

Paterson Points

NEWSLETTER OF THE RAIL MOTOR SOCIETY INCORPORATED



Patron: Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair AC


DECEMBER 2023

Seasons Greetings!



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 RAIL MOTOR SOCIETY PATERSON

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Hunter Valley

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New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following new members: John Lindus from Adamstown Heights, Ben Eagar from North Gosford, and returning member Graeme Turner from Thornton.

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. The Society will endeavour to run a CPH shuttle service to Dungog and return, departing 10.45am.

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 in 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 Tony Dunn and Graham Jones are presently 'off the rails'. We wish Tony and Graham all the best on their 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.

Bruce Gehrig

Welfare Officer

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.

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
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Edgeworth NSW 2285

SOCIETY NEWS

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.



Who expects to see a Koala at Paterson depot? This unusual visitor was spotted on 27 Nov 2023, taking temporary refuge in the solitary tree at the end of the abandoned siding (Robert Spencer)



The Picnic Train, hauled by Steam Locomotive 5917, pauses in Paterson Yard to await the main line to clear, on Saturday 20 May 2023 (Bruce Gehrig)



From the Boardroom

Safe Working training on train preparation for Fitters and Operational Crews, that missed the first session, had to be cancelled due to operational circumstances. We are looking for a suitable time frame for this in the not-too-distant future.

Investigations are being undertaken into the purchase of a portable lunchroom to replace the FZ carriage's use as such. This will be positioned on the western embankment outside of the main shed. The FZ will then be used as training / meeting room. The present change area is to be moved from the MHO to the FZ. During the search for a suitable building, TRMS has been offered a carport type of building presently being used by a Men's Shed group as a lunchroom. A review of this offer and the suitability of the structure is being undertaken. The Board is hopeful the acquisition of such a building will bring volunteers on our work days closer together, rather than scattered around the depot in work areas, due to lack of room as at present.

A grant has been obtained for the 600 class roof repairs and work has commenced on this project.

Following on from an audit by the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator, a subcommittee to be known as the "SMS and Trip Review Committee", has been formed. This subcommittee meets on Wednesdays. It will mainly consist of the Board's Executive. The committee has two functions. The first is to review Safety Management System (SMS) documentation presented to it by the Operations Manager, then recommend to the Board the need for changes or not. The other function is to receive and review details of all trips requested against our set acceptance parameters. The committee will consult with the Rolling Stock Manager (RSM), Operations Crewing Manager, and Customer Services Manager regarding the availability of rolling stock, crewing and accommodation, before any trip is authorised.

There are a lot of people and activities involved in the organisation of our trips and charters. To that end a Special Board Meeting was held on 29 September, in order to ensure smoother operation and trip planning. These people and their tasks are as follows, Operational crewing rostering is the responsibility of Rod Short and Steve Harper. Fitter crewing rostering and fuel is the responsibility of Mick Walsh. Accommodation and on-board staff arrangements are looked after by a small team led by Trish Short. The Society is grateful for the planning and effort put into these arrangements by Trish Short. Train availability is handled by our RSM Robert Spencer. Graeme Holloway's responsibilities along with the position of Rosters Coordinator, includes ensuring there are no track work or track possessions that could interfere with trip planning. The responsibility to ensure the above actions are being put in place is our Operations Manager Bruce Agland. Bruce will liaise with all concerned to ensure one month's prior notice of details, including a draft timetable as soon as it is available, before any tour departs or trip can go ahead. Bruce is also responsible for any interaction between our customers and TRMS..

By the time of magazine publication, the 100-year anniversary celebrations for railmotor CPH 3 would have been held on the 17 December 2023. We hope those who attended had a great day on such a momentous occasion.



When this image was captured, CPH 3 would not return to main line service until Jul 2011. Seen here on 25 Oct 2008 restoration is well underway, as its appearance outside the shed demonstrates. This scene will soon be replicated when CPH 3 will lead celebratory local shuttles on its 100th birthday (TRMS image file)

SOCIETY NEWS

From the Boardroom.....Con't

2024 is the TRMS 40th year anniversary and celebratory arrangements are being put in place. Spencer Ross has volunteered to coordinate these arrangements. The support and assistance of any members able to help would be much appreciated.

Members are reminded if attending the Depot outside of normal work day hours, they must arrange such a visit with their supervisor and prior to, or on arrival, inform the Caretaker of their presence. Volunteers must also sign on in the FZ register upon arrival and later sign out and inform the Caretaker of their departure from site.

Lance Nelson has been appointed as our Safety Officer. Members are requested to assist and cooperate with Lance in carrying out this role. The Board wishes Lance every success in this role.

For those members with Centrelink obligations, the Secretary will in future be responsible for any Centrelink contact and documentation.

For future correspondence, TRMS will have only one PO Box, that being 4268, Edgeworth. All other PO boxes will be discontinued.

Our "Wednesday Work Days" are still experiencing very good roll-ups, with some members attending on Mondays. Thanks go to these members for their continued support and efforts to maintain the depot and rolling stock. Our Open Days have been experiencing good patronage and the Board thanks all those who have assisted on these days.

It is very pleasing to acknowledge that twenty-three new members have joined the Society in this calendar year; this includes the new members since the last edition of "Whispers" (see Page 1). 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.

The Board would like to acknowledge the work and efforts of our Grants Team, Sharyn Noll and Graeme Holloway. They spend countless hours seeking out and applying for grants. Success does not always come but they keep on relentlessly searching for grants to benefit our society. They are often supplemented in these applications by other members.

The Society was saddened by the passing of Member Number 3 and Life Member, Geoffrey James Murray, in October this year. Geoff was one of the founding members of this Society. On behalf of the Board and Members of The Rail Motor Society we offer Geoff's family our sincere condolences.

To any member who has suffered a bereavement through the last year we extend to you our sincerest condolences.

Members are reminded that Annual Membership Subscriptions are due and payable by 1 January 2024. Ordinary Member \$44, Student / Pensioner \$33, and Family \$66.

The notice included with this edition of Paterson Points is the only advice that will be issued in regard to subscriptions.

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

Rodney (Rod) Short

President

Michael (Mick) Walsh

Secretary



7344 catches the afternoon sunshine as it pauses on the shunting neck beside Branxton Station, have just retrieved 629/729 from the former Hunter Valley Railway Trust Railway Museum located at North Rothbury, 2 Jun 2023 (Robert Spencer)



As 2023 draws to a close, volunteers celebrate with a special luncheon on 13 Dec 2023, this being the last regular Wednesday work day of the year. Special thanks to Trish and Kaye for making arrangements, and their helpers on the day.

Operations Report

621/721 operated a 6-day tour for Cruise Express's annual Taste Riverina Food & Wine Adventure over the period 4–9 October. Saturday 7 October was a lay day and the Society operated a successful day tour to Coolamon for Griffith patrons. Lake Macquarie City Council's History Illuminated tour to Stroud Road was operated by 621/721 on 13 October. Expert commentary on the North Coast line was given by local historian Ed Tonks.

As part of a larger north and north-western tour, 621/721 journeyed empty to Gulgong on 3 November for Scott McGregor's Railway Adventures to transport his passengers to Sydney on Saturday 4 November. A brief stopover at Paterson Depot was made for refuelling and a crew change.

7 November saw 621/721 run the Society's regular Melbourne Cup tour to Muswellbrook Races. The weekend of 18–19 November saw 621/721 operate Mudgee Miniature Railway's annual Gulgong weekend tour. Local trips from Gulgong to Dunedoo and Merrygoen provided services for local residents.

Hunter Ethical Disability Support Services (HEDSS) held their Christmas function with a local trip to Dungog followed by a sumptuous lunch in our Depot grounds on Friday 8 December. Friday also saw 621/721 head off for Scott McGregor's 8-day Central West Explorer tour. Unfortunately, a derailment at Murrumbo (near Bylong) on Wednesday 6 December closed the Ulan Line and necessitated a quick change in plans with passengers being bussed from Muswellbrook to Gulgong to meet tour commitments. Our 620 took the long way around, overnighing at Binnaway, before travelling on to Gulgong to pick up the tour schedule on Monday. The co-operation of ARTC Broadmeadow in promptly providing assistance with alternate paths was greatly appreciated.

Our regular Open Days were held on 15 October and 19 November with local trips to Dungog being well supported.

621/721 travelled to Flemington Car Sheds for wheel lathe attention on 19 October and 30 November to treat some wheel defects. Over the weekend of 27-30 October, 621/721 also journeyed to Broadmeadow Maintenance Centre for the replacement of a leaking manifold.

Training organisation Railtrain conducted two Safeworking Recertification courses on 14 and 30 November. Fourteen (14) Paterson based members attended the courses.

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

Bruce Agland

Operations Manager



Driver Phil Smith, Travelling Fitter Kevin Judd and Driver Steve Harper, are pictured in 621 while paused at Mindaribba on 5 Sep 2023, at the beginning of a 6-day Insights Tour visiting South-West branches.

SOCIETY NEWS



CPHs 1, 3 and 7 stable overnight at Sydney Terminal on 29 Sep 2023, ready to participate at Transport Heritage NSW's 2023 Transport Expo, held over the October long weekend (Allan Beard)

Right: HPC 402 with ground penetrating radar attached ready to perform ballast surveys in the Sydney Trains Network, exits the storage shed to make way for 621/721, 17 May 2023 (Bruce Gebrig)



621/721 awaits the road while an XPT service pauses briefly at The Rock Station, 8 Sep 2023 (Phil Smith)



Rolling Stock Report

CPHs 1, 3 and 7

The month of November is allocated to perform annual maintenance on our CPH fleet. But urgent attention needed on 621/721 (see below) resulted in only CPH 1 being attended to in November. Working extra Mondays, in addition to the normal Wednesday work days, our fitters worked industriously to attend to CPH 7 and CPH 3 to have them completed by mid-December. In this particular year a more thorough Tri-Annual Inspection and Prescribed Maintenance schedule was performed.

Kevin Stobbart has fitted new and improved ball valves to the effluent outlet pipe on CPH 1 and CPH 3. These replace fittings that had become very difficult and temperamental to operate. Previously, Mick Walsh had replaced a similar valve on CPH 7.

Our Electricians are installing a new power supply in CPH 7 to accommodate a new full-size refrigerator. With the loss of former benchtop space above the now removed mini-fridge, a second custom made, wall-mounted, fold-down, work bench has been installed by Ray Kildey and Brenton Eelsey.

In late November, work commenced on CPH 3 to have it looking its very best for its 100th birthday, with all external paintwork receiving a refresher, thanks to our carriage painter, Peter Macfarlane.



Kevin Judd and Ross Goodman (out of shot) reinstall 721's rear auto-coupler, plunger bar and buffer beam after making repairs to mitigate unwanted noise, 5 Dec 2023 (Robert Spencer)

Rolling Stock Report.....Cont'd

I continue to receive favourable feedback on how well CPH 7 rides on its new bogies.

NPF 621 and NTC721

As alluded to above, 621/721 has demanded more than its fair share of attention of late. First an incident on a trip, which necessitated an emergency brake application, resulted in badly skidded wheels ("flats"). This required two trips to the underfloor wheel milling machine, located at Flemington, Sydney, to remove the flats—see separate report elsewhere. In between visits to the wheel mill, trimming shoes were fitted in an effort to make inroads in restoring wheel roundness and reduce impact noise.

Next, a badly leaking water-cooled exhaust manifold had to be replaced in late October, after finding 60 litres of coolant was needed to manually fill the header tank. With 621/721 required for an imminent charter, the set was transferred to Broadmeadow Maintenance Centre, where BMC maintenance personnel removed the failed manifold and installed a recently fabricated replacement (off the shelf spares being no longer available). Examination of the failed unit resulted in it being condemned.

An oil test confirmed 621's No.2 engine to be "making oil" as a result of diesel fuel entering the lubrication system, with the most likely cause being via the diesel injectors. The assistance of specialist engine maintainer, Adrian Tanner, was sought to investigate and make repair. Although Adrian's passion is for Detroit diesel engines, he also happens to be very familiar with Cummins engines. Removal and inspection of the injectors confirmed they were the main cause of the problem, along with an abnormal sealing agent that had gotten into places it ought not to have. The injectors were cleaned, reinstalled and adjusted for optimal performance. The engine started almost immediately and the previously smoky exhaust now noticeably absent. Adrian returned in early December to perform similar maintenance on the No.1 engine.

On its last few outings 721 has been reported producing intermittent loud clanking noise from somewhere below the rear vestibule floor, much to the discomfort of passengers seated nearby. In early December, shortly after 621/721's return from the wheel mill to Paterson, the two cars were separated to gain access to 721's rear brake gear, coupler, and other mechanicals. The auto-coupler and its spring pack was found to have worn bushes and movement which would account for some noise. Without finding a better spring pack from amongst our spares, we removed both auto-coupler and spring pack from 629 and installed this matching pair into 721. The auto-coupler was supported in a frame (visualise a horizontal slot to provide lateral movement) in which the top and bottom rubbing pads had worn, allowing some vertical movement—another possible metal on metal noise source. A plate was added to close the gap between rubbing pads and the auto-coupler leg, thus substantially reducing vertical movement and noise. One of the plunger bars, which absorbs the impact of 721's rear buffer beam with 621's, could be shaken by hand producing further noise. The plunger bar was removed and the spring found to have lost some of its compressibility. Spacers were added to remove the slack and the plunger bar reinstalled. Once the spring was recompressed, the plunger bar held firm, thus a third potential cause of noise was removed. A number of maintainers put in two solid days of effort to work on this problem, some fronting up for a third straight day to inspect and service 621/721 to be certified Ready-for-Service for its final eight-day charter for 2023 a couple of days later. Feedback confirmed the underfloor noise has been eliminated. My profound thanks to all involved.



The diesel injectors in 621's No.1 engine receive much needed attention in the expert hands of Adrian Tanner, during an engine "tune-up", 6 Dec 2023



707's guards compartment and vestibule areas, showing a badly corroded metal floor, which was only discovered after the old wooden floor was lifted. The metal floor was later replaced.



Newly laid floor sheets in 707, March 2023

SOCIETY NEWS

Rolling Stock Report.....Cont'd



HPC 402

In October, 402 received a long-overdue engine “tune-up”, along with a thorough engine check-over, thanks to the expertise of Adrian Tanner, a Morisset-based Detroit engine

specialist, whom rolling stock maintainer Jeff Sorensen put me in contact with. The No.2 engine in 402 was found to be well down on full power, which Adrian was able to rectify by adjusting the throttle linkages. The No.1 engine, which had been overheating, was previously forced to work much harder than it should, given the No.2 engine had not been pulling its weight. The No.1 engine was also found to have a faulty thermostat and ineffective coolant bypass, resulting in coolant only able to circulate locally around the engine. No wonder it had been liable to overheat. The fuel filters were found to be in very poor condition and replaced. Adrian pointed out the oil filters had been installed incorrectly—they had been this way for many years—and took corrective action. The exhaust system was made less restrictive to reduce engine back pressure. This much-needed attention has restored 402 to optimal performance.

The matter of making the Data Logger and Vigilance Systems operational has regrettably languished because of more pressing matters on other rolling stock, but rolling stock maintainers are acutely aware both systems are vital and must be made operational soon. The vigilance system will be used in conjunction with the existing “Deadman” safety system.

CTC 51 Trailer Car

Active progress has stalled, pending bogie overhauls on active CPH units 1 and 3. However, Dorrigo Steam Railway and Museum has been approached to ascertain if they would be prepared to swap a pair of their trailer bogies, which have solid wheels, for those under CTC 51 which are fitted with spoked wheels. We are not permitted to run the spoked wheels at mainline speed, which render them impractical for our operation. It is hoped Dorrigo will be amenable to the prospect of obtaining spoked wheels, especially being the original type of wheel construction. Dorrigo will put the matter to their Board.

Loco 7344

There is little to report on 7344 apart from noting that it too is due for its Annual Service. It is reportedly still down on power, which is another matter to follow up.

On 15 Nov 2023, Steve Bruty recovers a 400 Amp battery isolator switch from DEB car 952 at Broadmeadow to replace a troublesome isolator switch on 621. Many invaluable rare spare parts were recovered over two subsequent visits (Robert Spencer)

Rolling Stock Report.....Cont'd

Restoration of WPF 602 and CT 707

Window restoration is continuing in 707.

Retired rolling stock maintainer, Grahame Pantlin, returned to install and set refurbished HV7 diesel injectors in one of 602's engines, to enable engine testing. Further work is required to recommission the fuel delivery system. Regrettably, Grahame advised me that he is no longer physically capable of progressing this demanding task, so it must fall to others to complete the task. On behalf of Project Manager, Charles Smith, and myself, we are both very grateful for his time and advice.

Also, work has commenced on FT 501 (400 Class trailer car) to remove the rotten and bowed timber frame where rainwater water ingress has damaged it. The aim of this work is to arrest further deterioration, thus ensure the carriage will have a stable frame and dry interior for future restoration work.

629/729 Refurbishment

Our Electricians have commenced inspection of all electrical componentry. The Carriage Builders have commenced their inspection of the flooring. And our Fitters have determined both engines turn freely by hand. The No.1 engine starter motor was removed for repair and a spare stored in the KB storage van was retrieved and fitted. Both fuel tanks were drained and subsequently filled with 150 litres of fuel. Pipework to all fuel sight glasses has been cleared of obstructions.

Four new starter batteries, cables and ancillary equipment have been purchased and installed.

CPH Bogie Overhaul

Attention will shortly focus on the overhaul of the bogies removed from CPH 7 now that a suitable work area within the Main Shed has become available with the transfer of the MHO Goods Van and FZ Training Carriage onto 4 Road. The bogies have been cleaned of accumulated grime using a high-pressure washer operated by Allan Beard and later positioned near the overhead gantry crane ready for disassembly.



Using a high-pressure water jet, Allan Beard removes many years of grime from bogies recovered from CPH 7, on 29 Nov 2023. These will be the next set to be overhauled.

SOCIETY NEWS

Electrical Projects

The full-size fridge in 721 will drain the batteries if the alternator or drive belt fails, so an improved electrical arrangement to protect the batteries has been under investigation for some time. After extensive research, Greg Robertson found a battery management system using an Enerdrive DC-DC charger that would optimise the charging of the batteries during the day and prevent the batteries being drained if there was an alternator issue. The system was successfully trialled over a few trips. CPH 7, which is being fitted with full-size fridge, is currently being wired with the same Enerdrive circuitry as used in 721.

The new flashing ditch lights in 402 were successfully trialled on an ARTC train radio charter to Willow Tree. They also worked well on a later Zetica Rail charter. However, a post trip check revealed minor signs of overheated wiring, though the circuit breakers did not trip. Tests suggested that the lights could drawing excess current if they overheated. Ventilation holes have been drilled in the housing and the lights will be monitored on the next charter.

Other Matters

Bureau Veritas was engaged to conduct an ultrasonic inspection of the axles fitted to our rolling stock, looking for the presence of cracking or other discontinuities. Such testing must be conducted every six years. No defects were found.

During November several volunteers made two visits to Broadmeadow to remove parts from DEB cars 952 and 954 that could be used in 621/721 and loco 7344. The parts recovered will be invaluable. Most prolific were relays and timers used in the engine circuitry. We have few spare relays and no spare timers. 621 has a 400 Amp battery isolator switch which is becoming difficult to operate. We did not have a spare, however, we fortunately obtained one from 952 which will allow us to swap out the current isolator and investigate. I wish to express thanks on behalf of our Society to Ben O'Regan, Collection Relocation Manager, Transport Heritage NSW Ltd, for facilitating our visit to Broadmeadow and also assisting to recover a twin headlight assembly using an elevated work platform.

The Australian Railway Historical Society (NSW division) has now scanned our engineering drawing collection and the original drawings have now returned to Paterson. Two portable storage devices, kindly donated by Warwick Erwin, will be used to transfer the digital files to TRMS' engineering computer, and provide two offsite back-up copies of this vital data. A Final Report was prepared and submitted to Transport Heritage NSW, who authorised a \$3,000 grant to fund this project. TRMS contributed considerable In-Kind volunteer labour to sort, collate and transfer approximately 750 drawings to and from Sydney.

Finally, as 2023 draws to a close, I would like to express my sincere thanks to our rolling stock maintainers for their dedication and determination to ensure our rolling stock was made ready-for-service to fulfill all our charter obligations throughout this year. It seems each year is not without its challenges, such is the nature of maintaining and operating our heritage fleet, but our volunteers have proven equal to the task.

Robert Spencer

Engineering Manager (Rolling Stock)

A new fridge battery management system, designed by Greg Robertson, is being installed in CPH 7. Also note the new wall mounted fold down work table recently installed by Ray Kildey and Brenton Elsey to compensate for lost benchtop space when the mini-fridge and cupboards were removed. 27 Nov 2023



Looking down on the Detroit engine in 602, with its rocker cover removed, 15 Feb 2023. Grahame Pantin is about to remove the diesel injectors for cleaning, before an attempt can be made to restart this engine



Infrastructure Report

The latter part of 2023 has been very productive seeing the fruition of some major work nearing completion.

Under the guidance of Greg Robertson, electrical contractor Cotton Electrical was engaged to produce an extensive report on the depot's ageing wiring and power distribution boards. They advised what was needed to bring the Depot up to current wiring regulations and make provision for the depot's future power needs. Cotton electricians have been on site and have installed new wiring and a new sub-board ready for the FZ and MHO's move and have also provided sufficient wiring for the new proposed meal room. Now that the move has been completed the Cotton electricians will return to finalise this work.

Just in the last couple of weeks, we have been working 'all hands on deck' to

prepare for the relocation of the FZ and MHO onto 4 Road. The move went without a hitch thanks to the experienced team from Wheeler Cranes. Our yard crew has subsequently removed the temporary rails and sleepers.



Above: Fuel trailer in an early stage of construction, 4 Jul 2023 (Allan Beard) Below: Completed fuel trailer, 22 Nov 2023 (Robert Spencer)



SOCIETY NEWS

Final preparations have begun for the placement of CPH 14 down near the front gate. It will be painted in cream and green CPH colours and placed there as a static display as a much loved item of interest.

Thanks to all the outside crew, the area near the rear gate has been cleaned up in preparation to better arrange the storage containers and also make provision for a roof over two of the containers. The foundations have been completed. The movement of the containers will have to be done by a small crane because of nearby overhead wiring. When this work is finished another shipping container will be purchased to provide additional storage.

The spare bogies and engines for 629 have been delivered from Werris Creek as a backload by Highlands Lift n Shift and placed in a temporary location until a permanent home is found for them.

We have been approached by a training company for sleeper laying training in our depot and we have taken them up on their offer. Hopefully, the loop siding will be part of this training and thereby be brought back into operation.

The fuel trailer is now complete with signwriting—looks great thanks to Peter Macfarlane for a very professional job. This will be used when our trains are in regional areas where fuel is unavailable over the weekends.

Rodney (Rod) Short

Infrastructure Manager



The MHO goods van being transferred onto 4 Road, 10 Nov 2023 (Lance Nelson)



Above: The FZ training carriage being lowered onto 4 Road by Wheeler Cranes, 10 Nov 2023 (Lance Nelson)

Left: The FZ training carriage being transferred onto 4 Road, 10 Nov 2023 (Lance Nelson)



TAM and BR Restoration Update

By Brenton Elsey

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

Peeling back 'original layers' has revealed some interesting sights and quite a few challenges in fulfilling the briefs given for the finished result. The bathroom with shower and washbasin in the TAM has been completed, along with the toilet/washbasin and furnished sleeping compartments. This now enables members travelling some distance a chance at a good night's sleep when working the trains (leaving early/returning late).

In the BR, air-conditioning in the kitchen/dining area has made life more comfortable for those working in this area. The library is now complete and work is now progressing in the lounge area. With the ceiling repaired and painted, windows repaired and walls painted or varnished as required, the flooring will have been laid by the time you are reading this. The final work will be fitting out the toilet/washroom area in this car. This leaves just a few lounge chairs, TV and air-conditioner to be fitted.



In the TAM car, a new vanity and shower stall (behind left wall) has been installed for the convenience of guests, as pictured 17 May 2023 (Brenton Elsey)

Below: In the BR car, the guest lounge nears completion, as pictured 29 Nov 2023 (Brenton Elsey)



Flemington Wheel Mill

By Robert Spencer

621/721 made two visits to the Underfloor Wheel Mill at the Sydney Trains Flemington Maintenance Centre, the first being on 19 October, and a second on 30 November, to remove flat spots from its wheels. The “flats” were the result of an emergency brake application between Marulan and Goulburn, causing the wheels to lock. What was expected to be just one day at the wheel mill became two when complications arose in first setting up the wheel mill for 621/721. The mill is programmed to accept wheels on current Sydney Trains rolling stock. However, 621/721 has smaller wheels, which meant the program had to be altered to suit (easier said than done).

On the first visit, much time was unfortunately spent just in configuring the mill to accept 621’s smaller wheel size, however the job eventually got underway in earnest. In addition to wheel “flats”, some wheels exhibited spalling (chip or splinter damage) which also needed removing. It was during this process that an internal casting defect (a crack) was discovered in one of the wheels, which required considerable extra milling (and time) to remove. The resultant reduced wheel diameter then dictated the machined size for other wheels to ensure compliance—up to 12mm diameter variation allowed across axles on a given bogie and up to 25mm diameter variation allowed between leading and trailing bogie wheel sets.

On the second visit, 721 was the lead car onto the mill. Recently sharpened milling cutter heads were first installed and then a “mule” (vehicle propelling system) positioned 721 over the mill, which almost fills a large underfloor void beneath the rails. This mill is one of probably only three operational units left worldwide; its technology having largely been superseded by lathes.

Once in position, two slotted rollers cradle the wheel to be milled and the wheel is then clamped into a fixed position via the axle box housing. The wheel can then be lifted clear of the rail and the rail retracted so the mill cutter can engage with the wheel. Before milling commences, the machine first measures the wheel diameter, then flange thickness and height. The mill operator then determines the thickness to be removed and once input via a control panel, milling commences. Cutting is done by many tungsten-carbide tips arranged to simultaneously cut both wheel and flange profiles as the wheel rotates in the mill. The cutter first does a “clean-up” cut to remove any high spots. Then the main cut begins, restoring the correct wheel and flange profile, by taking incremental cuts during many revolutions. It takes about 6 minutes per full wheel rotation to accomplish each incremental cut. Once down to the required diameter the mill then cuts a chamfer on the outside edge of the wheel. The machine finishes by taking a second set of measurements which are duly recorded by the Mill Operator. It should be noted that wheels on either end of the axle are milled simultaneously—the machine has a cutter head for each wheel and operator work stations either side. The mill requires two operators during each set-up and disengagement. Such is its workload; the mill works a two x 12-hour shifts.

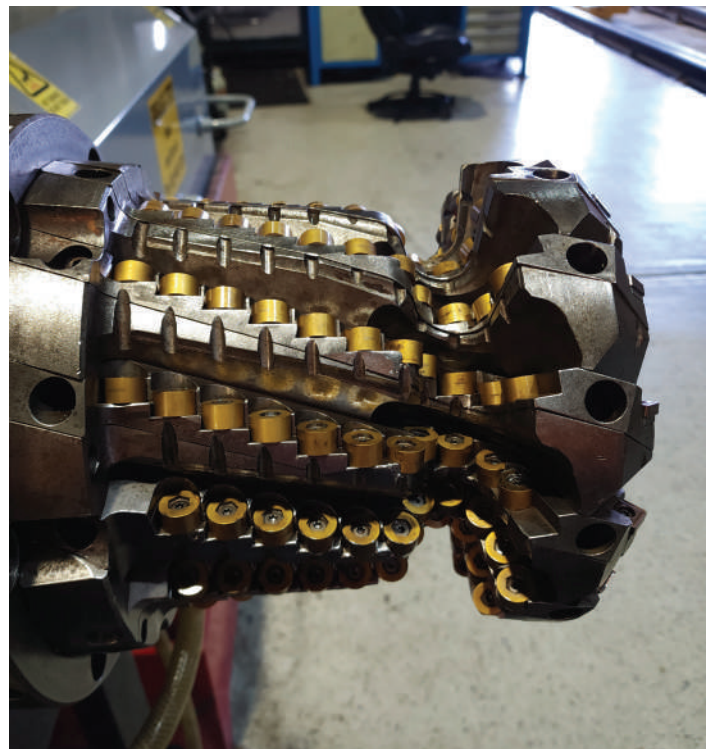
Right: This milling head will cut both wheel and flange profiles simultaneously. The gold-coloured components are the tungsten-carbide cutting tips.



The wheel rotates slowly in a grooved roller while the milling head cuts into the wheel at high speed from below. Metal shavings are visible.



721 is positioned onto the wheel mill using a “mule” controlled by Mill Operator, John Wilson



Flemington Wheel Mill.....Cont'd

With all four (4) wheel sets on 721 completed, the wheels on 621's No.2 bogie then required further turning down to be within 25mm of the wheel diameter of those on the front bogie. In total, six (6) wheel sets were machined, taking from 0730 hrs to 1830 hrs.

The underfloor wheel mill at Flemington is approximately 20 years old, and despite becoming superseded by other engineering processes, is still a remarkable piece of German Industrial Engineering to behold in operation. The Society is indebted to Mill Operator John Wilson and his team for their care and expertise in attending to 621/721 and for their gracious hospitality in engaging with TRMS staff throughout the process. I also extend my thanks to Shaun Kalverla, Maintenance Delivery Manager at Broadmeadow Maintenance Centre, for liaising with Flemington Maintenance Centre to facilitate 621/721's visit.

Right: Mill Operator, John Wilson, checks progress on the mill's control console (all photos by Robert Spencer)



VALE: Geoffrey James Murray

By Bruce Agland

The Society is saddened to report the death of foundation and life member Geoffrey James Murray. Geoff passed away peacefully in Belmont Hospital on Sunday, 15 October, following a fall at home earlier in the month, aged 84 years.

Geoff was instrumental in the formation of the Rail Motor Society back in the 1983-1984 period. The task of building a new organisation from scratch by Geoff and our other foundation members can never be understated. Geoff was also very involved in the restoration and return to service of CPHs 1 and 7.

Geoff was elected as Vice President at the first Annual General Meeting of the Society held on 1 February 1986. He served as the Society's President from 1986 to 1988 and Secretary from 1988 to 1989 when his work commitments required a reduced participation in Society activities. Following his retirement from work, he was to later serve as Secretary again from 1997 to 1999, Vice President from 2004 to 2005 and Assistant Secretary/Treasurer from 2005 to 2011.

Geoff was a printer by trade and was instrumental in producing our original newsletter, the "Tin Hare Gazette". This became a quality printed publication in the late 1980s and early 1990s and was very popular with the rail heritage fraternity. He was also a very keen photographer and you will see many of his early photos around the Depot as well as in our publications.

Around 2015, Geoff suffered a serious medical episode which severely impacted his vision and left him with very limited sight. His medical situation meant that he couldn't attend at Paterson, however, he was able to continue supporting the Society



as an associate editor and contributor to the Paterson Points magazine. We were fortunate for him to make a final visit to the Depot earlier in 2023 where he was amazed by the progress being made on the developments around the site. He was especially impressed by the number of volunteers we had.

We extend our sympathy and condolences to Geoff's wife Anna and his extended family.

OPERATIONS DIARY

ARHS 2023 June Kings Birthday Long Weekend New England Region Tour, 9–13 June

By Neville Pollard

Tours coordinator, Spencer Ross, often reminds passengers that the timetable is permission to operate a train on a line; after that, the reality is that unexpected events can make the printed timetable a work of fiction. Such was the case on Friday 9 June when 621/721 left The Rail Motor Society depot at Paterson before the scheduled 7.50 am departure only to soon become entangled in the aftermath of the delays caused by a Down empty wheat train that had been stopped at East Maitland the previous evening with skidded wheels. The result was a 25-minute late departure from Broadmeadow after picking up passengers from Sydney.

The timetable stated that a stop would be made at Murulla between 1159 and 1216 to allow the Up Northern Tablelands Express to run through. This did not happen because the Xplorer was 20 minutes late out of Werris Creek. As 621/721 was well ahead of schedule, a decision was made to proceed to Murrurundi for an earlier lunch stop; the meal provided by Murrurundi P&C.

Then came a further change of plans; due to an unexpected trackwork possession in the Tamworth–Armidale section where we were forced to follow the Down Xplorer out of Werris Creek rather than lead as per the timetable. The resulting two-hour stopover was filled by a thoroughly enjoyable inspection of the Australian Railway Monument and Rail Journeys Museum at Werris Creek.

Right: The sun begins to set as 621/721 pauses at Kootingal, allowing passengers a quick leg-stretch, while our drivers obtain a Train Order to Walcha Road, 9 Jun 2023

Below: Tenterfield Railway Museum showing NSW rolling stock static exhibits, including 622/727 stabled beside Tenterfield Station platform, 11 Jun 2023



On 9 Jun 2023, passengers reboard 621/721 after a short lunch stop at Murrurundi Station



ARHS 2023 June Kings Birthday Long Weekend New England Region Tour, 9–13 June.....Con't

621/721 left the 'Creek' around 1700, but a stop at Kootingal to await a Train Order to Walcha Road caused a 20-minute delay. Our arrival at Armidale was shortly after 1900.

Given the closure of the line beyond Armidale in around 1992, the 95 kilometres to Glen Innes had to be undertaken by coach. Here, ARHS passengers would be accommodated for three nights at the New England Motor Lodge. Although we were two hours late the staff welcomed us with warm rooms and a glowing fire in the dining room.

An excellent guided tour of Glen Innes the next morning by local historian, Judi Toms, revealed a well-kept country town (pop 8900) dotted with many heritage buildings. The Glen Innes Railway Station (681.3km), opened in 1884, and Station Master's cottage were understandably the focus of considerable attention.

There were several reasons for our trip west to Inverell: one was to follow the route of the proposed Glen Innes–Inverell railway; an Act for the 50-mile cross-country line, estimated to cost \$3 million, was assented to in 1950 to avoid the circuitous rail route for agricultural products via Moree to the coast. However, no sod was ever turned on the branch and the act repealed in 2011. Next was a visit to the 'Inverell National Transport Museum' which houses over 120 exhibits, followed by a visit to the nearby 'Inverell Pioneer Village' where the original Inverell Station building now resides.

Resuming our coach trip north on Sunday morning, our first reconnaissance was Deepwater Station (718.4km) opened in 1886. The station building appears in reasonable condition.

After safely descending Bolivia Hill, the town of Tenterfield (pop 4066) soon loomed up. The Tenterfield Railway Station (773.8km) features seven rooms, and now houses the Tenterfield Railway Museum, opened in 1991 and operated by a team of local volunteers. It houses an impressive array of railway memorabilia along with NSW rolling stock static exhibits that occupy the station yard.

The reconnaissance of Wallan-Garra (792.1km) began with lunch at the station café. There were four interesting objects to investigate: location of the border etched in the platform at the Sydney end; remains of the transshipment platform at Jennings on the NSW side; different platform awnings on the NSW and Queensland platforms, reflecting nineteenth century colonial parochialism; and now the only extant example in Australia of a dual gauge turning triangle.

We said goodbye to Glen Innes Monday morning to rejoin 621/721 at Armidale (578.8km) destined for Tamworth (455.0km). On the way to Armidale, there were brief explorations of Ben Lomond (645.8km), Guyra (621.7km), and Black Mountain (611.9km) railway stations.

The trip to Tamworth took around two hours, revealing spectacular scenery down Moonbi Range where silvery rails wound around tree-covered ridges dominated by granite boulders through seemingly ever-tightening curves. Small mountain streams danced



On the return to Armidale the coach followed the closed Northern Line where possible, pausing here at Ben Lomond Station, which is bathed in glorious afternoon winter sunshine, 12 Jun 2023



At Manilla, a stop was made to photograph the magnificent curved viaduct over the Namoi River flood plain. Captured on 12 Jun 2023, most of this structure is about to be removed due to safety concerns

OPERATIONS DIARY

from one side of the line to the other reflecting the late morning sun.

A pleasant afternoon coach trip followed the closed line to Barraba. At Manilla, a stop was made to photograph the magnificent viaduct and truss bridge over the Namoi River (completed in 1906) which, due to safety concerns, is to be removed. At Barraba (551.5km) there is now little of railway significance at the terminus except for grassed over track and memorial gates.

Following a night at Tamworth, our train proceeded to Werris Creek where 621/721 reversed onto the Binnaway branch ready for the one-hour trip to Premer for lunch at the local hotel. The well-kept three-room heritage listed precast concrete building at Premer is the only station extant on the branch. The hotel across the road provided a wonderful baked dinner, a hallmark of country pubs.

The relaxing journey to Broadmeadow featured a rare nonstop run through Werris Creek on the loop line but we were held at the departure signals from the loop for a Down empty Aurizon coalie. Another 15-minute wait followed at Bell's Gate for the Down Xplorer. This was the only lengthy cross we experienced on the return journey. Following a scintillating ride down the Hunter Valley with a brief stop at Singleton to pick up an evening snack, 'Control' routed our train via the coal lines between Maitland and Waratah to enable arrival at Broadmeadow an hour ahead of schedule, permitting Sydneysiders to catch an earlier train home.

The previous evening Spencer Ross announced that he would be retiring as ARHS Tour Coordinator at the end of the year after serving in that position for the past 23 years. Thank you, Spencer, for organising the Northern Tablelands tour and so many previous June long weekend tours that enabled me to travel on almost all presently operating lines. Your organisation and dedication will be sadly missed.

Thanks also to the Rail Motor Society for their hospitality and the safe and enjoyable weekend experience.

[This is an edited extract of Neville's full tour report which appeared in the August 2023 edition of Railway Digest along with many images and a route map. Adapted for Paterson Points with the Author's permission.]



On 13 Jun 2023, 621/721 pauses beside heritage listed Premer Station, awaiting the return of its passengers who are at lunch at an adjacent hotel (photos supplied by Robert Spencer)

Insights Riverina Tour, 5–12 September 2023

By Margaret Pantlin

On Tuesday 5 September, departed Paterson Depot at 9.46am with Drivers Steve Harper and Phil Smith, Fitter Kevin Judd and on-board crew Margaret and Grahame Pantlin, running empty cars to Thirroul. We had only travelled a short distance before the No.1 engine shutdown, but still completed our journey to Thirroul using only the No.2 engine. At Thirroul, Fitter Kevin replaced the fuel filters, believing this was the problem.

The following morning John and Brigitte Tuckerman from Insights Tours and their very delightful passengers joined the train with the rest of the passengers boarding at Wollongong and Moss Vale. However, after leaving Thirroul heading to Summit Tank via Unanderra, the No.1 engine again shut down. Kevin, with the assistance of Grahame, managed to get the No.1 engine operating again which enabled us to complete the trip to the Summit Tank where to the thrill of all our passengers it was a clear morning affording spectacular views.

Arriving at Moss Vale we were informed a truck had struck a road under-bridge at the southern end of the yard (Illawarra Hwy) and the delay likely to be lengthy. Steve eventually got permission to walk the track to inspect the bridge and take photos demonstrating that there was no visible damage. He submitted this to Train Control who gave us permission to proceed. In all, we had a three-hour delay but fortunately we were on the platform so passengers were able to stretch their legs, enjoy the sunshine and have a cuppa. This wasn't the end of our hold-ups as when we got to Wingello, again we were held up for half an hour due to track work. Upon arrival at Cootamundra, passengers transferred to an Insight Tours coach that was supporting the tour, so passengers could sooner continue to Temora and to their accommodation, regaining some lost time. The train however arrived into Temora three hours late.

Thursday morning 7 September, the train was refuelled at Temora before our guests arrived for the trip to Griffith. On arrival at Griffith our guests alighted for a coach tour around the town, before continuing to Leeton. This was a short day for the train staff who enjoyed the break after yesterday's demanding trip.

On Friday 8 September we departed Leeton, serving morning tea to our passengers before they alighted at Coolamon for another coach tour. Returning to the train, their journey continued to Junee for lunch in the refreshment room. After lunch they enjoyed a coach trip to The Rock where they rejoined the train for their remaining day's travel to Albury.

On Saturday 9 September two drivers, Dennis Turner and Steve Hinds, joined the train for the day. We ran empty to Lockhart via The Rock where our passengers rejoined us here for a trip back to Albury, where 621 was later refuelled. We thank Dennis and Steve for their assistance.

On Sunday 10 September we departed at 8.40am heading to Culcairn where passengers alighted the train for further local coach touring. We ran empty cars to The Rock where we had a five-hour stopover before they again rejoined the train bound for Cootamundra. We served afternoon tea on this leg of the journey, and arrived on-time at days end.



Steve Harper points to the new headboard on 621, as the train waits at Griffith Station, 7 Sep 2023 (Phil Smith)



Grahame Pantlin pictured at Temora Station, with 621/721 beside the platform, 7 Sep 2023 (Phil Smith)

OPERATIONS DIARY



The Riverina Tour crew (L–R): Steve Hines, Grahame Pantlin, Margaret Pantlin, Dennis Turner, Kevin Judd, and Steve Harper, pictured at Lockhart Station, 9 Sep 2023 (Phil Smith)

The train refuelled at Cootamundra on Monday 11 September ready for an early 8am start. The passengers enjoyed views of expansive canola fields while sitting back having their morning tea. They left the train at Marulan for further coach sightseeing while the train went back to Goulburn to await their return, meeting their coach at Wingello. The last section was the run to Picton where they left the train for the coach trip home to the South Coast. This was their last day of travel with us and what a delightful group of people. Thank you to Insight Tours for a wonderful trip. The train continued on to Moss Vale where we stabled for the night.

On Tuesday morning, 12 September, after further refuelling at Moss Vale, we ran empty cars home and arrived at Paterson depot on time.

June Long Weekend Addendum

By Trish Short

On Saturday 10 June, while ARHS passengers were away sightseeing by coach, the Rail Motor Society ran three shuttle trips to Uralla and back. All trips ran at capacity, carrying around 90 to 96 very excited and enthusiastic passengers on each occasion. During these trips, we offered morning/afternoon tea and other refreshments, or people could simply sit back and enjoy the sights.

We followed up on Sunday 11 June, running a lunch train to the Kootingal Hotel. Again, the train ran at capacity, with some disappointed people left on a waiting list. The Kootingal Hotel provided a great two-course lunch and beverages for our 95 passengers. A big thank you must go to the Hotel, because without their support these trips would not be possible and we love visiting such regional areas and supporting small and unique towns.

As usual, with these very popular day trips in regional areas, people keep asking, “When are you coming back?”

Muswellbrook Race Train, 7 November 2023

By Trish Short

The Society again ran a Muswellbrook Race Train on Melbourne Cup Day, Tuesday 7 November. The number of passengers travelling was down on last year, so only 621/721 was required to handle the number of racegoers.

After leaving Maitland at 9.40am, and picking up along the way, we transported 55 passengers to Muswellbrook, where they disembarked to board a coach for the short trip to the race meeting. Our lady carriage attendants also travelled to the race track with our passengers to enjoy the races and ensure afterward that only our passengers rejoined the coach back to the station.

After we left Muswellbrook at 5.30pm, hot dogs were served to passengers as we travelled home. However, before Singleton we had to stop and await further advice as there was a suspected broken rail in the track ahead. This caused an hour and a half delay and arrival back at Maitland was not until 8.15pm.

Despite this hiccup, our passengers enjoyed their day at the races; some being lucky winners. One punter gave \$100 to his carriage attendant as a donation to the Society. Another passenger also took up a collection and presented a further donation of \$130.



This image, taken at Muswellbrook Station on 1 Nov 2016, exemplifies typical Muswellbrook Race Train patronage (Bruce Gebrig)

Gulgong Tour Report, 18–19 November

By Lance Nelson

On Saturday 18 November the crew of Mick Baczynskij, Bruce Greenham, Mick Walsh, Sharyn Noll and Lance Nelson departed Paterson depot at 0747 for Broadmeadow to pick up Peter King and his passengers. We departed on time for Gulgong picking up more of his group from Maitland and Singleton.

Upon arrival at Gulgong, in very hot and humid conditions at around 1230, we were met by Phil Smith, our relief Driver, who transported us to our accommodation and then to lunch. We freshened up, then went back to the train in time to prepare it for a local trip departing 1700 to Dunedoo and return. It was still rather hot and humid after stabling the train and we all enjoyed a well-earned drink and lovely dinner.

On Sunday we were back at the train at 0700 to prepared it for an 0820 departure to Merrygoen. We carried a full train of local people, eager to enjoy a few hours on our beautiful 621/721.

We arrived back at Gulgong and departed with our Newcastle passengers at 1120. Once again it was very hot and extremely humid and thankfully, we arrived back at Broadmeadow early. After saying our goodbyes, it was then back to Paterson to stable 621/721

FROM THE ARCHIVES

“In the Beginning”

Article and Photos by Geoff Murray

In 1983, a proposal was put forward at a monthly meeting of the Newcastle Branch of the Australian Railway Historical Society by the Branch Manager, the late Rev. Henry Varcoe, to purchase, restore, maintain and operate three of the 1920s vintage 42 foot rail motors which the State Rail Authority were going to replace with modern air-conditioned coaches on country branch line services.

A wish list of preferred criteria for a home in the Newcastle area was circulated amongst the membership who were invited to submit suggestions for further investigation and discussion with the local SRA District Manager. The four basic essential requirements were: 24/7 main line access, a sympathetic local population, site security and overheads, and ease of access for members/volunteers. The concurrence of the SRA District Manager was considered to be essential if the proposal was to have any chance of success.

After many hours of discussion and several inspections for a future home in the Newcastle area, a suggestion by the SRA District Manager to “have a close look at the former goods yard at Paterson” convinced the proponents that it was worth a detailed inspection as it had not been considered as a likely location for a depot at all.

About this time I had personally developed an interest in ARHS and railway photography and discovered a fellow workmate with similar interests—his name was Warren “Mick” Turton and he was a Surveyor/ Engineering Draftsman. We became firm friends and so, when I informed him of the proposed ARHS Newcastle Branch’s plans he immediately offered to assist in any way he could.

After several phone calls from Henry Varcoe requesting assistance in designing a track plan for the proposed depot at Paterson, I broached the subject with Mick who agreed to carry out the task at least as far as his qualifications would allow, bearing in mind he was not a registered surveyor.

Sunday 22 July 1984 saw Mick and I headed towards Paterson, the boot of my Commodore loaded with an assortment of surveying equipment “loaned” by our employer to prepare a basic site plan to ascertain if the Paterson goods yard would be suitable to establish a home depot for the proposed purchase and maintenance of rail motors.

The morning was overcast with light showers of rain, the surrounding hills covered in mist, not an ideal introduction to the small village of Paterson as we found our way to the railway station building and had our first glimpse of the goods yard from the station side of the track.

The scene that met our eyes was one of dismay and disappointment. The whole area of the former goods yard was littered with wooden cable drums, pallets and other debris left behind by the contractors who had constructed the recently completed North Coast line CTC signalling project.

On the positive side, the goods shed immediately opposite the station appeared to be in fairly good condition as did the overhead goods gantry crane.

We retraced our steps to the main road and eventually found our way to the vehicle entrance of the goods yard off Webbers Creek Road and parked beside the goods shed. The only other structure was the local per-way gang shed which was located on the goods siding near the crossing loop points at the Dungog end of the crossing loop.



Our first view of Paterson Goods Yard. Photo taken from the embankment at the Maitland end of the up platform. The overgrown goods yard and assorted rubbish can be clearly seen.



Mick Turton commences the property boundary survey utilising the permanent railway survey markers as a starting point.



Below: Mick transferring his survey results to the plan supplied by the SRA property branch.

“In the Beginning”.....Con’t

Mick had obtained a copy of a departmental survey of the Paterson railway precinct as well as a set of standard scale turnout templates which had to be used for any additional trackwork planned to be laid on railway property as part of the proposed depot development. Utilising the railway’s own permanent survey markers, Mick set about establishing a site plan and location of structures such as the goods shed in order to design a practical yard layout within the constraints of the available area to be leased. At this stage we were joined by Henry Varcoe who was anxiously waiting to see the results of Mick’s survey.

Once the basic site plan was completed, it immediately became apparent that there wasn’t enough space between the embankment at the southern end of the property boundary and the goods shed to install a left-hand set of points to create an “arrival” road on the western side of the goods shed and leave the track on the station side of the goods shed as a “departure” road.

At this juncture, it should be explained that the newly formed society’s bank balance was nil. The other three founding organisations who had decided to join in the venture with the Sydney Division ARHS, namely the Rail Transport Museum, Southern Pacific Electric Railway and Zig Zag Railway, had only agreed to contribute rail motors so there was a distinct lack of funds for depot and infrastructure development.

Local SRA Cardiff Railway Workshops Manager, ARHS member and keen supporter of the proposed rail motor group, Ron Preston, argued strongly with the Sydney-based ARHS hierarchy in support of purchasing a 400/500 class rail motor set as part of the ARHS’ contribution towards the establishment of a rail motor group, even contributing the proceeds from the publication of a rail enthusiast’s book. The reason behind this idea was revealed at a later date.

On the plus side of the equation as we were to later learn, the station was manned on day shift by ASM Jim Cummings, the police station and residence was occupied by a full-time officer and the local historical society had just moved into the recently restored courthouse. The choice of Paterson was starting to appear more favourable but that fact was not going to solve the problem we were faced with regarding location of the track beside the goods shed. It was essential to retain the goods shed for storage of spare parts etcetera, so in the end, there was no choice but to abandon any idea of laying track on the western side of the goods shed.

Apart from the goods line, there was no track in the yard which meant that a track plan would have to be devised and approved by the relevant track inspector. Sleepers and rail would have to be found and laid before any vehicle could be stored at Paterson.

Consideration was given to applying to the SRA property department to extend the southern boundary of our leased area and then applying for permission to excavate part of the embankment to lay a set of points in the correct location to be able to lay track around the western side of the goods shed.

The news of the imminent arrival of the first shipment of rail motors from the SRA put an end to any plans to extend our leased area and concentrate on preparations to receive the first rail motors. TO BE CONTINUED...

[Sadly, although Geoff had intended to continue to document the early years of the Society from his personal recollections, his untimely passing, as noted in the Society News, means we can only lament at the loss of his profound knowledge. His first instalment is presented here as a tribute to the first of a series Geoff was intending to write—Ed.]



The bad news is revealed to Henry Varcoe as the SRA turnout template is laid onto the main survey plan and the track layout will have to be as it is today.

PHOTO GALLERY



621/721 stabled overnight in the railway yard at Temora Station, 6 Sep 2023 (Phil Smith)



621/721 pauses beside the Tootool Location Board (Tootool is 16 km west of The Rock), 9 Sep 2023 (Phil Smith)



621/721 at Lockhart Station, 9 Sep 2023 (Phil Smith)



621/721 in the railway yard beside The Rock Station, 10 Sep 2023. The branch line to Lockhart veers away right, in front of The Rock mountain peak. (Phil Smith)



621/721 homeward bound, after touring the Riverina, breaks its journey at Goulburn Station, 11 Sep 2023 (Phil Smith)



621/721 breaks its journey at Coolamon, during an Insights Tour charter to Griffith, 7 Oct 2023 (Phil Smith)

PHOTO GALLERY



Steve Preston (left), Karina and Geoff Murray on the platform at Neath. Geoff had come for a ride after his recovery from health issues on the Society's first operation on the South Maitland Railway, 13 Mar 2016 (Bruce Gebrig)



Above: It's 6.30am as a new day dawns on 621/721 in Temora Yard, 7 Sep 2023 (Phil Smith)

Right: It's approaching end-of-shift as Bruce Agland, Rod Short and Ross Goodman watch as 621's last wheel set receives attention on the Flemington wheel mill, 30 Nov 2023 (Robert Spencer)





On 2 Jun 2023, after having been collected from the former Hunter Valley Railway Trust Railway Museum located at North Rothbury, NPF629+NTC729 has just made its welcome return to Paterson Depot, following its purchase by The Rail Motor Society (Paul Horder)



LVR NTC731+NPF631 and Rail Motor Society HPC 402 at Narromine Station, 3 Apr 2023 (Wayne Coleman)