



ASSOCIATION OF TOURIST & HERITAGE RAIL AUSTRALIA

ABN 19 755 744 868

ATHRA News - Issue 9 March 2011

The last ATHRA Board meeting was held on Saturday 26th February 2011 at the RTBU's NSW Branch offices Pitt St Sydney for which we thank them for their hospitality. On Sunday 27th February a number of delegates took the opportunity to visit the Sydney Tram Museum at Loftus as part of the 50th anniversary of the last tram to operate in Sydney and enjoyed the pleasure of a ride on the coupled O class set.

ATHRA Awards

The ATHRA Awards for 2011 will be presented at the October 2011 meeting of ARTC. ARTC have agreed to continue their sponsorship of the Infrastructure Award and it was agreed at the meeting to expand the rollingstock restoration award to have a section for preservation of freight rollingstock. Details of the Awards and closing dates for submissions will be made in a separate mail out in the near future however in the meantime work on submissions needs to be being planned.

Boiler Code

The Boiler Code is ready for presentation to the RISSB Board for acceptance and will then be available for use by ATHRA members through the RISSB Web Site. The Development Group are to then commence the preparation of a maintenance document which will be handled in a similar manner. The Board acknowledged the huge time and effort of the members of the group who prepared the Boiler Code much of it in volunteer time. Acknowledgement is also made of the time and input from persons outside of the group who provided material and comment and material for use in the Code.

International Rail Safety Conference Melbourne

The next ATHRA meeting will be in Melbourne to be held in conjunction with an international rail safety forum. The forum will include a session of the Tourist and Heritage sector. The ATHRA Board meeting and AGM will be on Saturday 15th October with the ATHRA Awards being presented at a dinner that evening. Sunday 16th will be an ATHRA General Meeting open to all ATHRA members with a gala dinner that evening for the start of the rail safety conference.

On Monday 17th October the first day of the conference will have a number of presentations on heritage issues. The conference continues through to Thursday 20th October and will include visits to both Puffing Billy and Bendigo Tram. Delegates will be able to attend the dinner and Monday event or may choose to attend the full conference and visits. Papers are being prepared for the conference at present and we will advise further details including the cost for full attendance or partial attendance when further details are known but in the meantime you should reserve these dates in your diary now.

WATTRAIN

An international group call WATTRAIN has been developed and will be holding their next meeting in London (probably York) in October 2012 after the Olympic Games. There will be both a pre and post meeting tours. ATHRA has agreed to join as a member. Details of the event and costs will be made available when they are known.

Unslett Project

Considerable work has been undertaken by a small group to prepare a submission for the restoration of a World War 1 Hunslett steam locomotive currently at ANGRAMMS in Queensland. The submission has been made for funding from the Commonwealth Government a part of World War 1 Centenary Celebrations. Submissions have closed however there has been no response as to the success or otherwise of the project. If successful it is intended to transport the loco around Australia during the centenary celebrations and where possible operate it on any 2 foot gauge track.

Trans Australia Line Centenary

Whilst it is several years before the centenary of the first Trans the centenary of the turning of the first sod at Port Augusta will be in September 2012 with a similar event in Kalgoorlie in February 2012. Attempts are being made to try and re-enact the events ahead of the centenary of the opening of the ITrans line in 2017.

Training Documents

A number of groups responded to the request for a second review of the content of the Lesson Plans. Most of the comments related to minor issues although one major change is that of line speeds where there is a need to differentiate between maximum line speed, maximum curve speed and temporary speed restrictions. The class of rollingstock also needs to be taken into account when determining maximum track speed that a train may operate at. There were also some comments about not all systems of safe working being in the document. To do this would be a document so large it would be hard to copy with many of the systems of safe working being restricted to a main line operation hence the use of the two main types of safe working used on Tourist and Heritage Railways eg Stagg and Ticket and Train order Working. It is acknowledged that main line operators need to have qualifications in all safe working systems for the railway(s) over which they run but lesson plans for these are held by the railway(s).

All of the comments received are being sent to David Rumsey as changes need to be made for all relevant documents and not just the one document where the correction has been noted.

The Board meeting established a small sub-committee to develop the competencies required and to ensure that the lesson plans are placed on the RISSB Web Site for all ATHRA members to use.

It is stressed that these plans are generic documents and as such each railway/tramway needs to customise them for their own use.

Brian Busch
Chairman ATHRA

The following written member reports were presented at the meeting. Some. Other member groups made verbal reports at the meeting

ATR Victoria

Tourist and Heritage Railways Act 2010:

The Tourist and Heritage Railways Bill passed the Lower House on the last sitting day of the Victorian Parliament before it rose for a final time for the State elections. As a measure of the interest of all members of Parliament, the Bill was passed after 3.5 hours debate in the final week where every speaker spoke in support of the Bill and tourist railways. It is very early days for the implementation of the Act and the initial emphasis will be on establishing the supporting Regulations.

Rail Trails and Tourist Railways:

Many of Victoria's interesting closed rail lines have been converted to Rail Trails. These are a marvellous use of these disused corridors that provide benefits for the immediate tourism business and the boarder community in general. As an example, the Warburton trail forms a substantial part of the route of Oxfam's annual fundraising Trailwalker event.

More recently the advocacy groups Bicycle Victoria and Rail Trails Australia have been turning their attention to trails beside operating tourist railways. This has created considerable tension with the T&H rail sector mostly due to a lack of understanding of each other's position. In order to facilitate the provision of such trails, the Department of Transport has established a Steering Committee and Working Group to develop a Code of Practice for the planning, construction and operation of Rail Trails in the rail corridor of tourist railways. The members of the Working Group are the DOT, ATR, Bicycle Victoria, Rail Trails Australia and Municipal Association Victoria (representing Local Government).

The code is being developed on the principle that the Rail Trail will be licensed onto the

corridor as opposed to the land being excised for the trail. An important part of the code will be addressing the safety issues during construction and ongoing use of the trail. The work is not yet complete.

Department of Transport Workshops:

The Department of Transport has been proactive in helping the T&H sector address some key issues that could impact on the ongoing accreditation of operators. Workshops have been held to help operators fulfil their responsibilities in relation to Safety Interface Agreements with road authorities, vegetation control in relation to fire hazard reduction and visibility at level crossings.

The ATR is greatly appreciative of these workshops as they address critical issues by bringing together the sector and expert resources in a forum that is beyond the capacity of the ATR to organise itself.

TAT Rail

The Christmas period has been a little quiet on the railway front in Tasmania with only a small amount of news notably:-

The Don River Railway returned steam operations from the Don Station following a number of years without a steamable locomotive. A government grant enabled paid staff to complete the restoration works.

Wee Georgie Wood unfortunately is out of action for a year or two seeking a new boiler. The Romeo diesel engine ex Lake Margaret Power scheme has been rapidly restored and is now running the trains again.

At the Redwater Creek Railway plans for SteamFest and March 12 to 14th are well underway along with construction of the second stage of the shed giving a new undercover display facility of 36 x 20m.

The SteamFest Tasmanian Railways Tour which was being organized for this years event unfortunately did not attract sufficient

patrons to run and has been cancelled.

The Tasmanian Transport Museum Society in Hobart is presently seeking mainline access for short runs in the area.

The Derwent Valley Railway still has not turned a wheel with government bureaucracy still preventing access to their line.

In late January I met with the new Director at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery – Mr Richard Mulvaney who accepted the position in Tasmania following a similar position at Thirlmere Rail Transport Museum in NSW. Richard has expressed interest in exploring networking opportunities for the sector.

RAIL HERITAGE WA

Rail Heritage WA is the recipient of the former Commonwealth Railway locomotive GM1. Names Robert Gordon Menzies and in its traditional maroon and silver livery, it has been gifted to Rail Heritage by the Federal Government. The locomotive will make an excellent link with the existing standard gauge federation fleet of carriages. The aims are,

Restoration of GM1 for towage and transport to Bassendean

External restoration and prominent display at the museum.

Operational restoration of GM1.

WHEATBELT HERITAGE RAIL PROJECT

Following the success of the 100 years of rail celebrations that took place in December 2006, the Shire of Dowerin in conjunction with the neighbouring Shires of Wyalkatchem and Goomalling propose the development of a unique and innovative tourist attraction, the Wheat belt Rail Heritage Project. It is proposed that the Wheat belt Rail Heritage Project is to be implemented in two phases.

Firstly, the S Class 'Greenmount' locomotive will be relocated to Dowerin, complete with

passenger carriages, a dining carriage, guards van and other items of rolling stock specifically linked to the Wheat belt and Grain Carting activities. These items will be housed in the former Minnivale Wheat Bin within the Shire of Dowerin and will form a permanent, fully interpretative, static display 'The Wheat belt Rail Heritage Museum – Annex to the Bassendean Rail Heritage Museum

In conjunction with this, the Shires of Goomalling, Dowerin and Wyalkatchem will work together with the Bassendean Rail Heritage Museum, ARG, Westnet Rail, the Office of Rail Safety and Public Transport Authority to gain accreditation to operate a fully operational steam train between Goomalling, Dowerin and Wyalkatchem. It is anticipated that initially the train will have four (4) excursions per year, intended to coincide with the local events calendar of all three shires.

The notion of reviving steam in the Wheat belt is not a concept that is new to Dowerin and the surrounding region. The Shire of Dowerin recognised the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Dowerin Railway line and organised a weekend of festivities on the 9th and 10th of December 2006 with the S-Class 'Greenmount' being transported back to the centre of Dowerin where it once ran on a regular basis

Shire staff worked in conjunction with the Bassendean Rail Heritage Museum, Westnet Rail, ARG, the Office of Rail Safety, Public Transport Authority, FESA and the former Minister for Transport Alannah McTiernan to ensure this project met compliance requirements to move the Steam Train out of the Metropolitan Area and into the heart of the Wheat belt.

BOYANUP MUSEUM

When the railway yards were removed in Bunbury, the Vintage Train collection found a new home at Boyanup where the old Bunbury Goods Shed and Roundhouse had been at least partially relocated. Thus the Boyanup Museum was born.

By the early 1990s the Leschenault Railway Preservation Society was struggling for members and it was wound up with its assets coming to ARHS WA. The items on permanent loan from Westrail were later donated to ARHS. Thus Leschenault Lady – the oldest Australian built steam locomotive continued to be operational.

Unfortunately in 2005 the Boyanup Museum was closed – it is hoped that this is only temporary! The Vintage Train carriages are still in Boyanup and so Rail Heritage WA has taken a short-term lease of the property to enable conservation work on this historic collection of carriages. 'Leschenault Lady' is now back at Boyanup after having spend several years operating on the Boulder Loopline. Ian Carne of Boyanup is very busy trying to keep this moving at Boyanup.

HOTHAM VALLEY

As part of HVTR rationalizing its fleet of ex South African passenger coaches, several are to be disposed. Following 10 months of engineering reviews, 4 coaches were purchased in January by Pacific National. They will be strengthened and re-fitted out as crew relay vans for use in Queensland. On Wednesday morning 26th January, the first coach (AHB306) was loaded to road transport at Pinjarra for its journey to South Australia where initial fit out works and design will commence.

In preparation for coaching stock rationalisation, several bogie changes required were carried out on Sunday 23rd January at Pinjarra. As part of this work, two coaches were placed on temporary 'shop bogies' which had been fitted with specially designed adaptors.

As part of coach shunting operations at Pinjarra on Monday 17th January, the opportunity was taken to relocate DE loco G50 into the east yard workshop in preparation for re-installation of its engine and main generator. Initial work which commenced the following day, will focus on general body repairs, miscellaneous attention

undercoat painting. The main generator repairs were completed in 2010 and in coming months it will be re-attached to the engine. Once this has been undertaken, the engine-generator assembly will be installed into the locomotive.

On Monday 13th of December, HVTR's new "Perth office" opened at 8 Old Perth Road Bassendean with the relocation from Perth Railway Station having been undertaken in stages over the preceding week by several very hard working, sleep deprived members. The new location is immediately across the road from Bassendean Railway Station, which has turned out to be very convenient for customers that have visited our old location.

The photos show the office frontage with Office Manager Mary Phatouros and our computer systems expert Justin Von-Perger of V Biz.Net, who are by fortunate coincidence, conveniently located in the nearby arcade. Justin has assisted HVTR for over 20 years with its computer needs and systems including our ticketing system program which Justin developed.

The new office is smaller than previous city offices and is located in an area of lower rental rates which will save on costs significantly.

This time last year, a week after the last Steam Ranger train, a grader damaged the HVTR line at Marrinup. Well, hard as it may be to believe, it has occurred again, this time at the 3.8km occupational crossing just east of Alumina Junction. This time it was our own contractors working on our fire breaks and access tracks. We are unsure yet whether this is some new trend developing or just two 1 in 30 year events occurring back to back!

The afternoon of Sunday 7th November was spent commencing the removal of flue tubes from the boiler of W945 once the special train workings to Dwellingup had been completed. The work progressed well with 6 tubes removed in roundly 3 hours.

to mechanical & electrical items and

KOJONUP

The Kojonup Tourist Railway began in 1993 with several local residents realizing what history and value would be lost should the railway line completely disappear in Kojonup. Through their hard work and perseverance and with the assistance of the Shire of Kojonup the Kojonup Tourist Railway Inc is an active volunteer organization that is working towards the preservation of the 12 km of line between Kojonup and the-Farrar-siding.

KTR are accredited to run our light railway vehicles (shown above) on behalf of the Shire of Kojonup.

The current projects are:-:

* Laying of steel sleepers; in our track pattern we need to lay 1 in 8 steel sleepers between our wooden sleepers. KTR have already accomplished this for approximately 6 kms of the track

* Laying of wood sleepers; New wooden sleepers need to be between the steel sleepers and new ones need to be a minimum of 1 in 8 as well depending on the condition of the existing wooden sleepers. This is a priority for us to ensure that we complete the section up to where the steel sleepers have been laid - this will increase our accredited run by a further 3.5 kms.

* Conversion of the zoo train from road to rail; this is a project dear to our heart, however we can only move this project forward as we have funds.

* Writing up formalized training plans for all operational positions. This project has begun in 2007 and we will work steadily during the year to convert all of our training programs to competency based training modules where all items will be assessed.

CARNARVON

CARNARVON FLOOD DECEMBER 2010

A Flood Warning for the Gascoyne River Catchment was issued at 3:30 PM on Sunday the 19th of December 2010 Western Australia Flood Warning Centre Upstream of Carnarvon the river level at Fishy Pool peaked at about 10am this morning at a height of 15.5 metres. At 1pm the level was 15.1 metres.

At 3pm the Gascoyne River at Carnarvon was 7.64 metres. The river level is expected to rise very slowly throughout Sunday.

The **Kimberley** Steam loco was built in 1922 and operated from the early 1950's in Carnarvon and until 1958 when it was replaced by diesel powered locos. The town was linked to the One Mile Jetty by a rail system that transported goods from State Ships to a goods shed where the Carnarvon Civic Centre is now situated. The Kimberley has been fully restored by light rail enthusiasts.

HMAS Sydney memorial

The tragic battle between the HMAS Sydney and the German Raider, Kormoran on November 19, 1941, will be commemorated in the development of the Carnarvon Heritage Precinct. Although controversy rages over the site of the battle there is no doubt about Carnarvon's role in the rescue operation that followed the battle. There were no survivors from the Sydney, but 319 men from aboard the Kormoran survived the ordeal. Of these, 216 were taken to Carnarvon by rescuing ships, and a further 103 came ashore on lifeboats just north of Carnarvon.

PETS

NEW BOOK

Tracks by the Swan is a definitive account of the rise, development and decline of electric street transport in Perth, to an ever-changing backdrop of the city and its people. It traces the social, economic, political, industrial and technical factors influencing the tram and trolley bus systems which served the people of Perth for almost seventy years from 1899. Electric trams were the latest in modern technology when they came to Perth at the end of the nineteenth century. The small town

on the banks of the Swan River had been boosted economically by recent gold discoveries in Western Australia and, in an era where private transport was limited, the trams were essential to link the expanding suburbs with the commercial centre.

Electric trolley buses were introduced in 1933 as a perceived modern extension of the trams, and this system rapidly expanded into the 1950s.

In their heyday the trams and trolley buses served a large proportion of the developed Perth area, providing vital transport for work and leisure and carrying over one million passengers per week.

A track by the Swan is a richly illustrated 312-page book, with over 400 photographs, drawings, maps and copies of original documents.

GENERAL

The Perth Electric Tramway Society provides a regular service over 4 kilometres of standard gauge track through picnic areas and farmland.

Trams operate between Mussel Pool and the Village at half hourly intervals, with extended weekend running times of 12pm to 4pm Saturdays and 11am to 4.30pm on Sundays and public holidays.

Note: Family and senior concessions are also available, just ask your Tram driver.

For more information, visit their website at www.pets.org.au

Go 'behind the scenes' and discover what it takes to restore a tram to operating condition - a special treat for tram enthusiasts - available on the fourth Sunday of every month!

For no extra charge you will be invited to disembark at the Tram Workshop in Mussel Pool for a fabulous 'behind the scenes' guided tour.

Here you will see firsthand all the dedication and hard work that goes into restoring a vintage tram back to its operating condition.

BENNETT BROOK RAILWAY

With any luck this year will see completion of the Mussel Pool platform and signal Box revamp. The WVJ locomotive water tank should make it onto its stand and become operational. Parts for the Gemco gearbox are progressing which hopefully will see this most useful diesel return to traffic use. The new platform and track alterations at Kangaroo Flats will continue to slowly appear as the project takes shape. Clearing of equipment and land around the side of the Carriage shed by the midweek crew will allow for the new Wagon Sheds to be erected and a new set of points is being built for the extra trackage.

Midweek, Friday Night & Track Crews will continue to operate on a regular basis providing the backbone that keeps our railway up to standard for our Roster Crews to keep the trains running. Another BBR Annual dinner was held in early December and was well attended by the membership. A good night was had by all with the usual good feed, night train operations and some award presentations made.

The Big Perry has had its boiler removed from the frames which will now allow better access for the boiler inspector to check out the boiler as well as enable easier removal of the wheels for re-profiling and cleaning up of the chassis. The tender tank from 118 was relocated to the front of the pit shed and stood on its side for access to repair the floor.

With a crane on site R 1751 was lifted out of the storage compound and placed onto bogies with high bolsters to enable conversion to begin for future use on the railway. R 1751 is the last of the 5, R type wagons BBR acquired in the formative days of the railway.

New boards to replace some of the old worn deck, are being fitted to QBB 2889 which is currently under overhaul. The repaint of the authentic WAGR "McPhersons" advertising

sign on D33 has been completed.

BUSSELTON JETTY

The Jetty Train was purchased by the Busselton Jetty Preservation Committee (now known as BJECA) from the Mindarie Keys Marina in Perth as another fundraising initiative. This train was first put into service in April 1995, has a four-cylinder petrol engine and travels at 6km an hour along the length of the jetty and has proven to be a great tourist attraction in its own right.

The Jetty Train is currently not in service. The train will resume mid to late February 2011.

NORTHAMPTON STATION

Dedicated to the collection of ex WAGR rollingstock and the restoration of the historic former Gwalla station site.

BOYUP BROOK

Proposal is to run a service from the Boyup Brook station out to the old flax mill. The ex Perth Zoo train, 1953-1970, 610mm gauge, petrol steam outline locomotive. Boyup Brook has been offered a small train and carriages (ex Perth Zoo) to create a tourism attraction. The train and carriages need some work and infrastructure will need to be built to run the train.

contact Event Tourism Officer, Daly Winter on 045 8699 923 for further details

Heritage Rail SA

HRSA Membership remains the same as previously.

The organisation had met at Railway Park Prospect courtesy SteamRanger in November and is due to meet at Cobdogla a week before the ATHRA meeting

Since the last meeting of ATHRA we have been involved in two workshops with Rail Safety. The first being one relative to rail safety issues and discussing topics such as Management of Change and Risk Reviews. A

later meeting address both the issue of drug and alcohol testing and high risk work as well as OH&S Risks and the new First Aid on the Work Force Code of Practice some of which were not direct rail safety issues.

Drug testing for the T&H sector has been an issue which has seen the sector exempt for some time due to the high costs of testing however alcohol testing has been in place for some time. Some organisations have their own RBT unit whilst others rely on another group to carry out this function for them.

HRSA was advised that the cost of drug testing had decreased and tests could now be bought for \$18.00 each hence the sector was advised that it would need towards carrying out these tests. A presentation at the last workshop indicating that whilst the cost of the test kit is minimal anyone using cough mixture or prescribed drugs could well test positive. This then requires a further screening at a cost of \$100.00 to clear the legal use and show only the illicit use. We have raised this cost factor with Rail Safety and they are giving the issue further consideration however it will no doubt only be time until a relatively cheap test is available.

Alcohol testing is an accepted aspect of all Accredited groups in South Australia..

In South Australia major changes to first aid requirements have come into force meaning a large cost to most groups to update current equipment and some additional training in some areas. These changes apply not only to the T&H sector but to all work places.

The term of office for all executive positions and in fact all members expires in February 2011 at the AGM. Advice as to the new delegates will be given at the ATHRA meeting. All member groups have also been through re-election in the main the current membership being re-elected.

It was proposed to hold a Conference/Workshop early in 2011 however a lack of workers has led to its cancellation. Like most States the HRSA membership is in the main made up of active personnel from eh

of the member groups and there is only so much time in the day.

HRSA has not had a lot to do with the Single Rail Regulator task as much of what is occurring is based on the current SA Act and Regulations although we are kept fully informed at each meeting by the attendance of the SA Rail Safety Manager

In SA there is also a State level Crossing Advisory Committee which has a HRSA member on it. Slow moves are being made to drag the Local Government groups into interface documentation and an agreed cost model for level crossings but it is slow and frustrating work not helped by delays in changes to the Legislation in SA for interface issues at level crossings.

Coupled O Set at Sydney Tram Museum Sunday 27 February 2011

