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ASSOCIATION OF
TOURIST AND HERITAGE RAIL AUSTRALIA
ABN 19755744868

“CINDERS & ASHES” ATHRA’s NEWSLETTER

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORT

The second ATHRA Meeting for 2006 was held at Ipswich, Queensland from Friday 8th September through to Sunday 10th September and incorporated ATHRA’s First Annual General Meeting during the Saturday afternoon session.

In accordance with ATHRA’s Constitution, the positions of Chairman and Secretary fell vacant. The incumbents, Paul Rollason and Bryan Homann, both chose not to seek re-election. Nominations had been called prior to the meeting and Peter Silva and Brian Busch were declared elected unopposed respectively to the positions of Chairman and Secretary for a period of two years. Current Deputy Chairman Tony Coen and Treasurer Matt Roberts continue in their positions until the next Annual General Meeting when those positions will be up for election.

Outgoing Chairman, Paul Rollason, delivered the following report to the meeting which encapsulated the history and achievements of ATHRA to that time.

Chairman’s Report

The Association of Tourist & Heritage Railways Australia Inc. (ATHRA) was formed in June 2004 as a result of the need for an Australian industry peak body to represent the interests of the tourist and heritage rail sector within Australia. A key driver for the

formation of ATHRA was the significant change occurring within the regulatory sector that was beginning to impact on the tourist and heritage sector. Until the formation of ATHRA, state-based organisations had represented the needs of the sector.

The inaugural meeting of ATHRA was held at St Kilda Tramway in South Australia where the first committee was selected. From here a constitution was developed along with a Strategic plan and working groups to battle the ever increasing changes in the rail regulatory field.

The ATHRA **membership** has continued to grow from the key state-based organisations who are now full members and they include:

- Association of Tourist Railways Incorporated (Victoria) – (ATRV)
- Association of Tourist Railways Queensland Inc. – (ATRQ)
- Australian Railway Historical Society ACT Division – (ARHS – ACT)
- Tasmanian Association of Tourist Railways – (TATRail)
- Association of Rail Preservation Groups WA Incorporated – (ARPGWA)
- Council of Historical Railways and Tramways of South Australia – (CHRTSA)
- Rail Heritage Australia (NSW) – (RHA – NSW).

The Associate members of ATHRA include:

- Australian Railway Historical Society Victoria Division (ARHS-Vic)
- Emerald Tourism Railway Board

- NSW Rail Transport Museum (NSW-TRM)
- Cooma Monaro Railway
- Hotham Valley Railway
- Pemberton Tramway Co

The Affiliate members of ATHRA include:

- Council of Tramway Museums of Australia Inc. – (COTMA)
- Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand – (FRONZ)

The **meetings** held to date include:

- St Kilda, South Australia – June 2004
- Canberra – October 2004
- Belgrave, Victoria – March 2005
- Mt Victoria, New South Wales – October 2005
- New Norfolk, Tasmania – February 2006
- Ipswich, Queensland 2006

Two of the **catalysts for the formation** of ATHRA included the copious changes to the rail safety and regulatory sector along with the near impossible search for affordable insurance. To date the safety and regulatory changes continue to pose the greatest challenge to our industry. As a consequence the **Rail Safety Reference Group** was established with Graeme Breydon at the helm.



ATHRA Meeting delegates riding No.65 at Brisbane Tramway Museum.

This Group has had significant inroads into influencing the wider industry so to ease the burden on our member groups. Regulatory bodies now consult ATHRA to see what impact it will have on our members. Without this major achievement, many more of our member groups may have well been closed down. Some of the areas that ATHRA have been involved in include ME79, Rail Safety Bill, Medical Assessments for Rail Safety Workers, OH&S and boilers and operators, Rail Safety Consultative Forum, National Transport Commission and the various areas they are involved, Codes of Practice (via the ARA) etc just to name a few.

Some of ATHRA's **achievements** to date include:-

- Heightened awareness amongst rail regulators, NTC, ARA, OH&S etc
- Raised profile of the industry amongst various bodies
- Raised profile of the industry amongst our own members
- Support network for individual railways
- Networking opportunities for members
- Increase awareness to members of the issues that face our industry
- Achieved considerations for smaller railways with lower risks
- Assistance with the production of SMS Guidance for T&H Railways
- Considerations in boiler certifications and training
- Development of competencies for rail safety tasks (currently underway)
- Growth (personal and as an industry)
- Sourcing of more affordable and alternative insurance

ATHRA has also produced a number of **documents and publications** itself for the benefits of all members and they include:-

- "Cinders and Ashes" – ATHRA Newsletter (3 issues)
- ATHRA Alerts (27 in total)
- ATHRA's Strategic Plan

- Profile of Australian Rail Heritage
- Many various submissions concerning rail regulatory and safety issues

Sourcing affordable **public liability insurance** (PLI) has also been another huge task undertaken by ATHRA. Three years ago, many groups were facing permanent closure due to the sudden and ridiculous rise in the cost of PLI, in some cases up to 900%. Matthew Roberts has made inroads in this area through his persistence and dedication to find a more affordable alternative. Via Matt's gallant efforts we now have another player on the Australian market which is prepared to underwrite rail and hence force the return of some healthier competition. Whilst we believe more can be done in this area in the future, a significant start has been made. Further improvements will be realised when more groups join the scheme enabling ATHRA to have a larger bargaining power. Additional savings are likely for other insurances such as voluntary worker's insurance, directors liability insurance, rollingstock insurance and recovery insurance to name a few.

ATHRA also has a web presence via its own **website** which is currently maintained by Mark Griffiths. Originally this site was designed and maintained by the Pemberton Tramway Company. The site contains a vast amount of information and is expanding continuously.

ATHRA is a member of the **Australasian Railway Association (ARA)**, the peak rail industry body for Australia and New Zealand. The ARA, in recognition of the importance of the sector, has appointed a Heritage Liaison Officer. ATHRA's link with the ARA is significant, as internationally within the sector, there are very few examples of the tourism and heritage sector being embraced by the broader rail industry peak body

within the country. Given the significant regulatory and legislative change occurring in Australia, the link between ATHRA and the ARA is strategically important for both entities. ATHRA also sits on the Rail Skills and Careers Council and Code Management Company.

For the ARA, in representing the needs of the industry to regulators, governments across Australia and others, it is possible to present issues on the basis that all of the rail sectors, including the tourism and heritage sector, are represented.

For ATHRA, the link with the ARA means that effective input in areas such as codes, draft legislation and other regulatory changes can be progressed and channelled into the overall industry responses. It will ensure outcomes that are acceptable to the tourist and heritage sector.

Raising the profile of ATHRA has also been a goal of the Board. ATHRA has achieved this in many ways and includes:-

- Regular articles in the Railway Digest
- Meetings with:
 - Industry
 - Rail Regulators
 - ARA
 - NTC (National Transport Commission)
 - OH&S
 - Government Officials
- Discussions with our own members

Whilst we have achieved so much in such a short period of time for a volunteer industry, we must not lose sight of the fact there are a **vast potential for the future growth and development** of ATHRA and its benefits to members.

These areas of potential include:-

- PR Opportunities via
 - Tourism Australia
 - Web site
 - Production of a National brochure

- Continual lobbying of decision makers to influence decision making to ensure the survival of our membership.
- Continued networking via:
 - Meetings with members
 - Moving ATHRA meetings around Australia
 - Gunzel Tours
- Bulk purchasing of sales items
- Continual sharing of knowledge
- Ongoing work for the search for more affordable insurance
- Awards to members or member groups
 - Rail Track Association Australia (RTAA) Award
 - Other various awards to be developed to lift the morale of groups

It is very pleasing to see that ATHRA is growing and there is an ever increasing awareness of ATHRA's input and involvement. I believe that ATHRA is now well on its feet and has a deep respect within the industry. Members and groups have started to network closer and are reaping the benefits. Members have made contacts across Australia and now know who to contact if they require more information.

On a personal note, Chairing ATHRA has been a huge challenge. I have learnt a lot and my eyes have been opened far more than I would ever believe both in a good and bad sense. I have certainly made some valuable and long lasting friendships. There are many very talented and generous people within our industry albeit some of us being considered a little strange. However it is simple nature of the passion that these people display that will ensure the future success of ATHRA and everything it stands for.

I look forward to the continued involvement with ATHRA in some way. It is with a little sadness that I leave the Chair however it is certainly time for a change at the helm to someone with some fresh ideas and a new direction which will



Brisbane Tram No. 341 stands in the sun at Brisbane Tramway Museum after a run for ATHRA Meeting delegates.

benefit ATHRA far more than my humble contribution.

I wish the new Chairman and his/her committee all the very best and I offer whatever assistance I can offer (subject to my wife's approval of course).

I must thank several people for their continued support during my term as Chair. Without these people my role would have been far more difficult and damn near impossible. In no particular order I thank the following people and I apologise if I have left anyone off my list:-

- **ATHRA Management committee** – Their support, encouragement and the occasional kick in the backside has been very much appreciated. Malcolm Davidson (first Deputy Chairman), Tony Coen (Current Deputy Chairman), Bryan Homann (Secretary) and of course Matthew Roberts (Treasurer) have all had an influence on me and the decisions concerning ATHRA. Their close friendship has also been most appreciated especially through the tough times when you felt like you just wanted to walk away.

- **ATHRA Board, Delegates and Members** – I thank you all for your continued support, encouragement and friendship. We all don't see eye to eye all the time however at the end of the day we can all still sit down and have a chat and I am happy to consider you all as friends of mine. A huge thank you goes to the individuals that have performed other roles on behalf of ATHRA and two people in particular that come to mind are John Glastonbury and his work on ME79 and Mark Griffiths for maintaining the web site.
- **Graeme Breydon** – Was the convenor of the ATHRA Rail Safety Reference Group and generally a person who I could just pick up the phone and have a talk to over various issues. Sadly Graeme passed away on Monday 21st August 2006 and I can't thank him enough for everything he had done for me and ATHRA. I can very easily say Graeme did more work than the rest of us put together and he deserves a medal for all the blood sweat and tears that he put into our industry and ATHRA has a lot to be grateful for. I can't tell you how much dedication, commitment and sheer passion this gentleman had towards Rail Safety and his level of understanding goes well beyond all of us. Without Graeme and his team ATHRA would not be in the position it is today.



Bundaberg Fowler No. 5 stands at ANGRMS Woodford station.

- **Chris Le Marshall** – As the ARA Heritage Liaison Officer and delegate to ATHRA, Chris has had a huge supporting role and has mediated many situations behind the scenes and has certainly assisted me to a level you couldn't imagine. Chris is also dedicated and extremely passionate towards the industry and like Graeme is a very valuable resource. ATHRA's Strategic Plan is the brain child of Chris and we thank Chris for his continual support.
- **Peter Silva** – Peter has always been in the background at ATHRA and always lent some advice to me when required. He has never pushed his ideas onto ATHRA but always left them as ideas to consider. Peter will be a continued asset for ATHRA.
- **Brian Nye and the team at the ARA** – Brian and his team have always been very supportive to ATHRA and in fact believed in ATHRA and its existence from day one. Brian realised like we all did that our sector was very much under represented and via Brian's efforts along with ATHRA determination, ATHRA has now got a healthy respect from the rest of the rail industry who initially just wrote us off. My sincere appreciation goes to Brian and his team.
- **Rail Regulators** – All the rail regulators across Australia have also very much appreciated ATHRA's input into the rail safety and regulatory changes. Our sector is quite unique and I believe that ATHRA has increased the level awareness of the Rail Regulators about the concerns and uniqueness of our sector. This education process has taken time however I believe all parties are better off. I thank all the Regulators for their friendship and professionalism that they have displayed during all levels of consultation.
- **ATRQ and the Groups I belong to** – I must thank ATRQ and its members along with the groups I

personally belong to for their understanding and support during my time as Chair. I haven't had the time to devote to these organisations as I should have but I believe that all groups are better off because of ATHRA.

- **My family** – Last but not least, I can't thank my loving family enough for allowing me to have the time to perform the tasks and make the trips away from home on behalf of ATHRA. At times my family have been neglected and I can only apologise for that and make the commitment that I shall be devoting more time to you all. This is the main reason for me having to cut back my other commitments and I strongly advise everyone to make sure your look after your family first. To my wife Sherie and my children Timothy and Stephanie I thank you all for your support through the last 2.5 years as I could not have done it without your love and support.

For the sake of all tourist and heritage rail groups I urge you all to put aside your differences and focus on the much larger picture. Sometimes we have to eat a little humble pie and work with everyone for the betterment of our industry so that all our own members can enjoy our hobby. It will take a positive input and involvement from everyone involved in ATHRA to make this large wheel turn so that everyone benefits.

I encourage all members to take an active part in ATHRA and encourage everyone to take an active part in ATHRA for the betterment of all tourist railways. Remember, **"United we stand and together we succeed."**

I have enjoyed the journey, and I hope that we can all continue **"Bringing tourists, enthusiasts and rail heritage together."**

Paul Rollason

IPSWICH MEETING REPORT

The Ipswich Meeting was more than just an Annual General Meeting. Over the course of the weekend, in three ½ day business sessions Delegates tackled a broad range of issues covering:

- rail safety and regulatory reform,
- training and assessment,
- promotion of the tourist and heritage sector,
- level crossings,
- arrangements for future ATHRA meetings,
- a review of ATHRA's budget planning processes,
- the Riga Charter,
- the applicability of modern boiler codes to heritage boilers, and
- a review of ATHRA's Strategic Plan.

Our discussion of these topics was greatly assisted by our guests that included:

- Julie Bullas – Director Rail Safety, Queensland Transport and Chair of the Rail Safety Regulators Panel.
- John Shalders – Code of Practice Manager, ARA.
- Chris Le Marshall – Heritage Liaison, ARA.
- Gary Whiting – Queensland Rail

Key decisions from the meeting were:

- Appointment of Warren Doubleday to lead ATHRA's rail Safety Group.
- Establishment of a Training Issues Group to monitor and advise the changing training requirements that the sector now faces. Members of the group are John Hoy, Brian Busch and Tony Coen.
- Identification of the key Goals in ATHRA's Strategic Plan as:
 - pursuing opportunities for competitive insurance,
 - gather data identifying the sector's economic benefit to Australia,

- developing relevant training documentation for the sector,
- developing relevant boiler codes for the sector,
- sourcing funding to allow the implementation of sector-wide marketing strategies,
- surveying the sector for feedback on ATHRA's directions and activities.
- Appointment of Eamonn Seddon to lead the development of a Marketing Group.
- Appointment of Appointment of Alan Gardner to lead the development of boiler codes suitable for use in the sector.
- Establishment of a Finance Committee with the members being Matt Roberts, Lindsay Watson and Peter Silva.
- Continuation of the practice of holding ATHRA Meetings twice yearly with the meetings to be hosted by each state in turn.

Overall, it was a very successful meeting that, in addition to setting a clear direction for ATHRA, provided an opportunity to further cement the strong relationships the sector has established Regulators and the industry through the ARA. ATHRA thanks Andrew Moritz and the staff at The Workshops Rail Museum for their assistance and the use of their facilities for our meeting.

Peter Silva



Bundaberg Fowler No. 5 returning to Woodford station after a run to the end of the line.

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

With a number of interstate visitors coming to Brisbane for the ATHRA Meeting, the opportunity was taken to showcase the achievements of some of the ATRQ members. On a sunny Thursday morning, many of the ATHRA Meeting delegates gathered at the Brisbane Tramway Museum at Ferny Grove. After morning tea and an inspection of the workshop, delegates were treated to rides on a variety of the Museum's trams. Bogie cars 341, 429 and 554 were brought out for a run as were single truck cars 47, 65 and 99.

The Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society (ANGRMS) at Woodford was the destination for the afternoon and, after patronising the local bakery, delegates arrived to find Bundaberg Fowler No. 5 in steam. After trips along the length of their line and a tour of inspections, it was time to retreat to Ipswich for the night.

With the ATHRA Meeting timed to start on Friday afternoon, the opportunity was available for delegates to visit the Queensland Pioneer Steam Railway at Swanbank in the morning. 0-4-2T Perry *Kilrie* hauled the train over the length of the QPSR operation before stopping off in their depot. Visitors were treated to morning tea and then an inspection of the depot before it was time to head for the business of the ATHRA Meeting.

SunSteam was operating a tour on the Saturday of the ATHRA Meeting to Laidley for the town's Spring Festival. This was too good an opportunity to miss so the meeting was scheduled to allow delegates to travel on the train from Ipswich to Laidley. AC16 221A gave an admirable performance with its 8 car train climbing the Little Liverpool Range. While SunSteam's passengers were able to enjoy the afternoon in Laidley, ATHRA delegates returned by bus to Ipswich and the business at hand.

After the ATHRA Meeting concluded on the Sunday, those people not having to rush off to flights home were taken on a guided tour of The Workshops Rail Museum and the Queensland Rail Workshops. The Museum is a fantastic public venue and the state government of Queensland has set a standard that is a challenge for every other state.

The pre and post meeting visits are a tremendous adjunct to the ATHRA Meetings. Not only do they give some of the local railways and tramways the chance to display their good work, they also give a chance for delegates to network and build stronger connections with each other. Our thanks go to the volunteers of Brisbane Tramway Museum, Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society, Queensland Pioneer Steam Railway and SunSteam and to the staff of The Workshops Rail Museum and the Queensland Rail Workshops for their hospitality during our visits.

Peter Silva

RAIL SAFETY UPDATE

Since the May 2005 ATHRA Newsletter report, there have been many further developments. Many of these will impact on the Tourist and Heritage (T&H) sector, some of the negatively.

A summary of these are:

- Introduction of the Victorian Rail Safety Act on 31/7/2006. Victorian T&H groups have three years to be compliant, that is July 2009. Changes are scheduled to be made both to the Act and the

Regulations during the Autumn session of the Victorian Parliament during the first half of 2007 to bring them into line with the National Transport Commission (NTC) Model Act and Regulations.

- The draft NTC Model Regulations and Regulatory Impact Statement consultation phase concluded late August 2006. ATHRA and COTMA made submissions about these regulations. The major impacts on the T&H sector of these regulations were identified as:
 - The direct impact on our volunteer worker's lives and the possibility that they will walk away
 - The overbearing nature of the existing Material Change process
 - Risk Registers
 - Security Management Plans
 - Emergency Plans
 - Provision of Exemptions
 - Competency Training and Assessment Processes
 - Scalability of the various Regulations
- Request for Assistance – physical and financial from the Regulators
- Public Transport Safety Victoria (PTSV) issued an extensive Accreditation Guideline in September 2006.
- ATHRA Meeting in Brisbane, early September 2006 at which the Chair of the Rail Safety Regulators Panel and Qld Regulator, Julie Bullas attended the Meeting at which sector concerns were discussed. The liveliest part of the meeting concerned competency

assessment at which many issues and concerns were raised. This resulted in two subsequent meetings with NTC representatives in Melbourne to discuss our concerns about this issue. Some clarification has been able to be obtained and a workable process will most likely be achieved, it will result in further paperwork and systems for our sector. The need for those undertaking assessment to have a qualification in assessment or have a trained assessor assisting in the process appears to be the most likely outcome.

- The various state Governments are now in the process of formulating their own Rail Safety Bills, except Victoria, based on the National model and later on, the required regulations. It will be important that each state body monitors their own local consultation processes and takes part in them. Concerns should be relayed back to the ATHRA Executive as well.
- Implementation of the new Rail Safety Systems to the model Bill are proposed as detailed in the following table. These generally follow hot on the heels of the work required to be done in most states to comply with either the new version of AS4262.1 or the National Accreditation Package (NAP). The Rail Safety process seems never ending, often resulting in volunteer burnout. Your moral and physical support for those undertaking the “paper war” is essential otherwise they may evaporate.

Rail Safety Plan Element	NTC Proposed Implementation Dates
SMS & Risk Management requirements & Interface Co-ordination Plans (ICP)	12 months from 1/1/07, except Vic.
Interface co-ordination plans with road infrastructure managers (level crossings etc)	36 months from 1/7/07.
Competency requirements for Rail Safety Workers	24 months from 1/7/07 with a review for T&H after 12 months.

- The ATRV has been working with the PTSV on a Victorian version of the Rail Safety Regulators Panel *Safety Management System – Guidance for Tourist & Heritage Railway Operators*. Although due out during November 2006, it has been delayed by the PTSV's internal review processes. It is hoped that this will soon be made available to Victorian T&H rail organisations in order for them to start on their work. Six months of the three years to implement these substantial changes to their Safety Management Systems has already gone.
- The NTC plans were to make available the revised Model Act and Regulations by late December or early January. Although subject to changes by the various state parliaments, they should remain in principle the same throughout Australia. The ARA and Interstate rail operators will be watching this aspect very carefully. The NTC also plans to issue a set of guidelines to the model rules as well, early in the New Year.

- At the November meeting of the Rail Safety Consultative Forum in Melbourne, many of the issues raised by myself on behalf of the T&H sector were found to be common with those of the main line operators. These issues in summary are:
 - Consistency in regulations – a subject shared with the major operators
 - Definitional issues concerning the term Rail Safety Worker – this is to be clarified further in the new NTC model Regulations
 - The competency and assessment process and the need for clarification and understanding on how this works – this is gradually being done as all parties understand how the education system itself works.
 - The timeframe for the competency and assessment process implementation – 12 month review process to be undertaken by the NTC, but more time may be necessary
 - Financial assistance for training assessors, model competency assessment documents, e.g. through Government training schemes – some identification of them was given, but needs to be followed up further.
 - Interface Agreements – difficulty in preparation and concluding them – often an industry common problem
 - How Change Management is handled
 - Safety Culture
 - The differences between the various regulators on how electric street tramcars and tramways are treated or considered
 - The need for NTC information documents and sponsored workshops or information sessions on how these matters are to be addressed or expected to be handled by the T&H sector.

- Other matters raised at the forum were:
 - Data and reporting of incidents for statistical purposes
 - Timing for the re-alignment of Rail Safety Management Systems to NAP and AS4292.1 and then to have to redo it again a short time later to match the new NTC model rules.
 - Safety Culture
 - The development of a suite of nationally applicable safeworking rules
- An early December seminar by the NTC on Drug and Alcohol looked at the various regimes across Australian states. It varies quite widely often due to the variations in evidentiary systems and methods used by the police for road vehicles. While not a matter of great importance to the T&H sector, as we seldom run across state borders, it is one that concerns the various interstate rail operators due to various inconsistencies.

Where to from here?

Constructive feedback from you is important, to understand the problems you are having either internally in meeting these new regulations, or in dealing with those in authority. The next ATHRA meeting in Perth during March 2007 will be an ideal opportunity to do this as representatives from the Regulators will be present there.
Warren Doubleday

NEXT ATHRA MEETING

The next ATHRA Meeting will be held in Perth from Friday 16th March 2007 to Sunday 18th March 2007. The meeting will be held at Whiteman Park, the home of the Bennett Brook Railway and the Perth Electric Tramway Society. An optional pre-meeting tour will visit the Pemberton Tramway and the Hotham Valley Railway.

Full details available from the ATHRA Web site: www.athra.asn.au



AC16 221A makes a false departure from Grandchester on SunSteam's trip to Laidley.

WORLD STEAM AND TOURIST TRAIN CONGRESS

Ushuaia

Tierra del Fuego Argentina
1st to 4th October 2006

The conference was attended by over 50 participants from the sector around the world, including Tim Fischer, Chairman Tourism Australia and Chris le Marshall, the Australasian Railway Association's Heritage Liaison Officer. The conference consisted of two one-day sessions that enabled participants to glean information related to tourism, new markets, developments within South America, developments within Europe and Australasia and Oceania. Many aspects of tourist and heritage operations were examined and technical aspects related to water treatment and other new developments were explored.

The conference took place at Ushuaia which is the southern most city in the world, and the city that is utilised as the main departure base for the significant number of tourists wishing to see the Antarctic.

The conference commenced on Sunday night with a function where guests or attendees could meet the President of the congress, Mr Enrique Diaz who is the owner and operator of the Railway-at-the-End-of-the-World, Mr Enrique Meyer, the Secretary of Tourism of the nation of Argentina, Mr Hugo C ccara the Governor of Tierra del Fuego, and Mr David Morgan, the Vice President of the Congress.

The opening ceremony allowed delegates to effectively introduce themselves to other attendees and to gain a feel for the background of the attendees. Sessions commenced in earnest on Monday with a very good introductory speech provided by Lord Faulkner who is the Chairman of the UK

Heritage Railway Committee. Lord Faulkner spoke about the scope of the heritage task in the UK and identified how the Heritage Railway Committee had acted with the various public sector and non-public sector organisations in the UK associated with the railways in order to ensure the preservation of key rail heritage icons.

The second morning session was delivered by Mr Hector Espana who is the Argentine National Parks CEO. The presentation spoke of the positive impact of trains for national parks, and highlighted the environmental benefits associated with the use of tourist trains as opposed to individuals accessing national parks in either cars or buses. The environmental aspect of tourist train operations will be a growing element of the industry, as already in South America more tourist railways are planned to facilitate access to various national parks.

In the afternoon, Mr Juan Roccatagliata, the Railway Transport Secretary of the government of Argentina, delivered a presentation on the Argentinean railway system and the renaissance taking place within Argentina with a specific focus on the investment by Argentina in high speed rail. The presentation detailed the under investment that had occurred within South America over the previous decades, and highlighted the initiatives being taken by Government to bring the railways up to the required standard, so that essential infrastructure required to meet the needs of the population and the needs of business could be provided.

The second afternoon session was delivered by the Secretary of Tourism for Argentina, Mr Antonio Torrejon. The presentation focused on the emerging markets for tourism and identified the growing market for bespoke products within the sector. While traditional markets related to

family travel, there is the emergence of a significant and profitable sector that requires a premium product and an expanded experience.

Mr Ian Thompson, a transport economist based in Chile, delivered a paper on transport economics and highlighted the economic benefits of heritage and tourist railways, and detailed the mechanisms that emerging organisations could use in order to gain government investment in essential infrastructure needed to realise those economic benefits.

The final presentation of the day was by Alex Vallejas who gave an overview of the exciting tourist train project currently being progressed in Patagonia. Alex is a consultant from the Catholic University in Argentina and was able to detail his first hand experience of the projects being considered and the benefits the projects will bring to local economies.

Day 2 commenced with a presentation provided on the situation in Australia and Oceania with respect to tourist and heritage railways. The presentation was provided by Chris le Marshall and focused on the key industry developments, specifically with respect to legislative and regulatory change, the key role the ARA and ATHRA have played in ensuring effective input from the heritage sector, and the uniqueness and benefits of the relationship. The presentation also provided an overview of the industry, the industry development profile, and also detailed the key operators within the sector.

The situation in Australia and Oceania was followed by Heimo Echemsperger who is the Vice President of Fedecrail, the European peak tourist and heritage rail body, on the situation in Europe. The presenter detailed the benefits of the peak body, particularly in terms of regulation and the

PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL STEAM AND TOURIST TRAIN ASSOCIATION

The last day of the world tourist and heritage train conference saw the participants considering whether there was any benefit gained in setting up a global organisation known as the International Steam and Tourist Train Association.

Participants agreed unanimously that such an organisation would be worthwhile in terms of representing the interests of owners and operators of steam and tourist heritage railways and providing key services to members internationally.

The meeting agreed to set up a working party consisting of two participants from Europe, one from the Indian sub-continent / Asia, one from North America, one from South America and one from Australia and Oceania, in order to tease out the mechanisms by which such an organisation could be created. The meeting believed that such an organisation would greatly assist the sector internationally through:

- assistance in procurement of essential parts at competitive prices;
- provision of expertise and advice in relation to legislation and regulation impacting on the sector;
- advice and assistance to start-up organisations;
- assistance in marketing the tourist and heritage sector worldwide through the provision of an international web-based directory;
- identification of sources of funding for members;
- provision of data related to the economic and employment benefits of tourist trains;
- influencing world bodies on behalf of the sector to achieve optimal outcomes;
- where local and regional organisations do not exist,

European Union, and the benefits that the peak body has been able to bring to the emerging tourist and heritage operations in the former Eastern Block and the Soviet Union countries. Fedecrail has assisted in securing funds from the European Union to ensure the survival of some tourist and heritage railway icons in those areas.

Mr Kyoichi Oda from Heritage Railways Japan provided an overview of the heritage railway situation in Japan and the issues impacting on the sector there. Mr Rajesh Agrawal, the Executive Director Heritage Operations with the Indian Railways provided a presentation on the tourist and heritage railway sector within India. Rajesh' presentation focused on railways such as the Darjeeling Railway with its world heritage listing, and detailed the economic and social benefits to communities along the railway, and the very positive impact of those tourist and heritage railways on communities. Rajesh gave a very good presentation on the scope of tourist and heritage operations within the Indian sub-continent, and provided a mouth watering range of tourist and heritage railway offerings available within the Indian sub-continent.

Mr Tim Fischer, Chairman of Tourism Australia and former Deputy Prime Minister of Australia provided a sparkling paper entitled Green on Green for rail heritage tourism. Tim detailed the obvious environmental benefits of heritage railways and implored attendees to take the environmental message back to their organisations and back to their governments to promote their railways as environmentally 'green'. Tim provided a checklist for survival of tourism and heritage railways with focus including marketing, infrastructure maintenance, and succession planning.

Shaun McMahon, Director O.P.I.M. Rio Turbio in Argentina delivered a

paper on the Porta internal boiler water treatment system. Shaun is very experienced in areas related to modern steam technology and provided an overview of the internal boiler water system and its benefits. Shaun's paper showed that technical innovation within the sector is continuing and provides significant results. Mainline steam locomotives operating within Argentina, for example, have been able to operate using the Porta internal boiler water system with boiler washouts being extended out to once every six months.

The first two days of the conference focused on an exchange of information and provided a plethora of critical information for attendees. The highlights of the first two days were the obvious vigour of the tourist and heritage sector within Argentina, the diverse range of tourist and heritage offerings within the Indian sub-continent, and the high degree of awareness that all delegates had of the vibrant tourist and heritage sector within Australia, New Zealand and Oceania.

A theme that emerged throughout the conference was the social and economic benefits that tourism and heritage railways provide to regions and local communities, and the need to ensure that governments and others were made aware of those benefits.

The final day of the conference, Wednesday 4th October, focused on the way ahead for the sector.

Chris Le Marshall



0-4-2T Perry Kilrie storms through QPSR's Swanbank station with its train.

representing the interests of the sector to national governments so that tourist and heritage icons are preserved;

- promoting research for use by members related to the economic benefits created at regional and local levels by tourist and heritage railway organisations; and
- encouraging research in areas related to market development opportunities for the sector.

All participants agreed that in order to be relevant members must be able to freely access the information detailed above.

It was envisaged that individual organisations and peak bodies could join the international organisation.

Participants were mindful of the costs and agreed that ideally the international body would utilise the Internet extensively to communicate with members and to disseminate information with a requirement to meet being limited to once every three years.

Participants agreed that within three years there should be a meeting either in Australia or India to review and agree the outcomes that the working party had delivered.

Chris Le Marshall

COTMA REPORT

The 2006 Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia (COTMA) Conference in Melbourne, November 17 to 25 was most successful. Just over 120 people registered for the various events, with about 95 attending on each of the first five days. The formal conference dinner was attended by 125 delegates and guests.

The Conference papers and reports have been placed on the COTMA website; www.cotma.org.au under the proceedings tab. While many of the papers focused on tramway

museum issues, a number are very relevant for tourist and heritage railways as well. There is a great deal of knowledge throughout the Tourist and Heritage Rail Sector and the COTMA Conference is an excellent way of spreading this knowledge and building individual relationships with other sector volunteer workers.

The CEO of Yarra Trams, a major Conference sponsor spoke at the Conference Dinner of the future vision for Yarra Trams. A feature of the dinner was the presentation of the COTMA Achievement Awards. COTMA's Achievement Awards have been made at the last four bi-annual conferences. The Awards are not competitive, but are to set standards of achievement that their fellow peers can recognise, flag and inspire others to equal or better. For the first time in 2006, a formal "EAR Award" (Excellence and Recognition) was made to the organisation that the judges considered had made the most significant achievement.

The EAR Award in 2006 was awarded to the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association for the Preservation and Restoration of VR No. 41. As part of the Award, a \$500 cheque was presented, made possible by Austbreck Pty Ltd, suppliers of tramway current collection equipment. The Award itself consisted of a cap and cone tramway ear and section of trolley wire mounted onto a piece of polished timber. Achievement Awards were made to: Ballarat Tramway Museum - "Meeting Challenges" - Rebuilding the electrical sub-station and publishing "The Golden City and its Tramways" and the Wellington Cable Car Museum - Restoration and display of Cable Grip Car No. 3.

One of the outcomes from discussions with the various

Australian Museum Members was the lack of knowledge amongst Rail Safety Regulators, Victoria being the exception, of electric street tramways. They are not the same as railways, being capable of sharing the streets with other road users. This is a matter the COTMA Executive will be addressing through the various consultative forums.

The next Conference will be held in Launceston during mid 2008.
Warren Doubleday

ACCIDENT PLANNING FOR REMOTE WORKERS

Every railway faces the never-ending task of track maintenance so it is common for people to be working somewhere out along the line. While a lot of energy is put into the planning the work, is the same energy put into planning for accidents? What if someone was seriously injured while undertaking track work?

Are some members of your work teams qualified in First Aid? Do your work teams take a First Aid Kit with them? Do your work teams have access to reliable communications with Emergency Services? If you are using mobile phones, do you have coverage at all locations along your line? Do your work teams know the nearest road access points to the work site? Do you have agreements with adjoining landowners to use their properties for access in an emergency? Does more than one person in your work team know your emergency procedures?

No one wants accidents to occur and certainly no one plans to have an accident. However planning for the possibility of an accident may prevent an injury becoming a death!