



Founded 1908

# Derby Railway Engineering Society



To: Members

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## OVERSEAS VISIT TO THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND Thursday 23 – Tuesday 28 August 2012

### 1. Introduction.

The Society last made a visit to Ireland in 2006 when the majority of the programme was devoted to Northern Ireland, making only a day trip to the Republic.

This year's principal guest to the Annual Dinner in February 2012 is Dick Fearn, Managing Director of Irish Rail. It would be most appropriate to establish a link between our Overseas Visit and the Annual Dinner, through the good services of Dick Fearn.

The dates for the visit have been set around the presence of the Tall Ships Festival which will be present in Dublin Bay from 23 to 26 August, see [www.dublinaltships.ie/festival](http://www.dublinaltships.ie/festival). Their presence affords the opportunity to board some of these magnificent vessels on certain days with Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> offering the amazing spectacle of the "Parade in Sail" from 11.00 to 14.00 Hrs.

This year, the itinerary covers 5 nights, providing 4 full days for pre-planned visits to railway attractions old and new. The itinerary does provide some free time each day for people to do as they please. I understand that some may wish to opt-out of visiting railway workshops and substitute their own activities – that's quite in order! For suggested places and activities - see Section 5.

Our programme envisages members making their own travel arrangements to and from the Republic of Ireland, travelling by air or sea. Some may wish to extend their stay. Travel information on various options is given in Section 4. Please check these travel details when making your bookings as times and prices are subject to change. Also, alternative travel options do exist.

The customary Overseas Dinner will be held on Monday evening (27 August), hopefully, with Dick Fearn as our principal guest.

### 2. Itinerary

Thursday 23 August 2012 Depart UK for Dublin. For those able to reach Dublin by the middle of the afternoon, there may be an opportunity to visit the "Irish Railway Records Office" adjacent to Heuston railway station.

- Day 1\_Fri A return visit to the Inchicore Works of Irish Rail and possibly to Irish Rail's Drogheda DMU Depot. For those preferring a non-railway event, please see section 5 for suggestions.
- Day 2\_Sat For rail enthusiasts, we take the train from Dublin Heuston to Portlaoise, located 60 miles from Dublin) to visit Irish Rail's new DMU Depot. On leaving the Depot, we make our way to see the Stradbally Railway located 6 miles from Portlaoise. This narrow gauge railway belongs to the Irish Steam Preservation Society Ltd, and Stradbally is home to a transport museum that has a turf burning steam tractor – not an every day sight! Private hire bus(es) will be arranged to take the group from Portlaoise to the Depot and onto Stradbally, returning the group to Portlaoise to catch a train back to Dublin.

On this day, the Tall Ships Festival is present in Dublin Harbour and selected vessels can be boarded by the public between the times of 11.00 to 22.00 Hrs.

- Day 3\_Sun On this day the Tall Ships are accessible to the public in the morning until 11.00 Hrs, after which the "Parade of Sail" takes place until 14.00 Hrs.

To ensure a good vantage point for the Tall Ships in full sail, members are encouraged to use the local public transport; buses, Luas and DART.

When the Parade has finished, why not take yourself further afield by way of the Luas rail system and its major extensions which have been completed in recent years and resulted in some impressive engineering achievements? One such extension is the line to Bride's Glen. This southern terminus of the Green Line marks the spot when funding ceased, some 2 years ago, leaving the station perched on the viaduct!.

The Society may be able to arrange that day to visit to one of two the Luas rolling stock depots, such as the Red Cow Depot serving the Red Line.

- Day 4\_Mon Designed to appeal to all and to explore sights further a field from Dublin, we take one of the new South Korean DMUs from Heuston station south to Waterford, Ireland's oldest city, a major port since the Viking times and home of the Neptune shipyard which produced in the 19 century the worlds largest iron steam ships. Today Waterford is known for its Crystal Works, a legacy of its former glass making industry. Conducted tours of the crystal works are available on weekdays between 9.30 to 3.15 pm for 8 Euros/person for groups of 8+ persons.

The onward journey from Waterford offers 2 options. One can return via Kilkenny, a popular tourist destination, known for its 11<sup>th</sup> century castle with its commanding position overlooking Kilkenny and the River Nore. Alternatively, there is a circular route, returning via Limerick Junction to Dublin – a clockwise journey.

This being our last day, we shall have our customary evening Dinner, hopefully supported by all members of the Society's group with our principal guest, Dick Fearn. Wynn's Hotel has offered the Society a 4-course dinner at €35 per person, served in the Private Banquet Room.

- Day 5\_Tue Leave Dublin for home

### **3. Hotel Accommodation – Wynn's Hotel Tel: 00 353 1 874 5131.**

The Society has selected the Wynn's Hotel [www.wynnshotel.ie](http://www.wynnshotel.ie) as offering the level of accommodation and catering appropriate to the Society's Overseas Visits. The hotel is located in the heart of the City of Dublin, a few minutes walk to the Abbey Theatre, Trinity College and Dublin's two premier shopping streets. The Luas tram stop is directly in front of the hotel and the two main line railway stations, that we shall be using, are only a short walk away. The hotel has a history of providing 150 years of luxury accommodation and was awarded by tripadvisor "The Certificate of Excellence in 2011".

The hotel has agreed to hold a number of rooms for us (singles and doubles, free of cost or liability) until 13 February when your deposit cheques will secure the rooms. The final payment is due at least 30 days before our



4.4 Local Travel for Dublin [www.visitdublin.com](http://www.visitdublin.com) T: +353 1 605 7700

There is a great choice of public transport systems in and around Dublin, including buses, the Luas tram system and the DART service covering both north and south coastlines of Dublin Bay. Regional and inter-city train services are operated by Irish Rail [www.irishrail.ie](http://www.irishrail.ie) on T: +353 1 703 3504.

Further travel details relating to reduced price travel cards are available from the Tourist Office, shown above, and the Luas web site [www.luas.ie](http://www.luas.ie) . The range is vast and confusing!

## 5. **Free-Time Suggestions**

This year we are bound for the “the most friendly capital” so book a guided tour to enjoy the attractions of Dublin. You will see the iconic Ha’penny Bridge spanning the River Liffey, the graceful Custom House, a tour of the magnificent State Apartments, the historical Christ Church cathedral and many more places of architectural and historic interest. Amongst these, are the National Museum, Irish Museum of Modern Art, the National Gallery, the beautifully illustrated 800 AD gospel manuscript kept in the Trinity College Museum.

Having done the above, you will be ready to quench your thirst, so make for the Guinness Brewery [www.guinness-storehouse.com](http://www.guinness-storehouse.com) or one of the bars or restaurants on the famous O’Connell Street.

Further suggestions are:

A selection of 3 tours available from [www.daytoursunplugged.ie](http://www.daytoursunplugged.ie) to the Wicklow mountain National Park, a range of historical sites and the UNESCO World Heritage site at Newgrange.

Day trip from Dublin to the Cliffs of Moher – [www.dublintoncompany.com](http://www.dublintoncompany.com)

Another company offering day tours at 25 euros each [www.wildwicklow.ie](http://www.wildwicklow.ie)

Guided bus tour of Dublin lasting 90 minutes at a cost of 14 euros/person [www.loveireland.com](http://www.loveireland.com)

I am indebted to David Russell for assisting with the provision of the railway transport information and acting as the Society’s link with Dick Fearn, Managing Director of Irish Rail. I am indebted also to Tony Broughton for bringing the presence of the Tall Ships Festival to my attention and providing its details.

Looking forward to hearing from you in January

Peter Parkin  
Assistant Secretary (Overseas Visits)

