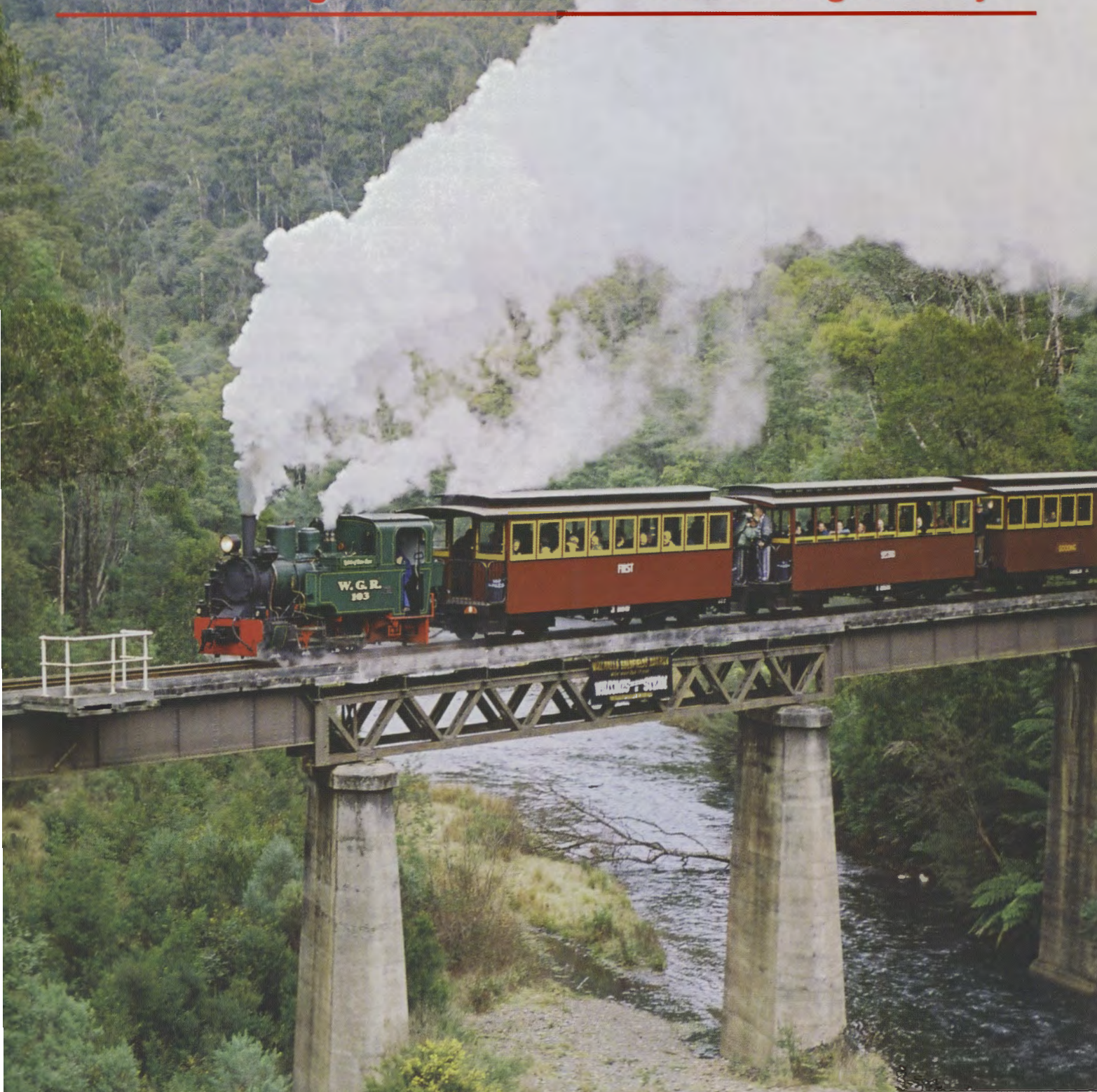


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# LIGHT RAILWAYS

**Australia's Magazine of Industrial & Narrow Gauge Railways**



**Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc.**



## LIGHT RAILWAYS

Australia's Magazine of Industrial and Narrow Gauge Railways

No 179 October 2004

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#### Conversions:

1 inch (in)	25.40 millimetres
1 foot (ft)	0.30 metre
1 yard (yd)	0.91 metre
1 chain	20.11 metres
1 mile	1.60 kilometres
1 super foot	0.00236 cubic metre
1 ton	1.01 tonnes
1 pound (lb)	0.454 kilogram
1 acre	0.4 hectare
1 horsepower (hp)	746 Watts
1 gallon	4.536 litres
1 cubic yard	0.765 cubic metres

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## Comment

Kodak recently announced that, on 26 November this year, production would cease at its Melbourne film manufacturing plant. Those of us who use Kodachrome had received our bad news several weeks earlier; that is, that the sale and processing of Kodak's one-time flagship product would end in September, with any remaining rolls having to go to Switzerland for processing. Both decisions were blamed on declining film sales, a result of the growing popularity of digital photography.

This issue of *Light Railways* is something of an indicator in this regard as, for the first time ever, more than half the images supplied for publication (25 out of 44) came to us as digital files.

To be fair, some were shot on film then scanned by the photographer (a common practice among today's professional photographers) whilst others were scanned by the library or museum holding the original prints. However, this still points to a profound, and continuing, change in the way that we exchange information.

The rate at which this change is taking place can sometimes seem frightening, and not a lot of fun if you happen to earn a living in a 'sunset' industry, but for LRRSA members, it's mainly good news. The streamlined processes that the new technology brings means, in the shorter term, that deadlines may be revised and production costs contained. In the longer term, it opens up the possibility of new and exciting ways for us to convey information to our members.

I've worked in the Advertising Industry now for over 30 years and the changes I've witnessed during this time have been quite breathtaking. The bottom line, however, is that it's always been about communicating information and ideas, and using the most appropriate means, both new and not so new, to do so effectively.

Many changes lie ahead for us, but our prognosis is very bright. *Bruce Belbin*

The Light Railway Research Society of Australia Inc. was formed in 1961 and caters for those interested in all facets of industrial, private, tourist and narrow gauge railways in this country and its offshore territories, past and present.

Members are actively involved in researching light railways in libraries and archives, interviewing knowledgeable first-hand participants and undertaking field work at industrial sites and in the forests.

*Light Railways* is the official publication of the Society. All articles and illustrations in this publication remain the copyright of the author and publisher. Material submitted is subject to editing, and publication is at the discretion of the Editor.

Articles, letters and photographs of historical and current interest are welcome. Contributions should be double spaced if typed or written. Electronic formats accepted in the common standards.

Material is accepted for publication in *Light Railways* on the provision that the Society has the right to reprint, with acknowledgement, any material published in *Light Railways*, or include this material in other Society publications.

**Cover:** On Friday 23 July 2004, Walhalla Goldfield Railway's Henschel 0-6-0T (26427 of 1956) Spirit of Baw Baw heads a special train across the Thomson River Bridge, enroute to Walhalla, during celebrations marking the return of regular steam operation to the town, after a gap of 60 years, and the completion of the replica Walhalla station building (see pages 29 to 31 of our Heritage & Tourist section).  
*Photo: Peter Ralph*



*The Cobar Chesney Mine circa 1908, with standard gauge wagons loaded with firewood in the foreground. Behind, men push skips from the main shaft to a rock breaker, from which rakes of skips are rope-hauled to the ore bins on the right. Ore will be loaded in standard gauge hoppers for transport over The Peak branch line to the Great Cobar smelters.* Courtesy Great Cobar Heritage Centre

## Mining Railways of Cobar

by Bob McKillop

### 7. Other Mines, 1871-1922

This series of articles on the industrial railways of the Cobar district has focused on the dominant player on the field, the Great Cobar Copper Mine, with the previous installment covering its associated activities at the town of Nymagee. The early success of the pioneer mining venture that eventually became the Great Cobar attracted other prospectors to the district. In 1871 the United (Occidental) and the Cornish, Scottish and Australian (CSA) mines were discovered and many more were to follow. This article examines the larger of these mines and the various forms of tramways that were used to haul ore to the surface and to dispose of waste products. Locomotives were not used in the period under review, though they were to be employed underground when three of these mines reopened in the 1930s.

#### Background

A central theme of the earlier articles was the boom and bust cycles experienced by the various proprietors of the Great Cobar Mine due to the difficulties of operating in such an isolated location, the harshness of the arid climate and the vagaries of international metal prices. These factors impinged even more heavily on smaller mines and their story is usually one of early hope and dashed expectations.

Following the euphoria generated by the discoveries of copper deposits in the early 1870s, a serious drought brought despair in the latter years of the decade and it was not until February 1881 that its grip was broken. Enthusiasm for new mining ventures was revived and an air of prosperity returned. In November 1881, Cobar boasted a population of 3000, 15 general stores and eight hotels, as well as: "Mrs Wright's Coffee Place, where music, literature, edibles and amusements are provided... The game of cricket is not unknown in Cobar; every Saturday evening Messrs Morrison & Monaghan's hotel is made lively by the melodious strains issuing from the

brazen throats of the Cobar amateur band."<sup>1</sup> There were also four butchers, four bakers, a soap factory, four blacksmiths and wheelwrights, two brick-making establishments and a cordial factory. Before long drought had dampened hopes again, but the dominant interest of the town's inhabitants remained prospecting and the activities of the various mining ventures. When boom times returned at the end of the decade: "large areas of land were pegged out daily and great excitement prevailed wherever townspeople gathered."<sup>2</sup> Disillusioned with the opportunities for wealth through pastoral pursuits in the harsh arid environment, even the local squatters "put themselves at the head of the movement and are not only helping the practical miner, but are also doing a great deal of prospecting on their own account."<sup>3</sup> Increasingly, the gold content of the local ores was the centre of attention. In 1896 some 26,750 oz of gold was won from mines in the Cobar district, although these were small ventures established with local capital.<sup>4</sup> As outside investors provided the capital for expansion in the early 1900s, the gold-yielding ores were worked out and copper ore was encountered along the bottom workings.<sup>4</sup>

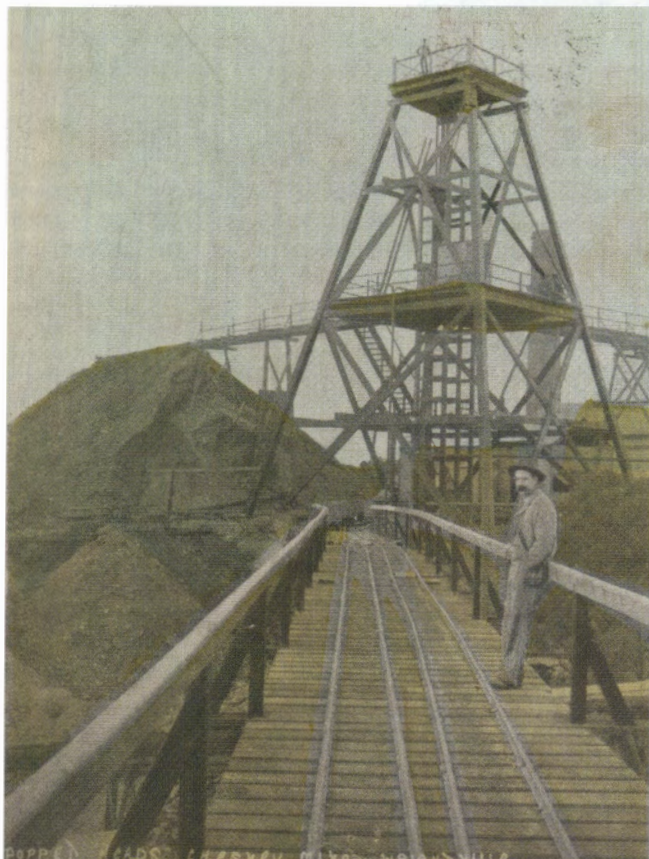
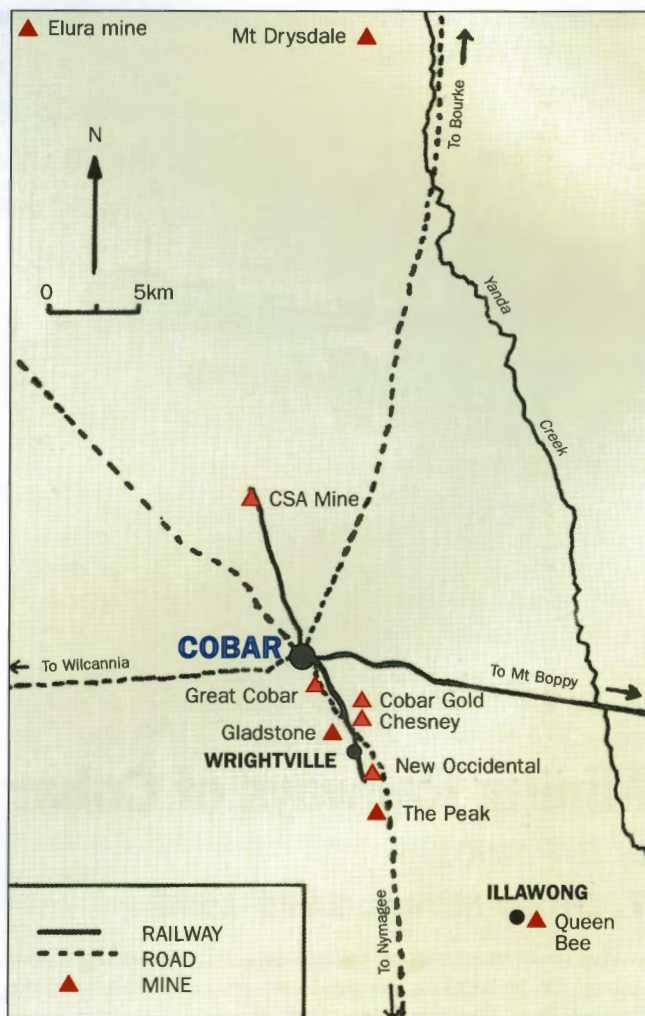
As noted in the second article of the series (LR 154, pp.6-7), the standard gauge Peak branch line, which actually terminated at Mount Pleasant (5 miles 53 chains), was opened on 26 November 1901 to provide railway services to mines south of Cobar. Its construction was a long and drawn out affair due to strikes by construction workers and planning blunders. The excavation of their main street for the railway offended the citizens of Wrightville, while their anticipated railway station, which would enable a commuter passenger service to Cobar, failed to materialise.<sup>6</sup> As sidings were constructed to the Occidental, Cobar Chesney and Cobar Gold mines, however, the branch came to play a key role in the expansion of these operations. Initially firewood dispatched from sidings along the Nyngan-Cobar railway was the main product delivered to the mines. A passenger service was just a local hope that was never shared by the Railway Commissioners, although the lack of such a service did not deter some of the locals who regularly 'jumped' the goods trains. The practice resulted in a fatality in May 1908, when

two brothers climbed on one of the trucks as the morning wood train departed from the Occidental Mine, and rode to Wrightville. When opposite the Family Hotel in the main street, the train stopped to shunt on the branch line to Chesney and the trucks crashed together, causing John Tierne to fall between the wheels, which ran over him.<sup>7</sup>

In October 1905, news of the discovery of a rich lode of lead ore in the abandoned CSA Mine had brought a renewed round of mining speculation to Cobar. The £50 shares in the CSA Company were soon demanding £2400 apiece and there was a fresh flood of applications for mining exploration leases.<sup>8</sup> A visitor reported that "The apathy of previous years has given place to an air of expectancy, of subdued excitement... everyone is anxiously awaiting the coming development, the keystone of which is the success or otherwise of the CSA mine."<sup>9</sup> In this atmosphere, the Cobar Stock Exchange was officially opened on 17 July 1906. The first premises were the billiard room of the Empire Hotel, but it subsequently moved to its own premises in Barton Street. All the brokers of the town had joined. Through 1907, the *Cobar Herald & Nymagee Advocate* listed 13 mining companies on the local stock exchange.

### Occidental Gold Mining Company

This was one of the earliest mines on the field and was to become noted for its longevity. It was discovered in 1871 by Cobar pioneers Harry 'Pappa' Cornish and the Cobar Copper Mine captain, Thomas Lean, and was initially developed as the United Goldmine. It closed after several years of small-scale operation. The lease was taken over by the Occidental Gold Mining Company in 1888, which reopened the mine the following year.<sup>10</sup> A 10-head battery driven by a 20hp portable steam engine commenced crushing in December 1890.<sup>11</sup> Over the next two years, a



The poppet head at the Chesney Mine, circa 1906. Note the narrow gauge of the tramway lines. Courtesy Great Cobar Heritage Centre

winding plant, consisting of a double-cylinder engine, fitted with reversing gear, a vertical boiler and loose and fast drums with clutch and brakes attached, was installed under the direction of the mine manager, Mr Gudgeon.<sup>12</sup>

There were regular reports of good gold recovery from open cut mining during the 1890s, and dividends were paid to the company shareholders, but water shortages often resulted in cessation of operations. With the opening of The Peak branch line in 1901, the Occidental Mine was the southernmost served by the railway. The plant was improved and expanded over the years and by 1911, it comprised a large battery and a cyanide plant in which the concentrates were saved by means of blankets.<sup>13</sup> For the year 1908, the Occidental Mine crushed 51,103 tons of ore to yield 4480 oz of gold, valued at £57,637. The main shareholders were local Cobar identities, including John Leah (the mayor in 1911) and WJ Hogan (a former mayor).

By 1910, the Occidental mine operated a 60-stamper mill, complete with a cyanide and slimes plant. In the half-year to 28 February 1911, the slimes plant treated 9228 tons and the sands plant 15,900 tons of ore. The company paid its 67th dividend to shareholders in April 1910, bringing the total dividends paid to £70,350, a most handsome result for a company for which the original capital was only £4500.<sup>14</sup> In 1912, the firm erected a considerable amount of new plant, with fine grinding capability to increase the amount of gold extracted per ton of ore.<sup>15</sup> In that year, a total of 35,165 tons ore was treated, plus sands, with a yield of 13,264oz of gold valued at £43,505.<sup>16</sup>

The tramway system developed as an integral part of the expanding mine, although the movement of skips was



*Men on employment relief work at the Cobar Reservoir in 1916. Following the closure of the Great Cobar and other mines, the government was under pressure to offer relief work at this time.*  
*Courtesy Great Cobar Heritage Centre*

evidently by manpower during this period. The gauge of the post-1935 tramway system was 1ft 6in (457mm), so the early system was most likely of this gauge. In August 1913, it was reported that 2223 trucks or skips containing 1383 tons of ore had been raised in a fortnight, with around 2000 trucks per fortnight being the regular haul.<sup>17</sup>

With the closure of the Great Cobar Copper Mine in August 1914, the Occidental Mine became vitally important to the continued survival of the town. A protracted strike that commenced in early April 1915 over a dispute between union officials and management was therefore of considerable concern to the citizens. Some 200 men were thrown out of work and *The Western Age* lamented: "The Occidental pay sheet amounts to £30,000 per year, which in the present state of things means a good deal to the town. It is only recently that there was a strike at the mine because the management refused to sack a man; now the present trouble is because they did sack one."<sup>18</sup> Operations evidently resumed after 10 weeks, but there was continuing industrial unrest here and elsewhere on the field, with 136 working days lost due to strikes at the Occidental Mine in 1916-1917.<sup>19</sup> When a new manager, Mr J Weir, took charge on 3 January 1917, he found that the mine was almost stripped of ore and he faced a struggle to keep the battery working.<sup>20</sup>

New equipment was installed and the mine continued, but operations were intermittent. With the closure of the Mount Boppy mine in February 1917, the Occidental became the largest gold mine in New South Wales, but depressed economic conditions after the First World War resulted in intermittent operations. Hopes for expansion were raised in September 1919, when Mr JM Armstrong formed a new company, the Occidental Consolidation NL, to revitalise the mine.<sup>21</sup> A new processing plant capable of treating 1000 tons of ore per week was erected at a cost of £20,000. Significantly, the plant used coal rather than firewood for its energy source. Preliminary work on reopening the mine

commenced in May 1920, but the revival was to be a short and unhappy experience for the local community.

On 14 December, six miners entered the cage at the bottom of the shaft to ascend, but instead the cage descended into the sump, immersing the men in some 7ft of water.<sup>22</sup> The cage was quickly raised and the men survived to tell the tale, but the incident required a formal inquest. A long strike occurred next and, when work resumed, it was found that the new treatment plant failed to perform satisfactorily. Most of the employees were dismissed in July with their last fortnight's pay outstanding.<sup>23</sup> With all mines on the field now closed, Cobar's last hopes for resurgence lay in a move by the Occidental company to place the mine under option to the Mt Boppy Gold Mining Company. Sampling of the ore was undertaken in April 1922 and there was a long wait while the ore was sent to London for analysis. Hopes were dashed when the manager received a letter from James Negus advising that the directors of Mt Boppy did not intend to proceed with the option.<sup>24</sup>

The news had a profound impact on the town. Families left Cobar in droves seeking work elsewhere and the once prosperous town was reduced to a sleepy village. The Occidental Mine was again reopened in the 1930s, bringing another revival to the town. This story will be covered in the final article of this series.

### **Cobar Chesney GM Company**

Founded by Melbourne investors during the 1888 boom, this mine was located on Fort Bourke Hill to the south of Cobar. A crushing plant was erected, with the engine arriving on site in February 1889.<sup>25</sup> It was evidently a small scale operation, for it was reported in March 1891 that the company required an engine to wind the shaft.<sup>26</sup> Want of capital hindered development and, in February 1898, there were rumours that an attempt to 'float' the company had failed. The following month, it was reported that the mine had "passed into the hands of 'men of money'."<sup>27</sup> The Chesney-Cobar GM



*Cobar Gold Mine circa 1912, with the former haulage tramway to the waste disposal area being used to transfer ore to standard gauge hopper wagons on a siding off The Peak line below. A section of standard gauge track is visible on the right. The extensive treatment plant is centre right, with the main headframe further up Fort Bourke Hill.*  
*Courtesy Great Cobar Heritage Centre*

Company expanded the plant and installed narrow-gauge skipways to transport the ore from the underground workings and to move materials on the surface. Elevated tramways on impressive trestles were a feature of this mine. Photographs indicate that they were of a narrow gauge and, as the tramway system of the 1940s was evidently of 1ft 3in (357mm) gauge, it is likely the early system was also of this unusually narrow gauge. The mine remained marginal, however, and drought, coupled with a fall in copper prices, resulted in its closure in January 1902.<sup>28</sup>

As noted in part 2 of this series, the Great Cobar Copper Syndicate purchased the Chesney mine for £40,000 in July 1904 (LR 154, p.9). It was reported that the Chesney directors had "battled hard to bring the mine success, and they expended £100,000 in hard cash."<sup>29</sup> Their problem was the excess of silica in the ore and the absence of iron, which mitigated against developing smelting of the very big and good-grade silicious copper and gold lode. On the other hand, the Great Cobar Copper Syndicate required silicious flux for its smelters, so the silicious lode of the Chesney mine, averaging 30ft and carrying as high as 3 per cent copper, was an attractive proposition to the syndicate. A standard gauge railway siding from The Peak line to the Chesney was opened in February 1905, allowing 650 tons of Chesney ore to be railed to the Great Cobar smelters each week.<sup>30</sup>

The Chesney Mine closed with the demise of the Great Cobar operations in 1914. As reported in LR 168 (p.7), it was reopened in January 1916 and continued to dispatch ore to the Great Cobar smelters until the final cessation of operations on 16 March 1919. The mine was then worked by tributors, who shipped small quantities of ore to Port Kembla for processing.<sup>31</sup> The Chesney Mine was to have another period of activity in the 1940s as part of the expanded New Occidental GM operations. This will be covered in the final article in the series.

### **Cobar Gold Mine Limited**

English capitalists developed this mine, which was also located on Fort Bourke Hill and it was locally referred to as the Fort Bourke Mine. The owners evidently anticipated that lavish investment in infrastructure would bring financial rewards. When the Minister for Mines, Sydney Smith, visited Cobar during a heatwave in January 1897, the manager, Mr O'Gorman, enthusiastically showed him over the 100-head stamp mill imported from San Francisco that was then being erected.<sup>32</sup> O'Gorman told the Minister "that had he started on the one-horse principle that appears to have guided the Melbourne shareholders in developing the Chesney-Cobar Company, he would fail ignominiously from the start." It was a boast that would come to haunt his English backers.

A small cyanide treatment plant was obtained second-hand from Mitchell Creek in 1898 and the company then ordered a much larger plant from England.<sup>33</sup> The American-built 100-head stamping mill was, however, regarded as a folly. Some £30,000 was invested in plant and machinery, as well as a large water reservoir known as O'Gorman's Tank. Returns on the investment were evidently not forthcoming and, in July 1899, the mine had been idle for several months.<sup>34</sup>

By 1902 the 40ft lode had been cut out over extensive areas of open-cut mining, but the main mining activity was in two tunnels driven from the western side of the hill into the lode, with the main shaft and poppet heads located about 80ft west of the lode.<sup>35</sup> The main drive of the mine was at 116ft, with another level driven at 216ft from the surface both north and south of the lode.

There were extensive narrow-gauge tramways operating on various levels. As the ore was broken down from the stopes in the underground workings, it fell onto the floor and gravitated to the passes where it was loaded into the four-

wheel skips. Truckers hand-pushed the skips to the plat at the main shaft and when a sufficient number of trucks had accumulated, they were sent up to the surface in the cage, from where they were pushed over another tramline to the grizzlies for crushing. Between 400 and 500 skips, each loaded with 12cwt of material, were hauled every eight hours.<sup>36</sup> Photographs suggested that the gauge was wider than at other mines at Cobar, possibly 2ft 6in. Tramways also hauled ore from the open cut workings to large storage bins, from where boys trucked it to the battery bins. Automatic feeders moved some 250 tons of ore to the mill each day.

A double-tracked tramway operated by steam winch was installed on a viaduct over The Peak branch railway to transport waste materials from the cyanide vats to huge tailings dumps on the south side of the line. This waste sand from the vats was also used for fill the worked out stopes in the underground mine. Empty skips were filled with waste and hauled up the tramway to the tunnel entrance, from where they were pushed to the required place by truckers. By 1906, however, mining operations had reached the copper lode and gold output was reduced, operations being suspended in 1908.<sup>37</sup>

When the Great Cobar Company purchased the mine in 1910, the *Cobar Herald* referred to it as "the scandalously mismanaged Cobar Gold Mine."<sup>38</sup> A siding from The Peak branch was installed in 1911 to allow the transfer of ore from the mine to the Great Cobar smelters. The internal tramway system was re-configured for this new role, with the viaduct now being used to run loaded skips from the tunnel down to the loading area by gravitation to a transfer area across the standard gauge line, where they discharged the ore directly into railway wagons on the siding below. The empty skips were then hauled back into the mine by cable.<sup>39</sup>

As with the Chesney, the Cobar Gold (or Fort Bourke) Mine's operations were now dependent on the survival of the Great Cobar operations. The end of its chequered career appeared to come with final cessation of those operations on 16 March 1919. The Fort Bourke Mine was, however, to have yet another revival in the 1940s as part of the expanded New Occidental GM operations. This will also be covered in the final article.

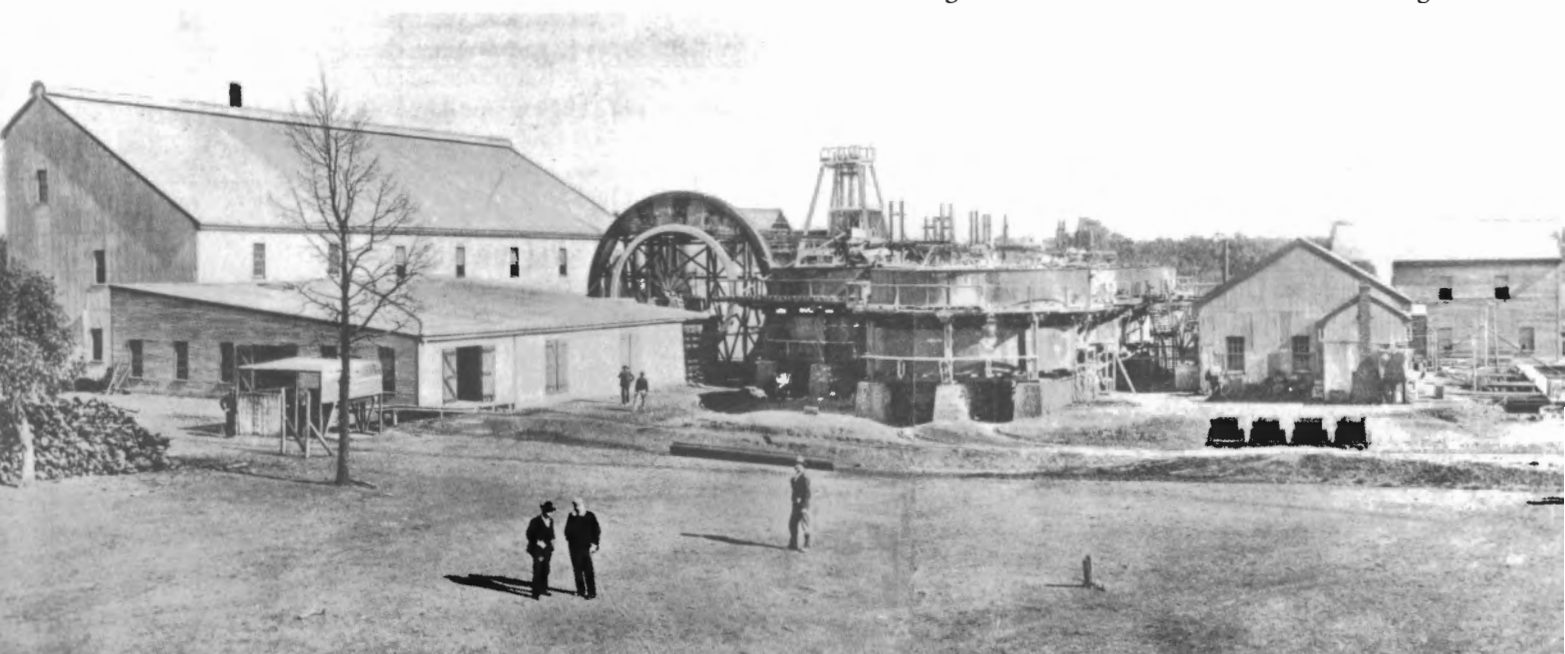
### Queen Bee Copper Mine

Originally opened for surface gold working, the Queen Bee mine, some 12 miles south of Cobar, raised fresh hopes in the town when a syndicate of 26 local identities commenced its development as a copper mine. The village of Illawong soon developed as a residential and service centre for the new venture. In its first three years of operation by the syndicate, the mine paid very handsome returns of £26,511 and there were some 2000 tons of ore at grass in 1905. The £3500 plant comprised the winding plant, a rock breaker, sorting table, sawmill, weighbridge, three reverberatory furnaces capable of treating 600 tons of ore per month, a dam of 3000-cubic yard capacity and a brick-making plant<sup>40</sup> A small water jacket blast furnace was installed by 1908 and this, together with the reverberatory furnaces, treated 4901 tons of ore in the half-year to 30 June 1908, the company declaring a profit of £1952.<sup>41</sup>

Firewood for the reverberatory furnaces and coke for the water jacket furnace were transported to Mount Pleasant on The Peak branch line, thence carried the 6 miles to the Queen Bee mine by teamsters. Skipways were used to haul the ore to the bottom of the main shaft and wound to the surface, from where the skips were hand-wheeled to the storage bins at the respective furnaces.

Production of ore ceased in 1909, although development work was resumed in 1910. By July 1911, the main shaft had been sunk to 760 feet and six levels had been opened out.<sup>42</sup> However, capital for expansion was not forthcoming and an application was made to the Mining Warden for suspension in September 1911.<sup>43</sup> Operations resumed in April 1912 under a new manager, JW Martin.<sup>44</sup> Woodcutters and carriers were appointed. In May 1915, operations had again been suspended for some time, but copper to the value of £186,550 had been produced in the previous five years and the company had paid a good dividend.<sup>45</sup>

A new company, Mount Illawong Mine NL, took over the mine in early 1915. Mr HR Fox, chief engineer at the Occidental Mine, was appointed general manager. On arrival at Illawong, he found that much of the machinery had been dismantled, the reverberatory furnaces were wrecked and the mine workings in a bad state.<sup>46</sup> It took three months to get



General view of the Mount Boppy gold mine and plant in 1905. The train of skips at centre right are on the waste disposal line from the tailings and slime vats at the centre of the photo. *The Sydney Mail*, 12 July 1905



*View of the Mt Boppy mine taken from the poppet head in 1905 looking over the building to the right of the previous photo to the village of Canbelago in the background. Note the rope-worked tramway to the tailing ponds and the various tracks in the foreground. The Sydney Mail, 12 July 1905*

the underground workings in order. Initially ore was sent to Port Kembla for treatment, but high freight charges made this unprofitable, so a concentrating plant was erected during 1916. Worked as two shifts, it was able to treat 50 tons of ore per day. The revival was short lived and, by 1919, "every piece of machinery had been stripped from the mine."<sup>47</sup>

### **Mount Boppy Gold-Mining Company**

Located 27 miles east of Cobar and 3 miles south of the Mount Boppy railway station, this mine was one of the few on the field that did generate handsome returns for its investors. Michael Delaney O'Grady discovered the lode in September 1896 and worked a claim called Hidden Treasure with a prospector, Thomas Reid.<sup>48</sup> In November 1897, O'Grady and Reid sold their lease to the Anglo-Australian Exploration Company for £1000. The following year, this company proved the lode, known as the Mount Boppy reef, to be 1000ft in length and to lie to a depth of 200ft. Its development commenced in 1899 under FH Granstedt as manager. A large number of men were employed to sink four different shafts to tap the mammoth lode.

A new company, Mount Boppy Gold-Mining Company Ltd, was formed in London to develop the mine in 1900 and invested heavily in establishing a model plant with a capacity to reduce 1170 tons of ore weekly. Ore treatment commenced in 1901. The village of Canbelago sprang up as a mining camp to service the new venture. By 1905, the town had a population of 1500 and boasted business houses of all kinds. The *Sydney Mail* reported that:

*At that time [1900] the place was a 'sheep walk' covered with pine scrub and stocked mostly with rabbits, the land bringing in*

*possibly about 1d per acre. To those who knew this area in which is now located the "boss gold mine in the State", the transformation is remarkable. A glimpse of the body of miners coming off and going on the shift or the hive of schoolchildren attending the Public School tells what this mine is doing in the way of sustaining the population. ... One of the blessings of the camp is that one can get his mail daily from metropolitan centres, and so far as the world goes, he can be just as up to date as the city man."<sup>49</sup>*

A well-designed narrow-gauge tramway system played a key role in the efficient movement of ore and waste materials around the site. Underground, workings had been developed at the 400ft level by July 1905, with extensive skipways in place on four levels to transport the ore to the plat at the main shaft. Once the skips reached the surface at the main shaft, the ore was tipped into the breakers and then loaded into skips to be hauled up the incline tram by winch to the automatic feeder of the 60-head stamp mill. From the mill, the crushed ore passed over the Wilfrey and canvas tables, and thence went to the tailings and slime vats. The network of surface tramways featured numerous branches and sidings with complex pointwork.

By July 1905, 110,000 tons of ore had been crushed for 77,000oz gold. The company had paid dividends to its shareholders equalling the invested capital of 110,000 £1 shares, but it had been agreed to increase the capital by issuing 11,000 additional £1 shares at £3 per share.<sup>50</sup> Described as the premier gold mine in New South Wales, production was expanded over subsequent years. To the end of 1911, shareholders had been paid dividends totalling £413,533, a return to shareholders of 351 per cent on their investment.<sup>51</sup> With the mine now working at the 800ft level, production and



dividends to shareholders continued to increase over the next three years, it being reported that investment in new plant had been returned in the first year.<sup>52</sup> On average, around 300 men were employed at the mine during this period.

Signs of an end to the bonanza emerged in 1915. Despite the modern plant, the mine was dependent on local firewood for its energy supply. When the mine opened, it was claimed that there was an abundant supply of timber for many years to come, but the voracious appetite of the boilers meant the accessible timber stands were quickly cut out. At the end of June 1915, wood carters struck, asking for 9s per ton for wood and direct employment by the company, together with the right to rent or buy horses when they pleased.<sup>53</sup>

The owners, evidently satisfied with their rewards to date, announced the closure of the mine in February 1917.<sup>54</sup> It was a huge blow to the 2000 inhabitants of Canbelego, who were wholly dependent on the mine for their livelihood. To soften the impact, the management advised that the mine would reopen in several months after a new main shaft had been sunk and the surface plant and machinery rearranged. To the end of 1916, the dividends paid by the company amounted to £419,582, or a return to shareholders of 356 per cent.

The 2000 people of Canbelego were left to fend for themselves as best they could. Some of the men found employment for a brief period on construction of the branch railway from Cobar to the CSA mine, but the others began to move elsewhere. There were hopes for a revival in August 1918, when shareholders were advised that there were sufficient reserves for 3½ years of operation and a new shaft had been sunk to 400ft.<sup>55</sup> Milling operations began in late January 1918 and gold to the value of £15,055 was processed in three months. Under an enterprising manager, James Negus, the mine returned to full production in late 1919, but closed the following January due to a shortage of water.

In April 1921, several miners gave evidence to the Inquiry

into the Metalliferous Mining Industry at the Canbelego court house. Frederick Arthur Frazer claimed that conditions in the mine were unsafe and that a “good number of men had been infected with industrial disease from working in the mine.”<sup>57</sup> Frazer felt that while there were considerable quantities of ore remaining for the mine, it was becoming increasingly difficult to extract. Edward McLoughlin reinforced local concerns about the unsafe and unhealthy conditions in the mine, claiming that the conditions were due to the poor extraction methods used in the past and the use of cyanide sand for mullocking in the underground workings.<sup>58</sup> By now there were only 20 men engaged at the mine and they undertook a final ‘clean-up’ that month. Tributors were allowed to work the mine, while the plant was used to extract gold from the accumulated alums. The plant was finally closed in January 1923.<sup>59</sup>

Canbelego quickly became another mining ghost town, a forgotten speck on the map that is missed by travellers on the Barrier Highway to Cobar and Broken Hill. In recent years, however, mining exploration activities were resumed and the once prosperous township has seen a new influx of people seeking to extract wealth from the rocks below.

### **Cornish, Scottish and Australian Mine**

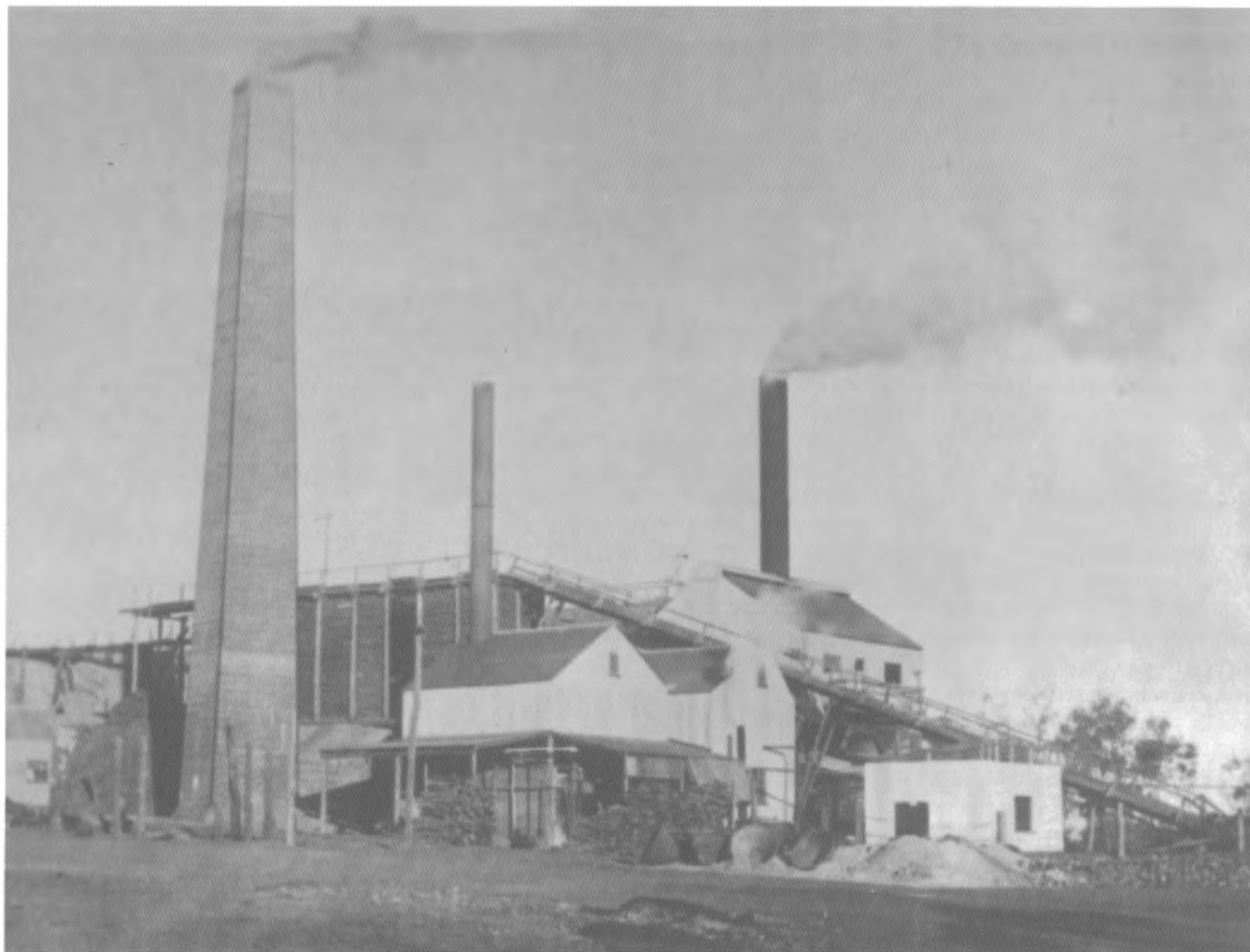
Originally established as a copper mine in 1880, the CSA mine generated high hopes for Cobar on several occasions only to have them dashed. The discovery of a high-grade carbonate lead ore in 1905 generated great excitement in the district, with shareholders in the syndicate demanding huge windfall profits for their shares and the success or otherwise of the CSA mine was seen as the keystone to the development of Cobar.<sup>60</sup>

Extensive exploration work determined that the success of the mine would depend on the existence of sufficient copper sulphide to form matte in blast furnace treatment.<sup>61</sup> At the



*The CSA Mine in 1903, showing head frame and the winding house on the right.*

*'Curley' Solomon collection, Cobar Historical Society*



*The CSA Mine following the erection of the larger No.2 water jacket furnace in 1918. Note the incline tramway haulage to the ore bins, centre, which was used for transporting ore from other mines. 'Curley' Solomon collection, Cobar Historical Society*

fifth annual general meeting of the company in 1913, it was reported that 2817 tons of first grade ore was raised and railed to the smelters at Cockle Creek. In June 1915, the company revealed its plans to erect smelters at the mine.<sup>62</sup> Company directors Dr Richard Read, a former partner in the Great Cobar Copper Syndicate, and Mr F Brown visited Cobar in August 1915 to oversee the development.<sup>63</sup>

Brown returned with fellow director George Blakemore the following August to assess progress with the construction of the new water jacket blast furnace. At this time 20 drays were employed carrying copper ore for shipment from the mine to the railway and hauling coke back to the mine.<sup>64</sup>

The new plant consisted of the main shaft equipped with a boiler plant, air compressor and winding engine capable of dealing with an output of 1000 tons per week. Narrow gauge tramways transported ore from the underground workings to the plat probably using a haulage system, where they were placed in the cage for winding to the surface. From the main shaft, a series of overhead tramways allowed the skips of ore to be rope-hauled along a tramway direct to the furnace plant, which consisted of a water-jacket blast furnace, 126in long and 44in wide, and a Samuelson blower.<sup>65</sup> The furnace was connected to a brick chimney 123ft high. Slag from the furnaces was poured into double slag pots and transported by tramway to the dump site, while the copper matte was emptied into smaller pots.

George Blakemore emerged as the prominent player in the expansion of the CSA mine from 1916. As discussed in Part 5 of the series (LR 168, p.9), Blakemore lobbied strongly for

a branch railway to serve the CSA mine and the 6½ mile line was opened in January 1917. When traffic on the line failed to reach anticipated levels, however, controversy erupted over disputed promises by the Great Cobar mine to use large quantities of CSA basic ores for its smelters. Blakemore led a delegation to meet with the Minister for Works, Richard Ball, in early February 1919 and claimed that the Great Cobar manager had refused to take CSA ore as agreed.<sup>66</sup> Before the matter was resolved, the Great Cobar mine was closed for the last time on 16 March 1919. The hopes for a future for Cobar now depended totally on the CSA enterprise.

The second and larger water-jacket furnace had been completed at the end of January 1918, after which the small furnace was kept as standby.<sup>67</sup> A 250hp Fowler engine and two Connersville blowers each capable of delivering 13,000 cubic feet of air per minute were installed at the new furnace. Two months later, three workers were seriously burnt as a result of an accident when turning a double-ended slag pot on the furnace dump railway line.<sup>68</sup> When the men swung the pot out to for discharge, it lurched and molten slag fell onto damp ground and some water. The resulting explosion seriously burnt the men handling the pot, Jordan and O'Donnell, together with Andrew Moss, who was attending to another slag pot a few feet away. The tramlines for slag disposal were reconfigured in 1919.

George Blakemore's ambition to build the CSA Company into the dominant copper producer in New South Wales soon brought him into dispute with fellow directors and prominent Cobar identities. The source of the conflict was a

project to build a copper refinery at Kandos, north of Lithgow, at a reputed cost of £75,000.<sup>69</sup> Two directors, F Brown and FN Yarwood, sent a confidential circular to shareholders expressing their opposition to the proposal. Blakemore reported to the company's annual general meeting that the Kandos plant would enable copper matte and copper ore to be treated to produce high-grade electrolytic copper. Electrolytic tanks had been procured from the closed Great Cobar copper refinery at Lithgow (LR 164, p.15) and the NSW Cement Company would supply electricity and water. The forthcoming completion of the railway connection between Mudgee and Werris Creek would "provide direct rail communication with mines south of Harden to the Victorian border, west of Dubbo to Cobar, Bourke, etc, and from Werris Creek to the Queensland border."<sup>70</sup> It was a grand vision at the wrong time.

The hopes of the directors were briefly raised in early 1920, when the Cobar plant processed 690 tons of company ore and 227 tons of purchased ore in the week ended 14 January.<sup>71</sup> These hopes were dashed on Saturday, 22 March 1920, when a serious underground fire broke out on the No.2 level of the mine. The mine was sealed until Friday, 30 April, when it was opened to allow men wearing breathing apparatus to inspect the fire from No.3 level. Pipes were installed and efforts were made to extinguish the flames with water, with the men apparently succeeding in controlling the fire for two days. About 3am on Sunday morning, heavy smoke enveloped the men, who discovered that the timber in the 'G' stope was on fire. The workers were immediately brought to the surface and the mine was again sealed.<sup>72</sup> With it, the hopes of Cobar for a mining revival were dashed and the town went into rapid decline.

Forty-two years later, the CSA mine was to usher in a new mining revival on the Cobar field. Cobar Mines Pty Limited, a joint venture between Enterprise Metals and Broken Hill South, purchased the CSA Mine from Enterprise Exploration P/L in 1960. Shaft-sinking commenced in February 1960 and ore production started in June 1965 at a rate of 335,000 tonnes per year, which was railed to smelters at Newcastle. To the end of 1987, the mine had produced 1.2 million tonnes of ore, which yielded 193,000 tonnes of copper, 48,000 tonnes of lead, 211,000 tonnes of zinc and 168,000 kg of gold. In January 1998, the then owners Ashanti closed the CSA Mine, but it has subsequently reopened under new ownership and continues to contribute to Cobar's economic prosperity.

### Acknowledgements

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Looking east across the crossing of the QR in 1997 showing the catchpoint and signal arrangements. The Bruce Highway crossing is just past the rail crossing, and shortly beyond the line splits into northern and southern branches. Photo: Rod Milne

## Tully Mill's Birkalla Branch

by Rod Milne

### Introduction

Situated in Far North Queensland, the sugar mill at Tully first commenced operations in 1924 in the same year that the main Queensland Railways North Coast Line was established through the area. For a little while, some cane was hauled by the government line while the mill created its own extensive system of local 2ft gauge tramways, one of them being the Birkalla line. It was one of the first of the mill branches to be built, for in 1927 the QR advised that the tramway crossing over the main Government line at Birkalla station had been signalled. The completion of the mill tramway brought to an abrupt end any of the short haul cane traffic that may have once emanated from the Birkalla QR siding.

Although the Birkalla line eventually grew to a reasonable length to terminate in a big paddock at the foot of Mount Mackay east of Merryburn Creek, there were even grander visions for it in the 1930s with a serious proposal to establish a raw sugar jetty and port at Tam O'Shanter Point south of Mission Beach. Thus, a lengthy and rather pretty continuation of the 2ft gauge system was proposed to the new jetty to enable the carriage of raw sugar by mill tramway all the way from Tully. Various, Birkalla and East Feluga were mentioned as starting points for this line, the Birkalla option involving a circumvention of the divide at Sugarcane Creek and an alignment through some delightful rain forest and cassowary habitat at Carmoo.

This article describes the Birkalla Branch of the mill system, which in 2002 was still going strong, despite proximity to the town and mill and increasing urbanisation. Named after the QR former station (which closed in 1963) and the district it served, the Birkalla line today is essentially a two pronged system.

Birkalla purports to be an aboriginal word meaning "plain", an appropriate title considering the flat nature of the country hereabouts at the valley floor of the Bulgun and Banyan Creeks, surrounded by rain-forested ranges. Place names associated with mill lines have always been problematic, and mill sidings have usually carried the name of the cane grower principally served. Thus, Silvestro's was located in the middle of their farm, the name "Birkalla Branch" applying to the section in entirety since establishment.

### The main spur

The Birkalla line commences from the main line to El Arish not far north of Tully Mill itself, though the 2ft gauge line takes a more circuitous path to reach the point than the main road. On the eastern banks of the tramway bridge over Bulgun Creek, the main line rises and curves to join the Old Tully Road - still the Bruce Highway in the 1970s - at a long loop. Locally, this area is called Crupiville, even though the Cardwell Shire Council now recognises the entire area to be called Birkalla. Crupiville is a gaggle of houses on one side of the main road and an old garage that served customers aplenty in the Bruce Highway days, the branch line to Birkalla diverging by a curious triangular junction arrangement that virtually encircles the entire settlement. There is a reason for this madness, for the branch originally faced north, the direction of travel for Tully bound cane for many years when the old bridge over Bulgun Creek was in use right up to the 1960s. So, despite the still circuitous nature of the journey to the mill, the trip is shorter than it was in the good old days! A dead end cane siding often used for stowing the permanent way trains completes the picture at the junction, and there are several other sidings (including a loop) on the branch as it switchbacks through a reverse curve past cane fields and pandanus trees to reach the crossing of the QR line.



*Com-Eng 0-6-0DH locomotive twins TULLY No. 14 (AK2663 of 1963) and TULLY No. 10 (AD1341 of 1960) haul cane from a spur siding just west of Birkalla during the 1997 season. Note the 11-tonne capacity bins in the train. Photo: Rod Milne*

The loop west of the QR crossing was an important one, for on the northern branch line until 2002, there were no loops beyond. Thus, locomotives had to run around there and push out across the railway and highway if heading onto the northern branch. This was not necessary for traffic onto the southern spur, where other loops exist. Located just south of the old Birkalla station site (closed in 1963), the tramway crossing with the QR was signalled in 1927, and has the standard arrangement of catch points and disc signals on the 2ft gauge line, along with single arm home signals on the main line approaches. The crossing is set normally for the QR, and tram crews must manually set the signals at “danger” to allow a 2ft gauge crossing. The crossing is basically worked on a first come, first served basis, and I have seen trams crossing the main railway as QR trains approached from a kilometre or so away. Even the “Sunlander” could conceivably be delayed at the crossing to let a cane train go by, though the mill employees usually have an idea when that train at least is due. In recent years at least, QR has “crossed off” (placed out of service) the signals at Birkalla during the slack season, restoring them for the crushing. QR is opposed to any further crossings of the main line by tramway crossings and indeed would favour further reductions of them if it could achieve this.

The Birkalla crossing is a tricky one, for just beyond the QR is the main Bruce Highway, with its crossing equipped with flashing lights. With tram crews pushing empty bins out towards Birkalla crossing the QR and the Bruce Highway, it is easy to imagine that safety was sometimes compromised by sheer necessity. In 1997, a cane train derailment occurred here, blocking both the main North Coast Line and Bruce Highway for a little while, so it is a point well known for operating difficulties. The provision of a run around loop at the terminus for the 2002 season now allows cane trains to cross in each direction with the locomotive in front.

On the eastern side of the Bruce Highway, by a lovely stand of remnant paperbark forest, is the simple junction with the southern spur, as the main line swings sharply to the north

to pass by the Council's Birkalla depot to join the main Mission Beach Road. It follows the latter along through another sharp curve to the east, where Banyan Creek is crossed on a standard Tully steel span bridge with timber piers.

The terminus yard at Birkalla could be described as beginning here, for there is a long dead cane siding running north, before the track swings again to the north east. The previous arrangement at the end of the branch was two dead end lines by a big old gum tree alongside Mission Beach Road. That big tree is notable for its osprey nest, the birds continuing to roost here despite the periodic noise and activity every cane season when bins are loaded here.

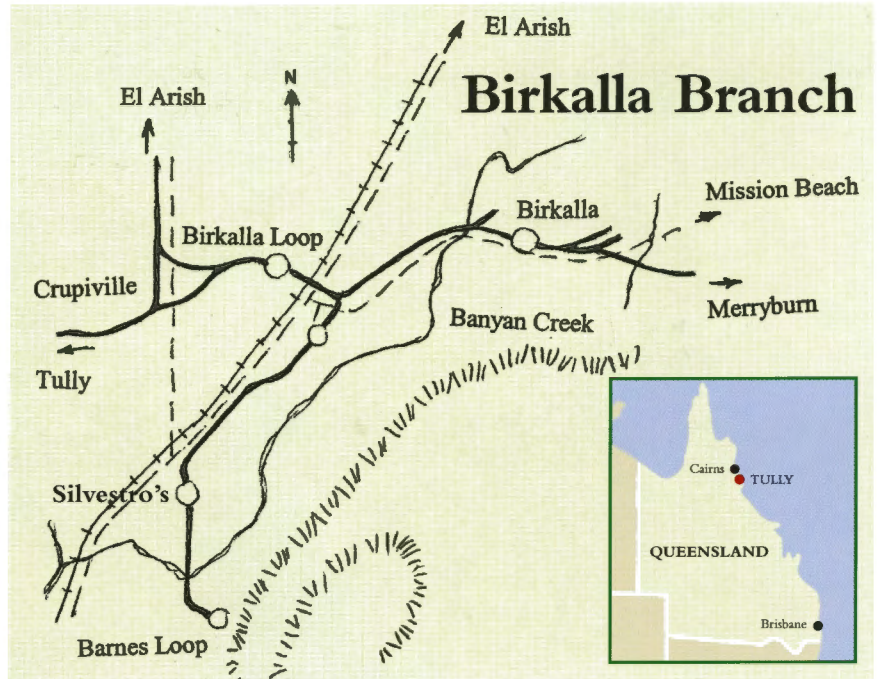
Although the current end of the rails is under the mud on the western side of Merryburn Creek, the line did go further on in the 1960s. Two sidings crossed the main Mission Beach Road, the first a cane spur, and the second, closed in 1985, a continuation of the main line. This crossed Merryburn Creek, and ran into a big paddock to the east in the locality of Merryburn. That paddock is now largely a clean cane and seed cane area, the mill taking the opportunity to sever the rails on the western side of Merryburn Creek to avoid a second level crossing with the busy Mission Beach main road.

### **The southern spur**

A newer branch than the main line that has actually seen quite recent extensions (in contrast to the main line's reduction), the southern spur junctions east of the Bruce Highway. Immediately, it crosses the Mission Beach main road at another place where sight lines are problematic for cane train crews, before the rails swing abruptly through some 120 degrees to run south west along the alignment of the old Mission Beach Road. At this point is a loop cane siding where cane trains can be run around, while further on, beyond a steel span bridge, the rails run beside the main Bruce Highway on the opposite side of the road to the QR before swinging due south-east to a second loop siding serving Silvestro's .

Nowadays, Silvestro's is the last place that a locomotive can run around, though the tracks continue on to cross Banyan Creek by a delightful little steel span bridge to terminate in a yard (Barnes Loop) on the eastern side of the Tully aerodrome, by Aerodrome/Pollard Road. This yard is quite extensive, comprising a pair of spurs and a loop line that cannot now be accessed at the terminus end. In the old days, cane trains could run around here, but the arrangements are now fairly standard for sugar mills, which favour push out movements to the last cane sidings. This siding basically serves French's property to the east. It is an interesting little terminus full of character, with two old houses to one side, the aerodrome to the west, and the rainforested Mount Mackay as a backdrop. It is a good place to photograph a cane train, though that is not an easy task, for movements are fairly sporadic depending on when cane is being cut on French's property. There is also a disused quarry on the cane farm, though none of its output seems to have ever found its way to the 2ft gauge line.

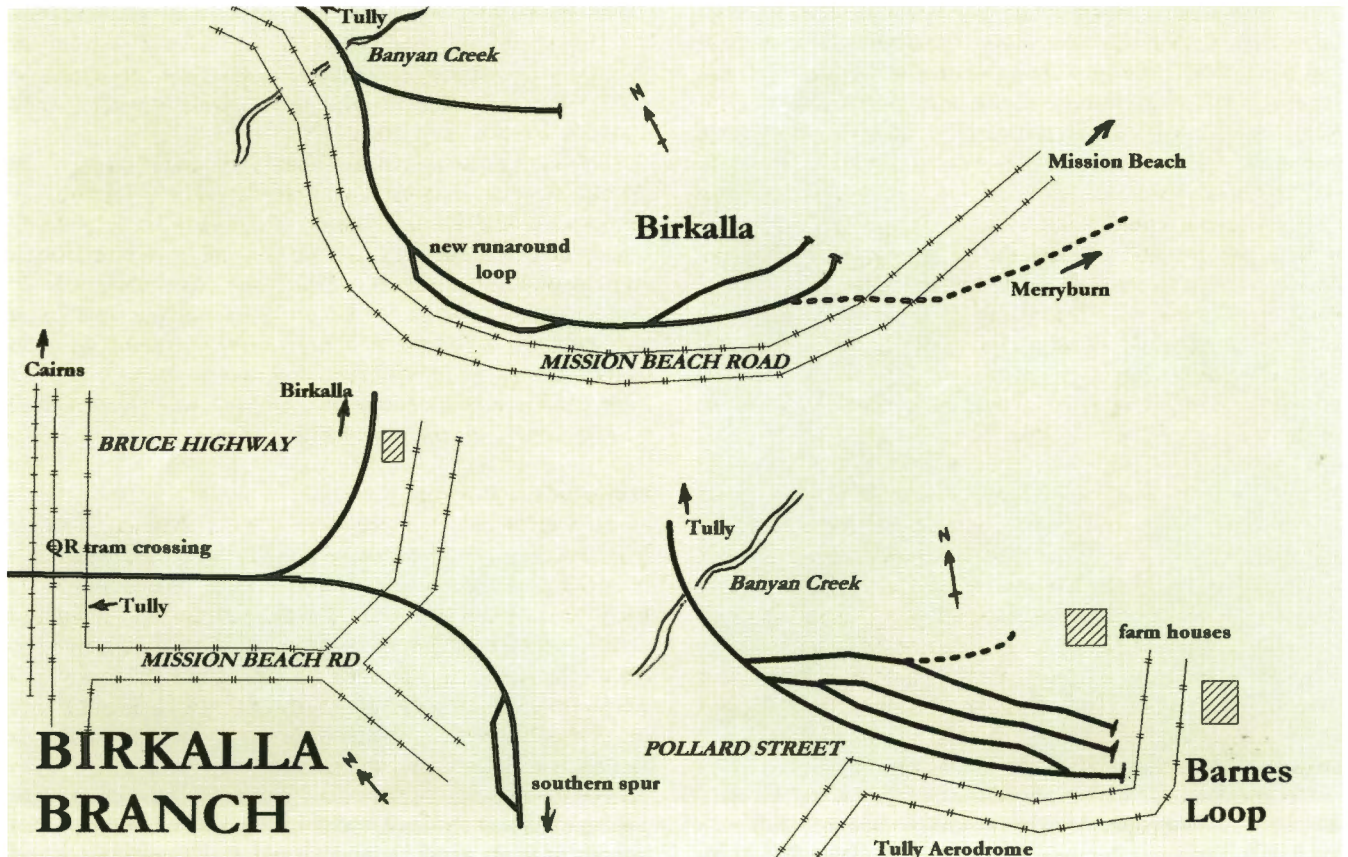
One of the most remarkable things about the terminus of the southern spur at Aerodrome Road in East Tully is its proximity to the mill, which is little more than 1.5 km away. However, cane loaded here is railed north, then west and south again in a big loop, the rail distance being a good three times of that by direct road. In many ways, that is an ominous situation for the line's future viability, though to give the mill credit, they have promoted its use rather than road trucks to limit damage and traffic on the local roads. Whether that arrangement persists long into the new century is a moot point!



### Train working

The Birkalla line is worked as required during the cane season, which nowadays usually lasts from mid June to November. In the good old days, before continuous crushing and 24 hour operations, the season could occasionally kick on into the new year, but at least the new arrangements mean that it is quite possible to see a cane train on the Birkalla line on a Saturday or even a Sunday as well. For the photographer that is a real boon!

There are two cane sidings on the main Birkalla line east of the QR, and three more on the southern spur, so that means that the line is worked reasonably commonly, perhaps as much as 40% or 50% of the season. There are obviously





*The terminus at Birkalla looking due east in 1996 with a loaded rake by the large gum tree that dominates the scene with its "LOCO LIMIT" sign.*

*Photo: Rod Milne*

days when the tracks lie idle, but when the cane contracting harvesters are working in the area, there can be three or four trips a day to the particular siding (or sidings) where loading is occurring.

Cane train movements can be in the form of a specific trip from Tully to the branch, or alternatively a side trip for another main line cane train. Thus, it is not impossible for the El Arish twice daily regular cane train to stop at the junction to run a trip to place bins or collect cane. Sometimes a locomotive can work out light direct from the mill to the loading point to collect bins, the shortness of the journey and proximity of

the line to the mill enabling some very flexible train working arrangements.

The Birkalla line is available to the full mill roster of locos, though the most common units used are the 0-6-0DH types, either singly or in multi pairs. Each season, Tully mill operates two multi coupled pairs in No.10 (AD1341 of 1960) & No.14 (AK2663 of 1963) and No.12 (AD1351 of 1961) & No.15 (AK3574 of 1964), and I have seen both pairs regularly along the Birkalla line, as well as other single units like No.18 (AO60113 of 1977). It is common for the mill to roster a multi pair on a pick up run to Feluga and back, and that service can be worked out on the Birkalla line en route.

Although the three ex QR rebuilt DH class units work all over the system, including on the small branches, I have never seen one east of the QR crossing at Birkalla. However, they have been observed shunting west of the QR on the branch and also stabled on the branch for crosses, so it is probable that they have run the full length too. Even the Djarawong line has seen the bigger B-B locos every so often! Example rosterings include Nos.12 & 15 on a cane train in 30 June 1997, No.18 on a cane train on 30 July 1997, and Nos.14 & 10 on a cane train on 5 September 1997.

Personally, I find it disappointing that I never saw the true delight of the Tully Mill fleet, Fowler No.8 (21912 of 1936), on the branch, but no doubt it visited many a time in its more active days. This was built originally to haul the big cane trains over the new El Arish main line in 1937, and after being rebuilt by EM Baldwin in 1963 (590 9.63) she was a delightful old 0-6-0DH, latterly with battered cream and maroon livery. Another early diesel of the fleet, Clyde 0-6-0DH No.9 (DHI.4 of 1954), would have also made a trip or two through the years to Birkalla before ending its career ignominiously as a brake wagon!

An interesting facet of the mill operations is the running of perway and maintenance trains in the slack. Thus, it is not impossible to see a mill locomotive and small daggy four-wheel



*The view shows the southern branch's crossing of Banyan Creek, looking north away from the terminus towards Silvestro's Siding*

*Photo: Rod Milne*



vehicle at Birkalla in the off season, as well as the normal weedspray trip run to bring the line back into service at the start of each season in June. These can be delightful services to photograph. In 1996 and 1997, three dinky little EM Baldwin 0-4-0DH units in 1, 2 and 3 (6/1082.3 2.65, 6/1082.2 2.65 & 6/1082.1 2.65 of 1965) were used on these perway type trips and made visits to the Birkalla line. As an example of this, 3 was observed on a works tram stabled at Silvestro's loop on the southern spur on 18 August 1997. In the off season, special movements also occur to stow bins. Late in November 1996, for instance, at the end of the season, rakes of bins were stowed along the Birkalla line as they were on other branches.

Floods are a source of inconvenience, with Tully suffering a very bad flood in early 1998 courtesy of Cyclone Sid. Another occurred in March 1997, when Banyan Creek flooded, inundating sections of the Birkalla lines and causing some washouts and minor damage. The line boasts three steel span bridges (two on the southern spur), and two of these cross the Banyan.

Cane trains on the Birkalla line are worked under radio control from the mill traffic office, and include the use of GPS systems in cabs to alert crews to the proximity of other cane trains. Birkalla is normally a "one cane train at a time" job, so the potential for conflict is minimal. Derailments are a different thing though, and there have been a few on the line, including the spectacular five bin one at the Bruce Highway crossing on 24 June 1997.

### The future

It would be a brave person to predict a rosy continued future for the Birkalla lines, which I suspect will suffer the same demise that some of the original branches in the Bulgun and North Bulgun areas endured. The area under cane in the Birkalla and Carmoo areas is not increasing, there is increasing

threat from residential rural and urban encroachment, and the haul is very short. Already the main stem has been shortened by a kilometre or more, and I predict that road transport will in due course be substituted for what remains, with the branch line being severed at the QR crossing. QR would gladly see the end of another tramway crossing on its main line, and the Department of Main Roads would also be quite happy to see the end of two tramway crossings over its roads in the Birkalla area. Truly, the Birkalla line faces a doubtful future.

In 2003, the diesel tilt train commenced to run to Cairns and it was widely predicted that many of the smaller less trafficked cane tram crossings of the QR would be removed completely. But this did not come to pass, and in April 2003 it was noted that new crossings were in place to renew the track work so buffeted by trains of two gauges in the cane season. The QR main line signals were, as usual each slack season, out of service, but the omens looked good for a continuation of rail haulage of cane from Birkalla and Barnes Loop. However, on the negative side, the forecast major restructure of the troubled cane industry in the state could have an impact on the viability of smaller cane lines of the major mills.

So, it is recommended that anyone with a camera and a penchant for photos of cane trains on little branch lines make their pilgrimages to Birkalla soon. The next few years may see the end of the Birkalla cane trains forever. To visit a lovely waitress at Mission Beach, I once travelled this area regularly, delighting in the sight of the grass-grown tracks of the Birkalla Branch beside the main Mission Beach Road for its first two kilometres or so. I would miss that branch line indeed.

### References and acknowledgements

Scott Jesser • Marg Macdonald • Romine Andersson • John Browning • Graham Heritage • Tully Mill • QR Weekly Notices (1927) • Cardwell Shire Council



*The southern railhead of the southern branch at Barnes Loop adjoins Tully Aerodrome, Mount Mackay and Anderson Road. This view looks south in 1996.*

*Photo: Rod Milne*



## Industrial Railway NEWS

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### Special thanks to contributors to the Locoshed and Cane Trains e-groups

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## NEW SOUTH WALES

### BLUESCOPE STEEL LTD, Port Kembla

(see LR 178 p.18)

1435mm gauge

English Electric Australia Bo-Bo DE D28 (A.053 of 1961) is being rebuilt at Steelhaven by United Goninan, the railway operating contractor. English Electric Australia Bo-Bo DE D17 (A.031 of 1960) has become the workshops shunter, replacing 'preserved' Com-Eng Bo-Bo DE D6 (built 1950), and English Electric Australia Bo-Bo DE D32 (A.088 of 1964), which has been withdrawn from service. United Goninan are using the Steelhaven workshops to refurbish three English Electric Australia Co-Co DE locomotives formerly used on coal haulage at Port Kembla, for South Spur Rail Services. These are D47 (English Electric Australia A.146 of 1967), D49 (GEC Australia A.243 of 1972) and D51 (English Electric Australia A.111 of 1965). D47 emerged in its new two-tone blue paint scheme on 22 July, to be followed by D49.

Chris Stratton 7/04, 8/04; Chris Walters 7/04, 8/04

### JUNEE RAIL WORKSHOPS

1435mm gauge

Ex BHP Newcastle Goninan Bo-Bo DE locomotives 55 (051 of 1977) and 57 (057 of 1982) are owned by this locomotive engineering and maintenance organisation. 55 was noted in blue livery on 3 July being prepared for a role as workshops shunter. Chris Walters 7/04

## QUEENSLAND

### BUNDABERG SUGAR LTD, Fairymead Mill

(see LR 178 p.19)

610mm gauge

A Mundubbera couple were lucky to escape injury after the caravan they were towing was hit by a cane train on Moore Park Road on 27 July. They



**Top:** Ex BHP Newcastle Goninan Bo-Bo DE 55 (051 of 1977) at Junee Rail Workshops on 3 July being prepared for duties as workshops shunter. Photo: Chris Walters **Centre:** Manildra's Walkers B-B DH 7340 (702 of 1972) en route from Manildra to Narrandera via Bomaderry, seen here at Junee on 3 July. Photo: Chris Walters **Above:** BlueScope Steel's newly outshopped GEC Australia Bo-Bo DE D40 (A.241 of 1972) at Cringila on 9 July. Photo: Chris Walters



**Top:** Recently transferred from Fairymead, Millaquin Mill's EM Baldwin B-B DH FAIRYDALE (10048.1 6.82 of 1982) near Rehbeins Siding as it hauls cane from Qunaba to the mill on 3 July. Photo: Carl Millington. **Centre:** Invicta mill's CROMARTY (Walkers 708/1973, rebuilt BFE 7346/1996) nears the Haughton River bridge with 102 loaded 6-tonne bins and a bogie brake wagon on Sunday 8 August 2004. Photo: Scott Jesser **Above:** On Saturday 7 August 2004, Plane Creek mill's 2 KARLOO (Walkers 630/1969, rebuilt BFE DH48/1995) and remote unit 1 ALLAN PAGE (Walkers 594/1968, rebuilt BFE DH12/1995) arrive at Orkobie to attach loaded bins. On departure, the train had 345 loaded 4-tonne bins from Karloo, Tinerta and Orkobie, with KARLOO up front, 155 bins, ALLAN PAGE, 190 bins and a bogie brake wagon. Photo: Scott Jesser

were nearing their destination for a two week stay and were extremely fortunate that it was the caravan that was demolished rather than their car. Barry Blair 7/04

## **BUNDABERG SUGAR LTD, Moreton Mill**

(see LR 178 p.19)

610mm gauge

Track demolition has continued with the Paynter's Creek and Maroochydore Road lines receiving attention during July and the Howard Street yard in early August.

Carl Millington 7/04, 8/04; Shane Ferris 8/04

## **BUNDABERG SUGAR LTD, Innisfail district mills**

(see LR 178 p.20)

610mm gauge

Loco shortages meant that Babinda Mill's Com-Eng 0-6-0DH multi-pair 1 *JOSEPHINE* (A1821 of 1957) and *RUSSELL* (A2027 of 1958) were on loan to South Johnstone Mill for a short time in early July. They were noted hauling cane in the Silkwood area on 2 July. The following week they were at Mourilyan Mill for the start of the crush there. Mourilyan Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH 11 (55-64 of 1955) was sent to Babinda in exchange. Another Babinda Mill Com-Eng 0-6-0DH multi-pair 4 *HARVEY* (AD1138 of 1960) and 5 *BRAMSTON* (AH2460 of 1962) work on day shift in the old Goondi Mill area and are normally based at the old Goondi Mill site. They were newly painted in yellow during wet weather in the first half of July, having been hit by a car on the Bruce Highway near Garradunga on 29 June. The car driver was a 76-year old local.

A major derailment took place on Babinda Mill's QM bridge, on the Russell River just south of Bartle-Frere on 16 July. Bins hauled by Clyde 0-6-0DH 16 (56-93 of 1956) went into the river, damaging the bridge. It can now only be used by single locomotives.

The bins shown on the back cover of LR 178 are not 6-ton capacity, but 'modified 4-tonners' that have had a top rail added to increase capacity to 5 tonnes.

Rod Milne 7/04; Shane Yore 8/04; Chris Hart 7/04

## **CSR LTD, Herbert River Mills**

(see LR 178 p.21)

610mm gauge

July and August brought a fair quota of derailments and breakdowns on the cane railway system. There were a number of complaints from harvesting contractors about shortages of bins and late deliveries, with a spokesperson claiming that CSR needed to provide more funds to boost reliability.

**Macknade** Mill Clyde 0-6-0DH 11 (65-383 of 1965) was derailed at catchpoints at the Bemerside level crossing with QR on 5 July. This occurred when the pointsman, who had previously checked the main line and had signalled for the cane train to cross, saw the QR *Sunlander* train approaching and

# Industrial Railway NEWS

released the catchpoints lever. The cane locomotive was not able to stop before being derailed at slow speed by the open catchpoints.

One of the more significant locomotive breakdowns at **Victoria Mill** was Walkers B-B DH *JOURAMA* (680 of 1972 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1996), out of service from 7 July to 20 August with its engine having been sent to Mackay for repairs. In addition, EM Baldwin B-B DH *BRISBANE* (5423.1 9.74 of 1974) had to be brought back to the mill by road transport on 11 August following a final drive failure at Stone River. At a derailment at the 4 Mile Loop on the Lucinda line on 19 July, a ripped up rail actually speared through the complete length of a full cane bin, a most unusual occurrence. A Victoria Mill driver broke his ankle when Clyde 0-6-0DH *PERTH* (69-682 of 1969) was derailed while travelling light engine on the 3 Mile line on 28 July.

A number of Macknade Mill locomotives spent brief periods at Victoria Mill to cover failures in late July and early August. Clyde 0-6-0DH 16 (DHI.1 of 1954) spent from 11 to 15 August as the Victoria empty yard shunter, while the visits of other locomotives for cane haulage were much shorter. Victoria Mill's Clyde 0-6-0DH *LUCINDA* (65-436 of 1965) went to Macknade Mill on 18 August, initially for repairs. By 21 August it was in service there as a welcome addition to the roster. There were also a number of mill stoppages for breakdowns and rain, meaning that the normal cane transfer pattern from Victoria Mill to Macknade was disrupted and even reversed on occasion.

Driver only operations of Victoria Mill sugar trains using Walkers B-B DH *CAIRNS* (681 of 1972 rebuilt Bundaberg Foundry 1997) began on 20 July, following the erection of a safety fence around the sugar hopper area at the mill.

Walkers B-B DH *CLEM H McCOMISKIE* (605 of 1969 rebuilt Walkers 1991), recently rebuilt for a second time by Solari Engineering, began running trials on 18 August. It is fitted with a "dragline" control seat with the driver controls mounted on extensions of the armrests.

Chris Hart 7/04; 8/04; Steven Allan 7/04, 8/04; *Herbert River Express* 10/7/04 via Steven Allan; *Herbert River Express* 29/7/04

## HAUGHTON SUGAR CO PTY LTD, Invicta Mill, Giru

(see LR 178 p.21)

610mm gauge

There have been a number of derailments and breakdowns this season, with bin bearing problems a major cause. Some derailments have caused significant track damage, including the breaking of concrete sleepers. There have also been difficulties with locomotive reliability.

There was a mistake in LR 178 regarding the maximum load allowed on the Invicta system. The correct figure is 166 6-tonne bins.

Jason Lee 7/04, 8/04; Editor



**Top:** Mackay Sugar's Clyde 0-6-0DH BASSETT (67-596 of 1967) in a new livery at Marian Mill on 11 July. Photo: David Rowe **Centre:** Proserpine Mill's rebuilt EM Baldwin B-B DH 10 The Barley Girl (9816.1 10.81 of 1981) shunts in the mill yard on 25 July. The new "name" can be seen under the ONTRAK symbol above the radiator grille. Photo: David Rowe **Above:** A shining reconditioned GM EMD Co-Co DE Model SD40 locomotive 3096 shortly after being unloaded from BBC Sealand at Nelson Point on 6 August for BHP Billiton Iron Ore. Photo: Richard Montgomery

## MACKAY SUGAR CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION LTD

(see LR 178 p.22)

610mm gauge

With the reopening of Pleystowe Mill for the 2004 season, the following was the initial loco-motive rostering for cane haulage duties:

### FARLEIGH MILL

2	PLEYSTOWE	0-6-ODH	Clyde	64-321	1964
9	PALMYRA	0-6-ODH	Clyde	63-273	1963
17	LANGDON	B-B DH	EMB	9562.2 6.81	1981
29	VICTORIA PLAINS	0-6-ODH	Clyde	66-490	1966
31	SEAFORTH	0-6-ODH	Clyde	61-233	1961
32	ST.HELENS	0-6-ODH	Clyde	61-234	1961
33	FOULDEN	B-B DH	EMB	7220.1 6.77	1977
34	HAMPDEN	B-B DH	EMB	6706.1 5.76	1976
35	INVERNESS	B-B DH	EMB	10123.1 5.82	1982
36	FARLEIGH	B-B DH	Eimco	L254	1990
39	CEDARS	B-B DH	Walkers	693	1972
		rebuilt	Walkers		1997
40	DULVERTON	B-B DH	Walkers	690	1972
		rebuilt	Walkers		1997
44	WALKERSTON	B-B DH	Walkers	672	1971
		rebuilt	Pleystowe		1994

### MARIAN MILL

6	MIA MIA	B-B DH	EMB	9815.1 10.81	1981
8	PALMS	0-6-ODH	ClydeQ	70-708	1970
14	ALEXANDRA	0-6-ODH	Clyde	61-235	1961
15	MELBA	0-6-ODH	EMB	12512.1 7.85	1985
16	CHARLTON	B-B DH	EMB	9562.1 6.81	1981
18	GARGETT	B-B DH	Eimco	L255	1990
19	NARPI	B-B DH	Eimco	L256	1990
20	BOONGANNA	B-B DH	Eimco	L257	1990
21	TANNALO	B-B DH	Walkers	705	1972
		rebuilt	BFE	7343	1995
22	PINNACLE	0-6-ODH	Com-Eng	AA1549	1961
		rebuilt	Com-Eng	AN5849	1975
26	BASSETT	0-6-ODH	Clyde	67-596	1967

### PLEYSTOWE MILL

4	HABANA	0-6-ODH	Clyde	60-215	1960
5	SHANNON	B-B DH	EMB	7126.1 5.77	1977
13	DEVEREAUX	0-6-ODH	Clyde	67-568	1967
24	NETHERDALE	B-B DH	Walkers	699	1972
		rebuilt	Walkers		1997
25	ETON	0-6-ODH	Com-Eng	FB3170	1963
27	LACY	0-6-ODH	Clyde	65-439	1965
30	CONNINGSBY	0-6-ODH	Clyde	61-232	1961
37	CALEN	B-B DH	Walkers	692	1972
		rebuilt	BFE	7330	1995
38	MICLERE	B-B DH	Walkers	664	1970
		rebuilt	Farleigh		1996
54	OAKENDEN	0-6-ODH	Com-Eng	FB3169	1963
55	BALBERRA	B-B DH	Walkers	657	1970
		rebuilt	TulkGon		1994

### RACECOURSE MILL

7	NORTH ETON	B-B DH	EMB	6780.1 8.76	1976
28	TE KOWAI	0-6-ODH	Clyde	56-103	1956
41	SUNNYSIDE	0-6-ODH	Clyde	57-160	1957
42	BROADSOUND	0-6-ODH	ClydeQ	70-710	1971
45	ROSELLA	0-6-ODH	Clyde	64-317	1964
50	HOMEBUSH	0-6-ODH	Clyde	55-58	1955
51	FINCH HATTON	B-B DH	Com-Eng	NA59112	1977
52	RACECOURSE	0-6-ODH	Clyde	65-440	1965
53	MUNBURA	0-6-ODH	Clyde	67-570	1967

PLEYSTOWE & PALMYRA operate as a multi-unit pair, while CEDARS & DULVERTON, and CALEN & MICLERE, operate as Locotrol pairs. A triple header working has been utilised when PLEYSTOWE and PALMYRA have been attached to FOULDEN to bring in a load from Hampden loops.

By the end of the first week of August, LANGDON

had gone to Pleystowe in exchange for NETHERDALE.

BASSETT was repainted at Marian Mill for the new season in a new yellow colour scheme with red frames and counterweights, red and white striped headstocks and coupling rods, white cab steps and black trim.

It has been reported that standard gauge Walkers B-B DH 7321 (683 of 1972) has been sold, but it was still in store at North Eton on 26 August. Also still at North Eton was EM Baldwin 4wDH 10 (4529.3 11.73 of 1973 rebuilt by EMB 8860.1 8.79 of 1979 & by Marian 1980), parked in the shed although supposedly sold at auction last

year, and EM Baldwin 4wDM ALLANDALE (473 3.63 of 1963) sitting outside in the weather.

David Rowe 7/04; David Phillips 7/04, 8/04; Leon Oberg 8/04; Tony Wells 8/04

## THE MULGRAVE CENTRAL MILL CO LTD, Gordonvale

(see LR 163 p.21)

610mm gauge

Ex-Hambledon Mill Clyde 0-6-ODH 19 (65-435 of 1965) was noted derailed at the Hambledon triangle at Edmonton with a northbound empty train on the morning of 19 July. It was soon rerailed by a crane and was noted in service later the same day.

Com-Eng 0-6-ODM 2 (A1001 of 1955) was noted on a work train on 10 August near Banna hauling seven old cane trucks converted to rail bogies towards the mill. Work had been going on removing track from a location beside Bennett Road, Aloomba. The early Com-Eng AA type units are rarely seen south of the Mulgrave River these days. The unique Mulgrave Mill-built 4wDM of 1962, affectionately known as the 'Pie Cart' was noted amid condemned bins at the mill on 12 July.

Rob Stanier 7/04, 8/04; Corey S 7/04

## PROSERPINE CO-OPERATIVE SUGAR MILLING ASSOCIATION LTD

(see LR 178 p.22)

610mm gauge

With five bogie locomotives available for use, no Clyde 0-6-ODH locomotives are rostered on afternoon or night shifts, but three were being used on day shift use on 25 July. Number 3 (58-195 of 1958) was noted shunting around the mill yard while 6 (62-272 of 1962) and 7 (65-442 of 1965) were hauling cane on lines in the south and north respectively.

Tom Badger 7/04; Steven Allen 7/04; David Rowe 7/04

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

### BHP BILLITON

(see LR 178 p.22)

1435mm gauge

On 6 August, the last of the batch of second-hand GM EMD Co-Co DE Model SD40 locomotives arrived in port. Like the previous six (numbered 3086 to 3091, not as reported in LR 178) they arrived overhauled and repainted in the new BHP Iron Ore "bubble" livery. They are numbered 3092 to 3097, and some were in service within a few days.

By mid July GM EMD Co-Co DE 3080 (33674 of 1968) had been fitted with airconditioning and microwave oven to enable it to be used as a yard shunter at Nelson Point.

Richard Montgomery 7/04, 8/04

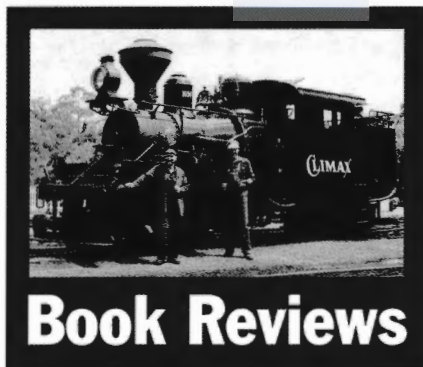
### PILBARA RAIL

(see LR 177 p.21)

1435mm gauge

A major derailment took place near Yandicoogina on 12 August with 8000 tonnes of ore spilt and extensive damage to rolling stock, including 78 ore cars. The cause was thought most likely to be a broken rail and the track was expected to remain closed for up to a week.

Barry Blair 8/04; Richard Montgomery 8/04



## The Mapleton Tramway

### The Line of the Diminutive Shay Locomotives

by John Knowles

92 pages, A4 size, plus card cover, 81 illustrations, references, and index. Published by the author. Available from LRRSA Sales, \$A28.50 (\$A25.65 to members) plus postage.

Mapleton and its surrounding 'villages' is a very different place in 2004, with its ritzy craft shops, well heeled 'tourists' and polished four-wheel drives to that of 60-70 years ago when life travelled at a slower pace, everybody knew everybody, milk was milk and had real cream, and that letter from Aunt Rose would probably arrive on 'the tram' hauled by a chattering little steam engine that looked oh, so different, to the bigger engines which hauled the main line train to the 'big smoke' (Brisbane).

Queensland was blessed with a number of rather unique railways known as 'shire tramways', all of which had a character of their own, and this is the story of one of them, the 2ft gauge Mapleton Tramway. Built as an extension of a sugar cane tramway system serving the sugar mill at Nambour (unfortunately, just recently closed), it was one of two such tramways owned by the Maroochy Shire, the other to Buderim, another mountain resort of some note (and similar modern day development), but built most crazily to different gauges – 2 foot to Mapleton and 2ft 6ins to Buderim! Both of them were to provide homes to three of one of the railway world's more unusual, but eminently successful, locomotive types – the Shay.

The author of this study, John Knowles, is well known as an enthusiastic and diligent researcher and writer on railways in Queensland. In this, his latest book, we are presented with a most readable and detailed account of a small line that was probably little known to many in its lifetime, or to most modern day railway enthusiasts. John outlines how the tramways west of the QR main line developed initially as part of the Moreton Central Sugar Mill tramway system. The extension to Mapleton (built under the auspices of the Shire) was very much an afterthought, but the feeling was it was needed to reach a developing area at the top of, and west of the Blackall Range. The fact that it didn't pay, and probably shouldn't have been built anyway, seems to have been lost in the enthusiasm of providing a service to this outlying area. That it kept going so long was due in part to the situa-

tion that any reasonable road up the range would have faced similar constructional difficulties to those of the tramway builders.

Some may find the text a little too intense, with a profusion of facts and figures, but no doubt these will delight those who revel in such data. However, there is much to interest all tastes here, and it all must be placed in the context of being an historical record. John's treatise on the characteristics and workings of a Shay locomotive are well done, explaining some of its peculiarities and why it was so successful in certain railway environments, of which Mapleton was but one. The two little Shays which Mapleton possessed were examples of the smallest version that Lima built. They have a charm all of their own, with their lopsided appearance and unusual 'get there as quick as I can' exhaust beat. To see such an engine in action on steeply graded and sharply curved track must have been quite something.

The reviewer was somewhat surprised by the inference that *Dulong* could well have been the first Shay built to the gauge of two feet and finds that no reference was made in the sources to a recognised reference book on Shays, '*The Shay Locomotive – Titan of the Timber*' by Michael Koch, published in 1971. Koch made a lifetime study of the Shays, and there is much information to be found in his book on the type. Lima built its first Shay as early as 1878, and there were 2 foot gauge Shays built prior to *Dulong* in 1908. Probably the most well known of these were those built for the 2 foot gauge Gilpin Tramway in Colorado in the late 1880s. Koch's list of Shays shows that *Dulong* was released from the Lima works on 18th May 1908, and had 22 inch drivers, whilst *Mapleton* left the works on 23rd November 1914 and had 29½ inch drivers. Both had the same 6 x 10 inch cylinders, and both were supplied through the dealers Gibson, Battle & Co.

The 1942 military map inside the front cover is interesting and adequate, but a full-page map of the line, with probably a location sidebar, would have been this reviewer's preference. Aerial photographs are an acquired taste, and at 12,000 feet a bit too far away to be easily read unless you're into aerial photography in a big way; on some of these photos the white direction lines tend to distract.

On the plus side, are a profusion of really interesting photos, and whilst the clarity of some are considered below standard, one must not forget the availability and technology of photographic equipment of the day, and remember quite a few of these are non-professional 'snaps'. An added bonus are the excellent diagrams from the pens of Keith McDonald and John Armstrong, both well known for their drawing skills and ardent researchers in their own right. Modellers of the unusual will find plenty to interest them here!! John also puts to rest some of the 'myths' which have dogged the local circle of research on this line, and it is hoped that the book can find a market, if maybe a specialised one, in the local tourist havens of the mountains of this day and age.

As John surmises, quite correctly it is felt, if this line had survived a few years longer, there is a

likelihood it would have been with us to this day. No doubt some will find it surprising that this line made two range climbs, was steeper, climbed higher, and probably had better views than the much touted climb up the Cairns Range – Queensland's other famous railway range climb, although both have their respective charms and interests. One is inclined to agree that the possibility of the Shays still being in action, other than possibly on special occasions, is highly unlikely, but wow, what a drawcard they would be if that were the case!! It is pleasing to hear that the Illawarra group are pressing ahead with their restoration of a hybrid Shay locomotive which, when active in the hopefully not too distant future, will provide today's railway enthusiasts with something more than just pictures in a book of an unusual engine type.

This 92 page book is in A4 format with laminated card covers, and is well laid out and presented. The print size may be considered a little small for some eyes, but this in no way detracts from the overall presentation. There are just over sixty photos, all well reproduced (given the likely condition of some of the originals), the four maps are clear, and the six loco and rolling stock diagrams excellently executed. The book is published by the author and distributed by the Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society. Copies are available through the Sales Officer of the LRRSA, details of which are to be found in the sales list that accompanies each issue of *Light Railways*.

Buy your copy now, you won't be disappointed!!

Ray Ellis

## Video Reviews

### A Garratt goes again – Part 1

Steam Media Productions. 90 mins, VHS PAL/DVD. Available from: ARHS Sales - NSW & Vic, The Railfan Shop-Melb., Puffing Billy Shop, Branchline, Trainworld, Buffer Stop and various tourist railway & museum outlets. RRP: DVD \$44.95, VHS \$39.95.

The standard test for the attention-grabbing properties of any video is to have a good meal and then settle into a comfortable armchair in front of a warm fire and see how long it takes to drop off to sleep. I am delighted to report that this video passes the test with flying colours, in that I barely blinked throughout its 90-minute duration and was fully engrossed by every moment of it.

The word is 'action'. The screen is a constant delight of Garratt action, sound and movement through the beautiful scenery of that part of Melbourne's Dandenong Ranges that is fortunate enough to be blessed with the Puffing Billy Railway. All preliminary test runs prior to the loco's official debut are shown in detail, ranging from boner (loco and van only) to a 19-car extravaganza, in a variety of weather conditions, including such details as brake tests and engine servicing.

Photography and choices of location are uniformly excellent. Perhaps the least successful sequence is a night test run to Emerald in which very little can be seen (not surprising) but the sound while climbing Emerald Bank is superb. The depiction of the Garratt being turned on the Emerald turntable, while unique and unquestionably historic, is to my mind a little long and slow moving, as indeed it undoubtedly was in actual fact.

There is inevitably a certain amount of repetition in the choice of some of the locations, but this is a very minor quibble. We can never really tire of seeing trains on the Monbulk trestle, negotiating the reverse curves beyond Clematis and heaving themselves up the 1 in 30 Emerald Bank, and now the delights of Fielder and the Wright forest.

There are crosses shown with Na-hauled regular trains, but in all cases there is considerable distance between the locomotives. It would have been nice to have seen some comparison sequences, where the Garratt and an Na were posed together, so that a true appreciation of the real size difference could be gained.

This is an excellent video production, an absolute 'must' for any Garratt or Puffing Billy enthusiast, and a real credit to the people of Steam Media Productions who have more than maintained their usual high standards.

*Arthur J Straffen*

## Song of the Rails

### The story of the Sandstone Narrow Gauge Railway

Produced by Frameline Television for The Sandstone Heritage Trust. 80 mins, VHS PAL Available at R125.00 each plus postage (Airmail R103.20, Surface mail R72.30). See the website [www.sandstone.co.za](http://www.sandstone.co.za) for other available videos and online ordering, or write to: Judy Le Grange, Curator, Sandstone Heritage Trust, PO Box 98364, Sloane Park 2152, South Africa.

This is the story of the Sandstone Narrow Gauge Railway in the Eastern Free State, South Africa. Sandstone Estate is a thriving farming enterprise consisting of some 10,000 hectares, and in the 1990s it was decided to build a narrow gauge railway, not just as a preservation project but as a working railway to haul the produce from the farm. Thus the Sandstone Heritage Trust was formed, which has expanded into an organisation dedicated to preserving, in a working environment, as much as possible of South Africa's agricultural and industrial past.

As with any preservation attempt, enthusiasm, in itself, is simply not enough and it is exciting to see the commitment of those involved come together with seemingly endless resources, manpower and expertise. This really is preservation on a mind-blowing scale. Everything from locos and rolling stock to farming equipment, cars and trucks, aeroplanes, steamrollers and even vintage lawnmowers can be seen here. It is sad to see any preservation project fail, but it is reassuring that many historic items that would otherwise have faced an uncertain future have found sanctuary here at Sandstone Estate.

Even though the first rails were not laid until 1998, the railway has since expanded to around 14 kilometres and provides a wonderful run for the wide variety of motive power and rolling stock. Although running through fairly open country, the background scenery is spectacular to say the least and with grades reaching a staggering 1 in 20 there is plenty to do for both locomotive and crew. The commentary, perhaps, provides the best insight into the sentiment behind this line. "*Sandstone Heritage Railway is not a preserved line. It does not have its own history and tradition to draw on or be faithful to. What it does have is the will, the expertise and the resources to make things happen.*"

This video has been professionally produced, and it shows. As a producer myself, I know how difficult it is to reach a balance between pleasing the enthusiast and not boring the general public. In my opinion this program has achieved this balance as nearly to perfection as possible. One aspect that really stands out is the quality of the writing. The commentary is well delivered, detailed and extensive without ever really being intrusive, leaving plenty of long uninterrupted scenes of the locos in action. There are a number of interviews, which are interesting but kept refreshingly short. Several of the more important items in the collection have their stories told in some detail and archival scenes are used to good advantage. The contemporary footage is imaginative, varied and very well shot.

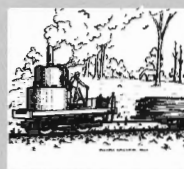
It is nothing short of inspiring to see so much wonderful equipment so well cared for and I am very pleased to see such a professional and entertaining record of the work achieved so far. Absolutely outstanding and highly recommended.

*Graeme Belbin.*

### LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARD



On Thursday 12 August, at the LRRSA AGM, held in Melbourne, Colin Harvey was awarded a Life Membership for his services to the society as treasurer, a position he has held continuously, for the last seventeen years. He successfully steered us through the introduction of the GST and the ever changing public liability insurance situation. Colin has also been an avid researcher and has generously provided information he has discovered to others with particular interests. He also has a number of published articles to his credit.



## LRRSA NEWS

### MEETINGS

#### ADELAIDE: "James Martin & Company"

There will be a discussion on the subject of South Australian locomotive builder James Martin & Company which from 1890 until its takeover by Perry Engineering, in 1915, built 233 locomotives for railways in South Australia, Western Australia, New South Wales, Tasmania and Queensland. **Location:** 150 First Avenue, Royston Park. **Date:** Thursday 7 October at 8.00pm. Contact Arnold Lockyer (08) 8296 9488

#### BRISBANE: "Sugar and steam – 1950/60s"

David Mewes will present some slides, taken by Jim Powe, of steam operations in the cane fields in the 1950s and 60s.

**Location:** BCC Library, Garden City Shopping Centre, Mount Gravatt. After hours entrance (rear of library) opposite Mega Theatre complex, next to Toys'R'Us.

**Date:** Friday 8 October at 7.30 pm. Entry from 7 pm. Contact Bob Dow (07) 3375 1475

#### HOBART:

There will be no meeting in October. However, a visit to Ulverstone may be arranged for November. If this goes ahead, details will be given separately, either with a leaflet with this issue of *Light Railways*, or in a separate mailout to LRRSA members in Tasmania. Enquiries: Ken Milbourne: (03) 6272 2823.

#### MELBOURNE: "Ashcat's Africa"

Tall tales and true from the South African railways in the 70s & 80s! Tony Marsden will be presenting a slideshow of his experiences working on the South African Railways.

**Location:** Ashburton Uniting Church Hall, Ashburn Grove, Ashburton.

**Date:** Thursday 14 October at 8.00 pm

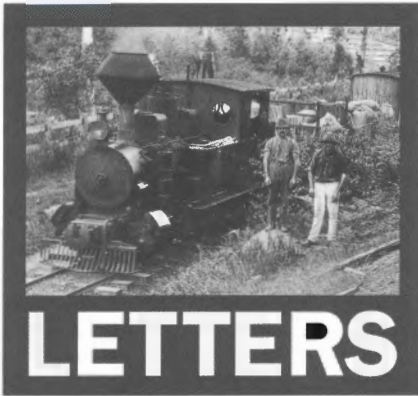
#### SYDNEY: "Jim Powe's Movies"

Classic movie footage from the lens of Jim Powe. 8mm & 16mm film, including Wee Georgie Wood, Lake Margaret Twy, Moreton & Gin Gin sugar mills, and rare footage of a London bus on the Laura-Cooktown railway. Also, Dennison Street Rockhampton, Pichi Richi Railway and much more. Not to be missed!

*Note: Jim had a recent accident which may prevent his attendance. If he is not able to attend, an alternate program will be arranged. Call Jeff Moonie on (02) 4753 6302 to confirm details.*

**Location:** Woodstock Community Centre, Church Street, Burwood, (five minutes walk from Burwood railway station).

**Date:** Wednesday 27 October at 7.30pm.



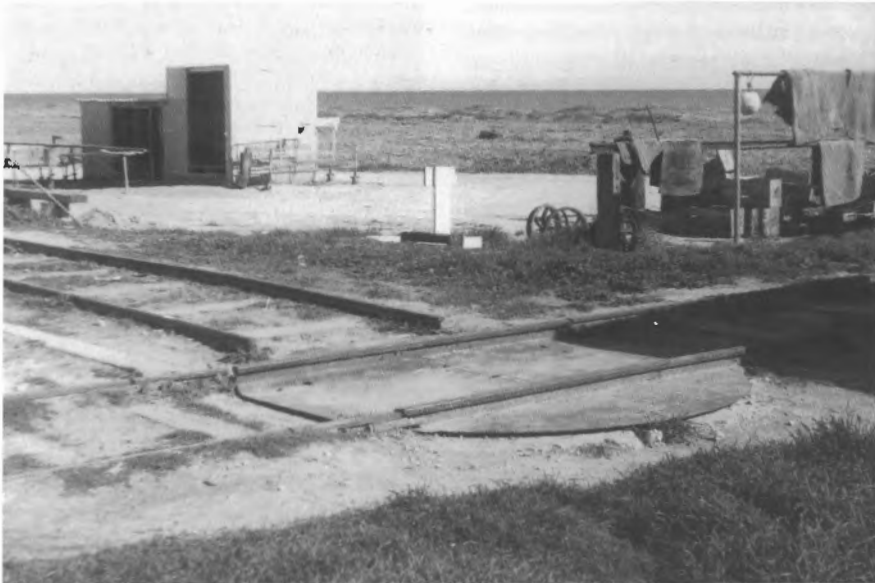
# LETTERS

Dear Sir,

## Jetty Tramway, Kingston, South Australia (LR 177, p.21)

The photographs below, taken on 4 May 1969, confirm that there was a turntable at the shore end, and show that one rail was on the extreme edge of the jetty, as at Cape Jaffa (see photo on p.20 of the same issue).

John Knowles  
New Malden, UK



The turntable at the shore end of the jetty at Kingston, South Australia. Photo: John Knowles



The track laid along the edge of the Kingston jetty. Photo: John Knowles

Dear Sir,

## Senussi Cave Railway, Tobruk 1941 (LR 177)

In his article on the Senussi Cave Railway, John Browning surmised that the supply store at Senussi Cave was required for munitions. The history of the Royal Australian Army Service Corps (AASC) paints a more sinister reason for the use of the cave.

Unloading stores in the port was a hasty affair, the RAN's "Scrap Iron Flotilla" running the air blockade and having to be turned around within an hour at night; CAASC Lieut-Col JA Watson had to raise a port detachment and impose strict transport control to ensure effective discharge in the time available, and Sgt E.S. Hodgson was attached to Base Sub-Area staff to supervise the tug and lighter crews working the harbour. Misapplication of food, particularly attractive items, was endemic ranging from scrounging extra rations, through organised theft, to medical staff feathering their own nest in the name of the poor patients. An armed security guard with orders to shoot was placed around supply dumps until the previously detached platoon of D Inf Coy AASC was tasked with establishing a security store in the Senussi Cave, operating a rail line

from the roadhead to the cave for more easily securable storage of the attractive stores.<sup>1</sup>

The history also includes the Photo AWM 020389 (LR177, p.5) with the caption - *Railing attractive supplies into Senussi Cave, Tobruk September 1941. The cave was a refuge against the systematic theft organised by some units of the garrison. It was operated by the ex-carrier platoon of the disbanded D Inf Coy AASC from July 1941; Lieut J. Harvey in control riding on the train.*<sup>1</sup>

In the history of the Royal Australian Engineers with the 9th Australian Division, it is noted that as well as the 9th Div Engineers, a number of other engineering units were at Tobruk and *Some sappers from 1 Aust Railway Construction Company were also sent in to help on the wharves with the Royal Engineer groups already there.*<sup>2</sup>

Could it be that the availability of railway construction engineers prompted the decision to use light railway for this transport task? This information may help in identifying unit war diaries that may be worthy of closer investigation.

## References

1. Neville Lindsay, "Equal to the Task - Volume 1; The Royal Australian Army Service Corps", Historia Publications, 1992, p.238-9
2. Ken Ward-Harvey, "The Sappers' War - With Ninth Australian Division Engineers 1939-1945", Sakoga Pty Ltd in conjunction with 9th Division RAE Association NSW, 1992, p.31

Greg Stephenson  
Fairfield, Qld

Dear Sir,

## WA Sawmill Locomotives

It's nice to see some activity among the few remaining WA veterans, however miniscule it may be. The pictures here indicate a change in status for such an engine. Realistically, there is not a lot of hope for an early return to operation for this loco, but at least its move to Pemberton is a start.

Locomotive SSM No.2 was imported from Beyer Peacock (builder's number 5475) in 1911 by the South West Timber Hewers Co-op Society (SWTH) and named *The Hewer*. It was set to work at Lucknow, a hewn timber centre and small sawmill in forest country about 15km from Collie, the private access railway to which had been operated by the Railway Department. A WAGR Weekly Notice advised that "*The Society's engine commenced running into Collie station yard on September 12th, 1911, and performs necessary shunting in connection with the Society's traffic*". However, a note in May 1912 regarding shunting charges suggests that work on the Collie bush railway had reverted to WAGR locos.

In May 1912, a further Notice said shunting at Holyoake was now performed by the Company's own engine. This meant that *The Hewer* had moved quite quickly to the SWTH's large milling operation being developed at Holyoake, *The Hewer's* first serious venture into sawmilling. Garratt motive power, in the form of the 68-ton M class 2-6-0+0-6-2, then entering traffic on the steadily extending branch railway eastwards from Pinjarra, would not have



suiting the logging railways which extended northwards from the mill at lineside.

*The Hewer* was a 4-6-0 machine, one of the type classed 'G' by the WAGR. Beyer Peacock 4-wheeled bogie locomotives had external axle boxes, which distinguished them from the North British type (such as G123, now operating from Dwellingup), which had internal boxes. The one-piece cab side, peculiar to most of the Beyer Peacock built machines, was distinct from the rather attractive two-piece cab type typical of most 'G' class locos.

The SWTH was taken over by the State Sawmills in 1920 and that organisation, in turn, was sold to Hawker Siddeley Building Supplies in 1961. In 1970, that company merged with Bunnings Limited, which was subsequently acquired by Wesfarmers. Through all these changes, SSM No.2 soldiered on, albeit as a timber yard exhibit in more recent years.

The last working days for SSM No.2 were under the management of Hawker Siddeley, who saw it finally in steam in February 1967, when it travelled from Deanmill to the company's timber yard in Manjimup. There, under Bunnings management, it was generally kept in good order in its small shelter near the company office, facing the South West Highway.

Acquired by the Pemberton Tramway Coy, the loco was transported by road from Manjimup early in 2004. *The Hewer* is by no means a stranger to Pemberton for, although it spent about 30 years of its early working life at Holyoake, it was transferred in early 1943 to Deanmill, close to the State Sawmills workshop at Pemberton, for a long, almost 20 years, stay there.

Once upon a time, the ubiquitous G class locomotive was found in all corners of the State rail system as well as on wood and sawmill lines. Few of those working in the bush were imported directly into the industry, and most had passed through previous ownership. Of those few that came direct from the builder to work in the south-west forest, *The Hewer* is the sole survivor. It's good to see it back on 'proper rails' at Pemberton, with perhaps a chance to steam in the future.

Acknowledged as a source of information: *Rails through the Bush*, Gunzburg/Austin

Len Purcell  
High Wycombe, WA

Dear Sir,

#### The Railways of Hebburn (LR 177)

Further to the correspondence in LR 178, it seems possible that neither of the figures mentioned for the weight of (2nd) No.1 may be correct. Writing in *Industrial Railway Record* No.62, Roger West gives the loaded weight of the 1920 Hawthorn Leslie version as 65 tons 0 cwt, and the Hebburn derivative as 65 tons 2 cwt. When the locomotive arrived in Australia, an "official" figure of 75 tons 2 cwt began to be mentioned, and I am sure Ron Preston has quoted that in good faith. It is not hard to think that, somewhere along the way, the "6" became corrupted to "7". The figure of 51 tons (approx) does not seem right when compared with similar 6-coupled tank engines such as the NSWGR Z26 at 65 tons, and the C30 at 72 tons, the latter of course having two heavy bogie trucks. It is all a bit of a mystery, but 65 tons does sound about right.

The commentary regarding the purchase of NSWGR 3013 is rather splitting hairs. The RVR was owned by Coal and Allied Industries which, a few weeks earlier, had taken over Hebburn Ltd. and also gained control of the SMR. Through acquisitions, a company whose core business was coal mining suddenly found itself the owner of three separate railway operations. Essentially, 3013 was acquired by Coal and Allied for use by its Hebburn subsidiary.

While the DLI required modifications to the pressure vessels for certification purposes, that did not come until later. The SMR was experiencing a severe motive power shortage, and the new loco was urgently needed to free up the 10-class that had been on semi-permanent loan to Hebburn. 3013 was rushed into service, as received, actually facing chimney first in the Down direction. Three months later, a second water gauge was fitted at East Greta Junction, and Hebburn staff then transferred across the air reservoirs and steam brake from No.1. The requirement for two water gauges had much to recommend it. In 1935, SMR No.17 suffered a catastrophic failure when the single water gauge became blocked, and returned a false reading. The interesting part of that story is that a young trainee fireman had reported the gauge behaving erratically, only to be admonished for exceeding his duties! SMR engines were subsequently fitted with a second water gauge on passing through shop.

While on the subject, there are some interesting stories surrounding the Stephenson engine. Initially, the locomotive had a pronounced tendency to derail on curves. Eventually, it was jacked up for inspection, to reveal that the rear bogie mechanism was seized with corrosion, effectively increasing the rigid wheel base. This was put down to exposure to sea air on the ship, the engine having been delivered fully assembled, except for the rods. According to the Hebburn people, the builder later contacted the company seeking drawings or photographs of 7841, as their own records had been destroyed in a fire. Apparently, the company responded as well as it could, a Hebburn employee taking a set of photographs.

Finally, there is a little story behind one aspect of Ron's article. In the gradient diagram reproduced on p.8, readers may have been puzzled by the notation "Single line working Weston to Hebburn operative from 20 May 1963". In fact, this was an attachment to a set of instructions issued to SMR enginemen a few days earlier. When the Elrington colliery closed, at the end of 1962, Hebburn decided, not for the first time, that it was time to exit the railway business, and SMR were invited to take over operations on the branch. The Hebburn system of "one engine, and we always know where it is" was regarded as most unorthodox by the SMR, who made preparations for the introduction of Ordinary Train Staff working on the appointed day. The unions had other ideas and, after a 24-hour stoppage on the SMR in support of the Hebburn men, nothing more was heard of the idea.

Robert Driver  
Killara, NSW

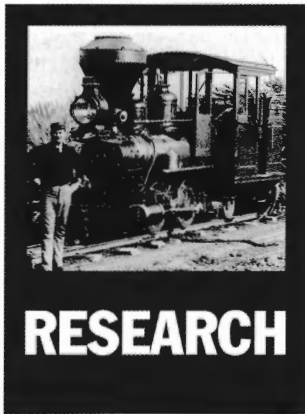


No. 9992. AUSTRALIAN AND OTHER COMPANIES. TYPE 4-6-0. SERVICE—PLANTATION AND LIGHT RAILWAY.

Builder's photo of Beyer Peacock 5322 of 1909 The Blackwood, a sister locomotive to *The Hewer*, from a Beyer Peacock catalogue of the period. Photo: Len Purcell collection



SSM No.2, formerly *The Hewer*, (Beyer Peacock 5475 of 1911) in the Pemberton Railway Company's yard, 5 April 2004. Photo: Len Purcell



### Members' Research topics

The Research column was launched in LR 141 (June 1998) to serve as a forum for members engaged in research projects to exchange information that might facilitate the research process. Some of the projects listed in that inaugural column have brought forward articles that have been published in *Light Railways* or are with the editors, while other projects were seemingly of a more long-term nature! Sadly, two of the researchers listed in LR 141 have passed on.

A member recently indicated to me that he would like to see more information available on research projects that are currently being undertaken as he may be able to make useful contributions to those undertaking the work. The editors have an ongoing list of the research topics on which we have received advice, which includes the following:

**New South Wales.** John Kramer and Jim Longworth are continuing research into logging tramways in the Coffs Harbour area, with John working on Woolgoolga and operations at Coffs Harbour itself, while Jim is working on the Bonville and Boambee lines. Jim is also working on the railways associated with the Yamba breakwater. Jim and John Shoebridge are researching the various amusement park railways of eastern Australia. John's major research project is on the colliery railways associated with Burwood Estate in Newcastle, including the Glenrock railway. He is also working on material from his father, who was foreman at the Hebburn Colliery workshops. Margaret Simpson of Powerhouse Museum is preparing an article on the Metropolitan Water Sewage & Drainage Board locomotive No.4, which is now in the museum's collection. John

Browning's project to document the construction railways of the Snowy Mountains Scheme is will be an ongoing task over the coming years (see LR 150, p.34) and John is seeking assistance from any members who may be able to assist with this project.

**Queensland.** While we have a couple of articles on sugar mill lines and locomotives, we have very little information on research activities that may be going on in the Sunshine State. Further advice on projects there would greatly relieve the anxiety of the LR editors.

**South Australia.** Denis Wasley has advised that he is researching lock railways on the Murray River and he would greatly appreciate any assistance that members can provide. The article will also cover locks in Victoria.

**Tasmania.** We have recently received a well-researched and thorough article from Ross Mainwaring on the railways associated with Rosebery on the West Coast. We understand that Lindsay Whitham is researching Grubb's tramway, while John Browning is pulling together information on the Trevallyn hydro project.

**Victoria.** We take it that Phil Rickard is still working on the Cave Hill tramway, while Peter Evans is tackling Dumbrell's timber tramway and Mike McCarthy is pulling together material on Mason's timber tramway. We are sure there are many other worthy research topics south of the Murray.

**Western Australia.** While we can report that David Whiteford has submitted an article on the Perth sanitation tramway, we have no advice on new research topics in the West. Perhaps it is a case of too many topics and too few researchers, but we would greatly appreciate advice on any WA projects that are current.

**Other.** John Browning is researching Malcolm Moore locomotives and is also assembling material on Planet locomotives in Australia, while David Jehan has a long-term project underway on the railway of Christmas Island. Both are keen for further input on these topics.

If you can assist any of these researchers in any way, please contact the LR editors and we will pass the information on. If anyone else has other research topics

## Coming Events

### OCTOBER 2004

**2 Bennett Brook Railway, Whiteman Park, WA.** *Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine* Day with the Fat Controller and narrow gauge steam and diesel trains. Information: (08) 9439 2821.

**2-3 Puffing Billy Railway, Gembrook, VIC.** *Day Out with Thomas* – a family attraction at Emerald town. Also on 9-10 and 23-24 October. For information, phone (03) 9754 6800.

**3 Cobdogla Irrigation Museum, SA.** Open day with Humphrey Pump, narrow gauge steam train rides and heritage engines. Phone (08)

**3 Wee Georgie Wood Railway, Tullah, TAS.** Narrow gauge steam train operations, 0930-1600. Also on 10 October. Phone: (03) 6473 2228 or 6473 1229 (AH).

**9-10 Alexandra Timber Tramway & Museum, VIC.** Woodturners' Gala Day Saturday, Running Day Sunday, both 1000-1600. Information: Peter Evans 0425 821 234 or Bryan Slader 0407 509 380.

**16-17 Campbelltown Steam Museum, Menangle, NSW.** Oil, Steam & Kerosene Days with narrow gauge steam and diesel trains, traction engines, steam rollers and vintage machinery. Phone (02) 4626 3500; E-mail: big-trev@bigpond.com.

**17 Puffing Billy Railway, Gembrook, VIC.** Kids Fun Run with Thomas. For information, phone (03) 9754 6800

### NOVEMBER 2004

**1 Puffing Billy Railway, Gembrook, VIC.** Cup Eve Train, special dinner train to the Packing Shed to raise funds for the 'Climax' Locomotive Restoration Fund, 1900-2345.

**6-7 Wee Georgie Wood Railway, Tullah, TAS.** Narrow gauge steam train operations, 0930-1600. Also on 9, 13 and 21 November. Phone: (03) 6473 2228 or 6473 1229 (AH).

**6-7 Puffing Billy Railway, Gembrook, VIC.** Day Out with Thomas – a family attraction at Emerald town. For information, phone (03) 9754 6800.

**7 Cobdogla Irrigation Museum, SA.** Open day with narrow gauge steam train rides and heritage engines. Phone (08) 8588 2323.

**14 Alexandra Timber Tramway & Museum, VIC.** Official Recommissioning of Kelly & Lewis 5957 at 1100, Open 1000-1600. Information: Peter Evans 0425 821 234 or Bryan Slader 0407 509 380.

### DECEMBER 2004

**4 Wee Georgie Wood Railway, Tullah, TAS.** Narrow gauge steam train to Carols, 1500-2100. Also on 5 December, 0930-1600. Phone: (03) 6473 2228 or 6473 1229 (AH).

**4 Puffing Billy Railway, Gembrook, VIC.** Daytime Santa Specials hauled by Garrat locomotive G42, departing at 1100. Also on 11 and 18 December, with a Sunset Special departing at 1745 on 11 December. For information, phone (03) 9754 6800.

**12 Cobdogla Irrigation Museum, SA.** Open day with narrow gauge steam train rides and heritage engines. Phone (08) 8588 2323.

**12 Alexandra Timber Tramway & Museum, VIC.** Running Day 1000-1600. Information: Peter Evans 0425 821 234 or Bryan Slader 0407 509 380.

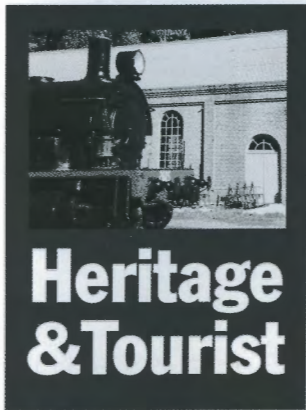
**NOTE:** Please send information on coming events to Bob McKillop – [rfmckillop@bigpond.com](mailto:rfmckillop@bigpond.com) - or The Editor, *Light Railways*, PO Box 674, St Ives NSW 2075.

underway or even in the 'thinking' stage, please let us know and we will see what help can be mobilised to the cause. *Editor.*

### Locomotive SANDFLY

As reported on page 31, *SANDFLY* (Baldwin 7860 of 1886), the first locomotive to operate in the Northern Territory has recently returned to Darwin. The LRRSA published a special issue of *Light Railways* (No.65), 'The Saga of Sandfly and the Lost Tribe' by John Buckland, back in July 1979 and this remains the definitive history of this 'tribe' of eight similar Baldwin

Locomotive Works 4-10½C class 1067mm gauge locomotives that operated on various light railways around Australia. The Society has been able to assist our northern research colleagues by donating two copies of LR 65 to the Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory. The Territory History Curator at the museum, Glenys Dimond, has expressed their appreciation of the presentation and advises that one copy has been placed in the Territory History office and the other in the Museum's library, which is linked electronically to all other public libraries in the Territory.



## Heritage & Tourist

### 50 Years of Railway Heritage: An Evolving Movement

As three Australian states celebrate their 150th Railway Anniversaries, it is a useful time to reflect on what will be 50 years of rail preservation in this country from July 2005. It has taken 150 years, but Australia's mainline railways are finally breaking down colonial barriers and are entering an exciting era in which trains can operate coast to coast under uniform communication and safeworking systems, codes of

practice and regulatory frameworks.

These changes have significant impacts on heritage railway operators. As noted in LR 176 (p.27), the National Health Assessment

and Certification Standards are imposing significant challenges for small preservation groups. This challenge means that a sector that has traditionally drawn its 'world-view boundaries' at the local government area border has been forced to seek cooperative solutions across those boundaries. Nevertheless, the signs are encouraging. I have previously reported on the formation of the Association of Tourist Railways Queensland (ARTQ) and, at a meeting of all state representatives at the St Kilda Tramway Museum in Adelaide on 18-19 June, the Association of Tourist & Heritage Rail – Australia (ATHRA) was born. The ATHRA aims to represent the interests of all tourist and heritage rail organisations at a national level. It currently focuses on access to affordable public liability insurance and gaining a tourist and heritage rail voice in formulating Australia-wide codes of practice. Meanwhile, the ARTQ remains active and organised a workshop on Health Assessments, held in conjunction with its meeting at Rockhampton on 28-29 August 2004.

Bob McKillop

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## NEWS

### Queensland

#### AUSTRALIAN SUGAR CANE RAILWAY 610mm gauge Bundaberg Steam Tramway Preservation Society

The annual inspection of 0-4-2T No 3 (BFC 3 of 1952) was undertaken over the June long weekend. The boiler was found to be in excellent condition thanks to the continued water treatment programme used by the Society. The *News Mail* hired the train to promote its Harry Potter evening and over 600 people rode the train for the hour or so it was operating, providing great publicity for the Society. Lynn Zelmer, via LocoShed E-mail group, 07/04

#### FRASER ISLAND TOURIST RAILWAY

The proposal to establish a light railway for tourists on Fraser Island using the paths of former logging railways has been revived, with a presentation on the project at the 2020 Vision for Fraser Island conference at Tewantin on 12 August. John Sinclair, the force behind the Fraser Island Defenders Organisation (FIDO), said the proposal would offer visitors a "close to nature experience" and make the area more stable and

sustainable. He argued that the 150,000 tourists a year currently travelling across the island by road, many of them in large four-wheel drive vehicles, were generating wash that is filling up the lakes. The former logging tracks are currently used as four-wheel drive tracks, while the tourist facility at Central Station (the former logging camp and loco shed site) has information, photographs and some wheel sets from the former logging operations.

*Sunshine Coast Daily*, 13/8/2004, via Barry Blair; Chris Stratton, via LocoShed E-group, 05/08/04

#### GINGER FACTORY, Yandina 610mm gauge Buderim Ginger Limited.

A visit to this popular tourist attraction on 16 August found the former Moreton Central Mill 0-6-0TT *MORETON* (Krauss 4687 of 1901) operating its regular schedule of trips through the extensive grounds of the factory with its two 'tourist type' passenger cars. The train departs from the station on a large loop in the 'village' every half-hour for a 15-minute trip with a taped commentary. It runs on a section of 'main line' along the boundary of the property, which includes a protected level crossing on the factory access road, does another loop around the 'Old Ginger Farm' at the western end of the property and then returns. This visitor noted that the populist story that *MORETON* initially operated in German New Guinea was served up to visitors (this time putting it on 'a logging line'). In fact, Krauss records show it to be ordered by Arthur Koppel for Australia as a duplicate to No. 4298, which went to Proserpine

sugar mill. It appears that the order was cancelled and the locomotive was placed in storage for resale, it being delivered to Moreton Mill by O Granowski in 1904 (not 1907). Historical errors aside, the journey offers a pleasant journey behind an important heritage locomotive, albeit one making rather different noises from its canefield days on account of the diesel engine in the tender. The practicality of that alteration is undeniable. *MORETON* offers faithful service every day of the year except Christmas Day with just some oiling of the motion each morning and a servicing of the engine twice a year. Editor, 08/04; with thanks to John Browning and David Mewes

#### MORETON SUGAR MILL, Nambour

With the closure of the Moreton sugar mill, there has been considerable interest among light railway enthusiasts regarding the future of the three heritage locomotives that were on static display in the mill grounds. We are pleased to report that all three have or are to be moved to safe havens for further restoration and display. Most interest has been focused on the former Mapleton Tramway Shay geared locomotive (Lima 2800/1914, rebuilt using parts from Lima 2091/1908), which is the only remaining Australian example of this popular locomotive type. Maroochy Shire Council called for expressions of interest for the restoration, housing and display of the locomotive earlier in the year. Following evaluation of submissions from interested parties, Council decided to retain ownership of *SHAY*, which will be transported to a site at Mapleton, where volunteers

from the Mapleton and District Community Association will attend to its care and maintenance. Council has also resolved to meet with interested parties with a view to forming a working party with the long-term intention of having the locomotive restored to full working condition.

John Fowler 0-6-0T *EUDLO* (16207 of 1925) was transferred to the Nambour & District Historical Museum in December 2003 (LR 175, p.21). The Malcolm Moore ex-Australian Army WW2 4wDM *SANDY* (MM 1051/1943) has also gone to this museum for restoration. *SANDY* was named after Sgt Leslie ('Sandy') Plater, a former mill employee who was killed at El Alamein in 1942 and the museum has obtained a \$30,000 grant under the Federal Government's commemorative program, 'Saluting the Service', for its restoration. Sandy's nephew, railway enthusiast and Nambour museum member Clive Plater will be part of the restoration team. He said that *SANDY* would be restored in the correct military colour scheme to reflect its heritage. It is planned to mount the locomotive under cover at the museum, with the option to move it outside on special occasions. Maroochy Shire Council, 02/08/04; Carl Millington, 08/04 via John Browning

### New South Wales

#### ILLAWARRA TRAIN PARK, Albion Park 610mm gauge Illawarra Light Railway Museum Society

Society members have been active cleaning up and restoring the site, with new signs being erected during July. To assist with the clean up,

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the local Fire Brigades donated time to assist in a burn-off of all surplus debris such as undergrowth and old rubbish in the area known as the fire trail. Around 50 people put in a full day working at this location and the Society is thankful to them for their efforts.

During August, all the steam locomotives and the Brownhoist boiler were pulled down for their annual boiler inspections. New arrivals at the museum during February/March were a 4wDM Simplex from Goondi sugar mill (Motor Rail 10219 of 1951, see LR 177, p.25) and 3-cylinder Ruston 4wDM 371959 of 1953 from Condong sugar mill. Restoration and rebuild work has been undertaken on the Ruston locomotive, with the unit pulled down for overhaul. Carriage No.430 was returned to service in August after repair to its timber works and a repaint. Construction of the second bogie for the Shay locomotive is well advanced and both bogies will shortly be placed under the frame. The former Vernier mancar has been converted to 610mm gauge has been placed on track to facilitate ongoing restoration work.

Brad Johns, 08/04

**NEWINGTON ARMORY & RAILWAY** 610mm gauge  
**Sydney Olympic Park Authority**  
Further to LR 177 (p.26), the Olympic Park Authority has announced that the Newington Armory (its spelling) and heritage railway is open on the first Sunday of each month from August 2004. Evidently the Authority has satisfied itself that the experience gained from the special open days was sufficient for it to handle regular operations. Admission is \$8 for adults, \$4 child/concession and \$20 for families. The phone number for information and bookings is 9417 7888; or visit the Web site at: [www.sydneyolympicpark.com.au](http://www.sydneyolympicpark.com.au). LR editors John Browning and Bob McKillop attended the open day on 1 August. The passenger train was only operating in push-pull mode using the 4-car articulated carriage set from Laboratory C to building 45, about 750 metres each way. A new extension some 700m long has been completed to connect this

line with that to Building 39, thus creating a loop journey (see map on rear cover LR 161). Trains will use this full route from the open day on 5 September, providing a round journey over 3km in length. There was an interesting range of attractions at the site and helpful guides were present in large numbers. A Wingrove & Rogers 4wBE numbered LF 01 (with battery box 11) was stationed outside Building 20 with four flat wagons (FB 38-41), two of which displayed newly acquired replica cannons from HM Barque *Endeavour*. These were constructed by ADC using moulds from one of the original cannons recovered from a reef in Queensland where they had been jettisoned in 1770. Restored building 20 with its vaults and copper capped rail track, complete with three hand-pushed trucks and turntables, now has a display of different types of armament stores in one vault. A second Wingrove & Rogers 4wBE (LFD 01/BB 12) was displayed at the workshops with five flat top wagons (FB 33-37) loaded with different types of armaments. Guided tours of the wharf and a further armaments display in Building 13 were also provided. A further three flat top wagons were in this building – FB 23, 24 and 32. Near the wharf, the branch line to Building 18 – the largest in the complex and currently being restored – has recently been refurbished.

Colin McDonald, 07/04; Editor, 08/04

### **STATE MINE HERITAGE PARK & RAILWAY, Lithgow** 1435mm gauge

The State Mine railway received formal advice of its accreditation in late July and its NSW Rail Access Agreement was signed off on 29th. State Mine volunteers and Ozback Explorer staff undertook formal track safety awareness training on 24 July and a shake-down tour operated under the accreditation and rail access agreement from Lithgow to Mudgee, Dubbo and return via Wellington on 31 July. Local volunteer Greg Pitt has recommenced his programme of rebuilding wooden skips using salvaged metalwork, frames and wheelsets. The first two completed under the new program are currently on display at the museum in front of the workshops.

Ray Christison, 07/04

### **WALLARAH COLLIERY,**

#### **Catherine Hill Bay**

The colliery railways at Catherine Hill Bay, once a Mecca for industrial railway enthusiasts, were covered in an extensive article in LR 39. The Wallarah Coal Company built the standard gauge railway in 1889 to link various collieries with its jetty at Catherine Hill Bay, some 8km south of Swansea on the Central Coast. Eight locomotives worked on the railway up to its closure in December 1963.

A developer, Rosecorp, recently lodged plans with Lake Macquarie council for a \$40 million eight-storey coastal sports club on the side of a cliff at the former Moonee Colliery mine site. Rosecorp proposes to conserve the mining heritage of the former Wallarah and Moonee Collieries, including the restoration and re-use of historic icons such as the Catherine Hill Bay jetty, Wallarah House and a section of the industrial railway along the foreshore.

ABC Newcastle Radio, 3/8/04, via Barry Blair

## Victoria

### **ALEXANDRA TIMBER TRAMWAY & MUSEUM**

610mm gauge

The second Kelly & Lewis 0-6-0DM (5957 of 1936), restored by Paul Simpson at Panania NSW has been acquired by the ATTM. Following Paul's death last year, the locomotive was offered to the society by his widow, but a fund-raising campaign was necessary to make the purchase and transport the locomotive to Alexandra. Assistance was provided by Shire of Murrindindi, JL Gould Sawmills Pty Ltd and the Commonwealth Government's Regional Partnerships program. With advice that a grant under the latter program had been approved on 23 June, there was a hectic round of activity to finalise the grant arrangement and arrange for the uplift and transport of the locomotive via the Panania Public School grounds, where ATT volunteers had previously prepared it for the move.

The locomotive was lifted onto a truck arranged by JL Gould Sawmills and spare parts were loaded into ATT President, Bryan Slader's van on 15 July. The following day the 10-tonne locomotive was unloaded at the Alexandra museum site by two forklifts and gently lowered onto its new home rails. Sister locomotive 4271 was on hand to

tow 5957 to its temporary resting place in the roads outside the locomotive depot. On Sunday 18 July, work began on the mechanical restoration of the loco. Bryan Slader repaired and refitted the seized fuel pump and, at 1.13pm, the engine (which had operated for only five hours at Panania) burst back into life. After testing the transmission with the final drive in neutral, the locomotive moved under its own power at 1.31pm, the first time it had operated at Alexandra for over forty years. This short run proved that the transmission was satisfactory, so the locomotive was taken for several test runs on the restored section of tramway. The loco performed entirely satisfactorily. That night it was put away undercover for the first time in over forty years. An article on this locomotive and its restoration will appear shortly.

On 17 July the boilers of the John Fowler 0-6-0T (11885 of 1909) and the Marshall portable engine (47566 of 1907) were stripped and washed out for their annual inspections. Both boilers were rigorously examined on 24 July. The Marshall was passed for operation at its existing 100psi, while the Fowler had its certificate reinstated to 150psi, an increase of 30psi over its last examination.

Peter Evans, 08/04

### **OLD BEECHY RAIL TRAIL**

Further to the report in LR 165 (p.29), the 45km Old Beechy Line Rail Trail connecting Colac to the Ottways is scheduled to be officially opened in early in 2005. About 22km of the trail is already open to the public. The Colac Otway Shire Council arts and culture coordinator, Kaz Paton, said the trail would not only benefit tourism, but will provide a valuable means for Colac residents to appreciate the history and environment of the region. *Colac Herald* 14 July 2004, via Norm Houghton

### **SOUTHERN HYDRO TRAMWAY, RUBICON FOREST**

610mm gauge  
As reported in LR 172 (p.28), the Victorian Department of Sustainability & Environment (DSE) called tenders for the reconstruction of the 15,000 Syphon timber trestle bridge in May 2003. The design for the replacement bridge remains faithful to the existing structure and specifies a 44-tonne load so it can carry the tramway locomotive

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Weaving its way through tropical foliage dominated by ginger plants, Krauss 0-6-0T+T MORETON leads its tourist train at The Ginger Factory, Yandina, on 16 August 2004. Photo: Bob McKillop



The Australian Sugar Museum at Mourilyan, Nth Queensland, has two former cane locos on display; John Fowler 4668 of 1883 (ex-Mourilyan mill), and Hudswell Clarke 1099 of 1919 (ex- Goondi and Victoria mills). Photo: John Kramer



The winter 'burn-off' at the Illawarra Train Park site in July 2004 produced this unusual scene of ex-Tully Mill No.6 0-6-2T (Perry Eng. 7967/49/1) in thick smoke. Photo: Brad Johns

and rolling stock in the future. Midwest Civil of Ballarat completed the works in February 2004 at a cost of \$240,000. The trestles and decks were prefabricated in Ballarat and then transported to the works site. The work included the demolition of the existing structure and the removal of the existing bed logs, pouring of concrete footings for each trestle – the middle trestle consisted of three 800mm bed logs on top of each other, resulting in a very large concrete footing – then erecting the trestles and decks.

Two other bridges on the tramway at Royston Power Station and Lubra Creek had been reconstructed shortly before the former SECV Rubicon assets were leased to Southern Hydro. DSE plans to use the remaining funding to undertake maintenance work on these bridges and the locomotive sheds at the Rubicon forebay and Royston Power Station. Design drawings and specifications have been completed for the Beech Creek trestle bridge, but a funding shortfall does not enable the reconstruction of this bridge at this stage. A grant request to the 2003/04 Victorian Heritage Program was unsuccessful, but positive feedback was given to the merit of the proposal and further discussions are planned to develop further funding proposals to enable the reconstruction of the Beech Creek Bridge.

Bill Twitchett, DSE, via Peter Evans 7/04

### WALHALLA GOLDFIELD RAILWAY 762mm gauge Walhalla Tourist Railway Committee of Management

Steam formally returned to Walhalla on 23 July after 60 years when 0-6-0T *Spirit of Baw Baw* (Henschel 26427/1956) operated the passenger train between Thompson and Walhalla. In 1996, the WGR reached an agreement with the locomotive's current owner to fully restore it for operations on the WGR. Work started in earnest in 2000 under a joint project between the WGR and Baw Baw Shire Council. A dedicated group of volunteers undertook the task in a

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workshop provided by Valicote at its Morwell premises. The locomotive was transferred to Walhalla in 2002, when it took a number of mid-week trial runs (see LR 167, p.30). It locomotive received DOI accreditation in June 2004. From 31 July 2004, the steam locomotive is operating trains on the line on the first weekend of each month until the commencement of summer fire bans. The event also celebrated the completion of the Walhalla railway station building, with John Brumby, the Minister for State and Regional Development, unveiling a plaque to mark the occasion. The present station building is an exact replica of its predecessor, a substantial Federation-style structure built in 1910-11, and using the original Victorian Railways design plans. The new building was prefabricated at the Central Gippsland Institute of TAFE as a Community Jobs Program project and transported to Walhalla in November 2001. The State Government's Living Regions, Living Suburbs program and the Commonwealth Government's Regional Assistance Program provided funding for materials and site development. External contractors, supported by a very dedicated group of the Railway's volunteers, undertook the fitting out work on the station. *Herald-Sun* 24/7/04, via Barry Blair; Peter Ralph, 07/04; *Ltrobe Valley Express* 26/7/04 via Steven Haby

## Western Australia

### EUCLA JETTY

The Eucla Jetty ruins, abutment and beach landing remains were entered in the WA Register of Heritage Places on 2 July 2004. The jetty was served by a 3ft 6in gauge horse-worked tramway that ran into the small township. The jetty and tramway were built in 1887-88 and operated until the opening of the Trans-Australian Railway in 1917. David Whiteford, 08/04

### WHISTLE STOP, Busselton

184mm gauge

This well-known miniature railway near Busselton closed on 27 April after nearly 20 years operation as



Restored Wingrove & Rogers 4wBE, numbered LFD01, with demonstration munitions train at the workshops, Newington Armory & Railway on 1 August 2004. Photo: Bob McKillop



"Let's stop here for a picnic". As locomotive 6A simmers in the background, the crew of a Puffing Billy Railway Gembrook service enjoy a quiet lunch before returning their train to Belgrave. 27 March 2004. Photo: Ian Cutter



Kelly & Lewis 5957 is lowered onto the waiting truck in the grounds of Panania School on 15 July 2004.

Photo: Colin McDonald



The completed 15,000 Syphon Bridge awaits the relaying of rails in February 2004. Photo: courtesy Bill Twitchett, DSE



The Henschel 0-6-0T (26427 of 1956) at the head of the special train at Walhalla Station on 23 July 2004. Station Manager Lindsay George stands proudly beside the locomotive. Photo: Peter Ralph



The interior of the newly refurbished heritage Walhalla station building on opening day. Photo: Peter Ralph

a major tourist attraction. The track, the former Margaret River railway station building, ex-WAGR passenger carriage and other features will be retained, as the buildings may be used for holiday accommodation in future.

David Whiteford, 07/04

## Northern Territory

### DARWIN RAILWAY TERMINAL

The first locomotive to operate in the Northern Territory, the diminutive 0-4-0ST *SANDFLY* (Baldwin 7860 of 1886) was returned to Darwin on 26 July by Great Southern Railway as a gift to the Northern Territory Government. The locomotive was transported the on a flatcar behind *The Ghan* passenger train. *SANDFLY* was one of eight similar Baldwin Locomotive Works 4-10 $\frac{1}{2}$ C class 1067mm gauge locomotives imported by Newell & Company of Melbourne between 1884 and 1891 that have been the subject of great interest by light railway historians over the years. John Buckland told their story, 'The Saga of Sandfly and the Lost Tribe', in a special edition of *Light Railways* (No.65) in July 1979. The contractor for the Port Darwin to Pine Creek Railway, C&E Millar, took the locomotive to Darwin in April 1887 to assist in the construction task. In October 1888, the South Australian Railways took possession of the line and its three locomotives, *SANDFLY* becoming No.107. Under Commonwealth Railways administration, it was given pride of place in the narrow gauge register with the number '1' and the classification 'NA'. Following its withdrawal in 1950, *SANDFLY* was restored and placed on display at Port Augusta railway station and was subsequently transferred to the Keswick Passenger Terminal in Adelaide where it was displayed in the waiting room. The locomotive was an attraction at the 75th Anniversary of *The Ghan* service to Alice Springs, travelling there from Darwin on *The Ghan* train following a ceremony at East Arm at 0800 on 8 August. It is planned that an all-weather display facility will be constructed at the Darwin Railway Terminal to ensure *SANDFLY*'s long-term conservation. The locomotive has been placed in storage until this facility is completed. ABC Radio Darwin, 4 Aug 2004 via Barry Blair; Trevor Horman 08/04; Glenys Dimond, Museum of the NT, 08/04.

## WEST COAST WILDERNESS RAILWAY

*Clockwise from below: ABT 0-4-2T locomotive No.3 and train arrive at Queenstown station, 21 February 2004. □ On the previous day, No.3 makes a steamy exit from Riggs Cutting, near Queenstown. □ Driver Mark Tregonning is hard at work turning No.3 on the manually operated turntable at Queenstown. □ A damp evening at Regatta Point station. □ Drewry 0-6-0DM D1 (Vulcan Foundry D193/Drewry 2405 of 1953) is turned at Dubble Barril as ABT loco No.3 looks on. □ With the majestic hills surrounding Queenstown as their backdrop, ABT locomotives No.1 (Dübs 3369 of 1896) and No.3 (Dübs 3730 of 1898) are seen shunting in Queenstown yards.* Photos: Peter Ralph

