



# Whispers from the depot

Newsletter of The Rail Motor Society Incorporated

5 Webbers Creek Road,  
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[www.trms.org.au](http://www.trms.org.au)

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## From the Boardroom

Fellow members, welcome to this edition of “Whispers from the Depot”.

You should have received your invitation for our big weekend on the 16th and 17th November. If you haven't yet received it, please contact the secretary. We will be celebrating the momentous occasions of The Rail Motor Society's 40th Anniversary, CPH7's 100th Birthday and our annual Christmas Luncheon.

The weekend will commence with our luncheon at Club Macquarie, Argenton, on Saturday, 16th November.

Sunday's celebrations will be held at Paterson depot. The CPHs will do several shuttles to Telarah and return, while 621/721 will run to Dungog. There will be plenty of activities in the depot precinct, including a sausage sizzle, a Tiger Moth flyover and a cake-cutting ceremony. The Museum will be open and depot tours will be conducted during the day. Details of Saturday and Sunday events are included in your invitation.

Due to a change in the free service provided by Microsoft 365 for Not-for-Profits, TRMS emails and the internet have been transferred to a new service provider and host. While this may sound simple, it was quite the opposite. Much behind-the-scenes time and effort were required by those with email addresses affected and a few Board members directly involved. It's important to acknowledge that those involved had little to no knowledge of these procedures, making the process quite daunting.

Before the abovementioned changes, we also decided to update our outdated website. Our Webmaster is working on the site and should be able to present it to the Board for review in the coming weeks before it goes live.

Of interest to those members who crew our trains, the Board has made an addition to the crewing policy, in that all rostered crew will commence and finish their trip obligations from Paterson depot. The only exceptions are relief crews, out-of-district operational crews and passenger attendants when trains leave the depot as “empty cars” (no passengers), but they must be on hand to assist with passengers and their luggage from the first passenger embarkation to the last disembarkation point.

On the grants front, whilst Sharyn Noll, Trish Short and Graeme Holloway have been very active submitting grant applications, we haven't had a great deal of success until recently, when we received notification of a 2024 Transport Heritage Grant for the project “Accessible Platform” to access and view TAM 503 and BR 1395 was approved. This

is great news for a change. Congratulations to those involved.

**Mick Walsh – Secretary / Public Officer**

## Operations Manager's Report

Our Open Days in July, August and September have all proved extremely popular with significant group bookings being taken on each day. Groups have included car clubs, social clubs and a retirement village.

Day trips have also been popular with our regular customer Southern Cross Coaches running two trips to Stroud Road in June and August. We also ran a day trip from Maitland to Dungog and return for Maitland Legacy in August.

We operated a long-distance tour to Broken Hill to convey passengers from Broken Hill to Parkes as part of a larger Cruise Express tour. This was highly successful with local trips to Menindee from Broken Hill and Trangie from Parkes on Father's Day, operated by the Society, proving popular with local customers, enabling us to make the most of our lengthy empty car movements involved. Spencer Ross also arranged a one-way trip from Paterson to Broken Hill, with our passengers returning to Sydney via Silver City Explorer. This also added to the profitability of this operation.

*Sunday Lunch with*  
**RAIL MOTOR SOCIETY**  
**THE IMPY**  
@ *Trangie*  
ESTABLISHED 1918  
LAUNCHED 2022

**ALTERNATE MAIN**  
**'SALTBUSH' LAMB LOCALLY SOURCED**  
With Traditional Roast Vegetables, Cauliflower Bake & Mint Sauce

**ROASTED PORK BELLY**  
with Traditional Roast Vegetables, Cauliflower Bake & Apple Sauce

**ALTERNATE DESSERT**  
**HOUSEMADE STICKY DATE PUDDING**  
With Butterscotch Sauce

**COCONUT PANNA COTTA**  
With Passionfruit and Toasted Coconut

  
We hope you enjoy your Sunday Lunch at the historic Imperial Hotel Trangie. Thank you for visiting.

*The Imperial Hotel at Trangie was very pleased to receive our passengers for their lunch and provided this commemorative menu which prominently acknowledged our Society and train visitation.*



© Bruce Gehrig

7344 found engagement recovering three derelict DEB set cars (HPF 952, TC 753 and HPF 954) from Broadmeadow for Complete Rail on 28 June. Their ultimate destination was South Maitland Railways at East Greta Junction. However, storage space was not available at the time and the units were temporarily stored at Paterson Depot. 7344 finally transferred the three cars to East Greta on 20 September.

During August and September, we had two visits from Paterson Community Pre-School students and their teachers. The pre-schoolers were shown around the Depot by caretaker Lance Nelson and were clearly impressed by the size and scope of our rolling stock. After the inspection, they moved into CPH 1 where they enjoyed a short run to the dead-end and then down to the catch points on the Goods Siding before returning to the Depot [*see their comments at the end of this newsletter*].

On the block working front, our Signalling Consultant, John Aitken, has conducted testing of our rolling stock (HPC 402 and NPF 621/NTC 721) for wheel-to-wheel resistance. These tests showed that our rolling stock met the relevant ARTC standards. We also ran two days of testing with ARTC in the Gloucester area at the end of August with mixed results. We are working with ARTC to reach a suitable resolution following this testing. Our dispute with ARTC is still in progress and we await their final report.

We have also been advised that the Vintage Rail Journeys business has been acquired by Journey Beyond (operator of the Indian Pacific and the Ghan). Vintage Rail have used our Depot as an overnight stop on many of its northern operations. Representatives of Journey Beyond visited our Depot in July to discuss future operations of this nature.

Our coverage under the NSW Government's "Crown Indemnity" public liability insurance has been renewed for another year.

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

period.

**Bruce Agland – Operations Manager**

## Rolling Stock Report

### CPH 1, 3 and 7

CPH 1 was lifted, one end at a time, using the new hydraulic jacks to swap out its bogies for a set of recently overhauled bogies. To accomplish this task, the cowcatchers had to be removed, the mechanical brake linkages disconnected, and the cardan shaft removed from the final drive. These components had to be reinstalled after the new bogies were in place. A mainline test run was conducted on 30th September. The new hydraulic jacking system worked extremely well, providing safe, smooth, synchronised control of the left and right lifting jacks.



© Graeme Holloway

The opportunity was also taken to repaint the exterior of CPH 1 after first remediating deteriorated wooden cladding.

As reported in the June Paterson Points, the engine and transmission in CPH 3 were damaged while in traffic. Detroit engine specialist, Adrian Tanner, repaired the engine relatively quickly, but it took until the final week in September to finally sort out issues with the replacement Twin Disk transmission. A custom-made wooden cabinet has been fitted to house a full-size refrigerator. Currently, the electrical power supply system is being installed. The system will be identical to that in CPH 7.

I wish to acknowledge and thank the many people who worked tirelessly to install the bogies under CPH 1 and return CPH 3 to operational status just in time for their participation in the Transport Heritage Expo, 5–7 October.

### HPC 402

Due to mechanical concerns, 402 was withdrawn from service, pending removal and close inspection of the bogie on its No.1 end. The cause of unusual wear on the leading wheels must be determined, along with other issues.

We have been waiting to finish work on CPH 1 before becoming focused on this critical task and workshop floor space becoming available to work on 402. Work will soon resume assembling and installing two fixed above-floor

auxiliary fuel tanks.

### **NPF 621 and NTC 721**

The two-car set received its annual service in July. In parallel, passenger seats and the driver and observer's seats were either repaired or replaced. A fault with the 'deadman' system (leaking air) was diagnosed and rectified. We have refurbished torque arm dampers that are ready to install. Replacement intermediate plunger bars, along with new coil springs will need to be obtained. The plunger bars, refurbished spring packs and half-size couplers are needed to eliminate the annoying coupling noise currently heard between 621 and 721 due to worn components.

The new flashing LED ditch lights work well and are incredibly bright, and should surely alert inattentive motorists to our train approaching level crossings.

### **Loco 7344**

A persistent problem preventing full throttle (hence full engine power) was resolved. The cause was discovered to be a partially blocked filter in the air system, preventing full movement of the throttle linkage.

### **CTC 51**

A set of solid wheels has been machined (tyre and flange reprofiled), ready to replace the spoked wheels currently under CTC 51. However, we will not be able to turn our attention to CTC 51's bogies until CPH 3's bogies are overhauled. Work is underway to manufacture a new battery box, install a toilet vacuum pump, and replace life-expired air hoses.

### **NPF629 / NTC 729 Refurbishment**

Both engines in 629 have been started. The #2 radiator was discovered leaking coolant from a middle flange. Although a temporary repair was made, it must eventually be taken to Broadmeadow Maintenance Centre for a permanent repair. The large radiator cores must be lifted out through the roof, which is beyond our capability. Our electricians are working their way through the electrical systems. Corrosion was discovered in the chassis frame around the external doors and steps needing repair. All the windows have been checked for scratches—around ten will need changing—and the window mechanisms must all be serviced. Sound insulation has been installed under the floor on 729. All the seat roll-over mechanisms are being serviced to ensure they operate freely.

### **WFP 602 / CT 707 Restoration Project**

One engine in 602 was started and run for a short while. Before we can start its other engine, we must install refurbished diesel fuel injectors. The radiator header tanks have been removed for flushing and repair. In 707, approximately half of the windows have been restored and await reinstallation. The adhesive that once affixed carpet lining to the luggage racks is being painstakingly removed to reinstate its original configuration.

## **Infrastructure Report**

The meal room has now been delivered and is in place. Fitting out will be a work in progress over the next couple of months. This area will be used for morning tea and lunch for all our volunteers and will also be utilised for other events when necessary.

The roof area between the boilermakers' area and goods shed has been completed and this makes a more comfortable work area for these guys. Five sheets of alsynite (roof sheeting) were replaced in the main shed due to breakage. This has allowed more light in to the work areas.



All roof gutters were cleaned out while this work was being carried out.

The spare 620-class bogies have now been placed in storage up behind the MHO for use in the future.

The second toilet in the BR carriage is nearly completed. This will be a great asset to the Society for visitors and volunteers, thanks to everyone involved.

Electricians have installed a new 32-amp power point to operate our transmission test rig, allowing us to perform our own testing. All of this additional work around the shed is allowing us to do more of our own jobs, which, in turn, allows us to do them quicker and more cost-effectively than outsourcing.

After years of discussion regarding CPH 14, the decision has finally been made to display it at the depot's front entrance. This will enhance the appearance of the entrance to our depot. The foundations have been laid, and the relocation should take place in the next few weeks.

I want to thank all the volunteers for their efforts on the meal room project, painting of the storage containers and preparing foundations for CPH 14. These have been some major work undertakings that are now all coming together and progressing well.

**Rod Short – Infrastructure Manager**

## Port Stephens Volunteer Expo

On Wednesday, 26 June, Jon Derry and I represented The Rail Motor Society at the Port Stephens Volunteer Expo which was held at the Nelson Bay Bowling and Recreation Club. Organised by the Hunter Volunteer Centre, the event brought together a number of not-for-profit organisations to showcase volunteering opportunities within Port Stephens and surrounding areas.

We joined with exhibitors, including Marine Rescue, NSW RFS, the Koala Sanctuary, 100.9 PSFM (radio station), Red Cross, Linked Community Services, Legacy, and of course, the Hunter Volunteer Centre, plus several others, in having a table displaying our volunteering opportunities.

The public attendance was below our expectations, and prospective volunteers interested in our activities and location were few and far between. Most of the attendees were local retirees and while a small number showed an interest in participating in our activities, the travel distance was a deterrent. However, we raised awareness of our operations among the local community and the other exhibitors. Many visitors were interested in attending one of our Open Days and riding on the rail motors, and we handed out many information brochures.



We both enjoyed the opportunity to represent and promote the Society and interact with the public and other organisations. The Hunter Volunteer Centre is planning another Volunteer Expo in Raymond Terrace later in the year, and we believe that it would be beneficial for the Society to exhibit there, as the location and demographics of Raymond Terrace would be better aligned with The Rail Motor Society.

**Brett Williams**

## Open Days

### Sunday, 15 September 2024

On our September open day, 46 people visited our depot. Forty people travelled on the CPH shuttle trip to Dungog, which terminated at the main platform, as the XPT from Grafton was not running. Our passengers were members of

two organisations. One group of 33 was from the Closebourne Retirement Village, organised by our member Kevin Stobbart. The other group of seven were from the National Seniors Association and coordinated by one of our longtime travellers Denise Hooker.

Only CPH 1 and CPH 7 were available to run on this occasion. Our Facebook site mentioned the possibility of the train being fully booked.

### Sunday, 18 August 2024

On our August open day, 29 people visited the depot. Twenty-two travelled on the Dungog shuttle after being taken on a depot tour.

### Sunday, 21 July 2024

On our July open day, 43 members of the Newcastle District Vintage and Classic Car Club visited the depot and travelled aboard our CPH rail motors to Dungog. After signing in, and purchasing their train tickets, they proceeded to the grass area in front of the TAM and BR for their morning tea, which they had brought with them. Seats and tables had been set up for the group to use. After they returned from Dungog, they drove to the Paterson Tavern, where they had booked a lunch reservation for 1 pm.



Thank you to all those members who helped at the depot and on the train on each occasion.

**Bruce Gehrig**

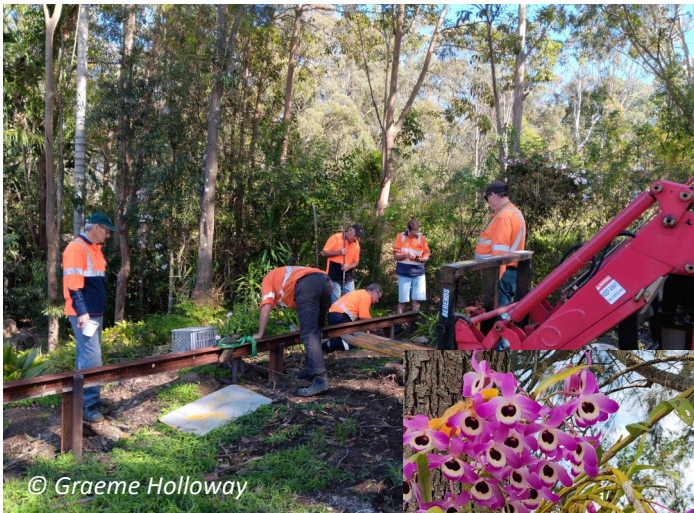
## Recycling Report

After commencing to recycle empty bottles and cans in July 2018, the Society passed 30,000 items processed in August and at the end of September had reached 30,800.

The Society appreciates those members who bring their empty containers to the depot for recycling as the proceeds from recycling are used to offset the cost of providing soft drinks, water and biscuits to members working at the depot or on our trains.

**Bruce Gehrig**

Scenes Around the Depot



### My visit to Paterson Rail Motor Museum

My favourite part was going backward and ringing the bell on the train - C

L - I liked driving on the train together

E - I liked sitting inside the old train.

M - I liked going there with my family

A - I liked seeing where they sleep

L - I liked going backwards and then forwards.

### My visit to Paterson Rail Motor Museum

J - I liked going on the train

F - I liked the statue in the museum

B - I liked looking at the old train with the sleeping cabin

R - I liked hearing about the way they communicated

B - I liked the sleeping cabins

E - I liked riding in the train and seeing the excitement on the children.

S - I enjoyed the history of the trains