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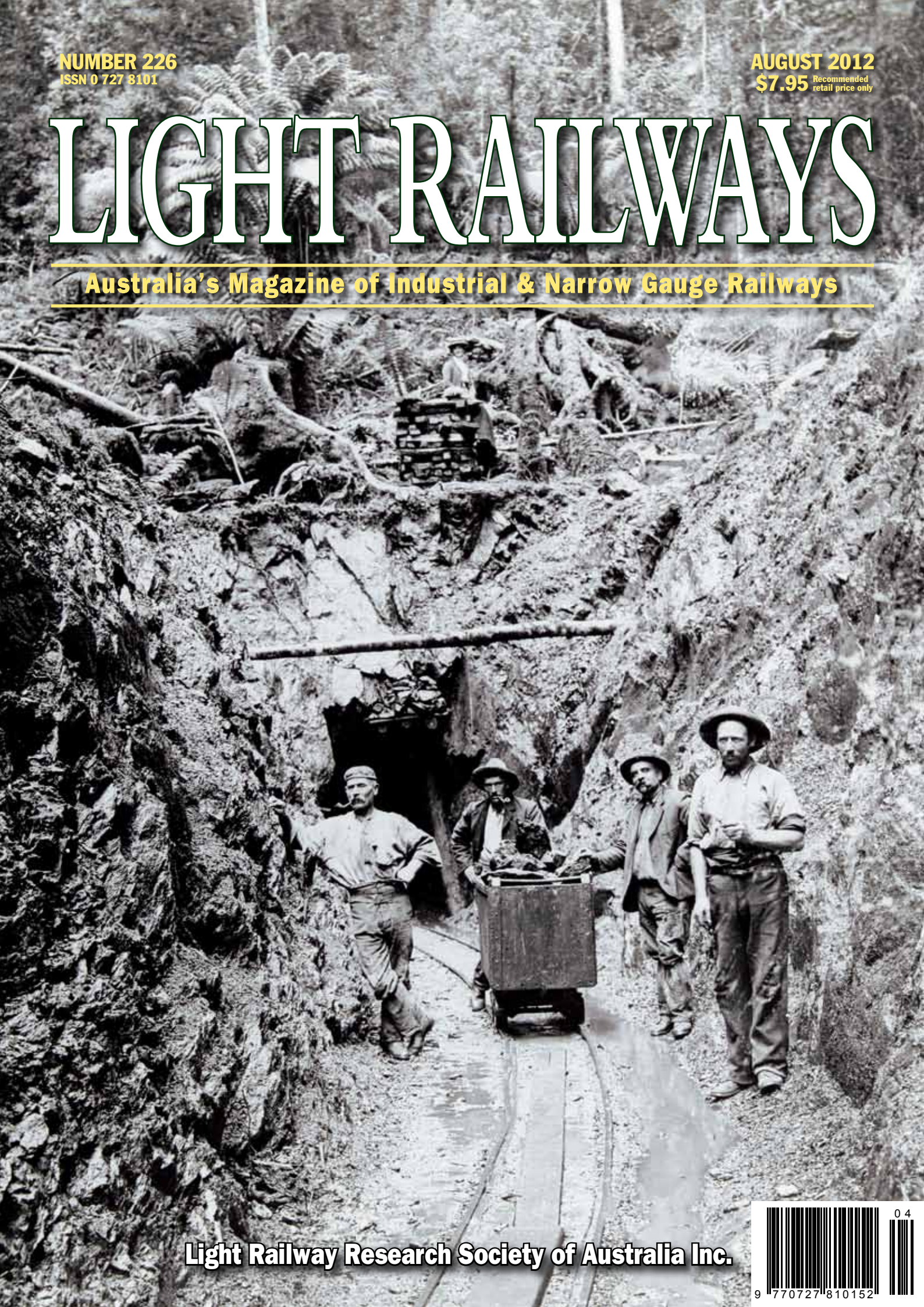
LIGHT RAILWAYS

Australia's Magazine of Industrial & Narrow Gauge Railways



Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc.

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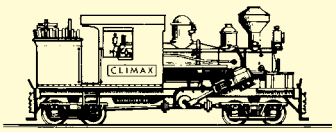

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Imperial to metric conversions:

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

Contents

Signing off — again!

In the February 2012 issue (LR 223) I wrote of succession planning for the *Light Railways* magazine and called for expressions of interest in the position of Heritage & Tourist editor. This resulted in applications being received from a number of outstanding applicants. The LRRSA Council approached two exceptional candidates, Andrew Webster and David Fitzsimons, who have both agreed to join the editorial team. In addition, Scott Gould has agreed to take on the position of Field Reports editor and it is envisaged that this will also encompass the Research section of the magazine. I will be stepping back, but will continue with general editorial tasks for the time being.

Andrew is a lecturer in literature and education at Victoria University in Melbourne, while David is a journalist and senior editor with a national news organisation based in Sydney. Scott is a younger member who joined the LRRSA Council in late 2009 and has led a number of field excursions for the society. The expanded editorial team is planning to get together in Sydney during August to firm up our respective roles and procedures, together with an assessment of future directions for *Light Railways* in the light of technological change and the evolving interests of our readers.

Long standing readers may recollect that I stepped down as editor of *Light Railways* in April 1992 after 12 years in the role. I then rejoined the editorial team that took the magazine into its current A4 colour format with expanded news sections in 1997. That makes for 27 years with the magazine in an editorial role, so it is time to relinquish these duties.

It has been a rewarding experience. Over the years I have established a wide network of people across Australia and the world who have contributed to the magazine. In many cases these ties have merged into close friendships which I value highly and look forward to retaining over the coming years. These will by no means be idle, as I have a lot of research and writing I hope to do in whatever spare time I can find!

Bob McKillop

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

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

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

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

Front Cover: *Early last century a group of intrepid miners poses by the adit of the Sylvester Mine, on Tasmania's west coast. The long-abandoned lead and silver mine was located on Comstock Creek, around 3.5km west of Zeehan. Photo: State Library of Victoria*

A composite photo of William Langley's Curved Bridge over Shingle Creek. It was 77m long by 10m high, and was constructed on a 4-chain (80m) curve down a 1:33 grade. It was one of the few bridges to be steel-railed. The Curved Bridge was built after the Climax arrived in 1912 as a replacement for a large pigsty bridge which was burnt down in a bushfire. The vertical steam boiler under the bridge appears to part of a logging winch, perhaps used to haul in the massive bed logs used for the bridge, some of which are still preserved in situ. Photo: Len King collection

The Langley Vale tramway

The story of William Langley and his timber empire

Part 1 – The Langley Brothers era: 1897-1912

by Ian McNeil

Introduction

Langley Vale was a small sawmill village on the NSW North Coast Railway, 400 km north of Sydney. It was first known as Rockville, after a prominent local feature called Hanging Rock. The Post Office requested a name change in 1905 to avoid telephone exchange confusion with another Rockville in NSW. Sawmill manager Joseph Latham proposed the name Langley Vale which was accepted.

The village developed on the north bank of the Lansdowne River, a navigable tributary of the Manning River. Before the arrival of the railway in 1915, the river was the village's main link to the outside world. Small coastal vessels plied the Manning waterways carrying timber, agricultural produce and passengers down river and on to Sydney.

Behind Langley Vale the cliffs of the Lansdowne Escarpment towered up to 300 metres above the narrow strip of river flats below. The heights were covered in virgin hardwood forests, protected from early timber getters by high cliffs. Once the timber on the river flats was cut out, the Lansdowne timber industry stagnated until the arrival of timber tramways in the mid-1890s.

The best-known of the Lansdowne timber lines was the Langley Vale Tramway. Begun in 1897 and built as a wooden-railed line to the unusual gauge of 4ft 2in (1270mm), it eventually extended more than 20km into the Lansdowne ranges. During both it's horse-drawn and steam-traction phases the line was known for its hair-raising practices of free-wheeling loaded log trucks and log trains at speed down the long steep grades, controlled only by brawny brakemen riding the log trucks.

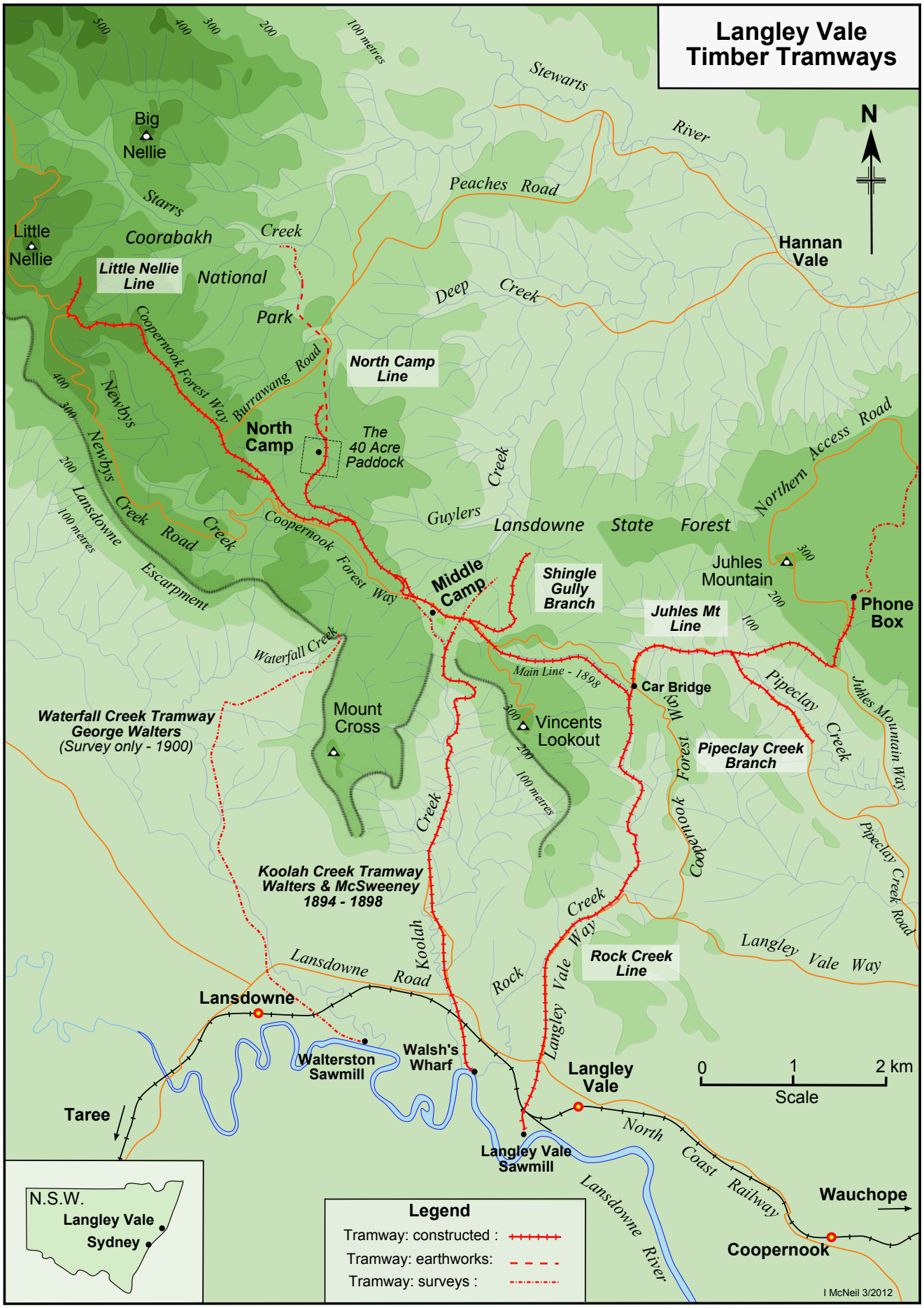
The Koolah Creek timber tramway (1894–1898)

The short-lived Koolah Creek Tramway was one of the earliest timber lines on the NSW north coast, and the first on the Lansdowne. It was built in 1894 by Coopernook sawmiller George Walters in partnership with Sydney timber merchant Justin McSweeney. The tramway was a 4ft 2in (1270mm) gauge, wooden-railed horse line that ran 5 km from a timber camp high up on the Lansdowne Escarpment down to Walsh's wharf on the Lansdowne River. A history of this line will appear in a future issue of *Light Railways*.

The Koolah Creek Tramway was the forerunner and template for the Langley Vale Tramway. They were sited within a kilometre of each other, shared the same unusual gauge, were built with wooden rails and employed horse haulage. Both lines took full advantage of gravity to freewheel loaded log trucks down long steep grades off the Lansdowne Escarpment. William Langley, who built the Langley Vale Tramway, had an intimate knowledge of the Koolah Creek line. He was Justin McSweeney's works manager at Balmain before managing Walters & McSweeney's Coopernook mill when it was getting its log supply from the Koolah Creek Tramway.

William Langley (1860–1946)

The Langley Vale Tramway is synonymous with William Langley, the man who built and presided over it for nearly 40 years. He was born at Terara on the Shoalhaven River in 1860, the second of six sons of Robert John Langley, an English sea captain who first settled in the Shoalhaven district on the NSW south coast. Captain Langley was an enterprising man and began his career captaining sailing ships that traded between the Shoalhaven River and Sydney. He prospered and in the early 1860s moved to Balmain in Sydney where he built up a small fleet of ketches and schooners and later, coastal steamers. He developed an extensive trading business between Sydney and the NSW north coast. His vessels shipped timber and agricultural produce to Sydney and back loaded coal and manufactured goods to the river ports.



The Lansdowne Escarpment dominated both the skyline above Langley Vale and the efforts of the first timber saw millers to get logs for their mills. Feasible routes for timber tramways up the Escarpment were limited and there was hostile competition for them. The early timber industry was dependent on the navigable waters of the Lansdowne River to ship timber down to the Manning River and on to Sydney and export markets.

The slightly portly figure of William Langley standing on one of the many pigsty-style bridges on his 4ft 2in (1270mm) gauge wooden-railed Langley Vale Tramway. He was the driving force behind Langley Vale and presided over the village, sawmill and tramway for 35 years.

Photo: Forestry Commission of NSW per Len King

William served an apprenticeship as a joiner before joining his father's business in Sussex Street, Sydney in 1879. Working for his father did not appear to suit him for he left the firm, and by 1892 had become the manager of the Federal Timber Company's large timber yard and sawmill on the Balmain waterfront. This was owned by Sydney timber merchant Justin McSweeney who at the time was importing large quantities of American oregon and redwood timber into the colony.

McSweeney was among the first group of timber merchants to begin exporting NSW hardwood timbers to England. This venture was successful and trade increased rapidly. Needing a reliable supply of quality hardwood, McSweeney purchased an interest in George Walters' Coopernook sawmill and financed the construction of the Koolah Creek logging tramway upriver to supply it with logs. William Langley agreed to move to Coopernook and manage the saw mill, thereby marking the start of the Langley family's long association with the Lansdowne district. On 29 August 1896 a farewell banquet was held at the Balmain Town Hall for William on the eve of his departure for the Manning.[1] The list of guests at the banquet read like the 'Who's Who' of the Balmain establishment, and it appears that William Langley was not only well thought of but was also well connected.

William managed the Coopernook saw mill until McSweeney & Walters sold their Lansdowne assets in March 1898 to the London-based Australasian Timber Company. He moved 5 km up the Lansdowne River to the future site of Langley Vale where his brothers' firm, Langley Brothers, had purchased an old sawmill and started construction of the Langley Vale Tramway. This is probably when he joined them as a full partner of Langley Brothers.

William went on to establish the long-lived and successful Langley Vale saw mill and its logging tramway. He and his brother Arthur looked after the Langley Brothers timber interests at Woolgoolga and Coffs Harbour as well as on the Manning. He was often away in Sydney on business, and was well-connected in the timber industry. He was president of the Associated Country Sawmillers of NSW and of the Timber Merchants Association. He passed away at Taree on 11 November 1946 at the advanced age of 86.

Langley Brothers enter the Lansdowne timber trade

In 1896 Captain Robert Langley celebrated his 70th birthday and passed control of the business over to his sons. Initially three of his six sons; Robert Henry, Alfred and Arthur formed a partnership, Langley Brothers, to run the business. The firm had become an established timber trader with resident agents on the Tweed River and in Woolgoolga and Coffs Harbour. They were mainly buyers of hewn girders, railway sleepers, pine, cedar and hardwood logs, but now the lucrative and growing export trade in sawn hardwood to England attracted their attention.

The English markets wanted quality hardwoods, properly seasoned, free from blemishes, warping and shrinkage. In order to control both quality and production, Langley Brothers wanted their own sawmills. Taking advantage of their brother William's intimate knowledge of the Lansdowne timber industry, they entered into direct competition with Justin McSweeney and George Walters.

In early 1897 Langley Brothers purchased the disused Rockville sawmill on the north bank of the Lansdowne River, 5km upstream from Coopernook. The mill was built by Barrett

A driver, his off-sider and their horse team pose with a heavily-loaded log truck for this 1911 photograph of the Langley Vale Tramway. The 18ft long tallowwood log, destined for the sawmill, contains some 3200 superfeet of timber and is typical of the huge trees being cut in the virgin Lansdowne forests during William Langley's time. *Photo: Arthur Cooper collection*

and Williams in the mid-1870s, but closed after accessible timber along the river flats had been cut out. The Langleys also purchased 120 acres of private land around the mill, with the land titles being held by Alfred and Robert Henry Langley. At the same time Arthur Langley applied to the NSW Lands Department for permission to construct a 6-mile logging tramway from the sawmill up to the forests on top of the Lansdowne Escarpment.[2,3]

The narrow summit ridge along the top of the Lansdowne Escarpment was the most practical route for a logging tramway. Arthur Langley's claim to it brought him into conflict with rivals Justin McSweeney and George Walters who wanted to extend their Koolah Creek Tramway into the same area. They lodged their competing claim with the Lands Department a few weeks later.[4]

Arthur Langley did not wait for official permission before staking his claim. Ignoring the lower section between the saw mill and the summit ridge, he began tramway construction at strategic blocking points along the ridge. When Lands Department surveyors arrived in October 1897 to survey the competing routes, they found he had already constructed a mile of tramway and two bridges. This did not go down well with McSweeney and Walters who saw their expansion plans blocked. Feelings ran high and shortly afterwards Langley's new bridges were burnt down. Arson was suspected and an inquest was held in November 1897:[5]

"*An inquest was held at Coopernook by Mr. T. B. Boyce, district coroner, on the fire at Langley Brothers' tram line, by which bridges valued at £150 were destroyed. The verdict was that the fire was the act of some person or persons unknown.*"

By early 1898 McSweeney and Walters had accepted defeat and unloaded their Lansdowne assets onto the unsuspecting Australasian Timber Company. Included in the sale was the Coopernook Saw Mill which the new company formally took possession of on 1 March 1898. William Langley resigned his position as Coopernook sawmill manager and moved 5km up-river to take charge of overhauling the Rockville Saw Mill and constructing the Langley Vale Tramway. The Australasian Timber Company operated the Coopernook mill and the Koolah Creek Tramway for a few months before going into liquidation in October 1898.

It took the Lands Department 12 months to process the lease claims which now involved the liquidator of the Australasian Timber Company. Arthur Langley had to wait until November 1898 for his tramway lease applications to be approved and gazetted. The rental was back-dated to 1 January 1897 to cover the start of tramway construction.

Langley Brothers' Rockville saw mill

Barrett & Williams old saw mill was on the north bank of the Lansdowne River near its junction with Rock Creek. William Langley lost no time getting the old mill back in action. It had lain idle for some years and buildings and machinery were in dire need of overhaul. Extensive alterations were also carried out and the saw mill was in full swing by the end of April 1898. The enlarged mill was capable of outputting some 60,000 superfeet of sawn timber a week, a respectable quantity for those times. Robinson and Sons planing and moulding machines were later added in July 1900 for Langley Brothers to add dressed timber to their list of timber products.

Fire, the nemesis of sawmills, struck at midnight on 22 February 1901. In spite of the best efforts of the mill workers, the mill burned to the ground, throwing 40 men out of work. Buildings and contents were valued at £3000 but were only insured for £1000.[6]

Fortuitously for Langley Bros, the assets of the now-defunct Australasian Timber Company were auctioned off a month later. These assets included the Coopernook Saw Mill, previously managed by William Langley for Justin McSweeney. The mill was purchased at auction by Sarah Jane Newton, the widow of a wealthy Coopernook pioneer settler. She leased it to the Langley Brothers for 12 months. They were soon back in business, with their large steam punt Rock Lily bringing logs down the Lansdowne River from Rockville.

Meanwhile no expense was being spared in rebuilding the Rockville Saw Mill in an enlarged and up-to-date form. With much ceremony William Langley entertained local and Taree business men as well as his employees to a banquet at the new mill to celebrate its opening on 2 July 1902. The *Manning River Times* was also invited, resulting in this description of the mill: [7]

The main building is 126ft x 53ft. One wall plate has a length of 86ft, without a join. Where the logs enter the mill sideways, the posts are 53ft apart. Three large beams, 76ft long, are bolted into the principals of the roof, carried over the wall plate to the ground, where they are bolted to a heavy sleeper. This gives great strength to the roof, with a minimum of vibration to the whole building. The foundations of the frame and benches are specially strong; heavy posts being sunk into the ground 16ft, driven slanting and then strained into position to two substantial sleepers 60ft sunk into the ground and tied by cross sleepers 40ft in length.

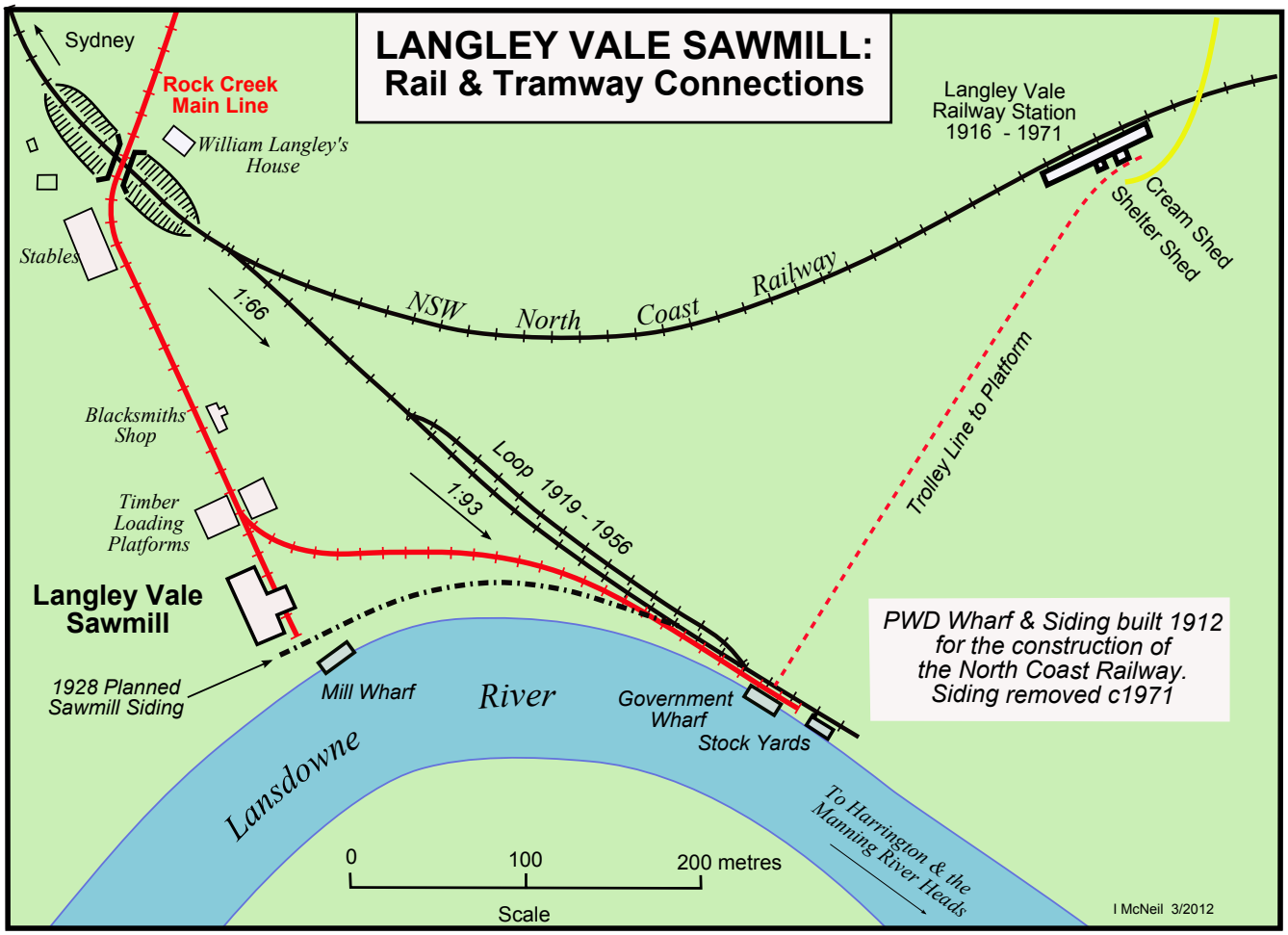
The frame will break a log 18ft in girth, and carry 10 saws. It embodies all the latest improvements, and was constructed by T. Robertson, at a cost of £360. There are 2 circular saw benches and a docker. There are two 25 horse power boilers, suspended on iron girders, and supported by brick pillars on concrete foundations. This prevents a disturbance of the brickwork when the boilers expand. The chimney shaft is 2ft 6in in diameter and 60ft high.

A tramway runs some miles into the bush and cost £3000 to construct. There is a double steam winch for hauling logs into the mill, and drawing them over to the frame. The mill can put through a maximum of 70,000ft per week. The water supply is inexhaustible. There are at present 260 large logs ready to operate upon.

The saw mill purchased up to a third of its log requirements from independent teamsters up and down the Lansdowne and Dawson Rivers. Langley Brothers used the steam punt *Rock Lily* and another punt purchased from the defunct Australasian Timber Company to ship logs from loading points on the river banks. These were unloaded at the log wharf and hauled up a timber shoot to the mill by steam winch.

Before the opening of the North Coast Railway through Langley Vale in 1915, all of Langley's timber was shipped out by boat. A short horse-worked tramway siding connected the mill to a wharf on the bank of the Lansdowne River. Various small coastal steamers, including the Langleys' own *Cooloon* and *Cora Lynn*, loaded sawn timber, girders, poles, sleepers and wood blocks destined for city and overseas markets. Ketches and schooners also collected cargoes of Langley timber. Sailing vessels were towed from the Manning River Heads up river to the mill by a Government-subsidised steam tug based at Harrington. During the early years, over 300,000 super feet of timber was shipped out each month, with up to 6 ships a month calling in for cargoes.

The saw mill remained at its riverside location for over 50 years, a testament to the enormous timber reserves on the Lansdowne heights. The two steam boilers were replaced in 1927, and apart from a few minor fires, the mill survived pretty much in its original form until after the Second World War when it burned to the ground. By that time ownership had passed to Allen Taylor & Company, and they rebuilt it as an electric mill beside the North Coast Railway at Langley Vale.



The Langley Vale Sawmill was located on the Lansdowne River where deep water allowed coasting vessels to dock. The PWD built a wharf and construction siding for the North Coast Railway there for the same reason. The siding and wharf remained in use for many years until after World War II.

The Langley Vale Tramway's Rock Creek main line (1897-8)

Langley Brothers' logging tramway was a 4ft 2in (1270mm) gauge wooden-railed line built with sawn brushbox rails spiked to bush-cut sleepers. Construction of the 9km main line from the Rockville Saw Mill to the railhead on Guylers Creek was a major undertaking. A large number of labourers were engaged in its construction from early 1897 through until late 1898. The project suffered a few hiccoughs along the way. As well as the deliberate firing of tramway bridges in November 1897, 'Mother Nature' also took a hand a few months later.[8]

"*The late heavy rain did a great deal of damage to Messrs Langley Bros. newly constructed tramline, filling up some of the large cuttings, and will entail a great deal of extra expense, as well as delay, upon these mill owners*."

The tramway was one of the Langleys' biggest investments on the Lansdowne. Joseph Latham, later to become Langleys' saw mill manager, supervised the line's construction. He gave evidence at the 1907 NSW Royal Commission of Enquiry into Forestry and submitted the following facts for the cost of the line:[9]

"*The cost of construction was about £4 10s per chain, and to this the cost of rails must be added. There was 10,000 feet of sawn timber for rails per mile, and 1,760 sleepers to the mile. The cost was £5 10s a chain, or £3,080 for the whole length. On the same line we have spent £500 since last March putting in deeper cuttings. It has cost us about £3,700 altogether, including the cost of flattening the grades*."

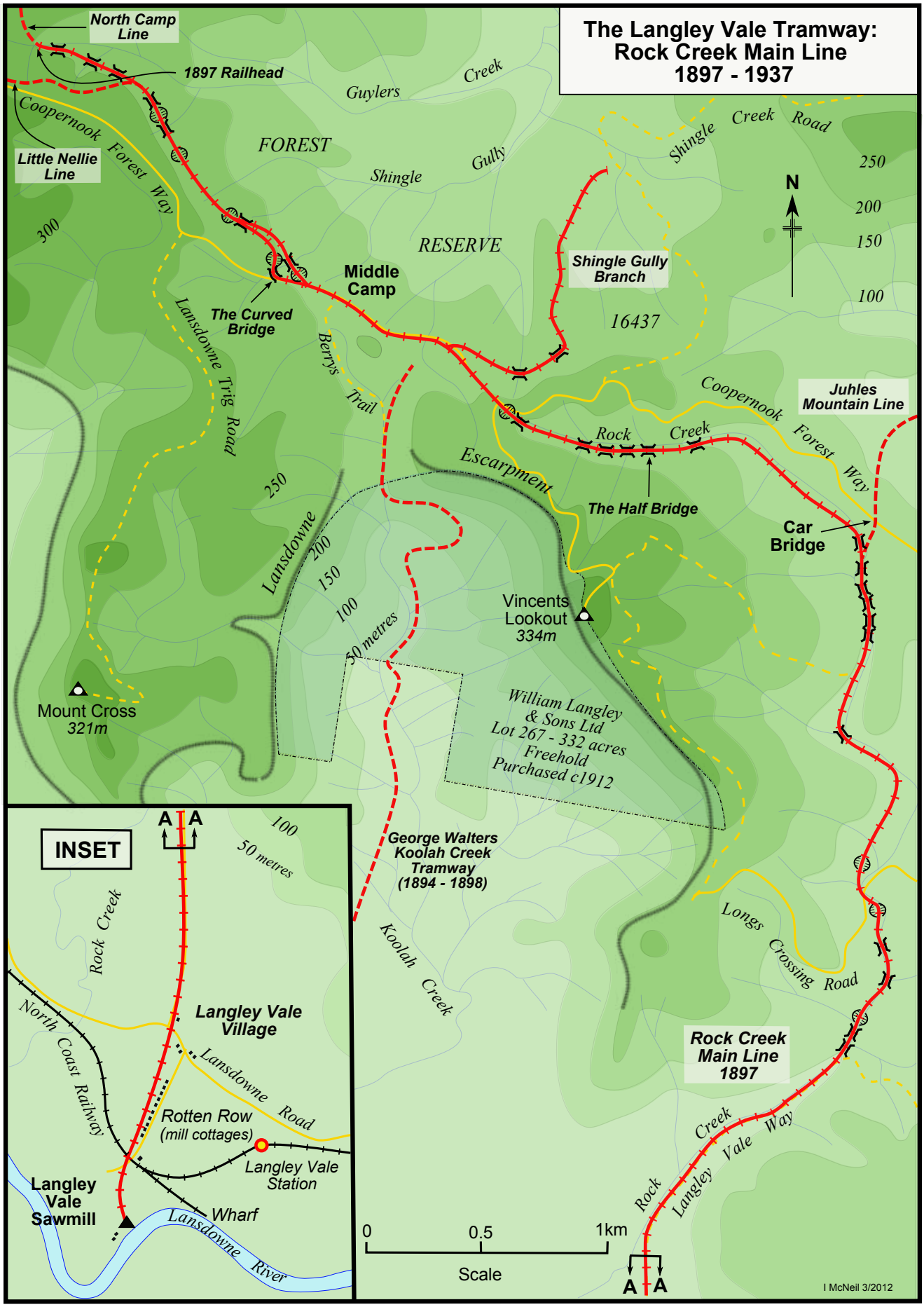
The main line from the mill followed Rock Creek up to the top of the Lansdowne Escarpment, on the eastern side of Vincent's Lookout. This was a longer route than Walters' and McSweeney's Koolah Creek tramway, but the average gradient – about 1:25 – was much less severe. After leaving the mill the line crossed about a kilometre of river flats to converge with Rock Creek. For the next 5.5km it climbed steadily, never straying more than about 50 metres from the creek bed. The formation consisted of a succession of side-cuts and ledges cut into hill sides with the odd box cut here and there. The line criss-crossed the creek several times during the ascent to minimise the amount of earthworks needed.

At 6.5km from the mill the line reached the summit ridge, near today's intersection of Coopernook Forest Way and Vincents Lookout Road. Up to this point the line had climbed steadily, maintaining the even gradient that allowed Langley's dare-devil brakemen to free-wheel their loaded log trucks down to the mill. Having reached the summit ridge, the tramway now descended west along the top for about a kilometre to Middle Camp timber depot, near the intersection of Coopernook Forest Way and Berries Trail.

The main line continued west for another 1.5km and terminated 9km from the mill at the head of Guylers Creek. This section of the tramway was the first to be built by Arthur Langley to deliberately block the rival firm of McSweeney & Walters. It involved a steady climb along the north slope of the summit range, crossing several deep side gullies on the way. One of the biggest bridges in this section was located just after Middle Camp. This was a big pigsty and girder affair estimated to have been 50m long and 20m high. It was destroyed in a bushfire and was replaced by William Langley's famous Curved Bridge, remnants of which can still be seen today.

A short 1 km branch line left the main line via a trailing junction at the 7 km mark, near Middle Camp. It was a very steep line going down to the lower reaches of Shingle Creek, with grades estimated as steep as 1:10 against the load. Earthworks were comparatively light as the line generally followed hillside contours. There were two substantial bridges over side creeks, the biggest measuring 40m long by 15m high.

A picnic party on the original pigsty bridge across Shingle Creek near Middle Camp on the Langley Vale Tramway. It is estimated to have been 50 metres long by 20 metres high, with steep approaches on both sides. When it burnt down in a bushfire, William Langley replaced it with his well-known curved trestle bridge at a better location a short distance upstream. *Photo: Len King collection*



The spine of the 4ft 2in (1270mm) gauge Langley Vale Tramway was the Rock Creek main line from the sawmill up to the headwaters of Guylers Creek on top of the Lansdowne Escarpment. The 9km line cost Langley Brothers nearly £4000 and took two years to construct. Brakemen free-wheeled loaded log trucks down 6kms of 1:25 grade down to the mill.

Timber cutters pose in front of big tallowwood logs cut from a single forest giant. A Forest Guard employed by the Forestry Department has measured them up to calculate their superfeet content and the timber royalty payable The tape measure used to measure these logs is hanging vertically down the second log from the left. Just behind the third log is a glimpse of the Langley Vale Tramway. The logs are numbered 1 to 6 in order of cutting. The first large number on each log is its length in feet, the second is its girth, LB = Langley Brothers and ft. = superfeet of timber in each log.
Photo: Forestry Commission of NSW per Len King

No Special Lease application was made for this branch line and no survey is recorded for it. This dates the line to the post-1919 period, after the Forestry Commission took control of forest management, and indicates it was a steam-operated line. It would have been difficult to work, and the loco may have only been able to haul one or two logs out at a time.

There were some 29 timber bridges on the main line. They were originally lightly-built as pigsty and girder structures and bushfires took a heavy toll of these over the years. When the Climax locomotive arrived in 1912, most needed strengthening to carry its extra weight and were rebuilt as conventional trestle bridges. One of the more unusual structures was the 'Half-Bridge'. It was a long section of earth-filled crib-work beside Rock Creek that carried the line across a steep and unstable hillside. It was built with massive bed logs over 1 metre in diameter, many of which are still preserved today, 115 years after the bridge was built.

From 1898 until 1912 the Langley Vale tramway was operated by horse teams. Empty log bogies were hauled from the saw mill up to the log loading ramps, or wharves, on the main range. Cut mill logs were rolled onto pairs of 4-wheel log bogies, chained down, and the bogies linked together by a connecting chain to make up a log truck. Log trucks were fitted with bell brakes, which consisted of of a single wooden brake block between each pair of log bogie wheels. The brakeman stood at the back of the truck, and hauled back on a rope and lever arrangement to pull the brake blocks up between the wheels.

Horse teams were harnessed to each loaded truck for the trip back to the mill. On downhill sections the horses were unhitched and the log truck allowed to free-wheel. The 5km long 1:25 grade descent down Rock Creek became known for some hair-raising rides to the bottom. If oral history is believed, it was a matter of pride for brakemen to be able to coast all the way to the mill without needing to hitch the horses back up. Given that the last 500m was over flat ground, the speeds they got up to can only be imagined. It was apparently this practice that led William Langley Jr. to remark once that "*if a new hand stayed longer than lunch time on his first day, we could bargain on a fair length of service from him.*" It was a risky practice and there were several accidents on the line:

A Valuable Horse Killed: *Mr. W. Langley, of Rockville, has been rather unfortunate in having several valuable horses killed on the tramline at various times – the latest addition to the list occurring a few days ago. It appears that horses are used to pull the trucks along the tramline until a downgrade is reached, when the animals are quickly unhitched and step aside to allow the trucks to descend the hill. On this occasion however the horse did not move out of the way quickly enough, and the trolley, bearing a large log, dashed into the unfortunate beast, killing it. The animal was one of the best that Mr. Langley possessed, we believe.*[10]

Serious Accident on The Lansdowne.

On Saturday morning a sad and painful accident happened to a young man named Henry Warren, who was employed on Messrs Langley Bros. tramline. It appears from the information gleaned, that Warren was in the act of bringing a log down the line, and in rounding a curve the front truck left the line, the front end of the log struck a tree, which caused the behind truck to turn half over, throwing Warren on his back across the line. As the trucks fell back, the brake blocks fell upon the unfortunate young man's abdomen pinning him there under. His cries were heard by a couple of men in the vicinity. They hastened to his rescue, and with the aid of levers removed the trucks, and released the poor fellow who was found to be very seriously injured. He was carried to his residence, when a stretcher was rigged up, he was placed thereon, and carefully carried by a number of his mates to Coopernook, and there placed in a van and taken to the hospital, accompanied by Mr. W. Langley, J.P., and a few friends.[11]

Terrible Accident at Rockville.

On Monday last, a very serious accident occurred on Messrs Langley Bros timber tramline at Rockville, Lansdowne River. It appears that a middle aged man named Geo Metcalf, whose place of residence is at Stewart River, was on a truck, when another truck, in charge of another man, ran into him knocking him off. The lower part of his back was hurt in the fall, and the truck went over his right hand, crushing it in a terrible manner. The poor fellow was brought to Manning River District, where a consultation was held by Drs Gormley and Kelly yesterday (Tuesday) morning, when it was decided to amputate the arm midway between the wrist and elbow.[12]

The Curved Bridge

The 1897 conflict between Langley Brothers and McSweeney & Walters over tramway rights on the Lansdowne Escarpment resulted in a win for Arthur Langley, but an area for a tramway terminus and timber depot was awarded to McSweeney and its location compelled the Langley Vale tramway to detour around it. This forced a more difficult crossing over the Shingle Creek gorge, with steeply graded approaches on both sides of a 20 metre high pigsty bridge. This section was a thorn in the side for Langley's tramway operations. The steep grade against the load on the eastern side required double horse-team haulage, and splitting loads during the Climax era.

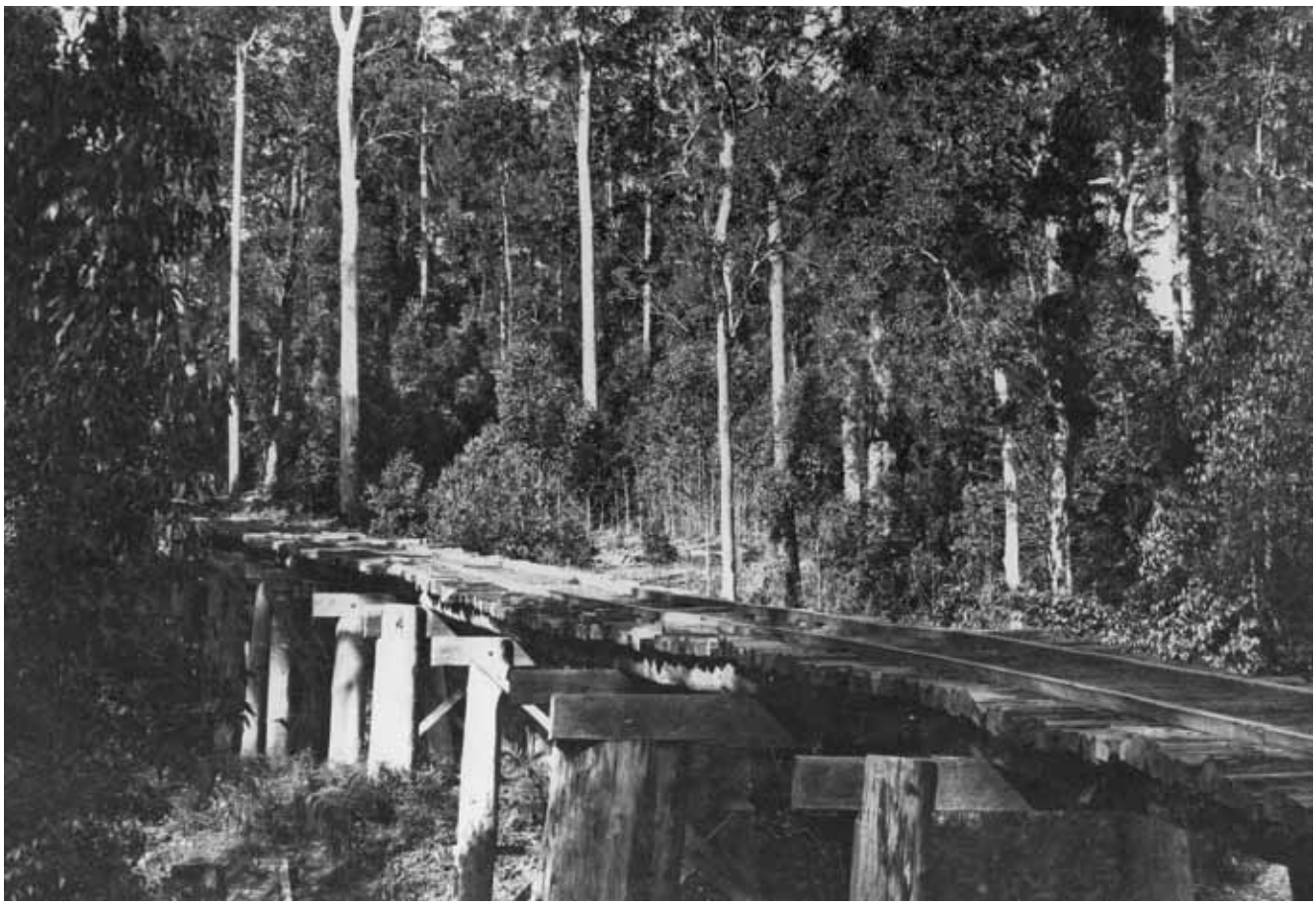
The ownership of McSweeney's tramway leases passed to the liquidator of the Australasian Timber Company who sold them on to the wealthy Newton family of Coopernook. Their plans of repairing and extending the Koolah Creek Tramway came to nothing and the leases were eventually forfeited in April 1912. This freed William Langley to put in a replacement bridge across Shingle Creek Gorge on McSweeney's easier alignment. It is not now known if his first pigsty bridge burnt down before or after it was replaced, but the result was a 400m tramway deviation and a new bridge to cross Shingle Creek 100m upstream where the gorge was shallower.

The new bridge was his well-known Circle or Curved Bridge. It was 77m long by 10m high, constructed around a 4-chain (80m) curve on a 1:33 falling grade. It was a stone's throw from where Coopernook Forest Way now crosses the creek, and became the subject of many period photographs. It was one of the few places where steel rails were employed on the tramway.

Arthur 'Tab' Newman related what it was like to cross the Curved Bridge on a log train, apparently not an experience for the faint-hearted:

"*That curved bridge, that was all done by hand and bullocks. My father helped build that curved bridge. They had steel rails round it. When it was wet, you'd see the old driver stand up, he would button his coat up, you could see that he wasn't real keen about it. They wouldn't dare to lock those wheels on it when they were coming round there and it was wet. No way.*

When they came to the curved bridge, just after it there was a steep climb. They'd undo half of the trucks [because the loco didn't have enough power]. The boys'd hold them. The loco would take half and go right up to the other place. Shunt the logs on the loop line. Soon as he got up on top, he'd blow a whistle. They'd know he was all clear, you see. Then the boys'd let the others go. By god, they used to travel down there.



A wooden-railed trestle bridge on the Langley Vale Tramway during the post-1912 steam traction era. Although horse teams were no longer employed on the tramway, the bridges wooden sleepers were close-spaced to support the brushbox rails – worn rails having been known to snap under the loco's weight. Another feature of this bridge is the use of a convenient tree stump as a trestle support, a technique often used by the resourceful William Langley. Photo: Forestry Commission of NSW per Len King

This curved bridge used to give you the biggest thrill you ever got in your life. Don't matter how many times you went over it, your hair still fly up under your hat. Say you was on the middle truck of seven trucks. This truck you were on would be going one way, by gee, we were going. All of a sudden it'd come back like that. Your hair stands straight up on end! You get that fright!" [This would be the second half of the load of trucks, which had been left just before the curved bridge and then were released to roll down. When they had rolled as far as they could, the loco would come back and hook them on.]

The trucks were hooked together with a chain. Sometimes they didn't bother, depends on the length of the log. You had to perch up on the log and hold onto the rope, just ordinary rope and heave back on that. That was the brakes. They wasn't worked from the engine. Men handled brakes. The men rode the logs and screwed the brakes up. I had a go on it a couple of times. Didn't like it though. That's the only brake system they had, but the old loco itself had brakes on it."[13]

Langley Vale village

The Langleys established a small village on company-owned land to accommodate their mill workers. It was originally called Rockville but after a request for a name change by the Post Office, it was renamed Langley Vale in October 1905. The village grew from a modest start of five cottages in 1899 to peak at 30 company-owned houses in 1933. Many of these cottages formed 'Rotten Row', built on a narrow strip of land between the mill access road and the tramway. William Langley had a comfortable home built for his family on a small rise overlooking the mill.

William Langley went to some lengths to attract and retain reliable workmen. As well as providing a reasonable standard of accommodation, he built a small school in 1901 as an added incentive to entice married men with families to stay on at Langley Vale. He had trouble getting good teachers in the early years, and correspondence with school authorities demonstrated this concern:

'*[It is] a help to me in getting a good respectable class of men here, but as it is they won't stay for any length of time as the children don't get a fair chance*'.

There was a small company-owned store to provide the basics for the village, and in later years a 'butter-boat' used to dock at the wharf with a wider range of goods for sale. The telephone arrived in 1907 and the same year the company built a community hall to enhance the social life of the village. Saturday night dances, concerts, card nights and 'smokos' were popular entertainments. In 1921 William Langley assisted with the construction of a small Union Church at Langley Vale. He did not allow any pubs in his village, but that didn't stop thirsty mill workers getting their weekend supplies from Coopernook some 5km down the road.

There were some 60 men employed at Langley Vale during its heyday in the years leading up to World War I. Not all of them lived in the village, and it was usual for bush workers to camp up in the forest during the week.

William Langley encouraged sporting activities as another way of creating a stable workforce, and in later years it helped if you were a good rugby league footballer and wanted a job at the mill. He built two tennis courts for the village, and both tennis and cricket were well represented on the sporting calendar.

Langley Vale had none of the isolation endured by many other sawmill villages of the time. The township of Coopernook was a few kilometres down the road, and there were ships trading downriver to Taree and Sydney. The North Coast Railway arrived in 1915 and a passenger railway station at Langley Vale opened next year at William's urging.

Alf Webster (right) and a fellow millworker pose beside a giant blackbutt log on the Langley Vale sawmill's log ramp. The Langleys were cutting virgin forest in the early years, as evidenced by the log size. The windows of the mill office can be seen on the right, with the Langley Vale tramway - steel railed in the mill yard - passing in front. Alf volunteered to serve during WW1 and was killed in action in France in 1917.
Photo: Forestry Commission of NSW per Len King

Timber operations pre-World War I

A NSW Royal Commission of Inquiry into Forestry was held during 1907. The Commissioners visited timber centres across the State to take evidence from local timbermen. William Langley was interviewed, as were some of his employees including saw mill manager Joseph Latham, bush foreman Charles Klumpp and bullock teamster Harry Metcalf. Their evidence gives an insight into Langley's timber operations during the horse and bullock team era.

At the time of the inquiry the Langley Brothers were cutting hardwood timbers, mostly blackbutt, tallowwood and ironbark for both local and export markets. Their sawmill was outputting between 50,000 and 60,000 superfeet of sawn timber per week, while they were also producing a large number of hewn hardwood girders and railway sleepers. The tramway supplied two-thirds of the sawmill's weekly log requirements. The rest was purchased from independent teamsters and cutters along the Lansdowne River and shipped to the mill on board Langley's steam punt *Rock Lily*.

Up on the Lansdowne Escarpment, timber-felling operations had been based in Forest Reserves 16437 and 23675 along the summit ridge for the past five or six years. Joseph Latham thought there was enough timber there for another two years. Langley Brothers employed eight timber workers who camped up there during the week. Their duties included felling trees marked out for them by bush foreman Charles Klumpp, cutting them up into mill logs, and clearing tracks for the bullock teams to haul the logs back to the tramway.

The Langleys had been granted a grazing lease in 1903 on 40 acres of Crown Land, the 40 Acre Paddock, a few hundred metres north of the Guylers Creek railhead.[14] It was used to spell their bullock teams, thus avoiding long return trips to paddocks down on the Lansdowne River. Langleys' bullock teams hauled mill logs from up to two miles back to log loading wharves along the tramway. They were working in rough country and needed block and tackle to pull logs out of the deeper gorges. It was a slow process, with each bullock team typically able to haul in one mill log a day.

A Forest Guard came round twice weekly to measure up the mill logs and tally the amount of royalty payable. This was a source of considerable resentment to William Langley. His relationship with the Government over timber royalties and land rentals was an ongoing and prickly one. The loose and poorly-enforced regulations governing the timber industry prior to 1900 meant that entrepreneurs like the Langleys pretty much had a free hand. But the introduction of uniform NSW timber royalties in 1903 plus an increase in the number of forest reserves created to protect remaining forests combined to add significantly to Langley Brother's timber supply costs. The Langleys protested strongly. It appears they had connections in high places for the matter was raised in the NSW State Parliament:[15]

In the Legislative Assembly on Thursday 8th inst., it was agreed on the motion of Mr. Davidson that there be laid upon the table of this house:

(1) All correspondence between the Forestry Dept and its officers with Messrs Langley Bros, or William Langley.

(2) All reports supplied or furnished to the Secretary Lands, or the Department of Lands, respecting the working of tramway and Special Leases in connection with Messrs Langley sawmills at Rockville, Lansdowne, Manning River.

The 1905 economic downturn depressed timber prices to the point that many mills operated at a loss. William Langley argued that the timber royalties should be correspondingly reduced, and felt so strongly about it that he refused the pay the annual rents due for his tramway leases. The Government retaliated by gazetting the impending forfeiture of the leases, prompting this Letter to the Editor from William Langley:[16]

Dear Sir,

In your issue of the 1st July, under the heading of "Forfeiture", is a paragraph stating that Special Leases held by my brother and myself are declared forfeited. This is not correct, as if you will look at the Gazette, it is final that they will be declared forfeited within 30 clear days.

As it may seem strange to many of your readers why we allow these Special Leases to become in arrears, we may state we do so because we think we have no right to pay the exorbitant rents we do for them now, for the following reasons:-

When the lease for the tramway was granted to us, part of it went through forest reserve and part through ordinary Crown Lands – the whole of the land for several miles at the end of the tram line being ordinary Crown Lands. Our leases and tree permits then only came to a few pounds per month. After we got a few miles of tram constructed, the Government then made all of it forest reserves, increasing our royalty. This made a material difference to us. A short time after we had completed the tramline, and when we were looking forward to getting some recompense for our outlay of over £2000, the Government steps in saying:

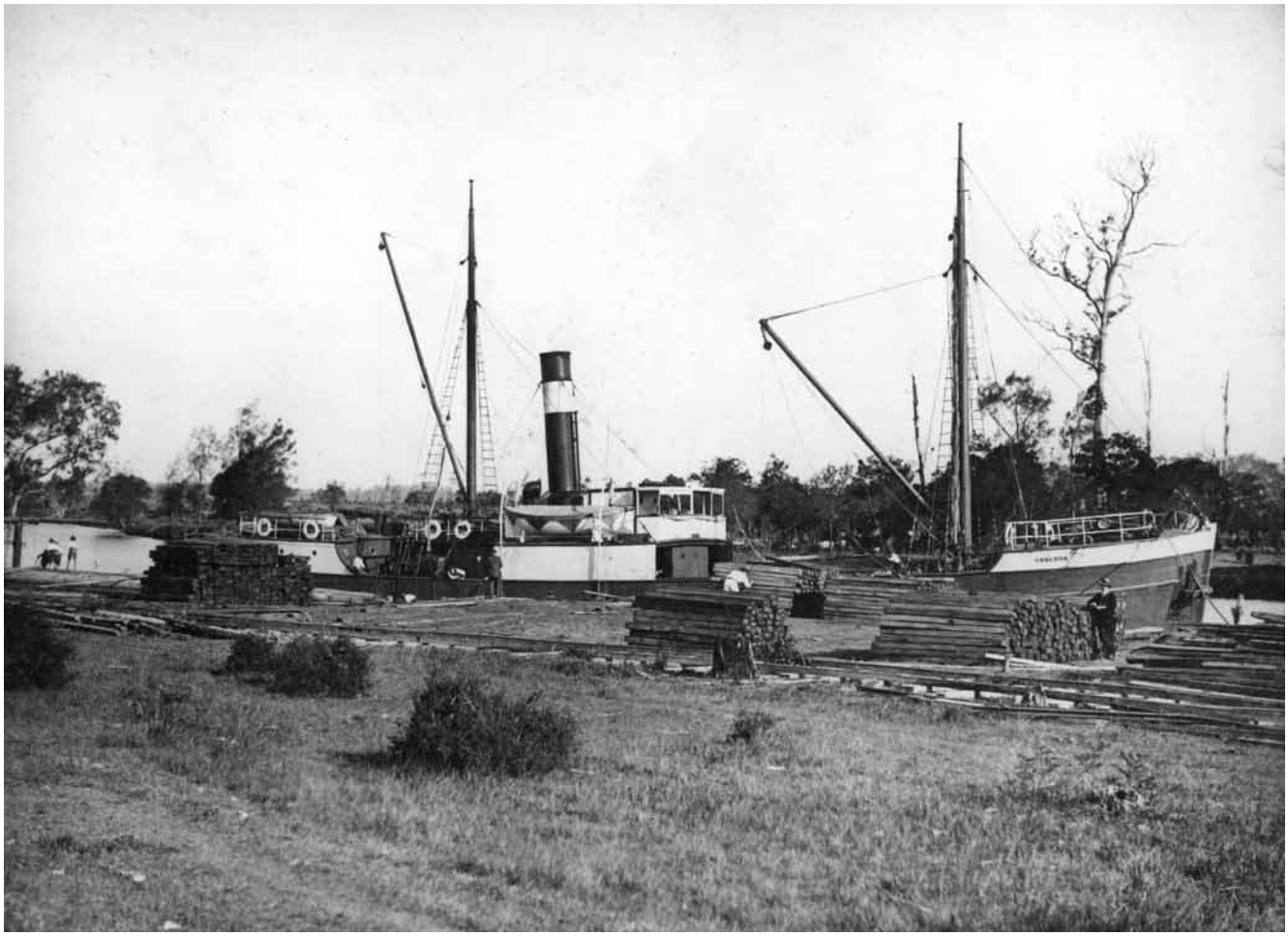
"Now you have your tramline finished, and which we have at a rental of £25 per year for timber you could get at a few pounds per month", and puts on a royalty of between £12 and £16 per month."

This is the encouragement a person gets for his energy and recompense for spending capital in your district. With land, tram, mill and plant, we have spent over £8,000, and the timber accessible by tram would never have come out, but would have been left there to rot and depreciate in value. In other States any person who spends capital in any industry, such as ours, and keeps it working, the Government assists, and does not go back on its original agreement.

We claim that we have been some good to your district, as our tram is only one of many applied for on the coast that has been kept constantly working since it has been granted. We employed in day labour over 50 men, and our wages last year for shipbuilding, mill, etc., came to over £4500; and this does not include the many teams that draw logs for us at a price on the bank of the river, and which we are safe in saying number 20.

The Government had a larger stick than the Langleys, for the rent was eventually paid and Reversal of Forfeiture notices were gazetted. The following year, 1906, William again protested by refusing to pay the annual Special Lease rents. And once again he had to capitulate when the Government gazetted Forfeiture notices.

Section 15 of the NSW Forestry Act of 1909 allowed for the granting of exclusive cutting rights over forest areas deemed too rugged or inaccessible to be profitably worked by ordinary means. Entrepreneurs who invested significant capital in timber tramway infrastructure could thus recoup their investment without being held to ransom by independent timber cutters, some of whom had resorted to deliberate spoiling tactics to thwart timber tramway owners in the past. However when William Langley claimed exclusive cutting rights over the Lansdowne Forests in 1912, the local Taree Land Board refused his claim, stating that in their opinion the forest areas were not rugged or inaccessible enough to qualify. This did little to endear Government authorities in general and the Forestry Department in particular to William, and long remained a bone of contention for him.



Langley Brothers' 120 ton coastal steamer SS Cooloon *loading railway sleepers at Langley Vale sawmill wharf pre-WWI. The Langleys built the wooden-hulled steamer at Langley Vale in 1904, initially for the passenger and cargo trade between Sydney and Tweed Heads. She regularly traded to Woolgoolga and Coffs Harbour and took many cargoes of timber from Langley Vale. The* Cooloon *was wrecked while crossing the bar into the Manning River on 28 February 1917.* *Photo: Forestry Commission of NSW per Len King*

Langley Brothers' ship building on the Lansdowne River

Langley Brothers built three ships on the Lansdowne River during the early years. There was deep water fronting the Rockville Mill at Langley Vale which, together with plentiful timber on hand, made it a good location to build wooden-hulled vessels.

The first of these was a stern-wheeled drogher, or steam punt, built for the North Coast Steam Navigation Company. She was built at Rockville by John Sullivan, a well-known local shipwright who owned a ship-building yard at Coopernook. The *Bowra* was a wooden vessel with a copper-sheathed hull, 80ft long, 20ft beam and drawing 4ft of water. She was flat-bottomed and was designed to ply the shallow waters of the Manning River and its tributaries. Her 22hp compound horizontal steam engine could push her along at six knots and she was capable of carrying 900 bags of maize on a 3ft draught. The *Bowra* was launched on 8 May 1899 by William Langley's 7-year old daughter Gwendoline.[17]

A second and more ambitious vessel was on the drawing boards in late 1900. This was a small wooden-hulled steamer for Langley Brothers to trade between the Tweed River and Sydney. The fire which destroyed the Rockville Mill in February 1901 put paid to plans to build it at Rockville, and construction was switched to a site alongside their leased Coopernook sawmill. Local hardwoods were used for all the construction except for the decking which was made of imported oregon planks.

The new steamer was christened the *Duroby*, an aboriginal name for a picturesque flowering tree growing in the Tweed River district. The *Duroby* was considerably larger than the *Bowra*, being 127ft long with a 24ft beam and drawing 8ft 6in. She could steam at 10 knots and was able to carry up to 200 tons of cargo. There was accommodation for 20 passengers and mod-cons such as electric light were included. Young Gwendoline Langley again performed the honours, launching the *Duroby* into the Lansdowne River at Coopernook on 23 May 1902.[18]

The last Langley Brothers' vessel built on the Lansdowne was the 120-ton wooden steamer *Cooloon*, launched at Rockville on 11 May 1904, once again by Gwendoline Langley. The *Cooloon* was designed and built by Mr G Mowatt, and was larger again than the previous two, being 135ft long with a beam 26ft and drawing 9ft. Like the *Duroby*, she was intended for the Tweed River passenger and cargo trade. About 400 visitors and guests turned up for the launch and were treated to refreshments and speeches by William Langley. After she was launched the *Cooloon* was loaded with 85,000 feet of hardwood timber and then towed to Sydney by the steamer *Gamecock*, where she was fitted with her boiler and a triple-expansion compound steam engine.[19]

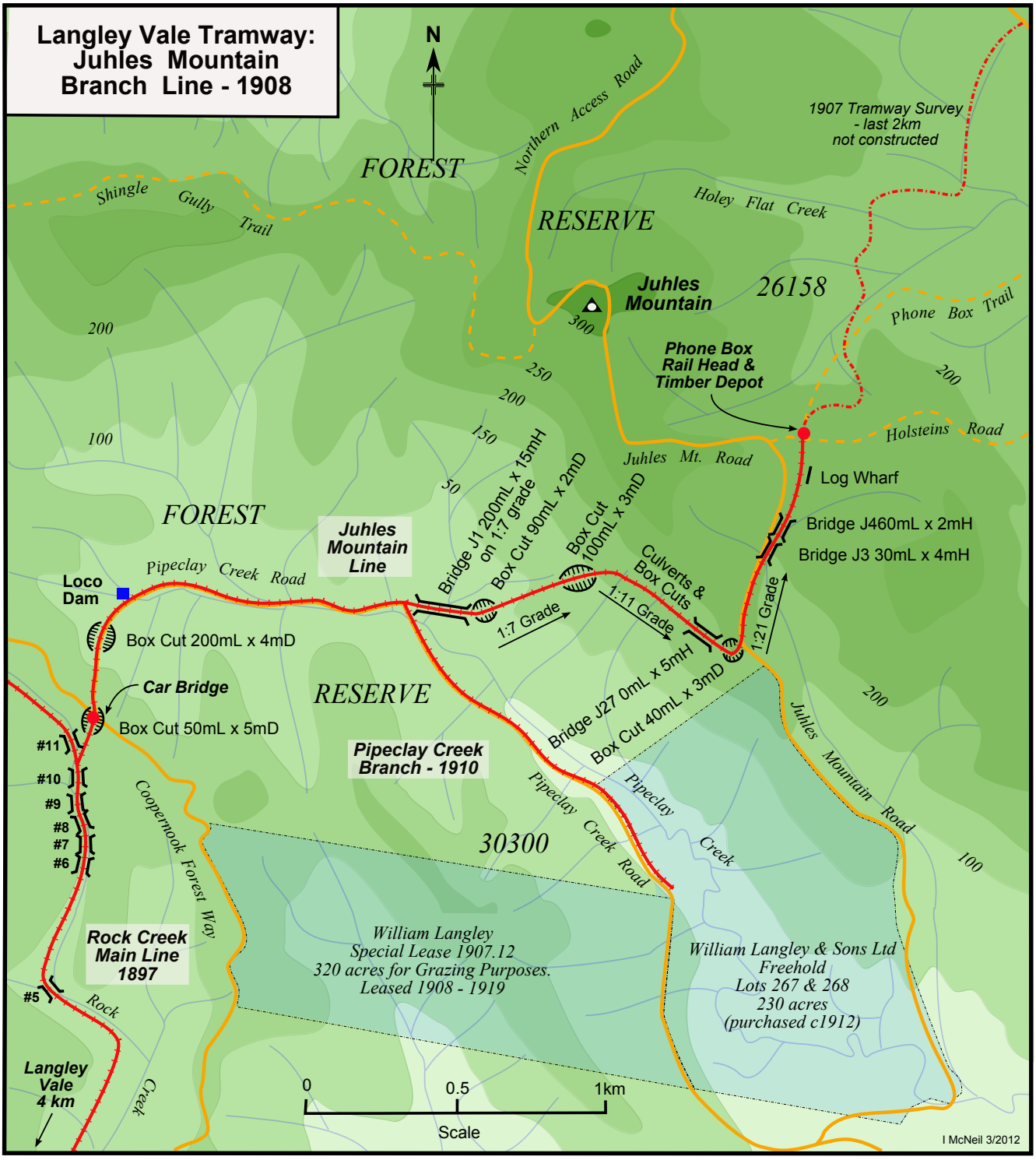
It was thought that more vessels might be built at Rockville following the launch of the *Cooloon*, but the North Coast trade was tending towards larger steel-hulled steamers, better able to withstand the rough crossings of the river bars they were subjected to. Langley Brothers built no more wooden-hulled steamers.

The Juhles Mountain branch line (1908)

After 10 years of logging along the main ridge the Langleys had cut out a lot of the timber within reach of their tramway. They turned their attention towards the forests surrounding the 300m summit of Juhles Mountain, some 4km east of Rock Creek. In December 1907 William Langley applied to the Lands Department for permission to construct a branch tramway to the Juhles Mountain area. Following a survey of the proposed route, he was granted Special Tramway Lease 1907.[13] Taree on 1 October 1908.[20] The *Wingham Chronicle* recorded the start of construction in the following month:[21]

"*While on Langley Vale, Langley's mill was idle on Saturday, engine repairing. There are 32 hands at the mill, and 50 more at work on the new wing of the tram-line which diverges from the old route about three miles from the mill and curves to the Lower Stewart's River, present line runs to the head thereof. The new 18-ton loco arrives in three months, and then the biz will hum! Of this, more anon.*"

The *Wingham Chronicle*'s correspondent was a bit wide of the mark regarding the "new 18-ton loco". Langley Brothers did indeed acquire a steam locomotive; ex-Joadja Andrew Barclay 0-6-0T (B/N 180 of 1878), but it was for their use on the 3ft 6in (1067mm) Coffs Harbour Jetty line.[22] But he was correct about the location of the new tramway wing. 4.5km from the mill the new branch left the main Rock Creek tramway to start a short steep climb up to Car Bridge, a deep cut through the narrow spur separating the watersheds of



The line to Juhles Mountain was the first of the Langley Vale Tramway branch lines. It was built as a horse line in 1908 and changed to steam traction in 1912. The 1:7 grades on this line were the steepest on the whole system and must have taxed the horse teams to the utmost.

Rock and Pipeclay Creeks. The Car Bridge was named for the road bridge that used to take Coopernook Forest Way across the cut (now filled in). An equally steep and short descent then followed to take the branch down to level ground alongside Pipeclay Creek. After following this creek downstream for about a kilometre, the line then literally 'took off' up the mountain. This is a section that George Walters, of Koolah Creek Tramway fame, would have been proud of, for it was an audacious piece of tramway construction.

Starting the climb was the biggest bridge William Langley built. NSW District Forester HJ Lyne described it following his visit there in September 1912:

"*Other photos taken by Mr. Brett, which will be sent to the Department, are from Juhles mountain, Langley Vale, where Messrs Langley Bros, carry on their big timber operations. One of these shows a blackbutt soon after felling. It was 112ft to the first limb, and had a centre girth of 15ft and a 5in. pipe. It contained 18,774 feet. Another photo shows Messrs Langley Bros' big timber bridge on their tramline at the head of Juhles Mountain. This bridge is 215 yards in length and at one point there is a depth of 55 feet beneath it.*"[23]

What Forester Lyne failed to mention was that the gradient on this bridge was 1:9! The tramway continued climbing for another kilometre on the same appalling gradient to ascend a steep ridge spur of Juhles Mountain. Earthworks were heavy along this section, with a succession of box cuts, culverts, side cuts and benches cut into the steep mountain side. After rounding the sharp southern spur of the mountain, the tramway turned north, and the gradient eased to a more modest 1:21 on the present day Juhles Mountain Road. Diverging from this road the line headed north-east over a couple of long, low bridges and terminated at Phone Box timber depot. This was located on a relatively flat ridge saddle east of Juhles Mountain, some 3.6km from the main line. Local oral history claims a brakeman was killed when his log truck ran away on one of the steep sections during the pre-1912 horse-team era.

Langley had permission to continue the line for another 2km north to the ridge summit overlooking the Stewart's River valley. The 1908 survey of the proposed route shows the tramway was planned to extend across Holey Flat Creek to the current-day Northern Access Road, but this section wasn't built. It is believed that Langley's acquisition of steam log haulers in 1912 enabled him to log this area without resorting to tramway extension.[24] In July 1915 a *Sydney Morning Herald* correspondent took a trip on the Juhles Mountain line and penned this description:

At Langley Vale is an up-to-date mill right on the banks of the river, and within a hundred yards of the North Coast railway. Timber boats come up regularly, and sawn timber is dispatched to Sydney.

Leaving the mill on a cold frosty morning, on a quaint little train, this little loco, with a load of timber trucks, wends its way gradually up into the heart of the forest country, along a wooden tramline, winding around hillsides and along picturesque little mountain streams. The gorges are one tangled mass of tree ferns, bangalow palms, ferns, and all sorts of beautiful undergrowth, with brush timbers and magnificent hardwoods scattered all through. After a journey of about an hour for the six miles the end of the Jewel's [sic] Hill tramline is reached. The elevation of this terminus is something like 600ft above the starting point, and the grade in places as steep as 1 in 6. It is an American engine called "The Climax," and specially designed for such work.

At the terminus is quite a little township of wooden huts. These are the abodes of the timber getters and others engaged in the log hauling

Bush-workers use Maori timber jacks to roll a large mill log onto a tramway truck under the watchful eye of bush foreman Charles Klumpp. The safety valves of the Climax blow off in the background as the loco waits with a near full load to return to the mill. William Langley first saw these light-weight jacks used in New Zealand when he visited his daughter and son-in-law in 1913. He was so impressed he returned to Langley Vale with a case full of them. *Photo: Forestry Commission of NSW per Len King*

operations. On this particular forest is seen a steam log hauler at work hauling logs through the bush from a distance of three-quarters of a mile by a main and tail rope system. A rough track is first cleared through the bush over hill and stream to the spot where the timber is to be operated on; the trees are then felled and cut into suitable lengths, and snigged onto the main rope by another rope operated from the main hauling wire. The logs thus treated are then hooked on to the main rope, and thence hauled to the main log wharf. It is rather uncanny at first to see a great wire rope charging through the bush with a huge log at its end and the tail rope sometimes 50ft in the air amongst the tree tops. The pace at which these logs are hauled in, all going well, is really remarkable, and by an arrangement of pulley and unhooking the log, corners are negotiated speedily.

From the log wharf the logs are loaded onto the trucks and picked up by the loco, and taken down the steep grades right to the mill. One night the writer saw 16 such logs brought in to the yard in one load. The train weighed over 70 tons, and there was over 18,000 super feet of timber in it. A great advantage possessed of working the forest in the manner above described is that the hauler can operate in places and on timber which a bullock team could not look at, and make pay. Again, on about 400 acres seen, already operated on, practically every stick of timber which could be put over the bench was taken, in some places the forest being cleared in the face. The timber on this forest is of first-class quality, consisting mainly of blackbutt, tallow-wood, grey gum and brush box, with turpentine, red and white mahogany and spotted gum.[25]

Together with his December 1907 application for the Juhles Mountain tramway branch William Langley also applied for a Grazing Lease on 320 acres of nearby Crown Land. His selected block was about a kilometre south of the Juhles Mountain line, situated around the headwaters of Pipeclay and little Pipeclay Creeks. Part of the land was intended as pasture for his bullock teams; the rest of it could be logged under the guise of clearing it for agriculture.

His application was approved and he was granted Special Grazing Lease 1907.[12] Taree on 1 October 1908.[26] Once cleared of timber, the creek flats along Pipeclay Creek proved so fertile that William Langley purchased the best land outright a few years later. This property today is a large successful dairy farm supplying milk to local and Sydney markets.

His Grazing Lease and the surrounding area was part of Forest Reserve 30300. When this became available for logging Langley applied to construct a short branch line to connect his Juhles Mountain line to his Grazing Lease. In October 1910 he was granted Special Lease 1909.[14] Taree for a tramway and timber depot.[27]

His Pipeclay Creek branch line left the Juhles Mountain line at the 1km mark, just before the big bridge and the start of the steep climb up Juhles Mountain. It headed southeast, following Pipeclay Creek downstream on a gentle descending grade. Today all traces of this line lie beneath Pipeclay Creek Road.

William Langley and Sons Ltd (1912)

Four of Captain Langley's sons were the directors of Langley Brothers. Alfred and Robert Henry ran the shipping side of the business, while Arthur and William managed the firm's timber interests. Arthur died in September 1911 and his death led to the business being split up. The Langley Vale assets were transferred to William Langley in February 1912[28] and in July he registered the business as William Langley and Sons Ltd with a capital of £60,000 in £1 shares.[29] William was managing director, the other directors being his son William Edward and Taree solicitor LO Martin. His other two sons, Harold 'King' Langley and Robert John Langley also joined the firm.

The formation of the new company and the injection of new capital introduced big changes at Langley Vale. 570 acres of forest country were purchased around Juhles Mountain and Middle Camp which enabled William Langley to reduce his timber royalty costs, payment of which he always strongly objected to.

Another big change was the purchase of two steam log haulers to reduce the company's reliance on bullock teams to keep the mill supplied with logs. The log haulers were ideal for Langley Vale. There was enough virgin timber for them to operate in each site for up to 18 months at a time. And with ¾ mile of rope wire they could pull timber out of steep gullies and rough country the bullock teams couldn't touch. One of the log haulers was disposed of in late 1917 to the NSW Public Works Department for use in the construction of the Chichester Dam.[30] The other operated successfully right up to the end of the line in 1937.

William Langley was also known for another innovation, the introduction of the New Zealand 'Maori Jack' to Langley Vale. The Maori Jack was a hand-operated device with twin winding handles, used to move heavy mill logs onto tramway trucks. It was lighter and easier to work than the equivalent Australian 'Wallaby Jack', and was popular with Langley's bush workers. In 1913 William's daughter Gwendoline had married Francis Hay, a New Zealand engineer working on the construction of the North Coast Railway. When William visited Gwendoline in New Zealand he saw a Maori Jack in action and was so impressed with it that he brought a case of them back with him.

In Part two, in the October issue of Light Railways, William Langley's fortunes are followed through World War 1, his introduction of steam traction, the sweeping changes of the post-war era, and on to bankruptcy in the Great Depression.

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In the main street of the thriving town of Zeehan, circa 1905, two little girls look on as one of the Zeehan Tramway Company's 2ft gauge 0-4-0WT Krauss locomotives trundles past the imposing premises of WT York & Co, Importers, with a passenger car in tow.
Photo: Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office, reference PH30-1-63

Steel rails and lead chromate

by Ross Mainwaring

Early history

The west coast of Tasmania has many locations where fabulous mineral wealth has been won from the ground. One such place is — or was — Zeehan. A high geographical prominence overlooking the town is Mount Zeehan, so named in 1799 by the explorer and navigator Matthew Flinders for one of Abel Tasman's ships, the *Zeehaen* on which the Dutchman sailed during his voyage of discovery when he sighted the western mountain range of Van Diemen's Land in 1642.

Towards the end of December 1882 an outcrop of argentiferous galena was discovered by prospector Frank Long beside a small creek in a broad valley five kilometres to the north of Mount Zeehan. Prior to this date, the country was regarded as *terra incognita* because of its isolation and inhospitable terrain. By 1891 there were 159 companies, syndicates and tributers at work upon the numerous galena lodes which, although rich in lead and silver proved to be limited in width, depth and extent.[1]

By the early 1900s this thriving town of Zeehan had become the third largest population centre on the Tasmanian isle, home to over 5000 people and sometimes referred to as the 'Silver City.' The main street, a 'well-macadamised thoroughfare' was two miles long. Homes and businesses were lit by electricity supplied from the municipal electrical works. Two theatres, a hospital, a public reading room and a school of mines lent respectability to the residents. A daily newspaper, the *Zeehan and Dundas Herald,* kept readers up-to-date with the affairs of the outside world. The needs of thirsty miners and travellers were catered for by 19 hotels; some of the better class of establishment even provided porters or coaches to meet trains arriving at the Zeehan railway station from either Burnie or Strahan.[2]

The mines, to readily connect with the mainline railway yards, were served by an extensive 2ft gauge tramway network, sections of which ran down the main street. Diminutive Krauss steam locomotives pulled four-wheeled side tipping skips laden with ore or materials. Unfortunately the silver-lead lodes did not extend to any great depth and faulting often disrupted their continuity; large volumes of water seeped through the rock into the stopes and drives requiring continuous expensive pumping from the lower levels. With a fall in the value of silver from 1910, Zeehan's economy declined as nearly as quickly as it had arisen.

Dundas

Another mining town born of the silver boom was close by — Dundas. But its fate was even more unkind than that of its close neighbour:

This forsaken township is about 5 miles from Zeehan, with which it is connected by rail and road. It had a population of 1,080 in 1891, but has gradually declined to a couple of families and a few of the ancients who always seem to linger about decayed mining camps. It has an appearance of peaceful senescence, and were it not for the sadness of the deserted cottages one would be pleased with the picturesqueness of the grassy clearings, the old fences, exotic bushes, and encroaching blackberries.[3]

The first mineral lease was pegged in the Dundas region in 1887 and galena was discovered two years later. Prospecting in this valley, which lies to the east of Zeehan, was most trying; an average yearly rainfall of 97 inches fell upon an extremely

luxuriant, nearly impenetrable forest which clothed the steep hillsides. Feverish speculation broke out with this latest discovery and 74 companies, nominally capitalised to over £1,500,000, were floated by 1891.[4]

In 1892 Maestrie's Broken Hill mine[5] produced 866 tons of bullion which contained 77,000 ounces of silver.[6] It was enthusiastically proclaimed: *Any one who had a few shares in Mastri's* [sic] *was considered to have a heritable estate that could keep his descendants in comfort until the collapse of civilisation*.[7]

Access to the new field was by a pack track but this was considered *'so treacherous the packers were threatening to refuse to travel on it.'* Poor transportation threatened to stymie the development of the mines so a public road was cleared through the dense scrub. Very soon this became totally inadequate for the conveyance of heavy machinery and mineral ores so a 3ft 6in gauge railway was built and opened from Zeehan to Dundas on 15 April 1892; this line was constructed for the Mount Dundas & Zeehan Railway Company. Government locomotives had running rights, by agreement, over the new railway. At Brewery Junction[8] (five miles from Zeehan) the line forked: northwards to Dundas station then a further mile to Maestrie's; and eastwards for a mile or so to the Adelaide mine (Anderson's claim) and the West Comet mine ore bins.[9] The second class return train fare from Zeehan to Dundas was 2s 3d, first class 3s.[10]

The major Dundas mines now benefitted from direct rail access to the smelters at Zeehan and, most importantly, the port of Strahan via the isolated line of the Tasmanian Government Railways which terminated at Zeehan. Before the coming of the railway, machinery and supplies for the tin mines of Heemskirk or the silver-lead mines of Zeehan were landed at Trial Harbour and carted for 15 miles from the tiny seaside settlement of Remine over an 'atrocious' dirt road to the bustling mining centres. In reality, Trial Harbour was only an opening in the rocks that left it fully exposed to the wild Southern Ocean.

Dundas was proclaimed a town on 2 August, 1892. Around this period the High Street boasted two banks and numerous shops of every description as could be found in the state's metropolis. A school and churches were nearby, while six hotels catered for the thirst of the mine workers. A brewery, situated conveniently close by at Brewery Junction, supplied liquor to the hotels.[11] The town's relative isolation compelled its residents to be self-supporting as far as practicable.

Poor traffic receipts due to a fall off in ore production forced the Mount Dundas & Zeehan Railway Company to sell out to the Emu Bay Railway Company in 1899. This concern had constructed a sinuous 3ft 6in gauge main line running inland down through the wild and mountainous wilderness from the Port of Burnie on the north-west coast to Zeehan, tapping the traffic of numerous important mining centres along the route such as Waratah (with the mining world's renowned Mount Bischoff tin mine), Rosebery (lead and zinc) and Renison Bell (tin).

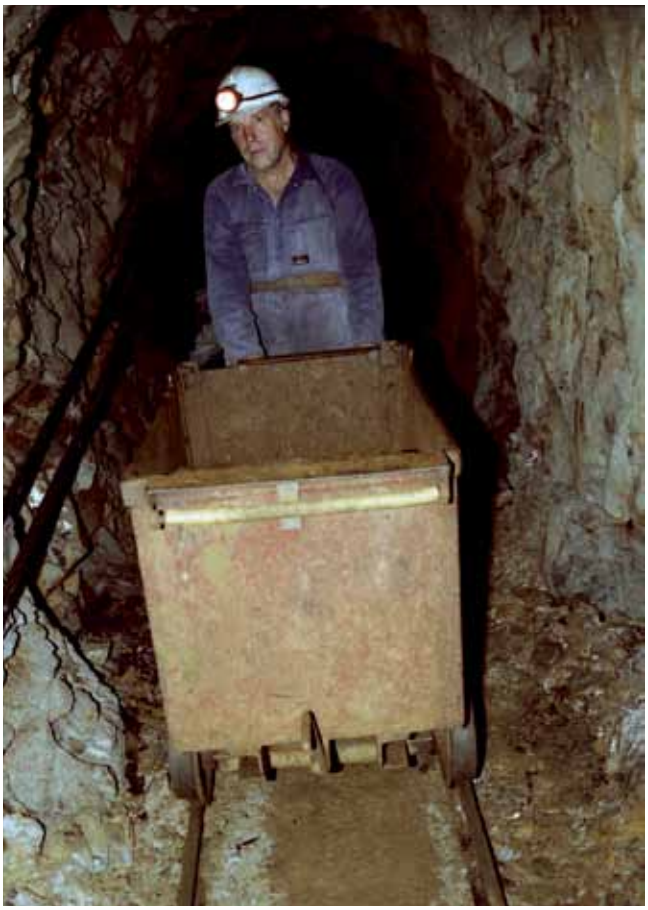
The demise of a mining town is practicably *a fait accompli* when the last licensed establishment closes its doors; in the case of the now forlorn Dundas, this was the *Miners' Arms Hotel* which had ceased trading in 1919.[12] Finally, rail traffic had dwindled to the occasional truck of firewood so the Rayna Junction–Dundas railway was entirely closed in 1929, severing all rail connections with Zeehan. Geological difficulties, inadequate capital investment, copious water inflow and low metal prices forced upon the mines a cessation of work. The populace had dwindled to about 50 souls. Wallabies, Tassie devils and tiger snakes now outnumbered the human population of this once vibrant township.

Dundas 2012 – the Dundas Extended mine

The 'ancients' of old Dundas have long departed this world and only one occupied home remains. At 1143 metres, Mount Dundas looks down the 'peaceful senescence' of the valley through which the Dundas River flows. The long disused turntable pit of the Emu Bay Railway is still intact but practically overgrown with trees beside the access road which was built on the old railway formation to Dundas station and Maestries. On the distant ridgeline to the north can still be followed the sinuous track bed of the legendary 2ft gauge North East Dundas Tramway, on its way from Zeehan to Williamsford. However, not everything is as comatose as it appears to a visitor to the valley.

Tasmania's mineral emblem is Lead Chromate — Crocoite (PbCrO4). The lead chromate crystals, appearing in a monoclinic system of varying length and thickness, are a bright hyacinth-red in colour. In the Adelaide mine at Dundas these crystals form long, slender prisms up to 100mm in length.[13] Such magnificent specimens are much sought after by mineral collectors from Australia and elsewhere throughout the world.

During the 1970s Mike Phelan reopened a long abandoned mine which had been dug into the northern slope of Dundas Hill during the field's halcyon days.[14] This he has called the *Dundas Extended*. The mine site, of very restricted size, is situated in dense forest. An adit, the entrance to which is partly concealed by luxuriant tree ferns, extends for some 130 metres into the hill through slates and siltstones to cut a silver-lead vein. Three rises of about 30 metres in height have been put up to prospect for the elusive Crocoite crystals.



Underground transport in its most basic form – hand tramming. Once common in all mining fields in Tasmania, let alone the Australian mainland and the rest of the mining world, this practice is now very rare, only predated by the use of primitive wheelbarrows running on planks in centuries past. 14 March, 2012. Photo: Author

A nice example of large Lead Chromate crystals – better known as Crocoite. This is the State of Tasmania's mineral emblem, as is mined at the Dundas mines. *Photo: Author*

An 18 inch gauge tramway was originally used in the old workings but Mike has relaid the track to 2ft gauge. Second-hand steel rail was procured from the nearby Comet mine,[15] and also from auction at the closed Aberfoyle tin mine at Rossarden in north east Tasmania. The rails are dogged to hardwood sleepers.

A small four-wheel steel mine truck, also from Rossarden, is used to carry out the waste material to the dump. At the underground end of the adit a sharp turn to the right is encountered where the tunnel heads off towards the position of the rises. To get the truck around this corner a turntable, just adequate to accommodate its short wheel base, is set into the footwall. The design of this appliance is quite simple: two parallel bars of flat steel, to match the track gauge, are welded onto the 36in diameter circular steel base. The circular plate was once part of the Oceana Mine's steel headframe, erected by Zeehan Mines Pty Limited. in the early 1950s, which sat above the 648ft deep shaft, three miles south of Zeehan township. Rivet holes drilled diagonally across the plate testify to its previous application.[16]

An air compressor outside the adit supplies air through pipes to an air pick which Mike uses to dig out the ground up at the face of a rise. The ground is not all that hard and is fairly easily broken down. The Crocoite crystals grow from mineralised water seeping into a void in the ore bearing rock so their removal is a delicate operation; a screwdriver is used to gently prize the rock apart without damaging the crystal formation.

Waste dirt and stone falls down the rise to rail level where it is shoveled into the truck and hand trammed to the surface. Side clearance in the tunnel is very tight in places. Near the end of his 'shift' Mike picks down a quantity of dirt ready to be loaded out next time he decides to work in his mine. Roof conditions are generally good, though in one location in the adit a fault is encountered so 6ft ×6in×8½in hardwood timber is put up for support. The floor is quite slushy here from seepage.

The tippler on the surface is homemade and is simple but effective: the truck is pushed into the pivoted metal frame which is normally chocked level with the rails; when the chock is removed the unbalanced weight tips the truck forward to empty the dirt through a forward-opening door onto the dump below. A long length of timber is used for leverage to manually return the truck to track level where the tippler is again chocked. The now empty truck is pushed back into the mine for another load. Of course, any valuable Crocoite or silver-lead mineral specimens are handled very carefully to avoid damage. Some of the dump's dirt is used for filling in potholes on the dirt access road. The mine is only worked part time, just a few hours a day some weeks to suit the owner's whim.

Zeehan: 2012

Whereas Dundas has joined the sorrowful ranks of other pathetic ghost towns, Zeehan is still the domicile of some 600 people; many of these are transient mineworkers who travel to work at the Renison Bell tin mine. The showpiece of the town is the West Coast Heritage Centre which incorporates a most excellent museum. Located in the numerous rooms of the onetime School of Mines and Metallurgy, it features a very comprehensive pictorial display of all West Coast mining history. Next door is the beautifully restored Gaiety Theatre which was capable of accommodating over a thousand people. These attractions make for a popular stopover location for numerous tourists during the warmer months of the year.

Many choice specimens of precious metal ores and minerals are on display in the museum but the rare Crocoite commands pride of place. Visitors are able to purchase superb examples of Tasmania's unique mineral emblem. Although not even a distant shadow of their former wealthy silvery days, a few Dundas mines still produce valuable minerals for the admiration of those who appreciate nature's splendors.

Acknowledgement

The author wishes to acknowledge the generous assistance of Mike Phelan.

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13. Lease was first pegged in 1890 by T Anderson. Acquired by Adelaide Pty Silver Mining Co in 1891 and worked for silver-lead for a very short period of time.
14. Abraham Kosminsky pegged leases near here in 1890. Some official spelling has his name as Kosminski. Dundas Hill was close by.
15. The Comet leases were pegged in 1888.
16. The first lease was pegged in 1887 and the Oceana Mine was worked intermittently until 1925 then closed. Exploration by North Broken Hill Ltd and Broken Hill South Ltd between 1946 and 1948 resulted in Zeehan Mines Pty Ltd being formed in 1950 to reopen the mine. The Mine was worked from 1954 to 1960 then closed as ore reserves were practically exhausted. Water inflow was also a problem. The old shaft headframe, which it is thought originally came from the Victorian goldfields, is on display at the West Coast Heritage Centre in the mining museum's yard.

Clockwise from below: *The homemade underground turntable, which is a steel plate 3ft in diameter. The rivet holes from the plate's previous use at the Oceana mine near Zeehan can be clearly seen. At this location the roadway is driven from the main adit at right angles. • Deep inside Dundas Hill: in places the adit has minimal clearance for the rail truck to pass through. A unique miner's tool, the pelican pick, is propped up against the side wall. • The entrance to the mine is partly obscured by tree ferns. The tippler is several metres to the right of the photo. • The lease holder of his Dundas Extended mine, Mr Mike Phelan, pushes the four-wheel truck onto the tippler in preparation to end tipping the dirt dug out of the underground rises. Note the circular steel bar across the end of the truck's body that was used for pushing the truck, its position below the lip offers maximum protection for the miner's fingers. • After emptying, to bring the tippler containing the truck back up to track level, a long timber is necessary to provide additional leverage. Note how the truck's front end is pivoted at the top to allow the dirt and stone to spill out onto the dump below. Photos: Author*

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QUEENSLAND

ISIS CENTRAL SUGAR MILL CO LTD

(see LR 224 p.26)
610mm gauge
EM Baldwin B-B DH 11 (10130.1.6.82 of 1982) and its EM Baldwin brake wagon (7937.1 7.78 of 1987) have been repainted yellow with red and white dazzle striping on the headstocks and running board sides. Previously the locomotive had been in the mill's standard livery which is cream between running board and waist levels.
Tony Bennett 6/12

MACKAY SUGAR LTD, Mackay area mills

(see LR 225 p. 26)
610mm gauge
At about 5pm on 24 June, a police car driven by a sergeant was struck by Marian Mill's Eimco B-B DH *FARLEIGH* (L254 of 1990) hauling empty bins at the level crossing on R McClures Road, Benholme, west of Marian. Road conditions at the time were described as wet, muddy and very slippery. The level crossing had 'Give Way" signs but no flashing lights.
Courier-Mail 25/6/12 via David Bromage; Brian Millar 6/12

MACKAY SUGAR LTD, Mossman Mill

(see LR 225 p.27)
610mm gauge
The transaction to acquire the milling and related assets of Mossman Mill was completed as planned at the start of June. Through the application of incentive schemes, Mackay Sugar plans to increase cane supply by 25% in four years.
North Queensland Register 5/6/2012

MSF SUGAR LTD, Mulgrave Mill, Gordonvale

(see LR 225 p.27)
610mm gauge
It is understood that all cane from Babinda north is being crushed at Mulgrave Mill this season

Top: *In pristine yellow, Isis Mill's EM Baldwin B-B DH 11 (10130.1.6.82 of 1982) and its brake wagon at the Bundy Road road transport dump on 18 June. Photo: Tony Bennett* ***Centre:*** *Mackay Sugar's Eimco B-B DH 19* NARPI *(L256 of 1990) heads 103 loaded bins towards Marian Mill at Webster's Junction, Gargett, on 16 June. Unusually, the locomotive was running long-hood forward. The substantial cutting gives access to the trackbed of the old Owens Creek branch railway on which the 2ft gauge is laid in the foreground. Photo: Scott Jesser* ***Above:*** *The last days of the well-equipped Babinda Mill workshops on 15 May with Com-Eng 0-6-0DH locomotives (L-R) 9 (AH3979 of1964), 4* HARVEY *(AD1138 of 1960) and 5* BRAMSTON *(AH2460 of1962). Photo: Editor*

Top: *With the Bellenden Ker Range as the backdrop, Mulgrave Mill's Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 8* CHARINGA *(A1926 of 1958) departs from Bundy Loop at McDonnell Creek and is about to cross the border from the old Babinda Mill tramway onto the Mulgrave Mill route, 22 June 2012.* ***Centre:*** *The morning of 21 June was set down for maintenance at Mulgrave Mill and workers are busy tidying up the cane unloading station. Loaded bins come in on the right hand side line to be tipped and then are taken to the empty line on the left by a traverser. The two modified bins on hand are for the spilt cane billets that are being cleared away.* ***Above:*** *Tractor motorcades cane train. A new addition to the Mulgrave fleet, Clyde 0-6-0DH 23* BEHANA *(55-56 of 1955), hauls its train west along Vohland Road towards Aloomba with the Malbon Thompson Range in the background. All photos: Editor*

and track work to upgrade the former Babinda line that connects to the former Mulgrave line at McDonnell Creek is continuing. Work was being done to relay the loop lines at Bundy Loop, McDonnell Creek, in mid-May in preparation for the start of the crushing, and similar work was continuing at Cucania in mid-June after crushing had commenced. Both Plasser tamping machines, the Model KMX-06 (98 of 1975) and the KMX-12T (432 of 1997) have been stabled at Fishery Falls for use in the area. The KMX-06, the oldest tamping machine in use in the industry, suffered a seized wheelset and was at the mill for repair at some stage.

The locomotives transferred to Mulgrave Mill from South Johnstone Mill for the 2012 season are as follows and have been renumbered and named:

23	*BEHANA*	0-6-0DH	Clyde	55 56	1955 (ex 2 *GOONDI*)
24	*PYRAMID*	0-6-0DH	Clyde	56 90	1956 (ex 3 *DARADGEE*)
25	*CUCANIA*	0-6-0DH	Clyde	63-289	1963 (ex 20)
26	*MERINGA*	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	AK3675	1964 (ex 22)

Numbers 23 and 24 have been noted operating separately, not as a paired unit as they were generally used in Babinda Mill days.

Clyde 0-6-0DH 18 (64-379 of 1964) has been fitted with a Cummins engine. It has also received a torque converter taken from a Com-Eng locomotive, and no retarder is fitted. This locomotive has been named *BARRON* and was ready to enter service at the start of the season.

Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 9 *MEERAWA* (FC3473 of 1964) had a final drive failure last season and has also been receiving attention in the workshop. It has received a new Allison 6-speed automatic transmission with a retarder. This type of transmission incorporates automatically-changing gears as well as a torque converter and it appears that Mulgrave Mill is pioneering its application in the sugar industry. It was expected to re-enter service in early July. It is likely that Clyde 0-6-0DH 19 *REDLYNCH* (65-435 of 1965) will be the next to receive an automatic transmission. This locomotive was noted on 12 May parked in the Redlynch navvy shed with the weed spray train.

Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 17 *DEERAL* (AD1453 of 1962) has been dismantled, with its rolling chassis on shop bogies, and its superstructure, noted outside the back of the loco shed in May and June.

Prof B-B DH 33 (PSL 25.01 of 1990 rebuilt South Johnstone 1993), formerly South Johnstone Mill's *NYLETA*, was moved from the navvy yard to the loco shed on 22 June. It is believed that it will be fitted with a Scania V8 engine and will become 22 *ALOOMBA*.

A new cab, similar to that fitted to Com-Eng 8 *CHARINGA* (A1926 of 1958), was noted outside the front of the loco shed during May and June.

Clyde 0-6-0DH 16 *KAMMA* (56-96 of 1956) is still desperately in need of a repaint. Plainly visible on the cab side is '6 Hambledon Mill CSR' and on the cab rear 'Visit Sugarworld'. This locomotive was transferred from Hambledon Mill, then the site of Sugarworld, at the end of the 1991 season.

The two Walkers diesels, *GORDONVALE* (595 of 1968) and *MULGRAVE* (612 of 1969) – both

rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1995 – have had the footplate steps removed to allow checking of the radiator water removed, while *GORDONVALE* has had a new fuel tank fitted in front of the cab like *MULGRAVE*.

Of the brake wagons, EM Baldwin 13 (7065.4 6.77 of 1977) is paired with *MULGRAVE*, and 1990 Hambledon locomotive conversion 11 (ex Baguley 0-6-0DM 2514 of 1954), is paired with EM Baldwin 0-6-0DH 11 *MAITLAND* (4413.2 8.72 of 1972). Clyde 18 (CQ132 of 1965) appears to have been fitted with a new engine and compressor but not an auxiliary fuel tank, while Clyde 19 (CQ1319 of 1969), which has an auxiliary fuel tank, is used with the Clyde locomotive that runs to Redlynch. The other brake wagons are behind the loco shed, apparently out of use.

Three locomotives had been placed in the navvy yard by mid-June, presumably surplus to current requirements. These are Com-Eng 0-6-0DM 5 (A1005 of 1955), Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 6 (A1006 of 1955), without an engine, and Clyde 0-6-0DH 14 (56-86 of 1956). In addition, two locomotives have been dismantled behind the loco shed for some time, Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 4 (A1004 of 1955) and Clyde 0-6-0DH 15 (58-190 of 1958).

The three small navvy locomotives are also out of use, with Motor Rail "Simplex" 4wDM (10450 of 1954) behind the navvy shed, the 1962 Mulgrave Mill-built "Pie Cart" in the navvy yard, and EM Baldwin 4wDM 10 (6/881 6.64 of 1964) parked adjacent to the Mulgrave Settlers' Museum building. The Hansen linecar from Hambledon Mill (1516 of 1976) was disposed of to Tom Porritt a few years ago.

A couple of corrections/clarifications need to be added. Locomotive 17 was at one time reported as being named *PYRAMID,* but this was incorrect. In addition, Clyde 0-6-0DH 13 (64-316 of 1964) has been reported as *HIGHLEIGH,* but it has never carried this name.

Luke Horniblow 5/12; Woody Charlton 5/15; Carl Millington 6/12; Tom Porritt 6/12; Editor 6/12

MSF SUGAR LTD, South Johnstone Mill

(see LR 225 p.27)

610mm gauge

It is understood that all cane from Babinda south is being crushed at South Johnstone Mill this season. Work was going on relaying a section of the old Babinda line on Bramston Beach Road at Miriwinni in mid-May. In attendance was Clyde 0-6-0DH 15 (66-491 of 1966) with two ballast wagons and a ballast plough, while a compressor wagon and four line bogies were stowed nearby. Both the mill's Tamper ballast tampers were also in use, the Model SVT-JWL (4375739 of 1979) and Model STM-XLC (94962 of 1995). On June 11, these vehicles were waiting for the reinstatement of the QR diamond crossing at Garradunga to be able to return to the mill. The tampers and the locomotive were back at the mill by June 21 and the ballast

Top: *Little changed from its Innisfail Tramway days, South Johnstone Mill's Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 27 (AO57111 of 1975) hauls its navvy train through a banana plantation at Wangan on 22 June.* ***Centre:*** *Road vehicles fitted with hi-rail equipment give additional flexibility to cane railway maintenance. Here South Johnstone Mill's Mitsubishi Canter weed spray truck prepares for action at Hunts Loop in the old Mourilyan Mill area on 22 June.* ***Above:*** *The rationalisation following the closure of Mourilyan Mill resulted in the elimination of some branch crossings of the QR North Coast Line and the establishment of this main line crossing at Ramleh. Here South Johnstone Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH 18 (56-83 of 1956) cruises through the catchpoints with its loaded train. All photos: Editor*

wagons and ballast plough were noted being hauled towards the mill by Com-Eng 0-6-0DM 27 (AI57111 of 1975) at Wangan on 22 June.

On 15 May, nine locomotives were noted at the Babinda Mill site. In the stabling shed were:

1	*JOSEPHINE*	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	A1821	1957
	RUSSELL	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	A2027	1958
11		0-6-0DH	Clyde	55-64	1955
13		0-6-0DH	Clyde	59-203	1959
38		0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	AH4695	1965

In the workshop were:

4	*HARVEY*	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	AD1138	1960
5	*BRAMSTON*	0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	AH2460	1962
8		0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	AA1543	1960
9		0-6-0DH	Com-Eng	AH3979	1964

It was stated that on the completion of the work on the coupling rods of number 4 in the following two weeks, the Babinda workshop would be closing for good. Following the reinstatement of the diamond crossing at Garradunga, it is understood that these locomotives were all moved to South Johnstone Mill, although multi-pair 8 and 9 have subsequently been seen hauling cane in the Miriwinni area.

The old Mourilyan Mill site has been cleared of almost all rolling stock, with the exception of Plasser Model KMX-12T ballast tamper, 249 of 1982, which appears to be disused, and adjacent to it a few mill roller carriers that seem to have been left undisturbed because a large tree has fallen on them. A couple of the roller carriers are mounted on Innisfail Tramway bogies and the other is the chassis of a John Fowler 0-4-2T locomotive, thought to be 12967 of 1911. This is one of several steam loco chassis that were used as roller carriers from the 1960s but the others have all been disposed of following the closure of the mill. No locomotives are based at the Mourilyan mill site this season.

On May 15, a visit to the Silkwood depot found it being used for storage of four of the mill's small brake wagons as follows:

1	Clyde Qld	CQ2413	1972
BV2	EMB	6575.1 5.76	1976
No.3	EMB	6575.2 5.76	1976
RS0024	Hockey Engineering	1972	

With the start of the crush, these had been removed from Silkwood, with 1 and BV2 noted in the storage shed at the mill on 21 June.

Top: *Lingering on against the odds, the chassis of John Fowler 0-4-2T 12967 of 1911 at the Mourilyan Mill site on 15 May. This was one of several steam locomotives cut down to carry mill rollers in the 1960s. Photo: Editor* ***Above:*** *Built at Islington Workshops in 1969, standard gauge Bo-Bo DE 53 has found a new lease of life as workshops shunter for Bluebird Rail Operations at the place of its origin. Photo: courtesy Scott Mitchell/NRM Catch Point*

Meanwhile, it is understood that Clyde 0-6-0DH 17 (55-57 of 1955) was stationed at Silkwood for the start of the crushing, and is used on three shifts a day.

Com-Eng 39 (AH4688 of 1965) is based at the south side of the Silver Bridge and works in the area up to the top of the 8-mile Range, including Nos.1, 1½ and 2 branches. It brings loaded bins up to the Silver Bridge and propels them across, as the bridge is no longer available for locomotive use. The bins are picked up on the other side by a locomotive coming from the mill yard.

The mill's hi-rail Mitsubishi Canter weed spray truck was seen in on-track operation on 22 June doing spot spraying at sidings where bins had been parked during the slack season spraying campaign.

Late on the night of 15 June, a driver was pinned under the buffer of EM Baldwin B-B DH 32 *LIVERPOOL* (10385.1 8.82 of 1982) whilst shunting at Currajah Loop. Two mobile cranes had to be summoned to the scene to release the unfortunate employee, who was taken to hospital with serious leg injuries.

Luke Horniblow 6/12; Shane Yore 6/12; Editor 5/12, 6/12; *Cairns Post* 16/6/2012 via Bob Gough

SUCROGEN (HERBERT) PTY LTD, Herbert River Mills

(see LR 225 p.28)

610mm gauge

Of the locomotives receiving major overhauls, Macknade Mill's EM Baldwin B-B DH 20 (7070.4 4.77 of 1977) returned to service late in June, not long after the start of crushing. At Victoria Mill, Clyde 0-6-0DH *LUCINDA* (65-436 of 1965) was being readied to go back in service by the end of June, while Walkers B-B DH *VICTORIA* (599 of 1988 rebuilt Tulk Goninan 1994) still had a long way to go.

An 11-tonne bin has had one bogie removed and replaced as a trial with a single wheelset similar to that used on the 8-tonne bins. There are also plans for double-length raw sugar wagons with two of the existing size sugar boxes fitted on them, and in the future one large box. Two Herbert River sugar box wagons were noted outside the Bradken plant at Boogan, near Innisfail, in late June, presumably as part of this project.

Victoria Mill's EM Baldwin 4wDH *Sugarworld Shuttle* (9109.1 9.80 of 1980) had its engine removed during the slack season and sent away to Anese Motor Repairers in Ingham. The engine was returned in mid-May.

Victoria Mill's Preserved Hudswell Clarle 0-6-0 *HOMEBUSH* (1067 of 1914) was to run during the Italian festival in the last weekend in July.

Chris Hart 5/12, 6/12; Editor 6/12

SUCROGEN PLANE CREEK PTY LTD, Sarina

(see LR 225 p.28)

610mm gauge

The track on Malone's Hill on the Turnors Paddock line at Koumala was washed out during the slack season and had to be relaid. Proserpine Mill's Plasser Model KMX-12T ballast tamper (413 of 1995) was reportedly on short-term loan to line and tamp the new track late in May.

Bob James 5/12

Industrial Railway NEWS

TULLY SUGAR LTD
(see LR 222 p.24)
610mm gauge
EM Baldwin 0-4-0DH 2 (6/1082.2 2.65 of 1965) was noted stationed in the El Arish depot shed in mid-May. There is no sign of any work being done on the projected Bilyana line to the south of the tramway network.
Editor 5/12

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

BLUEBIRD RAIL OPERATIONS PTY LTD, Islington
(see LR 207 p.27)
1435mm gauge
Bo-Bo DE 53 (SAR Islington 138 of 1969) is in use as workshops shunter at Islington and is contracted from Bluebird Rail Operations as required by other occupants of the workshops, which are leased out by GWA to Bluebird and several other parties.
Bob Sampson, National Railway Museum 6/12

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BHP BILLITON IRON ORE PTY LTD
(see LR 225 p.28)
1435mm gauge
Six Model SD70MACe Co-Co DE locomotives, 4374 to 4379, built by Progress Rail Services at Muncie, Indiana, were unloaded at Nelson Point commencing on 27 May. A further seven were due to be delivered at the end of June with four more expected to arrive in August. Further deliveries are expected to begin in November 2012 from an order of 80 as part of a massive replacement program.
A Model 09-3x DTS ballast tamper and a Model SSP 305 ballast plough are reportedly on order from Plasser Australia.
Brett Geraghty 5/12; *Railway Digest* 5/12

THE PILBARA INFRASTRUCTURE PTY LTD
(see LR 223 p,27)
1435mm gauge
Numbers 701 to 708, the first eight of an order for 19 Model SD70MACe Co-Co DE locomotives being constructed by Progress Rail Services, left Muncie, Indiana, on 18 June for haulage to Norfolk, Virginia, for loading into a heavy lift ship bound for Port Hedland.
WA Railscene e-mag 197

PILBARA RAIL
(see LR 225 p.28)
1435mm gauge
Twelve General Electric Model ES44DCi Co-Co DE locomotives (60773 to 60783 of 2012) numbered 8175 to 8186, arrived at Dampier on 14 May. An order for 13 Model ES44ACi locomotives, to be numbered 9187 to 9216 was reported in May.
A Model 09-3X dynamic ballast tamper and a Unimat Midel 08-475/4S switch tamper are reportedly on order from Plasser Australia.
Former Robe River Model CM40-8M C0-Co DE locomotives 9417 (Alco 6010-01 of 1970 rebuilt Goninan 083, 1989), 9420 (Alco 3486-04 of 1967 rebuilt Goninan 119, 1991), 9424 (Alco 6010-4 of 1968 rebuilt Goninan 084, 1989) and 9425 (Goodwin G-6041-04 of 1970, rebuilt Goninan 085, 1989) are stored in a transport yard in the light industrial area in Karratha.
The two Model CM36-7M Co-Co DE locomotives 5051 (Goodwin G-6035-02 of 1969 rebuilt Goninan 072, 1987) and 5052 (Goodwin G-6041-02 of 1970 rebuilt Goninan 073, 1987) are stored at 7 Mile awaiting scrapping.
Comparison trials and tests are under way on the prototype Type Q and B ore cars to determine a new series of ore car.
WA Railscene e-mag 192, 194, 196; *Railway Digest* 5/12

OVERSEAS

FIJI SUGAR CORPORATION
(see LR 225 p.28)
610mm gauge
Two major rail bridges on the Lautoka Mill network were destroyed in the April floods, at Navo, south of Nadi and Naviago, north of Lautoka. All efforts were concentrated initially on the very important Navo bridge, which was repaired using girders salvaged from the old Sigatoka rail bridge which itself had been a victim of flooding some years ago. The repaired Navo bridge was reopened on 19 June with attention then to be turned to Naviago, which was expected to be open by the end of July according to the Prime Minister. In addition, track repairs were focussed on areas where the use of replacement road transport would be most difficult.
Following the floods, the government announced that it would not be taking over cane harvesting or lorry transportation as had previously been stated. In addition, the proposed cane quality payment system will also not be introduced at the current time
Fiji Times Online 19/6/2012, 5/6/2012, 20/6/2012; The Jet 27/6/12; Trevor Emmitt 6/12

REPUBLIC OF NAURU PHOSPHATE CORPORATION (RONPHOS)
(see LR 215 p.31)
915mm gauge
A visit to Nauru in May 2012 has confirmed the final demise of the railway. The dual track line itself is largely intact, running from the phosphate pile and workshops located in the centre of the island down to the loading bins above the phosphate processing plant to the south west. However it has been covered in gravel and used along its entire length as a road for mining vehicles. The tops of the rail can be easily seen and on occasion an exposed sleeper end is visible. Approaching the workshops, a number of modern saddle bottom four-wheel phosphate wagons are along the side of the road ostensibly protecting the power poles to which they pushed up against.
At the RONPHOS workshops the remains of a Thomas Hill 4wDH locomotive may be seen. It sits on an isolated piece of track and is in a poor state of repair, the lack of engine being the most obvious problem. A drive down the main line reveals little apart from some scrap rail, a wheel set or two and the remains of a v-tipper wagon pushed towards the edge of the road. The rail is easily followed and runs all the way to the loading bins and access bridge.
On a plinth near the RONPHOS offices sits 610mm gauge Orenstein & Koppel 0-4-0WT 11586 of 1928, with a v-tipper wagon, slowly decaying in the marine environment.
The loading bins and their access bridge are intact with track still in place. Apart from the two locomotives and plentiful wagons these two structures represent the most significant artifacts of the old operations.
Rod Hutchinson, 5/12

Fast becoming overgrown, the remains of the last locomotive used on Nauru's phosphate mining railway, 915mm gauge Thomas Hill 4wDH (268V of 1976), built in Rotherham, South Yorkshire, sits outside the large workshop building. *Photo: Rod Hutchinson*

Book Reviews

Built by Bundaberg Foundry

by John Browning and Brian Webber

Published by the Australian Narrow Gauge Museum Society. 80 pages, A4 card-cover, colour and black & white illustrations. Available from the ARHSnsw bookshop, phone (02) 9379 6633, or on-line at www.arhsnsw.com.au
Recommended retail price $22.50

Built by Bundaberg Foundry roughly fits into the same category as Craig Wilson's *Built by Baldwin* and John Dunn's well-known (and ongoing) series covering Commonwealth Engineering (Comeng). The comparatively modest output of the Bundaberg Foundry — eight steam locomotives, 13 diesel locomotives and 20 ex-Government B-B DH rebuilds — is reflected in the size of this smaller tome, but while this new book may not be as weighty as those mentioned, it is no less important. Authors John Browning and Brian Webber will likely need no introduction to readers of *Light Railways* magazine. John compiles the News section of the magazine (and has for many years), and has long been the go-to man for assistance in researching Australasian industrial locomotives. Meanwhile, Brian is one of Queensland's most prolific and well-respected railway historians and authors, and has justly earned a distinguished reputation for balancing his work, placing as much importance on the industries of yesterday, as he does the railways of today. Together, they make sure that the Foundry's locomotive output is covered comprehensively.

The mission of this work can be gleaned from the foreword, "This book is the story of locomotives that were produced by a Queensland company working with overseas manufacturers to produce workhorses suitable for intensive use in harsh Queensland conditions." Interestingly, all eight of the Foundry's steam locomotives remain with us today through preservation, while the majority of their diesel locomotives built or remanufactured for the Australian sugar industry are either still in service, or have also been preserved. This places *Built by Bundaberg Foundry* in the intriguing position of being a work that is essentially the definitive word on the topic, but one in which just about everything covered may well change in decades to come. The second edition could well be a very different beast, even if no further locomotive deliveries are ever made.

The book itself is, as mentioned comprehensive in its coverage and it handles with ease a history of all locomotives built at the plant, largely examined one-by-one. Sections also look at associated topics such as the firm's history, the Ballyhooley operation based in Port Douglas, and "Bundy's" Last Great Adventure, the amazing film project that took Bundaberg Fowler No.5 from Woodford, via the sugar cane lines of the Nambour, Bundaberg, Mackay, Ingham, Innisfail, Tully and Gordonvale areas to Mossman Mill in 2000. It was an amazing project at the time, and only seems more impossible 12 years on.

Because the Foundry's output was quite small, the book largely avoids the need for the great rafts of tables common to books of this type, and as a consequence the text-based approach makes quite a good read in addition to being an important resource. The historical focus of the book is largely on the locomotives once they were constructed, delivered and commissioned, unlike Craig Wilson's book, which examined in detail the background of EM Baldwin's marketing, design and customer relationships. However, what this book does, it does very well, a result no doubt of careful and methodical record keeping on the part of the authors, coupled to source material retained by the firm themselves. The information is thorough and will interest anyone with a serious interest in Australian, and particularly Australian industrial locomotives.

Where the book is comparatively weak, is in the final section covering the ex-Government DH/M/73 Class locomotives rebuilt during the 1990s for the Australian sugar industry. Compared to what has come before the coverage is a little brief, although it could be argued that little is written of these machines because there is comparatively little to write at this stage in their history. However, given these locomotives are among the highest profile to have passed through the Foundry, it is possible that diesel fans attracted to this book by the promise of such coverage, might be a little let down. But, in the end this is a fairly minor weakness, for the information on the rebuilds will certainly be enough to please most who will turn these pages. Overall, the layout is simple and easy to follow. The photo quality ranges from fair to excellent, and illustrations are clear and easy to read. At $22.50, the book is outstanding value — particularly in this day and age of many railway books being quite, some might say 'overly' expensive. Furthermore, profits from the sale of *Built by Bundaberg Foundry* will be donated to Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society, whose star attraction is Bundaberg Foundry steam locomotive No.5.

On a closing note, while reading the book, it occurred to this reviewer that its size and subject matter might make for an ideal e-book for iPad and tablet users. Books such as this are important especially to younger readers who are still discovering the railway scene 'off to the side' of the main lines of Australia. Perhaps an e-book version might make work such as this — traditionally difficult to track down as years pass — easier to find and obtain, which is certainly the kind of exposure a quality book such as this deserves. Highly recommended!

Chris Walters

Global industry, local innovation: the history of cane sugar production in Australia, 1820-1995

by Peter D Griggs

A5 size hardback. 928 pages with 69 photographs, 60 maps and diagrams, and 56 statistical tables. Digitally printed. Published 2011 by Peter Lang AG, Bern, Switzerland.

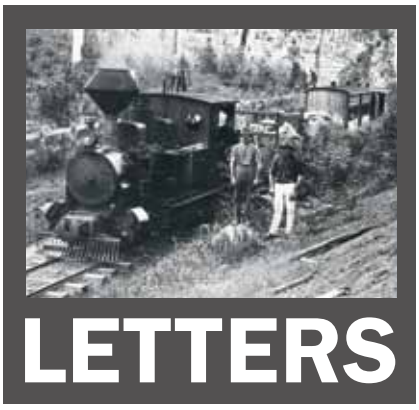
This book will doubtless become the standard reference on the Australian sugar cane industry for many years to come. Its author, a historical geographer at the Cairns campus of James Cook University, has previously published widely on the subject. The monumental work provides an excellent overall survey, dealing with growing, milling, refining, marketing, and the social, economic, political and industrial contexts of the industry. Geographical and environmental issues are pre-eminent in the narrative, with the agricultural side of the industry given particular prominence.

Peter Griggs writes in an accessible style and the book is almost free of typographical errors. Given the enormity of the subject matter, the writer has done very well in marshalling narrative and analysis across a broad sweep, providing an invaluable integrated understanding of industry development. However, I suspect that he found it difficult to avoid being swamped by the amount of factual detail that is available for the more recent period.

Rail transport features in a useful summary of the harvesting and transport of cane. The overall treatment is sound but it is perhaps too much to expect one person to develop expert detailed knowledge over such a wide subject, and so it proves. The keen eye will notice a few minor errors of detail and of understanding in the material on cane railways.

However, this does not significantly diminish the value of the work, which would be very valuable reading for anyone interested in the history of the sugar industry in Australia. It includes an extensive bibliography including details of many archival records of the industry, as well as published sources.

Made available by a Swiss academic publisher, this well-produced book is not cheap. If you want to obtain a copy, some shopping around on the internet will prove to be of benefit. Alternatively, your local library might be persuaded to obtain one. Highly recommended. *John Browning*



LETTERS

Dear Sir

The new Improved Meyer (LR 225) – for sale to Rhodesia

By late 1917, the First World War had been in progress for over three years and the needs of the munitions industry had created an inexhaustible demand for essential raw materials. During this period the tonnage of chrome carried over the Beira & Mashonaland Railway in Rhodesia had doubled, while the tonnage of copper from Katanga, in the Congo, had increased fivefold.[1]

This increase in traffic led to a corresponding decline in the condition of the locomotives on this railway as it struggled to both handle the increased tonnages and maintain the available locomotives. New locomotives were unavailable and, by 1917, the railway was incapable of carrying the volume of traffic unless extra locomotives were received. In an attempt to resolve this problem the Commonwealth Government received, in October 1917, a cablegram from the Secretary of State for the Colonies in London requesting the loan of ten 3ft 6in gauge locomotives for use in Rhodesia.

The Prime Minister's department immediately forwarded a copy of this telegram to the Premiers of Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania in the hope that one of these states may have been able to supply the required locomotives.[2] Tasmania immediately replied stating that a new locomotive, belonging to Millars Timber & Trading Company, was at present in the TGR's Launceston Workshops.[3] This locomotive was an 0-4-0+0-4-0 "Improved Meyer" that had been built by Andrew Barclay in 1912 (builders No.1303) for the Huon Timber Company as their No.7.[4] With an axle loading of 14 tons, it was too heavy for use in Tasmania and 'instructions [had] been received to ship this locomotive to Manilla (*sic*)', but instead it could be sold to Rhodesia 'for approximately £5000'.[5] Both Queensland and South Australia also offered to sell locomotives to Rhodesia, rather than loan them, with Queensland offering six 'B13' class engines,[6] while South Australia would sell either two 'T' or 'Y' class locomotives.[7]

In reply to these offers the United Kingdom government stated that these locomotives were unsuitable and that the type of locomotive required was an eight coupled tender engine, with a tractive effort of at least 26,000 pounds and a tender capacity of eight tons of coal and 3,000 gallons of water.[8] The closest that any state could come to meeting these requirements was Western Australia, who offered to sell to Rhodesia four 'F' class locomotives, a 4-8-0 which developed only 20,530 pounds tractive effort and had a tender capacity of only five tons of coal and 2200 gallons of water. However, this sale would be conditional on that the United Kingdom government releasing for export material required by the WAGR to repair four other locomotives.[9]

Almost three months elapsed before the Commonwealth Government received a reply to this final offer, when the Secretary of State for the Colonies cabled Australia in March 1918 to inform the government that Rhodesia's locomotive requirements had been met.[10] In late 1917, the Chemin de Fer du Bas-Congo au Katanga (BCK) had commenced to take delivery of twenty-four new 2-8-2 locomotives that had been built by HK Porter in the United States.[11] However, the BCK was still largely only a proposed railway[12] and the Beira & Mashonaland Railway had managed to borrow six of these locomotives, which had resolved their motive power problems.[13]

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2. Decypher of cablegram received from the Secretary of state for the Colonies dated London, 20th October 1917, 12.40 p.m. National Archives of Australia (NAA) Series A2939/1, Item SC75.
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12. S.E. Katzenellenbogen, *The Railways and the Copper Mines of Katanga*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1973, p.90.
13. Edward D. Hamer, *Locomotives of Zimbabwe and Botswana,* Stenvalls, Malmö, Sweden, 2001, p.62.

Mark Langdon
(via email)

Dear Sir,

The New Improved Meyer No.7 (LR 225)

Scott Clennett's excellent article on this locomotive has done much to dispel the pre-existing near total absence of any technical detail concerning the engine itself and its history while in Tasmania. It certainly fulfilled the term 'new' in one sense. It arrived brand new and some years later finally left the state still 'new'. The justification for the word 'improved' in its description so far as its sojourn in Tasmania is concerned is hard to find.

The significance of the engine being identified as 7 suggests that there were six other engines under company ownership before this engine was ordered and this indeed was the position. Scott has referred to four of them; namely *STANLEY*, the Manning Wardle 0-4-0ST (371/1871) which had arrived at Hopetoun in 1901, the ex-TGR Baldwin 0-4-0ST (7108/1884) which was purchased in 1902, the Lima Shay (2029/1907) and *THE HUON* (Andrew Barclay 959/1902). Apart from *THE HUON*, which was located at Geeveston, all of the other three were at Hopetoun. They had been owned by the Tasmanian Timber Corporation (TTC) before that company was absorbed by the Huon Timber Corporation (HTC). The other two locomotives owned by the HTC at the time No.7 was ordered were the Lima Shay (698/1902) ex-North Mt Lyell Copper Company, which was at Geeveston, and a vertical boilered Oliver/Markham that had been imported by Edmund Tyler in 1890 to work on his tramway at Ida Bay. In 1898, it passed into the ownership of Hay and Chopping, who worked an extensive tramway serving their Hastings sawmill and coal mine. This sawmill, tramway and engine fell into HTC ownership in 1907 but as operations continued at Hastings, the VB engine remained there, and apparently at work.

The probable reason why the Meyer was dignified with a number when none of the prior six engines had been so identified probably lies in the fact that they were spread between three owners and three different locations. There would have been little need for numbers for the small number of locomotives operated by the individual companies. Once all six engines had passed into the ownership of the HTC, the opportunity to rationalise a listing of engines became possible and probably desirable. However, I am unaware of any attempt to number the other engines, or even any suggestion that they be numbered.

The fate of all seven of the HTC engines was largely determined by the fluctuating fortunes of the company and its ultimate failure. Following the abandonment of the Hopetoun Mill and tramway, *STANLEY* and the Lima Shay (2029/1907) were transferred to Geeveston. With the closure of operations there the Lima Shay was left with little likelihood of being needed, and Millar's Timber & Trading Company, of which the Huon Timber Co was a subsidiary, transferred it to their timber operation on Vanikoro Island in the Solomons. In 1934, *STANLEY* went to Jaeger's sawmill tramway, near Redpa in the far north west of Tasmania, where it worked until about 1937 when it lost its boiler. Surprisingly, that was not quite the end of the story for this interesting locomotive for, in February 1943, Jaegers used the frame and wheels to mount a Sentinel steam lorry motor in the construction of a rather bizarre locomotive. About 1924 the little Baldwin appeared on the tramway serving an HTC-owned

sawmill near Dunalley. Lima Shay 698/1902 does not appear to have worked after the Geeveston operation closed and was possibly scrapped at Geeveston. *THE HUON* was to see several years of service. In 1926 it was shipped to Western Australia, where it worked on various sawmill tramways for about 15 years. It was scrapped in 1958. The vertical -boilered Oliver/Markham has survived and is on display at the Tasmanian Transport Museum in Glenorchy.

It would be interesting to learn how No.7 survived the period of Japanese occupation of Mindanao, and to what extent it was used then and in the immediate post war years.

Ken Milbourne
Montrose, Tasw

owner converted the vessel to a lighter for carrying timber to Regatta Point near Strahan. When Howard closed his sawmill the *Glenturk* was tied up at Risbey's wharf (at Risbey's Cove which is between Regatta Point and Strahan) where at some later date it sank. Its 'bones' are still visible today.

And so the SS *Glenturk* served two interesting Tasmanian industrial railway systems associated with the timber industry during its existence: from transporting an Improved Meyer articulated steam locomotive to carrying valuable Huon Pine logs.

With thanks to Mr Peter Reid of Queenstown for his valuable assistance.

Ross Mainwaring
St Ives, NSW

Dear Sir,

Strahan jetty tramway (LR 223 & 225) and The new Improved Meyer – a sorry saga (LR 225)

Mention is made of the SS *Glenturk* in LR 225, page 9. By coincidence, this vessel built in 1905, and once owned by the West Coast Timber Co, came into the possession of the Pine Export Company of Strahan in 1919. The 84 feet long steam scow frequently called at the Mill Bay jetty at West Strahan with a load of Huon Pine logs. A steel rail tramway was used to transport the logs from the jetty to the nearby mill, which was the Pine Export Company's principal sawmill as described in LR 223 and 225.

When the Pine Export Co became insolvent in the 1920s, Mr Bob Hamer, appointed as company caretaker, took possession of the vessel and operated it as his own with the permission of the defunct company's management. In 1938 the *Glenturk* ran aground on Sophia Point reef (between Strahan and Kelly Basin in Macquarie Harbour) suffering considerable damage. No suitable slipways were available at Strahan for the necessary repairs. The boiler and engine were removed and the vessel came into the possession of a sawmiller, Mr R J Howard, who had timber interests at Zeehan and Strahan. The new

Dear Sir,

World War I Light Railways

The image above was originally sent as a postcard to members of my family, both in Australia and the UK, in June 1918. The group are men and NCO's of the Third Australian. Light Railway Operating Company (3rd ALROC).

The image was most probably taken in Provin Northern France in late May 1918 and includes my Grandfather Sgt Jarvis William Latham, Service No 14053. He is the third man from the left in the top row. I am attempting to identify the others in this image and was wondering if any *Light Railways* readers could help

Bill Latham
via email

Editor: Any relevent information may be forwarded to the editor, via the postal or email addresses on page 2.

Dear Sir

Petrie and the Eudlo Flats (LR 225)

In Rod Milne's article, mention is made of a newspaper report of an incident that occurred on Saturday 19 September 1936 and Rod was unsure where this may have occurred.

This accident was much more than an 'incident' for those involved, which included my father, Edgar Plater, who suffered a fractured spine, broken pelvis and lost all his teeth amongst other injuries. The loco involved was the *EUDLO* (John Fowler 16207 of 1925) and it still shows evidence of that accident. Dad, aged 19, was the fireman at the time and returned to work after about a year recovering; he went on to clock up 51 years service with the Moreton Mill.

The 'incident' occurred when a bridge about 40 feet long across a saltwater inlet to the Maroochy River about 400 yards downstream of Dunethin Rock collapsed. The loco ended up upside down in the inlet with about six trucks of cane all around it, Dad was crushed between the loco and one of the cane trucks. Retrieving the loco from the inlet was a major exercise which included driving four piles and constructing a lifting frame above it.

EUDLO is on display at the Nambour Museum, along with photos of the accident and Edgar Plater's story.

Clive Plater
Eudlo, Qld

Dear Sir,

SMR Stanford Merthyr line (LR 225, p34)

The year 1963, mentioned in connection with the closure of this line, may refer to the replacement of the overbridge at Heddon Greta by earth in-fill, but the railway was taken up long before that. On 9 December 1943, Kearsley Shire Council secured passage of the *Stanford Coal-Mine Railway (Amendment) Act,* under which SMR could seek government approval to close all or part of the line, notwithstanding certain provisions of the original Act. The Shire Council wished to resume portion of the railway land for a proposed deviation of the Maitland–Kurri road, thereby eliminating the overbridge at Heddon Greta. Although nothing came of this proposal, SMR proceeded to close the line between Ayrfield No.1 colliery and Kurri Kurri under the powers of the Amendment Act, and reclamation of the track on this section commenced in December 1944. The remaining section was retained as a refuge siding.

It is interesting to note that immediately north of the former road bridge is the preserved Heddon station platform, closed in 1929, and which will not be affected by the new Branxton link road.

Robert Driver
Killara NSW

Research Editor: The ARHS publication *Australian Railway Routes, 1854-2000* was consulted for a closure date of this line and this gives December 1963. Perhaps an amendment is required for any update..

Cover Photo (LR 225)

The nice photo of an SMR coal train on the cover of LR 225 is somewhat more revealing than the caption might suggest. The location is actually the gentle rise through

Bee Siding, which was the railway name for the locality originally called Weston Soldiers Settlement, but now known as Loxton. The Bee Siding station platforms, which the train has just passed, were erected by the settlers as a self–help project in early 1928, but the signal box and Up and Down storage sidings had existed since 1914. In this view, the train is passing the 'new' brick signal cabin, constructed by SMR at a cost of £360, after the original building fell victim to arson during the unrest of 1930, when the mines and railway were in a prolonged shut down.

Bee Siding was abolished as a Block section in 1961, and the signal box, along with most of the SMR station buildings, was demolished in 1975, having been declared 'eyesores' under Cessnock Council's 'Coalfields Beautification' program.

Robert Driver
Killara, NSW

Dear Sir,

Facts, certainties and imbroglios at Cobar (LR 225)

I was rather bemused by the 'fanciful' response in LR 225 to my correspondence concerning the possible fate of the two missing Great Cobar, John Fowler & Co locomotives. I would humbly suggest that my suggestion was somewhat less 'fanciful' than the long held notion that the two Brooks & Co 2ft 6in gauge Fowlers were consigned to Sydney, NSW rather than Cuba!

However, I digress. If one examines the John Fowler & Co loco list, although the cancellation of locos 4481 and 4482 may have happened at another time, it appears that it occurred in either December 1882 or January 1883. Based on Richard Horne's advice that the four original Great Cobar locos ordered were despatched as normal from the works, the cancellation of 4481 and 4482 seems to have taken place at much the same time as the missing Great Cobar locos would have arrived in Sydney, only to find that they were unwanted at Cobar.

Although Richard Horne quite rightly indicates that the two missing Great Cobar Fowlers may not have gone to Cuba, the apparent very close coincidence in timing with the date of manufacture of the Fowler loco supplied to Casas Aulet in December 1882 (4451) makes Cuba I believe very difficult, if not impossible, to ignore, especially as it seems unlikely that Casas Aulet would have gone to all the trouble of changing the gauge of its tramway/s for just one loco. The Fowler cancellations in 1881 and 1884 mentioned by Mr Horne on the other hand, are in my opinion simply red herrings.

While re-examining the imbroglio of the two missing Great Cobar Fowlers, I note that Richard Horne revisited much of my earlier advice in the LR 158 article regarding which locos arrived at Cobar and when.

I feel, however, that a couple of additional points need to be addressed. Firstly, although it was originally intended that two Mort's Dock locomotives were to be used at Cobar and despite the purported presence of two Mort's Dock locos in the 1884 Mines Dept Report that may well have only been prepared to some extent as a desk top exercise, definitive evidence is only available that one Mort's Dock loco arrived and worked at Cobar. Ignoring the 1884 Mines Dept report, the maximum number of locos specifically noted at work on the Great Cobar tramway as I recall was five, presumably four Fowlers and one Mort's Dock specimen, although it is possible I guess that one of the Fowler locos could have been out of action and two Mort's Dock locos were hard at work.

It seems quite clear that the Mort's Dock loco/s proved unsatisfactory, or that it/they faired poorly in comparison with the Fowler product, and that situation became apparent very early in the piece. Bearing that in mind, it isn't clear if the second Mort's Dock Great Cobar loco was delivered to Cobar, or even whether it was actually built. Richard Horne pertinently notes, that there are no known photographs of the Morts Dock Great Cobar locomotives. More tellingly, however, except for the corroborated recorded early use of the first Mort's Dock loco at Cobar, as I recall, unlike the Great Cobar Fowlers, outside of the 1884 Mines report there are no known subsequent mentions of two Mort's Dock locos at Cobar, or for that anywhere else. If the second Mort's Dock loco ordered by the Great Cobar Copper Mining Co was actually built, what happened to it, and why is there no long term trace of either Mort's Dock loco, when other Mort's Dock ng locomotives gave quite lengthy service?

Ron Madden
Wagga Wagga, NSW

ERRATA

In the article 'The new Improved Meyer – a sorry saga' in LR 225:

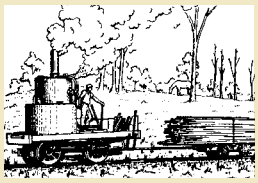
The builder's number and date is correctly given in the photo caption on page 3 of LR 225, but is incorrectly given as 1303 of 1913 twice in the text – on page 3, third last paragraph, and in the first line after 'Vale', on page 10.

Also, in the last paragraph on page 5, where it states that the two relevant locomotives "... were built in 1912/13 ...", in fact both had build dates of 1912.

In reference No 34, on page 11, the date given should be April 1915, not 1913, and in ref No 35, the date should be 30 March 1915, not 1015!

In the article '*PETRIE* and the Eudlo Flats', also in LR 225, the photograph on page 24 was taken at the loop south of Didillibah Road, adjacent to Eudlo Flats Road, not at the loop adjacent to Paynter Creek Road.

The item in Research, on page 34 of LR 225, 'SMR line to Stanford Merthyr, NSW' was from the Yahoo site, but was not submitted by Jeff Mullier.



LRRSA NEWS

MEETINGS

ADELAIDE: "Richard Horne's Light Railway Photos"
The topic for the August meeting is Richard Horne's light railway photos. Bring along an item of light rail interest. We would like to hear from any member who can supply current information on heritage or tourist light rail sites in South Australia.
Location: 150 First Avenue, Royston Park.
Date: Thursday 2 August at 8.00pm.
Contact Les Howard on (08) 8278 3082

BRISBANE: "Dave Rollins' Travels Pt 2"
David Rollins has volunteered to show more slides of his recent overseas trips.
Location: Brisbane City Council Library, Garden City Shopping Centre, Mount Gravatt.
Date: Friday 10 August at 7.30pm.

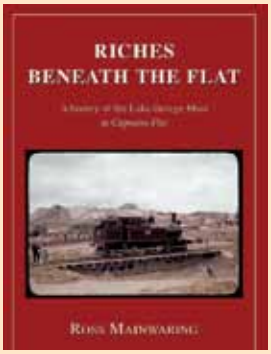
MELBOURNE: "Annual General Meeting and Pickering's Sugar Pine Railroad"
Following our brief Annual General Meeting, Phil Rickard will introduce a DVD on Pickering's Sugar Pine Railroad, which is considered by many to be California's most spectacular logging railway. It was close to the Yosemite Valley, and the video includes historic photographs, early colour film, and recollections from two people who worked there.
Location: Ashburton Uniting Church Hall, Ashburn Grove, Ashburton.
Date: Thursday, 9 August at 8.00pm

SYDNEY: "Sugar tramways of our northern neighbour"
Ray Gardiner will present some of his excellent videos on Indonesian sugar cane tramways which he personally photographed on one of his many trips to that country. Not only were there many exotic narrow gauge steam loco's working in the cane fields but the sugar mills themselves had very interesting stationary steam engines to power the cane crushing machinery. These videos are now of great historic value as steam rail operations in the Indonesian canefields are practically extinct.
Location: Woodstock Community Centre, Church Street, Burwood, (five minutes walk from Burwood railway station).
Date: Wednesday 22 August at 7.30pm

New from LRRSA Sales ...

Riches beneath the Flat

A history of the Lake George Mine at Captains Flat



By Ross Mainwaring

Published by the LRRSA.

A history of the standard and narrow gauge railways, town, and silver-lead-zinc mine at Captains Flat.

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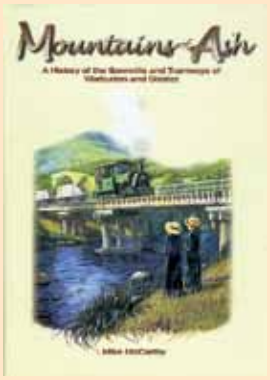
Mountains of Ash

A History of the Sawmills & Tramways of Warburton and District



By Mike McCarthy

Published by the LRRSA.

Hard cover, 312 pages, A4 size

Describes a complex network of over 320km of tramways serving 66 sawmills in a mountainous area.

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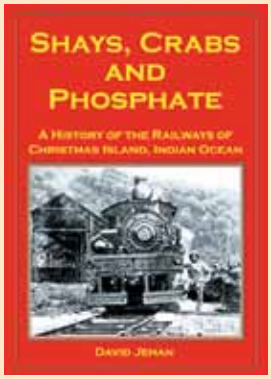

By David Jehan

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Tall Timber & Tramlines Queensland

By John Kerr

Published by the LRRSA.

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

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of _____

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(address) (postcode)

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

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RESEARCH

SCOPE OF *LIGHT RAILWAYS* RESEARCH

The exchange of information on the LRRSA Yahoo Group continues to delve into an expanding range of light railways applications, with discussions on the use of monorails and similar appliances to transport bananas from the field catching my eye in recent weeks. I also reported in the last research column on the 5th International Early Railway Conference that was to be held in Wales from 6-10 June 2012 with papers by Australian railway researchers. This research area focuses on railways that were established before the first main line railway in the geographical area of interest. They cover plateways, narrow gauge railways and a variety of motive power forms that have not previously been given a lot of attention by railway historians.

The LRRSA Council is reviewing our strategic direction in response to the National LRRSA Conference in May 2011, including the future scope of research undertaken by society members for *Light Railways* and our publications. The feeling is that there is scope to widen the fields that we cover, but we would like further feedback from members on which specific fields might best serve us in the future and where the boundaries might be.

As noted elsewhere in this issue, I will be stepping back from my current roles on the LR editorial team from this issue. We are planning a get together of the team in Sydney in the near future where potential changes in the scope of the magazine will be canvassed, so if you have ideas in this field we would be delighted to hear from you. *Editor*

KIRCHHUBEL'S TRAMWAY, LR 116

The former Kirchhubel's tramway, located 4 km north of Tanjil Bren, is now officially closed off though it is still accessible for the time being. The reason for the closure is the poor state of the log bridge over the West Tanjil River: the main bearer is rotting from below and will probably collapse at some point in the future.

The tramway can still be followed for some distance. On the north side of the West Tanjil Falls, a tape-marked trail parallels the river for a short distance, but by veering right the tramway formation can be picked up, evident by the level track bed, some substantial cuttings, and relics such as winch cable. The trail was followed for approx 1km before being lost in dense undergrowth on a bearing of 340 degrees headed into a gully (the beaten path goes off at right angles). The gully is believed to be the site of the remains of a former trestle bridge.

The former sawmill site is 1km beyond where the trace was lost. The sawmill was established in 1941 by Hermann Kirchhubel, one of a consortium of mill owners who constructed and operated the three foot gauge (910mm) internal combustion tractor operated West Tanjil tramway, until taken over by the Forests Commission in August 1941. The mill and its tramway operated until the early 1950s when the area was logged out. The former Kirchhubel's tramway is accessible on foot either from Tanjil Bren central, or by 4WD on Saxtons Road via the former Porta's Mill site, where formation and mill remains are also visible.

Ray Peace

ADA RIVER HISTORIC AREA, Field Report

Your humble narrator and two friends visited the Ada River Sawmills Historic Area on a very wet Easter Monday 2012. We explored the Ada No. 2, New Ada and Federal mill sites and were pleasantly surprised to find a lot of interesting artefacts still on-site. Readers may care to compare our findings with those given in the Ada Valley Field Report that appeared in *Light Railways* No. 31, Autumn 1970.

We drove from the Bump to where Downey's Spur Road cuts the high lead incline to the Ada No. 2 mill. Drivers need to be careful of logging trucks operating in the area. The walking track is well defined, clear of vegetation and easily navigated. Wire rope and trestle bridge foundations can be seen in several locations down the incline.

Some time ago the Department of Sustainability & Environment (DSE) built an elevated walkway through the trestle footings that crossed the Ada River. This overcame the need to scramble along the old trestle which was very difficult due to rotting timbers, river mud and substantial re-growth.

Over the walkway you reach solid ground and the Ada No. 2 mill site. There are numerous artefacts lying around including wheel sets, one of the two original boilers in its brick setting with grates and fire bars, fallen chimneys, the saddle tank from the locomotive *'Squirt'*, saw blades, steel rail points and about 30 metres of steel rail in stu heading north towards the New Ada mill.

DSE has recently installed another elevated walkway through the very wet section of track north of the Ada No. 2 mill towards the Federal line junction. It appears that the materials used to make this walkway have been recently brought in by 4WD from the Big Creek road past the New Ada mill site. Therefore the track up to the New Ada mill was not currently overgrown and very easy to navigate.

We then headed towards the New Ada mill site and found the winch and boiler (but no evidence of the hut) on the western side about 500 metres past the Federal junction. We were unable to reach the track to the log landing and the hand winch on the eastern side about 300 metres from the New Ada mill site, due to significant regrowth. The New Ada mill site is marked on the track and there are several masonry and sawn log foundations on-site.

Returning to the Federal line junction, we walked easterly to the Federal mill site along the track which is fairly easy to navigate, although slippery in places. On the way we passed a large winch drum and sprocket on the track alignment. The only trestle still standing is that which crosses the Little Ada River a short distance from the Federal mill site. This

The remains of Kirchhubel's tramway at West Tanjil falls where the tramway crossed the river. Taken in April 2011, this view shows earth-covered logs on the right that may be a relic of the tramway bridge, while those on the left are of more recent origin. *Photo: Ray Peace*

pigsty trestle has partly collapsed but is still very impressive towering around eight metres above the river level.

We forded the river which was tricky with the water level being well over the rock stepping stones. The Federal Mill site is close by and heavily overgrown since my last visit. Although well signposted, we could not find the substantial mill foundations nor the old huts to the north which may have collapsed by now.

After a quick lunch and hot drink in the rain, we retraced our steps back to Ada No.2 mill and then out to the car on Downey's Spur Road. The whole trip took about three hours return and the elevated walkways make the trip well within the capabilities of most walkers. It would also be possible to visit the Ada tree from the Federal mill site which would add approximately two hours to the return time.

I can thoroughly recommend this area to other members and it would be most suitable for a future Society tour.

Simon Moorhead

Located midway between the New Ada and Ada No.2 is a boiler and winch combination once used to lower the sawn timber down to the Ada No.2 and ultimately out to Powelltown. This winch lies to the left just out of the picture.

The saddle tank from the locomotive 'Squirt' rusting away at Ada No.2.

The set of points located on the southern approach to the Ada No.2 mill are closely inspected by labrador Mabel. *Photos: Simon Moorhead*

Coming Events

AUGUST 2012

3-6 Ida Bay Railway, TAS: Narrow gauge train trips over scenic route from Lune River along the banks of the river estuary and Ida Bay to Deep Hole. Trains depart Friday to Monday at 1000, 1200 and 1400 (winter timetable) for the 2 hour return journey. Cabin accommodation and camping facilities available on site. Enquiries: (03) 6298 3110 or http://idabayrailway.com.au

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

5 Durundur Railway, Woodford, QLD: Narrow gauge trains operate on the first and third Sunday of the month 1000-1600. Phone: (07) 5496 1976 (recorded information) or 3848 3769; website: http://www.angrms.org.au

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

12 Illawarra Train Park, Albion Park, NSW: Tongarra Train Fest for rail enthusiasts with all serviceable locomotives and rolling stock in action on a range of roles from 1000-1600. Further information 0401 753 555 or http://www.ilrms.com.au

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

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

SEPTEMBER 2012

8-9 Alexandra Timber Tramway, VIC. Alexandra Spring Markets on Saturday with narrow gauge trains operated by petrol-engine loco and steam trains on Sunday, 1500-1545. Diesel-hauled trains on Sunday 21 September. Information and group bookings: 0427 509 988.

15-16 Richmond Vale Railway, Kurri Kurri NSW: Family Fun Fest with Thomas the Tank engine and Friends, together with entertainment for the whole family, 1000-1600. Information (02) 4937 5344 or www.richmondvalerailwaymuseum.org

23 Bennett Brook Railway, Whiteman Park, WA: 'Friends of Ashley Day' Day 0930-1600 with unlimited narrow-gauge train and vintage bus rides, live jazz, farm animals, free entry to Revolutions Museum and fire engine display. Bookings at: (08) 9534 3215 (0900-1700).

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

OCTOBER 2012

7 Wee Georgie Wood Railway, Tullah, TAS: Narrow-gauge train rides with historic 4wPM locomotive from 1000-1600. Trains also operate on 27-28 October. Information: http://www.weegeorgiewood.com.au or (03) 6473 1372.

13-14 Alexandra Timber Tramway, VIC. Narrow gauge steam trains for Alexandra Markett and Steam & Wood Gala Day from 1500-1545. Also diesel-hauled trains for History Week on Sunday 28 October. Information and group bookings: 0427 509 988.

20-21 Campbelltown Steam Museum, Menangle, NSW: Oil, Steam & Kerosene Field Days with narrow-gauge steam-hauled trains running over extended track, working steam displays and stationary oil engines. Details at 0417 215 513 or: www.csmm.com.au

20-21 Puffing Billy Railway, VIC: 'Day Out with Thomas' event at Emerald Town station with entertainment for the entire family and 20-minute steam train rides from Belgrave. Also on 27-88 October and four days in November. Booking essential: (03) 9757 0700 or online: http://www.puffingbilly.com.au/news-events

Note: Please send information on coming events to Andrew Webster — carnadees@optusnet.com.au — or 25 Hodgkinson Street, Clifton Hill VIC 3068. The deadline for the October issue is 28 August 2012.

Heritage &Tourist

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

NEWS

Queensland

WORKSHOPS RAIL MUSEUM, Ipswich 610/1067mm gauge
Queensland Museum
The former UK War Department 4-6-0T and North Eton Sugar Mill No.4 (Hunslet Eng. 1239 of 1916, see LR 205, p 27) was moved into the Queensland Rail Ipswich Railway Workshops on Wednesday 27 June so that a restoration program by workshops staff can begin. It is intended to restore the locomotive to its original World War I condition as a static exhibit for The Workshops Rail Museum. The locomotive, formerly, was donated to the Museum by Mackay Sugar in 2005. The restoration project is expected to take two years.

David Mewes, 06/12

DURUNDUR RAILWAY, Woodford
610mm gauge
Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society Inc
Updating the report in LR 225 (p. 35), the concrete slab for the Peterson Road level crossing was poured on 23 May following the lowering of the recycled water main by Utility Water. This allowed the remaining sleepers and rails to be placed on the crossing and the rails were thermit welded together on 26 May. The Peterson Road level crossing was finished off and the road reopened during the first week of June 2012.

Terry Olssen, 06/12

NAMBOUR & DISTRICT HISTORICAL MUSEUM
610mm gauge
Nambour & District Historical Museum Inc
On Saturday 26 May 2012 the former Moreton Mill 0-4-0WT locomotive *VALDORA* (Dick Kerr 1893) was moved from the Railway Modellers' Mini Train Park in Nambour to the Nambour & District Historical Museum. The Sunshine Coast Railway Modellers Society Inc decided to transfer ownership of the locomotive to the museum after it suffered damage during the 2011 floods. Flood waters reached the footplate of *VALDORA*, inundating the cylinders and motion.
In loading of the locomotive onto the truck for transport to the museum, it was found that, despite uncoupling many pieces, the wheels refused to turn and it had to be skidded on and off the tilt tray truck. The loco has been stored under cover at the Nambour Museum, where it will be water blasted and cleaned-up for better presentation to the public. It is anticipated that *VALDORA* will be happier on higher ground and in the company of other former Moreton Mill locomotives.
The history of this locomotive is mired in myth, but the known facts are that it was one of two locomotives supplied to Farleigh Sugar Mill by Dick Kerr & Company of Kilmarnock in 1893. It was transferred to Racecourse Mill with the Homebush tramway in 1927. The locomotive went to the Nambour Mill, where it was named *VALDORA*. Some sources claim that *VALDORA* has the builders' number 191, but it has not been confirmed that Dick Kerr formally allocated numbers to its products, so any markings found on the loco's parts during restoration will

A view of the Peterson Road level crossing with welded rails for the extension of the Durundur Railway in place on 26 May 2012. *Photo: Terry Olsson*

The former Moreton Mill 0-4-0 steam loco VALDORA *(Dick Kerr 1893) loaded on the truck at the Railway Modellers Mini Train Park, ready for delivery to the Nambour Museum, on 26 May 2012.* *Photo: courtesy Carl Millington*

be of considerable interest to loco historians.
Clive Platter, 5/12; John Browning, 5/12; Carl Millington, 6/12

SUNSHINE PLANTATION, Nambour 610mm gauge
Big Pineapple Corporation P/L
The official reopening of the 2.4km Big Pineapple railway on 16 June suffered a major setback when a routine test run prior to the opening was unable to climb the first hill. Sunshine Plantation general manager Brendan Weatheral told the *Courier Mail* that: *"When we took the train up the first hill we realised that something wasn't right when we started to slide and slip backwards. We thought it might just have been the dew, but when we tried again we realised that the track had been tempered with a greasy substance which turned out to be a non-petroleum based oil. "*
Park management were forced to turn away upset families who had travelled from as far away as the Gold Coast to be on the theme park's first ride since it came under new management. Nambour CIB, forensic officers and police were investigating the 'deliberate act of sabotage'. The official opening was rescheduled for Saturday 23 June.
Sunday Mail, 17 June 2012, via John Browning

New South Wales

ILLAWARRA TRAIN PARK, Albion Park 610mm gauge
Illawarra Light Railway Museum Society Ltd
During May the ILRMS volunteers were in full swing for the 'May Mayhem' that saw trains operating every weekend. The society's involvement with the 'Wings Over Illawarra' event on 6 May resulted in an all-time record with the trains moving some 2300 visitors to the air show via the train park grounds to and from the Illawarra Regional Airport. John Fowler 0-6-0DH *SHELLHARBOUR* (21912 of 1937/ rebuilt EM Baldwin 1963) and former Tully Sugar Mill stable mate 0-6-2T *TULLY 6* (Perry Engineering 7967/49/1 of 1949) operated 'top and tail' transporting people from the station to the bus terminus in the head shunt area of the triangle road. From there buses were utilized to move visitors to the air show.
During Mothers' Day on 13 May ex-CSR Victoria mill 0-6-0 *CAIRNS* (Hudswell Clarke 1706 of 1939) was in charge of the train operations throughout the day. *CAIRNS* was the operating loco again on 20 and 22 May hauling the 'Shellharbour Kid's Fest Express', which also attracted good crowds. Finally the schedule concluded on 26 May with the Tongarra Camp Cooking festival event, which saw the camp fire cookers braving a very cold windy day for their event. Train operations on the day were handled by the former Quarries Limited 0-4-0ST *KIAMA* (Davenport 1596 of 1917) in the morning, with *SHELLHARBOUR* taking charge in the afternoon.
Rail enthusiasts are reminded that the *Tongarra Train Fest* on 12 August will see all available ILRMS locomotives and rolling stock in action together with displays by other community groups. Foundation member Tony Madden has completed the rewrite of the *ILRMS Museum Guide*, which updates past guides written by the late Ken McCarthy and David Jehan. The new guide is available for purchase and information can be found by emailing: info@ilrms.com.au
Brad Johns, 06/12

Former UK War Department 4-6-0T 327, later North Eton Sugar Mill No.4 (Hunslet Eng. 1239 of 1916) is moved into the QR workshops at Ipswich for restoration on 27 June 2012. The 30-ton overhead crane should make light work of lifting the locomotive. *Photo: David Mewes*

John Fowler 0-6-2T INVICTA *(11277 of 1907) steams through the Bundaberg Botanic Gardens with an Australian Sugar Cane Railway train on Monday 11 June 2012, on the Queen's Birthday Weekend.* *Photo: Bob Gough*

ZIG ZAG RAILWAY, Lithgow
1067mm gauge
Zig Zag Railway Cooperative Ltd
While this heritage railway operates former Queensland Government Railways locomotives and rolling stock in the main, it has received occasional coverage in our reports on account of former mining/construction locomotives in its fleet. Reports of the difficulties the Zig Zag Railway Cooperative was experiencing in meeting rail safety accreditation standards have circulated within rail heritage circles for some time and the Office of Rail Safety Investigations (OTSI) undertook a full audit of ZZR accreditation in October-December

2011. OTSI temporarily ceased all ZZR rail services on 6 December, but two ex-QGR rail motors were passed for service on 16 December. These railcars provided limited passenger services on the line – with a third joining them by Easter 2012 – while negotiations continued between the Independent Transport Safety Authority (ITSA), the ZZR and the NSW Government in an attempt to address safety issues. Evidently these negotiations failed to achieve satisfactory results and ITSA ordered the ZZR to cease all operations in June 2012. Sunday 18 June was the last day of operations on the ZZR and prospects for its reopening appear to be dim. NSW Transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian reiterated that her department would continue to offer the ZZR expert assistance, but added "it may be that the problems with Zig Zag are insurmountable."

In early July, works trains were operating on the line, and acting general manager Michael Forbes was quoted as saying that the tourist trains would resume operations "but at present we can't say just when".

The Railway News, June 2012; *Lithgow Mercury*, 20 and 21 June, 5 July 2012

LITHGOW STATE MINE RAILWAY.
Lithgow 1435mm gauge
Lithgow State Mine Railway Limited

The LSMR conducted two well attended events during May 2012 to mark National Volunteers Week and International Museums Day. On both occasions the organisation opened its workshop to the public to showcase the work being undertaken by volunteers to restore its equipment in preparation for the operation of a tourist railway on the State Mine branch and the development of a museum incorporating the historic Eskbank Station and goods yard. On both occasions there was high patronage by local residents as well as some individuals from outside the district. As a result the LSMR has picked up a number of new volunteers to assist in bringing this community based project to fruition.

Michael Wilson, 06/12

NEWCASTLE MUSEUM, Civic
914/1435mm gauge
Newcastle City Council

A visit to the new Newcastle Museum in the former Honeysuckle Railway Workshops on 26 June revealed large numbers of visitors, particularly school groups, embracing its stories and engaged in hands-on activities. A feature exhibit is the former contractor's 0-6-0ST *'The Buck'* and subsequently 20N of the NSWGR Great Northern Railway, (Kitson 1620 of 1870), which spent most of its long life as number 4 of the J&A Brown stable. It is displayed in the Link Gallery, a covered section between the locomotive boiler shop and the new erecting shop that is also used for temporary exhibitions. The 1887 locomotive boiler shop, which features interactive exhibits based on science, maths and engineering principles, houses the 1855 Craven Brothers rope crane, which appears to have received extensive restoration work.

'A Newcastle Story' in the 1880 blacksmith's shop explores the character of the city in all its beauty, grit, colour and life. The 'Work' displays cover key fields of work within the city in well-presented show cases, while railway enthusiasts will enjoy the current photographic exhibition by Robert and Bruce Wheatley covering steam locomotives and the men who worked on them in the Hunter Region during the 1960s and early 1970s. But the feature attraction is the BHP 'Fire and Earth' exhibitions in the 1921 new erecting shop. These focus on the Newcastle steelworks and underground coal mining, with the six minute Steelworks Sound & Light Show on the hour providing the 'WOW FACTOR'! It provides a high tech demonstration of tapping a blast furnace into a 60-ton ladle and then transferring the molten steel from a ladle to ingot moulds on a 3ft gauge wagon, with the

The last remaining representative of the NSWGR Great Northern Railway, 0-6-0ST 20N (Kitson 1620 of 1870), subsequently number 4 on the J&A Brown railway, on display at the Newcastle Museum, 26 June 2012. Photo: Bob McKillop

The Newcastle Museum uses this display of an underground miner loading a skip to tell the story of 19th century coal mining at Newcastle. Photo: Bob McKillop

story narrated by a hologram supervisor and highlighted by the noise, light and smoke of the hearth floor.

There are disappointments too. Perhaps the museum's most internationally significant object, the 1820s AA Company fish-belly rail used for Australia's first industrial railway (LR 221, p 32) is an under-whelming display in a glass cabinet between the cafe and the 'Newcastle Story' with little explanation of what it is or why it is there. In addition, our report that the pioneer BHP Bo-Bo DE 32 (A Goninan 1 of 1954) was a feature exhibit (LR 221, p 36) was wide of the mark (the editor's fault). Although that was planned, this loco remains in storage pending the funds to restore it for display and a decision on where it will be located. The museum is open 10am to 5pm, Tuesday to Sunday and entry is free.

Editor, 6/12

Victoria

PUFFING BILLY RAILWAY

762mm gauge

Emerald Tourist Railway Board

Updating the report in LR 225 (p 37), the ETRB was the only heritage railway applicant to receive funding in the 2012 Victorian Government's budget. Although the $4.4 million funding allocated was less than hoped for, the allocation will cover most of the Puffing Billy Railway's requirements to achieve legislative safety requirements. The terms of the budget require the money to be spent on maintenance and safety improvements and ERTB officials have been working with the State Government to develop the necessary project list and cash flows for the use of the funds. A significant proportion of the funding is available over the first two years.

Despite drizzly and foggy conditions, the 'Great Train Race' on Sunday 6 May was most successful with 3040 runners setting out to beat the trains. The event raised a significant amount of funds to augment the PBR Society's coffers. The Society is planning a series of events to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the reopening of the railway between Belgrave and Menzies Creek from 21–28 July. On the 21 July a special 'shakedown train' will operate to Menzies Creek, just as it did 50 years ago, with the 2012 train conveying recipients of the PBPS 50 year membership badges to the presentation ceremony.

On Saturday 30 June the Puffing Billy Railway operated the regular 11:10 Belgrave to Gembrook service with additional cars attached to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the last train from Colac to Beech Forest.

The 1962 train consisted of G42, five NQR open wagons (four with temporary tarp canopies) with an NU louvre van and NC guards van at each end. Due to Puffing Billy only having one NU available, the deficit on the 2012 train was made up with another NQR, so with the regular consist attached, the train comprised a respectable 16 vehicles. G42 had been 'done up' for the day with a red painted front buffer beam and headboard in similar style to that when it hauled the 1962 ARHS train. When purchasing tickets, travellers were presented with a copy of the original circular and ticket on an A4 sheet which outlined the consist and running times of the 1962 train, along with information regarding the day's arrangements—which given it was a regular service precluded any photo stops, except for two false arrivals of the Beech Forest portion of the train at Gembrook Heritage station.

Departure was about 20 minutes late in sunny but very cold weather, giving the motorcaders (of which there were many) plenty of opportunity for great photographs, while those who chose to ride the train (and justify its operating at all) settled in for a day out. A safeworking stop at Menzies Creek provided opportunities for those on board to photograph the train before the run through Clematis and easy climb of Emerald bank. The train continued down into Lakeside where 14A was sitting in No.1 platform road waiting to depart toward Belgrave. After taking water the train continued downhill until just before Cockatoo, where the long climb to Gembrook commenced. While the journey through the sheltered forest was cool, the exposed ridge on the final two kilometres was downright cold, with the exhaust from the locomotive blowing at right angles almost as soon as it left the funnel!

A great day out! Passengers from the Puffing Billy Railway's reenactment of the Last Train to Beech Forest on 30 June discuss their experience at Belgrave station, as G42 returns to loco in the background. Photo: Scott Gould

After arriving at the Gembrook Heritage station many of the passengers headed off in search of warm food, while those who waited saw the regular section of the train being shunted to No.3 road before two false arrival photo runs of the commemorative train took place. More shunting moves saw an NC van and NBH car shunted to the front of the consist, to be dropped off at Emerald on the return journey for Sunday's Footplate Experience train. Eventually G42 made a quick visit over the ash-pit and took water before re-joining the head of the train for a late departure in the rain. The return journey was uneventful, with stops at Cockatoo, Lakeside to wait for the down train to arrive, then Emerald to shunt off the NC and NBH. On departure an exchange of whistles took place — G42 with it's peanut and 861 with its large five-chime, each seeming out of place on its locomotive. Last stop was at Menzies Creek for safeworking, before the final run to Belgrave.

Of those who travelled on the train there were several who had made the trip on the Last Train to Beech Forest 50 years earlier, including Frank Stamford and Ted Godwin, while Bernie Holmes had travelled on the last goods the previous Wednesday. Frank described to us how the train was fitted out with temporary seating of freshly-sawn hardwood planks, which were splintery, and in some locations the vegetation was so close to the track it was hanging into the wagons as the train passed.

Puffing Billy Railway Monthly News, 467, June 2012; 468 July 2019; Scott Gould, 07/12; Frank Stamford, 07/12

MENZIES CREEK RAILWAY MUSEUM

610mm gauge

Puffing Billy Railway Preservation Society

The redevelopment of this museum was well advanced by May 2012 with construction work on the main display building completed and work was progressing on reassembly of the boiler house. A new entrance walkway was under construction and landscaping and fencing tasks were continuing.

Fitting out the display building, together with track laying and ballasting, was required before the rolling stock could be relocated to its new home. It was planned that the new display building would be fitted out to enable it to host 50th anniversary events in July.

Puffing Billy Railway Monthly News, 467, June 2012

ALEXANDRA TIMBER TRAMWAY
610mm gauge
Alexandra Timber Tramway & Museum Inc

The museum will be the base for former Cheetham Salt 4wDM number 4 (Ruston & Hornsby 320555 of 1951), which was purchased by stalwart member Peter Evans on 1 June 2012. This 20DL model locomotive was new to the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works and, at an unknown date, it became number 4 in the Laverton fleet of Cheetham Salt. It retained its original twin-cylinder 2VSHL engine (number 317242) and mechanical transmission to the end of its operating life. It was subsequently moved to Bass River and then to a property at Cranbourne. It was expected to be moved to Alexandra by the end of June. The cab will be measured up for future replacement and then scrapped, and the rest tidied for display.

The ATTM president Bryan Slader and Jane Lawes represented the society at the first Heritage Day at Yea on 20 May, They set up a stall to promote the ATTM and demonstrated the 1915 Ruston portable engine from the ATTM collection, which generated a lot of interest and discussion among participants at the event.

Timberline 125, June 2012

Tasmania

WEE GEORGIE WOOD RAILWAY, Tullah 610mm gauge
Wee George Wood Steam Railway Inc

This society now has a new website at www.weegeorgiewood.com.au. Trains currently operate from 1000-1600 on the first Sunday and the last Saturday and Sunday of the month from October during the season from October to June. Fares are $7 adult, $5 concession and $14 family. Trains are currently operated by the ex-Lake Margaret Tramway 4wPM (Nicola Romeo 770 of 1925), with 0-4-0WT *WEE GEORGE WOOD* (John Fowler 16203 of 1924) expected to return to service in 2013.

The website provides historical background on the North Mount Farrell Tramway and the establishment of the Wee George Wood Steam Railway in 1977. Future plans include the construction of a 1.5km track extension along the shores of Lake Rosebery, enlargement of the station building at Tullah, construction of additional carriages and, eventually, the return to service of 0-4-0T No. 9 (Krauss 5988 of 1908) following completion of restoration work.

Editor, 06/12

South Australia

COBDOGLA IRRIGATION & STEAM MUSEUM
610mm gauge
Cobdogla Steam Friends Society Inc

The Cobdolga Steam Friends had successful open days in March and April. When 0-4-0ST *MARGARET* (Bagnall 1801 of 1907) was stripped down for its boiler inspection early this year, the opportunity was taken to re-plumb the oil burner system with individual oil and steam lines to all three burners (two main and the pilot burner). The size of the oil lines to all burners was increased as they had been choking for oil. The burner system now works very well and each burner can be cut in as required by the steam demand. Extra air holes were made in the furnace door cover to increase the air supply to the furnace.

A private run of the Humphrey Pump was held for the Jaguar Owners Club during May. An Engineering Heritage Award plaque was unveiled at this event by a representative from the UK Institution of Mechanical Engineers. This was only the second such award made to an engineering icon outside the United Kingdom by the IMechE, the first being former NSWGR locomotive No 1 at Sydney's Powerhouse Museum. A third award has since been made to the 1785 Boulton & Watt beam engine at Powerhouse.

During the start-up process for the Humphrey Pump, a gas leak developed, to the extent that the pump well was evacuated because two of the operators were affected by the gas. They both recovered, but subsequently SA Water issued a "Do not Run" notice for the pump until an investigation and repairs have been completed. Both the June and July runs for the Humphrey were cancelled, but it is hoped the pump will be back in operation for the September open day.

In addition, the 100 plus year old disused elevated water tank tower at the Cobdogla Museum dropped a couple of pieces of concrete from the bowl of the tank. The tower was fenced off for safety reasons, but SA Water made the decision that due to the spalling of the concrete, the tank would have to be demolished. Just how this is to be implemented is still to be decided as it was found the tank is very unstable. The water tower is surrounded on three sides by the railway, exhibits and the Irrigation Commission engine shed. The area now fenced off includes the Cobdogla Steam Friends railway station and track, so the train is unable to be run until the demolition is completed. As a result, the July open day has also been cancelled, but it is hoped the railway will be back in operation for the open day scheduled for 30 September.

Denis Wasley, 07/12

Western Australia

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

The 'Friends of Ashley Day' held on 20 May was most successful with a good turnout of visitors. The workshops crews put in a big effort to get the 0-4-2T *BETTY THOMPSON* (Perry Eng 8967.39.1 of 1939) and the former WA PWD 4wDH *GEMCO* (George Moss 1963) ready for the event, while Barry McLean was responsible for the overall organisation of the day's activities. The new station platform at Kangaroo Flats was brought into use for the first time during this event.

The redevelopment of Mussel Pool station and yard has made significant progress with the former WAGR Cottesloe signal cabin of 1897 becoming fully commissioned to operate all signals and points in the yard on 1 June 2012. The signal cabin was relocated to the BBR in November 1988 and erected near the goods shed opposite Mussel

The Aveling & Porter road roller at the Cobdogla Irrigation Museum was craned away from the water tank demolition site in June 2012. Here, workers discuss how to get the roller out of the area. Photo: Denis Wasley

Pool station. It was moved to its new location on the station platform on 22 September 2011. The refurbishment of the station and its environs has been a joint venture between Whiteman Park and WALRPA that has resulted in a fine working example of a long gone WAGR country station.

The return of 2-8-2 NG 123 *FREMANTLE* (Anglo-Franco-Belge 2670 of 1951) to service will be a longer term project than anticipated (LR 224, p 38). In addition to a new ash pan, a boiler inspection found that there are boiler problems than need to be addressed. On a more positive note, the re-profiled wheels of the ex-Marian Mill 0-6-2T (Perry Eng 2801.51.1 of 1951) were delivered to the BBR from Gemco Rail in May. Unfortunately a boiler inspection has also identified problems with the boiler on this locomotive.

Bennett Brook Railway Newsletter, June 2012

AUSTRALIAN PROSPECTORS & MINERS' HALL OF FAME, Kalgoorlie

Further to our report in LR 224 (p. 38), Peter Jones AM Chair of the Australian Prospectors & Miners Hall of Fame, announced in April that the WA Department of Training and Workforce Development has leased the main building as a centre for education and training in mining related courses, with effect from 1 July 2012. Certain areas of the main building will remain open to the public, particularly the entrance/foyer areas, minerals gallery and the Mark Creasy area, with the Hall of Fame plaques and interactive displays to be moved into the entrance/foyer area.

The Hannan's North operation and associated museum aspects will continue under the patronage of Kalgoorlie Consolidated Gold Mines, operator of the Boulder Fimiston Superpit. A new Board was to be in place by July-August 2012 to carry the new business arrangements forward.

Federation of Australian Historical Societies e-Bulletin 100, 4 June 2012

Northern Territory

ADELAIDE RIVER & SNAKE CREEK RAILWAY 1067mm gauge
Friends of the North Australia Railway (Adelaide River)

We have not had a report on this railway preservation group since February 2010 when we reported on the successful trials of ex-Mt Isa Mines 0-4-0ST (Hudswell Clarke 928 of 1910) operating on compressed air (LR 211, p 38). In his report on the achievements of the FNAR during 2011 to its annual general meeting on 30 May, president Trevor Horman outlined the work done to enhance the infrastructure at the Adelaide River site and the events held there during the year. He also reported the construction of a locomotive shed to accommodate rolling stock at Adelaide River and achieving accreditation for limited rail operations using a fettlers' trolley as key targets for 2012.

Work has continued on restoration of the Fairmont fettlers' trolley during 2012 and it is hoped to have this fully accredited for Sunday afternoon rides this year. This is seen as a key step in the aspiration of the FNAR group to commission a 4km railway to Snake Creek Junction, the site of branch lines that served the large WWII ammunition depot complex at this locality.

Trevor Horman, 06/12

Overseas

WAR OFFICE LOCOMOTIVE TRUST, United Kingdom
610mm gauge

Further to the report in LR 224 (p. 39), the dismantling of ex-Bingera Mill 4-6-0T (Hunslet 1215 of 1916) was completed in early June 2012 when the cylinders and cast smoke-box saddle were removed from the chassis, leaving but a bare frame. Now that the locomotive is stripped, a detailed evaluation is being undertaken to identify and cost the work that needs to be done to ensure that it is restored to pristine and operational condition.

The cast saddle is repairable, at some cost, and a new boiler is needed to restore the loco to its condition when it first left the Hunslet works in 1916, While the 1941 boiler has perhaps one more possible repair, it has been decided to build a new one, thus avoiding problems down the track. The journals need attention to achieve a common size and new brasses are to be cast.

Former CSR Lautoka Sugar Mill 0-4-0ST No. 19 (Hudswell Clarke 1056 of 1914) photographed by Bob Darvill at the Statfold Barn Railway in Staffordshire in the United Kingdom on 1 June 2012. It made its first public appearance at its new home during the 'Steam Enthusiast Day' on 2 June.

Heritage & Tourist

The slide valves and cylinder bores appear to be in reasonable condition, but further assessment is required. The front bogies are at the workshops at Statfold Barn, where they are being restored by apprentices.

Michael Bentley, 06/12

STATFOLD BARN RAILWAY, Tamworth, United Kingdom
610/762mm gauge

This railway, located on a farm just outside Tamworth in Staffordshire, commenced as a simple oval track around a lake, but the importation of a historically significant British-built locomotive from Indonesia in 2004 was the trigger for a far more extensive dual gauge railway. The driving force behind this enterprise in Graham Lee, supported by his wife Carol, family members and a team of dedicated and professional engineers and support staff.

In his capacity as chairman of LH Group Holdings, Graham Lee negotiated the purchase of Andrew Barclay and the Hunslet Engine Company by the group in 2004. Graham retired from the LH Group in 2004 and now looks after the heritage and preservation connections arising from the Hunslet Engine Company business.

Although not open to the public, the Statfold Barn Railway holds a number of 'Steam Enthusiast Days' each year and interested enthusiasts may apply for invitations to these events. There an extensive collection industrial steam, diesel and battery-electric locomotives of 610, 762 and standard gauge at the railway, including the new steam locomotives *STATFOLD* and *JACK LANE* built on site by the Hunslet Engine Company.

The 'Steam Enthusiast Day' on 2 June 2012 featured the newest arrival at Statfold, ex-CSR Lautoka Mill, Fiji, 0-4-0ST No. 19 (Hudswell Clarke 1056 of 1914). This locomotive was primarily used for transferring bagged sugar from the mill to the wharf. It was withdrawn in 1960 and placed on display at the mill for some 50 years. The loco arrived at Statfold Farm in May 2012 after being repatriated to the UK a few months earlier.

Statfold Barn Railway website; SBR Guide Book & Stock List Update, June 2012

Above: *On 30 June 1962, three days after the last goods train had run on the line, G42 hauled the 'Last Train to Beech Forest', a special farewell excursion sponsored by the Australian Railway Historical Society. As the passenger stock used on previous fan trips had been returned to Belgrave for Puffing Billy's reopening the following month, patrons were accommodated in a mixture of NQ trucks, NU louvre vans and guards vans. Befitting the sad occasion, it was wet and miserable for most of the day but, as luck had it, the sun shone during a photo stop near Barongarook on the return run. Photo: Peter Ralph*
Below: *Exactly 60 years later, G42 stages a false arrival photo run at Gembrook with the anniversary celebration train (see report on page 37). Photo: Scott Gould*