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# RAILWAY

## HISTORY™



FOR ALL WHO ARE INTERESTED IN RAILWAYS

IN THIS ISSUE:

### **‘GREEN OVER RED’ MAGAZINE**

Its impact on Australian railway enthusiasts

### **KATANNING-DONNYBROOK**

Part 1: A WAGR Cross-Country Line

### **NSWGR PASSENGER FATALITIES**

Assessing accident trends

*Journal of the Australian Railway Historical Society*





PHOTO SERIES P.C.641

LA LA, WARBURTON, VIC.

An early postcard of Warburton with the three-road locomotive roundhouse prominent in the left foreground. The questioning of the wisdom in closing the Warburton branch line in a *Green over Red* editorial generated considerable controversy at the time.  
COURTESY JOHN THOMPSON



Overall scene following the Rocky Ponds derailment in July 1948 with the breakdown train in the background. NSWGR PHOTO, J SIMPSON COLLECTION, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 015942. John Oakes' account of passenger fatalities on NSW Railways commences on page 21.



# EDITORIAL

## From East to West

This issue offers a broad spectrum of articles, commencing with Paul Nicholson's account of the magazine *Green Over Red*, which set out to publish material for the new wave of railway enthusiasts interested in the current developments emerging in Australian railways in the post-steam era.

*Green Over Red* was launched in 1966 as an offset-printed magazine with a small circulation in Victoria, but quickly built up a range of contributors from across Australia. Its editorials occasionally generated hostile responses from older enthusiasts, but the editors stood their ground. During 1969, production and printing was taken over by Traction Publications in Canberra, with new features such as advice on railway photography 'Focus on Railways' by the Schroeder brothers.

Alas, with Jack Richardson's decision as the driver of Traction Publications to retire, *Green Over Red's* last issue was in March/April 1972. Paul concludes with reflections on what might have been.

Our feature article is Part 1 of Rod Milne's account of the construction and operation of the cross-country line from Donnybrook to Katanning in Western Australia. This segment covers the planning and

construction of the 'Pioneer Type' line, including descriptions of the stations and their infrastructure. The fine map of the line and layouts of the individual stations are the final contributions by Bob Stack for *Australian Railway History*, so I extend my sincere thanks to Bob for enhancing our presentations over many years. You will have noticed from recent issues that Graeme Henderson is now providing this input.

John Oakes' article 'Passenger Fatalities in NSW Accidents' was submitted some years ago, but given that it covers the significant incidents that have occurred to date on the NSW Railways, it is presented here in its original form.

Our Explorer Page item is an exploration by Philip Dunn of the VRs Chief Mechanical Engineer, Thomas Woodrolfe's report on the power options for VR narrow gauge locomotives, which led to the purchase of the two G Class Beyer Garratts in 1926. A painting by Tony Bull, 'Sydney Yard at Midnight', rounds off the issue.

*Robert F. Milne*

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**Cover Image:** Former Midland Railway of WA English Electric A1A-A1A diesel-electric locomotive F40 heads a goods train at Lowden on the Katanning–Donnybrook cross-country line in 1984. **JEFF AUSTIN PHOTO**

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**Letters:** We publish a selection of letters depending on space allowances. Letters should be kept to around 250 words and preferably be sent via email.

# REFLECTIONS ON

## GREEN OVER RED

Looking back at an innovation in the railway enthusiast magazine scene in the 1960s and 1970s.

Paul Nicholson

**Editor:** There have been numerous magazines catering for Australian railway enthusiasts and other segments of our public transport over the years, some long-lived, others less so. Here Paul Nicholson, one of the founders of the magazine *Green over Red*, published between 1966 and March 1972, looks back at the social and economic changes within our society at that time and reflects on the rationale for the new magazine within this context.

### REMEMBERING THE SIXTIES

**T**he sociology and culture of the railway enthusiast hobby is an area not often discussed or documented, but one that does offer much interest for the railway enthusiast and people interested in transport generally.

In that context, it's timely to look back 50 years to the mid-1960s when the main focus of Australian railway enthusiasts was clearly directed towards steam locomotives. That is understandable considering steam had already been withdrawn from parts of Australia and was fast disappearing elsewhere, but there were areas such as the 'Short North' in New South Wales (especially between Gosford and Newcastle) where a strong steam presence remained and these were a big attraction to enthusiasts from far and wide.

As steam was on its way out, the preservation movement was gathering momentum and much interest and effort was directed towards establishing railway museums in different locations. Railway enthusiast excursions were also operated regularly, especially in Victoria where steam-hauled tour trains operated almost every other weekend, often carrying several hundred passengers. Even in areas where steam had disappeared, facilities often remained in place allowing



The *Green over Red* magazine sold for 30 cents in March/April 1970. This issue featured a short article on railways in the Soviet Union.

the tours to operate with relatively few logistical issues or problems.

Australia's railway systems were still very much in the traditional form of state government operations with only a few private operators such as the South Maitland or Emu Bay railway companies providing exceptions. So, steam was very much the focus for most railway enthusiasts 50 years ago. It is fair to say that within 'the hobby', those with wider interests, especially modern motive power such as diesel locomotives, were very much in the minority and sometimes looked down upon by their peers.

Photography had become very popular generally and particularly among Australian railway enthusiasts, but by today's standards, it was still expensive in real terms. Communication among enthusiasts and within 'the hobby' was generally through printed publications and regular meetings of the various societies catering to the railway hobby. Enthusiasts often corresponded and compared notes through what is today called 'snail mail', but this was then the general form of communication. Telephone calls outside one's local area (i.e., 'trunk calls') were also expensive in real terms. The widespread availability of STD telephone calls had not yet materialised and mobile phones were unheard of.

Something of a generation gap was emerging as the 'baby boomers' (born from 1946 to 1964) became the keen young men of 'the hobby'. I say 'keen young men' because it's fair to say the railway enthusiast environment was and probably still is essentially a male bastion. The generation gap manifested itself in Victoria with the formation in 1961 of the Association of Railway Enthusiasts. Whilst still maintaining a mostly steam train focus, the ARE set out to target the younger enthusiasts.



Society, too, generally reflected traditional conservative attitudes and values. The Menzies government had been in office since 1949 and university and other forms of tertiary education was only available for a few. Young people in the government system tended to complete their secondary education and then either move into a trade as an apprentice or commence a 'white collar' career straight from school. Government instrumentalities, including the railways, offered apprenticeships in various trades ('blue collar' workers) and there was a wide variety of office jobs available for the 'white collar' brigade. A person would generally start at the bottom and work his or her way up the ladder almost always under the supervision of experienced people who had also learned on the job. This organisational character had remained virtually unchanged for many years. Ongoing or permanent employment was part of the parcel, especially for 'white collar' workers.

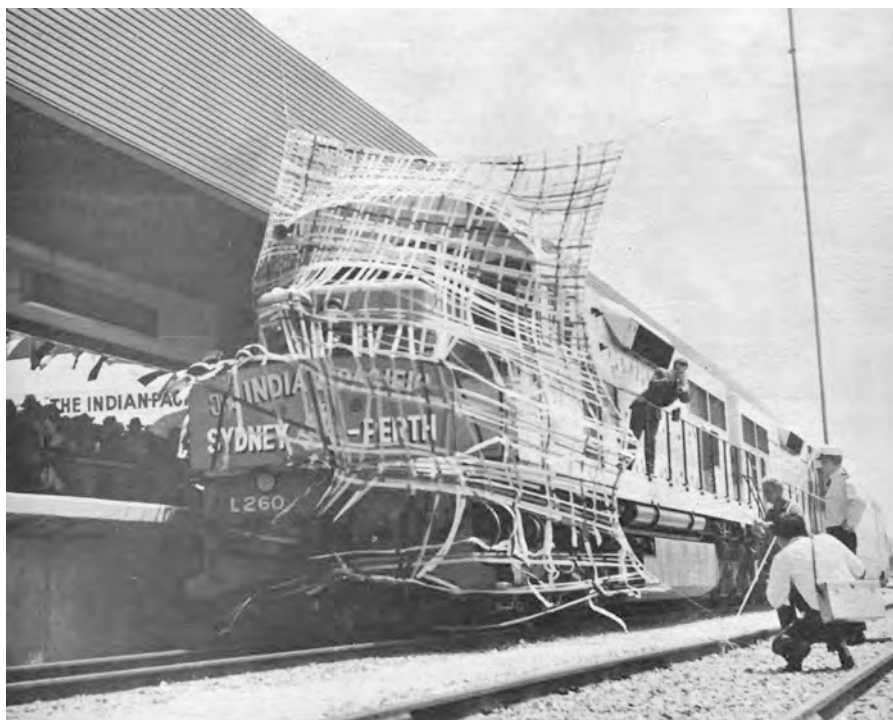
Nevertheless, as a tertiary qualification became increasingly necessary for career advancement, government organisations, especially, were often generous in allowing staff time off with pay to attend lectures and tutorials when they were inside working hours. The Vietnam War created much public controversy and younger people became increasingly restless. Conscription for men aged 20 was another controversial feature of Australian society 50 years ago.

Like the community generally, our hobby environment was dominated by experienced 'wise men' operating in a fairly traditional and structured environment. It is fair to say winds of change were embraced slowly.

In Victoria particularly, there was some restlessness among the younger enthusiasts who were not necessarily 100 per cent focused on steam power. These people increasingly felt their interests were not being adequately catered for by the traditional organisations and societies. Bear in mind, the internet and 'instant' communication were still 30 years or more down the track so enthusiasts tended to look to societies and organisations to develop and share their interests.

## A NEW MAGAZINE

So, in 1966 the idea emerged among a small group of people in Melbourne—



This Adrian Gunzburg photograph of the arrival of the first *Indian Pacific* trans-continental train headed by L260 and L261 at East Perth Terminal on 26 February 1970 featured on the cover of the May–June 1970 issue of *Green over Red*.

mostly secondary school students—that they should do something very different by creating a railway magazine aiming to fill what they saw as a big gap in the hobby.

Not only would the magazine be independent and focus on diesel locomotives and other seemingly neglected areas, but it would also include commentary and discussion. Traditionally, publications aimed at railway enthusiasts simply reported facts and published pictures. This would have reflected the community generally where, as mentioned before, university education with people being taught to think and express themselves was not commonplace.

So emerged our little magazine, *Green Over Red*. It is a long story how the name came about, but it was chosen to demonstrate that signalling and safeworking was a specialised area of the interest within in the hobby not often covered, but more importantly in VR terminology the name meant 'Clear normal speed' and proceed—in our case, at full speed into the future and beyond.

The initial editorial team comprised Robert Cowan and Paul Nicholson, whose paths crossed working at the Model Dockyard in Melbourne, and David Langley, a fellow student with Paul at Box Hill High School, who, even as a teenager, had developed extensive knowledge of the specialised

signalling and safeworking area and later moved on to become a highly respected authority on the subject. Unashamedly, the magazine was somewhat quirky especially in its early days.

I had a broad interest in transport generally that included buses, another specialist area of the enthusiast movement not widely catered for, so, for a time, often much to the amusement of many and consternation to some, was the inclusion of an occasional 'back page' article on buses! Michael Taplin, from the United Kingdom, who subsequently became the overseas news editor of the British magazine, *Tramways and Urban Transit*, for more than 40 years, assisted with background information for the bus items.

*Green Over Red* was printed 'in house', thanks to the business of Robert Cowan's late father. The offset production was somewhat 'out there' in an era of stencils and duplicating machines, but one concession we had to make in early years was that pictures were simply black and white with no shades in between.

Among the subjects and topics covered in early issues included power signalling in New South Wales, the WAGR L Class diesel-electric locomotives (then rather new), a day in the life of a VR suburban guard and passenger rolling stock in Tasmania.

An early contributor to the magazine was Frank Stamford, who was well-





VR T Class diesel-electric locomotive T357 heads a Sunday passenger train at Killara on the Warburton Line in December 1964. BOB WILSON PHOTO

known then as now as a researcher of light railways. A mild-mannered man by anyone's measure, Frank was university educated and could editorialise both eloquently and in a forthright manner.

As mentioned earlier, the magazine was not afraid to both stimulate discussion and to editorialise. The closure of the Warburton line near Melbourne in 1965 had caused much debate both in enthusiast circles and the general community. *Green Over Red* published an article on the line, which created a storm with an editorial entitled 'Was Closure Really Necessary?' Never before had an enthusiast journal editorialised on such sensitive topics.

Senior officials of the organised enthusiast movement in Victoria reacted strongly and calls were made to the editors asking them to desist. The concern within the organised enthusiast movement was that the VR Commissioners would read the article and would be so offended that in a retaliatory and retributive reaction would punish the organised enthusiast movement that, at the time, was working hard to retain facilities for the continued operation of steam enthusiast tours. It just was not 'form' to criticise the VR and its Commissioners. They were viewed as typical 'wise men' of the era who had to be treated with deference and respect. Those involved with *Green Over Red* took it as something of a compliment that it was thought the VR Commissioners would read the magazine.

In 1970, there was condemnation

from the fledgling bus and coach enthusiast movement saying the 'published statements' (another *Green Over Red* editorial) were at variance with and detrimental to the aims and objectives of 'the hobby'!

While the magazine was well received throughout Australia and especially in New South Wales, in Victoria it was generally shunned by the well-known older enthusiasts of the day "because it was different". The editors received a number of public 'dressing downs' from the leading lights of the enthusiast movement. The concepts of nurturing and encouragement were also unknown 50 years ago.



A WAGR L Class 2240kW locomotive heads an interstate freight train 'under the wires' on the old Main South Line near Merrylands on its delivery run to Western Australia in 1967. ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 035430

## WIDENING SCOPE AND PRESENTATION

As the 1960s wore on, the community attitudes were changing at a more rapid pace. This was a time of widespread divergence within the community over the Vietnam War. On a more positive note, however, opportunities for international travel were emerging, particularly with reduced air fares for young people and later the general introduction of 'cheap flights' to Europe and other overseas destinations.

The reductions were major in real terms because hitherto overseas travel had generally been the province of the more affluent sections of the community. Railway enthusiasts of the time, especially the younger ones, were not usually at that end of the social spectrum. So the combination of much reduced overseas air fares and many 'unknown' railway destinations proved to be a big attraction to Australian enthusiasts, especially where steam was still operational.

*Green Over Red* identified this trend and expanded its coverage to include articles on overseas destinations likely to be visited by Australian enthusiasts. One of the early and knowledgeable contributors to the overseas coverage was the current editor of this magazine, Robert McKillop.

Part way through the six-year life of the magazine (1966–1972), the circumstances of its founders started to change. The secondary school stu-



dents of 1966 were establishing their careers and expanding their interests into other off-topic areas that led to marriage and family commitments. A pioneer publisher of Australian transport books and journals was the late Jack Richardson who traded as Traction Publications. Through Traction Publications, Jack agreed to take over the printing, publication and distribution of the magazine. The editorial team and style of the magazine remained largely unchanged but professional printing was a big improvement.

During this time as a final year high school student in 1967, I chose riding Brill railcars on the South Australian Railways rather than a visit to Fassifern in New South Wales in order to photograph trains there.

Photography has always been a major component of the railway enthusiast



SAR narrow gauge Brill Model 75 railcar No. 106 at Port Pirie on 10 October 1951.  
MURRAY COLLECTION, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 011104

lifestyle. In the days of *Green Over Red*, 35mm colour slides were preferred by most enthusiasts, who gradually moved up to better quality photo-

graphic equipment. But black and white was also very popular, especially when publication was being considered. Some enthusiasts, particularly those based in New South Wales, had a flair for artistic photography and travelled throughout Australia and around the world taking railway photographs (whereas, it was once claimed, most enthusiasts are happy to simply take snapshots). Among the New South Wales enthusiasts with a flair for artistic photography were the Schroeder brothers, Colin and Robert, who shared some of their expertise and work in a series of *Green Over Red* articles 'penned by Australia's foremost rail photographers'. Both pictures and articles were very well received.

## LOOKING BACK

The end of the magazine in March 1972 came at a good time for everyone involved. The editorial team's personal circumstances were continuing to change and Jack Richardson had come to the decision it was time to retire from publishing and bookselling.

The Traction Publications bookselling business was sold to the ARHS New South Wales Division and became part of what is today's very successful sales operation. The publishing side went to Transit Australia Press.

*Green Over Red* may have been a little ahead of its time 50 years ago and the keen young men of the editorial team maybe somewhat brash for the conservative times, but the enthusiasm of everyone involved cannot be denied or doubted. If the magazine had survived perhaps it may have evolved into something like *Railway Digest* is today?

September/October, 1970
GREEN-OVER-RED
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# FOCUS ON RAILWAYS

by Robert and Colin Schroeder

Last issue we mentioned the term "Photographic Technique". In this issue we will discuss exposure, a part of photographic technique.

Exposure seems to be a major problem with railway enthusiasts and their photography. From personal observation, the number of incorrect exposures has astounded us; colour slide exposure problems being the most predominant or, more correctly, the more noticeable.

Due to the latitude in black and white negative film, it is usually possible to salvage something from a badly exposed negative during the printing stage, even though one might have to work hard for the result. On the other hand, colour slide film, by its nature, has little latitude, plus or minus half a stop being the greatest tolerance advisable. Any greater error is immediately noticeable.

Of course, no matter what type of film you use it is preferable, and we are sure it is your own preference, to expose the film correctly.

What is Exposure?

This may seem obvious. It's the admittance of light onto light-sensitive film creating an image; a basic principle, but trouble arises in allowing the right amount of light for the immediate conditions onto the type of film you are using.

Exposure can best be viewed as a ratio between film speed (ASA, DIN) / developing technique and aperture/shutter speed combinations. For example, Ektachrome-X exposed at 64 ASA and developed in E3 chemicals using standard developing times gives an exposure of 1/250 at f/8 in bright sunlight.



Problems with exposure balance do not arise when photographing lighter coloured locomotives as illustrated by this photograph of 4006 and 4002 on 35 South nearing Pictou on Sunday, 6th June 1970.

(Photo: Bob Schroeder)

The first page of Robert and Colin Schroeder's 'Focus on Railways' in the September/October issue of *Green over Red*.





Barrie Brown's photo of 'the world's first double-deck multiple-unit interurban train passing through Redfern Station on its Up journey on 25 June 1970 was featured in the July/August *Green over Red* magazine. Paul Rogers' account of their design and manufacture appeared in the May/June 1971 issue. ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 107184

The end of steam on Australian and overseas railways marked a significant change in enthusiast attitudes. Some people simply could not handle railways without steam and moved on to other interests and lifestyles, but

thankfully, the general divide between the 'good' people into steam and the 'bad' ones with wider interests, including diesels, is long gone.

An informal reunion of several people involved in the early days of

*Green Over Red* was held at the Lilydale Victorian Railway Institute (that continues to open every Friday afternoon) recently. At the dinner that followed, one of the group (recently retired after a long career in the transport industry) commented that 50 years ago when the first issue of *Green Over Red* appeared no enthusiast of 1966, young or old, conservative or liberal, educated or otherwise, could have imagined how the Australian railway scene would be in 2016. I reckon he was spot on!

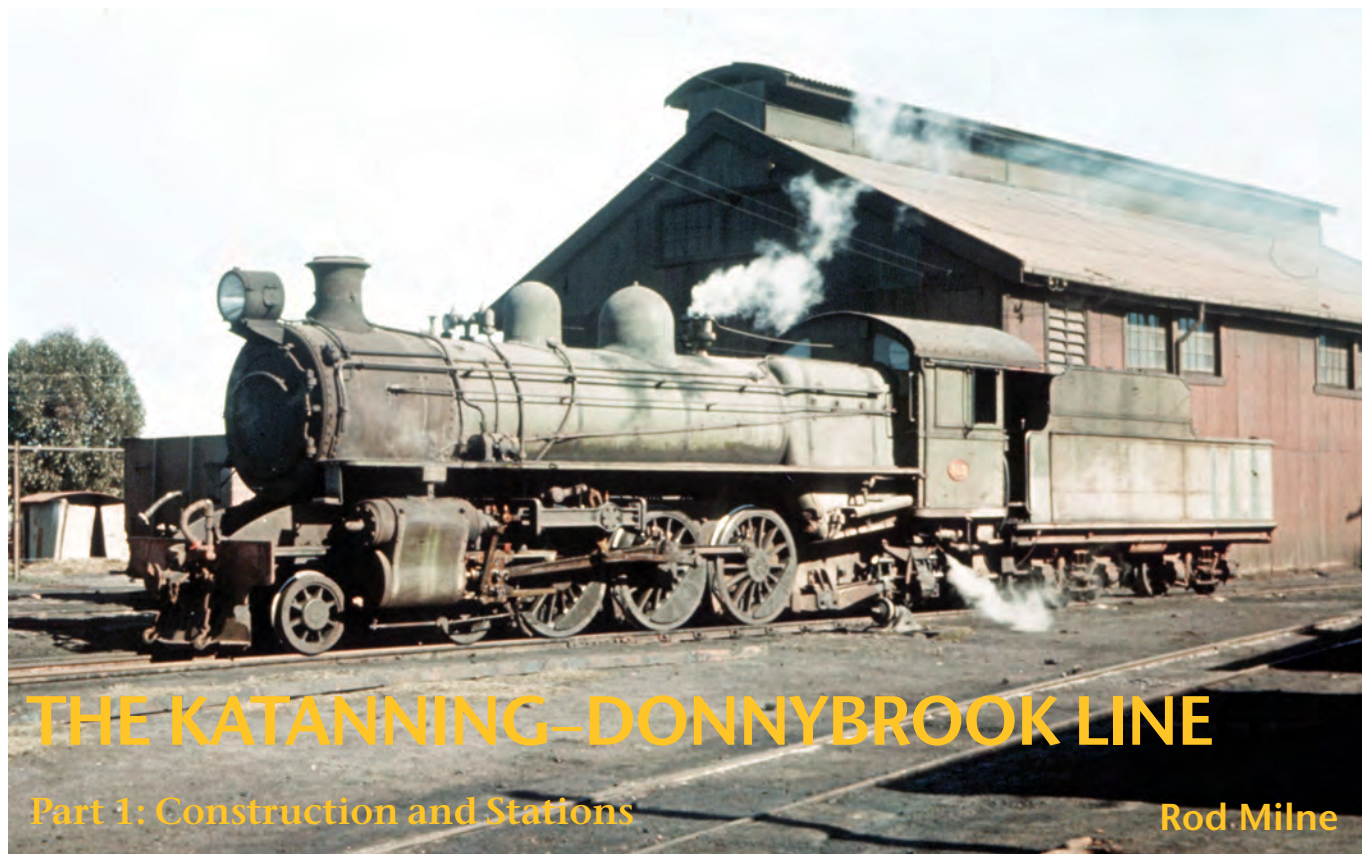


Robert Cowan and Paul Nicholson peruse a bound volume of early *Green Over Red* magazines at the reunion for *Green Over Red* participants at the Lilydale Victorian Railways Institute on 8 July 2016. PHOTO COURTESY AUTHOR

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WAGR P Class Pacific locomotive No. 513 at Katanning locomotive depot on 5 April 1961.  
E G SKILLER PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 091059

## INTRODUCTION

Australia once boasted many country branch lines that were wonderfully scenic, perhaps the best in my opinion being the long moribund Donnybrook to Katanning line in south western WA. It is somewhat of a tragedy that goods trains no longer traverse its circuitous alignment to meet the needs of the productive grazing and farming districts it served.

In the early 1900s the gold rush boom had begun to wane and the government looked to the development of the agricultural areas to open up country for settlement and the cultivation of crops. An important part of the proposed program was the construction of extensive branch line railways to serve these communities.

The existing railway system was principally main lines which linked the larger towns with Perth and coastal ports. These had been designed and surveyed by the government but constructed mostly by private contractors. This arrangement had worked well but was prohibitively costly for the extensive agricultural lines. The government therefore sought new methods to build the new lines, by aiming to keep the cost of rail construction down to about £1000 per mile.

In 1904 the PWD Engineer for Rail Construction, James Thompson, visited the eastern states to inspect light railways in other states. Following his return, he submitted recommendations for 'developmental railways' which specified:

- the width of the formation be reduced;
- 45lb. rails be laid on half round timber sleepers with earth packing instead of ballast;
- no station buildings at sidings;
- ruling grades of 1 in 40; and
- 'G' class to be the heaviest locomotives used and a speed limited to 15mph.

These guidelines were accepted and three proposed railways were selected to be built by this method—Goomalling–Dowerin, Katanning–Kojonup and Wagin–Dumbleyung. The Public Works Department was permitted to tender for the construction work and was successful in being awarded the contracts to build all three 'developmental' lines.

The tenders were opened on 29 May 1906 and the PWD tender of £37,037 for the Katanning–Kojonup railway was accepted by State Cabinet on 5 June 1906. The 'day labour' system was used under which workmen were signed up each day and paid a daily rate. The route had previously been surveyed and pegged by the PWD and the task of clearing the route of vegetation and forming the earthworks got underway.

The 45lbs per yard steel rails were made by Ougrée–Marihaye, Liège, Belgium and the first shipment arrived at Fremantle on the 'SS Lothringen' on 5 June 1906.<sup>1</sup>

During the construction, the whole purpose for building the line came into question, with the critics urging a Royal Commission. These claims were rejected and the railway was completed. The final cost of the railway was £39,767 16s 5d or £1207 per mile excluding rails and fastenings.

The new railway was immediately deemed to be unsafe and for seven months it could only be operated by small A Class locomotives. Following additional ballasting, other light line locomotives were approved for operation. The whole construction method was reviewed and not repeated. Future lines were built to a higher standard, with standard sleepers, ballasting and station buildings.

As completed, the Western Australian Government Railways (WAGR) cross-country line between Donnybrook and Katanning well represented branch line construction standards of the era. Numerous curves were used as the line tackled a succession of low watersheds and reached



above sea level, east of Kojonup, where the track began a steady descent to the lower country beyond. Although Punchmirup was the highest station, the actual summit of the line was nearby, at 1307ft above sea level. The ruling grade for the whole line was 1 in 40, deployed on each of the four sections constructed, along with light 45lb rails. Those light rails and heavy grades later became problematic for train working, ultimately leading to the branch's demise.

## CONSTRUCTION

Construction of the line was achieved over a five-year period between 1907 and 1912, with work commencing at both ends. The Public Works Department Railway Construction Branch undertook most of the work, apart from the middle length between Boyup Brook and Kojonup, constructed by the private contractors Vincent Brothers. This company also constructed railways in the Great Southern area, operating a timber mill at Benjinup to supply sleepers and bridging timbers.

The first portion of the line opened as a short branch between Katanning and Kojonup on 6 April 1907. It was built to very basic standards with no ballast, this fact doubtless resultini on the branch being initially limited to the very light A Class locomotives. Although a banquet was held, there were strong community protests regarding the absence of Ministers of the State Government at the event. The government endeavoured to evade criticism with allegations of confusions in making the arrangements. Two intermediate sidings were put in during construction. As constructed, the line to Kojonup was merely a short branch off the Great Southern Railway (GSR) at Katanning, but it was a promising start for the active local Kojonup Railway League.

At the other end, another short branch opened from Donnybrook to Noggerup on 26 March 1908 as the fledgling Preston Valley Branch. Like the Kojonup branch, this was constructed by the Public Works Department with work commencing on 15 April 1907. Between Donnybrook and Noggerup, four intermediate sidings were provided: at Queenwood, Lowden, Yabberup and Mumballup.

With the prospect of developing new timber stands and fertile grazing lands beyond Noggerup, the branch was extended on to Boyup. A contract was signed with the Public Works Department to do this work in March 1908 and the line was opened officially on Friday 19 February 1909 in a ceremony at the new terminus. A special train brought the Premier to undertake this duty, along with sundry notable officials, including Sir John Forrest and Mr Lee Steere from the local Road Board. Why Forrest attended the event is not known, though as newspaper reports of the time noted, three branches opened at much the same time.

Formal opening as a WAGR branch occurred a few weeks later, on 10 March 1909, when the track was transferred from the Public Works Department to the WAGR; Noggerup's rail terminus days were brief indeed. The service on the lengthened Preston Valley branch to Boyup was a weekly Wednesday train only (returning from Boyup Thursday), though one additional train per week augmented the Boyup Mixed as far as Noggerup on Mondays. Two intermediate sidings were established, known merely as No. 1 Siding and No. 2 Siding when the line opened. The formal names Wilga and Benjinupp were adopted on 1 April 1909, while in August that year, the terminus name Boyup

was amended to Boyup Brook.

Between Boyup Brook and Kojonup the 'missing link' was constructed by Vincent Brothers, with a contract signed on 27 October 1910. Arguably a larger work than the other sections, it featured several significant bridges, including those over the mighty Blackwood River at Asplin and the Muradup River at Muradup. Vincents' built a sawmill north of Benjinup to supply timber (sleepers and bridge girders) to the new line. The contract price of £60,500 was increased to £66,500 with approval of Government to deal with extra costs.

In due course, the official opening occurred on Thursday 16 May 1912, when Premier Scaddan officiated amongst gathered settlers at Kojonup. On that occasion, it was noted that the new section featured no fewer than 27 bridges. The section was completed slightly later than the contract deadline stipulated (27 April). A special train ran from Bunbury picking up along the way. There were the usual speeches, plus a formal banquet to mark the opening. Deputations met the premier *en route*, a stop being made at Culicupp (now Kulikup) to hear representations from the local community.

Services commenced five days after the official event, on 26 May 1912, from which date the entire cross-country railway was complete enabling a direct connection between Katanning, Albany and Bunbury. Other WAGR cross-country branches ran between Collie and Wagin/Narrogin but these offered less direct routes. For Vincent Brothers, the completion of the line through to Katanning was beneficial, enabling a more direct route for materials sent to their other construction project at Gnowangerup.

As completed, the new line was a lengthy route of 131 miles, linking the port of Bunbury with Katanning in the deep south of the state. By the time it opened, the basic construction standard of 45lb rails and 1 in 40 grades was becoming out-of-date, looming as an Achilles' heel as time progressed and roads improved. Had its track standard been higher, it may have endured the 1970s and 1980s better. Almost immediately, the ephemeral title the Preston Valley Branch disappeared when it merged with the other sections as the Donnybrook-Katanning Branch. The final cost of the Kojonup-Boyup Brook section was £103,714 6s 2d or £2059 per mile, and the Boyup Brook-Donnybrook section was £74,951 9s 10d or £1565 per mile, excluding rails and fastenings.

While it was a boon to the timber milling and farming communities along the way, it can be argued that the line was destined never to be a particularly busy one, being little more than a meandering byway in the south of the state. South of here, other cross-country WAGR lines were surveyed but never built by the State Government. Directly impacting on the Donnybrook-Katanning line would have been the Boyup Brook to Cranbrook railway, surveyed south-east from Boyup Brook past the timber mills of Chowerup to the GSR at Cranbrook.

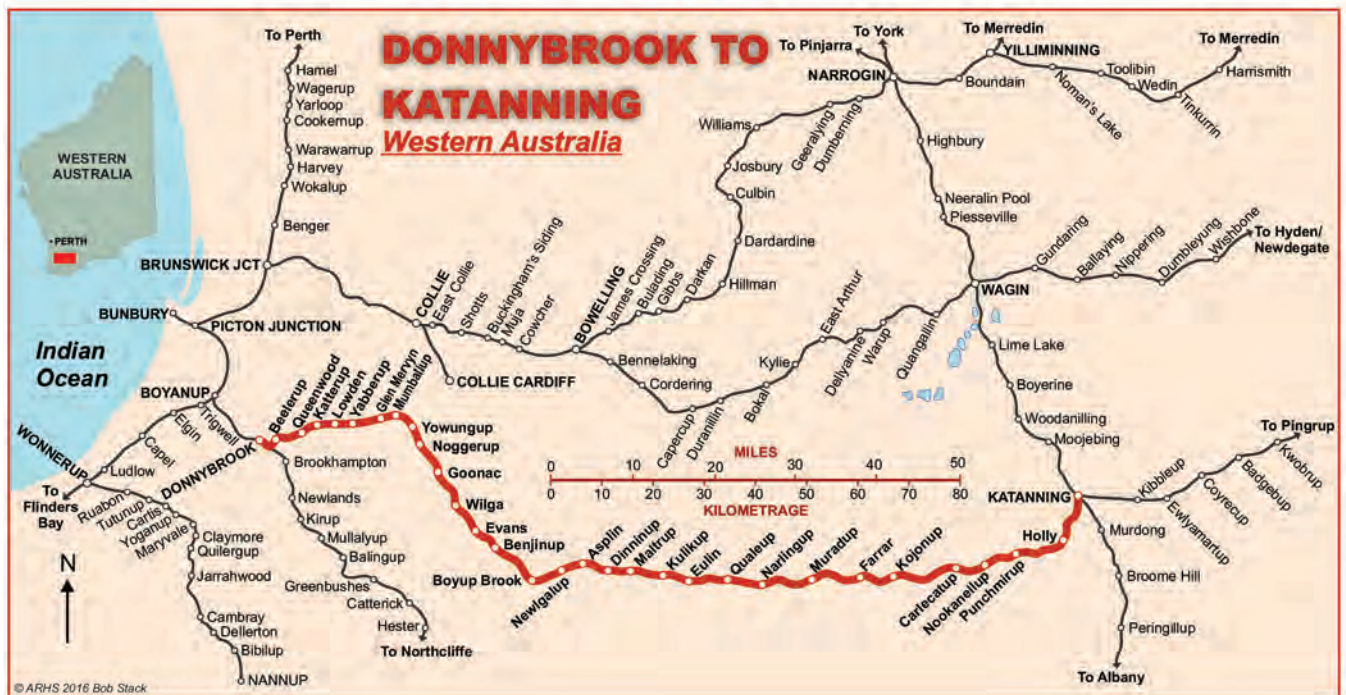
As if this was not enough, another line was surveyed to run from Manjimup to Mount Barker, also on the GSR, while the southernmost of these forgotten cross-country lines destined never to be built was that between Northcliffe and Nornalup, providing a final cross country connection between Bunbury and the GSR. In the case of the Manjimup to Mount Barker line, a portion was subsequently constructed by the Public Works Department in 1950 as a timber line connecting Manjimup with the new State Sawmills at Tone River and Nyamup. Indeed, the timber mill



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terminus at Tone River was almost half-way across to the principal intermediate town site of Rocky Gully.

## DESCRIPTION

Despite the line's title the Donnybrook–Katanning line (also colloquially called the Boyup Brook or Kojonup line), my description of the line is in the opposite direction, from the Katanning end.

Once one of the WAGR's busiest railway yards, **Katanning** station (131m 33ch from Donnybrook) took pride of place in the centre of the town, which boasts some 5000 residents. It has a delightful brick station building

with canopy roof line taking centrepiece on an island platform, enabling easy connections to the branch trains that diverged to Pingrup, Ongerup and Kojonup. A large galvanised-iron goods shed served the needs of the freight forwarders, while a gaggle of sidings at the southern end lead to the town's fuel depots which received considerable traffic by rail.

Sandwiched between the Pingrup line and the GSR was Katanning loco depot, where many locos found refuge till the 1980s. A reasonably sized depot in steam days, it later functioned to service branch line diesels operating in any one of three directions. Katanning locomotive depot was once well-known for its allotment of X Class diesel-electric locomotives.



View of Katanning Station and yard, October 1968. The goods shed is on the left with the locomotive depot to its rear.

A GRUNBACH PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 203368



At the southern end, beyond the island platform, distinctive three-arm signals directed trains to and from the three main stems leading south. The middle road was the main GSR; the one to the east—the branch to Pingrup—and the one to the west—the Kojonup line. While the GSR and Pingrup lines curved to the left as they fell south, the Kojonup line ran straight, before crossing the main Great Southern Highway on the level as it headed towards the low hills fringing the town.

There was a tough climb here, for the track rose most of the way from Katanning to **Holly** (121m 32ch from Donnybrook), situated on the watershed south of the Carrolup River. On maps, the line is shown winding in a lovely serpentine way through the undulating country, passing close by Fairfield Road and then a patch of bushland before crossing it to rise onto the watershed at Holly. Holly was opened as 253m13c stopping place on 17 May 1915 with truck loads being accepted by the end of the month and the name being applied in June. Logically, Holly Siding Road ran past Holly, which became a staff and ticket station on 29 November 1923. In steam days, it was a busy line and heavily loaded trains were challenged climbing out of Katanning. Holly's crossing loop was completed in 1924 but it was

closed as a staff station on 7 April 1927 and the loop removed in 1934, while a siding served a wool ramp (provided in 1936 and closed in 1977) and stockyards (erected in 1920 and closed in 1967). The usual shed was provided for parcels and traffic off the train.

Switch-backing onwards in big sweeping curves over pretty open grazing lands in the spring months after the winter rains, the line wandered past grazing sheep and crops of oats and wheat. A mere four miles away was **Punchmirup** (117m 4ch from Donnybrook). Initially, this was the first siding out from Katanning and it served Carrolup district to the north. A classic galvanised-iron shed adjacent to the siding overlooked a simple yard, with wool ramp (till 1977) and stockyards (between 1923 and 1977). The aboriginal word '*poniti*' (meaning knee) is the root for this name. A ganger was based at Punchmirup in 1927. This was the line's highest station at 1159ft, though the actual summit was at the altitude of 1307ft.

At the next siding, **Nookanellup** (112m 51ch from Donnybrook), water was available in steam days, the small siding (opened in June 1909) boasting the usual shed, ramp, and stock yards (provided 1917, closed in 1977) to service the needs of local farmers. Traffic outwards comprised wool and

sheep, while inwards, supplies and perishables arrived by train, along with tarped truckloads of superphosphate from the CSBP works at Picton during the winter months. The most noteworthy feature here was the old 10,000 gallon locomotive water tank erected in 1918, a remnant of the steam era, with its galvanised iron 'squatters' tanks placed on a high timber stand.

Passing alongside a meandering gully called Carlecatup Creek, the rails headed west to cross the historic Broomehill-Kojonup Road, one of the first in the area. Running around the southern side of a low open ridge line, the track then reached the fourth siding, **Carlecatup** (109m 20ch from Donnybrook). This was the second intermediate siding opened with the line but the spelling was Carlecutup until July 1908. Carlecatup was sited in a thicket of gum tree woodland close by a bridge over a watercourse. In most ways, it was virtually identical to other sidings on the line, with stockyards (after 1920 and closed in 1967), shed, ramp (constructed in 1927) and siding. Like most other places on the line, it was largely devoid of habitation too, apart from a farmer's house up on the hill to the west. Carlecatup is an aboriginal name derived from the root word '*karla*' (for fire). For many years, the local per way gang was based at a camp about 40 chains on the Katanning side of the siding.

Around a hill, trains passed before reaching a more level stretch of ground along Wagerlup Creek leading to the main Kojonup Road. At this point, the line made the first of several level crossings with this important cross-country road, as it swung to the south around a wide curve before climbing to rejoin the road. Then both ran side by side before there was a second level crossing. Now on the northern side, the railway lay briefly there before a third successive crossing nearby brought the track on the final approach to **Kojonup** (98m 42ch from Donnybrook).

Arguably one of the state's prettier rural towns, Kojonup has around 1000 residents and remains a viable centre in its own right. Straddling the busy Albany Highway north of the railway crossing, the shopping centre remains a reasonably prosperous one, an easy walk from the old railway station. Protected by flashing lights in 1968, the highway crossing marked the

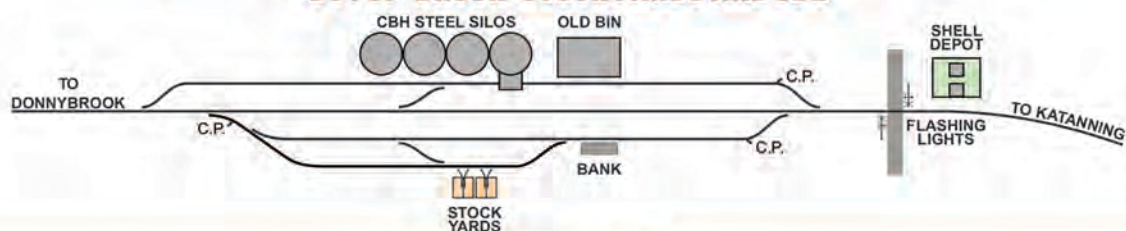


A W Class 4-8-2 locomotive is watered from the water tower at Nookanellup in August 1969. RAIL HERITAGE WA, P12840

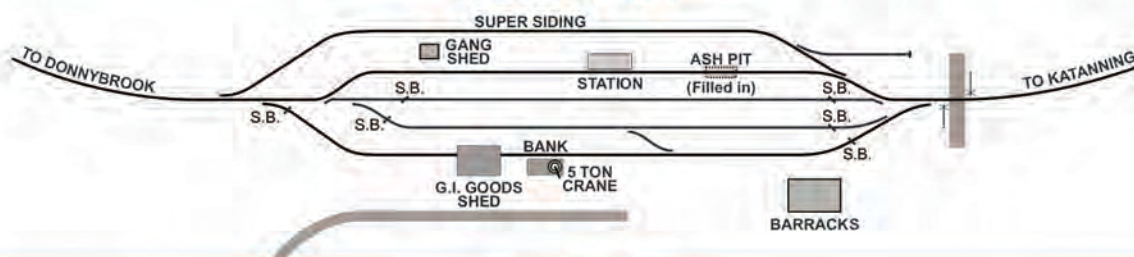


# MAJOR STATIONS BETWEEN DONNYBROOK AND KATANNING

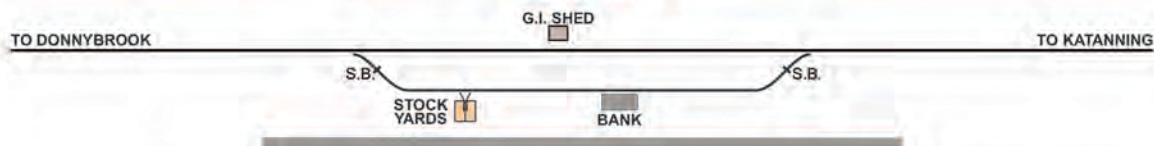
## BOYUP BROOK STOCKYARDS AND CBH



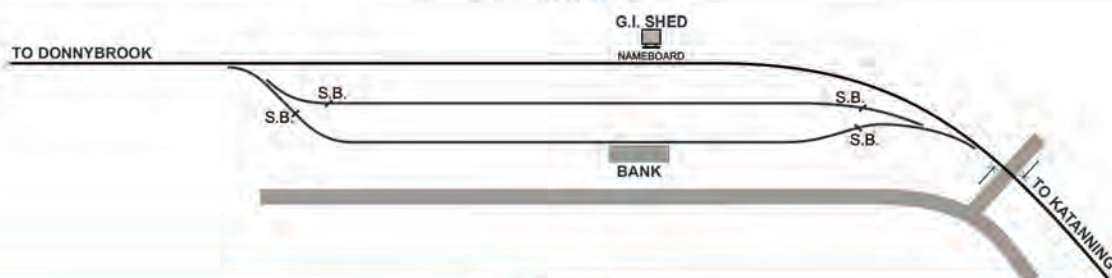
## BOYUP BROOK



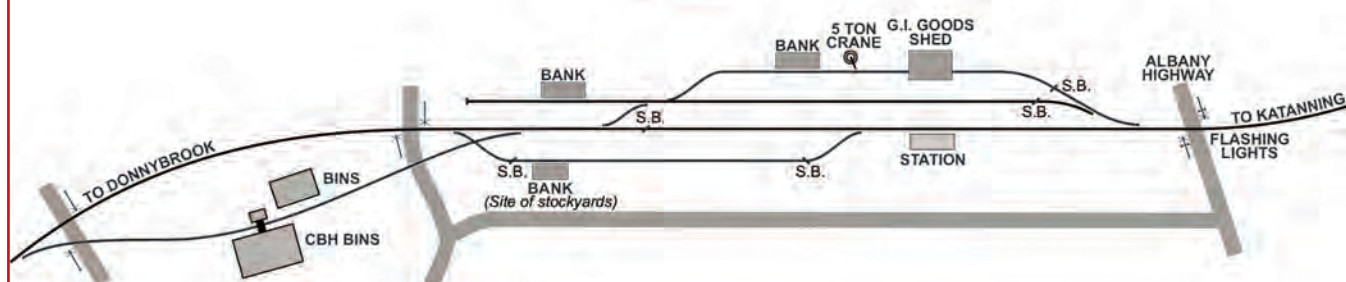
## DINNINUP



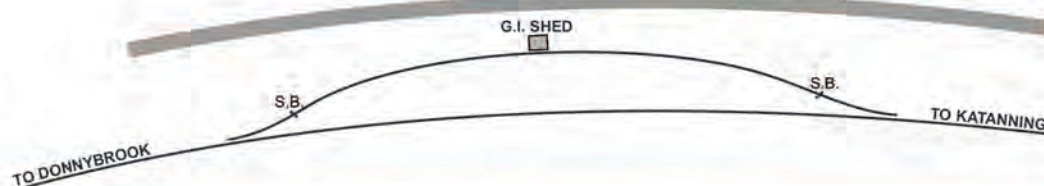
## MURADUP



## KOJONUP



## PUNCHMIRUP



eastern end of the yard area latterly, though a triangle existed from 1907 until 1973 just east of there. In 1955, a scotch block was put on the eastern leg of this triangle so that it could be used as a delivery siding, though after steam disappeared in 1970, it had limited use.

Although the WAGR introduced road services for passengers and small freight quite early on (1941), Kojonup railway station was busy until the 1970s, dealing with significant wool, livestock, grain, general freight and superphosphate. A row of gum trees flanked the yard's southern side, creating a pleasing backdrop to shunting. In 1968, Mr J Greeuw gained a yard lease for fertiliser traffic, while Cooperative Bulk Handling (CBH, now the CBH Group) established a grain bin with siding west of the station in 1961. Unusually, this siding boasted a diamond crossing which intersected a siding, leading to the CBH grain bin.

Otherwise, it was a classic and standard WA country station. Attended from 2 September 1912, the surviving station building was completed in June 1925, with a quaint timber station building (similar to Dalwallinu, Quairading and Mukinbudin) on the southern side amongst the aforementioned stately trees. Opposite was a compact three-track yard (the crossing loop was constructed in 1913), with the goods siding running through an overline goods shed (constructed in 1922) and past a wool-loading ramp and five-ton crane (erected in 1922). Benn Parade accessed the railway station, and Gordon Street ran past the goods shed. Kojonup's Station Master



Kojonup goods shed on the left with the station and locomotive water tank (right).  
RAIL HERITAGE WA, P8798

(Class 5) was well occupied with daily activity in the yard, though something out of the ordinary occurred during 1935 when the station safe was blown in a robbery!

West of Kojonup, the track followed the meandering line of Kojonup Brook, which resulted in a distinctive bulge in its alignment as it headed sharply north to avoid hilly country verging the town. In this picturesque length, trains were obscured from passing cars until **Farrar** (90m 61ch), opened as 224m 41ch stopping place on 9 February 1914 with the siding completed soon after, where the railway abruptly crossed the main Kojonup–Boyup Brook Road on the level adjacent to a swampy area. Farrar had a siding, ramp and small shelter shed, but in common with many small sidings was closed to less than container load (LCL) traffic and

parcels in 1975. Between 1929 and 1978, stockyards were available, but the goods shelter shed was removed in 1951. For many years, it boasted a water supply dam and a 5000 gallon tank relocated from Muradup in 1919, but this fell into disuse in the latter years. In 1968, WAGR advised a water supply was now available at Kojonup, perhaps using the town supply. Steam locomotives were to disappear there soon after. An engine pit had been provided in 1917. Early *Weekly Notices* recorded the siding name as Farrer with the name Farrar being substituted in March 1914 but it is possible the initial references were in error.

The railway remained south of the main road as it negotiated a watershed and then swung back to the other side. Around here, the country changes a little, as the wheat belt grazing lands are replaced by more wooded country. It presents a scenic landscape indeed, composed of splendid eucalypts and meandering gullies, the impressively named Balgorup River (more a stream than river) being crossed just east of **Muradup** (85m 74ch from Donnybrook).

The town site of Muradup featured a general store as well as the usual school and post office. It served briefly as the terminus of the line when the track to the east was washed out during the 1980s. The staples of wool, stock, superphosphate and supplies kept the siding with its shed, ramp and stockyards busy for years. A 5000 gallon water tank fed with water pumped from the local creek was installed on opening but, as noted above, it was relocated to Farrar in 1919. In 1967,



There was lots of spare time working the Katanning–Donnybrook Line in the 1950s, as depicted in this photo of guard Arthur Shaw feeding a magpie in the brake van of a train at Eulin in 1950. RAIL HERITAGE WA, Po4990.





The crew shunting with X Class diesel-electric locomotive 1002 *BIBBULUM* was photographed beside the out-of shed at Muradup on 27 May 1982.

JEFF AUSTIN PHOTO, RAIL HERITAGE WA, P13197.

work was underway on a crossing loop there, flashing lights being installed on the Mayanup Road level crossing in 1969. Until 1969, the local business of Messrs J R and R Greeuw used the siding, occupying a lease in the yard. Stockyards were provided in 1917 and closed in 1974.

By the time the train had reached Muradup, the passenger (if any) was made immediately aware that the Donnybrook-Katanning line was an undulating track, in reality a progression of continuous banks over ridges. One of these ensued beyond Muradup, as the line headed back towards the main road before swinging to the right at a tangent to ascend another gully. Now away from the road behind a ridge, the railway passed Narlingup Nature Reserve before dropping a little to reach the siding of the same name.

**Narlingup** (80m 36ch from Donnybrook) was scenically placed at the foot of a ridge looking south over paddocks and the meandering Wattle Creek. After closing to LCL/ parcels traffic in 1975, the station shed was surplus to needs, though the loop siding remained for fertiliser and wool. The loading ramp was closed to use in 1969 and the stockyards (first constructed in 1920 and upgraded in 1939) had closed in 1974. In later years, Narlingup, like many other WA country sidings, was graced by a so-called 'London Transport' or 'bullseye' name board on a post.

There is a story, possibly true, about a dam near Narlingup where steam-era train crews were known to stop to catch ducks. On one occasion, the

driver shot a duck and directed his fireman to collect the deceased bird. Common sense dictated that the fireman leave his clothes on the side of the dam as he collected the bird on the lake, but by the time he regained the shore, his clothes were gone, and the practical joke-playing driver had restarted the train. Reputedly, the naked fireman was obliged to jog alongside the train till the driver let him back on board!

On the next section, there was a Ballast Pit (75m 54ch from Donnybrook), a mere quarter-mile away from Qualeup. Not much is known about it, but the WAGR made a practice of creating small ballast pits and sidings to replenish the red lateritic pea gravel that provided the ballast for much of its system. **Qualeup** (75m 29ch from Donnybrook), boasted a CBH grain bin that was established in 1961. In 1979, work on a new CBH bin necessitated temporary speed restrictions past the site. As a town, it was not much to get excited about, though the store was augmented by a fibro hall used for community events. The usual parcels shed, wool ramp and stockyards (1920–1974) adorned the siding which handled bulk grain as well as the normal commodities, the Qualeup store being supplied by rail. The aboriginal word '*kwolyup*' means 'place of she-oak trees'.

More undulating lands followed, with the track generally south of the aptly named Eulin Siding Road. After a few miles, the railway then passed along the creek flats of a broad watercourse, the centrepiece being the

delightfully named Quelelup Lake. For some of this section, the rails ran along the foot of the ridges to the north, reaching **Eulin** (70m 37ch from Donnybrook). Opened as Eulinn and losing an 'n' in August 1915, it was a staff station between 1927 and 1974. The reason why this lowly siding was elevated to a staff and crossing station was an obvious one: it was a watering station for steam locomotives. Eulin's 5000 gallon tank replenished many W Class 4-8-2 steam locomotive in the latterday steam era, but when diesels took over, it made more sense to make the more urbane Kulikup the staff station. Although wool, fertiliser, livestock (stockyards from 1921-1962) and supplies were dealt with at Eulin, its demise was swift after it closed as a staff station on 20 December 1974. It was, in WAGR terms, 'eliminated' from 24 March 1975. Pleasingly, its name is still honoured in the name of the road and the Eulin Siding Nature Reserve.

The successor to Eulin as a staff station, **Kulikup** (67m 27ch) was sited in wooded country, the tennis court by the railway a prominent feature. Opened as Culicup and renamed in April 1913, the shed, siding, wool ramp and stockyards (1921-1962) sat below the townsite which boasted a couple of houses, general store and school. Kulikup general store, like the ones at Muradup, Dinninup and Qualeup, relied once on the WAGR for transport. Kulikup has a similar meaning to Qualeup being derived from the word '*koolikap*' also referring to the presence of casuarina trees.

Running in country poorly served by rural roads, the next part of the line meandered west through pasture lands reaching **Maltrup** (62m 20ch from Donnybrook). In February 1924, *Weekly Notice 8* announced the opening of a public siding at 194 mile with standing room for 15 single trucks and no loading platform or shed. A name would be decided later. But of interest is that this public siding was one of only a few on the WAGR where the siding would 'be spiked over during the slack season'. But next month 'it is now decided to keep this siding open all the year around.' In June the name Maltrup was applied and a loading ramp had been provided. For some reason, it became a staff station on 18 November 1945, functioning in this role until 6 December 1965. Thereafter, it lingered as a small siding

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for wool and superphosphate until the siding was closed from 1 August 1966. Maltrup remained open as a parcels and LCL stop until complete closure from 1 September 1975.

At **Dinninup** (59m 10ch from Donnybrook), things were a little more cosmopolitan, with a general store and hall staring across the main road at the siding with its out of shed (transferred from Kurramia, the wood line junction on the Kanowna line, in 1919), stock races and wool ramp. In this part of the world, Dinninup was a centre of sorts, and so the train used to stop to set down supplies and mails. Dinninup was also the host town of the Boyup Brook and Upper Blackwood district shows and retains a showgrounds today.

Orchards once flourished at Dinninup, providing traffic for the trains which paused here, some conveying export fruit in the 1920s. In March 1923 for instance, some 1500 cases of fruit were loaded at Dinninup for two ships loading at Fremantle. At this point, the rails began to hug the serpentine alignment of Boyup Brook itself, and the view was enhanced as the train wound through denuded hills.

The line was at varying distances from the road, which immediately west of Dinninup ascended a sharp ridge overlooking the creek. Three miles further on, the two modes intersected at a level crossing by the road bridge over Boyup Brook. Here was **Asplin** (55m 34ch from Donnybrook), which rejoiced in the name Condinup until 1921. The Condinup district is a little to the north, Asplin was a simple siding, shed and wool ramp by the



W Class 4-8-2 locomotive No. 943 at Boyup Brook locomotive depot with its coal conveyor and 60ft turntable on 12 January 1968. P HOPPER PHOTO, RAIL HERITAGE WA, P11831

level crossing. A track gang was also based here.

A bridge over the Blackwood River was then crossed immediately beyond the level crossing with the main road, and was a fine looking structure right beside the road bridge. A scenic location indeed, it was a good spot to see a pair of XA/XB Class diesel-electric locomotives rumbling over with another load of superphosphate for the cross-country line. In April 1978, a fire damaged this bridge and Asplin functioned as a temporary terminus for the line from the east until repairs were completed in January 1979.

West of this bridge, both road and rail switch-backed together in a delicate dance to **Newlgalup** (52m 5ch from Donnybrook). The stopping place was opened in 1919 and named Newlgalup

in January 1920. A siding was completed by the next September. This siding name honours the cockatoo, with Newlgalup Road lingering as a reminder of the name long after the siding closed from 1 August 1966. It handled the staples of traffic including superphosphate, traffic being boosted by fruit grown in a small cluster of orchards nearby. Indeed, it was not unknown in the 1920s for Newlgalup to load 500 boxes of export fruit on trains in a month, so a shelter shed was installed in 1924 to deal with 'out of' business and passengers. In January 1930, Newlgalup was briefly the end of the line from Katanning, as a bridge fire west of that point resulting in the 22 mixed train on Monday, Wednesday and Friday ending its journey at Newlgalup. At 6.30am on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, the train worked back from Newlgalup to Katanning, so it is assumed the crew went on to Boyup Brook by road those evenings to rest in the barracks there. Train operations resumed in April once bridge repairs were completed.

Beyond Newlgalup, the train left the main road and wandered by the creek on the final approach to the line's main intermediate point, **Boyup Brook** (48m 35ch from Donnybrook). In the heyday of the line, and even as late as the 1980s, this could be a busy little country station yard, situated down on the flat below the town centre. The station building was on the northern side, and the goods shed and yard were opposite on the town side, with a number of parallel tracks



Boyup Brook Station, goods shed and yard in January 1984. RAIL HERITAGE WA, P12804

running through. One of these loops effectively created an island platform, by running on the creek side past the station building. Such arrangements enabled passenger trains to cross at Boyup Brook, although that was not a common occurrence. Wool, stock, superphosphate, sawn timber, general freight and machinery were all railed in the halcyon years, and my principal memories of the yard are of sidings full of four-wheeled brightly coloured tarped superphosphate railway wagons. Even as late as the 1960s, there was a regular weekly local goods train from Boyup Brook dealing with livestock, a key commodity railed from there.

Boyup Brook was attended from 1 April 1911 to 28 June 1985 and with its broad canopy roof, the station differed significantly from the one at Kojonup, the walls being of timber construction, and a number of out-buildings adjoining on the Kojonup side. The out-of shed was on this side, but on the Donnybrook side was a round-roofed timber passenger shelter shed separate to the main station. In the heyday of the line, the station master at Boyup Brook was classified as a 5th Class position, like the one at Kojonup. Boyup Brook also had barracks for train crews, a 60ft turntable (installed in 1939) and two 10,000 gallon loco water tanks. Railway Parade ran parallel to the yard on the southern side, with Bridge Street heading uphill to the town centre. As with the railway bridge at Asplin, the Blackwood River railway bridge at Boyup Brook was damaged by the 1978 bushfires and the line was closed until repairs were completed in January 1979.

**Boyup Brook Stockyards** (47m 64ch from Donnybrook) was a separate siding on the western approach, opening late in 1948, specifically created to deal with the area's prodigious output of sheep and cattle. This was the site of Boyup Brook's triangle, opened with the line and removed in June 1939 after a turntable had been installed in Boyup Brook yard. In 1973, CBH erected a silo here as well, boosting local traffic considerably with the railing of bulk grain to the port at Bunbury. Boyup Brook was the third location on the line to boast wheat silos (Qualeup and Kojonup were the others). A town of about 1000 persons, Boyup Brook is obviously named after the creek of the same name. '*boya-ap*' is aboriginal for 'place of stones'.



FS Class 4-8-0 goods locomotive No. 461 at Donnybrook locomotive depot, 14 January 1964. E G SKILLER PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 090944

In many ways, Boyup Brook marked a divisional point in terms of the country traversed and the services handled, so a few trains were tabled to end their journeys there. West of here, the jarrah belt was entered, with the last traditional wheat and wool properties fading out near **Benjinup** (40m 34ch from Donnybrook). Opened with the line as Number 2 Siding, it was named Benjinup on 1 April 1909, the name being simplified to Benjinup in August 1915. It had a siding with standard angle-roofed out-of shed, wool ramp and stockyards. Right up until 2 February 1983, it was a staff station too, with a short electric staff section Benjinup–Boyup Brook from 1950. Why it was necessary for this meagre siding to be a staff station remains uncertain, though during the early years Vincent Brothers had a mill north of the siding with a lengthy branch line. Stockyards at Benjinup were provided in 1920 and closed in 1973. Aboriginal in origin, the name comes from the root '*benjin*', a local native plant.

Opened as 169m 15ch stopping place in September 1936, the name **Evans** (37m 27ch from Donnybrook) was inserted into the rates books in February 1937. Evans was a '10cwt halt', meaning that trains were allowed to stop there to load and unload consignments if they were less than a half-ton and was closed in 1960. Here the line entered the patchwork mosaic of jarrah forests and small farms that characterised the rest of the journey west.

As the use of motor transport

increased during the 1960s, there was less need to stop trains at halts like this to set down parcels and supplies, or the occasional passenger. Once the tracks entered the jarrah belt, the scenery changed dramatically. The jarrah belt comprises sombre lands due to the dark appearance of the jarrah tree leaves and bark. They provided a valuable timber for many years for the state, being both ideal for building purposes and also for railway sleepers and timbers. Alas, it is not particularly attractive country due to tree height limiting views. This compared unfavourably with the wheat belt with its magnificent white- and pink-barked gums amid the broad cropped fields in gently rolling country.

On this section was a ballast pit siding where abundant lateritic red pea gravel was quarried and loaded for use under the permanent way. This was located at 34m 54ch from Donnybrook, with points being installed on 15 October 1923 concurrently with its opening as an ordinary train staff station. The new section in use thereafter was Boyup Brook–Ballast Pit Siding–Noggerup, Wilga and Benjinup being later staff stations.

**Wilga** (32m 61ch from Donnybrook) was opened with the line as Number 1 Siding and named from 1 April 1909. There was a small sawmill town by the siding with its shed, ramp and stockyards (1920–1968). For various periods, Wilga was a staff station dividing the length through the jarrah, and saw occasional crossings, with sections Wilga–Benjinup and Wilga–Noggerup





2-Do-2 diesel-electric locomotive XA1408 **WOLMERI** passes the Wilga out-of-shed.  
RAIL HERITAGE WA, P13460

in use, latterly from 6 September 1948 until 2 February 1983.

The timber mill here had a connection to the yard and railed out sawn jarrah for many years, dominating the western side of the station yard. A true mill town, Wilga featured a store, hall and company housing, all with distinctive design betraying the timber company origin. The Adelaide Timber Company maintained a mill tramway system criss-crossing the forests hereabouts, the main wood-line leading west towards Grimwade. In October 1927, a small underpass under the WAGR line was constructed on the eastern approach to Wilga to allow construction of a mill railway running to the east. This grade-separated crossing in lieu of the more traditional diamond crossing was a curious feature of Wilga. A quaint feature of the waiting shed at Wilga was that it was placed at right angles to the line, instead of addressing it directly.

Opened as 160 mile stopping place in January 1925 the name **Goonac** (27m 38ch from Donnybrook) applied from June that year. It was moved from 160m 32 ch to 159m 65ch in December 1925 and closed with a number of other stopping places in 1960 (possibly October). Like Evans, it was a '10cwt halt'. Pity the poor guard who had 10cwt of freight to discharge at Goonac during one stop!

Soon the tracks approached the fertile orcharding districts that flourished along the Preston River valley. Just east of Noggerup was **Water Tank** (24m 52ch from Donnybrook). This imaginatively named location served as an intermediate watering stop for steam

locomotives prior to their demise in 1970. An abundance of springs and soaks in this country generated good water supplies, all feeding into the Preston River which flowed past nearby, the 25,000 gallon tank being fed by water pumped 700 metres from a deep pool in the river. **Noggerup** (23m 35ch from Donnybrook) is the next siding. Opened as Number 5 Siding, also known as Preston Valley, it was named Noggerup in November or December 1908. It lost its double 'p' like Benjinup in 1915. Noggerup was a staff station and small town nestled in jarrah woodland south of the main road. Briefly discontinued as a staff station when the extension to Boyup opened, Noggerup reopened on 29 December 1909.

The attractive Noggerup yard was on a curve and featured stately trees,

like Dinninup, Muradup and Kulikup. The Preston Valley Sawmills Company once had a bush line and siding here, generating timber traffic for rail, but after the bush line had been removed the company's siding was taken up in September 1928. This network ran west of Noggerup, with a connection to the WAGR station yard. Noggerup had a siding, shed, ramp and stock-yards (1922–1974), fruit being handled in season.

Indeed, from Noggerup on to Donnybrook, all the intermediate stations dealt with steady fruit loadings until the 1950s, more often than not loaded as 'out of' traffic, onto trains as they stopped *en route*. Much of the fruit was export-bound, destined for ships sailing from regional ports that week, and it was not unknown for 1000 cases to be loaded at any one spot for this trade. Nearly all the stops had sidings in their heyday for loading of truck-loads of fruit.

Re-joining the Boyup Brook Road, the railway ran parallel virtually all the way to Donnybrook. Beside the road was **Yowungup** (20m 26ch from Donnybrook), a fruit-loading stop opened in August 1909 that lingered until 1960. The years 1960–1961 marked the end of the busier days of fruit traffic, these years witnessing significant rationalisation of the stops on this length of line.

**Mumballup** (18m 44ch from Donnybrook) was more important, being a busy road junction where the Collie Road joined the Boyup Brook Road. Opened as Number 4 Siding, it was named Mumballup late in



MSA Class 2-6-0+0-6-2 Garratt locomotive No. 491 heads a goods train at Noggerup, circa 1962. R MOSS PHOTO, RAIL HERITAGE WA, T3190.



1908 and lost the second 'p' in 1915. Opposite the siding with its shed, ramp and stockyards was the Mumballup Hotel and a general store, for which supplies were railed in the years prior to the closure of the siding on 30 June 1980. Mumballup enjoyed a brief period as a staff station. For instance, on Friday 28 January 1927, a Commissioner's Inspection train was timed to cross the regular No. 24 train there.

Nearby **Glen Mervyn** (15m 54ch from Donnybrook) opened in 1909 as 16 mile stopping place, and gained its Scottish name in August that year. Glen Mervyn is also honoured by the name of a dam to the east. A siding and loading ramp were provided in April 1923 and there were stockyards (1923–1965). The public siding was closed from 1 January 1966 but Glen Mervyn remained a halt until 1 August 1976 and there was a spur line to a ballast pit located here until the 1970s. Also on the eastern side of the road was **Yabberup** (12 m 04ch from Donnybrook). Opened as Number 3 Siding, named Yabberup late in 1908 and also losing a 'p' in 1915, it was closed in 1960. Like all other points this side of Noggerup, Yabberup dealt with fruit from orchards and supplies, as well as occasional passengers. Yabberup was for some time a home station for a track gang.

In January or February 1918 a private siding was put in at 146 miles for Bunning Brothers. In January 1921 it was made a passenger stop and a few weeks later it was open for parcels and goods up to 10cwt. The siding was closed and taken up in January 1923.



XA Class diesel-electric locomotive No. 1408 **WOLMERI** heads its goods train past the unusual out-of shed at Lowden on 22 February March 1973. J AUSTIN PHOTO

Located at 10m 24ch from Donnybrook, **Lowden** was more substantial, operating as a staff station until 1965 dividing the Donnybrook–Noggerup section. It opened with the line as Number 2 Siding and named in December 1908. Like Mumballup, it featured a general store. John M Ferguson opened a mill 1.6km south of Lowden in 1907 and had a railway from the siding to the mill and into the bush. In 1910 the mill was taken over by a Millars subsidiary, Swan Saw Mills. After the mill closed in 1914 and sleeper hewing ended, the siding at Lowden was removed in May 1922. Bunnings completed a mill 1.5km north of Lowden (Preston Valley Sawmill No. 2) in February 1920 and it was connected by rail to Lowden in October 1926. The mill closed in 1929 and the siding was removed in

November 1931. Lowden also had stockyards from 1920–1974 and was a staff station for various periods. It closed from 23 May 1985. A distinctive feature of Lowden was its quaint open-sided waiting shed which was little more than a fruit loading shed.

**Katterup** (8m 52ch from Donnybrook and opened in August 1909) came next. Its name was derived from another Aboriginal name (the root word 'kata' meaning 'head'). The stopping place was moved approximately 20 chains closer to Lowden (140m 32.5ch) in February 1944. Closed in 1960, it was a stop by the road serving orchards, but many of these succumbed in later years as fruit growing contracted towards Donnybrook. Cases of apples and pears were loaded here, for export or local consumption, empty boxes sent back by train providing extra traffic. An 'out of' shed was built at Katterup in 1927 to deal with the traffic.

Just a quick skip away was **Queenwood** (6m 14ch from Donnybrook). Opened as Number 1 Siding and named in December 1909, the siding lasted till 30 May 1977. Again, its role was identical to the other fruit stops along the Preston valley which fell into disuse from the 1950s.

Beyond Queenwood, a later deviation of the main road caused the railway and road to swap sides for the first time since Benjinup. Located on a gentle rise, this level crossing largely replaced another at the pleasantly sited **Beelerup** (2m 63ch from Donnybrook). It opened as a stopping place in August 1909 and was moved



The loading ramp, station sign and shelter shed at Mumballup on 29 December 1972. J AUSTIN PHOTO. RAIL HERITAGE WA, P09375





An O Class 2-8-0 locomotive departs Asplin with a mixed goods train for Katanning circa 1940. W LARSON PHOTO, RAIL HERITAGE WA, Po6072

a few chains further from Donnybrook in December 1912 or January 1913. It was given a siding in mid-1938 and is the line's last, or first stop, depending on which direction you are heading. The station name means 'place of grass trees', and it was a verdant place when the trains ran past orchards along the rich river flats of the Preston River to the north. Beelerup had a ramp and shed.

Now back beside the main road, the line dropped down to the junction with the main line at **Donnybrook**. The actual junction was in the yard proper, west of where the branch line converged with the sharply descending main line, the latter being at a significantly higher elevation. They ran parallel to each other until both were at the same level at the entrance to the once busy yard. Overlooked by a large tiled canopy-roofed timber station building on the eastern side, Donnybrook yard was commodious when

the branch functioned with many parallel tracks and the usual sidings to the goods shed, ramp, stock yards and fruit sheds. For many years, Donnybrook enjoyed a strategic role, as the last station on the South Western Railway where a cross-country connection existed to Albany and the Great Southern District.

## To be continued

## End Notes

1. The rails arrived on the same date at the contract was signed as the Government had placed an early order for rails to construct three lines that had been under consideration for construction, so the purchase had been finalised before the contract was signed.

## In this month's **Railway Digest**

### The NSW Hunter Valley

The Hunter Valley Coal Chain is the largest export operation in the world, but there's even more to this busy network than a coal train passing very few minutes. We present a selection of recent images taken along this extraordinarily busy corridor.

### A visit to the West Coast Wilderness Railway

When an old friend of Shane O'Neil's happened to celebrate his 60th birthday while on contract as a steam driver at Tasmania's famous West Coast Wilderness Railway, it provided the perfect excuse

to fly down and take a good look at the current operations there.

### Cunninggar

On 7 December 2015, GrainCorp announced that, as part of its *Project Regeneration*, the Cunninggar Grain Receival site, just north of Harden on the NSW Main South, would be upgraded at a total cost of \$8.1 million. As a regular visitor, Buck Rogers has been monitoring the progress at Cunninggar, and provides a timely update.

**Plus all our regular features**







Railway workers give assistance to injured passengers following the Salt Clay Creek Bridge accident near Cootamundra on 25 January 1885. CC78 Class 4-4-0 locomotive No. 81 is prominent in the foreground. H KING PHOTO, ARHNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 003911

## PASSENGER FATALITIES IN NSW TRAIN ACCIDENTS

John Oakes

**Editor:** This article, submitted in 2011, provides a brief overview of accidents in the New South Wales Railways that resulted in passenger fatalities. The author provides an assessment of the different types of accidents that resulted in passenger deaths and concludes that there were around 224 passenger fatalities between 1855 and 2003.

### INTRODUCTION

The total number of NSW train passengers killed in railway accidents since 1855 is about 224. There have been 33 accidents with fatalities to passengers.

Twelve were rear-end collisions: at Campbelltown, Sandy Flat, Farley, Hurstville, Berala, Sydenham, Liverpool (two), Heathcote, Glenbrook (two) and Cowan Bank.

Head-on collisions have been relatively rare: namely at Sydney Yard, Exeter, Binalong and Borenore.

Derailments account for 11 fatalities. They occurred at Haslems Creek (Lidcombe), Cootamundra, Tarana, Sydenham, Stanwell Park, Aberdeen, Rocky Ponds, West Ryde, Granville, Wentworthville and Waterfall.

Three runaways led to passenger fatalities at Peats Ferry (Hawkesbury River), Raglan and Murulla.

Two level-crossing accidents: one at Gunnedah and

another near Werris Creek, resulted in train passenger fatalities.

The most unusual was an explosion under a train at Rooty Hill.

There have been some long fatality-free periods. Notable examples are 1858–1884, 1926–1948 and 1977–1989.

### INDIVIDUAL ACCIDENTS

The first fatal accident was a derailment at Haslems Creek, later Lidcombe, on 10 July 1858 when two passengers were killed. One person was killed when a train bounced off the buffer stops of the second Sydney Station on 25 August 1884, but it appears that the victim was a railway employee on duty. A cattle drover was killed in a collision involving a cattle train at Campbelltown on 11 September 1884.

The Cootamundra derailment that occurred on 25 January 1885 was due to a washaway at Salt Clay Creek about 5km south of the town. Five passengers and three employees were killed. The runaway at Peats Ferry (now Hawkesbury River) occurred on 21 June 1887. Five passengers and a driver were killed. This runaway down Cowan Bank occurred before the bridge across the Hawkesbury River opened.

Four passengers were killed in a runaway between Raglan





**A large breakdown crane lifts a damaged carriage following the head-on collision between the *Temora Mail* and a goods train at Exeter on 13 March 1914. .**  
S R BEER STUDIO, BOWRAL, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 006903B

and Bathurst on 25 April 1890. A broken coupling at Raglan allowed the rear portion of a mixed train, including a passenger carriage, to run back through Kelso and across the Macquarie River to the Russell Street level crossing where it collided with a goods train that had just departed Bathurst for Sydney.

A passenger and a racehorse on the northbound *Brisbane Mail* were killed at Farley on 13 May 1890 when it collided with its southbound counterpart while the Up train was reversing into a siding to allow the Down train to pass. A circus employee was killed when the second division of a circus train collided with the first division at Sandy Flat (near Bluff Rock in the far north) on 20 April 1892.

Eight passengers were killed in a derailment due to a broken rail at Tarana on 27 April 1892. A head-on collision in Sydney Yard on 31 October 1894 resulted in the death of 11 passengers. This was followed by the derailment of a commuter train south of Sydenham on 15 February 1901 in which six passengers and the fireman were killed. The accident was blamed on a combination of excessive speed, the condition of the track and the design of the locomotive (an F class 2-4-0T, then used on suburban trains).

One female passenger was killed in a derailment at Stanwell Park on 25 January 1908. A head-on collision at Exeter on 13 March 1914 resulted in 14 deaths. The southbound *Temora Mail* collided with a northbound goods train that was about to reverse into a refuge to allow the *Mail* to pass.

The following year, one passenger was killed in a head-on collision at Binalong on 17 April. In this instance, the northbound express from Albury collided with the southbound *Temora Mail* at the station.

Four passengers were killed and 14 injured in an unusual rear-end to rear-end collision at Hurstville on 3 August 1920. A terminating train was propelled into the rear of a stationary peak-hour passenger train south of the station. Six years later four passengers died in a derailment on the wooden bridge spanning the Hunter River near Aberdeen on 10 June 1926. The locomotives of the northbound *Brisbane Limited Express* were derailed by the poor condition track on the approach to the bridge.

The second-worst accident in New South Wales occurred between Blandford and Murulla on 13 September 1926 when the Sydney-bound *North-West Mail* collided with

some runaway goods trucks that had escaped from a siding located on the crest of a hill. The death toll was 27.

The long fatality-free period between 1926 and 1948 began with the Murulla accident and ended with the Rocky Ponds accident of 30 June 1948. In the latter incident, a mail train hauled by 38 Class locomotive 3817 was derailed due to a broken rail. The death toll was four passengers. The fatality-free period included the whole of World War II when many extra trains were run to assist with the war effort. However, two drivers were killed in this period: an electric train driver in a collision with a goods train shunting at Newtown, and a steam locomotive driver on a runaway coal train at Eastwood. Both accidents occurred in 1940.

In addition, three railway employees were killed when Rail Pay Bus No. 5 was blown up at Yanderra (near Mittagong) in a payroll robbery attempt on 8 December 1941. The first fatalities to suburban electric train passengers occurred in a rear-end collision at Berala on 7 May 1952, some 26 years after the introduction of electric trains in 1926. One electric train ran



**Two heavy Craven breakdown cranes lift locomotive 3817 back onto the track following the mail train derailment at Rocky Ponds on 30 June 1948.**

NSWGR PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 007279





Telescoped suburban train carriages at Liverpool Station after the collision resulting in a freight train headed by locomotive 4535, which ran into the rear of the suburban train on 31 October 1965. R B CLARKE PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 290867

into another standing at the platform, resulting in ten deaths. The driver of the second train was travelling at an excessive speed to stop short of any obstruction after being permitted to pass a signal at stop as allowed for under the regulations.

Another rear-end collision involving two electric trains occurred at Sydenham on 19 December 1953, resulting in the death of five passengers. It is believed that a loose screwdriver in a signal cabin caused an electrical connection between two wires that should not have been so connected and the signals cleared as a result.

There were two deaths when a diesel-hauled goods train ran into the rear of a stationary steam-hauled local passenger train on a bridge south of Liverpool on 12 July 1962. The deceased passenger was a railway signalman on his way home from work, while the guard of the passenger train was also killed. Also at Liverpool Station, one passenger was killed on 31 October 1965 when a northbound goods train ran into an electric train standing at the platform. At the subsequent inquiry, it emerged that the crew had fallen asleep at the controls.

In an unusual accident at Rooty Hill on 9 July 1968, a gas cylinder being used in track work exploded under a single-deck interurban train travelling towards the Blue Mountains. One female passenger was killed and 19 passengers were injured. The following year, the driver and a passenger were killed when two-car diesel train

637/737 from Dubbo, collided with a semi-trailer loaded with cattle at a level crossing eight miles west of Werris Creek on 19 November 1969

One passenger was killed when the Sydney-bound *North Coast Mail* was derailed at West Ryde on 28 January 1970. This was due to a broken axle on a meat van immediately behind the locomotive. This appears to be the only fatality in a steam locomotive-hauled country carriage. That same year, one passenger and the driver were killed when DP 103, the power car on a *Silver City Comet* set, collided with a stationary goods train at Borenore on 31 July. 1970 scored a trilogy of accidents when one passenger and the two crew were killed in a rear-end collision north of

Heathcote on 28 October 1970. The rail motor on a local service ran into the rear of a stationary goods train.

The driver and a traffic inspector on the *Northern Tablelands Express* were killed in a level crossing accident near Gunnedah on 13 May 1975. Eight months later, one passenger was killed in a rear-end collision near Glenbrook on 16 January 1976. A goods train hauled by a 46 Class electric locomotive ran into the rear of one of the first double-deck interurban trains just west of Glenbrook Tunnel.

New South Wales' worst railway accident was at Granville on 18 January 1977. A crowded commuter train of wooden-bodied carriages hauled by 46 Class electric locomotive No. 4620 was approaching the road overbridge near Granville Station when poor track derailed the locomotive, which hit the bridge supports. The bridge collapsed crushing the third and fourth carriages, resulting in the death of 83 passengers, half of whom were killed instantly.

There was a four-year gap from the Granville disaster until 6 April 1981, when diesel train 607/707 was involved in level crossing accident at Yoogali (near Griffith) on 6 April 1981, which resulted in the death of the driver. The derailment of a Tangara electric train at Wentworthville on 27 December 1989 resulted in the death of one passenger.

In a well-publicised accident, five passengers (and a driver) were killed in a rear-end collision on Cowan Bank (between Hawkesbury River and Cowan) on 6 May 1990. A double-deck



The collapsed Bold Street road overbridge and crushed carriages at Granville following the January 1977 disaster. ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 505956





Preparing to lift damaged electric locomotive 4620 following the Granville disaster in January 1977. I LYNAS PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 002015

interurban electric train ran into the rear of a heritage steam train hauled by locomotive 3801. Four of the passengers were on the steam train and one in the first car of the electric train, together with its driver were killed.

The most recent fatalities covered here involved interurban services operated by double-deck electric trains. Seven passengers were killed at Glenbrook on 2 December 1999 when a double-deck interurban train ran into the rear of the Sydney-bound *Indian Pacific* passenger train. On 31 January 2003, six passengers were killed in the derailment of a *Tangara* electric train south of Waterfall. The train was travelling at excessive speed around a curve and it was subsequently revealed that the driver died at the controls before the accident.

## SOME CONCLUSIONS

Over one-third of the fatalities described above occurred in the one accident at Granville.

Over 148 years of New South Wales railway operations to 2003, it appears that there has been only one fatality in a steam locomotive-hauled country carriage, namely the one at West Ryde, while the only fatality to a passenger on a branch line was in the level crossing accident near Werris Creek.

Fatal accidents always lead to official inquiries that attempt to find the cause of the accident and to work



Rescue workers with the damaged double-deck interurban train following the rear-end collision outside Glenbrook Tunnel on 16 January 1976.

R B CLARKE PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 290869

out a way to prevent the same thing from happening again. At Murulla, an emergency tail rope was being used to 'couple' the last few vehicles on a goods train standing in Murulla Loop after the normal coupling had broken. When the train was pulled forward to clear the points, the tail rope slipped off. The last few vehicles escaped because the air-brake hose connection had not been made. If the connection had been made, the brakes would have been applied automatically when the wagons separated.

The derailment south of Waterfall on

31 January 2003 was caused when the train reached excessive speed following death of the driver and the failure of the foot pedal 'dead man' device to operate. This resulted in a new vigilance control system that requires positive activity on the part of the driver. Lack of activity, that is failure to operate the controls or push a button, results in the train not pulling up.

## REFERENCES

Kevin Pearce, *Australian Railway Disasters*, IPL Books, 1994.

Sydney newspapers for dates following the accidents.

Don Estell, Letter to the Australian Railway Historical Society *Bulletin*, July 1995. It was this letter that inspired the author to research this topic.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to the ARHSNSW Resource Centre Staff and to Stuart Sharp.

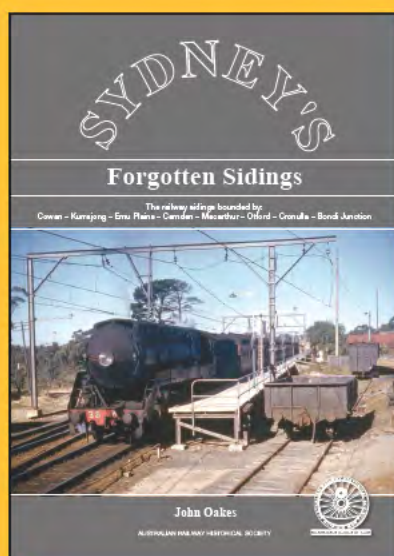
**Note:** Trevor Edmonds points out that following both the Exeter and the Muralla accidents, an injured passenger subsequently died in hospital. These fatalities were not included in the formal statistics.



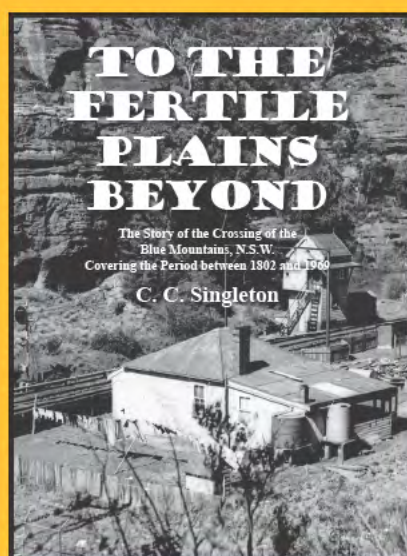


The scene following the tail-end collision of a double-deck interurban emu train and the *Indian Pacific* train at Glenbrook on 2 December 1999 resulting in the death of seven passengers. A COBLE PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 029823

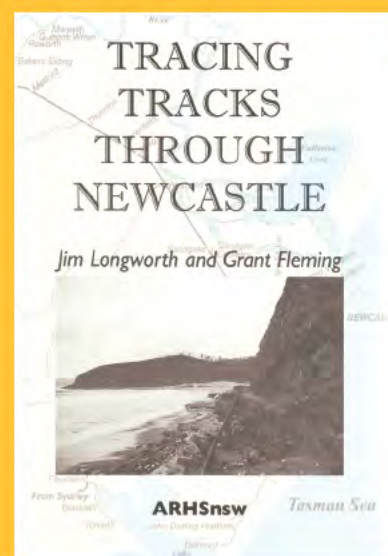
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## VICTORIA'S G CLASS GARRATTS

Philip Dunn

During my researching in Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV) files, I was a little puzzled not to find a link between the inquiry from the Victorian Railways into Garratt locomotives recorded by Beyer, Peacock in 1911 and an appropriate Victorian Railways Commissioner's file. However, Matthew Walker has recently discovered in the PROV a file (VPRS421-P0-74-11-7699) that provides the missing link and Chief Mechanical Engineer Thomas Woodroffe's memorandum in response to the Commissioner's direction is copied, verbatim, as follows:

### 1. How the narrow gauge engines compare in the matter of power with the 2ft gauge engines that are in use in Tasmania.

As directed by the Commissioners on Corres. S 11/7699 I visited Tasmania some time ago and inspected the narrow gauge locomotives running between Zeehan and Williamsford and generally inquired into the class and power of the Tasmanian Narrow Gauge locomotives, particularly those of the "Garratt" type recently obtained, which the Tasmanian Railway Department has employed on its narrow gauge lines.

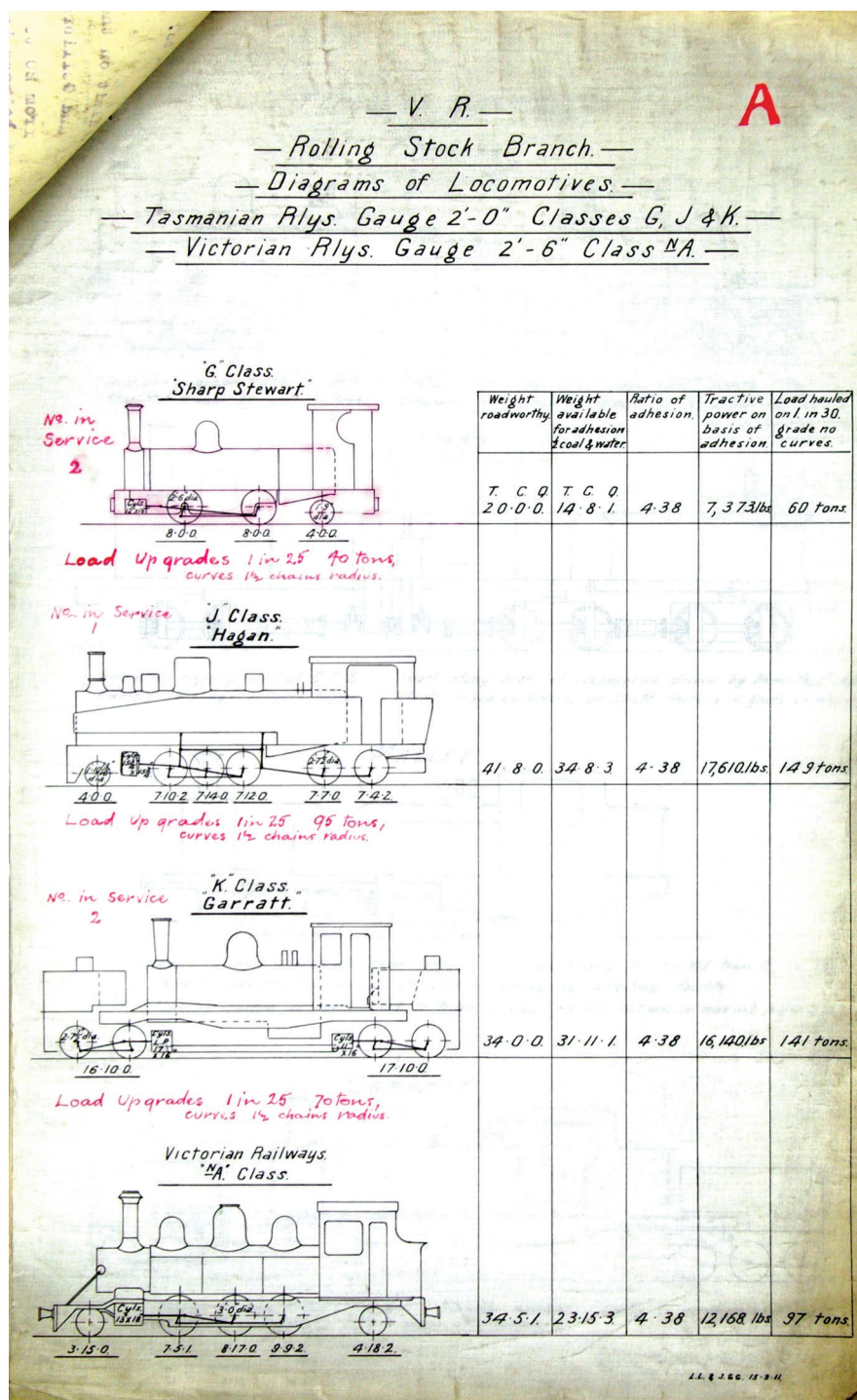
The (Tasmanian Railway) Commissioner and his Officers gave me every facility for inspecting their locomotives and I had a run on the Garratt locomotive.

On my return from Tasmania I verbally reported to the Chairman the result of my inquiries generally; and the delay in furnishing this report is due to waiting for some information which has just come to hand from Messrs William Adams & Co. and which is referred to later on.

The locomotives referred to, including the Garratt type, together with their weights, power and other particulars are illustrated on attached tracing marked "A".

It will be seen that there are three classes of narrow gauge locomotive in use in Tasmania, viz. two of the ordinary type made by Messrs Sharp, Stewart & Co., one of the "Hagan" type and two of the "Garratt" type,

the two latter types of locomotives having approximately 40 to 50 percent more tractive power than the narrow gauge locomotives employed on the Victorian Railways. The grades on the Tasmanian Lines are however steeper





and the curves sharper with the result that the allotted loads up the grades are approximately the same as in Victoria.

The "Garratt" locomotive is of a type similar to the "Fairlie" and the "Mallet" [sic] which have for their object the making of all weight available for adhesion, distributing it over a number of wheels so that the individual wheel loads are not excessive and at the same time providing a minimum rigid wheelbase. This is achieved by mounting the boiler etc on bogie or swivelling trucks which carry the engine and gear.

The "Garratt" type is an adaption and at the same time a considerable improvement on the "Fairlie" type in which both trucks swivel on a centre. In the "Mallet" [sic] type one of the trucks is attached to the boiler and the other is capable of lateral movement.

All these classes of locomotive have the disadvantage that the steam connections to the boilers must necessarily be flexible to adapt themselves to the movement of the bogies. This arrangement gives considerable trouble and, I am afraid, causes frequent laying up of the locomotives.

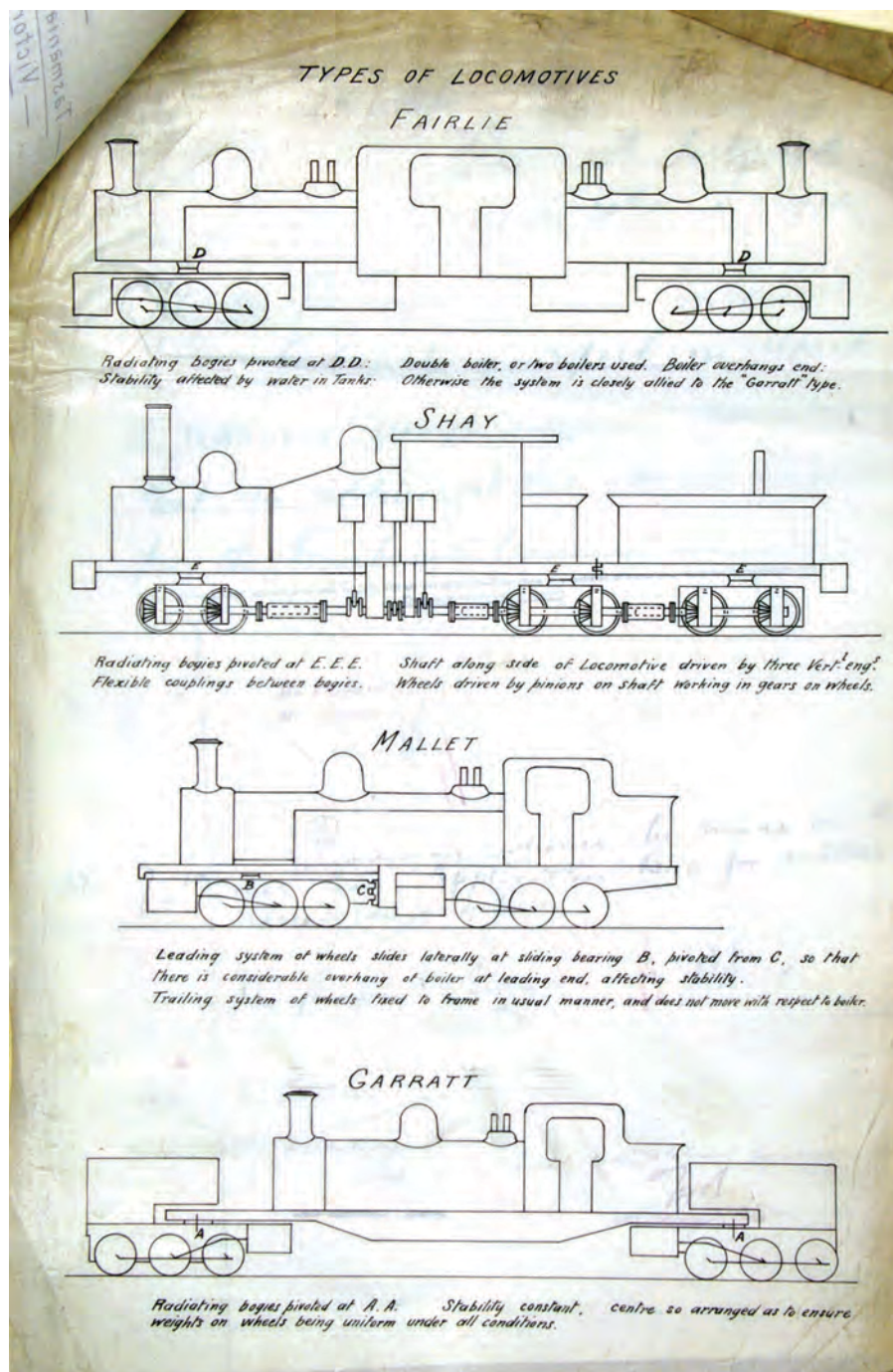
In the "Mallet" [sic] type there is only one of these joints as the boiler etc is a fixture to one of the trucks. Further, as these locomotives are usually made on the compound principle, with the low pressure cylinders fixed to the moveable truck there is not so much trouble with these joints by reason of the lower pressure used.

The "Garratt" locomotive, like the "Fairlie" type, has two of these joints and one of the joints in each Tasmanian locomotive is already giving trouble. In other respects the "Garratt" type is a very great improvement on either of the other types referred to; it runs smoothly and easily around sharp curves and is, moreover, from its design a very stable locomotive under all conditions.

Various types of this class of locomotive are shown on tracing "B" attached.

The Tasmanian Railway Department has two of the "Garratt" locomotives working on its narrow gauge lines and the cost of each delivered under steam was £3,462. The Department has also ordered two "Garratt" locomotives for its mainline traffic, one for goods and one for passenger service, and these are expected shortly.

On my return from Tasmania I



communicated with Messrs William Adams and Co. as to the probable cost of the narrow gauge locomotives of the "Garratt" type and they have now forwarded plans of two locomotives that would be suitable for our gauge, one (with 6 pairs of coupled wheels) having a tractive power of 23,660 lbs and one (with 4 pairs of coupled wheels) having a tractive power of 16,450 lbs. The approximate cost of the former landed here would be £5,166 and of the latter £4,176. These rates include duty, freight, erection etc and are on the assumption that two of either type were obtained.

No doubt these prices could be reduced if the locomotives were manufactured here on a Royalty basis. The estimated cost of our present type of

narrow gauge locomotive, allowing for increase of labor etc and having a tractive power of 12,168 lbs is about £2,400.

## 2. Whether, in the construction of new narrow gauge engines for the Victorian Lines, their tractive power should be increased.

On looking into this matter with regard to the above question, I found that on the Gembrook Line for various reasons the number of vehicles is restricted to 10, thereby restricting the loads to a tonnage well within the capacity of the existing engines. On the Beech Forest Line the vehicle limit is 20 though the curves are sharper and the grades similar to the



Gembrook Line. In conversation with the Chairman he verbally directed me to arrange with the General Supt of Transportation for Messrs Blazey and Shannon to visit the Beech Forest and Crowes Line and inquire into this apparent anomaly and generally into the question of whether more powerful engines would be advantageous. Their report has been considered by the General Supt of Transportation and myself and agreed to. It has been forwarded to the Commissioners separately.

Messrs Blazey and Shannon recommend that the vehicle limit on the Gembrook Line remain as at present and between Colac and Gellibrand and between Beech Forest and Kincaids is to be reduced from 20 to 14 and that between Kincaids and Crowes the vehicle limit be 12 and between Beech Forest and Gellibrand 10 vehicles or 120 tons. These restrictions would reduce the tonnage load to an extent that there would be obtained in introducing a new

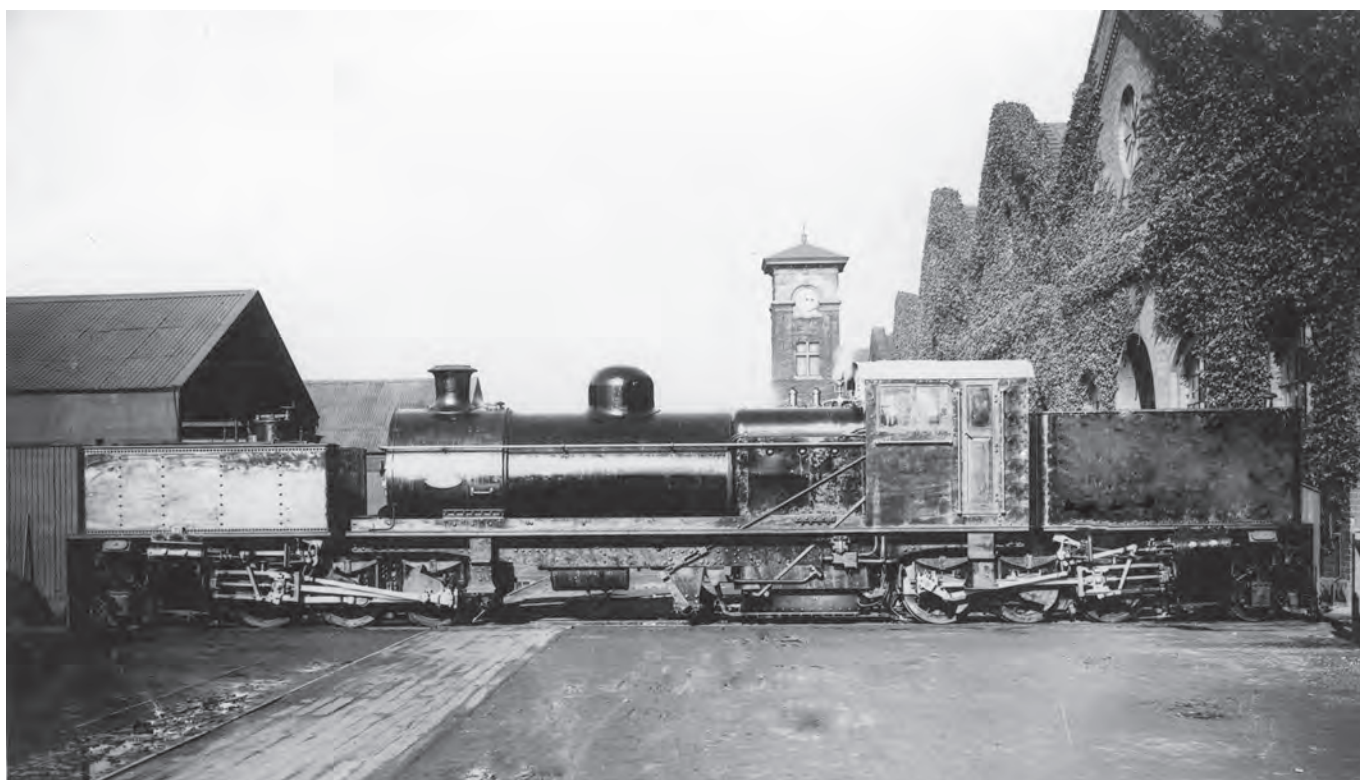
type of narrow gauge locomotive. Although the vehicle limit was fixed at 20 I understand that in practice that number of vehicles has never been taken.

The Way and Works Branch also advise (See Corres. W&W 11/10427a) that under existing conditions no increase in the maximum wheel load and the maximum total load can be permitted.

After reviewing all the circumstances, and as only one locomotive is required at present, I do not recommend any departure from the existing type of narrow gauge locomotive. Anticipating the approval of the Commissioners I have ordered two sets of material for narrow gauge locomotives to our present standard one set of which will be kept in stock as a standby.

The running of the two "Garratt" locomotives on the Main Line in Tasmania should also be watched with interest and reported upon.

**T. H. Woodroffe, Chief Mechanical Engineer**



An early photograph of a G Class 2-6-0+0-6-2 locomotive at Newport Workshops. ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 042058

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# SYDNEY YARD AT MIDNIGHT

Watercolour by Tony Bull, painted 1965



**Tony Bull comments:** I resurrected this painting of mine from a heap recently, and thought it might be of interest to *Australian Railway History* readers. I painted it whilst working in London in 1965 at the tender age of 23. Having joined the Australian Railway Historical Society in 1960, I had arranged to have my copies of the *ARHS Bulletin* (now *Australian Railway History*) and the *NSW Railway Digest* forwarded (by sea mail!) so I was fully aware (and distressed by) the gradual but inevitable disappearance of steam from the NSW Government Railways; indeed the same was happening simultaneously on British Railways.

Being also absorbed by military history, I had in previous years visited the Australian War Memorial in Canberra a number of times. There I had been struck by a monumental painting by the eminent Australian artist Sir John Longstaff, entitled *Menin Gate at Midnight*. It movingly depicts the ghosts of the dead soldiers rising from the graves of the Western Front, with the magnificent Menin Gate floodlit in the background. [The painting still hangs there to this day and still holds a magic spell.]

With this in mind, and mourning the loss of steam from Sydney Terminal Station, and perhaps with a touch of homesickness, I conceived of the idea of picturing the ghosts of the vanished steam engines reappearing and reliving their glory days at Central, as seen from the throat of Sydney Yard—hence the title *Sydney Yard at Midnight*.

Despite being on the other side of the world, having stood there on many occasions and witnessed the departure of the *Melbourne Express* and many of the night mail trains, I could easily envisage the scene in my mind's eye. I depicted streamlined and standard C38 Class locomotives, a C36 and a C32, and for good measure a C35 Class 4-6-0, which is a bit of a ring-in. Whilst these are all 'ghosts', readers will note a 'real' 46 Class electric locomotive stabled in Platform 2, whilst 'real' carriages are attached to the ghost of the C38 locomotive on Platform 4! The actual painting is about 50cm x 40cm. I eliminated all background high-rise (not that there was much then!) as it would have detracted from the subject.

## ARH Volume Numbers

Two readers have pointed out that the volume numbers for January to June 2017 are incorrect. They should be

Volume 68. My apologies for these errors.

The correct volume number appears on this issue.

Editor



## Red Hill Mayday

ARH 951, January 2017

I am disappointed that two photos in Garry Hayes story, 'Red Hill Mayday Coffs Harbour' were credited to Darby Munro, when they are actually both my photos which I printed and gave the copies to Darby Munro.

I was in Coffs Harbour on the day that the line was opened to relieve a train and work it through to Grafton, the photos were taken in Coffs Harbour yard and I have the negatives and further to that I did not give permission for the photo to be used.

In the magazine, this photo has been cropped. This is the original photo I took on the day.

*Kevin Spicer, by email*

**Editor:** We were unable to obtain any additional details regarding the source of the photographs Kevin refers to prior to publication of the article. Kevin's photo is reproduced here.



## Alan Parkinson's Career Part 3

ARH 953, March 2017

I have been following the series on Alan Parkinson with some interest. Alan was certainly a stimulating character to work with.

In relation to Part 3 of your series, I was the Way and Works Divisional Engineer at Bathurst from 1971 to 1975, and remember the upgrade of the Valley Heights depot very well. Alan had talked about what he wanted to achieve there, and Ron

Pead (Locomotive Superintendent General) asked me if I could help Alan. Appreciating common sense initiatives, such as this one by Parko, I readily agreed. Ron Pead clearly did other networking, and later on, I quietly received endorsement from my Head Office.

The major element was the extension of the roundhouse. It involved a substantial building, about 18m long

by 8m wide and 8m high, plus a long, suspended covering, linking it to the roundhouse. I gave the project to Mike Hickey, who did the structural design for the building and provided the required engineering oversight during construction.

We all knew that for the extension to do its job, the building had to be done properly. It was and it did!

*John Broadley, East Ballina, NSW 2478*

## Alan Parkinson's Career Part 4

ARH 955, May 2017

On page 11 of the May *Australian Railway History*, there is a photo of locomotives being serviced, this photo was taken at ACDEP in March 1971, I have the article that was in the *Railwayman* in-house magazine from NSWGR, concerning opening of the new servicing Depot at Eveleigh. The caption under the photo says it is DELEC.

On page 14, there is a photo of four diesel locomotives at Lithgow Depot, I

think you will find that 4443 is 4449, and that 4473 is in fact, 4477, the reason that I mention 4473, when it was delivered new it was fitted with the standard head light assembly at the No. 2 end, as seen in a photo taken at DELEC with X33 on the 27 September 1966. This photo was in the August 1975 issue of *Newsrail* magazine. When I saw 4473 at Broken Hill in the early 1970s it was fitted with the horizontal headlight on the No. 2 end from either

a 45 or a 48 Class locomotive. It still had this assembly by 1978, as shown in the photo on page 104 of is in Ron Preston's book on the 44 Class locomotives taken by Leon Oberg. In the *Train Hobby* book on the 44's, it is stated that 4473 was fitted with horizontal rectangular headlight when it was in reverse livery, this not true.

Hope you don't think I am knit picking but they are the facts.

*Peter Cooke, Mt Victoria, NSW*

**Editor:** This photo was a late substitution in the article. A close inspection of the enlarged image reveals that the 44 Class locos are 4477, 4471 and 4479. Thanks to Peter for updating this.

The article on Alan Parkinson by Colin Bull in the May edition of your magazine mentions Alan's experiences with the GM engines in the Australian

Navy's Oberon class submarines.

*Weyers Warships of the World* in its 1973 and 1978 editions show that this class of submarine was fitted with Admiralty Standard Range Diesel Engines powering English Electric Motors for all 27 built. This was made up of 13 for the Royal Navy, six for the Royal Australian Navy, three for the Royal Canadian Navy, three for Chile

and two for Brazil.

The Submarine Institute of Australia on its web page does not mention any change of engines to GMs in the course of their service with the RAN, though they had improvements made to their sensors and fire control systems.

*Austin Mooney, Goulburn NSW*

## The Norton Griffiths Saga

ARH 955, May 2017

Further to Neville Pollard's article (ARH May) concerning the Norton Griffiths contract arrangements, there remain unanswered questions about that firm's contribution to the City Railway. I have recently been working with an extensive photo collection (NRS 16669 – City Railway Progress Photos) held in the SRA archives at NSW State Archives and Records.

In particular, Item 1 of that set contains pictures taken between November 1916 and September 1917. Those from 1916 seem to confirm Neville's article in that they show little more than the loose soil removed from the route of the tunnels through the Botanical Gardens near the Macquarie Street overbridge and behind the Conservatorium of Music, and no work underway at the date of the photos. This would be the reasonable limit of work if Norton Griffiths had been unable to obtain tools, as is stated by the author.

The photos from early 1917 show considerable progress, with the open cut tunnels excavated to full depth and parts of the brick walls and arched

roofs completed. This again seems to be consistent with the transfer of responsibility for construction to the Railways at the beginning of 1917 and their apparent ability to locate tools, including a steam driven 'channeling machine', whose operation will warrant further research. Nevertheless two photos, one at Belmore Park and the other near Wynyard, are captioned as showing the work on 14 May 1917, and noting that Norton Griffiths had ceased work two days earlier. Other photos of about the same date showing demolition between Campbell and Goulburn Streets draw attention to 'debris left on site', apparently in criticism of the previous contractor.

In June 1971 ARHS *Bulletin* published an article about the phases of the City Railway by R F Wylie who was personally involved in the work. It would seem that Norton Griffiths continued with the work in the Botanical Gardens, though answering to the Railways rather than the Public Works Department after the beginning of 1917 and a new contract was made dated the 24th April, though only ten

days later the whole arrangement was cancelled and work generally ceased. The Department did continue work on the bridge under Macquarie Street and the tunnel portal as well as sections which would deteriorate unduly during abandonment. The bridge was completed, and Macquarie Street restored to full use by the middle of 1918. To finalise the contract, the completed work needed to be costed and Wylie was seconded to work with the Government Accountant and Norton Griffiths to establish the quantities.

Thus it would seem that Norton Griffiths' involvement with the City Railway ended in the first half of May 1917. Close study of the dated photos in NRS16669 shows derelict worksites in early May, and great activity later in that month as the Railways took over the work using their own direct employees. Whether this date corresponds to the end of Norton Griffiths' work on the many other projects which were contracted to them is unknown. Two of the images are reproduced here.

*Bill Phippen, ARHSnsw RRC manager*



Preliminary work at Harrington Street showing offices and other buildings when Norton Griffiths and Co ceased work, 12 May 1917. NRS 16669 1-141



Looking east from near Macquarie Street with great activity on tunnel construction under Government House Drive, 22 May 1917. NRRS 16669 1-145





W Class 4-8-2 locomotive No. W 930 heads an east-bound goods train at Kojonup with the goods shed on the right, 15 September 1962.  
A GRUNBACH PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 092081

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