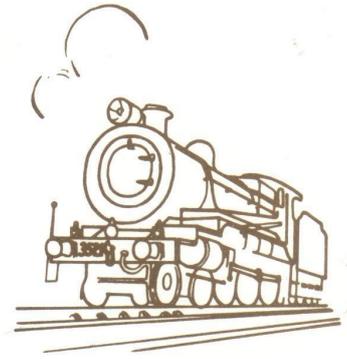


Sydney Live Steam Locomotive Society

Anthony Road, West Ryde, N.S.W.

'Newsletter'

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Roger Kershaw discusses black NSW engines with John Tulloch on our black engines day in November!

November Running Day.

By the middle of the week preceding our running day it looked as though we would be in for a real scorcher. By Friday it was likely that a total fire ban would be declared for the metropolitan area as well as much of the southwest of the state. With our RedKite charity day under threat John Hurst spent much of the morning in contact with the fire authorities and by mid afternoon he had written approval from the Rural Fire Services Commissioner for our running day to go ahead. Members were notified by email or phone that our day was on. There were some conditions set, the mulch heap had to be

dampened down and John had purchased small hand fire extinguishers that were attached to all of the guards vans for the afternoon. We had our hoses out in strategic positions but fortunately they were not needed.

Barry Potter, along with Roger Kershaw and Greg and Les Bird were down from Orange with locomotives D5507, Z2304 and C3075T. Craig Hill was also visiting from Yarramundi. The first train out for the day was John Tulloch with the J class coupled to the four car blue set on the elevated. When we started passenger hauling I had coupled Z1915 in front of the J and we ran till well into the afternoon. John had a short break replaced by Peter Dunn at the regulator. When I came off John ran a few



Vernon Condon and Brian Hurst try out the blue tarp covered frame of our future ticket office.

ger train. With the hot weather Warwick's V class ended the afternoon running on its pumps as the water just got too hot for the injectors to operate. The Central West members of the AFUMLE had worked out a very good set of emergency working conditions to cope with the extreme weather conditions. It seemed to work like this. You start with more drivers than you have locomotives and co-op any competent spare drivers that happen to

Max Gay was guard in November and here he is with his trusty fire extinguisher ready mounted close by on his guards van.

laps on his own till David Lee banked the train with his GM locomotive. After a few runs with this combination Garry Buttler had his "Impala" 4-6-0 in steam and coupled up in front of the J and saw out the afternoon. The second train on the elevated was a five car set with Arthur Hurst, Betty blowfly 0-4-0 and John Hurst 2-8-0 "Nigel Gresley". The two trains were able to handle the passengers very well.

On the inner main we had V1224 with Warwick and Andrew Allison alternating the driving. The second train was 2-6-2 "Mountaineer" driven in turns by Barry Tulloch and Martin Yule. On the outer track we were treated to something different. One train saw Z2304, Roger Kershaw leading train engine D5507, Barry Potter on the Central West car set. It was considered if such a combination ever ran in full size practise, there were enough years of overlap but we would need to check the depot allotments to get an answer. The second train was a double headed C30 class combination of Ray Lee, C3112 as train engine and pilot engine Greg Bird's C3075T. It has been a long time since we had double 30's on a passen-



be available. Set up a base camp on a bench in the shade near the station area and swap the driving duties on a regular basis. Barry Potter, Roger Kershaw, Greg Bird, Les Bird, Craig Hill, Ray Lee and Tony Eyre were the drivers involved. Roger's Z23 ran excellently all the afternoon,



Craig Hill driving Roger Kershaw's 23 class leads Barry Potter and his 55 class on a very lightly loaded Central West Express!



Arthur Hurst and “Betty” the Blowfly leads John Hurst behind his “Nigel Gresley”. Track Superintendent Mick is on the first car.

extra locomotives for the running roster. On the way home I remembered that on my very first visit to the grounds in the late sixties Barry Tulloch’s J class was one of the locomotives I remembered. Little did I realize at that time that one day I would double head with that loco with a 19 class of my own.

December Running Day.

Our first running day for the 09-10 summer season turned out to be a good day. During the week before we had some days of total

the problem from last year had been fixed. (AFUMLE: - Australian Federated Union of Miniature Locomotive Enginemmen.)

Our ticket sellers Vernon and Brian, tried out the see through ticket office for the first time.

Mick handed out some of the new club shirts that were ordered. If you have ordered a shirt and haven’t yet collected it, please contact Mick to make suitable arrangements.

We also had some window boxes on the clubhouse, showing a bit of greenery. Hopefully there will be more flowers next month.

The crowds just weren’t there today. Perhaps the weather sent them all to cooler places. We had two large party groups and oddly, we had some very full trains just before the end, they probably wanted to stay in the shade as long as possible. Overall we gave 1198 rides, (about half a usual November day) the proceeds of which will go to RedKite. We did have a couple of their volunteers to help with the afternoon.

Many thanks to John Hurst for arranging the fire exemption, and for our Orange visitors who came to provide

fire ban but the rain on the Friday and slightly cooler weather forecast saw the bans lifted. Even so the grass was looking very parched; there was little evidence of the previous day’s rain. December is usually a very easy day but we had the usual couple of party groups and the local West Ryde Pre-school for their Christmas party. The signaling problems created by some excavation work last Saturday had been corrected by Warwick on the following Sunday. While Warwick attended to his tasks Wendy got to work with the weed killer, thanks Wendy. I had some of the bench seat components to check on site and sorted out the direction the rest of the construction would take.

We had a very busy afternoon on the elevated; I think we would have earned most of the revenue for the day. The Pre-school group had set up camp at the top of the grounds right near the elevated station so we had a big group right there. We ran a 5 car train with John Tulloch, J class 2-8-0 and Arthur Hurst, Betty Blowfly 0-4-0. Paul Taffa had a 2 car train pulled by his 0-4-0 Hunslet and I ran Z1915 with one car. Paul ran the Santa Special late in the afternoon and another run saw all the pre-school helpers on board. It



looked a sight with their red shirts and Santa hats. We had full trains for much of the afternoon while on many occasions the ground level trains had only one or two passengers.

Warwick ran the V class 1224 on the inner and managed the day despite some minor clack and injector troubles. The second train on

Paul Taffa and the West Ryde Neighbourhood Children’s Centre helpers take a ride behind Hunslet.



Arthur Hurst and Betty, John Tulloch and 2904 on a 6 car elevated train. Bernie is guard on the December running day.

the inner was the unusual combination of Ray Lee C3112 leading John Hurst, 2-8-0 "Nigel Gresley". They ran till mid afternoon and came off when Jim and Dom Mulholland had C3901, 4-8-2 "Green Machine" in steam and joined the running on the outer track. There had only been one train on the outer till then and that was 2-6-2 "Mountaineer" with the driving shared between Barry Tulloch, Martin Yule and Peter Dunn.

We hosted overseas visitors, Andrew and his son from the Birmingham Society in the UK. John T entertained them early on, and they stayed for quite a while, we hope they enjoyed their stay. They had not come direct from the UK so the hot weather was not such a shock.

Brian Hurst sold tickets from the clad ticket office and I hope it was cooler there with all the insulation in the walls! It was also good to see Brian Kilgour back at the grounds for a visit.

Overall we gave 1298 rides which is about 300 above a December average and (surprisingly) the second highest in the last 15 years. Probably just as well because our

ticket office expenditure has been substantial! For the 12 months, we had no runs on 2 occasions (February and June) but we finished with 23,265 rides which is a little above average, so overall we worked harder for an average result!

Many thanks to Liz, Di and Joy our regulars who always help out in the kiosk. Fortunately the day was not as busy as previous months.

I do not know if many other members have noticed but we have a very large black cat that seems to think it owns the bottom end of the grounds. On the November running day and again today I sighted the cat sprawled out in the shade in the middle of the path between Anthony Road and the foot bridge, it had no problem with the fact that our visitors had to walk around it as they came in.

January Running Day.

Our first running day for 2010 turned out to be a very reasonable day. It was warm and humid and we had sufficient cloud cover to keep the harsh sun at bay. These reasonable conditions saw a larger crowd than we would expect at this time of the year and our rides total of 1553 for the afternoon was about 50% up on the average for a January run. Scott Murray was on the gate and once past the initial rush he had not much else to do than watch the trains go round. Before we started Arthur had gone round with the ride on mower making the grounds look very smart.

We found some signalling troubles with no power to 'A' distribution box. This was deduced to be a cable fault and a surface run wire was put in place as a temporary repair, as we have used up all the spares in the ground. Clearly we are going to have to run some more wires down to that end of the grounds before too long.

The last parts of the first attempt at



Barry Tulloch, Lionel Pascoe and Martin Yule share a moment between trains.

Gyprock cement in the ticket office were completed in the morning. Jim delivered the door lock together with a replacement floodlight. With a bit of luck we should be able to get the ticket office almost complete for the February running day. Perhaps just a coat of paint or some trim to complete. As it was Brian Hurst sold the tickets for the day, I hope he was able to feel the benefit of the insulation.

We had a good selection of locomotives on the roster. Up on the elevated Arthur Hurst was out first with four cars and a guards van coupled behind 0-4-0 Betty the Blowfly and was soon joined by Z1915, John Lyons, coupled in front. Jim Leishman steamed the Ps4 4-6-2 and ran a three car train while Paul Taffa hauled two cars with the Hunslet 0-4-0. Just after 3.00pm we ran the 19 and Blowfly into the loop and treated ourselves to a cuppa.

When we returned to the track Jim took his train in for a spell and was joined by Paul. After a short break Paul returned to the main line and with the two trains handling the passenger numbers Jim returned his loco to the loco depot leaving his cars in the loop. Arthur and myself had some very full loads, we had to see we kept the pressure up otherwise we would have had trouble. We carried our last passengers at about 4.40pm. or so and then coupled up the spare cars to return them to the carriage shed. Seven cars, two guards vans and two small locomotives, with Mick Murray riding as shunter we moved the lot to the carriage shed. I was told that it looked very good.

On the outer main 2-6-2 "Mountaineer" hauled one of the trains. The driving was shared by Barry Tulloch, Martin Yule and Peter Dunn. Late in the afternoon Peter Wagner was in the driving seat receiving tuition from Barry Tulloch. The second train on the outer was 4-8-2 Mountain driven by John Hurst with Max Gay assisting. It was great seeing the Mountain having a run.

Warwick's WAGR V1224 was on one train on the inner with David Thomas at the regulator for much of the afternoon. Warwick finished off the day. The second inner train was hauled by Matt Lee with C3506 4-6-0 and John Tulloch 2-8-0 J class. Warwick's V class has had some workshop attention with the clack valves all having been resealed. Early the V was pulling against the steam brake but with that turned off it ran well all afternoon.

In loco Ray Lee had C3803 in steam, but did not run.

Special Members Day. Saturday 6th March.

To mark the end of a very busy working summer season the first Saturday in March will be set aside for a club lunch time BBQ and run. There will be NO HEAVY work scheduled for that day. Bring a loco for a run and enjoy the lunch.



John Tulloch 2904, Matt Lee, 3506 double head on the inner main on the January running day.

Henry had the R down for a boiler test, but a leaking clack terminated that test as pressure could not be raised. Thanks to Margo, Chris and Lee who helped Dianne in the kiosk while our regulars were enjoying a break. Brian Hurst sold tickets from inside the new ticket office,

David Thomas on V1224 on the January running day.





Above: The loves of the Editor's life. Z1915, daughter Cate and grand daughter Pandora, not necessarily in that order.

Right: The BBQ is always a centre point on the Christmas party day!

so has now had a good feel on what it will be like! Nathan Lyons and Brian Rawlinson were busy in the signal box all afternoon.

Christmas Party Report

What a lovely day. Not too hot, and even in the evening, not too cold!

We had over 30 members and friends attend to have a lovely BBQ evening tea. Bill Richards was here specially for the occasion and it was good to see him at the grounds.

Seven locos came for the run. David Lee had the GM, and his little Commonwealth Rushton, seen being high jacked by a devilish looking character with flashing red horns as darkness fell. We saw the GM haul a real live

cattle truck with livestock from the Muston farms. John Tulloch brought along the J, John Lyons had Z1915 in steam giving rides to youngest granddaughter Pandora, her Mum and both grandmothers. Garry Buttel gave Impala a run and Arthur Hurst had Betty the Blowfly in steam. As well Andrew brought along his A10 for its steam test. This was obliged by the boiler inspector Thomas, and then we had some injector trouble. However a quick drop the fire, refill the boiler and steam up again and out onto the track quick to allow the axle pump to do its job! Initial running seemed quite OK, despite the finicky injector.

The level crossing lights looked wonderful with the white lights showing along the line of the road and the red lights along the tracks!

The J had some night running while the A10 called it a day once night fell. The last were away from the grounds about 11pm.

Everyone seemed to have a good time. It is certainly a



Editorial.

It is just over ten years since the drainage works at the bottom end of the grounds was completed and we were able to resume our normal operations. The improvements that we have completed since then have been considerable. Drive ways, unloader, level crossing, paths, equipment shed, fences, landscaping and the soon to be finished ticket office have all enhanced the utility and appearance of our grounds.

On the wider scene in the UK brand new 4-6-2 "Tornado" has been completed. In NSW there are two C32 class in steam and in Canberra AD6029 is well on the way to steaming once again. At Thirlmere there is a new round house, the collection has been thinned and a flash new entrance facility is been constructed, and who would have thought that a new boiler for C3801 would be under construction in Europe.

By 2020 where will things be? We will continue to maintain our grounds and look forward to seeing the various locomotives now under construction in steam. Plenty to look forward to.

John Lyons.



Max Gay's 3½" gauge 38class firedoor.

very pleasant (secluded) sanctuary and the weather was perfect for such an evening. Thanks to all who came, we should make an excuse to do it more often.



Christmas party day and Bill Richards discusses things with Stuart Kean, Barry and John Tulloch near the new ticket office.

New Years Eve Report

About 13 members and friends came down for a New Years Eve BBQ. Garry Buttel brought along Impala and Simon had a fast and successful run with Simplex. There was some two way running on the elevated, Gary running "Impala" clockwise while Simon ran "Simplex" in the normal running direction. A suitable piece of stick was declared to be the staff and a few of us operated the lever frame. Those of us who arrived early did some shed work, while John L did some bench seat trial assembly. Barry Millner and Brian Muston lit the BBQ and after the roaring fire had reduced the hot plate to a molten mass (not really-just kidding it was only a dull red heat!) We let things cool and then got stuck into our tucker. Before the end of the night Barry T removed the pressure gauge on the compressor to fix a cracked soldered joint that was leaking. We watched the 9pm fireworks and then packed up and headed home. A good way to finish 2009.

Locomotive and Rolling Stock News.

Brian Muston had his U105 chassis at the grounds with his reverser stand mounted on a piece of wood. He is puzzling over some features, but it seems the full size drawing have helped sort out the details. We have also seen Andrew Allison's A10 in steam, initially with a steam test and later running on the track. The injector seems finicky but the engine goes OK! It is great to see the A10 running and nearly completed, it is now the latest member built locomotive since John L. completed Z1915 in 2003. We have also seen more parts for Max's 3½ inch gauge 38 class, being the firedoor arrangements. Very nice work.

Our Club on the Web

This is a high quality air photo of the grounds. The controls can vary your view not only from above, but from the north, south, east or west as well!

<http://www.nearmap.com/?ll=-33.804472,151.087141&z=19&t=h&nmd=20091114>

If it doesn't go straight to the map search for Chatham Rd, West Ryde and zoom in.

Barry Tulloch unravelling the mysteries of locomotive construction of Brian Muston's U105.



Works Report.

Mick had the weed killer out and is also working on a concept to rejuvenate the weed killer train to try and make it all easier. The idea involves fitting a generator in

Diary

- 26-28 February Lake Macquarie Birthday Run
- 2 March Directors Meeting
- 6 March Special Members BBQ and Run
- 20 March Public Running Day
- 2-5 April 2010 AALS Convention at QSMEE
- 6 April Members Meeting
- 17 April Public Running Day
- 4 May Directors Meeting
- 15 May Public Running Day and Next Newsletter!



lawn to discover a broken (cracked) pipe fitting on the main water pipe. Jim arranged a plumber to come and fix. We tried to tape the joint temporarily to no avail so the water was turned off and only turned on when required. Fortunately the excavated hole never overflowed! By the time the water got near the top, seepage exceeded the incoming! The plumber did a good job and all is now in good working order.

The air compressor gauge developed a leak and Barry Tulloch undertook a repair. The soft soldered tube connection inside had cracked, a common fault.

Andrew Allison attends to a finicky injector on his first ground level run for a brand new A10.

Ground level track.

the battery space. We certainly need to spray more often. Sometimes the effectiveness seems a bit ordinary, especially if it rains just after. David Thomas continuously keeps on weeding and filling our green bin. He has also been planting some new plants. It always good to see him arrive with a box of plants!

Jim Leishman has surveyed the floodlights and is arranging to replace those that have deteriorated. It seems some of the fittings have reached the stage where they need replacing. One Saturday we detected a damp patch in the lawn near the flagpole. During the week Jim excavated our soggy

ground level due to work on the ticket office. Mark Gibbons has removed 19 point motor and replaced the micro switches so it is back in business. We had done some patch ups over the last few months but replacing the micro switch finally seems to have solved the problem. The sun was quite warm very early, and once the machine was removed Mark had the benefit of the air conditioned club house to do the work in until he had to replace it on track, and it was certainly very warm by then. We have also had some cabling problems when a fence post excavation dug up and cut a large number of our signal wires. The jig saw puzzle was put back together but a couple of associated problems subsequently occurred and were resolved.

Not a lot of activity on the ground level due to work on the ticket office. Mark Gibbons has removed 19 point motor and replaced the micro switches so it is back in business. We had done some patch ups over the last few months but replacing the micro switch finally seems to have solved the problem. The sun was quite warm very early, and once the machine was removed Mark had the benefit of the air conditioned club house to do the work in until he had to replace it on track, and it was certainly very warm by then. We have also had some cabling problems when a fence post excavation dug up and cut a large number of our signal wires. The jig saw puzzle was put back together but a couple of associated problems subsequently occurred and were resolved.

Lionel does the honours concreting in some more white picket fencing.



More recently however a wire for the 'A' box power supply has gone open circuit and as there are no spares, a surface run cable has been provided. At some stage we will be up for laying a new cable from the signal box. If anyone has a source of 1mm² cable, we would be interested.

Level Crossing

The level crossing has been given its final touches as Barry Tulloch has white painted the level crossing gate posts and also given the drop bolts a spot of red paint to make things invisible against the red disc signs. Progressive installation of the white picket fencing has been completed around the crossing and either side of the ticket office. Brian, Lionel and Arthur were the main players in this work. Brian Muston attended to the weldmesh to picket fence interface and came up with a suitable solution for the im-



John Lyons with the new bench seat under construction. It actually hides some unsightly ducts!

ings after lunch and it was complete. Next running day (which was the following Saturday) for the first time Vernon and Brian sat inside the framing to sell tickets!

Many of the tasks were done by various members and without this concerted assistance of parallel effort it is doubtful things could have progressed so quickly. Jim arranged the sourcing of material for the seat and various hardware items for the ticket office including the air conditioner. Henry arranged the roofing and cladding and associated bits, while Jim has done a second round and provided some more bits. As well Warwick has been filling in the consumables (most of these are biscuits!) and provided the water tank. Barry and Martin constructed the tank stand and installed it.

Brian Hurst has also painted the floor with a sealer to prevent it dusting up and it all looks quite good.

Arthur, Warwick, John Lyons and Lionel did most of the sarking and then roof fitting on a fairly hot day. It was very bright up there!

The external cladding was done by a multitude of helpers including Paul Taffa, John Tulloch, Peter Dunn and Brian Muston and this also went on very quickly indeed, being complete with another half days work by Warwick and Max.

The roofing and cladding went on together and these two things transformed the look of the structure in a mere 6 hours.

perial vs. metric sizes. The whole area certainly does look better and there is talk of more picket fencing, but....where do we stop!?

Elevated track.

John Hurst has done some repairs to the elevated signal wires and now we have them all working correctly. We will soon be back at work on up grading the track alignment as everyone has been occupied with the ticket office construction and the associated up grading of its surrounds.

Ticket Office.

Since the last newsletter, the ticket office has gone from a slab on ground to an almost completed building. The prefabricated frames were erected the week before the November running day and took a mere 4 hours. By lunchtime it was almost done and with a few more fasten-

Martin, Barry, Henry and Max fit the door cladding to the ticket office.



Duty Roster.

- March J.Hurst, A.Hurst, J.Leishman, J.Lyons, B.Rawlinson, M.Tyson, M.Yule, D.Mulholland, J.Mulholland.
- April. B.Hurst, T.Eyre, M.Lee, R.Lee, R. Smithers, P.Taffa, J.Tulloch, B.Tulloch.
- May. H.Spencer, A.Allison, M.Gibbons, W.Fletcher, G.Kirkby, B.Muston, J.Noller, P.Sayers.
- June. W.Allison, G.Buttel, B.Millner, M.Murray, S.Murray, S.Collier, P.Ryan, V.Sciicluna.

Gate Roster.

- March. R.Smithers. April. P.Taffa, May. D.Thomas. June. J.Tulloch.



Our New Year's Eve BBQ was a very pleasant occasion.

Election of our 2010 Board – Request for nominations

As required by our Rules, all current members of the board retire at the Annual General Meeting held in June each year. Nominations are required for all board positions for the incoming year.

Nominations need to be in writing, and provided well in advance so that all members can be advised of who is standing for election to the board.

Nomination forms are available in the clubhouse, and will be provided to all members for whom we have an email address. A form can be provided by mail on request to any Board member.

The nomination form gives an overview of the roles and responsibilities of each position. Each nomination must be signed by two members, and the person being nominated. The completed form **must** be provided to Henry Spencer by **Sunday 2nd May**.

If you wish to stand, or intend to nominate another member to stand, you must follow this process. At the meeting itself, nominations from the floor will **not** be accepted, unless there are insufficient formal nominations. A vote will only be taken where there are more nominations than required for a position. There are a total of seven board positions: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three Directors.

Details of all nominees will be provided to all members with the formal Notice of Annual General Meeting, sent a few weeks before the meeting itself. Should there be multiple nominations for any position; a Proxy Form will also be included, enabling you to vote for your Board even if you cannot physically attend the meeting.

Of the current board, the following have or intend to nominate for next year:

- Warwick Allison President
- Mick Murray Vice President
- John Hurst Treasurer
- David Thomas Director
- Barry Tulloch Director

Notably absent are Henry Spencer, who after 21 years as our Secretary, is finding his health problems too much to continue in the role, and Jim Leishman, who would like to see a younger person get involved.

Many thanks to those members who brought along ladders, battery drills, and other tools to help with the work.

Henry has organized the electricals and has installed it all with the help of Brian Muston, Lionel, Arthur and John L. Lionel dug the trench for the conduit for the power supply. A new circuit breaker has been installed in the green distribution box.

John Lyons installed the door frames and David Lee fitted the door hinges and Martin is also dealing with cladding the front door, after attending to all doors and making them able to fit their frames!

The wall paneling went in over a few weeks following installation of the insulation. Mick did the initial sheets and other panels were cut by Arthur and Warwick. It was good to have tall Barry T and John T install the last of the insulation batts before helping to hold up the ceiling panels with Peter Ryan and Martin for Arthur to screw in.

The Gyprock cement was applied by Martin Yule and Scott Murray. The following week after the awning lining was installed Andrew finished off what was the first coat.

Mick took on the dreaded task of working out how the back fascia was to be secured. This was done on a very hot January day and by knock off had installed the rear and one end fascias. The awning fascia is to be a half scale version of a full size Strathfield station awning. Martin is arranging this to be laser cut.

The excavation for the path was done late January with the concrete to be poured on the first Saturday in February. There was a lot of rain in the days before the due day and while the forecast was not promising covers were set up and the pour went ahead. (It was our coldest day in the last month..) The concrete was barrowed in and as Mark G. had his gum boots he directed the place-



Mark Gibbons and Brian Muston screed off the concrete supervised by Vic Scicluna.

as good as finished. I would add that at the time of working on this Newsletter the tank would be well and truly overflowing.

The whole of the work in the level crossing and ticket office precinct has been a great concerted effort by members in a quite short space of time. Henry described it as Go, Go, GO!

AALS Revised Codes of Practice
Recently published is the revised AALS Codes of Practice. Much of the work has been done by Mick Murray and with new drawings from Dave Archibald. These can be perused at www.aals.asn.au in the 'Resources' tab.

ment of same. When the time came to pour the pad for the air conditioner compressor the original form work collapsed. Martin, Arthur and Vic quickly rebuilt the form work, this time a more substantial structure and the job was complete. The screeding was done by Vic, Brian M. Jim L. and Bernie .

Martin delivered the door locking gear and the fascia for the awning. John T painted the fascia with the correct primer and the second coat of Gyprock cement was applied by Warwick and Brian R., Sanding back should be completed by next week end.

Warwick designed the bench seat to cover the electrical mains and in January John L. took on the job of constructing and assembling the seat and attaching it to the brick base. Mark Gibbons and Vic Scicluna assisted with the final assembly. Lionel and John L. formed up the last of the mounting pads and mixed and poured the concrete. It was in place and fastened by the January running day with final trim fixed the following Saturday. This bench is designed to hide some cable ductwork, and it seems to be just the job. It will be a popular spot on running days to watch the action! Brian Hurst has filled the bolt holes and it looks like it will soon be painted.

By the time you have this Newsletter it will be

Conventions.

Don't forget the convention is coming up at QSMEE. Registration details are here:

<http://www.tracksandtrains.com/qsmee/pages/2010%20conv.html>

John & Mick testing a generator on the weed killer wagon.



OLD FOLKS.

A self-important university student who had been walking along Coogee Beach took it upon himself to explain to a senior citizen resting on some steps why it was impossible for the older generation to understand his generation.

"You grew up in a different world, actually an almost primitive one" the student said loud enough for the others to hear. "Young people of today grew up with television, jet planes, space travel, men walking on the moon. We have nuclear energy, ships and mobile phones computers with light speed.... And many more other new things." After a brief silence, the senior citizen responded with "You're right, son. We did not have those things when we were young..... so we invented them. Now, what are you doing for the next generation?"

Editors note. We all hope that they work hard and pay their taxes to keep the older generation in the manner to which we have become accustomed!



Meet the Ancestors! We think this is Newcastle Interlocking Staff—a long time ago!

Darryl is a work colleague of mine who has been on the job for a long time. As our "Old Man of Signalling" it is true to say a lot of what is out there on the network today, was worked out by Darryl. Darryl has put his thoughts down and I am privileged to be able to publish this in our newsletter. It is a reflection of a past that most of us have never experienced. For us who perhaps want to live in the past, the good old days, it is too good to pass by. Warwick.

A Veterans View

by Darryl Dunne

Before I start I have a confession to make. I have an addiction.

It's signal engineering or as it is sometimes unkindly described "the practice of the black art." My addiction began when I was 15 years old.

I joined the NSWGR Signal and Telegraph Branch as an

The Chief Signal and Telegraph Engineer's staff in 1964.



apprentice electrical mechanic on the 7th of January 1952. I was joining a diverse organisation of just over 59,000 employees. My starting wage was £2/ 3/ 9/10d. This seemed like a fortune to me at the time but I never did work out how I was paid that 9/10d.

There were approximately 16 signalling apprentices taken on that year, and many more in other trades. This may seem like a fairly high yearly apprentice intake but it was not unusual for those times. To me this is an indication that those old Chief engineers who determined such matters as apprentice intake at the time were forward looking on matters of succession planning and the need to avoid future skills shortages. The railway then was a very different organisation to the railway we see today.

Steam locomotives were still being built at the railways' Eveleigh workshops. The railway built 38 and 58 class steam locomotives were world class but we could not build enough to meet increasing needs so we were buying more steam locomotives from overseas.

There were only two mainline diesels locos in service and electric locos were yet to appear. Steam locos did not disappear from the system until the early 70's.

When I now see the paper headlines blaring out about the terrible over crowded conditions passengers are forced to endure, I think 'wots up' with these people - don't they realise how good they have it today? During the 50's and early 60's the suburban electric passenger stock consisted entirely of single deck red rattlers.

Our Hero, Darryl.



Sydney Station West Signal Box. 432 pistol grip style levers.

These were not air conditioned, had very hard seating and lots of standing room. Smoking in the carriages was permitted and it seemed that everybody smoked, except me. And to make matters worse all the smokers had window seats and kept their windows closed. The challenge when travelling in a packed peak hour service was to stay conscious until you reached your destination. If you happened to pass out from smoke inhalation nobody would have noticed as it was so packed you could not fall over. Not many politicians travelled on trains in those days unless it was in the Commissioners Carriage. In 1952 the older signal system was in a very poor state of repair. Very little money had been spent on what today we call major periodic maintenance. The condition of the signalling generally was in such a state that it would not be tolerated today. Most of the field equipment, points, signals and train stops were ageing and required a great deal of maintenance to function reliably.

Cable routes were broken down and vital signal wiring exposed to the elements. The ageing rubber insulation on cables had disintegrated in some places exposing bare live copper conductors. There were no go areas in signal boxes where any disturbance to the conductors could break one or worse start a fire.

Patch up jobs were continuously being carried out to keep the system working and it is a tribute to the signalling staff of the day that the system worked as well as it did.

During the 1950's almost all available money was going into new capital infrastructure investment. The electrification and signal system upgrading of the Blue Mountains had commenced, the city circle loop was being completed and there were others.

I worked on the resignalling for electrification of the up and down Main Lines between Central and Strathfield.

This work was carried out in old signal locations within a

at high speed and run through a large team of track workers fatally running over one poor individual.

I do not know what protection they had in place but from my experience on that job it would probably only have been a single lookout with a flag .

There could not have been much if any forward warning of the worksite to the driver. In the late Eighties I experienced the consequences of another staff fatality - one of my own staff.

In this case I had the harrowing experience as manager of having to inform the young man's family. I remember knocking on the door to be greeted by the young man's brother.

I introduced myself and he said "its Edsel isn't it?" and all I could say was "yes it is".

We then sat in awkward silence for about an hour waiting for his father to arrive home to receive the tragic news. It is

dirty dusty environment. There is no doubt that asbestos dust would have been present from train brakes the fibro location linings and shelves and fibrous asbestos tape from around signal wiring trees which had to be removed for new VIR (vulcanised india rubber) cable to be installed.

All this work was carried out without any protective clothing or equipment.

It seemed that everybody working on this job developed a perpetual cough and running nose and it goes without saying that today these working conditions would be a gross violation of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

It was on this job that I had the misfortune to witness a rail worker fatality. An electric passenger train entered a work site

Modern (well from the 1960s!) plug in relays. The technology used at Sydney and Strathfield Signal Boxes.



my greatest wish that no railway family or manager will have to go through such a traumatic experience again and that with the training and procedures we have in place today I hope this wish will be realised.

During the late 1960s the run down state of the metropolitan signalling was at last addressed and substantial capital funding was provided for the inner Sydney resignalling.

This was new ground for the signals engineering staff. Nothing of this magnitude on a working system had ever been undertaken before in their time. Specifications for this work had to be written; contract documents developed and detailed planning for the work carried out.

As the size and scope of this work was beyond the capacity of railway resources a contractor was engaged to carry out the installation. A railway projects staff of approximately 70 was needed to interface and commission the new work. My roll in this was in the specification development and detail planning.

This project was immediately followed by work of a similar scope and size for the Strathfield area and on this job I had the roll of Project Engineer.

I am happy to say that today as a result of these major resignalling works commenced in the 60's and others continuing today the signalling infrastructure is in a far better shape than it was when I started.

However, while these two major works are presently performing reliably they are now ageing, over 30 years old, and I believe we should be planning for their replacement now.

When I joined the railway funding for staff supplies was extremely tight. This I believe was a left over from the austerity measures necessary in wartime. I recall that for a depot of six tradesmen and an apprentice there was a monthly ration of two cakes of soap and two rolls of news paper grade toilet paper. Once that was used up you had to bring your own in. Imagine how that would go down in Pitt St. today.

I recall that during my design office days in the early 60's that to get a new pencil I had to grovel to George the custodian of plans and stationary. I had to present with the worn out pencil which was scrutinised to see if it was the same brand and type to the one previously issued to me. And if it passed this test it was measured to see if its life could be prolonged with the use of an extender tube. Then if it failed that test I would be presented with a new pencil.

The details were entered into the issues book which I then had to sign. George was my farther in law at that time. No favours for me from George!

While this degree of scrooge like economising may seem ridiculous, and it was, think about the situation today. We do things, write things, send things, often simply because we can at the tap of a key. This all has a cost. The technology to do this is not cheap. I believe that only about ten per cent of what is sent to me is relevant to my needs, but I print much more than that to get to the relevant ten per cent.

The railway at the time I joined was a rigid public service organisation with an almost military style regimentation. If you passed the Chief Signals Engineer in the corridor you did not have to salute but it helped to smile and keep your

head slightly bowed as a sign of respect.

This certainly improved your promotion chances when your time came. Even the dress protocol was rigidly enforced. This was such that we always had to wear long pants, dress shirt a coat and a tie, but the wearing of shorts and long socks during summer was not permitted in the design office even if you did wear a tie.

Computers, the internet and photo copies had not been invented when I entered the design office. Documentation for distribution had to be typed on to waxed paper. This was then run through a Roneo printing machine to produce multiple copies. Design drawings were hand drawn with a black ink pen on wax coated linen cloth. Prints were then made on a photo sensitised paper.

Deliveries of documents and letters to other departments and to field locations were carried out by runners. Delivery could take days or even a week to reach a destination.

Then came the PC and the internet, the ultimate communication tools and system facilitators, the promise of the paperless office.

Sometimes I wonder if this wonderful servant has in some cases become the master, and what about the explosion in the number of pulp mills?

However, that being said, where would we be today without these great tools.

Now I have to make some comparisons with training. Then, along the way and today, during my apprenticeship, electrical trades training was carried in house by the Railways Institute.

The only university, Sydney, ran a general engineering degree. Most engineers achieved a diploma of engineering from Sydney Technical College. There was no formal classroom training in signalling. All signalling training was acquired by instruction from qualified signalling staff with the use of some technical notes if they were available. Apprentices were provided with a particular signalling subject to learn for the month. This was by whatever method we could. At the end of that month we had to present to a stern and sometimes ferocious District Engineer to be grilled on what we had learned.

I can tell you this was a terrifying but very effective way to learn a trade.

By the mid 60's it was recognised that with the rapidly advancing signalling technologies the previous method of training staff in this unique engineering discipline was inadequate, so a training school was set up at Erskineville. This subsequently was moved to Chullora.

This also had its limitations so in the late 70's a properly staffed technical training college was set up at Belmore by the Signals Branch.

This had a Signal Engineer as training manager, four full time electrical signalling trainers and two full time mechanical signalling trainers. These were the golden years for signalling technical skills training, both for apprentices and staff training on new systems

In early 1996 this collage was taken over by others, the technical staff structure was virtually dismantled and technical curriculum development ceased.

Today despite the ever advancing technology there is only one full time electrical signalling trainer and no mechanical trainers.

I believe that this loss of focus on technical training has contributed to our current skills shortage. Also, we now have a workforce that is not being provided refresher and new technology training to maintain their skills.

Very recently a project to install a properly equipped signalling training installation called "Curtin" has been commenced at Petersham training college. I can only hope that this project is only the start of further improvements in our training resource and the dim light at the end of the tunnel will soon become daylight.

In closing I have to say that I believe from an infrastructure point of view, and I stress infrastructure, this railway today is a far better one than the one I first joined.

Finally, my advice to you young people coming on today is do not become captive to a single speciality within your discipline, take every opportunity to vary and broaden your experiences, and do not be frightened to take on responsibility.

From my experience I believe that I could not have had a more challenging, rewarding and varied career with any other single employer. There has been a wonderful range of challenges with some stress and frustration but mainly satisfaction and a feeling of achievement.

I have been given the opportunity to work in

nearly every area of signalling, both as front line worker and in management. In all this I have been supported throughout by a great team of people and made many very good friends whom I consider to be my second family.

All this of course has made it hard for me to make a break from the job and retire.

However, this time has, almost, come so with a captive railway audience I will use this opportunity to say thank you for your great support, your generous help and wonderful friendships that have made my career so enjoyable

An O gauge delight from the Tulloch collection.



Report on the 100th Anniversary Celebration of the Society, 13 July 2048.

By "Railfan".

Members of the Society met cordially at the grounds to celebrate our 100th anniversary. In the 100 years since formation, many changes have occurred that our forefathers would never have thought of.

The foresight of our members back in 2009 laid in a six year supply of fuel for our locomotives. This was fortunate because the carbon taxes that were applied from 2012 made it impossible then to purchase any new fuel.

Despite the pollution taxes applied we surreptitiously ran under cover of darkness to avoid being seen by the carbon police. To avoid tell tale sparks they designed and fitted large contrivances to the chimneys to capture the bright red embers before they reached too high an elevation and could be seen over the fences. However it would not last forever.

That six year supply strung out for 15 years by rationing. To prevent theft they built a large secure blockhouse and kept it under lock and key.

To avoid the Society being 'stacked' by renegades only wanting our char, membership provisions increased until total loyalty could be guaranteed.

However by 2024 it had gone and running was relegated to the few battery operated locomotives. The batteries could be charged using solar panels, as they had not yet begun to tax sunlight like they did in the UK. But it was not what we were about, and we yearned for the days of unrestricted running with hissing steam, large chuffs of black pungent smoke and being able to coat the ground and track with our total loss lubrication systems.

We were indeed fortunate to have one of our members trial the new energy source, a small pocket sized fusion reactor that could be sat on the old grates. He had a job at Lucas Heights (a dark smoky place on a hill named after the Prince of Darkness) and was designing micro power plants for lawn mowers, sorely needed as the city was immersed in kikuyu as carbon fuels had been all but banned.

It was just what we needed in size and capacity!

The technology was fully sustainable as the water it produced as a by-product could be directly fed into the boiler. The reactor was fully self contained with the few grams of hydrogen it needed being pre-packaged with the reactor as a complete self contained unit. They are even rechargeable, as it is a simple process to send them back to the factory for rejuvenation after their 10 years of operation is exhausted. So by 2032 we were back in business! Business almost as usual all those years ago.

For the last 16 years we have been doing what we should be doing, giving public rides for enjoyment and promoting model engineering. The white radiation proof suits and helmets we wear is little price to pay. At least they keep the oil out of your hair!

The nuclear powered BBQ did a great job in cooking our sustainably grown healthy produce of artificial vegetables and methane free livestock, and we look forward to next year's anniversary where we hope to use the de-suspend tools to bring back some of our suspended animation ancestors and see just what it was like back in them olden days.



Above: Martin Yule drifts downgrade with Mountaineer and a good load during the January Running Day.
 Below: John Lyons and 1915 double heads with John Tulloch and 2904 with Guard Bernie on the November running day.



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 Track location is Anthony Rd, West Ryde adjacent to the car park behind West Ryde shops. 33° 48' 15.99" S; 151° 05' 12.78" E
Telephone: (02) 9874 8696. **Postal Address:** The Secretary, PO Box 124, West Ryde, NSW, 1685
Web Page Address: <http://www.slsls.asn.au>
 Public Running Day is the **THIRD** Saturday in each month from 1.30pm. Entry is \$2 adults, \$1 children. Rides are \$1 each.
 To ride on the trains, enclosed footwear must be worn.