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# **INCLUSION DESCRIPTION OF AUSTRALIA'S MAGAZINE OF INDUSTRIAL & NARROW GAUGE RAILWAYS**

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### **LIGHT RAILWAYS**

Australia's Magazine of Industrial and Narrow Gauge Railways

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Editor: Scott Gould Associate Editor: Richard Warwick PO Box 21, Williamstown, Vic. 3016 editor@lrrsa.org.au

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

Field Reports Editor: Peter Evans fieldreports@lrrsa.org.au

Research Editor: Stuart Thyer research@lrrsa.org.au

Industrial Railway News Editor: Chris Hart industrial@Irrsa.org.au Distributor: Gordon and Gotch Limited. Printed by BPA Print Group.



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 Qld 4104

Secretary: Bob Gough (07) 3848 3769 Tasmanian Representative

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

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### Imperial to metric conversions:

1 inch (in)	25.4 millimetres
1 foot (ft)	0.30 metre
1 yard (yd)	0.91 metre
1 chain	20.11 metres
1 mile	1.61 kilometres
1 ton	1.01 tonnes
1 pound (lb)	0.454 kilogram
1 acre	0.4 hectare
1 horsepower (hp)	746 Watts
1 gallon	4.546 litres
1 cubic yard	0.765 cubic metres
1 super foot	0.00236 cubic metre
(sawn timber)	

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### **Editorial**

My wife and I have the good fortune to be travelling overseas at the moment, and on our first weekend I was able to experience two English preserved railways – the standard gauge Great Central Railway, and the two foot gauge Leighton Buzzard railway. While these railways are outside the remit of *Light Railways*, being able to see how the preservation movement in the UK does things was very interesting. While population density and funding differs greatly from Australia, the presentation of the rolling stock and infrastructure on these railways put some of our main line commercial operations to shame!

This issue of *Light Railways* contains a diverse range of articles from across several states, Tasmanian mining, Western Australian firewood tramways, a manure tramway in Melbourne and a follow up on 'Spider', the Marrawah tramway locomotive pictured on page 15 of last issue. IRN, Research, Field Reports and H&T continue to cover interesting goings on in the world of light railways, I particularly like the Llama in the report on page 37!

Thank you to all our contributors, without you, we wouldn't be able to produce what I think is a very high quality magazine. *Scott Gould* 

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:** Proud owner Graham Lee keeps a vigilant lookout from the cab of Statfold Barn's Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 number 11 (972 of 1912), ex Lautoka Mill, Fiji, as the engine storms through the road overbridge at Waunfawr on the Welsh Highland Railway on a gauging trial on 9 April 2014. Photo: Andrew Thomas, Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railways



A rare photograph of a loaded wood train posed at Kurramia. Motive power is almost certainly ex WAGR G 127 (James Martin 115 of 1895), with its distinctive extended smokebox. Photo: Rod Milne collection

### **Gs amongst the woodlands:** Bulong's woodline 1908-1918

### by Rod Milne

The one time gold boom town of Bulong, located due east of Kalgoorlie, boasted two railways, though they were not operational concurrently. The 2ft gauge mining line that ran to the cliffs above Lake Yindarlgooda barely turned a wheel at the turn of the last century, though the second railway, a 3ft 6in gauge woodline, fared much better. Remarkable as this is to say now, many of the original surveys for the Trans-Australia Railway (TAR) brought the line through Bulong before a decision for a more direct alignment via Parkeston was made.

Bulong in its heyday was quite a town. Surveyed in 1894, it was proposed to augment the IOU gold mine which had been opened the year before. Purportedly, it was planned to call this new town 'IOU' though Surveyor Hamilton who laid out the streets of the town found the alternative aboriginal name 'Boolong' relating to a spring. The shortened version of this ('Bulong') became the townsite's name in 1895 when it was formally gazetted. In the coming months, the Queen Margaret emerged as the town's main underground gold mine.

The townsite as laid out was a big one, and it is claimed in the heyday there were over 600 people resident there. There was a local authority (Bulong Roads Board) with monthly meetings, a hospital, school and police station, and at least three hotels being clustered with stores around the main town centre. Provision was made for a Racecourse Reserve north east of the town near where the original mine tramway ran, with Reid Street being the main north-south thoroughfare. Cable, Lardner and Jones operated the main town store and the main hotels in the town's heyday were the Court, Bulong, Federal and Globe. Bulong was never to rival Kanowna to the north where an extensive woodline system was established by the Westralia Firewood Company by the late 1890s. At one point, this system extended 30 miles north to Gindalbie and west towards Broad Arrow with an interconnecting line to the Broad Arrow firewood tramway.

### Establishing the new woodline

In April 1907, preparations were made to shift the firewood collection operation down the Kanowna line as wood reserves further north were cut out. Surveyors acting on behalf of the Westralia Timber and Firewood Company were despatched and in 1907 were undertaking survey work south of Bulong. The authorised line of survey for the new line lay seven miles south of Bulong but in April 1907, the local community, recognising that the town of Bulong was beginning to struggle economically, lobbied for the route of the new private railway to come through the town itself. A deputation met the Minister for Mines in that month and was clearly successful.

This amendment was duly endorsed by government, with the route now surveyed to pass through the Bulong townsite. However, a change to the survey in the town of Bulong occurred in November 1907 when there was a dispute with lease holders Lee and Macnamara who sought a payment of  $\pounds$ 150 to run the track through their site. The Westralia company baulked, and so an alternative line was located north of the hospital grounds in Bulong and past the state school, the new alignment being fortuitous indeed due to what became the regular conveyance of injured workers from the end of the line to the hospital for treatment (in 1911-1912 for instance, it was claimed the majority of patients treated at Bulong Hospital were woodcutters from the end of the line).

In September 1907, the shift to Kurramia was made, and a new depot was established with the necessary facilities for a woodline, including staff cottages and a general store. However, operations did remain at Kanowna for a little while longer, the last activity at this point occurring in February 1908. The shift itself must have been a herculean task, doubtless involving considerable use of the WAGR railway line between Kanowna and Kurramia.

Track, sleepers, trucks, locos and equipment were all shifted down, though it is noted that the conditions of the time were still economically favourable, for dog spikes up on the old wood main line near Gindalbie were not reused and left to rust in the sun. Obviously the rails were brought down and there were also tiny 20lb rails from the Lancefield tramway, presumably used on the spur lines off the main line. In time those incredibly light rails got to be known as "snap and rattle" because of their propensity to easily break and derail trains. One of the firstVIPs to travel on the new woodline was the Minister for Mines, who undertook a trip on the track to Bulong on Friday 15 June 1909.

### The line described

When the new woodline was brought into use in 1908, it diverged from the government's Kanowna line at a new location called Kurramia. The actual junction was meagre, comprising a simple turnout to the woodline branch, but there were two sheds provided adjacent to these staff locked points. One was an 'out of' shed (for storing consignment items unloaded from trains) and the other a staff cabin, it being necessary to use the electric staff for the Kalgoorlie-Kanowna section to unlock the points and work the siding. A porter was employed at the junction when the line was in use.

The woodline then proceeded around a long curve to cross Kanowna Road on the level and enter the company's brand new depot shifted from Kanowna. A number of sidings were provided, three of them through tracks. A dead end was located on the southern side, and on the northern side were two dead ends for the loco workshops/shed, company store shed and water supply. The latter came from the brand new Goldfields Water Supply (GWS) pipe (which then served both Kanowna and Bulong). Further beyond, on the eastern approach, was a triangle. Kurramia essentially comprised the woodline depot, company houses and store, and not much else, and even though the woodline ran though Bulong, it was generally referred to as the Kurramia woodline in despatches.

A small hotel functioned on the southern side of the Kurramia level crossing for a while, it being proposed in 1907 when the Licensing Court held sessions in Kalgoorlie. In October 1910, the publican Mr W J Finn was declared bankrupt, so it may have had a very short existence. When it was later sold, the Kurramia hotel was described as having 13 rooms and is understood that it was named the Junction Hotel. Kurramia also boasted a state school till March 1913 when it was sold for removal, the school being sited on the opposite side of Kanowna Road to the woodline depot.

Beyond the triangle at Kurramia, the woodline headed off in a series of long straights, the first running to the vicinity of the 'Perkolilli' pastoral station. A curve to the right then took the rails down another long straight to a point north of the old mining town of Balagundi where a ridge line was negotiated by a remarkably deep cutting. Beyond this point, another length of straight track took the railway to the edge of Bulong townsite where it entered from the west-north-west.

The survey providing for the line to run through Bulong was an interesting one, for it crossed tangentially many of the formal allotments of the townsite. By then, Bulong was clearly on the wane as a township due to declining gold output, so many of the lots were perhaps now vacant. It then passed north of the Bulong hospital and began to curve past a reserve for a public institute and the state school, in the process crossing the main street, Reid Street, on the level. Most of the route then lay south around the edge of the hill to a long loop siding which served as a crossing point as well as no doubt dealing with any of Bulong's goods needs. This was located in the vicinity of Furness and Seymour Streets, in the far south east of the town area. A short goods siding also existed near the hospital on the western side of Bulong, so there were some facilities at the town. Also provided at Bulong was an elevated water tank for the engines, the supply for this coming all the way from Mundaring via the GWS pipeline to Bulong. Last but not least, there is ground evidence in the form of a formation indicating that a spur siding ran north to the main mine, the Queen Margaret. When the woodline was built, Bulong was still very much a town of walkers, horse riders and cyclists; indeed in September 1913, the town's sole car driven by a Mr Jay collided with a bicycle in Colin Street with no injury to either party, being humorously described in the press.

Beyond this point, the woodline then headed out in the bush lands beyond, running to the east of the public road





(now known as Bulong-Curtin Road) and to the south of the large salt lake Yindarlgooda. Most of the alignment was gently undulating or flat, with the formation raised slightly above the surrounding terrain. Small cuttings were required but were roughly finished off, the material from the cut being merely piled up on the cutting sides rather than finished off and spread evenly.

Spurs were laid off this main line to the south and to the north, though most did not operate concurrently, the company practice being to merely shift the whole spur a little further on once the wood in that area was depleted. Essentially they were temporary branches, not unlike the portable lines used in the cane districts of Queensland and NSW to provide access into the farmer's fields. Thus, a glance at a map of the system east of Bulong is somewhat misleading because only one or two of the branches were functioning at any one time. South of the woodline in this country was a small gold mining locality called Randells, which once boasted a hotel magnificently called the Flagship Hotel. The wood trains worked at various times close to that point as well as to the TAR under construction (so close to the latterday Curtin that woodline train crews could see the smoke of engines working construction trains on the new transcontinental line to the south).

Beyond Bulong, there were not a lot of curves as the track proceeded south east, east then north-west in a long hook feature which avoided Lakes Yindarlgooda and Yallurnie to the north. There were less than a dozen curves in over 30 miles as the 'main line' of the woodline ran over a series of long straights, through some flat country and also some undulating lands. The survey team did its work well, for the railway managed to avoid the higher ground most of the way, though ironically, this alignment managed to optimise the adverse impacts of overland flooding.

There was an important siding at the 30 Mile, which often featured in reports associated with the woodline, this being north west of the latterday Curtin on the TAR. In addition to firewood, this siding also dealt with water and ore traffic road hauled to and from Mount Monger to the south. Approached by another long straight on a south west north east bearing, the terminus of the main line was generally called the 45 Mile, or 45 Mile Camp. In 1910, when elections were held in the district, it was noted that a general store existed at the 45 Mile Siding on the woodline, supplying woodcutters and gold prospectors alike. The company inserted a triangle to turn the wood train engine here (to this day, the formation of same is still discernable on Google Earth at -30.864273,122.164880), and the actual wood cutter's camp and store were just beyond this on the northern side of the line.

This lovely evocative flat was a long way from public roads, the 45 Mile Camp also boasting a small forge for repairs to the G class locomotives. In addition to the normal remains of rail activity including ash, dog spikes and bolts, the forge site still boasts fire bars used in locomotive fire boxes. At its furtherest extent, a few miles beyond the 45 Mile Camp, the woodline reached to north of Karonie, destined to be a station on the new TAR (in 1918, the WAGR noted that the woodline main line extended for over 70 miles to the furtherest extent, well beyond the 45 Mile Camp). It is remarkable country out that way, comprising salt pans, and wooded areas and open flats, the little wood trains clattering through this empty countryside ferrying wood for the mines of Kalgoorlie. Flooding was clearly problematic, the area being susceptible to large overland sheet flows of water which would have caused disruption to the permanent way of the woodline.

### **Operations and incidents**

The wood train from Kurramia and Bulong went out every morning six days a week to the end of the track, returning in the afternoon or evening. The latter train was traditionally referred to in despatches and the newspaper as the 'afternoon train', not uncommonly used to convey injured timber cutters to the Bulong hospital. The normal load included 20 trucks of wood and also vans, and the crew comprised three men (driver, fireman and guard).

The first few years seemed to have been busy and productive, the new woodline contributing greatly to the businesses of Bulong which then included several hotels as well as stores. Supplies for the town from Kalgoorlie and Perth came up on the woodline trains, the WAGR allowing its trucks to traverse the woodline. Thus, the new line effectively became a private branch with through traffic from the WAGR. Bulong's supplies could now be railed in WAGR trucks and put off in the siding at the town by Furness Street. The wood train also catered for passenger needs, being the easiest and most effective way to get to Kalgoorlie and beyond by the simple means of a connection to the Kanowna train at Kurramia.

Although it was a private line, the Kurramia woodline served a significant public need in delivering supplies and passengers to the town of Bulong. Accommodation was provided for passengers at the rear of the train and trucks loaded with supplies came up on the train, which made a connection of sorts with the WAGR train at Kanowna. Whether or not the service was publicly advertised is not known, though newspaper reports of the time often referred to the 'afternoon train'. Although Bulong was on the wane when the woodline opened, there were at least three hotels and other businesses in the town which would have drawn their needs by rail to the short goods siding near the hospital. So traffic was not just wood; supplies and passengers went by train and water was also hauled, the big elevated tank at Bulong connected with the GWS supply being a boon to those residing out in the bush.

In late October 1909, heavy rains damaged the brand new woodline where it passed through Bulong, it being reported that most of the hotels in town suffered damage due to water entering their cellars. The track was washed away in several places and 'otherwise damaged' but a gang was put to work immediately, with repairs being made to enable a rake of 32 loaded trucks to be hauled out by the evening of Thursday 21 October 1909.

The abundance of wood cutters employed at the end of the railway contributed also to the social life of Bulong. Union membership grew dramatically and there were of course social events such as dances in the Miners' Institute and even a bush racecourse. Even the hospital did well, for there were many injuries to men at the outlying camps treated there, the wood train being able to convey them into Bulong and literally drop them off at the hospital doors. For instance on 14 October 1913, the afternoon train conveyed an injured woodcutter to the Bulong hospital. He survived, though some did not, and one particularly sad event saw the delivery of a badly injured man to the hospital only for the man to succumb at the hospital entrance as he was unloaded from the wood train. It was a hard life in Bulong but in a way, the woodline brought an aura of wobbly civilisation to the place. In August 1913, another man succumbed at the head of the woodline when he was crushed between buffers during a shunt. He was not the guard and was evidently a good soul helping the crew with the task.

On Friday 31 January 1913, a large funeral for the late Mr Olle was held in Bulong, and the Westralia Firewood Company thoughtfully provided a rail service to Bulong for people attending the event. The person concerned was a checker for the firewood cutters working the line, and so an engine and coach were run by the company to take the man's friends and relatives across from Kalgoorlie and Kurramia to Bulong.

On Saturday 5 September 1914, a derailment occurred on the woodline at Bulong. The engine was pushing several loaded trucks along a spur siding to make up the full train when four trucks, an empty van and the engine came off the tracks. Three passengers on the train escaped injuries but were no doubt seriously delayed as a gang was employed all of Sunday to lay a rough deviation around the damaged track. Two more incidents reported included a collision in March 1913 with cows on the line near the 12 mile, on the western side of Bulong, and a wood train derailment near Bulong in early 1915. In the case of the latter, a short train comprising engine, five trucks and guards van was heading towards the end of the line on Monday 4 January 1915 when the axle under one of the trucks broke and the train derailed. Two trucks were smashed up in the derailment which seems to have occurred just beyond Bulong on the approach to the cutting beyond the cemetery.

### Locomotives and rolling stock

The Westralia Timber and Firewood Company maintained a roster of 2-6-0 locomotives identical with the government's G class. The star performers were built by Beyer Peacock, and delivered as number 3 (5181 of 1908) in March 1909 and number 4 (5625 of 1912) in December 1912. There were two older locos too, including the antiquated A class 2-6-0 called DAY DAWN which came to the company in January 1903 from the Public Works Department (it had a prior career in the construction of the Leonora line). Also on the company roster was ex-WAGR 2-6-0 G 127 (James Martin 115 of 1895) which debuted with the company in April 1905. It is presumed the two new G class locomotives 3 and 4 performed the main body of the work, with G 127 having a support role, along with the hired 4-6-0 G 123 (Dübs 3507 of 1897). It seems that at Kurramia, the little A class barely turned a wheel. While most of the attention to the fleet occurred at Kurramia depot, the 45 Mile Camp boasted a forge for minor repairs including firebar replacement.

The company used its own limited rolling stock plus trucks of the WAGR which were allowed to be hauled along the private line to and from Kurramia. Obviously this made haulage of firewood direct to the gold mines of the Golden Mile much easier, the loaded wood trucks being attached to the WAGR Kanowna trains at Kurramia and then hauled on to Kalgoorlie, before being taken further down the Boulder line direct to the gold mines. The traffic was so brisk in the earlier years that a survey was undertaken for a complex triangular junction east of Kalgoorlie station to enable the wood trains to run from the Kanowna and Menzies lines direct to Golden Gate and the Boulder line. For many years, a separate goods train terminated at Kurramia specifically to serve the needs of the woodline depot.

### **Decline and closure**

In 1913, the woodline at Bulong suffered its first body blow, when work commenced on the TAR. Considerable uncertainty settled on the woodline's operations, due to the initial proposal to run the 'Trans' direct from Jurmania Rock through Bulong to a transhipment yard at Kurramia, thereby rendering the woodline redundant. Once the more direct alignment to Parkeston and Kalgoorlie was settled on, the firewood line was still in trouble for the new survey in fact severed access to many of the good areas of woodland served by the woodline. From 1913 onwards, the woodline spurs were forced in a more northerly direction where timber supplies were not so good, close to the big salt pan of Lake Yindarlgooda and Karonie. The last few years of the Kurramia woodline were ones of complete uncertainty which had a devastating impact on the company's operations and viability.

Not long after the TAR construction commenced, the gold mining industry and its dependent firewood industry were also clobbered with the outbreak of the First World War in Europe in 1914. Not only were prices reduced, but the country suffered a huge drain in manpower to the war. Whole districts lost their youthful males and the impact on the area was disastrous. Mine output declined and there was a consequent reduction in demand for firewood. By March 1916, it was reported the woodline was being used also to convey water for gold prospectors due to the extremely dry conditions that prevailed that year (presumably for the fledgling mining industry at Mount Monger via the 30 Mile Siding). Also, in January 1914, a consignment of pipes for the Mines Water Supply Department was delivered by road from the 45 Mile Siding to Randalls for a proposed upgrade of water supply there. Despite those interesting diversions from normal firewood traffic, it was the beginning of the end for Bulong's last remaining railway line.

In the final period of operation, the odd excursion train ran to Bulong. On Easter Monday in 1917, a special train was put on for the St George's Presbyterian Sunday School to depart Boulder at 9.15am, thence running via Golden Gate and Kallaroo to Kalgoorlie, where it was to reverse and run to Kurramia and then Bulong. The newspaper report associated with the event said the Westralia Firewood Company had given special approval for the train to run on the private railway east of Kurramia. Bulong residents were arranging to provide hot water for the groups of picknickers expected to ride the train out.

On Monday 23 April 1917, the little railway through Bulong was involved in a happy human interest story, when the crew working the pay train to the 45 Mile Camp, due to depart Kurramia at 10.15am, found a lost lad along the track well beyond Bulong, at the 26 Miles. The pay train was described as comprising an engine and a covered van used for distributing the pays to the men along the track, the company in its heyday employing 150 men.

Also at the same time, in April 1917, it was reported that ore was being hauled in wagons by road to the 30 Mile Siding on the Kurramia woodline, for onwards transit by rail to the batteries in Kalgoorlie. The ore originated at Mount Monger, a mining camp south of the siding. Needless to say those miners were naturally aggrieved when rumours circulated that the woodline was about to be pulled up. The ore and water traffic for Mount Monger was obviously not enough to keep the trains going on the 3ft 6in gauge woodline.

The assets of the Kurramia woodline were being removed and sold in June 1918, following a merger agreement with the Lakeside woodline. Three engines from Kurramia were to be transferred to Lakeside, with most of the staff as well, it being proposed initially to retain the Kurramia-Bulong section of the railway intact briefly to ascertain whether other use could be found for this track. For the ore loaders at 30 Mile Siding, the sudden loss of rail access by the woodline was seriously problematic and they petitioned for a siding to be put in on the brand new TAR in October 1918.



Westralia Timber and Firewood Company's locomotive number 4, seen here posing for its builder's photo in traditional works grey, was a Beyer Peacock 2-6-0 (5625 of 1912). According to the Beyer Peacock records, it was ordered from the makers by "WJ Adams, agent for Harris Scarfe & Company, Australia" – the latter being a long-established firm of retailers, that at one stage also acted as machinery merchants. The racks on its tender clearly indicate that it was destined to burn wood. Photo: Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester

Bulong's brief dalliance with rail access to the rest of WA was severed forever after only ten short years. However, it is noted that the life of the woodline at Kanowna was also a short one, some ten years, suggesting that woodlines by their nature quickly deplete the resources they were constructed to exploit. Although the lifting of the woodline east of Bulong was well in hand in 1918, some of the railway lingered, with the very last track at Kurramia being recovered in 1920.

1917 proved to be a bad year for one of the remaining hotels in Bulong (the Court Hotel) when it burnt down and was not rebuilt, the town already having lost its local government with the last meeting of the Bulong Roads Board in 1911. By the 1920s, Bulong was in a bad state indeed, with the post office being reduced to a receival office only in 1923 (it was reported that a small gold nugget was once found at the foot of the steps after a heavy downpour). In 1928 with the water tank adjacent to it collapsing, the little used public hall (the Miners Institute) was sold for removal, though no arrangements were made for the disposal of the piano that had accompanied many a dance in the boom years when the mines and woodline were going. In 1938, the town's last hotel (the Bulong Hotel) was delicensed and dismantled.

Bulong today is a quiet and peaceful place, a few bits of tin designating sites of the last miners' shacks. However, the woodline route is still obvious in many areas, hooking through town past the site of the hospital and heading on to the back of beyond. The formation is made of a darker red material and stands up in many places above the surrounding flat land before being lost in washaway country about 2 km south. However, the route is discernible in many places where



Abandoned for over 90 years, the formation of the tramway is still clearly visible in the red Western Australian soil. Photo: Rod Milne



Near the 40 Mile, the tramway can still be traced amongst the regrown trees. Photo: Rod Milne

the woodlines once ran, and where the TAR intersects those firewood spurs used many years ago. Given the fact that the Bulong woodline was used for a very short time almost a century ago, the existence of the right of way to these modern times is surely remarkable.

### Acknowledgements and bibliography

I would like to thank my good friend Bernie Morris for his generous assistance with this article, and also Jeff Austin, the esteemed co-author of the book on the subject of woodlines, for his considerable aid. My visit with Bernie to the remote and inaccessible 45 Mile Camp site very much encouraged this article.

The following are noted as key sources of information for the article.

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- Gunzburg, A, Austin, J. Rails through the bush: timber and firewood tramways and railway contractors of Western Australia. Light Railway Research Society of Australia, Melbourne, 1997.
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- WAGR progress yard plan for Kurramia
- WAGR Weekly Notices (1908-1921)
- WAGR Working Timetable (1917)

Those seeking to learn of Bulong's 'other' railway, the short isolated narrow gauge line that linked mines north of the town with the battery plant above Lake Yindarlgooda (the quaintly named Bulong Mine and Ore Reduction Company Tramway), should read David Whiteford's fine article on the subject in *Light Railways* 212.



Storys Creek headframe c. 1977. The building on the left is the manager's residence. The red roofed building is the community hall. Photo: Volker Hahl

### **Rail ore transport at Storys Creek**

### by Volker Hahl

This article is about rail haulage at the Storys Creek wolfram (tungsten) mine in north-eastern Tasmania. Wolfram, and to a lesser extent tin, was mined underground from shallowly dipping quartz veins down to a vertical depth of 200m involving 12 levels. Access was originally by adit and a declined shaft following a quartz vein, and from the mid 1950s a vertical shaft. Tin was originally discovered here in 1881 and mining finally ceased in 1982. The mine and its supporting township were located on the southern slopes of the Ben Lomond plateau in north-east Tasmania at an altitude of 730m. Access is from the Fingal Valley via Avoca, 25 km distant. The mine is situated on a plateau but sloping away to the valley is deeply dissected hill country. Eucalypt forest surrounds the location in all directions.

The mine closed 30 years ago and the town is now gone, but for much of the time it was a small self-contained community solely dependent on the mine for its existence. It was regarded for much of the time as a remote place, not due to distance but rather because of the narrow winding mountain road which separated it from the rest of the world. The company workforce varied due to circumstances up to about 100 workers but in the early 1920s it reached 120 for a short while and in the early 1970s went briefly over 150. During this latter time however, many of these workers lived elsewhere and travelled up the mountain every day. It is thought that the town's population peaked at between 250 and 300 in the late 1960s to early 1970s but would have been around the 200 mark for most of the time from the First World War onwards. It was a basic mining town: there was a shop (two in earlier days), a post office, a butchers shop for a while, school, bush nurse, community hall and a cricket ground, but – note – no pub. The area has moderate rainfall, is mild in summer and cold in winter with the odd snowfall.

1973 saw a slump in metal prices and the mine was put on a care and maintenance basis. Much of the population left and services closed. Work was resumed on a single shift basis later in 1974 with about 24 to 30 workers including staff. All support services now came from the Aberfoyle mine 6 km away. I arrived to work there in mid 1976. My father and brother worked here, and I worked on until the mine finally closed in 1982. Not all people who worked underground here were called miners; miners were the men who operated the rock drills. Everyone else was a labourer, trucker, platelayer, timberman and so on. I didn't take on the rock drill permanently although asked several times but I did fill in when any of the miners was on holiday. I did most other tasks with the exception of surveying and winder driving.

As remarked, the metal was discovered in 1881 and a couple of companies started and soon failed. Early workings were modest and unsuccessful and often simply gouger operations. In 1915 the small leaseholders on the field were bought out by a local syndicate and capital was introduced to develop the mine and to put it on a proper industrial footing.

A new adit was driven from creek level and a separating mill was built at a suitable location some 400m further down the creek. This mill, which commenced operations in 1917, was connected to the surface ore bins, located just outside the adit, by a steel railed tramway of 2ft gauge. The ore delivered



from underground was picked up from the surface bins by six side-dumping trucks of nominally 1-ton capacity. These were taken down the line in one rake to the crusher shed by a single horse. The grade was particularly gentle, to prevent the trucks getting away under gravity and over running the horse, and also to make life easier for the horse going back up the grade with six empties. On an old abandoned truck chassis found some years ago there is evidence of a braking mechanism for the attendant to keep the speed of the downward journey under control. At the crusher shed there was a diversion for the horse. The pin was pulled from the linkage connecting the horse to the rake, the horse would trot off to the right and the trucks would roll on into the crusher shed to be emptied. The horse would then be taken and hooked on to the other end for the return journey. In the 1920s and 1930s about 36 tons was the mill's capacity for an eight hour shift so the pace was not particularly hectic.

This simple method operated unchanged until 1959. To increase production and simplify ore haulage, a vertical shaft



The northern end of Storys Creek. The prominent building is the 'new' mill. The top of the headframe is just visible on the extreme left of picture. Other town buildings are among trees behind the mill. Photo: Volker Hahl



The start of the tramway at the surface orebins is in the middle distance. Photo: Volker Hahl

was built in the mid 1950s, and also a new mill in a different location. When the new mill came on stream in 1959 haulage from the adit ceased, the old mill and tram line were abandoned and the horse retired. Although it is possible that local coal mines were still using pit ponies it is quite likely that Storys Creek was the last metalliferous mine in eastern Tasmania to use a horse, it being considered old fashioned even then. It was, however, a simple system which had served its purpose well.

When the adit workings started in 1915, 2ft was the chosen gauge for underground. In smaller Tasmanian mines wooden rails were often used for short term expediency (timber was abundant) but this phase was soon passed here, and steel rails became the norm. The ore was delivered to the surface bins in end-dumping box trucks by hand trucking. There is some suggestion that early on there was a variety of sizes: 1/2, 3/4 and 1-ton capacities. By the mid 1920s, sinking below adit level had commenced. A decline shaft or haulage was installed following one of the veins. This went down at about 30 degrees, connecting with the various levels. All ore from below adit level was hauled up this decline shaft. The ore was collected from the stopes in end dump box trucks of what appear from photos to be 1-ton capacity. The ore was collected from the stopes in the trucks and hand trucked to the shaft. At the shaft they would be hooked onto the rope and hauled up the steel rails by the steam winch on the adit level. At the



An end dumping box truck used to take ore up the decline shaft and to the surface ore bin. Photo: Chemical Engineering and Mining Review

adit level the truck was unhooked and hand trammed to the surface bins while an empty truck was lowered back down. Co-ordinating ore extraction from the stopes with haulage meant that trucking from stopes could only be conducted on one level at a time. By now 1-ton box trucks were used exclusively, with smaller sizes redundant. I do recall seeing in the then worked-out upper levels an abandoned side dump truck of early vintage. Where this fitted into the scheme of things I can't say.

By about the mid 1950s mine development had advanced down dip to 6-level, and the new vertical shaft was under construction. At the same time, the new mill was also being built. When the shaft became operational in 1956, but before the new mill was ready, ore from the upper levels continued to be taken out via the decline shaft. The adit level was connected to the shaft and called 1-level. Ore from the lower levels was hoisted up the shaft by box trucks in the cage and were taken out on 1-level and hand trucked to the surface bins. When the new mill came on stream in 1959, all ore was hoisted to



An ore truck being hauled up the decline shaft. Photo: Chemical, Engineering and Mining Review

the surface up the vertical shaft. Initially, ore trucked from the stopes was hoisted from each level but in due course an ore pass was constructed which eventually ran from 3-level to 11-level, the lowest level on the shaft. Now trucking from stopes could continue without reference to hoisting, and as a consequence side dumping trucks replaced the box trucks on all levels except the one where the shaft loading station was. Eventually the shaft bottomed at 11-level and all ore was hoisted from here. Ore from levels above was loaded from the 11-level stope chutes directly into box trucks for hoisting. All levels above 11-level now had side dumping trucks which, until the advent of battery electric locos, were hand trammed.

The box trucks going up the shaft were emptied into the shaft ore bin on the surface by a tumbler and so end dumpers were no longer required; solid bodied trucks were now used. In my time at the mine there were three types of ore trucks in use; solid bodied box trucks for ore removal on 11-level and hoisting up the shaft, and two types of side dumpers elsewhere. One variety was a wide bodied 1-ton (nominal) capacity truck with the body resting on a cradle at each end using a four pin arrangement. These were used on 9-level. The others had a narrower body, similarly 1-ton nominally, with a curved rocker arrangement at each end. These were used on all other levels.



The type of side dumping ore truck used on most levels after the main shaft went into operation. Photo: Volker Hahl

Some time in the 1960s the mine experimented with 1½-ton capacity side dumpers on 9-level. These were bought from Rosebery, where apparently there was some tipping arrangement in place which Storys Creek did not have. It was found that the single operator could not tip the trucks manually and so the idea was abandoned.



Side-dump truck used on 9-level.

Photo: Ken Bice

In 1964 a battery electric loco was introduced on 6-level followed by another, about 1967 on 9-level. These were called 'one ton locos', referring to their tractive effort. Each had a charging unit installed at a convenient location nearby. The idea of locos was to move the ore more quickly and to take the hard work out of long hand trucking runs. This was achieved on most levels, not just the two with the locos. On the levels above 6 a few ore passes were established along the levels, and these passes gravitated the ore down to 6-level where it was picked up by loco trucking and taken to the main ore pass. This shortened the trucking runs on the upper levels. Ore could be taken to the main ore pass near the shaft or to the nearest subsidiary pass, which ever was closer, and the loco on 6-level did the hard work. A similar system worked from 7 and 8-levels down to 9. On 9-level there was a rake of seven trucks for the loco to pull but for 6-level I can't say. In my time there we had a loco and only two side dumpers because the stopes above were nearly worked out. Despite the small tonnages on 6-level the loco was persevered with because the state of the line was now poor, and hand trucking would have been very difficult.



Gemco battery loco hauling a rake of ore tucks in 1978. Photo: Ken Bice

9- and 11-levels had some long trucking runs by Storys Creek standards, about 250m from the shaft to the end of the drives. Locos were not considered for 11-level. The box trucks, because they had to fit in the cage, were not amenable for joining together and connecting to a loco, and the loco would have been in the way of shaft loading. For all that the rock could still be moved a fair distance by hand (or foot if you like). When 11-level north was being advanced, I remember loading the rock by bogger (rail loader) from each round fired and pushing the trucks out to the shaft about 230m. This meant a 460m round trip with each truck and as I did 22 trucks in a shift. That came to over 9 km of pushing ore trucks in a shift. Who needed footy training?

The locos are believed to have been Gemco 'Trammers' from George Moss Pty Ltd of Perth, WA. They were quite simple, just a large lead acid battery in a metal box, with motor and wheels underneath. At one end was a small platform and a seat for the driver. On the floor of this platform was a foot



Loco with two ore trucks on 6-level.

Photo: Volker Hahl

switch to prevent the loco being moved without the driver being on board. A hand lever gave it forward and reverse. One loco had another hand lever to convert the forward motion of the motor into a braking effect. Both had mechanical parking brakes. The ore trucks with the four-pin tipping arrangement would have been bought from the original manufacturer but the others, particularly those used towards the latter years, seem to have been made to order by a local engineering company. In fact the chassis were probably knocked up in the mine workshop – they were simple enough.

The rail system was fairly straightforward. All drives with one exception had a single track. The exception was the main crosscut on 11-level going west; this was a dual track as far as the hanging wall vein, about 100m. They must have been expecting big things to put in two lines but only one was in use in my time there. Where drives branched off in other areas the points were simply a single rail hinged at the top end that could be easily swung over for going right or left. From memory there were four places that did not have this simple setup. On 6-level at the main crosscut there were three directions possible so a full width set of rails all in one piece was used. Also on 6-level were two turntables. These had a steel baseplate firmly fixed. In the centre, more or less,



Headframe at the Storys Creek mine. The headframe was first used at the South New Moon mine at Eaglehawk (Vic) and then at the South Virginia Mine, Eaglehawk and from there to Storys Creek. Photo: Volker Hahl

projecting upwards was welded a solid steel pin. Also welded to the baseplate were two steel strips standing on edge and forming closely spaced concentric circles with the steel pin as the centre. These formed a circular channel into which steel balls, probably ball mill cast offs, were loaded. On top of this was placed a circular steel plate with a hole in the centre through which passed the steel pin from the lower plate. This was large enough to take one ore truck. A loco could of course take a rake of trucks straight ahead across the turntable but going sideways meant one truck at a time. In this case the loco could truck up to the turntable but from there it was hand trucking. The fourth place was the main crossroads on 11-level where the dual lines going west passed through the footwall vein drive going north and south. The system here was fixed in position and was for the manipulation of the empties to send them in any direction required. The full trucks all had the same destination - the shaft - so once they were headed that way there was no need for them to change lines.



Box trucks at the shaft on 11-level, full ones on the left, empties on the right. Men are entering the cage to go to the surface. Photo: Volker Hahl

One other important piece of equipment was the loco jack. This was a very solid mechanical jack for getting derailed locos and full ore trucks back on the line. As far as I can remember there was only one jack, kept on 9-level where most of the loco trucking was done. Other levels had to make do with a steel bar, piece of rail or a solid piece of timber for a lever. Depending on how badly off the line the truck was, it was not usually a difficult job to get it back on the rails. Derailments were only occasional.

When the mine closed in 1982 underground saleable items were removed from the mine. However rail transport was already being superseded by rubber tyred vehicles and small systems particularly were not in great demand elsewhere. The sale of the transport items was not considered to be worth the cost of the labour of their recovery and as a consequence it is all still underground and under water to this day – and probably for ever.

### **Editors note:**

Storys Creek appears in various maps, government and mining records as either Storys, Story's, Storeys or Storey's Creek – or sometimes a combination of all of them in the one document. The spelling differences can be traced back to the Storey's Creek Tin Mining Co., which was reported in *The Mercury* 6 December 1884 as differing from the creek by one letter. http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/9097143 Australia Post has also changed from Storey's Creek to Storys Creek, the latter being in place since 1962.

### East Collingwood Manure Depot Tramway

by Colin Harvey

### The night soil problem

In the years following the gold rushes, the population of greater Melbourne expanded greatly and by 1861 it had reached 140,000. In the absence of a sewerage system the problem of disposal of night soil was becoming acute. The use of cess pits, which overflowed into streets and polluted streams, was a major health issue and their use was being discouraged. Generally night soil was removed in pans (at night) by contractors and buried in trenches, with little or no treatment, at whatever depot was available — or dumped by the less scrupulous operators wherever they thought they could not be observed.

Numerous attempts to establish a central depot for the receipt and processing of night soil of all municipalities were thwarted by 'not-in-my-backyard' attitudes. In 1860 the City of Melbourne moved to prohibit the deposit of non-indigenous night soil at its depot in Carlton<sup>1</sup> forcing surrounding municipalities to establish depots within their own boundaries.

East Collingwood municipality, adjoining the city on the north-east, arranged for an half an acre of Crown land on the west bank of Merri Creek, formerly used as a slaughter yard, to be reserved as a manure depot. Although reasonably isolated, the site's proximity to the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum resulted

in objections from the Superintendent of that Institution, but to no avail.<sup>2</sup>

### **Earth closets**

Water closets would not become a practical proposition for most premises until widespread sewage reticulation in the 1890s. By the 1860s, earth-closet systems of waste disposal were being promoted; in particular by George Woodward, the Patent Earth Closet Company, and Draper & Sons. These companies sold their own patent appliances along with the service of regularly removing the contaminated earth and replenishing it with new, or at least reconditioned, earth. Although more expensive than the pan system it was certainly a more pleasant arrangement.<sup>3</sup>

To process earth for their closets in reasonable proximity to Melbourne, Draper & Sons arranged to rent the East Collingwood manure depot from August 1869. (Night soil formerly deposited at the depot was now being buried in Mayors Park.) Draper & Sons had about 700 closets under its management; each being cleared an average of three times each week. Used soil was deodorised using lime tar and iron sulphate and dried at the depot for a period of months. It was then recycled back to the customers (if only used twice before), sold as manure, or used on the firm's farm at Heidelberg.<sup>4</sup>

The depot consisted of wooden sheds, draining bins and a pug mill, to break down



Above: Detail added to a contemporary map of Melbourne showing the limited suburban expansion that had occurred by 1877. Base map by A. Fayard, detail by M. McCarthy http://nla.gov.au/nla.map-rm4052 Below: Cadastral plan of the manure Depot's location with the area occupied by the Poudrette shown highlighted in pink.



solid material, located on the steeply sloping bank of the creek with access only available from the north. Soil was transported to and from the depot in boxes on carts. To negotiate the narrow approach, Draper & Sons installed a wooden tramway some 600 yards long from a transhipping point at the former route of Heidelberg Road.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Poudrette Company**

In 1874, after trials at St Kilda, chemist Ludwig Rummel and merchant Leopold Hess obtained a patent for a 'method of, and apparatus for the deodorisation, disinfection, and utilisation of human and animal excreta'. The partners intended to produce manure on a large scale, extracting valuable chemicals by heating in a series of retorts,<sup>11</sup> and managed to convince the Central Board of Health and the East Collingwood and Fitzroy councils that this would be the solution to their waste disposal problems. The preferred location for a plant was the north end of the manure depot site on the Merri Creek, so a long-term lease of five acres was applied for and Draper & Sons was told to vacate. To raise the necessary capital the Collingwood Poudrette (Guano) & Ammonia Company Limited was floated.<sup>6</sup>

In the course of evaluating the lease request, the Department of Crown Lands & Survey became aware that what it thought was a half-acre depot, now had an enclosed area of 10 acres, that the town council had illegally rented it to Draper & Sons and an unauthorised tramway had been constructed. Meanwhile the Poudrette company started construction of its plant, also without any authority to occupy the site; and Draper & Sons refused to leave.<sup>7</sup>

By June 1875 the Poudrette works were almost complete still with a tramway through the middle. Matters came to a head when a pipeline was constructed across the tramway stopping traffic. The Lands Department effectively sided with Draper & Sons by insisting on leaving a strip 30 links wide out of the proposed lease to maintain access along the creek. Ultimately the Mayor personally attended the manure depot and resumed occupation on behalf of the Town Council.<sup>8</sup>

The year after commencing operations, the Poudrette company, already in a parlous financial position, was forced to close by order of the Central Board of Health. Contrary to the promoter's claims, the factory produced copious quantities of 'abominable stinking smoke' to the detriment of the inmates and staff of the nearby Yarra Bend asylum.<sup>9</sup>

Draper & Sons did not regain possession of the manure depot but the site continued to be used for the disposal of nightsoil and offal until 1880 when the reservation was revoked due to the ongoing pollution of the creek and the Yarra River.<sup>10</sup>

The site of the manure depot is now part of Hall Reserve, Clifton Hill. Landscaping of the site has created a pleasant park and obliterated almost all evidence of its malodorous past. The northern part of the tramway route is now used for the Merri Creek Trail bicycle and walking path.

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   Argus 17 Jan 1880, 20 Sep 1880.
- 11. For a detailed description of the Poudrette works see the *Argus* of 20 May 1876. http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page244751



Joggers and a cyclist enjoying the Merri Creek trail through Hall Reserve, Clifton Hill. The alignment approximates that of the tramway. Photo: Colin Harvey



Showing little resemblance to the locomotive pictured on page 15 of LR 236 with the first train from Marrawah in 1913, 'Spider' has received new frames, boiler, smokebox and cab over the intervening 34 years. Photographed at Smithton by George Sweetapple in 1947, 'Spider' sits in front of an open wagon on bogies of a timber tramway heritage.

## The Marrawah Tramway's Baldwin locomotive *Spider*

### by Jim Stokes

Spider was one of five 4ft 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>in gauge 0-4-0 steam tram motors built by Baldwin in 1891 for the Bendigo tramways. They carried Bendigo running numbers 1-5 and Baldwin works numbers 12241-5, although not necessarily in the same order. They were sold at some time after the Bendigo tramways were electrified in 1903, but their history over the next few years is uncertain. The locomotive which became *Spider* appeared in the May 1911 catalogue of Melbourne machinery agents Cameron and Sutherland, together with one of its sister engines. However the accompanying photo showed a Bendigo Phoenix motor, not a Baldwin. The catalogue entry for *Spider* described it as 3ft 6in gauge, fitted with new tyres 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches wide and 'overhauled and ready for continuous work'. It is not clear whether *Spider* had been overhauled and regauged by a previous owner or by Cameron and Sutherland.

Spider was purchased by the Marrawah Tramway Company and was inspected in Tasmania in 1911. The Department of Labour and Industry's boiler records noted that the boiler was old and getting thin about the washout plugs. Cameron and Sutherland had some difficulty obtaining payment from the new owner and their representative disabled *Spider* by removing the slide valve covers until payment had been completed. The *Launceston Weekly Courier* of 13 March 1913 published a photo of *Spider* at what became Smithton Tram Yard station, heading the first train of agricultural produce (which appeared to be mainly cheese) to be brought in on the Marrawah Tramway. *Spider* was then still essentially a defrocked steam tram motor in appearance, with a primitive awning on four iron uprights extending from the chimney to the rear of the engine.

Spider was the Marrawah Tramway's only engine when the Public Works Department took over the line in March 1914. The tramway's manager, Archibald Ford, always referred to Spider as 'our No.1 engine', which he appears to have meant in the qualitative as well as the numerical sense. In January 1917 Spider was taken by road to the then end of the Tasmanian Government Railways Western line at Myalla and railed to the TGR's Launceston workshops for overhaul. Ford told the TGR's Chief Mechanical Engineer, William Deeble, that Spider was 'by far the best engine we have'. In the course of the overhaul the original bar frames, which were cracked, were replaced with plate frames. Deeble told Ford in October 1917 that fitting the plate frames had allowed space for wheel flanges of standard thickness; when the engine had been regauged from 4ft 81/2in to 3ft 6in the width of the firebox had not allowed the bar frames to be brought in far enough to retain the full thickness of the flanges and they had been reduced to a quarter of an inch. It was probably at the 1917 overhaul that Spider acquired its rather forbidding plate steel cab, which caused it to resemble a combination of a kettle and a First World War armoured car.

In April 1923 the Emu Bay Railway was authorised to replace *Spider*'s original boiler and this job appears to have been completed about November 1923. During the second half of 1924 the boiler required repairs due to 'bad workmanship' by the EBR, which necessitated the PWD hiring a replacement engine from JS Lee. The Marrawah Tramway, together with *Spider* and the line's three other small tank engines, were transferred to the TGR in September 1929. The TGR completed bridge strengthening in 1935, permitting the Beyer Peacock C-class 2-6-0s to work through from Smithton to Redpa. The spur lines to Pelican Point and Mella and the extension from Redpa to Marrawah were closed in 1940, 1945 and 1939 respectively and the Salmon River branch was taken over by Circular Head Amalgamated Timber in 1947. *Spider* survived to be the last of the four small tank engines at Smithton and it was sold to

Britton Brothers on 4 April 1949 for use on their tramway at Christmas Hills on the Smithton–Marrawah road. The northern section of Britton's tramway, which linked the mill with the Marrawah Tramway at Ten Mile, had already been abandoned and *Spider* was taken to the mill by road to work the bush logging lines south of the mill. Despite widening of the wheel treads *Spider* found it difficult to handle the bush track and it was replaced by a diesel engine in 1953. The frame and wheels were converted to a log bogie and used until the tram closed in 1965.

In September 1963 Jack Shennan noted that *Spider*'s boiler, cab, bunker, water tanks, valve gear and headlight were strewn about the yard of Britton's mill. In 1973 the boiler was placed on display at Marrawah with the cab, frame and wheels of the former Marrawah Tramway 0–6–0ST *Six Wheeler* (Hudswell Clarke 380 of 1891), which had been abandoned on the Salmon River branch. However the remains were removed to the Marrawah tip in the 1980s.

These notes have been compiled from information provided or published by David Beck, John Browning, Mark and Angela Fry, Richard Horne, Ken Milbourne, Tony Parnell, Jack Shennan, Charles Small, Jim Stokes and George Sweetapple. See *Light Railways* 41, 57, 110, 143 and 145, *Australian Railway Enthusiast* December 1980 and *Narrow Gauge Down Under* 37, 41, 43-45 and 48

Right: Nose to nose with 'Big Ben', Baldwin 0-6-0ST (52512 of 1919), 'Spider' shares the limited shelter on offer at Smithton, 1947. The West Smithton tram yard engine and workshop buildings were destroyed by fire in 1934, with "new" facilities being cobbled together from redundant buildings previously located at Ulverstone and Nietta. Photo: George Sweetapple

Below: With its original Baldwin boiler, and enclosed cab, dating this photo between 1917 and 1923, 'Spider' poses with a loaded train. Photo:Winter's Studio, ARHSnsw Railway Resource Centre 032495







Please send contributions to: Industrial Railway News Editor, Christopher Hart 15 Dalrymple St, Ingham, QLD 4850 Phone: (07) 47766294 e-mail: industrial@Irrsa.org.au

Special thanks to contributors to the *Sugar Cane Trains/Navvy Pics* 2ft Facebook page.

### QUEENSLAND

### BUNDABERG SUGAR LTD, Bingera Mill BUNDABERG SUGAR LTD, Millaquin Mill (see LR 236 p.22 and LR 233 p22)

610mm gauge

Millaquin Mill loco, Bundaberg Foundry B-B DH *ELLIOTT* (002 of 1991) is at the Bingera Mill garage being fitted with a new 6-cylinder Caterpillar C18 motor in place of its Detroit Diesel V12 this slack. The new motor is expected to reduce fuel usage on this loco. *ELLIOTT* will possibly be running to the Gillens Creek/Clayton area this coming crushing season and bringing back loads of 110 six tonne bins.

EM Baldwin 0-6-0DH *RUBYANNA* (3406.1 7.70 of 1970) and *BLI BLI* (6/1257.1 7.65 of 1965) have been sold to the Fiji Sugar Corporation. Millaquin Mill *RUBYANNA* left Bundaberg for shipment via Brisbane on 17 March with Bingera Mill *BLI BLI* following on 19 March.

Lincoln Driver 3/14; Geoff Driver 3/14; Chris Zunker 3/14

### **ISIS CENTRAL SUGAR MILL CO LTD**

(see LR 235 p.22)

610 mm gauge

Seen here on 20 March were the following locos: Walkers B-B DH D3 (600 of 1968 rebuilt Walkers 1994) and D4 (656 of 1970 rebuilt Walkers 1994), Clyde 0-6-0DH D9 (75-812 of 1975) and EM Baldwin B-B DH D10 (7267.1 6.77 of 1977). D10 was parked with the rail welding wagon at the top of "The Hill". Brakewagons seen were Walkers 3 (rebuilt from ex QR bogie wagon in 1993) and EM Baldwin 9 (10278.1 5.82 of 1982), 10 (7937.2 7.78 of 1978) and 11 (7937.1 7.78 of 1978). The George Moss sleeper renewer (R853 of 1987) was parked at the entrance to the sleeper shed. A new concrete level crossing has been laid across the Isis Highway at Bundy Road siding.

Carl Millington 3/14



**Top:** Mackay Sugar's Walkers B-B DH DULVERTON (690 of 1972 rebuilt Walkers 1997) at Mandurana Junction on 6 March. Photo: Peter Nettleship **Centre:** Mackay Sugar's Palmyra diamond crossing on the former OR Marian branch being lifted out early in March. Photo: Mitch Zunker. **Above:** Pioneer Mill's Plasser tamping machine (41 of 1973) at work packing new sugar line trackage near the mill on 12 May. Photo: Luke Horniblow







**Top:** Newly assembled 13 tonne bins at Mossman Mill in early April. Photo: Michael Scomazzon **Centre:** Mulgrave Mill's EM Baldwin 0-6-0DH 11 MAITLAND (4413.2 8.72 of 1972) showing its modifications in April. Photo: Danny Nolan **Above:** Victoria Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH CENTENARY (64-381 of 1964) with a rail train at Leno's siding on 18 April. Photo: Luke Horniblow

### MACKAY SUGAR CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION, Mackay mills

(see LR 236 p.22) 610mm gauge

Walkers B-B DH *DULVERTON* (690 of 1972 rebuilt Walkers 1997) and Mackay Sugar BVAN 4 (built on Anderson Rea frame 1998) were seen moving bins around early in March. EM Baldwin B B DH *MIA MIA* (9815.1 10.81 of 1981) was seen on a ballast train between North Eton depot and Victoria Plains on 5 March. EM Baldwin 0-6-0DH 15 *MELBA* (12512.1 7.85 of 1985) is being fitted with a new Mercedes Benz motor and an Allison automatic transmission this slack.

Mackay Sugar had removed all the diamond crossings on the former QR branch line to Marian by early in March and was also planning to remove the section of former QR track in front of Racecourse Mill.

Scott Jesser 3/14; Mitch Zunker 3/14; 4/14

### MACKAY SUGAR CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION, Mossman Mill (see LR 235 p22)

(see LH 235 p22) 610 mm gauge

John & Jason Shepherdson of Miallo who are doing contract herbicide spraying for this mill are using a Massey Ferguson 35 tractor converted to run on rails. It has had fixed rail wheels fitted as well as a spray tank at the rear and has to be turned using a bag lifter at the end of each line. By early April, components for 120 new bins had arrived and were being assembled. These bins are 180mm higher than Mossman's existing bins, increasing their capacity to 13 tonnes. Michael Scomazzon 3/14, 4/14

### MSF SUGAR LTD, Mulgrave Mill

(see LR 236 p.23)

610mm gauge Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 17 *DEERAL* (AD1453 of 1962) was in use on poison spraying duties during early April. EM Baldwin 0-6-0DH 11 *MAITLAND* (4413.2 8.72 of 1972) has had a new hood top fitted and extra weight in the form of a 1½ tonne steel plate added to the front headstock. This is said to bring the loco weight up to 20 tonnes. The new hood incorporates the fuel tank. Danny Nolan 4/14

### THIESS PTY LTD,

**The Narrows LNG Tunnel, Gladstone** (see LR 236 p.24)

762mm gauge By late March, the trackage used during the boring of this tunnel had been removed. *The Observer* 28/3/2014

### WILMAR SUGAR (HERBERT) PTY LTD, Herbert River Mills

(see LR 236 p.24)

610mm gauge

Victoria Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH *CENTENARY* (64-381 of 1964) was seen at Leno's siding on the Abergowrie side of the Herbert River bridge on 18 April. It was on a rail train associated with a relay taking place between the siding and the bridge. As of late April, the new 8 tonne bins

### Industrial NEWS Railway

ordered from China had not yet arrived. Flooding associated with Cyclone Ita in April has caused washouts on the rail system, all of which will have to be repaired by the start of crushing in June. Luke Horniblow 4/14; Editor 4/14

### WILMAR SUGAR PTY LTD, Inkerman Mill, Home Hill

(see LR 231 p23) 610mm gauge Kalamia Mill's Tamper ballast tamping machine (562 of 1976) was seen packing some track in the yard at Inkerman on 2 March. Luke Horniblow 3/14

### WILMAR SUGAR (INVICTA) PTY LTD, Invicta Mill, Giru

(see LR 236 p.24)

610mm gauge

By early March, Com-Eng 0-6-0DH FB3169 of 1963 had been officially named *INKERMAN* although still carrying *OAKENDEN* name plates from its Mackay Sugar days. It was seen near Majors Loop on 2 March. Also seen this day was Com-Eng 0-4-0DH *INVICTA* (CA1040 of 1960) on a ballast train near Clare 2. A new branch line is being built off the Black Road line this slack. It will follow Keith Venables Road for approximately one kilometre. Luke Horniblow 3/14

### WILMAR SUGAR (KALAMIA) PTY LTD, Kalamia Mill

(see LR 236 p24)

610mm gauge

Com-Eng 0-6-0DH *CHIVERTON* (C1030 of 1958) was seen with a ballast train on 2 March.

Invicta Mill locos Walkers B-B DH locos *HODEL* (687 of 1972 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1995) and *MINKOM* (710 of 1973 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1996) plus their brakewagons which are here for RSU training had been moved to Sunwater near McDesme by early March. They had to be moved owing to track works at the mill. This mill's Tamper ballast tamping machine (562 of 1976) was seen at Inkerman Mill on 2 March. Luke Horniblow 3/14

### WILMAR SUGAR PTY LTD, Pioneer Mill, Brandon

### (see LR 232 p21)

1067mm gauge

Clyde 0-6-0DH *MAIDAVALE* (62-266) was seen with the poison spray wagon near Pelican Road on 9 March. The Plasser ballast tamping machine (41 of 1973) was also seen at Pelican Road on the same day. Clyde 0-6-0DH *PIONEER* (63-287 of 1963) was seen on a ballast train at the end of Pelican Road on 24 March. Work has continued on the the Bruce Highway overpass near the mill and it looked to be almost complete by mid April.

Luke Horniblow 3/14; James Chuang 4/14

### WILMAR SUGAR (PLANE CREEK) PTY LTD, Plane Creek Mill, Sarina

(see LR 236 p.24) 610mm gauge

On 27 March, EM Baldwin B-B DH D12 (6890.1 10.76 of 1976) was taken on a test run to Koumala with a rake of bins following fitting of its new motor and Allison transmission. Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 7 (FC3776 of 1964) has been in use with the navvies this slack season. Oonooie Loop which had fallen out of use in recent years owing to the condition of the sleepers, was lifted early in March and will be relaid so it can once again be used as a crossing loop. (Luke Axiak 3/14)

### WILMAR SUGAR (PROSERPINE) PTY LTD, Proserpine Mill

(see LR 229 p25) 610mm gauge

This mill is converting to Willison couplings this slack season with all bins, locos and the brakewagon to be converted. Tom Badger 3/14

### **OVERSEAS**

### **FIJI SUGAR CORPORATION**

(see LR 236 p.25) 610mm gauge

In 2003, FSC management decided to do away with the Lautoka Mill rail system and it gradually declined over the years owing to lack of investment. There has now been a change of policy and FSC has reassured cane farmers supplying the mill that the rail network would be fixed over time, with maintenance having started on some of the worst lines and will move to other areas. FSC is to take over the management of harvesting and transportation of cane including road transport in addition to rail at its four mills. This is expected to improve reliability and efficiency. The rail network and access to it will be improved so that advantage can be taken of rail's lower costs. Transport costs per tonne of cane by rail is stated to cost \$6 and road lorry \$13.

FSC is expecting to spend at least \$2 million on the rail systems at its mills this slack season. Forecast crop for 2014 is 2 million tonnes of cane.

Labasa Mill is planning to increase sugar cane production and by 2020 wants to introduce the cane quality payment system, upgrade the railway transportation infrastructure, introduce large scale farming, introduce mechanical harvesting and refine sugar. Refurbishments and upgrades of several lines are to be done this slack with work on the Nagigi Line already underway.

FSC is carrying out a study to determine the viability of building a new mill at Raki Raki in place of its Penang Mill. The new mill would process the cane juice to the syrup stage and transport that to Rarawai Mill for final processing. An electricity co-generation plant may also be included with the new mill. Other co-generation plants are expected to come on line at Labasa Mill this year and Rarawai Mill next year.

FSC has purchased two EM Baldwin 0-6-0 DH locomotives from Bundaberg Sugar Ltd. These are Millaquin Mill *RUBYANNA* (3406.1 7.70 of 1970) and Bingera Mill *BLI BLI* (6/1257.1 7.65 of 1965). The former left Bundaberg for shipment via Brisbane on 17 March with the latter departing on 19 March.

Fiji Broadcasting Corporation 15/3/2014, 28/3/2014; *Fiji Times Online* 25/3/2014, 19/4/2014, 26/4/2014; FijiOne 8/4/2014; Geoff Driver 3/14; Chris Zunker 3/14



Pioneer Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH PIONEER (Clyde 63-287 of 1963) at Pelican Road with a rake of ex Queensland Railways ballast hoppers on 24 March. Photo: Luke Horniblow



### **Book Reviews**

### IRON WORK HORSES

by Bruce Macdonald

176 pages portrait format, hard cover, with more than 450 black and white photos. Published by Eveleigh Press. Available from the LRRSA online bookshop - \$54.00 plus postage (\$48.60 plus postage for LRRSA members) http://www.lrrsa. org.au/LRR\_Online\_shop.html)

This well produced and comprehensive book provides an overview of industrial steam locomotives in Australia. The book covers all of the manufacturers that have produced locomotives that have been used in Australia.

The author, Bruce Macdonald is well known and highly regarded in the railway fraternity and has a long history in steam preservation and railway modelling. He is in an ideal position to prepare this book given his knowledge of locomotives and their manufacture. The fact that he has been able to collect such a wide range of photos from a wide range of sources attests to his standing within the rail fan community.

In his Introduction, Bruce Macdonald tells us that he is what is commonly known as a "train buff". He then says that train buffs can be divided into two types - those that prefer the larger railway systems and those that are interested in industrial railways or tramways. He says that the first group covers generally State owned systems with large locomotives, long trains, signaling systems, timetables and regulations. Information about them is readily available. The second group is mostly of various gauges, privately owned, casually engineered and leisurely operated with mainly steam locomotives and loose couplings. Information about these railways or tramways is not readily available and one has to search deeply to find out more. One has to look at very old maps. search old newspapers for vague references and look on site for any remains that still exist, and then piece together what actually existed.

I think that most LRRSA members and readers of LR magazine would agree with Bruce's assessment, and this book is a testament to a large amount of research into industrial railway locomotives in Australia.

This book is essentially a collection of photographs from all of the manufacturers around the world that provided locomotives for use in Australia. As Bruce says in his preamble, it is not a gazetteer of locomotives in Australia industry, but rather an introduction to manufacturers who are now part of our railway history. What the book provides us with is a fascinating collection of photographs with detailed captions from across Australia where they were used.

The start of the book gives us five colored pages of photos of builder's plates from the locomotives covered in the book. A complete listing of the various manufacturers that provided all of the known locomotives used on industrial railways in Australia then follows. This is broken into various chapters covering the broad categories of Britain, France, Belgium, Germany, USA and Australia. Most pages have 2 or 3 photos per page with relevant details in an interesting commentary.



The chapter on British manufacturers includes examples from the main names including Beyer Peacock, John Fowler, Hudswell Clark, Kitson and Vulcan Foundry and so on. Also, it includes many of the lesser-known companies such as Airdrie Iron, Alexander Chaplin, Nasmyth Wilson and so on. All of this is described with a broad collection of photos with informative captions across a wide variety of locations and industries throughout Australia. Understandably, the British section takes up about half of the book.

The section covering Europe includes locomotives from France, Belgium and Germany with their many distinctive designs. Next is the USA and the main names are included such as Baldwin, Climax and Lima as well as the Vulcan Iron Works. The various forms of Baldwin locomotives are shown in their working environment as well as the Climax type in use on many timber tramways/railways in Australia. Finally Australian manufacturers are covered and include such names as Walkers, Bundaberg Foundry, Clyde Engineering as well as some of the lesser-known names including Rodgers Brothers, Vale and Lacy, Parkinson and Monaghan, Harman and Phoenix Foundry.

The book has been produced to a very high standard with a large amount of black and white



### LRRSA NEWS

### **MEETINGS**

### ADELAIDE: " Light railways of South Australia lists"

Our topic will be our list of SA light railways. News of light rail matters will be welcome from any member. Location: 150 First Avenue, Royston Park Date: Thursday 5 June at 8:00pm

### **BRISBANE: "Railways of Greece"**

David Rollins has offered to show slides of his past visits to Greece of the various railways in that Country.

Location: BCC Library, Garden City Shopping Centre, Mount Gravatt. After hours entrance (rear of library) opposite Mega Theatre complex, next to Toys'R'Us. Date: Friday 13 June at 7:30pm

### MELBOURNE: "Railways and tramways of the Mt Lyell region."

Ted Godwin will be giving a slide presentation and talk about the railways and tramways of the Mt Lyell region. **Location:** Ashburton Uniting Church Hall, Ashburn Grove, Ashburton. **Date:** Thursday 12 June at 8:00pm

### SYDNEY: AGM, followed by "Light railways and tramways of Hong Kong."

The NSW Division's AGM will occupy a short space of time, after which David Jehan will be presenting on the light railways and tramways of Hong Kong. This includes the Fanling to Sha Tau Kok steam railway, the Hong Kong Island tramway, the Peak Tram funicular and the light rail system of the New Territories. **Location:** Woodstock Community Centre, Church Street, Burwood, (five minutes walk from Burwood railway station). **Date:** Wednesday, 25 June at 7:30pm

photographs reproduced to a high standard. Whilst there are a couple of relatively minor production errors, they do not detract from the overall quality of the book.

This book is quintessential light railways in Australia and is highly recommended to those interested in industrial locomotive manufacture and operation on a wide range of locations and industries across Australia.

Richard Warwick



Please send letters to: Editor: Scott Gould PO Box 21, Williamstown, Vic 3016 e-mail: editor@lrrsa.org.au

#### Dear Sir,

#### Phoenix foundry book review, Trawalla–Waterloo tramway (LR236)

"Striking while the iron is hot" so to speak, following on from the Trawalla–Waterloo Tramway field report, and the book Review of Richard Warwick, regarding *The Phoenix Foundry* by Robert Butrims and David Macartney.

I generally endorse Richard's review and congratulate the two joint authors for an interesting and well researched effort, however there is an error, on page 147; that I would hope may be corrected in a later edition to prevent any future mythology in regard to "*a job application and offer of employment to that infamous VR Engineman* "Hellfire Jack" Leonard Milburn of the VR Sunshine Disaster of Easter 1908."

My "Trovelling-in-Trove" has highlighted the fact that Milburn was denied the position with the Tramway Company as the VR Commissioners Would Not have Milburn anywhere near or on their premises, especially in an Engine driving position adjacent to VR sidings and safe working.

This fact highlights Richard's comments on poor referencing in the Phoenix work described above.

I submit the "Trove" reference for your interest.

#### MLA citation

"An Unfortunate Engine Driver." The North Western Advocate and the Emu Bay Times (Tas. : 1899 - 1919) 7 Oct 1909: 4. Web. 12 Mar 2014 <http://nla.gov.au/nla. news-article64862214>.

#### An Unfortunate Engine Driver.

When Leonard Milburn, who drove the first engine of the Bendigo train which did all the damage in the Sunshine collision, was dismissed from the Department for his mistake involving such terrible consequences, it was generally thought that he was for ever done with the Railway Department. But it seems that his error has again risen against him in rather unexpected fashion. Some time ago the Department entered into a contract with the Trawalla-Waterloo Tramway Company, Victoria, which undertook to supply the Department with tailings as ballast for the permanent way. Milburn was offered by the company the position of driver of the locomotive, which hauled the trucks of ballast into the Trawalla yard. His appointment, however, was subject to the Victorian Railway Commissioners raising no objection, as the train would have to pass over a few chains of the State railroads. The Commissioners, however did object. They stated that they could not consent to Milburn being in charge of an engine, or working in any capacity on Government railroads. The Commissioners' objection lost him his position, and, unfortunately for Milburn, he had given up other employment when the offer was made.

### Frank Mitchell, via email

A similar newspaper article was also quoted in LR43 – but printed in the *Nagambie Times* on 22 October 1909 – re tweeting isn't a new phenomenon! *Scott* 

#### Dear Sir,

### A Locomotive Curiosity – A Post Script (LR 201 June 2008, page 6)

Further to the above article, I have now found a report in the 'Lang Lang Guardian' for Wednesday 27 May 1914 which provides further information on the drainage improvement project and its home-made locomotive.

It recorded the commencement of work on the 21st May by the rail-mounted Lübecker dredge (excavator) on the Lang Lang River, in the presence of the Minister of Public Works and other dignitaries. Among these was Mr Catani, described as Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department (not the Chief Engineer of the Water Commission, who was also present) and Mr R Carr, the Engineer in charge.

The dredge had arrived in early June 1913 at the 'local station' and the intervening 11 months had been used in moving the plant to to the end of Stanlake's Lane, in constructing a railway line of 60 chains across the ti-tree swamp to the river bank and erecting the machinery (a task complicated by the fact that it had not previously been assembled in Germany before export). Also included in this work was the construction of the home-made locomotive, illustrated in LR 201, which the report informs us made use of a steam engine built by Tangye Ltd. (of Birmingham). The dredge was finally erected and given a successful trial run in the presence of Mr Catani on 15th April, following which timber and rails were ordered for laying on a section of the line towards the outlet at the bay in order to commence work. The dredge had been constructed 23 chains from the bay and the distance proposed to be excavated was 2 miles and 60 chains 'to the road bridge'. The dredge cost  $f_{2,000}$  with a further  $f_{1,000}$ duty. At the trial the dredge excavated 105 cubic yards in 40 minutes at an estimated cost of 5d per yard. Despite the 'stiff gluey soil', the dredge worked well, digging to a depth of 4 feet. The proposed channel was to be 40 feet at the top, 25 feet at the bottom and 8 feet deep, with a sloping bank of about 15 feet. It was estimated that 50 feet per day would be excavated, so taking about 12 months to complete the work to the bridge.

Further reports show that in February 1916 an official inspection party, including Mr Catani and Mr Keast MLA, was impressed by the work done and pleased with the progress made. Completion was estimated to be in a further 4 months, nearly double the one year originally forecast. However, three months later it was reported elsewhere that the work was complete and the dredge was being dismantled and moved to the north side of the river to cut a new drain there. It is interesting to note that *The Bendigonian* for 1st November 1917



The Lübecker dredge on its substantial track with the narrow gauge service railway running alongside on the right. Photo: State Rivers and Water Supply commission of Victoria collection, State Library of Victoria, image rwg/u857



An early photo of the Tangye powered locomotive, in a comparable state to the image in LR 201. Note the improvised gantry crane in the background, and dredge buckets beside the locomotive. Photo: State Rivers and Water Supply commission of Victoria collection, State Library of Victoria, image rwg/u864



Pictured later in life, the loco has gained some additional cross bracing, a side skirt, and a trailer containing some rather stern looking ladies! Photo: State Rivers and Water Supply commission of Victoria collection, State Library of Victoria, image rwg/u877

reported that the Public Works Department at Williamstown Shipyard had built an improved copy of the German dredge at an estimated cost of  $\pounds 5,000$ , which the Drainage Trust was contracted to pay, but the real cost could be a lot more, yet the Trust only had  $\pounds 10,000$ .

Richard Horne South Croydon Surrey, UK

#### Dear Sir,

#### Robe SA (LR 236)

In his article many eons ago (LR155), Jim Longworth drew attention to similarities between the Hudson Brothers' tramway at Narani and a portage railway. Reading Phil Rickard's Field Report in LR 236, I was fascinated to read about the 1600mm slipway at Robe that "may be the remains of the slipway system that used to convey fishing boats over the sand dunes to the tranquil waters of Lake Butler to ride out gales."

Although the arrangement at Robe would not have qualified as a portage railway because it did not use conventional rolling stock and it carried vessels not cargoes, it seems to me that it was a rather special variation of a portage railway and because it presumably had a railway component, viz "across the dunes," it probably should have a name. If it doesn't have a name, then perhaps one should be invented.

Do we know whether the slipway system was winch operated?

Ron Madden Wagga Wagga, NSW I understand that Robe's Lake Butler slipway operation was winch operated, and that Jim Longworth and Phil Rickard are compiling an article on Australian slipways and short portage tramways and would welcome good photos of the Robe operation.

In the world of white water rafting, kayaking and canoeing, portage sections of river are those where the vessels, and contents need to be carried around an un-navigable section of river, perhaps in this case, portage is appropriate? *Scott* 

#### Dear Sir

#### Huntsman Tramway, Tasmania (LR236)

I was interested to see the picture of the Russell Allport loco in LR 236. I picked up a few earlier references to the Huntsman tram in the *Hobart Mercury*. On 16 August 1918 it was reported that Cumming and Co of Burnie were erecting two mills in the Huntsman Hills near Meander. On 23 November 1918 it was reported that the Austral Timber Co had started operations at its big mill at The Huntsman. The mill was cutting blackwood, but the wooden tram was not quite completed; the tram would provide a saving in cartage from the mill to the macadamised road.

On 14 January 1921 Cumming Bros called tenders for the supply of logs to Huntsman mill. On 27 January 1921 a motor truck was carting timber from Cummings' mill at Meander to Deloraine. On 13 July 1922 it was noted that Cumming Bros' Huntsman Mill at Meander had closed after completing a large English order.

I might also note that Eucalyptus gigantea (also known as E delegatensis) is not Blue Gum, but gum-topped Stringybark or White Top. Tasmanian Blue Gum is E globulus.

### Jim Stokes, via email

Further investigation reveals that E gigantea has been used to describe both species of tree over the years. In modern references, E delegatensis is the Stringybark or White Top, E globulus is the Blue Gum. Given that Blue Gum is a smooth barked tree, a review of the image suggests the tree is most likely a Stringybark. Stuart Thyer – Research Editor

### Dear Sir,

#### The George Moss story – an introduction (LR 236)

It was interesting to see the article regarding George Moss and Gemco locomotives. The photo of the loco underground on page 19 appears to show Adrian Clements driving. Adrian was the well-known George Moss salesman in Kalgoorlie during the 1980s selling ventilation ducting and fans, and various mining accessories, in addition to locomotives and mine cars. The annual George Moss Christmas party in Kalgoorlie was legendary!

Tony Weston Melbourne,Vic



### **Field Reports**

Please send contributions to: Field Reports Editor, Peter Evans PO Box 21, Williamstown, Vic 3016 e-mail: fieldreports@lrrsa.org.au

### Mount Barrow, Launceston, Tasmania.

Gauge approximately 1000mm

In November 2008 my wife and I went for a drive on the Mount Barrow discovery trail near Launceston. See the website at the link below (but ignore the link to Google Earth at the website as it is incorrect).

### http://www.forestrytas.com.au/visiting/ visitor-sites/north-east/mt-barrow-discoverytrail

I took photos of what appear to be the remains of a possible locomotive-worked wooden pole-railed tramway. The tramway remains are at about latitude -41.408334 and longitude 147.371172.

We visited friends again at Bridport on Australia Day weekend 2014, and I unearthed a copy of *The Examiner Annual* 1947. This has some interesting photos of wooden railed timber tramway operations (including a locomotive) which were presumably in existence about 1947. I don't know whether these photos show Mount Barrow operations. I have asked a Forestry Tasmania contact, but have not received a reply. *The Examiner Annuals* don't appear to be on 'Trove'.

I also found a news story with a reference to a tramway and locomotive in an item relating to Blessington's New Hall North Esk Memorial in the *Launceston Examiner* of 8 October 1926, page 8. The Burn's Creek mentioned in the story is near Mount Barrow. A link is at:

http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/51367310

Tony Weston, February 2014

### Nine Mile Creek, Welshpool, Victoria

914mm gauge

A site investigation of Mason and Moore's 1890 mill site at Nine Mile Creek, east of Welshpool (Vic), was made on 12 February 2014 by Peter Evans, Colin Harvey, Phil Rickard and Mike McCarthy. The mill is a focal point for a forthcoming article on Mason and Moore's operations including the three feet gauge tramway that served the enterprise. Our key objectives were to try and pin point the precise position of the mill and learn from what was left



A log loading ramp and much-decayed pole rails at Mount Barrow.

Photo: Tony Weston



Pole rails crossing a creek at Mount Barrow.

Photo: Tony Weston.



From The Examiner Annual of 1947: an internal combustion locomotive working on pole rails. It is possible that this shows the logging operation at Mount Barrow.



on the ground, as well as identify evidence of the tramway and railway siding that at one time served the mill.

The location is now a dairy farm so our expectations were not great but, having contacted the owners and obtained permission to visit, our 9.30 pre-visit gathering at the Koonwarra coffee shop was full of anticipation for what lay ahead. The day was mild and smoke from distant bush fires permeated the atmosphere.

We arrived at the farm gate around 10.45am and the first thing that struck us as we drove along the track to the house was the rough ground on our right where we knew the mill most likely once stood. If we were keen to poke around before we arrived we were now very optimistic as well. We met the owners at their house which is the much-altered structure erected for Christopher Mason back in 1890. They were extremely helpful and very interested in our endeavours to the extent that all electric fences were switched off throughout the farm. Having experienced on one occasion what happens when one comes into contact with an electric fence in mid-straddle, I was most appreciative of this aesture!

Our first point of investigation was the rough ground alongside the entrance road and, within minutes, the remnants of the sawdust trench were found. Nothing pinpoints the precise location of a sawmill more than this. The trench had been filled in, but settlement of the earth had left a shallow depression that attracted moisture and provided a green contrast to the parched brown pasture surrounding it. The size and shape of the outline confirmed that a vertical breaking down saw was used, and the direction of the trench allowed us to determine the location of the sawdust heap (of which no trace now remains). Given the original reported size of the heap, this could only mean that the sawdust had been removed rather than allowed to rot away. Adjacent to the trench another circular depression indicated the location of the 12000 gallon underground water tank that had served the mill and the community of Hodgkinson. Over the course of approximately three hours

we were able to traverse the whole of the

property, including the section south of the dismantled South Gippsland Railway. The site of the brick kilns that served the community was easily located because of the remnant clay pit which lies within one of the paddocks. Little evidence of the tramway formation could be seen on the north side of the former railway, but the alignment could readily be seen curving away to the south from the railway underpass through which it had once travelled. We were accompanied in our wanderings by what seemed several million bush flies. Pesky little critters! The site of Mason's Siding from the mainline into



Mason and Moore's tramway formation (slightly highlighted for clarity) emerging from the South Gippsland Railway underpass at Nine Mile Creek, east of Welshpool Vic. Photo: Phil Rickard

the sawmill property was marked by a curved ditch that had once followed the formation. Aerial photography suggests that what appears to be a tramway formation curving through the paddock near the sawmill site should have been apparent on the ground, but this was not the case. It is possible that the alignment is marked by a vegetative difference rather than an earthen mound, so a return visit may be on the cards during winter to see if it can be found. All in all it was a fascinating few hours that added some precision to the mapping and general understanding of the sawmill layout.

After leaving the property and enjoying lunch on the wharf at Port Welshpool, a visit was made to a second sawmill site of similar vintage and not far away. Robert Curram's sawmill north of Hedley operated from 1892 to 1900 when it was destroyed in a large bushfire that swept the region. The mill was connected to Hedley station by a wooden rail tramway. Research had positioned the mill at the back of a property off Morgan's Road, north-west of Hedley. Aerial photography indicated that, although the area had become grazing land in the 113 years since the mill was razed, a small patch of bushland existed alongside the creek adjacent to the mill site. This offered hope of something being left, as did the fact that the mill was completely destroyed by fire. Often abandoned metalwork from sawmills that met this fate can still be found, and this proved to be the case here.

We walked the 385 metres from the car across to the location of the mill and, on arrival, were greeted by the remains of a steel pulley shaft protruding from the ground, fragments of metal lying about half-buried, the sawdust pit (another vertical breaking down saw - now partially filled with water) and the wheel rim and other metal parts of a horse wagon in the bush behind the sawmill site. No doubt a metal detector would have turned up much more around the former sawdust trench. A very faint mound could be discerned heading away from the mill to the south-east which most probably marked the tramway alignment.

It was another fruitful visit that added to our knowledge about the sawmill. Another coffee at the Koonwarra café marked the end of our day. We presented as a much sweatier, more bedraggled lot in the afternoon than we did in the morning, but it was a pleasant end to a very fruitful and enjoyable day.

Peter Evans, Colin Harvey, Phil Rickard and Mike McCarthy

### Ottery mine, Tent Hill, near Emmaville, NSW 457mm gauge?

Situated about 30km north of Glen Innes and eight kilometres from Emmaville (originally called Vegetable Creek), the Ottery mine site was visited in late 2012 and April 2014. Lying within the Vegetable Creek tin-mining district, the Tent Hill area had a number of tin scratchers by the mid- to late 1870s, among them Alexander Ottery. The 1882 discovery by Reid and party that Ottery's lode was extremely rich saw its acquisition by John Moffat's Glen Smelting



Company, which developed the mine to some depth. The ore was transported to nearby Tent Hill where the company had an existing battery and smelting plant.

Exploited for tin until closure in 1906, the workings were acquired in 1920 by William Cooper and Nephews (Aust) Ltd, which constructed a complex treatment plant for the production of arsenic (refined arsenous oxide), mainly used in sheep dip and pesticides. The arsenic operations ceased in 1936 due to the flood of cheap imports. Subsequently, tin again became the principal output when the operation was sold, possibly to Burma-Malay Tin Limited. The mine finally closed in 1940. In the mid-1950s some re-treating of the dumps was conducted. On site today are many derelict brick structures including kilns, calciner, refinery, a bank of partly demolished condensation chambers

with a common flue leading up a hill to a large, intact, chimney stack; together with some rusted machinery, adits and shafts. In 2012, although under the control of the NSW Dept of Minerals and Resources, a native dogwood had been allowed to proliferate and obscure much of interest. A recent visit revealed that much clearing work had recently been done by locals (*Glen Innes Examiner*, 11 Feb 2014), and the publically accessible sections were relatively clear. A good, sheltered, information board has lots of history and details, but seems not well-maintained as several items had fallen down behind the glass with no remedial attention.

Narrow gauge tramways were used in the various levels (the mine reached 79m in depth) and adits. A couple of narrow gauge box trucks (thought to be 18-inch gauge) are "stuffed and mounted" by being embedded in cement! The remains of half-a-dozen more can be seen scattered down the mullock heap that cascades into a small gully. Some pieces of lightweight rail were located – maybe of 12lb and 16lb per yard sections. Visitors are advised to keep behind the fences and not drink any water thereabouts. One would also advise them not handle the white arsenic residues that coat a number of the structures!

If anyone is interested in this mine as a research project, I'd suggest that a visit to the Emmaville Mining Museum, might be a good starting point – see www.miningmuseum.emmaville.net. A quick look at the NLA's Trove newspapers also revealed much of interest. In 2010, Central West Gold NL held EL4459 (now expired) over the Ottery area, and some drilling work was carried out just outside the official heritage reserve. The company's 2010 December quarterly report has a map of the main surface features of the Ottery mine.

Phil Rickard 04/14



Looking uphill past the ruins of the two banks of condensation chambers to the flue and chimney stack, Ottery mine. 14 April 2014. Photo: Phil Rickard



Left: Remains of two narrow-gauge (probably 18-inch) box trucks, arranged in an unusual display; one being on its end, and both being set in concrete. Despite this, Mother Nature is fighting back, with a young tree slowly lifting the whole ensemble from the ground. 14 April 2014. **Below left:** Remains of the various kilns and furnaces where the ore was roasted to produce the fumes which were subsequently condensed to form arsenic trioxide crystals in the brick condensing chambers. 14 April 2014.

**Bottom left:** Close-up of the more-intact, left hand set of condensing chambers. There are two banks of chambers, originally each with 33 bays to facilitate continuous production. The arsenic trioxide crystals were then re-treated before being despatched to Sydney for further processing. Note the white arsenous residues. 1 Nov 2012.

All photos: Phil Rickard

### Evans Brothers lime kiln tramway, Platina, Victoria

610mm gauge

On 18 March 2014, volunteers from the Walhalla Goldfields Railway were doing site preparations at the old siding area at Platina (on the former 762mm gauge Moe-Walhalla line) in order to prepare for a rail delivery from Wahgunyah. In the process the volunteers dug up some of the light rail from the tramway that used to run from this siding to a nearby lime kiln.<sup>1</sup>

In September 1909, the Walhalla Marble Quarry Company applied for a tramway licence for 60 chains of tramway linking its "Marble Quarry" at Coopers Creek to a proposed siding on the Moe-Walhalla railway, then under construction. The application was signed William Myers, Quarryman. It soon transpired that the real company behind this application was Evans Brothers (late A. Smith & Company), lime, cement and firebrick merchants of 372 Flinders Street Melbourne. The Company listed amongst its products "Lilydale", "Waratah", "Heads", "Lara", and "Comadai" lime. In January of 1910, the Company sought permission to lay its tramway as soon as possible as the work at the quarry had to be pushed-on with urgency. The sum of £1 was paid to secure the tramway licence, and the line was presumably completed shortly thereafter.<sup>2</sup> The siding forming the interface between railway and tramway was opened as the "Copper Mine Siding" on 19 December 1910, and renamed "Platina" on 9 February 1911.<sup>3</sup> The tramway and siding were to be shared by Evans Bothers and the nearby copper mine at Coopers Creek.<sup>4</sup>

There was apparently much two-way traffic on the tramway. Three kilns, each 10 feet in diameter and 50 feet deep, were built with bricks hauled in from Platina, and the bagged lime was taken out in the opposite direction. Firewood to burn the lime was cut nearby and, as the area adjacent to the kilns was cut out, firewood operations shifted further away, moving as far as Knott's Siding on the Boola Road. Firewood was hauled to a central point





Light rails unearthed at Platina siding in March 2014.

by sledge and then delivered via chute to the nearest road, then loaded onto a motor truck for transport to Platina station, where it was offloaded onto the tramway for transport to the kilns. Most of the firewood was split timber about five feet long, so it was heavy work, and not for the faint-hearted.<sup>5</sup> Photographic and archeological evidence suggest that limestone was quarried and crushed some distance below the kilns, and then hauled up a single-track incline of about 3ft 6in gauge by a winch, after which it was burnt at the kilns. The incline's operations were controlled using a telephone line running alongside the haulage, evidence of which was still visible in 1989.<sup>6</sup>

Tragedy struck in September 1915 when the works manager, Mr. William Pratt, was drowned trying to save his young son who had fallen into the rain-swollen Thomson River. Both father and son were swept away, with Pratt's wife and daughter helpless witnesses to the event.7 By this time, the limes listed on Evans Brothers Company letterhead had been reduced to just two - "Waratah" and "Snowflake", the latter presumably being the trademark applied to the lime produced at Platina. Operations seem to have settled down to regular production, with the tramway licence being paid up until at least January 1926.8 Lime appears to have been both railed direct to customers and consigned to Evans Brothers own depot at Brighton.9 The history of these particular kilns past 1926 is somewhat hazy. Deterioration in the limestone supply is thought to have led to the closure of the works. The kilns may have re-opened briefly as Proudfoot's lime works, which were considered a tourist attraction for a traveller on the railway to Walhalla. The kilns were finally dismantled in the 1940s and the high-quality Hoffman bricks, brought at such expense from Melbourne, were removed and used to build two houses, one in Commercial Road, Morwell, and one in Hickox Street, Traralgon.<sup>10</sup> The route of the tramway was subsequently converted into a forest track.

Platina field report via Michael Leaney.

Evans Brothers field report and historical research by Peter Evans.

#### References

- Editors Note: Victorian Tourist & Heritage Railway organisations undertaking works such as this should obtain a copy of the *Victorian Heritage Act 1995* to ensure that their activities remain within the law. Section 127(1) and 127(2) of the Act apply directly to this type of activity. Similar legislation no doubt applies in other Australian states and territories.
- Lands Department files, PRO, VPRS 5357, unit 5367, file 06/129.
- Jungwirth A. N. and Lambert K. W. (1996). Weekly Notice Extracts 1894-1994. Published by Weekly Notice Productions, Cheltenham. Pages 81 and 275.
- Narracan Shire Advocate, 26 October 1910; 16 November 1910.
- Recollections of John Mueleman, Walhalla Heritage League Newsletter, November 1993.
- 6. Site survey by Peter Evans, April 1989.
- 7. The Argus, 2 September 1915.
- Lands Department files, PRO, VPRS 5357, unit 5367, file 06/129.
  *The Argus*, 4 March 1918.
- From a talk given by Peter Morrison (Secretary of the Moe Historical Society) to the Traralgon & District Historical Society on 11 October 1994.

Photo: Lynda George



Looking west along the jetty at South Channel Fort showing remnant sleepers set in the concrete. Photo: John Cleverdon

### South Channel Fort, Port Phillip Bay, Victoria.

#### Gauges unknown

Port Phillip Bay has few islands, yet three of these did have tramways - the man-made South Channel Fort; the well-known Swan Island system (used originally by the Victorian Military Forces sub-mariners and Navy, then the RAE, RAA and the RAN); and the little-known guano tramline on Eastern Island (in the Mud Islands group [which are sandy, not muddy!]), about half-way between South Channel Fort and Swan Island. The guano extraction dated from c.1860 to c.1900, and the company involved always referred to the islands as "Flat Islands" - one presumes "Flat Island Guano" sounded a lot more marketable than the alternative. Almost certainly Pope's Eye (another man-made but uncompleted fort just inside The Rip), would have had a tramway system similar to South Channel Fort had it been finished.

A Russian invasion scare in 1877 prompted Victorian military authorities to move the defences of Port Phillip Bay from Williamstown closer to the entrance at 'The Rip', dictated by a dramatic increase in the firepower and range of heavy armament. South Channel Fort was constructed between 1879 and 1888 as a man-made island built up on bluestone boulders and concrete with a sand covering. It is 121.9 metres long, 76.2 metres wide and a mere 6.4 metres above sea level. Much of the fort was complete with some guns in place by the time of another Russian invasion scare in 1885. A jetty was added in 1890. The South Channel Fort included a number of gun emplacements, mainly facing south towards the entrance channel, and an underground 'Keep' which included ammunition magazines, fresh water storage, kitchen and mess, officers' quarters, power room and storage areas, all connected by a network of tunnels. Defences included an electrically-detonated permanent minefield, moored static mines which exploded



on contact, and the gun battery of one central 6-inch gun, two outer 8-inch hydro-pneumatic 'disappearing' guns, and two flanking 5-inch 'disappearing' guns. There were also a number of smaller quick-firing guns. The fort also possessed two electrically-lit searchlights powered by an oil-engine-driven generator. The fort is significant for its then-revolutionary design, for its armament, and for its relative intactness.

John Cleverdon visited South Channel Fort on Monday 7 April. The visit was organised by the National Trust as part of a Heritage Festival. Of particular interest to LRRSA members are the tramway remains on the island. These include a tramway running from the jetty around the northern side of the Fort as well as short tramways in the tunnels near the gun emplacements. A visit is well worth it if readers get the chance, and the field reports editor would welcome further details. For information on how to access South Channel Fort via accredited tour operators, contact Parks Victoria on 13 1963 or visit www.parks.vic.gov.au

#### Background: Phil Rickard 04/14

South Channel Fort history: Churchward, M. (1994) *South Channel Fort: Report to the Industrial History Committee, National Trust of Australia (Victoria),* unpublished. Site report: John Cleverdon, 04/14

#### **TASSIE TRACKS**

During a November 2013 visit to Tasmania, several lines of interest were investigated. I can recommend all three as most worthwhile:

### North East Dundas Tram, Zeehan

### 610mm gauge

This was a 2ft (610mm) gauge Tasmanian government railway (TGR) which was famous for having the world's first Beyer-Garratts and using a Hagans patent locomotive. It was 29km in length and opened from Zeehan in sections between January 1897 and June 1898, when it reached its terminus at Williamsford.

On a previous visit, the route was followed on foot from Zeehan Rivulet on the eastern outskirts of Zeehan (the entire station ground is obliterated here) to where the formation crossed the Murchison Hwy near the present Melba Siding, on the former Emu Bay Railway. This section largely parallels the EBR on the north side as far as Nickel Junction (7.2km from Zeehan). From here there existed a 2.2km branch to Griffith, which awaits investigation. Immediately after Nickel Junction, the line passed under the EBR and, about 1km further on, met the highway. After crossing this road, probably only a track when the line was operating, it parallels the road for 500m before turning away to the east.

The safari on this trip starts here, and a word of warning is necessary. We drove a little over 14km along the formation and it can only be described as serious 4 wheel-drive territory; it took us three hours on the way in and 2½ hours for the return. A number of sections could only be traversed in low range 4WD, and there were several times we nearly turned back.

But what a railway it must have been! You are completely in the middle of nowhere for the entire trip. The formation twists and turns over the entire distance and finding 50m of straight track is very rare. There are virtually no signs of habitation or station remains. The only exception was Confidence Saddle (17.7km) where the tramway crossed from the Argent River catchment to that of the Ring River. There was evidence of a siding, and this was the junction for Dunkley's wooden railed horse tram which ran for about 5km to the south.

There were a number of creek crossings where the tram went across on a usually curved and sometimes quite high wooden bridge. These streams are now crossed by very steep and difficult fords. Several had bridge remains in situ, mainly piers but in the case of Great Northern Creek one length of decking remains. This is very hard to spot under its covering of tree ferns!

There are many embankments and cuttings en route. The former are sometimes quite high (estimated up to 40m), and the latter are frequently cut through solid rock with vertical walls. Being built for 2ft gauge, the clearances are fairly tight on some. A number of sleepers were observed, some still in their original position and some pushed to one side. Many still had dogspikes in them. No rail was seen.

The 4WD track ends at the site of Montezuma Station (23.3km). A short walk along the formation brings you to the Montezuma Falls. We were lucky to find plenty of water coming over the 104m drop. You can cross to the other side by means of a very narrow suspension bridge with a width of no more than 200mm. Signs at each end state that a maximum of two adults or one adult and two children are permitted on the bridge at any one time! This bridge is close to where the tramway bridge was, a few remains of which can be found on the Williamsford side.

We had planned to walk into Williamsford along the formation as this is a well graded and recognized walking trail. Due to the extended time taken to get to Montezuma, we decided that this walk would have to wait for another day. We had to marvel at the skill and determination involved in surveying, building and operating the tramway through such a wild forest area. How did the surveyors and builders know where they were going? A truly amazing feat in the 19th century.

The tramway closed to passengers in June 1929. It closed completely between Nickel Junction and Williamsford on the same date, with the remaining section from Zeehan closing with the Griffith branch in July 1932. A Mr. R. J. Howard operated the section from Confidence Saddle into Zeehan in a private capacity for timber traffic into the late 1930s.

### The North Mount Lyell Railway

#### 1067mm gauge

This railway was opened by the North Mount Lyell Copper Company in December 1900. It was built to service the company's mine and townships at Gormanston and Linda (over the hill from Queenstown), the smelters at Crotty on a 3.5km branch from Crotty Junction (which was 20.5km from Linda), the brickworks and jetty where the railway first met Macquarie Harbour (43.5km), and the new town of Pillinger on Kelly Basin (which was also part of Macquarie Harbour, 45km). The railway essentially ran north-south.

The whole enterprise was not a success and, within a couple of years was in serious financial and operational trouble. A saviour of sorts came in the form of the opposition; the Mt Lyell Mining and Railway Company, which operated the Mount Lyell Mine and the Abt railway from Queenstown to Regatta Point. This company acquired the entire NMLCC operation in August 1903. The railway struggled on for just over 20 years, with the final services in 1924 and authorized closure completed by January 1929.

Our investigations on this trip concentrated on the southern end of the railway. Time precluded any detailed investigations at Linda and Gormanston,

as vehicular traffic can go. It is through beautiful forest and parallels the Nora River which joins the Bird River near the railway bridge. There is a small car park, picnic facilities, information boards and a registration hut adjacent to the bridge. All walkers are required to sign in before commencing the walk and sign out on return. The day we were there, a grand total of six people visited Pillinger, including a couple well into their seventies.

The walk commences by crossing the reconstructed Bird River bridge, the distance to the Brickworks Jetty Siding (described as Pillinger East on all the information boards) being just over 7km. It is a truly beautiful walk being beside the Bird River for most of the way. There are many cuttings and embankments, with the formation having been washed into the river for several hundred metres at one point, involving a bit of a scramble. The cuttings are often wet and sometimes partially collapsed, but the gentle gradient gives a generally straightforward walk. A number of small tributaries



A cutting on a curve on the North-East Dundas Tramway.

Photo: Andrew Hennell

and the central section of the railway (including the Crotty Smelters Branch and smelter site) is now under the waters of Lake Burbury or in areas where access is not permitted.

Travelling south from Queenstown via John Butters Power Station on the King River, Lake Burbury is reached in 23km. The road then continues due south along the shoreline for another 4 km until Darwin Dam is reached. Public access is allowed here. Continuing south, the road joins the formation of the railway, but little is to be seen as the road has been re-graded and is well maintained. After passing the sites of Darwin and Purgatory Gap, a road junction is reached 12km from Darwin Dam. Here, the Franklin River Track swings off to the SE while the Bird River Track continues along the railway formation. It is identified as a 4WD track, but is perfectly suitable for ordinary vehicles: I would have no hesitation in taking my Goggomobile.

No road widening has taken place, and it certainly feels like driving along a railway. There is a good selection of embankments, curves and cuttings in the 5km to the Bird River bridge, which is as far of the Bird River were crossed by short timber bridges, with most having some piers remaining. One even had a wooden pier replaced by concrete. Only one rail was found along the way and few sleepers, but a number of snakes hurried off the track. The 4 Mile Tank is, surprisingly, still in situ on top of a cutting. It is rectangular and of timber construction with metal bands.

As Pillinger East is approached, the eucalypt forest starts to give way to coastal vegetation. Arrival is very sudden, as the whole area formally occupied by the sidings and jetty is largely revegetated. A picnic table, a 'long drop' toilet and comprehensive signage are provided. The main items to be seen are the remains of the jetty (mainly piles, but some cross timbers still supporting rail), the new short National Parks jetty, the very decayed remains of a North Lyell guards van, the extensive brick kilns, and two abandoned boilers. Many of the bricks manufactured here were used to build the smelters. A number of rails are scattered about the area.

Access to the remaining 1.5km of the railway to Kelly Basin (West Pillinger) does not seem to be readily available. The formation just vanishes



**Top:** The 4 Mile Tank on the bank above the North Mount Lyell Railway. Photo: Andrew Hennell **Centre:** The brickworks jetty at Pillinger. Photo: Andrew Hennell

**Above:** The internal-combustion logging locomotive preserved at Florentine. It appears to be powered by an old Ford V8 truck engine and gearbox, and the rear bogie is also powered. Photo: Andrew Hennell

into the scrub. A boat ride from Strahan may provide an easier route! The 14km return took us four hours plus at least an hour at East Pillinger, but well worth it. Highly recommended.

### RailTrack Riders, Maydena

1067mm gauge

The locals at Maydena, a small town near the outer end of the Derwent Valley Line, are an enterprising lot. With the winding down of the logging industry and setbacks like the closure of the primary school, they were looking for something to promote their town. A group of locals banded together to create RailTrack riders. They have obtained running rights over the section of the former TGR from Maydena to Florentine, which was the terminus of the line when it closed in 1993. It had previously gone 2km further to Kallista, but that was closed and lifted in 1950.

A RailTrack Rider is a four-wheeled vehicle on which are two plastic seats side by side. In front of each seat is a handle with bicycle brakes and pedals to provide the locomotion; Buster Keaton would feel right at home. A few of the Riders have two non-powering seats behind if you want to take the kids. A service may consist of only one Rider, or up to half a dozen but, no matter how many, each trip has a powered (internal combustion engine ride-on mower body) Rider bringing up the rear. This is to keep some sort of control over the group and provide a bank engine service if the gradients get the better of any of the passengers. The journey is 3 km each way and a delight. There is only one level crossing (leaving Maydena) and rail traffic must give way to road. There is a standard give way sign facing rail traffic! The main railway features en route are the Hydro Electricity Siding (which was used to unload cement during the construction of the Gordon Dam), and two signals as you approach Maydena on the return; one colour light, one semaphore. At Florentine, the ride goes as far as the outer end of the run-around loop, which is located immediately before the former log-loading area. This is now private property and cannot be accessed. A small museum and display has been built adjacent to the terminus which contains much information about the Florentine Railway and the local logging industry. Outside there are a number of tramway log bogies and a tramway locomotive. There is also a short walking trail along a nearby creek.

The Riders are constructed locally, with only the wheels imported (from the US). The Maydena group is currently attempting to obtain running rights from National Park station (about 12km closer to Hobart) to Sharp's Siding. This will be a wonderful development if it comes to pass, as National Park Station is right at the entrance to the Mount Field National Park, which attracts vast numbers of locals and visitors alike. The group has already restored the building at National Park, and is keeping the yard free of vegetation. What a pity you can't catch a train in Hobart for a day return! The RailTrack Riders operate on demand, so a phone call before you go is advisable. A great trip and well worth it!

Andrew Hennell, November 2013



Please send contributions to: Research Editor, Stuart Thyer PO Box 21, Williamstown, Vic 3016 e-mail: research@Irrsa.org.au

### **Morison and Bearby**

Tony Weston kindly forwarded this piece from the *Chemical Engineering and Mining Review*, July 10, 1947 p.399.

Diesel Locomotives for Heavy Duty

"Manufacturers of a wide variety of engineering products for the past 70 years, Morison and Bearby Pty Ltd, of Newcastle, NSW, are now producing a special line of diesel locomotives suitable for all classes of light railway work.

These locomotives are of particularly rugged construction and are suitable for rough and heavy work. The standard unit produced is for 2ft gauge; this can be varied to suit requirements. A catalogue issued recently by the company illustrates a series of these locomotives powered with Southern Cross diesel engines, but similar units can be supplied powered with petrol or kerosene engines.

A useful feature of the "M&B" locomotives is the hand operated governor which permits engine speeds ranging from 600 rpm to 1,200 rpm in all gears. This speed range greatly assists the working of the locomotive on steep gradings, sharp curves and over undulating tracks frequently encountered in general light railway work. In addition, gears are in constant mesh throughout all speeds in each direction, thus ensuring easy and foolproof gear change."

Is anyone able to add any further information and in particular say if any such locomotive was built? John Browning makes the observation, from his research into Bundaberg Foundry, that local design and construction of a commercial locomotive was no trivial enterprise. *Tony Weston* 

### **Google Maps Gallery**

Landgate, Western Australia's Land Information Authority, is the primary source of location knowledge for Western Australia. The state has become the first in Australia to embrace Google's latest mapping gadget - Google Maps Gallery an interactive atlas that launched on February 27, 2014 and provides hundreds of previously inaccessible government and business maps.1 Google approached Landgate a year ago asking them to join in showcasing the Google Maps Gallery by providing access to a range of early maps and aerial surveys from around the state. The free system available at http://maps.google. com/gallery/publisher?pub=Landgate overlays the historic images on top of Google's base map, and can be viewed online or easily imported into the Google Earth application. John Cleverdon

1. http://www.watoday.com.au/digital-life/digital-lifenews/googles-maps-gallery-gives-online-explorers-awindow-to-was-past-20140327-35kge.html

### **Do-It-Yourself Google Maps Gallery**

It is possible for Light Railways researchers to emulate the work of Google Maps Gallery from within Google Earth. By using the 'add image overlay' function, original mapping of tramways can be imported into Google Earth and aligned using landscape features common to both maps. This allows researchers to visualise where tramlines and infrastructure might remain on the ground in a modern landscape. The result can be saved and forwarded to others, who can then open the file in Google Earth, where it will align itself onto their map.

Although an excellent tool, there are limitations of this system for use with historical maps. Having features, such as roads, property boundaries or waterways, common to both maps, is necessary; roads, just as tramways, may have altered their course over time or have been discontinued. The scale of the original map and its accuracy when drawn will also affect the usefulness of the output.

In researching the suitability of the image overlay tool, I scanned a historical map of the Mt Kembla coal tramway<sup>1</sup>. The tramway has long vanished under modern Wollongong, but an accurate overlay was achieved as key roads had not moved and the original map was drawn to correct scale. For my uses, an upcoming field report, the resulting overlay gives an excellent starting point to venture out into the field.

A useful tip is to replace the solid background colour of the original map with a transparent background. Many image editing programs can do this, the resulting overlay in Google Earth will then show just the lines, rather than a semi-transparent image. By converting the lines to white, or a suitable contrasting colour, this can help alignment and visualization of the end result. A useful starting guide can be found at http://genealogy.about.com/b/2013/03/31/ diy-historical-map-overlays-in-google-earth.htm and a full tutorial at https://www.google.com. au/earth/outreach/tutorials/earthoverlays.html *Stuart Thyer* 

1. Eardley G. *Transporting the Black Diamond, Book 1.* Canberra: Traction Publications; 1968

### **Biographies of a Profession: Forestry**

In February this year, the Australian Forest History Society (AFHS) entered into a new project with the Institute of Foresters of Australia (IFA) and the National Centre for Biography at the Australian National University. The project



A map taken from Wooden Rails to Kinglake and Flowerdale, LR 67, overlaid onto Google Earth. Aligned using towns and main roads, it shows much of the the tramways subsumed by more recent house developments. Photo: Courtesy Google, DigitalGlobe, Cnes/Spot Image. Map by Ralf Alger.

aims to make biographical information about an entire profession freely available via the internet. Professor Melanie Nolan, Director of the Centre, said that she was attracted to the project as a pilot study for other professions because the relatively small size of forestry made the project readily 'doable'.

Opportunities for further collaboration with the AFHS were welcomed by IFA President, Rob de Fégely, during a field day in Southern NSW last year, and have been followed up by IFA CEO, Alison Carmichael. She noted how the IFA had marked its jubilee in 1985 by commissioning The Foresters by Athol Meyer, and that it was currently building up its digital data-base of knowledge.

The National Centre for Biography is the home for the well-loved Australian Dictionary of Biography that started in 1959 and now makes its descriptions of 12,500 Australian lives including 21 foresters - freely available on-line. In 2011 it started Obituaries Australia to make published obituaries available on-line. Although it has now gathered almost 4000 obituaries, no foresters were included until this project started. The AFHS' mission to 'advance historical understanding of human interactions with Australian forests and woodland environments' covers many professions, of which foresters are a vital part that should not be forgotten. AFHS President, Sue Feary, noted how many people who had trained as foresters had formed the early echelons of national parks organisations. Once this project has been completed, it will be important to see how other disciplines connected with forests could be covered. John Dargavel

Many historical figures involved in Light Railways history are featured in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. The Dictionary can give clues to industry links and personal connections; these are often vital in tracking successful and unsuccessful businesses that used light rail over the years. One example of a Light Railways subject is Romeo Watkins Lahey (1887–1968), well known for his Canungra timber tramway. His biography reveals a much broader insight into the personal, business and military history of the man.<sup>1</sup>

1. http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lahey-romeo-watkins-7009

### Newspapers at the National Library of Australia

Researchers will soon find that they will no longer be able to use some newspapers that were previously available at the National Library of Australia. Under the ANPLAN, issues of local and country paper newspapers that are not part of the NLA collecting policy, will be sent to the appropriate State library.

The effect for the researcher is that they will no longer be able to use all those newspapers conveniently in one location at the National Library, but will need to visit the appropriate State Libraries to read copies of local and country newspapers. Some of these will be held on microfilm at the National Library but not all dates, titles, or editions are available in that format. So, if you were conducting an Australian-wide study in country newspapers, you may have to visit each of the State Libraries to read all the newspapers of your interest. If, for example, you wanted to read recent issues of the Queensland newspaper Longreach Leader, you will need to go to the State Library of Queensland, use their Enquiry Service or an online service. Earlier copies of this title up to 1954 are available digitally in TROVE and you may be lucky to find some microform issues closer to you. For more information refer to Repatriation of Australian Newspapers at

http://www.nla.gov.au/australian-newspaperplan/repatriation-of-australian-newspapers on the National Library's website.

### **Boiler Records around the Nation**

Boiler records are an important research tool, used for both locomotives and plant in industries utilising light railways. The records help tell the story of mines, timber mills, collieries, quarries, lime works, brickworks and many other industries. They can trace locomotives across different owners, states and even countries or can reflect the rise and fall of enterprises; often the last inspection date stamped on a boiler denotes the end of an enterprise.

Boiler records were held by State and Commonwealth Governments as part of the inspection and certification requirements of relevant Acts. These records have survived to differing extents across Australia and I am looking to collate a 'state of the nation' on boiler records. To achieve this end, could researchers who have accessed boiler records please provide the following:

- Where were the records physically located?
- When did you access them?
- Was there a significant delay between requesting and receiving records?
- Has any digitization of the records occurred, enabling online access?
- Did the records appear to be complete?
- Did you have to pay for them?
- Do you have any special advice or tips for researchers accessing the records? Stuart Thyer



The 'Jackass' boiler at Richards and Sons logging winch site, near McMahons Creek, Vic. Inset: The boiler shows a pattern of inspections up until the destruction of the site in the 1939 fires. Photo: Scott Gould



# Heritage & Tourist

Please send contributions to: Heritage and Tourist Editors, Andrew Webster and David Fitzsimons PO Box 21, Williamstown, Vic 3016 e-mail: heritagetourist@Irrsa.org.au Digital photographs for possible inclusion should be sent directly to editor@Irrsa.org.au including location and photographers name.

### QUEENSLAND

### FRIENDS OF ARCHER PARK STATION AND STEAM TRAM MUSEUM INC., Rockhampton

1067mm gauge

It is an exciting time as the day draws near when the Friends Association will take over management and operation of the museum from the Rockhampton Regional Council. Over the past few months the Executive Committee has had many meetings with Council officers to determine acceptable conditions – agreement was recently reached. The Council has approved the proposal that Friends take on the management and a formal contract is being drawn up.

Briefly the conditions are:

- Council, as owner of the museum and most of its exhibits and equipment, will retain responsibility for maintenance and will provide specialist support if necessary, eg. safety and mechanical.
- The Friends Association will be responsible for all running costs such as wages, services, fuel, etc. To fund these, the Friends will receive a management fee from Council and will retain all income from the museum's operation. The Friends will take over management of the museum from about 1 April 2014 but responsibility for operating the rolling stock will be delayed until the organisation can finalise its accreditation with the Transport Department's Rail Safety Regulator.

From the excellent roll up at the last two monthly meetings it is clear that members are keen to become involved in the process and support the running of the museum for the benefit of the community. Future meetings will certainly include much on management issues for the museum to give members knowledge of what is happening and seek their contributions. There has also been a change in the operating name and it will operate under a shortened trading name, "Archer Park Rail Museum". This trading name has now been registered. *Tram Tracks* 4/14

### DURUNDUR RAILWAY, Woodford

610mm gauge

April was a busy month for ANGRMS with several significant happenings.

A significant rolling stock milestone took place on the running day on Sunday 6 April when the 84 year old Grovers bogie wagon was returned to passenger service after overhaul. in progress on reinstating the balloon loop for traffic. The financial position is better than in recent times, helped greatly by income from the "driver experience" days.

Minutes of the meeting of the Association of Tourist Railways, Queensland, Inc. 1/3/2014

### BUDGET DEMOLITION SALES, Telford St, Virginia 610mm gauge

Ex-Racecourse Mill John Fowler 0-4-2 (17683 of 1927) is still standing at the entrance to this industrial yard as it has done for the past 7 years. John Browning 4/14



Fowler 17683 at Budget Demolition Sales, Virginia, on 31 March 2014. Photo: John Browning

On 5 April, a major milestone took place in regard to the track extension. The resleepered set of points near the level crossing was moved into place, and several prefabricated concrete sleepered track panels were moved from Woodford station to Storeybrook and placed in the correct alignment. Work also continued with the repainting of the ex-Wamuran station building, with only a few finishing touches still required.

It was decided to replace the driving wheel springs on 6wDM *NETHERDALE*, (Bundaberg Foundry 13 of 1954), which had several broken leaves. Finding a suitable spring works that can undertake this task on locomotive springs has proved quite a challenge. Workers only managed to locate a few throughout Australia and were lucky to find one at Northgate in Brisbane.

This will complete the last major mechanical issue on *NETHERDALE*.

The 0-6-2T steam locomotive (Bundaberg Foundry 5 of 1952) is still undergoing major maintenance. *Durundur Railway Bulletin*, Volume 35, Number 326, March/April, 2014

### QUEENSLAND PIONEER STEAM RAILWAY CO-OPERATIVE, Swanbank

1067mm gauge

Loco PB15 Walkers Ltd. Maryborough PB 15 4-6-0 No.448 *R.V.ARMSTRONG* (93 of 1908) has just passed its boiler inspection. Work is still

### **NEW SOUTH WALES**

### MANDALONG VALLEY RAILWAY, Mandalong 595mm gauge

This private museum railway is in the course of development with a 1km circuit of track under construction. Three steam locomotives have been obtained as well as a steam-outline diesel. As noted previously, Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 1862 of 1952, ex Victoria and Macknade mills, has been acquired from Timbertown and is to be named WAUCHOPE, in recognition of the fact that it spent longer at Timbertown than in sugar mill service. It has passed a boiler inspection. Under restoration is John Fowler 0-4-2T PETRIE (19930 of 1933) ex-Babinda and Moreton mills, which was acquired from Peter Loney in Victoria. The third locomotive is a 0-4-0ST built in 2013 by Denmark Engineering using parts from a large 12-inch gauge locomotive that was never completed by its previous owner. This charming locomotive owes something in appearance to Hunslet quarry tank and Peckett designs. It is available for sale.

The steam outline locomotive is the one built by John Dunlop in approximately 1980 for the Wyndham Estate in the Hunter Valley. It was later rebuilt from a "2-4-2T" with a petrol engine to a "0-4-2T" diesel for use at Leyland Brothers World, Karuah, in about 1990. It recently arrived at Mandalong Valley as a "0-4-0T" together with four passenger cars, having been acquired from another private owner in the Wyong Shire. The railway is happy to receive visitors by prior appointment. To arrange a visit, please contact Morgan Denmark on 0452 180 673. John Browning 4/14

### **ZIG ZAG RAILWAY, Clarence**

### 1067mm gauge

After its recent natural disasters of flood and fire, the railway has been able to start planning and spending on more rebuilding, being fairly confident that reimbursement money will be forthcoming.

In February staff from the the railway met 'Lands Department' personnel from various regional offices and the Treasury Managed Funds. The item of major importance to the Zig Zag Railway and its Trust was the repair of flood damage, in particular the damage on the Clarence Bank, west of Clarence Tunnel. The critical list of work to be completed consists of clearing the Bottom Points workshop and depot of debris and making it safe (this includes an asbestos check before and after) and repairing the Workshop shed, track, and the Signalling and Radio system.

New timber sleepers have been ordered to replace the 320 lost at Big Flat Rock on Middle Road. The railway phone has been connected to the Bottom Points depot. The luffing crane is ready to go and stored at Hartley Vale awaiting use.

Chris Eagle has obtained quotations from Johnston's Transport to move the donated lathes and other machinery to Lithgow. However there is not much point in moving the items until there is room in the workshop to receive it.

Power has been restored to the compressor room in the workshop. This is the last of the current repairs.

When the railway receives a response from the ADF insurer, it can pursue the clearing of the mess outside the confines of the workshop and



Fowler 0-4-2T PETRIE under restoration at Mandalong Valley Railway.

Photo: Graeme Belbin



The Mandalong Valley Railway 0-4-0ST that is available for sale.

Photo: Graeme Belbin

resume sifting the burnt contents of the machine shop and office. Workers started documenting the losses as the ash was sifted but there is still work to do as every skerrick needs to be recorded to maximize the indemnity from the ADF. Jobs that can be started then are:

- making the roof of the shed watertight
- sifting and cataloguing the remains of the office/machine shop
- removing debris and rebuilding the machine shop and re-cladding the shed. The re-cladding would include grit blasting and painting the main shed supports scorched in the fire. A structural engineer would need to be engaged to design, supervise and sign off on the work.

Michael Forbes, Mark Langdon, *Switchback* issue 132 3/14

### South Maitland Railways Pty Ltd (a Division of H & M Holdings Pty Ltd) and Hunter Valley Training Company Pty Ltd, East Greta

1435mm gauge

The privately owned South Maitland Railways Pty Ltd continues to provide transit for coal trains to the Pelton loading terminal, which is fed by overland conveyor from the Austar Coal Mine at Ellalong. This mine was originally developed as an extension of the Pelton Colliery by the Newcastle–Wallsend Coal Mining Co. in the 1970s. Nowadays, heavy maintenance of the railway is done mainly by contractors, but SMR retains a small staff to perform signalling and other miscellaneous duties. The coal trains are currently operated by Pacific National, up to a maximum of four a day, representing almost 9000 tonnes net.

In 1989, the SMR locomotive complex at East Greta Junction was taken over by the Hunter Valley Training Company and used for apprentice training purposes, but late in 2013, HVTC vacated the site and moved to a new purpose built facility at Rutherford. Earlier in 2013, SMR Beyer Peacock 2-8-2Ts 10 and 18 (5520 of 1912 and 5909 of 1918) which were placed in trust with HVTC on the understanding that they were to remain at their old home, were taken from their resting place in the locomotive workshop and placed in a new purpose built storage shed, adjacent to the coal loader. This was necessitated by the lease of the workshop to Bradken, to be used for upgrading of diesel electric locomotives.

The Hunter Valley Training Company is a non-profit organisation, supported by several industrial sponsors, including the engineering firm Howden, and to celebrate this firm's 160th anniversary, HVTC arranged for the privately owned *Blue Zephyr* train to be steam hauled to Neath on Saturday 5 April, conveying guests to a luncheon at the Neath Hotel. Since the departure of HVTC from the East Greta Junction site, the former SMR steam running shed has been vacant, and in February SMR 18 was taken from storage and placed in the shed on No.2 road to enable necessary repairs to be performed in preparation for hauling the celebratory train, the crewing being provided by the Lachlan Valley Railway.

### Heritage NEWS & Tourist NEWS

As a contingency measure, SMR generally requires steam hauled trains to be accompanied by a second locomotive, and as SMR No.10 was unavailable, 18 was joined by the LVR's ex NSW Government Railways Baldwin Lima Hamilton 2-8-2 5917 (75580 of 1952), which marked this engine's return to service after major repairs extending over several years.

The running of this historic train was a cooperative exercise. SMR closed its line to coal traffic for the duration, planned the schedule, and made arrangements for safe boarding and unloading of passengers at East Greta Junction and Neath stations. Austar Coal Mine donated locomotive coal and allowed the empty train to run through to its Pelton loading terminal where the locomotives were reversed on the triangle. This was the first time since 1983 that a 10 Class locomotive had operated over the full length of the SMR system. It was also the first time that a 59 Class locomotive had ventured beyond the SMR exchange sidings at East Greta Junction. The operation of a passenger train entirely within the confines of the SMR was highly unusual, and had not occurred since the pre-1930 era when the company operated the occasional special train for the benefit of its employees.

Tragically, shortly after this event two miners died in a fall of coal at the Austar Mine, casting gloom over the region. Robert Driver 4/14

### BATEMANS BAY TOURIST RAILWAY, Batemans Bay

#### 380mm gauge

John Lawrence reports that on a recent trip to the Batemans Bay district he happened to locate a small tourist railway at a sanctuary park near Batemans Bay. The locality is the Birdland and Animal Park on the southern outskirts of the town. The little train has a steam outline locomotive powered with a Ford Escort petrol engine coupled to a manual gearbox through a hand operated clutch. The throttle is a lawnmower type lever with cable connected to the carburettor. The wheel arrangement is 4-2-0 design with the final drive through a differential to a single set of driving wheels behind the four wheel leading bogie pony truck. There were two carriages coupled to the loco, both equipped with two four wheel bogies. "The only identification I could locate during this short investigation was the number in the cab which was X 826 '

"I did not have a tape measure with me but I thought that the gauge appeared to be about 15 inches or 380mm. The meandering circular track appeared to be laid with rails of 20lb/yard or 9kg/m. The track was laid with a mixture of steel and wooden sleepers." John Lawrence 3/14

### LITHGOW STATE MINE RAILWAY, Lithgow 1435mm gauge

On Saturday 12 April the LSMR started D34 (English Electric A.197 of 1969) for the first time since being preserved by the LSMR. The engine hadn't been turned over for nearly 7 years. D34 was built in 1969 for Australian Iron and Steel's Port Kembla plant by English Electric at Rocklea QLD and was their heaviest and most powerful loco at the time, weighing in at 132t and its 12CSVT engine produced 1340kw.

You can see the smoky start up on YouTube at the following link - http://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=vwkNJG0fSwl&feature=youtu.be and you can also see video of a trip along the entire LSMR branch line on YouTube, which was posted in April 2014 by the LSMR. Go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ki\_rYPOh-s Lithgow State Mine Railway 4/14

### VICTORIA

### Powelltown Centenary, Powelltown

The Upper Yarra Historical Society approached Frank Stamford and Mike McCarthy early in 2013 about supporting the Powelltown Tramway Centenary on 17 November. From this discussion the Powelltown Centenary booklet evolved but



Nearing the end of the return journey to East Greta Junction, the Blue Zephyr train drops downgrade approaching Gillieston on Saturday 5 April 2014. Notice the extended smoke box on number18, which incorporates a self-cleaning front end, fitted in 1998 when the locomotive was on hire to 3801 Ltd for tourist work in the NSW Southern Highlands. Photo: Robert Driver



The extensive restoration of ex PWD NSW Krauss 0-4-0T JACK (6063 of 1908) has recently been completed at the Lake Macquarie Light Railway, Toronto NSW. Photo: Graeme Belbin

the task didn't end there. Further contact from the UYHS in the weeks leading up to the event saw another request to support the happenings on the big day if at all possible. The UYHS had put a lot of work into preparing a range of activities at Yarra Junction and Powelltown where the local community, in conjunction the UYHS, arranged for photographic displays, a market and a number of other events over the day.

A key item was the opportunity to travel from Yarra Junction to Powelltown alongside the tramway alignment wherever possible and to inspect crossing points where the tramway veered from being visible from the main road. To facilitate this, the centenary booklet was to be an important asset but to further help matters, the LRRSA was asked to erect signage at station and siding sites. The idea was that visitors could follow the route of the tramway, stop at each site to read a bit about each and compare the historic photographs in the booklet with the current day view. Clearly our knowledge of precisely where the locations were was deemed a key advantage. The centenary celebrations were to be held on Saturday 17 November so on Tuesday 12 November LRRSA members Phil Rickard, Frank Stamford and Mike McCarthy met at the Yarra Junction Museum to load signs and star pickets into Mike's trailer.

First stop was at the junction of Little Yarra Road and the Warburton Highway in the middle of Yarra Junction. It was actually a sign that told that this was the way to Powelltown. Because Powelltown now has fewer than 200 residents apparently it doesn't qualify for road signage. Very strange! Our sign was to rectify this but it was with some trepidation about the legality of what we were doing that we banged our posts in and attached our sign under the curious stares of the puzzled locals.

Subsequent signs were erected at (or near) Barrier, No 1 Siding, Gladysdale, Black Sands, Reid's Siding, Groom's Siding, Three Bridges, Worlley's Siding, Gilderoy, United Siding, Fieglin's Siding and Powelltown.

It was a good half day of enjoyment that hopefully helped visitors understand more about the past. The Friday following the centenary we retraced our steps to retrieve the signs and star pickets to return them to the museum. Against all predictions only two were pinched! Frank Stamford and Mike McCarthy 3/14

### BELLARINE PENINSULA RAILWAY, Queenscliff

#### 1067mm gauge

On Monday March 17, a railway volunteer noticed that one of the railway's station signs had been removed from the location known as Marcus station, which once boasted a Mallee type shed and separate goods platform. Marcus opened as 'Ocean Grove' before being renamed 'Marcus Hill' in 1896, then 'Marcus' in 1904. Its main traffic in later years was milk dispatched from the Ocean Grove dairy. Today this site is on the path of the Rail Trail between South Geelong and Queenscliff.

The sign was cut from its supporting posts by a saw of some description and it is not clear why anyone would do such a thing. A volunteer from the railway had spent many hours creating the sign to mark the location of significance just near Banks Road railway crossing. The replacement cost of the sign will be approximately \$1000 but this could be more if the sign had to be made outside the volunteer base. Recovery of the sign would save volunteers many hours organising its replacement.

The sign is made of solid timber with edging painted black with white painted raised wood lettering "MARCUS". The railway is asking for anyone with information on the sign's whereabouts to make it known so the sign can be restored to its former location. Anyone with information should notify the police at Geelong. Editor: Perhaps the first place to look would be any young men named Marcus in the area



### WALHALLA GOLDFIELDS RAILWAY, Walhalla 762mm gauge

The Victorian long weekend in March gave a very healthy return for the railway. Many people took the chance to enjoy the fresh air in Walhalla away from the smokey Latrobe Valley. As of then 92 Morwell residents had taken up WGR's \$5 offer for a train ride to get away from the open cut fire. On Wednesday, 12 March the whole of Morwell Park Primary School visited Walhalla for a day, for respite from the smoke. Fortunately the fire is now out.

The railway has had a few requests from the public to run birthday parties for children and families at WGR. In response, workers have come up with a concept which may help increase the volunteer force in the future. The plan is to keep things simple so that the parties are not too onerous. Additional helpers will be recruited as party hosts, accompanying the groups on the trains to ensure that everything runs smoothly. Children will receive a flag and party bag full of railway goodies to help celebrate the day. At Thomson there will be the opportunity for children's photos including the loco and every effort will be made to make the special day a memorable experience. It is hoped this will encourage more young families to visit Walhalla and perhaps some may want to volunteer or have repeat journeys.

The hard working Way and Works gang has been awarded another job earning much needed dollars for the railway. WGR was approached to lay some lengths of track as part of a static display at Cowwarr railway station site by the Gippsland Plains Rail Trail Committee (GPRTC). The display involved laying a 12m section of broad gauge railway on 21 March to display a VR GY freight wagon as part of an interpretative display for Rail Trail users.

Michael Leaney, President of the WGR said: "Our Way and Works volunteers have maintained many of the skills required for railway track construction by traditional methods which have died out with increasing mechanization. It's pleasing that the GPRTC saw the WGR as being an important resource for this type of work and selected us to construct this track section. It's one volunteer community group helping another."

The WGR is supplying the rails, sleepers and skilled labour while the GPRTC is looking after the ballast. Materials have been sourced from the WGR's existing stock and via the Registrar of Tourist and Heritage Railways which has also facilitated the provision of a GY wagon for the display. *Dogspikes and Diesel*, 3/14

### PUFFING BILLY RAILWAY, Belgrave 762mm gauge

History was made on Thursday 20 March, as Stacey Faletoese from Berwick in Victoria boarded Puffing Billy Railway becoming the Railway's 10 millionth passenger since it was reopened by the Puffing Billy Preservation Society in 1962.

GROOMS SIDING

### Heritage NEWS & Tourist NEWS

Stacey was travelling on Puffing Billy with her husband Lucas and their son Tepa (4 years) and their 13-week old baby Melia.

Puffing Billy Railway CEO, John Robinson, said: "This record is a credit to the staff and huge band of dedicated volunteers who, over the years, have laboured tirelessly and given their time freely to preserve Puffing Billy for the enjoyment of all Australians and overseas visitors."

Graeme Daniel reports that 14A (Newport 1914) is nearing completion of its overhaul and that 8A's (Newport 1908) overhaul is underway with the wheel sets being crack tested. *CARBON* (Couillet for Decauville, 1890) has a new boiler. Kine Haugland, Marketing Executive, Puffing Billy Railway, Graeme Daniel 3/14

### ALEXANDRA TIMBER TRAMWAY AND MUSEUM, Alexandra

610mm gauge

Jane and Gerry Laws report that *The Alexandra Standard* editorial review - "Murrindindi: What's On 2013-14" featured a report regarding the Alexandra Railway Precinct Master Plan. The Master Plan to turn Alexandra's Railway Precinct into a vibrant tourism hub is gaining traction after a \$13,500 pledge from the State Government provided roughly a third of the funds needed. Master Plan steering committee member Gerry Laws said he hoped that generations to come could experience and appreciate the precinct.

Carl Hopkins reports that the usable fire bars are back in the Fowler's (11885 of 1909) firebox. Another one or two fire bars may need to be repaired as there is too much gap at the moment for rail service, but it should be usable for a fire for the steam test. Bolts have been loosely installed in the main smoke box attachment holes, but the gaps around the blast pipe area still need to be blocked up using the cover plates that are sitting in the ash pan in the loco shed. Peter Evans reports that on Saturday 22 March, work started on removing ex-Cheetham Salt Ltd Ruston No.4 (Ruston & Hornsby 320555 of 1951) from Dave Mickle's property at Cranbourne for eventual transport to Alexandra. The much-rusted cab has been removed, the loco has been dug up and craned onto timber blocks, and a start has been made on removing the siezed drive chains so that the wheels will turn once again. Timberline 136 4/14

### TASMANIA

### Redwater Creek Steam Railway, Sheffield 610mm gauge

The Tasmanian long weekend of 8-10 March saw the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the annual Sheffield Steam Festival. This November will also mark 100 years of the TGR Railton-Wilmot railway which passed through Sheffield.

As usual the Redwater Creek Steam and Heritage Society had their delightful 610mm gauge 0-4-0T

Krauss locomotive (composite assembly of B/N 5862 & 5800 of 1910) in operation on their railway. The three carriage train which included the North East Dundas Tramway bogie car c.1898 was well patronized. The aroma of the loco's wood smoke wafted across the rally grounds to blend with that of the numerous traction engines and steam roller.

Although the weather was showery on the Sunday the event was well supported by the locals and visitors.

Ross Mainwaring 3/14

### WEST COAST WILDERNESS RAILWAY, Queenstown

#### 1067mm gauge

The ABC has reported: Major work on the re-opened Abt railway in Tasmania's north-west has stopped, pending the incoming Minister's approval of major expenditure.Trains are still

only running half way along the line from Queenstown to Strahan.

The Infrastructure Department says while preliminary work is underway, major expenditure needs approval from the new Minister, who is yet to be named.

The West Coast Mayor Robyn Gerrity is expecting the full run will be finished by the next peak season, but says tourists are satisfied with what is on offer. "They like the fact that it's shorter so it gives them a lot more time to spend in the other towns as well," said Alderman Gerrity.

"As far as opening the whole line goes, they've possibly got another six months work at least to get the track finished and signed off to Strahan. It'll be next tourist season before it'll be running all the way through."

Luke Martin from the Tourism Industry Council wants a new business model locked in as soon as possible. "I'm hoping with the new Government



Couillet 986 of 1889 CARBON showing its new boiler, built by W.E.Smith Engineering P/L of Coffs Harbour. Photo Graeme Daniel



The 0-4-0T Krauss makes a late afternoon departure from the Redwater Creek Society's railway station at Sheffield, Tasmania. The carriage behind the locomotive is the superbly restored North East Dundas bogie carriage. 9 March, 2014. Photo: Ross Mainwaring

they'll move to give that certainty and to get a commercial operator in; this is not the type of thing I think Government should be running," he said. The previous government had expected upgrades on the scenic track to be completed by now. Claire Todd www.abc.net.au via Phil Rickard 3/14

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

### **BENNETT BROOK RAILWAY, Whiteman Park** 610mm gauge

A 2013 film from Western Australia, "Factory 293", was filmed in Whiteman Park and at the old Midland Railway Workshops.

Simon Mead from Whiteman Park reports: "I was fortunate to be able to attend the premiere screening of the film last Friday. I was amazed that anyone would even contemplate filming a story set in Siberia during a blizzard here in WA, let alone that they succeeded so brilliantly. The effects are very convincing and were all done locally. A short "making of" video is available on their web site - http://factory293.com/ WVJ did not make the final cut, but the opening sequence of the final production features Mussel Pool station in similarly bleak conditions. The story is set during WWII in a Soviet munitions factory deep in Siberia during a blizzard. The film is due for release soon."

Lindsay Watson 3/14

### ATHRA New President for ATHRA

Following Brian Busch's resignation due to ill health, Chris Martin was elected Chairman of the Association of Tourist and Heritage Railways Australia at a meeting in Launceston. Chris has been Vice Chairman and Secretary and urges members who have not looked at the website lately to take the time to do so; it is now a very useful tool for holiday planners and enthusiasts alike. http://www.athra.asn.au Chris Martin 3/14

### **OVERSEAS NEWS**

### UNITED KINGDOM

### WAR OFFICE LOCOMOTIVE TRUST

### 610mm gauge

A boiler order has been placed for the World War I Hunslet 4-6-0T (1215 of 1916). Chairman Ian Hughes, said: "Our tight timescale eliminated two out of the four potential suppliers, and of the final two, Israel Newton Ltd came out as best value on a delivery that matched the other finalist, and I am very glad to say an order has now been placed and work commenced". Unfortunately the Trust has had to compromise on timescales; Newton's could have made a boiler in time to fit and have 1215 ready for September (assuming all work was complete on the rest of the loco) but this would have cost £10k more than allowed for in the grant. What Newton's can do though is have a boiler ready for early September which means the loco should be ready for a revised target of 11 November

Despite the dismal weather the volunteers at the workshop have continued repairing and assembling. Those with four double jointed elbows found a niche job in refitting the last of the bolts holding the cylinders on, some of them being within the hollow core of the smokebox saddle and behind the exhaust steam pipe which is also part of the casting; a painfully time consuming job when some nuts can only be moved a 1/12th of a turn at a time with a repositioning of spanners and extension bars between each move. Other items have included finishing off remounting the motion brackets, with various sections of angle and gussets all now attached by a combination of rivets and fitted bolts, refitting the tank valences, fitting the rear cylinder covers and starting work on tidying up and reassembling the drawbars; a not insignificant job in itself with a few chunks to be made good in the buffing faces.

To continue refitting the axleboxes, it has been decided to take the frames to the workshop that is carrying out the axlebox machining. As the workers are using the existing hornguides, each has to be carefully cleaned up square to centre line then the box machined to fit. It is much easier to double and triple check measurements if this all takes place in the same location; this should ensure that all is true when the axles are refitted. Part of the reason for keeping a tight hold on costs is that despite being stripped to many component parts, workers are still finding areas (such as the bogie tyres) that are in reality in poorer condition than initially thought. With regard to the bogie tyres, these have also now been ordered. This is also why ongoing support is still needed and is as important now as when the restoration started; the Trust cannot back off on fund raising even though they have been very fortunate with grant applications so far.

While the frames are temporarily out of the workshop, work will continue to add to the pile of renovated items that is being assembled ready to be fitted, and while there is a bit more space the present plan is to extract the bunker and start on

some of the work required to finish it off, and by the time they return, the Hudswell Clarke should be pretty much completed, allowing total focus on the Hunslet.

Meanwhile the search will also continue for some of the missing items: the loco is lacking the two Furness No 2 lubricators and another Roscoe No 1 lubricator, as well as all four spectacle frames (nominal 16" diameter). *News From The Trench*, War Office Locomotive

Trust newsletter, 2/14

### STATFORD BARN RAILWAY, Tamworth WELSH HIGHLAND RAILWAY, Porthmadog 610mm gauge

Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 11 (972 of 1912), ex Lautoka Mill, Fiji, had its first public outing since restoration to working order at Statfold Barn when it featured at the Statfold Enthusiasts' Day on 29 March, immaculately turned out in Midland Railway red. It was then transported to the Welsh Highland Railway, arriving at Dinas on 4 April. It undertook gauging trials between Caernarfon and Porthmadog on 9-10 April. On 12 April it worked a test train and unsurprisingly it found the 7km stretch averaging 1 in 43 north from Beddgelert a major challenge, given that it was designed to operate on relatively flat cane lines in Fiji. The locomotive was used to double head a passenger train (with a South African Bever Garratt) between Caernarfon and Porthmadog on 19 April. It was on display at Harbour Station, giving cab rides, until returning the following day the same way it had come.

The locomotive was programmed to appear at a Gala to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of preservation on the Ffestiniog Railway in early May and was expected to be named *FIJI* by the Fijian High Commissioner at a ceremony at Porthmadog Harbour Station on 2 May. It was also be used for a special freight train photo charter in aid of The Railway Children charity on 9 May and possibly for passenger shuttles between Caernarfon and Waunfawr during the beer festival the following weekend. John Browning 4/14



The Hudswell Clarke being put through its paces at Statfold Barn on 29 March.

Photo: courtesy Henry Noon

### New from LRRSA Sales ...

### Climax a locomotive resurrected Compiled by Peter Charrett

Published by Puffing Billy Preservation Society



Soft cover, 32 pages, A4 size Includes a potted history of Climax locomotive No.1694, the Tyers Valley Tramway, the locomotive in service on the Tyers Valley Tramway and Puffing Billy Railway, and photographs of the Tyers Valley Harman and TACL locomotives.

39 photographs - 24 in colour, four-colour map of Tyers Valley

Tramway Price \$10.00 plus postage (\$9.00 to LRRSA members) Weight: 160 gm

### Powelltown Tramway Centenary

### 1913 – 2013

Powelltown Tramway Centenary



By Mike McCarthy & Frank Stamford

Published by the LRRSA. Soft cover, 32 pages, A4 size

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### The Narrow Gauge

Whitfield – Gembrook – Crowes – Walhalla By Nick Anchen

Published by Sierra Publishing 216 pages, 300mm 240mm landscape, hard cover, about 300 photographs



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