

Paterson Points

NEWSLETTER OF THE RAIL MOTOR SOCIETY INCORPORATED



DECEMBER 2018

Patron: Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair AC

Seasons Greetings!

Inside:

- ~ Fundraising Events to Benefit Farmers
- ~ Member Profile: Eric J Larkins
- ~ HPC 402 Central West Branch Tour
- ~ SMR 125th Anniversary

 RAIL MOTOR SOCIETY PATERSON

www.railmotorsociety.org.au PRINT POST APPROVED PP100003904

MAITLAND
Hunter Valley

SOCIETY NEWS

President's Report

– Arthur Burgess

Here we are again nearing the end of another successful year (2018) in the life of The Rail Motor Society.

The year itself has been a very good one for the Society. Our workload with chartered tours has excelled to the stage where we are finding it very difficult to crew all our trains. To the staff who have crewed many times over, I say thank you once again. Without your continued support we would not meet our obligations to our valued customers.

To the staff who maintained our train fleet, I say thank you. The splendid manner in which you conducted yourself in achieving the scheduled servicing needed to meet our operating commitments must be applauded.

Thanks also to our volunteer gardeners - the Depot surrounds are looking good. To those personnel involved, I thank you.

Our carriage builders have not stopped repairing vehicles where necessary. Their continued efforts in restoring our rail motor trailer are never ending.

This year we have met all of our key performance indicators. And we have met all the requirements of the of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR).

We are still in a good financial position thanks to the Board's commitment to strong fiscal management. To those personnel, I say thank you.

Planning is underway to complete Stage 3 (western side of shed) to resolve our drainage problem. To facilitate this we applied for a grant to the Aurizon Community Giving Fund — with no response to date. I hope that the Dungog Shire Council will play their part in addressing this environmental problem.

There are several projects in place at present:

- New workshop area
- Extension of concrete work area in 1 and 2 roads
- Spare parts accommodation in the KB carriage
- Carriages BR and TAM for members overnight accommodation
- Upgrading of the Goods Shed is taking place for the woodworking and painting tradesmen
- The Cottage is presently undergoing renovation

The members of the Board for their continued efforts in managing those many administrative tasks that keep our Society running on a day-to-day basis.

Our Line Managers (Rolling Stock, Infrastructure and Operations) for their ongoing efforts in managing their respective branches in our organisation.

Editor of the Paterson Points, Robert Spencer.

Bruce Gehrig for supervising Open Day events in the Depot.

Trish Short for organising rail motor tours offered by The Rail Motor Society. Special thanks for organising the Farmers Fundraiser, which raised \$10,500.



Friends and members who kindly donated machinery and or monies to benefit the progress of The Rail Motor Society.

Especially the effort the ladies have shown in assisting with tasks required to meet our obligations.

Finally, I would like to thank those many persons unmentioned for their help and contributions. Without these people, we would not survive. If you wish to participate in any way, please contact our Secretary for further advice.

On behalf of the Board of Management, I wish to convey to everyone including your families, a very Merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year.

New Members

The Society welcomes new members Rodney Howard, Fingal Bay; Ted Dunbar, Waratah; and Jonathan Derry, Fingal Bay.

Working Days

Regular work days are usually held each Wednesday, new volunteers are always welcome. There is a wide range of tasks that need doing and we will certainly be able to find something to keep you engaged. If you are not a regular volunteer at the depot and would like to participate, contact the Secretary for further information.

Open Days

The Society's Depot at Paterson is usually open for inspection between 10am and 3pm on the 3rd Saturday of each month except December, with the last guided tour commencing at 2pm. However, there may be times when our staff are engaged on rail tours or otherwise committed and it is not possible to open the depot on that day. Intending visitors should always contact the Secretary to confirm that staff will be available on the day concerned. Group tours can also be arranged at other times by contacting the Secretary. Entry is by gold coin donation.

Membership Details

If the details on the address label on your newsletter are incorrect or any of your personal information or contact details change please advise the Secretary as soon as possible.

Correspondence

All inward and outward correspondence for the Society should be via the Secretary using the Society's postal address as given in the Society Directory. Correspondence should not be addressed to individual Society members and where email is used all messages should be copied (cc'd) to the Secretary.

Donations

Please remember that the ATO has approved the Society issuing receipts for gifts /donations (not testamentary) which will be allowable deductions for income tax purposes.

Cover Image: Passenger trains return to the South Maitland Railway to celebrate its 125th anniversary over the weekend 8-9 December. Having just left Cessnock, 621/721 is seen here at Caledonia, as it journeys towards East Greta Junction station. (Photo: Robert Spencer)

Paterson Depot Open Days

- Bruce Gehrig

The Society had an increase in visitors to the depot during 2018, over those in 2017, as the following details attest:

	2018	2017
Open Days	576	380
Groups	629	79
Others	2	2
Totals	1,207	461

Half of the open day visitor numbers this year were the 290 people who came to the depot over the weekend 19–20 May, when we ran shuttles to Wallarobba with the three CPHs as part of the Australian Heritage Festival. The next highest number was the 119 visitors in July, with many families and school age children visiting at the end of the school holidays.

Most of the group numbers reflect the 576 scouts who came to the depot over the three days, 18–20 January (see June 2018 edition of Paterson Points). Three groups made visits: the Rutherford Probus Club, the Lake Macquarie Old Boys Club and the Paterson Historical Society 'annual walk of the town' in March. The 'others' group reflects the annual November visit of Mark Cohen and his carer (see February 2017 Paterson Points).

We were unable to open the depot in February due to the ongoing refurbishment of 621/721, or in September and November, due to tour commitments. However, at other times, visitors were able to be shown through the CPHs, the TAM and BR and 621/721.

The Society thanks all members who assisted on the open days, which allowed our guests to learn about the Society, or experience travelling aboard the CPHs on the shuttle trips.

New Editor

- Robert Spencer



As reported in the June edition of Paterson Points, expressions of interest were sought for a member to become involved as the Society's Publications Officer, which involves being the Editor of the Paterson Points and occasional newsletters. With no expressions of interest from members forthcoming, I was asked if I would be willing to take on the role, to which I agreed. Although I've been a member of the Society for quite some time, it is only upon my retirement that I've become a regular face at Wednesday's volunteer work days.

Being a retired mining engineer, after a career spanning 35 years, I have never been in the employ of the rail industry. However, I have always had a passion for rail travel and for rail heritage operations, but previously from the perspective of an outsider looking in. Hopefully my skills from writing many engineering reports in my former career will stand me in good stead in my new role as Editor.

I wish to acknowledge the help of Bruce Gehrig who will assist me in this role. Bruce's knowledge of the Society and its members will be invaluable, along with his helpful suggestions on newsletter content. And to the members in general, your continued support in providing stories and photos for both the Paterson Points and 'Whispers from the Depot' publications is eagerly anticipated.

My contact details may be found in the updated Directory, found elow in the Directory.

DIRECTORY

The Rail Motor Society Incorporated Depot & Museum

Webbers Creek Road,
Paterson NSW 2421
Depot: 02 4938 5411
www.railmotorsociety.org.au

President

Arthur Burgess
Phone: 0414 596 409
Email: burgessaj@bigpond.com

Vice President

Rodney Short
Phone: 02 4932 6967
Email: short_rodney@hotmail.com

Engineering Manager (Infrastructure) and Train Crewing Manager

Eric Larkins
Phone: 02 4966 1549
Email: eric.larkins1@bigpond.com

Secretary / Public Officer and Acting Engineering Manager (Rolling Stock)

Michael (Mick) Walsh
Phone: 02 4954 4904
Email: trmssec@bigpond.com

Treasurer

Trish Short
Phone: 4932 6967
Mobile: 0413 672408
Email: trmstres@gmail.com

Operations Manager

Bruce Agland
Phone: 02 4909 3167
Mobile: 0416 224 531
Email: aglandb@bigpond.com

Editor

Robert Spencer.
Mobile: 0499 774 065
Email: trmseditor@outlook.com

Contributions of articles and/or photographs for future editions of Paterson Points are most welcome and may be forwarded directly to the Editors.

**Correspondence to be addressed to:
The Secretary
PO Box 4268
Edgeworth 2285**

Operations Report

- Bruce Agland, Operations Manager

Operations for 2018 will total a little under 20,000 kilometres. In 2017 we ran over 37,000 kilometres (a record year), with over 13,000 of those kilometres attributed to HPC 402. Due to the extended unavailability of 402 for bogie maintenance at UGL, we lost a number of lucrative inspection jobs, leaving 402 to run just over 3,600 kilometres this year.

Our local Paterson to Stroud Road short excursions have proved very popular again this year with six being run over the period June to October. Gosford based tour operator Coastal Liner has been a regular supporter of these tours with many Probus Clubs using their services in conjunction with the Society's trains for outings.

Our regular Gloucester 'Chill Out' Festival trip in July again proved popular with patrons and local services to Bundook also proving popular with locals. ARHS (NSW Division) ran a tour to run over the newly opened section between Kandos and Rylstone in early September.

At the end of August we carried out a special run to Stroud Road for local communications company 4Tel to test an on-train infrared camera installation.

Our own two 'Need for Feed' special excursions in September to Hawkesbury River and Woy Woy proved very successful and enabled the Society to raise in excess of \$10,000 to support our drought affected farmers. We must recognise and thank ARTC and Sydney Trains for waiving their respective access charges in support of these fundraising trips.

Due to a cancellation, we were able to run two of our trains to Muswellbrook Races on Melbourne Cup Day this year. One train ran from Broadmeadow while the other ran from Maitland. Both were well patronised with one train being used as a fundraiser for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter.

The ARHS (NSW Division) 402 Club ran their annual 5-day tour, this time to cover some of the western branches. This tour was very popular with two passengers from the UK and one from the USA travelling to Australia to join the train. Day one of the tour involved a climb of the Blue Mountains on what was the hottest day of the year so far. WOLO [speed restriction] conditions were in force and as a result many Sydney Trains services were delayed which had a 'knock on' effect to our running with an extended delay being incurred at Penrith. A further delay with overheating engines at Lawson meant that we were very late into our overnight destination of Parkes. The following days proved uneventful with visits to Tottenham, Narromine (overnight), Warren, Dubbo, Coonamble (overnight), Merrygoen and Gulgong (overnight). The last day (Melbourne Cup Day) saw us run across the Ulan line to arrive at Muswellbrook for a lunch break where all six of our operational vehicles were present. This has been the only time they have all been together away from the Depot. See Robert Spencer's full report elsewhere in this issue.

Cruise Express continue to support the Society with their rail and sail offerings. Two trips to Brisbane were run in September and November. These trips have proved very popular, selling out in just a few days after their release for sale. Local Brisbane member Ben Francis also arranged for a local group to travel to Casino on our return run.

Mudgee Miniature Railway ran their regular Gulgong weekend tour in November, this time using 621/721 to provide the services. Once again, this proved very popular with their patrons.

A further trip to Hawkesbury River for a 40th birthday was operated in November. Instead of a river cruise, the partygoers chose to spend the afternoon at the Anglers Rest Hotel with entertainment, finger food and drinks provided. This format may prove to be another opportunity for future day tours.

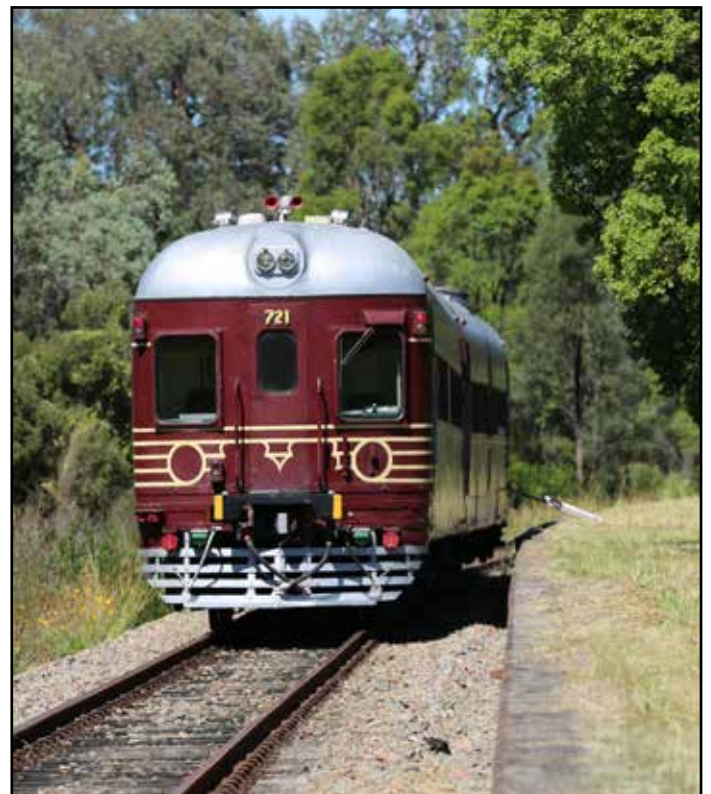
December saw our CPHs and 621/721 operate excursions in support of South Maitland Railways 125th Anniversary. See Bruce Gehrig's report elsewhere in this issue.

All of our rolling stock items have performed well and it is a credit to the maintenance staff for their continual efforts to keep our trains operating reliably.

Operational activities undertaken during the period included our annual audit by the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR) in September. A number of minor issues were identified and have been addressed to the satisfaction of the Regulator. These audits prove very valuable, to ensure that the Society's Safety Management System (SMS) is always up to scratch. Other activities included negotiations for the renewal of our public liability insurances, preparation of an application to ONRSR for variation to our accreditation to enable us to operate shunting locomotive 7344 and the obtaining of the various TOC (Train Operating Conditions) Waivers to transfer 7344 into our name. We have been verbally advised that the ONRSR has approved the variation to our accreditation for the operation of 7344 and at the time of going to press, the only outstanding item is receipt of the final documentation from the Regulator.

2019 looks to be another good year with many multi-day bookings with Cruise Express already on the program along with our regular annual operations.

None of our operations are possible without the participation of our operating crews. I thank each and every one of them for their ongoing contribution throughout 2018.



621/721 awaits 'the road' at Abermain Platform to continue on to East Greta Junction during the SMR 125th Anniversary (Photo: Robert Spencer)

Member Profile

— Eric J Larkins

- An edited extract from a personal memoir: 'The History of Eric J Larkins on the Railway'

I have a long family history of working for the railway, spanning across five generations. I started on the railway when I was 16 years old as a junior station assistant. In that time, I pushed a one man manual trike to clean signals lamps, heated the foot warmers in the winter and refilled the water bottles on the mail trains. I also took my turn on the main road gates and cleaned the station. In 1962, as a station assistance relief, I went to Coffs Harbour for 6 months to work in the Goods Shed.

In the first week, I lived in a 6 foot x 6 foot shed and slept on a chain wire bed without a mattress! I then went to Wauchope for six months working in the Goods Shed, and then back to Kempsey as a safeworking station assistant. Following that, I worked as a shunter for a short period and also did some work as a guard. In 1968 I transferred to Broadmeadow Yard, as a guard for sixteen years.

The life was hard, but I think it was harder for my wife as we had three children under the age of 5 years. I would often be away up to 30 hours at a time, having to stay at barracks — this continued until 1984 when brake vans were taken off the trains. I went to Muswellbrook on loan for six months in 1984, working on coal trains to Ulan and return. I then transferred to Newcastle as a guard, where the work was local.

On 23 October 1997 at 6.39am, I was working a passenger train to Maitland and we were running 30 seconds behind time approaching Beresfield station. This happened to be a good thing, or else our train would have been involved with the huge coal train derailment, where I witnessed Beresfield railway station being demolished by the coal train! Very fortunately our driver was able to stop our passenger train about 100 metres from the incident. As a guard, it was my responsibility to advise control that an incident had occurred, and also a duty of care to ensure that all passengers were safe. I then proceeded to the accident site to check on the drivers of the coal train and the Beresfield station staff and passengers that were waiting for a train.

My wife was a big help to me as we regularly talked about what had occurred, however, the trauma has haunted me for a long time as I would often relive what had occurred and what could have happened if we were running on time. In October 2003, I experienced three transient ischemic attacks and was subsequently medically retired in 2005.

In the 1990s I joined The Rail Motor Society after seeing an advertisement seeking volunteer drivers and guards to work heritage trains on the main running line. Other duties that I'm involved in are the maintenance and restoration of the rail cars. My favorite part about being involved in the Society is having the opportunity to be able to work with others with the same interest and passion, to ensure that rail heritage is preserved for future generations.

I have a special passion for the CPHs. I can recall working on these rail motors as a guard on the Belmont line. I am now a qualified driver and continue to enjoy both guard and driver duties for the Society. My favorite project is the old trikes, as I have fond memories of pushing a Trafalgar trike out to clean the signals when I was a junior station assistant.

As Infrastructure Manager at The Rail Motor Society, my responsibilities include ensuring the track in the yard is maintained to a high quality standard for use by the heritage trains and that the rail yard is a safe working area for the working members.



Eric in 2018, as he diligently takes in the scene ahead of CPH7. (Photo: Andy Warren)

I am also the crewing manager, arranging crews to work tour trains all over NSW. I confer with other drivers in NSW and Queensland to develop a roster for drivers and guards. A driver at Parkes assists me with rostering crews in the west and southwest areas of NSW and a driver at Acacia Ridge assists with rostering crews to go into Brisbane.

What I find most inspiring about The Rail Motor Society is when the people come and reminisce about when they use to ride these trains to work or school. Also, when we take the trains into country areas of NSW, just seeing the glow in the young one's eyes reinforces that what we are doing is well worth our time



Eric in 1960, just after he started on the railway.

Rolling Stock Report

- Mick Walsh

A brief summary of where we are up to with our Rolling Stock projects and maintenance was provided in the October edition of 'Whispers from the Depot'. What follows are more detailed reports on the individual projects, including some pictures.

CTC51

See report by Stephen Davies elsewhere in this issue.

CPHs

All three of the CPHs have been performing well, with the Mechanical Crew needing mainly to attend to the normal servicing of these units. After the Christmas break these units will be taken out of service to enable their 'Annual Inspection' to be undertaken.

An S3 Grant for full funding to replace the exterior walls on CPH1 has been approved. This work is planned to be undertaken during March–April 2019, and over this period only CPH3 and CPH7 will be available for trips. We are confident that all three units will be available for Steamfest, which will take place in mid-April 2019.

Noel Cotterill is making good progress on fabricating a frame to go under CPH3 to house its portable steps. By the time this edition is distributed, Noel expects to have this project completed, providing us with passenger disembarkation steps fitted to all of our operating units.

We have a long-range and ongoing plan for the CPH bogies. After completion of the next stage of shed floor concreting and when

space becomes available in the shed, we intend to remove the bogies from under CPH19. These will be stripped to ascertain their condition, refurbished as necessary, and then reassembled ready to replace CPH7's bogies. The bogies removed from CPH7 will then be refurbished, ready to go on CPH1. The bogies removed from CPH1, once refurbished, will become spares. This will allow us to always have a spare set of CPH bogies at our disposal.

A grant application for partial funding of CPH7 bogies was unsuccessful.

402

In the last edition of Paterson Points we reported, with regard to 'Bogie Maintenance and Wheel Change Out', that all wheel discs had been pushed on to the axles, and that arrangements were being made for the wheelsets to be returned to Broadmeadow for assembly into their bogies. However, it later became evident that the axle threads had been damaged when the wheel discs had been pushed on.

When the wheelsets returned, UGL Broadmeadow were concerned how they were going to repair the damaged axle threads — and they also discovered they had ordered the wrong bearing sleeves, which meant the sleeves had to be air-freighted, ex-Germany, and then machined!

A change of Project Manager and an outside engineering firm brought in to manufacture a die nut to repair the damaged threads saw the wheelsets finally ready to be fitted to the bogies at the end of August. The bogies were reassembled and on Tuesday 25 September, 402 was finally reunited with its refurbished bogies. A small test run proved successful.



A new bogie is readied prior to fitment to 721 at Broadmeadow Service Centre. (Photo: Mick Walsh)



A new rear bogie has been positioned under 721, awaiting connection when the car is lowered. (Photo: Mick Walsh)

After another hold up due to negotiation over variances, 402 finally returned to Paterson on 8 October, almost 11 months after its departure from the Depot.

Both compressors were changed out by UGL during this period. These are waiting to be sent for refurbishment when the Engineering Workshop can take them.

A five day Central West Branches tour for the ARHS 402 Club was run over 2–6 November. During this trip one of the newly fitted pulleys for the Compressor Drive came loose on the shaft, resulting in severe damage to the compressor's input shaft. Consequently, 402 came home with only one compressor operating. UGL has since removed the compressor, and taken it along with one of the previously removed compressors for parts, to make rectification.

The toilet became a problem on this trip. It is deemed unrepairable and will be replaced.

621/721

621/721 was transferred to Broadmeadow Service Centre (BSC) for the bogies on 721 to be changed out on 22 September. Prior to this, Kings Engineering at Rutherford had refurbished two bogies to expedite this change out. Shaun Kalverla (BSC Maintenance Manager) had put arrangements in place to have a Breakdown Crew travel up from Sydney to assist with raising 721 clear of its bogies.

Earlier that morning Rod Short and Mick Walsh placed 721 in position and uncoupled it clear of 621. Two BSC fitters, Greg Dooley and Luke Willets, set about preparations for lifting.

Activities increased with the arrival of Ross Seghers and his Breakdown Crew. A plan was worked out for the placement of

jacks and packing with emphasis on safety. With this in place, and all connections between the bogies and the car having been disconnected, 721 was raised clear of its bogies and secured. The old bogies were rolled out clear of 721 to allow the new ones to be rolled in.

While this was happening Shaun and Kyle Chivers were ensuring nobody went hungry by preparing a BBQ lunch for all involved.

The new bogies were measured up and compared with the removed ones. Adjustments to give approximate settings for the radial and height packing were made and the new bogies were lifted and rolled into position. After several up and down movements for adjustments, by mid-afternoon 721 was restored on its refurbished bogies. Their work done, Ross and his crew packed their jacks and other work gear into their trucks, in readiness for the return trip to Sydney.

Greg and Luke remade all the connections between 721's bogies and its body. Then 621 and 721 were amalgamated and all train connections reinstated. While Luke made final adjustments to the radials, Shaun and Greg balanced and adjusted the braking system with the assistance of Rod and Mick. By late afternoon the bogie change out was complete.

The Rail Motor Society is grateful and appreciative of the arrangements and efforts put into this project by all involved with special mention to Shaun Kalverla, Greg Dooley, Luke Willets, Ross Seghers and his Breakdown Crew.

S2 funding for refurbishment of electrical components and draw gear was granted in the last round of grants. After completion of 721's bogie change out, we took advantage whilst the unit was at BSC, to commence this much needed work.

Rolling Stock Report...Con't

The cars were split again and the draw gear was inspected by Greg Dooley, with only minor adjustments and tensioning being required. Further inspection and non-destructive testing will be carried out at a later date. We have had for some years a leaking input shaft seal on the No.1 Final Drive. Prior to arrival, Greg removed an input seal from some spare drive-bogies to ascertain correct sizing. Seals were purchased and replacement was carried out. The trips to Gulgong and Brisbane afterward have proved the replacement successful, with no leaks evident.

For some time now we have been suffering from intermittent electrical problems due to loose and corroded connections and other faults. This has usually been treated, when the fault cannot be found, by running a bypass wire to enable efficient running. One example of this being that for some time, the Primary Influence Valve in both transmissions had lost power to them, and we had to run a 'hotwire' to both, to allow them to work. These valves affect when the transmissions change, which in turn can have a detrimental influence on road speed and pulling ability. Matt Temperley, a BSC Electrical Technician, who worked on these units when they were in service, took to the task of sorting out all of the problems. The electrical box for #1 engine had been severely bashed about and was in a poor state. Matt replaced the box and all the associated wiring. He also tightened any loose connections in other associated junction boxes and replaced corroded connections on some Magnet Valves. It would appear that he has solved the Primary Influence Valve problem and removed the 'hotwires' in doing so. This work has been coordinated to be carried out to fit in with Matt's shifts and the Muswellbrook Cup trip. Consequently 621/721 has had a couple of trips between Paterson and Broadmeadow to allow this work.

Matt is continuing to work on rectification of a door locking problem for which parts have been sourced. 621/721 performed faultlessly on its trips to Gulgong and Brisbane.

Again TRMS expresses its sincere thanks and appreciation to Shaun Kalverla for his coordination, Greg Dooley for his mechanical prowess, and Matt Temperley for his efforts and persistence in fault finding and refurbishing the 'electricals'.

TRMS and Broadmeadow Service Centre continue to build a strong working relationship.

7344

Our S2 funding application to bring locomotive 7344 up to a fit-for-service condition for relocation from Eveleigh to Paterson was granted. In July an order was placed on Lithgow Railway Workshop (Tim Elderton) for the necessary reconditioning and the installation of a Vigilance Control system. Inspection of the loco revealed several seized engine components, along with radiator and water leaks. These repairs were undertaken and the engine tested and found to be okay. Several problems with the air and brake system were found and rectified. The failed batteries were replaced. The Vigilance Control system was then installed. An ICE radio and ancillaries were sourced. Several visits to the Large Erecting Shop at Eveleigh by Rod Short and Mick Walsh enabled preliminary planning work to take place.

Our radio installer [who requested anonymity] supplied the aerials and antennas, five in all, for Noel Cotterill to fabricate stands to accommodate this equipment. Once these stands were fabricated, the radio installer, Bruce Agland and Mick Walsh descended upon 7344 at Eveleigh.

The radio installer and Bruce fitted the HMI unit, stands, and their

various antennas and ran their cables to the ICE unit [see photo] inside the cab. Mick ran power cables and installed the 24V power supply. The radio installer has since made two more visits to terminate the leads and complete the installation. After his last visit he completed, tested and signed off the install.

Bruce Agland has been working on TOC (Train Operating Conditions) Waivers to put the paperwork in place that will allow the locomotive to come to Paterson under its own power. Tim Elderton made adjustments to the Vigilance Control required by Asset Standards Authority (Sydney Trains), who issued the waiver on 27 November. ARTC have also issued a waiver. The only outstanding item is for a variation of accreditation with ONRSR. We are hoping with these items resolved, that we can bring 7344 under its own power to Paterson before Christmas.

Once 7344 is at Paterson its tired bodywork and paint will be refurbished with funds from an S2 heritage grant to bring it back to its original livery, matching that shown in the photograph of 7302.



7344's newly installed ICE radio. (Photo: Radio Installer)



ICE radio CCU3 ancillary equipment installed into 7344. (Photo: Radio Installer)



The livery 7344 will undertake.

Infrastructure Report

- Eric J Larkins

Well it's the end of another year, and we had a very good year — a big thank you to the Wednesday crew; without them we would not have got to where we are.

The work on and in the KB is well on its way. When it's finished all parts will be placed on shelves and labelled. And you will be able to walk from the goods shed inside platform straight into the KB, only stepping up two steps.

The heavy machinery is now out of the Goods Shed and has been placed in the new work area of the shed — an easy location for the members to use when required. However, it will be some time before the car and wagon builders are able to move into the Goods Shed.

Storage of our rolling stock plans has been established in an annexe to the Goods Shed. Robert Spencer has also completed a comprehensive electronic index of our plans and has supervised their storage in the plan room. This will facilitate locating plans when required.

Work has been started in the FZ to make more room for the members to use for morning tea and lunch and other uses like training, meetings, etc. The computer will be moved into its own room and I hope to get the telephone fixed.

The BR has had a new kitchen cabinet and linoleum floor covering installed, plus the water has now been connected. The retaining wall was started in early December. The first hole wasn't too bad, but in the next hole hard rock was struck within 50 millimetres of the surface. Using the little jack hammer will be slow work, with about 18 holes yet to go!

Our old tractor is fortunately still going well and is saving us a lot of heavy work. Our newly acquired Toyota forklift has been fully refurbished, serviced and new lights fitted. This has allowed Conditional Registration to be obtained to enable limited use on public roads

What I can't forget is how well the garden looks - Barry Kingsford and Ron Pirie would be proud of it.

With all the projects being undertaken over this past year everyone has done a superb job, so with that I wish all the members and your families a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and we will see you all in 2019 because I'm lining up a lot more work!

Thanking you all.

SOCIETY NEWS

Update on CTC51

- Stephen Davies

Vinyl flooring was laid by a contractor from Bass Floors Newcastle in late August. Two doors were shortened to fit before they could be put back up.

The next task was the installation of the side horizontal boards, which have been painted green in readiness. These boards support the seats at the wall fixing point. Once this was finished, we started putting seats back in to see how we could work the seating arrangement, as we did not have an accurate seating diagram to guide us. With the seating layout decided, along with the area for the tea making facilities, we have gone back to the seats and started assembling them.



Various seating options are trialled in CTC51, like the one seen here, to determine the best seating layout.



Above: CTC51 driver's cab awaits equipment and controls fitout. The plan is for it to become an operational cab once more.

Left: CTC51 pictured outside the Depot shed, having been temporarily removed during shed floor preparations for further concreting. The upper body has since been undercoated to protect it.

The kitchen cupboard should be fitted soon by Ray and hopefully Bruce [Agland] will finish wiring the Driver's cab so that it can become a driving trailer.

In the meantime, Greg has continued to paint and lacquer inside. Once Greg has finished the toilet area, the installation of the toilet, basin and tap can commence.

The 'suicide seats' are to be manufactured and refitted at both ends and also the frames for the small two seats at the driver's end will need to be cast and manufactured.

The headlight will be put in place properly by Grahame in the near future and talks on how we can do the lettering on each side and front disc are underway.



Restoration Update – BR & TAM

- Brenton Elsey

Work has continued steadily on restoring these two cars to their past glories with a few more modern conveniences and layout changes.

Peeling back to 'original layers' has revealed some interesting sights and quite a few challenges in fulfilling the briefs given for the finished result. However, a new kitchenette, complete with refrigerator (and a microwave still to come), cleaning equipment storage, new floor covering and repaired seats plus some repainting has seen a marked improvement in 'half' of the BR. Work has also commenced in the 'other half' of this car, which will comprise, among other features, a library and a sitting area. Meanwhile, the TAM has had its sleeping berths renovated, with the next projects being a new toilet, wash room and showers. A new water tank has been fitted, servicing these two cars.



New flooring has been laid in the BR carriage.



A new kitchen unit and refrigerator have been installed in the BR carriage. The seat awaits repair.



Above: Joy Kildey applies her skills to repairing the seats in the BR carriage.

Right: Water storage, to service BR/TAM carriages (kitchen, shower and toilet), shown here being positioned.



SOCIETY NEWS

Farmers Fundraising Events

- Trish Short

After watching the plight of the farmers throughout Australia and being raised on the land myself and my involvement with The Rail Motor Society, the idea came about that maybe together we could make some small but positive contribution along with many other very kind and hardworking people.

After some discussion we decided to run two train journeys, the first to Hawkesbury River on Saturday 15 September, and there to cruise on the Riverboat Postman. Our passengers travelled down on the 621/721 rail motors which everyone enjoyed. The staff on the cruise boat were very obliging, donating two double passes to travel with them in the future, as a prize to include our raffle.

Our second journey, on Sunday 16 September, was to Woy Woy; there to enjoy a Brisbane Water cruise on the Lady Kendall cruise boat.

On this occasion travelling there on the lovely old CPHs. Although the weather was not as kind, everyone still had a very enjoyable day. In total we had 150 passengers over the weekend with quite a few first timers on our rail motors. All were very happy and look forward to travelling with us again in the future.

As well as the rail journeys, we ran a raffle with some great prizes donated by various local businesses. The results were:

- 1st, 1 week holiday for a family at the RBTU units in Jervis Bay — won by Colleen Canny
- 2nd, 2 tickets to the Country at the Camp concert at Branxton — won by Ray and Joy Kildey
- 3rd, 2 tickets on the Postman Run cruise — won by Carol George
- 4th, family ticket dolphin watching on Moonshadow Cruises, Nelson Bay — won by a Sydney resident.

We also had 25 other prizes, all donated.



ABOVE: The first of two fundraising events held to benefit farmers hit hard by the drought — on this occasion departing Maitland for a cruise on the Hawkesbury River, Saturday 15 September.

(Photo: Bruce Gehrig)

TOP RIGHT: The second of two fundraising events held to benefit farmers — this time employing CPHs 1/3/7 on Sunday 16 September. The train has just arrived at Woy Woy where passengers will transfer to the Lady Kendall cruise boat. (Photo: Robert Spencer)

RIGHT: Passengers board the Lady Kendall cruise boat for a Brisbane Waters cruise, with funds raised to benefit drought-affected farmers.

(Photo: Robert Spencer)



TRMS crew pose beside 721 whilst on the farmer's fundraiser. (Photo: Bruce Gehrig)

We then wrapped up our fundraising event with the drawing of the raffle at a Garden Party held at Trish and Rod Short's house in Telarah.

The total raised was \$10,500 (used to purchase two truckloads of hay) which was donated to the 'Need for Feed' hay appeal and this was delivered on the weekend of 23–24 November to the Upper Hunter. A big thank you to all who supported this wonderful cause. Following our publicity through various organisations, I was approached by a friend from the C3 church at Cherrybrook in Sydney, as they were looking for a contact to convey a donation to the drought relief and asked if we would mind if they could contribute with us. Their very kind donation of \$1,200 was used to purchase 'Why leave town' gift cards and these will be distributed in the Merriwa district, along with non-perishable goods that were donated during this fundraiser. A big thank you to the CWA in Merriwa for accepting our goods and distributing them to the families around the Merriwa district. If you ever have the opportunity to drop in to the CWA in Merriwa please do as they are a wonderful group of hard working people.



TRMS Presentation to Probus

– Bruce Gehrig

On Tuesday 5 June, Trish Short and Bruce Gehrig attended the Hunter Region Probus Association Annual Travel Expo to give a presentation on behalf of the Society. This opportunity arose following a group visit to the Depot, which had been held on Wednesday 14 April for the Rutherford/Telarah Probus Club, when fourteen members of the club came along for morning tea provided by Trish and a tour of the Depot. Following the success of this visit, an invitation was extended to the Society to be a presenter at the annual Probus travel expo.

The Expo, which was held upstairs at the East Maitland Bowling Club, was attended by over 60 members, who represented more than 30 Probus clubs within the Hunter region. A stand was set up outside the meeting room, on which we placed Society brochures, photos of our trains, Society tours email form for future train trips, along with flyers for forthcoming tours, such as the July Gloucester 'Chill Out' Festival.

The Society was one of seven presenters at the expo. There were three bus/coach companies, two travel agencies, the Hunter Botanical Gardens, and our Society. Each of the presenters was asked to keep their presentations to 15 minutes including any questions. For our presentation Bruce covered a very brief history of the Society and Trish talked about the running of our Society tours with costings, destinations, etc., and other charters that the Society runs for our customers. To further enhance the Society's image, we provided two complimentary tickets as a lucky door prize on our July Gloucester Chill Out trip. Our attendance was much appreciated and gave the Society exposure to the Probus community in the Hunter Region.



Bruce Gehrig gives a TRMS presentation at the Hunter Region Probus Association Annual Travel Expo, to promote our Society and its offerings. (Photo: Trish Short)



The Rail Motor Society information table at the Hunter Region Probus Association Annual Travel Expo. (Photo: Trish Short)

Private Charter by Ben Francis – Brisbane to Casino

- Margret Pantlin

At the completion of the Cruise Express tour Ben Francis organised for 44 passengers to join the train in Brisbane for a private charter from Brisbane to Casino on Friday 23 November 2018. A quick stop at Glenapp signal box was especially memorable as Rob Sibson posed next to a large photo of himself with the 'Glenapp Boys of 1948'.



ABOVE: The Ben Francis charter group poses for a photo on the platform at Casino. (Photo: Joel Thomas)

ABOVE RIGHT: Rob Sibson (pictured) is posed next to a large photo of himself with the 'Glenapp Boys of 1948'. He grew up at Glenapp in a railway house, as his father was employed by the NSWGR. (Photo: Joel Thomas)

This group also enjoyed the Border Tunnel and Border Loop Spiral, with Ben giving his commentary on this and various other points of interest all the way to Casino. The passengers alighted at Casino for their return trip to Brisbane by coach.

A big thank you to Ben Francis, who is one of our members and the organiser of this trip, with all the proceeds going to the Rail Motor Society.

621/721 proceeded onto Grafton where it stabled overnight.

On Saturday we returned to Paterson empty and well ahead of time. Thank you to all the crews who volunteered for this trip.



OPERATIONS DIARY

Cruise Express – Sydney to Brisbane

- Margret Pantlin

This was the last trip for Cruise Express Rail and Sail Tours for 2018. Rail motors 621/721 departed Paterson on Wednesday 21 November, travelling to Sydney to stable overnight at the Large Erecting Shop at Eveleigh, due to an early morning start the next day. Departure from Central was at 5am, with 81 passengers along with Cruise Express staff, who enjoyed breakfast on the train whilst travelling to Paterson. On arrival, they disembarked for a tour of the Paterson Depot whilst TRMS crews changed over and the rail motor was refuelled.

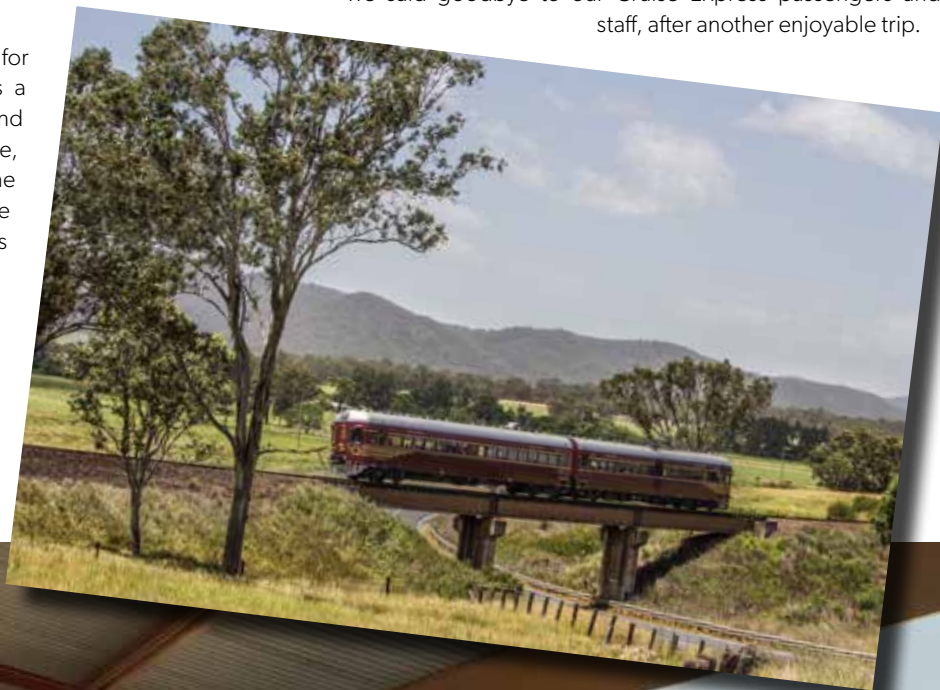
Resuming the journey, the weather was ideal for train travel. We stopped at Dungog to cross a southbound service. Lunch was taken at Taree, and later in the afternoon passengers enjoyed wine, cheese and biscuits. Arrival into Grafton was one hour early. Given the early morning departure the passengers no doubt enjoyed a good night's rest.

RIGHT: Rail cars 621/721 seen here on a Brisbane bound Cruise Express charter. (Photo: Richard Boyce)

BELOW: Cruise Express passengers express their enthusiasm for heritage rail travel at Casino. (Photo: Richard Boyce)

Departing Grafton next morning at 7.16am, additional driver Peter Lougher took over the controls as we headed towards Casino for a photo stop and a leg stretch. Everyone was excited to travel the border loop spiral and its two tunnels, before passing through the [1,100 metre long] Border Tunnel which exits into Queensland, listening to Rod Short's commentary on how it all works.

Stopping at Greenbank, Queensland driver Laurie Parsons and his wife Glenda joined the train to enable Laurie, who had just retired, to take control and have his final drive. Acacia Ridge driver, Ben Francis, later joined us to take the train into Roma Street Station. This is where we said goodbye to our Cruise Express passengers and staff, after another enjoyable trip.



OPERATIONS DIARY



LEFT: TRMS and Cruise Express crew gather beside 721 at Casino. (Photo: Richard Boyce)



RIGHT It's TRMS member Laurie Parson's last day at the controls of a train after 46 years in the rail industry. (Photo: George Chapman)

BELOW: A friendly wave from 721 as it passes through Acacia Ridge on its way into Brisbane on the last leg of a Cruise Express charter. (Photo: Ben Francis)



OPERATIONS DIARY

HPC 402 Central West Branches Tour

The ARHS NSW Division, 2–6 November 2018

- Robert Spencer

Background information on the '402 Club' and rail motor HPC 402 was provided in the June 2018 edition of Paterson Points. This year's tour took in the Central Western branch lines, in particular, Tottenham, Warren and Coonamble — outward bound via Sydney, Bathurst and Parkes, returning via cross country lines linking Dubbo to Muswellbrook and concluding at Broadmeadow. HPC 402 had only recently returned to service after a protracted outage for bogie repairs and change-out of its two compressors. Now into its 80th year, it was set to embark on a 2,000 km rail adventure!

Day 1, Friday 2nd November

The popularity of this trip was evident when fully booked quite soon after announcement. Four passengers (including myself) and ARHS NSW Tour Director Spencer Ross boarded rail motor HPC 402 at Paterson, joining TRMS crew: Ray Sullivan, driver; Bruce Agland, driver assistant; and Stafford Payne, fitter. Departure from the Depot was at the unusual mid-morning time of 9.50am, due to new Block Working

arrangements for single-car trains in the Sydney Trains controlled area. We entered the North Coast main line right on schedule at 10am, 'short-end' leading, heading for Broadmeadow. A brief stop was made at Mindaribba to cross a north-bound (Casino) XPT service. Shortly after passing the ARTC/Sydney Trains network boundary, we stopped at Broadmeadow to pick up five passengers, departing at 11am. A largely uneventful run through to Sydney, although 'WOLO' speed restrictions were in force due to the high 30s temperature forecast.

Arriving Hornsby at 1.10pm, we pick up one additional passenger followed by three more at Concord West. Veering west via the goods line through to Flemington Junction we enter the Main Western line. With all passengers now on-board for the day and tour notes distributed, we settle back to enjoy a Devonshire Tea and the trek westwards over the Blue Mountains. There are many familiar faces amongst the 402 Club tour group.

The stability of the Sydney Network is tested under WOLO conditions, with services including ourselves progressively becoming impacted. Upon arrival at Penrith at 3pm HPC 402 was diverted into the Down Refuge — as a special train our progress is at the discretion of the timetabling and control officers. We're held for 1hr 10min, watching as three intercity services proceed ahead of us, before we're underway again. At Valley Heights we commence the relentless 1:33 grade to Katoomba and not long afterward the combination of high 30s outside temperate and reduced speed on grade causes the shutdown of one of two engines — the horizontal roof-mounted cooling system being unable to provide sufficient cooling capacity.

The engine is manually restarted a number of times, as we struggle on into Faulconbridge for a 15 minute spell whilst the crew investigate. Underway once more, we make Lawson by 5.30pm. After discussion with Sydney



HPC 402 stands ready to depart on a five-day 2,000 kilometre ARHSnsw tour to visit Central West branches, whilst its stablemates look on. All three would reunite five days later at Muswellbrook.



402 pauses at Bogan Gate whilst the 'road' (behind the photographer) is set for the Tottenham branch. (Photo: Robert Spencer)



402 is pictured at the Tottenham stop block, where passengers had alighted to take photos and then reboarded, as the crew now prepare for departure. (Photo: Robert Spencer)

Trains Network Control and with afternoon services catching us, 402 is diverted into the Up Refuge at Lawson.

At 6.55pm we're given the 'road', taking the path of a cancelled intercity service. With one of two engines periodically shutting down due to the heat, and crew battling valiantly to nurse our steed onward, we finally reach the summit of the 1 in 33 grade at Katoomba, much to the relief of all. We're held for 20 minutes to allow the Bathurst service to overtake us. As we depart Katoomba, now 3 hours 50 minutes behind schedule, the first spits of rain are noted along with distant flashes of lightning further west and darkness sets in. As we descend into Lithgow Valley, the worst now appears to be behind us, and we settle back as sandwiches are brought out for dinner accompanied by a glass of wine.

Shortly after Lithgow we pass out of the Sydney Trains controlled area and into the John Holland Country Rail Network (CRN). Upon arrival at Tarana at 9.25pm we are advised of signal failure ahead, all the way to Bathurst, caused by lightning strike!



TRMS crew: Ray Sullivan, Stafford Payne and Bruce Agland stand beside 402 at Tottenham. The exact location is in no doubt given the prominent distance marker. (Photo: Robert Spencer)

We proceed at reduced speed under caution, taking nearly 1 hour to reach Bathurst. We are now about 4½ hours behind schedule. Fortunately there are no further delays as we journey onward to Parkes, arriving at 1.20am. Passengers are taken by maxi-taxi to a nearby motel whilst TRMS crew refuel and stable 402.

OPERATIONS DIARY

Day 2, Saturday 3rd November

Our remaining three passengers join us breakfast, having made their own way to Parkes. The passenger contingent now totals fifteen, with two having travelled from the UK, one from the USA, two are from interstate, with the remainder generally local to Sydney-Hunter regions. The day is sunny and warm but considerably more comfortable than on Day 1. The rail motor has been refuelled and we set forth from Parkes at 8.10am, crossing the CRN/ARTC boundary at Goobang Junction. After a spirited run westward across the plains we arrive at Bogan Gate station at 8.40am, where a train order is sought to diverge onto the CRN controlled Tottenham Branch. Having set the road for the branch we depart Bogan Gate right on 9am. We're underway on the first of the Central West branches, the 115 kilometre Tottenham branch, which opened 17 October 1916 (102 years ago).

The line initially passes over some lightly timbered ridge country before heading north-westerly into West Bogan plains country, passing through large pastoral holdings. The effects of the drought are evident — farmer's dams and water courses are dry, paddocks are mostly devoid of sheep and cattle as pasture is minimal, although a green tinge does indicate some rain must have recently fallen. We pass through Trundle at 9.25am followed by Tullamore at 10am, and Albert at 10.30am. Grain silos are the main structures to be seen on the line. We reach the Tottenham yard board (598 kilometres from Sydney) at 11am, 10 minutes ahead of schedule. We enter the yard where a rake of yellow liveried Manildra Group wagons are stabled across from the Tottenham grain silos, and make our way to the stop board at the very end of the line where passengers disembark to take photographs. Our rail motor reverses to a goods platform where the passengers take a short walk to the local 'watering hole' (Hotel Tottenham) for some liquid refreshment and a 20 minute break.

The township of Tottenham began with the discovery of copper in 1903. A number of rail spur lines serviced mines in the Tottenham-Albert area. Today the town services a large and diverse agricultural industry with a district population of approximately 1,000. It lies 35 kilometres east of the geographic centre of New South Wales. A number of passengers seek out the Tourist Information shop to procure a copy of 'Tracks to Tottenham – The Bogan Gate to Tottenham Rail Line', by Diana Chase, published in 2016 to coincide with the 100 year anniversary of the completion of the line to Tottenham.

We depart Tottenham at 12.30pm and shortly afterward settle back to enjoy a chicken salad lunch provided by the Parkes motel. Shortly before 3pm we reach the Bogan Gate CRN/ARTC boundary where our current train order is fulfilled and access is sought for the next section. Whilst standing at the junction passenger discussion turns to the Main Line Indicator board naming (M = main line and L = loop, with consensus being that the accompanying 'E' nomenclature signifies Frame E location). Once back in ARTC territory, we retrace our path back to Parkes. At Parkes the opportunity is taken to turn the rail motor on the triangle, first taking the west fork (Stockinbingal line) and then reversing into Parkes station via the east fork, which bizarrely takes us very briefly back into the CRN network. This movement is performed so that 402's 'long end' will lead heading towards Narromine, and later Coonamble. Upon re-entering the ARTC network at Goobang Junction and having concluded safe-working procedures for our journey to Narromine we set forth at 4.25pm via the cross country line through Peak Hill. Stockpiles of concrete sleepers and new rail are spotted along most of the line in preparation for upgrading as part of the inland rail project, although no significant work on the track-bed or bridges is yet evident, hence the speed restrictions we encounter over much of the line.



402 is seen here at the current limit of travel on the Warren South branch. Ahead a bridge lies burnt out. (Photo: Robert Spencer)

We arrive at Narromine at 6.20pm, some 35 minutes behind schedule.

Passengers are taken by maxi-taxi to a nearby motel whilst TRMS crew stable 402 on an adjacent grain silo siding. The taxi driver reports that a welcome 6 millimetres of rain had fallen at Narromine during the electrical storm on the previous evening.

Day 3, Sunday 4th November

Passengers are taxied back to Narromine railway station, where the rail motor had received another delivery of fuel. A NSW TrainLink coach service arrives to pick up local passengers. When asked by the bus driver whether our group is catching the bus, we say no – we're catching the train, only to be emphatically told there are no train services – yes there is we respond, as our rail motor sounds its horn on departing the siding for the platform!

The day is overcast, quite warm, but not unpleasantly so. We depart Narromine platform at 8.25am, but only to move forward to the ARTC/CRN network boundary. The ARTC networks continues east — but we're headed west, back into John Holland controlled territory. Driver Ray Sullivan points out that this location is very near the spot where a photograph in the latest edition of the Round House magazine shows the former Narromine crew barracks and turntable. A still standing brick chimney from a former flour mill is prominent in both past and current scenes. Having obtained a train order we set forth for Nevertire, passing Swane's Rose propagating nursery on the outskirts of Narromine. Passing through Trangie we surprise someone sleeping on the platform! Shortly afterward, we arrive at Nevertire at 9.30am where a new train order must be obtained for Warren South (Namoi Cotton).

Having set the road, we depart onto the short Warren South branch. After passing Namoi Cotton's mill and air-strip we arrive at the Warren South yard limit at 10am. The cotton industry we later learn has had an excellent season, being supplied with irrigation water from Lake Burrendong (near Wellington). We listen in on a discussion with John Holland train control on how far we are able to proceed - the line ahead being cut by a burnt out bridge — we're given permission to proceed slowly, and to perform a risk assessment. We journey slowly onward for 5 minutes until we reach the current limit of travel, where the opportunity is taken to disembark and take photographs. After performing the necessary safeworking procedures we return to Nevertire junction.

Upon arrival at Trangie 11.30am the rail motor is stabled and all walk to the nearby Imperial Hotel for a pre-ordered lunch. A cleansing ale or two (for the passengers) and a very enjoyable meal of roast lamb and pork with vegetables, followed by desert. So enjoyable the two cooks and waitresses are summoned to receive special thanks from the diners. We depart Trangie at 1.20pm, proceeding back to Narromine. There it is necessary to re-enter the ARTC rail network and obtain a new train order for the run east to Dubbo. Upon arrival at 2.50pm, we say goodbye to our first passenger, Nigel (from the UK) — having covered the two branches he'd not previously travelled, he departs for a new rail adventure elsewhere.

We depart Dubbo at 3.05pm, briefly reversing west to signal DO28 to pick up the loop line connection east to Troy Junction, and then the branch line to Coonamble. We pass a number of Qube locomotives stabled in Dubbo yard, associated with Cobar ore shipments, which will depart before our return. At Troy Junction we cross the ARTC/CRN network boundary and proceed onto the 154 kilometre Coonamble branch. However, we quickly learn that a 20 km/h speed limit has been imposed all the way to Gilgandra due to track-work! The countryside now shows noticeable signs of improvement with green pasture and

even a modicum of water evident in some dams following recent rains. Gilgandra was reached 1 hour 50 minutes later, whereupon the track speed returns to 80 km/h.

Approaching Coonamble yard, surface water is seen lying about in the paddocks, indicating good rain must have fallen recently, and grain crops showing green shoots. Permission is sought to enter Coonamble yard. A nearby sign proclaims the yard is non-interlocked. We proceed to the stop board and 616 kilometre marker, before reversing along the platform road into a sadly neglected Coonamble station where 402 is stabled. We disembark at 7.15pm, just over 1 hour behind schedule due to track speed restrictions. A mini-bus conveys us to a motel for our third night's accommodation. We hastily drop off our luggage before proceeding to the Bowling Club before the meal service ceases.

402 begins Day 3 here at Narromine and will end at Coonamble.

(Photo: Robert Spencer)



OPERATIONS DIARY

Day 4, Monday 5th November

An overcast start to the day and another warm day ahead. The crew refuel 402 whilst we have breakfast. We depart Coonamble at 8.05am, some 25 minutes ahead of schedule in view of forthcoming track speed restrictions that had not been factored into our timetable. Shortly after departure, a John Holland track inspector boards our train to perform his track inspection, no doubt relishing the comfort and view afforded from the rail motor as opposed to his usual 'hi-rail' motor vehicle. Once south of Gilgandra we re-enter the 20 km/h zone where we encounter John Holland work crews engaged in rail welding and other track maintenance duties. At Eumungerie another John Holland crew is hard at work.

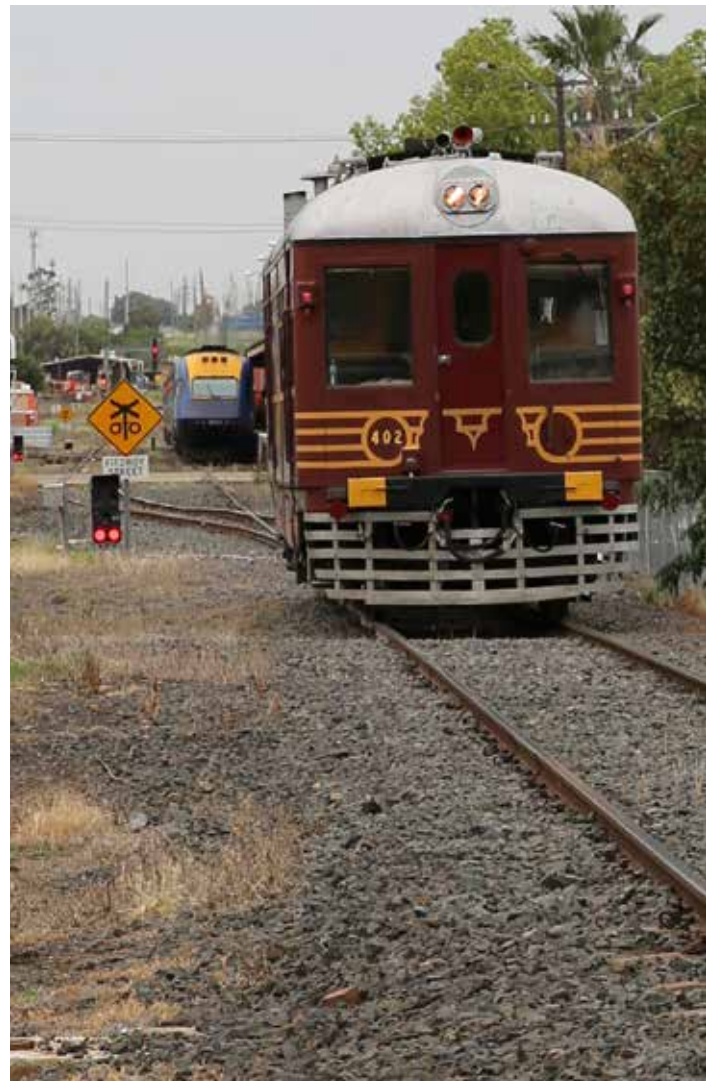
We finally arrive back at Troy Junction at 12.35pm (CRN/ARTC network boundary). There we obtain an ARTC train order to proceed into Dubbo, first via the East Fork towards Orange, then reversing to Dubbo platform via the South Fork so that the railmotor is turned with the 'short end' leading to Merrygoen. This will set up the 'long end' to lead from Merrygoen all the way to Broadmeadow. [It was originally intended that the rail motor be turned on the triangle at Binnaway, but due to late running on the Coonamble line, the Merrygoen-Binnaway-Merrygoen leg is abandoned.] We pull into Dubbo platform just before 1pm where the passengers disembark for lunch. Here we also say goodbye to our South Australian passenger. Due to our late arrival, 402 must stand clear of the platform by moving to Dubbo West to allow the Dubbo XPT access to the platform. XP 2007 and XP 2013 duly arrive on time and will depart Dubbo at 2.15pm, to be followed by our rail motor at 2.20pm although it is actually 2.55pm following a lengthy wait to get answered by ARTC network control and obtain a train order.

We depart Dubbo, and this time at Troy Junction we take the ARTC controlled cross-country line to Merrygoen, shortly afterward passing Fletcher's International Container and Bulk Grain handling facility. Once off the Dubbo Plains the topography becomes gently undulating. There is visible improvement in the countryside, with green pasture and water lying about in the railway corridor. As we pass by the Goonoo conservation area south of Mendooran, considerable recent track upgrading becomes evident with concrete sleeper replacement in heavily graded and/or curved sections, along with vegetation removal from within the rail corridor.

Upon arrival at Merrygoen the road must be set for our rail motor to reverse onto the Mudgee line, heading for Dunedoo and Gulgong. Once again a train order must be obtained to proceed. Whilst Bruce Agland sets the road for Dunedoo, driver Ray Sullivan alerts us to the yellow and red dumbbell signals along with green arrows at Merrygoen – a relic of South Australian signal infrastructure. We pass through a location known as 'The Gap' 402 kilometres from Sydney via Mudgee, which coincidentally matches the number of the rail motor. Shortly after passing Dunedoo the former Coolah branch is sighted at Craboon. The area is good sheep and cattle country as evidenced by stock numbers. We arrive at Gulgong at 7.10pm, approximately 15 minutes ahead of schedule, having dropped the Binnaway leg. A bus transfers us to the Ten Dollar Town motel whilst the crew stable 402. After the evening meal passenger Bill East takes the opportunity, being our last night of the tour, to thank TRMS crew and organiser Spencer Ross for another great '402 Club' tour.



Passengers and crew tuck into a hearty lunch at the Imperial Hotel, Trangie. (Photo: Robert Spencer)



402 stands clear of Dubbo Platform to accommodate a scheduled XPT service. (Photo: Robert Spencer)



402 prepares to 'retire' overnight at Coonamble station, at the end of a fourth day's travel. (Photo: Robert Spencer)

Day 5, Tuesday 6th November

We depart Gulgong at 8.40am, where Mudgee based Pacific National driver and TRMS member Kevin Robison has joined us as driver for the homeward leg. The day is overcast and forecast to reach into the mid-30s. West of the divide and until now we'd had seen few other trains in our travels, but that is about to markedly change as we enter Hunter Valley coal train territory. Passing Ulan Mine balloon, 25 kilometres from Gulgong, a loaded coal train stands ready to depart (9014/9007/9022).

Shortly afterward we pass the Moolarben Mine balloon loop where another coal train is seen in the distance. Our first coal train cross occurs on the Wilpinjong loop, passing a PN coal train. Next we are held briefly on the Wollar crossing loop to await an Aurizon coal train crossing, before entering the Wollar Gap tunnel. We pass another 402 kilometre marker, this time measured from Sydney via Muswellbrook. We cross a Genesee and Wyoming coal train on Coggan Creek crossing loop. Midway between Bylong tunnel and Cox's Gap No.1 tunnel we're held on the Murrumbo loop for about 40 minutes for a scheduled cross, which turns out to be a hi-rail inspection vehicle! Once through Cox's Gap No.2 tunnel we enter the Upper Hunter district which is noticeably drier east of the divide; the Goulburn River only just flowing between pools in its riverbed. At the Yarrowa crossing loop we catch a loaded coal train hauled by TT02/9026/9030 and overtake it.

Passing the Mangoola balloon loop we see three G&W locomotives at work on a coal train (G&W having taken over the former Glencore rail haulage assets). We pause briefly on the Muswellbrook crossing loop to cross an empty Cobar-bound ore train, before arriving at Muswellbrook at 1.40pm for our lunch break.

There in the Muswellbrook yard are CPHs 1/3/7 and diesel train 621/721, which had both conveyed patrons to attend the Muswellbrook Cup (celebrating the Melbourne Cup). It is believed to be the first time that all three TRMS rail motor sets had met up whilst on tour. Needless to say there was a veritable who's who of TRMS train crew in attendance! We departed Muswellbrook shortly before 3pm.

Near the village of Camberwell a G&W coal train was loading at Ashton Coal siding. Once again we overtake TT02/9026/9030 (it having passed us at Muswellbrook), this time on Nundah bank, and behind it is a loaded PN coal train waiting to exit Camberwell balloon loop. A brief stop is made at Maitland at 4.25pm where one passenger disembarks (2nd visitor from UK) to make a connection with a Sydney bound XPT service. A loaded coal train awaits main line access from Bloomfield Colliery branch. In total we pass 13 empty coal trains between Muswellbrook and Warabrook heading up the Hunter Valley.

We arrive at Broadmeadow right on 5pm, some 40 minutes behind schedule as the tour officially concludes and three passengers disembark. HPC 402 departs Broadmeadow at 5.10pm, right after a Brisbane bound XPT. Two passengers journey back to Paterson, where HPC 402 is stabled after travelling an estimated 2,080 kilometres over five days.

Special thanks to Spencer Ross (tour organiser and car attendant), the Rail Motor Society crew and those responsible for preparation of the train, and John Holland Rail and ARTC for making the tour possible.

OPERATIONS DIARY

Melbourne Cup Day Charters

- Bruce Gehrig

The Society again operated two Melbourne Cup Day trains to Muswellbrook on Tuesday 6 November. The first trip was run on behalf of the Westpac Rescue Helicopter using the three CPHs. This train ran to Broadmeadow to collect most of the race goers, with the rest of the passengers boarding at Maitland, resulting in a full train to Muswellbrook.

As there was a waiting list, the Society then ran 621/721 from Maitland, stopping all stations to Branxton to pick up our 55 passengers. On arrival at Muswellbrook, passengers from both trains were bussed to the racecourse.

On the way, race forms were studied, while passengers enjoyed their cheese, biscuits, cabanossi and a glass of wine or orange juice. Raffle tickets were also sold for prizes to be drawn on the evening run home.

While the two trains were stabled in Muswellbrook, 402 rail motor arrived from Gulgong with an Australian Railway Historical Society charter for a lunch break.

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: The CPHs operating the Westpac Rescue Helicopter train to Muswellbrook arrive at Maitland to pick up passengers. (Photo: John Hourigan)

It's a case of 'all hands on deck' when three TRMS tours converge on Muswellbrook. Stafford Payne, Bruce Greenham, Rod Short, Kevin Robison, Bruce Gehrig, Bruce Agland, Mick Walsh, Ray Sullivan (obscured), & Eric Larkins. [Grahame Pantlin out of shot.] (Photo: Robert Spencer)

Trish Short pictured here with her daughters whilst attending the Muswellbrook Cup. (Photo: Bruce Gehrig)

This gave the rare sight of our three trains being at the one location at the same time.

After the races were over, and with not many winners, race goers returned to the station and boarded their respective trains for the trip home. Although the day had been a hot one, everyone had enjoyed their day at the races. Hot dogs were served for a light tea, together with tea and coffee for those who had not bought along their own refreshments. Raffles were drawn and prizes distributed, and some more raffle tickets sold to raise funds for the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service. On time running back to Maitland and Broadmeadow capped off a good day out for our guests.

The Society extends thanks to all our members who worked on the trains, as it was a day where all hands on deck were needed to operate three trains on one day.



Rail Motor Tour – Gulgong/Dunedoo

- Brenton Elsey

Over the weekend of 17–18 November 2018, our 621/721 rail motors undertook a tour to Gulgong and Dunedoo, chartered by Mudgee Miniature Railway.

Tour leader Peter King and most passengers were picked up from Broadmeadow, with stops also at Maitland and Singleton where others joined the train. In fine weather, the run to Gulgong ran smoothly, with morning tea served by the crew. On arrival at Gulgong, the travelling group were transferred to waiting coaches, some travelling on to Mudgee while the rest stayed in Gulgong. On Sunday their itinerary included winery tours in the morning, before returning to the rail cars after their lunch on Sunday for the return trip.

Meanwhile, and following a lunch break for the crew, it was time to take some of the locals and another group for a shuttle ride to Dunedoo where they participated in a 'murder mystery' play on Saturday evening. With all attired in fancy dress costumes, they made for a very entertaining trip to their destination. After joining them for dinner and a short stay to watch proceedings, the crew retired to the train for a little 'shut eye' before loading the revellers around midnight for the return trip to Gulgong.

RIGHT: These passengers at Gulgong station are suitably attired to attend a 'murder-mystery' play, as they pose beside 621/721 before boarding the train to Dunedoo. (Photo: Brenton Elsey)

Sunday morning dawned bright and clear, with the first task being to refuel our train. Once done, several shuttles were undertaken for the locals, with runs to both Dunedoo and Ulan. After lunch, our main party returned for the trip home which was not without a little drama – a broken down coal train delaying us for a few hours. However, afternoon tea kept the passengers calm, and the break saw an opportunity for the cabin crew to sell souvenirs with takings much higher than what might have been expected. A rather quick and smooth trip home followed, with many passengers eager to 'go again' next year on this annual event.



Rail cars 621/721 have arrived at Gulgong on a tour charter to benefit the Mudgee Miniature Railway, organised by Peter King. (Photo: Brenton Elsey)



OPERATIONS DIARY



Rail cars 621/721 stand ready to depart from a temporary Cessnock platform located at Mulbring Road. They will travel to East Greta Junction station where the South Maitland Railways is celebrating its 125th anniversary. (Photo: Robert Spencer)

SMR 125th Anniversary Weekend

- Bruce Gehrig

Earlier in the year the Society was approached and invited to take part in a weekend to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the South Maitland Railways (SMR). The weekend 8–9 December was chosen for the celebrations and the SMR planned to have both stationary and running trains for visitors to ride on or inspect at East Greta Junction.

The celebrations were centred on the East Greta Junction station site and the road past the former station was closed by Maitland City Council for the weekend. Because of the road closure the SMR planned to run three trains to the site as there was no nearby car park to cater for the number of visitors expected. The SMR arranged for one of their 10 Class locos to be in steam and haul three cars from the Maitland Rally Ground to the East Greta Junction precinct. Visitors were able to park their cars at the rally ground and catch the train. On the return journey steam loco SMR18 would propel the train back to the rally ground. A bus was also provided to bring visitors to the site from the rally ground.



The normally single section East Greta Junction to Pelton was temporarily divided into two sections - East Greta Junction to Abermain and Abermain to Cessnock with staff and ticket working. At Abermain, Bruce Agland and Stuart Hope exchange the staff. (Photo: Robert Spencer)



At East Greta Junction, SMR18 departs with a shuttle to the rally ground carpark watched by 721. CPH1/3/7 are stabled behind 621/721. (Photo: Robert Spencer)

The Society was asked to provide both our three CPH rail motors and the 620 Class diesel train. 621/721 was to leave East Greta and run five return shuttles to Cessnock, where a small temporary platform was set up. The rail motors would run three return shuttles to the former station at Abermain, which still has a platform. This arrangement would allow people from the Cessnock and Abermain areas to leave their cars at the stations and catch one of the trains to East Greta.

On the weekend of the celebrations, the timetable provided for 621/721 to leave East Greta at 8.18am for the first Cessnock shuttle, then return and provide another four shuttles from East Greta at 10am, noon, 2pm and 4pm. The CPHs would run three shuttles, the first at 10.30am after 621/721 had left Abermain for the last part of its trip to Cessnock. In order to run two trains concurrently, the normal single section East Greta Junction to Pelton was temporarily divided into two sections - East Greta Junction to Abermain and Abermain to Cessnock with staff and ticket working.

The Society also set up a stand over the weekend under a large tree at the end of the East Greta platform to sell souvenirs. The SMR also asked the Society to sell tickets for both our trains to visitors who walked up and had not pre-booked on the internet before the weekend. Tickets were available at our stand on the platform and from the train staff for those people wanting to catch trains either from Abermain or Cessnock. The SMR had staff at both Cessnock and Abermain to help with any enquiries about the trains for people turning up at the platforms. The staff member at Abermain had the added responsibility of supervising the safe working staff and ticket system, and the opportunity to photograph the old system of staff exchanges was well recorded.

The ticket prices also included admission to the event. The SMR had on display examples of original non air coal wagons through to today's modern bat wing coal wagons, on a siding off the main line to Pelton. Steam loco SMR10 was on display and visitors were able to climb steps to enter and inspect the cab. Pacific National, who had brought the modern coal wagons to the event, also had three diesel locomotives. These were branch line loco 48127 and EL53, which had worked over the last six years hauling coal trains on the Pelton line, and 8244. This latter loco was opened for inspection and visitors were able to climb up and look through the cab. All money raised from the weekend was to go towards the restoration of the two steam locos SMR10 and SMR18.

On Saturday there were passengers on the first 621/721 shuttle to Cessnock at 8.18am, and it turned out that most of the trains passengers during the day were doing a return run on our train, with few people actually leaving their cars at Cessnock and travelling to the event by train. Unfortunately late running by the CPHs meant that 621/721 could not leave Abermain on some return trips to East Greta until the rail motors had arrived there under the safe working system of staff and ticket. The passengers were allowed off the train at Abermain for a leg stretch and the chance to take a photo of the train at the platform where passenger trains had not stopped for over 45 years. Due to the lack of any bookings on the fifth shuttle at 4pm that run by 621/721 was cancelled.

The Society also took the opportunity to run a dinner train to Neath on the Saturday evening leaving Maitland station at 6pm. At Neath 53 passengers alighted from the train and walked the short distance to the Neath Hotel for their evening meal. Michelle and Brett from the Neath

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Hotel were very helpful with the organisation of the food and we enjoyed a lovely three-course meal. Come 10pm it was time to catch the train back to Maitland. Many of the passengers had not travelled with us previously and are very keen to join us in the future.

Sunday's trains ran similarly to Saturday. After arrival at Cessnock, passengers had time to detrain and take photos of 621/721 at the temporary platform at the end of the line. Departures from Cessnock were at 9am, 11am, 1pm and 3pm. Due to the hot weather on both days, cold drinks and bottles of water were sold to help keep our passengers refreshed. Again, the last shuttle from East Greta at 4pm was cancelled due to lack of bookings.

Passenger numbers were not as high as expected over the weekend and both trains were generally about half full for their shuttle trips. On the rail motors shuttles to Abermain, passengers were able to be catered for in CPH1 and CPH7, with CPH3 (in the middle) being used on only one trip.

Much goodwill was generated from our operations over the weekend with the South Maitland Railways who were very appreciative of our Society's involvement. The Society would like to thank all those members who worked on our trains over the weekend, or were involved in the transfer runs from the depot to East Greta on the Friday afternoon and return on the Sunday afternoon after the event finished.

TOP RIGHT: CPHs 1/3/7 cross Swamp Creek at Abermain, on their way to East Greta Junction. The former 'down' track has been dismantled. (Photo: Robert Spencer)

RIGHT: SMR18 watches on as CPHs 7/3/1 arrive at East Greta Junction on its last trip for the event, shortly to proceed home to Paterson Depot at the conclusion of a memorable weekend of activities. (Photo: Robert Spencer)



The rural nature of the South Maitland Railway is evident here as CPH 1/3/7 pause at Abermain platform, prior to returning to East Greta Junction. (Photo: Robert Spencer)

TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO RIDE ON 621/721 TO MOREE

Friday 29th March 2019

Departs Maitland Station approx 8am

Tickets \$195 p.p twin share or \$230 Single supp.

*** Heritage train to Moree**

*** One nights accommodation and continental B'fast**

*** Lunch at Werris Creek Museum**

*** Dinner at the Club**

**At your own expense is return trip on Country link explorer on day of your choice
and any additional accommodation, meals etc.**



Contact Trish Short 0413672408



A spectacular picture of 621/721 crossing the Goulburn River Bridge at Wollar. (Photo: Wayne Eade)



The unique sight of three TRMS tour trains all meeting up at Muswellbrook — HPC 402, CHPs 1/3/7 & 621/721. HPC 402 was on the last day of a five-day ARHS_{nsw} tour, whilst the other two trains had brought their patrons to attend the Muswellbrook Cup. (Photo: Robert Spencer)