NUMBER 225 ISSN 0 727 8101 JUNE 2012 \$7.95 Recommended retail price only

Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc.

IGHT RAIWA

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Australia's Magazine of Industrial & Narrow Gauge Railways



LIGHT RAILWAYS

Australia's Magazine of Industrial and Narrow Gauge Railways

No 225 June 2012 ISSN 0 727 8101 PP 342588/00002

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Distributor: Gordon and Gotch Limited.

Printed by Graphic Impressions.



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Imperial to metric conversions:

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

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Comment

June and July this year mark two important anniversaries in the *Light Railways* calendar. The first is the closure of the Victorian Railways' 2ft 6in gauge Beech Forest Railway, in the Otway Ranges south-west of Melbourne, on 30 June 1962.

Kept alive way past its theoretical 'use-by' date by unique local circumstances (potato and pulpwood traffic, and poor local roads) the 'Beechy' was the last of the five VR narrow-gauge railways to officially close. As one would expect with such a popular railway, there were many calls for the line to be kept open for tourist traffic. Though the Beechy had never been a big passenger carrier, with mixed trains having been the norm since the early days, many well-patronised passenger specials had been operated during the railway's final three years (using carriages from the then-dormant Gembrook 'Puffing Billy' line). However, the track, infrastructure and the last operable locomotive, G42, were all in such run-down condition, that any such venture would have required a massive investment of cash and man-hours.

The final nail in the Beechy's coffin was, ironically, a happy event for narrow-gauge fans, and the second of our anniversaries – the reopening of the Puffing Billy railway, between Belgrave and Menzies Creek, on Saturday 28 July 1962. At that time, most believed that Victoria could simply not support two such railways.

Since then, of course, much narrow-gauge track has returned to the garden state, with the reopening of the spectacular outer section of the Walhalla line, and the extension of the Puffing Billy Railway to its original terminus at Gembrook.

Though most of the Beechy's right-of-way has long since turned to other uses, including two lengthy rail trails, one wonders if it's wise to completely write it off. After all, Britain's Lynton & Barnstaple Railway slumbered for over 70 years before coming back to life. Never say never. 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.

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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.

Front Cover: On a cold winters day in 1974, South Maitland Railways 2-8-2T 20 (Beyer, Peacock 5998 of 1920) whips past the undergrowth and the track gangers sheds just north of Caledonia. This was near the end of the era of the old SMR, with the non-air four-wheel wagons, link & hook couplers all serving a number of loading points. Soon it would be airbraked wagons, auto couplers and only a few loaders served. Photo: Shane O'Neil



Builder's photograph of the new Improved Meyer, No. 7, Barclay 1303 of 1912, probably taken in early December 1912. Richard Horne advises that, as new, the loco 'was painted dark green, picked out with red lines', but the lines are only just perceptible here. The photograph clearly shows several of the main features of Meyer locomotives. It is questionable whether No. 7 is sitting on rails in this photograph. Photo: RT Horne Collection

The new Improved Meyer – a sorry saga

by JS Clennett

This is the story of arguably the most unsuccessful locomotive ever to come to Australia, a locomotive that was built for one of the country's largest but most unsuccessful timber milling enterprises of the time; an enigmatic locomotive with a history that has been mostly lost for nearly a century: No.7 — The new Improved Meyer.

Background

Over the second half of the nineteenth century, the harvesting of Tasmania's southern forests had been in the hands of small to medium sized, generally family-based enterprises, but in 1898 the Government sought entrepreneurs to come forward with proposals to exploit this major hardwood resource on a much grander scale. As a result, two new British companies submitted grandiose proposals, but by 1904 the first was on its way to an ignoble demise, and by 1905 the other, not long into production, had been sold.

The history of these companies is complex and intertwined, too complex to cover in detail here. Briefly though, the Tasmanian Timber Corporation (TTC) was intending to build "... *the largest* (mill) *in the Southern Hemisphere*" on the western shores of Port Esperance, in the far south of the island.¹ Known as the (second) Hopetoun Mill, it was destined to barely reach its teens.

The other, the Huon Timber Company (HTC), was to build its 'super mill' near Geeveston, well up the Huon River Estuary, about 25 kilometres north of Hopetoun. At least it managed to reach its majority, but only just, and after a tumultuous and very costly life.

Each poured huge funds into developing its enterprise, including into extensive and extravagant steam-powered steel-railed tramways, and into other costly infrastructure, severely

and permanently compromising any chances of profitability. Commencing production in March 1901, the TTC was in trouble almost from the start, with management ructions within a year, and a need for restructuring as the Tasmanian Hardwood Corporation (THC) in 1906. It then fell under the management control of the HTC in May 1908, but after a major fire, entered liquidation the following July. In the wash-up, ownership of the Hopetoun operations, and many other assets, was assumed by the HTC. Then, in early 1912, the HTC became a subsidiary of Millars Timber & Trading Company (Millars). After again being hit by fire, the Hopetoun Mill was to effectively close at the outbreak of war. It was then just 13 years old. The Millars-controlled HTC continued to operate the Geeveston super-mill, with several breaks, until 1925.

Our story is about an unusual locomotive that arrived new at Port Esperance in early 1913 from the Scottish builder Andrew Barclay Sons & Co Limited. It was described as a new Improved Meyer articulated locomotive (1303 of 1913), and was to become known as No.7.

The Meyer type of locomotive had been developed originally by a Frenchman, Jean Meyer, in 1868. It was an articulated type in which two bogies were placed directly under the main locomotive frame, in much the same way as with today's diesel locomotives. This resulted in two important features. The first was to increase the flexibility of the wheel arrangement over that of a conventional rigid-framed locomotive, enabling access to track with tighter curves. The second was to allow for a larger firebox in the space between the two bogies, and therefore the development of more steaming capacity.² The additional power was utilised by making each bogie an engine in its own right, as with the Garratt, and with all axles being powered good traction could be achieved, allowing haulage over steeper grades.

On the other hand, the designer might be tempted to increase the axle load in order to exploit the full haulage capacity of the larger boiler and with no pony trucks to share this load, the track could suffer badly as a result. Such was to be the case with No.7.





Above: Builder's photograph of Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST (959 of 1902) THE HUON, the original workhorse at the Huon Timber Company's operations at Geeveston. This was a particularly successful locomotive, and may have been the reason that the company went to Andrew Barclay in 1912 to source a bigger locomotive to supplant the two small and very old units at Hopetoun, and to assist the smallish Shay that had gone there new in 1908. Photo: RT Horne Collection Left: Baldwin 0-4-0ST 7108 of 1884 BALDWIN was missing the top and rear of its wooden cab when photographed working on the Hopetoun tramway early last century. Photo: John Buckland collection

Below left: Manning Wardle 0-4-0ST STANLEY (371 of 1871, rebuilt Black Hawthron 1892) on the Hopetoun tramway circa 1901. Photo: Ken Milbourne collection Below right: Lima Shay 2029 of 1907, a 28-ton Class B machine, arrived at Hopetoun in early 1908. When the line there closed seven years later, the Shay moved to the Huon Timber Company's line at Geeveston, where it was photographed in action. Photo: Peter Sellars collection





At some stage in the early part of the twentieth century, following the general success of Meyer locomotives built by the Leeds firm Kitson & Co, Andrew Barclay determined to enter this market. They produced a catalogue outlining the basic specification features for two classes of Meyers, the BB class 0-4-4-0 and the GG class 0-6-6-0, each with six sub-classes relating to different cylinder diameter/stroke combinations, and each of these with three sub-sub classes related to gauges of one metre, 3ft 6in and 4ft 8½in, a grand total of 36 variants. These designs were promoted as Improved Meyer locomotives.

The Hopetoun locomotives

From the outset it was the declared intention of the TTC at Hopetoun to construct and equip a tramway system that would dramatically overshadow all that had been built in the industry in Tasmania before. Just over 21 miles of relatively well laid steel-railed track was built over the years, yet the future might well have been gleaned from the two curious small locomotives initially acquired. These were far from up-to-date.

The first was a 30 year-old Manning Wardle 0-4-0ST (371 of 1871) *STANLEY*, which had seen service on a colliery line in England before being rebuilt in 1892 by Black Hawthorn, while the other was a sixth- or seventh-hand Baldwin 0-4-0ST (7108 of 1884) *BALDWIN*, purchased from the Tasmanian Government Railways (TGR).

By about the end of 1906, the tramway was reaching well into the forest, and one line in particular, the Wobbly Creek branch, presented quite steep grades against the load, grades that the original small duo would not easily handle. Consequently, and in spite of the company's parlous state, it purchased a new B-class wood-fired Lima Shay (2029 of 1907). This arrived early in 1908, just in time for the cascade of events that led to the liquidation of the THC, and to the assumption of the mill's ownership by the HTC. Although its workload was quite limited, just four years later, and with the HTC firmly in Millars sights, the need was seen for another new locomotive.

The new Improved Meyer locomotive

There has long been confusion about the history of the Improved Meyer articulated locomotive imported by HTC in 1913. Kostaglou,³ in his Report Number 5, noted that *'it never saw service given that it was too heavy for the latest tramline additions. It was mothballed almost upon arrival'*, and Beck's research of DLI boiler records found a report that the locomotive was inspected on 5 March 1913, that stated: *'This is a new engine just imported'*.⁴ However both of these references would now appear to be over-simplifications. In the case of the boiler records, the critical word would seem to be 'inspected'.

Another reference to it was in an article in the ARHS *Bulletin* No.560 (June 1984), in which it was noted that it was transferred to a Philippines subsidiary of Millars, either directly or via Western Australia, in about 1925.⁵ At first impressions, this would seem to have indicated that its mothballing in the Huon must have lasted for some time. As the Hopetoun operations had long since closed by then, the question arose as to whether it was sent to the HTC's other operation at Geeveston for storage, or had gone elsewhere.

The answer has recently come to light with the discovery of an important file in the Archives Office of Tasmania (AOT), a file with entries dating from May 1912 to July 1918 that has brought to light the strained early history of this enigmatic, and as it turns out, nomadic locomotive.⁶

The first year - design, construction and testing

Just why a company experiencing such severe financial and operating difficulties at its Hopetoun mill would want to buy another, as yet unbuilt locomotive from the other side of the world is hard to comprehend, and what transpired over the next six or seven years only adds to that enigma. Nevertheless, on 6 May 1912, the HTC's London office interviewed a representative of Andrew Barclay with the prospect of making such a purchase. This was not seven weeks after the restructuring of the Millars organisation that included the acquisition of the HTC, and perhaps raises the question of how much Millars knew of the matter. In any event, it set in train something of a debacle.

Andrew Barclay responded just two days later by making a detailed offer to 'Specification No 6313/18 modified as under' to supply a locomotive of the Meyer type 'carried on two four wheeled bogies'.⁷ They stated that it would 'develop a draw bar pull of 24000 lbs on the level' and that this would be more than adequate to handle the HTC's stated requirement to be able to pull a load of 85 tons (not including the locomotive) up an incline of 1 in 15. The offer included for the laying of a line of the correct gauge (3ft 6in) at Barclay's Kilmarnock works in order to carry out such a test, with the locomotive in steam, and with a spring gauge between the load and the engine. Delivery was to be 'FOB Glasgow, packed for shipment in the usual manner . . . in about twenty-two weeks'.⁸ The HTC's London office accepted this offer, although what input the Tasmanian connection had is not known.

The "Improved Meyer" locomotive had two bogies, each an engine in its own right, placed directly under the main frame, as opposed to the central boiler cradle arrangement found in the Garratt type. In some improved Meyers, the cylinders on each bogie were inboard, restricting the space available for the firebox, but with others, including No.7, the cylinders were placed at the rear ends of the bogies. This had both advantages and disadvantages. Allowing a larger firebox enabled greater steam generation to drive both engines, but at the same time the steam delivery pipes to the rear engine were lengthened and made more complicated.

Because of the articulation of the bogies, the front and rear steam pipes required flexibility, and so were provided with a number of ball joints. The lubrication of these became a contentious issue with No.7. The ball joints in these pipes could be subjected to heavy wear under working pressure, and it was the lubrication of these, whether to be forced or not, that became a serious issue during the latter stages of the construction of the locomotive. Exhaust steam from the rear-facing rear-engine cylinders was discharged through a second chimney, rising up through the fuel bunker. This reduced the risk of steam exposure to men in shunting operations.

The Andrew Barclay marketing thrust was far from successful, as the makers only managed orders for five individual locomotives in 25 years, from 960 in 1903 to 1956 in 1928. Of these five, only two were to any of their three 'standard' gauges (both being of 3ft 6in gauge), the others being of 2ft 5½in, 2ft, and 3ft gauge, and there were many other variations to the catalogue specifications. For example, the cylinders were rearward facing on three, with a second (rear) chimney rising through the fuel bunker, and inward facing on the other two, with no such chimney.

The second and third were both of 3ft 6in gauge and were built in 1912/13, 1299 *JOAN* (with inward facing cylinders) for the May Morn Estates in New Zealand, and 1303 No.7 (with rearward facing cylinders) for the HTC.¹⁰ At that time, Andrew Barclay was still finding its way with the

Meyer concept. *JOAN* had been 'designed' by Howard Butters, an engineer and a director of the May Morn Estates in New Zealand, and was apparently built by Barclay 'at cost' on condition that it could build other locomotives to the same design.¹¹ They never did so. The modifications proposed to the HTC were apparently to be made from the design of the heaviest of the proposed BB class, and as it turned out, these were significant, particularly in relation to its weight. It is perhaps also notable that that this particular design was based on the 18th of the 36 variants in the catalogue, coinciding with the specification number quoted by Barclay in their offer: No.6313/18.

It is certainly significant that the catalogue stipulated that the minimum weight of rail for this sub-class should be 55 lbs per yard, and it is extremely unlikely that much, if any of the rail at Hopetoun would have met that criterion.

The letter of offer to the HTC of 8 May 1912 set down quite comprehensive basic specification and performance details, the most relevant of which were as follows. The underlining is by the present author and indicates points that were to prove contentious one way or another over the next decade or so.

Price: £2210 delivered FOB Glasgow (as it happened shipping was ex-London, see below)

Draw bar pull: 24000lbs 'on the level'

Draw bar pull: <u>17200lbs on a grade of 1:15</u>

Cylinders: $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches dia (modified from 12") by 18 inches stroke (do 16")

Wheel Diameter: 2'-8" (modified from 3'-0")

Wheel base: rigid 6'-0", total 25'-9

<u>We desire to draw your attention to the short total wheel base</u>... <u>which would contribute to safety and comfort when working on</u> <u>curves</u>. We would point out also that the load is distributed with great equality among the eight driving wheels. . . Engine to take curves of $1\frac{1}{2}$ chains easily when at speed

Heating surfaces: tubes 932 square feet, firebox 96 square feet, total 1028 square feet

Grate area: 18 square feet

Water capacity: 1000 gallons

Fuel capacity: 2 tons of wood

Weight empty: <u>33 tons 10 cwt</u>

Weight loaded: 40 tons 0 cwt

Working pressure: 180 psi

Walschaert radial valve gear

The quoted price of $\pounds 2200$ was to be loaded quite a lot by the time No.7 had arrived at Port Esperance. Andrew Barclay's final figure was $\pounds 2595$ 10s 0d, including extras, spares and carriage to Glasgow, while inspection fees, freight to Port Esperance via London and Hobart, insurances, duties etc, increased it to $\pounds 3768$ 14s 7d.¹²

In mid-December 1912, and on the recommendation of the Engineering Department of the Western Australian Government through its Agent-General, the HTC wrote to one GF Mathews Esq of Manchester, notifying him that Andrew Barclay had just completed a locomotive for them, and seeking his services for 'inspecting' testing set down for Friday 20 December.¹³ This letter included the load capacity criteria specified in the letter of offer. He was also asked to make any observations on anything connected with the work that came under his notice, although it was acknowledged that he would not be able to undertake any detailed inspection of the workmanship and finish of the locomotive. The letter was signed, as were others, by Robt L Allen, Secretary *pro tem*, under the letterhead of the Huon Timber Company, Pinners Hall, London EC.¹⁴

Mathews reported back the day after the test, describing the

procedure used, and stating that while the specified drawbar load was achieved in some respects, the test methods used were somewhat crude, but on the safe side of the load.¹⁵ The test was undertaken on track of:

 \dots 80-90 ft. on a 3 chain curve. Quite sufficient to make a test, but not quite enough to demonstrate by continuous pulling the efficiency of the engine. \dots I expressed to the firm that the track laid was hardly long enough, though it might demonstrate the tractive effort of the engine in a starting effort, on short length, but not a sustained one which would have been much better for testing.¹⁶

In respect to 'other observations', he made special comment that he thought that the steam ball joints should have more effective lubrication, forced if possible, that the steam pipe to the rear engine be lagged, and that the steam chests be lagged over.

Mathews concluded his report by recommending that there should be a further inspection, in steam, to establish that the HTC 'get(s) the engine up to your expectations even if you are satisfied with the draw-bar tests, as stated above'. Clearly, Mathews had his misgivings about the locomotive, yet his recommended further inspection did not eventuate. Even at this stage, Mathews referred to the locomotive as No.7, and that number was boldly painted on its sides at Kilmarnock.

On 22 December, an inspector from the Scottish Boiler Inspection Insurance Co Ltd was present at a hydraulic test of the boiler to a proof pressure of 270psi, and subsequently certified it for a working pressure of 180psi.¹⁷ This was the last of a series of inspections that the company had undertaken during the latter stages of construction of the boiler, and was in all likelihood the only boiler test carried out until at least mid-1915, and probably not until after it left Tasmania, some time after July 1918.

The hectic next two weeks or so, with Christmas intervening, saw a continuing flow of communications between the HTC and Mathews, and between the HTC and Andrew Barclay about the adequacy or otherwise of the load test, of the need or not for forced lubrication of the steam pipe ball joints, and so on.

In a terse telegram dated 27 December 1912 Andrew Barclay guaranteed its locomotive thus:

We undertake make all details satisfactory, Gaurantee (sic) Engine will maintain specified drawbar pull. Consider lubrication steam ball joints by siphon as provided satisfactory. Forced lubrication unnecessary, we could fit charging you time and material if instructed at once.¹⁸

The HTC immediately forwarded the contents of this telegram on to Mathews, and asked him what he thought about the matter of forced lubrication of the ball joints.¹⁹ Mathews replied the next day in some detail, and with obvious frustration:

In recommending forced lubrication to steam ball joints, I do so following best practice. Messrs Kitson & Co., Leeds, who have made a type of engine similar to this one, and call it the Kitson-Meyer type, Messrs Beyer Peacock & Co., with the Garratt, and other makers of articulated Engines, all put forced lubrication to these joints: that Messrs Barclay & Co. do not do so and now think it unnecessary, I attribute to want of knowledge or perhaps economy. Therefore I should advise you having forced lubrication fitted . . .

... As mentioned in my previous letters, the chief trouble (in) these articulated engines has been the ball joints for steam pipes, first in keeping them tight, 2nd. in lubricating them, and preventing undue wear on the nose end where they are continually rubbing. The siphon lubricator suggested is no good, it cannot force oil into these parts against 180 lbs. of steam, and I told the makers of this fact.²⁰

These comments were somewhat timely and ironical. At the time, the world's first two Garratts, K1 and K2, had been in service in Tasmania for about three years, and their operators, the Tasmanian Government Railways (TGR) were already committed to four more, and so had more experience than



Adamsons Peak looking westwards from the Dover Jetty in 2006. The twin peaks, and the flat ridge to their right have long been known as 'the Cow, the Calf and the Pasture'. On the shoreline below the Calf was the original Hopetoun Mill, burnt out in 1898, while the Tasmanian Timber Corporation's Hopetoun mill and wharf were to the left and below. The tramway route from both of these mills ran up the green slope to the right, to harvest the forest on the hills in the right middle-ground and beyond. Photo: JS Clennett

many others with the lubricating of such ball joints, a fact that was to come to light a few more years into No.7's history.

This period was obviously difficult for all the parties. In the end, it came to a head on the penultimate day of 1912, when the HTC found it had no option but to accept Barclay's guarantees on these two critical issues, or it would miss a crucial shipping date from London.

The final instructions to Andrew Barclay were conveyed by letter on 30 December 1912, quoting several telegrams of the same date: . . . After carefully considering the circumstances, we telegraphed you today as follows:- 'Relying on your gaurantee (sic) will accept locomotive if you can rail it to London not later than 7th January. Shall we engage freight.'

And received the following reply:- 'Regret cannot dispatch before holidays could rail Kilmarnock seventh if instructed this afternoon is steamer closing sixteenth January not available.'

We immediately telegraphed as under:- 'Rail locomotive from Kilmarnock on 7th. We are reserving space on that understanding.'

The steamer now offering is the s.s. 'Ruahine', the representatives of which stipulate that the locomotive shall be alongside by the 10th prox. We trust that you will accordingly make every effort to fulfill your promise \dots^{21}

Everything at sea

And so Mathews was politely thanked and paid off,²² and No.7, '*packed for shipment in usual manner*', left Kilmarnock by rail for London on either 7 or 8 January 1913 in order to be sure to be alongside for loading onto the SS *Ruahine* before she sailed.²³

The SS *Ruahine* (10,758 tons) was a passenger and cargo ship of the New Zealand Shipping Co, and had been regularly on the run from London, via Cape Town and Hobart to New Zealand ports since about 1893. She would have presented the best opportunity for such a direct delivery, one that would not be repeated, at least not by that ship, for about six months.

After a fast trip of six and a half weeks, the SS *Ruahine* duly berthed in Hobart on the evening of 26 February 1912,²⁴ and No.7 was unloaded. It was then moved around the wharves for re-loading onto a local vessel for the trip to Port Esperance, but it is not known how soon it made that last stage of delivery.

And here lies another enigma. The boiler records referenced above indicate that No.7 was 'inspected' on 5 March (the following Wednesday), and not that it was 'tested'. What constituted this inspection or where it took place, Hobart or Port Esperance, is not clear, but for there to have been a comprehensive inspection at Port Esperance seems very unlikely. The first possible steamer for Port Esperance, the Dover, sailed from Hobart on Saturday 1 March, and the next, the Togo on the following Monday. Neither of these vessels would have been ideal for what would have been quite heavy crates. It is probable that another vessel was used, and perhaps the steam scow Glenturk (see account below) was the most likely, but no other sailings from Hobart to Port Esperance were listed in the Mercury shipping news until after 5 March. Thus, in the unlikely event that the Dover was used, the earliest arrival at the mill wharf would have been late on that Saturday. A Sunday unloading was extremely unlikely, and so for a boiler test to have taken place on the Wednesday would not seem practical. There is also strong evidence, as will be seen below, that No.7 was not even unpacked for more than another three years.

This author's contention is that the probable scenario was that the 'inspection' took place in Hobart, and constituted only a viewing of documentation, including the Kilmarnock boiler-test certificate, with, at most, a cursory viewing of the packed-up locomotive. In any event, the appropriate time to



The Glenturk was most likely the vessel used to transport No.7 from Hobart to Port Esperance after its arrival on the SS Ruahine in late February 1913. It was certainly the vessel used to take No.7 back to Hobart on the first stage of its abortive trip to the Launceston Railway Workshops in 1915. Photo: Maritime Museum of Tasmania

pressure-test the boiler on a locomotive would surely be once it had been assembled, or at least once its boiler had been appropriately set up, and this could hardly have taken place at Port Esperance by 5 March.

Further, it is very clear that the urgency that had seen No.7 sent from Kilmarnock in such a rush to catch the ss *Ruahine*, and against the serious misgivings on the part of Mathews, had by now evaporated. The HTC's operations at Hopetoun were in serious trouble, and No.7 apparently remained in its crates at Port Esperance, staying there until the end of March 1915, over two years later.

Locomotive for sale

The next chapter in this saga came in September 1914, when the HTC offered to sell No.7 to the Tasmanian Public Works Department (PWD):

New Barclay Meyer Locomotive

We beg to enclose herewith duplicate invoice of the above locomotive, together with statement showing the total landed cost at Port Esperance ($\pounds 3768/14/7$)

As stated by the writer we are prepared to recommend to our directors in London to sell the locomotive at cost price - and will cable them at any time if you so desire.

We shall be pleased to let you peruse all the original documents relating to the locomotive.²⁵

The PWD then asked the TGR to assist in the assessment of the locomotive prior to any purchase, and a letter-report followed from the Chief Mechanical Engineer of the TGR, WR Deeble, to the Engineer-in-Chief of the PWD, TW Fowler, headed '*Ballast Engine*'.²⁶ This was neither overly positive nor negative, and had only been prepared on the basis of limited drawings and specifications, the locomotive itself remaining unpacked at Port Esperance. However there were one or two points that Deeble was critical about, including his preference for forced lubrication to the steam-pipe ball joints (one of Mathew's criticisms), that he saw problems with articulated locomotives using saturated steam, and that there may need to be some modifications made. He also noted that the axle loads would each be 10 tons. Calculated anticipated performance figures were listed for the locomotive under noted conditions hauling trains at 10 mph around 3 chain radius curves, on various grades. His tonnage for a 1 in 15 grade was 80 tons, ie 5 tons, or 6% below the original specified figure.

Ten days later, the PWD Engineer for Railway Construction, FG Butler, sent a memorandum to his superior, Fowler, strongly recommending the purchase of the locomotive.²⁷ This memorandum gives light to the reasons that the purchase was being seriously considered.

In particular the PWD had been charged by the Government with the construction of a number of 'hinterland' branches running southwards from the north west coast of the island up into rich, but steep farming country, notably the Nietta, Preolinna and Penguin tramways. Butler saw the locomotive as ideal to replace the PWD's two current construction locomotives:

These \tilde{E} . Class locomotives are very old, and have to be thoroughly repaired after a few months work . . (and) . . are a constant expense to maintain in working condition.

These 'E. Class' locomotives were in fact two of seven Hunslet 4-6-0T units that had been new to the Tasmanian Main Line Railway (TMLR) in 1875-77, and were thus nearly 40 years old. They each had a rated tractive power of about 9700 lbs, and were relatively light. On the other hand No.7, bearing in mind it was in fact two engines, would have rated at 23,700 lb, and no doubt this and its flexibility for the proposed tight curves attracted Butler. However, he seemed to be oblivious to the high axle load. He ended his memorandum stressing the urgency of the matter, as he foresaw plate-laying at Ulverstone starting in a month's time. His report was endorsed positively by Fowler, and by the Minister for Public Works, James Belton.

However, two days later the Minister was more circumspect,²⁸ and more reports were sought from Ross Reynolds, Assistant Engineer-in-Chief, and from PF St.Hill, who had had some experience with the locomotive type on construction works,

specifically with *JOAN* at May Morn.²⁹ St.Hill's letter report mentioned that the steam joints in *JOAN* tended to leak under full working pressure, a comment that seemed to fall on deaf ears, at least for the moment.

Reynolds, on the other hand recommended purchase and, this being accepted,³⁰ the Secretary of the PWD was instructed to agree to the HTC's offer, on the proviso that the locomotive would, under actual steaming conditions, meet specified performance criteria. Delivery was to be to Ocean Pier in Hobart, and payment would be dependent on such satisfactory performance.³¹ The HTC keenly accepted the result; it had at last got rid of its white elephant.³² Or had it?

On 26 March 1915, the HTC wrote a succinct letter to the Secretary of Public Works:

According to our present advice, the "Glenturk" – with the above locomotive on board – should be in Hobart on Monday morning next.³³

The *Glenturk* was a 71-ton steam scow built at Port Esperance in 1905 for WP Henderson, manager of the Hopetoun mill, to carry logs from outlying points to the mill, and timber to ships out in the bay.³⁴ It went through a series of changes of ownership that mirrored the unstable life of the mill itself. It is more than likely that she was the vessel used to transport No.7 from Hobart to Port Esperance in 1913. This 1915 return trip was probably the last one she made for the company for she was sold off just 18 days later.

Back to the drawing board

And so No.7 arrived back in Hobart on board the Glenturk on 30 March 1915, just over two years after its first visit, and still in boxes. The following receipt was issued:

Received from the Huon Timber Company, ex "Glenturk":-

- 1 Loco Carriage in good order and condition
- 1 Loco Boiler do
- 2 pr. Driving wheels do
- 2 pr. *******ing Wheels do
- 2 Bogies

10 cases Machinery (Loco Parts). Original cases unopened – Cases somewhat knocked about.³⁶

The boxes were then railed to the TGR's Launceston workshops where the locomotive was at last unpacked and assembled. It appears that the penny was at last to drop. The locomotive apparently weighed in at over 50 tons, instead of the expected 40 tons, and compared with *JOAN's* 27 tons.³⁷ The Chief Mechanical Engineer, telegraphed Ellerton Browne, the HTC manager in Hobart:

Engine much over weight nineteen tons on rear axle can you meet me here eleven thirty tomorrow.³⁸

Ellerton Browne telegraphed that he would arrive by express two days later.

Any meeting between the two is not documented, other than that the Engineer in Chief apparently wrote to the HTC



This schematic drawing, TGR Drg No 1599 was prepared by its Chief Draftsman in mid-1915 to show possible alterations to No.7 to address excessive axle loads. The drawing indicated, however, that even more load would result from the addition of the extra wheelsets and framing, rising to 10¹/4 tons on each of the three rear axles and these high loads on each bogie on such short wheel bases would severely compromise the structure of track and bridges. It was probably the straw that broke the back of any sale to the Public Works Department, and the alterations were never made. Archives Office of Tasmania PWD213/1/12

on the matter on 3 May, and Ellerton Browne then cabled his Head Office in London for instructions. As a result, Ellerton Browne wrote a rather sanctimonious letter to the PWD on 17 May 1915:

... We have received a reply from our Head Office in London – with reference to the above locomotive – from which we conclude that the weight of the locomotive was increased in order to obtain the required drawbar pull. Our Head Office point out that the locomotive is a bargain at the price we agreed upon, owing to the great increase in cost of labour and material, apart from the difficulties of getting deliveries at all just now.

If, however, you will kindly submit Mr.Deebles (sic) proposals for alterations, together with estimate of cost of same, we feel confident that an arrangement can be arrived at to our mutual satisfaction.³⁹

The alterations proposed by Deeble included converting each of the locomotive's bogies from a four-wheel arrangement to six wheels. When the suggestion was put by the PWD to the TGR, their reply was that they would be able to do the work, but there would be a delay of some six or more weeks before details could be prepared.⁴⁰ The approximate weight per axle would be 9 tons 10 cwt, an implied total weight of 57 tons. Costs would need to be left open, but would be approximately \pounds 550.⁴¹ A schematic drawing was subsequently done (TGR Drg No 1599), and this indicated a total weight of 57³/₄ tons, with a maximum load of 10¹/₄ tons on each rear axle. In its idleness, No.7 was putting on weight.

It was then desperately suggested by the HTC⁴² that a weight re-distribution might solve the problem, involving moving the tanks around, and this should be tried before any major alteration costs were incurred. However, that was soon discounted by the TGR as *moving this weight from one end to the other would, of course, be no relief at all.*⁴³

Extensive calculations were done on the potential effect on bridges of an altered locomotive, and these concluded that such a total load on such a small overall wheel base would result in higher bending moments on shorter spans than would be due to either the then-new 94 ton M-class Garratts, or the 72 ton Beyer-Peacock E-class of 1907. These calculations are contained in the file and they are conclusive stuff.

And that was all but the end of the matter. CC Baird, Chief Engineer for existing lines was at last someone who was able to take the bull by the horns, in a memorandum to his Commissioner.⁴⁴ After reiterating the problems with bridges, he went on to say:

Further, in view of the fact that the engine is intended for construction purposes when the object now appears to be a reduction in the weight and strength of rails,⁴⁵ it seems an anomaly to increase the concentrated weight of axle loads.

In view of the above remarks I therefore think it would be very undesirable, if not unsafe to run such an engine under these conditions.

Hiatus

And that is where things stood until April 1916 when the TGR wrote to the PWD pointing out that the locomotive they had purchased was rusting in the open at Launceston, and that it should be cleaned up, painted and covered.⁴⁶ The PWD replied that the purchase had not gone through, and they would alert the HTC of these facts, and ask what was to be done with it.⁴⁷

Another six months elapsed until the HTC was notified that, upon payment to the Government of the sum of $\pounds 106$ 10s 2d, being half of the expenses incurred by it in regards to carriage and erection of the locomotive, the HTC could take possession of it, and would be required to remove it from Launceston.⁴⁸

In the last document in the file, a further nine months later, the HTC agreed to the condition, enclosing a cheque for the requisite amount, and advising that it had arranged with the TGR to have the locomotive dismantled and packed.⁴⁹

Another overseas trip

Just where it went for the next four years is not yet clear, but the end of the Great War followed less than four months later, and early shipping would have been difficult. However, it appeared with an associated Millar's company, Findlay Millar Timber Co in the Philippines not later than 1922. Richard Horne reports a note in the Barclay records that read: 'When in London in December 1922, Mr. Bell learned that this loco was working in Malay'.

In 1924, the Findlay Millar Timber Co published the book *Philippine Lumber*, in which appeared a photograph of a trio of locomotives in a yard at Kolumbugan in that country; a trio that included the Meyer, only the second such photograph known to this author, and the only one of it in steam.⁵⁰

Of the other locomotives, one was a small and elderly Beyer Peacock 2-4-0T, 2158 of 1882, that had also arrived from Australia, from Millars Timber & Trading Co of WA, in December 1917,⁵¹ while the other was a much bigger Shay, 3242 of 1923, and thus quite new at the date of the photograph. It had a total working weight of 52.4 tons, and, assuming a reasonably balanced weight distribution, would have had working axle loads of just over 13 tons,⁵² very comparable with the Meyer, although possibly on a longer overall wheel base. In short, this would indicate that the track capacity in Kolumbugan was sufficient to carry these loads, contrary to the situation in Tasmania and a major reason why the Meyer had been such a failure there.

No further history of No.7 is to hand, other than it apparently worked on at Kolambugan until it was scrapped.

Vale

And so the sorry saga of Andrew Barclay B/n.1303 of 1913 came to an end.

This was a locomotive that had been conceived in May 1913, to an unproven basic design that was then modified, including having its weight increased to improve traction, and that exhibited several identified design faults on completion. At a time when the status of its ownership was in something of a hiatus, it had taken to the high seas for seven weeks on a passenger liner, and then on a much more humble vessel to eventually reach an obscure bay in the far-off antipodes. There it was found to be totally unsuitable for its purpose, and so there it remained, apparently still in its boxes, for the next two years.

When its owners saw an opportunity to offload it onto a government struggling with the difficulties of building and operating railways in wartime, it was taken on the second of its journeys, on the *Glenturk* back to Hobart, and then by rail to Launceston, where it at last emerged into daylight. There, it was to be erected, prodded, studied, and analysed, but again to fail its assessment and to be left rusting away in the open for another three years before being again packed into its boxes. At five years of age, the Andrew Barclay new Improved Meyer, had still not done any work.

The irony, of course, was that the Meyer's Tasmanian failure gave new life to both *STANLEY* and *BALDWIN*, the locomotives it was supposed to replace, as demonstrated by the advertisement that appeared in the *Mercury* of 23 March 1913 (p.2):

Wanted first-class Loco. Fitter.

Apply The Huon Timber Company Ltd., 23 Old Wharf.



The 0-4-4-0 Meyer-type locomotive No.7 was probably not in service until after it arrived in the Philippines, sometime between 1918 and 1922. It is seen here as the centre locomotive at Findlay Millar's operations at Kolambugan, in a 1923 photograph that appeared in Philippine Lumber, published by that company the following year. The other two units are the diminutive Beyer Peacock 2-4-0T SAMSON (2158 of 1882) and a much larger Shay (3234 of 1923) that would have been quite new, and that fact may have been the reason for the photograph. The Meyer and this Shay had very similar axle loads of about 13 tons. Photo: Findlay Millar Timber Company, courtesy the late Graham Holt

References

- 1. Tasmanian Mail, 19 January 1901, page 16
- 2. Except that this advantage could be negated if all cylinders faced inwards.
- 3. Archaeology of the Tasmanian Timber Industry Report No 5: Historic timber getting
- between Hastings and Dover, page 113, Parry Kostaglou 1994

4. Light Railways No.57: Tasmanian Discoveries, David Beck

5. ARHS Bulletin No. 560, June 1984: Andrew Barclay Locomotives in Australia. RT Horne.

6. Archives Office of Tasmania, Item PWD213/1/12 – *Barclay Meyer Locomotive* – *Purchase from the Huon Timber Company*. The catalogue reference to this file was found in an on-line search on the AOT website by Phil Rickard, who raised it with this author. Note that many of the following references and footnotes quoting letters, telegrams etc were generally sourced from this PWD file.

7. The underlining is by this author.

8. Letter of offer Andrew Barclay (AB) to HTC 8 May 1912

10. Meyer Articulated Locomotives, Donald Binns and Günter Koch, Trackside Publications, 1997.

11. The May Morn Estate was a not dissimilar venture to Hopetoun, although it also included clearing of the forests to the north-west of Wellington for farming. Like Hopetoun, it was notably unsuccessful, and *JOAN* spent little more than a year there.

12. The original offer was to deliver the locomotive to Glasgow for shipment. In the event it was railed from Kilmarnock to the London docks.

- 13. This reference to WA may indicate the involvement the Millars parent company, or at least its operations in that State, albeit belatedly.
- 14. Letter HTC to Mathews 18 December 1912

15. Letter Mathews to HTC 21 December 1912

16. The somewhat broken grammar used by Matthews leads to difficult interpretation of some of his statements.

- 17. Letter of certification to AB 22 December 1912
- 18. Telegram AB to HTC 27 December 1912
- 19. Letter HTC to Mathews 27 December 1912
- 20. Letter Mathews to HTC 28 December 1912
- 21. HTC to AB 30 December 1912
- 22. AB to Mathews 30 December 1912
- 23. Letter HTC to AB 30 December 1912
- 24. The Launceston Examiner, and the Mercury 27 February 1913
- 25. Letter HTC to PWD 21 September 1914

- 26. Letter/report TGR to PWD 8 January 1915
- 27. Departmental Memorandum 18 January 1915
- 28. Minister's Minute paper 20 January 1915
- 29. St.Hill to PWD (Reynolds) 23 January 1915
- 30. Reynolds to Fowler 03 February 1915
- 31. Secretary for Public Works to HTC 24 February 1915
- 32. HTC to PWD 02 March 1915
- 33. HTC to PWD 26 March 1915

34. The *Glenturk* was herself intertwined with the complex history of the TTC, the THC, and the HTC, from the time of her launching in 1905 until she was sold out of the HTC in April 1913.

36. Receipt 30 March 1015

37. An internal TGR memorandum of 30 April 1915 is difficult to interpret, but it seems to indicate that the basic weight of the locomotive without water or fuel on board was 51 tons, 13 cwt and 3 quarters.

- 38. Telegram to HTC 29 April 1915
- 39. HTC to PWD 17 May 1915

40. There was also the critical point that the workshops were struggling to keep an aging fleet of locomotives in service with the increased traffic of wartime.

- 41. Deeble to Fowler 24 May 1915
- 42. Letter HTC to PWD 14 Jul 1915
- 43. Deeble to Fowler 05 August 1915
- 44. Baird to Railway Commissioner 04 November 1915

45. Presumably on the proposed new hinterland lines, although the bridge problem would have been more universal on the TGR system.

- 46.TGR to PWD 14 April 1916
- 47. PWD to TGR 15 April 1916; PWD to HTC 15 April 1916

48. PWD to HTC 16 October 1917

49. HTC to PWD 26 July 1918

50. *Philippine Lumber*, Findlay Millar Timber Co, Manila, Philippines, 1924, source: the late Graham Holt

51. Data via email from R Horne, July 2011

52. www.shaylocomotives.com . This reference records that this locomotive had a build date of 26 September 1923, and was originally owned by Millars Timber & Trading Co. for the Kolumbugan Lumber & Development Co. as # 3. It had an empty weight, as built, of 88,000lbs (39.64 tons), and could carry 1750 US gallons of water (9.53 tons), and 3.25 tons of fuel (coal), a total of 52.42 tons.



A party of walkers on their way to the Trawool Falls around 1910 chose Wright's broad-gauge tramway as a convenient form of access. Ahead of them stands the granite works with its gantry crane, and the tail race from the Pelton wheel can be seen exiting the works building to the left. Although the rails are light, the tramway appears to be laid to a high standard. Photo courtesy Bob Whitehead, from the Rex and Rosemary Britton collection

Wright's Folly The Falls Creek Granite Quarry and its tramway

by Peter Evans

Introduction

The worst time to start a new business, especially when it would face stiff competition, is in the midst of a major financial crisis. That is just what William Cruickshank Wright did in 1892, although, to be fair, the enterprise was conceived when Victoria was at the height of its prosperity.

For a granite quarryman and monumental mason, William Wright, born 16 January 1842, had an impeccable background. His father, James Wright, was an Aberdeen-based granite polisher and monumental sculptor born around 1810 and who, by 1851, had a thriving business in Aberdeen. He received a Letters Patent in the early 1870s and renamed his works the 'Royal Granite Works'.¹ James Wright died on 4 March 1876, and the polishing works in John Street Aberdeen, as well as the granite quarries at Stirlinghill and Syllavethy were inherited by his sons Frederick and William Wright.² William Wright had married Isabella Green, the daughter of a woollen manufacturer in January 1861, and she went on to bear him a large family of nine boys and three girls.³

William Wright decided that he and his family could make a better life for themselves by emigrating to Australia so, presumably bearing a large amount of cash from his share of

the business in Aberdeen he, his eldest son and a daughter, boarded ship for the colonies around 1889.4 He had conceived an interest in Victoria and its granites whilst on holiday. He and his son spent about four months prospecting around Victoria before deciding to advertise in the press for a location where the granite was of a suitable quality. The advertisement was answered by a Mr B Spargo, who had a mineral licence covering the locality of Falls Creek near Trawool. After inspecting the porphyry granite, Wright purchased Spargo's right and then submitted a formal claim for a lease of 15 acres comprising a large portion of the southern bank of the creek. The town of Seymour used Falls Creek for its water supply, but Wright was able to convince the Chairman of the Water Trust that his quarry would be well below the Shire's off-take, and that no pollution of the supply would occur. He would build a weir about one hundred yards below the Trust's off-take, and use the water over a fall of 100ft to power a 5ft diameter Pelton wheel developing 30-40hp when water was available, and would also install a steam engine for the drier months of the summer. These would power three stone saws and turning and polishing lathes installed in a mill and adjacent dressing shed 150ft long. The tramway from the quarry would pass between the two sheds, and a travelling crane capable of handling 25 tons would be installed for transferring the stone. In the quarry, stone would be handled with a derrick crane capable of lifting 15 tons. One of the sculptors to be employed in producing the finished product was to be the locally-renowned Secondo Talachino. Wright had brought with him from Aberdeen the sum of \pounds 10,000 to invest in the works, and a substantial amount of this, about $f_{,6000}$, would be expended in opening up the quarry and installing machinery.5 William Wright built a large house for his family near the works, his wife and remaining children arriving in the colony around 1896.



Above: The house built by Wright for himself and his family adjacent to the works clearly shows his confidence in the permanency of his enterprise. Photograph courtesy Elizabeth Gordon

Below: This view looking east back towards the granite works shows the massive construction of the gantry crane, and the grade on the broad-gauge tramway beginning to rise steeply towards the quarry (behind the photographer). The cable strung on posts to the right of the tramway may be part of the incline haulage system but, if so, it is not clear how it actually operated. If the incline was worked by the capstan just visible in the centre of the tracks, life must have been very exciting for the operator if the rope broke. Photo courtesy Bob Whitehead, from the Rex and Rosemary Britton collection





A private siding is built

In any enterprise where the product is heavy, transport is critical to its success. Wright was fortunate that the deposit of granite was close to the Tallarook –Yea railway, constructed by contractors C & E Millar in 1883. The nearest station to the quarry was about two miles to the north at Trawool. In April 1892, with work in the quarry underway, Wright applied to the Victorian Railway Commissioners to have a siding installed on the main line near his quarry and a tramway constructed into the works. If the VR would put in the points and provide the rails and sleepers, he would lay the siding and the tramway into the quarry. Suitable rails would be available locally from the Tallarook Ballast Pits tramway. To show his bona fides, Wright would guarantee 4% interest on the expenditure until such time as the siding paid its way. The Commissioners were cautious - they knew nothing of Wright, and such a siding and tramway was likely to be expensive. In June 1892 Wright got his answer. The siding would be constructed on an up-front cash payment of \pounds 620. Wright countered that his men were already constructing the earthworks for the line and, as a consequence, it would now cost much less, and he asked the Commissioners to reconsider the price. In response, a formal survey was instituted, showing the upper part of the quarry line as a cable-worked incline on a gradient of 1-in-15, and the price shot up to $\pounds739!$

Desperate to advance the project, Wright purchased and lifted the disused brickworks siding at Tunstall (today's Nunawading), which would provide 20 chains of 50lb rail and sleepers, and had the material dispatched to the site of the proposed siding at Falls Creek. For its part the Commissioners allowed the carriage of this material free of charge, and would allow Wright to lay the siding under the supervision of its own staff. Wright would have to construct the tramway to the quarry using his own resources. The VR would place trucks in the siding but would not work the quarry line, so it advised Wright he should purchase his own locomotive and use it on the main line end of any rake of trucks. The VR would allow the use of its trucks on the quarry line, but they would have to be individually inspected by its own staff before being allowed back on the main line. Wright would be responsible for any damage to the trucks. By October 1892 the siding inside the railway fence was complete, and the local ganger

was handed the keys to the lock bars. However, the Inspector from Yea, R Anderson, decided that the location of the catch points was incorrect (despite their installation having been overseen by VR staff) and there was a further delay while this was corrected. By this time, in December 1892, Wright had completed the tramway into the quarry and demanded to know why the siding was not open for traffic. This was approved in January 1893, and Wright finally had a means of dispatching his output.

Tramway operations

Just how the tramway system worked cannot be stated with any degree of certainty. The VR had recommended that Wright purchase his own locomotive, but there is no record of him ever having done so, nor of one being specially made for him. The line from the private siding to the quarry was a little over 29 chains (583m) long. For the first 17 chains (342m) between the siding and the works, the gradient did not exceed 1 in 203 in favour of the load, so it would have been practicable to work this part of the line with horses. At the works a siding (apparently the only one on the tramway) serviced the interior of the main building. Beyond the works, the gradient steepened to 1 in 16 for eight chains (161m) and then to 1 in 10 for the final section of four chains (81m) and, no doubt, this was beyond the haulage capability of even several horses. (This steepest section of the line is still readily visible today as it has been packed to an even grade on a small embankment using waste granite). At the top of the incline there was a short level section which would not have been more than 20 metres long (just enough for a single truck). The VR archives describe the portion of line beyond the works "to be worked with cable" so, presumably, it acted as a powered incline. The steep section included one short curve of 11 chains radius (221m). The method of powering the incline (and of lowering trucks) is not presently known but, in the contemporary photograph which includes finished headstones, may be seen what might be some form of removable capstan sited between the rails. This would seem to be a fairly impractical method of working the line and, given the large amount of capital invested in the works, there may once have been a steam winch at the quarry end of the broad-gauge tramway.



The narrow-gauge tramway and the stiff-leg derrick in Wright's quarry. The tramway appears to be about 3-ft gauge and is clearly temporary. Footings for the derrick can still be found in the quarry itself and it is evident that it occupied at least a couple of positions as the quarry face advanced. Photo courtesy Bob Whitehead, from the Rex and Rosemary Britton collection

In addition to the broad-gauge tramway there was one of about 3ft gauge in the quarry itself, apparently laid with the same weight of rail used on the main tramway. The function of this is also unclear, although it was definitely used to transport freshly-quarried stone on small four-wheeled trucks from underneath the 15-ton stiff-leg derrick. From the site survey carried out in in October 2011, it seems unlikely that this tramway ran all the way to the works itself, so it may have acted simply as a feeder to the broad-gauge tramway. As the quarry operation advanced up Falls Creek, this would have been a more practicable proposition than extending the broad-gauge line beyond the terminus shown on the archival mapping. If this is so, Wright may have owned at least one broad-gauge truck to avoid demurrage charges levied by the VR, and this truck may have been used to transfer raw stone to the works.





A large gantry crane at the granite works spanned the tramway and was used to transfer stone to and from the trucks. This view looking west shows the single siding leading into the works on the left, with rough-dressed stone in the centre of the picture and partially finished monuments on the right. What appears to be some form of removable capstan for working the siding into the granite works can be seen just beyond the points.

Financial difficulties intrude

The VR calculated the cost of its contribution to the siding inside the railway fence to be £373, and to the tramway outside the fence £467. On 5 September 1892, Wright had paid the sum of $\pounds 350$ towards the cost of the siding. He proposed to defray the balance by paying 5% annually of the remaining cost as rent until such time as the siding became remunerative. He had already expended £7000 of his capital and was fast running out of money. So far, most of the traffic on the siding had been inwards - machinery destined for the works. Very little outwards traffic in the way of finished monuments had been dispatched. The VR's district traffic superintendent offered the opinion that the granite quarries at Harcourt (near Bendigo) had been open for a long time and the proprietors had developed significant contacts within the building industry. He held that, given the difficult financial circumstances in Victoria, the output of the Trawool quarry was a "doubtful proposition". Even Wright admitted in April 1893 that, whilst some orders were in the course of being fulfilled, there was to be no traffic on the siding for some time.

How was the VR to recover its costs at a time when it too was under financial pressure? It was eventually agreed that Wright should pay an annual rental of 5% of the outstanding amount, and the first such payment was sent to the VR in January 1894. When the siding was used in July 1895 by the contractor for a new water supply weir being installed on Falls Creek, Wright seized his opportunity to argue for a reduction in rent. In March 1896, the VR itself used the siding for bridgework on the main line, and Wright was jubilant when the VR subsequently cut the interest payment in half. Consignments from the siding continued to be negligible, and the VR considered closing it altogether. In May 1898

Photo courtesy Bob Whitehead, from the Rex and Rosemary Britton collection

it removed the Annett locks on the siding rendering it inoperable, despite Wright's protest at this 'tyrannical' action. The VR would only re-open the siding on the payment of the current balance of \pounds 101 on the siding account. It would accept this in yearly payments of 25% if Wright could not afford the whole sum. This was eventually amended to five yearly payments of 20% and \pounds 2 cash to cover the reinstallation of the Annett locks. The siding was re-opened in August 1898, but Wright continued to struggle with his repayments and the works were 'almost at a standstill'.

Worse was to come. A venture in gold mining near Kerrisdale was not a success. The Wright's family home at Trawool burnt down in January 1900 through a fire spreading from the wash house, and rumour had it that the insurance was insufficient to cover the loss. In October 1900, the English, Scottish & Australian bank foreclosed on his large overdraft and seized the works. It offered the works to the VR to supply granite for the new railway station in Melbourne, but the offer was refused. Realising that its investment hinged on the works reopening, the ES&A bank pleaded with the VR Commissioners to allow Wright to get the quarry back into production. The Commissioners allowed Wright three months grace to pay his arrears. However, by January 1902 Wright had apparently abandoned the enterprise and had moved to Western Australia. In March 1902 the VR lifted the siding and stacked the materials at the site.

Only seven weeks later Wright returned from WA and announced he had purchased the enterprise back from the ES&A bank. He was horrified to find that his siding had been lifted, and enlisted the assistance of Minister for Lands MK McKenzie (the local member) and Minister for Railways Tommy Bent. Both put substantial pressure on the VR Commissioners, who agreed to reinstate the siding on payment of f_{141} in five instalments of 25%. After further political pressure, this was reduced to \pounds ,36, the cost of labour only. A further reduction to f_{18} was made when additional pressure was applied. Wright must have been close to penniless when he purchased his enterprise back from the bank, as he could not afford even this small amount. Minister for Lands McKenzie suggested that the siding should be reinstated and that Wright be allowed to pay the money back when he could. In September 1902, the siding was reconstructed and Wright agreed to pay-off the $\pounds 18$ in six-monthly instalments and assign all his rights in the siding to the VR. He successfully completed five of the six payments but stumbled at the last hurdle. Around this time Wright's interest in the quarry and works was purchased by builder and contractor Peter Rodger.6 In March 1908 Rodger announced his intention to re-open the quarry for the purposes of extracting stone for the Flinders Street Railway Station.7 However, Rodger lost the contract in August 1908, and the station building was eventually finished using granite from Harcourt.

The quarry is gone but the name lives on ...

Following the abandonment of the quarry, the Falls Creek siding lay idle for some years. The siding was renamed "Granite" in November 1904, and trains occasionally stopped there to let passengers alight and re-embark via ladder in order to visit the Falls higher up the creek. This traffic had gradually increased and, in September 1905, the proprietor of the Trawool Hotel, M Meyer, called for this use to be formally recognised. Not wanting to unduly delay trains bound for the terminus of the line at Mansfield (and constrained by protests from local residents from shifting the Trawool platform to a new location), the VR investigated the cost of a platform on



An example of Wright's letterhead, PRO, VPRS 421/PO, unit 464 file 33/4909. Reproduced with the permission of the Keeper of the Public Records

the eastern side of the line. This was completed in December 1910 at a cost of \pounds 94 and opened for traffic in January 1911. The platform was of timber construction on raised posts and incorporated a small waiting shed. By 1933, the timber platform was in a poor state of repair and it was dismantled, and the remains used to construct a small earth-filled platform on the south side of the line, to the top of which was added the existing waiting shed.⁸ The loop siding was removed in June 1919 and the location itself abolished in December 1951.⁹ The line saw its last train movement on 9 November 1978 and the line, like Wright's Folly at Falls Creek, disappeared into history.

In July 1921, William Wright was admitted to the Kew Asylum suffering from senile dementia. His health gradually deteriorated, and he died on 12 October 1921 from bronchopneumonia, with his occupation still listed as 'granite merchant'. He was buried in the Boroondara cemetery in Kew two days later.¹⁰ His wife Isabella followed him to the grave in January 1936.¹¹



Granite platform circa 1916 showing its raised timber construction, deliberately built in this manner as a means of saving money. D3 541 has just arrived with a down mixed. The point where the tramway to the quarry left the siding is just beyond the furthest visible fence post on the left. Photo courtesy Bob Whitehead

Today, all sign of the siding at Granite has been erased by the construction of the Upper Goulburn Rail Trail. The route of Wright's tramway can be traced where it took a short cut across a paddock but, beyond this point, little remains. In the quarry itself, little can be seen except for a few small cut blocks of stone. The most significant remains are the granite-block weir constructed to feed water to the Pelton wheel (still successfully holding back the waters of Falls Creek 120 years later), and a number of beautifully crafted monuments in cemeteries around Victoria.¹²

References

1. http://www.glasgowsculpture.com/pg_biography.php?sub=wright_j accessed 19 October 2011

2. The London Gazette, 4 October 1878, page 5439.

3. Isabella Wright death certificate 758 of 1936.

4. Information from Elizabeth Gordon, great-grand-daughter of William Wright. Wright possibly already had a relative living in Australia – see *The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser*, Saturday 9 February 1889, page 4.

5. *The Argus*, 15 August 1892 and 16 March 1894; *Broadford Courier* 24 June 1892; *Seymour Express*, 26 July 1892, 21 March 1893; *Alexandra and Yea Standard*, 27 October 1893.

6. PRO,VPRS 421/P0, unit 464 file 33/4909. (File location kindly identified by Des Jowett).

7. Yea Chronicle, Thursday 26 March 1908, page 2.

8. PRO, VPRS 421/P0, unit 464 file 33/4909. This extensive file covers all dealings between the Victorian Railways and William Wright. Details of the gold mining venture in the *Kilmore Free Press*, 20 February 1896 page 3. Details of the house fire in 1900 from the *Kilmore Free Press*, 18 January 1900 page 3; and the *Yea Chronicle*, 18 January 1900 page 3.

9. Jungworth, N., and Lambert, K. (1996). Weekly Notice Extracts 1894-1994. Weekly Notice Productions, Cheltenham.

10. VPRS 24/P0 unit 1013, inquest 1093 of 1921; William Wright death certificate 14456 of 1921;

11. Isabella Wright death certificate 758 of 1936.

12. Site survey by Peter Evans, Scott Gould and Colin Harvey, 7 October 2011. For details of the Swanson monument see the *Williamstown Chronicle*, Saturday 30 December 1893 page 3; and for the Bayley Monument the *Euroa Advertiser*, Friday 29 October 1897, page 2.





Top: The memorial to contractor William Swanson and his wife in the Melbourne General Cemetery. This monument was produced at Wright's quarry and works at Trawool. William Swanson was himself a man with many railway connections, having built the West Block at the Newport Railway Workshops, the Prahran railway station, and extensions to the platforms at North Melbourne. **Above:** The dam on Falls Creek which fed the Pelton wheel at Wright's granite works. Photos: Peter Evans

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Above: William and Isabella Wright's grave in the Boroondara cemetery. A basic grave of concrete and basalt is a most unfitting end for a man capable of the production of fine granite monuments like that to William Swanson in the Melbourne General Cemetery and Arthur Bayley in the cemetery at Avenel.

Above right: Adjacent to the site of the granite works is this roughedout base for a monument which was never completed.

Right: One of the footings (excavated out of the solid granite) for the stiff-leg derrick in the quarry.

Below: Quarried blocks that were never delivered to the works still remain on site, clearly showing the "plug and feather" method of their removal and the clean cleavage planes of the Trawool granite. Photos: Peter Evans











Sandstone Gala, March-April 2012

Sandstone Estates is an agricultural property in the eastern Free State in South Africa, right on the Lesotho border, owned by Wilf Mole. His Sandstone Heritage Trust has saved a significant portion of Southern Africa's 2ft gauge rail heritage and a 25km railway has been built for the collection to operate on.

A large number of 2ft gauge steam locomotives have been returned to working order, both from South African Railways and from a variety of industrial railway operations including in Angola and Mozambique. The Sandstone workshop within the railway complex at Bloemfontein continues to work on restoration projects. There is also a large collection of rolling stock and some vintage internal combustion locomotives.

A special gala event, "Kalahari Sunrise", was held from 23 March to 1 April 2012, bringing together enthusiasts from throughout the world, including a number of LRRSA members.





Australians featured prominently among the volunteer train crews, including a number from the Bennett Brook Railway in Perth. The cost to guests of around \$620 included three meals a day for the ten day period. Eighteen steam locomotives were in operation in various combinations throughout the event, and a variety of rolling stock was in use every day. An optional excursion to Bloemfontein was also available.

In addition to the railway exhibits there is an enormous heritage collection that was available for inspection including vintage farm machinery, tractors, steam traction engines, transport vehicles, military vehicles, cars and buses. Many items were in operation, along with Sandstone's bullock team.

This was an excellent event hosted in person by Wilf Mole. Sandstone is easily accessible to international travellers, and suitable accommodation is available in the immediate area. Keep on the lookout for further events as a visit is a highlight not to be missed. *John Browning*



Clockwise from above left: Framed by eucalyptus, German World War I 'Heeresfeldbahn' 0-8-0T 498 (Henschel 13779 of 1915) at the Grootdraai loop with the mountains of Lesotho in the background. \Box NGG16 class 2-6-2+2-6-2 Beyer-Garratt 153 (Hunslet Taylor 3898 of 1968) reaches Vailima summit with an afternoon passenger train. \Box This beautifully reconstructed inspection car which originated in South-West Africa has Wilf Mole at the controls as it follows the passenger train at Vailima. \Box Ex-sugar mill Avonside 0-4-0T SEZELA No.3 (1936 of 1924) emerges from Grootdraai loop with a SAR ballast hopper to pass a traditional wagon hauled by bullocks. \Box Built for the Beira Railway as its number 7, Falcon 4-4-0 'Lawley' 232 of 1895 shunts hay wagons at the Hoekfontein farm complex. \Box A much altered Andrew Barclay 0-4-2TT, 1459 of 1916, takes water from the impressive facilities at Hoekfontein before undertaking its next duty. This locomotive also originally operated at a Natal sugar mill. Photos: John Browning













Clockwise from top left: Kerr Stuart 'Darwin' class 0-4-2ST TAMARA (4063 of 1924) climbs the grade to Mooihoek. Rescued from Angola, Decauville 0-4-0T BATHALA (302 of 1899). \Box A far cry from driving Pilbara iron ore trains for John Lyas and John Mere. 🗖 Dave Rollins takes a tea break on NGG16 class Garratt 113 (Beyer Peacock 6923 of 1939). 🖵 The 'show time' of the gala was a quintuple headed train. Ascending Pandora bank is NG15 2-8-2 'Kalahari' 17 (21905 of 1931) with NGG13 49 (Hanomag 10599 of 1928) and NGG16 153, 113 and 88 (Cockerill 3268 of 1937).
□ Even more diminutive than BATHALA, Kerr Stuart 'Wren' class 0-4-0ST LITTLE BESS (4031 of 1919) assists with shunting at Hoekfontein. Photos: John Browning





During the 1999 season, PETRIE descends Diddillibah hill with a rake of loaded bins from Eudlo Flats.

Photo: Rod Milne

PETRIE and the Eudlo Flats by Rod Milne

In the 2003 season, Nambour sadly witnessed its last cane trains, their demise coinciding with the closure of the Moreton sugar mill. In the last two seasons, not all lines were worked, the Eudlo Flats and Clark's lines being casualties some time before. Indeed, the Eudlo Flats line last worked in the 2001 season, its abandonment perhaps a harbinger for the remainder of the system.

My first experience of the Eudlo Flats line was as a youngster, when the family took holidays at Caloundra. When it came to visit Coolum and relatives at Tewantin, we were obliged to take the long way around, the direct road between Mooloolaba and Caloundra not existing at that time. So a drive through the back blocks of Maroochydore would sometimes reveal the Eudlo Flats line in all its rustic ambling glory.

The nomenclature of the area is decidedly interesting. The mill called the line the Maroochydore Road line, though Eudlo Flats was also often used, and Eudlo Creek as well. My name for the cane branch was the Diddillibah line, after the district of the same name half way down the branch. The Diddillibah hall was near the branch summit and there was also a school, the evocative aboriginal name meaning 'place of black snakes' and pronounced Da-DILLI-ba. Where the line ended is now known as Kuluin, an aboriginal word meaning 'native pigeon'.

The initial cane branch of the Moreton mill system slowly crept its way out from the junction with the Paynters Creek line (which ended in a roundabout way just east of Woombye). In 1923, the mill cane inspector reported on the Eudlo Flats area with the aim of assessing it for a cane tramway that would in due course run through to Maroochydore, a large tonnage of rails ex-Fraser Island being sent to Maroochydore in late 1922 for use on extensions to the system including from Coolum to Coolum Beach. By the early 1930s, it was reported the track was not too far west from the then rustic Maroochydore, a wee holiday township on the mouth of the Maroochy River. Whether the opportunity was used to run excursion trams to that point is not known, though they did run to Deepwater and Coolum. Newspapers of the time refer to an incident that occurred on Saturday 19 September 1936, when a cane loco and truck collapsed through a bridge over a creek near Maroochydore. The washout was 50 feet long and 12 feet deep, though the description of the location is somewhat nebulous and may not have been on the Eudlo Flats line, which was prone to flooding.

Although my first experience of the Eudlo Flats (Diddillibah) line was in the 1960s, I was fortunate to renew the old friendship with it whilst working in the area from 1999. Mercifully, the branch still had three seasons left in it and I managed to spend a bit of time photographing and observing the cane trains. By 1999, there were only a couple of cane loading points, as the line meandered on from the junction with the Paynters Creek line, crossing the stream by a small steel bridge. Then there was the first cane siding. where loads from Diddillibah were often dumped, the line rising in a straight towards the ridge upon which Diddillibah sits.

By that time, track conditions were pretty deplorable, the rails running like a wonky snake, the line a derailment waiting to happen! Now sharply rising, the line then hooked towards the west, passing through a long reverse curve, which took it over Diddillibah Road. On the other side, as logic would suggest, there was an equally sharp descent, and this was the problematic one, for it was against the loads. Straight after the level crossing with Diddillibah Road, was another with the logically Eudlo Flats Road which ran past the main loop siding (located east of the road). This was the siding where loads were split to negotiate the Diddillibah bank, and more often than not the cane train would be found here, mucking around.

Eudlo Flats Road then swung away to the south-west, but the rickety cane line continued on, past a little used cane spur to cross Eudlo Creek by a low bridge. A pretty creek that commences its journey in the ranges above Eudlo, the creek is named after the aboriginal word 'yudlu' meaning 'eel', and it finally joins the Maroochy River not far from Maroochydore itself. In years past, this area was notorious for flooding, with it being reported in both 1927 and 1928 that water was two feet over Maroochydore Road. It wasn't called the Eudlo Flats for nothing! Obviously, inundation impacted on the cane line laid as it was on the ground, but generally the heaviest rains occurred in the off season, disrupting cane traffic very little.

Just beyond the Eudlo Creek bridge, the branch bifurcated. One line hooked back to the right, towards a large cane load-out point accessed from Rafting Ground Road and the south west, while the eastern spur went a bit further on that way, ending behind some industrial sheds. In days gone by, it went further, but industrialisation of the cane lands of Kuluin was no friend to the sugar mill or indeed its cane railway. My experience of the Eudlo Flats was that most cane was loaded on the west spur. Indeed, I cannot recall ever seeing bins loaded at the east end, though it was somewhat obscured.

In the last few seasons on the Eudlo Flats, the star performer was the diminutive and rather quaint looking EM Baldwin locomotive *PETRIE*, resplendent in yellow. In general, in 1999, *PETRIE* worked the Paynters Creek and Eudlo Flats line, also doing a run to Clark's line if needed. The Moreton locos all tended to have their own bailiwicks; the Punt line for instance was *DUNETHIN*'s, with *JAMAICA* and *BLI-BLI* doing the branches out from River Depot.

So apart from navvy locos, the only mill loco I saw out on the Diddillibah line in those last seasons was *PETRIE*. The big hill at Diddillibah was challenging to cane train workings and normally necessitated double trips. So *PETRIE* would split the load at the loop south of the hill, taking one section up over the hill to the junction with Paynters Creek, then going back light over Diddillibah to get the rest. For a rail photographer, it was great fun, for it meant two trips for the price of one, and over a fairly demanding piece of track. *PETRIE* did tend to grind up that hill at Diddillibah, the speed apt for the wobbly piece of track the train was required to traverse. In 1999, the loco crew told me of a recent runaway that occurred on this bank, when a navvy train got away and doubtless derailed. About the same time (August 1999), *PETRIE* came off the track, but down Paynters Creek way.

Not uncommonly, *PETRIE* was required to do a run to both the Eudlo Flats and Paynters Creek lines in the morning and afternoon, setting bins out at both. Although there was a bit of work to be done, the jobs never seemed too arduous for the mill crews, who enjoyed a pleasant amble up in the hinterland behind Maroochydore. Paynters Creek wasn't a bad place for a swim on a warm day, awaiting the noise of the empties from the bin, rattling along with a sound like a thousand shopping trolleys – as a visiting Canadian once aptly described them!



Also in 1999, PETRIE is seen shunting bins at the loop beside Paynters Creek Road.

Photo: Rod Milne

By 1999, rumours were abounding in the district that the cane lines were on their last legs, and it was evident in the basic levels of maintenance that mill management saw no long term use for cane trains. Relieved as I was to be getting photos of cane trains on the Eudlo Flats line, I was sad that their days were clearly numbered. But there was an even greater malaise in the local cane industry, with the mill itself threatened by loss of cane lands to creeping urbanisation (road haulage was under way from distant cane paddocks as far away as Little Mountain and Beerburrum).

2001 turned out to be the last cane season the Eudlo Flats line was worked. Road haulage was substituted for the last two seasons, though curiously cane trains continued to run up the Paynters Creek line. Although there were clear operating difficulties on the Eudlo Flats line by virtue of the double trips at Diddillibah hill, there were few cane lines operated in Queensland where cane was railed in such a roundabout manner. By road, the terminus of the Paynters Creek line east of Woombye was perhaps 5 km to the mill in the next valley, the rail haul four times that, if not more.

For those last seasons too, the roles of the remaining loco fleet were altered, with *PETRIE* gaining extra duties following the disappearance of runs to Eudlo Flats. Somewhat surprisingly, Com-Eng *JAMAICA* (by then the mill's spare loco) ran a rake of bins up to Eudlo Flats on Tuesday 22 October 2002. So *PETRIE*'s stranglehold on the short branch in its last years was not entirely complete.

If the truth be known, I have not been back to the Eudlo Flats and Diddillibah since the last cane trains ran. I don't think I can bring myself to look at the new dominant pradigm of encroaching suburbia (and exurbia) and a trackless formation on Diddillibah hill. Time has moved on quickly and in 2012 you could be excused for thinking there never were cane trains in that area.



PETRIE, with several bins in tow, at the junction of the Paynters Creek line. Diddillibah hill is in the background. Photo: Rod Milne

Acknowledgements

The Moreton mill cane train crews are acknowledged as a wonderful source of information on the line in the last years, when derailments were not an uncommon event as track deteriorated. Carl Millington and Scott Jesser were also useful sources of general information and the marvellous on-line newspaper files of the NLA's *Trove* provided useful titbits relating to the earlier years. I would love to hear from any readers with further information on the line's construction and day-to-day operation.





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& Cane Trains e-groups, the Canetrains.net forum, and Jim Bisdee's West Australian Railscene e-Mag

QUEENSLAND

MACKAY SUGAR LTD

(see LR 224 p. 24) 610mm gauge The decommissioned locomotives recently moved from Pleystowe into undercover storage at North Eton are as follows:

SEPTIMUS	0-6-0DH	Com Eng	A2128	1958
CHELONA	0-6-0DH	Clyde	59 201	1959
PIONEER	0-6-0DH	Com Eng	AI2358	1962
OAKENDEN	0-6-0DH	Com Eng	FB3169	1963
10	4wDH	EMB	4529.3 11.72	1972
	(rebuilt EN	MB 8860.1	8.79 1979 & N	larian
	Mill 1980)		

They have joined in storage there:

CARLISLE	0-6-0DH	Com Eng	Al3271	1963
RICHMOND	0-6-0DM	Com Eng	A1308	1955
BARCOO	0-6-0DH	Com Eng	FB4383	1965
HOMEBUSH	0-6-0DH	Clyde	55-58	1955
CATTLE CREEK	0-6-0DH	Com Eng	B1724	1957
FINCH HATTON	B-B DH	Com Eng	NA59112	1977
7304	B-B DH	Walkers	663	1970
	Standard	gauge		
7306	B-B DH	Walkers	665	1970
	Standard	gauge		
7308	B-B DH	Walkers	667	1971
	Standard	gauge		
7341	B-B DH	Walkers	703	1972
	Standard	gauge		

Gemco sleeper renewer RSELP2 (521684004739 R841 85 of 1985) is also stored at North Eton as is a pair of 73 class bogies on an ex-QR wagon. The following dismantled locomotives previously at North Eton have been disposed of for scrap:

ASHBURTON	0-6-0DM	Com-Eng	A1614	1956
DALRYMPLE	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	AL4892	1965
7327	B-B DH	Walkers	689	1972
	Standard	gauge		
7332	B-B DH	Walkers	694	1972
	Standard	gauge		

The four 6-wheeled brakewagons stored at North Eton have also been scrapped. These were two from Farleigh Mill (Clyde Queensland



Top: The storage shed at North Eton on 19 February 2012: (L-R) Standard gauge Walkers B-B DH 7341 (703 of 1972), Clyde 0-6-0DH HOMEBUSH (55-58 of 1955) and Com-Eng 0 6 0DH OAKENDEN (FB3169 of 1963). **Centre:** At a nearby former mill building on 9 March were (L-R) Com-Eng B-B DH FINCH HATTON (NA59112 of 1977) and Com-Eng 0 6 0DH CATTLE CREEK (B1724 of 1957). **Above:** At Farleigh Mill's Ossa 3 siding on 24 April were EM Baldwin B-B DH SHANNON (7126.1 5.77 of 1977) with ballast hoppers. In the distance is Com-Eng 0-6-0DH ETON (FB 3170 of 1963) with the welding wagon and behind it the Plasser ballast regulator. All photos: Scott Jesser



Top: ETON and the new Mackay Sugar rail welding wagon at Ossa 2 siding on 8 April. Photo: Scott Jesser **Centre:** Brought back to the mill by road because of a washaway at Constant Creek, SHANNON is unloaded at Farleigh on 28 April. Photo: Warwick Wright **Above:** Macknade Mill's EM Baldwin DARWIN (6171.1 9.75 of 1975) with Clyde Old brake wagon BV4 (CQ3426 of 1975) in the mill yard on 6 April. The extravagant sign writing applied as part of its recent refurbishment is in evidence. Photo: Hayden Quabba

CQ3457 of 1976 and EM Baldwin 7901.1 6.78 of 1978) and two that were obtained from Proserpine Mill numbered 10 and 9 (EM Baldwin 9817.1 12.81 and 9817.2 12.81 of 1981).

A wet season washout has occurred on the northern approach to the Constant Creek bridge on Farleigh Mill's north coast line. This meant that equipment used for track maintenance work on the line could not return to the mill by rail. EM Baldwin B-B DH *SHANNON* (7126.1 5.77 of 1977) was brought back to Farleigh Mill by road from Ossa 2 Siding on 28 April, as were Plasser Model KMX-12T tamper TTAMP5 (376 of 1990) and Plasser Model PBR-201 ballast regulator BREG1 (247 of 1982). *SHANNON* had been hauling ballast on the north coast line while Com-Eng 0-6-0DH *ETON* (FB3170 of 1963) had been hauling the new bogie track welding wagon in the same area.

Scott Jesser 3/12, 4/12; Hayden Quabba 3/12, 4/12; Warwick Wright via Luke Horniblow 4/12

MSF SUGAR LTD, Mulgrave Mill, Gordonvale and South Johnstone Mill (see LR 224 p.24)

610mm gauge

Further locomotives are reported to have been transferred to Mulgrave Mill from Babinda for the 2012 season. One is a Clyde 0-6-0DH and there is also a suggestion of a multi-pair unit. Further details are awaited. Prof Engineering B-B DH *NYLETA* (P.S.L.25.01 of 1990 rebuilt South Johnstone Mill 1993) is still standing out of use at Mulgrave. It is reported to require major engine repairs.

Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 17 *DEERAL* (AD1453 of 1962), which was transferred to Mulgrave from South Johnstone Mill in 2011, has been dismantled in preparation for refurbishment including the fitting of a new cab. It is understood that Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 12 *RIVERSTONE* (AD1452 of 1961) will be receiving similar treatment.

Locomotives present at the old Babinda Mill site in early March were as reported at the end of 2011 in LR 223 with the exception of Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 4 *HARVEY* (AD1138 of 1960) and Clyde 0-6-0DH 16 (56-96 of 1956) which were not seen, and Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 8 (AA1543 of 1960) which was in the shed off the rails.

Work has been going on to upgrade the former Babinda Mill section of the Mulgrave-Babinda line, with several bridges being reconstructed to take heavier locomotives. Mulgrave's Plasser KMX-06 tamper (98 of 1975) has been observed in the area along with line bogies loaded with track panels.

Carl Millington 3/12, 4/12; Tom Porritt 4/12; Woody Charlton 4/12, 5/12

MOSSMAN CENTRAL MILL CO LTD

(see LR 208 p.20) 610mm gauge

On 30 April it was announced that an agreement had been made with Mackay Sugar Ltd to purchase the Mossman Mill assets for \$25.3 million, to be completed on 1 June. The purchase is to be funded through issuing about \$12m in Mackay Sugar shares to the Mossman Central Mill Co Ltd and refinancing its \$13m debt. Mossman Central Mill Co Ltd will

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retain its food grade bagged sugar operation, which it markets under the brand 'Daintree Gold'. Mackay Sugar will be taking on the employment of those working in the Mossman cane transport and milling operations.

Newsmaker 1/5/2012

SUCROGEN (HERBERT) PTY LTD, Herbert River Mills

(see LR 224 p.26)

610mm gauge Victoria Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH *CENTENARY* (64-381 of 1964) was noted on 5 March with two bogie flat wagons at the site of repairs to the bridge at Waterview Creek near Yuruga on the mill's Bambaroo line. Late in April, the cab of Clyde 0-6-0DH *LUCINDA* (65-436 of 1965) had been returned to Victoria Mill from sandblasting and was being fitted out. The locomotive will be receiving new engine compartment doors. Walkers B-B DH *VICTORIA* (599 of 1968 rebuilt Tulk Goninan 1994) was still a bare frame with

the new engine sitting on it.

Carl Mllington 3/12; Chris Hart 4/12

SUCROGEN (PIONEER SUGAR) PTY LTD, Inkerman Mill, Home Hill

(see LR 224 p.26)

610mm gauge

EM Baldwin B-B DH *IONA* (4498.17.72 of 1972) had its cab in place on the frame in March. The short end nose has been eliminated and the cab relocated to the end of the frame, removing a

distinctive feature of the first Baldwin bogie locomotive. The engine being fitted is a Detroit Series 60 diesel.

Luke Horniblow 3/12; Carl Millington 3/12; Hayden Quabba 4/12

SUCROGEN PLANE CREEK PTY LTD, Sarina (see LR 224 p.28)

610mm gauge

Repairs have been carried out on the Turnors Paddock line at Koumala and Walkers B-B DH 1 *ALLAN PAGE* (594 of 1968 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1995) has been in use hauling ballast. Hayden Quabba 4/12

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BHP BILLITON IRON ORE PTY LTD

(see LR 224 p.28) 1435mm gauge

Six Model SD70MACe Co-Co DE locomotives, numbered 4374 to 4379 left the Progress Rail plant at Muncie, Indiana for rail haulage to Norfolk, Virginia, on 22 March. Here they were loaded onto heavy lift ship *Daniella* on 27 March. Arrival in Port Hedland was expected on 13 May. The next batch of seven locomotives (4380 to 4386) left Muncie in the last week of April. Brett Geraghty 3/12, 4/12; *WA Railscene* emag 187

PILBARA RAIL

(see LR 224 p.28)

1435mm gauge Twelve Model ES44DCi Co-Co DE locomotives, believed to be numbered 8175 to 8186 (60773 to 60784 of 2012) left the GE plant at Erie, Pennsylvania, for rail haulage to Norfolk, Virginia, on 14 March. They were loaded onto heavy lift ship *BBC Nile* that sailed on 2 April and was expected to arrive at Dampier on 12 May. 8172 to 8174 (60770 to 60772 of 1912) arrived at Dampier in early March and were in service by early April. Construction of the 52 kilometre Lang Hancock Railway to Hope Downs Mine 4 was well underway by April with earthworks under way and bridge construction due to commence. *WA Railscene* emag 182, 183, 184, 185

OVERSEAS

FIJI SUGAR CORPORATION

(see LR 224 p.28) 610mm gauge

Further serious flooding took place in the western part of Viti Levu at the start of April with more significant damage to infrastructure, particularly in the Nadi area. Included in extensive damage to rail lines, it is understood that the major Navo railway bridge just south of Nadi was seriously affected but promises have been made that it will be repaired in time for the 2012 crush. It has also been stated that some rail traffic will be diverted temporarily to road to enable farmers to get crops to the mill. The Rarawai Mill was inundated once again.

Fiji Times 10/4/2012 via Brad Peadon; Radio New Zealand 18/4/2012

LRRSA ONLINE DISCUSSION GROUP

Have you joined the LRRSA's email discussion group yet? See: http://au.groups.yahoo.com/group/ LRRSA/ and click on "Join This Group"!



New Model SD70MACe Co-Co DE 4374 for BHP Billiton Iron Ore on test at Progress Rail, Muncie, Indiana, on 7 March.



Sawdust and Steam: A History of Sawmilling in the East Otway Ranges 1850-2010 by Norman Houghton

A4 size, card cover. 234 pages with more than 290 photographs and 58 maps and diagrams. Digitally printed. Published 2010 by the author, PO Box 1128, GEELONG 3220. Available from the LRRSA online shop for \$57.95 plus postage (\$52.15 plus postage for LRRSA members).

This book has been developed from the LRRSA title of the same name, written by the same author and first published in 1975. It includes a very clearly written historical summary of timber operations in the east Otways which gives the reader a good understanding of the way the industry developed and why. It also makes a comprehensive effort to describe and provide details of all the sawmills that operated in the district. However, its main emphasis is on the various tramways that were used to bring logs to the larger sawmill operations and take away their sawn timber. This part of the content expands on and in some details corrects the information contained in the 1975 book and is based on herculean field work of a kind that few others would contemplate attempting, particularly given the extremely adverse conditions encountered in this part of the world.

In an appendix the author provides a graphic description of how this work was undertaken, which itself serves as a stern warning to others who might be similarly tempted. It seems to be generally acknowledged that the quality of his fieldwork has been of a very high standard so the results in providing detailed information about the various tramways are excellent, including maps and site diagrams. However, adding details of all sawmilling operations in the eastern Otways to a history of timber tramways provides a challenge to the author in combining the two aspects in a satisfactory way.

The original "Sawdust and Steam" had a clearer if simpler focus. This was reflected in its different subtitle: "A history of the railways and tramways of the eastern Otway ranges", so to say that the new version is a "revised and reprinted" version of the book published in 1975 might raise the odd eyebrow. The new volume retains a chapter on the Birregurra to Forrest government railway branch line but excludes the Great Western Coal Mining Company's line from Deans Marsh to Benwerrin, which merited a chapter in the 1975 publication.

The digital printing process used suits short run printing. The photographs are generally printed as well as could be expected using this process and I found the results to be quite good even if inferior to those that might have been obtained through offset printing. Only about half the photographs from the 1975 "Sawdust and Steam" have been used. A couple of interesting photographs of internal-combustion locomotives have been omitted but there are many new historical photographs included as well as a large number of field images taken by the author.

It seems clear that the author's field work was carried out using metric measurements. Quite naturally these measurements are used in describing the tramways and associated facilities that he has discovered or confirmed in the field.

However, when it comes to obsolete measurement and currency figures found in historical sources, the author has chosen to express them in the metric and decimal system for "ease of current comprehension except where an authentic rendering is required for engineering accuracy". This decision calls for some critical appraisal.



The author expresses all monetary amounts in dollars, simply multiplying the pound figure by two, but anyone interested enough in Australian history to be reading the book would most likely be aware that in 1966, \$2 became the equivalent of £1. The difficulty in understanding the value of historical monetary amounts is caused not so much by the unit of currency but by inflation and changes in the relative costs of labour and various categories of goods. The author provides a table in an attempt to assist the reader with this. However, it only covers the period up to 1965 and uses as its measure the "minimum weekly wage" (in dollars) in Victoria. This seems to me to be a rather debatable approach.

Metrication, completed in Australia in 1988, means that over time the old imperial measures will become unfamiliar and largely incomprehensible to the vast majority of people. However, a number of issues need to be taken into account in adapting to this new situation when dealing with historical data.

- It is generally accepted by historical writers that whenever a quotation is made from a historical source, it should be exact. Norm Houghton has chosen not to follow this convention and some would regard this as a serious error.
- There is a danger that conversions may purport to provide greater precision than was found or intended in the original source. For example if it was stated in a newspaper that a tramway crossing was "situated four miles west of the township", no one would have taken this as an exact measure. However to say that the tramway crossing was 7.62km west of the township would imply something different. In the book the author has given metric distances from Melbourne for the railway stations on the Forrest branch. The VR source expresses these distances to the nearest quarter-mile (440 yards or about 400 metres) but the author expresses them to the nearest 100 metres.
- Standardised measurements are often used in design or for a range of products, for example for the various lengths of railway station platforms, or the standard dimensions of sawn timber, or the weight of a yard of railway line. To simply convert imperial dimensions to their approximate metric equivalents will conceal the pattern of the original standards and the logic behind them.
- A number of historical measures which appear accurate were never intended to be taken as such. For example, ranges of steam and internal combustion engines, including locomotives, were often described in terms of horsepower, for example 20hp, 30hp, 40hp. These figures were never intended to be an exact measure but were simply indicative model designations within a range so converting such numbers to a metric equivalent may miss the point.

This can all be summarised simply in the proposition that measurements should be reported in the units in which they were made. One option is to provide a conversion table at the front of the book. The reader can access online conversion tools that transform imperial measurements to metric in a matter of seconds. Alternatively, as is generally recommended in style manuals, authors may choose to provide an approximate metric equivalent in brackets after the imperial measurement, where it will improve comprehension.

These comments should not to be seen as pedantic criticism of the writer of *Sawdust and Steam*. They are intended to encourage discussion on how we might most effectively write history that communicates and illuminates.

In spite of the reservations outlined above, this is an interesting and well-written book that makes a significant contribution to recording Victoria's forest and timber tramway history and can be recommended a place on your bookshelf. John Browning



Dear Sir

Strahan jetty tramway (LR 223)

In response to Ian Cutter's query, the early morning sunrise scene on page 32 shows the long abandoned jetty of the Pine Export Company in Mill Bay at West Strahan. This company was registered on the 28 July 1919 with a capital of $\pounds 5000$, taking over the assets of Pearson's Pty Ltd of Melbourne. Mr WM Pearson became the managing director.1 The purpose of the new company was to harvest Huon pine and other valuable timbers from the dense forest of the Braddon River area where a tramway was constructed to a jetty on Macquarie Harbour from where the logs were shipped to Strahan. This company became the biggest sawmiller in the area, with two mills employing 80 men and 30 horses as well as three steamships and a lighter for water transport. Sawn timber was sent away by ship or by the Tasmanian Government Railway which ran north to Zeehan to connect with the Emu Bay Railway. Poor management forced the company into insolvency by the late 1920s.

Behind the photographer on the end of the derelict jetty shown in Ian's photo was once a shed housing an oil engine which powered a winch with a drum attached. A wire rope ran from this drum to a derrick. This was used for lifting logs that could not be floated such as hardwood, from a punt onto a four-wheel rail trolley which was then pushed to the company's sawmill along a steel railed tramway. The rails, many of which are still lying discarded in the swampy bushland, were relatively heavy, probably about 40lbs per vard. The substantial mill lay between Meredith Street and Duck Creek. A tall concrete foundation supporting a rusty horizontal steam engine and flywheel can still be seen in the front yard of a nearby house.

The original tramway once crossed over the creek and continued on to Rayner's sawmill which was located in the western end of the present day caravan park adjacent to West Strahan beach.² For many years after the operation closed a caretaker was in charge until the mill burnt down. A huge sawdust pile was once the playground for the local children.

Today, the few remaining timber piles of the Pine Export Company's jetty can be seen protruding from the water a few metres south of the present Meredith Street boat ramp at West Strahan. With thanks to Messrs Don Grining and Peter Reid for their assistance in bringing this interesting story together.

Ross Mainwaring St Ives, NSW

1. Garry Kerr and Harry McDermott, 1999, The Huon

- Pine Story, A History of Harvest and Use of a Unique Timber.
- 2. Interview with Mr Don Grining of Strahan.

Dear Sir

Cane railway bridge, Maroochy River

As a child, I have fond memories going out to the Maroochy River Bridge with my father and the Moreton Mill's bridge gang whenever there was a flood in progress to check the bridge. This bridge was the mill's most important piece of tramline infrastructure and was treated as such with annual maintenance during the period when my father was responsible for track maintenance at the mill. During floods, if necessary, we would go out onto the bridge to push any debris clear. There were no fancy safety regulations back then.

We had visitors from Canada staying with us during the heavy rains in early March 2012 and as part of a tour around the district, I took them to the old bridge. We found the river in flood and a large quantity of debris caught up in the bridge as depicted in the accompanying photos. Evidently no one checks the bridge any more to clear debris and I feel it is only a matter of time until a future flood claims the old bridge.

Clive Plater Eudlo, QLD

Dear Sir

The past becomes the present: wooden rails and pipeline dreams. (LR 223)

Reading the article about the Lake Margaret Power Station reminded me of a conversation I had with my late brother, Trevor, in the early 1960s. He had been employed as 'bush boss' by Lyell-EZ Explorations in the south-west



During the heavy rainfall in early March, a large amount of debris collected around the former Moreton Mill tramway Maroochy River bridge, as seen here on Wednesday 7 March. Photos: Clive Plater



"A tall concrete foundation supporting a rusty horizontal steam engine" as photographed on 26 January 1961 at Mill Bay in West Strahan. Photo: Ian Cutter

wilderness of Tasmania, and to keep him and a couple of others busy when working conditions were unsuitable in the area during winter, they were found work in the Queenstown area. Their job was to tighten nuts on the Lake Margaret pipeline. Pay was two shillings per nut. He reckoned it was good money.

Another job my brother worked on that winter was pulling up a 2ft gauge rail line somewhere in the Mt Lyell mine. I received a ute load of sleepers, brought to me at Smithton when he came for a weekend. The sleepers had been lying in mud for over 60 years, and he brought them up from Queenstown to Smithton, via Deloraine, when he visited us one weekend. Except for about 1/4 inch around the 'dog' holes, they were as good as gold, but of course they were huon pine. They were too small for any woodworking purpose I could think of, and they finished up as 'morning sticks' on the fire, as huon pine spits a lot and the sleepers were no use for logs!

Dennis Burrell Tumbi Umbi, NSW

Dear Sir

Great Cobar Locomotives (LR224)

I found Ron Madden's speculative letter most interesting, but consider that there is no evidence to link two of the first four John Fowler locomotives (4370 to 4373) built to the order of the Great Cobar Mining Co, to Casas Aulet & Co in Cuba. These locomotives were ex-works, two each in August and September 1882.

From reports from the Great Cobar's mining captain, recorded in the Sydney Morning Herald, it is quite clear that of these original four Fowler locomotives, only two had arrived at the mine when the firewood tramway opened in April 1883. In August, the captain said that there were two engines only and that two additional more powerful locomotives had been ordered from Morts Dock & Engineering Company. There was no mention made then, or subsequently, that these two Fowler locomotives were

part of an order for four. Nor did this report mention that a further two Fowler locomotives (4631 and 4632 ex-works in June) were already en route to Cobar.

Reports become a little confusing, as it was stated in September 1883 that a third locomotive had just been received, presumably one of those from Morts Dock, as a report in early October stated that two more Fowler locomotives had just been delivered (4631 and 4632 ex-works in June). Yet at the beginning of December it was reported that only four locomotives were in use on the line (whereas there should have been at least five, or six if the second Morts Dock locomotive had arrived). Nonetheless, by August 1884 a report by the NSW Inspector of Mines clearly stated that there were then six locomotives in use, two from Morts Dock and four from Leeds (i.e. Fowler).

Ron Madden says that Fowler 3788 (not 3378 as printed) of 1879, the locomotive returned from Casas Aulet, was probably 1ft 8in gauge, yet there is no record of its gauge in the Fowler records. Nor is there a record of the gauge of Fowler 4451, its replacement at Casas Aulet, ex-works in December 1882. It seems to me quite fanciful to suggest, simply because the next two locomotives in the builder's number series, 4481 and 4482, were cancelled (there were 20 traction engines or other machinery in between) that they were somehow related to Casas Aulet. Equally fanciful is the suggestion that they were possibly a proposed renumbering of two of the four locomotives originally ordered for Cobar. One has to ask why Fowler would wish to do that and, in any case, they had left the works three months previously. There could be any number of reasons for the cancellation of these two locomotives and, indeed, the records show two other examples of locomotives being cancelled, three each in 1881 and 1884.

It is curious that nowhere in the extant Fowler records is there mention of either of the two orders for Cobar being other than delivered as ordered. It is a pity that only the Fowler Engine Registers have survived, as



The 1/24 scale model of BALLAARAT, made entirely of jarrah, that is currently on display at the Sovereign Hill Gold Museum at Ballarat. Photo: Geoff Isaac

the correspondence files would surely have thrown light on this matter. However, I am sure that the answer to the mystery of the two 'missing' Cobar locomotives is unlikely to be found in Cuba.

As an addendum, it is interesting to note that although there are several photographs of the Fowler locomotives in use at Cobar, covering a period of 20 years, there are none known of the more powerful Morts Dock locomotives. Furthermore, parts of at least two of the Fowler locomotives were used in about 1922 by Tulloch & Company, Rhodes in the creation of an unsuccessful standard gauge locomotive for use by its subsidiary, the Rhodes Timber Company, at Mount George, NSW.

Richard Horne

South Croydon, UK

Dear Sir

BALLAARAT (LR 224)

I was very interested in Philippa Rogers' BALLAARAT article in April Light Railways magazine.

Being a railway enthusiast, I make wooden models of Victorian Railways locomotives in 1/24 scale, using only Huon Pine.

On my trip to Western Australia in 2004 I saw BALLAARAT in the Busselton Council Park and decided that I would make a 1/24 scale model. I measured it and took photos and was given a plan – the same one that is in the magazine. I was given some jarrah wood to make it.

The model of *BALLAARAT* and models of two Victorian Railways locomotives that were built in Ballarat are being displayed in the Sovereign Hill Gold Museum from April to August as part of the 150-years celebrations of the opening of the Geelong– Ballarat rail line on 10 April 1862.

Geoff Isaac

Portarlington,Vic

Dear Sir

BALLAARAT (LR 224)

The article about *BALLAARAT* in the April 2012 issue of *Light Railways* reminds me that more research is required into the background to this locomotive.

The contemporary newspapers refer to the locomotive being designed by Mr Jonathan Robinson, a claim which could not have been made in Britain as BALLAARAT is clearly a very close copy of a Fletcher's Patent Locomotive. It is noted in the article that Robinson was likely to have been influenced by contemporary Fletcher, Jennings products, but I think there must have been a much closer connection between Robinson and Fletcher, Jennings. All the unusual design elements of BALLAARAT are standard Fletcher, Jennings designs, including the flat bar frames, the cast iron spoked disc wheels, the boiler design, the cylinders (stroke is twice the diameter) and the Fletcher Patent Valve gear. However, Ballaarat has much smaller cylinders than Fletcher Jennings would have used for a locomotive this size. Robinson was probably an ex-employee who had drawings if not patterns. Some years ago I started trying to

confirm whether Robinson had worked for Fletcher, Jennings but didn't get very far. More records may be available now.

While I haven't inspected it in person, I disagree that BALLAARAT has a form of Gooch valve gear. It is Fletcher's PatentValve Gear, which was based on Allan Straight Link valve gear. Fletcher's Patent 321 of 6 February 1864 was for valve gear working from an axle other than the driving axle to enable the rear axle to be closer to or behind the firebox, and for the fabricated plate frames. Gooch and Allan valve gear are similar but differ in the fixing of the link, Gooch's link only pivots while Allan's moves up and down in opposition to the radius rod. Ray Minchin may not have been aware of the Fletcher Patent Valve Gear when he drew BALLAARAT.

The most similar surviving Fletcher Jennings locomotive is *DOLGOCH* (built 1866) on the Talyllyn Railway, although rebuilding in preservation has caused the loss of the original fabricated frames. A copy of the Lowca Engineering Co catalogue page is attached for information. This has been printed in several books, including 'Steam from Lowca' by Ian Kyle and 'Great Preserved Locomotive 6' by Peter Johnson and Rodney Weaver.

The standard gauge 1877 Fletcher Jennings locomotive *BAXTER*, also a 'Patent Locomotive', preserved on the Bluebell Railway still has its original fabricated plate frames. The similarity to *BALLAARAT*'s frames and wheels is striking.

The article is a useful summary of previously published information but it does highlight the need for more research to discover how Robinson came to 'design' a locomotive so similar to the very distinctive contemporary locomotives produced by Fletcher, Jennings in Lowca, Cumberland (now Cumbria). There may be descendants in Ballarat or elsewhere who have more knowledge of Jonathan Robinson's movements before arriving in Ballarat.

Fraser Brown via email



A page from the Lowca Engineering Company catalogue of the period, showing the strong similarity between BALLAARAT and the British Fletcher, Jennings product.



ADELAIDE: "Norway! Why Norway??"

Frank Stamford will give a presentation on pioneering attempts to develop practical narrow gauge railways, the birth of 3ft 6in gauge in Norway, and its effect in Australia and many other parts of the world – with some thoughts on whether it was a good idea or not. Bring along an item of light railway interest. We would like to hear from any member who can supply current information on heritage or tourist light railway sites in South Australia.

Location: 150 First Avenue, Royston Park. Date: Thursday 7 June at 8.00pm. Contact Les Howard on (08) 8278 3082

BRISBANE: "Cane Railways"

The February meeting will feature DVDs of cane railways, presented by Bob Gough. **Location:** The Military Jeep Club of Queensland Club House, Rocklea Showgrounds, Rocklea.

Date: Friday 8 June at 7.30pm.

MELBOURNE: "Mono-rails"

John Peterson will be giving a presentation on mono-rail systems of various types, old and new, with special reference to those manufactured by Road Machines (Drayton) Ltd. These were widely used in Victoria, and other parts of Australia, on construction projects, including railways, weirs, wharves, and at at least one lighthouse in WA.

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

Date: Thursday, 14 June at 8.00pm

SYDNEY: "AGM and photo presentation"

The NSW Division's AGM will occupy but a short space of time, after which there will be a presentation of colour slides from the late Ray Graf collection. Subjects covered will be Tasmanian West Coast narrow gauge railways and Queensland sugar cane railways. The historic value, and subject matter makes these photo's magnificent.

Location: Woodstock Community Centre, Church Street, Burwood, (five minutes walk from Burwood railway station). Date: Wednesday 27 June at 7.30pm

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5th INTERNATIONAL EARLY RAILWAY CONFERENCE, CAERNAFON, WALES

This conference, scheduled for 7-10 June 2012, is jointly sponsored by the Newcomen Society for the History of Engineering & Technology, the Institute of Railway Studies & Transport History at York, and the Railway & Canal Historical Society. The program includes papers by researchers from Australia and New Zealand. The Australian contribution includes a joint paper by LRRSA researchers Phil Rickard and Jim Longworth on Early Australian Railed-ways, 1788-1855, and Rod Caldwell on Australia's first railway, namely the Australian Agricultural Company line to its A pit in Newcastle of 1831.

SMR LINE TO STANFORD MERTHYR, NSW

A contractor undertaking earthworks for the F3 road extension to Branxton unearthed the remains of the Cessnock to Maitland Road where it crossed over the railway line to Stanford Merthyr in April 2012. The stone abutments for the bridge that carried the road over the line were prominent. The line was closed in December 1963.

Jeff Mullier, LRRSA Yahoo Group

RAILWAY CRANES IN AUSTRALIA

While we have not yet had any specific responses to the queries from Chris Capewell presented in this column for the February issue (LR 223), we have received feed-back on other cranes for the preliminary list or rail-mounted cranes on the International Steam Site. The suggestion that the steam navvy depicted in the photo on page 39 of LR 224 may have been built by Whitaker of Horsforth, Leeds, came from Chris Capewell, based on its similarity with the one preserved at the Silver Stream Railway in New Zealand.

Stephen Larcombe advised that in September 2011 it had a sign stating it was a 60 ton Ruston & Proctor 'steam shovel', but in fact its capacity was 15 tons. The steam shovel was imported for use on construction of the Transcontinental Railway and was eventually abandoned at Zanthus. It was rescued in the 1970s and placed at the Boulder railway station. Mike Lucas of the Golden Mile Loopline Railway Society has undertaken a detailed inspection of the steam shovel and reports that there are no builder's name plates or numbers on it, the only identification being the name 'Ruston & Proctor' cast into the metal counter-weight under the boiler. He has offered to pass on any further information that may come to light once the society relocates the machine.

THOMAS PARKER LOCOMOTIVES

There has been correspondence among LRRSA Yahoo Group members regarding early electric locomotives built by Thomas Parker Limited at Wolverhampton in England including a number for mines in South Africa and two for the Broken Hill Proprietary Mine in 1901. An excellent website devoted to the life of Thomas Parker has been developed by Bev Parker (no relation) at:

http://www.localhistory.scit. wlv.ac.uk/genealogy/Parker/ ThomasParker.htm#menu Details of the locomotives built by Thomas Parker can be found at: http://www.localhistory.scit. wlv.ac.uk/genealogy/Parker/ Locomotives.htm

John Browning, Annerley QLD



This 2ft gauge wheel-set was photographed at the Crotty smelter site when inspected on 13 March 2012. Photo: Ross Mainwaring

CROTTY EXPEDITION, TAS

For a good many years the site of the North Mount Lyell Mining Company's smelter site at Crotty in western Tasmania has been inundated by the waters of Lake Burbury, which are impounded by both the Crotty and Darwin Dams. A routine maintenance inspection of a water tunnel at the former dam in 2012 required the lowering of the water level of the lake. It was therefore possible during a site visit of 13 March to walk and wade out to the smelter site which is now temporarily exposed to the sunshine. Many artefacts and ruins of the plant and railways remain including short lengths of Barlow rail and even a pair of 2ft gauge wheels.

The formation of the 3ft 6in gauge railway, which brought in the ore along a branch line from the junction with the main line from Linda near the company's mine on the slopes of Mt Lyell, can still be traced at the worksite. Bricks with the imprint of 'NML' (North Mount Lyell) lay on the ground where the smelters, which operated from 1901 to 1903, once stood. A nearby 'island' which once had a brick flue and chimney high up on its flank is now the home to numerous wombats that will once again become marooned when the water level again is allowed to rise. The nearby company town of Crotty and the company's main line railway from Linda to Pillinger remained submerged a long way beneath the present water level.

Ross Mainwaring, St Ives, NSW



The site of the North Mt Lyell smelters at Crotty when reduced water levels in Lake Burbury allowed an on-site inspection, on 13 March 2012. Photo: Ross Mainwaring



News items should be sent to the Editor, Bob McKillop, Facsimile (02) 9958 8687 or by mail to PO Box 674, St Ives NSW 2075. Email address for H&T reports is: rfmckillop@bigpond.com Digital photographs for possible inclusion in *Light Railways* should be sent direct to Bruce Belbin at: boxcargraphics@optusnet.com.au

NEWS

Queensland

DURUNDUR RAILWAY, Woodford 610mm gauge

Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society Inc.

The long-standing project to double the length of main line track at the Durundur Railway finally got under way in April 2012 when the Moreton Bay Regional Council commenced construction of the level crossing for the extension to cross Peterson Road. ANGRMS extends its thanks to Cr Adrian Readel and Council officers for their efforts in getting this project under way.

Once the crossing is completed, ANGRMS volunteers will realign the mainline to access the crossing, and lay new track, including a run-around loop and new platform at Storey Brook.

Terry Olsson, 03/2012, 04/2012

WHISTLESTOP RAILWAY MUSEUM 1067mm gauge Maryborough City Whistlestop Inc

The replica 0-4-0VB loco *MARYANN* (Olds Eng. 1999) was withdrawn from service for maintenance work in February and March 2012. The full-scale replica of the pioneer logging locomotive has operated in Queens Park, Maryborough, for the past 12 years.

Maryborough Herald, 8 February 2012, p 5, via John Browning

New South Wales Coleman & Son Miniature

RAILWAY 457mm gauge As in 2011 (LR 219, p. 35), Coleman and Son had their miniature railway in operation for the Sydney Royal Easter Show from the 5 to 18 of April. Operations were expanded from the 2011 program with four locomotives and eight passenger cars available for traffic. The track layout consisted of an elongated oval with four sidings and a passing loop with the LGB layout in the tunnel providing an added attraction. Locomotives available for traffic were steam outline 3802, The Andrew James and 3806 Henry, both in green livery, 3807 Gordon in blue livery, and diesel outline 42109 Lady Diane in Phil Belbin's Candy livery. This locomotive was specially brought out to operate a series of trips late on Easter Saturday. Heavy loadings were observed on the three-car trains on Easter Saturday. Unlike last year all carriages operating were open type cars with no canvas roofs fitted. Ben Barnes, 04/12

MENANGLE NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY 610mm gauge Campbelltown Steam & Machinery Museum

A new shelter was installed at "Menangle Station' in readiness for operations the Oil, Steam & Kerosene Field Days on 19-20 May. At 'Central Station' located at the end of the recent 120 metre track extension, an old steel standard gauge bridge has been used to create the platform facing. Trains now operate over some 700 metres of track.



A view of the construction works to install the level crossing for the extension of the Durundur Railway to cross Peterson Road on 21 April 2012. Photo: Terry Olsson



All three of Coleman & Son's NSWGR 38 class miniature steam outline locomotives are featured in this evening panorama on operations at Sydney's Royal Easter Show on Easter Saturday, 7 April 2012. Photo: Ben Barnes

Restoration work continues on the hisoric John Fowler 0-6-0DM (B/No 16830 of 1926) ex-Condong Sugar Mill. A lot of wear is apparent, particularly on all the rods, one of which was half worn through due to rubbing contact with the rear wheels. A new clutch release shaft has been fitted and work has commenced on the brakes, which had been re-assembled incorrectly in the 1990s. These are now working properly and the locomotive has had new gearbox operating rods fitted. It is clear that the old ones had been 'bodgied up' by the mill to suit the change of engine in the 1950s from petrol to diesel (avoiding the new sump profile etc.). The tyres have a 1967 date on them, which presumably was the last time they were replaced or re-profiled.

The locomotive made its 'maiden voyage' run between Menangle and Central stations on 15 April and several runs were made the following day with good results. Progress to date suggests the loco will be functioning in time for the club's October 2012 running days. The paintwork on the upper works of the locomotive will be repainted green. Can any reader advise whether the radiator was black or green when the loco was delivered to Australia? Richard Ellis, 04/12

ILLAWARRA TRAIN PARK, Albion Park 610mm gauge Illawarra Light Railway Society Ltd

The ILRMS has celebrated 40 years since its foundation as a society on 12 February 2012. The day featured official celebrations and commemorations of that event, with foundation member No. 1 and operations manager Tony Madden, and member No. 6, our workshop manager Brian Holmes, receiving awards in recognition of their 40 years of service to the society. The presentations were made by Kellie Marsh, Mayor of Shellharbour City Council, and Gareth Ward, State Member for Kiama..

The visitors were treated to a doubled-headed passenger run behind ex-Victoria Mill 0-6-0 *CAIRNS* (Hudswell Clarke 1706 of 1939) and ex-Kiama Quarries 0-4-0ST *KIAMA* to mark this official occasion in ILRMS history. The experience was enhanced by jazz from the local band Illawarra Flame Tree Plus One to round off an enjoyable day.

Brad Johns, 04/12

RICHMOND MAIN HERITAGE PARK, Kurri Kurri 1435mm gauge

Richmond Vale Preservation Cooperative Society Ltd

The RVR again provided special events during the 2012 Hunter Valley Steamfest on 28-29 April. 0-4-0ST *MARJORIE* (Clyde Eng 462 of 1938) was in action on Mulbring Road shuttle services while ex-BHP steelworks Bo-Bo DE 34 (A Goninan 3 of 1954) operated trains to Pelaw Main and return. Work to correct the steam brake problems and to adjust the side valve timings was carried out prior to the event. The locomotive returned to service for a mid-week tour on 15 March and performed well with four even exhaust beats. A new ash pan is being constructed for fitting when resources permit. Meanwhile, good progress has been made with the restoration of fellow 0-4-0ST KATHLEEN (Avonside 1862 of 1921) with the boiler undergoing hydraulic testing in April. A trial fitting of the reverse lever and linkage, and the front sand boxes was made in March, while the saddle tank was cleaned out ready for repairs.

The cosmetic restoration of former

Lysaghts 0-4-0ST *ALISON* (Andrew Barclay 1738 of 1923, see LR 212, pp.34-35) has also progressed in recent months.

Link Line, Autumn 2012; Graham Black, 05/12

Victoria

PUFFING BILLY RAILWAY 762mm gauge

Emerald Tourist Railway Board Updating the report in LR 224 (p. 35), the Garratt 2-6-2+2-6-2 locomotive NGG16 127 (Beyer Peacock 7428 of 1951) arrived at the Port of Melbourne and



The evening sunlight catches John Fowler 0-6-0DM (B/No 16830 of 1926) as it makes a trial run over the MenangleNarrow Gauge Railway on 16 April 2012 following extensive restoration work.Photo: Richard Ellis



At Richmond Main Heritage Park, the cosmetic restoration of Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST ALISON (1738 of 1923) is making good progress, with the boiler and smokebox recently receiving a coat of paint. Photo: Graham Black

arrangements were made to transport the two engine units and the boiler to Menzies Creek on 22 March. The two engine units arrived, but it transpired that an incident in unloading the boiler flat-pack had resulted in the boiler becoming partly dislodged and some residue fell out. This caught the eye of quarantine officials who ordered a rigorous cleaning before granting a release. The boiler/ cab unit arrived at Menzies Creek Museum on 13 April and, following the three units being reunited as a complete locomotive, it was shunted into a 610mm gauge track by resident diesel locomotives.

The final cutting up of the remains of former QGR B-BDH DH25, acquired for spare parts along with DH5, occurred at Menzies Creek on Monday 5 March. The 'Day Out with Thomas' event on 17-18 March saw five steam locomotives — 2-6-2Ts 7A, 8A and 14A, Garratt G42 and Peckett 0-4-0ST 1711 of 1926 in the guise of *THOMAS* — and two diesels (DH31 on Thomas shuttle trains between Emerald and Belgrave, and D21 as Belgrave yard pilot).

The efforts of the ERTB in preparing its business case for government support to the railway were rewarded on 1 May 2012 when funding of \$4.4 million was announced in the Victorian Government Budget to upgrade priority railway infrastructure and enhance rail safety on the Puffing Billy Railway over the next four years. We will provide further details on this development in the next issue.

Bill Hanks, 03/12, 04/12; David Campbell 03/12; ERTB media release, 1 May 2012

BEAMISH HEAVY HAULIERS,

Wantirna610mm gaugeThe formerMulgraveRamblercarriagesand the0-6-0DHfromMourilyanBulkSugarTerminal(Walkers570of1956,LR193,p30;212,p36;and214,p36;and214,p36;and214,p36;and214,p36;and214,p36;and214,p36;and214,p36;and214,p36;and214,p36;and214,p36;and36;and36;and37,and38,and39,and30;and314,and</t



The recently restored Commonwealth Engineering 4wDH (B/N GA1048 of 1956) and two of the refurbished Mulgrave Rambler carriages at the Beamish Heavy Hauliers complex at Wantima in south-east Melbourne. Photo: Phil Rickard



The boiler and cab section of ex-South African Railways Garratt locomotive NGG16 127 (Beyer Peacock 7428 of 1951) is reunited with its two engine units at the Menzies Creek Museum on the Puffing Billy Railway on 13 April 2012. Photo: Peter Ralph

Heritage &Tourist

Commonwealth Engineering 4wDH (B/N GA1048 of 1956) built for the Commonwealth Department of Supply at St Marys NSW that subsequently worked at Fairymead Sugar Mill in Queensland, were moved from an undisclosed location in Melbourne to the Wanti S Oa area in March 2012. They were noted in a paddock (part of the Beamish Heavy Hauliers complex) off the Burwood Highway at Wanti S Oa on 4 April, In addition to the rolling stock, there were several bogie flat wagons, assorted bogies and a quantity of rail oPhisitleickard, 04/12

RUBICON VALLEY HISTORIC AREA 610mm gauge AGL Hydro

There has been encouraging news regarding the preservation of remaining elements of the former tramway that serviced the Rubicon hydro-power scheme (LR 179, pp. 28-29 and 32). From discussions between local residents and representatives of AGL Hydro it emerged that one of the last remaining sections of the tramway from the Royston power station to the Haulage is under consideration for preservation. It is also hoped to preserve other sections around the power station, including an upgrade of the 15,000 Siphon Bridge as an addendum to the project to rebuild the Beech Creek trestle bridge being undertaken by the Puffing Billy Preservation Society. The heritage protected Beech Creek trestle bridge, built in 1927 to service the Rubicon hydro-power scheme, was one of four remaining light railway trestle bridges in Victoria. It was left charred, twisted and destroyed by the Murrindindi bushfire in 2009. In a further development. John

In a further development, John Horne has negotiated the return of 'The Jeep', a battery powered inspection vehicle built soon after the end of the Second World War, to Royston power station. It was relocated to Clover power station in the Keiwa scheme in the late 1980s, where it was regauged but saw little work and was stored in the open.

Gerry Laws, *Timberline* 124, April 2012

Tasmania

REDWATER CREEK STEAM RAILWAY, Sheffield

610mm gauge

Redwater Creek Steam & Heritage Society Inc

Glorious weather greeted visitors and participants during the 2012 SteamFest at Sheffield during the long weekend event of 10-12 March. Two prestigious awards, the Community Event of the Year and the 2011 Tourism Promotion Award, have been bestowed upon the Society for its annual SteamFest.

Numerous steam and internal combustion engine exhibits were on display, but pride of place was given to the green 0-4-0WT steam locomotive (composite of Krauss 5862 and 5800 of 1910) and its superb train of two carriages and brake van. This consist made regular departures throughout the day running through the central part of the exhibition ground for everyone to admire, and listen to its shrill whistle giving warning at the level crossings. Guarding the rail track, the ancient post-and-rail wooden fence, which has been re-erected on site, adds a lot of unique character to a once common scene.

An operating rock crusher was 'belted up' to the Tasmanian Transport Museum's Robey & Company traction engine; the time consuming manoeuvring of which to line up the flat belt between the two flywheels aroused much interest. A bullock team was put through its paces by a 'bullocky', who set the beasts to work loading logs onto a jinker or carting gravel fresh from the rock crusher. People were invited to pose for photographs holding the 'bullocky's' whip beside the two bovine leaders of the bullock team. Steam powered chaff cutters, threshers and a straw presser entertained the visitors to a display of 'old time' agricultural activities. Firewood, the fuel for all of these steam machines, including the Krauss locomotive, was cut at a sawbench powered by a portable steam engine. Vintage cars, some from interstate, tractors, oil engines and military vehicles rounded out the displays.

A highlight of each day's activities was the afternoon Grand Parade where everything on wheels (and four legs) paraded around the venue for visitors to admire. On Saturday evening 'Steamrage' - lively musical entertainment - was provided at the Town Hall. It is good to see that the whole event is well supported by the community and local business, as well as politicians, both Federal and State members.

Sheffield's annual SteamFest is well worth a visit, but for those narrow gauge enthusiasts who admire the superb Krauss locomotive and its train, the railway operates on the first weekend of the month.

Ross Mainwaring 03/12

WEST COAST WILDERNESS RAILWAY, Queenstown 1067mm gauge

Federal Hotels Limited

The afternoon WCWR train from Queenstown was struck by falling trees on Monday 5 March 2012. The train was on the Strahan side of Dubbil Barril when a mini-landslide caused the trees to fall onto the rear van, with one tree damaging a passenger carriage. Fortunately no one was injured, but the landslide resulted in through services being suspended while measures to stabilise the line were undertaken. Trains continued to run from Queenstown to Dubbil Barril and return, but there were no services from the Strahan end of the line.

In response to heavy bookings, the morning train on Saturday 10 March was double-headed by Abt 0-4-2T locomotives 1 and 5. Abt locomotive 3 is currently undergoing heavy overhaul at the Queenstown



Two foreign-built steam veterans pose side by side at the 2012 Sheffield SteamFest on 11 March. The German built 1067mm gauge Krauss (composite assembly of B/N 5862 and 5800 of 1910) pulling the beautiful red North East Dundas Tramway carriage (c1898) passes an American Buffalo Pitts 13hp traction engine (B/N 8246 of 1907) built in New York State. This machine's flywheel was attached by a flat drive belt to a chaff cutter, with some of the chaff piled in the foreground. Photo: Ross Mainwaring



The former SA Harbors Board TACL/Fordson rail tractor and jetty flat wagon on display at the Ruston Proctor Steam Tractor Museum, Cowell, on 13 March 2012. Photo: Doug Miles

workshops. In March the boiler was noted on a wagon frame in front of the workshops, while the side tanks and cab were loaded in a C wagon stored in the loop at Lynchford. The rebuild of 0-6-0DM 9 has been completed and it has been finished in red livery. Its powerful new horn has been the subject of much local comment.

The Mercury, 6 March 2012; Rob Bushby, 03/12

South Australia

NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM, Port Adelaide

457, 1067, 1435, 1600mm gauges **Ex-Broken Hill Associated Smelters** 0-6-0T PERONNE (Andrew Barclay 1545 of 1919) was in operation at the museum each day from 21 to 23 April. A visiting rail-fan group from the United Kingdom hired PERONNE on Monday 23rd for exclusive trips and cab rides. During the annual Thomas the Tank Engine event from 7 to 15 July PERONNE will be in action every day, together with double-headed steam trains on the 457mm gauge railway, while Red Hen railcar trips will operate on the broad gauge track. HRSA Newscast, No 13, March 2012

RUSTON PROCTOR STEAM TRACTOR MUSEUM, Cowell

1067mm gauge

Cowell is situation on Franklin Harbour approximately half way between Port Lincoln and Whyalla. The Ruston Proctor Steam Tractor Museum (formerly the Franklin Harbour Agricultural Museum) has an extensive display of old machinery, notably a 1910 Ruston Proctor traction engine and a TACL/ Fordson rail tractor formerly used on the local jetty. A visitor on 13 March 2012 found the rail tractor and two ex-SA Harbors Board jetty trucks displayed in the open, but in good condition.

Doug Miles via Les Howard, 03/12

Western Australia

BENNETT BROOK RAILWAY, Whiteman Park 610mm gauge Western Australian Light Railway Preservation Association Inc

Some 26 WALRPA members contributed their labour on Saturday 24 March to a massive clean-up of the general area of the Bennett Brook Railway, particularly the yard area at Mussel Pool.

Coming Events

JUNE 2012

1-4 Ida Bay Railway, TAS: Narrow gauge train trips over scenic route from Lune River along the banks of the river estuary and Ida Bay to Deep Hole. Trains depart Friday to Monday at 1000, 1200 and 1400 (winter timetable) for the 2 hour return journey. Cabin accommodation and camping facilities available on site. Enquiries: (03) 6298 3110 or http:// idabayrailway.com.au

3 Durundur Railway, Woodford, QLD: Narrow gauge trains operate on the first and third Sunday of the month 1000-1600. Phone: (07) 5496 1976 (recorded information) or 3848 3769; website: http://www.angrms.org.au **3 Ballyhooley Steam Railway, QLD**. This narrow gauge railway operates steam trains between Marina Mirage station and Port Douglas every Sunday and on selected public holidays from 1020 to 1500. Information: (07) 4099 1839.

3 Wee Georgie Wood Railway, Tullah, TAS: Narrow-gauge train rides with historic 4wPM locomotive from 1000-1600. Last train of the 2011-12 season on 30 June-1 July. Information: (03) 6473 1372.

9-10 Red Cliffs Historical Steam Railway, VIC. Narrow gauge steam operations with train rides every half-hour 1100-1600 using Kerr Stuart steam and EM Baldwin diesel locomotives, 1100-1600 and the first weekend of following months. Enquiries: (03) 5024 1345.

9-10 Redwater Creek Steam Railway, Sheffield, TAS. Narrow gauge steam train operations on the first weekend of every month. Information: www.redwater.org.au

10 Cobdolga Irrigation & Steam Museum: Narrow gauge steam train rides 1100-1630 together with operation of the historic Humphrey Pump at the Irrigation Museum for information, phone (08) 8588 2323.

10-11 Alexandra Timber Tramway, VIC. Narrow gauge steam trains operating each day for the Alexandra 'Truck, Rod & Ute Show' and Queens Birthday celebrations. Diesel-hauled trains on Sunday 24 June. Information and group bookings: 0427 509 988.

22 Puffing Billy Railway, Belgrave, VIC. 'Jazz on the Puffing Billy' with live jazz and local wines on the night train and dinner at the Nobelius packing shed. Fare \$99 per head, bookings at (03) 9757 0700 or online at Puffing Billy website.

JULY 2012

1 Kerrisdale Mountain Railway & Museum, VIC. Narrow gauge trains operate each Sunday between 1000 and 1500, with demonstration of steam engines in the museum and workshop tours. During school holidays (22 Sep-3 Oct) a train also operates at 1pm on Friday, Saturday and Monday. Information, phone (03) 5797 0227 or website: www. kerrisdalemtnrailway.com.au/

1-15 Semaphore & Fort Granville Railway, SA: Miniature steam trains operate daily during the school holidays 1000-1600. Fares: \$7 adult, \$5 children and \$20 family. Phone (08) 8341 1690 for information.

7-15 National Railway Museum, Port Adelaide, SA. 'Day Out with Thomas' event over 9 days with steam train rides on 457mm and 1067mm gauge lines and 'Red Hen' railcars on the broad gauge. Pay at entrance. Further details will be posted on: http://www.natrailmuseum.org.au/events.php.

8 Alexandra Timber Tramway, VIC. Narrow gauge steam trains operating 'Winter Specials' passenger services. Diesel-hauled trains on Sunday 22 July. Information and group bookings: 0427 509 988.

8 Cobdolga Irrigation & Steam Museum: Narrow gauge steam train rides 1100-1630 together with operation of the historic Humphrey Pump at the Irrigation Museum for information, phone (08) 8588 2323.

10 Sydney Olympic Park, NSW. Narrow gauge train ride and guided tour of the Armory. This tour is organised by the Lane Cove Historical Society and bookings can be made through Bob McKillop (details below).

AUGUST 2012

4 Puffing Billy Railway, Belgrave, VIC. 'Jazz on the Puffing Billy' with live jazz and local wines on the night train and dinner at the Nobelius packing shed. Fare \$99 per head, bookings at (03) 9757 0700 or online at Puffing Billy website.

12 Alexandra Timber Tramway, VIC. Narrow gauge steam trains operating, with diesel-hauled trains on Sunday 26 August for 'Early Fathers' Day' with all dad's free entry. Information and group bookings: 0427 509 988.

19 Workshops Rail Museum, Ipswich, QLD. Annual Workers' Reunion & Ipswich Heritage Faire to honour the state's railway workers with heritage displays, entertainment and tours of the heritage workshops. A special workers' steam train tour will operate to Grandchester and return. Details at: http://www.theworkshops.qm.qld.gov.au

Note: Please send information on coming events to Bob McKillop — rfmckillop@bigpond.com — or 140 Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag NSW 2068. The deadline for the August issue is 30 June 2012.

Heritage &Tourist

Organised by Peter Monkhouse, the work was greatly assisted by the efforts of Whiteman Park Manager Steve Lowe, who arranged for three of his staff to drive the bobcats and truck on the day, A large amount of material 'surplus to requirements' was moved on the day, making a huge difference to the general appearance of the railway. Work on fitting a new ash pan to 2-8-2 NG16 123 FREMANTLE (LR 224, p 38) saw the boiler removed by early April, but the locomotive was not expected to be ready for service for the 'Friends of Ashley' Day on 20 May. This is the new title for the former 'Friends of Thomas" days, which appears to retain similar attractions. Employees of Wallis Drilling installed the repaired planetary drive of former WA PWD 4wDH 37 (Gemco Funkey 1983) during March.

BBR Newsletter, April 2012

VICTORIA SQUARE, Busselton 1067mm gauge

City of Busselton

The City of Busselton is planning to move Western Australia's pioneer locomotive, the 0-4-0 BALLAARAT (Victoria Foundry of 1871) from its long-standing location in Victoria Square for restoration work from May 2012. A local business has donated space to allow volunteers to undertake preservation work on this historic locomotive, which was the subject of our feature article in the April issue of Light Railways. Following completion of this restoration work, it is hoped that a new Interpretative Centre will have been built next to the Busselton Jetty with space to display BALLAARAT in a protected environment.

Philippa Rogers, 04/12

LRRSA ONLINE DISCUSSION GROUP

Have you joined the LRRSA's email discussion group yet? See: http://au.groups. yahoo.com/group/LRRSA/ and click on "Join This Group"!



30 June this year marks the 50th anniversary of the official closure of the Victorian Railways' 2ft 6in gauge Beech Forest Line. Norman Houghton, former Light Railways editor and author of definite work The Beechy, has produced a commemorative booklet, Closed 50 Years Ago, for the occasion, and here we reproduce two of the images from the book as our own small tribute to a much-loved railway that, half-a-century ago, many people hoped could be saved (as related in 'The Beechy Battle' in Light Railways 140, April 1998).

Above: G41 (Beyer Peacock 6267 of 1926) has arrived at Beech Forest with the weekly goods, and is engaged in shunting. The main loading appears to be pulpwood. Photo: ARHS (Vic)

Below: A pulpwood train arrives at Dinmont, with G41 at the head. The condition of the road, the second main road into Beech Forest, shows why the railway was the superior form of heavy haulage in those days. Photo: ARHS (Vic)

