



Downpatrick & County Down Railway Society

Railway Station, Market Street, Downpatrick, County Down, BT30 6LZ
Telephone: 077 9080 2049, Internet: www.downrail.co.uk

PRESS RELEASE

8th June, 2006

Special Visitor Steams in to Downpatrick

The Downpatrick & County Down Railway is popular with many visitors, from all over Northern Ireland and beyond. But this Sunday, 11th June, one very special visitor by the name of Harvey is paying a visit to the railway from the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland, in Whitehead.

For Harvey, or to give his full title of No. 3 "RH Smyth", is a steam engine – built in 1928 for the Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners' lines at Queen's Quay - a comparatively short railway which ran from the northern end of the quays on the west side of the River Foyle.

Johnny Glendinning, chairman of the RPSI said the engine has had a remarkable life for any steam engine. "In 1968 a private individual bought the engine from the harbour commissioners – saving it from the scrapman – before he sold it to us for a nominal sum in 1972"

He continues, "Since then the engine has been further than it's original owners would ever have thought possible. As well as serving as a shunting engine for us at Whitehead, Harvey has recently been seen in action hauling ballast trains on the Northern Ireland Railways network during the Larne line relay and the reopening of the Bleach Green line."

And who was RH Smyth? Mr Glendinning explains, "RH Smyth was Chairman of the Londonderry Harbour Commissioners from 1927 to 1941, and his family owned Feed Stuff Mills in Strabane and did an extensive business in the North West."

He adds, "Railway folks being what they are, they soon abbreviated the engine's name to 'Harvey'!" Downpatrick & County Down Railway chairman, Michael Collins, says that it's not every day a steam engine comes to visit you.

He says, "We have one of our engines undergoing restoration at Whitehead, but it won't be finished before our current engine will need some routine maintenance that will typically have to happen in the middle of our summer season."

Mr Collins explains, "Our engine, Orenstein and Koppel No. 3 – the very continental looking engine – has been in service now for 6 years and has performed exceptionally. However, after six years we think she needs a rest to allow our volunteers time to give her a check-up so that she can continue to perform as well as she has in the past".

"Planning for this began earlier in the year, as we were conscious that we didn't want to have to provide a diesel substitute during the busy summer months," says Mr Collins.

Harvey, or as visitors might get to know him – the green engine – will be operating the DCDR's summer trains which begin Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th June, and every weekend until 10th September, with trains travelling between Downpatrick and Inch Abbey from 1.40pm till 5pm.

For more information on these, please log on to the railway's website at www.downrail.co.uk



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NOTES TO THE EDITOR

Harvey will be leaving Whitehead on Sunday 11th June at 1030 and arrive at Downpatrick around 1pm. It will be accompanied by an RPSI crew and will be in light steam. It will most likely couple to the train for a proving run to Inch Abbey.

TECHNICAL NOTES

The engine is the last of the Port and Harbour Commissioners' standard gauge shunting tanks, No.3 "R.H. Smyth", and built by the Avonside Engine Co. in 1928 and described as "generally similar to the B6 class 0-6-0

saddle tanks, but with a wheelbase of 9 feet and a gauge of 5 feet 3 inches". The livery is black and green, lined out in yellow and lettered in gilt

The leading dimensions of the engine are as follows:

Cylinders 14" x 22";

Wheels 3'6" diameter;

Tubes 126 x 1¾" diameter;

Heating surfaces - Firebox 54 + Tubes 476 = 530 square feet;

Grate 9½ square feet;

Working pressure 160 lbs;

Water capacity 800 gallons;

Coal capacity 20 cwt;

Weight 24 tons empty, 30 tons full;

Length 24 ft; Width 8'6"; Height 11'½";

Smallest curve 150 ft radius;

Tractive effort 13,141 lbs at 80%.