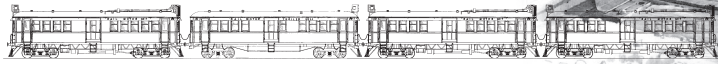


Paterson Points

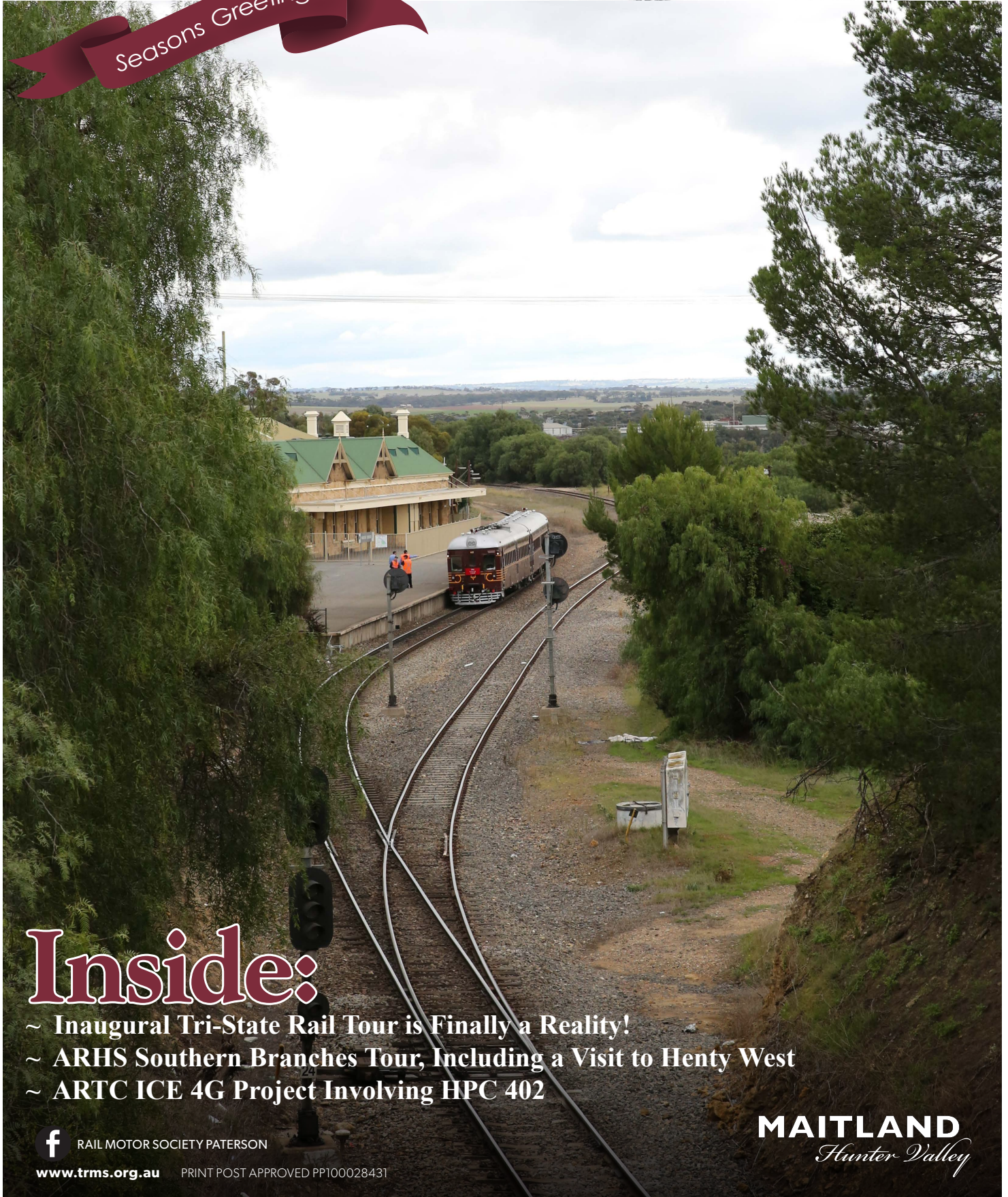
NEWSLETTER OF THE RAIL MOTOR SOCIETY INCORPORATED



Patron: Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair AC


DECEMBER 2022

Seasons Greetings!



Inside:

- ~ Inaugural Tri-State Rail Tour is Finally a Reality!
- ~ ARHS Southern Branches Tour, Including a Visit to Henty West
- ~ ARTC ICE 4G Project Involving HPC 402

 RAIL MOTOR SOCIETY PATERSON

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MAITLAND
Hunter Valley

SOCIETY NEWS

New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following new members: Paul Cavanagh, Paul Roper, and Robert Lamona.

Membership Renewals

The Board of Management would like to thank all members for their continued support throughout 2022 and remind members that their annual membership subscription for the year commencing 1 January 2023 is due by 31 December 2022. Members \$44, Concession (Student/Pensioner, Seniors Card Holders) \$33, Family \$66.

Please note: separate membership renewal forms will no longer be mailed out. This reminder will accompany your Paterson Points.

If you wish, payment can be made by direct deposit to The Rail Motor Society Inc. BSB 062-806 Account 0090 7487 – please include your name and the word “Membership” in the details. Otherwise, payment, noting your name and address can be posted to, The Secretary, The Rail Motor Society Incorporated, PO Box 4268 Edgeworth 2285.

If your contact details have changed, could you please notify the Secretary of these changes, by email to, secretary@trms.org.au, or the postal address above.

Donations

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

Open Days

The Society’s Depot at Paterson is usually open for public inspection between 10am and 2pm on the third Sunday of each month but closed in December. Entry is by gold coin donation.

There may be times when our staff are engaged on rail tours or otherwise committed and it may not be possible to open the Depot on a given day. Intending visitors should always contact the Secretary to confirm that staff will be in attendance on the day concerned. Group tours can also be arranged at other times by contacting the Secretary.

Advertising

It is possible to place an advertisement within this magazine for a fee.

Inquiries can be made through the Secretary (see Society Directory).

Correspondence

All inward and outward correspondence for the Society should be via the Secretary using the Society’s postal address as specified 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.

“Off the Rails”

As this issue was being prepared, the Society is aware that Charles Smith is presently ‘off the rails’. We wish Charles all the best on his return to good health.

To any other members who may not be enjoying the best of health, the Society extends its best wishes for your recovery.

DIRECTORY

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

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

Donations Sought for 600/700 Class Restoration

The Rail Motor Society has embarked upon a project to restore its 600/700 class two-car diesel train (602/707) to running order and eventual heritage train operation. In doing so, it will become the only 600/700 class two-car diesel set in operation.

The Society has a team of skilled volunteers who are capable of bringing this project to fruition, but like similar restoration projects of this nature, the rate of progress is largely determined by available funding. To assist the Society in this regard, readers who may wish to donate money to help restore this historically significant set are invited to do so.

If you can provide monetary assistance, donations can be made by Direct Deposit to,

The Rail Motor Society Inc
BSB 062-806 Account 00907487

When paying by Direct Deposit, it is important that you include your **Name** and the text "602" in the description. This will greatly assist in identifying these donations. If you require a receipt, please email your contact details to: secretary@trms.org.au or post them to the address below.

If paying by cheque, please make it payable to The Rail Motor Society Inc and send your donation to,

The Rail Motor Society Inc
PO Box 4268
Edgeworth NSW 2285.

Please remember that the Australian Tax Office has approved the Society issuing receipts for donations which will be allowable deductions for income tax purposes.

Supplying Digital Photographs

Paterson Points contains many great photographs submitted by our members and the general public. We highly encourage people to submit their images and really appreciate the support we receive. Please provide the date and location of your image, as well as your name, so that we can acknowledge you in the magazine. If you can suggest a caption for your image, doing so would be very helpful. Image files may be emailed directly to the magazine Editor via the email address provided in the Society Directory.



The early morning light is evident as 621/721 prepares to depart Broken Hill for Peterborough on 25 May 2022. The Silver City Tours Coach had not long returned passengers to the station (Spencer Ross)



621/721 at Platform 2, Southern Cross Station, shortly before departure to Albury, 30 May 2022 (B Gehrig)



SOCIETY NEWS

President / Secretary's Report

Although COVID-19 is still about, 2022 has seen the easing of restrictions that had an adverse effect on our Society. This has seen our trip workload substantially increase this year with tour companies taking advantage in seeking our services. Whilst this may be great for our revenue, it has placed an unwanted consequence on us. With a full book of trips, there have been circumstances this year that have resulted in both rail motor sets being on tour at the same time, with very restricted times between trips for servicing of the fleet, as well as the extra demand placed on having crews available. This has placed a burden on a reduced number of rolling stock maintainers to have the units ready for the next trip. Throughout the year, thanks to the dedication of our maintainers, not one train left the depot without the servicing being completed and certified fit for service.

This increase has also placed extra pressure on our Operational Crews with them having to roster more than what they normally would have had to, and the availability of Operational Crews residing far away from the depot. Another unwanted repercussion, with the high number and frequency of trips, was the clashing with the Board of Management meetings, of which six must be held per year. With some juggling and inconvenience, this was achieved.

The Board is conscious of the strain this has placed on our rail motors and volunteers. A strenuous review of our 2023 operations has resulted in a less arduous programme for next year. The Board has also decided, to provide as a backup and due to the availability of crew, that 621/721 and the CPHs will not be rostered on overlapping trips unless there are exceptional circumstances. There will be at least four days between trips to allow for regulated servicing of the units. This will also ensure a longer down period for our crews.

We were fortunate to receive from the 2022 Transport Heritage Grants Program a grant for the restoration and return to service of units 602 and 707. There is only one major grant of \$50,000 in these awards and we were very grateful to receive this amount. Although we have received grant funding for the 600/700 class restoration, we are exploring other funding options. We would encourage members and their friends, if possible, to donate to a special account set up for this purpose. See the appeal notice in this issue or contact our Treasurer Trish for details. The Board is also open to any funding suggestions from members.

A new Memorandum of Understanding between the Society and Transport Heritage NSW regarding 620/720 spares has been signed. It is disappointing that action on implementation and procurement of the actual parts has stagnated. We are still keen to see some movement and action from THNSW concerning critical spares for these units. We have also extended the Loan Agreement for 621/721, between TRMS and THNSW for a further 5 years.

It was with great regret in August, Mick Halls, our Maintenance Coordinator, informed the Society that he would be unavailable for future trips and carrying out maintenance at Paterson depot to provide fulltime family care. Mick's decision to cease active duty is a great loss, but



A training session being conducted in the FZ Car for Fitters and Operational Crews

understandable for the sake of his family. The society wishes Mick, his wife and family, all the very best for the future.

Due to Mick's unavailability, Kevin Judd has agreed to take on the Maintenance Coordinator's role. We offer our support and wish Kevin well in this position.

A training day was held in July for Fitters and Operational Crews. Included was practical instruction on trip servicing requirements for each unit, sign-off of daily trip preparation sheets and Safe Working training. Another day will be arranged for those who missed this day. Feedback from participants was positive.

A First Aid training course was held in July, with seven members attending this first course. Further courses are being arranged. Please contact Trish Short or Paul Horder to register your interest.

Wording for "welcoming aboard" announcements for the CPHs and 621/721 have been composed. Todd Sargent, at radio station 2NURFM, has agreed to record these for us. These consist of obligatory safety announcements, a brief history of the Society and a history of the particular rail motor set.

The Board considered the possibility of having this year's Christmas Party back at Club Macquarie. As it was too late to arrange, for this year only, the end-of-year workday BBQ was held on the 30 November, due to trains being out on 14 December, our usual Breakup Day.

As CPH3's centenary will be celebrated in December 2023, Spencer Ross has taken on the task to produce a rail motor book to mark this special occasion. Spencer would be grateful for any information or input that would assist him in this production.

In an attempt to lighten the workload on some of our people, Anthony Dunn will be assisting our Tours Officer with the multitude of tour tasks that take place behind the scene. Graeme Holloway will become the Grants Officer. He will be seeking out and searching for grants that are suitable to the society.

Our "Wednesday Work Days" are still experiencing very good roll-ups. Some members have chosen to attend on Mondays when access to rolling stock is generally more certain. Our thanks go to these members for their continued support and efforts to maintain the depot and/or rolling stock. Our Open Days have been experiencing good patronage—extra thanks to those members who have assisted on these days.

It is very pleasing to acknowledge that twenty-eight new members have joined the Society in this calendar year; this includes the new members who have joined since the last edition of "Whispers" (see page 2). The Board still encourages more volunteers for our workdays, and train crews for our tours. If Wednesdays or Mondays are not suitable for you, please contact the Secretary, who will assist to work out some appropriate arrangements to make you welcome and allow you to contribute in a way suitable to you.

To any member who has suffered a bereavement throughout the past year, we extend to you our sincerest condolences.

The Board wishes all members and friends of the Rail Motor Society a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

Rodney Short
President

Michael (Mick) Walsh
Honorary Secretary



Above and left: Christmas and end-of-year workday BBQ was celebrated on Wed 30 Nov 2022

SOCIETY NEWS

Operations Report

With the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions and the passing of the "La Nina" weather systems, our operations since my last report in September have been relatively uneventful. September operations were rounded out with a Western Circle tour for Scott McGregor's Railway Adventures.

CPHs 1, 3 and 7 travelled to Sydney to participate in Transport Heritage NSW's Transport Expo 2022 on the October long weekend. Our three CPHs worked three round trips each day featuring the Metropolitan Goods Lines. These trips ran from Sydney Terminal through Sydenham, Marrickville Junction, Enfield and Chullora to Sefton Park Junction, before returning to Sydney Terminal via Lidcombe. All trips were at full capacity.

During October, 621/721 operated two trips to Griffith and the Southern Branches for Cruise Express, followed by a North Coast trip for Insights Tours. The North Coast trip was unusual in that it started from Cowan and ended at our Depot at Paterson. Unfortunately, late notice rerailling possession stopped the train from reaching its planned destination of Kyogle.

November saw 621/721 work our regular Melbourne Cup Day race special to Muswellbrook Races and later a day trip to Gloucester for Mudgee Miniature Railway on 19 November. Following a maintenance trip to Broadmeadow, we were requested by NSW Trains to make 621/721 available for display for Hamilton Station's 150th Anniversary on 25 November. The 620 stood on both 1 and 2 platforms at Hamilton at various times during the day, in between the regular services where

they were open for inspection by the public.

CPH 1 and 7 have seen plenty of local operations with a day trip to Dungog for Linuwel School (East Maitland) and Stroud Road excursions for Taree Leagues Travel Club and Tuncurry Coaches. On 3 November they ran another heritage special for Lake Macquarie City Council to Hawkesbury River and a Metro Goods Line tour for the ARHS (NSW Division) on 27 November.

7344 was not to be left out of the tour action and travelled to Broadmeadow to assist the Transport Heritage NSW "Newcastle Flyer" operations on 15-16 October. These trips featured locomotive 3801 operating solo with a six-car set. As there is no engine release road at Newcastle Interchange, 7344 was engaged to take the carriage set to Broadmeadow, while 3801 turned on the Islington Triangle. 3801 was reunited with its carriages at Broadmeadow Maintenance Centre (BMC) and the whole consist was hauled by 7344 back to Newcastle Interchange ready for the return journey to Sydney. A special thank you must go to the Manager and staff at the BMC for their co-operation in facilitating these operations.

7344 also travelled down to Telarah from Paterson on 6 December to assist Sydney Rail Services with shunting of their rolling stock fleet in Telarah Yard.

Our regular Open Days were held in September, October and November using CPH 1 and 7. On the November Open Day

Below: 621/721 is stopped at The Rock, where a local auto electrician has been called out to fix a wiring problem, 1 Apr 2022 (Doug Cullen)



an additional afternoon service to Dungog was operated for a coach tour group from Sydney.

Despite the good weather being enjoyed on the East Coast, the west of the State has experienced some severe flooding, especially around Parkes and Forbes, which resulted in the annual ARHS (NSW Division) "402 Club" tour on HPC 402 being cancelled for this year. It is planned to be rerun in late March next year.

On 27 November, HPC 402 headed off to Sydney for another round of Overhead Wiring Inspections. This is the second series of inspections for this year. This will be an abbreviated operation with only seven inspection runs scheduled. 402 is scheduled to return to Paterson on 14 December.

I would extend a special thanks to all crews and maintenance staff for their support and assistance over this congested period of working.

Bruce Agland
Operations Manager



Train crew mind 621/721 at Temora platform, while waiting for passengers to return from dinner at the Temora Aviation Museum, 4 Apr 2022 (Doug Cullen)



HPC 402 is about to depart Binnaway and commence Day 2 of ARTC radio testing duties on 4 Aug 2022 (SG Preston)

Bruce Greenham sets the road for HPC 402 at Merrygoen, 3 Aug 2022 (SG Preston)

SOCIETY NEWS

Rolling Stock Report

CPH Fleet

CPH 3 has been placed out-of-service due to a leaking transmission (a seal has failed within the torque converter causing a copious amount of diesel to leak out while in operation). Frustratingly, the transmission itself actually transmits drive propulsion better than before, but with a leaking seal we will have to remove this transmission for repair. However, we must first await the return of our spare. On that matter, Twin Disc P/L (Brisbane) has advised they have all the necessary parts to complete the repair and are currently working to reassemble it. Let's hope for everyone's sanity, transmission repair number four will be successful.

Fortunately, there have been no major mechanical or electrical problems with CPH 1 and CPH 7 since my last report. However, due to the condition of the bogies, and perhaps more so their wheel profiles, their operation is currently restricted to relatively local one-day runs. Our spare set of bogies is currently being reassembled at the Depot by our volunteers (covered later in my report). The Board has authorised the progressive overhaul of bogies from under CPHs 1, 3 and 7 to be fully out-shopped in order to expedite the process. One problem that has recently persisted on CPH 7 is a blocked toilet, later tracked to a failed toilet vacuum unit. As an interim measure, the toilet vacuum unit off CTC 51 was transferred to CPH 7. Curiously, the unit removed from CPH 7 has a 24-volt motor, yet was powered off a 12-volt circuit. We have no idea how this came to be.

Annual Servicing and Inspection of CPHs 1 and 7 was conducted during November (a month specifically allocated to perform this task). We will catch up with CPH 3 shortly.

621/721

Our two-car diesel set has had a fairly hectic tour schedule of late, often with barely enough time to perform other than routine servicing between jobs. Throw in the occasional urgent repair task, or two, or three, and those on hand have had to work hard to ensure our vehicles are made Ready-for-Service to meet trip demands. I sincerely thank our Rolling Stock Maintainers for their tremendous efforts.

A sample of urgent tasks to be attended to includes: the repair of an external coolant leak in the #2 exhaust manifold, an investigation by a field technician from Cummins and later by Broadmeadow Maintenance Centre staff to look into an engine oil leak, and a fuel spillage issue that necessitated an access hatch be cut in the floor above the #2 auxiliary fuel tank to enable inspection and repair. I am most grateful to Mick Walsh, who during my leave of absence in October, was required to deal with these matters.

And there is still the outstanding matter of noise coming from the #2 air compressor. It is thought to be due to faulty non-return valves which will likely need replacing.

In addition to routine battery monitoring, and many miscellaneous tasks, the electricians have resolved a lingering door locking issue on 721, repaired a faulty speed sensor on 621, and attended to hot water urn issues.



A pair of 2QG bogies await reassembly

HPC 402

This vehicle has recently received its Annual Service and was made Ready-for-Service ahead of a planned five-day "402 Club" Cobar trip in late November. In preparation for this trip, the Carriage Workshop team removed the workbench and had just reinstalled the seats ready to accommodate a full passenger load when news of the trip's cancellation was received (due to flooding) and the workbench had to be reinstalled for its next job – sorry fellas! At least the fitter's Pre-Trip Inspection and Servicing was not in vain with its next job for Sydney Trains falling hot on the heels of the cancelled Cobar trip.

Loco 7344

I have nothing of note to report as having been actioned recently. We are waiting on air filters that have been ordered (delivery ex-USA) and have yet to drain and replace the engine coolant. We must also investigate a reported oil leak associated with the radiator fan.

CTC 51 (Restoration)

The installation of air pipework is virtually complete, with testing having commenced and any defects currently being tracked down and rectified. Paul Heron has almost singlehandedly progressed this phase of work and to see the air system back in working order is a credit to his determination and expertise. The next task is to assess and remediate the bogies and replace the spoked wheels with solid disc wheels. However, attention is currently focused on overhauling the bogies on CPHs 1, 3 and 7, with our active fleet taking priority.

602/707 (Restoration)

Seat assessment is still being undertaken by Geoff Small and Jon Derry and should soon be finished. The fabric seats are still being cleaned and refurbished by Stephen Davies. The restoration and/or refurbishment of the floors in 602/707 is the next task to be undertaken. Early in the new year, we plan to start the engines to assess their condition and status.

Spare Bogie Overhaul

The reassembly of our spare bogie set had languished until recently without a project champion, but progress has since resumed in earnest with the appointment of contractor Noel Price to complete the reassembly. Our Maintenance Coordinator, Kevin Judd, who recently returned from leave, set aside a number of days to work full time on the bogie reassembly working alongside Noel. Kevin has considerable past experience performing many bogie changeouts which he has brought to bear on the reassembly. I must also thank Graeme Holloway, Tony Dunn, and Lance Nelson for their assistance.

By the time you read this report, I anticipate the spare bogies will have been reassembled.

Spare Exhaust Manifold

We will shortly take delivery of a spare water-cooled exhaust manifold for 621 that has been fabricated by Kings Engineering (Rutherford). The original supplier (Cummins) no longer stocks this component. It was therefore necessary for this critical spare to be fabricated. Funding was obtained from Transport Heritage NSW, who is responsible for a pool of critical spare parts to support its 620 class State-owned assets.

Air Compressors

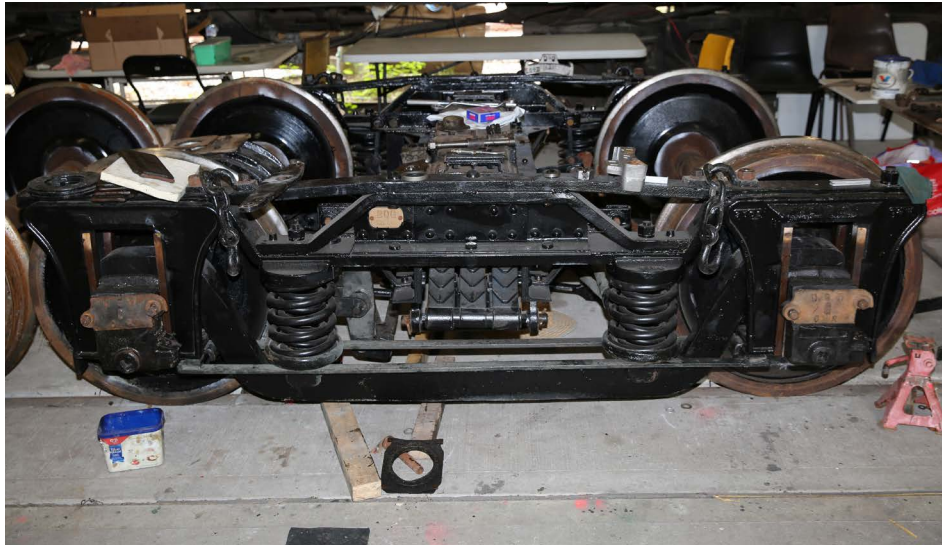
Nigel Woolley, a contractor who specialises in steam engineering, has been working on a number of air compressors retrieved from storage at Paterson which were sent to him for appraisal. Some were found to be beyond repair due to corrosion from water entry, but at least one, and possibly a second, can be overhauled and made serviceable. He intends to deliver a compressor back to us before Christmas, all being well. This will provide us with at least one spare working compressor.

Training

The Rolling Stock Maintainers, along with operational crew, attended a TRMS Maintenance Procedures Workshop in mid-September. Much focus was on practical Daily Pre-Departure Inspection of trains while away from our Depot, with practical demonstration given by Mick Walsh, and the fitter's obligations prior to a train leaving the Depot (train preparation, start-up, and Ready for Service Certificate). Also covered were operational crew obligations, shunting, and our Safety Management System.

Robert Spencer

Engineering Manager



The 2QG drive bogie set in the later stages of reassembly in late Nov 2022

SOCIETY NEWS

Infrastructure Report

After a very successful year, I would like to thank everyone for their great effort. We have had record numbers of volunteers and their efforts are visible in the amount of work that has been completed as well as works in progress.

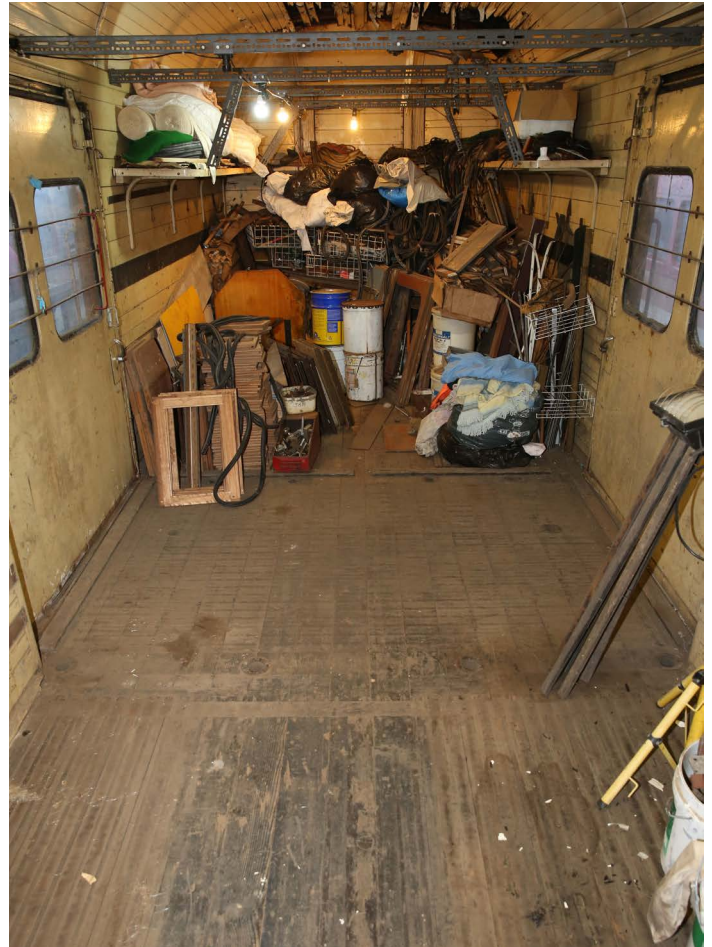
Just to name a few things (and I am sure to miss some):

- The roof on the container near the main gate has been repaired and is now weatherproof, thanks to the work of Jim Lambkin and his assistants. The container is now more usable for weathertight storage of parts and equipment.
- Lance Nelson (cottage caretaker) has organised the delivery of mulch for the gardens and is presently getting it spread throughout the gardens. We must congratulate him for his effort. The result is very pleasing for attending members and our visitors.
- The concrete paths have been completed around the cottage and down to the edge of the shed yard, which concludes the current stage of work. There is more path construction work planned for the shed yard, but it must wait until the No.4 Road project is completed.
- Work has commenced cleaning out the MHO goods van. An area will be set aside inside for our electricians to call home, providing them with much-needed workspace to repair parts and equipment.
- Work on CPH 14 has commenced, with the sealing of its exterior and other tasks, in preparation for its static display near the entrance gate. It will be moved during the process of repositioning other vehicles onto No.4 Road.

I would like to thank everyone for their tremendous efforts this year. Our depot is looking great and is sure to impress new members and visitors alike.

Rodney Short

Infrastructure Manager



Above: The interior of the MHO goods van, which is being cleared of stored material, 14 Nov 2022

Below: Construction works for new concrete paths, 15 Aug 2022



10 Day Inaugural Tri-State Rail Cruise, May 2022

By Robert Spencer

Background

The impetus for the extension of our operations into South Australia and the balance of western Victoria came from the Australian Railway Historical Society (NSW Division) and other tour operators that make use of our services.

The extension of services required a variation to our Accreditation under the Rail Safety National Law. Our initial application for variation was made in 2017. The National Rail Safety Regulator appointed two Rail Safety Officers from the Adelaide Office to assess our application. It is thought, due to their misunderstanding of the Society's operational history and capability, and possibly, inexperience with mainline heritage operations, that these factors resulted in our application being rejected in early 2018. An appeal of the decision was made, but this proved to be simply a quantitative, rather than qualitative exercise, only ensuring the assessment process was followed and did not take into account the quality of the documentation and the appeal was rejected.

Another application for a variation of our accreditation was made in late 2019. This application also looked headed for an early demise due to a number of issues with the Rail Safety Officers appointed to review our documentation. A crucial meeting between our Operations Manager and the newly appointed ONRSR Director of Operations in the NSW (Sydney) office in late September resulted in a much more consultative approach. This was followed up with a number of very successful face-to-face meetings which led to a greater understanding between the two organisations. Our variation of accreditation was granted on 3 July 2020.

Several False Starts

After what seemed like a lifetime of organisation by Trish Short, the first scheduled trip in early 2021 had to be abruptly cancelled due to 621's accident at Griffith, with some people choosing a refund of monies paid, and others leaving their money to hold their seat. The next few months were spent checking the lists and rebooking the accommodation, only to cancel a second time due to COVID-19 travel restrictions in other states. This also made some of the passengers nervous and unsure about travel due to COVID-19 infection risk and ask: what would happen if we enter other States and a snap shutdown of State borders occur, or the risk of people being forced to isolate, etcetera? With a number of people subsequently cancelling their booking, those on the waiting list were offered a seat. As we neared our third intended departure date, a final list of 66 eager passengers was locked in.

Day 1, Sunday 22 May

Finally, it's a reality and the day has arrived! We are all set to begin our great rail adventure. This event is especially noteworthy as it will mark the first journey by a NSW two-car diesel train to venture into South Australia. It will then return via Victoria, thus completing an epic anti-clockwise circular route upon reaching Sydney (see map). For those starting out at Paterson, boarding commences before sunrise at 0530, for a 0555 departure aboard heritage diesel railcar set NPF 621 and NTC 721.

The initial crew includes drivers, Rod Short and Phil Smith, travelling fitter, Mick Walsh, and customer service staff: Trish Short and Bruce Agland in 621 and Trevor Hooker and Spencer Ross in 721. We make stops to pick up passengers at Maitland, Broadmeadow, Gosford, Mt Colah, Hornsby, Pennant Hills, Concord West, Lidcombe, Paramatta, and finally Penrith.

With all 66 passengers now aboard, our train departs Penrith on schedule at 1100, to begin the ascent of the Blue Mountains and its challenging 1:30 grade beyond Valley Heights. After a warm welcome from the Society, each passenger is issued a distinctive Rail Motor Society lanyard with their name tag attached, and to mark this prestigious event, each receives a commemorative mug with a photo of 621/721 and inscribed with all the towns and cities where we will have overnighted or stopped, and a Society pen. Very thoughtfully, on the reverse side of each passenger's name tag was printed their accommodation details, pre-booked tour options, and train and organiser's contact numbers. Finally, each was given a comprehensive set of tour notes, specially compiled by the Australian Railway Historical Society's Railway Resource Centre. Passengers eagerly look forward to the journey ahead, although Trish attempts to temper expectations, telling them to consider it "an adventure" as we venture into unfamiliar territory, where things might not always go exactly as planned. Our passengers settle in as we make good time, reaching Katoomba 14 minutes up on our timetable.

At Lithgow, time for a brief leg-stretch while lunch was brought on board; a last-minute change of plan upon learning the intended hotel venue at Bathurst could not accommodate our late arrival. So instead, we eat our lunch whilst taking in the picturesque scenery between Wallerawang



OPERATIONS DIARY

Inaugural Tri-State Rail Cruise.....Cont'd

and Bathurst. With our 1½ hr lunch stop at Bathurst no longer needed, our drivers seek an earlier train path from train controllers and are fortunately successful.

We depart Bathurst 1 hr 35 min ahead of schedule, a gain we would retain throughout the mid-afternoon run to Orange and then to Parkes, our final destination for Day 1, arriving shortly after 5pm. On the platform to meet us is Parkes-based Society driver, Colin Monkerud, who is there to assist with train refuelling and stabling. Colin would return the following day to join the operational crew for the next eight days.

A coach awaits to convey passengers to their motel, most staying at the Park View Motor Inn where dinner has been arranged. The evening meal service was unfortunately very slow, due to last-minute motel staff absences on a Sunday evening, but otherwise the meal was very enjoyable.

Day 2, Monday 23 May

After breakfast at the motel, a coach returns passengers to our train which waits at Parkes station. The carriage attendants load the passenger's luggage into 721 which has an area purposefully barricaded to contain their luggage. Our passengers settle in and a head count is conducted whilst we await the green light. We are given the road, but wait, we are missing someone! The train driver toots the horn (forcefully), and very soon an embarrassed passenger scurries aboard, to the taunting cheers of fellow passengers.

We depart Parkes at 0910 (5 minutes up) and immediately sight construction works associated with the new Inland Rail Project, where this line will cross. At 1015 we pass by Condobolin railway station, which marks the last major inland town before we enter the sparsely populated outback region. At Kiacatoo we incurred our first delay, waiting for about one hour for a freight train. Once underway, the only other notable locality we pass through is Matakana where the Kidman Way inland highway crosses.

Our arrival at Ivanhoe at 1350 is 55 minutes late. Local Country Women's Association members had been patiently waiting, ready to provide us with lunch (sandwiches, cakes, fruit, and drinks). Given the remote locality, they deserve high praise for the excellent lunch they provided. They took the opportunity to run a raffle which raised about \$400, which pleased them greatly. Being behind on our table, our drivers worked with train control to secure the best possible train path ahead, factoring in competing rail traffic.

Lunch is concluded as quickly as possible in order to close the gap on our original timetable. We depart Ivanhoe at 1420, now just 20 minutes behind schedule.

As we pass through this outback region, there is green vegetation and pools of water evident in many places—the result of recent rains—in stark contrast to the normally arid outback. We cross a near-brimming Darling River at Menindee, arriving at 1610, to be diverted onto a loop line to await an eastbound freight train. A number of curious locals wander over to take a closer look at our unfamiliar means of transportation.

Freighter crossing completed, we depart Menindee at 1705, now only 5 minutes down on our table. The sun is beginning to set over Menindee Lake, which is full, making for a spectacular sight. The landform ahead is relatively featureless until the Barrier Ranges come into view. We arrive at Broken Hill at 1830 EST, where the sun has not long set, remarkably only 3 minutes late. Passengers disperse to their



Colin Monkerud and Bruce Agland discuss the operational matters prior to departure from Parkes, 23 May 2022 (Bruce Gehrig)



A stop for lunch at Ivanhoe, 23 May 2022 (Bruce Gehrig)



621/721 straddles the NSW/SA border at Cockburn on its inaugural trip into South Australia, 25 May 2022 (Phil Smith)

allotted accommodation – for most, it is just across the road from the railway station, while the train crew prepare to stable our train for its two-night stay. Watches are adjusted to CST (-30 min).

Dinner that evening was at the Palace Hotel (featured in the movie "Priscilla Queen of the Desert"), which included a floor show by drag

Inaugural Tri-State Rail Cruise.....Cont'd

queen "*Christina Knees-Up*"; blonde by night and a bookkeeper for the Royal Flying Doctors by day!

Day 3, Tuesday 24 May

This day was an off-train day for passengers to enjoy local attractions. For the operational crew, there would be train servicing and refuelling tasks to perform, before taking a well-earned break.

Breakfast was held at the Broken Hill Community Centre, where cereal and bacon & egg rolls awaited. Afterwards, passengers set out on a day of local sightseeing by Silver City Coaches, visiting: the Line of Lode Miner's Memorial and lookout, Silver City Mint & Art Centre featuring "The Big Picture" (12m high by 100m long), Silverton Hotel (for lunch), and Mundi Mundi plains lookout. On the return to Broken Hill, we visited the Living Desert State Park where 12 majestic sandstone sculptures were on display atop a prominent ridge, as well as being treated with wine and cheese while watching the sunset, capping off a memorable day.

Day 4, Wednesday 25 May

Breakfast was again at the Broken Hill Community Centre before we were transferred to Broken Hill station. At 0720, we pull out of the platform, excited by the prospect that 621/721 will soon make history by entering South Australia for the first time. Wayne and Bob, both Broken Hill-based drivers, will share the driving duties to Adelaide.

We arrive at the NSW/SA border at Cockburn at 0800 where a brief stop is made for operational crew member Phil Smith to alight and capture this historic moment, with 621/721 straddling the state borders (621 in SA and 721 in NSW). As we entered South Australia, passengers were advised of the 80 km/h speed restriction imposed by ARTC (South Australia), along with a "stop and go" directive at each road crossing having flashing lights and bells. From this point on, until we would reach Albury many days later, we were restricted to 80 km/h running.

At Mannahill, we pass a substantial stone masonry railway station building, although long out of use. The first town we reach is Peterborough, arriving there at 1120, where a stop is made to visit the Peterborough Railway Museum for lunch. Our hosts provide a short, guided tour of the museum, as our time is limited. Departing Peterborough at 1330, we set out for Crystal Brook Junction, passing through Yunta, Caltowie, and Gladstone, with freight crossings in the latter two locations. As the number of main road crossings increases, there are many more "stop and goes" to be made. Many motorists appeared confused at the sight of our train stopping short of each crossing and coming to a halt as if appearing to give way to motorists. At least one motorist who had been stopped was seen to then drive through the crossing after we had pulled up.

Having arrived at Crystal Brook Junction (at 1510), our train proceeds via the southern fork to Adelaide. The northern fork allows trains to proceed directly to Port Augusta, or onwards to Darwin or Perth. Shortly after, we reach the locality of Redhill, where we stop to cross an approaching Ghan passenger train at 1520, followed by a Pacific National double-stack freight train at 1550. It is while stopped here that we begin to encounter curious onlookers, no doubt wondering what to make of our unfamiliar two-car passenger train. Our journey soon resumes and we are 15 minutes up on our table.

At 1800, the outskirts of metropolitan Adelaide appear, as we pass through Two Wells, which at one stage was where passengers would have to detrain until access arrangements at Keswick were eventually resolved. A scheduled train crossing at Dry Creek does not eventuate, so despite arriving 19 minutes down, we proceed 11 minutes up.

Our arrival at Adelaide Parklands Terminal, located in the suburb of Keswick, is at 1910, some 25 minutes ahead of schedule. There were many photographers waiting to capture our arrival. So ended a historic day of travel aboard the first NSW two-car diesel passenger railcar to venture into South Australia and arrive at Adelaide's interstate passenger train terminal.

Passengers and crew transfer by bus to the Ibis Adelaide Hotel for a two-night stay. The bus is accompanied by a vehicle towing an enclosed trailer which barely holds our entire luggage collection.

Day 5, Thursday 26 May

621 would be refuelled and along with 721, both cars will be serviced and checked by Mick and any other matters attended by the operational crew. Once completed, the crew were then free to relax and enjoy this break in our journey. Passengers had preselected to undertake one of two tours: 1) Hahndorf Wine Region or 2) the National Railway Museum and the South Australian Aviation Museum.

Day 6, Friday 27 May

Departure from Adelaide Parklands Terminal is at 0755. Once again, there are many rail fans in attendance, this time to watch our departure.

In the cab, we have Jeremy and Simon, both Adelaide-based drivers who will share driving duties as far as Dimboola (Vic).

In a sensible move, we learn that ARTC (South Australia) has rescinded the "stop and go" order at each main road crossing after having evidently revisited their risk assessment. However, the 80 km/h speed restriction remains in place.

Just beyond Belair railway station (the limit of local broad gauge passenger services) we enter the crossing loop to await a late-running west-



621/721 at Peterborough Railway Station shortly before departure to Adelaide, 25 May 2022 (R Spencer)

OPERATIONS DIARY

Inaugural Tri-State Rail Cruise.....Cont'd

bound Pacific National freight train. We depart 15 minutes down and begin our climb through the Adelaide Hills. Compared to the NSW Blue Mountains, the challenge is rather benign, as cheekily remarked upon by our Society drivers. We pass an SCT freight train stopped in the loop at Mt Barker, awaiting our arrival.

Our first stop is at Murray Bridge arriving 1030, some 20 minutes down on our timetable, where passengers alight for a river cruise aboard the "**Captain Proud**" Paddle Wheeler on which we are served lunch. Murray Bridge still has a substantial, if largely disused, railway station building and long platform. The only regular passenger train to stop here is Journey Beyond's twice-weekly **Overland** service operating between Melbourne and Adelaide. Our train would remain at the platform, forcing a couple of freight trains to divert around 621/721 via the run-around loop.

After a very pleasant interlude, a bus awaits to return the majority of people back to the station. For others, it is a chance to 'walk off lunch' as they make their own way. Departure from Murray Bridge was at 1315, a little behind our timetable. We pause at Coombe loop (northeast of Keith) to await the Adelaide-bound **Overland**, which approaches and thunders by 10 minutes later. Our journey resumes, and with no further traffic ahead, we make good time to the SA/Vic border, arriving only 6 minutes down. Once again, we must adjust our watches, this time back to EST (+30 min).

We pass through Serviceton at 1655, just as darkness sets in. Nhill is passed at 1745. A brief stop was made at Dimboola at 1820, where our South Australian drivers alighted and Melbourne-based drivers, Neville and 'Stewie', board to take the controls. It is understood they arrived by hire car from Melbourne and the Adelaide drivers would use it as their means to return back home.

We arrive at Horsham at 1845, concluding an interesting day of travel and entry into the third State on our route. Considering the itinerary, the speed limit imposed on us, and other rail traffic competition, we've done pretty well to have finished only 25 minutes down on our table. Horsham is 328 kilometres from Melbourne, and is situated in the Wimmera region. Passengers and crew are accommodated in two local motels.

Day 7, Saturday 28 May



Passengers having lunch at Peterborough Railway Museum, 25 May 2022 (Bruce Gehrig)

Around 0830, passengers arrive at Horsham railway station and gather on the platform to await the arrival of 621/721 from the stabling yard. A thick blanket of fog envelops the station precinct so our train is not spotted until it slowly emerges from the fog. The crew had arrived much earlier to prepare the train and oversee refuelling.

We depart Horsham at 0855 and cautiously make our way out of town through the fog, which persists for about the next 40 minutes. It is 1015 when we reach Stawell, which is home to the Stawell Gift (Australia's richest footrace). No time to pause, as we proceed onward to Ararat, arriving at 1055, now some 25 minutes down on our table. We briefly stop to collect our lunch packs which are waiting on the platform. As we depart, we pass a 3-car **Velocity** diesel passenger train on the other side of the platform. Ararat is now the limit of Broad Gauge services from Melbourne via Ballarat.

From Ararat, the main western standard gauge line diverges to Maroona, where the branch to Portland continues. It is from this junction that we instead take the cross-country line to Geelong. As we travel through the western plains, our drivers draw our attention to the appropriately named Mt Elephant, an extinct Volcano protruding above the otherwise flat landscape. As we pass the outskirts of Cressy (35 km north of Colac), our drivers inform us that this was once a busy junction station that formerly connected Colac to Ballarat by rail, but alas, nothing remains.

A brief stop is made at the North Shore platform (the closest pick up / set down point to Geelong) where Richard Wardle, an additional driver for the onward journey awaits. At this stage of our journey, we are now 8 minutes up on our table. However, trouble lies ahead! We are held for nearly 30 minutes on Manor loop (south of Werribee) while Police deal with trespassers somewhere ahead within the rail corridor. Before our journey can resume, we must also await an approaching Oaklands (NSW) to Geelong grain train that was likely similarly delayed by the Police operation.

Further time is lost on the Newport to Sunshine Goods Line where we learn that the theft of copper cable has disrupted signalling, requiring our drivers to complete Safe Working procedures before our train can continue. At Tottenham Junction, we diverge via the eastern leg of the triangle to make our approach to Melbourne. From this elevated location, the Melbourne CBD skyline comes clearly into view.

Our arrival at Southern Cross Platform 1 is at 1600, just 35 minutes down on our table; not too bad considering the disruptions we had just encountered. A small group of rail enthusiasts are on hand



Passengers board 621/721 at Adelaide Parklands Terminal, 27 May 2022 (R Spencer)

Inaugural Tri-State Rail Cruise.....Cont'd

to photograph our historic arrival. After we pull up, the carriage attendants get busy unloading the passenger's luggage while the operational crew attend to refuelling. 621/721 will be stabled nearby, beside a signal box located just beyond the end of Platform 1, with good visibility to station staff.

Our accommodation for the next two night's stay, at Hotel Batman's Hill, is conveniently located diagonally opposite the main entrance to Southern Cross Station.

Day 8, Sunday 29 May

This day is a layover day for our train crew. But for 35 of our passengers, it was an opportunity to travel on Puffing Billy through the scenic Dandenong Ranges from Belgrave to Gembrook. I was interested to learn from PB volunteers how their Society had been impacted by COVID-19, being told of a sharp reduction in active volunteers and reduced train operations as a consequence. For our remaining tour passengers, it was a chance to shop or dine in cosmopolitan Melbourne, or simply rest up.

Day 9, Monday 30 May

Returning to the Southern Cross regional train terminal at around 0830, our passengers awaited the arrival of our train from a nearby stabling siding. At that time of the morning, the number and frequency of V-line **Velocity** trains arriving at Southern Cross was quite remarkable. Our departure was at 0905, some 5 minutes late caused by a signalling issue. Soon enough we were underway, wending our way through the complex North Melbourne Yard. Our driver on this leg of the journey is Richard Wardle. The weather on this day was cold and wet—the first inclement weather we had encountered on the tour.

Shortly beyond Sunshine railway station, the dual gauge goods line takes us onward to Broadmeadows, followed by Craigieburn, the current limit of Melbourne's metro rail network. Now only 2 minutes down on our timetable, we settle back for the morning run to Albury. As in recent days, we remain restricted to 80 km/h by ARTC and slowly fall behind our table as a result (restricted speed having not been factored in). In order to regain time, our 10 minute stop at Seymour station is cancelled. As we approach Violet Town, our driver announces we are approaching the site of the 1969 **Southern Aurora** train crash, and to be on the lookout for a **Southern Aurora** carriage placed on permanent display as a reminder of the disaster.

Our arrival into Albury is 40 minutes late at 1415, where passengers alight. There has been a change in plan. Originally, we were to have alighted at Ettamogah, in which case the train's portable steps would need to be set up to allow passengers to detrain for a coach transfer to the Ettamogah Pub, which is our lunch venue. But with the inclement weather and the convenience of platform access at Albury railway station, a coach would instead transfer passengers from here. Passengers enjoy their sit-down lunch in this quirky establishment, where Trish, being highly organised, reminds people of what meals they had pre-ordered, after people's memory lapses. Then with no time to waste, it is soon back on the coach for the return to our train.

Departure from Albury is at 1600, now 50 minutes down on our table. But being back in NSW, we are no longer restricted to 80 km/h and settle back to enjoy some spirited running along the long straight stretches of track from Albury to Wagga Wagga.

Our arrival at Wagga Wagga is at 1720, still 50 minutes down, and just on dark. Passengers and carriage attendants disembark for a coach transfer to their overnight accommodation. However, 621/721 must journey onward to Junee where it was refuelled and would stable overnight. No suitable stabling facility was available at Wagga Wagga on this occasion.

Dinner on the final evening was at the Quality Hotel Rules Club which adjoins our accommodation complex. After dinner, the train crew is asked to step forward so that they can be thanked by all for their tremendous effort in arranging and running a highly memorable and thoroughly enjoyable trip. In acknowledgement of the crew's untiring efforts, passengers present the crew with a thank you card together with \$1,000 taken up in a collection. The crew sincerely thank the passengers for their kind words and for their generosity but announce they will instead put the money toward the restoration of the Society's 600/700 class rail car set.

Day 10, Tuesday 31 May

And so, the final day's journey home begins. Departure from Wagga Wagga is at 0800. It is a wet day, but we have yet to encounter the wild weather predicted to our north (Adelaide was hit by a mini tornado just the day before and the same weather system is now making its way through Central NSW).

At Yass Junction, Society member and driver, Colin Monkerud, alights to make his way home to Parkes. At this point, we are 17 minutes up on our table. As we journey homeward, Trish passes through the train announcing there will be a quiz with prizes and hands out sheets of paper for people to write down their answers. The ten questions that will be asked are based on our travels over the past week. The last question asks how many kilometres will we have travelled over the entire trip? One passenger is remarkably only a few kilometres off!

A planned three-hour stopover in Goulburn is cancelled in favour of obtaining an earlier path into Sydney (before the peak hour curfew). After a brief stop at the platform to pick up a packed lunch, we depart 3 hr 25 min up on our timetable. But as the saying goes, be careful of what you wish for!



South Australian drivers, Jeremy and Simon, look pleased with proceedings as they pose beside 621/721 at Murray Bridge, 27 May 2022 (R Spencer)

OPERATIONS DIARY

Inaugural Tri-State Rail Cruise.....Cont'd

We arrive at Moss Vale just over 3 hours up, but here we must yield to other traffic: a local Endeavour service, the Canberra *Xplorer*, and a Marulan bound "stone" train. We are held for 1 hr 17 min before we eventually get underway, but are still well up on our original timetable. At Macarthur Junction, on the outskirts of the Sydney metropolitan area, we enter the Southern Freight Line, 1 hr 45 min up on our table, hoping for a clear run. However, on reaching Glenfield Loop, we were held for 35 minutes for two south-bound freight trains to pass. Further ahead, a 40 minute wait at Chullora North junction, waiting on yet another freight train—we are on the freight line after all. Given the road once more, we proceed to Flemington Markets to wait a further 28 minutes, until Sydney Trains is ready for us to enter their network.

Despite the hold-ups, we arrive at Concord West station at 1840, still 30 minutes ahead of schedule. It is here where the majority of our Sydney passengers disembark. Unfortunately for them, the lifts were not working so luggage had to be carried up the stairs. So much for our 3 hr 25 min early departure from Goulburn! But it was worth a shot to get home earlier.

Resuming our journey northward, brief stops to drop off passengers were made at Hornsby (1915), Gosford (2000), Broadmeadow (2115), and Maitland (2141), slowly gaining time with no further rail traffic to hold us up. Arrival back at Paterson depot was at 2215, just over 50 minutes ahead of our table, bringing our great adventure to an end.

And the answer to how many kilometres 621/721 would travel on this trip is... 3,858 kilometres, of which 831 were in South Australia, and coincidentally, 831 were in Victoria.

Special Thanks

Thanks first and foremost, to Trish Short, being the principal point of contact for passengers, and for making accommodation, bookings and meal arrangements, and for working up a great tour itinerary, assisted by Spencer Ross.

To Bruce Agland, Operations Manager, for successfully obtaining train paths that enabled this tour, after many years spent resolutely working to secure the necessary accreditation.

To our interstate train drivers: Wayne and Bob, who drove from Broken Hill to Adelaide; Jeremy and Simon who drove from Adelaide to Dimboola; and Neville and 'Stewie' who drove onward to Melbourne, for willingly and generously giving up their time to provide their skills and road knowledge which were essential in making our interstate travel possible.

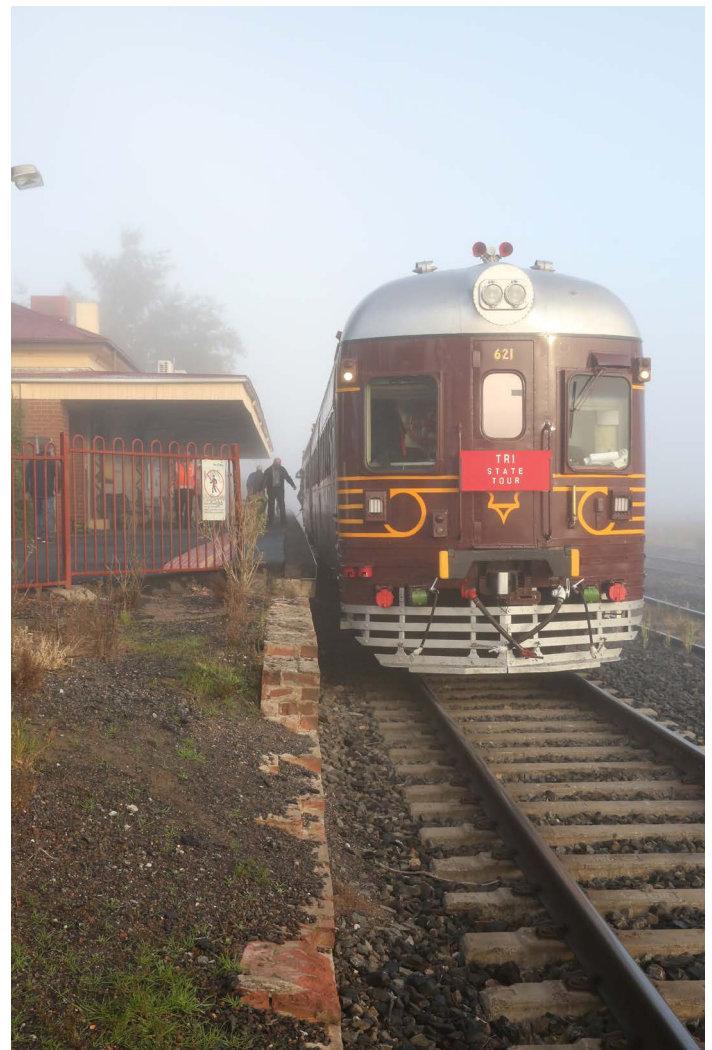
To our own train drivers: Rod, Phil, Colin and Richard; train fitter Mick, who performed daily Pre-Departure checks, vital servicing tasks and refuelling, and also assisted Trevor to manage the luggage; and passenger attendants: Trish, Bruce, Trevor and Spencer; many thanks on behalf of all passengers for their hospitality and assistance. While things didn't always go exactly according to plan, considering this was the inaugural ten-day "test" trip, venturing into unfamiliar territory for much of the time, I'm sure all who participated will agree that the Society did a terrific job.

Post-Trip Reflections

For Trish, this was her first major society trip undertaking, so she was naturally a little apprehensive about the smooth running of such a trip and her ability to organise this amount of people. There were so many different requests and needs from people from dietary requirements to physical abilities, however, we managed to be able to meet all their needs and requirements. With the help of Spencer Ross and his many



621/721 crosses an Adelaide-bound Overland passenger train at Coombe, South Australia on 27 May 2022 (Phil Smith)



621/721 will shortly depart Horsham Railway Station on a foggy morning, bound for Melbourne, 28 May 2022 (R Spencer)

years of experience organising similar events, Trish was pleased that all went remarkably well.

Every day was different, with adjustments having to be made due to timetable changes which are out of our control, and credit must be

Inaugural Tri-State Rail Cruise.....Cont'd

given to our operational crew for keeping us running and arriving at our destinations on or near time. Sometimes buses had to be changed or meal times altered to meet our needs.

There were a few operational hiccups in South Australia and Victoria which were able to be overcome with the assistance of our interstate drivers using their local knowledge and contacts within the rail industry. We would especially like to thank them for their participation and their valuable knowledge and generosity in assisting The Rail Motor Society on this occasion.

Trish received very positive feedback from many of our travellers and wishes to reciprocate her thanks for being given the opportunity to organise their travel arrangements. Bruce Gehrig (Society member and passenger) commented afterwards: "Trish did an exceptional job, both beforehand and on the train, and in all the ways she liaised with passengers, keeping people informed, etcetera."

Finally, a special thank you to all who were involved in making the trip a triumph. It was a great accomplishment for our Society.

Postscript

Following the success of the tour, the Society proposed to operate a similar, but slightly extended tour for our customer Cruise Express. At the 'eleventh hour', ARTC chose to deny us access to South Australia and Victoria with a number of dubious claims about track circuit operation. These were baseless, however, as the network owner, they had the last say and we were limited to taking Cruise Express's passengers only as far as Broken Hill, where they continued by coach.

We worked our way to Albury via Parkes, Stockinbingal and Junee, working some local trips out of Broken Hill, Parkes and Albury to offset operating costs. In Albury we collected our Cruise Express passengers for the two-day return journey to Sydney.

We are working with ARTC to resolve the track circuit issues and plan to operate a tour to Melbourne in May 2023 to undertake some track circuit testing west of Melbourne to satisfy ARTC demands.

[The author wishes to acknowledge and thank Bruce Agland, Trish Short and Bruce Gehrig for their assistance in preparing this article]

Right: The wet weather makes for a gloomy scene as 621/721 breaks its journey at Albury, on its return home to Paterson, 30 May 2022 (Bruce Gehrig)



621/721 stables beside a signal box just outside of Southern Cross Station. A six-car V-Line Velocity set is seen arriving, 29 May 2022 (Bruce Gehrig)



The Rail Motor Society Tri-State crew enjoy time-out at the Mail Exchange Hotel, Melbourne, 29 May 2022 (Phil Smith)



OPERATIONS DIARY

HPC 402 and ARTC's ICE 4G Project

By Stephen George

As Telstra is planning to shut down its 3G network in June 2024, it has become necessary to upgrade the National Train Communications System (ICE train radio).

402 continues to support network communications testing for the ICE 4G upgrade project.

Since the Society's acquisition of HPC 402 much of its operations have been spent traversing the NSW rail network (and beyond) to support the survey and testing of evolving network communications systems. For 30+ years, 402 has frequently been engaged to support project works for delivery of WB (Without Brakevan), CountryNet, MetroNet, NTCS and DTRS "radio" systems and Electronic Train Orders. 402's configuration and operational capability supports flexible and cost-effective testing operations, not able to be provided by other vehicles. Additional on-board services and equipment mounting provisions have also been provided to support the testing activities. As well as its long-term role in comms system activities engagement for testing, support for other rail systems has occurred in recent times including track and overhead monitoring activities.

With Telstra announcing the end of their 3G service in June 2024, ARTC initiated a project engaging Telstra to upgrade mobile sites to provide 4G mobile coverage across the 8,500 km ARTC network. To ensure compatibility of on-board equipment, ARTC also engaged with ICE manufacturer, Base2, to ensure an upgrade solution for ICE units to have the capability to communicate via 3G and 4G during the network transition period. The ICE unit upgrade will require a physical change out and return to Base2 of the ICE "CCU" (central control unit) mobile unit to be upgraded from a 3G to a 4G supported device.

Following Base2's development of the 4G ICE unit, extensive laboratory and operational testing was undertaken by ARTC, RIMS, Telstra and certification organisations to confirm compliance and to support network operation testing, the Society was engaged to facilitate a number of network testing runs. Due to its remote (in parts) nature, current varied mobile systems coverage (3G, 4G, as well as No G) and interfaces with Sydney Trains, the ARTC Hunter Valley and adjacent interstate North Coast network was identified as the venue for the 4G ICE unit testing runs.

In preparation for testing, 402 was again equipped with cabling and equipment to support the additional test 4G ICE unit, which included driver HMI (Human Machine Interface) wiring into the testing saloon area and a new MIMO-type antenna recommended (but not essential) for 4G LTE connectivity.

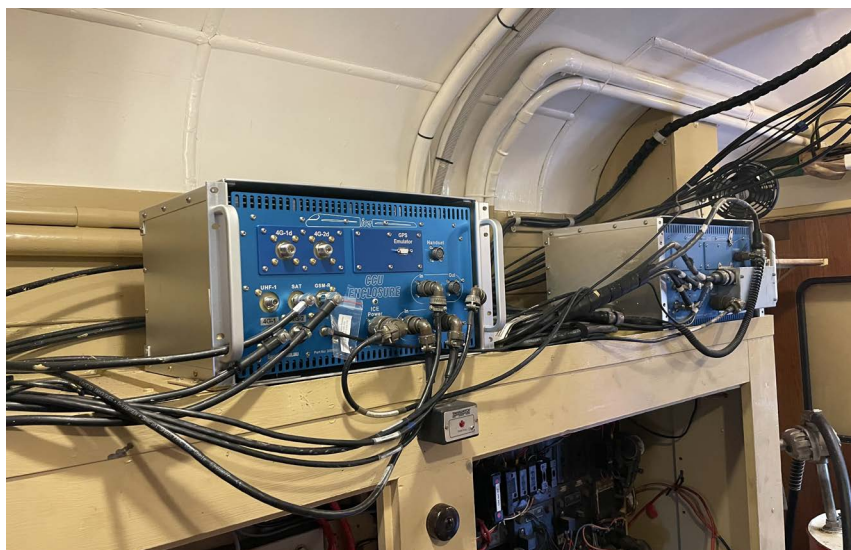
Over multiple runs, conducted during June, July and August, functional testing was performed between Paterson, Broadmeadow, Port Waratah, Taree, Muswellbrook, Gulgong, Binnaway, Werris Creek and Narrabri to confirm the upgraded ICE unit's operation. Generally, these runs were completed without incident, however, some long days resulted due to network issues and 402 also presented some overheating issues which highlighted an operational risk due to the restricted access to replenish water on the current network.

Following the ARTC network testing runs, approval for deployment of the 4G upgraded ICE units was approved by the NTCS CCB (Change Configuration Board) and deployment of 4G ICE units has now commenced. Overall, another successful testing engagement—well done 402 and team!

[Once testing is completed, this will require our Society to have all of our ICE radios upgraded, which will come at a considerable cost—Ed.]



ARTC Test team members Jared Smith and Ben Kozak set up for testing in 402 (SG Preston)



The 4G test ICE unit mounted alongside 402's operational 3G unit (SG Preston)

ARHS Southern Branches Tour, 10–14 June 2022

By Robert Spencer

The Australian Railway Historical Society (NSW Division) ran their traditional June long weekend tour, with this year's destination being various Southern Branches, before returning to Sydney via Parkes, Orange, and Bathurst. On this occasion, the special focus was on a visit to the newly opened Henty West Grain Corp facility situated on the Rand line (our train being the first passenger train on the reopened 2.8 km section of this line) followed by coach travel to explore what remains of the abandoned Tumbarumba, Tumut and Batlow branch lines.

Day 1, Friday 10 June

In a pre-dawn start, 621/721 departed Paterson right on schedule at 0530, along with a number of hardy passengers, who had elected to start (and finish) their journey at Paterson. On this trip our drivers were Rod Short, Steve Harper, Phil Smith, and Richard Wardle; plus travelling fitter Mick Walsh; and customer service staff, Trish Short and Allan Beard.

Following a smooth run along the Central Coast, 621/721 was diverted into the Up refuge at Cowan to allow an Intercity train to overtake. Exiting, we proceeded onward to Concord West where the majority of Sydney passengers boarded and the tour would commence in earnest. Our train then descended through the North Strathfield dive to emerge and switch to the Western goods line. At Flemington Junction, our train was held for 35 minutes, awaiting entry onto the Sydney Trains network at Lidcombe. Using the break in proceedings, ARHS Tours Director, Spencer Ross, welcomed passengers and issued each with a comprehensive set of notes covering key historical data connected with the lines to be visited. Once underway, our route took us via Regents Park and Liverpool, to Campbelltown, where our departure was right on schedule.

With no hold-ups along the way, Moss Vale was passed three minutes early and our arrival at Goulburn was spot on time. Given the opportunity to continue our journey, rather than stop for lunch at the Country Women's Association rooms at Goulburn, a packed lunch was instead delivered to the station. As a result, we departed Goulburn at 1355, some 50 minutes ahead of schedule. With a clear run, we arrived at Cootamundra at 1650, some 70 minutes up on our table, shortly before the onset of darkness.

Passengers and crew were then transferred by coach to the Cootamundra Heritage Motel for a three-night stay.

Day 2, Saturday 11 June

With much to accomplish on this day, it began with an 0805 departure from Cootamundra, bound for Henty West, a seemingly unremarkable destination. However, this was an opportunity to be aboard the first passenger train to traverse a reopened 2.8 km section of track along the otherwise long-closed Rand branch line. The reopened section of the track provides rail access to GrainCorp's new Henty West grain storage/loadout facility.

On the journey south, we were unexpectedly held at Junee for 20 minutes to await an Up steel train to cross. We departed Junee just over 10 minutes down on our table, a deficit that would remain all the way to Henty (arriving there at 1020). After completing the necessary Safe Working procedures, and with the branch points set, 621/721 made history as it ventured slowly out onto the Rand line.

We were fortunate to have TRMS member Bob Gibson travelling with us, who in a much earlier life, had worked goods trains on the Rand line. Using the train's public address system, Bob was able to provide his fellow passengers with an informative description of the line and recall train operations serving the various grain silos along this line.

GrainCorp's Henty West grain storage facility soon came into view and 621/721 paused beneath the grain loading bin, before continuing on and terminating at the stop block. Regrettably, ARTC had stipulated that passengers were not permitted to alight, but TRMS operational crew were allowed to do so, and thus, the scene was duly captured for posterity. Arrangements were later made to share those images with passengers. 621/721 retraced its path back to Henty station where a brief stopover allowed passengers to visit a craft shop occupying the station building. We departed Henty at 1125, some 25 minutes down on our table.



Above: 621/721 has just arrived at Cootamundra in the late afternoon fading light, where passengers transfer their luggage to a waiting coach, 10 June 2022 (R Spencer)

Below: As 621/721 ventures out onto the Rand line as far as Henty West, Bob Gibson describes his past experiences having worked this line during his long and illustrious railway career



OPERATIONS DIARY

Southern Branches Tour....Cont'd

It was exactly noon when our train arrived back at Wagga Wagga, where passengers alighted to board a coach bound for Tumbarumba. 621/721 proceeded to Junee to refuel, before returning to Wagga Wagga to collect passengers much later in the afternoon.

The coach followed as closely as practicable, the abandoned branch line. At Ladysmith, a well-maintained station building remained. After spending lunch at Courabyra Wines, the group travelled to the terminus of the 21-kilometre Tumbarumba—Rosewood Rail Trail, which opened in 2020. There to meet the group, local identity and passionate rail trail advocate, Ron Frew, spoke on the development of the rail trail and its positive impact on the town.

621/721 returned to Wagga Wagga as tabled. But with no passengers waiting on the platform, an anxious call was placed from the train crew to the coach to ascertain its whereabouts, learning it was 10 minutes away. After a hasty transfer of passengers from coach to train, the rail journey resumed at 1645, albeit 15 minutes down on our tabled departure. It was exactly 6pm when 621/721 arrived back at Cootamundra, concluding the day's travel.

Day 3, Sunday 12 June

This day was an off-train day for ARHS passengers, who travelled by coach to see what remained of the abandoned branch line from Cootamundra to Tumut and Batlow. At Coolac, a derelict goods shed and former Station Master's cottage identified the station precinct. The group then proceeded to Gundagai to spend time inspecting its well-preserved railway station and associated infrastructure, along with museum exhibits. At Tumut, a well-maintained station remains and various information plaques described its past history. After a nearby lunch break, the group proceeded to Batlow to discover what rail architecture remained. Although the station buildings are long gone, in situ rails remain within the abandoned rail yard. A short diversion was made to visit the Mount Horeb station site (on the Tumut line) on the journey back to Cootamundra.

With ARHS passengers absent for the day, the Society took the opportunity to run a local shuttle trip for members of the public, travelling from Cootamundra to Junee and return. While these passengers enjoyed their lengthy stopover in Junee, we took some of the ARTC Junee network controllers and their families for a trip from Junee to Cootamundra and return in a reciprocal arrangement.

Day 4, Monday 13 June

Time to say farewell to Cootamundra and resume our rail journey, which today would see us travel to Orange. 621/721 departed Cootamundra at 0850, diverting off the Main South line through Cootamundra West onto the Temora line. At Stockinbingal, our planned route took us onto the cross-country line connection to Parkes, via Forbes. With no competing rail traffic, Train Control allows our train to depart Stockinbingal nearly 30 minutes ahead of schedule.

We arrived at Forbes railway station at 1100 (well ahead of schedule) where a one-hour stop is made for lunch. A shady reserve adjacent to the station building was used for this



621/721 pauses beneath the grain loadout hopper at GrainCorp's new Henty West facility, 11 June 2022 (Phil Smith)

purpose. A local business, Isabel's Place, provided a variety of wraps, delicious cakes, fresh fruit pieces, and a cold drink. With no conflicting traffic, Train Control granted 621/721 an early departure to Parkes.

Arriving at Parkes at 1235, our passengers must alight and wait on the platform while 621/721 proceeded to Parkes loco for refuelling. Afterward, it must await other traffic movements before regaining platform access. The first opposing train to arrive was the Down Broken Hill *Xplorer*, then an Up steel train, and after that, a loco hauled west-bound rake of grain wagons. After this flurry of traffic had passed, 621/721 returned to the platform to pick up its passengers. Once again, we were very fortunate to be granted an early path, departing Parkes at 1455.

Shortly after leaving Parkes, we passed a very large grain storage sub-terminal at Mugincoble. Then our train began the scenic climb over the Bumberry Range before descending the eastern side, and onward through Manildra and Molong. We arrived at Orange at 1645, over two hours ahead of schedule. Here we would spend our fourth and final night's accommodation.

Southern Branches Tour....Cont'd

Day 5, Tuesday 14 June

On a crisp early morning, with frost still evident in shady areas, the crew set off to prepare 621/721 for its final day of travel, while passengers boarded a coach for a short sightseeing trip around the city of Orange, before being delivered to the railway station.

We departed Orange at 1025 for the relatively short journey to Bathurst, where a lunch stop was made at the nearby Victoria Hotel. Given an allotted stay of just over 2 hours, there was also time for those interested to visit the Bathurst Rail Museum, or simply take a short walk.

Soon enough it was time to resume our journey and we departed Bathurst just before 2pm. Still running ahead of schedule, it was not surprising to be held at Lithgow for 20 minutes to allow an Intercity Sydney service to depart the station and clear the section ahead. At Katoomba we spent a few minutes in the Up refuge, possibly having closed the gap on the Intercity service or awaiting onward path confirmation, otherwise, it was an uninterrupted run over the Blue Mountains.

Arrival at Penrith, our first passenger set down station, was spot on time at 1830. Then it was onward to Sydney Terminal, arriving there at 1930. With the majority of our passengers having now alighted, we set out for Paterson, departing Central 10 minutes up on our table.

After a brief stop to set down passengers at Hornsby, and a prearranged evening snack collection at Berowra, we left the bright city lights behind on our journey homeward in darkness. Besides being held for 10 minutes at Gosford, to await a Down Wyong train to overtake us, the journey home was otherwise uninterrupted and good time was made over the remaining journey. On reaching Broadmeadow we were 50 minutes up on our table, and with no delays on Hunter lines, we arrived home at Paterson at 2330, almost one hour early. And so ended a very enjoyable five days of touring.

Many thanks to Spencer (ARHS Tours Director) for arranging a great

tour itinerary; and also, to Rod, Steve, Phil, Richard, Mick, Trish, and Allan from The Rail Motor Society for providing a safe and comfortable journey. And a special mention to the Train Controllers who, where possible, allowed our train to run ahead of schedule and minimise delays.



621/721 has just come off the Rand line (left) where TRMS driver Phil Smith resets the points to the main line running (R Spencer)



621/721 at Henty, 11 June 2022 (R Spencer)



OPERATIONS DIARY

Southern Branches Tour....Cont'd



Left: The ARHS tour group inspect Gundagai railway station (R Spencer)

Bottom left: 621/721 at Forbes railway station, 13 June 2022 (Phil Smith)

Below: Under a clear winter morning sky, 621/721 sits ready to depart Orange on the final day of the tour, 14 June 2022 (R Spencer)



Cruise Express Canberra Trip, 16–19 September 2022

By Trish Short

Cruise express chartered our train for another great Canberra weekend trip. Departing The Rail Motor Society depot on Friday 16 September at 5.52am (a nice early start), we arrived at Central Terminal at 9.45am, where we met our passengers. With luggage loaded aboard and 76 passengers having found their seats and settled, we departed at 10.25am, right on schedule.

The journey south to Goulburn was very good, with just a few showers of rain encountered along the way, but the countryside was looking beautiful. In conversation with some return travellers from previous trips prior to the onset of COVID-19, they are all now very excited to be back on the rails travelling through New South Wales to the nation's capital city, Canberra.

Arriving approximately 1 hour ahead of our timetable, meant that everyone could settle into their accommodation a little earlier than expected.

Cruise express passengers enjoyed a weekend of sightseeing, food, and wine. They visited the gardens where the tulips were blooming and also visited the old Parliament House which included a guided tour and lunch. Afterward, a visit to the National Gallery, National Museum, and finally dinner at 'Poachers Pantry'.

The Rail Motor Society runs several excursions over the weekend, from Canberra to Bungendore on both Saturday and Sunday. The first trip each day, a shuttle service there and back, was intended to give families the opportunity to simply enjoy travelling by heritage train, and we ran at capacity with 85 passengers. Then at 11am, we ran a second trip for 60 passengers who would have lunch at the Carrington Inn, Bungendore. Wow! Their lunch is a great spread. All had been looking forward to a great day out and they were not disappointed.

Our Monday morning departure at 8am was on time. As the trip reached its conclusion, there were some noticeably tired and weary passengers, but all had a great weekend in the Capital.

Cruise Express Moss Vale Trip, 27–29 September 2022

By Trish Short

This was a short mid-week trip to Moss Vale, with the theme: “Swing into Spring”.

Departing Paterson at 6.35am on a Tuesday morning—a mid-week excursion being very unusual—we make our way to Central Terminal. With few delays during the journey to Sydney, we arrived at Central on time, to pick up our passengers and be ready to depart for Moss Vale at 10.45am. A delicious morning tea was delivered to the train, to be served to passengers during their journey.

The original plan was to have lunch at Robertson, arriving there by train, but with the line being closed on this occasion, passengers were transferred by coach from Moss Vale to Robertson. As a result, lunch was much later than intended.

On the Wednesday, the group travelled by coach for a sightseeing tour of the Southern Highlands, including the tulips at Bowral. They were later treated to a concert at a local winery, and to dinner and entertainment, which, from all reports, did not disappoint.

With our Cruise Express passengers away for the day, our Society ran two shuttle trips to Goulburn and return for the local people. As it was the school holidays there were lots of kids and families having chosen this as a fun thing to do, and we had 89 passengers on the first run and 78 on the second. Of those, we carried two people who had travelled with us the week before from Canberra to Bungendore, obviously very keen rail motor travellers. This was a great day with one little girl on the second run who just sat in the driver’s cab the whole trip and just loved it.

The Thursday morning departure was a little late at 10am due to a delay in the siding. Passenger lunches had already been brought on board, supplied by a local caterer. Our passengers were all in high spirits having had a great time in the Southern Highlands.

Insights North Coast Tour, 23–28 October 2022

By Allan beard

The Society ran another charter for Insights Tours (a Thirroul based business), this time along the North Coast line for six days from 23–28 October. Heavy rain in the week before the tour, which had closed parts of the North Coast line, initially put doubt on whether we could reach our most northern destination of Casino.

We left the depot at 7.10am Sunday morning and ran empty cars to Cowan. This was most likely the first time the Society has picked up passengers at that station for the start of a charter. After waiting in the Up refuge for 45 minutes, the 38 passengers arrived by coach, which had collected them from the South Coast and Sydney areas. As their luggage would remain on the coach (which shadowed the train), it did not take long for them to board and we departed at 11.20am. It was a good run back to our depot at Paterson, where we stopped to refuel. On the way, lunch was served to our passengers. Further good running along the North Coast line, saw us arrive at Gloucester, for our first overnight stay, some 75 minutes early at 4.20pm.

On the following Monday, we departed Gloucester at 8am and travelled to Taree where our passenger’s lunches were loaded aboard. After arriving at Urunga at 1.20pm, passengers left the train to rejoin their coach for a trip up the Waterfall Way to Dorrigo, where they stayed overnight. Meanwhile, 621/721 continued on to Boambee Beach, arriving at 2pm, where it was stabled. The crew stayed overnight at Coffs Harbour.

The next day (Tuesday) we ran empty cars back to Sawtell to pick up our passengers at 9.15am. We travelled to Grafton, where there was a stop for a ‘leg stretch’, before continuing to Casino, arriving there at 1.35pm. Here, passengers would once more rejoin their coach, travelling to Warwick and Tenterfield for overnight stays. 621/721 returned to Grafton to stable for two nights, allowing the crew to have a rest day on the Wednesday.

On the Thursday, we returned to Casino to pick up our passengers. We left at 9.30am, stopping at Grafton to collect the lunches and then travelling to Eungai. Here passengers alighted to join their coach for a trip to South West Rocks to see the Trial Bay Gaol ruins. 621/721 headed south to Kempsey; there to wait two hours for passengers to return. Away at 4.10pm we travelled south for 40 minutes to Wauchope. Here passengers were transferred by coach to Port Macquarie for their overnight stay, while the train was stabled overnight at Wauchope.

Friday was the last day travelling on our train for the Insights passengers. After a breakfast cruise at Port Macquarie, their coach returned them to Wauchope. We departed at 9.30am for Paterson. A good run home was somewhat marred when we were held at Stroud Road for 20 minutes, to wait for, and follow back to our depot, our two CPHs that happened to be running a local Stroud/Dungog trip.

On arrival back at Paterson depot at 1.50pm, passengers would rejoin their coach for further sightseeing and stay overnight at Maitland. On Saturday, the last day of their holiday, they enjoyed a riverboat cruise on the Hawkesbury River before heading home to Sydney and the Illawarra. Our travellers let us know that they had a thoroughly enjoyable time travelling on our train, combining heritage train travel with the flexibility of a coach following the train, to take them to their nightly accommodation and tourist attractions along the journey.

OPERATIONS DIARY

7344 assists 3801 Newcastle Flyer

By Bruce Agland, Operations Manager

On Friday, 14 October, 7344 travelled light engine to the Broadmeadow Maintenance Centre (BMC) to assist Transport Heritage NSW's Newcastle Flyer re-enactment on the following Saturday and Sunday. On this occasion, 3801 worked its six-car consist unassisted by the usual diesel locomotive. The absence of an assistant loco and an engine release road at the new Newcastle Interchange, meant that 3801 could not run around its consist. To solve this issue, the Society was engaged by Transport Heritage NSW to use 7344 to haul 3801's car set back to the BMC. 3801 was then able to turn on the Islington Triangle for its return run to Sydney.

On Saturday, 15 October, 7344 dutifully arrived at Newcastle Interchange at 1150 and coupled to the six-car consist. After the usual continuity test, 7344 departed at 1200, arriving at the BMC at 1216. 7344 was then detached to run around the consist and couple up for the return journey. Meanwhile, 3801 arrived from Islington and was watered and serviced by its crew. When the servicing was completed, 7344 shunted the consist onto 3801's tender, ready for the return run to Newcastle Interchange.

7344, with the six cars and 3801 in tow, departed the BMC at 1405, arriving at Newcastle Interchange at 1432, where the 73 Class was detached to await 3801's departure for Sydney. Following 3801 and its train's departure, 7344 departed Newcastle at 1510 for the BMC, where it was stabled overnight to repeat the same task on Sunday.

The same process was followed on Sunday, and following 3801's departure, 7344 returned home to Paterson.



Above: 7344 and 3801's six-car consist stable outside Broadmeadow Maintenance Centre, 15 Oct 2022 (B Agland)

Below: 7344 returns home, 'light engine', seen here passing through East Maitland on 16 Oct 2022 (B Agland)



7344 coupled to 3801's six-car consist at Newcastle Interchange, 15 Oct 2022 (B Agland)

THE RAIL MOTOR SOCIETY

Invites you to join us for

Christmas in July weekend to Bundanoon all aboard 621/721

Departs Friday 30th June 2023 from Paterson approx. 7am with pickup where needed upon request

Saturday Day of touring by coach to various places of interest, Bradman Museum, local shopping in Berrima, lunch at Eling winery, visit Fitzroy falls and return to accommodation.

Enjoy a lovely Christmas dinner at the Bundanoon Hotel with all the trimmings.

Sunday morning after breakfast time to explore Bundanoon markets arriving home in the early evening on 2nd July

Total cost \$995 all inclusive per person Twin share

\$150 single supplement (limited number)

\$500 deposit by 30th March 2023

Balance by 30th May, 2023

Contact Trish Short to Book 0413672408

Trips of interest coming up

We will be running some day trips to various places such as

**Murrurundi for their anniversary on 2nd April – details to follow
Hawkesbury River – fundraising for Brain Cancer – date to be set**

**We are also looking at going to Melbourne in May, this will be a
6-7 day trip - details to follow.**

Also a Canberra weekend in Sept/Oct – details to follow

**If you are interested in any of these trips you can contact
Trish Short on 0413672408**

**If you would like your name of the email list also contact
Trish Short and then you will receive updates on these trips.
These trips will also be listed on our webpage - www.trms.org.au**

And also our Facebook page

PHOTO GALLERY



621/721 pauses beside a disused Cootamundra West railway station, 22 Aug 2022. Despite the Tri-State Tour train headboard, ARTC had denied it from entering South Australia, hence needing to travel from Broken Hill to Albury to collect passengers (S Harper)



A Dubbo bound XPT crosses 621/721 at Stuart Town on a Scott McGregor tour, 2 Oct 2022 (John Burns)



ARTC testing officers Ben Kozak and Jared Smith pose beside 402 on arrival at Binnaway for a group photo with the TRMS crew, 3 Aug 2022 (SG Preston)



CPH 1 (trailing CPH 7) is stopped at Campbelltown during a passenger lunch break, on an ARHS Metro Goods Line Tour, 28 Nov 2022 (Bruce Greenham)



Above: 621/721 breaks its journey at Ivanhoe, as it journeys to South Australia, 23 May 2022 (Phil Smith)

Left: 621/721 is flanked by its contemporary Victorian counterparts, just outside Southern Cross Station, Melbourne, 30 May 2022 (B Gehrig)





7344 hauls 3801's 6-car set through Hamilton on its way to the Broadmeadow Maintenance Centre on 15 Oct 2022 (John Hourigan)



621/721 at Peterborough, South Australia, 25 May 2022 (Phil Smith)