



STEAM SCENE

Newsletter and Journal of the Steam Tram and Railway Preservation (Co-Op) Society Ltd.
t/a Valley Heights Steam Tramway.
Proudly associated with Transport Heritage NSW (Blue Mountains Division).

"Preserving the past,
enriching the future"

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COTMA Comes to the Valley

Sunday, October 12, turned out to be a bright sunny day which became increasingly warmer as the day wore on.

The COTMA delegates visit had been a long time in the planning but the day was now upon us. The coach arrived fairly much on time and after an official welcome by Chairman Craig on behalf of the society the group proceeded to the Roundhouse where a delightful morning tea was put on by the society. During the break, Keith Ward, Assistant Publicity Officer for the Museum, welcomed the group on behalf of the museum Chairman and went on to explain the significance of the depot and some of the exhibits contained therein.

Following morning tea, the group was assembled for a ride on the tram, one of the highlights of the visit. Although the tram originally seated 70 passengers, it was tested somewhat with 50 or so delegates (of senior dimensions) and a sprinkling of public visitors. 103A had no trouble in handling the load. On returning to the depot, our visitors alighted

and were given the option of a tour of the site conducted by Keith, independently inspecting the site or going for another tram ride.

At about 12.15, our visitors lined up to



received a delightful spit-roast lunch, consisting of roast beef, chicken, jacket-potatoes, assorted salads and bread rolls. The spit roast was provided by "Diamond Caterers" who did a superb job and were roundly complimented on the quality and quantity of the food provided. The meal finished with fruit platters. All too quickly the time approached for our guests to

leave and continue on up the Mountains to see the "Three Sisters" and other sights.

Some of the delegates elected to travel by train and it was a pleasure to be able to deliver them to the Signal Box and there, direct them to the station platform, a short distance away.

As a final gesture to mark the occasion, Keith Ward handed out leather key-fobs for each of the delegates embossed "COTMA 2014 VHST". These were much appreciated.

A big "Thank You" to all concerned in making the visit a success from the table and chair arrangers to the Caterers. A special "Thank You" to member Deanne Irwin for arranging, purchasing and cooking for the morning tea.

"Thank You" also Keith Ward, for manufacturing the key-fobs and assisting in looking after our visitors.

The day can be marked up as a success and another indicator of what we can do. It also proved that the depot can provide an atmospheric location to accommodate up to 60 sit-down guests.

The Museum Plays Host to LVR

The weekend of the 27th-28th of September, was a hectic one for the museum. As part of the Depot Centenary Programme, Lachlan Valley Railway had been invited to stable and operate from Valley Heights, a series of shuttle trips to Katoomba. Locos 5917 and 3237 together a carriage set and gin arrived at Valley Heights at the conclusion of a series of shuttle runs between Mulgrave and Richmond, the previous Sunday.

Saturday, September 27, saw three shuttle trips to Katoomba with the locos

double-heading and a diesel 4906 bringing up the rear.

The trips were well patronized. In the meantime the society operated the tram service seeing average patronage. It was a delight to see both steam locos come into the yard and over the turntable at the conclusion of the day's operations. Sunday saw two shuttles to Katoomba but a much bigger patronage of the Museum and steam tram. Over 180 people came through the gate.

Food and merchandise sales did very well.

It was a mammoth effort of organization and Andrew Tester and Keith Ward are to be congratulated on the formatting of the weekend. Not least of this organization was the operation of the steam tram between LVR's occupation and vacation of the museum's running line. It all went very smoothly and a credit to all concerned. Thanks to all the STARPS guys for keeping the service ticking over.

(All photos, courtesy Andrew Coble)

(Below) Shades of days of old as 3237 is turned.



(Below) The tram is just visible in the background as 3237 and 5917 come to a halt in the Valley Heights Arrival Road.



(Below) An atmospheric night shot of 5917 approaching the turntable.





A New Elephant Trying to Get Into the Room?

- **Tougher Environmental Regulations on the horizon for rail operators**

(By Bruce Irwin, Editor)



(Above) "Now who's a naughty boy?" Old 'diesels' just wont fade away.

The Protection of the Environment Operations Act and its attendant Regulations came into force in 1997. The Environmental Protection Authority has announced that it is undertaking a review of the environmental regulation of the NSW Rail network. This has come about because the level of benefit to the environment has not been as high as was expected under the current regulations.

In short, there is still an unacceptable level of banging, crunching, squealing, hooting, smoking, dripping and oozing going on from railway operations, that don't seem to be getting any better under the existing regulatory system. For instance, there are still a lot of old noisy diesel locos getting around (a treat for enthusiasts but disagreeable for many others) that were thought should have faded away by now. Couple the existing situation with future expansion of the rail task and it appears the alarm bells have been ringing in the environmental corridors. These aren't the only problems and this ever so brief summary should not in any way be taken as an all inclusive précis of the problem or the way it is proposed to improve or solve it.

The Authority has prepared a position paper outline as to what they propose for the new regulatory framework and have invited comment from stakeholders and interested parties before further proceeding down the legislative path.



(Above) An enthusiast's dream but an environmentalist's nightmare. Will this type of scene have a 'use-by' date put on it sometime?

As part of this process the EPA has consulted with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) and the railway system operators Sydney Trains, the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) and John Holland Rail.

In summary, the review to date, concluded that regulation of the operational rail sector should involve licensing both railway system operators and rolling stock operators under the POEO Act.

Now I can well hear you saying, "What does this have to do with the society and its operations?" Briefly the answer is "Not much" but hastening to add, "...at this stage". The framework states inter alia,

"The current exemptions for heritage operations would continue. That is, operators of rolling stock used solely for heritage purposes would be exempted from the requirement to hold an EPL. Any operator of heritage rolling stock which is used to haul freight or maintain railway track and

and would therefore require an EPL if these activities were undertaken on a railway system that comprises a network of more than 30 kilometres of railway corridor operated by the same railway system operator."

Despite this comfort, heritage operators have even to date, amongst other things, been required to install self-containment for grey and black water waste on passenger trains.

Over the years since the Act was introduced, there have been rumblings in the industry about heritage operations viz-a-viz environmental impact; items such as ash disposal, smoke emissions, oil and residue waste, water contamination and so on.

One has only to see the growth and impact on the rail heritage industry, coming from the implementation of the first Rail Safety Act in 1993, to be concerned. This started out as a comparatively modest obligation on heritage operators but as we all know, triggered by the "Waterfall" accident. it has since become a very onerous and burdensome compliance undertaking that has seen some of our brethren fall (if only temporarily) by the wayside. I hasten to add, it has not all been bad but my basic initial criticism still holds—it still does not sufficiently reflect scalability or many of the innate factors unique to heritage operators. But on this, I have written before.

Just as the Rail Safety Act of 1993 grew and became all encompassing, I suspect the PEOA of 1997 will do likewise, although a slow starter. We might look to be exempt from its tentacles for the moment but sooner or later the bureaucrats that administer the Act, wont be able to resist moving in on 'heritage' with the same disproportionate zeal as the transport regulators. How long will it be before they start asking: *"Now that smoke you are raising, we really need to quantify the heavy particle mass and gaseous carbon emissions". "That oil you drip is really quite unacceptable in this day and age, you'll have to do something about containment." " We really can't have that water from the boiler wash-out contaminating the drainage system and water table with all its chemical additives." "And the ash! Really, we now know that is akin in its effects to asbestos! It will have to be dropped in a self-contained environment, bagged and disposed of at a certified waste disposal station".* A little exaggerated? Perhaps but don't be surprised if a measure of it doesn't come about in a few short years time.

The massive bulk of ONRSR is crowding the heritage room at the moment like an over-staying guest, busily feasting and gobbling-up limited heritage resources. Wouldn't surprise me if a little way down the track of the future, the waddling form of the EPA elephant doesn't also want permanent lodgings in the 'heritage room'.

(The précis and views expressed in this article are solely those of the editor and do not necessarily reflect those of the Board of Directors.)





Memoirs of a Mangler

- Children no Exception

Whilst on a railway themed tour of Rookwood Necropolis on August 3, I came across the memorial pictured below. It was in memory of Samuel Frederick George, aged 7. The headstone was not part of the tour but on noting that the boy was killed by a 'tram motor', I was impelled to follow the sad story up and thus, relay it as follows.

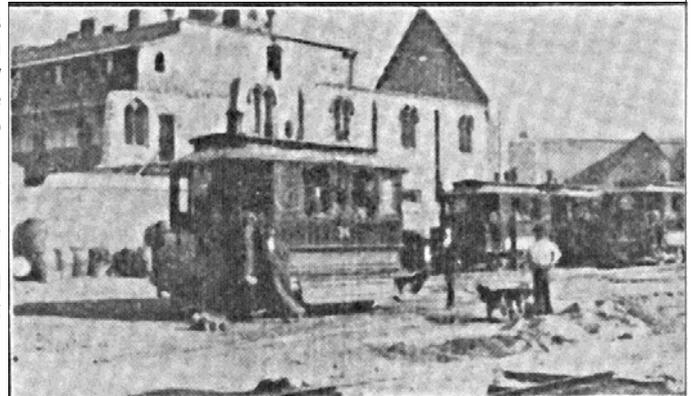


Samuel Frederick George was a lad aged 7 years of age. He was the youngest son of a well-known Sydney Dentist J.W.E. George and his wife Annie. They were resident at 461 Pitt Street Sydney, at the corner of Hay Street.

Thomas was a pupil of the Convent School of the Good Samaritan Sisters in Pitt Street and was at around 4.p.m. on Tuesday, May 11, 1897 on his way home, located on the opposite side of Pitt Street and a block away.

William Speering was the driver of a tram that he had taken charge of and had just departed the "Belmore" tram depot in Pitt Street, gaining the main line and heading in the direction of Redfern Station. Young Samuel had just

Samuel was quickly taken to Sydney Hospital where he was seen to by the R.M.O. Dr. Barnes, about 4.15 p.m. Little could be done for Samuel and he died at 9.30 that night.



A subsequent rumour that the boy was playing in the grounds of the depot near the time of the accident, were dismissed.

At the coronial hearing, the jury made a recommendation that the Tramway Authorities should have someone near the depot entrance at school finish times to control traffic. Nothing seems to have subsequently come of this.

The Coroner made a finding of accidental death with no blame attached to anyone.

Had the tram motor at that time, been fitted with the device that automatically triggered the dropping of the 'cow-catcher' on impact, the boy's life may have been saved. It would be around 1906 before the tram motors were thus equipped. In the meantime, it remained part of the Fireman's duties to be on the alert and ready to drop the 'cow-catcher' should anyone or anything look like getting in the tram's way. (To page 6)

(Above) A view of part of the depot yard at the time the nearby buildings, including the Convent School were being demolished to make way for the new Central Station c.1900



(Above) The Pitt Street or Belmore tram shed depot at the corner of present day Eddy Avenue and Pitt Street. (Below) The convent school of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan which was next door to the tram depot c.1870.



(Above) Samuel George's memorial in the Roman Catholic Section of Rookwood Necropolis.

(Left) A "return thanks" notice placed in the SMH, Tuesday May 25, 1897

stepped off the footpath when, according to the conductor's evidence, he slipped and fell. Speering immediately applied the brake and brought the tram to a halt. The fireman, Frank Bonfield, saw what was happening but had no time to drop the 'cow-catcher' before the tram was upon the lad. The motor passed over the boy, crushing both legs and breaking his left arm.

Public Notices.

MR. and Mrs. J. W. E. GEORGE tender their sincerest THANKS for the many expressions of sympathy conveyed in letters, telegrams, cards, and floral tributes in connection with the recent fatal tram accident to their youngest son. They also wish to express their grateful acknowledgment of Dr. W. Odillo Maber's prompt application of his skill at the time of the accident, which, though it could not save the little sufferer, enabled the parents to see their child in life and converse with him before he passed away.



The Way Things Were...

Around 1913, a Mr C Paull (ex Station Master, Darling Harbour) wrote a series of reminiscences for the "NSW Railway and Tramway Budget" magazine. By that time, he had long been retired with the result that some of his stories date from the 1860's, a time when NSWGR was in its infancy. The first story relates to the Railway Refreshment Room, Sydney Station. Not the edifice that was within the comparatively new station building at Central but the one at the old terminus at Redfern. The two further stories make for interesting reading also. (My thanks to Peter Stock for supplying copy).

The Railway Refreshment Room, Old Sydney Station

"Forty-eight years ago (1865), this was a bit old fashioned to what it is today. There was only one room about 12 feet wide and 16 feet long and it was not open all day long. It was only open near the arrival and departure of trains which were few and far between.



(Above) The old Sydney Station as it was in 1879. It is unknown if Mrs. Moon was still conveying her eatables at the station then.
(Below) Another view of old Sydney Station.



Supplies were brought to the station by a kind old lady—Mrs Moon—in a basket from her pastry-cook's shop in Botany Road, next to Hamilton's Chemist Shop. The eatables were always fresh and nice. There was only one narrow table, or counter, in the room and a couple of long stools to sit on. The supplies consisted of tea and coffee, cake, muffins etc. and the charges were reasonable. Three Pence for a cup of tea or coffee and a cake or muffin.

At holiday times it was difficult to get into the little room but Mr. Moon and his son Thomas, used to come and give a hand and all things considered, it was not too bad. Hungry people were not to particular so long as the food was good. It was quite amusing to see passengers on the look-out for Mrs. Moon and her basket of niceties when she would be a little late at times or perhaps, the intending passengers were a bit early.

Mrs. Moon was a lady of importance in those days, respected by all who gladly welcomed her and the basket of eatables."

Rookwood Cemetery Started

"In 1865, what is now the great cemetery at Rookwood was a wild bush called Haslem's Creek. Well I remember when the Government commenced to have it cleared for a burial ground. They

used the unemployed of Sydney to do the work. All the old stagers off the street and around Paddy's Market were the unemployed then. As they had to go up to work by train in the early morning, when the few passenger carriages we had were required for ordinary use, all sorts of vehicles had to be put on to carry them - "C" vans, cattle wagons and open goods trucks. It was my lot at times to go in charge of the train and a nice job I had to keep them right as they would hang their legs over the sides of the open trucks or want to ride on top of the "C" vans etc. In clearing the bush, several were killed through trees falling on them.

It was a nice task each night assisting to pay them when we got back to Sydney. They received Four Shillings per day and were paid in a room on the platform—about 400 of them. A more unruly lot I never saw. There was a difficulty in keeping women from going up to work there. They said that could clear the bush as well as the men but we had to forbid them going. It was bad enough with the men as they were the 'cream' of Sydney.

I have forgotten to mention the job we had getting them aboard at Haslem's Creek in the evening but no accident happened to us during the whole time the clearing was going on. But, to see them work! The 'government stroke' was nothing to it and the poor overseers had a hard time looking after them."

Homebush Races in 1865

"This was a scramble and no mistake. Thousands of people went to Homebush by train, but I can't say they were all passenger trains. Many were livestock trains (two-legged stock). It was nothing to see passengers climbing over truck doors when they were up to getting inside. They not what kind of accommodation it was, so long as they got to Homebush. Mr. John Higgs was S.M. in Sydney in those days and a pretty bad time he had but the trouble in Sydney was nothing to the return trip from the races. Most of the passengers carriages had to be used for the country trains going out that night. There were very few left to bring the people back from Homebush so cattle wagons had to be run, many with no sides in them. It was impossible to gauge what number of vehicles would be required as hundreds that went to the races by road in all sorts of carts etc. made for the railway station at Homebush to get home. The rush was awful. The railway porters were mostly casuals with no uniforms and is was very laughable to see them trying to put one another off the line when the big rush came near dark. I was sent to Newtown with some hands to collect the tickets. I shall never forget the job it was in the cattle wagons, everyone standing and no lights except for our hand-lamps. Hardly any of them had tickets and we had to collect a shilling each from them. There was no possible chance of issuing excess fare tickets, so as each train was finished, I had to count up my fares. One thing for which we were thankful though; there was nothing like the number of women going to the races then as there are now. (To page 6)



Operations Manager's Fireside Chat

- Loco Cab Safety—Crews and Guests



Safety in the cab of our steam locomotives:

The following hazards have been identified when in the cab of a steam locomotive. (Refer to VHST P 012 and VHST P 014).

Hazard Controls

These control measures should be adopted:

1. Hot surfaces including pipework should be identified and not to be touched by bare skin;
2. The firehole door should only be opened when necessary, with the blower operating when it is opened to draw fire to the smoke box;
3. Crew must report any steam or water leaks to the Maintenance Manager as soon as possible for repairs, whilst gauge glasses should be inspected for leaks and damage;
4. Care to be exercised when moving a locomotive, especially when near the openings in the cab to prevent a fall from the locomotive;
5. Clean up all spilt oil and remove any trip hazards prior to commencement of operations;
6. Keep clear of any moving parts that may cause injury when the locomotive is in motion.

Maximum number of people to be in a locomotive cab.

7. A maximum of four (4) persons will be allowed in the cab of a steam locomotive at any one time. That includes authorised/rostered tram crews. When a conductor or shunter also occupies the cab for brief periods for operational purposes the limit is increased to five (5) persons (including the conductor or shunter).

Casual footplate rides

8. Casual rides are allowed for non-operational personnel and/or guests for the purposes of experiencing a ride on a steam locomotive in a safe manner. The persons invited by locomotive crews may ride subject to the following:

9. All cab rides, for other than rostered crews, must be

approved by the Operations Manager and their names recorded on the Daily Operations Sheet;

10. The number of persons on the footplate are referred to in the previous note 7;
11. Those guests will be appropriately dressed in clothing that protects their arms, legs and bodies plus appropriate footwear;
12. Children under 14 must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult;
13. Invitations to guests will be given judiciously, they must be physically capable of entering and leaving the cabs by the locomotive steps;
14. Should there be an emergency situation in the rail corridor must wear approved high-visibility clothing/vests and be escorted from/to a safe place by one of the tram crew;
15. Be briefed alerting them to any safety hazards and precautions that must be observed;
16. Being supervised at all times and keep clear of openings in the cab sides where a fall from the locomotive may be possible during operation;
17. Non-qualified guests must not be in control of the tram at any time although those known to the Society and suitable qualified to operate the tram be under the direct supervision of a qualified VHST driver;
18. Not being positioned in the cab so as to obstruct the drivers view at any time.

Peter Stock,
Operations Manager.



The Adventures of Old Dad Stock and the Troubadour (With apologies to the 'Wizard of Id')





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The museum is located at 17b Tusculum Road,
Valley Heights. Ample parking is available. A train
service is available to Valley Heights station. From
there, walk around via the road bridge to the
signal box opposite the station. Tram picks up
after 10.45 a.m.

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

Last but not least.....

PERSONAL



In regret we inform members of
the passing of member **Barry
Kenneth Gerdes** (aged 79) on
October 7, 2014. Barry had a long
association with the society and
although we didn't see him very
often at VH, he was a loyal and
generous supporter. Our condo-
lences to his family, friends and
associates.

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In fond remembrance we recall
the passing of society past Direc-
tor and Life Member, **Ronald
Herbert Mills** on September
20, 2013. Ron was a wealth of
locomotive engineering
knowledge which he readily
passed on to our works team.

R.I.P.

Works Report: LFA153: No.2 bogey overhaul completed, draw-gear replaced. Triple-valve etc. dismantled and checked. **72B:** All sub-frame timbers tied into head-stocks. Truss rodding manufactured and fitted. **99DD:** Slats to end platform floors fitted. **1308:** Crack testing of driving wheels and painting of part of wheel set. **1022:** Machined cylinder block received back.



Latest News from Yesterday

Sydney Morning Herald, Friday, 27
July, 1883

Many persons travelling on the Waverley and Randwick lines will doubtless have become familiar with the danger which is involved in the conductors on both lines using the same description of whistle. Tramway conductors could no doubt testify to dangerous incidents which have occurred at the junction of Oxford-street and Botany-street, in consequence of the conductor of one tram giving the signal for his tram to start, and such signal being mistaken by the driver of the motor of a tram proceeding in a different direction. Last night two persons narrowly escaped receiving serious injuries by reason of the premature starting of a tram in the manner already described. At a quarter to 10 o'clock a tram which was proceeding in the direction of Waverley drew up opposite the Darlinghurst Court-house. That tram was closely followed by another which was bound for Randwick. The latter had hardly become stationary at the corner of Botany and Oxford streets when two intending passengers approached it. One tried to slide one of these vexatiously immovable "sliding doors," with the result which almost invariably attends the attempt. Just as he was about to renew the effort the other person caught hold of another equally vexatious door. Simultaneously the conductor of the Waverley tram blew his whistle, and the driver of the Randwick tram, accepting the signal as one for him to start, put on steam. The tram moved ahead, and the two would-be passengers declining to incur the danger of being dragged until they fell under the wheels of the car, wisely relinquished their hold. The tram, however, did not go many yards before the conductor realised what had happened, and signalled to the driver to stop. The signal was instantly obeyed, and the two persons who thought they had been left behind had the satisfaction of taking seats in the tram and of being carried to their destination.

(from page 4) In spite of our difficulties though, we mostly got through the work without any trouble. The travellers seemed quite satisfied with what was going."

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(From page 3) William Speering, the driver of the tram motor, had been a driver in Sydney since 1882. In 1903, he transferred to the Newcastle trams and then to Baulkham Hills depot in 1907. He retired in July 1919 and died the following year aged 66.



(Above) 461 Pitt Street, Sydney, the home of Samuel George and the dentistry of his father, still stands today, a heritage building, at the Cnr. of Pitt and Hay Streets.

References: Evening News, Wed.12-5-1897; Staff history card (State Records); Registry BDM Sydney.



Members On-site—Operating Days

Members are reminded that if they are visiting the museum on operating days, they should not go into prohibited areas e.g. along the track corridor or other non-public places. Unless a member is directly involved in operating the tram and is a certified Rail Safety Worker, they must obey restricted entry signage in the same way as members of the visiting public. Should you wish to go into a public-prohibited area for say photographic purposes, please arrange with the Operations Manager of the day who will implement safety protocols. The reason for this is to further reduce hazards to safety for operating staff.

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The recently heightened level of alert associated with potential **terrorism acts** requires the society to review certain procedures. A review is underway and adjustments will be advised to all concerned.

I am a little steam tram man and I drive it now and then, I know it goes much faster but I keep it down to "ten".

Long time society member **Dennis O'Brien** is recovering well from a triple bypass and pneumonia from earlier in the year. Our best wishes go you Dennis. Was good to see you on the COTMA visit.

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Making Haste Slowly

The following appeared in the NSWGR & Tramways Annual Report for 1897-98.

UNIFORM GAUGE

The Federal Convention which met in Adelaide in April 1897, the Right Honourable, the Premiers of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia agreed that the Chief Railway Commissioners of those colonies should meet and discuss the question, and bring up a report. At a meeting in Melbourne in August last year all the necessary details were agreed upon, and a report was subsequently made. The matter is perhaps one which does not call for immediate final action, yet it should not be lost sight of, as the longer

it remains altogether in abeyance the greater the cost will be eventually. That there must be in the end be uniformity of gauge there can be no doubt, and it would be a step in the right direction to begin to prepare for the change. The Commissioners agreed that it could not conveniently be effected within five years; but it is not imperative to adhere to this period. Both economy and general utility suggest the adoption of the standard 4 feet 8½ inch gauge, which is that in existence in New South Wales.

The early settlement of the question would be of benefit to the colonies interested, as gradual preparations for this extensive change could be made."

The wheels of government grinding ever so slowly, it would be 1962 before the standard gauge was opened between Sydney and Melbourne and a further eight years before the Sydney-Perth standardization.

