

'Newsletter'

Vol.30. No. 2.
May 2002.

Running Day Reports.

February. The forecast was for a hot day after early showers and a chance of an afternoon storm. It was just that early but the humidity was fairly high and the early showers probably kept the numbers down. On the elevated track Jim Leishman ran the Ps4 pacific with three cars and a van, double headed Brians, Carter with "Perseverance" and Rawlinson Blowfly, both 0-4-0's took a couple of cars. Brian Carter pointed out that it was at one stage a triple Brian as Brian Hurst was guard. (an interesting aside. Late in the afternoon a young lady asked, "did I know where Brian had gone" I was about to ask "Brian who" when she added "Hurst" problem solved. Ed.) Brian Rawlinson's Blowfly retired early with some injector problems and the Carter locomotive continued on its own. David Thomas ran his newly acquired B10 in revenue service with one car. It's a very attractive locomotive with its green livery and polished brass dome cover. At the end of the day there were some problems with the stub points, the heat had caused some expansion. I was surprised at this as I had taken a good bit off the tracks some 12 months ago with an angle grinder when we had the same trouble.

There was only one 6 car train on the ground level and that was Ray Lee's VR S class with Ray and Matt sharing the driving. They ran on the outer as did Bernie Courtenay and the SMR 10 class hauling three cars and a van.

On the inner track Henry, TGR R class, and Max, "Bitza" ran separate trains. Henry took four cars and a van, while, max ran a three car train with a van. Mick Murray ran "Tinkerbelle" with two cars and a four wheel flat wagon carrying a load of pipes.

The shade was very popular, there were three party groups and we provided 1486 rides.

The new signalling cabling ran well and without incident, although some low volts will need to be addressed. The feet issue was again tackled hard at the gate and hence compliance on the trains was pretty good. One of the more difficult customers (who eventually just left) said 'but its summer!'

Now, about the afternoon storms. I left the grounds just after 5.00pm. Heading west on to the high ground I could see the storm clouds out to the southeast and thought, they will miss us at Seven Hills. Driving home I was facing a clear sky and said to Diana as we had tea "the storm will miss us". Shortly after 6.00pm. I was at the kitchen sink facing west south west and noticed some dark clouds just in sight, said, we might get a bit of a storm after all, as I went out to the yard to have a better look. Looking east the storm clouds were very black with every thing swirling around at the edges. Within a short time the wind was incredible and the rain, when it started, was at about twenty degrees to the horizontal. The electricity went off at about 6.25pm. By 7.15pm. the sun was out again and the sirens started, emergency vehicles going every where. That night the envelopes for the posted Newsletters were addressed by gas camp light. Sunday morning when I got out I was amazed at the damage that had occurred, there were trees down every where. We got our electricity back on at about 6.15pm. on Monday, about 48 hours, Jim Mulholland, who does not live very far away had to wait an extra few hours and my next door neighbour, on a different circuit, another 12 hours. So much for the thought "the storm will miss us"

March.

For early autumn the day could not have been better. It was clear and hot, there were many party groups with the shaded areas taken up early in the afternoon.

On the ground level Peter Shiels, C3901, ran a six car train on the outer, there was a problem with the leading bogie approaching the points connecting the station loop to the main. This was closely observed by our experts during the afternoon and then later when passenger working was finished on that line. The second train on the outer was a two car and van consist hauled by Max Gay with "Bitza". On the inner track the Ray Lee C3803 was driven by Matt and Ray while the TGR "R" class of Henry Spencer powered the second train.

The elevated track provided a good display of motive power. Jim Leishman's Ps4 only ran for a short time, as the injectors were not picking up in a reliable manner. Jim and Dennis Mulholland ran the Pannier with one car and a van all afternoon. Two cars and a van were the loading for Paul Taffa's "Hunslet" and Brian Carter's 0-4-0 "Perseverance" ran with three cars. David Thomas ran his B10 as pilot for the "Hunslet" but retired with a steaming problem and spent the rest of the afternoon in loco and on the siding.

Ken Baker is back in the state and had the N&W J class boiler on show. The bits and pieces are all there now and the stays are being prepared all ready for silver soldering. The regulator and superheater elements were in place.

Earlier in the day, before the public running, the Allison 'Mona' ran trials for the convention, all was in order. so she went home to be packed away for the trip.

There were 1706 rides given, which was a bit of a surprise as there was a slow start (probably due to the local West Ryde Easter Fair), but things picked up and we were still giving rides at 5pm.

The day was injury free despite a plague of derailments, but hopefully the causes will be recognised and addressed.

Certainly regular volunteers are needed for track work!

On the injury front (if anyone is interested in statistics) the cumulative total is .033%, Our last 12 months rolling average is now .013%, the lowest I can recall, and is an indication of a current good performance.

April.

This was a really great day. The weather was excellent for mid autumn and the crowd was probably boosted by some advertising courtesy of the S.M. Herald promoting things to do in the holidays that cost less than \$25.00. There were lots of groups having parties, one group in particular ran a pirate theme, and so there were quite a few well made up pirates both young and old, easy to tell who was in your party. Late in the afternoon Jim Leishman transported a whole train load of pirates and the one sitting right in front of the guard told me that he was four and it was his party, the Pirate of Honour, no doubt.

We had two visiting locomotives on the ground level roster. Ross Bishop with his Fowler 0-6-2 "Toneya" ran on the inner track while John Hill with his 4469 took a six car train on the outer. John had some concerns early in the afternoon but after a short maintenance session in loco he was under way for the rest of the day. While the 44 class was in for maintenance Bernie Courtenay ran a train with his SMR 10 class on the outer track then went up on to the elevated for the rest of the afternoon. John Hurst steamed the 4-8-2 on the outer with John B. sharing the driving. Henry, with his TGR "R" class provided the second service on the inner.

As previously mentioned Bernie's 10 class was on the elevated for the bulk of the afternoon. Jim Leishman's Ps4 4-6-2 had a trouble free afternoon, injectors and pump not a problem. The third train for elevated running was Brian Carter, 0-4-0 "Perseverance" hauling two cars and a van.

On the day we provided 2676 rides which is the best for the nine years that Warwick has on his computer records.

There were quite a lot of pleasant comments (and smiles) from those departing, and overall I think everyone had a good time. It was hard work on the gate, and in the signal box where several point troubles made their presence felt. There were also a few derailments but no injuries reported, which is good.

The track to the traverser was in place and proved a big benefit over lifting the cars for the elevated track.

SLSLS Email List

Now we have an email group of 26 members! The best and easiest way to be added is by sending Warwick an email by using the email link on the SLSLS home page. You will then be pummelled with up to date information on what happens each Saturday, plus reminders of up and coming events!

Anniversary Book

Yes! There are still copies available. We regularly sell a few each running day, and they will all be gone in 2 years! Cost is \$7.50. See Warwick or the ticket seller on running days.

Annual General Meeting

The June meeting will be the Annual General Meeting. All members are encouraged to attend on this night to here the various reports and participate in the election of officers for the coming 12 months. At this stage, all current Directors have indicated their willingness to continue in their roles and hence offer themselves for re-election.

Name Badges

Another list is on the notice board. If you want one, just put your name on the list. Remember to spell it, as you would want it to appear on the badge! Orders will be placed when the list reaches half a dozen or so names. (Currently only three names on the list).

Drink Prices

A message from the ladies, the lemon mineral waters in the fridge are \$1.20 to members (\$1.30 to the public). Other drinks remain at \$1.

Loco & Rolling Stock News

Some parts of the J Class rebuild from John Tulloch have been seen, including a very fancy brake shoe. With such standards, this engine will be transformed! Ray Lee ran his brand spanking new 30 class 3112 on Saturday 27 April. This loco has been under construction for just 12 months. It has some novel features including tanks of lead, slip eccentric valve gear (including a quadrant gear reverser), and runs on wet steam. You oil the eccentrics by squirting oil in the side tank fillers. The side tanks themselves are full of lead. In conjunction with the loco Ray has constructed a 6 wheel gin to carry the water and driver. Both the gin and the loco are magnificent pieces of work. After some final tweaks and painting, it will be a 6 car train loco on the running days! Hopefully Ray will produce a newsletter article in due course.

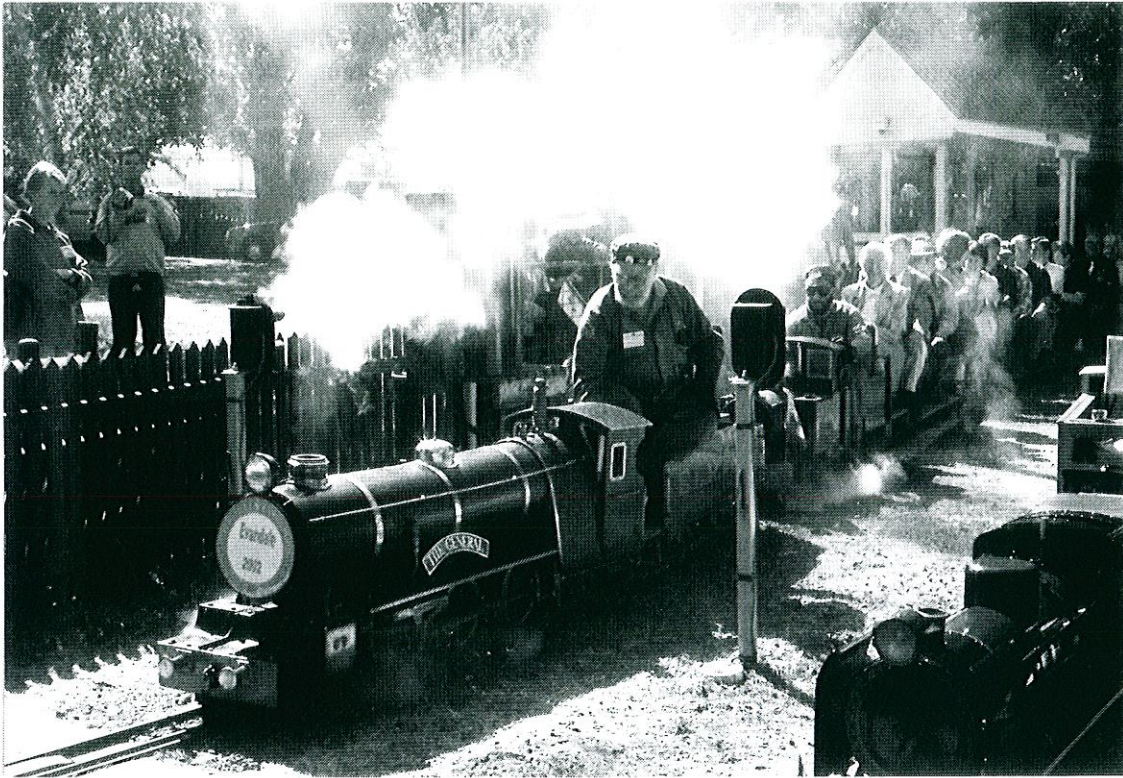
David Lee has shown his Commonwealth Railways louvre van, which he intends to use as a riding truck behind his Ruston. This is a fine piece of work, with some very nice bogies and TIG welding, and some specially sculptured sides representing the louvres.

2002 Convention at Evandale Light Railway and Steam Society, Tasmania.**Reported by Warwick Allison**

The convention was a very friendly and relaxing time. Without a doubt the Evandale Society had worked very hard, and this effort continued throughout the convention in pleasing the visitors. Full credit to Peter & Dianne Lawson who were the chief organisers. There were reminiscences for Greg Waddle, who passed away before the convention, on several occasions. Greg was the initiator of the Evandale Society (the track is on grounds provided by Greg), and was a gifted and talented creative motivator.

Running was easy with an absence of congestion on the track. Most drivers opted for running on the 5 and 7¼ inch multi-gauge track, as the separate 5 inch had some tight curves. There was an absence of those excessively large locos, and everyone was very friendly. There were 4 or 5 locos on the elevated, one Simplex and the others 3½ inch gauge. My 'Mona' ran well, and was accompanied by Bill Chalmers with his heritage 'Pacific'. The other locos were from the Hobart Society, a group who specialises in the smaller locos.

To overcome Mona's tendency to set fire to the grass, an end for the ashpan was fashioned up from an aluminium foil pie dish. It proved quite effective!



Above. The official train was headed by "The General", a very old locomotive that had done the fair ground circuits until restored by Greg Waddle.

Both Photographs W.Allison.

Below. Mark Robinson is watering Warwick's "Mona". Behind is Bill Chambers on Mark's "Blowfly", and behind that is Derek, the President of the Hobart Society, driving a "William" on the Hobart Society's track.





Above. John and Bruce Hagan with their 7 1/4" gauge Great Western 4-2-2 and 4-4-0

Both Photographs W.Allison.

Below. This 5" gauge version of a Hornby O Gauge clockwork train, complete with Wallace and Gromit and built by Greg Waddle, was a favourite.



The Newcastle lot were there as a crowd (probably the biggest single club contingent, other than the host club), and as always they were a lot of fun. Representatives were everywhere you went! They added their own element to the fun!

The AMBSC meeting was very short with no business to conduct. The AALS meeting was almost as short. The SLSLS motion for constitutional and bylaw amendments to the postal voting system was adopted overwhelmingly. Some papers were presented that gave the for and against arguments in regard to incorporation of the AALS.

At the Sunday evening "Bogie Awards" The Most Popular loco and the Bolton Trophy went to Ian Davies (Wandong and Moorabbin) for his 5inch gauge Heavy Harry. No traction engines attended, so this trophy was not presented (Martin-come to South Australia next Easter!), and the Southern Federation Trophy for the Model Engineer with a significant contribution to the hobby went to Chas Goodwin of the North West Model Engineers, Tasmania.

Andrew Allison received an award for setting the most fires. The grass had been slashed and was tinder dry. The elevated track was of open construction and any debris coming out the back of the ashpan played havoc with the grass!

Next year 2003 the convention will be at Penfield, South Australia, with the following year 2004 at Bunberry, Western Australia.

Still More about Feet (the ongoing saga!)

A permanent sign has now been provided at the entry gate. This means that by the time a customer pays for entry they will have passed 3 signs about enclosed footwear!! Even with this though, there are another 2 signs before they reach the station, and some people still want to try us on! Despite our best efforts it is still a strain (particularly so on the April running day) and still further ideas are being considered. One idea floated at the February meeting is to roster 2 people at the gate, one for the money and one to police and verbally advise every adult where their footwear is not up to expectations. This would formalise the arrangements that have been happening since December.

Station masters need to be vigilant, and especially if queues are long, advising people early that they have a problem as soon as they join the queue will obviate the anx that is caused when they finally reach the station only to be told, sorry, no ride. If the queues are really long, (such as in April), then a roving member on foot patrol, would be a helpful solution. It would be good for members not fulfilling other duties to be able to take the initiative on this.

As a consequence of a bit of unpleasantness experienced at the April running day your Directors have pondered how to better address the thorny question of where the dividing line is between sandals and enclosed footwear. While our preference is for fully enclosed (ie no holes or gaps anywhere), some sandals do provide a good deal of protection, but may have some very small holes in them. If people present for rides with such footwear, there is a lessor risk if they ride on the elevated where there is no possibility of them dragging their feet and ramming ballast between their toes. Accordingly the best approach would be a "We really do require a fully enclosed shoe with no holes anywhere, but on this occasion, you could ride on the elevated where there is less risk of a problem, and you'll know what to wear next time."

Bernie is looking at arranging a display board with some acceptable and non-acceptable shoes on display. Please note also that the enclosed business means the back of the shoe also. Shoes with no back are liable to come off too easily.

Works Reports

Elevated Track

The new approach track for the elevated carriage shed was still incomplete, but at least functional for the April running day. This saved a lot of effort and after completion and galvanising, should be very useful. The stub points crossover has had some work done to make the facing point lock a bit less liable to jam with dirt, which washes in. The channel iron and cranks are certainly looking better with our painter's efforts!

Ground Level Railway

Work on track upgrading has continued with a new track bed and resleepering being done for the outer main station exit pointwork. This was a difficult area, and hopefully will be better after it has settled in. It certainly looks a lot better and the super is now in the correct direction. Some track work has also been done at the

bottom curve to correct some more settling adjacent to the concrete drain and to adjust the super on the inner main.

A reminder to all members-in the event of any train being brought to a stand in the section the first priority is to protect the rear of the train. To do this, the red flag is to be placed in the flag holders provided on every guards van, and placed next to (and NOT on) the track a suitable distance behind the train. Remember to remove the flag when you are ready to depart!

Grounds Improvements

One compressed cement panel on the entrance bridge, which was delaminating, was replaced by a spare we had on hand. The new panel was embedded into silicon sealer, which solved the banging as kids bounded across. Maybe the other sheets should be treated like this before repainting!

Fencing has been provided around the spare track stockpile under the bridge. This is as a result of a small child who slipped through the defences on the March running day.

Approval has also been given for the replacement of the fence on the eastern side of the grounds opposite the loco depot.

The report of our Inspecting Engineer has consolidated issues about the northern end of the grounds. Members at the April meeting would have discussed some of the issues, some of which have been raised before. The main issue is mixing public with moving cars, access behind the fencing, trip hazards, steep bridges etc. All suggestions as to how to improve this area will be welcome at the June meeting. One option is to provide some fencing on the south side of the elevated (where the chain hangs) and prevent the public from accessing the area all together. It would need a gate for member access to the aluminium footway. This fencing at the ramp would need to be easily removable (such as the posts slipping into pipes in the ground. The bridge would be removed and the remaining concrete steps demolished. Members would be aware that Clause 7A of our Rules requires a 75% vote of members at the meeting being in agreement for the demolition of any structure. Please consider.

Greening and Environmental

David Thomas has been planting and maintaining the trees and shrubs. In time this will bring some pleasant summer shade and hide some of the less pretty views, as well as softening the harshness of some aspects of the site engineering!

From Our Inspecting Engineer

Annual Inspection of Non-boiler Plant and Equipment - 2002

The annual inspection of the Society's grounds and facilities was completed on 23 March 2002, as required by the Australian Association of Live Steamers Code of Practice for the Operation of Miniature Railways, Road Vehicles and Plant, "Owner/user Inspection of Non-boiler Plant and Equipment".

The Society's Policy, General Appendix, Qualifications, Assessment of Competency, Hazards and Controls analysis and Maintenance policy and supporting documents were found to comply with the recommendations of the Australian Association of Live Steamers Code of Practice for the Operation of Miniature Railways, Road Vehicles and Plant

The Society's non-boiler Plant and Equipment and associated records were also inspected and a number of items were assigned priorities for attention reflecting potential risk exposure according to the following scale:

1. Urgent – for immediate attention
2. Attention under 3 months
3. Attention 3 to 6 months
4. Attention 6 to 12 months
5. Policy matter

The full inspection report including the list of items for attention is available for perusal by members in the Clubhouse and a report on the inspection and findings was provided to members at the April General Meeting.

The level of interest shown by way of discussion and questioning underlines the importance placed by members on the need for managing the Society's risk exposure.

Following on from the inspection, the planning, recording and reporting of rolling stock and infrastructure maintenance has been reviewed and a new record system is being introduced. There is now a dedicated folder in the Clubhouse for recording all defects, maintenance and replacement work carried out to the rolling stock, track, bridges, stations, fencing, etc.

There is a set of instructions included in the folder and Members are asked to record any defects noted, or work completed, on the rolling stock and infrastructure on the appropriate sheets. If assistance is required in filling out the record sheets, Warwick or myself can assist.

On Running Days, the folder will be in the Signal Box and Members are requested to report any defects noticed on the day to the signallers so that they can be recorded for attention.

The introduction of the new maintenance records and ongoing attention to our rolling stock and infrastructure will assist us in improving the quality of our facilities and in effectively managing risk.

Mick Murray
Inspecting Engineer
28 April 2002

Presidents Breakfast and Sick Kids Day.

Not wanting to break with tradition, your President was late (as usual) to the breakfast, which was in full swing by the time of my arrival at 8.30am. Of course the advantage in this was that I was able to walk straight in and have a wonderful brekkie of snags, eggs, bacon and onions. Toast was available, and Jennifer made some pikelets that were devoured with jam and squirty cream.

I would suggest only a moderate role up of members, but this was no reason to leave any leftovers and everything that was cooked was consumed!

Those who missed out should remember this day for next year!

Following on was our charity run for Malcolm Sargent. Only five locos in attendance, being Henry's R, and Bernie's 10 class on the ground level, and on the elevated was David's B10, Jim's PS4 and David Lee's Ruston. David let some of the kids have a drive, and it was a popular move!

During the day, there was lots of singing and dancing, large outsize characters on the trains, plenty of balloons, and everyone having a good time. Some of the characters that were there were:

Luna, Sailor Moon, Sailor Mercury, Madeline, Penny the something, Curly the Koala, and Treble Clef the Malcolm Sargent Mascot. If you thought they were fun you can see them on tele (I think) Saturday mornings channel 7 (no excuse for not coming to the club, we have a tele too!)

The weather was glorious, the company pleasant, the day was lazy (for members) and active for kids, and everyone had a great time. This is our premiere charity event, as it actually is for the kids themselves, not just money. It really deserves our best support.

Wednesday Members Get Together .

For members lucky enough to be able to get to the grounds on Wednesdays bring your locomotive on the **First Wednesday** each month any time in the morning, run light engine, pull a string of riding trucks, load them as you wish or bring your scale rolling stock - anything goes.

Simple BBQ lunch arranged on the spot for all who come. (cost to be shared among the eaters.)

After lunch run till your leave pass expires.

We had a trial run on the 1st. May and although there were only three starters they all enjoyed the day in perfect weather.

Come along and enjoy your locomotive on our grounds in peace and quiet.

Visitors from other clubs or your friends all welcome.

All inquiries

Henry Spencer and Brian Rawlinson.

Steam and Railway Attractions in Tasmania. *or Warwick's Travel Tales.*

The Evandale convention was of course the ideal reason to spend some time looking around. It is not particularly easy or cheap to get to Tassie, and there is not a lot of information available on the mainland about what goes on. No doubt this is fuelled by an inherent lack of knowledge of the geography. After a good look around it is my opinion that they are ahead of NSW in operating steam. They seem to be less bogged down with red tape and are busy actually doing things! As well as the current attractions there is a large amount of old formations and industrial sites that are worth a visit, just to see how the place developed. Many of these still have stories to tell, with relics abounding. I didn't see them all, and I already have a full itinerary for next time! I will avoid giving everything away, but will give a brief rundown on the places I visited that have a railway, or associated interest. They are a good starting point. They are in clockwise order, starting at Devonport. Open up a map of Tasmania and follow the President's Travels.

Devonport: Don River Railway runs everyday with steam on Sundays. We had an MA for the short trip to Coles Beach and return. The Don has a new magnificent workshop full of engines, some in various states of restoration and all looking well looked after. There are no restrictions on looking around either!

Sheffield: A local group has a 2 ft gauge Krauss that operates on the first weekend of the month.

Deloraine: There is a park by the river with an E class, 4-6-0. Watch your head. I noticed a lot of Tassie engines seemed a bit low on the cab roof corners.

Westbury: Pearns Steam World is worth a look with 2 big sheds, one full of steam traction and portable engines. Most have been restored.

Launceston: Inveresk is the old Launceston railway workshops. Now partly an art gallery, the old blacksmiths area has been preserved intact! Complete with recorded clangs and bangs. The other buildings house a variety of displays (not all railway), but worth a look. Outside is the old weighbridge complete with a H class loco chassis.

Hillwood: Actually a strawberry farm, but with a H class for climbing on, plus some wagons. The strawberry wines and vinegars are recommended!

Richmond: The miniature village of old Hobart Town plus the oldest stone bridge in Australia, make a visit here worthwhile. (The bakery was pretty good too!)

Hobart: The Tasmanian Transport Museum is at Glenorchy, and is open weekends. This is a site next to the mainline, but was developed completely for the museum, which includes trolley buses, ordinary buses, and railway equipment. The items, including the engines, are well maintained and looked after. All cab fittings are included, and there is no trouble getting in and having a look either. They provided rail motor rides up and down the yard, and the local members were very talkative and helpful. Also in Hobart we visited the Hobart Miniature Locomotive Society. This club has a new elevated track for 3½ and 5 inch gauges. The track pillars and beams are made of rolled channel sections. The track is steel bar on edge pressed into slotted treated pine sleepers. These appeared to be decking. The track is very smooth and with the transition curves, allows a reasonable speed. Inside this track is their older smaller elevated track. I saw a 'William' 2-6-2, a Maisie, a Rob Roy, plus my Mona. The only 5 inch engine was Mark Robinson's (ILS) Blowfly. A very friendly crowd. They do not open to the public.

The Maritime Museum in the city is worth a look, and InCat the big catamaran builder, are up the Derwent near the Bowan Bridge.

Bush Mill at Port Arthur: This is a well advertised site. It is well engineered in 15 inch gauge and the K class Garrett is worth seeing. The ride is pretty good too! I found the mill part a bit ho hum, but this is probably a result of seeing plenty of this sort of thing at home. If the mill was working it might have been a bit different! At least there was a display that matched the different Tassie timbers in their raw form, and after polishing.

GIVE AWAY.

Brian Kilgour has a "Merlin" automotive valve grinder and would like it to have a new home. It was set up to recondition fuel valve gear on one of the ships he sailed on. Brian can deliver the machine if needed. If you are interested talk to Brian.

School Days #2.

A former industrial arts colleague from my school is now Deputy Principal at a high school on the other side of the Blue Mountains. He is very professional, great with his practical skills but a bit long winded at times and has no time for fools. I often said, "count to ten then go to fifteen." One of my current colleagues has relatives in the same town, Uncle is Deputy Principal of the primary school while Aunty is Infants Mistress. They had been counting the days for a certain student, let's call him Charlie (not his real name) to graduate to the high school. So this year on the first day for the new Year 7 students they all assemble and are probably welcomed by the Year Adviser and the Principal. The Deputy then gives the run down on what to do and not what to do, about 30 minutes, most are lost after five minutes. At the end of his talk the Deputy asks are there any questions. Silence for a short time then Charlie pipes up, "Questions! Any ***** questions! You have just bored the **** out of us for the last half an hour and you expect us to have ***** questions." We did not find out what happened but I hope the Deputy counted to twenty!

Diary

4 June	Annual General Meeting
5 June	(Wednesday) Members Mid Week Run
8,9,10 June	Hot Pot at Illawarra Live Steamers
15 June	Public Running Day
29 June	Central Coast Steam Model Co-Op Ltd Interclub Visit
2 July	Directors Meeting
3 July	(Wednesday) Members Mid Week Run
20 July	Public Running Day
6 August	Members Meeting
7 August	(Wednesday) Members Mid Week Run
17 August	Public Running Day & next newsletter.

Garden Roster.

June '02.	H.Spencer, R.Collett, G.Croudace, W.Fletcher, M.Gay, S.Larkin, D.Lee, B.Muston, J.Noller, P.Sayer.
July '02.	W.Allison, N.Amy, R.Barlow, B.Kilgour, B.Millner, D.Mulholland, J.Mulholland, M.Murray, S.Murray, V.Scicluna, P.Shiels.
Aug. '02.	B.Courtenay, K.Baker, B.Carter, J.Grierson, M.Haynes, L.Pascoe, J.Sorrensen, N.Sorrensen, D.Thomas, P.Taffa.
Sept. '02.	J.L.Hurst, J.B.Hurst C.Bunnik, A.Cottrell, J.Leishman, J.Lyons, B.Peake, M.Tyson, M.Yule.

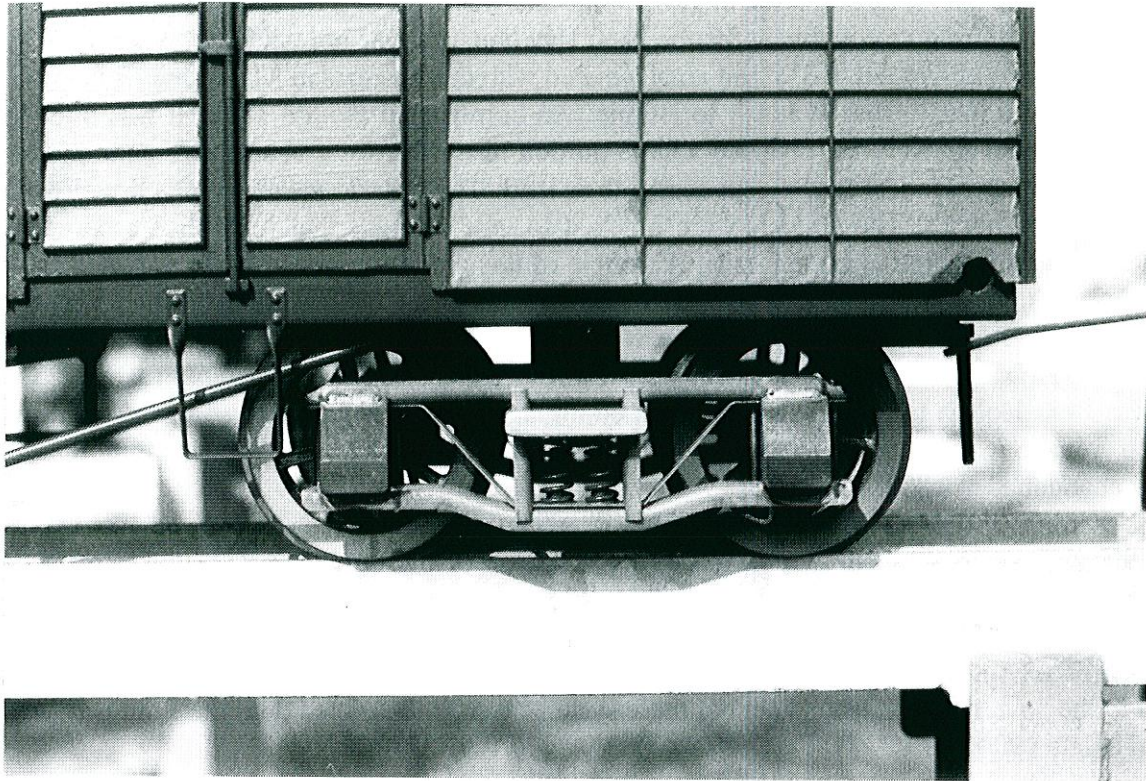
Gate Roster.

June. Max.Gay. July. Mark Gibbons. August. Maurie Haynes. September. John B.Hurst.

Editorial.

It would be rather pleasant to have some extra material to vary the content of the Newsletter, a few notes, diagrams or photos would be great to add a bit of variety. See what you can do, please.

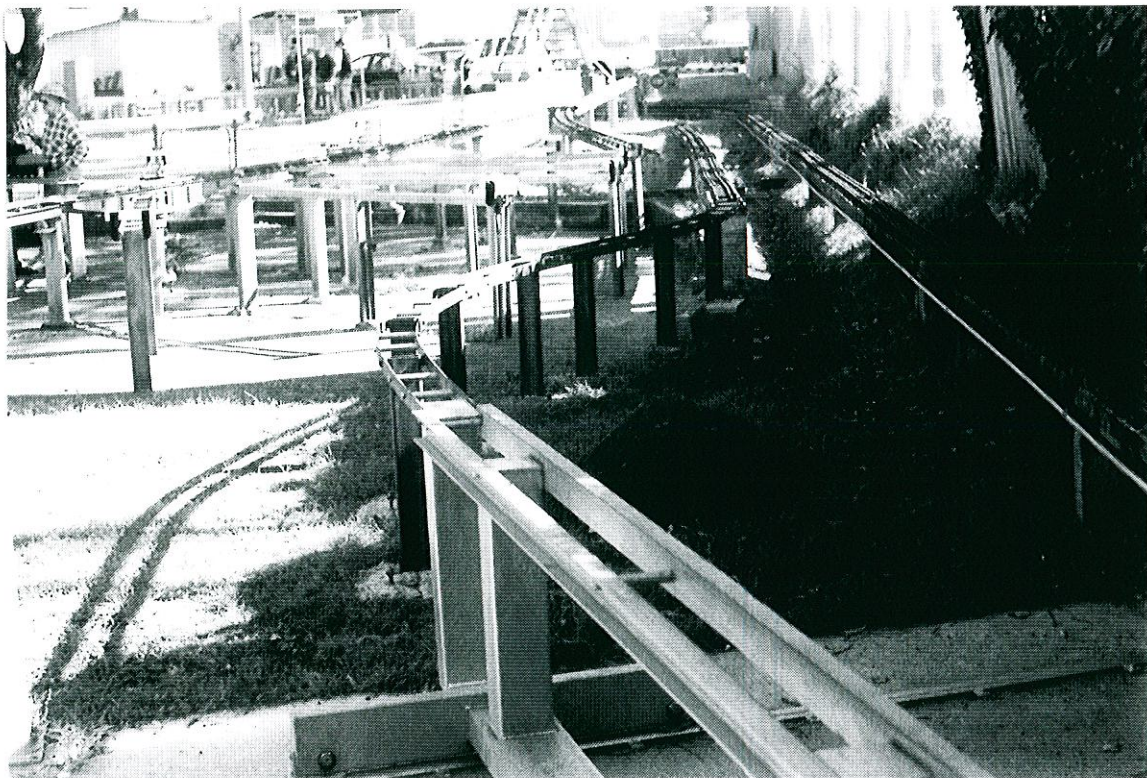
John Lyons.



Above. A well constructed bogie for David Lee's Commonwealth Railways van which will serve as a riding truck.

Both Photos John Lyons.

Below. The track alignment that will take the hard work out of setting up the elevated trains on running days. It still needs to be galvanised and fixed permanently in place.



A Potted Tasmanian Railway History: The first 'railway' in Australia was the convict powered wooden railed line at Port Arthur in 1836. The next effort was the Launceston to Deloraine line, built to get the agricultural produce of the area to market in 1867. This line was built to 5'3" gauge. By the late 1870s it was in trouble and was offering its equipment for the Emu Bay line, but was not taken up. The last 5'3" train was in 1888, the line being converted to 3'6" and amalgamated with the Tasmanian Main Line Company.

The first Emu Bay Railway from Waratah to Burnie was constructed around 1878. It was built by the Van Dieman's Land Company who had obtained a large portion of north west Tasmania for agricultural purposes, that never really prospered. The railway ran across their land. This was 3' gauge, was laid with wooden rails, and was worked by horses. The sleepers were notched to take the rails that were then secured by wedges. Seems a lot more work than flat bottom rails! A sample of this type of construction is provided in the Zeehan museum. As the output from Mt Bischoff (at Waratah) increased the line had reached capacity and the decision was taken to relay the line in 3'6" gauge, iron rails and steam power. This enlightened decision was to conform to the Hobart to Launceston railway then being privately built to 3'6". The Tasmanian Main Line Railway was from Hobart to Launceston and opened about 1875. Dual gauge ran from about Evandale into Launceston from 1876, sharing the alignment with the Launceston to Deloraine Railway until the broad gauge was finally abandoned in 1888.

By the 1890s railway construction was in full swing. Because of the difficult terrain the Government built a 3'6" gauge railway from Zeehan to Strahan in 1892, in order to get the mine products to port, and then some 2' gauge lines from Zeehan into the surrounding districts, the first of which, the Dundas tramway, was initially privately run. The Abt was built in 1898 to connect the Queenstown mines with the port at Strahan, and connected to the government Zeehan line, but these systems were still isolated until the Emu Bay was extended to Zeehan in late 1900.

As the depression years came and went, the mines were being worked out and closed and railway operations from Zeehan were becoming less and less viable.

Until the 1960s the railways were the only transport mode on the west coast, the roads being inferior and unsuitable for heavy vehicles. While the reason for closing the Abt line were increasing running and maintenance costs, it was no coincidence that its closure occurred simultaneously with a new upgraded road being built! The Zeehan to Strahan line closed during the same period and Strahan was no longer a major port servicing the mines.

Mine closure has been a way of life on the west coast. A recent announcement was made that the Rosebery mine is closing and it is now the Queenstown mine that transports its product by road to the railhead south of Rosebery that is keeping the railway operating.

Newsletter' is Published by: Sydney Live Steam Locomotive Society Co-op Ltd.

Track location is Anthony Rd, West Ryde adjacent to the car park behind West Ryde shopping centre. Telephone (02) 9874 8696

Postal Address: The Secretary, PO Box 124 West Ryde NSW 2114

Web Page Address: <http://www.pnc.com.au/~wallison/slsls.htm>

Public Running Day is the THIRD Saturday in each month from 1.30pm. Entry is \$2 adults, \$1 children. Rides are 50c each