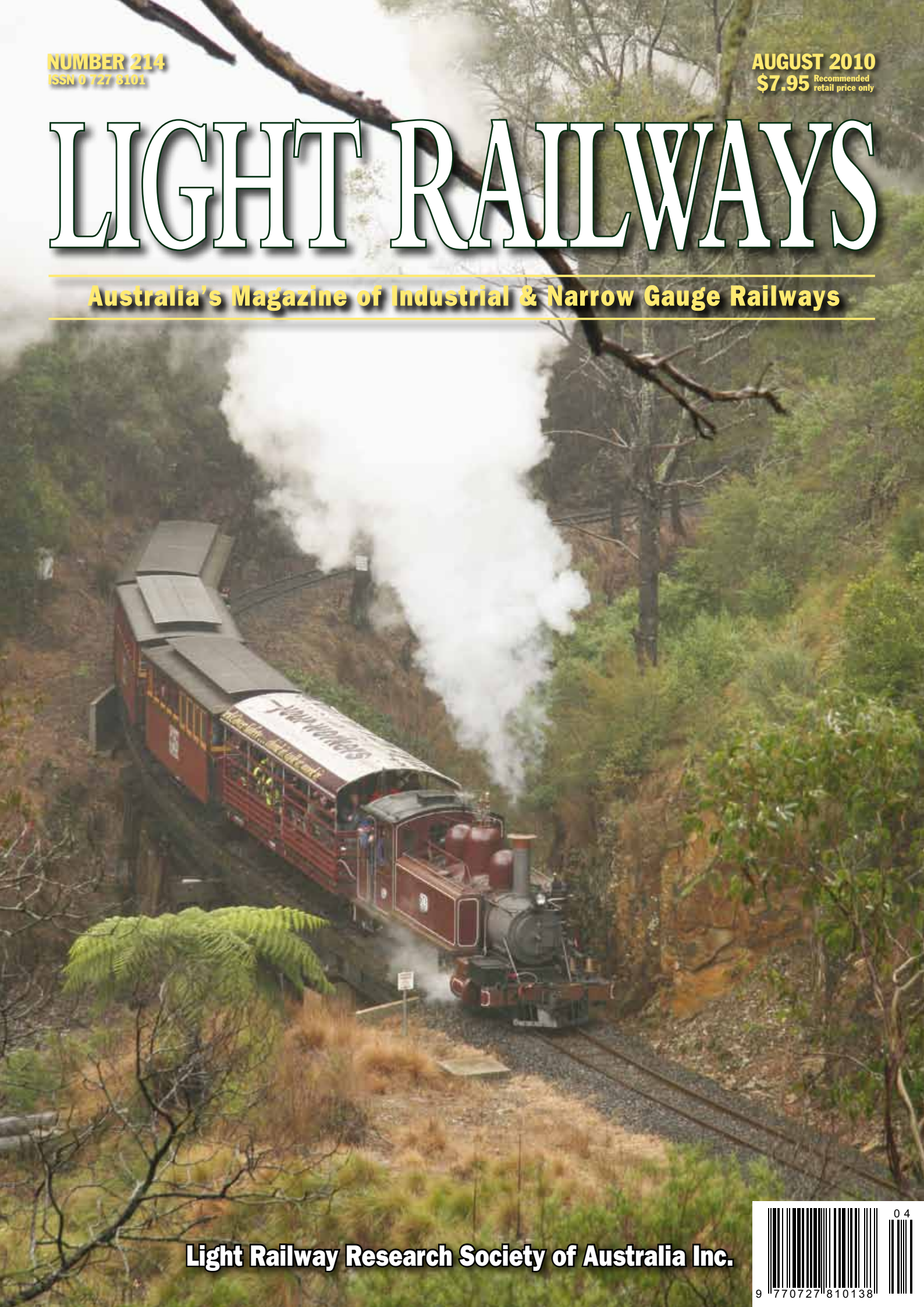


**NUMBER 214**  
ISSN 0 727 8101

**AUGUST 2010**  
**\$7.95** Recommended  
retail price only

# LIGHT RAILWAYS

**Australia's Magazine of Industrial & Narrow Gauge Railways**



**Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc.**





## LIGHT RAILWAYS

Australia's Magazine of Industrial and Narrow Gauge Railways

No 214 August 2010

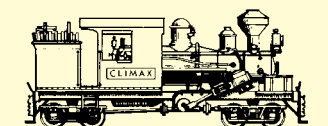
ISSN 0 727 8101 PP 342588/00002

**Editor:** Bruce Belbin,  
PO Box 674 St Ives NSW 2075.

**Research, Heritage & Tourist Editor:**  
Bob McKillop,  
c/o PO Box 674 St Ives NSW 2075.

**Industrial Railway News Editor:**  
John Browning,  
PO Box 99 Annerley Qld 4103.

**Distributor:** Gordon and Gotch Limited.  
Printed by BPA Print Group.



**Light Railway Research Society  
of Australia Inc. A14384U**  
PO Box 21 Surrey Hills Vic 3127

### COUNCIL

**President:** Bill Hanks (03) 5944 3839

**Secretary:** Phil Rickard (03) 9870 2285

### New South Wales Division

PO Box 279, Moorebank NSW 1875

**President:** Jeff Moonie (02) 4753 6302

**Secretary:** Ross Mainwaring (02) 9449 2738

### South Australian Group

6 Dunedin St, Dover Gardens, SA 5048

**Secretary:** Arnold Lockyer (08) 8296 9488

### South-east Queensland Group

365 Fairfield Rd, Yeronga Qld 4104

**Secretary:** Bob Gough (07) 3848 3769

### Tasmanian Representative

11 Ruthwell St, Montrose, Tasmania 7010

Ken Milbourne (03) 6272 2823

### MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. For dates, times and locations of future meetings, see LRRSA NEWS, page 26.

**Subscriptions:** \$48.00 for year ending 30 June 2011, providing six issues of *Light Railways* magazine, information on Society activities, 25% discount on LRRSA publications, etc. Overseas: \$A75.00 economy airmail. Payment by cheque, money order, Mastercard or Visa. Contact the Membership Officer, PO Box 21, Surrey Hills, Vic. 3127. Fax (03) 9701 8221. Email: [lrrsa@lrrsa.org.au](mailto:lrrsa@lrrsa.org.au)

**Sales:** Back issues of *Light Railways* and other publications available from LRRSA Sales, PO Box 21, Surrey Hills, Vic. 3127.

### LRRSA Web Page:

<http://www.lrrsa.org.au>

### Conversions:

1 inch (in)	25.40 millimetres
1 foot (ft)	0.30 metre
1 yard (yd)	0.91 metre
1 chain	20.11 metres
1 mile	1.60 kilometres
1 ton	1.01 tonnes
1 pound (lb)	0.454 kilogram
1 acre	0.4 hectare
1 horsepower (hp)	746 Watts
1 gallon	4.536 litres
1 cubic yard	0.765 cubic metres
1 super foot (sawn timber)	0.00236 cubic metre

## Contents

Walhalla Railway Centenary	3
The tramways that served Edithburgh	7
The Hillend Colliery tramway	11
Lakes Creek Meatworks tramway	14
Lure of the narrow gauge railway to Walhalla	21
Letters	24
Book Reviews	26
Research	27
Industrial Railway News	28
Heritage & Tourist News	34

## Comment

We note the positive comments made of late regarding the quality of the research undertaken by LRRSA members into the history of our industrial and narrow gauge railways. A feature of this work is the researchers' efforts to 'tell the story' of these railways in the context of the industry in which they operated and the economic and social factors that impacted on their operation.

The primary purpose of *Light Railways* is to present these findings to you the reader. Our feature article this issue focuses on the classical industrial setting and role of the tramways at the giant Lakes Creek Meatworks at Rockhampton. The motive power was Clydesdale horses for much of their operating life, although a rare Lister 'Rail Truck' was introduced in 1936. John has used the oral history of the men who worked there to tell the story in an interesting way. It is complimented by two short research articles, one on the Hillend Colliery tramway at Cessnock and the other on the salt industry tramways at Edithburg in South Australia.

We also publish occasional articles covering special events. The celebrations for the centenary of the opening of the Moe-Walhalla Railway have captured the attention of narrow gauge railway enthusiasts in recent months, particularly the use of the Puffing Billy Railway locomotive 7A for special trains on 29-30 May. We offer two articles with photographs relating to this event, with Frank Stamford explaining the centenary activities, while Peter Ralph focuses on the personal attraction that this special railway has for him.

*Bob McKillop*

The Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc. was formed in 1961 and caters for those interested in all facets of industrial, private, tourist and narrow gauge railways in this country and its offshore territories, past and present.

Members are actively involved in researching light railways in libraries and archives, interviewing knowledgeable first-hand participants and undertaking field work at industrial sites and in the forests.

*Light Railways* is the official publication of the Society. All articles and illustrations in this publication remain the copyright of the author and publisher. Material submitted is subject to editing, and publication is at the discretion of the Editor.

Articles, letters and photographs of historical and current interest are welcome. Contributions should be double spaced if typed or written. Electronic formats accepted in the common standards.

Material is accepted for publication in *Light Railways* on the proviso that the Society has the right to reprint, with acknowledgement, any material published in *Light Railways*, or include this material in other Society publications.

**Walhalla Railway Centenary: Front Cover:** On Sunday 30 May, in driving rain, 7A crosses the second last trestle bridge before entering Walhalla yard. Photo: Nick Achen  
**Upper Back Cover:** View from the first train travelling to Thompson on Saturday 29 May shows the twisting nature of the line. Photo: Scott Gould  
**Lower Back Cover:** At Walhalla, former Emu Bay Railway 10 class B-B DH Spirit of Emu Bay (Walkers 576 of 1963) pulls the train clear of the platform to allow 7A to run into No.3 road. A too-short headshunt prevented the NA from running around its train in the conventional manner. Photo: Scott Gould



On Saturday 29 May, Puffing Billy's NA class 2-6-2T 7A (temporarily renumbered 9A for historical purposes) departs Thomson and crosses the Thomson River bridge with drain cocks open in preparation for the 1 in 30 grades ahead. Photo: Scott Gould

## Walhalla Railway Centenary

by Frank Stamford

On Monday 3 May 2010 the centenary of the opening of the Moe–Walhalla 2ft 6in gauge railway was celebrated with a ceremony at Walhalla, the Minister of Tourism, Tim Holding, and the Mayor of Latrobe City Council, Kellie O'Callaghan, being in attendance. A special diesel-hauled train was run for the occasion over the restored 3.5km section of the line from Thomson to Walhalla. Subsequently, on the weekend of 29–30 May, six special trains were run, hauled by NA class locomotive 7A from the Puffing Billy Railway.

The first train to Walhalla arrived on 15 March 1910, hauled by NA class locomotive 9A. For the next six weeks construction trains run by the Public Works Department carried passengers and goods until the railway was taken over by the VR on 3 May 1910. The railway was officially opened on that day when a special VIP train hauled by 9A ran from Moe to Walhalla, departing Moe at 10:30am, with a scheduled arrival time at Walhalla of 1pm. The very first timetabled VR train had departed Walhalla early that morning hauled by locomotive 1A, arriving at Moe at 9:25am.

The Walhalla railway was different to the other VR narrow gauge lines. It was not built to develop pioneering agricultural communities, but to service a substantial and prosperous town. For that reason it was the only one to have an architect-designed station building at its terminus, rather than a collection of portable buildings. The last 13km of the railway ran through extremely difficult country. Had it been otherwise, the railway would have been built much earlier, and to 5ft 3in gauge. When the railway arrived the

surrounding population was around 3000. Walhalla had been established in the 1860s as a gold mining town, and for almost fifty years it had been a bustling commercial centre. It was remotely located at the foot of a narrow steep-sided valley. First time visitors to the town often arrived in a highly nervous state, due to the hair-raising nature of the roads. The expensive coach trip to Moe station took seven hours. No wonder the coming of the railway was a cause for celebration.

But Walhalla's prosperity was not to last. By the end of 1913 the two major Walhalla mines closed, and Walhalla went into decline. The following report of the opening of the railway, from the Melbourne *Argus* of 4 May 1910, gives a good description of the railway, and an interesting insight into concerns at that time for Walhalla's future.

### On the edge of things.

**Walhalla's railway.**

**Fine engineering feat.**

**By our special reporter.**

Walhalla's splendid isolation, in the heart of the Baw Baw ranges, has been dispelled by the entry of one of the most remarkable railway lines in Australia, and certainly the most remarkable in Victoria. The line, which is of 2ft 6in gauge, strikes off from the Gippsland line at Moe, threads its way through the foothills, and then clinging to what are almost sheer slopes and spanning fern tangled ravines and tumbling water courses on lofty bridges, it pushes into the yawning valley that shelters Walhalla, there to halt abruptly, as if suddenly conscious of its own temerity. The line is a triumph of engineering skill, and it was to set the seal upon this triumph that a large Parliamentary party visited Walhalla yesterday.





*Above: Its image reflected in the still waters below, 7A/9A crosses the Thomson River bridge with the second up train on Saturday 29 May. Photo: Scott Gould*  
*Below: On Saturday 29 May, 7A carrying 9A plates, enters Walhalla yard. This was the first such public trip since the 1940s. Photo: Nick Anchen*





The party consisted of the Premier (Mr Murray), the Minister for Railways and Education, (Mr A. A. Bilsson), Mr Edgar, MLC, honorary Minister, Messrs Wise and Beard, MHR's, Messrs Rees, Reardon, and McLellan, MLC's, Sir Henry Weedon, MLA, Messrs Craves, Farrer, McCutcheon, Norman Bayles, Hutchinson, and Hannah, MLA's, the chief engineer for railway construction (Mr Kernot), several state officials, and Mr H. E. Rowe, (chairman of the Long Tunnel Company). At Warragul and Moe the party was joined by the presidents of the local shires, and from each stopping place between Moe and Walhalla a large number of residents boarded the train to be present at the ceremony of the opening of the line.

As lines go, the Moe to Walhalla line is not a cheap one, but it is cheap in relation to some of the other Victorian lines, and is cheap also, it is claimed, in view of the interests and purpose it will serve. Its total length is 26¼ miles, and the expenditure on the line and rolling stock when the construction was authorised some years ago, was limited to £130,000. The total amount expended is within this limit. From Moe to Upper Moondarra, or Harris [Erica], as the station at the latter place has been named in honour of the member for the district, it was an easy proposition the constructing authority had to face, but the last eight miles into Walhalla presented obstacles that justify the official statement that, so far as this stage was concerned the line passes through more difficult country than any other broad or narrow gauge railway in Victoria.

There is nothing in the Victorian railway system to approach the grandeur and magnificence of the scenery through which this railway passes in the last section, at the Walhalla end. Once it plunges into the mountains, it makes the traveller dizzy with its daring flights. How it manages to cling to some of the mountain slopes seems a mystery. High up above the line towers the crest of the timbered hill; below there is a sheer drop of anything from 50ft to 230ft. Then, as though in sheer delight at its power, it skirts the base of a

cool secluded valley, where the moss makes an inviting carpet, and the fronds of the tree ferns meet overhead, and filter the sunlight through in soft patches. A little further on, it races beside a stream, and glorying in its freedom it takes a sweep at the mountainside again, and crosses another creek at such a height that for a moment the train takes on the appearance of a toy train, suspended in mid-air. The Walhalla gorge, into which the line eventually drops, becomes so narrow that the railway at one place is carried on piles over the creek, and to accommodate the station at the terminus the creek has been partially bridged over, and the platform is above the spot from which the current has been diverted. After travelling over the line yesterday the Premier said that should the unexpected happen, and the mines of Walhalla fail, the tourist traffic would almost make the railway pay. There seems to be much to support that view. If all the bridges and trestles on the line were placed in a row they would stretch for a mile. There are no tunnels, but from the cuttings and excavations 400,000 yards of earth have been taken.

The whole of Walhalla, and most of the residents of the neighbouring district turned out to welcome the visitors. The president of the Walhalla shire (Councillor Barnes), and the chairman of the Railway Trust (Mr Henry Hartrick), and other representative townfolk officially received the Premier and those who accompanied him.

The visitors were entertained at luncheon on their arrival at Walhalla.

The chairman (Councillor Barnes, president of the Walhalla shire), in proposing the toast of the "State Ministry", said that the line as constructed carried its own justification. They had two regrets that day – the absence of the member for the district (Mr Albert Harris) owing to ill-health; and of the late Sir Thomas Bent, to whom they owed so much. (Applause.)

Mr Murray, in reply, said that even to a wearied and worn politician there were moments of extreme happiness. He had experienced this when his friend, Mr Hannah, drank to the



'9A' crossing one of many trestle bridges in Stringers Gorge on Saturday 29 May. Pounding up the 1 in 30 grades, the sound reverberated spectacularly off the canyon walls. Photo: Nick Anchen

success and prosperity of the Government, and sang “For they are jolly good fellows”. (Laughter.) Parliament was sometimes accused of doing things in a hurry; of doing work hastily, in giving the electors plenty of time for repentance. There had, however, been no undue haste about the construction of that railway line. (Laughter.) It was a long time since the construction of the line was authorised by Parliament, and about six years since the first section from Moe was commenced. Now that the work was completed, who could say but that a new era of prosperity was not opening for Walhalla. The route traversed by the railway was particularly beautiful, and even if the unexpected happened and the mines should fail, the tourist traffic in the future should very nearly make the line pay. (Applause.)

Mr AA Bilsson said that the line was an object lesson in what could be done in the way of building a light line of railway, of the kind that was required to provide facilities for people living in remote parts of the State to get their produce to market. So favourably impressed had he been upon that point that he intended making representations regarding light lines to his colleagues, and if the Government approved he was certain that Parliament as at present constituted would endorse that approval. (Cheers.) ...

### Opening the line.

The ceremony of opening the line took place later in the afternoon at the Walhalla Station. There was a large gathering of residents and visitors from all parts of the district. Councillor Barnes presided.

Mr AA Bilsson said that it had been asserted that the goldmining industry in Walhalla had seen its best days. (Cries of “No.”). An authority like the Government geologist (Mr Dunn) had said, however, that in centres such as theirs and Bendigo they had only been scratching the surface, even though they had sunk down several thousand feet, and that there was still plenty of gold about. If there was one thing that

should assist Walhalla to develop its possibilities it was surely a railway that would permit of supplies being secured at a cheaper rate, and would also facilitate transport. (Applause.) The first thing to remember in weighing the line’s chances of success was that the impartial committee which dealt with all railway construction proposals in Victoria had recommended its construction, and that out of the five or six routes that had been originally suggested that from Moe was selected as giving the shortest distance to Melbourne, tapping rich country in Moondarra and other parishes to the west, and making available the large supplies of good timber. The expenditure on its construction was limited to £115,000, and for rolling stock £14,000 additional. The cost as finished would be within these limits. (Cheers.) The line was the most difficult and consequently the most costly of the Victorian narrow gauge lines. During the construction of the line goods and passengers had been conveyed by construction trains ... In declaring the line opened, he hoped that all the expectations formed in connection with it would be realised, and that it would open up a new era of prosperity for Walhalla and district. (Cheers.)

Mr Murray said the figures quoted by Mr Bilsson regarding the line were particularly reassuring. (Applause.) He was not going to take the ipse dixit of anyone that the two reefs being worked at Walhalla were the only reefs in those mountains. The people of a quarter of a century hence would smile at what was done to develop the district by those who were contentedly working those two reefs. Something would have to be done to develop the auriferous resources of the district, and if he cared to put on the mantle of prophecy he would predict a great future for mining in these alpine regions. (Applause.)

Hearty cheers were given for the success of the line and for the member for the district, Mr Albert Harris.

The special train, with half of the Parliamentary party on board, returned to Melbourne last night. The other members of the party are following this morning.



‘9A’ rolls into Walhalla Station on Saturday 29 May.

Photo: Nick Anchen





Looking at Edithburgh from the jetty, circa 1932. The Castle Salt Factory, with its distinctive tall chimney, is on the left of the picture.

Photo: State Library of South Australia

## The tramways that served Edithburgh

by John Reid

Located on the Southern Yorke Peninsula, the township of Edithburgh, though never connected to the South Australian railway system, did have its own tramways. Salt, grain and general cargo were the reasons for the existence of these tramways.

Two tramway systems operated, and in keeping with the government railways of South Australia, were of different gauges—actually three gauges if one considers the light tracks used at the salt lakes.

### The salt plateway

In the 1870s, salt was harvested in the many low-lying depressions in the area. There were 101 workable lakes in the district that could be used for salt scraping. By 1898 the Castle Salt Co-operative Company, Ltd refinery had been established in Edithburgh. This was followed at the turn of the century by another two refineries, both constructed on Halloran Parade.

The plateway tram—known as ‘the steel wagon track’—was 6¾ miles long and followed the present-day Edithburgh–Yorketown Road. The gauge was 5 feet 3 inches, and as the wagon tyres were each 4 inches wide, the width of each rail was 7½ inches. The tracks were set in cement and laid in the centre of the roadway. The line commenced at Seven Roads Junction, near Lake Fowler, and terminated near the present-day Edithburgh Museum. The right of way in Edithburgh was the middle of Edith Street. Today, a plantation is growing where the steel rails ran.

A loaded wagon from Lake Fowler carried about 60 bags of crude salt and was hauled by 6 to 8 (sometimes 10) draught horses. At the peak of the salt harvesting season up to 100 of these wagons delivered a load to the salt refineries each day. The

track on which the wagons ran made the load easier to haul and reduced wear and tear on the macadamised metal road. Travelling time from Seven Roads Junction to Edithburgh was about two hours. The line ran in a generally southeast direction from the Junction, and can best be described as a flat run with a few slight rises.

As for working the plateway, it was assumed that a loaded wagon had right of way. A story is told by a local resident concerning an empty working back to the Junction. Apparently, the driver liked his ‘few for the road’, and being somewhat under the influence of the ‘amber fluid’, let his dependable team lead both driver and wagon back to the Junction. When an opposing fully laden wagon confronted the team, an altercation arose, as his steadfast horses were unaware of their obligation to give way.

In addition to salt, grain and gypsum were also transported to the port of Edithburgh. The line is believed to have operated from 1906 to 1926, when the increasing use of rubber-tyred trucks made it redundant.

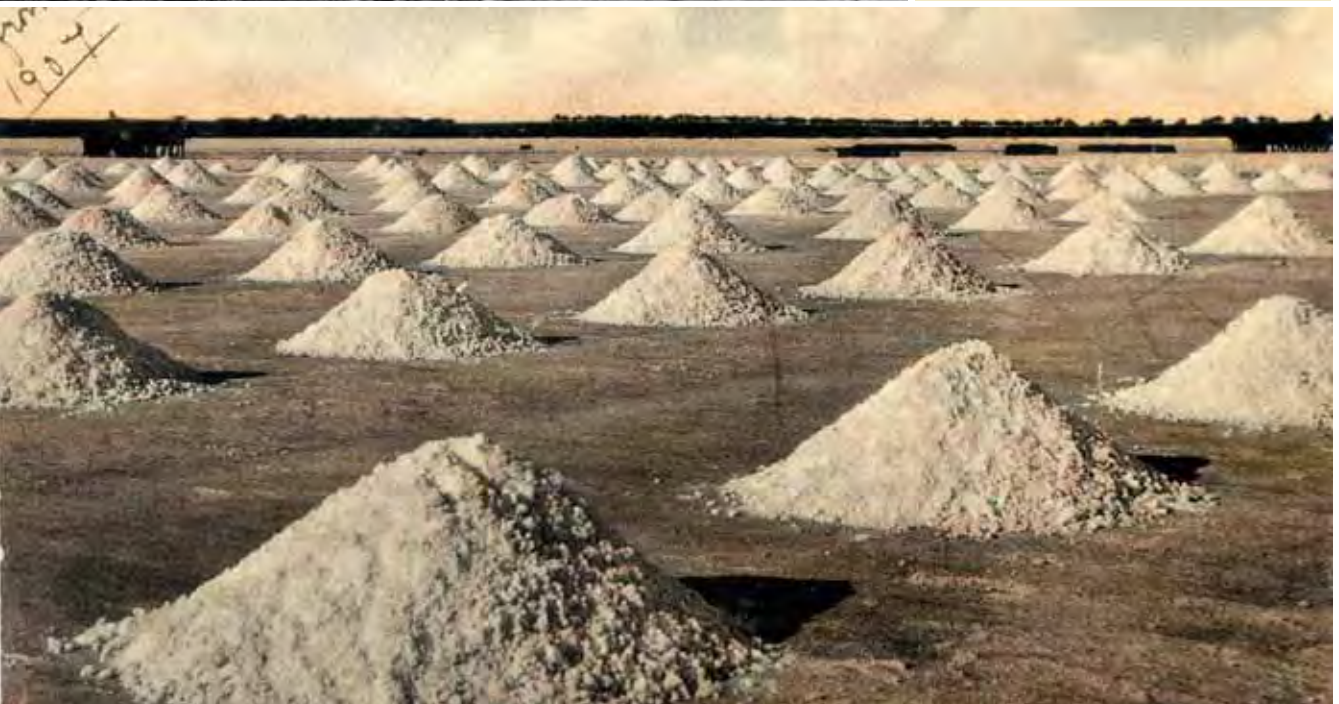


Laying ‘the steel track’ in Edith Street, circa 1906. The Edithburgh Hotel is on the left.

Photo: State Library of South Australia



*Collecting and bagging crude salt on one of the Castle Co's lakes, circa 1916  
 Photo: State Library of South Australia  
 □ Temporary track laid at the 'Pink Salt Lake', around 1900. Photo: State Library of South Australia  
 □ This old postcard, titled 'Salt Heaps, Lake Fowler, Yorke Peninsula, South Australia' shows a vast array of salt piled up and ready to be collected, while a horse-drawn wagon approaches in the distance, circa 1907.  
 From John Reid Collection*







Loading salt at the jetty, circa 1907. The Castle Salt Factory is in the background.

Photo: State Library of South Australia

An interesting aspect of this tramway was the water trough built at Lake Fowler, which was fed by a natural spring. No doubt the horses appreciated it. The trough can still be seen today at the lake.

On the salt lakes, 2ft gauge portable tramways were used to collect salt from the various salt piles as required. Four-wheel wagons were operated by manpower.

### The port tramway

This network of tramway tracks radiated from the root of the jetty and served a number of industries – the salt refineries, grain stacks, gypsum and general cargo unloaded from gulf vessels. The tramway gauge was 3 feet 6 inches, and remnants of it can be seen on the jetty and in Edith Street today.

The jetty at Edithburgh is unique, as it is located about 25 feet below the cliff on which the town was built. Four tracks were on the jetty, three being about 570 feet each in length and the other around 300 feet. Three tracks were laid on the land end. The southern track ascended the cliff and terminated in Edith Street about 12 feet beyond the warehouse of Dalgety & Co Ltd (the present-day museum). This track junctioned at O'Halloran Parade and proceeded to the Castle Salt Co-op Co Ltd works. The northern track left the jetty and swung in a northwest direction, and continued as the main tramway serving the Commonwealth Salt Co Works, the Standard Salt Co Works and the grain stacks. The middle track ran parallel to the southern one, crossed O'Halloran Parade and terminated in Edith Street at the warehouse of Edithburgh Agencies Grain Shipping and General Agents.

4-wheel wagons, with a capacity of 5 tons, were utilised on the jetty tramway. Operated and maintained by the former South Australian Harbors Board, they were fitted with two shoe-type brakes which were operated by a lever. They used gravity to travel from the salt refineries or grain stacks to the jetty, the brakes being operated by a brakeman riding the wagon

to the ship's side. Horses were used to haul the wagons on their uphill journey. It is thought that 30 to 40 of these wagons were used at the port. A preserved flat-top, No. 12 (carrying SAHB disc No.78 on its side) can be seen in the local museum.

### Conclusion

Though houses have replaced the refineries and much of the history described in this article has been obliterated, an interesting few hours may still be spent in Edithburgh taking in the museum and the jetty.

### Acknowledgements

Mr Dev Patterson of Edithburgh, for information on Seven Roads Junction and Lake Fowler.

### References

- Stock Journal*, Falie Jubilee 150 Souvenir. Hindmarsh Adelaide 1986.
- Welcome to Edithburgh*, tourist publication.
- A Story of Coobowie Edithburgh and District*, Edithburgh Museum Committee 1986.
- 'Notes on South Australian Jetty Tramways', *Light Railways* No.64, April 1979



One of the 4-wheel flat-top wagons once used on the jetty is preserved at the local museum.

Photo: John Reid

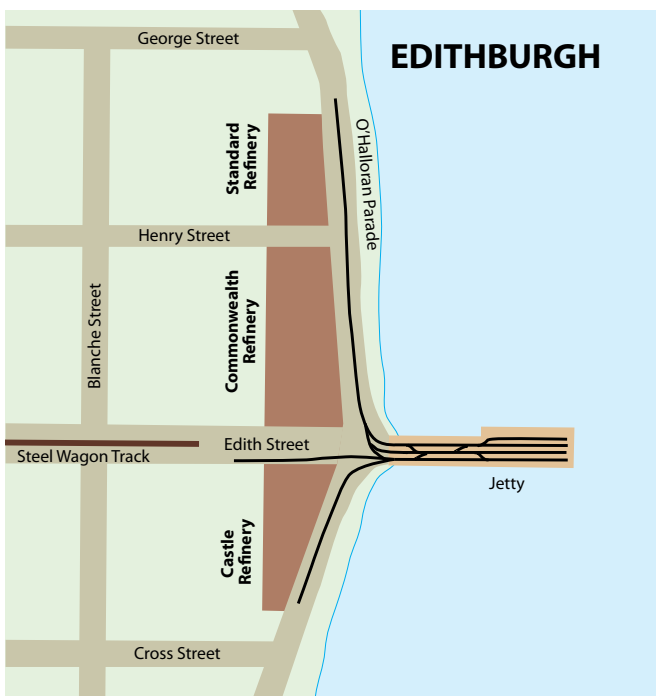
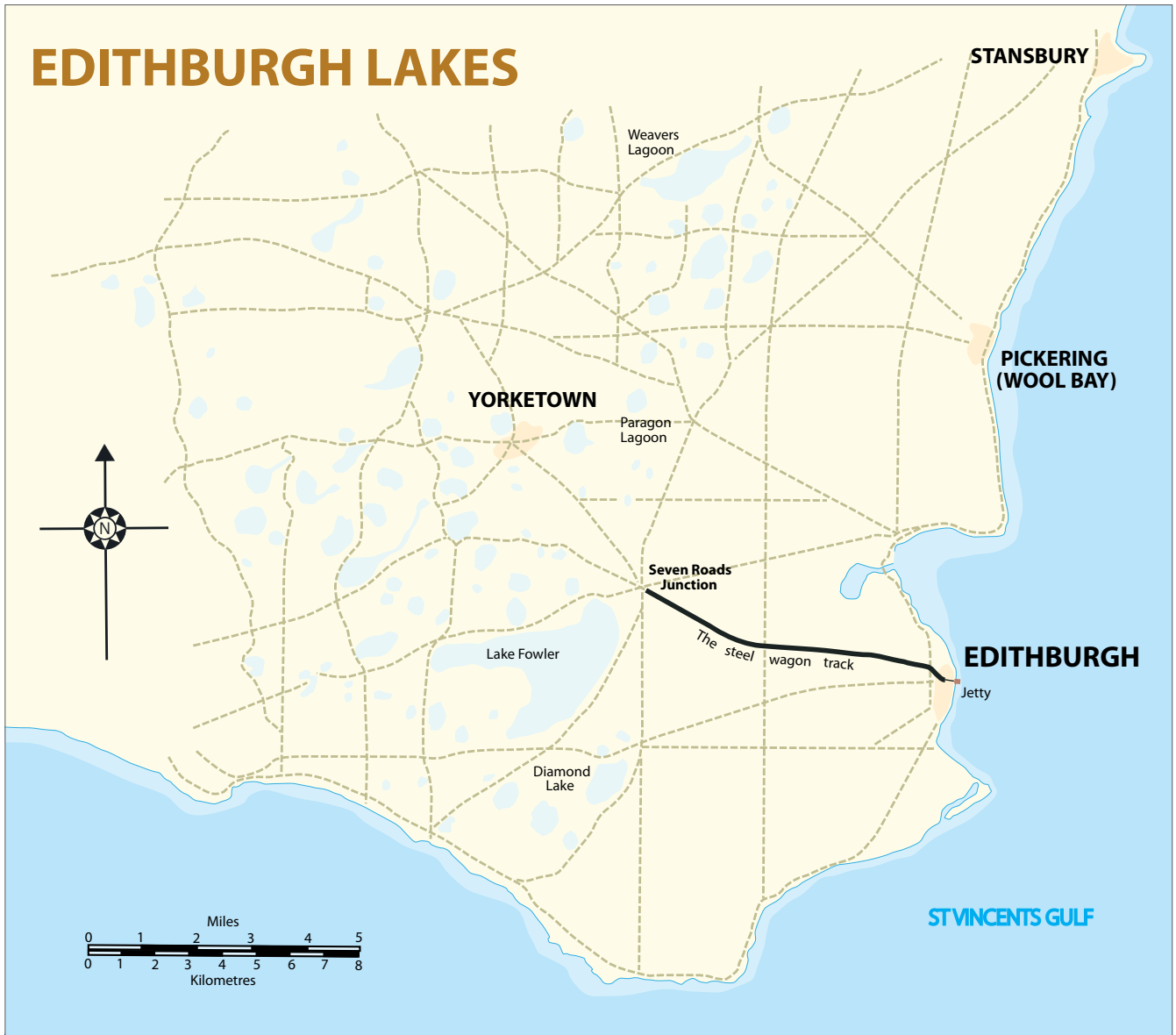


Diagram of the jetty tramway at Edithburgh as it was during the heyday of the salt trade.

The jetty at Edithburgh, on Monday 23 March 1987. By then, only a single track remained in place.  
Photo: John Reid



# The Hillend Colliery tramroad, Cessnock, NSW

by John Shoebridge

## Introduction

Unlike the situation around Newcastle, where multiple coal seams and many miles of outcrop permitted the existence of dozens, if not hundreds, of small mines, the South Maitland Coalfield, stretching from Farley to Millfield, was taken up at a later date by large syndicates, leaving very few pockets of outcrop coal accessible to small operators.

Hillend Colliery was one of the few small mines established on such an outcrop. Located adjacent to the residential area of Cessnock's East End, it worked to extract a small remnant of Crown Coal. Of special interest to readers of this magazine is the fact that its owners used a light railway to deliver the output to the main line railway.

## Aberfield, later Hillend, Colliery

During 1924, Cessnock mining identities Peter Noble, Tom Russell and Tom Bartlett entered into partnership to prospect the outcrop of the Greta Seam with the aim of opening a small mine close to the township. The area in which they were interested lay at the north-western extremity of the Aberdare Colliery holding, and had apparently been overlooked when the Caledonian Coal Company (later to become Caledonian Collieries Limited) took up the property around 1905.

On 23 September 1924, the syndicate applied for a Crown lease and the East Maitland Mining Warden granted them 20 acres, comprising portions, ML 70 and ML 87 in the Parish of Cessnock, County of Northumberland. In 1928 a subsequent application for an additional ten acres was successful and eventually the Hillend Colliery holding came to encompass 80 acres.

The mine, initially registered under the name Aberfield Colliery, was commenced with the excavation of a single tunnel, driven in an easterly direction directly opposite present-day Millfield Street. Taking advantage of the slope of the terrain, it was not long before the main Greta Seam was reached. Being on the outcrop, the seam thickness here had been eroded from the normal 25 to 35 foot thickness down to around seven feet.

Nevertheless the coal proved to be of especially high quality and working places were soon set away either side of the main road, with horses wheeling the skips right to the surface. Bush timber was cut on the property to build a gantry and sawn timber purchased for a single storage bin. Initially the output was hauled from this crude pit top to the South Maitland Railways goods yard at Cessnock railway station in a Ford truck. Messrs AB Hough and Co, who attended to the affairs of numerous small mines, were appointed as the syndicate's shipping agents and they arranged the supply of hired coal hoppers. As far as can be determined, the mine never owned its own coal wagons.

The following year, with the seam now 23 feet in height, a furnace shaft was sunk 50 yards from the original portal, and a small steam winch and boiler were installed to bring the coal skips up the tunnel and onto the gantry. Here they were emptied by a single 'kick-up' tippler onto a fixed bar screen. It appears there was no attempt to hand-pick refuse. Eventually the steam engine and boiler were replaced by an electric motor, connected to the Caledonian Collieries Limited reticulation system.

In February 1928, the Hillend Coal Mining Company was incorporated to take over the assets and interests of the small syndicate. The new firm had a capital of £15,000 and it was most likely at this date that the name was changed. Tom Bartlett remained as a shareholder, now joined by Messrs W Marheine, A Westcott, O Gillam and G McCulloch, all of whom were associated with the Newcastle coal trade. The firm's registered office was in Vincent Street, Cessnock, and the Company secretary was Mr John Nimmo.

## Surface tramroad

Prior to this date, the increase in output had begun to test the capacity of the single motor truck, and taking into account the proximity of South Maitland Railway's Caledonia station, it was decided to construct a narrow gauge skipway between there and the mine.

In October 1926, as provided for in the *Mining Act*, Peter Noble and Thomas Bartlett had been granted permission by the Warden to run a mining tramroad across the surface of Mining Leases 85 and 625, then held by Caledonian Collieries Limited.

At the same time, they would have approached Cessnock Council for authority to run a rail line along the unmade verges of several local streets. So far, no record of this quite unusual agreement has been located, but no doubt Council, anxious to remove the lumbering coal lorry from the main street, would have readily consented.

## Tramroad route

The 1¼ mile line was built using flat-bottom skip rail laid to 2ft 6in gauge on split timber sleepers. The meagre ballast was provided by coal refuse or 'chitter'.

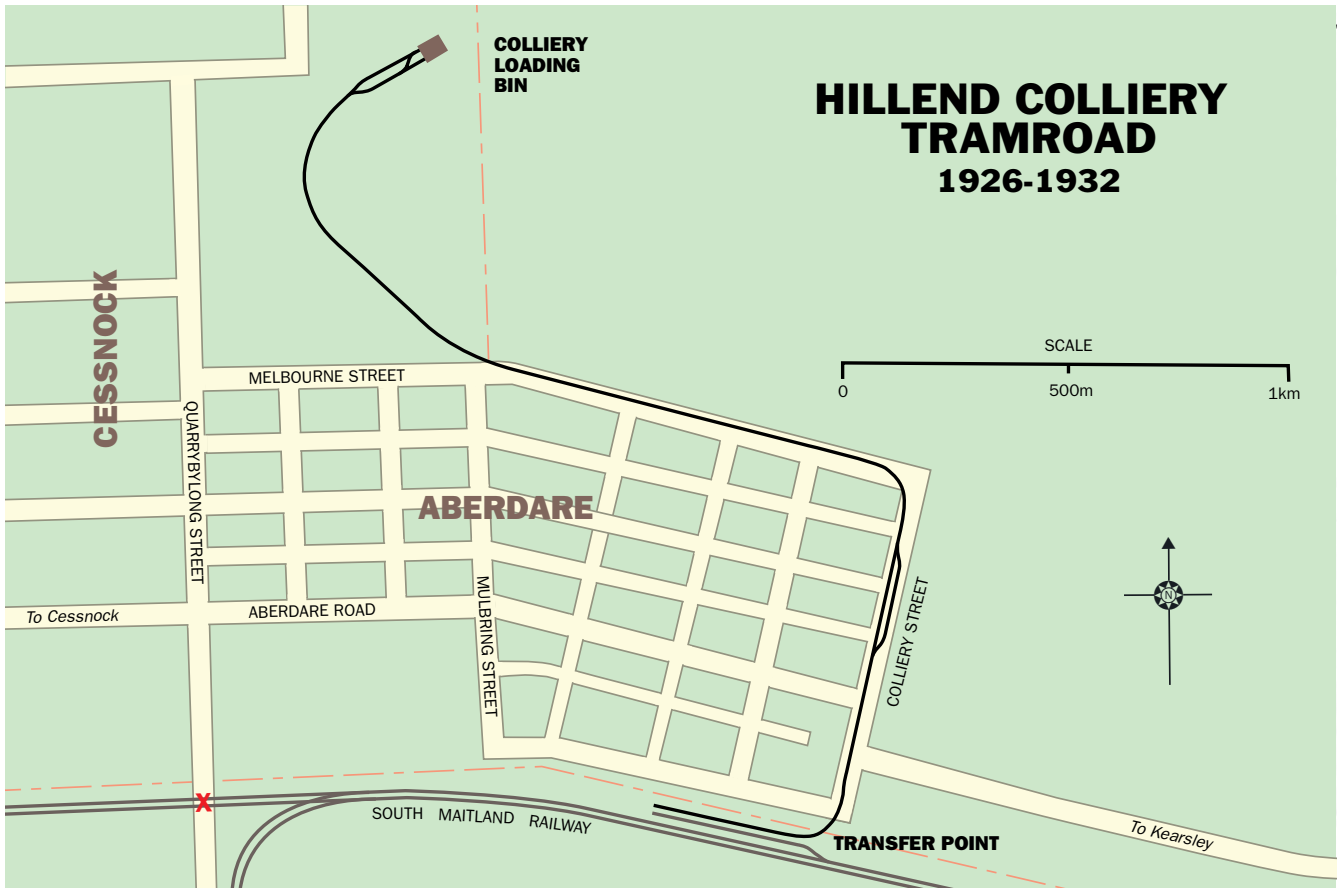
Leaving the colliery yard, where there was a run-around loop and two loading sidings, the line crossed the adjacent vacant paddocks in a gentle curve to meet Melbourne Street, Aberdare, almost opposite the Curry Street intersection. From here it ran on a slight downgrade along the unmade northern footpath as far as Colliery Street. Now the track took a sharp turn south across Melbourne Street and along Colliery Street where it again occupied the footpath. Here, close to Rawson Street, was a section of double track used as a storage siding and also serving as a run-around loop. The single track continued on, finally turning west to run for a short distance along Cessnock Street beside the South Maitland Railway's boundary fence.

Near this point, the South Maitland main line passed through a short cutting. When the track was duplicated in 1911, the Australian Agricultural Company, who owned the line at that time, took the opportunity to lay in a short dead-end goods siding interlocked from Caledonia signal box.

The siding subsequently saw little use, with most goods traffic being handled at Cessnock, so that the Hillend operators readily obtained permission to load coal hoppers there. A timber gantry and chute were built so side-tipper skips could directly discharge into the main line wagons.

## Tramway operation

From its inception the line was worked by two small internal combustion powered locomotives. Several local residents recalled, when interviewed, that their drivers were Dick Gaskell and Stan Bartlett. At the same time, they described the little locomotives as 'tractors', giving rise to the conjecture that they may have been adaptations of Fordson agriculture machines, common in the timber industry around this time. Other than this, nothing has yet been unearthed which throws any light on their origin, make or type.



The normal 15 cwt colliery skips used below ground at Hillend were fitted with cast iron bearing pedestals and were thus quite unsuitable for running such a distance. Accordingly, at the mine, coal was tipped from these skips into the bin, then loaded into 'Jubilee' type, side-tipping steel skips fitted with roller bearings.

With the mine in full production, two trains of these vehicles were in operation, each comprising ten trucks. Following the arrival of a train from the mine at the Colliery Street loop, the locomotive was run around, and the skips, five at a time, were propelled to the ramp to be tipped. The empty train then waited on the double track section for the next loaded train to arrive.

During the first part of the major industrial dispute that erupted on the coalfield in June 1929, Hillend Colliery, whose owners were not members of the Colliery Proprietors Association, continued at work. Coal sales flourished, but then local residents, deprived of their free issue of house-coal, set about pilfering lumps from the skips on the tramway to the extent that the police were asked to provide an escort for the little trains!

In early September the *Cessnock Eagle* carried the following report:

*The Hillend Colliery at Cessnock has ceased carrying its coal by road and the output is drawn over a small line to Aberdare where it is trucked. Until recently the lorries drew the coal to Cessnock railway station where it was shoveled into wagons. The company has two small locomotives at work and the coal is hauled in hoppers which hold about 30cwt each. The engines travel just as well one way as the other, having three reverse gears as well as three forward gears. The output of the mine is in the vicinity of 125 tons daily. The mine is working at full pressure to fulfill contracts.*

Surprisingly, the reporter claimed that the small mines which had remained at work were a "help to Cessnock", surely a sentiment not shared by the majority of residents whose breadwinners were at that time engaged in a bitter industrial confrontation.

By the end of the month, the dispute had spread to South Maitland Railways so that Hillend had once again to resort to motor lorries, this time having the coal transported all the way to Allendale, on the Government Railway. Although sales were maintained, the increased haulage costs seriously reduced profits.

### Closure and removal

In August 1930 there was a fire in the Hillend workings, originating from the ventilating furnace. This mishap further strained the company's finances and in December, Mr Gillam, on behalf of the Hillend Coal Mining Company, applied to have the labour conditions on the leases suspended so that they could temporarily close the mine.

In evidence given to the Mining Warden he advised that the colliery employed around 30 men, and whilst sales had amounted to 23,680 tons in 1929, in the following year, with the larger mines back at work, they were only able to sell 11,100 tons. He claimed that orders from their two principal customers, namely the Newcastle Gas Company and the Department of Railways, had been reduced due to undercutting by his competitors.

The application was refused and Hillend continued at work. In order to reduce costs, many of the pillars near the outcrop were split, extracted or robbed, leading to major surface subsidence. In turn this led to the inflow of air and the revival of the underground fire, forcing a suspension of work between January and June 1932. Production recommenced, and the mine struggled on until the end of the year when the Hillend company finally gave up, with the official date of abandonment recorded by the Mines Department as 5 December 1932.

The following year the tramway was lifted and the rail sold to Bellbird Colliery. South Maitland Railways soon removed the goods siding and in December 1933 their main line was diverted across its site as part of a grade reduction deviation. Around the time that Hillend closed, there is anecdotal



evidence that a small internal combustion locomotive may have replaced the horses on the short Greta Main Colliery skipway at Abermain. Otherwise, nothing is known regarding the disposal of the rolling stock.

**The Hillend fire**

With the mine closed, the underground fire blazed out of control. A pall of thick black smoke could be seen for miles and at times the mass of solid flame was said to be 40 feet high. With the company wound up, the owners moved on and the Mines Department was left to attempt some remedy. Relief workers were engaged to seal the tunnel mouth and the air shaft, and several small gullies were diverted so that sand and silt ran into the mine and gradually the inflow of oxygen was reduced. Fears were voiced that the fire might breach the barrier to threaten the workings of Aberdare Colliery, but by 1935, the worst of the conflagration had burnt itself out.

Even so, the fires smouldered on for years, with noxious vapors, akin to a London smog, blanketing the adjacent suburb at dusk. Household silver was tarnished, local children coughed themselves to sleep, asthma sufferers were forced to relocate and complaints from local residents were long and loud, so after the Mines Department gave up, Cessnock Council continued the thankless task of filling the subsidence holes to smother the fires. Right up to the 1960s the area remained a blighted, smoking wasteland of hillocks, sink-holes, ash and chitter. Eventually things settled down and today the site of the colliery is an unremarkable, if somewhat degraded, horse paddock.

**Conclusion**

So passed into history this small enterprise and its unique tramway. Today there is little sign that the mine or tramroad ever existed although the legacy of fires and fumes is still very much alive in the memories of many senior residents.

I have not been able to locate any photographs, but viewed from the air (on Google Earth) the route of the tramroad between the mine and Melbourne Street can still be vaguely discerned. To an informed observer, the site of the loading point adjacent to the (now) single South Maitland Railways main line is quite apparent.

**Acknowledgement**

Brian Andrews corrected several important errors in my initial draft, and Ross Mainwaring helped me with the newspaper report. Otherwise, virtually all the information in this article has come, with kind permission, from research carried out by my long-time friend Jack Delaney, sometime Traffic Manager of South Maitland Railways.

Jack died just as these notes went to press (June 2010) and I must pay tribute to his assiduous research, his very considerable knowledge of the local mines and railways and his ready willingness to share his findings.

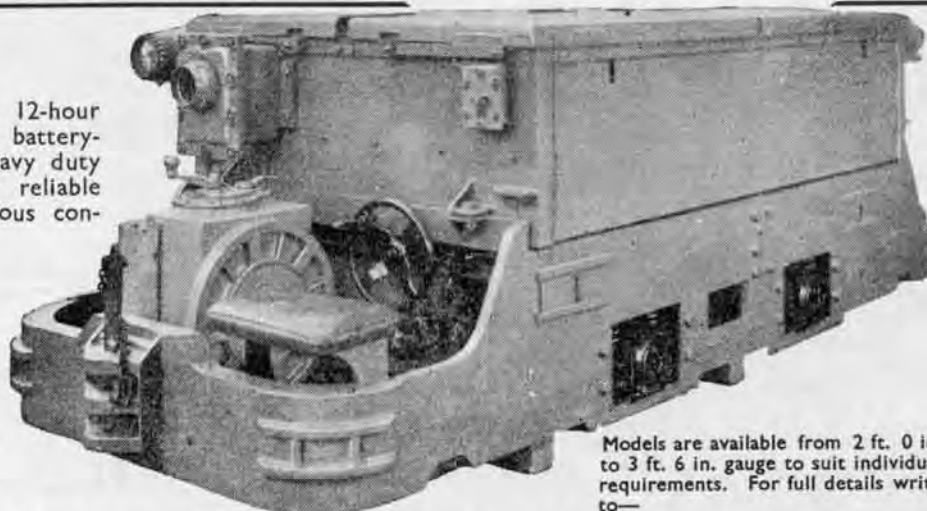
His comprehensive notes on the history of the South Maitland Coalfield are available in the form of a CD issued by the Newcastle Regional Museum, and as such, are required reading for any persons seriously interested in this most important industrial region.

**FROM THE ARCHIVES**

**BATTERY-OPERATED  
LOCOMOTIVES . . .**



Designed for operation on a 12-hour shift basis, these flame-proof, battery-operated locomotives are of heavy duty construction and suitable for reliable working under the most arduous conditions.



Models are available from 2 ft. 0 in. to 3 ft. 6 in. gauge to suit individual requirements. For full details write to—

**GIBSON BATTLE & CO. LIMITED**

*In Association with Head, Wrightson & Co. Limited, England*

535 KENT STREET, SYDNEY	:: :: :: :: :: :: :: ::	Telephone : M 6661
KEMP AND UNION STREETS, NEWCASTLE	:: :: :: :: :: :: :: ::	Telephone : M 2600
428 QUEEN STREET, BRISBANE	:: :: :: :: :: :: :: ::	Telephone : FA 2271

*During WWII there was a chronic shortage of storage battery locomotives for underground coal haulage and man transport in the coalfields of NSW. To meet this demand Gibson Battle & Co Ltd of Sydney constructed battery locomotives to an American design, presumably under license from the Jeffrey Manufacturing Co of Columbus, Ohio. Gibson Battle built several 42 inch gauge four-wheel locomotives using standard Jeffrey traction motors. The later 'streamline' design of cast steel frame is depicted in the photograph. The easiest form of recognition of these battery locomotives compared with the imported Jeffrey product was the prominent 'GB' on the axlebox cover. Most of them went to mines in the Western Coalfield such as Wallerawang Colliery and Lithgow Valley Colliery. At least two of these rare machines are preserved. (Advertisement from The Journal I.E.Aust., Oct-Nov, 1953.)*



Seen from across the Fitzroy River in 1947, the impressive scale of the Lakes Creek Meatworks is apparent, with the Berserker Range rising behind it.  
 Photo: W Brindle, National Archives of Australia A1200, L9511

# Lakes Creek Meatworks tramway, Rockhampton

by John Browning

## Introduction

Lakes Creek is situated on the north bank of the Fitzroy River about five kilometres downstream from the city of Rockhampton. The meatworks there opened in 1871 and have remained among the most important in Queensland ever since.<sup>1</sup> The exact date of inception of the internal tramway is not known, although it seems likely that internal rail transport was used at the works from an early date and continued for more than a century. Horse traction was used from the start and a petrol locomotive was also used from the 1930s until rubber-wheeled tractors took over.

The meatworks was connected to the Queensland Railways from 1888, allowing the bulk export of frozen meat. After a period of mixed fortunes, in 1928 the works was acquired by the William Angliss group, which in turn came under the control of Vestey's from 1934. These changes did not affect the identity of the operating company, The Central Queensland Meat Export Company Pty Ltd. Vestey's, which had extensive grazing interests, set about re-equipping and expanding the plant and commenced the export of chilled beef to the United Kingdom. A cannery was opened as well as specialist departments for smallgoods, ham and bacon. The chilled beef trade increased from 1.3 million lbs in 1934 to 15.7 million lbs in 1939, with a corresponding reduction in frozen trade.

The Lakes Creek works was the first in Queensland outside Brisbane to operate all year round, affecting the operations of local graziers who had previously marketed on a seasonal basis.<sup>2</sup>

As was common in meatworks established in the 19th and early 20th centuries, an internal narrow gauge tramway was established to transport products around the complex. Photographs dating from about 1910 show a well-established and extensive system.<sup>3</sup> A small selection of these photographs accompanies this article and probably gives a reasonable impression of what the tramway was like into the era of locomotive haulage.

## The tramway before the Great War

The 3ft 6ins gauge works tramway was separate from the sidings of the same gauge off the government railway that extended into the works for the delivery of stock and coal, and the despatch of meat and other products. There must have been more than a kilometre of internal tramway track, with branches into most departments within the large integrated plant. Almost every animal product was of value and there was a great need for efficient transport to link the various sections.<sup>4</sup>

The photograph album dating from around 1910, held by the State Library of Queensland, shows extensive lines laid in the dirt, with a plethora of sidings, crossings, loops and triangles, together with turntables where 90 degree changes of direction were necessary. The track appears to be around 20lb/yard mostly laid on timber sleepers, although portable sections of line are seen stacked in one area and were used for temporary construction purposes.

Two short river wharves were laid with track. These allowed horse feed to be delivered by boat and stored in a nearby



fodder shed, although one wharf appears to have been designed originally for the delivery of coal. The tramline crossed Lakes Creek by a timber bridge which was later replaced in concrete. At one point there was a diamond crossing over a coal siding that connected with the government line. Such a feature was retained into the 1950s.<sup>5</sup> Some trackage ran inside buildings within the meatworks complex at this time but the extent of track within buildings is unknown. The congested nature of the site, the lack of other means of transport and the nature of abattoir operations suggest that a fair amount of track would have done so.

Most of the buildings in the c.1910 photo album had little or no relationship with those existing by 1940 and in fact the large plant has been extensively rebuilt many times over. As a result, and in the absence of any overall site plans, it is very difficult to get an accurate idea of exactly where the tramway ran over time, although no doubt its course was altered as required to take account of new developments. The light track would make this easy to achieve. In addition, new buildings reflected changing working methods within the plant, and this was reflected in changes in the way that the tramway was used.

### The tramway in the Vestey era

Very extensive rebuilding took place on site following the Vestey takeover, and the tramway was certainly upgraded and developed further. Many alterations were necessary with the re-equipment and expansion program while significant sums were spent during 1936-7 in upgrading the track, coinciding with the arrival of the locomotive.<sup>6</sup>

The re-equipment of the works was timely, for World War II meant an enormous increase in activity with the workforce reaching more than 2200. Chilled beef shipments ceased with

all beef being frozen and acquired by the government during the war. Production increased even more from the end of 1941 with the entry of the USA into the war as the works supplied huge quantities of canned rations for the south-west Pacific area and later frozen meat in boxes.

The increased demand for product put a great strain on the meatworks facilities and its internal tramway infrastructure.<sup>8</sup> By 1945, the massive works could manufacture 48,000 12-ounce cans and 4000 wooden corned meat cases per shift. Its canning capacity was 54,000 units per shift and in one year during the war, 17 million 12-ounce cans of meat were produced.<sup>9</sup>

By the late 1940s, commencing at the Rockhampton end of the works at the box factory, the tramway served the canning works, the electricians', carpenters' and fitting shops, boning room, slaughter floor, tripe house and tallow house, ending up at the cooperage where barrels were made.<sup>10</sup>

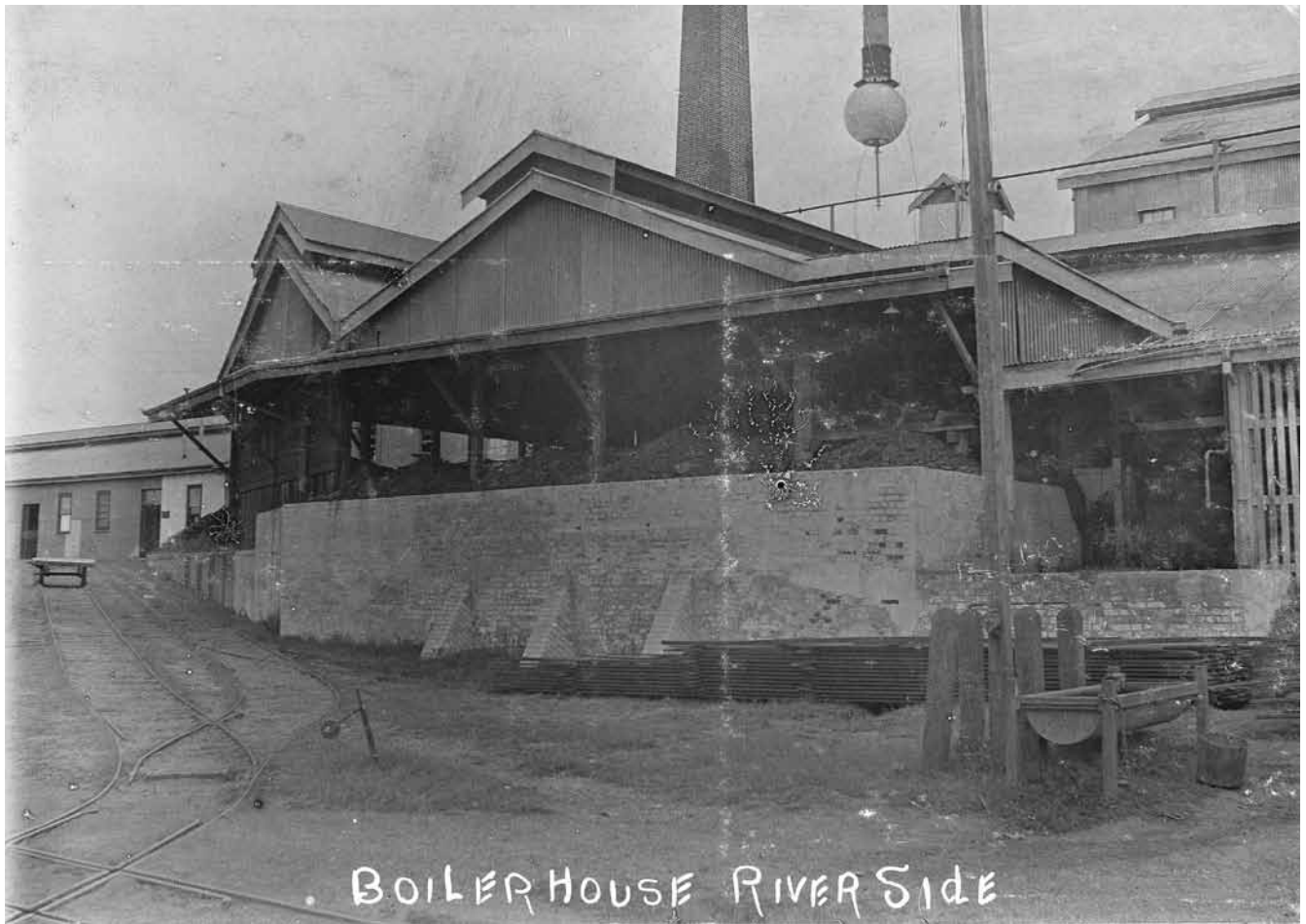
Over time many of the tramlines were set in concrete as they traversed areas that were highly trafficked for other purposes. There were also other reasons. In June 1940, an urgent request came to spend £70 17s on cementing the tramline running from the beef abattoirs to the tallow house with the following explanation that is a reminder of the nature of the work carried out at the works:

*The trucks carrying the bones and scraps to the tallow house are of necessity left standing for a considerable time before removal and as a result of this the liquid seeps through to the ground, forming pools which besides being most offensive become fly blown in a very short time.<sup>11</sup>*

In May of the following year approval was sought for the expenditure of £89 on cementing the tramline running alongside the casings department. The work was required immediately at the insistence of the Commonwealth veterinary officers.<sup>12</sup>



*On wharves and bridges, decking was provided for the horses. This appears to show the track coming off the bridge that crossed Lakes Creek, complete with checkrail. In the background can be seen a horse hauling a tip truck with a rectangular body. Photo: State Library of Queensland 126583*



BOILER HOUSE RIVER SIDE



REFRIGERATING BUILDINGS

**Top:** This photograph shows portable track sections stacked behind the boiler house. There is a reasonable incline off to the left – presumably the flat wagon is chocked.

Photo: State Library of Queensland 126584

**Above:** This seems to show track coming off a river wharf. The light rails and pointwork, with tight curves, was typical of many industrial applications of light railways.

Photo: State Library of Queensland 126585



By the late 1950s, the tramways had been laid in concrete throughout in order to meet government health requirements. This reduced the need for maintenance and meant that future building work would tend to accommodate existing tramway routes.

Other shorter sections of special purpose 'tramway' were also in use as part of specific processes within the plant. This included for the seasoning kilns at the box factory and for the retorts which were situated on an upper floor in the cannery. The box factory had 19 rail turntables of 4ft diameter, impossibly small for 3ft 6ins gauge. They were probably associated with the seasoning kilns and their 60 steel trucks which were only 4ft by 2ft 9ins, suggesting 2ft gauge.<sup>13</sup> Six 'rail skips' for use at Lakes Creek were transferred from Riverstone meatworks, where there was no 3ft 6ins gauge as far as is known, in 1939, and the ten steel trucks with turntable tops associated with the cannery retorts must also have been less than 3ft 6ins gauge.<sup>14</sup>

### Rolling stock

The photographs taken before the Great War show a variety of unbraked four-wheeled wagons on the 3ft 6ins gauge tramway. There are numbers of heavy flat-tops, some loaded with packing cases. Another flat-top wagon is seen fitted with stanchions and with one detachable side in place. There is a conventional steel tipper wagon and another where the tipping body is a vertically-mounted cylindrical drum. One photograph shows a draught horse pulling a side tipping wagon with a rectangular body. There is also a variety of wooden bodied wagons, no two alike, some with low sides and some high sided.<sup>15</sup>

In the 1940s, large numbers of unbraked four-wheeled wooden wagons were used for the transport of animal products. They had high sides and many were drop-sided. The timber-bodied wagons were heavy on maintenance and not ideal for

their purpose.<sup>16</sup> A program of lining the boning room trucks with galvanised iron sheeting was undertaken in 1938 and this seems to have been the standard for subsequent construction.<sup>17</sup> The flat-top wagons were refurbished in 1937-8 and the steel tipping ash trucks received new bodies in 1937.<sup>18</sup>

Works records of the late 1930s mention the refurbishment of 'yard trucks', 'offal trucks', 'fat trucks' and 'bone trucks'.<sup>19</sup> By the 1950s it appears that for all practical purposes, trucks used for these purposes were interchangeable, with wooden bodies about 2ft 6ins high and one drop side.<sup>20</sup> Purchases during 1938 included four meat trucks for the new preserver and two trucks for use with the tankage press, while two additional dump trucks were purchased from local engineering works Burns & Twigg in 1940.<sup>21</sup>

The works was able to construct timber truck bodies and to assemble complete vehicles using steel components bought in. 1938 saw the construction of six meat trucks lined with galvanised iron for use in the boning room, five salt trucks for the abattoirs and three trucks for the canning department, while 1944 saw the construction of three trucks for the casings department.<sup>22</sup> As late as 1960, three bone trucks were constructed at the works at an estimated cost of £599 8s, using hardwood bodies constructed by a contractor and with all steel components bought in.<sup>23</sup>

Viv Knowles, who commenced in the slaughter yard as a 14-year old in 1941, remembers that wooden-bodied trucks were parked in appropriate places around the slaughter floor and the different cattle products, for example hearts, livers, hoofs or skins, were thrown into them from ground level. A horse would remove them, up to two or three at a time. There were no turntables used to position the trucks; they were simply parked on the appropriate line.<sup>24</sup> By the 1950s, the tramline ran beneath a new killing floor and the by-products were tipped down chutes into the trucks below.<sup>25</sup>

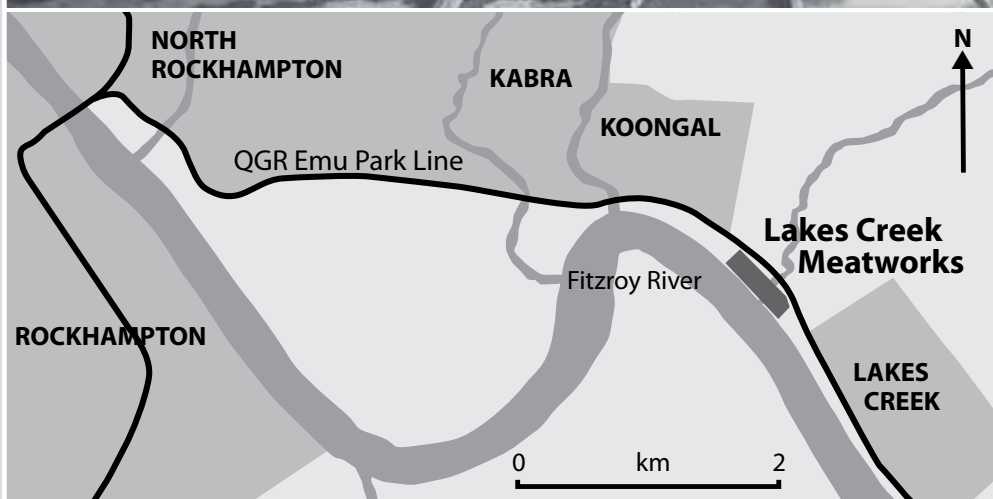


*An interesting tip wagon. It has timber framing with iron bracing and inside journals. Buffer beams and new couplers were added to the rolling stock when the Lister locomotive arrived.*

*Photo: State Library of Queensland 126587*



**Above:** Although it appears that some by-products would have come down the slides to the benches at the side of the track, the bulk of material for boiling down would have come down the chutes and directly into the wagons beneath, meaning that the rolling stock would have needed to be positioned accurately. The track is raised above the concrete floor on steel supports. The wagon appears to be one of the wooden sided ones mentioned in the article. Photo: State Library of Queensland 126592. **Right:** The Lakes Creek Meatworks predated the arrival of the government railway, and initially relied exclusively on the Fitzroy River for its transport needs.



### Horse haulage

The Clydesdale horses needed to be trained for each particular duty undertaken. They generally worked one day on, one day off. They were fit'ted with special harnesses for hauling the rolling stock by means of a 'snigging chain'. This included a quick release mechanism by which the driver could uncouple the horse. Horses generally worked out how to perform this operation for themselves before too long. They were fitted with a special breastplate to enable them to push the trucks; they could push the same load as they could haul, and this was very useful when trucks had to be positioned on a dead-end line inside a building.<sup>26</sup>

Stories of working horses abound, and here was no exception. The horses needed little direction to move from one part of the works to another in the performance of their duties. They adjusted their path according to the way points were set and it was said that they would not attempt to haul wagons through points that were not set correctly. One animal steadfastly refused to pull more than four wagons from the tallow house. If five were attached, he'd unhook himself and wait for the load to be reduced. The horses worked by the clock. When the 12 o'clock whistle went, they would take themselves off to the stables for

lunch without delay. It is even said that on occasion a horse would 'voluntarily' assist humans who were having difficulty in pushing a truck by themselves.<sup>27</sup> One interesting statement from a former worker at the plant was that the horses did not defecate onto the tracks within the works and would restrict this activity to 'smoko' times.<sup>28</sup>

On one occasion, a horse got its hoof caught in a set of points. After all other efforts failed, steps were taken to remove the horseshoe, freeing the trapped animal. The advantage of the horses was that they were more flexible in their uses around the plant while the locomotive had to stay on the rails.<sup>29</sup>

About four draught horses were in use on the tramway at any one time during the 1940s. Their main tasks were in hauling animal products between the slaughter yard, boning room, cannery and tallow shed. One horse was used for the removal of ash from the boiler house, with a full wagon being removed to the tip approximately every half hour. The ashes were dumped in a reclamation area close to the river to the east of the works. Another horse was used for moving materials around the box shed where packing cases were made. By the early 1950s, only two draught horses were at work on the tramway at any one time out of a total of six available.<sup>30</sup>



## The Lister locomotive

The locomotive was a small green four-wheeled 'Rail Truck' built in England by R A Lister & Co Ltd, of Dursley, Gloucestershire, in 1936. It was designated Model RT and carried builder's number 8020. It was ordered through Dangar, Gedye & Co Ltd of Sydney in May 1936 at a cost of £435. Despatched on 27 August 1936,<sup>31</sup> it had been delivered to the Lakes Creek works by December that year.<sup>32</sup> Early experience with the Lister demonstrated that purpose-made buffers needed to be added to the yard trucks. These previously unnecessary fittings were added in early 1937 at a cost of £49.<sup>33</sup>

The standard Lister rail truck was built to 2ft gauge or thereabouts (as was the example used at Riverstone meatworks in NSW – see LR 161) and weighed up to 1½ tons.<sup>34</sup> The one at Lakes Creek, however, was a very rare example built to 3ft 6ins gauge to match the pre-existing tramway track and it weighed 2½ tons.<sup>35</sup> It was fitted with a J.A.P. 980cc 9.8hp V-twin petrol engine, and two spare axle sprockets were sent out with it.<sup>36</sup> At Lakes Creek, it was fitted with additional timber buffer beams.<sup>37</sup> By the early 1950s, it had been fitted with an Overland engine.<sup>38</sup>

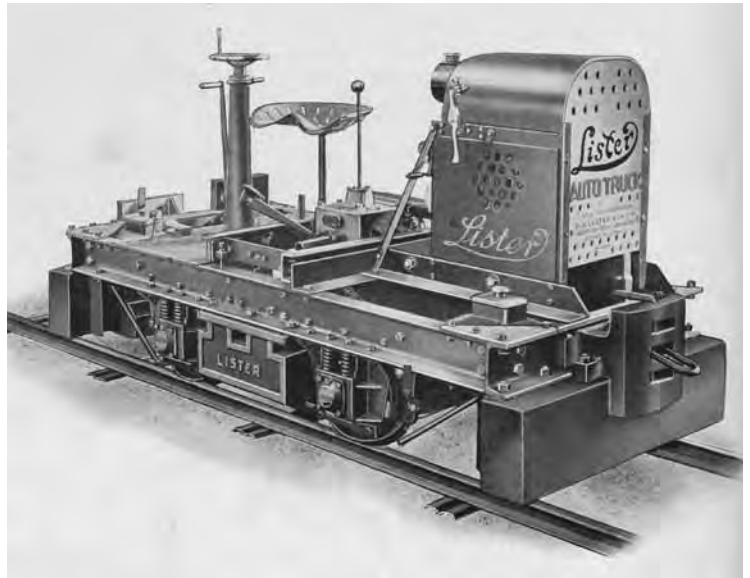
The RT was a 1928 rail development of the contemporary Lister 'auto truck', a small three-wheeled rubber-tired platform truck built from 1926 for goods handling in situations such as industrial plants, warehouses, and railway stations.<sup>39</sup> In January 1941, Mr RA Vestey ordered one of these auto trucks for use at Lakes Creek, at a cost of £405. It too was ordered through Dangar, Gedye & Malloch and was delivered by July 1941.<sup>40</sup> These Lister products must have given Vestey's good service. The 2ft gauge locomotive for use at Riverstone Meatworks was ordered through the same agents in 1943.<sup>41</sup>

In 1939, the 'motor driver' on the meatworks tramway was A Liddell.<sup>42</sup> Another early driver was Chick Cowie, a prominent local footballer and captain of the Rockhampton team. His brother, Les, won a Rugby League Premiership with South Sydney and played for Australia.<sup>43</sup>

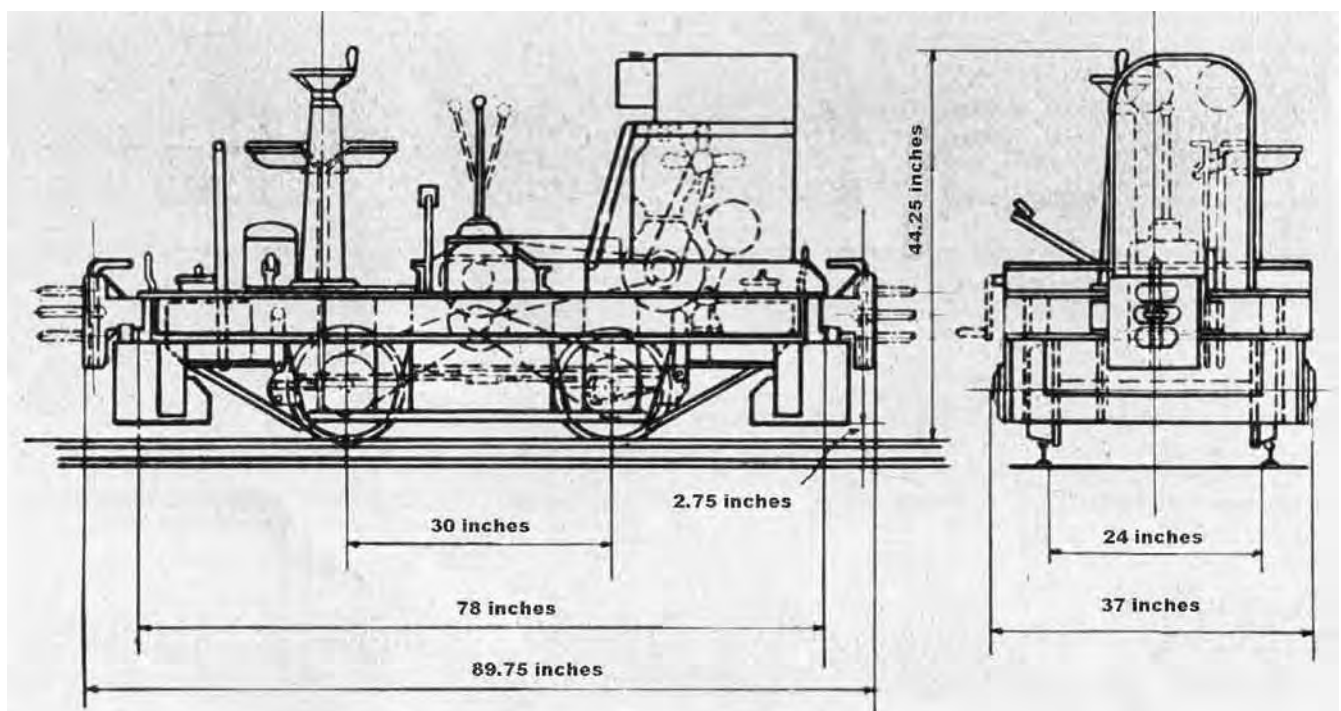
As a young man in the early 1940s, Terry Noonan regularly drove the locomotive, bringing bones from the boning room to the tallow house. He remembers it as easy to start with the crank handle and that it reliably worked continual double shifts for years and years. The meatworks environment posed some difficulties, with greasy rails in wet weather meaning that it

was difficult to gain traction, requiring the application of sand to the rails. This was facilitated by the sandboxes fitted at each corner of the loco. Use of the locomotive and horses was interchangeable but it appears that the horses were preferred to the loco for shorter hauls and in the areas that were more difficult to work, for example around the slaughter floor and tallow house.<sup>44</sup> Expenditure on repairs to the locomotive seems to have been light apart from repairs to the aluminium crank case in 1938.<sup>45</sup>

By the early 1950s, the locomotive was used in those areas of the works where officialdom had decreed that the horses should not work for hygiene reasons, for example under the new slaughter floor. However, it was becoming worn out and the horses tended to be preferred where possible.<sup>46</sup>



**Above:** Only two Lister locomotives are known to have come to Australia, both to meatworks. This catalogue photograph shows the 2ft gauge version, as used at Riverstone in NSW. It is believed that the rare 3ft 6ins version at Lakes Creek was very similar in appearance, only wider. Courtesy Norm Houghton **Below:** The Lister locomotive was designed to be simple and able to work on very light track. Courtesy Norm Houghton



## Tractor haulage and tramway closure

The locomotive remained in use until about the end of 1953. It along with the horses was replaced by two Ferguson tractors in the abattoir, wet and dry rendering, and boning sections at a cost of £2031 1s.<sup>47</sup> The tractors were fitted with suitable buffing gear, front and rear, and were used straddling the track. This coincided with improvements such as a ramp being built at the tallow house enabling the contents of the steel skips to be tipped down chutes from a higher level. The locomotive was sold for scrap.<sup>48</sup>

With the entry into the USA export market from the late 1950s, quality control matters became more stringent and hygiene issues with the wooden bodied rolling stock became a significant concern. This led to the wider use of steel tipper wagons.<sup>49</sup> Tighter export regulations were foreshadowed by the American government in 1963 as more automated systems of handling began to be introduced. In 1965 a new conveyor system was introduced for boning.<sup>50</sup> With the opening of a new abattoir block in around 1966, a compressed air waste blower further reduced the need for the tramway.<sup>51</sup>

Although purchases of tractors, trailers and fork-lifts feature prominently in expenditure records in the 1950s, some limited use of the tramline lingered on into the 1980s.<sup>52</sup>

The meatworks has been comprehensively redeveloped since then and little trace of the tramways remain. A visit in January 2007 revealed a short section a few metres long set into concrete in a vehicle parking area at the western extremity of the site, with evidence of a parallel track alongside. Photographic evidence indicates that this track once ran inside the box shed where packing cases were made. The light tramway rail used is readily distinguishable from the nearby remains of sidings once connected to the government railway.

## Acknowledgements

Thanks to the staff of ABC Capricornia Regional Radio for their assistance in seeking out former meatworks employees, Cameron Borg of the Rockhampton City Council Library, Mick Hurst who arranged a site visit, and to the many informants who cheerfully and willingly provided eye-witness accounts.



*Remains of the tramway that ran within the box shed set in concrete at the western end of the site in January 2007. Photo: Author*

## References

1. *Chronological History of the Lakes Creek Works* found at: <http://www.cmgbeef.com/history.html> ("Chronological History")
2. Chronological History; Kerr, J, 1990. *Triumph of Narrow Gauge - A History of Queensland Railways*. Boolarong Publications, Brisbane, p.225
3. Central Queensland Meat Export Co. Photo Album c.1910. John Oxley Library (State Library of Queensland) APE 89, Box 7213 (CQME Photo Album, SLQ).
4. Interview with Eddie Phipps (a stockman at the works for more than 40 years) 23/12/06.
5. CQME Photo Album, SLQ; interview with Terry Noonan 8/1/07; interview with Bob Smith 26/1/07
6. Expenditure permits R98, R192 & R228 in Lakes Creek Archives RCC, Box 3.
7. Chronological History
8. Interview with Rol Oxenham 20/12/06; interview with Viv Knowles 20/12/06
9. Evidence prepared for the Royal Commission on Abattoirs and Meatworks, 1945, in Lakes Creek Meat Works Records held by Rockhampton City Council Library ("Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library"), Box 8; Borg, Cameron. *A brief history of Lakes Creek Meatworks*. Lakes Creek Archives. RCC Library, Box 1.
10. Rol Oxenham 20/12/06
11. Expenditure permit R853 in Lakes Creek Archives RCC, Box 3
12. Expenditure permit R1060 in Lakes Creek Archives RCC, Box 3
13. Undated plant description Box Factory Building in Lakes Creek Archives RCC, Box 8, Index 19; Plant listing of 1950 in Lakes Creek Archives RCC, Box 2.
14. Expenditure permit R788 in Lakes Creek Archives RCC, Box 3; Longworth, Jim and Fleming, Grant, 2001, 'The Riverstone Meatworks Light Railway' in *Light Railways* 161; Expenditure permit R726 in Lakes Creek Archives RCC, Box 3.
15. CQME Photo Album, SLQ
16. Terry Noonan 24/12/06; Interview with Jack Coughlan (former Chief Engineer) 29/9/03
17. Expenditure permits R507, R514, R833 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Box 3.
18. Expenditure permits R235, R365, R611 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Box 3
19. Expenditure permits R235, R268, R295, R319, R348, R420, R454, R611, R637, R1238 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Box 3.
20. Bob Smith 26/1/07
21. Expenditure permits R447, R495, R982 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Box 3.
22. Expenditure permits R514, R550, R576, R1383 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Box 3
23. Expenditure permit R2978 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Box 5.
24. Viv Knowles 20/12/06
25. Bob Smith 26/1/07
26. Terry Noonan 24/12/06; Eddie Phipps 23/12/06; Bob Smith 26/1/07.
27. Interview with Roy Cavanagh, 21/12/06 based on the recollections of his father, Pat; Eddie Phipps 23/12/06.
28. Bob Smith 26/1/07.
29. Roy Cavanagh, 21/12/06; Eddie Phipps 23/12/06.
30. Jack Coughlan 29/9/03; Rol Oxenham 20/12/06; Eddie Phipps, 23/12/06; Terry Noonan 24/12/06; Rob Smith 26/1/07.
31. Private communication Brian Gent 29/4/09
32. Expenditure Permit R51 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Boxes 3&5
33. Expenditure Permit R193 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Box 3
34. RA Lister catalogue c.1930; <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/howard.v.moore/lister.htm>;
35. Schedule of vehicles 1/1/1940 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Box 8
36. Private communication Brian Gent 29/4/09
37. Jack Coughlan 29/9/03; Eddie Phipps 23/12/06; Terry Noonan 24/12/06
38. Bob Smith 26/1/07
39. <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/howard.v.moore/lister.htm>
40. Expenditure Permit R1012 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Box 3.
41. <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/howard.v.moore/lister.htm>
42. Schedule of vehicles 1/1/1940 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Box 8
43. Viv Knowles 20/12/06
44. Interview with Barry Cornick 20/12/06; Viv Knowles 20/12/06; Terry Noonan 24/12/06 & 8/1/07.
45. Expenditure Permit R490 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Box 3.
46. Bob Smith 26/1/07
47. Expenditure Permit R2430 in Lakes Creek Archives, RCC Library, Box 6.
48. Eddie Phipps 23/12/06; Terry Noonan 24/12/06; Bob Smith 26/1/07.
49. Jack Coughlan 29/9/03.
50. Chronological History
51. Jack Coughlan 29/9/03; Chronological History
52. Expenditure permits and asset disposal records in Lakes Creek Archives RCC, Boxes 2 & 5; Bob Smith 26/1/07





In the yard at Moe on 30 January 1951, G42 is busy making up the regular weekly mixed train.

Photo: Peter Ralph

## Lure of the narrow gauge railway to Walhalla

by Peter JO Ralph

My passion for the Walhalla railway began on my very first visit to the historic gold mining township, located some 170km from Melbourne, on 30 January 1951. This was prompted by an article 'Ghost Town in the Mountains' that I had read in an *Argus* newspaper supplement. I travelled on the morning passenger train from Melbourne to Moe where I was immediately confronted by Garratt locomotive G42 shunting in the yard making up the regular weekly Monday mixed train. I was totally amazed at seeing this massive locomotive on 2ft 6in gauge tracks, in contrast to the diminutive NA locos on the Gembrook railway!

As the line between Platina and Walhalla had been closed in April 1944, I then caught the motor coach to Walhalla, where I spent a couple of pleasant hours taking photographs of the township, before re-joining the Moe coach back as far as Erica. Here I caught the mixed train back to Moe...an experience I will never forget!

The train was up to the maximum load limit and made up of mostly heavily-laden NQR wagons of potatoes and timber. Whilst riding in the NC van with the guard I observed massive slipping, the glow of the firebox and the exhaust blast of G42 up ahead on a curve whilst storming the infamous Gould bank. Despite a few delays, we finally reached Moe in sufficient time to connect with the evening passenger train back to Melbourne. It is a memory firmly etched in my mind.

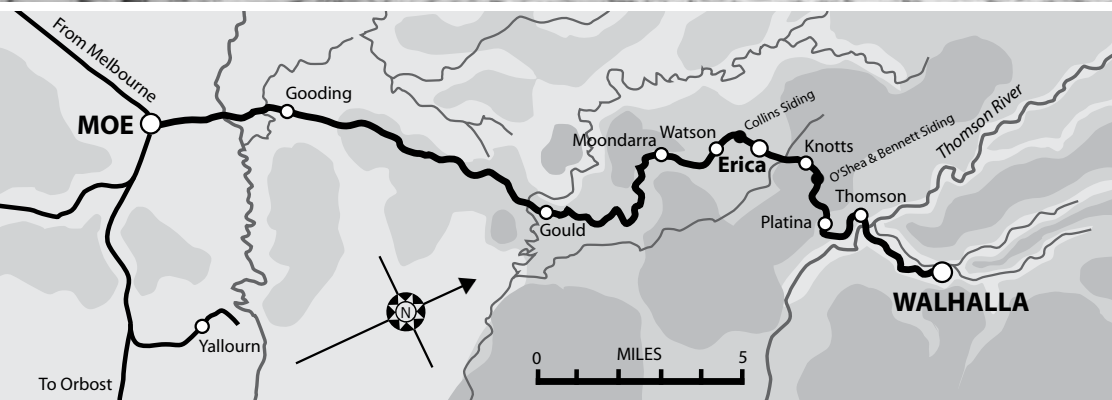
My curiosity to see what the remaining section of track between Erica and Walhalla looked like finally got the better of me, so I arranged to lead a group of Youth Hostels Association bushwalkers over this section of track on the weekend of 8-9 March 1954. We travelled by furniture van from Melbourne, arriving at Erica around midnight and camped under the fir trees in Erica railway yard.

On the Saturday the entire day was spent walking and inspecting the disused section of track between Erica and Walhalla. At that time the rails and sleepers had not been lifted and were relatively intact, except for a land slip at Bridge 10 between Platina and Thomson, which left the rail suspended in air. I will remember fighting back the blackberries covering the section of track between Thomson and Walhalla.

At this time I had the pleasure of meeting Charlie Lee, the original owner of the Star Hotel in Walhalla, and author of the book *Walhalla Heyday*. Charlie was also the instigator and chief organiser of the 'Back to Walhallaites' excursion trains run on Australia Day weekends in the 1930s. We forged a firm friendship over many years. Charlie was born and bred in Walhalla and had many a yarn to tell about the history of the township during the mining era. He was also the brother of WH Lee, the famous photographer and postcard publisher. Charlie was able to assist me in securing many of his brother's early photographs of Walhalla and its railway.

In 1992 I became an inaugural member of The Walhalla Goldfields Railway, which now operates trains over 4.5km of track on the former VR alignment from Thomson through the picturesque Stringers Creek gorge to Walhalla. I had the good fortune to have been there to witness and photograph the official opening ceremony of the railway by the then Deputy Prime Minister, Tim Fischer, and the Premier of Victoria, Steve Bracks, who was given the honour of hitting the 'golden spike', enabling the train to proceed into the platform (see LR 165 June 2002). Another memorable occasion was the special train hauled by the 0-6-0T steam locomotive *Spirit of Baw Baw* (Henschel 25427 of 1956) on 23 July 2004. I was able to photograph it crossing the Thomson River bridge during the celebrations to mark the return of steam operations to Walhalla after a gap of 60 years, together with a ceremony to mark the completion of the replica station building at Walhalla.

So this remarkable railway lives on into another decade thanks to the Walhalla Goldfields Railway Inc and its large contingent of enthusiastic volunteers. I have returned countless times since and never tire of the railway and the friendly folk that make that make it all happen!



Two-month old 2-6-2T 9A, in Canadian Red livery, at Walhalla on 15 March 1910, having just arrived there with the first (albeit unofficial) passenger train from Moe. The official opening took place a few weeks later, on 3 May, with 9A once again doing the honours. □ A map of the Moe to Walhalla line, shown at its fullest extent □ In the early days of the line's operation, a typical mixed train crosses one of the many bridges between Thomson and Walhalla. Photos: Peter Ralph Collection







Several NQR open wagons have been pressed into passenger service for a well patronised 'Back to Walhalla' excursion during the 1930s. Photo: WH Lee, from Peter Ralph Collection  
 An unidentified NA crosses the Thomson River bridge with a mixed train bound for Walhalla. Photo: Peter Ralph Collection  
 A copy of the Victorian Railways 'S' Circular announcing the closure of the Platina to Walhalla section of the line in 1944.  
 The 'central business district' of Walhalla, as the author discovered it in January 1951. A (then) current model FX Holden, closest to camera, shares the street with an interesting collection of British and American vehicles of the era. Photo: Peter Ralph

Railway Bridge  
 Walhalla ⑤

W.T.T.40/44. VICTORIAN RAILWAYS. W.T.T.40/44.  
 Office of General Superintendent,  
 Room 71, Phone 1803.  
 23rd March, 1944.

MOE - ERIGA - PLATINA - WALHALLA

Closing of line between Platina and Walhalla and substitution of Goods train for Mixed between Eriga and Platina

Commencing on Saturday, 1st April, 1944, and thereafter the section Platina to Walhalla will be closed to traffic.

Commencing on Monday, 3rd April, 1944, a Mixed train service will run between Moe and Eriga and Goods train service between Eriga and Platina, and the full regular service will then be as shown hereunder:-

DOWN	19 Mixed Mon.Wed.Fri.		UP	20 Mixed Tue.Thud.Fri.	
	dep	arr		dep	arr
MOE	11.30		PLATINA	dep	5.00 (See Note)
Goading	11.33		ERIGA	arr	...
			Collins Sdg.	dep	4.20
Gould	12.10		Watson	arr	5.00
Moondarra	12.42		Moondarra	dep	4.40
Watson	12.55		Gould	arr	5.20
Collins Sdg.	1.00		Goading	arr	5.00
ERIGA	1.10		MOE	arr	5.50
PLATINA	dep	...			
	arr	...			

NOTE: - The section Eriga to Platina will be operated for Goods traffic by switch trips as required to White Rock and Platina.

WORKING TIME TABLE. W.T.T.180/43, Page 65 to be amended accordingly.

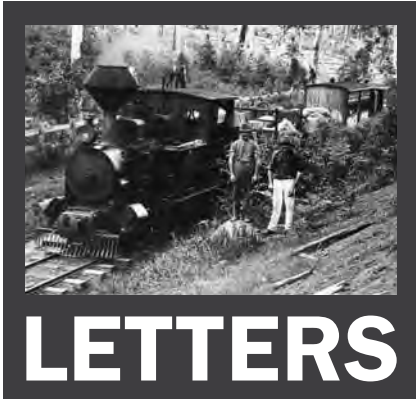
All concerned to note, so arrange and make the altered conditions widely known locally.

M. A. REMPHY,  
 Genl. Supt. Transport.

D.2651/44.  
 1200.M.C.R.







## LETTERS

Dear Sir,

### Spray Tunnel at Zeehan (LR 213)

Your mention of the Spray Tunnel at Zeehan in Tasmania, on page 38 of the June issue of *Light Railways*, reminds me of the time my wife and I drove through it, a few years back. There was a sign outside the tunnel advising against vehicles over eight feet in width, caravans, etc from trying to enter the tunnel. We drive a Toyota Camry, and even with the wing mirrors folded in, we barely had six inches clearance on either side. I assumed that the railway was 3ft 6in gauge, but not so, according to your article. A bit of an adventure though.

If any of your readers are in Tasmania and heading down towards Ida Bay, I recommend a diversion just south of the town of Dover. Look for the turn-off to a place called Duckhole Lake. You drive off the main road and onto one of the logging trails (probably best to get a local map) and park at the beginning of the walk to Duckhole Lake. The walk is about one hour each way, and follows an old horse-drawn logging tramway formation. There is still evidence of timber sleepers and rails in places. The walk is pure magic, in pristine bush, with the nearest person seemingly a million miles away. It is an easy walk and I thoroughly recommend it.

David Lewis  
Northmead, NSW



The road through the Spray Tunnel at Zeehan in February 2010. Photo: Brian Wébber

Dear Sir

### Exhibition Building tramways, Melbourne (LR 212)

I read with interest Phil Rickard's, research into the tramways of the Melbourne Exhibition, (LR 212 p.33), particularly his reference to the Thomson-Houston electrical equipment demonstration and the recovered light broad-gauge turntable.

The former was of interest, in that the demonstration and operation of the electric tramway, predated the use of such deployment in underground mining, particularly at Rutherglen, where such installations are suggested as first-offs in Australia at least. Further, the soon-following opening of the Box Hill Electric Tramway Co's line, had echoes at Rutherglen, with the later-intended removal of the system to that place.

With the turntable, I have had some personal acquaintance. As part of the *Stringybark Express* postal motor operation, recalling the press coverage of the item when first rediscovered and its eventual arrival of at the Emerald railway yard, some thought was given as to whether the item could be of use at Wahgunyah. Thus, then some twenty-five years later, inquiry to the ETRB revealed that the item still existed and that as they had no use for it, it likely could be made available.

The item, actually, was not much to look at, and with the gauge set of the Barlow rail integral to the unit's construction, there had been little prospect of it being convertible to two feet six inches.

Unfortunately, time and circumstances had since played havoc with the item, and when inspected in 'storage', adjacent to the Kilvington Drive gang shed, it was in a sorry and largely unusable state. My understanding is, that languishing as it did in the Emerald yard, it fell victim to a cleanup, wherein an enthusiastic, but in the circumstances ill-informed, worker allegedly consigned various of its cast iron segments to scrap.

Reading between the lines, I suspect that Phil Rickard's letter, at the time of writing might hint that the integrity of the item was suspected as being in some doubt.

Dave Moyle  
Wahgunyah, Vic

Dear Sir,

### Puffing Billy's 861—the former JOHN BENN (LR 213)

It was with great interest and a smile on my face that I read your 'Comment' in LR213.

Many people have expressed similar sentiments to your own, regarding the conversion of the Decauville/Couillet 0-4-0T locomotive of 1886, named *JOHN BENN*, into an old American West style 2-4-2ST. Many people have also considered the possibility of converting it back to its original form, but I can tell you on good authority that it won't happen in our lifetime.

As a Puffing Billy fireman I have fired 861 on many occasions and always thoroughly enjoyed the experience. In recent times 861 has been the locomotive of choice for the Footplate Experience Trains operated by the Climax Restoration Committee to raise

funds for the restoration of Climax 1694. When we celebrated the 120th birthday of *CARBON*, the Decauville/Couillet 0-4-0T still in original form, it double-headed with 861. Both locomotives attracted much attention, but 861 was the crowd favourite. All loco crews who operate 861 will tell you it is a little locomotive with a big heart.

The conversion of *JOHN BENN* to 861 was in many ways a sacrilegious act, but that act is now part of its history. As *JOHN BENN* along with *CARBON* and *SIR JOHN GRICE* had already been saved from being scrapped, its future existence was assured. When Ron Kain re-established a narrow gauge railway presence in Walhalla, it was the creation of 861 that drew many willing people to that project. (It is noted here that Bill Ferris had already operated *CARBON* in Walhalla, operating on a circle of track near the centre of town).

Having had a reasonably long association with *JOHN BENN* in its current incarnation of 861, I like many others have warmed to its appearance. On many occasions I have seen many people gazing at 861 with wide smiles as they admire its charm. The attraction this locomotive now has for people of all ages, compared to *CARBON*, is immense and on that point alone the conversion of this locomotive has been of great value.

I can offer you a glimmer of hope that 861 could possibly be converted back to being *JOHN BENN* some time in the future. Most of the original locomotive still lurks beneath the 'Disneysque' façade; the original frames, cylinders, wheels, valve gear and other components are still there. Whilst the original boiler barrel was replaced with a new one 3 feet longer, the original barrel became the smoke-box. The original smoke-box front and door that incorporated the side-tank supports still exists. The original side-tanks still exist, but they are now on *CARBON*. One of the cab side sheets exists as do the original builders plates.

As you can see, much of the original fabric still exists and if someone desperately wanted to convert 861 back to its original form, it could be done, but as I said before, it won't happen in our lifetime.

We are very grateful to the current owner of *JOHN BENN* and *CARBON* for his contribution to the preservation and ongoing maintenance of these two historic locomotives. They could have quite easily have gone overseas.

WL (Bill) Hanks  
Upper Beaconsfield, Vic

Dear Sir,

Your editorial in LR213 was most interesting. You are not the only person with concerns about the rebuild of *JOHN BENN*. Your feelings towards the rebuild almost exactly reflect mine, and I know others have the same reservations. It is difficult to come to terms with 861—I have been involved in many very enjoyable events with this locomotive, but there is always the feeling that something is wrong.

However I think your comment, "With so much original fabric destroyed", in the last



paragraph is unnecessarily pessimistic. The basic locomotive—frames, wheels, cylinders, and valve gear—is still a Belgian Couillet of 1886. In effect only a veneer of 1886 American style has been added. That is what makes it bizarre. The part above the frames has been very well done, and looks very effective. But the frames, outside Walschaerts valve gear and the Belgian cylinders are totally out of character.

It is true that everything above the frames would have to be remanufactured to restore it to its original form, but it is also true that the majority of locomotives of that age that are still in regular use do not have the original boiler, smokebox, side tanks or cab. They wear out and have to be replaced.

The former *JOHN BENN* has been able to earn a living with the '861 Footplate Experience' fund-raising program, and whenever it is seen out and about on this or other special activities it always attracts favourable attention from the general public. In that respect it has to be said that the rebuild has been successful.

The other two gasworks locomotives do not get out so often, but when they do they also attract attention. I think their small size and quaintness is a drawback. Unfortunately, *JOHN BENN*'s unrebuilt sister *CARBON* has a cab too small for a 'Footplate Experience' and so far it has been difficult to find a method for that delightful survivor to earn her living, but I am sure there must be a way. The third gasworks locomotive, *SIR JOHN GRICE*, easily earns his living playing the part of *THOMAS*, but in that role he looks infinitely worse than 861.

It is a pity that we seem to live in an age, and a country, where these survivors of a past age have to parody themselves to justify their existence.

Frank Stamford  
Emerald, Victoria

Dear Sir

#### **The Wootton–Mayers Point Tramway (LR211. 213)**

I have very much enjoyed reading Ian McNeil's history of the Wootton–Mayers Point Tramway in LR211 and 213. I am writing to add a few notes about the Clyde Engineering 2-6-2T, which became Tasmanian Government Railways P1 in 1920. Allen Taylor & Co were probably fortunate that the TGR were suffering from an acute shortage of locomotives at the time they had the engine on the market, since it was not an ideal purchase. It spent most of its life as the Launceston shed and workshops shunter and was withdrawn around 1941 to await a general overhaul that it never received. Its boiler was recommended to be condemned in 1946. The TGR apparently regarded the boiler as unfit for industrial sale, because P1 remained basically intact until it was sold to be cut up for scrap in October 1951.

One curious feature is that Clyde duplicated their maker's number, which was given to both the Allen Taylor engine and to NSWGR K-class 2-8-0 1354 (later 5502). This appears to have come about because Clyde built the prototype K (1353, later 5501) as their 240 in 1918, followed by the Allen Taylor

engine as 241 and a 4-6-4T for G and C Hoskins' Spring Hill – Cadia line as 242. Between 1920 and 1925 Clyde completed the remaining 119 K-class engines with makers' numbers 241–359. I do not know if the duplication was deliberate or the result of an oversight.

Jim Stokes  
Curtin, ACT

Dear Sir

The article on the Wootton–Mayers Point Tramway in the June issue of LR refers to alterations that were made on the advice of Ernest E Lucy, the NSWGR's Chief Mechanical Engineer, to the leading and trailing trucks of the Clyde-built 2-6-2T *Wootton* (241 of 1919). Lucy's involvement with the loco might have actually been much greater than this.

An interview with the Tasmanian Government Railways Commissioner George W Smith was published in the *Hobart Mercury* of Friday 22 October 1920. During that interview the TGR's possible purchase of the 2-6-2T was mentioned, and it was stated that the loco "...had been built to the design of and under the supervision of Mr Lucy, Chief Mechanical Engineer for the New South Wales railways." Of course, Commissioner Smith (or the *Mercury's* reporter) may have misunderstood the nature and degree of Lucy's involvement with the loco, but it does seem a fairly straightforward and unambiguous statement.

Would Clyde have had staff with the expertise required to design a steam loco in 1919? I suspect not, in which case it would have been reasonable for the company to obtain the services of an experienced locomotive engineer to do the job for them. Lucy was there in Sydney, and as most of the locos that Clyde had built up to that time were for the NSWGR (and all of them to NSWGR designs) they would have had well-established connections with his department.

Darryl Grant  
North Balwyn, Vic

Dear Sir

On page 6 of *Light Railways* 213, June 2010, in the article The Wootton–Mayers Point Tramway, the caption beside the photo of TGR locomotive P1 (formerly *Wootton*) states that the locomotive was "scrapped in 1945". However, the remains of this locomotive (without boiler) were seen in Launceston on 5 February 1951. The TGR drawing numbers E-25L-1 'Locomotive Historical data' has a note alongside P1 'Obsolete and scrapped 1945' as also have the passenger Garratt locomotives M1 and M2. The remains of the M Class locomotives (also without boilers) had been seen in September 1947 on a siding adjacent to the boundary fence between the Launceston Locomotive depot and York Park (now Aurora stadium, where AFL football is played). The aforementioned drawing has a note for M1 "Cut up for scrap and sold to Mt Lyell Coy 18/9/50". Several locomotives of classes B and C were also cut

up for scrap and sold to Mt Lyell in the latter part of 1950. Just when the remains of P1 were cut up is not known, as my copy of the sheets of drawing E-25L-1 were obtained in 1951 (the latest locomotive shown is diesel-electric X10).

Also, in this caption, the TGR's Chief Mechanical Engineer's name is given as HP Sennett. There are a considerable number of TGR rolling stock diagrams signed by him, and the name could be read as Sennett. On some diagrams (not many) where the name has been written by another person, the name is clearly HB Bennett, and other sources confirm this. Mr Bennett later became General Manager of Railways under the Transport Commission in the 1940s.

David Parsons  
Oaklands Park, SA

Dear Sir

I was very interested to read of the inglorious early history of the locomotive *Wootton* in Ian McNeil's article "The Wootton–Mayers Point Tramway - Part two" in LR213, and that *Wootton* had been sold (at a profit!) to the Tasmanian Government Railways in 1920 to become P-1. This led me to my personal notes on TGR locomotives in which I had written the following some years ago:

#### **P-class [2-6-2T; 40t; 15244lb]**

*As there were no N- or O-classes, the next locomotive to consider is the sole Australian-built P-class locomotive that appeared second hand in 1921. Initially it was put into service on the Melrose Branch, which at that time ran from Don Junction to Palooona. Being a relatively clumsy 2-6-2T locomotive, it proved to be unsuitable for running-line use, and was soon transferred to Launceston, where it served as a yard shunter until being put aside in the early 1940s. It was eventually scrapped in 1951. All in all, it was a poor buy, and the original NSW owners were probably glad to get rid of it at less than two years-of-age.*

Clearly, *Wootton*, alias P-1, proved to be a white elephant for both its owners. My memory, although I do not have the reference to hand, is that it was intended for use drawing trains of flux from a quarry at or near Palooona via Don Junction to Devonport for use in steel smelters in NSW, but proved totally unsuitable.

The Melrose Branch was one of a number of lightly laid branches that ran from junctions on the Western Line (along the Tasmanian North West Coast) up into the steep hinterland to the south, in the shadow of the Western Tiers. Its light, steep and curvy construction must have closely mirrored that of P-1's former home where it had proved such a failure—someone had not done their due diligence.

Although government 3ft 6in gauge railways are outside the LRRSA normal ambit, readers may be interested that the next two classes in the TGR series were the very successful Perry-built R-class (4-6-2 passenger) and Q-class (4-8-2 goods), introduced in 1922-3 but their originally intended sister S-class (4-6-4T goods) was never to be, the order being cancelled at

the design stage. I have often wondered if that was because of the P-1 experience and the likelihood that the relatively heavy tank locomotives were no longer seen as suitable for their intended branch line use.

Scott Clennett  
Hobart, Tas

Dear Sir

In the article mentioned above, on page 6, the author names HP Sennett as Chief Mechanical Engineer of the TGR.

Obviously the reproduced P Class drawing is of poor standard, as they were drawn on waxed linen and generally reproduced by blueprint. TGR did not obtain a dyeline machine until about 1959.

However, the name is Harold Bruce Bennett, often referred to by his military rank of Colonel. He was born in Victoria but trained in West Australia, joining the AIF in World War I and returning to WAGR in 1920. In 1922, he came to Tasmania as Workshop Manager, and in 1923 he became Chief Mechanical Engineer. He held this appointment until 1940, when he was appointed as General Manager.

Mr Bennett, however, would not have carried out any actual drawing work—he would merely sign drawings prepared by his staff. In the 1950s this task was usually done by the Assistant Chief Mechanical Engineer on his behalf. From 1940 to 1970, the workshop staff had grown from about 350 to 1000, building their own locomotives, carriages and wagons.

Anthony J Lee  
Moonah, Tas

Dear Sir

### Steam locomotives on Victorian timber tramways (LR 212)

It was amazing to see the interesting bush-bashed steam locomotives created as part of the early timber industry of Victoria in the article by Frank Stamford. One that Frank did not mention was one I only know about through pictures in the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission collection in the State Library of Victoria [<http://slv.vic.gov.au>]. One of these images, with a short article by Richard Horne about the loco and how it was used, was in LR 201 June 2008 (p.6).

The series of photos show a unique obviously home-built vertical-boilered steam locomotive. The frame it was built on seems to be from a skip but with outside wheels and an additional frame making the gauge greater than 2ft; maybe 2ft 6in. It is pictured in the same collection as a huge Lubecker bucket dredge so my assumption is that the line was used to bring firewood from the surrounding scrub to feed the boiler of the dredge.

Lubecker was a specialist German excavator builder that eventually merged with Orenstein & Koppell. Carlo Catani, the famous early Victorian engineer, ordered the Lubecker Bucket Dredge in 1912 and it arrived in 1913 at a cost of £4,700. It weighed 80 tons and had a capacity of 61 cubic metres per hour. A labourer at the time dug about 8 cubic metres per day. It was used on the Lang Lang River, then on the Main Drain, Cardinia Creek and Yallock Drain.

These drains were important in draining of swamplands in the Koo Wee Rup and Lang Lang parts of Victoria to the south of Melbourne, which became rich farmlands.

there are many examples of compelling scenery with the tropical greenery setting off the yellow, grey and red colours of the locomotives. The charms of Fiji's cane railways have brought increasing numbers of Australian enthusiasts to Viti Levu in recent years to see these trains while they still have the chance.

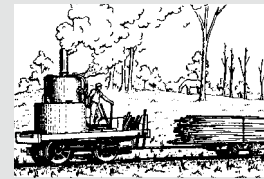
Ian Dunn's book contains a selection of his photographs taken in the period from 2004 to 2009. Featured are trains on the Fiji Sugar Corporation's interconnected lines serving Rarawai and Lautoka mills. Ian has an eye for a good picture and the photographs are colourful and well reproduced. Those who have been there will recognise that the photographer has had to go to a lot of trouble to obtain many of the shots.

Each full page photograph is accompanied by an extended caption and the book also contains a brief summary of the history of the cane railways and of current working methods. Sadly, with the truncation of the Lautoka Mill line that once served the Coral Coast and Sigatoka Valley, several of the photographs feature scenes that can never be repeated.

This charming book would be enjoyed by all those who have visited Fiji and by all who would like to go. The relatively high price is most likely a result of a short print run, so it may be advisable to make your investment sooner rather than later. Strongly recommended. *John Browning*

At a swamp-focused lookout at Tooradin there is a wheel set from the Lubecker dredge on display.

John Peterson  
Beaconsfield, Vic



## LRRSA NEWS

### MEETINGS

#### ADELAIDE: "The Abt Railway"

A video of Tasmania's Mt Lyell Abt Railway will be shown. Members are also invited to make contributions on any topic of light railway interest.

**Location:** 150 First Avenue, Royston Park.

**Date:** Thursday 5 August at 8.00pm.

Contact Arnold Lockyer on (08) 8296 9488.

#### BRISBANE: 'Nambour—10 years on'

The theme for the August meeting will be 'Nambour 10 years on'. Members are invited to bring slides, CDs or photos of the Bundy Fowler's celebrated visit to Moreton.

**Location:** BCC Library, Garden City Shopping Centre, Mount Gravatt.

After hours entrance (rear of library) opposite Mega Theatre complex, next to Toys'R'Us.

**Date:** Friday 13 August at 7.30pm. Entry from 7pm.

#### MELBOURNE: "Annual General Meeting, and Victorian 2ft 6in gauge"

Following our brief Annual General Meeting Lindsay Walker will be giving a talk on Victorian 2 ft 6in gauge railways, including Walhalla shortly after closure, Colac-Beech Forest, Puffing Billy *Young Sun* specials, and the Altona explosives reserve tramways.

**Location:** Ashburton Uniting Church Hall, Ashburn Grove, Ashburton.

**Date:** Thursday, 10 June at 8.00pm

#### SYDNEY: "Railway Archaeology."

Jim Longworth will give a presentation on the art of researching, surveying and interpreting the remains of long forgotten railways. Jim works out of the Office of Rail Heritage so attendees of our meeting can be assured of some interesting insights into this fascinating field of exploration.

**Location:** Woodstock Community Centre, Church Street, Burwood, (five minutes walk from Burwood railway station).

**Date:** Wednesday 25 August at 7.30pm



## Book Reviews

### Clydes among the Cane: Fiji's sugar railway on Viti Levu

by Ian Dunn

A4 size landscape format, card cover. 64 pages with 61 colour photographs, 59 of them full page, and two maps. Published 2010 by Eveleigh Press, PO Box 345, MATRAVILLE 2036. \$45 posted.

The sugar industry railways of Fiji can be a curiosity to Australian eyes that are used to the modern and efficient operations of Queensland. The trains in Fiji move at a more leisurely pace, loaded with whole stick cane, while the railway uses largely 1960s vintage Clyde 0-6-0DH locomotives. With the main line mostly following a coastal route on the main island of Viti Levu,





## RESEARCH

### NLA on-line research tools

Your editor had the opportunity to attend the 2010 National Trust Heritage Festival event at Mosman Library at which Rose Holley, Trove Manager of the National Library of Australia (NLA), gave a presentation on 'The Making of our Digital Nation'. This brought home the remarkable progress being made by the NLA team in providing history researchers with some great tools that enable them to access core reference material online.

We have covered the development Australian Newspaper Digitisation Program (ANDP) and the use being made of it by LRRSA researchers over the past few years, most recently in LR 211 (p. 32). Additional material is added to the ANDP website on a weekly basis. Each issue of the *Sydney Morning Herald* between 1842 and 1954, for instance, is now available on-line as the task of bringing this material together has managed to fill many gaps in the Fairfax archives. Similarly, a full sequence of *The Argus* between 1848 and 1954 is now on-line, while the *Brisbane Courier* is available between 1864 and 1933, and the *Hobart Mercury* from 1860 to 1954.

Rose Holley advised that once all the currently targeted newspapers are available on line to 1954, there is likely to be further updating of more recent issues. A number of proprietors have indicated they want issues after 1954 to be digitised, while there has also been pressure from community groups to include a wider range of regional newspapers. The outcome will depend on what funding might be forthcoming, particularly in the form of grants such as that provided by the Warwick Fairfax Foundation for digitisation of the *SMH*.

The ANDP incorporates a powerful search capacity, but its coverage is dependent on the accuracy of the text in the electronically translated text box on the left of the ANDP

webpage. The OCR technology used for this can generate many errors, especially where the original print is not clear or is marked in some way. The cost of making these corrections in-house would be astronomical, so the NLA relies on mobilising the public to correct the electronically converted text. All LR readers using the ANDP facility are urged to register as a user and to take the time to correct errors in the text of any items they find of interest; thereby assisting others who wish to use the search facility.

Rose went on to describe 'Australia Trove', the NLA's online search engine which she is now managing. Trove brings together material from the collections of over 1000 Australian libraries plus other Australian archives covering newspapers, photos, maps, plans, etc. She covered mechanisms for the public to correct and enhance photo captions in the collections accessed via Trove and how individuals can download their own images into the public arena via Flickr Commons.

*Editor*

### LRRSA 50th Anniversary

The Light Railway Research Society of Australia is gearing up to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2011. Available records show that a group of young enthusiasts came together to share their interests in timber tramways and industrial railways and the first meeting of the Victorian Light Railway Research Society (VLRSS) was held in February 1961. The first item the group published under the name of the VLRSS was dated Autumn 1961 and its inaugural field trip was to the Victorian SEC 90cm gauge railways



*A hopper wagon on the short section of track at the rear of the Willoughby Incinerator during construction of the refuse hopper (behind camera) on 17 July 1934. David Warner Collection, Willoughby District Historical Society.*

at Yallourn on 2 September 1961. The focus of the Society's activities broadened in 1968 when it changed its name to Light Railway Research Society of Australia.

A number of most useful suggestions on how the anniversary might best be celebrated have been put forward by members of the LRRSA Yahoo Group and these were considered by Council at its meeting on 2 July 2010. To that end it is planned to provide additional pages in *Light Railways* in 2011 to document the growth and development of the LRRSA, highlight some of its research achievements, and note some of the areas where research is still needed. A special photo-feature covering each of the 50 years of the LRRSA's existence is also being considered. This would illustrate both LRRSA activities and significant events relating to light and industrial railways in Australia during that period.

We will keep you informed of progress on this and other activities which might be arranged to mark the fiftieth anniversary.

*Frank Stamford*

### Willoughby Incinerator

Willoughby City Council is in the final stages of a long-running project to restore its heritage-listed municipal incinerator building designed by Walter Burley Griffin to its original condition and make it available for public use. As building construction slowed in the late 1920s, Griffin and his partner Eric Nicholls teamed up with the Reverberatory Incinerator & Engineering Company (RIECo), which had been established by Griffin's main client, the Melbourne businessman Nissan Leonard Kanevski, the

patent holder Vasilee Traunoff and John Bolan, the municipal engineer of Melbourne Council. Griffin and Nicholls were to design attractive buildings to house the works, their first being the 1929 incinerator for Essendon Council in Melbourne.

Their cause was greatly enhanced by a campaign by Alderman Nobeley, the mayor of Randwick and a Federal parliamentarian, against the pollution of the local beaches caused, amongst other things, by the dumping of garbage at sea. The outcome was the Commonwealth Beaches Fishing Grounds and Sea Roots Protection Act of 1932, which included a regulation prohibiting the dumping of garbage at sea within 15-20 miles of the shore between Port Stephens and south of Botany Bay.

Municipal Councils lined up to construct incinerators in response. By 1940 the RIECo proudly boasted that it had built 18 incinerators for municipal councils across Australia, 13 of which were housed in buildings specifically designed for the locality by Griffin and Nicholls.

Willoughby Municipal Council accepted the RIECo tender for an incinerator in January 1932 and Griffin prepared the design for the building around January 1933. It is regarded as one of the most outstanding of his incinerator buildings, making full use of the sloping terrain to cascade the garbage through the incineration process. In this instance, the ash and clinker was dropped into a rail hopper wagon under the combustion chamber and hand-pushed over a short section of track to be discharged in refuse hoppers. The hoppers then discharged the refuse into motor trucks on a roadway below for transport to landfill sites.

Your editor has been working through the archives of the Willoughby District Historical Society in recent months. These include the David Warner Collection of some 800 photographs of Willoughby Municipal Council activities between 1932 and 1938, which provide extensive coverage of the construction of the incinerator and its early operation. By all accounts it was not a great success and the Council soon reverted to extensive landfill for its garbage, use of the incinerator being discontinued in 1967.

*Editor*



## Industrial Railway NEWS

Industrial Railway News Editor : John Browning  
PO Box 99, ANNERLEY 4103  
Phone: (07) 3255 9084 / 0407 069 199  
e-mail: ceo8@iinet.net.au

**Special thanks to contributors to the Cane Trains & LRRSA e-groups and to Jim Bisdee's West Australian Railscene e-Mag**

### NEW SOUTH WALES

#### SHOALHAVEN STARCHES PTY LTD, Bomaderry

(see LR 206 p.18)

1435 mm gauge

Walkers B-B DH locomotives 7315 (674 of 1971) and 7319 (678 of 1972) were sold to the Manildra Group for use by Shoalhaven Starches by the ARHS ACT Division and left Canberra by road on 16 April. 7315 was seen shunting at Bomaderry along with Goninan Bo-Bo DE D2 (024 of 1967) on 22 June.

Chris Stratton 5/10; Neville Conder 6/10

#### UNITED GROUP RAIL FLEET SERVICES, Chullora

1435mm gauge

0-4-ODH Xt106i (Chullora 9 of 1964) is used by United Goninan for shunting at Chullora workshops, although it is believed that it still owned by RailCorp. It has recently been repainted in a white and blue livery.

*MotivePOWER* 69; Editor

### QUEENSLAND

#### CSR sugar spinoff

(see LR 213 p.28)

On 5 July, CSR Ltd announced it had agreed to sell its sugar and energy division, Sucrogen, to Wilmar International Ltd, a Singapore-based oilseeds and grains company and the world's largest palm oil trader, for \$1.75 billion. The offer from Wilmar Australia Pty Limited is made up of 1.35 billion in cash and \$403m in assumed net debt. Wilmar is one of the region's largest listed agribusinesses, with a market capitalisation of approximately A\$31 billion. The sale is subject to approvals from the Australian Foreign Investment Review Board and New Zealand Overseas Investment Office.

CSR media release 5/7/10 via Bob McKillop; *Bloomberg BusinessWeek* 5/7/10

#### BUNDABERG SUGAR – MARYBOROUGH SUGAR FACTORY JOINT VENTURE

(see LR 213 p.28)

The proposed joint venture combining the operations of Bundaberg Sugar's north Queensland's interests and Mulgrave Mill is expected to be in place from 1 December 2010, following positive advice from the Foreign Investment Review Board and the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission.

Maryborough Sugar Factory company announcements 15/6/2010, 20/6/2010, 21/6/2010.

#### BUNDABERG SUGAR LTD, Bundaberg district

(see LR 210 p.24 & 212 p.25)

610mm gauge

Com-Eng 0-6-ODH *INVICTA* (A1513 of 1956 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 2001) is normally stationed at Wallaville to work cane in the old Gin Gin mill area, and with increased production this season, was scheduled to be working two shifts daily. It suffered engine damage in the week before crushing was due to commence so Com-Eng 0-6-ODH *BURNETT* (AH2967 of 1963) was transferred from Millaquin Mill to take its place at Wallaville from the start of crushing on 28 June. *INVICTA* returned to service on 1 July and *BURNETT* became the spare loco at Wallaville. The previous spare, EM Baldwin 0-6-ODH *RUBYANNA* (3406.1 7.10 of 1970) has been returned to Bingera Mill.

On the Bingera Mill link line from the Fairymead area, the track between Moorlands Road and the drawbridge crossing of the QGR at Meadowvale has been relaid with concrete sleepers. The old Johannesen's Loop (between Moorlands Road and the drawbridge) has been removed and a new loop installed on the site of the old Johannesen's Siding (alongside Moorlands Road) Mitch Zunker 7/10; Lincoln Driver 7/10

#### BUNDABERG SUGAR LTD, Innisfail district

(see LR 213 p.28)

610mm gauge

Clyde 0-6-ODH locomotives 17 (55-57 of 1955) and 20 (63-289 of 1963) were noted stationed at South Johnstone Mill's Silkwood Depot on 26 June. They had recently been repainted following a run of wet weather interruptions to crushing. Com-Eng 0-6-ODH *HARVEY* (AD1138 of 1960) was noted stationed at the old Mourilyan Mill site.

While cane between the Japoon and Silkwood areas is now directed to South Johnstone Mill via the old Mourilyan Mill route through Moresby, the old line up the Japoon Range is still serviceable and can be used if traffic is interrupted on the preferred route.

Editor 6/10

#### CSR SUGAR (HERBERT) PTY LTD, Herbert River Mills

(see LR 213 p.28)

610mm gauge

Plasser Model KMX-12T tamping machine *THE PACKER* returned to Victoria Mill from Plane Creek on 22 April. Somewhere around that time the Model GWS-75 spot tamper (434 of 1997) and Tamper Model BESM1 ballast regulator (1775577

of 1977) were sent back to Plane Creek. On 16 June a Tamper tamping machine was noted at Victoria Mill. This may have been a unit on loan from Kalamia Mill for on the same day Victoria Mill's Clyde 0-6-ODH *PERTH* (69-682 of 1969) was being loaded onto a semitrailer for transport to Kalamia, although this movement has not been confirmed.

Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 *HOMEBUSH* (1067 of 1914) was in passenger use for the Italian festival on 15-16 May, and newly re-engined and repainted EM Baldwin B-B DH *WALLAMAN* (6400.3 4.76 of 1976) was on display at the boarding point. Also refurbished in the slack season at Victoria Mill was Clyde 0-6-ODH *DALRYMPLE* (ClydeQ 70-709 of 1970) which was noted on the full yard shunt in late June. However, the refurbishment of EM Baldwin 0-6-ODH *HOBART* (4413.1 7.72 of 1972) had still not been completed at Macknade by the end of June and Victoria Mill's Clyde 0-6-ODH *CANBERRA* (65-433 of 1965) was sent over to Macknade to help out there. EM Baldwin B-B DH *RYNNE* (5423.1 9.74 rebuilt N+P 2009) finally seems to have entered service at Victoria Mill and was seen on cane haulage in early July. Towards the end of May Rinaldo's Engineering began assembling the new 8-ton bins that are arriving from China in knocked-down form. It was reported that the order is for 210 units. Chris Hart 5/10, 6/10, 7/10; Editor 6/10; Rod Milne 7/10.

#### CSR SUGAR (KALAMIA) PTY LTD, Kalamia Mill, Ayr

(see LR 208 p.19)

610mm & 1067mm gauge

Railway molasses wagons are still hauled to the mill by mill locomotives over the dual gauge track from Kalamia Siding in Ayr. On 28 June, Walkers B-B DH *RITA ISLAND* (625 of 1969 rebuilt A Goninan, Mackay 1996) hauled eight QR MO and VMO wagons to the mill. Two 1067mm gauge transition wagons are used to allow the 610mm gauge locomotive to carry out this task. The operation at Kalamia Siding thus requires the positioning of the transition wagons at each end of the rake, involving a fair amount of shunting. The yard at Kalamia Siding is also used for cane loading on the 610mm gauge. Rod Milne 6/10

#### CSR PLANE CREEK PTY LTD, Sarina

(see LR 213 p.28)

610mm gauge

An unusual sight on 14 May was that of the mill's Plasser Model TC50 linecar (built 1982) being sent on an expedition to the end of the 'Mainline' at Alligator Creek. It encountered the usual slack season hazards of overgrown track, fallen trees across the line, non-functioning flashing lights at crossings, and road crossings that required digging out. The consequent delays meant that the vehicle did not make it back to the mill that day and it was stabled at 5 Mainline Siding in company with EM Baldwin B-B DH D12 (6890.1 10.76 of 1976), a rake of ballast wagons and the KMX-08 tamping machine (Plasser 415 of 1995). Carl Millington 5/10





**Above:** Above: Victoria Mill's rebuilt EM Baldwin B-B DH RYNNE (5423.1 9.74 reb. N+P 2009) hauls cane across Cartwright Street as it passes the famous Station Hotel and approaches the railway crossing in the centre of Ingham on 1 July. Photo: Rod Milne  
**Left:** Some of the brand-new locally-assembled four-wheel 10-ton cane bins made in China in service at Macknade Mill on 28 June. Photo: Chris Hart. **Below:** The interesting mixed-gauge yard at Kalamia Siding in Ayr on 24 June, with Com-Eng 0-6-0DH CHIVERTON (C1030 of 1958) shunting 610mm gauge cane bins. To the right is a rake of 1067mm gauge QR molasses 'bombs'. Photo: Rod Milne



## MACKAY SUGAR LTD

(see LR 213 p.28)

610mm gauge

An on-line auction of Mackay Sugar equipment is to be conducted by GoIndustry-DoveBid (Australia) Pty Ltd from 26 to 29 August, including 11 locomotives and some other items of rolling stock. Bids can be lodged at <http://www.go-dove.com/event-14580> The auction contact is Greg Ceniti on (03) 9013 9230 or 0421 332 266; email: [greg.ceniti@go-dove.com](mailto:greg.ceniti@go-dove.com) Rail items to be included are:

Lot	ID	Type	Builder	B/n.	Date	Ex mill
NE230	CATTLE CREEK	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	B1724	1957	Cattle Creek
NE231	3 DALRYMPLE	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	AL4892	1965	Cattle Creek
NE232	46 BARCOO	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	FB4383	1965	North Eton
NE233	CARLISLE	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	AI3271	1963	Farleigh
NE234	49 RICHMOND	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	A1308	1955	Farleigh
NE235	ASHBURTON	0-6-0DM	Com-Eng	A1614	1956	Farleigh
NE236		brake wagon	EM Baldwin	7901.1 6.78	1978	Farleigh
NE237		brake wagon	ClydeQ	C03457	1976	Farleigh
NE238	9	brake wagon	EM Baldwin	9817.2 12.81	1981	Proserpine
NE239	10	brake wagon	EM Baldwin	9817.1 12.81	1981	Proserpine
NE241	RSLEP2	sleeper machine	Gemco	521684004739 R841 85	1985	Pleystowe
NE242	TTAMP4	ballast tamper	Tamper	4375636	1976	Pleystowe
NE246	10	4wDH	(EM Baldwin (reb.EMB (reb. Marian	4529.3 11.72 8860.1 8.79	1972 1979	
NE247	SEPTIMUS	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	A2128	1980	Marian
NE248	CHELONA	0-6-0DH	Clyde	59-201	1959	North Eton
NE249	PIONEER	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	AI2358	1962	Racecourse
NE250	OAKENDEN	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	FB3169	1963	Farleigh

Also on offer is Lot NE240, the locomotive cab from Clyde 0-6-0DH MARIAN (56-104 of 1956) ex Marian Mill. At the end of June, the operational locomotives for sale: CHELONA, OAKENDEN, PIONEER, SEPTIMUS and number 10 were parked together on a siding beside the Pleystowe loco shed while the other locomotives are decommissioned at North Eton. Locomotive reallocations since the 2009 season are as follows:

NELLIE	0-6-0DH	Clyde	58-188	1958	Farleigh to Marian
DEVEREAUX	0-6-0DH	Clyde	67-568	1967	Racecourse to Farleigh
ALEXANDRA	0-6-0DH	Clyde	61-235	1961	Marian to Racecourse
MELBA	0-6-0DH	EM Baldwin	12512.1 7.85	1985	Marian to Racecourse
PINNACLE	0-6-0DH	(Com-Eng (reb. Com-Eng	AA1549 AN5849	1961 1975	
ETON	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	FB3170	1963	Racecourse to Marian
VICTORIA PLAINS	0-6-0DH	Clyde	66-490	1966	Farleigh to Marian

New MTU 2000 engines have been fitted to Farleigh Mill's Walkers B-B DH NETHERDALE (699 of 1972 rebuilt Walkers 1997) and Marian Mill's Eimco B-B DH NARPI (L256 of 1990). A new Cummins engine has been fitted to Farleigh's EM Baldwin FOULDEN (7220.1 6.77 of 1977). All four bogie brake wagons have received new motors and compressors over the slack season, and the unique Gemco double-unit brake wagon has been rewired.

A new brake wagon is currently under construction by a private contractor to be used with NARPI. It should be delivered by the end of the year.

Plans are in hand to further develop the old Pleystowe mill site as the service hub for the Mackay Sugar rail system. Traffic control and the bin maintenance facility are already sited there. In the future, the main mill buildings will be converted to contain the main locomotive servicing facility and the centralised navy depot.

Farleigh's Clyde 0-6-0DH locomotives CONNINGSBY (61-232 of 1961) and SEAFORTH (61-233 of 1961) are outstationed at Pleystowe for working cane on the old Pleystowe lines either side of the Pioneer River, making up trains for haulage up Church Hill to Farleigh by larger locomotives, typically EM Baldwin B-B DH HAMPDEN (6706.1 5.76 of 1976 and INVERNESS (10123.1 5.82 of 1982), and Clyde

double-unit PALMYRA (63-273 of 1963) & PLEYSTOWE (64-321 of 1964).

The locotrol train on Farleigh's north coast line to Wagoora operates with two Walkers B-B DH rebuilds. CEDARS (693 of 1972 rebuilt Walkers 1997) is the command unit and DULVERTON (690 of 1972 rebuilt Walkers 1997) is the slave unit, coupled with bogie brake wagon BV4 (Farleigh, 1998). At the southern end of the north coast line this train, both loaded and empty, runs via

the old Pleystowe route through Mapalo rather than the old Farleigh line over Sivyer's Hill and through Hampden loops.

Hayden Quabba 5/10; Scott Jesser 6/10, 7/10; Brian Millar 6/10, 7/10

## ISIS CENTRAL SUGAR MILL CO LTD

(see LR 210 p.26)

610mm gauge

Walkers B-B DH ISIS No.6 (610 of 1969 rebuilt Isis 2002) was yet again a derailment casualty when it rolled over close to the mill at about 8am on 24 June.

From the press coverage, it seems likely that the locomotive ran away while hauling a train of 28 full bins and a brake wagon to the mill on the steeply-graded Adie's line. The crew members, including a driver under instruction, were forced to jump from the locomotive before the derailment. Two suffered slight injuries.

Brian Bouchardt 6/10; *Bundaberg News Mail* 25/6/10 & 26/6/10; Editor

## PROSERPINE CO-OPERATIVE SUGAR MILLING ASSOCIATION LTD

(see LR 209 p.21)

610mm gauge

The mill has constructed a number of long-wheelbase wagons for moving rails and track panels. These are conversions of 10-ton four-wheeled bins. During May, track replacement work was being done on the Kelsey Creek line, with panels of 40lb rail track being pulled up and replaced with 60lb materials. The 40lb sections were being removed for use in relaying sidings. Luke Horniblow 5/10

## TULLY SUGAR LTD

(see LR 213 p.28)

610mm gauge

The ex-Mackay Sugar Walkers B-B DH TULLY-7 (657 of 1970 rebuilt Tulk Goninan 1994) has been repainted in Tully Sugar red and yellow livery. The rebuild of Walkers 618 of 1969 at the mill is continuing to progress, with the radiator fitted and a pair of regauged bogies and a new fuel tank outside the shed. The new cab is also on site.

The historical exhibit at the mill has been completed with the addition of animal and human figurines showing the horse haulage of cane, manual whole stick cane loading, and horse cultivation. The project is a joint undertaking of Canegrowers Tully, Tully Sugar and Tully Rotary Club.

Track extensions continue to be ongoing in the Riversdale area. The most recent development noted was a 5km extension of the Riversdale line from Merryports Loop to a new loop at Collarbone Creek. This was in use in 2009. Other extensions built in the last few years include one of about 3km past Camilleri's loop on the Barnes Branch in Riversdale, and one of about 1.8km on Jackson's branch in the Murray Upper which has been extended across Upper Murray Road and down Hamlin Road as the starting off point for the proposed Bilyana line. Luke Horniblow 6/10; Editor 6/10

## VICTORIA

### INITIATING EXPLOSIVES SYSTEMS PTY LTD, Deer Park

(see LR 175 p.22)

762mm gauge

The extensive tramway on this site served the explosives manufacturing and magazines area, connecting the complex of isolated buildings used for packing, storage and loading out. It is understood that the tramway has only recently become disused and that the locomotives and rolling stock are still on site. Up to now a degree





**Above:** The impressive scale of Mackay Sugar's 610mm gauge cane railways is exemplified by twin Walkers B-B DH 1997 rebuilds CEDARS (693 of 1972) and DULVERTON (690 of 1972) crossing the Constant Creek bridge with an empty train on Farleigh Mill's north coast line on 27 June. Photo: Scott Jesser

**Left:** Tully Mill's Walkers TULLY-7 (657 of 1970 rebuilt Tulk Goninan 1994) was acquired from Mackay Sugar in 2009 and operated at Tully in the yellow Mackay livery. It was repainted in the attractive Tully red and yellow colours for the 2010 season and here waits at the mill for the rain to stop on 26 June. Photo: John Browning

**Below:** The true charm of the historical exhibit at Tully Mill, inaugurated on 29 May, is revealed with the placement of figurines that show the use of the rolling stock and make the scene come to life. 26 June 2010. Photo: John Browning





# Industrial Railway NEWS

of heritage protection has been in place, but Orica Australia Pty Ltd has recently applied to Brimbank City Council for approval to demolish and remove the buildings and infrastructure on part of the Deer Park site. It seems that this will destroy the extensive tramway system and all traces of the former rail access.

Orica Deer Park Factory Site Heritage Review Report for Brimbank City Council, March 2009; Scott Gould 6/10, 7/10.

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

### BHP BILLITON IRON ORE PTY LTD

(see LR 213 p.28)

1435mm gauge

On 30 June, it was announced that the Australian Competition Tribunal had ruled that third parties can negotiate with BHP Billiton for access to the Goldsworthy iron ore railway until 2028. However, it was also decided that the expenses involved in granting third party access to the Mt Newman railway were so great that it would be contrary to the public interest.

On the other hand, because the Goldsworthy line handles less iron ore there would not be as much disturbance if it was opened to smaller miners.

The new Co-Co DE locomotives being built by Electro-Motive Canada in East London, Ontario, began to leave the works in May. The first nine, 4356 to 4364, believed to be builder's numbers 20098203-001 to 20098203-009, were shipped from the port of Montreal on the heavy lift vessel *Jumbo Fairlift* on 19 June bound for Port Hedland. 900 tons of rail has been delivered to Port Hedland by ship for the Newman main line duplication and was trucked from port to the flash butt depot in mid June. This rail will build about 75km of track on the new duplicate line south from Mooka. The route of the duplicate line will deviate significantly from the current one between Cowra and Shaw sidings to provide a more favourable gradient for loaded trains in the Chichester Ranges area.

Recent namings of Electro-Motive Canada Model SD70Ace Co-Co DE locomotives are as follows:

No.	Builder's No.	Date	Name
4314	20058712-001	2006	JARTURTU
4315	20058712-002	2006	MIJARRPA
4317	20058712-004	2006	SPINIFEX
4318	20058712-005	2006	PATHARRA
4320	20058712-007	2006	MAVERICK
4322	20058712-009	2006	TABBA
4323	20058712-009	2006	COURAGE
4328	20066862-057	2008	WIKIRRPA
4329	20066862-058	2008	PILBARA
4330	20066862-059	2008	GILES
4332	20066862-061	2008	INTEGRITY
4333	20066862-062	2008	KARLKULA
4334	20078915-001	2008	WHEELARA
4336	20078915-003	2008	REDMONT
4343	20078915-010	2008	HILDITCH
4344	20078915-011	2008	TENACITY
4348	20088019-002	2009	HEMATITE
4353	20088019-007	2009	WARMAN

Brett Geraghty 4/10; WA Railscene e-mag 82, 85 & 86; *International Business Times* 1/7/2010

### PILBARA RAIL

(see LR 210 p.29 & 212/29 – this latter item headed *PILBARA INFRASTRUCTURE* in error)

1435mm gauge

On 30 June, it was announced that the Australian Competition Tribunal had ruled that third parties can negotiate with Rio Tinto for access to the Robe River iron ore railway until 2018. However, it was also decided that the expenses involved in granting third party access to the Hamersley Iron railway were so great that it would be contrary to the public interest. Because the Robe River line handles less iron ore there would not be as much disturbance if it was opened to smaller miners.

The balance of the wagons for the new Rio rail train built by Gemco at Forrestfield in Perth that had been stored in their yard for about a year were loaded onto road transport for transport to Dampier in the first week of June.

WA Railscene e-mag 84; *International Business Times* 1/7/2010

### ROY HILL INFRASTRUCTURE PTY LTD

1435mm gauge

The way has been opened for the construction of a new Pilbara iron ore railway with an agreement reached between the Western Australian government and the parent companies, Gina Rinehardt's Hancock Prospecting and the Korean firm Posco, on 24 June. The proposed 300km railway will connect the Roy Hill mine, situated about 110km north of Newman, with Port Hedland. Roy Hill is on the eastern end of the Chichester Ranges, near Fortescue's Christmas Creek mine. Fortescue is extending the rail line from its Cloudbreak mine by 50km to Christmas Creek. The scheme includes a stockpile area at Boodarie, a train unloader, access corridors to the inner harbour; and two berths. Construction of the new railway is expected to start in mid-2011, with exports to north Asia planned for 2014.

Colin Barnett media release 24/6/2010; *Sydney Morning Herald* 24/6/2010



**Top:** Explosives factories are usually reluctant to give up their secrets so Scott Gould was excited to see that 762mm gauge rolling stock was still visible at Orica's Deer Park complex on 5 July. They are outside building Y108, used as a loading-out facility. Unfortunately the adjoining magazine, identified as the oldest on the site, appears to have been demolished recently. Photo: Scott Gould **Above:** Another loaded iron ore train has arrived at BHP Billiton Iron Ore's vast Nelson Point complex on 8 May, this one headed by contrasting GE type Co-Co DE locomotives. 5664 KAOHSIUNG was originally an AE Goodwin product (G-6047-01 of 1971) that was rebuilt, originally as a cabless unit, by A Goninan at Bassendean (159 of 1995). 4328 WIKIRRPA is a 'pumpkin' unit built by Electromotive Canada (20066862-057 of 2008), part of an order originally intended for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation. Photo: Toad Montgomery



# New from LRRSA Sales ...

## TALL TIMBER & TRAMLINES QUEENSLAND



By John Kerr

Published by the LRRSA.

Describes all Queensland timber tramways known to the author.

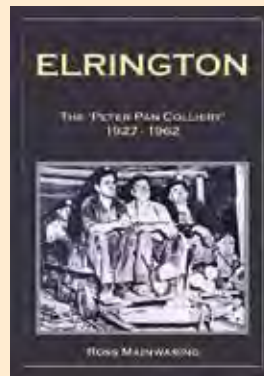
Soft cover, 104 pages, A4 size  
90 photographs, 28 maps and diagrams,

References, bibliography, and index.

Price \$29.95 plus postage  
(\$22.46 to LRRSA members)  
Weight: 520 gm

## ELRINGTON

THE 'PETER PAN COLLIERY' 1927 - 1962



By Ross Mainwaring

Published by the LRRSA.

A coalmine and its railways near Cessnock NSW, established by the BHP in 1927.

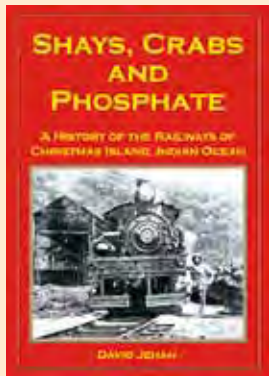
Soft cover, 96 pages, A4 size  
64 photographs, 9 maps and diagrams,

References, bibliography, and index.

Price \$25.95 plus postage  
(\$19.46 to LRRSA members)  
Weight: 460 gm

## SHAYS, CRABS AND PHOSPHATE

A HISTORY OF THE RAILWAYS OF  
CHRISTMAS ISLAND, INDIAN OCEAN



By David Jehan

Published by the LRRSA.

Soft cover, 136 pages, A4 size

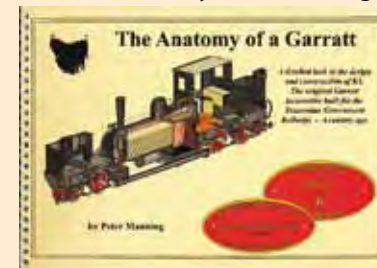
Over 160 photographs, 14  
maps and diagrams,

References, bibliography, and index.

Price \$33.00 plus postage  
(\$24.75 to LRRSA members)  
Weight: 700 gm

## THE ANATOMY OF A GARRATT

A DETAILED LOOK AT THE DESIGN AND  
CONSTRUCTION OF K1. THE ORIGINAL  
GARRATT LOCOMOTIVE



Published by Peter Manning Design & Drafting

64 pages, A4 size  
landscape, card cover  
spiral bound, about

350 illustrations.

Price \$39.95 plus postage  
(\$35.96 to LRRSA  
members)  
Weight 320 gm

Postage and packing: Within Australia, 501 gm to 3 kg \$10.90, over 3 kg \$14.00

Send to: LRRSA Sales, P.O. Box 21, Surrey Hills Vic 3127, Fax (03) 5968 2484.

Payment may be made by cheque, money order, Mastercard or Visa.

Buy securely on line,  
see our web site:

[www.lrrsa.org.au](http://www.lrrsa.org.au)



## An invitation to join the LRRSA ...

Membership of the LRRSA offers you:

- Light Railways magazine, mailed to you six times a year
- Substantial discounts (usually 25%) on LRRSA publications
- Opportunity to purchase Light Railway News on CD-ROM
- Meetings in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney
- Tours to places of light railway interest

Annual Subscription for year ending 30 June 2010 is \$48.00

Includes LR Nos 208 to 213 (Overseas by airmail: NZ, PNG, Japan, South-east Asia - \$A60.00; Rest of world - \$A75.00).

- If joining in June or July pay \$48.00 (\$60.00/\$75.00 overseas) and receive 6 issues of Light Railways (Nos 208-213).
- If joining in August or September, pay \$40.00 (\$50.00/\$62.50 overseas) and receive 5 issues of Light Railways (Nos 209-213)
- If joining in October or November, pay \$32.00 (\$40.00/\$50.00 overseas) and receive 4 issues of Light Railways (Nos 210-213).
- If joining in December or January, pay \$24.00 (\$30.00/\$37.50 overseas) and receive 3 issues of Light Railways (Nos 211-213).

- If joining in February or March, pay \$16.00 (\$20.00/\$25.00 overseas) and receive 2 issues of Light Railways (Nos 212-213).
- If joining in April or May, pay \$56.00 (\$70.00/\$87.50 overseas) and receive 7 issues of Light Railways (Nos 213-219).

Application for membership of Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc. P.O. Box 21, Surrey Hills Vic 3127

I, \_\_\_\_\_  
(full name of applicant)

of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (address) \_\_\_\_\_ (postcode)

\_\_\_\_\_ (occupation)

desire to become a member of the Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc. In the event of my admission as a member, I agree to be bound by the rules of the Society for the time being in force. I enclose cheque/money order for \$48.00, or please charge my Visa/Mastercard No.

\_\_\_\_\_ Expires \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



# Heritage & Tourist

News items should be sent to the Editor, Bob McKillop, Facsimile (02) 9958 8687 or by mail to PO Box 674, St Ives NSW 2075.

Email address for H&T reports is: rfmckillop@bigpond.com

Digital photographs for possible inclusion in Light Railways should be sent direct to Bruce Belbin at: boxcargraphics@optusnet.com.au

## NEWS

### Queensland

#### **DURUNDUR RAILWAY, Woodford**

610mm gauge

#### **Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society Inc.**

Restoration of ex-QR rail motor trailer PL111 commenced in September 2009 and all interior fittings, seats, etc were removed and stored to allow an inspection of the previous restoration work. By June 2009 the body frames had been wire buffed and given a coat of paint. Flat steel was welded over the outer section of the frames to allow for replacement outer sheeting to be fitted and this work is currently underway. In addition, the former Nambour Sugar Mill bogie open wagon is being refurbished and prepared for accreditation as an additional maintenance vehicle.

During May and June 2010 volunteer gangs lifted, levelled and packed sections of the mainline track using air-operated ballast hammers. Deteriorating sleepers were replaced and sleepers were rebored and respiked as required. *Durundur Railway Bulletin #303*, May-June 2010.

#### **BUDERIM-PALMWOODS HERITAGE TRAMWAY TRAIL,**

**Buderim** 610mm gauge  
**Buderim-Palmwoods Heritage Tramway Inc.**

The society invited friends and supporters to Wise's Farm on 8 May

2010 to celebrate the completion of cosmetic restoration of the ex-Buderim Tramway Krauss 0-6-2T 6854 of 1914. The locomotive was displayed in the covered area that had been built for it when it was acquired in 2004, and the job done on it reflects very highly on the group responsible.

After the closure of the 2ft 6ins gauge Buderim Tramway, the locomotive was sent to Walkers at Maryborough in 1936 by its new owners, Gibson & Howes of the Bingera Sugar mill. Walkers regauged it to 2ft by the simple expedient of slicing its chassis down the centre and removing a 6-inch section. It worked at Bingera until 1960.

The locomotive had been acquired by Graham Chapman in 2000 as part of the estate of the late Mike Loveday. Graham sold it to the Buderim-Palmwoods Heritage Tramway for \$8000. He was present at the ceremony on 8 May.

Restoration costs were estimated to have been in the vicinity of \$30,000 with new side tanks fabricated and many missing fittings replaced or reproduced.

About 200 people attended the event including local council and parliamentary representatives. Following an initial informal inspection of the locomotive, the guests received country hospitality and heard speeches from a number of key players in the preservation effort. A commemorative plaque was

presented showing the names of the members of the small team that had worked on the locomotive. Discussions are under way with the Sunshine Coast Regional Council with a view to having the locomotive placed in a proposed display building close to the original Buderim Station. The Heritage Tramway group have restored a portion of the old tramway formation at Telco Road, Mons, as a walking track and propose to publish a book later in 2010 with a historical account of the tramway and the story of the restoration of the Krauss locomotive.

John Browning 05/10

### New South Wales

#### **RICHMOND MAIN HERITAGE PARK, Kurri Kurri**

1435mm gauge

#### **Richmond Vale Preservation Cooperative Society Ltd**

The RVR was represented at two sites during the 25th Hunter Valley Steamfest on 17-18 April 2010. The Society had a promotional and sales stall in the Federation Centre at the Steamfest site at Maitland while trains were operated at the main Kurri Kurri site in order to attract the general public to the museum.

0-4-OST *MARJORIE* (Clyde 462 of 1938) was passed for operation during the Steamfest event following mechanical repairs. The connecting and coupling rods had been removed to allow for the wheelset quartering

to be inspected, resulting in the connecting rod and the spherical roller bearings of the coupling rods being found to be badly worn and suffering from some corrosion. Machining of the coupling rod bearings was outsourced and new bearings were fitted, while a defective boiler tube was replaced. The locomotive performed acceptably over the Steamfest weekend, although several minor defects were detected.

*MARJORIE* was the only steam locomotive available for the Coalfields Steam weekend on 12-13 June. It operated the Mulbring Road shuttle service, while ex-BHP steelworks Bo-Bo DE 34 (A Goninan 3 of 1954) worked an hourly service to Pelaw Main and return. Between its passenger duties, *MARJORIE* also ran a short demonstration train of six restored non-air coal hopper wagons and brakevan to simulate an empty coal train arriving at a mine. There were good attendances, with some 1400 adult visitors over the weekend.

In order to get a SMR 10 Class 2-8-2T locomotive back into service, it has been decided to remove the boiler from No. 30 (Beyer Peacock 6294 of 1925). to carry out repair work and then fit it to No. 24 (Beyer Peacock 6125 of 1922), which is in better mechanical condition. Following wash-out of the boiler on 24, it was revealed that a large number of crown and wall stays will require replacement before it can be



The ex-Buderim Tramway Krauss 0-6-2T (B/N 6854 of 1914) at Wise's Farm during the ceremony to celebrate the completion of cosmetic restoration on 8 May 2010. Photos: John Browning



brought back into use. The repaired loco will be identified as No. 24. The former Maritime Services Board Planet 4wDM locomotive (FC Hibberd 3715 of 1952) has been returned to operational condition after an extended period in storage. A compression test revealed that No. 3 cylinder had no compression due to a misaligned valve pushrod badly damaging the camshaft follower. This was found to be beyond repair, but fortunately the Lachlan Valley Railway was able to provide a replacement to the Society at a price beneficial to both parties. Following replacement of the camshaft follower and the fitting

of new covers and gaskets to the cylinder block, the engine was tested and passed with no problems. Two bulk tank wagons donated to the RVR by Koppers Australia Pty Limited arrived at the Richmond Main base on 4 June 2010. These tank wagons had been used to transport tar from their Newcastle works, adjacent to the former BHP steelworks, to locations around New South Wales. Most of these tank wagons had been converted to bolster wagons, so these two make a very welcome addition to the RVR collection of industrial rail vehicles used in the Newcastle areas. *Link Line 154, Autumn 2010*

## TIMBERTOWN, Wauchope

610mm gauge

### David and Alison Waite

Updating the report in LR 211 (p. 35), the new proprietors officially took over the Timbertown complex in early June 2010. Five new attractions will be operating by the mid-year school holidays, including a new miniature railway, with the 2010 'Timbertown Steam Festival' scheduled for 10-11 July. David Waite has announced that he hopes to have the Timbertown Steam Heritage Railway operating by Christmas 2010.

*Port Macquarie News, 23 June 2010, via Barry Blair's 'Inside Rail News'*

## Victoria

### STATE COAL MINE WONTHAGGI

610mm gauge

#### Parks Victoria

The Eastern Area of the State Coal Mine was re-opened for tourists in Easter 2010 after being closed in 2004 to allow upgrading of mine safety to be carried out. Visitors can inspect an interesting collection of authentic mine buildings (all of which have been relocated from other sites). The largest building contains the museum with a wide range of mining implements, artefacts and historical photographs. The State Coal Mine was a unique enterprise, whose history is well documented in the museum. Opened in 1909 as a result of the NSW miners' strike and consequent shortage of black coal for the Victorian Railways steam locomotives, the mine worked until final closure in 1968 and was operated throughout by the VR.

Underground tours are conducted to the first level where a maze of tunnels and equipment can be seen, all virtually in original condition as left by the last miners in 1968. The Wonthaggi mine was regarded as one of the most dangerous and wettest coal mines in Australia and levels below the first level remain flooded. There are two inclined tunnels at the Eastern Area separated by about 50 metres. Tours currently access the mine by the Back Heading and walk in about 500 metres to the first level. This is a temporary arrangement until the cable haulage in the Main Heading is commissioned. New rails have been laid in the tunnel and a passenger platform has been constructed outside the tunnel entrance. A new engine house sits at the top of the incline which previously gave access to the coal sorting and loading structure built over the VR's broad gauge line, and a new cable is in place on the incline. It is understood that a new covered man-car has been manufactured in Bendigo but is presently undergoing modifications before being commissioned in the near future. Prior to the closure in 2004, converted open steel trucks with wooden bench seats were used for the carriage of visitors. The historic area is managed by Parks Victoria and tours are conducted by volunteers, chiefly former miners and CFA members



*0-4-0ST MARJORIE (Clyde Eng 462 of 1938) heading a short demonstration train of non-air coal hopper wagons and brakevan at the Coalfields Steam weekend on 12-13 June. Photo: Graham Black*



*One of the two bulk tank wagons donated to the Richmond Vale Railway by Koppers Australia Pty Limited being unloaded at the Richmond Main base on 4 June 2010. Photo: Graham Black*



## Heritage & Tourist

who were responsible for mine rescue. There are picnic facilities and walking tracks which encompass much of the remaining relics of the mining era. Malcolm Dow 7/10

### WALHALLA GOLDFIELDS RAILWAY 762mm gauge Walhalla Goldfields Railway Inc.

As part of the ceremonies to mark the centenary of the opening of the Moe–Walhalla Railway, the Puffing Billy Railway made NA class locomotive 7A available to run six trips between Walhalla and Thomson on the weekend of 29–30 May (LR 213, p. 36).

The locomotive was transported by low-loader from Menzies Creek to Walhalla on Wednesday 26 May, and a number of test trips were made over the following two days. During these test runs, and on Saturday 29 May, the locomotive wore the number plates of 9A, reverting to its correct identity for the Sunday runs, and was fitted with two whistles. The original 9A hauled the Ministerial train carrying official dignitaries into Walhalla on the opening day in 1910 and spent much more of its life on the line than 7A. The railway between Platina and Walhalla was closed in 1944 and between Erica and Platina in 1951.

Those who travelled on the Saturday had the better conditions weather wise and, according to Frank Stamford, who rode behind the loco in the 'flat-bed' car on the return leg of the day's first trip, it was a sensational experience, assaulting all the senses in a very positive way. The sound of the loco working hard in the narrow valley and echoing off the rock cutting was extraordinary. Frank concluded that the \$79 fare faded into insignificance against one of the most memorable train trips he had ever made.

Several passengers have reported that travelling behind that locomotive up the grades on wet rails, around the unceasing sharp curves with the narrow rocky creek bed below and the rock cutting close by on the right-hand side, left them with unforgettable sound and sight experiences of a steam locomotive working hard in a very special environment. David Lowe inspired

by the steady 'chouf chouf' of the loco echoing in the steep valleys followed by some slipping on the damp track and a rapid 'chofa choufa choufa' as she gained traction again.

Visitors on the Sunday were greeted with heavy rain that had turned small streams into raging torrents. Departure of the 1300 train was delayed for 75 minutes while two landslips were cleared, resulting in late running for the remainder of the day. John Dennis, who rode on this train with his wife, reported that while it rained pretty much continuously

the whole time they were on the train, all the windows remained open without a single complaint. The sound of 7A (running with its proper number) blasting up through Stringers Gorge was an amazing experience, rounded off with the odd bout of wheel slip.

*Light Railways* joins the satisfied visitors on the day in extending its congratulations to the Walhalla Goldfields Railway and the Puffing Billy Railway for making this remarkable event happen.

Frank Stamford, John Dennis, David Lowe through LRRSA Yahoo Group, 28-31 May 2010

## Tasmania

### WEE GEORGE WOOD STEAM RAILWAY, Tullah 610mm gauge Wee George Wood Steam Railway Inc.

Thanks to the hard work put in by volunteers of this dedicated railway preservation group in the small and isolated community of Tullah, it is possible to see and ride behind the locomotive that once provided its link to the outside world. Mother Nature generally placed the more valuable minerals in locations that were inconvenient and at times quite inhospitable, and Tullah in Tasmania's west



*At the State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi, a collection of old skips and wagons sits near the entrance to the main heading tunnel. The inclined cable haulage into the heading, recently upgraded for tourist operations, is on the right together with a new passenger platform at the top of the grade and the new winding house and machinery shed in the background. Landscaping is yet to be completed.*

*Photo: Malcolm Dow*



*The overhaul and rebuild of a former Queensland Railways Innisfail Tramway 610mm gauge HHB wagon, obtained from Mourilyan Sugar Mill, is nearing completion in a Melbourne workshop. It is planned for utilise the rebuilt vehicle as a heavy-duty flat car.*

*Photo: Peter Newett*



coast area is one of those places. The exploitation of Tasmania's minerals began seriously in the last decade of the 19th century by which time the colonial government had commenced providing railways in some of the more remote areas of the island.

The first railway on the West Coast was the private line from Burnie to Waratah in 1884 and, as the Emu Bay Railway, this was extended to Zeehan by 1892. The EBR bypassed the Tullah community and its silver-lead mines so a horse-worked tramway was built to a location 13.5km away to the north, called Boco, where a tranship

connection could be made with the EBR, thereby enabling transport of the minerals to the port of Burnie. A function was held in Tullah on 26 November 1902 to celebrate the opening of the North Mount Farrell Tramway.

This timber-railed tramway was rebuilt in 1908 as a steel tramway on a new route to connect with the EBR line at Farrell Junction 10km to the west. Second-hand locomotives were initially used, but a new locomotive was purchased from John Fowler & Company in 1924 (B/N 16203). The small 0-4-0WT was known as *WEE GEORGIE WOOD* as its small

size was associated with a British comedian of the time. It was subsequently joined by a sister Fowler locomotive (17732 of 1928), christened *WEE MARY WOOD*, and in 1949 by a Krauss 0-4-0WT (5988 of 1908) that had formally worked at the Mt Lyell Mine.

With the opening of the Rosebery to Tullah section of the Murchison Highway in 1962 most of the tramway was closed, although *WEE GEORGIE WOOD* continued to work the short section of line from between the mine and flotation plant until mid-1964. A small group of steam train enthusiasts formed the Wee Georgie Wood Steam

Railway Inc in 1977 to restore *WEE GEORGIE WOOD* to operating condition and to relay a short section of the tramway.

Given the small size of the community and its remote location, the efforts of the group in maintaining the line and providing a regular schedule of operating days between September and May each year has been remarkable (LR 211, p. 36). Your reporter was at Tullah early for the running day on 20 February 2010. Tasmania's only female accredited steam locomotive driver (as she proudly told this writer) was in the shed preparing the loco for the day's activities. Once steam was raised, she prepared the train of *WEE GEORGIE WOOD*, a carriage and water truck for the first run at 10am. The journey is along a kilometre or so of undulating track between balloon loops at each end of the line. Noted in the running shed was the 0-4-0WT Krauss 5988. Its last boiler was outside outside the shed together with the remains of an Orenstein & Koppel loco bearing plate 4241.

It is not always easy to be in the "right place at the right time" when on holidays, but if you visit Tasmania [as you should], planning to be in Tullah on the appropriate day would be most rewarding. The enthusiastic people there deserve our support. Brian Webber 02/10



Brian Webber photographed Fowler 0-4-0WT *WEE GEORGIE WOOD* (16203 of 1924) at the end of the track following its run from Tullah station during the Wee Georgie Wood running day on 20 February 2010. It will use the loop to run around its train and head back from whence it came.



National Railway Museum's stalwart Ron Fluck lifts the tarpaulin to show two of the stored ex-Stenhouse Bay 610mm gauge locomotives, the rebuilt Malcolm Moore 4wDM with a Deutz engine (in the foreground) and Ruston & Hornsby 4wDM 306 (393981 of 1956) on 16 April 1998. Photo: Bob McKillop

## South Australia

### NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM, Port Adelaide

457/610/1067/1435/1600mm gauges  
Port Dock Station Museum (SA) Inc.

The NRM has reached an agreement with Cobdogla Steam Friends Inc. to transfer its three former Waratah Gypsum Pty Limited 610mm gauge locomotives to Cobdogla on permanent loan. These locos, which operated at Stenhouse Bay (see LR 162, pp. 7-13), are 4wDM 304 (Ruston & Hornsby 187078 of 1939), 4wDM 306 304 (Ruston & Hornsby 393981 of 1956) and a Malcolm Moore 4wDM numbered 1514 with a Deutz diesel engine and which worked as the jetty shunter until 1963. They were donated to the Mile End Railway Museum in 1971 and were transferred to Port Adelaide when the museum was relocated to that site. They have been stored there under tarpaulins on a section of 610mm gauge track.

Denis Wasley and Editor 06/10

## Western Australia

### **BENNETT BROOK RAILWAY, Whiteman Park** 610mm gauge **WA Light Railway Preservation Assoc. Inc.**

The 'New Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine' Day on 23 May drew good crowds and visitors enjoyed the festivities. Two trains operating around the main loop—NG15 2-8-2 123 (Anglo Franco Belge 2670 of 1951) heading the summer rolling stock and 0-6-ODM *ROSALIE* (John Fowler 4110019 of 1950) with the corridor rolling stock operated trains – while 0-4-ODM *PLANET* (Hibberd 2150 of 1938) and 4wDM *ASHLEY* (Kless Eng. 1986) operated the toast-rack and heritage carriages 'top and tail' on shuttle services between Mussel Pool and Whiteman Village Junction stations. Unfortunately Perry 0-4-2T *BETTY THOMPSON* (8967.39.1 of 1939) suffered a cracked steam pipe prior to the event and was not available. In addition, NG15 123 requires new superheater elements and, as they were not available for the steam season, blank pipes were fitted, rendering it a saturated locomotive until new superheater pipes can be fitted. This loco subsequently suffered a broken spring on the rear pony truck and has been removed from service.

WALRPA members were saddened to hear of the death of Ron Watson on 30 May. Ron is regarded as the 'Father' of the association, particularly as all five of his children became involved in the group and the Bennett Brook Railway. The Watson home at Hazelmere was the focus of early WALRPA meetings and its yard housed the rolling stock that became the nucleus of the BBR. When the two NG15 locomotives arrived at Whiteman Park, it was Ron, an ex-WAGR driver, who provided the expertise to get them into service and train new drivers. A special function was held at Whiteman Park on Sunday 6 June in memory of Ron, at which the crew of NG15 123 put the locomotive on the turntable and blew the whistle three times to signal a minute's silence.

*BBR Newsletter*, February 2010;  
BBR website News, 17 February 2010

## Coming Events

### AUGUST 2010

**1 Durundur Railway, Woodford, QLD.** Narrow gauge steam train rides on the first and third Sunday of the month between 10am and 4pm. Picnic and barbecue facilities on site. Information: (07) 5496 1976

**1 Ballyhooley Steam Railway, QLD.** This narrow gauge railway operates steam trains between Marina Mirage station and Port Douglas every Sunday and on selected public holidays from 1020 to 1500. Information: (07) 4099 1839.

**1-2 Kerrisdale Mountain Railway & Museum, VIC.** This scenic narrow gauge railway and steam museum is open to the public from 1000-1600 Thursday to Monday and public holidays. Steam engines run in the museum each Sunday. Information, phone (03) 5797 0227 or website: [www.kerrisdalemtnrailway.com.au](http://www.kerrisdalemtnrailway.com.au)

**7-8 Red Cliffs Historical Steam Railway, VIC.** Narrow gauge steam operations with trains rides every half-hour 1100-1600 using Kerr Stuart steam and EM Baldwin diesel locomotives, 1100-1600 and the first weekend of following months. Enquiries: (03) 5024 1345.

**7-8 Redwater Creek Steam Railway, Sheffield, TAS.** Narrow gauge steam train operations on the first weekend of every month. Information: [www.redwater.org.au](http://www.redwater.org.au)

**8 Alexandra Timber Tramway, VIC.** Narrow gauge steam train operations 1000-1545. Also on 22nd with diesel-hauled trains as an early Fathers' Day event. Phone (03) 5772 2392 (running days) or 0427 509 988 for information and bookings.

### SEPTEMBER 2010

**11-12 Alexandra Timber Tramway, VIC.** Narrow gauge train operations 1000-1545, with market day on 11th (petrol locos) and steam trains on 12th. Diesel-hauled trains on Sunday 26 September. Phone (03) 5772 2392 (running days) or 0427 509 988 for information and bookings.

**18-19 Richmond Vale Railway, Kurri Kurri, NSW.** Family Fun Fest from 10am with steam and former industrial diesel locos providing train rides each day and a wide range of other family attractions. Phone (02) 4937 5344 or (02) 4538 0190.

**19 Bennett Brook Railway, Whiteman Park, WA.** 'New Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine Day' with unlimited narrow gauge train and vintage bus rides, live jazz from 0930-1600. Tickets \$15 per person for whole day (discounts for advance purchase). Bookings (08) 9534 3215

**?? Wee George Wood Steam Railway, Tullah, TAS.** This delightful narrow gauge railway usually commences its steam season on the last Sunday of September, but LR was unable to obtain confirmation of the 2010-11 operating dates prior to going to press. Please check for updates at: [www.tullah.org/wgw/](http://www.tullah.org/wgw/)

### OCTOBER 2010

**1 Puffing Billy Railway, Emerald, VIC.** A special open day with a variety of narrow gauge steam trains. These include a special mixed train organised by the Climax Restoration Committee that will provide better than usual sights, scenes and photo opportunities. Limited seats are available, so book early on (03) 9757 0700.

**3 Cobdogla Irrigation Museum, SA.** Open Day with Humphrey pump and narrow gauge steam train operations. Also Halloween twilight diesel-hauled train on Sunday 30 October. Phone (08) 8588 2323.

**9-10 Alexandra Timber Tramway, VIC.** Narrow gauge steam train operations 1000-1545, with 'Woodies Gala' and Market Day on 9th. Diesel-hauled trains on Sunday 24 September. Phone (03) 5772 2392 (running days) or 0427 509 988 for information and bookings.

**9-10 Puffing Billy Railway, Emerald, VIC.** Day out with Thomas, with Thomas the Tank Engine in full steam and entertainment for the whole family. Also on 16-17 and 23-24 October and 6-7 November. Bookings essential on (03) 9757 0700.

Note: Please send information on coming events to Bob McKillop – [rfmckillop@bigpond.com](mailto:rfmckillop@bigpond.com) – or the Editor, Light Railways, PO Box 674, St Ives NSW 2070. The deadline for the October issue is 27 August.

## Overseas

### SANDSTONE ESTATES,

**South Africa** 610mm gauge  
**Sandstone Heritage Trust**

This extensive working heritage railway was last reported in LR 196 (p. 39), while we had a more lengthy report in LR 186 (p. 28). A private steam week highlighting just the railway was held at Sandstone Estate between 19 and 25 April 2010 for those who had booked and paid for the Megapower 2010 event before it was cancelled due to poor ticket sales. Volunteer crews were to be made up from event guests who operated the trains, with the qualifications of two WALPRA members from the Bennett Brook Railway in Perth who attended being accepted by South African rail safety authorities. Due to the Iceland volcanic eruption, ten crew members from the Welsh Highland Railway were marooned in the United Kingdom, leaving only four qualified crew members among the visitors. Workshop staff at Sandstone helped out with train operations.

During the week all 17 restored steam locomotives on site at Sandstone were steamed and travelled over the estate's railway. A highlight was the return to steam for the first time since 1992 of Garratt 2-6-2+2-6-2 NGG16 88 (Cockerill 3268 of 1937) following its restoration. This gives Sandstone Estates a working example of a Garratt 2-6-2+2-6-2 from each of the builders of the former SAR narrow gauge Garratt locomotives. NGG13 49 (Hanomag 10599 of 1928), NGG16 113 (Beyer Peacock 6923 of 1939) and NGG16 153 (Hunslet Taylor 3898 of 1968) complete the collection.

An organised tour group visited Sandstone from 24 to 27 May. Trains were operated as photographic charters making full use of the scenic potential that exists on the more than 15 kilometres of track on the estate, using a variety of rolling stock. Following this, Sandstone's green 4-4-0 'Lawley' (Falcon 233 of 1895) was transported south by road and made a brief visit to the Avontuur line on 1 June, to double-head a charter train for the same tour group in partnership with the Apple Express NG15 locomotive. Both visiting groups report that the organisation and hospitality at the estate was magnificent. Further information is available at: <http://www.sandstone-estates.com/>  
Bob Baker 05/10; John Browning 07/10





The dramatic setting of the Sandstone Estates Railway in South Africa is evident in this shot of the two former Beira Railway 'Lawley' 4-4-0 locomotives double heading a mixed train on 26 May 2010 with a 'vintage' team of oxen adding to the effect. Beira Railway 7 (Falcon 233 of 1895) restored to its original condition by the Sandstone Trust heads its sister (Falcon 263 of 1897), owned by the James Hall Museum of Transport and restored by Sandstone to its subsequent identity as SAR NG697. Photo: John Browning

□ Big and Little on 610mm gauge: ex-South African NG15 2-8-2 123 (Anglo Franco Belge 2670 of 1951) rests in the loop at Mussel Pool station with the recently recommissioned water tank wagon during the Bennett Brook Railway's 'New Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine' Day on 23 May, while the diminutive 4wDM ASHLEY and 0-4-ODM PLANET arrive at the platform with a shuttle service from Whiteman Village Junction. Ex-WAGR explosives van D33, converted to 610mm gauge and painted with a recreation of 1950s advertising van livery on one side, completes the composition of this interesting photograph by Neil Blinco.





