

Australian Railway Historical Society

W.A. Division (Inc.)
Trading as Rail Heritage WA



FOR ALL WHO
ARE INTERESTED
IN RAILWAYS

2010-2011

ANNUAL REPORT

AUSTRALIAN RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY W.A. DIVISION (Inc.)

T/a Rail Heritage WA

2010-11

OFFICE BEARERS AND MEMBERS WITH FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

PATRON	Hon. Stephen Smith MP
PRESIDENT	Mr Brian Williams
VICE PRESIDENT	Mr Geoffrey Higham
TREASURER	Mr George Turbett
COUNCILLORS	Mr Allan Brinkworth
	Mr Dominic Bennett
	Mr Tony Milner
	Mr Ian Carne
	Mr Roy Daley
	Mr Ian Studham
	Mr John Adamson
	Mr Graham Watson
ARCHIVES/LIBRARY	Dr Paul Collin
MUSEUM ROSTER	Mr George Turbett / Mrs Lynda Butler
MAIL OUT	Mr Ian Studham/ Mr Derek Wooldridge
MEMBERSHIP	Mr Ian Carne
BOYANUP	Mr Jeff Austin
RESEARCH OFFICER	Mr Geoffrey Higham/ Ms Philippa Rogers
SALES	Mr Peter Hopper
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Mr Geoffrey Higham
WESTLAND EDITOR	Mr Richard Montgomery
WEBSITE MANAGEMENT	Dr Paul Collin
MEETING ENTERTAINMENT	Mrs Lynda Butler
WEDNESDAY OPENINGS	

Presidents Report

Mr Brian Williams

It is with pleasure that I submit this report to members of the WA Division of the Society. Another year has past us by and it has been a particularly strenuous one. To this end I wish to thank the Vice President for his erstwhile activities as both acting Secretary and Westland Editor. Thanks also to Ian Studham for his efforts in dealing with issues pertaining to Midland and to the other Councillors for their efforts throughout the year. I wish to thank John Adamson, who had to resign from Council, for his efforts and wish he and his wife well in the future.

The Society was fortunate in being able to welcome the Hon Stephen Smith MP, Federal Member for Perth as our new Patron. Minister Smith graciously accepted our invitation, which strengthens his long relationship with Rail Heritage WA.

In February the Australian Federal Government announced the Society as being the recipient of diesel locomotive GM1 'Robert Gordon Menzies'. This locomotive is currently at Dry Creek, South Australia awaiting work to be performed on the wheels to allow transfer to WA. It also means the Society has to add a standard gauge siding within the Museum to allow the locomotive to be exhibited for public viewing.

Also arriving in the Museum was locomotive R174 from Midland Centrepoint Shopping Centre and kindly donated by Steffanelli Nominees.

Railfest 2010 was not quite as an eventful day as one would have liked but my thanks to all those involved in the prior preparation and also their efforts on the day.

During the past year the Society did not have a Secretary and this proved very onerous on Council. I request that members give due consideration to assisting in this area in the forthcoming year.

Work has almost been completed on the laying of rail into the new platform dock. It is hoped that in the not too distant future this will be finished and exhibits relocated to provide better viewing for the public.

I wish to extend my thanks to those all members and volunteers who have so ably performed tasks for the Society throughout the year. I also extend my thanks to all the organisations that have provided assistance and performed tasks for the Society in the past year.

Membership

Ian Studham

At the end of the 2010-2011 Society year, our membership stood at 118 adults, 32 family, 9 life members and 2 organisations for a total of 161 members. This is 4 less overall as compared to last year. The Society would like to record its sincere thanks to life member Derek Wooldridge and Peg Wooldridge who have handled most of the administrative tasks associated with membership issues for a significant number of years, with Derek keeping the register and Peg handling credit card payments and assisting with banking. The onset of old age and infirmity has caused Derek to grudgingly make the decision to retire from active duty part way through the year, which is a great

loss to the society. My thanks also to Philippa Rogers for stepping in and updating the membership register during the final handover.

Peter Hopper continued to produce the monthly newsletter. The mail-out has generally been dealt with by the Wednesday Museum staff, co-ordinated by Lynda Butler and George Turbett.

With Geoffrey Higham continuing with the editorship of the "Westland" magazine the frequency of production was maintained at 4 per annum and the ongoing quality of the magazine was ensured.

At the start of the 2010-11 year, Council determined that membership dues would remain the same for the forthcoming Society year.

Museum

Geoffrey Higham

Museum receipts totalled \$25 781 (incl GST) for the year ending 31 March 2011. This compared with \$29 763 for the full year in 2009/10. Ticket sales were slightly down, however venue hire earned considerably less.

Public openings

The museum was open to the public on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons throughout the year. Lynda Butler continued as Wednesday co-ordinator and did this very well. Sundays were supervised by a small number of volunteers on rotation.

The number of volunteers available is barely enough for both rosters, special thanks are due to those who volunteer for both days, and this needs to be addressed in the new year.

Patronage on Wednesdays has not grown as fast as hoped and the society needs to improve this. Concentration on groups – schools, seniors, etc - seems the main avenue for growth so that the museum can be shown to as many people as possible. Efforts are now under way to promote school group visits by providing meaningful educational outcomes.

Special events

We held two open days for the first time – Enthusiasts Day in May and Railfest in October. The May event was a new effort, it was generally well received and we decided to repeat this in 2011. Railfest was somewhat disappointing - because many of our members were diverted to meet demands of the Midland Redevelopment Authority to vacate Midland, we postponed this function at short notice and this appears to have been the problem. For 2011 we have advertised the date well in advance as returning to the last Sunday of the school holidays.

Improvements

The main work being undertaken was the rebuilding of the front platform. Council agreed to allocate additional funds for changes to speed up completion and this work is at last nearing completion.

Management

We were not able to find a single member to be responsible for the whole museum during the year, so that several councillors and others worked on museum operations. Better coordination is needed and it would be advantageous if a single, suitable person can be found or employed in the future. Outside funding would assist this.

Grants and Sponsorship

George Turbett

Lotterywest grants were carried over from 2009 to 2010 year and were finalised in 2010/2011.

The gross amount for the year was finalised to the amount off \$43486.90. The main grant was for the platform but also encompassed some archival scanning of the photographic collection, and the breakdown was as such:

Platform = 18,239.84 new dock wall and concrete platform.

Scanning= \$11,032.50 for photos to be put on computer for heritage.

The other active grant was awarded for archives and general storage facilities, amounting to \$10,595. This grant has some \$7000 to be claimed in next financial year.

No new grants had been raised in the 2010/2011 year .

To LotteryWest, our thanks for your ongoing major support which assists Rail Heritage WA in its endeavours to preserve WA's railway history.

Sales & Publications

Geoffrey Higham

Sales generated \$28206 for the year ending 31 March 2011, which is up on the 2009/10 figure of \$23676. This includes sales in the museum shop, at the AMRA weekend, over the web and by post.

There were two main contributors to the increase in sales:

1. Our new "Guide to the collection" by member Bill Gray was launched at the beginning of the open day in May, and has been very well received, being a great advance on our previous photocopied Guide.
2. We held two Open Days during the year instead of one – Enthusiasts' day in May was also the venue to launch the book "Trainee to train controller" which also sold well.

I have increased our range of railway books from other publishers, which sell well to our members as well as to visitors. Sales of toys have continued, although it has become harder to obtain supplies of cheap toys with any railway connection.

Sales were \$3629 from our stand at the AMRA annual model rail exhibition in June 2010, approx 15% down on the previous year, a fair result given the general slowdown in spending.

Sales continued to be made from our website. Thanks to Philippa Rogers for packing and posting most postal orders and also assisting with the wholesale orders.

The Westland

Four issues of "The Westland" were produced, numbers 266-269, although issue 266 related to the 2009/10 year for those who receive the journal as part of their membership. Similarly, Issue 269 was part of the 2010/11 subscription for society members although finalised after the end of the year in May 2011.

Issue 266 was large than normal, a special issue devoted mainly to rail in the Boyanup area, to provide a long-term booklet for sale at our South West Rail & Heritage Centre.

The journal had a mix of historical and current articles. I also endeavour to cover major events and achievements of kindred bodies, however this has been limited as little material has been provided by other groups.

As well as going to members as part of their subscription, copies are sold in the museum shop, and wholesale to several shops, and a number of subscriptions by non-members. Increased circulation is the best way to provide a better production without escalating costs.

I am grateful to all the contributors of articles, photos and news. Special thanks to Jeff Austin, Jim Bisdie and Simon Barber for repeat contributions. Thanks also to my wife for proofreading and to Roger Palmer for photo enhancement.

Restoration and Maintenance – Rollingstock

Allan Brinkworth

Activities for the last year were unfortunately somewhat curtailed due to ongoing movement of rolling stock, materials and spares out of Midland added to which the cramped rail space available at Bassendean exacerbated the problem.

In spite of these difficulties a reasonable level of restoration was achieved. Body repairs and painting have been completed on ZF 441, 4 Wheel Brake Van destined for the new dock and an FD freight van allocated to the proposed Dowerin Country Freighter display.

AYC 510 is basically complete only requiring installation of concertinas, reassembly of her bogies and touch up of paint where vandals graffitied the sides. Assessment of both ZJ 266 express brake van (roof repairs and repaint) and ARA 356 Australind brake/saloon has begun (structural damage and repaint).

Bullion van VX 4999 is well along with interior repairs and painting over the mission brown applied when it was used in the production of the film "THE GIFT" at Midland in the 1990's.

A complete repaint of MRWA dogbox passenger car JA 6 was carried out, and other minor maintenance was carried out to items within the Museum area.

The former AP class sleeping car, converted to a workmans van which was obtained as a gutted and vandalized shell and stored for some years in the Midland Workshops was disposed of as scrap after all avenues to find it an alternative home, including sale on the open market, were exhausted. It was decided that better examples survive in preserved form (ALT 88 at Boulder and another AP on display in Esperance Museum), and permission was obtained from the State Government to dispose of the remains of this car due to the very low likelihood of restoration in the future and the lack of storage space at Bassendean.

6 wheeled timber bodied shunters float NS and the 6 wheeled ballast plough LX were transferred into the care and custody of Collie Heritage Group late in 2010. Both these vehicles require comprehensive rebuilding, and based on the track record of the Collie group who have performed outstanding work already on a range of Society owned vehicles, these wagons will soon be back to superb display condition.

Boyanup

Ian Carne

Due to Health problems, apathy, and other causes, the work force at Boyanup has dropped off dramatically resulting in work parties of 6 attending if possible on the 2nd Sunday of each month.

Three volunteers are tending to the old Machinery, two are general rouse-about and one is trying to attend to the railway side.

The Boyanup Foundation, of which RHWA is a component member, has in its own right a bank balance of \$2000.00, half of which will be spent on restoration of non rail associated exhibits, for example small engines, the Old Bailer and the Merry-go-round, by the end of 2011. \$1000.00 will be held in reserve for future knowns and unknowns and to keep the Foundation solvent.

Divisional Council resolved to rename the Boyanup Museum the South-West Rail and Heritage Centre during the year to better reflect the spread of heritage housed at the facility.

Very little work is taking place on the rail side although RHWA are footing the rents etc. This can no longer be tolerated, RHWA have to appeal to its membership for a promotions person to take on the challenge of promoting The Southwest Rail & Heritage Centre through local papers be it wrapped around G233, or H18 or whatever to try and encourage people to be involved.

We need to complete the upgrading of the "Museum-on-Rails" ZJ270 so it can be on display for schools and Seniors visits, a requirement from BHP if we apply for assistance. We need to carry out repairs to two sets of points, one requiring two 12ft timber replacements and mechanism overhaul and the other one requiring six 8ft timber requirements and mechanism overhaul.

So now you can see why SWR&HC needs to be promoted out side of Boyanup.

Wheatbelt Heritage Rail

Tony Milner and Ian Studham

This project, a collaborative effort between Rail Heritage WA, the Shire Of Dowerin and adjoining shires seeks to establish a rail heritage base in the former wheatbin structure at Minnivale (12 km north of Dowerin) and ultimately operate limited heritage services along the country branch line between Gomalling, Dowerin and Wyalcatchem.

The Dowerin Shire received a Wheatbelt Development Commission grant which funded the engagement of a specialist consultant, Chris Le Marshall of Linqage International, who has prepared and presented a business plan and costings for the several stages of the project. Chris held a presentation for RHWA at Bassendean which was well attended and well received.

The Dowerin Shire is now investigating opportunities for the significant start-up funding identified as necessary to get the major stages of the project off the ground

Meanwhile, at Minnivale itself, work has proceeded well over the last 12 months.

3 large roller-doors have been fitted on the west end of the wheatbin bin to allow for rollingstock access and security. Internal track work by both RHWA and Dowerin shire has been undertaken. Ultimately, 3 tracks are to be laid in the bin. The first, destined to be the display track for freight rollingstock has been completed and is now home to 3 items of rolling stock transferred from Bassendean and Midland by road.

Progress is being made towards lock-up of the facility and installing electricity inside the bin.

Locomotives

S 549

A leaking superheater element was removed from the S class for repair. However this has been delayed pending funding for the Wheatbelt Heritage Rail project which would see more substantial boiler work performed on the loco to ensure its ongoing reliability.

XA 1402

This loco was occasionally started to ensure the batteries were kept charged, however an electrical fault has developed which has not yet been traced.

YX 86

Work was completed on the replacement of rusted sheet on the tender of this loco, as well as repairs to the smokebox door and funnel. This locomotive now requires repainting and will be then be placed on display within the Museum

A 11

Work continues on the replacement of rusted sheeting on the tender of this loco, and a new rolled smokebox crown is being sourced.

LV&S loco

The detailed restoration of this loco continues, with much effort being directed towards a motorized system which will slowly turn the wheels when the loco is placed on display. The springing, axleboxes, wheels, pistons and motion have now been completely re-assembled.

B6

This locomotive was transferred to Walkaway where it is in the custody of the City Of Geraldton-Greenough. It has been placed on a section of rebuilt siding and will eventually reside inside the restored Goods Shed. There are plans for a local group to be formed to deal with the cosmetic restoration of this loco, a large job which will initially entail the specialist removal of asbestos lagging from around the boiler.

Roy Daley has also continued his regular mechanical checks and maintenance of the Caterpillar front-end loader and other Society machinery and plant.

Operations

Ian Studham

Removal of rollingstock from Midland continued with loco Y 1101 and coaches AM 313 and AYC 512 being transferred by rail to Bassendean, courtesy of ARG in mid 2010. MRWA Steam Locomotive B6 was transferred by road to Walkaway, and freight vehicles removed by road included the TAD bogie cattle wagon which was transferred directly to Minnivale, the WVD bogie refrigeration van and the bogie flat car which B6 was resident on, both to Bassendean. Vehicles remaining at Midland include 2 unrestored standard gauge cars and the ADG/ADA railcar set. Arrangements are being made to transfer these vehicles as soon as possible.

Our thanks to our Rollingstock Engineer, Mr Ray Littley, for all his assistance and advice in preparing our stock for mainline certification. My thanks also to John Wearmouth and Dominic Bennet for their help in the work required to ensure safe transit of the stock over the mainline network.

Information Technology

Geoffrey Higham

Website

The society website at www.railheritagewa.org.au continued to offer a face to the world, as well as the online purchasing function initiated previously.

The website was periodically updated to reflect advertise events, and to update books for sale.

Considerable upgrade work was done to cover our museums in more detail, and to begin an education section. At the end of the year, work was underway to make our collection of scanned images accessible and searchable from our website.

Email

The society maintained a series of email addresses such as "bookings@railheritage", "secretary@", etc. This enables addresses to be advertised without giving out members' personal addresses. It also means we need not change of address when personal change or are on leave, etc.

Unfortunately, we receive considerable spam to these addresses. Our volunteers have to regularly clean the spam from the mailboxes at the society ISP to avoid overflow and interruption to emails.

New material for the website is generated and coordinated by member Geoffrey Higham, whilst the hard work – coding and maintenance - was done by member Richard Montgomery again this year.

THANK YOU

As always the Society has received support, monetary or otherwise, from a number of outside entities in the past year. Recognition and appreciation for contributions is extended to Lotterywest, Midland Redevelopment Authority, Bunbury Regional Prison, Town of Bassendean, John Holland Rail, Westnet Rail, United Group Rail and the Public Transport Authority.

Particular thanks must go to ARG who continue to provide free haulage over the network of our rollingstock during transfer from Midland to Bassendean. This contribution amounts to many hours of processing of compliance and registration paperwork over a number of months long before the actual move occurs, and Rail Heritage WA wishes to acknowledge the generous and willing assistance of ARG staff in helping with a task that is well outside their normal scope of operations.

Rail Heritage WA continues to have a good working relationship with other community and rail preservation groups including our tenants at Bassendean, the WA Model Railway Club, and the Association of Rail Preservation Groups (and its various members), Hotham Valley Railway and AMRA.

The ongoing relationship with the Shire Of Dowerin in the quest to establish a rail heritage facility and operation in the district has been fruitful, with development of the overall plan and sizeable financial contributions from Dowerin contributing to the gradual establishment of facilities at Minnivale silo.

To those members who have put in countless hours in the past year to make sure the Society continues to function, contributing in manifest ways ranging from manning the counter during

opening hours, to administrative and membership services, to co-ordinating the ongoing restoration program, Divisional Council offers all of you our sincere thanks for your invaluable input.

This year, as in every year, our Society has benefited enormously from the efforts of volunteers who, while not being members, give unselfishly of their time and bring significant skills, expertise and dedication to the projects they apply themselves to. The ongoing re-establishment of activities and facilities at Bassendean continues to place significant pressures and strains on our volunteers, due to the return to semi-open workplaces, often with gravel or sand underfoot. While overall volunteer numbers have dropped in the last couple of years, the core group of volunteers have been understanding and tolerant while continuing their valuable and much appreciated work and the Society wishes to express our sincere appreciation of these efforts.