

Annual Reports of the Officers of the Irish Railway Record Society CLG for the year ended 31 August 2018

Chairman's Introduction

This report relates to the 73rd year of the Irish Railway Record Society.

During the year under review, an attractive series of events was offered to the members in Dublin, Cork and London. The success of the outings programme was thanks to the efforts of Shane Roberts and Alan Hyland. The library, under the direction of Tim Moriarty, continued the facility of weekly library nights throughout the season. The input of other Board members and volunteers, whose work is less visible but whose input is essential to the running of the Society, must also be acknowledged.

The Journal continued to achieve its usual high standards thanks to the efforts of the Journal Team.

The Society is primarily about the enjoyment of a shared interest and friendships which contribute to a rare phenomenon – a totally voluntary learned society.

I again take this opportunity, on behalf of the Board and personally, to thank all those members and supporters who have contributed to our Society during the year under review.

Tony O'Shaughnessy, Chairman

Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to inform you that this year's accounts show a small surplus of €2,398. This compares with a deficit of €8,698 in 2017. The total income amounted to €64,048 (€66,590 in 2017) while expenditure amounted to €62,358 (€76,300 in 2017).

Subscriptions increased by just €335 while revenue from book sales increased by €1,520. Expenditure on the premises was reduced by some €7,100 as no major repairs were undertaken during the year. May I thank the Board members for their support and our

treasurers in both London and Cork for their assistance.

Alan Hyland, Hon Treasurer

Secretary's Report

There were 991 members of the Society at the end of August 2018, a decline of 31 or 3% on the previous year. The sharpest reduction was in the Dublin region, with all the other categories remaining stable.

	2017/8	2016/7
Dublin	247	270
Ireland incl. NI	329	333
Britain	346	348
Overseas	36	38
Libraries	33	33
TOTAL	991	1022

We were notified of the deaths of the following members and offer our sympathy to their families and friends: Bill Askew, Richard Chown, J. Fitzgerald, David Jackson, David Lawrence, Harold Smith and Don Steele.

The Society's data protection policy was updated during the year and is now fully compliant with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which came into force in May. The Board reviewed both the risk register and compliance checklist during the year. It also carried out a comprehensive review of the Society's insurance cover, in close co-operation with our broker.

A committee of the Board prepared a draft Strategic Plan for the Society in response to a resolution passed at the 2018 AGM. **The text of the Plan will be accessible on the Society's website and hardcopies are available on request.**

A new Society website went live during the year and particular thanks are due to Ciaran Cooney for his excellent work on it.

Pat Mangan, Company Secretary

Premises Officer's Report

The premises continue to be maintained to a high standard. Expenditure (including

maintenance and security) was kept to a minimum, resulting in lower costs in these areas. Cleaning continued to be carried out at regular intervals during the year.

Alan Hyland, (Acting) Premises Officer

Journal Team Report

Three issues of the Journal were produced during the calendar year 2018 - Nos. 195-7, forming the first half of Vol. 28. Both 195 and 197 each had 64 pages, and 196 had 68. The content was as follows:

Journal No.	Text pages	Picture pages
195 (Feb)	34	30
196 (Jun)	49	21
197 (Oct)	35	29

There was a change of printer during the year. QPA, who had handled our Journal for nine years, went out of business, and the final issue of 2018, No. 197, was printed by Westside Press, to the now customary high standard. Our designer, Gerry Butler of Signal Design, continues to ensure a pleasing and clean layout.

The quality of photographic reproduction remains excellent, thanks in no small measure to the Society's Hon. Photographic Archivist and Editorial Team member, Ciarán Cooney, whose skill in restoring old images is deployed to the benefit of members, as was seen to especially good effect in the feature on Broadstone in Journal 195.

Other highlights of that issue were the inauguration of Luas Cross-City, including Martin Brailsford's excellent track diagram of the enlarged Luas system, reproduced with the permission of the Branch Line Society, and an account of a short tour on the Belmond train by our member, John Byrne.

Journal 196 focussed on railway safety in Ireland, to coincide with a conference in Dublin of the International Railway Safety Council. Copies of this issue were made

available to those attending the Conference. This issue also included a short piece by our newly appointed President, Mr Dick Fearn.

Journal 197 resumed normal service, with a substantial feature on "Waterford as a Railway Centre", by long-standing member Albert Thornton, himself a resident of Waterford.

The Journal Team is currently just five in number: Ciarán Cooney, Kieran Marshall, who assembles our News, Martin Baumann, who has expanded our news coverage with input on NIR matters and other interesting byways of railway activity, long-time contributor Barry Carse, and Michael Walsh.

2018 was a challenging year for the (very) small Journal Team. It is not clear that the present editorial setup remains viable and other options are being looked at. Members' views and offers to contribute to Journal production activity would be welcome, especially in connection with the October issue, Journal No. 200.

Michael J. Walsh, for Journal Editorial Team

Archivist's Report

The Society's archives have continued to grow and attract attention from genealogists and researchers interested in social and economic history. Interest in family history continued unabated. During the year we made available a large collection of employee records donated to the Society which related to, and were discovered in, the Inchicore Works. These partly fill a large gap in the known surviving records. Thanks to Dr Peter Rigney and Paddy O'Brien for their assistance on this aspect of our archival work. As we explore ancestral records, we also aim to give visitors an insight into railway history and an understanding of what it meant to work on the railways.

We have also acquired a large amount of relatively modern material from Irish Rail which came to light during the remodelling of the GNR(I) office block at Connolly Station. Because it had to be moved within a very short timeframe, much sorting, reduction and cataloguing is still required which will occupy a great deal of time over the next couple of years. We thank Anthony McDonald who spent a lot

of time in Connolly arranging the material for transfer, and Stephen King of Irish Rail for his assistance and assessment.

Richard McLachlan continued his work on the drawings collection, publishing high quality, low quantity print runs of the drawings for our collections and for use by historians and modellers. An interesting development was the publication of architectural and other drawings of the extraordinary railway town of Greenore which was launched in Greenore Co-op. The venue was packed with local people, fascinated by the detailed drawings of the village of which they are rightly proud. We thank Richard and Herbert Richards for their work in this area.

Members continue to use our collection when researching articles for the Journal. A forthcoming talk on GNR(I) hotels and catering is largely based on materials in our library and archives. The Hon. Archivist has published papers in the Journal based on material in our collections, including an accident in Banbridge, the Listowel and Ballybunion monorail and pilfering from the railway in south Wexford. We encourage members to use our unique facilities and the Hon. Archivist is always willing to make mutually agreeable arrangements where possible for research when normal Tuesday night access is not feasible.

Rev. Norman E Gamble BA Mod PhD (TCD), Hon. Archivist

Librarian's Report

The library was open to members and visitors on forty-one occasions from September 2017 to July 2018 and provided the usual services. The total number of attendances by members was 715 compared with 857 in the previous year and 1100, 1080, 1162 and 1192 in earlier years. Attendance figures varied from 5 to 24 with an average of 17.3 visitors recorded. Around forty five members attended the annual Christmas library night. Donations and bequests of library material continued to be received from various sources and the usual library work/services of classification, binding and repairs, catering, book sales and cleaning continued during the season. In December the

Hon. Librarian's annual lecture consisted of slides from his collection. The attendance at the National Heritage Week open day in August was disappointing. The library continues to be in good order and condition.

Tim Moriarty, BA, MLS, Hon. Librarian

Programme Officer's Report

A total of 15 meetings were held at the Society's Heuston premises on Thursday evenings between September 2017 and April 2018. Highlights included "Full Steam Ahead at the Bluebell" by Dick Fearn and an illustrated presentation by Derek Young on "The End of an Era – the Changing World of the '60s; the Final Days of UTA Steam and Railcars", along with the usual slide shows and annual film show.

There were five outings during the period (attendance figures in brackets):

Enniskillen Model Railway Exhibition on 30th September (50)

LUAS Cross-City preview tour on 18th November (57)

Nenagh Branch and Western Rail Corridor on 24th March (64)

West Clare Railway at Moyasta on 19th May (52)

Co. Donegal Narrow Gauge Railways on 20th & 21st July (49).

An Open Day was held in the Society's premises on 26th August 2017 in conjunction with *National Heritage Week* and an Open Evening was also held on 22nd September 2017 in conjunction with *Culture Night*, the latter being particularly well supported with some 80 visitors over the four hour period.

The Annual Dinner of the Society took place on 27th November 2017 in the Wynn's Hotel, Abbey Street, Dublin, attended by some 76 members and guests.

I wish to thank all those who participated in any of the above activities.

Shane Roberts, Hon. Programme Organiser

London Area Report

The London Area continues to promote the Society in South-East England, and provide a forum in London for those with an interest in Irish transport, particularly railways.

The London Area supports the parent body in various ways. Its meetings promote interest in the Society, helping retain existing members and encouraging new members. It has given financial support to the digitisation of the Society's archives, led by London Area member, Richard McLachlan, mainly for the purchase of equipment. It often acts as a repository for the Irish collections (slides, photos, books etc.) of members (and other English enthusiasts with an interest in Irish railways) on their death, and avoids such collections being assigned to the skip.

We meet at the Calthorpe Arms in Gray's Inn Road. Our speakers were:

Thursday 19th October 2017

"Graham Hoare's Irish Railway Photos"
presented by Roger Joanes

Thursday 16th November 2017 "Ireland's Great Railway Engineers" by Gerald Beesley

Thursday 7th December 2017

"Engineering Railway Architecture – the GNR(I)" by Siobhan Osgood + AGM

Thursday 18th January 2018

"Port, Harbour and Military Railways" by Andrew Waldron

Thursday 15th February 2018

"LUAS 14 years on" by Anthony McDonald

Thursday 15th March 2018

"Further Tales of Irish Railway Travel in the mid-1950s" by Michael Davies

Thursday 19th April 2018

"The GNR(I) lines to Newcastle and Derry" by Charles Friel.

Average attendance was around 40.

The Area organised its annual Transport Collectors' Market in March 2018, once again in Chiswick Town Hall. This is an essential fundraising event for the Area but also

provides a useful service to the wider enthusiast community.

The London Area is the current custodian of four bequeathed collections from recently deceased members and friends of the Area, including our Area founder and first Chair, Lance King. Negotiations are in progress to acquire two further collections. Our presence and activities in the London Area are a good way of maintaining close links between the Society and members living in England, and a beneficial outcome of this has been generous bequests to the Society.

As a rule, we tend to acquire the Irish parts of larger collections although in some cases, a wider selection is included. Our practice is to offer books and other published material to the parent body in Dublin. However, in the case of slides and photos, our aim is to digitally record and reference these before sending them across the Irish Sea, although this can be a long process in the case of a large collection.

Where there is published material which is not of use to the parent body, we dispose of it where we can to ensure that it "goes to good homes" and as a means of raising funds for the London Area.

The London Area has developed its own website, with links to the main Society website. This enables us to include more information and be more responsive to events locally than is possible on the parent body website, and generally to encourage participation in our activities by presenting them in the best possible light to a local audience.

If you live near London, or are in the city for business or pleasure, do come along and enjoy our activities – see the London Area's website (www.irrslondon.com) for further details.

Tim Morton, Chair of London Area