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LIGHT RAILWAYS

Australia's Magazine of Industrial & Narrow Gauge Railways



Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc.

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Australia's Magazine of Industrial and Narrow Gauge Railways

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Conversions:

1 inch (in)	25.40 millimetres
1 foot (ft)	0.30 metre
1 yard (yd)	0.91 metre
1 chain	20.11 metre
1 mile	1.60 kilometres
1 super foot	0.00236 cubic metre
1 ton	1.01 tonnes
1 pound (£)	\$2.00 (in 1966)
1 pound (lb)	0.454 kilogram
1 acre	0.4 hectare
1 horsepower (hp)	746 Watts
1 gallon	4.536 litres
1 cubic yard	0.765 cubic metres

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Comment

Your response to the 'new' *LIGHT RAILWAYS* has been extremely gratifying, to say the least. On behalf of John, Bob and myself, and the LRRSA Council, sincere thanks to all of you who wrote, e-mailed and phoned your appreciation.

To each of the 52 (to date) new LRRSA members, a resounding "Welcome". Thanks, also, to the bookshops and societies who've begun to stock our magazine, or who've increased their standing orders, and to those casual readers who discovered Issue 139 at their newsagent or bookshop and thought highly enough of it to keep an eye out for this one.

VR's narrow-gauge Beech Forest Railway holds a special place in the hearts of many enthusiasts and even now, thirty six years after the last train trundled along its decaying track, it seems that passion has not subsided.

With two fine books on the subject currently available, schemes afoot to reopen parts of the roadbed as trails or tourists trolley lines, and the restoration to working order of the Beechy's last operating locomotive, G42, in progress, interest in this enduring little railway certainly remains strong. This issue's feature article, by Rory Sutcliffe, and additional contributions on the subject by Mark Plummer and Bob Whitehead, make this abundantly clear. *Bruce Belbin*

The Light Railway Research Society of Australia 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.

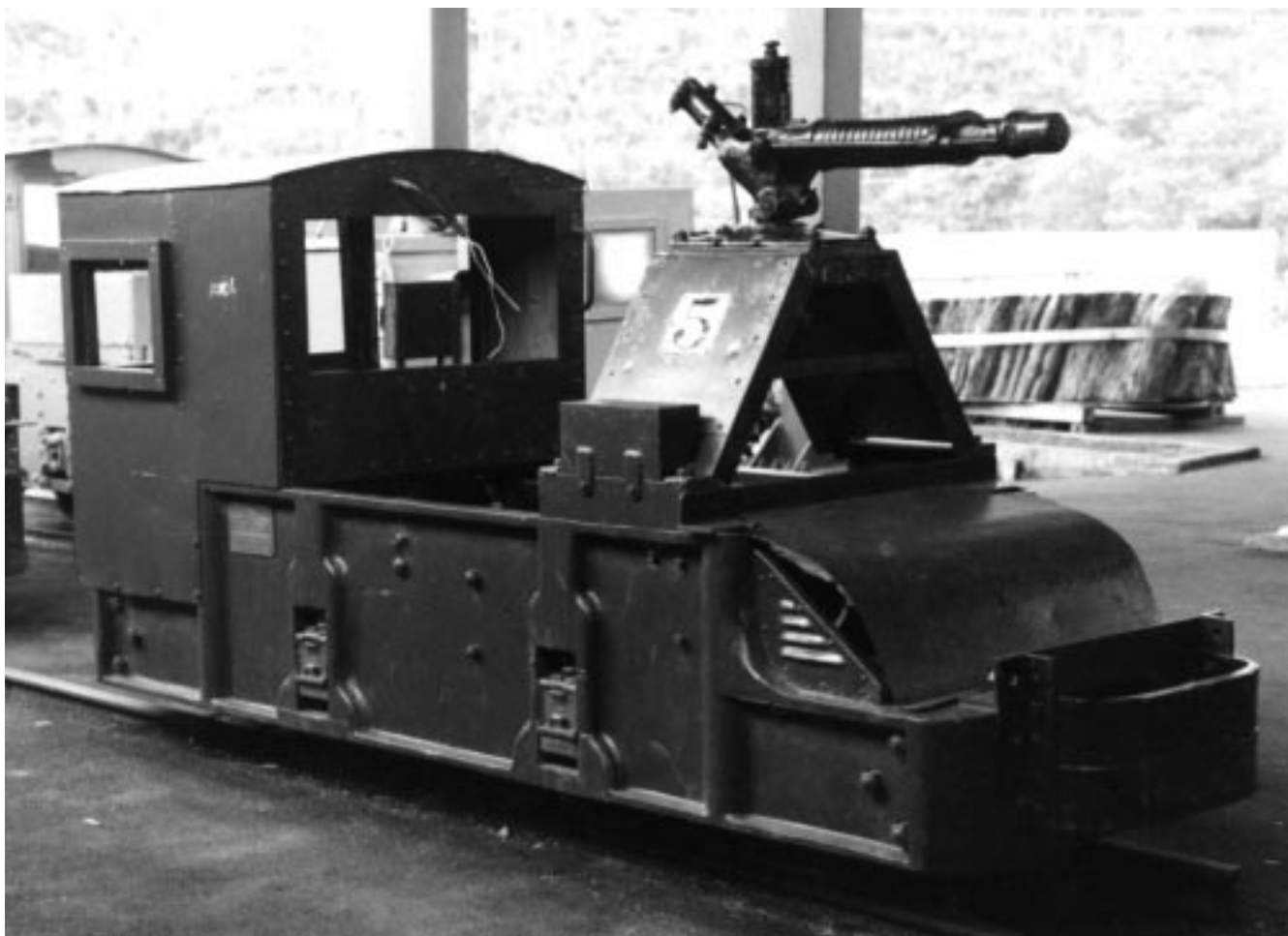
Members are actively involved in researching light railways in libraries and archives, interviewing knowledgeable first-hand participants and undertaking field work at industrial sites and in the forests.

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.

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

Cover: *The Richmond Vale Railway, near Newcastle, NSW, holds the distinction of having been both the first and the last Australian industrial railway to use steam locomotives in regular service. Opening in 1857, it employed an interesting variety of steam locomotives during its 130 year span, including ex-Mersey Underground 0-6-4T locos, and former World War One ROD Robinson 2-8-0s. In the 1970s, as the indigenous motive power began reaching the end of its economic life, parent company Coal & Allied Industries transferred locomotives from other systems to assist. The second of these was South Maitland Railways 2-8-2T No.23 (Beyer Peacock 6056 of 1920) which arrived on 21st March, 1973 and, not long after was captured climbing Blanch's Hill with a train load of Stockrington coal, bound for the Hexham Washery. Photo: Graeme Belbin*



Ex Cornwall Coal Co 1ft 11ins gauge 4wWE 2376 of 1906 in its later identity of Mt. Lyell 5 at West Coast Pioneers Museum, Zeehan, Tasmania, April 2nd 1986. Photo: the late John Buckland

General Electric locomotives for Australia

John Browning

The General Electric Company (GE) was formed in the USA in 1892 through the merger of Edison General Electric Company and Thomson-Houston Company. Both these companies already had a history of involvement with the application of electric traction to rail use. By 1895, GE had built what were then the world's largest electric railway locomotives. Small electric locomotives for underground mining use were a very important but less spectacular part of their production, and the first came to Australia in 1899.

In 1918 GE produced the first diesel locomotives manufactured in the United States, which are believed to have been unsuccessful. For a few years from 1925, GE combined with Alco and Ingersoll-Rand to produce internal combustion locomotives, and after Alco began to produce its own line of locomotives from 1928-9, GE and Ingersoll-Rand continued to market a separate line.

During the 1930's, GE manufactured a wide range of switching (mostly industrial) locomotives, using engines supplied by a variety of manufacturers. In 1940, they entered into a marketing agreement with Alco for larger main line locomotives, an agreement which continued until 1953 with the locomotives carrying the brand "Alco-GE". GE also experimented with main line gas-turbine electrics during the

1940's with 56 units eventually built. In 1953 Alco resumed production of its own locomotive line and in the late 1950's, GE began development of its own main line diesels.

In recent times, GE built a batch of 29 large diesel-electrics for Hamersley Iron in 1995 in collaboration with A. Goninan. Most of GE's locomotive production has taken place at the company's Erie (Pennsylvania) plant, with lighter locomotives produced at the Schenectady (New York State) plant for a period.

Ron Stafford in the USA has a copy of the (very large) General Electric builder's list. Recent correspondence with Ron has revealed the following Australian entries in the GE list. There may be other Australian locomotives, but the list is too extensive for every entry to be checked at this stage. Ron is happy to provide whatever details are on the list in respect to any specific builder's number, so if readers know of any more, they are encouraged to forward them to me (through the Editor) and I will ensure that Ron receives the details. Ron's list does not necessarily provide details of gauge and loco type, although it appears that there must be other information of this kind available, judging by the details obtained by David Mewes about Mount Morgan locomotives. Where included, gauge and type details have generally been added from my records, together with any information shown in brackets.

The Mount Morgan locomotives were featured in LR 99, and the Cornwall Coal unit in LR 105. Perhaps a reader will be able to provide some more detail of the NSW units (which I assume were all 3ft 6ins gauge trolley wire electrics), or provide clues on locomotives not listed here.

GENERAL ELECTRIC CO

Schenectady, NY and Erie, Pa, USA

1498	1899	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q. 1	3 ton
1562	1900	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q. 2	3 ton
1714	1902	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q. 3	3 ton
1869	1903	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	3 ton
2011	1904	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	3 ton
2044	1904	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	3 ton
2218	1905	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	3 ton
2219	1905	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	3 ton
2376	1906	1ft 11ins	4wWE	Cornwall Coal Co, Tas (later Mt.Lyell M&R Co, Tas)	3 ton
2470	1906	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	3 ton
2541	1907	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	3 ton
2542	1907	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	3 ton
2732	1907			Wesport-Stockton Mining Co, NSW	6 ton
2733	1907			Wesport-Stockton Mining Co, NSW	6 ton
2734	1908			Wesport-Stockton Mining Co, NSW	20 ton
2735	1908			Wesport-Stockton Mining Co, NSW	20 ton
2736	1908			Wesport-Stockton Mining Co, NSW	20 ton
2989	1909	3ft 6ins	4wWE	Sulphide Corporation of Australia, NSW (later National Oil,	8 ton
2990	1909	3ft 6ins	4wWE	Sulphide Corporation of Australia, NSW (Glen Davis, NSW	8 ton
3001	1909	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	3 ton
3002	1909	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	3 ton
3167	1910			Wesport-Stockton Mining Co, NSW	10 ton
3475	1911	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	3 ton
4167	1912	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	7 ton
4168	1912	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	7 ton
4366	1913	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	10 ton
4367	1913	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	10 ton
4368	1913	2ft 2ins	4wWE	Mount Morgan Gold Mining Co, Q.	10 ton
4492	1913?			Wesport Stockton Mining Co, NSW	20 ton
5756	1916?			Sulphide Corporation of Australia, NSW	
5757	1916?			Sulphide Corporation of Australia, NSW	
9517	1924			Kandos Cement Co, NSW	8 ton
9518	1924			Kandos Cement Co, NSW	8 ton
17933	1943	Std	Bo-Bo DE	built for US Army Export (later Dept of Supply, St.Mary's, NSW)	44 ton
17934	1943	Std	Bo-Bo DE	built for US Army Export (later Dept of Supply, St.Mary's, NSW)	44 ton
17938	1943	Std	Bo-Bo DE	US War Department (later Dept of Supply, St.Mary's, NSW)	44 ton
17939	1943	Std	Bo-Bo DE	US War Department (later Dept of Supply, St.Mary's, NSW)	44 ton



The left hand unit is 3ft 6ins gauge General Electric 4wWE 2989 or 2990 of 1909, as reconstructed at Glen Davis with new frames built by Thirlwell & McKenzie (Wollongong) in 1946. This 8 ton loco had been supplied new for the Sulphide Corporation, but was purchased by the National Oil Pty Ltd, Glen Davis, in 1940. (The right hand unit was built at Glen Davis in 1947 utilising new frames supplied by Goninan.) State Mine Museum, Lithgow, NSW, October 15th 1994. Photo: Ray Graf



GE "44 Tonner" 17939 of 1943 at the NSW Rail Transport Museum, Thirlmere, in its original guise of USA 7921. Photo: Jim Martin

As far as I can determine it, the last four were USA Transportation Corps 7920, 7922, 7923 & 7921 respectively. The last one is definitely so identified in the GE list, while the first carries the relevant details on the F R Tulk rebuild plate fitted in Perth in 1979. 7920 and 7923 ended up at Christmas Island (9401 & 9402) via the NSWGR, while

7921 & 7922 went via the Woomera weapons station to Commonwealth Railways (DE90 & DE91). These two are now at the Thirlmere (NSW) and Port Dock (Adelaide) railway museums respectively, while the remains of either 2989 or 2990 of 1909 (rebuilt with new frames) are preserved at the State Mine Museum, Lithgow.



"Preserved" standard gauge General Electric Bo-Bo DE 9401 (17033 of 1943) in the process of being engulfed by vegetation at Drumsite school, Christmas Island, Indian Ocean, March 1994. Photo: Greg Stephenson

The Incline at Harnett's Sandstone Quarry - Mosman Bay.

by Jim Longworth and Grant Fleming

Introduction

Mosman Bay is a narrow inlet on the northern shore of Sydney Harbour. The prestigious suburb of Mosman lies to the east and Cremorne to the west. Mosman Bay is nestled between steep opposing slopes that have been eroded out of the massive horizontal sandstone plateau. Beyond the southern end of Harnett Avenue, a low stone jetty projects from the western shore out into the deep tranquil greenish-blue waters. The jetty supports the Sea Scout hall, the Mosman Rowing Club clubhouse, and a flat grassy area. A small brass plaque set in the grass, celebrates the Mosman centenary, proclaiming: "Stone Quarrying - In 1878 Richard Hayes Harnett Sr established a freestone quarry on the hillside above here, which operated until 1889. Stone was transported by winch and rail from the quarry to a wharf located at this site."

Harnett's Quarry

The quarry was opened by Mr. R.H. Harnett around 1878 and was noted for the even whitish color and durability of the sandstone.

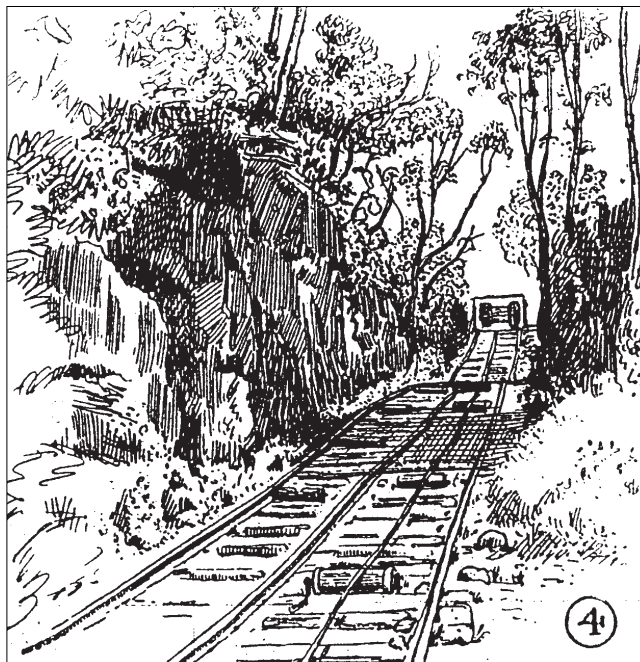
Mr. Harnett went to Melbourne looking for skilled quarry workers, where he recruited a man named Robert Flew. Robert Flew and his family had emigrated to Melbourne from the famous Portland stone quarry in Dorset, England. Their first task was to construct an inclined tramway from the quarry down the steep slope to a loading jetty at the water's edge. This took three months of hard work.

Flew constructed the tramway using the three railed principle that he had apparently had experience with in the Portland quarries. Use of three rails was economical in its use of iron rail which was a scarce and expensive material, and did not require constructing any movable point blades while allowing two wagons to pass at the mid way point. It was stated that upwards of £5,000 were expended in



Looking across Mosman Bay to the ferry wharf opposite.

Photo: Carrol Collection



"Inclined railway for quarry trucks. Mosman's Bay, Port Jackson"
Town & Country Journal, 25 May, 1889.

opening the quarry, making roads and the tramway, and appliances for working it.

Quarrying the stone out of the solid rock was facilitated by a series of perpendicular cracks penetrating the full depth of the free-stone bed, cutting the entire plateau into a series of giant parallelograms. These cracks were exceptionally straight and true, so the quarrymen only had to cut blocks off the giant cubes to the required dimensions. Most quarry workers were paid one shilling and three pence per hour for an eight and a half hour day, plus five and a half hours on Saturday.

Trials were carried out with an experimental explosive called "Neokratine", apparently with satisfactory results.

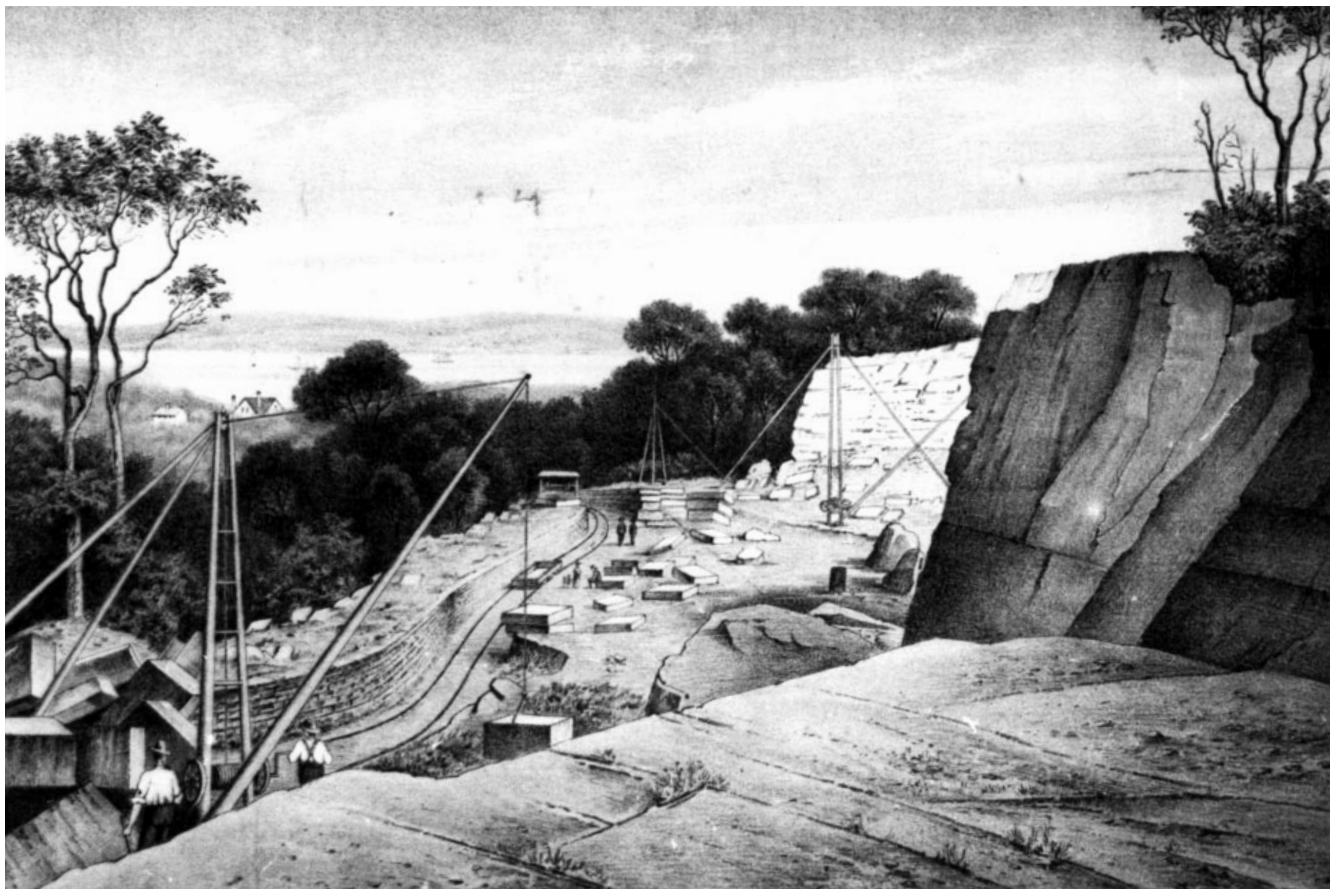
Stone was loaded into barges which were tied up at the jetty. The barges were then towed by steam launch out to sailing ships moored in the deeper water of the bay. There the stone was transferred aboard by the ships' own cranes.

The only motive power required to run the operation, were cranes for loading and unloading the sandstone blocks. All of the cranes appear to have been hand operated.

Stone from the quarry was used in "Wilson Hall" at Melbourne University, sea walling around Sydney's Farm Cove, and abutments for the original railway bridge over the Parramatta River near Meadowbank. Stone was also sent on trial to Adelaide and Colchester in England.

Incline

The quarry at the top of the plateau was connected to the stone jetty on the shore of the bay, by a double-track, three rail, self-acting, inclined tramway. The incline descended from the southern extremity of the quarry heading in a generally southerly direction to the bay. Rails were light flat bottom rail, probably made of iron. A short section of four rails mid way up the incline allowed trucks to pass. Loaded wagons descending by gravity on one track served to haul empty wagons up the other track. The two sets of wagons were connected together by a long wire cable, which was wound round a horizontal drum at the head of the incline. The cable was supported on horizontal rollers laid at short intervals up the centre line of both tracks. The gauge of the incline is unknown.



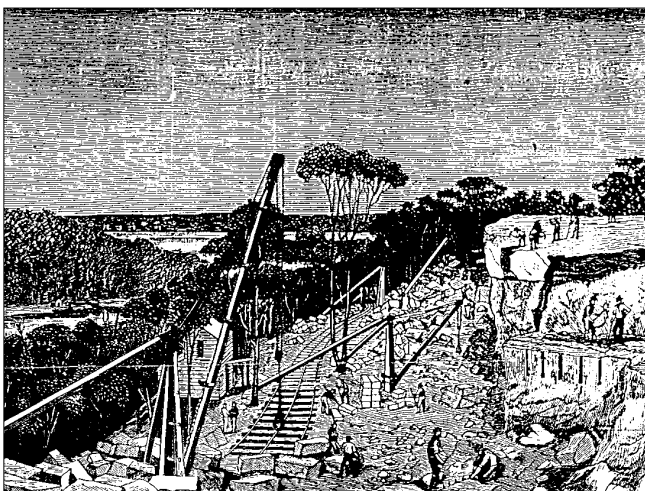
An undated early view of the quarry.

Photo: Carrol Collection

At the top of the incline the set of three rails passed under the horizontal winder drum. In the quarry, the tracks meandered around the outer rim of the excavation. One reference shows a single track pair of rails, while another shows the three rails following the same alignment. Given that the two rail illustration appears to predate the three rail illustration, one can surmise that the two rail arrangement proved to be unsatisfactory and was later replaced by the three rail arrangement.

Closure

The quarry operated until around 1889 when it was closed, not because the suitable stone had been worked out – but because the owners considered that the land was worth more for house building sites.



“Messrs Harnett and Co.’s Freestone Quarry, Mossman’s Bay.”
The Illustrated Sydney News, 6 September, 1879

Extant Remains

At the water’s edge, the stone jetty still exists and is in good condition, though it appears to have been rebuilt and extended over the years. Houses occupy the quarry floor. House yards are bounded by precipitous sandstone faces, that reflect the straight vertical cracks that facilitated extraction of the stone so long ago. A narrow bushland reserve and flights of stairs ascend up the slope behind the jetty following the line of the tramway. About one quarter of the way up the incline, a length of $\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter cable lies part buried in the formation. The cable is recognisably haulage-cable, because the strands of wire are wound in a very long helix in order to make maximum use of their tensile strength and prevent the cable from unraveling when placed under tension. McLaren suggests that as at 1978 a portion of the old rails and sleepers remained under the foundations of one of the houses. We have been unable to substantiate this. On the opposite shore of the bay a short iron rail post is a tantalisingly possible relic.

Acknowledgement

Both authors acknowledge and appreciate the support and encouragement of Mr. Bruce Macdonald.

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On VR's Beech Forest line, G41 is taking water in sylvan surroundings, January 1952. Photo: Philip G. Ellis Collection via Norm Houghton

The Beechy Battle

by Rory Sutcliffe

The closure of the Colac to Beech Forest railway in June 1962 was preceded by more than the usual citizen protest activity.

Norman Houghton in his otherwise excellent book *The Beechy*, looks at the closure only with minimal attention¹. This writer has perused every issue of the Colac Herald from 1957 to 1963 and sets out the saga in more detail.

The Line Closure Decision

The broader stage for the closure of the Beech Forest railway was set in 1957 when the Birregurra to Forrest railway was closed. The Otway Shire Council (OSC) acquiesced with little protest and found itself saddled with additional road repair costs. In July 1958 the OSC resolved to approach the Minister for Transport with the view to securing sufficient funding to upgrade the main Otway roads to 17 tons axle loading capacity². The OSC specifically had in mind the main road from Colac to Beech Forest, then a narrow and twisting strip of gravel³. Implicit in this strategy was the ultimate relegation of the narrow gauge railway to a small player in the Otway transport game.

In July 1960 OSC supported a move from the Hamilton City Council to press for a conference with the aim to bring transport regulation up to date, i.e. to break the legislated monopoly of the Victorian Railways.⁴

Dissenting councillors suggested that too much reform might result in open slather for all and leave the Otways inadequately served by either rail or road.

A few months later the Joint Transport Research Committee (JTRC) brought down a finding that the Beech Forest railway be closed because traffic levels no longer justified the retention of the railway⁵. A full copy of the finding is quoted in *The Beechy*, page 152.

The OSC's reaction was immediate - it resolved to approach the Country Roads Board (CRB) for funds to build a modern road from Beech Forest to Colac otherwise the additional heavy traffic would ruin the existing road and bridges. Cr Bill Tann said the closing of the railway was distressing and should be opposed. Cr Jim Mulgrew (a sawmiller at Forrest) said the same thing had happened at Forrest where the railway had been neglected and when it had closed the resultant heavy traffic on the road ruined their surfaces.

The Victorian Railways (VR) acted on the JTRC report with alacrity and decided to recommend to the government the closure as soon as possible. The OSC discovered this by chance in July 1961⁶ and immediately protested to the commissioner Mr Brown. He was told that Otway roads could not cope with the additional heavy traffic. This argument carried some weight and Mr Brown ruled that the railway would remain open for another year. However, 30 June 1962 would definitely be the end as the Garratt loco boiler certification expired at that date.

In the meantime the CRB would expedite funds to construct a modern main road from Beech Forest to Colac

via Charleys Creek. The old road following the railway was to be downgraded. Construction works on the Charleys Creek road commenced in November 1961 and proceeded at a rapid rate⁷.

A Tourist Railway Proposal

On Friday 16 March 1962 a railway enthusiast, Mr Neil Gunther, of Normanhurst, NSW, suggested in the local press that every effort be made to keep the line open for tourist traffic. Mr Gunthur argued that:

A workable scheme should be put before the VR to thwart the scheduled closure of the line on 30 June. Of course the VR has long committed itself to a policy of closing railways. And, of all lines the VR likes to close, there is some evidence to support the view that it likes most to close those in the Colac and Otway region... [R]ailway facilities have been withdrawn from five main-line places. Now the axe is to fall on the Beech Forest line, leaving the Otways trainless.

The two Garratt Locomotives (G41 and G42) at Colac are the only engines of this world famous type ever to be on the VR locomotive roster. And the line probably provides the only example anywhere of Garratts forming the motive power on such a narrow gauge. It is almost the only surviving Victorian railway to be exclusively steam worked, and is certainly the only Victorian railway on which steam cannot be replaced by diesel power unless special locomotives are built to suit the gauge.

Most important of all, from the viewpoint of its possible future, is the fact its scenic qualities far outweigh those not only of any other line in Victoria but also of any other on the south-east Australian mainland. One would have to cross Bass Strait and travel on Tasmania's west-coast Emu Bay Railway (Burnie to Zeehan) to discover its equal. Perhaps a railway is not without honour except in its own district. Colac people have grown up with their narrow-gauge railway and may not see it as others see it, which is scenic delight.

There are four distinct sections on the rail trip from Colac to Weeaprounah, each with its own scenic beauty. First comes the climb out of Colac through mostly open country, with views of Lakes Colac and Corangamite and many smaller lakes becoming more

pronounced towards the rear. Then along to that delightful rural farmlet of Barongarook and down through forested country with the Otways as a backdrop to the peaceful valley of the Gellibrand River. On this section is a lovely horseshoe curve around the headwaters of Ten Mile Creek. The third section, beginning at Gellibrand, lifts the line 1500 ft, in twelve miles, climbing the ranges to Beech Forest on an unbroken grade of 1 in 30. This is a most impressive part, for the little railway forces a passage through heavy forest until it comes out into an area of grass, ferns, and occasional stands of beech timber in the final stages of its assault on the Otways. In this section there are over sixty curves of three chain radius or less.

This is scenic rail travel of a high order, with the train twisting endlessly as though looking for a way to conquer the mountain barrier. A steady column of smoke silhouetted against a landscape of vivid green marks the locomotive's toiling progress.

At Beech Forest the line turns west for the fourth section and shortly reaches its highest elevation at 1862 ft near Buchanan, after which it winds gracefully along the main Otway ridge to its terminus at Weeaprounah. This section is marked by outstanding panoramic views. To the north a timbered wilderness falls away to the gleam of Lake Corangamite and the rolling grasslands beyond Colac, with the high country towards Ballarat in the far distance. To the south there are glimpses of the Southern Ocean. East and west the Otway tops with green uplands and tree clad hills, undulate across the field of vision. Dotted here and there, like giants from another world, are the lower trunks of huge trees which once surmounted these mountains.

The wheel has swung a full circle in the matter of steam locomotives. Once too common to be noticed, they are now rare enough, especially hauling trains in Victoria, to have become almost objects of interest as when trains first ran a century ago. And the Beech Forest line is now a last stronghold of the steam locomotive.

There is no rail journey in Victoria with anything like the scenic charm of that by the Beechy, and people will be eager to make this journey. And to make it more than once just as they visit the same holiday resorts more than once, if proper publicity is used to attract them. After all, Government money is spent regularly in attracting people to other Victorian resorts which are scenically far less rewarding than the Colac-Otway region.



G41 on a Colac bound goods train near Dimmont, circa 1948.

Photo: John Buckland, from Norm Houghton Collection.



In 1961, the year before closure, G42 brings a mixed goods through McDevitt. This was a popular spot with enthusiasts during the line's final years, due to its scenic nature and proximity to the main road.
Photo: Ian Scutt

Community Response

Mr Gunther's comments fuelled the fire of community feeling and generated enough heat to justify a public protest meeting. Swift moves by the committee formed to "Save the Beechy" resulted in arrangements for that body to meet the Acting Premier (Mr Rylah) on 13 June.

The *Colac Herald* reported that the deputation would comprise the five members elected to the committee⁸ the Mayor of Colac, Cr TH Matthews; president of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr C Campbell; President of Colac Tourist Development Association, Mr C Kettle; Mr L Atyeo and President of the Beech Forest Progress Association, Mr Darryl Towers. The Town Clerk would also accompany the deputation.

Mr Atyeo was the leading campaigner and conducted a one-man onslaught and through the local parliamentarian Mr Tom Darcy had explored several avenues in his efforts to have the VR reconsider its decision. Les Atyeo addressed the meeting and outlined the history of the Beechy from its opening in 1902, until May 1960, when the cartage of hardwood for pulp was discontinued because Maryvale paper mills, which used Otway timber, found another source of supply and consequently revenue from the line dropped by half. At about the time the hardwood cut out, the VR decided that the line was not paying and it was faced with heavy expenditure on rolling stock. "All figures to support this decision are hard to come by," Mr Atyeo said. He emphasised the benefit the line would be to Colac as a tourist attraction and pointed out the world-wide trend to revive old railways.

While realising tourism on the line would not pay for many years, Mr Atyeo visualised that if auxiliary committees were formed in Warrnambool, Melbourne and interstate,

etc, the time would come when there would be a list of people waiting to travel on the train each weekend. "These are the things the railway department should be prepared to look at," Mr Atyeo said. No one else had the tourist attraction of the Beechy, and he believed that in the foreseeable future it would prove a tremendous boon to this part of Victoria. Once the line was pulled up it would never be replaced. Its present resale value would be negligible to the VR, Mr Atyeo concluded.

Apportioning of revenue from the line had always been a problem and adversely affected the true operating position. The rolling stock position was not a reason to close the line as he felt the policy of the VR had been to let the stock deteriorate and then close the line.

Roads maintenance and construction was a tremendous problem in the Otways and the railway was needed to relieve that problem. It would appear that it would take another two years before the road reached the Otway ridge and even then it would not reach the pine plantation which the train was now serving.

The Shire Council had to meet matching CRB grants and this was a limiting factor in how far and how quickly it could proceed with road building, Cr Murchison said it was much cheaper for the farmers to obtain superphosphate by rail than road but the railways could not offer a quick delivery service.

Official representative for the Otway Shire, Cr W Tann, spoke of the Shire's efforts to retain the train over a period of years. Last year when he was a member of a deputation from Otway Shire he had told the Minister of Transport (Sir Arthur Warner) he had learned the Garratt engine had been inspected and issued with a service certificate for 12 months. Cr Tann said had he not learned of the loco inspection the line would have been closed about that time.

When the Minister confirmed that the engine had been passed for another 12 months he granted the deputation until the end of the month (June) to put the roads in order to take increased traffic. The deputation was told firmly at that time not to seek a further extension regarding the train.

Mr Kelly read a letter to the meeting from the VR which stated that the existing locomotives were completely beyond repair and it was doubtful whether a manufacturer could now be found to build only one of the two steam locomotives to operate the line. The VR with its present commitments would be unable to do so. Diesel locomotives could be obtained at about £60,000 each but it was extremely doubtful whether 10 per cent of enthusiasts who keep these "curiosity" services alive would patronise a train operated by such a "soulless form of traction."

Quite apart from the motive power problem, no narrow gauge passenger vehicles were available and it would cost £50,000 to convert sufficient goods vehicles to operate excursion passenger services on the line. The letter concluded: "It is difficult to conceive that any volunteer organisation could countenance expenditure to that order and it is therefore intended to remove the rails as early as practicable after the line is closed."

There was much local suspicion about the VR letter and derisive comments about a huge organisation with steam loco building and repair facilities that could not refurbish a 36 year old locomotive.

These deliberations kept the committee motivated and focussed for the meeting on 13 June 1962 when Colac's five-man deputation to save the Beechy met the Acting Premier, Mr Rylah, in Melbourne⁹. The deputation's submissions, in the main were:

An estimated capital expenditure of something like £120,000 appears to have been debited against estimated receipts of only five years, which, to say the least, was a far longer period than that allowed by the Taxation Department for capital depreciation to

taxpayers. It was also an unrealistically short period for £50,000 expenditure on freight cars which had been used for some 20 odd years without any capital expenditure other than routine maintenance.

The estimated capital expense of £50,000 - believed to be £6,000 for each of eight passenger vehicles - was also quite unrealistic taking into account the type of vehicle which had been used in the past and also the fact that the Department would appear to be estimating a revenue from passenger traffic of not more than £10,000 in the next five years.

The impact of the closure on the district's roads would be heavy. Soft pine from Beech Forest for pulping at the APM mill at Maryvale had been the main freight on the line since June 1960. Before that an equal amount of hardwood was also carried but the mill had found a source closer to Maryvale and so the hardwood ceased. The current weight of softwood carried - 130 to 150 tons a week - would have to be carried by road if the line closed with a very serious affect on the existing road system.

The decision to close the line needed to be reviewed to see that the property of the taxpayers of Victoria was not to be destroyed at the expense of the CRB and the Forests Commission. The delegation suggested that the Forests Commission itself could consider taking over the line for its own use at least until adequate roads were provided for disposal of such a valuable pine plantation.

The main concern was that the Beechy had been treated like any other railway in the State. But the delegation argued this line is something more than that - it was the only 2ft 6in gauge line in Australia, apart from the recently resurrected eight miles at Ferntree Gully.

The Beechy was unique in Australia. Its counterparts in other countries such as Wales and in other parts of Great Britain had been turned into very successful revenue earners as tourists attractions after, at times, being closed for many years. The great thing was that they were not destroyed as would appear to be the immediate fate of the Beechy which



G42 rests by the Colac coal stage in the late 1950s. The two Garratts were fitted with electric lighting in 1958, when a new timetable for the Wednesday Goods moved the departure time from 8am to 2am.

Photo: Robert Kilburn Collection, via Norm Houghton

it was felt could become one of the State's greatest assets and attractions.

The deputation offered its assistance by establishing committees in various centres throughout the State. They predicted that within a year or two there would be a waiting list of organisations wanting excursions on the Beechy. The delegation stated that "this generation will be failing in its obligation to the past and to the future if it permits the Beechy to be destroyed purely on the score of freight economy and without regard to the tremendous tourist potential."

They noted that the VR claim that the Garratt locomotives - themselves quite unique - were beyond repair was inconsistent with the skill of Australian workmen, especially as these locos were only 36 years old - "mere babies compared with some of the rolling stock being used on similar lines throughout the world".

The words had some effect and on Tuesday 26 June 1962 the Premier, Mr HE Bolte, granted a reprieve to the Beechy with the scheduled closure only three days off¹⁰. In a statement from Parliament House, Mr Bolte said that as a result of the deputation of Colac citizens to the Chief Secretary, Mr Rylah, the railway would be kept intact for a further 12 months.

Furthermore, the Premier added, the rolling stock, with the exception of one locomotive fit only for scrapping, would also be left intact for that period.

The other locomotive would be retained at Newport railway workshops for a period, but the Premier said he understood the engine would be costly to repair as virtually complete reconstruction was necessary.

After the Premier's announcement no time was lost by the successful five-man Beechy deputation in collating evidence to present a case to either the Railways Commissioners or the Government for continuance of the Weeaprounah rail service¹¹.

The committee acted swiftly because the nature of the

country though which the line ran tended to cause rapid deterioration of rails and sleepers. Les Atyeo was asked by the press for his opinion of Neil Gunther's proposal to lease the line from the Victorian Railways at a figure which a local body would consider satisfactory. Mr Atyeo said the financial and administrative aspects involved in a local body taking over the railway to run it privately were enormous. He added that Mr Rylah had asked the deputation if all the interests represented by the deputation would be able to run it on its own should the government so decide, but the deputation had to admit that they could not do it.

Official Response

The chairman of the Forests Commission had advised that whilst the output of pine timber could be expected to increase steadily during the next few years, road transport facilities would be adequate to deliver the timber to Colac. He said he felt that from the tourist point of view, the railway offered nothing that the road could not offer. From the viewpoint of the fire prevention he felt that the emission of sparks from the smoke stacks of the engines coupled with the effects of braking on the steep downgrades could conceivably increase the danger of fire.

The chairman of the CRB stated that the main outlet from Beech Forest was via Charleys Creek Road, 12 miles long between Ferguson and Gellibrand. Approximately five miles of this road had been reconstructed, with two miles being sealed. The cost to date of these sections was £30,000 and pending completion there was a five-ton axle limit on the road. However, from Gellibrand to Colac the road was in a satisfactory condition for legal loads and there was no five-ton limit, he said.

Commenting to the Premier's Department on the case put forward by the deputation the deputy chairman of the Railways, Mr George Brown, said that the Railways Department could not see how the State could justify the heavy capital expenditures required for locomotives and rolling



In the 1950s, G42, in charge of the Wednesday Goods, is shunting wagons full of pulpwood at Ferguson. Pulpwood traffic was a major revenue earner for the railway.
Photo: The late Doug McLean/Train Hobby Collection



G41 departs Beech Forest, bound for Colac, with a Puffing Billy Preservation Society Special on 21 November, 1959. The line to Weeaprounah (which prior to December 1954 went all the way to Crowes) curves away to the right of the picture. Photo: Peter Charrett

stock merely to duplicate a tourist facility of a type that would soon be operating in the Dandenong Ranges. He believed the chances of any volunteer organisation reopening the Beech Forest line on a similar basis to Puffing Billy, without heavy Government financial aid, would be non-existent.

Mr Brown went on to say that with regard to the question of continuing the narrow gauge service for general traffic, the Department could hardly believe that the deputation was serious in mentioning the effect on the existing road system of the 150 tons of soft pine timber per week - which was about three motor trucks loads per day - now moving by rail.

Closure

The last goods train ran on Wednesday 27 June 1962. A Melbourne based journalist booked a trip on the last train and filed this report¹²:

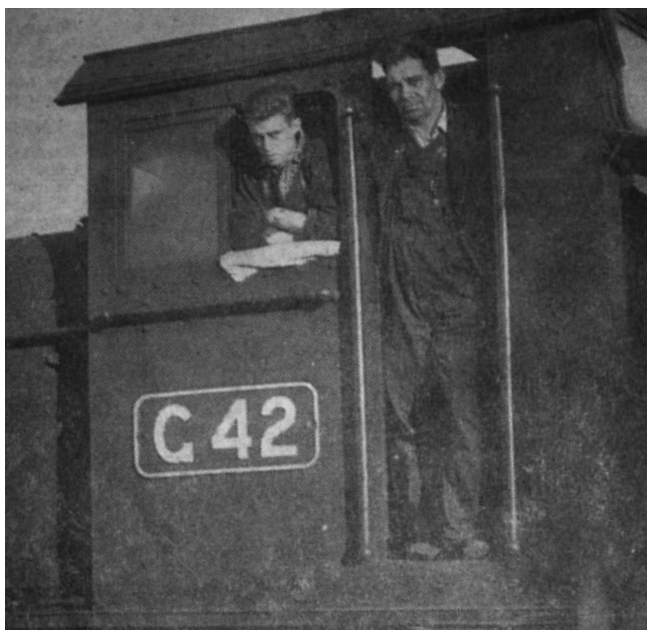
Today I rode on the narrow-gauge Beechy train on its last working run after 60 years of chugging through the Otway Ranges. The line from Colac to Weeaprounah, is being closed. Riding in the guards' van today, I saw the fine scenery that has prompted local people and railway enthusiasts to try to save the "Beechy" as a tourist attraction. I went from Beech Forest, a stopping place for the train, to Weeaprounah, and back.

This leg runs along the crest of the ranges giving a view for miles on each side. It shows distant mountains and today the valleys were picked out by seas of white fog. Fern covered gullies, tall trees and green paddocks, dotted here and there with neat farm houses, completes the picture.

A handful of railway enthusiasts also rode in the van and at many points along the way people took snapshots or waved. The line was the last of 2 ft 6 in. gauge still operating commercially in Victoria. It has closed because railway officials consider it a poor proposition. Alas. There may be a reprieve yet.



G42, at the head of an ARHS Special, pauses for water at Dinmont on 3 March, 1962. The steel water tank here, and another at Gellibrand, had been built to replace older corrugated iron structures only seven years earlier, an act which at the time must have given considerable heart to fans of the railway. Photo: Peter Charrett



Fireman John Spence (in window) and driver Clarrie Kenyon (in doorway) on the last goods train. Photo: Norm Houghton Collection

The last goods train made a triumphant entry into Colac station yard on the Wednesday afternoon with detonators exploding on the line and a crowd of cheering townspeople. People had gathered at every station and at many other points along the line to take photographs and farewell the train and a number of motorists had kept it company all the way from Beech Forest¹³.

Driver Clarrie Kenyon, who had driven locomotives on the tricky narrow-gauge line for the previous 26 years, said he felt sad with his fireman, John Spence (only two years on the line) after pulling the historic Garratt locomotive to a stop in the yard.

Among those who followed the train by cars were members of the Puffing Billy Preservation Society and the Railway Historical Society from Melbourne. On its final haul, the Beechy freighted four truck loads of Otway seed potatoes consigned to Queensland and 11 trucks of pulpwood. A reminder of the heyday of the Beechy line was the quantity of narrow gauge rolling stock gathered in the yards. There were no less than 67 trucks, three louvre vans and two guards' vans present.

The final farewell to the Beechy line took place on Saturday 30 June, when 150 excursionists boarded four open trucks, three louvre vans and a guard's van for a trip organised by the Australian Railway Historical Society¹⁴. Through comfort was not at a premium on the six-hour journey as the train consisted only of open trucks with tarpaulin covers for shelter, louvre vans and two guards vans, the railway enthusiasts appeared to enjoy the trip through the ranges and forests up to the Beech Forest.

The train was accompanied by many motorists, all but one car coming from Melbourne, and at farm houses near the line and at stations people had gathered to wave farewell. At several points along the line the train stopped and its occupants were able to take photographs and warm themselves with exercise. Only a short stop was made at Beech Forest where it was raining with a bleak wind blowing. But as the train descended through the valleys the sun shone brilliantly to show Otway scenery at its glorious best to provide adequate compensation to those who made the historic trip.

Interlude

Although the railway had been given a 12 months' reprieve, during which period the track would remain intact and rolling stock, other than the locomotive, would remain in the Colac yards, gangers who worked on the line said that if it was not maintained it would not be long before the forest took it over and bush fires destroyed sleepers and bridges¹⁵.

The very final preservation gasp was a proposal from the National Trust Landscape Preservation Council to the Premier, the Lands Department, and Colac "Save the Beechy" committee, that the Beech Forest Railway be continued as a scenic railway and not as a historical curiosity.

The secretary, Mr JF Amos, suggested that an observation car seating about 30 to 40 people, and driven by either a diesel, steam or petrol engine be built¹⁶. Preliminary estimates indicated that such a car would not cost more than £10,000, Mr Amos said. The letter from the Landscape Preservation Council secretary read:

In response to representations from yourself, the National Trust and other persons and organisations the Premier has decided to defer for a year lifting the rails on the narrow-gauge railway from Colac to Weeaprounah. It is important that this time be utilised to see whether a service can be maintained profitably on this line by some organisation other than the railway department. If not, it appears that the rails will be sold for scrap.

There appears to be two possibilities. The first is to operate the line as a historical curiosity like the Puffing Billy line. We think the line is too far away from a large centre of population to depend on this, and competition with Puffing Billy might endanger the success of both projects. Although we do not rule out entirely this kind of service on the Beechy, we feel the second alternative offers more promise of success. This is to turn the line as a scenic railway with a comfortable modern observation coach, and developing it as a tourist attraction.

We have examined the estimates given by the Railway Department for a new locomotive and rolling stock, and we can understand that such an approach offers no prospect of a profitable service. We have in mind an observation car like a motor bus seating 30 to 40 people mounted on wheels to run the rail track. It could be driven by petrol engine, diesel engine or steam engine.

We have made contact with the manufactures of a suitable steam engine, and this form of engine has advantages. Preliminary estimate indicates that such a car would not cost more than £10,000.

We would like to make contact with persons and organisations in Colac interested in retaining the line, and particularly with persons interested in operating it on a commercial payable basis. Although we can support the proposal, it appears that it should be run by a Colac organisation, formed for the purpose, in which the Trust might have an interest.

The investigation to be made should include:

The extent of the local passengers and parcels goods traffic.

The possible extent of the tourist in the initial years. Once established the tourist traffic would probably grow.

Local facilities, accommodation and meals for tourists.

Estimated costs of operating the service, scale of charges and possible reserve.

The National Trust submission was referred by the Premier to the Tourist Development Authority for consideration. The TDA had a low key approach to the Otways and had in fact only provided tourist facilities along the Great Ocean Road between Lorne and Apollo Bay and nowhere else in the region.



The last train on the Beech Forest Railway, an ARHS Excursion, catches the afternoon sun near McDevitt as it heads back to Colac, 30 June, 1962.
Photo: Peter Charrett

End of the Line

As soon as the last excursion had been run, the VR lost no time in removing the locomotives. G42, the only serviceable loco, left Colac on Wednesday 11 July for Newport¹⁷. G41 departed a few days later. With no serviceable motive power available the chances of reopening the line were very small. And this proved to be the case.

The Tourist Development Authority spent months considering the future of the Beech Forest railway. It sought the opinion of the Puffing Billy Preservation Society. The Society reported that it would be very difficult to operate and maintain the Beech Forest railway with volunteer labour.

The TDA eventually advised the Government that the road system would be the best way of introducing tourists to the Otways¹⁸. The Minister for Transport responded accordingly and in September 1963 recommended that the railway not be re-opened. Furthermore, a bill was introduced in Parliament to dismantle the railway. This was the end of it all.

In the 1990's such a closure would not have been permitted by the community and tourists bodies and the line, or at least part of it, would have been retained. But in the 1960's with its unsophisticated thinking and outright opposition from the government such a course of events was almost inevitable. Colac was too far from Melbourne to bother the politicians and too far from the source of patrons for a narrow gauge tourist railway.

As well, Colac did not then have the capability to raise the necessary finance to renovate the railway and secure a reliable locomotive. Track and bridge maintenance would

have been enormously expensive for an ongoing operation.

In the years since then from time to time the call is made to rebuild the Beechy line but without result. A walking track has been made along several kilometres of the roadbed between Barongarook and Birnam and along a short section immediately west of Beech Forest. The road bed is visible in many sections between Colac and Beech Forest and between Banool and Devitt Bros Siding is used an access track by pine companies and farmers.

Some railway houses remain at Gellibrand and Beech Forest. The line along the ridge has been ploughed over between Beech Forest and Pile Siding and is hardly discernible.

At Weeaprounah there is a well maintained railway type name board alongside the road, from the Tanks to Browse the road bed is more visible than not in the paddocks and bush but this continuous strip has frequent interruptions.

At the terminus a length of track, a wagon, a sign post, a mile post and buffer stop have been reinstated as a static display. At Beech Forest there is a picnic shelter containing many historic photos of the area, including the railway.

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Above: G42 puts on a good display as it approaches the road crossing at Elliminyt, in 1961.

Photo: Ian Scutt

Below: NA14, seen here on an ARHS Excursion at Gellibrand on 21 March 1959, was the last of its class on the Beech Forest Railway. It saw little use during the line's final years, other than a few such passenger excursions, and in April 1962, two months before closure, was transferred to Newport Workshops for storage. Fortunately, it survived the experience, and can be seen today in action on the Puffing Billy Railway at Belgrave.

Photo: Peter Ralph/Train Hobby Collection





Above: G42 heads for Beech Forest with one of the many passenger excursions that characterised the railway's final years. Like its stablemate, NA14, G42 eventually found its way to the Puffing Billy Railway, and after several years as a static exhibit in the Steam Museum at Menzies Creek, was moved to Belgrave, in 1977, where the monumental task of restoring it to working order began. Hopefully in the not too distant future, scenes such as this one will once again be possible, albeit in a different location.

Below: In early 1961, a start was made on dismantling the abandoned section of track between Weeaprounah and Crowes. On 8 March that year, G42 pauses at Lavers Hill with the demolition train.

Both photos: Peter Ralph/Train Hobby Collection



The Beechy Since 1962

By Mark Plummer

Background

I just missed travelling in The Beechy train. I was 13 years of age in 1962 and pocket money did not stretch to a fare on one of the last runs. Disappointed, I did the next best thing - I visited the line after closure.

The engines and carriages had been taken away and there was just a long string of NQ open goods wagons at Colac. Further down the line some railfans were using a home-made rail tricycle near Banool. I had a chance to ride on it. At last I had ridden on the line!

After that I often visited the demolition contractor at work and rode on the petrol locomotive he was using to pull up the line. When I was sixteen I hiked along the line from Colac to Crowes. It took three days, mainly because the line was so overgrown past Weeaprounah.

In 1962 the rail heritage movement was not strong enough to save The Beechy. It was stretched getting Puffing Billy up and running. All available NA locomotives and carriages were needed at Belgrave. The Beechy's two Garratt locomotives were worn out and the track was in disrepair.



At Dinmont, the former loco water tank is apparently still being put to good use. 21 February, 1998. Photo: Norm Houghton

Besides, it was argued, The Beechy was too far from Melbourne for regular volunteer work parties and tourists.

The heritage movement could only save one of the Garratts. After the rail was removed most bridges were demolished, infrastructure removed, farmers incorporated sections of the line into their properties, some sections were made into dirt roads, and it seemed the whole right-of-way would slide into oblivion.

The Railtrail Outcome

The concept of railtrails was unknown in 1962. Had there been a locally based campaign to keep the whole right-of-way intact as a walking, cycling and horseriding track it would probably have been successful. Bridges, stations and other infrastructure could have remained.

In recent years the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has made two sections of The Beechy line into walking tracks; one from just south of Barrongarook to Birnam, the other from just west of Beech Forest to Ferguson. More of the old line could be opened as a railtrail.



At the former site of Birnam Station, an information board has been erected within the picnic area. Photo: Mark Plummer

From Birnam, for instance, the trail could be extended south to Karwarren and possibly to Gellibrand River.

The Barrongarook to Birnam railtrail has one milepost intact and signs showing where the water tanks and culverts were located. At Birnam the station ground has been made into a picnic area with a large covered information board telling the story of The Beechy. The rail heritage movement has erected a memorial sign at the former Crowes terminus with a cut-down NQ wagon on a short section of track.

There is the potential to clear a railtrail from Crowes back to Lavers Hill. It could be feasible to rebuild the line from Crowes back to Lavers Hill and operate it with a tourist trolley service. Because both Lavers Hill and Crowes are on the Great Ocean Road, many tourists pass through the area. Sufficient rails for the project are at Timboon just a few kilometres away.

Any reader who lives in the area and is interested in helping to convert more of the old right-of-way into a railtrail or reopening the line from Lavers Hill to Crowes can contact the writer at Box 223, East Melbourne 3002, or telephone him on (03) 9337 9883.

The writer is the National President of the Australian Rails to Trails and a former secretary of the Light Railways Research Association (predecessor to the LRRSA). He is a solicitor in private practice.



At the former terminus at Crowes, an historical exhibit has been created around the restored buffer stops. Photo: Norm Houghton



Industrial Railway NEWS

NEW SOUTH WALES

BRADKEN CONSOLIDATED, Waratah

(see LRN 82 p.10 and 83 p.2)

1435mm gauge

The Goninan 4wDE (030 of 1972) was noted parked in the former Commonwealth Steel yard at Waratah from a passing train. It appears to be still in use.

Bob McKillop 12/97

BHP LTD, Newcastle

(see LR 139 p.22)

1435mm gauge

A further two Goninan Bo-Bo DE locomotives seemingly in operating condition were noted at the Newcastle steelworks on December 20th. These were 43 (007 of 1960), which was shut down, and 57 (057 of 1982) which was in use. D57 is the last locomotive to have twin black lines along the bonnet sides.

Also noted were a road-rail shunting unit with a ballast hopper, a ballast tamper, and a ballast plough, all bearing Barclay Mowlem stickers. These are presumably used for maintenance of the steelworks railway.

Brad Peardon 12/97

BHP LTD, Port Kembla

(see LR 139 p.22)

1435mm gauge

On January 4th, English Electric (Australia) Bo-Bo DE D36 (A.237 of 1971) was noted in use in the steelworks complex, as was preserved Clyde 0-6-OST *BRONZEWING* (457 of 1937) which was accompanied by a large bogie water tanker and a rake of carriages.

Two coke oven locos were also seen in use in the coking area of the works. These are specialised tall electric locomotives used for slow speed haulage of coke quench cars. The cars convey red hot coke the short distance from coke oven to quenching tower and then back to the discharge point.

As this is a continuous process in very harsh conditions, a robust and largely maintenance free locomotive is required. Perhaps some reader will be able to provide information about the ones used at Port Kembla: Brad Peardon observed two, of different types, numbered 3 and 6 in October 1997.

John Browning 1/98; Brad Peardon

PASMINCO, Cockle Creek

1435mm gauge

At the former Sulphide Corporation works, the Goninan Bo-Bo DE (019 of 1964) is in regular service, although its red livery is currently looking quite drab and dirty.

Grant Fleming 12/97

THE MANILDRA GROUP

(see LRN 115 p.9)

1435mm gauge

At the end of December, two locomotives were noted at the factory at Manildra, both carrying the name *GEM OF THE WEST*. Clyde Co-Co DE MM01 (62-257 of 1962) was available for use in the factory complex, while Walkers B-B DH 7304 (702 of 1972) was parked on a siding outside.

Walkers 73-class B-B DH locos 7329 and 7335 (691 and 697 of 1972) reportedly have been donated by Manildra Starches to the Mid State Railway & Pioneer Museum, Cowra.

John Browning 12/97; *Australian Locomotive News* 8/97



The Manildra Group, Manildra, NSW: Clyde Co-Co DE MM01 *GEM OF THE WEST* (62-257 of 1962), 17/6/96.
Photo: Ray Graf

SYDNEY WATER, Northside Storage Tunnel project, Sydney

(see LRN 118 p.8)

Construction is scheduled from March 1998 of a 15.8km tunnel running between 65 metres and 90 metres underground from the western bank of the Lane Cove River to North Head Sewage Treatment Plant. A 3.5km branch tunnel will run from Scotts Creek to join the main tunnel under Tunks Park, located between Willoughby and North Sydney City Councils.

The main tunnel will have a diameter of approximately 6 metres and the branch tunnel will be about 4 metres in diameter. A 1.7 km, 4 metre diameter tunnel will also be excavated from North Head Sewage Treatment Plant to Little Manly Point to transfer excavated material. The tunnel will be built using two tunnel boring machines. One will tunnel from North Head Sewage Treatment Plant to Tunks Park. The other will tunnel from Tunks Park to Lane Cover River

Locomotive, Rolling Stock & Equipment Manufacturers

Bundaberg Foundry Engineers Ltd

(see LR 139 p.22)

The two Walkers B-B DH 73-class locomotives being rebuilt for Proserpine Mill (673 of 1971 and 701 of 1972) will be delivered during the course of the year. One is expected to be ready for the start of the season, and the other will be delivered some time later.

Harvey Flanders 2/98

West, while a smaller tunnel boring machine will be used to excavate the branch tunnel and the tunnel to Little Manly Point.

It is expected that about 1 million cubic metres of clean, crushed sandstone will be removed from Tunks Park and Little Manly Point by barge. It can be anticipated that underground railway equipment will be utilised for this project, and

details are requested from Sydney readers when available.

Sydney Water *Information Kit* via Bob McKillop 2/98

QUEENSLAND

CANE RAILWAYS: 1998 OVERVIEW

23 sugar mills in Queensland have rail transport systems, totalling 4200 km, all but one on 610mm gauge. Because of interconnections, there are in fact just 17 separate systems (and there is also another interconnection by ferry), and they carry 36 million tonnes of cane in a five month season. Rail transport saves the equivalent of up to 25 000 road truck movements per day. The average cane haulage by rail is 18km. Over \$100m has been spent by millers since 1990 to extend and upgrade their railway systems.

Australian Canegrower 8/9/97 via Chris Hart

Industrial Railway NEWS

PROJECTED MILL MERGER

The objective of achieving a merger between South Johnstone Mill Ltd and Tully Sugar Ltd, both growers co-operatives, is still being pursued by the parties concerned.

Australian Canegrower 14/7/97 via Chris Hart

BINGERA SUGAR LTD

(see LR 139 p.22)

610mm gauge

A visit on January 27th revealed that the ballast plough rebuilt from a Ruston & Hornsby 4wDM (387893 of 1955) had been returned from Fairymead Mill. The two Motor Rail Simplex 4wDM locomotives (10233 and 10234 of 1951) had gone from the area behind the workshops, presumably having departed for preservation "down south".

John Browning 1/98

CSR LTD, Herbert River mills

(see LR 139 p.23)

More than 329 000 tonnes of Victoria Mill cane were crushed at **Macknade Mill** during the 1997 crushing season, with two or three trips handled daily by Macknade's E M Baldwin B-B DH 20 (7070-4-4-77 of 1977 and Baldwin brake wagon 1. In fact the last cane crushed at Macknade for the season was cane transferred from Victoria.

At Macknade, the Motor Rail Simplex 4wDM 4 (10232 of 1951) has been in use as truck shop shunter during the slack season. This is because of the removal of the tippler, through which the bins are normally fed to the truck shop. Because they currently have to be shunted in and out of the one end of the truck shop, a shunting unit is needed. The old single bin tippler, installed in 1975, is being replaced by a double which was rebuilt at Macknade during the 1997 crushing from a single tippler of unknown origin. Another 25 11-tonne bins should be introduced



Mackay Sugar, Marian Mill, Qld: Walkers B-B DH TANNALO (705 of 1972; rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1995) heads towards the mill at the crossing of Cattle Creek, near Gargett, 29/9/95. A plan to replace this crossing at a higher level is projected.
Photo: John Browning

to service at **Victoria Mill** in 1998. Approximately 30 of the 11 ton bins have been at Macknade during the slack season. These have already been trialled through the full and empty yard pushers to see if modifications to the system are required. They will eventually be trialled through the feeding station and new tippler as well. The Plane Creek Mill Plasser track jack (371 of 1989) returned home in the latter part of the 1997 crushing.

Many washouts from the extensive flooding were experienced by both mills during January. A new Victoria Mill tramline branch north of Bambaroo, which will cross the Bruce Highway via an overpass, is reportedly planned.

The Herbert River Express 6/12/97 via Chris Hart; Chris Hart 12/97, 2/98; Bob James 2/98

MACKAY SUGAR CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION LTD

(see LR 139 p.23)

610mm gauge

Planning is reportedly under way to replace **Marian Mill's** difficult and flood-prone

crossing of Cattle Creek, west of Gargett. This section is on the old QGR branch line formation and includes a timber trestle bridge with a flood-prone road crossing alongside. A new causeway and bridge is planned as a joint rail and road project.

Mackay Sugar has recently trialled the use of EV-Alert transmitters in some of its locomotives. These devices transmit low frequency, highly coded radio signals which activate receiver/decoder units fitted in haulout vehicles, harvesters and other vehicles involved in cane harvesting/processing.

A pulsing amber warning light is activated within a range of about 300m from the locomotive, thus reducing the risk of accidents when other visual or audible warnings are ineffective. The device can of course be used to activate solar-powered warning lights at rail crossings also.

The Herbert River Express 13/12/97 via Chris Hart; Bob James 2/98

SOUTH JOHNSTONE MILL LTD

(see LRN 120 p.19)

610mm gauge

A South Johnstone Mill locomotive and carriage were used to provide transport for ambulance officers to reach a 16-year old girl at Mena Creek requiring hospital treatment on January 11th. The mill still carries out the duty of delivering bread and milk to flood-bound areas along the tramway when roads are flooded, and a locomotive and carriage are on standby for use by the ambulance service at these times. During 1997 a train was used to retrieve a snakebite victim during flooding.

The name attributed to the train, the *Ninja Turtle*, comes from "Turtles Express" which is painted on the carriage fitted up for tourist operations in the mill yard some years ago where it was hauled by Malcolm Moore 4wDM 17 (1060 of 1943).

Cairns Post 10/1/98 via Roger Anderson; John Browning



The "Ninja Turtle" train rests in the yard at South Johnstone Mill, January, 1997. Photo: Eric Egan

Industrial Railway NEWS

QUEENSLAND SUGAR INDUSTRY CORPORATION, Lucinda

(see LRN 86 p.12)

The Lucinda sugar terminal's Com-Eng 0-6-0DH G1023 of 1958 suffered a breakdown on about November 22nd. As a result, Macknade Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH 18 (DHI.5 of 1954) was borrowed for a few days, returning on November 25th.

Chris Hart 12/97

TASMANIA

PETER BINNEY, Black Bobs Bog

narrow gauge

In Tasmania's Central Plateau, a unique transport system is used to bring harvested sphagnum moss from the bog to dry land for sale worldwide. The unconventional lightweight railway seems to use an articulated train set of 5-6 cars with a single axle to a car, using a modified ride-on mower for a locomotive. The rails are timber, and it seems that the line may in fact be a plateway or flangeway. The remote area has been leased for more than 20 years and has produced dried moss (used in orchid growing) worth more than \$1m. The line is periodically rebuilt as various sections of the bog are worked, and derailments are apparently not unknown. Working is restricted to the summer harvest season, the location being abandoned to the ice and snow each winter.

Aussie Post 3/1/98 via Arnold Lockyer 1/98

NORTH QUEENSLAND SOJOURN

On October 2nd, 1997, John Browning did a quick trip from Mission Beach to Mossman in north Queensland, taking a look at some sugar mills on the way. The day was showery and overcast, but some cane was still being hauled, and among the photographs he took are these:



Bundaberg Sugar Company, Mourilyan Mill: Seemingly ready to take off outside the loco shed at the mill is vintage Clyde 0-6-0DH 1 (55-64 of 1955), 2/10/97.



Mossman Central Mill Company: Commonwealth Engineering 0-6-0DH FAUGH A BALOUGH (AL4190 of 1965) and DOUGLAS (AL2562 of 1963), working in multiple, bring a rake of loaded bogie canetainers through the mill yard, 2/10/97.



Babinda Sugar: Commonwealth Engineering 0-6-0DH 1 JOSEPHINE (A1821 of 1957) is at home in the wet tropics at McDonnell Creek, the northern extremity of the Babinda tramline, 2/10/97.



Babinda Sugar: Commonwealth Engineering 0-6-0DH 7 MORRISON (AD1239 of 1960) and 6 ALLISON (C2234 of 1959), newly equipped for working in multiple, on the Bramston Beach Road, 2/10/97.



Heritage & Tourist

The significant progress by several preservation activities reported in this issue suggest that the conservation of our industrial and narrow gauge railway heritage is going from strength to strength.

Our feature news story (p. 24) is the return to service of Bundaberg Foundry 0-6-2T (No. 7 of 1953) at the Coal Creek Heritage Village Bush Tramway in Victoria's Gippsland region. Known as *KOLAN* at Bingera sugar mill, the

locomotive was withdrawn from service in 1973 and subsequently placed on display at Boyds Antiquarium in Bundaberg until purchased by Coal Creek in 1996 [LRN.118, p.15]. Local volunteers and *Work For The Dole* workers restored the locomotive to service as participants in the first project under a redevelopment program for the Coal Creek Village. It was ready for service at the commissioning of the Coal Creek Bush Tramway by the Victorian Minister for Transport, Hon. Robin Cooper, MLA on 19 December 1997. For the ceremony, 70-year old retired V/Line driver Harvey West was chosen to have the honour of driving the locomotive on its first day. Ironically, Harvey was the driver of the very last steam train to leave the Coal Creek Siding on 15 April 1959.

At the commissioning, Mr Cooper unveiled the plans for "Relaunching The Past - 1998" which will re-establish the Coal Creek Village as a major Victorian attraction. The redevelopment is based on a strategic plan to make Coal Creek a more viable business as an educational and entertaining complex which captures the tradition of the early farming and coal mining era. The Minister announced a Community Fund Support grant of \$500,000 for the redevelopment, which will be matched by a further \$500,000 from the South Gippsland Shire Council and other contributions from a local philanthropic trust.

New Queensland Operation

This issue also provides a first-hand report of the new tourist railway on St Helena Island in Moreton Bay outside Brisbane. The island served as a penal settlement from 1867 until 1933. Prisoners built their own prison which was then run as a self-supporting colony. A tramway was built to serve the jetty in the south-west corner of the island, a sugar mill in the south-east corner and the

prison/administrative area in the north. After serving as a grazing lease for some years, the Department of Heritage & Environment began to take an interest in the island in the 1970s and public interest in the history of the island emerged.

Subsequently four boat operators negotiated access rights to the island, but the 3km return walk to and from the ruins presented an obstacle to many visitors. The solution was a narrow gauge railway to provide transport with minimum impact on the island's heritage. Moreover, as Brian Webber reports, the project provides an interesting model for cooperation between private enterprise, a community group and a government department.

Recognition of Railway Heritage Volunteers

Congratulations to the four stalwarts of the railway preservation movement who were honored on Australia Day, namely:

Dr John Glastonbury AM: ARHS and 3801 Limited, for the preservation of Australia's railway heritage;

Stephen Buck OAM: for services to the preservation of railway heritage through the ARHS (ACT Division), Canberra Railway Museum and Michelago Tourist Railway;

Samuel Burgess OAM: for services to tourism as Chairman of the Zig Zag Railway;

David Torr OAM: for services to the community as Works Manager for the NSW Rail Transport Museum.

Forest Railway Historical Walks

Preservation of the forest railways of Australia is rarely practical, but much can be done to conserve a reminder of the era through historical walking trails. Further to our feature articles on The Beechy, we have a report from Bob Whitehead on new initiatives to restore sections of the line as a walking/cycling trail and to establish a rail heritage site at Crowes. On the Mid-North Coast of NSW, the Wootton Historical Railway Walk allows the visitor to appreciate something of the extensive light railway system that operated in the forest between 1890 and 1944. We carry a report on this project below. The walk is one of the rails-to-trails that have been established utilising former forest railways corridors. The gentle grades of such former railway formations provide a public venue for many different uses, including walking and horse riding. They serve as historic and conservation areas which provide the opportunity for future generations of Australians to appreciate the achievements of pioneer timber-getters and the regenerated forest environment now managed for their benefit.

Bob McKillop

NEWS

Queensland

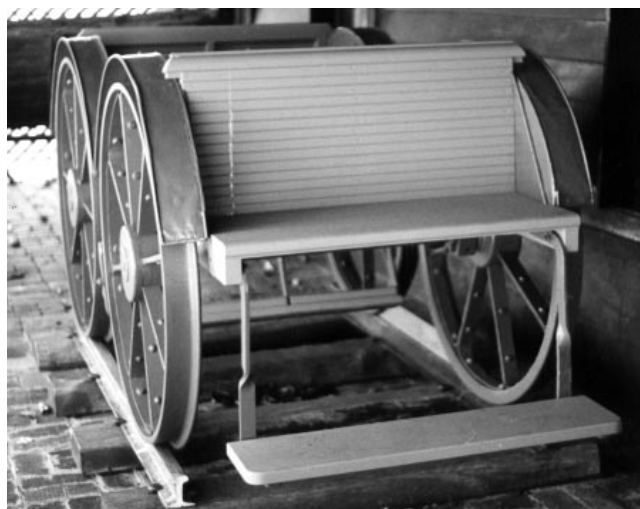
ST HELENA ISLAND TRAMWAY, Rotary Club of Wynnum and Manly

610 mm gauge

A solution to the transport problem of getting visitors from the jetty on St Helena Island to the prison ruins in the north of the island came with the offer of the Rotary Club of Wynnum and Manly to construct a tramway. The club laid about 1km of track from the jetty precinct to the nearest part of the prison ruins. An 0-6-ODM locomotive was purchased from Mulgrave Sugar Mill (Baguley 3377 of 1953) and 'flown' to the island slung beneath a Defence

Force Chinook helicopter (LRN.119). A dozen cane tramway trucks fitted with passenger bodies were also obtained for the railway from *Sugarworld*, Edmonton.

I visited the island on 25 January 1998 on a publicly advertised tour. After the 1100 departure catamaran trip, patrons followed the Guide ('Prisoner 275') in a circuit around the south-east of the island. Passengers on a second tour operator travelled on the tramway to the ruins and back while the catamaran passengers walked. Following lunch, my group joined the train. Passengers were required to couple the rope acting as the door to compartments and an announcement was made warning of the torment ahead on the rough-riding train.



In the Island Museum is a reconstructed "Kangaroo" wagon from the original St Helena Island Tramway. Passengers sat on bench seats at each end, as a convict sat in the centre section and operated a horizontal pumper mechanism to propel the vehicle.

Photo: Brian Webber

Heritage & Tourist

After "Doors closing, please stand clear" was announced, the train started in the usual cane tram jerk and proceeded to vibrate passengers for several minutes until the far end of the line was reached. The five-hour day trip included almost continuous entertainment provided by the Guide. Passengers appeared to enjoy the "theatre" of the tram trip and saw it as an important break from the somewhat depressing atmosphere of a day spend contemplating how society treated its unfortunates in times past.

The adult fare for the day trip is \$30, covering water transport, tours of the island and prison settlement, tramway ride and the National Park "user fee". Generous discounts are available for group bookings. Night tours are also available at \$24 for adults. Bookings (07) 3396 3994.

Brian Webber, 2/98

BRAMPTON ISLAND PTY LTD

762mm gauge

Brampton Island is one of several properties acquired in December 1997 from Qantas by P&O Australia. The handover will take place in March 1998 and the new owners are expected to spend significant amounts refurbishing their acquisitions. The position of the Brampton Resort, some distance from the deep water anchorage, seems to hold out a good prospect of the railway line between wharf and resort surviving (see LRN 113 p.9).

Courier Mail 22/1/98 via John Browning

RAILCO, Ravenshoe

610mm gauge Motor Rail Simplex 4wDM AMY (4207 of 1929), donated by Mulgrave Mill (see LRN 121 p.17) has been taken to Ravenshoe for possible use to give short rides on a line in the station yard which could be extended into a nearby creek reserve. The loco is currently missing a gearbox.

It is understood that Hansen 2-2wPMR 1516 of 1976 has also been donated by the mill.

It seems that consideration has been given to converting the Simplex loco to 1067mm gauge, but a better option might be to obtain a light 1067mm loco, possibly in exchange for the Simplex (or to build a 2ft gauge line? - Ed.) RailCo would be



St Helena Island Tramway: A train waits at Ruins station, ready to return tourists to the Jetty. 25.1.98. Photo: Brian Webber



Bundaberg Botanic Gardens Railway: Bundaberg Foundry 0-4-2T 3 (B/N 3 of 1952, ex-Qunaba, Millaquin and Mourilyan Mills) is captured working in an attractive setting, July, 1997. Photo: Mark Plummer

interested in hearing from anyone with a suitable locomotive.

Tom Porritt 11/97

RON CALVER, Park Ridge,

610mm gauge

Late in 1997, Ron purchased two Ruston & Hornsby 4wDM locomotives from an Ashmore scrap dealer. These locomotives are 179872 of 1936, now fitted with a Perkins 3-cylinder diesel, and 285339 of 1949, now fitted with a Lambordini diesel. These locomotives had been purchased at auction from Hannah & Edmonds, Uki Rd, Murwillumbah, NSW, where they had been stored for some years. It was reported in 1990 that these locomotives, formerly used at Hayman Island, Queensland, had been acquired by a main-line group, Austatrain, to become part of a sugar museum projected for Condong Mill (see LRN 78 p.8).

Ron plans to run these locos, which are both operational, on a line to be built on his property south of Brisbane. Bob Gough 2/98

New South Wales & ACT

CITY OF GREATER LITHGOW, Static Displays

Further to LRN 110 p.9, the Hunslet 4wDM preserved in Rotary Park, Main Street (4059 of 1950) is accompanied by a steel coal tub numbered 37. The explanation board (which erroneously states the 1067mm gauge loco was built in Scotland in 1951) says it entered service hauling coal at Hermitage Colliery in 1952. Could this be a case of identity confusion with North British 0-4-ODH 27297 of 1952, which was built in Scotland? Three small, wooden 610mm gauge coal tubs and a miniature headframe are displayed on a vacant block of land in Lithgow Street. John Browning 1/98

HERITAGE GRANTS

Twelve rail heritage projects received funding of \$256,220 in the 1998 Heritage Grants announced by the Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning,

Hon. Craig Knowles. Several of these projects relate to industrial railways, notably:

Cessnock City Council, \$20,000 to restore Richmond Vale Colliery (with a further \$82,000 recommended for three future years);

Goulburn City Council, \$5000 dollar-for-dollar grant to conserve the pumphouse and Appleby steam engine at Goulburn Steam Museum;

Hunter Valley Training Company, \$5000 to restore former South Maitland Railways locomotive No. 10 to full working order;

University of Newcastle, \$11,500 to ensure that the South Maitland Railways' archive is properly housed in a secure, climate-controlled environment and readily available to researchers; and

Richmond Vale Co-op Society \$3720 to return former BHP self-propelled steam crane No. 5 to working order.

Mr Knowles also reported that a grant of \$12,500 had been made to the Steam Tram and Railway Preservation Co-op Society toward their \$40,000 project to restore former Portland Cement Company 0-6-OST locomotive No. 2 (Robert Stephenson 2994 of 1899). This project has been completed at the Rail Transport Museum, Thirlmere.

NSW Heritage Office, 1/98

KEITH DUNCAN,

Megalong Valley 610mm gauge

This private railway has not been reported for some time (see LRN 47 p.7). A visit in January 1998 found an imaginative "sculpture" of narrow gauge equipment at the entrance to the property. Along the road frontage is the two-road shed. This contains two Perry 0-6-2T locomotives ex North Eton Mill in Queensland. No.6 (2382 of 1942) is in grey and yellow livery while the other, 6634.52.1 of 1952, (formerly 7) is plain black. Also in the shed was a Malcolm Moore 4wPM (1050 of 1943), painted blue, together with a small open passenger car formerly used at Goulburn Steam Museum and a steel replica Melbourne cable tram trailer. The railway appears to be about 700m in length, and

Heritage & Tourist

is somewhat overgrown. Once planned as the "Megalong Valley Tourist Railway", the dream may have faded somewhat.

John Browning 1/98

SKITUBE, Perisher Blue Pty Ltd

1435mm gauge

Tulloch 0-4-ODH locomotive 1 (001 of 1959) is in "Thomas" blue with a very Thomas-like numeral and with red lining (see LRN88 p.10). Frames, wheels and headstocks are painted black. This locomotive is restricted to the relatively flat sections at and near Bullock's Flat and most probably spends nearly all its time in the depot area.

John Browning 12/97

STATE MINE RAILWAY HERITAGE PARK, Lithgow

1435mm gauge

Static restoration has commenced on two Glen Davis tram locomotives in the collection. These are the Glen Davis "tram" loco and the GE locomotive.

The plan is to display them along with the Glen Davis Jeffrey battery loco, shale hoppers, man transports and a Jeffrey L400 loader. The latter is a sister to the machine used for development work at Glen Davis.

Ray Christison 2/98

TIMBERTOWN COMMUNITY ENTERPRISES LTD, Wauchope

610mm gauge

It is said that this operating company is now under the control of an administrator, and hopes are expressed that a further injection of capital will be forthcoming from a new operator soon. Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 1862 of 1953 is now operating in black livery following its 1994 overhaul (see LRN109 p.6), and has a rather oversized running number No.1862 on the tender side.

Its train is three charming narrow-bodied wooden bogie cars. Unfortunately, loco and train sit out in the open as the open sided shed at Timbertown Station lost its rail connection some years ago.

John Fowler 0-6-0T *THE GREEN HORNET* (12271 of 1910) is displayed under cover at Broken Bago Station with a log mounted

on bogies. It is the reserve engine, and is able to operate on reduced pressure.

John Fowler 0-4-2T 17881 of 1928 has been dismantled and its boiler was sent to Hunter Valley Training Company in the first half of 1997 for retubing and firebox repairs.

Motor Rail Simplex 4wDM 4214 of 1929 has been fitted with an overall canopy, and looks very pleasing. It was in the depot building at Broken Bago, where the track layout allows stock to be turned on a triangle.

John Browning 1/98

WOOTTON HISTORICAL RAILWAY WALK

This heritage walking track has been established by State Forest of NSW and the Wootton Progress Association allows the visitor to appreciate something of the extensive light railway system which operated in the forest between 1890 and 1944.

Located 20km north of Buladelah on the Pacific Highway, the walk follows the last 6km of the railway from Sams Camp to the Trestle Bridge in Wang Wauk S.F. There are many remnants of the railway still intact.

To access the walk, turn off the Pacific Highway at the Squires Road sign at the top of the hill in Wootton. Travel along Squires Road for 1.5km and, after crossing a timber bridge, turn left at the road junction with Possums Pie Road and travel a further 3.5km to Wang Wauk State Forest. Continue along what is now Worths Road until you reach the parking and picnic spot at Sams Creek. State Forests brochure

OLYMPIC COORDINATION AUTHORITY Millennium Park Railway, Homebush Bay

610mm gauge

Concept plans for a vast "21st Century" park around the Olympic Site at Homebush Bay were announced in January 1998.

The plan proposes extensive works throughout almost all the 500-hectare waterfront area, including recreational and educational facilities, as well as major landscape works.

The existing RAN Newington Armaments Depot railway (LRN 119) is to be upgraded and extended to provide a passenger transport service through the park.



COAL CREEK HERITAGE VILLAGE, Korumburra, Victoria

Bundaberg Foundry 0-6-2T (B/No. 7 of 1953) returned to service on 19 December 1997 following extensive restoration work by local volunteers. Restoration tasks included cleaning and retubing the boiler, new boiler stays, a new funnel, overhaul of the lubricator and brake system (including a steam air compressor from the Talylyn Railway Company in Wales), new water tank and pipeworks, motion work refurbishment and a complete repaint. The former *KOLAN* has been renamed *COUNT STRZELECKI* at Coal Creek.

The 610mm gauge Bush Tramway has been extended into the centre of the village and Black Diamond Mine. This provides a more convenient point to join the train that serves as a transport system to new exhibitions. New locomotive and carriage sheds have been built in the typical style of 19th century bush tramway systems. All-day train tickets are \$4 for adults and \$2 for children. A cab ride ticket for one circuit on the steam locomotive is available for \$10. The Village is open every day from 10am to 4.30pm. Steam operations are planned on weekends, school and public holidays, with the Ruston Hornsby 4wDM (354040 of 1953) handling trains at other times.

Warwick Turner, 1/1998



Expenditure of \$20 million has been approved for the project, including some \$5 million to upgrade the railway.

Sydney Morning Herald 10/1/98

Victoria

PUFFING BILLY RAILWAY

762mm gauge

Emerald Tourist Railway Board

The Christmas/New Year holiday saw mixed passenger traffic, with some higher than expected loadings and low turnout on others due to heat wave conditions.

For the six months to December 1997, 96 per cent of trains were hauled by steam locomotives, with 2-6-2Ts 7A, 8A, 12A and 14A in regular mainline service.

12A worked on 134 days during this period for 5730 km. Steam locomotives Climax 1694 and Peckett 0-4-0ST, together with the two privately owned Couillet 0-4-0Ts, were available for special workings, with diesel locomotives D21 and DH59 were also available for service.

On Saturday 7 February all the piers for Bridge No.9 (Cockatoo Creek) were installed, as well as eight of the ten beams. The remaining two beams were expected to be installed on 17 February. Decking should be fitted and track laid across the bridge in March. The bridge must be finished before the track can be ballasted from Cockatoo Creek towards Fielder, as works loco NRT1 is not powerful enough for the job on the long 1 in 30 grades, and larger locomotives will not fit on the low loader.

During several days in February it was not possible to run round trains at Lakeside, due to track changes to provide an island platform [see LR 139, p.27]. Locomotives took water at Emerald instead of Lakeside, and diesel loco D21 was used at Lakeside to shunt the empty passenger cars.

PBR Members Newsletter, 1/98; Frank Stamford 2/98

DIAMOND VALLEY RAILWAY INC., Eltham

184mm gauge

Corporate sponsorship from Honda MPE, in the form of a 5.5hp GC160 petrol engine has enabled the Diamond Valley Railway to advance their project to restore the model of W241 0-6-0DH locomotive. The locomotive, built



An evocative reminder of the Beech Forest railway. Photo: Norm Houghton



On 21 February, PBR identities Dave Conlan and Don Marshall take a breather as construction work continues on Bridge No.9, which will carry the Gembrook extension over Cockatoo Creek Photo: Bill Hanks



Bogger and Skip preserved in Main Street, Rosebery, Tasmania. 3/10/97 Photo: Wal Lane



The new Honda engine fitted to W241's frames.

Photo: DVR

Heritage & Tourist

in 1966 by Bill Pert, has been out of service for several years. When it returns to service in mid-1998, W241 will be the 21st locomotive in service on the DVR.

Melissa Blake, Honda MPE, 2/98

OTWAY SCENIC CIRCLE ASSOCIATION

This group has proposals under consideration to expand the railway heritage site at Crowes, the terminus of the former VR Beechy narrow-gauge railway. The site currently features the restored buffer stop at the terminus and information about the former railway. In addition, the Gellibrand Progress Association has initiated a project to restore a section of the former line as a Rails-to-Trail, while the Beech Forest Progress Association has cleared some 4km of the formation for a walking trail. These three groups are now working toward an integrated project for public use of the corridor. *Bob Whitehead, 2/98*

ALEXANDRA TIMBER TRAMWAY AND MUSEUM INC

610mm gauge

The ATT&M, the Shire of Murrindindi and the Federal Department of Transport & Regional Development have joined in a partnership to restore the railway buildings at Alexandra.

An initial grant of \$50,000, with an additional \$5000 from the Shire of Murrindindi, and \$5000 to be provided by the ATT&M, is funding the work. It is estimated that an additional \$18,000 will be raised from in-kind contributions from the Shire, the Alexandra community and the ATT&M.

Work on the project is well underway with the entire station now restumped and level. Restoration and replacement of structural members is nearing completion and new weatherboards have been specially cut to the original profile.

By the beginning of January the "operational" side of the station was almost finished. The work is being carried out in accordance with the Burra Charter of Australia ICOMOS.

The Museum at Alexandra will be

Heritage & Tourist

in full swing between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm on Easter Saturday, Sunday and Monday in 1998. John Fowler 0-6-0 T (11885 of 1909) and Kelly and Lewis 0-6-0 DM (4271 of 1935) will be operating passenger trains and visitors will be able to inspect progress on the "frames-up" restoration of Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 (1098 of 1915). In addition, the Museum's 8 nhp and 2 nhp Marshall portables will be in steam along with the Bartram vertical boiler and Tangye pump. As an added attraction, the Buffalo Pitts traction engine will also be in steam.

Plans to further extend the tramway along the old formation towards Rubicon have been progressing with the reclamation of rail from the irrigation dam at Waranga. The tramway along the dam wall was dismantled by Goulburn Murray Water some years ago, but the section between the dam wall and the quarry was left intact. Tenders for all the rail and rolling stock at the site were advertised and a number of museums are believed to have tendered for the lot.

The ATT&M was the successful tenderer after arguing that the remaining track should be left in situ and the rolling stock retained on site at Waranga due to its considerable heritage significance as the last of many tramways once operated by the former State Rivers & Water Supply Commission. Twelve tonnes of the already dismantled section of track have now been reclaimed and the remainder is expected to be at Alexandra shortly. The ATT&M will provide ongoing heritage advice to Goulburn Murray Water concerning the maintenance of the remaining section of track at Waranga and the possible operation of the Waranga tramway.

Peter Evans 3/98

Tasmania

EAST COAST BIRDLIFE AND ANIMAL PARK, Bicheno

narrow gauge **Neville Quinn**
The Douglas River Coal Company operated a mine between 1843

and 1858 in what is now one corner of the 32ha Birdlife and Animal Park. Mining relics from neighbouring properties and from various other sites along the coast have been collected for a historical exhibit.

A stretch of aerial tramway once used to carry coal from the mine to a jetty has been rebuilt. Old boilers, several coal skips and convict bricks have been placed on display in what is to be an expanding collection.

Aussie Post 8/11/97 via Arnold Lockyer

Western Australia

BENNETT BROOK RAILWAY WA Light Railway Preservation Association

610mm gauge
Following the success of last year's event, BBR has scheduled two *Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine* days for 1998. The first of these will be on Sunday 17th May. An intensive service will operate on both the "Bushland Loop" and on the "Mussel Pool branch" from 9:00am until about 5:00pm. The locos and some stock will feature appropriate faces, and the *Fat Controller* will be in attendance. There will be a range of other attractions including bus rides and a tractor display. The second Friends of Thomas day is planned for Sunday 11th October.

A significant milestone has been reached in the restoration of former Magnet Tramway No.3 0-4-4-0T Mallet locomotive (Orenstein and Koppel 2609 of 1907) with the successful running of the front engine unit on compressed air. [LRN113, p.23] Willis Engineering have been working on the engine units on an occasional basis for some time, and have been making steady progress recently. Work has been proceeding concurrently on the rear engine unit and this should be operable in the near future.

Simon Mead, 2/98

Overseas

Papua New Guinea Railways

The book *End of the line: a history of railways in Papua New Guinea* was officially launched by the Vice-Minister of Education, Professor John Waiko at the National Library on 12 February 1998. It documents the history of some 150 railways built by the

Germans, Australians, Japanese and construction companies through the different stages of the country's development.

Professor Waiko said "it is a national shame for Papua New Guinea not to have adopted railways as an alternative means of transport". Authors Bob McKillop and Michael Pearson outlined the rationale and themes of the book. The event was well reported in the local media and *The National* newspaper also carried a full page review of the book by Ian Bowden (see p.28 for our review). *The National*, 13/2/98

Kelani Valley Railway, Sri Lanka

762/1672mm gauge
JF Tours & Travels (Ceylon) Limited
Conversion of the last section of narrow gauge line from Homagama to Avissawella to broad gauge was officially opened on 11 August 1997. Narrow gauge track has been retained to allow the operation of heritage trains over this route.

SLR narrow gauge rolling stock is kept at Avissawella and is still used for some trains due to a shortage of broad gauge motive power.

JF Tours & Travels, operators of *Viceroy Special* steam trains, maintain narrow gauge 4-6-4T J1.220 (Hunslet 1478 of 1924) and V2 Sentinel steam railcar No. 331 (Sentinel 7303 of 1928) in running order for heritage tours. Both were scheduled to operate during a Dorridge Travel Service 8-day tour of Sri Lanka from 29 December 1997. J1 4-6-4T No.221 (Hunslet 1479 of 1925) is set aside at Dematagoda shed for a proposed steam museum in Colombo.

Editor 12/97

Fiji Institute of Technology

Picked up through the Internet is a report that there may be plans for the Institute to restore to working order one of the steam locomotives left in Fiji. Further details would be welcome.

John Browning 11/97

Coming Events

APRIL 1998

4 Puffing Billy Railway, Commissioner's Inspection Tours; Phone (03) 9754 6800.

4 Wee Georgie Wood Railway, Tullah TAS. Steam train operations.

9-26 Semaphore & Fort Glanville Tourist Railway, Port Adelaide SA (457mm gauge). Daily operations during school holidays pending locomotive availability. Phone 08 8341 1690 for details.

11-12 Australian Narrow Gauge Convention, Blackheath, NSW. Third convention of narrow gauge railway modellers at Blackheath Public School. Contact George Paxon for details: Phone/fax 02 4757 2629; e-mail: paxon@pnc.com.au

11-12 Wee Georgie Wood Railway, Tullah TAS. Steam operations on this popular "little railway" on the West Coast. Phone 03 6234 8233 for details.

11-13 Alexandra Timber Tramway, VIC. Train operations with John Fowler 0-6-0T and Kelly & Lewis 0-6-0DM, together with Marshall portables, Bartram vertical boiler and Tangye pump, and Buffalo Pitts traction engine. Restoration work on Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 (1098 of 1915) on display. Phone: 015 50 9988.

12 Cobdogla Irrigation & Steam Museum, Barmera SA. Pump and steam day with Humphrey Pump, Bagnall locomotive and traction engine in steam (1100-1630).

19 Cobdogla Irrigation & Steam Museum, Barmera SA. Steam train operating day.

26 State Mine Railway Heritage Park, Lithgow NSW. Open Day as part of Heritage Week. 2-6-2ST 2605 in steam with a display of Glen Davis underground locomotives, battery cars and transports. Contact museum 02 6353 1513 or Ray Christison, e-mail: christson@lisp.com.au

26 Puffing Billy Railway, *The Great Train Race* Fun Run. One of Australia's most popular Fun Runs where runners compete with *Puffing Billy* over a 13.5km course. On 25th and 26th *Peter Peckett* operates at Gembrook.

MAY 1998

5 Puffing Billy Railway, Commissioner's Inspection Tours; Phone (03) 9754 6800.

10 Puffing Billy Railway, Mothers' Day Luncheon Special.

16-17 Richmond Vale Railway Museum, Kurri Kurri NSW. Steam train operations in association with Model Show.

17 Puffing Billy Railway, *Thomas the Tank Engine* Weekend - Special trains, food and the Fat Controller will be in attendance.

17 Bennett Brook Railway, Whiteman Park WA. *Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine* Day. A number of steam and diesel locomotives in action with the fat controller in attendance. Phone (08) 9249 3861.

17 Cobdogla Irrigation & Steam Museum, Barmera SA. Pump and steam day with Humphrey Pump, Bagnall locomotive and traction engine in steam.

JUNE 1998

7 Cobdogla Irrigation & Steam Museum, Barmera SA. Pump and steam day with Humphrey Pump, Bagnall locomotive and traction engine in steam

7-8 Richmond Vale Railway Museum, Kurri Kurri NSW. Coalfields Steam Weekend. Steam trains running 1000-1600.

20 LRRSA/Puffing Billy Railway. Special event to celebrate the 70th birthday of Climax locomotive 1694. Check for date and details at (03) 9754 6800.



RESEARCH

Cockatoo Island Dockyard Records

Information about the collection is provided in Australian Archives Fact Sheet No. 27.

Records include construction drawings of steam locomotives (P1297), locomotive and rolling stock outline drawings (P2316) and photographic records (P1300). The collection includes material on the 610mm gauge North East Dundas Tramway.

A dockyard operated on Cockatoo Island in Sydney Harbour from 1856 to December 1991, administered at first by the Government of New South Wales.

In 1912, the Commonwealth Government bought the island and operated the dockyard until 1933 when it was leased to Cockatoo Docks and Engineering Co Limited. During the period of lease, the Commonwealth Government was closely involved with the dockyard as its major client and owner of the land.

A large quantity of records (726 archival series), many of them of historical interest, has been transferred to the NSW Office of the Australian Archives.

The collection documents the operations of a major Australian dockyard for over a hundred years, some series dating from the mid 19th century. Formats include several types of drawings, photographs, volumes and files.

Although the main activities of the dockyard were ship construction, refitting, conversion and repair, some records will be of interest to readers of Light Railways.

Records documenting the maintenance of the island itself, and the construction and maintenance of its buildings and facilities may be relevant.

Photographs and detailed drawings are held of the power station, cranes, foundries,

workshops and other buildings, and dry docks. Several of these relate to the rail lines used in the work of the dockyard.

Records which are over 30 years old are available for inspection in the Reading Room of the NSW Office of the Australian Archives. This is at present at Level 17, 477 Pitt Street, Sydney but will move to Chester Hill later in 1998. Prior telephone notification of an intended visit is advised so that records may be retrieved from the repository at Chester Hill.

The Australian Archives is about to publish Guide 10, *Cockatoo Island: a Guide to Commonwealth Government Records*. This comprehensive guide describes records created by CA 7228, Cockatoo Dockyard P/L and indicates some other sources. Copies will be available for viewing at any office of the Australian Archives.

They may be purchased at a cost of \$10 per copy (plus postage) from any AA office; by mail order from the Public Program section, PO Box 7425, Canberra Mail Centre ACT 2610; or by e-mail from aaales@aa.gov.au

Margaret Chambers

Hagan's Patent Locomotive

The remarkable 2-6-4-0T 2ft gauge J-class locomotive which entered service on the TGR North East Dundas Tramway in 1901 was

described in LR.43, August 1973 (pp. 14-21). This included scale drawings of the locomotive prepared by Geoff Murdoch.

Geoff advises that he has collected more information about the locomotive over the intervening years and is preparing a 'locomotive profile' of this unusual machine.

With publication of Dr C Cenac's book on Garratt K1, Geoff is keen to publish more accurate drawings of Hagan's Patent locomotive.

He is keen to contact Tasmanian readers who may be able to assist with information or research into the relevant TGR archives.

I am advised that the Australian Archives Office in Hobart has recently acquired the majority of the TGR records and these are currently being catalogued.

Geoff Murdoch's contact is PO Box 127, Redbank Plaza QLD 4301.

FIELD REPORT

Sanderson's Mills, Forest

Sanderson's two mills at Forest in the Noonday Creek (1897-1902) and West Barwon Valley (1902-1923) were flooded in 1962 by the West Barwon Dam. Due to the present drought, the dam is only one-quarter full and, as a consequence, the two mill sites have emerged from the mud.

On 16 November 1997 I inspected both sites. The following are my findings:

Noonday Mill

The mill site is on a small flat spot high above the creek. Ground imprints at the log yard and the sawdust hole are clearly visible. The tramway formation leading into and out of the log yard is obvious. Numerous metal items dot the blacksmith site.

Henry's tram, which ran below Sanderson's, is detectable upstream from the mill for almost 150 metres. The logging road put in to clear the valley of trees prior to flooding cuts through the middle of everything and has destroyed most earthworks from the 1890s.

Barwon Mill

This mill was built on an extensive flat just a couple of metres above the river, so the dam waters and siltation have buried everything. Not one ground mark remains, nor is the actual mill site detectable. As well, the dam builders bulldozed the site and removed the sawdust heap, so the caterpillar treads ground the evidence to dust.

However, poking around with a machete unearthed some lengths of 60lb rail, a piece of curved steam pipe from a Rowan car locomotive and the funnel from the Slaughter Gruning L-class locomotive. There is no tramway formation evident at the site or anywhere along the valley for kilometres.

Norm Houghton



Scale model of Tasmanian Government Railways J1 (Hagan's Patent Locomotive) in Zeehan School of Mines Museum, Tasmania. 3 October, 1997.

Photo: H.J. Wright



Book Reviews

Rails Through the Bush: Timber and Firewood Tramways and Railway Contractors of Western Australia by Adrian Gunzburg and Jeff Austin.

300 pages, 295mm x 207mm, 281 photographs, 21 maps, 8 locomotive diagrams, hard cover. Published 1997 by Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc, PO Box 21, Surrey Hills, Victoria 3127.

The LRRSA has become recognised as the publisher of good quality books in recent years, and this excellent book is yet another example. The subject of timber tramways in Western Australia, which fascinates many beyond the boundaries of that state, has only previously been the subject of tantalisingly brief articles in society journals, magazines, and the odd book dealing with the WA timber industry.

Adrian Gunzburg and Jeff Austin have now addressed this, with the production of a magnificent book dealing with not only the timber tramways of Western Australia, but also the related firewood tramways, and the often neglected subject of railway construction contractors and their industrial railways. As the reader soon finds, there was a direct connection between all three types of railways, through the people involved, as well as with the locomotives themselves, which passed happily and easily between all three!

The book is divided into three sections. The first section (158 pages / 182 photos) deals with the timber tramways, followed logically by the firewood tramways (46 pages / 68 photos), and finally the railway construction contractors, including the PWD (46 pages / 31 photos).

Each section is divided into sub-sections covering each owner or contractor, giving details of their history, personnel and operations, followed by a locomotive list and a summary of the locomotive's movements (and some of these are quite extensive!)

At the end of the book is a brief glossary of terms, 20 coloured maps showing each of the tramway systems in mind boggling detail, and a representative selection of eight locomotive drawings.

The references section is one of the clearest, and easiest to read the reviewer has seen in recent books - the text is printed in a size you can (at last) read easily, without having to resort to a magnifying glass! There is a wealth of black and white photographs, many of which

haven't been published before, and all are extremely well produced. Most of the darkroom work on these photos is the fruit of Adrian Gunzburg's labours, and he has done an excellent job.

It would be impossible in a review of this nature to mention all the highlights in this book! Maybe mention of a few will suffice. How many people understand how rare were the Barclay 4-6-0s? (Barclay built few tender engines, or 3ft 6in. gauge locos for that matter.) Those with a love of the 'G' type locos, both the 4-6-0 and 2-6-0 variants, will be delighted - there are many of them! Western Australia had one of the biggest collections of these *colonial* designs originated by Beyer Peacock, and later built by other British builders, and even some interstate members of this family found their way to Western Australia, from South Australia (particularly), and even from as far away as Queensland.

The narrow gauge enthusiast will not be disappointed either, with the firewood lines providing some interesting examples, including one with the rare gauge of 18 in. To see all these engines, whatever their owner, with tenders piled high with wood, gives the impression of a *wild west* style of operation, but this belied the important part these locos played in the timber industry of Western Australia, well into the latter part of the century. This book could also be considered a tribute to the woodmen and contractors of Western Australia, as much as to the locomotives that faithfully and uncomplainingly served them.

There are few areas of concern with this book. The text is happily free of 'typo' errors (obviously somebody has spent some valuable time attending to this!), and it is printed in an easily readable style on good quality paper. The maps are excellently drawn, and shown in colour. However in the reviewer's copy, the darker colours tend to merge with each other, particularly where there are a number of similar colours on the same map. This is probably more a difficulty with the printing process rather than any fault of the authors or publisher.

A minor omission may be the lack of mention that the attractive little 2-4-2T *KARRI* was, in fact, based on a design which Black Hawthorn, Dübs and North British all built in some quantity for the 3ft 6in. gauge railways in Japan (both JNR and private lines). The railway construction contractors are an area which are frequently overlooked in books both here and overseas, and yet they form an extremely important part of the railway story.

The authors have addressed this subject admirably, and the expanded version of the Edward Keane Story is most interesting, all the more so when one realises that such business practices (in modern form) are alive and well today! The reviewer's overall impression was that herein were to be found good examples of what the late John Buckland humourously referred to as "*little old engines lost in the bush*"!

Adrian Gunzburg is an already recognised and authoritative author, with his three previous books on the locomotives of WAGR and the Midland Railway of WA. Jeff Austin is probably not so well known, yet this book will give him the credit that he duly deserves (all those hours in the Batty Library were well spent, Jeff!), and inducts him into a small, but growing, band of notable authors on railway matters.

Both authors show an obvious love of their subject, and they are to be congratulated for producing a first class book that will obviously become the recognised authority on the three subjects covered. The LRRSA should also be congratulated for this production (in which, it appears, Adrian also played a major part).

Whilst the price of this book (\$46.00 retail; \$32.00 members) may appear steep to some, this is one book where you could afford to "splash out" and be well rewarded for doing so, for it will form a splendid addition to the bookshelf of anyone interested in light and industrial railways. It will undoubtedly be well received and popular in Western Australia. Highly recommended.

Ray Ellis

End of the Line: A History of Railways in Papua New Guinea by Bob McKillop and Michael Pearson.

University of Papua New Guinea Press, Port Moresby, 1997, 170 pages, maps, photographs and index. Available from LRRSA Sales, PO Box 21, Surrey Hills Vic 3127

In 1931 Margaret Wood married in Rabaul and went as new 'missis' to Neinduk plantation in the north Baining. On her first night she had changed into her silky green wide-legged beach pyjamas when there was a storm of objects battering on the house, a rattling of tins and raucous yells. She feared the worst; but it was her neighbours honouring the newly weds with a tin-kettling. Their cheerful fellow planters and the Assistant District Officer from Lassul Bay insisted that they all go to a lively party at Nambung.

"We all got onto flat wooden trucks with no side supports and were pushed along a rail track through the trees by about half a dozen natives. Of course I hadn't had time to see anything of the plantation, and I wondered just where I was going. It all felt very unreal and exciting....It was a brilliant moonlight night with the coconut trees all turned to silver We continued on until the rail tracks came to a sudden end. This marked the border of the two plantations, and from there we walked past a sawmill and on to [a plantation house]". (From *Pat Boys, Coconuts and Tearooms*, privately published, 1993.)

Margaret Wood did not have a happy marriage, but she recalled that rail journey with delight: it was novel way to travel through an exotic landscape. Bob McKillop and Michael Pearson

would also argue that it was an appropriate and efficient means of transport. And of course in their comprehensive survey of railways in Papua New Guinea the Neinduk wooden rails with the branch line to the sawmill (including length and gauge) are included.

Some of the most valuable contributions to the writing of the history of Papua New Guinea have been made by those who have taken a particular topic, dealt with it thoroughly, and by being conscious of the broader context, added to our understanding of broader historical movements. James Sinclair has done this with his two volumes on the history of the aeroplane; and McKillop and Pearson, dealing with a much narrower topic, have also been able to illuminate much social and economic history. Their pursuit of published sources, documents in archives, and private and public collections, memories, relics and eroding, over-grown earthworks has been most effective. Their footnotes and bibliography will be used by scholars working on other topics as a guide to what may be uncovered by the longterm chase of elusive fragments of evidence.

The photographs, which have been read for all the information that a magnifying glass will divulge, are excellent. The collections on Misima and the Dubuna to Bootless Bay line are particularly effective. The contrast in the dress and posture of men on the mining lines compared with those pictured in the ox-drawn carriages in German New Guinea says much about the different styles of an outpost of a great imperial power and an Australian frontier. The maps are a useful addition. Documents showing the routes of the Rabaul tramway and the Japanese line at Buin which should be readily available have in fact disappeared more rapidly than the lines themselves. In fact, as McKillop and Pearson are aware, the best evidence of the Namanula line are the rails that now swing high and sleeperless across the washouts eroded through the recent ash falls.

The authors have collected some fine anecdotes, and solved some historical puzzles. Among the cheerful, larrikins elected to the first House of Assembly in Port Moresby in 1964 was Keith Tetley, a wartime submariner, later crocodile shooter and trader in the Gulf of Papua, and sometimes called 'Railways' Tetley. We now have an accurate account of how Keith, honourable member for Gulf Open, came by his name. He helped himself to rails abandoned by the defunct Borneo New Guinea Mangrove Company, and was sued by Steamships Trading Company who thought they owned the rails and other assets of the failed company. Tetley won the case. That was as close as Papua New Guinea came to having a Great Railway Robbery.

While the general level of accuracy is high, there is one error of fact and interpretation that should be noted. The authors say that Whitlam proclaimed Papua New Guinea would be self-governing in 1972, and that after he became Prime Minister Papua New Guinea became self-governing on 1 December 1972.

In fact, the date for self-government was 1 December 1973 and this date was set in mid-1972 while Andrew Peacock was Minister for External Territories. At the time Whitlam said, "Labor supports and endorses the statement made by the Minister". Whitlam was in power at the formal declaration of self-government; but he was following the timetable proclaimed by Michael Somare in Port Moresby and Peacock in Canberra.

Bob McKillop and Michael Pearson are to be congratulated on collecting information on 150 railways in a land so often thought to be without a history of railways. They have made arcane detail interesting, and tied the railways of plantations, missions, governments, miners and armies to wider events. They leave the reader with a strong argument that Port Moresby would be a better city if it were serviced by a light railway - but allow little hope that its carriages will ever run a loop from Konedobu to Baruni, Gerehu, Waigani, Boroko, Koki and back to Kone.

Currently Papua New Guinea has neither the political nor bureaucratic strength to plan, finance, build and administer such a major public utility. The absence of institutional strength is part of an Australian legacy that was better in the bush and at initial contact than in towns and squatter settlements and in building an infrastructure appropriate to a new nation.

The printer omitted page numbers, but as a tolerant Bob McKillop pointed out, numbers are needed to exploit the index, and so readers are encouraged to number their own pages.

Hank Nelson, Department of Pacific History, Australian National University

Victorian Railways Narrow Gauge G Class 'Garratts in the Otways'

Edited by Emile D. Badawy and John Sargent.

48 pages, 297 mm x 210 mm, 53 photographs. Published by Train Hobby Publications.

With a few exceptions this landscape format book consists of one photograph per page illustrating Beyer-Garratt locos G41 and G42 on the Beech Forest railway.

Before seeing it, I thought the price (\$29.95) was excessive for a 48 page book, but there is no compromise on the quality of production, and the photographs are very well reproduced on heavy art paper.

The photographs are historical gems, bringing the character of the railway back to life. All are printed in colour, perfectly exposed, and the majority are absolutely pin sharp. Most were taken by Peter Ralph and Michael Schrader.

Amongst other things they show the varied scenery, the balloon loop at Beech Forest, taking water at Dinmont, and views from the cab. They date from between September 1954 and June 1962.

Book Reviews

Of particular interest are six views on rail recovery trains between Weapoinah and Crowes taken in 1961.

Most of the captions are of one line, but they appear to be accurate. Normally I do not favour short photo captions, but in this case they seem to have worked. Had they been longer the photographs could not have been reproduced so large. There is a simple map, a track diagram of Beech Forest, a diagram and side view drawing of the locos, and a minimum of introductory text. I would have liked to see the photographers names underneath the photographs, rather than listed on page 2, and a short bibliography would have been helpful to those seeking more information.

Priceless historic photographs deserve to be treated with respect. They certainly have been in this publication. The book is available from LRRSA Sales, and from many other outlets. Highly recommended.

Frank Stamford

Moreton Sugar Mill: Sweet Heart of Nambour *by Berenis Alcorn and Robin Dunn.*

238 pages, 260mm x 200mm, 106 photographs, 6 maps and diagrams, card cover. Published 1997 by the authors.

In the late 1890s, the Queensland Government, with the expulsion of South Pacific labour in prospect (and likely to be hastened by the advent of Federation), and keen to develop a viable economic base for expanding settlement, decided to make more attractive the terms for government-financed sugar mills. The basic idea was that settlers would mortgage their land to the government in exchange for mill finance, and that the efforts of European labour would enable the loans to be repaid as one of the fruits of a successful sugar industry.

The political nature of this measure was demonstrated by the fact that not all mills established with government finance in the late 1880s were yet on a sound footing, and certainly the rash of mills established under the new Act were mostly financial disasters, with the government having to step in and run many of them for extended periods. Some had been unviable from the start and closed, sooner or later. Others flourish today, although not all under grower control.

Moreton Mill at Nambour has faced many vicissitudes during its century of existence. From the start, it was crippled by the costs of building a tramline too steep to be worked by conventional locomotives and in the opposite direction to that all too soon demonstrated to be wise. Periods of government control followed until 1907, and the original company remained fairly impoverished right up to the takeover by Howard Smith in 1976.

Book Reviews

In 1987, the mill became part of the Bundaberg Sugar group, now controlled by Tate & Lyle. The mill has evolved into a successful but probably marginal operation under the control of a multinational company, suffering from an unsuitable location, a small canegrowing area with rather too much of it (including the areas into which expansion can occur) inaccessible to the tramline system, and with ever-increasing pressure from urban and tourist development. The authors have done a very good job in successfully putting together a lively account of the mill's story, using an impressive range of research material.

The important role of tramlines in the mill's development is acknowledged and well handled, and there is much of particular interest with cross-river lifting bridges and tramway ferries featuring, as well as more unusual delights such as a passenger service geared to residential beachside development and even a service to convey live baby oysters!

There is an interesting range of tramway photographs, and one of the authors has remarked how she soon developed a fascination for the development of the various tramline branches.

A few shortcomings include the indifferent reproduction of the photographs, the decision not to use columns in presenting the text (which makes reading it very wearisome), and the less than adequate presentation of the maps and diagrams.

However, this is yet another very valuable addition to the ranks of sugar mill histories, which can be strongly recommended to all those interested in this fascinating industry and the narrow gauge railways which it used.

The authors are to be congratulated for their efforts, as is the Bundaberg Sugar Company for underwriting the book's publication. The cost of \$33 posted (\$31 within Queensland) from 22 Turner Street, Maroochydore 4558 is good value.

John Browning



Video Review

Nambour '97

by *Ron Aubrey*

Produced by: ASNM Video, 10 Nerine Street, Kingston Qld 4114.

Duration: 26 minutes.

Cost: \$10.00 (plus \$4.25 packing and postage).

August, 1997 marked the centenary of Moreton Sugar Mill, Nambour (see LR139). To help celebrate the event, the mill's management approached the Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society with a request for the loan of a suitable steam loco to haul cane throughout the week, resulting in the temporary transfer of the Bundaberg Fowler 0-6-2T (B/N 5 of 1952, formerly at Pleystowe Mill) to Moreton.

The event seems to have taken many enthusiasts by surprise but, fortunately, Ron Aubrey, a member of the Australian SN Modellers Group, was there to capture some of the action on video.

With an apparent lack of interest shown by the professionals, it was decided to produce a short compilation of Ron's footage as the first release for ASNM Video.

It would be misleading and unfair to review this video as a professional production, which it clearly does not pretend to be (although there are much more amateurish videos on the market which do). I must say, however, that I enjoyed Nambour '97 for a number of reasons.

To see a cane loco actually working hard, slipping as it starts a rake of nearly fifty cane trucks, is fairly rare in this day and age, and the sight of the Bundy Fowler running down the streets of Nambour must be virtually unique, in Australia at least.

A number of points must be made, however. Most importantly, it is absolutely essential that, where possible, a tripod be used, and it is a shame that some interesting angles have been marred by jerky camera work, particularly where the zoom has been utilised. Some of the scenes I found unnecessarily long, such as the light engine moving off down Howard Street.

While I accept that production costs did not extend to adding a voiceover, perhaps a simple fact sheet could be included next time.

Nambour '97 is no Spielberg production but, regardless, goes some way towards filling a gaping hole in the steam video market. Without it, I, for one, would not have seen this fascinating working at all.

At only \$10 (plus \$4.25 postage) it represents very good value and is, I feel, a venture well worthy of support. Recommended.

Graeme Belbin

Left: Bundy Fowler 5 of 1952 runs light through Howard Street Yard whilst on its Moreton Mill Centenary assignment. Photo: Bob Gough

LRRSA NEWS

MEETINGS

MELBOURNE: "Railway Wonders of the World"

A team of specialists will present a selection of favourite slides covering examples of the odd, unusual, picturesque, scenic, amazing, incredible, grotty and grotesque objects that have run on light railways throughout the world.

Location: Ashburton Uniting Hall, Ashburn Grove, Ashburton

Date: Thursday, 9 April at 8.00 pm.

SYDNEY: "Menangle Sand Company Railway"

Paul Simpson will be presenting an illustrated talk into the history and operations of the quarry railways of the Menangle Sand Company P/L.

Paul has been researching this topic for some years and has uncovered a wealth of information.

Location: Woodstock Community Centre, Church Street, Burwood. Woodstock is a 5 minute walk from Burwood railway station and parking is available in the grounds.

Date: Wednesday 22 April at 7.30 pm. Contact Jeff Moonie for details (02) 4753 6302 for further details.

ADELAIDE: "Bring an Item" Night

Location: 150 First Avenue, Royston Park.

Date: Thursday 2 April at 8.00 pm. Contact Arnold Lockyer for details (08) 8296 9488.

EVENTS

June 20: Puffing Billy Railway, LRRSA Trip to celebrate the Climax's 70th birthday.

Still being planned, but a barbecue lunch, birthday cake, and some unusual photographic opportunities look likely. Details will be sent to LRRSA members.

The NSW Division of the Society will be mounting a stall at the Australian Narrow Gauge Convention at Blackheath on 11-12 April. If you can assist please contact Jeff Moonie (02) 4753 6302 or Bob McKillop 9958 4516.

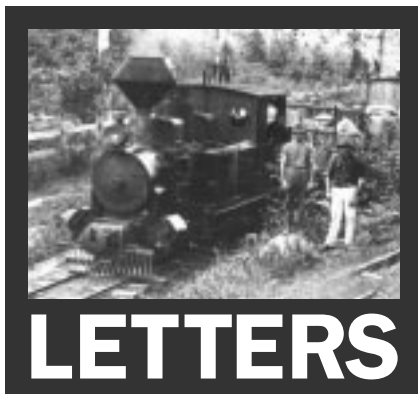
ERRATA, LR139

Page 15, photo captions bottom right: *SEYMOUR* is, in fact, 29 years younger, having come into the world as Baguley Drewry B/N 2392 of 1952.

Page 20, we failed to acknowledge that the article had previously appeared in *Tasmanian Rail News*. Apologies to *TRN* for this omission.

Page 28, second column, fourth line: On 4/10 it was CCS **25** on the mixed train with No.8.

Page 31, third column: fifth last and fourth last paragraphs should read on, i.e. "...285343, with its original engine 298919, reportedly came to Bowen..."



Dear Sir,

**Early Locomotive References,
(LR 138)**

I write in response to Jeff Austin's invitation to comment on entry 5 in his *Early Locomotive References* (page 30, *Light Railways* 138).

I have no doubt that the locomotive shipped from Melbourne for Strahan aboard the ship *Glenelg* on September 26, 1893, was Krauss 2640/1892. This little engine was the first to be purchased by the Zeehan Tramway Company which opened a passenger and freight service on October 6, 1893. The proximity of the shipping date and the opening of the tramway, together with the fact that no other locomotive is known to have arrived on the West Coast of Tasmania around this time, gives strong support to my opinion.

The loco in question worked for over forty years in Tasmania at several different locations. In 1907 it passed into the ownership of Dunkley Bros, who purchased the Zeehan Tramway. Under its new owners 2640 worked at Zeehan, Tullah and near Trowutta. Due to the high pitch or bark of its exhaust it acquired the name "Puppy" while at Tullah. In 1930 it was purchased by the Australian Commonwealth Carbide Company to haul limestone on the line at Ida Bay. It is believed that it was scrapped in or about 1938.

Ken Milbourne
Montrose, Tasmania

Dear Sir,

**Light Railways at Sorrento, Victoria
(LR.65)**

On a visit to the Mornington Peninsula Hospital (Hastings Road, Frankston, Victoria), I noticed a framed photo of the Sorrento Tram on the wall on the left hand side immediately inside the front door. The photo shows one of the two Baldwin saddle tank locomotives, bunker first on a train of five or six 'toastrack' cars, in a two-road yard on a left hand curve, curving towards the sea. The caption states it is at Back Beach, Sorrento, and that the photo was taken in 1910.

I have noticed on a 1 : 63,360 series R752 map "Sorrento" (1931) a tramline running from a "Lime and Fertilizer Works", south-south-west along the eastern side of Trueman's Road for about one mile, then veering south, then south-east for

three-quarters of a mile, then north-west for a few hundred yards. There are some buildings marked next to the tramway at this end, and a nearby quarry which does not seem directly served by the tramway, which bypasses it. Trueman's Road runs off Dromana Road midway between Rye and Rosebud. Does anyone know what this tramway was?

John Robin
Meander, Tasmania

Dear Sir

**Origins of the Australian Central
Sugar Milling System: the CSR Legacy
(LR 138)**

It was good to see an issue of *Light Railways* devoted to the sugar industry: some comments follow.

According to my father and uncle, who grew up at the northern rivers mills, the launch shown on page 7 is *Captain Tom Fenwick* (known simply as *Captain Tom*) and it was taken at the Broadwater Mill on the Richmond River. This boat was purchased in 1927 and lasted until the 1959 season. The photograph on page 8 was also taken around the environs of Broadwater.

Regarding the Fowler 0-6-0PM on page 12, of the four locomotives of this type which CSR had in Australia, 16830 was the only one not to have the word "LEEDS" superimposed on the "FOWLER" on the radiator (as seen on page 17). I am unable to tell whether the locomotive photographed shows this feature. Incidentally, 16830 was ex works in 1926, not 1925.

The photo of the Decauville 0-4-0T on page 13 is interesting and must have been taken later in the loco's life rather than earlier, judging by the diamond stack, the extended frame, and the home made steel tender. The name, from what I can discern, is quite possibly *FIVES LILLE*. If that is the case, then it has lost the tender with which it was originally supplied.

On page 11 it is stated in relation to Condong Mill that in 1971 "mechanical harvesting was commenced and the cane was brought to the mill by road transport". This is not wholly correct as some mechanically harvested cane was carted on the rail system. The Condong 4-ton bins

used for this purpose were transferred to Victoria Mill in the mid 1970s. In fact, according to the February 1974 edition of the CSR publication *News Letter*, CSR had introduced mechanical harvesting on a trial basis at Condong in 1967/8.

Chris Hart
Cordelia, via Ingham, Qld.

Dear Sir,

**John Fowler 16340/1924 at Marsden
Weir Steam Museum (LRN.120, p.7)**

As noted in LRN, the Fowler locomotive at Marsden Weir Museum carries bogus works plates "17882".

I was told by the chap at Goulburn that these plates were made by the owner (or custodian?) of JF 17881 at Wauchope who made a mould from one of its plates and altered the number 1 to a 2. Allegedly he was willing to make further plates successively numbered 17883, 17884, etc as required, so watch out!

As you would know, only a small proportion of Fowler's works numbers were railway locomotives and the next actual number so used was 17903.

Frank Lodge
St Kilda VIC

Dear Sir

**Australian Newsprint Mills' Boyer
Tramline (LR 139)**

Congratulations to Tony Parnell for his interesting article about this unique line, which unfortunately seems to have been little known to a wider audience before its closure, not featuring in *Light Railway News* until the end of 1991.

In LRN 119, mention was made of two battery locomotives at the Redwater Creek Steam & Heritage Society at Sheffield, Tasmania, which were said to have come from Rosebery. The photograph supplied by Peter Medlin at the time shows that in fact these are the Mancha locos from Boyer. Loco 1 belongs to Ron Aubrey and No.2 to the Redwater Creek Society. This being the case, perhaps they kept their motors after all.

John Browning
Rockhampton, Q.



Ex-Australian Newsprint Mills Mancha 4wBE 1, together with the cab of its sister loco No.2 at Sheffield, April 11th 1997.
Photo: Peter Medlin