

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.infobluemountains.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

For the benefit of our Members please accept the Publicity Manager's apology for the lateness of this edition of the Depot Diary. Unfortunately the current pressures of his fulltime employment have impacted on his ability to deliver this edition of the Diary in a timelier manner. Normally the Diary would have been issued in April, June and August. For this year the June edition will be incorporated in with the August edition which will also contain the Annual Reports for this year's Annual General Meeting. The news in this Depot Diary captures the events for the period March to May.

2. FISH REPORT

Due to the lateness of the edition of the Diary our usual report from the Chairman has been held over until the next edition where I am sure Ted will have an extensive report to share with you.

3. THE CHARGEMEN'S BUILDING – FINAL REPORT

The previous report (*Depot Diary No. 86 - April 2006*), indicated basically that the building was complete externally, with the exception of several minor items. One of the problems that we had from day one was lack of working space. The building is located between a rock face on the northern elevation and road 1 of the roundhouse on the southern side. It is hard against the 60 ft turntable on the eastern end and abuts some uncovered space on the western end between the road 1 wall of the roundhouse and the previously mentioned rock wall. Because the Museum was open to the public, wire fences were out of the question, so the decision was made from day one to work within the confines of the building at all times and to also keep it secure. This meant that everything was stored inside, which included an electric rip saw bench, carpenters work bench, a double shelving unit, four step ladders, six scaffold planks, five carpenters stools, assorted cartons and boxes and the necessary timber and paint to complete the work. The reason why so much material was purchased so far ahead was to



Above: Carpenter David Grove fitting the lock to the door in the centre room. Note the new boards on the right hand wall

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and the existing boards which have been cleaned up on the left hand wall.

take advantage of the considerable savings in costs that were on offer at the time.

While most of the work was going on outside the building there was not a problem, but once the exterior was complete and everyone was working inside, it became quite crowded.



Above: John Parker placing packing pieces at the junction of the floor and the walls to support the skirting boards.

But help was at hand. One of our group offered the suggestion that we were starting to get nowhere fast the way things were, and proposed that a 20ft (6m) container be obtained and placed in position at the western end of the Chargeman's Building, to be used as a store for the work in progress. He further indicated that he would fund such a container, an offer which was gratefully accepted. The provision of the container made such a difference to our working conditions it was almost unbelievable. Early in the first report about this work it was stated that the intention was to take the building back to its original format. This meant that additional door and window openings that had been added over the years had to be removed, together with other openings such as wall air conditioners, man holes and flue pipes. As required the internal lining boards were removed, the openings framed-up and left ready for re-sheeting. All lining

boards so removed were stored for re-use. The lining boards, which covered both the wall and the ceilings, may have been standard mouldings in 1913, but they were not in 2004. The boards used in the original building were described as 4 x 3/4 T&G VJ clear Oregon boards in full lengths. When deciphering a timber specification such as this the 4" meant that the boards were dressed or planned from a 4" nominal sawn width board which was nominally 3/4 inch sawn thickness, and as lining boards at that time were not planed or dressed on the back or reverse face, only planed on the front, the finished thickness was 5/8 inch. The T&G VJ stood for tongue and grooved, vee jointed. Therefore the description of the board tells the professional all about it in a coded form.



Above: In this image lining boards being fitted to the new partition wall between rooms 1 and 2. This wall was necessary to keep the interior architecturally correct in accordance with heritage requirements.

The original boards were of clear Oregon, which is a North American timber and in the late 1800's and early 1900's massive quantities of this species of timber was imported into Australia. It is grown mainly in the United States and Canada where it is known as Douglas Fir and was freely available in clear grades right through to construction grades. The NSW Government Railways imported huge amounts over the years, and just one major use for construction grade Oregon was the floor frames in hundreds of the "Yankee" end platform suburban cars, and every one of them was 51'0" long in single length timber. While Oregon timber is still available in Sydney, the quality in the higher grades has fallen over time, large quantities such as we required were unable to be met, and costs were prohibitive, so they virtually priced themselves out of contention.



Above: Phil Pedley carrying out patching of the original lining boards in the centre room.

Because the lining boards were a special run, long lead times had to be allowed in order that timber could be procured and machined. But before that could happen quantities had to be calculated, which of course fell to me. It is a bit like trying to see around corners, but I made a calculated guess and placed an order for 1069 lineal metres. The species of timber we chose to mill the new boards from was Queensland Finger Jointed Hoop Pine. Hoop Pine is a very dense timber which takes paint very well, but is plagued with knots at very close intervals.

Modern technology has come to the fore and has developed a method of providing a clear board by cutting all the knots out and machining a finger joint on each end of the clear sections of each board, and some of the boards are as short as 200mm or 8" and gluing them together in a non stop process. It also makes selected lengths easy to obtain, and in our situation we chose 5.4m or 18'0 lengths.

When the Chargeman's Office was still under Railway control, the walls and some of the ceilings in rooms 2 and 3 were sheathed with hardboard, in an effort to modernise it. Then into the cavity between the studs, 32mm or 1 1/4" diameter holes were bored through the hardboard and original lining board, and a type of insulation was blown in, and when the cavity was full, the hole was closed with a cork plug, sanded off flush on the external face of the hardboard. Many of these boards had no other blemish than the holes, and it was decided to leave these in place. We had reached the stage where we had removed so many defective boards that we had to be doubly sure whether repair or replacement would be the choice.



Above: Dennis Brown and John Parker sorting out a plan of attack for the next phase of the work.

Where the board with the holes were retained, an off-cut of old lining board was screwed and glued to the rear face of the lining board, before the new weatherboards were fixed, to provide fixing for the new patches to be applied from the inside. Those patches were made from Western Red Cedar timber, screwed and glued into position. This species of timber was used because it is easy to work, particularly in awkward positions. There were many ceiling and wall penetrations, which had been covered by the hardboard and these were almost always patched or repaired with board retrieved from somewhere else in the building. Minor patching was carried out in many places using "Builder's Bog" which is a two pack filler material system, and each batch once mixed, has a short working life. It is very much affected by the weather, and in hot weather it sets quite rapidly, and in cold weather quite slowly. When set, it is cleaned up with sandpaper and left ready for painting.

The building, when new, was virtually three adjacent rooms and the wall between rooms 1 and 2 had been removed while it was in railway service. A new wall was erected between these rooms with a 1200 wide door opening in it, and a similar opening was cut in the wall between rooms 2 and 3. These openings were

required to fit the building for its new role as a display area for small and miscellaneous exhibits. New lining boards commenced to be fixed in April 2006 and they were complete by November the same year. A new lining board ceiling was installed in room 3. As a concession to age this ceiling was installed using a nail gun, which made things so much easier.

New external door jambs were installed, complete with DAR (dressed all round) architraves externally and a fixed glazed sash above each door. The three external four panel doors were made up from old doors retrieved from a railway station. Six old doors were cannibalised to make three good ones. New bolection moulds were installed externally to the doors, while the inlay moulds on the internal faces of the doors were recycled. New internal door jamb linings, architraves and skirtings, all of finger jointed material were installed, and scotia moulds to all internal corners were installed. A modern electrical switchboard had been installed, which matched nothing, so a door height dual purpose cupboard was installed over the front of it, giving access to the switchboards and storage for some cleaning equipment. The cupboard was made out of matching wall lining boards, and it looks like part of the original structure.



Above: Taken from room 2 looking into room 3. Painting is in progress.

Painting was the next procedure, and all paints used were oil based. The ceilings are 11'0" high and they were given four coats, being one primer, one under coat and two coats of satin finish enamel. All with a brush off an 8' step ladder. The walls were treated in the same fashion, and the architraves, skirtings and windows were finished in full gloss enamel.

The timber floors in this building matched the rest of it. Some sections were hardwood, some oregon, some a mixture. Some sections had hot bitumen poured all over them in an effort to prevent draughts, and in some areas where there had been a desk for many years there were quite pronounced wear marks by feet as they had shuffled over time. The worst of these problems were repaired, a manhole was installed, (there was no underfloor access before) and the whole of the floor was covered with hardboard underlay, using over 7,000 special underlay nails to fix it. On top of that was laid carpet tiles, which the Museum had in stock. Once these were laid, the difference was amazing.

To complete the picture, the electrician installed brass tumbler switches to the drop lights with cone shaped light shades. Termite bait stations have been installed around the building, and steel security grilles have been manufactured and installed to all glass areas.

The work commenced on 10 May 2003, and was completed on 15 June 2007. It took four years and one month to complete, logging 10,900 hours of work. Without a doubt, it was one of

the most difficult jobs that we have ever had to contend with, or to put it another way, one would not think that one could have so much bad luck in such a small area.

However, it is now complete, and I am very proud of the people who helped to bring it to such a conclusion. When I refer to my diary, when we started we had an average of 3.5 people a day working on it, and when we finished we had almost 8 people per day. And when one considers that the average age of the members of the Retiree Restoration Group is 72, it is a pretty fair effort. (Now it is apparent why we used the nail gun on the room 3 ceiling).

The work was carried out without accident or injury of any kind, and while it was hard and difficult, we did have a lot of fun and enjoyed each others company. It was a challenge that we met.

4. HOLLYWOOD COMES TO VALLEY HEIGHTS



You may remember this heading, when it first appeared in the Depot Diary No. 92 (April 2007). It was about a short film created by some locals, namely director Brad Haynes and executive producer / stills photographer Sasha Huckstepp, about an ex. WW1 soldier and a Japanese P.O.W. held captive at Cowra in 1942.

I won't say too much as it still at the cinemas, being shown from Glenbrook to Tasmania.

It is called Broken Sun and it runs for 90 minutes.

It does feature our very own movie star or should I say the hands of our member Peter Butler supposedly driving the locomotive in the movie.

The track scenes that they shot at the depot were quite effective. Being a big fan of Australian films I found it enjoying whilst at the same time being a story based around war and two blokes who couldn't be friends - a little sad. Overall being a film shot on shoestring budget (as usual for Australian films, past or present) Brad and his crew did a very good job with most of it being filmed in his shed near the depot and the outside scene's being shot at Holbrook in southern N.S.W.

For more info visit www.brokensunfilm.com

Once again I'd like to say well done to Brad, Sasha and the rest of the crew. (Article supplied by Jim Hall).

5. OFFICE OF RAIL HERITAGE – DISPOSAL OF ROLLINGSTOCK

Expression of Interest in the Disposal of Rollingstock – No doubt some of you would be aware of the Disposal of Rollingstock that was announced by RailCorp's Office of Rail Heritage. An extensive list of rollingstock deemed as being surplus was formulated and an Expression of Interest process was announced calling for interested parties to lodge their claim for available items.

Successful applicants would have to document their ability to be able to comply with the extensive criteria as set by RailCorp.

Some of the items listed included exhibits at Thirlmere that had been earmarked for display at Valley Heights as well some existing items already at Valley Heights.

The RTM has lodged their Expression of Interest for many items, some of which will be destined for Valley Heights. Those items for which an interest has been expressed which are earmarked for Valley Heights include steam locomotives 3214, 3616, and carriages ETB 6039, L647 (U Wagon) and RBR 1049.

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It is with much appreciation that we at Valley Heights would like to express our sincere thanks to Peter Berriman and his panel of hard working associates who spent many long hours on preparing the Expression of Interest in the items destined for Valley Heights, on our behalf.

In addition to these items, STaRPS have also lodged their own Expression of Interest in steam locomotive 1308 and passenger carriage LFA 179. Both of these items were in the possession of STaRPS under a long term loan arrangement from the RTM, prior to the fire and had money invested in them by STaRPS. We wish both STaRPS and the RTM well in their applications being successful, as this will ultimately benefit Valley Heights.

6. MT. VICTORIA GREAT TRAIN WEEKEND

Long time readers of the Depot Diary will recall how we hosted steam locomotives 3526 and 3801 last year. The locomotives visited the mountains as part of the Mt Victoria Great Train Weekend and the centenary celebrations for the Nepean River Railway Bridge. During their visit to the mountains the locomotives were accommodated at Valley Heights where the depot's steam era was revived. As each year goes by, interest with this event from the local and broader community grows. We again hosted the locomotives for this year's event. With 3801 not available due to its current boiler assessment, 3526 accompanied 3642 to the Mountains. This was the 36's first visit to the mountains since its recent overhaul. Next edition of the Depot Diary will contain a more extensive report and pictures on the weekend's event. In the meantime, here is a picture to whet your appetite.

Top Right: 3642 stands on the Turntable while attempts are made to try and balance the locomotive on the table without the need to split the locomotive and tender for turning. While the crew were able to achieve this, attempts to turn the locomotive and tender as a whole unit (if required) would be unsuccessful as the locomotive would not clear the DLE's Building. Photo: Andrew Tester.

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7. AROUND THE MUSEUM

New Tram Shed – Work is progressing well on the packing and tamping of the two sidings within the new Tram Shed. By the time you read this newsletter preparation for casting of the concrete slab floor will be complete and it is hoped that the slab will be completed during May.

Amenities Building – The April work week for the retirees group saw particular attention being given to the roof of the Amenities Building. This work primarily concentrated on the treatment of surface rust that was starting to take hold on the external surfaces of the corrugated iron roof. To perform this work in a safe environment for our retired volunteers the Museum hired a mobile cherry picker for the duration of the work. After wire brushing the rusted surfaces the corrugated iron was treated and painted. Another improvement to the roof



of the Amenities Building was the installation of two whirley bird roof ventilators. These have been strategically placed to discretely camouflage them so as to not detract from the aesthetic appearance and heritage significance of this building. *Left: A young retiree, Jim Hall offers his assistance in applying the paint to the roof of the Amenities Building. Photo: Peter Butler.*

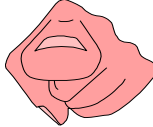
8. RETAIL REPORT

Refreshment Sales and Coffee Machine Operators – Those of you who have expressed interest in assisting our retail department in the sale of Refreshments and the use of the Coffee Machine will soon be advised as to when the training will take place. Once the training occurs we will be looking at formalising a roster so that we can offer our expanded range of refreshments. We would like to express our thanks to those who are offering their assistance with this new service to our visitors.

Rollingstock Videos - The Museum's existing stock of videos by Rollingstock Productions has been reduced to clear. All Rollingstock Videos are on sale for just \$11-00. Rollingstock have advised that they will no longer be supplying their products in VHS video format and as a result all existing stock of videos has been reduced to clear. All future products from Rollingstock will only be available in DVD format.

SHOP ASSISTANCE

"We have a need for more people to assist in the shop, so if you like dealing with people, or you think that you would like to work in the shop area, your help would be very gratefully appreciated. No retail experience necessary. Interested persons will be trained by experienced staff and depending on numbers volunteering, be rostered once every couple of months or so. Please contact our Retail Manager Steve Corrigan on 4759 1980 or email: sic_alco@pnc.com.au."



YOUR MUSEUM NEEDS YOU

9. WORKS REPORT

Work Hours – The following hours have been logged by our volunteers for the months of February, March and April 2008.

Activity	February	March	April
Services	15	18	33
Buildings	401	305	597
Model Railway	35	16	51
Workshop	72	22	6
Exhibits	127	162	117
Landscaping / Grounds	62	137	53
Publicity	26	65	4
Retail	101	160	253
General / Admin	83	71	68
Perway	57	233	181
Total	979	1189	1363

Reminder – Attendance Register

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 to be established. 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.

10. NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have joined and trust that they have a long and enjoyable association with the Museum.

Name	Membership Number
Stephen Dive, Springwood	497
John McCarthy, St Helens Park	498
Steve McCarthy, Ingleburn	499
Rod Hawkes, Rooty Hill	500
Leo Wathan, Mt Riverview	501
Trevor Oakley, Lawson	502

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A special welcome is extended Rod Hawkes who has subscribed as Member No: 500. Although it would be nice to have all 500 of our members financial it is encouraging to know that our Museum has attracted over 500 members since our inception. Of these 500 members we currently have 163 financial of which approximately 40% contribute actively in some form or another when time permits.

11. 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. 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. Please contact the Museum's Membership Officer, at our Postal Address with your revised details.

What are the advantages of getting the Depot Dairy by email? Receiving Depot Diary by email, you will not only get it quicker than through the conventional mail system, you will also receive a colour copy of the Newsletter.

12. 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.

13. 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.

Visiting members of Valley Heights, RTM and Springwood Historical Society are advised that while your Membership entitles you to unlimited free Admission to the Museum this **does not** include Tram/Trike Rides. Unlimited Member's rides cost – Adults: \$6-00, School Students \$4-00, Seniors/Concessions \$4-00.

14. FUTURE DEPOT DIARIES

If any members have any features that they would like to include in the Depot Diary please contact our Publicity Officer to submit an article. These can be reports of work carried out at the Museum to items of Railway Interest in general.

Coming up commencing in the next edition of the Depot Diary is an editorial extract from the Northern District Times on the Meadowbank Manufacturing Company. This was submitted by Dave Torr and permission to reproduce this article has been authorised by the editor of the Northern District Times Newspaper.

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OH&S AND MEMBER'S SAFETY

As you can appreciate, Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) is very much a part of our daily lives particularly within our working environment.

Even as a volunteer organisation we (as a Museum) have a duty of care to our visitors and working members who offer their services to ensure that their Safety is not at risk at any time while on site.

The Museum has a Joint Operations and Safety Committee (JO&SC) that is made up of members of the Museum, STaRPS and the Springwood Historical Society whose job it is to ensure that operational issues and items of safety are discussed and addressed accordingly.

This new section of the Depot Diary will form the communication channel through which the Members will be bought up to date regarding onsite Museum Safety.

Each issue will have items of safety contained within this column, some of which will be repeated from one issue to the next.

In the interest of all our Members safety, particularly those who work on site we encourage you to read this column in each issue and become familiar with its content for the benefit of your personal safety.

Members are advised that when working onsite it is important that you sign on for duty in the Sign On book located in the member's Meal Room at the rear of Road 5 of the Roundhouse. Likewise at the end of your time, please ensure that you remember to Sign Off before you leave for home. This is important for Workers Insurance purposes, as it is a record for when you were on duty at the Museum should something unforeseen occur.

Safety Clothing – We ask that when you come to work for the Museum that you come appropriately dressed for the work that you intend to do. If you are working with or near any operating plant we ask that High Visibility clothing (Tee Shirt or Vest) is worn. Like wise if you are working on track work particularly in close proximity to the Main Line that High Visibility clothing (Yellow or Orange and **NOT** Red) be worn.

As volunteers we cannot enforce what clothing we want you to wear but have listed below items of minimum protective clothing we recommend members wear while working onsite. These include:

- Work Boots (preferably steel capped).
- Overalls or appropriate full length work clothes
- High Visibility Tee Shirt or vest (when required).
- Gloves

When working in the workshop or around noisy machinery we ask that members wear suitable ear and eye protection. While the Museum does have a limited supply of goggles, ear muffs and dust masks we recommend you consider supplying your own for your personal use.

If you suffer from an injury while working onsite, please ensure you report the injury to a fellow worker onsite and that the nature of the injury is recorded on an Injury/Incident Report. These are located in the Member's Meal Room.

The Safety of our Members and Visitors at Valley Heights is of paramount importance. If you are concerned over any aspect of onsite safety please ensure that you inform the Duty Officer at the Museum or any member of the Museum's Executive on the day you notice the potential safety risk, so that corrective action can be implemented as soon as practicably possible.

MOBILE PLANT OPERATORS

The Museum will soon be conducting operator assessments in the use of the Forklift Tractor and the Front end Loader. All workers interested in becoming operators should express their interest through contacting our Chairman Ted Mullett.

REGULAR FEATURES

CLEANING ASSISTANCE

Member John Parker, who has been overseeing the cleaning of our Toilet and Meal Room facilities, has advised the Museum of his inability to continue with this job. Both John and his wife Gwen are moving to greener pastures in their retirement. We are therefore interested to hear from any interested members who would like to assist the Museum in a small way. While cleaning is not everybody's cup of tea unfortunately it is an essential task that needs to be attended to on a regular basis. Most of our regular onsite workers are already committed full time to many other tasks both on and offsite. Please give this some serious thought. Your commitment would only be required on two half days a month. Please contact Col Burne on Ph: 4739 2423 or Andrew Tester on Ph: 4735 8601 and they can arrange to meet with you to discuss and show you the ropes. All equipment provided. Any additional assistance would be greatly appreciated. To John we thank you very much for your efforts in undertaking this task and we would like to wish both yourself and Gwen best wishes for the future. Please stay in touch with the Museum.

UP COMING EVENTS

2008	
Open Days – August 2008	Sun. 10 & 24/08/2008
Retiree Work Week	Sat. 9/08/2008 Mon-Fri. 11-15/08/2008
Annual General Meeting	Sat. 30/08/2008
Open Days – September 2008	Sun. 14 & 28/09/2008
Retiree Work Week	Sat. 13/09/2008 Mon-Fri. 15-19/09/2008
Open Days – October 2008	Sun. 12 & 26/10/2008
Retiree Work Week	Sat. 11/10/2008 Mon-Fri. 13-17/10/2008

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