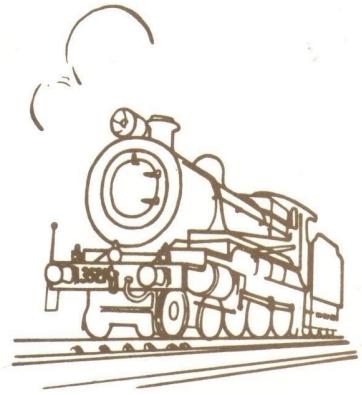


# Sydney Live Steam Locomotive Society

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

## 'Newsletter'

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Wayne Fletcher and the heritage Mackellar 3½ inch gauge NSWGR 34 class which he has restored to running order.

### August Running Day

We were lucky that this running day turned out as well as it did. If we were to believe the weather forecast we would not have bothered unpacking the locomotives. However, under very grey skies, we did have a reasonable afternoon. There had been some rain between morning tea and lunch and a few spots during the afternoon. It was not till about 4.30pm that the rain started. A few optimistic groups set up their party requirements before lunch while we were setting up the grounds. The preparations were carried out by Barry M, John H, Arthur, Graeme, and myself. Graeme was busy with the leaf blower clearing all the fallen leaves from the running right of way and the paths. I did my usual check of the overhanging vegetation on the perimeter of the elevated track as well as putting out the hoses for the elevated sta-

tion.

John H steamed "Nigel Gresley" before lunch to check on the results of recent work, all was well. Ross had "Toneya" running on the outer main early, Nick was seen having a drive! Bernie and Andrew spent some time looking at some work on Nick's "Maisie".

Bernie started off as gate keeper till about 2.00pm when Jim Mulholland took over, he was delayed by work commitments. Unlike some August running days the queue was not excessive. I think the uncertainty of the weather kept some away.

As mentioned earlier Ross had the 0-6-2 Fowler running on the outer and with Martin Y as guard ran well all afternoon. The second train on the outer was hauled by another narrow gauge locomotive, 2-6-2 Alco "Mountaineer" driven by Paul B. Paul was assisted with the driving by Peter D and Geoff Olsen was guard.



Zac Lee and the B10 on the August running day.

The inner main saw the WAGR V1224 at the head of one train with Andrew driving early in the day and David T on guard duties. Later in the afternoon Warwick was at the regulator and later still Warwick and David changed duties till the end of the day. Warwick found that he was driving with foggy glasses due to drifting steam, such was the weather. The second train on the inner had Graeme K with 4-6-2 2401 running as pilot and Ray with C3803 run-

ning train engine. Tony E assisted with driving the 38 and Peter Wagner acted as guard. This train suffered one derailment due to children leaning over too far resulting in the recording of three minor injuries. Late in the day Ray took C3803 off and Graeme continued with 2401 and a reduced load till the end of the day. Ian Tomlinson was station master on the inner station assisted by Neal and the outer station was attended to by John T, driver retraining! Mick Murray steamed the Shay and prepared to trial the sample of coke that may be suited as an alternate fuel. This was quite a failure. Mick has provided a detailed report further on in this Newsletter.

On the elevated track John and Arthur ran 2-8-0 "Nigel Gresley" and 2-8-2 heritage Mikado on a seven car train. I spent the afternoon as guard on this train. The two locomotives ran well and at times carried some very heavy loads, more adults than children and some of the adults are larger than once was the norm. Garry B ran another train with 4-6-0 B1 'Impala' and Nick was guard. Late in the day Zac steamed the 2-6-0 B10 and ran one car. Elevated station master was Simon.

The kiosk was looked after by Elizabeth, Margo, Gai, Joy and Sheila Dewhurst. We missed Diane, she was recovering from an appendix operation! In the signal box we had Barry M, Steve B and Martin D working in shifts. Mark Gibbons was track superintendant and Neal's partner Jo-

Anne was our ticket seller. Our rides total for the afternoon was 1943, considerably less than a typical August day. It was though a good result for a day that was so threatening. Some rain started at about 4.30pm and that sent our visitors hurrying off home. At 5.00pm there was a real down pour, so heavy that you could hear it coming.

### September Running Day

This was our first running day for the Spring season and was certainly an improvement over the last running day. The sun was warm but there was still a noticeable coolness when the sun was hiding behind clouds. There were about six party groups, some set up early including one person who was let in the main gate to stake their claim. We were without some of our regulars but the setting up was completed in time for us to get underway with Bernie, Vic, John and Arthur looking after things.

We only ran three trains on the ground level till late in the day. The outer saw Mick Murray with the Shay hauling the Central West car set with Simon riding as guard. With char burning in the firebox the locomotive turned in its usual reliable performance lifting some very heavy loads throughout the afternoon. The second outer train had Ray with C3506 running train engine and Neil Mackellar and the B&O 0-6-0 switcher as pilot running the blue car set. During the afternoon the 0-6-0 returned to loco to have the lubricator re-filled then joined back on the train. While Neil was tending to the loco Ray continued with a slight reduction in loadings. Graeme K was guard on this train for the afternoon.

The inner train was hauled by the WAGR V1224 with David T doing the driving till late in the day. The V

Mountaineer and Paul Brotchie with Geoff Olsen as guard prepare for traffic in another August scene.





**Here is the Hurst's train with John Lyons as guard way down the back, running parallel with 2401 Graeme Kirkby leading a hidden Ray Lee and 3803 on the inner main.**

had leaking clack valves and one sported a bandage but the loco performed well all afternoon. Geoff Olsen was guard. There were some minor derailments that could not be explained, this was after Warwick took over the driving. John Tulloch arrived late in the afternoon with the J class 2-8-0 and hauled a short train till the end of the day. This additional train was very welcome to help shorten the queue for the inner station. Peter W was guard on this train. Peter was a man of many hats during the afternoon, guard, station master and even a spell in the ticket office. The elevated track had our now usual seven car train with John and Arthur driving the 2-8-0 "Nigel Gresley" and the heritage Mikado respectively. Graham Tindale was guard on this train for most of the afternoon. Garry B ran a three car train with his LNER B1 "Impala" 4-6-0 doing a great job for the afternoon with Nick acting as guard. Zac Lee had the freshly painted maroon B10, 2-6-0, in steam most of the afternoon waiting for a steam test and after David T was relieved of his driving duties on V1224 this was carried out. Zac was then out on the track with one car carrying passengers. I had steamed Z1915 early in the afternoon to test run a new bogie driving car but in my haste to get going I failed to tighten the nuts holding the foot board stirrups in place and came to an abrupt halt as I was leaving the loop on to the stub points. With my feet on the foot boards the toe in caused boards to catch. Most embarrassed I returned to loco and packed up early. Joe and Luca, with David, Nick's friend, attended to the elevated station and late in the afternoon I gave Graham a spell from guard duties.

During the afternoon the inner station masters were Ian T and Martin Y while on the outer station Peter D and Peter W assisted and Tony E shared the driving on the C35.

In the kiosk our helpers were Elizabeth, Diane, Gai, Joy Margo and Rosemary who did a great job. Emily was there for our first aid needs and fortunately her skills were not needed. Signal Box crew were Mark Gibbons with Neal Bates handling the outer under supervision from Warwick. Steve Border did an excellent job as track superintendent being very attentive to all the activities of the afternoon. The afternoon was very busy with the big

party groups causing long queues waiting for rides. Rob Murphy was on the gate and had a very busy time for the first hour. We sold 3004 tickets for train rides for the day, a very good effort. Jo-Anne was our ticket seller for the bulk of the afternoon.

### October Running Day

This was a lovely spring day, the weather was just right. The running day for this month is often shared with the Granny Smith Festival held in the local area and that usually means that our crowd builds up later than we normally expect. Setting up was carried out by Barry M,

**The September running day saw Mick and the Shay on the outer main passing Neil Mackellar and the switcher leading Ray Lee and 3506 in the platform.**





Again in September, David Thomas driving V1224 on the inner main.

Victor, Arthur, Graeme K, Warwick and myself with others as they arrived helping as well. Lunch was had promptly at 12 noon and trains were ready to run by about 1.15pm, we are often not that well organised! Scott Murray was gate keeper for the afternoon and after the initial opening rush things slowed till mid afternoon when, with the festival activities over, our visitor numbers picked up. We were without some of our normal locomotives and drivers Ross B was overseas and John H had taken his Foden to the Clare valley in South Australia for the Miniature Traction Engine and Road Steam Rally. Arthur related that John had a very enjoyable run on the Friday but Saturday was a total fire ban day so his activities were curtailed. On the elevated Arthur coupled the 2-8-2 heritage Mikado to three cars and ran reliably all afternoon. Graham Tindale was guard until relieved by myself late in the day. Simon had his 0-6-0 "Simplex" on hand and I intended to double head with

Z1915. We coupled three cars and guard's van with the "Simplex" as train engine and Z1915 pilot. After two laps I was having water feed troubles with the 19 and retired to loco while Simon and Nick removed one car from the consist returning it to the carriage shed siding. The "Simplex" ran very well till the end of the day. Back in the elevated loco I persisted with the loco and after a short time, as if by magic, both injectors started picking up in a most reliable manner. I ventured back on to the track and coupled to a passenger car only to have the feed pipe from the riding truck pump come adrift under the tender. Back then to loco and dropped the fire, not a good afternoon. Joe and Luca looked after the station, Luca is becoming very competent with the lever frame.

On the ground level outer track Jim and Dom Mulholland ran one train with C3901 4

-8-2 "Green Machine". We had not seen this locomotive for a while and with each of them alternating between driving and guard the locomotive ran well. The C3901 came off mid afternoon and was replaced by green C3803 with Ray at the regulator till the end of the day. The second outer train was hauled by Graeme and 2401 4



Simon Collier and Simplex did much useful work on the October running day, including letting guard Nick drink tea on the job!



Garry Buttel and Impala with a short train on the September day.

-6-2 as train engine and Neil Mac and the 0-6-0 B&O switcher as pilot. When Neil returned the switcher to loco Graeme continued till the end of the day with a reduced load. Bernie was guard on this train.

The inner trains were hauled by two of our larger locomotives. Mick ran the three truck Shay with Geoff riding as guard while Warwick had the WAGR V1224 2-8-2 in steam with Andrew and Warwick sharing the driving. Carol Leggett was inner station mistress. Both trains ran smoothly all afternoon. The running staff not mentioned already included Paul T, Peter D, David T and Neal. The signal box was operated by Barry M and Martin D and there were no signalling issues for the



Dom Mulholland and 3901 stands next to Rays 3803 during a loco swap in October.



Mark Gibbons oversees operations from the Signal Box on our September running day.

afternoon. David Thomas was track superintendent for the afternoon. The train loadings were light to start with and we carried some heavy loads by the end of the day. We gave 2031 rides for the afternoon, this total was almost 200 above the October running day average.

The kiosk was run by Elizabeth, Diane, Gai, Margo and Sheila. They all did a great job for us. One feature of the afternoon was the display of flowers in the ticket office garden. Simon has been working very hard on this garden and his efforts are paying off. Warwick mentioned that he saw a visitor taking photos of the flowers! There were some of the posters put up regarding membership, there was one inquiry and that was followed up by a visit to the grounds the following Saturday.

### Inter-club and Small gauge day.

This was held at our grounds on the last weekend in August. The rain during the previous week was suppose to clear but Saturday saw some wet weather that slowed down the activities. Simon was on hand very early to start opening the grounds and was soon joined by John L. With no real early starters there was even time for a civilised cuppa. Nick was the first to unload a locomotive and then others followed. We had a display in the club

3803 & Ray Lee with Peter Dunn as guard on the outer main on the October running day.



### Diary.

- December 2 Members Meeting
- December 6 Members Christmas Party (evening) BYO everything, including food, family and friends.
- December 20 Public Running Day
- December 31 (Wednesday evening) New Years Eve BYO BBQ tea.
- January 6 Directors Meeting
- January 17 Public Running Day
- February 3 Members Meeting
- February 21 Public Running Day and next newsletter!

NB: Check AME for a full listing of events

house covering OO gauge to 5" gauge. Between these two limits there were a good number of 2½" and 3½" models. All of Nick's Blowfly parts (except the boiler) came together for display and Andrew had the Loft's Porter there as well. Andrew included on show a 2-8-0 Austere Ada and some other garden gauge locomotives. Zac had the B10 chassis there, he is currently doing a re-paint.

We owe our thanks to Diane, Elizabeth and Gai who kept the canteen running throughout the day looking after members and visitors alike. They managed morning, afternoon tea and lunch, including, sweets with cream for sweets. The club house was the popular place for morning tea as it was a bit wet outside. Despite the damp timber supply Brian M got the fire burning for the BBQ lunch and started the cooking of the sausages and onions. John L assisted Brian with this task. While David T had supplied the bread rolls for both days we started to run short on Saturday so Warwick made a quick trip to the bakery to replenish supplies. Added entertainment in the club house was the showing of some old film that Mark G had arranged to have digitised and transferred to DVD. With some of the original film over forty years old there were many memories stirred. While not much was doing and the weather was wet, the ground frame received its missing handrail and Martin D also attended to the reed switches on the channel iron to improve their



Leal Brack's very nicely done XPT at the Interclub day.

reliability. Martin also attended to the signal box as required.

After lunch the weather improved and there was some action on the tracks. On the ground level we saw Ian T's 4-4-0 "Maid of Kent" running with Ian and his grandson. Graeme K ran his H class and some of his wagon collection. There was a very attractive XPT, in original colours, owned by Leal Brack. This is a petrol / electric / battery driven model and runs well. Roger Jones had a couple of "Planets" and another battery powered bogie diesel outline locomotive. On the elevated track we had already seen the "Maisie" that Andrew A has been working on running before lunch. This was joined by two other Allison locomotives, "Mona" and the B2. They eventually formed a triple header with a couple of cars giving some rides. Hugh Elsol, ran his 2-4-0 "Hardwick" and Leon Brack steamed his 3½" gauge C38. John H had worked all week on the 3½" "King" which was fitted with new Viton O rings in all 4 cylinders, and some new pistons as well. A boiler test by David T had it on the track after lunch. I think John was very pleased with the way it worked! Late in the day Zac ran the 1 gauge methyl-

A happy President Warwick with the B2 on the Interclub and Small Gauge day.-Photo Hugh Elsol.

lated spirits fired 4-6-0 around a small circular track on the clubhouse concrete.

About twenty members and visitors walked across to the Bowling Club for tea on the Saturday night.

Sunday dawned bright and clear. John T opened up at 7.00am and was followed by Warwick at about 8.00am. Warwick steamed the B2 and some good running occurred all morning until about lunch time with a number of drivers taking turns. After lunch the driving trolley was transferred to Andrew's "Maisie" and this ran the rest of the day again with various drivers. Also out was Hugh Elsol with 2-4-0 Hardwicke which attained its usual typical speeds on the less occupied track. Wayne Fletcher brought along the C34 class for a run, and also Ernie Sweet's old Maisie for display in the clubhouse. On the ground level Graeme K had the H class 4-4-0 out with a short mixed train which had many drivers as well.

Lunch was cooked by Graeme K and Arthur H with morning and afternoon tea and the kiosk looked after by Gai and Sheila D, both did a great job looking after the visitors and members. Lunch was taken outside in the sunshine while listening to steam exhausts and whistles, very pleasant indeed! Martin again looked after the signal box. It was a very relaxed, most enjoyable day indeed. While it was difficult to estimate numbers over the two days Warwick suggested we had about 60 people on the Saturday and about 20 on the Sunday. The attendance register showed that there were representatives from eight other Societies. All enjoyed themselves and many thanks to all members who worked to help make the weekend a success.

### SLSLS Family Day. Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October.

This event turned out to be an excellent day with about fifty members, families and friends. Barry M was at the grounds early and started the unlocking and preparation of the grounds. The weather was great, even though it was a bit warm for this time of the year and as it was the day after the grass cutting team had been at work the grounds were magnificent! Tables and chairs were set up outside in the shade and all those present brought a vast array of picnic food to enjoy, a lot was cooked on the BBQ. Simon was running the "Simplex" on the outer in the morning and Ross B steamed 0-6-2 "Toneya" and with a couple of cars attached and enjoyed a leisurely run with his family and doing some driver instruction. Ray L had the VR A2 4-6-0 in steam running with the Pullman set on the inner main and with Matt and himself sharing the driving they provided a lot of rides for the children present. Tony Eyre acted as guard. Ian T and his grandson enjoyed their run with 4-4-0 "Maid of Kent". The Lee hand car was very popular with all the children present running up and down on the long siding off the inner main. The kids themselves organised a line up and took turns all having a great time. The Lyons grand children now want one! John H fired up his Foden steam truck and provided rides down the grounds over the entrance bridge and back up to the inner station. Neal B missed much of the day as he was called away for an urgent work commitment but was back in time to have a drive of the Foden around the Bowing Club car park. In the morning Vic steamed his Climax and managed a few laps with this small locomotive. Arthur had the heritage Mikado set up with a special



## Duty Roster..

December.	M.Murray, A.Allison, M.Gibbons, W.Fletcher, G.Kirkby, B.Muston, J.Noller, P.Sayers,I.Tomlinson.
January.	W.Allison, N.Amy, S.Collier, G.Buttel, B.Millner,S.Murray, V.Scicluna, G.Tindale, P.Brotchie.
February.	D.Thomas, B.Courtenay, G.Croudace, S.Larkin, L.Pascoe, S.Sorensen, D.Lee, N.Bates, R.Murphy.
March.	J.Hurst, J.Leishman, J.Lyons, D.Mulholland, J.Mulholland, M.Yule, R.Bishop, J.Abate, G.Olsen.

## Gate Roster.

December: John Noller. January: Peter Sayers. February: Paul Taffa. March: David Thomas.

nephew seat on the tender, it had very good use. Garry had the B1 "Impala" on the elevated and daughter Emma, with pink drivers hat, had a few rounds of the track. Warwick ran his "Mona" with nearly completed HG guard's van and I ran the Z19 with the new bogie driving wagon, normal driving truck and the SHG guards van that I made for elevated use. We had a couple of laps with grandchildren driving and riding but was then forced off with the water feed problems. All still had a good time. It was especially good for the Lee, Tulloch, Larkin and Lyons children to have the chance to catch up after thirty years or so. All their off spring got on well and had a great time. The day seemed to be very successful and everyone, young and old, had an enjoyable time. It may become a regular event.

## Works Reports

Mick has provided some new face masks and a reminder sign for eye protection near the grinder. Members should avail themselves of this face protection when using the angle grinders or whipper snipping. Ear plugs are also provided. There is a large box of them in the shed.

## Grounds.

One Friday saw a dedicated band at the grounds early. Arthur beat the traffic and arrived at 6.30am. To pass the time he installed the new angled white picket fence panel to match the recently installed one adjacent to the elevated station exit. David L assisted when he arrived until Warwick managed to get there with our hired cherry picker. David and Warwick assisted by Arthur spent the day changing out the floodlights to new LED types. The work took until about 4pm, so it was a major effort but it is now all done! Vic picked up our rubbish! Arthur had the fence all set up ready for concrete around the post. The following morning John L was there early and had the post concreted in by morning tea time. Following that John mixed some sand and cement and rendered the face of a recently made retaining wall under the new picket fence.

Brian M attended to the BBQ and replaced the grates with heavy duty ones that will last us a long time to come! Warwick and Andrew have also repaired the chimney as-

sisted by Nick and Ross.

Arthur Hurst has overhauled all our mowers. This included work on wheel bearings as well as the engine and new blades. Please treat them well! Arthur set up the unloader as a work platform while Jim L organised a suitable work table. At the end of one Saturday Andrew and Warwick rearranged the shed and stored our spare cement sheet and fence panel off-cuts. The clubhouse was also tidied up ready for inter-club weekend. The various non-ME magazines that have accumulated are being offered to free to any takers. There are still plenty there. If you want any - be early!

Martin Y is working on new handrails for the toilet doors. Lionel has filled the coal bin and buckets all ready for us to use! David T spends most Saturdays in the garden doing much weeding. The trees had the dead wood removed on Tuesday 21 October and created a lot of very good mulch. This is being placed mainly along the bottom fence area. Work has commenced with Jo assisting David in this task. On the first Saturday in November there was a big push on this project with lots of newspapers on hand and a lot of members spreading the mulch.

Simon found a comfortable way to water the Ticket Office garden. This has much in flower with many of the other plants about to burst into bloom! Such is spring. He has also been attending to the weeds on an individual basis. Very tedious!

## Elevated Railway.

Warwick attended to some steel supports for the ground frame decking. These were bolted and welded in by Andrew, and painted by Jim M. We cut the sheet as needed and the new deck was installed. We added some screws to the fence and generally tightened up the whole assembly. The railing has been installed as well, to give extra security to those operating the levers from falling over. John Lyons had made a step for the ground frame and has

*Continued Page 10.*

**Thanks to John Lyons, John Elsol, Hugh Elsol, Graham Tindale & the staff photographer who all contributed to the photo montage on the following pages.**

## Editorial

With another volume of the SLSLS Newsletter complete I would like to take this opportunity to thank those members who have given their time to provide material to help fill each issue. Special thanks to Warwick for sticking everything together in a form for publication. Over the years the Newsletter has recorded the progress of the Society and the contributions of the members who have made this progress possible.

The members that have gone before us have left the Society with a wonderful facility that enables us to follow our interest in running miniature steam locomotives. With an effort now to attract new members we must ensure that any that chooses to come along are made welcome and hope that they will be able to make a worthwhile contribution to the future of the SLSLS. Best wishes to all members and friends of the Society for the Christmas season and the New Year of 2015!

John Lyons

# Interclub and Small Gauge Day



# Family Day





**David Lee removing old floodlights.**

welded it in place, in between rain showers. This was achieved together with some bracing and it should fill the bill. The following Saturday an extra brace was screwed on and young Jason Lyons applied a coat of paint where needed.

Martin D investigated the reed switches on the channel iron preparing an improved arrangement. He has ordered the material for the new relay box.

After the weather cleared Warwick dug out for the formwork under the second picket fence recently installed by Arthur at the elevated level crossing. Once the formwork was done it was apparent it wouldn't need much concrete so the available team was rustled up and a barrow and a half of concrete did the job quite well, with Peter D mixing and levelling off and David T attending. The next week the formwork was removed and the job backfilled.

John Lyons has started with the level crossing gates. Having prepared the main components and drilled the holes for the rods, Neal B ran the afternoon shift putting the curved tops on the vertical posts using a bit of his Michelangelo techniques. He then managed to weld one gate together before (a late) afternoon tea! The following week John Lyons was hard at the manufacture of the second level crossing gate being able to use the first gate as a building jig. By the time he went we had two gates complete! The Saturday before the October running day John started on the straps and at home has worked on the hinge blocks and other spacing blocks.

Nick wire brushed back the elevated signal and Jo-Anne applied some rust converter to the exposed parts. Warwick managed to coat the inside of the post with fish oil (OOHH- you smell like fish – said Wendy when Warwick walked in at home), and primer was applied were necessary. More preparation and painting is needed!

**Brian Muston and the new BBQ grates.**



John H has given the elevated signalling mechanical equipment a good going over, removing and greasing pins and doing some adjustments. Discussion about the system



**BBQ reconstruction under way!**

emphasised the need for signalmen to pull the levers very gently in order to get a feel for the equipment and avoid damaging the stops.

Mick did some work on one of the GL carriage sets and then with John L suggested having a look at the stub points to the carriage shed siding. Mick suggested loosening the fastenings anchoring the main line to the abutment and on finding there was a fair clearance between the shanks and the cross ties we were able to drive the track back into the expansion joints to give about 1 to 2 mm clearance for the stub point rails. Observation showed we still had a problem. Mick further investigated and it appears the entire track formation (posts, beams, the lot) is slowly creeping downhill. The expansion joint was attended to, a vertical curve has been removed making the joint work better and some additional alignment tabs have been welded to the track to keep it in line. The welding was done by Neal assisted by Jo-Anne. Mick gave the rails in the expansion joints a good clean and oil so we may have them sliding as they are suppose to as they heat up and cool down. Some more thoughts on this will need to be had as no movement is evident in any of the track structure, except that the joint at the stub points keeps getting less.

**Peter Dunn supervising cleaning and painting of the bridge deck by David and Nick.**



Martin Y delivered the steel channels for the elevated loco departure road. These are stored in the shed and will be in the way for a while until they can be installed. Some additional components are being sourced.

### **Ground Level Railway.**

Andrew had done a survey of the green car bolster states. This was verified today and one more car (the second car) needed some adjustment to the bolster. Andrew ground out the weld and then re-welded it in the correct position. It has made a difference! As well we noticed one green car had a concrete weight instead of a proper weighbridge weight. These are significantly lighter so we took the opportunity to upgrade it. Andrew drilled the new weight and we swapped them over.

Peter D and Paul B replaced a fishplate on the carriage sidings. This needed some modification to be reinstalled after upgrading the points there some weeks ago.

Mick looked at the brakes on the green set (they had a minor leak on the August running day) and replaced a couple of diaphragms. Mark G and Vic investigated the cause of No.9 signal not going back to stop after the train went past. It was traced to a defective cable core, most unusual. Some wires were swapped to solve the problem! Nick and Warwick did a soap and water wash on all the ground level cars. Later they were assisted by Ross Bishop. This long overdue activity has removed much grime and made them much cleaner to handle. If anyone is keen on assisting, some of the cars (especially the footboards) could do with some paint.

Ross had the task of measuring up for a replacement glass face for the banner signal on the exit from the GL depot, it had suffered a miss-adventure during mowing. Two weeks later he reinstalled the reglazed front.

Neal with Jo's help and the attention of others fixed the eaves lining and cleaned out the signal box gutters and then hosed them out. Mark had oiled the points and attended to two electrical faults. One where a relay had fallen out and was in the bottom of the box (apparently most unusual). Mick Murray had re-attached a fire extinguisher to an elevated van and looked at the bogies on two of the green set, taking one home for further work.

During the tree work some damage occurred to the outer main track so Bradley (prospective new member) and Warwick removed the panel. The panel was reshaped with the sledge hammer but unfortunately not good enough for us! We managed to find a spare panel but it was not long enough, so both panels were cut and welded together to get the correct length. Bradley assisted with the cutting and weld prep and you can blame Warwick for the welding!

Peter D and Paul B replaced the sleepers on 33 points with stainless steel ones. They were quite efficient, starting after lunch but having it out, repaired and reinstalled before afternoon tea! Watching them straighten the turnout after welding was interesting!

### **Loco & Rolling Stock News**

Brian Muston brought along the new bogie wagon for Nick and showed him how to apply the sides. John Lyons



**John Lyons at work on the level crossing gates.**

had Nick's Blowfly smoke box and chimney looking very good. Nick was rather pleased!

Warwick had his partly built HG van on show while a lot of talk took place. Andrew had a look at Nick's Maisie boiler with some work being planned. He also cleaned the Old Girls tender running gear. It was difficult to roll and the brakes were hard to adjust. It is much improved after removing of a lot of gunk! A note from Mick gives some statistics about the Shay. Since going into service it has travelled 208kms in 56 hours running time. The wheels have made 558,752 revolutions and the engine unit 1,024,380 revolutions. Simon brought along Nick's smoke box tube plate and back head for the Blowfly boiler, while Warwick showed some recently constructed trestles for the trestle bridge on his 16mm scale garden railway, and later a corrugated building and some point levers. David attended to a boiler test on Garry Buttel's 'Impala' so this is now ready for 4 more years of running days!

### **Members News**

Jim L showed us a DVD of the Swiss Vapeur Park. It was mostly in French and German. It has to be seen to be believed.

A number of our members visited Galston HME for their invitation run. There was not a lot present (the weather would have turned off people) but Warwick certainly had a nice time on Friday and those attending on Saturday

**The ground level cars being given a good clean.**



would have also enjoyed themselves.

We tested the renewed BBQ grate. Brian M had a fire simmering in the morning to burn off the coating that the new grate was covered with. We devoured some sausages, onions and fried bread for lunch expertly cooked by Brian M. This was to remove leftovers from the Interclub and small gauge day!

John Tulloch got his picture in the local Blue Mountains Gazette following Wascoe's birthday event. SLSLS gets a mention. Max Gay has leg troubles, so it's not likely we will be seeing him for a while. Look after yourself Max.

Our new member flyer was published in the November Railway Digest. RD was selected as it was the largest distribution (Australia wide) railway news magazine and thus would target a most likely audience. The encouragement of new members is ongoing and suggestions of other means of doing so are welcome. Just convey your ideas to a Director. Note the membership application process does not change and active members are the goal. We will also have some posters and handouts available for display on running days.

## Busted – Trial of an Alternative Fuel

**Mick Murray**

With the cessation of char production by Australian Char in Victoria, many clubs have been searching for an alternative fuel to keep our steam locomotives operating. As part of this effort, John Hurst recently obtained a number of samples from a local fuel merchant for trials. Amongst these was a black coal coke which looked promising and worth a try.

The "coke" was trialed in the Shay on our August Running Day.

For the record, the Shay has a "char" grate of about 57 square inches with 614 x 1/8" air holes providing approx. 14% air flow area (probably closer to 18% allowing for edge clearance and clearance between rocking grate segments).

Initial Observations related to the trial are as follows:

- The coke is coated with/contains quite a bit of fine dust and looked quite different to what I remember from the '60's;
- There was little visible flame during firing up, or at any time coke only was in use;
- Pressure rise was very slow (on air) to 30 psi, then when the steam blower was turned on, it had to be blown harder to raise steam (and was noticeably slower than on char);
- During the run to the sidings, pressure dropped to 50 psi – at least 10 minutes on the blower was required to return the pressure to 100 psi (typically 3 -4 minutes with char).

At this stage, I made the decision that I was not happy to commence the running session using the coke as fuel and changed over to 100% char fuelling. Further observations follow:

- With the 100% char, but pressure was still slow to build;
- I coupled up to a car set and ran 2 x 2 laps using char (along with remnant coke in firebox)
- On the second set of laps, after starting from the station with around 50 psi - which is typical if I have fired and added water using the large injector – it took 1.5 laps to recover full boiler pressure using a fair amount of blower, and I noted that pressure would not build on the uphill run as is typical;
- Usually when leaving the station with around 50 to 60 psi on the gauge, the blower can recover pressure by the bottom of the hill, and retain/build pressure on the uphill climb.

The run was abandoned, and after some further additions of char and some good fire raking, pressure was building a bit quicker, but not as well as normal.

I decided to drop the fire and found that there was 3 or so handfuls of totally unburnt coke, and significant ash (for the amount of time the fire was alight) present. In addition, the smokebox had around 50 – 60% of the cinders seen typically after a full running session.

It seems likely that the combination of unburnt coke and ash was choking the fire and not allowing the added char to reach its potential. Perhaps the relatively low grate air flow area was also a factor.

Based on this (limited) experience, it appears the "coke" is unlikely to be a viable alternative fuel, at least with char grates.

This makes one wonder how the Stephensons and the Sydney steam trams managed on coke - perhaps "coke" is no longer "coke".



## European Travels.

My family were fortunate to enjoy a great holiday during June and July across Europe. There's always a train element factored into our family holidays. Here is a roundup of the train side of things. Taking some Annual and Long Service leave, Sharlene and I had planned a pretty full itinerary, complete with some planned and unplanned train adventures.



**On the London Underground!**

We headed to London first. A busy week seeing all the famous sights, interlinked by numerous trips on the London underground. We stayed in a small apartment in Islington, a short walk from Angel Tube Station on the Northern (Black) line. The kids and I read that Angel Station had the longest escalator in Western Europe! That it did!

Highlights of London included the Tower of London, The Engine room inside Tower Bridge, The Science museum complete with their rocket collection, their Parsons Steam Turbine, Stephenson's Rocket, the hall of aeroplane engines and countless other treasures. We spent a day out at Windsor Castle, catching the "First Great Western" quick (very quick) intercity train out of Paddington to Slough and then changing to a DMU for the short trip on the branch line to Windsor Central. On that same day we ended up over at Greenwich late in the afternoon (at the Prime Meridian) coming back from Windsor into Paddington (spotting A4 Pacific Bittern along the way), then the tube, then the Docklands railway – a long day but fantastic. Entertainment from the squirrels in the park at Greenwich topped off the day. Hampton Court Palace and its expansive gardens was also a sight to see, as was Hyde Park. The London Eye provided a bird's eye view of Greater London, with the streets below dotted with Red Double decker buses.

**At Paddington en route to Windsor Castle. Jason and the First Great Western HST Intercity 125's.**



Next Stop was Paris, via the Eurostar out of London St Pancras International! Customs appeared to be very crowded but the crowd flowed through the checkpoint and we joined the train in carriage 16 – as it turned out, the

## Peter Lyons

third carriage from the front! The trip was pretty smooth at speeds up to 300km/h, the train covering the 495km distance in just under 2 and a half hours. The pleasant atmosphere of the London Tube was but a memory upon arrival at Gare Du Nord, as we even tually sorted our way through crowds,

sorted out the metro ticketing, navigated the signage and right of way, and with assistance from a few locals, navigated our way across Gare Du Nord, through the SNCF station, and up to Chapelle Station on Metro line No2 (blue) for our short 10 stop trip to our hotel near The Arch de Triomphe. Crazy experience with all luggage and family in tow, and a couple of wrong platform selections. Tip here – look for the line termination station in the signage as this sorts out the correct platform (and direction)! Once settled into the hotel, all the chaos was forgotten - a climb up the magnificent Arch de Triomphe resulted in a grand view of Paris on a warm and sunny June 30 evening.

We had four days sightseeing in Paris, followed by two days at Euro Disney. The Louvre, The Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, Versailles Palace, The Funicular up to Sacre Coeur church, the Champs Elysees - excellent spectacles. The Metro was crowded and dirty compared to the London Tube. An attempt by myself to speak in the Native Tongue to purchase a billet of tickets drove the French ticket lady to the brink of frustration late one afternoon. She pointed me to the ticket machines round the corner before abruptly closing the ticket office in my face! Amazing – I thought my Year 7 French would get me through!!

Onwards to Italy. The trip involved a flight from a cloudy Paris to Rome, and a trip on the Leonardo Express into Rome Termini station followed by a short walk down narrow cobbled and Vespa lined streets to our hotel. Termini station was a hive of activity with trains departing to all corners of Italy. The two Rome Metro lines also cross at Termini, and were themselves very crowded during the peak periods, but allowed us to get across the City to the Coliseum on one day (Blue line B) and to the Vatican City (Via Red Line A) on another day. We spent another morning travelling by bus south of the capital to the Catacombs – a very interesting visit. Rome was fantastic, with the great sights, and wonderful food.

After 4 days in Rome, we headed north to Sienna. We took the Frecciarossa high speed train to Florence, covering the 288km in 90minutes. The train regularly hit speeds of 250km/h as it sped through the Italian countryside. We made



**Jason poses with British Rail Class 373 - No. 3232 at London St Pancras International - June 30, 2014. Nothing like the P class we are used to!**



**Jason posing with Ferrovie dello Stato (FS) Railways Class D 445 no 1112, a 1435kW Fiat Built Locomotive. Sienna – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2014**

our connection comfortably, catching regionale train 11749 to Siena. This train looked to be a push pull arrangement with a diesel locomotive on one end and the integrated diesel unit/car 1 at the other! The carriages were well laid out and comfortable. Sienna is a lovely walled city and we enjoyed the atmosphere of a Tuscan Italian village.

After two days, we again took the train to our next destination – Pisa. Heading back northwards and changing trains at Empoli. The trip took just under 90 mins on the regionale trains, through fields of sunflowers. A friendly taxi driver jammed the 5 of us and luggage into his small taxi upon arrival at Pisa Centrale, and we had a small tour up very narrow streets via Pisa University and of course, the famous leaning tower. The Tower's lean has been contained with civil works

to its foundations in the 1990's, and today we were able to climb to the top – the marble stairs well-worn to the "level" through nearly 900 years of leaning and lots of feet!

We encountered our first train strike on the Sunday of the world cup final, which caused us to catch a taxi across the mountains to Lucca – home of Saint Gemma, and we enjoyed a bicycle ride around the town wall. Back to Pisa that evening and fingers crossed the strike would not continue.

Our next destination was the town of Corniglia – located in Cinque Terra National Park along the north Italian coast. We had a nervous wait for a taxi to the station, and were fortunate a local bus came along at the right time to deposit us at the station with time to spare. Our train was running late and Pisa station was crowded with passengers that missed their train during the strike the previous day. It was chaos at the ticket office as people were trying to change their tickets – thank goodness we pre-booked our trip a few days before. We travelled by Intercity semi-fast train, to La Spezia, where we changed onto the local all stations train to Corniglia. This section of Italian Main line towards Genova was nothing short of spectacular, hugging the rugged steep coastline, through tunnels and alongside the beaches, this was a well engineered railway. This section was the final section of the Ligurian Railway not completed until 1874 – all materials had to be shipped in as access from inland was impossible at the time. Storms and washaways forced route changes during construction, but the final stretch between La Spezia and Sestri Levante contained 51 tunnels (totalling 28kms in total length) and 23 bridges (totalling 1 km in length) over the 44km total line length. The famous Cinque Terra Villages had been isolated until the completion of this rail line.

Corniglia village sits some 365 steps above the railway station - access is via the long staircase at the western end of the platform or via the National Park mini bus as was fortunate for us and our luggage. The station situated between two tunnels, and elevated above the rocky Mediterranean shoreline. This was the case across the Cinque Terra villages with stations carved into the mountains beneath and around the five

**Left: This is Corniglia railway station in cinque terra national park serving the small village of same name. Note the steep terrain which made this 44km section the final link up the Italian coast. The original alignment hugs the beach beyond the present tunnels. Below: The Grand Arch of Milan Station!**





**Top:** Jungfrau trains cross at Eismeer (3160m) above sea level. **Above:** At Eigerwand station (2865m) above sea level.

villages. Staying two nights in this part of Italy was fantastic – Great and varied scenery, with the railway interwoven throughout. We took some steep mountain walks between villages, the local trains between others, swam at some lovely pebbly beaches and caught the ferry along the Mediterranean coast, calling at each village port. The weather hot and 30+ degrees, the cold cold July weather back in Sydney was well avoided.

We then headed north to Milan via the coast to Genova, then inland. Our trains late running nearly cost us a missed connection at Sestri Levante, but fortunately for us the intercity connection was also running late. The station staff played games with the platform of waiting passengers, changing the arriving trains intended platform from 1 to 2, to 4, to 3, then across to 2 all within the space of 3 minutes. I grew muscles with the double bag workout traversing the stairs and subway frantically

moving between platforms. Exhausted, we were happy to find our compartment and settle in.

We used Milan as an overnight stop-over on our way to Switzerland for the final couple of days of our trip. The Highlight of Milan for us all was the Milan Central Railway Station. This was a grand building. It matched it with the renowned cathedrals and basilicas of London, Paris, and Rome. It is a cathedral for the



**Track work at Klein Scheidegg**

railway enthusiast! Built in an Art Deco and Liberty Style – Its Majesty made possible by Prime Minister Mussolini's influence to showcase the power of his fascist regime. The station was opened in 1931, and serves 330,000 passengers a day. The 5 of us worked our way in and out of the place, and after an overnight stay headed for platform 4 and the Eurocity high speed service to Spiez, with a change of train to Interlaken Switzerland. This train was great, and reached speeds above 200km/h. Swiss trains were clean, ran to time, and were well designed and engineered.

The finale to our trip took us to Interlaken – a great Swiss city and the starting point for the Jungfrau Railway to the top of Europe – Jungfraujoch, some 3454 meters above sea level. The two days spent in Interlaken were by far the highlight. After arriving from Milan, we found the hotel and went exploring. We took the incline railway to Harder Kulm, which takes the passenger 755 metres above Interlaken in a little over 8 minutes. The viewpoints were breathtaking. We got keen and paraglided later that evening spectacularly into the centre of Interlaken. What a thrill for the kids and me!

The trip to Jungfraujoch on the 18<sup>th</sup> July was a great experience. Three trains take you to the top, the last train from Klein Scheidegg “on the cog” for the final 9 kilometres (seven in a tunnel). There are two intermediate stations where the “up” and “down” trains cross – each with spectacular views. The weather at the top for us was clear and sunny and 2.8 degrees C, but out on the glacier it warmed up and the kids tobogganed in the snow – at the height of the European Summer!

We enjoyed our final night back in Interlaken, before travelling back to Milan and Flying back to Singapore for some days with family and then back to Sydney. It was a tough return back to work and reality once again.

#### Loco between Lauterbrunnen and Klein

Schidegg, Switzerland July 18, 2014.





Above: Simon Collier takes Warwick's B2 for a run watched by Interclub & Small Gauge Day visitors. Below: Nigel Gresley with John Hurst and the heritage 2-8-2 with Arthur Hurst pass Mick Murray's Shay on the August running day.



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**Telephone:** (02) 9874 8696. **Postal Address:** The Secretary, PO Box 124, West Ryde, NSW, 1685

**Web Page Address:** <http://www.slsls.asn.au>

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

**To ride on the trains, enclosed footwear must be worn.**