

Association of Tourist Railway Inc.
Preserving Heritage Railways in Victoria

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The Electric Telegraph

**An Electronic publication of Heritage Railway and Tramway News
from Victoria.**

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This is the electronic publication of the ATR bringing the news of happenings on Heritage Rail within Victoria to our readers. These news items are compiled from the publications of our members and are published at regular intervals. We hope that you enjoy these issues, the publication is sent electronically to all members of the ATR and ATHRA. You can contact the ATR electronically by sending an email to secretary@atr.org.au or by mail to PO Box 271, Queenscliff 3225. You can download further copies from the ATR website at www.atr.org.au

Comment

2009 was a very difficult year for the management of Heritage Railways in Victoria. Many of our group's management teams have had to completely set up again the management of their groups in order to receive re-accreditation as if they were main line operators. Yet was all of this really necessary?

This has resulted in excessive stress for our small band of administrators and has actually resulted in burnout for several people who have been forced to leave our group to preserve their health and families.

So why the re-accreditation? This has never been satisfactorily explained. To be re-accredited our very small team of people, who do our administration, had to work long hours. However without the assistance offered by the State Government through Safety Action, it is doubtful that anyone would have made the grade.

Our railway administrators are the people that we need to take our hats off to as without their efforts over the last 50 years, all of our endeavours to try and save part of Australia's rich transport heritage would have come to nought. They just do not get the praise that is due to them yet we could not open without them.

And another question is, are we really transport and should we be under the banner of the Department of Transport? To my mind we are part of the entertainment industry rather than that of transport. Let's hope that 2010 will be less stressful to our people and their families.

National News

ATHRA - Association of Tourist and Heritage Rail Australia

Meetings

The next meeting of ATHRA is to be held in Tasmania from 12 March to 13 March 2010. The meeting will take place in Sheffield, Tasmania. A tour visiting Rail Heritage sites in Tasmania will precede the meeting of ATHRA from the 6 March to 11 March 2010.

ATHRA Alerts

The National Association has set up a system of "Alerts" to immediately draw member's attention to urgent changes which are taking place in the rail industry. Alerts No's 1 to 13 were issued in 2005. No's 14 - 27 were issued in 2006 and No's 28 to 36 in 2007. The Alerts issued in 2008 are Alerts No 38-40. Alerts No 41- 46 were issued in 2009. For details please see the ATHRA website.

Victorian News - ATR

Bush Fires

Accreditation

All Victorian accredited heritage rail organisations have been re-accredited. The only exception was the T.M.S.V. which decided to surrender their accreditation and is now a static museum. To assist members in the new regime, the Department of Transport has funded support for the Heritage and Tourist Sector by Safety Action Pty, Ltd, for a further 12 months. This will be very useful to all our members as we struggle with the new rules and it will keep us up to date with what is happening in the legal field.

Death of Bruce Eastwood.

The Association noted with regret the death of Bruce Eastwood in October 2009 who was President of the ATR from 1991 to 1995. Bruce was an accountant by profession and was heavily involved with the Daylesford Spa Country Railway and also with the Bellarine Railway. Bruce was one of the first non VR qualified people to be accredited to drive a railmotor. Bruce's wife Sonia was also heavily involved in the ATR and for a number of years was Treasurer and undertook for the PTC the maintenance of the records of those persons approved by the VR to operate on Heritage Rail in Victoria. Our thoughts and condolences go out to Sonia.

News from our Members

Australian Railway Historical Society - Victorian Division.

The Society has been trying very hard to try to get the Victorian State Government to commit to placing the Museum undercover in East Block at Newport Workshops. The Museum has spent many decades in the open exposed to sea air and spume which negates restoration work almost immediately the work is carried out. Victoria is the only state in Australia which does not have an undercover railway museum. The exhibits go back to the early days of the Colony of Victoria but cannot be displayed properly due to the lack of funds or decision by the Government to look after its own properly correctly, the Museum being the custodian of the equipment for the State Government.

MUSEUM NOTES

Locomotive B83 is falling apart from the sea air. While the engine is being repainted regularly nevertheless the sea air is doing damage to metal parts and it was noticed that the piece of metal behind the fireman's door was so rusted that the bolts have sheered off requiring repair. This has resulted in setting back the entire re-painting programme by at least a month while this is repaired.

Similarly wooden carriages such as Norman and Torrens are suffering badly and a vast amount of work has to be made to just hold the status quo. A lot of timber replacement has been made to both cars but the deterioration continues.

Newsrail

October issue had an interesting article on Spencer Street No.1 box. The November issue carried a tribute to Wal Larsen, who was a friend to many Heritage Rail groups. A major article was on the broad gauge line to Albury and this was continued in the December issue.

Alexandra Timber Tramway & Museum

The railway celebrated the centenary of trains arriving in Alexandra.

Ballarat Tramway Museum

The Museum reports that following good rain Lake Wendouree is starting to fill again. This is being helped by an inflow of recycled water. The City Council has spent in excess of \$1.3M in enhancing facilities at the lake. This is not the first time the lake has been dry as it was created from a shallow swamp. The lake has always been a focal point for Ballarat.

2009 saw the completion of 35 years of the Museum operating trams in Wendouree Parade. When this section of the former Ballarat tramways was saved the dream was to preserve and operate a museum tramway around the lake using the surviving track. At the time the State Government was determined to remove all provincial tramways and the section chosen to try to save was away from Country Roads Board roads. In the end, only the section within the park boundary was saved mainly because it was found from parish plans that the "road" Wendouree Parade was technically not a road

but merely a "track" within the park and not marked on the official government parish plan.

Around the Depot

Work has commenced on the restoration ESCo crossbench tram No 22 Most of the woodwork will be on the south side of the body which is very poor. Most of the pillars have been badly affected by wood rot. These will be replaced. Tram 14 has had extensive mechanical and electrical work carried out and tram 671 has had a repaint.

Work has recommenced on refurbishing No 38's motors with the underside of the tram being cleaned and some paint applied to protect the timbers from the effect of street running. One of the motor cases has been cleaned with wiring renewed as necessary. The depot has been cleaned up and this has allowed the tower wagon to return to live at the depot.

Other works have included the demolition of the former SEC Bike shed at Bungaree which was damaged by a fierce wind storm. The City Council has tried to make the bicycle path crossing the access track from the depot in Wendouree Parade more prominent to bike riders, as a number of falls have occurred at this location due to bike tyres being narrower than in the past.

A grant has been received from the Commonwealth Government (\$3,850) for the purchase of small equipment and (\$17,400) from the State Government to allow the museum to develop the interpretative display as part of the revamped display area at the museum

Once again the annual visit as part of 'Copsnkids" took place with 64 children entertained with tram rides. The children are hosted by the Ballarat Police who runs a four day camp for children who are being treated for cancer.

The Bellarine Railway

The railway reports that it carries some 40,000 passengers each year and contribute an estimated \$7.M to the economy of the region.

The railway noted the passing of its former President, Max Coleman, and his work in establishing the railway on the former Queenscliff railway and acquiring engines T251, Pb15, 454 (and RM76, which is on loan to the Mary Valley Railway in Queensland).

The railway received the Judges' special Prize from the Geelong Advertiser, the 2009 Business Excellence Award for the region In July 2009. The railway officially launched T251 for normal service in July. The engine is 92 years old and took two years of intensive restoration. A new tender was built for the engine.

The railway received a gift of \$10,000 for the restoration of carriage SP8 for the Blues train. In addition the Borough of Queenscliff made a grant of \$20,000 towards the shed at Laker's Siding and this sum will be used to maintain the track between Laker's and Queenscliff. An application has been made for funding under the Jobs Fund to employ 13 people for two years to refurbish the track.

The Blues train continues its success and now runs for 45 services each year. Charters and driver experience trains are increasing and the railway has been useful to the town in allowing people to park on the outskirts and take the train into the centre of Queenscliff. For the Seafood Festival, for example, 46 railcar movements took place with 5,000 people using the service. A further 500 people used Drysdale. The railway has the capacity to move 2000 people an hour between Swan Bay and Queenscliff.

The railway has safely taken delivery of all the 3'6" gauge engines from the Puffing Billy Museum at Menzies Creek. They are stored in the shed at Laker's. All the track work in this shed has now been completed with all operating stock stored safely out of the weather.

The railway is slowly erecting name boards for all the former stations established over 100 years ago on the line. These stations have been closed for many years.



X Class Passenger train at Queenscliff Station

Photo J. Frost

Bendigo Tramways

The tramway is to have a \$3.1M upgrade with the bulk of the money to be spent on the restoration of the tram repair workspace and to make the site safe to allow visitors to tour through the site. The depot is the oldest operating tram depot in Australia having been built in 1903. The administration building is to be redeveloped to provide in addition better volunteer accommodation. Associated track works, site works and landscape works are to be carried out as well. This has meant that many trams in the fleet have had to be transferred to storage to allow the depot to be re-built.

The tramway has had a very active end of the year operations with a 20 minute shuttle service from both the Central Deborah Mine and from Emu Point to Rosalind Park for the Bendigo Community Carols in the evening on 20 December. In addition the Myer Santa tram ran again from 14 December to 24 December.

In addition to this the tramway is running an evening service from 5.00 pm from the 27 December 2009 to the 9 January 2010. This is in addition to the daily tourist trams.

Although the workshop will be needed for the upgrade programme nevertheless repairs to trams is still continuing. No 808 has run some 50,000 km as a talking tram and has had its tram bogies replaced with a spare set. Paint touch up work has been done. Haddon tram W3 663 has arrived for repair under contract and was unloaded at the Gas Works site and then driven to the depot for work.

Tram No 16 is to have \$146,000 spent on it with a grant from the Department of Transport to restore it to P&MTT tram No 84. It is proposed to take this tram down to Malvern Depot to celebrate the Centenary of the Depot on 30 May 2010.

Daylesford Spa Country Railway

Following on from the February 2009 bushfires, the railway has not been unable to re-open to Bullarto, nor has it received any funding from the State or Federal Governments for this replacement work. While many millions of dollars were contributed by the public for Bush Fire relief of destroyed and damaged communities, not a cent has been allocated to Heritage rail to replace their losses.

Nevertheless the railway using its own reserves has purchased a quantity of second-hand 75lb rail from the former Wahgunyah line to replace rail destroyed in the fire. But it does not have the financial resources to purchase the necessary sleepers to repair the track. The railway needs some \$300,000 to allow it to restore the burnt section and cope with the ravages of time to the section between Musk and Bullarto where they cannot get into to do their normal maintenance.

The railway has again used their reserves to purchase a suitable 6LW Gardner engine suitable for 7RM or the Leyland from Sydney. In addition they have acquired three track machines to maintain the track.

On a brighter note, the railway received an ATHRA award for the restoration of railmotor 63RM. Work has continued on maintenance of the operable track and much fire prone vegetation has been removed and burnt.

63RM:

Still currently running all the passenger services (apart from the monthly Silver Streak) with no problems to report.

91 RM:

Work is still continuing on both the roof and ceiling repairs. After more removing of the economy car roof's previously applied fibre glass, then patching where required, we appear to have finally stopped the roof leaks in that car. As the bulk of the roof is now painted etch primer grey it needs a coat of royal blue paint to finish it off. Work is about to switch to the first class car roof. A major amount of work has been undertaken in the manufacture of the

new ceiling panels. This has included the replacement of some of the internal timber roof framing. Another activity currently being undertaken is the re-painting of the remaining ceiling panels in the first class car; this has been a fairly big job with the removal of all the old flaking paint followed by a large amount of overhead sanding work. The target is to have 91 RM completed by the end of this year ready for our busy Christmas/January running

DRC40:

Still running well on its monthly Silver Streak commitments. New batteries and charger have been purchased for the Diesel Alternator set and await installation. This is to provide a separate 24volt system for the DA set itself. When the DRC's were rebuilt during the early 1980's this is how the DA set was set up however, at some stage, the DA set was modified to pull it's 24 volts from the 64 volt battery bank which is not normally recommended

32RM:

With the limited workforce currently concentrating on the repairs to 91 RM things have been a bit quiet of late. Progress is still happening on 32RM, just at a slower pace. The recently re-fitted external steel window pressing have been fully secured with new stainless steel screws. The roof vents have been paint stripped and are in the process of being repainted. These vents have also had new bearings fitted to them. The aluminium floor kick strips have been polished and wait re-fitting. Work has started on removing the paint from the external opening window frames. Some work has also been undertaken on the driver's cab components, including painting the driver's dashboard and cleaning up and painting various air brake parts and pipes.

Diamond Valley Railway

The railway paid tribute to a former President, Max Coleman, who was also a life member of the railway

The railway reports:

Projects completed – Works

1. One siding has been removed from alongside the old carriage shed.
2. A new concrete level crossing has been completed near No 11 signal post.
3. Electrical Conduits and water pipes have been installed in the W G Pert carriage shed complex.
4. Four and a half re-furbished panels of 141b. /yd. Rail were installed alongside Nillumbik platform.
5. Nine new panels of 6 Kg. /m. rail were installed in pine tree loop from the triple arch bridge towards the level crossing near fork tree cutting.
6. Five and half new panels of 6 Kg. /m. rail have been installed in the new No. 1 road, Diamond Valley, between No 10 signal post and No 11 signal post.
7. The concrete floors have been poured in the new W G Pert carriage shed.

Work in Progress

1. On going aligning, levelling and ballasting of track are continuing around the system as required.

2. We are gathering components for future 6 Kg. /m. points (thanks to Richard Hayes and his milling machine). These should enable us to continue removing existing 14lb. /yd⁴ points from the mainline and cascade them into future yards and sidings.
3. Work is underway on the replacement of the post and rail fencing at various level crossings and pedestrian crossings around the system.
4. A retaining wall is being constructed along side the Sanctuary Carriage Storage sidings head shunt towards Willcox Bridge.
5. Six old 14 lb. /yd. points (removed from the front of the Old Carriage Shed) are being re-furbished for installation in the future track arrangement for the new W G Pert Carriage Shed. So far six points have been completed of which two have already been installed one in the lead to Nos 1 & 2 roads in the W. G. Pert workshop and the other in No 3 road of East Yards.
6. Work continues on the maintenance of our grounds in good condition thanks to the Parks and Gardens team.
7. New picnic tables have arrived from Kidstown Shepparton in the Jack Tatum picnic site at Meadmore Junction.
8. Thirty five 6m. Lengths of 20 mm x 10 mm steel bar rail have been laid on the concrete floor of the new W G Pert carriage shed. This is for the first five roads in the Carriage shed.
9. Continue replacement of old rail with 6 Kg. /m. rail between triple arch bridge and fork tree cutting. Five panels of 6 Kg. /m rail have been prepared for this project. (As Flexi-trak).
10. On the point bench there are two new points for the connection to Sanctuary Siding head shunt.
11. Duplication of the Willcox Bridge.

Grounds

To ensure that the ambience of the park is maintained the last 12 months has seen the planting of 500 trees , shrubs and grasses to return the grounds to a more bush setting. The recent drought did not help this work and an overzealous neighbour reports the railway to the council if they even hear a chain saw. So any maintenance needs to be carefully done as the municipal council is loath to allow any removals. Yet this has to be carried out from time to time as plants age and become unsafe.

Buildings

A major building is taking shape to provide a new Bill Pert Workshop complex. This is located alongside the present workshop/engine shed and replaces the former carriage shed.

Patronage.

Patronage continues at a similar level to previous years.

A number of special days have been run for several groups and the railway was used to film a romantic comedy "I Love You Too". Over 2,800,000 visitors have been carried on the railway.



Diamond Valley steam trains

Photo J. Frost

Friends of the North Australia Railway at Adelaide River

The railway reports:-

MIKE BOWMAN ALMOST THERE WITH HUDSWELL CLARKE #928

Mike has made some incredible progress with #928 in the last week. Not only has the saddle tank gone back on, but the steam dome and the chimney have been restored and refitted.

Mike Bowman reports:-

"Got a bit more done, makers plate on right hand side, half the lining on the cab done, a coat of black on the boiler front and loosened up the clamps and securing dogs (those things with knobs on the end!) on the smoke box door. Yesterday Peter Cornell welded the connections into the face plates for the boiler front and trued the plates up on the facing machine (something you don't want to get your fingers too close to!) With a bit of luck we will progress this next week. Last Friday was 928's 99th Birthday, maybe brightening up the loco was an appropriate thing to do but to be honest I never really thought of it until just now but it makes you think that 99, a good innings and still pretty well in one piece! We had better do something really special for the 100th Birthday! "



Hudswell Clarke No 928

Photo Friends of Adelaide River.

NAR HOUSE PROGRESSES

For some time now we have been working on rescuing a genuine NAR fettler's cottage from Katherine. Pete Cornell is organizing the logistics and advises that the stars are coming in to alignment.

With the Wet approaching we need to do this soon or wait until the next Dry.

In hopeful anticipation therefore, we decided to complete the concrete foundations for the house. This involved filling 72 holes in the ground with concrete on Saturday morning. We ordered the concrete for 0930 (when it was already hot) only to hit a double booking with Mick Loone. Our 5 cubic meters of concrete arrived just before noon. I was fortunate that long term colleague, Wolfgang Meike, had hesitated when I asked him what he was doing on Saturday morning. He was a great help as we tried to place this large volume of concrete in the searing heat. And to top it off, whilst we waited for our concrete Wolfgang helped to drill, cut and install some of the missing bracing inside Sid Williams #2.

As a result of this effort we are now ready to receive the 10m x 13m cottage. Thanks to Wolfgang for his time and effort on Saturday and also to Mick for assistance to clean-up the site on Sunday.

Mornington Railway

The railway has been heavily involved in debris removal from the right of way to assist in the present fire season. The railway is involved in developing a new strategic review of the railway. Re-sleepering is being conducted in the vicinity of the Horse Crossing. The level crossing at Wooralla Drive has been resurfaced by the contractors for the Shire Council and any necessary sleepers replaced. Replaced sleepers have been used to box in a crossing place used by walkers and cyclists who cross the formation near the Horse Crossing.

The railway has an arrangement with Richie's Supermarket whereby the railway is the recipient of donations from the company who use their card at the store.

Diesel Locomotive T334 is now in service again and has been repainted. T 411 has been out of service since it was derailed but following repairs is now operating again. Steam Locomotive K163 will come out of service in February 2010 for six months for maintenance. The railway had hoped to hire in another steam engine but the cost of transferring an engine proved to be too much.

Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Society

Tramcars

W3 663

This tram has been transported by road to Bendigo. The Association has engaged the services of the Bendigo Tramway to carry out the rebuilding of the roof and other works as funds permit. The cartage of 663 was contracted to Arthur's Transport utilising their special trailer which is fitted with rails for this designated purpose. This meant that although mobile cranes had to be used at Haddon to lift 663 onto the trailer we were able to unload it in Bendigo utilising their loading ramp which is located at the Gasworks Depot. The trip across to Bendigo was uneventful and the unloading process went smoothly.

Once 663 had been towed clear of the loading ramp, the Bendigo staff performed the required checks to enable them to confirm to PTSV that they had tested and checked the tram in accordance with their safety management system. Bendigo Tramway staff was then able to move 663 under its own power to the main depot at Tramways Avenue, escorted en route by their emergency vehicles. The operation along the streets of Bendigo went without problems and 663 is now stored in the main shed whilst a detailed study of the roof structure is performed to ascertain the best method of repair. The Association acknowledges the support VicTrack, through Mike Ryan, has given this project by sponsoring the transport of 663 to Bendigo.

SW5 849

Work is steadily progressing on the restoration of 849. During November, the four defective door pistons were replaced with units (from 843, and from tram bodies at Newport) that have been overhauled previously by Anthony Smith. Whilst this was being done the opportunity was taken to replace most of the steel piping along with numerous barrel unions with high pressure nylon air line. Individual door isolation taps have also been fitted to facilitate fault finding and adjustment.

In November the creased No. 2 end apron was removed from 849. This had been damaged whilst it was being moved off track by forklifts during its storage period at Preston Workshops. A near new apron ex SW5 809 was selected from store as its replacement, and the holes that had been drilled to secure ad panels were welded closed. It was then grit blasted, primed and has been re rolled to ensure correct curvature.

In addition, three sliding doors were replaced due to deterioration with others from store. This was not as straight forward as it would seem, due to the fact that they vary in size from tram to tram and there are a number of other minor

differences between classes. The three selected doors required planing to reduce height and in two cases the top roller brackets were countersunk to ensure adequate clearance within the door cavities.

Other Works

Level Crossing Lights

With the decision to remove the indicator lantern [signalling] system in the depot area, it has been necessary to redesign the control circuitry to retain use of the level crossing lights. This redesign is due to the fact that the crossing's operation was interlocked with the now redundant signal relays. During November, John Withers completed the design work and has made the required alterations within the relay box. The contactor dropping resistor boxes have now been installed and only the mounting of the line skates and wiring is required to complete this project. The system will then be tested to ensure correct operation and alterations made to our operating procedures as part of the change management process.

Entertainment Area

The cladding of the end walls with colour bond sheeting is now complete and the two drop centre sections removed from the body of SW5 809 are now incorporated into the longitudinal walls. As part of the redesign, the brick hotplate enclosure was removed and in December the floor was paved with ceramic tiles. The repainting of 809's former panels has commenced and they are to retain their former "Metropolitan Transit" livery with new logos and numbers applied. Only minor trim work is now required to complete this project which will give us a good undercover barbecue facility with a unique tramway flavour for members and guests to enjoy.

Track work

In preparation for re-laying the Car barn (north western) Curve, the south western curve has also been lifted to allow both curves to be aligned correctly when the work undertaken. The removal has also allowed water and services to be installed easily under the formation to service the vegetable garden area beyond the curve. A contractor was engaged to remove top layers of rubble to expose the sleepers. The rolled rail for the Car barn curve was returned to Haddon from Yarra Trams on Wednesday 4 November 2009, and has been stacked near the Lower Terminus until after summer when work gangs can be arranged to lay it. The rail looks fantastic and is a great improvement over what was removed, and we thank the team at Yarra Trams, particularly Massoud Majidi and Gary Tillotson and their teams for doing this work for us, and to Dennis Cliche for approving the project.

New Website

The new MTPA website www.mtpa.com.au has now gone live and is a major upgrade of the previous site. The site is the result of many hours of work by Warren Doubleday and Kym Smith to prepare and upload the relevant material.

The remaining 3'6" gauge engines have been transported from the Museum to the Bellarine Railway. All the remaining 2 foot gauge engines have had their asbestos removed. This will mean that the few remaining exhibits in the museum will be able to be viewed by the public once again.

Other News

The railway is revamping its membership/volunteer data base. The new product "Murder on the Puffing Billy Express" and the Jazz Train evening were sell outs and the demand for a Day out with Thomas the Tank Engine has exceeded expectations.

Following the State Government's policy the ETRB has set up a "Green team" to ensure that the railway has in place policies and procedures to reduce its environmental impact and for these strategies to be in place by June 2010.

Workshops

Locomotive 8A is undergoing a B examination and D21 while in traffic is also due for one. G42 is out of traffic and stored and is waiting on a D examination. 12A is under heavy overhaul. DH31 is undergoing a D exam and DH05 is being prepared to run as soon as possible. The bogies are nearing completion electrics are being worked on draft gear installed and it is being prepared for a repaint.

Climax 1694 boiler is being fitted out in preparation of a steam test. Garratt NGG16 129 is having its boiler cradle stretchers worked on The front pivot casting has been machined and is being fitted back in the cradle including the reaming of the bolt holes and the manufacture of fitted bolts.



14A approaching Belgrave

Photo J. Frost

Redcliffs Historical Steam Railway

The PTSV audit of their SMS was conducted in April 2009 and was successful.

In May they completed the installation of 2 x 9000 litre and 1 x 14000 litre rain water tanks - thanks to the Governments Community Water Grants. The

tanks will greatly reduce their reliance on irrigation water for the operation of their steam loco and will no doubt help extend the boiler life...

In September two special days were run for the local kindergartens - carrying around 900 passengers.

In October the station and train were hired for a wedding. The wedding ceremony took place on the platform and then the bride and groom and guests went for a train ride - which had to be diesel hauled due to weather conditions.

The railway is also building a new 3 bay carriage storage shed.

Finally they are installing some ex Victorian Railways signals - the signals are mainly for display but we will incorporate them into our operation.

Steamrail

Excursion trains have been successful with the Fathers Day tour to Seymour. Other trips included shuttles from Mitcham to Mooroolbark together with steam crew training runs.

A major and successful trip was run to Mildura over a weekend at Melbourne Cup time. The train was one of the longest that Steamrail has been run in recent years with three diesel engines in the consist, a power car, 7 sleeping cars, a BRS, and 5 sittings cars. A total consist of 17 units including engines. The train was so long that it was necessary to go to Westall Yard to allow the three engines to run around the train and then return to Spencer Street Station to pick up passengers. On the train's return from Mildura steam engine R761 was added to the train and two of the diesels were shut down. Again it had to proceed to Westall after the passengers had disembarked to run around before it could return to Newport.

The group spent many hours of work in getting the sleeping carriages ready to run to Mildura as it is many years since a sleeping train ran in Victoria. Sleeping car "Indi" had its roof repainted and the body cleaned. The water system was repaired and all the other cars needed similar checks.

18CE has been overhauled and repainted. **25BE** is being repainted and overhauled and **50AK** is receiving attention to roof leaks

Electrail

12BT is continuing its restoration to as new. The seats are being reupholstered with padded armrests and door pads being reinstated. Four of the nine compartments have been so treated. Door mechanisms and locks have been repaired. Internal deck-light mirrors have been reinstated in all but two compartments. Around half of the revarnished interior timber panels have been reinstated and all carriage windows have now been restored. Other internal revarnishing has occurred. Twelve photos, two adverts and four internal partition mirrors have so far been reinstated. Carriage lamps have also been returned to six of the nine compartments (with the silver paint removed from the lights to reveal the original nickel plating). The completed work looks fabulous. The luggage racks are all being restored. With brackets receiving fresh nickel plating and the wire mesh being meticulously cleaned

down and repainted, the luggage racks now look as "good as new". There's only one luggage rack to finish off. The carriage underframe has been painstakingly cleaned down

Tait car 341T - The restoration of this Tait car is now well advanced. A piece of the main beam at the corner of the car has been replaced with new coach bolts installed. Steel gussets have also been repaired. Deck-light windows have been exposed and painted externally. Beading has been installed (internally) around the deck-light windows. Carriage windows have also been restored. Revarnishing and repainting of the interior of the car is now well advanced. The fresh varnish work and paint looks wonderful.

E1109 - Work has resumed on this loco. Indeed there has been lots of activity in recent months. This includes the polishing of internal brass fittings, initial work on rewiring, installing a new door at Number 2 end, painting external grills (which have now received their first coat of black), the cleaning down of window brackets and the priming of the roof hatch, air tanks and brackets.

Dynamotor Project - The dynamotor project which has involved the overhaul of dynamotors at Ironcore Transformers for future use has continued. Having operable spares is considered essential. The project is well advanced.

The Big Move & Vehicle Scrapping - As part of the move from the Tarp Shop area to West block, Swing Door car, 32D and Yellow Tait Greaser car, 447M were scrapped. Prior to scrapping of these cars, they were stripped for spare parts. The movement of spares took considerable time. Thanks to everyone who assisted with this mammoth task.

Status with Operations (or lack thereof) - A lot of effort has gone into positioning ourselves to operate again. We have developed a range of paperwork including a risk register, maintenance procedure, safety instructions, testing procedure and a variety of forms. We have worked at mitigating identified risks. This work is well advanced. We hope to meet with representatives from the new Metro Trains Melbourne and other relevant bodies in the not too distant future. Sincere thanks are expressed to Adrian and Ruth from the Department of Transport for their support and help to steer us in the right direction. We are hopeful that there shall be positive developments in 2010. Particular thanks to Stuart, Allan, Cliff and Kevin for their extensive input into this process, particularly with form and procedure development.

The Victorian Goldfields Railway

The railway has put a large amount of time and energy into preparing for the 2009/10 fire season and has been involved in removing debris and spraying where needed. Also as much of the line as practically possible has been whipper snipped to make it safe for passengers and the community.

The railway reported the untimely death of its Vice President, George Young.

The railway has been hard hit by the burning of the Maldon Station building on the 20 October 2009. VicTrack the owners of the building have appointed a Project Manager to make safe the building and demolish the burnt roof. To help the railway, Puffing Billy made available a portable building from Cockatoo and this is being used to house the "first class" operation as well as the office. Ticket sales are being conducted from van 16ZLP. The fire has

resulted in the deferment of projects already approved for works at Maldon. The fire brings to light the need for railways to insure the buildings that they occupy as the building was uninsured. An insurable interest in a building exists where you lease a building and use it for your own purposes to earn income.

The railway has started work to complete No 3 road at Muckleford. Loco J549 is currently being repaired and future work includes the installation of new superheater elements. The DERM is out of service waiting on repairs to its engine and radiator.

Tramway Museum Society

At the recent AGM the Society elected a new executive. As the museum is now a static museum and has surrendered its accreditation certificate, any new application to operate in the future will require them to be treated as a new operator. They will have to prove that they have in place financial and management resources similar to those of commercial operators.



Bylands in happier days W5 795 at the terminus

Photo J. Frost

Yarra Valley Railway

The railway reports that the cafe at Healesville has been renovated with a fresh coat of paint, polished floor boards and air-conditioning. A first annual Heritage Festival was held at Healesville over two days in September. Rolling stock was displayed and steam rollers and traction engines and oil engines brought to the display. Large crowds attended both days and of course the trolley service was operating.

Bridge and Track Work

The railway has been working on bridge No 28 where the piles were replaced in 2008 but still need to be finished and re-railed. Suitable rail was obtained from South Australia and the rail bent to shape for the location. In October 2009 the track was removed from the bridge and the crossheads

exposed. These were replaced and the sleepers re-laid with the new rail following. Ballasting and packing completed the repair. This means that the line between Healesville and the tunnel is now in serviceable condition to run passenger trains. On the track scarifying out of the steam locomotive ash used by the VR track gangs to support sleepers is underway. New sleepers are being installed and track bolts and fish plates cleaned and greased. The railway has been the recipient of a supply of free second-hand sleepers from the Department of Transport.

The railway has a small road over rail bridge at Donovan's Road and the road traffic on this road is very small. A deviation has been created to provide a level crossing and work has been undertaken to improve the drainage and visibility.

Award

The restoration of RM 22 has won a further ATHRA award and was awarded the plaque for "ATHRA Passenger Vehicle Restoration Award 2009". With the completion of restoration of this unit a report has been prepared to PTSV for accreditation to run the unit.

J516

Work is continuing on this engine and the engine has been moved to the front of the shed to allow the de-tubing of the boiler, stripping of the entire right hand side valve gear and starting on the left hand side. Overall the engine is in good condition considering the time it has spent out of doors and that it is almost 40 years since it was last steamed.

Other Works

Carriage 1BW is under heavy restoration and has had some roof panels refitted, new gutter mouldings being fitted and is being prepared for internal and external painting.

