

The Depot Diary

No. 80
April
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

All Advertisements in this Newsletter are free, in recognition for the people and companies who have helped us in our activities.

1. APOLOGY

To all our Members who receive their copy of the Depot Diary through the mail, our apologies for the late delivery of the February 2005 (No: 79) edition.

2. FISH REPORT

I hope you all had a good Easter?

Since the last Diary the Crown forklift is now operational. A large Air compressor has been received from Oasis Nursery.

Thanks to Jim hall for his repairs to the holes left by the removal of the stanchions. Jim has also reorganised and cleaned up the member's meal room.

Planning for new engine shed is almost complete. A tender has been accepted with minor amendments. The next step is to put in a building application to Blue Mountains City Council.

Discussions are still ongoing with Warrimoo Model Railway Club in regards to their joining our Museum.

Work will be commencing shortly with the replacement of the hail damaged workshop roof. Thanks to RIC and Stratco - Penrith for making this possible.

Negotiations are still ongoing with sealing of the Access Road. There is no joy in sight at this time.

3. RAILWAYS 150TH CELEBRATIONS PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT



Planning proceeds in earnest towards our event to mark the 150th Anniversary Celebrations. We can reveal at this stage that our celebrations will commence on Monday 19th September 2005 and proceed through to Friday 7th October 2005. This period covers the last week of Term 3 and the entire school holidays. Presently we are canvassing all the schools between Emu Plains and Mt Victoria, to tell them about this special occasion and invite them to the Museum on School Excursions during the last week of Term 3. A Schools Art Competition is also being investigated with Expressions of Interest being sought from all the High Schools in the area, regarding their participation. To date no feedback has been received from the schools.

In the near future our Chairman, Ted Mullett will be writing all members residing in NSW, seeking their support to this event. This is going to be a huge undertaking calling on as many resources as possible to staff the Museum during the 3 weeks of the event. We request that you give us some favourable consideration towards assisting in this event. Areas that

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Members will be asked to assist in include, Retail (Admission Ticket & Souvenir Sales), Tour Guides, Model Railway, and General Duties. Hoping we can reveal more for the next Depot Diary.

4. RAILMOTOR TOUR

Reminder – There are still a very limited number of seats available on this tour.:

Date: Sunday 29th May 2005

Cost: \$100-00

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 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. the tour itinerary has been confirmed, full details will be sent to those whom are attending the tour and payment is now required. **Don't be disappointed.**

5. WEBSITE

As was briefly mentioned in our last Depot Diary we now have a new Webmaster. We would like to welcome Grant Robinson as our new Webmaster. Since Grant's appointment as Webmaster, many changes have been made to the existing site to bring it up to date. Some of the new features include a Location Map, Online copies of past Depot Diaries, Opening Hours, Admission Prices and Calendar of Open Days, for the current year and online Membership details. Many other options are also being discussed and explored as possible additions in the future including a Photo Gallery and a Retail page. We would encourage all members to visit our website at www.infoblue-mountains.net.au/locodepot as we are seeking feedback on the new design and layout. If you have any feedback please email our Publicity Officer, Andrew Tester at email: atmuseum@optusnet.com.au. Grant is now redesigning the website for STaRPS. If you are a STaRPS member and would like to review the test Website for STaRPS, log on to www.infoblue-mountains.net.au/locodepot/test.

6. SPRINGWOOD MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION

The Museum once again participated in the annual Springwood Model Railway Exhibition. The event was held over the weekend on the 12th & 13th March 2005. This year's event was an outstanding success with record retail sales and a huge thank you goes to all of our members for their assistance over the weekend.

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7. MEMBER'S INFORMATION MEETING

Reminder - The **first** Valley Heights Member's Information Meeting will be held on Saturday 28th 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 or to our Vice Chairman, Andrew Tester on email: atmuseum@optusnet.com.au or by mailing them to the Museum's postal address, on the front page of the Depot Diary. The next Member's Meeting will be at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) where members will get the opportunity to discuss any issues during General Business following the formal proceeding of the AGM.

8. STaRPS REPORT

The last issue of the Depot Diary outlined the history of the B class Tram Cars that STaRPS will use behind their Steam Tram Motor 103a. STaRPS also own two other Tram Trailer Cars at Valley Heights.

Replica Double Decker Tram Car – This replica car was constructed by the Tramway Department on the frame of electric tram K746 in 1951 for the Jubilee of Federation. Following this, the replica was placed into storage until spring

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1956, which saw the commencement of the Sydney Waratah Festivals. As part of the Sydney Waratah Festival, street parades were held annually until the Festival's demise in 1973. As part of this parade a replica Sydney Steam Tram comprising of this car and a Tram Motor Body mounted on a tractor, were included in the parade. The replica Double Decker tramcar soon found its way to the Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences where it was stored until the 1990's when the Powerhouse Museum began rationalising its transport collection and STaRPS were invited to inspect the Car. Delegates from STaRPS inspecting

the car were suitably impressed with the vehicle, that arrangements were made to relocate the car to Valley Heights.

Permission was granted by the Powerhouse Museum on the provision that the car could be stored and restored in a secure, weatherproof environment. On Thursday, 5th June 1997, custody of the replica Double Decker was transferred to STaRPS with its arrival at Valley Heights, where it now awaits restoration.

Former NSW Electric Tram Car N685 – This Tram Car entered service on the Sydney electric tram system early last century. This car and car N619 were acquired by STaRPS to replace the B Class trailers destroyed by the fire in Parramatta Park in 1993. These were initially transferred to Thirlmere to allow restoration to commence however upon closer examination of both cars it was found N685 was in better condition and the decision was made to restore this car and use N619 as a source of spare parts. N685 is currently just a skeleton on temporary bogies and is now stored at Valley Heights.

9. MUSEUM ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

STaRPS and VHLDHM were invited to participate in a pilot trial for museum accreditation during 2004. Four delegates, two from each group, attended seminars and meetings throughout the year. This participation made us all aware of the necessity to properly plan our respective museum attractions professionally and with thought, generally enhance visitor requirements and amenities. The pilot programme concluded at a gathering of all participants at the Fairfield history museum last November.

STaRPS first became aware of Victorian museum accreditation in 1998-99 through the society's membership with the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia (COTMA). COTMA's Victorian affiliates began the process of museum accreditation following legislation that established the criteria. Subsequently, museum accreditation was granted to our tramway museum contemporaries south of the "big creek".

STaRPS first became aware of a possible NSW move towards a government museum accreditation proposal during the early years when establishing our accreditation as a railway operator. STaRPS was invited, along with all heritage operators, to a series of seminars conducted by the then Rail Infrastructure Corporation (RIC) at the Technology Park, Eveleigh, in 1999 and 2000. Bruce Irwin, Peter Stock and the late Cliff Currell attended these seminars. Amongst operational subjects, one session dealt specifically with the official perceived ultimate goal that, in the future, all heritage operators may well need to be self-sufficient. The session extended into the possibility of museum accreditation being eventually established by legislation in NSW, based on the Victorian model. Through RIC invaluable contacts were made by STaRPS with the Museums and Galleries Foundation of NSW (MFG), a direct result from attending these seminars.

Cliff and Peter met with the helpful staff of MGF. We, at STaRPS, soon experienced the advice, encouragement, help and assistance that this organisation can and does freely offer. Cliff, Peter or Bruce attended many half-day or full-day seminars at city or country locations relating to museum operations.

For 2003, a pilot programme was instituted by MGF to prepare selected regional museums into the processes of self-evaluation techniques so as to be better prepared for any future accreditation. STaRPS applied for inclusion in this pilot. We were unsuccessful. The pilot only being held in the Hunter Valley region and further, we were deficient in certain administrative and documentary procedures. However the MGF did visit the Valley Heights complex during 2003 and met with STaRPS and VHLDHM representatives. After this visit it was clear that STaRPS, as a "stand alone" organisation operating in

conjunction with another, must combine under the "all in or nothing" concept. The VHLDHM immediately embraced the concept of jointly applying with STaRPS for inclusion in the 2004 pilot programme then being finalised. The rationale for this was *Valley Heights is one complex with two (or more) players, each complimenting the other*. Once that criteria was established, good things started to happen.

This led to the new joint committee representing our heritage site at Valley Heights being formed, comprising Bruce Irwin, David Hunt, David Torr and Peter Stock, who acted as the convenor. This new application was successful. It was regrettable that Cliff did not live to see the application finally accepted and taken to its conclusion as he put considerable thoughts, time, effort and enthusiasm into writing-up the initial documentation required.

An interesting, hard-working year was experienced by the committee throughout 2004. There was much discussion and further comprehensive documentation to prepare, meetings to attend and self-examination of both groups individual and collective activities to analyse. In October last year the MGF review committee visited Valley Heights as part of the final stages of the programme to talk through what they considered priorities with the complex's development. Although a rainy and cool day, our visitors enjoyed many rides on the Track Maintenance Vehicles before getting down to the day's agenda.

Finally, our group met with the other selected participants from the western region of Sydney last November where a discussion and "wash-up" of the year's activities was discussed. Lessons learned show we, as a *tourist destination*, need to be aware of the many pitfalls that may thwart our progress and just how to avoid those pitfalls. Certain strategies are now in the pipeline as a result of our participation. These include an enquiry for guidance on how to use shop mannequins for inter-active displays, guidance with the documentation of each groups small exhibits and, in the STaRPS field, conservation of steam tram destination rolls and the scanning onto CD the R. F. Moag photographic collection. Most importantly a meeting chaired by Volunteering Australia will be held in early February at which the committees of both groups will participate to learn techniques on how we can be better manage our personal succession with new members.

Our Valley Heights collective museum programme is not complete by any standard. It only just scratches the surface of what still needs to be done. Whatever the future may hold for eventual museum accreditation in this state two things are certain. Firstly, our two groups are now in a better position to prepare for any future museum accreditation and secondly, the museum complex will surely become *the major tourist destination on the lower Blue Mountains*.

10. GET WELL

The Museum would like to express its best wishes to member Peter Sage, who with his son Ted, has been involved in the Restoration of the BL Carriage. Peter has not been well for some time and was recently hospitalised for treatment. To Peter, all the very best for a comfortable recovery. The Museum's thoughts are with you and your wife Rosemary during these times and your Museum colleagues look forward to seeing you onsite again in the future.

11. AROUND THE MUSEUM

Chargeman's Building – Work has progressed well on the installation of new replacement weatherboard cladding. As at the completion of the March work week, our band of dedicated retirees now have fitted the insulation and new weatherboards to about two thirds of the northern and eastern walls. Although wet weather conditions plagued the latter part of the week, this didn't stop the retirees on the insulation and weatherboard task. Thanks to the shelter provided by the new verandah roof, work Depot Diary No. 80
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was then diverted to the front (southern) wall. This building is now starting to look some what loved.

Compressor Shed – The new compressor shed located in the Members Top Carpark has had the new concrete slab floor painted

12. EXHIBITS

BL356 – Restoration work on the BL continues under the watchful eye of Ted Sage. For some time now work has been concentrated on the interior of the carriage.

Shell Oil Tanker – Terry Matchett and John Stanley have taken over this project. Progress on this project has seen the springs restored, ready for reinstallation over the axle boxes, painting of the of the tank in primer has long been completed and work has commenced on painting the underside of the tank white, in preparation for its coat of final colour, yellow. Once the underside of the Tank receives its final coat it will be reunited with the frame.

4601 – Some minor cosmetic restoration has commenced on 4601. This has included interior cleaning of both cabs the cleaning of headlights and windows and gauges. Some minor painting of white has been carried out on parts of the cab ceiling that was already white and other small components that were also white externally on the locomotive.

Track Maintenance Vehicles – The Museum has a good collection Track Maintenance Vehicles in our collection. Many of these are privately owned by members of STaRPS. They range from a manually operated tricycle and Sheffield trolley to motorised quadricycle vehicles including a Villiers and a Wickham to name a few. There are also a number of others that are in varying state of repair or restoration. Some of those named above are used to offer rides for our visitors on non-steaming days. As a result, they require regular maintenance in order to comply with accreditation requirements so that we can use these exhibits to provide rides.

13. SMALL EXHIBITS

As part of our preparation for the 150th Anniversary we would like some help in sorting through our large collection Small and miscellaneous exhibits to prepare for display during the three weeks of the event. The work will also include the preparation of the display room. We would require the help of 3 or 4 members to assist the person co-ordinating this work. If you feel you can assist in this work please contact our Publicity Officer, Andrew Tester on (02) 4735 8601 and we will pass on your details to this project co-ordinator who will contact you to organise a mutual time to start on this project.

14. DOGS

Those our members who occasionally bring their pet dogs while working on site are reminded that their dog must be attached to a lead at all times and not allowed to roam the Museum unsupervised. This decision had to be taken as there were Occupational Health & Safety concerns surrounding animals on site. Dogs are not allowed in any buildings, particularly the

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Members Meal Room and Toilets, at all times. Members who bring their dogs are also responsible to clean up after their animal and not leave it up to others to do your responsible duty. Should it become evident that these guidelines not being observed, we will have no alternative but to ban dogs from the Museum period.

15. WORKS REPORT

Work Hours - As at the end of March 2005, the following hours had been logged by our volunteers for the months of February and March 2005.

Activity	February	March
Services	8	4
Buildings	150	298
Model Railway	1	12
Workshop	40	29
Exhibits	91	83
Landscaping / Grounds	169	76
Publicity	1	78
Retail	93	125
General / Admin	91	51
Total	644	756

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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16. NEW MEMBERS

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

Name	Membership Number
Phillip Pedley - Blaxland	406

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Fax. 02-47519315
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17. EMAIL

Do you have email access and would like your copy of the Depot Diary emailed to you. Please let us know of your email address. **What are the advantages of getting the Depot Diary by email?** Getting the Depot Diary emailed, you will not only get it quicker than through the conventional mail system, you will also receive a colour copy of the Depot Diary.

If you already receive the Depot Diary by email, please ensure you advise us of any changes to your email address. If you no longer wish to receive the Depot Diary by email please advise.

This will ensure you continue to receive your copies of the Depot Diary.

18. 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 your copies of the Depot Diary. Please contact the Museum's Membership Officer, at our Postal Address with your revised details.

19. 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.

20. UP COMING EVENTS

Event	Dates
Open Days - April	Sun. 3 & 17/4/2005
Open Days - May	Sun. 1 & 15/5/2005
Retiree Work week	Sat.16/5/05-20/05/05
Classic Car Club Visit	Sun. 15/5/2005
Members Meeting/Information Day	Sat. 28/5/2005
Railmotor Tour - Kiama	Sun. 29/5/2005
Open Days - June	Sun. 5 & 19/6/2005
Open Days - July	Sun. 3 & 17/7/2005

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