



The Depot Diary

No. 99
June - Aug
2008

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

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1. THANKS

It is that time of the year where we express our sincere appreciation to supporters and sponsors. Year after year the following individuals, companies and their proprietors continue to provide invaluable support to our Museum either financially or in kind. To all those who support us, we thank you.

Tony and Anthony Brown – Anthony Brown Pty Ltd
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Kees Geelan – HookUp Electrical Services
Kevin Girard
Ken Albery – Macquarie Road Auto Repairs
Springwood Retravisoin
Ian Vigers – Blue Mountains Coffee Roasters
Terry Howe - Terry's Truck Hire
John Campbell – Leonay Plumbing
John Cramp – SPS Statewide Protective Service

2. MEMBER'S INFORMATION MEETING

The members are invited to attend a Member's Information Meeting to be held on Saturday 15th November 2008 at 11:00am on site.

The Meeting will be an informal affair and is open to Member's of Valley Heights and STaRPS.

If you would like to attend and have a question it would be appreciated if you could submit your question prior to the meeting so that an appropriate answer can be sourced for the meeting.

3. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Museum's Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday 31st August 2008 in the presence of 32 members.

During the meeting, Chairman Ted Mullett addressed those present on the Museum's achievements over the past year. Before declaring all positions vacant Ted thanked all retiring office bearers for their contributions to the management of the museum and called upon Life Member of the NSW Rail Transport Museum, Mr Dick Butcher to conduct the Annual Election of Office Bearers.

The following were elected

OFFICE	NAME
Chairman	Ted Mullett
Secretary	Ross Stenning
Treasurer	Brian Coker
Publicity	Andrew Tester
Building Services	Ted Dickson
Building Restoration	Dave Torr
Grounds Maintenance	Jim Hall

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Exhibits Presentation	Bruce Saunders
Model Railway	Ray Beharrell
Workshop Manager	Terry Matchett
Perway Manager	John Stanley
Small Exhibits Curator	<i>Not Filled</i>

Former Small Exhibits Curator, Mr Neil Cram announced that he would not be accepting nomination to the Executive Committee for personal reasons. This is an unfortunate loss to the management of the Museum and we thank Neil for his input over the last 2 years. Neil has indicated his willingness to continue contributing to the Small Exhibits sub committee.

4. MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

The Museum's Membership years ends on 30th September each year. Included in this newsletter is your Membership Renewal Application for the 2008-2009 Membership Year. If you have already renewed your membership there should not be an Application form included with this newsletter. Members have got until the 31/12/2008 to renew their membership. After this your Membership will be deemed as unfinancial and copies of the Depot Diary will cease to be issued. We would like to thank you for showing your support to the Museum through subscribing to the Depot Diary and trust that we can look forward to your continuing support in the coming year.

5. STEAM VISITORS

As we did last year the Museum played host to two steam locomotives over the weekend of 24th & 25th May 2008. Steam Locomotives 3526 & 3642 were hired by the organisers of the annual Mt Victoria Great Train Weekend. The Steam Locomotives arrived from Thirlmere at 2 pm on Friday 23rd May where there were stabled and settled in for the evening. Our volunteers provided overnight onsite security for the locomotives on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights and we are pleased to report that there were no occurrences of unwanted visitors.



Above: 3642 & 3526 stand in the Down Refuge Siding soon after arrival at Valley Heights on Friday 24th May 2008. Photo: Andrew Tester.



Above: Upon arrival in the Refuge the locomotives were uncoupled from their train as they were required to run around their train before stabling in the loco depot. 3526 and 3642 shunt forward onto the Down Main line to run around via No: 2 Platform. Photo: Andrew Tester.

Once the locomotives had settled into the depot the crews attended to servicing. This included, coaling, watering and attending the fires.

Over the course of the weekend there was the likelihood that turning of both locomotives would be required. This was going to prove to be a challenge for the 36 class, if required.

In the fading evening light on the Friday afternoon attempts were made to see if we could turn 3642 without the need to have to split the locomotive from its tender. After many frustrating attempts to slowly position the 36 class on the turntable, the skilful crew were able to position the locomotive so that the 36 class was evenly balanced and the wheel flanges on the locomotive and tender cleared the rail head. Despite being successful in positioning the locomotive we were unsuccessful in being able to turn the locomotive and tender as one unit due to the oversized nature of the 36 class not clearing the Chargemen's building.

On the Saturday morning both locomotives ran light engine tender first, to Penrith where they met the Sydney Train which had been diesel hauled from Sydney Terminal. A change of motive power at Penrith saw the diesels run light engine to Valley Heights followed by the Mt Victoria bound train hauled by 3642 and 3526.

The train struck trouble just short of Leura when 3526 experienced steaming difficulties resulting in the train coming to a halt. Steam pressure had to be regained before the train

struggled its way to Katoomba, where 3642 uncoupled to allow 3526 to make its way to Mt Victoria for the first of a series of shuttle services. 3642 was to stay at Katoomba until 3526 completed the first round of shuttle services when the locomotives were to reverse roles. Little did we realise that the earlier steaming problems experienced by 3526 at Leura were going to plague the locomotive during the first round of shuttles. As a result 3642 remained waiting patiently at Katoomba until the 35 returned with the train later in the afternoon. Unfortunately for the RTM and many eager ticket holders the remainder of the shuttles had to be cancelled for the Saturday.

As a result of the 36 not being used on any of the shuttle services there was no need to turn 3642 on its arrival back at Valley Heights. So all the effort to try and turn the 36 the previous evening only proved that if the need arises in the future, that the locomotive and tender will need to be split.

On Sunday, the same exercise was repeated only the train was assisted by the diesels providing banking assistance from the rear of the train all the way from Penrith to Katoomba. This prevented a repeat of the steaming problems experienced from the day before resulting in all steam services operating for the Mt Victoria festivities. Upon arrival back at Valley Heights the steam locomotives were serviced and stabled for the night before returning to Thirlmere on the Monday morning.

6. MEET THE EXHIBITS – THE MERCURY SHUNTING TRACTORS (Bruce Coxon)

The NSW Government Railways, we think, bought three of these tractors for the purpose of the easy movement of tools and equipment around their depots. Valley Heights Depot had such a unit in the 70's up until the depot was shut down in the 80's. Upon closure of the depot it was transferred to Chullora. This unit, numbered "Internal Combustion Engine No. 113" of the NSWGR Mechanical Branch, Water Supply Chullora was used to carry such things as 46 class batteries, welding gear, tools and even an air compressor at one stage.

Recently, a team was formed to return our exhibit back to service following on from a previous father and son team of Steve and Eric Walton.

Our team is led by new member Robert Nelson a fully qualified mechanic, our secretary Ross Stenning, myself and anyone else who happens to pass by. I should point out at this time that if it wasn't for Jim Hall and Ross's keen eyes our exhibit would not have been rescued from railway ownership at Delec by Ross and Ted Dickson. Ross, along with others were invited by the railways to see if any equipment at the soon to be closed down Delec workshops was of interest to our museum. Jim spotted our Mercury truck in the long grass and after many letters to the railways, Ted brought it home to Valley Heights on a car trailer, well done fellas! It also turns out that Ted's son Mark used to drive this vehicle when he worked at Valley Heights.



Above: The Prefect Truck soon after delivery at Valley Heights. Photo: Ross Stenning.

One of our first tasks was to do a bit of research and find out where these tractors were made and importantly, from where we could purchase spare parts. So Rob, a keen internet man, found a website in the UK called the Autotruck Club. On this site it gives a bit of history and full exploded mechanical drawings of these units.

The website says that the earliest reference to Mercury Tractors is in a brochure published by a firm named Bramco (1920) Ltd of Coventry, by 1932 the company had relocated to Gloucester where production continued until 1964 when Mercury were taken over by Dennis Brothers with production moving to Guildford in the UK. Following the takeover the trucks were badged as Dennis Mercury until 1972 when the Mercury Truck & Tractor Co Ltd was sold to Marshalls of Halifax Ltd, further research will tell us what happened next?

Rob quickly identified from other websites including the Ford Sidevalve Owners' Club that the motor is a 10hp, 4 stroke, side valve unit (i.e. the inlet and exhaust valves are mounted in the engine block with the head containing the top of the compression chambers and sparkplugs). Some people may recognise these motors as they were commonly used in the Ford Prefect motor car.

Also to our astonishment, Rob came across a company called, Obsolete Auto Parts based at Kurrajong NSW who carry a full range of parts for these old engines.

So with a bit of confidence that we could buy these spares, we proceeded to remove engine and gearbox from our exhibit. The gearbox bearings had seized up due to water getting in through the gearstick lever, so we have this unit soaking to make it easier to disassemble after the motor is restored.

The motor is in surprisingly good shape as the various photos below show.



Above: The motor of the Prefect truck dismantled, mid way through its mechanical overhaul. Photo: Bruce Coxon

After we stripped it down we found it had been previously bored out to 25 thou oversize, it also had an incorrect set of valve springs and the wrong type of clutch plate installed. A few piston rings were broken but the pistons themselves were able to be reused after cleaning. The crankshaft and bearings are also in good shape. The camshaft is reusable

after cleaning but a couple of valve followers were of the wrong type. The bore only needed to be honed out and ready to receive a new set of rings.



Left: With the motor dismantled Peter Butler cuts in the valve seats. Photo: Bruce Coxon

With the help of Peter Butler and his valve seat cutter, all new valves were lapped into the freshly cut seats. The head is in good shape, nice and flat just needing the spark plug holes to be tapped out as the threads were full of "gunk".

Rob purchased all the replacement engine parts including a ring set, valve springs, stainless steel valves, gasket sets, carburettor and fuel pump kit, clutch plate and throw out race all supplied at a very reasonable rate. This will enable us to get the engine and gearbox back into working order, also keeping the cost to a bare minimum but restoring any old useable parts.



Right: The re-assembled motor is ready to be put through its paces once the truck has been restored. Photo: Bruce Coxon

We will keep you up to date with progress through further articles but our plan is to restore the gearbox, differential, chassis and then the C cab, now that the motor has been restored to working order. If all goes well, this great little machine will well and truly be a fine working exhibit for the museum before years end.

We also plan to keep all of these articles plus other collected data as a record of this exhibit in the library for future reference. If anyone else has any info on our exhibit, please pass it on, especially any original paint schemes or photos at Valley Heights. (Article supplied by Bruce Coxon).

7. OFFICE OF RAIL HERITAGE – DISPOSAL OF ROLLINGSTOCK

Expression of Interest in the Disposal of Rollingstock – As we reported in the last edition of the Depot Diary, RailCorp's Office of Rail Heritage called for Expressions of Interest in the disposal of Items of Heritage Rollingstock deemed surplus to requirements. Organisations interested in acquiring any of the items were invited to tender for the items during which they had to demonstrate how they can meet the strict criteria as set out in the Expressions of Interest document. Our parent body, the NSW Rail Transport Museum and our friends at STARPS lodged their expressions of Interest. As at the time of writing, there has been no word from RailCorp as to who the successful applicants were. This is despite the tendering process closing and an announcement due to be made in mid August. While no news is good news, it is hoped that the announcement will be made in the not too distant future, as to the success of the expressions.



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8. TRAINING FOR RURAL FIRE SERVICE

As a further example of the partnership between our Museum and our local Fire Services, Glenbrook / Lapstone Rural Fire Brigade held an Urban Search and Rescue (U.S.A.R.) Exercise at the Museum on Saturday 3rd May 2008.

The purpose of the training exercise was to increase the knowledge of our officers and fire fighters of the Rural Fire Service's role in a major Urban Search and Rescue incident which could be a train crash, a building collapse or even a terrorist attack. The main role of the Rural Fire Service in such an incident would be one of support and supply of man power to assist in searching and removal of casualties from an incident scene under the guidance of fully trained rescue personnel.

The exercise centred around the open Rail Motor set being stored at the Museum.



Above: Fire crews attend to the rescue of a passenger in a simulated rescue situation. Photo: Phil Pedley.

The scenario that faced our crews was that a train had been involved in an incident causing numerous people to become trapped within and around the train. Our crews were tasked with assessing injuries of casualties (with the assistance of first aid trained people) and then depending on their injuries organising their removal. Our crews were advised that there was only one door available to use so they would have to get the injured out some other way. Equipped with stokes litters, stretchers, blankets, tarps and first aid kits our crews set about removing the injured. The majority of the seriously injured persons were removed through the open windows of the carriage, one crew removed a casualty through the only access door and found that it was very difficult, the stretchers had to be stood on its end to get it into the vestibule of the carriage and then finally out the door. Two casualties were found under the carriage and were removed by placing them on tarps and sliding them out from under the carriage. The less injured persons were carried from the carriage and passed out to other members on the ground. One seriously injured person was carried out of the carriage then placed on a stretcher once they were out.

The Officers and Fire Fighters that attended this exercise would like to thank the management for permission to use the Museum for this exercise, all who attended found it a worthwhile exercise and would like in the future with the Museum managements permission to run a similar exercise but on a larger scale. (Article supplied by Phil Pedley).

9. AROUND THE MUSEUM

New Tram Shed – It is with much pleasure that we can announce the completion of the new shed to house the STaRPS collection. At last report we advised that tamping of the track and preparations for the casting of the concrete floor was advanced. We can report that the floor has been cast and sealed with paint and electricity supply has been connected with internal lighting and electronic roller doors operational.



Left: Casting of the new floor complete. Since this photo was taken the floor has been sealed with paint and the shed is ready for its new inhabitants.

Photo: Andrew Tester

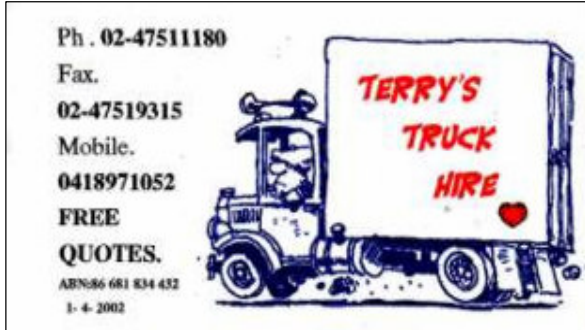
While the shed has now been completed, the focus now turns to trackwork outside so that occupation of the shed can commence.

Track Work – As mentioned above, trackwork has become the key focus around a lot of the Museum activities now that the Tram Shed has been completed. To allow us to achieve some of the planned work moving forward requires us to have access to more track and while the majority of the track within the Museum's confines are operationally sound, its outside our boundaries that now requires a lot of attention. This is necessary, as we need access to the track outside the Museum gates so that we can shunt the tramway's collection into their new shed. This has a roll on effect in that this will then free up space in the roundhouse so that we can accommodate other locomotives and items of rollingstock which are planned to arrive in the future. Additionally, restoring the trackwork outside the gates to the current stop block will be the first step in our ultimate aim of restoring the track to the Signal Box. In the near future an appeal will be made for assistance to help with this trackwork and as this is going to benefit the Museum in more ways than one it is hoped that we can expect a co-operated effort from all members to make this work easier and quicker. Having said this a start has been made with connecting the first road to the new shed. This work has required the complete lifting of both the Ash Sidings as the existing sleepers that were in place had rotted. With both sidings lifted the opportunity was taken to level the track bed. With leveling completed, sleepers were positioned in readiness to lay rails before connection of the first siding to the shed was achieved.



Above: Two photos depicting the relaying of the first siding towards the shed, just prior to connection to the shed. Photos: Andrew Tester

With the first siding connected to the shed, work has now commenced from the Ash Siding points in an easterly direction towards the current stop block in the Coal Storage Siding, which when completed will provide us with rail access to the new shed so that shunting can take place. Stay tuned for further updates.



10. 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.

11. WORKS REPORT

Work Hours – The following hours have been logged by our volunteers for the months of May, June, and July 2008.

Activity	May	June	July
Services	204	14	0
Buildings	506	204	385
Model Railway	20	1	16
Workshop	14	72	15
Exhibits	204	313	247
Landscaping / Grounds	132	296	59
Publicity	89	2	7
Retail	98	103	214
General / Admin	67	53	79
Perway	142	296	291
Total	1476	1180	1313

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.

12. 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
Peter CATALOGNA, Linden	503
Deanne TESTER-ALBERY, Winmalee	504
Elsie LUNT, Penrith	505
Richard LUNT, Penrith	506
Peter JONES, Rooty Hill	507
Scott CARROLL, Girraween	508
Ron CLANCY, Emu Plains	509
John SHEPHERD, Springwood	510



13. 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.

14. 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.

15. SPECIAL FEATURE – MEADOWBANK MANUFACTURING COMPANY

Attached to this edition of the Depot Diary are the first and second parts of a news item on the Meadowbank Manufacturing Company. This article appeared in the Northern District Times and thanks to the editor, permission has been granted for us to reproduce these two and the third and fourth parts.

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.

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.

REGULAR FEATURES

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.

UP COMING EVENTS

2008	
Open Days – November 2008	Sun. 9 & 23/11/2008
Member's Information Meeting	Sat. 15/11/2008
Retiree Work Week	Sat. 8/11/2008 Mon-Fri. 10-15/11/2008
Open Days – December 2008 Special Santa Weekend	Sat. 13/12/2008 & Sun. 14/12/2008
Retiree Work Week	Sat. 13/12/2008 Mon-Fri. 15-19/12/2008
2009	
Open Days – January 2009	Sun. 11 & 25/01/2009
Retiree Work Week	Sat. 10/01/2009 Mon-Fri. 12-16/01/2009
Australia Day – Open Day	Mon. 26/01/2009

CLEANING ASSISTANCE

Following the resignation of John Parker from the cleaning role we are pleased to welcome June Tester who has offered to assist the Museum in this role. June has commenced in this capacity but we would welcome any body else who is interested in give June assistance in this important role. Please contact Col Burne on Ph: 4739 2423 or Andrew Tester on Ph: 4735 8601 and they can arrange to meet with you and June to discuss and show you the ropes.

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.

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