

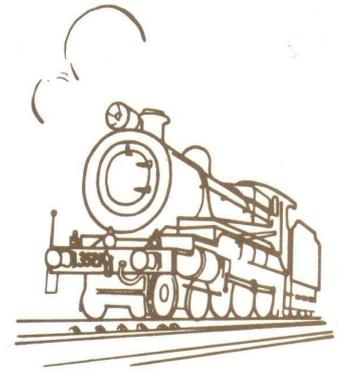
# Sydney Live Steam Locomotive Society

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

## 'Newsletter'

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May 2008



03/05/2008

Mountaineer waits on the outer main while the B10 & Perseverance convey a load on the inner main on our RedKite day. The new inner main carriage shed trackwork is nearing completion.

### Running Day Reports

#### February 2008 Running Day Report.

This running day stayed cloudy with a little bit of sunshine. There had been early rain in some of the eastern suburbs as well as a light shower at Seven Hills. As the afternoon went on the cloud started to disperse and we enjoyed more sun. The some of the crowd stayed on and the last trains were after 5.00pm. Mike Tyson was on the gate and was very busy at the start of the afternoon but soon had a relaxing time. The party groups seem to be getting more organized, one had their own gazebo and another came with two plastic dining tables and a pile of plastic chairs, recliner arm chairs included. The grounds

looked very good, the lack of sunshine during the preceding week had slowed the rate of growth of the vegetation. We had a small grass fire during the afternoon. This was on the bottom curve of the outer main on the area that had been dosed with "Roundup" sometime earlier. Lionel stamped it out to bring it under control.

The elevated track had a very good line up of locomotives. John Hurst ran 5" gauge King Richard III with visitor Ian Ramsay's freshly painted Don Young designed 0-4-0 Rail motor on a four car train. Jim Lieshman ran the ten wheeler with three cars while Brian Carter 0-4-0 "Perseverance" hauled two cars. David Thomas B10 2-6-0 and myself with Z1915 each ran a single car train. The



**Brian Carter with Perseverance & 2 cars on the elevated on the February running day.**

new “King” ran well, a short stop was had in the loop to sort out the hydrostatic lubricator early in the run and then at other times during the afternoon the B10 and “Perseverance” had a spell.

On the inner main Ross Bishop ran his Fowler cane locomotive “Toneya” on one train with the second hauled by Ray Lee with C3803 and Matt Lee driving C3506. When Ray took the C38 back to loco for an early departure John Tulloch and the “J” class Z2904 ran the rest of the afternoon. The outer track saw the Mulholland clan running C3901, Jim and Dominic shared the driving while Natalie enjoyed a ride as well. The C39 came off about

light in a shunt signal turned out to be a pile of ants dirt built up on the globe.

We had a few train control problems, it was good to have sufficient motive power to be able to run a reliable service!

It was good to see Lionel at the grounds, he was recovering after a spell in hospital. Ross Bishop showed off some parts he has made for a large scale McLaren traction engine, one rear wheel and a compound cylinder block, excellent quality workmanship.

### March 2008 Running Day Report.

**Martin Yule & Mountaineer drift downhill while 3506 with Matt Lee and 3803 start the uphill climb on the inner main.**



Our first run for autumn 2008 was probably the hottest running day we had experienced since early 2007. The grass had got away a bit since the gardening day so Barry Millner was at work early with a mower to make the general areas tidier. The shady areas of the grounds were very popular, another group had their own gazebo. This is becoming more common. When you think you have seen everything you can be amazed, one lot wheeled all their party gear in using two Woollies shopping trolleys! Martin was our gate keeper and after a very busy spell at opening time was able to enjoy a very easy afternoon. Elevated running was not as extensive as last month. Jim Leishman had the 4-6-2 Ps4 coupled up to three cars but after a few laps was forced to retire with steaming problems. Brian Carter, “Perseverance” 0-4-0 double

headed with David Thomas B10, 2-6-0, coupled to three cars. I ran Z1915 with one car, running till very late. During the afternoon I had one train load of young fellows. It just reminded me of what I do not miss by not teaching Year 8 or 9 boys any more.

John Hurst came well prepared for elevated or ground level running. John decided he would be best utilized on the ground level and ran 4-8-2 "Mountain" on the outer track, Max Gay assisted with the driving. KRIII resided in the elevated locomotive depot for the afternoon. The second train on the outer was run with Ray Lee, 4-6-4 C3112 and Matt Lee 4-6-0 C3506, they ran till about 3.15pm. then returned to loco.

On the inner David Lee had the Central West set with his double GMs. They certainly look good back to back. This train had V1224 shunted onto the train before taking passengers. The shunt was unusual and the GMs split the points. Most embarrassing, especially with some knowledgeable visitors watching events in the Signal Box! They ran for a while, then the GMs were uncoupled and sent to the outer main. Eventually John Tulloch with Mountaineer made up the second train on the inner and this ran until close of business. Passenger hauling on the inner started a bit late.

On the outer main David and the GM's hauled two cars until there was a traction motor problem.

Before the day started, Mick and Henry were replacing some broken wire trips. They devised a new scheme to install the wire which should make it a lot easier to replace in the future.

The total for the day was 1736 rides, which was a below average result for a March due to not having a full complement of locos.

### April 2008 Running Day Report.

The week prior to this running day was wet and not too pleasant and the forecast for Saturday was not optimistic. I was even considering not loading the 19 but eventually did so when the weather brightened a bit at Seven Hills. At Wentworthville on the way to the grounds there was a shower but it cleared by Harris Park. The weather was not our only problem. Between morning tea and lunch time it was discovered that we had lost one phase of our power supply. The fault was on Integral Energy's side of the fuses and when they were contacted we were told that we should have help within six hours. It was one and a half hours to opening time, no compressed air, no signal box and all the ice cream had melted. John H, Martin and Graeme departed to round up some 240V compressors and a power lead was run from the outlet on the power box at the station foot bridge to the signal box.

Steam raising began with some makeshift methods. Some extra long chimney extensions were tried and David Thomas attempted to use an air bed pump, with some success. Martin was first back with a



A well detailed Railmotor built by Ian Ramsey visited us in February.

couple of compressors and one was immediately connected to the V1224. John and Graeme were back soon after and so was the Integral Energy man. Within about twenty minutes we were back to normal.

I had started raising steam with Graeme's compressor but swapped to the ground supply and we were able to load the compressor back in the van. We were not too late starting running.

Graeme ran 4-6-2 2401 on one of the outer trains, the second was hauled by C3803 with Ray Lee at the regulator. The inner track was covered by Warwick, V1224 on

John Hurst and the Mountain work up the outer main while on the inner platform twin GMs of David Lee triple head with V1224.





**Graeme Kirkby oils around on a wet March running day.**

one train. The second train was hauled by the Mountaineer driven by Barry Tulloch and Martin Yule in shifts through the afternoon.

The elevated track was the small engine domain, we ran two single car trains, David Thomas, B10 2-6-0 and myself with 0-6-0 Z1915. John Hurst's King Richard III and Jim Leishman's 10 wheeler remained in the elevated depot and John Tulloch eventually arrived with the J class. The "J" was driven on the elevated for a few laps after David and myself had retired to loco.

Bernie was on the gate covering for Warwick so that he could drive. He was busy at the start but then had a rather lonely afternoon.

About half an hour after we started running so did the rain start and it kept up for thirty to forty minutes. Some of our visitors headed for home. One party group quickly relocated under the foot bridge while others sheltered under the trees. One group were well organised with a gazebo. All the drivers were prepared with wet weather gear and so we kept up the service.

We managed to provide 1402 rides for the afternoon which considering the conditions was not too bad. We

**At least the driver is OK!! The service continues despite the conditions!**



had full trains till well after 4.00pm.

It was good to see Henry back at the grounds. He had excavated the conduit to the carriage shed looking for last weeks loss of power. This was discovered and was due to damage by a mattock!

It was a cold, wet afternoon but despite the early problems we managed to keep everything going. I know the locomotives always look very good in cold and damp conditions and we have to concentrate to keep the slipping under control. I often consider what it was like on the full size locomotives. My Z1915 has just completed

five years of service. When the real Z1915 was that age it was number 110 and the year was 1883. The rails had reached Albury in the south and Orange in the west. The Great Northern Railway from Newcastle had reached the New England area to Tamworth and Gunnedah but was isolated from the southern system as the opening of the Hawkesbury River bridge was still some six years away in 1889. The type of cab on 110 gave little protection from the elements as it was very similar to that on David Thomas's B10, the port hole or cut away cabs were not fitted till the locomotives were rebuilt with Belpair boilers. With a load of 125 tons a speed of 8 to 10 miles per hour could be managed over the mountains. With long shifts, the rain, snow or the freezing winds it was very hard work and remained the main line goods service for the next ten years. The alternative was horse and cart! My shift for that afternoon was two and a half hours and we did it for fun, the thought of a hot shower was something to look forward to.

We received a very appreciative e-mail from a satisfied visitor who was happy we kept things going.

One could have been forgiven for wanting to stay in bed today but in the end, alls well that ends well. Many thanks to those who lent a hand to rig up temporary arrangements, and especially to John, Martin and Graeme who went off to fetch extra gear. Thanks also to all the members who braved the conditions.

One statistic for the month is that our 12 months rolling injury average is now zero! Well done!

**PRESIDENT'S BREAKFAST and RED KITE TRAIN DAY.**

This was a great day all up. By 8.00am. the BBQ breakfast was well underway and there were a

good number of members there to enjoy the sausages, eggs etc. With that part over and cleaned up the Red Kite volunteers started arriving and we assisted with some of their preparations. I had two posts to concrete and Warwick required some concrete at the apron of the new carriage shed. He cut the threaded rod to be planted in the concrete while Lionel and Stuart Larkin excavated the trench. By the time Brian Hurst and I had concreted the fence posts Lionel was ready to pour and so we provided three barrows full to complete this work. Henry spent some time working on wiring, Mark Gibbons was attending to some point motors.

We had a good rollup of locomotives. On the elevated Jim Leishman ran the 10 wheeler, Brian Carter had "Perseverance", David Thomas his B10 and John Hurst ran King Richard III. David had a different riding carriage having fitted a seat to the chassis of the tender of his SAR 620 class to see how it would run. He was happy with the result. John took the King off soon after lunch, tied it to the stop on the end of the road to allow him to open the regulator and find the steam leaks. My last sight of John for the day was he set out to find a pencil and some paper to make a list.

Brian Muston ran his "Springbok" and some of his goods wagons on the ground level. Warwick had the V1224 running on the inner and Barry Tulloch steamed the "Mountaineer" on the outer. Warwick experienced some problems and on investigation back in loco the V was found to have superheater problems. Brian Carter and David Thomas transferred their locomotives to the ground level and ran the inner train for the rest of the afternoon. Mark Gibbons took a turn at the regulator of Mountaineer and John Tulloch steamed the J class late in the afternoon.

We enjoyed a BBQ lunch courtesy of Red Kite. They had provided lots of activities for the children and after lunch the Humphrey B Bear show entertained everyone. At lunch time a few of us spoke with the gentleman in charge of Red Kite. It was his first visit to the grounds and was very impressed with our facilities and the quality of the locomotives. We learnt a little of the Red Kite structure. Brian Rawlinson showed him the workings of the signal box. At the end of the day everything was cleaned up well, even the cover for our ticket booth went, I am sure we will be able to recover it.

## What's Doing!

### 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner

A reminder of the date for the Societies' 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner. This will be held at the Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club on Saturday night 12 July 2008. It is \$37 a head for a premium buffet, including tea and coffee. Mark this date in your diary. A form was included in the last



**Despite the chimneys the smoke still came out the wrong end!!  
Read the running day report to see what these two are up to!**

newsletter for members to advise who will be coming, don't leave it until the last moment!

### Annual General Meeting & Administrative Matters

The AGM is coming up soon on the 3 June. We have two current Directors retiring and not seeking re-election. Come along and have your say in the running of the Society! Your Directors have plans for the revamp of the Society's Rules. Some of this is necessary to move with the times and have our rules reflect how we wish to operate given modern banking facilities and such like. New model rules have been issued by the Department and it is

**Allen Cottrell supervises Jim Leishman preparing the 10 wheeler.**





**Mark, Barry and friend during the Red Kite day.**

intended to adopt these with changes to suit our operation. These changes are listed on a schedule which makes it a lot easier for the Department and members to be able to know the variances between us and the model rules. One advantage is that it will be a lot easier for every member to have an up to date copy. The intent is to try and not change how we operate too much, and to retain those special aspects that members have adopted over the years. A small committee of Warwick, Henry, John H and Mick will prepare the new document. After discussing with members what is proposed, the proposal needs to be put to the Register of Co-operatives for approval, so it will not be a particularly quick process. If you would like to have an input into this, please send your suggestions to Henry or John H.

#### **Orange NSW Weekend**

A considerable number of members travelled to the central west for this event. With many NSWGR locomotives and nearly 200 items of NSW rolling stock it was a very good get together. Seeing some of the photos of the day the quality of some of the rolling stock is incredible. There were almost as many standard goods engines as

Port Waratah at the end of 1972. It was only scale stock to run, the Tullochs had to leave a couple of riding trucks on the trailer. John T. will remember this run for the wrong reason. All loaded on Friday night and set to go Liz noticed that the trailer brake lights were not operating. Many hours later after a rewire the lights were working but the intention of an early start running on Saturday was spoilt.

#### **Loco and Rolling Stock News**

Simon Collier brought along his Springbok front bogie. This is a lovely job and we are looking forward to the rest of the engine!

As mentioned in the Red Kite report David Thomas utilised the tender chassis of his SAR 620 class as his riding truck, he was very happy with the result. We have also



**Mark Gibbons and Mountaineer with a train load of Red Kite volunteers!**

#### **Hello!! Red Kite himself and helpers!**



seen some of the boiler work for this locomotive, it will make a very nice loco. We have also seen wagons from Brian Muston and a tipping wagon from Mick Murray, plus a partly finished 3½ inch gauge Duchess built by JE Hurst many years ago!

#### **Members News**

Welcome to Simon Collier who was elected a full member at the March members meeting. Welcome Simon we hope your time with the Society is long and enjoyable. Simon has a Springbok under construction.

Just before Easter Andrew Allison and Ellie were married, we wish them well for the future.

Also, congratulations to Bernie who was married last month! Welcome to the world of most of us! Ray and Diane Lee now have a second grandchild,

## Garden Roster

June. B.Courtenay, G.Croudace, S.Larkin, N.Lyons, L.Pascoe, S.Sorensen, D.Lee, D.Thomas.  
July. J.Hurst, J.Leishman, J.Lyons, B.Rawlinson, M.Tyson, M.Yule, D.Mulholland, J.Mulholland.  
August. B.Hurst, T.Eyre, M.Lee, R.Lee, R.Smithers, P.Taffa, B.Tulloch, J.Tulloch.  
September. H.Spencer, A.Allison, M.Gibbons, W.Fletcher, M.Gay, G.Kirkby, B.Muston, J.Noller.

## Gate Roster

June. Gary Buttell. July. Simon Collier. August. B.Courtenay. September. G.Croudace

daughter Julie and her husband had a baby girl, Erin Amilia, recently, at last call all were well.

## Works Reports

### Elevated Track

Nothing new to report on the elevated this newsletter. We are still looking for someone to take on the fixing of the leaning stub point pivot as mentioned last newsletter.

### Ground Level Railway

We decided to progress the fitting of rollup shutters to the signal box. This will replace the existing aluminium panels and should improve the look markedly.

The ground level station level crossing has progressed steadily and saw the first use by cars just before the April running day. John Lyons has taken this project on board and we have poured a section between each running day since the New Year. We have also put ramps on the facing ends to ensure there is no blunt edge to catch carriages. Most were done under the threat of rain, as has become the norm of late.

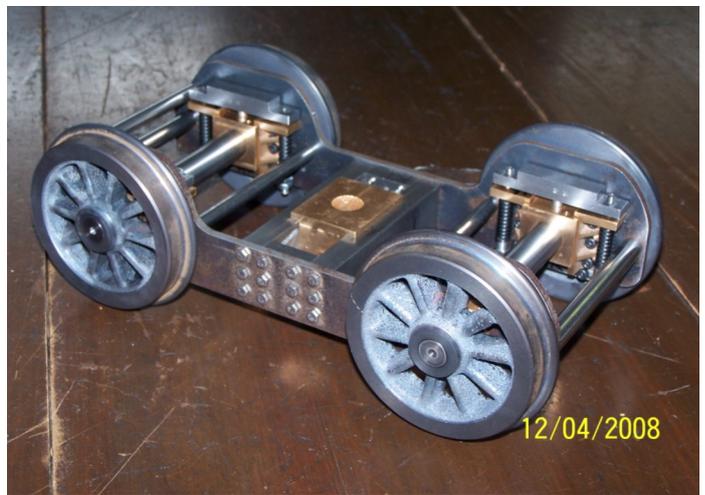
The next stage will involve the excavation and breaking up the concrete on the northern side. A new drain will be provided and the new slab will end up being on top of the Tonkin drain. This will be set up ready for a nice path that will head towards the elevated station entrance, and this means the levels have to come up a little.

All the work affected the mixer and it needed to be provided with a new belt. Brian Muston had attached new wheels to the cement mixer to make it easier to use. He also installed the new belt which turned out to be harder to obtain than anyone thought. John Lyons eventually managed to source it locally to his home. After the job we re-greased it and made some further adjustments and it seems now to run much better (and quieter)!

We are also considering some nice level crossing gates that would make it look railway like.....

With a break from this project due to Red Kite Day John has concreted the fence posts between the elevated station and the lever frame. Jim has cemented the cone tops to prevent water pooling around the posts.

After a report of No. 7 signal not pulsating one Saturday, Henry investigated and discovered a broken soldered joint. This has been fixed and we had it pulsating away for some hours to prove it!



**Simon Collier's new Springbok bogie.  
Now all we need is the rest of the loco!**

Mick & Paul attacked the elevated carriage bogies and has been replacing the vacuum brake diaphragms with ones with proper insertion. Meanwhile Brian Muston, Bernie, Henry and Warwick attacked the ground level cars. The red set and Central West set were adjusted throughout. One car on the blue set and two on the green also needed attention. Two bogies were swapped as well due to a cracked pull rod bracket. This means the whole ground level fleet is now fully functional brake wise. A

## Editorial.

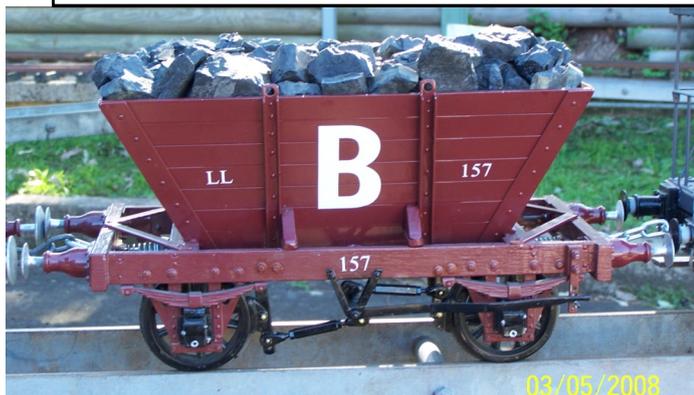
Since the last Newsletter the local ME supply company has gone into liquidation and a long established supplier of brass and copper has, it seems, vanished. This will make the sourcing of raw materials perhaps difficult and we may need to work with other society members to help out. Collectively we have a great knowledge base that often can overcome serious problems. An example was the odd sized drive belt we needed for the concrete mixer. Jim Leishman tracked a supplier down, when he called me I knew exactly where to go.

Other interesting reading of late was RailCorp's list for the disposal of non-core moveable Heritage Rolling Stock. One of the conditions is that once the item has been relocated the transferee must: make the Equipment reasonably available for public display! I was surprised by some of the items on the list but in some ways more surprised by what was not listed. The Department of Rail Heritage may have some interesting plans or perhaps this is just the first round, time will tell.

John Lyons.



Part of Brian Muston's growing plastic wagon fleet. Above is an SMR brick wagon, and below an alphabet wagon complete with brakes!



few elevated cars and brake vans remain to be done, plus fixing of the defective bogies changed out. Bernie had the week killer out and has spot poisoned the on-track weeds. Hopefully over the winter months we can attack the track and do some upgrading work.

**New Inner Main Carriage Shed**

After manufacturing the carriage shed track work Barry and Martin have investigated the front door for the carriage shed. This has been made and some fitting has been done to line up various components. The door was suc-

cessfully fitted and this meant the shed was at lockup stage!

The turnout to the carriage shed has been laid in the inner main. This involved cutting the existing panel at the appropriate places, redrilling the fishbolt holes and some readjustment of the formation levels. Amazingly it all seems to fit and it even lines up with the carriage shed track!

Barry, Brian Mark G and Warwick cut and installed new plastic sleepers for No. 6 points. This will give us a head start to the track upgrading. We also laid out the track into the carriage shed. We reslept one panel, and are happy with the general geometry. Once the door was fitted we were able to cut and lay the track to precisely fit the location.

Jim Leishman and Warwick used John Hurst's dropsaw and we cut up over 100 plastic sleepers in double quick time. Later Brian R and Warwick drilled the mandatory hole in them and they are now ready to use on the carriage shed track and the inner main. Installation had commenced in April after we had a delivery of road base, as the track needs a reasonable lift.

We expect the carriage shed to be in regular operation soon (if not when you read this!)

**Ground Improvements**

We have arranged for a tree man to come and remove the various dead branches in a number of trees as well as to remove fully the dead pine tree just south and adjacent to the alder tree. This was done on 2 May (the day before the President's breakfast and RedKite day).

Brian Hurst has repainting the toilet floors-all three! This has improved the appearance of these areas.

Some of the members consuming their President's breakfast!



Martin Yule delivered a new bag of char. It appears this got lost in transit, but fortunately after a lot of telephone calls Barry Tulloch tracked it down and Martin collected it. Vic, Martin, Barry and myself helped shovel it out into our bins and containers, and we managed to place the full tonne! With all our new char grates in our locos, and the consequential reduced consumption, we expect this to last some time!

A special mention for Graeme Kirkby who manages to work a full day doing gardening including all the edges. He also brings his own whipper snipper. It certainly makes the place look nice!

We have also been using the mulcher and Barry Millner tried very hard to feed full size trees into this machine. We

mulched and mulched including cleaning up a lot of the hill and some other prunings that have been left around the grounds for some time. David has requested that lawnmowers be restricted to a mower width only on the eastern side of the elevated track from the retaining wall down to the bottom of the ground, and no whipper snipping on the eastern fence side of the elevated. This is to protect some delicate vegetation in this area! Don't forget that green weed waste should go in the green bin, and leaf litter etc placed directly on the gardens. Other material can be mulched. Please do not place garden material in the trailer.

Andrew and Warwick took a load of scrap metal to the tip. This has helped tidy up the top of the grounds a bit.

Jim Leishman has fitted another new dual flush



Stuart Larkin assisting Lionel Pascoe with concreting in some support bolts at the new inner main carriage shed.



Barry fitting the carriage shed door. John shows its an inside job.

unit into the ladies toilet to reduce our water consumption.

The new drain behind the signal box was concreted by Warwick and Barry T. It was topped off with some sand and cement some of which also went onto the drain in front of the new carriage shed in order to provide a fall for the water to run off. The purpose of this drain is to prevent run off from higher ground flooding across and making the entry to the signal box slippery and unpleasant. Some ballast was used to backfill either side after the formwork was removed. So far this drain appears to be working!

Barry Tulloch & Mick Murray has fitted a latch to the new tool shed door to hold it open (and a quality latch at that).

Henry did some tidying up of the signal wiring near the carriage shed.

## Features

### 2008 Cobden Convention Report

by Warwick Allison

This year the convention was hosted by the South West Model Engineers at Cobden, Victoria. The weather was extremely variable. While wet weather did not disrupt events at all, the weather changed from being very warm and humid to bitterly cold with icy winds. This was one convention where you needed cool and warm clothing, however you needed it on the same day! The convention coolness came after a long period of extreme high temperatures and fire bans. The grounds were parched and the verdant green fields that were evident last Cobden convention were now brown.

The model engineers were partnered by the local rotary club who provided most of the facilities for the meals, accommo-

Andrew closely inspecting Mick's 4 wheel tipping wagon. A lovely job too!



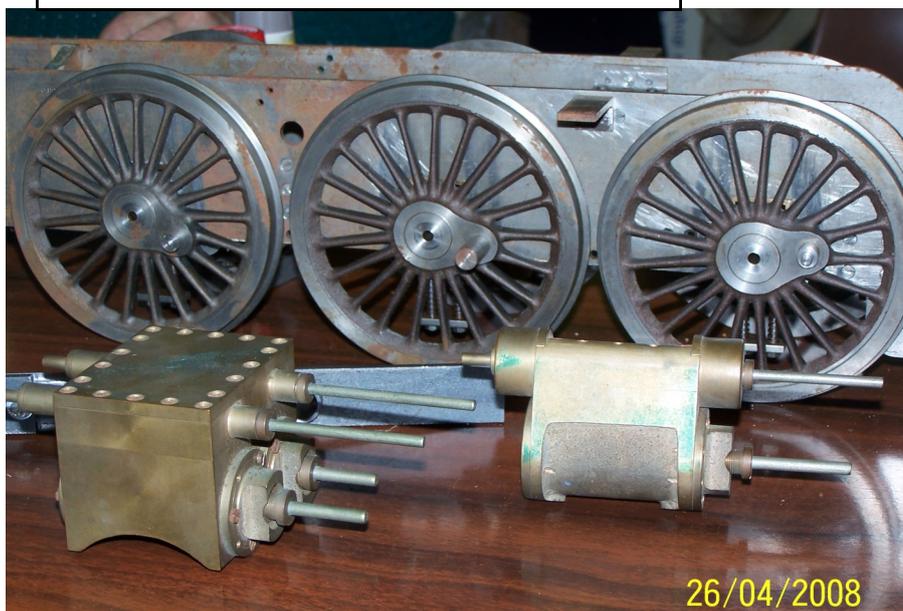


**Vic Scicluna and John Lyons at work on the ground level crossing.**

dation and meetings that go together to make up a convention. As has been expected at Cobden conventions, the whole town got behind the project and the organisation on the day was superb. The meals were well produced and a variety of 4 different types at each session was offered. Attendance was above expectations, and the track of the south west model engineers had changed by the significant growth of the trees which has transformed the site.

The facilities consist of a dual gauge 5 and 7¼ inch

**Parts of the unfinished Hurst 3½ inch gauge 'Duchess'. These parts are close to 50 years old!**



gauge track, and a separate 3½ and 5 inch gauge elevated track. To my thinking, the ground level is one of the better of the dual gauge ground levels where moving blade crossings have not been used for the points. The 5 inch people took the turnouts slowly as the wheels bumped their way through the crossings but derailments were very few and everything ran quite sweetly.

The elevated appeared to have not been used for some time. The track had some unexpected twists and turns, and could not be described as high speed but a total of seven locos tried it out over the weekend and there were no spills, so it couldn't have been too bad!

They had their signalling turned off for the event, and at the only critical junction where the folded figure eight track converged, a flagman was positioned to operate the points and provide an appropriate flag to the converging tracks.

The station has 3 through tracks, a large covered roof area, and an attached brick refreshment rooms and ticket office. Quite a facility. They have two large sheds for the storage of rolling stock, and a large facility for locos. Upon leaving the station the line passes through an arbo-real tunnel then onto an X junction where the folded figure eight converges. Taking the left hand turnout takes one under the main line and out past an old station building and boat pond before swinging around to the right and climbing continuously to pass over the line where had just come along. On falling back to ground level the line takes a left hand curve before coming back to the main junction where one then takes the right hand turnout. This leads to beyond the extent of the previous track and out and around another small dam, eventually crossing it on a long bridge before returning to the station. The length of the run is quite long and it takes some time once one leaves the station to return it.

There was a large roll up of locos of all shapes and sizes. There were six 3½ inch gauge and one five inch gauge that ran on the elevated track. Probably the most impressive sights I saw was Bob Nash's large 7¼ inch gauge FEF loco, Noel Bruce's 5 inch Berkshire (built by Peter Gray) and, for a time on Saturday afternoon, a nice train consisting of a green 36 class, followed by three 38 class locos.

The Bolton Trophy (for an Australian prototype) went to Roger Kershaw (Orange Society) for his NSW 4-6-0 O class, 2304. The SSME most popular loco went to Tullamarine LSS Alf Bond's Shay (built by David Giles in New Zealand). The Southern Federation Trophy also went to Alf Bond. Zac Lee (SLSLS) won the Australian Model Engineering under 25 encouragement award for his part completed AME simple marine engine. The South West Model Engineers presented a special award to Shane Ferris (QSMEE) for

his Northumbrian (Rainhill) in 7¼ inch gauge, which obviously took their fancy.

The boiler meeting went smoothly. A committee was established to look into stainless steel boilers using a modern type of stainless steel. A warning was also given on Cadmium free silver solders. Apparently the cadmium acted like a tinning agent that helped the silver penetrate close fitting joints. There have been numerous cases of lack of penetration that appears to have been traced to the current cadmium free silver solders. The wake up call was “Don’t think you have forgotten how to do it...!” The problem is the spelter. There was also some discussion on direct mailing to boiler inspectors, however the mood of the meeting was that club secretaries still need to receive the



21/03/2008

The Lees and their GMs at Altona.

Roger Kershaw (OSME) has a drive of Warwick’s “Mona” around the elevated track of the South West Model Engineers.



large amount of fill and the prospective track formations have been laid out. The points are the swing nose variety which of course solves the flange problems between the gauges. Rails are individually screwed to the wooden sleepers, and some track circuiting is in use through a tunnel made of containers. They plan to replace the tunnel with a proper construction.

The other club open on Tuesday was Moorabbin. Moorabbin has an elevated track with large radius curves which can encourage brisk train operation.

Keith Hartley (SLSV) with his 3½ inch gauge VR A2 at Cobden.

corro. Dave Merrifield has retired from the post of AMBSC Secretary after 25 years, and Adrian Cox, (Altona) has taken on this role.

The boiler meeting was followed by the Safety Committee meeting. This was ably chaired by Roger Kershaw as Chairman and Alf Grigg as Secretary. There was an explanation of the consultative process for updating the Code of Practice. All the submissions will be placed on the AALS website so that all can see the issues.

The AALS AGM was on the Saturday night. The SLSLS motion to make minor changes to the 5 inch gauge track standards was passed, and all the other motions were passed as we had agreed to vote. The meeting was efficiently run without controversy, and was a credit to all involved.

Next years convention is at Castledare in Perth, and 2010 will be at QSMEE in Brisbane.

On the following day, Tuesday the post convention runs started. Altona is a dual gauge 5 & 7¼ inch ground level track where the members have a lot of potential to develop a first class railway on the site. They have a plan which includes a lot of track and bridges and the layout should be very attractive and interesting with the addition of some landscaping. They have already brought in a



21/03/2008



22/03/2008

A line up of elevated locos. An LBSC Mona, leading a VR R class, followed by the VR A2, a Bulleid Pacific and Juliet. Not in the picture was Hardwicke & a 5 inch Jersey Lily.

Noel Bruce's 'Mohawk' (built by the late Peter Gray) was the scene for some heavy drinking discussions. A lovely loco. Behind is a Hagan "Flying Scotsman".



23/03/2008

Only a few conventioners turned up here, but there was some high speed running on the elevated track. Both clubs put on a sausage sandwich lunch which was gratefully appreciated.

Tullamarine Live Steam Society (Bulla Railway) opened its track on the Wednesday, as did Diamond Valley. I attended at Bulla, which has two ground level railways, one a 3½ & 5 inch dual gauge ground level line and the other a 5 & 7¼ inch dual gauge line. Both are of a reasonable length, the 7¼ inch gauge one being very long indeed as it winds in and out of hills and has magnificent views of the valley. The last time I visited it was very windy (and a cold wind at that) and this time was the same. We tolerated the wind OK until it rained, then it turned rather icy. I asked a member if it was always this windy here, and the reply was "YEP"! Perhaps this is an Alpine railway!

They have built a brick station that services both tracks and a graceful all welded steel curved bridge spans the big track to let the public access the inner grounds. They have banded up with the local land care group which is busily planting and sculpturing the landscape. While a lot of progress has been made, there is still plenty to do, and although time is needed to get the growth into the plants, the evidence is that there is plenty of work taking place and this is one of the tracks to watch for the future. They are planning for the 2013 convention, and I will be very keen to come back again and see how the transformation has continued. I drove both 5 inch and 7¼ inch gauge locos over all the trackage, and the track was generally pretty good. It is a big job to keep such a long track in good condition and I don't think the soil conditions are

conducive to long term stability, but I am sure the members are up to the task! They are also planning an elevated track, which when built, will result in this society being one of the most fully featured of all such societies. Today the BBQ lunch included bacon and coleslaw to the approval of my wife. For the lady readers I have it on good authority that Tullamarine also have the best toilets-very important in some eyes!

It would have been better to have a better coordinated and earlier available program of post convention runs. That which eventuated was largely the result of the effort of AALS

Treasurer Ross Walker-thanks Ross. Also the host clubs web site had convention details posted, but it seemed to be inoperative for some considerable periods of time. No doubt this upset some of the bookings. That completed my train holiday-next year the convention is at Castledare in Perth, WA.

### The Moorabbin Track and Little Engines

Running Mona at Moorabbin is exhilarating if you are a speed freak. It really makes these little engines buzz like no other track can. When you leave the station, you take a casual lap and return back at the station, one track across from where you started. A final check of the water, and you cram into the firebox as much char as you can, and then you are away- chiff-chiff-chiff-chiff!

The track falls gently as it circles around and down as you head towards the cutting, under a bridge and then motor at an ever increasing pace with only light steam on as you enter the tunnel. A quick check by the brakes as the train readjusts from a left hand curve to a right and the different (dark) environment startles one slightly. The safeties lift (if they hadn't already) and fog up your glasses. You open up as you leave the tunnel and the grade increases, have a light check as you enter the curve and then open up to rise up the front of the grounds. You feel the steady rising grade starts to bite so you open up further still. The engine starts to buzz, as it accelerates at an ever increasing pace as you continue to rise and round the clubhouse curve to point you onto the long rising straight up the southern boundary of the grounds.

You open up wide, and the engine is now as if it is white hot. The chimney is clear but blasting in a constant electric motor like buzzing. The safeties are blowing hard and as you continue to accelerate the engine is vibrating up and down and literally erupting in its performance. The faster you go, the more the safeties blow, and the pump is hard on too! In an extremely short space of time, you need to throttle back and brake for the top curve as you regain composure and continue to reduce speed to take the last two curves before again entering the station and coming to a stand.

The water has been sacrificed, as the revs were far in excess of the efficient pump rate, and you get the injector on, fill the boiler and firebox, and regain your composure, before once again, we are off into that long downward spiral and into that super rising straight!



**Gerardus Mol presenting the AME Under 25s award to Zac Lee with AALS President Barry Glover in the background.**  
**Below: A scene at the recent Orange NSW Scale day.**



Diary	
3 June	Annual General Meeting
7-9 June	Hot Pot Run Illawarra Live Steamers
21 June	Public Running Day
1 July	Director's Meeting
12 July	60th Anniversary Dinner
19 July	Public Running Day
5 August	Members Meeting
16 August	Public Running Day & Next Newsletter!



**We recently had the tree people in to remove some dead wood. At left we see one enjoying himself in the big blue gum above loco, while above they mulched the results of their work. Photos from David Thomas.**

## Simple Vacuum Pumps

Warwick Allison

It is fairly well known that the cheap Chinese car air compressors can be converted into effective vacuum pumps. This article describes how to do it.

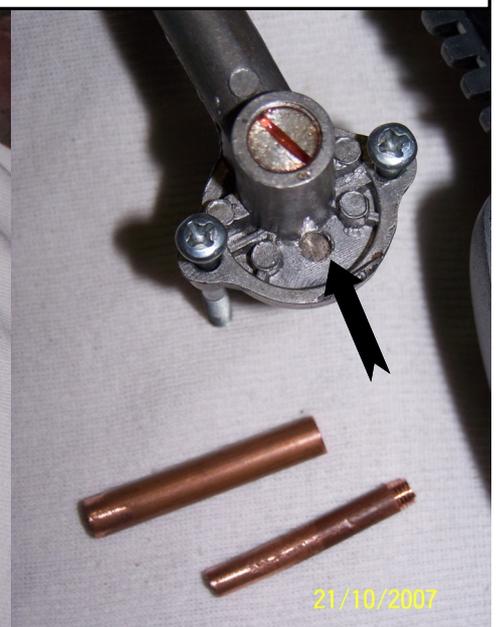
The type of pumps we are using usually cost about \$20 and are readily available in Supercheap Auto, Kmart and

similar shops. They are often on special and you may be able to get them at extremely cheap prices. The ones I have obtained usually are fitted with a pressure gauge. This of course is of no use for making vacuums, but the alteration process does not effect the air compressor ability of these little units, so it simply becomes a multi function device!

Take the unit apart by undoing the 5 screws in the side of the plastic case. The internals have a steel cylinder that is sandwiched between the crankcase and the head by two long screws. They easily come out with a Phillips head screwdriver.

On the head the suction hole is adjacent to the pressure outlet. On the piston side it is covered by a spring steel flap valve. Mount this in your vertical drill vice, and using a No17 drill, enlarge the air entry hole but be careful not to go right through. About 3mm is the maximum

**Left: The main parts of our simple vacuum pump. Right: The head showing suction hole and suction pipes before assembly.**





**Above is the underside of the head showing the flap valve. Right is the assembly complete with the new vacuum pipe attached to the head. Below is the finished product.**

depth, maybe a little less. Don't let the drill touch the flap valve. Tap the hole 3/16 inch x 40 tpi, only to the depth of the larger hole. Use the plug tap straight off – the alloy is very soft.

Thoroughly clean off all the swarf, including any that got under the flap. Blowing it out is usually the best approach. As my vacuum connections are all made with 1/4inch pipe, I needed to join some 1/4 inch tube onto 3/16 inch tube. Cut a piece of 3/16 inch copper tube 30mm long. Thread one end 3/16inch x 40 tpi for about 2-3mm. Cut a piece of 1/4 inch copper tube 40mm long. Put in the lathe and drill out one end to 3/16 inch diameter for about 3/16 inch depth. Insert the plain end of the 3/16 inch pipe into it and silver solder.

After cleaning up, screw it into the tapped hole in the head with a smear of loctite on the threads. Fit a cable tie around the pipe and head as shown in the photo to hold things together.

Ensure all is clean. Test the pipe by sucking and blowing. You should be able to blow through OK, but sucking should encounter resistance. Reassemble the head to the cylinder and crankcase.

Take the plastic case and just in front of the centre of the cylinder using a round file, file a half round space in the top. Similarly on the other side. Check the pump for fit. You may have to trim some other internal plastic sprues to clear your new vacuum inlet. Reassemble the unit inside the case, and the job is done.

If you have a vacuum gauge it can now be tested. Connect the gauge onto the copper pipe using a suitable (6mm) rubber hose. Apply 12v (you can use your car cigarette lighter if you haven't cut the plug off yet) and see what it pulls. If all is well it should be capable of

exceeding 20 inches Hg. If it is less, then you have probably damaged the flap valve. However even so, if it pulls more than (say) 12 inches it will still be an effective pump for your brakes.

If you did damage the flap valve to an unacceptable extent, it will need to be replaced. Use a piece of spring steel. An old 5 or 10 thou feeler gauge is OK. Centre pop and then drill out the rivet holding the old flap valve to the head with a 3/32 inch drill. Also drill a hole in your old feeler gauge, and then cut a new flap valve from it. It may be easier to shape it on your grinder.

Now the problem is likely to be the seat. Perhaps you drilled right through! It will need to be cleaned up and made flat. As the flap valve is recessed you will need to use a small diameter (3/16inch) slot drill. Set this up in the mill or lathe (with the head suitably packed under the tool-post) and take a teeny cut off the face in the recess until it is obvious the whole thing is flat. Make sure the cut extends to the securing rivet area as well. When satisfied reassemble your new flap valve with a new 3/32 rivet pushed into the hole with some loctite. It's a good idea to machine the head flat and thin before it is inserted to ensure it clears piston at the upper part of its travel.

How do I know all this?? Don't ask please!





Above: A scene from the NSW scale day at Orange. Some refreshments were needed, and the drive through was close by!  
 Below: A busy loco depot with a 36 +38 +38 on a main line train at the Easter Cobden Convention.



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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.sls.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.