



# The Depot Diary

No. 79  
Feb  
2005

NEWSLETTER OF THE VALLEY HEIGHTS LOCOMOTIVE HERITAGE MUSEUM BLUE MOUNTAINS DIVISION OF THE NEW SOUTH WALES RAIL TRANSPORT MUSEUM ABN 25 000 570 463 ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO THE SECRETARY, VALLEY HEIGHTS LOCO DEPOT HERITAGE MUSEUM, P.O. BOX 484, SPRINGWOOD, N.S.W., 2777  
Web Site: [www.infoblue-mountains.net.au/locodepot](http://www.infoblue-mountains.net.au/locodepot)

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## 1. HAPPY NEW YEAR

Belated Happy New Year to all our Members. The Executive Committee trusts that you and your family enjoyed a Happy and safe Christmas and that we can look forward to your continued support in the New Year and beyond. The year 2005 promises to be a big year in the Rail Enthusiasts community, with many events being planned for the up coming 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the railways in New South Wales. Of course, we at Valley Heights will be contributing our part to these celebrations. For further details please see the report(s) in this and future editions of the Depot Diary.

## 2. MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Annual Subscriptions for the 2004/2005 membership year are now past their due date (31<sup>st</sup> December 2004). Renewals will continue to be accepted from those who still have not sent their subscription, however, they will no longer receive the Depot Diary until their membership has been renewed. It has been encouraging to see so many of our members continuing their support towards the Museum by renewing their Membership. We are also extremely grateful to the many who have donated quite generously to the Museum's General Restoration Fund. Your continued support is very much appreciated. Should you require another Renewal Form to be sent to you please contact our Membership Officer, Col Burne on (02) 4739 2423.

## 3. FISH REPORT

Hello everyone, Happy New Year.

As usual a lot seems to happen between Depot Diaries, the trouble is memorising all. A major project was undertaken to remove three stanchions nearest to the turntable. This appears to open up the area. Thanks to our Patron, Neal Cram for providing the finance for the Crane. Thanks to Jim Hall for his work on the jackhammer to remove associated concrete.



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Our thanks to Crown Forklifts for their assistance in the repairs to our electric forklift. They have provided a replacement battery and other parts. The Forklift should be in operation by mid March.

Our Publicity Officer Andrew Tester is going into hospital in March for an operation on his Kidney. All our best wishes are with Andrew at this time.

It is disappointing to report that we do not have any help with the Mannequins or Batteries. Tony Brown is endeavouring to have one of his suppliers help us.

As you will see further in the Diary planning is well underway for our part in the 150<sup>th</sup> Railway celebrations. We will need your support.

Our thanks to Grant Robinson who has taken up the role as our web site co-ordinator. Keep your eye on the site, as you will be seeing some changes. [Web Site: www.infoblue-mountains.net.au/locodepot](http://www.infoblue-mountains.net.au/locodepot)

Our thanks to Dick Holdsworth who has donated a 2ft, gauge trolley, which we hope to use in the de-ashing pit.

Our thanks to Lawry Lawless Headmaster at Winnalee High School with his donation of RRR crockery, silverware and glasses.

## 4. RAILWAYS 150<sup>TH</sup> CELEBRATIONS PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT



Now that we have entered 2005, the year of the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Railways of New South Wales, it is going to be full steam ahead to ensure that our plans come to fruition for the celebration of this event. Many events have been planned by the different heritage operators, to celebrate this occasion, so it should be a big year for the Rail enthusiast. Our planned celebrations are scheduled for September-October and it is hoped that we can start revealing our planned celebrations by the June edition of the Depot Diary. In the meantime, we will be writing to all our members in the near

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future seeking assistance to help staff this event. If any member is interested in what is already planned for the coming year, further details can be obtained online at [www.railcorp.info/150years/celebrating](http://www.railcorp.info/150years/celebrating) This is a specially produced website, specifically dedicated to the celebrations of the 150th Anniversary.

## 5. CONDOLENCES

It is with much regret that the Museum learned of the sad passing of Jantina Geelan on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2004. Jantina was the wife of long time Museum member and supporter Kees Geelan. Kees has provided assistance with much of the Museum's electrical work particularly in the rewiring of the Museum's workshop and associated machinery. Jantina was also involved in the community, dedicating her time to our good neighbours the Springwood Boys and Girls Club. To Kees and his two children Andrew & Robyn, we extend our deepest sympathies to you in the sad loss of your wife and mum.

## 6. RAILMOTOR TOUR

For those of our Members who attended last years Railmotor Tour to Mudgee you will be pleased to know that this year's tour is currently being organised. Once again we will be using the CPH Railmotors from the Railmotor Society so bookings will be strictly limited to 70 passengers. As such it will be a case of first in best dressed. Tour details are still to be confirmed, however, brief details are as follows:

Date: Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2005

Cost: \$100-00 (approximately)

Destination: Kiama (Route – Valley Heights, Moss Vale, Robertson, Summit Tank, Unanderra, Kiama and return to Valley Heights via the South Coast).

Tour organiser, David Lewis is now accepting expressions of interest from those wanting to attend this exciting tour. If you are interested in partaking in this tour, please call David on (02) 9630 6304 and advise him of your Name, contact details and Number of bookings. No money is required as yet. Once the tour itinerary has been confirmed, full details will be sent to those whom have expressed interest in attending the tour and payment of a deposit will be required. Book early and avoid disappointment.

## 7. STaRPS REPORT

Now that we have introduced you to the pride of the STaRPS collection, Steam Tram Motor 103A, the next item(s) that need introducing are the Tram Trailer Cars that the Steam Tram Motor will be hauling.

*Thanks to STaRPS, in particular their archivist, Frank Moag for these historical notes on their B-class Tram Cars.*

STaRPS has two B-class steam tram trailer cars at Valley Heights. Both cars came from a demolished residential building. Car 93B is currently nearing the end of a thorough re-build and restoration programme, whilst its sister, 72B, is waiting its turn for similar attention.

Tramcar 93B was built by Hudson Brothers at Clyde in October 1889, whilst 72B was built by Henry Vale in January 1891. Records indicate that 93B was listed in the Sydney area from 1903-1913 where it was thought to have been used as a trailer for electric trams. The car was listed as being allocated to the Rockdale to Brighton-le-Sands tramway from 1914-1919, again as an electric trailer. Tramcar 72B was recorded as being one of the four cars used to open the Arncliffe to Bexley steam tramway.

From records, as at 30<sup>th</sup> June each year the following was noted:

- 1920-both cars at Baulkham Hills.
- 1921-Both cars at Baulkham Hills.
- 1923-72B at Arncliffe and 93B at Baulkham Hills.
- 1924 to 1926-both cars at Arncliffe and fitted with electric lighting.

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- 1927-both cars held at Arncliffe after closure of Arncliffe tramway on 31/12/1926.
- 1928-both cars listed in store at Randwick.

Both cars were sold in April 1932, to Corbetta King and Evelyn King (presumably sisters) who transferred the cars to their land at no. 3 Hillcrest Road, Berowra. It was here that the two cars were later incorporated into a dwelling. The two cars were set apart and were enclosed within an overall structure. Car 93B was on the western side and essentially contained the sleeping quarters, whilst 72B became areas for dining, kitchen, laundry, bath and toilet facilities.

The property was eventually sold twice, coming into the ownership of William and May Ward during 1954. Eventually, as a widow, the property passed from May Ward's estate to Kerrie Booth during 1997.

The society was aware of the presence of this interesting item of real estate since the society's inception. Indeed the property was featured in a newspaper article in the early 1950's. Subsequently David Lewis made contact with May by letter asking if a small group may inspect the tramcars. She agreed. David, with Frank and Leila Moag, visited in 1994. May at that time was an 80-year-old widow. May was cautious and stressed she did not want to become a tourist attraction as she had been burgled twice before. The society respected these wishes and kept the houses whereabouts to only a few of us.

David continued to visit May quite regularly. Over the next twelve months they became quite friendly. David, on behalf of STaRPS, was always open as to what our interest in the house was, but no pressure was ever brought to bear on May. She recognised why we were so interested in her house and used to say that if she ever won the lottery she would build a new house and that we could have the trams the next day! David used to bring May a lottery ticket every time he visited.

May passed away and David saw her death notice in the paper. David followed the sale of the house over the next 10 or so months culminating in the property being auctioned in October 1996. After negotiating with the new owner a price and conditions for the demolition of the house and removing the trams was agreed upon. Once the block was cleared by the society the tramcars were moved from their resting place of 65 years on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 1997. The

two tramcars arrived at Valley Heights later in the day, having passed through the old operating site in Parramatta Park to retrieve spare bogies.

The society commenced restoration on 93B immediately as it was assessed that the body was in better condition than that of its sister. Car 72B had succumbed to the ravages of time due to being more exposed to the prevailing elements and moisture penetration from the use of it as kitchen, bath, laundry and toilet. The bogies, badly damaged in the Parramatta Park fire of 1993, are being rebuilt and replacement braking gear is also being progressively assembled. The vacuum braking system needed substantial manufacture of the brake pans and other attachments.

#### **Acquisition and loss of trailer 44B.**

The society had been aware of B-cars in the Newcastle area. One unfortunately was found to be beyond repair and ultimately yielded a number of spare parts. One other had been in the society's "sights", was in good condition and was in a secure location.

Subsequently the society acquired this B-class tramcar from behind a home in Lambton, a suburb of Newcastle. This car had a long family history of being used as a residence for several generations of the Weaver family.

Tramcar 44B (original number 22) was built at the Tramway Workshops, Randwick. It entered service in July 1895, being withdrawn from service in Newcastle. In August 1935, the Weaver family purchased the car from the Hamilton Depot. It was placed on a block of land and housed the first generation whilst a permanent home was built in front of the car. Subsequent generations have lived in the car over the ensuing years.

Member Frank Moag was aware of the tramcar for many years and made himself known to the Weaver family. As was the case with the Berowra cars, Frank became friendly with the family and kept in touch without pressuring our interest. Eventually the last owner decided to re-develop the block and advised Frank that the society may take possession of the tramcar. On 18/8/2000 Frank Weaver signed over the car to the society and arrangements were made to transfer it to Valley Heights to join 72B and 93B. The transfer was made by road arriving on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2000.

This tramcar was unique as it had been fitted with 32-volt electric lights and most of this conduit, wiring and switches were still in situ. Much work would have needed to be expended to bring the car back to service, but with the society's experiences with the destroyed two B-cars at Parramatta Park and with 93B at Valley Heights this was not an insurmountable worry.

However it is sad to relate that this tram-car was totally destroyed, in a matter of minutes, by bushfires raging on the whole of the Blue Mountains area, on Christmas Day, 2001. With the loss of tramcar 44B the opportunity was lost to be able, in the future, to operate a three-car steam tram.

*A footnote to the loss. This was the catalyst by which the society immediately made representations to the local state member requesting help and assistance following the loss of the tramcar. This initial contact by STARPS and supported by VHLDHM paved the way for the grant to re-build the retaining wall and to erect a new depot building to safely house steam tramway rolling stock.*

The Society does have two other tram trailer cars in its possession onsite, including a replica double deck car. This history of these cars will be detailed in a later Depot Diary.

### **8. MANNEQUIN NEEDED**

We require the services of three Mannequins to model our collection of railway uniforms. The Museum would like to hear from anyone who knows the whereabouts of any unemployed Mannequins that could be donated to the Museum's Exhibits.

### **9. ASH TUNNEL TROLLEY**

The Museum would like to hear from any members or past depot employees who may have plans or photographs of the hand

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operated Ash Trolley that was used in the Ash Tunnel. The Trolley ran on a narrow gauge track through the Ash Tunnel and was used in the cleaning of locomotive ash from the Ash Pits in the Arrival and Departure Roads above the tunnel. As it is the Museum's plans to restore this unique feature of the depot, the Museum is interested in hearing from anybody who hold photographs or plans of this trolley. If you can help, please contact the Museum on (02) 4751 4638 at weekends.

### **10. MUSEUM ACCREDITATION PROGRAM**

During 2004 representatives from the Museum and STaRPS were invited to participate in a pilot trial Museum accreditation program.

In the next edition of The Depot Diary we will advise our members on what the program was all about, what our representatives learned from the program and where this will help the Museum into the future.

### **11. MEMBER'S INFORMATION MEETING**

Your Executive Committee has decided to start Member's Information Meetings on a regular basis each year. They will be scheduled quarterly in February, May, August and November. The August Meeting will be held in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting (AGM) where members get the opportunity to address the committee, during open forum towards the end of the Meeting.

Members will be advised via the Depot Diary of future meeting dates and will get the opportunity to lodge any questions they wish to address to the committee prior to the meeting so that the committee can have an appropriate response for the members at the meeting.

The **first** Member's Information Meeting will be held on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2005 commencing at 2:00pm at the Museum, followed by a BBQ at 4:00pm.

This meeting will be open for all Members. If you are attending and would like to table a question to the committee, please submit your question by email to our Chairman, Ted Mullett on email: [emullett@bigpond.net.au](mailto:emullett@bigpond.net.au) or to our Vice Chairman, Andrew Tester on email: [atmuseum@optusnet.com.au](mailto:atmuseum@optusnet.com.au) or by mailing them to the Museum's postal address, on the front page of the Depot Diary.

### **12. WORKS REPORT**

#### **Work Hours**

As at the end of January 2005, the following hours had been logged by our volunteers for the months of August - September.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>December</b>	<b>January</b>
Services	9	13
Buildings	15	220
Model Railway	10	26
Workshop	30	17
Exhibits	78	116
Landscaping / Grounds	124	200
Publicity	NIL	NIL
Retail	86	128
General / Admin	118	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>766</b>

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### Reminder - Attendance Register

Can all members please ensure that you register all details relevant to your attendance at the Depot, in the Attendance Register? This enables an accurate record of your time spent on each project. Workers Concession hours are calculated from these records. It is also a requirement for Insurance purposes, should anything unforeseen happen to a worker while on the site.

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### 13. AROUND THE MUSEUM

**Chargeman's Building** – Work continues on the work associated with the restoration of this building. Presently work has seen the new roof over the verandah of this building completed. The team has now commenced work on the installation of new replacement weatherboard cladding to the eastern and northern walls on this building.

**Overhead Wiring Stanchions** – On Saturday 12th February 2003 three of the former overhead wiring stanchions were removed. Approaches were made by the Museum to RIC and approval was granted. The three stanchions involved were the termination stanchion located immediately in front of the former DLE's Building on the western side of the Turntable and the first two east of the turntable heading back towards the station. While these form part of the heritage of the site, they are being removed to improve the visual aesthetics of the Museum complex and assist in operational aspects, particularly when it comes to turning larger locomotives or items of rolling stock on the turntable. All other stanchions will remain in place.



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**Watering Column** – For quite some time now, member Ken Rudd has been working on the restoration of the Museum's Watering Column. This exhibit is an example of those designed for use under overhead power lines. The work undertaken on this exhibit to date has included the de-scaling and painting of all the columns parts and renewing of individual pieces that could not be restored. It is planned to reassemble this exhibit in the former locomotive servicing area, between the Arrival and Departure roads, adjacent to the Ash Pits in both these roads. The location of where the original watering column has been located and work is now commencing on the rebuilding of the foundations to re-erect the column on. It is hoped that this exhibit will be restored in time for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the railways in September.

### 14. NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have joined up until the end of November, and trust they have a long and enjoyable association with the Museum.

Name	Membership Number
David Grove - Faulconbridge	403
Eric Kent - St Marys	404
Lyn O'Grady - Warrimoo	405

### 15. CHANGING ADDRESS?

Are you moving home or changing your contact details?

Please ensure that you keep us informed of your correct details. This will save the Museum money in postage and will ensure that we can continue sending you copies of the Depot Diary. Please contact the Museum's Membership Officer, at our Postal Address with your revised details.

### 16. MUSEUM ADMISSION FOR MEMBERS

Just a reminder for the benefit of members of Valley Heights, the RTM, STaRPS and the Springwood Historical Society, in order to gain free entry to the Valley Heights Museum on Open Days, please have your current Membership Card / Badge ready for presentation to shop staff when asked to do so.

Failure to present your Membership Card/Badge when requested, will require payment of the Admission charge applicable.

### 17. UP COMING EVENTS

Event	Dates
Open Days - February	Sun. 6 & 20/2/2005
Open Days - March	Sun. 6 & 20/3/2005
Springwood Model Railway Exhibition	Sat. & Sun. 12 & 13/3/2005
Open Days - April	Sun. 3 & 17/4/2005
Springwood Foundation Day (Participation to be confirmed)	Sat. 2/4/2005
Members Meeting/Information Day	Sat. 28/5/2005
Railmotor Tour - Kiama	Sun. 29/5/2005

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