

Association of Tourist Railway Inc.

Preserving Heritage Railways in Victoria

A0022112C

ABN 98 950 537 404



The Electric Telegraph

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

**Issue No 10
July 2011**

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 545, Eltham Vic 3095. You can download further copies from the ATR website at www.atr.org.au

Comment

The Maturity of the Heritage and Tramway Tourist Sector.

This year is the 60th anniversary of the beginning of the Heritage Rail movement in the UK with Tom Rolt and his colleagues taking the first tentative steps to save the Talylyn Railway. In Australia Puffing Billy is 57 years old and a number of other Heritage rail organisations have achieved 40 years. For example the trams at Bendigo have been operated longer by the Bendigo Trust than any other operator in the history of the city.

With the aging of all of our heritage railway groups a new challenge arises. This is that as the pioneers of our group's age and indeed die; a new generation of people are taking over the reins. The pioneer looks back at the organisation that has been created by his group and suddenly realises that the institution is no longer proceeding in the way that it was set up and the values that caused it to be set are being discarded by the new operators i.e. the new generation!.

Things that were held sacrosanct by the pioneers are suddenly being discarded and indeed the successors are often not railway enthusiasts and have no connection with the hobby but are nevertheless attracted into the ranks. As people retire these people move into the upper regions of the management and have little sense of the heritage that the group was set up to preserve, often discarding key elements as they do not understand the reason why! . This causes great angst among the surviving pioneers who laboured hard to preserve it.

The question that has to be asked is why it was preserved in the first instance and how do we incorporate this into the next generation with the reasons for this, otherwise all the work that we done over the years was for naught.

Disaster Plan

The question has arisen do we all have a disaster plan? Disasters take all forms and can include landslips, bush fires, earthquakes, floods and other events. Also what would happen if a major accident happened both from the stress of the event and the financial consequences arising.

With so many events happening this year we all need to look at internal planning to ensure that we have such planning and the people to implement the plan.

Victorian News - ATR

News from the ATR Committee

ATR General Meetings for 2011

Given the DoT Seminars are often attended by the same people as the ATR General meetings, it has been decided to hold quarterly meetings during 2011, nominally the 3rd Thursday of August (and AGM) and November. Meetings will continue to be held at the Hawthorn Tram Depot.

Annual General Meeting

This year the ATR needs to find both a President and Secretary of the Association for 2011-2012. Both of the present officers are not able to continue on in office and it is essential that our members nominate for both positions.

National News

ATHRA - Association of Tourist and Heritage Rail Australia

International Rail Association

The organisation will be present at the International Safety Conference which will be held in Melbourne over the 17th to 23 October 2011. This is to be held in conjunction with the ATHRA meeting.

AGM and ATHRA Awards

The ATHRA AGM is to be held on 15 October 2011 and the ATHRA awards will be made at a dinner that night. Sunday 16 October will be an ATHRA General meeting open to all ATHRA members with a gala dinner that evening for the start of the rail conference.

ATHRA Alerts

The National Association has set up a system of "Alerts" to immediately draw members' attention to urgent changes which are taking place in the rail industry. Alerts No 52 - 53 have been issued in 2011. For details please see the ATHRA website. [Click Here](#)

News from our Members

Australian Railway Historical Society - Victorian Division.

The Museum is still closed for upgrading owing to OH&S issues. Discussions are taking place with government for the eventual relocation of the museum to another site. Work is still proceeding on carriage 8M and on Y108 by the museum workforce.

Newsrail

The April issue has a major article on the Western line and passenger services using it. An article on turntables shows the location of turntables in 2009. The May issue concentrated on the Migrant trains just after the end of WW2 and there is an article on the history of Willaura and a short article on Ballan's Water supply. The colour spread was on diesel engines which are still running from an earlier generation. The June issue covered the Casterton Branch line and a yarn by Norman Cave on the "Yard pilot". The colour spread has some interesting photos on unusual lash up of engines.

The magazine always includes news of current events on the railway system and developments on our heritage lines.

The publication Group advises that the next book to be published is entitled "Mechanical Weighing Machines of the Victorian Railways" and is being proof read.

Ballarat Tramway Museum

Around the Depot

Over 7100 people rode the trams in three days. Each afternoon four trams were pressed into service, no mean feat on a line with only one short crossing loop.

Ballarat Heritage Weekend

This was held over the 7-8 May and saw the horse tram running from the loop to St Aidan's Drive. The tram rides were free as the City Council sponsored the event.

Around the Depot

The tramway reports

Twenty-six members gave their time to ensure that the Museum's operations went off without a hitch during the Begonia Festival. John Shaw and Lindsay Richardson, our Perth members, again made the trek across the desert so that they could exhaust themselves 'selling' tram tickets over the three days. Eleven members were able to assist every day.

It was not all work and Alastair Reither arranged at short notice a wonderful barbecue under the stars at Bungaree on the Saturday night and a pleasant evening was spent at the "Western Hotel" the following night.

The top deck seat on the horse tram has been repainted prior to its appearance in traffic during the Ballarat Heritage Festival.

Mechanical work on No. 38 is nearing completion, with the wheels back in the truck frames and the motors in place and the final fitting of the bearings. Friend, and AETM worker, Ian Seymour has re-profiled several wheel sets for the Museum in recent years. On 16th April he returned freshly turned motor bearings

for No 38 and assisted in their fitting. Unfortunately the bearing was found to be oval and the motor has had to be returned for further work... The painting of the underside of the body has been completed. The gear cases have been cleaned and painted, a daunting task.

The compressor on No 14 has received some attention, while the drop end seats on three of the single truck trams have been stripped and re-varnished. The Museum has been able to obtain some surplus rail for Bungaree and when the overhead at Essendon Depot was replaced surplus fittings were donated to the Museum. At Bungaree a large shed has been built using money received from an estate. Three roads will be built in the shed and the two W class trams on site will occupy the shed together with Tram No 32. The W class trams are being stored for VicTrack who owns them.

Sagging overhead on the depot fan was rectified by straightening the southernmost pole which was starting to lean, and by making some minor adjustments to the span wires. The decorative scrollwork for the overhead is in the process of being cleaned and prepared for installation in the Parade.

Discussions with Council are proceeding with the hope that some funding will allow this long awaited project to proceed. The project is seen as enhancing the heritage appearance of the gardens.

During the last week of April a major track repair project will see a large number of rail joints replaced in Wendouree Parade in the section between Depot Junction and Carlton Street.

Fares have had to increase to \$4.00 adult and \$2.00 children.

40 year Anniversary Celebration

The Museum is now 40 years old being established in 1971. A special celebration took place over the 28-29 May to mark this. A dinner in a local hotel with a display of photographs over the forty years was shown as a Power Point type presentation took place on the Saturday with brunch at the depot and the running of some special trams on the Sunday. All present enjoyed meeting old friends.



Some of the participants attending the 40 Years Celebration

Bellarine Railway

Works have been taking place around the Queenscliff station over the last 6 months, a new post and rail fence has been constructed from the end of the platform down to the old crane base. This fence has replaced the old wire fence that has been in place for a number of years.

A new gate was also constructed at the coaling area for the locos. This allows the platform to be blocked off when coaling is taking place.

New platform seats have been made for both Queenscliff and Drysdale Stations. The Old Drysdale seats have been cleaned up and placed on the platform at Lakers Siding

One of the Railway members has made new station signs for Queenscliff and Lakers Siding. Signs were also made for Marcus and Mannerim. The railway has been appointed by the Department of Transport as the contractor to dismantle the former Fyansford railway. The line is 4.5km long and there are four sets of flashing lights. The rail is to be used to relay the heaviest section of the Bellarine line from Queenscliff to Lakers Siding. Much of the railway is laid with 7M lengths of very old crippled 75lb/yd rail. A total of 400 sleepers have now been replaced toward Summa Park.

Carriage SP8 is being restored for the Blues Train. A design is being developed for composition brake shoes for the Western Australian carriages ZA200 and Z112 to remove a problem with the cost and supply of cast iron brake blocks. Similarly the same work is happening with the X class locos with the aim of increasing block life and reducing costs from \$200 to around \$70 each. Air operated windscreen wipers have been fitted to the Rail motors and to V8, X3 and X20. Pozieres boiler has been tested to 160psi.

The railway is investigating a more modern logo.

Bendigo Tramways

The tramway reports that the following trams are under reconstruction or repair.

- **Tram No. 0008** – a 1903 single truck tram restored for the Electric Supply Company of Victoria (ESCV).
 - **Tram No. 0302** – a 1925 Municipal Tramways Trust (Adelaide) vehicle built in Philadelphia, USA.
 - **Tram No. 0663** – this former Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board W3 built in 1931 is now owned by the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association (MPTA). It is undergoing a roof replacement.
 - **Tram No. 1501** – a 1920s New South Wales Government Tramways 'P' class tram is being restored for the Sydney Tramway Museum (SPER).
 - **Tram No. 0003** – 1890 battery-powered tram built for the Bendigo's first tramline, between Bendigo and Eaglehawk.
-

Daylesford Spa Country Railway

New Shed

The shed is complete and is now housing the railway's historic rolling stock.



The new Storage Shed - Photo Daylesford Spa Country Website.

Other Works

The construction of the new shed has taken most of the available labour and works done included the re-sleeping of the remnant of the old Ballarat line leading to the shed, its extension, the construction of two sets of points and the laying of three tracks into the shed. The building of the points was a first for the railway as previous sets of points have been built with the assistance of other railways to the Spa Line. (The laying of points is quite difficult as the editor remembers from the early days of Puffing Billy that the first set of points was laid three times before we got it right.)

Nevertheless, other maintenance things such as vegetation slashing, sleeper renewal has continued on the line.

The railway has submitted an application for \$622,000 from the Commonwealth Government's Regional Development Australia Fund. This will include the track and the development of the station at Bullarto. If granted this will see the return of trains to Bullarto from Musk.

ROLLING STOCK REPORT

Recent Rolling Stock work has only been on vehicle running maintenance

63RM: Yearly B exam was carried out in February with no major issues identified. Currently running most of the services **91 RM:** Has now been retired to being a backup to **63RM** and used only when passenger demand warrants its use. 91 will be placed in the restoration shed for some body repairs and external repaint. **DRC40:** The air conditioner fan on the roof had become rather noisy. Therefore in April the fan and motor were removed from the roof and stripped down to replace the shaft bearings. **32RM:** Work on hold **Y159:** Some "new"

second-hand batteries have been purchased and await fitment. **26MT**: Now stored in the new shed! Unfortunately, due to weather deterioration, body repairs are required before it can be used again.

Friends of the North Australia Railway at Adelaide River

The railway reports:-

This coming Saturday (21 May) we will be celebrating the 85th anniversary of the completion of the Katherine River Railway Bridge and the Katherine Railway station (May 1926). The extension of the railway across the river facilitated the development of Katherine as we know it today. During the single year of 1926 virtually the whole of Emungalan moved south across the river - lock, stock and barrel,

In a major spurt at the end of the Financial Year the Dept of Construction is expediting the construction of the sealed Rail Trail from Stuart Estate (5 km north) in to Katherine via Conroy's Gap and Emungalan.

And whilst it's a fine sentiment and a fine job we were unhappy that there was a plan to remove the existing 500m of 60lb/yard rails north of the Katherine Bridge. This track is a very important remnant of the NAR (the only NAR track within 90km of Katherine) and it consists of the special Carnegie steel sleepers which were punched for dual gauge, showing that the dream of the north-south transcontinental railway was alive and well in 1926



The dual punched sleepers at Katherine, Photo Adelaide River

Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association

The Tramway reports;

North West Curve -The last of the tie rods were installed over Friday and Saturday, with the outer rail being spiked down late Saturday afternoon to complete the relay of the North West curve. W2 407 was then given the honour

on Sunday morning of being the first tram to traverse the new curve, being driven at very low speed by Tony Smith and stopping every few metres while Kym Smith monitored the interaction of the wheels and rails. No faults were detected and 407 was then given a second run around with Kym Smith at the controls to confirm the work. Backfilling of the curve will now be undertaken using the fill that will be removed to allow work to commence on relaying the south west curve. A few images of 407 'round the back are attached. More photos will be up on the MTPA's Flickr site later this week

Open Day - The open day was well attended with 28 visitors sampling rides and inspecting the collection during the morning, and another 25 visitors arriving later in the afternoon by coach, courtesy of Stephen Tyrrell.

Mornington Railway

The railway is running a Fathers' Day raffle. Work on the railway is continuing and tree trimming has taken place at Oakbank and Baldock Roads. Some clearance was also done at Bungower Road and at other locations. A full train of branches was later put through the chipping machine.

The railway is in the process of having a shared use path on the railway and meetings have been held with the various stakeholders and the DoT and a variation of the Accreditation is to be submitted to Transport Safety Victoria. The railway has purchased a defibrillator and trained the necessary people in its use.

The railway is concentrating on its web site to create further its awareness of the line in the community. Like all railways and groups there is huge amount of work being done behind the scenes and many people doing this work are invisible to the average volunteer. As well as the website this includes accreditation and risk assessment, statistics, occupational health and safety, marketing, training human resource management and many other things that cannot be seen.

Repairs to carriages are continuing and Guards Van 604ZD is receiving attention. Exterior boards are being replaced where necessary, the roof above the guard's door has been partly rebuilt, and new canvas has been applied. Van No 364ZL which was given to the railway is being converted to become a new ticket office. Rotten exterior boards are being replaced and it is being prepared for painting.

Engine K163 has had its 70th birthday on the 20th March 2011 and this was marked with a cake and special celebration with the local MP being present. The railway had two unwelcome visitors on the platform at Moorooduc when two horse riders endangered the safety of visitors by riding the animals on the platform.

Sleeper works have continued with the replacement program working up the hill from Bungower Road. The track gang has almost completed a full cycle of the entire operating line. In addition to this gang a new group has been formed to cut back the ever encroaching vegetation. This material is chipped.

Portland Cable Trams

The tramway reports

Depot Turntable

It's been over year a in the making, but the motorization of our depot turntable is close to being finished. Portland Aluminium Smelter (Alcoa) personnel have performed all the work with the planning being prepared by H.A.T.C.H. Engineering.

A grant from Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) enabled us to have the turntable motorization work commence. All the wiring and electrical work has been completed and the gears and motor have been purchased. Alcoa are currently in the process altering the cog that we had so that it better fits onto the gear box.

We are hoping that it will be completed within the next 4 weeks and then we will have a BBQ / Training night to show the volunteers how to work it and have a play with it on the night. We must acknowledge the work done by Alcoa and HATCH Engineering and also thank FRRR for the grant allocation.

Fairmont Rail Maintenance Vehicle for sale

To any of our fellow heritage rail organizations, we are wishing to sell the Fairmont Rail Maintenance Vehicle that we have. It is in working order but hasn't been used in recent years as it doesn't suit our rail set-up. Anybody interested, Please contact Alan Rees on (03) 5523 2831 or mobile 0409 232 405. The asking price is \$5000 or near offer.



Fairmont Rail Maintenance Vehicle for sale Photo Portland Cable Trams

100,000 Passengers.

Thursday January 6th 2011, Portland Cable Trams recorded its 100,000th passenger since services commenced in February 2002. Mrs. Anne Baker, a local resident along with her 6 granddaughters rode trip 5.

This is a very significant achievement and it is a great reward for all the volunteers that worked so hard to get the tramway running in the first place and then to continue to put in the hard work to ensure that it continued to a success.

We have 60 members but only approximately 40 are active and perform all the duties such as: Tram Driving, Conducting, Track Maintenance, Rolling Stock Maintenance, Office Duties and Gardening, etc.

Passengers Numbers

January, February and March have been very good in relation to passenger numbers and we have ticked over 103,000, that's 3000 plus passengers since early January and we hope the trend carries on through April and the Easter break. In the current economical climate, combined with fact that we are an isolated region with many kilometres to be travelled to get to Portland, we hope to be able to at least match last year's figures

Alan Rees

Puffing Billy

The Railway has started to look at alternative sources of funding, is seeking sponsorships for funding works, and is revising its business plan. The railway has had good passenger numbers over the financial year and may reach a record year at the end of June.

The Great Train race in May was a great success with almost 3,000 runners running against the train including the federal Leader of the Opposition, The Hon Tony Abbott, and other politicians. Each year the railway has a policy of providing free influenza inoculations to staff and volunteers and this has been most valuable in protecting them as they come in contact with so many visitors to the railway.

The railway has a policy of promoting itself to the public and takes part in many festivals and displays to promote both volunteering and travel on the trains. To assist long distance volunteers the railway has onsite accommodation and this is most useful.

Recently the railway had a "makeover day" at Belgrave where many jobs were undertaken to ensure that the station and its environs are always spick and span and attractive to both the workers and the visitors to the railway. A further "makeover" is to be held in August.

A "Heritage" mixed train was run to Gembrook in April and used four freight vehicles, an NBH carriage, a compartment carriage and a traditional guards van.

With the death of long time member Keith Atkinson the railway's Edmonson ticket machines have had to be relocated from Keith's former home and these have been re-established at Ferntree Gully.

With the amount of mechanical work required on the railway's historic steam engines the railway has been able to employ an additional fitter in the workshop to better keep up with the work. The railway has been contracted to upgrade the railway at the Caribbean Gardens and this has been completed with the aid of a 2' tamper from the Alexandra Timber Tramway Museum.

Other works are bridge works at Cavendish over the Wannan River and the Beech Creek Trestle Bridge at Rubicon.

On the track, work is proceeding on drainage and the normal maintenance work.

Locomotive and Workshop News

The Climax engine is steadily being rebuilt with the machining of the crank webs completed and other items machined. The new side frames have been riveted and the rear pilot beam along with the truss bars and foot plate brackets have been fitted. This marks the beginning of the engines reassembly.

12A continues its major overhaul and the tyres to the driving and coupled wheel sets are being fitted. 8A is in the workshop for a C examination and 7A has a more heavy D examination under way. The small engines 861 and 986 are having boiler works done.

In the carriage workshop 4NAL is in for a complete overhaul. 26NAC has been reissued to traffic and 11NBHC has been repainted after graffiti attack.

707 Operations

R707 BOILER REPAIRS - PROGRESS REPORT - UPDATE

Repairs have been completed to R707s firebox.

New plate has been root welded into the top part of both sides of the inner firebox and new stays fitted. The boiler was washed out on Saturday, 25 June and a cold water boiler pressure test will be conducted during the week ending 02 July. This will be followed by steam pressure tests before the locomotive is certified to resume mainline operation.

In addition to the firebox work the opportunity has been taken to remove, overhaul and refit both the locomotive piston valves and the tender relay brake valve.

R707 is scheduled to haul a Scouts charter to Bacchus Marsh on 24 July.



Photo 707 website - Photo by Ashcat

Seymour Railway Heritage Centre

The group runs regular work days at the depot, working on the upkeep of the of the track. The Centre ran a trip to Clunes as part of the Clunes Booktown festival and a trip to Tocomwal was run. The group is seeking help in preparing a regular newsletter and it is hoped to make "News Dispatch" come out on a monthly basis.

Steamrail

The Group reports:

Locomotives

R700 has received the wheels from R 766 and is now ready for transfer from Ballarat East to Newport. Shunting work at Ballarat East was assisted by steam engine **Y112**. Work on **A2 986** is proceeding and the engine frame has been painted black prior to reassembly. Fitted bolts continue to be made for the spring centre pin mounts. The boiler has been painted in heat resistant high temperature silver. **K153** needed major attention as the steam delivery pipe failed and had to be replaced. Work on R711 stopped to allow repairs to be made to K 153. All the other steam engines are in service.

DIESEL LOCO REPORT

S313 is in Melbourne for an exam and minor repairs The locomotive is to have air-conditioning finished off and a fridge installed while it is in Melbourne. The engine has been repainted in VR blue and gold. **S301's** certification has lapsed as the engine is not required until the party season when it will be re-certified. **T364** is to have a repaint of the roof and a few wiring jobs in the cab. Once this work is completed **T356** will have some rest and attention.

MARKETING REPORT

CATHIE SKELTON – MANAGER

Souvenir sales have been going well on all of our trips lately. The new range of books and DVD's are proving to be popular. Sierra publishing will be releasing a new book on the Walhalla railway and we will have this book in stock for our snow train in July. We have been advertising our trips with the "Age" newspaper on the weekends, with great success; also another area we have been trying is radio advertising with Magic am and some country radios. All with good results. Mothers' day rail n sail was an excellent day with lots of smiling families everywhere. The surveys done on the train came back with lots of excellent remarks.

CARRIAGE REPORT BRIAN BRAND – MANAGER

14 BRS - The final blue top coat of paint has been completed. Masking of the gold stripes has started. The signage has been applied. The windows have been cleaned and only needs a final inspection before it is out shopped. **8 AS** - After reassessment of the rust damage to this car, indications are that only one more window needs to be repaired. This will speed up the job and get it back to traffic. **.207 BS** - Peter Berman has continued chipping away at the rust spots. Bill Elmer has started work on the damage to the steel sheeting below the rivets. The groups advises that 48 volt light globes are no longer obtainable in

Australia... They have been found in Germany but a manufacturer in Australia can make them but need a minimum of 1,000 globes ordered.

Tramway Museum Society of Victoria *trading as Melbourne Tramway Museum*

The group advises that it is now open each Sunday and it would like to be open on at least one Wednesday and Saturday each month as well.

The tramway has recommenced social meetings and these are held at Hawthorn Tram Depot on the first Monday of each second month. The Museum has found that the surrender of the lease of the land from the edge of their land to Kilmore never went through and the dream of extending the line towards Kilmore is intact.

The Victorian Goldfields Railway

The new carriage shed at Castlemaine is well under way and is large! A further \$50,000 is needed to complete the work. As well as this work, the rebuilding of the station building at Maldon by VicTrack after the fire gutted the building is now complete. Maldon is the railway's "flagship" station and the heart of the line. While Castlemaine is the larger town and has the connection with the mainline train services, Maldon is the base.

At Muckleford the No 3 road completion is well under way.

Yarra Valley Railway

The railway recently called a public meeting at Yarra Glen to put the local community in the picture as to what was planned at that end of the railway. Over 200 people attended and it was gratifying to receive many offers to help in the work. The railway plans to complete the restoration and replace the burnt bridges and commence operating to Yarra Glen by late 2012. The meeting was covered by all local newspapers.



Track work towards Yarra Glen - Photo YVR

The line has now obtained the following items of rolling stock from Ballarat East where it was stored in the Steamrail Depot, carriage BW34, and vans ZD619, ZD19 and some freight vehicles. Carriage 1BW will be 100 years old later this year and it is hoped to complete restoration in time for this event.. Carriage 1BW is being rebuilt at Healesville. Walker railmotors No 58 MT and 64MT have been transported from Huon to Healesville.

J550:- Discussions are ongoing for the relocation of this steam engine to the railway. J541 - Planning underway to relocate J541 to Healesville. J541 will require some maintenance works prior to passenger service operations.

Planning for the Third Annual Healesville Heritage Festival is underway. Further details for the festival in September 24th and 25th (first weekend of the September School Holidays) is on the railways web site. Construction works have commenced for the round-about on Melba Highway, Yarra Glen. Works include upgrade of the current level crossing. Currently half of the crossing has been installed, with traffic re-directed over this completed section.



No 40 in the Ballarat Botanical Gardens 29 May 2011



No 8 at Ballarat Tram Depot 29 May 2011