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LIGHT RAILWAYS

Australia's Magazine of Industrial & Narrow Gauge Railways

Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc.

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Imperial to metric conversions:

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

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Editorial

Australia – the combustible country?

As production of this edition of *Light Railways* was in the closing stages, news of the disastrous bushfires in Western Australia came through. The town of Yarloop has been virtually destroyed, with 160 houses and most businesses reduced to ash, and tragically, two lives lost.

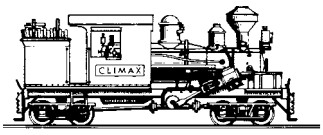
Amongst the buildings destroyed was the Yarloop Workshops, a comprehensive early 20th century facility that once serviced all the machinery and foundry needs of Millars Karri and Jarrah Forests Limited. Access to the area is currently restricted, but we hope to have an update in the April edition of *Light Railways*.

This brings to mind other well - known heritage operations that have suffered from fires. In 2006 the Walhalla Goldfields Railway lost a trestle bridge to fire, while the Zig Zag railway is still struggling to reopen after the October 2013 fires. In built up areas, the Loftus tramway museum, and Steamrail both had serious fires in 2015, with irreplaceable items and years of volunteer labour lost forever.

It is an unfortunate reminder to record what you can while it is still there, as no matter how loved, or valued, disaster can destroy what would seem to be a permanent feature on our heritage landscape.

Scott Gould

Front Cover: *Bob Gough won the 2015 Mike Loveday trophy with this photo of Perry 0-6-2T B/N 1850.46.1* Skipper *hauling Sugar Cane to Qunaba Sugar Mill, Bundaberg in 1975. Today* Skipper *is preserved at the National Railway Museum in Adelaide.*



Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc. A14384U
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www.lrrsa.org.au

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 forests.

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

Mason and Moore's Nine Mile Creek sawmill c1891. Christopher and Elizabeth Mason's residence in left background and stables to the rear left of the mill. The log yard was configured to provide for log deliveries by tram on the left and deliveries by bullock and horse team on the right. The tramway passed through the shed and onwards to Port Welshpool. *Photo: Late Beryl Atkins Collection*

Mason and Moore at Nine Mile Creek

by Mike McCarthy

It was the opportunity offered by construction work on the Great Southern Railway that, in 1888, prompted Christopher Mason and William Moore to purchase John Ferres's sawmill on Nine Mile Creek, 7 km north-east of Port Welshpool in South Gippsland. At the outset, Mason and Moore shared similar plans to most other sawmillers dotted along the route of the railway; profit from the sale of sleepers and other timbers required by contractor George Buckley & Sons, and then use the railway to access the Melbourne market. However, this was soon to change as the broad thinking and ambitious partners saw prospect for much greater things.

The construction of the Great Southern Railway, stretching from Dandenong to Port Albert, aimed to end the isolation of this corner of Victoria and open it up for settlement. Surveys of Branch lines proposed to radiate from the new railway featured prominently in the press and the concept of public and privately owned narrow gauge feeder tramways into the hill country was subject to debate in the press and parliament. In an era of optimism and expansion, and encouraged by the public dialog, Mason and Moore sought to position themselves to benefit from the growth and the development that would surely follow. The sawmill acquired from Ferres proved central to their plans.

Christopher Mason was a young, entrepreneurial sawmiller when, in 1886, at the age of 25 he opened his first mill, most likely a single-bench 'spot mill', at Yarram, 28 km east of Welshpool.[1] Mason was a very direct, practical man not known for his tact but respected for his drive, courage and perseverance.[2] In 1888, the opportunity arose to purchase a second plant, that of John Ferres at Nine Mile Creek, a short distance north of Port Welshpool; so, in need of finance, he formed a partnership with William Moore, 11 years his senior. They were to trade as C.R. Mason & Co.

Moore was a highly respected and successful Yarram horse trader[3] who had made his money supplying the British Army in India with re-mounts.[4] Related through marriage both men were strategic thinkers who found they could work well together. With Mason running the day-to-day operations and Moore providing finance and influence the Yarram mill was shifted to Darriman, north-east of Port Albert. However, it was to operate here for only a short period.[5] Caught in the industry slump of the time the sawmill worked spasmodically until the partners sold it to John O'Connor in 1890.[6]

John Ferres

Mason and Moore's second sawmill was purchased at auction in March 1888 from the trustees of John Ferres's estate. Ferres was forced, through insolvency, to dispose of his Nine Mile Creek sawmill.[7] He had formerly been the Victorian Government Printer and had retired after a controversial final year or two of his career in Melbourne. With tenders soon to be called for the construction of the Great Southern Railway he sought his fortune by investing his savings in the establishment of the sawmill in 1886. The railway construction work demanded large numbers of sleepers and other timbers, which he was well placed to provide. He also saw Port Welshpool's deep-water port as a valuable link to markets.[8]

Unfortunately for him the delay in commencement of construction work on the railway meant he found little demand for his output and then the further delay repairing the burnt Welshpool jetty meant that he had no access to the Melbourne timber market.

With these obstacles, combined with breakage of machinery and difficulties in getting logs to the sawmill during the winter of 1887, Ferres soon ran out of cash and found himself foul of a creditor who successfully had him declared insolvent. The outcome was the sale to Christopher Mason and William Moore.[9]

The partners were also keen to provide sleepers and bridging timbers to Buckley but, like Ferres, were thwarted by the long wait for the work to commence. However, a strong campaign by the Welshpool Railway and Jetty League saw a contract let in August 1889 for the reconstruction of the jetty, with Mason, in partnership with local contractor Alex Don, the successful tenderer. This provided welcome work for Mason and Moore's nearby sawmill but the contract work was also to prove something of a revelation. Whilst undertaking the rebuilding Mason became aware of the durable qualities of the Yellow Stringybark which grew in great numbers across the hill country north of Port Welshpool. The piles of the jetty were of this species and most had not deteriorated at all since Alex Blair[10] completed construction back in 1859.[11] The jetty was rebuilt by cutting off the burnt tops of the piles and splicing on new upper sections. Mason saw the potential of this timber and, with Moore, embarked upon a crusade to convince, in particular, the mining and ports authorities of its qualities.

Mason's timing was near perfect. The late 1880s was a period of re-evaluation when it came to the usefulness of local forests. Prior to this, the bulk of construction timbers came to Victoria from other Australian colonies or from overseas. Indeed, in 1888 Warragul sawmiller Charles Sargeant, pointed to the station master's residence at the recently opened Moe railway station indicating that it was constructed almost entirely from Oregon timber imported from America.[12] As Moe sat at the eastern edge of the then magnificent but now long gone West Gippsland forest, to many this seemed absurd.

A major slump in demand for timber in 1887-88 prompted the Victorian Hardwood and Sawmillers Association to demand change. With construction of the massive West Melbourne Dock (later Victoria Dock) underway and requiring an enormous quantity of timber, the association called the Melbourne Harbor Trust to task for specifying Jarrah from Western Australia for wharf decking when, in the opinion of its members, local timbers were just as suitable.[13] Their concerns could not have been better directed, for on the Harbor Trust Commission sat distinguished engineer and surveyor Clement Hodgkinson. Hodgkinson had developed a deep knowledge of Victorian timbers whilst Assistant Commissioner of Crown Lands and Survey and having sat on the 1871 Royal Commission on Forests.[14]

Hodgkinson had taken responsibility for the preparation of the Harbor Trust's contribution to the 1888 Melbourne Centennial Exhibition. The exhibit included examples of Victorian timbers along with details of their uses and durability. Amongst them were samples of Yellow Stringybark, which had formed parts of the wharf piles at Welshpool.[15] Hodgkinson had been informed by the Mines Department, which spoke highly of the species for use in mines, and by representations from local sawmillers, in particular Mason, during 1889, who campaigned to raise awareness of the species.[16]

Hodgkinson was passionate about the utility of Victorian timbers. He seized upon the information presented and was successful in both raising knowledge about local timbers and bringing about change in timber used in wharf construction and other public works in Victoria.

Confident of being able to secure the rights to a vast tract of this timber Mason and Moore turned their attention towards convincing the Melbourne Harbor Trust to permit the use of Yellow Stringybark in place of expensive imported timber. With such a common goal in play it is of little surprise that Mason and Hodgkinson were soon drawn to each other and it would certainly have been Mason who provided the samples from the wharf piles that the Harbor Trust displayed at the 1888 Exhibition.

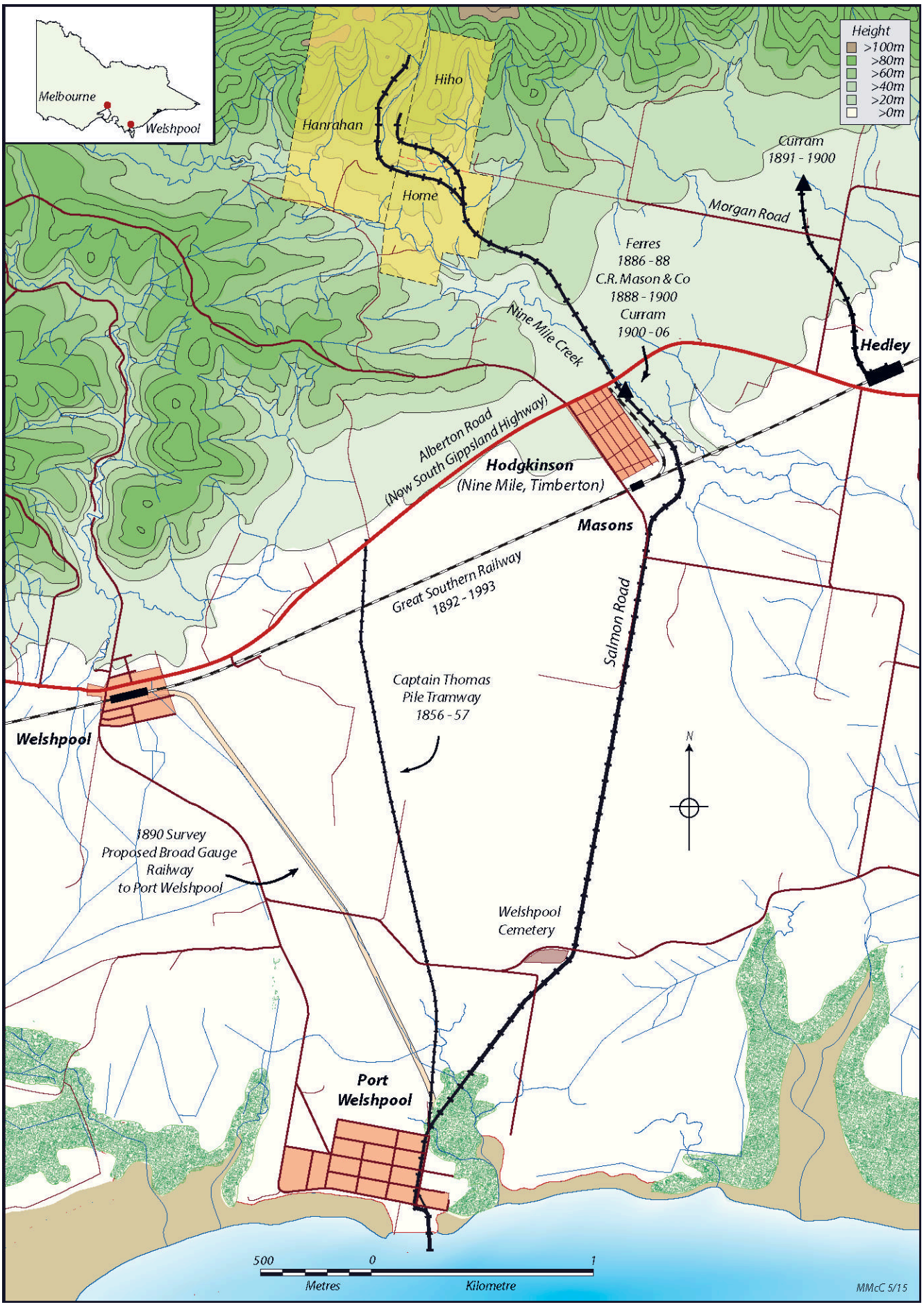
Having acquired Ferres's sawmill the partners set about creating a market for its output. In the short term, much of the timber produced at the mill went to Mason's Welshpool jetty work and Buckley's railway contract, but the partners also had their eyes to the future. A public meeting, largely instigated by Mason, and held at Alberton in May 1889, sought to gather information about and garner support for the commercial use of local timbers. Alfred Howitt, acting Secretary of the Mines Department was present[17] and it was initially through him that his friend Hodgkinson became aware of the characteristics of the Yellow Stringybark. Shortly afterwards, the connection between Mason and Hodgkinson was cemented.

Conscious of the momentum created and aware that other sawmillers would soon join the band-wagon if the Harbor Trust would accept the local timber, Mason and Moore acted immediately. They obtained the timber rights to the forest on Hanrahan's and Hiho's properties in the upper reaches of Nine Mile Creek, 10 km north of Port Welshpool. These were just two of many properties in the area that were richly endowed with Yellow Stringybark as well as the highly valued Blue Gum, but they had the added attraction of being located along the rise of Nine Mile Creek, the principal stream in the area, offering access to the port. A larger forest covering other selections awaited exploitation further up the valley.

They also purchased the property of James Dobson, adjacent to the Alberton Road crossing of Nine Mile Creek. It was an ideal location for the sawmill and demonstrated the thought that Ferres, initially, and then Mason and Moore put into the operation. The site provided efficient access to the principal log supply further up the valley; it was level but well drained and, importantly, the surveyed route of the Great Southern Railway passed through the land. It was also close to the proposed site of Hedley station, but not quite close enough as it turned out! Mason's plans for the mill and its output served as a threat to the Hedley (and also Welshpool) residents because they thought they would lose their stations to the enterprising partners. The discussion about this would occupy a lot of local newspaper space in the early 1890s.

The Sawmill and Tramway

There was no question about the seriousness by which Mason and Moore were approaching their enterprise. Ferres's sawmill had been thoughtfully laid out and well equipped but Mason made changes with a view to efficiency and permanency. The partners had no contracts in hand but fearlessly invested heavily in an operation that could meet the needs of large users of structural timber, but it was the Melbourne Harbor Trust they were targeting in the main. Ferres had equipped the mill with a 12 hp Marshall portable engine, typical for a sawmill of the time, but Mason augmented this with a 20 hp Robey, providing a powerful combined driving force for the mill. The engines drove an intermediate shaft 32 ft in length which transferred power to a vertical breaking-down saw, capable of sawing through logs 6 ft in diameter, and three running-off benches as well as a saw sharpening machine.



A trench, 36 yds in length, beneath the saw benches contained a tramway for sending sawdust to the heap and waste timber to the burn pile. All the benches were contained within a shed that stretched 45 yds by 22 yds.[18] Unusually for a sawmill close to a perennial creek, Mason installed a 12,000 gallon underground tank to provide a guaranteed water supply for the mill and its workers. By contemporary Victorian standards this was a big mill. A single running-off bench was common; to have three suggested a very large capacity.

The comprehensive approach taken to the enterprise was a clear indication of the resolve of the partners but also heightened the risks they faced. Despite the positive press in support of the Yellow Stringybark, government departments were yet to be convinced and, by late 1890, the firm was without a single contract to support its substantial investment. However, this was not due to any lack of effort. In December 1890, Hodgkinson presented a second report to the Harbor Trust where he recommended the adoption of Yellow Stringybark for all wharf works whether they be timbers or piles. He further recommended that a group of the commissioners inspect the forests in South Gippsland and made mention of the sawmilling enterprise established by Mason and Moore.[19]

The visit took place in January 1891. Four of the commissioners and the acting Chief Engineer of the Melbourne Harbor Trust took part. Christopher Mason and the Shire President, Henry Bodman, greeted them with a jointly organised reception at the Commercial Hotel in Yarram. Evidence was gathered from parties present about the qualities of the local timber and the following day they journeyed by coach to Nine Mile to inspect the mill and the expansion works underway. Later they visited Port Welshpool to inspect the jetty and the long-standing timber from which it was constructed. On return to the mill, they enjoyed a banquet provided by Mason within 'the commodious premises there' and, later, Clement Hodgkinson, with the assistance of a guide, led the party on horseback through the back-country forests before returning to Alberton that evening.[20]

The following day the party explored the timber resources north of Yarram before attending a banquet hosted by the Shire President but attended also by Christopher Mason. In a 'lengthy but sensible speech', Mason outlined his vision for the enterprise at Nine Mile that included pushing logging tramways deep into the Jack River and Trenton Valley country to the north and through the vast timbered country out that way. Moore complimented Mason's thoughts by signalling for the first time that it was their intention to bring their proposed tramway under the *Tramways Act 1890* which would allow the carriage of passengers and general goods for the benefit of the community. Their tramway would stretch through timber country at first, but a further extension along the rich agricultural valleys to the north would permit the carriage of produce, to pay the way, before again entering forested areas.[21] Hodgkinson spoke at length of the quality of the forests they had inspected and was greeted with cheers by an audience that had placed great store in the hope that the Harbor Trust would lead the way in changing attitudes to the value of their local timber.[22]

The following day the visitors left for Sale to catch their train home to Melbourne. Back at Alberton and Nine Mile, confidences were high that a decision in their favour was imminent. Drawing on the success of the Harbor Trust visit and probably with knowledge from Hodgkinson about the impending calling of tenders for large quantities of wharfing timber, Mason set to work finishing the work at Nine Mile.

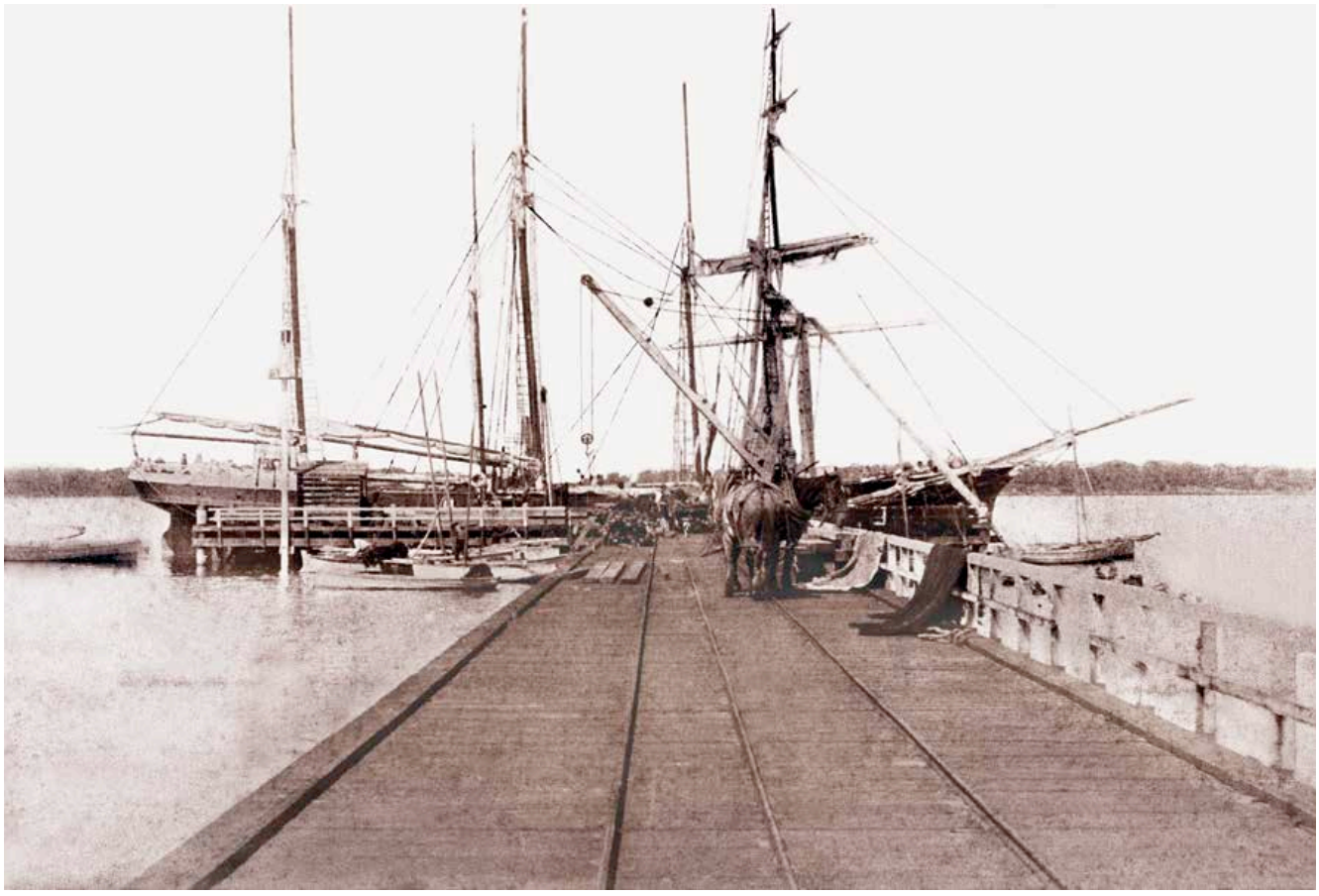
With efforts well advanced on the sawmill Mason turned his attention to constructing the tramway over the 7 km to Port Welshpool. Despite the proximity of the almost completed Great Southern Railway the port was the obvious point to which the tramway should be built. The lengthy piles to be shipped and with the Port of Melbourne the likely destination, sea transport was chosen as the preferred means of despatch. Furthermore, with the prospect of a very large contract in front of him Mason saw the use of locomotive power as essential. His view was that horses could not provide sufficient haulage capacity given the heavy loads anticipated over the level countryside to Port Welshpool. A steam locomotive was required and track construction needed to consider this.

Mason adopted a tramway design similar to that used by Rollo at Yarragon a decade earlier. The steel rails were to be laid to 3 ft gauge on 5 in by 3 in longitudinal sawn timber bearers. These in turn were to be nailed to 8 in by 3 in sawn timber sleepers, each 5 feet in length.[23] Imported steel rails were expensive so the design allowed the use of light-weight steel rails for heavy loadings with the support offered by the bearers. He at first planned to use 14 lb/yd rails but, probably concerned about their ability to carry the weight of a steam engine, even when supported by the bearers, he instead opted for new 20 lb/yd rails for the tramway.[24] The rails were of the weight commonly used in mining and, given the extent of activity in that sector underway in parts of Victoria at that time, were readily available.

Construction of the tramway was relatively simple with no significant geographical hindrances along the way. It was a matter of clearing a path through the White Paperbark scrub and raising the formation across the tidal salt flats near the port and elsewhere where there was a need for drainage. The level country removed any need for expensive diversions through private property and the existence of a convenient surveyed road to the port meant that the only requirement for access was the permission of the Shire of Alberton. Land for the outlet tramway therefore came at virtually no cost.

From the sawmill, the tramway passed to the south and travelled beneath the Great Southern Railway, then under construction, via a conveniently positioned flood opening. Curving through a paddock, owned by the partners, the tramway entered a Shire road reserve before turning south again onto what, in part, is now Salmon Road. This it followed for around 3 km before entering the proclaimed township of Welshpool (later Port Welshpool). A curve to the south-west and a further 1.7 km through a saltwater flood plain brought the tramway onto Turnbull Street which it followed for half a kilometre before curving to the east to reach its terminus at the Port Welshpool jetty.

A short piece of speculation seems appropriate at this point regarding the aforementioned burnt Welshpool jetty. In 1886, a maliciously lit fire all but destroyed the jetty.[25] The remains sat untouched for several years before local agitation highlighting its strategic importance gained the attention of both politicians and senior bureaucrats. Welshpool's deep-water port seemed the natural destination for the export of Gippsland bulk products including coal, timber and tin. Consequently, planning for reconstruction included an extended structure with a jetty tramway of 5 ft 3 in gauge,[26] clearly in anticipation of a future connection to the Great Southern Railway. As previously stated, Christopher Mason and Alex Don won the contract with a required completion date in 1889. Of interest is that George Buckley had announced his intention to use the Welshpool jetty to land his materials and rolling-stock for The Great Southern Railway. However, baffling long delays in



The government jetty at Port Welshpool c1891. There are two vessels tied up abreast in view. The nearer appears to be the Coquette*, a regular trader to Port Welshpool. The jetty tramway, gauged to 5 ft. 3 in in anticipation of a connection to the Great Southern Railway, shares a common right hand rail with Mason's 3 ft. gauge tramway. Under the jib crane in middle distance, one of Mason's timber trucks awaits removal by the horses in the foreground. The* Khartoum *would have collected the assembled trucks in a siding positioned just off the jetty end.* *Photo: Late Beryl Atkins Collection*

completing the repair of the jetty, which drew the concern of the Shire Council, forced a change in plan. The delays became such that they threatened Buckley's ability to complete his contract. Consequently, he was made to use the shallow channel in Swan Bay near Toora, 10 kilometres to the west.

Buckley would have constructed a broad gauge tramway to the port to convey his rolling stock and materials to the rail head, as he did at Swan Bay. With a well organised local citizens group campaigning for such a link as a permanent branch line it appears feasible that Buckley's access line would have remained and become a permanent link, much as did O'Keefe's line at Port Franklin. This would not have suited Mason and Moore as they were already hatching a plan to build their own line, including rails along the jetty, to direct the ensuing traffic onto their tramway. As has been said, they had plans for the tramway that were much broader than providing a means of carrying timber to the port. It is difficult to dismiss the thought that Mason's unexplained delays in repairing the jetty may have been deliberate!

Melbourne Harbor Trust

On 4 March 1891, with tramway construction to the port well advanced, the Melbourne Harbor Trust called tenders for the supply of 600 piles and 246,750 super-feet of best quality sawn Yellow Stringybark wharf timber.[27] The elation (and relief!) that Mason and Moore must have experienced could only have been tempered by the reality that they still had to win it. Nevertheless, without question, Mason must have felt great satisfaction in achieving the change in attitude to this particular species of native timber that he had not only long sought but, along with Moore, had so much depended. Closure of tenders was a mere twelve days later and the wait for the result must have been nerve wracking despite the knowledge that the firm was well positioned to win. However, they were not the only potential providers of Yellow Stringybark timber. West Alberton sawmiller, Robert Curram, being equally keen to win the contract, had moved his sawmill into the Yellow Stringybark forest north of Hedley, just over 2 km distant from the Mason & Co sawmill, the previous month.

The *Foster and Toora Mirror* carried the news in its edition of 3 April 1891; Mason and Moore had won the contract defeating four others for the work. Interestingly, Curram had submitted the lowest tender at £4,507 but Mason and Moore, despite submitting a price £276 higher, had the benefit of the tramway and therefore, according to the Harbor Trust, presented lower risk with regard to timely delivery. No doubt the tramway, soon to be steel railed and steam powered, gave a major advantage over Curram's proposed wooden-railed tramway to Hedley station, a kilometre or so to the east. The Harbor Trust sent its Timber Inspector to sight both Mason's and Curram's operations prior to a final decision. His report highlighted the differences in sophistication in both methods of production and transport, and supported the granting of the contract to Mason and Moore.[28] The work done by Mason, in particular, in promoting the use of Yellow Stringybark, would have carried a lot of weight with a man such as Hodgkinson. The benefit to the public purse was substantial in the form of lower costs and the product potentially superior to that used previously.[29] He would have been keen to reward those who had demonstrated such commitment.

Robert Curram & Sons

There is no question that Hodgkinson intervened on behalf of Mason and Moore. Robert Curram approached the Secretary of the Melbourne Harbor Trust shortly after tender close to enquire as to how he had fared. He was told that his price was the lowest and that he could expect to be awarded the contract. Not long after, he learned that this was not going to happen through an article in the *Gippsland Standard*. Clearly unhappy, he wrote to the Trust pointing out what he had been told and seeking reasons behind what he saw as a reversal of the decision. No sensible reason could be given and, consequently, he too was awarded an identical contract to that given to Mason and Moore but at Curram's lower price.

Curram subsequently constructed his wooden rail tramline from the mill to Hedley in July 1891 in anticipation of the railway being opened allowing him to send the piles and wharf timbers he produced away by rail. Unfortunately for him the railway didn't open until the following year meaning he couldn't meet contracted delivery obligations. The contract was subsequently cancelled.[30]

Work on completing the tramway to the mill at Nine Mile, minus its steel rails, was accelerated and the sleepers and bearers were fully laid by late April 1891.[31] The workmen then moved to the task of felling the timber, which commenced on 1 May.[32] With strict time requirements attached to the contract, traffic commenced immediately despite the first shipment of steel rails being still en-route aboard the schooner *Little Angelina*.[33] Trucks, presumably with wheels temporarily gauged to fit, ran along the wooden longitudinal bearers and horses did the hard work. By early May over 25,000 super-feet of timber lay stacked at the port ready for the arrival of the boats.[34] The timber had been cut from the wooded properties close by the mill, including Mason & Co.'s own land where a township was starting to emerge. By mid-May, a good start had been made on felling trees to supply the Melbourne Harbor Trust with piles and over 100 of the 600 trees required for this were already on the ground.[35]

The success in winning the wharf timbers contract gave great impetus to the firm, which spread beyond the mill and the tramway. The land upon which the mill sat covered 200 acres, a far cry from the usual Victorian bush mill licensed allotment of three acres. The additional land was part of the vision that Mason and Moore shared. A future underpinned by what they fully expected would be an insatiable demand for the Yellow Stringybark, plentiful in South Gippsland but rare elsewhere, required a large and settled workforce. The partners determined not to follow the usual path and provide rough wooden huts for their workers. They wanted their employees to bring their families and stay. Furthermore, this was an era of speculation, especially in new regions such as South Gippsland. There was, potentially, a lot of money to be made from land sales for towns along the route of the Great Southern Railway and they wanted their town to be a regional capital.

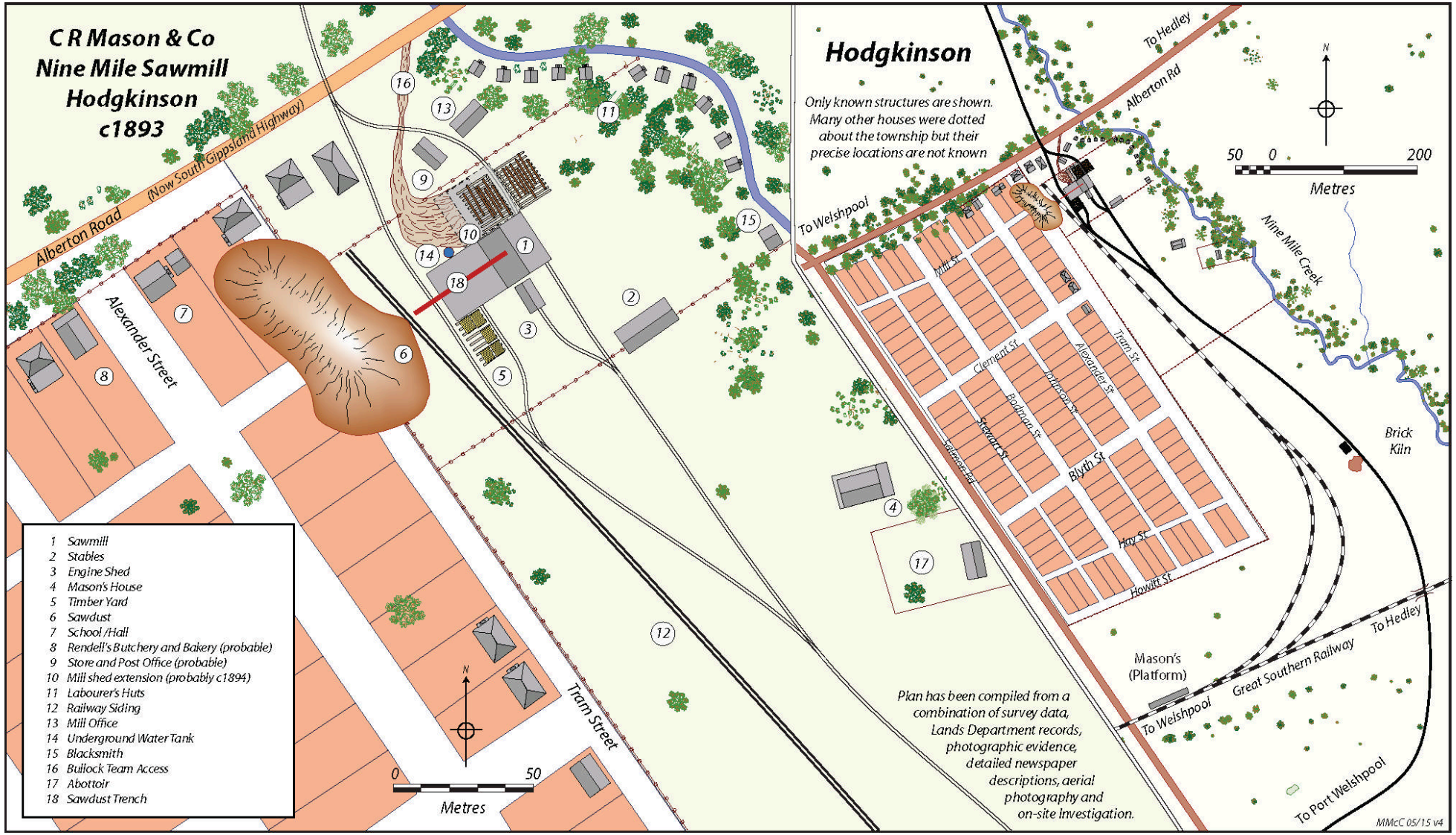
Hodgkinson

Across the paddocks to the west and south of the mill a township was surveyed with streets running to the Alberton Road and also south to the railway. Land sales took place in March 1891 which saw the building allotments on the road frontage initially offered for sale[36] followed, two weeks later, with the remainder of the blocks, 145 in all.[37] Only 13 were sold at the auctions[38] but Mason and Moore remained confident that the remainder would soon follow and, demonstrating the confidence of the times, Hull from Yarram soon established brickworks between the mill and the Great Southern Railway.[39] By May 1891, many of the houses for the mill workers were complete and the township was taking shape with Rendell's butcher shop, Makeham's general store and a Mechanics' Institute serving the community. A school accommodating 30 children, 25 of them with fathers working at the mill, was to follow 12 months later.[40]

Very mixed feelings about all this were common amongst the settlers of the area. On one hand, they welcomed the employment and prosperity that came with it but on the other, the goings-on at Nine Mile brought threat. The settlement map of this part of Gippsland at the time was a far cry from what we understand today. The town of Foster existed due to the gold mining activity that had been underway for several decades but, aside from the former sawmill settlement of Muddy Creek (adjoining present-day Toora), there was practically nothing between that place and Alberton, 47 km to the east. The then partially completed Great Southern Railway was to change all that. Railway surveyors had mapped out station sites, which would become focal points for potential development and population growth. Clearly some settlers stood to benefit greater than others, depending upon where each farmed. If your selection was close to one of the stations, the rewards could be both financial and practical. The developments at Nine Mile, which commenced well after public awareness of the proposed station sites, threatened the very need for Welshpool and Hedley stations as Nine Mile sat between them. In turn, those property owners who had hopes raised by the announced station sites sensed that threat. As embryonic as it may have been, Nine Mile featured a community, whereas there were only scattered farms at the other two, and not many of them. Although, later, Mason was to deny it,[41] he had actually sought to shift the site of Hedley station to suit his mill[42] but had made public his view that Nine Mile Creek was the right position for the station serving Welshpool.[43] The Railways Department agreed to shift Hedley station and started work on the ground to achieve this but the intervention of the Shire of Alberton and support from the district press stopped the change. In the end the Hedley and Welshpool folk kept their stations and a third, equipped with a platform constructed by Mason[44] and named 'Masons', was inserted between them. In any case, as we shall see, it was the Welshpool farmers who were facing an ongoing greater threat, although they were not to know this at the time.

With such activity surrounding the mill settlement, attention soon turned to what name it should take. For decades the locality went by the name of Nine Mile and indeed long term residents of the district were indignant that the 'newcomers' wanted something different. Nevertheless, early in 1891, Mason toyed with 'Timberton', but once the Harbor Trust contract had been awarded there was only one name that Mason and Moore would countenance – 'Hodgkinson'. Naming the town after their key supporter in winning a major contract may seem a little tacky, however, Clement Hodgkinson was a highly respected public figure who had held many influential public positions and was a distinguished surveyor and engineer. As we have seen, he was also instrumental in drawing public attention to the quality of Victorian hardwood timbers. Naming the town in his honour drew the displeasure of the editor of the *Gippsland Standard* who clearly did not understand Hodgkinson's role[45] but his was a lone voice.

From mid-May 1891, the 20 lb/yd steel rails began arriving. The ketch *JC Taylor* and the schooner *Little Angelina* were involved in bringing them from Melbourne and the task of laying them commenced immediately. With the sub-structure of the tramway already in position progress was rapid but the speed of the task was also assisted by the achievement of another milestone for the firm, the commencement of steam locomotive operation.[46]



Khartoum

In early June, the ketch *Coquette* arrived with another load of rails but also with Mason and Moore's locomotive aboard. It was a small unit manufactured by WG Bagnall of Stafford, England and was of 2-4-0T configuration. It carried builder's number 682[47] and, according to the local press, Mason and Moore had paid £500 for it. Built in 1885, allegedly for use in the Sudan, the locomotive came to Port Welshpool from Tasmania, and carried name plates identifying it as *Khartoum*. For reasons unknown, it never made it to its intended destination but, instead, John William Wyett purchased it, in its year of manufacture, for his tramway at Beaconsfield in northern Tasmania.[48] At the time of its delivery to Beaconsfield it was described as 'A locomotive of the most modern make, with all latest improvements, of eight-horse power, and only weighing between three and four tons…'.[49] Immediately on delivery to Port Welshpool *Khartoum* was put to work hauling rails to the railhead[50] and the tramway, complete with steel rails, was finished through to the mill by the middle of June.[51]

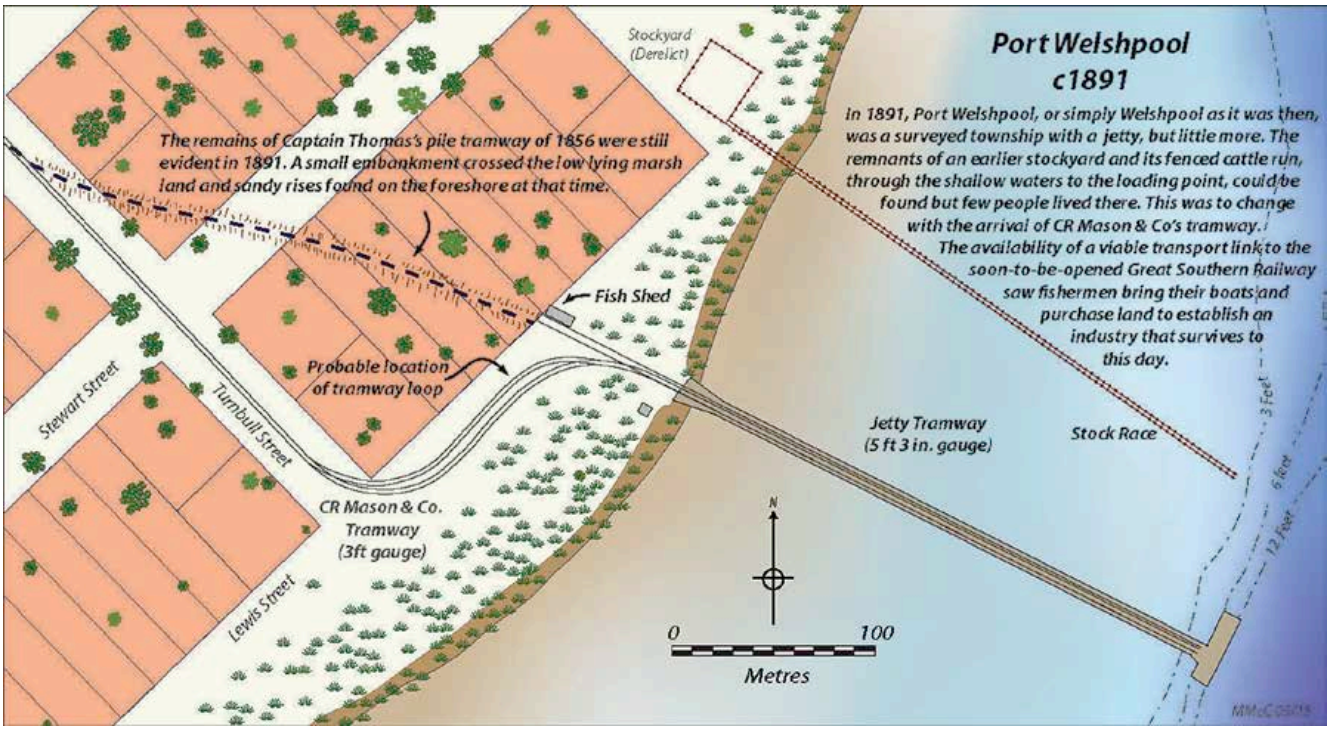
No diagram of the track-work about the sawmill has been found, however the various sources available make a reliable approximation possible. What distinguishes this sawmilling operation from most others is that it despatched logs (as piles) as well as sawn timber. Tramway arrangements therefore had to accommodate both. What is indisputable is that the line from the port ran directly into and through the mill shed at its east end where the log yard lay. There could only have been two reasons for this; piles coming from the forests to the north, and also hauled by bullock team from nearby properties, would have been stored and ultimately despatched from the log yard making the through-the-mill connection necessary. However, the connection, in combination with a mill bypass track on the west side of the structure, would also have permitted the locomotive to haul trucks both to and from the port rather than push in one direction. Evidence suggests that this was the practice adopted.[52]

The locomotive shed was located close to the mill near where the two mill engines were. This was sensible as the mill engine driver would also likely have had duties involved with preparing and maintaining the locomotive as well. A siding from the main line served the engine shed.

On the Port Welshpool side of the sawmill a track diverged from the main line to pass the west side of the main shed. This would have allowed the despatch of piles directly from the bush to the jetty without having to pass through the log yard.[53] Photographic evidence suggests that a branch to this line passed through the sawn timber stacking yard to enter the mill shed. This permitted the loading of trucks with sawn wharf timbers without blocking through traffic from the bush to the port. On the north side of the mill the two lines of rails would have met, probably just prior to crossing the Alberton Road.[54]

The transport of timber and piles to the port was far from the only purpose of the tramway. Mason and Moore were keen to make it a significant revenue earner in its own right. Inspired by the 'tramway debate' of the times, which supported the provision of general cargo tramway feeders to link with government railways, their plan was to provide a transport link between the port and the hinterland including

Piles destined for the Melbourne Harbor Trust and fish baskets returning to Port Welshpool constitute the loading on this rake of trucks sitting on the loop line on the west side of the sawmill. The focus of the passengers towards the front of the train suggests that it is about to depart behind Khartoum. In the right background, the group of houses along what was Tram Street in Hodgkinson, suggests a date in the later months of 1891. *Photo: Late Beryl Atkins Collection*



a connection with the railway.[55] They also sought to steal the march on the government, essentially by performing the same task as was planned for the proposed government line between Welshpool and the port. Although a decision had yet to be made to construct such a line (eventually built as a 2 ft 6 in gauge horse-worked tramway), the survey for this railway had been completed in 1890. The strong local lobby represented by the Welshpool Jetty and Railway Extension League had been advocating for the branch for some time with the very powerful argument that Port Welshpool offered the best anchorage in the region and was a more convenient shipping location than the well-established Port Albert. Without doubt these views were substantially true and when funds became available it was clear the Government would build the railway. However, the same argument could equally apply in support of the partners' tramway. Given that, in 1891, only Hodgkinson had any semblance of a township, Mason and Moore's tramway would most probably have supplanted the government line. The farmers around Welshpool would have cried foul if this happened but if the partners' tramway was ultimately successful it would have been most unlikely that the Government would have proceeded with its scheme. The result would probably have seen the consolidation of population at Hodgkinson, and Welshpool may never have become the township it did. The interesting aspect of this is that given the amount of thought and effort Mason and Moore put into their planning and investment it is extremely likely that this possible outcome was well and truly at the forefront of their thoughts. There was money to be made at Hodgkinson if the population grew.

As early as November 1890 Mason and Moore had informed the Alberton Shire Council that it was their intention to offer a full public passenger and goods service[56] and that a tramway siding would be provided at Nine Mile, as it was then known, to facilitate this. Throughout 1891 correspondence passed between Christopher Mason, the Council and the Department of Crown Lands and Survey about the legal framework that would support the construction of the tramway and the breadth of services planned to run over it.[57] The focus was primarily towards bringing the tramway under the auspices of the *Tramways Act (1890)*. This Act dealt, in part, with precisely the situation that Mason and Moore, along with the Alberton Shire Council, were facing. The matter received considerable attention from the public who, through the local press and approaches to Council, sought to protect their interests. The tramway was to run along mostly uncleared Shire roads so it was really all about assurances concerning transit and access should the roads ever be formed.[58] The abrasiveness of Mason was a contributor to the concerns of the public. He did little to explain his intentions and instead relied purely on his own right to act. Had he adopted a different approach much of the trouble he and the Council experienced with the public may have been avoided.[59]

Log Tramway

While all this was occurring Mason got on with the task of extending the tramway northwards to fulfil his obligations to the Melbourne Harbor Trust. They secured the timber rights on most of the properties surrounding the mill, which were accessible to bullock and horse teams. In particular, Sweeney's land, a kilometre south-east of the mill, provided many piles for the Harbor Trust contract.[60] However, it was the forest in the hill country to the north-west that the partners sought the most. It was here that the densest growth of large Yellow Stringybark lay and the 1891 agreements signed with Angus Hiho and John Hanrahan provided access to this timber. Hiho was paid £100 for his timber and a further £5 to allow timber felled on Hanrahan's land to pass over a tramway through his property.[61]

Construction of the log tramway to the area commenced in June 1891.[62] The tramway crossed Nine Mile Creek a short distance from the mill and then followed a route along the north-east side of the creek, steadily climbing the valley side and passing through Crouch's and Morgan's properties from where, presumably, logs were also extracted. By July 1893,[63] it stretched 2 km from the mill, onto Home's property, where it branched, with one tramway curving to the west to follow the valley floor while the northern line climbed the valley side into Angus Hiho's heavily wooded property. The tramway then passed around a ridge to enter Hanrahan's land.[64]

The method of tramway construction on the section of log line as far as the junction on Home's property was the same as that on the port tramway and it seems likely that *Khartoum* worked as far north as this point. The steady downgrade to the sawmill would certainly have enabled trucks to gravitate over virtually the full journey, although the section beyond the Nine Mile Creek bridge to the mill may have involved haulage by *Khartoum*. This would have left the locomotive with the task of hauling the empty trucks back up the line to Home's bush terminus. Outward traffic on the two log branches was gravity worked to this location with horses employed in pulling empty trucks back to the forest.[65]

Two further contracts for the supply of Blue Gum and Yellow Stringybark followed CR Mason and Co.'s success in winning their initial contract with the Melbourne Harbor Trust.[66] The workforce was rapidly expanding with 40 workers employed at the start of 1892[67] and the township of Hodgkinson boasting a population of 140. With the partners looking at any opportunity to expand the business, it was likely to keep growing.

The Great Southern Railway

It was the stated intent of Mason and Moore to provide a general carrier service over the tramway to the port. In September 1891, the first load of tin ore from the mines north of Toora was despatched over the line[68] although it isn't known if more followed. In April 1892, the regular transport of fish commenced as fishermen established their industry at Port Welshpool. They had the option of a long haul over the rough track to Welshpool to meet the train or a 30 minute journey to Hodgkinson behind *Khartoum* at a cost of 4d per basket.[69] A spring wagon carried the fish boxes over the short journey to Hedley station and getting them there was a priority that demanded immediate transhipment from the tramway trucks. Mason introduced a timetable for the benefit of fishermen in order to meet the Melbourne train and, during 1892, more than 400 baskets of fish were despatched each week to Melbourne.[70] Of course, the partners planned to have a more direct means of sending their general construction timber and other goods by rail to Melbourne.

In August 1890 an approach was made to the Railways Department for a siding into the sawmill timber yard. With clearing and earthworks undertaken by Mason and Moore, and rail laying by the Department, the siding opened for traffic in June 1892 with the partners meeting all costs including the rental on the rails.[71] The siding left the mainline just east of the platform at 'Masons' and curved to the north to cover the 660 metres to the sawmill.[72] It involved two lines of rails curving off the mainline to join 340 metres from the railway fence,[73] forming a head shunt that continued to the sawmill.

The opening of the siding provided the opportunity for the partners to commence a new business venture in 1892 in the form of an abattoir and refrigeration plant.[74] Frozen "country killed beef" was sent to the Victoria Market in Melbourne direct from the sawmill siding.[75]

Without question, 1892 through to early 1893 was the boom period for sawmilling and tramway operations. The Melbourne Harbor Trust contracts in total were massive. Hundreds of trees were felled during the falling season 'when the sap was up' and it wasn't unusual to see several boats of various types queued up waiting to be loaded and despatched to Melbourne. Amongst the vessels regularly plying between Port Welshpool and Melbourne on behalf of Mason and Moore were the *W.J. Taylor*, *Coquette*, *Brazileira*, *Ocean Rover* and *Frank Guy*. Under the control of driver Barney Hughes *Khartoum* was kept busy hauling two loads of piles, with up to ten piles per trip,[76] sawn timber and returning fish baskets to the port each day.[77] Later, trucks loaded with fish and general goods returned to the mill. Interestingly, passengers also featured. Using two timber bogies fitted with a bench between them passengers could travel for a small fee. On one occasion in April 1892 over 30 paying customers enjoyed a Sunday excursion to Port Welshpool.[78] Mason and Moore were well on the way to establishing Hodgkinson as an industrial centre and their tramway as an accepted general carrier.

An issue at the time, though, was the absence of a legal basis for their tramway operations; perhaps even for the carriage of timber. As previously mentioned they had obtained permission to construct the tramway along shire roads but this gave them no authority to charge others for the transport of anything and certainly, they could not carry passengers. To do legally what clearly they were regularly doing during 1891-92, they needed the Shire Council to seek authority under the *Tramways Act (1890)* and then to have that authority delegated to them. Throughout 1891 and 1892 the partners dealt with the convolutions associated with achieving the authority they sought in an environment where few understood the workings of the Act. Finally, in February 1893, they declared that they had had enough. The requirements under the Act rendered the idea too expensive for their liking and, instead, they sought authority to build the line under the Private Tramways provisions of the same Act. This allowed them to construct and use a tramway but only for their own use. They could not carry paying passengers and nor could they transport general goods for a fee.

This may have been a pragmatic step to take given the problems they had with the government bureaucracy, however, one thing is certain. For several years after this decision they were still regularly carrying fish and conveying passengers, and presumably, collecting fares to do so.[79] Furthermore, it would appear that, at least until 1895, they were never actually licenced to operate the tramway in any form. Consequently, in April 1895, the Council informed the Public Works Department of Mason and Moore's alleged illegal activities but the outcome of this, unfortunately, is unknown.[80] Incredibly, it seems that Mason and Moore were never issued with a licence to operate their tramway.

The tide begins to turn

Mason and Moore set about establishing their enterprise with admirable planning, strategy, boldness, persistence and hard work. They were single minded in their approach but had a broad vision as to what they sought. However, if they had a failing, it was to understand fully what was required of them when dealing with a government entity. Where the Harbor Trust required timber to be of 'suitable' quality it meant in accordance with its standards, not merely those acceptable to the sawmiller! The Trust required near-perfect timber. Piles needed to be straight and flawless, sawn Blue Gum needed to be free of knots and straight grained. Furthermore, contract delivery times were strictly enforced and excuses, even those linked to inclement weather, were not tolerated. From the very early days of their first contract, Mason and Moore struggled to meet the quality and time requirements of their contract with the Harbor Trust. As early as July 1891 the Trust recorded that they were behind in their deliveries. Over 2,100 trees lay felled in the forest at the time but muddy conditions meant a lot of difficulty in snigging them to the tramway landings.[81] By September their problems compounded when Jefferson, the Harbor Trust's Inspector of Timber, informed

A group of passengers at Hodgkinson seemingly about to be taken down to Port Welshpool aboard Mason's passenger car! In the background is the broad gauge siding from the Great Southern Railway that served the mill. The cool weather clothing suggests the photo was taken around August/September 1892. The well-dressed gentleman at upper left is possibly Christopher Mason while his partner, William Moore is possibly the person wearing the long coat standing at the right front. *Photo: Late Beryl Atkins Collection*

them that approximately, a quarter of the piles supplied and a similar proportion of the sawn timber had been rejected as 'not suitable'.[82] The quantity of rejected piles rose to a third by February 1892 and, of course, the rejections only added to the problem of time delays. More timber needed felling to meet the need and this took more time. Furthermore, the rejected piles were of a size that made resale very difficult. Each rejection meant a financial loss.

Increased efforts in the bush made up some time and output but this came at a cost. Poor oversight saw trees marked for a farmer's use felled and an appearance in court[83] and, tragically, a death when William Willis was killed by a falling tree whilst in charge of a team of bullocks engaged in loading a pile onto a tramway truck in the bush.[84] But unbeknown to Mason and Moore their problems in delivering to contract requirements introduced another risk that was to have a far reaching impact.

The early 1890s were marked by a period of massive economic depression in Australia. It was brought about, in the main, by over investment during the previous decade, mainly in property, using foreign capital that could not be repaid when the assets failed to generate sufficient income. A consequence was a loss of confidence in the Australian market by British investors and the drying up of loan funds available to Australian public and private enterprises. The colonial government departments were reliant on these funds to continue to function. Dramatically affected by these circumstances, the Melbourne Harbor Trust, along with other government entities, was unable to borrow from British investors to fund its major projects. Furthermore, the massive decline in trade directly impacted on its ability to operate. Wharfage charges, the principal source of income to the Trust, declined by 42% from 1890 to 1893.[85]

The response from the Harbor Trust was to curtail expenditure wherever it could. At the very top of its priorities was to halt the construction of the vast West Melbourne Dock and to cancel all contracts where the Trust had the contractual ability to do so.[86] CR Mason & Co. was a major supplier to this work and, because of the delivery delays, was in contractual default. Consequently, the end came swiftly when in May 1893 the Trust informed Mason and Moore that it was cancelling their contracts.[87] Pleas citing hardship and unfairness went unheeded and not even their chief supporter, Clement Hodgkinson, could help. Seriously ill at the time, Hodgkinson passed away a few months later.[88] Mason and Moore were cut adrift.

The impact at Hodgkinson was immediate. The partners were left with 300,000 super-feet of timber felled and cut to lengths to suit Harbor Trust requirements. Furthermore, the next load of wharf timber for Melbourne was ready for the chartered ketch, *Strathmore*. With only a limited prospect in the current climate of recovering costs, Mason and Moore put the piles through the saws to turn out whatever construction timber they could and then despatched the lot to Melbourne to sell at clearance prices.[89]

Overnight the township was practically abandoned. With the exception of a skeleton workforce, all staff were laid off and most left in search of work elsewhere.[90]

The years 1893 and 1894 were lean times for Victorian sawmilling as the colony struggled with the depths of the depression. With the cessation of deliveries of piles and timber to the Melbourne Harbor Trust, the Hodgkinson mill could only service whatever local orders for construction timber came along and, consequently, the tough times affected it in

the same way they impacted the industry at large. A timber yard in Yarram serviced local sales[91] and Dougherty and McDonald contracted to operate the log tramway to supply the yard as needed.[92] Likewise, tramway operations to the port were restricted to servicing the requirements of the Port Welshpool fishermen. The daily run to the port by *Khartoum* ceased, with the locomotive confined to its shed. The work was passed to a horse team to haul the catch to Hodgkinson where it was transferred to a fish truck positioned in Mason's Siding for collection by the Melbourne train.[93] The one trade that continued unaffected out of Hodgkinson was the movement of frozen beef by rail to the Victoria Market.

Paving Blocks for London

By mid-1894, little had changed with respect to the low demand for timber in Victoria or elsewhere in Australia; however, enterprising sawmillers in other colonies were showing the way. Millars in Western Australia had found a market for their Jarrah and Karri hardwoods in London[94] where demand for paving blocks was very strong. There, such timbers, with significantly longer lives than local species, were sought for new and replacement road making.[95] With assistance from the colonial government Tasmanian sawmillers were also soon despatching samples of local Blue Gum, Stringybark and Huon Pine to seek a share of the opportunity, with reports of early success.[96]

Stories of the Western Australian and Tasmanian shipments, which appeared in Melbourne newspapers during the latter months of 1893, inspired Mason and Moore to throw their hats in the ring as well. Yellow Stringybark was untested as street paving but its durability was its most valuable characteristic and Mason, in particular, could see no reason for it not to be at least the equal of Western Australian Jarrah for this purpose. They sought Victorian Government support to develop this trade through deepening the channel into Port Welshpool to provide a direct link to London, and also, by reducing the cost of leased second-hand rails from the Railways Department for tramway construction. Furthermore, they wanted the government to finance a 30 mile extension to their log tramway under the banner of promoting narrow-gauge feeder railways in Victoria – an idea much in vogue at the time.

Nothing came of any of it but, in typical fashion, the partners grabbed the initiative. Restored to full operation and with an extension to the mill shed in place the reconfigured plant set to work cutting 9 in x 3 in paving blocks for use on the streets of London. Between November 1894 and January 1895 720,000 super-feet of sawn paving blocks were dispatched over the tramway to the port where, reminiscent of an earlier time, they were loaded onto a succession of coastal traders and sent to Melbourne. Horse teams undertook this work with *Khartoum* presumably kept locked away in its shed. From Melbourne the clipper ship *Loch Ness* and the SS *Indrini* carried the blocks to London.[97] A further 45,000 super-feet of blocks travelled aboard the clipper ship *Othello* in late February with more on the four-masted barque *Crown of Germany* in April.[98]

None of this, of course, was to service orders received. Mason and Moore repeated their earlier proactive approach adopted to win the Harbor Trust contracts. They took a risk and invested profits from the earlier work to mill the timber and despatch the blocks to London where they would be sold 'from the boat' to the City Corporations at whatever price could be obtained. The Western Australian Jarrah sawmillers had enjoyed incredible success and blocks from there were commanding upwards of £10 per thousand, providing a lucrative profit. Even £8 per thousand would have given Mason and Moore a handsome return so it is easy to see why they were prepared to take a risk.

However, their optimism was short-lived. The prices obtained for the paving blocks aboard the *Loch Ness* and *Indrini* are unknown but were disappointing.[99] With the timber certified by the Victorian Conservator of Forests they were confident that later despatches would do better, but the writing, as they say, was 'on the wall'. The bubble had burst in the market for Tasmanian Stringybark, which, at best, had been commanding a close-to-breakeven price of £6 per thousand[100] but mostly was struggling to find a buyer at all.

The London despatch to *The Argus* in mid-May could not have been gloomier in telling readers that 'there is no market for Victorian Stringybark'.[101] Confirmation of the bad news arrived later in the month when the newspaper's London correspondent further informed readers;'timber brokers consider that it is useless to ship this timber to London'.[102] The problem was, although the Stringybark was highly durable, the unseasoned wood expanded and contracted with changes in moisture and would not hold its shape.[103] Roads paved with it would soon bulge and explode due to the expanding blocks. A very unfortunate state of affairs! Mason and Moore faced a financial disaster.

Fish Traffic

The partners could do little about the situation. Once again, mill operations reduced to part-time, awaiting a recovery in the local market and, for a time, even the traffic in fish ceased. Mason had stopped the service at the height of the paving block effort. A road formed between Welshpool and the port the previous year prompted JW Wyatt to offer a road service to take the daily catch through to Welshpool. However, competition was to return to the business in April when George Richards, a resident of Port Welshpool, leased some rolling stock from the partners to restore the fish service over the tramway, again using horse haulage.[104] It was a tough time for the partners but more so for Christopher Mason who also lost his wife Elizabeth to suicide in March 1896.[105]

Richards's action, not surprisingly, didn't please Wyatt. He attempted to have Richards closed down by complaining about the tramway road crossings in the vicinity of the port,[106] and by alerting the newly-formed South Gippsland Shire Council to the fact that the tramway was unlicensed which, he stated, exposed Council to considerable risk.[107] In truth Wyatt was correct but the Council refused to act, preferring not to be drawn into supporting one competitor over another and preferring also to let 'sleeping dogs lie' with respect to the tramway licence. It was, after all, the decision of the Alberton Shire Council back in 1890 that created the problem. From Mason's perspective he had done all that the Act required of him. The ball was in the Council's court to arrange the licencing.

Richards offered a service that was more responsive than had previously been the case with Mason and Moore. He would have the tram waiting at the jetty when the fishermen returned with their catch[108] which makes it likely the tram was based at Port Welshpool at this time. Richards, twice a week, also collected a ton of ice from Masons Siding for carting to the port for use by the local fishermen. The ice house sat alongside the tramway on the approach to the jetty.[109]

The arrangement with Richards seemed to work well for a while but discontent amongst some of the fishermen, probably about cost, led to a division in the ranks in early 1897. A breakaway group formed their own association and in March purchased a spring wagon to do the carting themselves.[110] They employed a driver to take charge of the task. The remainder continued to use Richards's tram but after an initial period when things seemed to be going well, it soon

became clear that the division of loadings benefited no-one. At times the quantities of fish carted by road could not cover the wages of the driver and Richards struggled to make ends meet on the tramway.

What may have helped Richards somewhat during this period was the occasional despatch of small loadings of timber through the port by Mason.[111] With the tramway leased to Richards, it is likely his horse tram undertook the task of carrying the timber.

The December 1897 Hodgkinson school picnic at Port Welshpool saw Richards provide transport over the tramway using two trucks to convey pupils, teachers and parents. It was a great success with good weather ensuring a fun-filled day for young and old alike.[112]

A large order for paving blocks for the City of Melbourne that same month gave some hope that a market for the Yellow Stringybark blocks, presumably this time cut from seasoned timber, had at last been found. However, no evidence of further shipments has surfaced. In any case other developments in the downward spiral of the Hodgkinson sawmills would suggest that the shipment was a one-off event.

Hodgkinson Fades

Timber products, meat and fish were despatched to Melbourne by rail directly from Masons Siding, adjacent to the mill. Meat traffic had ceased in 1896 when Mason closed the abattoir. With very little timber being produced the consequent downturn in business for the firm saw Mason and Moore default on rent to the Railways Department for the rails used in the siding. After a couple of desperate attempts by Mason to prevent closure, by early 1898 the Department had had enough and in April, the points leading to the main line were disconnected.[113] Some traffic may have continued for a short while by transferring loads from a truck on the now isolated track leading to the mill to a Railways Department truck on the mainline.[114] However, if this did occur, it ceased to be an option in October 1898 when the Department formally closed the siding.[115] The passenger platform on the main line remained until its removal twelve months later.[116]

The action was a body blow to the partners and would most certainly have ended Richards's use of the tramway. Without the ability to load directly into a fish truck on the mill siding and to carry ice for the fishermen on the return trip his carting business over the tramway was not viable. John Gregory was running the road carrier service to Welshpool by this time. The closure of Masons Siding sent all fish and ice traffic his way and he increased his number of wagons to two in order to deal with it.[117] The tramway was still available to despatch timber destined for the port but the likelihood of such traffic had long passed and it is unlikely that the tramway was ever used again. The last recorded shipment of timber from the jetty was back in October 1895.[118]

Hodgkinson as a township had faded to a cluster of houses by this time, the chequerboard pattern of streets having rapidly dissolved into scrub. Rendell, the township's butcher and baker, shifted his business to Welshpool in April 1899[119] leaving Mason's general store as the one remaining business. The post office, run by Mason from his store, had ceased to function the previous year following the removal of the platform at the Masons Siding.[120]

Christopher Mason died on the last day of 1899. He had contracted a serious illness, which, exacerbated by the onset of the bacterial skin disease, erysipelas, brought about his premature death at the age of 44. His obituary described him as a man of 'indomitable pluck and fearlessness' who 'might have risen to a position of affluence and independence' but for lack of 'tact or ballast'![121] – a surprisingly blunt assessment for an obituary. One could also have added 'but for the onset of the 1890s depression' for, without question, had the depression not occurred both Mason and Moore would have become very wealthy men.

The mill, along with its by now overgrown tramway, lay idle following Mason's death; but not for long. Bushfires ravaged the district in February and March 1900. Much damage was caused and the Hodgkinson sawmill was threatened but spared. Not so lucky was Robert Curram who had continued working his sawmill at nearby Hedley in competition with Mason ever since the heady days of the West Melbourne dock expansion. Curram's sawmill, including its boiler, equipment and tramways, was destroyed.[122] Curram had enjoyed marginally more success than Mason over the years in finding markets for the Yellow Stringybark. At the time of the blaze, he had secured a large local contract plus a substantial order from England.

Unable to fulfil the orders with his mill burnt, Curram leased the Hodgkinson mill from Moore[123] but had no use for the tramway. Curram despatched his timber through Hedley, as he had done previously, by running wagons along the Alberton Road.

With the mill leased, Moore set about disposing of other mill assets. A clearing sale in March disposed of Mason's household furniture, goods and groceries from the store, cattle, horses etc.[124] The 20 hp engine and boiler from the sawmill was also surplus to needs and apparently hadn't worked since the wharf timber contracts had stopped. B Carpenter, a Melbourne machinery agent purchased it around October 1900. The effort involved in loading this ten-ton object onto a railway truck at Hedley was notable enough to make the local news.[125]

Dismantling of the tramway occurred around May or June 1900, with rails and trucks despatched to Tasmania.[126] Half went on the SS *Wyrallah* in the middle of June, the disposal of the rest is unknown but more than likely went to the same destination.[127]

The immediate fate of *Khartoum* is uncertain. Its presence at Hodgkinson was last noted in December 1894 when it was ensconced in its shed at the mill. Given the decline in traffic after the loss of the Harbor Trust contract, it is unlikely to have worked again. In theory, it could have left Hodgkinson any time after 1894. However, Mason never gave up hope of a business revival. He had faith in the Yellow Stringybark timber and promoted its benefits far and wide until the day he died. It seems unlikely that he would have disposed of such an essential asset should a revival occur. Following Mason's death, as mentioned above, a newspaper noted disposal of everything related to the sawmill business except the locomotive. This omission could be because of a possible earlier sale or because a buyer had been found. No evidence has surfaced of an advertisement for its sale. The one certainty is that in 1901 Alex Sanderson at Forrest, in south-western Victoria, acquired the locomotive where it ran on his 3 ft 6 in gauge Noonday Creek tramway.[128] Someone had altered the locomotive from its original 3 ft gauge configuration seemingly prior to its arrival at Forrest.

Although other possibilities may exist, two thoughts come to the mind about its disposal. The first is the possibility of its sale in November 1900, along with the surplus boiler, to Carpenter, the Melbourne machinery agent. He may have regauged it although one would have to wonder why, as a market existed for 3 ft gauge locomotives. He then may have on-sold the locomotive to Sanderson the following year. No evidence has been found that Carpenter advertised the locomotive for sale.

Another possibility is that of a sale to William Gunn for his 3 ft 6 in gauge tramway at Crossover. Gunn had the wherewithal to regauge a locomotive and certainly did so with an ex-Bendigo Tramways steam tram some years later. He took delivery of a locomotive in October 1900,[129] within weeks of the sale of the surplus Hodgkinson mill boiler to Carpenter. Evidence exists that Gunn did have a locomotive for a short period prior to the arrival of *Parrott* in 1901.[130] It is possible that this was *Khartoum*. It is interesting that in 1901 Sanderson sold *Parrott* to Gunn and took delivery of *Khartoum*, then (or later) renamed *Westward Ho*. Could not the two sawmillers, having both expressed dissatisfaction with the unit they owned, have agreed to exchange locomotives in the hope that the other unit may better suit their needs?[131]

William Moore died at the age of 52, on 18 January 1901, following an operation to remove a tumour. Subsequently, Robert Curram purchased the mill from his estate. Curram and his sons were to operate the Hodgkinson sawmill until 1906 when the mill closed after the death of Robert Curram in September of that year.[132]

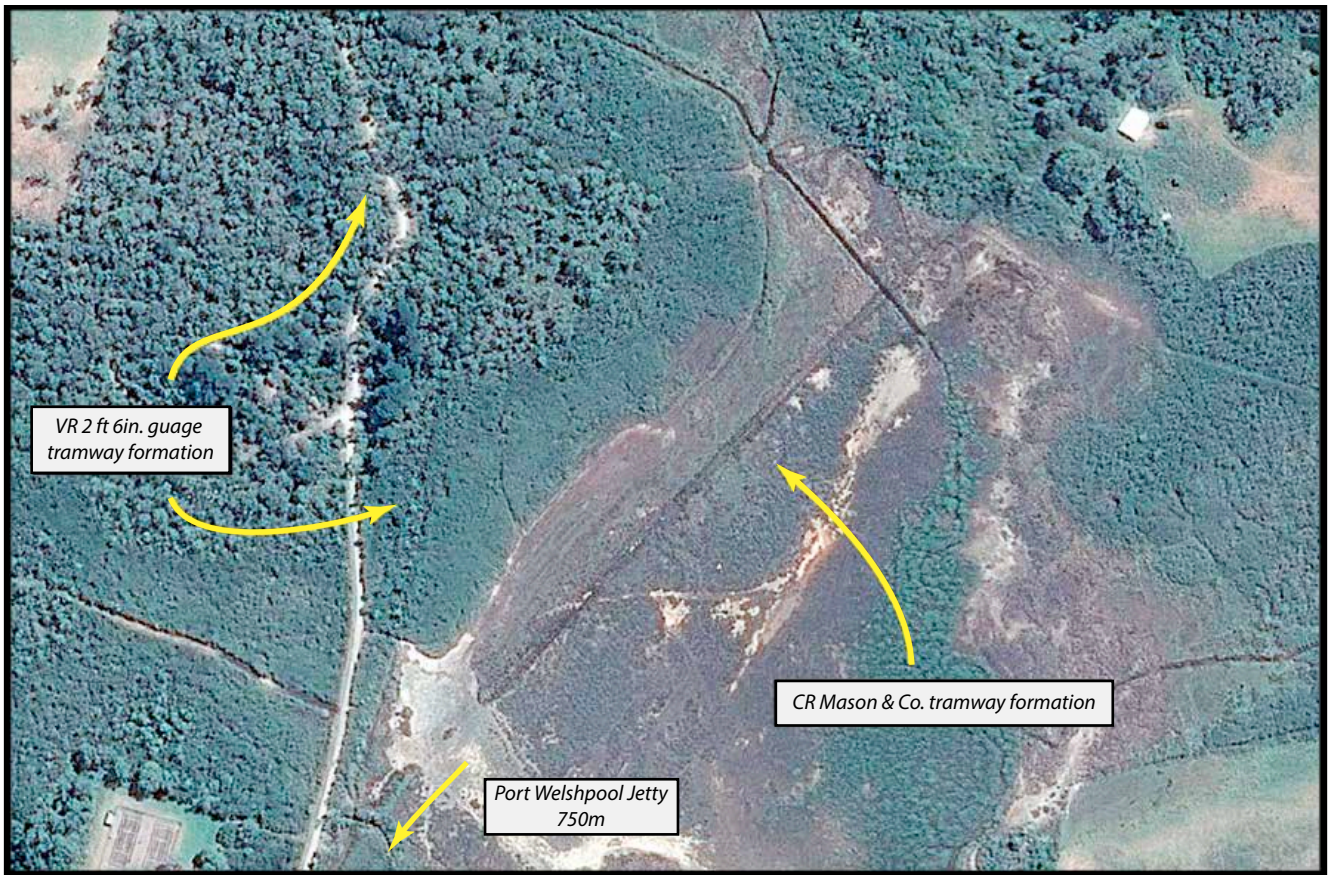
Mason and Moore's sawmill and tramways at Hodgkinson were remarkable more for what they could have been rather than what they were. Good planning, a visionary strategy, measured investment, quality machinery and bold execution marked all aspects of the business but it wasn't enough to make it a success. Events well beyond the control of the partners brought about the demise of the enterprise. Had this not been the case there can be little doubt that this story would have much more to tell. It is also likely that the shape and character of this part of South Gippsland would have been significantly different to what it is today.

Extant in 2015

Much remains on the ground in 2015. In Port Welshpool, the alignment from the jetty to where the tramway veered to the north-east was later occupied by the Victorian Railways narrow-gauge line so all trace of the earlier tramway has long gone. However, from the outskirts of the township the formation is clearly visible angling across the tidal flat and then the paddocks to the north. Crossing an unnamed road, the alignment passes through coastal scrub until rounding the eastern edge of the Welshpool Cemetery. Throughout this section, the tramway is visible in aerial photography but also on the ground where survives a very wombat-burrowed formation replete with sleeper impressions in places.

After crossing Telegraph Road the tramway alignment enters an unmade road reservation and, again, sections featuring sleeper impressions remain although, bewilderingly, they are interspersed with sections where there is not a sign of the tramway. The reservation eventually becomes Salmon Road along which few signs remain although a low embankment is visible in a couple of places up to the point where Salmon Road veers to the north-west. The tramway turns into what was Mason and Moore's property at this point. In years gone by, the canted curve in the line, featuring more sleeper impressions, was a feature here; however, sadly, a recently constructed farm access road has destroyed this section of the alignment.

The segment of tramway passing through the paddocks towards the former Great Southern Railway is difficult to pick up on the ground but is visible in aerial photography although quite subtle. The bridge that carried the railway over the tramway remained over the life of the railway and the abutments stand today. The mounded tramway formation



An aerial view just north of Port Welshpool showing the formation of Mason and Moore's tramway crossing the tidal flats. The track on the left heading to the top of the photo is the former VR narrow gauge tramway to Welshpool although the middle section in view has deviated from the tramway alignment. From bottom left of the image the two tramways followed identical routes to the Port Welshpool jetty.

Photo: Google Earth

The site of Mason and Moore's sawmill is now a dairy farm and, aside from Mason's house which remains in use on the property, most traces of the former enterprise and the township of Hodgkinson have now long gone. The green grass marks the alignment of the mill sawdust trench. The protruding patch of green grass in the foreground pin points the position of the vertical breaking-down bench. The length of the trench highlights the large size of the sawmill and the two patches of green extending to the left of the main trench show the positions of the chutes down which sawdust from the running-off benches fell. *Photo: Mike McCarthy 12 February 2014*

curves to the north to pass between the abutments. Farming activities have obliterated all evidence of the tramway in the section from the bridge up to the mill site. Nevertheless, the alignment of the railway siding into the mill is visible in the paddock alongside the railway.

A fascinating discovery was the sawdust trench of the mill featuring the distinctive shape needed to accommodate the vertical breaking-down saw. 33 metres in length, an impressive artefact remains to this day. Although filled, settling of the earth over the years has left a distinct depression where the trench had been. The depression retains moisture and, in summer, the green strip of grass contrasts markedly with the surrounding paddock. Similarly, the location of the underground water tank is obvious for the same reason. Elsewhere, the small clay hole for the brickworks remains on the property today. Mason's house, although much modified, remains on the property. Of particular interest is the driveway leading from the South Gippsland Highway to the house. It follows a curved, illogical alignment. Logic is restored however when it is realised that the gate marks the precise location where the log tramway once travelled and the alignment of the drive curves nicely around the locations where the mill-shed and stables once stood. Clearly, the alignment of the driveway dates from the time when the mill was in operation. It is amazing how often this phenomenon is repeated in locations where sawmills and other early industries and their tramways once stood. Unless there is a good reason, farm fences, gates and access tracks rarely change!

The first evidence of the log tramway running north-west of the sawmill can be found on the east side of the site of the Nine Mile Creek bridge. No evidence of the bridge or its approaches remains today, however, the tramway formation beyond it, crossing the paddock on a steep grade to enter the water reserve, is very clear. Visible evidence exists of the formation through the reserve. Although untouched since abandonment the thick growth within the Reserve makes it hard to find. The sight of sleeper impressions was possible here in years gone by and probably remains so with some hard looking.

From the Reserve, the tramway formation crosses paddocks around to the steel-rail terminus in what was Homes's paddock. Remnants are inconsistent in this section; however, the bench for the tramway is there in places over the final 300 metres. The much-eroded alignment of the northern branch of the log tramway runs through paddocks on the slopes north-west of this point.

The site of Curram's sawmill sits in a paddock on the north side of Morgan's Road. The pit for the vertical breaking down bench remains as well as a steel pulley shaft and the metal parts from a horse wagon. A very faint mound heading away from the mill to the south-east most probably marks the tramway alignment.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Foster and District Historical Society for their assistance particularly with photographs. I would especially like to recognise the late Hedley historian Beryl Atkins for her assistance, encouragement and support for the research undertaken for this article. Delightful afternoons sitting with Beryl in her kitchen at Hodgkinson, enjoying a cup of tea whilst going over notes and photos provided a very fond memory of the 15-year span of this project. My one regret is that Beryl did not get the opportunity to read the story. I also wish to thank John Dennis, Peter Evans, Colin Harvey and Phil Rickard for accompanying me on field trips associated with this project. Colin and Phil also assisted with peer review of the manuscript. It's amazing how much more can be understood (and enjoyed) when there are several focused minds involved in the search and the discussion.

Students and Head Teacher, JH Wood, from Hodgkinson State School No 2773, taken in 1908. In the background is the sawmill, two years after its closure having been operated by Robert Curram & Sons since 1900. The school moved to Hedley in 1913.

Photo: Foster and District Historical Society

Notes

1. *Government Gazette*, 1886
2. What became known as Port Welshpool was originally gazetted as Welshpool. Locally the change to calling it Port Welshpool occurred around 1890 when construction of the Great Southern Railway had commenced and it became known that the nearest station to the port was to be named Welshpool. For consistency the port is referred to as Port Welshpool in this article.
3. *Gippsland Times*, 21 January 1901. Moore was a well-regarded and successful resident of Yarram who sat on the Shire of Alberton Council for many years and was an investor in local enterprises such as the Yarram Butter factory and, of course, Mason's sawmill.
4. John Adams, *From these Beginnings,* History of the Shire of Alberton, 1990
5. Sands & McDougall Directory, 1888
6. *Gippsland Standard*, 27 August 1890
7. *Gippsland Times*, 11 January 1888
8. *Ibid*, 23 June 1886
9. *The Argus*, 20 February 1888
10. Some sources quote Rendell as the builder. Blair was awarded the contract but it is possible Rendell was engaged by Blair to undertake the work.
11. *The Argus*, 14 Jan 1891
12. *Ibid*, 25 January 1888
13. *Ibid*, 7 February 1888
14. H. W. Nunn, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hodgkinson-clement-3774
15. *The Argus*, 9 August 1888
16. *The Yarram Chronicle*, 16 January 1891
17. *Yarram Chronicle*, 16 January 1901
18. *Ibid*, 8 May 1891
19. *Ibid*, 19 December 1890
20. *Ibid*, 16 January 1901
21. *Gippsland Standard*, 21 January 1891
22. *Yarram Chronicle*, 20 January 1901
23. Shire of Alberton, Surveyor E Scanlon's submitted design for tramway construction
24. VPRS 433 Unit 56, Corres 7 January 1891
25. *Gippsland Times*, 23 June 1886
26. VPRS 425 P0 U289 File RC 05/1431
27. *The Argus*, 9 March 1891
28. VPRS 7966 P1, Unit 9, File 2371
29. *Foster and Toora Mirror*, 30 January 1891
30. VPRS 7966 P1, Unit 9, File 2371
31. *Yarram Chronicle*, 7 April 1891
32. VPRS 7966 P1, Unit 9, File 2358
33. *Yarram Chronicle*, 26 May 1891
34. *Ibid*, 8 May 1891
35. *Ibid*, 8 May 1891
36. *Gippsland Standard*, 7 March 1891
37. *Ibid*, 14 March 1891
38. *Ibid*, 21 March 1891
39. *Yarram Chronicle*, 26 May 1891
40. *Ibid*, 8 May 1891
41. *Ibid*, 23 December 1890
42. VPRS 433 Unit 56, 22 October 1890
43. *Yarram Chronicle*, 23 December 1890
44. VPRS 433 Unit 73, 7458
45. *Gippsland Standard*, 7 March 1891
46. *Yarram Chronicle*, 26 May 1891
47. A.P. Winzenried, *Britannia Creek,* APW Productions, 1986
48. J. Browning, *Light Railways* 227, October 2012
49. *Ibid*
50. *Yarram Chronicle*, 9 June 1891
51. *Ibid*, 9 June 1891
52. *Illustrated Australian News*, 1 January 1892 confirms that timber was "dragged" to the port and the photograph of the Port Welshpool jetty showing a timber truck seemingly being unloaded with the locomotive out of sight, indicates that a tramway loop must have existed at the Port Welshpool end of the tramway to enable the locomotive to move out of the way.
53. A photograph of this section of tramway clearly shows piles ready for despatch to the port.
54. Based on photograph analysis, aerial photography, site inspection and mill descriptions
55. *Yarram Chronicle*, 8 May 1891
56. CR Mason letter to Alberton Shire Council, 13 November 1891
57. Shire of Alberton Correspondence with CR Mason & Co., 1891
58. *Gippsland Standard,* 6 May 1891
59. *Ibid*, 9 May 1891
60. *Yarram Chronicle*, 22 May 1896
61. *Ibid*, 22 May 1896
62. *Ibid*, 9 June 1891
63. *Ibid*, 22 May 1896
64. *Ibid*, 22 May 1896

65. The section of tramway up to the junction on Home's land was very well formed and graded, and evidence on the ground noted in 1997 in the form of embankments, cuts and sleeper impressions reflects the same construction methods as used on the line south from the mill. Beyond the junction point the tramways were distinctly different and in places quite steep and roughly formed. No sleeper impressions remain suggesting light packing was used. This would suggest that *Khartoum* was deployed working the log line to the junction with horses and gravity employed beyond that point.
66. VPRS 7966 Unit 11 Item 2739
67. *Illustrated Australian News*, 1 January 1892
68. *Yarram Chronicle*, 22 September 1891
69. *Ibid*, 30 January 1892
70. *Ibid*, 8 April 1892
71. VPRS 433 Units 56, 72 - 74
72. VPRS 433 Units 56, 75
73. VPRS 242 Unit 185, R37698
74. *Yarram Chronicle*, 22 July 1892
75. *Toora and Welshpool Pioneer*, 30 June 1894
76. *Gippsland Guardian*, 15 August 1891
77. *Ibid*, 2 September 1891
78. *Yarram Chronicle*, 8 April 1892
79. VPRS 433 Unit 130 8776
80. VPRS 4999 P0 Unit 10 650
81. VPRS 7966 P0 Unit 11 2739
82. *Ibid*
83. *Yarram Chronicle*, 22 May 1896
84. *Ibid*, 3 July 1891
85. *The Argus*, 4 May 1893
86. *Ibid*
87. VPRS 7966 P0 Unit 11 2739
88. *The Argus*, 7 September 1893
89. VPRS 7966 P0 Unit 11 2739
90. *Ibid*
91. *Yarram Chronicle*, 25 September 1894
92. *Ibid*, 22 May 1896
93. VPRS 433 Unit 130 Item 8776. Also outward tonnages from Masons Siding over this period
94. *The Argus*, 18 October 1894
95. *Ibid*, 15 October 1894
96. *Hobart Town Mercury*, 1 December 1893
97. *Yarram Chronicle*, 13 November 1894
98. *Ibid*, 1 March 1895
99. *The Argus*, 5 April 1895
100. *Wellington Times and Agricultural and Mining Gazette*, 11 October 1894
101. *The Argus*, 15 May 1895
102. *Ibid*, 24 May 1895
103. *Ibid*, 23 May 1898
104. *Gippsland Standard*, 3 April 1895
105. *Ibid*, 7 March 1896
106. *Ibid*, 12 June 1895
107. *Ibid*, 15 May 1895
108. *Ibid*, 16 October 1895
109. *Ibid*, 5 February 1896
110. *Ibid*, 19 March 1897
111. *Ibid*, 24 December 1895
112. *Ibid*, 17 December 1897
113. VPRS 433 Unit 141 Item 4983
114. *Gippsland Standard*, 22 June 1898
115. VR Weekly Notice 17/98
116. *Ibid* 14/99
117. *Gippsland Standard*, 11 October 1899
118. *The Argus*, Shipping Intelligence, 1889 - 1900
119. *Gippsland Standard*, 14 April 1899
120. *Ibid*, 11 October 1899
121. *Ibid*, 5 January 1900
122. *Ibid*, 28 February 1900
123. *Ibid*, 16 March 1900
124. *Ibid*, 23 March 1900
125. *Ibid*, 21 November 1900
126. *Ibid*, 6 July 1900
127. *Toora and Welshpool Pioneer*, 22 June 1900
128. *Sawdust and Steam*, Norm Houghton 2010
129. *Warragul Guardian*, 26 October 1900
130. Jack Gunn interview notes
131. Other evidence points to a relationship between the two. Sanderson was a Scot while Gunn was of Scottish parents, both were of very similar age and sat together on the Board of the Victorian Sawmillers Association. Both were steam experts/enthusiasts. Gunn's choice of 3 ft 6 in gauge at Crossover when he had previously used a gauge of 3ft is a puzzle, which could have resulted from discussing the choice for 3 ft 6 in gauge with Sanderson or possibly the purchase of rolling stock from him. All this is circumstantial but what is very clear is that the two men knew each other well and shared common interests. A possible swap of problematic locomotives can't at present be proved but neither can it be discounted.
132. *Foster and Toora Mirror*, 26 September 1906

Westward Ho, *WG Bagnall B/n 682 of 1885 at Britannia Creek, November 1907. The locomotive was previously named* Khartoum *and had been regauged twice by the time this photograph was taken. It arrived at Port Welshpool from Beaconsfield in northern Tasmania for use on Mason's 3 ft gauge tramway in June 1891. It seems likely that it left Port Welshpool in October 1900 to go to Gunn's tramway at Crossover before being passed to Sanderson at Forrest in 1901. If this is correct it was Gunn who regauged the locomotive to 3 ft 6 in. It was sold to Cuming Smith & Co. at Britannia Creek in 1907, the new owners returning it to its original 3 ft gauge. Photo: LRRSA Collection*

ROD 23 and a sister engine wait their next turn of duty at Hexham. *Photo: Graham Black 1970*

An almost forgotten part of Australian and World War One History

Following on from his extensive article on J&A Brown's ROD No.23 in LR 209, Graham Black *gives an update on this important piece of Australian history.*

From a total of 521 2-8-0 locomotives constructed for the Railway Operating Division of the Royal Engineers, British Army between 1917 and 1918, only three operated as the Richmond Vale Railway Nos. 20, 23 and 24, survive in the world.

Retired from service in mid 1973, Nos.20 and 24, were purchased by the then Hunter Valley Steam Railway and Museum, now renamed the Dorrigo Steam Railway and Museum, and in May 1978 No. 23 was given the number plates of No.21, and moved to the Freeman's Waterhole Mining Museum, near Toronto. No.21 was once believed to have hauled the train of Marshal Foch and his entourage to the signing of the armistice at the end of world war one in 1918, however this has been thoroughly disproved.

In January 1986, No.23 was moved again to the Richmond Vale Railway and Museum at Kurri Kurri where it was positively identified as No. 23 / ROD 2004, the 305th and last of the 2-8-0 ROD's shipped to France. Like all mechanical machines, parts wear out and are sometimes swapped from other machines to keep them in service. The majority of parts identified belong to 2004 but all of the parts had traveled to France for war service.

In late 1987 the boiler was lifted from the frame and in November 1996 transported to the Hunter Valley Training Company, located in the old S.M.R. workshop at East Greta Junction for assessment. The conclusion was that an extensive overhaul of the boiler would be required if the locomotive was to be returned to service. Both lower sheets of the outer firebox, the lower half of the middle boiler course, new front tubeplate, all tubes and possibly portions of the inner firebox were identified as requiring replacement.

Since 1987 No. 23 has been in a dismantled state basically hidden from sight. Many and varied ideas on how to raise the funds to restore No. 23 to service has been tried without success. Hopes were raised with the anniversary of the First World War but once again without success.

Finally enough funds to re-assemble and cosmetically overhaul No. 23 have been donated by the Port Waratah Coal Loader and the Dick Smith Foundation, and also supported by sponsorship from Wattle Paints Australia.

On 23 July 2014, No. 23 was taken from its long time storage site to the loco shed where work could commence. In the process No. 23 became the first ROD in almost 47 years to use part of the old main line to Hexham before it was cut back to Stockrington Colliery.

Soon after the cleaning and scraping layer upon layer of hard caked on grease, oil, brake block dust and dirt from the wheels, cleaning of the engine frame and tender commenced. This task has been greater than originally thought and required many man-hours from a small but dedicated crew. Each component, once clean, has been undercoated and given two coats of black gloss paint.

The next stage will be replacing the boiler, lagging, funnel, smoke box door and cab. This is expected to be completed some time early in 2016, when thoughts will turn to a suitable date for the unveiling of only one of the three surviving members of the 521 built World War One steam engines of the ROD, possibly used by Australian Railway men in that terrible conflict.

Contact has been made with many of the surviving crew members who worked on the RODs at Hexham and they eagerly await their first view of ROD 2004 / J. & A. Brown No. 23 the engine that has almost been a forgotten part of the Australian and World War One History.

Above: *Former NSWGR shunting loco X217 positions ROD 23 for painting at Richmond Main.*
Right: *Looking good! The tender takes on a new appearance as the gloss black is applied.*
Below: *The loco frames and tender receiving a good cover of undercoat. By the time this goes to print, the boiler should be back in the frames. All photos: Graham Black*

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

NEW SOUTH WALES

AUSTRALIAN TRAIN MOVERS AND WESLEY SERVICES PTY LTD, Londonderry, NSW

John Garaty visited the Australian Train Movers site at Londonderry in the period leading up to a Grays online auction in November. Details of the eventual disposals are unknown.

Among the range of items offered for sale were the following locomotives:

1067mm gauge Malcolm Moore 0-6-0DM (26-204 6 of 1948) believed to be the last of 16 pioneer underground locomotives built for use at Australian Iron & Steel's Illawarra district mines between 1948 and 1951. It came to Train Movers from the Zig Zag railway.

762mm gauge EM Baldwin 4wDH 11 (6700.3 4.76 of 1976, Model DH4T Mk2), originally built as 610mm gauge for Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works for tunnelling work, and subsequently used by Transfield. It had previously been sold at auction at Kooragang Island in 2009.

Also up for sale were a 762mm gauge tunnel segment car, a couple of modified 1067mm gauge coal hoppers, some 2ft gauge wheelsets, and a quantity of track materials.

On site and not offered for sale was a standard gauge 'Trackmobile' road/rail shunt unit, three further 762mm gauge segment cars, and two Innisfail Tramway bogie flats. Although not listed in the paper catalogue, the 'Trackmobile' may have been sold at the end of the auction.

John Garaty 11/15

MANILDRA FLOUR MILLS PTY LTD, Manildra

(see LR 221 p.22)
1435mm gauge

Photos posted on Facebook on 16 December show Goninan Bo-Bo DE MM03 (4970 of 1961) shunting here with Clyde Co-Co DE MM01 (62-257 of 1962) also present.

Austin Harrison 12/15

MANILDRA FLOUR MILLS PTY LTD, Narrandera

(see LR 244 p.25)
1435mm gauge

Seen at work here on 9 November was Walkers B-B DH 7340 (702 of 1972).

Adrian Cooper 11/15

QUEENSLAND

BUNDABERG SUGAR LTD, Bingera Mill
BUNDABERG SUGAR LTD, Millaquin Mill

(see LR 246 p.22 and LR 246 p.22)
610mm gauge

1.7 million tonnes of cane was crushed at these two mills in 2015.

ABC Rural 19/11/2015

ISIS CENTRAL SUGAR MILL CO LTD

(see LR 246 p.22)
610 mm gauge

1.28 million tonnes of cane was crushed here in 2015 with the season finishing on 6 November.

ABC Rural 19/11/2015; *NewsMail* 19/11/2015

MSF SUGAR LTD, Mulgrave Mill

(see LR 246 p.22)
610mm gauge

Probably previously unreported here was the shortening of the branch to Fairweathers in the Little Mulgrave area during the 2012 slack season owing to the destruction of a bridge over the Mulgrave River during flooding. This was a road rail bridge which was rebuilt as a road bridge only. The branch now terminates at Frizzos Loop on the mill side of the bridge and the 3 thousand tonnes of cane on the other side is road hauled into here. Navvy loco Com-Eng 0-6-0DM 5 (A1005 of 1955) has continued its wanderings and was seen at Sandy Pocket in South Johntone Mill territory on 2 December and at Babinda on 4 December. Prof B-B DH 22 *Aloomba* (P.S.L.25.01 of 1990 rebuilt South Johnstone Mill 1993) returned to service on 4 November. It had been out of action since suffering a broken axle on the night of 21 September. South Johnstone Mill EM Baldwin B-B DH 32 *Liverpool* (10385.1 8.82 of 1982) was sent here between 14 and 21 November for

Top: *Up for auction the next day is Malcolm Moore 0-6-0DM (26-204 6 of 1948) at the Australian Train Movers site at Londonderry on 10 November. Photo: John Garaty* ***Above:*** *Now much changed from its original form is Mulgrave Mill's Prof B-B DH 22* Aloomba *(P.S.L.25.01 of 1990 rebuilt South Johnstone Mill 1993) at McGuigans Loop near Aloomba on 21 December. Photo: Luke Horniblow*

Top: *Mulgrave Mill Clyde 0-6-0DH 16* Kamma *(56-96 of 1956) on Double Barrel bridge over the Little Mulgrave River on 21 December. Photo: Luke Horniblow* ***Centre:*** *On 20 December, Clyde 0-6-0DH 11 (55-64 of 1955) trundles down the main street of South Johnstone township on its way into the mill yard. Photo: Mitch Zunker* ***Above:*** *South Johnstone Mill's EM Baldwin B-B DH 26 (7244.1 8.77 of 1977) with at the rear of the rake South Johnstone Mill bogie brakewagon 6 built in 1990, climbs towards Pin Gin Hill on the Nerada line on 21 December. Photo: Luke Horniblow*

work to be done on it. NQEA bogie brakewagon 21 (built in 1995) has been sold to Tully Mill and was observed there on 20 November. The frame of Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 7 (B1010 of 1956) returned to the mill from being sand blasted and painted on 23 November and this loco is to be rebuilt. On 7 December, Clyde 0-6-0DH 18 *Barron* (64-379 of 1964) ran into a towed boat and trailer which failed to stop at the Redbank Road level crossing near Packers Camp. The loco ended up at almost right angles to the track and rather bizarrely up against the boat which had separated from its trailer. Damage to the loco included a buckled rear cab wall, broken windows and smashed air conditioning unit. Owing to several reasons, this mill along with the others in the Cairns to Tully belt had an extended crushing this year and finished just prior to Christmas.

Jason Sou 11/15; Luke Horniblow 11/15, 12/15; Mitchell Millett 11/15; Mick Brown 11/15; 7 Local News Cairns 12/15; Zinc 102.7 Cairns 12/15; Nine News Queensland 12/15; Darren Humphrey 12/15; John Charleton 12/15; Andrew Sues 11/15; 12/15; Mitch Zunker 12/15

MSF SUGAR LTD, South Johnstone Mill

(see LR 246 p.22)

610mm gauge

At some time between 14 and 21 November, EM Baldwin B-B DH 32 *Liverpool* (10385.1 8.82 of 1982) was sent to Mulgrave Mill for work to be done on it. EM Baldwin B-B DH 26 (7244.1 8.77 of 1977) was regularly working the Nerada line latterly during the crushing season and had also been paired up with South Johnstone Mill bogie brakewagon 6 (built in 1990) for work in this hilly area.

Jason Sou 11/15; Mick Brown 11/15; Luke Horniblow 12/15

SHELL AUSTRALIA PTY LTD, Townsville Harbour

(1067mm gauge)

At use for shunting the Shell sidings here are a D&N B600 Road Rail Shunter and possibly a hi-rail tractor.

Louise Pacey 12/15

TULLY SUGAR LTD

(see LR 246 p.23)

610mm gauge

Mulgrave Mill's NQEA bogie brakewagon 21 (built in 1995) has been purchased by Tully Mill and was observed here on 20 November.

Luke Horniblow 11/15; 12/15

WILMAR SUGAR (HERBERT) PTY LTD, Herbert River Mills

(see LR 246 p.23)

610mm gauge

On 5 November, Victoria Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH *Lucinda* (65-436) returned to Victoria but was back at Macknade Mill from 26 or 27 November to 4 December. EM Baldwin B-B DH *Wallaman* (6400.3 4.76 of 1976) plus Clyde 4 wheeled brakewagon BV6 (CQ3477-2 of 1976), based at Macknade for the 2015 season also returned to Victoria on 4 December. Slack season

maintenance will be performed on the *Wallaman* at Victoria and the *Lucinda* is needed by the navvies for poison train duties. EM Baldwin 4wDH *Sugarworld Shuttle* (9109.1 9.80 of 1980), the regular poison train loco, failed with a very loose tyre sometime during the crushing season and the *Lucinda* was subsequently set up with the controls for the poison spraying wagon. Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 *Homebush* (1067 of 1914) performed for the Victoria Mill social club Christmas party on 5 December, providing rides through the mill yard. Unfortunately, it was unable to be present at the Macknade Mill social club's event this year owing to both parties being on the same day. Macknade Mill's EM Baldwin 0-6-0DH 14 (6/2490.1 7.68 of 1968) is to receive an extensive refurbishment including a new Mercedes Benz motor of higher power than the existing unit, an Allison transmission and new final drive casing during the 2016 slack season. Also to be refurbished is EM Baldwin 6 wheeled brakewagon BV2 (7065.5 6.77 of 1977) which caught fire during the crushing season. As well, extra weight in the form of a steel plate will be added to the deck possibly bringing total weight up to 19 tonnes. Work continues on the fitting out of the new bogie brakewagon at Victoria Mill.
Editor 11/15, 12/15

WILMAR SUGAR PTY LTD, Inkerman Mill, Home Hill
(see LR 246 p.24)
610mm gauge
EM Baldwin 0-6-0DH *Carstairs* (6/2715.1 9.68 of 1968) left Proserpine Mill on 4 November for return to this mill.
Tom Badger 11/15

WILMAR SUGAR (KALAMIA) PTY LTD, Kalamia Mill
(see LR 244 p.26)
610mm gauge
A cane farmer in the Javisfield area has threatened to remove a cane railway which passes through a three metre section of his property unless an economic interest of 2 million dollars for the value of the cane which has passed over his property for the past five years is paid. He is claiming that the issue of the track passing through his property was not addressed correctly by the millers in the past. The contentious section of track appears to be a part of the Lower Jarvisfield line at Vasta Road.
Townsville Bulletin 16/12/2015; John Browning 12/15

WILMAR SUGAR (PROSERPINE) PTY LTD, Proserpine Mill
(see LR 246 p.25)
610mm gauge
With the crushing having finished on 31 October at this mill, loan loco EM Baldwin 0-6-0DH *Carstairs* (6/2715.1 9.68 of 1968) was loaded up for return to Inkerman Mill on 4 November. The rebuild of Clyde 0-6-0DH 8 (65-443 of 1965) was completed by December with commissioning being undertaken. It has been fitted with a Mercedes Benz

Top: *Posing in the picturesque setting of Callejas bridge over the South Johnstone River on South Johnstone Mill's No.1 branch on 24 November is Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 38 (AH4695 of 1965). Photo: Jason Sou* ***Centre:*** *Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0* Homebush *(1067 of 1914) waits for another load of passengers at Victoria Mill on 5 December. Photo: Christopher Hart* ***Above:*** *Macknade Mill's EM Baldwin 0-6-0DH* Hobart *(4413.1 7.72 of 1972) delivers empties to Covells siding on the Hawkins Creek line on 22 November. Photo: Luke Horniblow*

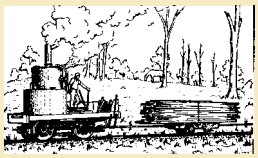
motor and Allison transmission. A new cowling at the front end has been fitted to accommodate the new cooling system and the loco now carries a new livery. The body is yellow with black for the upper parts of the hood and a white roof. The headstocks and valences are painted with red and white stripes.
Tom Badger 11/15, 12/15; ABC Rural 19/11/2015

OVERSEAS

FIJI SUGAR CORPORATION
(see LR 246 p.25)
610mm gauge
According to the FSC executive chairman, there are no plans at this stage to repair the rail bridge at Sigatoka which was partially washed away in January 2009. Expense is given as the reason. Alternative uses mooted for the structure include using it as a jetty for commuters, presumably in combination with water borne transport and establishing cafes on it. Farmers in the Kavanagasau area beyond the bridge have no option but to continue paying the increased cost of using lorries to transport their cane to Lautoka Mill.
The Fiji Times Online 29/12/2015

PT FREEPORT, Grasberg Mine, Irian Jaya
(see LR 236 p.25)
1435mm gauge
Now in use at this underground copper and gold mine are a number of Modutrac 40 tonne Bo overhead wire electric locomotives built by Schalker Eisenhütte Maschinenfabrik GmbH of Bochum, Germany. Each axle of these centre cab locos is driven by a 135 kw AC traction motor and these can be individually controlled. Power packs for diesel or battery operation can be swapped in and out as required. The electro-dynamic main brake is capable of bringing a 700 tonne train to a stand. These locomotives transport all the extracted material at the mine in a driverless, round the clock, fully automated system.
http://www.eickhoff-bochum.de/en/node/4011/15

Top: *On 5 December, the Chinese built bogie brakewagon continues to be fitted out in the Victoria Mill locoshed. Photo: Christopher Hart* ***Above:*** *EM Baldwin B-B DH* Inverness *(10123.1 5.82 of 1982) passes by Mandurana 1 after topping the severe Church Hill grade on its way to Farleigh Mill on 5 November. Photo: Scott Jesser*



LRRSA NEWS

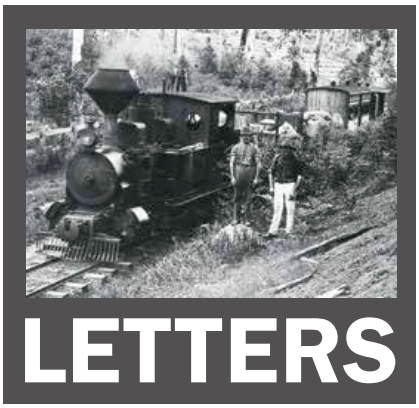
MEETINGS

ADELAIDE: "Milang Light Railway Centre, and visits to Victoria"
We will discuss the progression of the SA Light Rail Centre storyboard project at Milang. John Meredith will report on the LRRSA Salt & Gypsum tour and the Kerrisdale Mountain Railway, and Doug Miles will show his photos of Yallourn from 1973.
News of light rail matters will be welcome from any member.
Please contact Les Howard on 08 8278 3082 or lfhoward@tpg.com.au if you are planning on attending.
Location: 9 Craiglee Drive, Coromandel Valley
Date: Thursday 4 February 2016 at 8 pm

BRISBANE: "Bundaberg cane trains"
The SEQ division will host a DVD presentation of Bob Gough's travel to the Bundaberg area in October 2015.
Location: BCC Library, 107 Orange Grove Road, Coopers Plains.
Date: Friday, 19 February at 7:30pm

MELBOURNE: "The Welshpool Jetty and its tramways"
Mike McCarthy will present the next chapter in his series of presentations covering the early tramways of South Gippsland. This time he will be telling the story of the Port Welshpool Jetty and the fascinating VR 2 ft 6 in tramway. He will explain why it is true that if the *SS Clonmel* hadn't run aground outside of what is now Port Albert in 1841, the tramway probably wouldn't have been built.
Location: Ashburton Uniting Church Hall, Ashburn Grove, Ashburton.
Date: Thursday 10 February at 8:00pm

SYDNEY: "Tulloch of Rhodes – Engineers and Manufacturers"
NOTE TEMPORARY CHANGE OF VENUE
David Jehan will be presenting the history of Tulloch, Engineers and Manufacturers, of Pyrmont and Rhodes, 1883 to 1974, covering all activities over their 91 year history with an emphasis on their production of railway vehicles for light rail use.
Temporary new location (yet another) at Burwood: This building is the Library and Community Hub on the corner of Conder St and Railway Parade on the south side of the railway, just west of Burwood Plaza and the railway station. Parking and street parking is available nearby.
Date: Wednesday 24 February at 7:30pm



LETTERS

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

Looking Back – Australian Light Railways on the Gallipoli Peninsula, 1915 (LR245)

Just wondering why, if you wanted to update the Gallipoli story, you did not approach the original authors. I am still researching the railways operated by Australians in the First World War and could provide new material.

Trevor Edmonds
Via email

Reply from the Editor:

'Looking Back' in *Light Railways* was never intended to replace "proper" articles, the intent was to highlight interesting photos and pull apart some of the detail that might not be obvious to the casual observer. Many of the photos in 'Looking Back' are of interesting subjects, but either little is known of the background, or there isn't enough to constitute a stand alone piece in the magazine.

While the Anzac item in 'Looking Back' was done to commemorate the campaign, it was certainly not intended to be an update as such of the original article.

Regards,
Scott

Austral Bricks, Eastwood, (LR243)

It was great to find that one of the skips used to hoist shale out of quarries adjacent to brickworks in suburban Sydney has been preserved. I am however a little sceptical about the content of the plaque quoted in the piece in LR.

When I visited the Eastwood brickworks and shale quarry on Midson Road in 1975 I noted the operator as Brickworks Limited and in 2002 the operator was Austral Brick Co Pty Ltd (http://www.irc.justice.nsw.gov.au/Documents/EA02-314.pdf0). Austral Brick has been totally controlled by Brickworks Limited since 1950 (http://www.brickworks.com.au/irm/content/history.aspx?OriginalCategoryId=222)

In 1975 a similar design of skip was used to hoist material from a large storage bin at the base of the quarry up the quarry wall and into the brickworks. The gauge of the track was measured at 3 ft 0 in and an additional off-centre rail between the two tracks probably served to reduce the risk of damage following derailment. The large bin was connected to a crusher by a conveyor belt, which was overgrown at one point and apparently out of use.

My photos show a stockpile of crushed rock at the base of the quarry and a Caterpillar front end loader apparently loading the rock onto a low level feeder in the bin. A Volkswagen micro bus parked at the base of the quarry probably served for crew transport.

The skip was bottom dumping, with what appears to be an automated discharge using a bar at the right hand side activated by a frame beside the tracks at the top of the incline. There was a winder driver at the top of the incline. The skip itself had different diameter wheels front and rear. There was also a second skip and axle set.

I did not see any evidence of rails at the base of the quarry, and this observation is consistent with other operating brickworks and quarries using inclines at St Leonards and St Peters, and disused brickworks at Thornleigh, Ashbury, St Peters, and Punchbowl during the mid-1970s. I recall the operating quarries having rubber tyred front end loaders and dump trucks and the disused quarries being set up in a similar fashion.

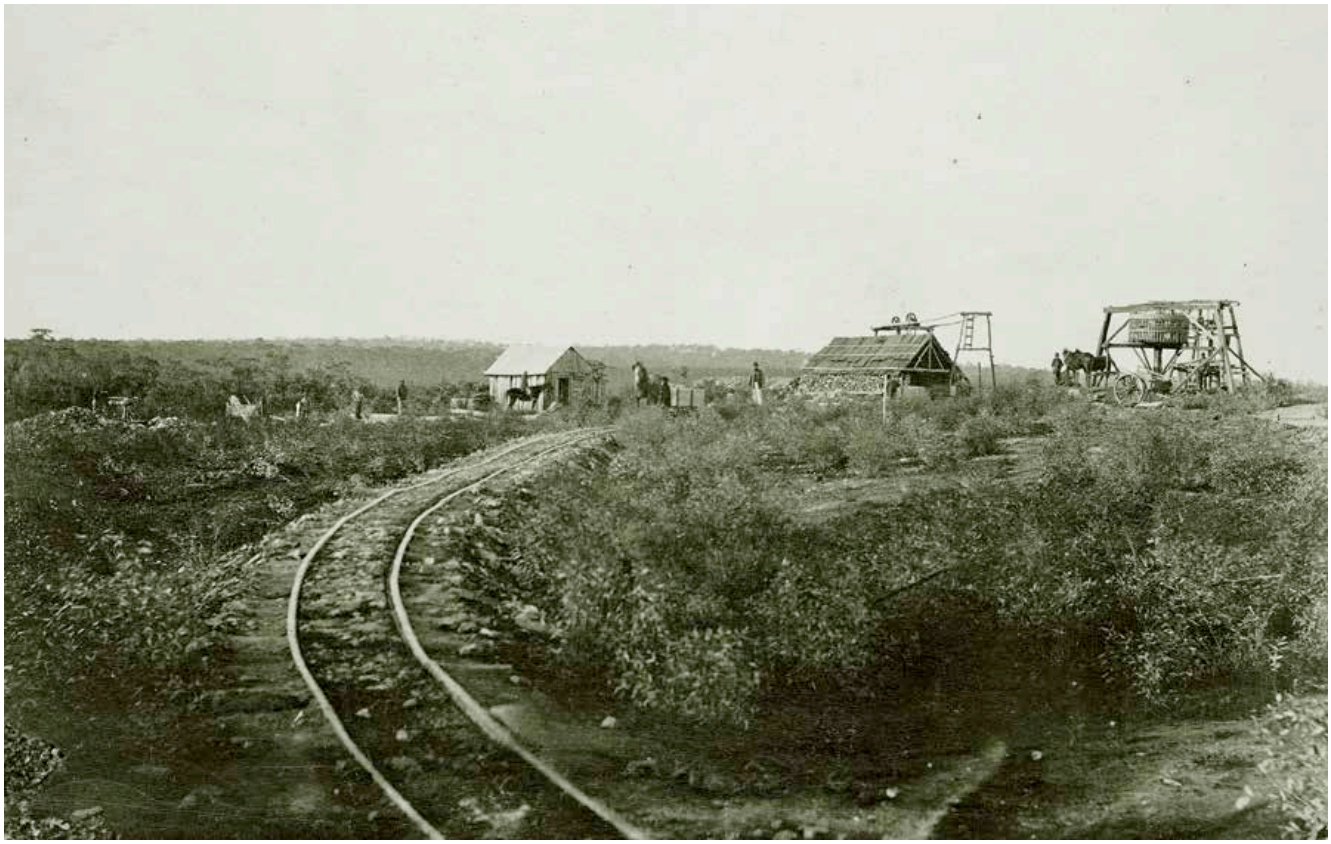
All the inclines were 3 ft 0 in gauge, with the exception of that at St Leonards, which was approximately 2 ft 11 in or 2 ft 11½ in gauge. At St Leonards there were also the remains of 18 in gauge timber framed side-tipping skips. This is discussed in more detail in my letter to LR 203.

I think the skips used on the inclines were specifically designed for this service because of the differing diameter of the front and rear wheels. The skips would have been too high for hand loading of broken shale at the base of the quarry and probably too small an area at the top for mechanised loading with a rope shovel.

Photos from the 1920s showing hand pushed side-tipping skips at the State Brickworks and the Beacon Hill quarry of the Brookvale brickworks are included in the book *Working the clays, the brickmakers of the Ashfield district*, by Nora Peek and Chris Pratten, published by the Ashfield and District Historical Society in 1996. The side-tipping skips discharged into a "chinaman", a hole in a large steel plate, with a larger skip below, probably similar to the skip preserved at Eastwood.

Tony Weston
Via Email

Left: *The Austral Bricks Eastwood quarry as a skip descends the incline to the loading plant.*
Above: *Loading a skip at Eastwood. Of note are the differing diameter wheels, and discharge triggering arm.*
Both photos: Tony Weston



A picture's worth a thousand words: the St Arnaud silver mines

The accompanying photograph is from an album compiled by Lewis brothers of St Arnaud in Western Victoria (State Library of Victoria accession number H2015.130) with date ranges from 1860 to 1945. This particular photograph, simply titled 'Silvermines, St Arnaud' (one of the few in the album not dated) is on page 23, sandwiched between photographs dated 1872 and 1910.

Silver was known to exist in association with gold at St Arnaud by 1859. The lode was discovered one quarter mile north-west of the township by George D. Edwards and Henry Julius La Roche, and several trial crushings were made which seemed most promising.[1] The first leases specifically for silver mining were taken up in 1862.[2] The silver existed as a chloro-bromide of the precious metal and was found in cavities in 'mice-eaten' quartz above the water table. Below the water table the silver was found as a sulphide. By 1867, 8,197 tons of silver ore had been raised in Victoria for a yield of 12,592 oz of silver. Most of this had come from St Arnaud.[3]

By January 1864, more than £22,000 had been expended on the St Arnaud silver mine under the direction of St Arnaud Silver Mines Association manager Amos Cheale and the mine, despite (or because of) paying dividends, was £4000 in debt.[4] The major technical problem seems to have been the many other minerals mixed in with the ore which made it extremely difficult to separate out the silver.[5] In 1873, the mine changed hands, being purchased by the London & St Arnaud Gold and Silver Mining Company Limited. A new manager was appointed, Mr A J Hutchinson, an experienced silver miner from Nevada. Under his superintendence a new 'Stetefeldt's patent roasting furnace' (the only one in the Colony) was installed. The quartz ore was crushed dry and conveyed to the top of the furnace where smelting took place. This seems to have been an immediate success and, from one week's crushing, a bar of mixed gold and silver weighing 1210 oz was obtained.[6] By July 1874 the north shaft of the mine was down to the 300 ft level,[7] however, little more seems to have been done for a number of years.

In February 1888 there was renewed interest in the silver lodes, and a number of mines were pegged-out south of the original claims, even extending into the township of St Arnaud itself. The ore from these claims was said to have been assayed at Broken Hill to yield 44 oz silver to the ton and 15 dwt gold. This led to the formation of a number of new companies and a subsequent boom in share trading.[8] The old St Arnaud Silver Mines Association mine was taken over by the Victorian Comstock Silver & Gold Mining Company, which was cleaning out the shaft ready to recommence production.[9] However, at Broken Hill the lodes bearing silver were 100 ft wide; those at St Arnaud a paltry 8 ft wide – a great disincentive where it was necessary to attract working capital.[10] The boom in silver at St Arnaud appears to have been short-lived, with only sporadic activity continuing into the twentieth century. By 1917 the silver mines at St Arnaud were remembered only as 'once famous'.[11]

Another photograph in the Lewis brothers album shows a very substantial 'silvermine battery' at Bell Rock Hill just outside St Arnaud (with elevated ore tramways entering from two sides) so it is likely that our photograph shows one of the smaller mines dating from the boom in 1888. There are several interesting features. From left is a small shaft worked by a hand-operated windlass; several men apparently working-up mine timbers; a small hut with a stone chimney, a run of mullock; the main shaft, roofed over with bush poles and sheets of bark supported on rubble-stone walls; and a whim for hauling in that shaft powered by a pair of horses. Of particular interest is the well-constructed and substantially-ballasted tramway centre frame. A single horse is harnessed to a box truck, probably loaded with ore ready for its trip to the battery.

References

1. *The Argus*, Friday 9 March 1888, page 4; *Avoca Free Press and Farmer's and Miner's Journal*, Wednesday 25 October 1916, page 2.
2. *Victorian Government Gazette*, Gazette 109, Friday 12 September 1862, page 1703.
3. Robert Brough-Smyth (1869). *The Gold and Mineral Districts of Victoria.* Facsimile edition, Queensberry Hill Press 1979, pages 410-411.
4. *The Argus*, Thursday 30 June 1864, page 7.
5. *The Advocate*, Saturday 1 October 1881, page 18.
6. *The Leader*, Saturday 17 January 1874, page 21; US Patent 43,140 of June 1864.
7. *Avoca Mail*, Tuesday 21 July 1874, page 2; Tuesday 15 September 1874, page 2; Tuesday 17 November 1874, page 2.
8. *The Age*, Saturday 4 February 1888, page 9; Tuesday 27 March 1888, page 5; *The Leader*, Saturday 31 March 1888, page 15; *The Argus*, Friday 9 March 1888, page 4; Thursday 5 April 1888, page 5.
9. *The* Age, Wednesday 3 October 1888, page 13; *The Argus*, Saturday 27 April 1889, page 11.
10. *St Arnaud Mercury*, Saturday 31 March 1917, page 2.
11. *Weekly Times*, Saturday 4 November 1917, page 2.

Queensland group visit to Neranwood Tramway

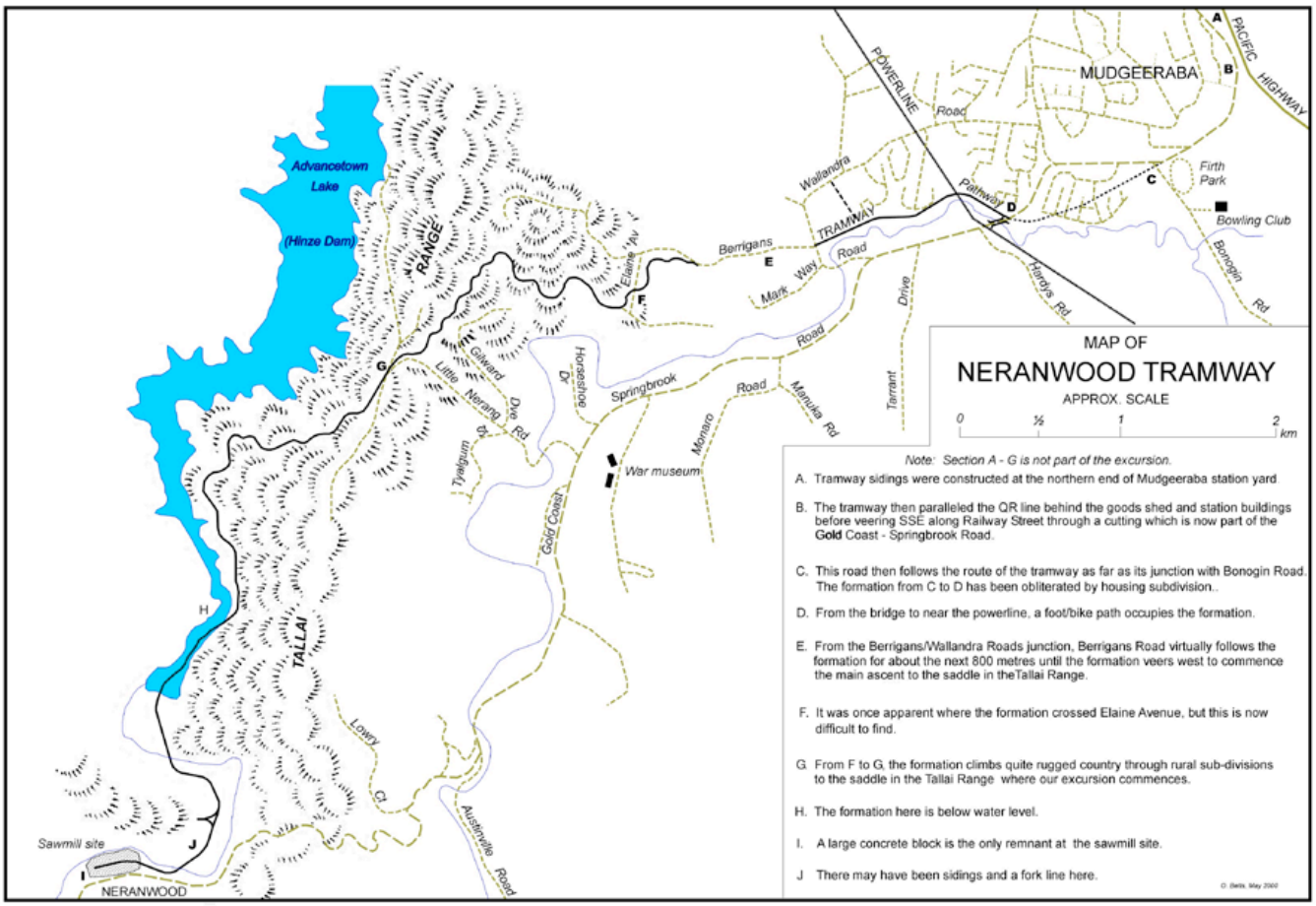
On 13 September, a group of Queensland LRRSA members and friends took part in a visit arranged by Danny Sheehan, Peter Cokley and Owen Betts to the remains of the Neranwood Tramway on the Gold Coast hinterland. The short-lived 2ft gauge line ran 11 kilometres from the QR station at Mudgeeraba to the sawmill site at Neranwood. Although intended to transport sawn timber to the main line railway, it seems that the tramway was also used to bring logs to the mill. The sawmill and tramway opened in 1924 and constituted a major investment but proved not to be commercially viable. The mill may have closed as early as 1926. It was not operating in August 1927 and it is unclear if operations were ever resumed. No bids were received at an auction held in November 1930.

In Mudgeeraba, the route of the tramway runs through what is now a road cutting and shortly after becomes obscured by urban and agricultural development. From where the Springbrook Road crosses Mudgeeraba Creek, the trackbed has been used for a bike path / footpath for about 500 metres. After emerging from Berrigans Nursery, the route closely corresponds to Berrigans Road for about 800 metres. The line then commences its ascent of the Tallai Range and the trackbed is generally intact after it enters rough bush country. An inspection was made of a well-maintained section on private property where sleepers were still visible. The summit of the route is where it crosses Little Nerang Road and the trackbed then enters the Hinze Dam water catchment which is closed to unauthorised access. The route is submerged as it nears Neranwood. Some foundations remain at the mill site, close to Polly's Restaurant, where a pleasant lunch was taken.

Many thanks to Danny, Peter and Owen for arranging the visit and to the landowners who allowed access to their property.

The accompanying map was provided by Owen Betts.

Participants (L-R) at the Timbergetters' Monument, Mudgeeraba: Owen Betts, Barry Campbell, Bob Gough, Ruth Kerr, Danny Sheehan, Peter Cokley, Alex Tafe, John Browning, Greg Stephenson, Mark Linnett. *Photo: Steve Malone*



A well-preserved section of trackbed on the ascent of the Tallai Range. *Photo: John Browning*

Field Reports

Please send any contributions, large or small, to fieldreports@lrrsa.org.au or to P.O. Box 21, Surrey Hills, Vic 3127.

North Mount Lyell Railway, Tasmania
Gauges 1067mm and 610mm

On the west coast of Tasmania, the King River was dammed to form Lake Burbury, the centrepiece of the King River Power Scheme. Beneath the impounded water lie sections of the former the 3ft 6in gauge North Lyell railway, which was 27 miles long. The railway was completed in 1900 to link the wharves of Kelly Basin, on Macquarie Harbour, to the copper smelter at Crotty and the terminus of the line at Linda, which was situated in the valley below the rich North Lyell copper mine. The copper ore was dispatched from the mine by 2ft gauge steam tramway to the top loading station of an aerial tramway. From here the ore was sent down in buckets to Linda railway station where it was loaded onto railway wagons for the onward journey to the smelter at Crotty. The enterprise was a financial disaster (the railway with equipment cost in excess of £316,000) and smelting ceased in 1903 when the company was absorbed by its neighbour, the Mt. Lyell Mining & Railway Company. The North Lyell railway gradually fell out of use until final closure in 1929. It was entirely dismantled and the rails reused by the Mt. Lyell company.

The present day bitumen road from Queenstown to Darwin Dam runs along, or parallels the railway formation in many localities. Two Queenstown historians, Mark Metrikas and Peter Reid accompanied by the author recently visited the locality of the 21 mile peg, which has a few deep cuttings in the vicinity. The low winter and spring rainfall, along with maintenance work on the tunnel from Crotty Dam to the John Butters hydro power station has dramatically lowered the level of Lake Burbury, revealing the old railway formation in many places.

It was recorded in the *Examiner* (Launceston) that, on Thursday evening 18 July 1901 an accident involving a fettler's trolley and the afternoon train from Kelly Basin to Linda occurred at 'Twenty-one Mile.' James Derrick, formerly permanent-way inspector of the North Mount Lyell Company was severely injured. A reporter stated: 'It appears that the up train from Kelley's [sic] Basin was very late, and the men working on the line put their trolley in gear and started towards Crotty, Derrick acting as brakeman. When passing through the cutting the engine suddenly appeared in front of them. There was only time to jump off, but Derrick was caught in some manner by the engine.' The man suffered several broken ribs, internal injuries and a smashed knee. On Friday he was conveyed to the hospital at Queenstown.

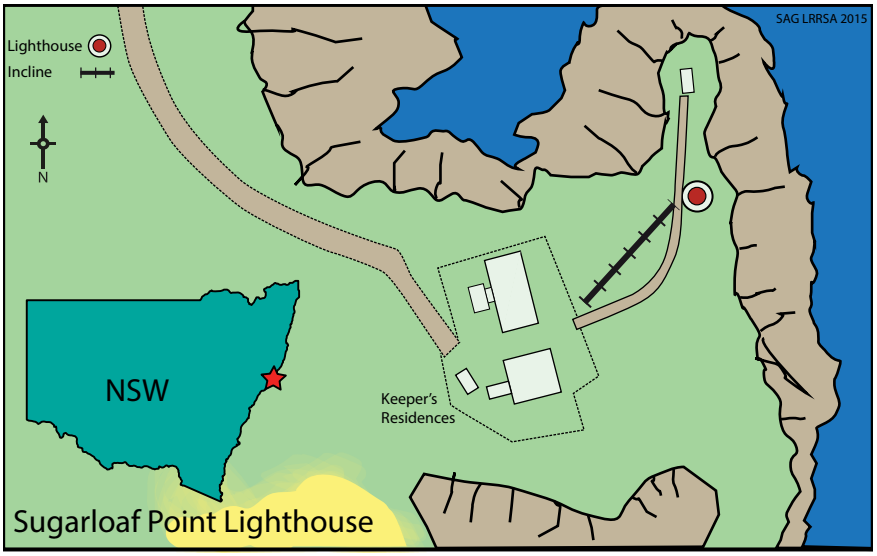
In *Light Railways* No.106 of October 1989 researcher Ray Ellis wrote that the afternoon train from Pillinger (the township at Kelly Basin) departed at 2:30pm for Linda (arrival 4:30pm) which was designated as the down direction of travel, contrary to the reporter's notes. An Avonside 4-6-0 locomotive, of which the company owned three, was probably in charge of the train. The approach of the train was probably muted by the confines of the cutting itself and if a strong wind was blowing, together with the noise of the trolley, precious little warning was available to the fettlers returning home from their work.

Ross Mainwaring 12/2015

Near the 21 mile peg between Linda and Crotty Junction, overlooked by the Thureau Hills, the railway formation is now temporarily exposed. Two local historians, Peter Reid and Mark Metrikas stand in a cutting near where the railway accident occurred, seriously injuring James Derrick. The track formation, heading south in the direction of Crotty station, recedes downgrade into the water of Lake Burbury. Since this photo was taken the water level has again risen to well over the heads of the men.
Photo: Ross Mainwaring, 9 November 2015

Although the old townsite of Crotty and its railway station remain submerged beneath Lake Burbury, the old North Lyell Crotty smelter site was high and dry. Peter Reid examines an abandoned 2ft gauge wheelset, normally submerged, lying on the northern side of the smelter site.
Photo: Ross Mainwaring, 9 November 2015

SUGARLOAF POINT LIGHTHOUSE, Seal Rocks
Sugarloaf Point Lighthouse, opened in 1875, is significant for its association with the development of New South Wales maritime navigational aids during an important period of expansion of the lighthouse network. It also has a long association with Australian shipping. The lighthouse was designed by New South Wales Colonial Architect James Barnet, and was the first of his major lighthouse designs.
Dramatically located on the summit of an abrupt headland which rises 60 metres above the sea, and free from modern visual intrusions, the lighthouse has strong aesthetic values. The light was first exhibited on 1 December 1875.
The light was automated and converted to solar power in 1997, and now the tower, the flagstaff base and part of the incline railway remain in Commonwealth hands (i.e. the Australian Maritime Safety Authority); the rest of the light station is the responsibility of the NSW Department of Land and Water Conservation.
Just to the south-west of the tower is part of the incline, a timber railway used to transport goods up the steep slope to the tower. Details about its use are sketchy but the remains are still there, albeit overgrown. The rest of the incline, the keepers' residences and other buildings are outside the Commonwealth boundary.
As at July 1999, the general condition of the lighthouse was good, although it was reported that there was corrosion in the metalwork attaching the lantern to the tower. The concrete pad was in fair condition and had been painted. The incline was in good condition. (April 2002)
There was also a 500 metre long jetty which was used to land some 1800 tons of building supplies and materials which also must have had a tramway along its length to join with the inclined railway.
AHC database details: **Class:** Historic **Legal Status:** Registered (18 April 1989)
Database Number: 103604
File Number: 1/09/080/0025
Leon Oberg 9/15, Phil Rickard 10/15,



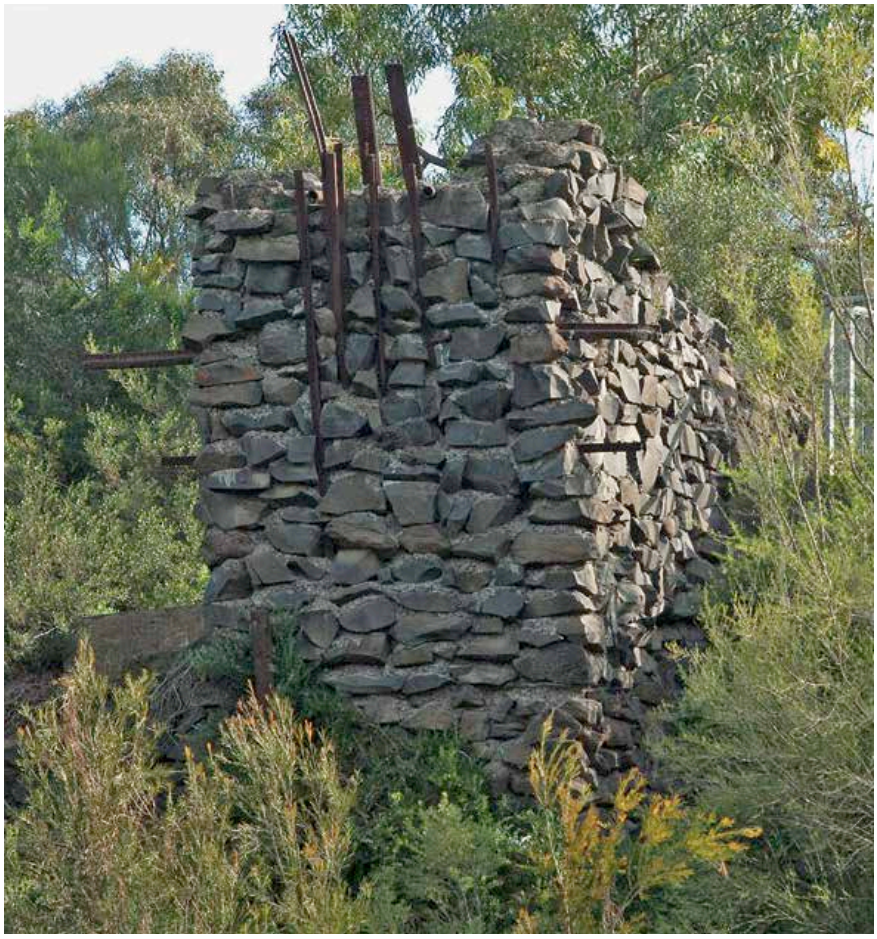
In September 2015 Leon Oberg photographed the trolley and an overgrown section of the incline which once served Sugarloaf Point lighthouse.

Fingal, NSW
Gauge unknown
A mystery rail has been located in the road bitumen outside the cemetery on the northern side of Fingal Head, near the mouth of the Tweed River. There is, so far, no conclusive proof the rail was connected with the sand mining known to occur in the area north of the Fingal Head town area, although a tramway was involved with the sand mining in the Cudgen area south of Kingscliff (see Jim Longworth's article The titanium tramway at Cudgen, LR 207, pages 3-7). Enquiries at the local Tweed Heads museum were inconclusive, although fellow museum members have also photographed rail near the same cemetery. Arthur Knowles and others have mined mineral sands at Fingal Head at various times from late 1930s onwards. My suspicion the rail is not tramway related is reinforced by the fact that, so far, no person has replied on the LRRSA Yahoo group with a Fingal Head listing on any of the tramway loco lists. Thus the source of the rail in the bitumen remains a mystery.
Peter Cokley 10/2015 via LRRSA Yahoo Group

Wales Quarry aerial ropeway, East Brunswick Victoria
Stone was an essential material in the young Colony of Victoria, both for building construction and for bridges and roads. One of the best sources of hard durable stone was the million-year-old basaltic lava flows forming the plains to the north and west of the Yarra River. In the late 1850s, many basalt ('bluestone') quarries were established on and around the eastern fringes of these plains.[1] One of these was established in East Brunswick in the early 1860s in an area bounded by today's Victoria and Albert Streets to the north and south and Merri Creek to the east.[2] It was to operate for a century,[3] primarily in the hands of two generations of the Wales family, but trading as 'Watters & Wales' by the late 1880s and until at least 1917.[4] Newspaper reports indicate that most of the traffic from quarries in the area was handled by horse-drawn drays, and most of the stone was used for road making.
The first of the Wales family (spelt in some early documents 'Wailes') to arrive in Australia was George Wales, born in Durham, England in 1823. He was in Ballarat by 1859 (where he married Scottish-born Agnes Wright) and their first child, Alexander Wright Wales, was born in 1860. The family subsequently moved to Melbourne where it is presumed George Wales started the quarry, although there seems to be no archival evidence to prove this (George Wales would, in later life, become a wood and coal merchant in Richmond).[5] His son, Alexander Wright Wales, established a fifty-year association with the quarry industry both with the family quarry and, eventually, becoming the founder and chairman of directors of the Albion Quarrying Company, incorporated in 1885.[6] He was active in local affairs, being elected to the Brunswick town council in 1895, and later becoming Mayor. He was blinded in a blasting accident at the family's East Brunswick quarry in May 1900, curtailing both his civic and quarrying activities.[7] The business was taken over by two of his three sons, Alexander George Wales (born 1885) and William Wright Wales (born 1888, died of influenza in 1919).[8]

Alexander George Wales oversaw the rapid expansion of the business and, like his father, took on a civic role, becoming Mayor of the City of Brunswick and serving three terms as Lord Mayor of Melbourne.[9] The Albion Quarrying Company also had contracts to construct several of Melbourne's municipal tramways, and to supply ballast to the Victorian Railways.[10] In the mid-1920s motor transport took over from horse-drawn vehicles carting stone from the East Brunswick quarry,[11] a new crushing plant was installed and an aerial ropeway erected and used to lift and haul skips of stone from the quarry to the crusher. Each skip was 7ft long by 4-ft wide and the cableway was designed to lift 2½ tons of stone.[12] In 1965 the 50m deep quarry was purchased by Whelan the Wrecker and used as a place to dump the rubble of many of Melbourne's heritage buildings. It was thought the quarry would take fifty years to fill; ten years later it was half-full.[13]

Wales Quarry at East Brunswick in the early 1860s.
Unattributed photographer, State Library of Victoria image H653



The eastern tower of the aerial ropeway on the banks of the Merri Creek. *Photo: Colin Harvey*

The quarry site is now Whelan Kartaway's Brunswick waste transfer station depot. A portion of the southern boundary of the old quarry is visible along Albert Street East, and parts of the eastern boundary are evident in parkland between the end of Kirkdale St and Victoria St. In Phillips Reserve adjacent to Merri Creek, a retaining wall composed of large bluestone blocks remains, very overgrown. One of the two bluestone-rubble towers for the aerial ropeway is still *in situ*, reinforced by sections of flat-bottomed rail of various weights between 20lb/yd and 60lb/yd, and one section of bridge rail. Nearby is a reconstruction of one of the stiff-leg derricks from the quarry. Unfortunately, the interpretive material thoughtfully provided at the site has been badly defaced. The site is listed in the Victorian Heritage Inventory, registered number H7822-0072, Hermes number 8718.

History: Peter Evans 09/2015
Site report: Colin Harvey, 09/2015

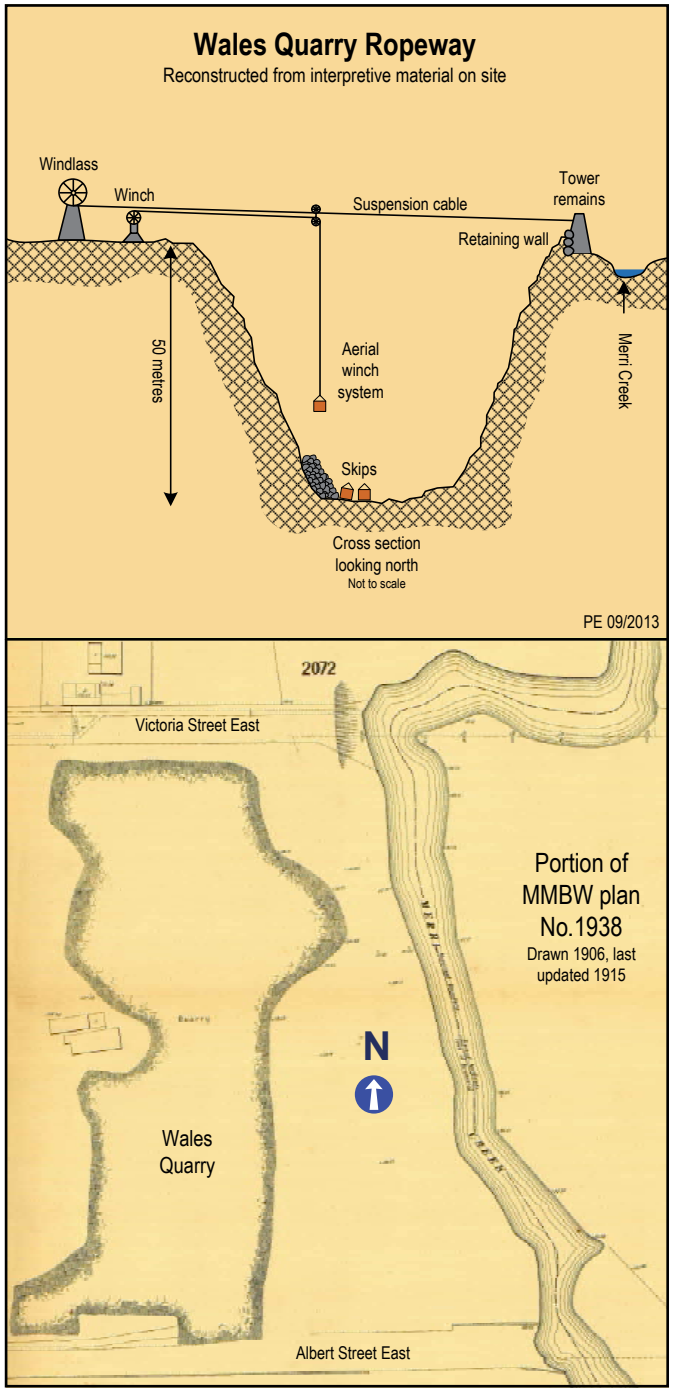
References:

1. See for example VPRS 6605/P0 unit 22 files 58/189 and 58/1445; unit 26 files 59/496, 59/577, 59/621, 59/622, 59/650, 59/657, 59/712, 59/728, 59/819, and 59/1213. All these files relate to quarries in the Brunswick area, however, none of them mention a member of the Wales family.
2. PROV, VPRS 8601/P2 MMBW Detailed Base Plans, unit 5, plan No. 1938, last revised 1915.
3. Michelle Sommerton (2009), *City of Moreland Thematic History*, unpublished report to City of Moreland, Lovell Chen, page 89.
4. *Fitzroy City Press*, Saturday 19 March 1887, page 3; Saturday 3 September 1887, page 2; Saturday 12 November 1887, page 3; *Brunswick & Coburg Leader*, Friday 19 May 1916, page 4.
5. PROV, VPRS 7591/P2 unit 239 file 58-816, will of George Wales.
6. *Victorian Government Gazette*, Gazette 24, Friday 6 March 1885, page 709.
7. *The Age*, Wednesday 16 May 1900, page 4; The Argus, Wednesday 1 March 1939, page 2.
8. *Independent* (Footscray), Saturday 3 May 1919, page 2.
9. David Dunstan (1990), *Wales, Sir Alexander George* (1885–1962), In *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 12, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University; *The Age*, Saturday 8 August 1925 page 15.
10. *The Age*, Wednesday 25 April 1888 page 5; Saturday 22 February 1913, page 15.
11. *The Argus*, Tuesday 1 July 1924 page 4; The Age, Friday 12 December 1924 page 9.
12. *The Age*, Saturday 21 July 1934, page 15.
13. Robyn Annear (2005), *A City Lost and Found: Whelan the Wrecker in Melbourne*. Black Inc. Page 271.

LR246 Errata:

The photographic images for the field report *Buxton Sawmilling Company* on pages 28-32 of LR246 should have been lettered A to G in publication order – these letters refer to locations shown on the map at the bottom of page 29.

The field report *Derrimut Explosives Reserve* on page 32 of LR246 should have been credited to Colin Harvey.



The remains of the winding gear at the head of the incline. Photo: Chris Stratton

Above: Looking down the incline at Joadja just below the winding gear.
Right: The incline has left this conspicuous scar on the hillside at Joadja.
Photos: Chris Stratton

Joadja, near Mittagong, NSW
Gauge 1067mm

Joadja was the scene of oil shale mining activities from the mid-1870s until the early years of the twentieth century. The oil shale was situated in a steep-sided valley, and both balanced and power-operated inclines were used to transport the shale out of the valley and later to remove the processed product. The system became increasingly mechanised and, eventually, included locomotive-operated tramways at the top and bottom of the main incline.

Chris Stratton visited the site on 8 November 2015 during an open day held by the owners of the property on which the oil shale works were situated. The tour costs $18 and you ride around on trailers behind a 4WD. At some points you can get off and look around, at others they just stop and talk about the location. After the official tour I asked about climbing to the top of the rail incline and this was approved after a short safety talk (and signing an injury waiver). I didn't go straight up the incline, I went up another track that goes to a small coal mine, then I climbed to the top and inspected the remains of the winding gear for the incline, then I came down the incline (which was quite hard as the surface is loose and easy to slip on, so it was safer to zig-zag across the incline rather than going straight down). I then went to look at the piers of the rail bridge over the creek as, although you can see them from the tour, you don't get close to them. There is only one intact concrete pier on the eastern bank; there is another lying down close to the water, and what looks like an overgrown abutment on the western side.

Chris Stratton 11/2015 via LRRSA Yahoo Group

RESEARCH

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

Ray Graf collection

Regular readers of *Light Railways* over the last fifty years will have seen many news reports and photographs credited to Ray (Raymond) Graf. Ray died at the end of 2010 and left a large number of industrial and tourist railway photographs to the society. Born in 1944, Ray spent half his life in Melbourne before moving to Orange in NSW. He was a prodigious photographer and would often visit and re-visit various sites to continually update his notes, particularly his locomotive records – his primary interest. Ray's Victorian photos are now back in Melbourne and an examination shows they include some forty Victorian locations. Ray started in the sixties with black and white before moving to colour slides. From the 1980s Ray used several cameras that were fitted with motor drives. This has resulted in multiple copies of the same scene or locomotive – sometimes six or twelve or more, so effectively there are only some 1200 different subjects despite the 7600 slides! Of that number, about 1600 pertain to Puffing Billy and another 1000 relate to Alexandra Timber Tramway & Museum. It is tentatively proposed to transfer this material to those organisations.

The multiple copies of the one picture is regrettable in some ways. This is manifested, say, at the Nowingi gypsum operations of Brunswick Plaster Mills, where there are sometimes a dozen or more identical photos of the one loco. One suspects that two would have been enough and then the other ten could have been of the infrastructure, industrial scenery, workers etc. Unfortunately the latter type are lacking – a large proportion of the slides are record shots of locomotives. None-the-less, these are the best Brunswick Plaster pics I've ever seen – Ray was a good photographer. One roll at SECV Yallourn (38 shots) actually comprises only two, different pictures – the other 36 are the same as the two! Ray was generally meticulous, recording on each slide the date, place and loco details – though not always. This has created a few mystery pics – only some of which your scribe could identify.

Ray was a diligent recorder of underground battery-electric locos, a subject he virtually had to himself. Included are the following contracts and locations:

Melbourne u/g railway (CODELFA Construction P/L) [Jolimont Yards; Wellington Pde; Exhibition St 1976-8]
MMBW South-eastern sewer [Braeside, Scoresby, Hammond Rd 1979]
MMBW Thomson Dam – D'Avanzo Bros 1979
MMBW Thomson Dam – Bells Portal 1979
MMBW Thomson Dam – Swingler Portal (Atkinson-Holland) 1978
MMBW Thomson Dam – East Warburton Atkinson-Holland) 1978
MMBW Main Outfall sewer, Sayers Road, Laverton 1988
MMBW unknown 1971

Other Industrial locations include:
VR Spotswood [RT shunter]
Mulwala Explosives Fty , Exchange Sdgs 1987[1]
Portland Harbour Trust 1981
BHP Long Island 1988
Uptons Engineering, Corowa, NSW (unconfirmed)[2]
Explosives Factory Maribyrnong – LRRSA tour 1991 (unconfirmed)
APM Maryvale 1979, 1987
APM Broadford 1981
Brunswick Plaster, Nowingi 1965, 1981, 1986

Melbourne's underground rail loop, connecting with existing suburban lines at each end, was constructed in the 1970s. One of the contractors for portion of the project was Codelfa Construction Pty Ltd. Codelfa employed a number of similar 3ft 6in-gauge locomotives on the tunnelling work – their unit numbered 26-3 is seen here at the depot on the south side of Wellington Parade on 14 March 1978. This 16ton 4wh DH locomotive is Com-Eng B/No HC4596 of 1965. Its previous use included Cardinia Reservoir construction where it was on 3ft gauge. It had also worked in Tasmania and NSW. Subsequent use included tunnelling work at Loy Yang in Gippsland. Photo: Ray Graf. LRRSA collection.

Sandhurst Town was a tourist theme park at Myers Flat, near Eaglehawk, featuring a eucalyptus distillery and replica gold mining camp (plus large amounts of old machinery). It operated from the mid-1970s until the early 1990s and had a 2ft-gauge railway with an assortment of locomotives (steam and diesel). In this scene from 2 April 1981, we see freshly painted Ruston & Hornsby 0-4-0DM 305328 of 1954 basking in the sun at the head of its train. Originally purchased by Colonial Sugar Refinery, it was successively used at Goondi, Hambledon, Victoria and, lastly, Macknade mill where it was No.10, before going to Sandhurst Town in 1974. Photo: Ray Graf. LRRSA collection.

Beech Forest railway dismantling trains 1965
SR&WSC Waranga Reservoir 1964
SEC – Bogong Creek, Kiewa (LRRSA tour)
SEC – Rubicon/Royston (LRRSA tour) 1986
SEC – Yallourn/Morwell – hundreds of slides over many years.
ACL Fyansford 1965, 1966
Powelltown sawmill 1967
Tourist locations include:
ETRB – industrial locos
Belmont Common tourist railway
Coal Creek, Korumburra (unconfirmed), no date.
Sandhurst Town, 1981
Telopea Gardens (Halls Gap), 1987, 1988
Healesville tourist railway, 1986
Kerrisdale Mountain railway, no date
Caribbean Gardens, 1979
Wombat Gully, Leneva (LRRSA tour), 1987
Hogan's Creek (LRRSA tour), 1987
Yarra Junction museum, 1988
Marysville – Days' loco display
Interestingly, according to the pages of *Light Railway News*, Ray also visited several other places in Victoria for which no slides have yet been found. There is also a considerable number of black & white photos – some still negatives in rolls, some loose, some prints. A large amount is of Victorian enthusiast steam trips in the sixties, some Tasmanian material of indifferent quality, some SA, some WA, and some foreign!
Council will be considering a number of ways of handling the large amount of material involved with a view to making it accessible to all researchers – members and readers will be advised in due course.
Phil Rickard

1, 2. I realise these locations are (just) in NSW, however they lie in the Greater Victorian Economic Zone of Influence!

Cairns beer tramway

This image of unorthodox tramline use comes from northern Queensland. The spectacular Cairns to Kuranda railway suffered a most disruptive accident on 15 December 1910 when a landslide, after a period of intense rainfall, partly closed the Kuranda end of the number 10 tunnel for more than two months. Trains could only travel as far as the tunnel with passengers having to de-train and walk around the outside of the tunnel to another train to continue the journey. Because the railway was the main freight connection between inland towns and the port at Cairns, the blockage was very disruptive. Over 300 men were used to clear the damage and stabilise the slide. It was not until 6 March 1911 that the line was cleared and reopened to traffic.
Whilst the temporary arrangements of walking around the tunnel were in place, a light tramway of 2ft gauge was laid which allowed some products such as beer barrels to be rolled along the rails. The image shows McCracken's as the product name on the end of the barrels, but from where did the barrel and its contents originate?
Robert and Peter McCracken arrived in Melbourne from Scotland in 1841. They went into the beer brewing business and around 1853 built a brewery at 110 Collins Street, Melbourne.

Railway workers pushing vital supplies of beer along the narrow gauge deviation.

McCracken's was one of the six brewers that amalgamated in 1907 to form Carlton and United Breweries.
The Collins Street brewery closed in 1908 and CUB continued to use the McCracken name on products such as AK Light, McCracken's Australian Bitter Ale, Invalid Stout and Khaki brand Extra Stout and these products were produced as late as the 1940s. Given that the Cairns Brewing Company was only formed in June 1924, CUB and other southern brewers shipped beer to northern Queensland for many decades.
Richard Gilbert and State Library of Queensland

Engineering Heritage Awards 2015

LRRSA member David Jehan has been awarded the Engineering Heritage Award for excellence in an engineering heritage publication from Engineers Australia for his book *A History of Tulloch, Engineers and Manufacturers, Pyrmont and Rhodes, 1883 to 1974* (Reviewed in LR 244 August 2015).

A justifiably proud David Jehan displays his Engineering Heritage award.

Known as the Colin Crisp Award[1], this is Australia's premier award for excellence in Engineering Heritage projects. It is awarded biennially at the National Engineering Heritage Conference, which was held in Newcastle, 7-9 December 2015.
The author considers this to be an award for not only himself, but for all those who assisted in the seven year project including fellow LRRSA researchers Jeff Moonie, Ross Mainwaring, Ian McNeil, Bruce Macdonald, John Shoebridge, Gary Barker, Peter Knife and Richard Horne.
The Tulloch family also greatly appreciated the effort put into the book and presented David with a model of a Tulloch built South Maitland Railcar at the book launch, which was held in Sydney on 27 June 2015.

1. www.engineersaustralia.org.au/engineering-heritage-australia/colin-crisp-award

Murarrie Brickworks (QLD)

In suburban Brisbane, a dispute broke out over the proposed construction of a tramway from Thomas Kelly's brickworks to the QR Mooraree (now Murarrie) railway station in 1902. It appears that this enterprise was known as the Tingalpa or Murarrie Brickworks. The local council was reticent to give permission for the construction of the tramway, the three *Trove* links give the nature of the dispute but not the outcome. A 1923 topographic map indicates a tramway running from the brickworks to Bulimba creek.
Do any Queensland readers know what tramways were built to serve the brickworks?
http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article172584688
http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article19187187
http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article19230062
Peter Cokley and John Browning via LRRSA yahoo group

Heritage & Tourist NEWS

News items should be sent to heritagetourist@lrrsa.org.au Digital photographs for possible inclusion should be sent direct to Scott Gould at editor@lrrsa.org.au including the name of the location, the name of the photographer and the date of the photograph.

QUEENSLAND

PIONEER LOCOMOTIVE

1067mm gauge

After half a century of sitting out in the weather rusting away, the Burdekin district's original *Pioneer* locomotive (Hunslet 0-4-2T, 624 of 1896) is to be cosmetically restored. The restoration of the 10 ton coal-fired Hunslet locomotive will be done by members of the Burdekin Machinery Preservationists who plan to complete the work next year to mark the locomotive's 120th anniversary. Although the metal sheeting and cast iron boiler are heavily corroded and the roof rusted away, the remaining structure is in surprisingly good condition. One side still bears its original *Pioneer* nameplate. The boiler is too damaged to be operational again. Pioneer was retired from duties in the mid-1960s and was first displayed at the Endeavour Foundation Park in Ayr and it later spent time at other locations in Ayr and Brandon. The Burdekin group has applied for a grant to cover the cost of preservation which will include erecting a car-port style shed over the locomotive to protect it from the elements. Bought in 1896, *Pioneer* was the second locomotive purchased for the Pioneer Mill, only preceded by a locomotive known according to the records as *Old Mary Ann*. The small fleet was later boosted by the arrival of *Dixie* in 1909 and *Kilrie* in 1915, both 10 ton Hunslets like *Pioneer*. *Pioneer's* modern diesel namesake was purchased in 1963 and is still in operation.

Taken from report by Leanne Oliveri, *Townsville Bulletin*, 7 November 2015

MAPLETON TRAMLINE CENTENARY, Mapleton

762mm gauge

A memorial was unveiled on Sunday 1 November in the Lilyponds Park at Mapleton to commemorate the centenary of the Mapleton Tramline. The memorial incorporates Dan Rowe's drawing of the Shay locomotive *Mapleton*.

Clive Plater, 12/15

WOODFORD RAILWAY, Woodford

610mm gauge

After discussion at the last AGM and an email survey of members. Peterson Road will temporarily be the new name for Storeybrook station, following the change of name of the adjacent café and gardens. With the need to obtain some new tickets for running days, the opportunity was taken to change the Railway's name from Durundur Railway to Woodford Railway. The new tickets will also have the station name change. However both changes are for marketing purposes only at this time, and the names Durundur Railway and Storeybrook will remain in use for any SMS related issues such as safeworking, use on various forms, etc.

A track maintenance day was undertaken on Saturday 19 September, concentrating on sleeper renewals and 11 concrete sleepers were renewed. After some months of planning and amassing materials such as sleepers, rails, fishplates, bolts and clips, assembly of the track to provide a 98 metre long third road into the compound has rapidly progressed.

Durundur Railway Bulletin, 11-12/15

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

1067mm gauge

The end of the year saw the arrival of QR CWM (Camp Wagon Mechanical Department) 21, a 1904 built carriage that has an interesting history. Over the next year or so members will refurbish the carriage that was converted to a camp wagon in 1965. The refurbished carriage will be both an exhibit in itself as well as hold exhibits on display. The Work for the Dole team have been working hard and have put in 53 new sleepers along the tram track in Denison Street with the help of a digger. The TMC6 section car has had a bit of running lately but it still needs a bit of maintenance.

Tram Tracks 12/15

SUGAR INDUSTRY MUSEUM, Mourilyan

The Australian Sugar Industry Museum in Mourilyan, south of Cairns, is seeking funds for a major upgrade without which it may have to close down. It was first opened in 1977, but in recent years, rising operational costs and stagnating visitor numbers have prevented the museum from making much needed improvements to its exhibitions. Museum manager Wayne Thomas said: "If things don't change within the next couple of years, it's going to be very hard to continue operating. It's not exciting and it's not a place where you'd come and go away saying, 'Well that was really great'. We've got things on display that are just static — they don't do anything, they don't explain well enough as to what they actually are or what the exhibit is doing." In an effort to raise the money needed to upgrade its exhibits, the museum management launched a crowd-funding campaign to raise $30,000 in 60 days. However with only $595 pledged with just eight days remaining, the museum is falling well short of its target. "We're a little bit concerned that the uptake is not that good," Mr Thomas said.

Taken from report by Sharnie Kim and Mark Rigby, ABC Far North, 19 November 2015 and crowd funding update at www.indiegogo.com/projects/making-a-sweeter-experience#, 31 December 2015

VICTORIA

WALHALLA GOLDFIELDS RAILWAY, Walhalla

762mm gauge

Back in the 1920s, the Victorian Railways considered building railmotors for the 2 foot 6 inch lines but never moved beyond the concept stage. Some 90 years later, WGR is planning to bring the concept to reality by converting a Melbourne tram!

The Richmond Vale Railway Preservation Society is progressing with the restoration of Kathleen, *Avonside 0-4-0ST 1862 of 1921, with the aim of returning the loco to service in June. Would any readers know when the locomotive came out of service, or was last steamed at Port Kembla? Photo: Graham Black*

The project, known as Project 461 will take two years to complete and will cost about $200,000. The railmotor will be based on X1 Class tram number 461 which was built in 1926. The body shell of this tram has been purchased from Len Millar of Newstead by the Walhalla Goldfields Railway [along with number 463 which is in very poor condition and may be rebuilt as a trailer at a later date] to form the basis of the railmotor. The purchase followed an inspection of the trams by WGR Board Members, Graham Vallance, Graeme Skinner, Dan Beavis, John Rawnsley and Michael Leaney on 30 October. The plan is for bogies to be fitted and a 2.0 litre Subaru flat-four diesel/hydraulic unit will provide the motive power. Brakes will be Westinghouse to ensure standardisation in the railway fleet. These will be powered by an engine driven compressor. The X1 railmotor will have a capacity of 28 passengers with the ability to carry one wheelchair. Presently under ATR rules, railmotors only require a crew of two (a Driver and Guard) which will reduce the difficulty of finding crew at short notice. Michael Leaney, Graeme Skinner and John Rawnsley held a very productive and positive meeting with Transport Safety Victoria on 2 December to discuss the specifications of the railmotor and a full plan is now being developed. The railway is obtaining a complete set of original MMTB X1 plans which will be digitised and updated to modern engineering specifications. There will be minimal modifications to the tram's structure and appearance. The loading gauge of the X1 is just a little smaller than the railway's NBW carriages. The NBWs are 10.2m long by 2.68m wide while the X1 is 9.45m long by 2.62m wide. Number 461 will be delivered to Thomson in early 2016 when the initial work of stripping back woodwork and sand-blasting the metal structure to develop a full profile of the scope of restoration will take place. It is envisaged that the project plan with full drawings and specifications will be completed by the middle of 2016 with restoration and conversion starting shortly after the plans are signed off. The underlying reason for developing a railmotor is to take the railway to seven day-a-week operation and to provide better fleet utilisation. There are many times when operating a full train service is not justified for a handful of passengers while a railmotor fits the bill perfectly. It will also mean a reduction in the demands on train crews. Currently a minimum of three are required to run a train, but only two people will be needed to operate the X1 railmotor. Regular train services will continue with volunteers Sat/Sun/Wed and the X1 railmotor will be used on Mon/Tue/Thu/Fri and in quiet periods such as winter when a full train is not required. It is planned that a driver will be employed on the rail-motor services with volunteers assisting and filling the roster in busy periods. A seven day-a-week operation has been identified as a major pre-requisite for seeking funding to extend the railway towards Erica.

Don and Leigh on the trolley as it crosses the Thomson River Bridge in 1958. Photo: via WGR

Don on the same trolley and the same bridge (albeit going in the down direction) in 2015. Photo: Michael Leaney

Trolley to Walhalla

In 1957-58 rail enthusiast Don Marshall explored the Moe - Walhalla line with his friend Leigh Ellis on a small trolley they had built. On Friday 12 December the ME1 Trolley returned to Walhalla after 58 years.

The *Latrobe Valley Express* and Win TV NEWS also came to document this historic event. This little trolley was the last known vehicle to travel the closed Walhalla line before the line was dismantled.

After Marshall and Ellis made several journeys on the Walhalla line the little trolley was used to help restore the Puffing Billy line between 1958 and 1963. The trolley was then retired to the back shed of the Puffing Billy museum in Menzies Creek. Two years ago the Puffing Billy museum started restoration work on the trolley. They had to replace timbers and the engine which had been stolen sometime in the 1970s and according to Don, the trolley looks better than ever.

Dogspikes and Diesel 12/15

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

SOUTH AUSTRALIA LIGHT RAILWAY CENTRE, Milang

610mm gauge

After a major upgrade, the Museum has achieved its goal of becoming a registered museum with History SA. The collections are now properly presented and the visitor experience has been enhanced. A major benefit of registration is that the Museum is now entitled to apply for grants under the State Government's community museums programme. One such grant has already been applied for and relates to the development of the SA Light Railway Centre. The plan is to prepare 15 A1 sized storyboards to go around the walls of the Centre and to support these with a display of locomotives and rolling stock on the floor. The storyboards will tell the story of the state's light railways. The first need is to identify the focus of each storyboard e.g. amusement, munitions, salt pans, mining, jetties, and then to gather information and photographs for them.

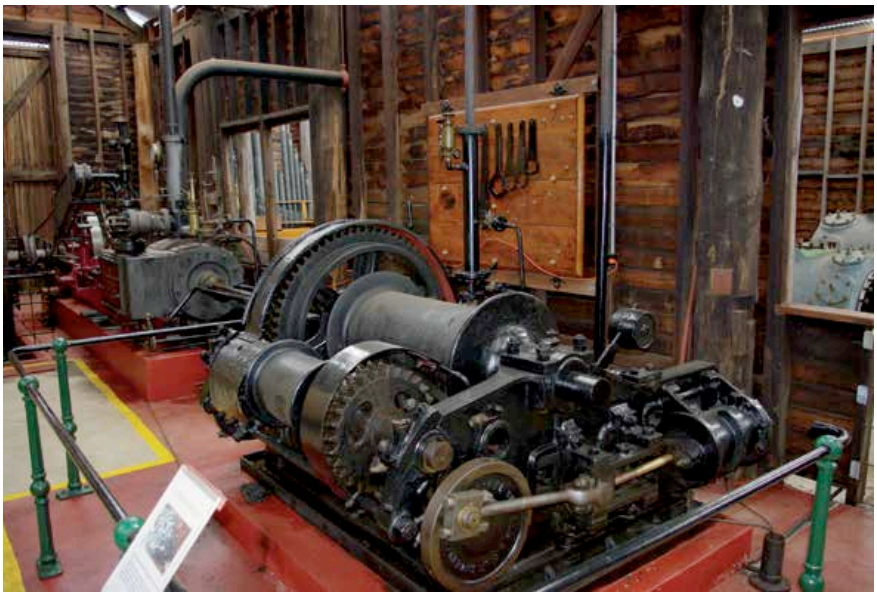
Peter Lucas, Milang Railway Museum, 11-12/15

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Yarloop workshops Inc., Yarloop
1067mm gauge
On 8 January, the historic workshops formerly operated by Millars Karri and Jarrah Forests Limited at Yarloop was destroyed by bushfires, along with 95 houses in the town.
Touted as the most intact example of an early privately-owned 20th century railway workshop in Australia, the Yarloop Workshops were constructed in 1902 to service the Millars sawmilling empire, and operated until it was damaged by Cyclone Alby in 1978.
The workshops had been preserved intact and featured many operating stationary steam engines, a foundry, and sawmilling plant, as well as railway equipment.
A full report will appear in LR 248
WA today news report: tinyurl.com/jrqxf95
www.yarloopworkshops.com.au

CARNARVON HERITAGE PRECINCT JETTY RAILWAY, Carnarvon
1067mm gauge
A visit to the Carnarvon Heritage Precinct and One Mile Jetty by John Phillips in December 2015 revealed the following information. The 0-6-0T steam loco *Kimberley* (Andrew Barclay Sons & Co, 1755 of 1921) is on static exhibition. It came to Carnarvon from Broome in the early 1950s and ended up in a local kindergarten before being restored to working order. With a bit of work it could be fired up but at present it is confined to its spot in the museum.
The railway runs out on the jetty for about 1.6 km hauled by a diesel train. The line continues on past the water tower into town but has not been used for quite a while as it is very overgrown and in places the line has been severed to provide rails for the jetty section. There is a large amount of rolling stock in the yard at the museum but most of it is in pretty bad shape.
John Phillips, 12/15

BENNETT BROOK RAILWAY, Whiteman Park
610mm gauge
During 2015 a lot of postponed maintenance problems came under consideration. Great progress is being made on the development of new office and crew amenity facilities at the workshop. Three more transportable buildings have been installed; one from Belmont, another, a former South Spur building from the Bellevue site, and the third, the former Whiteman Park entry building. A lot of money has been spent connecting these transportables to electricity. The new use for these buildings is currently being discussed.
Many members are keen to see one of the NG 15 locomotives in operation; however a lot of work needs to be done. The workshop has a lot of work on at the moment and need some clear air before making some serious progress.
The carriage shed crew has worked steadily to paint the carriage fleet. The carriages are the shop front of the Railway and it's important they are in top condition.
The Whiteman Village Junction North Signalling Project is moving along rapidly. All electrical control circuit cabinets have been installed and electrical cables run and terminated. All nine signal motors have been fitted and tested. It has now come to the "push and look" testing phase where the electrical operation of the control circuits is carried out.
The Outer Home and Advance Starter signals have been operating successfully since October under trial and evaluation. However they are still white crossed as out of service.
The bracket home signal arm and starter signal for No.1 road are now operating; also under trial and evaluation. Again they are white crossed as out of service.
Work has also been done fabricating the linkages for the No. 2 road point motor. The point motors are the last phase of the project. Once No. 2 road point motor is connected, train crews will have to drive up to the platform north of the footbridge to change the points electrically during run around procedures. When this comes into force, full instructions will be promulgated to all operations crew members.
Once No.2 road point motor is completed, No.3 road point motor will be installed. When the whole project has been assessed by the Signals technical committee and approved by the management committee, the white crosses will be removed and the signals and point motors commissioned.
Some of the Upper Quadrant convex lenses at Zamia have been smashed by vandals but fortunately replacements have been donated.
Work has commenced on concreting the floor of the Locomotive shed. This is being done in stages as it is not possible to move all of the



In the once beautifully maintained machinery display room at the Yarloop Workshops, this Clarke Chapman (UK) winch was used for log haulage in the bush, bringing cut timber to the tram lines for transport back to timber mills. *Photo: Stuart Thyer*

The One Mile Jetty train has a good load of passengers on board as it nears the end of its journey back to Carnarvon. Photo: John Phillips

locomotives outside for an extended time.
There has been trouble sourcing parts for the Dorman Planet (4wDM 3966 of 1962) as one of the heads was cracked and failed the pressure test. The decision was made to buy two reasonable heads from Melbourne. All these parts have been overhauled and once re-assembled, should give a reliable locomotive.
The Atlantic Planet (0-4-0DM 2150 of 1939) has had its brake shoes replaced and is running most of the weekend services. It has been waiting for another large diesel and the coming steam season to get some more work cleaning up the car body and improving the doors, painting etc.
Ashley has been running the midweek trains and apart from some exhaust improvements has been running well. The locomotive department has been slowly cleaning the ex-Marian Mill 0-6-2T Perry chassis (Mile End, 2601.51 of 1951) in preparation for re-wheeling.
The locomotives recently have had their numbers added on their cabs for anyone who might read reports in the newsletter and might not know what the name of the maker or locomotive meant in the past; it is now possible to check numbers and origins against a table.
Bennett Brook Railway Newsletter 12/15

HANNANS NORTH TOURIST MINE, Kalgoorlie
A recent inspection of the Hannans North Tourist Mine at Kalgoorlie by Matthew Whiteford found examples of the many skips and hoppers on display. Some are inside the former WAGR Kalgoorlie locomotive shed which had seen decades of use on a gold mine. A 610mm gauge line runs through the shed with extensions either end. The former tourist train did not run through the shed but may have been stabled within it. At the Super-pit lookout there is a small display of mining equipment including a 1 ton side-tip hopper and a Gemco underground loco with no further identification. The display is on the pit side of the fence separating the car park and public lookout from the pit. Work is commencing to build a 1067mm gauge railway to the lookout to replace the former WAGR Boulder–Kamballie–Trafalgar line on which the Golden Mile Tourist Railway had operated trains until the line was closed for mining expansion. The track may be laid in a zig zag fashion.
David Whiteford 12/15

ISLAND EXPLORER, Rottnest Island
The Rottnest Island Authority has issued Adams Coachlines with a Concession and Licence Agreement for the provision of Bussing and Tours for Rottnest Island from 1 November 2015. Adams will operate the Island Explorer, train and shuttle service; the train service between Settlement (Thomson Bay) and the Oliver Hill gun emplacement largely having been operated by volunteers.
David Whiteford 12/15

OVERSEAS NEWS

NEW ZEALAND

WAITAKERE TRAMWAY SOCIETY, Waitakere
610mm gauge
Despite the present closure of the tramway by Watercare, the Waitakere Tramway Society is still battling for re-instatement of its services. The talks with Watercare and Auckland Council are still in progress and they have been more positive than usual. The Society intends on following through until a positive result has been achieved.

DRIVING CREEK RAILWAY, Coromandel
381mm gauge
After a restriction put in place by the NZTA Rail Regulators early 2015, Driving Creek Railway, claimed to be NZ's only narrow gauge mountain railway, can once again take under five year olds on the train tour to the Eyefull Tower – an unusually shaped lookout tower. Driving Creek Railway has made some modifications to its trains and seating arrangements that have been approved by the NZTA. There are now double locking systems on carriage doors and higher sides on the carriages of the train where children will be permitted to sit. The railway, near Auckland, was built between 1975 and 1990 and features spirals, reversing points, viaducts and tunnels on its scenic one hour return trip.
FRONZ Newsletter 12/15

UNITED KINGDOM
Derbyshire
610mm gauge
The boiler of Hunslet 4-6-0 tank engine No. 1215 (Hunslet 1215 of 1916) is now complete except for tubes, dome top and regulator; the tubes are already ordered and due shortly, the dome top is in progress and smokebox is to be drilled and assembled. The only negative was the discovery of some pinholes in the J pipe off the regulator. This has been taken to CIW Ltd. for repair and the boiler is very close to completion. Lots of parts are starting to accumulate around the workshop and on the locomotive. At the time of writing the matchfunding appeal had cleared £6000 thanks to generous supporters and a £1000 grant from the Veronica Awdry Charitable Trust which gives the fund £12,000 once matched, but £20,000 is still needed to complete the locomotive.
However, as quite a few items (particularly the boiler) have taken a lot longer to get delivered than expected, the locomotive is unlikely to make Tracks to the Trenches event on May 13-15 2016 at the Apedale Valley Light Railway. This would only have left at most 30 working days for the volunteers to complete and test the locomotive once the boiler is finished.
War Office Locomotive Trust Hunslet Newsletter, 12/15

Hannan's North Tourist Mine's former tourist train sits on display on 29 December 2015 beside the former WAGR locomotive shed. The battery electric loco bears no obvious identification. *Photo: Mathew Whiteford*

New from LRRSA Sales ...

Simsville and the Jarrah Mill

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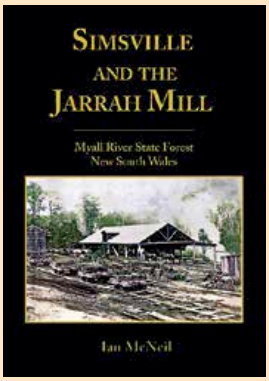

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Published by the LRRSA
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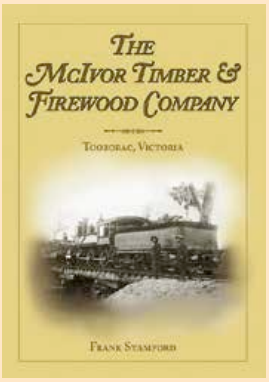

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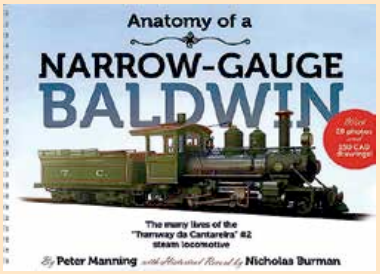

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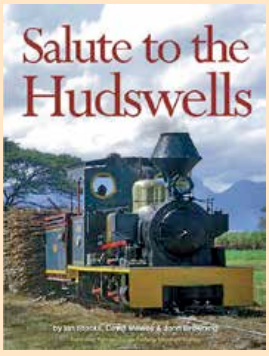

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