

# **Railway Preservation Society of Ireland**

## **REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**North Star Hotel, Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2015**

Nora Owen chaired the meeting and 53 members were present.

Mrs Owen introduced herself and said she was no longer a steam 'virgin', having visited Whitehead recently to sample footplate travel, a great experience provided by dedicated volunteers.

She welcomed veteran member A.Hamblin who had made the journey from Surrey, as he did most years.

Mrs Owen then asked everyone to take a few moments to remember those members who had died during the past year.

### ***Apologies***

Lord O'Neill, R.C.Guinness, Dr.J.Smyth, J.Harcourt, C.Holliday, F.McAllister, J. McKegney, P.Newell, J.O'Meara, F.Richards, P.Scott, D.Seymour, M.J.Walsh, D.Wynne.

### ***Minutes of the AGM on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2014***

The minutes, previously circulated, were adopted on the proposal of S.Timmins, seconded by J.McKeown.

### ***Chairman's Report***

D.Grimshaw said that since his published report there had been substantial development progress made, i.e. the second phase of work at Whitehead was virtually finished, No.131 and No.171 were progressing well but had some work still to be done. He wished to thank GROW, as the scheme comes to an end, for the help given to the Society over the past few years.

He said he was pleased to be able to report that, after 3 years of meetings and reports, that the NI Tourist Board have offered to fund the £1.4m which, with the £1.6m from the Heritage Lottery Fund and £30k from Carrickfergus Borough Council, will allow the £3m phase 3 development scheme at Whitehead to proceed. It is hoped that work will take place from August 2015 to March 2016.

D.Grimshaw reported that a proposed site in the Dublin area had been turned down by CIÉ and so other areas were being explored. G.Mooney noted that, after an initial setback, use of the locomotive shed at Connolly had been agreed, pending updates to the Safety Management System.

D.Grimshaw stated that the Dundalk proposal had not been forgotten. With outline planning permission in place, this could be a longer-term option for storage to complement a Dublin operations and maintenance base or a museum.

He also reported that the Industrial Heritage Association of Ireland had made a special award to the RPSI to recognise 50 years of contribution to Irish Heritage, and this would be accepted at a ceremony in Dublin in February.

D.Grimshaw paid tribute to the RPSI 50 Committee, under R.Morton, for the amount of effort put in to celebrating the Society's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year. R.Morton responded by saying it was a team effort and it was encouraging that the target of 50 new members had been reached. Also, about 20

new volunteers, mostly of retirement age, had signed up, but the challenge for everyone was to recruit younger volunteers.

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of B.Garrioch, seconded by H.Ritchie.

### ***Secretary's Report***

P.McCann said that the only update to his published report was the requirement to prepare the Society for registration with the recently set up Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. This will require a certain degree of documentation to meet the public benefit requirements of the new legislation. J.Richardson recommended NICVA for help in this area.

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of R.Morton, seconded by B.Mullally.

### ***Treasurer's Report***

B.Garrioch reported that the Loan Appeal had raised £13,000 so far.

D.Humphries asked if it could be confirmed that profits made by HEI were to be gifted to the RPSI. He also asked if loans made to HEI from the RPSI would be repaid. D.Grimshaw confirmed that all profits were to be paid back to the RPSI. He also stated that HEI was still in the early stages of its life as a separate company and there was no requirement as yet to have loans repaid, but he would raise the matter with the HEI board. D.Humphries said it was vital that both boards were fully clear as to their responsibilities. P.Rigney noted that it would be preferable for HEI accounts to be presented at the RPSI AGM. He also suggested it would be better to have HEI back inside the RPSI.

G.Mooney reported that the No.171 Appeal, set up in February 2011 and closed in 2014, had seen a phenomenal response from members. With tours, calendars, etc., the total had now reached £91,153. J.McKeown noted the effort by J.Richardson in collecting €11,460.00 for both the No.171 and Craven Carriages restoration funds with his on-board raffles.

The report, previously circulated, was adopted on the proposal of P.Rigney, seconded by B.Mullally.

### ***Appointment Of Auditors***

Guardian were re-appointed on the recommendation of D.Humphries, seconded by B.Garrioch.

### ***Reports Of Operations Officers***

J.McKeown thanked Irish Rail staff, in particular Stephen King, for assistance with the Dublin Operations. Plus, thanks to the colleagues in Whitehead for their assistance during the year. Two new firemen had been certified during the year. He noted the death of steam driver Nicky Moore, a good friend to the Society.

The RSC carried out a number of audits on trains throughout the year and in December 2014 issued a licence to continue as an RU for the next five years.

The reports, previously circulated, were adopted on the proposal of G.Mooney, seconded by J.Darling.

## ***Reports Of Locomotive And Carriage Officers***

J.McKeown noted the help of the Irish Rail CME Peter Smyth and Paint Shop Manager John Barrett for the superb job done on the two catering vehicles in the new livery of blue and cream; hoping for two more to be turned out in 2015.

The reports, previously circulated, were adopted on the proposal of W.Riddall, seconded by L.Mooney.

## ***Election Of Board and Office Bearers***

P.McCann reported that nominations had been received for all posts, with the exception of Vice-Chairman and one director, and there were no contests.

There being no further nominations from the meeting, the following were elected to serve on the Board on the proposal of J.Darling, seconded by W.Riddall:

<b>Chairman:</b>	Denis Grimshaw	<b>Directors:</b>	Mervyn Darragh	Joe McKeown
<b>Vice-Chairman:</b>			Mark Healy	Phillip Newell
<b>Secretary:</b>	Paul McCann		Niall Kelly	Francis Richards
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Bill Garrioch		Dermot Mackie	Peter Scott
			Fergus McDonnell	Mark Walsh

J.McKeown thanked T.O'Shaughnessy for the enormous amount of work he got done as Carriage Officer and wished him well, and welcomed N.Kelly to the post.

## ***Any Other Business***

D.Chambers asked about train protection systems for No.171. D.Grimshaw replied that TPWS would be required for No.4, No.131 and No.171 at a cost of £15k to £20k each.

J.McBride asked if the RPSI intends to do anything regarding the proposed closure of the Foyle Valley Railway museum. D.Grimshaw replied that there was probably little we could do but bring it to the attention of our members and the NIMC.

T.Hand said she had been distributing leaflets produced by the RPSI 50 Committee and they had been very well received.

B.Mullally noted that the turntables at Cork and Mallow remained at risk of disposal.

D.Grimshaw replied that the Mallow table had been inspected and found to be too badly corroded for economic repair. Cork turntable will be inspected for possible acquisition and future re-use.

D.Grimshaw told B.Mullally that the Dublin Operations Committee would consider the feasibility of operating in conjunction with the programme of cruise liners calling in Cobh this year.

E.Fahey suggested that extra PR appointments should be made to help with publicity.

Mrs Owen said that on behalf of the membership she would like to thank D.Grimshaw and P.McCann, the other officers of the Society and the volunteers, and their friends and families who sustain them, for the tremendous work they do. She wished the Society good luck during the year. That being all the business she brought the meeting to a close.

*Signed:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Chairman* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date:* \_\_\_\_\_