

NUMBER 223  
ISSN 0 727 8101

FEBRUARY 2012  
\$7.95 Recommended  
retail price only

# LIGHT RAILWAYS

Australia's Magazine of Industrial & Narrow Gauge Railways



Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc.



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Australia's Magazine of Industrial and Narrow Gauge Railways

**No 223 February 2012**

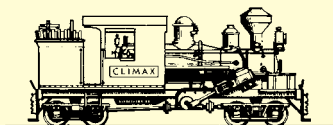
ISSN 0 727 8101 PP 342588/00002

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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 (sawn timber)	0.00236 cubic metre

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## Comment

With this issue your editorial team commence their 15th year at the helm of the revamped *Light Railways*. It has been most satisfying to receive a number of complimentary responses from readers about the magazine in recent months and we have a healthy supply of good quality articles for the coming year.

As I noted in the editorial for LR 220 last August, the LRRSA National Conference in May 2011 recognised that an ageing membership base and the impacts of changing technologies on the way people communicate and receive information pose significant challenges for our future. I have now served as editor and co-editor of *Light Railways* for 26 years. The May conference noted the need for succession planning for our editorial team, but little has happened since. I feel the time has come when I need to step back and assist others to take on some of the editorial work. Accordingly, I am calling for expressions of interest from LRRSA members to take on the task of preparing the Heritage & Tourist section of the magazine (and also to assist with editing articles submitted for publication). Please contact the Editor or the Society at the contact points in the adjacent column to express your interest in assisting.

*Bob McKillop*

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

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

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

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

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

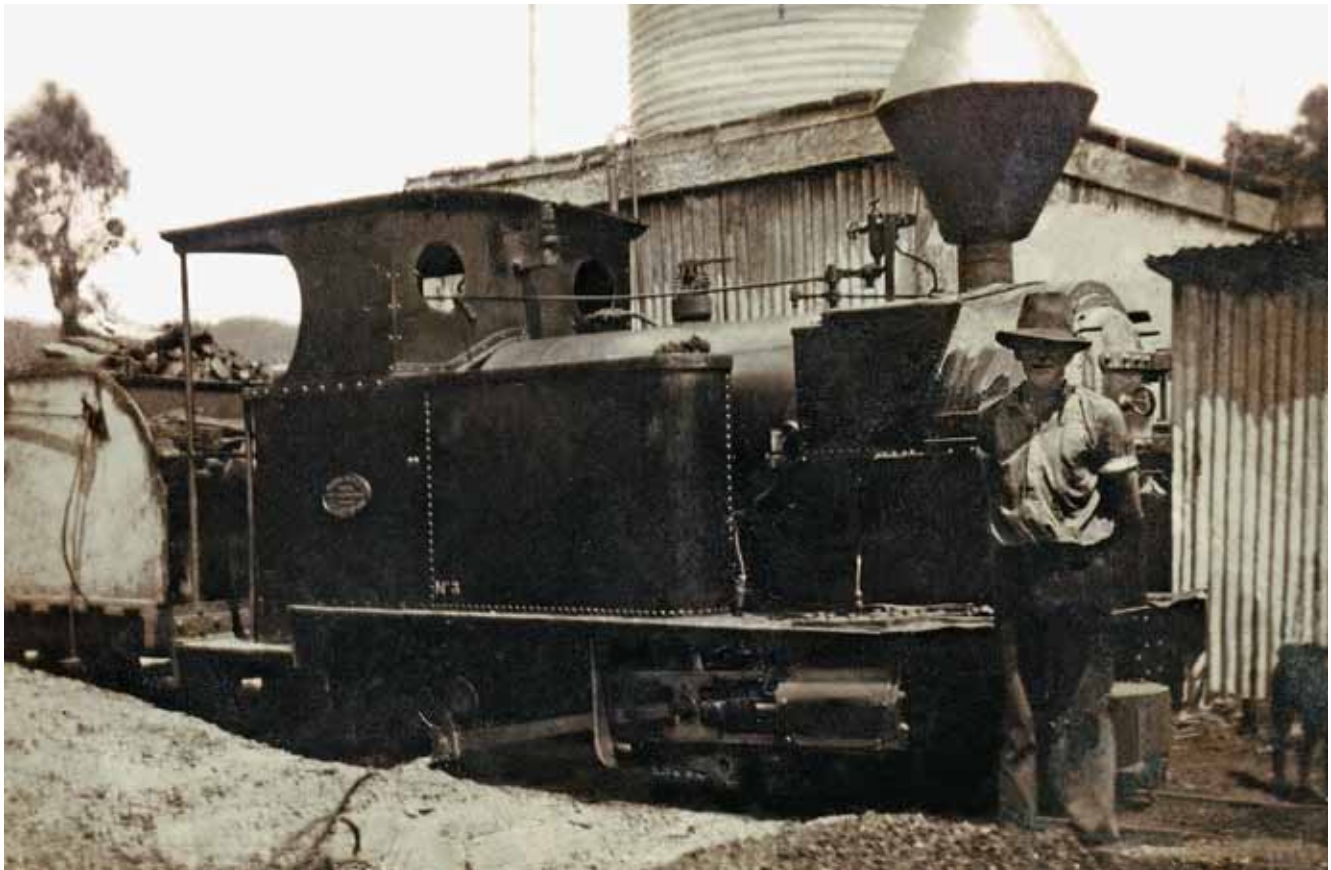
**Front Cover:** John Kramer photographed the B class Climax geared locomotive (1653 of 1923) that once worked at Simsville in NSW and later at Maydena, Tasmania, on display at the Tasmanian Transport Museum, Glenorchy, on a sunny Sunday 2 October 2011.

**Back cover upper:** The volunteers at the Durundur Railway at Woodford, Queensland, will soon find out if the patrons mind if their train is hauled by steam or diesel power, with the temporary withdrawal of Bundaberg Fowler No.5, for a regular boiler overhaul. On the last running day for 2011, Sunday 18 December, the train waits at the line's eastern terminus. Photo: Brian Webber

**Back cover lower:** Mackay Sugar's Walkers B-B DH CALEN (692 of 1972, rebuilt BFE 7330 of 1995) is assisted by MICLERE (Walkers 664 of 1972, rebuilt Farleigh 1996) as it crosses the Pioneer River at Mia Mia, west of Mackay, with a long train of loaded bins in the late afternoon of 19 August 2011.

*Photo: Greg Stephenson*





*This heavily restored photograph shows Avonside 0-4-0T No.3 (1910 of 1922) on the main line in front of the water tank on Jim Wilson's property, in the charge of driver George Krueger. The locally-built tender seems to have received a pretty average paint job. Photo: courtesy Dave Francey*

# The Silent Grove tramway

by Bill Kerr & John Browning

In days gone by, a number of sugar mills constructed 2ft gauge feeder tramways, sometimes locomotive worked, to bring sugarcane from isolated growing areas to a Queensland Government Railways (QGR) siding. Here cane was transhipped by derrick from the tramway trucks into government railway wagons for transport to the sugar mill. This is the story of one such line in the Mackay district, adapted and expanded from material in *Stand Together: The story of Cane Grower Representation at Mackay*, a book written by LRRSA member Bill Kerr and published by Mackay Canegrowers in 2009. The story was provided during 2008 by a man who had worked on the long-closed line.

Dave Francey (who died in 2010) was the last Racecourse Mill driver on the line connecting the Silent Grove area with the government main line at Mt Ossa. The 2ft gauge rail service was replaced by road transport at the end of 1946 season.

Dave spent his 50-year career on locos working for a single employer. He joined Racecourse Co-operative Sugar Milling Association Ltd in 1930 as a 15-year-old steam loco boy, got his ticket there and finished driving diesels in 1980. His Irish-born father John was working at Farleigh Mill when Dave was born in 1915 but he later moved to Racecourse.

Silent Grove was one of the far-flung cane areas that Racecourse Central Sugar Company was forced to service after it failed to secure cane from nearby Homebush when

CSR closed that mill in 1921. The Homebush supply area went to Farleigh and, as the late John Kerr noted in his mill history *A Century of Sugar*: 'Racecourse had to continue its role as developer of the district, accepting cane from far and wide and using its capital to help struggling cockies to get established.'

John Kerr's book gives detailed accounts of Racecourse's expansion into new areas north of Mackay. As well as constructing tramways at Calen and Silent Grove, it erected derricks at sidings on the QGR North Coast line as far north as Wagoora. Those at Pindi Pindi, Calen and nearby Umerella were erected in 1924. Cane trucks and portable rail were provided at Mt Ossa and Mt Pelion to help growers load cane.

Silent Grove comprised 3000 acres of virgin rain forest drained by Murray Creek. It had pockets of arable land suitable for sugarcane but most were uncultivated because of poor access.

The first hope of opening the area for cane came with construction of the 3ft 6in gauge McGregor Creek tramway north west of Mirani by the Pioneer Shire Council. More than 60 landholders signed a 1905 petition asking the Queensland Government to build a tramline from McGregor's Creek through to Silent Grove. Queensland Railways took over the Shire tramline and extended it to Kungurri in 1911 on the understanding that the Lands Department would build a road into the area. After stalling for some years, the Department eventually opened land for selection in 1916 without roads, arguing that the costs of road construction would make land too expensive.

A Royal Commission concluded in 1910 that Silent Grove was a suitable place for a new sugar mill but, because it was frost-prone and had few settlers it was placed eleventh in the order of priority. In 1922 selectors applied to another Royal Commission for an eight mile tramway but were told that this was outside the Commission's authority.





**Above, left and right:** The timber bridges in the line were substantial and expensive to maintain. Significant reconstruction work was done in the 1938 slack season as is shown here, at the top end of Jim Wilson's cow paddock. Photos: courtesy Dave Francey

**Right:** Here repairs involving pile driving are taking place on Ossa Creek bridge during the reconstruction of the bridges in 1937-38. Photo: courtesy Dave Francey

**Below:** Little remains of the Ossa Creek bridge in 2011. Photo: Steven Jesser





The top of Silent Grove was only about 10 miles upstream on Murray Creek from the QGR line that was completed in 1924. As the North Coast line progressed, settlers began clearing land. Racecourse Mill arranged for QGR to provide facilities at Mt Ossa where tramway cane could be loaded onto government rail.

John Kerr wrote: *At the Annual Meeting on 1 March 1924 James McDonald (Chairman of Directors) outlined his scheme to ensure the mill's future viability. Several shareholders praised his initiative and in September Surveyor Shields was engaged to locate the route of an eight mile (13 km) line. A Baldwin locomotive was bought from Smellie and Company for £900 and through James Croker & Sons eight miles of 30 lb rails were ordered in London. J Sturgeon was engaged as a foreman at Mt Ossa to take charge of the construction of a first class railway.*

All seemed lost when the Queensland Cane Prices Board decided to restrict cane production and refused to grant additional growing permits in the Silent Grove area, prompting an announcement by the mill in March 1925 that the tramway would not go ahead.<sup>1</sup> With the tramway materials shipped from England on the water, the resulting protests from the settlers prompted the Cane Prices Board to reverse its decision and grant permits for an additional 550 acres.<sup>2</sup>

Now that the use of land for canegrowing was assured, the delays in getting the mill to build the tramline prompted growers to offer to levy themselves four shillings a ton of cane to cover the cost. The mill urged growers to form a Silent Grove Tramline Company similar to companies formed to build feeder tramlines to Cattle Creek Mill. Racecourse agreed to hand over the locomotive, rails, bridge and formation works and lend the new body £1000 a year for three years interest free if growers committed to supplying the mill for 20 years. Unfortunately, the farmers could not raise the cash and the new tramline remained in limbo.

Eventually, the mill agreed to lay five – not eight – miles of tramway in time for the 1926 crushing provided Silent Grove farmers paid 2s 6d a ton on all cane and half the haulage costs. The growers readily accepted and the surplus rail was sold, a mile each to Palms Mill and Plane Creek. However, the truncation of the planned line meant that as the roads improved, growers from the upper part of Silent Grove would save on costs by carting their cane directly to the QGR at Kungurri.<sup>3</sup>

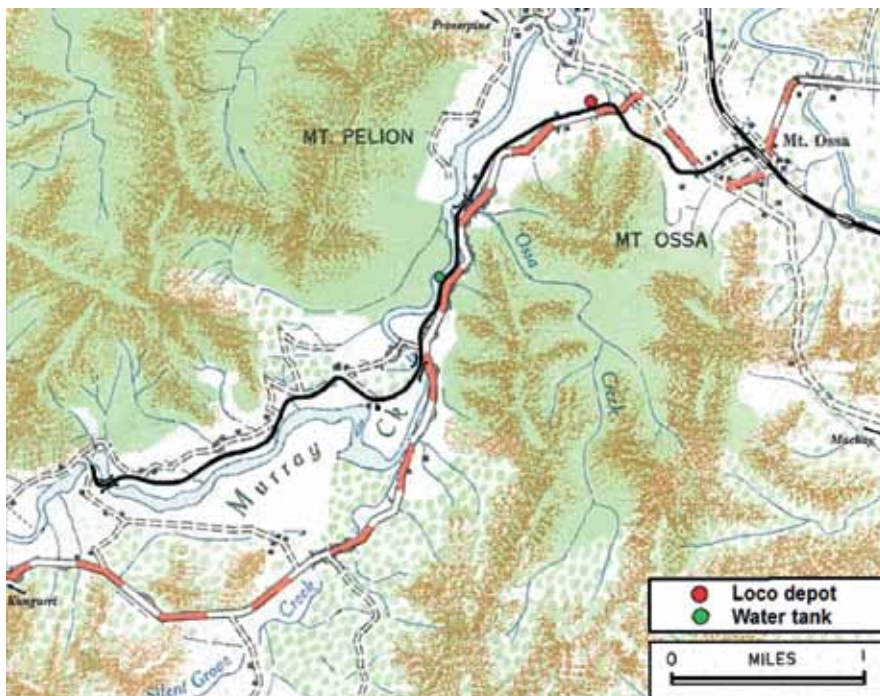
Construction work resumed in October 1925 and the lower 2½ mile section of the line was in use from the start of the 1926 crushing season.<sup>4</sup> In late August 1926 a cane fire burnt out a property on Murray Creek being worked by Italians and all local efforts were concentrated on clearing it using the tramway. Although 75 trucks had been ordered for use on the line, the Achilles heel of an insufficient supply of QGR wagons was already apparent.<sup>5</sup> Construction on the upper part of the line did not proceed without a hitch. On 17 September 1926, 19-year-old Claude Vickary fell about 18 feet from a timber tramway bridge he was engaged in building.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately the tramline was only finished on 13 October, well behind schedule, and a large quantity of cane was left uncut.<sup>7</sup>

Cane for both Racecourse and Farleigh mills was loaded into QGR rail wagons at Mt Ossa. Racecourse had two cane derricks powered by horse whim and Farleigh one.<sup>8</sup> The two mills agreed to pool the supply of rail wagons but when they were in short supply, Farleigh growers got preference so they could unload and return for more cane, because they delivered by road. Racecourse cane stayed on the tram trucks, leaving the mill with insufficient empties to haul up the line.

The original Racecourse Central Sugar Company Limited was reformed as the Racecourse Co-operative Sugar Association Ltd in 1927. As part of the development of grower-owned co-operatives at both Farleigh and Racecourse, the two mills exchanged cane land, with Racecourse getting Homebush and Farleigh the North Coast. The addition

of Homebush cane gave Racecourse more than it could handle. The Silent Grove cane was diverted to Farleigh in 1927 and the line was not incorporated in the new Co-operative in anticipation of its disposal. However, the 1927 season confirmed the Farleigh directors in their view that the short tramline was a liability rather than an asset and should not be acquired on a permanent basis. Initially, the farmers at Silent Grove did not commence supplying cane until the season was a month old.<sup>9</sup> Then a 10-day railway strike commencing on 3 September meant that a day's cane supply was left behind at the Mt Ossa siding and this was immediately followed by a cane fire that left 450 tons of burnt cane uncut.<sup>10</sup> When rain washed out the line late that season, Farleigh closed early and 600 tons of Grove cane went uncrushed.

The new Co-operative did not wish to spend £10 000 on what was looking more and more like a white elephant but the Silent Grove farmers could not afford to buy it either. Eventually, a decision to expand the Racecourse mill in August 1928 justified the cost of securing the cane supply and the tramway was purchased from the old Racecourse company.<sup>11</sup>

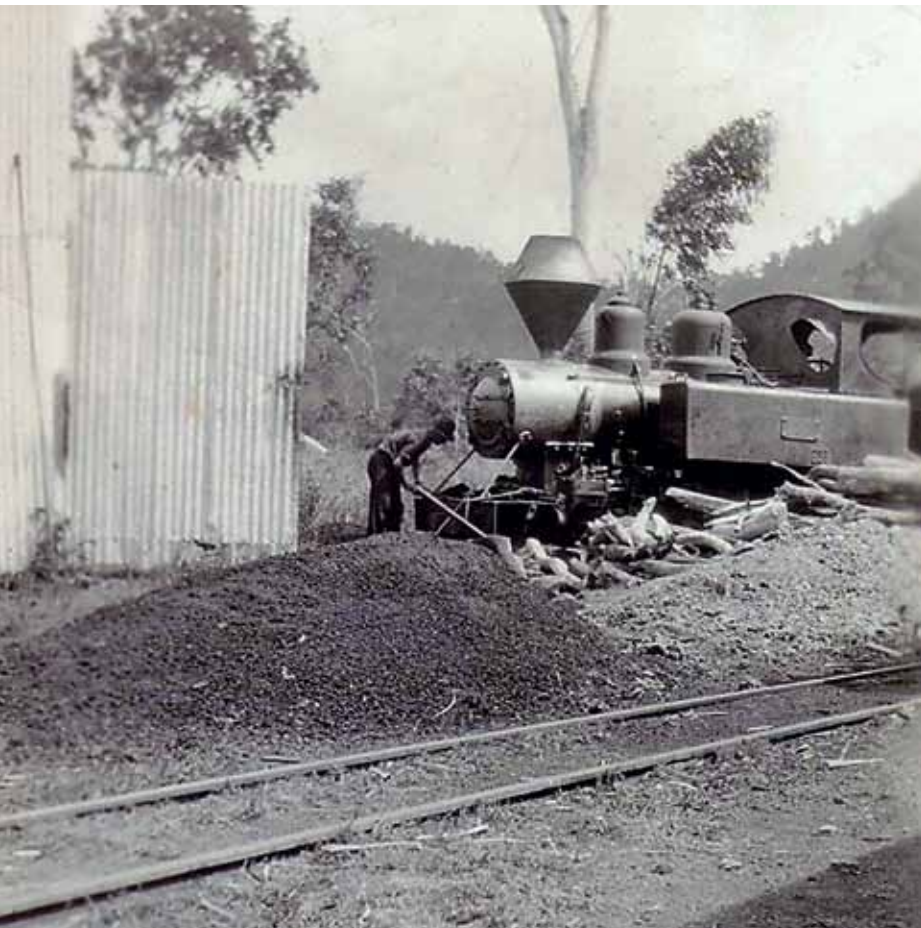


*The line emerged from the station yard and crossed the Bruce Highway (still a goat track) before skirting around Mount Ossa (the mountain) to enter the Murray Creek valley, arriving at the depot which was situated on land belonging to Racecourse Mill. It then squeezed between the road and the creek as it passed through the narrow gorge between Mount Ossa and Mount Pelion and followed Murray Creek along the riverbank, crossing numerous watercourses and passing the water tank that supplied the locomotive. After crossing Murray Creek it took a twisting course before crossing the creek once again to reach the terminus.*



Following this, cane haulage at Silent Grove was done for Racecourse Mill on contract until 1936, using the mill's rolling stock. Dave Francey recalled, *In 1935, George Kruger and I were told to pack our ports (suitcases) and get up to Mt Ossa to get the mill out of a hole. In the beginning the loco driver contracted to haul cane to Mt Ossa for so much a ton and the mill also paid for loading.* From 1937, the mill took over direct management.

Initially, Dave was fireman on the Baldwin loco used on the tramway. A cane inspector patrolled the area on horseback and allotted trucks to farmers. Two fettlers tended the line. The line was steep and winding. It crossed Murray Creek twice and had 25 bridges and culverts in five miles. The bridges were prone to flood damage and often needed repairs. High maintenance costs eventually led to the line's demise.



**Above:** The Baldwin 4-6-0T locomotive (45215 of 1917) at the basic depot facilities in 1936 with 19-year old fireman Dave Francey in attendance. Apart from a new spark arrestor and smokebox door, the lower cab sides have been cut out and the water tanks moved back about four feet in an attempt to increase traction. Photo: courtesy Dave Francey

**Right:** The cleared site of the depot in 2011. Photo: Steven Jesser.



The Baldwin was built with a light axle-load for use on munitions tramways in France in World War I. It struggled to handle the terrain at Silent Grove in spite of modifications designed to transfer weight from the leading bogie to the driving wheels. In 1936, requiring a replacement boiler, it was banished to Racecourse to be replaced by one of the mill's two Avonsides that had been provided by Farleigh for the Homebush tramway. The surer-footed Avonsides had been designed for tougher conditions on South Africa's cane railways. Long after the line was removed, Dave was able to renew his acquaintance with the Baldwin at its new home at Dreamworld on the Gold Coast and was invited to take it for a lap of the theme park circuit.

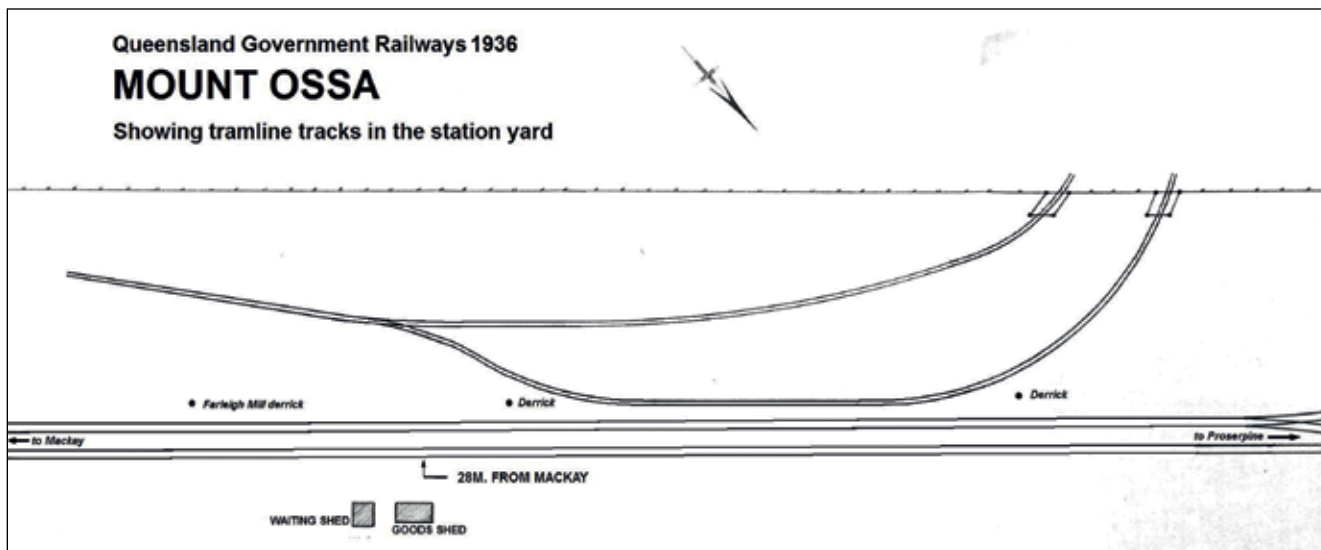
Dave recalled, *When the Baldwin was at Mt Ossa it had no tender.*

*Back of the footplate was a bunker for coal and there were two big tanks on the side of the boiler for water supply. The water at Mt Ossa was too salty so we had to get it from Jim Wilson's farm on Murray Creek. We pumped it out of the creek every second day into a tank that he also used for house water.*

*It was a tough line. The engine was either going flat out or we had the brakes hard on. Along the line we had landmarks such as trees and bushes so we'd know when to catch the load on the top of the hill and when to open the throttle to climb the grade ahead.*

*There were six sidings till you got near the far end before crossing Murray Creek. On the bottom side there was a large siding where we brought the full trucks over a long curved bridge. Having left the empties up the hill a distance, we ran them past the loco to push them up to what we called the 'top end' where there were seven sidings for farmers. Some would load in the morning and some on the second run. On the run back, the full trucks weren't mixed up so no extra shunting was needed when we got them to Mt Ossa where the cane was loaded onto QGR wagons. The eleven farmers loading in the area were allocated four tram trucks for each 6-ton F wagon, six tram trucks for a 10-ton FG wagon and twelve for a 12-ton H wagon.*

*There were no double-ended sidings in those days, so shunting was more complicated. Empties had to be pushed into the siding and hauled out the same way when loaded. One farmer had no points onto the main line so the crew had to*



The final arrangements to maximize QR loading capacity at Mount Ossa after the Farleigh Mill derrick had been shifted two chains south in 1936. Farleigh Mill cane came by road.

lay down portable 'riding points' over the main line every time trucks were delivered or collected. Some farmers still delivered their cane to the tramway in horse drawn wagons. Most used endless chain lifts or big fly wheels to raise their loads of cane onto the tram trucks.

The crew usually did two morning runs and one in the afternoon, hauling 22 tramway trucks of 30 cwt capacity each time. Some days Dave worked both day and afternoon shifts, from 7 am until 9 pm. In the early days, as well as hauling cane, the loco made a monthly trip to Silent Grove with rations and supplies for farmers. In late 1936 a box truck was introduced to protect the goods. During the slack, the crews carried out maintenance, returning to Racecourse when they ran out of jobs to do.

*Every second year one Avonside would go back to Racecourse and be replaced by the other, recalled Dave. We would send it down on the QGR line in an F wagon with tramline fitted on the floor. We'd have to break the tramline at the Mt Ossa siding and pull it across to the main line, jacking the loco up onto a pigsty of sleepers until it was level with the rail wagon. Then we'd drive the loco up onto the F wagon under its own steam.*

Other drivers who worked the Grove line were Hector Wulffe, Ken Gibson, George Dickensen and George Krueger.

At the end of World War II, Racecourse Manager Norm Bennett was faced with the need to build a new tramline bridge over Murray Creek. The isolated line did not carry sufficiently heavy traffic to justify the expense, so he opted to transport Silent Grove cane by road trucks.

Growers agreed to the mill's offer to take delivery of cane in the paddock and the haulage contract was awarded to Atherton Bros at 6s a ton, although this had to be increased to cover costs. Ironically, the cost of seven lorries and drivers, a foreman and a mechanic to get the cane to the weighbridge by road cost more than the cane was worth. However, the change was regarded as a success and it was decided to lift the tramline at the end of 1946 season. Three miles of track were sold to Proserpine and remaining rails and rolling stock returned to Racecourse. Consideration was given to relaying the tramline in the station yard in 1949 to facilitate a quicker turnaround for the lorries, but this was not proceeded with.<sup>12</sup>

The old loco shed at Mount Ossa was used to house cane lorries in the crushing, with the mill owning the trucks and engaging drivers each year on a contract basis. By 1969 Silent Grove was the only Racecourse area still dependent

on government rail and the growers there remained with Racecourse until 1972. Most Silent Grove cane now goes to Farleigh Mill, where logic dictates it should have gone in the first place.

### Current remains

Steven and Scott Jesser found few traces of the Silent Grove tramway in October 2011. Apart from a few shallow cuttings and a bank at the gully on Wilson's property there was no formation visible – almost everything has been ploughed over by farmers, taken over by road formations, or eroded away.

However, the vestigial remains of three tramway bridges were still visible – over Murray Creek, a gully on the old Wilson property and Ossa Creek. Most of the bridge timbers have been washed away or burned but five uprights were still present at Wilson's gully. At Murray Creek the bottom of one bridge timber was in the water and there was another one on the bank, about to fall over. The bridge timbers at Ossa Creek were in the best condition. There were two groups of uprights at Ossa Creek with one on each bank.

No remains of the pump shed or water tank at Wilson's gully could be found. There is a ploughed field at the site of the loco shed near Mount Ossa. In years to come the final traces of the Silent Grover tramline will disappear forever.<sup>13</sup>

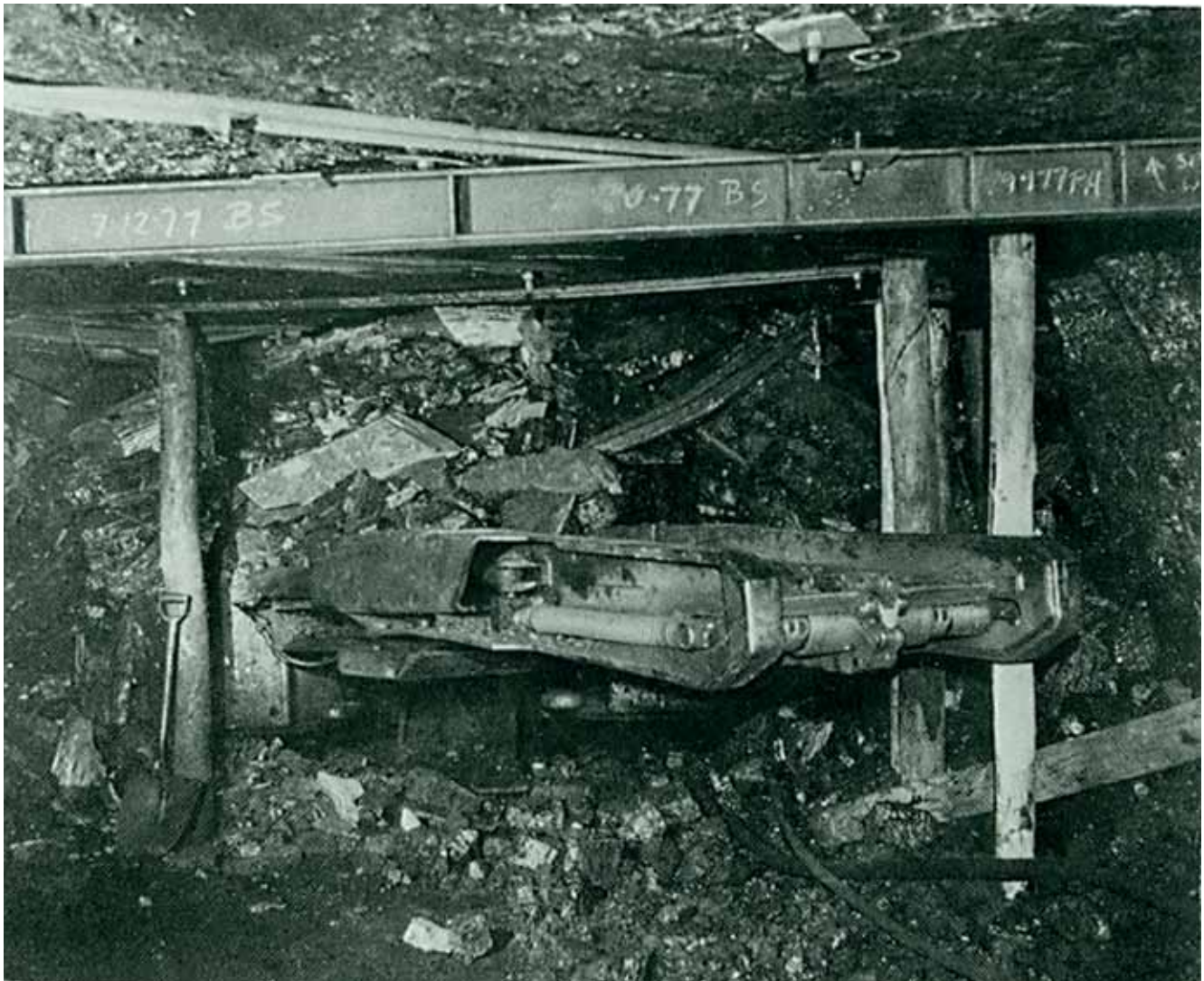
### Acknowledgements

Special thanks for their assistance are due to the late Dave Francey, Dave Francey Jnr, Mike McCarthy, Brendan Whyte (National Library of Australia), and Steven & Scott Jesser.

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*"Where to Start?" This photograph was taken at another mine, but a similar view confronted us as we approached the buried continuous miner at Richmond Main.*

*Photo: BHP, Lake Macquarie City Library Collection*

# Saving the horses: Adventures with battery locomotives

by John W Shoebridge

*Some time ago one of the editors suggested that I consider setting down some first-hand experiences involving industrial rail systems. My initial endeavour, 'A Time of Fire' (LR 208) appears to have been well received, prompting me to continue, this time relating some underground mining (?) activities.*

## Introduction

In New South Wales coal mines right up to the 1960s, pit horses (they were never referred to as 'ponies' in NSW) provided much of the motive power underground. Although rarely deliberately mistreated, some had short, brutal lives and few caring mineworkers were sorry when they were superseded. Nevertheless, whenever underground catastrophe, be it fire or flooding, threatened, by tradition the word was "Save the Horses!" and many an untold deed of heroism has been performed to bring them to safety.

During my time in the mines I was involved in several modern-day versions of this humane exercise, involving the rescue and recovery of battery locomotives or "iron horses". Here is my recollection of these events.

## Waratah Colliery 1955

Early in my career I was employed by Caledonian Collieries Limited at Waratah Colliery, near Charlestown, as an underground supervisor or 'overman'. As a young man I did many foolish things and with a proper degree of shame, I now recount one of them.

Around 3 o'clock one morning, the transport crew shunting empty timber trolleys had managed to derail their train near the foot of the No.4 drift. When I arrived on the scene, the trolleys were back on the road but the battery loco sat helpless in the middle of a wide intersection. Some roof supports had been displaced, three legs were out, one baulk was down, and the strata above was already beginning to 'nip'.

Spurred by the need to get things moving again, and overlooking every pitman's cardinal rule, "Look to the roof," I directed the placement of ramps and packing and we commenced the re-railing. We managed to get a long tail-rope from the front coupler shackled onto the winch rope from the surface, but when we signalled the haulage driver to haul away, the loco frame fouled one of the check rails and it needed to be lifted to clear. "Ho! Bring me a jack!" says I.



The big Trehwella arrived without delay, and soon several of us began to bear down on the lever, the ratchet engaging click by click, others inserting packing as we went. Before long, however, my small band of helpers began to wander away, gathering to watch from half-way along the pillar. By now the roof was 'bumping' with 'butterflies' (fragments of caked stone dust) descending and the remaining timber creaking and groaning. The retreating spectators moved slowly toward the next intersection, all the while suggesting that I similarly abandon the job.

Indeed it was surely time to go, but we were almost there and I would never hear the end of losing the loco under a fall, and so pride dictated that I must continue. One more click on the jack and the frame was clear. I yelled for someone to bell the winch driver, the rope tightened, and the loco was dragged safely clear. As I took off down the roadway, the light debris was already falling around me and from the corners of my eyes I could see the roadside props buckling and splintering! It does not get much closer than that.

The onlookers broke into a run as a fusillade of cracking timber was followed by a seismic roar as the whole intersection came in, blasting us with dust and small coal. Propelled by fear (and the wind blast), I overtook and cannoned into them and we rolled together on the floor. When the commotion subsided, they picked me up, we dusted ourselves off and all went and had our crib.

The pit did not work next day nor the day after, the mess taking six shifts to clean up. I was severely, and quite correctly, reprimanded by the manager for not setting temporary timbers while we worked, but whatever the outcome, (and I still smile to myself) our loco did not end up under the fall!

### Richmond Main Colliery 1962

This case does not describe the 'saving' a locomotive, but the use of one for salvage purposes. The adventure is included because it was one of the most memorable situations I have encountered underground.

In May 1962 I was appointed assistant undermanager at Richmond Main, at one time the largest colliery in Australia, but by then in its years of final decline. Within a week of taking up duty I was involved in the recovery of a buried continuous mining machine ('miner'), this being my first exposure to such an operation. Thankfully, such events are not frequent, and in my 20 or so years of coalface work I experienced only four such incidents.

The miner was cutting coal in a 'solids' place, approaching a faulted zone. With little warning, a fall overrode the timbering. There was no time to tram the machine to safety and it was completely buried except for the loading boom. Fortunately the miner-driver, and the cable-hand, the only men at the face, were quick on their feet and escaped without injury. But how could we get it out? When I arrived, clambering beside the machine as far as I could, I looked upward into the void. The beam from my cap lamp did not reach to the top of the fall and there appeared to be a solid mass of broken stone sitting on the machine.

The recovery work went on around the clock, with the undermanager-in-charge and myself sharing the supervision. It was all very new to me so I kept my mouth shut and looked wise and the men appeared to know what to do next.

First, the rill of small coal and stone was shovelled away to expose the rear of the miner and heavy 'breaker' props were set to secure the 'lip' of the fall, care being taken that they were so placed as to not foul the machine when it was eventually dragged out. The little red light on the boom showed that the power supply was still functioning. The electric cable was carefully uncovered, led well clear and protected by timber slabs.

Three especially heavy timber legs were selected and their locations carefully paced out back down the roadway. Here they were hitched into the roof and floor to provide anchor points. Meanwhile a set of six, massive three-fold sheave blocks (kept specially for the purpose of miner recovery) had

NEW SOUTH WALES

No 3275

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1912—1953

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L. J. Allomes  
Examiner

Date of Issue 7-12-60

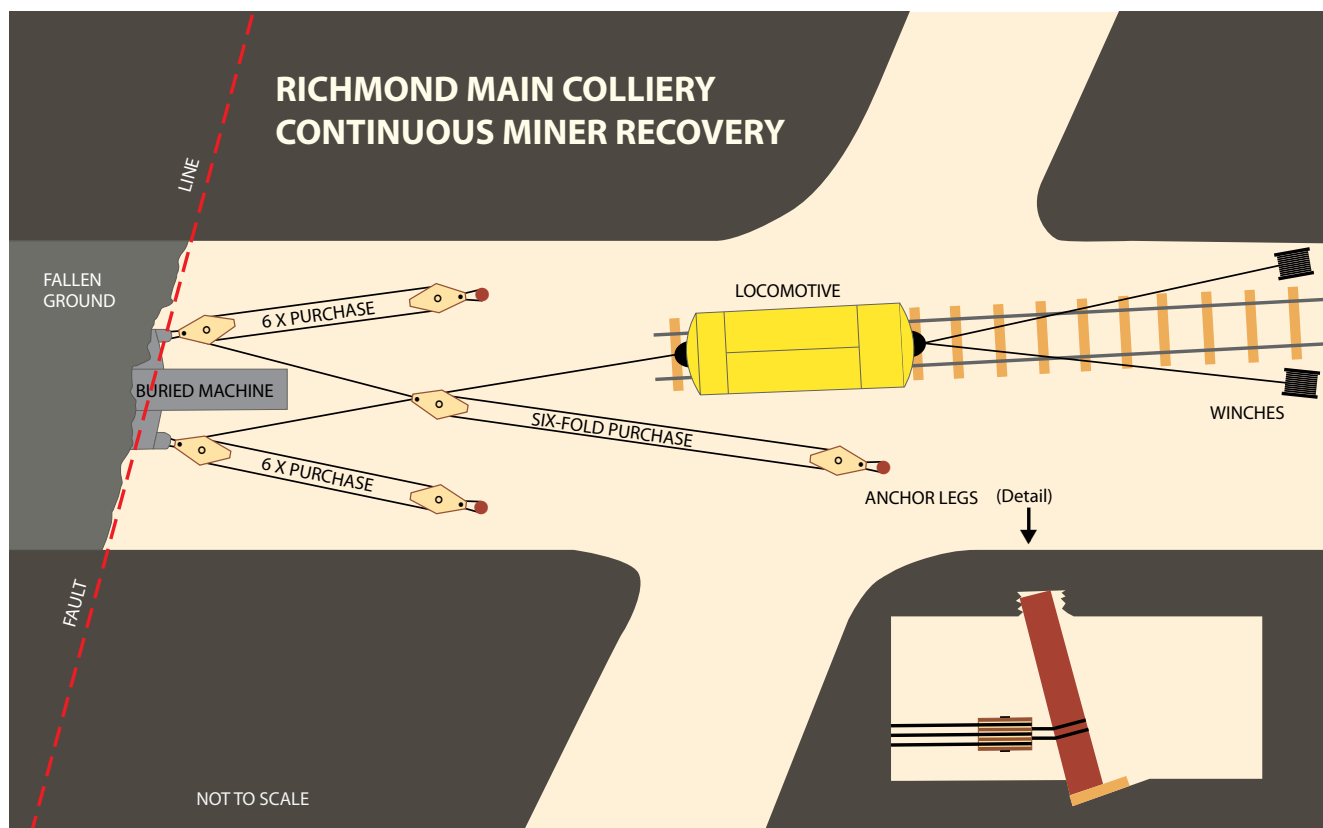
E. J. Kennedy  
For Secretary for Mines.

45285 3.56 A. H. Pettifer, Government Printer.

Usual Signature

"Qualified on Paper" NSW Mines Department regulations required that any person driving an underground locomotive must hold the appropriate certificate. These were awarded by the Department's Electrical Inspector, after a verbal examination and a practical demonstration of competency. During the formation years of the Sydney Tramway Museum, this piece of paper served to convince the authorities that the holder had the ability to drive trams!

Author's Certificate



arrived from Hexham workshops. These were dragged on site by a horse and the accompanying wire rope was laboriously reeved around the pulleys. One block on each purchase was attached by huge shackles on either side of the rear of the miner, the second bound by wire rope strops to the anchor prop, and the twin fall-ropes were clipped together and onto one of the third pair of blocks, thus giving us a 49-fold mechanical advantage.

On production, the continuous miner had been loading into two 42D type shuttle cars. These were battery-powered with two-wheel drive via sprocket chains and notorious for their limited (one might well say “feeble”) tractive capacity. That left the Jeffrey battery loco, used for materials transport. Within a couple of hours, rails had been laid up a convenient cut-through towards the rear of the miner. The single fall-rope from the third set of blocks was lashed around the loco coupler and secured with ‘bull-dog’ clamps (see diagram).

After several shifts occupied in rigging, we were ready for the actual salvage. One intrepid soul crawled beside the miner and attached lengths of rein rope to the appropriate control handles, at the same time switching the power on the hydraulic pump. Having well sanded the rails, the loco driver backed his machine away, straightening out the ropes and lifting the blocks off the floor. The miner-driver stood ready to manipulate the hydraulic controls via the rein ropes. No attempt would be made to run the traction motors of the miner; if done prematurely, all this would do would be to bog the machine. For the same reason, the spray water supply, which not only suppressed dust, but cooled the hydraulic oil, was disconnected.

The spectators, myself included, now retreated to the safety of the cut-through. The undermanager took charge, and with a vertical wave of his light, signalled for battle to commence. The loco took the strain, the ropes drew taut, and the wire strops bit deep into the timber anchor legs. The miner-driver tugged his reins, attempting to raise and lower the cutter head and shovel, and thus loosen the grip of the fallen stone. The whole machine bucked and writhed, the pump

howling, hydraulic rams straining and relief valves screaming ... and nothing happened. The loco driver backed off and took a series of short runs, and soon the smell of red-hot loco resistances mingled with the stink of crushed sand and vapourised oil.

After half an hour or so of this with no perceptible movement, it was time to get serious. Some of the crew were sent for a cup of tea, while others went with the locomotive which was unleashed and despatched with a flat-top trolley. All was silent save for stones settling in the fall, and the hydraulic oil boiling in the miner tank. The undermanager and I took a short break, sprawled in the slack coal against the rib. An hour or so later, the train returned bringing two skip-puller winches borrowed from the loading points. These were placed outbye of the locomotive, pinned between roof and floor by screw props. A power supply was extemporised, two winch drivers nominated, a sentry was posted to relay signals and half a shift later, we were back in business. Again the loco pulled the tackle tight, then the twin winches took up their strain, while again the hydraulic rams forced the heads up and down. With the haul ropes bar-taunt and lubricant oozing between the strands, ... slowly ... ever so slowly ... the pulleys revolved and inch by inch, the trapped machine was dragged back between the breakers.

The hauling tackle was hastily dismantled and moved to the side and the miner-driver cleared fallen stone from his control position to free the tramming levers. Then under its own power the continuous miner moved out beneath the supported roof. Despite the immense weight which had pinned it in place, it had suffered only two smashed headlights and a crushed cooling-water jacket. Repairs were hastily made and, after three days and two nights of the most arduous and dramatic efforts, the section was back on production next shift.

Although the colliery manager might raise his hands in despair when he saw the overtime sheet, the incident was certainly a quick learning curve for a young fellow, and one that stood me in good stead in later years.



## Wallerawang Colliery 1978

By 1975, with ten years experience as a colliery manager under my belt, I was out of the pits and working for the Mines Rescue Service NSW. Based at its Lithgow station, I was responsible for emergency response to the 20 or so mines on the Western Coalfield, at that time extending from Bell as far north as Ulan.

Mid-morning one dozy Saturday, a call came in from Wallerawang Colliery, west of Lithgow, stating that there was a fire of unknown origin in the mine with men underground and unaccounted for. I activated the house-bells to summon my 'on-call' brigadesmen, and then leaving an attendant at the phone, four of us set off in two vehicles to Angus Place, pressing through the suburban traffic well over the speed limit. We arrived at the pit in record time and I hurried to the office to find out what I could of the situation. One of my men was told to stay with the vehicles to get our gear ready, the second I sent to check the ventilation fan, the third to stand sentry at the tunnel portal.

The office personnel had raised the alarm on receipt of a phone call from below. There had been no subsequent messages from the mine and as the colliery manager was on leave, they were attempting to contact other officials at home. With no record in the office as to how many men were below, I went into the lamp cabin and counted the empty spaces on the charging rack. There were 11 lamps on issue. At least that was a figure to start with, so I hastened to the tunnel mouth where three or four men had just emerged, eyes streaming, spluttering and coughing.

We sat them down and administered oxygen, and eventually one was able to draw breath sufficiently to tell us that there was a battery locomotive, immobilised and on fire in the main intake, close to the bottom of the tunnel. Clearly this was a text book case for reversing the fan, but lacking local knowledge of the ventilation circuit, I hesitated to make

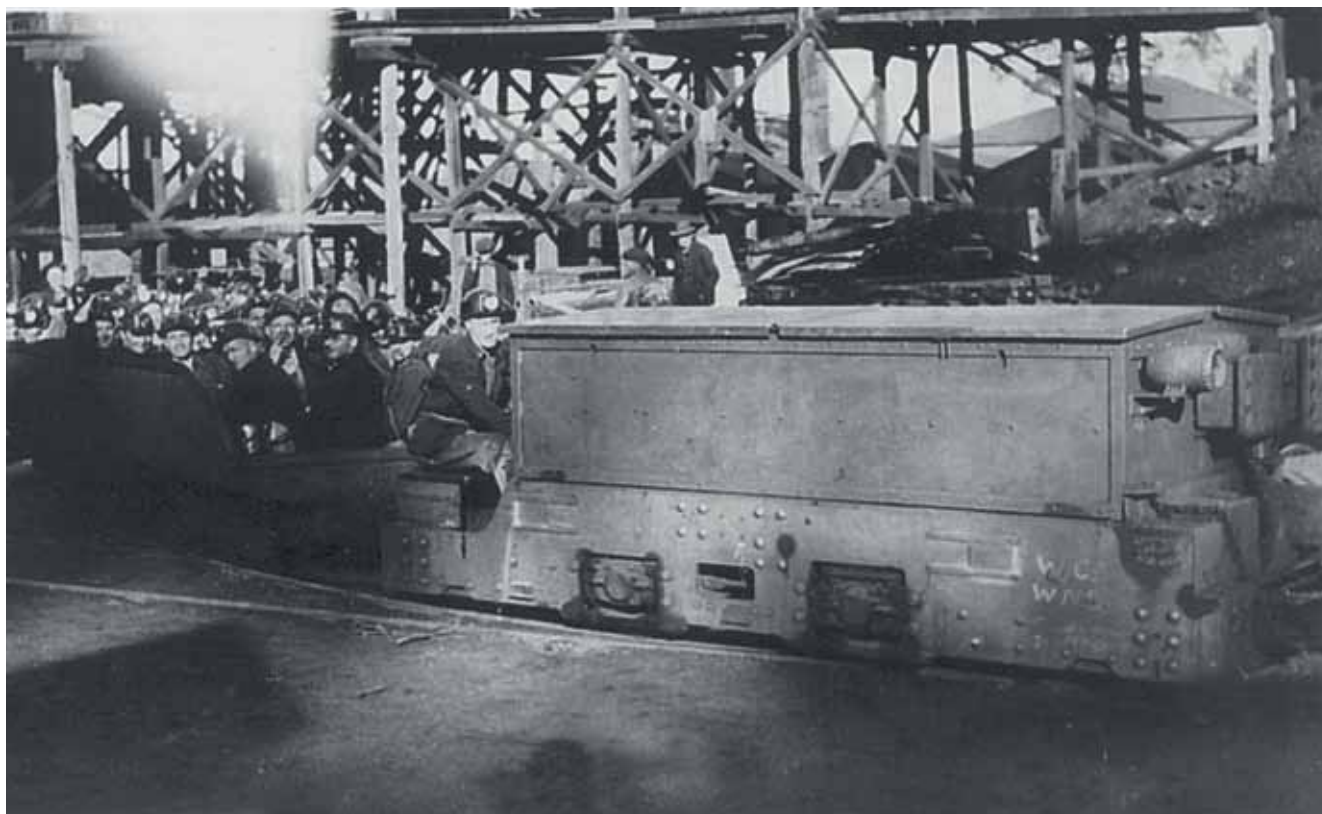
such a move without reference to a mine official. One of my brigadesmen was a qualified electrician, so in preparedness, I sent him into the fan motor-room ready to reverse the power leads should I give the word. Meantime, I had the other two don short-term compressed-air breathing apparatus (BA) and sent them down the tunnel to assist the men escaping. I remained at the portal keeping tally of those who emerged.

Miners continued to come from below, some wearing self-rescue escape sets, others bare-faced and gasping. I administered oxygen as required and soon they had all recovered sufficiently to decline further treatment, before hastening to the change room and an unexpected early knock-off!

Eventually the deputy in charge of the shift arrived on top, accompanied by the BA men. He was able to confirm everyone was out of the mine and at the same time he told us that the fire was confined to the battery plug on the locomotive. He had seen no flames, although the insulation was giving off dense fumes and the metal body was too hot to handle. No one had tried to drive it out, the fire being at the controller end.

I sent the BA men back into the mine with a couple of fire extinguishers to see what they could do. As they vanished from sight, the colliery engineer arrived and the deputy and I briefed him on the situation. He told us there was a spare locomotive in the surface workshop and we agreed it could be used, so I recalled my man from the motor room and he soon set off to drive it down the tunnel. Even though he would be on the fresh air side of the fire, he took with him a BA set, because "You never know"!

In the mine, the two locos were coupled and within minutes they and three men were back on the surface where the offending plug was levered out and the smouldering residue damped down. If only all incidents were as simple as this!



*"VIP Transport." Undated photo of a substantial battery-electric locomotive taking visitors into Wallerawang Colliery.*

*Photo: W Pincott, Ross Mainwaring Collection*

## Burwood Colliery 1979

In January 1979, I moved to Newcastle, again in the role of Mines Rescue Superintendent, my district here extending from Munmorah to Gunnedah. Within days of taking up duty, I was called to BHP's Burwood Colliery, at Whitebridge, around ten one Sunday morning. Here I found the colliery manager and several of his senior officials gathered at the top of the inclined drift. He told me that there was a fire underground; they had made a preliminary foray below ground but had been driven back by smoke. A quick check of the air exhausting from the fan confirmed that something was indeed seriously amiss. We decided that it was necessary to confirm the source and severity of the fire and to do this, use would have to be made of breathing apparatus, in this case, liquid-oxygen fed units of three hours duration.

It was the rescue station's responsibility to train and organise selected mineworkers as Mines Rescue Volunteers and within half an hour the first of these began to arrive, called in a pre-arranged rota as part of our mutual assistance arrangements. Before long we had sufficient hands to form two five-man BA teams, one to enter the mine and the other to stand by on the surface, in case the problem should escalate. In theory we had telephone communication by means of reeled cable but in reality, in those days messages generally comprised "Hey! What did you say?" so the phones were left in the rescue van.

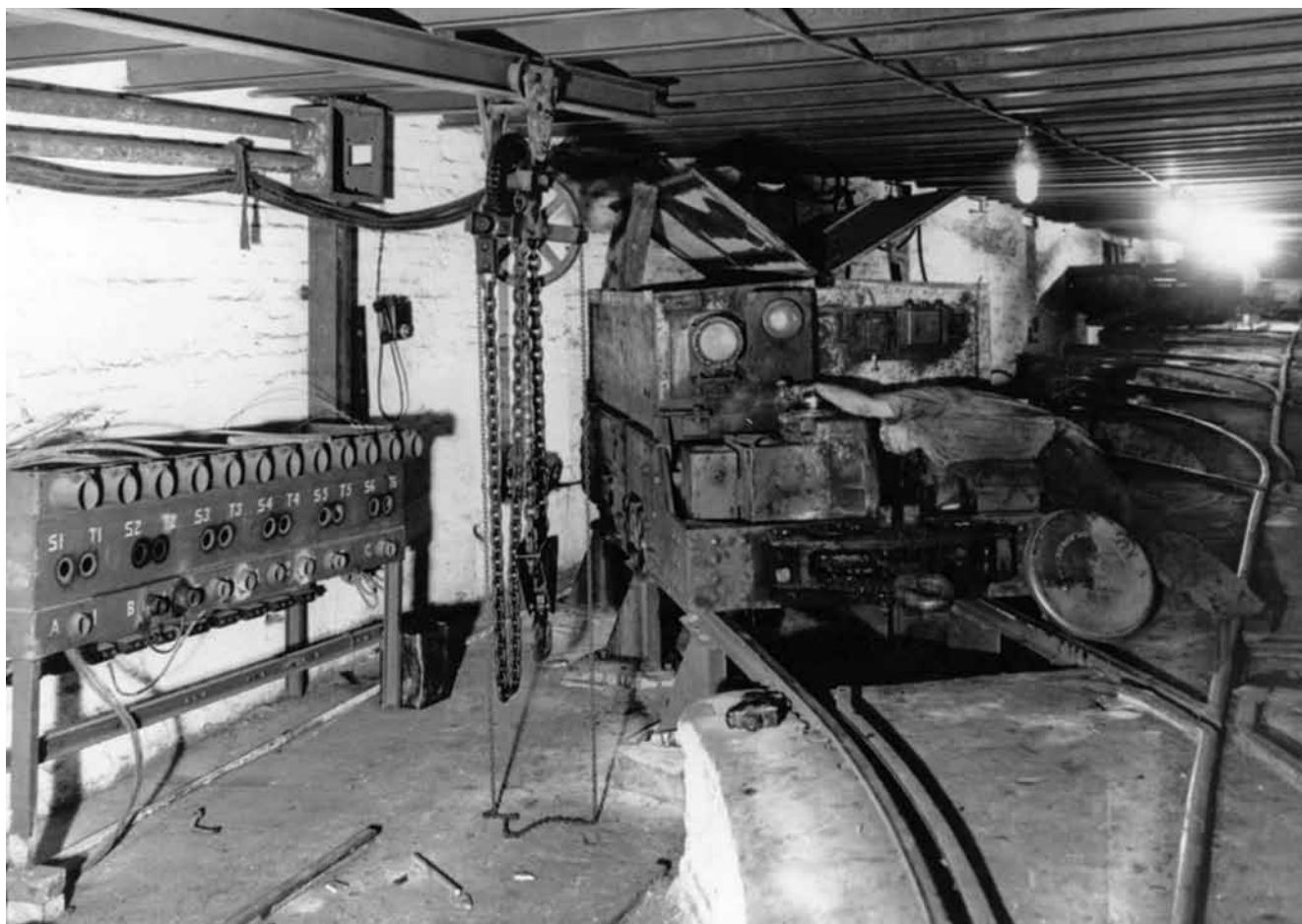
Also theory provided that my job was to remain on the surface, in overall control of the situation and able to organise back-up as required. Having got things going and being new to the district, however, there was no way I was going miss the fun, so I left my assistant in charge on the surface and nominated myself as leader of the exploratory team.

Breathing sets charged with oxygen, we boarded the drift transport and rode the car to the Victoria Seam landing where we confirmed our intentions by the mine telephone before setting off along the level roadway. For a time there was no need for respiratory protection, but after some 20 minutes of brisk walking, we met the first of the smoke backing up against the air current.

This was as far as we could proceed without apparatus, so we put in our mouthpieces, performed the prescribed checks and set out in single file, unreeling a guideline as we went. Within 50 metres or so, the visibility fell to an arm's length and the heat became intense. We pressed on, stooping as low as we could, the temperature and smoke increasing with every step. After ten or so minutes, with my Biro drooping in my pocket, I was beginning to doubt the wisdom of the incursion. It was obvious that the fire was well out of control, so even though we still had no idea of its extent, perhaps we should call it a day? Then the second man in the team, older and more experienced than myself, moved closer and mouthed through the side of his mask (a dangerous and forbidden action), "Think this is hot John? Nowhere as hot as it was at Liddell!"

These few words steadied me and we continued up to the next intersection. Looking down the side roadway, even through the thick smoke, we could now see the ferocity of the fire. The coal ribs had the appearance of the interior of a coke retort, and drippers of tar were running from the roof, stinging like hornets where they touched bare skin.

It was indeed time to leave. Number two man marked the spot on the plan and I gave the signal to "Retire" and with perfect discipline, the team turned about and retraced their steps, hand-over-hand along the guideline. As we departed we opened any fire hydrants that we passed, leaving the water running.



*'Iron Horse Stables.' Underground locomotive charging station at Burwood Colliery. Photo: BHP, Lake Macquarie City Library Collection*





*'Back to Daylight': Battery locomotives recovered from Burwood Colliery on the surface.*

*Photo: Author*

Back at the drift telephone we paused to confer. It was agreed that the mine, for the time being, would have to be abandoned and sealed off at the surface. I phoned the manager with my recommendation. He concurred, but suggested, as we were on the spot, that we should attempt save the six 'horses' (ie battery locomotives), which were 'grazing' (charging) quietly in their nearby 'stable' (charge station).

I agreed to try, first checking that we had sufficient oxygen remaining. There was still more than a full hour's supply so off we went. Although the smoke on the main road was getting thicker by the minute, in the battery room itself, visibility was quite good, the ventilation here provided by a separate split. Two of the team, who worked at Burwood, made short work of disconnecting the charger leads and preparing the locomotives to leave.

Out on the main road with smoke backing up, the visibility was now virtually non-existent, so for safe working purposes, we coupled the locos into a single train. I nominated one man to drive, the others to spread out along the train, ready to brake if required, on a pre-arranged gong signal. As the convoy rumbled slowly along the deserted roadway, I stumbled blindly ahead making sure that all points were correctly set.

Arriving at the drift bottom without mishap, we found the intake air current was diluting the smoke, permitting us to take off our breathing sets, blow our noses and have a good spit! The little train was uncoupled, telephone messages and bell signals were exchanged with the surface engineman, and one at a time, our charges were hooked onto the rope and hauled up the slope to the surface. Let loose beside drift portal, unlike their equine counterparts, they placidly stayed where they were parked. As the last one emerged, a waiting front-end loader commenced to dump loam into the tunnel mouth.

By midnight, utilising the efforts of 50 or so rescue volunteers, we had put airtight seals on this main drift and the three shafts. The following day, engineers from CIG Limited connected hoses and adaptors to the underground fire mains and sent the first of several thousand tonnes of nitrogen gas below (now you see why we opened the fire hydrants). The fire would consume the residual oxygen and

hopefully subside, speeded by the injection of this inert gas.

Nine months and hundreds of man-hours of BA work later, the mine was back in production. The little locomotives, temporarily relocated to other BHP mines, returned to roam the Burwood roadways, although the colliery manager was loud in proclaiming his suspicion that the best had been retained by his colleagues!

### **Stockrington Colliery 1988**

Toward the end of my time with the Mines Rescue Service, a self-heating was detected deep underground in Stockrington Colliery, near Minmi, and the decision was taken to seal off the section with brick walls. Certain locations required the use of breathing apparatus and thus came under my supervision.

By this date remote portable monitors were in use for instantaneous gas analysis and before commencing the job we had installed a number of these at strategic locations close to the coal faces. Running on battery power these silent 'sentinels of safety' transferred information along the telephone lines to the surface control room, giving warning of accumulations of flammable gas and their transition toward explosibility. Indeed a far cry from the many lonely hours I had spent far below ground on other sealing jobs, keeping watch with a cage of canaries and an oil lamp.

And so it was that around 2am, the incident controller at Stockrington was sitting in front of a radiator, in a surface office, coffee in hand, when he was suddenly alerted by an alarm indicating that the air/gas ratio had suddenly passed well into the explosive range!

Contacted at home by telephone, I first confirmed his decision to withdraw the men who were building the seals, then set off post haste to the mine. There was no need for lights and sirens at this hour! Just as I parked in the pit yard, a small begrimed party emerged on foot from the tunnel mouth and shamefacedly explained that in their haste to retreat, they had split the points and derailed their locomotive underground, well beyond the Buttai Turn. A second loco was trapped inbye. I administered a joking admonishment and sent them off for a shower and some food.

After a quick look at the monitor printout, I decided we could risk re-entry. Two volunteers were readily forthcoming. We left our identity tokens, collected some chemical-oxygen personal escape sets (because you never know), and set out for a long walk. Forty-five minutes later we came on the locos, one sitting patiently on the rails, its headlight illuminating the second, which was sprawled across the junction, almost at right angles to the track. A quick look indicated that the points had been set correctly, confirming my suspicion that undue haste had been the cause of the problem and it appeared lucky indeed that someone had not been injured!

There was a jack on each loco, a stack of sleepers nearby and both my companions were experienced pitmen, so leaving them to get on with the re-railing, I set out to have a look at the gas monitor sites. I decided to walk the silent roadways, in case the second loco was needed to provide a tow. Spontaneous heating rarely produces visible smoke, but the danger from carbon monoxide (CO) is very real, so I carried with me a chemical gas detector which I used to sample the air every 50 paces. A few years previously I would have used a canary! Alone with my thoughts, I pondered how many such deserted roadways I had walked during the course of my career.

Close to the face, the little monitors, their red and green lights blinking, were whirring cheerfully. At the same time my chemical tubes indicated an acceptable level of CO. As I had suspected, at the second monitor point, a joint on one of the sample tubes had pulled apart, admitting air and distorting the fuel/oxygen ratio relayed to the surface computer. A few seconds with some black tape, (always in one's pocket!) rectified the matter.

As I made my way back towards the junction, I met the coupled locos and crew coming inbye to collect me. We rode

triumphant to the surface, emerging blinking towards the rising sun. Looking east across the Stockrington Valley at dawn always presents a magnificent outlook, more especially after a shift underground! In the control room, the gas readings had returned to normal and the sealing-off could continue on the next shift.

My triumph was short-lived. As we were supping our tea and telling each other what fine fellows we were, the Superintendent of Collieries arrived at the scene, giving us scant thanks for our efforts. I was told that had the locomotives been left walled-off in the district, the company could have claimed insurance for their full value — far more than the price they would bring as scrap. After all, the owners, Coal & Allied Limited, with underground operations being then phased out, had more than enough battery locomotives.

That of course would have gone well against all my instincts and training, but then as I have heard it said, 'Head Office knows the cost of everything and the value of nothing.'

## Conclusion

Now the number of locomotives in our coal mines is on the decline. Soon all will have been replaced by more flexible, rubber-tyred diesel vehicles which do not require an army of 'roadlayers' to keep their ways in order. To think that when I started in the pits there were still men employed under the award classification of 'Rolleywayman' a job description dating back to the inception of 'railed ways' in the mines.

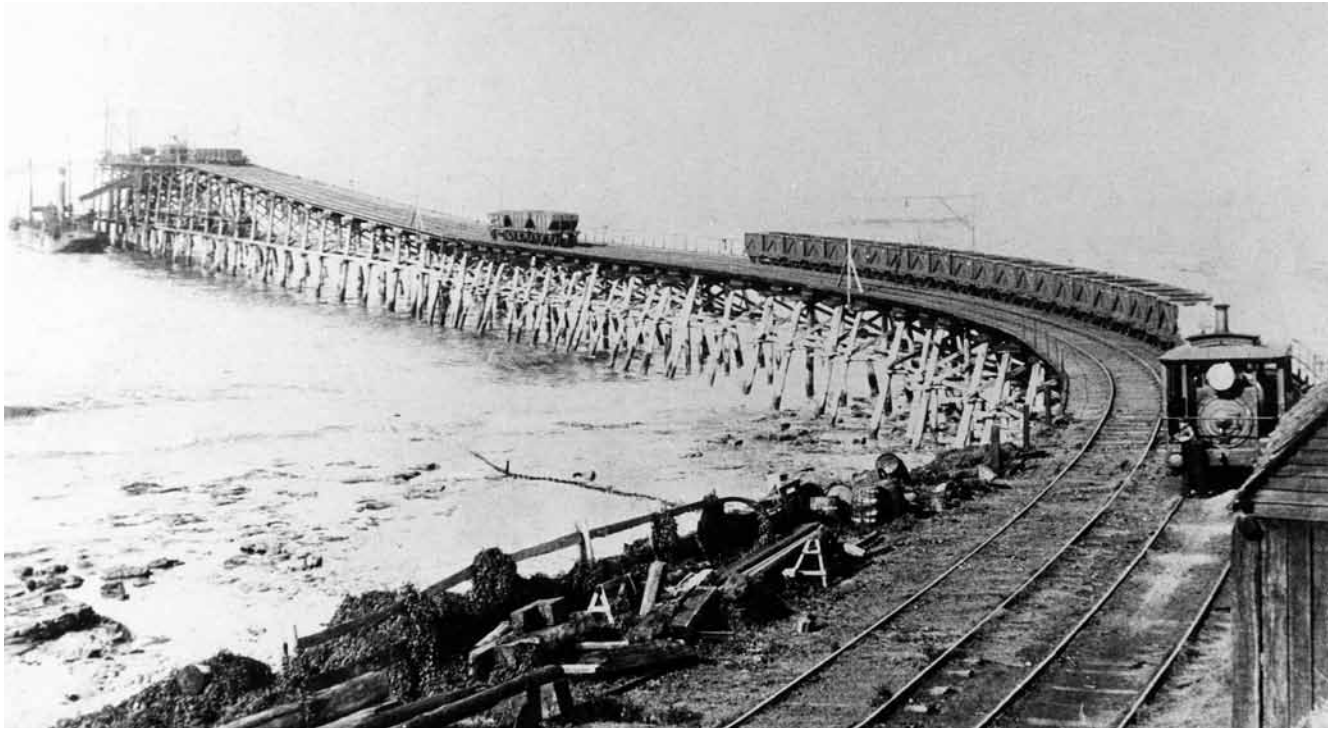
During my 45 or so years in the NSW coal business, I moved on from learning how to control a recalcitrant pit horse to being able to program a gas analysis computer. I am not sure which was the most fun. Strange to think that my revered father had always pressed me to become an accountant!



*Out in the light of day, one of the Stockrington battery locomotives is posed for a photograph on the weed-infested pit top trackwork in January 1978. The elaborate overhead support structures are associated with the mine's unique over-running current collection system used by the larger, trolley-wire locomotives.*

*Photo: Graeme Belbin*





**Above:** An overall view of Bulli Jetty. On the left, a ship is loading, while on the right, steam tram motor No. 21 is about to couple up to a rake of empty wagons. **Below right:** Bulli Colliery No.1 (Vale & Lacy 2 of 1867). Both photos: ARHSnsw Railway Resource Centre

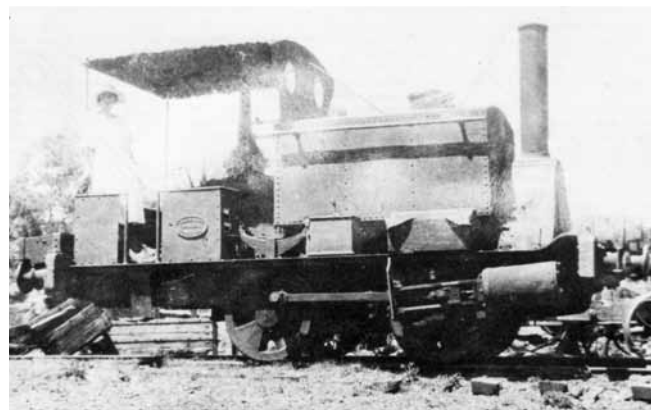
## A peculiar incident at Bulli Colliery

by Richard Horne

Industrial locomotives are called upon to perform many tasks, but perhaps none more unusual than that undertaken by one at Bulli Colliery, NSW, on Friday 29 December 1911. The story, reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* for 1 January 1912, concerned a mysterious fish seen in the sea off Bulli on the 28 December, which caused a large crowd of curious onlookers to gather on the jetty and beach. As it approached the jetty, fishermen identified it as a large shark, but others with over-active imaginations declared that 'some fabulous monster of the deep could be seen at Bulli'. Fishermen threw meat and fish into the sea which the shark ignored until, finally, a leg of mutton was too much of a temptation, after which it devoured everything, including bait, hooks and lines.

The following day an enormous hook was attached to the centre of a cable stretched between the jetty and a buoy some 40 yards away. It was baited with meat which the shark took, breaking bolt and hook but not breaking free of the line. A Captain Sinclair, of the Riverview St Ignatius College, who was on Christmas vacation at Bulli, set out in a small boat, accompanied by a workman from Bulli Colliery. The ensuing battle, to screams from the assembled crowd, saw the boat nearly dashed to pieces by the shark, but the captain managed to place a hook in its mouth and it was hauled up to the jetty by no less than 18 men. Attempts to haul it out of the water failed until a steam winch was utilised and it was finally landed on the jetty. It was then, with difficulty, put on a rail trolley and taken to the end of the jetty to be photographed. It was 13ft 9in in length, had a jaw width of 20 inches and weighed over half a ton.

At the suggestion of the Bulli Colliery manager, Mr Youill, the shark was hauled by one of the colliery's locomotives to a shed in the colliery, where it was exhibited with the proceeds



benefitting the local hospital. In the flowery prose of the time, this unique task for a locomotive was described thus:

*When the fish was removed from the pier to the impromptu exhibition buildings, it was followed by a concourse of people. The precession savoured of the funeral of some celebrity. The monster lay on a trolley (sic), with a tarpaulin for a shroud, and in his death – he died bravely – was honoured like a viking of old. The colliery engine was summoned, and coupled to the trolley; a whistle blew shrilly in the still air, and the cortege moved slowly to the shrine, to the accompaniment of the groaning of the trolley, the grunting of an asthmatical locomotive, and the dismal strains of music produced by two stones in a kerosene can, vigorously shaken by a small boy of surprising strength. The monster now lies on his catafalque, and can be viewed by all and sundry for a small charge for admission.*

Which locomotive was thus honoured is not known, but at the time Bulli Colliery had three locomotives in use. They were No. 1, a 0-4-0ST built by Vale & Lacy in 1867 (its sister, No. 2, built in 1868, had been withdrawn c.1906, with the frame and motion used as a haulage engine) and two steam tram motors, ex-Sydney Nos. 21 and 62 built by Baldwin, 5451 of 1881 and 6983 of 1884, respectively. It would be pleasant to think that the 'asthmatical' one was the 1867 veteran and, indeed, it may have been so, for use of a steam tram motor would surely have warranted mention in such a detailed newspaper report.



*Transporting bags of grout on a fine West Coast day was no problem with the help of the motorised four wheeled trolley. The workman is grasping a long handle with which to engage the gear lever attached to the petrol engine's one speed gearbox. The gradient of the wooden tramway was anything but constant and adhesion could present a challenge on a typical West Coast day – wet! 19 May 2009.*

*Photo courtesy of the Launceston Examiner.*

# The past becomes the present: wooden rails and pipe dreams

by Ross Mainwaring

## Introduction

The West Coast of Tasmania, exposed as it is to the Southern Ocean and backed by the rugged West Coast Range is subjected to precipitation measured in feet, not inches, an ideal rainfall, along with topography, for the harnessing of the rivers for the generation of hydro-electricity.

In November 1883 payable gold was discovered on a high ridge which separated the beautiful Linda Valley from the valley of the Queen River, 18 miles distant from the port of Strahan on Macquarie Harbour. The leases pegged at this dramatic location, overlooked by Mount Owen and Mount Lyell, eventually fostered two major copper mines: one was the famed 'Iron Blow' of the Mount Lyell Mining Company (No Liability) formed in Melbourne in 1892 while the other copper deposit, a little to the north, was to become the North Lyell Copper Company's mine at which the surface outcropping of the large ore-body was discovered in 1897.

To attract much needed British capital, the Mount Lyell Company was incorporated in March 1893 becoming Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Company Limited. During

1903 the two companies merged: North Lyell suffered from extravagant and incompetent management while Mount Lyell faced a situation of diminishing ore reserves at the 'Iron Blow'. Each company's copper ore, when combined in the smelting furnace, was complementary to the process. This merger consolidated the mining field into one of great potential wealth with Mount Lyell's very able management superintending operations and the North Lyell mine supplying the majority of the relatively rich copper ore.

The principal town and focus of smelting operations was now Queenstown in the Queen River valley; Gormanston, virtually a wholly company town on the eastern side of the ridge and the domicile of many employees working in the mine, lost a little of its former importance while Linda, home to North Lyell employees rapidly began its decline to present day ghost town status. Two 3ft 6in gauge railways served the field: the Mount Lyell Company's railway from Teepookana (later extended to Regatta Point near Strahan) and the North Lyell railway from Linda to Kelly Basin on Macquarie Harbour. This latter line was officially closed in 1929 as it no longer served any useful purpose with the concentration of company operations over the ridge at Queenstown.

## Fuel satisfaction

The human activities of mining and smelting can consume extraordinary quantities of timber, both for fuel and for underground mining purposes. Dense rainforest clothed the mountain slopes around Mt Lyell and these virgin forests only awaited the timber cutters to fell them for fuel, mine supports



or building material. Forested areas were accessed by narrow gauge tramways, being 2ft or 2ft 6in gauge, of either steel rail or wooden rail variety.

Small 7½ ton, 2ft gauge German-built Krauss steam locomotives brought in rakes of trucks loaded with timber for the smelter furnaces, air compressor boilers and electrical generation plant boilers. The surrounding mountain slopes quickly became denuded of vegetation as the tramways were extended further away from Queenstown while the noxious sulphur fumes emitted from the smelter stack effectively killed off any regrowth.

As a fuel for the Dübs & Company built 0-4-2 Abt rack tank locomotives that worked the mainline to Regatta Point, coal was imported from Elrington Colliery (near Newcastle, New South Wales) because the domestic mineral's steam raising capabilities were inferior when burned in the small firebox of these rack locomotives. In later years, as an economy measure, a mixture of Tasmanian coal from Fingal, and Newcastle coal was burnt.

During 1908, 1200 tons of wood a week, cut by 140 firewood getters, was consumed for all purposes by the company and the forest had been stripped bare for a radius of six miles from the works. Landed at the boilers, firewood cost between 8 to 10 shillings a ton. A sawmill, owned by the company, cut building and construction timber to suit.

By 1911 the costs associated with cutting and transporting firewood had risen considerably but with no alternative fuel source close at hand to this remote region of the state, the generation of hydro-electricity became a very attractive possibility. An American, Robert Sticht, General Manager of the Mount Lyell Company and well acquainted with the

economic benefits of hydro-electricity from when he worked at copper refineries at Great Falls, Montana, estimated that £50,000 per year could be saved in fuel costs by the adoption of electrical power.

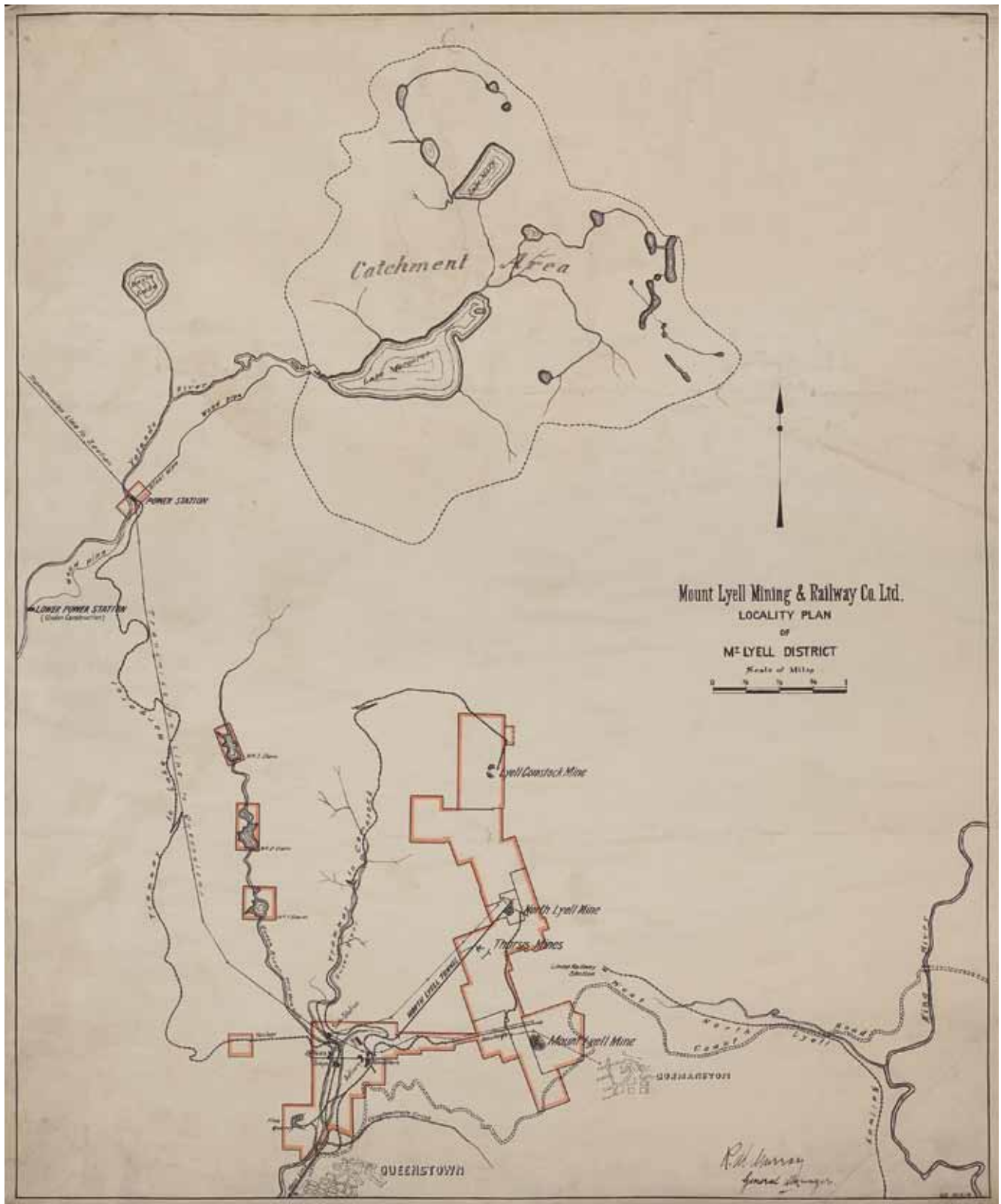
An ideal location for the projected scheme was close at hand, a glacially formed body of water known as Lake Margaret which was only five miles north of the smelters. A mountain valley cradled this beautiful lake which possessed a watershed of only eight square miles. But these eight square miles enjoyed the distinction of being the second wettest area of real estate in Australia, receiving an average rainfall of 145 inches per annum. Lake Margaret was high up on a flank of Mount Sedgwick, its peak being 2143 feet above sea level. From this peak a visitor can observe up to 40 lakes of various sizes in the surrounding highlands, but none surpass the capacity of Lake Margaret, making it ideal for water storage.

Approval was granted for the scheme so in 1912 preliminary construction commenced by extending an existing 2 ft gauge firewood tramway northwards from Madame Howard Plains to the future site of the power station beside the Yolande River. This stream formed the natural overflow from the lake and flowed onwards to its confluence with the Henty River. All building materials for the hydro scheme were transported along this sinuous narrow gauge transport artery which began with a self acting incline haulage way, known as 'Woody Hill haulage', from the valley floor up the western hillside of the Queen valley to the plateau above. It was seven miles from this point to the power station site; the tramway also included a zig zag as an additional feature of interest to the driver of the Krauss locomotive.



*Some cub-scouts from Queenstown pose upon the pipeline maintenance trolley which is standing on a turntable not far from the penstock. The green tarp behind the young boy on the left protects the petrol engine from the elements. The lovely bloom of white flowers on the right is thought to be Christmas Bush. Much appreciated by hikers, such as this happy group, is the timber walkway between the wooden rails. November 2009.*

*Photo courtesy of Kerri Retallick*



Locality plan of the Mount Lyell region, dated 1929, showing the mines, towns, the tramway out to Lake Margaret and the associated hydro scheme.

### Yolande River hydro electric power station

The waters of the Yolande River flowed right past the site of the power station on the way down from Lake Margaret. To be of use for power generation this flow had to be harnessed at its source so a wood-stave pipeline was constructed around the flank of Mount Sedgwick from Lake Margaret.

The lake end of the 48-inch diameter pipe was built into the natural rock constriction which backed up the water; so no dam wall was necessary as yet. Then it ran, falling 45 feet

on an even gradient, for 7250 feet to the top of the penstock which overlooked the valley below. Two steel pipes of 29 inch diameter, the penstock, provided a static head of 1100 feet dropping the water down to the turbines in the power station. This building was built of concrete and housed four Boving pelton wheels coupled to AGE 1200 Kw alternators with an output of 6600 volts three phase AC. A marble switchboard graced the wall of the control room.

Two 6.6 KV wooden-poled transmission lines ran cross



country to a substation near the works at Queenstown. Electricity was distributed to the reduction works, mine and the towns of Gormanston and Queenstown. The Lake Margaret scheme was commissioned in November 1914 at a cost of £164,000.

### **The pipeline**

Douglas Fir, imported from Canada, was the timber used for the staves that formed the pipe from the lake to the penstock. A special profiling tool machined the longitudinal edges of the staves to the required angle so they fitted snugly together in a circular shape. Once assembled on location each length of new pipe was bound by circular metal hoops spaced several inches apart; these were screw tightened to firmly bind the staves together forming a watertight homogeneous whole.

A steel railed tramway shadowed the pipe's route for construction purposes. In some places this tram was carried on a high steel trestle bridge or cut into the side of a vertical cliff. An incline haulage tram, laid beside the penstock, accessed the ridge and up this steep ascent went all the staves and other materials for the pipe's construction brought in from Queenstown.

### **Expansion of the generating plant**

The success of the scheme was immediately apparent. In 1918 another two turbines were commissioned in the power station. Lake Margaret's storage capacity was also increased by raising the level of the lake 20 feet. This was achieved by a concrete dam wall 650 feet in length. An additional penstock was also built and a further turbine was added in 1930.

With the introduction of electrified 2ft gauge rail haulage underground at the North Lyell mine tunnel and additional crushing plant to cope with an increased tonnage of ore, the Lower Power Station was built and was commissioned

in 1931. This was situated one mile further downstream and contained one 1500 Kw 7000/8000 volt Metropolitan Vickers Alternator driven by a 2800hp Boving-Francis turbine. This arrangement was remotely controlled by the operator from the Upper Power Station.

Once again wood was chosen as the preferred material for the pipeline, 6500 feet in length, from the dam across the tailrace of the Upper Power Station down to the penstock of the new installation. The 42-inch wood-stave pipe was made from Karri hardwood from West Australia and it too was shadowed by a construction haulage way. An electric winder lowered the trolleys of material down this tram to the worksite. The combined capacity of the two hydro-electric power stations was 9500hp continuous or 11,500hp at peak load.

However, by the late 1940s with further expansion of Mount Lyell's reduction works plant and additional electrical equipment at work in the West Lyell open cut mine, the Lake Margaret scheme was unable meet the power demands placed upon it so additional electricity was purchased from the State's Hydro-Electric Commission grid.

### **Decline then resurrection**

In 1984 the Tasmanian Hydro-Electric Commission purchased the Lake Margaret scheme although a leasing arrangement allowed Mt Lyell to continue operating the plant. Twelve months after its centenary year of 1993 the Mt Lyell Mining and Railway Company closed its copper mine. Engineering and metallurgical consultants from Copper Mines of Tasmania Pty Ltd studied the feasibility of reopening the mine. They were sufficiently confident to recommence development work underground and the mine went back into full production two years later.

On 12 December 1994 the Lower Power Station ceased generating, but the Upper Power Station soldiered on until



*As if the West Coast rainfall was not high enough an additional ten per cent of precipitation, by way of spectacular geysers of Lake Margaret water, fell upon the bush land at many locations along the route of the original pipeline. Hydro Tasmania based its decision to close the Upper Power Station upon this unique spectacle. Lake Margaret itself lies just beyond the middle ridge. 17 February 2006. Photo: Nick Anchen*



*This location was known as 'the crossover' and is where the steel tram rails passed beneath the original pipe towards the lake end of the tramway. Headroom was very restricted hence the warning sign. The ferns are thriving from the copious leakage of water from the King William Pine pipe.*

*Photo: Nick Anchen*

1 July 2006 when it too was closed. A reason put forward for this action was the extremely poor physical condition of the wood-stave pipeline. It was estimated that 10 per cent of the water therein was lost through leakage in the form of spectacular water spouts, of varying intensity and height, at regular intervals throughout its sinuous course. The associated spray had the ability to drench any passing hikers or fishermen on their way to the lake. Wedges made of King William Pine were gently tapped into splits in the pipe in an effort to stem the leaks but it was a losing battle.

This pipe enjoyed a long life though: it had been replaced with King William Pine in 1938 as a native conifer substitute for the original imported Douglas Fir which had only endured for a relatively short life of 24 years'.

On 18 March 2007 Hydro Tasmania hosted a 'Back to Lake Margaret Day' with the closed power station opened for inspection. Some historically minded West Coast residents became concerned about the future of this iconic power generation site amid threats of demolition. The mayor of the West Coast Council, Daryl Gerrity, applied for and was granted heritage listing for the Lake Margaret power stations. The West Coast Community Liaison Group, the Heritage Council Works Assessment Committee and the Hydro Tasmania Working Committee explored all possibilities as to the future use of the site.

A decision was reached in June 2008 to redevelop the Lake Margaret infrastructure back to operational capability at a total cost of \$14.7 million. The question of a viable alternative to the wood-stave pipeline was studied in detail, but surprisingly positive cost considerations decided in favour of constructing a new wood-stave pipe similar to the original that had endured the internal flow of water and the external onslaught by the West Coast weather for 68 years'.

### **Pipeline restoration and the associated tramway**

Simple economics decreed that a timber pipe was the preferred option over steel or fibreglass construction. Nevertheless, the cost was still going to be \$9.5 million. The International Tank & Pipe Company of Clackamas, Oregon, USA was awarded the contract. This company specialises in industrial tanks and pipes manufactured from timber.

The company's owner, Mike Bye, flew to Tasmania to inspect the work site. No doubt he felt an affinity with the exposed highlands of Lake Margaret and the similar winter conditions of snow and rain in the mountain regions of Oregon! On completion of his site inspection and discussions with Hydro Tasmania engineers he returned to Oregon to place orders with sawmills for timber staves made from Alaskan Yellow Cedar. Usually his company would use Douglas Fir timber treated with creosote, but this option was not acceptable to Hydro Tasmania, taking into consideration the wilderness area through which the pipe travelled. Nevertheless, the cedar softwood promises a life of 40 years before maintenance is necessary and is easily obtained and considerably cheaper than the only other timber alternative, Redwood.

The kiln dried wood staves average 13 feet in length and the longitudinal edges are profiled tongue-in-groove. 43 staves make up a pipe diameter of 4 feet. About 22,000 steel bands tightly bind the staves together along the entire length of the pipeline. A galvanised steel cradle supports the pipe up off the ground, or above gullies, along the route. A special work platform is positioned on top of the cradle at places of great height as a safety precaution and convenient workplace for the workmen.

The actual assembly work was undertaken by a Tasmanian contractor, Hazell Brothers, whose workers were instructed by Kent Huschka of International Tank & Pipe. Work began on 21 May 2009 from the half way point of the pipe's route.





**Above:** A short distance from the dam wall of Lake Margaret the new pipe purloined the original right of way of the steel railed tramway. Here the pipe's galvanised steel support cradle traverses the top of the old tramway trestle, bypassing the preserved section of the now 74 year-old King William Pine pipe, on the left. The timber bridge walkway is for the use of pedestrians on their way to the lake. Photo courtesy of Kerrie Retallick.

**Right:** The vivid colour of the Alaskan Yellow Cedar contrasts sharply with the drab green of the native shrubs. The wood staves were fitted together by tongue-in-groove and formed into a circular shape over internal formers. Note the galvanised steel support structure which in some locations over gullies was many metres in height. Circular steel bands, to be fitted later, bound the staves tightly together. 31 May 2009. Photo courtesy of Michael Griffiths.

**Below:** Two very different types of material transportation, tramway and pipeline, sit harmoniously together; both are manufactured from renewable natural material – wood. Additional steel bands, stacked beside the tramway, will be shortly added to the pipe's circumference for additional strength against the internal gush and flow of Lake Margaret water on its way to the penstock. 31 May 2009. Photo courtesy of Michael Griffiths.





At first, consideration was given to using the old penstock haulage tram. To this end an overhead monorail unloading arrangement was constructed at the crest of the haulage but the decision was then made to bring in all materials by helicopter direct to the worksite. A road had accessed the power station and settlement since 1964 when the tramway, by now truncated at the Zeehan Highway above Queenstown, was closed.

A helicopter was not used exclusively to move materials to a worksite: the shadowing maintenance tramway, which had been 'upgraded' from steel rails to hardwood rails in the mid 1980s, ran astride a wooden pedestrian walkway. These rails, probably Tasmanian Oak (eucalyptus) were 100mm by 100mm in size and the track gauge was about 800mm. Another upgrade occurred in 1996 when treated timber was substituted. For the new pipeline reconstruction, any rotted sections were cut out and replaced by 100mm by 50mm treated pine.

A four wheeled motorised trolley, fitted with a detachable Honda petrol engine, was used to convey loads to the worksite. This contraption was quite unusual: a chain connected the gearbox drive to a sprocket on the axle; there was only one forward gear and neutral. The operator walked behind the trolley holding a long handle with which he could reach the gear lever to shift it in or out of gear. This little distance also kept him away from the engine's exhaust fumes, an unpleasant intrusion upon the pure mountain air. The throttle was affixed on the engine itself.

Although only of limited capacity, the trolley was still a far superior conveyance than bodily carrying bags of cement or other heavy items. The typical West Coast weather – rain or snow – could, however, make traction difficult on uphill sections when the wooden rails would become slippery. On such occasions the Honda engine's horsepower output required additional assistance with the help of some manpower to surmount the grade.

At one time four turntables were incorporated into the route of the tram for turning the trolley but latterly only three are in use – one at either end and one in the middle. In the 1970s the trolley undertook an unusual duty. A director of Consolidated Goldfields Limited, who was afflicted with polio, wished to visit Lake Margaret so an arrangement was made to convey him by trolley out to the dam.

Another form of transport was also used, that of two-wheeled bicycle. The maintenance employees travelled the tramway route by bike on their routine inspection trips of the pipeline.

Today the tramway only goes out about three quarters of the way to Lake Margaret, terminating at a location called the 'crossover' which is where the original steel rail tram 'ducked' beneath the old pipeline. From here the new pipe continues along the old tram formation towards the dam, even running along the top of a high steel trestle bridge at one point.

The Tank and Pipe Company supervisor, Kent Huschka, said of the finished pipeline: 'It looked beautiful before the bands went on... It was this white thing that snaked across the country. It glowed in the evening, but then we had to put the bands on and it turned black.'

### **Lake Margaret – the scheme reborn**

The Premier of Tasmania, David Bartlett, officially reopened the refurbished Upper Power Station on 12 November 2009. Its electrical output was 50 gigawatt hours and this supplied the copper mine at Queenstown.

Hydro Tasmania then decided to refurbish the Lower Power Station and its attendant pipeline. International Pipe and Tank of Oregon again supervised the construction, undertaken this time by a different Tasmanian company, Shaw Contracting. Some 91,000 lineal metres of Alaskan Yellow



*The tramway en route to the dam at Lake Margaret. Resembling a fat black snake, the new pipeline can be seen slithering its way along below the tramway. Mount Geikie (1154 metres) stands proud in the left background while Lake Margaret is just around the corner, to the right, behind the ridge which rises up the slopes of Mount Sedgwick. 31 May 2009. Photo courtesy Michael Griffiths*





Seen on 17 February 2006, the eastern concrete wall of the refurbished Lake Margaret Power Station prominently displays the construction date of 1914. A few original homes of the station's operators can be seen in the background. These now stand empty facing an uncertain future. Photo: Nick Anchen

Cedar went into the 1.4 metre diameter, two kilometre long pipe, bound tightly together by 11,000 circular steel bands. This project cost \$13.2 million but it also included a new fibreglass penstock and the installation of a new 3.2 megawatt 'mini-hydro' plant.

The Lower Power Station was officially reopened on 23 July 2010 by the State's Energy and Resource Minister, Bryan Green. The hydro-electricity now generated at Lake Margaret was sufficient to provide 60 per cent of the Queenstown copper mine's requirements. The original lower tramway haulage and winder have been preserved and a new elevated viewing platform erected so visitors can behold the old and new power stations.

As a tribute to its long life, three short sections of the original King William wood-stave pipe have been preserved at the site and it will be interesting to see how the imported American substitute compares with the native Tasmanian timber over time.

Speaking in 2009, the State Premier, David Bartlett said that by bringing an 'energy icon' – Lake Margaret – back on line, Tasmania's renewable energy base would be considerably enhanced. Timber was the other renewable resource utilised – wood-stave pipe and wooden tramway – making the whole scheme environmentally sustainable and 'eco friendly' as it is fashionable to say today. The West Coast Council's Lake Margaret 'pipe dream' has become reality.

## Acknowledgements

The author wishes to acknowledge the generous assistance of Peter Reid and Geoff Steele of Queenstown.

## References

1. Blainey, Geoffrey; *The Peaks of Lyell*, 1954. First edition page 58.
2. Years of operation for North Lyell railway: 1897 – 1928; Mt. Lyell railway: 1897 – 1963.
3. Coke was also a fuel in the smelter furnaces; it was shipped from the company's coke ovens at Port Kembla, NSW.
4. Mainwaring Ross; *Elrington, The Peter Pan Colliery 1927–1962*, Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc., 2009.
5. Four Dübs & Co (built 1896, 1898 & 1901) and one North British Locomotive Company (built 1938)
6. Abt rack tank locomotives worked the railway. They each weighed 24 tons.
7. In 1907 140 fire wood cutters were employed out of a total company workforce of 2080.
8. *The Mineral Industry, its Statistics, Technology and Trade*, Edited by Walter Renton Ingalls, 1907. There were some 29 steam boilers in use at this time about the works.
9. The town of Great Falls, Montana, is beside the Missouri River where several waterfalls, the Great Falls of the Missouri, impede the natural flow of the river. Dams were built at these obstacles (the first was Black Eagle Dam in 1890) to generate hydro-electric power for the copper mining industry's smelters located beside the river and also the copper mines situated as far away as Butte, Montana.
10. Blainey, Geoffrey; *The Peaks of Lyell*, 1954, First edition page 222.
11. The lake's total surface area was 325 acres.
12. The present mining company has laid a pipe up the haulage way easement out to their new tailings dam situated in a valley beyond Queenstown's airport.
13. In later years, four wheel petrol and diesel locomotives were used as well as a rail motor. These provided a passenger service for the power station employees and their families who lived in the company houses at the isolated settlement of Lake Margaret.
14. Whitham, Charles; *Western Tasmania: A Land of Beauty and Riches*, 1949 page 156.
15. Bradshaw, Noeline; *Lake Margaret*, The Galley Museum publication, Queenstown.
16. Also known as Oregon. It is the State tree of Oregon, USA.
17. Whitham, Charles; *Western Tasmania: A Land of Beauty and Riches*, 1949, page 157.
18. Ibid, page 156.
19. The West Lyell open cut worked a large low grade copper deposit from 1935 to 1972.
20. Blainey, Geoffrey; *The Peaks of Lyell*, 1967, Third edition page 316. In 1964 Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Co. Ltd. became a subsidiary of Bitumen and Oil Refineries (Australia) Limited [Boral]. In the latter half of the same year Boral sold its shares to Consolidated Goldfields Limited of London [1993, Fifth Edition, page 333]. At the time of its closure the mine was operated by Renison Goldfields Consolidated Limited. This company was once partly owned by MLM&R Co. At this period Renison was half owned by Consolidated Goldfields Limited of London. It also operated an underground tin mine at Renison Bell on the West Coast of Tasmania. In 1998 Copper Mines of Tasmania went into administration and was acquired by Monte Cello SV which became a subsidiary of Sterlite Industries (India) in 2000.
21. *The Sunday Examiner Magazine*, 11 April 2010.
22. Bradshaw, Noeline; *Lake Margaret*, The Galley Museum, Queenstown.
23. The use of King William Pine had been rejected in 1913 because of a 'lack of uniform density' in the timber. Often called King Billy Pine (*Athrotaxis selaginoides*).
24. *Heritage Tasmania*, 23 November 2009.
25. *The Sunday Examiner Magazine*, 14 June 2009.
26. Ibid
27. Ibid
28. Ibid
29. For full details of this tramway see the book *A History of Railways and Tramways on Tasmania's West Coast* by Lou Rae, 1983.
30. Interview with Mr. Geoff Steele, Queenstown.
31. Ibid
32. *The Sunday Examiner Magazine*, 14 June 2009.
33. *The Advocate*, 13 November 2009.
34. The mine is part of the Vedanta group of companies (India). All copper concentrates are exported to the Tuticorin copper smelter in India. Ore reserves are listed as 9.5 million tons at a 1.25% grade.
35. *The Sunday Examiner Magazine*, 11 April 2010.
36. *The Mercury*, 24 July 2010.
37. Ibid
38. *Western Herald*, September 2010.
39. Other short sections have been donated to various Tasmanian museums.
40. *The Advocate*, 13 November 2009.
41. Hydro Tasmania owns three other wood-stave pipelines in the State.



# Industrial Railway NEWS

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

## QUEENSLAND

**MSF SUGAR LTD, Mulgrave Mill, Gordonvale and South Johnstone Mill**

(see LR 222 p.21)

610mm gauge

The following locomotives from the former South Johnstone/Babinda combined fleet were observed parked up at Babinda Mill in late December:

1	JOSEPHINE	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	A1821	1957	
10	RUSSELL	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	A2027	1958	stabling shed – multi pair
2	GOONDI	0-6-0DH	Clyde	55-56	1955	
3		0-6-0DH	Clyde	56-90	1956	stabling shed – multi pair
4	HARVEY	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	AD1138	1960	loco shed
11		0-6-0DH	Clyde	55-64	1955	stabling shed
13		0-6-0DH	Clyde	59-203	1959	stabling shed
15		0-6-0DH	Clyde	66-491	1966	stabling shed
16		0-6-0DH	Clyde	56-96	1956	loco shed
38		0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	AH4695	1965	loco shed on blocks

Tamping machines also present were the Plasser KMX-06 from Mulgrave Mill (98 of 1975) in the truckshop and the Tamper SVT-JWL from South Johnstone Mill (4375739 of 1979) in the stabling shed.

All the ex-Mulgrave 4-tonne bins that had been moved to the Babinda mill site have now been shifted to the old Goondi Mill site. At Mulgrave Mill there is still another rake of old out of use 4-tonne bins.

At Mulgrave Mill, Clyde 0-6-0DH 13 *HIGHLEIGH* (64-316 of 1964) was on the poison train in the period leading up to the Christmas break.

Work is under way to enable cane from Babinda north to be crushed at Mulgrave in 2012. Mulgrave Mill's Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 5 (A1005 of 1955) was working track material trains south to Deeral during December. Some of the former Babinda Mill sidings are being extended and rearranged and couple of creek bridges are getting new piers.

The Thai company Mitr Phol Sugar Corporation Ltd, which holds 22% of MSF Sugar shares,

confirmed a takeover offer on 16 November, valuing the company at \$313m.

Carl Millington 12/11; *Fraser Coast Chronicle* 8/12 2011

## PROSERPINE CO-OPERATIVE SUGAR MILLING ASSOCIATION LTD

(see LR 222 p.23)

610mm gauge

Following the second failure of a shareholders' vote to approve the sale of the mill to Sucrogen, the mill was put into voluntary administration on 6 November with Sucrogen reportedly asking for the return of a \$15m loan and major creditors Westpac losing patience in the sale process. COFCO increased its bid to \$122m on 7 November and offered finance to cover the debts to Sucrogen and Westpac, but this offer was refused. Following talks with the rival bidders, on 16 November, administrators Korda Mentha accepted Sucrogen's offer of \$120m plus the mill's normal operating costs and capital expenditure from 31 October. COFCO increased its offer to \$128m on 18 November but was told this was too late. With approval for the sale required from the creditors rather than the shareholders, Sucrogen clinched the deal by purchasing Westpac's debt of \$65m to ensure that it had the numbers at the creditors' meeting, which gave approval for the sale on 9 December. *Courier-Mail* 5/11/11 & 10/12/11; *Mackay Daily Mercury* 8/11/11; *Sydney Morning Herald* 16/11/11; ABC National Rural News 18/11/11; *Australian Financial Review* 21/11/2011



*Farleigh Mill triple header. With both the Hampden loops full, the train hauled by Walkers B-B DH NETHERDALE (699 of 1972 rebuilt Walkers 1997) proceeds over Sivyers Hill with the assistance of Clyde 0-6-0DH multi-pair PALMYRA (63-273 of 1963) and PLEYSTOWE (64-321 of 1964), 8 October 2011.*

*Photo: Hayden Quabba*





**Above:** The top of the Inkerman mill yard extends underneath the south end of the massive Burdekin River Bridge at Home Hill. Here EM Baldwin B-B DH BOJACK (7280.1 9.77 of 1977) leaves with empties as Com-Eng 0-6-0DH KOOLKUNA (AM4993 of 1965) pushes up full bins on 20 November 2011. Photo: Luke Horniblow  
**Left:** Inkerman Mill's EM Baldwin BOJACK prepares to pick up a full rake from Pemples siding, 5 November 2011. Photo: Hayden Quabba  
**Below:** Comparison of a late model Baldwin bogie loco with its Westfalia successor. Invicta Mill's EM Baldwin B-B DH BURDEKIN (10215.1 7.82 of 1982) heads in towards the mill with fulls, passing Westfalia B-B DH STRATHALBYN (13863.1 8.91 of 1991) on empties at Majors Loop, 6 November 2011. Photo: Hayden Quabba



# Industrial Railway NEWS

## SUCROGEN (HERBERT) PTY LTD, Herbert River Mills

(see LR 222 p.24)

610mm gauge

Macknade Mill finished crushing for 2011 on 29 October with the last Macknade cane being sent over to Victoria Mill until the crush finished there on 31 October.

Locomotives getting new engines this slack season are Victoria Mill's Walkers B-B DH *VICTORIA* (599 of 1968 rebuilt Tulk Goninan 1994), Clyde 0-6-0DH *LUCINDA* (65-436 of 1965) and Macknade Mill's EM Baldwin B-B DH 20 (7070.4 4.77 of 1977). 20 had been dismantled down to the frame for a complete refurbishment by mid-November. The structural components including the frame were then sent to David Gianotti's "Advanced Aqua Blasting" in Ingham for blasting and painting. This is the process followed with EM Baldwin bogie locomotives that have been refurbished and fitted with Series 60 engines over the last couple of years. Previously, the blasting and painting was done in-house. The complete dismantling of *LUCINDA*

was well advanced in the Victoria Mill loco shed by Christmas.

Victoria Mill's preserved Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 *HOMEBUSH* (1067 of 1914) was used for the mill social club Christmas party on 3 December.

The old cab of Victoria Mill's Walkers B-B DH

*CLEM H McCOMISKIE* (605 of 1969 rebuilt Walkers 1991) is still to be seen in Ingham Industrial Estate at the premises of G&N Solari, who installed a new cab in 2004.

Steven Allan 10/11; Chris Hart 10/11, 11/11, 12/11; Luke Horniblow 12/11



**Top:** Very nicely turned out with a new cab in the Victoria Mill shed on 27 December 2011 is EM Baldwin B-B DH *GOWRIE* (7135.1 7.77 of 1977) with its Solari brake wagon. Photo: Luke Horniblow **Above:** The surface of the Haughton River provides a perfect mirror for gathering clouds in the early morning as Invicta Mill's Walkers B-B DH *GIRU* (593 of 1968 rebuilt Tulk Goninan 1994) heads out with another rake of empties on the long run south of the mill on 20 November 2011. Photo: Luke Horniblow





**Top:** Pioneer Mill's 1067mm gauge Walkers B-B DH JERONA (647 of 1970) kicks up the dust as it heads towards the mill with its rake on 6 November 2011. Photo: Mitch Zunker **Centre:** The remains of two ex-QR DH-class used by Cooks Construction in Victoria await the possibility of rebuilding at Tully Mill on 27 December 2011. They are (L-R) ex-CC01 (586 of 1968) and ex-CC03 (643 of 1970). Photo: Luke Horniblow **Above:** Inkerman Mill's Com-Eng 0-6-0DH KOOLKUNA (AM4993 of 1965) heads a rake of cane across the road at Osborne Junction on 6 November 2011. Photo: Hayden Quabba

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

### AQUILA RESOURCES LTD

1435mm gauge

This company has received conditional Federal Government approval to build a new heavy-haul railway from its proposed iron ore mines in the west Pilbara to a proposed port at Point Anketell, east of Dampier. The line will cross a Rio Tinto branch near Pannawonica and the main line near Karratha.

David Bromage 11/11; <http://www.aquilaresources.com.au>

### BHP BILLITON IRON ORE PTY LTD

(see LR 222 p.25)

1435mm gauge

Electromotive Canada Model SD70Ace Co Co DE 4301 *BING* (20038540-02 of 2005), badly damaged in a derailment on 28 May, was ready to return to service on 19 December following repairs. GE Model AC6000CW Co-Co DE 6070 *PORT HEDLAND* (51062 of 1999) had suffered a badly bent frame and was cut up at the accident site.

Brett Geraghty 12/11

### THE PILBARA INFRASTRUCTURE PTY LTD

(see LR 222 p.25)

1435mm gauge

The five GMEMD Model SD9043MAC Co-Co DE conversions for Fortescue Minerals from Juniata Workshops, Altoona, Pennsylvania, arrived at Port Hedland on 30 November on heavy lift ship *BBC Congo*. Unloading began the next day and was completed by 3 December. The locomotives, numbered 905 to 909, were each road hauled on a 116 wheel float to the FMG Rowley Yard for commissioning.

WA *Railscene* e-mag 168

### PILBARA RAIL

(see LR 222 p.25)

1435mm gauge

From 27 to 29 November the latest six General Electric ES44DCi Co-Co DE locomotives, 8166 to 8171, were unloaded at Dampier from heavy lift ship *BBC Congo*. Each complete locomotive was road hauled on a 116 wheel float to the 7 Mile workshops.

It is understood that the eight former Robe River Model CM40-8M Co-Co DE locomotives stored at Parker Point since 2009 have been sold and will be taken to Perth by road for overhaul. They are:

9410	Com-Eng	C6096-05	1975	reb Goninan	202	1996
9414	Goodwin	G-6060-05	1971	reb Goninan	124	1991
9417	Alco	6010-01	1970	reb Goninan	083	1989
9420	Alco	3486-04	1967	reb Goninan	119	1991
9421	Com-Eng	C6101-01	1977	reb Goninan	137	1993
9423	Com-Eng	C6116-01	1980	reb Goninan	126	1992
9424	Alco	6010-4	1968	reb Goninan	084	1989
9425	Goodwin	G-6041-04	1970	reb Goninan	085	1989

In preparation for the move, 9414 and 9420 were taken from the storage area and moved to the 7 Mile wye at Dampier for fuel and oil removal on about 20 November.

Four CM40-8M locomotives are still in use on Robe River operations with two used as shunters at Cape Lambert as shunters and the other two at Mesa J Pannawonica.

These locomotives are periodically exchanged attached to iron ore trains and are:

9411	Goodwin	G-6060-02	1971	reb Goninan 125	1992
9418	Alco	3846-02	1967	reb Goninan 118	1990
9419	Alco	3846-02	1967	reb Goninan 117	1990
9422	Com-Eng	C6101-02	1977	reb Goninan 138	1993

No buyers were found for the two ex BHP Iron Ore Model C36-7 Co-Co DE locomotives that were only used by Rio as shunters and transfer locomotives and these will be scrapped at Dampier. They are:

5051	Goodwin	G-6035-02	1969	reb Goninan 072	1987
5052	Goodwin	G-6041-02	1970	reb Goninan 073	1987

Comparative trials will soon be carried out with prototype large ore cars, the Q-class from Qiqihar Railway Rolling Stock Co Ltd and the B-class from Bradken (with car bodies also built in China). These are of aerodynamic design, similar to the FMG ore cars. They are designed for a gross capacity of 164 tonnes, beyond the current Rio line's capacity, but will be required in future years as mines with lower grade ore come on stream. In the meantime they will be limited to 144 tonnes. It is expected that hundreds of cars will be ordered following the trials.

A new passing loop has been installed at Falcon, 8km south of Marandoo on the Yandi line, to increase track capacity.

WA Railscene e-mag 163, 164, 165, 166

## OVERSEAS

### FIJI SUGAR CORPORATION

(see LR 222 p.26)

610mm gauge

On 2 November, Rarawai's Hunslet 6wDH 20 (9087 of 1982), hauling a train of about 30 empty trucks towards Tavua, collided with the side of a

bus at the village of Wailailai, north-east of Ba. Some bus passengers suffered minor injuries.

With Fiji Sugar due to take responsibility for cane transportation next year, the Chambers of Commerce at Nadi and Lautoka have made complaints about the congestion caused by road cane trucks during peak travel times. At the same time, Fiji Sugar has again expressed concern about cane trucks and rail being taken by scrap metal thieves.

The expiration of Native Leases has not just been a problem for cane farmers. The Fiji Sugar rail line from Sikituru just south of Nadi to the current terminus of the former Sigatoka line at Batiri has been operated since June 2008 without a valid lease.

While it has been confirmed that the Fiji Government has taken full ownership of the Fiji Sugar Corporation, the government has stated that it does not want to own FSC and wants to see it operating viably and independently within three years.

*Fiji Times Online* 3/11/11, 4/11/11, 23/11/11, 29/12/11; Fiji Broadcasting Corporation 22/11/11, 17/12/11, 29/12/11

### PT FREEPORT INDONESIA, Grasberg Mine, Irian Jaya

(see LR 221 p.28)

The rail infrastructure at the Grasberg mine will include 4 kilometres of surface track at the Ridge Camp rail yard, with facilities for muck tipping, personnel transport, maintenance and freight operations. The 15 kilometres of underground rail will service three terminals of the main mining operations, Grasberg Block Cave, the Deep Mill Level Zone, and Big Gossan. Boring of the tunnels is progressing.

The challenging mining environment for

operations at the estate provide a unique combination of high quality rail, road and military heritage that enables the visitor to "lose yourself in clouds of steam and smoke and imbibe the atmosphere of days gone by".

And the variety of steam on offer – 22 locomotives, traction engines, rollers, a crane engine and Sentinel road wagon – made this week-long event in April 2011 a 'steam heaven' for the visitors (see LR 220, p. 39). Bob Baker and Paul Willemsse from the Bennett Brook Railway and volunteers from the Welsh Highland Railway supplemented local loco crews during the week, and the film covers the links between Sandstone and these preservation groups. Bob and Paul get good coverage in the film, including a segment where they provide Karl, a Belgian enthusiast, with guidance on firing an Orenstein & Koppel 0-4-2T locomotive.

While there was inclement weather during the week, there were many occasions when the trains were bathed in wonderful light and the cinematographers have taken full advantage of these occasions. The film concludes with the finale of the Steam Gala: the operation of four narrow gauge Garratt locomotives on a 32-wagon train and then the stabling of the locos across four tracks in a line with their

## Industrial Railway NEWS

signalling and communications means that in-cab signalling and minimal trackside infrastructure will be used. The rolling stock will incorporate fail safe braking on the maximum grades of 1 in 67.

The main line will be electrified but it appears that the use of some electro-diesel and wire/battery locomotives is contemplated. Rolling stock will include muck wagons for loading from underground chutes and tipping at the surface, personnel cars with a capacity of 60 (4 cars per train), and flatbed wagons to handle container-size loads.

[http://www.irse.org.au/knowledge/local-meeting-presentations/doc\\_download/764-building-a-railway-in-the-clouds-of-west-papua](http://www.irse.org.au/knowledge/local-meeting-presentations/doc_download/764-building-a-railway-in-the-clouds-of-west-papua)

### CORRECTIONS

Only the keenest of eyes appear to have spotted the mistake made in LR 222 in the report about the Adelaide desalination plant tunnels (p.25). Here the description of the tunnels was that they "run parallel 20 metres under sea level." Of course the tunnels actually run 20 metres under the seabed!

Apologies to Stephen Preston in misdating his Fiji photos on p.26 of LR 222. They were taken on 14 October 2011. Also the top photo was taken at Lomolomo, not at Natova which is where the linecar is based about 3km to the south.



## DVD Review

### The 2011 SANDSTONE STEAM GALA

DVD/CD twin pack with 50 minute film by Frameline Film & Television and 'bonus' Photo CD for The Sandstone Heritage Trust. Price \$20 plus postage & packing from Bob Baker at: [sandstone.orders@westnet.com.au](mailto:sandstone.orders@westnet.com.au)

The Sandstone Heritage Trust estate in Eastern Free State, South Africa, is a mecca for narrow gauge and industrial railway enthusiasts, as well as those with other interests. As this professionally produced 50 minute film of the 2011 Steam Gala there highlights, the heritage



crews posing in front. The scene of this train passing the ox-drawn wagon is a highlight.

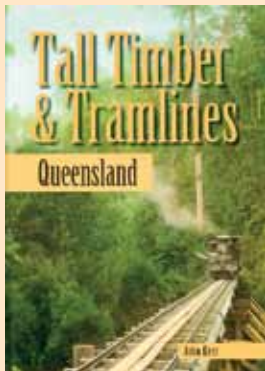
To this reviewer, the Photo CD of the Steam Gala is more than a bonus. The CD contains 190 wonderful photographs by 13 highly accomplished photographers and this alone makes this package a great bargain. Highly recommended.

Bob McKillop



## New from LRRSA Sales ...

### Tall Timber & Tramlines Queensland



By John Kerr

Published by the LRRSA.

Describes all Queensland timber tramways known to the author.

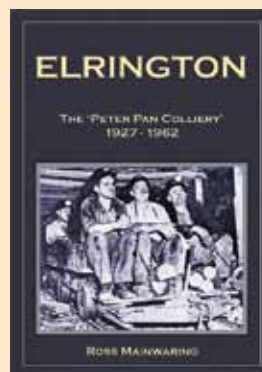
Soft cover, 104 pages, A4 size  
90 photographs, 28 maps and diagrams,

References, bibliography, and index.

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

### Elrington

The 'Peter Pan Colliery' 1927 — 1962



By Ross Mainwaring

Published by the LRRSA.

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

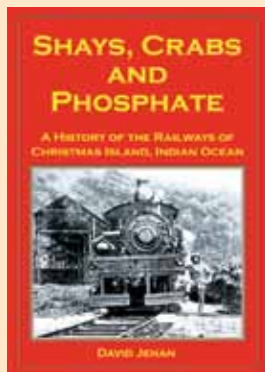
Soft cover, 96 pages, A4 size  
64 photographs, 9 maps and diagrams,

References, bibliography, and index.

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

### Shays, Crabs and Phosphate

A History of the Railways of  
Christmas Island, Indian Ocean



By David Jehan

Published by the LRRSA.

Soft cover, 136 pages, A4 size

Over 160 photographs, 14 maps  
and diagrams,

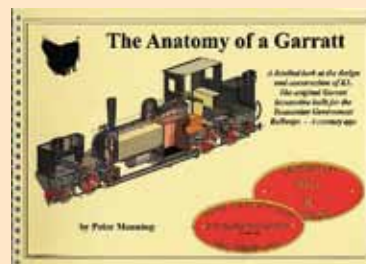
References, bibliography, and index.

Price \$33.00 plus postage  
(\$24.75 to LRRSA members)  
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### The Anatomy of a Garratt

A detailed look at the design and construction of K1.  
The original Garratt locomotive

Published by Peter Manning Design & Drafting



64 pages, A4 size  
landscape, card cover  
spiral bound, about  
350 illustrations.

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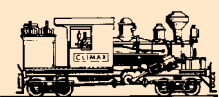
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- If joining in February or March, pay \$16.00 (\$21.67/\$25.67 overseas) and receive 2 issues of *Light Railways* (Nos 224-225).
- If joining in April or May, pay \$56.00 (\$75.83/\$89.83 overseas) and receive 7 issues of *Light Railways* (Nos 225-231).

Join easily on our website: [www.lrrsa.org.au](http://www.lrrsa.org.au)

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

I,  
(full name of applicant)

of

(address)

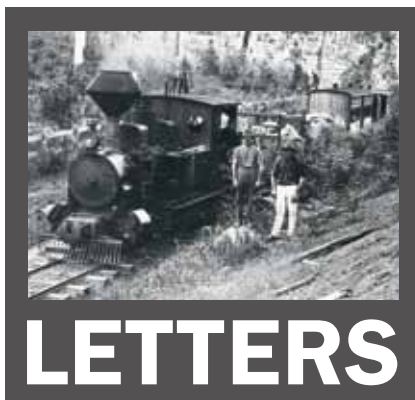
(postcode)

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

Expires . . . . .

Name on Card

Signature



Dear Sir,

## QUESTIONS OF IDENTITY

### The Southport-Burleigh road construction tramway, LR 213

Bruce Macdonald has questioned the identification of the 2ft 2in gauge steam locomotive at G & J Dowrie, South Brisbane, in 1924 that was owned by the Queensland Public Estates Improvement Branch.

In Queensland government records, the locomotive is identified as built by Airdrie Iron Works, which means that it came from the Mount Morgan mine in central Queensland. Bruce points out that the photograph of this locomotive, reputedly taken in about 1902, shows it to be in dismantled condition, and so it is rather unlikely to have been seen as a viable prospect in 1924. Very little is known about the Airdrie but it is said to have seen stationary use latterly, for pumping water at Stanwell.

Artesian water was pumped from Stanwell (now Neerkol) Creek by the Mount Morgan Gold Mining Company in connection with the running of water trains to Mount Morgan during the drought of 1902-1904, although a photograph taken at some point during this period shows a pump powered by a vertical boilered steam engine.<sup>1</sup> The power of the diminutive Airdrie locomotive might seem a little small to load a train with 17,000 gallons of water in an hour, a daily total of up to 200,000 gallons per day being required.<sup>2</sup>

There was another 2ft 2in gauge steam locomotive used at Mount Morgan, Chapman & Furneaux 1144 of 1897, an 0-4-0ST with 4-inch cylinders, which most likely replaced the Airdrie locomotive. Chapman & Furneaux were the successors to Black, Hawthorn of Gateshead in England, and this was their first locomotive. It carried the plates of agents Bolling & Lowe and is said to have been still in use at Mount Morgan in 1910.<sup>3</sup>

Further research is needed to discover when steam haulage ceased on the 2ft 2in gauge at Mount Morgan, but a 2ft 2in locomotive with 4-inch cylinders was advertised for sale by G & J Dowrie in October 1921.<sup>4</sup> While the cylinder diameter on the Airdrie locomotive could also have been 4 inches, it seems quite feasible that a misinterpretation of records at Mount Morgan had led to confusion and that the locomotive that was

in South Brisbane by 1921 was actually the Chapman & Furneaux. Both locomotives were inside-framed, potentially making regauging to 2ft difficult.

Banks Ltd advertised for sale a 'practically new' 2ft gauge steam locomotive in 1935.<sup>5</sup> Allowing for advertiser's licence, given that the company had taken over tramline equipment from the Queensland Public Estates Improvement Branch in 1925, it seems distinctly possible that the Chapman & Furneaux was the locomotive in question. Having possibly been used by Banks on a variety of construction jobs, by 1935 it would probably have been regarded as obsolete for this type of work.

1. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/153911911>
2. *Morning Bulletin* (Rockhampton) 6 November 1925, p.11 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article55243147>
3. Ellis, RF, 1979. Miniscale "Miner" in *Stack Talk* No.79. Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society. Here it is stated that the plates say 'Bolling & Lovett'.
4. *Brisbane Courier* 21 October 1921, p.9. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article20493803>
5. *Courier-Mail* 9 November 1935, p.23 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article35933338>

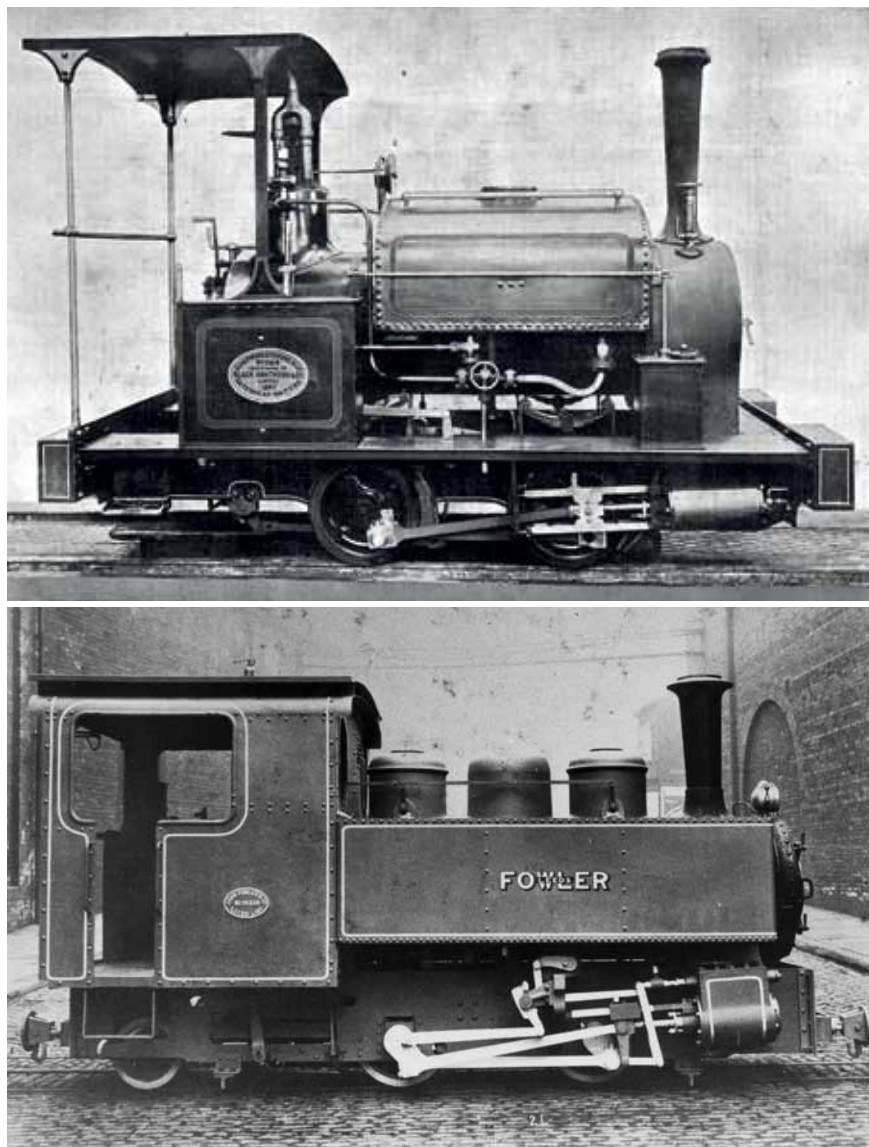
### Tully Mill Fowlers

For the opening of their new Tully sugar mill in 1925, the Queensland Government ordered five 2ft gauge 0-4-2T locomotives from John Fowler & Sons (Leeds) Ltd. These were builder's numbers 16337 to 16341 of 1924. They have been recorded as numbers 1, 3 *FELUGA*, 2, 4 & 5 respectively. Two of them survived to be preserved, with both being at the Lachlan Vintage Village at Forbes in the period 1974-1986.

Some confusing information has been published about their identities in LRRSA publications but now thanks to Bruce Macdonald, some clarification and correction is possible.

Bruce's records show that 16341, number 5, which had been 'preserved' at the mill, was obtained by him and delivered to the Goulburn Steam Museum on 3 July 1972. This locomotive went to the Lachlan Vintage Village at Forbes on 19 March 1974. It was obtained from Forbes by Warwick Turner of Echuca at the auction of 1986.

The second Tully Fowler at Forbes was 16339, number 2, which had been 'preserved'



**Top:** Chapman & Furneaux 1144 builder's photo with Chapman & Furneaux plates fitted. **Photo:** John Browning collection **Above:** John Fowler 16339 builder's photo. Alterations made at the mill included the insertion of additional water tanks inside the cab and the provision of a rear bunker. **Photo:** University of Reading Museum of Rural Life, courtesy Richard Horne



in a park at Cardwell. It was obtained by Bruce and sent directly to Forbes, arriving there on 13 October 1973. This locomotive was refurbished and operated at Forbes from 1978. It was obtained by the Goulburn Steam Museum (later the Marsden Weir Steam Museum) at the 1986 Forbes auction and also operated there. It was purchased from there in 2000, supposedly by one Laurence Voulter, and is now with Brian Boase at Daylesford, Victoria.

John Browning  
Annerley, Q.

Dear Sir,

**Locomotive INNISFAIL, (LR 222)**

In relation to the photo of DL 13 INNISFAIL on page 18 of *Light Railways* 222 (December 2011), the caption mentions that it was scrapped in 1994. I would just like for those that are not familiar with my collection to know that at least the cab still survives, with a much shortened engine bonnet. I have it set up with a transformer so that the lights work and my grandsons love 'driving' it.

Clive Plater  
Eudlo, Q.



*The mortal remains of former Innisfail Tramway DL 13 INNISFAIL (Baguley/RMP 3391 of 1954).*  
Photo: Clive Plater

Dear Sir,

**The locomotive 'Tom Thumb' (LR 158)**

I recently discovered evidence that clearly demonstrated that the John Fowler and Co locomotives forwarded to Brooks and Co in the early 1880s were actually forwarded to Cuba, not Australia. That information has apparently been forwarded to Britain, where efforts have been redoubled to try and learn more about the firm's locomotives that were sent to Cuba.

Following on from that development, it was indicated to me that it was suspected that despite the fact that it was clearly built as a prototype by an unknown outside firm for John Fowler and Co, locomotive 3788 (which was originally sold to Cuban sugar concern, Casas Aulet in 1879) was seemingly later forwarded to Australia where it became 'Tom Thumb' at Botany. The connection appeared to be one Captain JV Lane, perhaps an Australian mariner.

After some dogged research, I believe that because of the strong chain of events that has emerged, I have managed to link JV Lane to the arrival of 3788 in Australia and also established the path that it followed to get to this country.

Circumstantial evidence points to 3788 not having been returned to the factory when the locomotive was returned to her maker by Casas Aulet prior to mid-1882. Instead it appears highly probable that the locomotive was only sent as far as Boston, where the family of deceased Fowler customer, Augustus Hemenway had continued to manage its Cuban business interests, which included at one stage a shipping line that operated between Cuba and Boston.

The barque, *Glenfalloch* departed Boston for Brisbane, Queensland on the 6th of June, 1882 under the command of one Captain John Lane.<sup>1</sup> The vessel had arrived at Boston by mid-April 1882 after departing Port Phillip on New Year's Day 1882.<sup>2</sup> The *Glenfalloch* arrived in Brisbane (via Launceston) on the 3rd of November 1882.<sup>3</sup> There is, however, no suggestion that 3788 was ever used in Queensland.

With Lane still in command, the *Glenfalloch* departed Moreton Bay "in ballast" for Newcastle on the 1st of December 1882.<sup>4</sup> Only a little over four months after Lane's arrival in Newcastle, a small steam train that operated on the principle of the merry-go-round operated on a small circular track at a major Hunter Valley social event.<sup>5</sup> A very similar arrangement followed at a pleasure gardens near today's Bondi, before 3788 finally found a "permanent" home at Botany as 'Tom Thumb' in late 1884, after John Fowler & Co Sydney arranged for the supply of the appropriate type and length of rails for such an operation.

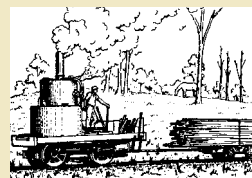
Given that 3788 was clearly a prototype and that fellow Cuban locomotive 'Little Beauty' of 1879 is believed to have been of 1ft 8in gauge, it is my opinion that there is a very good chance that 'Tom Thumb' was one and the same locomotive as the 1ft 8in gauge locomotive that was advertised repeatedly for sale in Sydney in early 1899 along with five carriages/trucks and track, by TM Goodall and Co.<sup>6</sup>

Ron Madden  
Wagga Wagga, NSW

1. *Brisbane Courier*, Tuesday 12 September 1882 – p4
2. *The Argus*, Wednesday 19 April 1882 – p5
3. *The Queenslander*, Saturday 11 November 1882 – p668
4. *Brisbane Courier*, Saturday 2 December 1882 – p4
5. *Maitland Mercury*, Tuesday 10 April 1883 – p4; and Saturday 21 April 1883 – Supplement.
6. *Sydney Morning Herald* – series of advertisements – 14 March 1899 to 22 April 1899.

**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"!



**LRRSA NEWS**

**MEETINGS**

**ADELAIDE: "Desalination plant railways"**

The main subject of the February meeting will be the tunnel lines associated with the desalination plant. Contributions are invited on any light railway topic, and suggestions of topics for future meetings are welcome.

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

**Date:** Thursday 2 February at 8.00pm.

Contact Les Howard on (08) 8278 3082

**BRISBANE: "Dave Rollins' Travels"**

The February meeting will feature slides by David Rollins taken on his past overseas visits.

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

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

**Date:** Friday 10 February at 7.30pm. Entry from 7pm.

**MELBOURNE: "Oschatz-Mügelin-Kemmlitz, narrow gauge steam in Saxony"**

Frank Stamford will introduce a video-tape dating from 1993 showing 75cm gauge 0-4-4-0 Meyer tank locomotives working on a 17.6 km long line in Saxony, Germany. The line is a remnant of a 107 km system, and the video includes historic footage of the last regular passenger train in 1975. Transporter trucks are used to carry standard gauge wagons, and the loading procedure of these is shown. Also views in the loco cab, double-heading, a special passenger train, and some entertaining cameo scenes (which will be even more entertaining if you understand German!).

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

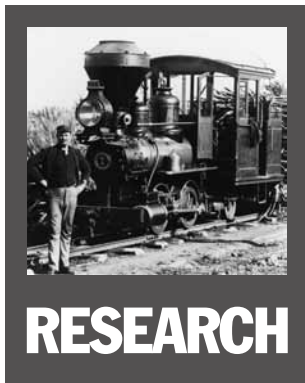
**Date:** Thursday, 9 February at 8.00pm

**SYDNEY: "The Ali-Shan forest railway"**

David Jehan will be presenting photos of his 2006 visit to the Ali-Shan forest railway in Taiwan. A narrow gauge railway that starts in pineapple plantations and ends in snow!

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

**Date:** Wednesday 22 February at 7.30pm



## EXPORT OF HERITAGE LOCOMOTIVES FROM AUSTRALIA

The demand for locomotives by preservation groups overseas, particularly those that served on Australian sugar cane railways, has often generated controversy. The 2011 Spring issue of *Expert Examiner*, the newsletter of the Cultural Property & Gifts section Australian Government's Office for the Arts provides an interesting report on some recent examples. In September 2011 the Minister for the Arts refused the export of a 'Moore Road Machinery' diesel-hydraulic locomotive which was found to be a significant Class B Australian protected object under Part 4 of the National Cultural Heritage Control List'. It is understood that this is the only Malcolm Moore purpose-built cane locomotive, built for Victoria Mill (DH-112-GT-1.56 of 1956). The other items described in the article are two Marshall road locomotives, a Marshall traction engine, a John Fowler stump puller and a J & H McLaren traction engine.

The review states that the National Cultural Heritage Committee recommended against their export, noting the Malcolm Moore locomotive and rare engines should be kept in Australian collections to illustrate Australian history. It added that the locomotive's future already looks hopeful and the rare engines have been matched with community groups that have associations with them.

## RED HEAD (GLENROCK) RAILWAY, Newcastle

Recent excavations to improve the drainage behind the changing sheds at Merewether Baths (Newcastle) have unearthed a section of formation with sleepers from the Red Head (or Glenrock) Railway, which has been the subject of a number of recent articles in *Light Railways*. The line closed in

1945 and the rails were lifted the following year. The archaeological remains were photographed by David Barrow of the Merewether Historical Society and the hole was refilled and paved over with the relics left undisturbed.

*John Shoebridge*

## MAROOCHY SHIRE COUNCIL TRAMWAYS: Mapleton and Buderim

It appears that films were made in the early 1920s of the Mapleton and Buderim Tramways on Queensland's Sunshine Coast. All efforts to locate a copy of either film has so far been fruitless. If any reader has any knowledge about the location of footage from either film, could they please contact Ms Jacqui Burgin at the State Library of Queensland (07) 3840 7817, or the editors.

## PIONEER AUSTRALIAN LIGHT RAILWAYS

Jim Longworth and Phil Rickard are currently researching light railways in Australia prior to opening of the government mainline railways from 1854. The Early Railways History Group of The Railway and Canal Historical Society describe such lines as 'early railways'. In summary, the researchers are seeking information on railways that were pre-mainline in concept if not necessarily in time. To date they have identified at least 40 lines. Would anyone with any material or leads on such early railways please contact them care of judylongw@gmail.com, or Jim on 9876 4369 (h).

*Jim Longworth*

## RAILWAY CRANES IN AUSTRALIA

A group of enthusiasts in the United Kingdom have been working on a list of surviving railway cranes around the world and are seeking assistance from individuals able to assist with the Australian section. A preliminary list is on the International Steam Site at: <http://www.internationalsteam.co.uk/cranes/cranesaus.htm>

The group is seeking corrections and additions to this list, including non railway gauge cranes of a reasonable vintage that are in preservation, including quayside cranes and fixed base cranes. They are particularly looking for Australian updates, but if you can help out with cranes elsewhere, this would also be most welcome.

Sources of information regarding the history of specific cranes, such as material available through Trove, will also be of great assistance. Some current specific Australian queries are:

**1. BHP Port Whyalla:** photographs and information regarding the giant cantilever (hammerhead) fitting out crane (150 ton lifting capacity) built by Clyde Engineering 1941-43 – steelwork lost at sea 1942 (ship/date?), replacement steelwork by Goninan, Newcastle (1942?); and the large breakdown type crane bought from Cravens Bros in 1938 and later fitted with a large lattice jib by BHP.

**2. Burnie:** photographs and information regarding the breakwater blocksetting cranes at this port. From 1887-90 a Ransomes & Rapiers machine was used; from 1913-18 a machine built by Salisbury Ltd, Launceston, was in action; and a Stothert and Pitt crane was in service from 1949-52. The latter crane was then used for general port handling work.

## 3. Commonwealth Railways No.

**4:** photographs and information regarding this standard gauge, 30 ton, steam breakdown crane by Booth, Leeds (works no. 2712 of 1913. Imported via Agents - Jas. A Watts, London).

*Chris Capewell*

## ASSISTANCE WITH PHOTOS

Ian Cutter writes: I have recently been making electronic backups of my colour slides. There are a couple of examples where I would like to know more than the bare date and location recorded at the time. Any information would be appreciated.

**Strahan, 27 January 1961.** I came across this jetty during the same early-morning walk that led me to an abandoned railway station, presumably West Strahan. Was the 'light railway' on the jetty connected to the outside world, or did it have its own captive rolling stock? Is it still there?

**Erica, 20 July 1963.** These wagons appear to be in use, yet I thought the railway closed in the 1950s. Who was using the wagons, and for what purpose?



*Early morning scene at Strahan on the west coast of Tasmania on 27 January 1961.*

*Photo: Ian Cutter*



*Ian Cutter's photo of loaded railway wagons at Erica on 20 July 1963. Can any reader assist Ian with his request?*





## Heritage & Tourist

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

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

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

## NEWS

### Queensland

#### WORKSHOPS RAIL MUSEUM, Ipswich 1067mm gauge Queensland Museum

On 5 November 2011, Rachel Nolan, Minister for the Arts, announced that the Workshops Rail Museum has scooped the pool at the 2011 Queensland Tourism Awards, winning both the Heritage & Cultural Tourism award and the Tourist Attractions award. The prestigious annual awards ceremony, organised by the Queensland Tourism Industry Council, celebrates and recognises the outstanding business practices and contributions operators make to the state's tourism industry. Minister Nolan said: "The Workshops play a big role in preserving our rich rail heritage and sharing it with visitors from far and wide. Tonight's awards confirm their reputation as a key tourist attraction that supports the local economy and jobs."

Museum media release, 5 November 2011

#### DURUNDUR RAILWAY, Woodford

610mm gauge

#### Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society Inc

During the ANGRMS work day at the Durundur Railway on 12 November the concrete floor for their first ever inspection pit was poured. The original plan of taking

the concrete truck through the shed to the pit site fell apart when there was a mix up with the order and the requested smaller truck could not be provided. This meant wheel-barrowing five cubic metres of concrete from the far side of the loco shed to the pit site.

In order to provide back-up motive power when former Pleystowe Mill 0-6-2T 5 (Bundaberg Foundry 5 of 1952) is withdrawn from service at the end of December for re-tubing, it was decided to overhaul ex-Marian Mill 6wDM *NETHERDALE* (Bundaberg Foundry 13 of 1954). A team of volunteers started the loco and took it for a trial run during the work day on 12 November. While *NETHERDALE* still requires considerable work to get it into operational condition, the test run showed that this loco can in fact be used as a back-up for the 0-4-0DM *GEMCO* (George Moss 1965), which gave the team a good morale boost.

Terry Olsen, 11/11

#### NAMBOUR MUSEUM

610mm gauge

#### Nambour & District Historical Museum Inc

A visitor to this museum site in early December 2011 found that a shelter had been erected over the former Moreton Mill 0-4-2T *BLI BLI* (John Fowler 14418 of 1914) now located near the former mill site (LR 220, p. 34) to facilitate restoration work.

Luke Horniblow, 12/11

#### SUNSHINE PLANTATION,

Nambour

610mm gauge

#### Big Pineapple Corporation P/L

Updating the report in LR 213 (p. 34), this tourist complex was closed in 2010 and work to restore the facilities commenced in October 2011. Paul Zeibath, the architect and manager of the Northey Street Markets in Brisbane has been appointed as general manager and is overseeing the rejuvenation project. Stage 1 of the project includes re-establishing the produce markets, restoring the plantations and orchards, "specialist fixing of the tourist train", restoring and fixing The Big Pineapple itself, and a general clean-up of the whole complex. The group is working closely with the Queensland Heritage Council on the restoration of the Big Pineapple feature.

*Sunshine Coast Daily*, 17 October 2011, via John Browning

#### ACLAND COAL MINING MUSEUM

610mm gauge

#### New Hope Corporation Ltd

From 1896, the Acland Coal Mining Museum was developed by John and Kath Greenhalgh on the site of the pithead facilities of Acland Colliery. With the prospect of a massive new open cut coal mine being developed in the area, the museum passed to the Rosalie Shire Council in 2000. As the township of Acland slowly died with the advance of mining, the

museum was closed in 2006 and came into the ownership of the Toowoomba Regional Council in 2008.

New Hope Corporation acquired the property in mid 2011 and although the historic surface infrastructure will not be saved, some significant items will be transferred to a proposed Acland Heritage Precinct at Jondaryan Woolshed. These include the two intact 4wDM diesel locomotives (Jenbach 1137 of 1952 and Bundaberg Foundry 16 of 1955), which are currently located under cover on site at Acland.

Andre du Preez (new Hope Group) 12/11; John Browning, 12/11

#### BURRUM & DISTRICT MUSEUM, Howard

610mm gauge

#### Burrum & District Heritage Society Inc

The collection of the Torbanlea Mining Museum has been relocated to the Burrum & District Museum in Howard, and some of the buildings were moved from Torbanlea to Howard in August 2010. On display outside the museum building at Howard with two wooden bodied skips is Bundaberg Foundry 4wDM 5 *RUSTY* (19 of 1956) which was previously displayed indoors at Torbanlea as part of a mining exhibit. This significant item appears to have received little attention since the closure of Burgowan No.13 Colliery in 1977.

John Browning, 12/11



*The ex-Marian Mill 6wDM NETHERDALE (Bundaberg Foundry 13 of 1954) being given a trial run on the Durundur Railway on 12 November 2011 prior to overhaul as a back-up locomotive.*

Photo: Terry Olsson



## AUSTRALIAN SUGAR CANE RAILWAY, Bundaberg

610mm gauge

### Bundaberg Steam Tramway Preservation Society

Following a lengthy period of constructive negotiations over accreditation between the ASCR and the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads, an official from the Department advised that it was unlawful to run trains without rail safety accreditation during the running day on 30 October and operations were promptly terminated. This unexpected action generated a good deal of negative comment in the local media, with the Member for Bundaberg, Jack Dempsey, stepping in to arrange for a visit to the site by rail safety inspectors, which occurred on 7 November. Outstanding matters were resolved and trains resumed operations on Sunday 20 November.

Both John Fowler 0-6-2T *INVICTA* (11277 of 1907) and Orenstein & Koppel 0-4-0WT *GERMANY* (6805 of 1914) were available to work trains over the Christmas holiday period. Work on the overhaul of Bundaberg Foundry 0-4-2T 3 (3 of 1952) has reached the stage where the locomotive is completely stripped down and the boiler has been removed for some remedial work to be carried out before a new smokebox is fitted. *GERMANY* will then be overhauled.

The track extension project outlined in LR 201 (pp 26-27) is substantially complete with the main work required being the construction of a road level crossing. It is hoped that it will be opened during 2012.

*NewsMail* 4, 8 and 17 November 2011; John Browning, 12/11

## ARCHER PARK RAIL MUSEUM

1067mm gauge

### Rockhampton Regional Council

A 'Family Fun Day' at the museum on 30 October brought a large crowd of visitors and featured a good range of stall holders. The Purrey steam tram ran without a hitch throughout the day. It was withdrawn from service on 27 November for its annual maintenance and boiler check and is scheduled to return to service on 12 February 2012. The museum also hosted a dinner on the platform for 275 Lions Club Convention attendees. There was very positive feedback from the group on the venue.

*Tram Tracks*, Vol 5:6, December 2011

## New South Wales

### MENANGLE NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY

610mm gauge

### Campbelltown Steam & Machinery Museum

Updating the report in LR 221 (p. 34), the advice that Ray Graf's ex Maritime Services Board 'Green Simplex' (Motor Rail 20560 of 1955) had 'gone to the Alexandra Tramway in Victoria' was somewhat premature. The transfer actually occurred over the weekend of 5-6 November 2011 when a team of volunteers from the ATTM arrived at Menangle with a truck to transport two locomotives, rolling stock and two Northeast Dundas Tramway bogies to Victoria.

On arrival at Menangle, the truck

was parked at the end of the new track, which was raised to allow for the locomotives and rolling stock to be driven up and winched onto the truck and float. First up was the former Plane Creek Mill 0-4-ODM (John Fowler 18801 of 1927), which had been sold to Stefan Rebgetz, as it was too wide for the loading gauge at Menangle and the narrower cab of the ex-Condong Mill 0-6-ODM Fowler (16830 of 1926) now nearing a return to service (LR 221, p. 33) is more suited for operations there. This was followed by the 'Green Simplex' and two whole-stick cane wagons for the Alexandra Timber Tramway, and the NE Dundas Tramway bogies for Stefan.

Carl Hopkins, 12/11

## ILLAWARRA TRAIN PARK,

Albion Park

610mm gauge

### Illawarra Light Railway Museum Society Ltd

As 2011 came to an end, the ILRMS and its volunteers looked back on with pride in their achievements during the year. Overall, railway operations and the development of attractions for visitors were successful with pleasing results in all areas.

In addition to the ILRMS traditional second Sunday running days, a number of special activities were held during the year, namely the combined Wings Over Illawarra rail-bus shuttle activities in association with HARS, Kids Fest activities, the Camp-fire Cooking Challenge and the Tongarra Train Fest.



Bundaberg Foundry 4wDM 5 RUSTY (19 of 1956) and coal skips on display at the Burrum Museum, Howard, in December 2011.

Photo: John Browning



The boiler from the Bundaberg Fowler 0-4-2T locomotive (3 of 1952) on a wagon outside the depot in the North Bundaberg Botanical Gardens awaiting the attention of a specialist welder.

Photo: John Browning



The highlight of 2011 was the Bendigo Community Bank sponsored Tongarra Train fest on 13 November. This event saw all the ILRMS locomotive fleet in action, together with activities by local community groups ranging from vintage cars and farm machinery to camp fire cooking. The ILRMS also had displays for visitors to the site, including the former CSR Victoria Mill's Drewry inspection car (Baguley 1338 of 1924), the restoration of which had reached the stage where its beautifully restored body was presented in its finished livery.

Locally-based politicians in attendance were Steven Jones, Federal Member for Throsby, and

Kellie Marsh, mayor of Shellharbour City Council, who made life memberships presentations to ILRMS volunteers John Garaty and Richard Demaagd in recognition of their services to the society. Restoration works on the former NSWGR LFA Passenger car that has served as the ILRMS canteen and souvenir shop were completed for the Tongarra Train Fest event. Site works around the Illawarra Train Park during the year included yard and ground care, main-line track maintenance, and locomotive and rolling stock maintenance and restoration. Among the latter, restoration of the former CSR Victoria Mill Drewry inspection car

is slowly coming to its conclusion, with the unit scheduled to re-enter service on the February 2012 running day. The steam locomotives and stationary boilers were shut down at the end of November for their annual inspections.

The society will celebrate its 40th birthday in February 2012. It is planned to make this event a rewarding milestone of works and operations for past and present volunteers. It has been 41 years since ILRMS foundation member Tony Madden called the public meeting in December 1971 that led to the birth of the society in February 1972. A range of special events is planned for 2012, with

## Heritage & Tourist

the Tongarra Train Fest scheduled to return in August.

Brad Johns, 12/11

### Victoria

#### PUFFING BILLY RAILWAY

762mm gauge

**Emerald Tourist Railway Board**

Good progress has been made in recent months with the restoration of the Climax locomotive (1694 of 1928). By Christmas the cladding and lagging on the boiler had been completed, the cab had been fitted and painted, and the valve gear was fitted. As this project nears completion, the ERTB Board has approved the commencement of gauge conversion and restoration of ex-South African Railways 2-6-2+2-6-2 Garratt NGG16 No.129 to operating condition. With funding for the project being provided by the Puffing Billy Preservation Society, ETRB and a private investor, the loco was moved into the Puffing Billy workshops at Belgrave in November for the commencement of work. Orders have been placed for the new axles to enable gauge conversion from 610mm to 762mm gauge and machining of the wheel sets was scheduled to commence after Christmas.

*Australian Railway Magazine* Dec-Jan 2011-12; *PBR Monthly News* 462, January 2012

#### BELLARINE PENINSULA RAILWAY

1067mm gauge

#### Geelong Steam Preservation Society

The former Broken Hill Associated Smelters 0-6-0T *POZIÈRES* (Andrew Barclay 1543 of 1919) transferred to the BPR from the Puffing Billy Railway's Menzies Creek Museum in September 2009 (LR 210, pp 36-37) has been restored to operating condition. The Puffing Billy Railway Committee was on hand to see the superbly restored locomotive formally returned to service on Saturday 29 October 2011. *POZIÈRES* was one of four Andrew Barclay industrial tank locomotives that worked at the Port Pirie smelters, which were named after World War I battles. It was withdrawn in 1964.

Editor 11/11, from web posts and Michael Chapman



Following its sale to Stefan Rebgetz, the former Plane Creek Mill 0-4-0DH (John Fowler 18801 of 1927) is loaded on a truck at the Menangle Narrow Gauge Railway on 5 November for transport to the Menzies Creek Museum in Victoria.  
Photo: Carl Hopkins



0-6-2T TULLY 6 (Perry Eng 7967/49/1 of 1949) heads a passenger train during the Tongarra Train Fest at the Albion Park Light Railway on 13 November 2011.  
Photo: Daniel Demaagd



## ALEXANDRA TIMBER

### TRAMWAY

610mm gauge

### Alexandra Timber Tramway & Museum Inc

As reported under the Menangle Narrow Gauge Railway, the ex-Maritime Services Board 'Green Simplex' (Motor Rail 20560 of 1955) and two whole-stick cane wagons formerly owned by Ray Graf were transferred to Alexandra on 5-6 November 2011. Former Plane Creek Mill 0-4-ODH (John Fowler 18801 of 1927) now owned by Stefan Rebgetz is currently stored at the Menzies Creek Museum on the Puffing Billy Railway. Stefan plans to remove several modifications and new body panels will be constructed to original plans that have been provided from the United Kingdom. When the locomotive is restored to its original condition, the intention is to move it to Alexandra for operation there. Cosmetic restoration of the Malcolm Moore rail tractor (C.396 L47-2) commenced in August 2011 and the upper sides of the loco had received at least one coat of paint by early December 2011. Further restoration to running order is dependent on the availability of volunteers to tackle the task. The status of the Alexandra Market increased significantly during 2011 and it now draws stallholders from all over the state. The visitors it attracts have provided a boost to the ATTM railway operations.

*Timberline* 122, December 2011; Peter Evans, 12/11

## South Australia

### COBDOGLA IRRIGATION & STEAM MUSEUM

610mm gauge

### Cobdogla Steam Friends Society Inc

The Cobdogla Steam Friends Society (CSFS) has introduced Wine & Dine evening events during the summer months following a successful trial run on Saturday 10 December. Despite threatening weather, the rain held off until after the event and the participants had an enjoyable evening. They travelled by train from the museum to the end of the line, where they enjoyed wine and food with a nearby vineyard as a backdrop. These evenings are scheduled on a monthly basis until March (and from October) with trains departing from the museum at 1800 and 1830 for the event (see Coming Events



*John Conway photographed the beautifully restored 0-6-0T POZIÈRES (Andrew Barclay 1543 of 1919) back in action on the Bellarine Peninsula Railway on 28 October 2011.*



*The inaugural Wine and Food Train at Cobdogla on 10 December 2011. The lead 'Simplex' 4wDM is Motor Rail Farleigh 7369 of 1939.*

*Photo: Denis Wasley*



*John Kramer photographed former the Mt Lyell Railway 0-4-2T Abt loco No. 2 (Dübs B/N 3594 of 1898) at the front of the Tasmanian Transport Museum; carriage shed at Glenorchy on 2 October 2011.*



for details). A number of gourmet caterers have expressed interest in providing the food, and the drinks on offer will be expanded to include beer from a local boutique brewery and fine coffee.

2011 has been a good year for the CSFS with an increase in passenger numbers and only small routine maintenance being required on the locomotives and rolling stock. Steam locomotive 0-4-OST *MARGARET* (Bagnall 1801 of 1907) is scheduled to be stripped down following the running day on 8 January for a full boiler inspection. This will involve removal of the cabin, saddle tank and cladding so the boiler can be inspected for the first time since

its recommissioning in 1988. It is hoped to repaint the loco as it is reassembled.

Denis Wasley, 12/11

## Tasmania

### TASMANIAN TRANSPORT MUSEUM, Glenorchy

1067mm gauge

A visitor to this museum on 25 September and 2 October 2011 found an interesting array of well-presented industrial locomotives on display. Of particular interest to *Light Railways* readers are the B class Climax geared locomotive (1653 of 1923) that worked at Simsville in NSW and then at Maydena, Tasmania;

the Markham & Company 1889 vertical-boilered locomotive; the ex-Mt Lyell Mining & Railway Company 0-4-2T Abt rack loco No. 2 (Dübs 3594 of 1898); the ex-ERZ Risdon works 0-4-ODM shunter (Ruston & Hornby 284836 of 1950, LR 213, p. 37); and a Wolseley rail-mounted inspection car used on the Emu Bay Railway. The Markham and rack locomotives are stored under cover, while the Climax is displayed in the open and the 0-4-ODM serves as the museum's shunting locomotive. The museum is open from 1300-1700 on Sundays, with trains operated on the first and third Sunday of the month. Ex-TGR 4-6-2

## Heritage & Tourist

M5 and railcar DP26 alternate in running trains from the former New Town station along a short section of track parallel to the TGR line behind the local football ground.

John Kramer, 10/11

### WEST COAST PIONEERS MEMORIAL MUSEUM, Zeehan

610/1067mm gauge

#### West Coast Heritage Authority Limited

A visitor on 28 September 2011 found a number of improvements in terms of presentation over the situation in early 2010 (LR 213, p37). The undercover area displaying many of the locomotives has been cleaned up and better interpretative signs have been provided for several exhibits. These includes former Mount Lyell Mining & Railway Company 0-4-OWT No. 8 (Krauss 5480 of 1906), two ex-Mt Lyell underground electric locomotives and a small 4wBE loco. Among the better preserved exhibits is the 1922 Daimler railcar, once used by the Mt Lyell Company's general manager to travel on the railway. Also housed undercover is the ex-Renison Tin Mines 0-4-OWT (Krauss 4087 of 1899, incorporating parts of 5800 of 1906), but it presents a sad sight from the effects of 18 years of exposure to the elements in a Devonport park.

A large amount of railway equipment is piled around the outdoor area, evidently including a number of items from Hydro Tasmania sites. The quantity of material appears to be well beyond the capacity of the museum to provide even basic conservation and the vagaries of West Coast weather are rapidly taking their toll. The ex-Pasminco Rosebery Mine Gemco 5-tonne 4wBE locomotive *Suzanne* and V-hopper wagon displayed on track, which are depicted in pristine condition on page 159 of the 2010 *Australian Railway Heritage Guide*, was in a badly rusted state.

This fascinating museum continues to struggle in terms of funds and human resources, despite the efforts of the current management to enhance the displays after a period of neglect.

John Kramer, 10/11; Ross Mainwaring 12/11



*This impressive display of an Eimco rail bogger being worked underground by a miner is at the West Coast Pioneers Memorial Museum in Zeehan,*

*Photo: John Kramer*



*Former Mount Lyell Mining & Railway Company 0-4-OWT No. 8 (Krauss 5480 of 1906) displayed at the West Coast Pioneers Memorial Museum. Ex-TGR 2-6-0 C1 is in the background.*

*Photo: John Kramer*

**DON RIVER RAILWAY,  
Devonport** 1067mm gauge  
**Van Diemen Light Railway  
Society Inc**

Our reporter and his wife visited the DRR on 29 September. It has a very well appointed railway museum and workshops, all built up from nothing. It is a tribute to the work of many at the VDLRS over many years. Parts of the huge workshop, opened in 1999, are open to visitors enabling them to safely see restoration work being undertaken and the products of these endeavours. Noted in the workshops was the delightful and beautifully restored railcar built for the Mount Lyell Railway by the Riley Engine Company in 1907. It had recently returned to the DVR following a period on display at the National Automobile Museum in Launceston. A number of former TGR locomotives were noted around the turntable, together with ex-QGR/Childers Sugar Mill/Tasmanian contractors 4D9 class 2-4-2T 131 (Dübs 1415 of 1880). Other locomotives of interest to LR readers noted around the workshops were ex-Emu Bay Railway 4-8-0 8 *HEEMSKIRK* (Dübs 3856 of 1900) and former Tasmanian PWD (and Kiama Quarry) 0-6-OT (John Fowler 5265 of 1885). Railcar DP22 and trailer PT3 were operating services to Coles Beach and return.

John Kramer 10/11

## Western Australia

### COLLIE RAILWAY HERITAGE GROUP

This active group is based at the 1898 railway goods shed at Collie. It has restored the former State Electricity Commission Bunbury Powerhouse 0-6-ODH (Com-Eng E1120 of 1956) as its works shunting locomotive. The group was awarded the ATHRA Freight Vehicle Award on 16 October 2011 for its efforts in restoring the former WAGR four-wheel freight van V3960 to pristine condition. The van is located in the area used for the fortnightly markets and has been fitted with a television set, together with an interactive map of all the railway lines, past and present, of the Collie district.

*ATHRA News*, October 2011; *Bennett Brook Railway News* Aug 2011

### KOJONUP TOURIST RAILWAY

1067mm gauge

The efforts of this small community (shire population 2200) to restore a section of the former branch line

## Coming Events

### FEBRUARY 2012

**1-29 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 daily at 0930, 1130, 1330 and 1530 for the 2 hour return journey until 30 April. Cabin accommodation and catering facilities on site. Enquiries: (03) 6298 3110 or <http://idabayrailway.com.au>

**4-5 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.

**4-5 Redwater Creek Steam Railway, TAS.** Narrow gauge steam train operations on the first weekend of every month. Information: [www.redwater.org.au](http://www.redwater.org.au)

**5 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>

**5 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.

**5 Kerrisdale Mountain Railway & Museum, VIC.** Narrow gauge trains operate over scenic railway on the hour each Sunday between 1000 and 1500, with demonstration of steam engines in the museum and workshop tours. Information, phone (03) 5797 0227 or website: [www.kerrisdalemtnrailway.com.au/](http://www.kerrisdalemtnrailway.com.au/)

**7 Cobdolga Irrigation & Steam Museum:** Wine & Dine event from 1730-2130 with a train ride to the end of the line for an evening of wine and food with a vineyard as a backdrop. This event is also scheduled on 10 March. Please phone (08) 8588 2323 for bookings. Twilight narrow gauge train rides with diesel-hauled train on 20 February. Diesel train rides can be arranged on Sundays by prior arrangement at \$4 per person.

**11-12 Alexandra Timber Tramway, VIC.** Market Day on Saturday with trains hauled by a petrol-powered locomotive and steam trains on Sunday for Valentine's Day Picnic from 1000-1545. Diesel-hauled trains on 26 February. Information and group bookings: 0427 509 988.

### MARCH 2012

**3-4 Puffing Billy Railway, Belgrave, VIC.** *Day Out with Thomas* event at Emerald Town station with entertainment for the entire family and 20 minute steam train rides from Belgrave. Also on 17-18 and 24-25 March. Booking essential: (03) 9757 0700 or online: <http://www.puffingbilly.com.au/news-events>

**10-12 Redwater Creek Steam Railway, Sheffield, TAS.** 2012 SteamFest with steam train rides, extensive displays of vintage machinery, traction engines, steam rollers, farm tractors, tractor pulling competitions and demonstrations. Information: [www.redwater.org.au](http://www.redwater.org.au)

**11 Cobdolga Irrigation & Steam Museum:** Narrow gauge steam train rides 1100-1630. Diesel train rides can be arranged on Sundays by prior arrangement subject to crew availability at \$4 per person. For information, phone (08) 8588 2323.

**11-12 Alexandra Timber Tramway, VIC.** Market Day on Saturday with trains hauled by a petrol-powered locomotive and steam trains on Sunday to celebrate the Fowler locomotive's 103rd birthday from 1000-1545. Diesel-hauled trains on 25 February with the Bartram steam engine celebrating its birthday. Information and group bookings: 0427 509 988.

### APRIL 2012

**6-22 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.

**7-9 Alexandra Timber Tramway, VIC.** Easter Gala event with steam trains operating each day with other attractions. Harvest Market Day 14 April with trains hauled by petrol-powered locomotive. Information and group bookings: 0427 509 988.

**7-9 Kerrisdale Mountain Railway & Museum, VIC.** Easter Steamfest with fun for all, including 40 minute return panoramic train journey, fully operational steam museum with full demonstration of all engines (visiting engines), workshop tours, kiosk, luncheon package, panoramic views, treats for the children and friendly volunteers to make your experience one to remember. Bookings essential – contact Jennifer at (03) 5797 0227 or via website: [www.kerrisdalemtnrailway.com.au/](http://www.kerrisdalemtnrailway.com.au/)

**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.

**Note:** Please send information on coming events to Bob McKillop – [rfmckillop@bigpond.com](mailto:rfmckillop@bigpond.com) – or 140 Edinburgh Road, Castlecrag NSW 2068. The deadline for the April issue is 27 February 2012.

between Katanning and Donnybrook as a tourist railway have been given some coverage in *Light Railways* (LR 159, p 31; LR 188, pp 31-32). A visit to this community on 1-2 September 2011 was a highlight of our Western Australian visit in August-September. Situated some 160km north of Albany on the main highway to Perth, Kojonup's small community has developed a remarkable range of tourist attractions that make it an essential stopover on any itinerary.

The award-winning Kodja Place Interpretative & Visitors' Centre tells the story of country Australia as experienced by the local farming community through the traditional Noongar style of storytelling. Built around the theme of 'One Story, Many Voices', Kodja Place includes the farm experience, life on 'the reserve', the heartfelt stories of early settlers, the aspirations of the young and the community's hopes for the future. The associated Rose Garden Maze explores the lives of Noongar, settler and immigrant women in the local area over a century – a moving experience. The Kojonup Town Walk Train features 52 historic and heritage sites, including the 1925 railway station and yard with goods sheds and crane, are all well presented with good interpretative signage.

The Kojonup Tourist Railway is an integral component of the town's tourist strategy. A steering committee was established to save and develop the 12km of track between Kojonup and Farrer in 1991 and the group was granted temporary accreditation to operate a light train – comprising open wagons hauled push-pull by a Mini-Moke and a light Daihatsu 4x4 vehicle converted to hi-railers – for three days during the annual Wildflower Season. As previously reported, the former Perth Zoo road train was acquired by the group in 2001 and it was subsequently decided to convert it to rail operation. The small group of dedicated volunteers has upgraded 11km of track, inserting steel sleepers on a 1 in 8 basis and replacing worn timber sleepers and ATHRA is assisting with its accreditation. A small group of volunteers headed by Ned Radford (president) and John Lewis (operations manager) are working steadily towards their targets and receive great support from the Kojonup Shire Council.

Work continues on conversion of the Zoo train. The locomotive was in the goods shed adjacent to the station



## Heritage & Tourist



One of the three former Perth Zoo road train carriages undergoing restoration and conversion to rail operation at John Lewis' workshop in Kojonup on 1 September 2011. Photo: Bob McKillop



Ned Radford demonstrates the turntable installed at Kojonup on 1 September 2011. It utilises the turntable from one of the former Perth Zoo road-train carriages and will be used to turn the locomotive following its conversion to rail operation. Photo: Bob McKillop



The former Wundowie Charcoal Iron Company 4wDM Simplex (Motor Rail 60s344 of 1967) at the Old Northam Railway Station Museum on 3 September 2011. A small tree has taken root in the works. Photo: Bob McKillop

and an overhauled Perkins 246 diesel engine was ready to be installed, together with the reconditioned hydraulic motor, but two new hydraulic pumps were required. The carriages were being converted and restored at a private workshop. Railway wheels and heavy-duty axles were ready to be installed. The turntables previously used for the road vehicles have found an adaptive use as the base for short turntables to turn the loco and the first of these has been installed near the main carriage shed. The goal is to be fully accredited and operational for the 2012 wildflower season.

Kojonup bills itself as the farm-stay capital of the west — Jacaranda Heights is highly recommended — and a meal at the Gull Service Station dining room is not to be missed. A trip on the tourist railway after September 2012 should be on your agenda, but make sure you leave time for some of the other attractions of this remarkable place.

Editor 10/11

### OLD RAILWAY STATION MUSEUM, Northam

1067mm gauge

This museum, housed at the former 1901 WAGR Northam railway station, has been reduced to Sunday openings between 10am and 3 pm, so the site was only observed from outside. The locomotives and rolling stock on external display are poorly maintained and a considerable quantity of junk is evident. Our purpose was to see the 5-ton 4wDM Simplex (Motor Rail 60s344 of 1967) that had previously worked at the nearby Wundowie charcoal iron and steel plant. The project to construct a blast furnace to produce pig iron using charcoal made from local hardwoods was initiated in 1942 and construction of a pilot plant commenced the following year. The plant commenced production of pig iron to meet the needs of local foundries in 1948. A second larger blast furnace was approved in 1955 and construction of a new charcoal retort commenced. The plant was sold to a private company in 1977 and pig iron production ceased in 1981. The Simplex at the museum is partly dismantled and in poor condition.

Editor 10/11



