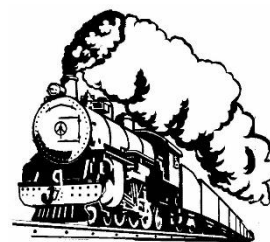




# RAIL HERITAGE WA

## *Members Newsletter*

*December 2021*



### FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Sat 11 December **2pm Christmas get-together** at the Museum. Please bring a plate of food to share and farewell WA Rail 150.

---

#### FROM THE PRESIDENT (Philippa Rogers)

Celebrating 150 years of Railways in WA was our focus for 2021 and we undertook a large range of activities as well as continuing our core work.

- On 21 August there was the ceremony at Wonnerup House, near Busselton to recognise the 150 years of loco-hauled railways in WA on the location where the first locomotive 'Ballarat' operated. The plaque for the monument was unveiled by Hon David Templeman MLA, Minister for Tourism, Heritage, Culture and Arts.
- We held two major events at the Railway Museum in Bassendean – the Model Rail Expo in June as well as our annual RailFest in October. Those two days saw 2,800 people visit. Both events were run in conjunction of local groups and kindred bodies.
- Completed the restoration of two steam locomotives – the sentimental favourite 123-year old Leschenault Lady and the truly Western Australian Midland-built 'Greenmount' S- class. Both gave demonstration runs to the delight of the public and drew very large crowds. Over two days Leschenault Lady's appearances in Boyanup resulted in 2,700 people attending – clear record crowds for the South West Rail and Heritage Centre.
- Our outreach programme saw us supply speakers to a variety of groups and we hosted speakers at Bassendean who attracted non-members
- Our new pull-up banner displays specially created for WA Rail 150 were on show in Merredin, Minnivale, Busselton, Boyanup as well as Bassendean.
- Our museum collection work with our smaller objects has made excellent progress this year enabling us to not only lend to places including Gingin but also make donations of items to Mt Magnet, Merredin and Cunderdin.
- With the support of ARC Infrastructure we were able to produce Malcolm Searle's book 'My Railway Love Affair' and members contributed articles to Australian Railway History
- The archives team has continued to grow our online photo database to over 26,000 photos, supported research into WA Railways and answered over 110 enquiries from the public – many relating to family history.
- In the second half of 2021 we renewed our focus on volunteers and have welcomed a few new volunteers to assist in various areas of our work.
- Planning has commenced for the replacement of the Goods Shed at Boyanup.
- And all the above was done in conjunction with the usual openings of the Railway Museum in Bassendean twice a week (outside of the lockdowns) and ongoing operations – all thanks to the tremendous commitment of our volunteers.

***Best wishes for Christmas and for 2022 to you all!***

## 2022 MEETING ENTERTAINMENT

A typical year (non-COVID) sees us with 8 meetings to which we wish to provide guest speakers – whether one of our own knowledgeable members or an external speaker.

Already for 2022 there have been offers from some members to present, so planning is off to a good start. Note: there is no meeting in January.

**WANTED: A volunteer to coordinate guest speakers for our 2022 meetings.**

If you can help out or able to present, please contact Philippa on 0417 961187.

**‘150 and still going...Reflections on a WA Rail Revival’.**

At our last meeting for 2021 Peter Newman AO gave an entertaining and thought-provoking presentation that was appreciated by the 40 people present.

**MUSEUM** (Philippa Rogers)

**Thank you to Dominic Bennett** for hanging some of our paintings by Gordon Brown in the office. They are now safe and can be enjoyed.



**30 November is the anniversary of the opening of the Railway Museum. This year marks 47 years of opening to the public.**



Now we have roof – and the row of pine trees that made so much mess have gone.

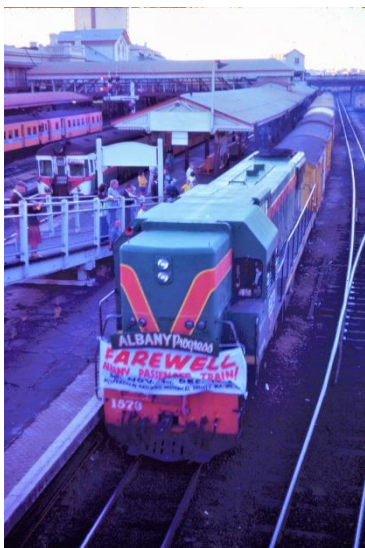
## ARCHIVES (G Watson)

The following requests for information have been received from members of the public during the months of October and November and have been responded to promptly and efficiently by Jeff Austin.

	Subject	Purpose
93	Electrification 30 <sup>th</sup> anniversary photo	Media release
94	Advertising wagons	Self
95	Perth-Fremantle railway 1890's	Creative writing project
96	Tail disks	Magazine article
97	Margaret River logging railways 1910	Family history
98	Morawa museum railway items	Local history
99	Claremont station master photos	Local history
100	Kalgoorlie ceremony photos, August 1968	Local history
101	Caron barracks caretaker duties 1950's	Family history
102	PM 704 at Olive Hill, 1969 photo	Family history
103	1893 Brunswick station site	Local history
104	Byford SM's house history	Local history
105	Greenbushes timber railway plan	Self
106	J. Collins, WAGR employee record 1917-59	Family history
107	P. Blue, WAGR employee record 1896-1918	Family history
108	Perth Goods, Tug of War team 1906 photo	Family history
109	MRWA company logo	Historical plaque
110	Governor Weld wheelbarrow plaque	Family history
111	A.Pratzky, WAGR employee record 1951	Family history

The Archives has recently been given access to, courtesy of Philippa Rogers, the photo collection of the late Basil Dunn some of which we have included in this report. Unfortunately, Basil, like many of us, did not date the photos so if any reader can accurately nominate the dates of any of them, we would be pleased to hear from you.





### More Photos Added to the Website

Since the last newsletter, another 200 images have been added to the RHWA online photo gallery. They are numbered P21401 to P21600.

## LOCOMOTIVE HISTORY (Jeff Austin)

### WAGR Dieselization in 1971

**The steaming of S 549 in recent weeks is a timely reminder of the final days of regular steam locomotive working, 50 years ago this year. As one of the last engines in service it is worth a look back at those final days in 1971 and the end of the 'great age of steam' on the WAGR.**

As construction of the standard gauge railway got underway in the early 1960s the WAGR investigated the effects of narrow-gauge diesel locomotives being released from the Perth-Kalgoorlie line. These studies were the first steps to full dieselization of the railway system and the withdrawal of all steam locomotives. By 1968, a more accurate assessment of future motive power requirements was possible, and a detailed report was prepared. This report predicted that steam locomotives would still be required until mid-1974.

The retirement of the modern steam locomotives began on 3 September 1968 when W 950 was withdrawn. Over the next two years, the arrival of new diesels and the flow-on effect of diesels following the standard gauge project, had resulted in a steady reduction in operating steam locomotives. In June 1970 a re-evaluation of the '1968 report' had shown an acceleration of the dieselization programme had been achieved due to changed haulage patterns on various lines. A cost benefit analysis at this time also showed that the purchase of a small number of main line diesels could replace all the remaining steam locomotives in 1971. The recommendations were put to government and funds were made available to purchase a further group of 'RA' class diesels.



*The first W class to be withdrawn, W 950 stowed at Collie, 14 June 1970 (RHWA P17471, J. Joyce)*

On 2 January 1971, the WAGR had 52 steam locomotives in service. They were based at Midland (3xDD, 2xDM, 3xV, 2xW), Bunbury (FS 423, 2xG, PMR 730, 2xS, 4xV, 14xW), Collie (FS 460, PM 710, 5xS, 3xV, 4xW) and Narrogin (PM 701, 3xW). Of the 81 locomotives which were stowed at depots, only one would see service again in 1971 – V 1222. Approval had been given to temporarily use S and V class locomotives to haul grain trains from Wagin to Collie from January 1971. V 1222 had been withdrawn in September 1970 but was recalled to service on 15 January to work these trains.



*W 915 at Narrogin Loco, c. 1970 (RHWA P03137, R. McMillan)*

The 5 new 'RA' class diesels entered service during February-May 1971, as well as the first 3 'D' class. The 'D' class went into service on the Jarrahdale bauxite trains and this released 'R' class diesels to general goods services. The impact of these diesels was immediate, with the retirement of 26 steam locomotives in the same period. Notable amongst them was the last 'PMR' class in service, PMR 730 which was withdrawn from Bunbury on 1 April; S 542 (23 March), W 908 (30 April), DD 596 (1 April) and G 123 (4 May).



*W 943 + V 1217 hauling the ARHS tour train near Beela, 22 November 1970 (RHWA P16912, Photographer unknown)*

The track upgrades on the Picton Junction-Pemberton railway had been completed and this allowed the operation of high axle load diesels on this section. The last steam locomotive, W 952 left Bridgetown on 26 March.

By the middle of May 1971, enough diesels were available to further extend their operations. W 952 was the last steam locomotive to depart Busselton on 22 May, while the Midland steam depot closed after the departure of V 1215 on 28 May. Steam locomotive working was then confined to the lines from Bunbury-Collie-Narrogin and Wagin. These services were –

- 1) Collie-Narrogin: one return train each week
- 2) Collie-Wagin: 2 return trains per week
- 3) Collie mines shunter: 2 return trips per day
- 4) Collie-Bunbury powerhouse: daily return trips
- 5) Collie-Brunswick Junction: one return trip daily

With such limited steam working it was planned to be fully dieselized by the end of July. The withdrawal of locomotives during July reads like a 'Who's Who' of the later preservation scene. They were – V 1209 (7 July), V 1220 (7 July), W 920 (9 July), V 1213 (14 July), W 947 (15 July), FS 460 (16 July), W 903 (16 July), W 945 (17 July), PM 701 (17 July) and V 1215 (21 July).

*The Railways Institute Magazine* reported, "On Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> July 1971, Collie became fully dieselized..." One of the last recorded steam workings prior to this date was the last steam locomotive to leave Wagin, W 943 hauling No.54 Goods on 24 July.

The complete dieselization however, proved to be short lived, as diesels were required elsewhere and steam locomotives soon returned in a shunting role. This remained the situation until the week ending 21 August, when there was an increase in steam working at Collie. Several locomotives which had been stowed in July were returned to service and this continued into September, with steam locomotives once again running to Bunbury powerhouse, Brunswick Junction and Narrogin. The three V class in service were those fitted with headlights on the tender for tender-first running from the Bunbury powerhouse to Brunswick Junction; a coal traffic commenced in September 1970.



*Last photograph of a steam locomotive on a goods train, X 1023 + S 549 near Bowelling, 11 October 1971 (RHWA P10430, J. Joyce)*

The boiler inspections for 8 October, listed the operating locomotives in the Collie depot. They were – S 545, S 548, S 549, V 1206, V 1209, V 1217 and W 943. On the same day, S 548 hauled No.105 Goods, Collie-Narrogin and returned the next day on No.120 Goods, double-heading with an X class. While also on 8 October, W 943 hauled No.55 Goods, Collie-Bowelling and returned to Collie on No.104 Goods. The last known photograph of a steam locomotive hauling a goods train was taken on 11 October, when John Joyce photographed S 549 double-heading with X 1023, Collie-Hillman.

By 23 October, the diesels had returned, and S 545 and S 548 were withdrawn, with the V class having only limited use. On 31 October, the ARHS arranged a rail tour from Picton Junction-Donnybrook and return, hauled by V 1220. This locomotive had been stowed at Collie in July and the return to service would have entailed some work. This is especially odd since V 1206, then still in service, was at Bunbury on the day of the tour? This tour and the 'Farewell to Steam' tour in June 1972 ensured V 1220 was later preserved at the rail museum, Bassendean.

The three V class were finally stowed in November – V 1217 (10 November), V 1209 (11 November) and V 1206 (15 November). As of 28 November, only two engines were still in service at Collie – S 549 and W 943. S 549 'brought down the curtain' on main line steam when it hauled the Western Collieries mine shunt on 24 December 1971 and was then stowed. W 943 continued into 1972 as the standby shunter in Collie yard.



*V 1206 hauling a coal train from the Bunbury power house in 1971 (RHWA P00720, K. Raynes)*

Meanwhile in Narrogin - W 915, W 923 and W 928 had commenced the year shunting in Narrogin yard. As diesel shunters arrived they were withdrawn, W 928 (8 March), W 915 (4 May) and W 923 (15 July). In January 1972, W 915 was withdrawn from stow and shunted the yards for 3 days, before again being permanently stowed.

Similarly in Collie, W 943 was the standby shunter when diesels were not available. One of its last days in service was reported in *The Railways Institute Magazine*,

"The majority of our mechanical staff at Collie are on the verge of being transferred to parts unknown due to Collie now being fully dieselized and steam a thing of the past ... or is it? On 1<sup>st</sup> March 1972 Collie was suspended in a state of bewilderment when a steam whistle was heard blowing in the yard and there was a steady flow of engine crews perusing the roster to see if they had been chosen as the lucky crews to work this monstrosity." So ended regular steam on the WAGR.

Postscript: In May 1971 the MLA for Collie, Tom Jones requested that the last steam locomotive used by the WAGR at Collie be made available to the Collie Historical Society. Hence the preservation of W 943, now displayed at Collie as W 948.

In March 1973, W 915 was recommended by the WAGR to Chris Andrews for his proposed tour trains at Albany but Chris preferred W 947.



*V 1220 hauling the ARHS tour train at Donnybrook, 31 October 1971 (RHWA P02902, D. Beazley)*

## THANK YOU TO ORGANISATIONS

On Friday 26 November a sundowner was held to thank organisations who have assisted us at the Railway Museum this year. Attendees included ARC Infrastructure (book sponsors), UGL (track usage, etc), ONRSR (helping us with steam accreditation), kindred groups who participated at Mini Model Expo and RailFest as well as our newest neighbours – the Bassendean Mens' Shed.



Thanks to Brayden and John for steaming S 549 'Greenmount' for the occasion – especially as the day was rather warm. This did enable our visitors to get up close to it – an opportunity they don't otherwise have.



Above: Northern Districts Model Engineers with the RHWa President (Bruce wears 2 hats)  
Right: Trevor Nunn, Philippa Rogers and Murray Cook (ARC Infrastructure)

(Photos: Trent Stanley and Trevor Nunn)

## SOUTH-WEST RAIL & HERITAGE CENTRE

The November Open Day was a Market Day and despite the heat 140 people came along.

April and October are the two Open days at SWRHC for which RHWa will be responsible. *Leschenault Lady* will be a key attraction on those days. She will also be operated on 1 or 2 other Open Days in 2022.

In the former WAGR-built Bunkhouse, used as accommodation by visiting RHWa volunteers, the significantly degraded polystyrene ceiling panels in the lounge / dining area have been replaced by a proper ceiling. The possum chewed electric light cable has been taken out of service and new wiring is in place. Thanks to John, Brayden and Noah for their work in taking down the old ceiling, emptying the room and cleaning up ready for the new ceiling. The bedroom ceilings are also falling in and further work will be required to make the bunkhouse fit for use.

Thank you to Alasdair and Anna for coordinating access to the bunkhouse and also for painting two walls to give a much better look to the main living area.

## RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE

Trent Stanley is coordinating a small team who are giving A 11 a much-needed facelift.

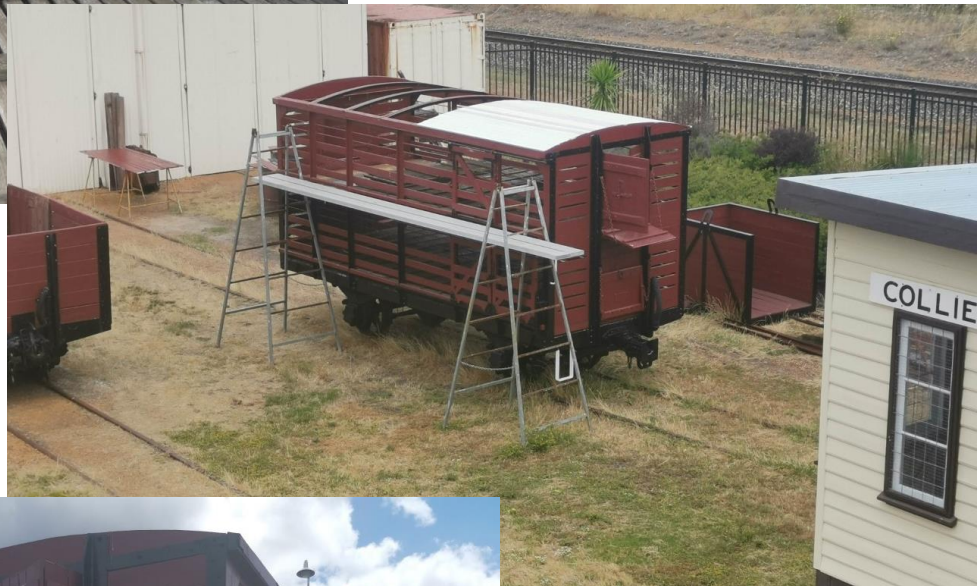
Unfortunately, after their first work session the hot weather has turned up so progress has slowed as A 11 is outside in the full sun. But the buffer looks better already.



The Collie Rail Heritage Group is restoring our CXB , which is normally resident in Boyanup.



The timber floor gratings were kept as they were in good condition and in other places they have used maple salvaged from the Roche Park Recreation Hall - smaller basketball court. And the roof is being finished of with wider jarrah boards from the timber the guys salvaged from the Collie Railway Institute flooring and joists. Thanks to Steve for these photos and the update.





## **NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE** (Simon Barber)

### **ARC INFRASTRUCTURE**

ARC completed Stage Seven of an eight stage resleepering programme on the Leonora branch railway during October 2021. The work involved 17.4km of upgrading between Myamin and Menzies, and Doney and Goongarrie. The steel to timber sleeper ratio is being upgraded to 1:2 during the work, replacing the former 1:4 pattern. New heavy duty steel sleepers have been inserted with an anticipated life of 40 years. Ballasting has also been undertaken in conjunction with the work. The project, which commenced in 2013, is due to be completed during 2022.

### **SCT LOGISTICS**

SCT service 2MP9 experienced a derailment on 10 November, with the rear six ABSY wagons coming off at the west end of the loop at Naretha. They remained upright and clear of the main line, so no extended line closure was necessary.

### **PACIFIC NATIONAL**

PN crewed Mineral Resources loaded iron ore train 4033 derailed 28 MHPY wagons near Widgiemooltha on 11 November. The train had loaded at Koolyanobbing East and was travelling to Esperance to discharge. Damage was quite extensive and required a load of replacement rail brought in from Bellevue by Aurizon. The line was able to be reopened on 17 November, with 26 of the derailed wagons remaining in position beside the rebuilt section.

### **FORTESCUE METALS GROUP**

FMG has obtained the four CD CM40-8M class locos CD4301, 4302, 4303 and 4305 from Rail First Asset Management. CD4302 has been brought by truck from Port Hedland to the FMG research facility at Hazelmere, arriving on 18 November. Joining 904, it is believed that both units will be part of “green” fuel technology testing being undertaken at the plant. The CD locos were all originally Robe River CM40-8M General Electric units, rebuilt from Alco locos by Goninan (now UGL Rail) at Bassendean. Eight units were sold by Rio Tinto to

CFCLA (now known as RFAM), with four eventually becoming the CD class for lease work in the Pilbara.

### **RIO TINTO IRON ORE**

CM40-8M locomotives 9411, 9418, 9419 and 9422 have been taken by truck to Port Hedland for scrapping by Sell and Parker, along with ballast wagons and ploughs. The equipment had been in recent use on the Rio Tinto Gudai-Darri line construction project. Scrapping of the locomotives had commenced by 23 November.

### **CBH GROUP / AURIZON**

The Aurizon takeover of the CBH grain rail contract was fully completed from 1 November. Trains in the Kwinana zone commenced running in November with Aurizon crews and logistical support. Four narrow gauge and two standard gauge sets of wagons have been servicing the Kwinana export terminal and the Metro Grain centre at Forrestfield. They will be joined by an extra set on each gauge during early 2022. The five standard gauge CBH locos have been supplemented by Aurizon unit Q4011, which has been noted running with CBH units, and also solo. P class locos and XT wagons, owned by Aurizon, have continued to operate in the Geraldton zone.

*Q4011 and  
CBH118 pair  
on 5S51 empty  
grain working  
at Beckenham  
on 18  
November.  
(Simon Barber)*



*A sign of the  
times with an  
Aurizon Q  
class heading  
a CBH grain  
train passing  
through South  
Guildford on  
the 24  
November  
2021 ( G  
Watson)*



Merredin  
RAILWAY MUSEUM

(J Patroni)

Despite a forecast predicted of a hot 35 degrees, a crowd gathered at Merredin's Railway Station on Monday 29 November to welcome and celebrate 50 years of continuous and efficient service of the Prospector train. Many guests included former railway employees for whom Merredin had been part of the advancement of their careers and home to their families. The air was full of laughter and the regaling of tales as colleagues and friends rekindled friendships and recounted experiences of previous times. The oldest former railway employee to join the celebrations was local resident, Frank Playforth (95) who believed the days of steam, though hard, were unequalled. Former district traffic superintendent Brian Gale recalled some of the happenings around Merredin that may best be left unreported!

The crossover of the two trains was timely, with TransWA driver Gavin, giving the assembled group a couple of extra whistles. Train crews were given a “goodie box” and passengers, a commemorative bookmark in recognition of the occasion.

The beautifully iced birthday cake was cut by Gloria Banks, former Merredin Shire President, Patron and former President of our Railway Museum. Both she and her husband Joe were instrumental in lobbying for the preservation of the old Railway Station buildings which were set for demolition with the commencement of the standard gauge. The hard work and vision of those early committee members has resulted in a great historical tribute to railway history in Merredin which today is enjoyed both locally and globally.



## PHOTOS OF THE 50<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS (Philippa Rogers)



Above: Transwa's birthday table at East Perth along with birthday cupcakes given to passengers.

Left: The Prospector ready to depart East Perth on 29 November 2021

The cross of the two Prospector sets at Merredin on 29 November.





*John Wearmouth, Philippa Rogers and Brian Williams posing with the model of the Prospector which Rail Heritage WA has lent to the Merredin Railway Station Museum for the celebrations (and a bit longer) – photo by Jane Patroni*



*Jane Patroni, President of Merredin Rail Station Museum who ensured the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday did not pass unnoticed was also the MC for the celebration event*



## MUSEUM ROSTERS

DATE	TICKETS/SALES	SITE SUPERVISOR	DUTY SUPERVISOR	
WEDNESDAYS		Museum open 1.00pm – 4.00pm		
8 December	A de Smalen	G Bradley	D Ingram	A de Smalen
15 December	A de Smalen	B Williams	D Ingram	A de Smalen
22 December	A de Smalen	G Bradley	D Ingram	A de Smalen
29 December	A de Smalen	B Williams	D Ingram	A de Smalen **
5 January	A de Smalen	G Bradley	D Ingram	A de Smalen **
12 January	N Richards	B Williams	D Ingram / KS / NR	B Williams **
19 January	A de Smalen	G Bradley	D Ingram / KS / NR	A de Smalen **
26 January	***** Australia Day Closed *****			
02 February	N Richards	A de Smalen	D Ingram / K Smith	A de Smalen
09 February	N Richards	B Williams	D Ingram / K Smith	B Williams

**\*\* School Holiday - Museum opens at 11.00am**

DATE	TICKETS/SALES		SITE SUPERVISOR	DUTY SUPERVISOR
<b>SUNDAYS</b>	<b>Museum open 1.00pm – 5.00pm</b>			
05 December	T Buttyl	B Williams	G Watson/M Gillooly	B Williams
12 December	A de Smalen	B Williams	C Forsey	A de Smalen
19 December	K Ayerst	B Keay	D Raine	K Ayerst
26 December	*****	Boxing Day – closed	*****	
02 January	T Buttyl	B Williams	G Watson/ M Gillooly	B Williams
09 January	A de Smalen	Iris Liu	C Forsey	B Williams
16 January	K Ayerst	B Keay	D Raine	K Ayerst
23 January	Quynh Hoang	Karen Smith	B Williams	B Williams
30 January	L McBeath	M Miles	G Higham	G Higham
06 February	T Buttyl	B Williams	G Watson/M Gillooly	B Williams

**Any alterations to the rosters would you please contact Brian at  
brianwilliams@railheritagewa.org.au**