



RAIL HERITAGE WA

Members Newsletter

July 2022



FOR YOUR CALENDAR

NOTE: Change of entertainment for July

Sat 9 July 2pm Entertainment meeting Entertainment meeting. Keith Cundale, President of Maylands Historical & Peninsula Assoc will talk on the changes that have taken place at Maylands Station since 1896. He will consider the various industries, characters and controversies.

Sun 24 July SWRHC Open day, Boyanup 9am to 2pm

Sat 13 August 2pm General Meeting followed by **Jeff Austin** speaking on the Rockingham – Jarrahdale railway which was opened 150 years ago

Sun 28 August SWRHC Open day, Boyanup 9am to 2pm

Sat 10 Sept 2pm Chris French will speak on signalling with an update on Claremont Signal Cabin situation.

Advance notice: Sat 12 November will see the launch of the project 'Railway Employees killed at war'

FROM THE PRESIDENT (Philippa Rogers)

On our second attempt to hold our Annual General Meeting we were successful on Saturday 18 June in achieving a quorum. Thank you to all those who came along and made it happen.

In addition to those management committee members elected unopposed as outlined in the last newsletter, our Vice-President position is now filled – thanks to Trent Stanley for stepping up to fill this position.

Constitutional change

An amendment was proposed to the clause previously outlined. This was accepted and subsequently adopted as a change to the Constitution. New clause:

2.4 Quorum for General Meetings: 10% of the current financial members (being members entitled to vote under the rules of a General Meeting) will constitute a quorum for the conduct of business at a General Meeting, unless the meeting is to consider a motion to amend the Rules Of Association of the Society in which case the quorum shall be 15% of the current financial membership.

MUSEUM (Philippa Rogers)

New interpretive signage –four smaller signs have now been installed. My focus will now return to writing material for the new displays in the Exhibition Building.

Mini Model Railway Expo

We were so lucky with the weather on Sun 5 June and with the great offerings from our exhibitors 1660 visitors (about 150 of these were under 4-years-old) were enticed to come along to the Railway Museum. A huge thank you to all volunteers who helped to make the day a success – from greeting people at the door to firing 'Greenmount', talking about GM 1 or helping to set up and pack away. There is a lot of preparation that goes into such events but seeing the smiling faces makes it worthwhile.

Wren Gillam took these photos of activities on the day (thank you) and captured many of the people and organisations who supported us in making the day a success.





Next big event: RailFest Sun 9 October. If you are interested in having a stall or display, please email admin@railheritagewa.org.au

ARCHIVES (G Watson)

The following requests for information have been received from members of the public and other organisations during the month of June and have been dealt with by Jeff Austin.

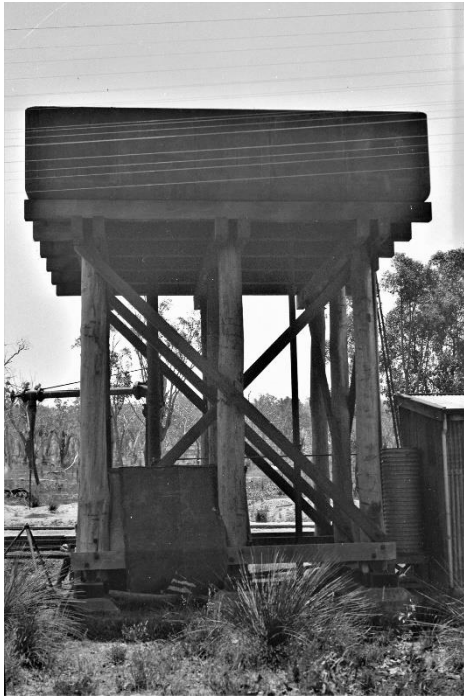
No.	Subject	Purpose
28	Armadale railway history	METRONET upgrade
29	Bridgetown railway water supply	Environmental study
30	Chidlow station photos	Local history display
31	Clackline station photo	Local honour board
32	Meekatharra railway dates	Self
33	J.Andrew & T. Fagan, WAGR employee record	Family history
34	Meltham station photos	Family history
35	Prospector and Prince Charles photo	Local history
36	Mt Lawley station photos	Local history
37	V 1220 photos	Coin series
38	F.H. Steinke, WAGR employee record	Local history
39	Ausrail/AN News newsletter, 1977-96	Self
40	Bruce Rock trackplan	Modelling

The Archives has received in recent times, a number of donations of photographic collections. Some of these collections have been just a few photos while other collections have numbered in the thousands, mainly but not entirely from deceased estates.

More recently, donations of collections have been gratefully received from Philippa Rogers, well known railway historian and author, Adrian Gunzburg and the late past President, Nicholas Pusenjak

As we place a priority on photos taken pre 1960s, I have chosen a number of photos from the Philippa Rogers' collection for publication in this month's newsletter. These photos were taken in the late 1930s (*Ed: but not by her!*)

If you have any railway related photographs taken in this time period, we would very much appreciate them being either donated or loaned to Rail Heritage for inclusion in our collection.



(left) Water Tank at Koojedda



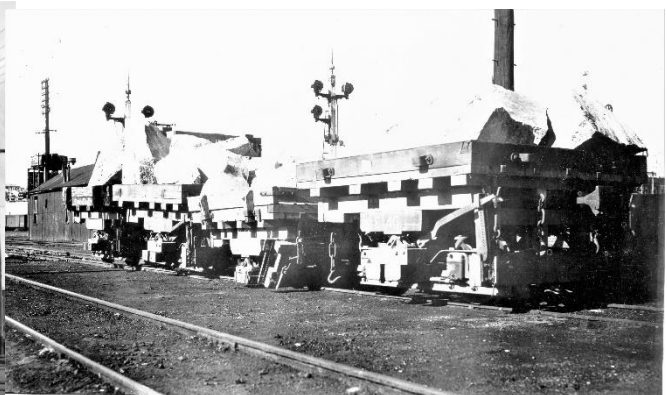
Above) Footbridge at Bassendean station



Above: Heavy load in Perth Goods



Above left : Jewell street level crossing



Above right: Derailment of a stone train in Perth Goods yard



Above: Overall view of Perth Goods

SOUTHWEST RAIL AND HERITAGE CENTRE (Alasdair Kenyon)

A beautiful winters day for our June open day, saw 63 adults and 30 children come through the gate.

During the month we took delivery of 3 display cabinets, a TV system, 3 cupboards and 2 shelving units which were funded by two grants (RHWA and SWRHC) under the Culture, Heritage and Arts Regional Tourism (CHART) program.



These will both enhance our public offering and allow us to improve our internal storage facilities. We are now focusing on selecting items to put in the display cabinets

Left: new display cabinets for Boyanup Foundation. Construction by Alasdair and Anna.



*How some of
our visitors
travelled to
SWRHC on 26
June!*

MOTIVE POWER UPDATE (B Hesford, J Wearmouth)

S549 was prepped and steamed successfully for the Mini Model Railway Day and was much appreciated by the many hundreds of visitors. Our thanks to Bennett Brook Railway for their assistance in provision of coal.

A fortnight later we steamed her again this time to shuffle some of our larger items around (those steam locos are very heavy!) and release the AQZ for future works. It is now sleeping quietly for the next few months.



The scene at night as the light-up crew are at work looking after S 549 with standard gauge dining car D 20 providing interesting lighting. (B Hesford)



*S 549 hauling AQZ 423 ready for its temporary location. The AQZ has had one side restored but the side you can see here could not be done in its previous location.
(B Hesford)*

S 549 being coaled ready for the Mini Model Railway Expo.

This followed the cutting up of much timber (old sleepers) for light up.

(P Rogers)



GM1 restoration has officially commenced now that it is closer to the shed, the reverser has been removed for overhaul, scaffolding has been setup in preparation for metal repairs around the nose.





The reverser of GM 1 is benched and ready for strip down. Some components are missing and will need to be sourced.

(B Hesford)

LOCOMOTIVE HISTORY (Jeff Austin)

RA 1910

The 1960's American bubblegum pop band, 1910 Fruitgum Company became the nickname for a WAGR diesel locomotive - RA 1910, when it emerged in experimental orange livery in 1974.

In November 1967 the WAGR called tenders for 12 main line narrow gauge diesel locomotives. They received responses from Clyde-EMD, English Electric and Goninan's but none was recommended. Instead, they were re-advertised and in May 1968 only Clyde-EMD and EE responded. The tender from Clyde-EMD was recommended but further investigation of existing Clyde and EE locomotives on the WAGR was undertaken. In September 1968 it was decided to split the contract and award 6 locomotives to both Clyde-EMD and English Electric. These locomotives would become AB 1531-1536 and RA 1906-1911. All 12 locomotives were on hire for the first 5 years, with a final purchase payment in April 1975. The eventual cost of each RA class locomotive was about \$255,000.

This group of locomotives was expected to dieselize the GSR main line from Avon Yard to Albany and enough were expected to be in service to complete this task by 1 January 1970. The lengthy tendering process and further delays in construction meant that this deadline could not be achieved.

RA 1910 (Makers No.A.202) was the last to leave the English Electric works at Rocklea, Queensland with RA 1911 on 12 December 1969. It was transported by rail to WA and given final commissioning checks at Midland Workshops before entering service on 6 February 1970. After some running-in work in the metro area it was sent to the GSR.

The dieselization of the GSR took a period of months with steam still required to cover for failed diesels and others sent away for servicing. The situation was further compounded by the collision of No.42 & 19 Goods at Kendenup on 24 February 1970 and damage to RA 1907 and RA 1911. Despite these setbacks, the GSR was fully dieselized from 1 June 1970.

The RA class were displaced from the GSR by the new DA class in 1972 and found their way back to Forrestfield, working to Avon Yard and Bunbury. RA 1910 was even used to haul the ARHS day tour to Donnybrook on 14 October 1973.



RA 1910 hauling the ARHS day tour at Donnybrook, 14 October 1973 (Jeff Austin)

'1910' entered Midland Workshops in April 1974 for new wheels and traction motor repairs. Whilst there, it was selected as the first narrow gauge diesel to be painted in the experimental International orange livery, ex works 5 June 1974. Two standard gauge diesels, L 257 and J 104 were also repainted but differed from '1910' in having black zebra stripes on the yellow band. The WAGR were keen to show off the new livery and '1910' was used on several hired special trains in the months that followed, including the ARHS day tour to Mogumber on 28 July 1974.

In March 1977 '1910' was due for general overhaul at Midland Workshops. When it re-emerged on 18 June 1977 it had been repainted to the new Westrail orange and blue livery. This was also a turning point in the career of '1910', as it was transferred to the Geraldton depot. It would remain in that district hauling general goods, grain, mineral sands and talc for all the 1980's. Only the occasional return trip to Forrestfield or Midland Workshops for servicing would see it venture back to Avon Yard and Bunbury.

By October 1981, '1910' had travelled 1,112,858km. The R and RA class were used extensively in the mid-west on all types of trains, often in multiple. They worked No.3/4 Freight to Forrestfield, grain trains to Mullewa and Dalwallinu, grain and talc trains to Three Springs and mineral sands trains to Eneabba.



RA 1910 in new International orange livery hauling the ARHS day tour at Mogumber, 28 July 1974 (Jeff Austin)



RA 1910 hauling a goods train at Three Springs, 27 July 1979 (Jeff Austin)

'1910' received its last major overhaul and engine replacement in May 1986. Time however was running out for all English Electric locomotives and the arrival of the new P class in 1989 was the beginning of the end. '1910' spent a short period as a shunter at Narngulu but was eventually stowed at Forrestfield on 14 November 1990.

It was examined on 20 November and a number of faults required attention plus the wheels were almost worn out. The recommendation was to submit it for write off and this occurred on 3 December 1990. It had travelled 1,938,363kms.

In May 1991 a private company approached Westrail with plans to purchase the R and RA locomotives stowed at Forrestfield. They would be repaired by Westrail and then sold onto overseas buyers. Westrail prepared quotes for the work but it was not proceeded with.

RA 1910 and the other written off R and RA class were cut up at Midland Workshops in September-October 1992 and the scrap sold to Perth Metals in Kewdale.

*Below: Scrap parts of RA 1910 at Perth Metals, Kewdale, 8 October 1992
(Jim Bisdee/Phil Melling Collection)*



AROUND THE STATE (Simon Barber)

METRONET / PTA

The Southern Suburbs Railway was closed between Elizabeth Quay and Aubin Grove stations from 3 – 6 June inclusive to enable further work to be undertaken at Cockburn Central Station. While the first day of the closure corresponded with a normal working day, the rest of the period was over the WA Day long weekend. Bus services were substituted from the city to Aubin Grove, with train services then in operation between Aubin Grove and Mandurah.

FORTESCUE METALS GROUP

To cover its increasing requirement for motive power, FMG is the process of boosting its General Electric fleet. Eight former BNSF / GECX Dash 9-44CW units have arrived in Port Hedland, with four already being placed into traffic to bolster existing sets. Twelve AC44C6M DC to AC rebuilds from former GECX / BNSF 9-44CW units are currently in shipment from the USA, the work having been undertaken by Wabtec in Forth Worth, Texas. The eight units already arrived carry BNSF livery, while the rebuilds wear the FMG blue and white livery.

(Reference Pilbara Railway Pages site)

<https://www.pilbararailways.com.au/FMG/roster.php>

WATCO

AB1535 ran a ballast programme on the Miling branch from 31 May to 4 June. Loading of ballast was undertaken firstly at Yerecoin, then at Coondle. Line rehabilitation has been occurring in the Bolgart – Calingiri section. On 7 June, AB1535 ran a rail train out of Midland to serve points in the Wheatbelt as diverse as York, Wyalkatchem and Ejanding. The opportunity to service the two DR units at Watco's leased facility within the UGL Rail complex at Bassendean was undertaken in early June.



AB1535, now wearing WATCO logos at each end, passes through Wattening, south of Bolgart, with 5BT2 ballast on 2 June (Simon Barber)

AB1535 made its first trip to UGL on 14 June since its relocation from Minnivale, though requiring assistance from DR1564 and 1565 to complete the journey. (Both photos by G Watson.)





AURIZON Loco Notes

The S class locomotives are usually based at Kwinana, with one allocated to Collie for use on the Worsley Alumina coal services. Although the class was once common at Picton, their use there in more recent years has become much rarer. However, S3304, S3306 and S3308 have been noted on workings from Picton since around April. The Alcoa and Worsley Alumina traffic out of the Bunbury Harbour usually employs the single cab ACN and P class units, with running around train consists not required as all the sidings served have balloon loops. The double cabbed S class are useful on trains feeding into the sidings at Alcoa in Kwinana where running around is required.

CBH Group Eight wagons derailed on grain service 1A80 on 12 June at Wagin, with the train heading towards Lake Grace. The train locos CBH023 and CBH016 were not affected. The line was closed until wagon recovery could be undertaken.

FROM THE PAST



*XA1410
shunts
rolling stock
at the
museum site
during 1971,
three years
before the
official
opening.
(Terry
Verney)*

THE END OF AN ERA (photos by Kieran Wright)

On 13 June 2022 the demolition of Dowerin Railway Station began as no use could be found for the building. AB 1535 hauled the last train to pass by the station building prior to its demolition – 9 June 2022.



FROM



(Jane Patroni)

The Power of Volunteering

Across Australia, the estimate of dollar value on volunteer work sourced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006) was \$43 billion! In 2014, 5.8 million people (31% of Australian adults) participated in voluntary work, contributing 743 million hours to the community.

Few organisations in Merredin (or anywhere for that matter!) would be successful without the trusty and enduring assistance of volunteers. Think sport, community events and social support. Many volunteers donate time and energy across multiple organisations. To all our community volunteers, especially our Railway Museum volunteers – we say a collective **“Thank You”**.



Ross and Simmo erecting the new large banners along the Museum fence.

The volunteers at the Railway Museum are continuing the work of those previous committees, in maintaining buildings and infrastructure and working towards new projects that will highlight the importance of our Merredin rail story. We have been able to use the availability and expertise of many supporters who have assisted us in our endeavours to move forward with our strategic planning as detailed in the *Interpretation and Design Concept Plan (2020) and Style Guides*.

On Friday and Saturday 24-25 June we again welcomed **Philippa Rogers** (President Rail Heritage Bassendean) and **John Wearmouth** (technical advisor) to Merredin. Philippa conducted a **Significance Workshop** (CHART funded) to help us more critically evaluate and present items within our collection and explore possibilities of incorporating information into digital form. To precede the Workshop we invited railway enthusiasts, museum “tragnics” and interested community members to attend an evening where Philippa presented some of the key and

interesting facts behind rail history in WA over the last 150 years. Held in our Refreshment Room, we welcomed Shire Councillors, Shire Staff and members of a neighbouring Museum to the evening which was beautifully catered for by our amazing **Julie Nicoletti**.



Before the talk people were provided with a wonderful three-course meal – to everyone's surprise and delight!

Philippa was instrumental in inviting Merredin to participate in key events around last year's celebrations of **RailWA – 150 Years**. As a railway organisation, it was the first time we participated in **RailFest** where we met many people whose collective efforts were making a huge difference across the preservation of rail history. Philippa was a keynote speaker at our inaugural **Gateway Merredin Festival "Troops Trains and Treasures."** With John, she represented Rail Heritage when we celebrated the highly successful **Prospector – 50 Years** event in Merredin last November. We look forward to their return visit!

Some of the attendees at Saturday's workshop





Left: Philippa speaking of significance of items in our collection



Right: Julie with her spectacular tiramisu

On these chilly days, volunteering is a good reason for our trust team to keep busy (and warm).

MUSEUM ROSTERS

These are only part rosters and complete rosters will be sent separately to those involved.

DATE	TICKETS/SALES	SITE SUPERVISION	DUTY OFFICER
WEDNESDAYS			
Museum open 1.00pm – 4.00pm			
6 July ***	K Smith	A de Smalen	D Ingram
13 July ***	K Smith	B Williams	B Horton
			A DeSmalen
			B Williams

***** School holidays – Museum opens 11am!**

DATE	TICKETS/SALES	SITE SUPERVISION	DUTY OFFICER
SUNDAYS			
Museum open 1.00pm – 5.00pm			
3 July	Quynh Hoang	K Smith	G Watson, M Gillooly
10 July	B Williams	K Smith	B Horton
17 July	A de Smalen	K Smith /B Keay	D Raine
24 July	B Williams	K Smith	S Mackay
31 July	L McBeath	M Miles, K Smith	G Higham
			B Williams
			B Williams
			A de Smalen
			B Williams
			G Higham

Assistance from the membership would be greatly appreciated in being rostered for positions on either Wednesday or Sunday afternoons. Training will be given for the position in which you are interested. Any alterations to the rosters would you please contact Brian at brianwilliams@railheritagewa.org.au