

# Paterson Points

NEWSLETTER OF THE RAIL MOTOR SOCIETY INCORPORATED



DECEMBER 2024

Patron: Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair AC



## Inside:

- ~ Society 40th Anniversary
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**PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**FOURTH SESSION OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT**

**COMMUNITY RECOGNITION STATEMENT**

12 November, 2024

**RAIL MOTOR SOCIETY ANNIVERSARY**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads):**

I would like to pay tribute to four incredible decades of heritage transport advocacy and service provided by members of the Rail Motor Society. The Society was formed in 1984 as a not-for-profit organisation determined to collect, preserve, and operate a representative fleet of NSW Government Railways rail motors. By 1986, the dedicated members of this passionate group had achieved their goal. After commencing tourist operations, the Rail Motor Society has brought joy to the lives of thousands of train enthusiasts. Based in Paterson, the Society has continued to grow its membership numbers throughout its 40-year history. I congratulate the Rail Motor Society and its wonderful members on reaching four decades of service.

Your passion for heritage transport and your commitment to sharing your knowledge with our community has made you an integral part of the Maitland region's identity. We appreciate your service, admire your advocacy, and thank you for the work you do to highlight how integral transport is to our communities.



## New Members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following new members: John Vierkant, Nundah Queensland; Benjamin Cousins, Wentworthville; Glen Mills, Greta; Andrew Hayne, Cherrybrook; Gary Delaney, East Maitland; Russell Butterworth, Broadmeadow; Heather Gascoigne, Largs; Joy Perry, Tenambit; Christopher Rayfield, Seven Hills; and Trevor Solomons, Rutherford.

## 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).

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## 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](mailto: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**

**5 Webbers Creek Road**

**Paterson NSW 2421**

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

## 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 Wayne Irwin and Jim Lambkin are presently 'off the rails'. We wish them 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.

# SOCIETY NEWS

## DIRECTORY

### **The Rail Motor Society Incorporated Depot & Museum**

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### **Vice President**

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### **Assistant Secretary / Treasurer**

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### **Infrastructure Manager**

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### **Train Crewing Coordinator**

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### **Paterson Points Editor**

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Email: editor@trms.org.au

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:  
5 Webbers Creek Road  
Paterson NSW 2421**



## Board of Management and Line Managers 2024/2025

### Office Bearers

President	Rodney Short
Vice President	Stephen Harper
Secretary & Public Officer	Michael Walsh <sup>1</sup>
Secretary & Public Officer	Anthony Dunn
Treasurer	Patricia Short
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer	Anthony Dunn <sup>2</sup>
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer	Bruce Agland

### Board Members

Bruce Agland	Bruce Greenham
Ross Goodman	Graeme Holloway
Spencer Ross	Robert Spencer

### Line Managers and Assistants

Operations Manager	Bruce Agland
Assistant Operations Manager	Stephen Harper
Rolling Stock Manager	Robert Spencer
Rolling Stock Coordinators	Kevin Judd
	Ross Goodman
Infrastructure Manager	Rodney Short
Assistant Infrastructure Managers	Graeme Holloway
	Bruce Greenham

### Subsidiary Positions

Train Crewing Coordinator	Graeme Holloway
Operational Crew Roster Clerks	Rodney Short
	Stephen Harper
Fitters Roster Clerk	Kevin Judd
Customer Service Manager	Trish Short
Assistant Customer Service Manager	Anthony Dunn
Safety Officer	Lance Nelson
Assistant Safety Officer	Paul Horder
Public Relations Officer	Trish Short
Assistant Public Relations Officer	Anthony Dunn
Publications Officer	Robert Spencer
Assistant Publications Officer	Bruce Gehrig
Tours Liaison Officer	Trish Short
Assistant Tours Liaison Officer	Spencer Ross
Accommodation Officer	Trish Short
Assistant Accommodation Officer	Anthony Dunn
Catering & Souvenirs Officer	Kaye Burgess
Welfare Officer	Bruce Gehrig
Archives Officer	Spencer Ross
Grants Officer	Graeme Holloway
Assistant Grants Officer	Sharyn Noll
Finance Officer	New Position TBA
Internal Auditor Operations	Arthur Burgess
Internal Auditor Rolling Stock	Brett Williams
Internal Auditor Infrastructure	Bruce Agland
Project Manager 629/729	Stephen Harper
Project Manager 602/707	Jon Derry

<sup>1</sup> Retiring 31/12/2024

<sup>2</sup> Relinquished 31/12/2024



CPH 7 at Tamworth, 7 Sep 1981 (late Tom Holmes).



On Friday, 12 March 2021, CPH 1, 3 and 7 are ready to depart Maitland for Dubbo (B. Gehrig).

# SOCIETY NEWS

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## From the Boardroom

Fellow members and friends, welcome to "From the Boardroom" in this edition of Paterson Points.

For our members, the Board of Management would like to thank you for your continued support throughout 2024 and remind you that your annual membership subscription for the year commencing 1 January 2025 is due by 31 December 2024. Depending on how you receive your copy of Paterson Points, you will find either attached or enclosed a notice regarding your 2025 Members subscription and payment options.

Please note that TRMS' postal address is in the process of being changed to:

### **5 Webbers Creek Rd Paterson NSW 2421.**

The lease on the existing PO Box will be allowed to run until its present expiry. All letterheads and stationery will be changed to reflect the new address. A substantial weatherproof letter box will be purchased and installed at the Depot adjacent to the Station Masters Cottage gates. All mail received, except personal mail, will be held for the Secretary. All mail should now be directed to the above address.

Our 40th Anniversary and Christmas luncheon was held at Club Macquarie on Saturday, 16th November. This was followed on Sunday, 17th November, by CPH 7's 100th Birthday celebrations. Full reports on these momentous occasions can be found elsewhere in this publication.

"Service Pins" and certificates were to be presented at the Saturday luncheon. Unfortunately, the pins did not arrive in time, leaving only the certificates to be presented. The Board congratulates the recipients of these service awards, recognising and thanking them for their many years of dedicated service to the Society.

The "Volunteer of the Year" awards awarded previously have been replaced by the above "Service Pins". These pins are in 5-year service increments, with the effective start date for still active members being 1 January 2023.

It was brought to the Board's attention that our Safety Management System (SMS) had no provision for an Internal Investigations Officer. Our SMS review committee was convened to consider the establishment of an Investigations Officer and to review the SMS documents concerning incidents and reporting. From that meeting, the following recommendations will be presented at the December Board meeting:

- The Investigations Officer position will be added to our SMS and Roles and Responsibilities documentation. Stephen Harper, who has training and been certified, shall be appointed to this role.
- Both the SMS documents involved be altered to clarify procedures and reporting in these documents.
- Clarify who a volunteer's Line Manager is when working in the Depot regarding incidents and report form completion. Also, make the train presentation volunteers' Line Manager the Operations Manager.

Anthony (Tony) Dunn will be conducting an audit of our key system. Some non-active members still hold security keys. It would be appreciated if these members could return them to Tony. Could members please check they have the appropriate key for their task? This will be part of the audit. Those not qualified to enter the rail corridor with a green key will be asked to swap to a blue key. Locks on rail motors have been changed to accept blue keys.

Our Webmaster is working on the site and should be able to present it to the Board for review in the not-too-distant future, certainly before it goes live. Executive members have had a trial login and worked their way around the site. The feedback has been positive. This is a mammoth task, given the amount of information to be added, as I can personally attest. Keep a lookout for future announcements.

On the grants front, whilst Sharyn Noll, Trish Short and Graeme Holloway have been very active in submitting grant applications, we haven't had a great deal of success until recently, when we received notification that a 2024 Transport Heritage Grant for the project "Accessible Platform" to access and view TAM503 and BR1395 was approved. Anthony Dunn and I represented the Society at the THNSW Sector Day, held in History House Sydney in accepting the grant. Congratulations go to all involved, and in particular, Graeme Holloway.

At the time of writing, we have submitted a Stream 2 funding application through Transport Heritage NSW to IFAP (Independent Funding and Advisory Panel) for the refurbishment of the mid and outer draw gear on 621/721. The preparation of this application was a very time-consuming and arduous task. I thank all involved, especially Robert Spencer, who did an excellent job of finessing the application. Now, we await the result. Stream 2 funding is for heritage items on Loan Agreements with THNSW; in our case, 621/721, 7344 and one fettler's trike.

As grants are a vital source of income for our Society, I urge all members, where they can, to offer some assistance in procuring these grants, no matter how insignificant you think it might be. A Grants Committee, consisting of Sharyn Noll, Graeme Holloway and the Executive, has been formed to collate grant applications. Applications will be submitted through this committee. If members have suggestions for possible grant projects, please offer them up to this committee. Some background information would also be of great assistance.

This will be my last input into the "From the Boardroom" in Paterson Points.

It is with a heavy heart that, after holding the position of Secretary since 2016, I have tendered, and the Board has accepted, my resignation from that position, effective after 31/12/2024. This resignation will, from after that date, also include the positions of Public Officer, Fitters Rostering Clerk, Trip Fuelling Coordinator, 629/729 Project Manager and positions on any sub-committees.

I intend to fulfil my remaining term as a member of the Board of Management but will not be available for any other positions if nominated. I will, however, be available whenever needed to assist my successor and any other member during the period of changeover and into the future.

I am finding, as the date on my birth certificate recedes further into the past, that it is becoming increasingly difficult to manage to carry out, with enthusiasm and diligence, the workload of the Secretary's position in a manner the position demands.

In my time involved with the Society, I have built rapport with people I consider friends. Although we do not agree on everything, I value these friendships greatly, and they will be forever lasting. I will be the first to admit to having, in this position, at times put people "offside". To these people, I hold no grudges or animosity.

I believe now is the right time to take this action.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank some of those long-serving members and members of the board who, during the many tumultuous times during my tenure, had my back and offered great confidence and support in my actions.

I have endeavoured, during my time as Secretary, to always place the Society's needs at the forefront of my endeavours.

I am hopeful that being relieved of these responsibilities will bring back the enjoyment and enthusiasm of being an active, participating member of this great Society. By positively managing its affairs under the past and present Boards of Management, of which I have been proud to be an Executive Member, this Society is forever improving and advancing forward.

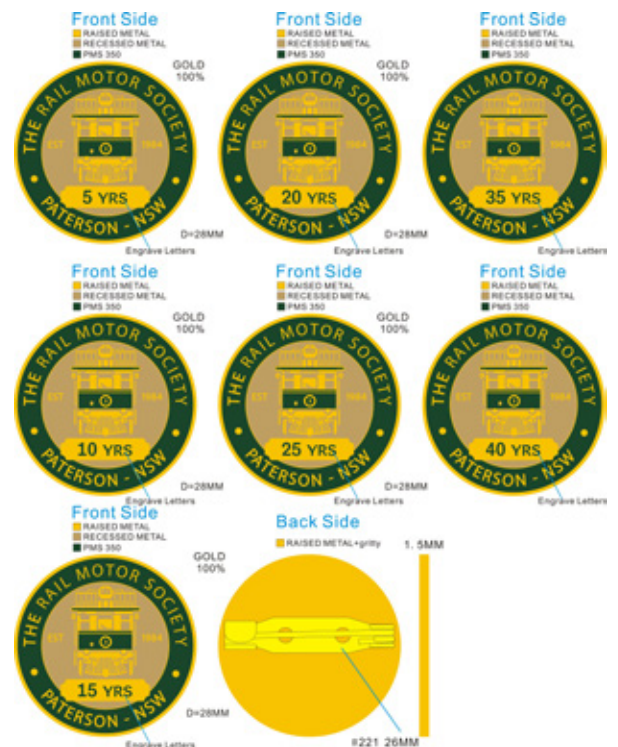
Following on from the above, after 31 December 2024, Anthony Dunn will assume the role of Secretary / Public Officer. Bruce Agland will take on Assistant Secretary / Treasurer. Kevin Judd will take over the Fitter's Roster and Trip Fuelling Coordinator. Stephen Harper will be the 629/729 Project Manager, with Bruce Agland as his assistant.

The Board of Management and Members extend our sincerest condolences to any member who has suffered a bereavement during the last year.

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

## Mick Walsh

Secretary



Above: Proof samples of service pins.

Left: Mick Walsh, front row second left, holds a 2024 Transport Heritage Grant awarded for the project "Accessible Platform" to access and view TAM503 and BR1395 (THNSW).

# SOCIETY NEWS

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## President's Message

I want to take this opportunity to thank Michael Walsh for his many years as Secretary of The Rail Motor Society. Mick has always put his heart and soul into the role of Secretary / Public Officer; your commitment to this demanding role will be sorely missed.

Mick and I have not always agreed on certain things, but we have always come together to achieve a positive outcome for the Society. Mick will continue to hold a position on the Board of Management and remain a great asset to our Society.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all volunteers for their contribution throughout the year.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and your families.

### Rod Short

President

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## Operations Report

Our Open Days in October and November both proved extremely popular. Bellbird Car Club brought a large group booking for our October event, while our 40th Anniversary and Rail Motor CPH 7's Centenary attracted a large crowd. Nearly 300 passengers travelled on the two trips to Maitland by the CPHs and the one trip to Wallarobba on 621/721. See a full report of these activities elsewhere in this issue.

Our three CPHs ran a trial trip to Dungog on 1 October to test a newly installed transmission in CPH 3.

CPH 1, 3 and 7 travelled to Sydney as part of the Transport Heritage NSW regular Transport Expo on the October long weekend. The three CPHs ran five return trips to Port Botany and one to Waterfall over the weekend. All trips ran at full capacity. In addition, 621/721 travelled to Sydney for an open display to the public on Platform 3.

The Regulator carried out a compliance inspection on 2 October. One non-conformance was noted, and the Board is addressing this issue.

On the block working front, ARTC signal engineering has requested additional testing with 621/721 following the two days of testing in the Gloucester area at the end of August. These will be conducted in association with our Signalling Consultant, John Aitken. Planned testing for November had to be cancelled due to other commitments for our Signalling Consultant. The work is now planned for the second week in December. Our dispute with ARTC is still in progress and we have just received their final report, which the Board is currently reviewing.

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

### Bruce Agland

Operations Manager



*On Saturday, 23 November 2024, 621/721 passed Telarah Station shortly before arriving at Maitland to pick up passengers for the start of a Western Circle Tour (Bruce Gehrig).*



*Trailing shot of 621/721 as it crosses the Hunter River at Singleton, 23 Nov 2024 (R. Spencer).*



*Right: On Sunday, 17 November 2024, passengers board CPH 1, 3, and 7 for the first shuttle to Maitland to celebrate CPH 7's 100th birthday (Russell Butterworth).*



## Rolling Stock Report

### CPH 1, 3 and 7

All three rail motors received their Annual Inspection and Maintenance in November. One week after a failed toilet vacuum system on CPH 1 was repaired, the system on CPH 7 decided to fail, and we are waiting on parts. A leaking fuel pump on CPH 3 was replaced.

Our electricians have nearly finished installing a power supply system in CPH 3 to handle a full-size refrigerator. This is the second unit to be similarly modified following CPH 7.

An oil sample from CPH 7's air compressor was tested and revealed the presence of visible wear debris. This, along with the fact that our travelling fitters have reported the occasional knocking noise, indicates that we would be wise to schedule a compressor change-out reasonably soon.

### NPF 621 and NTC 721

There is little to report on 621/721 apart from routine inspection and servicing. Reading lights were installed in the driver's cab at both ends so the driver's assistant could fill in paperwork at night without unduly distracting the driver. An application has been made to Transport Heritage NSW (owner of 621/721) to fund the refurbishment of its draw gear, which is badly worn and rattles loudly, much to the discomfort of passengers. The draw gear comprises a half-size auto coupler and spring pack with two spring-mounted plunger bars. The three components work together to keep the diaphragms firmly together between cars or between multiple two-car sets.

### HPC 402

After fitting overhauled bogies to CPH 1, our attention must now focus on 402. The irregular behaviour of its leading bogie was of sufficient concern to our rolling stock maintainers that the vehicle was placed out of service after its last trip, pending a detailed bogie examination. The cowcatchers on both ends were removed, along with brake rigging and drive shafts. It was then immobilised securely on No.2 Road, where its No.1 End was raised using hydraulic jacks to remove the leading bogie.

Although no obvious cause of misbehaviour was found, the bogie was in far worse condition than expected. We mistakenly believed that the bogies had been overhauled in 2018, but this proved to be to change its wheelsets and check its springs only. As we continued to strip down the bogie, this explained why pins and bushes in its rigging gear were found badly worn. We were dismayed to discover how little grease was inside the axle boxes lubricating the roller bearings. Analysis of residual grease for wear debris and a positive result necessitated the bearings to be condemned and replaced.

The wheels were examined and found to require machining to restore the full profile. The axles were ultrasonically tested for defects before the wheelsets were sent away for machining. New pins and bushes must be fabricated. Our rolling stock maintainers will try their utmost to have 402 back in service for a job planned in early 2025.



*Above: Ross Goodman and Mark Bennett carefully measure the inside wheel distance at four quadrants on 402's leading wheelset, checking for any variations, as Rod Short watches on.*

## Rolling Stock Report.....Cont'd

### Loco 7344

There is not much to report on 7344 apart from pre-trip inspection and servicing ahead of transferring a three-car DEB set from Broadmeadow to the former South Maitland Workshop facilities. Attention has been paid to the locking and operation of the sliding windows in the cab.

### CTC 51 Trailer Car

A new battery box has been constructed and mounted in position. A new vacuum pump for the underfloor toilet system has been installed. All original window blinds have been cleaned and installed using new rollers. The interior is complete except for the kitchen area, which must accommodate a full-size refrigerator and workbench. New solid wheels have been machined (restoring the tyre profile) and are ready to replace the current spoked wheels. However, we cannot begin work on CTC 51's bogies until those on HPC 402 and CPH 3 are attended to.

### NPF 629 and NTC 729 Refurbishment

All windows have been checked, and servicing has commenced to ensure smooth operation. Some windows are scratched and will need replacing. We have two recently refurbished driver's seats to install. About half of the seat frames in 729 have been serviced and painted. Insulation being fitted under the floor in the rear end of the carriage is almost complete.

Mechanical progress is somewhat hampered by a lack of mechanical trades volunteers who are otherwise engaged. We also have the matter of its leaking radiator that must be attended to.

As mentioned in "From the Boardroom", Stephen Harper will take over as the Project Manager.

### WFP 602 and CT 707 Restoration

The No.1 engine of 602 was successfully started in September. The radiator reservoir tanks have been removed, flushed and repaired and are ready for reinstallation. A seized alternator must be replaced before the No.2 engine can be started. We expect to start on the interior of 602 shortly once the floor has been installed. At present, the panels and engine covers remain in storage.



*HPC 402 is supported on stands to allow its leading bogie to be removed and stripped down for remediation.*



*Charles Smith is seen preparing to install freshly laundered blinds in CTC 51.*

## Rolling Stock Report.....Cont'd

Work has continued on the restoration of windows in 707, of which approximately half are done. The seat frames are being progressively restored and painted. All seat backs and squabs have been restored and placed in storage. Considerable physical effort was needed to remove the glue that formerly held the carpet in place in the roof luggage racks.

### CPH Bogie Overhaul

The bogie removed from CPH 1, which will be overhauled and later fitted to CPH 3, was cleaned and partially stripped down. As mentioned, with HPC 402 needing urgent attention, work on CPH 3's new bogies has temporarily stopped. However, new coil springs have been ordered, and the 7-leaf bogie bolster springs have been sent away for refurbishment.

### Other Projects

One of our volunteers has taken on the task of commissioning our "Twin Disc" test rig. An engineering workshop had previously used our rig to test the transmissions we'd sent for overhaul. We have the rig back on site, but it needs work. A variable-speed electric motor will drive the transmission. A controllable braking force must be applied to simulate an operating load on the torque converter. The unit must be "plumbed in" to allow diesel fuel to drive the impeller. It's a tricky job, but Neil Dein is well-qualified to take it on. We haven't yet conclusively determined if the transmission removed from CPH 3 was also damaged when the engine was recently damaged. The test rig will help us find out.

### Robert Spencer

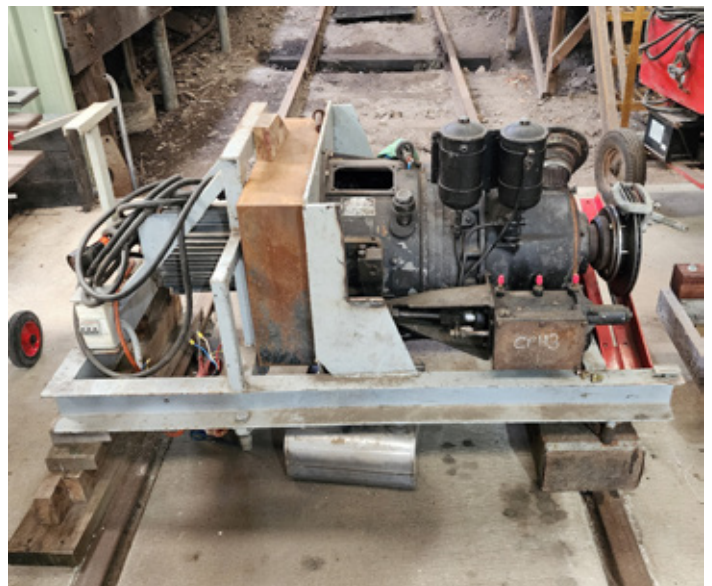
Rolling Stock Manager



*Ted Dunbar applies black paint to two driver's seat frames. The refurbished seats will be installed in 629/729.*



*402's wheelsets are shown being loaded for transport to Sulzer's Service Centre at Maitland, where they will be machined to restore the tyre profile.*



*Our Twin Disc transmission test rig is being commissioned (the picture shows a transmission in place).*



*"Barbecue Wednesday" at the depot. Neil Dein made the wheeled table, complete with a condiment holder, from materials he sourced.*

# SOCIETY NEWS

## Infrastructure Report

We have had a very busy year, especially recently. Things that had been put off for one reason or another have started moving forward, and we look forward to completing some of these projects very soon.

The foundations for CPH No.14 have been completed near the front gate, where it will be placed on permanent display. Currently, it is being used to store spare seats; as usual, storage space is at a premium. Once CPH 14 is in place, the entrance to our depot will be enhanced, and we will look like a real railway museum and operational depot.

Tony Price has finished replacing the cottage veranda, steps, and handrails, which were subsequently repainted. This has improved the appearance and safety of the cottage's access. This project was funded through a grant from Museums and Galleries.

We have also acquired a demountable building that will be fitted out as a meal room for our volunteers. This facility is much larger than currently provided in the FZ carriage and will allow everyone to meet together for morning tea and lunch in a comfortable space.

One of the next projects will be to construct a platform adjacent to the TAM and BR carriages, which will enhance the look of that area. We have some railway memorabilia ready to display on this platform. We have received a grant to fund the construction of the platform. Graeme Holloway will be the Project Manager. Work will commence as soon as practicable in the new year. Something to look forward to!

The water tanks that have been sitting idle for too long will soon be connected to the main shed by Tee Pee Roofing. This will be an asset, water-wise, to the Society.

Also, something that has been a long while coming—the additional siding has new sleepers and is now operational. I thank Brimble Rail for their assistance in replacing worn-out sleepers. A big thanks must also go to our volunteers working outside for their hard work in sometimes challenging conditions to complete these tasks.

### Rod Short

Infrastructure Manager



Work is underway to refurbish the former disused siding, 6 Nov 2024.



Tony Price has replaced the side veranda, railing, and steps on the former Station Masters Cottage. Seen here on 6 Nov 2024, he has just one diagonal brace left to paint.



New steps are lifted into position. These will provide access to the new demountable meal room. 6 Nov 2024.



Condemned wooden sleepers have been removed and replaced with steel sleepers, 6 Nov 2024.



*Curious onlookers watch the new steps being installed.*

## Celebrating the CPH Rail Motor Centenary

**By Spencer Ross**

The production of the Centenary of the CPH book is progressing. A quotation for the layout cost for an 80-page A4 size book has been accepted.

The text is being reviewed, and an ongoing selection of photos is being made.

I am seeking operational anecdotes from former drivers to include in additional text. Your unique perspectives and experiences will significantly enrich our publication.

Any previously unpublished photos of CPHs in service will be welcome for consideration for inclusion in the publication.

Please contact Spencer Ross by email: [bustopnsw@gmail.com](mailto:bustopnsw@gmail.com) or mobile 0428 333443.



*CPH 7 rests in Parkes Yard, 6 May 1940.*



*CPH 7 at Barraba, 7 Sep 1981 (late Tom Holmes).*

# SOCIETY NEWS

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## The Formative Years

By Bruce Agland

We celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the founding of the Rail Motor Society. This is a milestone that the Board and our members are extremely proud to achieve, and I have often wondered what our small band of founding members were thinking way back in 1984 when they sat around the table at New Lambton Library and signed up to establish this new organisation or how the Society would progress over the intervening period.

The catalyst for the formation of the Rail Motor Society was an announcement by the State Rail Authority in late 1982 that with the new timetable due in November 1983, there would be a wholesale withdrawal of the 60-year-old CPHs and the 45-year-old No.38 ("Creamy Kate"), and the 400 and 500 Class rail motors. This would see the cancellation of many country branch line services and the replacement of others with road coach services. The only pre-war built rail motors to survive this purge was the *Silver City Comet*, running between Parkes and Broken Hill, which would continue operating until 1989.

With considerable foresight, the Rev. Henry Varcoe, who was the Branch Manager of the Newcastle Branch of the Australian Railway Historical Society (ARHS), put forward a proposal to the ARHS NSW Division Council for the formation of a group to preserve and operate some of the CPH rail motors when they were retired from service, with a view to using them on ARHS tours. This was a time when there was a renewed interest in rail heritage with David Hill's planned restoration of locomotive 3801 to service, and a number of new heritage rail groups were emerging across the State. With this growth in mind, Henry's proposal was intended to attract a different group of enthusiasts, those focused on rail motor operations, so as not to impact the limited volunteer workforces of the other existing or emerging steam and diesel locomotive-oriented groups.

The ARHS put together a Steering Committee to encourage support from the Combined Railway Preservation Groups (CRPG) organisation under the leadership of Professor John Glastonbury. After lengthy negotiations, four existing heritage groups; the NSW Rail Transport Museum, the NSW Division of the ARHS, the South Pacific Electric Railway (the Sydney Tramway Museum) and the Zig Zag Railway Co-operative, all agreed to sponsor the new organisation. Together, they purchased some of the retired rolling stock from the SRA and pooled them to form the new Society's original fleet. As a condition of the Society's formation, ownership of the rolling stock eventually transferred from the purchasing groups to the Society when it finally achieved incorporation in May 1986.

The next step was finding a suitable location for a base. Some essential criteria were set down; the principal ones being a location on SRA property, suitable access to the main line and a location somewhere in an area between Dungog, Branxton and the Wangi Branch Line at Awaba. With the assistance of the SRA Property Branch, suitable sites were identified and then reduced to a short list of six: (1) an area of the Cardiff Workshops Site, (2) Arnotts Siding at Broadmeadow, (3) Waratah Colliery Exchange Sidings at Georgetown, (4) Shell Oil Siding at Broadmeadow, (5) Brewery Siding at Sulphide Junction and (6) Paterson Goods Yard. One by one, they were eliminated due to size, the potential for future sell-off by the SRA or, in the case of Georgetown, the potential for noise impact on the local suburban neighbourhood, with Paterson eventually becoming the final selection. Time was to prove this was the correct choice.

The first delivery of rolling stock took place on New Years Eve 1984. Six rail motors were transferred to Paterson from Sydney as an ARHS special tour. This was a trip that was often spoken about in awe. Amid boiling radiators, the Station Master at Hornsby was to announce that passengers should join the "steam excursion". A later decision to turn the train on the Islington Triangle resulted in much angst, as half the train wanted to go to Newcastle while the other wanted to go to Paterson, resulting in blocking the *Gold Coast Motorail*. They eventually reached Paterson in the early hours of New Years Day, 1985.

CPH 1 was the first unit to be restored and ran its trial run in October 1986. This was followed by CPH 7's trial run as part of an Open Day in January 1987. These successful trials were followed by the first main line tour operation to Taree in conjunction with the ARHS in June 1987.

The efforts of our founders to put together a completely new organisation, acquire rolling stock, establish a suitable base and run the first main line tour in less than three years can never be understated. Consider what the requirements would be to achieve such a feat today. It would take at least three years just to obtain the various approvals needed to startup.

The rest, as they say, is history...



## 40th Anniversary and Christmas Luncheon - Saturday 16 November 2024

By Bruce Gehrig

The Society was formed by a small group meeting on Friday, 26 October 1984. To celebrate the 40 years since its inception, the Society Executive planned a combined anniversary and Christmas luncheon at Club Macquarie, Argenton. Our Society had not held a traditional Christmas club luncheon since before COVID-19.

The Society committee, including Rod and Trish Short and Mick Walsh, put much effort into preparing for the event. Specially printed invitations were mailed to all members, life members and special guests. As a result, 63 attendees arrived at Club Macquarie on Saturday, 16 November for the special occasion.

The tables were decorated festively, and all attendees were given a Society pen specially engraved to mark the 40th anniversary. Each member's name tag also noted the special occasion.

Guests mingled, most able to catch up with old acquaintances until they were directed to the buffet table to collect their meal. A variety of roast meats, vegetables, and salads were on offer.

After the first course of the luncheon, President Rod Short formally welcomed members and guests. He went on to talk about the continuing success of the Society due to the founders and the efforts of the volunteers who have made the Society what it has become today.

Rod then presented Years-of-Service Certificates to the Society members who were in attendance. These certificates have replaced the previous "Volunteer of the Year" awards. The certificates, in five-year increments, were presented to members who have given from five to thirty-five years of volunteering service to the Society. The certificates were individualised to reflect each member's area of volunteer service. These members will also receive a commemorative pin denoting their years of volunteering. Unfortunately, the pins had not arrived in time for the luncheon. Other certificates of appreciation were also presented, including one to a guest who has travelled on a remarkable eighty-six trips run by our Society.

Rod invited life member Bryan Hicks, who was present at the Society formation meeting, to speak. Bryan reminisced about the inaugural meeting, which ended with the Society being formed with no money, no assets, and no rolling stock! Bryan acknowledged recently deceased member Geoff Murray, who was the driving force behind obtaining certification for the Society.

The cutting of the 40th-anniversary cake by life members Bryan Hicks and Stafford Payne, ended the official part of the function.

A group photo of the members holding their certificates followed. Dessert, tea, and coffee were then made available, leaving members free to enjoy the rest of the afternoon and catch up with old acquaintances.

Raffle tickets were sold to win a framed picture of CPH 1 and CPH 7 taken on an evocative crisp early morning in Orange. Bottles of port with commemorative 40th-anniversary labelling were also on sale. It was a highly successful event thanks to organisers and participants alike.



Members attending a combined 40th-anniversary and Christmas luncheon at Club Macquarie, Argenton



Society President Rod Short addresses the members.



Life member Bryan Hicks recounts the Society's inaugural meeting and formative years in the company of fellow life member Stafford Payne (Phil Smith).

# SOCIETY NEWS



## CPH 7 Centenary Celebration Day

By Bruce Gehrig, with added notes by Robert Spencer

On Sunday, 17 November, the Society celebrated 100 years of service by Rail Motor CPH 7, which commenced working for the NSW Government Railways on 12 September 1924. No records have been found that indicate what depot it was allocated to when it entered service. CPH 7 was the fifth rail motor to have been brought into service by the end of that year.

Similar to last year's event for CPH 3, it required months of organisation, principally by Rod and Trish Short, but assisted by many helpers as the event drew closer. The format for the day was to run three shuttles with CPH 7 leading to Maitland, with two in the morning and a third in the afternoon. Also, 621/721 was to work two shuttles to Wallarobba, one in the morning and another in the afternoon. As ticket sales were not as high as anticipated, the two afternoon shuttles did not need to operate.

The official ceremony and cake cutting were planned for 1 pm. As an added attraction, a Tiger Moth flyover by Phil Unicomb Aviation was arranged for 11 am.

The event was advertised on our Facebook page, on banners around the Paterson area, advertised in the monthly Paterson "Psst" newsletter and on 2-NUR FM, which also ran an interview with Trish Short.

*Right: Having run two shuttle trips to Maitland, CPH 7 is stabled as events celebrating its 100 years of service draw to a close (Allan Beard).*





This year the Society decided to set a fare for train trips, being \$10 for adults and \$5 for children, which also included a sausage sandwich for lunch. Tea, coffee, cake slices, and cold drinks could also be purchased. We had a stall selling Society souvenirs and raffle tickets. Local Paterson Long Horn Country and Apparel also had a stall selling merchandise.

The day was fine and warm, and visitors began arriving at 8.30 am, as the first rail motor shuttle was to leave at 9.20 am. Parking was along Webbers Creek Road or in the empty grassed area opposite the top gate. As they arrived, they were greeted by a Society member, who gave them details of the depot facilities, museum, etc., and where they could board their train.

Society member Brett Williams organised a display of heritage cars in the grassed area on Webbers Creek Road. Upon arriving at or leaving the depot, visitors could view six cars belonging to members of the Newcastle Restored Vehicle Club.

Three full shuttles operated in the morning, two to Maitland using our three CPH rail motors and one to Wallarobba using 621/721.

At 11.15 am, the Tiger Moth bi-plane performed several aerial circuits above the depot before returning to Maitland airport.

The running lines were fully roped and flagged off to prevent public access due to intermittent rail motor shunting movements. When it was safe to do so, passengers were directed by our volunteers to board the CPH rail motors inside the main shed. In between shunting movements, our visitors could tour the main shed where HPC 402 was seen undergoing bogie maintenance. Our Maintenance Coordinator, Ross Goodman, was on hand to explain what could be seen and mention a little of what he did. In addition to hearing about the bogie maintenance, our visitors were interested to learn about our spare Detroit 6/71 diesel engine and Twin Disc transmission placed on display. People were able to see rarely-seen aspects of rail motor maintenance and major components along with our workshop facilities.

Boarding of 621/721 was done from the short platform beside our shunting neck.

Also on display, Brimble had one of their track machines parked on a siding undergoing refurbishment. Although steel sleepers and tie rods were in place, a working demonstration could not be given due to the absence of fresh ballast. Being situated across from the active running lines, our visitors could not get a close look at the machine. It left after the day's events.

Rail traffic on the single North Coast Line was busy on this Sunday morning, resulting in some shuttles waiting in loops for interstate freights and XPTs to pass. Children were given a "Super Dooper" ice block at the depot when they alighted from their train. After the return of the second Maitland shuttle at 1.30 pm, the official part of the day was held on the grassed area beside the TAM and BR carriages.

President Rod Short welcomed everybody and thanked them for coming. He also acknowledged the official guests; Alexandria Carruthers, Deputy Mayor of Dungog Shire Council.

Fred Paton, Dungog Councillor for Ward C.

The Hon. Emily Suvaal, Duty MLC for the Upper Hunter, who was representing Jenny Aitchison, the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads.

After Emily's speech, which acknowledged the work of the Society by its volunteers and the exceptional appearance of the depot and grounds, life members Bruce Agland and Arthur Burgess, along with Emily, cut the cake, concluding the official part of the day. The photo raffle was drawn, and the winner was Noel Price. Visitors were then free to continue looking around our depot.



*On Sunday, 17 Nov 2024, CPH 7 achieves 100 years of service. It returns to the main shed, where passengers will alight after completing the first two trips to Maitland along with CPH 3 and CPH 1 (R. Spencer).*



*Passengers commence boarding 621/721 for a trip to Wallarobba. Brimble has a track maintenance machine (TMS400) on display.*



*Emily Suvaal, Duty MLC for the Upper Hunter, representing Jenny Aitchison, the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, addresses guests (R. Spencer).*

# SOCIETY NEWS

## CPH 7 Centenary Celebration Day....Con't

The Society thanks all those members who helped during the day in various ways, such as setting up tent stalls, barbeque cooks, selling souvenirs, assisting visitors, etc. and a special mention to Lance Nelson for his immaculate preparation of the cottage grounds and settings. The portable cool room, again supplied by Paterson Butchery, kept food and drinks quite cold and was much appreciated. The day was again captured on video by Steel Ribbons and can be viewed on YouTube.

The experience gained from this day should be beneficial for a similar celebration day for CPH 1 and CTC 51, when they achieve a hundred years of service on 19 November 1926 and 3 December 2026, respectively.



*Emily Suvaal, flanked by Society life members Bruce Agland and Arthur Burgess cut CPH 7's 100th Anniversary cake (Phil Smith).*



*621/721 enters the depot after returning from Wallarobba (Phil Smith).*

## Broken Hill Tour 28 August – 2 September 2024

By Lance Nelson, Trish Short and Robert Spencer

### Day 1 Wednesday, 28 Aug

We departed the depot at 8.20 am on board 621/721 for our long journey to Broken Hill. Our crew included drivers Rod Short and Steve Harper, travelling fitter Kevin Judd, and passenger attendant crew Trish Short, Tony Dunn, Spencer Ross and Lance Nelson.

Because this trip was a Cruise Express return-only journey from Broken Hill to Parkes trip (otherwise empty cars on the outward journey), Spencer Ross arranged to take passengers to Broken Hill one-way on our train and return on the Broken Hill Xplorer regional train after spending a few days in Broken Hill. This venture was quite well supported, considering it was only one-way on our train. There were 25 people on board at Telarah. About half of these travellers had not been on our train previously. All had a great time and indicated they were keen to come again. Spencer stayed with the group as their tour leader in Broken Hill.

Our route west was via Muswellbrook, Merrygoen, Narromine and Parkes. Due to a shutdown for trackwork being brought forward, we had to depart one day earlier than planned to obtain a train path. Even so, we didn't escape trackwork, getting delayed for over one hour at Ballimore due to late finishing work. We had a 'leg stretch' on the platform at Gulgong; otherwise, we would remain on board throughout the day. Lunch and dinner for passengers and crew, which Trish had taken the trouble to prepare at home, was heated and served while travelling.

We picked up relief drivers at Dubbo for the continued journey to Parkes, where we arrived at around 8.30 pm. It was just a short walk from the railway station to our motel accommodation and then straight to bed for most after a very long day.

### Day 2 Thursday, 29 Aug

We departed Parkes at 8.50 am for Broken Hill. It was another long day, but our guests enjoyed the beautiful Western NSW scenery, which had benefited from good general rainfall, and the sunset while travelling beside the Menindee Lakes. Again, we remained on board throughout the day, with lunch and dinner prepared while travelling and served to passengers and crew. After stabling our train at Broken Hill at around 7.30 pm, we checked into our rooms. Our motel accommodation was just across the road from Broken Hill Railway Station.

### Day 3 Friday, 30 Aug

Having arrived in Broken Hill one day earlier than planned, we were able to provide a trip to Menindee Lakes for the people of Broken Hill. We took 90 eager local guests on a day trip to Menindee to enjoy a lovely lunch at the Albermarle Hotel. The lakes had plenty of water, and the bird life was abundant. The opportunity to travel aboard our heritage two-car train was very well received by our guests and all had a wonderful time with us. We have had calls and messages from Broken Hill people asking when we will return!

Spencer's group had the option of a day-return coach trip to Mildura or making their own arrangements in Broken Hill. About half went to Mildura, departing at 6.15 am for a 5½ hour stopover in Mildura before the return journey, arriving back at Broken Hill at 7.30 pm local time. Dinner was at a Chinese restaurant attached to our motel.

### Day 4 Saturday, 31 Aug

The crew were all up early, needing to get the train ready for departure from Broken Hill at 5.15 am to take a tour group of 82 from Cruise Express to Parkes. Although we were timetabled to depart at 5.15 am NSW time, the SA time zone difference in Broken Hill confused some of our passengers, and consequently, we didn't actually leave until 6.15 am. Cruise Express provided breakfast and lunch on the train.



621/721 will stop at Singleton to pick up a passenger before continuing to Parkes. The new LED ditch lights certainly make the train stand out (R. Spencer).

# OPERATIONS DIARY

## Broken Hill Tour....Con't

Luckily, we had a better-than-timetabled trip back to Parkes, with delays reduced on otherwise quite long timetabled crossings. Due to the excellent communication between our drivers and Train Control, instead of sitting out on the loop line in "no man's land," our train was allowed to sidle across to the platform at Ivanhoe so the passengers could have a leg stretch and walk around for 40 minutes. Then, it was back on the train to continue the journey to Parkes.

After arriving in Parkes around 5 pm and stabling the 620, we checked into our accommodation. Afterwards, we met at a nearby hotel for dinner.

Spencer Ross had preorganised a coach day tour for his group in Broken Hill, including local attractions such as the Line of Lode Miner's Memorial, Jack Absalom and Pro Hart Galleries, Silver City Mint and Art Centre, and Albert Kersten Mining and Minerals Museum.

### Day 5 Sunday, 1 Sep

This was another big day for the crew, taking 90+ Parkes passengers for a day trip to Trangie for lunch at the beautiful Imperial Hotel (see the specially prepared menu for the luncheon in the September issue of our Whispers Newsletter). The onboard crew was kept very busy serving drinks and selling TRMS souvenirs. Trish excelled in organising this highly successful day for passengers and arranging for a few local shops to open for business on a Sunday in Trangie.

Spencer's group had a free day to explore Broken Hill.

### Day 6 Monday, 2 Sep

We departed Parkes, empty cars, at 8.05 am for the trip home, retracing our outbound journey. Our drivers were relieved at Muswellbrook, and we arrived back at the depot at 9 pm.

Spencer's group boarded a coach for a day tour that included visiting Silverton and its surroundings before returning via the Living Desert Sculptures. The coach driver pointed out patches of Sturt Desert Peas, which had bloomed following recent rains.

### Day 7 Tuesday, 3 Sep

For those who had spent the weekend in Broken Hill, it was time to depart for Sydney on board the 7.45 am (CST) **Silver City Explorer**.



On Friday, 30 August 2024, 621/721 runs a day trip to Menindee Lakes for the people of Broken Hill (Col Monkerud).



Passengers enjoy a "leg stretch" at Gulgong on Wednesday, 28 August (R. Spencer).



At Parkes, drivers Col Monkerud and Steve Harper chat as passengers arrive to board 621/721 for the onward journey to Broken Hill. Thursday, 29 August 2024 (R. Spencer).



It's 4.52 am at Broken Hill Station, where the crew makes 621/721 ready for the journey to Parkes (Col Monkerud).

# OPERATIONS DIARY



*On Saturday, 31 August 621/721 prepares to depart Ivanhoe, where Cruise Express passengers had been afforded a "leg stretch" on the station platform (Col Monkerud).*



*Right: On Tuesday, 3 September 2024, Spencer Ross' tour group boards the Silver City Explorer service to Sydney Terminal (R. Spencer).*

# PHOTO GALLERY

All photos taken at the 40th Anniversary and Christmas Luncheon appear courtesy of Phil Smith.



# PHOTO GALLERY

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*Recipients of Years-of-Service and Special Achievement Certificates at the Society's 40th Anniversary and Christmas Luncheon, Saturday, 16 Nov 2024 (Phil Smith).*



*Old and new. Centenarian CPH 7 (with 3 and 1 behind) is seen at Maitland beside its modern counterpart on Sunday, 17 November 2024 (Spencer Ross).*