



Steam Scene

Newsletter of the Steam Tram and Railway Preservation
(Co-Op) Society Ltd.

**“Preserving the past,
enriching the future”**

**Volume 6, Issue 4
August/October, 2009**

The Track to the Signal Box “The first step on the way is always the hardest”

Members will recall that it was reported with great expectation in December 2007, that a risk assessment meeting had taken place with Railcorp and that progress towards attaining access to the Signal Box, could be expected in the near future. Well things being as they are in government circles, personnel come and go and evidently the matter went into limbo for a while.

We can now happily report that the matter has been revived however, we are not quite there yet.

On Friday June 26th, a meeting took place with Railcorp reps on site. Museum executive members were present and the society's interests were represented by Chairman Craig. The Railcorp reps were extremely positive about the signal box connection notion, perhaps even more-so than previously.

Railcorp intend upgrading the Valley Heights yard with 107lb rail from the current Carlingford line upgrade. A further meeting took place at the Valley during the week ended September 19. From this it seems Railcorp wish to re-configure the Valley Heights yard. The present museum connection off the main system (from the refuge road) will be deleted and re-established down near the signal box. This will result in more straight-railing of the yard with the deletion of the “D” frame near the museum gates and another redundant set of points nearby. The signal box line will retain connection to the main system but will be locked-off to isolate our operation. At this stage,

Railcorp intend to do the work of straight-railing, including relaying of “our” line (the old coal storage line) to the signal box. It will be the museum's responsibility to lay-in the point-work necessary to connect the new shed on the former ash roads. Naturally, the society will be involved in this work. Railcorp intimated that the work is on a priority



The signal box at the outer proposed terminus. It looks drab and unattractive at the moment but plans for it to be an interactive display with working levers etc. are in hand.

listing and should commence early in 2010.

Whilst everything looks promising, we wont hold our breath waiting. As one of the Railcorp team said, “the first step is always the hardest”. Let's hope that once that step is made, the rest of the course becomes a sprint.



**FROM THE
EDITOR**

Sorry!!

My apologies for the lateness of this edition. Just before going on a five week vacation, my computer crashed. Yes I know, I should have had it all backed up but who does I ask you? Anyway, thanks to my computer guru (I know very little about the workings and peculiarities of computers. I am basically steam powered, kerosene lit) my files were retrieved and transferred to a later model computer.

Travelling in Queensland, I was delighted to once again ride on the Purrey steam tram in Rockhampton. The operating group, like most others is suffering from excessive regulation and ageing membership.

Not so delightful was the sight of a string of rapidly deteriorating end-platform cars at Lowanna. The sight was repeated at Dorrigo. Not long after the fire at Parramatta,



we made requests to several organizations, to obtain an end-platform car to use behind Stepho, as a short term measure to get us underway again. Many and varied were the excuses that were tendered as to why a car couldn't be provided.

Eventually, we had to go to a country farmer to obtain a car. I looked at the cars at Lowanna in chagrin; a least one of these could have been saved from mouldering into compost if it had passed to us when needed. What was that about the “dog in the manger?”

*Bye for now,
Bruce Irwin*

Society's Patriarch Celebrates His 94th !!

The society's grand patriarch and a founding member, Frank Moag, celebrated his 94th birthday on September 17. Frank celebrates each birthday as if it was his 100th (just in case?) Several of the society's members were invited to attend Fran's celebratory luncheon at Addison's Restaurant in Shellharbour. A delightful time was had by all. The highlight of the luncheon was when Frank stood and naming each person at the table, expressed how they made up the tapestry of his life. Congratulations to you Frank and thank you for a memorable time on behalf of those who were able to make it to your special time. The society salutes you!



(Above) A group photo of the birthday party. And no, you don't have to get your eyes checked, Frank's wife Leila is to the right and her twin, Concie, to the left.



“Bob, the Railway Dog” to be Memorialized

In December 2006, an article appeared in *SS* about “Bob the Railway Dog”. In brief, “Bob” as the dog was known, appeared on the South Australian Railways in the late 1800’s. He was addicted to railway travel, mostly traveling on top of the coal tender. He was known throughout S.A. and was reportedly seen as far away as Queensland, Melbourne and the Hawkesbury Bridge NSW! I was recently contacted by Heather Parker of the Peterborough History Group who had read the *SS* article and thought we might be interested in some further information and a proposal to memorialize Bob.

I wont recount the article in Steam Scene however the introduction serves as a reminder of the famous canine with a penchant for train travel. Bob traveled widely, mostly in South Australia but with occasional excursions further afield. He was friends with everyone but after his original “owner” ,William Seth Ferry, went to WA, he declined occasional attempts to be captive to anyone.



Bob’s agility to scale engines was legendary. Heather Parker tells us that a Dean Barnes remembers hearing about Bob from his great-uncle, Don Pearce. Don was an engine driver and lived down the east-end of Bourke Street Peterborough. He spoke about Bob’s agility in jumping from one train to another— there were at this time four lines running through Peterborough to choose from. As well as his longer journeys, he enjoyed day trips such as going out to get a load of stock and back again. In winter he would sit in front of the firebox to keep warm. Dean’s uncle called (with affection) that little “hairbag”. I have read that he was quite scruffy with hair matted with oil and a fair share of fleas!

(Above) Bob the Railway Dog. (Photo original (1892) with State Library of SA B45576.

“Some peevish drivers would put him off. He knew them and never got on their engine again.”

firebox to keep warm. Dean’s uncle called (with affection) that little “hairbag”. I have read that he was quite scruffy with hair matted with oil and a fair share of fleas!

A popular great traveller

The memoirs of Stephen William Quintrell tell us that Bob was a great charmer. Bob traveled widely to Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. At the completion of every trip, he always followed the engineman home and was treated as an important visitor. When back in Adelaide, he always went for a feed at the Eagle Hotel. Here, the girls always gave him the best. Every traveler knew Bob and the children adored him. “I have had him follow me home from Kingston. He was a most deserving dog. Some peevish drivers would put him off. He knew them and never got on their engine again.”

Some escapades

The late Bob Brownett told the following story about Bob. The incident happened about 1890 when Bob Brownett went to Parachilna with a big mob of sheep to truck to Adelaide.

“While we were waiting for the sheep trucks, the Adelaide train, driven by Alec Stewart arrived with the famous dog on board. It stopped for the crew’s customary lunch break. The publican (Billy Darmody) jocularly told Alec that he would keep Bob there. Argument ended with a wager of 10/- that it was impossible to keep the dog from the train. All Alec had to do to win the wager was to get on the train and sound the whistle. Billy had only one alternative, either lose the wager or witness the destruction of his liquid assets in the bar! He opened the door and lost the wager!

A John Evans furnished the following story. “At least on one occasion in his life, Bob the railway dog went to sea. He was apparently attracted by the sound of a

ship’s whistle in Port Augusta one day and duly went onboard. Fortunately the ship’s next port of call was at Port Pirie some 50 miles down Spencer Gulf. Bob was thus able to disembark, find himself once again in South Australian Railways “territory” and back in familiar surroundings and so resumed his travels around northern South Australia.

Bob Stolen

For a time, Bob went missing. He was stolen by a sheep farmer. Unfortunately for him, he had Bob herding sheep near a railway line. Bob heard the whistle of a train and ran to the engine where the crew recognized him and claimed him. The farmer was told that Bob was the property of the SAR and that he would be prosecuted for theft if he did not give him up. (From the time William Ferrie rescued him in Terowie, the railway men had always kept his licence current.) After this incident, one of Bob’s friends, a commercial traveler, had a special collar made with the legendary inscription on it to “stop me not but let me jog for I am Bob the drivers’ dog”.

What kind of dog was he?

There was obviously something special about this little dog. We have a good idea of what he looked like from two photographs. Thick scruffy curly hair, a friendly grin, bright beady eyes and a high pitched yap! Apart from anecdotal information and newspaper items, there are two oil paintings in existence. From here research, Heather Parker believes him to have been a German Collie X Smithfield.

As described in the Steam Scene referred to, Bob passed away suddenly in 1895 after paying a visit to a favourite butcher’s shop. He possibly had a stroke or heart attack. In all, he holds a special place in Australian “dog and railway lore”. He represents the adventurous spirit of those early days of rail and the people who pioneered this country. There is a widely held belief that Bob is the equal of the famous “dog on the tucker box” at Gundagai NSW and “Red Dog” of Western Australia. With this in mind, Heather Parke has been instrumental in commissioning acclaimed South Australian sculptor, Silvio Apponyi, to create a statue of Bob based on existing photos and stories. (An example of Silvio’s work is the wedge tailed eagle at Keswick station, SA). The work is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Heather has been fundraising for fourteen months and has raised over \$8,000. A further \$4,000 is needed. Heather has been heartened by the generous response of people to the project.

If you are a dog lover and would like to contribute to this special project send your donation to the “Peterborough History Group SA Inc. 113 Railway Tce. Peterborough SA 5422. Further information may be gained from heather-parker @bigpond.com

ooo0ooo

(Continued on page 3)



(Continued from page 2) The story of Bob recalls to mind the many stories about pet birds and animals that inhabited steam trams, in the late 1800's. Many of these stories have been related in SS previously. One could imagine the angst of the nanny-state fun-regulators nowadays, if some dog or other pet regularly made itself at home in a loco cab. No doubt they would have the dog potentially causing havoc with controls, sending the train crashing into oblivion.

Slowly but surely, I think our society is becoming more bland and less characterful. We are the poorer for the passing of the characters, larrikins and incidents, (the likes of Bob's adventures) of yesteryear. Our society is being subsumed in regulation and control as we are gradually pruned and melded into a subserviently bland consumer-driven society. No amount of "multi-culturalism" can make up for the passing of the characterful society that was the Australia of old. (The editor)



Rail Motor Trip to Newcastle in Doubt

Trip organizer David Lewis, advises that the proposed trip in November, is liable to be cancelled due to lack of response. To date only 33 pre-bookings have been registered. To make the trip viable, David needs 60 people to make up a load.

If this trip has slipped your mind or indeed if you have changed your mind, give David a ring urgently. Unless sufficient numbers are indicated within the next week or so, the trip will have to be cancelled.

Testing Times A'Commeth and Helping the Museum to Impress Two reminders from Operations Manager, Peter Stock.

Testing Times

A reminder for our Rail Safety Workers that the annual health assessments will be scheduled early in 2010. Remember that the assessments must be completed by the last day of February 2010. All those who are required to present for their assessment, will be notified, to allow time to arrange for their appointment to be made at a convenient time with our health professional.



Please Help the Museum to Impress

The open days at Valley Heights are an opportunity to impress our valued visitors with clean and presentable facilities. First impressions made upon visitors always remain with them and they are likely to come again or at least tell their friends as a result of their experience. A bad impression is however likely to remain forever and that too will be conveyed to friends.

those for visitors, are one and the same at present. The basins are an essential need for visitors, particularly those with young children. For them to find themselves confronted with a dirty wash basin, is a definite turn-off delivering a poor impression of the museum, no matter what else they see or experience. Of late, from those who attend on Saturdays, a tendency has arisen to leave the wash-basins in the mens' toilet,

Unfortunately, the wash basins used for workers and

Positions Vacant

SHOP ASSISTANT

With the transfer of our food sales into the shop area and the expansion of the menu, the Museum Retail Manager, Steve Corrigan, has put out a plea for more shop assistants. Although overall visitor numbers might be down, food and beverage sales have grown with the result that counter staff can have very busy periods. Steve would like to see more people volunteer for the counter roster to enable better customer service and a more relaxed time for staff. Society member Robin Stock regularly serves on the counter and is a dab hand on the coffee machine. We would however like to see more volunteers from the society participate, especially as we are the main beneficiaries of the food sales.

If you could lend a hand every couple of months or so, please get in touch with Peter Stock and he will refer you on to Steve. If you wish, Steve can have you trained-up on site to operate the espresso machine with basic food handling techniques. It's not difficult work and the environment is pleasant. Apart from

this, your help will contribute invaluable to the income of the society, in this most important area of our activities.

TRAIN GUARD/CONDUCTOR

We have not had any response to our previous appeal for members to volunteer for the position of train guard/conductor. If you like working with people and are able to commit to working with work-safe protocols, we can promise you a most satisfying time on the tram. A "Category 2" medical check is required but if you are in reasonable health, this is not likely to be a problem. Training is available. If you are tempted to give it a go, give Secretary, Peter Stock a call for further information.





It Could Only Happen on the Railways !

This is the first, in what will be a mini-series on strange but true happenings during the early developmental days of the railways, particularly those in the UK. Except for the first, most of these stories are derived by the book "Railways' Strangest Journeys" by Tom Quinn, published in 2003. I am sure you will find them most entertaining and indeed, almost unbelievable when considering the plethora of regulation that besets railways nowadays.

The First Railway Fatality - 1830

The London to Manchester railway could rightly be seen as the first "proper" railway, carrying passengers and goods between two major cities on a regular basis. It was opened on Wednesday, September 1830. The opening was a spectacular event and would have been a complete success had it not been marred by a tragedy.

The opening ceremony was staged as a grand cavalcade with all available locomotives and carriages called into service to take guests to the end of the line and back again. It was of course watched by thousands of people lineside. The procession of trains which gathered at the Liverpool end of the line was truly impressive. There were to be no fewer than eight trains carrying a total of 32 carriages, all hauled by Stephenson's locomotives and driven by his engineers. Stephenson naturally, drove the Royal Train. It was not quite royal however as the new monarch, William IV did not turn up. He was represented however by that grand old Tory war-horse and Prime Minister, the Duke of Wellington. His carriage was certainly fit for a king being some 32 feet in length and 8 feet wide. It was supported on eight wheels and in all, richly ornamented. Splendid it may have been but it lacked permanent steps. Temporary steps were used to prevent misuse. This was to prove fatal a little later on.

The procession of trains pulled out of Liverpool one by one with the Duke's in the lead. It made good time and reached Parkside, 17 miles down the track in under an hour. As the engine took on water, the notables made the mistake of deciding to stretch their legs, despite prior warnings to stay on the train. Some fifty men got off and began milling around.

William Huskisson was one of the notable guests. He was a former president of the Board of Trade and MP for the seat of Liverpool. Having fallen out with Wellington a couple of years previously, he went up to him in an effort to make amends and hopefully get reinstated to the Cabinet. He probably thought that as he was the local MP who had supported the railway project through the parliamentary process, now was the right time to put himself forward to the PM. As he shook Wellington's hand, a shout went up that an engine was approaching. It was the "Rocket" driven by Joseph Locke. Most people climbed back on the train or alternatively, sought the refuge of the nearby embankment. Huskisson however, had a gammy leg and was not very mobile. He panicked and ran to the side of the Duke's carriage but without the benefit of steps he could not clamber up into the car properly.

Poor Locke, the Rocket's driver, saw too late the oncoming disaster. Being completely without the ability

to brake, save from putting the loco into reverse gear, Locke could only watch with horror as the locomotive inexorably bore down onto Huskisson. Instead of covering between the tracks where there was sufficient room to take cover, Huskisson grabbed at a door of the carriage which swung outwards tossing him into the path of the Rocket. The sickening crunch as his leg was shattered under the wheels, was heard by all those around. *The Times* tells us that the wheel went over his left thigh "squeezing it almost to jelly". It was immediately clear that the "poor man was mortally wounded".

Stephenson reacted quickly. He said he would take the stricken politician on towards Manchester to seek medical aid as rapidly as possible. He thus turned his train into an ambulance. With three doctors tending the dying man, the train reached speeds of 35 miles-per-hour. Stephenson, never averse to milking a situation, said later that it was a world record. The speeding train provided a fantastic spectacle for the crowds who had no idea of the reason for the urgency. Stephenson dropped Huskisson and two of the doctors at Eccles, where they were taken into the vicarage—but to no avail. Despite the arrival of surgeons summoned by Stephenson, Huskisson died in agony at 9 p.m.

Despite the accident, the organizers determined to continue the cavalcade to Manchester. The festivities continued, largely as planned, including the banquet at the Adelphi Hotel, although the band was cancelled out of respect for poor Huskisson. There had been no doubt that the ceremonies should have started and ended at Liverpool. Enthusiasm for the railway there, appeared unalloyed. The Liverpool crowds were wholeheartedly enthusiastic about the new invention whereas at Manchester, contemporary observers noted that the procession was watched with "looks of sullen or insolent indifference". At Manchester the mood of the crowd was decidedly hostile, more so in particular with the Duke than the coming of the railway. The Wellington government's opposition to social reform put it at odds with the lower classes. Stones were thrown at the Duke's carriage. Wellington, the hero of Britain, who fifteen years before had militarily defeated Napoleon I, left the field of Manchester defeated by the show of strength of civilians who had once applauded him. Whilst Huskisson was the first mortal casualty of railways as we know them, Wellington could be deemed the first political casualty. Two months after the opening of the Liverpool-Manchester railway, the Duke resigned as Prime Minister in favour of the pro-reformist Earl Grey.



William Huskisson, the MP for Liverpool, who is more renowned today as the first railway fatality, than for his political achievements.

(Below) First class passengers travelled in carriages derived from road coaches. Lessers mortals travelled in open carriages hauled by an already out-of-date "Rocket" class engine.





Ever the conservative and suspicious of the masses, Wellington's experience with the Manchester opening blighted his railway appetite, for he never ventured onto a train again until thirteen years later. He argued that railways would simply "encourage the lower classes to travel about" and that the "roads, improved by the likes of Macadam, would prevail." How true his prophecy.

Cavalier Attitude—England 1839

For the first twenty years that railway travel was possible, accidents were frequent rather than serious.

They were frequent because people treated the railway as if it was a toy or a harmless novelty. They were not always as serious as they were one hundred years later, simply because 20 mph was generally as fast as they could go.

Locomotive engines were looked upon as a kind of fair-ground attraction and it was not until the casualty list began to lengthen, that the railway staff and the general public learned to treat them with respect and caution. The slogan "Safety First" did not become the watchword for the railways for many years.

This cartoon was published in 1887 and although not related to this story, illustrates it none the less.



Reading Between the Lines.

Every week there could be instances of passengers jumping off trains that were traveling at full speed—people who'd known only travel by horse and carriage simply could not imagine that traveling at 20 mph rather than 6 or 7 called for an entirely different attitude.

Railway records for the 1830's are filled with entries such as the following:

Injured, jumped out after his hat. Fell of while riding on the side of a wagon. Skull broken while riding on top of a carriage and coming into collision with a bridge. Guard's head struck against a bridge when attempting to move a passenger who had improperly seated himself outside.

Of the serious accidents reported to the Board of Trade, writes one authority " 22 happened to persons who jumped off when the carriages were going at speed, generally after their hats and five persons were run over when lying drunk or asleep upon the line."

The cavalier attitude to the dangers of the railway can perhaps best be summed up in the amusing report of what could have been a fatal accident on the Great North Railway. A wealthy landowner who'd decided to take a Sunday afternoon stroll along the railway line in 1839, was hit by a locomotive and hurled down the embankment. On being picked up he simply said; "If I've damaged the engine I'm quite happy to pay for it." !!

Amateurs—1838 Style

Until appropriate legislation was passed, individuals regularly put their own trains on the railway company tracks if they fancied themselves as train drivers

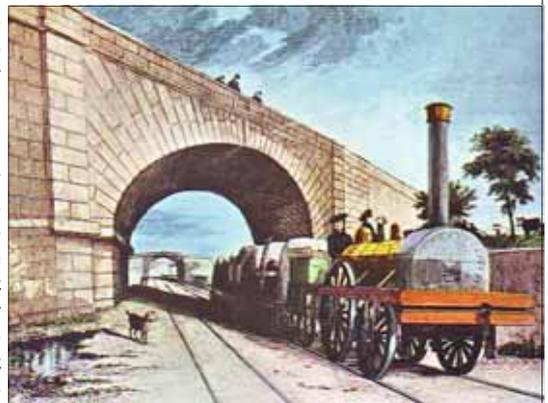
In the early and mid 1830's, a certain Dr. Dionysius Lardner had become addicted to doing this. He had his own locomotive engine but nowhere to run it. His solution was to take his partly dismantled engine to the local railway company tracks on the back of several large carts. He and his assistants would then assemble the engine, load it with coal and water then Lardner would set off down the tracks.

There was so little traffic in the 1830's that he got away with this dozens of times, despite the fact that the owners of the line were never informed. Then, towards the end of the decade, Lardner came unstuck. It was a bright clear day and he set off in the usual way. He was enjoying himself enormously and had built up a good head of steam when—not realizing that he was actually driving up the "Down" line— he ran into the 8.15 express. The noise of the two engines hitting each other could be heard across the county but by a miracle, no one was killed. Three passengers were slightly injured and both Lardner's engine and the company's train were badly damaged. Lardner, a notorious eccentric, was furious with the company for having their train in the wrong place at the wrong time! Despite the damage he'd caused, Lardner could not be prosecuted. As a result of his actions, a change in the law was deemed necessary and the private use of railway lines came to an end.

ooo0ooo

The Coal Carriers—1842

The idea of carrying coal by train once caused consternation, soul searching and heart-ache for dozens of railway directors. At a meeting in London, on director stood up and shouted, "If we carry coal they'll be asking us to carry dung next!" So in the weeks that led up to the first shipment of coal being moved, one railway company issued strict instructions that the matter was to be treated with the utmost secrecy. If word got out that the railway was carrying coal, the directors believed



that passengers would desert them *en masse*. This bizarre idea was undoubtedly connected to the fact that rail travel was enormously fashionable in its early days and the fashionable traveler at that time, was a rich traveler. There was little profit in carrying 3rd class passengers but huge profits in carrying the wealthy. But would the wealthy travel by train if they felt a trainload of coal had just preceded them down the track? The directors thought not. So when that first shipment set off, each wagon was tied down with beautifully coloured tarpaulins, to give the impression that goods of a delicate and refined nature were being carried, rather than big lumps of sooty anthracite!

(Above) A freight train on the Liverpool and Manchester line passing under the skew bridge near Rainhill. Engineering works such as this bridge were made to last.



Rail Safety and Accreditation Notes

This section of the newsletter usually resides at the foot of the end page however there is a need to bring Rail Safety Workers and interested members up to date with developments in this area of our operations. Peter Stock, our Operations Manager has compiled the following information.

Incident report:

No reportable incidents. The method for the reporting of incidents recently was amended by ITSRR. New amended reporting forms together with a wall chart defining reportable incidents and necessary responsive action, are displayed and readily accessible in the Operation Room.

Drug and Alcohol Testing:

The last random drug and alcohol test was undertaken by ITSRR testing officers during November, 2008. All RSW's tested returned a negative result. All VHST Rail Safety Workers are again reminded of their obligations and responsibilities in regard to drugs and alcohol.

Fatigue management:

VHST Rail Safety Workers must be mindful of their obligations and responsibilities in regard to fatigue management both at a personal level and in the observance of fellow RSW's engaged in rail safety work.

It is important that if a RSW feels fatigued to the extent that they are not able to fully and competently carry out their duties, they must advise the Operations Manager or his delegate and not "sign-on" for their duties, or if on duty, immediately "sign-off".

Further, where fatigue symptoms in another RSW are observed whilst they are engaged in rail safety work, the person making the observation must advise the Operations Manager or his delegate and encourage the affected person not to "sign-on" for their duties if they have not already done so, or if on duty, immediately "sign-off".

Safety issues:

- Check-rails have been installed at the western end of the coal road.
- The method of operation of the valve cock on the water tank has been modified. It is now possible to turn on the water supply for the locomotives from ground level by the use of a chain connecting to the valve cock.
- Train examination procedures are being introduced and have been trialled on recent operating days.
- Introduction of society security locks to replace master depot locks on STARPS operating days and the recording of their placement and removal now included on the Daily Operations Report.

Rail Management System:

At the last board of directors meeting 30.05.2009 the following statements were mentioned, discussed and/or reaffirmed:

- Safety Management System.

- Safety Management policy.
- Risk Management policy.
- Drug and Alcohol policy.
- Fatigue Management policy.
- Key Safety Performance Indicators and Performance Monitoring.

Toolbox talks nos. 1 and 2:

A programme of Toolbox talks has been instituted. The first Talk was held in November last year and another on 04.07.2009.

Subjects discussed included;

- Drug and Alcohol policy.
- Fatigue Management Policy.
- Emergency Response and location of Emergency Assembly Area.
- Safety Policy (document issued).
- Introduction of penalty notices on operators and RSW's and on-the-spot fines (documentation posted to all RSW's).
- Risk Register.
- Installation of check-rails on coal road.
- Inspection and Operation of Locomotive and Rolling Stock manual (copies of which were numbered, signed for by RSW before being distributed to those present).
- Modification to water tank delivery system.

Other matters for future meetings.

It was also resolved that future Toolbox Talks will be held in the morning of the first Saturday of the month, the next meeting set down for 01.08.2009.

Future of the SMS, etc.:

The society has responded to a letter of survey by ITSRR as to the present documentations relating to its accreditation and the offer for site visit to implement outstanding items. Recently the society hand-delivered hard copy comprising over 150 pages to ITSRR (not by email).

The society is waiting for the dates ITSRR will visit Valley Heights to conduct a review of the society documentation relating to its Accreditation to Operate and to assist in the completion of various attendant items.

The 2008 audit is yet to be finalized by ITSRR. The society is awaiting their findings. Meanwhile the 2009 audit is approaching and that audit is due in October!



When “Oils ain’t Oils”

We take electricity for granted nowadays and barely spare a thought for when electricity mains connection did not exist for many parts of the country, right up until the mid 1950’s and indeed beyond. I for one, remember being in the coastal village of Yamba in the late 1940’s where there was no electricity connected. I remember many small stations on the North Coast line around that time and well beyond, were illuminated by kerosene lamps. Trains today, are all lit by electricity provided by various means and it seems in the long distant past when trains were lit by a variety of fuel lamps. Strange as it may seem now, it was a quantum leap when kerosene came into vogue on the railways in NSW. Peter Stock has dug up the following story from the “Budget” of October 17, 1893. Consolidated texts are in italics.



A “Barton” burner, commonly known as a “bat-wing” burner today. Why they did not work initially is not mentioned in the “Budget” article.

“Some seven or eight years ago, experiments were made with the Barton Kerosene Burner, with a view to introducing them on the NSW’s Railways. From some cause or other, they were not considered successful and the question was allowed to drop until about June 1892. At this time, instructions were given that an effort must be made to use kerosene in lieu of colza oil. Colza oil is a vegetable seed based oil from the rape family. It is still used today in some foods.

A tail lamp was received from England which on being tried, was found to go out and smoke very much. About this time the repairs and maintenance of traffic lamps was placed under the Interlocking Department and to them fell the duty of making a success of burning kerosene in our present lamps.

A number of experiments have been carried out by the general foreman, Mr. William Thornley. He has clearly proved that not only can the kerosene burner without a chimney, be adapted to signal, side and tail lamps but by introducing his invented improvement, it can be successfully applied to locomotive head lamps and shunters’ hand lamps.



A kero burner assembly from a signal lamp. Was this type of burner Thornley’s improvement?

(Exactly what Mr. Thornley’s improvements were, is not given in the “Budget”. Perhaps it was the perforation arrangement as depicted. Maybe an “aficionado” out there might

enlighten us.)

Three areas of advantage of kerosene over colza were anticipated.

COST:

- Traffic Dept. - £1,530
- Interlocking and Signals - £1,500 savings
- Permanent Way Dept. - £57
- Tramway Dept. - £200

Locomotive Dept. - £1,200

A total saving of about £4,487 p.a.

The second advantage was in lamp maintenance and efficiency. An experiment between kerosene and colza fueled lamps resulted in kerosene lamps burning continuously for 100 hours without attention whilst similar colza fueled lamps would not burn for more than four to five hours without attention such as wick trimming.

A third advantage was in consumption. Kerosene lamps burnt with less fuel consumption, generally being more consistent in the rate of burning.

It is expected that the whole of the traffic side and tail lamps will be fitted up complete by the end of February next (1894) and the whole of the lamps in twelve months time. By the end of that time, colza oil lamps, so far as the railways are concerned, will be a thing of the past.”

(Kerosene lamps have now also largely passed into history being largely, collectables. The marker lamps and other lamps used by railways nowadays don’t somehow have the character of the old lamps. I remember well the old kerosene porters’ lamps, a brace of them lined up on a platform smoking away and wafting that peculiar odor of kerosene about the station area. Somehow, I don’t think there will be quite the enthusiasm about LED lamps and the like, by collectors of the future.)

ooo0ooo

Whilst on the subject of kerosene lamps, it is timely to mention the gifting of two kerosene lamps to the society by member Paul De Vries.

The two lamps are tramway “break-down” or emergency lamps, having three clear glass sides with the back of the lamp housing a reflector. They are of course kerosene fueled however, the cistern and burner assemblies for each, are missing. This was remedied in one case, by utilizing a cistern/burner assembly from a similar lamp gifted some time ago by Life Member, Frank Moag.

Paul came across the lamps some years ago at an antiques fair. His eyes nearly fell out of his head when he saw engraved on a worn brass escutcheon on one of the lamps, the number “103A”! Of all such tram lamps that must have been made, by coincidence, here was one that had survived independently of our motor, 103A. The chances of this happening must be astronomical. How they became separated from one another and went their different ways would be interesting to know. We know the history of 103A but the lamp is an unknown story. Judging by the general wear and tear of the lamp, including the brass escutcheon, there is little doubt that it is genuine. The second lamp is in poorer condition and comes from a former Newcastle “LP” tram.

With necessary “de-accession” attendant to housing changes, Paul thought the lamps and in particular the 103A lamp, would be better placed with the society and its original motor. The “103A” lamp in particular, is a wonderful addition and the society sincerely thanks you Paul, for making it available to us.



(Above & below) Two types of colza oil burners. The wick appears to have a solid core and requires a glass chimney to burn properly.



(Below) The emergency lamp hanging on the end of the motor’s apron.

(Photo courtesy, Peter Stock.)





"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

Web site: www.infobluemountains.net.au/locodepot
(follow link to steam tramway site)

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) Inc.

Chairman and Works Manager, Craig Connelly
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
2nd and 4th Sundays of
the month. Steam
operations on both days.



From the Work-front: 1308: Cabin dismantled for storage. Reversing screw assembly re-conditioned. **1022:** further progress on machining-up, fitting axle boxes. **103A:** Glands re-packed **Misc:** Modification of water tower cock to chain operation. **LA 179:** Further work on cleaning down, checking parts, painting of

No.1 bogey



(Lt.) Some of Ralph Boessel's reconditioning work on 1308's reversing gear etc

(Rt.) Steve Tolhurst working on the white metal of one of 1022's axle boxes



(Lt.) Craig Connelly and Steve Tolhurst pause to consider the next step in checking out the LFA's No.1 bogie.

Last but not least....



R.I.P

It is with deep regret that we advise the passing of long-time member, Peter Martin's daughter, Eleanor. Our sincerest sympathy is extended to Peter, his wife and extended family in this time of great sorrow.



Sick List

One of the stalwarts of the museums' grounds team, **Keith Reynolds**, is suffering from spinal cancer. Our best wishes are with you Keith and your partner, society member, Roz Reynolds. Please know that you are both supported in thought and prayer.

OTHER NEWS

Coal Road Upgraded

The Museum perway gang has recently slewed the outer end of

the Coal Road to make it trafficable to the ash bunker. The Coal Road itself has been progressively re-railed and slewed from the boundary fence. This slewing, had for some months, left the last few metres out of alignment and untrafficable. All is now finished and the modified line will admit full-size railway vehicles to the end of the line without fouling the boundary fence.

Following concerns from ITSRR re the embankment and the risks that could flow from a de-railment, the team has installed check railing to the last third of the line.

The perway team have done a very professional job and we thank them profusely.

Unfortunately, the section modified was only available to traffic for a few operating days before the outer end was required for the storage of a two carriage rail-car set. Hopefully these will be transferred off the museum site in the not too distant future.

ooo0ooo

Australiana Village—What If?

Appearing on the news late June, was a protest staged by the local folk at Wilberforce. They were protesting against the proposed sale/disposal of Australiana Village by the local council. The village is a collection of typical colonial commercial and other buildings that was put together some years ago to give insight into village life as it was in the late 1800's early 1900's. It could be seen as a down-market version of Timbertown. Some years ago it fell on hard times and closed. It has remained in this state ever since. The upshot of the protest meeting was that the council want interested parties to put together a feasible business plan if they want the village to re-open.

Years ago, after the Parramatta Park fire, Australiana Village was investigated by the society as a possible site upon which to re-establish. A circular track was envisaged. Nothing came of this however, it is interesting to muse "what if ?" Would the village have survived because of our presence or would we have gone down with it ? On balance, we definitely made the right decision to come to Valley Heights.

Additional Exhibits at the Museum

Arriving at the museum on July 24, were three additional exhibits; locomotive 3214, composite refreshment car RBR and an EHO van containing parts for 5711. With a little "shoe-horning" everything fitted although the operating line on the Coal Road is curtailed.

ooo0ooo

(Continued from page 3)

splattered with dirty soap grime. Not only the basins but the adjacent walls With an operating day occurring on the Sunday following, this is not a pleasant encounter for our visitors. It takes but a minute to wash or wipe down with paper towel, the residue of your hand washing and thus leave the basins and surrounds in a reasonable Your co-operation would be sincerely appreciated particularly by visitors and not least by the duty officer cleaners.



Have you sent your annual subscription yet ?