



STEAM SCENE

Newsletter of the Steam Tram and Railway Preservation (Co-Op) Society Ltd.
t/a Valley Heights Steam Tramway.
Proudly associated with the NSW Rail Transport Museum (Blue Mountains Division).
Affiliated with the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia and
Rail Heritage Australia (NSW).

“Preserving the past,
enriching the future”

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Saluting a Job Well Done !

The 41st Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday, November 2. members were in attendance. It was good to see members whom we don't see on a regular basis turn up, in particular, Paul Turner, Dick Hall, Dennis O'Brien and Jeffrey Walker.

The three retiring board members, Peter Stock, John Webb and Craig Connelly were re-elected unopposed for a further term of two years.

The acceptance of the Annual Report and the formal re-appointment of the society's auditor, was transacted without comment. The most delightful aspect of the meeting was to come however.

Upon notice in General Business, director David Lewis spoke with great sincerity on the work over the years of our Chairman, Craig Connelly. David in a particular spoke of Craig's leadership, devotion and generosity in the cause of



(Above) Chairman Craig Connelly. David in appropriately dressed as a driver, places a loving arm across the motor's apron rail.

re-building our assets after the fire of 1993. This was quite apart from developing our Safety Management Plan over the years, complicated by ever changing legislation and interpretation. David said, in short, had it not been for Craig's efforts, he had no doubts that the society would no longer exist (To page 6)



(Above) Our earliest known photo of Craig (far right) possibly on the day he was first 'hooked'. From left to Rt: Terry Lipscombe, Len Manny, Jack Midgley, Wayne Eade. The person obscured is unknown.

The 'Big Shunt' Takes Place

The long awaited 'big shunt' (part 1) took place on Tuesday, December 3. The object of the movement was to rationalize the round house/tram shed collection storage for the forthcoming Centenary celebrations for the round house.

Stepho was the work horse for the movement planned by Ted Dickson, with some input from ourselves. The Risk Assessment and Management process was carried out by Ted previously as was the checking of mechanicals by Craig and others.

It was an early start with Stepho fired up at 7 a.m. By delegation from our Operations Manager Peter, Ted Dickson conducted a 'tool-box' talk prior to the movement, for the benefit of all concerned. This ensured everyone was aware of the safety and protocol issues necessary for the day.

In all, the movement went quite well although not as much as was planned was achieved. Never-the-less the CBI and double-deck car are now stored in the tram shed and the 'Caves Express' car now resides in the roundhouse. The 'trikes', tractor

The next leg of the programme involves moving 5711 into the roundhouse. Stepho will really have his muscles flexed on that job!



(Above) The DD about to enter its new home in the Tram Shed. (Rt) 72B is gingerly hauled enroute to the Tram Shed.



(Above) Roundhouse bays sporting almost everything tramway. (Top Lt) Stepho eases DD99 down No.1 Ash road



FROM THE EDITOR AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

May the meaning of Christmas be deeper, its friendships stronger, its hopes brighter as it comes to you this year.



Whistles From the Past (Part 7) (By Dennis O'Brien)

• The Cowra Circuit—our 10th Excursion

Buoyed up by the success of the weekend trip on the Werris Creek—Mudgee-Blue Mountains circuit, the Blayney-Cowra—Harden circuit was to be the route of the next weekend trip away. This was our tenth excursion and one that was significant in the variety of locomotive power used and one or two incidents along the way.

The world-wide trend by the mid nineteen-sixties in railway preservation circles was starting to alter dramatically the patronage patterns. The N.S.W.G.R. focus was no exception and a younger generation of railway enthusiasts was now emerging. It was this group of younger people that had requested our society to arrange yet another week-end excursion.

So it was that on Saturday, 3rd September, 1960, oil-burning locomotive 5909 coupled on to our special train consisting of four end platform sleeping cars and an FJ sitting car.

Departing from Central Station at 7.30 a.m. good running time was kept to Penrith, where water was taken. From Penrith the climb up through the mountains to Katoomba was well within the capabilities of our locomotive and an assistant engine was not required. Our train was refuted at Valley Heights to allow the electrically-hauled air-conditioned Central West Express to overtake us on its journey to Orange. Again the society was associated with Valley Heights!

At Lawson we took water again, whilst some of our patrons climbed over the post and rail fence, crossed the highway and visited the local pie shop opposite the railway station. Our journey continued on to Lithgow where 5909 was exchanged for C-36 class locomotive 3616.

This locomotive was fitted with a Giesel Oblong Ejector during November, 1957. The modifications carried out on this interesting locomotive included an unusual funnel and a modified blast pipe arrangement in the smoke-box. When the locomotive was working hard a very soft exhaust noise was emitted. After extensive testing it was allocated to the Parkes locomotive depot located in the Central West of N.S.W. Whilst at this depot 3616 was regularly rostered to haul the Forbes Mail from Parkes to Orange where its unusual modification proved to be most efficient.

This was the first time that the locomotive had been used on any excursion and a great deal of interest was shown in its performance to Bathurst. Photographic stops were held between Wallerawang and Bathurst.

On arrival at Bathurst our motive power was changed. Elderly locomotives 2532 (with 2603 attached to assist the train locomotive up the heavy grades to Wimbledon) backed onto the carriages. Engine 2532 was one of the last 25-class in regular service, being fitted with a wooden cabin. It was working out its last days as the Bathurst yard-shunter and had been specially prepared for our excursion. Saddle-tank locomotive 2603 had an unusual history, being built by Dubs and Company, United Kingdom, in 1892. In 1929 the locomotive was sold to the Southern Portland Cement Company and used at their works as a shunter. However twenty years later it was re-purchased by the N.S.W.G.R. After a major overhaul it re-joined the other nineteen members of the class carrying out shunting duties throughout the state.

Our journey continued at a steady 25-28 mph. to Georges Plains. Then began the heavy climb up Tumulla bank, then onto Wimbledon. Engine 2603 was detached here and 2532 continued alone to haul our train towards Cowra. In the section between Gresham and Newbridge, known as the Stringy Bark Range, a photographic stop was held.



(Above) Oil-burning 5909 is put into refuge at Valley Heights pending being passed by the Central West Express. (Photo CRG Field collection, courtesy ARHS)



(Above) 3616 poses for a run-by between Wang and Bathurst. (Photo: late M.G.Baker)

over five hundred miles behind steam. Once again in keeping with our original aims a variety of steam locomotives and rolling stock were to be used if possible. A tremendous amount of behind-the-scenes planning in a short period of time took place by the committee to ensure a successful outcome.

We requested steam haulage over the mountains to Lithgow. However a coal-fired locomotive could not be used as the Electrical Branch of the N.S.W.G.R. was quite

Following on from our previous successful week-end excursions, the society decided to visit Cowra via the main western line and return via the main southern line, offering a total of

concerned about the locomotive's sulphurous smoke damaging the overhead electrical wiring insulators. There was no objection if we requested an oil-fired locomotive,

as long as it was worked back to Enfield depot that day. This was to ensure that the locomotive did not run out of bunker fuel oil.

A variety of locomotives had been requested to haul this excursion, including a D57-class locomotive from Harden to Goulburn. There was at that time only a couple of the 57-class remaining in serviceable condition. Even these locomotives were used only as required, all being earmarked for withdrawal by the end of the year. The society received a quotation of an extra twenty-six pounds (\$52) to bring a 57-class from Cootamundra to Harden light engine. Unfortunately we had to decline, as it was felt that this fee was rather excessive!



On arrival at Blayney, 2532 was serviced ready for its next assault on the heavy grades over the Cowra branch. After leaving Blayney, the trip on the branch line for our vintage locomotive almost proved too much. We stalled on the 1 in 40 grade near Stanfield due to lack of steam.

Observation of Blayney yard by Barry Tulloch prior to departure revealed locomotive 1938 was there and may have been sent to assist should it be necessary. However after a short time (and an unofficial photographic stop) our footplate crew managed to raise steam again and continued our journey.

After taking water and servicing the locomotive at Swan Ponds and attending to the safe working procedures, we continued our journey well into the late afternoon. Our arrival at Cowra was a little behind the timetable. An evening meal had been prepared for us at the railway refreshment rooms located on the station premises.

Our carriages were stabled for the night in the nearby sidings. Whilst the excursionists were enjoying the mandatory after-dinner slide show the local council

. Our excursion plodded along at reasonable speed to Young and then through to Harden. Well known locomotive fireman, Brian Burke came to the rescue of the rostered person on the footplate and paddled (fired) the engine for most of this section.

At Harden, a Cootamundra-bound goods train was standing in the back platform, being hauled by locomotives 5433 and, could we believe, 5708. We were most disappointed that perhaps more consideration may have been given to our original request to use one of these 57-class locomotives. Despite the disappointment with this rostering, many photographs were taken of the "goodsie".



(Above) 2532 builds up steam near Stanfield (between Carcoar and Blayney) (Photo, late T. Davies)

From Harden, AD60 class Garratt locomotive 6040 hauled our train through to Goulburn. Forty-two of these locomotives were constructed. However 6040 was the last member of the class to enter service. This locomotive thus gained the distinction of being the last steam locomotive to enter government service. A quick run to Yass Junction was made where the full ten minutes allocated was taken for locomotive purposes.

(left)

We continued onto Goulburn where our Garratt was replaced by locomotive 3215. Member Fred Stell was the driver, engine performance being outstanding and spirited on this, the last leg of our long journey, via Wollongong, to Sydney.

(Below)



workers placed sanitary cans underneath the carriage waste pipes. Before the weary travellers retired for the night they were instructed not to use the carriage facilities, but must use the ladies' and gentlemen's conveniences on the platform. It was arranged that they would not be locked for the night. It was stressed that only in a *real* emergency could the carriage facilities be used in lieu.

Gentle rain had started to fall. It was a cool night. And so the forbidden facilities began to be used for real emergencies. Then, in the early hours of the morning, the carriages were shunted to another siding without any warning to the occupants. Over went the 'empty' cans spilling their contents far and wide! Fortunately for the rain that night, by first light the remaining evidences of the night's shunt had been conveniently diluted and the rest washed away. This "movement" would be talked about for years.

Motive power for the next part of our trip was K-class 5608. These locomotives were unique in that they were fitted with outside Southern valve gear. There were originally one hundred and twenty locomotives built. Seventy of the class were converted to oil burning during the 1946-49 period. Some were converted back to coal firing at a later date.

Whilst our locomotive was being serviced at Wollongong our patrons took advantage of a light evening meal at the railway refreshment rooms prior to commencing a pleasant journey up the south coast railway to Sydney. The train arrived at 7.50 p.m. at Central Station, where we bade farewell to our footplate crew completing another successful weekend excursion promoted by our society.



(Next issue: *The end of the society's foray into rail excursions—our 11th trip and the one that never happened.*)



The Mangler Strikes Again

The large number of fatalities and injuries that occurred during the early days of Sydney's steam tramways, earned them the title of "Mangler". 1884 was a bad year for fatalities on the Botany line and the following story is just one of them. The following story was triggered by an October par in *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

The article depicted, appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald some weeks ago, as can be seen by the date. It was forwarded to me by Peter Stock for insertion into the regular SS section "Latest News From Yesterday". The fact that the poor woman concerned, run over by a tram, was gathered up, placed into a bag and taken by tram to the 'Dead-House' at Circular Quay, from this point in time, sounds quite macabre, indeed, almost blackly humorous.

Having a morbid sort of interest in tramway fatalities and the society that surrounded them, I decided to follow the story up from the newspapers of the time.



On Thursday, 9th October 1884, the 7.20 p.m. tram from Bridge Street to Botany, was making its way along Botany Road near the Kerosene Works. On stopping, the assistant conductor was alerted by a wagon driver that the tram had gone over 'something'. On checking out the 'something' the terribly mutilated body of a young woman was found. Half of her skull was missing and she was disemboweled. The name of the

woman was Rebecca Wilkinson, 22 years of age, not long married. She was said to be rather good-looking, dark complexioned, 5 feet 2 inches tall and about 23 years old. The subsequent coronial inquiry (held at the White Hart Hotel, Elizabeth St) revealed an interesting story.

5.15 Thursday evening, At Cook's River Rd. Rebecca Wilkinson saw her husband off to work (he was a baker) on a bus bound for Kogarah. Her husband said she did not appear very well. Thomas Wilkinson would not become aware of his wife's demise until the early hours of Saturday morning. Rebecca's sister, another witness, stated that she was subject to fits when she was younger and that they had returned

5.30—Henry Pelham was a cab-driver/carter. He deposed that he was driving along Cook's River Road after making a delivery. Mrs. Wilkinson hailed him if he could give her a lift to Surry Hills. After traveling about 200 metres, Pelham said that Wilkinson began to sway on the seat. He put his arm around her to steady her. He suggested she have a brandy at the next hotel, to which she agreed.

6.00—The St. Peter's Hotel publican said that a cart with a young man and as it turned out, Mrs. Wilkinson, pulled up outside his hotel. The publican thought at the time that she was a little bit intoxicated but the young man said that she was faint. They came in and went to the parlour where they each had a glass of ale. The young man apparently made advances on Rebecca, trying to kiss her, which she resisted. With this, the publican ordered them out. In Pelham's deposition, he made no mention of the attempted kissing and subsequent rebuttal but rather said they were order out by the publican when other people came in. Rebecca appears to have stumbled getting back into the cart which caused some laughter from some young men standing under the hotel verandah. The cart driver said to them; "Come on, there's room for half a dozen of you in our stable."

Travelling along to Elizabeth Street in the city, Rebecca took her leave from Pelham. Pelham then proceeded to his stabling facility where he arrived at about 6.50. In his statement Pelham said that Rebecca would not enter into conversation with him and that she was as if coming out of 'delirium tremens'. Although she appeared sober on her legs, he could smell liquor on her before they arrived at the hotel.

7.15 Mary Powell of Botany Road, deposed that she met the deceased who asked her; "Can you tell me where I live, I have lost my way" Powell considered she was under the influence and avoiding her, let her go on her way. This was about half a mile from where the fatality occurred.

7.30—The proprietor of the Half-Way House deposed that Wilkinson came into his bar and asked for a glass of beer. He told he thought she had had enough. She left straight away. This hotel was about a quarter mile from the site of the tragedy.

7.55 Emily Kettleton of Gardener's Loop, was with her father on a milk cart near the Kerosene Works. She saw what she considered was either a woman or a bundle of clothes across the track. Because the horse was restive her father could do nothing about it. Emily thought she saw the clothes move but was unable to discern whether it was because the body moved or whether they were ruffled by the wind. This was just before the arrival of the Botany bound tram.

8.05—Henry Royce and a companion Saunders, were on a wagon heading for Botany. Royce and Saunders noticed a bundle on the track. The Botany tram coming from Sydney, passed over the bundle and stopped at its regular stop.



(Above) A Botany bound tram in Elizabeth St. Sydney. C. 1897

after she was recently married.

5-15-5.30—Constable Pannell of Cook's River station deposed that he saw Rebecca go past the police station. He also so her go past on a cart, later at about 5.30. She appeared sober and all right. He had often seen her under the influence of liquor.

5.15-5.30 Charlotte Smith of the Cottage of Content hotel, deposed that Wilkinson drank a pint of beer and took another pint in a bottle. She only stayed a short time and appeared as if she had had something to drink before hand.



After the tram had passed, Royce and Saunders got down from the wagon and went over to the object. Royce called out to conductor on the stopped tram, "You've gone over something" The conductor came back with a lamp and together they inspected the body. Royce gave the conductor a bag and continued on his way. After the tram crew had seen the tragedy, Cook left his assistant conductor with the body and the tram continued to the loop where they met a Sydney bound tram. Here, Cook relayed news of the tragedy to the conductor of the passing tram.

William Foster was the assistant conductor of the tram and deposed that he felt as if the tram went over something near the Kerosene Gate. After checking the body, he picked up the woman's hat and purse some yards back. He was instructed to wait with the body. When the ex Botany tram arrived, with the assistance of that tram's conductor, "The guard picked up the shattered form of the unfortunate creature and after placing it in a bag, conveyed it to the Circular Quay morgue."

Neither the driver or his fireman noticed or felt the tram pass over anything. The fireman acting as lookout, had been distracted by some nearby cattle.

8.35—Constable Haynes of the Botany police was notified of the accident. He went to the scene, gathered up pieces of flesh and went to the morgue where he sighted the body. He said he found the body slightly

warm (11.30) This was despite the evidence of the driver that when he touched the leg of the deceased at the scene of the accident, he found it 'cold'.

The coronial jury found that Rebecca Wilkinson died from injuries accidentally received.



How did poor Rebecca come to be lying on the track? Had she collapsed as a result of a fit brought on by the alcohol she had consumed? Had she just tripped, fallen and passed out over the line? Had she indeed been hit by a previous tram? All of these scenarios are feasible.

She was obviously in some state at the outset. Pelham obviously thought his luck had changed when he picked Rebecca up and thought he would put 'some work on her'. He didn't or couldn't follow through. Although he denied it and his employer gave evidence that he was a good bloke, I would probably place more credence in the publican's evidence as to the events that took place in his parlour. As I have mused before in such cases, one cannot help but wonder how tram crews bearing witness to such not infrequent horrible events, coped thereafter with the ghastly images that must have remained indelibly imprinted on their minds.

Transport Heritage NSW

- A new dawn for heritage rail transport?

By the time this newsletter is distributed, the members of the NSW Rail Transport Museum will have voted no doubt, to change the name and constitution of the Museum to bring into being "Transport Heritage NSW". In short this has been brought about by the government's response and acceptance of the recommendations contained the Azarias Report—"All Aboard! A Fresh Start for Transport Heritage in NSW".

A new administrative structure will be established forming the Board of Transport Heritage NSW. This will comprise a Chair Person appointed by the Minister for Transport, four directors elected by RTM members and three directors nominated by an independent panel and appointed by the Board. Members will have a majority representation on the new Board. The Chairperson will only be able to vote in the event of a tied vote.

The new Board will have responsibilities encompassing all the present RTM board functions including operations, education, restoration and maintenance. Of major importance will be the provision of funding by the government to assist existing functions such as Trainworks and operations. An independent funding panel, with no affiliation to any rail museum will be established. It will assess and determine on merit, applications for funding from "...other transport heritage groups throughout NSW". It will be interesting to see how this pans out.

Another important point is the relationship between Transport Heritage NSW and other heritage transport operations in the State. It has been assured that these operators will continue to operate as they currently do with their own Boards, management, volunteer structures etc. The value of their work has been acknowledged and part of the brief for the new organization will be to ensure kindred organizations get better

access to advice, support, information and funding in some cases.

This is a very brief overview of the proposed arrangements. Those of you who are current members of the RTM will have been advised directly and more comprehensively of the proposed changes.

From the afore-mentioned, It would seem that Transport Heritage NSW will be having input into the conduct of certain aspects of management in respect of those societies or groups that manage state transport heritage items under agreement e.g. OTHR, the Finley, Tenterfield, and Wagga stations displays. How it will effect groups such as ours and say SPER, who hold and own invaluable transport relics in their own right, is not clear.

In coming to pass, the new arrangements will certainly come to the aid of rail heritage transport in general, suffering as it has from its very genesis, limited opportunities to promote and finance itself. With other states having 'stolen the march' in this industry, perhaps now NSW has some hope of catching up and even overhauling them.

The Valley Heights Museum site, being part of the original RTM holding, will most certainly come under the purview of Transport Heritage NSW. Again, with our integral involvement with Valley Heights, it remains to be seen what repercussions the new arrangements will have on us.

We have to date, enjoyed a very cordial arrangement with the RTM and its management. Whilst much of it has been on an informal arrangement it has never-the-less functioned very well to the benefit of all concerned. It is to be hoped that any new liaison will continue in a spirit of mutuality following the old saw that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it".



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The museum is located in Tusculum Road, Valley Heights. Ample parking is available. A train service is available to Springwood. Valley Heights station is accessible for museum visitors but you must walk around to the Tusculum Road entrance and not attempt to short-cut across the tracks.

The museum is open
between 10 and 4 on the
2nd and 4th Sundays of the
month. Steam operations
on both days.

Works Report: LFA 179: Progress on cleaning No.2 bogey and parts. **S” truck:** Painting concluded. **72B:** Under-frame repairs continue. Sole bars routed and shaped; inside stringers shaped ready for installation. **DD99:** Roof board installation continues. **Stepho:** Minor repairs (glands etc.) and adjustments following steam pressure testing. **103A:** Running adjustments made.

Zig Zag Calamity

The Zig Zag railway sustained terrible losses during the October mountain fires. Losses include: 11 carriages including 4 revenue cars. A rail motor set. 1,000 burnt sleepers, 4 sets of turn-out timbers, several containers of spare parts, workshop office destroyed and other infra structure damage sustained. Insurance will cover some of the damage but will fall well short of covering everything. Some carriage stock and the locomotives escaped serious damage, even so, it will put Zig Zag’s return to service back quite a long way, with a massive amount of physical work to be done to bring things up to speed.

The following message of commiseration was forwarded by email on October 21, by our Secretary, Peter Stock. I am sure we were all shocked and saddened by the event and feel most keenly the tragedy, having experienced likewise.

Mr. Noel Ackland,
Zig Zag Railway,
Lithgow.

Greetings Noel,

The “trammies of Valley Heights” were sad to learn of the firey destruction of Zig Zag rolling stock and infrastructure last Thursday. Having faced similar, almost total destruction by fire at our old operating site in Parramatta Park in June, 1993, our members can certainly relate to and understand the anguish and anger this event has caused your management and the general membership. To stand by and look around at the remains of rolling stock, etc, is a truly, lonely heartbreaking experience. At the time of our crisis it was thought and said by many that STARPS will not complete the final accreditation processes, nor will it ever be in any position to once again operate a steam tram. Time did prove those wild assumptions wrong. After considerable effort by enthusiastic and dedicated members the steam tram again began operations, but on a different site. I sincerely trust that our experience will be an encouragement to you. Judging in retrospect our re-establishing experiences both happy, in anger at what happened, sad that it did, be assured your membership will surely rally with their collective and enthusiastic encouragement. Your railway will again enjoy accreditation and eventually begin its operations once again. May your future endeavours be fruitful. We are sure they will be. On behalf of the Board of Directors and members.

Last but not least.....

PERSONAL



It is with sadness that we record the passing of Life Member, **Ronald (Ron) Herbert Mills** on September 20, 2013, aged 92 years. We only heard of his passing on November 15.

Ron had a wonderful career in the NSWGR being heavily involved in locomotive maintenance. Ron joined the society relatively late in life but his particular legacy was in passing on knowledge he had gained during his career. What Ron didn’t know about engine maintenance and repair wasn’t worth concerning one’s self with.

Ron suffered with Parkinson’s disease in the latter part of his life, even so, he was always interested in the pursuits of the society. Our Chairman Craig had visited him in recent times. We are the poorer for his passing.

R.I.P.

(From page 1) as an entity.

Accordingly David moved that Craig be elevated to the status of ‘Life Member’ of the Society in token recognition of his efforts.

The Treasurer, Bruce Irwin, spoke to the motion touching upon when Craig first came upon the society. It was a time when the society was down to very few workers but with some very big challenges. Craig (and others, a couple of whom are still members) came to the rescue of the society and with enthusiasm and diligence progressively improved what had become a somewhat ramshackle affair into the well respected organization it is today.

The meeting whole-heartedly supported David’s motion.

In his usual modesty, Craig graciously accepted the accolade. Well done Craig, its been a delight, and a privilege to travel the track with you!

OTHER NEWS

Annual Audit Time Again

A compliance inspection was undertaken by two agents from the Regulator’s office in early November.

Six compliance matters were identified for rectification. No safety matters were brought to attention. The major work as a result of the inspection will be the re-writing of our Safety Management Plan to reflect the current national Act and Regulations. All identified matters are receiving attention.

Santa’s Annual Visit

This year, the ‘Santa’ themed days took place of two consecutive days (December 7 & 8) rather than two separate weekends. Santa was assisted by two elves this year rather than one—a sign that ‘Santa’ is ageing like the rest of us, and needs a bit more help to get the job done.

Despite promotion, again the overall numbers were down on the previous year. There were however an increased number of repeat visitors. All concerned had a great time especially the children and mums and dads.

If you haven’t brought the kids or grand-kids before, make a point of it next year. We do it better than Meyer’s ever did!



Invitation to Participate



Part of the findings arising out of the compliance audit by the Regulator in November required that our Safety Management Plan be re-written to reflect the new national rail safety Act. As part of the consultative process, any member who would like to contribute in the review process is welcome to contact either Craig or Peter (contact numbers above) with views or suggestions by January 31, 2014..