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# RAILWAY

## HISTORY™



FOR ALL WHO ARE INTERESTED IN RAILWAYS

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

### **ALAN PARKINSON'S STORY**

Pt 5: Railway disasters, collisions and derailments

### **KATANNING-DONNYBROOK**

Part 2: A WAGR cross-country line

### **COOTAMUNDRA BRANCHES**

Memories of the 1974 RTM tour

*Journal of the Australian Railway Historical Society*



Fireman Brian Henderson filling the tender of a W Class 4-8-2 locomotive from the water tank at Nookanellup in 1969. B HENDERSON PHOTO, RAIL HERITAGE WA, P12836. Part 2 of the Katanning–Donnybrook cross-country line commences on page 14.



Branchline locomotive 48109 heads the mixed train of freight wagons, an MHG guards van and BL First Class carriage on No. 384 down the range from Batlow on 16 February 1974. BRIAN WOOLLEY PHOTO. An account of the 1974 South West Branches tour commences on page 21.

## EDITORIAL

Alan Parkinson has submitted an additional article to cover his railway career, this time describing the role of the teams responsible for attending railway accidents, the equipment they used and the specific accidents in which he was responsible for supervising the recovery effort between 1965 and 1992. A number of these, including the Granville disaster in January 1977, involved fatalities. The article is illustrated with images from Alan's collection and some from his colleague Brian Arndell.

Rod Milne's account of the cross-country line from Katanning to Donnybrook concludes this month. Part 2 covers the changes in locomotives and train operations over the years, winding-up with the closure of the line. The section between Katanning and Boyup Brook closed in June 1982, but the remainder to Donnybrook continued for seasonal traffic until 15 July 1987. The article concludes with a brief account of the heritage railway operations and museums that remain today.

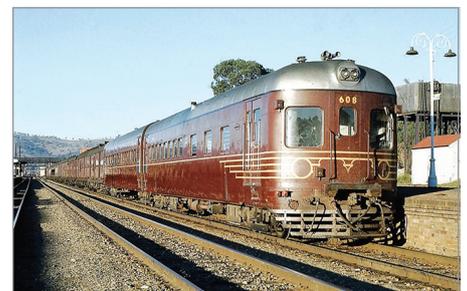
Brian Woolley submitted the previously unpublished and amusing account of the September 1974 tour undertaken by members of the then NSW Rail Transport Museum to explore the various branch lines of the Cootamundra District written by the late John Youngman. It is illustrated by photos taken by Brian during the tour.

Greg Blackwell presents the results of his research into the two Coombing Park sidings or branches and the train operations to uplift iron ore from the Coombing Park mine to the Lithgow iron and steel works. The issue rounds off with readers' letters.

*Robert Fero Kilop*

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Cover Image: The two-car diesel train 608/708 and the *South Mail* train at Cootamundra Station on 17 February 1974 prior to the RTM tour. BRIAN WOOLLEY 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.



The Craven 70-ton capacity diesel breakdown crane LC 1073 at Broadmeadow Depot in the 1990s. ALAN PARKINSON COLLECTION

## RAILWAY DISASTERS, COLLISIONS AND DERAILMENTS

### Alan Parkinson concludes his railway career story

During my railway career in the Department of Railways, in addition to managing different facilities statewide (as covered in Parts 1 to 4 of Colin Bull's account of my career), it was my responsibility to oversee and direct the recovery activities following accidents that had occurred on the New South Wales railway system.

To my knowledge there has not been any written evidence-based account covering the accident scene in order to enable the restoration of scheduled train services. The causes and responsibilities in each case are not discussed in the article, as they have been covered in previous writings and tabled for further investigations.

### DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

Following a railway collision or derailment, evidence is collected by the branch representatives who were present at the accident site. This evidence is then presented to the Board of Enquiry, which is responsible for determining the cause of the accident and responsibility for its occurrence, being either a person or a particular branch and, from this, recommendations were made regarding changes to work practices or regulations to ensure that such occurrences are not repeated. If there is not unanimous agreement by the Board of Enquiry, a minority report can be submitted by the dissenting branch member on the board.

Following the accident report, higher grade officers up to departmental heads of each division generally undertake further review of the evidence in order to make a final determination of the cause of the accident and associated responsibilities for the division. This may involve further interviews by the officers in attendance at the accident scene

or other employees involved if required. Where there were fatalities, the coroner undertook independent investigations from those undertaken by the Railway Department. This was, in effect, a judicial enquiry that prevented the Railway Department from publishing any information on the said accident until the coroner released his or her report.

### EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

As a result of the ravages of World War II, railway systems across Australia suffered from funding shortages that curtailed the effective operation of their networks. It was a period when existing equipment had to be kept in service until more modern locomotives and rolling stock eventually became available.

In terms of equipment for recovery from accidents in New South Wales, the following equipment was available during World War II and subsequent years:

#### Accident cranes

- Two 60-ton capacity, steam operated Craven Bros cranes;
- Three 30-ton capacity steam operated cranes (maker unknown); and
- One 30-ton capacity diesel-operated Craven Bros crane.

#### Jacking equipment

Various types of jacks, either hydraulic or hand-operated, up to 50-ton capacity:

- Trewella-type or Norton, up to 10-ton capacity; and
- Various screw-type bottle jacks, up to 10-tons capacity.

During 1950, each major accident centre was equipped with German-made MFD hydraulic jacking equipment.



The Krupp crane at Enfield after upgrading to 150-tonne capacity. It was subsequently based at Lithgow Loco Depot. ALAN PARKINSON COLLECTION

Towards the end of 1959, a decision was made to convert the two Craven 60-ton cranes from steam to diesel operation, increasing their lifting capacity to 70-tons. After further investigation, an order was placed with the Krupp Company in Germany to supply two steam-powered cranes each capable of lifting 120 tons. These cranes arrived in the early 1950s, but only one was assembled. Being steam-operated, there were operating difficulties, so the crane was set aside at DELEC in Enfield for many years. Some years later this crane had its main beam bent at an accident site, so it was replaced from the non-assembled crane. The second crane was never assembled.

Following my appointment as Chief Maintenance Manager, I consulted with Ron Preston, then Works Manager at Cardiff Workshops, to place the Krupp crane at his centre for conversion to diesel operation and raise its lifting capacity to 150-tonnes. On completion of this work, the crane was sent to the Lithgow Locomotive Depot, providing the overall network with a high-capacity rail-mounted lifting crane that could be moved quickly to an accident site. Most of the New South Wales rail network was not accessible by road, so mobile road cranes could not be used at many accident sites.

Given this constraint, I made enquiries regarding the use of two Caterpillar D9 bulldozers fitted with jib cranes as used by many American railways for re-railing locomotives and wagons after accidents. The idea was soon put to rest due to weight limits on roads and bridges around the state.

So it was back to a heavy-lift rail-mounted crane for major accidents.

Following discussions with senior executives and the Chief Engineering Officer, I was asked to seek estimates from companies in the United Kingdom and Germany. Specifications were prepared by Des Milton, the Operations Trouble Officer in the Design Section, and myself. Quotes were received from Cowans Sheldon in the United Kingdom and Krupp in Germany, with the former being acceptable in terms of both price and crane capacity. Given that we already had the 150-tonne capacity Krupp crane, only one crane of 150-tonne capacity was ordered, which entered service at the end of 1994.

## RAILWAY ACCIDENTS

The following offers an abbreviated summary of a selection of the many railway accidents where I had responsibility for the clearing methods.



Piled-up wagons in the yard at Wentworth Falls following the derailment there in the early hours of 17 July 1965. CLIVE KEENAN PHOTO

## Wentworth Falls, 17 July 1965

Train No. 202, Lithgow to Sydney with 44 wagons, derailed completely at Wentworth Falls at 04:40. I was advised at 05:00 of the incident and requested the services of the breakdown gang and informed Jack Goodwin, the Mechanical Branch Operating Trouble Officer of the accident.

The Valley Heights breakdown unit departed by road at 06:30, arriving at the accident scene by 07:15. It was a scene of devastation never to be forgotten. Electric locomotive 4620 was on its side in the open area adjoining the refuge siding. The wagons were clear of the refuge siding and mainline tracks, but were all stacked up on top of each other. This situation had been created by the leading wagon, a UME bogie flat-wagon loaded with rails, which had turned sideways and tipped on its edge, thereby creating a large barrier to the following wagons colliding with locomotive 4620, which could have possibly killed the crew, but fortunately they escaped unharmed. The guard, who had been trapped in his trailing van, was released by members of the breakdown gang.

The whole area was covered with cement, slag and bogie goods wagons such as BCH and BRH hoppers, together with four-wheel S, K and RU four-wheel trucks. Three bogie louver wagons were in a tangled heap, while several BCH coal hopper wagons were found in the front of houses of a nearby street. Out of the dust and cement, an old lady still dressed in her night attire emerged upset that

“something horrible was at the base of her bed”. We entered her home to find a buffer off an ‘S’ type wagon had gone through her roof! How fortunate was this lady!

Jack Goodwin arrived with the Enfield accident gang around 09:00, so we assessed the disaster scene. Jack suggested we ‘toss a coin’ to determine who would re-rail the wagons and locomotive 4620. Naturally, Jack won and his crew had more advanced MFD equipment than mine.

In order to expedite the clearing operation, I arranged with the Per Way officials to install temporary points in the refuge siding and build a track out to the wreckage, while requesting a more powerful locomotive to haul each vehicle from the wreckage. An AD60 Class Garratt locomotive arrived, but this was not suitable for the task as I needed a 45 Class diesel-electric locomotive. Initially this was declined, but after conferring with the CME, a 45 Class locomotive arrived and proved to be most successful in this task.

After surveying the pile of wagons, I could see that a mobile crane was also needed. I contacted my old friend Wilfred Jones, the Works Manager at Clyde Wagon Works, as he had just taken delivery of two new 20-ton capacity mobile cranes. I used the excuse that the wagons were his and the cranes arrived at 14:00 that day, together with several semi-trailers. The loading of the derailed wagons then commenced, while the Enfield Gang lifted locomotive 4620 and placed a portable turntable underneath, thereby enabling it to be moved and placed on the temporary track prior to its removal to Enfield in Sydney.

It is interesting to note that one of these cranes found its way to the Valley Heights Locomotive Depot some 15 years later. After that depot took delivery of a new 30-ton crane, the old mobile crane was transferred to the Lithgow Depot.

During the second day of work at the derailment scene it snowed during the night. On returning to the site, I found that a water main had burst under the weight of the train wreckage, so I was greeted by the sight of snow covering the wreck and water shooting skywards in the centre. In all, it took ten days to complete the clearing of the site.

## Glenbrook, 16 January 1976

Around 23:00 on 16 January, I received a call from West Control to advise that a freight train from Sydney hauled by a 46 Class electric locomotive had run into the rear of a four-car double-deck interurban electric train just outside the Glenbrook Tunnel.

Following the Wentworth Falls smash, our breakdown gang had been supplied with motor vehicles and more MFD jacking equipment. We arrived on the collision scene at 00:30 as access to the site and the tunnel was easy. The electric locomotive had completely demolished the rear carriage of the four-car interurban train, while a number of four-wheel ‘S’ wagons had become derailed, some of them in the tunnel.

Operating Trouble Officer Kevin Chapman and members of the Enfield breakdown crew arrived around 02:00. With assistance by ambulance officers and police, passengers on the interurban train were taken to Glenbrook Station for further treatment.

I set about re-railing the vehicles in the tunnel using the MFD equipment to enable the freight train and damaged locomotive to be removed from the tunnel in a ‘wrong line movement’.

The leading vehicles of the freight train had climbed onto the locomotive buffers, while the rear carriage of the inter-urban train was badly smashed. It was strange that the locomotive rear headlight, including the glass, was not broken, although a mark had been made on the lagging of an oil tank wagon.

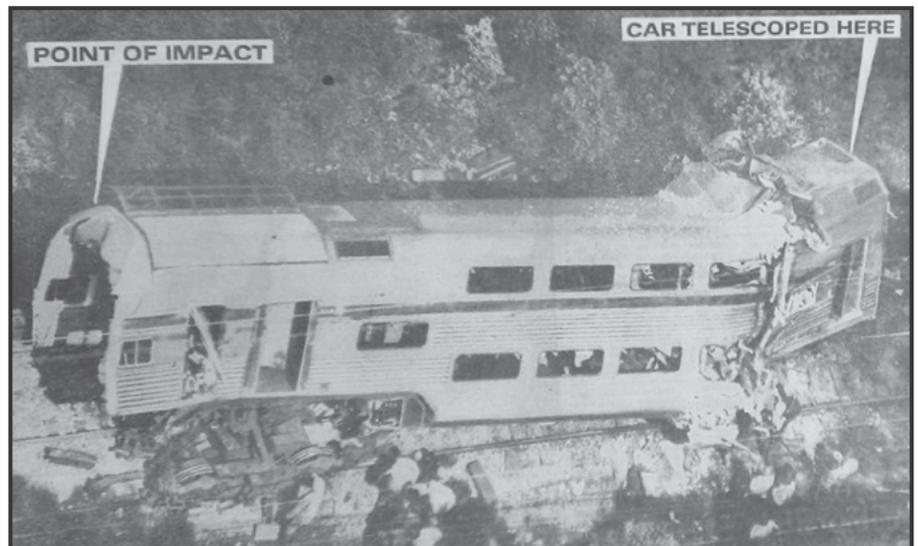
With the freight train being pulled back to Emu Plains, we set about planning how to handle the ‘crippled’ EMU motor carriage. Several other senior offi-

cers had arrived by this time, including my superintendent, George Tolhurst and the National Parks and Wild Life superintendent. We decided to lift the carriage over the brick wall adjacent to the Down main line using MFD equipment in order to avoid interference with the overhead electric wiring. There was a reasonably flat area on the other side of the retaining wall to handle the carriage, but prior to any movement, the Way and Works Gang built a retaining wall to prevent the carriage plunging down the mountain side into the river some 250 metres below.

Using the MFD jacks, the carriage was lifted up. It was intended that the bogies would remain on the track, but the No. 1 bogie was jammed under the crippled end of the carriage. As the carriage was lifted over the brick wall the bogie went with it. It rolled twice due to the added weight of the bogie and continued rolling down the mountain side smashing all in its path. The 30-tonne missile finally came to rest some 220 metres down the mountain side. The bogie detached on the way down!

My supervisor asked: “What was the next solution?” I suggested climbing down and stripping the carriage of electrical equipment and seats. Continuing my ‘suggestion’ I stated: “leave the carriage there so it could be seen as a ‘Wildlife Motel’ with birdlife upstairs and snakes and similar wildlife below”. The National Parks superintendent failed to see humour in the suggestion and responded: “You have 14 days to clear it out of the National Park.”

Giving the challenge more thought, I felt the Air Force could be asked to make a large helicopter available to lift



An aerial photograph from the *Daily Telegraph* showing the extensive damage to power car DCF 8004 outside Glenbrook Tunnel on 16 January 1976. ALAN PARKINSON COLLN.

the carriage off the hillside. This would require the carriage to be cut into three pieces as the helicopter could only lift a maximum of 10 tonnes at a time. Then Jack Bannister, the Chief Mechanical Engineer, arrived on the scene, so I advised him of the plan. He agreed to take the matter up with the Air Force, which responded positively to the proposal.

My breakdown gang and staff from the Fleet Train Running Services set about cutting the carriage into three pieces and removing the seats and electrical equipment. It was a challenging assignment with numerous problems, particularly:

- The carriage was balancing on the cliff edge facing the possibility of falling a further 200 metres into the Glenbrook Creek. It had to be stabilised using cables attached to large trees.
- The dangerous materials used in insulation of the carriage ceilings which expelled dangerous gases when heated. The insulation had to be removed before cutting could commence.

The removal of electrical equipment and other items took two weeks of very difficult work, so I needed to be on site each day.

Prior to finalising use of the helicopter, George Tolhurst suggested that we try to roll the carriage up the hill by using a large Hauser snatch block embedded in the railway bank on the main line attached to a locomotive. This attempt was unsuccessful, so my proposal to use the helicopter was accepted. I was asked to contact the Eastern Command Headquarters at Glenbrook and arrangements were in place by the Monday of week three following the accident.

I met with the helicopter pilot at the helipad at Glenbrook. To my surprise, he had attended the same school as me, namely Homebush Boys High School. I was taken up in the helicopter over the smash site to discuss with the crew how best to remove the carriage pieces from the mountain side. The group captain saw the lifting as a new 'exercise' for his men. A special forces group would organise the rigging for the lift. A heavy media presence was anticipated on the hillside for the lift, so I suggested that they not be told the exact day of the event.

In practice, the lift took two days. On the first, the two ends of the carriage and the bogie were lifted out of the gorge, leaving the main middle section for the second day. We were now feeling confident regarding the lift, so the media were advised of the date. The helicopter hovered around 50 metres above the ground while hausers were attached to the gondola section of the carriage, then it slowly lifted the load some 30 metres off the ground when there was a loud 'bang' as the sling suddenly broke and down came the carriage with all those on the ground running for their lives.

The officer in charge of the Special Forces group inspected the sling and said we would find ourselves in trouble. An inspector from the Air Force Safety Bureau was standing on the main line with railway officials. He quickly made his way down the mountain to examine the problem. In response to my query regarding what could be done next, he explained that the equipment had been 'pinched' from the Americans in Vietnam. It had been found in a container 'half full of sea water' on a beach. When the inspector examined the break, I explained that it was possible I had underestimated the weight of the carriage. Fortunately there were no injuries and the damaged carriage was only to be used for scrap.

The removal had been attempted in order to satisfy the



The RAAF heavy-lift helicopter preparing to raise a cut-up section of the V-set driving trailer car from the gorge adjacent to Glenbrook Tunnel in January 1976. CLIVE KEENAN PHOTO

National Parks & Wildlife officers and the clearing work continued. The Air Force officer thanked me for getting him out of what could have been a sticky situation.

### **Granville Disaster, 18 January 1977**

Australia's worst rail disaster occurred at the Bold Street overbridge at Granville during the morning peak-hour on 18 January 1977 when the electric locomotive, again No. 4620, on commuter Train No. 108 from Mount Victoria derailed as it passed under the road overbridge at Bold Street, which collapsed and crushed the timber carriages which were the third and fourth cars on the train. All the carriages derailed.

I received a phone call from Superintendent General Ray Hull at 09:00 that morning to go immediately to Granville Station where there had been a total passenger train derailment. I was to take all available MDF re-railing equipment and we would be assisting the Enfield crew. A police escort would be provided from Penrith.

We arrived at 10:00 and quickly realised the gravity of the tragedy. Our instructions were to do whatever we could to assist the removal of trapped passengers. Although derailed, the locomotive was clear of the collapsed overbridge and out of the way.

I sent my gang to place our 120-tonne MFD jack around the bridge structure, which had crushed carriages three and four. I could hear a voice under the rubble, so I crawled beneath the concrete slab to find a young man trapped beneath another steel section of the bridge. A paramedic officer climbed into this section with me together with Les Dukes, one of my crew. We inserted a 20-ton MFD jack to lift the steel section while the paramedic administered pain-killing drugs to the man.



Rescuers assisting injured passengers in the crushed carriages under the Bold Street overbridge, 18 January 1977.  
BOB O'LOUGHLIN PHOTO

I gave the order to start lifting, but this was stopped by Superintendent General Ray Hull, as a Police Superintendent had told Ray that the Premier had directed that a senior police officer was seen as the most 'suitable' person to co-ordinate the rescue effort. Ray ordered that all railway personnel stop what they were doing and await further directions.

Evidently, it was the police superintendent's intention to break-up the bridge with mechanical hammers (rock breakers). At this time, there was a dispute between the Police Department, Ambulance officials and the Fire Brigade over who had authority during major disasters such as this.

None of the Railway Department personnel were involved even though this was a major railway incident. The superintendent's decision significantly impacted on the assistance of our breakdown gangs, so I decided to speak to him. I asked if he had any knowledge or understanding of railway recovery procedures or the use of specific railway accident equipment? I suggested he look at the 112-ton locomotive on its side and advised that the 70-ton rail accident crane would shortly arrive, which could have the locomotive uprighted within 20 minutes.

When the accident crane arrived I asked Jim Slattery, the train crew ganger I had worked with on many occasions: "You have 60 minutes to re-rail the locomotive"; to which he replied: "What is your next hard job?" The locomotive was re-railed and I advised the police superintendent of our achievement, adding: "Perhaps you can see what we are trained to do". He walked away saying: "We will do it our way"

The Bold Street Bridge was cut up for removal and then, to 'add salt to the wounds' the police superintendent asked us



Rescuers setting ropes to lift the Bold Street overbridge from the crushed carriages using MFD hydraulic jacking equipment.  
BOB O'LOUGHLIN PHOTO

to cut up the steel frame for the bridge and, once all the bodies had been removed, he said: "The site is all yours now" and walked away.

Evidently, the lack of clear direction on who was responsible for the accident site went higher up the chain of command, for just six weeks later police rescue teams were sent to DELEC Locomotive Depot at Enfield to gain experience in how railway accident equipment was operated. It needs to be stated that on the ground, the police, ambulance crews and fire brigade worked tirelessly day and night to save passengers and clear the wreckage of this tragic accident.

Somehow, following the accident I received a 'Bravery Medal' with Letters of Commendation from the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition for my contribution at the site.

### Valley Heights collision, 18 July 1982

During my time managing the former Valley Heights Locomotive Depot as an electric locomotive rebuilding and wagon repair facility, West Control advised me at 22:00 hours of a major collision in Valley Heights yard. I quickly called the shed foreman to request assistance from the breakdown gang, ambulance officers and the police.

On arrival at the signal box, I asked the signalman where the collision had occurred and was advised it was near the Way and Works Training Centre. On arrival at the refuge siding I was confronted with an unpleasant sight. Four WH bogie wheat hopper wagons and a bogie freight van were all derailed and stacked up against electric locomotives 8505 and 8509 heading a Down coal train, which had run into the rear of a wheat train in the refuge siding. The brake van had mounted locomotive 8505, completely crushing its cabin. I could see the train guard was trapped in the van, which was on its side and on top of 8505. I reported the severity of the smash to our Superintendent General, Ray Hull, who resided in Valley Heights at that time.

Following the arrival of the breakdown gang, we commenced cutting the guard out of the wreck. When we finally reached him, a LP gas cylinder (used for heating the van in winter) was dislodged from its brackets, so we removed this and released the guard.

We then entered the crushed cabin



Rescue workers place the hook of a mobile crane to lift damaged wheat hopper wagons at Valley Heights on 19 July 1982. The tangled mess of electric locomotive 8505's driving cabin is evident. TED DIXON PHOTO

of 8505 where I discovered the body of the driver still sitting trapped in his seat. By this time the ambulance crew had arrived, together with Ray Hull, so I briefed Ray on the situation. I then left my crew to assist the ambulance crew in releasing the body, before returning to the signal box to interview the signalman. He stated that the accepting signal was set at stop prior to the departure of the coal train in the refuge siding. It was obvious that the driver of 8505 had completely ignored the signal, resulting in the collision.

The Traffic Inspector at Katoomba asked me if we were holding another guards van in the depot? If so, this would allow the coal train to be re-marshalled and dispatched, leaving

clear access to the derailed wagons and locomotive 8505. The second train was hauled back to Penrith by a 46 Class electric locomotive ex-pilot duties after locomotive 8509 had been certified as okay to continue.

Ray Hull asked how should we attack the mess before us? I proposed we obtain the services of two new 30-ton capacity mobile cranes that had been allocated to the Clyde Wagon Workshops, so Ray asked if we could get the cranes that day. I agreed to check this out with the Clyde Works manager, Jack Gearin, as I had previously worked with him at the Chullora Rollingstock Aircraft Workshop and had his phone number. The cranes arrived and we quickly lifted all the



The accident gang and mobile cranes clearing the accident site at Valley Heights in July 1982. TED DIXON PHOTO

damaged vehicles and replaced their bogies, before placing them in the wagon repair road at the Valley Heights Depot to await repair, while the guards van was placed on a semi-trailer and taken to the Clyde Wagon Workshops. This was another example of using mobile cranes to avoid disturbance of overhead electric wires, which would have been necessary if the 70-ton rail-mounted crane was used.

During my haste to clear the wreckage, I suddenly remembered the 'observer' crew member on locomotive 8505. I returned to the signal box where the officer on duty advised me that I had not noticed him sitting on a seat in the corner of the box waiting for a taxi to take him home to Lithgow. The observer did not want anyone to see him, but I advised the police, who had him placed under custody at his home. If he had been in the cabin of 8505, he would have been killed. I was not involved in the subsequent Inquiry, so I cannot comment on its outcome.

### Springwood derailment, 20 August 1987

At 12:00 on 29 August 1987 the Chief Mechanical Engineer, Bill Casley, advised me that the two leading carriages of Sydney to Lithgow double-deck interurban train had derailed at Springwood. The leading car had finished up an embankment and into the street below Macquarie Road, completely blocking it, while the second carriage had derailed at one end, but was still attached to the leading car.

I was relieving the Metropolitan Manager, who was on annual leave, so Harry Cross was Acting Manager at Valley Heights, but Bill Casley directed me to go to Springwood to take charge

of the situation. Prior to departing my Pitt Street office, I contacted Harry Cross who was able to describe the derailment.

I asked him to get in touch with Wilson Cranes at Blacktown to order a second 40-tonne capacity crane to back-up our new 40-tonne mobile crane. I also asked the on-site crew to use the spreader beam to hold the rear-end of the second carriage before cutting the draw-gear between the carriages in order to avoid the leading carriage tipping over.

While driving to Springwood, I got in touch with Bill Casley and requested him to contact the railway garage and order two semi-trailers and a 'jinker semi' with extended trailer as I was planning to take the first carriage out by road. The second carriage would be re-railed with MFD equipment.

On arrival at Springwood Station, the Traffic Inspector reported that he had found several track fish plates, dog spikes and rail chairs over the head of the rail placed by a unknown person which caused the carriages to derail. All passengers and the driver were uninjured. Harry Cross had waited for my arrival before the breakdown crew cut the coupling. Once this was completed, the rear two carriages were returned to Valley Heights, leaving the second carriage to be re-railed using MFD equipment.

The Traffic Inspector was concerned to have the main line cleared before the evening peak period, so I responded we would do our best. By then, the second crane had arrived, enabling the first carriage to be lifted off the embankment, thereby clearing the main line. The police assisted by closing Macquarie Road indefinitely

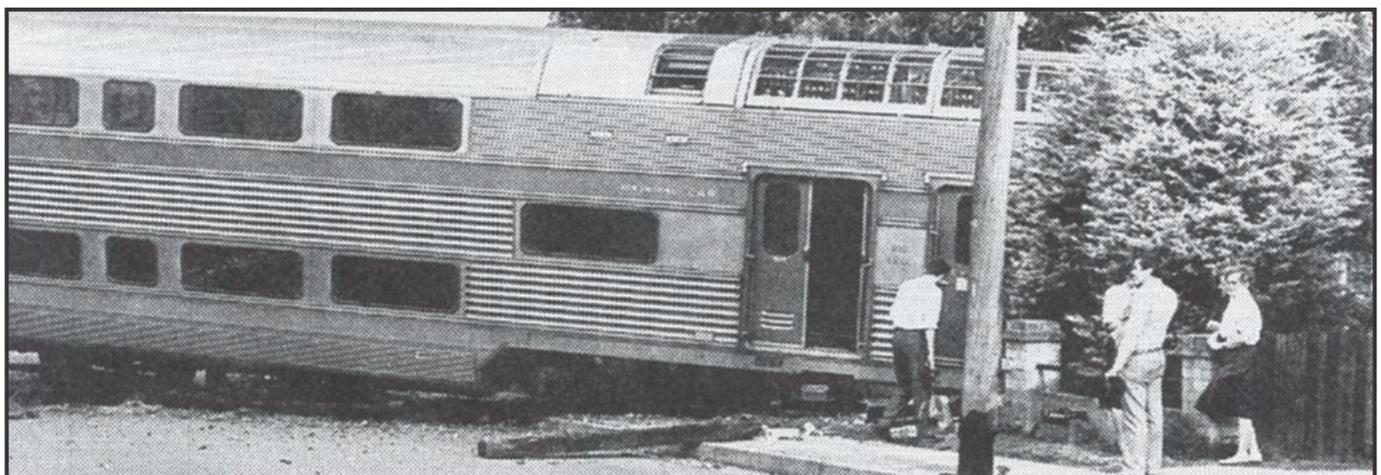
lyas the carriage and its bogie had completely taken over the street area, just clearing its houses. Following the arrival of the semi-trailers from Sydney around 18:30, the carriage was lifted off its bogies and loaded on, while the second bogie was placed on a jinker semi with extendable sides.

The next challenge was how to get the carriage to the Great Western Highway. The semi-trailer driver posed this challenge to me, so we both walked the full length of Macquarie Road to the Falconbridge level-crossing gates. In particular, we noted the electrical wiring to houses and the level crossing gates, which had to be disconnected by the Signal Branch. This required the Blue Mountains railway inspectors to alert their staff of having to lift the wires clear in order to enable the semi-trailer to proceed.

Returning to the accident site, I spoke to the police regarding the actions required to get the carriage out to the highway. They were most helpful, offering to control the traffic to facilitate the semi-trailer getting to the highway and then providing a police escort all the way to Sydney.

The two cranes lifted the carriage into the air, the semi-trailer was backed under it and the carriage was secured ready to depart. On arrival at the highway, due to the length of the carriage, the semi-trailer was forced to move across the Highway blocking both lanes of traffic, so the police stopped the traffic while the driver manoeuvred his way through.

A local bus shelter was struck, resulting in its demolition, but there was no damage to the semi-trailer, so it was able to proceed to Sydney. Next morning a Blue Mountains City



The lead carriage of the Sydney to Lithgow interurban V Set blocking Macquarie Road in Springwood on 20 August 1987. CLIVE KEENAN PHOTO



A policeman stands guard in Macquarie Road with the V Set lead carriage blocking the thoroughfare in August 1987. CLIVE KEENAN PHOTO

Council officer was quickly on the phone demanding a new bus shelter. I suggested he make contact with the Secretary for Railways for such a replacement.

### The Brooklyn/Cowan Bank Accident, 6 May 1990

At 20:00 on 6 May 1990, I was advised by the Control Centre that a collision had occurred outside the southern end of No. 3 Tunnel on Cowan Bank at 19:30 with an interurban double-deck electric train smashed into the rear of a steam hauled passenger train, resulting in a serious accident. I was briefed that Operations Trouble Officer, Des Milton, and the Enfield emergency unit had been notified.

I left home by car and arrived at the accident site at 22:00. Des Milton and I agreed on a plan for clearing the line, while ambulances and buses were transporting the injured and other passengers from the site. I met with the driver of the heritage train who advised that the driving wheels had gone into a violent spin, so he applied sand to the track in an effort to overcome the spin. He then opened the throttle, but the locomotive went into a further spin, before continuing about a train length out of No. 3 tunnel. Several more attempts to start the train were made, but each time there was violent spinning of the driving wheels, so he set the train back towards the tunnel while continuing to use sand to enable the locomotive to re-position itself before restarting the train back towards the tunnel and dropping sand

to improve adhesion. Then there was a violent crash from behind the train, breaking the coupling between the locomotive and the leading carriage. As the locomotive had the throttle open, it surged forward at least 12 metres.

My inspection of the train revealed that two of the carriages had their hand-brakes half applied by an unauthorised person. This was an old trick sometimes applied by people travelling on heritage trains in order to make the steam locomotive work harder on banks, thereby giving more smoke and better sound effects for photographers.

While I was examining the train, the new Executive Director of Compliances, Tony Boland, came on site and asked me what I had found.



SRA breakdown teams removing the debris from the driving car of the V Set following the collision with the stalled heritage train hauled by locomotive 3801, 6 May 1990. STEVEN STEWART, SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, ALAN PARKINSON COLLECTION

As I described my assessment, which he accepted, he asked me: "Are you going to do another Glenbrook?" I responded: "No, our plan is to clear 3801 away to Hornsby with its train, leaving the smashed rear carriage on site and clear the damaged interurban train to Gosford." 3801 and its train was sent to Cowan sidings for examination.

The smashed interurban carriage and the carriage from the heritage train were lifted with MFD equipment onto a large flat area outside the tunnel. This adjoined a large drop into a deep gully, hence Tony's comment regarding my actions following the Glenbrook smash.

After clearing the Up main line, arrangements were made to have the badly damaged vehicles removed by mobile cranes and low-loaders to return to Sydney. This required bulldozing a road into the smash site to enable the mobile cranes and low-loaders entry to the site.

It was very sad to see six fatalities from this smash, including individuals who had made significant contributions to the railway heritage movement. The accident was covered by a coronial inquiry, so I will not enter into comments regarding its findings relating to this tragic accident.

### Interstate Freight Train derailment, Condobolin, 1992

On the morning of 24 August 1992, I was advised by West Control that an interstate freight train was involved



The three 80 Class diesel-electric locomotives in the paddock at Yarrabandai together with the tangled remains of the semi-trailer, August 1992. BOB O'LOUGHLIN PHOTO

in a level-crossing road accident with a semi-trailer at Yarrabandai. The semi-trailer had stalled while crossing the main line resulting in the three locomotives on the train derailing and ending up in a paddock adjoining the railway. Several large bogie louvre vans were also derailed.

I contacted Warren Kennedy, the Manager at the Lithgow Depot and asked him to proceed to the derailment site and advise me of the situation. It was a long way to travel, so it was several hours later before Warren contacted me. He explained it was a real mess, with the three 80 Class locomotives out in the paddock and the train contents, primarily bags of fertilizer, broken and strewn along the track, so he explained that additional help was needed.

My instructions were to leave the locomotives after first making sure they were not leaking fuel or oil, while the locomotive crew and the semi-trailer driver should be taken to Condobolin Hospital for observation. I told Warren Kennedy to leave the locomotives in place until tomorrow when I would be on site. I requested the re-railing gang from Lithgow to attend the accident and I also asked Des Milton, the Operating Troubles Officer and the Enfield re-railing gang to assist.

The Chief Executive Officer, John Brew, and Bob O'Loughlin, the Metropolitan General Manager, were briefed on the situation. They asked: "What is your plan?" I responded that we would first clear the mainline to restore traffic flow, and then recover

the locomotives, which would need personal examination on site.

On arrival at the accident site, I consulted with my officers. As the wagons were well on their way to being re-railed, the train and wagons should be hauled back to Condobolin for possible disposal in Sydney once the Traffic Branch could arrange this move. Damaged wagons would be left at Condobolin until sufficient repairs could be completed to enable them to be returned to Sydney.

Recovery of the three 80 Class locomotives was clearly a job for the newly overhauled Krupp accident crane based at Lithgow and the Enfield Craven accident crane. I considered both would be required in this instance as each locomotive weighed 119.5 tonnes.



Setting up the heavy cranes by attaching concrete weights to balance both cranes prior to dragging each locomotive up to the track. BOB O'LOUGHLIN PHOTO

The leading locomotive was on its side and at least 50 metres from the track. Both its bogies were intact and attached to the underframe. The fuel tanks were also intact, so it appeared that all three locomotives had a soft landing in the paddock. There was some structural damage to all the locomotives, while the semi-trailer had been demolished, it was fortunate that the driver was not in the cabin at the time of the impact.

Our team members agreed that we would require both accident cranes and we would need exclusive use of the main line for the recovery operation. Accordingly, all interstate freight and long-distance passenger services would have to be diverted via Melbourne to allow each of the locomotives to be brought up to the main line and moved to their destination. Initially, each locomotive was lifted with MFD jacks to enable sleepers and rails to be placed under the locomotive. This would allow the cranes to drag the locomotives closer to the track for lifting, thereby avoiding further structural damage.

I felt satisfied with the agreed plans, so I returned to Sydney where I advised the senior executives of the arrangements. Their response was: "It's your baby". The Traffic Branch and the Ways and Works Branch were most cooperative, which made the job much easier. All three locomotives were successfully recovered and hauled to DELEC at Enfield. Des Milton and Warren Kennedy, the two officers in charge of this recovery did a magnificent job.



The Craven and Krupp the breakdown cranes lifting damaged locomotive 8030 onto the track near Yarrabandai in August 1992. BOB O'LOUGHLIN PHOTO

### The Nowra accident mystery, 3 October 1991

In late 1991 a 900 Class diesel train on a Wollongong to Nowra service was approaching its destination when the leading motor bogie wheel in the trailing motor car No. 958 failed. The driver heard a loud noise when approaching the station, so he went to check what had occurred. To his astonishment, a wheel set had broken through the carriage floor, but for some strange reason the bogie had not derailed.

The Assistant Manager at Port Kembla was Brian Arndell, who had previously worked with me at Valley Heights Depot as an electrician, prior to qualifying as a manager. He advised that they had a spare bogie at Port Kembla, so they would arrange for the bogie change without needing external assistance.

As the morning progressed, I received

a phone call from Tony Boland, the Director of Compliances, which covered irregularities and incidents. He said: "You will hear more of this. The lack of supervision with you and your staff will be held accountable as people could have been killed. What are you going to do about it?" I explained that action to exchange the bogie was already being carried out at Nowra, so the afternoon service could operate on time. Tony responded: "The Minister is very upset."

My assistant Martin Farley, who was in my office at the time, said that during the old Chief Mechanical Engineer (CME) days there had been a shortage of wheel sets when the 900 Class diesel trains were being built, especially motor bogie wheels. He felt sure that Tony Boland in his role as CME, had authorised the use of motor trailer wheel sets to be used as a stop gap until new supplies of motor wheel sets had been

delivered. Martin went through the old CME files and, to our surprise, he located the complete file there. Much to our surprise, there was no evidence of a directive to replace wheel sets when new motor bogie wheels became available, so trailer wheels had evidently been used ever since.

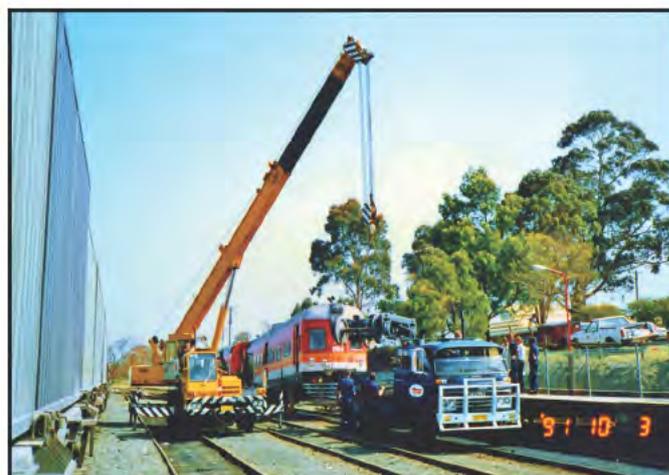
I contacted Brian Arndell, who had his staff check all wheel stock and examine 900 Class motor bogie wheel sets for possible fractures. When I received the findings of this stocktake, I went to see Bob O'Loughlin. He was very concerned over what had happened. I gave him the file and, after reading it, he advised that we should go to see the General Manager of Freight Rail. He also contacted Tony Boland and read the file contents to him. No further action was seen to be needed and the case was closed.

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The shattered leading motor bogie driving wheel of trailing DEB motor car 958 at Nowra on 9 October 1991. BRIAN ARNDELL PHOTO



The mobile crane, having lifted the rear DEB motor car No. 958, is lifting the damaged motor bogie onto a SRA lorry at Nowra on 3 October 1991. BRIAN ARNDELL PHOTO



The neat brick station building at Katanning with the goods shed in the background with four-wheel goods wagons lined up outside. With the demise of passenger services, rails formerly in the foreground had been removed.

G DORMAN PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 032157B

# KATANNING–DONNYBROOK LINE

## Part 2: Train operations and closure

Rod Milne

### TRAIN SERVICES

The service over the 131-mile long cross-country line linking Donnybrook and Katanning was characterised by slow goods and mixed trains for much of its life, with no real attempt to provide a specific service for passengers. In part, this dearth of comfort can be explained by the fact that the area was one of the first in the state to experience the ‘delights’ of WAGR road buses. In 1941, Kojonup gained a road bus service, and the rest is, as they say, history. In late 1947, mixed trains were still scheduled on the cross-country line, but they were downgraded to goods trains in 1948. A ZA brake van with passenger accommodation was provided on some trains for some years after.

The other slightly unusual thing about this meandering line were the terminating points *en route* boasting varying levels of service. In 1949, for instance, the train service comprised the following:

#### DOWN

No. 17 Stock, Tue 8.30am, Muradup–Katanning;

No. 29 Fast Goods, Mon, Wed, Fri, 5am, Boyup Brook–Kojonup;

No. 19 Goods, Sat, 10am, Boyup Brook–Katanning;

No. 21 Fast Goods, Mon, Wed, Fri, 9.05am, Boyup Brook–Katanning;

No. 27 Goods, Mon, Wed, Fri, 1.13am, Donnybrook–Boyup Brook.

#### UP

No. 28 Goods, Tue, Thu, Sat, 12.30pm, Kojonup–Donnybrook;

No. 18 Fast Goods, Tue, 4.20am, Katanning–Kojonup;

No. 20 Fast Goods, Fri, 10.45am, Kojonup–Boyup Brook;

No. 22 Fast Goods, Tue, Thu, Sat, 1.00am, Katanning–Boyup Brook.

Subsequent to this timetable being issued, the weekly stock train between Katanning and Muradup was cut back to Kojonup in September 1949, the service generally based on an arrangement whereby trains went east on alternate days and returned on the next day. This theme of intermediate terminating trains was commonplace during the line’s history, both Boyup Brook and Katanning crews running trains. For instance in June 1968, Boyup Brook, Muradup, Kojonup and Katanning were all terminating points, enjoying nine, six, four and three trains from the west per week respectively. In general the frequency of service dropped off the further east one went!

In common with many Western Australian branches, this line carried the same train numbers for decades. Initially, these numbers were 21 and 22, being carried by the year

round regular mixed, later goods train, on the Katanning–Kojonup branch line as early as 1909. By the 1960s, this number had been upgraded to three digits, 221 and 222 in accordance with a new numbering system in the district. Essentially, they were still the old Nos. 21 and 22 rebadged. Other numbers such as 225 and 229 were carried by intermediate terminating trains, like the Boyup Brook runs.

Traditionally, No 21 (later 221) the Katanning train, was an all-day run, leaving Bunbury in the morning (7.30am latterly). Boyup Brook was reached at lunch time and there was normally a layover there before going on, with Kojonup being reached in the late afternoon. Arrival at Katanning was often after dark. Monday, Wednesday and Friday were the regular running days departing Bunbury, and one train weekly would normally terminate at Kojonup, leaving only two trains a week to run on to Katanning and the GSR.

Trains were worked by crews at Donnybrook, Boyup Brook and Katanning, with the men from the latter depot normally only working as far as Kojonup. Most of the time, as was common on WAGR cross-country lines, crews changed at crossing points, and also swapped their locos there. Thus, locos returned to their home depot with the crew, ensuring Katanning's beloved fleet of locomotives remained intact. Boyup Brook had a few crews sufficient to deal with the regular service though in busier months, extra men would be posted there temporarily. In February 1969, it was reported two extra crews were based there because of heavy superphosphate, railway sleeper, wool and grain traffic.

## LOCOMOTIVES

For most of its life, this line was operated by steam locomotives. Only from the late-1960s did diesel locomotives make serious inroads, and then in the two final twilight decades of operation.

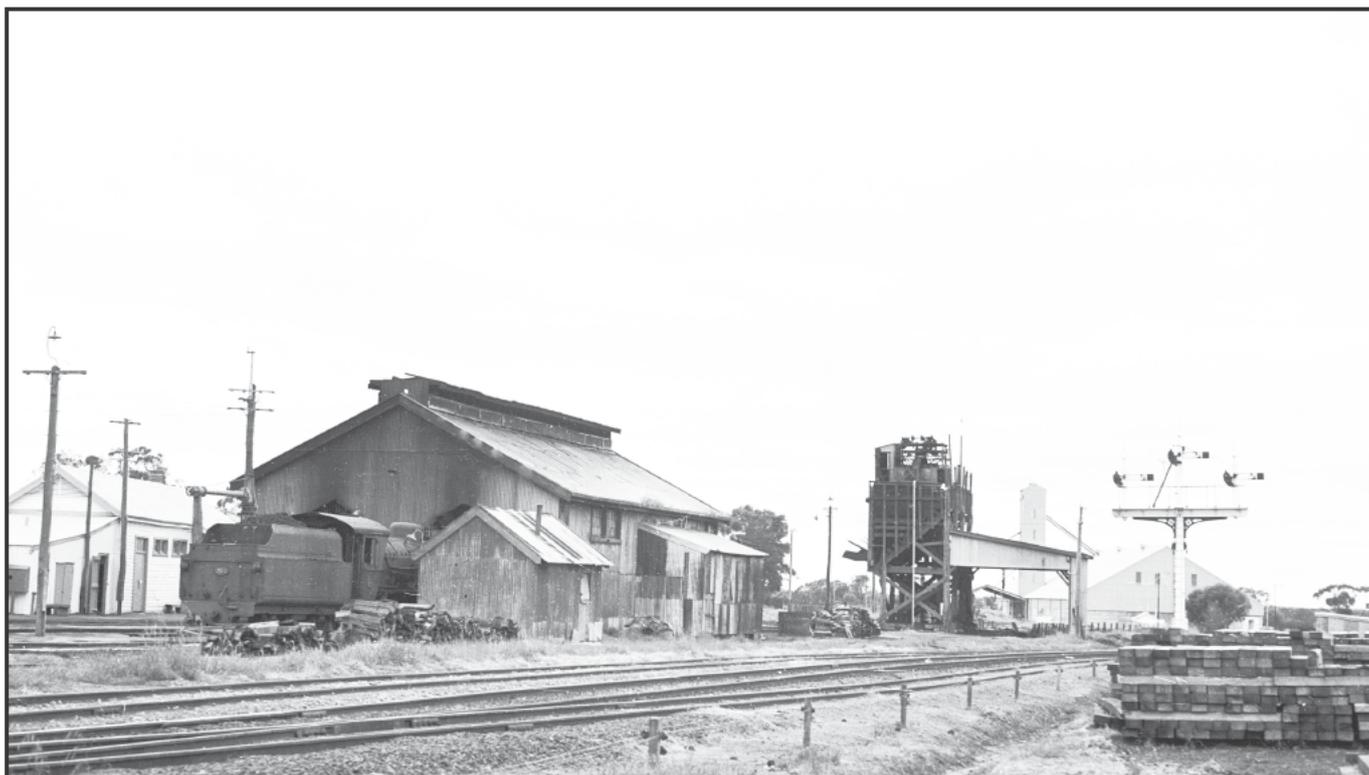
The line was available for several classes of steam locomotives, which took water *en route* at Noggerup, Boyup Brook,

Eulin, Farrar and Nookanellup. Earlier years were dominated by the tiny G Class locomotives which saw use widely across the state. Loads for O Class 2-8-0 locomotives were issued on the Boyup Brook section in 1909, and for Ms and Msa Class 2-6-0+0-6-2 Garratt locomotives in 1930. For instance, Msa No. 493 worked 22 Mixed from Katanning on 11 October 1948. Australian Standard Garratt (ASG) 4-8-2+2-8-4 locomotives had worked the railway in 1945 and on test trains in 1948, but they were not used regularly due to the lack of turning facilities at Bunbury and Katanning.

Upgrading of rural branches in the 1930s saw the elegant C Class Baldwin-built Pacific locomotives take over these services (C 440 hauled 22 Mixed on 27 February 1948), and in 1951, the even more stylish post-World War II W Class 4-8-2 locomotives appeared with No. 23 Down worked by W 956 on 12 May 1953. Alas, by the time W Class locos were placed in service, diesel-electric power was waiting in the wings, though the South West remained the last stronghold of steam power in the state until 1971.

In steam days, attached locomotives sometimes hauled heavier trains, it being reported in 1940 that a light engine regularly worked from Katanning to Kojonup to assist the heavy No. 17 Stock train. On 10 May 1963, a derailment occurred at Boyup Brook when double-headed W Class locomotives 951 and 924 worked No. 24 Goods. Only two years earlier (on 17 May 1961), Msa Class Garratts Nos. 491 and 494 headed a train at Boyup Brook.

The light track ensured that when diesel locomotives appeared on the 131-mile cross-country line, only lighter types designed for such lines were deployed. In many ways, engine loads were the key factor in the line's demise as they were reduced by heavy grades and sharp curves. The X, XA and XB Classes of diesel-electric 2-Do-2 locomotives built by Metropolitan Vickers in Stockton-on-Tees replaced the W Class steam locomotives from the late 1970. As the XB and XA types with multiple-unit capability were released from



The locomotive running shed and coal stage at Katanning with a W Class 4-8-2 locomotive in the foreground, October 1968. A GRUNBACH PHOTO, ARHSNSW RAILWAY RESOURCE CENTRE, 203369



Former Midland Company of WA Co-Co English Electric 1030hp diesel-electric locomotive G50 heads a freight train out of Donnybrook beside the Donnybrook-Boyup Brook Road on 23 March 1984. Following the reopening of Bunbury as a grain export port, this road carried high levels of road-based grain transport from the Great Southern Region.

J AUSTIN PHOTO

heavier main line tasks from the 1970s, they appeared on the line hauling heavy trains.

With their rigid frames, the 2-Do-2 Metropolitan Vickers locomotives were not kind to light tracks, and it appears they banged the permanent way around in a similar manner to their sister locomotives on the Meekatharra line. Derailments were not uncommon. A case in point being the incident on 29 December 1982 when XB 1022 *KARDAGUR* and XB 1017 *EWENYOON* derailed with a Boyup Brook train near Newgalup. The damage resulted in *KARDAGUR* being permanently withdrawn from traffic. Examples of latter-day rostering include the following:

2/2/70	229 Goods	Boyanup
X 1014		
9/2/70	229 Goods	Boyup Brook
X 1029		
10/7/81	Kojonup Goods	Kojonup
X 1030		
10/7/81	Up Goods	Kojonup
XA 1410/XA 1416		
12/1/82	Down Goods	Dinninup
XA 1406/XA 1408		
23/3/82	Up Goods	Kojonup
XB 1004/XA 1411		
15/4/82	Down Goods	Muradup
XA 1406/XB 1020		
29/12/82	Down Goods	Boyup Brook
X 1001		

Other light diesel-electric locomotives were allowed on the line, though there was little reason for this to occur. Y Class Bo-Bo shunting locomotives were allowed, but could only haul tiny

loads, so they rarely ran apart from the odd Commissioner's inspection train. More likely were the 750hp English Electric-built F Class Co-Co diesel-electric locomotives. Again, their loads were relatively small, but one or two of these locomotives usually worked out of Bunbury in the early 1980s on the Northcliffe line, and so they could find themselves out Boyup Brook way. After the through working of the line was severed, the two heavier English Electric G Class 1030hp locomotives (also ex-the Midland Railway) were deployed to Boyup Brook. On 12 May 1983, I observed a G class locomotive hauling a grain train out of Boyup

Brook following behind the regular goods train hauled by X 1021 *JARROO*. G50 ran up to Boyup Brook with the goods train on 12 April 1984 while on 17 January 1985, G51 drew a grain train to the same destination.

In the decidedly unusual category was the rostering of a Y Class diesel-electric shunting locomotive to Boyup Brook in April 1958, at a time when steam was dominant. The train was the Acting Commissioner's special, and unlike most workings of this train, it terminated at Boyup Brook instead of proceeding to Katanning.

## SPECIAL TRAINS

Through the years, special trains ran on the cross-country line for a range of reasons, though curiously it was not a widely used cut-off route for regional traffic which tended to use the Collie-Narrogin line further north. Special passenger services were less common on this line and by the 1920s, road transport dominated for local events. However, on the occasion of the Katanning Show on Friday 21 December 1923, a special passenger train ran between Kojonup and Katanning. Train No. K7 was scheduled to leave Kojonup at 9am for Katanning where it terminated at 11.30am. The return train (No. K8), was timetabled out of Katanning at 6pm to reach Kojonup at 8am. The train number K7/K8 was obviously influenced by the first letters of Katanning and Kojonup. Two years previously, on Friday 28



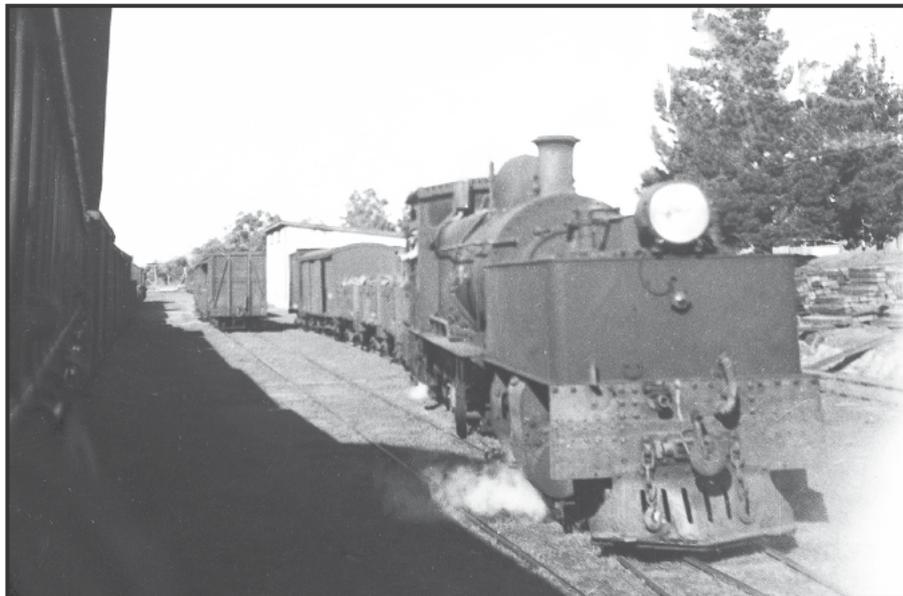
Ms Class Garratt locomotive No. 426 shunting No. 21 Mixed train at Beelerup circa 1940. W Larson photo, RAIL HERITAGE WA, P06062

October 1921, another special ran for the Katanning Show while on Tuesday 1 November 1921, a special passenger train ran on the line to convey parliamentarians to Lowden. This working was a short trip from Donnybrook to that point and back.

On Thursday 25 January 1926, on occasion of the Donnybrook Show, a special car goods train ran between Donnybrook and Boyup Brook as No. 23 Goods. Accommodation was not exactly salubrious, but the cross-country line residents were used to fairly basic travel on their line. Even at Christmas and Easter times, when services on many lines were beefed up for increased demand, the Donnybrook-Katanning line saw few changes or amplifications. It seems that the line's relatively meandering route discouraged rail passenger services quite early on. Periodically excursion trains ran in summer to beach locations like Bunbury: such as on Sunday 27 February 1927, when one (numbered D2 and D3) worked from Boyup Brook to Donnybrook and back connecting with a through train on the Bridgetown main line.

For the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Busselton on Tuesday 30 March 1954, a special passenger train was run from Boyup Brook to Busselton, deviating from the main line at Boyanup. Traffic was so brisk on the line that day that both Ludlow and Elgin, ordinarily mere unattended goods sidings, opened as temporary staff stations.

When the WAGR South West Railway



Ms Class Garratt locomotive No. 426 shunts wagons off the mixed train into the goods siding at Boyup Brook, circa 1940. RAIL HERITAGE WA, P06125

annual picnic was held, a passenger train generally ran from Boyup Brook to Donnybrook to connect with the main line train. In 1948, this picnic was held at Busselton, and the usual train came in from Boyup Brook in the morning as No. P8. The return service conveyed picnickers home that evening, being utilised to convey goods loading in its 'Fast Mixed' timetable.

Arguably the most important Australian dignitary to travel the meandering cross country line was the Prime Minister. Hard as it is to believe this today, but Stanley Bruce was conveyed by a special Mixed Train from Bunbury to Boyup Brook on Sunday 10 July 1927. Obviously, it was a whistle stop at Boyup Brook, for departure east

to Katanning was timed for 12.05am on the Monday, reaching Katanning in the predawn light at 6.15am. Not to be outdone, the Governor-General, William John McKell, travelled the line on Friday 23 September 1949. Special carriages AN 413 and AN 313 were attached to the regular No. 21 cross-country service as it ambled slowly from Bunbury to Katanning.

A curious one-off service ran on Saturday 23 November 1968 for the Youth Hostels Association. It was worked by a *Wildflower* diesel-electric train (DERC) and conveyed passengers from Perth to Noggerup via Fremantle, picking up en route then via Kwinana and Mundijong. Once the car was emptied, the trailer was detached at Noggerup and the DERC ran on to Boyup Brook to stable. Next day, the reverse occurred, with the empty DERC collecting its trailer at Noggerup plus bushwalkers from the YHA party *en route* at Glen Mervyn.

In June 1948, the Wirth's Circus train travelled across from the Great Southern district to Bunbury using the cross-country line. A stop was made at Kojonup, where the circus set up for the night of 16 June, after travelling over from Katanning. Next day, the tents were pulled down and the circus train was on its way again to Donnybrook. This was no small train, with a substantial load of coaches and goods wagons conveying exhibits, performers, and their animals. Amounting to some 575 tons, the train included one Z, one ZB, a Special Carriage, three AP coaches, one APC coach, three AF coaches,



Xa Class 2-Do-2 diesel-electric locomotive 1406 UNGARINYIN and Xa 1411 WEEDOOKARRI head a train of empty wagons across the steel girder truss bridge east of Boyup Brook. RAIL HERITAGE WA PHOTO, P11119

four BD, two T, one V and 13 QM wagons (31 vehicles all up). One can imagine the marvellous image of this motley train, with elephants aboard, wending its way around the curves of Punchmirup. As the Wirth's Circus train far exceeded the load for two Msa Garratt locomotives, special approval was given for the train to be hauled by ASG No. 27 and a Msa Garratt from Katanning to Donnybrook. Australian Standard Garratt locomotives had worked the railway on test trains and in 1945, but were not used regularly due to a lack of turning facilities at Bunbury.

While the line handled steady livestock traffic, not as many stock specials ran as one would expect. Most of the traffic was dealt with on Mondays and Tuesdays, the usual running days, using regular goods trains. However, on Tuesday 2 February 1954, a special stock train in two divisions worked from Punchmirup to Katanning and onwards as one train to Toodyay. The load comprised 25 CXB four-wheel sheep vans plus a B wagon containing a cow and another B with a horse. That day, special stock trains were scheduled to leave Punchmirup at 4.30pm and 8.30pm heading east to Katanning.

As for other seasonal loading, it tended to be conveyed by scheduled 'onditional' trains put on for several months to deal with the upsurge in traffic. The principal heavy tonnage dealt with was superphosphate carried in four-wheeled trucks from Picton Junction or Albany. Traditionally,



Heading a Bunbury-bound goods train, XB 1032 YEITHI and XA 1406 UNGARINYIN cross with X 1007 NATINGARO at Boyup Brook on 8 March 1978. JEFF AUSTIN PHOTO

those extras terminated at the last traffic point, with Muradup terminations not unknown, and Qualeup ones too if nothing was offering for sidings beyond. Those extras often returned with wool and stock, other seasonal backloading.

Somewhat ominously, the line was one of the first in the state where the WAGR's own road trucks were used. Kojonup had a twice weekly road freight service from 1941, direct from Perth, one of the trips later travelling via Quindanning and Boddington. But in 1948, the direct road service ceased and was replaced by a road truck running on Tuesdays and Thursdays from Katanning connecting with Train No. 19 Goods.

## DEMISE

For a visitor from the east in the early 1980s, it seemed truly remarkable that such meandering rural branches as the Donnybrook-Katanning line still existed. Worked by the characterful X Class diesel-electric locomotives, these trains ambled backwards and forwards with their four-wheeler wagons of superphosphate, wool and general freight, maintaining Westrail's tenuous service to this scenic part of the state.

This is not to say that the service was stable, for as early as 1930, a bridge burnt out at Newlgalup briefly severing through workings. As noted above the Blackwood River railway bridges at Asplin and Boyup Brook were burnt out in April 1978, resulting in termination of railway services from Katanning at Asplin and from Donnybrook at Boyup Brook until January 1979. In the early 1980s, damage between Kojonup and Muradup again severed the through connection and Muradup became the end point for a tenuous service from Boyup Brook run mainly to deal with bulk superphosphate traffic. On 13 July 1981 workings east of Boyup Brook ceased but were restored on 1 October 1981 on a seasonal basis. The last return goods to Muradup was hauled by X 1002 *Bibbulmun* on 31 May 1982.

Kojonup continued to get its freight from Katanning by a local goods train until 1 June 1982. Locomotive XA 1416 *NILIGARA* worked the last regular train, but another ran on 3 June hauled by XA 1402 *TARGARI* to clear the yard. On the western end, erratic superphos-



Boyup Brook Station in 1990 following upgrading, with additional converted vans on the left. Rails serving the platform have been removed and water covers the remaining tracks in the yard following heavy rain. G DORMAN PHOTO, RAIL HERITAGE WA, Po8490

phate and grain trains rumbled east of Boyup Brook, meeting the needs of Qualeup and Muradup for the last months of service. That year saw the line between Katanning and Boyup Brook closed entirely. During wheat seasons thereafter, the CBH bins at Kojonup and Qualeup were cleared by road trucks, the latter storage subsequently closing altogether.

With its large CBH bins, and steady grain and fertiliser traffic, it could be expected that Boyup Brook would continue to maintain its rail service for some time. But the creation of Totalwest saw the end of general freight traffic, and soon, the rails west of Boyup Brook were looking as grassy and rusty as those to the east. Loading was largely seasonal, but a twice-weekly goods train ran to Boyup Brook for a while, this service being seasonal for the last few years.

A short-haul traffic line at best, the prime bulk loading carried by rail on the Boyup Brook line comprised grain hauled to the CBH terminal at Bunbury and superphosphate hauled the other way from CSBP's works at Picton Junction on Bunbury's outskirts. About the same time as the trains stopped, the CBH silos at Bunbury closed for good and the rails fell into disuse. Trains last ran to Boyup Brook on 15 July 1987.



XB Class locomotive 1006 NANGAMADA nears Carlecatup with a Down freight train. The first wagon is loaded with superphosphate bins. NEVILLE WATSON PHOTO

## SUBSEQUENT HISTORY

While the Great Southern Line to Albany remains in service for freight traffic, passenger services were discontinued in 1978. The heritage listed Katanning Station remains in place and is leased out as office space.

In contrast, the smaller town of Kojonup has been active in conserving its railway heritage. The population of the whole Shire of Kojonup was just over 2000 in 2011 census. The Kojonup Tourist Railway restored four

kilometres of track west of the town by 2010, enabling tourists to view wildflower in spring from a train of open four-wheel carriages hauled by a converted Mini Moke fitted with 1067mm gauge railway wheels. The track was subsequently extended to 12km and the railway was officially opened on 6 October 2012. The former Perth Zoo train, restored and regauged to 1067mm by local volunteers, now operates the train of the first and third Sunday of each month.

This community also established



The former Perth Zoo train locomotive and carriages following gauge conversion and rebuilding by the Kojonup Tourist Railway heads out of the town with another load of passengers. COURTESY KOJONUP TOURIST RAILWAY



Oil-stained XA Class locomotive 1411 WEEDOOKARRI and XB 1004 KADJERDEN shunt the CBH grain sidings at Kojonup on 23 March 1982. JEFF AUSTIN PHOTO

the multi-award winning Koja Place Precinct and Visitor Centre to tell the story of the Kojonup community, which opened in 2005. It tells the story of the Noongar people and the more recent non-indigenous community, focusing on the transformation of the land from bush to farm, and from isolated settlement to town with the theme 'One Story, Many Voices'.

### Acknowledgements

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

### Chasing Trains on a (motor) bike

Rail (and motorbike) enthusiasts, Peter Reading and Mick James had been planning a railfanning trip out on the western line from Brisbane for some time, and with Mick's acquisition of a new bike, the choice of transport mode became obvious!

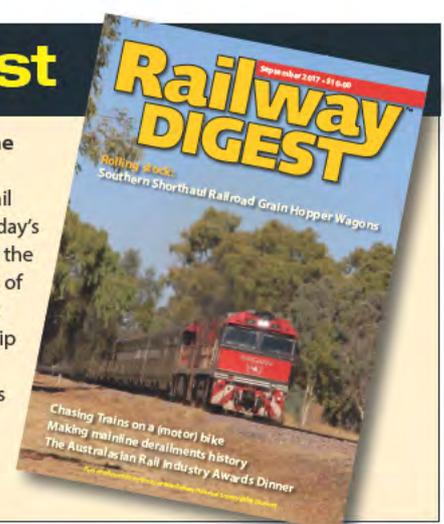
### Some assembly required: SSR locomotive transfers

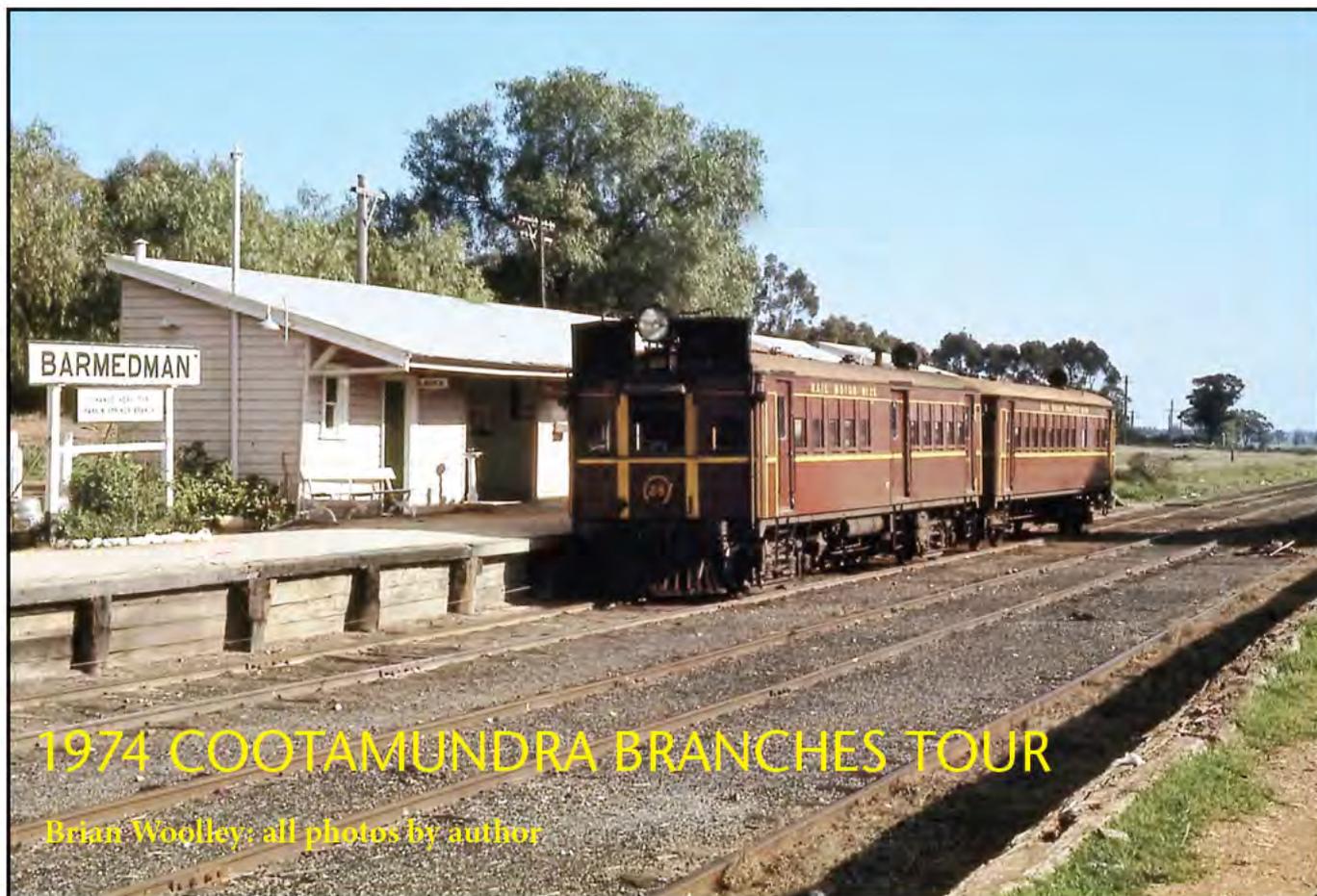
In mid-June, Southern Shorthaul Railroad undertook some remarkable light engine transfers between Parkes, Cootamundra and Junee, involving eclectic 'lash-ups' of up to 12 veteran locomotives. Ewan McLean was there to capture the action.

### Making mainline derailments history on the ARTC network

The frequency of derailments on Australian rail networks is declining but the larger size of today's trains means that when derailments do occur the consequences are often more severe in terms of rolling stock and track damage and can result in lines being closed for lengthy periods. Phillip Campbell describes the steps that ARTC is currently taking to 'make mainline derailments history'.

**Plus all our regular features**





## 1974 COOTAMUNDRA BRANCHES TOUR

Brian Woolley: all photos by author

CPH 25 and CTC 54 stand at Barmedman Station, the junction for the Rankin's Springs and Lake Cargelligo lines on 19 February 1974.

### BACKGROUND

This is a story about twenty NSW Rail Transport Museum (RTM) members who travelled to Cootamundra in 1974 to traverse four of the branch lines in that district. The text was written by the late John Youngman (RTM Life Member) who had a great sense of humour in the way he wrote this story. His way of telling this story differs from the normal and you will have a laugh as you read it. You will never be able to do the things that happened on this tour today.

All measurements are imperial and not in metric. All the photos are from my own collection. Some may be different from the story line but were all taken in the general area. I hope you will enjoy reading John's story.

### SYDNEY TO GILMORE

A brave contingent of 20 members left Sydney at 10.30pm on Train No. 9 South passenger hauled by 42211, on Friday 15 February 1974. At Strathfield, the last of the 'ruffies' entrained and so a happy-go-lucky bunch was able to settle down and enjoy the delights of MAM sleeping car No. 663—converted from a MFX sitting car in December 1941—which was to be home for three nights.

An uneventful run to Campbelltown followed where an unscheduled stay of ten minutes was taken to allow the local police to assist a troublesome passenger, not one of our bods, from the train. Once under way again, some spirited running followed to try and regain the deficit. Around Picton the PTC list of rules and regulations appeared on the wall in the centre crossover of the MAM.

Quite a few long faces were evident plus a lot of laughter from other passengers after everyone had read what was expected of them on the tour. After this amusement had died down it was decided that the early morning cup of tea would be served at 12.30am buffet style direct from the conductor's compartment. The half dozen or so who remained up to sample the tea were richly rewarded with a steaming hot pot of Gibson's Blue and White label packed specially for RTM weekend tours. By 1.00am everyone had gone bye bye.

At Goulburn, 42211 was replaced by 42203 and during the early hours, 20 minutes were somehow lost with a resultant late arrival at Cootamundra. Here the contingent vacated the MAM and headed for the Railway Refreshment Room for bacon and eggs, or direct to CPH rail motors 24 and 25 waiting in the south dock to form No. 9a to Tumut. After Train 435 Goods hurtled through at a snail's pace the 'Tumut Limited' with connection to Batlow took off with all of the gang in the leading motor CPH 24. By Gundagai, all normal passengers had alighted and arrival at Gilmore was only a few minutes down.

### GILMORE TO BATLOW

Branchline diesel-electric 48109 was waiting at Gilmore with half a dozen goods trucks, BL Class First Class carriage No. 384 and a MHG brake van. The BL had been retired from Sydney operations and would be condemned in October 1974.

For the next two hours we trundled across the prairie then made the big ascent to Batlow. Plenty of photo stops were made on the extremely sharp curves and steeply rising grades. A half-empty 'S' truck was commandeered by half



CPH rail motors 24 and 25 pause at Coolac Station on the journey to Gundagai and Batlow on 16 February 1974.

the mob for the final few miles into Batlow which took just on 50 minutes.

No sooner had the 'ruffies' jumped into the 'S' truck, it decided to rain. Cheers sprang up from the more sedate group that were still in the BL carriage. 48109 had trouble in those last few miles owing to grass being over the track on the sharp curves plus drizzling rain and the sand pipes not working, all resulting in continual wheel slip.

Perseverance prevailed, however, and finally Batlow appeared. The Batlow cannery virtually stopped work as No. 7 Freight crept past with soaking wet bods standing up in the 'S' truck and heads poked out of windows in the BL, so we must have resembled a stock train. Everyone then adjourned to the nearby town for refreshments. Pies, snags, rolls and milk shakes were quickly exhausted.

Fish and chips and steak sandwiches then sold well. The local cake shop succumbed to the onslaught and sold out at greatly reduced prices enabling it to close early. Time was available for a short hike on the Kunama extension whilst extensive shunting took place.

At 12.55pm No. 8 Freight train left for Cootamundra via Tumut. Again many photo stops were availed of during the big descent from Batlow. Back on the low country again, driver Johns demonstrated how to muck up a photo run by coming to a stand in the middle of a bridge! After a quick shunt at Gilmore we re-joined the main line for a short run to Tumut. Light refreshes were obtained here whilst the train was reversed and built up to a full load.

Trouble was again experienced on the short run to Gilmore with wheel-slip and no sand. At Gilmore we crossed Train No. 15b, the Riverina rail motor consisting of CPH 24. We then settled down for the three hour run to 'Coota'. With an occasional photo stop plus an unscheduled stop to extricate one cow expertly caught in a culvert on the track after being unsuccessfully herded there by observer A Robinson.



Diesel-electric locomotive 48109 climbs Wreboldera Bank with its freight wagons and four carriage BL 384 at the rear on Saturday 16 February 1974.

After exhausting ourselves pulling the cow out, it then plunged down the embankment to the creek bed.

Some very fast running bought us back into Cootamundra a little early. A quick wash and a change, and most of the group adjourned up town to the Majestic Café where 15 hungry heads hit the place like a whirlwind, sending Antonio and his Missus into a panic. However, with orders like mixed grills, T-bone steaks, bangers and mash flying around the café, one could see the dollar signs in Antonio's eyelids. The waiting was worthwhile, as a good feed followed while Bob Hope entertained us. After purchasing all Antonio's stock of biscuits, we made our way back to MAM carriage 663 and then descended on the barracks for showers. Lucky the MAM was in the dock closest to the barracks as there were all sorts of sights returning from the showers.

## OUR BIG DAY'S TRAVEL

Day two we departed early Sunday morning and on that day we travelled 456 miles (734 km) in one day returning to Cootamundra for the night in our carriage. 'CACTUS FLAKUS' followed for a few hours before Milton Morris decided to go for a 5.00am walk and slam the carriage door behind him effectively waking the whole MAM sleeper gang with a couple of exceptions.

By 5.50am, all 20 bods were making their way up to rail motor CPH 25 for a 6.00am departure for a marathon 17½ hour, 456-mile tour, a jaunt, bone-shaking, relaxing, frightening



CPH 25 stands at the small station building at South Wyalong on 17 February 1974.

or whatever type of trip. A good fast run to Temora saw CPH 25 fuelled to capacity as this was to be the last outpost for fuel.

After corn flakes and milk were successfully spilt all around the floor in the No. 1 end of the rail motor, we commenced the long hop to Lake Cargelligo. Along the way special stops were made at nearly all stations with a name board for photography. An uneventful trip brought us to the shores of Lake Cargelligo right on time. Most passengers took a walk down town for goodies and cold drinks.

## LAKE CARGELLIGO AND NARADHAN

Promptly at 11.40am, our train was off, bound for Ungarie. The first photo

stop was at the 412 mile peg, goodness only knows what for. I think it was something to do with a guy named Sperring. After changing the staff at Tullibigeal, we set off again until the rail motor began to lose power, becoming slower and slower.

We finally came to a stand about three miles out of Tullibigeal. Inspection revealed that a fuel line had broken in a couple of places and we looked like being 'cactus in the thistles'. Alas though, one bright spark decided to push the rail motor back to Tullibigeal on a slightly falling grade.

A thorough inspection then followed to see what could be done. With the help of the assistant station master's tool box, plus a little help from some of the travelling overseers, namely 'Spanner' Smith, 'Wrench' Robinson, 'Mechanic' Morris and 'Sudsy' Siddens, repairs were somehow completed on CPH 25, which was by now enjoying a well-earned rest in the shade of the old oak tree. The loop was in constant use by that cleaning man, namely 'Harpic' Harper and his band of followers playing on a four-wheel fettlers' trolley. A long-distance phone call to the RTM Enfield was put through, but to no avail as no one answered due to the possibly of a shortage of staff and the switchboard unattended.

We finally departed Tullibigeal 90 minutes late and it was now a matter of 'bore it to her' driver as we decided to keep to the table as far as possible. We literally flew down to Ungarie, where a very quick reversal took us out onto the pioneer standard branch line bound for Naradhan. Just before Kikoira, a photo stop was held at the



CPH 25 stands at Temora Station as the tour group has breakfast before setting off on the long trek exploring the various branch lines to the northwest. The rail motor was refueled here in readiness for the journey.



Naradhan is the terminus of the branch line from Ungarie. CPH 25 stands at the lonely station during its three minute stopover there.

tin mines. Very severe speed restrictions were in force along this owing to heavy rains earlier in the month.

Most of the track is laid straight on the ground with no ballast except dirt and no soleplates on the rough sleepers. One would think he was on the East Hills line! Nevertheless, CPH 25 did not have much trouble cutting time from the table. At Naradhan a turn around of three minutes occurred, being enough time for a family portrait.

## NARADHAN TO BURCHER

Then off again slicing time from the table in our little jumping jack, we literally flew back to Ungarie where we returned to the Lake Cargelligo line for the quick hop down to West Wyalong.

Another quick turn around and the Burcher pioneer branch was being broached upon. A number of level crossings are crossed as we leave the town, and the noise from the whistle aroused many of the inhabitants who could not believe their eyes seeing a rail motor heading out on the line and on a Sunday, too. The rails were particularly shiny on this line owing to a 2000-ton wheat special travelling on the line the day before, hauled by two 48 Class branch-liners.

It was now evident that the full table would be regained at the present rate of progress so a few photo stops were availed of. Arrival at Burcher was welcomed by large ominous dark clouds gathering over the south. After family portraits we departed the quiet 'City of Burcher' right on the tabled time of 6.45pm.

## BURCHER TO WEST WYALONG

After a couple of photo stops we ran into the rain which came down heavily for a while. Just past Lake Cowal the line was practically covered with only the tops of the rails out of the water. It was apparent that the thunderstorm had just passed through here and that we missed the full brunt of it. All the paddocks were flooded and the railway embankments banked-up huge lakes of water in numerous places, there being no drainage on this pioneer branch.

Even the telephone lines were down in many places having been that way

for some time. Emus were noticed on the Up side much to the amazement of one elderly passenger who thought we were having him on. A demonstration of fast running near Clear Ridge helped as we were back in West Wyalong by 7.45pm, where we were tabled to stand for a meal break until 8.40pm.

Everyone braved the light rain for the walk into town where Luigi's Food Bar was visited. This became the scene of the town's first near riot as 20 hungry hotheads were ready to devour everything in sight in competition with the locals, who realised they did not have a chance! After frantic ordering and mad dashes by Luigi to his store room, things quietened down somewhat as the smell of steak sandwiches began to momentarily quell our appetites. Luigi then told us that there was good money in his Hamburger Bar, but wouldn't agree to any free samples.

## WEST WYALONG TO 'COOTA'

By 8.40pm, everyone had found their way back to CPH 25 to the welcome of mosquitos that were also hungry. Off we went to Wyalong Central the first staff station. From here a series of different drivers brought twitches of anxiety to most passengers that were aware of it. We only just managed to get into Temora on the advertised where the motor was fuelled and watered. Departure was right on time and most



CPH 25 stands at the lonely terminus station at Burcher on 17 February 1974. Both the station and the former SM's residence in the background are pre-cast concrete structures.

heads on board began to nod off for the last hour's run to Cootamundra. At Stockinbingal, an empty wheat special train was supposed to be waiting for us, but it had not arrived so off we set for Meemar where the crossing was successful.

Finally, Cootamundra loomed up and arrival was near enough to time. A quick search for the MAM sleeping car found it in the south dock heading for Tumut according to the indicator. Bad news followed in that Train 320 express goods was running 90 late from Albury. Also, Train Control would not allow us to attach to the *Spirit Of Progress* train, as the Canberra car was in the road at Goulburn or some excuse to that nature so it appeared we would have to wait for 320's arrival after all. After showers and pots of tea, most passengers flaked in their cabins for a well-earned rest and a sleep-in the next morning.

## BACK TO SYDNEY

Sometime during the early hours of the following morning, MAM 663 was swinging along attached behind the EHG brake van of No. 320 express freight headed by a 44 Class Goodwin Alco locomotive.

By Moss Vale, all the passengers had seen the light and we were racing along in front of the *Southern Highlands Express*. A good run to Liverpool gave passengers time to work out if they would front-up for work that day or not. Half a dozen bods alighted at Liverpool much to the astonishment of the locals.

All too soon Granville Platform 1 loomed up and only a slight encouragement was needed to stop the train, while regular passengers were all eyes as 14 derelict-looking scruffy gentlemen emerged from one small sleeping car swinging on the backside of a long goods train, the locomotive of which was in Clyde Station. The announcement "All Change" was heard which is only too familiar at this station. Thus ended a most successful and unusual tour and true to performance on a lot of tours ended a little late although only by a couple of hours.

At Granville, the tour passengers quickly faded into the general scene as they all headed off in their respective directions.

I hope you have enjoyed John's story, it has brought back pleasant memories to me.

## MERIT AWARDS

John concluded his story with a list of "Recommended Merit Awards for Noted Personalities" as follows:

- RAY JOHNS: For his superb handling in stopping 48109 in the centre of Wereboldera Creek photo run.
- BRIAN COKER: For his successful balancing of accounts after passing the hat round on Sunday night.
- JOHN SMITH: For his outstanding sense of humour and self-control while returning from Batlow and Tumut.
- JEFF KELLY: For his faithful service to the KP crew on Friday evening ensuring the RTM mail had preference.
- PETER JOHNSON: For his determination in insisting that he had the flu from Saturday to Monday. Both days inclusive.
- BRIAN WOOLLEY: For his superb effort in littering the floor of CPH 25 with crushed corn flakes and milk.
- GRAHAME THURLING: For his fitness in standing up to a periodic thumping received for making a general nuisance.
- JOHN YOUNGMAN: For the unsuccessful takeover bid of the West Wyalong Hot Food Bar and failure to get a free hamburger.
- GRAHAM HARPER: For his constant appearance at the number two end dicky seat of rail motor No. 25.
- MILTON MORRIS: For his brilliant successful move in waking up 19 fellow passengers at 5am by slamming the centre door, in the dead quiet of a Sunday morning.
- DAVE SIDDENS: For his outstanding ability in waking up sleeping off duty crews whilst showering in the Cootamundra barracks.
- PHIL ROBINSON: For his expert workmanship in the repair of CPH 25 and thus saving it from the fate of the thistle.
- GRAHAM BELL: For the outstanding material which his yellow hat was made of, and the amusement it caused.
- ALAN ROBINSON: For his untiring efforts in sleeping throughout both day trips and thoughtfulness for supplying a pillow.

The rest of the passengers for their hardiness and determination in keeping up with the events and trials endured.

John Youngman, 31 March 1974

## Coming up in Australian Railway History

The October issue of ARH features an article by John Beckhaus and Ross Willson to mark the Centenary of the opening of the Trans-Australian Railway. Part 2 of David Matheson's 'From Steam to Diesel and Electric' article provides a detailed account of the changes that occurred on the Tasmanian, Commonwealth, South Australian and New South Wales Railways between 1951 and 1975.

The November issue marks the Centenary of the opening of the North Coast Railway to Kempsey

on 28 November 1917 by Rod Milne, while Les Morley covers the 1917 Campania Accident on the Tasmanian Government Railways. Jim Longworth rounds off the issue with his article 'Laundering the Railways Dirty Linen', on the history of laundry services on the New South Wales Railways.

December brings the conclusion to David Matheson's account of the transition from steam locomotives on the Victorian, Queensland and Western Australian Railways.

## Two Coombing Park Mine sidings and their train operations

Greg Blackwell

After reading Michael Jensen's very interesting article 'Retracing The Coombing Park Mine Branch' in the March 2017 issue of *Australian Railway History*, I investigated the train working aspect further and found that a short, dead-end siding named *Coombing Siding* pre-dated the branch siding that is the subject of Michael's article. Ore from the Coombing Park mine was loaded at this siding before it was superseded by the much longer siding to the mine. Initially, the ore was carted to Carcoar railway station as indicated by the following newspaper report:

On the Coombing Park Estate, about two miles from Carcoar, there is an immense lode of iron fully 150 feet wide. Messrs. John Links and Son, who have leased the land, have six men raising rich ore. Orders have been received for some hundreds of tons, and teams are carting the ore to the railway station at the rate of 100 tons weekly.<sup>1</sup>

As would be expected, the methods by which the two very different sidings were worked were themselves remarkably different and, as Michael mentioned, train operations varied over the years relative to the output of the mine.

### 1. THE ORIGINAL COOMBING SIDING

The first **Coombing Siding** was a short, dead-end type, facing for Down trains, with room for 12 D wagons, situated at 185 miles 14 chains between Carcoar and Lyndhurst and constructed by the Railways Department at a cost of £212.<sup>2</sup> It was brought into use on 12 February 1900 for: 'goods consigned to or by Mr Link'. This siding had a loading stage, the dimensions of which prevented the Baldwin-built J and O Class locomotives from shunting on it.<sup>3</sup> The instructions for working it were as follows:

This siding is situated on a falling grade towards Cowra of 1 in 66 on to a 1 in 40, and it must not be shunted by trains, but by an engine from Blayney or Carcoar. When there are loaded trucks to be lifted and empty wagons to be put in the siding, the empties must be left at Carcoar and the engine, propelling the brake-van, run out to the siding. On arrival, the engine will lift the loaded [wagons] and return to Carcoar, where it will detach the traffic and return to the siding with the brake-van and the empties and place the latter in the siding.<sup>4</sup>

The 7 May 1905 and 15 October 1905 timetables allowed for the following working between Blayney and the original Coombing Siding:

**27 Conditional Goods**, conveying loading for Carcoar and/or Coombing Siding, departed Blayney at 4.42pm and arrived Carcoar at 5.27. It made two trips from Carcoar to Coombing Siding, leaving Carcoar at 5.40 and 6.25 and leaving Coombing Siding at 6.05 and 6.50. The first trip to the siding was to collect any loaded wagons and stow them temporarily at Carcoar; the second trip was to deliver the empty wagons to the siding.

**24 Conditional Goods**, conveying the loaded ore wagons and, if necessary, other loading from Carcoar, departed Carcoar at 7.05pm and arrived Blayney at 7.55pm, where the ore wagons were attached to another goods train for transport on to Eskbank.

The **1 January 1906** Local Appendix permitted Coombing Siding to be shunted in two trips from Carcoar while whole trains paused during their journey to place or lift ore wagons. It specified three methods of working the siding that took into account the falling grade on both the siding and the main line. They were so concise they lacked what I consider to be important details. I have expanded the descriptions, hopefully accurately, to make them clearer. The three different methods of shunting the original *Coombing Siding* were:

#### 1.1: When there were loaded wagons on the siding and empty wagons at Carcoar

This was the preferred method which required the empty wagons to have been deposited at Carcoar by a Down goods train and the siding shunted later by a locomotive and van sent from Blayney. After arriving, they stopped on the Carcoar side of the points and the van was uncoupled. The locomotive moved forward along the main line to allow the brake-van to be gravitated onto the siding, but not attached to the empty trucks, before collecting the brake van from the siding and placing it back on the main line on the Cowra side of the points, where the guard secured it by means of the hand-brake and sprags.

A much simpler method would have been to uncouple the brake-van, run the locomotive onto the siding, and then gravitate the brake-van forward to its required position on the main line. This was presumably not permitted due to the chance of the brake-van 'running away' along the main line.

The locomotive then hauled the loaded ore trucks out of the siding and attached the brake van before proceeding to Carcoar where the loaded trucks were temporarily stowed. The empty wagons and attached brake van were hauled to the siding where the locomotive ran forward along the main line, allowing the empty wagons to be gravitated onto the siding by the guard using the brake-van to control their speed. Finally the locomotive collected the brake-van and took it back to Carcoar where it would be attached to the loaded wagons for haulage to Blayney en-route to Eskbank.

#### 1.2: When there were loaded wagons on the siding to be lifted by an Up Goods train

An Up Goods train stopped with the brake-van on the Cowra side of the points and the van was secured by using the hand-brake and sprags, then uncoupled from the train. All the wagons would be drawn forward then backed into the siding and coupled to the loaded ore wagons which were

hauled out of the siding and lowered back onto the brake-van. The now-heavier train would then resume its journey.

### 1.3: When the siding was empty and a Down Goods train was to place empty wagons on it

In this situation, the brake-van could not be used to shunt the wagons onto the siding as it would become trapped there, so either the wagons had their own hand-brakes, or sprags would be used to control them.

The Down Goods train stopped with the empty wagons clear of the siding points. The brake-van was uncoupled from the ore wagons and secured, then the rest of the train was uncoupled from the wagons and eased forward along the main line to allow the ore wagons to be gravitated onto the siding. The train reversed and re-attached the brake-van before resuming its journey to Cowra.

The 19 May 1907 Working Timetable included a train that appeared to be compatible with Method 1.1:

**24 Conditional Goods** originating from Carcoar at 3.50pm, conveyed loading from Coombing Siding and Carcoar to Blayney.

This timetable did not include any information referring specifically to the delivery of empty ore wagons to Carcoar or Coombing Siding, but showed that No. 19 Conditional Goods, ex-Blayney 1.10pm to Harden was permitted or required to 'lift or leave at all stations,' so perhaps this was the train involved.

## B. THE NEW COOMBING BRANCH

The new line to the mine, constructed at a cost of £4000 (\$570,700 in 2016 terms), was, at least initially, named 'Sandford's Branch Line at Coombing'.<sup>5</sup> It was connected to the main line via the existing points for the original siding.<sup>6</sup> Oddly, I did not find a reference in the Weekly Notices to the bringing into use of this new siding, so we may never know the exact date.

Circular A109, dated 27 May 1907, announced that: 'A branch has been constructed commencing from the exist-

ing points on the main line at Coombing and terminating at the iron ore mine, a distance of 1 mile 7 chains ...', but Michael Jensen (using McKillop as his source), states that the first loaded train departed from the mine at the end of this new branch siding on 10 April 1907, so it must have been brought into use before or on that date.

Circular A109 states that: 'Traffic to and from the mine will be worked by an engine sent from Blayney, the engine travelling tender first; also that the existing interlocking arrangements (Duplex and Bracket Lock) at the 'junction' would remain unaltered'.

The 20 October 1907 Working Timetable included the following trains between the mine and Blayney:

No. 36 Conditional Goods originating from Carcoar at 3.53pm, conveyed ore traffic from Coombing Mine to Blayney.

No. 24 Conditional Goods originating from Carcoar at 4.48pm, conveyed ore traffic from Coombing Mine to Blayney.

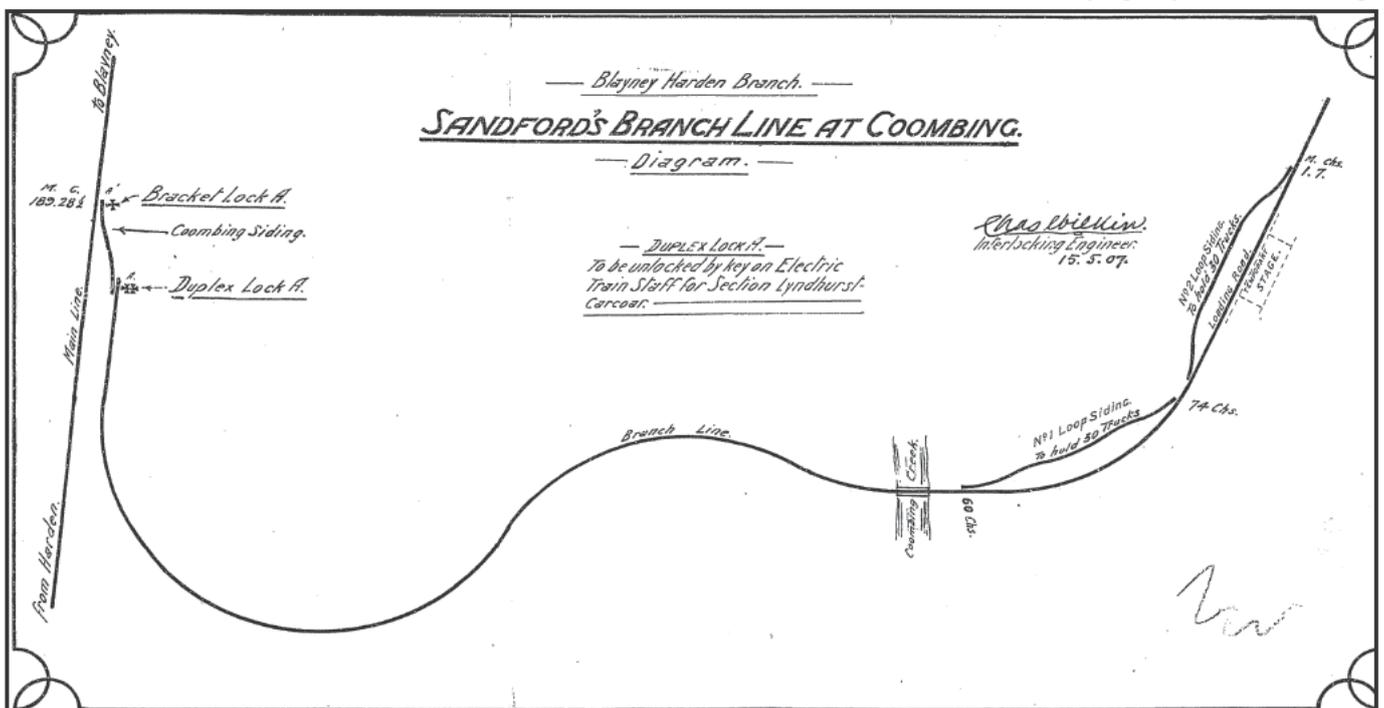
This diagram was attached to Circular A109, dated 27 May 1907, and shows the new branch line that may have been an extension of the original short siding. Note the temporary loading stage beside the No.2 Loop Siding, and the initial section being labelled as: *Coombing Siding*.

There does not appear to be any reference to corresponding engine and van movements from Blayney to shunt the branch siding before working either of these trains; nor is there any information about the delivery of empty ore wagons to Carcoar or the mine loading area.

Weekly Notice 34/1909 advised that B Class locomotives or lighter type only are to be allowed on this siding until further advised. This instruction was cancelled in Weekly Notice 41/1909, which advised that T Class 2-8-0 Standard Goods locomotives may be run on this siding.

On 7 July 1910, the Duplex and Bracket Lock at the 'junction' was replaced by a Lever & Bracket Lock.<sup>7</sup> Commencing either before, or with the introduction of, the 28 May 1911 Working Timetable, the branch siding began to be worked by many regular trains dedicated to that traffic:

- No. 37 Conditional Goods, conveying empties for Coombing



Siding, departed Bathurst at 11.52pm (Fridays and Saturdays excepted) and arrived Blayney at 2.23am.

- No. 37 Empty Trucks departed Blayney at 2.55pm and arrived Coombing Siding at 3.50pm, formed No. 82 Goods
- No. 55 Goods, conveying empty coal hoppers [sic] for Coombing Siding, departed Eskbank at 2.00am (Saturdays excepted) and arrived Bathurst at 6.08am.
- No. 115 Empty Trucks, conveying empty coal hoppers [sic] for Coombing Siding, departed Bathurst at 7.40am and arrived Blayney at 10.23am. It then departed at 11.30am for Coombing Siding where it arrived at 12.25pm and formed 38 Goods.
- No. 38 Goods departed Coombing Siding at 1.20pm week-days and arrived Blayney at 2.23pm where it became 38 Through Goods that departed Blayney at 2.25pm and arrived Eskbank at 11.12pm. (It reduced speed at Gemalla to pick up a mail bag for Tarana.)
- No. 82 Goods departed Coombing Siding at 4.40pm week-days and terminated at Bathurst at 8.59pm. (It stopped at 335m 56c between Carcoar and Stanfield to set down school children when required. They would have been travelling home from school at Carcoar.)

These six trains were listed in the 15 October 1911 Working Timetable, but their departure and arrival times differed by up to ten minutes. No. 38 Goods no longer picked up the mail bag at Gemalla, but No. 82 Goods still conveyed school children from Carcoar.

The 14 February 1915 Working Timetable listed only four trains to and from the mine:

- No. 115 Goods (Empty Trucks) departed Bathurst at 7.00am, stopped at Blayney 9.28 to 10.10, arrived Coombing Siding at 11.22am, probably formed 118 Goods
- No. 117 Conditional Empty Trucks departed Blayney at 2.45pm and arrived Coombing Siding at 3.52pm - basically the former 37 Empty Trucks renumbered, probably formed 82 Goods
- No. 118 Goods departed Coombing Siding at 12.02pm, stopped at Blayney 1.29 to 3.50, arrived Bathurst at 6.18pm replaced No. 38 Goods, but departed from the mine more than one hour earlier and terminated at Bathurst
- No. 82 Goods departed Coombing Siding at 4.40pm, arrive Blayney at 5.43, departed as 82 Conditional Goods at 6.30pm and terminated at Bathurst at 8.48pm. It no longer conveyed the school children from Carcoar. They caught an earlier train No. 36 Pick-up goods.

The same four trains were included in the 30 May 1915 Working Timetable and ran to similar times, the greatest difference being 30 minutes:

- No. 115 Goods (Empty Trucks) departed Bathurst at 7.00am, stopped at Blayney 9.28 to 10.10, arrived Coombing Siding at 11.22am
- No. 117 Conditional Empty Trucks departed Blayney at 2.35pm and arrived Coombing Siding at 3.30pm
- No. 118 Goods departed Coombing Siding at 12.02pm, stopped at Blayney 1.26 to 3.35, arrived Bathurst at 6.09pm
- No. 82 Conditional Goods departed Coombing Siding at 4.10pm, stopped Blayney 5.13 to 6.30, and terminated in Bathurst at 8.42pm.

From 14 November 1915, only slight alterations were made to the times for 115 and 82, while a significant alteration was made to the working of 118 Goods. The four trains ran as follows:

- No. 115 Goods (Empty Trucks) departed Bathurst at 7.00am, stopped at Blayney 9.19 to 10.00, arrived Coombing Siding at 11.05am.

- No. 117 Conditional Empty Trucks departed Blayney at 2.35pm and arrived Coombing Siding at 3.30pm.
- No. 118 Goods departed Coombing Siding at 11.45am, stopped at Blayney 1.26 to 3.10, arrived Bathurst at 5.48pm. It was scheduled to lift fruit from Orton Park and small lots of livestock and perishables from Perthville.
- No. 82 Conditional Goods departed Coombing Siding at 4.10pm, stopped at Blayney at 5.13 to 6.15, terminated at Bathurst at 8.10pm.

From 28 May 1916, the working was exactly the same except that No. 82 Conditional Goods departed Blayney 20 minutes later, at 6.35pm, and arrived Bathurst at 8.43pm. From 9 June 1918, only one return trip per weekday was timetabled from Bathurst.

From 10 November 1918, the same return working from Bathurst was timetabled, but, due to extra time spent at Stanfield and Carcoar, No. 115 took an extra 12 minutes to travel from Blayney to the mine:

- No. 115 Goods (Empty Trucks) departed Bathurst at 7.00am, stopped at Blayney 9.16 to 9.48, arrived Coombing Siding at 11.20am
- No. 118 Goods departed Coombing Siding at 12.00 noon, stopped at Blayney 1.26 to 2.17, arrived Bathurst at 4.10pm. It continued to lift fruit from Orton Park and small lots of livestock and perishables from Perthville if required.

From 13 July 1919, No. 115 was altered slightly and No. 118 was held at Stanfield for 16 minutes less than previously. A significant change was the introduction of the option to have empty trucks shunted from Carcoar to the mine by the locomotive off No. 66 Goods from Cowra, and to have loaded trucks taken by this train as far as Blayney:

- No. 115 Empty Trucks departed Bathurst at 7.05am, arrived Blayney at 9.22am
- No. 115 Conditional Empty Trucks departed Blayney at 9.48am and arrived Coombing Siding at 11.20am then formed 118 Goods
- No. 66 Conditional Goods departed Cowra at 9.05am, arrived Carcoar at 11.40 and stowed its loading. The engine and van then departed at 12 noon for Coombing Siding, conveying if required any empty ore trucks that had been left at Carcoar by a previous Down train. Loaded trucks were then attached and this train departed the mine at 12.50pm. Back at Carcoar it added its original loading and resumed its journey to Blayney where it arrived at 2.00pm
- No. 118 Goods departed Coombing Siding at 12.00 noon, stopped at Blayney 1.10 to 2.05, and arrived Bathurst at 3.58pm. It continued to lift fruit from Orton Park and small lots of livestock and perishables from Perthville if required.

On 12 August 1919, intermediate electric train staff working was brought into use in the section Carcoar–Lyndhurst with the provision of an intermediate staff instrument in a hut at the mine siding junction and a telephone connected to Carcoar railway station.<sup>8</sup> This, I believe, enabled other trains to traverse the section while an ore train was on the branch siding. I wonder if this ever occurred?

On 26 August 1919, a standard interlocking frame replaced the Lever and Bracket Lock at the 'junction' and new pattern point indicators were provided roughly four years later.<sup>9</sup>

November 1919, the only significant alteration involved No. 118 Goods. It ran, as before, from Coombing Siding to Blayney, but terminated there and the ore trucks were conveyed towards Eskbank by No. 120 Goods that departed Blayney at 6.10pm and arrived in Bathurst at 8.24pm. No. 66 Conditional Goods ex Cowra continued to be an alternative means for lifting the loaded trucks from the mine.

From 30 May 1920, a change made was for No. 115 Empty

Trucks from Bathurst to Blayney to convey school children from Gresham to Newbridge when required.

From 31 October 1920, a puzzling alteration was made whereby, according to my interpretation of the timetable, the empty trucks were taken past Carcoar and Coombing Siding to Lyndhurst. An Up Goods from Cowra arrived at Lyndhurst five minutes before the Down Goods that conveyed the empty trucks. These trucks were added to the Up Goods which then continued on to Carcoar where a Down train was formed consisting of the engine, empty ore trucks and brake-van.

The train crew had 33 minutes in which to do this before the locomotive and van off the Down Empty Trucks at Lyndhurst passed through Carcoar to Blayney. Why didn't it assist the Up Goods through this section? Did the engine need to be turned at Lyndhurst first? With the section to Lyndhurst now clear, the Down empty trucks proceeded to the mine and returned to Carcoar with the loaded ones.

The rest of the loading was attached and the Up Goods completed its journey to Blayney. The specific trains involved in this odd sequence of events were to lift fruit from Orton Park and small lots of livestock and perishables from Perthville if required.

- **No.115 Empty Trucks that departed Bathurst at 7.05am and arrived Blayney at 9.17. (If required, it still transported school children from Gresham to Newbridge);**
- **No. 115 Conditional Empty Trucks departed Blayney at 9.48am and passed by Carcoar and Coombing Siding to arrive Lyndhurst at 11.14, formed No. 118;**
- **No. 118 Engine and Van departed Lyndhurst at 12 noon, crossed No. 66 at Carcoar at 12.18, then crossed No. 19 Pick-up at Stanfield 12.31-45, arrived Blayney at 1.03pm;**
- **No. 66 Conditional Goods departed Cowra at 9.05am, arrived Lyndhurst at 11.09, attached the empty trucks off No. 115, departed at 11.20, arriving Carcoar at 11.45am. After the passing No. 118 locomotive and van, this locomotive and van took the empty trucks out to the Coombing Mine and returned with loaded ones. No. 66 Goods was then reassembled and, after the arrival of No. 19 Blayney to Cowra Pick-up, No. 66 departed Carcoar at 1.00pm and arrived Blayney at 2.01pm;**
- **No. 120 Goods, conveying the loaded ore trucks, departed Blayney at 6.10pm and arrived in Bathurst at 8.24 pm.**

If I have interpreted this timetable correctly, the train workings raise several questions. Why didn't No. 115 proceed directly from Carcoar to the mine with the empty trucks given that it was not scheduled to convey any loading for Lyndhurst? Is it because this would require tender-first running with the empty trucks between Blayney and Carcoar and this was not permitted? Moreover, why didn't No. 115 terminate at Carcoar and deposit the empty trucks there for the engine and van off No. 66 to deliver to the mine, and allow the locomotive and van off No. 115 to return to Blayney? Was it because there was insufficient room for stowing the empty trucks at Carcoar?

The above workings were identical in the 29 May 1921 timetable except No. 115 Empty Trucks was renamed No. 123 Empty Trucks. The only alteration made in the 16 October 1921 timetable was that No. 66 Conditional Goods left Lyndhurst at 11.25am, five minutes later than previously.

In the 1 June 1924 Working Timetable, according to the instructions on p9, empty hoppers could be conveyed to Coombing Siding by train number No. 123. I suspect this must be an error because there was no train with this number either for the Eskbank to Blayney timetables or the Blayney to Harden ones.

There was a No. 117 Conditional Goods running to the same times as the previous Nos. 115 and 123, and it may have shunted off the empty ore trucks at Lyndhurst, but it continued on from Lyndhurst to Cowra at 11.30am, rather than terminating at Lyndhurst as previously. This creates something of a mystery because No. 118 Engine and Van was once again listed as departing Lyndhurst for Blayney at 12 noon and was included as one of the three trains by which loaded trucks could be conveyed from Coombing Siding. How did the engine and van come to be at Lyndhurst? How were the empty trucks conveyed back to Carcoar? Was an engine and van, not listed in the timetable, sent from Cowra to Lyndhurst as No. 118 on these occasions?

No. 66 Conditional Goods was again included in the 1 June 1924 timetable, again appearing as one of the trains that could convey empty trucks to, and loaded trucks from, Coombing Siding, possibly attaching, as previously, the empty trucks off No. 117 at Lyndhurst.

A third option was available in this new timetable for working Coombing Siding, namely No. 58 Conditional Goods. It was scheduled to depart Cowra at 3.30am, stop at Lyndhurst from 5.33 to 5.50 (where it was crossed by No. 1 Mixed), arrive in Carcoar at 6.15, shunt Coombing Siding, depart Carcoar at 7.45 and arrive in Blayney at 8.46am. Did it attach the empty trucks at Lyndhurst or were they already waiting at Carcoar and how were they conveyed to this place? The workings in the 19 October 1924 timetable were the same.

Coombing Siding was not included on any of the pages for the Blayney to Harden Branch [*sic.*] in the 30 May 1926 Working Timetable, nor were Nos. 118 Engine and Van and 66 Conditional Goods, so the Coombing Park Mine mine had presumably ceased production by that date. The Railway authorities waited a while before deciding to disconnect the branch siding from their main line. On 10 August 1927, the interlocking gear at the junction at 193m 60½c was removed and the points were spiked, clipped and locked.<sup>10</sup> The points and crossings were scheduled to be removed and the main line straight-railed on 11 October 1927.<sup>11</sup>

**Editor:** G & C Hoskins commenced development of the much larger iron ore deposits at Cadia from 1916. Following completion of an 11½ mile standard gauge branch line from Spring Hill on the Main Western Line between Blayney and Orange to the mine by the company in February 1919, mining at the Coombing Park Mine wound down in favour of the new operation. All the company operations at Coombing Park were shut down in January 1920. Source: Bob McKillop, *Furnace, Fire and Forge*, LRRSA, Surrey Hills Vic, 2006, pp186-196.

## End Notes

1. *Goulburn Evening Penny Post*, Thursday 28 April 1898, p4.
2. Carcoar Station Card, ARHSnsw Railway Resource Centre.
3. Local Appendix to the Working Timetable, Western Division, 1 January 1906.
4. Weekly Notice, 7/1900.
5. *National Advocate* (Bathurst), Tuesday 14 May 1907, p2.
6. Circular A109, dated 27 May 1907.
7. Weekly Notice 28/1910.
8. Weekly Notice 33/1919.
9. Weekly Notice 35/1919 and 32/1923.
10. Weekly Notice, 37/1927.
11. Weekly Notice, 41/1927.

## Katanning-Donnybrook cross-country line

ARH 956, June 2017

Thank you for the July edition of the magazine. I am very interested in the history of the Katanning-Donnybrook cross country line. I first became acquainted with this line in the late 1950s.

My wife's grandfather took up land in the Dinninup and Kulikup areas about the same time that the railway was being built. A few years later one of his sons took up land adjoining Maltrup 'siding'—the local name for all the stops. He called the property *Maltrup*, in all the years he was there until the railway stopped running, he

was dependent upon the train coming through from Boyup Brook to bring him his bread and other requirements.

Kulikup was noted as a sleeper depot and as a rule many hundreds of sleepers could be seen waiting to be moved. At Kulikup, Rod Milne, mentions the town consisted of a couple of houses general store and school. This is correct, what was not mentioned is that in 1955, a Seventh-day Adventist church was built just up from the railway and is still in use.

On the 25 July 1962, around mid-afternoon I was standing in the

church next to my wife of about five minutes having completed our vows and been formally told 'we were man and wife', when a steam whistle called for right-of-way at the crossing. I turned to look out the window to sight the train when my wife dug me in the ribs and whispered: "pay attention". She has however been much more cooperative of my train spotting in the 55 years that have followed.

Thanks once again, and I look forward to the conclusion of the article.

*Peter Williams, Eagleby QLD 4207*

## Green Over Red

ARH 956, June 2017

I am writing in response to Paul Nicholson's article 'Reflections on *Green Over Red*'. I was a subscriber to the magazine from its inception through to its demise and I have bound all my issues into two volumes. I recall two issues relating to the magazine that reinforce the points made by Paul in the article, namely:

1. In January 1968, a letter appeared by Frank Stamford criticising railway enthusiasts for not speaking

out about rail closures and other issues. He said that enthusiasts were frightened that steam trips would be cancelled and concluded his letter by stating that the societies may have their steam locomotives, but not the railways to run them on.

2. In the October 1968 there was an exhibition at Spencer Street Station to celebrate 50 years of electric traction in Melbourne.

The railway societies had a commercial stand and *Green Over Red* was being sold. A senior official of a Victorian society told the people selling the *Green Over Red* magazine to remove it, which alarmed me, due to the hostility by the older Victorian societies towards the magazine. There was only one local society that continued to sell *Green Over Red*.

*Lindsay Sounds, Carnegie VIC 3165*

## Reader's Request

I am seeking a response from any reader who may be able to assist with the following query:

In W A Bayley's book *Picton-Mittagong Loop Line*, the following statement appears:

Major A C Anthill, the father of Picton or Stonequarry Creek, believed that Picton would become a railway terminus

because the surrounding hills were all too steep for a railway to climb out! He bent his effort to ensure that Picton was not by-passed by the railway, putting an end to Shone's plan to go direct to Bargo. Anthill's death in 1852 prevented his finally ensuring that the railway did reach Picton but his successors ensured that it did.

Can any reader advise when Anthill said this and the source of the comment? Does this imply that Shone's route to Picton was for a branch line connecting with an eastern main line?

Please reply through the ARH Editor.

*Don Hagarty, St Ives NSW 2075*

The famous Austrian tenor Richard Tauber may not have made Tim Fischer's 'Top Twenty Four Great Train Changers' list, but his reaction to the shock of changing from the luxury of the *Spirit of Progress* to the unheated New South Wales train in the middle of a winter's night in 1938 made headlines at the time both locally and internationally (after his return to London).

He also expressed surprise at the "funny little station" that he found on

arrival at Canberra. A visit to [www.trove.nla.gov.au](http://www.trove.nla.gov.au) and search for "Richard Tauber" and "Albury" will provide some interesting and entertaining reading. Tauber demanded that he be re-booked on "the aeroplane" for his travel on to Sydney and Brisbane, but may have relented later as there is a report of him and his wife having passed through Albury again in September.

Other visiting celebrities who would have made the change included the various Ballets Russes companies of the

late 1930s and early 1940s. A documentary film about them shown on the arthouse circuit some years ago included a brief appearance of *Spirit of Progress* behind an S class. I have not found a reference to the dancers' reaction to the change at Albury.

Thank you — and Tim Fischer — for providing this article.

Malcolm Lawrie, Edgcliff NSW 2027

## Former Burwood Goods Yard weighbridge

To the Editor,

You may be interested in the enclosed photo for a future issue of **Australian Railway History**.

It is of the weighbridge in the entrance to the former Burwood goods yard off Railway Parade taken on 5 June 2017. It was probably cheaper to leave it *in situ* and, as the photo shows, it has now been restored.

Vic Solomons, Kogarah 2217



## What's New at the ARHSnsw Railway Bookshop

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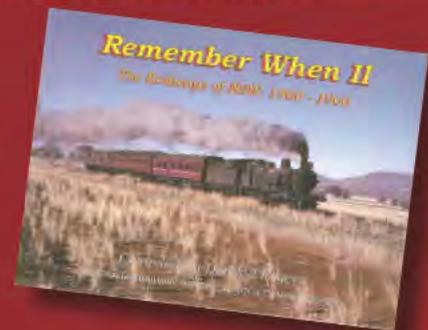


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The Kojonup Tourist Railway has restored 12km of track to the west of the town, together with the railway station, yard crane and maintenance facilities for its operations. The restored station building and yard crane were photographed on 1 September 2011.  
BOB MCKILLOP PHOTO

*Australian*

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