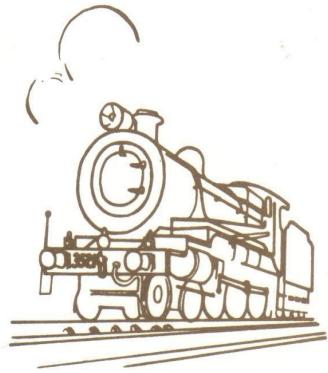


Sydney Live Steam Locomotive Society

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

'Newsletter'

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November 2006



Steve Border is in charge of the station as passengers are arranged on Andrew's train hauled by V1224 on the inner.

Running Day Reports

August 2006 Running Day Report.

After the disappointment of the wash out of our July running day it was great to have such a glorious day for our last winter running day for 2006. Alan Mackellar was kept very busy on the gate. The queue extended well beyond the footbridge for at least the first hour. The lines at all the station areas were very long all afternoon with the elevated and outer ground level ones having a considerable overlap. During the afternoon we managed to carry 3247 passengers, not a bad score.

On the elevated track Jim Leishman ran his 10 wheeler with three cars and a guards van, Jim Mulholland was

guard and also shared the driving with Jim L. The blue set of cars was hauled by Ken Baker, "Simplex" and young John Hurst, "Nigel Gresley". Due to passenger numbers an extra car was added later in the afternoon. Greg Croudace ran his 4-8-2 3½" tank locomotive double heading with David Thomas 2-6-0 B10 hauling one car. Greg's loco sported a "Sunlander" name board. Paul Taffa with the "Hunslet" pulled two cars and I ran Z1915 light engine, its first run since it had its boiler inspection. On the outer main the first on the track were our visitors Simon and John Hill driving John's 44 class. John is a member of the Luddenham society and had not visited us for some time, his presence was very welcome. The 44 suffered the occasional stall (heat induced I understand). Ultimately the restarts damaged the starter so it was off



Brian Hurst flags away an outer main train.

to loco while this was attended to. The 44 was back on the track to run the rest of the afternoon, and it was one

John B Hurst & Nigel Gresley lead Ken Baker & Simplex on the new Pullman cars on the elevated track.

of the last off.

The other outer main train was hauled by Matt Lee C3506 initially alone and then double heading with John Tulloch and the J class, Z2904.

On the inner was Andrew and V1224 as one train, and Henry Spencer with the R double heading with Ray Lee, C3112 on the other. Barry Tulloch and Mountaineer relieved Ray and Henry mid afternoon. It was good to have Steve Border (and his fiancee) on the platform as Station Master. Steve now lives in Canberra, and makes the trip for running day.

Henry had to leave early, as did Matthew and Di, so Ray and 3112 assisted John T & Z2904 for the rest of the afternoon.

The girls in the kiosk, Liz, Di and Joy had a busy afternoon, we appreciate the effort they put in for the society. In all, a very busy afternoon, but everything seemed to run very smoothly. We had just enough members to keep things going and were very thankful for John and Simon Hill's presence with the 44 class.

September 2006 Running Day Report.

We were blessed with a very nice spring day, all areas of the ground were accessible as the sun was just right and the shady areas not too cold. The garden team had worked very hard in the rain the previous Saturday and with the warmer weather and sunshine during the week the grass had shot up and the weeds made much more progress. The Granny Smith Festival was running on this day as well so it was no surprise that we had a very steady crowd, still coming in near 4.00pm. Alan Mackellar was on the gate again and though not as busy as last month did not have many slack moments. One of



our visitors was Clive Robertson of ABC radio and TV fame. Clive chatted with Alan and a few other members showing a lot of interest.

On the inner ground level Warwick and V1224 ran one train while the second train was hauled by C3803 with Ray and Matt Lee taking turns at the regulator. On the outer main there was more variety. At the start of the afternoon Brian Rawlinson with his "Blowfly" double headed with Graeme Kirkby D5035 on one train, while the second train started with Lionel Pascoe C3811 with Max Gay taking a turn at the regulator. Eventually the C38 was joined by "Mountaineer" with Barry Tulloch and Martin Yule assisting with the driving. After about an hour of running Brian retired the "Blowfly" with injector troubles and the D50 was joined by Z2904 with John Tulloch in charge.

With a bit of help Brian solved the injector problem but still packed up early for an easy departure. The Tulloch's D5037 and John Hurst's 4-8-2 were both in the ground level locomotive depot.

On the elevated track we had a six car train hauled by John B. Hurst with 2-8-0 "Nigel Gresley" and Ken Baker with his "Simplex". Paul Taffa ran a two car train with the Hunslet and Jim Leishman pulled three cars and van with his 10 wheeler. As I needed to make a quick getaway the 19 was left at home and I assisted Jim with the driving of the 10 wheeler. Having a six car train on the elevated helps to keep the queue short. Early in the day



Society elders confer before the September running day, from left, Barry Millner, Bill Richards, Ray Lee and Graeme Kirkby.

Peter Sayer gave his 0-6-0 "Blowfly" a run packing up by lunch time.

Our ride tally for the afternoon was 2305 which was not too bad. We had just sufficient members to run the day and while everything ran well we could always do with some extra help.

David Thomas' B10 broadside!





Tony Eyre doing guard duties on the September running day.

October 2006 Running Day Report.

What a contrast with our weather over two weekends! On the second Saturday it was very hot and I think there was a fire ban in place. The gardening team had to put in a big effort in the heat. The running day was just the opposite, the coldest running day for the year. At least the rain held off, even though it did try hard. Just as I had steam up in the Z19 there were a few spots but that was it. The cold conditions kept the crowd away and but for some party groups the day would have been very slow. Jim Mulholland was on the gate and had a very easy time. As well as having time to catch up on some reading he had an "interesting" conversation with Clive Robertson who visited the grounds again.

Before running began Mick Murray replaced a ground level bogie he had repaired so the fleet was in good order for the days run.

First train out on the elevated was Ray Lee with C3112 and the blue set of cars, this looked very good. Ray ran for a short time then stowed the cars and retreated to the ground level. John B. Hurst driving 2-8-0 "Nigel Gresley" and myself, Z1915, ran a four car and van for the best part of the afternoon. Brian Carter was up from the Southern Highlands bringing 0-4-0 "Perseverance" for a run and hauled two cars till about 3.30pm. when the train was taken over by Brian Kilgour with his "Nigel Gresley". David Thomas steamed the 2-6-0 B10 pulling one car. The Z19 came off about 3.45pm & as I needed to make a quick getaway, I was pleased the loading was light.

On the inner ground level both trains were hauled by single engines. Warwick drove WAGR V1224 while Martin Yule was in charge of 2-6-2 "Mountaineer". On the outer Matt Lee was first out with C3506 to be joined later by Ray and C3112. Henry Spencer ran his TGR R Class on the other train. He was soon joined by Barry Tulloch D5037 and Graeme Kirkby D5035. On a couple of occasions their train and mine were both running up hill at the same time. Looking straight across the grounds with very few visitors the sight was excellent. When Henry came off mid afternoon the two standard goods

engines continued together. Ray Lee and C3112 retired early and was replaced by John Tulloch with J class, Z2804 running with Matt till the end of the day. Lionel Pascoe had C3811 in loco not steaming due to gauge glass problems.

The girls in the kiosk sold a lot of warm drinks, tea and coffee, so that gives some idea of the type of day. The total rides for the day was 1542, which was pretty good considering. Steve Border remarked that despite the smaller number of people in the grounds, the trains were usually full for most of the day. We did however sell 12 postcards which Vernon tells us was a record!

We had a couple of derailments, including some skinned knees, which was unfortunate. From what I observed in one case one passenger was trying to use his camera while riding. We must remember to warn our visitors that the use of cameras is not allowed on moving trains.

What's Doing!

Loco and Rolling Stock News

John B Hurst brought down a Coronation boiler. This was brand new and very old at the same time. Hopefully he can finish the rest of the loco, which he tells us, is just about all there.

Ken Baker brought along the bogie for his Norfolk & Western J class. It has equalised springing and is typical

Greg Croudace double heads with David Thomas.





16/09/2006

Ray Lee & 3803 passes V1224 & missing driver in the platform loading on the September running day.

of the high standard of workmanship he is putting into this locomotive.

Jim Leishman had the PS4 at the grounds for a trial steaming following its overhaul. It didn't leave the loco depot as Jim assessed the few additional jobs to be done.

We also had a good look over the ingenious valve arrangements on a Hornby "Rocket" which Warwick has acquired. This has slip wheels not eccentrics!

Mick had his re-engined Tinkerbelle at the grounds, now battery powered, for a test run. It was complete with open wagon riding truck, flatcar and saloon bring up the rear. The saloon is a fine piece of work with padded seats, clerestory roof, simulated oil lights, door handle, polished wooden floor etc. Make sure you have a good look!

John Hurst Jnr brought 1966 along for a hydro test. Having reached the venerable age of 40, the loco. was a little

'incontinent' but John assures me that it will be back in steam soon!

My spies tell me on Wednesday that Vic Scicluna ran his Heisler, while Garry ran his 36 class (before going to work!) Running on Wednesdays seems occasionally popular and it is a good time to have a go!

While not exactly loco news, thanks go to Brian Muston who has provided us with a complete set of new hand flags for the guards and signalmen. This includes red and green flags, plus white ones for the platform staff as well!

Christmas Party

The Christmas Party would be on Saturday evening, 2 December. BYO BBQ & friends as usual!



14/10/2006

Editorial

Many of us would be familiar with "Steam Railway" magazine published in the U.K. and over a large number of years have read and watched as "Tornado", the 50th Peppercorn "A1" has grown from an idea to the stage where, with the boiler now complete, it is on target to be completed late in 2007. The latest AME carries an article on the construction of a 3'6" gauge South Australian 4-4-0 Z class locomotive, full size. The gentleman concerned works in the rail industry and has made very good progress to date. He has had assistance from others more involved in model engineering, names we have seen in the club newsletters and the AME. The "A1" will be a great achievement, a full size 4-6-2 express locomotive, but if the Z class gets to be completed it will be an equally momentous engineering feat.

Best wishes to all members and friends of the Society for the Christmas season and the New Year of 2007. A big thankyou to those members who have contributed to the Newsletter for this year. Articles are always welcome, so please share some of your experiences with us.

John Lyons.

Inspection Visit

Ken Baker told us of the possibility of an inspection tour of Broens, a modern factory that makes precision engineered parts. It is at Ingleburn. If you are interested in a visit, please let Ken know.

John Hurst and Ken Baker with Nigel and Simplex start out downhill on another elevated trip.



2007 Convention

Don't forget that convention registration forms are in the clubhouse too.

Members News

Nathan Lyons had his 21st birthday in October. Happy birthday Nathan! Brian Kilgour has moved. His new address is: 189 Wyalda Lane, Cooks Gap NSW 2850. Telephone: 6373 5475 or 0403 061 221

Works Reports

Elevated Track

A broken signal wire pulley has been removed and repaired. It would seem this was damaged during the retaining wall work.

Ground Level Railway

Mark Gibbons was servicing some of the ground level car bogies. One had a loose bearing plate which was welded back on. Mick Murray removed and fixed a damaged ground level bogie. It needed repairs to the bolster pin.

Barry Millner was actively into weeding and points maintenance.

The old pine log retaining wall which was removed pending the new shed floor and wall has been relocated to the new carriage shed site as a temporary measure to ultimately prevent spoil spilling onto the inner main during the construction of the new shed.

Ground Improvements

We had the air compressor man come, and the tank has been certified for another 12

Mrs. Eyre

It was with regret that we learnt of the passing of Mrs Eyre in late October. She had been a long term helper in the kiosk on running days and will be long remembered as a happy, friendly lady. Our sympathy goes to Liz and Tony, and to the entire Tulloch and Eyre households.



Matt Lee & 3506 pulls hard uphill while Martin Yule & Mountaineer head out on the inner main.

months.

Allan Cottrell & Co acted promptly in replacing a broken seat back on a tight time frame before the September running day. Just ask and the job is done!

Jim Lieszman replaced a broken fence post near the inner main station that was broken on the September running day. The old footing (of standard SLSLS proportions) was removed through use of the shear legs and left quite a crater. A new post was installed and concreted in.

Brian Hurst has been carrying on with his post base mortaring. He and Jack Grierson have been labouring away for quite a time now, and a large number of posts have been treated.

Max has taken the wheels off the unloader to perform some modifications. The wheels were rubbing against the frame, making it hard to move. Max adjusted the spaces and wheel profiles, and this made the unit move much more sweetly.

A failure of the footing of the big log retaining wall occurred with the heavy late September rains. The wall was dismantled and the post was removed with the shear legs. It came out

very easily and all the soil was still very wet due to the high clay content. The hole was enlarged and deepened. We drove in some steel spikes to help in keying in the footing, and deposited another 3 full barrows of concrete into the new footing. Hopefully this will stay put!

The rebuilding was attended to by Henry, Vic, Brian Rawlinson, and John Hurst Snr.

A concreted drain has been provided on top of the retaining way to take any run off from next door into the drain and out at the bottom. Hopefully this will prevent water accumulating behind the wall

The operation of the elevated ground frame was then checked due to the close proximity of the rodding and cabling to the works on the retaining wall. During the works, plastic sheeting had been laid over the signalling to avoid another job of re-excavation.

Toolshed.

Jim Lieszman and Lionel Pascoe attended the grounds on the following Monday after the shed wall was poured in order to remove the formwork from the last of the concrete work for the shed.

Henry and Andrew remove the failed retaining wall column.



Garden Roster

December.	B.Hurst, G.Croudace, T.Eyre, M.Lee, R.Lee,R.Smithers, B.Tulloch, J.Tulloch.
January.	H.Spencer, A.Allison, M.Gibbons, W.Fletcher, M.Gay, G.Kirkby, B.Muston, J.Noller, P.Sayer.
February.	W.Allison, B.Kilgour, N.Amy, G.Buttel, B.Millner, J.Mulholland, M.Murray, S.Murray, V.Scicluna.
March.	B.Courtenay, K.Baker,J.Grierson, N.Lyons, L.Pascoe, J.Sorrensen, N.Sorrensen, S.Sorrensen, D.Thomas, P.Taffa, D.Lee.

Gate Roster

December.	Scott Murray.	January.	Brian Muston.	February.	John Noller.
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Warwick grinds our new concrete floor while Jim Leishman and Vic Scicluna tend to the ancillary equipment.

A concrete grinder was hired and this ran over the slab and corrected some of the rain induced roughness. This worked very well, and did not take very long. Jim and Vic then had a job to clean and sweep the slab!

After the grinding, formwork was laid and a plinth was poured together with filling in some adjacent gaps. Bondcrete was used to ensure the concrete was strong given it would be feathered out on the edges.

Mick Murray assisted by Scott did some excavation at the end of the slab to fit a block retaining wall under the adjacent roundhouse road. The blocks were surplus to requirements ex some work at the Murray's and certainly look good. It was harder than anticipated.

pated and Mick and Lionel had some more camphor laurel cut away, and the conduits were extended to appear under the wall.

John Lyons worked on the unloader track welding up some new sections at home. With the help of a number of people and Bernie's straight eye, these were secured into position, and for the first time the unloader was run into its ultimate home!

With Scott's expert concrete brewing, Jim and Lionel did some final grouting of the sewer manhole, drain entrance and rebuilt some of the pad which the shed bottom plate will be assembled onto. We relocated the southern post that holds up the shed veranda



Mick lays cement blocks while Bernie and Scott check the unloaders first run onto its new rails and its final home.

Max, Mick & Brian attend to the new bridge decking securing.



roof, so that it will be the new corner post of the shed. This makes for better access into the new shed doorway. The joist will be replaced with a steel beam to retain the lifting capability.

We also removed the end bargeboards, the old electricity point of attachment and relocated the telephone cable so that the worksite would be clear for the builders.

Henry did some wire tracing and pulling in the old clubhouse, and we now have a power and light circuit ready for connection into the new shed (when it comes!)

The contractor we had selected for the job has gone out of business, so we will have to find a new one. Hopefully the delay won't be too long.



Bernie and John secure the traverser rails to the concrete.

Features

A Weekend in Melbourne

Warwick Allison

The October long weekend offered an opportunity for a steamy engineering weekend in Melbourne. The plan was a day to drive there, a day at Puffing Billy, and then a morning at the Model Engineering Exhibition at Monash University, some time at the Steam Locomotive Society of Victoria at Moorabbin, and to finish off, a drop in to the Diamond Valley Railway at Eltham.

We opted for the full trip to Gembrook. Not a cheap journey, but certainly a full day's steam experience. The only downer is that we should have worn an extra jumper, as the breeze certainly had a chill in it!

At Belgrave, we saw the 10am train leave with a double header of a green 6A and maroon 14A in charge. Our 10.30 train was hauled by G42. When we arrived at Menzies Creek, our train was divided. The rear portion (of reserved cars for tourists) returned to Belgrave with G42, while 14A,

which had dropped off the previous train, shunted onto our cars for the trip to Lakeside.

At Lakeside our train terminated while in the other platform stood 6A in resplendent green ready to take us onto Gembrook. We left Lakeside passing over the wig wag signal protected level crossing. It was the first working wig wag I had seen. Also evident is that here we were 25% of the way into our trip, and our trains had been hauled by every one of the three working steam locomotives available that day!

All the locos had been immaculately turned out for the occasion. At each opportunity, the crew were seen cleaning then down, it was great to see.

At Gembrook, there were plenty of cafes to choose from for lunch, and we chose the bakery for our pies and cappuccino, as we sat outside basking in the lovely mountains sun. A walk to the Gembrook Nature Park took us places we knew not where, but we managed to do all the walking tracks, and circumnavigate our way back to the station to be able to partake of an ice cream as we surveyed every detail of the gleaming 6A



6A powers onto the new(ish) ballast top trestle bridge en-route to Gembrook.

Diary

- 7 November Directors Meeting
- 18 November Public Running Day
- 2 December Christmas run and BBQ. (BYO)
- 5 December Members Meeting
- 16 December Public Running Day.
- 31 December New Years Run
- 2 January Directors Meeting
- 20 January Public Running Day
- 6 February Members Meeting
- 17 February Public Running Day and Next Newsletter

while it stood next to the water tank behind the station. It must be said the crews go out of their way to be friendly, and they were busy showing some families and young kids the workings in the cab.

Our trip back was as uneventful as the forward trip. We just basked in the atmosphere, and in the occasional direct sun shine that relieved us from the chill of the mountain breeze.

Downhill from Cockatoo we ran bunker first. Judging by the sound, the engine must have been in slight forward



Stan McKeoun's 7 1/4 inch gauge H220. A lovely job.

gear with the regulator cracked and the cylinder drains open. It created a sharp crack as the steam ejected from the cocks at each piston thrust, and retarded the train down the steep grade. There were no restrictions on the new trestle bridges on the line extension, and the trains coasted down and across with good momentum for the pull up the other side. The exhaust of 6A was sharp, but had a curious whistle to it. I understand it is the engine treated with an improved exhaust modelled on the Lempor.

After arrival back at Belgrave we drove back to Menzies Creek to watch the last train of the day being pulled by 14A arrive and depart. In the Museum, J541 from the Yarra Valley Tourist Railway Society is making steady progress being restored.

On the Sunday, the exhibition organised by the Mel-

A selection of nice model internal combustion engines.



bourne Society of Model and Experimental Engineers at Monash University's Engineering halls was our destination. The photos show some of the exhibits. There were plenty of exhibits of all sorts of engineering. Hot air engines, steam boats, locomotives, aeroplanes, CNC machines, and tooling were just some of the items. Good displays of miniature locomotives were provided by the SLSV and Mooroolbark clubs, but otherwise most of the engineering was from the exhibition hosts.

The last exhibition handout featured a simple to build hot air engine. This year it features a putt putt boat which can be built with some tinplate, some copper tube and almost no tools.



Part of the conjugated valve gear on H220.

After lunch we were welcomed at the SLSV and it was good to meet old friends. We were taken for a special run through the tunnel (not permitted to the general public-thanks Bill Stewart!), and we also inspected their well equipped workshop.

After Moorabbin we dropped in at Diamond Valley. This railway is very well engineered. The trackwork is very impressive, as is the signalling, and the train operation was very efficient. Not much steam in sight though, and those that were, were cane loco type. Certainly a place worth visiting, and they run every Sunday.

It is not often one can line up so many steam events over the one weekend, but it happens in Melbourne on the first weekend in October, every 2 years! Recommended!



Diamond Valley's very nicely proportioned 'B' Signal Box.

David Thomas was fortunate enough to have some time overseas and managed some things of railway interest. Here is his report.

FROM SOUTH TO SUD

It's rare for a woman to say anything nice about steam locomotives or railways, so I was surprised when my wife said she enjoyed travelling behind steam locomotives. There are obviously limits to how far this could be stretched, but I was glad that we could both enjoy the sights and sounds and smells of the steam loco pulling our train on one of the conserved railways of England. Even visits to two railway museums went well!

These occurred during our recent holiday to south England and France.

The journey to London was broken by a three day stop at Hong Kong. HK is a very busy place, with high population density, much traffic and many large construction projects under way including port improvements, bridge construction and many high rise residential blocks. HK also has a fine suburban railway system with rolling

Photo 1:Narrow gauge 0-4-4T loco in railway museum at Tai Wo, Hong Kong



stock that is fast and, unlike our own, clean and free of graffiti. A small museum at Tai Wo contains the only testament to the previous generations of steam locomotives. One 0-4-4 side tank loco is preserved here [photo 1]. The only other steam locos at the museum were in photographs taken during significant occasions such as the opening of a new line. One diesel loco (HK's first, made in Australia), a few carriages, signalling and ticketing items are also conserved in the museum. Some HO scale models of very fast modern European trains were exhibited in a glass case.

From Hong Kong we flew to London and after a few days travelled to Windsor using the 1st Great Western rail service. A full size replica of "Queen", an old GWR 4-2-



Photo 2: 4-2-2 "Queen" at Windsor Station, England

2 locomotive (No. 1401) was seen in a dead end siding in the station precinct. It was missing a tender and it is unknown whether one was made [photo 2].

I had hoped to see the West Somerset Railway [photo 3] and Bluebell Railway but happened to blunder across (really!) the Gloucestershire & Warwickshire and Lynton & Barnstaple Railways as well. Steam was in action at each. I was lucky enough to see 9F 922203 in action at the G & W, although there was little demand for its full ability to be used due to the rather flat line and light load. The Bluebell line lived up to my expectations with four engines in steam and quite a collection stored in the shed and yard. Under supervision I was able to clamber aboard a stored West Country loco to have a detailed look [photo 4]. My supervisor dispelled any rosy ideas I might have about the technical advantages of Mr Bullied's original designs of this and its two allied classes! Obviously O. V. Bullied should have tried working on some of his engines!

Following about two weeks in the south of England we caught an 18 car Eurostar high speed trans-channel train to Paris. [photo 5] The Eurostar trains, and TGV trains that serve regional centres of France, have a top service speed of 300 kph. The fastest are the TGVs on the Strasbourg line and can run to 320 kph. There appeared to be numerous forms of high speed trains in France, ranging



Photo 3: Lord Nelson at Minehead (West Somerset Railway), on its first day of revenue service in over 30 years.

from older, somewhat awkward-looking trains to the more sleek, single and double deck modern models. Their total number is now over 500.

The Eurostar's run from London Victoria Station is fairly slow, as it shares the original, low speed rail network. A

new line is currently being constructed through the southern suburbs for the Eurostar service and should open in 2007, significantly decreasing the running time.

After a brief stop near Folkestone to pick up passengers, the train entered one of the three trans-channel tunnels – two for train passage in each direction and the third for vehicular access for maintenance and safety access. Two crossovers enable trains to switch tracks within the tunnel, in exceptional situations. Passage through the tunnel was limited to 160 km/hour but was increased to full line speed in France. Shortly after exiting the tunnel I asked one of the train staff a couple of technical questions, only to be told that he would get someone to provide some answers in a while. Twenty minutes later a gentleman passed by and asked if I would come with him to the cab of the leading power unit, as he was about to relieve the driver for breakfast. It was only to be for half an hour or so (150 km!) but was an exciting opportunity to have first hand experience of a driver's view from one of the world's fastest trains. At the time there was dense fog and, peering through the 1.2 metre square window all that could be seen was about 60 metres of single track racing out of the grey at a speed that was truly exhilarating. At times the leading power unit yawed in a very disconcerting way, but as the driver was unconcerned, I reckoned it must be safe enough. The carriages that shared a bogie were fitted with four shock absorbers, two

Photo 4: Cab of West Country Class "Spam Cam" at Bluebell Railway.





Photo 5: Avignon TGV in Gare de Lyon Station, Paris

near the roof and two near the floor levels. Although I did not ask, I assume they were at least partly intended to control yawing and other unwanted movement at very high speeds.

Braking was by air, electrical and mechanical means. In an emergency application it would take three km to stop the train from full speed. A limiting factor is the maximum brake/wheel temperature that is 270 degrees Centigrade. A normal stop usually takes about ten km, with speed reduction by gentle power reduction before braking.

On our arrival in Paris we changed to the somewhat slower RER/Metro system to transfer to Gare de Lyon to join the GTV to Avignon. This train was similar to the Eurostar except that the passenger cars were double-decked. The RER trains in the Paris suburban system are somewhat similar to our double deck suburban trains, but are made from painted steel instead of stainless steel and fibreglass.

The trip from the south of England to the south of France took approximately seven hours, including the change from Eurostar to TGV in Paris. Not bad for roughly 1700 km!

Photo 6: The rack loco at Chamonix, near Mont Blanc.



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I had hoped that while in Provence (Provence and Haut Provence) we might be able to ride behind a small steam locomotive that ran between Nice and Digne-les-Bains each Sunday. Unfortunately the steam service had been discontinued not long before our holiday commenced. A minor consolation was the preserved rack loco on a plinth at Chamonix, near Mont Blanc (photo 6). The tourist rail service up the mountain to a glacier is now provided by an electric two car rack unit. Views from the mountainside and across the glacier to the mountain peaks were breathtaking!

The next railway experience in France was our visit to the world class railway museum at Mulhouse (somehow the French are able to pronounce this as Miloos), in the Alsace region of northeastern France.

The museum was established following the efforts of enthusiasts, including employees of the national railway (Societe Nationale des Chemins de Fer) in 1971. This resulted in the construction of a laminated timber framed building with 13000 square metres of exhibition area and 1350 metres of track. The exhibits included steam, electric and diesel locomotives, carriages, track maintenance vehicles, signalling equipment and various other items, including an HO model layout and scale models in glass cases. This wonderful technical collection was arranged in a conventional manner and was lit via high windows and electric lights.

Some of the highlights for me included:

- ◆ The 232 U1 passenger locomotive, a compound engine (as most French steam locos seemed to be) made in 1949. It was set up on rollers and at 20 minute intervals would blow its whistle and start chugging around for five minutes, complete with mock steam from near the cylinder drains [photo 7].
- ◆ The Alco-built 141 R class, of which 1340 were built to replace the many locos that were destroyed or made unserviceable during World War 2. In 1948 they hauled 49% of the total tonne/kilometres of traffic in France. It was a pleasing-looking hybrid between modern American and the highly stylised French designs. The loco exhibited (1187) was the last steam engine in regular service in France and ceased running on 3 November 1975.
- ◆ One of the famous Companie du Nord Pacifics (No. 3.1192) in brown livery [photo 8], built in 1909-14 for the Paris-Orléans (PO) Companie, redesigned by André Chapelon in 1929-34.

I thoroughly enjoyed all the exhibits although being rather biased towards the steamers. Compared to Australian, English and American styles, the French locomotives are so flamboyant and full of such surprising shapes and application of technology.

The new extension of the museum was opened in 2005 and the museum became "Cité du Train". The old section



Photo 7: Hudson Type 232 U1 four cylinder compound passenger loco

was named "Railway Adventure" and displayed the technical advances of railways from the earliest days to 1960. The new section was named "Golden Age of Railways" and presented the socio-economic impacts of railways in France between 1850 and the end of World War 2. The new section covers 6500 square metres (650 metres of track) and is basically a big tin shed, brightly coloured externally. Internally the display environment is very different to the original section. There are no windows and spotlights discreetly light the exhibits. The overall effect is a night scene or perhaps just a dream (and it does make photography a challenge if you have only a small flashlight!). This section is aimed at presenting the social aspects of railways, partly with the intention to attract a wider audience than enthusiasts or techno-buffs.

Six main themes are presented in the "Golden Age of Railways":

- ◆ Railway travel through the ages
- ◆ Mountain railways
- ◆ The use of and impacts on railways during war

- ◆ The joys of holiday camps
- ◆ Presidential trains
- ◆ Railwaymen

The exhibits varied greatly from vintage steam locos and carriages, to modern large versions, the Micheline rubber-tyred railcar to a loco on its side in gravel (a statement and tribute to the French Resistance in WW2). Audiovisual stations were set up at many of the exhibits to provide detail of the scenarios depicted. The recordings in these were in French, but portable audio sets were provided for English and German speaking people. These were triggered by signals at the display sites (in the new section) or by selection of an appropriate number on the keypad (in the old section). Overall, the method of presentation was stunning and adequate to retain the interest of most people. [Photo 9]



Photo 9:"Forquenot" a 2-4-2 of the Companie des chemins de fer du Paris Orleans, on the "Sud Express", Cite du Train Museum, Mulhouse, France

Photo 8: Nord pacific type 3.1192 in Cite du Train Museum, Mulhouse, France



If an assessment were to be made of the museum, the main things that were lacking were:

- ◆ more interactive items for children or a special playground section, as at the Workshops Museum in Ipswich
- ◆ a research and library section, as at the York Museum
- ◆ adequate information regarding other museums or preserved railways live steam operation (whether full sized or miniature). It is believed that a small steam loco had run on some occasions at or from the museum on some previous occasions.

A brochure in the shop section (adjacent to the cafeteria) advertised the "Ried Express" - a small steam railway run by volunteers nearby, between Volgelshiem and the Rhine River. The line is used by the preserved railway for one trip on weekends and by goods traffic



Photo 10. 0-6-0T loco at Volgelsheim Station, Eastern France

through the week. As we had not seen any live steam in France my wife and I drove there the next day.

The rolling stock comprised three 0-4-0T locos, two 0-6-0T locos, one 0-4-0 steam tram, and two 0-4-0 diesels used for shunting. These and other paraphernalia were stored in a small loco shed near the Rhine River. Our train was hauled by a small 0-6-0, a vintage German-built engine complete with compressor that seemed too large and made more noise than the engine. The train departed from a beautifully restored old stone station that contained a collection of small museum items and old photographs of the line in earlier times. The line previously extended into Germany however the bridge had been blown up at the end of WW2. The railway team hoped that it would be possible to build a new bridge the future. The line ran through flat country that contained regrowth forest and industrial development neither of which enhanced the travel experience. It is likely that the forest will become more aesthetically pleasing in years to come, as it grows to maturity and looks less weedy. [photo 10].

After The Ried Express, our contact with railways was limited to seeing the occasional district train hauled (or pushed) by a conventional electric loco, or a more rare view of a GTV. On return to Paris we caught the RER to Gare de Nord for our return to London on the "Eurostar" and then by plane on to Sydney and home. The final leg of the trip was via our own suburban rail system.

Reminiscing about the holiday, there were many highlights of people, travelling through strange places, and railways. However, emerging from the kaleidoscope of images is a shrill whistle and an elegant high-wheeled Heath Robinson standing in a semi-lit station in the middle of the night.

If you have ever wondered what the inside of the Tonkin drain that runs through our grounds looks like, here it is!



Above: John Lyons & George Robertson inspect Mick's consist of Tinkerbell and wagons.

Below: A closer view of the passenger car, complete with flooring, padded seats, and interior lighting.



**2007 Convention Registration Forms
for Penfield, South Australia
are available in the clubhouse, or from
the AALS website:
www.aals.asn.au**





Above: Ray Lee at speed passes John Hill's 44 class waiting in the station on the August running day. Below: 3112 in close



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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.