



# 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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**June 2007**

## New Shed Underway !

After much anticipation and unexpected delays due to administrative difficulties and engineering problems, we can now say the **new shed is definitely underway**. Yes, it has all been happening with a rush of late. The site has been leveled and the concrete footings poured. Spoon drains and other drainage has been put in place. Concrete sleepers and rails have been placed in No.1 road, and made ready for the concrete pour for the floor. The “Permalum” cladding selected has been delivered. The pace has been set to have the building completed by late-June 2007. On Sunday, May 27, the first portal frame piece was set in place. Thereafter frames were erected at a steady pace during the week. Members assisted in fitting bracing, etc. Tuesday, June 5, was a momentous day when the first lengths of track were laid in the new shed. Progress is happening almost daily, so much so that by the time this edition reaches you, (weather permitting) cladding will be underway. It is far removed from when we commenced the new shed at Parramatta Park (see below). More next time.



**(Above) This view gives some idea of the shed’s overall length i.e. 42m. (Below) looking West to East.**



**(Above & far Rt) At P’Matta Pk 1955. Contrast shed frames and first spike driving. In 1955 it was all 2nd hand poles, timber and sleepers. In 2007 it is steel frames, concrete sleepers and Pandrol clips.**



## The Road to the Signal Box—One Step Nearer

On Tuesday, April 24, Secretary Peter and yours truly, attended a very worthwhile meeting at the Valley Heights Depot. The meeting was chaired by Robert McLellan, Manager, (Safety Interfaces) of Rail Corp who was accompanied by several Rail Corp personages responsible for various areas. Peter Berriman, Ted Dickson and John Stanley represented RTM.

The meeting discussed a proposed access agreement covering the lines outside the present leased area. With particulars of present operations in hand, we all walked the abandoned lines down to the Signal Box which is the proposed terminus. It was pointed out that urgent access was required to the new shed under construction on the “Ash Roads”.

It was agreed that the operational limit for VHST be on the Arrival Road (that is the road leading from the present Down Refuge) on the museum side of the existing Derail. The old coal siding down to the Valley

Heights signal box would be included in the operational limits. Whilst the new limits will impose a greater maintenance burden, it does mean we will have greater freedom of movement. This will include access to the Signal Box and of vital importance, access to the Ash Roads new shed. The track condition is generally poor and there is a 20 metre section on the Coal Siding that will need to be replaced and slewed. This section was removed by State Rail some years ago,

Though everything is subject to paper processing, there is every likelihood that we will be able to access the “stop block” early in the new financial year under a tripartite agreement.

Thank you RTM President, Peter Berriman and the folk at Valley Heights for all the work done in bringing this important milestone about.

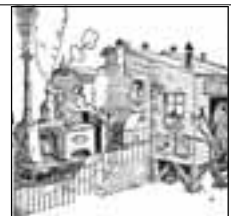
## From the Editor



*As you can gather from the lead-story and elsewhere, there has been a lot of feverish activity taking place at Valley Heights over recent weeks. The rush to get the ash pit re-timbered on the Arrival Road; preparation of the site for the new shed; assisting with the shed erection and track laying etc. During this process, a lot of on-site joint consultation and decision making has taken place between STARPS and the Museum’s work team. The wonderful thing that has impressed me as a non-technical observer of these deliberations has been the spirit of co-operation displayed by all concerned. Good, sound, level-headed reasoning has accompanied all on-site decisions and it is a credit to all concerned. It is, I think, a portent of the quality of management for “the Valley” we will see in the future. With three organizations working together, the site decision making process can be a drawn-out and laborious affair. Whilst there must be formal processes for major decision making, in the lesser cases that require immediacy, it is amazing what can be achieved by the hands-on people. This is especially so when they are possessed of the level of maturity and wisdom I have seen displayed recently.*

*Congratulations to all concerned, the future of “the Valley” I am certain, will be in safe and competent hands.*

*Go kindly,  
Bruce Irwin  
Editor.*





## Steam Tram Cockies Knew the Answers..

Member Vic Solomons, has kindly made available to the society, a selection of cuttings from the *Easter Suburbs Advertiser* dated 1948. The selections relate to early steam tram history of the late 1880's and was compiled by "Transport Authority" H.J. Hayman. Similar tales have been written about in the early booklets published by the society, "In and Around Sydney With the Steam Tram". Even if some of these tales are apocryphal, they make good reading. Yes, the steam trams did create mayhem at times, with loss of life and limb to pedestrians and livestock. The following stories however, gives us a little insight into the lighter side of that unique Sydney phenomenon, the steam tram of the late 1800's.



**A quite well-known photo of a Crown Street bound tram in Elizabeth Street, Sydney. It was at the Crown Street terminus that a parrot imitated the conductor's whistle.**

drivers to be accompanied by their pets. These could be dogs, cats, birds or even poultry. These were the days when folk took a particular pride in getting various species of birds to talk. Although it seems unbelievable nowadays, it was not an infrequent occurrence to split the tongue of say a butcher bird, in the belief that it would talk better!

Sometimes, animals would simply adopt a motor and become part of its working machinery so to speak. (Members will recall the SS article on "Bob, the railway dog".) In the early days of the Bondi line, it was not unusually to see lineside, cockatoos, magpies, wallabies, rabbits and even the occasional kangaroo. It is recorded that sulphur-crested cockatoos had a liking for steam

motors much the same as they seem to nowadays, for certain timbered houses.

One such cockatoo, evidently an escapee from captivity, took a liking to a motor but had to be forcibly removed because he "swore too much and was impertinent"!

Another cockatoo, possibly a pet, made

his home on motor 5A perching near the throttle up front. When the tram stopped, the bird would perfectly intone the driver's destination call of "Bondi Aquarium". Each driver in those days announced the tram's destination through a megaphone, e.g. "Wexford Street, West Bush, Glenmore, Tea Gardens connecting with Waverley electric motor car to Randwick town." This cockatoo never learnt to say "Waverley". One lady passenger very heatedly one day remonstrated with the driver,

"Look my man, where does this tram go to? You're saying Waverley and the bird is calling out 'Bondi Aquarium'!" This bird imitated the conductor's whistle and the tram whistle to perfection plus the hissing of steam.

It appears that near the old Crown Street terminus there was a caged "Mexican parrot" nearby. To relieve its monotonous existence, it imitated to perfection, the conductor's whistle. It was not unusual for a steam tram to puff away into the distance, with a conductor giving chase, the driver having been deceived by the parrot's whistle rather than the conductor's real one.

On tram 1A, we are told there was a resident bull dog. He rode, sitting atop the coal bunker. Although he was a white dog, he always had a very black rump. One day, a short-sighted lady (looking at the dog) remarked on the tram's ugly driver!!

### All Facilities

Mr. Hayman tells us that service on the steam trams of the 1880/90's were excellent. You could buy eggs, vegetables, fruit, pickles, wildflowers, ices, confectionary, soft drinks, spring water, periodicals newspapers, sea food and the list went on. Vendors got on slow trams while the driver took on water. Another old time trammie, the late Fred Nyman, recalled that Chinese hawkers on the Botany service could be a bit of a menace. They would jump aboard a tram calling "Tickets". They were not selling tram tickets but Pakapu tickets. Passengers could finish up buying a ticket in a Pakapu game rather than their fare to town!

It was often necessary to change engines at Paddington Post Office. Tram cars ran by gravity down the hill where an engine ran from Darlinghurst tank siding to meet them at West Bush present (then) site of West's Pictures.

Slow steam tram drivers who had formerly been horse bus drivers never lost their love of horses. One steam tram driver saw a man cruelly ill-treating a former horse bus nedly he used to drive. Stopping his tram, he snatched the whip from the driver's hands and publicly horse-whipped him outside Victoria Barracks! In trying to dodge the whip, the torturer got to close to the ex-bus horse which bit and kicked him, much to the delight of the tram passengers. A soldier of the horse artillery then picked up the horse beater and immersed him in a horse trough. The police did the rest and the tram driver later bought his old horse.

### Conductor Etiquette

Some of the rules and regulation recalled by Mr. Hayman include some of the following which were quaint, even in 1948 when the basis of the article was published.

- Tramwaymen must be (1)Clean (2)Clean-shaven (3) Courteous (4)Informative (5)Loquacious (6)Helpful.



**Another well-known print of a steam tram in city service during the 1890's. Note the conductor is wearing a pith helmet. The fireman/observer is possibly seated as this pose is occasionally seen in other photos of the time.**



Passengers were to be bidden the time-of-day and were to be escorted to their seat. This was to be dusted down before the customer's derriere made contact upon it!

The staff must smile at the ladies (Should not have been a problem). Drivers and Conductors must shake hands with new residents and point out scenic spots and interesting places. Also, they were to relate the history of the district and the geography of the area if possible, to the newcomer. Special attention is to be given to inquiring school children and foreign travelers. Conductors were to announce bargain sales and the location of pubs! Most of these regulations were still "on the books" in 1948.

Drivers were instructed to give a warning signal, five minutes before leaving on a journey. Ring bell, look right, look left. Watch for cattle on the track. Announce all stops clearly and loudly. Before starting ask in a loud voice: "Is everyone comfortably seated?" (This latter function was probably carried out by the conductor. Ed) If there were insufficient seats, the driver telegraphed ahead for an extra car which was attached at a convenient siding.

#### Crew Kindness

Mr. Hayman had memories of the kindness of Bondi and Waverly steam tram crews. They let quite a lot of shovelfuls of coal go wide of the mark and people on the tram track on a winter's night, blessed the kindly steam tram drivers, as they huddled over their warming fires.

#### Happy Events and Wash-Days

Many a mother to be had cause to remember a steam tram driver in her hour of trial. The driver supplied hot water or stopped his tram until lusty cries of a newly-born babe announced another future Boer War soldier or future Bondi grandmother. Children born on trams were a common occurrence. Most, if boys, were named after the driver. Many a hot tub of water was supplied to enable housewives along the tram route to do their washing.

#### Unhappy Events

Where the trams excelled was the funeral service to Waverley Cemetery. The hearse would bring the remains to be placed in a small tramway hearse at the rear of the tram (hearse now at Hamilton Depot NSW.) (Refer to previous articles in S.S. on tramway hearse. Ed.) The trams were draped in black, the drivers were in top hats with black streamers attached. The funeral director placed a sign over the destination board that read "In the midst of life we are in death". The fast Bondi, Tea Gardens and local all-stop Paddington trams ran ahead but the funeral tram ran a respectfully slow pace, taking two hours to get to Waverley Cemetery. Undertakers traveled on the tram somberly attired, muffled drums were played and sad airs on a violin. The trams stopped frequently to allow local mourners to come along or other kindly folk to simply place bush flower wreaths in the mourners' carriages. It was an era of kindness. Arriving at Waverley, all passengers went to the graveside as a mark of respect. Always the tram crews were in their Sunday best with black streamered stove pipe plug hats.

All funerals were not however, such sad affairs. A popular publican having passed away, his young Mae West-ish wife, plus her many admirers, went to his funeral. On the return journey, this tram was hitting 30 m.p.h. (about 55 kph). Unfortunately, a sanitary wagon drawn by six horses and fully loaded, skidded broadside on to the tram. The wagon was cut in two and the six horses cleared out with his driver and his wife who was going shopping. A mounted policeman headed the horse into a gully where they were stopped. Mae West and entourage were socially ostracized until they were taken to a nearby water standpipe and hosed down! (To be continued.)



This very early uniform style earned the conductors the title of "troubadours" by the traveling public.



A decorated tram motor. It is unknown if this was for a solemn or celebratory occasion. A funeral tram would have been similarly bedecked but most certainly in black cr pe.

## Ariah Park Tragedy– OTSI Report Released

Members will recall the shunting accident at Ariah Park on April 15, 2006 when LVR loco 3237 crushed a Guard when coupling-up to a carriage. The report on the accident by the Office of Transport Safety Investigation (OTSI) was released on April 30, 2007.

The report is quite lengthy reading however, sufficient to say that the tragedy occurred as a probable combination of a number of circumstances including identified procedural errors, unsafe acts and violations.

A wide range of recommendations addressing the deficiencies found by OTSI, were made for LVR to carry out and indeed, for other organizations to take note of.

Not least in OTSI's criticisms was the Regulator, ITSRR, regarding previous audit findings by that body and the lack of implementation.

An interesting finding was that OTSI believed that ITSRR needed to devote dedicated staff to building the

capacity of heritage operators to operate safely. The effort should not be focused on auditing but to providing education and training.

We have often attended ITSRR sponsored seminars over the years, when new procedures were due for implementation. Naturally, with functions such as these, there is a marked reluctance for any one person to put their hand-up, not wanting to appear to be "the dill" of the group or because of information overload. It was, I suppose assumed that everybody went away knowing what and when to implement. There was no real knowledge as to the capacity of any particular group to do the task involved. As we have mentioned before in S.S. in volunteer organizations such as ours, you live with whatever talent or lack there-of within your pool. Few heritage operators can afford to employ a professional to carry out a task that is beyond an organization's expertise. (Concluded on Page 6)





## The Day We Were Held Up by Bushrangers!

*When old society members get together, the conversation quite often gets around to the day we were held up by bushrangers. They even got away with \$200! but that part of the story comes later. Back in 1975, we thought we were made when we were invited to participate in the making of a movie, it was going to place us on the map. Unfortunately this didn't happen however, it gave us a great insight into how a movie is made "on the cheap" or perhaps, even at our expense.*



**The late Leonard Teale who played the role of Hatton the bushranger. Did he ever get paid?**



**Stars, Kate Fitzpatrick and the late, Leonard Teale stand outside C class trailer 37. The clothes and weaponry were authentic but not much else.**

Back in the 1970's, the Whitlam government poured a lot of money into the local film industry. Local T.V. drama was one beneficiary and our colonial past was an area that got a good work-out. A plethora of expensive mini-series, featuring our colonial past, graced our 21" screens. Who could forget the series "Rush" starring John Walters and "Against the Wind" starring Jon English? Joining the band wagon was the odd fringe-dweller. A producer by the name of Leo Shontran turned-up with a proposal for a T.V. film that was to be entitled "Bushranger". This film starred quite a few local luminaries including, Leonard Teale, Kate Fitzpatrick, Max Osbiston and others.

"Bushranger" was set in the 1860's around the Goulburn district. Leonard Teale played the part of a rather ghoulish fictional bushranging character by the name of Hatton. He had a particular penchant for hanging the odd victim.

The plot unfolds something like this. With gold and prosperity abounding, enter Hatton, well known bushranger, train hijacker and general thief. Hatton holes-up in a cave in the area, to escape from Sgt. Dunbard (John Hamblin) and the District Inspector (Ken Wayne). Dermot Riely (Kevin Wilson "Class of 74") accidentally becomes involved because Hatton robs him. Riely decides to join the troopers in their efforts to track the villains down. In doing so, he hopes to get his money back plus the reward. Another character is young Johnny Cavell (Alan Wylie), he wants to be like Hatton and holds up a stage coach. He follows the Hatton gang around like a dog without a home. Well I wont detail anymore, save to say, there is lots of galloping through the bush (it never seems to end) a train hold-up and plenty of near misses. The train hold-up is where the society comes into the picture.

Much of the filming was done at Smokey Dawson's ranch to the north of Sydney. Of the production, Leonard Teale said, "Every show's got a gimmick. In ours we're pushing the authenticity of costumes and weaponry." In this it certainly did, flashily dressed bushrangers with cabbage-tree hats *et al.*. At this point however, the producers either ran out of money for authenticity or carried on in ignorance and didn't bother to research further. They wanted to have the "Goulburn Mail Train" robbed by Hatton and Co. rather than a coach robbery. Hiring full-scale steam trains costs money so by some manner of means they eventually came across our bargain of a little show in Parramatta Park. Yes, 0-4-0 saddle tank engine 1022 would fill the bill together with a "B" and "C" tram car for carriages! It was to be filmed through blue lenses for night effect so what would be the problem? Who could tell? Well, just about anybody with any nowse who looked at the subsequent tele-movie. They almost got caught out on another point of authenticity. Although the story was set in the 1860's, the line to Goulburn wasn't opened until May 1869. They only

just scraped in on this score!

Anyway, with the promise of cash for our lighting-up and a couple of bit parts for some of our members, all was set for an early start on the 11th July 1975.

With scene taken and retaken, it sure was a long day. Come lunch time and we all looked forward to dining from the film maker's canteen. This however was not to be. The canteen was the strict preserve of the film crew and actors and no others. We had to make private arrangements. There were other extras floating around in period costume waiting for a call-on which never seemed to happen. One young woman with a child at her breast, complained bitterly as the day wore on, that she had children to collect from school and she had not been called-on yet. She was going to have to leave shortly, film or no film.

Your editor makes a cameo appearance very early in the film when he comes into a full carriage with his hand lantern to check the passengers. After a brief look around and a glance of contempt, he exits the compartment. A moment of cinematic fame had come and gone. The carriage compartment is actually the interior of trailer car 37C which we had on lease arrangement at the time. Whilst Kate Fitzpatrick and others are engaged in conversation, production "dog's bodies" outside the tram, apply a steady rocking motion to the car. Fortunately the car was equipped with excellent springs so it posed no problem in getting it to rock. Other extras were employed in walking the length of the car outside, holding up bushes. This gave the appearance from the inside, of the passing night scenery! So this is how they do at the movies! If this is any example, I wonder how many frauds I have been duped with when pondering the scenery or the mechanics of a big movie.

Eventually comes the big scene when Hatton (Leonard Teale/stand-in) takes over the train. The stuntman with a horse, rides alongside our "Goulburn Mail" as it labours up our "Termite Hill". The horse is spooked by the train. Another take. Finally it is decided that the stuntman will climb onto the roof of 74B (the tailing car) from the rear and make his way along to 37C where the passengers await, blissfully unaware of their fate. We of the society hold our breath in trepidation. Old 74B was not in the best of condition. Our fear was that the roof would give-way and have the stuntman's legs and feet flailing into the body of the car! Fortunately, the ancient stays of the roof held and the stuntman made his way along the roofs of the two cars to his quarry. On arriving at the engine, he pounces on members Frank Moag and Frank Millier and subdues them in turn.

Well, on and on the "takes" went, well into the dark hours. Then somebody had the bright idea to turn the loco's Pyle-National generator on. Up came the tell-tale whine and ruined the sound of yet another take. (Concluded on Page 6)



## “Bushranger” Photo Gallery



The crew film a dramatic take as Len Teale (Hatton) threatens a delightfully young, Kate Fitzpatrick. Is Len standing on a box?



The stuntman takes his horse alongside 74b however the horse takes fright at the loco. This method of boarding the “train” has to be abandoned.



The stuntman approaches 1022 in readiness for yet another gallop alongside.



Frank Millier nonchalantly remains at the throttle of 1022 while a bushranger appears to beat the tripe out of Frank Moag.



Mission accomplished! The stuntman has successfully boarded the train from the rear and is nimbly making his way over the roof of 37C to the engine.



The stunt rider completes his work and moves off the scene. A camera man stands on top of a van.



## "Preserving the past, enriching the future"

Steam Tram & Railway Preservation (Co-Op) Society Ltd.  
t/a Valley Heights Steam Tramway  
ABN 46 193 707 109  
P.O. Box 571, Springwood NSW 2777

Chairman and Works Manager, Craig Connolly  
02 9729 3536  
Secretary and P.E.O. Peter Stock  
(02) 9587 9051  
Treasurer and Editor "Steam Scene"  
Bruce Irwin  
(02) 9651 1707  
Membership Secretary, David Lewis  
(02) 9630 6304

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 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. Trike rides on the 1st Sunday, steam tram rides on the 3rd Sunday



## Last but not least.

### A Vote of Thanks

I know it's been said before but it really must be said again. Thank you Ted Dickson, John Stanley and your gang for the mighty job



you have done replacing the pit timbers and various sleepers on the Arrival Road. Thanks also to our Works Manager Craig and

members Peter Goodman, Steve Tolhurst and Peter Butler for their stout assistance to the project, as well. It was heavy, tiring work to get the job done in time for May 26-27 visitation of RTM's heavy steam locos. Congratulations—a job well done and one that will not have to be re-visited for many years to come. It is indeed, a project you can be proud of.

Whilst on the subject of appreciation, thank you Steve Lanyon and John Whithers for making yourselves available at short notice, to paint the shed portal framework at Smithfield and at the Valley—good on you men!

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**Works Update: 99DD:** Roof-bow placement completed. Commence install angle brackets to roof bows. Sanding roof/ceiling boards. Further angle brackets made. Letter boards and beading removed. **Other:** Assisted re-sleepering ash pit and Arrival Road section. Assist prepare shed and track ground base. Painting (on and off-site) of shed frame. Assist assemble shed parts. Doesn't sound like much but overall, a lot of hard yakka!



(Continued from page 3)

Surprisingly, most groups seem to some how struggle through the paperwork but do they really come to grips with what is expected of them? Time was when ITSRR and their predecessor, DOT was more approachable. Ideas could be floated with them and advice received. This role changed in later times with a more "arms-length" attitude adopted. We appreciate the need for the audit function to be seen as separate from that of training and instruction but surely it is in everyone's interest that heritage operators comply with their obligations within a healthy spirit of good-will without duress and stress.

A more "along-side" attitude by the regulator has been discernable of late and we can only express the hope that this will continue. Further to this, without compromising safety issues, we can only reiterate the need to keep regulation, documentation and compliance in scale with the size and scope of an operation.



(Continued from page 4)

At last it all came to an end and we were able to drop the fire in 1022, lock-up and take ourselves home around 9.45 p.m. Your editor got into no small amount of trouble for arriving home late, as he was supposed to be home in time for his birthday-tea with the family.

In the weeks following, we anxiously awaited an invitation to a pre-screening. We eventually were received at Spectrum Films and saw the pre-screening. For all the effort we put into it, the results were a little underwhelming. From then on, member Frank Moag made frequent attempts to contact the film's producer and others in an attempt to get our loco hire fee of \$200. Indeed, Leo had done a "bunk". Being sent around in circles, we never did receive our money. "Bushranger" had not only taken the cost of our days-off from work but virtually robbed us as well! Come to think of it, I wonder did any of the big names ever get paid for their efforts? Did Smokey Dawson or Leonard Teale ever get their money?

Very occasionally, in the wee small hours on T.V. a tele-movie will turn up. Lo! It is the late Leonard Teale and the rest, galloping through the bushes yet again. And 1022 glories once more at playing the "Goulburn Mail". I smile when I see it programmed, then I wince; to think it was once touted as a pilot to a series.

No, we didn't get our much needed \$200 but we certainly have had more than our money's worth of laughs about the time we were in the movies and were "had" by the "Bushranger".

### Theft of Valuable Parts

During the night hours of Monday May 21, intruders entered the confines of the depot and made away with valuable copper locomotive parts. The theft was reported to police.

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### Tram Letter Box

The tram letter box has been absent for some time but has recently returned. It is now resplendent with sign-writing that includes "Royal Mail" and the cipher "E vii R". (That last bit has got some of you thinking!) Thank you member Darren Stock for your handiwork.



### Annual Subscription Time

Yes, that time has spun around again. Your formal notice accompanies this issue. As you can gather from S.S. we are entering another important phase of re-development with the new shed and rebuilding of the double-decker underway. Keep your membership alive and help us maintain our post-fire rebuilding effort.