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LIGHT RAILWAYS

Australia's Magazine of Industrial & Narrow Gauge Railways



Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc.



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Australia's Magazine of Industrial and Narrow Gauge Railways

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Conversions:

1 inch (in)	25.40 millimetres
1 foot (ft)	0.30 metre
1 yard (yd)	0.91 metre
1 chain	20.11 metre
1 mile	1.60 kilometres
1 super foot	0.00236 cubic metre
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

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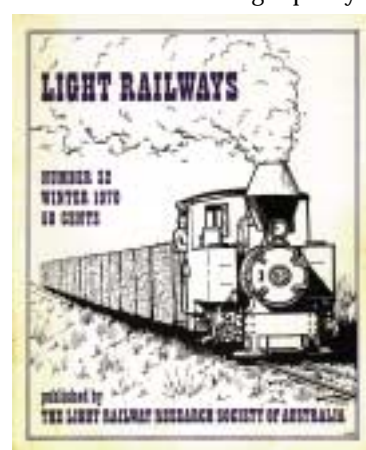
Comment

Thirty years ago, John Gorton was Prime Minister, our troops were in Vietnam, and LRRSA members were reading the Winter 1970 edition of *Light Railways*.

Then, as now, feature articles filled the front half of the magazine, and news and letters the rear. News reports in LR 32 included the latest on the South Maitland and Richmond Vale Railways in NSW, some Queensland sugar mills that were still operating steam locomotives and, from WA, the untimely demise of Bunning Bros' Donnelly River Mill line. A nice shot of Kerr Stuart 0-4-2T 742 of 1901 "preserved" in a playground at Redcliffs, Victoria, adorned the back page.

In the Letters section, subjects included "Baguley Steam Locomotives in South Australia" and "Ada Valley Report", both accompanied by some interesting photos.

Either of the two feature articles, "To Rocky Bluff..." by Gerry Verhoeven (part two of a series on the Stannary Hills to Irvinebank Tramway) and "The Oceana Tramway" by Wayne Chynoweth, would fit comfortably into today's magazine. A reminder that the high quality of our features is not a recent phenomenon.



The hard-hitting Editorial urged members to moderate their "love of the locomotive" and turn their attention to matters of "greater general interest", though the subject matter suggested didn't sound all that interesting.

LR then contained a lot less colour than it does today, but its visual appeal was much enhanced by John Thompson's and Graeme Evans' fine cover illustrations. LR 32 featured John's impression of Millaquin No.6 hauling cane to the mill in July 1970, and this month's cover, of the same subject, is offered both as a contrast with and as a tribute to the *Light Railways* of 30 years ago, and to those intrepid souls who produced it. *Bruce Belbin*

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.

Cover: In September 1973, Millaquin Mill's 'Bundy Fowler' 0-6-2T No.6 (Bundaberg Foundry 6 of 1952) heads towards the mill with a load of chopped cane. Photo: Graeme Belbin

Mining Railways at Cobar

by Bob McKillop

2. The Great Cobar Copper Syndicate Era, 1894-1906

Introduction

The Great Cobar copper mine, the dominant industrial enterprise on the Cobar mineral field, closed in 1889 (see LR 149). The Company was unable to work the mine profitably due to low copper prices and the high cost of transport and labour in the far west of New South Wales. Hopes for a revival came with the official opening of the Nyngan to Cobar railway on 1 July 1892. However, the colony was in the grip of a general depression, and low metal prices prevailed.

Prospects changed in January 1894 when William Longworth arrived at Cobar to take over the management of the Great Cobar Copper Mine on behalf of the tribute syndicate which had leased the mine.¹ This was the start of a 12-year period of expansion and profitability for the Great Cobar mine. The Syndicate, initially as tributor and then as owner, guided the Great Cobar through difficult years and then expanded it into the largest copper mine in the new Commonwealth of Australia. It introduced efficient new treatment techniques for the difficult Cobar ores, gave work to a large force of miners and other workmen and helped make the Nyngan-Cobar railway the most profitable in the State. The key to this success was the expert management and

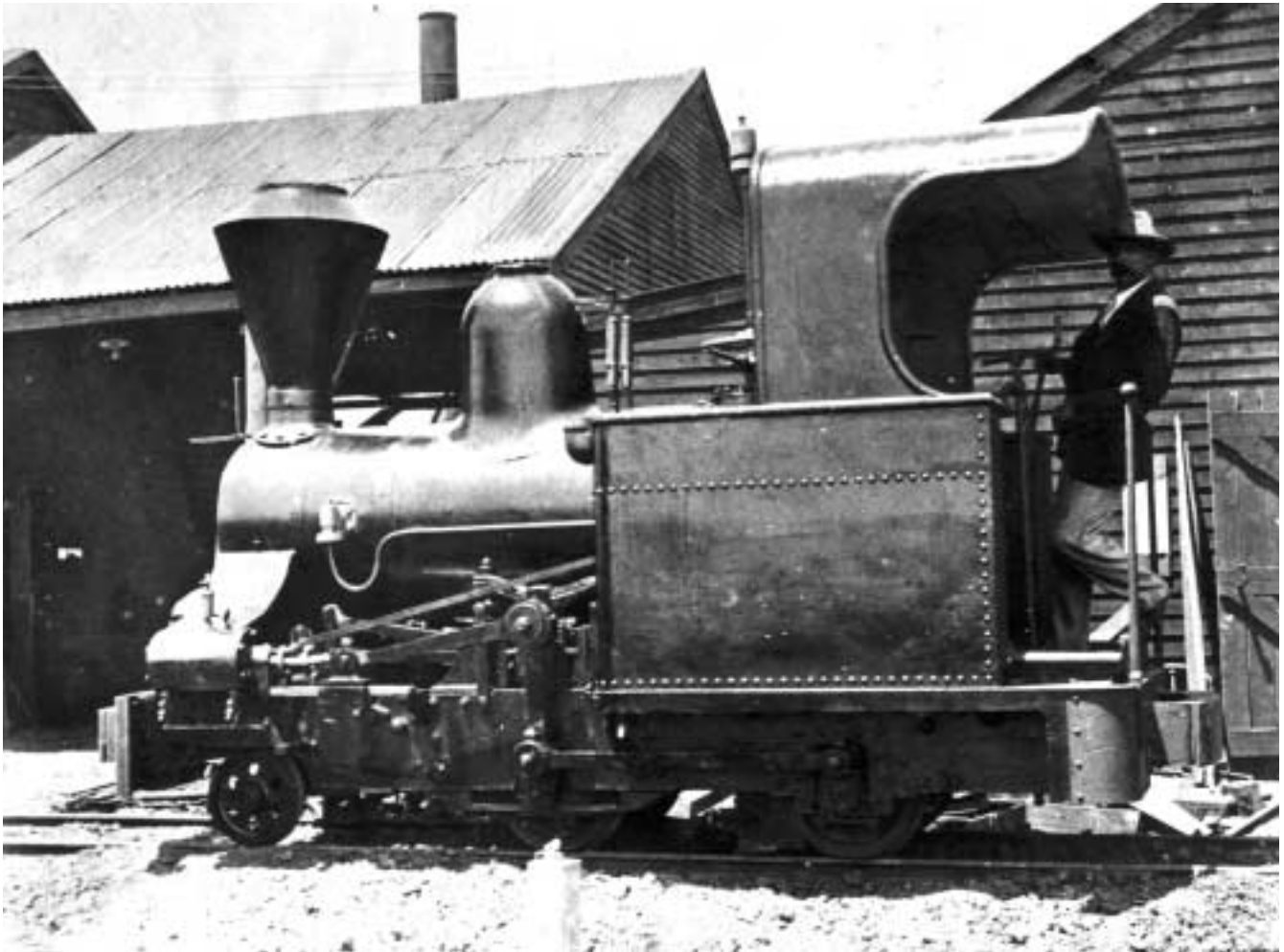
guidance of the brothers William and Thomas Longworth. The Longworths' first-hand experience of manual mining work provided credibility in their efforts to establish effective, practical man-to-man relations with their workforce. The management expertise of the Longworths in saving the mine and bringing it to profitability drew comparisons with the efforts of the Great Cobar Copper Mining Company which had managed the mine between 1875 and 1889. These were invariably unfavourable to the Company, and contributed to the standing of the Longworth brothers among Australia's leading mine managers.

This article examines the operation and development of the mine under the Great Cobar Copper Syndicate. It looks at the industrial railways used by the Syndicate for their surface operations and relates these to the wider social and economic aspects of mining operations in an isolated district of the vast Orana Region of New South Wales.

The Syndicate

William Longworth (1847-1928) was only two years old when his parents, Thomas and Rose, migrated to Australia with his younger brother James (1849-1897). The Longworth family arrived at Farm Cove, Sydney in February 1850. Thomas had an Agreement or Contract as a collier with the Australian Agricultural Company. Over the next 16 years, seven more children were born, a third son, Thomas (1857-1927) and six daughters.²

In 1878, William (aged 31), Thomas Jnr (aged 21) and their father opened a coal mine named Ellesmere, at Rix's Creek



John Fowler jackshaft drive locomotive in original condition at the Great Cobar workshops. The electric light in the background indicates that this photograph was taken after 1896 and therefore that at least one of the John Fowler locos was used by the syndicate at this time.

Photo: late Wal Snelson collection

near Singleton. By 1883 there were 14 employees at Ellesmere and a second tunnel was opened to the same seam and named New Park. However, a tragic mining accident on 30 September 1884 resulted in the death of Thomas senior and another miner. The Mines Inspector publicly commended William for his heroic rescue effort. He took responsibility for the welfare of his mother and sisters, but the basis for this support was the close partnership he developed with Thomas. Everything they did was as equal partners, and a unique bond was forged between the two which was only broken by Thomas' death 43 years later. According to Thomas' grandson, John Crane, William was the entrepreneur and Thomas the administrator³. William brought forward a constant stream of new ideas, and it was Thomas' role to get the administrative processes in place to make them work, while William went on to new things.

Around 1885 the Longworths formed a syndicate with Dr Richard Read, a general practitioner at Singleton, who had a neighbouring mine, and AJ Gould (later Sir Albert Gould), a Singleton solicitor and Member of Parliament. William looked to expand their enterprise by setting up coke ovens. However, they had difficulty selling their coke. William Longworth's response was to set up a smelting plant based on the Bessemer principle and so use the coke. He engaged Mr Dunstan, a Welsh copper specialist metallurgist who had previously managed the Great Cobar mine, to manage the plant. The Longworths turned to Cobar copper ore as a potential use for the coke, apparently on Dunstan's advice.⁴ William Longworth obtained permission to break 200 tons of ore, which he treated in his furnaces, and calculated that he could smelt the low grade ore at a profit.⁵ He next persuaded the others to take the Cobar mine on tribute for three years. To help finance the expansion, two new members were brought into the Syndicate, Mr AA Dangar, and WW Robinson, editor of the Singleton paper and husband of Mary Longworth.⁶ They operated as the Great Cobar Copper-mining Syndicate.

The Syndicate tendered to mine sections of the workings for a percentage per ton of copper mined, working in their own hours and conditions. A clause in the contract with the Great Cobar Company was that within six months, 50 tons of ore should be treated daily.⁷ However, the Syndicate saw the task so daunting under the prevailing conditions that when the Great Cobar Company wanted to include a clause in the tribute agreement for the tributors to have an option to buy the property during the tribute period at a price of £40,000, the Syndicate had it struck out.⁸ It was a decision they were to later regret.

The Tribute period

From the outset, the Syndicate announced its intention of erecting water-jacket furnaces at Cobar to treat the ore.⁹ Coal and coke, the latter to be obtained from the Syndicate's mine at Singleton, were to be used as fuel. A small, second-hand 30-ton furnace commenced operations on 26 March 1894, when 100 men were employed at the mine.¹⁰ Limestone was carted 26 miles for fluxing and coke was railed from Singleton.

A more immediate initiative enabled the tributors to work the mine at a profit, despite the Sydney price of copper being only £39 a ton in 1894. The Great Cobar Company had sold their copper ingots to Sydney-based representatives of an English firm of metal refiners for less than Chilean copper bars. Late in 1894, William Longworth directed the attention of the Sydney buyers of the copper to the fact that it contained on average about 2oz of gold per ton.¹¹ The result was an

immediate improvement of £7 per ton in the price paid for the copper.

With improved processing and higher prices, William Longworth had achieved profitability by 1895. A larger 60-ton furnace commenced operations in April 1895.¹² In 1894-95 the tributors produced 1,703 tons of smelted copper, valued at £68,120, from 37,845 tons of ore raised,¹³ a 50 per cent increase over the highest quantity of ore mined by the old company (in 1886). However, high railway freight rates to Cobar were regarded as a major constraint to the further development of the mine. High "local rates" were in force for the Nyngan-Cobar line until it achieved "profitability" in 1900. As low differential freight rates applied to Bourke, the Syndicate had most of its machinery and stores railed to that centre, then transported to Cobar by teams.

By mid-1896, the water-jacket furnaces were reported to be very successful, despite the prejudices of the old Cornish miners.¹⁴ There were 450 miners employed, together with 160 teams. A new shaft was sunk at the northern end of the mine as the winding shaft for the upper levels. Electricity was introduced in early 1896 for lighting purposes with a 12hp steam engine driving the dynamo. A *Sydney Morning Herald* correspondent concluded that: *To see the mine in full swing again cheers the people of this pushing town, because it means the employment of many men and the circulation of much money.*

William Longworth's initiative in treating low-grade ore in water-jacket furnaces effected a complete revolution in the industry. Whereas the old company had been tied by the obstinate adherence to an *obsolete system of the Swansea smelter, the Syndicate had brought a more modern, economic and efficient method of reducing the ores.*¹⁵

The skill of the Longworths in bringing the mine back to prosperity was a boon for the old Great Cobar Copper Mining Company. At the 40th half-yearly meeting in February 1896, the directors reported that their anticipation of excellent profits from royalties had been amply fulfilled.¹⁶ For no effort on their part, two dividends of 6d per share had been paid during the half-year and the accounts showed the sum of £4852 profit remaining. The value of the company's shares had risen from 1s 2d in 1893 to 29s each in June 1896.¹⁷

In June 1896 the Syndicate announced that they would establish an electrolytic plant at Lithgow, which would enable



Underground working at the Great Cobar, c.1896. Ingersoll-Sargent air drills had recently been introduced. Photo: Cobar Regional Museum



A view of the water-jacket furnaces in the foreground (c.1896), with the elevated tramway to the old furnaces in the background. Note the lower level narrow gauge line in the foreground for transporting coke to the furnaces. Photo: Cobar Regional Museum

them to extract the gold and silver from the Cobar copper before sale.¹⁸ William Longworth transferred to Lithgow to supervise the establishment of the new works in June 1896 and Thomas took over management of the Cobar operations.¹⁹ Dr Read was the general manager for the Syndicate and generally acted as its spokesperson.

A third water-jacket furnace commenced operations in 1898, a fourth furnace was under construction and there were plans for the erection of another.²⁰ By this time the Syndicate was using 780 tons of coke a month and paying £1500 per month in railway freight. There were now 600 to 700 men employed at the mine, and the electric lighting system was upgraded to enable it to be worked day and night.²¹ The workshops had been upgraded and it was reported that *the syndicate makes its own furnaces as well as doing its own castings, turnings and repairs on the ground.*²² Copper was worth £72 a ton in 1898, so the mine was highly profitable. One media estimate was that the mine was generating a profit of about £150,000 per year (equivalent to \$2 million in 2000 terms), after paying £60,000 in royalties to the Company.²³ The profit was divided among the five members of the Syndicate.

Industrial railway applications

Narrow-gauge railways provided the transport mode for ore and materials around the mine. Traditional underground mining methods were employed. By 1896, five Ingersoll-Sargent air-drills were at work in the mine.²⁴ The early drills were cumbersome to use and contributed to harsh working conditions underground. The drills made appalling noise and generated clouds of dust. The ore broken was loaded into 15 cwt skips and hand-pushed on an extensive system of tramways to the plat. When a sufficient number of trucks accumulated, they were sent up in the cage and the corresponding number of empties returned. On the surface, ore was trucked to the calcinating heaps or direct to the old reverberatory furnaces over elevated tramways. Additional

elevated tramways were constructed to the water-jacket furnaces from 1894, and these were expanded as new furnaces were added.

Coke for the water-jacket furnaces was initially railed from the Singleton works to Cobar railway station, from where it was transported to the mine by local carriers. Narrow-gauge (2ft 6ins) lines were constructed from the workshop to the coke yard and from there back to the water-jacket furnaces. Coke was trucked by hand over these lines to feed the furnaces.

In 1897, a short standard gauge branch line, officially known as the Coppermine Branch, was opened from the railway station to the mine, where it terminated in parallel sidings adjacent to the smelters. Wagons conveying coke were shunted over the branch by a NSWGR locomotive. At the mine, coke was transferred to wagons on an adjacent 2ft 6in gauge siding, which conveyed the fuel to the furnaces. It is believed these wagons were hand-pushed.

Firewood was still required for the calcinating heaps, which were constructed on a larger scale than previously with 1000 to 1500 tons of ore in each heap. It was a labour intensive activity, with the ore transported to the roasting heaps in hand-pushed trucks over temporary tracks and then railed back to the smelters after treatment. About 2500 tons of firewood was used per month. However, the former 2ft 6ins gauge firewood tramway saw little use by the Syndicate, it being claimed in 1896 that they could *supply the wood cheaper by horse and bullock teams and hence (allow) the discontinuance of the tramway.*²⁵ At this time, teamsters desperate for work during the ongoing depression in the region, and facing increased competition from railways and camel teams, were prepared to offer very competitive rates. However, at least one of the firewood tramway locomotives was brought into operating condition and photographed after the introduction of electricity in 1896. It is therefore possible that the firewood tramway saw some use around this time.

Growing Prosperity

With the Great Cobar mine generating a sound economic base, other mines were revived in the Cobar district, and the community looked to the new century with optimism. There had been a rush of claims between Cobar and The Peak in 1896 and a number of substantial gold mines were operating in the district. The Cobar Mining Company (Chesney) was taken over by men of capital in 1898, as was the Occidental. By July 1899, the English-owned Cobar Gold Mine (Fort Bourke), was reported to be in possession of the largest gold mining plant in Australia.²⁶ The infrastructure included a 100-head battery and a huge water reservoir known as O'Gorman's Tank. The Great Peak Freehold G M Company, situated on the hill known as the Peak about 5 miles from Cobar, was showing a lot of promise and the village of Illewong had grown up to service this area.

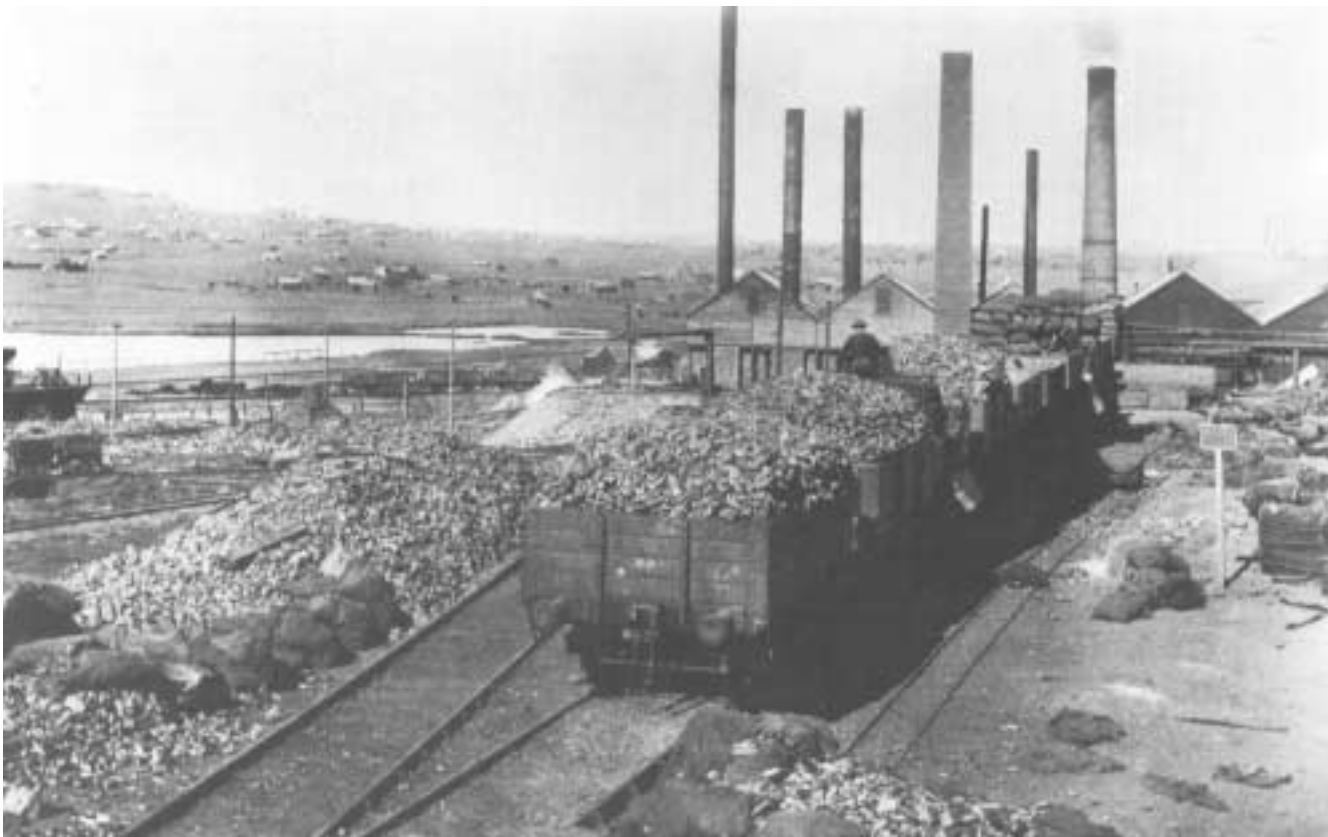
The town of Cobar grew rapidly through the 1890s as men migrated in to seek work in the mines and set up their families in the emerging "suburbs". These included Cornishtown near the Great Cobar mine, North Cobar around the railway facilities, Dapville, Wrightville serving the Fort Bourke Hill mines, Reservoirtown and Schooltown. The population grew from 1500 in 1894 to 6000 by the turn of the century and buildings of substance replaced the temporary structures of the early years. Many of Cobar's outstanding heritage buildings on the Register of the National Estate date from this period. Although Cobar's Court House was built in 1887, extensions were made in 1899, while Thomas Longworth built an imposing residence on the corner of Linsley and Blakey Streets in 1899 for the mine doctor. Now known as *Longworth*, this heritage property houses a quality restaurant. In the business district, the two-storey Grand Hotel opened in 1898, closely followed by one of the finest Federation era hotels in country New South Wales, the Great Western Hotel, which opened in August

1898. Double-decker horse-drawn buses ran from the main street, Marshall Street, to Wrightville, which became a separate municipality in 1899. However, in contrast to the electric lighting at the Great Cobar mine, the town continued to rely on kerosene street lamps.

In their annual report for the year ended 30 June 1900, the Railway Commissioners noted with satisfaction that *the line between Nyngan and Cobar has been removed from the list of non-paying lines.*²⁷ This provided the basis for a reduction in railway freight rates. It was also a signal for the residents of Cobar to petition for an improved train service to their prosperous town. Upgraded train services were finally obtained on 11 January 1904, when daily through trains to Sydney were introduced. Special excursion fares were offered in holiday periods, with some direct train services to the Victorian border to enable mining people to visit their families in mining centres in that colony.

Local agitation for improved railway services in the district led to a decision to build a branch railway from Cobar southward to The Peak, which would serve the mines in that area. In contrast to the protracted negotiations over the Nyngan-Cobar line, construction commenced immediately with little local consultation. Contractual disputes were the inevitable result. A strike by construction workers in early 1901 was followed by a dispute with the Great Cobar Mining Syndicate over the route. It had agreed to the line being built across the mine dump, providing that the rails were made level with the slag, but when it became apparent the rails would interfere with slag dumping, Thomas Longworth requested that another route be surveyed.²⁸

The mayor convened a public meeting to discuss the proposed change in the route. Speakers were emphatically in favour of a passenger-carrying tramway instead of a railway being put down from the goods shed to Lewis Street, in preference to either of the other routes, in order to facilitate



Standard gauge wagons unloading coke at the water jacket furnaces c.1901. There is a narrow gauge track to the right and another in the left centre, while 4-wheel NSW Railways wagons are standing on The Peak line in the background. Photo: Cobar Regional Museum



Hand-trucking ore to and from calcining heaps. Loaded trucks on the middle of the 'Y' are being weighed. Photo: Cobar Regional Museum

trade between Cobar and Wrightville. Construction proceeded in the face of local opposition and the residents of Wrightville found no signs of the hoped-for station buildings when the line was finally opened on 26 November 1901.²⁹ The Peak branch line, which actually terminated at Mt Pleasant (5 miles 53 chains), several miles short of The Peak, was locally referred to as a "white elephant". However, as sidings were constructed to the Occidental, Cobar Chesney and Cobar Gold Mines, it came to play an important role in the development of the district.

Purchase of the Mine

At the 50th half-yearly meeting of the Great Cobar Copper Mining Company, the directors reported that the mine continued to be worked on tribute up to 12 December 1900, at which date possession of the property was handed over to the Read-Longworth syndicate.³⁰ Over the previous four years, the Company had received about £60,000 per year in royalties and had paid its shareholders handsome dividends.

The high copper prices of the late 1890s had greatly boosted the value of the Great Cobar mine and the Syndicate was faced with a much higher price than that originally canvassed in 1893. The agreed sale price was £315,416, but finalisation of the deal was drawn out over several years. A minority group of shareholders made application through the courts to have the company wound up for the purpose of setting aside the sale.³¹ This application was dismissed with costs.

In June 1902, Mr SA Joseph, representing an English syndicate, secured an option on all the property owned by the Great Cobar Syndicate, except the Nymagee Mine, at a total price of £1,060,000.³² Two months later, three Great Cobar Company shareholders initiated legal proceedings to *prevent the agreements recently adopted being carried into effect*.³³ It was revealed that the Syndicate had paid out only £88,106 of the agreed price for the mine at this date. Eventually, Mr Joseph advised that his syndicate would not proceed with purchase of the mine, and the Read-Longworth Syndicate was left

with sole possession of the property during 1903.³⁴

With the move to purchase the mine in 1900, the Syndicate made changes in its management. George Blakemore, manager of the Nymagee copper mine (purchased by the Syndicate in 1896), came to Cobar as mine manager in December 1901, and Thomas Longworth went to Lithgow.³⁵ William Longworth moved from Lithgow to his Sydney home, Rockleigh at Point Piper.³⁶ He remained general manager of the Syndicate until his retirement in January 1905. At this time, George Blakemore moved to Lithgow to become general manager and was replaced at Cobar by WH Trewenack, formerly manager at Nymagee.³⁷

On the occasion of these changes, employees took up a collection to make a presentation to William or Thomas Longworth - reports differ, but it was most likely William. £50 was collected and a fine silver model of a Nasmyth slag ladle wagon was made in Sydney.³⁸ These rail slag pots were then under construction for the Syndicate at May Brothers Foundry at Gawler, South Australia. At the ceremony, attended by 400 people, Mr Blakemore highlighted the very great esteem which they held for Mr Longworth and said that the present condition of Cobar was due to the great success with which the Syndicate had been favoured; the company well deserved all they had. In reply, Mr Longworth said he had always acted in a manner he considered was fair and reasonable.

The crisis of 1902

George Blakemore took over management of the Great Cobar just as the copper price plummeted to £48 in December 1901. Dr Read told a newspaper representative that with the metal at the prices cabled from London, the outlook could only be described as hopeless.³⁹ Bleak market prospects were compounded by severe drought conditions. Low copper prices forced the Chesney and Mt Hope mines to close, while the Occidental closed due to lack of water. In January 1902, the manager of the Great Cobar mine closed down two furnaces and discharged 120 men.⁴⁰

The water situation continued to deteriorate. In March 1902, the town water supply was declared unfit for human consumption and a public meeting, with 1800 people present, agreed to allow the copper mine to use the remaining water to keep operating.⁴¹ A request was made to the Government to supply water by train. Trains conveyed 10,000 gallons of water per day for Cobar town from Warren, and from 16 April an additional train was provided to deliver water to Wrightville.⁴²

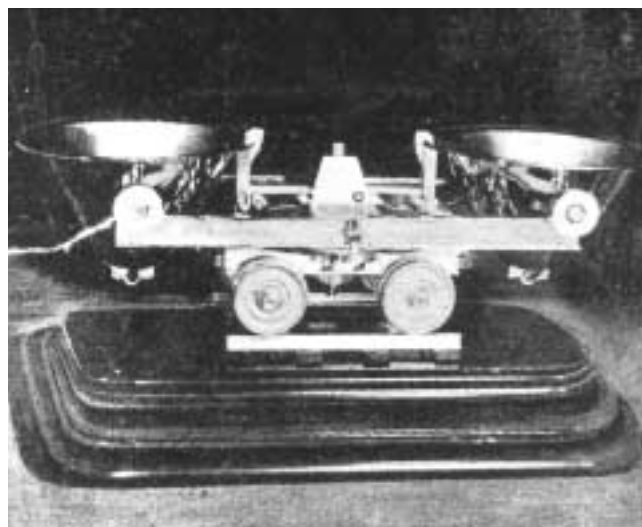
By May the copper mine had closed. William Longworth actively lobbied in Sydney for special relief for the mine. The Minister for Works informed the Syndicate that if it was prepared to start work again, when the Government could obtain more 400-gallon tanks, the required 50,000 gallons of water per day for the town and mine would be supplied.⁴³ The Syndicate signed an agreement to restart the mine *on a continuance of water supply at the rate at present charged, so long as the price of copper does not fall below £50 per ton.*

To receive water for the mine, George Blakemore had an excavation prepared on the eastern side of the Cobar-Peak railway line and east of the workshops.⁴⁴ The first train of 13 trucks containing 16,000 gallons of water arrived at the Great Cobar Copper Mine depot on the morning of 30 May, with a second consignment of 21 trucks with 20,000 gallons of water arriving at 3.30 pm.⁴⁵ Over the subsequent weeks, the average number of water trucks arriving daily at the mine was 32, delivering 32,000 gallons of water. Other trains continued to serve the towns of Cobar and Wrightville.

The water brought fresh optimism to the town. Four furnaces at the Great Cobar were back in operation by mid-June and it was reported that *the town is now beginning to wear quite a cheerful aspect and everyone appears to be in good humour.*⁴⁶ The water trains continued to operate until good rains fell in the district in November 1902. Reservoirs were replenished and all mines resumed work.⁴⁷

Mine Expansion

During the water crisis, George Blakemore had kept his work force employed maintaining and upgrading the facilities at the Great Cobar. The water-jackets underwent a *complete*



Silver model of a Nasmyth slag ladle wagon, presented to William Longworth in 1901. From The Sydney Mail, August 1905

*course of renovation and all engines, pumps, etc thoroughly overhauled.*⁴⁸

In November 1902, No.5 water-jacket furnace was commissioned. Designed by George Blakemore, the new furnace was able to put through 200 tons of ore a day, compared with 62 tons for the older furnaces.⁴⁹ When a new chimney for the furnace was completed in June 1903, its capacity increased to 340 tons per day.

With the ownership question settled, the Syndicate initiated a major expansion program in 1903. New boilers and larger capacity blowers were installed and a new blast furnace arrived in November 1903. It was *after the design of the Mt Lyell furnaces, being totally different from those in use at present on the mine and nearly the size of the large furnace erected a year ago.*⁵⁰

With the expanded processing facilities, the calcination of ores was abandoned in favour of direct treatment in water-jacket furnaces. In January 1904 it was announced that the 80-ton furnaces would be dismantled in favour of furnaces which could turn out up to 400 tons each day.⁵¹ The old reverberatory furnaces were pulled down and the flat below was selected as the site for a huge new reservoir.



Pouring slag into a Nasmyth slag ladle wagon, c.1905.

From The Sydney Mail



A horse hauling a Nasmyth slag ladle wagon from the furnaces, c. 1904. Locomotives replaced horses about this time.

From The Sydney Mail, August 1905

By adopting a system of fluxing, the Syndicate increased the ore charges and lowered the amount of fuel necessary to reduce the ore to matte. But the Great Cobar initially had to buy in suitable ores for flux. This problem was overcome in July 1904, when the Syndicate purchased the Chesney mine for £40,000.⁵² At first, Chesney ore was transported to the Great Cobar each week by road. Sidings were constructed from The Peak line to the Chesney in February 1905, allowing 650 tons of Chesney ore to be railed to the Great Cobar each week.⁵³ Standard gauge 4-wheel hopper wagons were obtained to convey the ore to the siding at Cobar, where the trucks discharged it into bins. A rope haulage system was installed to deliver the ore to the furnaces. The rope haulage reduced the cost of handling the ore by six pence a ton.

A second Mt Lyell type furnace, 17ft 4in long and 3ft 8in wide, was erected in early 1905.⁵⁴ The old trial furnace (No.5) was then re-erected, providing three large furnaces with a daily capacity of 720 tons of ore per day when all were in work. A large crushing plant, capable of an output of 120 tons an hour, additional boiler plant and blowers were also erected, and it was announced that a new main shaft would be sunk. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that the changes had been made gradually, and the various works dovetail into one another in an admirable manner.⁵⁵ A foundry had been established in which every class of work is done, from the casting of huge slag pots up to the most accurate lathe turning, (which) has greatly increased the efficiency of the mine plant.

Industrial Railway Development

In November 1902 improvements were made in the method of slag disposal. Until this time, hand-wheeled ladles had been used to dispose the slag. New tramlines were laid to the dump using rails reclaimed from the firewood tramway and horse-drawn slag pot wagons were introduced. As noted above, these were of the *Nasmyth* type, with twin-pots mounted on four disc wheels. The trucks carried two tons of slag. Horses were attached by trace chains, which enabled them to walk clear of the track.⁵⁶ The trucks were hauled with the frame holding the pots parallel to the rails, and these

were then swung at right angles to allow the slag to be dumped clear of the rails. Three arc-lamps, each of 1200 candle power, were installed for night time slag disposal operations. A fourth Jandus arc-lamp of 1200 candle power was installed in November 1903, which gave such a powerful light that passers by can read the time on the post office clock.⁵⁷

The four John Fowler 2-4-0T narrow gauge (2ft 6in) locomotives formerly used on the firewood tramway (see LR 147) were overhauled in 1903 and refitted for active service on the dump lines, where they replaced the horses.⁵⁸ The locos were rebuilt as conventional rod drive locos, converted to coal firing and fitted with steel shields at the back of the cabs to protect the driver from the heat of the molten slag.⁵⁹ For slag disposal, the old Nasmyth pots were modified for locomotive haulage. Seven narrow-gauge bogie slag ladle wagons were subsequently obtained. Locomotive haulage was also introduced for other tasks around the works.

The improved transport system within the works was described in the following terms: *The change from the old system of removing the slag from the reverberatory furnaces by hand wheeling to the use of a locomotive is not only a marked saving in expediency, but it also relieves a large number of workmen of a task that is little less than slavery in summer months.*⁶⁰

By 1906 production at the Great Cobar mine had reached a high plateau. Some 12,500 tons of ore was being smelted each month to produce about 300 tons of refined copper. The mine consumed from 18,000 to 19,000 tons of coke a year. The consumption of firewood and mine timber amounted to 32,000 tons a year, much of it brought in by Government trains which ran as required from the various "Coppermine Firewood Sidings" on the Nyngan line.⁶¹

A Government Railways train operated to the mine every day, and the locomotive then returned to the station to collect the truck loads of coke from Lithgow and Singleton to haul them to the mine.⁶² In addition, there were regular trains hauling ore from Chesney mine to the Great Cobar. The freight on supplies and products paid to the Railway Commissioners for that year amounted to between £38,000 and £40,000.⁶³



The rope haulage system was installed in 1905, to deliver the ore to the furnaces.

From The Sydney Mail, August 1905

Boom Times

A substantial rise in copper prices from September 1904 boosted confidence in Cobar. The Great Cobar Syndicate had increased its workforce to 700 men and the role of the Longworth Brothers in bringing prosperity to the town was becoming local folklore. Mining columns reported:

Not many men have done better for Australia in a mining way than Mr William Longworth, who retired last month from the general managership of the Great Cobar . . . Mr William Longworth did nearly all the battling and superintended all the screwing and scraping and cheese-paring; Dr Read seems to have stuck to his best and got the biggest interest in the corner. But bit by bit, they added their plant and improved the treatment, and presently for the property they could have bought for £40,000 they had to pay ten times that amount to secure.⁶⁴

By mid-1905 the Queen Bee mine at The Peak was being vigorously worked for copper. The rapid and successful development of the Queen Bee already brought growth to the little township of Illewong and its population was nearing 300.⁶⁵ In October 1905, news of the discovery of a rich lode of lead ore in the abandoned CSA Mine brought a renewed round of mining speculation to Cobar. £50 shares in the CSA Company were soon demanding £2400 apiece and there was a fresh flood of applications for mining exploration leases.⁶⁶ A visitor reported that *The apathy of previous years has given place to an air of expectancy, of subdued excitement . . . everyone is anxiously awaiting the coming development, the keystone of which is the success of otherwise of the CSA mine.*⁶⁷ In this

atmosphere, the Cobar Stock Exchange was officially opened on 17 July 1906. The first premises were the billiard room of the Empire Hotel, but it subsequently moved to its own premises in Barton Street. Through 1907, the *Cobar Herald & Nymagee Advocate* listed 13 mining companies on the local stock exchange.

Sale of the Great Cobar Mine

With good copper prices again being obtained, the time was opportune to sell the mine. Negotiations were again opened with the English syndicate that had proposed purchase of the mine in 1902. An American mining specialist, Mr CM Rolker, was hired to assess its value. His report estimated the cost of producing refined copper at £41 6s per ton in Sydney, each ton carrying in addition to the copper, £11 6s 3d per ton in precious metals.⁶⁸ At this rate (with copper at £60) a profit of 15s 10d per ton of ore treated was expected, or £1,215,000 on the ore in reserve. Mr Rolker estimated the present cost of production, delivery and realisation at £54 13s per ton of copper. Sale of the Great Cobar mine and all other Syndicate properties except the Nymagee mine, to the English company Great Cobar Limited for £1,006,000 was announced in May 1906.⁶⁹ Formal transfer of the Great Cobar mine to the new owners was effected on 22 August 1906.

While the Syndicate had always kept details of its financial transactions a closely guarded secret, the *Cobar Leader* reported that the final distribution of the proceed had been made as follows: AA Dangar, Dr Read, AJ Gould and W and T

Longworth, each £130,000; WW Roberts [sic] £50,000.⁷⁰ The Longworth brothers, now wealthy men, enjoyed life to the full over the next 20 years. Thomas purchased a mansion, *Woollahra House* at Point Piper, for his large family and built a steam boat, the *COBAR* for pleasure use on Sydney Harbour.⁷¹ William also purchased a steam yacht, the *ENA*, bred racehorses at Dulwich near Nundah and raced a number of successful horses.⁷² He purchased the property *Glenroy* at Karuah, Port Stevens.⁷³ He remodelled the house and built aviaries, gardens and boatsheds.

The 12 years of operation under the Syndicate were the most satisfactory of the Great Cobar mine in terms of prosperity, good community and industrial relations, safety and profitability. Innovation by the Longworth brothers in smelting and especially electrolytic refining of copper made major contributions to the Australian mining industry. The new owners after 1906 were to invest lavishly in impressive plant, including an electric industrial railway, but performance deteriorated under poor management and profitability was denied them. In Cobar and among mining circles generally, the Syndicate era was regarded as the “heyday” of the Great Cobar and the achievements of the Longworth brothers were viewed with nostalgia.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank LRRSA researchers Ron Madden and John Shoebridge, together with Colin Jones of the Cobar Museum, for their assistance with comments on the early drafts of this article. Adrienne Kabos, a great granddaughter of Thomas Longworth, also assisted with family records. Thanks also to Geoff Thorpe for his persistence in preparing the map in difficult circumstances.

Footnotes

1. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 January 1894 and *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 27 January 1894. These reports, both from the same source, state that Mr T Longworth had arrived to be manager, but it is certain that William took up this role initially. Thomas accompanied Dr Read on a visit to the mine in May 1894.

2. Latham, Barbara, “Thomas and Rose Longworth in Australia”, Longworth family history manuscript, November 1989.



The key Great Cobar Syndicate members c.1901: (left to right) William Longworth, Dr Richard Read and Thomas Longworth.

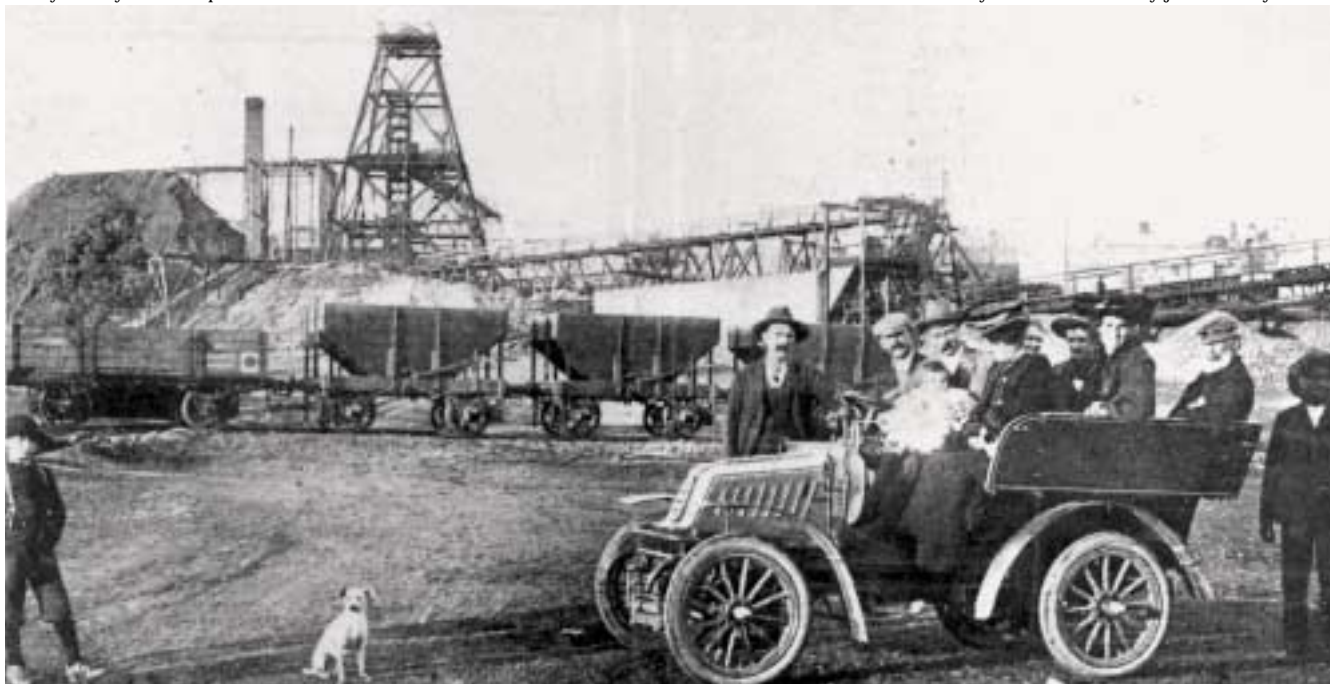
Photo: courtesy John Crane

3. Interview with John Crane and Stuart Longworth, grandsons of Thomas Longworth, Edgecliff, 16 September 1999. John Crane emphasised the close association between the brothers, who did everything together as a joint effort.

4. Shoebridge, JW, “The Railways of the ‘Great Cobar’”, *ARHS Bulletin*, No. 383, September 1969, p.198. Note that Shoebridge implies that the Mr Dunstan engaged by the Syndicate was the former Great Cobar manager Captain JT Dunstan, but the *Cobar Leader* article of 12 February 1905 gives his initials as WB Dunstan, who came from the Broken Hill South smelters. An obituary notice for Capt JT Dunstan (*Cobar Herald* 17 September 1912) noted he went from Cobar to the Central Mine at Broken Hill in 1885. John Shoebridge advised (letter 6 January 1999) that he had located several references to Mr Dunstan extolling the virtues of the Cobar mine at various locations in NSW.

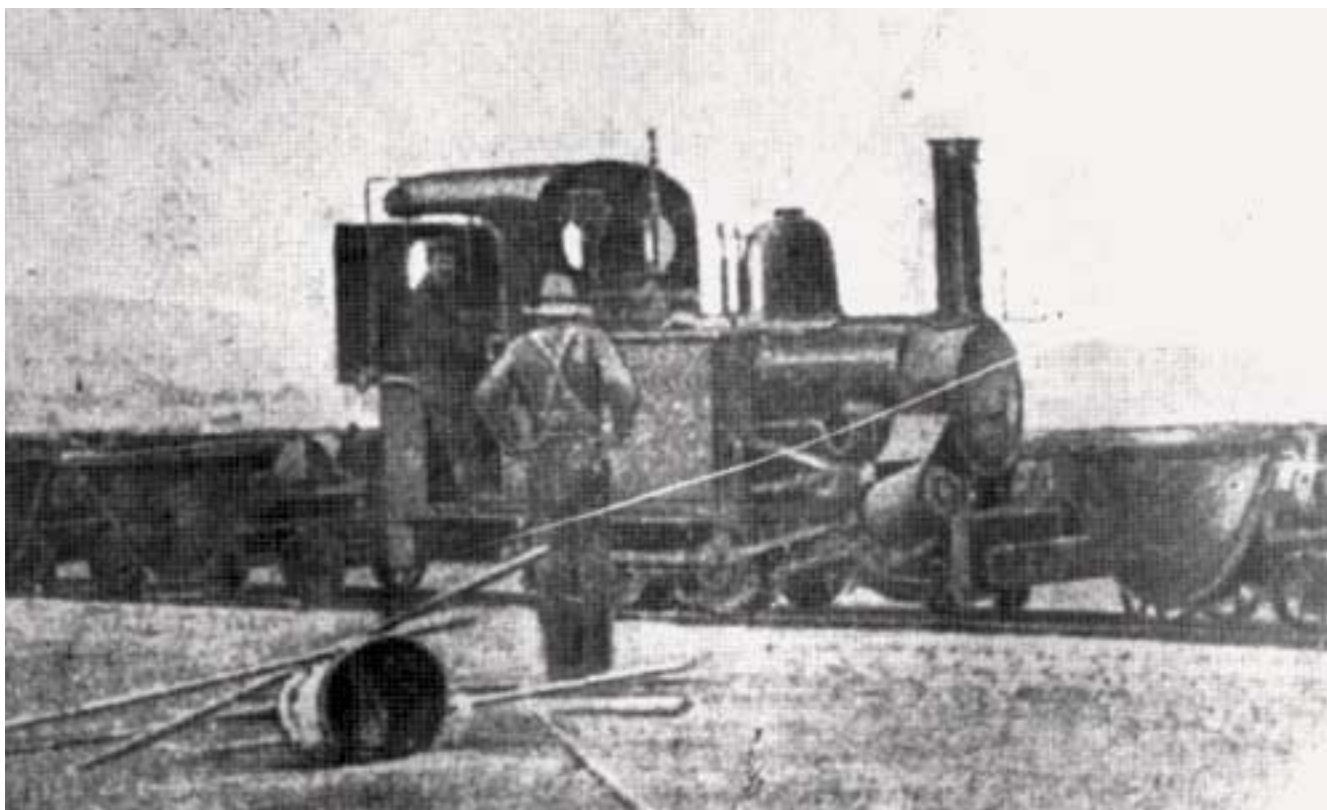
5. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 February 1897, p.3, “The Revival of Cobar”; *Cobar Leader*, 12 February 1905 “Mr William Longworth”

6. Latham, Barbara, 1989. It is likely that Robinson only joined the syndicate



The Chesney Mine after purchase by the Great Cobar Syndicate in 1905. The De Dion Bouton motor car was the pride of the mine manager, who is apparently taking his family on a Sunday outing. Standard gauge hopper wagons, used to transport ore from the Chesney mine to the Great Cobar smelters, are in the background.

Photo: Geological & Mining Museum



John Fowler locomotive as rebuilt for operations at the mine in 1904. The Nasmyth slag ladles have been modified for locomotive haulage.
Photo: Gifford Eardley Collection

after 1900, for media reports up to that time refer to a "five member syndicate" and Robinson received a smaller share than the others at the final payout (see *Cobar Leader*, 21 September 1906) John Crane confirms that Robinson was a minor shareholder who contributed little.

7. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 January 1894

8. *Cobar Leader*, 12 February 1905

9. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 27 January 1894

10. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 March 1884, p.9

11. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 March 1906, Our Hidden Wealth, Great Cobar Mine, p.7

12. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 29 June 1895, Great Cobar Copper Mine", p.29.

13. *Annual Report*, Department of Mines and Agriculture NSW for the Year 1895

14. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 May 1896. Our Mineral Wealth: the Copper Industry

15. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 February 1897, "Minister on Tour, Nymagee Copper Mine", p.6

16. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 29 February 1896

17. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 13 June 1896

18. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 6 June 1896

19. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 13 June 1896

20. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 12 February 1898

21. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 4 June 1898, Cobar, Great Mining Town of NSW; p.24

22. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 December 1898, The Cobar Field, Part 7

23. *Cobar Leader*, 23 September 1898

24. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 13 June 1896, Great Cobar Copper Mine by 'Nugget'

25. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 13 June 1896 as above

26. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 15 July 1899. Mining at Cobar

27. *Report of the Railway Commissioners*, 1900

28. *Cobar Leader*, 26 April 1901, Cobar-The Peak Railway - Departmental Bungle - Another Delay

29. *Cobar Leader*, 9 August and 29 November 1901

30. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 February 1901

31. *Cobar Leader*, 28 February 1902.

32. *Cobar Leader*, 13 June 1902

33. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 15 August 1902

34. *Cobar Leader*, 29 January 1904

35. *Cobar Leader*, 20 December 1901

36. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, p.143

37. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 January 1905, Mining in NSW, The Copper Mining Industry, p.9

38. *Cobar Leader*, 20 December 1901, which states that the presentation was to Thomas Longworth. *The Sydney Mail*, 9 August 1905 states that the silver model was presented to Mr William Longworth on the occasion of his

retirement as General Manager of the Syndicate at a ceremony at Cobar attended by William and Thomas Longworth and Dr Read. The model, crafted in Sydney, was reported to contain 140oz of silver extracted from Great Cobar copper at the Lithgow plant. Stuart Longworth (interview 19/9/99) advises that the silver model passed into the hands of his father, Sidney, and then to one of his daughters, but it has disappeared!

39. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 4 January 1902

40. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 18 January 1902

41. *Cobar Leader*, 14 March 1902, Copper Mine and Water Supply

42. *Cobar Leader*, 11 April 1902. Water for Cobar

43. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 May 1902

44. *Cobar Leader*, 23 May 1902. Copper Mine

45. *Cobar Leader*, 30 May 1902. Arrival of First Water Train

46. *Cobar Leader*, 30 May 1902.

47. *Cobar Leader*, 28 November 1902

48. *Cobar Leader*, 23 May 1902. Copper Mine

49. *Cobar Leader*, 12 December 1902. Copper Mine Additions

50. *Cobar Leader*, 27 November 1903

51. *Cobar Leader*, 29 January 1904. Mining

52. *Cobar Leader*, 15 July 1904. Mining

53. *Cobar Leader*, 3 March 1905

54. *Cobar Leader*, 3 March 1905

55. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 March 1906, Our Hidden Wealth, Great Cobar Mine, p.7

56. Shoebridge, p.202.

57. *Cobar Leader*, 30 October 1903. The Great Cobar Copper Mine

58. *Cobar Leader*, 30 October 1903. The Great Cobar Copper Mine

59. Shoebridge, p.202.

60. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 March 1906, Our Hidden Wealth, Great Cobar Mine, p.7

61. Shoebridge, p.200.

62. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 January 1905, Mining in NSW, The Copper Mining Industry, p.9

63. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 March 1906, Our Hidden Wealth, Great Cobar Mine, p.7

64. *Cobar Leader*, 12 February 1905. Mr William Longworth

65. Neville Burgess, *The Great Cobar*, self published 1995, p.149

66. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 1 November 1905

67. *Aust. Town & Country Journal*, 28 February 1906, Cobar, A Western Mining Town

68. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 June 1906, A Leviathan Copper Company

69. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 May 1906, Great Cobar Syndicate's Properties

70. *Cobar Leader*, 21 September 1906

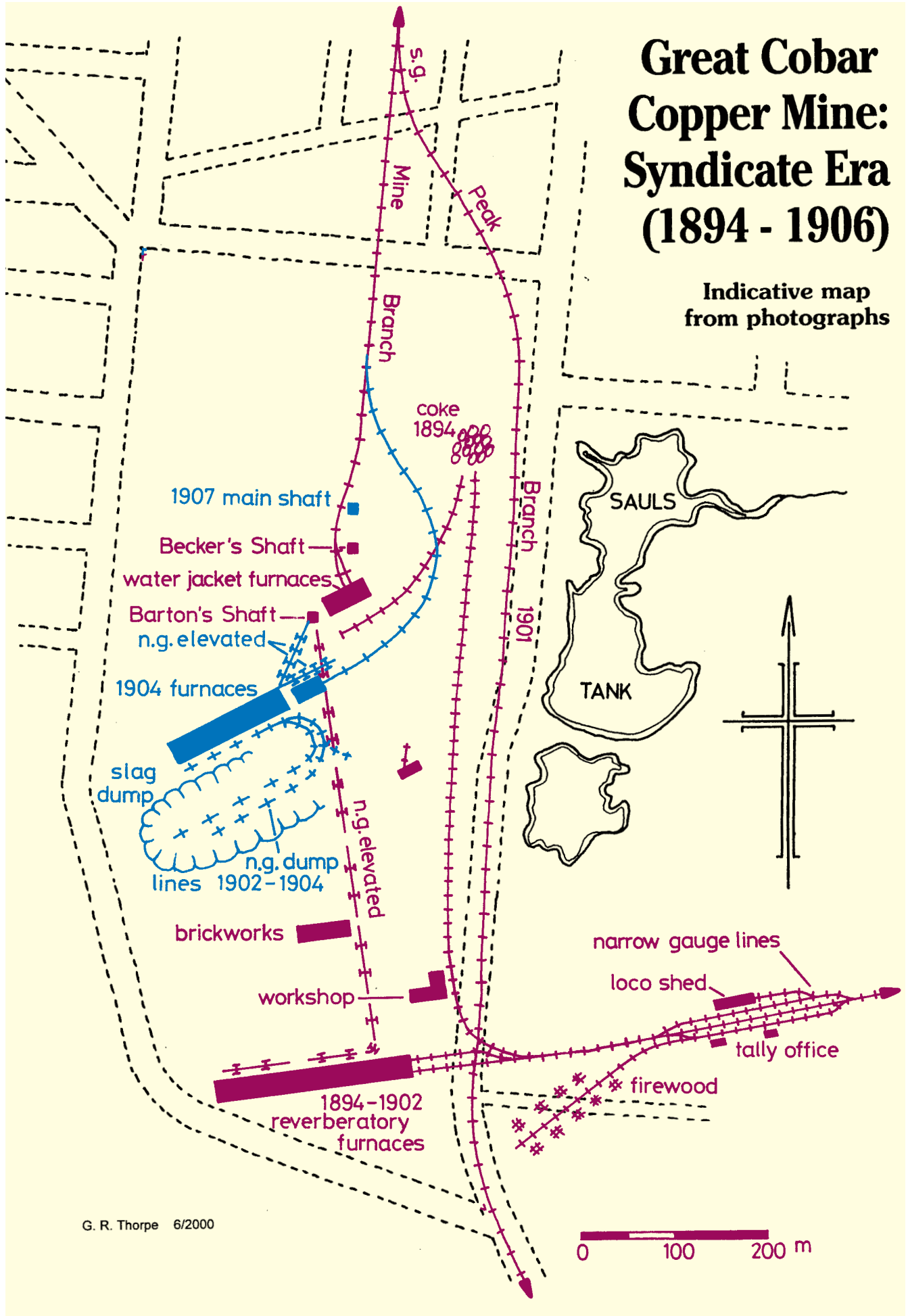
71. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, p.143

72. The ENA was fully restored by a group of Sydney businessmen in the 1980s for \$1.25 million, and it still operates on Sydney Harbour.

73. Interview; Stuart Longworth, 16 September 1999.

Great Cobar Copper Mine: Syndicate Era (1894 - 1906)

Indicative map
from photographs



G. R. Thorpe 6/2000



Mourilyan Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH 3 (59-203 of 1959) is shunting Chapman's siding just west of the QR during 1997. The crane in attendance probably indicates some kind of trouble.
Photo: Rod Milne

Cane Railways to Goondi East, Sundown and Innisfail Estate

by Rod Milne

Introduction

The areas immediately east of the old Goondi sugar mill north of Innisfail were once served by a network of 2ft gauge cane lines that has been heavily pruned in recent years. It was once quite a remarkable system, even boasting a connection to an isolated network at Innisfail Estate on the eastern bank of the North Johnstone River where an early sugar mill had operated. Connected to the Goondi Mill system by a punt, that isolated system fell into disuse after 1967 when a new bridge was constructed over the North Johnstone River at Innisfail downstream, enabling use of road transport for cane haulage and providing more direct access to Flying Fish Point and Ella Beach.

Most of these lines were constructed very early in the history of the Goondi sugar mill, the area immediately adjoining the town of Innisfail being the first to be developed as the mill plantation. Ironically, these areas are now progressively being left by cane farmers as the push to extend into more level coastal lands takes effect.

Prior to 1987, it was a short haul indeed for the cane from this area down to the mill at Goondi, crossing the QR after the opening of this section of the north coast line in 1924. After Goondi Mill closed following the 1986 season, the Goondi lines south of the North Johnstone River became part of the Mourilyan Mill system. Cane from the East Goondi area therefore now travels by a roundabout route that

passes through the old mill yard before going via Mundoo to cross the QR line again, and then the South Johnstone River at the so-called Queensland bridge at Comoon just north of the Mourilyan sugar mill. By 1997, the main line to the east of the old mill site extended a bare kilometre beyond the once important railway crossing, although with a longish branch north to the old Dodd's and Blennerhassett's siding.

Description of the system

Main branch

The meagre remains still in use in 1997 were in marked contrast to the much larger system that was in place before 1967. The line runs due east from the old sugar mill site at Goondi along the public road to the crossing of the QR just south of the old Goondi railway siding (closed in 1960 and once a molasses loading point). The large molasses tank still stands by the line, apparently now used for storage with access for road transport vehicles. A cane spur siding (Chapman's) heads south from a turnout near the tank to terminate at a cane loading area adjoining the QR.

East of the tramway crossing (protected by the usual Stop semaphore signals on the QR line with catchpoints and disc signals on the tram line), the branch continues parallel to the public road to terminate not far on at the old Spina's siding, where a loop line exists to enable the cane locomotives to run around their rakes of bins. Just to the west of this point, the former Sundown line runs north to sidings at Dodd's and Blennerhassett's where most of the cane in the area is now loaded, terminating at a pair of dead ends. This line was once a lengthy back shunt, a tricky line to work because the points faced east and it was necessary to run around the load in each direction to gain access. In more recent times (1996), a sharply curved angle connection has been available immediately to the east of the QR to enable through working from Goondi onto the Sundown line.

Ferry line

Spina's used to be a key junction on the line between the long Sundown branch to the north along the river and the continuation of the main line down to the river bank (called the Ferry line). In 1997, the junction to the stub of the Sundown line existed as a turnout facing towards the east, though the geography of the lines has changed significantly here, at least since the days when CSR ran the Goondi mill.

Prior to 1969, the Ferry line continued on from this point, passing around a series of 90 degree curves to skirt around paddocks, crossing in the process on the level the main road to the Sundown area on the bend of the river. As the line approached the river, there was a long dead end spur called Frith's siding that ran in an arc to the north east towards the river bank. From the junction with Frith's, the Ferry line curved back south, parallel with the river, and threw off a second long overshoot in the form of Cullinan's siding. Essentially a continuation of the straight track, Cullinan's line was only available for loco use as far as a bridge over Saltwater Creek. The section towards the town of Innisfail beyond was regarded as a horse line, with tractors and trucks later being used to push trucks over the bridge to the designated pick up point for the mill loco. Finally, from the junction with Cullinan's, the Ferry line turned east towards the river and made its way down to the punt itself.

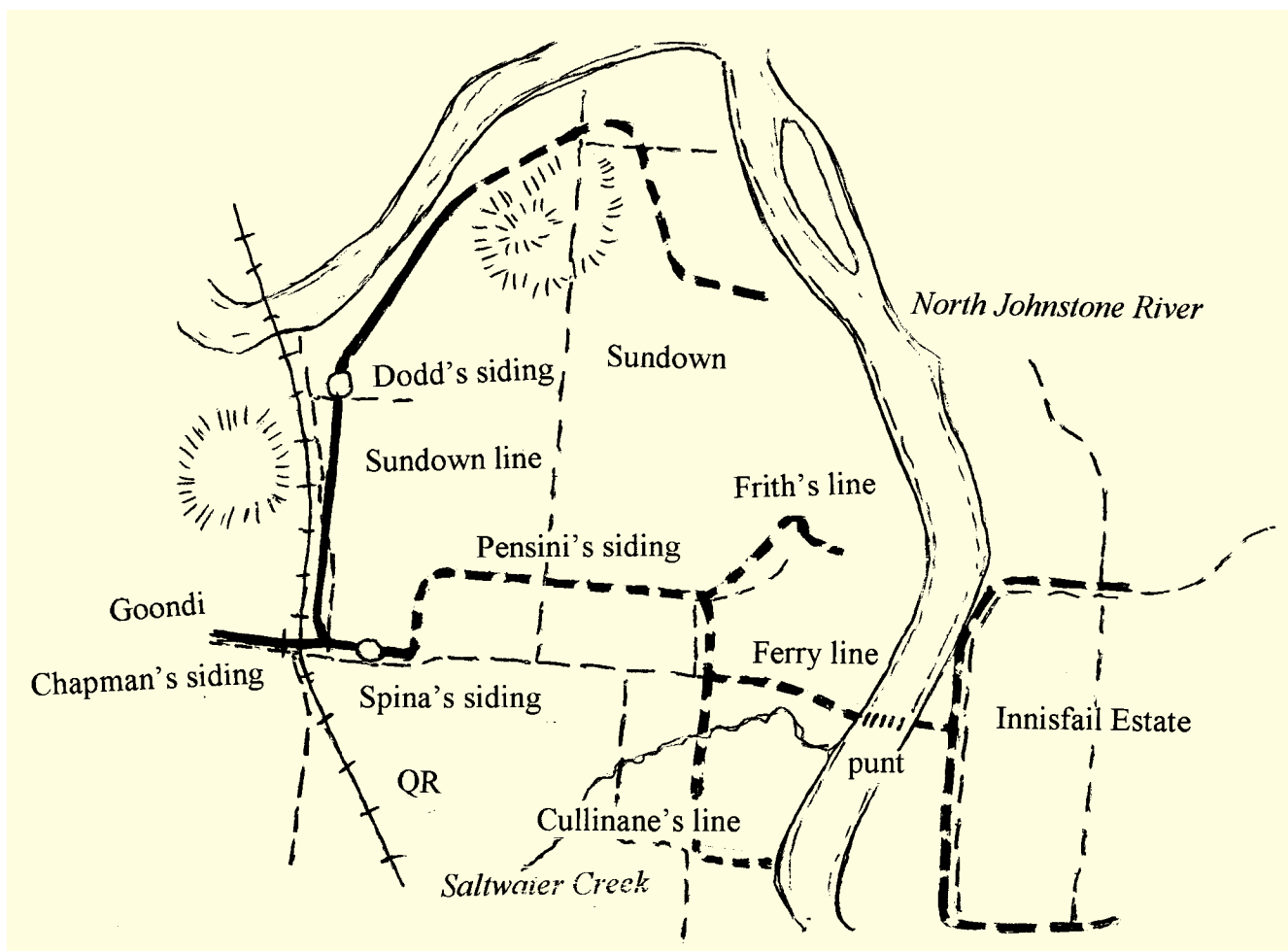
Although the ferry over the river to the Innisfail Estate isolated system was last used in the 1966 season, the lengthy collection of branch lines east of Spina's remained in use until 1969. Thereafter, the once quite extensive system that involved three separate lines (Ferry, Frith's and Cullinan's lines) was pulled up and can now barely be recognised as former tramway trackage.

Innisfail Estate lines

Referred to by the mill as a light cane railway system, this portion of line east of the ferry across the North Johnstone River essentially consisted of two lines. Each leg ran in opposite directions along the side of the old road down from Jubilee Pocket and Flying Fish Point, connecting to a short Y section that ran down to the cane punt. Clearly a legacy of the old sugar mill that operated on this site (the Innisfail Estate), the system was later focussed on delivering cane to Goondi, the central crushing mill for the area. It is understood that the Innisfail Estate mill actually last crushed in 1885, it being reported ten years later that cane from the area was being ferried eight trucks at a time over the river to the Goondi mill cane tram system on the opposite bank. In 1957, Ken Rogers reported a punt equipped with two rail tracks in use near Goondi, conveying cane across the river from the plantations.

It appears that the Innisfail Estate isolated system was largely worked by horses, and later rubber tyred farm vehicles such as tractors and trucks. There is of course the possibility that, if these lines were ever operated by the mill, a small petrol-engined loco such as a Simplex worked the system. The Innisfail Estate system was last operated (according to the mill) in the 1966 season. Oddly the new Geraldton bridge was open by that time, though it was not until the 1967 season that road haulers were contracted to bring the area's cane to the Goondi mill all the way by road.

The operation of the punt or ferry must have been a fascinating sight to witness if it was indeed large enough to take eight trucks of cane at the one time. One can just imagine the lives of the ferry operators, gingerly avoiding logs and crocodiles as they brought the Innisfail Estate's cane output over for the Goondi locos to collect on the Ferry line.





Dodd's Siding in May 1996 looking north towards the end of the Sundown line and Blennerhassett's.

Photo: Rod Milne

Sundown Line

Now little more than half its original length, the Sundown line once existed in a complete "U" all the way around the river to terminate not far north of Frith's siding on the Ferry line. After running north to a long loop at Dodd's Siding, the route of the line runs onwards to Blennerhassett's where there was a dead end siding.

From this point, the old Sundown line came close to the river bank to avoid a high ridge upon which some of Innisfail's more prestigious homes are now located before swinging back in a 90 degree curve to serve long gone cane farms in the eastern portion of the river loop. Much of this area is now a rural residential type subdivision, the rail tracks having been removed for some time from the final long extension of the Sundown line east of Blennerhassett's.

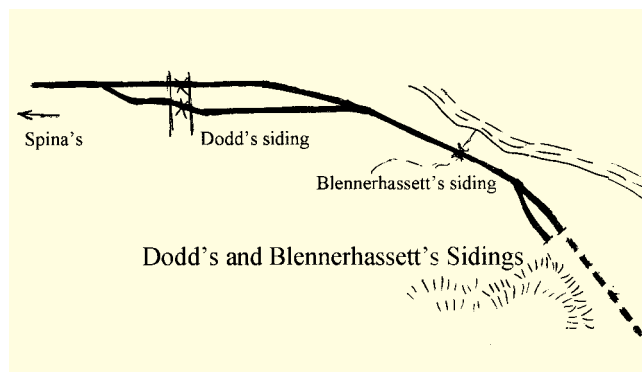
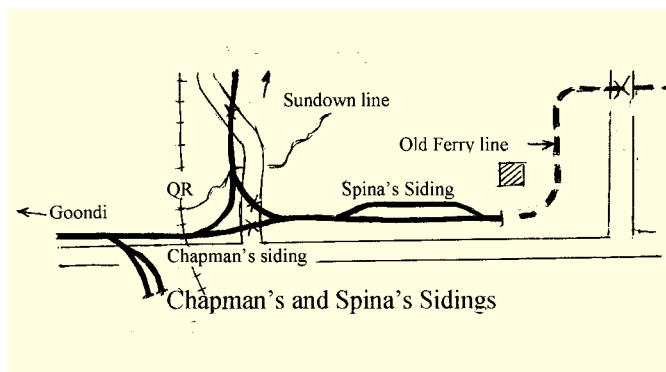
While Dodd's is the main cane siding still left, the mill management reports that some use beyond to Blennerhassett's is still made erratically, though the cane pockets north of here are dwindling in area and extent. The Blennerhassetts, who give the siding its name, are a notable grazing family with cattle grazing interests also in the Midgeree Bar Creek area east of El Arish.

Train working

Following the closure of the nearby Goondi sugar mill in 1986, the system east of the QR line is now an outer terminus of the Mourilyan Mill network and no longer the local area job it was when Goondi Mill was in operation. Thus cane trains now work through Goondi as required up to the loop at Spina's, or to Dodd's loop and Blennerhassett's using the new connection. They can of course also shunt from Spina's to Dodd's or vice versa using the old angle connection. From the loop at Dodd's, empties are pushed up to Blennerhassett's given the absence of a run around loop at the current terminus.

When the line went down to the river bank punt site east of Spina's loop, similar arrangements applied. Pensini's siding was located near Sundown Road, and there were further cane sidings down to the river as well, the trains collecting cane that had been punted across the river from the isolated Innisfail Estate system. Unfortunately, details of the siding arrangements on the lines closed by 1969 are not known.

When Goondi locomotives worked the system, it was very much a local mill area job that would have been assigned to the lowlier members of the mill fleet. In 1987, with the Mourilyan takeover, the lines were now at the end of a long



haul to the mill and would see the better main line locomotives. Goondi mill site has been retained as a track maintenance depot and a small Motor Rail Simplex 4wDM (10219 of 1950) is based there, no doubt appearing from time to time around Dodd's, Blennerhassett's and Spina's on track repairs, especially after heavy rain (a common state of affairs up here). Contrary to what everyone in the tourist industry says, the weather in this part of the world leaves much to be desired for much of the year, and washouts and mudslides are common in the extreme tropical conditions.

Conclusion

The system east of Goondi's tramway crossing with the QR was an interesting one that reflected its history as part of the old CSR Goondi Mill estate. Modern harsh economic reality has caught up with the system and only a remnant is still intact with the truncation of the rails beyond Blennerhassett's and Spina's. If only more photographers had been present to record those earlier days when punts, horses and steam locomotives were used to round up the cane trucks for a mill that was a little more than three miles away.

Ironically, even in April 2000, portions of the old mill tramway corridors for the Ferry and Cullinane's lines remained in Bundaberg Sugar Company ownership, as did all of the corridor of the Sundown line as far as the northern end of Sundown Road. On many of these sections, it has been a good thirty years since trains and tracks have been seen! Some track (though not on the original pre 1969 alignment) exists still at Frith Road at a point where bins are loaded to road vehicles.

The remains face an uncertain future, as a result of expansion of the Innisfail urban area with the encroachment of residential development into the old cane lines of East Goondi and Sundown. Declining loads might not be the only reason for closure. The rails east of the QR crossing could be eliminated



Spina's siding looking back towards the old Goondi Mill site, 22 May 1996. With the advent of the crushing season in prospect, the weed-killing train has obviously made a trip out here. Photo: Rod Milne

in the future with pressure to reduce the number of such crossings in view of their associated main line railway speed restrictions and safety considerations, particularly should the high speed tilt train penetrate north of Townsville.

Acknowledgements / References

Marg Macdonald • Darren James • Johnstone Shire Council • Bundaberg Sugar Company Ltd • Ron Porter • John Browning • *Australian Sugar Journal* 15 August 1953 • *Innisfail & District Historical Society Journal* Vol.7



The last remaining portion of the Sundown line, just south of Blennerhassett's, in April 2000. Idyllic far north Queensland - cane, bananas, tramway, and rain-forest clad hills. Photo: Rod Milne



Industrial Railway NEWS

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NEW SOUTH WALES

HILLGROVE GOLD NL

(see LRN 120 p. 5)
610mm gauge

A new mining area is being brought on stream and an old area brought back into commission as part of a major expansion of production of antimony and gold. Previous production rates will be increased five-fold with present reserves standing at eight years, and an excellent potential for further increase.

The Mining Chronicle Vol 4 No 6 via Ray Graf

KANDOS COLLIERIES PTY LTD, Kandos Colliery

(see LRN 35 p.5)
1067mm gauge

In 1998, this mine used one Gemco battery locomotive and one E M Baldwin 25 tonne diesel locomotive. These are quite possibly one of the two 6wDH Baldwins delivered in 1981 (9344-1-4-81 and 9344-2-4-81) and the 23-tonne Gemco 4wBE delivered in 1982 (2811-12-208-82).

Underground Equipment & Technology July 1998 via Ray Graf; Editor

POWERCOAL PTY LTD, Cooranbong Colliery

(see LRN 74 p.7)
1067mm gauge

In 1998, this mine operated two Hexham diesel locomotives and one E M Baldwin diesel as well as five Baldwin 17BE battery electric personnel carriers. Two 25-tonne Hexham 4wDH locomotives were supplied to what was then Newcom Collieries, 659 (supplied to Angus Place Colliery), and 690 of 1988 (for Cooranbong). Baldwin supplied Newcom with 20-tonne 4wDH 3738-1-12-71 for Angus Place Colliery in 1971. Baldwin also supplied five Model 17BE battery personnel carriers to Cooranbong in 1982-3:

PC 11 9981-1-9-82

PC 12 9981-2-11-82

PC 13 9981-3-3-83, named *GINGER CAT*

PC 04 9981-4-2-83

PC 05 9981-5-6-83.

Underground Equipment & Technology July 1998



Mossman Mill's Plasser tamping machine (111 of 1976) adjacent to the Captain Cook Highway close to Port Douglas, 27 May 2000.
Photo: Brad Peardon

POWERCOAL PTY LTD, Myuna Colliery

1067mm gauge

In 1998, this mine operated five Gemco battery locomotives. Gemco are believed to have supplied five 25-tonne 4wBE locomotives to what was then Newcom Collieries in 1982-4, and they were recorded as BL01, BL02, BL03 *DEBBIE LOW* (Gemco 3731-32/204/82), BL04 *VETA* & BL05.

Underground Equipment & Technology July 1998 via Ray Graf; Editor

COLIN REES TRANSPORT

(see LRN 152 p.18)
1435mm gauge

In early May it was reported that Walkers B-B DH 7322 (684 of 1972) was still at DELEC receiving attention. 7334 (696 of 1972) was at Yennora with 4wDH X209 (built NSWGR 1967) standby. 4wDH X216 (built NSWGR 1968) was not in use. There has been talk of both 73 class locomotives going to Melbourne.

Bob Gioia 5/00 (Aus loco discussion mailing list)

WALLARAH JOINT VENTURE, Chain Valley Colliery

(see LRN 74 p.7)
1067mm gauge

In 1998 this colliery used three Baldwin 25-tonne locomotives. Craig Wilson recorded three E M Baldwin 25-tonne 4wDH locomotives at Chain Valley in 1989, 10597-6-6-84, 10597-2-84 and 10597-3-1-85.

Underground Equipment & Technology July 1998 via Ray Graf; Editor

QUEENSLAND

BUNDABERG SUGAR TAKEOVER

British multinational Tate & Lyle has agreed to sell its Bundaberg Sugar interests to Belgian company Finasucre (Société Financière des

Sucre) for \$425m. The sale includes seven Queensland sugar mills (Moreton, Millaquin, Fairymead, Bingera, Mourilyan, Babinda and Tableland) and a half share in the Bundaberg Distillery and Bundaberg Foundry. Tate & Lyle paid \$325m for the group nine years ago. It has been stated that the retention of the single sugar selling desk for Queensland has made it difficult for Tate & Lyle to maximise the benefits of transactions within its group operations worldwide.

ABC Local News Wide Bay 8/6/00; ABC Rural News 9/6/00; *Innisfail Advocate* 10/6/00 via Chris Hart

BINGERA SUGAR LTD

BUNDABERG SUGAR LTD, Fairymead Mill
MILLAQUIN SUGAR CO PTY LTD, Bundaberg
(see LR 153 p.21)

610mm gauge

E M Baldwin 0-6-0DH *MANOO* (3875-1-7-71 of 1971) was transferred from Fairymead Mill to Millaquin's Qunaba depot on about 19 June, in exchange for E M Baldwin B-B DH 751 (6104-1-8-75 of 1975). *MANOO* had been transferred from Bingera Mill to Fairymead for the 1999 season. Cane is hauled from Qunaba to the Burnett River ferry for crushing at Fairymead Mill.

Bingera Mill's E M Baldwin 0-6-0DH *ST KILDA* (6-2179-1-6-67 of 1967) was in use at Fairymead Mill during the slack season hauling the grass mower.

Fairymead Mill started crushing plantation cane on 5 June, two weeks before Bingera and Millaquin were due to start up. On 7 June, two of Bingera's E M Baldwin B-B DH locos *GIVELDA* (5800-2-6-75 of 1975) and *DELAN* (5800-3-7-75 of 1975) were seen working on the Fairymead Mill system, apparently because of some minor loco breakdowns at Fairymead. Loco transfers between Bingera and Fairymead are easy

Industrial Railway NEWS



Top: Tully Mill's E M Baldwin B-B DH TULLY No.7 (10684-1-4-83 of 1983) has been fitted with a louvred hood top. Mill yard, 30 May 2000. **Centre:** Kalamia Mill's Walkers B-B DH JARVISFIELD (601 of 1969 rebuilt Tulk Goninan 1994) at Alva Beach Road, 2 June 2000. **Above:** Fairymead Mill's Clyde 0-6-ODH 60 (60-219 of 1960) hauls empty bins towards the Burnett River ferry for transport to Qunaba, 7 June 2000. Photos: Brad Peadon.

because the two systems are interconnected. However, transfers between these mills and Millaquin require road transport across the Burnett River.

Lincoln Driver 5/00, 6/00; Brad Peadon 6/00

CENTENNIAL COAL CO - GLENCORE - TOKYO BOEKI JOINT VENTURE, Cook Colliery, South Blackwater

(see LRN 95 p.13)

These joint venturers have operated the colliery since 1997 and have identified substantial coal reserves. One mining unit is developing the western Castor seam while a second is developing an area to the east, utilising a continuous miner. This colliery uses personnel carriers for man riding and locomotive haulage for materials (including continuous miner) transport.

The Mining Chronicle Vol 5 No 3 via Ray Graf; Editor

CSR LTD, Herbert River mills

(see LR 152 p.20)

610mm gauge

The **Victoria Mill** extension to the Elphinstone line will only be built to the far side of the new road/rail bridge for the 2000 crushing, with a siding on each side. By early May, welded rails for the extension were on bogies at McKell's on the line to Abergowrie, ready for track laying which was underway by mid-June. A replacement concrete bridge has been put in at Beeva on Victoria Mill's Abergowrie line to allow Walkers diesels to work over it and through to McKell's in the 2000 season.

The daily cane transfer from Victoria to **Macknade Mill** this year is expected to be about 800 bins. Macknade's pioneer Clyde 0-6-ODH 16 (DHI.1 of 1954) is nearing the end of a complete overhaul at the mill and should be good for a few more years service as it nears its half century. The two Hansen 4wPM line cars normally based at Macknade have recently suffered failures and have been sent to Victoria Mill for repair. These are L CAR 2 (56 of 1972) and L CAR 3 (1920 of 1978). The track jack formerly at Plane Creek Mill (371 of 1989) can now be considered as a permanent transfer to the Herbert River mills. *Herbert River Express* 13/6/00 via Chris Hart; Chris Hart 5/00, 6/00

FONDSIDE AUSTRALIA PTY LTD, Black Street, Milton

610mm gauge

Noted stored outside an industrial warehouse in mid-June was a pair of Gemco "trammer" 0-4-0BE locomotives, painted yellow, one with a grey battery box and one without. There was also one wagon chassis, a substantial number of prefabricated track panels and one panel made up as a loop with two sets of points. Further enquiries revealed that this equipment is for use in the excavation of a large stormwater

Industrial Railway NEWS

drain running from the vicinity of the Suncorp Stadium (Lang Park) to the Brisbane River, a distance of about 350 metres. A similar locomotive is reportedly already in use in the tunnel excavation. The project is expected to be completed by October.

Bob Dow & Greg Stephenson 6/00; Brent Jones (Fondside) 6/00

MOUNT ISA MINES LTD, Mount Isa & Hilton mines

(see LR 145 p.22)

1067mm gauge and 610mm gauge

A press advertisement placed by Simhauser auctioneers advertised an auction at Mt Isa on 24 May, with a Com-Eng diesel locomotive and three Gemco electric locomotives (all 1067mm gauge) among the equipment offered for sale. Subsequent enquiries have established that the diesel was a 20-tonne 195hp underground 4wDH numbered 2789 (HD5197 of 1965). It is reported to have been sold to Bob Davies at Maryborough, Queensland. The Gemcos were reportedly 24-tonne battery electrics. Two were incomplete and reportedly sold for scrap to a buyer from Casino, NSW, while the other went to an unknown buyer. Two other 20-tonne underground diesels (presumably Com-Eng) are said to be in store in the disposals yard.

The 1067mm gauge 20-tonne Eimco 4wDH supplied to the Hilton Mine ten years ago (L258 of 1990) initially gave a lot of trouble with broken axles and was moved to the Mt Isa mine, where it worked satisfactorily. It was replaced at Hilton by a Com-Eng 20-tonne 4wDH. With the remaining Com-Eng locomotives aging, a new diesel was purchased in 1999 from Mine Technik Australia.

Most if not all of the 1067mm gauge main haulage underground electric network is now finished with the closure of the southern area of Level 19L and the reduction of the lead mine. Until recently at least, three Mancha "Mule" battery electrics were in occasional use on 610mm gauge.

Two Walkers B-B DH locomotives are in use on the surface at the smelters. These are 5803 (682 of 1972), built for Mt Isa, and ex-QGR DH7 (589 of 1968). The Mica Creek power station is due for conversion to natural gas, and when this occurs it is expected that the locomotive there, Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 5802 (JA4282 of 1964), will return to the smelter as a spare.

Courier-Mail 20/5/00 via Tony Wells; Terry Allen (MIM Ltd) 6/00; Tony Wells 6/00; Ian Hughes 6/00; Editor

OAKLEIGH COLLIERY PTY LTD, Rosewood

(see LRN 36 p.8)

508mm gauge

Rail operations at the colliery ended in July 1998. Up to four Jenbach or Bundaberg Jenbach 4wDM locomotives were kept in service until

the end, and there were also a number of dismantled units that were disposed of for scrap. One 15hp 4wDM Jenbach locomotive was abandoned underground in the Glencoe section of the mine. The three other locomotives were salvaged. One is believed to have gone to an unspecified museum project while two more were acquired by Adrian Kraatz, a fitter at the colliery. These were inspected in May at Adrian's property near Ravensbourne (on the route of Munro's tramway) and were found to be Jenbach 20hp 4wDM locomotives. 2124 of 1954 is complete and operable, while 2153 of 1955 is dismantled but could be restored using a 15hp Jenbach engine that is with it. Adrian has also a substantial quantity of Jenbach spare parts including pistons, clutch plates, fans, engine parts, a flywheel, brake shoes, gearboxes, and cylinder heads, many originally held by the Queensland agent for Jenbach.

Adrian would very much like to see the locomotives go to a good home and is interested in hearing from any interested parties. The locos weigh about 3 tonnes each and should be easily convertible to 2ft gauge, being similar to the ones featured at Acland in LR 151. The spare parts are also for sale, preferably as a job lot. Adrian can be contacted at MS 897, Ravensbourne 4352 or by phone on (07) 4697 8100.

Adrian Kraatz 5/00; Editor

SOUTH JOHNSTONE MILL LTD

(see LR 153 p.22)

610mm gauge

By mid-May, two companies were involved in discussions to rescue the mill from immediate closure. Both Bundaberg Sugar and Thiess were interested in presenting proposals. The Thiess proposal involved a contribution of 5% of gross income from growers during the forthcoming season, while the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union was expressing grave concern about the possible contracting out of services. The Thiess proposal was to keep the mill in grower ownership but managed under contract using the existing workforce.

A growers' meeting on 24 May agreed to accept a rescue package, but the Thiess name was no longer mentioned in press reports. \$3m was to be made available by the National Australia Bank while a government guarantee was needed to cover the additional \$3.4m loan required to commence crushing, to be financed (as a loan from growers) by a 5% growers' levy for the next two seasons. The Federal government announced its agreement to making the guarantee on 5 June, but even ten days later, there was still uncertainty being expressed as negotiations with government continued. Crushing was expected to commence in about mid-July. Conditions on the package included restructuring the Board of Directors, new senior mill management, and plans for industry rationalisation and restructuring to be in place by the end of the year.

It can be expected that one of the Innisfail district mills will close as part of any regional restructuring.

ABC Rural News 16/5/00 & 5/6/00; ABC Local

News Cairns 18/5/00 & 5/6/00; *Cairns Post* 16/5/00 & 16/5/00 via Andrew Webb; *Australian Canegrower* 8/5/00 & 5/6/00, *Innisfail Advocate* 18/5/00 and *Townsville Bulletin* 25/5/00 & 15/6/00 via Chris Hart; Editor

TULLY SUGAR LTD

(see LR 150 p.26)

610mm gauge

Flood damage during the slack season was noted just north of Tully in late May. At one place close to the road it was noted that the formation was gone and a culvert destroyed, with the rails bent and distorted.

Brad Peadon 5/00

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

SPECIALISED CONTAINER TRANSPORT, Mile End

1435mm gauge

Specialised Container Transport has used various hired ASR's 500 class Bo-Bo DE locomotives to shunt its Mile End depot. These locomotives were built by South Australian Railways from 1964 to 1969. 527 (built 1969) was replaced there by 532 (built 1969) last year, and this in turn was replaced by 508 (built 1965) on 29 April 2000.

Justin Cleary 4/00 (Aus loco discussion mailing list); Editor

LACEPEDE DISTRICT COUNCIL, Kingston SE

(see LR 142 p.8)

1067mm gauge

The Council is to turn the jetty at Kingston SE to mainly recreational use. Most facilities used by professional fishers will be removed, including the railway along the jetty.

Radio 5PA 9/5/00 via Ian J Stanley

TASMANIA

PASMINCO LTD, Rosebery

(see LRN 71 p.17)

610mm gauge

Three Gemco battery locomotives remain in use running "passenger" trains into the adit at shift changes, and hauling ore and mullock out through the shifts. It is believed that all the other old levels are closed now, and all the mining is from the bottom of the shaft down the decline - it is all trucking and diesel powered down below. Ore is lifted from the lower levels up a shaft to 7 level, and railed out to the mill on the surface. The mine looks likely to be in use at least another 10 years at present. Further details of this rarely-reported operation would be welcome.

Rob Bushby 6/00

VICTORIA

ENERGY BRIX AUSTRALIA, Yallourn

(see LR 151 p.22)

900mm gauge

Both the two Walkers B-B DH locomotives and three Gemco 4wDH units have continued to be

used for brown coal haulage at Yallourn, particularly at those times that two briquetting factories have to be supplied. The rail haulier is National Logistics Co-ordinators but the rail equipment is owned by Energy Brix. The amount of brown coal to be moved by rail is being reduced by the increasing input of raw material hauled by road from Loy Yang. Some Yallourn material is going by road also. It was originally thought that rail operations would cease about October 2000 with the cutting of the line by open cut expansion but this could now be 18 months away. However, the plans to eliminate rail haulage are going ahead regardless and all brown coal for briquetting will probably be road hauled by mid 2001.

Just three of the five Gemco 4wDH locomotives are in service, numbered 1, 2 and 5. The other two are kept for spare parts. Restoration of the Gemco units to operating condition was made difficult because of their long period of open

storage which had had a particularly adverse effect on hydraulic hoses. Energy Brix are looking to dispose of the Gemco locomotives and would be interested to hear from any interested parties. Please contact Elva Anderson, Private Mail Bag 2, Morwell 3840. Phone (03) 5120 4166; Fax (03) 5120 4171.

Peter Newett 5/00; Elva Anderson (Energy Brix) 6/00

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BHP LTD IRON PTY LTD

(see LR 152 p.20)

1435mm gauge

The eight "Dash 8" Co-Co DE locos were reported out of use at Port Hedland at the start of May, and have been offered for sale. They have had the fuel tanks drained and other parts removed. These were remanufactured by Goninan 1987-8 from old A E Goodwin units dating back to 1968-70.



Top: E M Baldwin B-B DH interlopers from Bingera Mill were captured working on Fairymead Mill's Moore Park line at Hoods Road, 7 June 2000. Left is GIVELA (5800-2-6-75) and right is DELAN (5800-3-7-75), both of 1975. Photo: Brad Peardon. **Above:** Shunter at NREA-Alco's Whyalla workshops is ex-ANR standard gauge Bo-Bo DE 53 (built SAR Islington, 1969), 10 June 2000. Photo: Daven Walters

Industrial Railway NEWS

The builder's identities are shown below:

No.	Old No.	Goodwin B/n	Date	Goninan B/n	Date
5506	5455	G-6012-04	1968	071	1987
5507	5461	G-6035-02	1969	072	1987
5508	5466	G-6041-02	1970	073	1987
5509	5452	G-6012-01	1968	074	1987
5510	5458	G-6027-02	1969	075	1987
5511	5463	G-6035-04	1970	076	1987
5512	5465	G-6041-01	1970	077	1988
5513	5453	G-6012-02	1968	078	1988

Richard Montgomery 5/00 (Aus loco discussion mailing list); Editor

KINGSTREAM STEEL LTD, Mid West Iron & Steel Project

1435mm gauge?

This project is forecast to get under way this year. It involves an iron ore mine at Talling Peak and transporting the ore 140 kilometres to the Oakajee plant site about 20 kilometres north of Geraldton. Thiess Contractors will be responsible for the mining and for the provision of rail infrastructure to transport the ore.

Australia's Mining Monthly 3/00 via Ray Graf; Kingstream web site

ROBE RIVER IRON ASSOCIATES

(see LR 152 p.20)

HAMERSLEY IRON PTY LTD

(see LR 153 p.22)

1435mm gauge

The Robe River West Angelas mine development was formally endorsed on 27 March by the WA Minister for Resources Development, enabling work to begin on the project, expected to come on stream in mid 2002. It was to involve construction of a new railway, to be connected to the existing Robe railway from Pannawonica. However, on 23 June, Rio Tinto, Hamersley Iron's owner, announced a takeover bid for North Ltd, majority owner of Robe River. If successful, this would mean that West Angelas would be connected to Hamersley's rail system rather than to a major new rail development. Ironically this is something that Hamersley fought vehemently to prevent last year when its then competitor sought access to its rail system under national competition policy.

Australia's Mining Monthly 3/00 via Ray Graf; Robe web site; *The Weekend Australian* 24-25/6/00.

SOUTH SPUR RAIL

(see LR 145 p.23)

1435mm gauge

It is reported that South Spur Rail's English Electric (Aus) Co-Co DE locomotives K205 (A.135 of 1966) and K210 (A.186 of 1968) have been hired by Barclay Mowlem for track trains running out of Kalgoorlie.

Simon Barber 5/00 (Aus loco discussion mailing list)



Video Review

The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway

A Video by John Raby (53 minutes)

This video takes you on a trip up the line from New Jalpaiguri to Darjeeling. The video was shot in January 1997 and features both train 1D (the daily through train) and 9D (the local morning school train from Kurseong to Darjeeling). In keeping with good practice, there is no commentary or extraneous sounds on the tape. All you get to hear is the marvellous sound of the 'B' class as it attacks the hill with its train and the incidental sounds along the way. Well indexed location and explanatory notes are provided with the video and there are a few location sub-titles at appropriate places.

John experienced a variety of weather when filming, as seen in the tropical heat in the lower reaches and snow at Ghum! The sight of the engine approaching Darjeeling with two snowmen on the front instead of the usual sanding men gives a new insight into this delightful railway. My favourite sequence is of the train rounding a distant corner in the mist; a shaft of sunlight gives a superb lighting effect and an almost mystical quality to the scene. There are lots of action shots taken from well selected vantage points and a pacing vehicle as well as interesting views of railway operations, stations and village life along the way. The memorable wheel slipping sequence in the terai forest above Sukna provides sound, steam and smoke in abundance and also shows the manual sanding crew hard at work. There are interesting scenes at Kurseong station which is off the main line, requiring trains to Darjeeling to back out of the station before resuming their journey through the main street.

Technically, I could not fault the video for the quality of sound, colour or editing although purists might quibble that it was shot on Hi8, not digital. The content is always interesting and well balanced although possibly a little more time could have been devoted to the zig-zags (only one short sequence at No. 1) and the loops (one good sequence at Chunbati loop). Excellent close up shots of the engine and motion work in action are included.

The cost of this video is GB£14 which includes airmail postage. Order from John Raby direct. His address is: John Raby, Pearson Education, 25 First Lok Yang Road, Jurong, Singapore 629734
Mal Dow

APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE

The Society received the following letter from one of our servicemen in East Timor, and a parcel of LRRSA publications is now on the way to him. Should any readers also wish to assist, his address follows.

Dear Sir,

I am currently serving with the Australian Army on the border of East and West Timor. As you can imagine, there is little in the way of newsagents etc here to obtain hobby reading material from. There are indeed no facilities such as libraries, newsagents, bookshops, etc. As a rail enthusiast, I am writing in the hope that you may send me some rail literature/publication price lists/brochures/publicity material/membership application form, so that a small band of enthusiasts here may have some reading material. All information sent would be greatly appreciated. We have no internet access here. All mail to East Timor is freepost. Thanking you in anticipation.

S Sullivan

4401074 WO2 S. SULLIVAN
FPE DET BALIBO
BHQ 6RAR S2
UNTAET
OP Tanager East Timor
AFPO-FREEPOST
INTERNATIONAL MAIL CENTRE
SYDNEY NSW 2890

MEMBERS' ADS

DHR FILM NIGHT

ARHS (Vic. Div.) and the Darjeeling Himalayan Society (Australia) are presenting a "Darjeeling Film Night" on Friday 1st September. The program covers historical footage of the DHR and glimpses of other fascinating aspects of Indian Railways pre-1970s. The cost is \$10 per head at the door. All proceeds go to the restoration of the DHR which recently gained World Heritage Status in recognition of its pioneering 19th century engineering and vision as a development agent for the Darjeeling region. Venue: Melbourne Bowling Club, 138 Union Street, Windsor. Time: Screening starts at 7.30 pm sharp. Doors open at 7.00pm. Enquiries: Malcolm Dow (03) 9885 1075 (AH), (03) 9654 8642 (BH) or 0428 747 728 (Mobile).

FOR SALE

Two Jenbach 4wDM underground mining locomotives with wheelsets 508mm gauge. Can be converted to 2ft gauge. One complete; one in dismantled condition but with engine and gearbox. Also a large quantity of Jenbach spare parts. Adrian Kraatz, MS 897, Ravensbourne, Queensland 4352. Phone (07) 4697 8100.



LRRSA NEWS

MEETINGS

ADELAIDE: "Current SA Light Railways"

A discussion will be held on the subject of current South Australian 'light railways'.

Location: 150 First Avenue, Royston Park.

Date: Thursday 3 August at 8.00 pm.

Contact Arnold Lockyer (08) 8296 9488.

BRISBANE: "Neranwood Excursion"

Bob Dow will report on the recent Neranwood excursion, and Bob Gough will present some interesting railway video snippets.

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

After hours entrance opposite Mega Theatre complex, next to Post Office.

Date: Friday 4 August at 7.30 pm. Entry from 7 pm. Contact Bob Dow (07) 3375 1475

MELBOURNE: "Annual General Meeting and Slide Show"

After the usual brief AGM, the traditional members' slide show will be held. Bring along a choice from your collection, but remember no more than 20 each!

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

Date: Thursday, 10 August at 8.00 pm.

SYDNEY: "Esbank Ironworks, Lithgow"

Jim Longworth will give a talk on the light railways of Lithgow's Esbank Ironworks.

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

Date: Wednesday 23 August at 7.30 pm.

Contact Jeff Moonie (02) 4753 6302.

ACTIVITIES

Following publication of the second part of the trilogy on Timber Tramways on the NSW Far South Coast in LR recently, a one page summary was published in the NSW State Forests' magazine *Bush Telegraph*, May-July 2000 issue, and the author, Jim Longworth, has been interviewed on three separate occasions by ABC Radio in the region. LRRSA has featured prominently on each occasion. Hopefully the publicity may elicit more details on tramways in the area.

ERRATUM

In the feature article *Krauss Locomotives in Australia* in LR 153, locomotives carrying builder's numbers 6067, 6415, 6416, 6486, 6611, 6854 and 6927 were attributed to agents Lohmann & Co. These locos were, in fact, supplied through Diercks & Co.

A selection of books from the LRRSA Sales Department ...

LRRSA Publications

Modernising Underground Coal Haulage BHP Newcastle Collieries' Electric Railways

by Ross Mainwaring
Battery and overhead-wire electric locos at Burwood, Lambton, and John Darling collieries.
60 pages, soft cover, A4 size, 18 photographs, 13 maps and diagrams, references and index.
\$16.50 (LRRSA members \$12.38) Weight 230 gm.

Settlers and Sawmillers

A History of West Gippsland Tramways and the Industries they Served 1875-1934

by Mike McCarthy
Timber tramways serving over 100 sawmill sites from Beaconsfield to Trafalgar.
168 pages, soft cover, A4 size, 96 photographs, 17 maps and diagrams, 6 graphs, one loco diagram, references and index.
\$31.90 (LRRSA members \$23.93) Weight 700 gm.

Bellbrakes, Bullocks and Bushmen

A Sawmilling and Tramway History of Gembrook 1885-1985 - by Mike McCarthy

Describes a network of 3 ft and 3 ft 6 in gauge timber tramways, and associated timber mills.
104 pages, soft cover, A4 size, 71 photographs, 17 maps and diagrams, references and index.
\$26.00 (LRRSA members \$19.50). Weight 500 gm.

Rails to Rubicon

A History of the Rubicon Forest

- by Peter Evans
3 ft and 3 ft 6 in gauge timber tramways in rugged mountainous terrain; the 2 ft gauge Alexandra-Rubicon steam tramway, and the 2 ft gauge State Electricity Commission tramways..
200 pages, hard cover, A4 size, over 175 photographs, 53 maps/diagrams, references and index.
\$37.95 (LRRSA members \$28.46) Weight 1 kg.

Arsenic and Molasses

A Pictorial History of the Powelltown Tramway and Timber Milling Operations

by Frank Stamford
Companion volume to the book *Powelltown*, but with an emphasis on photographs. All the photographs are different to those in *Powelltown*.
88 pages, hard & soft covers, A4 size, over 100 photographs, 8 maps and diagrams, glossary and index.
\$36.00 Hard cover (LRRSA members \$27.00) Weight 650 gm.
\$24.00 Soft cover (LRRSA members \$18.00) Weight 470 gm.

Powelltown

A History of its Timber Mills and Tramways

by Frank Stamford, Ted Stuckey, and Geoff Maynard.
Victoria's only timber tramway to provide a passenger service. Six steam locomotives.
150 pages, soft cover, A4 size, 150 photographs, 22 maps and diagrams, references and index.
\$22.00 (LRRSA members \$16.50) Weight 550 gm.

Timber Mountain

A sawmilling history of the Murrindindi Forest from 1885 to 1950

by Norm Houghton
Timber tramways and mills in the Healesville, Toolangi, Yea, Buxton and Narbethong area.
106 pages, soft cover, 165 x 230 mm, 40 photographs, 8 maps/diagrams, 3-colour fold-out map.
\$16.00 (LRRSA members \$12.00) Weight 275 gm.

Books from Other Publishers

Britannia Creek

Wood Distilling in the Warburton District

by Arthur Winzenreid, published by the author.
The history of Cumings, Smith's wood distillation chemical works near Yarra Junction, Victoria, and its associated timber tramways. Many superb photographs, in a style similar to LRRSA books.
131 pages, soft cover, A4 size; 125 photographs; 17 maps, diagrams and drawings; references and index..
\$20.90 (LRRSA members \$18.81) Weight 555 gm

Tasmania's Hagans

The North East Dundas Tramway Articulated "J" Class

by Geoff Murdoch, published by the author.
Detailed history and superb diagrams of the unique Hagans 2-4-6-0T locomotive. Includes scale drawings of all N.E.D.T locomotives.
71 pages, soft cover, A4 size, 42 photographs, 2 maps, 38 diagrams/drawings, references and bibliography.
\$22.00 (LRRSA members \$19.80) Weight 300 gm

Firewood Tramways of the Walhalla Mines 1865-1915

A Research Paper on the History of the Firewood Tramways of the Walhalla Mines

by Terry & Brenda Jenkins. Published by T. & B.J. Publications.
Traces almost 100 km of mostly horse-drawn firewood tramways around Walhalla, Victoria.
272 pages, hard cover, A5 size, 96 photographs and maps, references and bibliography.
\$33.00 (LRRSA members \$29.70) Weight 530 gm

Postage and packing: Within Australia, up to 500 gm: \$4.60; 501 gm to 3 kg \$9.00 .

Send to: LRRSA Sales, P.O. Box 21, Surrey Hills Vic 3127, Fax (03) 9888 5441.

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



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- If joining in October or November, pay \$26.00 (\$34.70 overseas) and receive 4 issues of *Light Railways* (Nos 156-159).
- If joining in December or January, pay \$19.50 (\$26.00 overseas) and receive 3 issues of *Light Railways* (Nos 157-159).

- If joining in February or March, pay \$13.00 (\$17.40 overseas) and receive 2 issues of *Light Railways* (Nos 158-159).
- If joining in April or May, pay \$45.50 (\$62.00 overseas) and receive 7 issues of *Light Railways* (Nos 159-165).

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 \$39.00, or please charge my Bankcard/Visa/Mastercard No. _____

_____ Expires ____ . ____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

LR 2000-2001



LETTERS

Dear Sir

A Question of Influence (LR 150 p.3)

Peter Evans notes that Diercks & Co was registered as an incorporated company in March 1896 as successors to Bloomfield Brothers. Material in the George Bond files tell us that Bloomfield Brothers were the successful tenderers for the supply of tramway equipment to Plane Creek Mill in April 1895. It is interesting to note that by the time of the arrival of the Krauss locomotive in Mackay at about the end of the first week in December 1895, its supplier had become Diercks & Co, according to the Mackay Standard of 11 December.

John Browning
Rockhampton, Qld

Dear Sir,

South Coast Timber Trams (LR 128)

Having read through the article in *Light Railways* 128 in relation to NSW South Coast Timber Trams, I have come across some of the photographs used in the article in a publication called *A Pictorial History of the Shoalhaven* (ISBN 0 947299 07 6). Photographs on pages 14 and 21 also appear in LR 128. Other photos on pages 15, 17 and 29 may also be of interest to readers.

G Field
Ermington, NSW

Ed. The photocopy provided by Mr Field of page 17 shows a train on the Silicon Wharf at Bannister Head hauled by a locomotive with a large canopy. In LR 125, Richard Horne, responding to a query from David Burke, identified this locomotive as a Blackstone & Co. 0-4-OPM in the employ of Newbolds General Refractory Co.

Dear Sir,

Monorails (LR 112)

Since this interesting article, further information has come to light about these intriguing machines. Other sites where they have been used include:

- Birimid Casting Plant, Geelong: (LR 83)
- State Rivers and Water Supply Commission of Victoria, Tarago (LR 137)
- Appleton Dock construction: photograph in *Port of Melbourne Quarterly*, April/Jun 1956
- State Rivers And Water Supply Commission of Victoria, Cowwarr Weir: photograph: <http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/ruralwat/0/0/0/doc/rw000892.htm>

It would be interesting to hear of other locations where they might have been used in Australia. They were also reported to have been used in New Zealand. Another is reported to have been used on the construction of a water pipeline in Kuching, Sarawak. This one is supposed to have been retained for maintenance purposes.

Readers will be interested to know that the manufacturing rights are currently owned by a British railway enthusiast, Richard Morris. He has rebuilt one of these machines into a steam locomotive which is claimed to be the only working steam monorail locomotive in the world. This weighs 1 1/2 tonnes. I was intrigued by how power could be transferred to the single wheeled bogies. From the side it looks like an outside framed 0-6-0ST. The centre 'axle' has no driving wheel. The end axles are connected to the wheels via constant velocity joints.

In his original article on the Sydney Water Board monorails, Jim Longworth suggests that one advantage of monorails is they make less impact on the environment. This is confirmed in an article describing

monorails used for the transport of bananas. Apparently there are several thousand kilometres of these in at least 14 countries in Central America. Several hundred locomotives exist. The monorails consist of a wire rope suspended seven feet off the ground and supported by arches at regular intervals. The systems use diesel hydraulic 'tractors' suspended from two bogies.

This article can be found at:

<http://www.monorails.org/tMspages/banana.html>

It would be interesting to know if such monorails were or are used in Australia. I understand that one might have been used in Fiji.

John Peterson
Warragul, Vic

Dear Sir,

Mystery Locomotive (LR 152 & 153)

I bought the Telopea Tea Rooms and Gardens in the early 1980s. It had a 2ft gauge railway, with about one kilometre of track.

There was one working loco, plus five

MONO-RAIL

DRIVERLESS TRANSPORTER
at work on Circular Quay Railway Station, Sydney.

The Mono-Rail is one of the most interesting construction aids of post-war years. The system comprises driverless transporters and, where required, trailers, running on a single rail. The rails include straight and curved sections to suit site conditions, and are mounted on adjustable stands. They may be set up well above the site on scaffolding or trestleways. The system lends itself to a great number of different applications.

May we visit and advise you on site transport. Our experience is based on the latest overseas developments.

MOTOR TRACTORS PTY. LIMITED

348-349 Wattle Street, Broadway, Sydney.
Phone: MA 9273 (8 lines).
Telegram: "Selfmovers" Sydney.

VIC: 4 T&S: Cook Wharf & Co. Pty. Ltd. 100 Flinders Lane, Melbourne.
S.A.: Power Plant Ltd. 108 Currie Street, Adelaide.

QLD: Production Plant Ltd. Building 11, Bullock Street, Brisbane.
W.A.: Harris, Smith, Sanderson Ltd. Hay Street, Perth.

This full page advertisement, which appeared in the September, 1954 issue of *The Journal I.E. Australia*, describes the monorail system in use on Sydney suburban railway construction. Courtesy Norm Houghton

carriages which held six people each, plus some wagons. The loco in the picture (in LR 152) was static near the road for advertising purposes. This loco is now in my front garden, next door to the old tea rooms.

The idea of the train rides came from the original owner, Mr Lou de Clifford. The track was portable sugar cane tracks, in 16ft lengths, as used in the cane fields. The carriages were built from sugar cane wagons. I believe that there were three locos built by a Mr Zinn and, due to family problems, these were sold. One, I believe, found its way to the Illawarra Light Railway, while Mr de Clifford bought two for the Telopea Tea Rooms railway.

We had a few problems with lack of tourists, and bad traction and, unable to sell the whole complex, we decided to sell the train. The working loco, carriages and all the track was loaded onto two Bulls Transports, and taken to Wycliffe Wells, near Tennant Creek, in the Northern Territory.

David Burkhill
Stawell, Vic

Mystery Locomotive (LR 152 & 153)

James Shugg is correct in identifying the little 2ft gauge steam outline locomotive as being at Telopea Gardens, Halls Gap, western Victoria.

It was one of three locomotives built by a railwayman, Alwyn Zinn, at his home in the Ipswich suburb of Leichhardt in 1971-5. They were petrol engined machines with drive on to the rear axle only. I rather think that they were designed for operation on a circular railway so that the two axles were not parallel with each other.

The one in the photograph was number 1, built in 1971 and in the final stages of remodelling to steam outline shortly before Zinn's death in 1976. It carried a builder's plate reading:

BUILT BY A. ZINN - CLASS P24 - FOR THE KATHLEEN RAILWAY - 14.6.1971

The second locomotive built by Zinn was a larger locomotive with a V8 engine. It was finished in 1972 and carried a builder's plate reading:

BUILT BY A. ZINN ESQ - FOR THE KATHLINE RAILWAYS - PZ90 - 18.2.1972

The third locomotive was larger still and I think it had a Leyland Cub engine. It did not carry a builder's plate. It is believed to have been finished in 1975, and was pictured in LR 87.

The three locomotives, together with a quantity of workshop equipment, were obtained by the Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society in 1977 and removed to a storage site at Rocklea in Brisbane. The first two were purchased by Mr Lou de Clifford for his Telopea Gardens, then under development, in 1979. After a period of storage at my home in Brisbane, the third went to the Illawarra Light Railway Museum Society in 1982 and from there to Paul Simpson at the Menangle Narrow Gauge Railway in 1992. It was offered for sale in 1999.

At Telopea Gardens, Lou de Clifford had a Fordson diesel engine and hydraulic transmission fitted into the second locomotive and it was given a steam outline. It operated on a one kilometre long circuit and was pictured in *Light Railway News* 65. In 1984, Telopea Gardens was acquired by David & Susan Burkhill and by 1988 the first locomotive was reported on display with its engine removed. In 1996, it was reported that the railway from Telopea Gardens had been removed to Wycliffe Well in the Northern Territory but no further information about this site has been received since, so further news would be welcome.

John Browning
Rockhampton, Qld

Though space limitations prevent the inclusion of his letter, Bob Simpson, of Oak Flats, NSW, also identified the mystery loco and its siblings, and submitted the photo (below) of Zinn's second loco.

Dear Sir,

Jetty Tramway at French Island (Vic)

In 1995 I visited French Island, which lies in Westernport Bay, Victoria, for a bike ride around the island.

At the 'locale' of Tankerton, the only major settlement on the island, I recorded and photographed the remnants of a tramway linking the island's jetty to the island. The enclosed photograph (below) shows the remnants of this single tramline curving onto the jetty.

Unfortunately, my notes regarding the extent of the tramway line have been misplaced but, from the book and photograph, the gauge of the line might be set at 3ft 6in.

I would be interested if any fellow readers of *Light Railways* could shed any light on this jetty line.

Stephen G Haby
Box Hill, Vic



The jetty at Tankerton in 1995, with the remains of the tramway evident. Photo: Stephen G Haby



Zinn's second locomotive, with its train of converted cane wagons, at Telopea Gardens. Photo: Bob Simpson



RESEARCH

History of Australian Science and Technology Bibliography

The History of Australian Science and Technology Bibliography (HASB) recently been relaunched with many new entries and a new fully-searchable web interface. The bibliography has been compiled by the Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre as part of Bright Sparcs, and contains details of nearly 5000 publications up to 1998 (with 1999 in preparation). It is based on a number of sources, particularly, Laurie Carlson's annual bibliographies published in Historical Records of Australian Science.

The coverage is broad and includes publications from related areas such as medicine, engineering and environmental history. The bibliography is primarily based on academic sources, but useful background material can be located on topics of interest to LRRSA researchers. For instance, there are currently 23 references listed under "forest history". HASB can be found at: <http://barney.asap.unimelb.edu.au/hasb/hasb.php3>

Tim Sherratt (ANU), via Colin Harvey

Jarman Island, WA

Kevin Palassis Architects released the Jarman Island Light Station conservation plan in May 1999 for the Shire of Roebourne and the National Trust of Australia (WA). A lighthouse was built on Jarman Island (off the Pilbara coast from Cossack / Point Samson) in 1888-9. Quarters were erected and used until 1950 while the lighthouse was replaced by Cape Lambert lighthouse on the mainland in 1985. Among structures built on the island was a boathouse with a tramway for hauling boats into and out of the water.

The bulk of the tramway, apart from about 15 metres immediately

out of the boatshed site, still remains with rails going into the water to several metres depth at high tide. The conservation plan can be seen in the JS Battye Library, Perth, and further research conducted through State Records Office and the Battye Library where many government reports and plans have been deposited.

David Whiteford

LRRSA Webpage

The Society's Home Page at www.lrrsa.org.au goes from strength to strength. Updated monthly, it now has a lot of useful material for researchers, as well as information about the Society its publications and membership. New for June is the fine photograph of a Krauss 0-4-2T at Plane Creek Mill in the 1920s that was featured on the back cover of LR 153, and a PDF file with Jim Longworth's listing of the light railways of Sydney Harbour. This lists all known light railways and current references. Clicking the menu "What is a light railway" takes the surfer to useful background material and bibliographies on Australia's timber industry, sugar industry railways and government railways of less than 1067mm gauge.

A Tale of Old Rope

Wire rope was used extensively in tramway and logging operations in the 19th and 20th centuries. The source of the ropes is probably of little interest to most and a difficult topic to research. The writer recently came across some accounting papers dealing with the vending and disposal of several thousand metres of wire rope in 1917.

The rope was surplus to the requirements to the Fyansford Cement Works, ex the overhead ropeway from the quarry to the works, and the company offered it for sale to all comers. Given the shortage of most items used in the civilian and manufacturing economy due to the First World War, keen demand for the rope was evident. Machinery brokers in Melbourne advised their clients that the rope was for sale, while offers and orders were directed to the cement company.

Rope was dispatched to the following sawmillers: G Bond, Wyelangta (probably for Knott's mill); WR Henry, Forest (2 coils);

and J Kincaid, Weeaprounah. Strong enquiries were received from the Powelltown mill, Mt Bischoff Tin Mine, Mississippi Sawmilling Company, Sanderson & Grant and Cumming Smith. As the records are incomplete, it is not known if these potential orders were filled.

Norm Houghton

Australian Forest History Conference 2000

This conference - The Perfumed Pineries: Histories of the Callitris forests of New South Wales and Queensland - will be held at Coonabarabran, NSW, on 20-23 November 2000. It covers the environment of the white pine region and celebrates Eric Rolls' pioneer work on the ecology of the Pillaga Scrub. Over 20 papers have been offered, including one by your humble editor on "Pine and the Pioneers of NW NSW". Contact: John Dargavel, Phone (02) 6258 9102; Email: Pineries@anu.edu.au; URL www.es.mq.edu.au/physgeog/pineries.htm

Newcastle Regional Museum

In response to our item on the Museum's web site and the Greta Coal Measure information in LR 153 (p.26), LRRSA researcher Ross Mainwaring suggests that the material should be treated with some caution, pointing out a number of inaccuracies in the information provided for two of the collieries. It is believed that a tight

deadline for publication did not allow the opportunity for suggestions from other researchers to be incorporated in the final text that appears on the web site.

Query on Old Rails

A reader is seeking information about the origin of light railway line (about 14 lbs/yd) branded "B.V.G 1882", which is used for hand-rails and fencing in reserves at Wentworth Falls, NSW. It is possibly of German manufacture and was originally purchased for use by the Gladstone Quarry in 1884. Please send any information to Jim Smith, 65 Fletcher Street, Wentworth Falls NSW 2882.

Braeside Brown Coal Mine, Hazelwood, Vic

Reader Rob de Souza-Daw is seeking information about the coal mine and proposed tramway which gave its name to Tramway Road, which runs north from Jeeraland Junction to the railway just east of Morwell. According to Stephen Legg, *A History of the Morwell Municipality* (1992, p.76), a partnership of Messrs Jones, Gibson and Knox took out the first coal mining lease at Braeside in 1874. The venture collapsed due to lack of access to the railway, but not before plans were made for a tramway, the proposed route of which has become Tramway Road. It appears construction of the tramway may have commenced.

Coming Events

AUGUST 2000

7-12 Aust. NG Railway Museum Society, QLD: *Bundy's Last Great Adventure* - Bundaberg Fowler 0-6-2T No.5 undertaking sugar haulage at Nambour and participating in Sugar Festival on 12/8. Phone: (07) 3202 6330.

11-12 Cobdogla Irrigation & Steam Museum, SA: Steam running day, with Loveday Flier trains and vintage engines. Phone 08 8588 2323

14-18 Aust. NG Railway Museum Society, QLD: *Bundy's Last Great Adventure* - Bundaberg Fowler 0-6-2T No.5 operating over mill systems in Bundaberg district., Then moving to Mackay district 21-23 August, Victoria Mill, Ingham 26-27 August, and Tully Mill, 29 August. Phone: (07) 3202 6330.

SEPTEMBER 2000

1 Aust. NG Railway Museum Society, QLD: *Bundy's Last Great Adventure* - Bundaberg Fowler 0-6-2T No.5 operating over the tramway system of South Johnstone Mill. Then Mourilyan Mill 2 September, Babinda Mill 3 September, Mulgrave Mill, Gordonvale 4 September and Mossman Mill, 6-7 September. Phone: (07) 3202 6330.

2-3 Puffing Billy Railway, Belgrave VIC: 'Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine' Weekend - Thomas comes to Puffing Billy to say hello to all his friends! Also on 9-10 and 25 September. Phone: (03) 9754 6800 for bookings.

24 Cobdogla Irrigation & Steam Museum, SA: Steam running day, with Loveday Flier trains and vintage engines. Phone 08 8588 2323.

31 Melbourne Model Engineering Exhibition, VIC: At Monash University (also on 1 Oct). Phone (03) 9889 7907.

OCTOBER 2000

1 Cobdogla Irrigation & Steam Museum, SA: Steam running day, with Loveday Flier trains, Humphrey steam pump and vintage engines. Phone 08 8588 2323.

7-8 Puffing Billy Railway, Belgrave VIC: 'Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine' Weekend - See Thomas and his friends have fun! Phone: (03) 9754 6800 for bookings.

15 Bennett Brook Railway, Whiteman Park WA: 'Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine' Day with steam trains and the Fat Controller. . Phone (08) 9249 3861.



Heritage & Tourist

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

NEWS

Queensland

PORT DOUGLAS COMMUTER RAILWAY 610mm gauge
This 6km tourist railway operates to a regular timetable. Trains leave Port Douglas (Marina) at 10.30, 11.30, 1.30, 2.30, 3.30, 5.00 each day for St Crispins, the trip taking 15 minutes each way. On Saturday 27 May, the regular locomotive, Baguley 0-6-0DH *MOWBRAY* (3378 of 1954), operated the first train to St Crispins, but then gave way to 0-6-2T *BUNDY* (Bundaberg Foundry 2/1952) for the return journey. *BUNDY* had left Mossman mill at 9.30am the day before, and worked 'Commuter' trains on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday. On

Sunday 28/5, services were delayed when *BUNDY* collided with a motor vehicle at a level crossing near St Crispins. Fortunately, no one was injured. Mossman mill, the line's operator, had been reluctant to provide any information on these impromptu runs but, in the *Port Douglas & Mossman Gazette* of 8/6, Rail Manager John Quaid stated that steam would be returning to the *Ballyhooley Commuter*, initially at weekends, but possibly 7 days a week in the future. (See photos, page 32.)
Brad Peardon, 5/00 Graeme Belbin 6/00

FRASER ISLAND TOURIST RAILWAY

Construction of a light railway to reduce the impacts of visitors to the World Heritage-listed site on Fraser Island is again on the agenda. In February, the Minister for Environment & Heritage, Rod Welford, welcomed a prefeasibility study that proposed a light railway for the island and requested the Fraser Island Management Committee to consider all options to reduce visitor impacts. The Fraser Island Defenders Organisation (FIDO) commissioned the study by Gutteridge Haskins & Davey. In 1978 FIDO proposed the restoration of the old logging tramway routes on the island for the operation of tourist steam trains. This would provide three lines from Mackenzie's Jetty. The northern route to Seckle's Camp would have

been extended north to Happy Valley, while the other two routes would go via the Central Forestry Station to Eurong and Dilli Villi.

Brian Webber

SWANBANK RAILWAY, Ipswich 1067mm gauge **Queensland Pioneer Steam Railway Co-op**

Former Pioneer Sugar Mill 0-4-2T *KILRIE* (Perry Eng 265/1924) saw regular passenger service on the Swanbank Railway in June 2000, replacing the regular loco PB15 448, which was undergoing overhaul. The loco started life as a 0-4-0T working on the Hume Weir construction. It went to Pioneer mill in 1949, and worked there until replaced by diesels in the 1960s. It was donated by the mill owners to the Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society in 1980. As ANGRMS is primarily concerned with 610mm gauge equipment, *KILRIE* was transferred to the QPSR on indefinite loan. She made her public debut at this new home in late 1990 [see LRN 80, p.14].

Brian Webber 6/00

New South Wales

GREAT COBAR OUTBACK HERITAGE CENTRE

1435mm gauge
This museum, which features the history of the Cobar district and has one of the Great Cobar electric locomotives on display (see LR 142, p.24), announced two new projects in March. A heritage park

and recreation area featuring mining as its main theme is to be established adjacent to the present museum building. The former Chesney Copper Mine headframe and winder house are to be relocated in the park over the Great Cobar No.2 shaft. Under a Commonwealth Government Federation Fund grant, a 5km discovery track will be established from the museum south alongside the open cut and on the former Occidental Mine railway formation to New Tank, then back to the museum via the Great Cobar slag dump.

Cobar Age, 14 March 2000, via Ray Graf

LINE OF LODE, Broken Hill

1435mm gauge
Line of Lode Association Inc.
The new tourist attraction offers continuing minerals exploration and mining, heritage conservation, curatorship and innovation. It claims to offer Australia's pre-eminent collection of mining heritage. The Association has received a \$4.5 million Centenary of Federation grant to guide Broken Hill through the transition from a mining centre to one where tourism is the main focus. South Mine Heritage Precinct depicts the daily lives of miners and their families who have worked and continue to work on the Line of Lode mines. Ex-NSWGR Tin Hare CPH rail motor No. 13 was transferred from Canberra to Broken Hill in 1999 to be restored for tourist

RETURN OF SMR No.30 TO SERVICE

Richmond Vale Preservation Co-operative Society Ltd

Former South Maitland Railways standard gauge 2-8-2T No. 30 (BP 6294/1925) was steamed for the first time since 18 September 1987 at Richmond Main on 7 April 2000. After much work by many members over the preceding months, No. 30 ran trouble-free during her light engine and load trials to Pelaw Main on Friday 7th. She was to return to passenger train operations next morning, but compressor troubles meant that Goninan Bo-Bo DE No. 34 had to deputise on the first two trains. The problem was repaired and No. 30 ran trouble-free for the remainder of the weekend.

No. 30 was transferred from Hexham to Richmond Main on 8 July 1987, along with Nos 22, 24 and 25. The latter two locomotives entered service on the Museum railway, while No. 30 was stored pending restoration.

This task required complete dismantling and extensive work on the boiler. This included replacing many defective wall stays, foundation rivets, boiler tubes and front tube plates after welding repairs to the tube plate. A new regulator was cast and machined, along with new steam and exhaust pipes in the smoke box. A new smoke box was manufactured as well as repairs/modification to the ashpan. On the frame, some of the axle boxes were remetalled, and pins, bushes on the motion, valve gear and brake rigging were replaced where required. With the pending removal of No. 25 from service (LR 151, p. 30), efforts to complete the restoration of No. 30 were intensified. The boiler was returned to the frames on 30 January, while the side tanks, compressor and funnel were fitted on 1 April. Seven days later, the freshly painted and lettered No. 30 was ready for trials. Graham Black, 5/00 Photo: Wendy Black



Heritage & Tourist

train services on the Line of Lode project. The service will operate from the former NSWGR railway station, but this will require relaying about 1km of track. At present, daily tours offer 2-hour (\$10 adults) and 4-hour (\$25 adults) exploration of Broken Hill's mining history. Bookings: 08 8088 6000. Ray Graf/Editor, 5/00

ILLAWARRA LIGHT RAILWAY MUSEUM, Albion Park

610mm gauge

The Enthusiasts and Photographer Day and Evening on 27 May 2000 (LR 153, p.28) provided some great opportunities for photographers and general visitors. An official ceremony for the commissioning of the "triangle" road was held at 1.30pm, followed by a Cavalcade of four steam locomotives: 0-4-0ST *BURRA* (H/Leslie 3574/1923), 0-4-0ST *KIAMA* (Davenport 1596/1916), 0-6-2T *PERRY* (Perry 7967/49/1 of 1949) and 0-6-0 *CAIRNS* (HC 1706/1939).

The line-up on the triangle apex in the winter sun offered an excellent photographic spectacle. Passenger and demonstration freight trains on various types of consist were operated from 9am to 7.30pm. Ex-CSR Victoria Mill 0-6-0DM *SEYMOUR* (Baugley-Drewry 2392/1952) got the first passenger trains under way at 9am, while Hunslet-Hudson 4wDM (HE 4580/1955) and a Ruston-Hornsby 4wDM (engine No. 327100) operated demonstration trains. After dark photo opportunities included the "Steamy Glow" shutdown of *BURRA*, *KIAMA* and *CAIRNS* from 5.30pm and steam train operations by *PERRY* until 7.30pm, plus a barbecue dinner. Editor, 5/00; Brad Johns, 6/00

Victoria

ALEXANDRA TIMBER TRAMWAY

610mm gauge

The Society recently won the Murrindindi Regional Tourism Certificate of Excellence for Regional Attraction of the Year, 2000. The presentation was made at the awards evening on 15 May 2000. Work on restoration of 0-6-0 No.6 (HC 1098/1915) is proceeding,



Top: 0-4-2T *KILRIE* (Perry 265/1924) hauling ex-QR carriages on the Swanbank Railway, near Ipswich, June 2000. Photo: Brian Webber. **Centre:** ILRMS Enthusiasts' and Photographers' Day, 27 May 2000: Four steam locomotives - 0-4-0ST *BURRA* (H/Leslie 3574/1923), 0-4-0ST *KIAMA* (Davenport 1596/1915), 0-6-2T *PERRY* (Perry 7967/49/1 of 1949) and 0-6-0 *CAIRNS* (Hudswell Clarke 1706/1939) - line up in the autumn sunshine. Photo: Peter Charrett. **Above:** *PERRY* and train pause at Yallah station during evening running operations. Photo: Brad Johns.

with three tender wheels cleaned back to the bare metal and primed on 25 March. The Malcolm Moore 4wDM suffered damage to the right-hand trailing wheel in May, requiring its replacement by Simplex 10058 of 1948 for shunting duties during the May running day. However, because the Malcolm Moore is the only locomotive fitted with an operational electric start, mid-week train services were suspended until the loco could be returned to service. *Timberline 54, 6/00*

BASS VALLEY RAILWAY

610mm gauge

On reports that Coal Creek Village was negotiating to purchase a Ruston 4wDM ex-Bass Valley Railway, an inspection of this site was made on 11th May. In contrast to the scene in 1999 (LR 146, p.30), the complex was shut up and the Restaurant had closed. Apparently, development of the site is on hold and operations are suspended, although the railway is accredited. The former VR Tait passenger carriages were still in

position, but had most of the glass broken. The narrow gauge railway track was overgrown and had not run for quite a while. No ng locomotives or passenger carriages were sighted as they are securely locked away. There are six passenger vehicles from rebuilt salt boxes - currently accredited and stored undercover - together with several wagons for work trains. The four Ruston & Hornsby 4wDM locomotives on site are as follows:

BENNY: 4-cylinder Dorman/Ricardo engine - Hydrostatic Transmission (believed to be 252805 of 1947). This locomotive has been overhauled and rebuilt with new cab and engine bonnet. It has been fitted with train air brake and ex Victorian Railways Tait 3 Trumpet Whistle and new headlights on the cab - front and rear. Painted Brunswick Green with black under-frame. Locomotive operational - not accredited.

ROCKY: 3-cylinder Ruston engine (believed to be 283510 of 1949). Operational and accredited - as delivered from Cheetham Salt.

Used to build the railway and haul passenger trains.

HEATHER-JEANNE: 3-cylinder Ruston engine with hydrostatic transmission (believed to be 283509 of 1949). As delivered from Cheetham Salt. Stored operational and accredited.

Unnamed locomotive: 2-cylinder Ruston engine (320555 of 1951) dismantled and suitable for parts and scrap.

Peter Medlin, 5/00; John Browning 5/00

PUFFING BILLY RAILWAY

762mm gauge

Emerald Tourist Railway Board

The popular children's railway character *Thomas the Tank Engine* now pays regular visits to his friends at Puffing Billy. A new show features *Thomas* in steam - actually Peckett 0-4-0ST 1711 built in 1926 - with the Fat Controller and is held at Emerald railway station. For these events, the Peckett locomotive is fitted with a temporary cladding to look like Thomas. The exterior is made of timber and metal and the structure

Heritage & Tourist

is bolted onto the locomotive. The finish is excellent and excites the children, especially when Thomas has something taken from his tanks because of a boiler ache. I cannot say any more, so come and see the show!

The new format commenced in March 2000 and other *Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine* events will be held in September during the school holidays (2, 3, 9, 10 and Monday 25th). Other events are planned for October and November. Bookings can be made by phoning 03 9757 0770. Larry James, 5/00

Tasmania

Abt WILDERNESS RAILWAY,

Queenstown 1067mm gauge

Steam returned to Queenstown on 15 June, marking the 27th Anniversary of the last official train to run on the Mt Lyell

WARANGA RESERVOIR TRAMWAY Waranga, Vic

610mm gauge

Some years ago, The Rural Water Corporation (now Goulburn Murray Water) pulled up the rail on most of the Waranga Tramway and then advertised all the loose rail, in-situ rail, rolling stock and locomotive for tender. Several organisations tendered for the lot and cried poor. Alexandra Timber Tramway (just as poor!) took a different tack. We prepared a submission for the RWC in 1995 and, as a result, they agreed to retain the remaining tramway and rolling stock and to fund a small museum.

Construction of the Waranga Reservoir was carried out between 1902 and 1908 as part of an irrigation scheme for central and northern Victoria, with further work between 1915 and 1926. A horse-worked tramway system was provided to haul beaching-stone from nearby quarries to prevent erosion of the wall by wave action [see LR 21, pp. 18-20]. A locomotive was purchased to supersede horse-traction in 1959. This locomotive is believed to have been constructed by George W Sewell of Footscray, and consisted of a skip frame with an internal-combustion engine driving one axle via roller chains. The locomotive is a rare survivor of the once numerous "home-made" locomotives used on tramways in Victoria, while the tramway itself is one of only two extant 2 ft gauge industrial tramways in Victoria. Both the surviving section of tramway and locomotive are therefore assessed as significant heritage items. The Alexandra submission recommended that the surviving section of tramway between the end of the reservoir wall and the quarry should be retained and conserved in situ. The section of track leading to the "locomotive shed" should also be retained to demonstrate the way in which the locomotive was housed and maintained. The locomotive and existing rolling stock were also to be conserved and retained on site. The Museum offered to prepare a history of the Waranga Reservoir site so that the tramway may be correctly placed in context and interpretative materials developed.

In return for obtaining the loose rail, the Alexandra Timber Tramway has provided advice on the establishment of the museum. This has now proceeded to the point where designs for a building to house the "train" are being prepared by Goulburn Murray Water. The locomotive and several of the trucks have been taken to Alexandra and restored and will be returned to Waranga when the facilities are in place. The restored Sewell-built 4wPM loco was on display at the Easter 2000 Rally at Alexandra (LR 153, p. 29).

Hopefully this has been a win-win situation. The Alexandra Timber Tramway has obtained useful amounts of rail from the tramway already dismantled, the remaining tramway will be retained and the locomotive and rolling-stock displayed and conserved. As far as I know (and I would be delighted to be proved wrong), no other railway museum has yet taken this sort of stand where heritage has meant more than "adding to the collection". Peter Evans, 5/00 *Photo: Peter Medlin*



Heritage & Tourist

Railway. Ex-Pioneer sugar mill 0-4-2T *KLONDYKE* (Perry 271 of 1927) was on loan from the Bellarine Peninsula Railway at Queenscliff, Victoria for the occasion. It was steamed, and ran up and down in front of the Workshops in Carswell Park at 3pm. Ex-Mt Lyell/EBR V-class 0-6-0DM No.22 (Vulcan/Drewry D153/2405 of 1953) also operated during the day. This is the first loco restored by Saunders & Ward in Hobart for the Abt Wilderness Railway. Photographs of the day show the new passenger station and trackwork as virtually complete. The first new passenger car for the railway arrived in Queenstown on 22 June. Rob Bushby, 6/00

DON RIVER RAILWAY

1067mm gauge

Van Diemen Light Railway Society Inc.

Ex-EBR 4-8-0 No. 8 (Dubs 3856/1900) successfully passed its boiler examination and returned to service in November 1999. The museum now has four steam locomotives available for its operations. Restoration of former Tasmanian PWD John Fowler 0-6-0T (5265 of 1885) is progressing well, with boiler pressure tests scheduled to begin in May. The 610mm gauge ex-Lune River 0-4-2T (Hunslet Eng. 1844/1936), leased to the Trans-Derwent Ferry & Railway Company at Ida Bay (LR 140, p.30), is to be returned to Don River for overhaul. When the locomotive is available for service, it is intended to offer it for hire to various Tasmanian 610mm gauge railways.

Don News (various), via Ray Graf

WEE GEORGIE WOOD, TULLAH

'Wee Georgie Wood' operated on Sunday 23.4.00 for the last time till spring. On the train was a 4w bogie flat with a water tank, the 4w bogie end platform saloon carriage, in the process of being repainted, ex the Comstock tramway, loaned from Zeehan School of Mines. In the shed was another 4w bogie saloon carriage painted green ex the Lake Margaret Tramway, a 4wP painted yellow ex EBR. The Kraus ex Mt Lyell No. 9 is being rebuilt. Also on

site were several skips, flat cars, ore cars and a 4w ex BE frame ex Williamsford.

Western Australia

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

The Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine Day held on 21 May was again successful, although patronage and ticket sales were down slightly on the previous year. The year 2000 steam operations commenced for the day in the form of 2-8-2 NG118 (Henschel

24476/1938) and 0-4-2T BT1 (Perry 8967.39.1 of 1939), together with diesels *ROSALIE* (JF 4110019/1950) and ex-PWD No. 27 4wDH 'Windy Wyndham' (Gemco of 1964). NG15 118, BT1 and *ROSALIE* worked an intensive service utilising two 4-coach trains between Mussel Pool and Whiteman Village Junction (WVJ). Meanwhile, the Gemco operated trips around the Loop Line from WVJ with an open passenger wagon and the three small coaches. The Northern Districts Live Steamers also provided miniature train rides. Other attractions included vintage bus rides, tram rides, fun fair,

tractor display, face painting, kids concert, etc.

The dedication of the restored Subiaco station buildings and signal box has held on 11 June, with the Minister for Planning, Graham Kierath, officiating. Following speeches, Mr Kierath unveiled a plaque commemorating the event. Mr Kierath then took his place at the controls of NG15 118 to drive the Official Train while Mr Costa, the mayor of Subiaco, went up into the signal cabin to pull off the platform 2 starter signal to send the train on its way. This was the first train to come under the control of the cabin in its new location.



At Emerald, on the Puffing Billy Railway, loco 7A passes on a Belgrave bound passenger service, as an enthusiastic group enjoys the THOMAS show.

Photo: Peter Ralph



John Fowler 0-4-0WT WEE GEORGIE WOOD (16203/1924) in action on Sunday 23 April, 2000. Photo: Peter Charrett

Much work remains to be done to connect up the rest of the signals and points at WVJ to the cabin.
BBR Member's Newsletter, June 2000; Simon Mead, 6/00

CARNARVON LIGHT RAILWAY

1067mm gauge

The Gascoyne Development Commission (GDC) has invited tenders for "completion of a feasibility and business plan to develop new tourism product in Carnarvon". This project involves the detailed planning and costing for the development of a Gascoyne River Tramway Tour which builds upon existing horticultural infra-

structure, tourism product, an improved town image and increasing tourism visitation. The tramway would be an extension of the existing jetty-Babbage Island tramway and could go as far as the Ten-Mile Bridge over the Gascoyne River. The brief notes that the 1999 tourist season surpassed the town's expectations in terms of bookings and length of visitor stay as a direct result of a range of initiatives facilitated by the GDC, Carnarvon Mainstreet, the Shire of Carnarvon and the Carnarvon Heritage Precinct. The concept is to value add to existing attractions by networking smaller

operators to create a "Gascoyne River experience".
West Australian, 24 May 2000 via David Whiteford

DONNELLY RIVER HOLIDAY VILLAGE

Bunnings' Donnelly River Mill was opened in the 1950s and closed in the 1970s. The mill town is now a holiday village with accommodation available in the old mill houses. The mill still exists with most machinery intact and tours are conducted through it. Various trolley lines and trolleys still can be seen. Part of the railway formation along the route from the mill

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to the WAGR at Yornup siding is now part of the Timbergetters Walk Trail and then the trail turns on to a logging railway formation (from an earlier mill) which includes an old bridge over the Donnelly River. A four-wheel open wagon survives abandoned in the bush near the mill. It has four South Australian axle boxes - SAR 1904, SAR 1888, SAR 1892, and SAR Martin & Co. Ltd. Engineers Gawler SA 1889. The former mill locomotive shed has been restored as a bed and breakfast complex - "The Loco Shed". Its external appearance has not altered much and still includes the complete ventilation cawling along the roof. Donnelly is an excellent base for exploring the South West and its great railway heritage.

David Whiteford 5/00

ALBANY QUARANTINE STATION

The Albany Quarantine Station, situated across Princess Royal Harbour from the town, had an incline tramway linking a jetty with the station, together with some sidings to buildings near the jetty. The station is now Quarantup Camp available for group stays and leased privately from the State Government.

Until early May 2000 the incline portion of the tramway was still largely intact but as it was becoming unsafe it was pulled up in the first week of the month! The small 'terminus' at the top of the incline survives together with one frame of a former tramway wagon. The incline engine shed still exists with the still operational winding engine inside.

David Whiteford May 2000

RESIDENCY MUSEUM, ALBANY

1067mm gauge

The Residency Museum is the Western Australian Museum's Albany branch and consists of a complex of buildings from the area. On open display are two four-wheel 1067mm gauge open trolleys and one four-wheel enclosed van probably all from the former Albany Harbour sidings. The enclosed van, no doubt ex-WAGR, has no plates or identification.

David Whiteford May 2000.



The former Donnelly River Mill locomotive shed provides an outstanding adaptation of a heritage building to a new use, in this case a b&b holiday complex. Note the original ventilation cawling along the roof. Photo: David Whiteford



Albany Quarantine Station with the incline tramway in the foreground. The photograph was taken in early May 2000 before the track was pulled up. Photo: David Whiteford.



BALLYHOOLEY STEAM REVIVAL

As reported in our *Heritage & Tourist* pages, steam power has recently made a welcome return to Mossman mill's Port Douglas to St Crispins 'Ballyhooley Commuter' tourist operation. Graeme Belbin and Brad Peadon were fortunate enough to witness the first few runs and record the following scenes (clockwise, from above): On 27 May 2000, Bundaberg Foundry 0-6-2T 2 of 1952 BUNDY waits with its train at St Crispins Station. Photo: Brad Peadon. □ As the afternoon shadows creep across the golf course at St Crispins, BUNDY is turned on the former QR Kuranda turntable to take the last train of the day back to Port Douglas. □ Purchased from Millaquin Sugar Co. in 1981, SPEEDY (BF 6 of 1952) was the first of four locos (three steam and one diesel) to operate the 'Ballyhooley' services. On 26 May, it was out of use at Mossman mill, the remnants of its last fire still in the firebox. □ Having run down from Mossman, BUNDY is about to leave the main line, cross the Cook Highway, and head down the branch to Port Douglas. Photos: Graeme Belbin

