



Whispers from the depot

Newsletter of The Rail Motor Society Incorporated

5 Webbers Creek Road,
Paterson NSW 2421

www.trms.org.au

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Secretary's Report

Fellow members, welcome to this edition of "Whispers from the depot".

Although COVID-19 restrictions have eased, the Board is still very conscious of its obligations to our members and the public with somewhat less restrictive COVID protocols in place. We ask all members to make sure they practice the social distancing guidelines as far as practical, use the Hand Sanitiser located throughout the Depot, and please make an effort to keep all eating areas clean and tidy by cleaning up after yourself. If you are feeling unwell, please do not attend the Depot.

There is still plenty happening on the administrative side of the Society.

Our first group of Volunteers have attended and passed their First Aid Course. It is a relatively simple procedure with an online Q&A section followed up by a practical session. More sessions are being arranged and we encourage as many members as possible to participate. Please contact Trish Short or Paul Horder for further information.

With the rising cost of fuel, out-of-area crews, who travel to Paterson Depot for trips will now receive an allowance for their travel days.

Since the implementation of appropriate safety isolation procedures for working on all of the Society's equipment, there have been some incidents with these procedures. A Sub-committee, consisting of the Society's Executive, Safety Officer, and Rolling Stock Manager, will review our SMS procedures, including isolation danger tags and red flag protocols.

As an improvement to the current ad-hoc shunting system in the Depot, a "Duty Shunter" will be nominated to carry out shunting duties on workdays, and their name placed on the whiteboard.

With the completion of the path and brickwork for the Memorial Wall, Stainless Steel Tablets containing the name and brief history of the nominee will be obtained. A Sub-committee consisting of President, Rod Short, Vice President, Bruce Agland, and Board Member, Spencer Ross will review a final list of names and submit them for Board approval.

A new Memorandum of Understanding between the Society and Transport Heritage NSW regarding 620/720 spares has been signed. We are still keen to see some movement and action from THNSW concerning critical spares for these units.

We have also extended the Loan Agreement for 621/721, between TRMS and THNSW for a further 5 years.

Although we are applying for grant funding for the 600/700 class restoration, we are exploring other funding options. We would encourage members and their friends, if possible, to donate to a special account set up for this purpose. Contact our Treasurer, Trish Short for details. The Board is also open to any funding suggestions.

On the grants front, we were unsuccessful in one application to the 2022 IMPACT Philanthropy Application Program for assistance with the restoration of our 600/700 class. We have since applied and await the outcome of an application to the Transport Heritage Grants Program for the same project.

An application has been submitted to Community Building Partnership Program 2022 for concrete flooring to the storage shed to improve accessibility and security fire detection system to protect our Heritage Rolling Stock.

Trish Short has put a lot of effort into preparing and submitting an application to Community Building Partnership Program 2022 for a retaining wall and access around the TAM and BR Carriages.

Lance Nelson, our Caretaker, has recently shifted into the Station Masters Cottage. Lance has continued progressing with the enormous task of tidying up the depot precinct. At this juncture, I would like to remind members if they intend to visit the Depot outside our normal work / open days to contact Lance on 0428 488 652 to alert him of your presence and also on leaving the site.



Lance Nelson and Peter Russell give the BR exterior a fresh coat of paint

The Society welcomes new members: Wayne Ostler, Ross Heath, Keith Edwards, Phillip Laird, Neil Birkett, Troy Stuart, Andrew Hoddle, Aleta Snow, David Bowerman, Sharyn Noll, Michael Jarvin, Brett Williams, and Paul Cavanagh.

The Board still encourages more volunteers for our workdays, and particularly, train crews for our tours. If Wednesdays or Mondays are unsuitable for you, please contact the Secretary, who can work out some arrangements to make you welcome and allow you to contribute in a way suitable to you.

To any Member who has suffered a bereavement, we offer our sincere condolences.

Michael (Mick) Walsh

Honorary Secretary

Operations Report

While we have been relatively clear of the COVID-19 restrictions since my last report, Mother Nature returned to deluge eastern NSW with another “East Coast Low” weather system in July, causing severe flooding around the Lower Hunter. This flooding completely covered the Hunter Valley Steamfest Rally Ground resulting in the eventual cancellation of Steamfest for this year.

Our first operation into South Australia took place in May. With 65 passengers on board, 621/721 set off for Parkes on Sunday 22 May. Subsequent legs saw our 620 travel on to Broken Hill with arrival in Adelaide on 25 May. After a lay day in the South Australian capital, 621/721 headed for Melbourne on 27 May with an overnight stop at Horsham on the way. A good crowd of enthusiasts welcomed us into Southern Cross (Spencer Street) Station on 28 May. After another lay day in Melbourne, we headed for home with an overnight stop in Wagga Wagga. The 10-day trip was not without controversy with ARTC imposing many unreasonable restrictions on our operations, especially through level crossings. There will be a full tour report in the December edition of Paterson Points.

May, June and July proved extremely busy with a 5-day tour to Gulgong for Cruise Express using our three CPHs. The Australian Railway Historical Society continued with their traditional June long weekend rail motor tour. This time the destination was the Southern Branches using 621/721, based at Cootamundra. Saturday, June 11 saw a visit to the silos at Henty West and later June. On June 12, while ARHS passengers were enjoying a coach tour of some of the abandoned Southern branches, we took the opportunity to run a local trip from Cootamundra to June. While our passengers were entertained in June, we took some of the ARTC June network controllers and their families for a trip to Cootamundra. The tour returned home via Parkes and the Blue Mountains. These tours were followed up by a 3-day trip to Rylstone for Cruise Express on 24 to 26 June and a 3-day excursion to Gulgong for local tour operator Greenhills Travel on 1-3 July, both using 621/721.

Despite the relative success of our May South Australian tour, a planned 16-day operation for Cruise Express in August did not journey outside NSW, as ARTC persisted

with more bureaucratic obstruction. Their objections related to the operation of track circuits despite satisfactory track operation across the network in May. This resulted in us being unable to access South Australia and taking Cruise Express passengers only as far as Broken Hill on day 2. Our plan was to collect the tour passengers at Albury and to fill in the intervening period, we operated three local trips from Broken Hill to Menindee before returning to Parkes. In Parkes, we operated a local day trip to the “Rusty Horse Hotel” at Bribbaree. We then headed cross-country for Albury, where we operated local trips to Henty and The Rock and a lunch trip to Wagga Wagga. We picked up Cruise Express passengers at Albury on 19 August for the return run home, overnighing at Goulburn on the way.

As Telstra is planning to shut down its 3G network in June 2024, it has become necessary to upgrade the National Train Communications System (ICE train radio). After a lot of consultation, the system will be upgraded to use the 4G network as Telstra’s 5G network will not provide coverage for the entire national network. We have been engaged by ARTC to undertake radio testing and our venerable HPC 402 returned to facilitate this work. Testing runs undertaken include Gulgong-Narrabri on 27-29 June, Taree on 22 July, and Binnaway-Werris Creek on 3-4 August. Once testing is completed, this will require us to have all of our ICE radios upgraded, a not inconsiderable expense.



ARTC testing officers Ben Kozak and Jared Smith pose on arrival at Binnaway for a group photo with the TRMS crew (photo Stephen Preston)

Our regular Open Days were held in April, May, June, July and August. Due to the necessity to turn CPH 1 and 7, our June Open Day ran to run around the Telarah Triangle (instead of Dungog), providing a unique experience for our visitors. Except for May, these days proved very popular with CPH 1 and 7 operating at near full capacity.

Our Stroud Road excursions have again proved very popular. Runs were operated on 13 May and 21 and 22 July. All tours were well patronised, with the 21 July event boasting nearly 100 passengers, our biggest excursion to date. We also operated a birthday trip to Willow Tree on 14 May.

I would again acknowledge and thank the programmers from the various network owners for their ready assistance and co-operation in terminating and rescheduling our services at various locations to suit the prevailing weather conditions. This cannot have been an easy task, especially for the Sydney Trains staff, who not only had the weather and multiple track closures to contend with but ongoing industrial action as well.

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

Bruce Agland

Operations Manager

Rolling Stock Report

It has been a busy time for our rolling stock maintainers with many routine maintenance tasks and inspections to carry out, along with “out-of-course” repairs as required.

It is with much regret, that I must advise members that our Rolling Stock Coordinator, Mick Halls has ceased active volunteering to provide full-time care to his wife who is in poor health. His sudden departure in August caught many people unaware. I wish to thank Mick for his tremendous support, keen interest, and direct involvement in maintaining our rolling stock.

With Mick’s departure, Kevin Judd has kindly accepted the role of Rolling Stock Coordinator.

CPHs 1, 3 and 7

In my previous report (Paterson Points, April 2022) I noted that CPH3’s transmission (our spare unit) had failed for a second time – as before, leaking converter fluid (diesel) due to failure of an internal seal. So, in early April it was removed yet again, for its third repair! That left us chasing the original transmission which was still in the hands of Twin Disc (Pacific) Pty Ltd, a Brisbane engineering firm that specialises in this type of transmission. Finally, our original transmission was returned to site in mid-May although it was not until early June that we were able to install it. Even then, the job did not run smoothly as it was missing a spigot bearing and a rear anchor plate. Furthermore, we would discover the pump fluid lines had been plumbed incorrectly which prevented it from developing working pressure. Once these matters were resolved, CPH3 triumphantly returned to service on the July Open Day shuttle to Dungog, followed by two short runs to Stroud Road a few days later. But shortly afterward, it was noted that the transmission was dripping converter fluid whilst the rail motor was not running – not good! Our worst fears were confirmed after returning from the August Open Day shuttle to Dungog when a steady stream of converter fluid could be seen issuing from the rear seal drain as CPH3 entered the depot. On its next outing the same result, so it looks to be a fourth transmission leak in a row! As we have no working spare, and to keep CPH3 running (mechanically, the transmission

works fine), we propose to run a line from the rear drain seal outlet and pump leaking diesel back to the fuel tank. So, very disappointing news, and yet more hard work ahead to remove the original transmission and later install our spare transmission, once it comes back from repair.

The buffer on the no.2 end of CPH1 was found to have been weakened when the weld connecting the box section (which contains the spring) to its backing plate began to fail. The buffer was removed, disassembled, cleaned and checked before our boilermakers made the repair. Steel gusset plates were added between the backing plate and box section to provide additional strength. Other buffers are being checked and strengthened as time permits.

A pesky transmission drive selector fault on CPH7, which was making it difficult to change from “converter” to “direct” drive and vice-versa, was eventually tracked to a wiring fault and rectified by electrician, Trevor Hooker.

On CPH1, a blockage in the return line from the radiator back to the coolant supply tank was cleared by disconnecting the radiator overflow funnel and prodding the return pipe with a length of wire, then blowing the pipe clear with compressed air. Although no definitive obstruction was found, whatever it was must have been dislodged as coolant fluid was then able to freely drain back via the return line into the supply tank.

Ray Kildey has constructed three fold-down bench tops, one for each CPH rail motor, to compensate for the loss of existing bench top space that will occur when new full-size refrigerators are installed. The bench space is needed to prepare passenger refreshments. Ray’s clever fold-down design will not obstruct passage through the central side door when opened.



NPF621 and NTC721

Our two-car diesel train has travelled many kilometres in recent months with numerous long-distance trips including its historic inaugural tri-state tour. It has performed well, due in no small part to its preparation and maintenance by our dedicated team of rolling stock maintainers.

A tri-annual inspection and prescribed maintenance procedures were carried out in July, along with an engine “tune-up” performed by a Cummins field technician.

The carriage builders have located the source of a rainwater leak in the roof area above the two central

radiator fan rooms in 621 and made repairs. The leaks are thought to have resulted from the Griffith truck collision but had lain undetected until recent heavy rain events. They have yet to attend to 721, which has rainwater finding its way into the driver's cab and kitchen area. Rainwater is also entering the passenger saloon through some of the roof ventilators which is the next job we need to tackle.

On a recent trip, the no.1 engine exhaust outlet pipe became separated from the exhaust muffler when a connection weld failed. Arrangements were hastily made with contractor Noel Price, who had previously worked on the repair of 621 following the Griffith collision, to obtain his welding expertise. The vertical exhaust pipe and muffler are hidden away in the no.1 fan room, which has just enough room for one person to stand and work. Fortunately, the underlying metal in the exhaust pipe was still in sound condition and the welding repair was able to be done in situ – had it been necessary to remove the exhaust pipe and muffler out through the roof to make repair, it would have turned into a very big job because the overhead radiator fan blocks its way. It was a difficult task and I'm grateful to Noel for his perseverance.

A quote for the fabrication of a new steel exhaust manifold for 621 was obtained from Kings Engineering and an order has subsequently been placed. This is a critical spare and funding was obtained through Transport Heritage NSW.

The batteries on 621 are isolated via a large switch situated midway along the carriage, below floor level. As it is quite hard to access and operate the switch when facing a platform, our electricians were asked to fit an isolator that could be operated remotely from each driver's cab. Greg Robertson and Trevor Hooker have spent considerable time tracing the battery cables under 621, gauging whether a remote isolator is feasible and where it could be fitted. The feasibility, time required and the cost is still being discussed.



Len Smith, Jim Lambkin, Leo Burgess, and Bruce Greenham at work on the 4th road

HPC402

There is not much to report from a maintenance standpoint, apart from normal servicing and preparation

ahead of recent charters by ARTC for their technicians to undertake radio test work, and 402 has been running well.

402 was originally fitted with Hewlett Packard dashcams which were to be shared with 7344. This has not proved practicable due to the need to also transfer the power supply and associated cable which is routed above the ceiling. 402 has now been fitted with Navman 698 dashcams identical to those in the CPHs and 620. The HP unit will be permanently wired into loco 7344.

For some time 402 has been using relatively inexpensive LED headlight bulbs sourced online. Following several recent bulb failures, 402 will be supplied with quality Narva bulbs after our remaining unbranded bulbs are used up. The use of Narva bulbs in our CPHs and 621/721, whilst more expensive, have proved to be very reliable.

Loco 7344

The compressor on 7344 has not been cutting out when it reaches maximum pressure and the safety valve is operating continually, much to the annoyance of the crew. The source of the problem was traced to a faulty solenoid which has now been replaced.

CTC51

Paul Heron continues to work on the trailer car. The air and brake systems are progressing with the installation of a refurbished brake cylinder. An air reservoir tank is ready to be fitted. All fittings for the pipe work have been located and renovated and await installation.

A test of the air system will need to be conducted to discover whether there are any leaks or faults.

Spare Bogie Overhaul

Work is about to commence on the reassembly of the spare bogie set after all the components sent out for refurbishment have now been returned to the depot. The four (4) wheel and axle sets, after having been checked and reprofiled by Kings Engineering, Rutherford, were collected in June. Our last four refurbished axle boxes were returned to site in early September. I thank Graeme Holloway for transporting the axle boxes to and from Wilson & Oliver Engineering Pty Ltd, Sandgate.

Despite having progressed this far, due to the inordinate amount of time taken to outsource the overhaul of major components, and given our volunteers work part-time, the Board has decided that the remaining three bogie sets will be sent to an external service provider, despite the greater cost, to expedite this time critical task.

WPF602 and SCT707 (Restoration Project)

Project Manager, Charles Smith reports that the seats are being assessed for damage to determine which will need to be repaired by an upholsterer. A rough assessment of those needing repair: 5% of 25 fabric seats; and 20% of 30 economy vinyl seats. The fabric seats are currently being refurbished using a steam cleaner, in the capable hands of Stephen Davies. The finished result has been excellent.

turning his hand to the many odd jobs that were asked of him, such as painting, track laying, gardening, etc.

Graham had not been regularly attending the Wednesday workdays with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and then because of his declining health from the beginning of this year.

A memorial and scattering of his ashes was held on Saturday 30 July at the Cooreei rail bridge (which he helped to build many years ago) on Stroud Hill Road, Dungog. This was followed by a wake held at the Royal Hotel.

The Society extends its condolences to his family.

Off The Rails

At the time of the preparation of this issue, the Society was aware that Gwen Gurr, Spencer Ross, and Greg Robertson were off the rails. We wish them well on their path back to good health.

To any other members, and/or their spouses, who may not be in the best of health, the Society extends its best wishes for your recovery.

Open Days

In May, only 7 visitors attended our Open Day. A group of 35, that we had been expecting, failed to turn up. Despite the small attendance, our Dungog shuttle still ran to avoid disappointing our visitors. In June, 39 visitors attended. Of these, 35 travelled on our shuttle to the Telarah triangle, instead of Dungog, so our rail motors could be turned around. In July, 43 visitors attended. Forty-one travelled on the shuttle to Dungog.

In August, 67 visitors attended. Of these, 43 travelled on the shuttle to Dungog. At midday five carers and 12 handicapped children from Inspiring Abilities at Muswellbrook arrived expecting to ride on the shuttle train, mistakenly believing we ran a second trip to Dungog. Despite missing out on a train ride they were thrilled to watch the steam-hauled *Picnic Train* pass by the depot, as well as have their picture taken seated inside 621.

On all occasions, conducted tours of the Depot, rail motors, and TAM/BR carriages were provided for our visitors by our dedicated volunteers.

Besides many visitors from the Hunter Valley and Central Coast, others from NSW had travelled from as far away as Narrabri, various Sydney suburbs, and Blackheath, while one interstate couple were from Victoria and another were from Queensland.

Bruce Gehrig

First Aid Training

As noted in the Secretary's Report, our first group of volunteers completed their First Aid training with Australia Wide First Aid on 30 July. Only seven positions were available on the day and the aim was to have qualified First Aiders on the second tri-state tour. After completing the

online component at home, they attended an interesting four-hour practical session in Maitland on 30 July which covered bandages, CPR, and the use of Defibrillators and Epipens. We intend for the remainder of those who have expressed interest to be trained as soon as places become available.

The online component of the course used a downloadable, comprehensive 82-page manual which trainees retain as a valuable reference. Copies of the manual have been printed and placed with each First Aid kit in the Depot and on our rail motors.

Paul Horder
Safety Officer



Contractor, Noel Price and volunteer assistant, Graeme Holloway undertake the excavation and set out the formwork for the new paths



New concrete paths now extend beyond those laid earlier this year



ARTC FREIGHT LINE TOUR in the CPH RAIL MOTORS

Sunday 13th November 2022

An opportunity has provided the ARHS NSW Division and The Rail Motor Society to organise a special rail tour in the CPH Rail Motors along the ARTC Sydney Region Freight Lines.

On Sunday 13th November 2022 our train will consist of the heritage CPH Rail Motors from The Rail Motor Society at Paterson. An early departure from the Museum at Paterson with pick-ups along the way if required at Maitland, Broadmeadow, Gosford and Hornsby for a departure from Concord West at about 9.30am. Proceed along the ARTC tracks through Flemington to Chullora Junction and head south to Leightonfield Crossing Loop, then to explore the new Moorebank Freight Terminal. Travel further south passing Campbelltown and rejoining the Main South line beyond Macarthur to Maldon Junction to reverse. Return to Macarthur South Junction and on to Campbelltown for a lunch break. Bring your own picnic lunch or patronise one of the food outlets located close to Campbelltown Station.

After lunch rejoin our train to proceed along the Metropolitan Main South Line through Glenfield and Liverpool to Cabramatta Junction and on to Sefton Park Junction to rejoin the ARTC Freight Line. Pass Chullora Junction and the Enfield Marshalling Yards to the Suburban Goods line through Campsie to Marrickville Junction and the line to Port Botany Terminal.

Our return trip will retrace our tracks through to Chullora Junction, then Flemington Junction and along the former Abattoirs Branch to Olympic Park. Proceeding around the loop we return to Concord West and the homeward journey to Paterson.

Morning and afternoon teas will be served on board whilst travelling.

Regrettably track safety conditions do not allow us off the train for photo opportunities with one exception.

We will have a Train Crew Member take photos at locations and provide copies by negotiation.

Tour Notes will be available on departure from Concord West.

BOOKING FORM

Tour Name: ARTC Freight Lines Tour in the CPH Rail Motors

Date: Sunday 13th November 2022

Please Book ***seats ARHS Members and Guests*** @ \$125.00
..... ***seats Non Members*** @ \$140.00
Total (GST Incl) \$

Name ***Membership No.***

Address ***Post Code***

Telephone ***Mobile*** ***E-mail***

Accompanying Person(s)

I will join this tour at ***Station.***

I/we have proof of full vaccination for COVID-19

PAYMENT BY CASH/CHEQUE/MONEY ORDER/EFT/VISA/MASTERCARD For \$

Card No ***Expiry***/...../.....

Signature ***Booking Date***/...../.....

Tour Information and Tickets will be posted to your address within 10 days before tour departure date.

ARHS Membership is available to interested persons on application, On Line or at the Bookshop

Contact: ARHS NSW Division Tours Info-line: (02)9699 4595 or 0428 333443 ABN No. 96 000 538 803 ARHS NSW Division is not responsible for last minute changes of destinations or motive power by the tour operator.

Refund Policy; Cancellations up to 30 Days prior-100%; Less than 30 days to 14 Days-90% Less than 14 Days Regret no refund.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Booking Processed Tickets Sent/...../..... Car No Seats

Book On Line or at the ARHS Book Shop at 5 Henderson Road Alexandria OR

Mail Booking to ARHS NSW Division Tours P.O. Box 206 ALEXANDRIA NSW 1435