

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.**

**Issue No 3.
October 2009**

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 it from the ATR website at www.atr.org.au

Comment

2009 has seen a very mixed year in the fortunes of heritage rail in Victoria with the destruction of so many lives and property by fire. As the Bushfire Royal Commission wends its way towards its final report several things are clear. The findings of the commission will impact on all our lives and how we live and work in the country. This will affect how we operate our trams and trains and what we have to do to keep our passengers safe and how we treat our right of way.

The summer season of 2009/10 will be one where the authorities do not hesitate to declare a day of total fire ban and even worse. The government recriminations have started with the different fire authorities arguing. And now not only have we had the event of fire by bushfire to worry about we have had one of our heritage stations burnt by an electrical fault. Also 2010 is an election year so the politicians will be very nervous. Our colleagues at both Healesville and Daylesford still have not received any help from the State Government even though the assets are State Government property.

This brings to mind why do we not insure our track against bushfires? Historically the VR never insured its track and carried the risk itself. We certainly have an insurable interest in the safety of the track and other infrastructure but who will insure it and at what cost? The proposed Heritage Rail Trust for Victoria (for want of a better name) could be the answer. Other than for two organisations who own their own land, we are all operating on Crown Land. So the fire season for 2009/10 is going to be most interesting in more ways than we can imagine.

National News

ATHRA - Association of Tourist and Heritage Rail Australia

Meetings

The October meeting of ATHRA was held in Queensland following on from the *Railway Heritage: Opportunities & Challenges* conference organised by The Workshops Rail Museum. The conference was held in Ipswich, Queensland, from Thursday 15th October through to Saturday 17th October 2009. The ATHRA meeting was held on Sunday 18th October.

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- 43 have been issued so far in 2009. For details please see the ATHRA website

Victorian News - ATR

Bush Fires

At the present time both the Yarra Valley and Daylesford Spa Country railways are still hoping to receive some State Government funds to allow them to restore their destroyed track. To date there has been little response.

Accreditation

Under the new railway and tramway accreditation requirements (Rail Safety Act 2006 and Regulations) all of our groups that require accreditation to operate have received their accreditation from the Department. The only exception was the T.M.S.V. which decided to surrender their accreditation and are 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.

News from our Members

Australian Railway Historical Society - Victorian Division.

MUSEUM NOTES

The Norman Car is being repainted in carriage red with some timber panel replaced with new timber. Unfortunately, the further the work goes the more the decay is shown and much more work is required to ensure that this historic carriage is retained for posterity.

The Hitachi carriage has had the outside cleaned and the bogies are ready for a fresh coat of paint. A ganger's trolley has been completely restored and the group who look after the lawns and surrounds are now working on 220ZL, a guards van that has not been touched since it arrived at the museum.

A constant plea is made by the museum workers to get the Museum under cover. This museum was the first in Australia and all other museums in capital cities are now housed under roofs. The work being done by harassed workers in continual restoration is totally distressing as it is caused by the constant attack of sea air on exposed metal and wooden surfaces which would be totally alleviated if the Museum was housed under cover. It is a valuable part of Australia's heritage and is slowly deteriorating due to the lack of covered space.

Newsrail

The July issue has articles on Mansfield, steam locomotive watering facilities and the results of a survey on what readers think of Newsrail. The August issue talked about the former Melbourne goods and passenger yards. It also highlighted 50 years of the diesel T class engines and the Geelong passenger trains. September saw the No 1 Signal Box at Spencer Street highlighted and the W class which is 50 years old. Only 3 engines have escaped the wrecker's torch.

Alexandra Timber Tramway & Museum

The railway celebrated the centenary of trains arriving in Alexandra.

Ballarat Tramway Museum

The Museum has been fortunate to receive a grant of \$3,900.00 from the Ballarat Foundation and the Telstra Country Wide Community Fund for the purchase of various computer aid display equipment, primarily for the display area. This grant will enable enhancement of the archives area, both in maintaining the existing archive and allowing for new material to be added to the collection.

Around the Depot

The recently completed repaint of No, 671 has taken several months. Gone is the Royal Blue City of Ballarat colour scheme, to be replaced with a basically black and white livery with a charcoal roof and gold trucks and trim. The logos of the Museum's new sponsor, Pipers by the Lake, the restaurant and cafe in the Gardens, have now been applied and the floor has been repainted. No 671 re-entered revenue earning service on Saturday 22 August.

Work on No. 14 has reached completion and the tram is back in service, not without an initial hiccup when a loose connection to the resistance grids saw a delay in Wendouree Parade until service staff could be summoned. No. 14 was placed in storage from January 2002 due to low flanges. It saw a minor blaze of glory when it was used for the "Tram Pull" event in May 2003. In July 2006 the tram was lifted and the task of re-profiling the wheels and rehabilitating the motors began. The tram was actually lifted twice due to operational issues within the depot. Work included refurbishing both motors including their wiring, refurbishing bearings, repairing the truck, asbestos removal and a host of other little jobs. One of the armatures was found to require a complete rewind and this lead to a swap with our friends at Bendigo. It was a great sense of relief when the tram appeared in Wendouree Parade in service once more.

At the time of writing the entire Museum's single truck trams at the Depot are serviceable although No 18 is on limited running as it awaits its turn at being overhauled. Work on the reconstruction of No. 12 has been progressing slowly with the installation of new uprights. Recently joined member, Bill Redfern, a joiner by trade, is leading the work in this area. When this is completed, it will enable work on the roof to be undertaken. Workers released from No 671 have resumed working on Nos 12 and 22, the two ESCo cars.

Further work is also required on the track in Wendouree Parade. Two rail joints were replaced near Windmill Drive North in early May, and several more are to follow, all in that section of the track not re-laid in the thirties, but dating back to electrification in 1905. Forty sleepers have arrived for insertion in the depot fan to bring that section of track up to a better standard, prior to the fan being fully surfaced in a project being undertaken in conjunction with the City of Ballarat.

The Skylights in the old shed were recently replaced with UV filtered skylights, resulting in a lot more light in the area. They had gradually deteriorated and two recently developed holes.

As a final note Lake Wendouree is again receiving recycled water from the State Government's \$7M Lake Wendouree supply project. It will also receive 250 million litres of storm water by way of the wetlands. It is expected that it will take four to five years to fill

The Bellarine Railway

The railway has taken delivery of the three remaining 3'6" gauge engines from the Puffing Billy railway where they were an integral part of that railway's museum.

Bendigo Tramways

The tramway has moved 17 trams from the depot to the Gasworks depot for storage from the Hargraves Street depot to make way for the impending works there to improve the depot. Tram no 302 has been transferred to No 3 road so that work can continue to re-wire the tram.

A new electrically controlled roller blind destination sign has been fitted to tram No 34 using parts recovered from Preston workshops in Melbourne as an experiment to see if this information is useful to the travelling public. Work is steadily proceeding on Launceston tram No 14 for the Sydney Tramway Museum. The end platforms have been reconstructed and the tram shows very sturdy construction and extensive use of steel for its age.

The tramway is getting concerned with the attitude of Bendigo motorists who continue to flout the rules of the road regarding trams. It has been noticeable that the people observing the rules are visitors to the city and an urgent campaign from the Police and VicRoads is needed in the Bendigo area.

Daylesford Spa Country Railway

The railway had a visit from Christine Nixon, the Chairman of the Victorian Bush Fire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority, on 30 August 2009. She was taken to the edge of the trafficable track but no promises were given regarding funding to replace the track destroyed in the bushfire of 7 February 2009.

With the vast reduction in funds by the closure of most of the line due to the damage to the track by the bushfire, the railway has a greatly reduced cash flow and is unable to fund the reconstruction of the damaged line. While suffering from this disaster, work is continuing in other areas. While 1915 sleepers need to be purchased and laid in the bushfire section, the track gang has replaced 260 sleepers in the exiting running section from Daylesford. In addition bolt and joint replacement have taken place and this is contributing to the increase in track quality. Extensive clearing works are also in full swing.



Happier days at Bullarto

As the railway made the conscious decision to concentrate on rail motors as the primary source of power on the railway, and developed expertise in keeping these vehicles running together with sets of their plans, requests have flowed in from other broad gauge railways in Victoria seeking their advice and help in restoring or keeping their rail motors operating. To date help has been given to Steamrail, the Victorian Goldfields Railway, the Yarra Valley Tourist Railway, the Mornington Railway and the South Gippsland Railway.

Work on the rail motors is continuing and **91RM** has had some body work carried out on it and some roof patching. Water damaged internal panels have been removed and new panels are being manufactured.

32RM is being rebuilt and a lot of the car's body is now back together again after years of being apart.

The re-fitting of the front car body external window panels allowed the front interior panels to be re-assembled. The front aluminium panels were suitably polished while the painted panels were logically re-painted. The front roof cowling also had its re-painting completed and was fitted back onto the car body. Sanding and filling work on the external steel front panel is now underway. Perhaps the most visible sign of progress on the rebuilding has been the re-fitting of the external side window steel pressing. This definitely makes 32 look more like a train again. These panels await fitment of the

bottom aluminium panels before they can have all the attachment screws fitted.

More progress has been made on the internal re-assembly and more painting has been completed. All the new Masonite flooring underlay has been fitted and the interior cleaned. This allowed, after a bit of a wait for the contractor, the laying of all the new lino flooring. The laying of the lino then allowed the fitting of the drivers cab panelling after being suitably polished where required. Other recently completed tasks have been the manufacture of all the new wooden internal window framing and the manufacture and fitment of the passenger entrance door timber framing.

Friends of the North Australia Railway at Adelaide River

The year 2009 marks the 120th anniversary of the completion of the Palmerston and Pine Creek Railway by Charles and Edwin Millar for the South Australian Government in 1889. The track work was completed on 15 June 1889 and the official contract handover was on 30 September 1889. In the intervening three months the Millars were completing infrastructure along the way (such as fettler's accommodation, watering points, Adelaide River Refreshment Rooms etc.) plus demobilizing, selling surplus equipment, etc whilst operating the interim train service.

The Railway Picnic this year was a part of the progressive celebration of this 120th year of the completion of the grand Victorian era pioneering engineering project.

The railway reports as below:

"CARETAKER SHELTERS ALMOST COMPLETE"

"For the past few months we have been working on the construction of two additional shelters. One shelter is for a second caretaking couple and is high enough to accommodate a large mobile home. The second shelter is to provide weather protection for three demountable buildings that we own. Two of these dongas are suitable for accommodation and have air-conditioning (untested) and the third donga has a shower and toilet (not connected to anything yet).

This weekend we fitted the roof to the second shelter after doing the first one last weekend. These are big shelters (10m x 8m) and took a lot of material and effort.

Gordon Wilkinson and Harcourt Phillips put in incredibly long and hot hours over the two weekends to achieve this excellent outcome.

BUT WAIT THERE IS MORE

The floors of these shelters have been filled to about 0.5m above natural ground level to keep everything out of the drink in the 1 in 500 year flood. During the past week Gordon and Harcourt have shovelled a lot of dirt around the edges of one of these pads, installed metal retaining walls and backfilled behind the walls. All very neatly done and finished. It looks superb and is a credit to them."



Photo Friends of Adelaide River.

Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot

While this organisation is not a member of the ATR nevertheless its fortunes are linked with that of Victoria's Heritage Rail. Recent reports from the Friends record that they have introduced, as a trial, an entrance ticket which is based on that of the Ballarat Tramway Museum which I think is based on the former Day Tripper ticket of the extinct M&MTB. Admission is by way of a gold coin. To assist with sales of souvenir items efpos has been introduced. It is proposed to have better interpretive signage and VicTrack has appointed consultants to provide input.

Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Society

Spare Parts Trams

The remains of SW6 947 have been removed from the museum and have been replaced by SW6 901 which has also been dismantled and salvaged for parts and has in turn also been removed. In addition SW5 843 is also being dismantled. The parts retrieved have been securely placed in shipping containers and there are four sets of bogies from various cars put away for use as required. They all have good wheel sets, motors and running gear.

Other Works

W3 663 has been prepared for transfer to Bendigo to have the Bendigo Tramways carry out certain restoration works to the roof. An approach has been made to VicTrack to try to acquire W5 763 for preservation by the Association. This has been agreed to and will be made available in due course. In the meantime the bodies of trams W5 826 and W5 772 have

been made available to provide sufficient spare parts to restore 763 back to the original 3 door configuration.



W3 763 as stored at Newport Workshops

Photo - Anthony Smith

Overhead

New overhead spans have been erected over roads No 1 and 2. SW5 849 During September, the remaining work was undertaken to complete the renewal of the overhead network over roads 1 and 2. New terminations were purchased and installed to terminate the contact wire to the front of the workshop building, ensuring a neat and tidy finished product. The completion of this work means that all currently operational areas of the overhead network have now been fully rebuilt and the wire height raised to the regulated requirements. The tightness and neatness of the overhead is very apparent, and the increased height is very obvious when trams are being delivered to the site.

During September whilst 663 was being transferred to the Car Barn, 849 was placed into the Workshops to allow its restoration to continue. Two replacement internal motorman's doors were resized to suit. Work has also commenced on changing out the defective door pistons and renewing the piping in this area with high pressure PVC.

Fittings are being prepared for the rebuilding of the curve net behind the Car barn, and the curve near the garden and entertainment area, with most of the preparation being carried out as homework projects at Kym Smith's house in SA and transported back to Haddon on each of his visits.

Track work

The rail for the curve behind the Car Barn has been despatched to Yarra Trams E Gate yard for rolling to the correct curvature. Yarra Trams (Metro Link Victoria Pty Ltd) agreed to assist with this work after a submission was made to their CEO, Dennis Cliche, requesting their assistance with the project. Dennis responded personally to the proposal advising that they would be delighted to assist, with Massoud Majidi and Gary Tillotson being appointed to assist us with the work. The Museum is extremely grateful to Metro Link Victoria, to Dennis Cliche, and to Massoud Majidi and Gary Tillotson for their support of this project.

Future Planning

The Museum has commenced a review of all incomplete projects and maintenance issues to produce a realistic development plan and work schedule to best suit the present operating environment and workforce.

Items are being evaluated which are essential and achievable. For example, this takes into account such things as water restrictions which governs the washing of trams.

Puffing Billy - Emerald Tourist Railway Board

Once again Puffing Billy's passenger figures topped 250,000. After the disastrous time following the bushfires in February it was expected that the passenger figures would be much lower. In fact the figure reached 250,500 people carried which is remarkable considering the difficulties caused earlier in the year.

Planning is taking place on the development of a master plan for Belgrave and the Discovery Centre at Lakeside.

Marketing

The railway has revised its marketing plan for 2009/10 and has adopted a conservative approach for its budget for the same period. The development of the Marketing Plan is being funded by Tourism Victoria.

Museum

The remaining 3'6" gauge engines have been transported from the Museum to the Bellarine Railway.

Other News

The railway is going to help rebuilding the terminus of the Portland Cable Tram and this work is expected to take some 6-10 days to complete. The sea has eroded the cliff to such a degree that it has become necessary to relocate part of the line. At the same time the reconstruction of the Curdies bridge on the Camperdown and Timboon Rail trail is nearing completion.

The railway has introduced "real" coffee at Belgrave station and the refreshment staff have been Barista trained.

The railway is about to upgrade the toilets at Belgrave and commence the signal box at Belgrave and improve the scullery there as well.

On the locomotive front 12A has had its pony wheels and ponies assembled and the valve spindles and piston rods hard chromed. While G42 is temporarily out of service waiting on its "D" exam it was placed in service for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Garratt engine. The day concerned was extremely wild and windy and the engine hauled the train to Gembrook that day. Climax engine 1694 is almost ready to have its first steam test of the boiler. Other work is proceeding on this historic engine.

The archives group is cataloguing bound volumes of Narrow Gauge, VR Newsletter as well as newspaper cuttings. More enquiries are being received for information from the archives.

Steamrail

The group reports that the old bond store that was used as a depot at Newport for many decades has now been emptied and items and plant transferred to West Block of the Newport Workshop site. The group has had a number of successful suburban trips to Glen Waverley, Cranbourne,

Hurstbridge and Mooroolbark. As well a number of successful trips were run to country destinations including Seymour, Geelong, Moe, and other destinations.

Locomotive K 183

Steamrail and Victrack have been working towards an agreement for the management of the settlement money paid from the K183 collision. What has been frustrating in the interim was Victrack's lack of interest in completing this process. In spite of this, an agreement has now been reached which sets out key projects on which money will be expended in the coming months and years. These include:

- Complete the restoration of A2 986
- Re-tyre and mechanically overhaul D3 639
- Assess the extent of damage to K 183
- Buy K class driving and pony truck tyres
- Re-wheel Y 112
- Buy flue tube material
- Develop undercover storage for restored rail vehicles

All these projects are designed to assist Steamrail in the medium to long term, with the intention to 'future proof' our locomotives against expensive repairs or overhauls that put locomotives out of service for an extended period of time due to lack of funds or key parts. The development of undercover storage is also vitally important for the long term survival of Steamrail and the heritage assets we maintain. Carriages undercover will not be subject to the destructive elements of weather; water, heat and sun.

DEPOT FILMING FOR TV SERIES

Over the last month several scenes for a second series of the comedy television show "Wilfred" were shot. Filming took place inside the rear workshop buildings and inside guards van 14CW, 2BS and Moorabool. A large rustic boxing ring was set up in order to film Wilfred the dog and a chicken fighting each other (men in dog and chicken costumes) as a crowd of about 100 extras cheered on. The show is to be screened on SBS TV sometime early in 2010.

Locomotives

T 364 is undergoing cab upgrades. T395 which suffered electrical problems during the trip to Traralgon when R 761 failed with bearing problems has had the damaged motor replaced at EDI Newport and the damaged motor has been sent to ABB Spotswood for repairs. S313 is being completed for the Mildura Trip. R 761 has had its right hand side big end bearing re-metalled. S 301 is close to completion of the rebuild of the engine. It will then be repainted and placed in the locomotive. A timed and electrically interlocked pre-lube system has been fitted to prevent a similar incident to that which damaged the engine in the first place. B 72 work is still continuing and work has been done to the sand hatch openings in No 1 nose. With the sand boxes back the air brake can be refitted together with other equipment.

Carriages.

38BE has had a repaint and overhaul. 14CW has had repairs to the roof done and attention to its batteries and concertina spring mechanism. New

rubber covers are being progressively fitted to the E & W cars to protect the canvas concertinas from rotting. 600K and 61BW have also had roof repairs. Sleeping car Indi has received roof repairs and a spruce up of interior and exterior paintwork. The car has not run since 2002.

Electrail

341T has had work done on it including repainting of the roof, exposure of deck light windows, revarnishing and repainting of the interior. 12BT has seen the near completion of three compartments, re-upholstery and cleaning of the underframe.

The project to refurbish and overhaul some stored dynamotors is being done to ensure that there are spares once these carriages are allowed to run again. New shunt and series coils have been wound.

Work is proceeding on a risks register and discussions with the Department of Transport is continuing to try and get the stock operating again.

The Victorian Goldfields Railway

Stop Press

Unfortunately the Maldon Station was badly damaged by fire on the 20th October 2009. **Note, the fire does not affect the operation of the railway and trains are running as normal.**

The fire appears to have started in the room on the west end of the building used as the catering kitchen. Damage to this room was major with a total loss of the ceiling and roof.

The fire progressed to the Booking Office immediately to the east, again with major damage to the roof. Although the room was extensively damaged, a number of important items were recovered, including the railway safeworking equipment and ticket tube cabinet. The fire travelled through the roof space to the roof timbers above the book entrance hall and onto the area above the waiting room (used by the VGR as an office) and the east most room used as the VGR sales and souvenir room. Although the roof damage is extensive, fire damage is minimal to the interior of these rooms.



Photo Victorian Goldfields Web site.

Other News

Recent newsletters from the railway have shown that the matter of rail safety and customer satisfaction is taken very seriously and the Board has set a Zero Target for notifiable incidents, IDR's, injuries, faults and customer complaints.

The railway proposes to construct a No3 road at Muckleford and funding has been obtained to do this work. This will allow better use of the goods shed and other facilities at this location. A picnic at Muckleford was held in September and proved again to be a great event. Stalls were put up, local performers played and sang, and the event was well supported by vintage and other car clubs and a display of machinery. The railway received a grant from the ANZ bank from their "Seeds of Renewal" programme and this funding is to be used to assist in the provision of adequate toilet facilities of patrons and for users of the walking track. The fund is independently administered by the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal.

Carriage 41BU is receiving exterior restoration. Lowana has had some maintenance done to the generator.

Tramway Museum Society

Owing to the few volunteers that are available to regularly open the museum, it has been decided to only open the museum on the **1st and 3rd Sundays** in the month from 11.00am to 4.30pm. As the Museum was unable to complete the new Accreditation requirements for the time being it has become a static Museum.

Yarra Valley Railway

Following the bush fires of February this year which destroyed six trestle bridges on the line the railways has been able to salvage the re-usable metal parts from the sites. Bridge bolts, rail plates, dog spikes, bridge nails and other items have been recovered and are stored. A new truck has been purchased which will be very useful in carrying rail for track repairs.

With the closure of the Yorke Peninsula Railway in South Australia the YVTR has been able to purchase at the closure sale a quantity of 80lb rail and 80lb point material.

In the workshop at Healesville work is proceeding on 1 BW to restore this carriage for running once again. The external cladding has been removed and is being replaced with plywood suitably grooved and all damaged timber has been stripped out. New roofing material is being fitted and they are sourcing new fibreglass internal ceiling panels to replace the existing metal ones which have rusted beyond repair. After 1 BW is completed the next carriage to be restored will be 32 BW. Work on locomotive J516 has seen the removal of parts from the motion and brake gear with all rods now removed as well as crossheads, valves, pistons, brake hangers and pull rods. The boiler is the next part to receive attention. Unfortunately there are a number of missing parts and these items will need to be either obtained or manufactured.

The restoration of the DERM has started with the gathering of information and documentation to assist in the process.

The railway was successful in obtaining a grant of \$5,000 to run the Healesville Railway Show in 2010. A large sectioned model boiler has been donated to the railway.



ATR Delegates at the Christmas meeting at Diamond Valley Railway
3 December 2008
