

A PIECE OF AYRSHIRE'S RAIL HISTORY

Prof. Roland Paxton, Chairman of the Association's Museum at Heriot-Watt University, has presented Bruce Morgan, Museums Officer at the Dick Institute, Kilmarnock, with a sliver of a cast-iron plate-rail from the former Kilmarnock & Troon Railway (1811-46).

The rail, dating from c.1818, is of a previously unknown type strengthened by means of two longitudinal fillets under its running surface to the design of the railway's manager, John Wilson. This innovation followed the introduction on this horse-traction line in 1816 of a 'Killingworth' steam locomotive - 9 years before the opening of the Stockton & Darlington! The rail was discovered by Barr Ltd in 1996 during conservation of the line's ruinous Laigh Milton Viaduct by a PHEW initiated Trust to which Prof. Paxton acted as Secretary/Director.

Mr. Morgan regards the cross-section of rail as a valuable addition to the Dick Institute's holdings and intends to include it in a major exhibition on the Kilmarnock & Troon Railway currently in preparation.

2001 CARR PRIZE

At the November ICE Awards Ceremony in London President Sir Joe Dwyer presented Professor Paxton, past president Professor George Fleming and Jim Stirling of British Waterways with the Robert Alfred Carr Prize for their joint paper "Regeneration of the Forth and Clyde and Union Canals".

A lecture based on an updated version of this paper has been organised jointly by the RSE and the ICE for Monday 4 March 2002. Further information and tickets are available from Sandra Purves on 0131 556 4503.

