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Editor: Bruce Belbin, PO Box 674 St Ives NSW 2075 editor@Irrsa.org.au

Heritage & Tourist Editors: Andrew Webster, David Fitzsimons heritagetourist@Irrsa.org.au

Research and Field Reports Editor: Scott Gould fieldreports@lrrsa.org.au

Industrial Railway News Editor: John Browning, industrial@Irrsa.org.au

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Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc. A14384U PO Box 21 Surrey Hills Vic 3127 www.Irrsa.org.au

COUNCIL

President: Bill Hanks (03) 5944 3839 Secretary: Phil Rickard (03) 9870 2285

New South Wales Division c/o PO Box 674 St Ives NSW 2075 President: Jeff Moonie (02) 4753 6302 Secretary: Ross Mainwaring (02) 9449 2738

South Australian Group 9 Craiglee Dr, Coromandel Valley SA 5051 Secretary: Les Howard (08) 8278 3082

South-east Queensland Group 365 Fairfield Rd, Yeronga Old 4104 Secretary: Bob Gough (07) 3848 3769

Tasmanian Representative

11 Ruthwell St, Montrose, Tasmania 7010 Ken Milbourne (03) 6272 2823

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Contact the Membership Officer, PO Box 21, Surrey Hills, Vic. 3127. Fax (03) 9701 8221. Email: subs@lrrsa.org.au or use the coupon on page 31.

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Imperial to metric conversions:

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

Contents

The Langley Vale tramway – Part two	3
The last trains to Beech Forest	16
Industrial Railway News	20
Book Reviews	24
Letters	26
Research	32
Field Reports	33
Heritage & Tourist News	36

Comment

This issue, we welcome our new editorial team members, Andrew Webster and David Fitzsimons (Heritage & Tourist), and Scott Gould (Research and Field Reports). Bob McKillop has signed off as a member of the team, although in the future I am sure we will be using his services as an editorial consultant. We all gathered for a handover and planning meeting in Sydney recently.

Bob recorded his 27 years in an editorial role for *Light Railways* in the last issue, and I am sure you will join with me in thanking and congratulating him for his great contributions to the Society over that time. His co-editors have greatly appreciated his wise guidance. It is also worth highlighting the tremendous trust, encouragement and support that LRRSA Council has shown to the *Light Railways* editors over the years. LRRSA has been very fortunate to have had such intelligent and forward-looking leadership over a long period.

The editorial directory on the top left hand side of this page reflects one decision coming out of our editors' meeting, to initiate generic email addresses to streamline correspondence handling. Please use the relevant address if you wish to email a member of the editorial team.

Lastly, I would like to thank all those others who volunteered to assist with Heritage & Tourist editorial duties in response to the recent appeal for help.

- You can assist us in a number of ways:
- by contributing Heritage & Tourist or any other news items
- by volunteering to write book and video reviews
- by writing articles (short or long, light or weighty) or letters for publication

Please contact Bruce Belbin or myself if you would like to volunteer to write reviews or would like assistance or ideas in getting started with other written contributions.

John Browning

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

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

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

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

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

Front Cover: On Victoria's narrow gauge Beech Forest railway, a well-filled Australian Railway Historical Society (Victorian Division) special excursion 'Autumn in the Otways' departs Beech Forest with a 'down' for Weeaproinah hauled by a well groomed G41 on 14 March 1959. The main line to Colac can be seen veering off to the left of the picture. Photo: Peter Ralph



William Langley's A-class Climax at the head of a short log train, heading back to the mill bunker first. On the return trip the fireman will join the brakemen riding the logs to control the speed of the train down the Lansdowne Escarpment. The gouges in the cleared ground on the left suggest the area has been used as a log loading point. The shallow box cut and hill contour indicate a site on the Rock Creek main line between the Curved Bridge and North Camp Road. Photo: Forestry Commission of NSW photo per Len King

The Langley Vale tramway *The story of William Langley and his timber empire*

Part 2 – William Langley & Sons Ltd: 1912–1933

by Ian McNeil

Foreword.

Part 1 of this history appeared in *Light Railways* 226, August 2012. It covered the pre-WWI establishment of Langley Vale and its wooden-railed horse-tramway, which became notorious for the hair-raising practice of free-wheeling laden log trucks at speed down the steep grades off the Lansdowne escarpment.

William Langley's A-Class Climax locomotive (1912–1937)

The injection of new capital following the registration of William Langley & Sons Ltd in July 1912 enabled William Langley to introduce another big change to Langley Vale, with the purchase of a Climax A-class steam locomotive. It is believed to have arrived at Langley Vale sometime around mid-1912, the first reference to it appearing on 27 September 1912:

"Messrs Langley Bros have now a 'Climax' steam engine to bring up their trucks along their tramline, instead of horses."¹

It was probably delivered to Langley Vale in the same way that Allen Taylor's Climax locomotives came to Wootton – shipped up-river as a kit of parts, and re-assembled at the mill with the aid of a Climax engineer.

There is a frustrating lack of detail as to the identity of Langley's Climax locomotive. It was built by the Climax Manufacturing Company in Corrie, Pennsylvania, USA. Surviving records of this long-defunct company are few and far between. Their practice of allocating shop order numbers (builder's numbers) was rather haphazard and of little use to railway historians – builder's plates were cast in batches, stored in a drum, and affixed to finished locomotives in whatever order they were fished out of the drum. American historians Taber and Casler painstakingly tracked down many of the one thousand-plus Climax locomotives made, but unfortunately have no record of any 4ft 2in gauge A-class Climax locomotive destined for Australasia.

Period photographs indicate that it was a standard 18-ton steel-framed A-class Climax geared steam locomotive. Its design was simple and rugged, and ideally suited for timber tramways with sharp curves, steep grades and poor track. Its whole weight was supported on a pair of 4-wheel bogies, each wheel being independently sprung and driven through an arrangement of line shafts and bevel gears. A 160psi boiler powered a 2-cylinder vertical steam engine which drove a central line shaft through a 2-speed gear box. This arrangement gave A-class Climax locomotives a high tractive effort but a slow turn of speed. Climax catalogues of the day claimed a top speed of 10mph, but Allan Taylor & Company's experience with A-class Climax locomotives on the Wootton Tramway was that prolonged periods over about 6mph resulted in accelerated wear of the bevel gears.

The Climax locomotive brought significant change to the Langley Vale operations. William Langley was able to reduce his costs by getting rid of his horse teams and drivers, and together with the introduction of steam log haulers, he could rely on a year-round supply of mill logs. His previous supply chain relied on bullock team haulage which was regularly interrupted in wet weather when the ground was too soft for the teams to work.



This 1917 photograph taken for the Sydney Mail posed timber workers and log trucks loaded with giant mill logs on a Langley Vale Tramway bridge. Even though the Climax steam locomotive displaced horse team haulage in 1912, the close-spaced wooden sleepers were still necessary on the bridge to ensure there were no unsupported lengths of wooden rail that might otherwise snap under the weight of the locomotive. A handily-located tree stump has been enlisted to support one of the trestles. Photo: The Sydney Mail 3 June 1917

It also spelt an end to the colourful but risky practice of brakemen free-wheeling log trucks down the long Rock Creek tramway grades to the mill. But it seems that the old habit died hard. Instead of individual log trucks gravitating down the line, now whole train loads followed suit. On the steep grades down the Juhles Mountain and Little Nellie lines, and on the five kilometres of 1:25 grade down Rock Creek the following practice became the norm. The Climax would be put in neutral gear with the speed of the train being controlled by brakemen riding on log trucks behind the locomotive. It was said that, once seen, this was a sight to be remembered; a hundred-ton-plus train of logs careering downhill on the wooden-railed line, around sharp curves and over rickety wooden bridges, with brawny brakemen hauling hard on the brake ropes to keep the speed in check.

Langley's Climax spent nearly 25 years on the Langley Vale Tramway. There were no turning facilities on the line and the loco always ran funnel-first leaving the mill. It was fired on mill off-cuts and bush cut timber. Water supply for the loco was not a problem in this high rainfall district. There were a couple of dams built alongside the tramway, as well as any number of creek crossings where the train crew could drop a hose to refill the water tank. Servicing, maintenance and repairs were carried out by the sawmill blacksmith. Jack Graham was the regular driver of the Climax from 1912 right up to the end of the tramway in 1937.

Alfred 'Tab' Newman and his brother Arthur were timber workers at Langley Vale in the late 1920s. Helen Hannah interviewed them for her book "Forest Giants", and recorded their recollections of Langley's Climax:²

"On the loco, they'd have the fireman and the driver and then they'd have two other blokes. Coming down, the fireman, he'd have the brakes, y' see. Coming up the fireman would fire up, and coming back down in the steep places, he'd get out on the brakes. My word, three men and a driver.

One trip a day the loco usually did. I have seen them with 14 logs, but usually they took 12 logs in a load with the loco. It depends on the size. Some of them big fellas would have three, three and a half thousand [super feet]. I reckon between 24 and 28 thousand you could get. The loco, she picked up her wood and her sand from the mill. They used to burn the sand, get the moisture out. So it would be more dry. They'd carry it in the front. Turn the tap on. They'd only use the sand when it was a wet day to stop the trucks slipping. The rain never stopped the loco. You had to work in the rain, you never got paid if you didn't.

I remember in a real dry time the Forestry used to have a man go behind the loco, on a horse. Watching out for any fire sparks that might set a fire on the line. He'd be half a mile behind. I can remember Harry Adams, on the horse, following her day after day. That was in the thirties, near the end of the time. But very seldom she caught anything alight.

Once a bridge had burnt out and the loco went over the edge. The bullockies pulled her back. Never hurt anything, they just pulled her back."

The Climax seems to have spent a relatively uneventful career at Langley Vale. After an initial minor flurry of interest in the local newspapers it was seldom if ever mentioned afterwards. It was damaged in a mill fire in October 1925 which required the timber bodywork to be rebuilt by the mill blacksmith, Gordon Frazer. And in 1930 the locomotive was re-boilered by Morison & Bearby in Newcastle.³

The loco was set aside when the tramway ceased operations in late 1937. Mill foreman Gordon Saville dismantled the Climax at Langley Vale in 1938 and new owners Smith & Ellis Ltd shipped it to their Darling Harbour depot in Sydney to await a buyer.

Three years later it was purchased by the Circular Head Amalgamated Timber Company of Smithton, Tasmania and shipped out from Darling Harbour on 19 August 1941. There the Climax was regauged to 3ft 6in (1067mm) for service on the Salmon River timber tramways. It was enclosed in a crude wood and galvanised iron structure to give the driver and fireman some measure of protection against the bitter north-west Tasmanian winters. Together with the ex-Simsville A-class Climax (1265 of 1913) it soldiered on until 1949 when the Circular Head tramways closed down. In 1960 the bogies and cardan shafts were cannibalised from both Climaxes and incorporated into a diesel-powered locomotive for use on Britton's Swamp timber tramway.⁴ The remains were still essentially intact when Mark Plummer visited in 1969⁵, but had succumbed to scrap metal merchants two years later.



Above: Jack Graham in the cab of William Langley's A-Class Climax locomotive, of which he was the regular driver for over 25 years. The hand-written caption on the original photograph reads "Climax Locomotive standing on grade 1:6, which she ascends with empty trucks". The Langley Vale Tramway had some very steep grades on the Juhles Mountain and Little Nellie branch lines to challenge the loco crew on the ascents, and especially the brakemen during the descents.

Below: Climax driver Jack Graham and his brakemen pose for the camera in a scene which typifies operations on the Langley Tramway: a steam-hauled log train on the wooden-railed tramway under the control of log-riding brakemen during the long descent down the Lansdowne Escarpment to the sawmill. The fireman was expected to leave the footplate and man the brakes on a log truck on the downhill runs.







A train of logs arriving at Langley Vale sawmill, just after crossing the tramway bridge over the North Coast Railway. The tramway siding to the Lansdowne River wharf branches off just past the blacksmith's shop to the left of the train. The Climax loco was stabled under the overhanging roof extension of the mill. The Lansdowne River is immediately behind the sawmill buildings.

Photo: Forestry Commission of NSW per Len King

The North Camp branch line (1914)

In July 1914, William Langley applied to the Lands Department to put a branch line into the forests around the headwaters of Starrs Creek. His proposed 4km tramway was to cross the 40-Acre Paddock into the watershed of Deep Creek, then follow tributary creeks downstream to reach Starrs Creek. His application was accepted and after the route was surveyed he was granted Special Lease 1914.30 for Tramway Purposes in September 1914.⁶

Construction of the new extension started from the 1897 railhead at the head of Guylers Creek. Work was under way when a *Sydney Morning Herald* correspondent travelled the line in July 1915.

"About half way up the Jewel's Hill [sic] another line is noticed going away to the west, and a trip along this section amply repays one. The end of this old line is perhaps five miles from the mill, and here there were gangs of men busily putting down sleepers, laying wooden rails, and working on cuttings and embankments. Bridges were being built over deep and rocky gullies, and generally a miniature railway was being formed. This is a new tramline, some couple of miles in length, to open up virgin forest country containing magnificent blackbutt and tallowwood.

From various points of vantage on this area grand views of the surrounding country are to be obtained. To the west are observed the striking peaks known as Big and Little Nellie, to the north the Stewart River with its strip of settlement on either side, to the east can be seen the Pacific Ocean, while to the south is the vast expanse of the valley of the Manning River."⁷

Just how much of the North Camp line was actually built and operated is unclear. There are abandoned earthworks north of the 40-Acre Paddock and an unfinished deviation beside Deep Creek. They appear to have been constructed at two different times. The reasons behind their abandonment are still open to conjecture. Field investigations have revealed a well-defined tramway formation, about one kilometre long, from the Guylers Creek railhead, through the 40-Acre Paddock, to a substantial trestle bridge across Deep Creek. It includes one of the largest cuttings on the Langley Vale tramway, an impressive 200m long by 5m deep box cut through the spur ridge that divides the watersheds of Guylers and Deep Creeks.

North of Deep Creek two formations have been found. The first is ill-defined and appears to be the older. It follows the line of the 1914 survey, employing steep grades to reach a location called Twin Bridges where two deep creek gullies crossed the route. There are few traces north of this point though a faint ledge can be followed for another two kilometres before petering out short of the surveyed terminus.

The second formation appears to be an unfinished 1km deviation from Deep Creek to the Twin Bridges site. It avoided the steep grades of the first formation and maintained an even downhill grade. But heavier earthworks were required as the trade-off, including two long deep cuttings with an intervening embankment. The deviation finished abruptly 50 metres from, and in line with, the Twin Bridges site. The remains of a substantial trestle bridge, 60m long by 4m high, across Deep Creek appears to belong to this formation.

The available evidence suggests that about one kilometre of tramway was constructed during the 1914-15 period to reach flat ground alongside Deep Creek, within Langley's 40-Acre Paddock. This was where North Camp timber depot was established and, probably, the steam log hauler sited. An earthworks pad was formed up along the remainder of the surveyed route to satisfy the conditions of Special Lease 1914.30, but no bridgework or tracklaying was done.⁸

Before William Langley could extend his North Camp tramway, conditions changed.WorldWar I intervened and large-scale exports of Australian hardwoods to England and Germany collapsed.



The abandoned formations through North Camp and the 40-Acre Paddock have been difficult to interpret. They were part of a planned 4km branch line north to Starrs Creek which was begun in 1914 but never completed. The remnants belong to two different construction attempts – the first during WWI and the second just before the Great Depression. If ever there was a jinxed line on the Langley Vale Tramway then this must have been it.

The timber trade fell into the doldrums, sawmills closed, and many young timber workers went off to war. In 1916 the newly-created NSW Forestry Commission took over forest management from the Lands Department and by 1919 had put a working plan in place for the Lansdowne Forest. Stricter controls were placed on where and how William Langley could log. The Commission reserved the Starrs Creek forests for future competitors working up from Stewarts River. William Langley's tramway and log hauler were to be better utilised along the main range towards Little Nellie.⁹

The second formation, the unfinished deviation between Deep Creek and Twin Bridges, is thought to represent a final attempt to complete the North Camp line some 10 or more years later. This would imply that William Langley was nearing the end of logging operations along the main ridge towards Little Nellie and that the Forestry Commission was now prepared to allow him to log towards Starrs Creek.

Albert 'Tab' Newman remembered tramway construction work in the 40–Acre Paddock. He was born in 1912, and as it is likely he started work at 14 years of age as most country boys did, this dates the deviation construction to 1926 at the earliest:

"I remember them putting the cuttings through the 40 acre paddock up there, wheelbarrow and shovel. Some of those cuttings would be eight feet, ten feet deep. As they put the line up as they went, they had a sort of a trolley to take the dirt back. The men pushed that back. They used to saw their own rail at the mill. All them dogs and spikes and all that were hand made at the blacksmiths shop at the mill."¹⁰

Unfortunately the Depression years intervened shortly after. Work stopped on the deviation and the North Camp line was never finished. William Langley became a victim of the Great Depression and was forced into a fire sale of his assets to Smith & Ellis in November 1933. At the time of the sale the Forestry Commission noted that there were 0.6 miles (1km) of unfinished tramway under construction.¹¹



Langley Vale bush workers Arthur (Tab) Newman and Cecil (Cec) Standing in front of the rough shed housing the steam log hauler up in the Lansdowne Forest. Tab's recollections of his working life at Langley Vale were recorded by Helen Hannah and published in her book Forest Giants. Photo: Len King collection

The NSW North Coast Railway (1915).

The fourth section of the NSW North Coast Railway was built between Taree and Wauchope and passed through Langley Vale. The NSW Public Works Department (PWD) began construction in January 1911, and built a wharf on a deep water frontage of Lansdowne River at Langley Vale to ship in rails and equipment. A construction siding connected



The Forestry Commission employed a fire watcher to follow the Climax locomotive during bushfire seasons. Harry Adams (standing by the horse) was one of these men, and day after day rode a half mile behind the train on the lookout for problems caused by sparks from the loco. The mill-bound log train stands on the embankment rising to the tramway bridge over the North Coast Railway line, just to the right off camera. Photo: Arthur Cooper collection



A log train passes close behind the back fences of "Rotten Row", the line of Langley Vale sawmill cottages. The A-class Climax at the head of the train has just crossed the tramway bridge over the North Coast Railway. The tramway originally passed just to the right of the white-roofed shed in the right background, but the NSW Railway authorities would not entertain the idea of the Langley Vale Tramway crossing their line on the flat. The tramway was deviated to cross the railway on a combined road-tramway overbridge. This deviation cost some of the mill cottages most of their backyards.

the wharf to the railway works a short distance away. By May 1913 coastal steamers had delivered some 1800 steel rails to the Langley Vale construction camp.

The North Coast line passed through a curved cutting less than 200 metres north of the Langley Vale sawmill, and cut across both the tramway and the sawmill access road. The PWD would only agree to pay for one bridge across the railway, so both the tramway and the road were deviated to cross a common overbridge. The tramway deviation sliced across the backyards of the mill houses on Rotten Row. The houses closest to the mill were the most affected with the tramway literally going past their back doors.

The Taree to Wauchope section opened to traffic on 12 April 1915. Next year William Langley successfully petitioned the Railway Commissioners to provide a station at Langley Vale. A short wooden platform with a basic waiting shed and a cream shed was installed adjacent to Lansdowne Road, about 500 metres west of the tramway crossing. A narrow gauge trolley line connected the wharf to the station, mainly for the cream traffic.

The construction siding was retained as the railway's Langley Vale Siding. A run-round loop with standing room for 20 four-wheel trucks was added to the siding on 23 August 1919. Instructions for working the siding warned both guards and drivers to be careful of the siding's 1:66 falling grade down to the wharf and to pin down sufficient wagon handbrakes accordingly.¹² In 1929 plans were drawn up for a short reverse siding to branch off the wharf line and connect to a loading platform at the LangleyVale sawmill, but the Great Depression intervened and this siding was not built.

Most of Langley's timber continued to go by ship to Sydney as shipping costs were a lot cheaper than rail freight. Rail only became important in later years when the dredging effort necessary to keep the Manning River entrance open fell away.



The Langley Vale steam log hauler. It was a double drum machine, the larger top drum holding 300 metres of 5cm diameter main rope for hauling in logs, while the smaller drum below wound a lighter tail rope pull the main rope back out to the bush after a pull. William Langley obtained two log haulers in 1912, but sold one in 1916 to the PWD for use on the Chichester Dam construction. The second continued in use right up to the end of the tramway in 1937.

Photo: Arthur Cooper collection



The Climax at the head of a short log train coming down from the forest onto the Curved Bridge on the Langley Vale Tramway. There was a steep pull against the load on the other side, and according to bush worker Tab Newman, the Climax had to halve fully laden log trains to ascend. The 'second section' would be free-wheeled by brakemen down the 1:33 grade over the bridge to roll as far as possible before the loco came back to get them. Photo: Forestry Commission of NSW per David Beck

Post World War I changes.

The end of WWI saw sweeping changes to the way in which NSW forests were managed. The Forestry Act of 1916 set up the NSW Forestry Commission and equipped it with sufficient powers and resources to effectively manage the State's forests. The motley collection of Forest Reserves on the Lansdowne Escarpment were amalgamated in 1918 and proclaimed as Lansdowne State Forest No 291. It was one of the earliest forests to be placed under a Management Plan. Previous policies under the Lands Department had favoured clearing forest lands for settlement and agriculture. Now the emphasis was on the management of forest resources and sustainable logging.

When the Lansdowne Forest Working Plan was issued on 20 June 1919, William Langley's tramway leases were cancelled and replaced by annual Permissive Occupancy Permits administered by the Forestry Commission. He was directed where and how to log, putting an end to the practice of picking and choosing only the best timber.¹³

Increasing imports of American oregon timber after WWI provided stiff competition to the NSW hardwood timber industry and drove down prices. Thus when the Sydney City Council considered purchasing a timber business to supply its electric light poles and street paving blocks, the Langley Vale operation was one of those offered for sale. The asking price in September 1921 was \pounds 43,000 and included the sawmill, Climax locomotive and 15 trucks, 12 miles of tramway and cutting rights over 18,000 acres of forest, 650 acres of freehold land, one schooner and some 21 workmen's cottages. However three months later a new Council was voted in and promptly scrapped their predecessor's plans.¹⁴

The Little Nellie branch line (c1921)

The main forest area that William Langley was allocated post-1919 extended northwest along the main range towards Little Nellie Mountain. The tramway was extended in stages along the range, at a pace to suit the requirements of Langley's steam log hauler. One of the last extensions was recorded by a *Manning River Times* article in May 1926:

"Langley and Son's tramline is being pushed further into the forest and will cover a length of about seven miles from the saw mill, where it is contemplated putting in a siding for loading timber directly onto railway trucks. The firm's locomotive brings in a number of logs daily." ¹⁵

This decision to extend the tramway may have been encouraged by the winning of a large contract the same month to supply the Sydney City Council with 2½ million hardwood blocks to pave the city's main streets. The company also had contracts to supply the PMG with telephone poles, blackbutt cross-arms and tallowwood insulators.

The four-kilometre Little Nellie extension branched off from the old Rock Creek main line about 300 metres short of its 1897 terminus on Guylers Creek. It headed westward, climbing steeply for 500 metres to regain the spine of the main range. This it followed northwest for about 3.5km to terminate at the base of Little Nellie's 550m high summit. Coopernook Forest Way is built on top of most of this section. The line climbed steadily all the way with one steep pinch of 1:7.5 gradient about one kilometre short of the terminus, fortunately not against the load. At its terminus on Ti-Tree Trail, the tramway was some 430 metres above sea level, the highest point on the whole line. This marked the practical limit for the Langley Vale Tramway. Extending the line into the steep and rugged terrain surrounding the extinct volcanos of Little Nellie, Big Nellie and Flat Nellie would have called for heavy earthworks and steep grades against the load.

The tramway's route along the top of the main range allowed the steam log hauler to be advantageously positioned to pull timber out of Newbys Creek catchment to the south and from Starrs Creek catchment to the north. The short 300m-long Quarry Branch line, near the Newbys Creek Road turnoff, was put in to position the log hauler on an outlying spur ridge. At the tramway terminus on T-Tree Trail there are well-preserved benches where the logging winch and its boiler once sat, and long furrows still gouge the forest floor where the logs were hauled in. The Little Nellie line featured in some good film footage taken in September 1928 during the visit of the Empire Forestry Commission to Langley Vale. Some 56 Commission delegates were conducting a study tour of Australian forests, and William Langley hosted them on a trip on the Langley Vale Tramway to the railhead where the log hauler was operating:

On arrival at Langley Vale the party was met by Mr. William Langley who acted as host to the commission during the visit to the Langley Vale mill and the Lansdowne State Forest, as well as to Mr. Langley's private holdings. In the huge mill, which was in full operation, big tallowwood logs were being put through. Every branch of the sawmilling operation of this mill was actively engaged during the visit, and the delegates expressed themselves pleased

The delegates boarded Mr. Langley's mountain log train and ascended for about 10 to 12 miles right into the heart of a virgin Australian forest, where the giant timbers of centuries were being laid low by the woodman's axe. The train climbed over hills, the grades being as much as one in eight in places, and most of it over wooden rails and across rough wooden bridges of 50 yards length. The railway goes over Cross's Mountain, across the Razorback, down a declivity, and up another rise which forms the western wall of Hannan Vale, being about 1200ft above the starting point. The journey was accomplished in between three and four hours, but as progress was made Mr. Langley would stop the train and explain matters affecting timber and afforestation for the benefit of delegates. While the log train took almost 3 hours to climb up the hill, it came back in less than two hours.

At the end of the line the firm's log hauler is seen in operation. It has a direct pull over a track it has made through the bush by the hauling of many logs of 1150ft, and in addition the workmen can fasten on to a log 550ft. away from this end and haul it through virgin bush, making a pull from where the hauler is located of 1700ft. And there is no doubt about the pace which these logs were hauled at, faster than the ordinary walking pace, uphill and downhill being all the same to the hauler. This device is one of the most modern adjuncts of the country sawmiller. It consists of a 2 inch wire rope to do the hauling, and attached to this is a smaller hawser, the whole constituting an endless rope. The lighter hawser is used to pull the heavier rope back to the log after it has delivered its load at the log dump at the hauler.

The visitors expressed great surprise at the tall timbers, which included blackbutt, tallowwood, grey gum, flooded gum, bloodwood, white mahogany, turpentine and brush box. Ironbark does not grow in this forest.¹⁶

The Langley Vale Tramway also featured in two silent films shot in the 1920s. One was the 1926 Raymond Longford silent film "Tall Timber". It was a melodrama about a wealthy young ne'er-do-well who, cut off without a penny by his exasperated father, has to work in the North Coast timber industry for a living. The *Manning River Times* reprinted an advertising flyer for the film:

"Many of the exterior scenes were taken in this district, at Langley Vale, a centre of the great timber milling industry of Australia, and the entire mill, with its log trains and other resources, were placed at the disposal of the company for the production, which contains one of the most thrilling and realistic fight scenes ever screened. Both from a point of view of acting and photography, "Tall Timbers" is said to be well up to the average American production."¹⁷

Another short sequence was included in a Forestry Commission film made around 1925, "Timber Getting in NSW".



The Little Nellie branch was the last long extension of the Langley Vale Tramway, reaching the skirts of the extinct Little Nellie volcano. The line reached an elevation of 400 metres above sea level, the highest point on the tramway. William Langley's steam log hauler was used to good effect along this line, being able to draw logs out of Newby's Creek to the south and Starrs Creek to the north.



A 1940 aerial photograph of Langley Vale showing the Lansdowne River, sawmill, village, tramway and the North Coast Railway. The extensive orange orchards were planted by William Langley in the early 1930s in an attempt to diversify his business interests.

The end of the Langley era (1933)

The Empire Forestry Commission Visit in September 1928 could be said to be the high water mark of William Langley's empire. One month later the decline began. On 'Black Sunday', 10 October 1928, huge areas of the mid-North Coast went up in flames and fire-storms ravaged the Lansdowne forests. Langley Vale was hard hit:

Lansdowne district, like others, has passed through a very trying time, particularly so during the last fortnight, culminating in some instances in extensive damage being done, chiefly through bushfires, accompanied by heavy winds. Messrs W. Langley and Son, of Langley Vale, are considered the heaviest losers, as many of the wooden bridges and tramline rails used for the haulage of logs to the mill have been burnt out, necessitating the cessation of mill operations which I understand, will be till after Xmas, with very considerable expense in repairing the damage done. All will sympathise with Mr. Langley in his loss as he has at all times be a staunch friend to his employees.¹⁸

The Great Depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s brought great hardship to Australia. The local timber industry fell on hard times. Many sawmills closed down, owners went bankrupt and hundreds of timber workers lost their jobs. Langley Vale was also affected with the sawmill closing intermittently during 1929 and 1930. In an attempt to diversify, William Langley floated a company called Langley Vale Oranges Ltd with a capital of $\pounds 12,000$ in June 1931. Some 60 acres of orange trees were planted on river flats near the saw mill, the aim being to sell fruit and fruit juices to city markets.¹⁹

When Francis Sargeant, Allen Taylor & Co.'s managing director, visited Langley Vale in August 1931 he found the business was being operated on a tribute basis: ²⁰

"Mr. Langley informed me that he was working his mill on the tribute basis, The whole of the plant including locos and log haulers and sawmills have been placed at the disposal of the men and they had by agreement consented to work the plant, in fact had been doing so, on the output basis and were being paid at the rate of 7/6 per 100' super which included all costs of logs and delivery on wharf or railway ready for dispatch.

Mr. Langley stated that on the Saturday prior to my arrival the men, numbering in all about 52 employees, had held a meeting and had indicated that they were prepared to make a reduction of 20% which really meant he was able to produce timber and place it on the wharf for 6/- per 100' super. Mr. Langley showed me the report of the meeting of his employees and it stated that the reduction had been agreed to by 35 votes for and 10 votes against.

The men must deal from Langley's store for all their requirements so that Langley Vale is a self-contained little village. There is no doubt that Mr. Langley has a wonderful control, and although it did not seem to me to be possible for such an arrangement to last he assured me that it was a fact and showed me figures and statement to prove that the work can be carried out on this new basis. If the men are satisfied to work under these conditions it means that the best of them will not get more than $\pounds 2.10.0$ to $\pounds 3$ per week. Mr. Langley would have to keep the mill going constantly and would have to dispose of the whole of the output and get paid promptly therefore, to enable them to carry on."

One of the last straws for the struggling company occurred in March 1933 when another bushfire destroyed several tramway bridges and stretches of the wooden tramline:

During Friday last a bush fire was raging in the vicinity of the tramline that runs from the Langley Vale sawmill for some miles into the mountain country. The alarm was given and the mill ceased work and 40 men were organized to go out and attempt to quell the fire. This was at 3pm and they were kept busy until 3am on Saturday. Their efforts, however, were rewarded with success, for they were able to save eight bridges and the whole of the tramline, with the exception of about half a mile. Two of the bridges, however, were badly burned, and another somewhat damaged and half a mile of wooden rails were destroyed. The two bridges that were badly damaged were about four miles from the village and three were within a section of about three miles of one another.²¹

Williams Langley's efforts were not enough to keep the wolf from the door. The bank called in his overdraft and he was forced into a fire sale of all his timber assets at Langley Vale. They were bought for a pittance, a mere ± 5000 , in November 1933 by Smith & Ellis Ltd. William Langley's son Robert described what happened then:

"The Depression of the late 20's and early 30's broke my father. We had 4 million feet of tallow-wood office flooring timber maturing for milling in stock which just couldn't be given away. As a major portion of the turnover was in girders, sleepers, cross arms and wood blocks, curtailment of Government expenditure meant the bank called in the overdraft, necessitating the sale of the mill, operations and acres of good land. All went for a song to A & E & Ellis. A & small paddock, theOld House and a few cottages remained which kept the wolf from thedoor. Father planted an orange orchard, but by the time it was bearing,the war had broken out."²²

The company that bought Langley Vale was Smith & Ellis Limited. It had been registered in Sydney on 25 May 1932, with an authorized capital of \pounds 10,000. The two founders of the Company were Henry W Smith, a Sydney-based importer, and Sydney L Ellis, a Sydney timber merchant. They joined forces with the South Coast sawmilling firm,

Mitchell Bros of Narooma, and both Carl and Henry Mitchell joined the Board of Directors of Smith & Ellis Limited. The company expanded its interests in the NSW timber industry, taking full advantage of struggling businesses that were hard hit by the Great Depression. They picked up sawmills at Nana Glen, Orara Creek and Woolgoolga for a song, later adding the bankrupt Simsville operation. The Langley Vale purchase netted them over 600 acres of freehold land, the sawmill, mill cottages and store, the tramway, Climax locomotive and log trucks. Langley's sawmill permit and his Permissive Occupancy Permits for the tramway were also included.

Tramway closure (1937) and finale.

Smith & Ellis continued to operate the Langley Vale tramway for another four years until late 1937. No more tramway extensions were built. The Forestry Commission was extending its network of royalty-funded forest roads through State Forests and the company was already looking to road transport for the future. They took delivery of their first Cletrac crawler tractor for logging work in November 1937, followed by a second in July 1938. The tramway's Permissive Occupancy Permits were allowed to expire at the end of 1937, and the Forestry Commission was finally notified in January 1939 that:

"We will have no further use for the tramway in the future for logging purposes as we are logging the mill with lorries."²³

Smith & Ellis were taken over in 1940 by Allen Taylor & Co who continued to operate the Langley Vale sawmill. When the old mill burnt down after the World War 2 it was rebuilt alongside the shortened stub of the wharf siding as an electric mill. It was later purchased by Campbell and Jones who ran it before closing it down in 1970, and transferred the licence to a new mill in Taree.



With a full head of steam, the Climax waits at the head of a loaded log train for the photographer to finish his work before starting on the long trip back to the Langley Vale sawmill. The shed in the background houses the tramway's steam log hauler, probably located in very steep country towards the end of the Little Nellie branch line. The cleared area in the foreground is part of the log dump where hauler-logs were rolled onto tramway bogie sets and chained down. Photo: Forestry Commission of NSW per David Beck

Langley Vale today.

Langley Vale is just a memory today. The village has gone and the railway station closed back in 1970. The busy sawmill site is a green riverside paddock on private property – no trace of the mill remains. Some stretches of the Langley Vale Tramway formation survive inside the Lansdowne State Forest and the adjacent Coorabakh National Park. The best of these are found along the Rock Creek and North Camp lines. Other stretches are smothered in regrowth and rampant lantana, the curse of NSW timber tramway researchers, and require some skill with brush hook and machete to follow.

Physical remains of the tramway are represented mainly by the earthworks, especially the cuttings, the remains of the massive bed logs William Langley use to anchor his trestle bridges with, and isolated lengths of steel rail once used on the sharper curves and high bridges. Deep log furrows remain on the hillsides around Phone Box and T-Tree Trail where the steam log hauler dragged logs back to the tramline. There are also two wheelsets preserved at the Coopernook Forestry Depot. Their 5in (127mm) wide wheel treads together with a distance of 4ft 0½in (1232mm) between wheel flanges indicate there was a fairly generous gauge tolerance on the 4ft 2in (1270mm) gauge tramway.

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The A-Class Climax on the northern approach of the Curved Bridge across Shingle Creek, running bunker-first back to Langley Vale sawmill. The view today is very different, with giant trees and undergrowth hemming in the view. The photograph also does not do justice to the steepness of the sides of the creek gorge. Photo: Len King collection



Clockwise from above: The 70 metre long by four metre deep Rock Cutting on the abandoned deviation of the North Camp branch of the Langley Vale Tramway. It was excavated either in the late 1920s or early 1930s, just before the Great Depression took effect and was the last piece of tramway construction put in. The tramway formation comes to an abrupt end 20 metres from the exit of the cutting. • The 'Half Bridge' took the Rock Creek main line across a steep and unstable hillside on the climb up the Lansdowne Escarpment. The tramway formation was supported by a crib-work of large diameter logs. The early wooden rails were replaced by steel rails when steam traction was introduced in 1912. Sixty feet of 60lb rails remain bolted together in situ. • Taree-based field researcher Mick Allison measuring up the remnant crib logs that supported the Half Bridge. Logs up to one metre diameter were driven horizontally into the hill side to provide a secure foundation for the structure. The outer edges were supported by equally large logs laid longitudinally and bedded into the ground. Back-filling with earth had probably more to do with protection from fire damage. • There were 30 bridges on the Rock Creek main line alone. They were a constant headache for the Langleys, very vulnerable to the frequent bushfires that afflicted the tramway, and most had to be either substantially strengthened or completely rebuilt to take the weight of the Climax locomotive. This example is estimated to have been over 40 metres long and the central section up to five metres high. It appears to have been first built as a pig-sty structure, later modified into a standard trestle bridge incorporating the original bed logs. • One of the smaller bridges crosses the tranquil waters of Rock Creek, close to Pipe Clay Junction. The 12 metre gap was spanned by two log girders upon which the sleepers were spiked. One log girder remains in situ, the other has burnt through and slumps down from the left bank into the creek. Photos: Ian McNeil









The last train to Beech Forest, hauled by the last serviceable locomotive on the line, G42, on Saturday 30 June 1962, steams into a rare shaft of sunlight in what was otherwise a wet dreary day, as it rounds a curve near McDevitt on the return trip to Colac.

The last trains to Beech Forest

Text and images by Peter JO Ralph

Early in 1959 arrangements were made by the Victorian Division of the Australian Railways Historical Society, jointly with Colac's 'Kanyana' Festival Society, to operate a number of passenger excursion trains on the Colac–Beech Forest line. Towards this end, eight of Puffing Billy's NBH carriages were transferred from storage at Newport to Colac on 13 February, 1959. During the month from 28 February to 28 March 1959, no less than 17 special return passenger trains were operated on the line – four to Weeaproinah, seven to Beech Forest and six to Gellibrand. On each occasion the trains comprised the eight excursion cars and two brake vans and were hauled by locomotives G41 (12 trips) G42 (three trips) and 14A (two trips).

The popularity of these excursions exceeded all expectations and subsequently a number of additional excursions were run on a similar basis during the ensuing three years.

The first 'Bye Bye Beechie' trip on 3 March 1962, was so popular that the excursion was repeated three weeks later. G42 had been repainted, including red pilot beams, for other special trains. On the 31 March 1962, the Puffing Billy Preservation Society sponsored the 'Otway Ranger' excursion to Weeaproinah. This was the last true passenger train to run on the line before the NBH carriages were returned to Belgrave at the request of the Society, arriving there on 13 May 1962. At Belgrave, they received maintenance and restoration prior to returning to regular traffic on the first section of the Puffing Billy Railway from there to Menzies Creek, reopened on 28 July 1962.

In order to run the very last train on 30 June 1962, the ARHS (Vic Division) arranged with the Victorian Railways to adapt some of the NQ goods wagons, fitting them with makeshift canopies and bench seating. The train was a sell-out for this last sentimental journey, and included two NU louvred vans and two NC brake vans in the consist of nine, in case of inclement weather. It was hauled by locomotive G42, which performed faultlessly, departing Colac at 11.00am and arriving at Beech Forest around 2.20pm. Here the entire train reversed around the balloon loop, and after a short stay departed Beech Forest at 2.40pm for the return journey to Colac. A photo stop was arranged between McDevitt and Wimba before continuing to Gellibrand to take on water before an express run back to Colac. The sound of exploding detonators placed on the track greeted the train as it pulled in at 5.25pm, a final hurrah marking the closure of this truly remarkable railway after 60 years of operation.

On Saturday 30 June 2012 the Puffing Billy Railway marked the 50th Anniversary of Beech Forest Railway's closure with a re-creation of this last passenger train to operate on the line, using a similar consist of nine carriages, again hauled by the veteran G42, but this time between Belgrave and Gembrook.

Reminiscences of the Colac-Beech Forest-Crowes railway

This 2ft 6in gauge railway, running between Colac, Beech Forrest and Crowes, in Victoria's Otway Ranges, opened to Beech Forest in 1902, and was extended to Crowes in 1911, the most southerly terminus in mainland Australia.

When I first travelled on the line back in Easter 1950, in the course of a cycling trip I was making in the Otways, the weekly car goods operated the service from Colac at 9.00am on a Monday, arriving at Crowes at 3.45pm. It was generally hauled by G41. NA5 and NA14 were held in reserve at Colac, for use when G41 was unavailable. The train stabled overnight at Crowes, its crew bunking down in the modest station building. Jock McLean was the regular driver, his driving being confined to this line because of an eyesight impairment.



Above: Though the passenger excursion traffic of the line's final years was dominated by the Garratt locomotives. particulally G41, the railway's resident NA class (14A) made an appearance on two such trains. Here, a crowd gathers to watch as 14A takes water at Wimba on 21 March 1959 while working 'The Beechie', a special trip sponsored by the Australian Railway Historical Society. **Below:** The numerous steam leaks bear witness to G42's overall mechanical condition as it brings a goods train past the waiting shed at McDevitt in March 1961.

On this first occasion, I caught the regular goods train at Beech Forest during its return trip to Colac, the train having departed from Crowes at 8.00am. Leaving Beech Forest at 11.20am, and with my bicycle stowed away in an NM cattle wagon, the train arrived at Colac at 2.45pm. My next encounter was on a regular weekly Wednesday goods train on 5 June 1957 and hauled by G42 I rode the goods train out and back to Weeaproniah. Several other journeys on the goods trains followed — the car goods status had ceased at this stage, so I travelled with the guard in the 5NC brake van. After this, I either travelled on or motorcaded numerous passenger excursions operated on the line between 1959 and 1962 for various organizations.

The narrow gauge line handled large tonnages of freight — more than any other narrow gauge railway in Victoria. At 43.7 miles in length, it was not only the State's longest narrow gauge line, but was considered by many to be the most spectacular, with continuous 1 in 30 gradients, particularly in the section between Gellibrand and Beech Forest, and abounding with two-chain curves. Most people who travelled the line will recall the screeching of the wheel flanges on curves during the tortuous 1500 feet climb up the ridge to Beech Forest where, for a short section, the line paralleled the Crowes line into the Beech Forest yard. Here the train would reverse itself around a balloon loop before running out along the ridge, past potato farms and thick rain forest before arriving at the Crowes terminus.

The line handled enormous amounts of timber and potato traffic, wooden piles for the erection of jetties during the war years, and finally pulpwood bound for Maryvale in Gippsland. This latter freight gave the line an extended lease of life.

It also brought about drastic change to the running schedule, much to the displeasure of the train crews, with a 2.00am departure from Colac for Weeaproinah on a Wednesday, and an arrival back at Colac at 11.30am. This enabled the timber to be transshipped to the broad gauge for dispatch to the Maryvale **Clockwise, from above:** On 8 March 1961, G42 arrives at busy Beech Forest yard with a lengthy goods train. A large sign leaning against the station building proclaims "The OTWAYS for Happy Holidays" to the handful of travellers that might see it. • The crew of G42 takes the opportunity to blow down the boiler while their charge takes water at Dinmont tank, on 5 June 1957. • A desolate scene at Crowes in 1955, a year after the line between there and Weeaproinah had closed. • G42 takes water at Kincaid, while working the reclamation train over the reopened section on 8 March 1961. • Track workers throw a length of rail into an NQ wagon, near Crowes, as the reclamation train continues its melancholy task of dismantling the railway back to mileage 129m 60ch – a quarter-mile south of Weeaproinah.

pulp mill — all within a 24 hour period. The regular drivers on the line during this period were Bill Brady and Clarrie Kenyon. The regular guard/travelling station master was Ron Skey, right up until the closure of the line.

Although the line to the terminus at Crowes was closed in 1954, the nine-mile section between Weeaproinah and Crowes was temporarily re-opened in March 1961 to enable VR Way & Works Department trains to recover the rails. I was indeed fortunate enough to travel on one of these trains to the yard limits at Crowes, where the entire yard had been razed. This involved the NQ trucks being propelled into the section from Lavers Hill, with G42 having to run around its train in No.2 road and attaching to the rear for more accessible loading of the rails into the NQ wagons for return to Colac.

I will never forget traveling the scenic section of track, which hadn't seen a train for over six years. Parts of the line beyond Kincaid were entirely hedged in thick rain forest. This was truly an unforgettable experience that I will always cherish!

Industrial Railway News Editor : John Browning PO Box 99, ANNERLEY 4103 Phone: (07) 3255 9084 e-mail: industrial@Irrsa.org.au Special thanks to contributors to the LRRSA & Cane Trains e-groups, the Canetrains.net forum, and Jim Bisdee's West Australian

NEW SOUTH WALES

Railscene e-Mag

Blayney SeaLink Rail Terminal 1435mm gauge

On 18 May, the new Blayney SeaLink Rail Terminal was opened by Deputy Premier Andrew Stoner. The terminal connects SeaLink's Blayney cold stores warehouse and Newcrest's Cadia East gold and copper mine with the Parkes to Sydney main line, incorporating more than four kilometres of new rail track. Whether this large private industrial rail complex comes to have its dedicated shunting locomotive remains to be seen.

Bob McKillop 7/12; Railexpress 6/6/12

QUEENSLAND

BUNDABERG SUGAR LTD, Bundaberg area mills

(see LR 222 p.20 & 224 p.24) 610mm gauge

All five Clyde 0-6-0DH locomotives at the Bundaberg mills have been sold to Fiji Sugar Corporation. Four were due to be transported to Brisbane around 23 August for shipment

to Brisbane around 23 August for shipment. Three of these were originally Fairymead Mill locomotives, now on the Bingera roster but still stationed at Fairymead, 5 (DHI.6 of 1954), 56 *HINKLER* (56-89 of 1956) and 60 (60-219 of 1960). The fourth was Millaquin Mill's *MARGAM* (57-159 of 1957). The remaining locomotive, Millaquin Mill's *ASHFIELD* (65-441 of 1965) was to be retained in Bundaberg pending a decision as to whether it would be refurbished in Australia before being sent to Fiji.

In connection with this, EM Baldwin 0-6-0DH *RUBYANNA* (3406.17.70 of 1970) was transferred from Bingera Mill to Millaquin on 21 August as back-up loco to the Millaquin fleet.

Another police car driven by a sergeant has collided with a cane train, this time on 17 April at South Kolan on the Bingera Mill system. The vehicle was exiting a car park across the cane railway at about 7.50am when it was hit by EM Baldwin B-B DH *GIVELDA* (5800.2 6.75 of 1975), hauling a train of empties. Reportedly no one was hurt.

Neville Conder 7/12; Editor 8/12; ABC Wide Bay 17/8/12;

http://mypolice.qld.gov.au/blog/2012/08/17/ departmental-traffic-crash-south-kolan/

MACKAY SUGAR LTD, Mackay area mills (see LR 226 p. 22)

610mm gauge

Decommissioned Com-Eng 0-6-0DH OAKENDEN (FB3169 of 1963), offered for sale in 2010, was disposed of to Inkerman Mill in July. Involved in the transaction was the acquisition by Mackay Sugar of a spare set of EM Baldwin locomotive bogies which it is planned to put under Com-Eng B-B DH FINCH HATTON (NA59112 of 1977), which itself had also been decommissioned and offered for sale. It is currently in store at North Eton and following arrival in Mackay, the bogies were also placed in store. However in mid-August they were returned to Inkerman Mill (see elsewhere this issue). Routine failures of Marian Mill Eimco B-B DH locomotives have included 20 BOONGANNA (L257 of 1990) with a broken transmission shaft on 29 July which kept it out of action for about 10 days and 18 GARGETT (L255 of 1990) with a broken axle in August.

All the Mackay Sugar radio-controlled brake wagons now carry the names of their locos, as well as their 'B VAN' number as follows:

B VAN 1WALKERSTONB VAN 2CHARLTONB VAN 3CALEN/MICLEREB VAN 4CEDARS/DULVERTONB VAN 5TANNALOB VAN 6GARGETTB VAN 7BOONGANNA

Scott Jesser 7/12; Hayden Quabba 7/12, 8/12; Luke Horniblow 8/12

MACKAY SUGAR LTD, Mossman Mill

(see LR 226 p.22)

610mm gauge

A Twitter message posted by the Queensland Police Service on the morning of 4 August said that the Captain Cook Highway at its intersection of Mt Molloy Road was closed due to a cane train derailment.

Corey Seaton 8/12

MSF SUGAR LTD, Mulgrave Mill, Gordonvale

(see LR 226 p.22) 610mm gauge

On 20 July, Walkers B-B DH *GORDONVALE* (595 of 1968 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1995) hauled failed Walkers B-B DH *MULGRAVE* (612 of 1969 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1995) plus its loaded train and brake wagon 13 through the suburbs of Cairns on its way back to the mill. *MULGRAVE* was still out of service in mid-August, receiving new engine pistons and liners.

Prof B-B DH PSL. 25.01 of 1990 (rebuilt South Johnstone Mill 1993) was in service by late July after some attention from the fitters and some electrical work. It has the new identity 22 *ALOOMBA* and was mostly working the Walkers loco southern roster.

On 5 August, three locomotives were noted working in the Babinda area, Com-Eng 0-6-0DH locomotives 8 *CHARINGA* (A1926 of 1958) and 9 *MEERAWA* (FC3473 of 1964) and Clyde 0-6-0DH *CUCANIA* (63-289 of 1963). Mulgrave works into the old Babinda area as far as Happy Valley and the Left Hand Branch, and South Johnstone locomotives may also work into these areas depending on cane scheduling arrangements.

Clyde 0-6-0DH 14 (56-86 of 1956) is being used by the navvies. On 18 August, it was noted parked up at the former Babinda mill site with a long string of rail bogies. The KMX-06 tamper (Plasser 98 of 1975) was at work in Cucania siding.

Top: Farleigh Mill's Walkers B-B DH CALEN (692 of 1972 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1995) descends Sivyers Hill with B VAN 3 after bending its front safety rails in a mishap with some empty bins at Leap 3 Siding on 10 July. Photo: Havden Quabba. Above: Recently arrived at Inkerman Mill from Mackay Sugar, Com-Eng 0-6-0DH FB3169 of 1963, heads down Bapty Road with empty bins in mid-August. Photo: Luke Horniblow Below: Marian Mill's Eimco B-B DH 20 BOONGANNA (L257 of 1990) arrives back at Racecourse Mill for attention after a transmission failure on 29 July. Photo: Hayden Quabba

Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 17 DEERAL (AD1453 of 1962) is slowly being rebuilt and will be fitted with a Scania 5 cylinder engine, an automatic transmission and the new cab previously noted.

Clyde 0-6-0DH 19 REDLYNCH (65-435 of 1965) has been fitted with automatic transmission and returned to service in mid-August. Clyde 0-6-0DH 16 KAMMA (56-96 of 1958) also has this type of transmission, which brings about significant fuel savings. 19 mostly does the local hilly runs: Green Hill, The Bump and Sawmill Pocket.

As part of improvements being made on the Bruce Highway in the southern suburbs of Cairns, the cane railway at Red Hill is being relocated further west where it comes up close to the Highway, in association with major earthworks. The total project is not due to be completed until the end of 2013 so presumably the track alterations will occur during the slack season.

Carl Millington 7/12, 8/12; Tom Porritt 7/12, 8/12

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

(see LR 226 p.25) 610mm gauge

Victoria Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH LUCINDA (65-436 of 1965) was back in service on 30 June following its heavy overhaul. Walkers B-B DH CAIRNS (681 of 1972 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1997) finally entered service for the 2012 season in early July, having been held up awaiting transmission parts. Macknade Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH 16 (DHI.1 of 1954) was out of action on 7 July with final drive problems so Victoria Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH PERTH (69-682 of 1969) was sent across to replace it. The casing on the final drive of 16 was cracked and required repair and the disused 18 (DHI.5 of 1954) was moved to the shed to allow gearing components from its final drive to be removed for fitting to 16. 16 returned to service on 8 August and now has a slow-speed gear ratio.

On 8 August, Macknade Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH 12 (65-434 of 1965) suffered a universal joint failure. It returned to service on 10 August, allowing PERTH to return to Victoria Mill.

In late July, there were two rear end collisions on the Victoria Mill system. One resulted in EM Baldwin B-B DH HOMEBUSH II (6400.1 4.76 of 1976) receiving a seriously damaged headstock and Macknade Mill's EM Baldwin DARWIN (6171.1 9.75 of 1975) was sent over to Victoria Mill on loan for 24 hours to cover for any locomotive shortages. Motor Rail 'Simplex' 4wDM 4 (10232 of 1951), previously stored outside the navvy compound at Victoria Mill has been acquired by a Victoria Mill driver and removed to his property in the Sevmour area.

During a two-week stoppage for wet weather in the middle of July, the opportunity was taken at the Macknade loco shed to apply the green stripe to the locomotives that were still without it. DARWIN, 16 and EM Baldwin B-B DH 20 (7070.1 4.77 of 1977).

As is usual, Victoria Mill's preserved Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 HOMEBUSH (1067 of 1914) provided passenger rides in association with the annual Italian Festival on 28 July. Work on retubing this locomotive commenced on 23 August.

Industrial **NEWS** Railway

Around 20 August, there was a bad derailment to a loaded train on a bridge at Upper Stone. The bogie of an 11-tonne bin derailed and the bin went sideways. It swept the transoms away and damaged one set of piles as well as one span. The creek filled up with bins. With a bridge pylon cracked and needing reinforcement, repairs were expected to take three weeks. The two brake wagons and the rest of the bins had to be moved back to the mill side of the bridge using road trucks.

Steven Allan 7/12, 8/12; Chris Hart 7/12, 8/12; Luke Horniblow 7/12

SUCROGEN (PIONEER) PTY LTD, Inkerman Mill

(see LR 225 p.28) 610mm gauge

The rebuilding of EM Baldwin B-B DH *IONA* (4498.1 7.72 of 1972) involved it being fitted with replacement bogies, presumably one set from those that were disposed of when the two ex-Fiji Sugar Corporation locomotives (7240.1 5.78 and 8290.1 4.79 of 1979) were sent for scrap by Proserpine Mill in 2011. The bogies that came from IONA went to Mackay Sugar in a transaction that involved Inkerman Mill acquiring Mackay Sugar's decommissioned Com-Eng 0 6-0DH *OAKENDEN* (FB3169 of 1963), originally North Eton Mill's D4.

The new arrival was in use at Inkerman in early August, still in Mackay Sugar green and yellow livery, and it is understood that it will be named *INKERMAN*.

Meanwhile reported problems with the new bogies under *IONA* led to its original bogies being sent back from Mackay in mid-August for reinstatement on a temporary basis.

Luke Horniblow 8/12; Hayden Quabba 8/12

SUCROGEN (PIONEER) PTY LTD, Proserpine Mill

(see LR 222 p.23)

610mm gauge

A visit on 11 August found seven locomotives active on cane haulage. Of the Walkers B-B DH rebuilds, 11 (628 of 1969 rebuilt Walkers 1996) and 12 (673 of 1971 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1998) were working on the Elaroo line, while 14 (701 of 1972 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1998) was on the Gregory line. 11 also did a run on the Kelsey Creek line. The EM Baldwin B-B DH locomotives, 9 (6626.1 7.76 of 1976 rebuilt Ontrak 2004) & 10 (9816.1 10.81 of 1981 rebuilt Ontrak 2004) were working the Gregory, Cannon Valley and Conway lines. Of the Clyde 0-6-0DH locomotives, 5 (60-218 of 1960) did a couple of runs along the Cannon Valley line. including one run as far as Jansen's Siding while 7 (65-442 of 1965) was shunting the yard. Clyde 0-6-0DH 3 (58-195 of 1958), seen in the loco shed, appears to be retained for use on navvy trains.

On 12 August, 12 was noted hauling a train of in excess of 1000 tons on the Elaroo line as it headed 100 full 10-tonne bins through Thompson's Siding on the Goorganga Plains. Scott Jesser 8/12

SUCROGEN PLANE CREEK PTY LTD, Sarina (see LR 226 p.25)

610mm gauge

Some massive trains operate on the mill's Southern Cane Railway. On the evening of 8 July, Walkers B-B DH locomotives 2 *KARLOO* (630 of 1969) and 1 *ALLAN PAGE* (594 of 1968) both rebuilt by Walkers in 1995, headed south from Sarina with 410 empty 4.5 tonne bins and a brake wagon.

During the wet weather halt in July, EM Baldwin B-B DH D12 (6890.1 10.76 of 1976) and Walkers B-B DH 4 *CARMILA* (676 of 1971 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry) were repainted, together with the two bogie brake wagons.

Repair work has been taking place on the bridge across Plane Creek on the branch of the same name that extends south-west of the mill. The bridge has three steel spans on two reasonably tall concrete piers. All of the timber sleepers across it have recently been replaced and scaffolding on the outside, below the deck on both sides, suggests there is some further work to be done. As the bridge cannot currently be used by locomotives, Clyde 0-6-0DH D1 (56-101 of 1956) was transported in August to the 3-kilometre upper part of the Plane Creek branch, which serves three sidings, being stabled at Plane Creek 3 Siding. In mid-August the locomotive was being used for cane haulage on this section. Empty bins were being brought out from the mill by one of the three Com-Eng locomotives, being propelled the 1.5 kilometres from Plane Creek 2 Siding. The bins were then pushed across the bridge and the loco crew would be picked up in a road vehicle to

Top: Newly rebuilt at Inkerman Mill, EM Baldwin B-B DH10NA (4498.1 7.72 of 1972) has lost much of the character it once had when first delivered to Kalamia Mill 40 years ago as the pioneering bogie locomotive for the Queensland sugar industry. Photo: Brian Bouchardt, early August 2012. **Above:** Proserpine Mill's Walkers B-B DH 12 (673 of 1971 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1998) brings 100 loaded 10-tonne bins through Thompson's Siding on 12 August. Photo: Scott Jesser

take them round to D1 which was started and coupled to the empty bins. D1 would then pull the bins 800m to Plane Creek 4 Siding, the line's main loading point, collecting the now full bins that had been delivered the day before.

Scott Jesser 7/12, 8/12; Mitch Zunker 8/12; Hayden Quabba 8/12

TULLY SUGAR LTD

(see LR 226 p.26)

610mm gauge

Preparatory work has commenced on the conversion of another Walkers B-B DH locomotive, believed to be ex-Cooks Construction CC03 (643 of 1970), formerly QR's DH56. The bogies have been sent away to Bundaberg Walkers at the Bundaberg Foundry for gauge conversion and should be back in September. Voith is regearing a transmission that will shortly be trialled in *TULLY-5* (Walkers 650 of 1969 rebuilt Walkers 1993) and if successful, then the new rebuild is likely to be fitted with the same equipment, together with a Cummins QSK19 diesel engine. The new locomotive is scheduled to be ready for the 2013 season. Luke Horniblow 8/12

TASMANIA

NYRSTAR HOBART PTY LTD, Lutana

610mm gauge

A recent account suggests that an internal and mostly indoors 2ft gauge system is still used at the former Electrolytic Zinc works to move the cathodes around the Electrolysis Department, otherwise known as "the cell room". The wagons are propelled by push trucks that are in essence "de-forked" fork lift trucks.

The works had a little-known locomotiveworked system, possibly up to the 1960s, as recently discussed on the Tasrail and LRRSA Yahoo groups. Pete Haines 7/12

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BHP BILLITON IRON ORE PTY LTD

(see LR 226 p.26) 1435mm gauge

A consignment of new Model SD70MACe Co-Co DE locomotives built by Progress Rail in the USA, numbered 4380 to 4386, arrived at the end of June and were in service by mid-July. The next batch, 4387 to 4391, is believed to have arrived in early August. *WA Railscene* e-mag 203

CFCL AUSTRALIA PTY LTD

1435mm gauge

All eight former Robe River CM40-8M Co-Co DE locomotives that were listed in LR 223 as sold by Rio Tinto had arrived at the United Rail Group Bassendean facility for overhaul for CFCLA by the end of July. 9410 (Com-Eng C6096-05 of 1975 reb. Goninan 202, 1996) had been painted in CFCLA livery and numbered CD4301 by early August.

WA Railscene e-mag 203, 204

GREENTRAINS LTD, Maddington, WA

(see LR 217 p.29)

1435mm gauge

Ex-Hamersley Iron AE Goodwin Co-Co DE rebuild DR8405 Maggie (G-6014-04 of 1968 rebuilt Com-Eng 1984) was prepared for use on the initial phase of the Fortescue Metals railway construction but never delivered. Since 2008 it was stored at the Coote Industrial (Engenco) yard at Maddington but on 31 July it was moved by road to outside the Gemco Rail compound at Bellevue. The centre wheels on the bogies have been removed, making it a Bo-Bo DE.

Kieran Wright 8/12; WA Railscene e-mag 203

THE PILBARA INFRASTRUCTURE PTY LTD

(see LR 226 p,26)

1435mm gauge

A report for the period ending 30 June indicated that as part of the main line duplication program, 100km of formation was complete with approximately 65km of rail laid. 21 out of 34 turnouts had been installed on the main line. Brierty Ltd has been awarded a contract to construct six sidings with work scheduled to commence in July for completion by the end of December. Signalling works have progressed along the mainline duplications with several duplications nearing completion.

On the new Solomon spur line, 14km of earthworks was ready for tracklaying and the completion date was scheduled to be in November. The work includes an overpass of the BHP Billiton railway near Coonarie, with the girders being placed in late July.

Earthworks had been completed for the extension of the existing rail yard in Port Hedland. New facilities will include a new fully automated ore car maintenance workshop, loco provisioning building, new operations offices and an additional 6 million litre fuel facility. Optical fibre along the main line is complete and General Electric has successfully trialled and implemented the new train control system (RailEdge). Fabrication of permanent communications equipment supports the installation requirements.

Top: Plane Creek Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH D1 (56-101 of 1956) operating on 21 August on a temporarily isolated section of the Plane Creek branch caused by bridge repairs. Photo: Scott Jesser **Above:** Ex-Hamersley Iron AE Goodwin Co-Co DE rebuild DR8405 Maggie (G-6014-04 of 1968 rebuilt Com-Eng 1984) as a Bo-Bo outside the Gemco Rail compound at Bellevue in Perth, 6 August. Photo: Kieran Wright

Industrial NEWS Railway

A rake of 240 wagons had been delivered, the second rake of 240 wagons was in transit and the subsequent five rakes remain on schedule for delivery in 2012..

FMG Quarterly Report 30/6/2012; Brett Geraghty 7/12; *WA Railscene* e-mag 198

PILBARA RAIL

(see LR 226 p.26)

1435mm gauge

There appears to be some doubt about the reported order for 13 General Electric Model ES44ACi locomotives. Another report suggests 10 Model ES44DCi numbered 8187 to 8196. Several General Electric Model CM44-9CW Co-Co DE locomotives are being fitted with Electronically Controlled Pneumatic (ECP) braking as part of the introduction of this system. Locomotives being fitted in July included 7083 (47762 of 1995) and 9405 (54155 of 2003). *WA Railscene* e-mag 198 & 201

OVERSEAS

FIJI SUGAR CORPORATION

(see LR 226 p.26)

610mm gauge

At the start of the crushing season, the Prime Minister, Commodore Bainimarama, met with growers and indicated that rail infrastructure and equipment were being upgraded to allow cheap and efficient cane delivery where possible. He acknowledged that the rail system had been allowed to run down and had been seriously affected by the recent floods. The arrival of two "new locomotives" from Australia was mentioned. It is believed that at least one of these was refurbished at Ontrak Engineering in Sydney and delivered to Fiji shortly before the crush commenced.

As the season progressed, concerns continued to be expressed by growers about a shortage of cane trucks for loading, particularly at Penang and Rarawai Mills, which had been badly affected by the floods earlier in the year. Some cane from Tavua in the Rarawai Mill area was diverted to Penang Mill by road transport. It was reported in August that many cane cutters in the Rarawai area had returned home to their villages because of a lack of work caused by the shortage of cane trucks. This was said to be due to locomotive breakdowns, flood-damaged and poorly maintained track and mill stoppages, with priority having being given to unloading road lorries when crushing delays occurred.

On 25 July, the future arrival of up to five additional locomotives from Australia was announced, with the promise that they would speed up cane truck deliveries. These have been purchased from Bundaberg Sugar and it was expected that four of them would be shipped to Fiji by the end of August (see elsewhere this issue). They were described as "similar to the ones we have now in Fiji but of a much newer model and more powerful and fuel-efficient". The Labasa Tourism Association is promoting the idea of tourist trains to transport cruise ship passengers from Malua Jetty to Labasa town. *Fiji Times* Online 12/7/12, 25/7/12, 28/7/12, 3/8/12, 14/8/12, 15/8/12; Neville Conder 8/12; Steve Lewry 8/12

OK TEDI MINING LTD, PAPUA NEW GUINEA (see LRN 74 p.15)

USA-based Mining Equipment Inc supplied locomotives for the excavation of drainage tunnels at the Ok Tedi mine, which commenced in 2008 using a tunnel boring machine. At least one locomotive was a narrow gauge 25-ton Plymouth-type locomotive which hauled 15cubic meter capacity rotary tip muck cars. *Engineering & Mining Journal* June 2012 via

Tony Weston; International Mining March 2012

PT FREEPORT INDONESIA, Grasberg Mine, Irian Jaya

(see LR 223 p.28)

1435mm gauge

Further details are available of the planned underground railway to be provided as part of the Common Infrastructure Project, ultimately serving four separate mines.

The locomotives will be 36-tonne 4-wheeled units built in Germany by Schalke. All will be trolley wire-electrics (750v DC) with half the locomotives being electro-diesels and the other half equipped with auxiliary batteries.

Bogie muck wagons (70-tonne capacity), 60-person bogie passenger cars, and bogie flat wagons (70-tonne capacity) will be produced by Mühlhäuser in Michelstadt, Germany. Each passenger train will consist of four-cars, one having a guard's compartment. Four-wheel 50-ton capacity flat wagons for freight container use will be supplied by Nordic Mine Technology of North Bay, Ontario. Additional freight flat wagons ("dolly cars") will be required to transport materials required by the mines.

The surface facilities at Ridge Camp Rail Yard will include a mine rescue centre, passenger terminal and control centre, rolling stock maintenance depot, materials transfer terminals, muck dump and muck handling area. There will also be a separate rail system for ore haulage at the Grasburg Block Cave mine (GBC). Trains will consist of twenty bottom-dump 20 cubic metre muck cars, hauled by two 38-tonne electric locomotives; about 700 tonnes per trainload. Six trains and one spare will be required to maintain full production at 160,000 tonnes per day. This rail system will operate in full automated mode. There will be over 20km of track in the fully developed GBC ore haulage system with over 100 loading chutes to deliver ore from the ore passes to the ore cars.

For the development of the original Ertsberg East mine back in 1979-81, underground rail was utilised with Gemco trolley wire and battery locomotives on 915mm gauge. There were also four Plymouth 16-ton Model DMD-24 flameproof 4wDH locos, 7359 to 7362 of 1981. Tony Weston 7/12; Ray Gardiner 8/12

Book Reviews

Riches beneath the Flat A history of the Lake George Mine at Captains Flat

by Ross Mainwaring

Published 2012 by Light Railways Research Society of Australia Inc. 104 pages, soft cover A4 portrait format printed on semi-gloss paper. Text accompanied by 62 photographs, 12 tables and diagrams. Available from LRSSA Sales for \$29.70 plus postage. (\$22.28 to LRRSA members)

This book records the history of the discovery and development of a group of low grade metalliferous sulphide ore bodies in the central east of New South Wales, more precisely 45km to the south east of the Australian Capital Territory. Unlike most large metalliferous deposits, which are located in the arid and remote west of the state, the Captains Flat deposits lie within the Great Dividing Range in what was once densely forested, elevated terrain making access difficult, but providing ample fuel supplies for the boilers and ore treatment works in the early days.

These deposits were first discovered and reported by gold prospectors working in the valleys around the Molonglo River in the 1860s. Various local companies were formed to exploit these deposits; however nothing eventuated until English capital was secured. By 1927, all endeavours to release the metals from the complex sulphide ores had failed, so the mineral field was abandoned.

By this time however, advances in metallurgy had overcome the basic principles of the flotation process for recovering the metal sulphides and even selective flotation had passed its infancy in separating the various individual metals in complex ores. Negotiations with the state government were undertaken to establish a rail link to the mines, but unfortunately the government reneged with the onset of the Great Depression. By 1937, the NSWGR did finally begin construction of the branch line, and in 1939 the first trainload of concentrate was dispatched from the mines.

The ore was won by rill stoping, a process by which as ore was removed above drives from the main shaft, it was replaced by mullock within the mine or rock delivered by near vertical chutes from the surface. A system of 20in gauge tramways was installed to transport ore or backfill where needed. Because of the size of the shaftways, locomotives from America were initially obtained, a move that was to cause a major 'headache" later. Facilities were arranged at Port Kembla to store and transfer the Company's concentrates from the NSWGR to ships' holds.

World War II directly impacted on the company's operations; on the one hand demand from the government for production, whilst on the other, transport became increasingly scarce due to the many wartime demands on the NSWGR infrastructure. The metals markets were initially frozen, then became severely regulated. Materials and labour became scarce which led to interrelated housing and labour relations problems. Increased production meant an increase in the number of tramming locomotives and ore cars was required. The aforementioned problem now reared its head with the government's insistence on "Sterling" country supply of equipment; however only American companies could supply locomotives that would fit in the shaftways - the "non-standard" gauge being an added problem. Permits to purchase outside of "Sterling" countries were almost impossible to obtain, so delays were inevitable.

Post war challenges to operations included labour shortages, transport shortages and product loss; this loss being mostly due to leakage caused by the now poor state of the NSWGR's rolling stock. Labour problems became onerous with wage demands, rates and a myriad of allowances for specific duties, serious demarcation issues between unions and generally poor work practices. Profits were declining, aggravated by receding ore values and the need for deep sinking and development work to maintain production.

The final years before the mine's closure in 1962 saw a sharp decline in the ore values at depth, physical deterioration of the mine's underground structure and poor metal prices, so operations ceased; the mine had been worked out.

Ross Mainwaring has produced a most comprehensive history of a mining enterprise that could not have been developed in more trying times. I have only superficially covered the huge content of detail that the author has included in each chapter of this narrative.

He has supported his writings with a superior list of references, divided up by chapter, which makes them easy to follow. Added to this are various tables giving details of tramming equipment, wages and labour details, metal prices and mine production figures throughout the mine's life. A "Glossary" of mining terms has been included for those not familiar with the perhaps sometimes peculiar words only used in mining texts. A table of conversions is also provided.

A very absorbing and complex story, this is not a book to be read lightly or in one night, as the interrelationship of mining practices, metallurgical knowledge, global finance, government behaviour, location and labour relations of the times all influenced each other to create a very complex history. Trying to correlate all these elements into one coherent narrative is a very difficult task — one that Mr Mainwaring has done so admirably.

Peter Lukey

The Narrow Gauge

Whitfield–Gembrook–Crowes–Walhalla by Nick Anchen

Published by Sierra Publishing. 216 pages, 240mm x 300mm, hard cover, Over 300 B&W and colour photographs. Available from LRSSA Sales for \$75.00 plus postage. (\$67.50 plus postage to LRRSA members)

This is another book from the Sierra stable that has been researched, written and published by Nick Anchen. The book focuses on a Victorian Railways theme with plenty of colour images and a racy text. *The Narrow Gauge* proclaims itself as a salute to the four (sic) narrow gauge lines from their inception through to present day operations and relics.

The book examines the origins of the narrow gauge experiment in Victoria and then takes the reader through four lines that were constructed. These were the Wangaratta to Whitfield, Upper Ferntree Gully to Gembrook, Colac to Beech Forest to Crowes and Moe to Walhalla lines. Two subsequent chapters look at the locomotives and rolling stock used on these railways. These segments of the book contain images of each loco and the class type vehicles with a brief history of them all. This is nicely presented. The next sections move onto the narrow gauge preservation railways of Puffing Billy and the two Walhalla ventures. A final chapter outlines the surviving evidence along the four lines, including exhibits, interpretation signs and rail trails.

The book therefore is a go to whoa presentation. It includes history of the lines and rolling stock, reminisces of Victorian Railways staff who rode the rails along the lines plus those of railway enthusiasts who wrote-up their trips, and lots of fabulous images. The images have been scanned to the nnth degree and are therefore brilliantly sharp and clear. The landscape format allows for mammoth pics spread over two pages and full single page presentations. The paper stock is heavy art so the images, whether colour or black and white, are arresting. A fair swag of the images have not been published before and those that have may as well have not graced previous pages because the presentations in this book are fabulous. The old favourites are worth looking at again. The book is value for the pictures alone.

The structure of the book is modelled on Ted Downs' classic *Speed Limit 20*, published in 1963. Segments of Down's text are used more or less as is. Downs wrote his piece 50 years ago when railway historical writing was extremely difficult in regard to sources but the same cannot be said for today. *The Narrow Gauge* seemingly passes over this development because it treats the history of the various lines in very brief fashion and offers no substantial post-Downs data or insights.

Incredibly, for a line history, there are no station yard diagrams in the book and there are a few factual errors, such as the claim that the introduction of the Garratts did away with the practice of double heading of NAs. Not so. Double heading of NAs came years later.

The themes in the book are not presented with the rigour expected of a history work. For example, the statement is made that the VR Commissioners viewed the narrow gauge lines as unwanted orphans and were dispatched to the pages of history as soon as conveniently possible. It is true that the Commissioners opposed the narrow gauge concept from day one in the 1890s but Parliament ruled on them and voted the funds for their construction so the Commissioners ran the narrow gauge lines as per their remit.

The lines were closed when they were because they ran out of worthwhile traffic, not because they were unwanted orphans. Non-paying lines were, from 1896 and reaffirmed in 1928, subject to provisions of the Annual Appropriations Act and the VR reimbursed for revenue shortfalls that could not cover capital interest, working expenses and maintenance expenses. So the Commissioners kept open those non-paying lines, narrow gauge or not, that had a reasonable level of loading and only closed lines whose loadings were on a permanent slide.

A look at the railways worked out of Colac demonstrates this. The broad gauge lines to Alvie, Beeac and Forrest were closed years before the narrow gauge Beech Forest railway because their loadings were in terminal decline. The Beech Forest line did not run out of worthwhile loading until 1960. It was proposed to close it in 1961 but a stay of one year was granted while the Otway Shire and Country Roads Board rebuilt the main road and a major bridge on the Colac to Beech Forest road.

This book cannot be regarded as a history of the narrow gauge in the full sense of the word. The fifth narrow gauge line at Port Welshpool is not mentioned in the title of the book and gets a brief nod via one paragraph and a picture. This highlights the book's lack of historical context for the VR narrow gauge in all its forms. It has no over- arching political, operational and economic analysis that could pull the whole story together within the one set of covers. Where did the narrow gauge fit in the total picture of all VR line mileage and tonnage hauled at different periods? Were the narrow gauge lines always hopeless, underperforming cases? What were the forces that provided their traffic and what eventually dulled their loadings? Did this also apply to broad gauge branch lines?

Ask not why the narrow gauge lines closed when they did, but why did they last so long performing their freight tasks?

The history side of the narrow gauge in Victoria needs a more detailed and deeper presentation than has been offered in *The Narrow Gauge*.

Despite this reservation, the reviewer regards *The Narrow Gauge* as being worth adding to one's bookshelf for the pictures, its reminiscing pages, the rolling stock pages, the accounts of the 'preservation' railways of recent times and the relics and rail trails write-ups.

Norman Houghton

editor@lrrsa.org.au

Dear Sir,

BALLAARAT (LR 224)

The article on *BALLAARAT* is most interesting and the locomotive's resemblance to a Fletcher, Jennings product is certainly worthy of comment.

There are several features which stand out as resembling Fletcher, Jennings practice. First and most obvious is the backwards-facing valve gear driven off the leading axle, but the bar frames and the disc wheels with eight 'webs' are also Fletcher, Jennings trademarks of the period. I could also mention the horizontal cylinders and, of course, the well tank.

One point in which BALLAARAT differs from the typical Fletcher, Jennings 'Patent Tank' is that the rear axle has been placed behind the firebox to give that unusually long wheelbase. Most examples of the Fletcher, Jennings 'Patent' loco had the rear axle close against the front of the firebox, or directly beneath it, this being permitted by the lack of eccentrics on the axle, and giving a locomotive with more-or-less symmetrical overhangs at each end.

Examples with the rear axle behind the firebox appear to have been rare; in fact the Talyllyn Railway's *DOLGOCH* may have been the only one. LTC Rolt in *'Railway Adventure'* comments that the long wheelbase of *DOLGOCH* makes it look like a child's toy, in which a wheel has been placed at each corner. Exactly the same toy-like symmetry is seen on *BALLAARAT*.

There is another important respect in which the designs differ. Although BALLAARAT has backwards-facing eccentrics on the front axle, the valve gear is not a straight copy of the Fletcher's Patent design. The Fletcher gear was based on Allan straight-link gear, in which the expansion link and the valve rod are both suspended from the weight shaft and move relative to each other when the engine is reversed. I feel that the gear on BALLAARAT is more a back-to-front form of Gooch gear. The difference is in the shape and suspension of the link, the Gooch link being curved with its concave side facing the valve chest, and supported so as to oscillate about its centre while the valve rod alone is raised or lowered to reverse or 'notch up'.

BALLAARAT's link is curved with no apparent provision for vertical movement; reversing involves moving only the valve

rod, and thus it resembles Gooch gear. In short, the designer has taken Gooch gear and combined it with the back-to-front layout of the Fletcher gear, so maybe we should call it 'Fletcherised Gooch'.

My suggestion is that the design of BALLAARAT was based on a published drawing of the Fletcher, Jennings 'Patent' loco. There is such a drawing; it appeared in an encyclopaedia, 'Locomotive Engineering and the mechanism of railways' which was written by Zerah Colburn and DK Clarke and was published in 1871. The drawing is of a Fletcher, Jennings 10-inch 'Patent' tank and includes an elevation and a highly detailed sectional view. There is enough information there for an appropriately equipped workshop to build a 'replica'. The book contains similarly detailed drawings of other contemporary locomotives, and the Fletcher, Jennings design was presumably included as an example (if not entirely typical) of an industrial loco of the period. I suggest that the builders of BALLAARAT took this published drawing and based their own locomotive upon it, modifying the wheelbase and other details to suit local requirements.

There remains the question of whether Fletcher,Jennings had any direct involvement in the building of *BALLAARAT*. There are no likely candidates for it in the Fletcher, Jennings works list, but for all we know they may have supplied parts or advice. For my money, though, the encyclopaedia drawing is the most likely link.

Peter Holmes

via email

Dear Sir,

Steam locomotives on Victorian timber tramways (LR 210)

The Bagnall 2-4-0T locomotive *WESTWARD HO* (believed to be B/n. 682 of 1885) is familiar to many from its time at Britannia Creek in Victoria, and before that at Sanderson's West Otway timber operations. It had previously (from 1891) operated on Mason's 3ft gauge timber tramway at Port Welshpool in Gippsland as *KHARTOUM*. In his article in LR 210, Frank Stamford indicated that what it was doing before 1891 was not known.

In LR 104 (p.24) the strong possibility of it having been delivered to Wyett's Beaconsfield Tramway in Tasmania was canvassed, with Jim Stokes pointing out that a parliamentary paper showed that a Bagnall locomotive had arrived there during 1885. Assuming that this was Bagnall 682, and there is no known alternative possibility, delivery had clearly not been delayed until May 1887 as we were once told the Bagnall records suggested.¹ An updated account now gives February 1885 as the ex works date of this locomotive.²

Thanks to the National Library's TROVE digitised newspapers project, further information is now available. The *Launceston Examiner* of 5 June 1885 (p.3)³ announced:

An event of some importance to our community was the arrival on Saturday of a small locomotive, imported by Messrs. W. Hart and Co., for use on Mr. Wyett's tramway. It is a neat little thing, and will draw sixty-five tons on a level, or twelve tons up an incline of one in forty, A few weeks will elapse before it can be employed in carrying goods, on account of certain alterations that will have to be made in the rails. Though bearing a name of ill-omen, Khartoum, it is to be hoped that Mr. Wyett's venture will prove a success.

The track alterations must have taken a little time as it was not until 1 September 1885 that the Examiner stated (p.3):⁴

A locomotive of the most modern make, with all latest improvements, of eight-horse power, and only weighing between three and four tons, was imported a short time ago by Mr. Wyett. The maker is W. G. Bagnall, of Stafford, England, and at the trial trip made last week on an imperfectly ballasted line, the locomotive proved a great success.

From the evidence provided, I have little doubt that this is the locomotive that later became *WESTWARD HO*.

- 1. Baker, Allan C, 1985. The First Hundred Bagnalls in Industrial Railway Record No.100
- Baker, Allan C & Civil, T.D.Allen, 2007. Bagnalls of Stafford: Builders of Locomotives for the World's Railways. A History of the Firm & Its Folk. The Phyllis Rampton Narrow Gauge Railway Trust, p.615.
- 3. http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article38300608
- 4. http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article38304229

John Browning Annerley, Qld

Dear Sir,

3rd Australian Light Railway Operating Company (LR 226)

Of the seven Australian railway companies of the Great War, the 3rd poses the greatest difficulty in tracing its members.

The first was the Railway Supply Detachment, 11th Australian Army Service Corps that was formed from NSW railwaymen in late 1914. Part of their story was told in Australian Light Railways of the Gallipoli Campaign (*Light Railways*, April 2009).

No further Australian railway companies were formed until November 1916. In response to a request from Britain, a railway unit of five sections was raised from the various state government railways. Three would become broad gauge companies, and two light railway companies. A unit history of the 6th Australian Broad Gauge Railway Operating Company was published as 'A Railway War' (*Australian Railway History*, December 2010).

To meet the immediate need while waiting for the new companies to arrive from Australia, another company was raised in the field in February 1917 and called the 1st Anzac Light Railway Operating Company. It was reformed as the 17th (Anzac) Light Railway Operating Company in June 1917, became the 3rd Australian Light Railway Operating Company in March 1918 and finally the 3rd Australian Light Railway Forward Company in September 1918.

I have not found a nominal roll for the 3rd. As all its foundation members were drawn from other units in the field, there is no embarkation roll and its unit diary gives little more than a monthly summary with little detail.

The drawing of a Fletcher, Jennings 10-inch 'Patent' tank locomotive that appeared in Locomotive Engineering and the Mechanism of Railways, published in 1871.

The light railways of the Great War were 60cm gauge railways used to connect the supply depots with forward depots. They were operated by diesel and petrol rail tractors and small steam locomotives. Forward tramways, also 60cm gauge but under corps control, operated between the forward depots and the front lines.

The 3rd was initially divided into five sections. The first section went to the Somme to run ammunition trains using 20 and 40 hp Simplex petrol tractors. They operated close enough to the front to be targeted by German artillery. The other sections were based at Rouvray, Brotonne, Le Harve and Trouville where they carried timber from forest mills to broad gauge railways or canals.

In September 1917, the 3rd moved to Mimico Depot near Ypres in Belgium, mostly working ammunition trains forward from Ypres, usually under heavy shelling. Trains to the forward marshalling yard were hauled by Cooke 2-6-2T steam locomotives and then by Simplex tractors.

With the German advance in the spring of 1918, the 3rd were displaced and withdrew to Pacific Depot near Poperinghe then to Proven in April where they assisted the Canadian Construction Company on light railway construction and ballasting as well as salvage work. They moved forward to Woesten in June for salvage work towards Langemarck before being rested in July.

August saw the 3rd take over the operation of the light railways near Bethune (France) working across the Bassee Canal towards Robecq. Initially the 3rd could only operate at night due to its exposure to German positions. By the end of the month the allied offensive that would ultimately end the war had forced the Germans back. This allowed the 3rd to operate in daylight, and increased their operational area, with their lines being extended by the 5th Canadian Construction Company. They were hauling 1200 tons per day and their rollingstock allocation was expanded to:

- 20 hp Simplex rail tractors 5
- 15 40 hp Simplex rail tractors
- 3 petrol electric rail tractors
- Baldwin steam locomotives 5
- 142 wagons

The continuing success of the allied offensive required supply lines to be moved forward. In early September, the 3rd were moved to the Neippe Forest near Merville as a forward company and were organised into four sections: a headquarters section and three operating sections. Each operating section was to be capable of operating, constructing and maintaining lines as well as repairing wagons and the 20 hp rail tractors. Mobility of the sections ensured they could be relocated as required.

By the end of September the 3rd had left the Neippe Forest. They continued to move east until the Armistice on 11 November.

Following the cessation of hostilities, the 3rd worked on salvage and recovery operations until demobilisation of the company in February 1919.

Trevor Edmunds via email

Dear Sir,

Stannary Hills & Tramways Co

A friend and I are researching the Stannary Hills & Tramways Co rolling stock, obtained, built and used in their mining and transport operations from 1900 to the early 1920s.

Several types of wagons were employed, the earliest being side tipping ballast wagons built by Arthur Koppel, used in the construction of the tramway from Boonmoo to Stannary Hills and then extended to the Rocky Bluffs battery site.

Further rolling stock was built by the company at Stannary Hills, and this rolling stock is our main focus of attention. Current publications suggest that the majority of the four wheeled and bogie stock was based on a timber underframe primarily designed to be fitted with a "Vee" scoop to carry ore. A four-wheeled carriage (or possibly two) was provided to convey six passengers and several bogie open and flat wagons for goods and product from the battery.

Many forays to the Stannary Hills area have been made by interested enthusiasts over the years, but nothing technical has been reported concerning any rolling stock artefacts that may have survived other than a few general photographs and general observations.

Our initial goal is to establish sufficient information to construct a technical drawing of the timber framed ore hopper wagons, as accurate as can be achieved after 90 plus years of abandonment.

If any reader can assist us in our endeavours, please contact myself. We would be very grateful.

Peter Lukey peterlukey@bigpond.com

Forgotten Ship A

By ROWALD INCLUTION INCLUSION INCLUS asked. anyone, and people a this Cobaki, anyway?

time constit anyway?" Every ship is supposed to have a ory in her, but it would be hard to nd anyone who remembers the obsit's. The North Cossi Steam avigation Company used to own her, be mit built in 1918 for Landew on Company used to own he built in 1918 for Langl 127 feet long, 28 feet ann, 8 feet 4 inches deep, vessel, engined by Mon Langley feet 3

If anyor her, if any happened to kept; and pages has as the horn which bros think of island, of c

Dear Sir.

Langley Vale Tramway (LR 226)

I read the first part of the Langley Vale Tramway article in LR 226 with very great interest, as William Langley is amongst my kin.

According to the Langley family members who I have contact with, Robert John Langley arrived in Sydney in 1850 on the Balmoral. He went on to the gold fields in California and then to the Victorian gold diggings where "he made good". Robert married my great grandaunt, Mary Lapier, at Sydney in 1853.

Robert and Mary produced seven sons and three daughters of which William Langley was the fourth child and third son. William's elder brothers were Robert Henry b. 1854, and George b. 1856 (George Langley moved to Africa in 1906 and lived there for the rest of his life).

William Langley and his wife, Margaret (nee Porteous) had five children, of which two died very young, with only William Edward, Harold and Gwendoline surviving into adulthood.

On the subject of wooden hulled boat building, the assertion on page 14 of LR 226 that the Langley Brothers built no further wooden hulled steamers after the Coolon (1904) is open to debate. At least one more wooden hulled steamer, the Cobaki, was built either by or for them in 1918, after the Coolon was wrecked, and it received the Coolon's engines.

See the above 1946 Sydney Morning Herald news item (via Trove) on the Cobaki.

Bill Bolton St Ives, NSW

Dear Sir

Wooden rails and pipe dreams (LR 223)

It was interesting reading the article in February Light Railways on the Mt Lyell power station timber pipeline and the service railway. Attached (at left) is a picture of a thermometer that has been in the family for as long as I can remember. We lived in Footscray when I was a young boy and this thermometer was always in the kitchen, and is still in the kitchen of my parents' house.

Greg Goold Morwell, Vic

Dear Sir,

Wright's Folly (LR 225)

I read with great interest the fascinating June 2012 article on the fortunes, or should I say misfortunes, of the Falls Creek Quarrying, Sawing and Polishing Works situated at Granite on the Mansfield branch. My father and his mates would ride the Mansfield train in the thirties, the end of the line being a suitable starting point for week-long hikes on the Cathedral Range and beyond. I recall him saying how the conductor would always walk through the train calling out "anyone for Granite?" He never found any takers, Dad would say, and the train sped on through the night.

Just a detail, but that's what history is all about!

Andrew Ward Shoreham, Vic

Dear Sir,

Light railway at the Acropolis, Athens, Greece

In July 2012, your humble narrator and his family were able to escape the cold in Melbourne and holiday in Europe. Little did we know that our visit to the Acropolis in Athens, Greece would reveal a working light railway.

Acropolis is the Greek word for "settlement built on an area of elevated ground for defence purposes". The Acropolis in Athens is an archaeological site with sacred historical associations and several famous buildings such as the Parthenon.

The Acropolis is entered from the western side and the railway is situated in the south east corner, which is the furthest point accessible to visitors. It is approximately 100 metres long and connects the archaeological workshops on the south side of the Parthenon to a long horizontal crane mounted on the south east corner.

The gauge is approximately one metre and it runs between the old museum and the top of the southern perimeter wall. Hand carts are used to push loads both directions on the railway. The crane has movable shear legs on rails which allow it to lift and extend over the perimeter wall.

According to the video presentation at the new Acropolis museum, the railway is used to transport archaeological specimens to the museum below for restoration, as well as bringing new marble back to the top of the Acropolis for repair purposes. The workshop end terminates in a large open storage area containing numerous pieces of marble and is serviced by an overhead gantry crane.

It would take a brave railway enthusiast to suggest that this light railway is more culturally significant than the surrounding antiquities, but it's nice to know that a light railway contributes to the archaeological preservation of this sacred site.

I can thoroughly recommend visiting the new museum at the foot of the Acropolis which is ingeniously built over more ruins. It has see-through floors allowing visitors to watch the progress of the archaeological excavations underneath. The entrance fee is only 5 euro (\$6 AUD) for adults and it contains many sensational Greek artefacts,

but just don't mention the Elgin marbles in the British Museum.

And despite what you heard from the Australian media recently about Greece slipping into chaos, we had a no problems holidaying in Athens and the islands what-so-ever.

Simon Moorhead via email

Dear Sir,

The New Improved Meyer (LR 225)

I must congratulate Scott Clennett on his excellent story concerning the HTC Meyer locomotive in issue 225 of *Light Railways*. I must also equally congratulate Phil Rickard for finding the file amongst the 'wilderness' of the Tasmanian PWD Files and passing it on to Scott Clennett. I too was fortunate enough to have found the same file some time ago and photographed each and every page of the file (the joys of a digital camera!).

In the references listed by Scott he lists amongst others Archaeology of the Tasmanian Timber Industry Report No.5: Historic Timber Getting between Hastings and Dover. This report one of a series of four such reports covering the Southern Forests was largely the result of extensive research carried out during the 1980s by veteran LRRSA member Wayne Chynoweth. Wayne graciously allowed his research notes to be used by Parry Kostoglou for his report.

My own interest in the HTC loco is due to research that has amounted to 18 years (so far) concerning the locomotive worked logging tramways of Tasmania. This research will culminate in a series of books covering this subject. Each book in the series will not only examine each individual loco (odd and not-so-odd) but also the surrounding infrastructure of where they worked. This will include mill types and associated machinery, tramway types, logging equipment and logging methods. An emphasis has been placed not only on what and when but how and why and this during the research years led to many personal accounts from bushmen and loco drivers most of whom have now passed away. Over the last eighteen years there have been some real 'finds' whilst researching. These include locating a complete collection of builder's plans and photographs of logging equipment, mills, and 'true' bush locos - both internal combustion and steam. Another was meeting and subsequently interviewing the last driver of CHAT'S Class A Climax locomotives, which operated in the state's North West region. Rueben, who ultimately became a friend, sadly only recently passed away and shared all his knowledge and experiences in driving

and maintaining these locos, not to mention also being involved in several runaways with them! Another was interviewing the driver of the Bruny Island Sentinel bush loco and its construction and operation including how to drive it and 'swim' with it! The exclusive access to a number of private photo collections containing images not shown before publicly have also been highlights along the way.

This work is not the result of one individual but from the collaboration of a number of former and current members of the LRRSA Tasmania and the mainland. If it were not for the kind assistance given by the likes of Ken Milbourne, Tony Parnell, David Beck, Wayne Chynoweth, Jack Shennan, Ralph Proctor and Wayne Weatherstone (NSW) and Bruce Macdonald (NSW) then there would be much lacking. The willingness to share information and photographs between each person has ensured that a lot more history has been saved and recorded and I am most grateful to these gentlemen for their ongoing help. Wayne Chynoweth is co-author for the second and third volumes in this series sharing the logging operations with myself and lightening the load also.

The series will be entitled, "On Splintered Rails – A History of the Locomotive Worked Timber Tramways of Tasmania." The first volume nearing completion centres on those operations found in the North West Coast region of Tasmania. This volume includes a detailed history of the "Marrawah Tram" and its workings. The second volume will examine the diverse operations found on the West Coast and Northern Tasmania regions. The third volume covers the many operations found in southern Tasmania and will also include the Derwent Valley and Bruny Island areas. Those locomotive worked logging tramways not covered in Parry Kostoglou's reports are also included and contain some very rare photographs of even rarer subjects.

We are currently seeking out funding opportunities to meet the production costs of the first volume. Should any reader have any photographs or information that could be of assistance then please contact me at Lovelock Farm, 1619 Oldina Road, Oldina, Tasmania 7325. Contributions would be most welcome and acknowledged accordingly. All royalties from the sale of these books are to be donated to the Oncology Children's Foundation Australia, a cause supported by all involved in the project.

Mark Fry Oldina,Tas

Dear Sir,

The Lake George Mine at Captains Flat

I recently perused Ross Mainwaring's excellent book, *Riches beneath the Flat, a history of the Lake George Mine at Captain's Flat,* and although I was most impressed with the publication, I was disappointed to see long standing errors perpetuated regarding the formation in 1894 of the Lake George United Mining and Smelting Company (No-Liability).

The Koh-i-noor Gold and Silver Mining Company (Limited) was placed into voluntary liquidation in 1890,1 and by the middle of the following year a new concern the New Koh-i-noor Gold and Silver Mining Company (No Liability) had been formed to take its place.² Other mining ventures were also finding it difficult at that time, and in February 1892 a meeting of shareholders was called with a view to placing the Commodore Vanderbilt Gold and Silver Mining Company (Limited) into voluntary liquidation.3 By mid-June 1892 the Commodore Vanderbilt concern was the property of the Lake George Gold and Silver Mining Company (No-Liability).4

In August 1894, the shareholders of the New Koh-i-noor Gold and Silver Mining Company (No-Liability) confirmed their decision to amalgamate the concern with the Lake George Gold and Silver Mining Company (No-Liability), to form the Lake George United Mining and Smelting Company (No-Liability).⁵

1. NSW Government Gazette - 1890, page 6394.

- 2. Ibid 1891, page 3561.
- 3. Sydney Morning Herald 16 February 1892, p1
- Ibid 16 June 1892, p7
 Ibid 14 August 1894, p7 and NSW Government Gazette – 1894, p6491

R J Madden

Wagga Wagga, NSW

AUTHOR'S COMMENT:

Ron Madden's observations are most meticulous, but the author of this book, in a conscious effort to spare the reader minutia details of arcane company history, and the possible confusion so caused, chose to simplify the text in line with that adopted by the 1908 official publication titled *The Copper-Mining Industry and the Distribution of Copper Ores in New South Wales* by JE Carne.

As the primary subject of my book *Riches beneath the Flat* is the Lake George Mine post 1920s, the frequent financial restructuring of the principal mining companies and the ensuing entanglement of new company titles pre-1900, although ably researched by Ron, carries no great significance to the overall history of Captains Flat. In the author's opinion, its inclusion in the book would have brought unwarranted complication into the general text.

Ross Mainwaring

Email problems

We apologise to anyone who has been attempting to contact us by way of the email address **art@boxcargraphics.com.au**.

Due to some serious technical problems, this address became inoperable at the end of July.

A new address, via a different server, has been created: **editor@lrrsa.org.au**

Please use this for any future email correspondence with the editor. Our sincere apologies for any inconvenience caused.

ADELAIDE: "Richard Horne/Gerry Ohmer" We will be continuing with Richard Horne's light rail photos and mixing in short films from Gerry Ohmer. 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. Note that the meeting has been moved back a week, to avoid school holidays.

Location: 150 First Avenue, Royston Park. Date: Thursday 11 Octoberber at 8.00pm. Contact Les Howard on (08) 8278 3082

BRISBANE: "Babinda Mill 1982-2010"

Greg Stephenson will talk and show slides of Babinda Sugar Mill from 1982-2010. Location: Military Jeep Club of Old building, Rocklea Showgrounds, enter via Gooburra Street off the service road. Date: Friday 12 October at 7.30pm.

MELBOURNE: "Eritrea"

Alan Williams will be giving a presentation on the 950mm gauge steam-operated Eritrean Railway with its stunning scenery, dozens of dramatic tunnels, and amazing engineering that sees the line go to great lengths, often doubling and even tripling back on itself, to get from the plains to the capital, Asmara, at over 7600 ft asl.

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

Date: Thursday, 11 October at 8.00pm

SYDNEY: "The Wolgan Valley Railway"

Mark Langdon, accomplished author, will present details about his latest book which comprehensively deals with the oil shale works of Newnes and the associated railway. Four Shay locomotives operated on this steep standard gauge mountain railway which climbed and tunnelled out of the magnificent Wolgan Valley and ran for about 30 miles to a connection with the NSWGR at Newnes Junction. This is an evening not to be missed by admirers of geared locomotives.

Location: Woodstock Community Centre, Church Street, Burwood, (five minutes walk from Burwood railway station). Date: Wednesday 24 October 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.

Soft cover, 104 pages, A4 size 62 photographs, 12 maps and diagrams,

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A History of the Railways of **Christmas Island, Indian Ocean**

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AND PHOSPHATE

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Queensland

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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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Tall Timber & Tramlines Queensland **By John Kerr**

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

(full name of applicant)

of

(address)

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Name on Card

Signature ____

(nostcode)

As Bob McKillop indicated in the last issue of Light Railways he is stepping back from his roles as Heritage & Tourism and Research editor. I would like to thank Bob for his great work as part of the LR editorial team and his support to the new members, Andrew Webster, David Fitzsimons and myself, and wish him all the best with his future projects. I will be taking over the responsibility for the Research and the newly revived Field Reports sections, so please send any contributions, large or small, to fieldreports@lrrsa.org.au or to PO Box 21, Surrey Hills, Vic 3127. I look forward to hearing from you. Scott Gould

Brickworks tramways From the LRRSA Yahoo group:

A post from John Browning on the LRRSA Yahoo group about a 71/4-inch gauge railway at a lavender farm in North Yorkshire, inspired by Queensland cane trains http://www.woldswaylavender. co.uk/lavender/narrow-gaugerailway.html generated some interesting discussion. South Australian member Denis Wasley posted an item on Tuesday 14 August 2012 regarding the Berri brick kilns and associated 2-foot gauge tramways:

The brickworks produced house bricks and drainage tiles, which are porous clay pipes 3', 4 or 6 inches in diameter x 12in long. These were laid in trenches to drain irrigated land. Several houses built from bricks made at the brickworks still exist in Berri, SA. The skips were filled with clay by men with shovels from the pits alongside of which the track was laid. The loaded skips were pushed to an incline and the skips hauled up by a steam winch. Presumably the tracks were shifted from time to time as the pits grew in size. From the top of the incline, the track ran to the kilns which were built on higher ground. There were three main kilns.

The Berri Brick Kilns were owned by the Norman family which included A.E.L. (Arthur) Norman and Ron (Bricky) Norman (who was 21 in 1936). The Brick Kilns operated from 1918 to 1959.... The clay pits were used as a local rubbish dump for many years. Current property owner, Graham Redway, has been clearing the rubbish away and rehabilitating the land.

Several other brickworks tramways have been covered in LRRSA publications. Joseph Jefferson's Bunyip, Victoria, operations were covered by Mike McCarthy in *Settlers & Sawmillers* and Western Australia's Metropolitan Brickworks Tramway by Geoff Murdoch in LR 43, to name two. Do any readers have information or photographs of these potentially interesting types of operations to share?

Ultra-narrow gauge in Australia This topic on the LRRSA Yahoo group was initiated by Eddie Oliver posing the question of the use of ultra-narrow gauge in Australia. Phil Rickard responded with a link to this photograph taken at Launceston railway yards (allegedly between 1905 and 1920), showing two seeming non-connected wheel sets fitted with pinion gears, heavily laden with old rails and iron, presumably for testing purposes. The gauge is far narrower than would be expected for the wheel diameter, and the coil-sprung and possibly roller bearing axleboxes have caused much speculation with no firm answer. Readers' comments would be most welcome.

To take part in these or other interesting discussions take a look at the LRRSA Yahoo group, you never know what will come up next! http://au.groups.yahoo. com/group/LRRSA/

Bolla Bollana Copper mines, SA

In April this year Chris Wurr visited the abandoned settlement of Bolla Bollana in South Australia's Flinders Ranges, approximately 700km north of Adelaide. A smelter was established there in 1873 to process copper ore from the Stanley and David copper mines . A domed building, possibly a brick kiln can be seen on Google Earth at 30 17 36.49S 139 16 18.04E. Several lengths of Bridge rail were found on the site, which seemed

to have been used for structural rather than for their manufactured purpose, however it seems a long way to cart rail without intending to use it. Does anyone have information on tramways serving the mines or smelters in this remote area?

At a recent meeting of the South Australian group, Les Howard showed a photo of a piece of Bridge rail (held by the Royal Geographic Society of S.A.) believed to have come from the Port Elliot and Goolwa tramway. It seems to be of smaller cross section than the Bolla Bollana examples. Do any readers know of other uses of Bridge rail (or other unusual rail – i.e. Barlow) on industrial railways and tramways in Australia? Phil Rickard recently found this advertisement (above) and another on Trove in both Sydney and Adelaide, it seems that bridge rails were available from importers, possibly speculatively throughout the 1850s. An interesting web page describing the differences between types of rails can be found at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Rail_profile

Two other sites also might be of interest to readers:

http://www.illawarracoal.com/ default.htm is an unofficial history of coal mining in the Illawarra district of New South Wales, while http://www.woodlines. bigpondhosting.com/mainpage. html covers field exploration of the West Australian woodlines.

Bridge Rail photographed at Bolla Bollana copper smelter site in the Flinders Ranges, South Australia. Photo: Chris Wurr

The mysterious wagon at Launceston railway yards. Photo: Archives Office of Tasmania http://stors.tas.gov.au/LPIC144-1-39

Field Reports

Welcome to the newly revived Field Reports section of *Light Railways*. With winter now behind us I hope many of you will be getting back out exploring the light railways in the bush or industrial setting you have been reading about during the wetter months.

Please send any contributions, large or small, to fieldreports@Irrsa.org.au or to P.O. Box 21, Surrey Hills, Vic 3127. I look forward to hearing from you. Scott Gould

Gunn's Shady Creek Tramway, Red Hill and Big Cuttings, Crossover, Vic.

Crossover is 108 kms east of Melbourne on the route of the former Warragul to Noojee railway which closed in 1958. Inspired by a recent visit to the area by the Local Land Care Group (which unfortunately I was unable to join), I made a long delayed return visit after a gap of 34 years to William W. Gunn's two magnificent cuttings that once contained his 3ft 6in gauge tramway through which Gunn operated his converted Bendigo steam tram. I had last visited the Red Hill cutting in June 1978. It was one of the toughest days in the bush I have ever had after following the tramway alignment up from Red Hill Creek through thick undergrowth and ferns. That day I found my way home again by following the ridgeline above the cutting. A much more sensible way to go except for the fact that the ridge was completely bereft of tramways to follow!

Gunn's Red Hill cutting. Photo: Mike McCarthy

The Red Hill site actually consists of two cuttings; the original excavated in 1907 and the latter which was excavated in 1925 when Gunn sought to reduce the heavy grades leading up to it. The original cutting was about two metres deep whereas its replacement cut into the saddle by around seven metres. Interestingly the deeper cutting sliced through the alignment of the original tramway. The more recent line followed a direct route down the gully while the original followed the south side until the two merged.

The location is not difficult to find provided you make good use of GPS co-ordinates. The co-ordinates for the Red Hill Cutting are 38.04416667 S 145.99181667 E. The best way to get there is to follow Gunn Road from where it leaves Bloomfield Rd for 1.8 kilometres to a track and clearing on the left. You park your car here and follow the track to the north. You will cross Red Hill Creek on a recently made foot bridge and then follow the trail to the left. After about 230 metres a track branches to the right and climbs the hill. Follow this for around 640 metres to the top of the hill. The cutting is 130 metres down the hill to the right. It cuts through a saddle, so if you find yourself in a gully you are in the wrong location. It's not difficult to get in except in very wet weather when the ground will be both muddy and marshy in places. Having said that I suggest not going in there alone, and make sure you have a GPS unit to quide you.

Gunn's 'Big Cutting' was also visited. This is found 1.4 kilometres further along the tramway but extremely difficult to get to by following the formation. However it is easily accessed through Neerim South by following McDougall Road for 5.35 km. This road originally bridged the cutting (a rarity for Victorian timber tramways) but the bridge was replaced with fill in around 1940. The GPS co-ordinates for the bridge site are 38.03711389 S 146.00302778 E. A walk track on the west side takes you down to the base of the cutting now occupied by ferns and fallen debris. When in operation it was 200 metres long, 7.5 metres deep at its centre and 12 metres across at the top. It's a slog pushing through all the growth but well worth it to gain an understanding of just how massive it was. Mike McCarthy 9 June 2012

Longworths Timber Tramway, Kendall, NSW (LR 112, 131, 133, 203, 218)

The remains of this standard gauge timber tramway were inspected in May 2012. The field trip benefited from the assistance and guidance of local historian Bill Boyd, the driving force behind the establishment of the tramway heritage trail and its replica length of wooden tramway.

From Kendall the 16km tramway headed west up the valley of Upsalls Creek. Most of this area is private property which has been extensively settled and cleared for agriculture over the years. Together with the region's high rainfall this has meant that the formation has all but disappeared in these areas. Even when standing on known stretches of the tramway it needed the eye of the believer to be convinced. Google Earth satellite photography appears to show some tramway traces in open paddocks but follow-up field investigation was inconclusive. Fortunately an outer section of the tramway

formation is better preserved where it traverses some two kilometres of North Branch State Forest.

Field Reports

The Kendall Historical Society has built a short length of replica wooden-railed tramway and marked out a tramway heritage trail here. Directions: drive 4km west from Kendall along Lorne Road; turn right into Black Creek Road; after 200 metres turn left into Upsalls Creek Road, follow this for 10km to the Heritage Trail sign on LHS.

The section of replica wooden railed tramway, built by the Kendall Historical Society.

Photo: lan McNeil

The tramway formation can be walked for some 2 km back east towards Kendall before it loses itself in grassy paddocks on private property. This section of the tramway was lightly-engineered on a moderate falling grade – with the load – towards Kendall. Earthworks are minimal; there is only one short box cutting of any consequence plus a section of excavated ledge beside the rushing waters of Upsalls Creek. Remnants of ground-level log cribwork and girders plus some bridge timbers are evident along the way. The Historical Society has installed a few interpretative notices along the way, but it was felt more could be done here.

West of the replica tramway the formation crosses more private property as it leaves Upsalls Creek and follows Cascade Creek upstream for 2km to the forest terminus. There were large bridges and long sections of bedlogs and girders along here - one section of which survives in forest country near the end of the line. The extensive use of timber work to support the track has meant that once this was destroyed by bushfires little or nothing remains of the formation. This was evident near the end of the line, where the only traces found were an occasional bridge timber preserved in creek beds. Longworth's B-class Climax (1375 of 1916) was scrapped at the forest terminus in the mid-1930s. Rusted steel relics of the loco are said to be still on the ground there, but nothing was found in the thick forest regrowth covering the site. The heavily-corroded boiler and smokebox are on display in the open in a small fenced enclosure at Kendall, where the main street crosses over the North Coast Railway.

lan McNeil

The Simsville Timber Tramway, Stroud, NSW (LR 113)

The photo below shows part of an impressive tramway ledge on the 1924 Winns Hill line, about 1km short of its 400m above sea level terminus, looking downhill towards the Jarrah Mill some 12km away to the south-west. The rock wall on the side cut is 10 metres high in places; on the left the hill side plunges steeply down to Harriotts Creek 200 metres below. The formation is on a steady 1:25 grade with the load. There are bays cut into the hillside every kilometre or so where the steam hauler was positioned to pull logs up out of the valley below. This section was choked with rampant lantana and undergrowth when first mapped back in the 1980's, but has since been cleared by NSW Forests for access purposes. It is within easy walking distance from the nearby Jarrah Forest Road.

This section was revisted as part of a GPS re-mapping survey of the Simsville Timber Tramway system that has been underway during the past two winter seasons. The original pace-and-compass mapping back in the mid-1980's left a lot to be desired. It was a difficult challenge back then, trying to maintain constant-length paces in rugged forest country and thick undergrowth, and the resulting field maps usually disagreed to a greater or lesser extent with local topographic maps.

The advent of affordable GPS units has brought a degree of accuracy to field mapping that could only be dreamed of 25 years ago. In the case of the Simsville tramway mapping exercise, GPS surveying has highlighted topographic map errors regarding the location of creeks and trails, sometimes even vindicating the early pace-andcompass efforts!

lan McNeil June 2012

Victoria Coal Company, Cape Paterson (LR 197)

On a recent visit to Cape Paterson, Chris Wurr photographed four lengths of Barlow rail emerging from the sand on First Surf Beach adjacent to the lifeguard shed. Originally laid in 1863 to 5ft 3in gauge, the rails were already second hand, having originally been used on the Melbourne to Geelong railway. Purchased by Nathaniel Levi's Victoria Coal Company to connect their mines to a pier, which was never constructed, the tramway never saw use and was eventually covered in sand, occasionally being exposed by storms. Mike McCarthy estimates it has been 15 years since the rails were last exposed, and are now more than a metre lower than when he saw them last. There is also a considerable amount of recently exposed rail against the sandbank which has previously been removed to keep the beach safe for swimmers.

Chris Wurr

OCEAN SALT Co Ltd. Port Augusta SA (LR115)

A field inspection was made of the former Ocean Salt Company's tramway at Port Augusta.

The tramway was apparently abandoned around 1937 according to the *Light Railways* article in Issue 115 of January 1992.

Alongside the Trans-Australian Railway just north of the City of Port Augusta, the site of the Commonwealth Railways standard gauge siding for the Ocean Salt Company was found. It seems that this siding had been disconnected by the Commonwealth Railways in 1937.

An impressive tramway ledge on the 1924 Winns Hill line of the Simsville timber tramway, about one kilometre short of the former terminus. Photo: lan McNeil

Recently exposed Barlow rails, once used by the Victoria Coal Company for its 5ft 3in gauge railway, on the beach at Cape Paterson. Photo: Chris Wurr

On the west side of the line is a raised area where bagged salt was transhipped from the company's tramway, into Commonwealth Railways' wagons for on-shipment. A short length of tramway-weight rail was found pointing almost vertically out of the loading bank, but apart from earthworks, there is no sign at all of tramway permanent way.

The low swampy ground of the head of Spencer Gulf, adjoins the loading area immediately on its west side. The tramway to the salt works can be easily seen, as it runs firstly south, then curves south-westerly away from the standard gauge line to head towards the works. Because of the swampy and tidal area between the transhipping bank and the headwaters of the Gulf, the line has been carried on a substantial earth embankment varying in height up to two metres.

Closer to the water and mangroves, the top layer of soil on the embankment has been washed away by high tides. This reveals the core of the embankment, which would appear to be chunks of solidified mud containing seashells. It looks for all the world like a very cheap concrete mix using shells instead of cement. At a guess, it may be what has been dredged from the seabed in perhaps the vicinity of the Port Augusta wharf, but this is only speculation.

The eroded embankment continues until meeting a wall of mangroves which grow along the edge of the watercourse which Spencer Gulf has become at this point. Here the abutments for the decidedly curious wooden bridge are located – each supporting 'trestle' consists of a single T-shaped structure. On the remains of the embankment are some lengths of 60lb rail and, like the embankment – badly eroded. From this eastern side of the Gulf, further access is impossible.

To gain the western side of the tramway requires a long circuitous drive via Port Augusta. The T-bridge can be better accessed from the western side, although it does require some intrepid slopping around in thick mud at low tide. Reference is made in *Light Railways* 112, that this bridge was inspected by Commonwealth Railways engineers (a specific year was not cited in the article) and declared unsafe for heavy loads. Even when the bridge was in good order, it would have been a daunting trip of about 200 metres across the head of the Gulf! While venturing into the mangroves and mud jungle, the remains of some sort of wooden barge were seen. Buried in mud up to the waterline and with the upper part of the hull completely rotted away, the only tangible component of the vessel is the rudder and its post. Westwards of the point where the T-bridge struck land, drifting sand has completely obliterated the tramway formation. According to the Light Railways article, this sand drift problem had been going on since at least 1930. A reinforced concrete tank and a screenhouse are the only structures still standing. West of these the layout of the saltpans can be seen but again there is no ovidence of the

be seen, but again there is no evidence of the tramway formation. Chris Wurr April 2010

Gillis Wull April 2010

Erith Colliery Bundanoon NSW (LR 130) Dear Sir

It may be of interest to give a small update to Jim Longworth's very interesting article in *Light Railways* October 1995 on the tramways of Ringwood and Erith collieries at Bundanoon in the NSW Southern Highlands.

Because one of my grandsons is doing a school project on national parks I thought it might be opportune (before my knees and hips deteriorate much more) to take him on an excursion, which included a visit to Erith's old mine site, which is part of the pretty Morton National Park. Although the walking track is well defined it gets pretty rugged in parts, and the light for photography at the mine site where three openings are visible, is quite tricky (very dark).

I have visited the site many times since the 1960s, but much to my surprise we stumbled across a length of light rail beside the track near the furthest-most mine opening. A tree's roots have completely encircled portion of the rail, with one end of it disappearing into the earth.

The accompanying photo (below) might be of interest, and it also shows two mine openings in the background.

Leon Oberg, Goulburn, NSW

A short length of rail exposed near the mine opening of the former Erith colliery. Photo: Leon Oberg

Heritage & Tourist

News items should be sent to **heritagetourist@ Irrsa.org.au** Digital photographs for possible inclusion should be sent direct to Bruce Belbin at boxcargraphics@optusnet.com.au including the name of the location, the name of the photographer and the date of the photograph..

Queensland

AUSTRALIAN SUGAR CANE RAILWAY, Bundaberg Bundaberg Steam Tramway Preservation

Society 610mm gauge BSTPS stalwart David Twiss passed away recently in Bundaberg after a long battle with cancer. He had been an integral part in the restoration of John Fowler 0-6-2T *INVICTA* (11277 of 1907), and was an active contributor to a number of other projects at the Australian Sugar Cane Railway in the Bundaberg Botanical Gardens. His funeral was held in Bundaberg on 4 August.

In association with the launch of the book "Built by Bundaberg Foundry" at the North Bundaberg Botanical Gardens on 21 August, two Bundaberg Fowler locomotives were on display near the station. The original operating locomotive at the gardens, 0-4-2T 3 (BF 3 of 1952) has been under restoration and the overhaul of its boiler has recently been completed although a new smokebox remains to be made and fitted. The boiler was displayed on a flat wagon alongside the locomotive's chassis, on which restoration work is progressing well. Behind it was 0-6-2T number 1 (BF1 of 1952), which is in store pending restoration. The Society hopes to complete this major task over the coming years. Also on display in steam was *INVICTA*, as a fine example of the original Fowler type that was the antecedent of the Bundaberg Fowler type.

The new track extensions are substantially complete, but various regulatory requirements have still to be completed before they can be put into service.

Society members recently met with representatives of Museum and Gallery Services Queensland and learned more about the historical significance of the artefacts they have preserved, and the tools and methods that they use to restore and maintain them. They were encouraged to use historical methods as a key part of decisions they make about the preservation and presentation of the equipment they hold in trust for future generations.

Peter Hyde 8/12, John Browning 8/12

New South Wales

The Travelling Road Pit Pony Memorial and Miners Federation Peace Grove, Tarrawanna

On 3 July "The Travelling Road" Pit Pony Memorial and Miners Federation Peace Grove were formally declared open. The memorial is in the park at the corner of Foothills Rd and Caldwell Ave Tarrawanna. This park was one of the paddocks that was used to stable Corrimal Colliery's pit ponies. 'The Travelling Road' started at this paddock. It was used by miners and the pit ponies to travel to and from Corrimal Colliery. The installation consists of three main parts: "The Travelling Road", a tiled wall with glazed-in photographs that commemorate the pit ponies of the Illawarra coalfields, with a significant emphasis on Corrimal Colliery. The Miners Federation Peace Grove arch consists of two tiled pillars, surmounted by a steel silhouette of a miner's helmet with cap lamp. The pillars feature photos of Miners Federation activities and campaigns. Photos of activities of the Miners Federation Womens Auxilliary also feature in this display. A pathway and dedication stone,

Davenport 0-4-0ST KIAMA (1517 of 1915) and train at Yallah Station during the Tongarra Train Fest on Sunday 12 August. Photo: Scott Gould

The newly overhauled boiler of Bundaberg Fowler 0-4-2T 3 (BF 3 of 1952) on display with 0-6-2T 1 (BF 1 of 1952) at North Bundaberg Botanical Gardens on 21 August, for the launch of the book Built by Bundaberg Foundry. Photo: John Browning

seats and garden connecting the memorial wall and arch. The structures were designed by local artist Michael Keighery. Primemovers behind the project were four senior union officials who had all worked with pit ponies earlier in their mining careers; Kevin Wiseman, Victor Parkinson, Bobby Graham and Barry Swan.

The Miners Federation was formed in 1916 as the Australasian Coal and Shale Employees Federation, It was amalgamated with other unions and renamed in 1990, and now forms part of the Construction Forestry Mining & Energy Union. BHP-Billiton Illawarra Coal assisted financially with the construction costs. Wollongong City Library and the Illawarra Historical Society provided some of the photos that have been transferred onto the tiles. Other photos were provided by the Miners Federation itself and the families of some of its members. The memorial was opened by Andrew Vickers, Chairman of the Mineworkers Trust. John Garaty, 8/12

ILLAWARRA TRAIN PARK, Albion Park 610mm gauge

Illawarra Light Railway Museum Society Ltd A cool winter's day on 12 August at Albion Park saw the running of the Tongarra Train Fest. It was another successful running day for the ILRMS volunteers on the 40th anniversary year of the Society. ILRMS volunteers had worked hard on locomotive presentation, works and park presentation that brought the site back into shape after the windy days that had been affecting the Albion Park area in the lead up to the Train Fest weekend. Railway operations for the Tongarra Train Fest saw all the available rostered ILRMS fleet in action which was a treat for many visitors who got the chance to go back in time. The first run of the day saw SEYMOUR (Baguley/Drewry B/N 2392 of 1952 ex CSR Victoria Mill) on passenger services. Locomotive changes throughout the day saw PERRY (Perry Engineering B/N 7967/49/1 of 1949 ex Tully Sugar Mill) KIAMA (Davenport B/No 1517 of 1915

ex Quarries Ltd Kiama) and *BURRA* (Hawthorn Leslie B/N 3574 of 1923 ex Corrimal Colliery).

The Train Fest also had other community based groups on display including historical farm machinery displays, vintage car groups and motor bike groups. Visitors also got the chance to inspect the Arthur Moore Memorial Steam Display (Boiler ex Brown Hoist No 7 Rail Crane) in operation as well as tours of the locomotive working shed and the Ken McCarthy Museum Building. Food was available in the Tramway Dining Car (1940 ex NSWGR LFA 449 passenger Car) and camp fire meals were also served.

On the restoration side and work in general at Albion Park, new boundary fences have been installed and yard works continue, making the grounds a more pleasant area for all who visit the ILRMS. Locomotive operations and work programs are continuing including, after many years of lying idle, the Leyland/Krauss (2179 of 1889). The engine of this locomotive was started and the locomotive driven. The engine of the 1924 Baguley Inspection car ex Victoria Mill was also started and the car will be placed into service at a later date. The miniature railway (7¼in gauge) also operated.

John Fowler 0-6-0DH *SHELLHARBOUR* (21912 of 1937) was unable to operate as it had suffered a broken spring earlier in the week, and Motor Rail 4wDM *GOONDI* (10219 of 1951) was on duty on the fire train, whose services were thankfully not required. The restoration of ex-Kalamia Mill Com-Eng 4wDH *IVANHOE* (GA1042 of 1960) is progressing well with the locomotive having moved under its own power recently. Brad Johns 8/12, John Browning 8/12

Victoria

PUFFING BILLY RAILWAY 762mm gauge

Emerald Tourist Railway Board Saturday 21 July marked the 50th anniversary of the re-opening of the narrow gauge railway

of the re-opening of the narrow gauge railway from Belgrave to Menzies Creek by the Victorian Railways for the Puffing Billy Preservation Society.

The night train in Walhalla yard, on the evening of Saturday 11 August, hauled by former Emu Bay Railway 10 class B-B DH THE SPIRIT OF EMU BAY (Walkers 576 of 1963). Photo: Michael Leaney

In the re-enactment train, 14A masqueraded as 6A, since the real 6A was undergoing overhaul. The train consist was the same as that on the day of 21 July, 1962. Graeme Daniel 7/12

MENZIES CREEK RAILWAY MUSEUM

610mm/762mm gauge

Puffing Billy Railway Preservation Society As part of the celebrations for the 50th re-opening of Puffing Billy to Menzies Creek, the newly refurbished museum was opened to the public. On display was 127, the Beyer-Garratt 2-6-2+2-6-2 recently arrived from South Africa (Beyer Peacock 7428 of 1951).. Graeme Daniel 7/12

WALHALLA GOLDFIELDS RAILWAY 762 mm gauge

Walhalla Goldfields Railway Inc

On Saturdays 4,11 and 18 August, extra trains were run at 6pm and 8pm as part of the Walhalla Ljustfest. Hauled by ex-EBR 10 class B-B DH *THE SPIRIT OF EMU BAY* (Walkers 576 of 1963) and the ex-SECV 0-4-0DM No.14 *SPIRIT OF YALLOURN* (John Fowler 4210051 of 1951), the trains ran from Walhalla to Thomson with a light display mounted on the carriages. Spot lights were directed from the open car down Stringer's Gorge, highlighting the trees, creek, rock formations and the occasional deer. This is the second year of running these light trains and since they were all booked out, it will continue into the future.

The WGR also took delivery of another ex-QR Walkers B-B DH locomotive, DH72 (717 of 1974), for use on the railway. At present it is being stored at Loy Yang until conversion from 1067mm to 762mm gauge. The other DH class locomotive, DH37 (619 of 1969), is stored on a length of 1067mm track in the Walhalla yard, also awaiting gauge conversion.

At a recent members' dinner, participants were treated to speeches about the future of the railway, overseas trips by members and the future of tourist railways in Australia and elsewhere. The positive note to the speech by Rob Ashworth about WGR's future was tempered somewhat by Adrian Ponton's warning that without younger members, WGR and other tourist railways had no real future.

Colac and Beech Forest railway

On Sunday 1 July the Geelong & South Western Rail Heritage Society Inc. operated a coach tour visiting the permanent memorials and station sites on the Colac to Beech Forest and Weeaproinah railway to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the closure of the line, the original terminus of Crowes having closed on 9 December 1954. There were 38 passengers and mainly dry weather for most of the walks and site inspections, with the exception of the longest walk during the afternoon (from McDevitt to near Wimba) when it poured rain from about a minute after the start until about a minute before they reached the coach at the other end! Michael Menzies 8/12

KERRISDALE MOUNTAIN RAILWAY

610mm gauge

Kerrisdale Mountain Railway & Museum Inc. Much progress has been made on the new all-steel welded boiler in the last six months. All of the plate work has been set out, prepared for welding, and drilled for stays and also for the tubes. A lot of heavy machined flange work has been done for the various mountings and the steam dome of about 300 short stays, several dozen studs of various sizes and heavy sockets to suit the appurtenances. The inner firebox and outer wrapper are now a pair in terms of fit and are welded for final assembly into a working pair. The steam dome is a complicated fabrication with the top flange assembly, the Ramsbottom Safety Valves (2), the dry pipes for the fountain and throttle, and forward mounted auxiliaries. The throttle in itself being even more complicated than the dome to which it fits. This is a heavy steel fabrication with bronze trim to the spindle gland and valve, the whole unit had to be designed to suit the locomotive steam flow requirements (observe the large flange on the dome), and the counter pressure braking system. The whole boiler has now been approved by the boiler inspector for completion up to hydraulic test stage. This part of the locomotive is most rewarding to build and once it is finished it will be put on display in the erecting shop on its own low boy chassis. Steam trials will then be able to be carried out as the locomotive chassis is erected. A new smoke box door ring has been cut, and the original Fowler door and latching arrangement has been 'fitted', out of historical respect for the old boiler. Several LRRSA members have visited the KMR of late to see this new build 2ft gauge steam locomotive, and have been made most welcome. (A phone call first is helpful.)

Andrew Forbes 7/12

South Australia

COBDOGLA IRRIGATION & STEAM MUSEUM 610mm gauge

Cobdogla Steam Friends Society Inc

The Cobdogla Railway is currently closed due to the pending demolition of the concrete water tower adjacent to the railway station. The tank dropped a couple of 20kg pieces of concrete several months ago and was immediately fenced off as a safety measure while an assessment of the structure was undertaken. SA Water made the decision that the tower would have to be demolished due to the spalling of the concrete in the tower legs.

An initial attempt to demolish the tower was halted when it was discovered that it was more unstable than initially thought. A new plan was developed and the tower was scheduled to be demolished in early September. In the meantime, the area enclosed by the safety fence has been expanded and now includes the station and adjacent track, effectively blocking access to the track.

Other work has been undertaken with the painting of the Guard's Van and the installation of LED side marker and ceiling lights in all the passenger carriages. These will be powered from the locomotive to replace previous battery powered lights.

Motor Rail 'Simplex' 4wDM loco L4 PETER (9861 of 1953) had its old engine pulled out due to a lack of compression and a replacement engine was built up from a previously rebuilt Dorman engine. The two engines are slightly different models, but such items as the starter motor and flywheel were able to be transferred to the new engine. This has now been refitted to the loco and final tuning and testing is being done at present.

Elsewhere in the museum, the Humphrey Pump is also not operational following a gas leak

At Kerrisdale Mountain Railway, construction of the new locomotive boiler is well advanced. The complicated throttle assembly is in the foreground, Photo: Andrew Forbes

during the Easter open day. The valves are being overhauled and other possible sources of the gas leak are being investigated. The June open day went ahead without the pump but the July open day was cancelled.

The museum is still doing static tours and is looking at transferring a loco, carriage and some works wagons to the other side of the restricted area to allow some track maintenance and small train trips. It is hoped to have both the Humphrey Pump and railway operational again in time for the 30 September open day. Anyone planning a trip to Cobdogla for the open day should contact the museum first to ensure it will be operating. Denis Wasley 8/12

NATIONAL RAIL MUSEUM, Port Adelaide

457mm, 610mm, 1067mm, 1435mm, 1600mm gauges

1067mm gauge Andrew Barclay 0-6-0T PERONNE (1545 of 1919) took on the guise of Thomas at the Port Dock's July two-week 'Day Out With Thomas' event. This was held over the period Saturday 7 to Sunday 15 inclusive and apart from PERONNE, rides were also given on the broad gauge Red Hen railcars and BILL and BUB on the 457mm gauge railway. During the nine days Thomas event, PERONNE made 190 shuttle trips, travelled more than 200km and carried more than 7000 passengers. Clearly *Thomas* hasn't lost his charm. Several weeks of hard work and constant co-ordination has resulted in all of the railway items and memorabilia being moved to the railway museum site at Port Adelaide. NRM Curator Moana Colmer has lead this huge task to catalogue then accession (or not) all of the hundreds of items. A program is being developed that will see a wide range of different projects and events undertaken during the year. Details and invitations to participate will be distributed as soon as practical.

Planning continues for a special weekend for all HRSA member groups to attend and promote their respective organisations.

Bob Sampson, National Rail Museum Port Adelaide 8/12

SHEOAK LOG MUSEUM Clare Valley South Australia

610mm gauge

Following lengthy negotiations, NRM approved the loan of three 610mm gauge locomotives operated by Waratah Gypsum on Yorke Peninsula, to the Sheoak Log Historical Museum. Ruston & Hornsby 4wDM 304 (187078 of 1938) and 0-4-0DM 306 (393981 of 1956) were originally acquired by the railway museum in 1971, while the Deutz-engined Malcolm Moore/TACL arrived in 1990. Due to competing priorities and lack of undercover space at Port Adelaide, and after spending more than 20 years in the open, the three locos will now be restored and kept under cover during the loan period.

It had become evident that NRM needed to look at various 'new homes' for some items it simply could not house nor restore in any foreseeable future, in addition to creating much needed space at the Port Adelaide site to develop and expand other projects. Following unsuccessful negotiations with Cobdogla Steam Friends to take the locos on loan, Bob Ahrens was contacted – his company had provided some assistance in constructing a dual gauge (broad/ standard) loco shed at NRM and also provided a special display of agricultural and internal combustion engines during an event. The locos were inspected and the Sheaoak Log Machinery Museum agreed to take them on loan for five years with rights for an additional five years. It is intended that one or more of the units will be fully restored to operable condition, and all will be placed on display under cover in a new display pavilion at Sheaoak Log.

Located about 60km north of Adelaide, the Sheaoak Log Machinery Museum is affiliated with the Sheaoak Log Community Museum. President and local Rotarian Bob Ahrens has been involved with farming and farm machinery and founded the major agricultural and manufacturing company Ahrens Engineering. Bob has been involved personally in the restoration of farming and related equipment, returning benefits to the community for decades.

One of Bob's keen ideas was to initiate a Tractor Pull, where a wide range of both old and new tractors are put to the test. The most recent event in May using Vintage Farm Tractors attracted a very good crowd. Proceeds from the event were put towards a sawmill project for the Solomon Islands.

Sheaoak Log history had an unusual start. In the 1840's South Australia was almost bankrupt. The discovery of copper at Kapunda saved the state from financial ruin. It was necessary to find a suitable 'track' from Kapunda to Port Adelaide through the scrub so the copper could be exported. The track was first marked with a single furrow plough and went from Kapunda to where Greenock now stands and onto Daveyston. When the plough was two kilometres north of Sheaoak Log, it broke. A sheaoak tree was cut down to repair the plough which then continued to mark the track to Port Adelaide. Hence the name Sheaoak Log. The site was a day's trip for a bullock or horse team from Kapunda and an ideal site for a town. At one stage there were 50 houses, Post Office No 26, a butcher shop and three hotels. In 1886 the railway to Kapunda was completed but the line didn't go anywhere near Sheaoak Log. Without the teams hauling the copper and resting there overnight it soon became a ghost town.

A group of citizens in the town in the 1990s believed that some of the heritage of the town and district should be restored. The Ahrens family have been in business in the district for over 100 years. Ahrens Engineering was able to provide a shed which was surplus to the Sydney Olympics and this was re erected to house the museum. The hall was built as a replica of one of the old hotels and there is one of the original 1840s houses still standing.

The collection of fully restored and operational vintage engines, tractors, farm equipment including horse drawn wagons and drays and hand operated equipment can only be described as incredible. Some of the old makes on display are Cooper, Bamford, Petter, Lister, Moffat Virtue, Ronaldson Tippett, Bagshaw, Blackstone, Crossley, Ruston-Hornsey, Blackstone, Massey Harris and Caterpillar.

Richard Crookall. 8/12, Bob Sampson, National Rail Museum Port Adelaide ?/12

Western Australia

BENNETT BROOK RAILWAY, Whiteman Park 610mm gauge

On August 4, the Bennett Brook Railway ran its first Enthusiasts Day since 2002. On the evening prior to the event Perry 0-4-2T BT1 (8967.39.1 of 1939) failed due to a main steam pipe leak and Planet No.1 (Hibberd 0-4-0DM 2150 of 1939), back after an engine overhaul, had an alternator failure on its first run. Despite these setbacks, all scheduled train movements were completed. In total, 43 train movements were carried out at Whiteman Village Junction as well as several shunts during the day. The day saw the return of Maylands petrol loco to service after 4 years as well as the first scheduled outing for Dorman Planet No.2 on BBR rails. Highlight of the day

Heritage **NEWS** & Tourist

was the official opening of the new signal cabin at Mussel Pool. This cabin was originally at Cottesloe from 1897-1931, then at the western end of Perth station as the yard foreman's office and later the linen room where linen for overnight trains was stored and dispatched. In 1988 it came to BBR and has been installed as part of the re-development of the Mussel Pool platform. Bob Baker 8/12

BUSSELTON BALLAARAT getting a new look

1067mm gauge Busselton's historic 0-4-0WT locomotive BALLAARAT locomotive (James Hunt, 1871) is to get a makeover. It is being moved this week from its home in Victoria Square. Parts of the engine will be disassembled and refurbished. Volunteers are doing the work under the supervision of Phil Ashton at South West Machining Centre. A number of parts will be machined by SWMC on their site in the LIA, while other parts will have to be fabricated elsewhere. The city has a budget of \$34,000 for the project, of which \$24,000 is a grant from Lotterywest. In-kind services, including SWNC and Southwest Crane Services are contributing to the work. Little attention has been paid to the engine over the past 70 years. Work will involve removing and sandblasting some corroded metal, making new parts where required and painting the locomotive. The chimney will be taken off the engine for restoration. Because of the nature of the work and the reliance on volunteers, the timetable is flexible but it is hoped it will be completed in the next 12-18 months. The engine is destined for the new Railway House to be built on the foreshore, which will also house the Jetty Train. BALLAARAT, which was the State's first steam locomotive, played a significant role in the town's thriving timber industry in the late 1800s. The Mail, 8/12.

Ruston & Hornsby 4wDM loco 304 (187078 of 1938) and 0-4-0DM 306 (393981 of 1956), and the Malcolm Moore/TACL 4wDM are loaded for transport to the Sheoak Log Museum, on 23 May. Photo: Bob Sampson

