LIGHT RAILWAYS

Australia's Magazine of Industrial & Narrow Gauge Railways

Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc.

Contents

Editorial

Readers will note that we have made some subtle changes to the design of the magazine. Our thanks to Box Car Graphics for the "new look" - our first real change in 25 years. A number of options were prepared and considered by the LRRSA Council and this option won general approval. The previous layout has changed little since the new A4 format was introduced in February 1998 and it was felt that a "light touch" update would be beneficial.

The two leading articles in this edition cover 'operational' aspects of running a light railway – at Beech Forest in Victoria and Aramac in Queensland. The articles bring to light some day-to-day aspects of operating railways that were subject to variations in loading and passenger use – both are fascinating stories.

It is worth noting that the Aramac Tramway article would have been impossible without the National Library's Trove online newspapers. In regard to Trove, (see our Editorial in October 2022) the Society is most pleased to note that the Albanese Government has reversed the previous budget cuts which threatened closure of Trove by July 2023. Substantial funding has been allocated (thank you taxpayers of Australia!) to enable Trove, the NLA's most-used resource, to be continued, upgraded and improved, securing its future.

Also included is a full report on the very successful Steamfest 2023 event at Sheffield, Tasmania; a detailed report on the restoration of Simplex number 21575 at the Milang Light Railway Museum and a photographic Look Back at the South Maitland Railway in June 1983, marking 40 years since steam ceased operation. *Richard Warwick*

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.

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

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

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Front Cover: On the long weekend in March the annual Steamfest Festival was held at the Redwater Creek Railway in Sheffield in Tasmania. For this year's festival *Wee Georgie Wood* from Tullah joined in the festivities and on 3 March he joined the resident Krauss locomotive. A full report is given inside this edition. Photo: James Shugg

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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

View along Main Street from east to west. Business in immediate foreground are the butcher shop, Hancox produce shed and Beech Forest Club. The Club was a licensed private social and accommodation business. Railway station on the right, out of picture. Photo: T. H. Robertson

Ebb and Flow - Beech Forest Rail Traffic Patterns 1928 to 1954

by Norman Houghton

Background

The opening of a narrow-gauge railway from Colac into the rugged Otway Ranges in 1902 led to the then infant settlement of Beech Forest developing into a sub-regional centre of around 300 persons. The town was situated on top of the main ridge of the Range and was some 50 kms south of Colac. The railway was a lifeline owing to the poor condition of the roads and the high rainfall that made the ground a muddy mess for most of the year. Beech Forest boomed with the coming of the railway and had nearly three decades of growth before the brakes cut in with changes to the economic climate.

A 1927 view along Main Street from west to east showing the shops and businesses in this section. The buildings from the right to the left are a hut, bakery, grocer and outfitter, Robertson's store and fruit shop, butter factory, ANA Dining Rooms and boarding house, Fry's general store, Parrott's café, Robbins' butcher shop, Beech Forest Club. Photo: Otway Districts Historical Society

The town reached its peak in the years 1919 to 1925 when the district was one of Victoria's premier sawmilling areas and a distribution centre for all the hamlets and farms along the Ridge from Olangolah to Lavers Hill. When the situation began to alter from 1926 the well-established train traffic patterns on the Colac to Beech Forest railway collapsed within two years. The railway was never the same after that.

This article explores the effects of these changes and the mutually interlocking connection between the Beech Forest township and the railway.

Traffic in the 1920s

The train service reflected the dynamics of the local economy. It developed from one train every second day out of Beech Forest in 1902 to six trains a day from Crowes, Beech Forest and Colac by the early 1920s. Staffing levels at Beech Forest reflected the traffic and personnel comprised a Station Master, porter, goods clerk, train crew, engine cleaner and two track gangs equal to 15 or so operatives. The onset of the Depression, cutting out of the easily-won timber on private blocks and resumption of farms for water supply and forestry reserves caused an exodus and Beech Forest began its long decline. Rail traffic followed this broad trend.

The town supported a range of retail and service establishments, of which the main ones in 1928 comprised two general stores, boot-maker, baker, two butchers, confectioner, greengrocer, newsagent, post office, bank, Otway Shire Town Hall, Forests Commission office

Left: Beech Forest railway station in the mid-1920s. Train from Crowes just arriving on No. 2 Road. The train from Colac will arrive shortly on No. 1 Road. The station buildings comprised, from this end, waiting room, parcels shed, barrier gate, office, waiting room, refreshment stall (with the many windows.) Photo: Otway Districts Historical Society

Below: Operating Porter Laurie McCabe who staffed the place from 1929 to 1939. Photographed during a snowfall in 1938. Photo: Otway Districts Historical Society

and depot, police station, school, three churches with resident clergy, a doctor, private hospital, two large boarding houses and a hotel. The services included carriers and grain and timber merchants. Sports-wise there were clubs for tennis, table tennis, football, cricket and rifles.

Each working day, 1926 to 1928, there were at least three train services in to and out of the station, two of these being NA drawn and one a Garratt-hauled train. There was a Beech Forest-Colac-Beech Forest early morning mixed daily departure and return from Colac at around 11 am in connection with the Down Warrnambool passenger train. In the afternoon a Crowes-Beech Forest-Crowes run met the returning mixed from Colac. There was one goods service Colac-Beech Forest-Colac that arrived at Beech Forest late morning. On Thursdays there was an arrangement for a Colac market day service from Beech Forest to Colac and return, departing Colac at 3.30 pm. There were train crews based at Crowes and Beech Forest to run the services based out of these two places.

The state of the roads at the time was such that all loading went by rail. Inwards loading to Beech Forest consisted of farm supplies such as wire netting and building materials, machinery, animal feed comprising chaff, straw, bran pollard, wheat, barley, fertilisers, plus bulk foodstuffs such as bagged flour and sugar as well as groceries, cased fruit and vegetables, drapery supplies, beer and wine. Outwards traffic comprised sawn and split timbers, staves, potatoes, rabbits, cream and livestock. Passenger numbers were then a little under 5,000 journeys per annum out of the Beech Forest station, which is a notional equivalent of 16 passengers per the main train of the day, the 7 am mixed to Colac.

Road development in the Otways

The first development against the railway was opening of an indirect all-weather road to Colac via Forrest and extension of the road along the Ridge to Lavers Hill in the period 1926 to 1928. Closure of several sawmills in the same period caused a sudden downturn in freight loadings. The financial position of the railway, always poor, became worse and the first changes in this regard was the reduction in train mileage from 1928, accelerating in 1929 and reaching a low point in 1930.

The Beech Forest loco and train crew was withdrawn in 1928. This action left locos based at the Crowes and Colac ends, and none in the middle, so a new time table was configured to permit through running. This was a first for the line and the timetable from Monday 4 May 1928

was four trains per week – Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. The Crowes loco ran through to Colac, departing early morning, with the crews changing at Gellibrand, and the Colac crews running as far as Gellibrand. The locos employed on haulage were Garratt G41 and an NA. A Colac-Beech Forest return local was run on Tuesday and a Thursday Beech Forest-Colac for market day was provided with a corresponding Beech Forest-Colac service. The Thursday train was for Colac market day and it allowed for a crew overnight camp at Beech Forest on the Wednesday evening.

From Monday, 21 October 1929 the daily return trains were abolished with the removal of the loco, crew and engine cleaner at Crowes. The new time table allowed for three days a week service worked out of Colac to Beech Forest, with extension to Crowes two days on overnight rest. The third day's service was the Beech Forest to Colac Thursday market day train. Mails were conveyed by motor trolley over those gaps in the loco-hauled services as there was only one train a day in one direction, either Up or Down, depending on the day of the week.

Staffing retrenchments were made to coincide with the new time table and this included abolishing the station master positions at Beech Forest and Gellibrand and the track gangs at Barongarook and Wyelangta. It was proposed to reduce Beech Forest to caretaker management but the Otway Shire Council objected, saying that business was strong enough to justify a porter, so the VR relented and appointed an Operating Porter. Supervision of business traffic on the line was then handled by a Travelling Station Master (TSM) who worked the regular trains out of Colac.

Above: NA-hauled train arriving Beech Forest from Colac in 1938. By this time almost all general loadings into and out of the place were on road so the train is a short one. Photo: Otway Districts Historical Society **Below:** Working Time table for June 1938. Shows the usual weekly schedule of one train into Beech Forest on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and out to Colac the other way on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Down. COLAC—CROWES (Narrow Gauge).

Miles	STATIONS	1	3 "The Flier" Daily	5 Postal Motor Tues., Thur., Sat.
—	MELBOURNE W (Spencer-st.) dep.	...	A.M. 8 22	A.M. ...
	arr.	...	Pass. 10 58	...
95¼	COLAC W		Car Goods Mon., Wed., Fri.	
	dep.	...	11 30	11 30
96¼	Elliminyt N C	...	§	...
99	Tulloh N C	...	§	...
100¼	Coram N C	...	§	...
102¼	Barongarook N C arr.	...	...	...
	dep.	...	P.M. 12 5	P.M. 12 0
105¼	X (Water)	...	§	...
106¼	Birnam N C	...	§	...
108¼	Kawarren N C arr.	...	...	...
	dep.	...	12 30	12 25
111	Lovat N C	...	§	12 37
112¼	Gellibrand W arr.	...	12 50	...
				Tu. / Th., Sat.
	dep.	...	1 5	12 45 / 12 45
116¼	Banool N C	...	§	1 5 / 1 5
118¼	Wimba W N C	...	§	1 15 / 1 15
120	McDevitt N C	...	§	1 25 / 1 25
121¼	Dinmont W N C (See note) arr.	...	...	1 35 / ...
	dep.	...	§	1 55 / 1 35
124¼	Ditchley N C	...	2 50	2 15 / 1 55
124¾	Beech Forest W arr.	...	Mon., Fri.	...
	dep.	...	3 35	...
126	Buchanan N C	...	§	...
127¼	Ferguson N C	...	§	...
129¼	Weeaproinah N C (See note)	...	§	...
130¼	Pile Siding N C	...	§	...
131	Kincaid Siding N C	...	§	...
...	Water Tanks	...	...	...
133	Wyelangta N C	...	§	...
134	Pettitt's Siding N C	...	§	...
134¾	Stalker N C	...	§	...
137¼	Laver's Hill arr.	...	...	...
	dep.	...	§	...
139	CROWES N C W arr.	...	6 15	...

CROWES—COLAC (Narrow Gauge).

Height above Sea	Miles	STATIONS	2 Car Goods Thurs.	4 Car Goods Sat.	6 Car Goods Tues.	8 Postal Motor Mon., Wed., Fri.
feet			A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	P.M.
1358	—	CROWES N C dep.	...	8 30	10 30	...
1510	1¼	Laver's Hill	...	§	§	...
1697	4¼	Stalker N O	...	§	§	...
1711	5	Pettitt's Siding N C	...	§	§	...
1757	6	Wyelangta N C	...	§	§	...
...		Water Tanks	...	...	...	...
1547	8	Kincaid Siding N C	...	§	§	...
1634	8½	Pile Siding N O	...	§	§	...
1708	9½	Weeaproinah N C (See note page 234)	...	§	§	...
1722	11½	Ferguson N C	...	§	§	...
1823	13	Buchanan N C	...	§	P.M. §	...
1747	14¼	Beech Forest W arr.	—	10 35	12 35	...
		dep.	6 5	11 15	1 30	3 0
1676	14½	Ditchley N C	§	§	§	...
1272	17½	Dinmont W N C (See note, p. 234) arr.	...	...	...	...
		dep.	§	§	1 53	...
1014	19	McDevitt N C	§	§	§	3 25
701	20½	Wimba W N C	§	§	§	3 40
631	22½	Banool N C	§	§	§	3 50
		Gellibrand W arr.	7 21	P.M. 12 40	2 55	..
247	26½	Gellibrand W dep.	7 3½	12 55	3 10	4 10
267	28	Lovat N C	7 11§	§	3 19§	4 17
392	30½	Kawarren N O	7 52§	§	3 29§	4 30
462	32½	Birnam N C	§	§	§	...
527	33¾	(Water)	...	...	...	...
739	36½	Barongarook N C arr.	...	...	...	...
		dep.	8 35§	2 0§	4 10	4 55
891	38½	Coram N O	§	§	§	...
767	40	Tulloh N C	§	§	§	...
...	42½	Elliminyt N C	§	§	§	...
437	43½	COLAC W arr.	9 20	2 45	5 0	5 25
		dep.	Pass. 9 28	Pass. 6 28		...
30	139	MELBOURNE W (Spencer st.) arr.	P.M. 12 15	9 25	...	...

Beech Forest to Crowes traffic

The Porter's job at Beech Forest was a full one owing to activities along the Crowes extension as well as at Beech Forest and this entailed the monitoring of traffic and organising of trucks for the loading that was on offer. There was one train a day plus one mail motor either arriving or departing Beech Forest (including the overnight stabling on Wednesday) and this required the porter's additional attention for passengers and goods.

The traffic position from Beech Forest to Crowes did not materially improve over the next twelve months. From 10 October 1930 the service was reduced to one timetabled train a week on the Crowes extension, with the three trains per week service Colac to Beech Forest untouched.

The sudden service reduction was handled badly by the VR as no advance warning or notice was given to allow consignors time to consider alternatives. The VR assumed, wrongly, that the farmers and potato growers would motor produce to the rail head at Beech Forest and boost the outwards loadings there but this did not happen. Few had motor trucks and in the absence of an expected co-ordinated road/rail service consignors immediately turned to the private and Colac butter factory trucks that appeared as if by magic and took the loading. The trucks offered transport from farm gate to either Colac or Forrest (the alternative railhead) as there was a properly formed road all the way along the Ridge by then, most of it metalled and some of it sealed. Items such as cream, parcels, groceries and low volume high value goods were handled by road carriers.

The cream traffic was particularly sensitive to transit frequency and timing and if the train service was not consistent then farmers put cream onto road otherwise the cream could be up to four days old on arrival at the Colac butter factory. Stale cream was downgraded by the factory and farmers received a lesser return. The Colac factory put on a road truck for cream pick-ups and the railway got next to nothing.

It was a similar story for livestock west of Crowes, which was then driven direct to Colac on the hoof via Carlisle River rather than be taken upslope to Crowes and finding it still had a lengthy tramp all the way to Beech Forest. Potatoes could not be switched to road because the Melbourne receiving depot where the merchants operated was a rail-only facility. After agitation by growers and the Otway Shire Council the VR agreed to run potato specials provided loading for 10 trucks was on offer.

The timetable was reviewed within a few weeks as the Crowes curtailment achieved nothing but trouble and hostility for the VR so the Crowes service was restored to twice a week. There was a

Colac-Crowes service, departing Colac on Monday and Friday at 11am and returning from Crowes on Tuesday and Saturday. The Market train was run as a once weekly Colac-Beech Forest departing Colac Wednesday at 11 am and returning on Thursday morning at 7 am. The balancing Market train was a Colac to Gellibrand and return on Thursday afternoon. The Gellibrand Market service was dropped in June 1931.

The slow decline of Beech Forest township

By now the town of Beech Forest was losing population as a mirror to the diminishing train service. The commercial centre underwent a decline with some businesses closing or burning down. Fires carried off the Beech Forest Club (the town's largest rooming house and dining room), Fry's general store, Mrs Deppeler's general store and newsagency, Mrs Parrott's confectionary shop, Mrs Robbins' greengrocery and the old butter factory, then used as McCallum's grain store and carrier depot. There was no running water in the town and no fire brigade so fires could not be checked with anything but buckets of water being thrown onto flames. It was rumoured by wasp-tongued locals that most of the business fires were insurance jobs. The fires left numerous blank spots in the streetscape. The resident doctor left in 1932 despite receiving a guaranteed income provided by local subscription through the Otway Medical Association. Two of the churches withdrew their resident clergy.

The main street saw the cream, parcels and grocery delivery trucks from Colac rumble through and an increase in local road cartage from 1930 when the first garages were built for motor trucks used by local

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carriers. The Colac butter factory truck ran two, and sometimes three, days per week for cream pick-ups and it offered farm gate deliveries of bread, meat and stores sourced from Colac, the orders for which were given to the driver by the farmers along the route.

Over at the railway yard on the other side of the main street it was business as usual with one train a day in a single direction. The VR sought to win back business and in mid-1933 persuaded several businesses and farmers to sign contracts under concessional rates. It was a carrot-and-stick approach because farmers were advised if they did not sign then the existing concessional rates for agricultural purposes would be reviewed and, for example, freight on a ton of manure rise from six shillings and sixpence per ton to twenty-six shillings and ten pence. The twice a week service to Crowes and three times a week Colac to Beech Forest was sufficient for most agricultural traffic and much of the cream returned to rail for a few years. Cream can loadings along the Ridge from Beech Forest to

Crowes went from 800 a month to over 2,000. Livestock loading made a partial return to rail. The potato loading was market sensitive and in season the VR put on special trains to manage the traffic.

These loadings remained firm until around 1937 and then gradually dwindled in the face of further depopulation, road competition from newly upgraded roads and increasing motor truck ownership. Farmers were permitted under the 1933 Transport Regulation Act (designed to direct traffic to rail) to cart their own, and their neighbours' produce and livestock in their own trucks and many did so when full or part truckloads were more economic, convenient and time sensitive than railway bulk loading. The opening of a direct all-weather road to Colac in 1934 and likewise for the original road following the railway between Beech Forest and Gellibrand in 1937 took away the remaining cream and much of the general goods loadings.

The VR did not help itself by the way it arranged the train frequency in that it did not meet the needs of the locals and their situation.

Working Timetable for the busy season for the fire killed pulp trade when the Garratt was in for overhaul and NA's were assigned to do all the traffic for a few weeks.

Garratt G41 on a Goods about to depart for Colac in April 1942. The right-hand side of the yard contains large stacks of split timbers which came from 1939 bushfire salvage zones. The load on the train is almost entirely timber in the form of sawn and logs and probably comes from mills at Pile Siding and Lavers Hill plus from log contractors on the Crowes extension. Photo: Edward Downs Image ex Puffing Billy Archives

For example, a sore point with Beech Forest residents was the timetable arrangements that made a day return trip to Colac impossible by rail. By 1935 there was an additional complaint and it revolved around the transit time from Beech Forest to Colac. It was then around four hours, de-facto, regardless of what the time table specified. This particular complaint was prompted by locals experiencing a newly introduced bus service in1934 that ran from Lavers Hill to Beech Forest and on to Colac. It ran on a day return basis, the journey from Beech Forest to Colac taking less than one hour, so it snatched almost all the passenger traffic from rail.

Decline of passenger services

The rail was by now more a goods service than a mixed one and few along the line bothered to patronise the passenger seats offered on the mixed trains. Passenger traffic was mostly for those places away from the main roads such as Coram, Barongarook, Birnam, Banool and McDevitt. At Beech Forest there was precious little passenger loading, less than 400 journeys per year and this represented a notional two passengers per train out of Beech Forest.

Loading had stabilised at bulk and/or seasonal commodities such as outwards timber, potatoes, lime, chaff, hay, butter and inwards beer. The Colac butter factory truck for cream and goods was then running a regular three days a week service for farmers. The regular rail service to Beech Forest throughout the 1930s remained unchanged at three per week, departing Colac on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 11.30 am, arriving Beech Forest 2.50 pm and extending to Crowes on Monday and Fridays. The return Crowes service departed 10.30 am for a Colac arrival at 5 pm on Wednesday and 8.30 am for a 2.45 pm arrival on Saturday. The return Beech Forest service left on Thursday at 6.05 am for a 9 am Colac arrival. By the late 1930s there was still a train each day either into or out of Beech Forest with the mail motor filling the daily gap in one direction.

The Beech Forest township had suffered from the Depression but nevertheless remained a lively and vibrant community. The commercial side comprised a general store and newsagent, baker, butcher and hotel. The general store also sold petrol and oils. A fruiterer commenced business in 1935 but only lasted two years. The services included the Shire office and public hall, the Forestry, private hospital, bank, post office, school, police station and Court of Petty Sessions.

Community features remained viable and the various sports and social clubs, Potato Show committee, CWA, Boy Scouts and a six-holes golf course provided recreational and socialising opportunities. Amenity was improved due to the 1934 Jubilee commemoration and unemployment relief measures. Various improvement and beautification projects were put in place and this included tree plantings along the streets, installation of new tennis courts (in the centre of the railway turning loop) and building a playground for local children as a pioneer memorial. The Forestry brought planting gangs into town to sow pines on abandoned farms in the Aire Valley south and south-east of Beech Forest and this provided a permanent boost to local affairs. The tens of thousands of seedlings and the pine planters themselves came into Beech Forest on the train.

Rail activity remained steady until late 1937 and then began a dramatic slide. By now hardly any business was using rail, there being four good roads in to and out of the place. The inwards rail loading was about one truck every 10 days and the outwards one truck a week. The VR proposed withdrawing the Porter from station management but stayed its hand at the request of the Otway Shire. With the outbreak of war in 1939 a new set of circumstances set a brake on economic activity when many of the young men and women of the district left for war service.

The Porter at Beech Forest and the TSM along the line were withdrawn at the end of 1939 to mark the introduction of a curtailed timetable. A Caretaker took over station running at Beech Forest and the entire line was supervised by a Guard-in-Charge on each train that was run from Colac.

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The revised schedule was two trains per week, a goods service to Beech Forest on Tuesday and a Crowes service Friday/Saturday. This marked the end of the (one-way) Thursday market train and its overnight stabling at Beech Forest.

1939 bushfires

Then a miracle occurred to revive rail traffic. In January 1939 bushfires roared through the Otways and destroyed thousands of hectares of regrowth timber. The paper mill at Maryvale in Gippsland set its sights on the fire-damaged mountain ash sapling spars and called tenders for the supply of eucalypt billets. The comment was made in the Colac press that the train service had been reduced and there was no apparent consideration for the pulp traffic. However, the prospective volume of traffic was such that the VR had to respond. Starting with a few men in February 1940, the trade exploded after the winter months and by October there were 30 contractors employing 200 men on seven-day shifts, carting with a fleet of trucks to the nearest railway station from Dinmont to Lavers Hill.

Billets cut in the bush in wet weather were stacked there and from around September/October could begin to be moved out. By this time the billet stacks at the various stations were beginning to mushroom. The train was carting about 1,200 tons per month on Garratt-hauled services, which were then four or five days a week, and was barely making a dent in the expanding stockpiles.

The trains had to haul a couple of hundred tons a day in normal circumstances (two train loads) and somewhere between 300 to 350 tons per day to clear the peak loading. The peak trains required a five or six days per week service and this had to be achieved within the limits imposed by crew numbers and loco availability. There were no running problems associated with putting on extra trains as there were sufficient crossing loops on the line to handle this and the shortage of wagons could be made up from elsewhere. There were around 120 wagons on the line and the pulp would require around

80 of them, one lot loaded and another lot either in transit or being loaded. That left just 40 for other requirements and out of service ones for repair. Additional NQR wagons were transferred from the Gembrook line in April and May 1940 and this enabled the extra trains to commence running.

An NA-hauled service was introduced to run at night, departing around 9.00 pm, arriving Beech Forest around 1.00 am for an immediate turn around and arrival back at Colac at approximately 6 am. This was insufficient owing to the limited haulage capacity of the NA class so double headed NA trains were run to equal a Garratt load. The day and night sequence was necessary to spread the traffic evenly at the transfer dock otherwise there would have been no room at Colac to accommodate simultaneously all the inbound loaded trucks and the outbound empties being made up to train length.

In October 1940 a train crew and NA loco was assigned to Beech Forest to run switch trips along the Crowes extension to bring pulp loading to Beech Forest where it was consolidated for the longer trains to Colac. A Porter was also appointed to handle station business and manage the safe working arrangements. It was a return to former days for Beech Forest. The timing matched the onset of drier weather and an increase in work pace in the bush over summer.

In November 1940 the Garratt was taken out of service for its periodic overhaul at Newport and this necessitated extra NA services to cover the gap in haulage capacity. The regular mixed train service out of Colac at 11.00 am, then at two days, was increased to four days a week to Beech Forest, arriving 2.50 pm, and continuing to Crowes as a car goods on one day a week. The pulp specials ran as required, which was a continuous shuttle to and from Beech Forest, supplemented by a switch run along the Crowes extension. The pulp specials departed Colac at 9.40 am, 10 am and 10 pm, arrived Beech Forest at 12.40 pm, 12.55 pm and 2 am. The return trips left at 3 pm, 4.05 pm and 3 am. The daily switch run by the Beech Forest NA loco was to Pile Siding, 1 pm and return, and a Crowes switch at 4.15 pm

By the late 1970s Main Street commercial strip was a gutted shell of its former self. The old butcher shop and Hancox produce store site remain in use as a residence and work shed-cum-drummed fuel depot for a local contractor. The bakery shop now doubles as the bread supply and milk bar. It is on the site of the former Beech Forest Club and closed in 1984 when forced to do so by road works cutting into it. Photo: Otway Districts Historical Society

The main General Store closed its doors in the late 1970s. Shown here in 1984 when largely intact. It was pulled down a couple of years later. The purple roofed building next door is the Post Office. It remained open under a contract operator until 1994. Photo: Otway Districts Historical Society

to the terminus at 6.45 pm for a quick turnaround and arrival back at Beech Forest at 10 pm. The night train out of Colac was a double headed NA service in order to pick up maximum tonnage from the day's pulp loading on the Crowes extension and Beech Forest and to give the transfer crews at Colac something to start their day with.

The pulp peaked at nearly 8,000 tons per month by November 1940. On some days there were 850 to 900 tons in narrow-gauge rail trucks awaiting transfer in Colac yard – testing the siding capacity at that place. A record week for transfer was at the end of October 1940 when 6,278 tons was handled. The transfer contractor at Colac put on 12 men to handle this traffic between the narrow and broad gauges.

Beech Forest became the major loading point owing to its proximity to the burnt ash areas to the east and south-east. In 1940-1941 financial year there was around 23,000 tons sent through Beech Forest station, the bulk of it being over summer. This was reminiscent of the 1910s when the Beech Forest yard was lined with split palings fed into it by an endless stream of bullock wagons. Now it was an endless stream of motor trucks and rough-handed cutters manhandling the billets into stacks or into the rail trucks around the clock.

The railway yard was a bustle at all hours, with trains coming and going, locos cutting off for coaling and watering and much truck shuffling. The layout of the yard allowed for the handling of two trains at once, either inwards or outwards, as there were two running roads with a scissors crossover at the west end plus a 360 degrees turning loop at the east. There were two siding roads for the pulp trucks, one having long dead-ends, so overall there was just enough space to accommodate the movements and park every rake of trucks in its place. The Beech Forest pulp bubble lasted one full year and by 1941-1942 had reduced to a little under 4,000 tons and then rose to near 5,000 tons in the following until the trade ceased in 1943.

The train service more or less returned to normal towards the end of 1941 because the pulp volume was able to be handled by a daily Garratt-hauled service, supplemented by NA-hauled night specials as required. The Porter and train crew were withdrawn at around this time and station management reverted to a Caretaker.

By late 1942 the pulp was tapering to insignificance so the regular service was reduced to two days a week from January 1943. This level of service was insufficient for mail balancing between train and mail motor mode so the motor ceased and all Post Office mails were switched to road carriage. From July 1943 the service was put back to three trips per week, presumably because petrol and rubber rationing had put limitations on motor truck haulage. There was plenty of

loading for the railway for a while but soon after the war ended in 1945 the service was trimmed to once weekly as a Crowes return.

End of World War II

A sign of the times was the opening of Beech Forest Motors in 1949. This marked the arrival of motor vehicle servicing for the post-war boom and represented a further threat to rail traffic.

The weekly train service became the norm but seasonal specials were run for the potato traffic and during these times there was increased activity at Beech Forest. A train crew and NA loco was assigned to Beech Forest for a few weeks in the potato season to run a shuttle service along the Crowes extension to gather loading for consolidation at Beech Forest and dispatch by a Garratt train from Colac. At these times there could be three trains a day into and out of Beech Forest. This practice ceased when the Crowes extension was cut back to Weeaproinah in 1954. That was the last time a loco was based at Beech Forest.

From 1954 the train service was run as a Car Goods day return from Colac because the crews could get to Weeaproinah and back in the one shift. Beech Forest was now a service stop for coal and water on the way to the terminus. Loadings for this period were seasonal potatoes and a substantial pulpwood trade from the plantations to the east of Beech Forest. The pulp eased off in the 1958-1959 year and, with no additional bulk loadings on the horizon, the railway was deemed uneconomic to continue and was closed in 1962.

As for the town after this? Well, it carried on virtually unchanged until the late 1960s before starting to dip. It remained the centre of the Shire with the Council Chamber there but not much else around it. Improvements in the roads, diminishing dairy, encroachment of water supply and timber reserves onto farm land all contributed to depopulation and taking business elsewhere. By the 1970s most of the shops, services and the old buildings had disappeared, literally fallen down or demolished by Shire order. Another source of demolitions was the Country Roads Board, which body realigned the main road through town, across the old railway yard, and wiped out all the buildings standing in the way. This included the bakery/milk bar that finally went in 1984. The hotel, a fire re-build from 1964, then took on the role of town shop for a while. The final blow of that era was the demise of the Otway Shire Council in 1994, as the result of a forced municipal amalgamation. The Shire office, then a relatively new and up-to-date construction of 1980 closed, staff left town, and the Post Office, which had survived on Shire postal business, also shut down. The Shire Offices were sold into private hands and the Town Hall relegated to community use.

However, a recent lifestyle revival has restored substance to the settlement with its population of about 100 persons. Several new dwellings and a rebuilt hotel signify ongoing vitality and local industry remains strong and viable in plantation timber cutting, agriculture, cropping and livestock, although dairy is virtually finished. One third of the town's houses are week-enders and regenerated tourism is bringing day trippers to sights along the Ridge. The old railway has not been forgotten. In October 2005 a walking and cycling track was opened along the rail route or its nearby roads from Colac to Beech Forest to commemorate the pioneering route and the role of rail at Beech Forest. Take a walk to see for yourself.

References
1. This article is largely a re-packaging and differing look at data in the author's previously published histories on the railway and Beech Forest township, supplemented with additional research from the *Colac Herald* and Otway Shire Council Minutes.
2. *Colac Herald,* various dates 1910 to 1960
3. *Otway Shire Council Minutes,* various dates 1928 to 1955
4. Authored books: *The Beechy – Life and Times of the Colac – Beech Forest – Crowes narrow gauge railway 1992, Beech Forest – Capital on the Ridge, 2008, End of the Line, 2011, Rail Centre Colac 2015.*

An Aramac Enigma – what date; which train? The above photo was taken in 1913 by the Aramac newsagent, tobacconist and photographer, Fred Lawrence, who turned it into a postcard which he sold locally. For the 25th anniversary of the tramway it (and others) appeared in the Longreach Leader *on 7 Dec 1938 where it was titled "First train across bridge into Aramac" That being so, it cannot be on official opening day, 2 July 1913 as sometimes claimed, as the bridge across Aramac Creek (bridge No.8) was not yet built and trains terminated at a temporary platform on the south side of the creek. The date of the actual first train across the bridge No.8 and into the new station was not noted by the newspaper – sometime in the latter half of August seems most likely. Conversely, if the photo title is incorrect, and it was taken on opening day, the bridge must be that over the billabongs (Bridge No.7) near the Aramac Creek and it can't be the official train as that arrived tender first at sunset. Whatever the case, the locomotive is the shire's first, No.31, an ex-QGR B12 2-6-0 (Avonside 1179/1877) with an ex-A12 Baldwin tender. Photo: State Library of Queensland, John Oxley Library*

Excursion trains on the Aramac Tramway

by Phil Rickard

Introduction

In their interesting book *The Aramac Tramway* (LRRSA 2002), authors John Kerr and Peter Bell, when discussing the early years on the tramway, effectively ask the question "Was there any football excursion traffic?". They knew that the QGR ran excursion trains for the rugby on the Central Railway, and contemplate whether similar trains operated on the Tramway. But they just didn't know.

However, since 2009 and the commencement of Trove, the National Library's ongoing digitisation of hundreds of newspapers from across Australia, researchers are able to investigate in a few hours, at home, what would once have taken years, at public libraries. Prior to writing about the tramway's early locomotives (see *Light Railways* No. 286) I was re-reading *The Aramac Tramway*, and pondered the authors' mention about excursion traffic and recalled that I had seen some advertisements in the local paper – *The Western Champion*, Barcaldine. I duly started another file for any adverts and reports of special excursion trains.

Festival Week – opening events

Even before the 42-mile-long Aramac Tramway officially opened throughout, from Barcaldine to Aramac in July 1913, the Shire of Aramac was quick to accept traffic over sections of track as they were completed. Thus, we have a report from late June 1912 when the construction train was used to carry ten tons of foodstuffs and horse feed to the head of the line (16 miles from Barcaldine) for hungry Aramac and Muttaburra people and horses. It transpires that following very heavy rains the 'road' from Barcaldine to Aramac was near-impassable at its southern end. However, a train was possible and was duly met by some light vehicles that had managed to get that far, coming from the north.[1] Around the same time, council decided that once the track reached the half-way point, the '20-mile* or Mildura as it was soon renamed, it would make the line available for any type of goods; a published time table worked in with construction trains.

As an aside, in late November 1912, with the tramway construction at the 25-mile (from Barcaldine) near Pendine Creek, the last horse-drawn coach, (Augusta Doran: proprietor), left Barcaldine for Aramac, driven by Thomas Jones. In future the mails and passengers would be taken by tram to the head of line and transferred to C J Kingston's hire car for the remaining distance into Aramac. Just a month later, with the head of line at the Nine-Mile (from Aramac), the Tramway announced its first excursion train. To be run on New Year's Day 1913, it was to be for the Aramac Races. Racegoers from Barcaldine were to train it to the Nine-Mile, for a

The Western Champion and General Advertiser for the Central-Western Districts, Barcaldine 28 Dec 1912

Aramac Tramway

Aramac Races.

Cheap One-day Excursion on New Year's Day, 1st Jan., 1913.

PROVIDING sufficient inducement offers, a Special Train will be run in connection with the above from Barcaldine to Nine Miles.

Leave Barcaldine at 7 30 a.m., and returning from Nine Mile at 5.45 p.m.

Return Fares—

First Class, 6/8   Second Class, 5/-

Motor Cars will convey passengers to and from the course ; Fare 5s. each way.

Intending passengers are requested to advise the Station Master, or Mr. W. H. Clarke, on or before Tuesday, 31st inst.

R. G. MILLER,
Shire Clerk.

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* Sometimes reported as '20-mile', sometimes as '21-mile'. The QGR stated it was 21 miles 15 chains from Aramac Junction, which agrees with Google satellite measurement. The inn at this location, required for the stage coaches, was the Half-Way Hotel. It closed in early 1913.

Western Champion, Barcaldine Sat 25 July 1914

Aramac Tramway.
—
Barcaldine Pastoral, Agricultural
and Horticultural Society's
INAUGURAL SHOW,
28th and 29th JULY, 1914,
——and——
Barcaldine Central Racing Club
SHOW CORNFED
MEETING,
30th and 31st JULY, 1914.

SPECIAL CHEAP EXCURSION
Aramac to Barcaldine.

ON Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 28th, 29th, 30th and 31st July, EXCURSION Tickets, at the undermentioned Fares, will be issued from Aramac to Barcaldine, available for return until Saturday, 1st August, inclusive :—

    1st class ... 8/- Return Fare
    2nd class ... 6/-   ,,

On Tuesday, 28th, and Thursday, 30th July, the train will return from Barcaldine at 7 p.m., arriving at Aramac at 9.45 p.m.
T. CAMPBELL,
Traffic Manager.
Aramac, 17th July, 1914.

connecting motor car to the Aramac racecourse. In the event not a single Barcaldinite took up the offer and the train was cancelled. No doubt the cost – 5s on the rail and 10s for the motor car was way outside the means of all but the wealthiest. In years to come five shillings became the standard second-class excursion return fare on the tramway and was availed of by thousands.[2]

Wednesday, 2 July 1913 is always quoted as tramway opening date, yet a glance at the published timetable[3] shows that trains were advertised from Monday, 30 June; Wednesday was just the official 'ribbon cutting' opening by the Minister for Railways, Walter Paget. As construction was still taking place on the last bridge (Bridge No.8), over the Aramac Creek, it seems likely that the listed trains were part construction train and part public train, running to a time table and being utilised for any traffic offering – goods or passengers.

The first report of actual excursion traffic is related to the official opening of the tramway and the days following (Festival Week), when return tickets were issued at single fare-and-a-quarter. These fares covered opening day events, a tennis tournament, two Aramac race meetings (that saw between 450 and 500 people attend on each day), and allowed return usage until Monday 7 July. On that date a 'Children's Monster Picnic' was held at Mildura attended by over 300 children and parents. When the morning train arrived at the temporary platform, on the south bank of the Aramac Creek it soon became apparent (despite the warning carried by the invitation advertisement) that there were insufficient carriages for the waiting throng which also included a number of Barcaldinites heading home from the festivities. The situation was soon rectified – three goods trucks in the adjacent siding were emptied by many willing hands and added to the train which would have already consisted of three carriages on hire from the QGR plus the Shire's own large bogie carriage. The train dropped the picnickers at Mildura siding around 12.30pm where they indulged in various sports and a giant picnic. The returning train arrived at 4pm and conveyed the happy crowd back to Aramac.[4] The cost of the train was borne by the Shire which also voted £25 to the school committee for the picnic costs.[5]

Excursions of many types
The tramway's first decade saw many special excursion trains for a variety of events and the Shire quickly realised that they could be a good source of income. Motor vehicles were rare in central Queensland, often unreliable, and the roads, if one could call them roads, were often atrocious. A train was a far more joyful way of meandering across the Mitchell grass plains between Aramac and Barcaldine, keeping all the excursionists together in one group with general *bonhomie*.

For the first few years, going by the newspaper advertisements, the Shire sometimes ran special trains at its own risk, though that risk was often reduced by a guarantee from an interested party. One very early case was on New Year's Day 1914 – a Thursday, when the Barcaldine Caledonian Association guaranteed the Aramac Shire just £10 to run the train in conjunction with its sports day. It would appear, judging

by the advertisements, that tramway-initiated specials were run during the working week, Monday to Saturday – avoiding Sundays. Sometimes the shire would run its 'normal train' but to a different schedule to the published timetable – something that could cause a degree of local unhappiness. In the case of New Year's Day 1914, a public holiday, one doubts that there would have been any train run unless it was guaranteed, at least partly, by some party. As over 100 people availed of the train, the guarantee was amply met. It also seems that the tramway kept any fares over and above the guarantee, just as the QGR did much to the anger of the various rugby leagues.[†][6]

The following year, with the war in progress in Europe, a similar train, at the same fares was again run for the New Year's Day sports and over 120 travelled. This time the Aramac council waived the guarantee on patriotic grounds as the proceeds of the event were to be donated to the Red Cross.[7] In 1919 Catherine Fawkes, licensee of the Royal Hotel in Aramac, not only guaranteed the New Year's Day train but paid for the fares of all the children. Adult fares were set at a reasonable five shillings. The returning train did not reach Aramac until 11.30pm.[8] By 1927 the New Year's Day Sports was jointly organised by the Caledonian Association and the Returned Soldiers and Sailors Imperial League. That year, being a Saturday, the Tramway ran its normal train to an altered time table, arriving in Barcaldine earlier and departing later.[9]

In addition to the Barcaldine Caledonian Association, the dozen or so years after opening also saw special trains run for both the Aramac Jockey Club and the Barcaldine Central Racing Club on the occasion of race days at each location, various inter-town Cricket matches, when a circus passed through and, usually in July, the biggest event of the year, the Barcaldine Pastoral, Agricultural and Horticultural Society's show. As the Barcaldine Show extended over several days and included Barcaldine horse racing, a quite intensive train service could occur. Reference to the attached advert shows that in addition to the normal train days (Monday, Wednesday, Thursday) specials were run on Tuesday and possibly Friday. This was followed

The Western Champion, Barcaldine Sat 4 Oct 1913

Aramac Tramway.
—
Aramac Jockey Club.
October Cornfed Meeting,
9th and 10th October.
Grand Cricket Match,
Town v. Country,
11th October.

On....
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
8th, 9th and 10th October,
FIRST and Second-class EXCURSION TICKETS will be issued to Aramac at single fare and a quarter, available to return until MONDAY, 13th October.
T. CAMPBELL,
Traffic Manager.

the following week when the racing moved to Aramac and another special was run on the Tuesday.[10] In 1917 the Barcaldine Show, as usual, ran over two days, Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 July, followed by two days for the Barcaldine races. On the Tuesday a special train was run by the Tramway, with a return departure from Barcaldine at half-an-hour after midnight, arrival at Aramac at 2.30am. This late (early!) train was to enable participation at the Show during the day and a dance in aid of the Red Cross in the evening. Aramac school was closed for two days to facilitate those pupils, parents and others who headed to the show, one of the largest for years despite the war.[11] It is thought that special or altered trains were run for the annual Barcaldine Show until at least 1951.

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†   Onerous excursion train guarantees by the QGR on Central-Western communities, as opposed to major urban centres, was a sore point for years and finally reached parliament in Brisbane where the local MP voiced the complaint. (*Western Champion*, Barcaldine 21 Nov 1931.)

The last couple of years of the war coincided with subdued pastoral conditions locally but the end of the Great War and the armistice on 11 November 1918 was greeted with huge relief and an outpouring of pro-British sentiment. This buoyancy continued into 1919 when St George's Day (generally ignored in pre-war times) was celebrated with a big sports meeting in Barcaldine on Wednesday 23 April, organised by the local branch of the Ancient Order of Foresters. Whilst the QGR's idea of a special train was to offer excursion fares from Longreach on the normal goods train, the Aramac Tramway not only discounted the fares – adults 5s and children 2s 6d – but put on a special train, departing Aramac at 7.45 am and returning at 10pm, a service availed of by a large number of Aramac folk. [12]

Good times in the early Twenties

With 1generally better times, 1920 saw an increase in special and excursion trains. Often, a group, usually a rugby or cricket club, hired the train and paid a fixed guarantee fee, and then charged the passengers what they thought sufficient to cover its costs. As mentioned above, what particularly rankled was the QGR's practise of retaining all the fares, including those in excess of the guarantee. It is believed the same occurred on the tramway though it was easier to deal with a locally-based authority than one 360 miles distant in Rockhampton, which in turn was directed by Brisbane. Worse still, was if a loss was incurred; often due to sudden inclement weather leading to lack of patronage or a greater attraction elsewhere. Naturally, the canny hirer would try and get intending passengers to purchase tickets in advance of the travel date. Occasionally the hirer would appeal to the shire council for a refund of part of their payment citing a shortfall – such requests sometimes being met with a "Why didn't you charge more!" from council. These special trains invariably operated on Sundays, a day of no scheduled services and were granted conditionally on there being no stock trains being run the same day. [13]

In April 1920, the newly formed Aramac Athletic Club selected Easter Monday for a big sports event that included the rising sport of cycling. An examination of the tramway's special timetable shows a pre-dawn 5.00 am Down departure from Aramac in order to form a morning Up special from Barcaldine at 8.00 am. Judging by some caustic comments in the media, the evening return train did not run to time, resulting in some passengers missing an evening ball in Barcaldine where, unusually, the train was stabled overnight. Readers will note that the journey time, excluding stops, was 2 hours 20 minutes. Incidentally, the fares quoted in the advert are incorrect, being the normal fares – the excursion fares were First class 7s 6d, Second class 5s. [14] Over the years journey times were changed depending on the state of the track and its maintenance.

Trains for the Children

For over thirty years the children of Aramac were the beneficiaries of free train rides on many occasions, due to the generosity of either the Aramac council or Catherine Fawkes, a long-time resident and businesswoman of both Barcaldine and Aramac. One of the first occasions was in 1918 when on Monday, 6 May (Labour Day), a rather novel "motor gymkhana" was held in Barcaldine to raise funds for the town's Victoria Hospital. Suggested and promoted by the Vacuum Oil Company's local representative, several dozen cars competed for prizes for best kept, best decorated, best advertisement and

other categories. Various driving skills' tests were held including a Ladies' Driving Contest and over £183 was raised for the hospital. Thirty-two motor cars were in the grand parade – was that every car in Barcaldine at the time? A very crowded train came in from Aramac with an estimated 200 on board: "*Standing room only* scarcely expresses the packing of adults and children into three carriages." All the Aramac school children were on free return tickets courtesy of Mrs Fawkes. The Aramac train departed at 8pm for home. [15]

Following the Great War, there was one excursion train that became an annual event for the entire inter-war period. In 1919 the Aramac School committee, possibly recalling the 1913 opening week's children's picnic train, commenced making it an annual occurrence, again at Mildura (renamed Bowyer after 1920) where there was a picnic ground. For many Aramac kids the train ride and picnic was a much-anticipated yearly event. Following the 1920 picnic, the school committee's request for a refund of the £6 charge by the Shire was rejected. Unfortunately (for the shire), the rejection occurred at the same meeting where the tramway superintendent reported a "very satisfactory position" for the tramway's finances for the latest six months.[‡] This parsimony somewhat riled the Aramac Progress Association who shamed the council into agreeing to an annual free train for the school children of ratepayers.[16]

Reports from the 1920s note the picnic was always held on a Sunday (that being the one day with no scheduled trains), always around late April to early June. By 1924, even with tramway finances on the downhill, about 270 travelled and the extra carriages required were brought up from Barcaldine – the train consisted of four carriages and two trucks.[17] By this time the routine had been established – the shire granted the train free of charge, with the school committee to pay the wages of the driver, fireman and guard though it is thought that some crew may have done it gratis. In 1930 and 1931 (at least), it was held on the Labour Day holiday,[18] the first Monday in May, by which time it seems half the town was participating – the train was packed to capacity and many also came by car.[19] In 1940 it was touch-and-go as to whether there would be any train. A severe shortage of coal due to a 1940 miners' strike saw the picnic delayed from the first Sunday in

The Western Champion, Barcaldine 8 April 1922

ARAMAC RACES

Foy Cup Meeting,
11th, 12th and 13th April

SPECIAL TRAIN arrangements, BARCALDINE to ARAMAC.
On TUESDAY, 11th April, a Special Train will run as under :—

Barcaldine, depart ... 8 a.m.
Aramac, arrive ... 10.30 a.m.

THURSDAYS train from Aramac is suitable for passengers to connect at Barcaldine with the mail train to Rockhampton.

G. H. BIRD,
67   Station Master

Western Champion, Barcaldine Sat 20 March 1920

ARAMAC TRAMWAY.
EXCURSION TRAIN.

ATHLETIC SPORTS,
EASTER MONDAY, 5th APRIL, 1920.

MONDAY, April 5th, the train timed to leave Aramac at 10 15 a.m. and Barcaldine at 2 45 p.m., are hereby cancelled, and the following substituted viz :—

MONDAY, 5th APRIL.

DOWN.		UP.	
Aramac, depart...	50 a.m.	Barcaldine, depart	80 a.m
Mildura, arrive	6 10 ,,	Mildura, arrive ...	9.10 ,,
,, depart	6 20 ,,	,, depart	9 20 ,,
Barcaldine, arrive	7 30 ,,	Aramac, arrive	10 30 ,,

DOWN.		UP.	
Aramac, depart...	80 p.m Monday	Barcaldine, depart ..	80 a.m. Tuesday
Mildura, arrive	9 10 ,, ,,	Mildura, arrive	9.10 ,, ,,
,, depart	9 20 ,, ,,	,, depart	9 20 ,, ,,
Barcaldine, arrive	10.30 ,, ,,	Aramac, arrive	10 30 ,, ,,

EXCURSION TICKETS will be issued at Single Fares for the Double Journey, by the train leaving Barcaldine at 8 a m 5th April, available for return by train leaving Aramac at 8 p.m. 5th April. Fares—1st class 11s, 2nd class 5s. 6d.

S. F. TREVETHAN, Station Master.

[‡] In Sept 1922 the shire placed <u>surplus</u> funds from tramway operations on fixed deposit at their bank.

May until the first Sunday in June. The wages of the crew that day were £6 6s 10d.[20] This author could not locate any picnic train being run after 1940. In 1941 approval was given by the Shire but a shortage of funds resulted instead in a sports day being held in August. One suspects the picnic train was a casualty of the war and never revived.

Another excursion train, also mainly for children, was for the Barcaldine United School Sports Day. The first utilising the tramway was on Wednesday, 2 June 1920. Many of the schools in the Aramac, Longreach and Barcaldine region participated, with over 200 children, plus teachers and parents coming in from Aramac alone. Again, this train was paid for entirely by Catherine Fawkes, the retiring licensee of the Royal Hotel in Aramac. A QGR special train also came in from Longreach, and both trains were due at Barcaldine at 10am. One presumes the Aramac Junction signalman must have been a busy chap for a few minutes – the QGR train being allowed into the station first.[21]

Mrs Fawkes had a history of paying for the children's fares, not only for the sports day but also for them to visit the annual Barcaldine Show. Two instances noted are 1937 when 50 children and 40 adults availed of her special train on Wednesday, 28 July, and in 1938 when 75 children accompanied by 52 adults travelled on Wednesday, 18 May. The death of Mrs Fawkes in 1942 was not entirely the end of philanthropy in Aramac. On 4 May 1951 two local businessmen paid for a special train to take the Aramac children to Barcaldine's 29th Annual Show to attend the second day of the so-called 'Jubilee Show', celebrating 50 years since Federation.[22] And special trains were still being run on the tramway for the Central-West inter-district primary school sports as late as October 1950 and September 1954.[23]
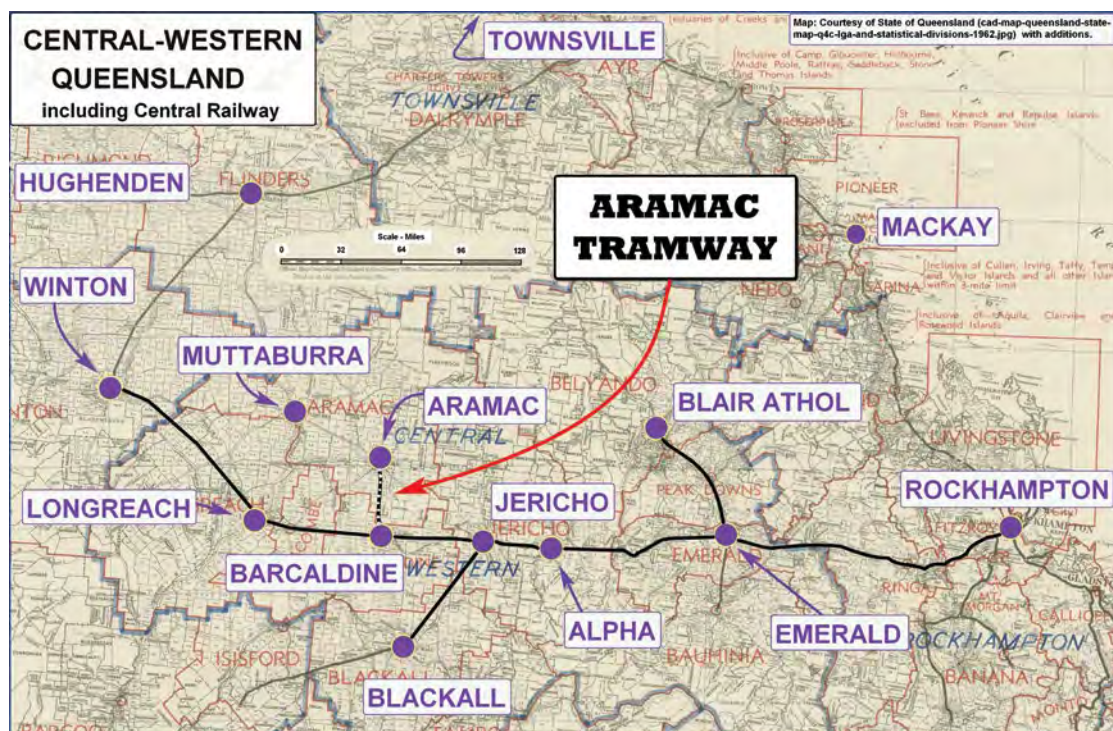
Special trains for the football
As alluded to in *The Aramac Tramway*, the 1920s saw renewed interest in rugby league as a winter-time football sport, coinciding with the return of many young men following the Great War. Starting in 1920, the Barcaldine Rugby League was involved in a number of matches against various towns. Aramac joined in from 1921 and a large contingent travelled to Barcaldine by special train on Sunday 26 June for their first-ever inter-town match. Held at the Barcaldine show grounds, a very large crowd was in attendance to see the locals beat Aramac 15 to 7. A return match was held a fortnight later in Aramac, on 10 July when over 100 adults and 40 children took the special train from Barcaldine, takings being £36 or £20 over the guarantee. In the main match Aramac showed considerable improvement, actually leading at half-time but faded in the second half to lose 34 to 14. [24]

Again, on 7 August, the Aramac Football Club hired a special train to head to Barcaldine. We know a fair bit about this event as the special ran at a loss – maybe there was something else on at home. The train left Aramac at 9.00am, arrived Barcaldine at 11.30am; there were two games, Aramac being in the main game against the Barcaldine 2nd Thirteen. Aramac was in front at half-time and still leading just 20 mins from full time when Barcaldine attacked strongly, eventually winning 22 to 15. The returning excursion train departed at 7.30pm, reaching Aramac at about 10.00pm. At the next Aramac Shire council meeting the football club said it suffered a loss of £6 or £7 from the train and asked to be allowed the benefit of the ordinary fares of other travellers who took the train. In the event the council wiped the deficiency by allowing the club the benefit of the surplus from the previous special train. In future the guarantee for a Sunday train (less than 12 hours) would be £19 5s or if over 12 hours £24 6s 10d; "and this refundment is not to form a precedent!" The Tramway was on a winner, no matter who won the game. Future advertisements indicate that the club tried to adhere to the 'less than 12 hours' charge.[25]

During the 1921 season Aramac visited Barcaldine three times but in the reverse direction received only one visit. The following year, in August 1922 another well-filled train from Aramac witnessed its first victory over the Barcaldine 2nd Thirteen at the Barcaldine show grounds.[26] In 1923, again, Aramac Football Club had to visit Barcaldine to get a match. On this occasion the guarantee for the special train was put up by two Aramac businessmen, Messrs David Stibbards and Ray Cahill and fortunately for them the locals responded and a well-filled train headed south on 17 June to the Barcaldine show grounds. Despite the very enthusiastic barracking by a sizable contingent of Aramac's fair sex, which rather amused the large local crowd, the Barcaldinites triumphed 11 to 5 in the main match. The return train steamed out of Barcaldine at 7.30pm with the Aramacites, no doubt fairly happy but vowing to do even better next time.[27]

CENTRAL-WESTERN QUEENSLAND including Central Railway

Map: Courtesy of State of Queensland (cad-map-queensland-state-map-q4c-lga-and-statistical-divisions-1962.jpg) with additions.

To put the small town of Aramac and its efforts into context: Aramac might have had a population of around 550 at this time compared with Barcaldine's 2100 and Longreach's 3100. When the Longreach rugby team travelled to Barcaldine (66 miles distant) on Sunday, 1 July 1923, the special excursion train on the Central Railway had 14 carriages, picking up at stations along the way and arriving at Barcaldine with 790 persons on board, collecting fares of around £180. Indeed, so anticipated was the match in Central-Western Queensland that some 64 of Aramac's really keen football supporters hired a special train just to get to Barcaldine.[§] Unfortunately, they did not quite cover the tramway's guarantee though they did see a good display, Barcaldine winning the main match 14 to 6.[28]

The following Sunday (8 July) the Barcaldine teams travelled to Aramac; around 200 travelled and the fares taken were £32, exceeding the guarantee by £2. Only three carriages were used for the throng – it cost the tramway a £1 per day to hire carriages from the QGR so the fewer they hired the more profitable! It was a fairly fast trip (by tramway standards) as the train reached Aramac in two hours from Barcaldine. In the main game the Barcaldine 2nd Thirteen overcame a much-improved Aramac 18 to 10.[29]

In 1924, in a repeat of the previous year's big match between Barcaldine and Longreach, some 60 die-hard Aramac rugby fans again hired a tramway train to reach Barcaldine to watch the big clash on 3 August. Four weeks later, on Sunday 31 August, another rugby special was sent down the tramway for an interesting day's football in Barcaldine. Two matches were played, the curtain-raiser being Alpha vs. Aramac whilst the main game was Emerald vs. Barcaldine. The train arrangements were quite clever – Barcaldine is about 90 miles from Alpha and 190 miles from Emerald. An excursion special, the first ever football train between Emerald and Barcaldine, was run on the Central Railway bringing 110 passengers from Emerald, 19 from Bogan and 112 from Alpha; the QGR guarantee was £120 and the fares collected was £130 5s. By running just one train bringing the two teams and their supporters enabled the train costs to be shared and the whole day became financially viable. And of course, the Aramac Tramway ran a special "packed to the extremes"; its train reaching Barcaldine a long time before the Emerald train. Scores: Aramac 5, Alpha 0; Barcaldine 9, Emerald 5. After the game the train with the Emerald and Alpha folk departed at 7pm for the long haul eastwards, whilst the 'Aramac Express' left at 7.30pm for a rollicking trip northwards across the Western downs![30]

Ten years later, with the Depression years starting to fade, 18 August 1935 saw almost 2000 spectators, one of the largest crowds to date, at the Barcaldine show grounds. The game, another grudge match between Longreach and Barcaldine, was to decide the Irvine Gold Cup. The QGR operated special trains from Longreach (511 passengers) and Alpha (115), whilst the Aramac special brought 68 passengers in on the tramway. In an upset, Longreach won the game 19 to 5. That evening a large crowd was at the railway station to see

the three specials away.[31] In June 1939, another large crowd was present for a rare Mount Isa vs Barcaldine match. Aramac played a Barcaldine 2nd Thirteen in the curtain-raiser and the Barcaldine Rugby League paid for the special tramway train in order to get the Aramac players and supporters to the match.[32]

Occasionally advertisements placed by the tramway do not state the reason for a special train, just that there is a special being run by the Shire, which we suspect put the part of the risk of it paying its way back on the tramway. None-the-less, a perusal of the local paper often gleans the reason – usually associated with a sporting event. Football, being a team sport for young players, suffered greatly with the outbreak of the Second World War. Aramac football virtually folded and did not play another intertown game until 1 June 1946 when, again, a special train was hired for the trip to Barcaldine to play a C-grade team. Aramac's lack of match practice saw them tiring by half-time and losing, 29 to two.[33]

A return match was played on Sunday 23 June when some 145 people, comprising three teams and their supporters, travelled by special train from Barcaldine under the auspices of the Barcaldine Rugby League to play teams from Aramac and Muttaburra.[34] Possibly the biggest immediate post-war event was on Sunday, 28 August 1949 when three Rockhampton teams travelled to Barcaldine to play various combined Central-West teams. Special trains, carrying about 600 people were run from Winton, Longreach and Alpha by the QGR and on the Aramac Tramway. For the record Central West won the main match 19 to 9, to the surprise of many in Rockhampton.[35]

Readers will recall that back in 1921 council had set the Sunday guarantee at £19 5s (less than 12 hours), otherwise £24 6s 10d. A quarter-century later, the May 1947 council meeting, in response to a plea from the Aramac Football Club, reduced the guarantee from £15 to £12 provided the tram did not leave Aramac before 9.00am, and departed Barcaldine before 7.00pm.[36] With the rise of the motor car, the tramway was having to fight for any business available. Indeed, only two months later an excursion train was run for the Barcaldine Show with no guarantee.[37]

Trains for the Cricket

Whilst rugby league became the dominant winter sport in the inter-war years, in summer it was cricket and Aramac was generally better at cricket than at football. Though not able to draw the crowds that the football could, cricket none-the-less supported a number of special excursion trains in the early 1920s and several are worth mentioning. For reasons unknown to the author, some Aramacites were not satisfied with having just one cricket club. In 1919, with the war barely over, a second club was formed – the Marathon Cricket Club, named after the parish in which Aramac stood.[¶] Its first match was against the Shearers – an *ad hoc* team of itinerant shearers working the district's sheds – in October 1919.[38] Both the Aramac CC and the Marathon CC played on the same recreation reserve and in December 1921 the Shire agreed to the Marathon club's request

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The Western Champion, Barcaldine Sat 16 June 1923

Aramac Tramway.

ON SUNDAY, 17th June, a SPECIAL TRAIN will leave ARAMAC at 9.30 a.m. BARCALDINE, arrive, 12 noon.

BARCALDINE, depart, 7.30 p.m., thence to ARAMAC.

Cheap Excursion Tickets will be issued, available for return on this date only.

Adults, 5s.
Children (under 14 years), 2s 6d

G. H. BIRD,
Station Master.

Western Champion, Barcaldine Saturday 6 Sept 1924

Intertown Football.

Barcaldine versus Aramac

At Aramac, Sunday, September 7th, 1924

Representative and School Boys.

Excursion to Aramac.

A Special Excursion Train will run from Barcaldine to Aramac to-morrow (Sunday), departing from Barcaldine at 9.30 a.m. and depart from Aramac on the return journey at 7 p.m.

Fares: Adults, 5s.; Children, 2s, 6d.

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§ The Longreach paper gives slightly differing passenger numbers, viz., 600 and 100.

¶ There was also a Marathon Hotel in Aramac.

to transport free on the tramway, a 2-ton roller from, and back to, Barcaldine for rolling the reserve. Whilst the tramway freight was waived, the club still had to pay the QGR mileage on the railway truck plus loading and unloading costs.[39]

Following a couple of well-patronised cricket specials during the 1920 season, the 1921 season again started with an inter-town game between Barcaldine and Aramac on 13 November, at Aramac. The Barcaldine CC arranged an excursion train and against the guarantee of £30 took fares of £29 12s 6d – just 7s 6d short. The Barcaldine station master, when interviewed noted: ' . . . that children in this town remain under 14 years of age quite a long time – in fact many were always the same age'. The train headed northwards at 8.30am with the Barcaldine XI and some 117 supporters on board, reaching Aramac around 10.30am after a pretty good run across the

The Western Champion, Barcaldine Sat 2 April 1921

INTERTOWN CRICKET.
—
Barcaldine v. Aramac,
To-morrow (Sunday) at the Aramac Cricket Ground
—
A Special Excursion Train
Will depart from Barcaldine at 8 a.m., Sunday, 3rd April, returning the same Evening.
Fares: Adults, 5/- return Children 2/6 return,
A GOOD DAY'S OUTING ASSURED
L. BOWDEN,
Hon. Secretary.

plains of high, green Mitchell grass – the first couple of years of the Twenties being especially good for the pastoral industry. The visitors managed 60 in its first innings; Aramac replied with 97. Barcaldine were still batting in its second innings when stumps was called, Aramac winning by 37 on the first innings. The return train departed at 7.30pm amidst cheers from the Aramac team and supporters, and reached home about 10pm. For some reason, the return trip was often slower than the morning trips – was speed reduced after dark; or were the crew simply not in a hurry? [40]

A couple of months later, 22 January 1922, it was the turn of the Marathon team. Its Eleven and some supporters took a special train to Barcaldine in order to play Blackall at the show grounds. Blackall won the match which the paper called: " . . . not very exciting and at times was decidedly dreary." Unfortunately, the Marathon CC lost £8 1s on the train and asked council for a refund: " . . . the council could not see its way to make any reduction in the cost of running special trains which is fixed by by-law at a certain price, and also point out that had the fares been fixed on a higher scale the shortage, probably, would not have occurred."[41]

Barcaldine cricket was in a bit of a rut at this time as evidenced later in the year when on 26 November the Barcaldine XI and its supporters journeyed to Aramac via special train to play its opening intertown match of the new season for the Ryan Shield. Train fares fell £10 short of the guarantee. Maybe the early departure from Barcaldine, 7.20am on a Sunday, was the problem or was it the lack of a fast bowler made the Barcaldine

Western Champion, Barcaldine Sat 3 Dec 1921

Intertown Cricket.
—
BARCALDINE v. ARAMAC
Show Grounds, Barcaldine,
SUNDAY, Dec. 4th.
—
An Excursion Train will run from Aramac for the occasion
A splendid game anticipated.
Admission Gents 1s, Ladies 6d
L. BOWDEN,
Hon. Secretary.

folk apathetic? Anyway, Aramac won the game by an innings and 24 runs; the visitor's fielding was: " . . . with few exceptions, bad. With a deficiency of only 46 to avoid an innings defeat, Barcaldine went again to the crease, and gave such a splendid display of batting that they were all disposed of for 22 runs, which display included five 'ducks."[42]

In February 1923, Barcaldine got its revenge when the Aramac XI travelled south. During the intervening months Barcaldine had been practising and recruiting; whilst for Aramac several key players from the last game were unavailable. To summarise: the special train departed Aramac at 8am Sunday morning, play started at 11.00am at the show grounds, Barcaldine won by an innings and 87 runs, the tramway special left for home at 7.30pm and the guarantee was not reached! [43]

Miscellaneous and Unusual trains

Special trains for the QGR. Over the years various Queensland Government Railways' personnel would visit the tramway for a number of reasons, often associated with track or bridge inspections requested (or not) by the Shire. However, one special train in 1917 brought the 'man at the top' in a train faster than the usual. On 23 May, the Commissioner for Railways, Charles Evans and his staff, visited Aramac in their own special train – a locomotive and three carriages. It got to Aramac in the fastest time the author has yet noted. According to the *Western Champion's* reporter the train travelled at 30 mph and the party was in Aramac inside 1½ hours – an hour faster than normal trains. The Commissioner congratulated council on the 'excellence of the permanent way.' [44]

Sometimes if a senior person from the Central Division (Rockhampton) was in the area they might be requested to call on the council. One such was the 4 March 1937 visit of the General Manager of the Central Division, Percy Wills. Wills was met at Barcaldine by the Shire clerk (Cecil Keegan) and the Aramac station master (Tom Quilkey) and conveyed to Aramac by special train. The visit was said to be for a general discussion of tramway matters and all seemed amicable as Wills was entertained to lunch at the Marathon Hotel by councillors Duke and Mayne.[45] A month later it all became clear when the Central Division QGR advised a reduction from £400 to £200 per annum from 1 April on the working charges levied on the tramway for the use of Barcaldine station. A worthwhile special train and lunch indeed! [46] (Four years later Wills became Commissioner for Railways.)

Tramway Employees' picnic train. In November 1920, some five months after an initially parsimonious council had refused the school children a free train, and with tramway finances looking particularly rosy, council offered tramway employees free use of the train for a picnic excursion for their families and friends. This was to show the appreciation of the council for the services of the tramway employees for the past twelve months. Additionally, council allowed the employees £15 towards expenses. The picnic duly took place on Sunday 5 December 1920, at Bowyer (ex-Mildura) with about 130 picnickers. Following rain, the picnic ground was a 'bit sticky' but soon dried in the sun. An impromptu cricket match between the lads and lasses, saw the lasses score 101, to which the lads could only reply with 40. Mind you, the men were restricted; they had to bat and bowl left-handed! [47] The following year, with tramway finances still good, council again funded a tramway employees' picnic train and granted another £15 towards expenses. About 150 attended in near-ideal weather.[48] Similar picnic trains were also run for the next three years but after 1924 there is no mention. Tough times were setting in.

Circus trains. The arrival of the circus was a highlight in any town, possibly even more-so in the Central-West where one had to make the most of any entertainment. For Aramac this sometimes resulted in a special train into Barcaldine when a circus came along the Central Railway. The earliest in relation to this article was in July 1915 when Wirth's Circus arrived in Barcaldine on two trains from the east. The circus was held in the railway reserve, next to the Barcaldine

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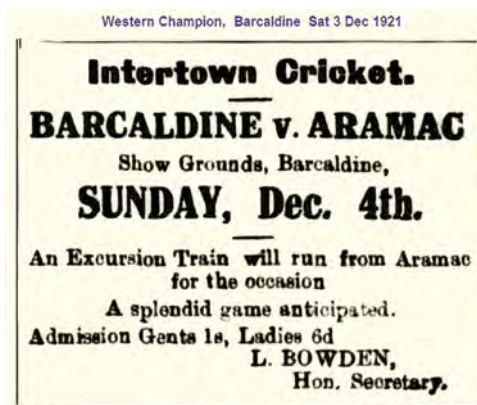
Barcaldine station. Aramac Tramway's No.A1, a 4-6-0 built for them by the QGR's Ipswich shops (b/n 103/1924), ready to depart for another run across the 'black soil plains' to Aramac in the 1950s. The carriage and combination van are the tramway's entire passenger accommodation and in the early years would be supplemented only when absolutely necessary by carriages hired from the QGR. Initially, the charge for using Barcaldine station was such that the Tramway considered building their own station. Photo: courtesy ARHS Queensland 1959 filmstrip, PICT0023

station, and many locals turned out to watch the elephants help unload the trains and set up. A one-night show was staged on Friday, 16 July and a special train, guaranteed by Wirth's, departed Aramac tramway station at 4.30pm. The return trip departed from Barcaldine at 10.45pm. A percentage of the takings was donated to the local Belgian fund as part of the war effort.[49]

Late the following year another circus arrived on the QGR. Eroni Bros originally advertised that they would perform in Aramac on Tuesday, 24 October 1916, followed by Barcaldine on Thursday 26, but for reasons not stated the Aramac performance failed to eventuate. Many people from around Aramac had come into town for the show and as a result of the late cancellation were rather peeved! As a consolation, on Friday the 27th, Eroni Bros paid the Aramac Tramway for a special train which brought over 60 people into Barcaldine for a second performance in that town. According to the *Champion's* reporter, Eronis' lost just sixpence on the guarantee. [50]

One circus train that actually travelled on the tramway was Perry Bros. In September 1923, having done a week in Townsville, Perry Bros headed inland along the Northern Railway, performing at all major towns. As the connection from the Northern to the Central lines was still some years in the future, the circus had to overland it from Winton to Longreach. The elephant, naturally named "Jumbo", helped occasionally with vehicle pushing. From Longreach it was by rail to Ilfracombe, then Barcaldine on Saturday 22 September 1923, Aramac on Monday the 24th, Jericho the 25th and Blackall the 26th. Perry Bros advertisement says "Coming by Special Trains", implying more than one train, though the local paper only mentions one. It left Barcaldine on the Monday morning for Aramac, complete with the: " . . . educated horses, chimps, baboons, lions, tigers, leopards etc". The menagerie displayed from 3pm to 5pm that afternoon and the circus performed at 8pm to a very large crowd. It departed Aramac the next morning for Jericho.[51]

Vice-regal train. In mid-1923, the Queensland Governor, Sir Matthew Nathan, did a tour of Central-Western Queensland, arriving in Aramac from Muttaburra late on 18 June – the first ever visit of a governor to the town. After dinner and a night at the Marathon Hotel, the governor spent the next morning visiting the hospital, the school of arts and the new war memorial. Following a late morning tea with prominent locals, Sir Matthew received a 'handsome illuminated address', had his picture taken and headed to the tramway station. His special train departed on the dot of 1.00pm for Barcaldine, where it was due to arrive at 4.00pm, after a very sedate journey across the plains. However, the crew seemed to have other ideas and the vice-regal special arrived at Barcaldine over half-an-hour early to a near-empty station. Undeterred, His Excellency struck up conversation with a local person who duly escorted him to the town hall where the shire council Chairman was getting ready to summon his motor car and head to the station. The Barcaldine paper's version is that the governor's train departed Aramac early, which seems rather unlikely. One suspects the train crew put on a bit of speed – trying to impress the governor, maybe? After the usual round of visits, including a nearby wool scour, Sir Matthew departed for Longreach on the 7.10 pm goods train. [52]

Swaying through a sea of Mitchell grass. In August 1963 the QGR wrote RM28 off the books and sold it to the Shire of Aramac for £100. Christened "Aunt Emma" by the locals, it trundled up and down their tramway for the next twelve years. It is seen here, towing two trailers, on an ARHS Qld excursion on Easter Eve, Saturday 29 March 1975, near Bowyer, heading northwards towards Aramac. Photo: courtesy Brian Webber

Rodeo and Golf Tournament trains. A couple of sports one might consider late-comers did generate a couple of special excursion trains in the late 30s, early 40s. New Year's Day 1939 saw the Barcaldine branch of the Queensland Country Women's' Association hold a rodeo at the Barcaldine show grounds and a dance later that evening, to raise funds. A special train was run from Aramac carrying 36 passengers, which seems a low figure.[53] Another rather unusual excursion train was as late as 14 September 1941, two years into the war though hostilities had yet to pervade the Pacific region. Special trains were run from Longreach on the QGR and on the Aramac Tramway, into Barcaldine for the Central Western Golfing championships. By all accounts, football had suffered a decline and in Aramac had virtually folded due to the war and the dearth of young men. Into the void stepped golf, which had prospered as it could be played by the not-so-young. The Aramac train brought 68 adults and 43 children arranged (again) by Catherine Fawkes.[54]

Catherine Fawkes' train. As already noted, Mrs Fawkes had a long history of paying the fares of the Aramac children for group events requiring the tramway. She (and her husband Jim) had the licence for the Royal Hotel, Aramac in two separate stints, 1913 to 1920 and 1930 to 1945. However, in late May 1930 Catherine found herself being rescued by the train. Travelling into Barcaldine by car on a Friday, it was found impossible to get further south than the 20-mile due to the atrocious state of the road following rain.** It is presumed that she contacted Aramac by phone (possibly from Bowyer station) and Jim immediately arranged a special train to go and fetch the travellers and bring them back to Aramac.[55] As the first Fairmont motor trolley did not arrive until 1936 one can only assume Jim contacted the

** The final sealing of the Barcaldine-Aramac Road was not completed until 1976, after the tramway closed.

station master who roused the loco crew and despatched a steam locomotive and carriage. Mrs Fawkes died in 1942 aged sixty, a great loss to the children of Aramac.

Fairmont motor trolley for hire. The tramway's first Fairmont trolley, a 6hp model purchased in early 1936 in order to speed up the movement of the track gang to enable them to work further from home, was also made available for special runs on days when steam-hauled trains were not operating. It had hardly arrived than it had its first job, on 19 March 1936, hauling a small trailer carrying ten shearers from Barcaldine to Aramac for the *Stagmount* shearing season. In June, a couple of months after its arrival, council finally fixed the hire charges: minimum fare 6s 6d single or return; week days, motor trolley only – £2 2s or £3 with trailer; Sundays and holidays, motor trolley only – £3 3s or £4 with trailer. It was thought that smaller sporting bodies and groups would find it useful as it would accommodate 24 with the trailer or 7 on the motor only.[56] In March 1940 it proved its worth by transporting the doctor, who had been urgently called to Aramac, back to Barcaldine when rains again turned the road into a veritable gluepot.[57]

Ten years later, in April 1950 the Fairmont trolley was hired to transport the Queensland Lands Minister (Thomas Foley, MLA Belyando), Ned Davis (MLA Barcoo) and a campaign official, from Barcaldine to Aramac for an ALP campaign meeting. The group departed Barcaldine at 6pm on Saturday, 8 April, but soon ran into floodwaters from the recent heavy rain. With water up to 18-inches deep over parts of the tramway, the trolley soon had a wet magneto and the four men had no option but to roll up their trousers and push the trolley clear. A rather wet and muddy minister finally reached Aramac late in the evening, got cleaned up and proceeded to address the 100-strong meeting.[58]

Funeral train. Possibly the most unusual special train was that of 25 and 26 August 1924. About midnight on Sunday, 24 August, John Dixon McAuliffe, a giant of a man and owner of the large pastoral station *Stagmount*, 12 miles from Aramac, died. The Barcaldine undertakers Meacham & Leyland, accompanied by their largest casket and McAuliffe's priest, took the 5pm Monday Up train to Aramac where a waiting lorry conveyed the group and casket to the *Stagmount* homestead. By 10pm they were back at Aramac railway station where a special train awaited to carry the solemn cortège to Barcaldine – McAuliffe's final journey over the 'black soil' plains that created his wealth. McAuliffe's widow, five children and a sizable number of relatives and close friends, including some Aramac Shire councillors accompanied the retinue.

The train arrived in Barcaldine at one a.m. and the corpse was taken to the Church of the Sacred Heart where the funeral service was held later that morning, Tuesday the 26th. McAuliffe had been born in Ireland in 1859, came to Australia when he was 21 and started out as a jackaroo, eventually owning 81,400 acres in the Aramac region.[59] Interestingly, six years earlier McAuliffe had accompanied the body of the Aramac post and telegraph master (Richard Mills) following his sudden death one night. No special train for Mills though – he went to Barcaldine on the next morning's Down train, and was also buried at the Church of the Sacred Heart.[60]

Pat and Majella's trolley ride. Thirty years later, and ending on a more joyous note, was Kathleen Patricia (Pat) Lynch's special trolley ride, though it was no excursion! One Sunday in mid-January 1954, heavy summer rains and impassable roads saw expectant mother 24-year-old Pat Lynch, and her husband James, isolated on their pastoral property *Hathaway*, east of Bowyer with baby nearly due.

Phone arrangements with Barcaldine Hospital saw Dr Lulham and ambulance-man Len Gale take a trolley the twenty-one miles out to Bowyer whilst Mr and Mrs Lynch set out in a truck, followed by a station hand on a tractor, on the six-mile trip to the tramway siding, including a crossing of a flooded Politic Creek. After an arduous journey the two groups met and the trolley duly ferried Mrs Lynch to Barcaldine. Two hours later she gave birth to a healthy baby girl – Majella Mary. It is thought that the trolley would be one belonging to the QGR fettlers at Barcaldine as the tramway's Fairmont trolley was stabled at Aramac on weekends.[61]

Summary

Post-1925, any sporting special trains were invariably for the rugby league, the only sport that could muster the necessary numbers to make an excursion train viable. None-the-less, other smaller groups would sometimes take advantage of a Sunday football train – say, a tennis, rifle or basketball club or just people going to visit friends, at a discount fare. Such a typical train would be that in 1928 – to bring the Aramac footballers and a large contingent of supporters into Barcaldine for a match against the Barcaldine 2nd Thirteen, the guarantee being more than covered[62] – but such specials were becoming fewer on the tramway.

After the mid-1920s advertisements for the running of special excursion trains virtually cease. One suspects that local people had incorporated the tramway and its operations into their daily lives and knew via the bush telegraph when a special was running. This was helped in September 1923, in response to the Progress Association's nudging, the Shire started posting what were in effect, Special Train Notices, on a public notice board at the corner of Porter and Gordon Streets in Aramac and also distributed copies to stores and hotels.[63]

Aramac Creek bridge. Having reached Aramac, Aunt Emma *has been turned and is now heading south, as the rain starts. RM28 was built at Ipswich Workshops and entered service with the QGR in 1928. Its original 45hp AEC petrol engine was replaced with a 50hp Gardner diesel in 1942. Restored by the QR Heritage Unit at Ipswich Workshops in 2003, RM28 is now preserved at the Aramac Tramway Museum. Photo: Ken Biggs, courtesy ARHS Qld*

Additionally, *The Western Champion* and later, *The Longreach Leader*, in their detailed reports on the various forthcoming sporting events and occasions, always mentioned if a special train was being sought; thus reducing the need for an advertisement.

Starting from the mid-1920s several strikes by QGR railwaymen and their flow-on effect to the tramway, increasing use of private motor cars or the local carrier's lorry (though one had to be mindful of the Traffic Act and the Heavy Vehicles Act), coupled with road improvements all severely impacted on the tramway's passenger traffic. Additionally, golf and tennis were gaining increasing favour and players invariably used their own or a friend's car when they went visiting other clubs.

None-the-less, special excursion trains continued until the end of the tramway in 1975 but became increasingly scarce, with possibly the last being for railway enthusiasts – an ARHS visit at Easter 1975. The relaxation of an excursion train swaying across the black soil plains of Mitchell grass was slowly going the way of the coach and horses that it had replaced back in 1912. It seems fitting to end these notes by quoting the final words of a typical 1920s football report: "The special train departed for home [from Barcaldine] about 7.30 p.m., the band being present to play the train out. The train steamed away amidst the cheers of the large crowd assembled on the platform."[64]

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Barcaldine railway station, c.1888. Looking east, a couple of years after the railway's arrival. The passenger facilities are on the left (north) side of the line, with the goods shed fronting the main street – Oak Street – on the right. For years, locals campaigned to have the passenger platform moved to the south side, citing safety concerns, particularly after the Aramac Tramway opened. Even shire requests for a footbridge were rejected by the QGR. The problem was solved in 1933 when the passenger station was burnt down and the QGR rebuilt the platform and buildings on the south side. The goods shed stayed on the south side and was moved to the east. Photo: Gedge Bros, State Library of Qld Neg.46700

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Simplex 21575 at Tinbeerwah around 2002. Photo: Russell Savage

The Restoration of Simplex Diesel Locomotive 21575

by Peter Lucas

History

In 2021, the Milang Light Railway Museum, on the shores of Lake Alexandrina in South Australia, was fortunate in obtaining a 2ft-gauge Simplex locomotive to augment its fleet. It is pleasing to now report that the loco has been restored to working order for operating at the Museum, and this article describes how it all came about.

Simplex locomotives were manufactured by the Motor Rail Company of Bedford, UK. They were originally developed to take ammunition from railway depots to the forward trenches during World War One along narrow-gauge tramways. Following the conflict they became a popular industrial locomotive. Numerous improvements were made to the same basic design and the Milang Museum locomotive, a 4wDM works number 21575, was manufactured in 1957.

The locomotive was originally delivered to the Pleystowe Sugar Mill, near Mackay in Queensland where it was used to transport track panels to the locations where cane was being hand cut. Later, after cane cutting was mechanised, the Simplex was used for "navvy" duties, such as track maintenance, until 2000.

During that time, the locomotive was externally repainted yellow and, between 1987 and 1989, a front seat and safety rail were added to carry a second person.

In 2000 it was sold at auction and was purchased by Russell Savage of Tinbeerwah, Queensland for his private railway. Simplex locomotives, at that time, came in two body configurations; with and without a cab. The cab version was very hard for the driver to get in and out of using a technique which involves putting your head through the front window! Russell decided that this was too hard for "senior" enthusiasts and so removed the cab.

The locomotive had last run in 2002 and Russell then took it out of service for restoration. However, that restoration never happened.

In 2021, the Milang Railway Museum was operating a short, two-foot gauge, tourist railway. Motive power was provided by a 4hp BEV battery locomotive. However, a more powerful locomotive was needed to operate a proposed extension of the railway which included gradients. This requirement led museum secretary, Peter Lucas, to seek a suitable addition, resulting in the purchase of Simplex 21575 from Russell for $5000 with the intention of restoring it and placing it with the museum on permanent loan. The locomotive was transported to South Australia in December 2021 on a tilt tray truck and restoration began.

The Restorers

The locomotive was moved to Neville Thomas's back yard, in Murray Bridge. Neville is a qualified diesel mechanic who is now retired after a lifetime of experience and he undertook the vast majority of the
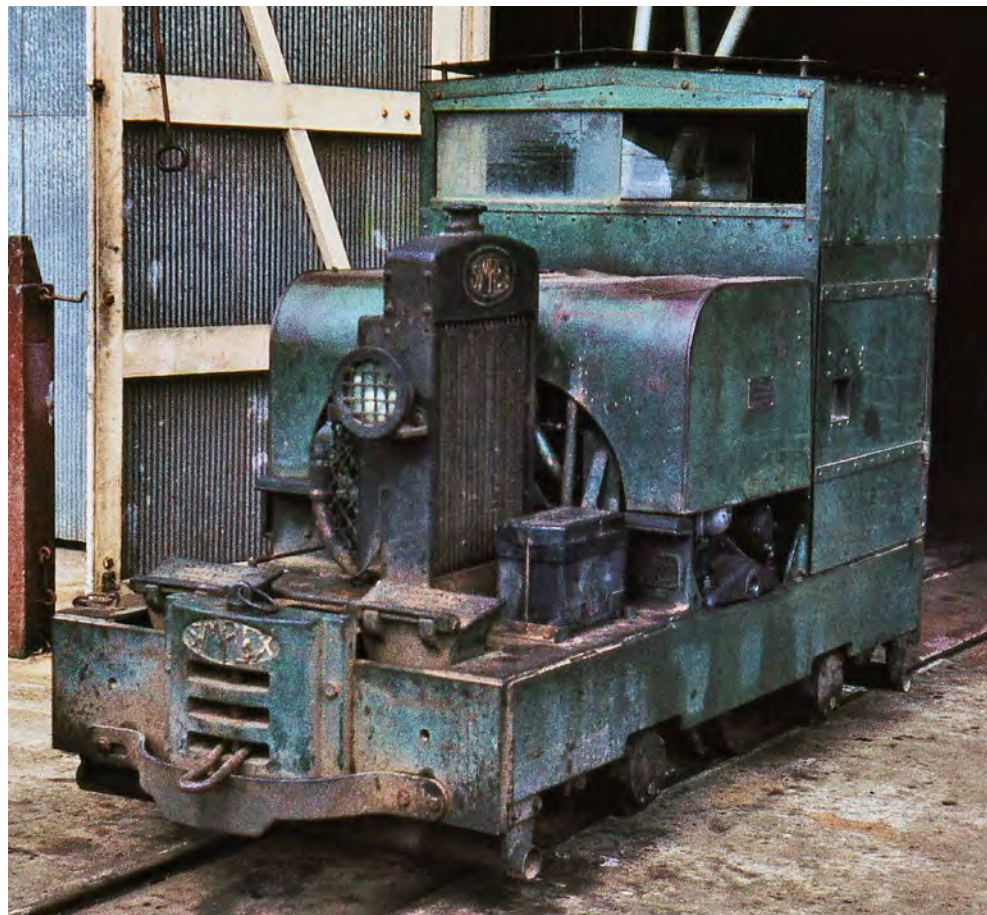
Above: In the workshops at Milang showing various parts that have been stripped away to allow work to proceed in late 2021. Photo: Peter Lucas Left: Simplex locomotive with cab in use at the Pleystowe Mill on 3 November 1966. Photo: Weston Langford, courtesy www. westonlangford.com/images/photo/108229

restoration. When extra hands were needed, he was assisted by his wife, Doris, and by Roger Miller. Peter Lucas developed the vigilance control and paid the bills.

All of the restoration was done in Neville's back yard and he put at least five hundred and sixty hours of work into the project over a period of fifteen months. The total cost of parts purchased was $7000.

Our Starting Point

Russell advised that the gearbox was in good condition but everything else needed considerable work. The engine was in good running condition but its accessories needed work. In addition, safety equipment needed to be added so that the locomotive could

be approved by the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR) for use on the Milang tourist railway.

The Restoration

Neville started by checking his first love, the 28 hp Dorman diesel engine. The water pump shaft was seized and the starter motor was not functional. He fixed these and then gave the engine a full service with all new filters and an oil change. The engine was then run and Neville's expert experience determined that it was in good condition. However, the engine accessories needed much work.

The locomotive was stripped down to the frames. Every item removed was photographed and catalogued and placed on shelves.

The clutch had major issues so the original manufacturer's drawings were obtained from Alan Keef Ltd, in the UK. When the manufacturer of Simplex locomotives closed, all rights and the spare parts inventory were purchased by Alan Keef Ltd. Using its drawings, Neville was able to identify and replace the faulty parts using new parts purchased from the Alan Keef company.

The previous owner, Russell Savage, had advised that the gearbox had no problems so, apart from an oil change, no further work was done on it. The radiator had multiple leaks and needed to be completely rebuilt using grommets purchased from Alan Keef. The alternator was seized and had to be replaced with a new unit purchased locally. The existing exhaust was loud and would have blown fumes directly at our passengers. Therefore, Neville fabricated

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a new exhaust system and silencer which directed the fumes at low level away from the passengers. Neville built a new control panel from scratch to contain the original oil pressure gauge plus electrical gauges, an ignition switch and an engine stop button.

Most of the engine cover panels had been modified by the Pleystowe Mill and were now not suitable for use. The only exception was the alternator cover which was cleaned up and resprayed. The major panels were fabricated, using Simplex original drawings, in sheet steel and were TIG (Tungsten Inert Gas) welded together using locally purchased hinges.

Below the floor, new brake shoes were cast at a local foundry in place of the old ones which were very worn. The chain drive also needed work with the adjustment links seized up and needing to be replaced. A chain oiler was also installed to prolong the life of the chain.

Re-building the Locomotive

The first step was to clean and sandblast the frames in readiness for re-spraying. Some areas, many of them inaccessible, were still in the original green colour in which the locomotive was delivered in 1957. It was later that the Pleystowe Mill repainted much of the locomotive yellow. By this stage of the restoration, it was mid-winter and spraying out of doors in Neville's back yard was not an option. Therefore, the museum volunteers built a temporary spray booth on Neville's back lawn and re-spraying proceeded.

The long process of re-building then began with each assembly being re-furbished and tested.

In operation, the locomotive will be pulling the Museum's passenger coaches which have been converted from wagons built in 1940 for the Smithfield Munitions Depot. Their couplings were not compatible with the Simplex so Neville had to build coupling adaptors from scratch for each end.

Above: At the Pleystowe Mill in 1977. Photo: John Browning *Below:* Stripped-back frame ready for sand blasting in readiness for a new coat of paint in the workshop at Neville Thomas' backyard at Murray Bridge. Photo: Peter Lucas

Vigilance Control

The museum is accredited with the Office of the National Rail Regulator (ONRSR) and therefore has a Safety Management System which requires that the locomotive must stop automatically in the event that the driver falls off or becomes incapacitated. The locomotive has a mechanical screw brake which could not be applied automatically. Therefore, we developed a system which required the driver to hold down a foot pedal. If that pedal was released then nothing happens for five seconds, then the horn sounds for five seconds and finally the engine is shut down. With the locomotive being in gear and with the clutch engaged tests have shown that it will come to a halt in thirty metres from pedal release. This vigilance control operates only when the locomotive is in motion so that the engine will not shut down when driver leaves the locomotive to switch points, etc.

Two photos showing the Simplex during its test run at Milang on 21 March 2023. Photos: Peter Lucas

Commissioning and Testing

The Simplex was transported to the Milang Railway Museum on 21 March 2023 and was test run to verify the correct operation of the engine, the transmission, the brakes and all accessories.

- Commissioning of the locomotive then began and involved:
- Finalisation and testing of the Vigilance Control system.
- Documentation of the six-monthly inspection.
- Documentation of the recurring monthly maintenance.
- Preparation of the driver's start-of-day and end-of-day checklists.
- Driver training and testing.

That commissioning is in progress at the time of writing and the Simplex will then pull its first passenger train. Readers may find a short video of the locomotive on Youtube at https://youtu.be/tCkIJJFv0S8 showing its arrival at Milang on 21 March and first run.

The two trains cross at Dulverton station loop on 12 March.
Photo: James Shugg

Steamfest 2023

by James Shugg

Steamfest was held in Sheffield, Tasmania on the March long weekend. This annual celebration of steam power, vintage machinery, tractors, beasts of burden and the old way of doing things was first held in 1993, and since the beginning an operating 2 ft gauge steam railway has been part of the action.

This year, Redwater Creek's resident Krauss locomotive and train was joined by Wee Georgie Wood and one carriage from Tullah. *Wee Georgie Wood* is a 99 year old locomotive built by John Fowler of Leeds, and this was the first occasion that he has operated away from his west coast home.

The original plan to take two carriages from Tullah to Sheffield proved impractical for logistical reasons, so to balance the passenger capacity of the two trains, the Redwater Creek Railway kindly lent *Georgie* its bogie open carriage.

The weekend prior to Steamfest was a regular running weekend, and both trains were operating. This enabled the safety system and clearances to be tested. Consequently, the carriage from Tullah needed to have its steps sawn off to allow safe passage past the platforms; and the initial plan to have the locomotives face each other proved impractical as *Georgie* could only fit on the turntable used to run around trains at the Sheffield end of the line boiler first. This meant that both locomotives ran facing towards Sheffield.

The safety system comprised of two staffs, one for the Sheffield to Dulverton passing loop station, and the other for Dulverton to East Victoria St station. Drivers could only proceed when in possession of the relevant staff. All road crossings within the Steamfest grounds were protected by crossing guards and there was two way radio communication between train guards, locomotive crews, crossings and stations.

Trains ran non stop from 10.00 am to late afternoon over the three days of the event. Steam up began around 6.30 am using donated pallet wood; both locomotives ran on local bush wood during the day. Saturday and Sunday were the busier days, with the two trains together hauling 34 return trips on each of those days, plus a special double headed service for the volunteers at the end of the day. Nearly 3000 passengers were carried over the whole weekend. The East Victoria St public road crossing saw 70 rail movements per day, by far the busiest railway crossing in Tasmania that weekend!

That all this took place safely, without unexpected incident or delay to service, is a credit to the Steamfest committee and its careful planning, the locomotive, guard and station crews and the large team of volunteers who worked hard to make the event a success. Appreciation must also be extended to the thousands of passengers, some of whom queued patiently at peak times for up to an hour in late summer sun to catch their preferred train.

The third 2 ft gauge heritage railway in Tasmania was represented at Steamfest by the Ida Bay Railway Preservation Society, with that railway's No. 7 railmotor transported to Sheffield by members who manned a display outside the railway workshops. Also present was the former Ida Bay Hunslet, whose restoration by volunteers at Sheffield has progressed to the point that the refurbished boiler has been reattached to the frame and wheels. There are cautious hopes that this locomotive will be ready to operate at next year's Steamfest!

Following the success of the rail component of Steamfest, there have been discussions around greater cooperation between the Tasmanian 2 ft gauge heritage railways. This would be demonstrated in various ways, including better coordinated running day and working bee schedules from later this year; sharing of volunteers and expertise across the three railways; pooling together for boiler inspections and to mechanise aspects of trackwork; and further rolling stock visits between the three groups.

Above: Volunteers' double header special train with all available carriages on 12 March. Photo: James Shugg **Below:** Fowler b/n 4080 of 1880 (left) and compound Fowler b/n 17211 of 1929 meet their middle sibling Fowler loco b/n 16203 of 1924 along with the green Krauss b/n 5682 of 1906 on March 12. Photo: James Shugg

Above: On its travels to Steamfest, Wee Georgie Wood *travelling down Sheffield's Main Street on the back of a truck on 28 February.* Photo: Chris Martin **Below:** Wee Georgie Wood *and its Mt Lyell carriage passing through Dulverton loop on 3 March. Photo: James Shugg*

The Redwater Creek Krauss and the Fowler (Wee Georgie Wood) *outside the Sheffield workshops on 5 March. The Fowler had to be turned to face the other way as during running tests the rear locomotive skid fouled on the turntable, which would have carried an unacceptable risk during the busy Steamfest operations. Photo: James Shugg*
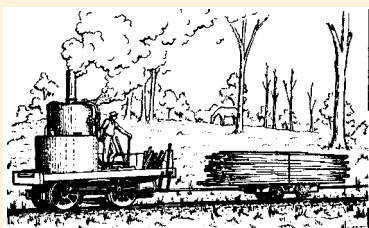
LRRSA NEWS

MEETINGS

LRRSA members' Online meetings
The LRRSA holds regular members meetings Online via Zoom conferencing on the dates below. Members wishing to "virtually" attend will need to pre-register by responding to an email inviting you to attend or via our website lrrsa.org.au. After registration, details of how to join the meeting will be provided to those that have registered.

June 2023 members' Zoom meeting – A 1968 jet search for Steam
Date: Thursday 8 June 2023 at 8.00pm AEDT
The introduction of "Pacesetter" fares for under-26-year-olds in 1968 made international air travel much more affordable. Frank Stamford will give a presentation that will include some highlights of a fifteen-week trip which took advantage of those fares. It will include Indonesia, western Europe, and South Africa. The emphasis will be on Java, which was a mind-boggling journey into the unknown; and some characterful narrow-gauge railways. Guaranteed to be a fascinating presentation!

August 2023 members' Zoom meeting – Articulated locomotives used in Indonesia
Date: Thursday 10 August 2023 at 8.00pm AEDT
Ross Sadler will give a presentation on the use of articulated locomotives in the Indonesian sugar industry. The first locomotives to be used in Indonesia were small four-coupled engines, with only limited pulling power. Naturally, there was an incentive to employ larger engines, but at the same time there was little chance of upgrading the track to mainline standards.

Thus, various forms of articulated locomotive came to be used as the standard workhorse of the Indonesian sugar lines. Those used included an 0-8-0 tank engine with Klein-Lindner axles, an 0-4-4-0 Mallet tank engine, Luttermöller locomotives from O&K, plus articulateds from Berliner Maschinenbau (formerly Schwarzkopf of Berlin) and another German firm, Arn Jung.

The presentation will feature animations, still photographs and video clips of the various types of articulated locomotives in action on Indonesia's sugar lines from the 1970s to the first decade of the new millennium. Reserve the date - not to be missed!

Brisbane: "No meeting"
At this stage it has been decided to cancel the Brisbane meetings until further notice. But why not join us Online for a meeting via Zoom?

Sydney: Annual General Meeting
Following the AGM Ross Mainwaring will give a presentation of narrow-gauge industrial railways of Western Australia. There are many diverse (disused) tramways and locomotives still to be seen around the goldfields and coastal ports.
Location: Club Burwood RSL, 96 Shaftesbury Road, Burwood, in the 'Private Room', Brasserie Restaurant. Free parking in RSL car park. Only 10 minutes easy walk from Burwood railway station. Please contact Ross (0415995304) or David (0400347127) if you need to be signed in upon arrival. It is highly recommended to arrive early and enjoy a meal with other LRRSA members. Note the date!
Date: Wednesday 28 June 2023 at 7:30pm

Melbourne: "No meeting"
Online meetings via Zoom will be hosted from Melbourne and will feature presenters from far and wide – see details at top of this list.

Adelaide: "Bi-monthly meeting"
The SA group meets every second month on the first Thursday of the even month to talk over matters of light railway interest. The June meeting will include a discussion on the various items in the History Trust of SA photo collection which are of light railway interest. A fascinating dissertation guaranteed! As accommodation is limited, interested persons should contact Les Howard at sa@group@lrrsa.org.au for details if you have not been to a meeting before.
Location: 1 Kindergarten Drive, Hawthorndene
Date: Thursday 1 June 2023 at 7.30 pm

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Forty years ago this month the State Rail Authority of NSW took over the operation of trains on the South Maitland Railways using diesel locomotives. This ended 88 years of steam haulage on the South Maitland network. The last day of SMR-operated trains was 10 June 1983 using locomotives 22 and 31 (Beyer Peacock B/N 6055/1921 and 5295/1926).

Colin Harvey was there for the event and took these photos.

Above: Locomotive 31 hauling the last steam-hauled loaded coal train heading to the main line along the Neath washery branch line past the Neath Hotel.
Right: The very last SMR train consisted of only engine No. 22 and a brake van. Seen here at Kiah Road bridge, Gillieston Heights, approaching the depot at East Greta Junction.

Above: The last load passing through Gillieston Heights with only three kilometres to travel to the exchange sidings at East Greta Junction. *Below:* Having acquired some adornments appropriate for the occasion, No.31 climbs away from the Swamp Creek bridge at Abermain with the last load of coal.

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Above: No.22 makes a spectacular ascent of Denman Hill, Abermain, with the last train of empty wagons bound for Neath. *Below:* Before No.22 was locked away in the shed, the opportunity was taken for a group photograph of the employees.

INDUSTRIAL RAILWAY NEWS

QUEENSLAND

RIO TINTO ALCAN, Weipa
(see LR 289 p.30)
1435 mm gauge
Downer EDI Co-Co DE R1005 (08-1763 of 2009) was seen hauling bauxite trains on 5 and 7 March. Goodwin Co-Co DE GL112 *Jeune* (G-6045-12 of 1971 rebuilt UGL, Broadmeadow in 2004) is on hire from RailFirst Asset Management. Former loco Clyde Co-Co DE R1001 (71-752 of 1972), now Southern Shorthaul Railroad's L277, was seen on duty at Werris Creek NSW on 10 April following repairs to the nose of the rear hood.
Daryle Doherty 3/23; Andrew Chappy 3/23; Phil Harrison 4/23

MSF SUGAR LTD, South Johnstone Mill
(see LR 290 p.32)
610 mm gauge
EM Baldwin B-B DH 25 (6470.1 1.76 of 1976) is being rebuilt at the mill this slack season and will end up with the

Mulgrave Mill style hood and cab which the other EM Baldwin bogie locos here have been rebuilt with. By 13 April the frame and bogies had been stripped to bare metal and were ready for painting. It will be fitted with a Mercedes 502 V8 motor and a 6 speed Allison transmission. Com-Eng 0-6-0DM 27 (AI57111 of 1975) was seen with the ballast train at Sawmill Loop between Silkwood and Kurrimine Beach on 25 February and at Dinner Creek Road on 6 April. It was in the company of Tamper STM-XLC tamping machine (94962 of 1995) on the former date. The concrete sleepers in the Eubenangee link up line between what were the Babinda Mill and Goondi Mill rail systems are being replaced with new ones this slack season. This line was laid in 1987 and the ex Mourilyan Mill ballast plough is being used to clear ballast covering the sleepers. Some rail welding is also being carried out with Clyde 0-6-0DH 11 (55-64 of 1955) and the welding wagon in attendance.
Jamie Hitchings 3/23; Luke Horniblow 2/23, 3/23, 4/23

Top: South Johnstone Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH 11 (55-64 of 1955) and the rail welding wagon near Dinner Creek Road on 25 February. Photo: Luke Horniblow **Above:** Rio Tinto Alcan Downer EDI Co-Co DE R1005 (08-1763 of 2009) between the port at Lorim Point and the bauxite loading facility at Andoom on 5 March. Photo: Daryle Doherty

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Top: *A line up of 0-6-0DH locos at South Johnstone Mill on 25 February. Right to left are Com-Eng 39 (AH4688 of 1965), Clyde 17 (55-57 of 1955), Com-Eng 1 (A1821 of 1957), Com-Eng 10 (A2027 of 1958), Clyde 14 (63-288 of 1963), Com-Eng 7 (AD1239 of 1960), Clyde 3 (56-90 of 1956) and Clyde 2 (55-56 of 1955). Photo: Luke Horniblow* **Middle:** *The rolling frame of South Johnstone Mill EM Baldwin B-B DH 25 (6470.1 1.76 of 1976) is moved around at the mill by Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 10 (A2027 of 1958) on 13 April. Photo: Luke Horniblow* **Below:** *Tully Mill's EM Baldwin 0-4-0DH 2* Priscilla *(6/1082.2 2.65 of 1965) beside Davidson Road on 8 April. Photo: Luke Horniblow*

TULLY SUGAR LTD
(see LR 290 p.32)
610 mm gauge
Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 18 (AO60113 of 1977) with the ballast train was stabled near the El Arish Depot on 6 April. 18 has a pneumatically operated ballast plough fitted at the rear of the loco. EM Baldwin 0-4-0DH 2 *Priscilla* (6/1082.2 2.65 of 1965) was stabled beside Davidson Road on 8 April. On the same day, EM Baldwin 0-4-0DH 3 *Coolies* (6/1082.1 2.65 of 1965) was seen at an establishment at Silky Oak where it is to be cleaned up and painted prior to placement in the Tully Lions Park. Tully Mill has two bridges over the Tully River south of the mill and they are approximately five kilometres apart. The upstream bridge has been deemed unfit for service and all traffic from south of the river will need to be routed over the downstream bridge this coming crushing season. The extra traffic on this route and two crossings of the QR line is expected to cause cane delivery delays to the mill.
Luke Horniblow 4/23

WILMAR SUGAR (HERBERT) PTY LTD, Herbert River Mills
(see LR 290 p.32)
610 mm gauge
Macknade Mill's EM Baldwin B-B DH 20 (7070.4 4.77 of 1977) and EM Baldwin 6 wheeled brake wagon MKD 1 (7065.3 6.77 of 1977) were on loan to Victoria Mill from 19 December and had returned by 24 December. The cabs for the two EM Baldwin type bogie locos being assembled at Macknade Mill arrived at Victoria Mill on 23 February

Top: Tully Mill's Com-Eng 0-6-0DH 18 (AO60113 of 1977) stabled with the ballast train near the El Arish Depot on 6 April. Photo: Luke Horniblow **Middle:** South Johntone Mill's Com-Eng 0-6-0DM 27 (AI57111 of 1975) and the ballast train stabled beside Dinner Creek Road on 6 April. Photo: Luke Horniblow **Above:** South Johntone Mill's Tamper STM-XLC tamping machine (94962 of 1995) stabled east of Silkwood on 25 February. Photo: Luke Horniblow

and will be fitted out there prior to being attached to the locos at Macknade. On 9 March, Macknade Mill's Com-Eng 4 wheeled brake wagon VRA 1 (PA101 of 1967) was sent to Victoria Mill on road transport where it is to be refurbished and converted back to original 6 wheeled configuration. Parts are on hand at Macknade Mill for the assembly of 150 x 11 tonne bogie bins for Victoria Mill which is expected to commence mid year.
Editor 12/22, 2/23, 3/23

WILMAR SUGAR PTY LTD, Inkerman Mill, Home Hill
(see LR 290 p.33)
610 mm gauge
A new cane bin tippler for this mill left NQEA, Cairns on 14 March.
Abby Mohammed 3/23

WILMAR SUGAR (PROSERPINE) PTY LTD, Proserpine Mill
(see LR 290 p.33)
610 mm gauge
Bradken is manufacturing 30 x 10 tonne bins for the start of the crushing season with assembly by a firm in Proserpine. Twenty more are to come later on.
Tom Badger 3/23; Wilmar Sugar Australia 3/23

MACKAY SUGAR LTD, Mackay mills
(see LR 290 p.33)
610 mm gauge
Com-Eng 0-6-0DH *Eton* (FB3170 of 1963) was seen stabled with a loaded train of rail bogies near the Pleystowe Mill site on 4 March. This loco now has stickers replacing the name plates and has lost its numbers (25) from both cab sides at some stage too. By early April, Clyde 0-6-0DH *Seaforth* (61-233 of 1961) had been repainted in the new livery of green, blue and white and will be based at Racecourse Mill this coming crushing season. Mackay Sugar has posted on Facebook, photos of problems with road vehicles in the rail corridor this slack season including a collision between a car and a ballast regulator.
Tom Badger 3/23; Steven Jesser 4/23; Mackay Sugar 3/23, 4/23

BUNDABERG SUGAR LTD, Millaquin Mill
(see LR 290 p.33)
610 mm gauge
Plasser KMX-12T tamping machine (390 of 1994) was at the loco shed on 25 March.
Klondyke Loco 3/23

MARTINUS RAIL PTY LTD, Queensland
(see LR 290 p.34)
1067 mm gauge
Following arrival in New Zealand from Queensland, GM Canada A1A-A1A DE locos MR-0104/4041 (A2118 of 1966 rebuilt Clyde 78-870R of 1978) and MR-0102/4571 (A2221 of 1967 rebuilt Clyde 80-944R of 1980) were stored at New Zealand Steel Ltd's Mission Bush Steel Mill, Glenbrook. By 11 February, they had been moved to storage at the Glenbrook Vintage Railway's Glenbrook Station, Waiuku, South Auckland which is five kilometres away from the steel mill on KiwiRail's Mission Bush branch.
Robert Sweet 2/23

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NEW SOUTH WALES

MANILDRA, SHOALHAVEN STARCHES PTY LTD, Bomaderry
(see LR 285 p.38)
1435 mm gauge
During April, five hundred timber sleepers in the yard were replaced with concrete sleepers by Taylor Rail Australia.
Taylor Rail Australia 4/23

VICTORIA

WHITE ROCK MINERALS LTD, Morning Star Gold Mine, Woods Point
(see LR 211 p.28)
610 mm gauge
White Rock Minerals acquired the Woods Point Gold Project by way of a merger with AuStar Gold in August 2021. Since last reported here, it has been redeveloping the Morning Star Gold Mine and using rail equipment. This has included two Eimco 12B rocker shovels supplied by Trident SA of South Africa. However, by 21 March, the mine had been placed into care and maintenance.
Tony Weston 3/23; John Browning 3/23; White Rock Minerals Ltd Quarterly Activities Report 31/12/2022

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

ROSS'S AUCTIONEERS AND VALUERS, Kalgoorlie
An auction at Kalgoorlie on the weekend of April 1 and 2 included two Gemco 0-4-0BE Trammer underground locos, two Gemco 4wBE Hauler underground locos, a 1 tonne side tipper, an Eimco 12B bogger and two other Eimco boggers.
Tim Barnes 4/23; Ross's Auctioneers and Valuers website 4/23

OVERSEAS

FIJI SUGAR CORPORATION
(see LR 290 p.35)
610 mm gauge
By late February, the Penang Mill at Raki Raki had been demolished. It had not crushed since being damaged by Cyclone Winston in 2016 and cane has since been road hauled to Rarawai Mill at Ba. This has been costly and it is desired to build a new mill at Raki Raki with India agreeable to helping in its construction. Labasa Mill management has stated that it would cost $56 million to fix the mill's deteriorating railway system which is causing delays to the flow of cane to the mill. It is taking sixteen hours to haul cane from a distant sector such as Wainikoro to the

mill. Rail is still cheaper than road haulage though with a cost of $10 per tonne from Wainikoro compared to $25 per tonne using lorries. The government has undertaken to fix railways that are in urgent need of repair and also look into providing more rail bins for chopped cane. Management has urgently requested upgrading of its rail network from Waiqele to Nubu. Farmers in the Wainikoro and Daku sectors have also raised concerns about the state of the railway infrastructure with the alternative of road transport being very expensive. Minister for Sugar and Multi-Ethnic Affairs Charan Jeath Singh is advocating the use of FSC's rail systems for passengers and cargo during the slack season when there is no cane to transport. A visit to the defunct Coral Coast Railway on 11 March revealed a state of dereliction. Present were Motor Rail Simplex 4wDM locos 24 (14024 of 1957) and 8/38 (23014 of 1960) as well as three passenger carriages. 24 also carries a builder's plate from Lautoka Mill Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 24 (1856 of 1950). On the same day, ex Lautoka Mill Fowler 0-6-0TT 7 (10656 of 1906) was in its usual spot at the Fiji Gateway Hotel, Nadi Airport.
Chris Stratton 3/23; *The Fiji Times* 23/2/2023, 26/2/2023; FBC News 13/3/2023; *The Indian Weekender* 17/2/2023; *Fiji Sun* 21/3/2023

Top: Martinus Rail's GM Canada A1A-A1A DE locos MR-0104/4041 (A2118 of 1966 rebuilt Clyde 78-870R of 1978) and MR-0102/4571 (A2221 of 1967 rebuilt Clyde 80-944R of 1980) in storage at the Glenbrook Vintage Railway's Glenbrook Station in South Auckland on 11 February. Photo: Robert Sweet **Middle:** Derelict Motor Rail Simplex 4wDM 24 (14024 of 1957) at the defunct Coral Coast Railway's base at Cuvu on 11 March. Photo: Chris Stratton **Right:** Derelict Motor Rail Simplex 4wDM 38 (23014 of 1960) at the defunct Coral Coast Railway's base at Cuvu on 11 March. Photo: Chris Stratton

More from Beaconsfield, Tasmania
Notes by Phil Rickard

In *Light Railways* No.289, (Letters to the Editor – pages 27-38), Stuart Jenkins from Bristol, England advised of some interesting details regarding the origins of the 2ft-gauge 1896 Siemens overhead wire electric locomotive used by the Tasmania Gold Mining and Quartz Crushing Company, ("Tasmania Mine"), at Beaconsfield. Stuart noted that the Beaconsfield machine was one of Siemens' "contractor's" type and supplied details of near-identical locos as used on the City & Waterloo Railway (London) underground tunnel construction around 1895. Stuart's letter was in response to Jim Longworth's article in LR281 "The Tasmania Gold Mine OHW Electric Tramway". Due to magazine space constraints at the last moment we regret we were unable to include any of the drawings that Stuart supplied and tender our apologies. However, we have now taken the opportunity to expand what we could have reproduced in LR289 and trust readers will find them of interest. We thank Stuart for his researches. Should readers be able to add anything, your editor would be pleased to receive same.

To summarise, in 1896 the Tasmania Mine opened its reconstructed battery and new reduction works adjacent to Middle Arm Creek, about a mile from its mine complex at the foot of Cabbage Tree Hill, Beaconsfield. The new work's building was some 160ft x 75ft and had four floors. It was designed and erected under the supervision of G Simpson Pitcairn[*], ME, consulting engineer for the Lührig Company. Following the construction of the new works, Pitcairn joined the Tasmania Mine as a metallurgical engineer. A chlorination plant was also under construction. An extensive description of the new plant is given in the *Launceston Examiner,* 16 May 1896 – the entire plant being reckoned to be the largest in the Australian colonies at the time.

A key part of the expansion plans of the company was the widescale introduction of electricity in the mine and rebuilding and electrifying the connecting 2ft-gauge tramway. Initially horses were used, said to haul twelve new side-tipping Bochum Union trucks however by May 1896 initial work was underway to allow for electric haulage on the tramway. By the end of July 1896, Siemens Bros and Co had commenced the installation of electric light for the surface workings and various underground working levels. By early February 1897 the poles and arms, with insulators, for the electric tram were in position for about half the distance. A fortnight later the poles, arms, insulators and wires were in position from the battery to the mouth of No.2 tunnel.

The little electric locomotive arrived at Beaconsfield on 27 March 1897 (Saturday) and was assembled on the Monday. On Tuesday 30 March it was given a trial run on

* George Simpson Pitcairn, Mining Engineer. Experienced in mining, coal and ore-dressing, his specialty was the Lührig concentrating system. Was on the West Coast before his stint at Beaconsfield. Later at Cobar, NSW.
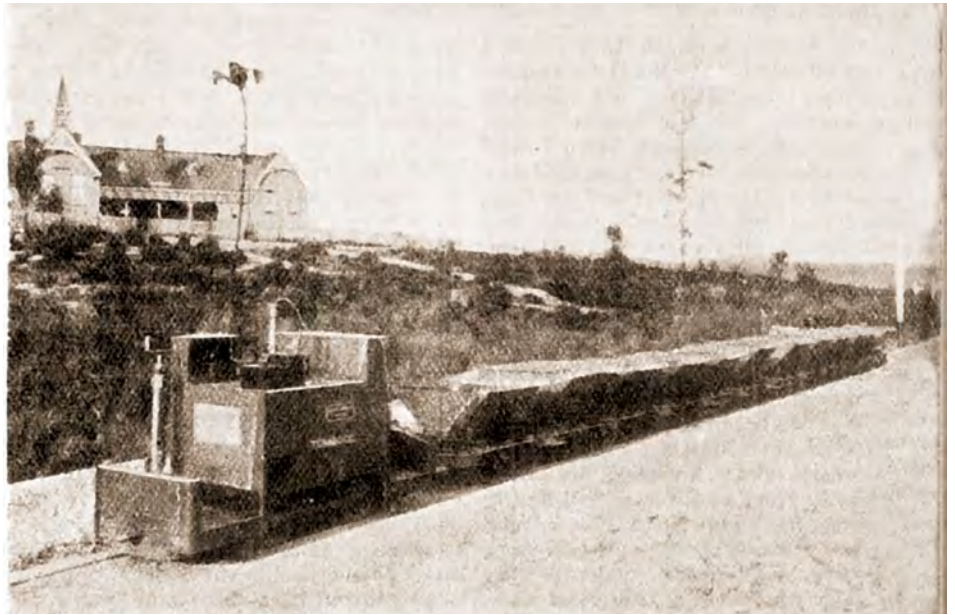
Above: *Beaconsfield. Siemens' loco taking its rake of a dozen empty Bochum Union side-tippers back to the mine. The local school, in Grubb Street, is in the background. Photo:* Australian Mining Standard, *19 January 1899 (courtesy Stuart Jenkins)*
Below: *Eighteen-inch-gauge locomotive, No.2, used by John Mowlem & Co on the construction of the City & Waterloo Railway in London. Image:* The Engineer, *2 August 1895* **Right:** *No.3 locomotive used by contractor John Mowlem & Co for spoil haulage in the tunnels for City & Waterloo Railway. Comparison with the Beaconsfield loco shows them to be virtually identical bar the canopy. Photo:* The Electrical Engineer, *1 November 1895*

Figs. 14 and 15—ELECTRIC CONTRACTOR'S LOCOMOTIVE
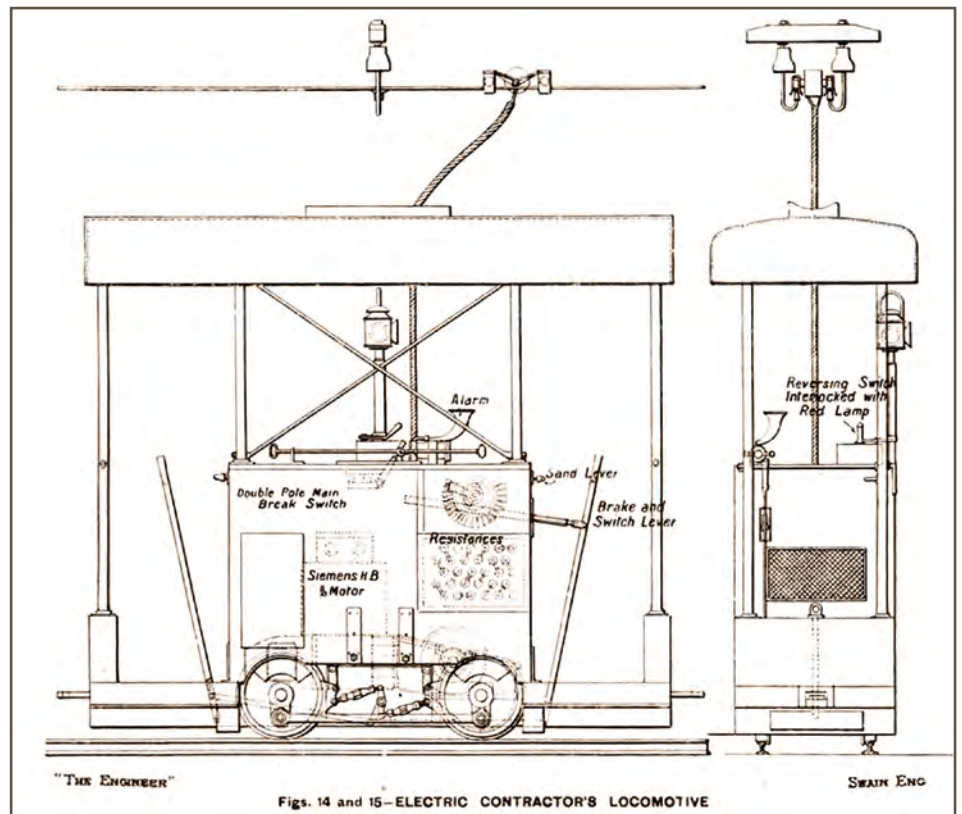
the line. By 9 April it is said to have had several successful runs hauling trucks and a week later "will be in running order shortly". In mid-May we are advised that: "The electric tram is now an accomplished fact, and the motor runs up and down the line with a string of trucks with ease and speed". Later in May, the manager is reporting that the 'electric motor' is now taking quartz from No.7 adit hopper, which would indicate that the overhead electric wiring had been extended.

All seems well as the weekly mining reports come in until early June: "Electric tram a continued success, barring a few accidents, which must be expected with all new machinery", followed a few days later by "The electric motor through an accident has come to grief,

and the trucks have now to be again drawn by horses, but it is hoped that this will be only for a time". A week later, however, all is well: "Electric motor repaired and running again". A few months later, the August 1897 half-yearly report for the Tasmania Mine simply states: "Quartz conveyed from the mine to the Tasmania battery by electric motor". In December 1897 there was a serious inrush of water at the mine which flooded a number of levels, led to a stoppage and reduced production for a year. (Water ingress was a major problem at Beaconsfield)

After the initial introduction, mention of the 'electric motor' almost ceases. The most the shareholders get told is "The tramway to battery has been maintained in good order" or similar, so one presumes it was doing its job. An extensive report in the *Australian Town and Country Journal* in 1900 confirms the electric tram was still running and Tasmania Mine's half-yearly report from August 1903 mentions, *inter alia,* that the tramway motor and rolling stock have received attention to keep them in the best order. In 1903 the ownership of the mine changed, having being bought out by an English entity, the Tasmania Gold Mining Company Limited. The 1909 half-yearly report simply states: "The surface and battery trams and rolling stock are in good working order."

Four years later though, the January 1913 half-yearly report is more illuminating, stating "The electric tramway has carried 51,781 tons of quartz and 3732 tons of coal from the mine to the battery, a distance of 1¼ miles." At this time the mine was being worked at a loss (and had been since 1909) and closure was a real option. By 1914 the end was in sight as summarised in Jim's articles in LR269 (October 2019 – available online) and LR281 (October 2021).

Tonnage figures included in the January 1914 special report of Arthur Llewellyn, MIMM, who was brought out from Britain to report on the ailing mine, confirms that during the life of the electric tram it had hauled about 720,000 tons of quartz to the battery. Assuming the ratio of coal used is the same as in the January 1913 half-yearly report (though this depended on whether there was a water shortage, normally used to run the Pelton wheels), one could add to that large tonnage about 52,000 tons of coal. The tram's busiest single year was 1907-08 when over 70,200 tons of ore was hauled (and possibly another 5000 tons of coal). That's a lot of tonnage moved by one tiny electric locomotive!

RESEARCH

1. *The Examiner,* Launceston, 27 August 1895
2. *The Examiner,* Launceston, 30 July 1896
3. *The Mercury,* Hobart, 6 Feb, 13 Feb 1897
4. *Daily Telegraph,* Launceston, 31 March 1897
5. *Daily Telegraph,* Launceston, 8 April; *Mercury,* Hobart 15 April; *Examiner,* Launceston 20 May 1897
6. *Mercury,* Hobart 5 June; *Daily Telegraph,* Launceston 9 June; *Mercury,* Hobart 19 June 1897
7. *Examiner,* Launceston 17 August 1897
8. *Daily Telegraph,* Launceston, 28 February 1902
9. *Australian Town and Country Journal,* Sydney, 10 Feb 1900
10. *Daily Telegraph,* Launceston, 27 August 1903
11. *Daily Telegraph,* Launceston, 12 February 1909
12. *The Examiner,* Launceston, 20 February 1913
13. *Daily Telegraph,* Launceston, 10 March 1914
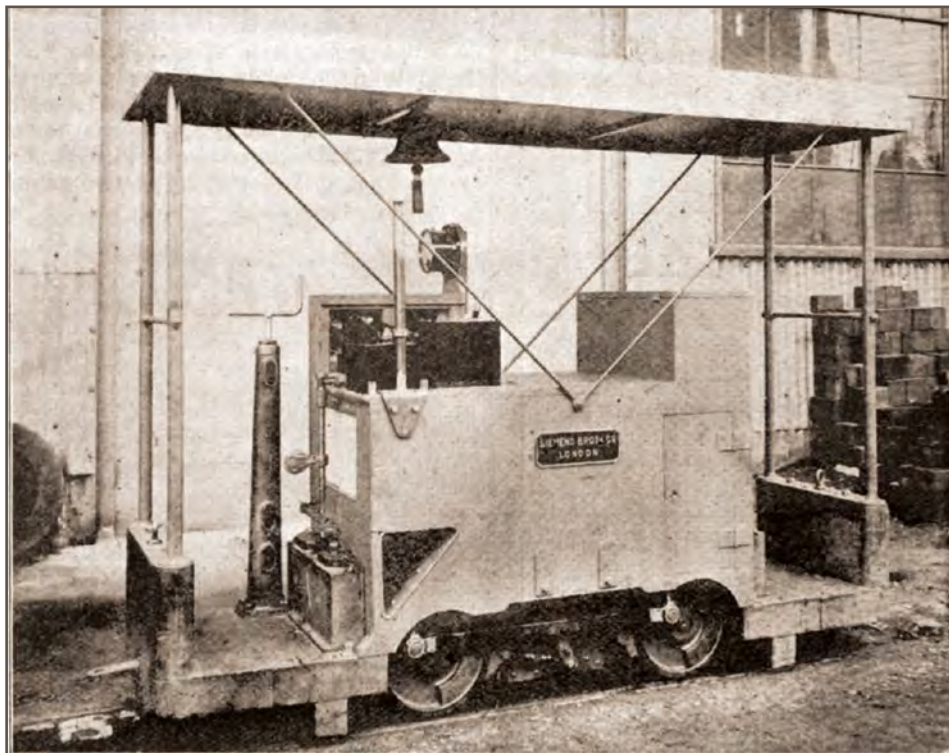
ELECTRIC TRAMWAY. "TASMANIA" MINE, BEACONSFIELD.

Reproduced from the *Australian Mining Standard*, 19 January 1899

The first electrical railway connected with any mine in Australia was equipped about two years ago at the Tasmania G.M. Co's property, Beaconsfield (T.). At this mine the lower or "Tasmania" battery, where a very complete plant of 60-head of stamps and Luhrig concentrating plant is employed. The whole of the mine and mine buildings have been lighted with electricity for some years, the dynamo for this purpose at the lower battery being driven from a Pelton wheel supplied with water – this is pumped out of the mine – under a head of about 50 feet. This lighting plant is of course used only during the night, and the electric tramway was arranged to utilise the water-motor during the day time. Owing to failure of water on some occasions it was found necessary to use a small steam engine as an auxiliary.

The generator consists of one of Siemens' compound-wound continuous current dynamos, having an output of 35 amperes at 300 volts at 3000 revolutions per minute. This generator is belt-driven from the water-motor, or from the steam engine, as desired. A small switchboard is arranged near the generator consisting of a marble panel, on which is mounted a Siemens' voltructor, a Siemens' ammeter, double-pole main switch, and two main fuses. The line is constructed with 40 lb Vignole section steel rails, and has a gauge of 2 feet. The electric locomotive is of Siemens' well-known "contractor's" type, of which a great many have been used in England and elsewhere, principally for underground work. The locomotive is equipped with a Siemens' motor, arranged to take current at 300 volts. It is connected with the axles of the locomotive by double reduction gear working in oil. Starting, regulating, and reversing switches are provided on the locomotive. As only one locomotive is used on this small line, the armatures of generator and motor are made interchangeable. The armatures are drum wound on Siemens' principle, the conductors being composed of bars, with Siemens end connections. This arrangement is a great improvement on the system of winding these drum armatures with coils of wire, and all the conductors, being on the surface of a coil – or part of a coil – if faulty can be easily replaced, in a much shorter time than when the armatures are wound on any other system.

Carbon brushes are used on both generator and motor, and give every satisfaction. The current is conveyed from the generator to the locomotive by means of two galvanised steel wires supported on insulators, and so arranged that an over-running trolley can be used. To keep the loss in the line within the proper limits, bare copper-feeder wires are also carried along with the steel trolley wires, and are frequently connected thereto. As the motor has to run into a tunnel and into a building where the height of the trolley wire is only five feet above the rail level, and has also to cross a road where the trolley wire is 18 feet above the rail level, it would have been difficult to have arranged an under-running trolley to have worked successfully. This difficulty was surmounted by using the double trolley system and an over-running trolley which runs on two parallel steel conductor trolley wires. This trolley is connected to the locomotive by a flexible twin cable about 12 feet long, which carries the current from the trolley wires to the locomotive, and gets over the difficulty of the great differences in the height of the trolley wire at different parts of the route. This locomotive has given entire satisfaction, although at times it has been running for several days and night continuously. The installation was arrange and erected by the Australian branch of Messrs Siemens Bros. and Co. Ltd., who also carried out the whole of the lighting at the line, the 2 dynamos for this work having an output of about 20k.w.

SOUTH GEELONG QUARRY TRAMWAY
Gauge approximately 800mm

On 1 February 2023 contractors excavating a new combined service trench in the South Geelong railway yards uncovered a short length of tramway track. The track is about 75 metres east of the Yarra Street boundary and runs roughly north-south. It can only be the remnants of a quarry tramway constructed in late 1878. The quarry produced ballast and other stone for the line from South Geelong to Queenscliff (then under construction).

Large quantities of stone were required. For the single line of railway: 36,140 lineal yards @ 7s 6d per yard, amounting to £13,552 10s. For sidings, bridges and culverts etc., 1250 lineal yards @ 5s 6d per yard, amounting to £343 15s. There was also a requirement in the schedule of quantities for metalling roads. For 22 public road crossings, 1056 cubic yards @ 5s 6d, amounting to £290 8s. For 26 occupational road crossings, 936 cubic yards @ 5s 6d, amounting to £257 8s. For various road diversions, 3100 cubic yards @ 5s 6d, amounting to £852 10s. For pitching in approaches and road diversions 9 inches thick, 250 cubic yards @ 3s, amounting to £37 10s. The final (and unusual) requirement for bluestone was for the bluestone ashlar steps in the loco oiling pit at Queenscliff, 19½ cubic feet @ 5s, amounting to £4 17s 6d.[1]

Contractors for the Queenscliff line, William Hampson Topham, James Angus and Alexander Jerusalem Smith (whose managing engineer was Wellington Carrington)[2] secured a supply of stone from Scott's Quarry at Chilwell. The quarry, in existence by 1860, took its name from the landowners, Jane and Duncan Scott, rather than the quarry operator.[3] The quarry was situated some two miles west of the future site of the South Geelong station (not erected until 1883). Topham, Angus & Smith gained permission from the Borough of Newtown & Chilwell to install a horse-hauled iron-railed tramway between the quarry and the railway siding in September 1878. The use of a small locomotive on the tramway was floated by the contractors shortly afterwards, producing an immediate backlash from Chilwell residents! Such a locomotive is not mentioned in any of the local newspaper reports, so perhaps an item of motive power to fit the unusual gauge could not be found. (Coincidentally, the tramway gauge of 800mm was just half of the Queenscliff line at 1600mm).

The tramway route lay south along Yarra Street to Fyans Street, then west along that street to the quarry situated near the present Elcho Street, west of Shannon Avenue. By October 1878 work on laying the tramway was well underway, although the line was said to be laid 'in the very roughest fashion'.[4] There was one accident reported during construction, a labourer named James Pardey had two toes broken when a rail fell on his foot and, shortly after the tramway opened, John Stokes has his foot crushed at the quarry when a tramway truck ran over it.[5] We cannot be certain which type of trucks were in use but, for a NSW railway contract just four years later, Topham, Angus & Smith were having a number of wooden-bodied 'dobbyns' constructed by a Goulburn wheelwright,[6] although this term can equally apply to tipping tramway and road vehicles.

The line exiting the quarry must have been quite steep, and it is possible this first section of line was operated by a winding gear[7] before horses took over the haulage further east along Fyans Street. In February 1879 a massive explosion at the quarry utilising 1904 lbs of 'Cornish blasting powder' dislodged 15,000 cubic yards of stone in one operation. The cost of the massive blast, at £150, was more than paid for by the labour saved.[8]

A steam-powered stone-crushing plant was erected not far from the Yarra Street railway crossing (for which a site licence was obtained),[9] and the stone was trucked to the crusher, broken into ballast, and loaded into rail trucks for use along the new line. The line to Queenscliff was opened for traffic on 21 May 1879, having been completed in nine months and well within the contracted time. It not only formed an important local link for tourists and fisherman, but promised a speedy movement of troops and munitions to the Port Phillip Heads should the colony be attacked.[10] As such, it formed an important link in the defences of Victoria at a time when the geographical emphasis was changing from the Hobsons Bay to the Heads as part of revamping Victoria's naval and military capability.

The tramway continued in use for a short time after the official opening. There was a serious accident on 26 May 1879 in which a brakeman on the tramway, William Henry Wilsher, had his leg badly broken when travelling back to the quarry. Wilsher had unhooked the horses between Latrobe Terrace and Pakington Street and was using the foot brake on the leading truck on the downhill section (apparently a standard practice, and complained of as dangerous to pedestrians). The brake lever gave way and he fell from the truck, the wheels from the second truck running over his leg near the ankle. Gangrene set in, and he died shortly after the leg was amputated.[11] The tramway seems to have been relinquished in September 1879 with Topham, Angus & Smith's bond of £200 being withheld until the roads along the tramway route were repaired to the borough council's satisfaction. It would appear that the rails had been lifted by the end of August 1879, and the contractors received their deposit back in September,[12] giving the tramway a total life of just under one year.

South Geelong quarry tram

PE 02/2023

0   0.5   1km

Base details from Vicmap t7721-1-3 dated December 2002, selection data from Moorpanyal parish plan

Geelong
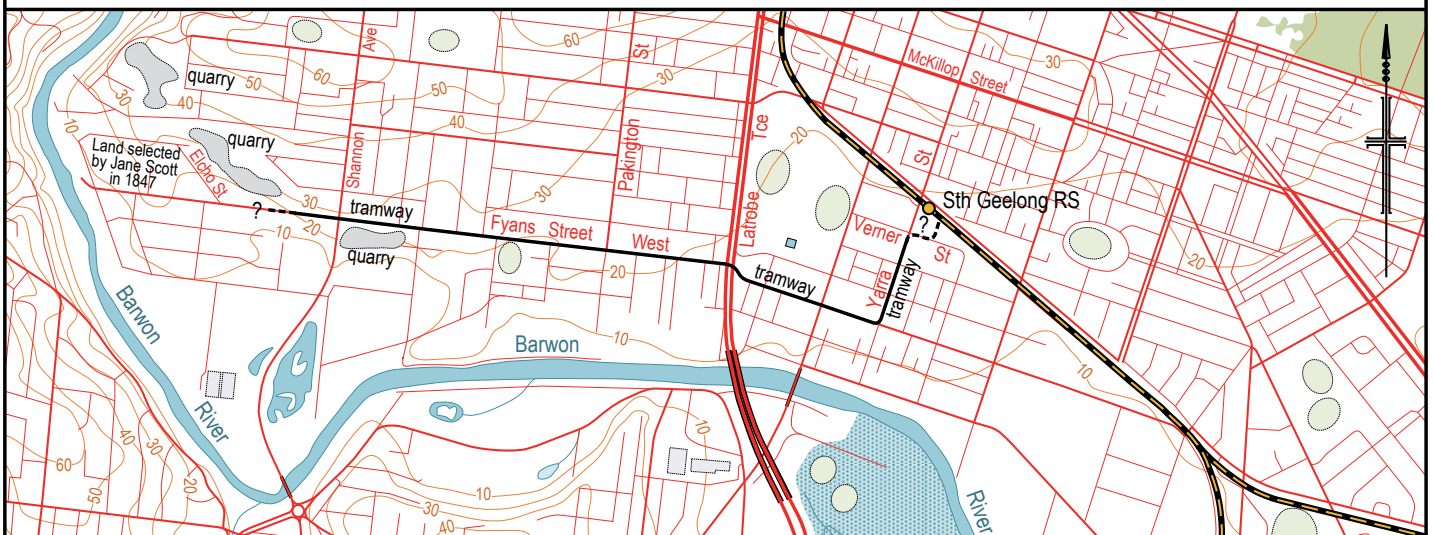
In August 1879 the contractors listed the following plant for sale by auction:

One 14 horse-power portable steam engine

Four stone-crushing machines

Three wooden buildings (2 x sheds, 1 x stable)

Galvanised sheet iron and vulcanised India-rubber belting

Leather engine belting 7 inches wide

Large quantities of messmate sleepers ex tramway

Posts, rails and redgum timbers.[13]

Given the location and orientation of the tramway remains at South Geelong there would need to be a right hand bend from Yarra Street into the railway paddock (possibly utilising Verner St for 75 or so metres) and then a left hand turn up to the rail siding. Presumably there would be a straight run up to the crusher and rail siding.[14] The quarry at the western end if the tramway was later used as a tip, and the site is now open space as the Rotary Centennial Park. Most people with knowledge of the line have rightly assumed that it was all pulled up

Top: *Section of tramway unearthed in the trench. It would appear that sections both inside and outside the rails were boarded over at this location. Image supplied.* ***Above:*** *Looking along the recently excavated trench, with the rails opposite the hi-vis-vest-clad gentleman on the right. The timber structure in the immediate foreground has been interpreted by the consultant archaeologist as the covering over an unlined drain trench placed prior to deposition of clay levelling fill for the yard surface. (This drain is shown on station plans for 1893 and 1928). The two corroded iron pipes running parallel and beyond the timber structure are suspected to be later drains, probably installed in place of the earlier unlined trench. Site analysis by Geoff Hewitt. Image supplied.*

Quarry tramway remains

0   40   80m

Base details from VR South Geelong plan dated 1928

- 🟩 tram exposure in trench
- 🟥 tramway remotely sensed
- 🟦 unlined trench/pipe
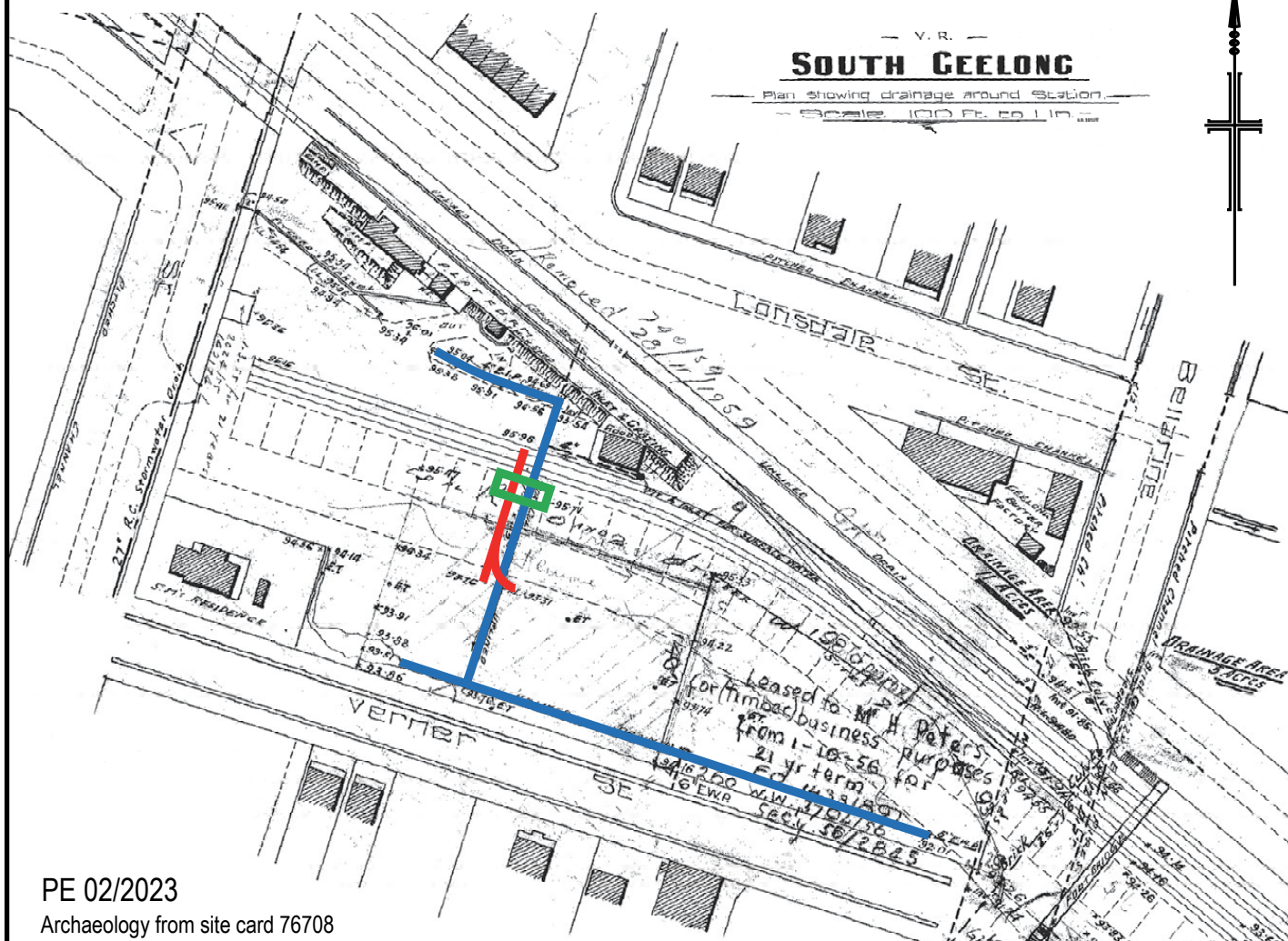
PE 02/2023

Archaeology from site card 76708

when no longer required. As we have seen, the Council certainly insisted on that occurring along Fyans and Yarra Streets, but it would seem that part was left in the rail yard, and has simply been buried.

As a result of the discovery, a site supervisor stopped further works. A consultant archaeologist was engaged by Ochre Imprints (the heritage advisors contracted to McConnell Dowell. which is constructing the South Geelong to Waurn Ponds works) to inspect the remains. Formal protection was instituted by placing the site on the Victorian Heritage Inventory as site H7721-0548. [15] Substantial lengths of tramway rail have been remotely sensed under the carpark bitumen extending 5 m to the north and 20 m to the south of the service trench, with the intriguing possibility of a branch towards the east. A section of undisturbed line has been excavated and the gauge measured as ≈800 mm [2 ft 7in to 2 ft 7½ in].[16] Further work is being undertaken on the site to establish the exact extent of the archaeological remains.

Norman Houghton, Michael Menzies, Scott Gould, Geoff Hewitt 02/2023. Additional research by Peter Evans.

References

1. Research by Michael Menzies.
2. *Geelong Advertiser,* Wednesday 11 June 1879, page 3; *Goulburn Evening Penny Post,* Saturday 5 January 1884, page 6; *The Avoca Mail,* Friday 22 August 1879, page 2; *New South Wales Government Gazette,* Tuesday 18 May 1886 [Issue No.280], page 3501.
3. *Geelong Advertiser,* Tuesday 14 August 1860, page 3.
4. *Geelong Advertiser,* Tuesday 17 September 1878, page 3; Saturday 28 September 1878, page 4; Tuesday 22 October 1878, page 2; Saturday 14 December 1878, page 2; Saturday 21 December 1878, page 3; Saturday 20 September 1879, page 2.
5. *Geelong Advertiser,* Wednesday 23 October 1878, page 2; Saturday 23 November 187, page 2.
6. *Southern Argus* (Goulburn, NSW), Thursday 8 March 1883, page 2.
7. *Geelong Advertiser,* Wednesday 17 November 1880, page 3.
8. *Geelong Advertiser,* Friday 28 February 1879, page 2.
9. *Geelong Advertiser,* Monday 31 March 1879, page 3; Friday 11 April 1879, page 3.
10. *Geelong Advertiser,* Thursday 22 May 1879, page 3. See also Houghton, N. (1984). *Geelong Miscellany.* In *Light Railways* 83, page 8. Further information on the quarries in the area is available from Rowe, David

(2021). *About Corayo: a thematic history of Greater Geelong, Theme 4, transforming & managing land and natural resources.* City of Greater Geelong, pages 412-414.
11. *Geelong Advertiser,* Wednesday 20 November 1878, pages 2 and 4; Tuesday 27 May 1879, page 2; Friday 6 June 1879, page 3; Saturday 7 June 1879, page 2; Thursday 12 June 1879, page 4; *The Argus,* Friday 6 June 1879, page 3.
12. *Geelong Advertiser,* Monday 28 October 1878, page 4; Saturday 9 November 1878, page 2; Monday 8 September 1879, page 3; Tuesday 19 August 1879, page 3; Tuesday 26 August 1879, page 3; Monday 8 September 1879, page 3; Saturday 13 September 1879, page 3.
13. *Geelong Advertiser,* Friday 8 August 1879, page 3.
14. Analysis on site by Norman Houghton.
15. Personal communication via email from Geoff Hewitt, 13 February 2023 and 24 February 2023.
16. Victorian Heritage Inventory site card H7721-0548; personal communication via email from Geoff Hewitt, 4 March 2023.

BOOK REVIEW

'Horse Trams of Australia' is the latest offering from Melbourne-based Transit Australia Publishing. The 174-page softcover book written by Jim Longworth PhD and Duncan MacAuslan covers a relatively little-known area of Australian public transport history. The book is aimed at wide readership including transport enthusiasts and those with a general interest in local and social history.

The authors note that horse trams were an early form of rail public transport in various parts of Australia. Their heyday was the latter years of the 19th century but the era was relatively short-lived, largely due to the introduction of electric trams. Adelaide with its relatively flat terrain was ideal for horse trams. Lines were opened in different parts of Australia – some in the most unlikely places. The book is well illustrated. Most of the views are of the horse trams in service with people included rather than record shots. This adds to the appeal of the work as it adds a social context to the relatively short-lived horse tram era. The quality of the illustrations is good considering most were taken more than 100 years ago.

A typical Australian horse tram was a two-axle closed vehicle and many were built in a double deck configuration. Open crossbench vehicles operated in some locations, particularly those with warmer climates and/or where visitors were the main patronage.

Most operations were "private" and some proved to be hopelessly uneconomic with relatively short lives.

Lines are grouped by state and each is individually described. The authors complete the coverage with a thoughtful assessment of the impact of the horse tram era. Detailed appendixes cover conservation and preservation and the use of horse tram technology in industrial settings.

The text is interspersed with several "tales" of the era. One I enjoyed was an account of a night-time incident in Melbourne where the tram was held up and passengers robbed. The culprits were never found and it was thought to be a planned "job" based on the knowledge that a regular passenger was a well healed gentleman.

Transit Australia Publishing is to be commended for *"Horse Trams of Australia"* and it should have a well-deserved place on the bookshelves of enthusiasts and general readers throughout Australia and overseas.

Available from Transit Australia Publishing, PO Box 114, Canterbury, Victoria 3126; $66.95 per copy including postage.

Highly recommended!

Paul Nicholson
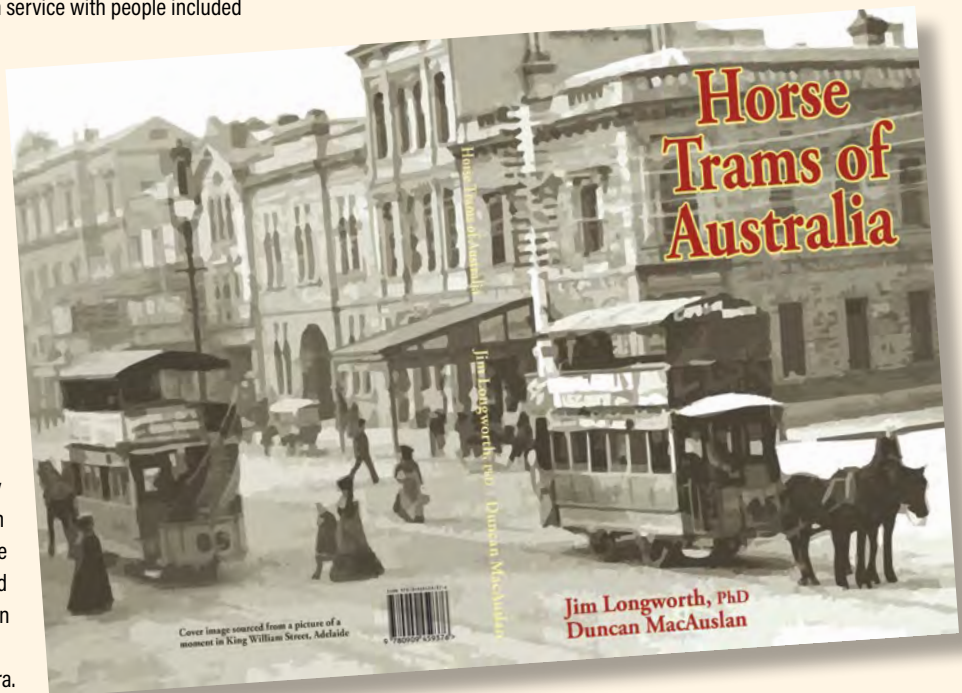
OBITUARY

Vale Chris Andrews

On 12 February 2023, Chris Andrews passed away aged 72 after years battling with diabetes, then an eye disorder and finally a rare form of cancer. Living in Melbourne in his early years he became LRRSA member number 195 and contributed his drawing skills to LR issues 16 to 25. Moving to Adelaide in 1969 he researched and wrote an article in LR31 on the Glenelg breakwater featuring the Bagnall locomotive which is extant at Cobdogla.

He did a degree in economics at Flinders University and joined the SA public service. He also joined the AETM St. Kilda tram museum in 1969 as member number 72. Chris was a committee member soon after joining, was secretary from 1995 to 1996, a trustee from 2000 to 2010, vice-president from 2008 to 2014 and president from 2017 to 2019. He was a regular member of work parties restoring the initial tram running fleet and preparing the Museum Tramway for commencement of tram rides from March 1974 including a lot of work restoring water-damaged plywood ceilings. He was a regular tram driver from early on until quite recently.

When the SA group of LRRSA was formed by Arnold Lockyer in 1983 he joined and went on a couple of research expeditions with Arnold. In his last decade he volunteered in archives at the National Railway Museum, Port Adelaide, in the LRRSA project to preserve Arnold's LR photos.

We shall miss the depth of his wide knowledge of the rail scene and his generous sharing of it.

Les Howard

Yarra Bank Tramway – Research (LR 289)

I have just read the article on the Yarra Bank Tramway in the Research section of LR 289 and whilst I am unable to provide any answers, I do have some observations to make.

Early pictures of the site show no evidence whatsoever of the subject matter. However, looking at the assortment of materials in the engineering works yard, my first thought was that it could have been a works depot for the erection of the new Princes Bridge. This does not seem likely though, given that the old road alignment and that leading from the 'Temporary bridge', would have passed right through it, (possibly delineated by the curving left-right line on the 1896 map).

Looking at the ground levels in the attached photos, a 'quarry' as such, shown on the 1856 map, does not appear likely as the land appears quite flat for some distance further to the south. I would suggest that maybe it was a partial removal of the earlier embankment, or a confluence of the old and the new. Post the era of your article, it looks to be very low-lying right through there. It would seem a little odd too, that they would need to cart material downstream for loading onto barges, as, once the river was dug out, barges would be able to access that whole length.

If I was to put money on it, it would be that the tram was built principally for the purpose of carting away the spoil from the river widening, to wherever it was distributed to, and maybe subsequently for bringing in the stone blocks, used to line the banks.

It is possible that the photograph of the painting, on p23, depicts the removal of stone spalls from the 'Falls', the ridge of basalt that crossed the river. It does appear to be a little more distant from Princes Bridge.

Geoff Winkler
Via email

Walhalla Goldfields Railway (LR 289)

With regard to the X1 rail motor project at Walhalla with its hydrostatic transmission and hydraulic drive to the bogies, this type of system is eminently suitable for such a vehicle, and if properly engineered will give good transmission and braking on any descent.

For reproduction, please contact the Society
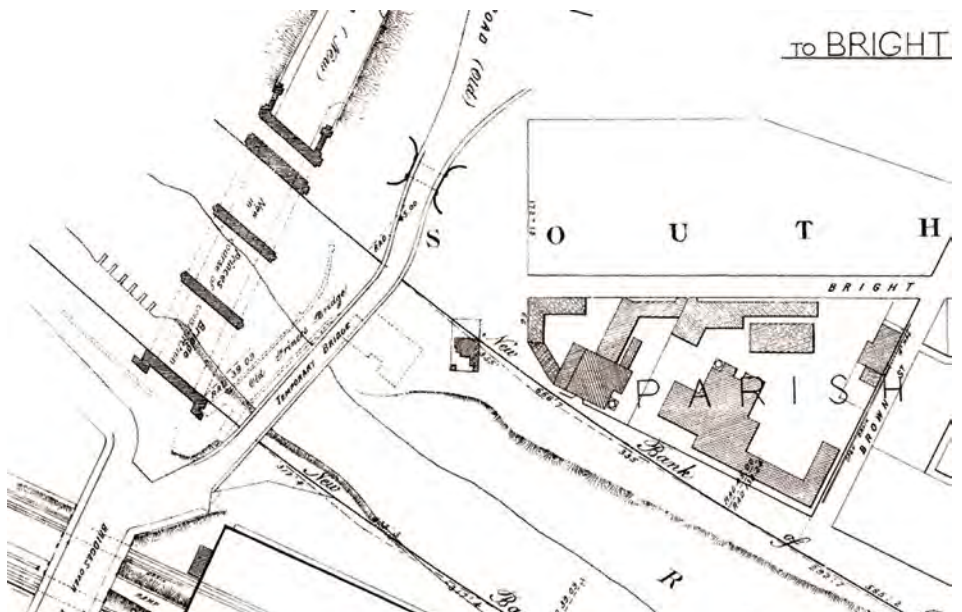
In my experience in building hydrostatically-powered vehicles, matching the transmission to the correct engine is fundamental to the design. Hydrostatic piston pumps should not exceed 1500 rpm at the input. The proposal to use the automotive engine – the "Subaru engine" – is wrong as to idle speed, torque and horsepower, and rev ranges are completely wrong for the application and a catastrophic failure of the transmission pump may ensue if a normal automotive rev range is used to drive it. There are plenty of options for the right parameters in the engine range otherwise a second Harman will be the result of this design.

Andrew Forbes
Chief Mechanical Engineer
Kerrisdale Mountain Railway

EBR rail motors (LR 286)

Further to the letters to the Editor in LR 290 re this matter, the most likely reason for the Emu Bay Railway M4 being at Guildford is that there was a plethora of DP's [TGR rail motors] stored at Burnie at a time when the rail motor shed was being converted to house the new diesel locomotives. Another reason is that M4 or M5 was stationed at Zeehan for the West Coast social runs when the M3 motor foundered and (M4 would not fit the Farrell turntable and had to be backed to and from the Primrose wye) before road access to Rosebery and Tullah and may not have been returned to Burnie. While it was at Zeehan it was driven by locomotive crews and I had one trip to Tullah. The Morris 8 inspection van was also at Guildford for some time. The other photo of the wrecked railcar has the old road car that ran shift workers to Zeehan Smelters down the government Zeehan to Strahan railway - the Berliet rail motor did not run on Emu Bay Railway in my time.

Bob Morley
Via email

Smithfield explosives light railway (LRN98 and 100; LR141, 142 and 148)

Readers may have seen the article by Graeme Dorling in *Catchpoint* 274, p34-39. On page 38 he writes that "the SA Light Railway Research Society was given the *unique* opportunity to visit the site on Saturday 14 March 1998." In fact, the SA group of LRRSA had visited the site on Saturday 9 October 1993. Member Peter Barry had come from Victoria to work there. He and Brian Andrews had negotiated permission for the visit, on condition that the visitors be named beforehand and were not to bring cameras onto the site. Instead Peter would take photos of items of interest and the negatives were passed on afterwards to Arnold Lockyer, and these are now prints in his albums at the National Railway Museum at 7-1001-039-026 to 036. The 1998 visit had no restrictions on photos – that was what made it *unique.*

Unfortunately, this claim of uniqueness for the 1998 visit was also made in the caption of the first photo in Arnold Lockyer's article in LR148, p.10 - viz *(believed to be the first such tour ever)*. Since Arnold had mentioned the 1993 visit in his first report on the 1998 visit (LR141, p.22-23), this comment was incorrect. The 1993 visit was reported by Lee Rodda in LRN98, Feb 1994, and again in LRN100, Jun 1994 by the SA group LRRSA. Both of these reports mention 40 lb rail, which is incorrect - it was 20lb rail (LR142, p.26), and both say the wagons were believed to have been built by SAR Islington. That was true, they were designed by LS Kingsborough of the SAR - this is recorded in the handout which was issued to the 7 participants of the 1993 trip. The LRN98 report as it appears now online says that there were originally "38 miles (45km)" of 2ft gauge track – 45km is 28 miles, which is correct. In the 1960s the majority of the magazine area was sold for redevelopment, leaving about 10km of track for our visits in the 1990s.

Les Howard
Via email

The Luggage Point Tramway, Brisbane (LR 276 & 280)

The American Industrial Mining Co (Museum), based in Ohio, is dedicated to the preservation of the mining, industrial and transportation heritage of the USA. Its website is americanindustrialmining.com

AIMM holds extensive records of a number of American industrial locomotive builders, including the Jeffrey Manufacturing Co. Pete Jedlicka, President and Co-Founder, has located official photographs of the first electric locomotive used on the Pinkenba-Luggage Point Tramway. Jeffrey 3561 was photographed at the Columbus, Ohio, works prior to its despatch on 17 October 1914. The height of the trolley pole is in stark contrast to the size of the diminutive locomotive.

Images: courtesy American Industrial Mining Museum #AIMM-AUS-JMC 7019 & 7020
John Browning
Annerley, Queensland
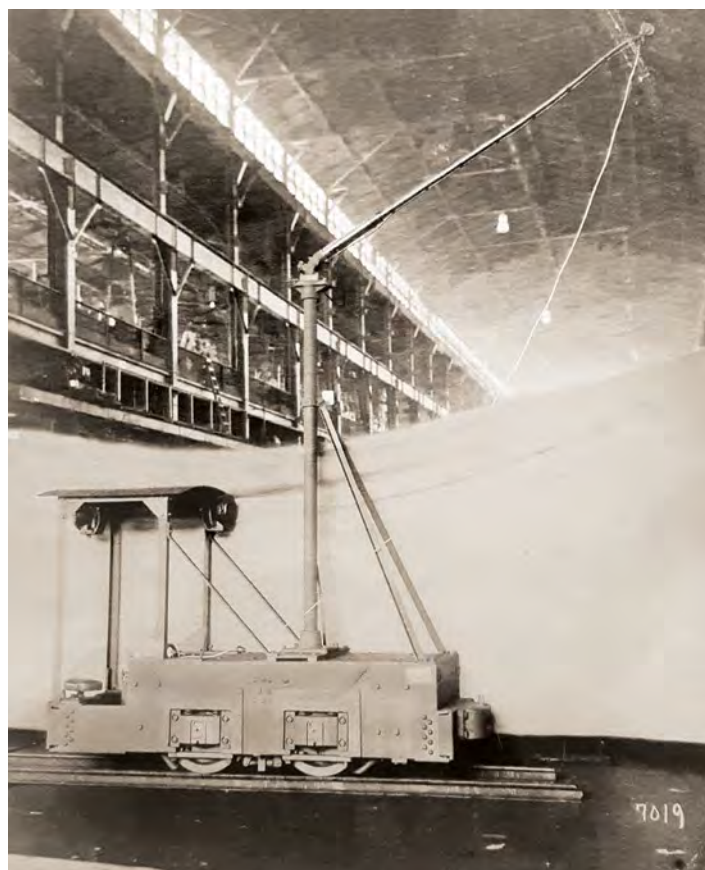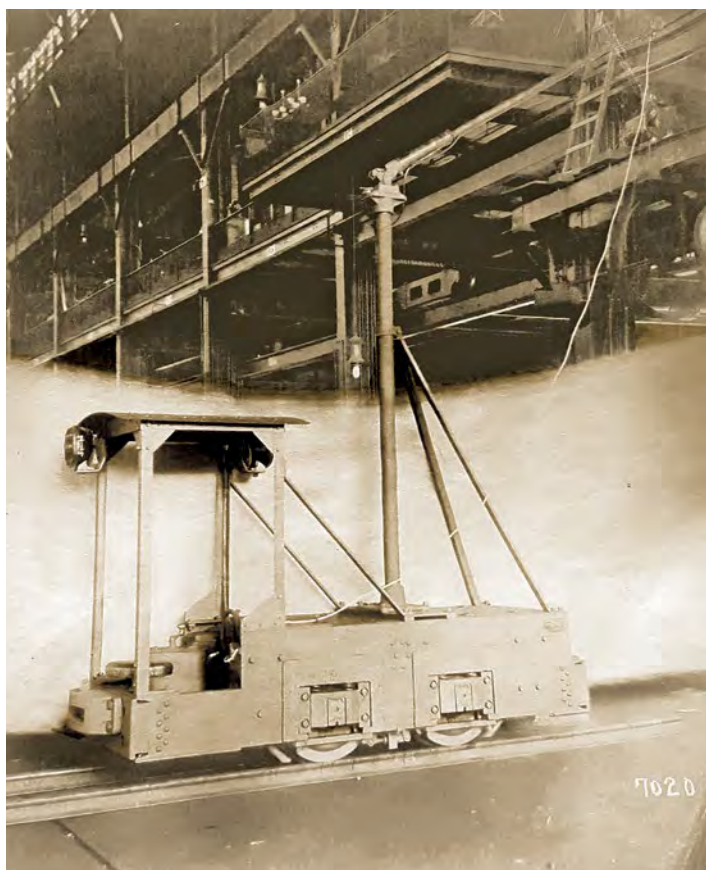
News items should be sent to **heritagetourist@lrrsa.org. au** Digital photographs for possible inclusion should be sent direct to Richard Warwick at **editor@lrrsa.org.au** including the name of the location, the name of the photographer and the date of the photograph.

QUEENSLAND

QUEENSLAND PIONEER STEAM RAILWAY, Swanbank
1067 mm gauge

The official launch of the 99 year old locomotive *Kilrie* was held on 19 March 2023. by Queensland Pioneer Steam Railway (QPSR). The restoration has taken ten years and had significant support from the AFULE and the Downs Steam Tourist Railway at its purpose built workshop near Toowoomba. *Kilrie* did three runs on the day which were all sold out.

Kilrie was built in South Australia by Perry Engineering of Gawler (S/N 265) in November 1924. This tiny locomotive was one of nine similar units purchased by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission of Victoria (eight built by Perry and one by Harman) for use on the construction of the Hume Weir on the Murray River near Albury. Its driving wheels are 28.5 inch (724mm) diameter and are driven by a boiler working at 150 pounds per square inch and two 10 inch (254mm) diameter by 16 inch (406mm) stroke cylinders actuated by Walschaerts valve gear. After use at the Hume Reservoir from 1925 to 1935, it was placed in storage until sold to Mount Morgan Mines Ltd in 1939, and a decade later was sold to the Pioneer Sugar Mill near Brandon, Queensland. There, around 1960, it was converted from a 0-4-0T to its present 0-4-2T configuration and also converted to burn oil. It was donated during 1978 to the Australian Narrow Gauge Preservation Society, and then *Kilrie* was purchased by the Queensland Pioneer Steam Railway on 27 April 2008. In its time at Swanbank it has been restored to proper working order, reconverted to coal burning and, for reasons of safety and train operation, has also been fitted with a Westinghouse automatic air braking system.
Downs Steam Tourist Railway and Museum Facebook post, 19 March 2023.

ATHERTON HERBERTON HISTORIC RAILWAY, Herberton
1067 mm gauge

A very special day for the railway's volunteers and members occurred on 23 March 2023 with the official launch of the 1905 Peckett steam locomotive and a 1913 carriage. Ninety thousand volunteer hours went into the restoration but more remains to be done. There had been previous shakedown trips but this was the official launch. The Mulgrave Mill Piecart emerged from the workshop on March 4 complete with its new signage (Track Maintenance Vehicle No. 1). The Piecart was built at the Mulgrave Mill at Gordonvale. Nobody knows why it was called the Piecart but the LRCs and ELRCs (Locomotive Remote Control wagons)) were all nicknamed Pie Carts. It was built to have a higher clearance to be able to go

out during the wet season to start doing maintenance on flood affected track.
Atherton Herberton Historic Railway Facebook post, 4 and 23 March 2023

MARY VALLEY RATTLER, Gympie
1067 mm gauge

Two of the RM2000 class railmotors built in the 1950s (also known as Silver Bullets) numbers 2017 and 2023 have been under restoration for the past two years at Gympie workshops. On 7 March 2023 they came off shed for trials and testing.
The Silver Bullet Society Facebook post, 7 March

NEW SOUTH WALES

MANDALONG VALLEY TRAMWAY, Mandalong
610 mm gauge

Fairymead, (BLW 10533 of 1889) is nearly back together at the Mandalong Valley Tramway, a private railway South of Newcastle. There is still a bit to do but 27 March is the 30th anniversary of its first steaming in 1993 after a prolonged restoration. Restoration efforts were hurried along to get it back together in time for another run.
Graeme Belbin, Narrow Gauge Enthusiasts Group, Facebook post, March 26.

VICTORIA

GEELONG SALT WORKS, Geelong
610 mm gauge

Recently at Donington Auctions in Melbourne there was the opportunity to purchase a rare Ruston and Hornsby locomotive believed to have originally come from the salt

works in Geelong. At this stage it is unknown if it sold and if it was, to whom.
Static preserved Australian locomotives and rolling stock Facebook Page post by David Wentworth, 23 March 2023

WALHALLA GOLDFIELDS RAILWAY, Walhalla
762 mm gauge

The 10-Class, No.1001 (an Emu Bay clone) was returned to operation in the week prior to Easter and ran well over the Easter Long Weekend. Passenger numbers were down as bad weather was predicted which didn't really eventuate. Six return trips were run on Easter Eve (Saturday) and Easter Day (Sunday), plus three trips on Good Friday and Easter Monday. The 10-class then operated until the following Sunday when the air compressor broke down forcing cancellation of trains that day and the following day, Monday 16 April. *Kasey* returned to service on the Tuesday and ran all trips to date.

With no replacement air compressor on hand for 1001, a replacement from the USA had to be air freighted to Australia. It is understood that the maintenance staff impose a "two trips per day" restriction on *Kasey* in order to prolong its availability when no other loco is available. The Fowler No.14, *Spirit of Yallourn* is out of service due to excessive wheel wear. New tyres have been obtained and it now has to go to the old SEC Yallourn Workshops (Hard Chrome) for them to be fitted and turned.

Kasey has a 30-ton haulage limit; WGR carriages weigh around 14 tons each, so it is limited to two carriages. Unfortunately, for the duration of the school holidays, the WGR had advertised three trips a day with a 4-carriage set but had to suffice with two trains and only 2 carriages per train. This led to heavy loading on both trains each day.

No.030, Kasey, a 4wDH built by E M Baldwin (b/n 3225.4.2.70 of 1970) had a varied career with the MMBW before finally ending up at the WGR in 1998. A rebuild by the Morwell engineering firm, Valicote Pty Ltd, saw the ex-tunnelling loco fitted with a neat cab to withstand the mountain rains – a rare event, of course! Photo: Phillip Milbourne

Top: Beneath blue skies, WGR Nos.14 and 1001 at Walhalla, 21 August 2022. Unfortunately 1001 suffered an air compressor failure during the busy holiday period, post-Easter. With No.14 already out of action, a number of trains had to be cancelled. No. 030, Kasey was called upon to shoulder the load. Photo: Phillip Milbourne **Middle:** *Two of the beautifully presented vehicles at Walhalla. 2NBW (an end loading passenger car) and 1NBCW (a combination pass + van). Visitors to Walhalla appreciate the wider carriages, with more comfortable and generous seating compared to the other, government-run, 2ft 6in-gauge railway. Photo: Phillip Milbourne* **Above:** *Walhalla station 21 April 2023. Kasey, No.030 at the head of its two-car train, the limit for this small locomotive. The nearest vehicle, 1NQRW, is much favoured on sunny warm days and provides superb views along the Stringer's Creek gorge. Photo: Phillip Milbourne*

DH 37, that has been sitting on blocks in the yard, looking rather decrepit for several years, is on its way with assurances given that the axles, currently at a firm in South Australia, will be turned and available around mid-May. It is understood that the SA company is a 'friend of railway heritage' and is doing the job for a favourable rate quoted by Victorian firms. When returned they will go to Inver Engineering for the wheels to be fitted. They will then be returned to Thomson Workshops to be fitted to their bogies. After that, the new 2ft 6in-gauge bogies will go to Walhalla and the body lifted onto same. Cosmetic repairs will then take place with the loco being hauled to Thomson for final fit-out and repair.
Phil Milbourne 4/23

COAL CREEK RAILWAY, Korumburra
610 mm gauge
The narrow gauge railway within the heritage park has fallen into disuse and photos from February 2022 show it in a derelict state. The South Gippsland Shire is the custodian and while the Victorian State Government had an input at one time, it withdrew funds leaving the local shire ratepayers to fund Coal Creek. Although it is still open, entry is free because all the exhibits and shops are closed and there are usually few staff members in attendance. In the 1980/90s Coal Creek was hugely popular and there was an entrance fee.
Narrow Gauge Enthusiasts Group Facebook page post, David McCulloch, 14 March

TASMANIA

WEST COAST WILDERNESS RAILWAY, Queenstown
1067mm gauge
From early June, it is planned to suspend all Queenstown-based steam services, following the earlier suspension of Strahan-based diesel services due to a minor derailment. With the railway completely closed, substantial rehabilitation of the track and locomotives will be undertaken, funded by a $16 million allocation by the state government, as well as a substantial compensation package for local businesses who will be hit by the closure. It is anticipated that services will gradually recommence in time for the 2023-24 summer season.
James Shugg

DON RIVER RAILWAY, Devonport
1067mm gauge
In early April an accidental fire destroyed a carriage shed and carpenters' workshop, along with two passenger carriages, some smaller rolling stock and locomotive spare parts. One of the destroyed carriages was delivered new to the North Mt Lyell Railway Company at the beginning of the last century. Despite some disruption to the railway's bar and function centre, trains are still operating on the regular schedule, four days per week. Pledges of support for the railway have come from the public and private sectors and right across the community. One way that LRRSA members can help is to visit the railway. Although the museum has a government railway focus, there is plenty of light railway interest to see.
James Shugg

WEE GEORGIE WOOD, Tullah
610mm gauge

The 2022-23 running season was due to draw to a close at the end of April. Patronage was boosted in March and April by busloads of tourists whose pre booked trip on the Wilderness Railway out of Strahan had been cancelled due to essential trackwork. This saw at least three extra return trips for *Georgie* on running days, plus a charter over Easter when trains do not normally run.

A highlight of the year was *Georgie's* visit to Sheffield for Steamfest. The little Fowler locomotive performed faultlessly over the three days and the prior running weekend at Sheffield, clocking up about 140km and carrying over 1200 passengers. Special thanks are due to Pete Martin at Sheffield for machining new bronze little end bearings at the last minute for *Georgie*, and to everyone at Sheffield for making the Tullah volunteers so welcome.

The new season for *Georgie* in Tullah will open on the first weekend of October. Meanwhile, volunteers will continue with sleeper replacement through the winter, focussing on the bottom balloon loop and other trackwork in that vicinity. The Fowler loco will be lifted off its wheels to allow a full inspection and preventative maintenance to be carried out. Also, final adjustments to the running gear of the new passenger carriage will be done so that both carriages will be available for use for charters and busy running days.

Finally, the Orenstein & Koppel 0-6-0T (builders number 4241 of 1910) which has sat rusting away in the yard at Tullah for at least the past 15 years has been sold to a local steam enthusiast. This locomotive last operated in the 1960s in Western Australia, and has passed through the hands of various owners since then, including the Mt Lyell Abt railway in the early days of its reconstruction around 2000. At that time, work was commenced regauging the little locomotive from 2 ft to 3 ft 6 in. Although the O&K is currently dismantled and needs a new boiler, all the parts are stored at Tullah and included in the sale. The young buyer has his steam tickets, is a rail industry professional, volunteers in the heritage sector and comes from a family with a long history in steam. The loco will remain in Tasmania and hopefully steam again one day, back on two foot gauge.

James Shugg

*Top left and right: The derelict state of the rail infrastructure at the Coal Creek Museum at Korumburra. Photo: David McCullough **Middle:** West Coast Wilderness Railway Rack and Gorge service passing through South Queenstown on 28 March. Photo: James Shugg **Above:** Mt Lyell Ruston, built in 1938, at the Don River Railway on March 24. Photo: James Shugg*

Top: The boiler, tanks and cab of the Orenstein and Koppel loco at Tullah. Photo: James Shugg **Middle:** Mt Lyell railway Riley railcar, built 1910 at Don, 24 March. Photo: James Shugg **Above:** Showing once again that heritage rail is not just for the boys, the Ida Bay Railway treasurer, Redwater Creek secretary and Wee Georgie's public officer pose by the Ida Bay railmotor outside the Sheffield workshops, while the former Ida Bay Hunslet lurks in the background as Steamfest draws to a close on 13 March. Photo: James Shugg

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

MILANG RAILWAY MUSEUM, Milang
610 and 1600 mm gauges

Simplex number 21575, built by Motor Rail Ltd. in Bedford, UK in 1957, arrived at the Milang Railway Museum on 21 March 2023, after a 15 month restoration between 2021 and 2023 by Neville Thomas. It is an update of the design which took ammunition to the trenches in WW 1. The locomotive worked at Pleystowe Mill, Mackay, Queensland, from 1957 to 2000 where it shunted sugar wagons at the mill. In a few weeks, when safety checks, driver training and documentation are complete, it will be heading some of the museum's free train rides.

James Chuang post on the *Light Railways of Australia* Facebook Group 21 March 2023.

COBDOGLA IRRIGATION AND STEAM MUSEUM
610 mm gauge

The railway at Cobdogla is still closed to the public and the team is still looking for ways to continue after 30 June when the SA Water sponsorship ends. The insurance from SA Water expired on 21 March and they are taking that into account. Various works have been continued with Loveday as the base.

Cobdogla Clarion via Les Howard

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BENNETT BROOK RAILWAY, Whiteman Park
610 mm gauge

The big news is that NG15 123's boiler is now back at the Railway and work is progressing well on putting the locomotive back together.

In trackwork news, the collapsed rail near the eastern entrance to the big cutting on the south loop has been replaced. This job entailed the excavation of the crossing, replacement of all the sleepers on the affected panel of track, replacement of the damaged rail, packing of all the sleepers and the reinstatement of the crossing. This was all achieved in one workday.

The next job to be tackled is to finish replacing sleepers at Horseshoe Curve, near Zamia, followed by the lifting and packing of track at Forest Grove. Following that will be the repair of the track at WVJ north crossing and a few other maintenance jobs. A big job to be scheduled soon is the replacement of the contaminated ballast at WVJ platform 1.

The Bennett Brooklet – Feb/Mar 2023

OVERSEAS

STATFOLD BARN RAILWAY, Tamworth, UK

K1 was the world's first Garratt locomotive. It was built by Beyer Peacock in the UK at Manchester, for the North East Dundas Tramway in Tasmania and after many adventures found itself back in the UK, variously preserved at Beyer Peacock, the York Railway museum, the Welsh Highland Railway (its actual home) but currently at Statfold Barn where it will be running for a few years having been restored there. Last April it double headed the *Snowdonian* with a South African Garratt out of Portmadoc. Comments on the post complained about the hammer-blow beating that K1 gave to the WHR track and about the poor quality of the coal it burns at Statfold.

Ian Castledine, Narrow Gauge Enthusiasts Facebook Group, 20 March

Maylands Brickworks

All photos taken by Weston Langford during an ARHS (WA) visit to the Maylands brickworks, 19 March 1966. Courtesy of westonlangford.com *image nos. 107223, 107241 and 107244.* Captions: Phil Rickard

Above: *19 March 1966. A train of six side-tipping skips in the 'white' clay pit of the Metropolitan Brickworks Company at Maylands, near Perth, await loading by a Ruston Bucyrus diesel shovel. The locomotive, No.1, is a 4-wheeled F C Hibberd & Co petrol mechanical, one of a pair of its Type-Y Planet locomotives. It appears to have been fitted with a home-made roof and side curtains. The Hibberd locomotives were fitted with Ford 10 4-cylinder petrol engines and were found to be under-powered for the work, leading to the construction of home-made locomotives with Holden '186' engines, utilising some parts from the Hibberds.*

Left: *At the brickworks, the locomotive would run around its train and wait in the siding whilst the trucks would be attached to a cable and winched, two at a time, to be tipped at the works. They were then allowed to run back on their own, often at considerable speed, as noted by LRRSA member Geoff Murdoch in 1973! At the time of Geoff's visit, the locomotives in use were home-made with 6-cylinder Holden '186' engines, based on the Planet design and incorporating parts from the Hibberds. This change-over occurred around 1970 – the original engines having been found to be under-powered. An interesting article by Geoff may be found in* Light Railways *No.43, October 1973 and available online at* http://media.lrrsa.org.au/biko041/Light_Railways_041_044.pdf *The brickworks rail operations closed in 1980.*

Right: *The same train, at the base of the incline to the works. The Hibberd locomotive, previously at the near-end of the trucks, has run around to the quarry-end of the trucks, preparatory to hauling the now-empty trucks back to the quarry. The shed in the background is for stabling of the locomotives between shifts. A worn-out skip adorns the foreground. The back cover of LR267, June 2019 contained the first part of our Maylands reminiscences, however we erred in the date, 19 March 1963 in lieu of 19 March 1966.*

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