



# RAIL HERITAGE WA

## Members Newsletter

April 2022



### FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Sat 9 April **Entertainment meeting - CANCELLED**

Sun 24 April Leschenault Lady in steam at the South-West Rail and Heritage Centre Open Day 9am to 2pm

Saturday 14 May Entertainment meeting 2pm **Lindsay Richardson shares his early railway memories**

Sunday 5 June Mini Model Railway Expo, Railway Museum, 10am to 4pm  
Including S 549 in steam.

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### FROM THE PRESIDENT (Philippa Rogers)

Welcome to our new Patron, Hon Dave Kelly MLA, who is our local member as well as the Minister for Water, Forestry and Youth. Thank you, Dave for your support.

At our general meeting in March an excellent presentation on '*Quintinshill disaster, UK's worst rail tragedy*' by Charles Waterton was greatly appreciated by those who attended our March meeting. Members are encouraged to share their stories or research by presenting at one of our Saturday afternoon meetings.

We have decided to **cancel our April Entertainment Meeting** for the protection of our members given the number of hospitalisations with COVID. Look forward to catching up again in May.

April is shaping up to be a busy month, not only events but the projected arrival of GM1 and a significant project to upgrade the drainage to overcome the two major problems with soak wells in the area between the AQM and the Vice regal car. We are trying a more comprehensive approach thanks to a detailed design by Bruce Key. The area will be inaccessible for a couple of weeks but visitors will still be able to access the carriages in a different way. With Easter and the SWRHC Open Day weekend it will all take some juggling. Hopefully everyone stays well.

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### MEMBERSHIP

Thanks to those who have already renewed their membership, which is due on 1 April. Our preference is for people to pay via direct debit but please note that we now have a Bendigo Bank account and the ANZ account has been closed so your quick link / records from last year will be out of date. Thank you.  
*And don't forget to return your renewal form too.*

## **STOP PRESS - GM 1 is on the move to Western Australia!**

To recap the story, the Australian Government asked for expressions of interest from groups interested in preserving the historic GM 1. Their decision was to gift it to Rail Heritage WA in 'as is, where is' condition. 'As is' meant a loco with no wheel life and in rather ordinary condition overall. 'Where is' meant in Dry Creek, South Australia.

Rail Heritage WA requested GM 1 due to its significant links to Western Australia, having travelled much of its 8 million kms across the Nullarbor between Kalgoorlie and Port Pirie. The building of the Trans-Australian Railway was the 'carrot' that enticed WA to join the Federation back in 1901. South Australia already had a GM preserved as well as a steam loco from the TAR, but WA had no such locomotive.

The first step was to pay for new wheels and minor works for GM 1 – which was done in SA and enabled it to be considered fit to move by rail. Negotiations had commenced to move it by rail from SA to WA when we were requested to display it at Streamliners 2016. This meant the loco travelling in the opposite direction to WA, but it came with a promise that a certain rail operator would then transport the loco by rail free of charge to WA. Sure, there was insurance to pay but that would be needed to rail it to WA anyway and we wanted to enable Streamliner enthusiasts to see this iconic loco at the event before it came to WA.

After a great Streamliner event it was time to move GM 1 to Perth. Suddenly the rail operator had changed their mind and despite two years of negotiations refused to rail GM 1 as promised. Another rail operator showed interest in helping but after a further couple of years it was clear this was not an option either. Further enquiries did not see any rail options available and by this time COVID was in full flight. In 2021 the decision was taken to attempt to move it by road – a very expensive exercise but no-one from Rail Heritage WA could leave the state to set it up.



*Loading at Parkes,  
NSW on Wednesday 30  
August 2022.*

*Photo by Brayden  
Hesford.*

But with the assistance of Lithgow Railway Workshops (thanks to Tim Elderton and his team) to set up the move, access and cranes it was finally able to happen – just in time for an extra fuel levy! Our thanks to Bernie Baker and others who have worked to protect GM 1 during its time in NSW, we really appreciate your



consideration. Also, thanks to UGL for their assistance in offloading it when it arrives in WA – it will make a massive difference to us.



*It wasn't easy to find a haulage company enable to carry such a load either.*

*Photo by Brayden Hesford.*

We have had to spend our restoration money (and more) to get it to WA but are pleased that it will finally get here and end up with other rollingstock from the TAR.

Thanks to Brayden Hesford and John Wearmouth who went to watch GM 1 being loaded at Parkes and ended up being hands-on, exhausted and sunburnt.



A big thank you to Ian Studham for his work in managing this project. It has been a thankless and stressful task – Ian had hair when this started.

Also, thanks to Geoffrey Higham for his assistance in writing the original submission that saw RHWA being gifted GM 1. There are others who have assisted in various ways and thank you all. Next month we will be able to update you on its arrival.

*These two photos of GM leaving Parkes yard by John Wearmouth)*



## MUSEUM (Philippa Rogers)

The Tuesday Museum Collection and Exhibition team has been making great progress with the accessioning and photography of items into the collection. Our care of the various railway uniform items has resulted in a need for a light expansion of the current hanging space as well as more padded coat hangers and an extra section of hanging space. Thanks to Jane and Bruce Keay for making these items.

As part of the accessioning process varying amounts of research are needed. Steph writes below about one such item and the research outcome to date.

### Champion Bay Tramways by Stephanie Sweeney

At the Railway Museum in Bassendean there is a display which was donated by the Perth Perway Institute many years ago. It shows samples of three steel railway tracks laid by the Royal Engineers' Expedition to the Swan River Colony between 1858 and 1860. The steel tracks mentioned in the display are:

1858: Fremantle  
0.25 mile, 35lb, 3ft. g.

1859: Champion Bay  
0.13 mile, 20lb, 2 ft. g.

1860: Fremantle  
14.5 miles, 40lb, 3ft. g.

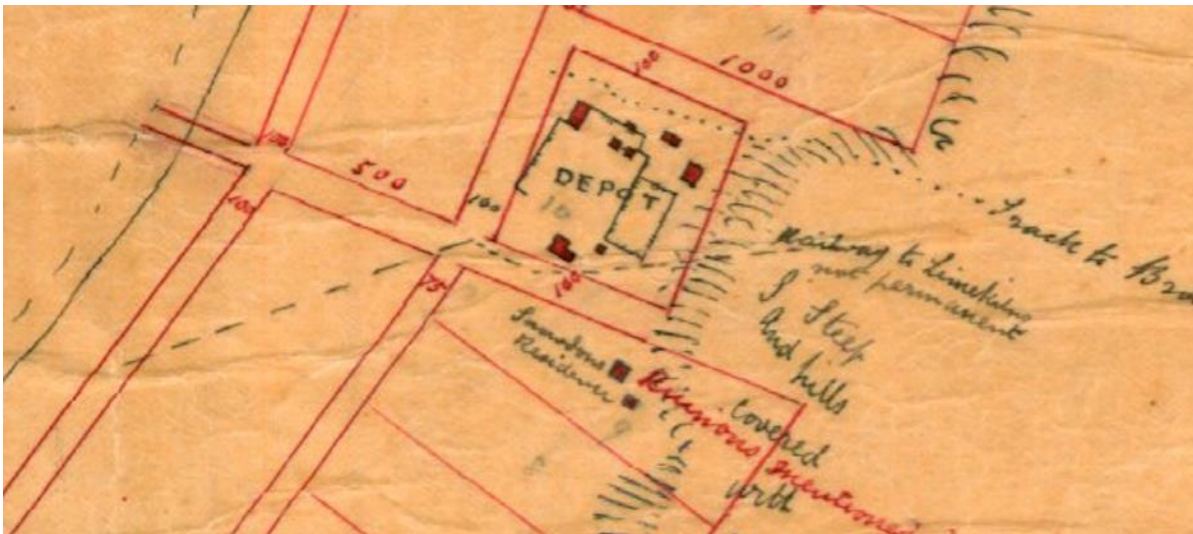


The information in the display is perplexing due to the samples not pointing to any known railways or tramways. At these locations the first horse-drawn tramway from Fremantle Prison was built in 1851 and the Fremantle South Bay Jetty tramway in 1867. In the Champion Bay area, the first state railway was not built until 1871. The South Bay Jetty tramway (1867) was thought to be the first to use all iron rails as opposed to wooden rails, but this collection was saying differently. Maps of Champion Bay in the mid-1860s from the State Record Office show a tramway that runs from the bay, past the Convict Depot, up to the Government Limekilns and Quarries. Not a lot of information was available about this tramway other than small mentions in local newspaper publications.

As well as David Whiteford the Geraldton Regional Library was contacted, and they provided information about a visiting surveyor to Champion Bay in 1857 who had obtained materials to build a horse-drawn timber tramway from the quarries through the depot down to the foreshore. Diane Evans, researcher of Midwest convicts, also sent through excerpts from official correspondence; one from 1859 requesting a horse for the tramway, the other from 1864 mentioning the daily trips the horses were taking on the tramway.



This established the existence of a tramway in Champion Bay in the late 1850s, however it does not provide any conclusive evidence this tramway is the one in the museum display, especially as the depot tramway had timber rails and the display sample is steel.



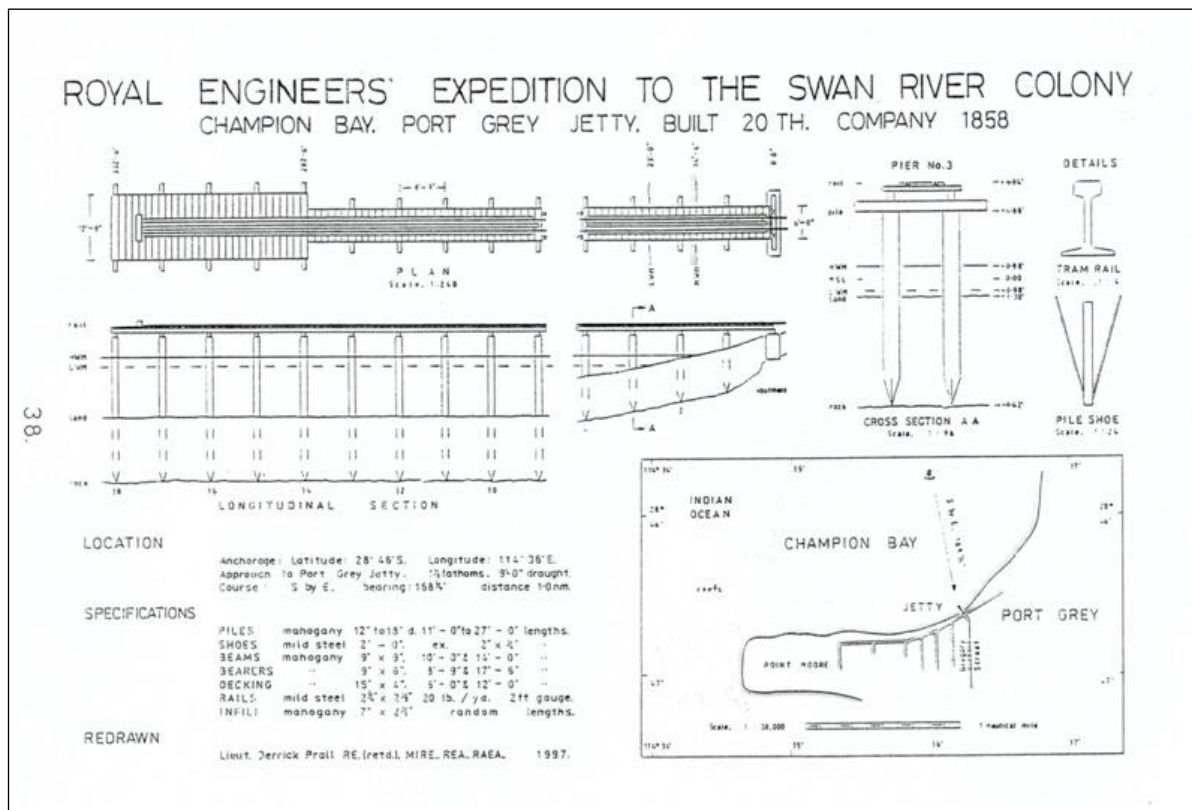
State Records Office of WA, AU WA S241- cons3850 20(e)



State Records Office of WA, AU WA S235- cons3868 137

We were lucky enough to borrow a rare copy of a book by Derrik Prall titled *Transportation, the great experiment 1850-1880 : directed by the 20th Co Royal Engineers Expedition to the Swan River colony : an archival portfolio*. It was the only reference found mentioning the Royal Engineers Expedition to the Swan River Colony, the text on the display. The book contained diagrams of buildings and structures built by the Royal Engineers Expedition to the Swan River colony. One of these structures was the Champion Bay Port Grey Jetty built in 1858.

The diagram shows the jetty had rails built on it. The specifications of the track list the rails were made out of mild steel, weighed 20 lb. / yd. with a track gauge of 2ft, which matches the details in the display. The tramway would have been used to assist loading and unloading goods from boats and ships. This diagram confirms the Champion Bay sample in the display is the Port Grey Jetty track.



*From: Transportation, the great experiment 1850-1880 : directed by the 20th Co Royal Engineers Expedition to the Swan River colony : an archival portfolio. Derrick Prall.*

This research has uncovered the construction of two more tramways before the great expansion of railways in Western Australian which occurred from 1871, and also the use of steel rails in WA prior to the 1860s. It does pose the question: how many early tramways existed but were undocumented? The Fremantle samples in the museum display are still a mystery. Hopefully these will be solved over time, but records of the Royal Engineers' Expedition are seemingly hard to find, even when people have visited overseas archives. However, we will not give up.

Care for the collection includes providing appropriate storage to prevent deterioration. For some of the smaller objects the best storage is in museum quality polypropylene boxes. The challenge is such boxes arrive flat and require construction. It is much harder than it looks!

*Left: David*

*Right: Steph & Emily*





## LOCOMOTIVE HISTORY (Jeff Austin)

### DA 1571

**The DA class of diesel-electric locomotives entered service 50 years ago and the class leader DAZ 1901 remains the only one in WA, the remainder having gone to South Africa and South Australia. This is the story of DA 1571/DAZ 1901.**

In July 1970 the WAGR drafted specifications for a new class of 3'6" gauge Co-Co diesel-electric main line locomotives. Tenders were circulated to various locomotive builders, with a closing date of 1 October 1970. The Tender Board received tenders from General Electric Co. of Australia Ltd and Clyde Engineering for construction of the 7 locomotives. After reviewing the tenders in the CME office at Midland Workshops on 28 October a recommendation of the Clyde tender was forwarded to the government for acceptance. A Letter of Intent was then sent to Clyde on 28 January 1971 for construction of the locomotives.

The seven locomotives were Model G26C, similar to the D class delivered the year before by Clyde. They were powered by a 16 cylinder EMD 645E engine, rated at 2000 traction horsepower and weighed 97.6 tonnes. Whilst the D class were intended for bauxite and mineral working, the DA class were for general traffic. Both classes were painted in the standard Larch green with red and yellow chevron livery.

The locomotives were built at Clyde Engineering Co., Granville, NSW and cost \$307,612 each. The class leader, DA 1571 left the works on 20 March 1972. It was fitted with standard gauge bogies hired by Clyde from the NSWGR for the transfer to WA and arrived at Midland Workshops on 13 April.



*DA 1575, DA 1571, DA 1573 at Narrogin Loco, 1 Dec 1973*

*(Photo: Jim Bisdee)*

After some modifications and testing, '1571' entered service on 26 April 1972. It was then used for crew training and trials at Forrestfield, before being sent to Avon Yard on 22 May. For the following week it was used for crew training on No.11/10 Goods between Avon Yard and Narrogin. The GSR main line became the haunt of the DA class for the next 7 years, with '1571' regularly hauling the overnight passenger trains, No.7/8 Pass from Perth-Albany. In March 1979 it went into Midland

Workshops for general overhaul and emerged on 26 June in the new orange with blue and white chevron livery. It had so far travelled 774,000kms.

*DA 1571 hauling  
No. 8 passenger  
Albany Progress in  
the Avon Valley  
Dec 1973*

*(Jim Bisdee)*



During the 1980s the workings for the DA class were more widely spread and '1571' could be found on alumina trains at Bunbury, fast freights to Geraldton and Albany, and grain trains from Avon Yard. It was in Midland Workshops for 3 months from December 1980-February 1981 with collision repairs but the details are not recorded. Later in 1981, '1571' passed 1 million kms in service.

By the mid 1980's it was mainly working grain trains and AXMO with other units. A major 'G' service in June 1986 had it fitted with a new engine, originally from D 1562. The later 1980s also included some tour train working. These were –

27 July 1986: hauled HVTR tour train, Perth-Bridgetown

8 April 1990: hauled HVTR tour train, Perth-Bridgetown

1-3 June 1991: hauled ARHS 'Mid West Wanderer' tour train, Perth-Geraldton

30 September 1991 : hauled Jazz Festival train, Perth-York



DA 1571 hauling ARHS  
'Mid West Wanderer'  
train at Wongan Hills 1  
June 1991 Phil Melling

After a service and fitting air-conditioning at Goninan's, Bassendean in July 1994, '1571' spent the remainder of the decade around Narngulu on goods and grain working.



In July 2000 it was towed to Goninan's Bassendean for general overhaul and returned to service on 6 December 2000 in yellow livery, with black zebra stripe ends and blue Westrail name. It was the last locomotive to be painted in a Westrail livery and only days before it was sold to the Australian Railroad Group (ARG).



*DA 1571 at Kwinana depot 1 Feb 2002*

*(Jeff Austin)*

'1571' then became quite a regular on the quartz trains from Forrestfield-Cairn Hill near Moora and even hauled woodchip trains from Bunbury-Lambert in the final weeks of that railway in 2005. Late in 2005 it was transferred to Narngulu and re-numbered '1901'. The large blue 'Westrail' on the car body was painted out in March 2006 and was replaced by the plain yellow livery but retaining the black zebra stripes on the ends. '1901' and many other ARG locomotives were sold to QR National on 1 June 2006.



*1901, AB 1535 and 1906 hauling grain train at Narngulu on 17 March 2006 (Photo: Phil Melling)*

It was fitted with ZTR traction equipment and on 7 July 2006 re-classified 'DAZ 1901'. Traffic around Narngulu was grain and iron ore trains before a return to Avon Yard and West Merredin in 2008. About March 2008, '1901' was fitted with ARG logos on the car body and ends to cover the faded yellow paint. It returned to Narngulu in mid 2009 and remained there on grain and iron ore working until stowed in 2011.



*DAZ 1901 and P 2508 hauling grain train at Cadoux 21 April 2008 (Photo: Simon Barber)*

After a short period of storage it returned to service in a miscellaneous role of ballast and rail trains, anywhere between Forrestfield and Narngulu. Stored again for 3 months in 2013 it returned to a variety of ballasting and rail trains before entering the workshops at Forrestfield in 2014. It emerged on 7 October in the new yellow Aurizon livery and was regularly used for transferring EMU railcars from Midland Workshops to Nowergup and other ballasting and rail train roles. Its most important task during this time was piloting the historic ANZAC special from Midland to Fremantle on 31 October 2014. '1901' was withdrawn and stowed at Forrestfield in April 2018 and later Picton. It was returned to Forrestfield on 29 October 2018 and has been the depot shunter at Forrestfield ever since.

Of the other members of the class, '1907' (DA 1577) left for South Australia on 11 March 2006 and today hauls iron ore trains out of Whyalla, while 'DAZ1902-1906' (DA 1572-1576) departed Fremantle on the ship 'FAIRLIFT' for South Africa on 10 January 2015.



*DAZ 1901 hauling a rail train at Woodbridge, 23 Oct 2014 (Photo: Phil Melling)*



## ARCHIVES (G Watson)

Here are the requests we have received from the public over the past month, and they have been dealt with Jeff Austin in his usual professional manner

No.	Subject	Purpose
8	W. Wiltshire, WAGR employee record	Family history
9	E class on wheat train photo	Publication
10	ARHS Pilbara tour 1972 photo	Family history
11	AU carriage timbers	Self
12	Goods shed colours	Training program
13	Pendennis Castle photo	Publication
14	Identify wagon makers plate	Local history

Another 200 new photos have been added to the RHWa online photo gallery. They are numbered P21801 to P22000.

### Do you remember these photos??

As part of the refurbishment of the Noel Zeplin Exhibition Hall, the photo boards have been dismantled ,the photos removed and added to our photo collection. They have yet to be added to the online gallery.

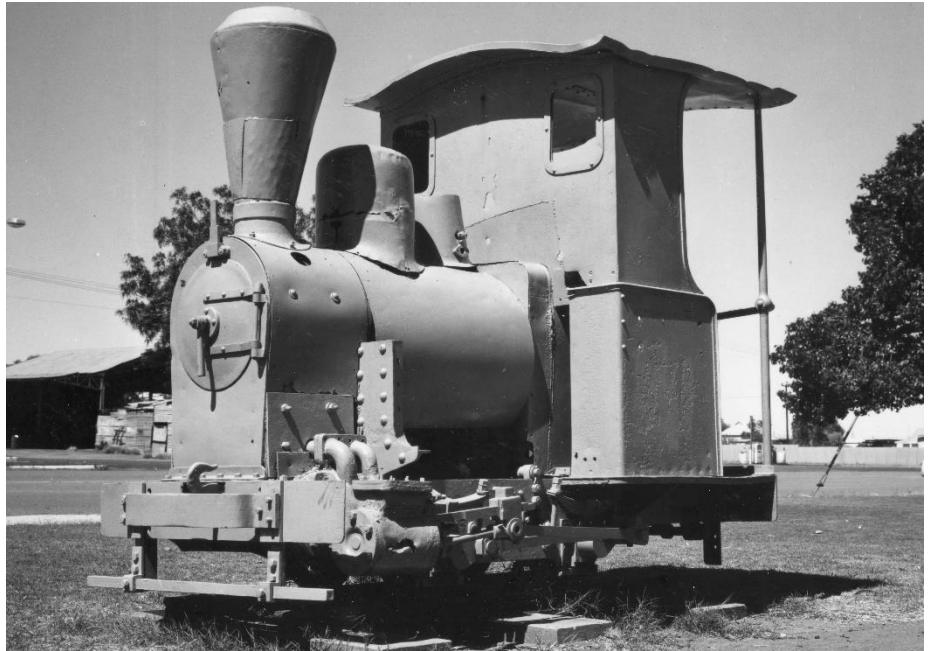


P20508



P20494

P 20483



P20501





P20467

P20515



## AROUND THE MUSEUM



*Bullion van paint job as worked on by Kevin. Looking much better !  
Photo: Philippa Rogers*



During the last month the guttering on the old kiosk has been replaced and Graeme has been giving the fascias and now the roller door a fresh coat of paint. This area is very popular with parents to sit in the shade and watch their children play on the play equipment.

(Photo: Philippa Rogers)

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

### **WA NEWS- BHP IRON ORE**

BHP will purchase four battery-electric locomotives and conduct trials at its Western Australia Iron Ore rail network, as part of the company's ongoing efforts to reduce its operational emissions. The four locomotives are scheduled for delivery in late 2023. Two will be supplied by BHP's current provider Progress Rail, a Caterpillar company, and two from Wabtec.

BHP will test the battery-electric locomotives' performance and emissions reduction capabilities in delivering iron ore from its Pilbara mines to the Port Hedland export facility. Conducting the trials in collaboration with two leading providers will support BHP's planned electrification of its iron ore fleet of more than 180 locomotives.

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau has released a preliminary report on the runaway BHP loaded iron ore train which occurred on 5 November 2018. Details can be accessed through the link below.

[ro-2018-018 preliminary.pdf \(atsb.gov.au\)](https://www.atsb.gov.au/publications/ro-2018-018_preliminary.pdf)



## **FORTESCUE METALS GROUP**

FMG's 12 AC44C6M units 101 to 112 are nearing completion by Wabtec at Fort Worth with a number already tarped for shipment. The AC44C6M are DC to AC rebuilds from former BNSF 9-44CW units. There may also be an extension of the order with more locos to be rebuilt.

## **JOURNEY BEYOND RAIL**

Following the reopening of the WA border to interstate and international travellers, the opportunity has been taken to start up *Indian Pacific* services. The first westbound working since the reopening arrived at East Perth terminal on 12 March, hauled by NR86. Despite the Midland suburban line being closed for works connected with the Bayswater station and bridge upgrade, the train was allowed to proceed through to East Perth. The same unit worked the eastbound *Indian Pacific* on the following day. The reinstatement of the service attracted media attention for the arrival of the first westbound train.

## **AURIZON- CBH GROUP**

CBH has decided not to use rail transport to clear the silos on the Miling branch of grain from the 2021 – 2022 harvest. Road transport will be used instead to haul the grain to Kwinana. The branch had been closed for an extended period due to a bridge near Toodyay requiring repairs, these having been completed during January 2022. It is understood that rerailing works are to be scheduled on the line during the coming year.

Five narrow gauge sets are currently in operation for haulage within the Kwinana zone. All sets consist at this stage of CBH locos and CBHN wagons. CBH is planning to run another two sets to assist in moving the record harvest. Narrow gauge VGKM and VGHM grain wagons have been arriving from Queensland. In addition, AGAY standard gauge wagons are being serviced at Gemco Rail, with work including the fitting of recycled bogies. CBH has indicated in the media that it wishes to once again operate grain trains in the Esperance zone.

## **WATCO**

### **ROSSLYN HILL MINING**

Watco has picked up the contract for the haulage of lead carbonate to Fremantle for export by sea. The carbonate is mined near Wiluna and taken by road to Leonora. It receives transit to and from Forrestfield via Watco's 471 / 472 and 351 / 352 services. Between Forrestfield and North Quay, a dedicated train is run. The lead carbonate is carried using strict handling protocols, being placed in sealed bags which are loaded into containers. A requirement for the transportation of the product is that it takes the most direct rail route from Leonora to the port.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

AB1535 worked its first infrastructure service for Watco on 21 March, leading DR1565 and 1564 on 2RT1 rail train. The two DR units were hauled, giving AB1535 a good workout. Departing Midland, the train worked on the Midland Railway, having an overnight stay at Three Springs, and then running east of Geraldton from 23 March for rail distribution.



AB1535  
heads north of  
Mooliabeenie  
on its first  
revenue  
Watco  
working with  
DR1565 /  
1564 in tow.  
(Simon  
Barber)

### **METRONET - MIDLAND STATION**

The Midland Junction Alliance has been awarded the \$246.7 million contract to design and build the new Midland Station.

The Alliance – made up of McConnell Dowell Constructors, Georgiou Group, Arcadis Australia, and BG&E – will design and build the new three-platform station between Helena and Cale Streets. The contract also includes decommissioning and demolishing the existing station which opened in 1968.

As well as the main station building, the project will include a 12-stand bus interchange, a new multi-storey car park with more than 600 parking bays, a north-south pedestrian overpass, passenger toilets, lifts, stairs, a kiosk and secure parking for 96 bicycles.

Early works on the project, which is jointly funded by the Federal and Western Australian governments, are due commence later this year.

### **FROM**



(Jane Patroni)

The cooler weather in recent days has made life more pleasant in Merredin and we at the Museum are looking forward to welcoming the visitors who call in. We are noticing an increase in caravan traffic stopping to enjoy a journey's break. Subject to volunteer availability, we hope to be open most of the Easter holiday.

We are looking forward to the installation of our new signage on the Museum's north facing fence and acknowledge the great team effort between *Creative Spaces*, *PTA* and *Arc Infrastructure*. This will enhance our profile as an entry statement and



continue our progress towards upgrades as part of our ongoing *Interpretation and Concept Plan*.

Although the hot weather has played havoc in our grounds, we have had the kind assistance of the Shire Parks and Garden crew in keeping our gardens tidy.



We received a special donation from one of our local residents who had worked for Westrail/TransWA as a customer service attendant on the Prospector/Trans Australian/Indian Pacific and Australind trains. Using the donated items of a blue pinny and badges, we have set up “Kath” in our display cabinet. Over the years, stewardesses were employed to assist the travelling public with meals, drinks and information. Apart from office work, it was one of the few departments within which women were employed on the railways.

In addition, we have been fortunate enough to be the recipients of some certificates and trade papers from the family of *Keith Sawyer* who commenced an apprenticeship as a *Car and Wagon Builder at the Midland Workshops* in 1947. Keith lived in with his family in Merredin. His father *Norman*, was an engine driver with the WAGR in the 1930s both in Kalgoorlie and Merredin.



Wishing all readers a very Happy Easter and if you are travelling through Merredin, call in and say “Hello”!

## SOUTHWEST RAIL AND HERITAGE CENTRE (Alasdair Kenyon)



Sunday 24 April 2022 9am to 2pm

### ***Leschenault Lady steams again***

Much loved 124-year old steam locomotive, Leschenault Lady, returns to steam - see it chuffing up and down.

*Please note: rides not available.*

Other activities include:

- Historic railway carriages
- Makers using recycled timber
- Items made from recycled metal
- Blacksmiths in action
- Model railways
- Agricultural machinery and more
- Teas in picnic van, sausage sizzle



Please prebook due to COVID restrictions.  
Free for under 18s and \$5 per person 18 and over.

<https://www.trybooking.com/BYJPC>

You will also need to show your COVID vaccination certificate on entry. Thank you.



The attendance numbers for March were very disappointing with 32 adults and 7 children coming through the gate. A cold and windy day (too windy to put out the banners on South West Highway) coupled with rain the previous day obviously putting people off.

Hopefully the steaming of Leschenault Lady for our April open day will give our attendances a boost.

Behind the scenes the Blacksmith group are progressing with the new gates for the centre and following completion of a land survey RHWA is developing the designs for the new Interpretation Centre.

On the long weekend it was good to see improvements made to the TA locomotive progressing it to operating condition. It is to be repainted orange.

## MUSEUM ROSTERS

DATE	TICKETS/SALES	SITE SUPERVISOR		DUTY SUPERVISOR
<b>WEDNESDAYS</b>		<b>Museum open 1.00pm – 4.00pm</b>		
6 April	K Smith	B Williams	T Nunn	B Williams
13 April ***	K Smith	A de Smalen	D Ingram	A De Smalen
20 April ***	K Smith	B Williams	T Nunn	B Williams
27 April	K Smith	G Bradley	D Ingram	G Bradley
4 May	K Smith	B Williams	T Nunn	B Williams
11 May	K Smith	A de Smalen	D Ingram	A De Smalen

**Note: school holidays so the Museum will open at 11am on these days.**

DATE	TICKETS/SALES	SITE SUPERVISOR		DUTY SUPERVISOR
<b>SUNDAYS</b>		<b>Museum open 1.00pm – 5.00pm</b>		
03 April	Quynh Hoang	K Smith	G Watson/M Gillooly	B Williams
10 April	B Williams	K Smith	C Forsey	B Williams
17 April	A de Smalen	B Keay, K Smith	D Raine	A de Smalen
24 April	L McBeath	M Miles, K Smith	G Higham	G Higham
1 May	Quynh Hoang	K Smith	G Watson/M Gillooly	B Williams
8 May	B Williams	K Smith	C Forsey	B Williams

**Any alterations to the rosters would you please contact Brian at [brianwilliams@railheritagewa.org.au](mailto:brianwilliams@railheritagewa.org.au)**