

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

NEWS LETTER

JANUARY

VR

1972

10 CENTS



GREETINGS TO ALL RAILWAYMEN FOR 1972



The Hon. Vernon Wilcox, M.P.

Since I became Minister of Transport, four and a half years ago, I have often spoken about railways as a most important form of transport.

Along with others I have been battling over these years to have the community recognize the role of public transport in any balanced system of transport.

I have also said that those in the transport field should not be afraid of changes which would be necessary to meet the challenges of this decade.

I am glad to have seen 1971 provide the following big steps forward—

- the first sod was turned in the Underground Loop project on June 22.
- Parliament has authorized the construction of the Eastern Railway—an imaginative project which runs along the median strip of the Eastern Freeway for over five miles—and the first new rail line in Melbourne since the turn of the century
- in considering the overall transport needs of the community, the Government has recently announced that public transport must be upgraded.

A start has been made in the right direction. We have got the ball rolling; it is up to all of us to see that we keep it rolling.

I wish all readers of *News Letter* a happy and successful year in 1972.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Vernon Wilcox', with a horizontal line underneath.

If railways were not required to finance uneconomic services, they would not need to charge profitable services what the traffic could bear to compensate for the losses, the report argued.

HUMP RECORD ON BIRTHDAY

Victorian Railways automated hump yard, in Melbourne, celebrated its first anniversary by humping a record number of wagons on the early morning shift.

In one 8-hour shift of the round-the-clock operation, 865 wagons were processed over the hump.

In the first 12 months since being officially commissioned, on December 9, 1970, 408,477 wagons passed over the hump.

WAGR HUMP YARD

An automated narrow gauge hump yard will be built by Western Australian Railways at their Forrestfield railway complex this year.

The Forrestfield terminal extends for 3½ miles and covers 610 acres. Including composite gauge marshalling yards and locomotive, carriage and wagon shops, it adjoins the Kewdale freight terminal which is the major terminal for standard gauge traffic.

The hump yard will have seven arrival sidings, 32 classification sidings, six departure sidings and 10 secondary sorting sidings.

All shunting operations will be automatically controlled. When a train enters the arrival sidings, two-way radio will be used to pass the destination of each wagon on to the Hump Control Tower. A teleprinter operator will transfer this information on to tape, and by running the tape through a tape reader, all the routes will be automatically set while the train is being humped.

STANDARD GAUGE FOR ESPERANCE

Mooted for a considerable time, the W.A. Government has finally given the go-ahead for a 246-mile standard gauge line to be built from Kalgoorlie to Esperance.

Nickel and salt traffic on the present 3 ft. 6 in. gauge line is now over 300,000 tons a year. In 1970, the line was upgraded so that axle loads could be increased from 10½ to 15 tons.

The new line will run from West Kalgoorlie through Kambalda to Lake Lefroy, from where the present line will be converted through to Esperance. Portion of the present narrow

CONCESSION FRAUD

Two young women were each fined \$25 by Melbourne Magistrate's Court last month, on charges of having obtained a railway concession ticket by using a false declaration.

A 19-year-old Melbourne University student told the Court that she obtained the forms for herself and her sister from the University.

RESEARCH INTO RAILWAY PROBLEMS

An investigation into how Australia's railways at State and Commonwealth levels are financed and equipped, and the problems these methods provoke, is under way, *The Australian* reported recently.

Advisers to Commonwealth and State transport ministers, with the

backing of the Bureau of Transport Economics, are preparing an in-depth study for the Australian Advisory Council meeting next month.

Priority in the studies is being given to upgrading rail tracks, rolling stock and the problems of railways in towns and cities.

The N.S.W. Department of Decentralisation, in its annual report, spotlighted the research, saying: there appears to be a case for commuter rail services in the cities to be controlled by individual metropolitan transport authorities.

It added that railways appeared to be protected in areas where they did not appear to be the most efficient transport system, but were expected to carry the costs of commuter services and various other uneconomic services, including relief in times of drought and flood.

gauge line passing through the now-ghost town of Coolgardie will be abandoned.

Since the W.A. portion of the national standard gauge project was completed, Kalgoorlie has had two isolated narrow gauge lines running into the nickel belt. Plans are also being considered for conversion of all or part of the other line to Laverton.

MORE AND FASTER BOX HILL LINE TRAINS

New accelerated time-tables for Box Hill line trains will start on January 24.

The new time-table will feature the use of two lines in the direction of the peak traffic. Some long distance trains to and from Belgrave and Lilydale will have more express running and will be up to five minutes faster. Timings of some Glen Waverley trains will be altered, too.

Providing the third line, which has enabled the capacity of the line to be increased enormously, involved no acquisition of land.

Under maximum loading, which cannot be achieved until the underground loop is completed, the Box Hill-Melbourne rail link will be able to move more than 50,000 people an hour in the direction of the peak flow. It would take more than 15 lanes of freeway to move the same number of people by car.

The last stage of the project, a third track between Burnley and Hawthorn, will be completed about the middle of the year.

V.R. CHAIRMAN COMMENTS ON

1972

Year 1972 promises to be an interesting one for the Victorian Railways.

We hope to be able to report at the end of the year that several trends which emerged during 1971 have continued, and indeed developed into positive action.

Last year saw the tide turn against **motor car mesmerism** with the dropping of portion of the freeway plan, a vigorous public debate on the merits of inner city freeways where public transport could do the job with less disruption, the Government asking for a reappraisal of the Transport Plan (particularly the emphasis given to public transport), and the newly promulgated restrictions on new car parking areas within Melbourne's Central Business District.

The Bland Inquiry into transport in Victoria, which will be presented to the Minister of Transport shortly, will be awaited with great interest. At long last it appears as though the role of railways in Victoria is to be identified, clarified and categorically stated.

If these trends develop from the groundswell that they are at the moment — the man-in-the-street and even motoring organisations are supporting the changes in principle—then 1972 could be

a year when public transport re-emerges to its rightful place as a city-saver and showcard, not a denigrater.

At the turn of the year, more than 1,000 wagon loads of drought and food relief fodder were carried to assist farmers suffering hardship from the disastrous flooding and prolonged drought that has stricken much of eastern Gippsland.

In 1972 we could face a record grain movement — 90 million bushels — if the necessary sales can be made. And also, from a modest beginning in the latter half of 1972, Lysaght's steel works at Hastings will start production and a new source of steel traffic will develop.

Our new stainless-steel metropolitan trains will come into service to bolster our image and prove that the system is still sound; obsolete equipment wins few friends.

Melbourne's underground loop will progress further and should take us nearly to the stage of starting major tunnelling under the city.

Naturally a return to profitable operation is not just a matter of starting new books—it comes from doing the job as it should be done.

May 1972 see us take some worthwhile steps on the path back to prosperity. **G. F. BROWN**

FRONT COVER

A train blurs over a road crossing; hundreds of tons of steel makes a mighty opponent for those who consider their four-wheeled chariot a worthy competition. Yet despite the disparity in odds, there are people who are prepared to dice with death to avoid a few moments delay.

Since trains and cars first came to cross one another's path, there have been accidents.

The 1924 Victorian Railways Magazine pointed up the problem saying:

"On Saturday, May 19, 1923, observers took up positions at three level crossings near Melbourne—at Mornington, Werribee and Dandenong.

"Of the 651 vehicles that

passed over the crossings, 514 did not slow down.

"Of the 137 who did slow, 36 looked one way, while 20 stared straight ahead. Of those who did not slow down, 85 looked both ways, 113 looked only one way, and 316 looked to neither the right nor left.

"Altogether, only 166 out of 651 drivers looked both ways before crossing; 485 were potential destroyers."

It is a sad reflection on motorists that they have not improved their mental approach to driving since 1924!

• For the record, the level crossing is Warrigal Road, near Mentone, where the first flashing light signal was installed in 1932. Since then, more than 410 crossings have been fitted with similar devices.

HOARDINGS GOING

Advertising hoardings at stations, once an advertiser's dream, are slowly disappearing.

Since July 1970, 4,058 lineal feet (nearly 4/5th mile) of 10 ft. hoardings have been taken from metropolitan stations.

They were removed because their condition had deteriorated and they were no longer suitable for poster displays. It was no longer economical to repair them or to build new ones.

PAYROLL TAX JUMP

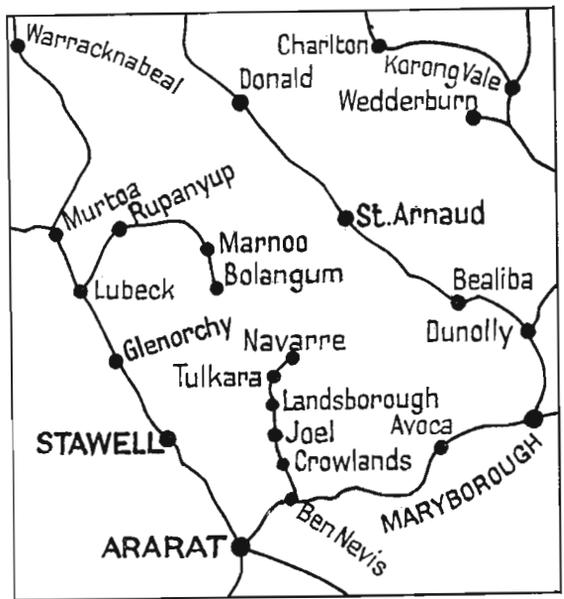
Payroll tax, which Government departments and instrumentalities have long contended should not apply to them, will add an estimated \$3.3 million to the V.R.'s expenses (and deficit) for 1971-72.

A jump of \$900,000 is the direct result of the decision to increase the tax from 2½ to 3½ per cent in the last State budget.

Nearly 2½ per cent of all V.R. expenditure is taken up by payroll tax.

USING A USED RAILWAY

From 1914 to 1954, a 23-mile railway linked Ben Nevis (and Ararat) with Navarre. Traffic dwindled and the line was closed—but it still serves the district it was built to serve.



The first railway in the area—to Ararat—was built in 1875; a year later it reached Stawell, and two years later, Murtoa. At the same time, a railway was pushed through from Bealiba to St. Arnaud.

In 1890, the cross-country Ararat-Maryborough line was opened and the district well served by railways. But still the clamour for more lines went on.

The area between Stawell and

St. Arnaud needed developing—and a railway. Survey parties criss-crossed the countryside and reports compared relative merits of the many proposals. A railway to tap the area was eventually authorised from Rupanyup to Marnoo—although the committee acknowledged that it would have been better from Glenorchy to Marnoo. The committee pointed out that the 9½-mile Lubeck-Rupanyup branch was suffering

from being too close to the Warracknabeal line.

The year 1909 saw the line open, but still the residents wanted more lines. Proposals were considered, among others, of linking Waubra with Marnoo, but the committee's endorsement went to a line from Ben Nevis to Navarre.

Main traffic was expected to be firewood—for Ballarat residents to keep out the cold—and cereals and livestock.

The line's traffic was always light and the necessity for heavy repairs to the bridges brought about its closure 40 years after it opened.

Bought by Shire

The Shire of Stawell saw the railway as the answer to some of the problems facing their district and negotiated its purchase with the V.R. In June 1957, the deal went through and the Shire was the owner of a complete, although disused, railway line.

Total purchase price was \$62,000 which included all rails, sleepers, freehold of the railway reserve and bridges.

Stawell Shire Engineer, Mr N. H. Cottman, said at the time that the Shire was faced with the replacement of over 100 old bridges and the building of scores of new ones.

The railway was a cheap and on-the-spot resource to meet the problem.

Dismantling

"Removing 55,000 fish plate bolts, 200,000 dog spikes, 50,000 sleepers and 265,000 lineal feet of 66-lb rail was a problem not usually met by Shire engineers," Mr. Cottman said.



Silent sentinels to passing road traffic are the Navarre station platform (left, protected by guard rail), the goods shed and firewood plant. The road passes Tulkara and Landsborough platforms also.



Two parallel roads, former rivals, now complement one another. Converted railway (left) is still flanked by mileposts (foreground) for its length.

"We soon found that removing the bolts was an ideal job for a crisp, frosty morning when one swing of a sledge-hammer caused the bolthead to fly like shrapnel. All the bolts in two miles of line could be broken in a morning—but if the same exercise was tried in the afternoon, one could swing his heart out for an hour, with no result except a hot bolt".

Profit

Salvage work cost the Shire \$21,000, bringing total expenditure to \$83,000. Some rails were sold and from 1957 to 1967, receipts reached \$123,000—a cash surplus of \$40,000.

Free bridges, roads

"Buying the railway meant that the Shire was able to build an extra 20 bridges virtually for nothing, completely rebuild and extend the Shire Hall and Offices, and contribute to a large new airport, all without cost to the taxpayers," Mr. Cottman continued.

"As a further bonus, the Shire got 12 miles of additional narrow, but needed, gravel roadway, simply by grading out the gravel ballast and erecting guardrails on the bridges".

Some adjacent roads have fords, and being able to use the railway



Main asset of the railway was its ready-made bridges to replace the nearby fords. Although road signpost would make you think otherwise, the bridge clearly shows its railway ancestry.

bridges saved the expense of building all-weather bridges for road traffic in this lightly used area.

"Sixty bridges were built out of the rails; the bottom flange of the rails makes excellent concrete formwork and the head and web reinforce the concrete," he added.

"These bridges have a total length of 3/4-mile and, even after paying for the rails, it is estimated that building costs were \$300,000 less than for conventional bridges."

More years yet

In 1957, Mr. Cottman told the council that the life expectancy of the bridges would be about 15 years. Replacement bridges and improved roads were expected to make the railway/road obsolete—but the lengthy drought and the current rural crisis have limited council funds.

Recent inspection showed that, with some repairs, the bridges can continue to serve Stawell Shire in a valuable way for many years to come.

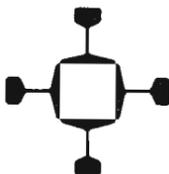
V.R. HOUSES SINGAPOREANS

High-rise flats in Singapore are being built with scrap rails from the V.R.

A Western Australian export company purchased 4,200 tons of unserviceable rails—dating back to 1886—and shipped them in two lots to Singapore.

The first shipment, in late November, was of 3,000 tons of 60-lb. rails; the second was of 1,200 tons of 80-lb. rails in mid-December.

In Singapore, the 80-lb. rails are welded into open squares (see diagram). The feet of the rails are welded together to form a hollow "tube" which is then used for piling or columns in high-rise buildings. Four rails welded together meet the specified standard of steel work for the foundations—320 lb. per yard.



Even though the company pays the V.R. much better than scrap value for the rails, it is still cheaper than buying new steelwork.

The 60-lb. rails are heated and then rolled as required; in effect they replace the raw materials. Some will probably be used for small steel works and some for new railways within mainland China.

• V.R.'s West Tower, at the hump, sits on piling formed by three rails being welded together into a triangle.



Some of the 106 wagons that made up the first shipment.

QUEENSLIFF REVIVAL

The 21-mile South Geelong-Queenscliff branch—which was closed for six months from late 1958—saw eight special passenger trains run on consecutive weekdays in December.

The specials, which ran from De-

ember 6-10 and 13-15, mostly carried schoolchildren from Melbourne and Geelong areas to the safe Queenscliff beach. One special, however, took 500 children from Queenscliff and Drysdale to the Melbourne Zoo.

Queenscliff lost its regular passenger service in 1931 because of bus competition.

During summer months, Sunday excursion trains run to Queenscliff from Geelong, Ballarat and Melbourne.

SAFETY HINT

Many are apparently unsure of the correct treatment for burns. Our Ambulance Officer has listed the proper treatment as:

Gently wash with COLD clean water or immerse in COLD clean water: add ICE if available.

If water is not available, use *Monacrin* solution (in all first-aid boxes).

Apply a sterile or clean dressing and bandage firmly.

This treatment reduces pain and swelling.

DO NOT APPLY:

- lotions
- ointments
- oily dressings

IF THE BURN IS DEEP; seek medical aid without delay.

METRIC CONVERSION

Australia is starting the change to metric measures and weights. After a lengthy investigation carried out by a Senate Select Committee, the Federal Government passed legislation to make the metric system the only legal weights and measures in Australia and its territories after a transition period. A conversion date target of mid-1973 is being aimed at.

No doubt, many are wondering what effect this is going to have on jobs, homes and sport.

Over the next few months, *News Letter* will have a series of articles with a question and answer section to help staff (and their families) understand the changes.

Many people are apprehensive, even frightened, of the change but India, Japan and South Africa are among several countries that have recently changed their traditional system of measuring distance and quantity to the metric system. Great Britain and New Zealand are currently in the midst of smooth changeovers.

Australians should not be apprehensive of the change.

Why change?

About 90 per cent of the world's population already use the metric system for weights and measures.

Australia has to trade with these people and the advantages of having one universal system are obvious.

In the system that Australia has now—the *Imperial System*—there are a tremendous number of special units for special trades.

School exercise books have tables for Troy weight, rods, poles, perches, gills, pints, bushels and pecks. (Some parts of the *Imperial System* were originally based on the length of an arm.)

Most people never knew what these terms meant and of those who did, many have now forgotten them unless they use them daily in a specialized trade.

Units

In the metric system, there will be a unit of length, called the metre, pronounced *meet'er*, and denoted by the symbol m. A metre is about three inches longer than a yard. The unit of mass (including weight) is called a kilogram, pronounced *hill'a'gram*, symbol kg. It is about 2½ lb. For temperature, the unit will be called a degree Celsius, °C, (not centigrade), pronounced *sel'see'us*, and equal to about 2° Fahrenheit.

The metric system is a decimal one, each base unit is multiplied by 10, 100, 1,000, or 1,000,000 to give bigger units, or similarly divided to give smaller units.

This makes calculations much easier, just as decimal currency did for money matters.

There will also be a few special units which will normally only be used by architects, engineers and scientists.

Committees

Departmental operations will see a lot of change as the new units are introduced. The Commissioners of all systems have set up a committee of officers to ensure that a uniform approach is made and confusion avoided. Co-ordination of work will also be ensured.

The V.R. has its own special committee to plan its conversion programme.

In bringing about the change, the committee will try to simplify the activities as well as convert to the metric system.

Committee members are:

K. Smith,	W. & W. Branch (Chairman)
J. Kervin,	Commercial Branch
F. Henderson,	Traffic Branch
J. Steel,	Rolling Stock Branch
J. Benson,	Accountancy Branch
L. Dickson,	E. E. Branch
C. Henshaw,	Stores Branch
M. Hughson,	Refreshment Branch
L. Lynch,	Secretary's Branch
W. Hunter,	Education Officer

Any queries that staff have about the change should be addressed to the Chairman, Metric Conversion Committee, Room 205, Head Office.

The Chairman does not guarantee to answer all queries, but will certainly try.

To help you get used to the new units, this table shows what your height will be when stated in the new units.

Height ft. and in.	Height metres
4.10	1.473
5.0	1.524
5.2	1.575
5.4	1.626
5.6	1.676
5.7	1.702
5.8	1.727
5.9	1.753
5.10	1.778
5.11	1.803
6.0	1.829
6.1	1.854
6.2	1.880
6.3	1.905
6.4	1.930

NEXT MONTH: Some handy comparisons with everyday items.

Undergrounds compared



Transport Ministers from two States recently "got to the bottom of things" so far as the Melbourne underground project was concerned. Taking a keen view of the proceedings were (from left) Mr. R. Roscoe, Chairman of MURLA, the Hon. M. Morris, Minister of Transport, N.S.W., the Hon. V. F. Wilcox, M.P., Minister of Transport, Vic. (between them, obscured, is Mr. F. Watson, General Manager and Chief Engineer of MURLA). Mr. Morris was in Melbourne to have discussions with Mr. Wilcox on mutual urban transport problems and took the opportunity to view work on Melbourne's underground.

\$25 FOR NAME

About May, four sleeping carriages from *The Overland*—two roomettes and two twinettes—are expected to replace the existing sleeping carriages on the overnight Melbourne-Mildura train.

With this upgrading, the Commissioners have agreed that the train be named—if a suitable name can be found!

An acceptable name would probably identify with the district, towns or service provided by the train.

Suggestions are welcomed from all railway men and women—and an award of \$25 will be given to the first suggester of any name accepted.

Possible names should be sent to the Senior Clerk, Public Relations and Betterment Board, Room 98, Head Office, between February and March 10. Each entry will be numbered in order of receipt to avoid problems with duplicate names.

Decisions as to the acceptability of any name will be final and the results will be announced in the April *News Letter*.

MIXED TRAINS RUN AGAIN

Unlamented, except by railway enthusiasts, mixed trains disappeared from the V.R. in 1962, the last two services being Ballarat-Maryborough and Springhurst-Wahgunyah. Mixed train travel times were slow for the car-dominated post-war period as the trains carried goods and shunted at many stations along the way.

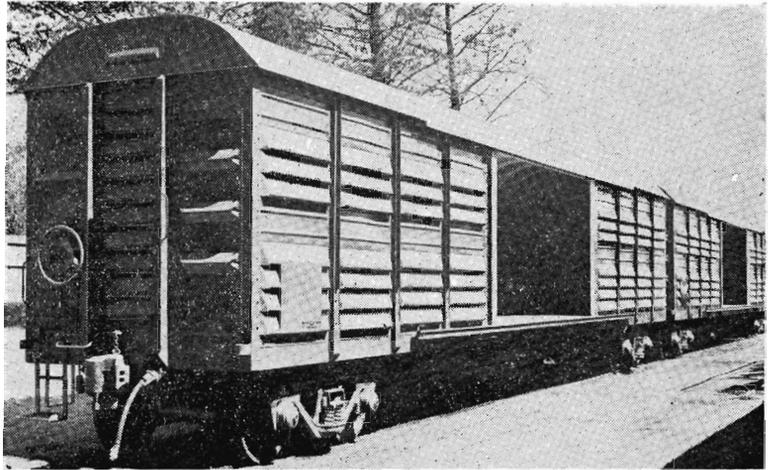
But mixed trains have made a comeback. Towards the end of 1971, a crop of school excursions featured travel by *mixed trains*—actually a carriage attached to a regular goods train.

One excursion took 55 fourth form students of Wangaratta High School from Wangaratta to Beechworth and back. Students were given a form with 45 questions on the surrounding countryside and railway operations to be answered from observations along the way.

Object of the tour was to enable students to see the workings of a country branch line.

Other tours included Cobden Junior Technical School travelling from Cobden to Curdie (and camping); and three separate excursions from Orbost to Nowa Nowa and back for the Orbost Pre-School Centre, Orbost High School and Orbost North Primary School.

New V.R. wagons



New VSX louvre vans at Ballarat Workshops waiting final fittings and marking out.

A new class of bogie louvre van—VSX—will be in traffic shortly.

Basically an enlarged version of the VHX design, it adheres to the Australian standard length agreed to by the ANZR conferences, of 56 ft. for louvre vans.

Tare for the new wagon will be 26 tons, and its carrying capacity 49 tons—bringing it up to the maximum gross weight allowed in Australia. The VHX, which is four feet shorter, tares at 25 tons and carries 50 tons.

To keep the tare weight of the new longer wagon down, the frame was lightened.

Double doors over a 16 ft. opening are a feature. An innovation for Victoria is the use of retractable wheels for the doors. Normally the door sits on the door track, but when the door is being opened, it rides up on to wheels for easy sliding.

Fifty VSX wagons are being built at Ballarat North Workshops.

Wheat inspection



SUGGESTIONS ACCEPTED

Suggestions adopted during November were:

- Production of a livestock label for cartons and crates \$5
- Relocation of bookstall at Mount Waverley \$5

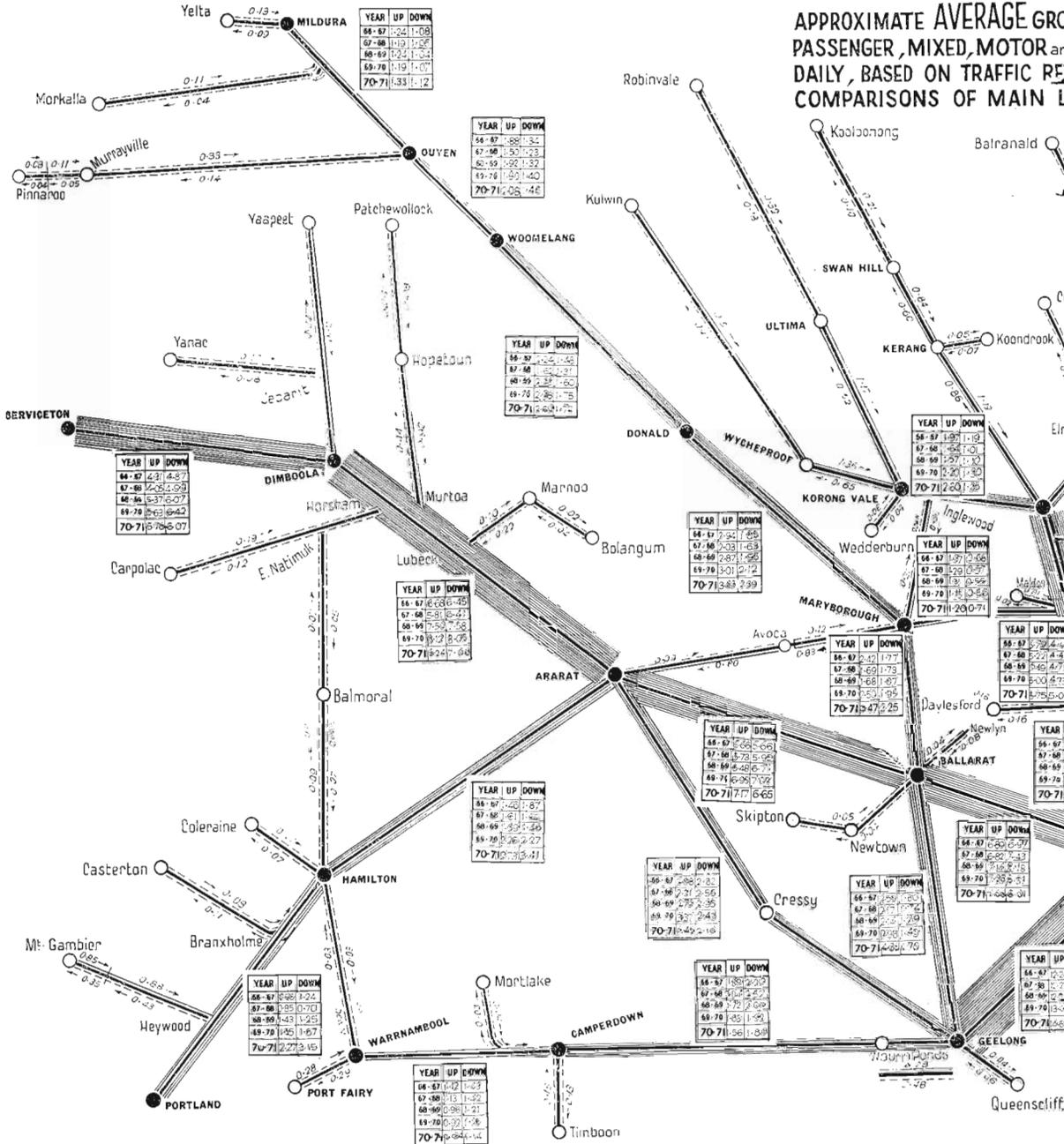
Suggestion forms (G. 256) can be obtained from supervisory staff or the Public Relations and Betterment Board, Head Office.

Victoria's bulk handling grain installations in the Wimmera, northern and north-western areas were inspected in late November. The inspection covered about 1,000 miles and ended at Mildura, from where the party returned to Melbourne by train. Pictured on arrival at Spencer Street station were (from left): Messrs. R. Livingstone and L. Judd, of the Victorian Grain Elevators Board, J. Crute, V.R. Chief Traffic Manager and a representative on the Grain Elevators Board, and the Hon. K. Turnbull, Chairman of the Victorian Grain Elevators Board. The G.E.B. Growers Representative, Mr. M. Burke, left the party at Donald.

VICTORIAN

DIAGRAM

APPROXIMATE AVERAGE GROSS
PASSENGER, MIXED, MOTOR and
DAILY, BASED ON TRAFFIC REVENUE
COMPARISONS OF MAIN L



RAILWAYS

SHOWING
**GROSS TONNAGE (INCLUDING GOODS,
 DEPARTMENTAL TONNAGE) MOVED
 IN TRAINS FOR YEAR 1970-71 WITH
 COMPARISONS WITH PREVIOUS YEARS.**

Diagram not to scale

AVERAGE LOADING

NOTE:- Figures shown on Diagram are obtained by dividing Gross Ton miles per annum in each direction by the mileage of the section and by the number of working days.

$$\text{thus: - } \frac{\text{Gross ton miles per annum}}{\text{Mileage of section} \times 310^*} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Average tonnage per day} \\ \text{Average tonnage per day} \end{array} \right.$$

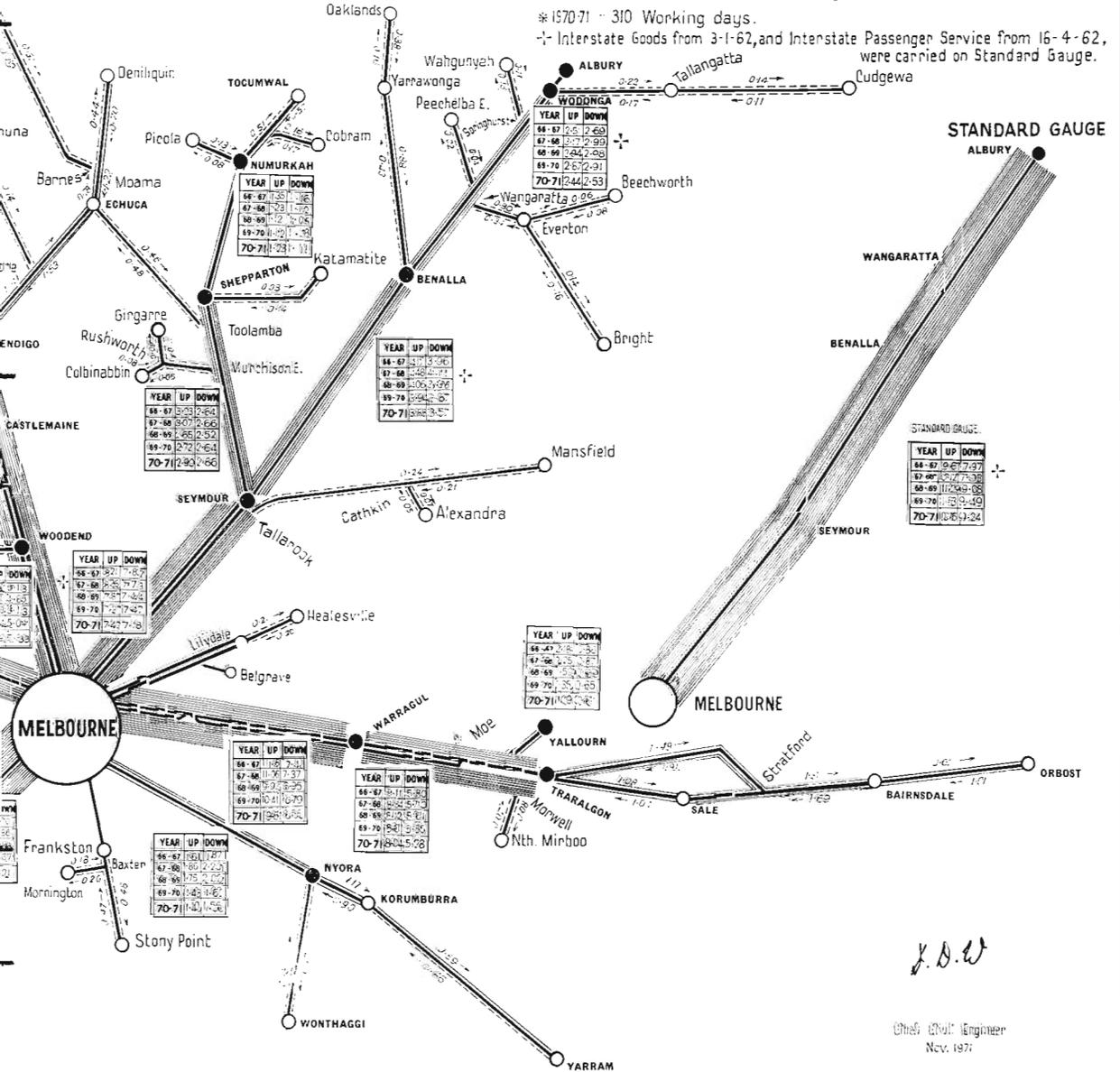
Each line on the Diagram shown thus represents 1000 gross tons hauled over the section per day.

Less than 500 gross tons shown thus

Gross tons means weight of car plus weight of contents. Locomotives not included.

* 1970-71 - 310 Working days.

- Interstate Goods from 3-1-62, and Interstate Passenger Service from 16-4-62, were carried on Standard Gauge.



J. D. W.

Chief Civil Engineer
 Nov. 1971

STANDARD GAUGE



The train that started it all. At 11 a.m. on January 3, 1962, this train with the first freight ever to travel untranshipped between Melbourne and Sydney, broke a banner to start the "straight-thru" service.



New bridges were built for the standard gauge line Wodonga and Broadmeadows. Clearly showing the changes in designs from the 1873-built broad gauge (left), is the new bridge for the 4 ft. 8½ in.



Because the standard gauge line uses the former metropolitan goods lines into Dynon for its approach to Melbourne, a new route into the city terminal, crossing the entire Melbourne Yard arrival area and western suburban lines, had to be found. A 13-pier curving concrete flyover brings the line into correct position for the run into Nos. 1 and 2 Platforms at Spencer Street.

Ever since railways started in Australia, in 1854, the unhappy choice of different gauges for the different colonies thwarted the development of a truly efficient, national railway system.

But on January 3, 1962, the first major step to break the problem was taken when the \$32 million, 197 mile, Wodonga-Melbourne standard gauge project was declared open.

Since 1857, numerous reports and conferences sought solutions to the gauge muddle. Scores of suggestions and inventions were submitted, but most were dismissed as merely *expediencies* that would not overcome the problem.

Initial railway growth in Australia was never aimed at linking the main commercial and industrial centres, as overseas; instead, it was aimed at opening up rural areas and linking them with the colony capital. Frequently the railway pushed into an area barely settled, yet immediately the district flowered—the railway was a sign of faith in the future.

In the 1880's the colony rail networks were meeting at the borders. Thus, the problem had come to a crucial stage.

Main concern centred on the Albury break of gauge. Most commerce and trade were directed along this route, and the necessity to transfer at Albury was a nuisance even when the available competition was only a horse and dray or a coastal steamer.

Warning ignored

Because there was no real alternative, several personalities played down the importance of gauge unification and the 1889 warnings of the then NSW Commissioner, Mr. E. M. Eddy, passed unheeded.

Came 1897 and Federation was the major topic in Australia. At a national conference, in Adelaide,



SUCCESS — 10 YEARS ON

gauge standardization was revived as a desirable achievement for Australia.

Just as in the past though, action was limited to conferences, reports and the trial of a few suggestions.

In 1921 a Royal Commission found in favour of converting all Australian railways to standard (4 ft. 8½ in.) gauge at a cost of \$114 million.

A standard gauge line from the NSW railhead at Grafton was pushed through to Brisbane in 1924, and thus was the only action on the Royal Commission's report before depression and World War II occupied national interests more than railways.

Ironically, it was World War II that provided the strongest case yet offered for standardization; the speedy movement of troops and equipment was retarded by break-of-gauge points throughout the continent.

Action at last?

The 1945 report of former V.R. Commissioner, Sir Harold Clapp, which recommended almost entire conversion of existing lines to standard gauge and the building of new lines to open up inland Australia as well as improve defence potential, finally got a little action on the then 91-year-old problem.

The Premiers of Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia signed an agreement with the Commonwealth Government in 1946 to standardize gauges. But inaction again reigned until 1956.

A Government Committee, chaired by the Hon. W. C. Wentworth, M.P. (now the Minister for Social Services), recommended the building of only three standard gauge lines which would achieve an uninterrupted flow of goods and passengers between the mainland State capitals. The lines were: Wodonga-Melbourne, Broken Hill-Adelaide via Port Pirie, and Kalgoorlie-Perth-Fremantle.

Action followed. The schemes were completed, or are in hand, more or less as originally planned; other proposals have emerged riding on the success of these ventures and the booming mineral industry.

Steel is big business on the SG line. This train is carrying steel pipes, flat and coiled steel. Other trains regularly carry cars, containers, Flexi-Vans, vegetables, fruit and other goods.

Once the new line was officially opened, new traffic was gained and old traffic speeded. One unusual train, in October 1967, carried pressure vessels.



Five minutes before the arrival of the first train, a W class locomotive pushed an ELF wagon up to the banner so that photographers could simulate the locomotive driver's view of the symbolic breaking of the banner. At other points in the crowd, fork lift trucks raised photographers above head height for clearer photographs.



After the new standard gauge line had been officially opened for 45 minutes, the first departure from Melbourne (of 1,742 tons) was signalled off with a golden whistle by former Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. E. H. Brownbill.



Wodonga-Melbourne

In Victoria, a new 4 ft. 8½ in. line was built to Melbourne from Wodonga—a standard gauge line already ran from Wodonga to Albury.

Preliminary work was quickly underway. By mid-1958 major bridge and earth works were evident. The first of the new track was laid between Wangaratta and Bowser in November, 1959.

Hundreds of men toiled to bring Victoria a newlook railway. The new line brought many innovations with it, as well as capitalising on all developments that could speed transit times.

Finally, the big day was there—January 3, 1962.

Results

After the speeches and publicity of the event had subsided, the new line started to show its worth.

In the years preceding the new line, freight traffic between Melbourne and Sydney had been virtually static at about 800,000 tons a year. Transit times were about 36 hours for the 600 mile journey.

Following the opening of the new line, transit times were slashed to around 16½ hours—an average of just under 40 m.p.h. Passenger train times were reduced to between 12½ and 14 hours.

The shorter transit time gained new traffic. From the former limit of 800,000 tons a year, freight carried over the line peaked at over 2.8 million tons in 1969-70. More than 20 million tons of freight has used the line in its 10 years history.

Following the opening, four freight trains used the line on weekdays—today an average of 20 travel at up to 60 m.p.h. between Melbourne and Albury.

Hard on the heels of the standard gauge line came the introduction of bogie exchange which increased the benefits of the new line to every branch line on the Australian 4 ft. 8½ in. and 5 ft. 3 in. network.

Future

Further impetus to railway standardization has followed the successful completion, in 1970, of the Perth-Sydney project. Adelaide will shortly get a 4 ft. 8½ in. link from Crystal Brook, near Port Pirie, a new line is being built to the South Australian steel town of Whyalla and studies of a standard gauge line to Alice Springs and possibly Darwin are underway.

Various other studies, being undertaken by many committees throughout Australia, are also underway.

The breakthrough of the initial

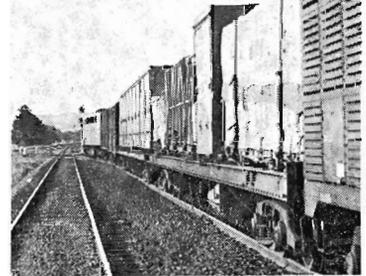
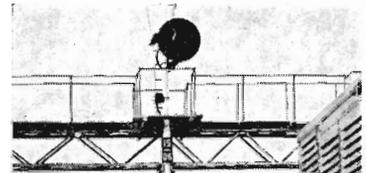
ventures has realised the potential of the railway system—so much so that even a major road transport organisation has called for further rail upgrading.



Whenever possible, and appropriate, the new standard gauge line was grade-separated. At Springhurst a flyover takes the line over the station access road.

The standard gauge project took full advantage of modern practices. Initially, no intermediate platforms were provided; trains run express except for passing moves at 15 crossing loops (right).

Searchlight signalling and electronic control of points, operated by one man from a panel in head office (below), is used throughout.



ARARAT NEAR MISS

A Hamilton train driver told Ararat Court recently that his train had to be heavily braked to avoid a collision with a petrol tanker, *The Horsham Mail-Times* reported.

The train driver told the Court that the tanker, which was carrying 4,750 gallons of petrol, passed a stationary passenger bus at the crossing.

In evidence, the tanker driver said that his vehicle's brakes failed approaching the crossing.

The Magistrate fined him \$55 and cancelled his licence for 26 weeks on the dangerous driving charge, \$20 for exceeding 40 m.p.h., and \$25 for driving an unsafe vehicle.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

Finding suitable names for trains has never been an easy task, but when the *Tasman Limited* service (daily Hobart - Launceston - Wynyard) was introduced, it had three different names: from Wynyard to Western Junction, it was known as the *Launcestonian*, from Western Junction to Hobart, the *Derwent*, and from Hobart to Wynyard, the *Table Cape*.

Western Australia's new rail car service between Perth and Kalgoorlie (which started on November 29) has been named *The Prospector*—an appropriate name for the train serving Kalgoorlie, a city steeped in the history of Australian goldfields.

As well, the first crossing loop on the Perth side of Kalgoorlie on the W.A. standard gauge line is named Bonnie Vale, after the nearby gold mine of the same name. For many years, the rescue of a miner named Varischetti from the flooded gold mine after a cave in was on school curricula throughout Victoria.

And did you know that two trains in Australia carry the same name? In Western Australia, the weekly Perth-Geraldton overnight train (via Watheroo) duplicates the name of Queensland's *Midlander* service from Rockhampton to Longreach and Winton.

• Even the V.R.'s searching for a name. See page 7 for details of how you could win \$25 by suggesting a suitable name for the Mildura passenger train.

LONGEST DAY TRIP

An excursion from Ringwood to Swan Hill—230½ miles—for 614 students and teachers from Mitcham Technical School in early December, was the longest day trip yet run by the V.R. for a school.

Traffic Branch Special Train Officer, Mr. Malcolm Palmer, said that the school was more than pleased with the trip and was considering a repeat next year.

The special, of 10 carriages, left Ringwood at 6.20 a.m. and was to have reached Swan Hill Folk Museum at 12.45 p.m. Even though the planned 20 minute refreshment stop at Bendigo took 28 minutes, the Folk Museum was reached 15 minutes early.

On the return, the Bendigo refreshment interval was extended again, this time to 43 minutes, but the train reached Mitcham only three minutes late.

Each student was charged \$2.50 for the rail travel.

AMONG OURSELVES

Head office bells



Wedding bells sounded out on December 11 for the clerk and typist of Deputy Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. E. P. Rogan, when Peter O'Halloran married Krystyna Slezak at St. Paul's Catholic Church, St. Albans. Peter met Krystyna after he transferred from the Electrical Engineering Branch—where he had been for six years—to the Secretary's Branch in 1970. Krystyna has been in Head Office for 8½ years.

Headed "Operation Snail"

Erskine (Ern) Evans, senior assistant to the Senior Architect, retired on December 24, after 49 years of railway service.

A registered architect, Ern was made a Fellow of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects last year.



Mr. Evans

the latest in comfort.

"The homes are built at Mary-

Much of Ern's time was spent travelling around the State investigating and preparing housing contract documents.

"We have about 3,500 departmental houses today," he said, "and the present pre-fab and pre-cut homes are

borough and Stawell and transported in two sections to the site.

"The cyclic maintenance system has meant a relocation of many homes to bigger towns."

Ern's biggest task on the housing side was as architect-in-charge of "Operation Snail" when 1,369 homes were provided.

He was also supervising architect of the Spencer Street terminal rebuilding.

"We gained a lot of experience from that job," he added, "because every phase of difficulty was encountered."

51 years 1 week

A railway career of 51 years and 1 week, which ended on December 28, is the record of Charles (Mick) Munton, Control Clerk and second-in-charge of the Bookkeeper's Office at Melbourne Goods.

Mick joined the V.R. in 1920 after the Labour Bureau sent him there for a job. Although he had the necessary qualifications he shunned a clerical position for labouring duties in the boiler shop at Newport Workshops. "Clerical work seemed too much like schoolwork for me," Mick recalled.



But nine months Mr. Munton later, the change was underway, and Mick transferred to Melbourne Goods where he remained for the majority of his career.

His first job was typing and ledger clerk; these duties are now done by women. He progressed through the bookkeeping grades and was O-I-C at both Newmarket Goods and Cowper Street for a while.

Mick was always an energetic youngster. He tried to break into League football, with Footscray, but failed "because I was too small." He then took up running with Footscray Harriers and became a boundary umpire, first with the Association (1933), then with the League (1934-42). From 1942-50 he was a goal umpire.

During his long career as a man-in-white, he reported only three players. "Two of them I caught red-handed," Mick said, "but they got off." The third was Alan Killigrew of St. Kilda, later their coach, who was about to clobber one bloke when I grabbed him by his shorts. He turned on me and made a comment, so I reported him for abusive language. By the time I'd done that, he turned back into the fray, but they'd broken up and he was the only one reported. He got two weeks."

With 50 years in Melbourne's major goods terminal, Mick has seen a lot of changes.

"I can recall traffic jams between the sheds in the late 1920's," he reminisced. "Some of the drays had up to six horses and when they were turning the area was frequently so crowded that they couldn't make it. There'd be shouting and horses moving and backing up all over the place for hours at a time."

As well as representing Victoria in hurdle events, Mick was a well known wrestler and boxer for the V.R.I. He has also been an athletics coach.

Drop out

Sky diving (or sport parachuting) is a relatively little known sport, yet 20-year-old Robin Rose, a draftsman with the Signal and Telegraph Division, won a place in one of two Australian teams that competed in the world's first 10-man star competitions, held in New Zealand earlier this month.

Although Robin has been jumping for only two years he has made 500 jumps and is a qualified parachuting instructor. Most weekends will find him at the Labertouche Sport Parachute Centre near Longwarry.



Mr. Rose
(of Wellington) for the judges. Judging,

Also competing in the competitions were teams from USA (4), Japan (3), New Caledonia (2), New Zealand (2), Canada and UK who each made five jumps over Master-son (80 miles north

Ironworks picnic



It was the main event of the day and a tight finish was on the cards as proud parents watched their offspring do battle. More than 90 members of the Plant Division attended their annual children's picnic at Belgrave, on December 4.

through powerful tripod-mounted binoculars and T.V. video tape cameras, centered on the time taken to form the star pattern.

In forming the star, the 10 men jump from their aircraft at 12,500 ft. above the judges. They free fall and manoeuvre into position, then break away and parachute to the ground.

"We are falling at about 120 m.p.h.," Robin said, "and have about 55 seconds to form our star. Then we have five seconds to separate and open our parachutes. At this point we are about 2,000 ft. above the ground.

"We manoeuvre by moving our arms and legs."

Robin gained his interest in parachuting (and the V.R.) from his brother Michael, who was a former jumper. Michael is now hoping for a special pilot's licence so that he can be flying the plane when Robin is jumping. Michael also works in the Signal and Telegraph Division.

Robin has been with the V.R. for three years.

1921 apprentice

One of the Department's very few remaining 1921 apprentices, Jack Hamilton, retired on December 3.

Jack started his career at Newport Workshops as an apprentice fitter and turner. He then worked in the Plant Shop as a fitter until 1939, from when he was attached to the Plant Engineer's Drawing Office, doing general drafting. In 1943, he became Supervisor of the Drawing Office and carried out a check of machine and plant installations and other special examinations.



Mr. Hamilton

Jack was later appointed Plant Engineer at Newport, where his work had started half a century ago, and taken him many times during his V.R. career.

At his farewell, he was presented with, amongst other items, a model of a drop hammer to remind him of his days at the workshops.

"Miss Mac" retires

A V.R. identity was lost earlier this month, when, on January 7, Refreshment Branch typiste-secretary, Miss Win. McArthur—affectionately known to a legion of railwaymen as "Miss Mac"—retired.

Her railway career started in 1923



Three in, seven to go. With only 5,000 ft. to the ground, Robin, nearest the camera, practices for the world competition. Large dial on his left arm is an altimeter.

when she joined the V.R. as a comptometrist for the Refreshment Accounts section. She has been the Superintendent's typiste since 1936 and there have been five Superintendents in that time. Up to her retirement day she tapped out her work on a 1937 Royal typewriter, which she got new; steadfastly declining newer models in preference to her old favourite.



Miss McArthur

The Refreshment Services Branch has had many unusual services during its years and Win. remembered the Railway Nursery, which was closed as a wartime measure. "It was most popular on Mondays and Fridays when mothers used to leave their children there while they went shopping," she said. "In later years, it was very hard to get staff. Then there was the railway dietician, who lasted until 1957. She checked dietary values and recipes of food served through the RRR's."

Win. also recalls Commissioner Clapp who took a keen interest in refreshment services. "He really got the citrus industry moving by promoting their drinks through the stalls at Flinders Street and Spencer Street stations," she added. "And the dining rooms always had tablecloths and silverware, and 3-course meals. But that's all gone now. All people want today is a fast meal!"

Interested in music all her life, Win. was once a violinist for the now-defunct SEC orchestra. She also plays the piano. Travelling (by train, naturally) is another of her interests. A trip to Cairns next winter is the only plan for her retirement.

—Another Refreshment Branch typiste, Miss Grace Lamb, retired in 1968 after 35 years at Flinders Street. (They must treat them all well there.—Ed.)

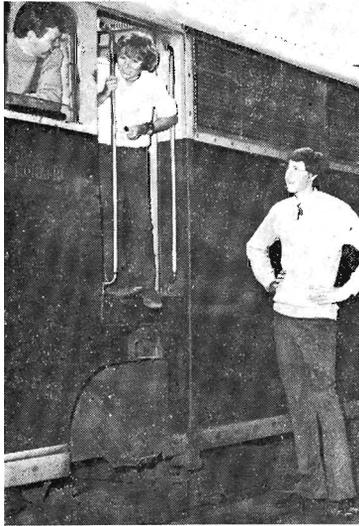
1942 apprentices reunion

V.R. 1942 apprentices will be holding their 30th year reunion dinner on February 18.

Held at Melville, 409 Bell Street, Pascoe Vale South (at the corner of Melville Road and Bell Street), the function will start at 7 p.m.

Mr. Gordon Perlstein will be pleased to hear from former V.R. apprentices of 1942 who will be able to attend. He can be contacted on auto 1222, 2122 or 2398. Cost of the evening is \$7.

The long and the short



Apprentices come in all shapes and sizes. The longest and the shortest accepted for this year's apprentice intake are seen here with Driver K. Hodgson. Shortest is 17-year-old Karl Weil, who is only 4 ft. 7 in. Biggest is Alan Moore, who, at 16, nudges 6 ft. 4 in. Both will be apprenticed in fitting and turning. Despite his size, Karl wields a mean tennis racquet and has won an open B-grade competition at Geelong. Alan's sports are rugby and spearfishing.

RETIREMENTS

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING BRANCH

Bartlett, G. G. C., Overhead Division, 3/1
Chelley, E. D., Head Office, 19/2

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Anson, J. T., Newport, 17/2
Anthony, A., South Dynon, 20/2
Blake, W. G., Bendigo North, 8/10
Chiron, A. V., Newport, 26/11
Colquhoun, L. J. T., Newport, 30/11
Daws, A. C., Bendigo Loco, 19/10
Dewar, A., North Melb., 6/12
Elvish, A., Wodonga, 12/10
Haddow, A. W., Jolimont, 21/2
Kirkilis, J., Newport, 11/2
Lanyon, E. C., Bendigo North, 4/10
Murphy, A., Ballarat North, 1/2
Occhipinto, G., North Melb., 10/2
O'Donnell, J. A. L., Cohuna, 3/2
O'Rourke, A., T.L. Depot, 15/2
Pauly, E. J., Newport, 24/2

STORES BRANCH

Hazell, D. K., Printing Works, 1/10
Tana, M., North Melb., 15/10
Pauline, R., Spotswood General Storehouse, 16/10
Rice, R. M., Bendigo North, 3/11

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Carr, H. J., Wangaratta, 31/1
Cummins, P., Yea, 3/2
Hynes, C., Bendigo, 25/3
Kearney, T. J., Jewell, 19/2
Mathisen, B. R., Ashburton, 25/10
Meany, V. T., Melbourne Yard, 27/11
Morehouse, C. J., Broadmeadows, 17/2
Sewell, H. E., Bonnie Doon, 26/12
White, J. F., Rel. Sig., 24/11
Wilson, (Miss) J. E. N., Geelong, 26/12

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Aston, A. W., Ararat, 26/2
Benson, M. B., Kyneton, 15/2

Cahill (Miss) H. M., Northcote, 24/2
Carr, E. J. K., Newport South, 2/11
Crawley, C. A., Cavendish, 31/1
Guest, L. G., Royal Park, 31/1
James, J. A. H., Spl. Works, East Melb., 7/2
Leed, E. R., Bendigo, Works Section, 25/11
Lentini, S., Flinders St. Works Section, 21/2
McInnes, R. R., Cavendish, 8/2
Ricardo, W. J., Mangalore, 9/12
Strefford, T. N., Spotswood Workshops, 15/11
Thomson, E., Korumburra, 10/11
Whittemore, W. F., Bendigo Works Section, 31/1

NEWS LETTER REGRETS TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING DEATHS

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING BRANCH

Kielnhofer, A., Overhead Div., 24/11

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Madden, R. D., Shelter Shed, 13/11
Stevens, K. H., Ballarat North, 7/12

STORES BRANCH

Quinlan, R., Photography Div., 17/11
Tronconi, B., Photography Div., 28/11

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Brennan, L. L., Donald (N.S.T.), 15/11
Gallien, W. F., Melbourne Goods, 12/11
Lynch, E., C/- Metro. Supt., 12/12
Rowlands, G. G., Colac, 18/11

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Kardasz, A., Spotswood Workshops, 17/11

Institute News

The Institute Library facilities may be made known to more railwaymen as a result of a display set up last month in the Spencer Street station building, adjacent to the stationmasters' conference room.

Through the co-operation of the Department's Education Officer, Bill Hunter, members attending the Supervisor Training course, saw some of the books and facilities that the V.R.I. Library has to offer.

A good cross-section of the Library's content in both fiction and non-fiction was selected for the display and most tastes catered for. The display was very well received by course members.

During a group discussion on the subject of "Railways Publicity", speakers made reference to the library display and suggested further uses for displays of this kind with a view to publicizing not only the library but the Institute as a whole.

It is hoped that the supervisors who attended the courses, and saw the display, will now spread the word that the Institute Library is a live and up-to-date facility, available free, to all Institute members, and that members may use this service, wherever they are located: if they can't reach the library, the library will reach them, either through the libraries established at various country centres, or by the carton service by train.

SPORT

By O.S.S. KEATING

Tennis—V.R.I. v. A.P.I.

Albert Ground was the venue again for the second of the latest series of tennis matches between the two Institutes. The grass courts were in top class condition, and the weather, ideal for tennis. The trend in the singles matches indicated that we would run out easy winners as Bruce Pearce defeated L. Hearn, 2 sets to 1, John Bromley beat P. Lester in straight sets, and Wayne Schulz and Stephen Stephens defeated G. Walter and L. Bacon respectively, 2 sets to 1. Our losers were Russell Booley and Maurie Barker who were beaten by P. Cumming and B. McCormick, in straight sets, giving us a lead of 4 rubbers to 2 at the conclusion of the singles. As I said before, we looked set to go on and win easily. However, the "posties" had other ideas, and proceeded to let us know that they were far from beaten.

In each of the three doubles matches they took the first set, and so had our backs really against the wall. Booley and Barker fought back to take the second set 6-3, but the effort was too much and they went down 3-6 in the last set. Then Schultz and Stephens, who had also fought back to take their second set 6-5, found their opponents too tough in the final set and they went down 3-6. Scores were V.R.I. 4 rubbers, A.P.I. 4.

The Pearce-Bromley (V.R.I.) v. Hearn-Lester (A.P.I.) game now captured all interest and what a great game it was. Our men had lost the first set 5-6, then lifted their play to take the second 6-2, but in the final set, the day's best tennis was seen. The postal boys were smartly into stride and very quickly went to a 4-1 lead, but our fellows knuckled down to the job and slowly, and from

a spectator's point of view, painfully, got back into the game.

Some great volleying by Bromley, and excellent serving by Pearce saw the score creep to 5-6, when suddenly we were in trouble again, as with the posties serving, we were down 15-40 and facing two match points. We managed to survive and win the game (scores level at 6-all) and take out the set at 9-7. This gave us victory 5 rubbers to 4 and the perpetual trophy is again in the trophy case for a further year.

It was an excellent day's tennis and both teams are to be congratulated on their displays, for although we were the victors, we had very little up our sleeves at the finish. Mr. G. F. Brown, Chairman, Victorian Railways Commissioners, welcomed members of both Institutes at a short social function after the game, and was ably supported by our General President, Mr. Bob Wright. It was most pleasing to see some of the life members of the V.R.I.T.A. in the persons of Messrs. A. Hargraves, H. Jones and E. Grant, come along and witness some of the play.

Cricket—V.R.I. v. A.P.I.

Having captured the perpetual trophies in bowls, football, golf and tennis, we now had only to win the Cricket match to create what probably would be a record, win all the trophies in one year—and 1971 seemed our year. The final game of the series was played at the St. Kilda Cricket Ground and we were rather hopeful that the team could maintain this Institute's unbeaten record for 1971. The unfortunate part of this story is that the Australian Postal Institute boys were just as determined that they would hold at least one trophy, and so the stage was set for an exciting game. Captain Lou Balcombe won the toss and sent our opponents in. The opening over from Thomas was very hostile and when Collihole opened from the other end, it looked as if we had unearthed two good young "fasties". Thomas's second over was disastrous when, off his third ball, a fairly easy chance from Mullins was not accepted and this incident possibly cost us the game. Mullins went on to make 113 before being caught off the bowling of Glover. The opening partnership put on 52, when Sullivan was out for 20, but the score was 167 before Collihole had Williams caught for 43.

From there-on, Glover and Collihole had the A.P.I. batsmen, with the exception of Mullins, in plenty of trouble. At lunch, Postal had scored 223 off 34 overs for the loss of seven wickets, to make our task pretty difficult.

So it proved, although our openers seemed well set, Glover lofted a ball and was well caught, the score being 25. At 48, de Zilwa, who had been batting quite confidently, was run out, the result of an excellent piece of fielding. Then in quick succession followed Parker (27), Smith (0), and Coyne (6) and the score was 5 for 59. McPhee and Uccello then got together and proceeded to attack the bowling, but a well set defensive field kept runs to a minimum. Finally, at 99, Uccello was out for 17, and the end in sight as only a few overs remained to be bowled. McPhee, playing the only bad stroke of his innings, spooned a catch and was caught and bowled for 35. At the conclusion of play Balcombe 6 n.o. and Thomas 5 n.o. were still at the wicket with the score 7 for 120; and so we were defeated by 120 runs. Highlights, from our point of view, were the fine bowling of Glover (from Sale) who finished with 4 for 69, the potential shown by Collihole (Mildura) and Thomas (Metro.) as opening bowlers, the fine batting by Parker, who opened the innings, and the veteran from Dimboola, Keith McPhee, who top scored with 35.

Without a doubt, the 113 by Mullins, was a great knock and he thoroughly deserved the congratulations offered him at lunch. The official luncheon was chaired by Des O'Donnell and as we were hosts, our visitors were welcomed by Mr. Commissioner I. G. Hodges, and Mr. Bob Wright, our General President.

Mr. W. Crowe, who for so long was Hon. Secretary of the V.R.I. Cricket Association, was a guest, and it was particularly pleasing for his many friends, both from the Postal and Railway camps, to see him looking so well and enjoying the game.

Golf—A.P.I. v. V.R.I.

The 1971 fixture was recently played at the Northern Golf Club. The course was in excellent condition, the weather perfect and good scores were the order of the day. The main event, the R. R. Edwards shield was retained by the V.R.I. team who won 16 games, lost nine and squared one. In the Peewater Cup competition the V.R.I., with three wins, defeated their hosts who could manage to win only one game and draw the other. In this particular competition you have to lose the match to win the trophy or win the match to lose the trophy—see what I mean? Anyway A.P.I. retained this most valuable trophy. Individual winners were K. Hatton with 38 points and F. Selkirk with 37 points.

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

NEWS LETTER

FEBRUARY



1972

10 CENTS



\$16 MILLION FOR IMPROVEMENTS

\$16 million will be spent by the V.R. in the 12 months to June 30 to improve trains and tracks throughout the State.

Work programmes include the relaying of 112 miles of country and six miles of metropolitan tracks; the building of 170 bogie freight vans and wagons in city and country workshops; \$1 million worth of improvements to stations, yards, freight handling areas and offices; signalling improvements; new grade separation projects—in conjunction with the Country Roads Board—at Paisley, Newport (Williamstown Road), Ararat, Allansford and Geelong (Victoria Street), in addition to current works at three other locations; bridgeworks at eight sites; and boom barrier and flashing light installations.

In addition, \$3.5 million will go towards the cost of the 50 new stainless-steel metropolitan trains, the first of which should be in service in the latter half of this year; \$1.5 million will be allocated for part of the costs of third track works between Burnley-Hawthorn and East Camberwell-Box Hill; \$60,000 has been provided for preliminary expenditure on the Victoria Park-East Doncaster line; and \$70,000 has been allotted for replacement sleeping carriages for the Mildura line.

As well as these works, but financed independently, is the underground loop project which is working toward a 1973 start for the major tunnelling.

These, and other similar works

each year, are bringing the V.R. up to a competitive standard.

The new metropolitan trains will do much to rekindle acceptance of public transport amongst some of our harsher critics, and will give us much-needed extra trains for peak services without having to rely on pre-1900 swing-door trains.

On the freight side, the new bogie vans and wagons are needed for inter and intra state traffic, and will enable the scrapping of expensive-to-maintain and inadequate four-wheeled vehicles. Included amongst the new wagons are 100 V.R.-built GJX hopper wagons, now being turned out by Newport Workshops. Completion of this programme will see 300 of these highly efficient grain-moving wagons in service; another 50 have been authorized to follow in 1972-73.

The relaying programme, with the majority being in the country area, will be a welcome infusion of money into the local areas during the current economic slow-down. In fact, railway wages throughout the State are a healthy proportion of many a town's spending.

Despite the fact that we would like to do more to keep pace with Victoria's and Melbourne's growth, steady progress is being made and the works carried out from loan funds are a vital part of keeping Victoria's railway system a viable and valuable asset to the State.

G. F. BROWN

TIMES OF CHANGE

Just 105 years ago last month, the names of several Melbourne metropolitan stations were changed, reflecting the growth of the developing metropolis.

Raglan Street station became North Sandridge (later it was to become North Port Melbourne then North Port), Church Street became East Richmond, Gardiner's Creek Road was given the now-prestigious nomenclature of South Yarra, the title Prahran was given to the station referred as either Greville Street or Commercial Road, Chapel Street became Windsor, and the vague des-

ination Beach was clarified as Brighton Beach.

SEMI EVERY SIX MINUTES

If the freight carried on the Sydney-Melbourne standard gauge line for 1970-71 had been handled on the Hume Highway, it would mean an extra semi-trailer in each direction every six minutes each day of the year, Mr. T. Fischer, (M.L.A.) said in N.S.W. Parliament recently.

He emphasised that the standard gauge line, in taking 130,000 semi-trailer loads off the highway, was

making an enormous contribution to road safety and the workability of the highway itself.

He added that checks at Marulan (N.S.W.) showed an average of 427 interstate semi-trailers passed through daily at present; rail kept 500 off the highway daily.

"On these calculations, it can be strongly argued that the Hume Highway will break down if the Sydney-Melbourne standard gauge railway line does not receive equivalent up-grading as the highway is receiving," he said.

"Whilst there is major capital expenditure in continually up-grading the Hume Highway, this is not occurring on the standard gauge railway line.

"It is essential that a balanced transport system be maintained and this will only happen if the railways receive grants and loans for capital expenditure on the same scale as our highway system," he concluded.

CHOICE OF KINGS

Trains figured in the news recently. Item one concerned the funeral train for King Frederik of Denmark.

Personal touches requested by the 72-year-old monarch included working the funeral train from Copenhagen to Roskilde with a steam locomotive.

The King had a life-long love of railways.

Item two was the announcement that actor Richard Burton plans to hire Hungary's luxury *Continental Express* train for his wife Elizabeth Taylor's 40th birthday.

It is Burton's intention to stock train with refreshments and guests and run it from Paris to Budapest for the party on February 27.

BLUEPRINT FOR SURVIVAL SAYS END ROADS

"The Government must prepare to end all road building and heavily subsidise public transport. The energy outlay for the cement and steel to build a motorway is three to four times that needed for a railway. The land needed is four times greater."

This recommendation is contained in a massive 45,000 word document entitled *Blueprint for Survival*.

Written by 33 eminent scientists and academics, it will cause a storm of controversy over its dire predictions of the future of the Earth, reports *The Age*.

NEW MURLA MAN

Mr Allan Gibbs, 61, managing director of General Motors-Holden's has been appointed to MURLA to

replace architect Mr. Robin Boyd, who died last year.

Despite Mr. Gibbs motor management, his engineering career started in 1931 with South Australian Railways. He also worked for Western Australian Railways and was involved with gold mining for a while before joining Adelaide's General Motors in 1934.

Discussing his appointment, Mr. Gibbs said: "When I was approached for this appointment I was delighted, because if I'm to do anything at all outside GMH I had a direct interest in.

"I have no spare time—or none to speak of—but I'm looking forward to finding some for this project".

WORTH QUOTING

"If an absurd incongruity is to be avoided in Melbourne's underground rail loop, it is essential that one section of yesterday's consultants' report be noted for special, urgent action. The consultants urged that wooden trains be phased out of the underground as soon as possible.

"This carries a disturbing implication that it is now envisaged that Melbourne's antique red commuter shakers—some 70 years old—will still be rattling around in 1977. How ridiculous they would look, emerging like antediluvians from new tunnels and lurching into the loop's spanking new stations, which, as the authority's chairman, Mr. R. B. Roscoe, told us a year ago, will be as aesthetically pleasing as possible.

"The loop estimate, at that time, was still \$80 million. Yesterday's report made clear the cost will be very much higher, which makes it all the more important that, as Mr. Roscoe said last January, the underground should be pleasing, to attract passengers.

"If Mr. Roscoe's aims, and the spirit of yesterday's consultants' report, are not to be defeated, our State Government must start, immediately, to give Victoria's railway commissioners the money they have so long been requesting for new trains. We must not have 1901 relics making a laughing stock of our 1977 underground."

—Editorial, *The Herald*, Jan. 11, 1971

TOP MAN LOOKS BACK... AND FORWARD

It's a long and hard road from the bottom to the top, yet, after such a career, V.R. Secretary Wils Walker, who retired on February 6, com-

mented: "I wish I was 10 years younger to see the plans for the future come into operation; the new stainless steel metropolitan trains, the underground loop and associated works, and extra tracks and lines in the metropolitan area that will revitalize the V.R. in the public's eyes."

During his career, which started in 1922 and fell two weeks short of 50 years, Mr. Walker saw a lot of changes.

Joining as a lad messenger, the 15-year-old Eaglehawk boy was assigned to the Telegraph Office, which was then at Spencer Street station, delivering messages throughout head office.

At this time, one of the many major revolutions to the V.R.—electrification of the metropolitan area—was underway and Spencer Street station was being partly rebuilt. He was to see it rebuilt again nearly 40 years later.

Progressing to the clerical grades, his duties included typing—this was the era when only males were employed; the first girl typiste was employed in 1923.

Waybiling in the Melbourne Goods Depot, a stint with the Betterment Board, and 12 years in the Rolling Stock Branch, were rungs on Mr. Walker's climb to the top.

He was transferred to the Staff Board in the Secretary's Branch in 1938.

From the Staff Board, Mr. Walker was appointed the 19th Secretary for Railways, in 1961.

Then came 11 years—the fourth longest term—in that capacity.

The top rung was reached last year when he was made Acting Commissioner for three months while a younger appointee was found.

"The railways still offer a good future for young men willing to work," said Mr. Walker. "I made it to the top from one of the lowest rungs on the ladder, the Chairman of Commissioners Mr. G. F. Brown and Commissioner Mr. I. G. Hodges both started as apprentices, and the Deputy Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. E. P. Rogan started his V.R. career as a junior clerk.

"One of the great things about a railway career is the superannuation scheme which started in 1926 and has been updated many times since then. This was one of the greatest influences in making a railway career worthwhile and secure. The security that superannuation gives

against sickness and disabling injury, cannot be too highly stressed."

NEW SECRETARY

The 20th Secretary for the Victorian Railways since 1856, following Mr. Walker's retirement, is Mr. Charles Morris, 62, of Oakleigh.

Mr. Morris was Chairman of the Staff Board. Since joining the Department in 1925 as a junior clerk aged 15, Mr. Morris has progressed through the ranks of the Traffic and Accountancy Branches and many divisions of the Secretary's Branch.



Mr. Morris

In 1934 Mr. Morris was admitted as an Associate of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and as Associate of the Australasian Institute of Secretaries.

In 1938 he became a Licensed Shorthand Writer of the Supreme Court of Victoria.

He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Transport.

After handling the complex problem of industrial relations for the Commissioners, and representing them before the Arbitration Commission, Mr. Morris was appointed to the Staff Board, and in 1961 became Chairman. Since then he has deputised as Secretary on several occasions.

"In my long career of 47 years in the railways, I have seen vast changes, and have always been proud of the organisation of this complex and diverse industry. I have also been proud to be a member of the great family of railwaymen," he said.

FRONT COVER

Although Melbourne hasn't had much of a summer this year, its beaches have been packed whenever the sun has introduced enough rays into the atmosphere to warrant the populace cooling off.

In this era of concern about pollution and road congestion, Melbourne is lucky to have 19 railway stations within walking distance of good beaches.

And as the front cover scene shows, the walking distance is quite small in some cases.

Cover photo was taken at Patterson River, Carrum.

A Parliamentary Committee on railways investigating a port? That's what happened a little over 75 years ago when the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways was called upon to report on proposed expenditure to rehabilitate the port at Lakes Entrance.

SAIL v. STEAM

Lakes Entrance, a popular tourist town 199 miles east of Melbourne, does not have obvious connections with Victorian railway history. But with coastal shipping on the lakes, the opening of the railway to Bairnsdale in 1888 led to severe competition between the two modes of transport.

The present entrance to the Gippsland lakes was selected by the Inspector-General of Public Works, Mr. Wardell, and work started there in January 1869. The object was to form a 400 ft. opening through the sandhills to supersede the natural entrances formed from time to time and at varying locations from the lakes to the sea. In 1874, these works were stopped.

From 1883-88, more work was done at the same location to make a navigable channel 12 ft. deep. These works were directed by Sir John Coode, who claimed that the site was the best that could be chosen, as it enabled the water currents to be trained directly through the entrance.

Sir John had miscalculated on the effect of the currents; instead of the scour making a permanent depth of 12 ft., the actual depths varied from 25 to 85 ft.

When the entrance was opened, the deepening of the channel, beyond all expectations, became a danger to the works. To strengthen and maintain the pierworks, 14,000 tons of stone were placed around the piles from 1891-99.

In the 15 years to 1896, \$84,000 had been spent on the channel by the Government.

Borer infestation

In 1896, it was also found that the piles of the piers at the entrance had become infested with *teredo navalis*, a destructive wood borer which entered piles when only 3 in. long and grew up to 3 ft. in length. With nearly every pile affected, collapse was imminent in heavy seas.

This was part of the problem that the Railway Committee was to investigate.

The railway had linked Sale with Melbourne in 1879, and reached Bairnsdale in 1888; but had had little effect on the sea trade. Generally, the Railways carried most passengers, parcels and livestock while shipping secured most freight. Nevertheless, there were some co-ordinated rail-steamer services with boats plying to the railway termini at Bairnsdale on the Mitchell River and Sale on the La Trobe River.

The problem came to a head when storekeepers at Traralgon, Walhalla and other places began to have their freight brought to Sale by water.

Railway deficit, shipping subsidy

The then Railways Commissioner (Mr. John Mathieson) said that the capital cost of the lines affected by the water competition—Morwell to Sale Wharf, Traralgon to Bairnsdale, Sale to Stratford Junction and Maffra

to Briagolong—was \$1,586,524 and, after paying working expenses and 4 per cent interest, there was a deficit of \$54,000 yearly.

On the other hand, the spending of \$84,000 on the channel from 1881-96—averaging \$6,000 yearly—was a direct subsidy of 42 per cent to shipowners who had not earned more than \$14,310 from freight revenue in any one year.

This enabled residents to get cheap freight by sea in competition with the Government's railways.

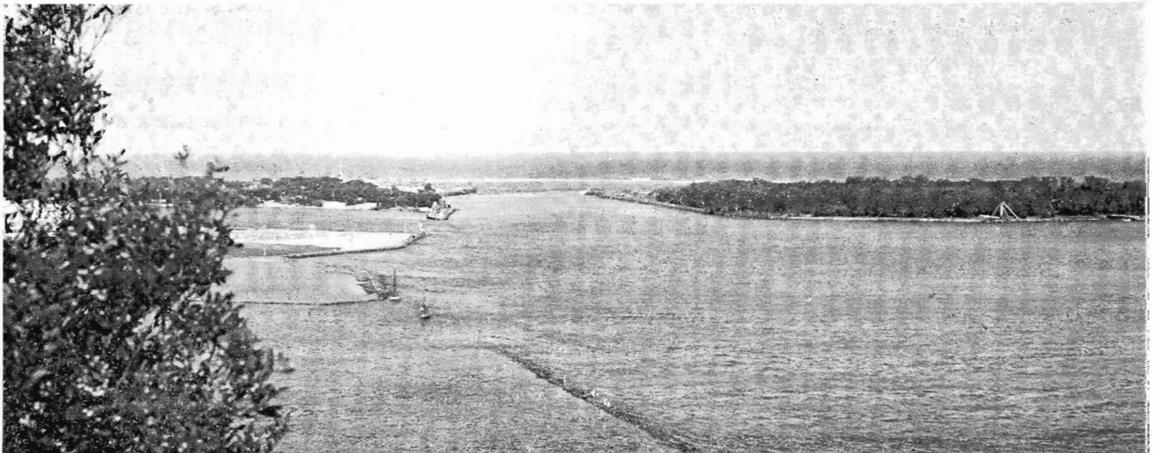
The Committee investigated every-thing connected with Lakes Entrance (or Cunninghamame, as it was then known).

In evidence, the Committee heard how towns like Tambo, Omeo and Orbost were dependent on the entrance to get stores in and products out.

Boats even plied to a wharf on the Tambo River at Mossiface, which was the transshipping point for Bruthen and towns to the north.

As the Snowy River entrance at Marlo was too precarious for lakes steamers to traverse, produce from the river flats at Orbost was taken to Cunninghamame for shipping to Melbourne.

A navigable channel at the lakes' entrance was of vital importance to the extensive areas outside that served by the Bairnsdale railway.



The artificial entrance to the Gippsland Lakes that the Parliamentary Committee on Railways investigated. Before the entrance was formed, the lakes were freshwater.

Goods levy

The 9-man Railway Committee ultimately approved of \$44,000 being spent on protection works at the Entrance but recommended that legislation be passed to levy inwards goods by 30c a ton and outwards by 20c.

The proposal to charge dues on a tonnage basis for shipping using the Gippsland lakes was short-lived; the Government had no power to charge such fees on "coastwise goods".

Opening the railway to Orbost, in 1916, finally sank coastal shipping in that area. Sandbars developed and despite continual dredging are still a problem today. Currently, a \$1 million project is being considered to beat the sandbar problem.

Many vessels have been wrecked in the area, including the *Country of Antrim*, which grounded on a sandy stretch in 1895. She broke up and sank before her cargo of 1,000 tons of railway lines could be taken off.



Commissioner Mathieson, who protested against the "subsidized" shipping being in competition with the V.R.

MILEPOSTS

1919

First portion—three quarters of a mile—Sandringham to Black Rock electric street railway opened for traffic, March 10.

First electric train service in Australia, Essendon to Sandringham, May 28.

1920

Royal Train for Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII) Royal Tour, June 1-4.

Entire Sandringham to Black Rock electric street railway in service, with passenger sections covering Sandringham station to Bluff Road, and Bluff Road to Black Rock.

CAR PARK CLAMP

New car parks for the heart of the city will be discouraged by a new traffic policy formulated by the Melbourne City Council in December, *The Age* reports.

Encouragement will be given to car parks on the fringe of the central business district that will be served by public transport.

At present 12,000 car parking spaces are available in the city area.

New buildings will no longer be required to provide car parking if extra cars introduced by the parking provisions affect traffic circulation.

Outside the central business district, off-street car parking will be encouraged in shopping areas and industry will be asked to provide fully for the parking of trucks and commercial vehicles.

The chairman of the council's public works committee said that the moves would protect residential areas from the onslaught of the motor car, and the CBD from increased traffic congestion and pollution.

By 1985 city roads are expected to be carrying vehicles travelling 32 million miles a day compared with the present seven million.

TRANS-CONTINENTAL JOURNEY BY BOOK

Well-known railway authoress Patsy Adam-Smith has produced her eighth railway book with the photographic help of Australian Tourist Commission's Photo Editor Lindsay Rodda. Titled *Across Australia by Indian-Pacific* (someone should have told her it's correctly *The Indian-Pacific*), the 80 page big-format book should appeal not only to railway men and women but to those who have or would travel through the centre of Australia.

Striking photographs, many in colour, complement the writing, which is not only descriptive of the train trip, but brings in a little history of the line, its people, its towns, industries and folk-lore, with an odd verse or two, including a ballad to a barmaid written by U.S.A's 31st President Herbert Hoover, who had been in Kalgoorlie ("where we cross into Western Australia railway territory") as a mining engineer.

Published by Thomas Nelson (Australia) Ltd. and printed in Hong Kong, *Across Australia by Indian-Pacific* sells for \$2.95 (H.H.)

APPRECIATION



Presentation of a tape deck was the V.R. Commissioners way of saying "thank you" to signal supervisor Ken Wilson, for risking personal safety to save the vital E signal box from destruction when high voltage overhead wires were brought down onto low voltage signal wires late last year. In making the presentation, the Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. G. F. Brown, said: "There is no doubt Melbourne's commuters owe you a debt of gratitude. The part you played in saving key pieces of equipment enabled us to get services back to normal within 36 hours of the accident. We thank you sincerely . . ." Details of the incident were related in November 1971 *News Letter*, p. 164.

RAILWAYS WORTH SAVING

Australia's leading management journal, Rydge's, recently ran an article entitled: *Railways on the wrong track; but worth saving.* Coming as it does from the voice for the managers of the free enterprise system, the article is all the more interesting. Much of what Rydge's had to say is reprinted here. Italics and bold type are ours.

In general, Rydge's states that the picture of Australian railway systems is one of overall losses, rising to dangerous levels in years of drought when bulk carriage primary produce hauls fall away.

The public image of railways is one of inefficient management, slow freight deliveries, grimy stations, and low staff morale.

Despite this depressing picture, there is a clear case for new investment in rail transport for the benefit of industry generally.

"So," Rydge's asks, "what is wrong with Australia's railways? Must the railways be synonymous in the public mind with inefficient management, grimy stations and a staff with low morale?"

"In fact, the Australian railways now represent one of the best investment possibilities open to public finance.

"Modern technological developments, modern management and accounting methods, population growth and increasing city congestion offer a potential return on which Commonwealth and State Governments alike are lavishing funds.

"Renovation of Railways is more than just a good investment. It is becoming increasingly essential to the proper utilisation of Australia's manufacturing potential, and to the orderly development of Australia's cities.

"Some of the problems caused by distance between cities and congestion within them, can only be solved by a diversion of public money into the urgent task of rescuing the various railway systems from the downward path of decline.

Mental blocks

"But before this can be done, it will be necessary to overcome two mental blocks in the minds of the decision-makers who determine where Australian public investments are actually going to be made.

"The first of these is the fascination of politicians with the motor car, helped along by the pressure from private motoring organisations and the vast automotive industry.

"With the great post-war increase in private ownership of motor vehicles, there has been a natural tendency to automatically **assume** that

building more roads and providing urban expressways were urgent tasks.

Wants, not needs

"These attitudes have been encouraged by the reports of consultant engineers and committees of inquiry that vast quantities of funds were absolutely essential to festoon cities with freeways and parking stations, to link hundreds of country towns with high standard highways, and to provide motorway—standard links between the capital cities, primarily for the benefit of long distance motor trucks.

"Only recently, a Melbourne inquiry confirmed the suggestion that \$2,221 million will have to be spent on freeways by 1985 to accommodate Melbourne's motorists in the style to which they would like to become accustomed.

"This has tended to divert attention from the fact that with rising congestion, increasing difficulty in provision of parking spaces and cities which are spatially enlarging, it is time to consider alternative ways of moving people and goods.

"The second mental block of politicians arises from the overall image of the railways as troublesome loss-making operations—a source of budgetary embarrassment and of continual complaints from constituents about fares, service, schedules and rolling stock.

"The result has been a tendency to assume, often subconsciously, that pouring money into the railways would be simply sending good money after bad, an impression probably re-inforced by the consideration that there is less political mileage in faster goods services (however desirable) than in opening another bit of highway in somebody's electorate.

Profit v. loss

"From a business management point of view, these assumptions are quite unjustified—for when you take a closer look at railway operations, there are some areas which potentially are extremely profitable.

"In general, the interstate passenger and freight operations are profitable, even with the slow speeds, inadequate rolling stock and worn out track of the present systems. The bulk haulage from the countryside usually pays its way, and the mineral export cargoes are usually

profitable business—which partly explains the willingness of private enterprise to take over the task.

"The really big losses occur on the suburban and commuter passenger services, and even more so on the country passenger services.

"The losses on the country passenger services are of such massive proportions that they represent a huge State subsidy to country dwellers—one which city opponents of the Country Party have so far failed to discover.

"While making accounting losses, suburban systems do at least move a lot of people—something which cannot be said for the country passenger trains.

"Heavy as they are, the direct losses on these country passenger trains are probably not their greatest cost to Australia.

"The really crippling cost of these losses is their role in perpetuating the impression that railways as such are technologically out of date, thereby deterring investment in all areas of the system—even the parts where profits can be made.

"Sharing the role of passenger service losses as the villain of the piece is the great interest rate red herring—a grievance which takes up an inordinate amount of space in railway commissioner reports, and diverts attention from the more important issues of current investment policy.

"As a legacy of a hundred years or more of railway investment in Australia, the railways have to find substantial interest payments on the loan moneys involved—including interest payments on a lot of foolish and ill-advised branch line proliferation which has never been profitable.

"Viewed as a current investment proposition, a lot of existing Australian country lines, of varying gauges and in several different States, would never be considered.

"Some of them would not have been considered even last century if they had been evaluated by economists instead of politicians as hypnotised then by railways as they are today by freeways.

"But since they are there, the amounts of loan funds poured into them in the past become irrelevant for current operating decisions, however irksome the payment of interest

on ancient loans may be to railway accountants.

"The real economic question is, will new capital investment in Australian railway systems be profitable (or if not profitable, socially desirable)? The answer is quite clearly yes.

Breakthrough

"The basic principles which should guide future investment were set out at the Australian Transportation Conference in Canberra in March of last year (see June 1971 *New Letter*, p. 84—Ed.) by Mr G. F. W. Brown, Chairman of Commissioners for the Victorian Railways. Mr. Brown defined the railway's economic role as the carriage of large amounts of traffic on high density routes between points of traffic concentration. 'It is the total traffic density over a specific route that is the principal factor determining whether rail will be the economical mode for the task,' he stated.

"This modern style of railway management thinking hopefully marks the end of a muddle in railway policy which has persisted from last century.

"Because rail preceded the motor vehicle, it was originally assigned a lot of the light, dispersed passenger travel and goods transport functions which are now more economically performed by road transport.

"Because of its high capital costs, and fixed and inflexible assets, rail is unsuitable for dispersed, short haul transport tasks. Looking at the other side of the coin, these same high capital costs provide a high capacity for handling large volumes of traffic between fixed points.

Potential

"In looking at the potential for investment and improved management in Australian railway systems, it is helpful to think of the problem in terms of the profit centres (loss centres in some cases).

"So far as the profitable services—interstate passengers, interstate freight, country commodity traffic and bulk haulage of mineral cargoes—are concerned, the question is, will given investments produce returns sufficient to justify spending the funds—irrespective of whether other parts of the system are making losses, or how much interest in being paid on loans from the early part of the century.

"The case of the city passenger transport deserves an article on its own. Here social considerations come heavily into play, since curtailment of railway services is likely to result in traffic congestion and demands for investment in roads far more costly than the operating losses on the system each year. Apart from the social considerations, there is also

the strong likelihood that selected investment in higher average speeds, more comfortable rolling stock and even such modest items as new coats of paint and better signs for railway stations would show a respectable return on investment.

"The daunting size of the country intrastate passenger losses clearly calls for very serious examination. It is possible that some of the smaller centres hanging onto a rail service no longer have any economic function and should simply be abandoned. It is possible that many current rail services could be more economically provided by buses, subsidised if necessary. Possibly, also, fast new rolling stock could generate more traffic over lines being upgraded anyway to handle faster and heavier goods trains.

"It may simply be decided that on grounds of social policy (or the electoral welfare of the Country Party) the community will simply have to bear the losses.

"But whatever the final decisions, it is essential that the vestment needs of other sections of the system should not be obscured by the troubles of the passenger divisions.

"Some 1969 figures assembled by the Western Australian railways but relating to the whole of Australia suggested that while rail carried out 24 per cent of the total transport task compared to 18.5 per cent by road, public capital expenditure on roads ran to \$586 million (62 per cent of the total) against \$124 million (13 per cent) for rail.

"Substantially increased injections of public funds are needed to replace worn out rolling stock, particularly the slow, antiquated four wheel units, with modern rolling stock running on high speed bogies, and for line improvements.

"This includes track duplication (the section of the main Sydney to Melbourne link from Junee to Albury is only single line), centralised train control, heavier rails, grade and curve improvements and other investments designed to speed up services and produce substantial operating economies.

"Until the Commonwealth pays more attention to railways, which it has largely ignored so far, apart from the rail gauge standardisation program, there will continue to be a gross mis-allocation of transport expenditures in Australia, with far too much money going into road development relative to railway investment.

"Australian rail may be a Cinderella at present, but with judicious assistance from the Fairy Godmother in Canberra, it can still emerge as a revitalised asset to Australia.

5,000,000 MILES

Following the article in June 1971 *New Letter* about locomotives that have amassed two million miles (p. 87) the highest mileage run by a GM diesel locomotive has been tracked down—over five million miles.

This remarkable feat was achieved by a 1939 E-6 locomotive (similar to our S-class) which lasted in service with USA's Seaboard Coast Line until August 1970.

More than a million miles was being logged every 6½ years of the locomotive's life.

Our own S 302 is recording its mileage at better than this rate. In its first 12 years it recorded two million miles and has now logged 2.3 million in 14 years.

SUGGESTIONS ACCEPTED

During December, awards were made for these suggestions submitted to the Public Relations and Betterment Board:

- Replacing steel mat in roomette shower compartments with rubber mat \$3
- Quartz-halogen headlight globes for diesel rail cars \$10
- Alteration to bolster bolts on locomotive bogies \$10
- Re-aligning of hand brake in ZF brakevans.. \$5
- Altered late evening train services, Williamstown line \$100
- Amendments to form R.S. 126.. .. \$20
- "Facelift" for rooms 61 and 215 at Head Office \$5
- New hinge design for tail discs.. .. \$34
- Summer uniform for female station assistants \$5
- Drawing attention to misuse of concession tickets \$3
- Horsham Sunday excursion train to stop at Wendouree during Begonia Festival \$2
- Modifications to back-hoe for re-sleeper gang \$250 (preliminary)

LOOP LOAN

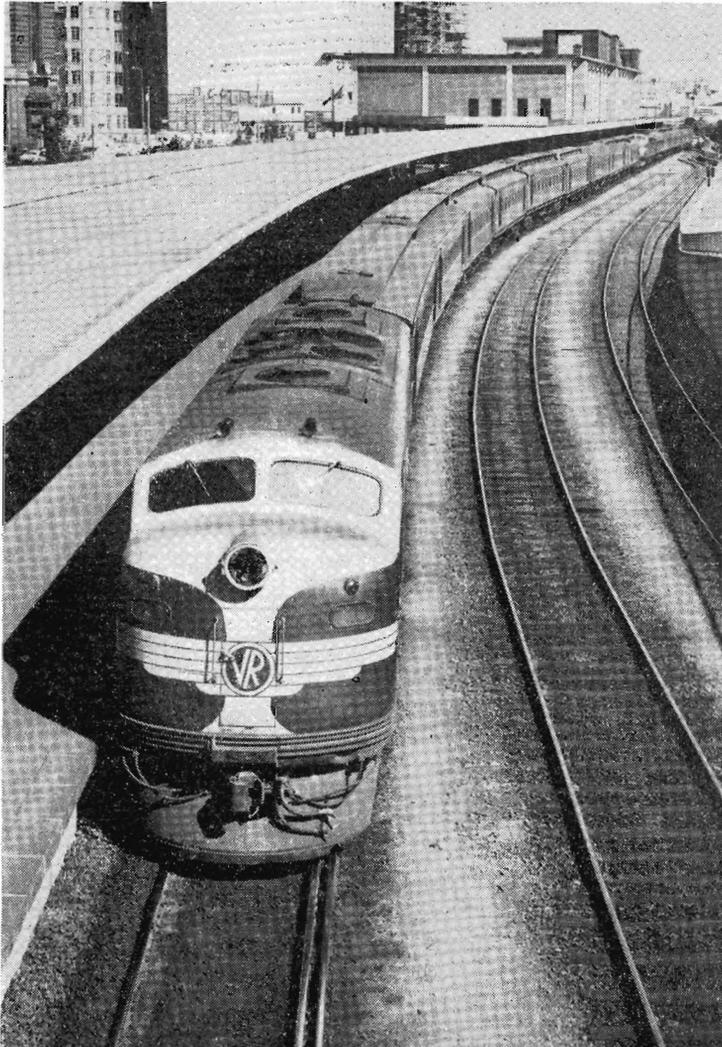
The Prudential Life Assurance Company has lent \$500,000 to the Melbourne Underground Rail Loop Authority.

VIEWS OF NEWS

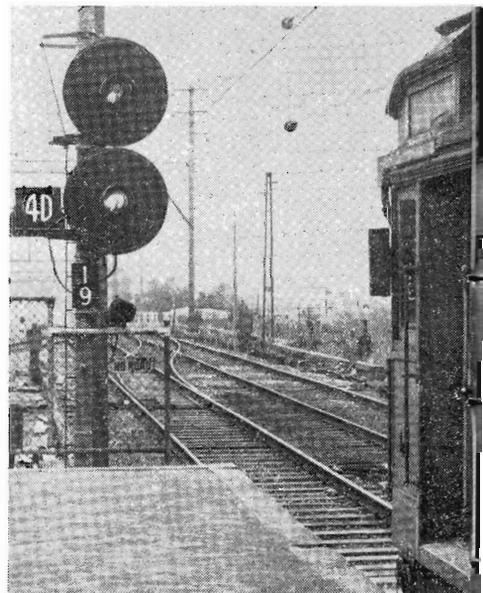
FOREIGNERS. The only things Victorian in this photograph are the countryside, tracks and train crew. Because the expected grain movement will be 20 million bushels higher than the estimate, extra haulpower was needed and Commonwealth Railways came to the rescue with the loan of three 1,800 h.p. GM class locomotives which released three V.R. locomotives from the standard gauge line for work in the wheat areas. (Three steam engines were also returned to traffic for shunting duties in country areas.) And the carriages? At holiday times there are insufficient air-conditioned carriages for the extra trains so non air-conditioned N.S.W.G.R. rolling stock is used.

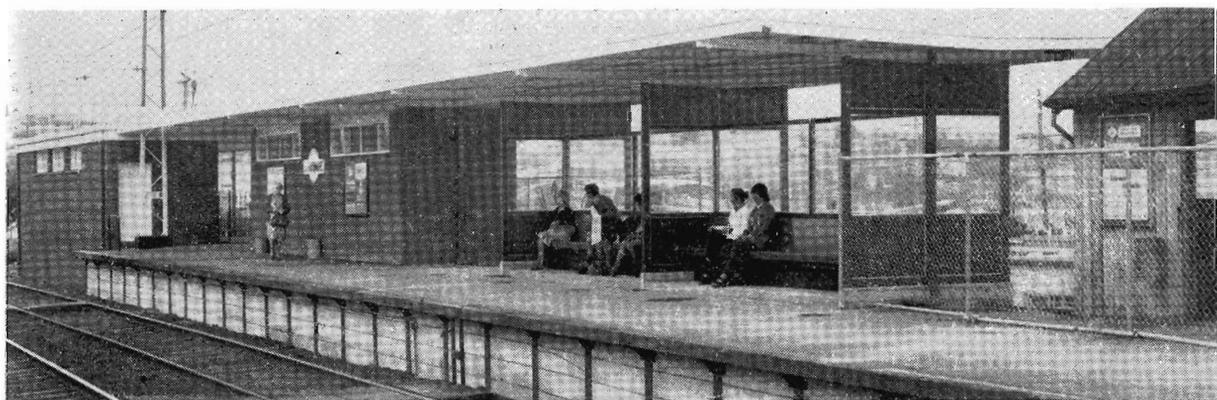


NEW STATION. At a cost of about \$40,000, new station facilities on the to-Melbourne platform at Strathmore were completed in December. Just to the right of the new building is portion of the old facilities.



TWO INTO ONE. No.1 Platform at Spence Street, built during the 1961-63 station rebuild, regularly accommodates two trains. Each afternoon, the 5 p.m. and 5.10 p.m. South Geelong commuter trains dock one behind the other in the 1,350 ft. long platform.





NEW STYLE BOOMS. The recently installed boom barriers at Clayton Road, Clayton, are the first in Victoria to have normal traffic light signals instead of large flashing red lights. The traffic lights normally control traffic at the intersection at the crossing, but when a train approaches, go to red for traffic crossing the lines, and the booms lower. Turning traffic then has the green light.

FOURTH FORTY. A relatively new appearance throughout the V.R. network are high speed points through which trains are allowed 40 m.p.h. instead of the more usual 25 m.p.h. To indicate to drivers the higher diverging speed, special speed indicators have been mounted beside the signals. Photographed is the installation at Box Hill. Other applications of these speed signals are at Altona Junction, Newport South Junction, and Werribee.

METRICATION — AND EVERYDAY ITEMS

Much of the worry about the change to metrics is about how we will fare with shopping and other everyday items. But what most people fail to realise is how little actual measuring is done by the average person or how often the units are implied rather than stated.

When most of us go shopping, we ask for, say, a pound of butter—but how many of us ever check its weight? We know that our interests are protected by Government regulations or the law.

And generally speaking, we know, by sight, how big a pound of butter looks. With metrics, we will ask for (and get) 500 grams of butter—a fraction more than the present pound. But to our eyes, the size of the butter pack should still be the same.

Take milk for an example—we

nunciation *kill'o'meeter*, symbol km) per hour. Thus, when we talk of “doing 60”, we will get used to “doing 96”, and Melbourne to Geelong by train or car will still take the same time.

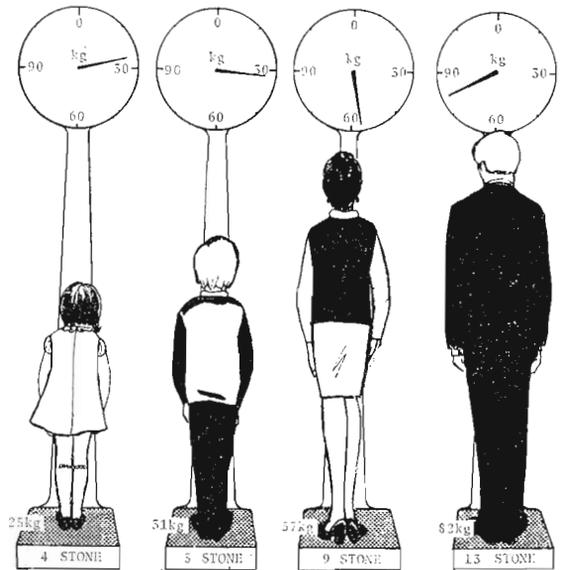
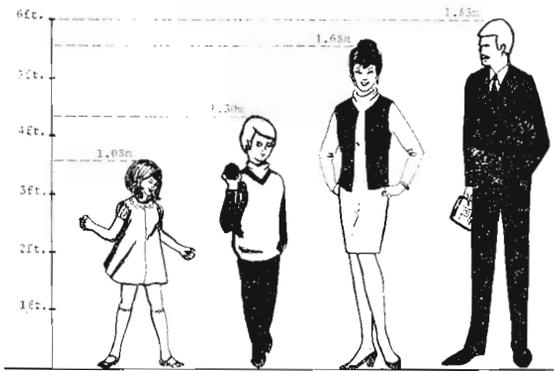
A nip of whisky will measure 30 ml (millilitres) and a half nip 15 ml instead of 1 oz. and $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., but to customers it will still be a half scotch, scotch or double scotch.

In sports, most of us know the terms, 1,500 metres, 100 metres and

One of the more readily convertible areas of sport is horse racing where the familiar five furlong sprint races are so close to a kilometre as to be able to ignore the difference.

Weights for the horses will eventually be shown in kilograms and weights like 8 stone 5 lb. will be shown as 53 kg. Some racing clubs are already showing dual weights in their racebooks.

Babies, too, will be announced as



know that it comes in pint and half-pint bottles, but without a milk bottle, how many of us could measure out a pint?

Petrol is another example. Under metrics, we will measure petrol by the litre (pronounced *leet'er*, symbol l) instead of the gallon, but few of us these days ask for a specific gallonage, it is the more usual “two dollars worth” or “fill ‘er up”. And it will be just the same when the register shows litres instead of gallons.

The more you think about it, the more you will agree that our present shopping requirements are bought more by sight than by actual weight.

One area where measurements are carefully taken and understood by the masses is with the feminine figure. The present ideal 36–24–36 will become, in centimetres (symbol cm), 90–60–90, itself a combination of curvaceous digits.

For motorists, speed limits will be expressed in kilometres (correct pro-

so on. How many athletic events are held over yard or mile courses these days?

“a 3.6 kg girl” (8 lb.) or whatever, but to the overjoyed parents it will still be beautiful.

Later this year the branches will start their own programme of educating staff in the metric system as it will affect railway operations. If you have any queries about the conversion, terms, etc., address them to the Chairman, Metric Conversion Committee, Room 205, Head Office. The more interesting queries will be included in a question and answer series in future *News Letters*.

In a very short time, these different sizes or numbers will become familiar, just as we quickly became accustomed to dollars and cents, and precise definitions will not be important in everyday life.

In this way the change should present few problems as we quickly become used to buying goods and services expressed in metric quantities with little conscious effort other than choosing the size that suits us best from those available.

NEXT MONTH. Common units and their metric equivalents.

MISLEADING REPORT

Last month, newspapers featured reports from a Coroner's Inquest into the death of a small boy who choked on a piece of apple.

The newspaper reports centred on a delay at the Hughesdale railway gates. Quotes like "The boy's mother pleaded with the gate operator to open the gates and let them through before the city bound train which was stopped at the station. But the operator waved the city bound train through . . ." (*The Age*) and "I ran over to the operator and begged him to open the gates. I don't think he realised the urgency of situation . . ." (*The Herald*) although reported factually from the inquest, are misleading because of the fact that the operator was not called to give evidence and the statements were from the justifiably highly emotionally involved parents.

News Letter feels that the gatekeeper's version of the incident has to be published because many people may conclude from the one-sided report that the gatekeeper was in some way to blame for the child's death.

The Poath Road crossing is approximately 40 yards from the Melbourne-end of Hughesdale station. The four gates are opened individually by a gatekeeper who controls a signal about 10 yards from the platform.

Gatekeeper Charles Cleary gave his version of the incident as:

He was standing near the cabin with all gates across the roadway when a woman came running across the road toward him shouting for him to open the gates as her child was choking. At the same time, the four carriage train which had been standing at the platform whistled and started moving.

He told the woman that as the train was coming she should get back into the car and be ready to move when he opened the gates. Instead of returning to her car, she tried to release the holding pins of the gates.

He stopped her from opening the gates into the path of the moving train, again told her to return to her car and signalled the train driver to hurry.

As soon as the train passed, he swung open the two gates immediately in front of the women's car and let it through.

Later in the newspaper reports, it is stated that when the parents reached the doctor's clinic no one was there and they had to go to another clinic.

News Letter regards it as significant that the Coroner neither criticised nor asked the gatekeeper to appear.

While *News Letter* sympathises with the parents in their loss and can understand their actions at the time, for a newspaper to make the delay at the gates the central theme of their report when there was another vital factor which contributed a much longer delay, is not, we believe, fair reporting.

WORTH QUOTING

" . . . The Board itself says that 40,000 people would have to be moved if adequate freeway access to the present central city were to be maintained . . . "

—*The Australian*, Dec. 10, discussing the new M. & M.B.W. master plan.

" . . . 'All-day parking structures in the city banished extremely valuable land from potential development', the Town and Country Planning Association said yesterday.

"Park-and-ride areas would save Melbourne's central area from the insanity of motor mesmerism.

"They would prevent Melbourne from being decimated by off-street car parking.

"And they would save it from a fall in property values which would follow the hopeless congestion caused by the unbridled motor traffic . . . "

—*The Sun*, Dec. 9

" . . . As Melbourne becomes larger and wealthier, it becomes harder and harder to move around, and on present trends, despite the transportation plan, it's going to go on getting worse.

"Is it true that large wealthy cities can't afford good transportation ?

"Of course it isn't, but it is true that until people are prepared to pay for them, governments won't build them.

"Public transport can and should be improved to give high quality service to high density parts of the city, and to provide a reasonable service to the rest of the area.

"We must remember that about 50 per cent of the population will be too poor, too old, too young or too sick to have a driver's licence.

"Public transport is a social service, and should be largely financed from general tax revenue, or if that is not forthcoming, from an increase in property rates, which we should press for.

"Whether we know it or not—and most motorists don't—it costs private owners an average of \$900 a year for every car on the road, large and small, old and new . . . "

—*John Loder*, consulting engineer and planner, *The Herald*, December 2.

EXPENSIVE JOURNEY

Two young Melbourne men were fined a total of \$247 by Bendigo Magistrates' Court recently after a vandalistic spree on a Melbourne-Bendigo train.

Incidents started at Riddell when the two youths hurled a loaded shopping jeep from the moving train. After the train's conductor spoke to them, they smashed two windows. Police were called to meet the train at Woodend, but the youths eluded them and hitch-hiked to Harcourt, causing more damage on the way.

The magistrate ordered one youth to pay \$47 compensation and fined him \$50 on each of three counts concerning damage on the train, while his companion was fined \$50 for aiding and abetting in the shopping jeep incident.

There were further fines for the other damage.

\$30 FINE FOR 40 YARDS

A Wendouree man who drove over the Bungaree level crossing with a train only 40 yards away, was fined \$30 by Bungaree Magistrates' Court, *Ballarat Courier* reported.

WHEN WE RODE THE RAILS

The State Library of Victoria is preparing to take people on "a nostalgic train ride back to yesterday" through manuscripts, early photographs, posters and historic railway exhibits from the La Trobe Collection.

The La Trobe section of the Library houses *Australiana* and contains a rich and varied amount of railway material dating from the time the Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Company ran the first train in Australia up to the 1920's and 30's when Harold Clapp was launching his Eat More Fruit campaign.

The diaries, memos, wages sheets and papers of early rail men will be on show along with models of early trains and "things rail men left behind."

Introducing the photographs of some early spectacular railway accidents is this little piece of doggerel:

A haughty young dame named Maud Mary Mack

Tried to alight next the opposite track,

The train being crowded the guard could not see

Now Maud's got a tombstone to her memory.

(Vic Rly. Magazine, 1924)

It is an exhibition that should please everyone from children to travellers, rail men and rail fans.

The exhibition will be open from March 3—May 12.

WATCH OUT FOR TRAINS— AND PLANES

Tasmania's Wynyard airport is one of the few locations in the world where a railway crosses an airport runway; the others known to *News Letter* are at Ballykelly in Ireland (near Londonderry), and at Kansas, USA.

Specially posed for posterity by the Department of Civil Aviation was the confrontation at Wynyard (below).

A hot line between the airport control tower and the Wynyard stationmaster's office ensures absolute safety at the crossing.

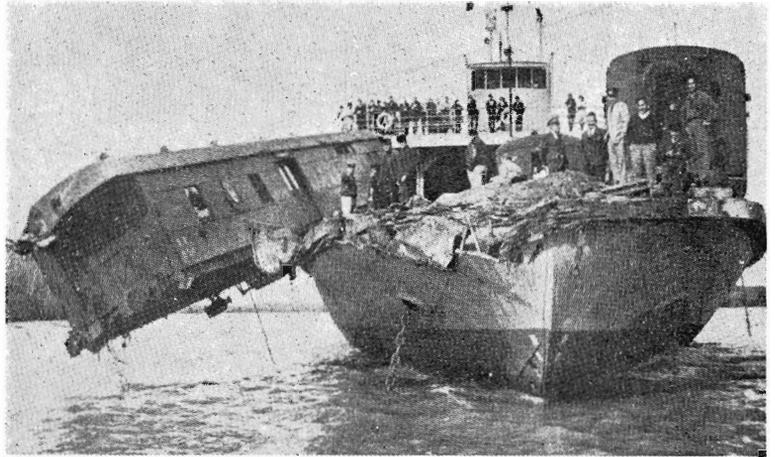
When clearance is to be given to an aircraft to use the runway, a common switch locks the railway signals on either side of the runway at stop. They can only be unlocked by both the airport flight service officer and the railway stationmaster pressing a release button.

On one occasion though, the DCA man forgot to operate his release after the runway had been used. A train patiently waited 20 minutes before the *all clear* was given.

The gravel runway, 05/23 to be exact, is generally used only by light aircraft in strong cross winds.

- At Sydney airport, the freight-only branch line to Botany crossed the end of a runway until deviated shortly after World War II to give QANTAS room to expand. Shortly after the war, however, a plane taking off collided with a freight train. There were no injuries. The cause was pinpointed as a failure of the signalling system which should have prevented a train crossing the runway at the time. Although the necessary switches had been operated, the signals had remained clear for trains.

WHO HAD THE STAFF?



About 900 people escaped after two General Urquiza Railway express trains collided in Argentina. The two trains met in the mid-stream of the River Parana, when ferries taking them across the river collided in

thick fog. Several carriages were derailed and a mail van was left precariously balanced over the ship's side.

—*Railway Gazette International*

THE PROBLEMS OF RUNNING A RAILWAY

The Indian Railways magazine reports that: "Train services on the Eastern Railway's Sealdah division were suspended for two days last December until assurances were given that armed escorts would be provided on all Bongaon locals and that effective steps would be taken to curb the activities of rice smugglers".

The assistance of commuters and various passenger associations was sought in maintaining the services.

Vandals too, have scored recent victories over the Indian Railways.

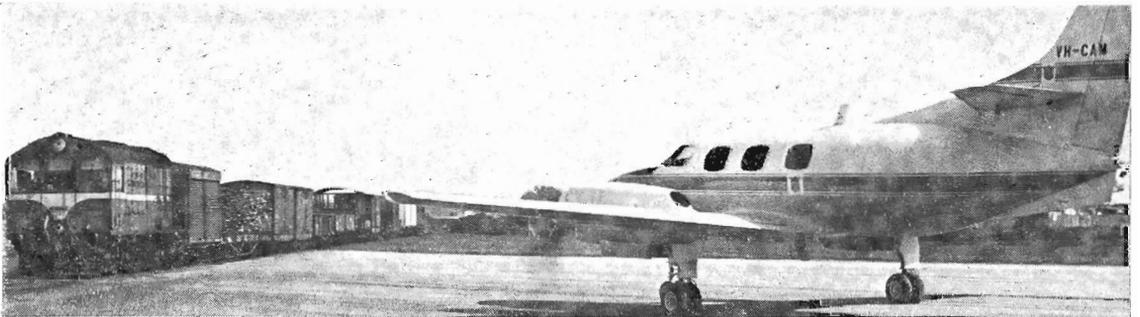
- Alarm chains in metropolitan trains on the Howrah and Sealdah (again) divisions have been removed from all but ladies compartments. The decision was taken to improve train punctuality.

- Multiple-unit trains running on the Howrah division are having

cushioned seats replaced with solid non-cushion seats following repeated thefts of foam rubber padding and their coir replacements. The magazine continued: "It is impossible to maintain the seats by the process of normal replacements and most of the first-class compartments are at present running without seats of any kind. The Railways thought it best to provide some sort of seats rather than have none. Accordingly, ordinary seats are being provided in first-class compartments".

METROLINER ANGER

Incensed by a recent attempt to derail one of the *Metroliners*, the New York-Washington high-speed trains, angry rail men, frustrated by hundreds of vandal acts against trains, asked whether train crews should carry weapons, reports *Railway Age*.



Apparently vying for right-of-way, a Tasmanian freight train crosses the path of DCA's Swearingen Merlin 111. The inevitable did not occur—the incident was posed for *DCA News*.

AIR-CONDITIONED STATION

America's first air-conditioned subway station—the \$US30 million PATH terminal in Manhattan—opened last July.

The station, 60 ft. below street level and within the foundations of the new World Trade Centre, handles an estimated 85,000 passengers daily. It has 40 exact-change turnstiles and change-giving machines.

—*Railway Age*

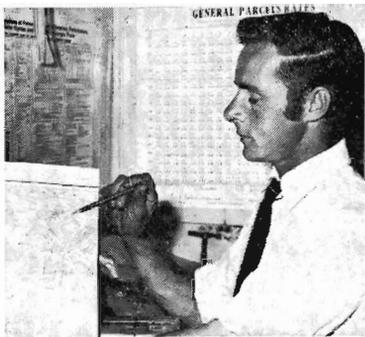
AUTOMATIC P.A.

British Rail's intercity trains are being fitted with a fully automatic public address system. Pre-recorded messages are broadcast automatically once the train passes preselected locations along the route.

The equipment is triggered off by the actual distance travelled. Seventy sets have been ordered for initial trials.

AMONG OURSELVES

Life saver (twice)



Mr. Bronstein points out on a chart where the more recent rescue was made.

A leisurely fishing trip for Toora's Assistant Stationmaster, Harry Bronstein, turned into a life saving venture for four fishermen off Port Welshpool in mid-January.

It was only by chance that Harry was in the area, as some fishermen on his boat wanted to see the passage between Snake and Little Snake Islands. When spotted by

Harry, the party of fishermen were clinging to their overturned boat about one mile off shore. They had been in the water for about two hours.

The water at the time was choppy and the fishermen were suffering the effects of immersion and the cold when Harry took them aboard his home-built 17-footer. He righted their boat and towed it the two miles into Port Welshpool.

"They were lucky that they were inside the heads," said Harry, "because during summer there are sharks galore in the area. I had seen sharks that morning."

Harry's other rescue was off Port Albert last December. Returning from another fishing jaunt he came across a boat with a broken-down motor. "There was a chap trying to row it back to shore but he was getting nowhere, so I towed him in," Harry added.

Always keen on fishing, Harry really came to grips with the baited hook during his latter railway career which has been at Welshpool and Toora.

"During the hotter months, the fishing in this district must be amongst the best in Australia," he enthused.

And what has he caught to back up that claim? "Only recently I caught 2 14-lb snapper, a 23-lb gummy shark and a 60-lb snapper shark. And the big ones have included a 50-lb gummy shark—which is much bigger than normal."

Evolution & revolution

During Rolling Stock Branch Engineer Gordon Croft's 47 years with the V.R. he has seen both evolution and revolution.

Starting as an apprentice car and wagon builder at Ballarat Workshops, he quickly transferred to Newport Workshops.

At this time (1925) there were still two tradesmen who had been with the V.R. since Newport Workshops were opened in 1889.

These two fine artisans always wore an apron, never an overall. To and from work, one wore a boxer hat and the other, a bell topper.

Gordon was engaged on the building of the petrol-electric (later diesel-electric) rail motors, which were the first lightweight steel cars built in Australia.

At the completion of the 10 rail motors, the depression caught up with Australia, and Gordon found



Mr. Croft

himself regressed to a painter's labourer. Once the monetary troubles eased, he was returned to tradesman grade and started working on the *Spirit of Progress* project which brought a new standard of rail comfort to the Southern Hemisphere.

A model of a compartment, air-conditioning unit and toilet was built and displayed throughout Melbourne. Air-conditioning experts from England instructed the V.R. staff on its working.

When the project was finished, Gordon was one of the hundreds of tradesmen who rode the new train to Geelong and back. "We were all so proud of the train then, woe betide anyone who attempted to vandalise it," he recalled.

With the S.O.P. project over, Gordon moved into the Drawing Office where he worked on inspection of maintenance vehicles, trucks and buses, helped design buffet cars, AZ and BZ saloon carriages, the VAM carriage for the Canberra service, and planned the conversion of the VAC carriage, and the use of liquefied petroleum gas for rolling stock.

Casterton

Casterton's stationmaster, Mr. Laurie Nelson, is well known throughout the town—not only from his railway activities but because he is a member of the Casterton Vice Regal Band.

How does Casterton rate a vice-regal band? "In 1918, the then Governor of Victoria, Sir Arthur Stanley, heard the band play at Merino and was so impressed that he bestowed his patronage," Laurie recalled. He is the librarian for the band and also a b-flat bass player.

The Casterton Vice Regal Band have an impressive record—they won South Street C grade, in 1965, and many local competitions.

As far as the railways are concerned, Casterton is suffering as a result of the rural crises. "When I came to Casterton in 1968, Laurie continued, it was the middle of the drought, and even today, some of the hills are still bare and have not picked up since then. Now the district is hit with the slump in wool prices; many of the town's businesses have reduced staff, and a few small businesses have closed altogether. Several of the displaced workers have left the district, and the only industry here is to close."

But Casterton's future is not entirely bleak. "We hope to get a new



Mr. Nelson

industry soon, and this could ease the unemployment factor," he said.

Indicating the severity of the slump, he said that superphosphate railings had been halved.

Laurie has worked at Winchelsea, Lubeck, Merino and Nathalia. He joined the V.R. as an apprentice fitter but transferred to the Traffic Branch as a lad porter at Moe eight months later.

Rural slump

Coleraine is a town hit badly by the rural slump; particularly the decline in wool prices.



Mr. Craig

Although Stationmaster Jack Craig has only been at Coleraine since April 1970, the town has shown effects of the crisis in that short space of time.

Recently, sand traffic—about 800 tons a month—to Portland and Warrnambool ceased, and superphosphate and wool railings halved because of the reduction of sheep numbers in the district as many local graziers move into cattle.

Coleraine once had three bakers," said Jack, today it has none. One of its hotels closed over three years ago and one of the town's largest stores is about to close. Employment is at a low level throughout the district."

Jack controls the 24-mile branch from Hamilton and the three intermediate stations, Bochara, Wannoo and Parkwood, all of which are unattended.

Joining the V.R. in 1944 as a lad porter, Jack left four years later. In 1951 he rejoined, this time as a lampman in Melbourne Yard. He went back onto the stations and has worked at Bena, Traralgon, Mooroolbark and Devenish.

He is helped at Coleraine by Shedman Bill Barker. Bill has lived in Coleraine all his life and his family was, at one stage, one of the three bakers in the town. A good local cricketer in past years, he has been with the V.R. for 17 years.

South African experiences

As rail fans keep up the search for steam locomotives, one V.R. man

has just returned from 34 days of pursuing steam locomotives in South Africa—Train Controller Bob Whitehead.



Mr. Whitehead

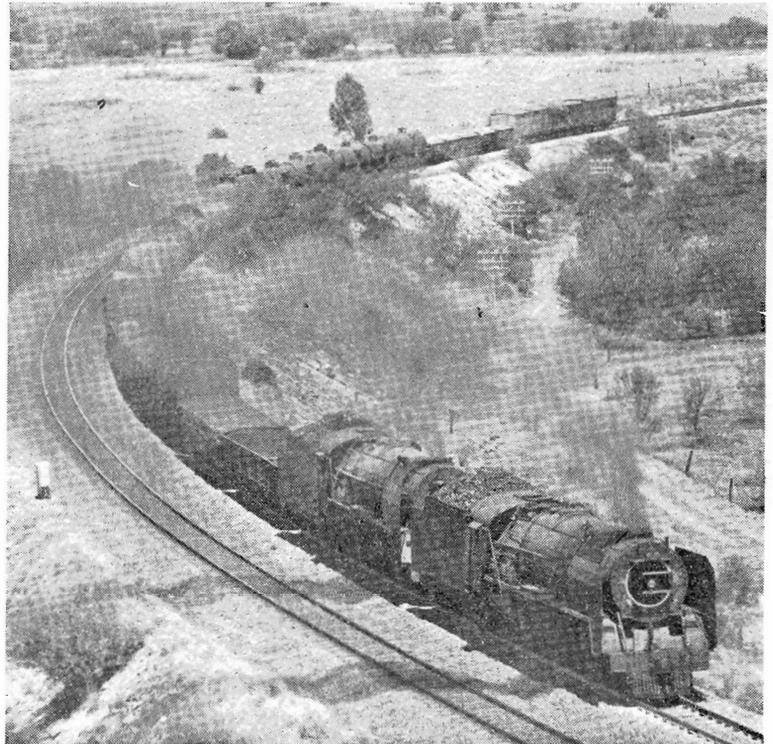
"I was really impressed with the way they run

As leader of a party of 14 Australian Railway Historical Society members, Bob travelled 4,600 miles by train throughout South Africa and Rhodesia.

their trains," he said. "At one station, our train stopped for 25 minutes for van goods, and four freight trains went past in the other direction. The Government there is much more responsive to railways than ours.

"The apartheid situation—they prefer *separate development*—is evident even on the railways. Most stations have duplicate facilities—one for whites, one for non-whites. Toilets, waiting rooms, footbridges, ticket offices, and, at one station, even separate parcels offices are provided.

"In Capetown, there are some suburban lines that are for non-whites only.



One of the more spectacular South African locomotives are the 25-class 4-8-4's which have nearly the same tractive effort as our S-class. Pictured is a pair of the second largest locomotives—the 15-class. At this location, near Karee Kopje (Karee Hill), the party photographed 18 steam hauled trains in six hours.

RETIREMENTS

ACCOUNTANCY BRANCH

Wilson, C. K., Head Office, 7/1

REFRESHMENT SERVICES BRANCH

Bartlett, (Mrs.) I., Geelong, 2/12
Hyland, T., Central Store, 7/1
Kelly, (Miss) D., Korumburra, 10/1
McArthur, (Miss) W., Flinders Street, 7/1
Surman, (Mrs.) M., Dining Car Depot 1/12
Williamson, F. M., Bookstalls, 21/2

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Ashton, G. R., North Melbourne, 21/3
Bartling, L. W., E.R.D., 30/11
Cardamone, G., Shelter Shed, 23/3

Creefman, A.S.E.A., Bacchus Marsh, 1/12

Dimoff, C. I., Shelter Shed, 14/3
Edrich, A. G., Jolimont, 6/12
Edwards, L., North Melbourne, 17/3
Hanlon, J. W., E.R.D., 25/11
Iacobucci, G., North Melbourne, 2/3
Johnson, G. F., Maryborough, 9/12
Lloyd, E. S., Newport, 4/1
Marlow, I., Newport, 17/12
Symons, J. H., Newport, 4/3
Trehwitt, F. A., Jolimont, 8/3

STORES BRANCH

Houston, M., Printing Works, 10/12
White, J. W., Newport Workshops, 13/12
Wall, H. J., Newport Store, 15/12

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Campbell, A., Melbourne Goods, 2/3
Flynn, F. J., Benalla, 28/3
Fraser, A. E., Lalor, 10/1

"They are experiencing an acute shortage of skilled labour for their train running divisions and many white clerical workers double up after office hours on the footplate of locomotives throughout the country. Many crews are working straight shifts of 12 hours."

Bob and his party were mainly interested in the railway side of the country and were most impressed by the 25-class steam locos. "Around Kimberley, which is desert country," he said, "they have a condensing version which can run 400 miles without taking water. The engine condenses the steam after it has been through the cylinders then re-cycles it back into the tender for use again."

Highlights of the trip were Victoria Falls, a visit to a second-hand locomotive dealer and a trip along a 2 ft. gauge railway which, in its 70 miles, has eight reverses and zig zags.

Bob has been with the V.R. for 22 years and was an R.S.M. before joining the train control staff 12 years ago.

Wealth of steam

Wanderlust has again struck the V.R.'s globetrotting railway enthusiast Graham Evans. Following two



Mr. Evans

"Indonesia is the nearest place to Australia with a large fleet of well kept steam locomotives," Graham put forward as his reason for going to Indonesia.

"The variety of steam locomotives is enormous," he continued, "there are 77 classes—27 built before the turn of the century—and 27 different wheel arrangements.

"The oldest locomotive dates back to 1878, and there are 0-4-0 tender locomotives, all the normal types, and 2-8-8-0 mallet compounds and 2-12-2 tank engines. The main gauge is 3 ft. 6 in. and there are pockets of rack working—one area has 0-10-0 rack engines. Feeder lines in some areas are 2 ft. 5½ in. and 1 ft. 11½ in. gauges."

Graham's planned tours are specifically designed for the rail fan, although some days will be taken up with more normal tourist pursuits,

trips to England—one overland from India and the other by train through Siberia (see *News Letter*, March 1970, p. 54)—Graham is organising two tours for rail fans on behalf of the Association of Railway Enthusiasts, to Indonesia.

such as *Bintang Baru*, the local beer.

"A true tourist would find some of the areas that we plan to visit, like West Sumatra, a little primitive—in fact, in some areas, we will most likely be the first tourist party," he enthused.

The two trips leave Melbourne on August 6 and 13. The former trip includes visits to southern Thailand, Malaya and Singapore, and, taking four weeks, costs \$788; the latter, of three weeks duration, covers Indonesia for \$698. Both prices cover all accommodation, breakfasts, and most travel.

If there are any intrepid rail fan railwaymen who would like to join Graham in darkest Sumatra, he can be contacted on auto. 2179.

Institute News

To the railway staff at Bairnsdale, November was probably a memorable month as a mini-cyclone swept through a portion of the railway area, and in the process a driver's caravan was considerably damaged.

However, the main sufferer of the occurrence appears to be the portables owned by the V.R.I. Bairnsdale Provisional Committee.

Institutewise, Bairnsdale has been a subject of conjecture for the V.R.I. Council, because, within the last 10 years Institute activities there were fairly strong, and at one stage appeared certain to form an Institute Centre.

The strong ladies committee had banked quite a substantial sum of money and the Bairnsdale Institute people had occupancy of railway land for tennis courts. A portable was purchased, transported from Sale and erected on what appeared to be a very suitable site, but then interest appeared to lapse.

During the storm the Institute portables were virtually reduced to firewood, and the V.R.I. Council are now wondering whether Bairnsdale people still want an Institute.

A meeting of all interested Institute members will be held at the Bairnsdale C.W.A. Hall (adjacent to the station) on Wednesday, March 15, at 7.30 p.m., and an administrative officer will attend and endeavour to gauge the feelings of local members.

RETIREMENTS (continued)

Gormly, W., Wangaratta, 13/3
Harding, J. H. I., Doon, 29/3
Liistro, G., Melbourne Goods, 17/3
Mulligan, J. M., Melbourne Goods, 10/12
O'Neil, M. J., Ararat, 11/3
Patterson, (Mrs.) E. J., North Shore, 31/12
Popieluch, T., Melbourne Goods, 14/3
Ramage, F. B., Dimboola, 10/3
Spinello, A., Melbourne Goods, 16/12
Swift, J. W., Carrum, 24/12
Walsh, W., Spencer Street, 8/12
Weisheit, W. R., Head Office, 15/1

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Aparo, S., Metro. Dist. Engr., 25/3
Burns, R. C., Bunyip, 26/11
Care, P., Spotswood Workshops, 6/3
Carnell, S. E., Warrnambool, 29/3
Clarke, W. T., Kilmore East (10), 31/12
Cleary, C. J., Hughesdale, 29/3
Gagliardi, A., East Melbourne, 22/3
Grace, R. W., Euroa, 9/12
Gregory, C. R., Rutherglen, 22/3
Gregory, G. H., Bendigo S & C, 22/3
Harwood, J. T., Tarnagulla, 29/3
Hill, H. B., Seymour, 14/1
Hirst, R. E., Caulfield, 24/12
Irvine, V., Head Office, 15/12
Johnson, G., Northcote, 21/12
Montilla, G., Newport, 20/1
McDonald, R., Henty, 31/12
Phillips, L. E., Korumburra, 4/3
Rice, K. P., Murchison, 20/1
Spalding, A., Geelong, 15/12

Tooley, R. H., East Melbourne, 22/12
Turner, H. B., Seymour, 30/11
Wild, H. C., Plan Room, Head Office, 24/3
Willison, R. A., Spencer Street, 25/3
Winiacki, J., Seymour, 1/12

NEWS LETTER REGRETS TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING DEATHS

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING BRANCH

Smerda, A., Head Office, 29/5/71

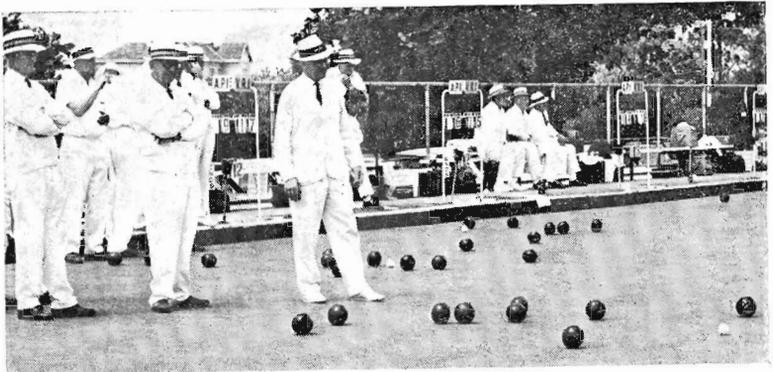
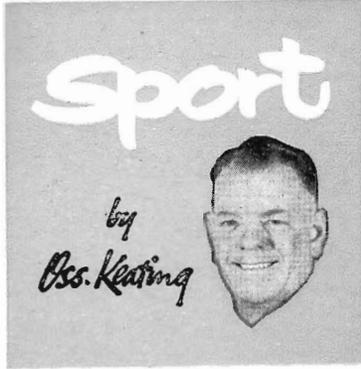
TRAFFIC BRANCH

Black, H. J., Flinders St., 26/12
Callinan, S., Ballarat Goods, 25/12
Pearce, D. G., Lindenow, 19/12
Roberts, H. J., Melbourne Gds. 16/12

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Aitken, L. J., Hamilton, 16/1
Brown, R., Kerang, 24/12
Dowsett, A. V., East Melbourne, 12/12

All railway staff located at and near Bairnsdale who favour the idea of a place for social activities, are urged to attend the meeting and express their wishes.



Having a good look at the head prior to the skips playing the last bowls for this end are V.R.I.'s (multi-banded hats) Jack Brown (rear) and Henry Boyle.

come to our guests, the Australian Postal Institute and representatives from the bowling club.

both the perpetual and individual trophies from a Hamilton four, skipped by Arch McBain, also a ganger, at Cavendish.

Bowls—V.R.I. v A.P.I.

The sixth annual bowls match between the two Institutes was played on the Footscray City Bowling Club's green, on January 23. Although the day was fine, a strong gusty wind tested the players' skill and light showers during the night made the green a little on the heavy side.

After six ends of the morning game we led 39 to 30. By the time all rinks had played 12 ends, we had jumped to a 32 shot lead, with V.R.I. 86, A.P.I. 54. Over the final six ends, the Postmen gradually pegged us back, but could not quite bridge the gap.

We won the morning session 118 to 101. At the official luncheon, our General President, Mr. R. M. Wright, extended a very sincere wel-

Although in front, we were a little worried at the start of the afternoon game, as in the previous two years, we had come from behind after having, as one visitor so aptly put it, partaken of suitable engine requirements, to take off the trophy. The "posties" had sounded a warning over the concluding stages of the morning game and we realised that the slightest relaxation on our behalf could cost us the match. After the first six ends we led by 11 shots, but by the time the 12 end mark was reached we were only 7 shots up with a close finish looming. However, we ran true to form and over the last few ends ran away from our opponents to win the afternoon game 134 to 108, and the match with a total of 252 to A.P.I.'s 209, a 43 shot margin. At the conclusion of play, Gordon Tiller, captain of the A.P.I. team presented the Perpetual Trophy to Alan Cowling, our captain, to hold for a further 12 months. This is our third successive victory in this particular sport and the first of the perpetual trophies competed for during 1972 is back in the V.R.I. trophy case. My sincere thanks to Alan Cowling and Kevin Bryce for the assistance and co-operation in the organising of this day, and in helping to make it such an enjoyable fixture.

Wimmera Bowls Tournament

The 1972 Wimmera Bowls Tournament was conducted by the Ararat Institute at both the Ararat V.R.I. Bowling Club and the Ararat City Bowling Club. Altogether a total of twenty teams competed, including rinks representing the Commissioners and Central Council. As is usual at this fixture, the organisation was excellent, the conditions, including the weather, first-class, and the hospitality terrific. A home team skipped by Harry Jolly, a ganger at Ararat, won

Golf

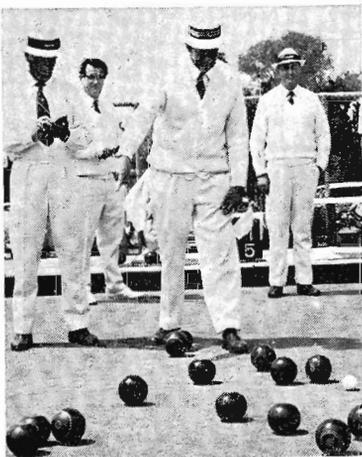
Railway golfers are reminded that the fourth Annual Hamilton V.R.I. Golf Tournament will be played at the Hamilton Golf Course on March 5. The Hamilton Club has, of course, watered fairways and excellent grass greens. The programme includes the Hamilton and District Championship (for the V.R.I. Perpetual Trophy) A, B and C grade scratch and handicap events. There is also A and B grade scratch and handicap events for ladies. Nominations close with the Hon. Secretary of the Hamilton V.R.I. Golf Club, Peter Moore, C/- Station master's Office, Hamilton, on February 27. An entry fee of \$3 includes green fees and an evening meal in the clubhouse at the conclusion of play. It is to be hoped that this fixture will be well supported as Hamilton has decided to stage this tournament earlier this year so as to avoid clashing with other tournaments later in the season.

RUNNING LATE

Apologies are extended to all because of the lateness of this issue of *News Letter*.

The S.E.C. dispute and consequent power restrictions which lasted for 14 days delayed setting and printing and disrupted all printing schedules.

—Editor.



V.R.I. player Keith Pope (front), indicates to his skip that V.R.I. were one down. Postal officials and players, and V.R.I.'s Neil Kennedy (hatless) watch the result of the end.

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

NEWS LETTER

MARCH

VR

1972

10 CENTS



FIRST PHOTOS OF MELBOURNE'S NEW TRAINS

RAILWAYS ASSIST TO RELIEVE UNEMPLOYMENT

Currently, 90 men are being employed by the V.R. under the terms of the rural employment scheme recently set up and administered by the State Treasury with Commonwealth funds.

This scheme—which has brought jobs to more than 1,000 of the State's hard hit and rural jobless—is producing for the Railways (and other participants) a valuable, albeit small, improvement to facilities.

Controlled by the Co-ordinator of Works under direction from the Treasurer, a steering committee of seven Departments, including the Railways, draws up the detailed programmes for the schemes.

The steering committee also ensures that the work undertaken is of value to the community. To this end, those employed by the V.R. are engaged in a variety of projects including track relaying (augmenting existing gangs), bridge and culvert maintenance or replacement, and pole line renewals in addition to general minor works.

Each employment scheme lasts

for eight weeks and numbers of jobs are allocated by a formula based on the increase in the jobless that has occurred in each employment district over the past 12 months.

Incidentally, this additional employment is not being provided without cost to the Department, as the Commonwealth has applied an upper limit to the value of material that can be used for each man employed, and if the material costs exceed this amount—which is the case in the majority of tasks—then the Railways must bear the cost.

Given adequate funds, the V.R. is always ready to co-operate with schemes of this kind to provide additional employment.

There are many desirable projects within the railway structure which will bring worthwhile improvements to the system and long term benefits to all concerned through faster transport, smoother riding, better tracks and bridges and the like.

G. F. BROWN

LOOP BRINGS DEVELOPMENT

Twin 30-story office towers costing more than \$16 million are to be built in Melbourne's William Street, opposite the site of the proposed Flagstaff station on the underground loop, the *Financial Review* advises.

It is considered the first obvious attempt to cash in on the underground loop project which is now under way.

A Melbourne representative of the development corporation is reported as saying to the *Financial Review* that the decision to pioneer the northern end of William Street was basically because of the underground project.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Each passenger on *Southern Aurora* will receive free a baby bottle of bubbly to celebrate the famous train's 10th birthday when they join it at Spencer Street terminal on the evening of April 16.

The same day in 1962 saw the start of *Southern Aurora's* running and the beginning of the direct passenger services between Melbourne and Sydney by the new standard gauge line.

TEST TUNNEL

A pilot tunnel for the Melbourne Underground Rail Loop project is being driven 2,000 ft. under La Trobe Street to test earth conditions.

Running from the Spencer Street rail yards to William Street, site of Flagstaff station, the tunnel will be 9 ft. by 9 ft. and will vary in depth from 25 ft. at the Spencer Street end to about 90 ft. at William Street.

The pilot tunnel will later become part of one of the loop tunnels.

Eliminated was the unpopular "change trains at Albury" where the N.S.W. 4 ft. 8½ in. met Victoria's 5 ft. 3 in. railway.

On the same date, *Spirit of Progress* and *Intercapital Daylight*, took up direct running on the standard gauge line.

Until that day, *Intercapital Daylight* had been known as *The Daylight*.

For the three months preceding the start of passenger operations, freight trains had been consolidating the track for high speed running of the *straight-thru* (as the V.R. said then) passenger trains.

In its 10 years of service, *Southern Aurora* has averaged an occupancy rate of about 80 per cent.

The Railway Construction Board will carry out the work for MURLA.

Costing \$275,000, tunnelling should take about six months.

TRANSPORT COMMISSION FOR NSW

A single transport authority—the Public Transport Commission of N.S.W.—will be established later this year to take over the activities of the departments of Railways, Government Transport (buses) and the Sydney Harbour Transport Board.

Administered by a chief commissioner and two part time commissioners, the Commission will set about modernising and co-ordinating bus, rail and Sydney ferry services.

When announcing details of the Commission, the N.S.W. Premier, Sir Robert Askin, said: "It is vital that the State be provided with a clear transport development goal, particularly for Sydney where there will be a population of five million within 30 years.

"In the metropolitan areas we must avoid at all costs the mistakes of many cities overseas which are approaching environmental ruin because of traffic chaos.

"We must provide a balanced transport system where public transport and private and commercial vehicles complement rather than compete with one another."

"NEWS LETTER" GETS AROUND

For a house journal/staff magazine, our monthly 16-page *News Letter* really makes its presence felt.

As well as being made available to all V.R. staff—25,000 of them—it is also sent to all members of Victorian Parliament, the Senate and the House of Representatives.

By request, it reaches a further: 500 paid subscribers; 600 retired railwaymen; travel agents; over 100 newspapers and magazines throughout Victoria; all radio and T.V. stations in Victoria; many Government departments and municipal authorities; many schools and libraries, including the Australian National Library in Canberra; other railway systems throughout the world; Victorian Transport Regulation Board and their regional offices; many companies and clients; four embassies in overseas countries and their information services; and railway enthusiast organisations.

Judging by the number of quotes taken from *News Letter* by these readers recently, our magazine is being keenly read for the latest news on a wide range of railway happenings.

WORTH QUOTING

"Just how much care do people take at pedestrian crossings over railway lines?"

"The *Standard* visited the crossing in Station Street (Box Hill) three times in the past two weeks to see how many pedestrians obeyed the flashing red lights and the boom gates.

"Each time the boom gates were lowered and the red flashing lights and bell started, several people completely ignored them and walked across.

"Surprisingly, the offenders were not young people, but were mostly women—often with small children and even pushing prams . . ."

—*Whitehorse Standard*

RAILWAY EXHIBITION

Along with the special treat for *Southern Aurora* passengers on its 10th birthday, the V.R. will let its hair grow long and stage another exhibition—which on paper appears to eclipse the success of the previous one, October 1968.

Main theme of the exhibition—to be held between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. on April 15, 16—will be interstate trains—and representative carriages from the trains will be available for inspection.

There will be demonstrations of track machines, *open house* on steam, diesel and electric locomotives, and a selection of freight rolling stock. The V.R.'s fire attack wagon will show its capabilities in a joint display with the Country Fire Authority.

There'll be plenty of rides, too. Free rides will be given in the V.R.'s oldest carriages (a most popular feature of the last exhibition) and, at nominal cost, rides can be had in the most modern stock—the *Southern Aurora*, and the new Portland rail car to mystery destinations.

Amongst displays of interstate travel through the years, a fashion parade of *good travelling gear* will be held.

After the last exhibition, many letters of appreciation were received from people from all walks of life. Even *The Herald* advised us that it, too, had received many letters congratulating the V.R. on its efforts.

Held to co-incide with the running of the first electric train in Australia, the V.R. optimistically hoped for 20,000 visitors—despite inclement weather, more than 70,000 attended. Scenes of that exhibition were in November 1968 *News Letter*, p. 163.

SM ASSAULTED

A 19-year-old youth who "went berserk" when asked for his ticket and assaulted Broadmeadows stationmaster, Mr. M. Ryan, was recently fined \$20 or four days gaol by Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court.

An additional fine of \$10 or two days gaol was imposed for damage to railway property.

ROAD SCHEDULES SLATED

"It is a pity the person who gave the defendant his schedule is not standing beside him in the dock, said Judge Ross when a truck driver appeared before him last December in a N.S.W. country court.

"The driver has been found guilty of causing grievous bodily harm to three passengers in his truck, following a collision with another truck.

"Evidence was given of the speed the truck was travelling and that the driver had to keep a 'tight schedule'.

"Criticising transport executives who expect drivers to break the law to meet long-haul schedules, the judge said executives should be in the dock when their drivers were accused of traffic offences.

"His comment left no doubt that he considered them blameworthy, too.

"Thankfully, not all transport firms ask their drivers to move cargoes with one eye on the speedo and the other on the clock.

"Some have the wisdom—and conscience—to make regular checks on the state of roads, density of traffic and so on to ensure that their drivers are set fair schedules.

"But others—through ignorance of the mental and physical strain on a long-haul driver or from sheer money-grubbing knuckle-headedness—want their drivers to break every rule in the book, including common-sense.

—*Sunday Mirror*, Jan. 9, 1972.

"GO BY'S" GO

Victorian Railways' widely followed "go by train" advertising series has finished.

The last advertisement—the rather appropriate *coffins go by train*—appeared on March 1 and was the 276th advertisement in the series that began in November 1966, when it appeared solely in *The Age* finance section.

Four months later, the series was expanded to blanket the Melbourne daily papers on Wednesdays and the initial advertisement told how the *birds and bees* went by train.

It was never intended that the "go by's" would continue for so long

but public interest was considerable, and the recall quite amazing for an advertising campaign.

Many unusual items of freight were brought to light by railway staff in their search for material (see *News Letters*, July and August 1971, pp100—101, 116—117).

The series was not concluded from lack of subjects—five years was considered a long enough run. A new chatty type series under consideration for the previous two years has replaced the "go by's".

It is expected that an occasional "go by" will be used, however, from time to time, when appropriate.

The Railways had received a number of letters from people and industries whose business had increased because their unusual or little known freight had appeared in the "go by train" advertisements.

One even recorded sales up by 60 per cent; as the people concerned use rail, the V.R.'s business in their commodity also increased by a similar amount.

TRAM-RAIL TICKETS

Following the success of combined train-bus tickets for some outer suburban bus routes, special combined train and city M.&M.T.B. tickets will be placed on trial at all stations on the Lilydale and Belgrave lines—the busiest in Melbourne.

On sale from April 9, the tickets give the usual availability of weekly tickets (unlimited travel between the stations named) plus 10 trips on M.&M.T.B. services within the city boundary.

If successful, they will be made available on other lines.

FRONT COVER

With the dawn of February 20 came a preview of Melbourne's new metropolitan stainless steel trains when the first carriage shell was delivered from Clyde-Master's factory and placed on to rails at Bayswater for transport to Martin & King's plant at Somerton for fitting out (see *centre pages*).

When the first of these trains enters service late this year, Melbourne's commuters will be treated to comfort-oriented metropolitan trains, with heaters, cooling and tinted windows—Australian firsts—and other features such as power closing doors.

Fifty 6-car trains are on order for delivery over the next ten years.

MAN'S BETTER NATURE

Ever since railways first invaded the domain of the restless Mallee sands, there has been a struggle between the two. But recent co-operation between the V.R. and Soil Conservation Authority into soil stabilisation seems certain to end the sand nuisance in Victoria's Mallee—at least as far as the railways are concerned.

Tales of Mallee dust storms are legend throughout Victoria and for years the Mallee sand has drifted across northern Victoria forming various-sized sand ridges—up to 30 ft. high in parts.

When railways came into the area, their cuttings, particularly, became an ideal resting place for the wandering sands.

In past years, the problem was tackled largely by teams of men who toiled in (usually) anything but pleasant conditions to shovel the sand off the line.

Another method of control was to erect wind chutes which limited the amount of sand blown on to the line. A drawback with these was, as the level of drift sand rose, they became less effective.

Wind chutes once extensively covered the Mallee but are being removed because of maintenance problems, because they did not attack the cause of the sand problems, and because a recently proved method of soil stabilisation promises to end the sand problem for the foreseeable future.

Success

For the last five years, two machines have been at work levelling

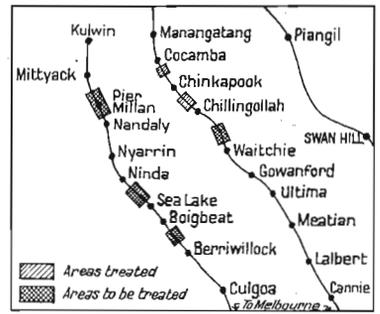
out the sand drifts, but as it was not coupled with any attempt to stabilise the sand, success has been minimal.



Despite a train the previous day and heavy overnight rain, the Mallee sand can quickly claim the railway area.

During the course of relaying the line from Ultima to Manangatang in 1969, widening the railway formation was part of the necessary work.

At 253m. 50ch., between Chinkapook and Cocamba, one particularly



bad ridge was 20 ft. high and eight chains long with sand spilling onto the rail on the west side.

Bendigo District Engineer, Mr. Alan Cane, conferred with the Soil Conservation Authority's Senior Conservation Officer, Mr. Tony Rae, and they worked out a course of action.

About 10,000 cubic yards of sand was scooped onto lower lying railway property, which reduced the height of the drift and widened the railway formation. The area was then sown with cereal rye.

This experiment was so successful that other locations between Chinkapook and Chillingollah were adapted into a joint V.R.—S.C.A. project entitled "Drift control and erosion prevention trial and demonstration area railway line protection—Chillingollah".

Despite the imposing title, the method was relatively simple. Land up wind (west side) of the line and into the adjoining landowners holding up to five chains from the railway was bulldozed level. Landholders were then to sow the areas with cereal rye, barley and lucerne, fence it, and carefully manage it to prevent erosion.

Mr. Rae said that the only restrictions placed on the landowners



Levelling the drifts is going on north of Sea Lake.



The effectiveness of wind chutes in limiting the drift accumulation on the rails is demonstrated near Pier Millan.

was that they were not to plough, fallow or burn off the treated areas without permission of the S.C.A., nor was the area to be overgrazed during times of drought.

Cost of the project is shared between the three participating parties.

Unveiled last year, the experimentally treated 96 acres along the 2½-3 miles of line has, to date, been an unqualified success in many ways—the erosion threat is removed; vermin, rabbit haunts and weed harbours are reduced; and valuable top soil which has accumulated in the drifts is returned to profitable use in the adjoining paddocks.

Trouble from sand is currently causing concern mainly on the Robinvale and Sea Lake lines and plans are underway for similar tactics to be used on troublesome drifts on

these lines, as marked on the map.

While the project will not stop the Mallee dust storms, it will see that the V.R.'s sand problem is curbed substantially.



One of the pilot stabilisation plots showing how the crops are planted right to the edge of the formation.

METRICATION—A CONVERSION TIME-TABLE

The next 12 months will see an increasing rate of change to the metric system of weights and measures in Australia.

The time-table is not firm and some variations from it must be expected, but generally we can assume that the variations will not be large.

The time-table shows two things of particular interest; one relating to marking contents of packaged goods, and the other to the transport industry.

The tentative programme for conversion revised to January 1971 is:

Aluminium fabrication	1973
Automotive industry	1972-1977
Baby foods	1972
Bread	early 1973
Building and construction	1974-1976
Clay bricks	now
Clothing	start 1974
Dairy products	1972-1974
Education:	
adult	1972 onwards
primary	1972-1973
secondary	1973-1974
tertiary (non university)	1972 onward
tertiary (university)	1972 onward
technical	1972 onward
Electronic and electrical engineering	1973-1976
Fasteners	1972-1974
Farm milk tanks (new installation)	1972
Gas industry	1973-1975
Household utensils	1973-1975
Iron and steel industry	1973 onward
Locomotive and rolling stock	75 per cent by 1978
Meat (wholesale)	progressively in 1972 starting 1973
" (retail)	
Meteorology:	
temperature, pressure	September 1, 1972
distance, windspeed, weather movement system	April 1, 1973
rainfall, snow depth, river height	January 1, 1974
Oil industry (petrol pumps, etc.)	1974-1976
Packaged goods:	
permissible sole metric	January 1972
sole imperial markings withdrawn	January 1974
progressive size rationalization	1972-1976
Paint industry	March 1974
Paper	July 1973
Pharmaceutical packaging	Early 1973
Printing	July 1974

Plastics and chemicals	1973
Rubber industry	Mid 1972
Ship building	1974-1975
Sporting bodies	progressively converting—complete 1973
Steel (beams, plate etc.)	1973
Storage	July 1973
Surveys	Mid 1972
Tariffs (solely metric)	June 1972
Textiles	starting late 1973
Tide tables & harbour navigation	converted Jan. 1972
Timber industry	1974-1975
Transport (freight rates, passengers, etc.)	July 1973
Vegetables, tobacco, sugar	1973
Water & sewerage (metric water meters)	July 1972
Water & sewerage (customer billing)	July 1973
Weighing machines	progressively now to 1974
Wheat, barley, rice and other coarse grains	1972-1973

Many everyday items have already settled their measures for the new metric system. Although it is unlikely that the change will actually take effect to any great degree until mid-1973, manufacturers, producers and processors will have a programme of phasing out rather than scrap and changeover.

Some of the conversions will be:

Milk	
Now	Will be
½ pint (284 ml)	300ml
1 pint (568 ml)	600ml
1 quart (1,136 ml—that is, 1 litre and 136 ml)	1 1 (litre)

The differences are quite small—a teaspoon holds 5ml, a tablespoon 20ml.

Butter	
½ lb. (227 g)	250g
1 lb. (454 g)	500g

Cream	
½ pint (284 ml)	300 ml
	Ice Cream
½ gal. (2.27 l)	2.5 l

Wine industry (bulk)	July 1972 - July 1973
Woolsales" (bottling)	1972-1974 conversion completed

Planning for the change in the transport industry—road, rail, air and sea—is well in hand.

The marking of packaged goods will be introduced gradually.

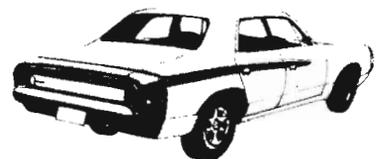
Shoppers will be faced with the problem of making a choice between the same commodity packed in imperial and in metric quantities. Even if the packets were marked with both imperial and metric values, comparisons between the prices of goods would not be easy unless the quantities happen to be very simply related to one another.

To help in making the choice, the Metric Conversion Board has designed a "cost comparator" to help shoppers check for value. It will show, for instance, that 1 lb. at 41 cents is equivalent to 500g at 45 cents, or 1 pint at 18 cents is equivalent to 600 ml at 19 cents.

It can show also that 3½ yd. of material will become 3.2 m; a 26 in. waist measurement will become 66 cm; 1½ pt will become a litre and that 10 degrees Celsius is the same as 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

With this advice, shoppers will be able to check to see that they are not being charged more than they should.

The dimensions of this motor car are:



Weight	1,441 kg	3,170 lb.
Wheelbase	281.9 cm	111 in.
Front track	148 cm	58.32 in.
Fuel tank	88 litres	19.5 gallons
Speeds in gears:		
1st	68.8 km/h	43 m.p.h.
2nd	112 km/h	70 m.p.h.
3rd	170 km/h	108 m.p.h.
Fuel consumption:	7.8 km/l	22 m.p.g.

SOLD — ONE RAILWAY (USED) TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER

Just 110 years ago this month, the Hawthorn railway line—then 11 months old—went “under the hammer” to the highest bidder.

Formed in 1857, The Melbourne and Suburban Railway Co. built a railway from Princes Bridge to Hawthorn and Brighton. Included in the scheme was a tunnel under Swanston Street to junction with the Hobson's Bay's terminal, a later extension from Heidelberg with a line through Collingwood and Fitzroy to connect with the Sewerage and Water Boards' tramway at Yan Yean, and continuation of the railway from Brighton to East Brighton and Dandenong.

When Parliament authorized the building of the line from Princes Bridge to Windsor and a branch from Richmond to Hawthorn in 1857, the Act specified that double tracks had to be laid, six acres had to be allotted for Princes Bridge station and a bridge built over Punt Road, Richmond.

On the other hand, the Government would provide, free, a strip 50 yards wide where the railway passed through Crown Lands, and gave authority for a tunnel under Swanston Street.

Fares and freight charges were fixed at fourpence and threepence a mile for first and second-class passengers; horses and oxen one shilling a mile each; sheep, pigs and smaller animals ninepence a mile. There was a flat rate of one shilling each for dogs irrespective of distance.

But the scheme was too ambitious for the company's \$600,000 capital and plans had to be revised. A single track was initially built to a temporary terminus at Punt Road, to save the expense of a bridge.

Even the opening ceremony of the section, performed by Governor Sir Henry Barkly in 1858, made history. A banquet, which was always part of those occasions, ended in uproar.

It happened as guests assembled for the “dejeuner”, as it was termed. Many people who considered they should have been invited, but were not, shouted and yelled during the Governors speech, so much so that reporters were unable to record the historic words.

Obviously frustrated, Sir Henry made an early departure and during the confusion, the crowd rushed the tables and carried away everything edible and drinkable. All that remained were broken furnishings and smashed crockery.

The company sold a number of

shares to obtain money to proceed with extension of the railway to the River Yarra at Cremorne—opened 1859—and Pic-Nic (beyond Burnley)—opened 1860.

With no money left, the company borrowed \$156,000 late in 1860 to complete the Windsor line.

In 1861, with the completion of a bridge over the Yarra, the line was extended from Pic-Nic to Hawthorn.

By this time, the company was again in a bad position financially. Capital subscriptions totalled \$500,000 but line construction costs amounted to \$950,000. Creditors began to

clamour for payment and several writs were in course against the railway.

A syndicate, “The Colonial General Railway Co.,” offered to take over the railway and its liabilities, but the proposal lapsed.

Eventually, authority to sell the line was granted by Parliament and at a public auction on March 31, 1862, The Melbourne Railway Co., the highest bidder, bought the works for a modest \$95,000.

The line was taken over by the V.R. in 1878, although independent management continued until 1881.

HELL — I'VE BEEN THERE

There is a Hell on earth . . . and, wouldn't you know it . . . it has a railway station.

Well-known rail fan, Wal Larsen, of Bright, visited Hell on a world trip a few years back.

He takes up the story :

“Hell is some 20 miles east of Trondheim in Norway, and the Norwegians have long been aware of the amusement of an Anglo-Saxon arriving at this spot. The tall, quiet stationmaster opened his window and waited to sell us postcards of his station, allowed us to stamp our passports with his station stamp and sold us a train ticket—return of course.

The man in the local post office smiled as we bought stamps and mailed postcards home. He cancelled the stamps then demonstrated how the name was clearly discernable—staff are apparently hand-picked for tourists at Hell.”

RAIL CUSTOMER SAYS . . .

“Travelling from Benalla to St. Arnaud recently we were concerned that we might miss our five minute connection in Melbourne. At Seymour we spoke to the leading station assistant who in turn advised Train control. After Seymour, the train made two extra stops which made it late.

“The Conductor and Guard were both aware of the situation and informed the signalman at Wallan to remind Train Control.

“On reaching Melbourne—10 minutes late—the conductor personally escorted us to the Mildura train.

“We wish to thank all these men for their co-operation and friendly way in which we were assisted.”

—Mr. K. Drury, Reservoir, writing to the Secretary.



Appropriately coloured with a fiery red sky and looking like a scene from Dante's *Inferno* on the original, this postcard is a popular souvenir for visitors to Hell. Incidentally, Gods expedition is not the departure point for an excursion to spiritual citizens, it is the *Goods despatch*.

ALTAR (ing) THE GAP

Railways are part of many towns throughout Australia and have been part of Kerang since 1884. But recently they became part of a local church following a \$45,000 renovation.

A casual idea that maybe red gum would make attractive fittings inside a church quickly grew out of all proportions when Father Hickey, of Kerang's St. Patrick's Catholic Church, mentioned his thoughts to the architects designing the renovations.

Encouraged by the architect's reaction, Father Hickey set out to get the necessary red gum, but this proved more difficult than he thought.

A small timber mill at Barham specialising in red gum was unable to help, so the Father searched the surrounding districts fruitlessly until he mentioned his problem to Kerang Stationmaster Mr. Eric Harrison.

Mr Harrison inquired if the V.R. could supply the timber and found that the disused railway viaduct over the Campaspe River at Axedale was a likely source, but that it had just been sold.

Undaunted, an elated Father Hickey, went to Heathcote, 110 miles from Kerang, to see the purchaser.

The transaction was made and the Kerang Catholic Church was the owner of five 21 ft. long, 18 in. x 10 in. bridge beams.

Kerang housing contractor, Bice and Clark, had the task of shaping the weatherboard beams, red gum and yellow box—into the sacred fittings; an altar, tabernacle stand, baptismal font, lectern and presiding chair.

Although the wood was fairly easy to work—getting it wasn't.

As the job drew to a close, they were short of wood, and off to Heathcote again went a party.

"We got another piece," recounted Father Hickey, "but our chain saw was blunt so the three boys from Form 2 who came along to help spent an hour sawing it through with a hand saw.

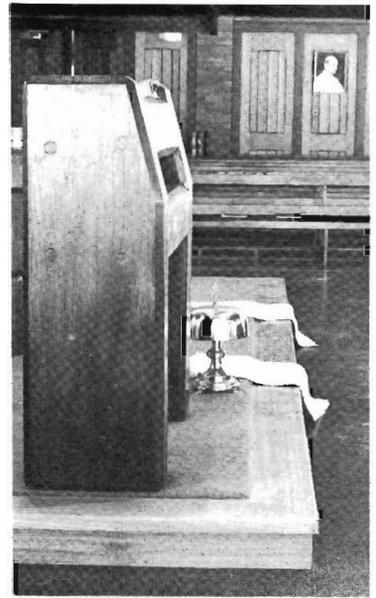
"After we manhandled the piece into our ute., it was just lifting the front wheels off the ground, so it was back to work for a further three cuts.

"Uncut, each of the beams weighed about one ton.

"No sooner had we left Heathcote than the boys were fast asleep."

On November 28 last, the extensions were opened.

"I felt all along that it was appropriate to have red gum in the



A close look at the church furniture reveals the heavy grain that is typical of the harder gums.

church because of its association with the district, and all the parishoners have been thrilled with the effect," Father Hickey commented.

"It's quite a talking point and a feature of the church."

So, while the railways are used to bring a talking point and having their surplus equipment used for all manner of things, St. Patrick's venture and the use to which they have put the bridge piers, is, to our knowledge unique.



Shaped from the bridge beams are (from left to right) the lectern, tabernacle stand, altar, presiding chair and the baptismal font.



St. Patrick's Church. The high-gabled centre portion is the original 1877 church; the low-roofed extensions were added in 1971.

MILEPOSTS

1921

First single-line automatic signalling in the southern hemisphere installed between Upper Ferntree Gully and Belgrave with crossing loop at Upwey, December 22.

1922

V.R. apprenticeship classes began at Newport Workshops, February 27.

First Reso (Victorian National Resources Development Train) Tour, August 28 to September 2, to Mildura and Swan Hill districts.

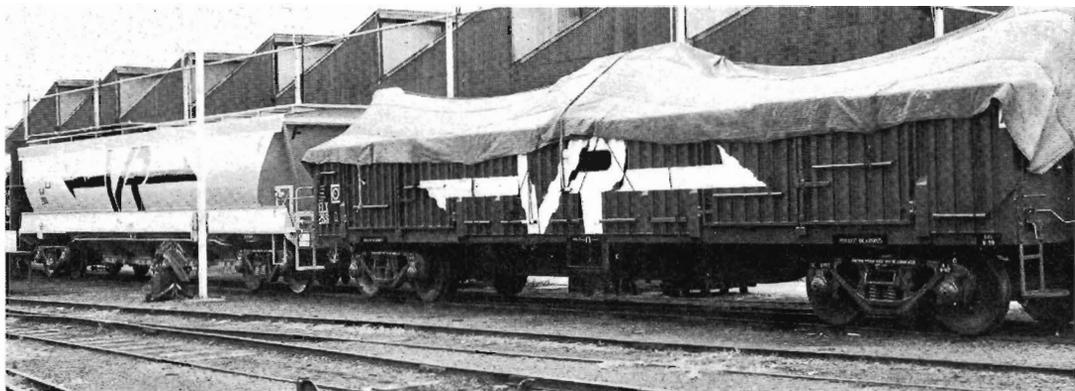
Extension of border railways from

Victoria into N.S.W. authorized, September 14.

1923

First electric locomotive; goods class Bo-Bo type, built at Newport; electrically equipped at Jolimont Workshops; in service July 20.

VIEWS OF NEWS



FOR ALL TO SEE. V.R. emblems for wagon sides have been standardised at 25 ft. in length. Proudly displaying the new "giant-signs" are an ELX and GJF wagon. There'll be no disputing whose wagons are running over inter-system lines.



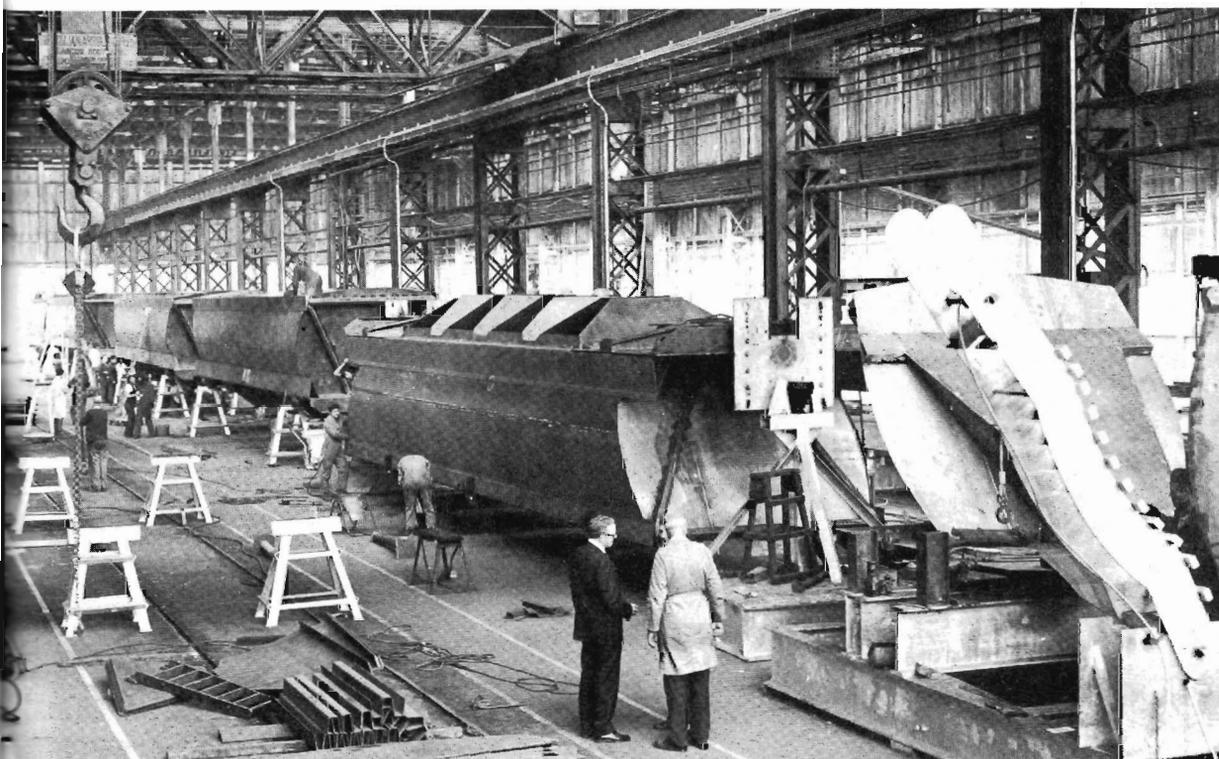
FAMILY INTEREST. Minister of Transport, the Hon. Vernon F. Wilcox, M.P., proudly shows off the V.R.'s hump yard to his wife and youngest son, Gerald. With the Wilcox family is V.R. Chief Traffic Manager, Mr. J. C. Crute (*right*), watching retarder operator Ted Aston at the hump controls.



PRODU
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SHAPE
motor ca



ON LINE. Five (and a bit) of the 150 new GJF hopper wagons to be built at Newport Workshops are visible on the production line: the same as GJX but not suitable for bogie exchange. Of the 200 similar wagons now in service, they are the first to be built by the railway Workshops.



THINGS TO COME. Following its delivery to Bayswater station (see front cover), the shell of the first stainless steel train carriage for the new metropolitan trains was placed on rail bogies, then taken to Martin & King's Somerton plant for fitting out.

Out in north-west Victoria, where the red Mallee soil fringes the sands of the Big Desert, stands a string of small towns with their prosperity closely tied to the fortunes of the grain industries.

Forty-one and a half miles north of Dimboola is one of these towns—

RAINBOW



From atop Rainbow's silo, a typical Mallee town, railway yard and countryside stretch away to the shimmering horizon. Just visible through the heat haze is the silo at Albacutya railway station, 6 miles to the north.

"In the opinion of the Committee," reads the 1898 Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways report into the *Jeparit towards Albacutya railway*, "the proposed extension will be a most useful addition to the existing railway system.

"It will be of great benefit to the present Mallee settlers, especially to those who have taken up land

north of the 36th parallel, and will encourage further settlement and cultivation.

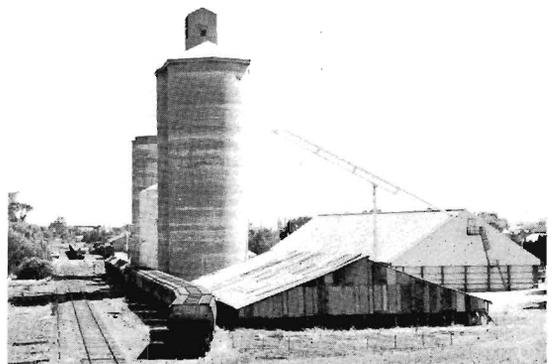
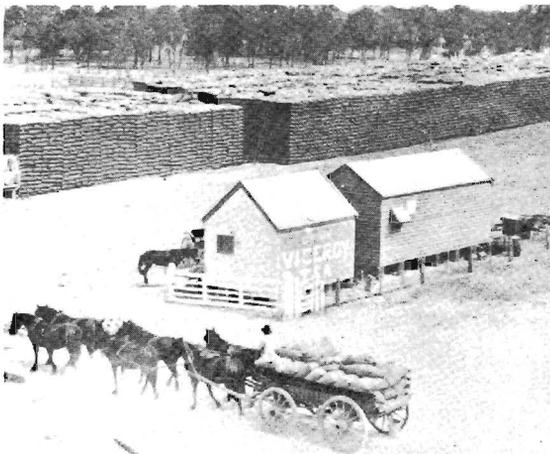
"The line itself will, according to the Departmental estimates, be a profitable one . . ."

This Mallee branch has lived up to its promise . . . and Rainbow's Stationmaster Hugh Nettleton has the figures to dispel the old adage

that branch lines are not worth having.

"The three stations that I control," remarked Hugh, "earned \$369,181 revenue last year—and that's from the last 10½ miles of the branch."

Opened on November 2, 1899, the 18½-mile extension from Jeparit to Rainbow succeeded in opening up and establishing this portion of



More than 800,000 bushels of grain can be stored in Rainbow's silos. The rear concrete silo is air-conditioned.

Rainbow has always had good wheat business. When this exposure was made, thousands of bushels of wheat in bags dominated the scene.



Victoria as a grain producing area.

Following the success of the extension proposals were considered in 1911 for a further extension to Nypoo

or nearby Turkey Bottom Reserve.

After investigating the area, the Committee recommended a 10½-mile line from Rainbow to Turkey Bottom Reserve, which was (fortunately) renamed Yaapeet in time for the opening on June 26, 1914.

These days the line mainly handles grain (wheat, oats and barley), superphosphate, wool and gypsum.

With a population of about 800, Rainbow is the main centre for railway activity. Last year, revenue from the station topped \$½ million.

"All Rainbow business people support the railways well," Hugh said, "and we get business from a local machinery firm which send their farm products all over Australia by rail.

"Our grain handling facilities here are excellent—we have an air-conditioned silo for barley that can hold 250,000 bushels, a 550,000-bushel wheat storage and a shed that holds 30,000 bushels of oats."

In his three years at Rainbow, Hugh has fitted into the town well. He is a keen bowler and Secretary



Mr. Nettleton



Mr. Wallis

of the local football club. Hugh was at Mansfield and Lascelles before his most recent transfer.

Shedman for Hugh is Ivan Wallis who has worked for the V.R. for four years.

"The drought put a lot of people in the district out of work but I was lucky enough to get a position here," he said.

"The local firm that was making the field bins and agricultural bars was doing great business until the drought, but now it is sending only an occasional consignment."

On February 24, 1972, one of the most ambitious schemes ever announced for Melbourne was officially named when a red velvet curtain on the citadel-like dome of Flinders Street station was drawn to reveal the project name . . .

FLINDERS GATE

Launched officially by the Premier, Sir Henry Bolte, the Flinders Street Station Redevelopment project—the largest city development ever undertaken in Australia—will see 27 acres of space above the Flinders Street rail yards and station redeveloped into a complex of offices, shops, plazas, theatres, etc.

In short, the completed project will become a model city—the redevelopment area is 12 per cent of the Central Business District.

Environmental and sociological considerations were being considered

for the final plans which were now in preparation by master planners and environmental designers.

At the ceremony, a scroll was presented by Sir Henry to two first form students of University High School. They are to act, symbolically for Victorian youth, as custodians of the scroll until a ceremony is held to mark the completion of the 25-year project.

At that ceremony, the scroll will be presented to the Premier of the day.

The familiar facade of Flinders Street station, which will disappear with the redevelopment, has long been a source of contention as to its architectural merits or otherwise.

Built in 1910 to a competition-winning design, the present domed station has been known to Melbourne's residents as a favourite meeting spot—"under the docks".

All other considerations aside, Flinders Street station is being pushed to the limit to handle present-day loadings, and although the underground loop project will divert a fair share of passengers to stations on the CBD perimeter, some form of rebuilding is inevitable.

Plans for the redevelopment include provision of a modern railway station.

SUGGESTIONS ACCEPTED

During January, the following suggestions were adopted:

- 1.35 p.m. Bendigo train on Saturdays to stop at Sunshine \$4
- Better reference re damaged equipment in working timetable addenda \$10
- Anti-corrosion treatment of bogies \$100
- Public address system for *The Overland* \$5
- Corrosion prevention for coil springs of rail bogies \$10
- Alterations to Room 68, Head Office \$1
- Extra hand hold to prevent damage to line breaker reset switch cover \$25

Suggestion forms (G.256) can be obtained from supervisory staff or the Public Relations and Betterment Board, Head Office. Awards for adopted suggestions now total \$80,624.

CREDIT UNION

After nine months successful operation, the Railways Staffs Credit Co-operative now has nearly 700 members who are contributing more than \$4,000 each pay from payroll deductions.

Already \$25,000 has been lent to members to purchase household equipment and pay outstanding debts. There is now a waiting period before loans can be granted.

If you would like to become a member, particulars are available from the Secretary, Railways Staffs Credit Co-operative Ltd., Flinders Street Station Building, 223 Flinders Street, Melbourne.

LINES FROM OTHER LINES

RAIL DOWNS BUS PROJECT

Plans for a rail rapid transit system eventually totalling 38km (24 miles), together with 16 km (10 miles) of reserved lanes for buses, has been announced for Leige, Belgium.

The rail solution, says *Railway Gazette International*, supersedes an earlier plan to build a network of bus tunnels in the central area.

This was abandoned because of the difficulties in automating the driving of the vehicles, the problems of ventilation and union opposition to driving buses long distances in tunnels.

AEROTRAIN FOR PARIS

Paris seems certain to have the world's first *Aerotrain* service—between the city and airport for “prestige reasons”.

Unfortunately for Parisians, the line will not provide a direct service into Paris as would have been the case with a proposed metropolitan railway which was to link the city centre with the airport for 100 million Francs less.

The *Aerotrain* cannot be carried into the central area in a tunnel because it is unsuited to underground operation.

Most passengers will, therefore, have to change into conventional railways at the city outskirts.

UNIQUE A.P.T. SUSPENSION

Following close study of vehicle riding and behaviour at high speed, British Rail has developed a novel suspension arrangement.

Incorporated in the truck is an electro-hydraulic/pneumatic tilt suspension. Sensors measure the transverse acceleration parallel to the floor, and cause the suspension to tilt the carriage body up to nine degrees relative to the track about a longitudinal axis.

Negotiation of curves at high speed without flange contact reduces dynamic stresses and wear on the track and improves the quality of the ride.

By tilting the vehicle it becomes unnecessary to make extensive—and expensive—modifications to track curves. Speeds through curves can

be 50 per cent greater than with conventional carriages.

When the trains are introduced in 1975, they will take over entire services and will lead to big changes in timetables. As much as two hours are expected to be cut from the 399½ mile London-Edinburgh run which at present takes about 5¾ hours.

—*Railway Age*

EUROPEAN TRAINS “SUPERIOR TO PLANES”

“Experts now agree that the rail-road train is superior to the plane at distances up to roughly 300 miles,” commented John Hess of the *New York Times* in a recent article in the *Financial Review*.

“In recent years, public authorities have been forced to recognise what the businessmen saw first—that the train is still the most efficient means of transportation.

“Despite massive road building programmes, the highway traffic problem was worse than ever and airways were becoming saturated without making a dent in the problem.

“What the traveller on short routes might save in the air, he loses between the airport and the town,” the article continued.

The head of Air France is quoted as saying that a high speed (about 130 m.p.h.) train costs half the purchase price of a Boeing 727 of the same capacity and ran at a tiny fraction of the maintenance and operating costs.

A spokesman for the Societe Nationale des Chemins de Fer (SNCF) said the French railways lost money on suburban travel because their fares were based on social needs. However, the Government paid a subsidy to cover the loss: in 1970 they paid \$140 million, in 1971, \$95 million.

While the image of European railways is one of luxury, high-speed frequent services—in West Germany alone, an intercity system brings first-rate trains into 33 cities at an average of one every two hours—the railway systems are still the poor relation compared with aviation and highways.

But consideration of noise, pollution and traffic have finally persuaded authorities of the importance, if not always the political viability, of giving the railway priority.

WHEELS OF LEARNING

Time is money says the old adage, and *Time* magazine has reported on an attempt to cash in on commuting time.

New York's Adelphi University now offers a Master's in Business

Administration to commuters on a morning and evening train from Huntington.

Adelphi's fee of \$246 has so far drawn 78 students for its courses in Financial Accounting, Process of Management, Macroeconomic Analysis and Principles of Marketing.

In neighbouring New Jersey, 20 riders on Jersey Central's Matawan trains are taking courses entitled Literature for the '70's and Our Changing Economy.

In each instance, lectures are by men from New York University and industry.

Students are happy that their commuting time can be converted into learning time. As one put it: “This is a much better idea than getting home at 10.30 at night or going to school all day Saturday”.

The “classroom”—a converted parlour car—will shortly have microphones installed so that students do not have to shout their questions.

As *Time* put it: “Seventy-six minutes to Huntington and two years to an M.B.A.”

AMTRAK TRIES “HOSTIES”

AMTRAK, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, recently set up to try to keep passenger trains in America, is trying to lure back passengers with hostesses.

With the help of Continental Airlines, it is training 24 young women in grooming, passenger relations and first aid.

The airline will train 1,250 railway staff in passenger handling techniques, the *New York Times* says.

• One of the girls being trained is the former social secretary of Hugh Hefner, publisher of *Playboy* magazine.

RAIL CRUISE

Driving the 1,340 miles from New York to Florida is an annual pilgrimage for many Americans. Despite relatively cheap air flights, thousands of vacationers prefer to drive, because Florida's hire-car rates during peak seasons are prohibitive.

A new company, *Auto-train*, has set up a “motorail” service from Washington to Sanford, Florida, to take the drudgery out of the long drive. Promoters of the scheme, after being refused bank finance, sold 700,000 \$10 shares to buy equipment, enclosed car transporters and dome cars. Seaboard Coast Line provides locomotives, crews, track and maintenance.

The service, which started on December 6, leaves Washington at 8 p.m. and reaches Sanford—a three-

hour drive from the major resorts—at 11 the following morning.

After just one ad. in selected newspapers, the train was booked for December and part of January.

The train carries 90 to 104 cars; a flat fee of \$US190 is charged for the car and up to four passengers.

Besides the convenience and speed of the journey, *Auto-train* offers cocktails and complimentary *hors d'oeuvres* in each of the 13 dome cars. Cartoons and a G-rated movie are shown. One hour out of Washington a sit-down buffet of beef or lobster is served and following that, an adult movie; a vocalist and drinks in the lounge car until 3 a.m. help pass the miles.

For an extra \$40, a couple can even have a compartment that includes TV, and breakfast in bed!

AMONG OURSELVES

REUNION

The A.I.F. Railway Unit Association reunion will be held in the Independent Order of Oddfellows Hall, corner of Victoria and Russell Streets, Melbourne on Monday, April 24, at 8 p.m.

Further details are available from the Secretary, Mr. R. W. Gray, telephone 57 2881.

Cuts 'em down to size

Frank Hooper is a one-man railway conservation programme with years of work ahead of him.

Stationed at Sea Lake, 238 miles north-west of Melbourne, it is his task to level out the sand drifts on the 37-mile Sea Lake-Kulwin railway.



Mr. Hooper

Widening cuttings and levelling drifts then sowing with special grasses and cereals is the most successful method to date of controlling the wanderings of the Mallee soil.

For the past seven months he and his spotless tractor have been working on the first six miles to Ninda.

"Strangely", says Frank, "it is easier

to cut back cuttings when they are damp; when they're dry, they pack solid."

Rabbit warrens often give Frank a shock when his tractor suddenly rears and invites itself into a rabbit community; the strong westerlies and south-westerlies that are the curse of all Mallee farmers are a nuisance to Frank, too, making working conditions most unpleasant.

Frank has been with the V.R. for 12 years, after joining at Quambatook. He worked on the pilot stabilization scheme at Chillingollah and now has Kulwin in his sights.

Mallee 'master

Ken Bailey has been Mildura's stationmaster since March 1971 after having had terms at Balranald (4½ years), Beulah, (2 years), Serviceton (2 years) and Drouin (2 years) followed by four years as a Traffic Inspector at Ararat, Flinders Street and Head Office.

Mildura is renowned for its climate, but it will soon be known for bananas; many people in the district are growing them—more as a curiosity. Soon Mildura station will bear evidence of this as recently Ken gave



Mr. Bailey

permission to Conductor Fred Fields to plant a number of the trees on the platform.

"We hope they will bear hands of bananas within two years," Mr. Bailey said.

Mildura is in the thirsty belt and beer is big business for the V.R. The two hotels and the ever-thirsty Working Men's Club all receive their supplies on the steel network. Much Renmark and Broken Hill freight also makes the first stage of its journey by rail to Mildura.

Ken's off-duty time is spent fishing at a favourite spot on the Murray. Before duty, though, he is well known to Mildura's milkmen and dogs: "I run about two miles each morning to keep fit," he said.

At both Mildura and Balranald, he has seen the problems of "Section 92". "But I'm convinced that good service will break the barrier every time," he commented. "Most new cars are brought to Mildura by the Motorail service."

Mildura has a staff of about 75, including loco crews and Way and Works staff.

They're racing at Irymple

Assistant stationmaster at Irymple for the last 13 years, Tom Kendall,



Mr. Kendall

is convinced that the northern Mallee "is the best part of Victoria."

And part of the proof is that Tom has been on the Sunraysia Trotting Club Committee for nine years.

"It is only a three and a half furlong track put in three years ago, but it is recognized as second only to Ballarat", he added proudly.

A keen bowler, Tom has won the "pairs" competition two years running at Irymple Bowling Club.

Fishing is his major relaxation: "The majority around here are redfin, but I caught a 4 lb. perch a few weeks ago."

Caught 100,000 offenders

After 34 years as a ticket examiner, Richard (Dick) Mason called it a day on February 8.

In that time, Dick estimates he detected and booked about 100,000 people for ticket offences.

The ticket checking division (as such) has been in operation only since the depression, but records show, unfortunately, that well over 1,000,000 Melburnians have had their names entered in V.R. examiners' books since 1945!



Mr. Mason

In the early days, the examiners used to travel on Sunday Excursion trains working a day that lasted from 8.30 a.m.—10 p.m.; and that was before overtime was ever allowed.

Despite the humourless business of detecting defrauders and other offenders, there have been lighter moments.

"One gent was detained after leaving the end of a platform," Dick recalled. "He was refusing to say anything, so I commented 'It's all right, you can't be hung for this sort of thing', when he suddenly volunteered that he could, as he was out on bail for a manslaughter charge.

"Other funny incidents came from people who gave false addresses. Mickey Mouse, c/- Walt Disney, Hollywood, was one that cropped up from time to time but one of the more original was "Herbert Sherbert, Fruit Saline Grove, Orange, N.S.W".

"It didn't make any difference, though. As well as being charged for not having a ticket, giving wrong

name and address was added to the charge list—and a further fine imposed.”

Dick joined the V.R. in 1926 at Upper Fern Tree Gully. In those days, more than 2,000 passengers used the narrow gauge trains at weekends.

And since then he estimates that he must have travelled more than one million miles by train. Mr. Mason has been commended many times for his diligence.

RETIREMENTS

REFRESHMENT SERVICES BRANCH

Redrup, (Miss) L., Standard Gauge Buffet Cars, 4/5

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Anson, J., Newport, 17/2
Bowen, T. H., Head Office, 21/1
Burke, W. J., Head Office, 13/4
Comer, J. G., Bendigo North, 10/4
Davies, T. W., Newport, 9/4
Dickinson, G. D., Newport, 1/4
Flynn, J. M., Newport, 25/1
Giannone, D., Newport, 2/4
Hall, W. F., Geelong, 14/1
Hardham, O. W., Newport, 10/1
Loye, L. R., Newport, 1/4
Milne, C. A., Maryborough, 2/2
McGregor, E., Ballarat North, 13/1

Nigro, L., Jolimont, 5/4
Small, W. F., Geelong, 14/1
Thompson, J. R., Newport, 28/4
Vitis, J., North Melbourne, 4/1
Watts, G. R., Jolimont, 7/4
Webster, M. J., Newport, 7/1

STORES BRANCH

Bryant, E. J., Reclamation Depot, 3/2
Horwood, S., Bendigo, 26/1
Hughes, J. E., Head Office, 18/2
Kuropatwa, S., Jolimont Workshops, 9/2
Lesh, V., Printing Works, 10/1

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Carey, L., Echuca, 25/2
Comerford, R. P., Shepparton, 8/2
Cook, L. C., Melbourne Goods, 20/4
Cummins, (Mrs.) S.M., Yea, 3/2
Fahey, H. T., Flinders Street, 14/4
Goudie, A. H., Nagambie, 7/4
Humphreys, R. A., Head Office, 16/4
McDermott, H. W., Spencer Street 16/12/71
Mason, R. J. P., C/o Staff Office, 8/2
Pryce-Jones, Z. P., Franklin St., 31/3
Stevenson, A. R., Spencer Street, 22/4
Todorovic, J., Flinders Street, 27/1
Turner, H. D., Camberwell, 6/4
Ward, R. S., Dynon, 2/4

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Bajic, I., East Melbourne, 7/1
Burt, S. J., Spencer Street, 20/4
Ciancio, G. A., Spencer Street, 17/4
Garra, V., Laurens Street, 18/4
Hagam, A. B., Mech. Sigs. Const., 2/7/70
Hulm, H. D., Laurens St., 21/12/71
Lear, E. M., Glengarry (I), 1/12/71
Pascarl, H. E., Spotswood W'shops, 9/4
Payne, J. J., Heyfield, 16/4
Reid, G., Lascelles, 31/1

Stephen, W. J., Koroit, 6/4
Tkatschenko, P., P.W.M.D. Spotswood, 29/11/71
Veitch, D. A., Bendigo Works, 14/4
Watts, G. C., Springhurst, 13/12/71
Wylie, A. L., Seymour, 9/4

NEWS LETTER REGRETS TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING DEATHS

REFRESHMENT SERVICES BRANCH

Diger-Didoris, M., Spencer St. Cafeteria, 24/12/71

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Duncan, D., North Melb., 17/1
Frampton, B. L., Jolimont, 5/2
Pyke, T. A. H., Newport, 8/2

STORES BRANCH

Campbell, G. K., Division 'B' H.O., 31/1

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Foran, W. A., Tottenham Yard, 20/2
Stasiak, W., Seymour, 9/2

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Aitken, L. J., Hamilton Works, 16/1
Dixon, R. W., Redcliffs, 29/1
Henderson, H. B., Meeniyah, 19/1

Institute News

ECHUCA CENTRE OPENED

“This day is born a baby to the Institute. With the help of railwaymen in the district it will grow to be strong, and an asset to all in the area.”

With these words, the Institute's General President, Mr. R. M. Wright,

summed up the feelings of the crowd of more than 50 who turned out to witness the opening ceremony.

Despite torrential rain for the preceding two days, the weather broke in time for the assembled crowd to risk footrot from the sodden lawns to hear the remarks of the speakers.

“If we think of the past, that's where we'll stay,” continued Mr. Wright. “This new centre—the 25th—can be looked upon as a young child and we have to plan to make its future bright.

“We look to the past for knowledge and experience, but it is to the future that we look for progress.”

An apology from the Minister of Transport, the Hon. Vernon F. Wilcox, M.P., was conveyed by Mr. Wright to the gathering. Mr. Wilcox

had expressed great interest in the function and regretted his inability to attend.

V.R. Commissioner, Mr. I. G. Hodges, a former V.R.I. council member for the last 10 years, and now a patron and Honorary Life Member, officially opened the centre.

“The Institute has never made a better deal,” he said. “The small amount that it cost in no way compares to the value that it will be to both the local members of the Institute and the community generally.

“With the enthusiasm of the local members here, Echuca could have one of the best country centres in Victoria.”

Mr. Hodges endeared himself to the crowd by discarding a troublesome microphone and continuing his address from the lawns.

The centre is in the premises of what was the Echuca Ladies Croquet Club and is on railway land, adjoining the station yard.

In March, 1970, a Railways Social Club was formed in Echuca by Assistant Stationmaster Bob Molloy and Rail Motor Driver George Morgan. Soon 45 of the 60 resident railwaymen were members of the club.

One year later, the Social Club, under the leadership of Mr. M. Thompson, a V.R. clerk, took over the occupancy of the croquet club.

In October, the V.R.I. council approved the Social Club as the basis for a full Institute Centre.



The clubrooms and greens of the new centre.



V.R.I. General President, Mr. R. M. Wright, addresses the gathering at the opening ceremony.



"With the cutting of this ribbon, I declare the 25th Institute Centre open. Won't you come inside and have some refreshments?" said Mr. Hodges, Commissioner, as he severed the ribbon with a slashing uppercut.



At the social gathering inside, Mr. Hodges (right) discussed the future of the centre with (from right to left) Messrs. Bruce Hornbuckle, Acting District Superintendent Bendigo, Dave Mansell, Relieving Traffic Inspector at Bendigo, George Morgan, Centre Secretary, Bob Molloy, Centre President, Alan Cane, District Engineer Bendigo, and Don Garcia, Rail Motor Driver and Centre Committeeman.

Members repainted the centre inside and out, improved the surrounds and provided table tennis, pin pool and facilities for other recreations.

Great assistance was received from the Echuca Ladies Railway Club, led by Mrs. F. Thompson and Mrs. M. Summers, who worked hard for the last nine months to provide amenities for members and their families.

Plans for the future include the conversion of one of the croquet greens into tennis and basketball courts, and the other into a bowls rink.

The previous country centre to be opened was at Wodonga in February 1970.

MEMBERS' LIBRARY

Nineteen-seventy-two crept quietly into a world plagued by wars, and threats of wars, fears of unemployment and rising prices, and doleful forecasts of all sorts of miseries ahead, but there's one bright star in the firmament which points the way whereby Institute members can get away from it all and lose themselves in a happier world—the *V.R.I. Library*.

We've had our worries in the library too, particularly with costs—the price of books has sky-rocketed in recent years, and we've had to struggle to provide our members with an adequate supply of new books. But we now feel that we have turned the corner.

Several new ideas are paying off, and the library is in a position where more new books are available on the shelves than for many years. This applies in virtually every area of the library, and particularly in detective, romance, general fiction, and children's, which are the most popular sections.

Even in bad times, we've always provided the latest books, but the quantities we were able to purchase meant that members sometimes had to wait for long periods before they could catch the more popular titles. These delays will very largely be eliminated now, and even when they do unavoidably occur, there is invariably very good alternative reading available.

Institute members who have not previously used the Library service should delay no longer—all members of the family are catered for. Metropolitan members who have not visited the library at Flinders Street recently, will find a visit now most rewarding.

The benefits already enjoyed by members using the Metropolitan Library will now flow on to the Head Office sub-library, country centre libraries and the carton service, so that no member is overlooked.

For anyone who may not know his entitlement from the library, these

few points may be of interest:

The library service is free to all Institute members.

Members are entitled to a minimum of six books at any one time without charge, comprising two books from the

- adult fiction section,
- adult non-fiction section (which includes hobbies, handyman and technical sections),
- children's section (or, if a member has children in more than two age groups, he may have one book for each age group).

Books may be selected by calling at the library in Flinders Street, sub-library at Head Office, or at one of the many country centre libraries which are established at most of the major centres. Libraries are also established at the Sunshine Institute, Spotswood Workshops and at Newport Workshops.

Alternatively, members, wherever they are located, may choose to use the carton service, whereby their books are sent to them, addressed to any station nominated. There is no charge for using the carton service.

Whether visiting libraries, or using the carton service, members requiring more books than those enumerated above may have them on payment of 5 cents per book over the counter, or \$1.00 per book per year for carton users. Up to three extra books at a time may be taken.

The Flinders Street library is open Mondays to Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Head office library, Monday to Friday, 12.30 p.m. to 1.25 p.m.

Members wishing to visit other metropolitan or country centre libraries should ascertain the hours open at each location.

Further information on the library service may be obtained by writing to the Librarian, V.R.I., Flinders Street, or phoning on Auto. 1574.



V.R.I. General President, Mr. R. M. Wright (right), presents a trophy to Ararat's G. Harrod for winning the Singles Championships.



The Commissioners' four, photographed with one of the representative country fours. Left to right are Messrs. S. Baker (Dimboola), R. Dowling (Maintenance Engineer, Signals and Communications Division), H. Chandler (Deputy Chief Commercial Manager), J. Crute (Chief Traffic Manager), C. Morris (Secretary for Railways), B. Jones (Sunshine), J. Van Berkel (Ballarat) and E. Wearne (Bendigo).

SPORT

By OSS. KEATING

1972 Country Bowls Week

Play started with the fours championship and at the end of the first day the eight section winners were Ararat 1, Dimboola 2, Seymour 1, Traralgon 1, Bendigo 1, Ararat 2, Geelong 2 and Geelong 3. Tuesday was singles day and the green winners were G. Beanland (Ballarat), A. Jones (Sunshine), G. Harrod (Ararat) and M. Shippies (Dimboola). In the semi-finals on Wednesday morning, Jones beat Beanland and Harrod beat Shippies. The final between Harrod and Jones was a great game and it was not until the last few ends that Harrod managed to draw away and win 23-17, and the first major title went to Ararat.

The quarter finals and semi-finals of the fours championship were also played on this day; finalists were Seymour 1 and Ararat 2. On Thursday, the pairs event semi-finalists were H. Noyes and C. Cluff (Ararat), J. Dunne and A. Sheehan (Echuca), N. Bear and D. Blackman (Traralgon) and A. Trayes and D. Moorhead (Bendigo). Friday, the concluding day's play, saw a keen contest between Sheehan and Dunne and Trayes and Moorhead in the pairs final, with the Bendigo pair running out winners. Congratulations to these Bendigo veterans, Alf Trayes and Don Moorhead, for a great effort throughout the week.

Final of the fours championship was again won by an Ararat four consisting of Max Miller, Stan Cunningham, Bill Clarke, and Bill North (Skip). After a very interesting game

they were able to beat the Seymour four—Paul Geoghegan, Jack Mc Carthy, Herb Liverton and Frank McCarthy (Skip).

The other event decided was the consolation fours, won by a composite rink with Bill Suavarin (Ararat) Dave Rowan (Sunshine), Dan Devaney (Sunshine) and Skip Maurie Walsh (Ararat). The runners-up came from Ballarat, and were four of the most popular veterans who regularly attend this particular fixture. They are all retired boilermakers, and when you consider that their average age is 74 years, then I guess it proves the old adage that brains will beat brawn any day. I refer, of course, to Andy Polson, Clet Kisler, Alec McKay and Matt Wallis (Skip). Just in case anybody thinks this effort was a fluke, I feel I should mention that I have been organising Country Bowls Week since 1963, and in that time, this four has never failed to win a trophy—surely an indication of their bowling skill.

On the Friday afternoon, whilst the pairs and fours finals were being decided, three representative country fours played three Invitation fours representing the Commissioners, the V.R.I. Council and the V.R.I. Social Bowling Club. An enjoyable afternoon resulted.

At the conclusion of play, the various trophies won were presented by the Secretary for Railways, Mr. C. S. Morris—who ably deputised for the Commissioners—and Mr. Bob Wright, our General President. My sincere thanks for the help received from Mr Des. O'Donnell (Councillor) and Keith Donaldson, as well as the Branch Staff Officers, for their co-operation in releasing as many bowlers as possible to participate in this week.

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

NEWS LETTER

APRIL

VR

1972

10 CENTS



THE BLAND REPORT

The long awaited report of Sir Henry Bland has been now tabled in Parliament and will be studied by the Commissioners.

Some of the recommendations merely endorse what the department had already stated such as review of costing, establishing research and marketing sections.

A statement by our Minister, the Honorable Vernon Wilcox,

M.P., when the report was tabled, is given on pages 58-59 of this issue.

I would repeat what Mr. Wilcox himself said: "We have before us a comprehensive and searching analysis of the problems of land transport in Victoria and recommendations for dealing with them".

"The changes must come but they cannot happen overnight."

G. F. BROWN

6 1001

Next month, between midnight and 5 a.m. on Sunday the 28th, the V.R.'s main telephone number—62 0311—will be changed to 6 1001.

The actual time was chosen to coincide with the lowest level of incoming calls. The changeover is expected to be completed in time for the first of the public inquiries which usually start about 5 a.m. Give-away cards with the new number, for distribution to established customers, have been printed.

Throughout its career, the V.R. has had four numbers: Central 9150, MY 210, 62 0311 and now 6 1001.

As well as being easier to remember, the new number should avoid misplaced calls that the V.R. gets for the S.E.C. (63 0311), *The Herald* or *The Sun* (63 0211), Yellow Cabs (62 0331) or McPherson's (62 0301).

The Spotswood Exchange number—391 5111—will not be changed.

LANDOWNERS TO PAY FOR ELECTRIFICATION?

A radical scheme in which landowners would pay for electrification of the line between St. Albans and Sydenham has been proposed by Keilor City Engineer, Mr. G. E. Price.

In a report to the Council, Mr. Price said that electrification of the railway was the key to accelerating development in the western half of Keilor.

Railway figures indicated that cost of the electrification work and providing three new stations would be about \$600,000.

Mr. Price continued: "I have reached the opinion that it would be realistic from a business point of view for combined sub-dividers on each side of the railway to provide this money."

The cost per block would probably

be less than \$100, which would be more than recouped by the benefits of speeding up development.

The last time public money was used for V.R. works was in 1930 with the Glen Waverley extension. There, the Government financed the scheme then recovered the cost from landowners.

As well as the above method, or paying for the work outright, the possibility of lending the money to the V.R. at token rates is also being considered.

The report concludes that there appears little chance of the works being financed from railway sources for some years.

START ON \$40m QLD. RAIL CENTRE

Work was due to start earlier this month on a \$40 million redevelopment scheme for a five-acre site now occupied by Brisbane Central railway station.

A 15-year project by Lend Lease Developments Pty. Ltd., the first building on the site will be a 15-story office block for railway administration staff, due for completion in October 1973.

The completed project—which will include an international standard hotel, seven or eight buildings and shopping plazas—will eventually cover in the entire Brisbane Central station site.

The station will be rebuilt for its subterranean existence.

FARE SCALERS FINED

Northcote Court recently fined three men for having travelled on a train without a ticket.

Northcote Leader reported that Railway Prosecutor, Mr. Frank Jones, said that fare scalers were on the increase and regular raids were being made on northern suburbs trains.

In a separate case, a South Kings-

ville man was fined \$20 for crossing railway tracks at Merri station and \$30 with \$5 costs for having used indecent language.

\$72 ACCIDENT

A Hillston (N.S.W.) man was fined \$20 with \$52 costs in Cobram Court in March for a collision with a train at the Goulburn Valley Highway level crossing.

Police told the court that there were signs on the road, clearly visible, indicating a rail crossing.

—Cobram Courier

MILDURA NAME

News Letter's contest to name the upgraded Mildura overnight train attracted 339 entries, which provided 270 different names.

When *News Letter* went to press, a final decision had not been made on the train's name, and it was planned to announce it when the new service is inaugurated in August.

FREE TRANSPORT FOR LONDON?

A plan to allow Londoners free travel on the city's public transport has been approved by the Greater London Regional Council of the Labor Party.

The Council is hopeful of gaining control of the Greater London Council in the May elections.

The Australian reports that a proposal was passed calling for free transport on buses and underground trains "as soon as possible" and tighter controls on private vehicles.

Research had shown that free travel would cost ratepayers less than \$1 for every \$200 of rateable value.

Proposer of the scheme, Councillor Urwin, said that the Government was "proposing to squander \$3000 million on carving ringways through London for the benefit of private enterprise and the car owner while clinging to the fatuous idea that public transport should pay its way."

A supporter said that the cost of the motorways would equal "the total cost of the Concorde, the channel tunnel and the London airport.

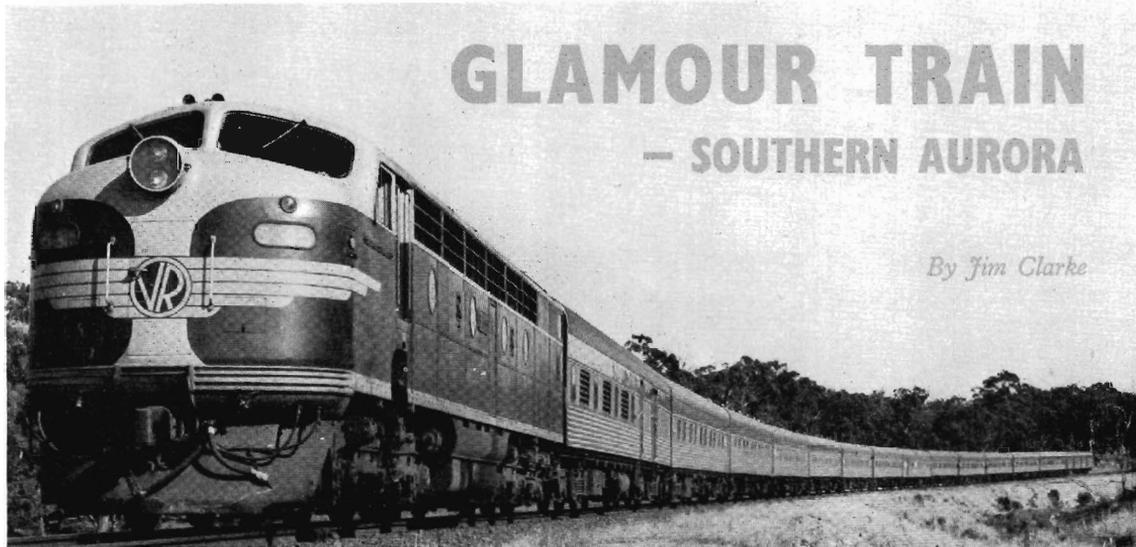
"As well the homes of 60,000 to 100,000 people will be affected."

FRONT COVER

Southern Aurora—10 years, one and a quarter million passengers, and 4,368,000 miles later.

Each night, twin gleaming stainless steel trains set out from Sydney and Melbourne for an overnight journey between Australia's two largest State capitals. The train is unique—it has only first-class sleeping accommodation. And that implies something special—but as any traveller on *Southern Aurora* knows, he gets that something extra.

On the occasion of the trains' 10th anniversary, come with us for a behind the scenes look at the



GLAMOUR TRAIN — SOUTHERN AURORA

By Jim Clarke

It's nearly 7 o'clock in Sydney's Central Station. Fourteen stainless steel carriages move almost silently along No. 1 Platform and come to a stand. Railway staff swing into action; the platform comes to life—*Southern Aurora* is ready for business.

A trickle of passengers stroll down the platform, peering in windows in anticipation of their accommodation. Travellers beam with satisfaction at the appointments; friends' looks bear a touch of envy.

A conductor greets the passenger at the door. A few words of welcome are exchanged, the passenger is shown to his cabin. A quick run through its features. "A morning cup of tea, sir?" "Would you prefer breakfast in your cabin or in the dining car?" "Dinner is being served in the diner now, I'll check with you later for your breakfast requirements." "Have a pleasant trip."

Inside the cabin—either roomette (single berth) or twinette (twin berths)—every item gleams with the attention lavished on it from the cleaners. Subtle red, yellow, blue and green tones harmonize to complete the bright, welcome appearance of the rooms.

Everything is available. Personal washbasin and toilet, comfortable seat and visitor's stool, drinking water, and an array of lights to satisfy the most demanding button-pusher.

Everything is tried. A quick look in the mirror. Presentable. Off to the dining car.

Steaks sizzle on the hot plate. The aroma of cooking food wafts imperceptibly into the body of the dining car, to be quickly dispelled by the efficient air-conditioning.

The Head Steward moves to your side. "Two sir?" Chairs are pulled back; a menu placed in hand.

A few moments pass. "Something to drink, sir?" A wine list of 30 varieties and vintages, and beer, is scanned. An order is placed. Wine glasses are turned over; a cork pulled, and best claret eddies into the glass. A nod of approval and more red flows.

Claret outsells other wines three to one on the glamour train.

A meal order is placed. Inside the stainless steel galley two cooks and a kitchen hand make up the meals that are so much a part of *Southern Aurora*. Turkey, prime beef and steaks, chicken, ham and lamb make up the two menus that rotate week about.

At the start, dishes like Lobster Mornay, and oysters were on the menu; but 10 years experience has shown what the public prefers best.

Two 30-lb turkeys are being cut to meet orders and slices from two massives lamb legs are being garnished with mint sauce and vegetables to satisfy a palate.

Five pounds of cheese and 24 slices of apple pie wait on the side lines, among other desserts that

range through fruit pudding and varieties of fresh fruit. Soup by the gallon simmers among the other cooking dishes—a dash of cream gives it its distinctive smooth taste.

Inside the diner, all is calm. People seeing off friends with a farewell dinner are given special attention to see that their wants are sated before the hands of time point to eight and the streamliner starts its 600-mile run to the southern capital.

Business is quiet in the club car. A few passengers who have supped elsewhere settle into the plush of the lounge. A steward service sees that their glasses are filled whenever needed, and the variety is good.

Cocktails, liqueurs, nips. "Whisky, sir—42 cents thank you".

Outside on the platform, the trickle of arriving passengers has swelled to a stream. Names on the conductors' passenger lists are being checked off. The hands of time move on.

It is 7.45. The electrician, whose tour of duty extends right through to Melbourne, checks the air-conditioning temperatures throughout the train. Should be 69°. All cars are within one degree.

Mail is being loaded in the van. Men tally the bags, check the labels, stow them safely.

The locomotives—two in New South Wales to conquer the long steep grades—stand quietly at the head of the 640-ton train. The

crew, having done their checks that all is right with the locos, take a quick snack. Their shifts run to Goulburn, 3 hrs. 5 mins. away, and 2205 ft. up on the Southern Tablelands.

Time ticks on remorselessly. The names on the conductors' sheets are ticked off. Non-travellers have left the cars and stand in groups along the brightly lit platform.

Announcements inform of the impending departure.

DEPARTURE

A bell sounds. The guard gives the all-clear. The two locomotives come to life and apply power to move the train smoothly away.

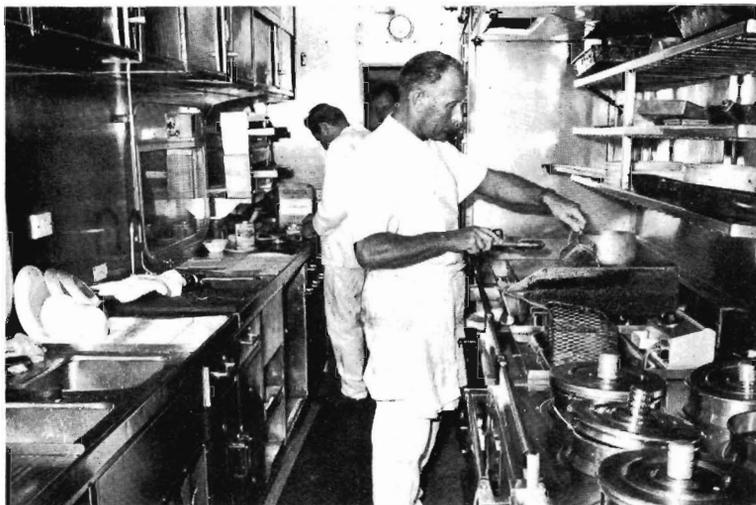
A field of waving arms sways in farewell and more than one eye glistens with a tear at the parting of friends.

Inside, the train's movement has gone unnoticed by some. A hurried farewell gesture, then the bright lights of the platform fall behind and the inky blackness of railway yards swallows most objects from view.

Speed rises. Sydney suburbs dance past the windows. Neon signs alternate with terrace houses; flats with shops. Traffic is seen snarled, standing at lights, or moving in slow procession through the narrow Sydney streets. The *Aurora* flashes past; the *Aurora* is under way.

Inside the diner, the faint melodious tinkle of the silverware rubbing together creates part of the train's atmosphere. In some quarters, the train is an anachronism. It offers the personalised service that one associates with the transport of the '30's—or today, with a high-priced hotel.

But the *Aurora* is neither. It is as modern as most motels—it is, in



Cook Kurt Welling—20 years on trains, shared between *Spirit of Progress* (pre—1962) and *Southern Aurora*—prepares the grill for a sirloin steak to become *Entrecôte Chasseur*.

effect, a mobile motel suite. The service? Personalised. What you want. Without the ridiculous prices. We set the train up as a prestige train; for businessmen, executives, holiday makers who wanted a little extra. What we didn't set up at a high level was the price. Regular travellers all comment on the value for money.

8.15. The diner is still in full swing. The laughter and chatter of passengers blend with the muted sounds of a train at speed. The diner will stay well patronised until approaching 9. Then suppers will, on some nights, keep its staff busy until well after 10. The dining car staff leave the train at Goulburn—at 11.5 p.m.

The centre of activity is now the club car. An aroma of toasted sandwiches and light snacks greets

a new arrival. Background music reaches the ear. Drinks are plentiful and moderately priced. It is the train's social centre and a valued addition to the train's consist. Until it is closed near Goulburn, the car always has a group enjoying a convivial.

The suburbs are thinning out. It is 8.24.

Southern Aurora slows, snakes to the left, then gathers speed into the 60's for the dash through Liverpool.

Passengers ebb and flow between the train's life centres. Some have retired already. Others read through magazines supplied in each cabin.

Conductors—one to each sleeping car—are preparing the evening cups of tea, checking out passengers requirements for breakfast, and seeing that they are comfortable. As well, a Head Conductor goes quietly about his tasks of co-ordination and supervision.

The lone electrician continues his vigil. Every hour the air-conditioning temperatures are checked and compared with the outside temperature. The Southern Highlands of New South Wales are renowned for their frosts; 16 degrees is not uncommon. Freezing point is shrugged off as normal. But to the train passengers, all is warm and a cosy 69°. Only the insulated glass, which is cold to touch, gives a hint of what's outside.

Piercing the night vastness, the powerful headlight shows up the track ahead. Driver and fireman constantly check the track, signals and controls. A minimum 3,600 horsepower is under their control—plus the train, up to 198 passengers and 22 crew. They value their job. A little of the glamour of the train has rubbed off on to the loco crew, too.



Three long-standing *Southern Aurora* travellers take a moment off to chat. From left to right are Mr. Aub. Blim, N.S.W. Head Conductor who was on the first run of S.A., when it carried its millionth passenger, and when it celebrated its 10th birthday; V.R. Head Steward, Mr. Roy Ritchie, who has been on S.A. since it began; and Mr. E. R. Wilkins, a regular passenger since the train began in 1962.

From Picton, the line starts a 30-mile climb which takes the train from an altitude of 550 ft. to 2200. Full power is called for from the locos and speed hovers around the 40's.

NIGHT

One by one, the cabin lights wink out. Passengers settle into their foam beds, adjust their pillows, and snuggle into a comfortable position. The outside world is little more than a pastoral scene bathed with the ethereal beauty that only moonlight can give.

Activity inside the train dwindles to a minimum.

11.05. Goulburn is reached. Right on time.

A seven minute stop suffices to change train crews. The diner and club car staff leave. Despite their working the train every third night, most stand around to watch the streamliner pull out into the chill highland air. Character and personality are strong with the *Aurora*.

The new loco. crew and guard now have command of the train for one of the longest crew workings in Australia—261 miles to Albury—before the next change.

Inside the train the quiet patrol of the electrician checking on his charge resembles that of a policeman on the beat. Every hour he makes his round. Every hour he fills out his report. Every hour all is normal.

Conductors now have little to do. An occasional call sign is registered. The problem attended to. "Conductor, what time is it?" "Ten past three, sir." "Oh . . . thank you."

Outside the train, stations large and small slide by. Monuments in stone of the importance of a railway—Yass Junction, Harden, Murrumbur-

rah, Cootamundra, Junee and others. Monuments in wood of the outposts of the railway empire serving a tiny few—Bowling, Nubba, Wallendbeen, Bomen. Some stations are mere platforms with a name board in a sea of grass—Rocky Ponds, Shepherds, Kapooka.

At the larger stations, the passing of the streamliner is intently observed by signalmen. A green all-clear shines from the signalman's lamp. A green light flickers back from the guard. The silver train plunges on into the darkness, its illuminated rear sign informing all that this was no ordinary train that passed, this was *Southern Aurora*!

Sentinels of safety, the railway signals offer their welcome green lights to the approaching train, then smartly show the stern red warning light as the train hums past.

Near the tiny hamlet of Frampton, the two speeding *Aurora* sets bid a fleeting greeting to each other.

South from Junee, the halfway point, the line is single-track. Refused in crossing loops are the lesser trains—in fact the *Aurora* has no peers between the two capitals. Occasionally a wayward or tardy train causes the streamliners' onward rush to be checked—even halted. No-one likes to admit that it was his station that halted the train out of course. No-one enjoys the ensuing correspondence that endeavours to prevent a recurrence.

The impressive Riverina towns give scant recognition to the passing of the train in the small hours. Only railway staff and motorists on parallel roads note the train's flight.

BORDER

The first fingers of dawn are usually broaching the horizon when the train glides to a smooth stand in the long tongue of Albury station.



Conductor Sam Truda—nine years on *Southern Aurora*—delivers a hot morning cuppa to a passenger. The morning newspaper is near the cabin door.

Scheduled for 5.05, the train usually makes it's second crew change a few minutes early. A shunter steps in behind the locomotives, uncouples them and they move off, the N.S.W. task completed. A V.R. loco. then moves to the head for the 197-mile run through Victoria.

Eight men for the dining car swagger down the platform and join the diner, passing a casual remark about the trip with two N.S.W. crew who have travelled through from Goulburn to prepare the kitchen and tables for breakfast.

Inside the deserted diner, all is in readiness. Shortly, people and cooking aromas will fill the car as the new day stirs into activity.

The sleeping car conductors are out and about too. Collecting newspapers, and milk.

The clocks point at 5.12 but *Southern Aurora* is under way a little early. Time is in hand to meet the unexpected if it rears.

With the efficiency that comes from years in the business, the conductors make the *good morning cuppas* and deliver them to the cabins at the requested times. They also prepare Continental breakfasts for those who like their breakfast in bed. Morning newspapers have been delivered in anticipation of a stirring passenger. Getting the feel of the capital that he



Steward Murray Stephenson (right) hands a cocktail to Steward Peter Rozek for delivery to a thirsty traveller. Murray is another of the staff who have been on S.A. since 1962. He once found a stowaway in one of the storage cabinets. When challenged as to what he was doing, the stowaway shot back: "Just keeping cool!"

will shortly be landed in is important, we think.

The diner is a hive of activity. First breakfasts are at 6.15 and everything must be ready. Again the quiet jangle of silverware becomes the background. Outside the miles slip past every 51 seconds—*Southern Aurora* is coming to Melbourne at 70 m.p.h.

BREAKFAST

Sunlight floods into the cabins. Passengers stir. "Where are we?" Cabin pamphlets rustle . . . Times shown are checked against passing villages. Showers come to life. Passengers lather up under steaming hot water. A brisk toweldown. Spruce up. Fit to take on the world. But breakfast first.

With the same unobtrusive efficiency that marked the evening meal, lashings of bacon and eggs (most popular fare by far) and other breakfast concoctions are delivered to patrons. Renowned railway coffee sits steaming within your grasp. Victoria parades outside the window. No strain, no hurry. There's a temptation to eat your way right into Melbourne. But others must eat too.

The train flashes on.

Many passengers have converted their compartments back into seats and are viewing the scene. Others are snatching the last few minutes slumber. Still others are enjoying breakfast in bed. All tastes are catered for.

By 8 a.m. the train is topping the Great Divide and only a downhill run into Melbourne remains. The last breakfasts are being served; conductors are helping passengers with their luggage or converting cabins for daylight travel. In an air-conditioned room in the V.R.'s head office, a train controller who never sees the trains, scans a huge panel and continues to sidetrack trains to let the *Aurora* roar through.

The train breasts the summit at Beveridge and there on the horizon is the Melbourne city-scape, thrusting into the blue sky.

Suddenly we're among Melbourne's suburbs. Time moves quickly and *Intercapital Daylight* heads past near the start of its daylight equivalent of our journey. Two miles remain.

Suddenly its nearly nine. With all the pretentiousness that the train can muster it draws slowly along the platform and comes to a stand. Clocks point to nine exactly. Instead of tearful farewell scenes, there are happy—and some tearful—reunion scenes.

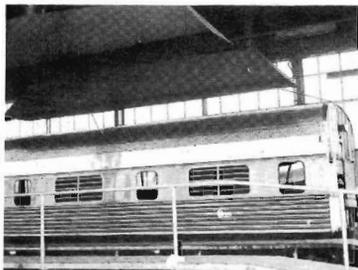
Conductors and passengers bid farewell. The crowd disperses. Sil-

ence falls again on *Southern Aurora*. Away from the train, passengers recall that their every wish was seen to. It was a train that boasted of service, and lived up to it. The passengers think no more. But for *Southern Aurora*, its life cycle takes on a new turn.

REJUVENATION

About 9.40, after the mail has been unloaded, the locked and deserted cars—save for the dining car crew—depart for the Dynon Car Sheds.

Its arrival at that location is met with a flurry of activity. Cleaners attack the sides to remove dust and make the stainless steel gleam again. Windows receive special attention to make them spotless. Inside move the troops, as the dining car crew



The power van for *Southern Aurora* runs continuously. Because of this, its 8½ hours in the car sheds are spent under an exhaust to expel the fumes.

hand in their stock inventories and orders for tonight's trip. One man per car they go. Beds are stripped. Linen bundled together for laundering. New linen, towels (hand, bath) and bathmats are placed in cabins. The cars are cleaned, dusted, vac-



On the morning after, Cleaner Aris. Rentos uses an industrial vacuum cleaner to remove all traces of the night before.



At the car sheds, Cleaners Athanasios Skopelitis and Jim Walsh remove travel dust from the stainless steel fluting.

uumed, wet dusted and nurtured until they look like new. The eating cars receive similar attention. About 11 o'clock the provisions are loaded. Two huge turkeys, 20-lb of steak, and sundry other items are stowed in the galley. Replacement wines and beers are added. Activity hums effortlessly along.

By 4 p.m. the cycle has turned 7/8ths. The Bar Steward signs on. Another inventory is taken. At 5.30 p.m. the cooks light up the galley and the homely atmosphere that cooking aromas give again warms the diner. At 6 the waiters join the train and lay out the cutlery.

Twenty minutes later the train moves off to Spencer Street station to stand alongside *Spirit of Progress*, awaiting that train's departure. At 6.30 p.m. the sleeping car conductors sign on; when the train docks they move into their established routine. It's the start of another day.

It is 6.45 p.m. *Spirit of Progress* departs.

The *Aurora's* locomotive rumbles through the platform and heads away to a loading dock to pick up the van, already stacked with mail. Back onto the train then into the platform . . .

It's nearly 7 o'clock in Melbourne's Spencer Street station. Fourteen stainless steel carriages move almost silently along No. 1 Platform and come to a stand



Electrician Nick Souvialiotis attends to the electrical gear in the kitchen.



Refreshment Branch Supervisor, Mick Dunkley-Smith, places two turkeys in the oven in preparation for the night's trip.

RAIL USERS SAY ...

"I wish to commend the actions of your staff in avoiding what I believe could have developed into a serious situation during the downpour on Thursday evening, February 17.

"It is easy in hindsight to recall that trains were delayed for over three hours. At the time, however, there was no such foretelling the future, and there was confusion as crowds continued to mill into the station with reports of cars and people being washed down the streets, bringing a potential panic situation to some of the crowd.

"The situation was handled by the normal station crew. Almost without exception they were understanding, reassuring, helpful and polite. They made a point of keeping the public address system operating and communicating with passengers as best they could. The announcements were human, informative, and, at one stage, even witty.

"I have no doubt that you have received complaints about individual inconveniences resulting from the rain but I hope this letter describes the very worthy efforts of your staff . . ."

—Mr. E. J. Bolton, Traralgon, writing to the Commissioners.

Flood help

"I would like to pay tribute to the hard work and energy of the station-master and staff at Toorak station during Melbourne's floods. They went to considerable trouble to ensure that all of us at the station were aware of the problems and to make alternative arrangements for our travel. I, and I am sure all others there, very much appreciated their hard work on our behalf."

—Mr. A. Grant, Mulgrave, writing to the Commissioners.

Drainage works

"Our property backs on to the Ivanhoe station car park and since our recent span of drenching stormy weather, it would be remiss for me not to pass on my thanks for righting a situation that has troubled us for a while.

For years, we have had seepage when excessive rains fell. With the new drainage system in operation it is most noticeable how dry the whole area at the rear of our house has been. We attribute this directly to the V.R.'s efforts over the last year.

My thanks to the Department responsible for these works, for no doubt it has been accomplished at no small outlay."

—Mr. N. W. Park, Ivanhoe, writing to the Chairman, Public Relations and Betterment Board.

NEWS LETTERS WANTED

To fill the gaps in the files of the Australian Railway Historical Society, some old *News Letters* are required.

The wanted issues are :

January 1932, January and March 1933, April 1935, December 1941, February 1942, January, February, April, May and June of 1946.

If any reader has copies of these issues and is prepared to have them added to the Society's files, then the Secretary, Mr. R. Whitehead, would like to hear from him.

The Society can be contacted through G.P.O. Box 5177AA, Melbourne.

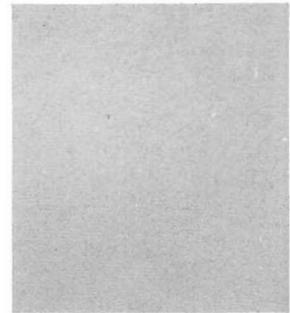
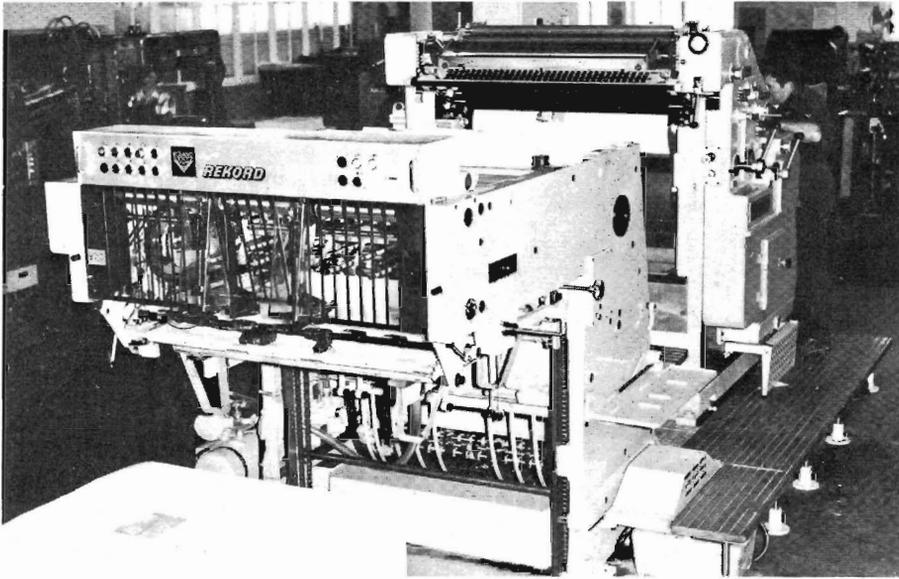
SUGGESTION ACCEPTED

During February, the following suggestion was adopted.

- Improved choice of wines in buffet cars — \$2.

Suggestion forms (G. 256) can be obtained from supervisory staff or the Public Relations and Betterment Board, Head Office. Awards for adopted suggestions now total \$80,626; the scheme started in 1921.

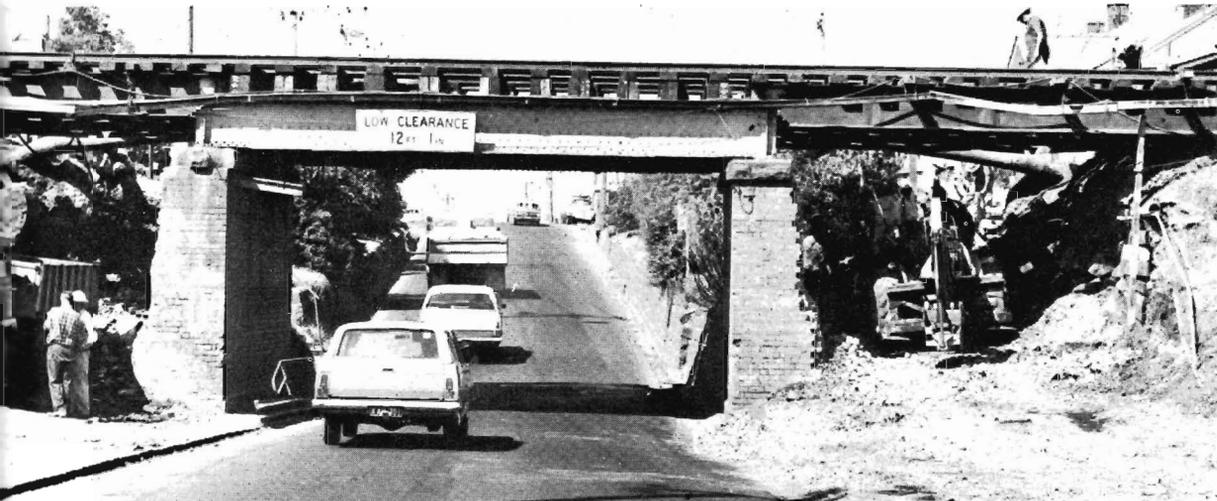
VIEWS OF NEWS



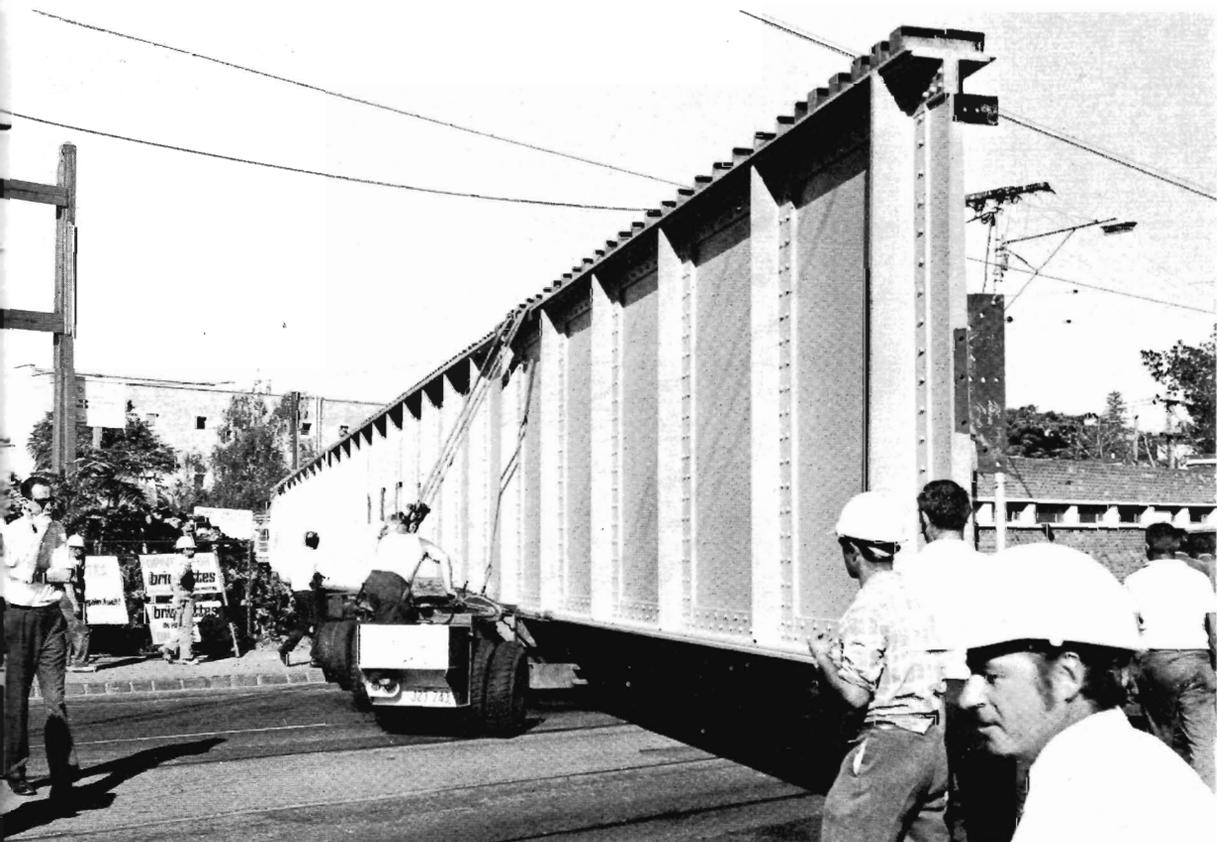
NEW MACHINE. Noticed a change in the last two *News Letters*? The magazine is now printed by the offset process instead of letterpress. In offset printing, the printing plate never comes in contact with the paper; the print image is transferred on to a rubber roller and then on to the paper. The new machine, by printing a complete *News Letter* at once, is four times faster for that production. For other work, it can be twice as fast as the letterpress machines.



ROOF ROAD. Road widening works at the West Footscray overpass of Geelong Road, (known to locals as Mount Mistake) encroached on the railway signal box area. Rather than move the box, the tiled, gable roof was whipped off, and a flat roof provided.



WIDER. A well-known traffic bottleneck, the narrow bridge under the railway at Francis Street, Yarraville, is being widened by V.R.'s Special Works section at Council and C.R.B. expense. When finished, the road will be 50 ft. wide instead of 20 ft. The existing brick bridge abutments will be removed and new ones built at the footpath line, a pedestrian "tunnel" being provided through the abutments.



BIG SHIFT. For the final stage of the third track works between Burnley and Hawthorn (October 1971 *News Letter*, p. 150), two 150 ft. long, 70 ton girders were delivered on March 19 to Hawthorn station. Too large for some rail curves in the area, they were taken to Hawthorn by road where the delicate manoeuvres to get them into the rail yard held the attention of all.

BOARD OF INQUIRY INTO LAND TRANSPORT IN VICTORIA

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF TRANSPORT (HON. VERNON WILCOX, M.P.)

Transport is a complex matter in all communities and, around the world, Governments are moving to deal with the transport problems which have become so much greater with the rapid advances and changes of the 20th Century.

The legislation which has governed land transport in Victoria was enacted in 1934—38 years ago—and few real changes have been made in the legislation since then. However, in the administration of the transport regulation Acts changes have been made in a piecemeal fashion to meet the circumstances of a particular problem.

It became clear to me and to others, that the system of land transport and its regulation in Victoria needed to be looked at in a way which was not possible within the ordinary day to day activity of Government.

Over the years, there have been numerous expressions of dissatisfaction from various sections of the community—the transport operators both road and rail; manufacturers; primary producers and country communities generally. In addition, there were mounting rail losses which were naturally of great concern to the Government; it became clear that something must be done about these rail losses. In short, the situation called for a new approach.

The Government accepted the need for an inquiry of some depth and consequently appointed a Board of Inquiry in November, 1970 with the following terms of reference:—

“To inquire into, report upon and make recommendations concerning the existing system of land transport in Victoria (with the exception of passenger transport within the areas of metropolitan Melbourne and the urban areas of Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong for which transportation plans have been or are being prepared) and in particular—

- (1) Whether the existing land transport system is satisfactory to meet the needs of agriculture and commerce and industry, and the public.
- (2) Whether the present division of freight traffic as to area and

type of goods between road and rail is desirable.

- (3) Whether there is duplication of existing transport services which is wasteful and, if so, how such duplication could be avoided.
- (4) Whether the existing system of transport regulation allows a flexible transport system which can adapt reasonably to changing conditions.
- (5) What changes, if any, should be brought about in the system of transport regulation and the provision of rail services to give the most efficient transport service practicable in the public interest.
- (6) What effects any changes proposed would be likely to have on the transport industry and Government finances generally.”

When announcing the appointment of the Board I said that the overall objective was to make the best use of our total transport resources.

We were fortunate to obtain the services of Sir Henry Bland, Kt., C.B.E., to constitute the Board. Sir Henry had recently retired from a distinguished career in the public service of Australia. From 1967 until his retirement early in 1970, he was Secretary, Department of Defence; prior to this appointment he was Secretary, Department of Labor and National Service from 1952-1967. His earlier years were spent in the New South Wales Public Service in which he continued until 1941.

I thank Sir Henry for performing a very large task in a very efficient manner. I expect that in due course his report will be recognised as a most important contribution to a vital industry.

The transport industry is the largest single industry in Australia and, equally so, within Victoria. It has been estimated that in Australia expenditure on transport is approximately 12½% of the gross national expenditure—this figure does not include the substantial amounts spent by manufacturers, retailers and pro-

ducers in providing their own transport services.

The Board travelled throughout the State and conducted public sittings throughout the State. The transcript of all sittings ran to 868 pages; written submissions were of the order of 2,000 pages and some 148 persons and organisations made written and/or oral submissions to the board.

Many people are well aware of the problems of the transport industry but the solutions involving many aspects of our total community life as well as the transport operators themselves—both road and rail—were not so easily found.

We have been given a further lead by the Report of the Board of Inquiry and we now have guidelines upon which to act.

I wish to make two points very clear:—

- (i) Changes can only be made over a period—they cannot happen overnight. I cannot stress this aspect too much. The recommendations of the Board look forward over some years.
- (ii) Before any rail line could be closed a procedure to be followed is recommended by the Board. The first step would be a proposal by the Railways. The second step would be for the proposal to be remitted to an investigating authority “which, after considering all necessary data (including the financial savings resulting from the action proposed) and consulting all proper local interests on the spot, would make its recommendations.” These would include, where the proposed action was endorsed, the organising of alternative services.

I am now able to state that the Government accepts the general principles contained in the recommendations of the Report as providing guidelines for changes which should be made progressively and over a long period in an endeavour to work towards a position in which the community is able to

make the best use of its total transport resources.

The changes will involve more road freedoms, changes in licences and fees for road transport and reorganisation of the Railways.

To ensure that the changes necessary to increase the efficiency of the transport system can be made successfully these changes will need to be carefully planned.

Transport regulation will remain, but will be adapted and used as an instrument to facilitate the changes recommended in the area of road and rail transport.

Some of the changes will require legislation and this will be presented to Parliament as necessary.

Having accepted the recommendations of the Board as providing guidelines, it is clear that some of the recommendations will require considerable study before they can be put into a form to enable them to be implemented. Indeed, I cannot say at present that all recommendations will be implemented.

However, some recommendations will be acted upon forthwith and these include:—

- Conversion of the corporate structure of the Railways to a type more appropriate to a commercial undertaking the size and complexity of the Railways; the governing body to be a board comprising men from business and the Railways.
- A definition of the role the Railways are to perform and the setting of financial targets for the Railways.
- The Railways, without delay, to extend and revise their costing procedures so that each facet of their operations may be precisely evaluated.
(The Railways have already started work in this area).
- The simplification of transport regulation by the issue of more long term licences in place of many of the present trip and monthly permits.
- The setting up of a Bureau of Road Transport Costs within the Transport Regulation Board.
- A detailed study to be undertaken of the transport costs and handling procedures for wool on rail.
- An examination of the present methods of cartage and distribution of petroleum products.
- The Railways in conjunction with the Grain Elevators Board to examine existing methods of handling grain traffic.

• Consideration of:—

Annual road-worthiness certificates being introduced for commercial vehicles over 6-ton capacity.

Compulsory inspection of vehicles over 12-ton capacity as a condition of issue of licence.

Compulsory third party property damage insurance for heavy vehicles.

(These matters, of course, relate directly to road safety).

Clearly the report of the Board of Inquiry shows the integrated nature of the land transport industry—for instance, any action taken with regard to rail transport has its effects on road transport and vice-versa.

It will be the aim of the Government to see that the changes necessary to increase the efficiency of the total transport system are made with a recognition of the inter-action between the segments of the industry.

It must be borne in mind that it would not be practicable to grant additional road freedoms where the road operators do not bear their real costs. The community could not afford to subsidise both road and rail over the whole range of competitive transport tasks. We must work toward a situation where the most efficient carrier undertakes any particular transport task at the lowest real cost to the community.

The Board of Inquiry believes that the Railways' financial situation can be very substantially improved if the changes recommended by the Board towards a more commercial approach to railway operation are brought into operation and the Railways given proper opportunity to become a viable enterprise. We have before us a comprehensive and searching analysis of the problems of land transport in Victoria and recommendations for dealing with them. We now propose to move towards solutions.

As I have said this will all take time. Those who study this valuable Report will see clearly the need for continuous examination of the land transport system as we move to improve it. We must use the knowledge gained to create conditions which will allow the system to evolve in such a way that efficiency will be increased and maintained into the future.

The task of making improvements will not be easy but I am sure that there will be general agreement that changes are necessary. Transport is of vital importance to Victoria and to Australia. The Board of Inquiry was set up by the Government of Victoria and its work was

naturally concerned with Victoria. However, I am well aware of the very great interest being shown throughout Australia by the transport industry and by those responsible for transport administration within Government. We welcome their interest and hope that the report of the Board and our approach to the recommendations will help to improve Australia's transport system.

As I have said the task will not be easy and it will be necessary for all involved—the transport operators, both road and rail; manufacturers; primary producers and the general community—to adopt a positive and active approach to the recommendations of the Report. If this is done, I am sure benefit will accrue to all sections of the transport industry—and, of course, the community itself must benefit by a better use of our total transport resources.

Balanced transport has been accepted as our objective in developing metropolitan transport; what we are now seeking to do is to move towards balanced transport for the whole State.

FOUR DAY OLD ACCIDENT DAMAGES TRAIN

The steady progress of the Ouyen-Pinnaroo goods was somewhat arrested when passing through tiny Boinka's (pronounced *Bo'inka*) platform, in the small hours of April 3.

To the accompaniment of splintering wood and twisting metal, the Y-class locomotive of the goods struck the platform a glancing blow in passing.

"Why," thought the crew, who had been through the platform countless times in identical locomotives, "should it strike it this time?"

Why, indeed! Railway staff were quickly on the scene to investigate the incident. A sequence of non-railway events unfolded to show the cause.

The obvious reason was that the platform face had spread towards the rails. Further investigation revealed that the platform had been used—without warning to railway staff—to load a semi-trailer prime mover, damaged in a road accident on the preceding Thursday, on to another.

The weight of the semi-trailer prime mover was too great for the earth-filled, wooden-faced platform and it had spread foul of the line.

It could have been more serious. But action is underway to recover the cost of damage to the platform and locomotive from the party concerned.

METRIC CONVERSION — RECOGNITION POINTS

THINK METRIC

LENGTH
 1 metre (m) = 1000 millimetres (mm)
 1000 metres (m) = 1 kilometre (km)

Recognition Points.....

- ▶ 25 mm Nearest equivalent to 1 inch
- ▶ 100 mm Nearest equivalent to 4 inches and the basic module for the construction industry
- ▶ 300 mm Nearest equivalent to 1 foot
- ▶ 2 m Approximate standard door height
- ▶ 50 m Length Olympic Swimming Pool
- ▶ 1 km Sprint distance—Horse race 5 furlongs
- ▶ 40 km Rail distance—Brisbane to Ipswich

VOLUME (Fluids)
 1 litre (l) = 1000 millilitres (ml) of water weighs

- 7 ounce Glass = 200 ml of water weighs
- 1 Pint Milk bottle = 568 ml
- 1 Gal = 4.55 l of water weighs 4.55 kg
- 5 Gals = 22.7 l of water weighs 22.7 kg
- 44 Gals = 200 l of water weighs 200 kg or 0.2 (t)

MASS (Weight)
 1 kilogram (kg) = 1000 grams (g)
 1000 kg = 1 tonne (t) metric ton (2205 lb)

Weight Comparisons

- 500 g = 1 lb
- 1 kg = 2 lb
- 5 kg = 10 lb

Illustrations include: 300 mm x 25 mm diam, 1 Foot x 1 inch diam, 100 mm diam, 10 mm thickness, 2 mm, 2 cents, 4" diam, 7/8", M16, 50 mm, 75 mm, 25 mm, 50 mm, 1", 2", 3", 9/8" B.S.W., 2", 3".

Metric Standard Inch Standard

Our Queensland colleagues have prepared information in the illustration of some recognition points. We hope to prepare something like this later, but with other relationships shown.

When the change to decimal currency was made, there were many exact equivalents between the new and old money units: for example, 5 cents equalled 6 pence, 10 cents equalled one shilling, \$2 equalled £1, and so on.

This made it fairly easy to accept the change over, as one could quickly find some comparison between the price in dollars and cents, and in pounds, shillings and pence. This enabled us to relate the price stated in the unfamiliar units to those in the more familiar ones. Some people have not yet made the complete change over, and still think £ s. d. occasionally, but everyone copes.

There are no exact equivalents expressed in whole numbers in the change to metric weights and measures. One inch equals exactly 25.4 millimetres; it is necessary to use a decimal part of a mm to get an exact equivalent.

In some cases, those where precise dimensions are needed, the conversion of Imperial (the old units) to Metric (the new) requires that the exact figure be used.

It does not look too bad when we consider changing from inches to millimetres, we just multiply by 25.4 to get our result. But when we change from miles to kilometres, it involves multiplying by 1.609344 to get the exact number of kilometres.

Few are really concerned with accuracy to this degree, and conversion tables usually show 1 mile—1.61 km (approx.).

This accuracy is good enough for most normal requirements. For example, suppose that we want to know how far it is in kilometres (km) from Melbourne to Bendigo. If it is 100 miles, then it is exactly 160.9344 km.

If we use the approximate 1.61 km per mile, we would say Bendigo is approximately 161 km from Melbourne. The error of less than 1/10th of a kilometre is of no consequence for most people and certainly not for the case in mind. But it can be important, say, when fares or freight charges are being fixed. Thus there are at least two needs for conversion tables, and care must be exercised when using them, to make sure that we use an appropriate factor for our needs.

For this reason, the Department has not yet published any conversion tables.

Although the relationships between lengths weights and liquid volumes are not precise, it is handy to have in mind some RECOGNITION POINTS.

- These are approximate only:
- 1 in. = 25 mm
 - 4 in. = 100 mm
 - 1 ft. = 300 mm

A standard door is 2 metres high.
 44 gal. = 200 litres.

7 oz. glass contains 200 millilitres (that is .2 litre) of liquid.

Melbourne to Nar Nar Goon, 40 miles = 64 km.

REPORTER REPORTS

"I left my briefcase in a train at Flinders Street station recently one morning, and by early afternoon it was returned to me intact from your Lost Property Office.

"My near-panic at losing notebooks and other items was soothed with considerate and quite compassionate attention by your P.R. office, particularly Mr. Russ. Hopper.

"Everyone concerned was most helpful, resulting in the recovery of my property so promptly and efficiently.

"I understand that I am not allowed to offer a reward to the finder. So, as a poor substitute, this letter is to pass on to whoever was concerned as an expression of my thanks.

"I am most impressed and very grateful."

—Mr. K. L. Joachim, Feature Writer for *The Herald*, writing to the Deputy Chairman of Commissioners.

AMONG OURSELVES

Three of two kinds

Three railway families at two locations is an unusual occurrence—but that's what *News Letter* found during a recent trip on *The Gippslander* when it was revealed that husbands of the three-woman buffet crew were railwaymen at the one location.

Supervisor of the *Moorabool* buffet carriage for one of the two crews is **Mrs. Lotte Kallaste**, who has been with the V.R. 5½ years. Working up from waitress, she has been in charge for two years.

"Some people are surprised to find that the train has a meal service," she said, "and we get a lot of regular travellers, too, mainly SEC men."

"It's a good life. We make only three trips a week—the other four days are ours."



Travellers on *The Gippslander* are always assured of a tasty meal from the buffet carriage. And buffet crew (from left) Eileen Mullock, Lotte Kallaste and Aileen Lilford, is one of the two regular crews that ensures good dining.

Aileen Lilford, the cook, has been on the train for 26 months, the last 10 as a cook. The comment of a recent traveller that one of her steaks was "the best in 1,000 miles of travelling around Australia" is not uncommon to the trip.

"Grilled steak is the best value for hungry travellers," remarked Aileen. "But at home I prefer roasts, particularly turkey."

Aileen recently took a holiday which caused the family to lose respect for her cooking. While she was away, Mr. Lilford dished up exotic dishes to their four children each night. "When I returned," she continued, "the children told me how much better their father was as a cook—but I quickly straightened them out,

I had pre-prepared the food before I went away."

She likes working on the train, but mentioned that the first three months were plagued by minor accidents, mainly bumps and bruises, until "train legs" were developed.

Third member of the team, is waitress **Eileen Mullock**. Also on the train for 26 months, she commented about the nice people that travelled. "We never get any trouble, and we are getting a lot of people who say they have given up driving and now use the train because it's more relaxing.

"Around Christmas, it's that hectic in the buffet car, that we feel as if we have run all the way to Bairnsdale and back."

Eileen was a machinist before trying out the V.R., and much prefers the train life.

While the three women log up more than 1,000 miles a week, their three husbands keep Upper Fern Tree Gully station under control.

Stationmaster, **Mr. Cliff Lilford**, has been at "The Gully" twice in his railway career. The first time was in 1949, when, as a Relieving ASM, he had to run the narrow gauge trains

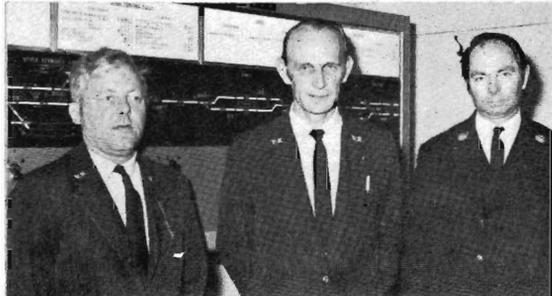
In 1952, he was at Yallourn, when the area was really starting to develop.

The family's railway connection continues beyond the obvious, as eldest daughter Glenda worked for the ARU for six years, and was secretary to J. J. Brown—a position now held by their other daughter Joan.

Heino Kallaste is the Signal Assistant at 'The Gully', the station he has worked at for most of his 10 years in the V.R. When newly arrived from Estonia, he took an immediate liking to the Fern Tree Gully area and bought some land overlooking the station. Over the next few years he built his own house, although never trained in that sort of work.

"The extension to Belgrave was under way when I came here," he said recalling the changes in his time at 'The Gully,' "and we now have a modern electronic signalling system (automatic track control) which controls from Fern Tree Gully to Belgrave. And when I built my house, there was not even a track to it—now there's a road, and my garden has over 100 trees."

Now that housebuilding has virt-



At Upper Fern Tree Gully, Stationmaster Cliff Lilford (right) is assisted by Signal Assistant Heino Kallaste (centre) and George Mullock.

ually ceased, the Kallaste family intend to travel Australia.

Last, but not least, is **George Mullock**, who started his VR career as a part-time conductor on the VR trams at St. Kilda. "I was living at Elwood at the time, right near the depot, so they offered me the job," he said. "I enjoyed working on the trams—they were good timekeepers and always made their train connection."

As quickly as George got to like the trams, the line was closed. He got a safeworking position at Armadale, then transferred to Lower Fern Tree Gully in 1961.

"I had just bought a house near The Basin when the 1961 bushfires came through," he continued. "I had never seen anything like it; they came to within ¼ mile of our back fence and firemen were all along our road."

Later, George moved to Upper Fern Tree Gully to fill a signal

to and from Gembrook; a job he really enjoyed.

Four years later he renewed acquaintances with the narrow V.R. this time at Colac, where he worked the 2 ft. 6 in. gauge trains to Beech Forrest and Crowes, again enjoying the tranquility and attractions of the bush.

Amongst his list of 24 stations worked at in as many years, was Ballan. "I had to be signalman at Ingliston at times, and we rode a bicycle 4½ miles along a gravel road to get there," he recalled. "Many's the time when returning at about 1 or 2 a.m. that the winds were that strong that I was blown off the bike and ended up having to walk most of the way."

assistant vacancy which also entails regularly working as Guard on one metropolitan train.

There's one thing the three families have in common apart from their railway careers—they all like their work.

V. R. I. BALL

Camberwell Civic Centre

JUNE 30

Bookings open May 8
with Graham Martyn,
Auto 2497.

Skeleton in the closet

"If you can carry it, we've had it," said Lost Property Foreman Jim Tongue reflecting on his 24 years in lost property offices of the V.R.



Mr. Tongue

With a geniality belying the image that lost property people are supposed to have, Jim remarked that he was always pleased to see people get their goods back. "I try to put myself in their position," he added.

That's a little bit hard because Jim has rarely lost an item.

There's always an element of surprise with lost property. "We found a skeleton in a suitcase once, but it turned out to be a medical student's plastic one; another good find was a suitcase with \$80,000 in it, but that was claimed.

"One of our more recent requests was to find a 'puff'—meaning a pouf—which a gentleman had left in a train."

All Jim's V.R. career has been associated with lost property.

"You see the changing fashion trends amongst the lost items—hats have died out; gladstone and attache cases have been replaced by brief cases and overnight bags; but the umbrella is still undisputed king of lost property.

"Of those who lose items, only about 20 per cent ever contact us, and only about 10 per cent of the items handed in are ever claimed.

"But it's amazing how people remember things," he added with the hint of a smile, "when a Wednesday Headline was put up recently about the number and type of items unclaimed, we were inundated with calls from people for goods they lost up to four years ago."

Jim, who retires on May 13, intends to live on the Gold Coast.

Turtle No. 11



Newest *Turtle Club* member, 20-year old Apprentice Electrical Mechanic Kazy Czapor, is the 11th V.R. employee to be saved by wearing a hard hat.

On November 11, he was moving a 22-ft. extension ladder when he stumbled. The ladder arced downwards and knocked him to the ground.

Although the ladder weighed over 100 lb., he was not hurt—because the safety helmet took the full force of the blow.

Kazy was doubly lucky. When starting the job, only 10 minutes before the accident, he realised that he didn't have his helmet and returned to the depot to get it.

Original baseballer

Charlie Scott, one of the V.R.'s notable sportsmen of earlier days, retires from his position as leading hand plumber at Spencer Street works depot on May 13.

A pioneer in baseball, he played in competitions from 1925–40, including representing Victoria for 10 years. In 1935, he was one of a group which went to Western Australia to help foster the game there.

Another memorable experience was when he was a member of the Australian team that beat an excellent American combination in Sydney in 1932.

In later years he coached baseball—one of his pupils was cricketer Bill Lawry.



Mr. Scott

"Bill was a natural at it, as are many of our cricketers—John Swanson, Paul Sheahan and others," he commented.

Charlie should know—he played both sports and represented Victoria in each.

A Collingwood cricketer—left hand bat—he was acting captain when former test star and later selector, Jack Ryder, was in the Australian team. He never made the Australian side, but represented Victoria in Sheffield Shield matches for 12 years.

Although he saw many greats—Ponsford, Fleetwood-Smith, Bradman, McCabe and others—he considers Ponsford, the opening bat, the best.

It's Charlie's conviction that baseball is a better game than cricket "because you get several innings to show your talents," but it suffers from being a winter sport in competition with football.

Mr. Scott joined the V.R. as an apprentice coppersmith in 1923.

RETIREMENTS

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING BRANCH

Phillipson, G. B., Tool Storeman, 18/4

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Bowie, W. W., Bairnsdale, 9/2
Brown, R. J., T. L. Depot, 15/5
Connelley, J., Newport, 20/5
Frecknall, R., T. L. Depot, 26/1
Goudy, A. W., South Dynon, 1/2
Grogan, J. K., Jolimont, 18/5
Kelly, W. T., Newport, 9/2
Liporta, L., Newport, 19/1
Milner, P. F., Traralgon, 13/12
Wells, F. H., Newport, 9/2

STORES BRANCH

Bryant, E., Rec. Depot, 3/2
Hughes, J. E., Head Office, 18/2
Kuropatwa, S., J. W. S., 9/2

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Brock, F. J. W., Seymour, 3/5
Cregan, A. J., Flinders Street, 25/5
Dunn, J. McK., Cathkin, 16/5
Hylard, M. A., Ringwood, 21/1
Jess, J., Wodonga, 4/3
Maher, J. M., Head Office, 17/5
Rasmussen, A. P., Flinders Street, 8/5
Spencer, R. T., Camperdown, 9/5
Waymouth, R. H., Melbourne Goods, 1/5

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Barry, P. R., North Melbourne, 9/2
Bonaddio, G., East Melbourne, 12/1
Bond, H., Ararat, 6/5
Cherogetos, A., Metro. Dist. Engineer 19/5
Dickie, P. D., Dunkeld, 18/1
Evans, E. T., Spotswood, 11/5
Finch, A., Ouyen, 18/5
Haby, F. W., Dimboola, 17/5
Krusc, E. W. H., Spotswood, 3/5
Macleod, D. J. A., Newport, 9/5
Maher, J. J., Spotswood, 29/5
Miller, F. C., North Melbourne, 18/5
Morden, C. E., Flinders Street, 21/5
O'Loughlin, J. T., North Melbourne, 18/2
Panczysyn, N., East Melbourne, 28/1
Scott, C. H., North Melbourne, 12/5
Theobald, S. C., Geelong, 16/2
Tonkonoga, I., East Melbourne, 24/5
Watts, A., Ballarat, 12/5
Watts, C. L., Spotswood, 18/2

**NEWS LETTER REGRETS
TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING
DEATHS**

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Dixon, J. C., Dandenong, 27/2
James, R. E., Melbourne Yard,
19/3
Leahy, D., Melbourne Goods,
20/3
Patey, W. W. M., Flinders Street
19/2

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Prior, C. J., Head Office, 21/2
Simpson, J. McN., Korumburra,
2/3
Szczeplaiak, S., North Melb. 4/3.
Willett, L. S., Benalla, 11/3

of the Flinders Street station buildings, Flinders Street.

The programme includes *Shades of Puffing Billy*, a light-hearted look at one of the train's trips between Belgrave and Emerald; the *Romance of transportation*, which covers the main points of the history of transportation in Canada, from horse to jets. *Adventures of a chipmunk family* will enthrall the youngsters while the remaining three films—*The bicyclist*, *Boy next door* and *The chairmaker and the boys*—should provide plenty of laughs as well as entertainment. So there you are, Dad—if Mum wants to bring the nips into town, do some shopping then have a good rest while they laugh their heads off, tell her to bring them along to your Institute on this particular Tuesday afternoon.

Admission is free to V.R.I. members and their families, but because of the expected demand for seats, tickets will be limited to one adult and three children.

South African Railways

The Institute Council is pleased to announce that in support of its Lecture Programme, arrangements have been made for Mr. John Hearsch, of the Secretary's Branch, and Mr. Bob Whitehead, Traffic Branch, to present a non-technical film programme entitled *Railways of Southern Africa*.

Recently returned from an extended tour of the African continent, they are able to present, through the medium of movie film and slides, an up to date, modern survey of the various railway systems in the countries through which they passed. As South Africa appears one of the last strongholds of steam locomotion, this night should be a *must* to those members who are still enthralled by, and who still remember,

the glory and glamour of the steam era in the railways, because, if anything, the emphasis in these films is on the steam loco.

This programme will be presented on Tuesday May 16, also in the V.R.I. Ballroom, Railway Buildings, starting at 8 p.m.

Open to all Railway staff, preferential bookings will be available to Institute members and their families.

For free admission tickets, to the showings, call personally or write to the General Secretary, V.R. Institute, 3rd Floor, Flinders Street Station Buildings, Melbourne.

Institute
News

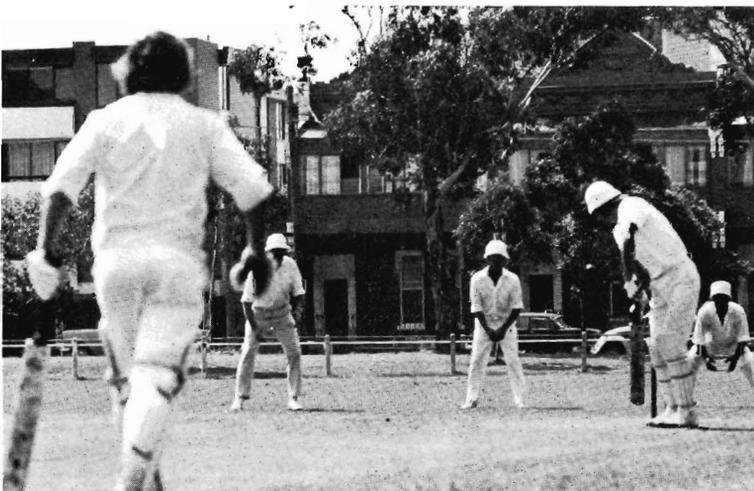
V.R.I. FILM DATES

Children's films

In 1971, the Institute Council broke new ground in presenting a children's film show during the May school holidays. Gratiified by the large attendance, Council is again presenting a film programme to youngsters during the 1972 May holidays.

A well balanced programme of colour and black and white films has been selected. The show is timed to start at 1.30 p.m., run for about 90 minutes, plus a short interval, and should conclude in time to catch off-peak trains home. The date is Tuesday, May 16, and the venue, the V.R. Institute Ballroom, third floor

Cricket week



A glimpse of the action between Sale and Korumburra.



BY OSS. KEATING

Country Cricket Week-1972

Heavy rain during the first three days marred this year's fixture when games were played on matting. However, an improvement in the weather enabled us to play on the turf wickets on the last two days—so every team had at least one game on these wickets. Five Centres competed: Dimboola, Korumburra, Sale, Sunshine and Traralgon. While it was most gratifying to see Sale competing for the first time, it was very disappointing that, also for the first time in many years, the Ballarat Centre was not represented. Competitors were given a very hearty welcome by Mr. R. M. Wright, General President V.R.I., and the week was officially opened by the Secretary for Railways, Mr. C. S. Morris.

Due to the weather, play in the first game did not get under way until after lunch, and there were no real surprises when the results were known.

Sunshine beat Sale and Dimboola won against Korumburra. Rain delayed play again on the second day, but a result was obtained in the two matches. Dimboola had an easy win over Sale and gave notice that they were a much stronger side than in 1971; but the big surprise came when Sunshine, giving a great display of team work, keenness and enthusiasm, beat the red-hot favourites,

Traralgon, in a great match. Wednesday saw Sunshine dispose of Sale and Traralgon beat the 'Burra. The match of the day on Thursday was the Dimboola v Sunshine game and, in another great team effort, Sunshine were able to out-score their opponents to win by 7 runs, with five wickets still in hand. This win meant that Sunshine could not lose the *D.S.J. Shield* for 1972, as they had the bye on the following day, Friday, and great was the jubilation in the Sunshine camp. In the other game, Traralgon had no trouble beating Korumburra. The final day, and Sale registered their first win in the competition with a very good victory over Korumburra, who, incidentally are only a shadow of the side that won this competition five years in succession. Traralgon secured second position with a convincing victory over Dimboola.

Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. G. F. Brown, presented the trophies to the winning team at a short social function after the final round of games, and Mr. L. A. McCallum, V.R.I. Vice President, congratulated the winners on behalf of the Institute. A very elated George Parker, captain of Sunshine, accepted the *D.S.J. Shield* and the *F.M. Mitchell Trophy* on behalf of his team and at the same time paid tribute to the excellent work performed behind the scenes by George Burns and Max Flavell, from the Sunshine Centre, who helped him recruit a team capable of winning this competition.

Some very good individual performances were recorded during this week. They included a 55 and a 54 N.O. by veteran Lou Balcombe and a great 61 N.O. by Ted Ray who is also, I feel, in the veteran stage, (both played for Dimboola), J. Slater, with a fine knock of 67 for Sale, 58 by Anton and a 54 N.O. by Anderson,

Cup winner



Not really the Melbourne Cup (but nearly as big) is the Commissioners' Cup for cricket, here being presented by V.R.I. Past President Mr. M. L. McKenzie, to George Parker, captain of the victorious Sunshine team.

Notable runners-up



Runner-up in the Teams Championship was Geelong, seen here receiving trophies from the Secretary for Railways, Mr. C. S. Morris (left). Team members are (from left) Russell Booley, winner of the Singles Championship, Frank Jones, who has played in V.R.I. tennis tournaments since the early 1930's, Ron Chandler and Ray Darcy.

both of Traralgon, and a 58 by G. Arcadiou of Sunshine. Among the bowlers, D. Stark of Sunshine, with 3 for 22, 5 for 34 and 5 for 14 starred, while R. Coyne's (Dimboola) effort of 8 for 43 was tremendous. C. Anderson, from Traralgon, proved himself a top class all rounder when he collected the amazing figures of 6 for 6 in an inspired burst of bowling. Finally, my sincere thanks, to Keith Hopkinson, Hon. Secretary, V.R.I. Cricket Association, for his assistance throughout this week.

Country Tennis Week—1972

Again we had the pleasure of the Secretary for Railways, Mr. Morris, representing the Chairman who was unavailable, declaring this particular Country Week open. The General President, Mr. Wright, as usual, welcomed the participants and stated that although this year's entries were small, he sincerely hoped that those players who did attend, enjoyed themselves and would endeavour to entice a number of their mates to play in the 1973 fixture.

As in cricket, the 1972 Teams Championship was won by Sunshine, and again this was good to see as this was also the first time that this particular Centre had won the *D.J. McIntosh Trophy*. Members of the winning team were G. Moloney (Captain), E. Foss, D. Taylor and S. Priestley. Runners-up were last year's winners, Geelong, who could not quite match Sunshine's over-all strength. The Railways Singles Championship was won by Russell Booley, of Geelong, with Les Cook, from Traralgon, runner up. Russell also won the Open Singles title, again defeating the unlucky Les in the final. In the final of the Doubles Championship, the Sunshine pair of Priestley and Taylor proved too strong for Traralgon's L. Cook and P. Sharp.

Special mention must be made of one of the competitors at this years fixture—J. F. (Frank) Jones, A.S.M. Little River—who has been associated with Railway Tennis since the early 1930's. He has been a regular participant in our V.R.I. Country Tennis Week since then and has attended innumerable Intersystem Tennis Carnivals either as a player or visitor. Nothing very remarkable about that, perhaps, except that Frank, who is a councillor of the Institute, turns 65 on August 29 this year.—Not bad is it, still playing competitive tennis in his 65th year. Incidentally, Council has paid Frank the honour of appointing him their Representative at the Intersystem Tennis Carnival now being staged at Brisbane.

In conclusion, might I thank the staff officers of all Branches in the Department, for their co-operation in releasing as many of the staff as was possible to compete in these various Country Weeks.

Tennis week



Receiving congratulations from (right to left) Traralgon's Les Cook and Peter Sharp are Sunshine's Doug Taylor and Sid Priestley, winners of the Doubles Championship.

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

NEWS LETTER

MAY

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1972

10 CENTS



A SOURCE OF PRIDE

That 150,000 Melburnians gave up their normal week-end pursuits to visit last month's railway exhibition should be a source of pride to railway men and women throughout the network.

Staging an exhibition as comprehensive and massive as this one, yet still maintaining a service from the remaining area reflects great credit on the Branch representatives who, co-ordinated by the Public Relations and Betterment Board, carefully planned the dovetailing of the exhibits with the regular services.

In times like today when the railway industry is beset with record deficits, and bitter attacks from critics, it is pleasing to reflect that the attendance indicates that Victorians themselves have still an interest in *their* railway system.

Quality of service is still a traffic winner—clearly evidenced by visitor-reaction to our modern rolling stock. This, of course, is only one aspect of customer-winning service.

G. F. BROWN

NSWR TAKEOVER CALL

A State-breaking \$30 million deficit coupled with a wages bill rising at the rate of about \$6 million annually, has prompted N. S. W. Transport Minister, Mr. Milton Morris, to call for the Federal Government to take over State railway systems.

The Australian reported Mr. Morris as saying that State Governments did not have the money to supply new carriages and other rolling stock urgently needed.

Mr. Morris was reported as being confident that the Commonwealth would soon take action to give the railways in all States a shot in the arm.

FEDERAL BOOST FOR RAILWAYS?

The Federal Government is considering the merit of pumping millions of dollars into State-owned railway systems.

The Age reports that the Minister for Shipping and Transport, Mr. Peter Nixon, has ordered his department to prepare a five-year plan for Commonwealth aid to improve metropolitan and country trains.

CORRECTION

Last month's Chairman's Comments, on the Bland Report, contains a typographical error.

The second paragraph should read:

"Some of the recommendations merely endorse what the Department had already started . . .": not *stated* as printed.

It is believed that at least \$20 million a year is necessary to make any impact on the problem.

The Federal Bureau of Transport Economics, which had made some preliminary studies of the railway situation, considered the injection of large sums of money into particular railway projects would show a favourable cost-benefit result.

The ensuing modernisation would also attract greater custom, reduce the railways' losses, save on freeways and reduce city congestion and smog.

According to the *National Times*, plans are that \$500 million be spent over 10 years, with concentration principally on city and suburban systems.

Whereas *The Age* described the move as an effort to regain popularity for the Government from the cities, the *National Times* said that by easing the State's burdens of railway losses, Commonwealth-State relationships could be bettered. They also contended that the investment in city transport "will be something of a sop in view of massive plans for decentralisation development in rural areas now being prepared by the Country Party".

Both newspapers commented that the moves were in line with modern thinking on transport problems.

PROBLEMS—AND ANSWERS

"The problems of our cities and provincial centres is a national problem requiring a national approach to national solutions," Federal Opposition Leader, Mr. Gough Whitlam, said when announcing his party's 14-point programme for development in Australia's cities and large provincial centres.

Special mention was made of specific grants to improve city rail services.

Mr. Whitlam also said: "It is high time the Commonwealth accepted a proper share of the financial responsibility for urban development in all its forms."

30 M.P.H. TRAVEL CAN DOUBLE PATRONAGE

"Drawing on experience from electrification of the London to Manchester line, and studies of US and Japanese experience, British Rail has formulas showing that increases in average train speeds can produce dramatic improvements in earnings.

"Where other conditions, such as fares, are held constant, then the ratio of new revenue to old revenue is roughly the square of the new speed over the square of the old speed.

"As an example, if average speed on an Australian suburban train rose from 20 m.p.h. to 30 m.p.h., this gives a ratio of new speed to old of 3:2.

"Squaring this indicates that revenue would rise by 2¼ times."

—*Christopher Jay, writing in The Financial Review, April 6, about the Transport Revolution.*

[The Melbourne Transport Plan specifies that the average speed of Melbourne's metropolitan trains be lifted from 22 m.p.h. to 30 m.p.h.—Ed.]

\$1,700m IN RED

Australia's seven railway systems are more than \$1,700 million in debt, the Minister for Shipping and Transport, Mr. Peter Nixon, told Parliament in March.

The debt had increased by \$500 million in the last decade.

CITY UNDERGROUND RAILWAY FOR PERTH

A rapid transit system incorporating an inner city underground railway is envisaged in a plan prepared by the Western Australian Government for Perth's development.

Stage one—costing \$110 million and lasting 10 years—involves building 5.5 miles of new electrified railway (up to four miles of it underground) new stations and the electrification of the present metropolitan system.

An extensive commuter bus network would co-ordinate with the rail system.

While this stage was underway, work would start on a \$14.6 million

project to remove the present ground level railway from the city area, which is restricting the city's northward development.

A second stage, also to last about 10 years, would provide for rail extensions—underground if warranted—to other suburbs.

[Only a short time ago, a transport plan was announced for Perth in which the existing metropolitan railways were to be removed and the right-of-ways converted into freeways.—Ed.]

ANOTHER NEW QLD. RAILWAY

Work started early last month on Queensland's latest railway—a \$30 million, 140-mile 3 ft. 6 in. gauge line to link Greenvale nickel deposits with a treatment plant at Yabula, 15 miles north of Townsville.

The line will have 137 bridges, while the crossing of the eastern Dividing Range will feature three tunnels.

When completed (expected 1974), the line will carry the longest and heaviest trains ever in Queensland.

Tonnages will build up to three million tons of nickel ore annually.

SUPERTRAINS

The State Government should build super railways instead of spending thousands of millions of dollars on freeways which would eventually choke Melbourne, Fitzroy Councillor Mr. Graham Porter, recently told the *Collingwood-Fitzroy Courier*.

It was a shame, he said, that sections of Collingwood, Fitzroy, Carlton and Richmond populations had to be shifted out of the city to build freeways.

If Victoria had trains travelling at more than 120 m.p.h. running between Melbourne and large country centres, people wouldn't want to live in the city.

Future freeways through Carlton alone were expected to mean the loss of more than 2,000 homes, the Councillor continued.

N.S.W. TRIUMVIRATE PLUS TWO

For years, Victorian Railways has been the only Australian railway system to have more than one Commissioner. But following proposals to amalgamate all Government-owned transport in N.S.W., the new organisation—Public Transport Commission of N.S.W.—intends having

three full time Commissioners, with an additional two part time Commissioners.

The Bland Report envisages that V.R.'s triumvirate be expanded into a Governing Board.

GAOL FOR TRAIN DRIVER ASSAULT

Six months gaol was given last month by Mr. Wallace, S.M., of Broadmeadows Magistrate's Court, to the sixth youth of a gang who attacked and kicked an electric train driver at Glenroy station last November.

The youth was alleged to have been hiding in another suburb since the assault took place.

Earlier, his five accomplices were tried and convicted on similar charges.

"But," commented *Broadmeadows Observer*, "they all received lighter sentences than the missing man."

PIN UP AD.

The concluding "go by" advert *Coffins go by train* (see March 1972 *News Letter*, p. 35) so fascinated one reader that he has adorned his filing cabinet with a cut out of the ad.

And what does the filing cabinet contain?

Death certificates!

METRIC WHEAT

Metric measures and weights will be used for the 1972-73 harvest.

The familiar bushels—60 lbs—per acre will be replaced by 75 kilograms a hectolitre.

Weighbridges and sales will be in metric tonnes (1,000 kilograms—2,205 lbs).

All sales from December 1 will be expressed in the metric units.

At the same time, acreage will be expressed as hectares. One hectare is approximately 2.47 acres.

TOKKAIDO SUCCESS

Japan's Tokkaido line has been a resounding success since it opened in 1964.

Passengers have risen from 11 million in the first year to 84 million in 1970, and profits have soared from \$20 million to \$300 million annually.

For the debt-ridden Japanese railways, this news was really good, said *The Australian*.

Recently JNR opened an extension of their 345-mile Tokyo-Osaka line

—to Okayama—and now plan a further six-year, \$650 million extension to Hakata. From there, later extensions will carry the line to Kagoshima at the southern tip of Japan.

Meanwhile, work has started on new "bullet" lines from Tokyo to two northern areas. Total cost will be \$3,500 million, and completion in 1976 is aimed for.

Building problems are getting more difficult to meet the standards of 170 m.p.h. running. Forty-nine per cent of the line between Osaka and Okayama is in tunnels.

OIL RIG WENT BY TRAIN

A good candidate for the popular "go by" advertising series, if it was still going, would have been the recent shipment of a complete oil drilling rig from Sale to Kewdale (the Perth freight terminal).

It was loaded on to 12 wagons.

Wonnerup, about 150 miles southwest of Perth, was the rig's new site.

FRONT COVER

A proud worthy exhibition. Over the April 15-16 weekend, 150,000 people flocked to Spencer Street station to see the Victorian Railways on show.

Our front cover photos show a selection of the action from the two days.

Top left: the memorable paralleling of the *Spirit of Progress* by the steam-hauled *Seymour Centenarian*. (Photo by *Bernie Kelly*, by arrangement with a suitable pine tree).

Top right: *Southern Aurora* Conductor Sam Truda hands a bottle of champagne to a passenger to celebrate the famous train's 10th. birthday.

Middle right: V. R. Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. G. F. Brown, rode into Melbourne on the leading steam locomotive of *Seymour Centenarian*.

Lower right: State Governor Sir Rohan Delacombe (*second from left*) and Minister of Transport, the Hon. Vernon F. Wilcox, M. P., (*far right*) were shown around the display area by the three Commissioners.

Lower left: one of the more spectacular displays was put on by the V.R. fire-attack wagon and the Country Fire Authority, to demonstrate the V.R.'s fire-fighting ability.

Exhibits worth \$10 million spread over 500,000 sq. ft. of Spencer Street terminal, free rides, 20 cent *mystery rides*, normally unseen railway practices and equipment on display, six steam locomotives, 10 diesel-electric or electric locomotives, interstate carriages open for inspection—this was the scene for the V.R.'s second great Railway Exhibition—to celebrate Southern Aurora's 10th birthday this time. Last time, in 1968, despite a tropical downpour, more than 75,000 Melburnians rolled up to see their railways on display; this time, 150,000!

1972 RAILWAY EXHIBITION

As a curtain-raiser for the week-end, an excursion for 800 steam train enthusiasts willing to endure a pre-dawn start to travel to Seymour and return to Melbourne, paralleling the *Spirit of Progress* was run by the *Seymour Centenarian*. Another 35 came to Melbourne in an extra carriage attached at Seymour.

For passengers on *Spirit of Progress*, it was just another trip until leaving Benalla when the conductor handed out a special leaflet, setting out the *Seymour Centenarian's* run.

To most passengers—other than the sprinkling of train enthusiasts aboard—exactly what was to happen was not quite clear—until the *Spirit of Progress* nosed through Seymour, that is.

A huge smoke pall, generated by the two 187-ton R-class steamers as they got their 11-carriage *Seymour Centenarian* rolling, columned into the overcast sky and *Spirit of Progress* passengers who were unprepared for the sight of rail fans at close quarters got quite an eyeful (and so did the rail fans of a certain sleeping car passenger).

First impression was that every camera in Victoria and half of the tape-recorders and goggles were on the train. Every window—even W.C.'s— sported at least two bodies and some even more.

Every conceivable vantage point to savour steam action was taken. *Spirit of Progress* passengers gazed a little in awe at first, but then as the thrashing driving wheels and steam machinery gyrated outside their windows, the magic of steam overcame them, too, and they willingly became part of an unforgettable ride into history.



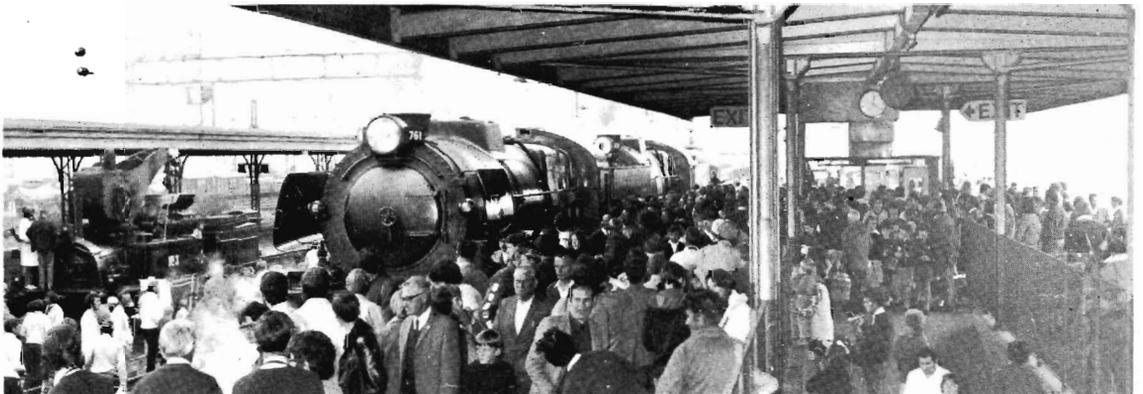
Everything that opened and shut was investigated by enthusiastic visitors.

It was never planned as a race—the two trains were to parallel one another and that's how it worked out.

First one, then the other, would draw ahead to delight the thousands

of people who flocked trackside to watch the two trains thunder past.

Every town had people to wave the trains through. Every vantage point sported a brigade of photographers.



After the arrival of *Seymour Centenarian* many of its 830 riders stood around to soak in the steam atmosphere.

Overbridges at Broadford, Wandong, Craigieburn, Jacana and Spencer Street sported crowds more like a football game than the passing of two trains.

At 10.10 a.m., the two trains drew into Spencer Street terminal—*Spirit of Progress* to platform No. 1 for interstate passengers to head off (and for some, to view the exhibition), the steam to platform No. 8, to be welcomed by the Governor of Victoria, Sir Rohan Delacombe.

Vice-regal patronage

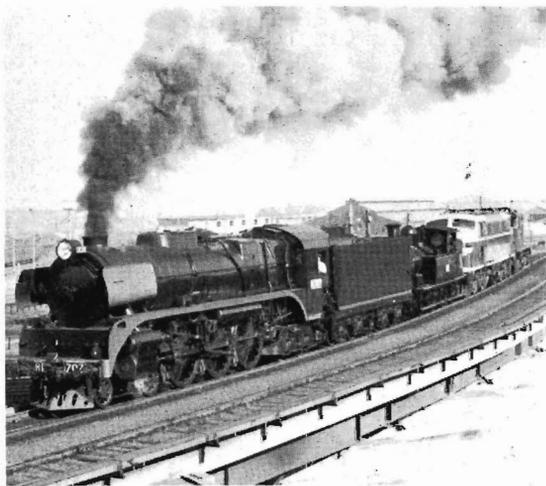
As soon as the two steam engines had come to a stand, Sir Rohan was into the cab, chatting with the crew and Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. G. F. Brown) who had ridden in from Sunshine on the leading R.

As well as the Commissioners being present, the Minister of Transport, the Hon. Vernon F. Wilcox, M.P., also attended.

An inspection of the majority of the 85 exhibits and displays was undertaken.

Highlights

The obvious highlight of the exhibition for the majority of people was the steam locomotives. Youngsters climbed in, on, under, over and through. They pushed, pulled, kicked and tested everything



One of the big problems of the exhibition was placing the rolling stock. Most was brought over in batches—like R 707's haul of tiny E 369 and 2,400 h.p. L 1157.

that looked interesting. They found more opening doors and hatches and steps than the railways knew they had provided.

And when that was done, they took to the rides. Mystery rides in the two air-conditioned rail cars attracted 6,000 travellers. The rail cars found their way to Clifton Hill, Camberwell, Hawthorn, Caulfield, Windsor, St. Kilda, Port Melbourne, Footscray, Spotswood, Newport, White City and Essendon.



Most popular ride in both 1968 and 1972 exhibitions was the platform length trip in the three veteran six-wheel carriages. On their journey, passengers passed representative carriages of *The Overland* and *Intercapital Daylight*.

Passengers patiently queued for more than an hour to have a ride in the new rail cars' first public appearance in Melbourne.

Running the full length of Platform No. 2 were the three veteran six-wheel passenger carriages which proved so popular in the 1968 exhibition. This time the red-painted D3 locomotive hauled them instead of the old suburban tank E-class

From the mail dock at No. 2 Platform, a *mini standard gauge* train ran to Sunshine for passengers to sample interstate train travel at speed. More than 3,000 willingly paid their 20 cents for the 15-mile trip.

Big eaters

With crowds of 50,000 on the first day and double that on the second, the Spencer Street cafeteria did a roaring trade.



The Portland-Ararat rail car's mystery trips were very popular.

locomotive which, being unfit to run, made its appearance as an equally popular static exhibit. About 27,000 enjoyed the free steam trip.

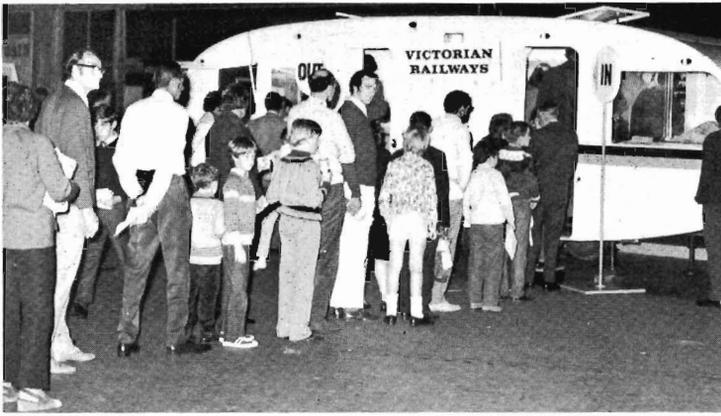
Trips to the hump yard, personally conducted by the Manager, Melbourne Freight Terminal (Mr. F. Blencowe), were swamped, too. A 280-h.p. diesel rail car left for the top of the engine road flyover every 20 minutes—and was full every time. At the flyover, taped details of the hump workings were given.

Some of the major items consumed by the hordes were 150 gals. of milk, 900 ½-pint cartons of flavoured milk, 1,800 meat pies, 300 lb. sausages, 300 lb. fish, 100 sets of brains, 150 lb. curried chicken, over ½ ton of potatoes and 60 lb. ham for sandwiches.

Most popular of the desserts was the old favourite, plum pudding.

Asides

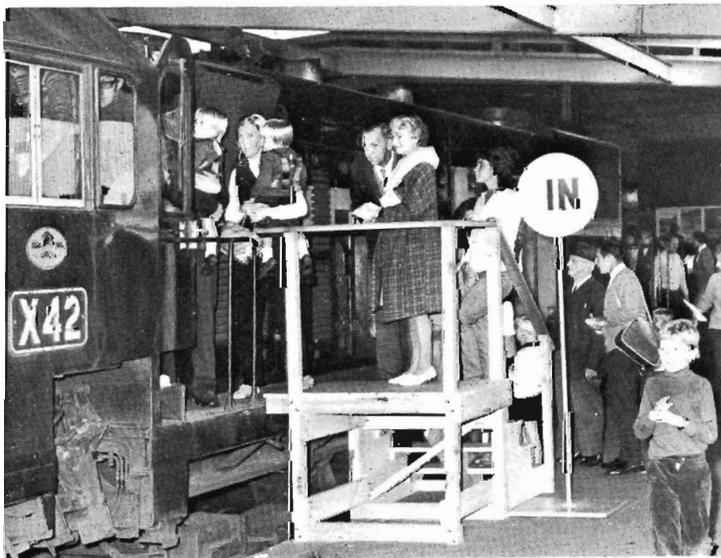
Organising a venture as big as the V.R.'s exhibition always brings its



The V.R. Mobile Advisory Bureau was just as popular at the exhibition as it is at the country shows which normally occupy its time.



Selections of modern freight wagons were placed at various points throughout the exhibition.



The mystery of mastering a powerful diesel-electric locomotive was revealed to the thousands who took a walk through 2,000 h.p. X 42.

problems and humour. On the day, there are always the little personal stories:

... as *Seymour Centenarian* and *Spirit of Progress* thundered side by side towards Melbourne, a passenger on *Spirit of Progress* developed a bloody nose. Sympathetic driver of the second R-class, Reg Walton, quickly soaked one of the engine driver's many "sweaty's" in hot water and passed it to the passenger standing in the doorway. After the treatment was administered, goods were returned to their rightful owner. And the two trains had not missed a wheel revolution . . .

... the first of the *mini standard gauge* train trips to Sunshine didn't quite get away to the start planned. With an engine at each end, it was planned that the two engines would get the train quickly up to the line speed then let the leading engine do the work. To the accompaniment of much whistling from the rear locomotive, the first trip roared out of Spencer Street with the 2,000 h.p. X-class at the head dragging the train up to 20 m.p.h. while the 950 h.p. T-class in the rear churned valiantly in an attempt to go the other way . . .

... many a parent insisted on reading all details of the exhibits and displays out aloud to their offspring—including those who were fast asleep . . .

... one young adventurous couple decided to get a better, close-up action shot of the fire train. Jumped into the station pit (which was forbidden) as the train started its run from up the platform. Although they hid between two carriages the wind current carried the spray neatly into their nook. Soaked and bedraggled, they took it well, and continued round to the mystery trips. Were still at the exhibition one hour later, too . . .

... more than one parent loaded tired junior on to one of the "do-it-yourself" parcels trolleys and continued to view all that was on display. . .

... just as much as the Saturday was the rail enthusiast day, Sunday was the family day. One unpruned corpulent parent turned to his spouse and was heard to utter "I told you they weren't our kids, they've got too much energy and initiative" . . .

... Driver Les Haining mentioned that more than one mother warmed her baby's bottle in the cab of the steam locomotive . . .

... despite the eight weeks of careful planning by a team of people, the starting time of the exhibition became 10.15 instead of 11 a.m. People turned up from 9 a.m. . . .

... perhaps the greatest surprise was the number of people, who, in

discussions with staff, admitted they had not travelled by train for many years, or not at all, and were unaware of the modern rolling stock . . .

. . . more than one person remarked that interstate trains had improved so much that they would use them in future . . .

. . . only boys—aged 4-6½—were lost; no girls (that's Women's Lib. for you). One boy turned up at the lost counter three times (is that independence?). And of the parents, only one was heard to offer a thank you . . .



The Overland Stewardess J. Zimmer hands out an exhibition guide to a visitor.

. . . one steam train enthusiast amused passengers on *Spirit of Progress* by completely covering his face and hair with paper towels and then gazing with unseeing eyes towards the speeding smokey end . . .

. . . at one stage, several *Spirit* passengers formed a viewing group and wandered up and down the corridors to stand and gaze at the steam engine outside . . .

. . . photographers on both trains generally observed a very gentlemanly decorum. After getting the shot they wanted, they would give their spot away . . . and so on, in rotation, so that every one was able to record the event . . .

. . . with the push-pull standard gauge train, turnaround at Sunshine was scheduled for five minutes. After a few runs on the Saturday, the standing time at Sunshine was reduced to 90 seconds. Sunday's crews after some practice whittled this to a mere 25 seconds . . .

Judging by the size and reaction of the crowds at the exhibition, railways have lost little of their fascination. It indicated that a large pro-

portion of the public still view their railway system as a valuable asset.

WHY THE EXHIBITION

Major purpose of the 1972 Railway Exhibition was to bring in the general public—particularly those who hadn't been on a train for years—as well as decision makers from industry, travel trade and media representatives, to see for themselves and actually experience the comfort of modern rolling stock, particularly interstate trains, all in one convenient location.

Other important aims, explained the Department's Public Relations Chairman, Harry Hauptmann, were to: generate a better understanding of railways—what they had to offer and how they operated—and to give staff and their families an opportunity to better know and be proud of their industry.

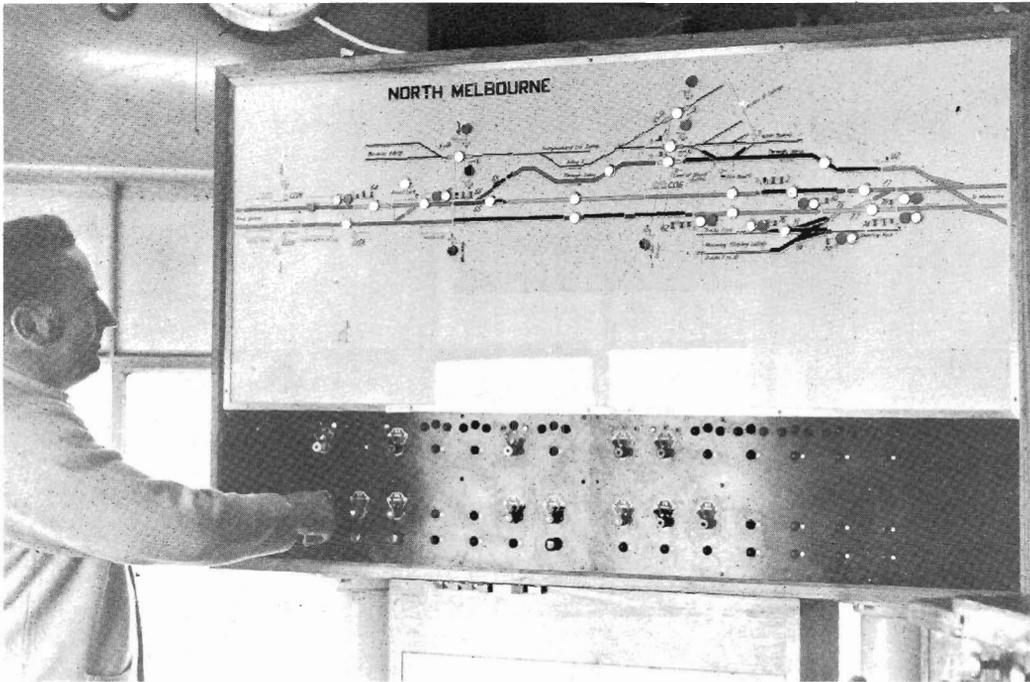
“Direct mail and press advertising were used to invite along the travel industry and media specialists—such as radio talk-backers—for they are so often the go-betweens with the Railways and the public,” said Mr. Hauptmann. “We wanted them to be well and accurately informed”.



One interested visitor had the exhibits described to him by his wife; he was blind.

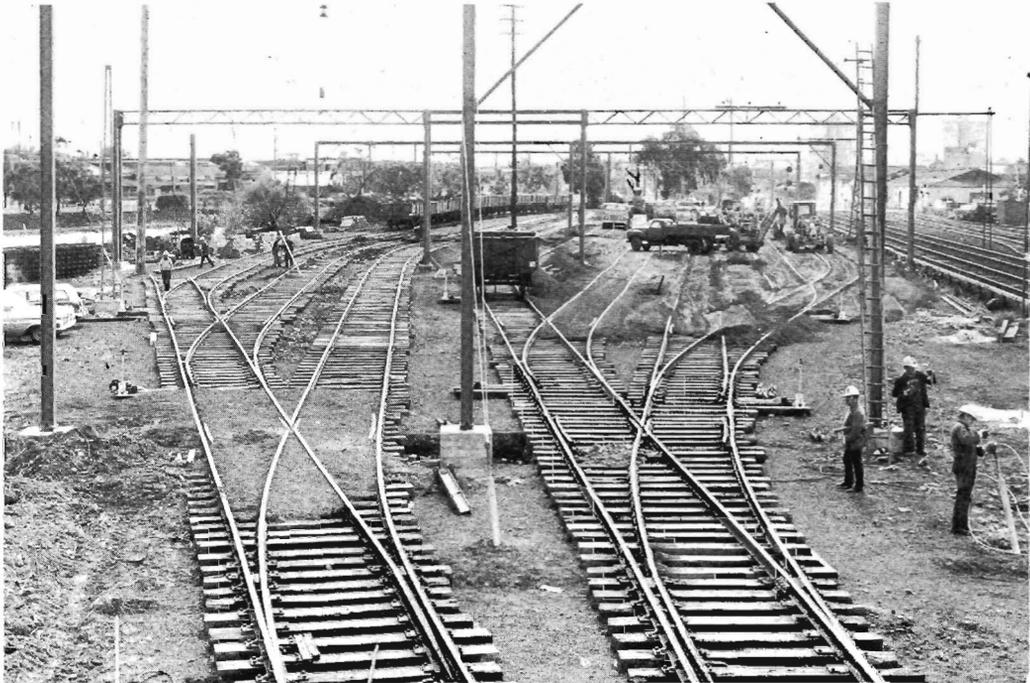


A very popular exhibit was the cause of the exhibition, *Southern Aurora*. Elsewhere a mini-*Southern Aurora* carried 3,000 passengers.



VIEW
NE

NEW SIGNALING
metropolitan
Melbourne Junction
a new signalling
the new stabling
box control the
new sidings; to
worthwhile, the
and signals to
installation of
Arden Street
crossings have
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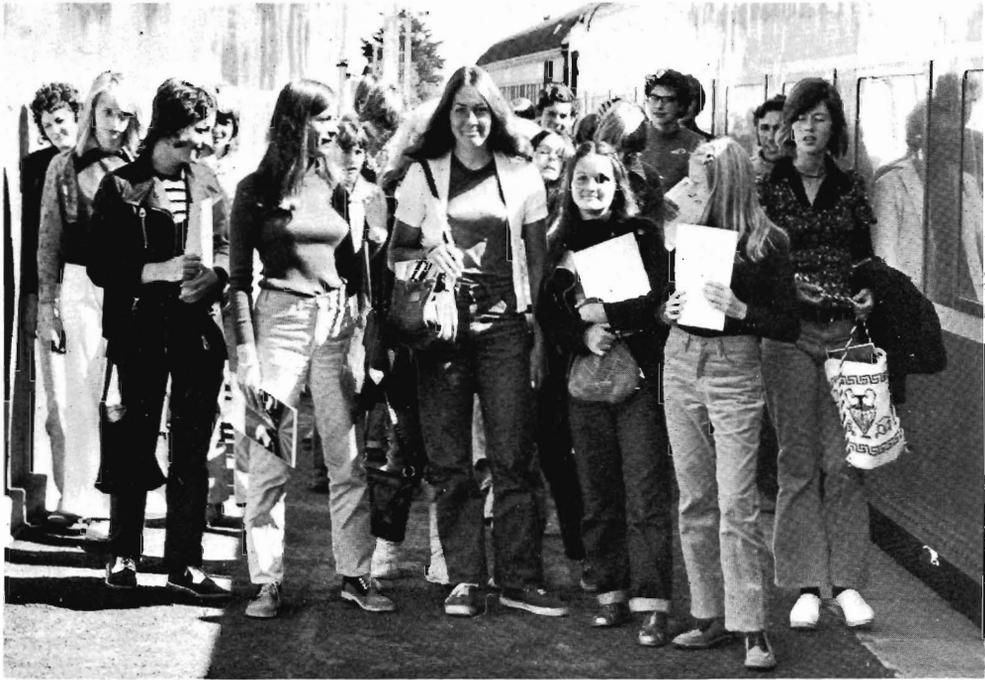


NEW STABLING SIDINGS. To replace sidings in Flinders Street yard lost to the Underground works, 10 new stabling sidings for metropolitan trains have been put in at Macaulay. Trains will be internally cleaned while at these sidings, too.



NEWS
OF
NEWS

ING PANEL. One of the landmarks - North signal box - has received panel in conjunction with sidings. Signalmen at the points in to and out of the make the whole system panel also controls points Birmingham Bridge. Recent barriers at the busy Macaulay Road level removed the need for locations.



RAIL-ROAD SCHOOL TOURS. Forerunner of a new range of school tours was organised by the V.R. in April. Form four students from Nunawading High School travelled to and from Sale by *The Gippslander*, from where a bus tour showed them B.H.P.'s natural gas installation and the East Sale R.A.A.F. Base. All arrangements were handled by the V.R.'s new Travel Promotion Officers.



ROLL - IN BRIDGE. Nepean Highway widening works at Gardenvale entailed completely new steel work for the rail bridge. The new bridge was assembled alongside the old one, to be then rolled in to position.

EMERGENCY WHEAT MOVEMENT SETS RECORD

Recent emergency movement of 42,500 tons of wheat from Wimmera growing areas to Portland, to meet an altered shipping schedule, demonstrated the V.R.'s ability to handle big consignments at minimum notice.

A crisis started when a stoppage by tug operators diverted to Portland the wheat carrying ship, S.S. Polyhymnia, due to load 42,500 tons of wheat at Geelong.

What would have been a shipment of wheat from the massive Geelong terminal silos now had to come from Portland, where the silos were nearly empty. The V.R. and Grain Elevators Board quickly swung into action to move wheat from country silos to Portland.

Problems

Freighting wheat is not as simple as it sounds. Wheat comes in five grades; wherever possible, three are sold as individual types. This sale required the blending of grains making the movement more demanding.

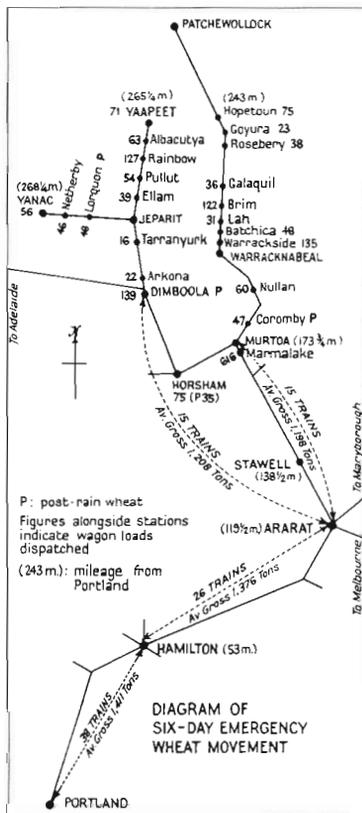
- Individual wheat types had to be kept separated until they reached the Portland terminal, where they were blended in the required quantities before loading.

- With light rails in most of the growing areas (north of Brim and Dimboola), the most efficient grain wagons, the 200 plus (orders in hand will swell the number to 350) GJX and GJF hopper wagons, could not be loaded to capacity.

- Stawell Bank—one mile of 1 in 62 gradient—meant that most wheat trains had to be pushed over the bank by another locomotive to maintain locomotive loading efficiency.

- The entire emergency movement had to be superimposed over the regular wheat wagon movement of (for that week) 801 to Geelong terminal, 1,201 for Portland, and 370 for mills throughout the State. Oats and barley were also moved.

To meet the six-day deadline, so the ship could sail before Easter, efforts were concentrated on silos that could be quickly and easily cleared by rail.



Few extra staff

With the exception of a few extra train crews, the entire emergency movement was handled by existing staff.

Special trains

Nearly 2,000 wagon loads were needed to move the wheat.

Two block train loads of hopper wagons ran a shuttle service between the multi-million bushel storage at Marmalake (Murtoa) and Portland (175 miles).

Four-wheel wagons kept up the flow of wheat from other areas to the seaboard terminal. The haul from Yanac to Portland was nearly 270 miles.

All told, 118 special trains, averaging 1,280 tons gross, ran.

Wheat wagons were added to regularly scheduled trains between Ararat and Hamilton to bring them up to their maximum hauling capacity, thus achieving most efficient operation without incurring extra locomotive use.

With the ship loading rate at Portland being the limiting feature, Hamilton was made a staging area and a shuttle of wheat trains ran between there and Portland to match the loading rates.

On each of the loading days, about four special trains brought between 5,000 and 5,500 tons into the terminal.

The whole exercise went off without a hitch—the terminal handled the incoming wheat smoothly, and at no time was jammed.

On Tuesday, March 28, wheat unloaded at Portland established a record. For the 16-hour day, 213 GY wagons and 60 GJX wagons were unloaded—8,500 tons.

Portland residents should be really thankful that road movements of wheat are quite small. Had the emergency movement of the 42,500 tons been undertaken by road—assuming an average of 15 tons per semi-trailer—Portland would have had an incoming semi-trailer every two minutes throughout the 16-hour days the terminal employees worked! With empty semi-trailers going the opposite way, this would have meant a semi-trailer every minute.

SUGGESTIONS ACCEPTED

During April, the following suggestions were adopted:

- Surplus locks be returned to store for use elsewhere 82
- Correction of wrong time shown on Alamein wall sheet 82

Suggestion forms (G. 256) can be obtained from supervisory staff or the Public Relations and Betterment Board, Head Office.

Many think that running a railway is only a matter of getting a train from one station to another. But in reality, the act of getting the train between the two stations is one of the smallest problems that the V.R. has to face. Electric traction has its own set of troubles—and one of the large ones is electrolysis. In Melbourne, with its large electric-powered railway and tramway networks, the problem is one of the worst in the world.

TRACKING THE PROBLEM

Basically, electrolysis is corrosion of metal by electric currents leaking from the rails and passing through the soil to metal objects buried in the earth: e.g. water and gas mains, and telephone cables.

Electrolysis occurs wherever the rails are used for return current with D.C. (direct current) traction. An A.C. (alternating current) system has no electrolysis problem, but conversion would cost the V.R. over \$25 million—an expenditure not justified to avoid the problem.

Severity of the problem depends on the nature of the soil, general condition of the traction system and metal underground structures.

Sleepers and ballast provide insulation between rails and the ground, but at times this insulation is far from perfect and leakage occurs.

Stray currents then leave the rails and flow into and through the entire underground network of pipes, etc., until, near a sub-station, they leave the underground pipes and return through the earth to the rails before entering the sub-station.

Where these stray currents leave metal objects to enter the earth, severe corrosion results—a current of one amp flowing continuously for one year will remove 13 to 20 lb of iron, or 75 lb. of lead. In practice currents much greater than this are usual.

Solutions

As early as 1925 the problem was making its presence felt.

A semi-official organisation, the Electrolysis Committee, was established by the then head of the State Electricity Commission, Sir John Monash, to tackle the electrolysis problem. Representatives were from the S.E.C., M. & M.B.W., P.M.G., M. & M.T.B., V. R. and the Gas and Fuel Corporation.

Traction current was established as the major cause. Current could be detected surging in a pattern consistent with train operation.

Even water pipelines beyond Warburton—20 miles from the nearest electric line—have been found to have stray current in them.

First method undertaken to overcome the problem was to improve the general level of insulation of the tracks. All structures subject to electrolysis (above and below the ground) were coated with various insulating materials to minimize current flow on to or off them.

A direct connection—a *drainage feeder*—linked the point on the structure where corrosion was most likely to occur and the nearest rail.

FIGURE 1

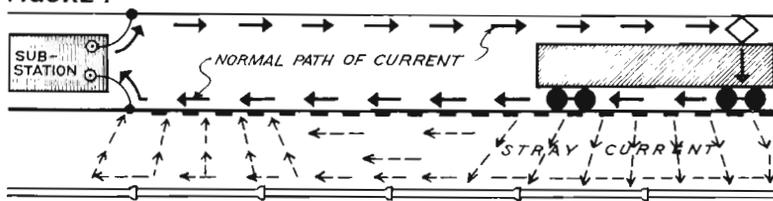
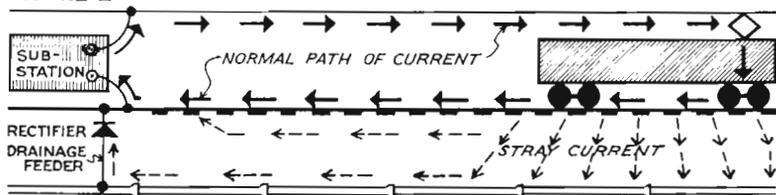


FIGURE 2

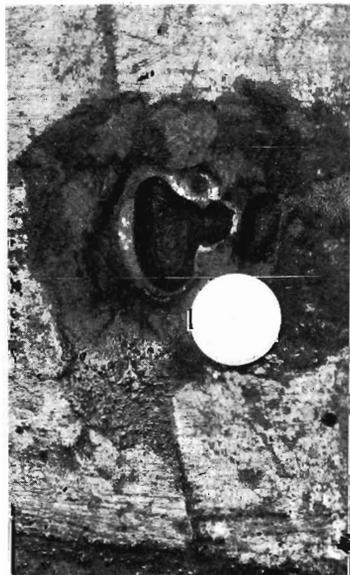


The idea was that the feeder would carry the stray current back to the rail—in the majority of cases—and then to the sub-station in the normal manner.

As no single point of connection is correct for all instances of train running—the strength of the return current and actual area where the stray currents are likely to leave the rails varies with the distance that a train is from the sub-station, and the number of trains in the area—there were times when the current actually flowed in the reverse direction and caused worse corrosion at other points.

Naturally this situation had to be corrected. A rectifier was added to the *drainage feeder*. This limited the stray current to the required direction; but introduced another problem—the current did not flow until a certain voltage was reached, and even then it was less than required.

Adding a constant voltage from an outside supply through a step down transformer and rectifier to the *drainage feeder* to alter the *drainage system*



This ulcer-like corrosion on a gas pipe—larger than a 10c piece—was caused by electrolysis.

to one called *boosted drainage*—was the next step.

This overcame the problem of draining sufficient current from the underground pipes and compensated, to a fair degree, for the inability of a single connection to be adequate for all possible combinations of circumstances.

Ideally, the *boost voltage* is only needed when trains are drawing power from the system.

However, the *boost unit* was only capable of supplying a constant voltage, and an unwanted *circulating current* flowed through the rails, earth and underground structures when no trains were drawing power.

Wider problem

This current altered the areas where corrosion occurred. Extra boosts (more units) were added to overcome this by-product; but the result was cumulative and forced a gradual increase in the number of problem areas—although a decrease in electrolysis effects—over the whole traction system.

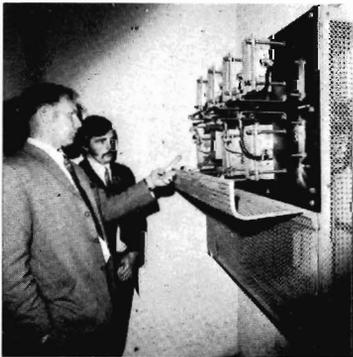
To overcome the problem, a modified version of an earlier method—direct drainage, but to the sub-station—was installed.

Instead of bringing the *stray currents* back to the nearest rail, very heavy duty feeders—once copper but now aluminium following frequent thefts—brought the *stray currents* direct to the negative terminal at the nearest sub-station. This involved the use of feeders up to three miles long.

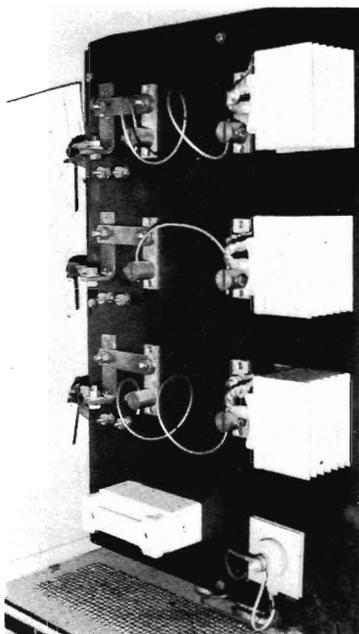
This, it was claimed, would not alter the pattern of the already circulating current and therefore would not cause further problems.

Also, the sub-station load would alter the return current flowing back through the negative terminal and automatically adjust the current flowing from the underground structures in proportion.

But again the answer was not this



Chief Electrical Engineer, Mr. Alan Firth, explains the working of the drainage equipment inside a sub-station to *News Letter* Editor. The equipment feeds the current back into the circuit.



The spiral conductor lengths are varied to alter the drain rate, as the rate of drainage from underground objects must be even, otherwise more trouble is caused.

simple. The current returning to the sub-station was not directly proportional to that flowing out.

The system also suffered from voltage drop over the rectifier still needed to block any reverse current. So a *polarised contactor*, which needed only a tiny voltage to operate it, replaced the rectifier.

With this arrangement, the drainage was at times insufficient and at other times too much, resulting in the same sort of secondary corrosion caused by the *boosted drain*.

It was at this stage that *over-drainage* was recognized as a major contributor to pipe corrosion.

Major breakthrough

With this sequence of events and the problem of an expanding metropolis as the background, 1960 saw a major breakthrough.

The then Engineer of Tests for the Electrical Branch, Mr. I. G. Hodges, now a Commissioner, recognised the potential of the newly-marketed *thyristor* or *silicon-controlled rectifier* (a development of the transistor) to overcome the electrolysis problem.

The system which grew out of the use of thyristors is, as far as is known, only in use on the V.R.

Earlier attempts were all variations of overseas methods—they have to vary because no two cities or systems have identical problems.

Staff in the electrical testing section devised a system where the *thyristor* was coupled to the *drainage boost transformer* to control the *boost cur-*

rent in direct proportion to the load drawn by trains. No trains, no boost; lot of trains, lot of boost.

Instantly mitigated were the problems caused by the constant *boost current*.

Problem minimized

Ninety per cent of the metropolitan area has been equipped with this system — *traffic regulated boosted drainage* — and more than \$1 million spent on it.

Despite its success in minimizing the problem, there is still room for improvement. Corrosion still occurs when *stray currents* leak away from the rails.

Serious corrosion of the rail foot happens whenever the ballast becomes dirty or covered with metal brake block dust, or at level crossings where the rails are, of necessity, not always able to be properly insulated.

The only known method of stopping this is to make the sleepers and ballast fulfil their insulating role by keeping them clean and clear of the rails.

The actual area where current leaks from the rails is a very short distance—usually only a matter of feet—and normally only where rails are close to underground structures capable of conducting electricity.

Special attention is being paid to combat electrolysis in the underground loop project.

While the problem of combating electrolysis may seem to be simple, its solution—like so many others associated with electricity—has baffled and eluded experts throughout the world for years.

WELL... THEY'RE CALLED SLEEPERS

Saturday, April 8, was just like any other day for Mildura-based driver Ian Gregory as he headed No. 75 goods out of Mildura about 10 p.m.

Four miles out, at Irymple, the train was slowed to exchange the safe-working staffs, then, as the locomotive powered away, Driver Gregory noticed a body between the rails.

Emergency braking was applied, but the distance was too short and three-quarters of the locomotive passed over the body.

Running back to make an investigation, a man's thong, cut in half, was found . . . and underneath the train, fast asleep, was its 22-year-old owner.

After his rude awakening, police attended and asked for a reason for taking up a rails position instead of the more usual sprung bed for sleeping quarters.

The reply that he didn't know how he came to be between the rails was not accepted so police charged him with being drunk and disorderly.

He was later fined \$2.

LAST OF THE MAIL MOTORS



The Mail Motor being loaded at Piangil in 1970.

The last mail motor service in Australia—between Piangil and Kooloong in northern Victoria—finished on March 6 to a rousing farewell from district residents.

The driver of the service, Bill Roberts, who had worked the "train" since 1940, was honoured at a later presentation at Natya Hall.

When he was not driving the motor, Bill looked after the track—now track care will be a full time occupation.

Mail motors, which carry parcels and mails, were run on behalf of the Post Office whenever there was insufficient traffic to warrant a train.

In the late 1930's, the heyday of these motors, there were over 50 similar services throughout the State.

The somewhat isolated communities along the 16 miles of track, each supporting about 35 families, were indeed grateful to Bill for often exceeding the bounds of duty to see that the mail got through.

Recalled were times when during drought years Bill often had to shovel his way through sand drifts, sometimes taking all night.

With petrol rationing during the war years, local residents would have been virtually isolated but for Bill and his postal motor. They have never forgotten.

Despite Bill declining to take part in an official honouring ceremony for his service—he dismissed it saying: "I've only done a job"—the Swan Hill Shire President, Mr. J. J. Larkin, presented Bill with an inscribed ash tray and stand.

The inscription reads: "presented in recognition of outstanding and devoted service from 21.6.40 to 6.3.72, W. Roberts, from the grateful communities of Natya and Kooloong."

Bill, a widower, who lives a lonely life without radio or television, recalled

to the gathering some humorous events which led up to the previous conveyance—a Sheffield Motor—being given to the Swan Hill Pioneer Settlement.

In his 32 years, he made more than 3,100 return trips. Up to September 1954 the run was 6½ miles longer—to Yungera.

But Bill and his postal motor service will live on in history.

The Australian Railway Historical Society plans to hang a coloured photograph of the inseparable pair in the Piangil station building.

—Swan Hill Guardian.

AMONG OURSELVES

Brimful of Brim

Tiny Brim, district population about 300, standing 229 miles from Melbourne between Warracknabeal and Hopetoun, is a "terrific little spot," says Stationmaster Don Newick.

"We've got everything here for all the sports, friendly people, and they support the V.R. well." To the tune of \$97,000 for 1970-71.

Being near the Wimmera-Mallee "Border", main traffic from the area is grain. Silos hold 740,000 bushels of wheat, 555,000 bushels of barley, and, last season, more than 40,000 bushels of oats were stored in the open.

Wool, groceries, beer, superphosphate and gas cylinders make up the

bulk of other traffic to Brim, and nearby Galaquil, which Don supervises.

Unusual traffic recently handled at Brim and Galaquil, and other stations were steel sections for power line pylons for a new line under way between Horsham and Mildura.

Travellers arriving at Don's station on a typical, sweltering, Wimmera day find the station visually refreshing: always a picture of tidiness and the gardens well cared for.



Brim's neat garden is a welcome respite from the sun-parched Wimmera countryside.



Stationmaster Don Newick takes a few minutes off to prune the geraniums.

The station garden, which has won first prize in V.R. competitions twice, was started by a former A.S.M., Frank Kupke, now at Boronia. Don, who has altered it a little and always kept it in good trim, is justifiably proud of its wins, and of Frank's hard work in starting it.

Don joined the V.R. in 1964 as a

shed assistant at Nhill, and has been at Maroona, Diapur, Kiata and Dimboola.

Rainbow No. 3

From Beech Forest to Gold Pass

From outback privations to demolition 'expert' to Chief Estate Officer of the V.R. is the personal story of Evan Prewett, who hands in his gold pass on June 3.



Mr. Prewett.

When a youngster, his parents took up a farm in the rugged Otway Ranges—and this led to the establishing of Australia's first primary level correspondence school.

The nearest school was at Beech Forest, six miles away by bush foot track.

So Evan and his brother became pupils Nos. 1 and 2 of the correspondence school.

Even today, his homework is preserved in the Education Department archives. Few can claim that (or would want to)!

In 1923 Mr. Prewett joined the V.R. as a junior clerk and was assigned to the Way and Works Branch payrolls office, working out details for the changeover from monthly to fortnightly pay.

Three years later he transferred to the Estate Office, where he was to remain until retirement.

He qualified as a Licensed Sur-



Giving the platform road at Pallut station some attention when *News Letter* called were members of Rainbow No. 3 gang. Left to right are Ganger Jack Harberger, and Repairers Jack Abbot and Bill Martin.

veyor and later became a Member of the Institution of Surveyors (Australia).

A captain in the Australian Army during World War II, he was given the special assignment of preparing demolition requirements for bridges throughout north-eastern Australia's coastal plain.

After the War, it was back to the Estate Office.

In 1957 Mr. Prewett was made the Assistant Chief Estate Officer, and Chief in 1965.

The Estate Office is a very complex organisation—briefly, its duties are to buy, sell, and lease land for the Commissioners and handle all the problems of land management.

Business is growing. Revenue from leases and sales is rising by 50 per cent every five years and will nudge \$2.3 million for this year.

The work is detailed and intricate. Mr. Prewett recalled that before the line could be extended from Darling to Glen Waverley in 1928, every title of land owned along the route had to be searched—a job undertaken by the young Evan Prewett.

And over the years he has been involved in many interesting transfers of titles. At various stages, the V.R. has relinquished a freezing works at Newport; the State Coal Mine at Wonthaggi (after a subsidence, it was the Estate Office's duty to arrange the re-location and reblocking of 29 houses); the Government Tourist Bureau; Hotham Heights Chalet; railway tram services in Brighton and Sandringham; Williamstown, Port Melbourne and some River Yarra wharves (until taken over by the Harbour Trust); Newport Powerhouse; and obtain the Kerang and Koondrook Tramway taken over by the V.R. in 1951 and land on Mt. Dandenong for a future radio-control centre mast.

In retirement, Mr. Prewett intends to travel and retain his Commissionership with the Glenroy Boy Scouts.

Foreman car builder retires



To the farewells of many workmates, Foreman Car Builder Eddy Coe (left) received a wallet of notes, an overnight bag, and bouquet of flowers for his wife, from Mr. Eric Mills, Acting Carriage Superintendent. Mr. Coe's railway history started in 1937 with work on *Spirit of Progress*. Later, he supervised much of the building of the first series of *Harris* carriages. Outside railway circles he was a well known former V.F.L. goal umpire and V.C.A. cricket umpire, and is choir-master for the Holy Trinity Church at Williamstown.

Four days off 51 years

Just failing to record 51 years service to the V.R. was Rolling Stock Branch Chief Clerk, Bill Burke, (right) who retired on April 13. Starting in Head Office in 1921, his years of duty took him to almost every outpost of the Rolling Stock Branch as a relieving clerk at some stage. He had been Chief Clerk since 1969.



NEWS LETTER REGRETS TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING DEATHS

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH
Hoy, F. J., Bendigo North, 15/3
Mellon, W., North Melbourne, 1/4
Rodier, T. E., Ballarat North,
26/3

TRAFFIC BRANCH
Biltris, G. A., Melbourne Goods,
4/4
Corbett, W. J., Hopetoun, 15/4

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH
Dally, N. L., Seymour, 31/3
Davidson, D. G., Seymour, 22/3
Goudie, E. D. Bendigo, 1/4
Irwin, G. R., North Melb., 21/3

RETIREMENTS

COMMERCIAL BRANCH

Cuthbertson, W., Head Office, 15/3

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Beecham, H. F., E. R. Depot, 31/3
Coe, E. J., Shelter Shed, 21/4
Dickinson, I. E., Newport, 29/3
Every, J. C., Warragul, 29/3
Findlay, F. E., Ballarat North, 20/6
Fontanella, C., Newport, 24/3
Koutsouridis, T., North Melb., 8/3
Luckman, R. E., Jolimont, 2/3
McMahon, W. D., Newport, 27/3
McPhee, D. M., E. R. Depot, 16/2
O'Rourke, J. J., Jolimont, 19/3
Pearce, J. L., Bendigo North, 14/6
Penny, T. D., E. R. Depot, 17/2
Polyzos, E., Geelong, 19/6
Sheriff, R. C., Newport, 14/6
Stevens, H. C., Newport, 3/3
White, H. A., Newport, 14/6
Whitehouse, R. J., Newport, 7/4

STORES BRANCH

Bourke, W., Spotswood Workshops,
13/4
O'Brien, L. R., Newport Workshops,
11/4
Woods, R. A., Seymour, 24/3

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Burt, (Mrs.) M. I., Syndal, 18/4
Carr, G. T. W., Stawell, 4/6
Davies, H. I., Bendigo, 12/6
Farello, V., Dynon, 8/6
Haines, F. J., Flinders Street, 31/5
Petch, M., Lethbridge, 4/6
Sonnnett, B., Dandenong, 17/3
Stevenson, A. D., Bendigo, 13/6
Wilcox, C. E., C/- Metro. Supt., 10/6

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Birch, J. W., Ballarat Works Branch,
31/5
Bryden, P., Head Office, 23/2
Grumley, W. H., Spotswood Workshops,
28/3
Hall, C. L., Euroa, 21/6
Hatherall, W. C., Penshurst, 5/3
Horan, P. J., Geelong Works Branch,
5/6
Liddle, H. C. J. P., Linton, 28/6
Lindeman, E. M., Head Office, 2/6
Owen, E., East Melbourne, 4/6
Pavey, L. R., St. Arnaud, 8/3
Polasek, A., Head Office, 3/4
Prewett, E. A., Head Office, 3/6
Reinkowski, K. A., Spotswood Work-
shops, 15/4
Salute, (Miss) A., Spotswood Work-
shops, 25/3
Scutella, A., Spotswood Workshops, 4/6
Stewart, R. G., Seymour, 26/1
Thompson, J. W. C., Caulfield, 11/6
Wing, J. T., Spotswood, 16/6

Institute INews

SPORT

By DAVE CATCHPOOL

Bowls—Intersystem Carnival

It was a rather confident Victorian Party that recently departed for Perth to defend its title of "Champion team" among the railway bowlers of Australia and New Zealand.

Victories over Queensland, New Zealand and South Australia in the first three Test Matches during the first week increased that confidence, however this was soon shattered in the second week's play when successive defeats at the hands of Western Australia, Tasmania and New South Wales put paid to Victoria's chances. A win over Commonwealth in the seventh and final Test enabled us to finish in third place.

As our Singles, Pairs and Triples representatives were all eliminated prior to the final round, this is the first occasion that Victoria has failed to return from a Carnival with at least one trophy.

On the brighter side, congratulations must go to Victorian Skipper Roy Sawers and his rink for gaining two eights in the Test Matches, one against New Zealand and the other against New South Wales.

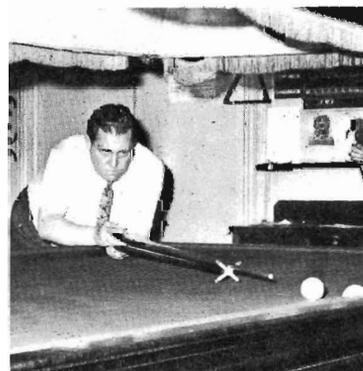
Although eight systems competed, the presentation of trophies ceremony at the farewell dinner in the Subiaco City Hall was monopolised by the host State Western Australia and New South Wales, the former winning the Commissioners' Shield and

Denniss Cup for the Teams Championship, both the Singles and Triples Championship, plus the trophy for the best individual rink, while New South Wales, in addition to winning the Runners Up trophy, also took out the Championship Pairs and Reserve Rink trophies.

The majority of the seven trophies competed for have been in existence since 1954 and prior to this Carnival Western Australia's only success in 18 years was recorded in 1970 when their representative won the Singles Championship.

Their achievement in winning four of the seven trophies, including the Teams Championship in which they recorded seven straight victories in the test matches, was a remarkable one and to our Western Australian friends we offer our sincere congratulations, thanks for a wonderful Carnival and may we meet again in New Zealand in 1974.

Billiards and Snooker



Jim McKain, winner of the Billiards tourney, lines up a shot.

For many years an Annual Billiards and Snooker Competition has taken place between the Victorian and South Australian Railways Institutes, each, in turn, acting as host State.

After a last minute cancellation of the competition in 1971, fears were held regarding its future but it is pleasing to report that South Australia accepted an invitation to visit Victoria in March this year and as a result of an excellent week's billiards and snooker plus social gatherings, these annual visits seem certain to continue.

Although Victoria proved to strong in the various competitions, the South Australian boys state, with great determination, that the results will be reversed when they meet the Vics. in 1973.

The Teams Championship for Billiards and Snooker was won by Victoria.

The Individual Billiards Championship, Highest Break Billiards Matches and Highest Break Snooker

Matches trophies were all won by Jim McKain, the Victorian captain and manager—a truly remarkable achievement.

The Runner-up trophies for the Individual Billiards and Snooker Championships went to Don Horner (Sth. Aust.) and Brian Viney (Vic.) while the Best Performance in the Teams Matches awards were won by Brian Beelitz for South Australia and Phil Lane for Victoria.

The farewell function was held in the Commissioners' Dining Room and excellently catered for by the Refreshment Services Branch. Mr. C. S. Morris, Secretary for Railways representing the Commissioners, and Mr. R. M. Wright, General President, V.R.I., presented the trophies.

Perhaps it was only fitting that Jim McKain achieved so much success "on the tables", as his efforts together with those of Des O'Donnell (Institute Representative) in ensuring that our South Australian visitors were well looked after at all times, were untiring.

Basketball

The 1971/72 Summer Basketball Season was easily the most successful in the history of the V.R.I. Basketball Club. During the previous 10 seasons there has been many an occasion when a premiership looked a foregone conclusion but due largely to "Grand Final jitters" the net result from seven appearances in such matches has been one solitary premiership.



The V.R.I.'s young ladies who wrested the basketball title from all challengers: (from left) Ann Reeves, Frances Topp, Trina Beck, Julie Porter, Robyn Lloyd (Captain), Kathy Lonergan and (Front), Catherine Topp.

However, the experience gained at the 1971 Australian and New Zealand Railways Intersystem Carnival by both the men's and women's teams proved invaluable during the summer season. Two men's and two women's teams were entered and one of our women's teams—in only its second season of competitive basketball—finished the first round in top position of "B" Grade of the Business Houses Basketball Association losing only one of the 20 matches played and then going on to win the premiership. The team consisted of Robin Lloyd (captain) Catherine Topp (best and fairest award winner) Frances Topp, Anne Reeves, Trina Beck, Julie Por-

ter, Kathy Lonergan and Lorraine Otter. Brett Newman was the team's very capable and hard working coach.

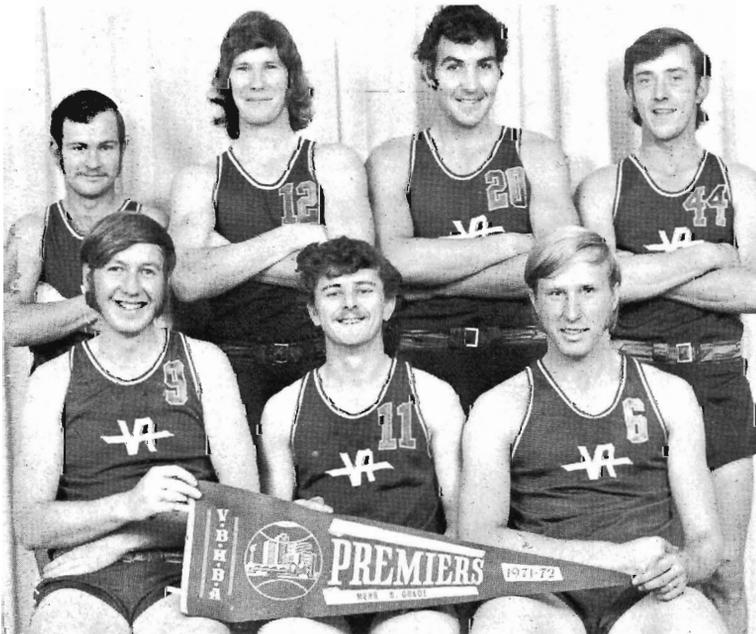
The other women's team competed in C Grade of the Victorian Women's International Basketball Association and had to win its last match of the season to finish in fourth position and participate in the finals.

Unfortunately, it failed by one point but nevertheless performed most creditably. As half of the team were new players they should be an even stronger combination next season. Lorraine Gillespie was a most capable team captain and Kathy Lonergan—yes, she played in both teams—won the best and fairest award.

Both men's teams competed in the Business Houses Association; the No. 1 team had gained promotion to B Grade and the No. 2 team again played in E Grade.

The No. 1 team accepted the challenge of playing in a higher grade magnificently and with 12 wins and six losses finished the first round in third position. The semi final was played against the A.N.Z. Bank which had defeated us in both previous encounters during the season; but on this occasion, the V.R.I. turned the tables and went on to defeat the State Savings Bank in the Grand Final and take out the premiership. Players who appeared with this team during the season were Ivan Rendell (Captain), Gary Katajala (best and fairest award winner), Geoff Leech, Lindsay Hatley, Graham Jones, Gary Taylor, Neville Bourke, Harvey Bray, Des Wilson, Geoff Nicholas and Ian Harris.

The No. 2 team finished in fourth position but unfortunately were narrowly defeated by State Savings Bank in the semi final. This team was ably led by Bob Brasher and the best and fairest award was won by Ross Haysom.



Last season's premier team. Back row: Graham Jones, Lindsay Hatley, Neville Bourke and Des Wilson; front row: Geoff Leech, Ivan Rendell (Captain) and Gary Katajala (Vice Captain)

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

NEWS LETTER

JUNE



1972

10 CENTS



WHAT ARE RAILWAYS FOR?

The shock waves at present reverberating around the countryside over the possible withdrawal of several rail services has brought an interesting aspect into the open—just what do many areas think of their railways?

Some statements are quite illuminating. Mansfield Shire Officials were quoted by *The Herald* as saying that closure of the line would have little effect, yet the local newspaper, the *Mansfield Courier*, in an article, drew attention to that “something in the vicinity of \$1,500 per week is paid in wages to 30 railway employees between Mansfield and Molesworth. This together with the same number of well respected families will be lost to the district . . .” There was no mention of the very poor patronage of the line.

Later on, the same article, continued: “If superphosphate was brought direct to Mansfield by road, hauliers would have to purchase trucks of 16 tons, and the roads were not built to continuously carry such heavy loads, nor would it pay a haulier to buy such a large transport for a limited season.”

In case you haven't guessed, superphosphate represents 48 per cent of all traffic handled on the Mansfield line!

A little further down the same line—at Yea—reaction was similar.

“Cr. Ridd said it was important that Council collate figures on the impact of lost jobs in this area; the effect on the rural industry; and also the effect increased road transport would have on the already overtaxed roads—and consequently Shire finances. ‘The Glenburn Road was never built for the traffic we could expect if the line closes,’ said the President.”—*Yea Chronicle*, April 26.

Away in the western district, the *Colac Herald* summed up the general attitude in its leader of April 7: “This could mean a reduction of employment in Colac, a rise in fares once competition is removed, greater congestion on the roads and such other hidden concessions as the end of pensioner fares.”

Yet in the same leader, they commented that the average number of Colac passengers per train was five.

In effect, what these people are saying is that they would rather have all their transport requirements met by road, but still keep rail around—however little they use it, to act as an insurance and to keep road charges in check.

G. F. BROWN

EARLY WINTER DISCOUNT

Passengers travelling interstate between Melbourne and Adelaide by “The Overland” between June 1 and July 31, will benefit by an off-season special concession fare.

In conjunction with South Australian Railways, the Victorian Railways offered the discount—about 10 per cent off the basic fare (excluding seat reservations and sleeping berths)—to try and build business in the normal winter travel trough.

McKINNON'S 100

V.R. free parking areas for rail commuters from McKinnon station has been expanded.

A new area, for 73 cars on railway

property in Station Avenue, coupled with the original 20-car space in Glen Orme Avenue, brought the capacity more in line with the numbers who would like to use it.

Adjoining the new area is a free council car park with space for 37 cars.

GIPPSLAND RELAYING

Eight miles of track from near Traralgon station towards Sale, are being relayed with heavier welded rail to replace worn out rail. The upgrading will allow higher train speeds.

A 30-man gang, including many new employees, is engaged on this work—part of the cost of which is

being met by the State rural employment scheme.

Relaying of a further 15 miles is planned for next financial year—depending on availability of funds. The total cost of the 23 miles of work is estimated at \$650,000.

A LITTLE BIT OF BULL

The Victorian Railways' Lost Property Store contained a little bull recently—a 3½-ft. tall, 1½ year-old red poll steer.

About 6.45 a.m. on Wednesday, May 17, E. W. (“Teddy”) Turner, a senior Railways Investigation Officer at Spencer Street, was phoned from the passenger yard with the almost incredible message, “Send someone up! We've got a bull in the yard.”

The bull turned out to be real, and it was frolicking in the lifting shop, near the entrance to the new pilot tunnel for the underground, in the Spencer Street passenger yard.

By 9 o'clock, the beast was standing timidly by the door of the lost Property Store, a halter round its neck, and a bundle of hay at its feet.

Hero of the morning, in true Wild West style, was John Burn, 24-year-old R.I.O., who jumped on the bull, wrestled it to the ground, and put a rope around its neck.

All he suffered was ripped trousers.

John was an apprentice painter at Newport Workshops before 18 months in the Army, followed by his present job over the last 2½ months, said this was the first time he had ever caught a bull, or even touched one.

The bull had escaped from a King

FRONT COVER

When standard gauge went through to Melbourne in 1962, Albury became the locomotive changing station. Pictured is the handing over of *Intercapital Daylight* to New South Wales Railways. As the Victorian locomotive returns to its Wodonga depot, N.S.W. Railways locomotives prepare to take the train for the next 401 miles to Sydney. In the middle background, a Sydney-bound freight waits for clearance.

Island cattle boat at 6 a.m. during unloading at a berth along Footscray Road.

Apparently it had tired itself out by wandering the streets and charging a few people, and was comparatively docile by the time John captured it.

"Cattle off these boats are usually very wild," said Mr. Turner, "and the bull would never have been caught if it hadn't been exhausted."

All ended happily when the bull was picked up by its owners, Dalgety's, at 10 a.m. the same day.



Railways Investigation Officer, John Burn, stands with his chaff-eating charge at the conclusion of the episode.

• Ten days later, bulls made their presence felt in a big way when two trains struck a mob of about 40 steers between South Kensington and Footscray stations; one train was derailed and services halted for three hours.

NEW CITY SUBWAYS

Melbourne City Council has decided to build new pedestrian subways into the major city rail stations.

A recent report in *The Sun* indicated that a \$550,000 subway would be started next March to link Little Collins Street with the existing passenger subway at Spencer Street station.

An estimated 15,000 will use the subway daily.

Entrances will be on the east side of Spencer Street in both the Savoy-Plaza Hotel and the Board of Works new office tower.

When the station was rebuilt in the early 1960's, provision was made for this subway to be built.

Council was told that the poss-

ibility of redevelopment in the western end of Melbourne was quite substantial.

For Flinders Street station, plans were announced for a possible two new subways under Flinders Street.

The subways, one to link Elizabeth Street with the station, and the other to join Swanston Street and the station, are dependent on redevelopment of the station going ahead.

NO 13 IN N.Z. LUXURY TRAIN

New Zealand Railways new sleek stainless steel sleeping car train—*Silver Star*—has no berth No. 13 in the sleeping carriages.

To keep superstitious people happy the number sequence runs 12, 12A and 14 according to *Railway Transportation*.

[A quick check with booking clerks at the V.R.'s Central Reservation Bureau revealed that on odd occasions an intending passenger will decline berth No. 13.—Ed.]

SUPER TRAIN FOR TRANSCONTINENTAL RUN

Capacity of the luxury, continent-spanning train, *The Indian-Pacific*, will be doubled on Mondays from Sydney and Thursdays from Perth for the peak tourist traffic—the winter season and school holidays.

Because of problems with the crossing of the mountainous sections in New South Wales, in that State the additional capacity will be run as an extra train in each direction between Sydney and Broken Hill.

When combined in each direction between Broken Hill and Perth, *The Indian-Pacific* will be one of the World's biggest passenger trains—26 carriages long.

The additional service will operate from Sydney on Mondays August 21 to October 9.

ALL-DAY PARKING TO GO?

Melbourne City Council is considering tough new parking restrictions to deter city workers from driving to work, reports *The Age*.

The Chairman of the Council's public works and traffic committee warned that the Council had the power to create "unbearable conditions for motorists".

According to *The Age*, the proposed tougher restrictions may include altering all day and other long term parking meters to three hour limits; creating more short term parking spaces in the Central Business District; and decreasing the

two and one hour city meter limits to one hour and half-hour limits.

"People must be encouraged to use public transport in preference to motor vehicles," the Councillor continued.

"The ultimate ideal would be to have no all day parking in the municipality."

1¼-MILE LONG TRAIN

A 1¼-mile long test train ran on May 18 from Coonyella Coal Field to Hay Point in Central Queensland.

Six 2,000 h.p. diesel-electric locomotives hauled 148 wagons carrying 8,500 tons of coal over the 124-mile 3 ft. 6 in. gauge route.

Three locomotives were at the head of the train; the other three were in the middle of the train, operated by radio remote control.

Australia's biggest trains, nearly two miles long, are run by Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd.—200 ore wagons, totalling 20,000 tons, hauled by three 3,600 h.p. diesel-electric locomotives.

On Government-operated systems the biggest trains are run by Western Australia. Three 3,000 h.p. locomotives haul 96 wagons of iron ore totalling 9,600 tons, from Koolyanobbing to Kwinana.

FINE FOR S.O.P. DISTURBANCE

A Hamilton concrete worker was fined \$100 by Wangaratta Magistrate's Court from charges arising over a disturbance on *Spirit of Progress* on April 24.

The man was fined \$10 for being drunk, \$40 for using indecent language, and \$50 for having assaulted a station assistant, reported the *Wangaratta Chronicle-Despatch*.

TWO FOR TRIAL OVER TRAIN ROBBERY

Two Chelsea youths were committed for trial in the Melbourne Supreme Court following allegations of a knife-point robbery on a train between Carrum and Seaford.

The robbed man, a Mount Eliza resident, told Frankston Court that between Carrum and Seaford two youths threatened him with serrated carving knives and took his wallet which had about \$32 in it.

As the train started from Seaford, his two assailants leapt from the train.

At Frankston, he reported the matter to the stationmaster who promptly called the police.

The youths were later detained in Bonbeach.

—Peninsula Post

In February, the Melbourne Underground Rail Loop Authority (M. U. R. L. A.) brought out a signalling expert from England to consider V.R. ideas and practices for signalling on Melbourne's underground loop and the central area of Flinders Street and Spencer Street. In his report, the consultant, Mr. Robert Dell, described the proposals put forward by V.R. Signals and Communications Engineer, Mr. Alan Irving, as: "entirely satisfactory. The proposals are forward thinking and in line with current up to date practices".

NEW LOOK SIGNALLING FOR MELBOURNE UNDERGROUND

Last year, Mr. Irving made a world tour to investigate latest signalling practices in the U.K., Europe, America and Japan, with special emphasis on underground applications.

Full implementation of the signalling report would give Melbourne's metropolitan system one of the most modern and efficient train operation and signalling systems in the world.

Railway signalling owes its origin to the need to make railway operations safe. Early signalling equipment was designed largely to aid and check manual operations, but, progressively, automatic apparatus has taken over the whole responsibility for ensuring the safe working of trains over railways without collisions or derailments at points.

An integral part of the signalling system is its function to **fail safe**. With modern electronic signalling this is generally achieved by having live circuits give **proceed** indications and dead circuits give **stop** signals.

Obviously, failures such as power supply interruptions, broken wires, dirty contacts, short circuits or other occurrences, will revert signal indications to **stop**.

This is the guiding principle in all installations.

Signalling centre

Most important and impressive of recommendations for immediate implementation is the establishing of a central signalling control centre at Flinders Street to operate all signalling between Richmond and North Melbourne stations and on the underground loop.

The system proposed would allow eventual extension to control the entire metropolitan network.

A control room, of 70 ft. diameter, would be at the top of a four storey air-conditioned office and car park block, most likely along Batman Avenue.

Staff for many functions related to the running of metropolitan trains—

such as time-tables, block and signal inspectors, and metropolitan train running—would be housed in the new building. There would be a laboratory for checking and testing the complex signal interlocking and remote control equipment.

Mr. Dell's comments on the proposal were: "The layout of the Melbourne suburban system, focusing as it does on Flinders Street station and radiating from there, lends itself ideally to centralized control of the signalling throughout, and the provision of such a system must result in the highest efficiency of the operation of the railway."

Around the walls of the room would be an illuminated diagram of all the routes covered.

In its early stages, signalmen would sit at control panels and control segments of track. At later stages the staff would be supervisory only, checking the satisfactory operation of automatic programme machines that would control train movements.

On a raised dais in the centre of the room would be the suburban train control centre transferred from Head Office.

From their new position the con-

trollers would be able to scan the movements of trains as recorded by the diagram, and make necessary adjustments.

"Such an important control room will become a showpiece," Mr. Dell commented in his report, "and a viewing gallery would be desirable. This would avoid visitors interfering with business."

Protection

Such a vital control centre would be vulnerable to a major disaster such as fire (and, perhaps, other incidents that have happened to vital Flinders Street E signal box recently).

To overcome this, division of safety signalling equipment into five areas is proposed, making it extremely unlikely that any disaster would completely put all five installations out of action at the one time.

Each of the separate installations would have its own emergency controls.

Speed trips

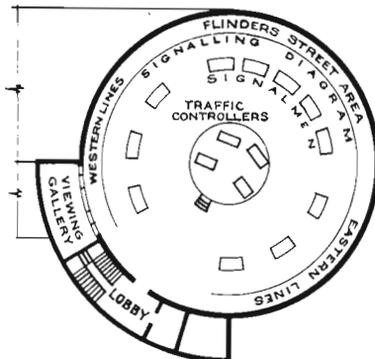
Each of the four underground loops must be able to handle 24 trains an hour.

Station times at some of the platforms—Museum particularly—are expected to exceed the normally allowed 20 seconds. This means that the headways (time and distance between trains) must be kept to a minimum to meet the capacity figure.

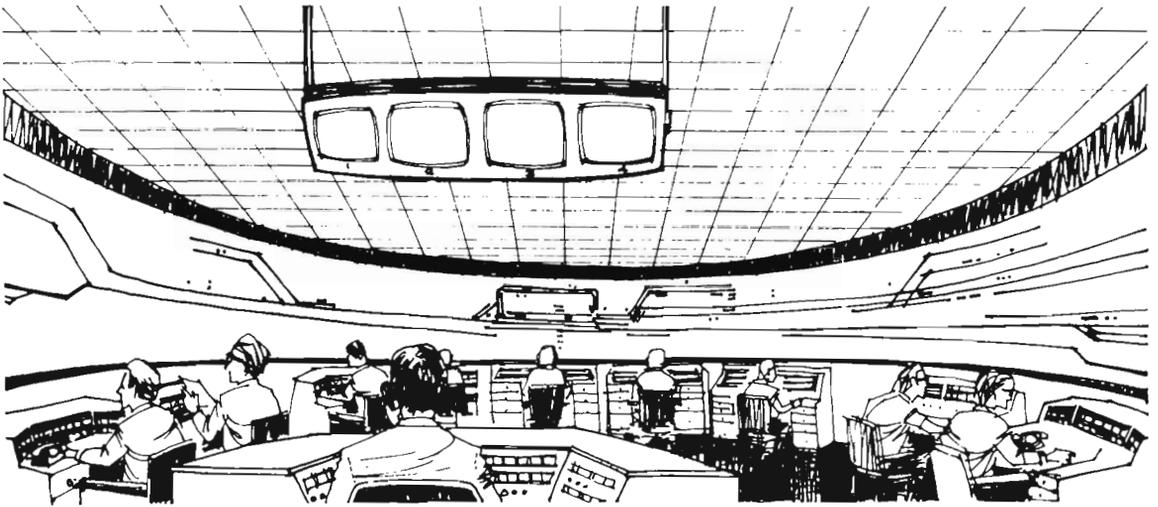
Just over 40 m.p.h. is the highest speed that could be reached on the loops, but, generally, trains would travel at about 30 m.p.h.

Train speeds would be relatively low because of the close spacing of stations and the tight curves required to connect the loop with the existing railway.

To protect train movements, a new procedure—*timer signals*—would be installed.



CONTROL ROOM - SECOND FLOOR



Artists impression of how the Flinders Street Traffic Control Centre could look.

When reduced speed is called for (if a train is closing on another, illuminated speed signs on signals would indicate that 25 or 15 m.p.h. is the maximum allowed) the *timers* would record the passing speeds and, if the train were travelling at more than the desired speed, the signals in advance would be held at *stop* until the appropriate time has elapsed.

If, for any reason, a train ignored the lower speed indication, it would run past the signal at *stop* and be automatically brought to a halt clear of the train in front.

All four tunnels would be signalled this way for operation in both directions.

Closed circuit T.V.

Each of the three underground stations would be equipped with closed circuit T.V. for station supervision.

Cameras would scan platforms and escalators, where congestion is likely to occur.

Monitors would be provided in the Station Supervisor's office; on spotting a problem, he would be able to dispatch staff to deal with it. The station public address system would also be operated from the Station Supervisor's desk.

Traffic Controllers at the Centre, too, would have monitors to check on proceedings at each of the underground stations, to gain first hand information without taking station staff away from their duties. In an emergency, the Controllers would be able to give platform announcements from their centre.

As well, the Train Controllers would be connected by direct line to the Station Supervisor.

Fire prevention

Fire prevention in the underground loops and stations is of paramount importance.

Special systems are proposed for likely trouble spots, and smoke detection units would be installed in many areas.

Cable insulation would be protected, where possible, by asbestos and fibre glass sheathing.

Communications

Radio communication between the Train Controller and Train Driver is proposed. Various forms of radio equipment are being investigated but the *Duplex* system, which allows two-way conversations—similar to a telephone—is preferable.

The philosophy of all major underground railway systems is to provide a public address system for the train crew to speak to passengers and a radio system for the Train Controllers to speak to the driver.

This would allow all irregularities in train running to be corrected in the most efficient manner, allow for all passengers to be promptly advised of causes and likely duration of service failures, and, in the event of a major breakdown, to give instructions for alternate arrangements.

In addition, trackside telephones linked to the Traffic Control Centre would be provided at all signals, for tunnel maintenance staff, and for train staff in the event of failure of their radio equipment.

Because radio messages could not be selective to the train required, a system of train numbers for identification was suggested.

Train numbers would also be useful for other additions recommended by Mr. Dell, such as *train describers*.

Mr. Robert Dell, O.B.E., F.I.E.E., M.I.M.E., F.I.R.S.E., 71, joined London Electric Railway in 1915 and served his whole career in signalling work. He was appointed Assistant Signal Engineer in 1936, Signal Engineer in 1942 and Chief Signal Engineer in 1961.

He retired from London Transport in 1970.

During his long career, he undertook the development of push button signalling desks, speed control signalling and remote control methods using interlocking machines. He played a leading part in the introduction of automatic fare collection equipment and carrier wave and radio telephone links between drivers and the line controller.

Programme machine signalling and automatic train operation were Mr. Dell's concepts that were developed and introduced to London Transport.

In 1965, Mr. Dell won the George Stephenson Research Prize for a paper on *Automatic Train Operation*.

In 1969, he took part in a Board of Trade and Industry sponsored mission to Venezuela in connection with the Caracas Metro Project.

Train describers

Train describer systems automatically advise the order of trains approaching a signal box or station.

This would replace the present train description bell system (manually operated—using destination codes) and could also be coupled to the platform indicators, to change them to the appropriate list of stopping stations as the next train approached.

Mr. Dell described the system as "practically essential" if the Traffic Control Centre were to function efficiently.

Initially, the proposal is to limit the facility for incoming trains to Clifton Hill, Burnley, Caulfield, Windsor and North Melbourne signal boxes, which would relay information on passing trains to the Traffic Control Centre.

At the centre, diagrams would show first, second and third trains offering for each route (including the loops.)

As the system becomes more extensive, *train describers* need to be operated by the trains themselves but this requires each train to be fitted with an identifying transmitter.

Mr. Dell recommends that, initially, for outgoing trains, signalmen at the Flinders Street Traffic Control Centre indicate the stopping conditions of each train, as it leaves Flinders Street, to the electronic storage equipment that controls the system.

Information would then be passed on to other units which would change the signs at platforms on the underground loop before the train reached the platform.

When extended to other areas, the equipment would delay passing the information beyond junction stations until the junction route had been set, and then the message would be directed down the appropriate line.

Programme machines

The next step towards a fully efficient centralized signalling centre for the metropolitan area would be the adoption of *programme machines* to store the entire programme of train movements and routing for a week's working. With the passing of a train, the equipment would check the train's identity with the *train describer equipment*, advance the programme roll to set points and signals for the correct routing of that train, then record the time of its passing and its number on a tape for later checking.

London Transport has nearly 200 of these machines in service on their underground railways; the Victoria

Line is fully controlled by *programme machines* and the Northern Line is almost completely equipped.

Normally, the machines store only the train destination, its route through the junction, the time that the train should pass and the train number, but the machines are capable of handling 31 pieces of information about each train.

Although the *programme machine* sets the route for trains, it does so through the normal signal circuits so that the usual high safety standards are maintained by the circuits, not by the machine.

Programme machines can deal with all movements at railway junctions; common uses are to:

- control junctions as trains approach and make the alterations when suitable, ruling out the possibility of signalling errors;
- route trains into and out of sidings and, in the case of trains leaving sidings, signal them out at the correct time.

The machine's associated circuits can adapt to trains running out of course, and signal ahead that a departure from the time-table has occurred.

They time all trains and, if early, hold signals in advance at *stop* until the correct departure time. Also, in the event of train being more than a predetermined amount late, the machine sounds an alarm in the Traffic Control Centre.

The machine is extremely flexible. Although normally geared to work as trains pass, the Traffic Controller can, by operating appropriate buttons, override the machine and give it new instructions to handle, say, train cancellations, the running of extra trains and the running of the system *first come, first served*.

Installation of these machines can be undertaken in stages, with benefits from each installation. Complete coverage of the metropolitan system would save greatly on manpower costs. Hence railway services could be greatly increased without a proportionate increase in labour content.

With *programme machines* and *train describers*, the V.R. would be only one step away from Mr. Dell's ultimate for any metropolitan system—*automatic train operation (A.T.O.)*

Automatic train operation

A.T.O. means just that—no crew required to drive the train, all doors automatically controlled, trains picking up their instructions from track-mounted equipment, fail-safe

speed governors and automatic braking—and is an exciting cost cutter.

But, 82 of the existing 146 trains of Melbourne's commuter fleet are not suitable for conversion, and although the later "Harris" carriages could be converted—the cost would be unrealistic. So new rolling stock would have to be built.

All present signalling would need replacing for A.T.O. operation, but, as modifications are made for other improvements such as *programme machines* and *train describers*, these could be made compatible with A.T.O. circuits.

Advantages of A.T.O. are.

- quicker service, because all movements are machine-controlled and minimum times for moves would be taken at all times;
- train running economies would follow because all trains would power, coast and brake at optimum levels instead of the varying rates of different drivers;
- closer headways, because driver-reaction time is automatically controlled and can be run at a minimum;
- savings in number of staff required to run trains.

A drawback to A.T.O. is that it cannot be effectively used on part of the system unless that part is physically separated from the remainder.

It is, however, as Mr. Dell recommended, to be regarded "as an ultimate objective on the suburban system, and the subject should be kept under constant review when any future plans are being made."

- New York's new R-44 cars (for New York City Transit Authority's Rapid Transit System) are being supplied for operation with three different modes of signalling as a step towards future automatic train operation.

The three systems are: wayside signalling with train stops (same as V.R.); cab signalling system; and automatic train operation.

MILEPOSTS

1923

First V.R. Technical College opened at Newport, March 11.

Electrification of Melbourne metropolitan railways, as originally planned, completed, April 15. Later extensions to outer metropolitan areas.

TICKET MACHINES FOR V.R. TRIAL

Passengers could be getting their rail tickets from vending machines when customer-operated ticket machines go on trial at some metropolitan stations in about six months time.

Although ticket machines have been available for many years, their use has generally been confined to system (or sections) with zone or flat fares.

Recent developments in railway technologies which have given the world true high speed lines also spurred greater interest in ticket vending machines, automatic barrier systems and many other methods of automating railway operations.

Latest developments have put into service machines which can offer a variety of tickets to a number of destinations—essential when a fare structure is based on actual mileage.

To test these machines under Australian conditions, the V.R. has called tenders, closing on July 12, for five "self-service ticket vending machines". (New South Wales Railways are also putting similar machines on trial at selected stations in the Sydney metropolitan area).

Four types

Four different types of machines are specified for the V.R.'s trials.

Machines, issuing single and return adult tickets between the originating station and Melbourne on insertion of the exact fare in coins, are planned for trial at St. Kilda and Reservoir stations.

Another machine—issuing the same tickets, but also giving change—is planned for Heidelberg.

A third type, able to issue single and return adult tickets from that station to at least three other stations with different fares, plus **off-peak** tickets to Melbourne (again at a different fare), will be tried at Thomastown. Change will be given.

The fourth machine is the most complex, and is planned for use at Princes Bridge. Single and return child and adult tickets to at least 20 destinations with different fares is the specification.

Other features

The machine must do more than just issue tickets—instructions and the selection sequence must be displayed along with the fare when a selection is made; the machines must be capable of cancelling the transaction at various stages and on a time cycle (to thwart tampering); they must indicate invalid selections; display **out of order** and **out of change** signs when appropriate; and return money in the event of any type of failure.

Each machine must be capable of alerting station staff to rectify any service failure such as **out of change**, etc.

Each machine must be its own accountant, too, and record details of sales, cash received and change given. Details and numbers of types of tickets sold are also to be prepared by the machine.

Facilities for recording this information for processing by computer are considered desirable as a future measure.

Help only

Machine use will most likely be confined to assisting the booking clerks to cope with heavy passenger peaks. Tickets to Melbourne will be on sale in all cases (except at Princes Bridge,) relieving much of the pressure for these tickets, and lessening peak work loads.

Trial period

Because of the complexity of the machines and the tremendous reliability that is required before machines can be accepted for this sort of work, a lengthy trial period, hopefully encompassing all likely contingencies, is planned.

The machines must prove their reliability, ease of handling, checking, loading and operation, and meet the rigours of kind and unkind use as well as being reasonably foolproof.

It is a sad reflection that where-ever machines are used, any malfunction is always considered the fault of the property-owner, rather than the actual machine itself.

The machines are expected to be in use early in the new year, and while present plans will see the machines installed at the stations mentioned, they could be moved to other stations for testing.

SAFETY AWARDS



Two sections of the Electrical Engineering Branch—the Testing Division and the Distribution Division—were recently awarded Certificates of Merit from the National Safety Council for having worked 100,000 hours without an injury involving the loss of a shift. Chief Electrical Engineer, Mr. Alan Firth, here presents the certificates to Mr. Peter McColl, Engineer of Tests (top), and to Mr. Laurie Krausgrill, Distribution Engineer, (below). To the end of May the Testing Division had completed 200,000 injury-free hours but the Distribution Division logged 145,000 hours before an accident on May 9.

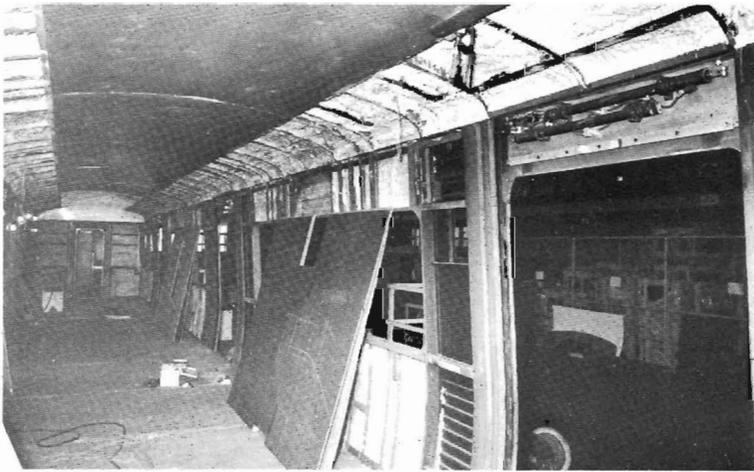


NEW TRAINS ON THE WAY

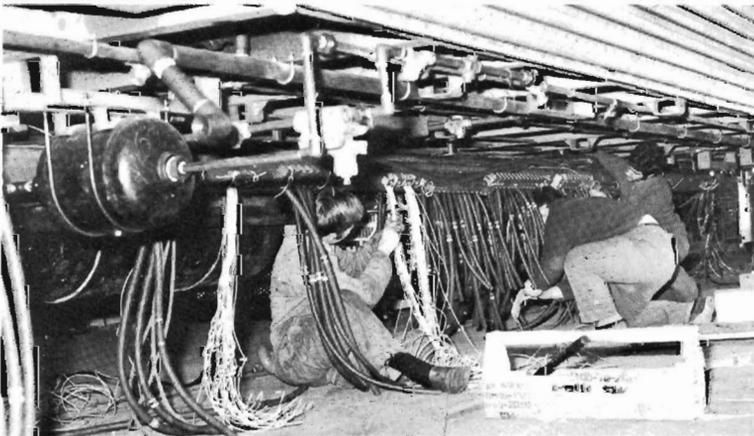
The first batch of the 300 new stainless steel carriages being built for the metropolitan area are taking shape.

When *News Letter* last month visited the Somerton plant of Martin & King's, who are to build the 250 motor and driving trailer carriages, work was in an advanced state on four vehicles and interior fitting out was about to start.

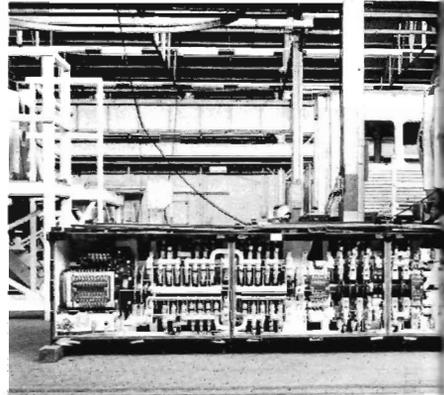
V.R. workshops are building the 50 trailer carriages and fitting all bogies and undergear. The first trains will go into running later this year; delivery rate is expected to be a minimum of five trains a year.



POLYURETHANE INSULATION lines the walls and ceiling, rubber insulation covers the floor to deaden under-carriage noise, and portion of the heating duct has been fixed to the roof. Also visible is the power-door mechanism and the walk-through arrangement at the rear of the carriage.



WIRES, WIRES, and more wires for the electrical circuits have to be linked to the motor equipment, then tested.



ONE HALF of the electrical control equipment for the new trains. The control equipment, based on Hitachi Ltd., incorporates the latest features for transport.

AT 76 FT. 9½ IN. over couplers, the new carriages are the longest in Australia in metropolitan use. The design incorporates fluted stainless steel, rubber seals and a small, lightweight European-style passenger door, making the carriages a sleek and attractive design.



EQUIPMENT for the rest of the \$21.5 million contract is stored alongside the contractor's work.

RAKISH FRONT-END designs of the motor carriages (nearest the camera) and the driving trailer carriages are different.



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SUMMARY OF THE BLAND REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Sir Henry Bland's 250-page report into the Victorian transport system contains many recommendations to minimize the cost to the community of its involvement in transport by making the best use of the State's transport resources. In his summary, Sir Henry said "the scope for free competition between rail and road modes should be progressively extended. A truly competitive environment will only exist if both modes (road and rail) bear their real costs or are equally placed in relation to their costs after taking into account community subsidies. Neither mode presently bears its real costs".

RAILWAY POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

REQUIRING GOVERNMENT ACTION:

1. Railways should be given a charter defining the role they are to perform.
2. Railways should function primarily as a commercial undertaking.
3. The present Railways administration should be converted to an appropriate type of corporate structure headed by a mixed governing Board, comprising men from business and high executives from the Railway service, including a Chief Executive, under a part-time outside Chairman.
4. Railways should be given responsibility for:
 - (a) determining fares and freight rates;
 - (b) determining services which should be provided, curtailed or terminated, with flexible response to demand.
5. Railways should have access to capital funds for development of services, facilities and equipment.
6. An Investigating Authority should be set up (independent from the Ministry of Transport, Railways and Transport Regulation Board) to consider all necessary data, consult local interests and make recommendations to the Government in respect of Railways proposals for withdrawal of services or closing of lines and stations.
7. Railways should be recouped the cost of imposed Government decisions to the extent that these conflict with the Railways' commercial objectives.

REQUIRING RAILWAY ACTION:

1. More sophisticated financial management techniques should be used for investment analyses, etc.
2. There should be a considerably stepped-up investigation of costs in specific areas.

3. There should be a radical revision of the total fare and freight rate structure with considerable simplification and cost orientation.
4. An intelligence unit should be set up to study going road charges.
5. There should be continued refinement of methodology for determining potential savings on specific operations including secondary savings through deferred or avoided repairs and maintenance, proceeds from sale of scrap, etc.
6. A case should be presented to the Commonwealth for the provision of funds for rail projects throughout Australia based solely on the economic merit of the individual proposals advanced.

RAILWAY PERSONNEL

1. Greater encouragement should be given to talented Railway personnel to pursue relevant studies, university and other, that would fit them for advancement.
2. Inter-branch movement of talented personnel should be encouraged.
3. The promotion system should be based primarily on efficiency.
4. Staff should be recruited from outside the railway service to make good deficiencies in expertise in specialised areas, e.g., financial management, cost accounting, marketing, etc.

RAILWAY GOODS TRAFFIC

1. Railways should make proposals for—
 - (a) closing of lines;
 - (b) closing of stations;
with those leading to the greatest overall saving to be put first.
2. There should be an extension of "freight forwarding" arrangements to intrastate centres and/or establishment of "Regional Freight Centres".

3. Steps should be taken to restrict services to limited periods on unprofitable seasonal lines which cannot be closed altogether.
4. Policy regarding retention of general merchandise traffic should be determined in the light of future potential profitability.
5. A detailed study of wool handling should be undertaken and an optimum physical handling system designed.
6. A detailed study of wheat movements (in conjunction with the Grain Elevators Board) should be undertaken, particularly regarding the extended use of GJX wagons and "merry-go-round" trains.
7. Further discussions with the oil industry (under the chairmanship of an independent person required to report to the Government) should be undertaken, with a view to far more bulk petroleum being moved on rail.
8. Rights to operate own road vehicles should be sought in areas where local carriers are charging exorbitant rates.
9. Changes to further increase the utilisation of rolling stock should be pursued. This will enable accelerated scrapping of antiquated vehicles that are so costly to maintain.

RAILWAY PASSENGER TRAFFIC

1. Railways should make proposals for—
 - (a) withdrawal of passenger services on specific lines;
 - (b) closure of intermediate stations to passenger traffic on other lines.

These proposals should include the elimination of country passenger services other than between Melbourne and Sale, Leongatha, Geelong, Serviceton, Mildura, Bendigo, Tocumwal and Albury, except that services of reduced frequency would be retained

between Geelong and Warrnambool and between Bendigo and Swan Hill.

2. Parcels traffic and rates should be reviewed with the object of making the traffic profitable and simplifying the rating system.
3. The fleet of non-air conditioned country passenger stock should be reduced to a level required for regular traffic. Peak holiday requirements should be partly met by buses.

TRANSPORT REGULATION—GOODS

1. New types of licences should be issued giving considerable road freedom within—
 - (a) 50 miles of Melbourne;
 - (b) 50 miles of Portland;
 - (c) 25 miles radius of a State border.

These licences should exclude the carriage of coal, beer, flour, bran and pollard, grains, containers, petroleum products, lime, sand and shell grit while the 50 miles of Melbourne licence should also exclude the carriage of bulk or bagged cement from manufacturing plants, iron, steel and aluminium unfabricated products, wire products from Rylands works at Geelong, motor vehicle bodies, parts and components, and wool from Geelong to Melbourne.

2. The load capacity of new vehicles under primary producers' licences should be limited to six tons and goods carried should be restricted to own produce and goods for own use.
3. The maximum carrying capacity of ancillary vehicles (operating within 50 miles radius of principal place of business) should be lifted from four to six tons.
4. All vehicles of up to 10 cwt. capacity should be exempt from licencing.
5. Supplementary licences should be available in addition to a basic licence for the carriage of specific commodities.
6. Licences should be issued instead of permits for all traffic that is not temporary in character.
7. Decentralised industries should have greater access to hire and reward carriers and vehicles owned by other decentralised industries. However, the carriage of cement from cement manufacturing plants, iron, steel and aluminium unfabricated products, wire products from Rylands works at Geelong, coal, briquettes, lime, gypsum, manures, grains, flour, sugar, wood pulp, paper,

hard-board, bran, pollard, stock-feed, malt, salt, minerals, petroleum products and goods for export should be excluded under this arrangement. This would be subject to any contractual arrangements a decentralised industry has with the Railways.

8. All timber traffic (other than from East Gippsland) should be available for transport by hire and reward carriers subject to any contractual arrangements between a sawmill and the Railways.
9. There should be a "fitness and qualifications" test for all applicants for the new types of licences.
10. Charges for licences and permits should be considerably increased.
11. Holders of some types of licences and all permits should be required to pay their Road Maintenance Charges in advance. Other operators should be required to lodge a bond guaranteeing payment of the Charge.
12. There should be no exemptions from the payment of the Road Maintenance Charges. **The actual rate of Road Maintenance Charge would still result in a substantial shortfall in contributions by road operators toward the cost of road construction and maintenance attributable to their vehicles.** [No specific recommendation was made in this regard.]
13. The Transport Regulation Board should have considerably strengthened power to cancel or suspend licences for offences. A points system would be developed to facilitate this.
14. Operators of all vehicles in excess of six tons capacity should be required to produce a roadworthiness certificate as a condition of registration each year.
15. All vehicles in excess of 12 tons capacity should be inspected annually by the Transport Regulation Board.
16. The activities and facilities of the Transport Regulation Board, Motor Registration Branch and Road Safety & Traffic Authority should be amalgamated into a new Road Transport Agency which would be responsible to the Minister of Transport.

TRANSPORT REGULATION—PASSENGER

1. With the exception of services beyond Geelong, bus services which take over from rail should not run through to Melbourne

but should co-ordinate with rail at appropriate locations.

2. Co-ordinated services should be designed so as to maximise the utilisation of buses and minimise inconvenience to travellers. Through or combined tickets with satisfactory arrangements for reserved rail seats would be required.
3. In appropriate cases, licences for buses which replace rail services should be granted to interstate bus operators provided their vehicles are registered.
4. Buses should be permitted to operate during abnormal traffic peaks in conjunction with the Railways.
5. Buses should no longer be exempt from the Road Maintenance Charge.
6. Interstate buses should be liable to inspection by the Transport Regulation Board on the same basis as now applies to intrastate vehicles.

A DIP IN THE TRAIN POOL?

Bikini-clad passengers could become a common sight on Western Australian Government Railways trains if a suggestion submitted by one of their employees proves practicable.

The proposal, revealed in the Perth newspaper, *Sunday Times*, is for a swimming pool, 30 ft long, by 7 ft. wide by 5 or 6 ft deep, to be installed in a carriage for use on long distance and excursion trains.

Shower cubicles, an attendants' room, a sun bathing platform and a sun roof are included in the plan.

The suggester, an electrical fitter at the Midland Workshops, supplied calculations which showed that the water surge during acceleration and deceleration would be acceptable.

• Water surge in moving vehicles has been a problem in the past. Oil tankers have baffles to keep the fluid surge down to acceptable levels. Before this prevention method was developed, British railway companies had a spate of derailments caused by water surge in the tenders of steam locomotives at very high speeds in the early days of high speed running.

MILEPOSTS

1923

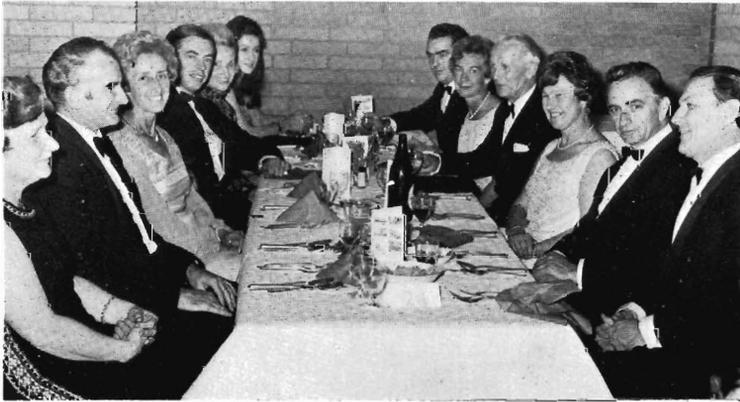
First wig-wig signal installed at Amess Street level crossing, North Carlton, August 22.

TRANSPORT OPERATORS' BALL



The former Bus Proprietors' Association Annual Ball was this year expanded to take in all transport operators, hence its name. Amongst the many who attended, were railwaymen (left to right) Messrs. R. Savelle, L. Byrne, J. Lloyd, K. Stewart and F. Hall, who, with their wives, met the Minister of Transport, the Hon. Vernon F. Wilcox, M.P. (second from right).

At another table, (below) Messrs. J. Lade, D. Cowden, R. Barden, H. Chandler and L. McCallum and their wives dined with Commissioner Mr. I. Hodges (right) and Mrs. Hodges (opposite him).



BIG STOCK LIFTS FROM DROUGHT—STRICKEN GIPPSLAND

More than 15,000 head of stock were railed to agistment areas from drought-stricken eastern Gippsland during April and May.

Thousands of head of other stock were sent to sale yards and abattoirs as men on the land in the area tried to overcome the disastrous effects of what has been described as the area's worst drought on record.

Declared drought areas affect all stations east of Traralgon on the main Gippsland line and Gelliondale and eastwards on the Yarram line.

As early as September 14 last year, some shires were declared drought areas, but when Autumn rains failed to break the "dry", graziers stepped up moving out their stock.

Special trains have taken stock to agistment in the Hamilton/Coleraine, Mortlake, Derrinallum and Skipton districts and to the irrigated Goulburn Valley—reversing the movements during the 1967 drought when Western District stock was agisted in eastern Gippsland.

Fodder

For the remaining animals, massive lifts of fodder have been made from the more fortunate areas.

Since the declaration of drought areas, more than 12,000 tons of fodder have been railed into the area from St. Arnaud, Warrnambool, Lismore, Burrumbeet, and Elmhurst.

RACE TRAIN RECORD

A record 1,076 punters travelled on special race trains to last month's Warrnambool Racing Club's May Carnival.

On the peak day, Thursday, May 4, when the 3-mile Grand Annual Steeplechase was run, 928 passengers travelled on the special trains.

Two fully air-conditioned 11-carriage expresses took the punters to and from Warrnambool station, and a fleet of taxis and buses shuttled punters between there and the course.



Stock from drought-stricken Orbost arrive at Tatura for agistment.

AMONG OURSELVES

Trained 1,000 apprentices

The 46-year V.R. career of Jack Connelly, a Manual Training Instructor for apprentices, came to a close on May 19. Starting as a lad labourer Jack later excelled as a boilermaker and, after years of training apprentices at workshops throughout the system, he was made an Instructor at the Manual Training Centre at Newport Workshops in 1962.

"I can't speak highly enough of the standards here," he told *News Letter* with pride. "Many overseas visitors have been through our set up and said that it is the best in the Southern Hemisphere. They've taken back with them many sketches and technical drawings for use in similar schemes."

In recent years, Ern Best, one of Jack's pupils, took out the coveted award of best apprentice in the State for oxy-welding.

In younger days, Jack was a keen rower and water polo player. He was later an umpire for the Victorian Amateur Football Association, and has been, for many years, the organist at his local church.

Training over 1,000 exuberant youths has never been a trouble to Jack who sums his years of teaching philosophically by saying: "They try to use their psychology on me, but by treating them as young men and using psychology back on them, we've got on well."

There's more than 1,000 ex-apprentices who would agree, too.



Retiring Instructor, Jack Connelly, (centre) with some of his pupils on his last day.

Head Office wedding



Saturday, May 20, was a happy day for 19-year-old Traffic Branch staff office typist, Patsy Shortell—she married 20-year-old Railways Investigation Officer Maurie Benton. Mary McManus, the Assistant Chief Traffic Manager's typist, was bridesmaid and Fred Newman of the Block and Signal Inspectors Office manned the camera to really make it a railway wedding.

Morden tradition ends

Another name well known to the older V.R. sporting fraternity—Bonding Section Ganger Clem Morden—disappeared from V.R. time sheets on May 19.

The Morden name has been in railway circles for over 75 years—Clem has given 46 years to the V.R., his father worked 45 years, finishing as a ganger at Port Melbourne, and his uncle, a fireman at Ballarat, predated that service by a further 10 years.



Mr. Morden

Clem's railway career started in 1923 in the V.R. photography section, but during the depression he was regressed to a tradesman's assistant.

At this time, he had made a name for himself as a V.F.L. footballer.

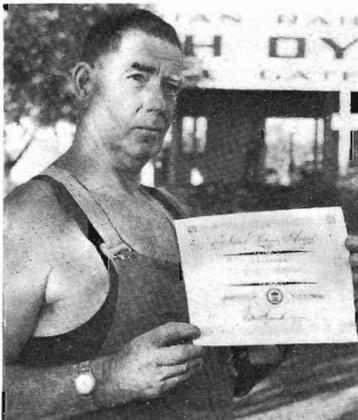
A winger, he played 80 games for St. Kilda and 15 for Collingwood—appearing in finals with both teams.

"There's been many greats in the football world who were railwaymen," he said. "St. Kilda and Footscray captain and coach Bill Cubbins, Collingwood's Len Murphy, Des Healey and Ron Todd, Carlton's Ron Cooper, Clyde Donaldson, New-

ton Chandler, Paddy O'Brien and Joe Kelly—who later coached Footscray—Richmond's Dick Harris, Martin Bolger and Roger Dean, and Tom Clarke of Essendon (father of footballer Jack and runner Ron) are just some that spring to mind. Ron Baggott, one of today's V.R.I. men, was a champion Melbourne player.

"There were times when the V.R. could have fielded a team that would have given any V.F.L. side a run for its money," he added.

Gardner's garden



Watchman, Arthur Gardner, with his award from 3UZ.

A flourishing garden in what was once the West Melbourne Swamp is still such a rarity that it attracts the eye—and the ordered display of plants and blooms that is Watchman Arthur Gardner's pride and joy at the South Dynon freight terminal is very eye-catching.

For Arthur, the result of his eight years of labour in converting rubble, stone and rubbish strewn land alongside the old tidal canal into a garden is one of his most pleasing gardens—and there have been many.

Gardening has been a life-long



One of the two South Dynon gardens Arthur hewed out of rail yards. The V.R. have also recognized Arthur's efforts by awarding him first prize in their garden comps. on occasions.

association. His first prize for gardening came 45 years ago when, at 14, he won a prize at the Maffra Show.

Many shows and towns later, he created controversy by growing tulips in Mildura, in 1942. "The locals said it couldn't be done," he commented.

Arthur joined the V.R. about 11 years ago, and three years later moved to Dynon. The then Goods Superintendent, Mr. J. Miller, after finding out that Arthur liked gardening, asked him if he'd like to try his talents on the area. "So long as I can make the garden the way I want to, yes," was the reply. From that start, a succession of Goods Superintendents, right down to today's Peter Helbig, have given Arthur every help.

From the eyesore Arthur carved two gardens—featuring willow and desert ash trees and many flowering shrubs.

In fact the area looks so good that nearly everyone comments.

"Arthur's a natural," commented one workmate. "If he was to throw the plant away, the thing would strike and flower better than most of us could ever get one to grow,"

So proud of his garden is Arthur, that he even came in over his holidays to mow the lawns—"The last time I let someone else do it, they ruined the motor-mower," he commented sourly.

Getting a replacement took some doing, too. "Eventually the Chief Traffic Manager said I could get a new one and asked me when I wanted it by. ' . . . tomorrow,' I replied. "Got it, too," he smiled.

Greenfingers Arthur confounded all critics during the big 1967 drought. Workmates all commented that his garden would wilt and die. It didn't, it stayed green and lush. Even the Board of Works inspectors said he was watering the lawn and they would have to disconnect the water unless he stopped.

But the last laugh was Arthur's—"It was my special blend of lawn seeds that let it stay green all year round—just as it does now."

Torquay charge

Signalman Wally Halemba recently donned his replica of the World War I cavalry uniform, mounted a horse, then let out a blood-curdling yell as he spurred his steed into action down the sand dunes.

A new version of the *Desert Song*? Had the third World War broken out without anyone knowing? No, it was a re-enactment of action by the Australian Light Horse (cavalry) for a documentary film.

During World War I, 16,314 Australian horses were shipped to Northern Africa for use in the fighting in the desert. Damascus, El Arish,



Mr. Halemba

its wartime successes are included.

Cavalrymen for the film were from the Southern Command Army Modern Pentathlon Club, of which Wally has been a member for 11 months.

An amateur jockey on the picnic meeting circuit, Polish-born Wally has always enjoyed his horse-riding; the Pentathlon Club is a good outlet.

Members compete against other riders in military-based events. Police and riding clubs are the usual competitors.

A sergeant in the CMF, Wally thoroughly enjoyed himself in the filming, even though each sequence had to be filmed twice. All told, they charged up and down the Torquay sand hills for six hours.

And, like all those who took part, he is eagerly looking forward for the release of the completed film.



The sands of time and Torquay are stirred by Signalman, Wally Halemba.

COMMERCIAL BRANCH

Wilks, W. H., Newport, 14/4

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Astrauskas, V., Geelong, 18/7
 Berens, J. M., South Dynon, 21/4
 Burgess, L. J., South Dynon, 7/6
 Cardall, A. J., Newport, 6/7
 Churchward, E. S., T. L. Depot, 21/4
 Currie, J. H., Ballarat North, 10/4
 Duscher, H. F., Newport, 28/4
 Erdmanis, A., Ballarat North, 10/4
 Firth, G. A., Bendigo North, 20/7
 Grivanos, A., Newport, 19/7
 Gubbins, T. J., Newport, 6/7
 Hanrahan, W. C., Ballarat North, 20/4
 Johnston, D. C., Ballarat North, 25/7
 Lane, G. V., Bendigo Loco. 14/3
 May, R. F., Newport, 31/7
 Murphy, P. J., Bendigo North, 14/4
 McLaws, D. A., Geelong, 14/4
 Nestor, M., Bendigo Loco. 26/4
 Schneider, C. H., Shelter Shed, 16/4
 Smith, C. S., Newport, 12/7
 Stumpo, N., North Melbourne, 10/4
 Theodoropoulos, A., Newport, 22/3
 Williams, E. L., Ballarat North, 12/7

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Aubrey, K. J., Melbourne Yard, 12/4
 Booth, H. T., Melbourne Goods, 7/7
 Bruns, M., Dynon, 17/7
 Campbell, T. A., Frankston, 14/3
 Dell-Oro, A. H., Wangaratta, 19/7
 Giblett, V. A., Prahran, 3/7
 Hatchard, R. I., Rockbank, 21/7
 McDonald, F. J., Mildura, 2/4
 Monk, E. J., Melbourne Goods, 10/4
 Nolan, T., Traralgon, 13/7
 Zorniko, I., Melbourne Goods, 19/7

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Ahern, T. J. F., Plant Division
 Laurens St., 17/4
 Almond, S. C., Spencer Street, 19/4
 Becroft, R. E., Dimboola, 24/4
 Bruce, W. A., Laurens Street, 21/5
 Bryce, T. F., Murchison East, 3/7
 Diss, P. J. F., Kyneton Utility, 19/5
 Kolywa, P., Newport Workshops, 14/7
 Legg, J. J., Bendigo Works, 30/6
 Martin, W. E., Haddon, 28/7
 Murray, B. B., Head Office, 28/4
 Murrrihy, T. P., Warrnambool, 4/7
 McCreery, W. H., Flinders Street, 13/7
 Pappa, F., Spotswood, 15/3
 Routledge, H. N., East Melbourne, 21/4
 Tognella, N., Geelong, 23/7
 Williamson, A. R., Spotswood, 14/7
 Wilson, C. J., Flinders Street, 10/5
 Wilson, J. McL., Seymour Tamping, 19/4
 Wing, J. T., Spotswood Workshops, 28/4
 Young, L. A., Mach. & Water Supply
 Div., 28/7

**NEWS LETTER REGRETS
TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING
DEATHS**

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Grogan, J. K., Jolimont, 25/4
 Mitchell, A. F., Ararat, 17/4

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Campbell W., Melbourne
 Goods, 24/4
 Chandler, K. L., Geelong, 10/5
 Stephens, C. H., Kyneton, 13/5

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Solinas, D., Spotswood
 Workshops, 10/5
 Reid, L., Head Office, 26/5

**BEAUTY HINTS FOR
THE GIRLS**

To provide an interest and service to the female members of the Institute, arrangements have been made for a beauty consultant from the Bambi Smith Model College to give a free beauty advisory lecture between 12.45 p.m. and 1.30 p.m., on Tuesday, July 11, at the Council Room, 3rd Floor, Railway Buildings, Flinders Street. Admission is free.

Subjects will include deportment and poise, dress sense, make-up, skin-care, hair-care, etiquette, etc. and should be of great interest to all young ladies aged between 16 and 60.

If you would like to come along to this demonstration, please ring Auto. 2445, and a reservation will be made on your behalf.

**HOLIDAYS—OVERSEAS
TRAVEL**

We have again arranged some interesting overseas tours over the Christmas period for the large number of railway men (and women) on annual leave at this time.

Prices quoted offer a special discount to members and cannot be bettered anywhere.

First, there is a 16-day tour of New Zealand, embracing both Islands, scheduled to leave Melbourne Airport on Thursday, December 21, 1972 and arrive back in Melbourne on Friday, January 5, 1973. Cost per adult is \$485 and this figure includes return air fare, all accommodation with private facilities, all meals, transport, sightseeing tours and launch trips included in the itinerary.

Second, we have planned an 11-day Fijian holiday, leaving either Melbourne or Sydney on Tuesday, December 26, 1972, and arriving back on Friday, January 5, 1973. This tour is priced at \$377 per adult (Tullamarine to Tullamarine) and includes return air fare, travel, sightseeing and cruises in Fiji, together with accommodation, including private shower, toilet, etc. Meals are NOT included mainly because it was felt that members would prefer to sample the various restaurants and foods available there. Any member who cares to use his holiday pass and join this tour in Sydney, will be charged only \$322.40—a saving of

\$54.60. Departure and arrival dates are still the same.

For those who like a lazy, care-free, all-round, luxurious 15-day holiday at sea, then there is a South Sea Island cruise leaving Sydney on Friday, December 22, 1972 and returning to Sydney on Friday, January 5, 1973. Prices range from \$278 per person (four berth cabin) to \$756 (single cabin with "the works").

Please ring the Institute, Auto. 2445, for bookings or more information. Members should keep in mind that these discounted prices have been obtained as an added service of your Institute, and if you are contemplating a holiday over the 1972-73 Christmas-New-Year period, then make sure you avail yourself of these concessions.

SPORT

By OSS KEATING

Cricket

While I'm fully aware that we are right in the middle of the football season, here are a few summer sports results which, as yet, have not appeared in *News Letter*. Cricket—for instance, is still topical, if for no other reason than at the moment the Australian test team is battling out the fight for the Ashes in England and I felt that this was as good a time as any to report on the 1971-72 Commissioners' Cup Competition.

As you probably know, four teams Codon, Melbourne Yard, Loco and Spotswood Workshops—competed. Games, as usual, were played on excellent turf wickets at Royal Park, and pretty well every game was close, keenly contested, and from reports, very well umpired. At the conclusion of the home and home rounds, last season's finalists were again to play off for the cup. This time, however, Loco avenged their 1971 defeat, by winning with eight wickets in hand, scores being Spotswood 138, Loco. 2/140. A great 72 not out by Roy Chapman and a fine bowling effort of 5/21 by Eddie Wilson paved the way for Loco's easy win. Lindsay Hatley and Bill Thomas did best of the Spotswood boys, but the rest of the team could not match their efforts. Congratulations to Loco. on yet another win; commiserations to Spotswood, who, at least, proved that their 1970-71 effort was no fluke. Remaining clubs, Melbourne Yard and Codon, are to be commended for the high standard of cricket they produced throughout the season. The Commissioners' Cup was presented to the victors by Mr. M. L. McKenzie, Immediate Past President of the Institute, on behalf of the Commissioners and the Institute, at a short function at the conclusion of play in the final game.

Country cricket

While on the subject of cricket, a report has just come to hand of a match played at Maryborough between the Donald and Maryborough Centres. In what was obviously a very tight and exciting game, Maryborough just managed to overhaul Donald. The visitors had first use of the wicket and, after being 6/49, managed to amass 146 runs before being all out. Maryborough also gave their supporters a fright, because at one stage they were 7/83, but were saved by veteran Eric Higgins with a great 38 (3 sixes and 2 fours) and finished with 150, to snatch victory by four runs. At a short social function after the match it was decided to arrange further matches during the next cricket season.

Bowls

It was most pleasing to read that Allan Sheehan, Train Examiner at Echuca, had won the Champion of Champions title of the Echuca and District Bowling Association. Allan competed in this year's V.R.I. Country Bowls Week and this win proved that the excellent form he displayed there was no fluke. As Allan can be considered one of the "younger" brigade of bowlers, I feel it won't be long before he makes his presence felt in our intersystem team.

Table Tennis

After a break of many years, the Ararat Institute decided to enter two teams in the Ararat and District Table Tennis Association and competed in A reserve grade and C grade respectively. Either the long lay-off did them the world of good or they managed to dig up some pretty handy players (and I'm inclined to think the latter was the case) because both sides finished at the top of their grades, winning premierships. The A reserve team was Darryl Smith and John Robinson, both firemen at the loco depot, and A.S.M. Rus Salma.

They defeated their opponents three rubbers to five. The win could have been much more decisive but for the fact that John Robinson did not finish duty in time to play and so had to forfeit his games.

In the C grade division, nothing was left to chance with the grand final win, 10 rubbers to one. This team was Jack Pianta, Ken Price and Dan Boyle, all of the Traffic Branch. Jack Pianta (who incidentally is Centre President) completed a very successful season when he won the C singles championship; and with his partner he also annexed the Doubles Championship—well done, Ararat!

The V.R.I. Table Tennis Association will conduct the 1972 State

Championships at the Table Tennis Centre, Albert Park, on Sunday, July 16, starting at 10 a.m. Events to be decided include the State Open Singles and Doubles Championships, the Women's State Singles Championship, a restricted singles and doubles event (seeded players excluded) and a Country Singles Championship. Please keep in mind that entries close on Wednesday, July 12, and entry forms may be had from the Hon. Secretary of any Country Centre, the Hon. Secretary of the V.R.I.T.T.A., or the Sports Secretary, V.R.I., C/- Room 97, Flinders Street.

Remember, all entrants must be financial members of the V.R.I. The organising committee is hopeful that a large entry will be received and that country areas, in particular, are well represented. It is desirable that the women's section of these championships be revived, and it is hoped that our female table tennis players support this fixture.

Soccer

Just a little over 12 months ago—on April 28, 1971, to be precise—the V.R.I. Soccer Club was formed. Since that date, due to the enthusiasm of a number of people, and in particular, the Club's Hon. Secretary, Wally Binder, parcels assistant Flinders Street, the club progressed to the stage where it was possible to enter a team in the Metropolitan Soccer League this season. The competition is well under way, and although the side took some time to settle down, it is beginning to make its presence felt and, it is hoped, many more wins are in store for it. The last round of the competition will not be played until Sunday, September 3, so that any railway soccer player who reads this and feels he can help our club will be most welcome.

There is plenty of time to settle in before the end of this season. All that is necessary is to contact either Wally Binder, or myself on Auto. 2445. Supporters who would like to see our railway team in action—our home ground is Middle Park Oval No. 7, right behind the Middle Park Bowling Club, and quite close to the Middle Park station. Our colours are, of course, blue with a yellow V.

Golf

Country golfers are reminded that the 1972 Country Golf Week fixture will again be held at the Rosedale Golf Club, Aspendale, on October 2-5. The programme will be much the same as last year, with individual events on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and the State Championships on Thursday. The teams events, again to be divided into major and minor divisions, will

be played on the knock-out system. Entries will close with the Sports Secretary, Room 97, 3rd Floor, Flinders Street Station Buildings (Auto. 2445) on Monday, September 11.

Country Tournaments

Dates of some of the major 1972 country golf tournaments are listed for the information of V.R.I. golfers.

Sunday July 16—

Maryborough V.R.I. Annual Golf Tournament, at the Maryborough Golf Course.

Sunday October 1—

North Eastern V.R.I. Golf Tournament, at the Golden Vale Golf Course, Benalla.

Sunday October 15—

Ararat V.R.I. Golf Tournament, at Chalambar Golf Club, Ararat.

Football

It is time again to do battle with our old adversaries, the Australian Postal Institute, on the football field. I refer to Australian rules, of course. The match will be played at the St. Kilda Cricket Ground (Fitzroy Football Club's home ground), on Wednesday, June 28, starting at 1.30 p.m. The game should be of high standard because both sides are always keen to win. We hope to field a particularly strong side and we will be striving for our fourth win in a row. With those two wily old birds, George Peters, of Newport as manager, and Jack Sharp, of Loco as coach, we have two of the most astute officials in the game and I'm sure no team could be in better hands. So, if you are off duty on this date and would like to come along and lend some vocal support to your side, we'll be happy to see (and hear) you.

Fencing

A further illustration, if one is necessary, of the quality and ability of the members of the V.R.I. Fencing Club, is the fact that in the 1972 Olympic Fencing Team, consisting of a manager and four fencers, our club is represented by the Manager, Mr. E. Szakall and two fencers, Miss C. McDougall and Mr. E. Simon a magnificent compliment to the V.R.I. Club when you consider that only two other fencers were added to the team from the rest of Australia. Surely this should indicate to any railway man or woman who is thinking of taking up this very popular sport, that there is only one club to join for top class tuition and competition—the V.R.I. Fencing Club. Similarly should any V.R.I. member have a dependent, particularly of school age, interested in fencing, they should join them up with the club immediately.

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

NEWS LETTER

JULY

VR

1972

10 CENTS



THE TIME IS NOW

Press reaction to last month's announcement that the V.R.'s deficit for 1971-72 would be a record \$36 million, was significant for its lack of criticism of the railways.

In place of the once familiar banner headlines proclaiming yet another burden on the tax-payer came hard-hitting, soundly based editorials calling on the Federal Government to set Australian railways back on the right track.

The Australian commented: "A modernised railway system could make a significant contribution to this country's economic growth. Small and inefficient country branch lines would need to be lopped off, but the potential for long-distance interstate fast freight haulage is considerable. Re-engineering the main line between Brisbane and Melbourne could bring us into the era of 150 m.p.h. advanced passenger trains, and four-and-a-half-hour cheap travel between Melbourne and Sydney. But this sweeping level of development would need to be nationally planned and nationally financed."

The Herald advanced a similar case, saying: "If Canberra needed something to steel its acceptance of long-ducked responsibilities towards the tax-paying, fare-paying public, then this (the loss), surely, is it.

"There are adequate precedents in other fields of transport. Road, air and sea transport systems have long received aid from the Federal Government. Some of this aid, at the expense of Railways, has been damagingly short-sighted."

But the most biting and accurate picture was painted by *The Age* editorial which read: "Record railway losses seem to have become as depressingly inevitable as periodic fare increases. The only consolation is that the increase in the deficit is not as steep as in the previous year. Without detailed figures it is fair to assume, contrary to popular opinion, that the railways are continuing to improve their efficiency where they can. But, as in many other enterprises, wage rises continue to outstrip rises in productivity, and irresponsible stoppages have not helped.

"Familiarity with railway losses breeds complacency or, worse still, leads to wrong conclusions. One is that railways are an obsolete form of transport, which can simply be left to die of attrition. This is manifestly untrue. Imagine the traffic congestion and pollution if Melbourne had no suburban rail

network. Railways are still the fastest, cheapest and safest way of carrying large numbers of suburban commuters at peak periods. They can profitably provide fast and efficient inter-capital passenger and freight transport. They are unsurpassed long-distance and bulk goods carriers.

"Lamentably, successive Governments in this State have acted as though the railways did not matter. For more than 50 years the railways have been starved of the funds they needed to replace worn-out rolling stock, upgrade permanent way, instal modern equipment and provide attractive services. The miserly capital expenditure that has been allowed has come from loan funds (in contrast to financing of most road projects), with the result that railway losses are boosted by crippling interest charges.

"A second, more widely held, fallacy is that railway losses don't really matter, that the railways should not be expected to pay. One defect in this attitude is that it denies the railways an important measure of efficiency, depresses their morale and diminishes their incentive to improve performance. A more serious flaw in the philosophy that the railways should run at a loss is that this obscures social priorities and economic alternatives. The question that has to be asked — and answered — is whether State (or Commonwealth) revenue diverted to cover railway losses could not be better spent to meet other community needs. Any subsidy by taxpayers to particular categories of railway users ought to be isolated, understood and fully justified on acceptable social or economic criteria.

"The railways have long been burdened with the obligation to provide freight and passenger services where the cost has been out of all reasonable proportion to the financial returns or value to the community. This is especially true where alternative forms of transport could be offered at lower cost. In his admirable report on land transport in Victoria, Sir Henry Bland has set sensible guidelines for rationalising and co-ordinating rail and road transport. The Government, to its credit, has begun or promised to implement some of his proposals. It has yet to commit itself to adopting those measures which would result in the greatest savings: the closing of country lines and stations, and limitation of

services where the excessive cost of maintaining them can be justified on only the most narrow political or parochial grounds.

"Abandoning or reducing grossly uneconomic services is only part of the remedy for the railways' sickness. The other is a massive injection of public funds to rehabilitate the railway system and to improve the quality of the service the railways should provide. The cost of revival will be great after all these years of neglect, and it can be met only from the resources of the Commonwealth.

"But the ultimate price to the community of the alternative — inefficiency, continued deterioration and final breakdown — would be greater still."

The decision of the press is clear and unanimous — Australia's railways are worth saving and only the Commonwealth can do it in time.

G. F. BROWN

TIME HALVED

Transit time for individual freight consignments railed from Melbourne to Sydney was halved from May 22.

The decision to reduce transit time from 48 to 24 hours followed publication of the newspaper advertisement titled "freight hotline to Melbourne", which gave details of the excellent overnight rail freight service between the two capitals.

Those transit times applied only to traffic handled through forwarding agents, but the advertisement brought response from individual consignors, for whom freighting was then a two-day proposition.

Action followed. At the request of the Chief Traffic Manager, the Freight Operations section investigated what could be done. The result? Transit time was halved.

CHEAPER BY CAR?

Recently published figures show that an American who buys a 1972-model car will spend \$US13,552 on it over the next 10 years.

Sunday Australian investigated Australian costs with the help of motoring organisations to find out an equivalent figure to keep an Australian polluting metal monster fed, watered, groomed and healthy.

R.A.C.V. said that for a Holden or Falcon with a purchase price of \$3,200, the cost of putting it on the road is \$3,498.

"For the next four years, registration, third party insurance, driving licence and R.A.C.V. subscription will bring standing costs to \$4,247.

Deduct a trade-in allowance of 35 per cent from the purchase price, add registration, etc., and the hapless motorist is left with a cost of \$3,127 before the car even leaves the garage," the article read.

"To this must be added running costs. Driving 10,000 miles a year at 22 miles per gallon, the cost of petrol will be \$1,289, as long as the price does not go up. Other costs—tyres, relined brakes, batteries, fan belts, radiator hoses and wiper blades—will bring total running expenses over five years to \$2,335.

"Add to this the standing cost, and the total cost is \$5,462 or nearly \$1,100 a year."

For those who think that small cars save them money, the article shatters that illusion: "In N.S.W., N.R.M.A figures for the Mini Clubman show that the combined standing and running costs for the car will total \$4,995 over five years on the basis of 10,000 miles a year."

And, finally, if you're in the executive class, you'll need to be to pay for a car like a Fairlane which will cost you about \$17,810 over 10 years.

TRAFFIC GROWTH

Sunflower seed traffic has blossomed into a promising crop for the V.R.

In past seasons the traffic has been very small but for this season—December to June—3,069 tons of seeds were railed to Portland from Tocumwal, Numurkah and Deniliquin.

MEMORIES

"Memory", or easy-to-remember, time-tables for Sunday trains on all major metropolitan lines started on July 9.

The time-tables feature a regular half-hour frequency on most lines, with a quarter-hour frequency for stations from Clifton Hill, Caulfield, and Footscray to Melbourne.

Half-hourly time-tables for the Lalor, Eltham and Port Melbourne lines were introduced in 1967.

While some services—mainly in the afternoon—have been reduced, an overall increase in Sunday trains has taken place.

Ringwood to Lilydale and Ringwood to Belgrave now have a half-hour service instead of the previous frequency of approximately three-quarters of an hour.

Eltham to Hurstbridge, Lalor to Epping, Camberwell to Alamein and Newport to Altona now have an hourly Sunday service while the St. Kilda line has a train every 15 minutes.

The advantages of regularity in the new schedules drawn up will be appreciated by all travellers—from most areas they have to remember only four train times to know when every

train in either direction leaves the station.

Apart from the ease of remembering the time-tables, there is less waiting time between connecting trains at many junction stations.

First and last trains of the day have been changed slightly, in order to provide an exact half-hourly service and ensure connections to Spencer Street for passengers transferring to country excursion trains.

NINE GET FINES

Preston Magistrates' Court fined nine offenders against railway by-laws in early June, including a \$65 fine for a man who insulted a ticket examiner.

The Court was told that the man "did his lolly" because he did not like the treatment a passenger was getting. When asked his name by the ticket examiner, he gave a fictitious one.

He admitted that he gave a false name but denied having used insulting language, *Northern Times* reported.

The Stipendiary Magistrate fined him \$40 with \$3 costs for insulting language, and \$20 with \$2 costs for giving a false name and address.

In another case, a 17-year-old youth detected travelling on a child's ticket (under 15) was fined \$5 with \$3 costs.

The Magistrate commented that as he had at least paid half a fare, he would be fined only half as much as usual.

Seven others were fined \$10 with \$3 costs for having travelled without tickets.

NEW RAIL BRIDGE FOR BRISBANE

A new bowstring design rail bridge over the Brisbane River, to link South Brisbane and Roma Street terminals, will be started early next year.

Land along the 1.5 miles between the two stations has been acquired. The bridge will be 870 ft. long.

Twin 3 ft. 6 in. gauge tracks will be built with provision for a standard gauge line if studies show there would be any advantage.

THE VINELANDER

The Vinelander will be the name of the modernized Melbourne-Mildura train from August 8.

Chosen from 270 different titles entered for *News Letter's* contest, *The Vinelander* was suggested by only one entrant; not by a railway man but by one of the 400 subscribers to the magazine.

Winner, Mr. G. W. Edsall, 50, a bookbinder, of Trawool Street, Box Hill North, will receive his cash prize during a lunch-time display at

Spencer Street station on August 8, when the roomette and twinette carriages will be open for public inspection.

A grandfather who was a station-master at Warrenheip, Carrum and Daylesford was the only link Mr. Edsall had with the Railways, although he always takes an interest in the State's railway system, being an avid reader of railway happenings reported by *News Letter*.

Oddly, Mr. Edsall had never been to Mildura, "but I read profusely and know about Sunraysia's great fruit industry", he said.

"Accordingly the name, *The Vinelander*, just came to me in a flash.

The Vinelander becomes the ninth named passenger train running in Victoria. The others are *Southern Aurora*, *Spirit of Progress*, *Inter-capital Daylight* (Melbourne-Sydney) *The Overland* (Melbourne-Adelaide), *The Flier* (Melbourne-Geelong), *The Gippslander* (Melbourne-Bairnsdale), *Great Northern Limited* (Melbourne-Bendigo), and *Albury Express* (Melbourne-Albury).

WHEAT RECORD

Wheat movements by the V.R. for the 1971-72 harvest—20 million bushels to the end of March—were a record.

More than one quarter of the wheat was shipped through Portland.

Grain Elevators Board member, Mr. Miles Bourke, announced that all country storages were expected to be cleared in time for the next harvest, due to start in November.

At one stage, the Grain Elevators Board believed it would have an 18 million bushel carry-over in Victoria at the start of this season's harvesting, but sales to Egypt, South America and the Middle East averted the anticipated problem.

Two years ago, the carry-over reached 60 million bushels—nearly a full year's quota.

Commonwealth finance had provided storage space for another 30 million bushels in Victoria during this season.

FRONT COVER.

Langi Ghiran, a small mount between Buangor and Ararat, forces the main Western Line between Melbourne and Serviceton to rise several hundred feet to cross its lower reaches. Photographed just before the summit was the morning passenger train from Melbourne to Dimboola.

MELBOURNE'S UNDERGROUND



TAKES SHAPE

The first 12 months of construction work on Melbourne's underground rail loop project passed without ceremony on June 22, while work by V.R. staff progressed at several points.

Major work is centred on the East Melbourne area. Two tunnels are being driven. Completed concrete box tunnel work now extends for nearly 1,000 feet.

Preparing the ramp for the Burnley group tunnel—about 900 ft. long—is also under way alongside the completed section of the Caulfield-Sandringham tunnel.

Cut and cover methods have been used to date (see work flow diagram, July 1971 *News Letter*, p. 104) for the work which involves excavations 30-44 ft. deep.

The photograph (opposite) shows work in the Collingwood stabling sidings. This is the start of the ramp for access to the actual tunnelling areas under Spring Street to allow removal of the spoil and the supply of materials.

The access gap between these tunnels and the completed box section will be the last area to be closed.

Ground water flows continually through the soil in the area and special drainage and pumping arrangements have been made.

A flood-prevention scheme has been designed to prevent flood waters entering the tunnels.

The next stage at E Box—tunnelling under the existing lines—promises to be most intricate, and should last 12-18 months.

Work will go on beneath the area while trains travel overhead as the tunnel will pass under most lines to ramp to the surface on the southern side of the yard.

Western portal area

At Spencer Street, the Railway Construction Board is driving a pilot tunnel 2,000 ft. along the route under La Trobe Street to test geology, ground behaviour and water occurrence.

This 9 ft. x 9 ft. tunnel is to allow prospective tenderers to gain first-hand experience of the ground through which the tunnels are to be bored.

Many tests are being taken along the route.

Seismic vibration measurement and observations of ground water flows, stray electrical currents, temperature and air have been made to date.



In a few years, trains will run through this area. A party from the concrete industry inspect progress on the project; the reinforced concrete walls are two feet thick on sides and top, and three feet thick at the base. Top to floor is 19 ft. and floor level at this point is 20 ft. below sea level.



Railwaymen and other members of the Industrial Mobilization Course inspect formwork for the concrete in one of the tunnels.

POSTWAR CREDITS

British migrants holding Postwar Credit certificates can cash them in.

Claim forms are available from the British High Commission office, 330 Collins Street, Melbourne.

Claimants who have mislaid their certificates can still claim, but these will be handled in October.

NO TICKETS—FINED

Eltham Court's Stipendiary Magistrate told two young apprentices apprehended without a ticket on a Hurstbridge train that it was a serious offence for which they could be fined \$50.

Each was fined \$25 with \$3 costs, reported the *Diamond Valley News*.

MILDURA'S SUBURBAN SERVICE

Fifty years ago last month an unusual rail service (for a Victorian country town) was started in Mildura—a suburban service.

Founded in the 1880's, Mildura struggled for an identity until the railway arrived in 1903. With guaranteed transport to the major market of Melbourne, Mildura's potential was unleashed.

Its 1901 population of 1,606 bloomed to 4,608 over the next 10 years and, by 1921, was 6,800.

Other towns developed, too. Irymple grew from nothing in 1901 to 1,200 20 years later; and nearby Red Cliffs, developed in 1919 as a soldier settlement area—the largest in the British Commonwealth even today—reached 4,135 in 1931.

The soldier settlers at Red Cliffs were faced with a nine-mile trek to Mildura—their major market.

In wet weather, the roads were impassible quagmires; in dry weather unpleasant avenues of thick, choking dust and sand. Mildura's dust storms, like Melba's comebacks, are legendary.

Against this background came agitation for a local rail service. And in 1922, they got one.

Suburban service

Rail motors and the V.R. had not been too happy an association in the years prior to 1920. The first two cars, in 1883, could not meet the demands placed on them for duty on the outer circle line and Essendon-Broadmeadows service; likewise, the two imported McKeen gasoline cars of 1912 lasted less than three years in service.

Perhaps this record had something to do with the very next group—the 45 h.p. A.E.C. rail motors—being sent to Mildura to prove their worth first up.

The first one ran a trial to Lancefield and back with dignitaries aboard, and was then promptly dispatched to Mildura—350 miles away—to start its career.

On June 28, 1922, the shuttle service between Red Cliffs—Mildura—Merbein was inaugurated.

On weekdays, trains ran at morning and evening "peak" times, plus a midday service. On Saturdays, the service was virtually continuous except for a lay off between 2 and 4

p.m. Saturday schedules were frequently varied to cater for local sporting fixtures.

There was no Sunday service.

Nocliffs

The service was quite popular—more than 110,000 travelled during 1924-25—and 11 stopping places were added to the 16-mile route (see map).

During 1924, a name was sought for the stopping place at mileage 344½ (two miles north of Redcliffs). Suggestions tendered were: Belac, Northstop, Wait-a-while (which later graced a station on N.S.W.'s Narrandera-Tocumwal line), Northcliffs, Sunnyclyffs and Nocliffs.

Current talk said that as the area already had Red Cliffs and White Cliffs (Merbein) then surely Nocliffs (the area is flat) would be appropriate.

The hint was taken, however, and the nod went to Sunnyclyffs.

Demise

As the roads were improved, patronage dwindled. In February 1928, the service was halved, and six months later, on a visit, the then Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. (later Sir Harold) H. W. Clapp, warned locals that unless greater use was made of the service it would be withdrawn.

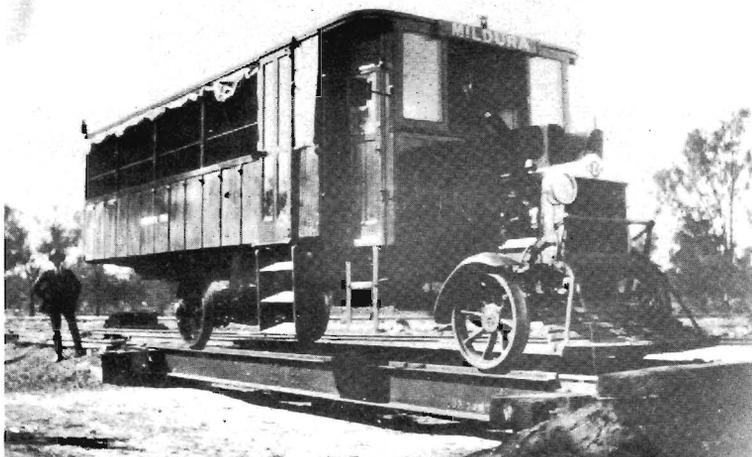
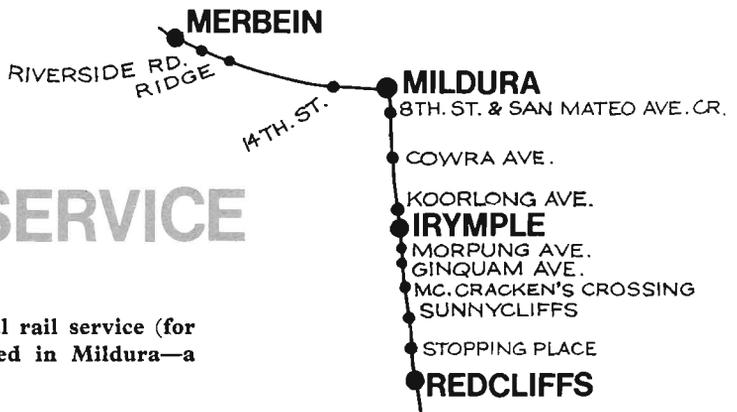
On November 10, 1928, that threat was carried out—Mildura's suburban train ran its last trip.

Two days later, on the Monday, the rail car started its three day pilgrimage back to headquarters—Melbourne.

Train

The train was amazing by today's standards. The body was built on a converted road vehicle chassis. The only glass was provided for the driver—passengers had canvas blinds to ward off the sun (and dust) and there were spartan wooden seats for 32 passengers.

Despite their apparent lack of comfort, modified versions (with padded seats and windows with glass) chalked up years of service in rural Victoria, the last being withdrawn in 1957.



Photographed on its inaugural run in 1922 is AEC 1 which ran the local service. The tiny turntable for the small motor was provided at Redcliffs station for this service. AEC 1 lasted in service until October 1953.

METRICS—TERMS AND USES

As the change to metrics gathers momentum, there is a need to know the correct use of the new terms and their pronunciation.

METRE. The American spelling 'meter' is not acceptable.

KILO. Used as a prefix with any unit, the pronunciation should be 'kill-o-' with the accent on the first syllable and 'o' pronounced as 'oh'.

KILOGRAM. Although a base unit, the name of this unit contains the prefix 'kilo'; it is 1,000 grams. Names of decimal multiples and sub-multiples of the unit are formed by attaching prefixes to the word 'gram'. 'Kilogram' is often abbreviated (unofficially) to 'kilo', pronounced 'keel-low' with the 'ee' as in 'heel' and the accent on the first syllable. It has no legal standing and its use other than in casual speech should be avoided.

MASS AND WEIGHT. The mass of an object is the quantity of matter it contains; it is constant. Its weight is the force due to gravity, on that mass; it may vary greatly, as is evidenced by 'weightlessness' in outer space. In the Imperial System, the term 'pound' has come to mean a mass of one pound or a weight of one pound-force. This has tended to create a situation in which the terms mass and weight are used synonymously.

The International System does not use units of force based on the weight of a unit of mass (e.g., the kilogram-force). The S.I. unit is the newton, and a weight when the word is used correctly to signify a force, should be expressed in newtons.

Doubtless there will continue to be many cases in which the term 'weight' is used loosely to mean mass. This duality of meaning has already been recognized in the Commonwealth Weights and Measures (National Standards) Regulations. Regulation 14 states that the units of measurement of weight have the same names and may be referred to by the same abbreviations and symbols as the units of measurement of mass, and provides that the weight of an object is numerically the same as the mass of that object expressed in the unit of the same name. This means that when the term 'weight' is used loosely to mean 'mass', the numerical value is the same.

The International System, by its nature, will obviate much of the confusion which has hitherto existed. It is hoped that as conversion pro-

gresses, the misuse of the term 'weight' will ultimately cease.

GRAM. The spellings 'gram and gramme' are both allowed under the Commonwealth weights and measures legislation, but the Board recommends the adoption of the shorter spelling for all units which embody the term, in conformity with a recent decision in the United Kingdom and current practice in the United States.

TONNE. It is recommended this be pronounced 'tonn' with 'o' as in 'tot' to clearly distinguish the unit from the ton, pronounced 'tun'.

LITRE. This should be used only for volumes of liquids and gases. The spelling 'liter' is not acceptable. Because the symbol, if printed or typed as a lower case 'l' (ell) may be misread as the arabic figure 1 (one), it is recommended the name of the unit be spelled out in full or an italic or script (*l*) be used where ambiguity may arise.

KNOT. For use in connection with air and sea navigation only.

PASCAL. This is the preferred name for newton per square metre. Its international adoption will simplify the naming of derived units

and the creation of decimal multiples of the unit. An alternative name for the megapascal is the newton per square millimetre and this has been favoured by some technologists as being more descriptive of the unit.

BAR, MILLIBAR. These units are intended for use in the measurement of gas pressures for meteorological purposes only. Should these units cease to be covered by international meteorological agreements, their replacement with the megapascal and kilopascal respectively will merit consideration.

DEGREE KELVIN. By international agreement, the unit of thermodynamic temperature is the Kelvin and temperature intervals in this scale no longer carry the degree sign ($^{\circ}$ K). Thus, having regard to the relationship with the Celsius scale the temperature 100° C. would be written 373.15K in the Kelvin scale.

DEGREE CELSIUS. The name Celsius was adopted internationally in 1948 instead of Centigrade, to avoid confusion with the identically named unit of angle.

Expressing numerical values

The following practices are recommended:

Because of possible confusion between European and British practice, it is proposed not to use the comma, either as a decimal marker or as a thousands separator. A gap between groups of three figures, counted from left to right of the decimal point, may be used instead of the comma, e.g. 6 093.962 72.

To avoid ambiguity, it is best to place the decimal point at the mid-height of the figures.

Where the figure is less than one, a zero should be inserted before the decimal place, e.g. 0.4; 0.027 61.

As far as possible a unit should be chosen for which values to be expressed will lie between 0.1 and 1 000, e.g. 47.321 mm., rather than 0.047 321 m.

MILEPOSTS

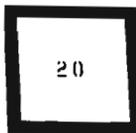
1925

First remotely controlled points and signals in Victoria, at Goulburn Junction in the Tallarook to Seymour section, controlled from Seymour, August 16.

Ringwood-Upper Ferntree Gully electrification, October 12; Croydon-Lilydale, November 30.

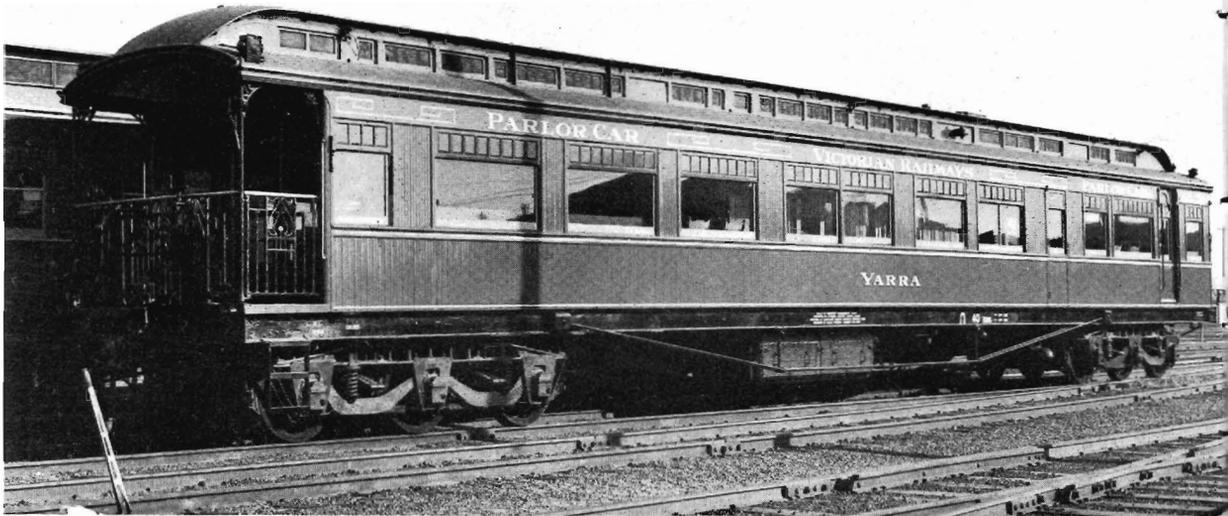
METRIC CAPACITY ON RAIL WAGONS

LOAD	55.9 t.
	55 TONS
TARE	21.6 t.
	21 5 1 0
	N 5.72



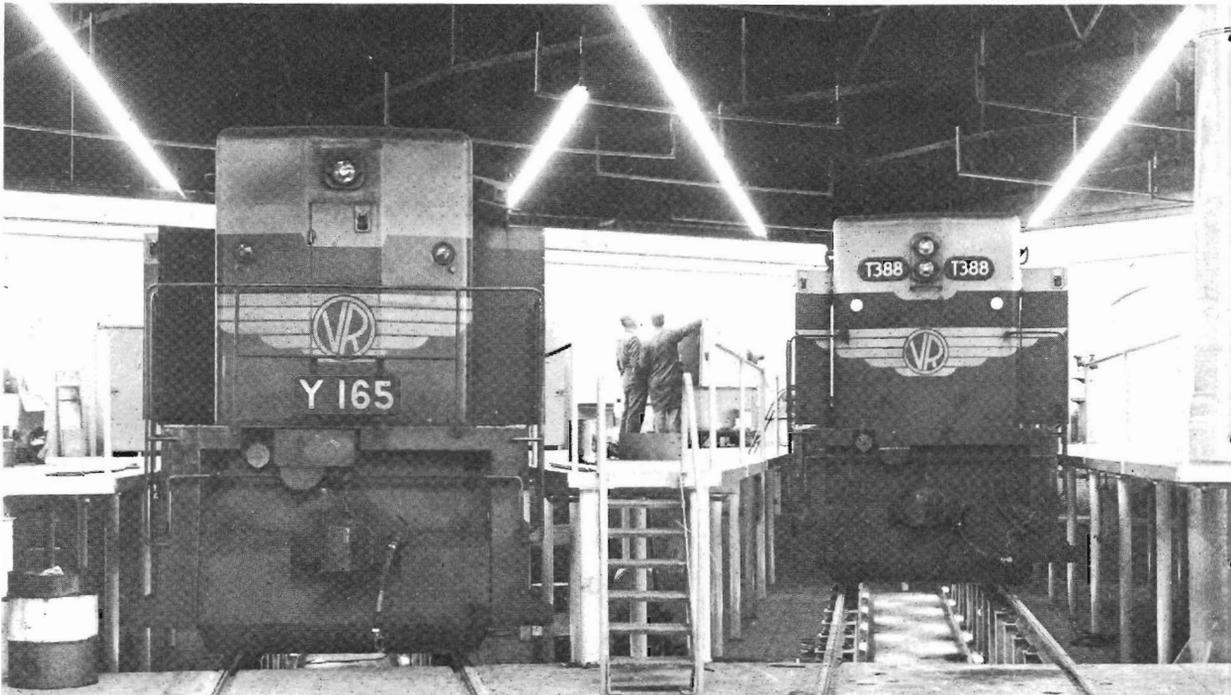
GJF
233

New wagons now coming into service have their tare and carrying capacity shown in Imperial and Metric Units. The tare of the GJF wagon is 21 tons, 5 hundredweight and 1 quarter and its carrying capacity is rated at 55 tons. The metric figures for the GJF are: tare, 21.6 tonne and capacity, 55.9 tonne. The symbol for tonne is t. Having to remember that 28 lb. is 1 quarter, and 4 grs. are 1 cwt., and there are 20 of them to the ton is more difficult than the decimal principle of the Metric System where you simply add 21.6 and 55.9 to get 77.5 tonne. Metric measurements will later be extended to all rolling stock.



VIEWS OF NEWS

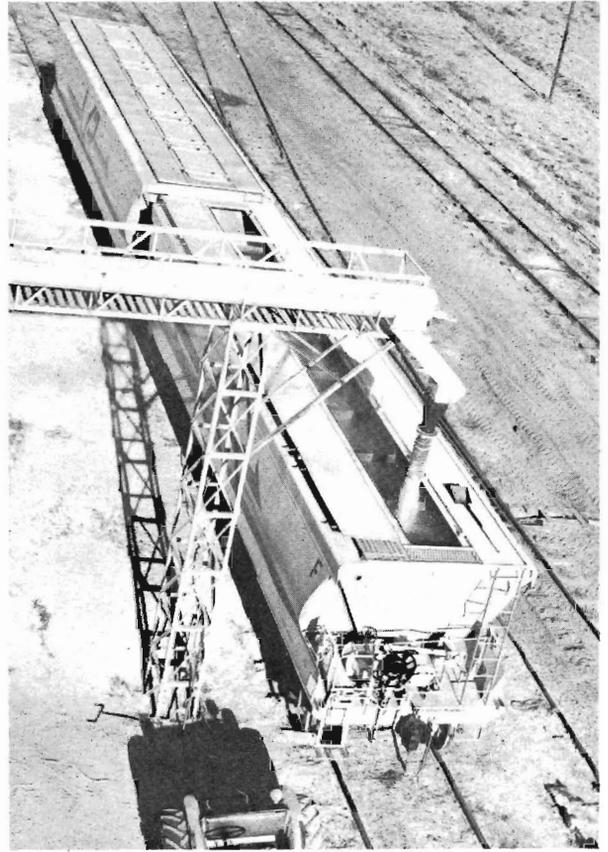
RESTORED. *Yarra*, the old parlour car from the *Sydney Limited* has been repainted by the Australian Railway Historical Society with circa World War I livery and lining out. Similar lining out was discontinued in the 1920's; *Yarra* was used on Sydney express services from 1906 until supplanted by *Spirit of Progress* in 1937. It is now used on rail fan tours and was a popular exhibit at the recent Railway Exhibition. *Yarra's* twin, *Murray*, was for many years the enginemens' instructors "office" at North Melbourne.



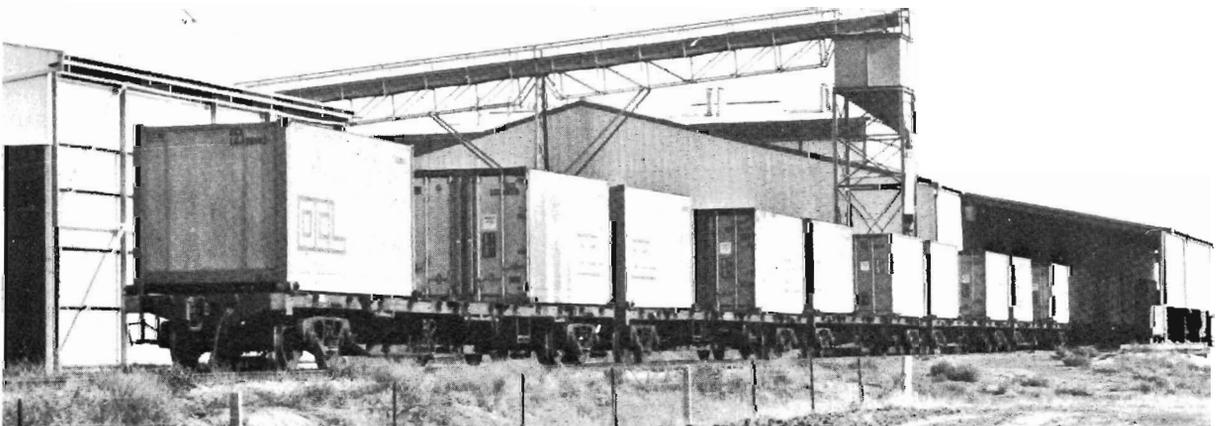
CONVERTED. Bendigo's large steam locomotive shed has been converted into a maintenance centre for diesel-electric locomotives. Commissioned on June 15, 10 locomotives a week will receive attention at the centre.



MODIFIED. For *The Vinlander* two twinettes and two roomettes from *The Overland* have been painted blue instead of maroon and modified for operation on the Mildura line. Seen renovating the draught seals on the vestibule door is Upholsterer Ian Burns.



LOADING. Rice has become big business to the V.R. Shuttle services of bogie hopper wagons – each wagon carries 40 tons of rice – supply the Echuca Mill. This loading scene was at Burraboi, on the Balranald line.



PACKAGED. Rice, loaded into containers for export, waits by the trainload at Deniliquin's mill for railing to Melbourne.

MORE GARDENS AT STATIONS UNDER UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF SCHEME



Strathmore station features extensive garden areas. In one area (above) wood chips restrict weeds from affecting the native plants.



Car park at Macleod has been sealed and stone subsequently provided around the area. Beautification works were carried out on the bank rising to the platform and between the car park and the adjacent road.



Albert Park features a scoria garden with a four-ton rock as centre-piece and then lawn back to the station buildings instead of long grass.

**Quietly, unobtrusively, un-
sightly areas around some metro-
politan stations are being turned
into pleasant areas as part of
the \$120,000 unemployment relief
scheme which finished last month.**

Since its March start, over 30 stations and many car parks have had work done at them.

Two young railway men were responsible for implementing the scheme—27-year-old Michael Morice, the V.R.'s newly-appointed Environment Control Officer, and 21-year-old Engineer, Brendan Waters.

The two drew up individual plans for each area to be worked on, and directed a work force of about 65 men.

Apart from the supervisors, the workforce was drawn from the unemployed under a scheme financed by the Commonwealth and administered by the State.

Low-maintenance is a feature of all the finished works. The majority of gardens incorporate hardy native shrubs with pebbles, scoria or wood chips to limit weeds.

Over 3,500 shrubs and trees (*Melaleucas* and *Callistemons*—both bottlebrushes—plus gums and wattles) and 2,000 ground covers have been planted out.

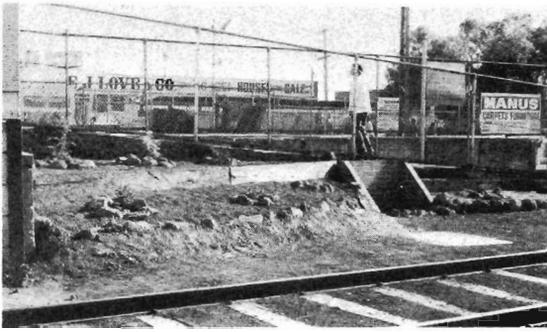
Local councils, in some areas, have been most co-operative towards the improvements and some have participated in the venture.

Funds have been made available for the coming financial year to extend similar work to all metropolitan stations eventually.

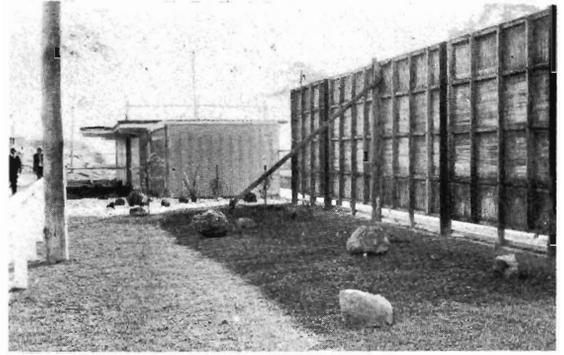
The programme is to include work at not less than 12 stations, as well as one mile of side-widths between stations. Also the gardening staff has been expanded to take over maintenance of some of the newly established gardens.

The V.R. has long wanted to improve the appearance of many areas of railway land but, money, staff and equipment have always been more urgently needed in other areas.

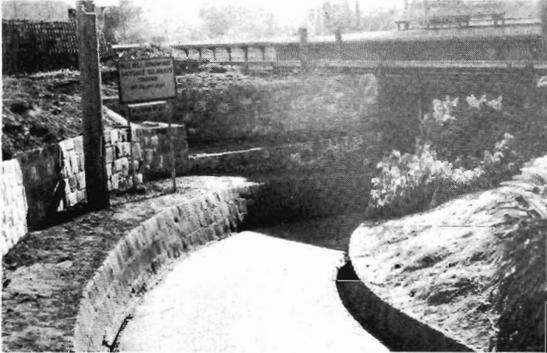
The unemployment relief scheme was specifically designed for beautification works at metropolitan stations.



Landscaping, using railway sleepers, was applied to this hard-to-use corner at Reservoir.



One of the biggest areas treated under the scheme was at Gardiner. On the to-Melbourne side, a very large scoria and pebble garden replaces untidy grass.



Chatham's subway approach is now graced with stone feature walls and terraced gardens.



At South Melbourne, the bank behind the platform was levelled, grassed, and planted with small shrubs.



At Mont Albert, pebble gardens were added to the platform.



Local council at Macleod co-operated in developing this area. Discussing plans are (from left) Engineer Brendan Waters, Heidelberg City Council Superintendent of Parks and Gardens, Mr. Ron McColl, and Environment Control Officer Mike Morice. The hollow was filled and sown to grass.



Areas surrounding Mont Albert station were tidied to complement the new station buildings.



One of the many pebble gardens has been added to Broadmeadows. On the other side of the lines, a screen of trees has been planted between houses and the railway lines.

RAIL CUSTOMERS SAY ...

Each month, the V.R. receives many unsolicited letters of appreciation and thanks for services rendered by staff. Many of the duties that bring this praise are normal, some are not.

Here is a selection from recent letters:

Child saved

"I am writing to express the most grateful and heartfelt thanks of myself and family for the safe return of my three-year-old grandson, Daniel, after he wandered onto rail lines.

"He left the house unnoticed but was soon missed; and my husband, son-in-law and daughter were all out searching for him. I was on my way to the railway line because I know that the boy has always been fascinated by trains and his greatest delight is to be taken for a train ride, so I was fearful that he had 'gone for a train ride'. On the way I met two of your ticket checkers, Messrs. Geoff Dempster and Bob Ryan of the Ticket Checkers Division, Spencer Street, bringing Daniel home.

"They told me that Daniel had a very narrow escape from the train that they were on (the 6.57 a.m. Glen Waverley to Melbourne), and they looked very upset, as indeed we all were. They told me it was due to the alertness of the train driver, Mr. Norman King, that Daniel was saved from death or serious injury.

"I do hope it will be possible for you to pass on our heartfelt thanks for your staff's efforts.

"We regret the inconvenience caused to your Department and will keep a tight check on Daniel, you may be sure."

—Mrs. Dorothy Gilliam, writing to the Secretary.

Hostesses

"I wish to express my thanks for the service and consideration extended to me recently by the hostess on *Intercapital Daylight* on January 20 to Sydney (Miss E. Szova—Ed.) and a week later to Melbourne when I travelled from Wagga Wagga (Mrs. I. Greer—Ed.).

"As I am a single parent with children 8, 6½ and 3, it was gratifying to me that two hostesses were only too ready to assist me, and that nothing seemed to be too much trouble to them."

—Mr. M. West, Glen Waverley, writing to the Secretary.

Fire convention

"On behalf of the General Committee of this Association, I would like to express appreciation of the Commissioners' assistance and co-operation in making available the services of Mr. George Edney (V.R.'s Fire Prevention Committee Chairman—Ed.) in his position as Chairman of

the Victorian State Committee of the Association, to organise May's most successful seminar on the subject of 'Fire and Safety in High-Rise Buildings.'

"The success of the seminar was due to the efficient planning and organisation of Mr. Edney and his committee, and the interest and assistance of the Commissioners in making Mr. Edney's services available is greatly appreciated."

—H. W. Marryatt, Chairman, Australian Fire Protection Association, writing to the Chairman of Commissioners.

Wheat

"Recently the largest single shipment of grain ever to leave a Victorian port was dispatched from Portland in the *Polyhymnia*. As the vessel was loaded at Portland unexpectedly, it became necessary to transport large quantities of wheat to the port in a matter of a few days to ensure continuous loading, as little grain was available at the port when the vessel berthed.

"My committee was particularly pleased that the Victorian Railways was able to meet the shipping requirements for the vessel, and extends its congratulations to your organization and all concerned on an excellent performance."

—N. W. Baldy, Secretary, Glenelg Regional Committee, writing to the Secretary.

Co-operation

"We recently loaded a ship *Panaghia Eloussa* at Portland with 8,800 tons bagged cargo, delivered to the ship by rail from our supply points at Charlton, Horsham, Nhill and Gerang Gerung; dispatch from those stations being spread from Wednesday, March 29, to Thursday, April 20.

"Plans were made for the ship to complete loading and sail on Saturday, April 22. The last of the cargo (20 wagons in total), dispatched from Horsham and Gerang Gerung a.m. on the Thursday was available on the wharf at Portland before 8 a.m. on Saturday despite a 24-hour strike, allowing us to complete the ship as planned.

"We consider this to be an excellent effort on behalf of the Railways, and would like to express our thanks and appreciation to all staff concerned, with a special mention of Mr. Jack Curran of Portland who, in the presence of the writer during

the evening of the Thursday, went to great trouble to ensure that the 20 wagons would be on the first train out of Hamilton on Saturday morning.

"Whilst writing we would also like to express our appreciation of the excellent service, co-operation, efficiency and courtesy always extended to us by the railway staff at Portland, particularly the S.M. Mr. Alan Cleland, Mr. Jack Curran and Mr. Lex Black.

"Last but by no means least, we would like to record our appreciation of the very fine work of Mr. John Gale, of your Traffic Branch, Melbourne.

"In shipping quite large quantities supplied from country stations, efficient service and co-operation by Railways staff is most important, and we cannot speak too highly of Mr. Gale's efforts in arranging delivery on every occasion we have needed his assistance."

—A. G. Hinkins, Export Manager, Noske Flour Mills Pty. Ltd. writing to the Secretary.

Traveller's Aid

"A few lines to show my appreciation for the help received today. I caught a train from Corio at approximately 11.55 a.m. I asked the Stationmaster there if I would be able to connect with the 1.35 Bendigo train. I am not in good health and cannot hurry. Evidently the stationmaster rang through to Spencer Street and when I arrived Mrs. Lark was waiting for me with a trolley and she came round with me, put the case on the train and saw I had a seat. I have spent many, many hours at the Traveller's Aid and have always been shown much kindness and consideration both from Mrs. Lark and Mrs. Moffat."

—Mrs M. Dallimore, writing to the Secretary

Briefcase recovered

"I would like to extend my appreciation to your staff for recovering a briefcase I left in a train on December 22.

"The Hightett Stationmaster contacted stations down the line with the result that later in the evening I was phoned by Carrum station to say that the case had been recovered. I picked it up at Hightett the next day.

"Although recovered, more importantly for me was the exposure to your courteous and efficient staff."

—Mr. H. R. Stockdale, Hightett, writing to the Secretary.

W.A. MOTORAIL

Rail travellers in Western Australia can now take their car with them to five major centres throughout the State.

A recently introduced MotoRail service operates from Perth to Bunbury (115 miles south), Albany (340 miles south-east), Geraldton (306 miles north) and Mullewa (331 miles north-east) over the 3 ft. 6 in. gauge network and to Kalgoorlie (407 miles east) on the standard gauge route.

With the exception of the standard gauge service to Kalgoorlie, cars travel on the same train as their owner; to Kalgoorlie they go by freight train, and, because that leaves from Kewdale freight terminal (in an outer suburb) a courtesy car service runs between there and Perth station.

Car charge is \$20 each way except to Bunbury, where it is \$15.

Passengers can also have their cars railed between Port Augusta in South Australia and Kalgoorlie or Perth, and between Melbourne and Mildura.

SUGGESTIONS ADOPTED

During May, the following suggestions were adopted:

- Form M. 60 be modified \$10
- Drawing attention to trespassing at Dandenong \$3
- Station nameplates be provided at Rupertswood and Werribee Racecourse \$1
- Notice be displayed in lifts for faster service \$2
- Allowing immediate replacement promotion when staff declared permanently unfit \$20
- Additional barrier gate be opened at Glenferrie for certain trains \$2
- Conductor to escort Mount Buffalo Chalet guests to reserved area on train to Melbourne \$2
- Size of scribbling pads be reduced \$5
- V.R.I. fire-escape door be repaired \$5
- Spray boom for fire-fighting be made for 2,000 gal. water tanks \$50
- Alterations to van goods handling at Ballarat \$5
- Alterations to signalling at Flinders Street \$50

Suggestion forms (G. 256) are available from supervisors or the Public Relations and Betterment Board, Room 97, Head Office.

AMONG OURSELVES

49 years

Forty-nine years a railwayman, the last 18 as a Block and Signal Inspector, is the personal record of Ted Willox who retired on June 9.



Mr. Willox

through the signalling grades to reach the special class at South Kensington and No. 1 Box at Spencer Street.

In 1954 he was made a Block and Signal Inspector and attached to the Ballarat district. His travels took him to stations as far apart as Patchewollock, Serviceton, Deer Park and Mildura.

For the next two years he also relieved in the Bendigo district adding even more stations to his working list.

In 1956 he transferred to the metropolitan area, where he remained until retirement.

Farewelled by many friends made during his tours around the the signalling installations throughout the State, Ted plans to travel north for the winter then return to his hobby of restoring antique furniture.

From a 1923 start as a lad porter at Merri, he progressed

Essendon's S.M.



Essendon's popular Stationmaster, Allan Tait retired on June 16. A railwayman for 40 years, he had been at Essendon for the last two and before that, at St. Kilda and Coburg. He is pictured above (seated) with some of the staff at a farewell gathering.

Girl on the move



A railway girl on the move is Traffic Branch typist Xenia Makrides—she hopes to journey overseas shortly, and to see her parents homeland, Cyprus. Her father, Charles, is a V.R. ticket examiner. Born in Australia, 20-year-old Xenia has travelled the length and breadth of this land and now wants to broaden her travel horizons. Hobbies? Well, there is palmistry, national dancing, ballroom dancing, reading and boys. Reading her own palm, Xenia predicts travel, travel and more travel—plus, unfortunately, two marriages.

No DDT

Expressing the V.R.'s concern for the environment is their recent appointment of 27-year-old Michael Morice to the newly-created Environment Control Officer post.

Not that Mike, with his Honours Diploma of Agriculture, will actually control the environment, but he will advise on the role of the V.R. where it comes into conflict with nature.

The V.R.'s record of control is good. Several years ago, they dispensed with DDT insecticides predated the present concern over use of the concentrate. Even earlier, arsenical weedicides were replaced with sodium chlorate compounds (formerly known as Weedex).



Mr. Morice

Now chemicals belonging to the Tryazines group are being used as weedicides. The application rate has been kept to a minimum.

V.R. application rates of these chemicals is amongst the world's lowest, and certainly the lowest in Australia. At least one other State Government department uses 10 times the V.R. rate of application of weedicides.

Weedicides have been a great boon. Fire hazards along tracks are removed by chemical mowing at appropriate times.

Despite the effectiveness of the weed killers, some perennial grasses, such as paspalum and couch, are not susceptible at current application rates.

One of Mike's major tasks will be to constantly evaluate products and to advise district railwaymen on how best to tackle specific problems with weed and pest control.

Areas of special interest are the skeleton weed problem along the railway between Yarrawonga and Oaklands in N.S.W., and vegetation control under wooden bridges.

Although weed control takes up much of his time, Mike's other duties

include administering the station beautification scheme, checking on pest control procedures, investigating soil erosion prevention schemes, and advising on pollution control, waste disposal and plant conservation.

Before joining the V.R., Mike worked with a private company, where he was extensively involved with field trials of new products and techniques. Prior to that he was with the M. & M.B.W.

DID YOU HEAR...

... About a new hazard for train travellers? Our editor was about to alight from his train when he found himself snared fast in a net woven by a female passenger; a button on his coat had caught in the crochet weave of a girl's poncho. Four fumbling fingers quickly made the snare worse, and to the accompaniment of helpful comments (and some not so helpful) from the large crowd of onlookers, the train moved off with the two still entwined.

It looked for a while as though someone would have to surrender one of the offending items to make separation easier, but skilled female fingers freed the tangle before a sacrifice became necessary.

Red faces, smiles, and knowing looks—and the editor really didn't want to get off the train at that station anyway.

Olympic referee

Already Australia's top basketball referee, Leading Hand Linesman John Holden, has been chosen as the official Australian referee for next month's Olympic Games in Munich.



Mr. Holden

John is no stranger to international basketball—having umpired in New Zealand and in the World Series in Czechoslovakia in 1967.

His umpiring duties regularly take him around Australia to officiate at top matches and when overseas

teams make their all-too-rare visits to this country.

"Australian basketball suffers a little by not getting enough top competition—we only get about one tour a year by an international standard team," commented John, himself a State championship player before taking up the whistle.

"Compensating this, we have three Americans in our team who have lifted the Australian standard."

How tough is the game at international level? "The Americans and Russians, particularly, are very serious about winning," John remarked. "For years the Americans have been No. 1 and the Russians have been trying to knock them off.

"Basketball in Europe is a big sport—here in Australia it is still developing, but recently, attention, mainly through direct telecasts of last month's Big 10 visit, should, with the direct cover of the Games in Munich, give the sport a big lift."

Australia's basketballers finished ninth at the Mexico Games.

John has been keen on basketball for 20 of his 35 years.

Fitness is just as important for referees as it is for top players.

Running is his main avenue to fitness—a match calls for John to run about 7-8 miles around the 92-ft. long court—and many mornings or evenings will find him padding along the beach between Seaford and Frankston.

Railway men and women throughout the State no doubt wish John and the Australian team every success in the Olympic Games.

Five wise men



Receiving \$200 cheques for the successful completion of the four-year Transport Administration Course are four railwaymen. Judging by their appearance, a beard must increase learning power rather than hide subversives.

From left to right are: Dennis Cowden, Engineer of Track and Drainage; Graeme Evans, Traffic Branch Clerk; Mr. G. F. Brown, Chairman of Commissioners, presenting the cheques; Max Michell, Traffic Branch Clerk and Dennis Lyon, an engineer in Dennis Cowden's section.

Successful completion of the course entitles the person to become a member of the Chartered Institute of Transport, and add the letters M.C.I.T. after their name. The course is open to all railwaymen who fulfil the minimum educational qualification.

The big men fly



When football fever grips Head Office, they go down hard (literally). Fighting out the annual grudge matches recently were Estate Office and Track and Drainage, Secretary's and Commercial, and a combined Secretary's-Commercial team played the strong Traffic Branch. Photographed (below) delivering the three-quarter time oration to the Estate Office, was Clerk Maurie McCormack. Estate won 12.18 to 10.14. Despite Secretary's Branch Trevor Thomas' (No. 10) giant leap and great effort throughout the match, Traffic Branch players built up a commanding lead and withstood a fighting finish to run out comfortable winners 18.8 to 8.10. Traffic's M. Vallence (4), P. Segrave (8) and B. Trewhella (2) were contesting the play photographed at left.



RETIREMENTS

COMMERCIAL BRANCH

Lamont, R. S., Head Office, 31/5

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING BRANCH

Francis, S. P., Gas Shop, Sp. St., 6/8
Hjorth, J. S., Overhead Division, 5/8
Little, D. D. W., Flinders Street, 20/8

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Bootlis, C., Newport, 7/8
Campbell, W., South Dynon, 11/8
Dean, G. G., Geelong, 8/5
Ferella, G., Jolimont, 17/8
Fragos, K., Newport, 7/4
Galvin, E. M., Ballarat North, 23/8
Gannon, J. L., Ballarat North, 8/5
Gross, H., Geelong, 30/8
Humphrey, H. L., Traralgon, 15/5
Johnson, G. F., Maryborough, 13/8
Pawlisz, M., South Dynon, 17/5
Phipps, W. E. J., South Dynon, 14/8
Platt, J. F., Newport, 10/8
Ryan, L. J., E.R. Depot, 11/5
Sanders, J. L. G., E.R. Depot, 29/3
Taylor, H. J., Jolimont, 25/5
Wegener, L. R., Wodonga, 2/8
Willey, C. R., Geelong, 9/5
Willey, T. E., Ballarat North, 27/8

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Allsopp, D. N., Flinders Street, 4/5
Avery, B., Tottenham Yard, 12/5
Burrows, G. A. F., Melbourne Goods, 2/8
Campbell, D. F., Melbourne Goods, 17/4
Greenwood, I. L., Maryborough, 7/6
Harrison, H. A., Croydon, 3/6
Jones, J. F., Little River, 28/8
Lawless, H. G., Horsham, 8/8
Long, F. L., Melbourne Yard, 23/8
Moran, W. J. E., Caulfield, 30/5
O'Connell, J. J., Wonthaggi, 28/8
Rowland, J. R., Dimboola, 24/8
Tierney, T. P., North Melbourne, 13/6
Whitwell, R. R., Mordialloc, 8/8

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Anderson, W. J., Line Div. Sp. St., 9/5
Gillespie, K. L., Head Office, 19/5
Gormly, G. H., Redcliffs, 12/5
Hansted, V. A., North Melbourne, 19/8
Marshall, A. G., Malmesbury-Taradale, 2/5
Martin, E. J., Korong Vale, 13/8
Miller, J. A., Head Office, 15/8
Mills, F. M., Geelong, 3/5
Neal, A. J., Korumburra, 17/8
Ryan, J. E., Chillingolah-Manangatang, 8/8
Speirs, R. M., Bandiana, 17/5
Tuddenham, C. C., Goornong, 7/6
Turcyniak, I., Geelong Works, 14/8
Weston, W. J., Wangaratta, 24/8

NEWS LETTER REGRETS TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING DEATHS

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Cullinan, A. L., Bendigo Nth, 3/6
James, T. J., E.R. Depot, 12/5
Phelan, K. F., South Dynon, 8/5
Spencer, K. G., Donald, 7/6
Surko, A., Jolimont, 20/5

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Walker, G. S., Swan Hill, 31/5
Dickinson, P. I., Swan Hill, 31/5
Danaher, D. J., Wodonga, 5/6
Walsh, J. W. C., Oakleigh, 3/6

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Duffy, F. J., Redcliffs, 9/6
Thwaites, J. L. A., Geelong, 31/5

Institute INews

V.R.I. SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members are no doubt aware that the annual subscription to the Institute is related to the minimum rate for an adult male railway employe.

Current rates have been in operation for two years even though the minimum adult rate was increased in January 1971.

Costs have been effectively reduced in many areas without detriment to services, but following the recent increase in the minimum adult wage Council now has no alternative to increasing membership subscriptions to meet increased operating costs.

From the pay period commencing July 9 new rates are:

Metropolitan

32 cents per fortnight
(previously 27 cents.)

Country Centre

27 cents per fortnight.
(previously 23 cents)

Country

22 cents per fortnight.
(previously 18 cents)

The increases will enable the Institute to continue existing services to members and, we hope, extend into new areas of benefit to all members.

In particular, the Council is investigating a scheme for members and their families to purchase goods at even more attractive prices than under the present scheme, and to establish facilities to promote a club aspect for members.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

Following last month's article about overseas tours for V.R.I. members during the Christmas holiday period, more detailed information is now available on the South Sea Island cruise.

Scheduled to depart Sydney on Friday, December 22, 1972, the cruise will return to that port on Friday, January 5, 1973. The ship, a British-owned one-class liner of 24,000 tons, will call at Tonga, Suva, Lautoka, Vila and Noumea.

For four-berth cabins, prices range

from \$278 (without facilities) to \$416 (with shower, toilet etc.); for two-berth cabins, from \$366 (without facilities) to \$542 (with shower, toilet, etc.). These prices are a considerable saving on normal fares.

A limited number of places on this cruise are reserved for a V.R.I. party, so "first come, first served." Further information from Auto. 2445, or the General Secretary, V.R. Institute, 3rd Floor, Railway Buildings, Flinders Street. Reservations—on \$30 deposit per person—must be made no later than July 28.

ECHUCA V.R.I. BALL AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS

There is a saying in the racing world that "a healthy, well bred youngster should develop into a top class thoroughbred", and that little piece of race track philosophy could well apply to our Echuca Centre. Born in February of this year, it has already indicated that it is growing into a strong active organisation and is certainly the focus of railway activity in the Echuca area. The Committee's latest venture, a Leap Year Old Time Ball, held on May 26, was an outstanding success, financially and socially. A very large crowd attended. The stage and tables were decorated with hundreds of blue and gold paper flowers. Among official guests were Mr. L. McCallum (Vice-President of the V.R.I.) and Mrs. McCallum, Mr. T. Connellan (Stationmaster, Echuca) and Mrs. Connellan, and the Mayor and Mayoress of Echuca, Councillor and Mrs A. Rosendale. This Centre's next social venture is a "Mock Debs" Ball, and as the same hard work and enthusiasm is being applied as was the case in this instance, then we have no doubt it will be every bit as successful as their first effort.

INSTITUTE SPORT

Table Tennis

Adelaide, October 9-19, is the venue of the 1972 Intersystem Table Tennis Carnival.

As holders of the Commissioners' Shield we are again looking for a strong Victorian team for this fixture.

Players interested in representing Victoria should forward applications to reach the Sports Secretary or Mr. W. Lawrie, c/- V.R.I., Melbourne, before July 31. Applicants must be members of the Institute for at least



Being photographed for *News Letter* must have made a lot of difference to the V.R.I. soccer team for their match against A.C.I. Box Hill, for they went out and recorded a crushing 6-0 win. Team members are, from left, (standing) W. Binder (Sec.), Evan Proestakis (playing coach), L. Holohan, M. Tanner, B. King, B. Jones (captain), N. Tanner, P. Guirke, W. McGroarty; (front row) N. McDougall, L. Santomartino, M. Christy (president) B. Cocks, S. Marcou and P. Webster.

six months prior to the start of the fixture, and should indicate their performances over the past two years, and team and/or grades competed in. We are endeavouring to enter a ladies' team in this carnival so if there are any female table tennis players who wish to enter, please let us know.

Fencing

This virile club, under the astute management of Andy Szakall (Australia's Olympic Games Manager), again amassed impressive wins at the recent Victorian State Titles. Miss G. Farashazy, a lass of only 12 years, won the State under-15 and C grade ladies' championships—a record that will be very hard to beat—while A. Drew won the men's C grade event. In the junior championships the girls' foil was won by G. Moody and the boys' section by C. Shepherd-Clark. G. Scott took off the number one placing in the epee.

At the conclusion of the finals, selectors named teams to represent Victoria at the Australian Junior Titles (which Victoria subsequently won), and V.R.I. members filled four of the five places in the boys' foils, epee and sabre events whilst girls filled three of the five places in girls' foils. This shows that the V.R.I. club is a dominant force in Australian fencing today.

East Gippsland Golf Tournament

Picturesque Newry Golf Course will again host this tournament on August 5-6. Saturday will be taken up with mixed foursomes and four-ball best-ball events while on Sunday,

the mens' A, B and C grade 18-hole scratch and handicap stroke events will be held, along with an 18-holes scratch and handicap event for the ladies. Any V.R.I. golfer interested in participating should contact Brian Cullen, a driver at Traralgon Loco. Depot.

1972 Country Carpet Bowls Championship (Un-biased)

The 1972 tournament will be conducted in the V.R.I. Ballroom, 3rd floor, Railway Buildings, Flinders Street, Melbourne, on August 20, starting at 10 a.m. As in previous years, the competition will be divided into mens' and ladies' sections, with a minimum of eight teams in each section. Entries should be forwarded to the Sports Secretary, c/- V.R.I., Railway Buildings, Flinders Street, by Friday, August 4, 1972.

Cricket

Commissioners' Cup Competition should start about the first week in November. Applications from teams or individual players are welcome and should be sent to the Sports Secretary or K. Hopkinson, c/- V.R.I., Flinders Street station, prior to the V.R.I. Cricket Association's annual meeting to be held early in September. V.R.I. cricketers are asked to bear in mind that the Intersystem Carnival will be held in Sydney from February 11-23, 1973, and players interested in representing their state at this fixture should watch this column and/or the Weekly Notice for closing date of applications.

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

NEWS LETTER

AUGUST



1972

10 CENTS



CHILDREN OR ASSASSINS?

Several worrying incidents of vandalism have been recorded in recent months.

Moving up a step from childish "pranks", some of these incidents have been a calculated attempt to damage trains both in sidings and in running.

Most serious of these has been the craze to smash drivers' windows—smashing any window is bad enough but allied to the safety of driver is the safety of the train, its crew and the passengers.

One incident saw the fireman taken to hospital with glass in his eyes—he could have been blinded.

Before these incidents become every day occurrences and, as such, grudgingly accepted by an apathetic community, every railway man and woman should attempt to impress on authorities they are in contact with the dangers of vandalistic acts against railways.

It is a community responsibility as well as well as a matter for parents.

Most offenders are youthful and indicate that their parents may never really have pointed out the dangers of such anti-social activities; schools, too, also tend to ignore suppressing vandalism, even though schools are the correct place to teach many community responsibilities.

To date the incidents have not brought about permanent injuries—but train services have been disrupted, staff injured, and considerable amounts paid out in compensation and to repair damage.

The problem is not confined to any particular area—it occurs throughout the State. No one wants to see children moulded into set behaviour patterns, but vandalism has no good uses, not even as an outlet for youthful frustrations.

Parents and the community must accept their responsibility and see that children do not become vandals and potential delinquents through community disinterest.

G. F. BROWN

LOOP BOOSTS VALUES 300 PER CENT

Melbourne's underground rail loop has helped lift city land values by up to 300 per cent, according to a real estate report, *The Sun* indicated on July 13.

The report claimed that general development trends and the rail loop project were the major factors in the value jump.

The most significant rises have been on the fringe of the central business district, particularly La Trobe, Spencer and Spring Streets, all adjacent to the loop route.

FEWER STOPS FOR PASSENGERS

Ten railway stations between Gordon and Horsham were closed for passenger traffic from July 24.

The stations were Wallace, Dunns-town, Windermere, Burrumbeet, Middle Creek, Armstrong, Deep Lead, Wal Wal, Jung and Doon.

For the 12 months to June 30, 1971, the total number of outward passenger journeys from the stations was only 670 for a total passenger revenue of \$969.90.

Apart from achieving a necessary economy, the closures brought about accelerated journeys between the larger centres.

Although closed for passengers, they remain open for the receipt and dispatch of goods.

CUPID'S CORNER

Angry British cab-drivers called it the kiss and cuddle queue and it was there every morning—blocking their way to Chatham station, in Kent.

No matter how hard the cabbies tried, the offending cars hardly moved . . . inside were husbands, passionately kissing their wives goodbye before taking the train to work.

Furious cabbies complained to the local council who established a "Cupid's corner" where communting husbands can bid farewell in peace.

A British Rail spokesman said that they were looking into the problem.

—Weekender

CONCRETE SLEEPERS TOO EXPENSIVE

Victorian Railways preference for timber instead of concrete sleepers is purely a matter of economics.

Experimental test installations of concrete sleepers were laid in 1951 along portions of the tracks between Hughesdale and Oakleigh and between Longwarry and Drouin.

Undoubtedly more durable, concrete sleepers should have a life of at least 50 years, against 20–30 years for timber sleepers.

But, concrete sleepers are not only more expensive than timber sleepers (over \$10 compared to \$2.90 each) they are also, because of their dimensions, unsuitable for use if mixed in with timber sleepers, so replacement has to be total, rather than gradual.

Tracks are maintained with mechanized sleeperring gangs wherever economically practicable, and this involves spot renewals of about one sleeper in seven, every three years.

Timber sleepers, with sleeper plates, have an average life in excess of 20 years.

● Australia's only concrete sleeper plant—at Whyalla, S.A.—has been mothballed because of insufficient orders. The only recent contract was for the 47-mile Port Augusta–Whyalla line which will be opened early in October.

BIGGER TRAINS

Maximum loads for V.R. freight trains have been increased to 49 bogie vehicles of 75 tons (3,675 tons gross) plus a brake-van (26 tons), making a total of 3,701 tons (gross).

To date, the heaviest V.R. freight train travelled from Melbourne to North Geelong on April 3, 1972. Of 43 bogie vehicles and one brake-van, the train load of steel had a gross weight of 3,116 tons (net 2,064 tons). One S class (1,800 h.p.) and one H class (1,050 h.p.) locomotive powered the train.

Interstate freights are amongst the biggest trains.

Between Melbourne and Adelaide the normal maximum is 1,400 tons, but occasionally 1,800 tons (gross) is reached.

On the Melbourne–Albury standard gauge line north-bound trains normally do not exceed 900 tons (gross), the load for a single locomotive. However, trains of 1,400 tons (gross) are not uncommon and trains up to 1,800 tons (gross) have run on occasions. Southbound trains, operated by one locomotive, are of about 1,100 tons (gross) but trains of 2,000 tons (gross) are often operated.

Wheat trains to Geelong are not among the heaviest trains in the State although, during the 1970–71 wheat season, a train of 30 hopper wagons and a brake-van, totalling 2,230 tons (gross) ran from Donald to Geelong.

WORTH QUOTING

" . . . I shudder to think of the effect on our inner suburbs and our near city parks and gardens if the freeways and arterial roads suggested by the transportation plan are accepted without question, and come to pass by 1985. We are told they

will require an estimated 13,900 acres of metropolitan Melbourne . . ."

—Mr. Lew Reese, M.L.A., writing in the column *Liberal Voice*, *The Herald*, July 20.

BIG S.A. TUNNEL?

South Australian Premier, Mr. Don Dunstan, has promised that the cost of tunnelling a rail link through the hills from Adelaide to the Murray Plains will be investigated.

He said this in answer to a suggestion that such a tunnel could cut 14 miles off the present journey.

—*The Australian*

GO FOR TRAINS SAYS EX-TRUCK CHIEF

Government money for transport should be mainly spent on modernising the rail system, not the roads, Mr. Ken Thomas, former chairman of Thomas Nationwide Transport said recently.

He told a gathering in Sydney that the Commonwealth should stop its love affair with the roads and look to the railway system, *The Sun* reported.

Far too much money was being spent on roads when the rail system could be modernised for a quarter of the road grant at an enormous cost benefit to the economy, he said.

RAILWAY PARKING STATIONS PLANNED

A pilot project for a parking station above Gordon railway station, 9½ miles from Sydney on the north shore, is being considered by the N.S.W. Railways and Main Roads Departments. Estimates place the cost of a multi-level building at about \$3 million.

Advocates of the scheme say that it will reduce city traffic congestion by attracting commuters back to the railways. If successful, it could be the forerunner of similar schemes throughout the Sydney metropolitan area.

Although there are many council-owned parking areas near Sydney railway stations, these are primarily for shoppers, and have time limits.

MILDURA RELAYING

A \$6.2 million facelift for the Mildura line is nearing completion.

When all the works are finished later this year, welded track will exist for the entire 350 miles between Melbourne and Mildura—the State's longest passenger run.

A 10-month, \$1.1 million relaying project for the 41 miles between

Hattah and Mildura should be finished in September and with this, the last of the old 31 ft. 9 in. 80-lb. rails with staggered joints will have been replaced with 270 ft. long 94-lb. rails.

When the ends of the rail became worn, the riding quality of trains over the staggered joints deteriorated.

For the relaying work, nearly 80 men are employed and about one mile a week is being upgraded.

TRANSPORT COMPLAINTS

Complaints about damage to Shire financed roads by heavy road transporters were aired by delegates to North-Western Municipalities Association annual conference at Horsham in May.

Conference was told that municipal councils could not afford to repair and maintain their roads.

An Ararat Shire Councillor said that country roads were failing to meet the stress and strain of increasing traffic.

"It's the weight, speed and type of vehicle rather than the number," *The Wimmera-Mail Times* reported him as saying.

"You put down a 12 ft. seal and before long the transport drivers' radar system seeks it out and they're using it for short cuts."

A Kowree Shire Councillor told the conference that "heavily laden transporters have caused a severe deterioration of a sealed road."

[Kowree Shire includes the vast timber industry on the S.A./Vic. border, centred on Mount Gambier.]

A Country Roads Board engineer said that the biggest problem was to find routes on which heavy transport could travel.

LEVEL CROSSING ACCIDENTS

Level crossing accident rates bounced back into the news recently with a call by a doctor to urgently abolish all 3,218 level crossings in the State.

The V.R.'s attitude is clear; responsibility for safety at these crossings rests squarely with motorists under the road rules.

Apart from that, the problem must be kept in perspective—only 58 of Victoria's 1,500 road accidents in which people were killed or injured during 1971 were at level crossings.

Of the 355 accidents at level crossings, only 100 involved trains; and of those involving trains, 36 were at crossings with flashing lights and bell, and six were at boom barriers.

Incidentally, cost of replacing all level crossings with grade separations would be \$1,300 million.

MOBILE MEETING

Shepparton's Apex Club hired a special train for its regular fortnightly meeting on June 23.

Normal meeting procedures were held on the train for the 50 travellers while it ran to Dookie—17 miles away—and back.

REFUNDS

Many metropolitan passengers are often puzzled why weekly train ticket holders receive refunds following two-day and longer rail stoppages but monthly, quarterly, half-yearly and yearly ticket holders do not.

The answer is relatively simple.

Melbourne's average train commuter, using a yearly ticket, travels at a 25 per cent discount.

He does this by saving—on his average 9.3-mile trip—16.8 cents on the daily return fare.

Taking the 9.25 mile Box Hill-Melbourne trip as an example, the return fare of 67 cents is a saving of seven cents on two single tickets; weekly tickets cost \$3, monthly tickets \$12, quarterly tickets \$32.50, half-yearly \$61.90 and yearly \$117.90.

Making five return trips with a weekly ticket instead of day return tickets saves seven cents a day.

Greater savings are made with tickets of longer periods.

A yearly ticket used for 47 weeks saves no less than 16.8 cents a day—or 25 per cent, based on only five return trips per week.

With any periodical train ticket, however, travel is unlimited between stations on the route covered by the ticket, both on weekdays and weekends. So, savings could be even more substantial.

Therefore, a person with a weekly ticket making only two return trips in a week, in the case of a three-day stoppage, would have been better off buying daily tickets for that week.

On the other hand, a person with a quarterly, half-yearly or yearly ticket would still benefit from the considerable savings.

This is why refunds are only paid on weekly tickets when there have been rail strikes of relatively short duration, even though the Department is not legally compelled to make any refunds at all under these circumstances.

FRONT COVER

A driver's eye view of trains crossing at Donnybrook loop on the Melbourne-Albury standard gauge line.

Ever since the first train ran in Victoria, in 1854, there have been requests for special trains and carriages. Until the motor vehicle made inroads, the railways were almost undisputed conquerors of distance and, as such, ran many and varied trips for the public. An insight into the practices of the pre-motor vehicle era, can be gleaned from V.R. records dated 1900-31.

A TRAIN FOR ANY OCCASION

The date, and purpose, of the V.R.'s first special train is not known, but race trains were running to Flemington by the early 1860's—and still do! But they make a story in themselves.

Hunt clubs apparently enjoyed a privileged existence in the fledgling country because a ruling in 1905 allowed the guarantees for their special trains to be held in abeyance—a practice usually reserved only for specials at Treasury request. Women, sorry, Lady Riders, were only charged half-fare. Mention was made of clubs travelling from South Morang (on the now defunct Whittlesea line) Epping, and Preston-Reservoir (now Reservoir). There was one stipulation: "Hounds are loaded in boxes with horses".

Shipping companies also had special trains, to connect with vessels. In 1901, there was no guarantee raised if the train was requested by Peninsular and Orient Co., Orient Co., Nord Deutscher Lloyd, and Commonwealth Line. Shortly afterwards, this privilege was extended to all shipping companies "provided traffic offering warranted same".

Football specials

Football clubs took their Saturday matches seriously as often the town's honour was at stake. It was no surprise, therefore, to find that large numbers of trains were run for these games. Amongst the records are reports of special trains from Nambie to Yea, St. James to Yarrawonga, Natimuk to Jung, Chinkapook to Robinvale, Ballarat to Melbourne and others.

Sometimes getting the footballers home created problems. In the timber country around Walhalla, when Erica played at Walhalla, they travelled to the big game on the regular train but hired a special to take them the 7½ miles home. In 1924 they queried the guarantee of \$17.70; the V.R. upheld their objection and reduced the guarantee to \$10.

Invalid passengers have always been no real problem to the railways. In 1914 instructions were issued for an invalid passenger, Mrs. McBean, to travel in a special carriage from Deniliquin to Melbourne. Carriage 32 AV (now on the *Vintage Train*) was used and a charge of \$20 was levied in addition to the first-class ticket.

Another invalid passenger—a Miss Brown—was carried from Spencer Street to St. Arnaud on June 4, 1918, in "an ordinary Z van attached to the 4.50 p.m. down Northern train". The van was transferred at Castlemaine and again at Maryborough to make a through journey. Two deck chairs were provided in the van for attendants travelling with the woman. Special mention was made that "two footwarmers are to be placed in the van".

Special carriages were even attached to interstate trains for invalid passengers. In 1922, the South Australian carriage *Broughton* was attached to the interstate trains from Terowie to Melbourne—for 20 cents per mile. In granting permission for the South Australian carriage to be attached to the express, V.R. approval indicated: "We would have suggested *Melville* car, if South Australia had not suggested *Broughton*".

Dance trains

In 1914, the V.R. agreed to the extension of regular trains for special purposes—such as "concerts, dances, etc."—from Ringwood to Croydon, Box Hill to Blackburn and Essendon to Glenroy or Broadmeadows for a charge of \$2.50—payable in advance.

This catering to the mood of the times was quickly taken up by other areas and the last train to Eltham could be extended to Hurstbridge for \$7. Fifteen years later, on Saturday, June 29, 1929, the V.R. ran a midnight special from Diamond Creek to Heidelberg after a dance "for a guarantee of 30 passengers". It must have been a very respectable dance because "first-class single fares only" was stipulated.

Land speculators travelled by train at various stages in the colony's history, but one of the last occasions when trains ran to new subdivisions appears to have been 1924. The sales were held at Corio and 555 people travelled from Melbourne by train.

In 1926, the V.R. fired a broadside at the bay excursion boat traffic when it snared the Dunlop Co's.

employees picnic to rail. After cutting the Melbourne-Bacchus Marsh fare from 48 cents to 28 cents, the company's employees parted with their rollicking 20 cent bay excursion for a steady train ride and the tranquility of "rural Bacchus Marsh".

New ground was broken in 1926 when the Chairman of the State Electricity Commission, Sir John Monash, asked for permission to use the Department's Buick inspection cars to travel between Melbourne and the new centre of industrial activity—Yallourn. After much consideration it was agreed to—for \$24 a return trip. The V.R. pointed out that the car "comfortably seats 6 persons".

The then Publicity and Betterment Board seized the idea and quickly drew up plans for parties to travel by inspection car throughout the State. Business was spasmodic, but, nevertheless, traffic was gained from a previously untried source.

Emergencies

Another unusual source of special trains was from family tragedies. On record are cases such as a man chartering a special train from Adelaide to Melbourne in an attempt to reach his dying father before it was too late. The train made a record run (for the era) between the capitals, and the interstate express was sidetracked to let the special pass—but the father died just two hours before his son's arrival.

Another emergency developed one Sunday from a station on the Hope-toun line. Within two hours of speaking with railway officials a special train was steaming to Melbourne with a woman passenger requiring urgent surgery. At several level crossings the special had to be stopped while the crew hurriedly opened the gates to continue their errand of mercy.

They succeeded, and the trip was officially recorded as "in record time".

Track motors

In May 1931, a Casey Jones gang-er's motor was used to take a party

A GROWING BUSINESS

of eight from Kerang to Swan Hill following a death in the family. News of the "special" must have spread, for less than three weeks later, the Robinvale Progress Association asked how much it would cost to use a ganger's motor to take accident victims to Manangatang—the nearest doctor—when roads were impassable due to rain. The V.R. turned down the application because, unlike the Casey Jones', the Sheffield Motor at Robinvale was not suitable for carrying passengers. However, applications from other areas continued to come in, and, after examining the case presented by residents of Natimuk to get to Horsham, emergency use was agreed to.

To show how much suburbia has encroached on our rural preserves, in 1915 Mont Albert was on the list of stations available for "Our day in the country excursions".

The list of special arrangements did not end there. Railway trams (from St. Kilda and Sandringham) were often chartered, as well as our horse-tram from Welshpool to Port Welshpool jetty.

When the motor car arrived on the scene in a big way in the '20's, the Ford Motor Coy. set up its works at Geelong and, every year, displayed its latest products in a show. In 1928, Ford's hired four special trains to take aspiring motorists to their siding from Geelong.

While special trains are still big business to the V.R., these examples of "personalised" specials rarely appear in today's motorised age.

"DIVERT ROAD FUNDS TO RAIL," SAYS T.N.T.

Australia's largest freight forwarding and road transport company, Thomas Nationwide Transport Ltd., urged, in their annual report the diversion of \$40 million annually from Commonwealth grants for road and air services, to rail modernization.

Half the money should be earmarked for track improvements and the other half for rolling stock and locomotive upgrading, it contended.

The report stated that the modernization of main line railway facilities throughout Australia was the most urgent need in Australia.

The report also said: "When it is considered that the railways are an indigenous industry with almost all their track and equipment produced in Australia right through from the iron ore and bauxite to the finished track, locomotive and wagon, the claims for rail gains strength. Furthermore, rail operation, unlike road, is comparatively safe."

Nearly 2,000,000 trees and shrubs will be railed from Dimboola, Mildura, Macedon, Creswick, Trentham, Benalla, and Rennick to Victorian and interstate destinations this season.

Grown by the Victorian Forests Commission, the trees and shrubs are mainly for use as windbreaks, roadside beautification projects and schools.

Main selling time is between May and October. Dispatch, now at its peak following recent rains, meets requirements of Governmental and local instrumentalities, and individual farmers and gardeners.



Mr. E. Watson prepares young trees for railting to customers.

Dimboola consignments come from the 8,000-acre nursery and arboretum at Wail, four miles away, on the eastern edge of the Little Desert.

Wail, and the Mildura nursery, specialize in producing trees and

shrubs for shade shelter in dry climate areas, while Macedon and Creswick provide for the medium to high rainfall areas. Trentham, Rennick and Benalla nurseries grow mainly radiata pine and close to 1.5 million pines will be railed this season.

In addition, about 300,000 trees and shrubs of 400 different varieties come from Mildura, Creswick and Macedon; most will be despatched by train. Nearly one-quarter of these are eucalypt species.

A special section at Wail is confined to maturing specimens, so that prospective buyers can readily see the space needed for any particular tree or shrub.

There is also a seed laboratory—like a pharmacy—where seeds, mostly varieties of eucalypt and acacia, are stocked. Some have been retained for more than 29 years and successfully germinated.

Mr. Bill Middleton, District Forester, said recently that choice of soil was one of the most important aspects.

"Basically, we use a mixture of organic drift, coarse sand, red sandy clay loam and black clay loam," he added.

The needs of each season are estimated in advance and shrubs and trees mostly grown on an annual rotation basis to be sold the same year.

Where seed is not available, propagation is by "cutting".

"Some types take root in just two or three weeks, but others can be as long as six months," continued Mr. Middleton.

With flowering shrubs, those grown from cuttings flowered the following year; this is not always the case when seed is used.

"Scratch somewhere else, cocky"



In September 1971 *News Letter* p. 141, we said that cockatoos and galahs cause a lot of minor repair work to rail lines in the Western, Mallee and Wimmera Districts. *News Letter* photographer John Schwarz, on a recent assignment in the Western District, came across this massive flock at work near Dunkeld. The birds forage amongst the ballast for food and kick or remove the ballast up to eight feet from the track.

"Overseas experience on the effect of the private motor vehicle on cities indicates that wherever attempts are made to meet the insatiable demands of the private motor vehicle there is a breakdown in city life and business." This and other comments below, were part of an address given by Robert McAlpine, Chairman of the Town and Country Planning Association, to a recent seminar entitled

PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND THE CITY PLAN

Melbourne's population grows by over 200 people every working day and about 1,100 new motor vehicles per week. Traffic is the main problem to be solved—solving this helps all other problems and makes them easier to solve.

"Cities should be for people. Cities are neither exclusively land, nor material things erected upon that land. The activities of the social and economic systems that occur on land by the use of people is what constitutes a city," Mr. McAlpine said.

"The irony of the situation is that the high rise building and the motor car are basically not lifelong partners, but fundamentally incompatible. The natural partner of the multi-storey office-block is, in fact, a well-run public transport system.

"It is a town planning principle that the only effective way of moving masses of people in crowded areas like cities is by public transport," the seminar was told.

Efficiency

Public transport efficiency is demonstrated by these figures which were detailed to those in attendance.

One rail track can carry (normal signalling)	30,000 persons per hour
One freeway lane can carry	2,000 persons per hour
One 8-carriage Harris train, peak-loaded carries	1,400 passengers
One private car, when commuting, carries	1.4 passengers
Therefore, the passengers from one train, if in their own cars, would need	1,000 cars
Parking—1,000 cars in the central business district (a) at kerbside metres, would require (allowing "loading" and "no standing areas")	6 miles of kerb
(b) parking lot at ground level requires	5 acres
(c) parking in city buildings—if all staff in a 20-storey building drove cars in and parked on the site, they would need at least	30 extra storeys
(d) on freeways at speed, 1,000 cars require (at 30 m.p.h.) one lane	11 miles long

As the basic problem is to move people, not vehicles, the most efficient way is obvious.

Problems

Mr. McAlpine told the gathering that five of the most disturbing factors in Melbourne today were destruction of the environment, air pollution, noise pollution, inconvenience at pedes-

trian scale and loss of amenity to people of all ages.

"Much of this is brought about by the needless use of private motor vehicles," he said.

"A modern city should have modern public transport related to a pedestrian-orientated city plan.

"Planned with lucrative shopping malls a city can be made safe, convenient and comfortable for everyone.

"And it doesn't matter how big a city gets in terms of population, because if it's planned properly, everyone will be happier in it."

Transport plan

Mr. McAlpine said that the recently completed transport plan drawn up for the Metropolitan Transportation Committee was based on a false premise—that people want to continue to do what they already do, drive motor cars.

"We'd all like to park outside Myer's if we could," Mr. McAlpine added.

"The report recommends that \$1,675 million be spent on freeway construction which will in fact carve up Melbourne as we now know it.

"While the cost of Melbourne's underground loop railway has risen, the cost of freeway implementation has soared to \$2,900 million.

"In my opinion, if there was anything to be found wrong with the underground railway proposal for Melbourne it would be that it isn't as comprehensive as it should be, it doesn't go far enough.

"The problem is not only the mobile car but the static one. What do you do with it when you get it to where it is going?" he added.

Parking

The proliferation of multi-storey car parks inside the central city perimeter should be discouraged, contended Mr. McAlpine, who went on to say what the recent decisions of the Melbourne City Council in this area were good (see February *News Letter*, p. 21—Ed.)

"However, it is equally wrong to create such car parks on the CBD fringe for all-day commuters because the motor vehicle will continue to saturate the inner suburbs to get to that destination," he said.

8 m.p.h.

Overseas studies show that cities never really choke themselves to death.

Mr. McAlpine pointed out: "Once vehicles reach the average of 8 m.p.h. they voluntarily restrict themselves from a city in favour of some other action, or just not coming into the city at all."

Toronto, a city of similar size and habits as Melbourne, has just had a rethink on its city road building program.

"In a momentous decision, taken in June last year, the Ontario Government stopped the building of Toronto's \$237 million Spadina Expressway and has abandoned its Urban Motorways Plans," Mr. McAlpine said.

"Their Premier said: 'Toronto does not belong to the automobile'."

Political mileage

"There is more political mileage in the public transport issue than many politicians realize," Mr. McAlpine continued.

"The past President of the Toronto Real Estate Board of the Influence of Rapid Transit on Real Estate values in Toronto said: 'If an urban rapid transit system never earned an operating profit it would pay for itself a thousand times over through its beneficial impact on real estate and increased property assessments'.

Future

"The futuristic concept of an ideal city that planning could create is shattered somewhat when we look around us today.

"Transportation in whatever form it takes is the back-bone of any city plan. As well as perhaps a touch of magic, our city needs realistic men of action who will plan boldly but sensitively for the future to make ours an attractive city.

"Above all, the Central Business District must have a Central Transportation Centre where airport buses, trains and all forms of transportation including country buses meet and people can change modes easily.

"The dignity of Australian people is at stake if something is not done soon to humanize this nation's cities."

When the Bland Report was first released, the press emphasised the comments and recommendations concerning the Railways; little mention was made of the numerous aspects dealing with road transport.

HOW MUCH DOES THE PUBLIC SUBSIDIZE THE ROAD OPERATOR?

This is perhaps best explained by the following extracts from "The Findings of the Board of Inquiry into the Victorian Land Transport System," presented to a section of The Institution of Engineers by Sir Henry Bland on May 17, 1972.

"In a nutshell, 41 per cent of road construction costs and 35 per cent of road maintenance costs were found to be attributable to trucks exceeding 4-ton load capacity. To express this in money terms, the cost responsibility of such trucks was some \$56 million in 1969-70", Sir Henry said.

"Now we've all become accustomed to the propaganda that road users are taxed unmercifully and that road users pay more than they should, and that that is why transport costs are what they are. . .

"If all the Commonwealth and State taxes and charges on, or relating to, the use of trucks over 4-ton carrying capacity were added up, the total would, in 1969-70, have been \$38 million. Now this is \$18 million less than the estimated cost-responsibility of the trucks I have mentioned, for the construction and maintenance of the roads.

"Now this figuring relates to all taxes and charges. It includes the product of excises and customs duties on fuel, tyres and spare parts. So the shortfall on payments made to costs involved—of \$18 million—is a valid figure only if one accepts that every cent raised by the excises and customs duties I have mentioned must be spent on roads.

"This the Board found to be an untenable argument.

"I imagine that you have not heard it suggested that the excise on beer should be spent solely on improving hotels and their amenities or that the excise on tobacco should be devoted to the Heart Foundation or those other organizations devoted to saving the smoker from an early demise. Sales taxes, excises and customs duties are weapons of the economic regulation and management of the community and devices for the satisfaction of the community's total needs.

"When, then, you consider the taxes and charges, State and Commonwealth, levied on or in relation to the use of trucks exceeding 4-ton load carrying capacity, which are presently hypothecated for road purposes, the total contributions of such trucks fall to \$14 million or one-quarter of the estimated cost responsibility of such trucks for the

construction and maintenance of the roads they use."

"In a word, trucks exceeding 4-ton carrying capacity are subsidised by the community very heavily. In good round terms, allowing for all the items I've mentioned, for every dollar levied on the truck of over 4-ton load carrying capacity, the community pays three more dollars."

Note: Road maintenance charges were first introduced in 1956 and remain the same today, despite increased labor and material costs of road construction, and maintenance.

Others share similar views

A very pertinent comment was made during the Inquiry, Mr. T. C. Trewin M.P., in evidence, stated—

"I am fully aware also, as a motorist who drives a private car, I am heavily taxed to provide the facilities not only for myself but for the huge transports that go past this door.

"I believe sincerely, and I have had a look at this financially, that if the road transport operator paid his full share of damage that he creates on our road structure and also his contribution towards capital costs of new roads, road charges would be much higher than they are today. Both systems (ie. road and rail) need the general support of the taxpayer and unless we work out a method, we are going to have sections of the community paying the greater burden of road transport."

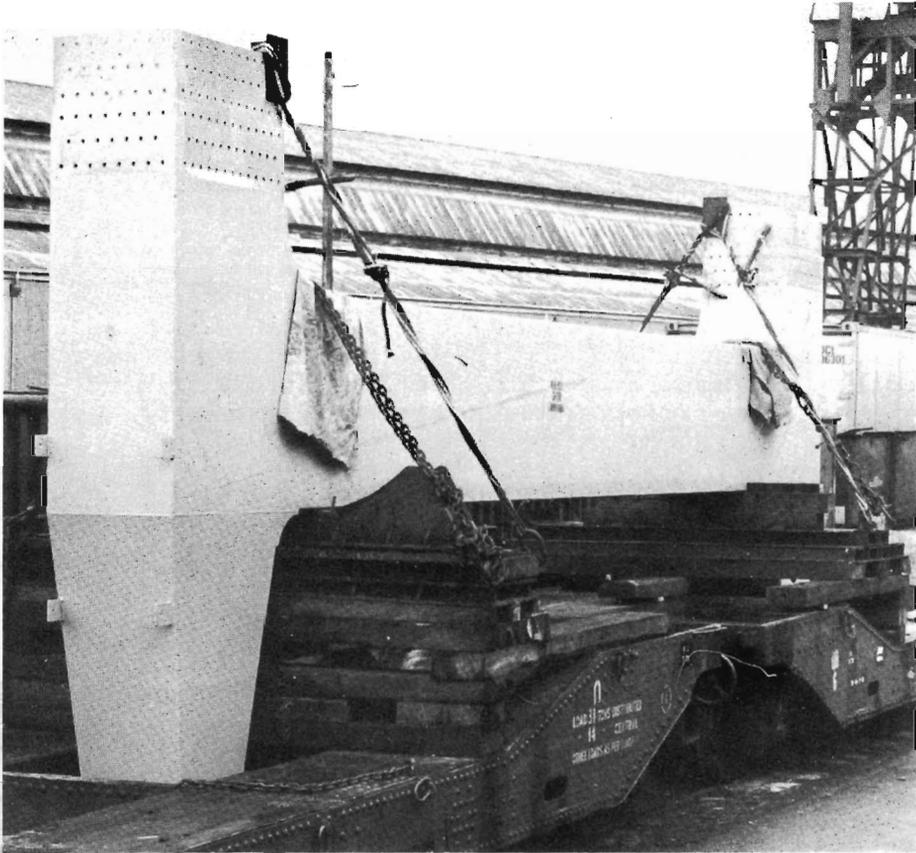
The V.R. trusts that the Government will take steps to rectify these anomalies and by so doing will place the Railways on a much fairer competitive basis.

Railwaymen should know why it is so easy for the road operator at present to compete with rail, particularly in the border and near border areas. We pay most of our costs—track, signalling, etc.—but the road operator, we now know, pays only a small portion of his.

MOTORAIL HONOUR



The ultimate honour was bestowed on MotoRail on July 27—a three months old Silver Shadow Rolls Royce was carried. The Mildura resident who owns the Rolls sent it to Melbourne by train for its first service. Asked why he chose to use MotoRail, the owner said he had used the service in the past for other vehicles and found it most satisfactory. The owner is well known in Mildura as the Rolls-owner who pedals to work on a pushbike "for health reasons".



◀ **BIG LIFT.** Bound for big in the Northern Territory gantry crane, recently rail Melbourne Goods. Three its 2,000-mile journey to La 300 miles south of Darwin crane portions will transfer erent gauge wagons and mode fers will be at Port Pirie, Ma Alice Springs (to road). At L the assembled crane will loading between road and rail at Commonwealth Railways'

FODDER. Big fodder lifts an ing to drought-ravaged Ea land. This loading scene is lake, one of many Western centres supplying grass

VIEW
OF
NEW



CONTAINER BOOM. New siding recently built for ACTA Pty. Ltd. is one of five built for container shippers. The sidings link company areas with the Swanston Dock line and the container terminal.



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▲ **HAY, HAY, WHAT'S THIS?** Recent Commissioners' Special Tour Train became a "mixed train" between Moulamein and Balranald to give faster transit to five wagons of fodder. Senior officials say that conveying goods loading by the Commissioners' special happens rarely — about four times in the last 10 years. Station visible is Perekerten.

▲ **ARMCO BOOM.** Colac's Barongarook Creek timber bridge has been replaced by eight 12 ft. diameter Armco culverts. The former timber trestle bridge had 10 openings. Over the last 25 years, the creek had scoured the water course six feet deeper. Next financial year maintenance-saving Armco's are planned for a further 36 locations.

B60 TURNS 20

Spencer Street station, July 14, 1972, was the venue for nostalgia. The occasion was the 20th anniversary of main line diesels in Victoria, and assembled to welcome the re-creation of B 60's first run was a group of railway officials, the press, and two railwaymen who played a big part in introducing diesels to Victorian Railways.

The two men were 82-year-old A. C. Ahlston, Chief Mechanical Engineer 1932-54, and the man who initiated the diesel program; and 81-year-old F. Myers, Commissioners' special driver from 1934-55. Mr. Myers drove each diesel locomotive on delivery to Melbourne from Bandiana, where they had been bogie-exchanged from standard gauge to the Victorian gauge.

Diesel traction was a development that meant much to the V.R. and other railways around the world.

In the ensuing 20 years, B60 has logged a record 2,550,000 miles—over a million more than the highest-mileaged steam locomotive, S 302.

The day after its delivery—July 15, 1952—B 60 was named *Harold W. Clapp* after the man who was Chairman of Commissioners for a record 19 years, from 1920-39. B 60 is the only one of the 26 class members named.

In its career, B 60 has fulfilled many prestige roles—initial rosters called for it to be on *The Overland* every second night for many years, a roster which contributed to it recording very high mileages in a very short time.

Actually, B 60 would have been the first Australian diesel to record 1,000,000 miles had it not been used on the 1954 Royal Tour train of Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh. The mileage honour eventually went to B 62 which logged those miles in 5½ years.

Mr. Ahlston recalled that in 1948 it was obvious that diesels could be the answer to many of the V.R.'s problems.

Shortly after, he and the present Chief Mechanical Engineer, Mr. S. Keane (then an assistant engineer) went on a world tour to study diesels.

They came back with firm conclusions and ran headlong into a top-level argument on the merits of various diesels.

Mr. Ahlston argued long and strongly with Government repre-



A nostalgic reunion of B60 with leading identities of the diesel era. From left to right are Messrs. F. Myers, former Commissioners' driver who drove B60 on its first run, S. Keane, Chief Mechanical Engineer, J. Stirling, Superintendent of Locomotive Running, A. Ahlston, Chief Mechanical Engineer at the introduction of diesels, F. Martin, Superintendent of Locomotive Maintenance and A. Nicholson, Assistant Chief Mechanical Engineer. In cab window is L. Haining, present Commissioners' driver who drove B60 on its anniversary run.

sentatives who claimed that another manufacturer's products were equal. Mr. Ahlston said that the GM diesels were far superior and would outsell all others. Twenty years later his prophesy is proved true—GM outsells all other makers throughout the world wherever competition is allowed.

Once design and purchase details had been approved, Sydney-based Clyde Engineering Ltd. built the B-class under licence to GM in America—all but the diesel engine, main generator and some electrical equipment being made in Australia.

Came July 1952 and the first diesel—B 60—was ready for delivery.

Commissioners' driver Mr. Myers was instructed in their working and then given the task of bringing them to Melbourne.

After a short test run, and then hauling a coal train from Wodonga to Seymour, B 60 was attached to the *Albury Express* for a triumphal entry into Melbourne.

How did Frank recall that day? "I was that busy making sure I didn't run through the buffer stops that I didn't see much of what was happening on the platform," he said.

Three State display



In Adelaide, a combined display by three systems was a feature of the Trade Fair held at the Myer Emporium. Similar window displays in Melbourne suburbs have dramatically improved rail bookings in local areas, during the display period.

METRICS—SOME CONVERSION EXAMPLES

The Railways of Australia, along with all other transport modes are firmly committed to adopting the metric system of weights and measures for fares and freights in July 1973. As this is less than 12 months away, activity is gathering momentum.

Much work has been done by the Commercial and Traffic Branches in converting various books, instructions, tables, and so on.

The Way and Works Branch has to give the distance from Melbourne in kilometres of each station and siding and the Rolling Stock Branch is computing the tare, carrying capacity and size of the various carriages, wagons and vans. The Stores Branch have to print the new publications, so parts of the other Branches are also feeling the increase in the tempo of change.

Because some customers will still offer consignments with their dimensions stated in Imperial Units, a series of conversion tables will be needed, and engineers are preparing them.

As all Australian railway systems will make the change on the one day, the books used by them all—namely "Through booking of parcels, perambulatores, bicycles, etc.," "R.O.A. Goods Rates book" and "Goods Rates Calculator"—will have to be reprinted and re-issued. These printing tasks have been spread among the systems; S.A.R. arranging for the *Goods Rate Calculator*, N.S.W. looking after the *R.O.A. Goods Rates Book* and V.R. handling the *Through booking of parcels, perambulatores, bicycles, etc.*

These should be available for issue early next year, giving plenty of time for staff to see and get used to them before next July.

Containers

It has been often said that the metric conversion would be a much more complex change than that to decimal currency.

This is very true. An odd example of the effect of one industry on another came to light a few days ago.

At a seminar discussing proposals of the packaging industry, it was recommended by the working group that all packages, cartons, etc. should be sized to fit pallets designed for I.S.O. containers.

This seems a very sound decision when considering that the major reason for making the change to metrics is to help the export market.

But the I.S.O. pallet is 2 in. narrower and 2 in. shorter than the one now used by railways, so it will be even more difficult to stow efficiently in our existing vans and wagons, if we have to handle more goods on the new, or I.S.O. pallets.

Publications

A number of publishing firms have produced books on metrication.

Most have valuable conversion tables and lists of conversion formulas in them.

One in particular has a series of cost conversion tables. These give a quick comparison of what you should pay for a metric quantity of material, if you know how much you would have paid for it if bought in Imperial Units.

An example is shown below :

	Priced in			
	\$ per yard	\$ per metre		
1	1.09	Example:	If it costs	
2	2.19		\$8.52 for a yard of	
3	3.28		material, how much	
4	4.37		would you have to pay	
5	5.47		for a metre of the same	
6	6.56		material?	
7	7.65	Imperial	Metric	
8	8.75	\$	\$	
9	9.84	8.00	8.75	
10	10.94	.50	.547	
		.02	.0219	
		8.52	9.3189	
			\$9.32	
			per metre	

Temperature

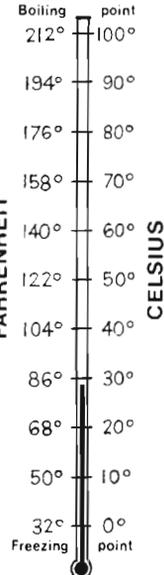
A frequently asked question is "What is Celsius temperature?"

For many years there have been two systems in use for measuring temperature, Fahrenheit and Celsius; Fahrenheit is the Imperial and Celsius is the Metric system.

The Fahrenheit scale has 180 equal steps, or degrees of temperature, between the temperature of freezing water and boiling water. Each one is called a degree Fahrenheit.

In the Celsius scale there are 100 equal steps or degree, each called a degree Celsius.

With the Fahrenheit scale, water freezes at 32°F and boils at 212°F.



In the Celsius scale water freezes at 0°C and boils at 100°C.

Therefore :

$$32^{\circ} \text{ Fah} = 0^{\circ} \text{ Celsius}$$

$$\text{and } 212^{\circ} \text{ Fah} = 100^{\circ} \text{ Celsius}$$

A change of temperature of 180°F equals a change of temperature of 100°C, so 180 Fahrenheit degrees equals 100 Celsius degrees, or, 1 Celsius degree = $\frac{180}{100} = \frac{9}{5}$ of a Fahrenheit degree.

The Celsius scale used to be called the Centigrade scale, but in Europe the right angle is divided into 100 angular degrees, called "grads". Thus there is a Centigrad.

To overcome confusion between the Centigrad, an angle measurement, and the Centigrade, a temperature measurement system, Celsius was substituted for Centigrade.

SUGGESTIONS ADOPTED

During June, the following suggestions were adopted:

- Altered design for GJX wagon hatch cover \$60
- Clarification of instructions for operating gas heaters in ZF brakevans \$10
- Electric train docking sheets be roneoed instead of handwritten \$5
- Repairs at Spencer Street station \$2

Suggestion forms (G. 256) are available from supervisors or from the Public Relations and Betterment Board, Room 98, Head Office.

MILEPOSTS

1924

Train Control system first introduced, Dandenong-Nyora, August 27; extended progressively in subsequent years.

Better Farming Train introduced October 13; discontinued in 1936.

Extension of electric traction to outer metropolitan area commenced: Camberwell-Ashburton, October 30; Ringwood-Croydon, November 28.

1972 V.R. BALL

Approximately 800 railway staff and friends gathered at the Camberwell Civic Centre on Friday, June 30, to enjoy the 17th Railway Annual Ball.

Apparently the reputation gained from previous successes is substantial because two couples presented themselves at the Centre 24 hours early. To their disappointment they were sent home and told to come back the next evening.

The Ball Committee rewarded their enthusiasm with a prize during the correct evening, though.

Excellent music from two bands—one old time and the other modern—kept the dance floor filled throughout the night.

During the evening prizes totalling \$150 were distributed to patrons at lucky tables and to dancers during the barn dance.

A number of railwaymen and their friends are regular attenders at the Ball, and among these were Les Wignall, Lindsay McCallum, Leo Scully, David Catchpool, Ron Suell, Evan Beach, Eddie Martin, Les Rolls and a regular attender from Warragul, Graham Fricke—and their wives. Some of those mentioned have not missed a Railway Ball for the 17 years they have been going.

Quite a few ex-employees were noted in this year's attendance but notable by their absence were many "regulars" from the country.

The Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. G. F. Brown, and Mrs. Brown, Commissioner Mr. I. G. Hodges and Mrs. Hodges, Secretary for Railways Mr. C. S. Morris and Mrs. Morris, and other heads of branches were guests. Deputy Chairman Mr. E. P. Rogan and his wife were unable to attend as they were overseas.



The photographer caught the Secretary's Branch table in a light-hearted mood.



Rolling Stock Branch couples get together.



An executive line-up. From left is Commissioner Mr. I. G. Hodges and Mrs. Hodges, Development and Planning Officer Mr. N. H. Rashleigh and Mrs. Rashleigh, and Acting Comptroller of Accounts, Mr. J. D. McGowan and Mrs. McGowan.



Dancing, drinking or just good company, whatever the patrons wanted they found at the 1972 V.R. Ball.

RICE MOVES

The first major movements of the 1972 Murray Valley rice crop expected to be about 92,000 tons, or 55,000 tons when milled, were railed from Deniliquin last month.

Although the Victorian Railways are vitally involved in rice transport not one grain of rice is grown in Victoria.

Main growing area tapped by the V.R. centres on Deniliquin, Caldwell, Burraboi and Moulamein—all within 50 miles of the Victorian border.

Mills at Echuca and Deniliquin polish the paddy rice then package it into 1 lb. or 2 lb. packs for the home market, or bag it for export.

Rail handles much of the rice twice—before and after milling.

A shuttle service on the Balranald line brings the paddy rice into Echuca for about nine months of the year. From the two mills, rice is railed to Melbourne for either marketing or export shipping.

This season's harvest is 16,000 tons less than last year's record crop—brought about by an unprecedented frost in February at the crucial flowering stage.

Australia is a highly efficient producer of rice.

Mr. Clive Holden, Director, Rice-growers' Co-operative Mills Limited, said that many Australians are unaware that this country's rice industry started in 1924, and today, Australian crops yielded a world record average of 2.7 tons per acre.

Australia's yield is about 5½ times that of the rice bowl countries.

Local rice growers are highly mechanized and feature rotational farming with a 6-year land lay-off between crops.

"Japanese production costs were 300 per cent higher than ours", he added.

World production of rice was much the same as wheat—about 160 million tons annually—with Asia traditionally being the world's major producer and consumer.

Last month's export rice went mainly to the U.K. and Holland; the balance usually goes to Papua-New Guinea and Chile.

About 20 per cent of local rice was sufficient for the Australian market; export rice in 1970-71 also reached Hong Kong, Malaysia/Singapore, India, Indonesia, Okinawa, Guam, New Zealand and several Pacific Islands.

Apart from the Murray Valley region, rice was grown in the Murrumbidgee irrigation area in New South Wales, and in northern Queensland, where, due to favourable climatic conditions, two harvests a year were possible.

RAIL CUSTOMER SAYS...

"I wish to thank you for your efforts in locating my case, sent as passenger luggage from Jannali station, N.S.W., to Melbourne. Even though I hoped, I did not expect to get it back, so I am very grateful to all concerned.

"I travel a lot by train, but this is the first time anything has gone astray, so we consider the service very good."

—Mrs H. Austin, Oyster Bay, N.S.W., writing to the Railway Investigation Officer, Mr. J. Walkeden.

AMONG OURSELVES

Signalman send-off



Another of the V.R.'s well-known signalling identities retired last month, Thomas Tierney, former signalman at North Melbourne junction for 19½ years. During his 48 years with the V.R. Tom built up a large circle of friends, many of whom went to farewell him at the send-off (above), where Mr. W. Oehm, Assistant Safe Working Officer (left) was congratulating him on his achievements. Mr. Tierney is a St. Kilda Councillor and a Justice of the Peace.

Three premierships

Assistant Stationmaster at Dimboola for the last eight months is Kevin Clark.

He started with the railways at Nhill, 24 miles away, four years ago, and later worked at Diapur as a signal assistant.

His major sport is football and he played 130 games with Nhill before transferring to Dimboola at the start of this season. He got a clearance only because of his V.R. transfer.

A rover, he considers his best effort to have been a game against Jeparit last season when he kicked 10 goals.

Kevin won the best and fairest award with Nhill in 1968 and played in three of their premiership teams.

However, when *News Letter* visited Dimboola, his new team were in eighth position and the likelihood of playing in another premiership team this year seemed remote.

Asked how he fared when playing against his old side this season, he added a little ruefully: "I didn't get a kick."

Kevin also plays tennis, badminton, squash and cricket. He won last year's open doubles tennis tournament at Nhill.



Mr. Clark preparing a consignment note.

Echuca S.M.

Recently appointed Echuca stationmaster, Tom Connellan is one of the youngest men to be posted to a class 1 station.

From a start as a lad porter at Birchip in 1949, he was appointed a stationmaster 11 years later at Berriwilllock. Since then he has relieved at Donald, Euroa, and been in Train Control at Melbourne and Ballarat.



Echuca is by far the busiest station he has been at.

"There are 32 Traffic staff here," he said. "Being a border area means that competition from road transport poses a big problem. But good service will win out in the long run and that's our aim at Echuca."

Rice is also big business at Echuca and it is a two-way haul; paddy rice from N.S.W.'s growing areas to the Echuca mill, then polished rice to

Melbourne for the local and export market. Flour and wheat are also high in Echuca's freight figures.

Off duty, Tom is a keen gardener, mainly concentrating on vegetables in season.

6 months=30 years



Mrs. Bunworth doing the job she knows so well.

In 1942 manpower-short Victoria appealed for women to help in industry. The V.R. was one organization which called for help—seven girls accepted; 30 years later only one remains.

In mid-July, Mrs. Ella Bunworth logged 30 years of front line service in selling tickets to passengers. Except for the first six months shared between Riversdale and Willison, Mrs. Bunworth's career has been at Flinders Street.

"I only intended to stay with the V.R. for six months—but, in December, I'll complete 30 years at Flinders

Prize-winning apprentices



Cash awards totalling \$669 were distributed to 65 Victorian Railway apprentices last month for outstanding craftsmanship. Chairman of the Victorian Railways Staff Board, Mr. R. M. Wright. (front, centre) told the prize winners that by balancing their time between fun and study and keeping up their good work, they could advance to high levels within the V.R. administration. "Two of our three Commissioners—Messrs. G. F. Brown and I. G. Hodges—started as apprentices in the Victorian Railways," he added.

Farewell Algie



Popular Foreman Carpenter at Spotswood Workshops, Algie Williams, retired to the well wishes of over 200 workmates on July 14. He would have supervised the making of nearly every piece of furniture made in recent years for Melbourne's stations. His choice of present was an original oil painting of a Queensland scene. He donated \$50 of his cash present to the Frankston Orthopaedic Hospital through the Railway Auxiliary. Above he is seen (right) being presented with the painting by Mr. Denis Smith, Assistant Workshops Manager, and some of the well-wishers. His railway career started in 1923.

Street, before retiring next January," she told *News Letter*. "The job sort of got into my system."

Mrs. Bunworth claims a record—she has sold tickets on every day of her 30 years with the V.R.

Dealing with the public all the time gives rise to funny incidents, and one was recalled about the gentleman who at the height of the evening peak queues, asked for "a single Darling". His tiny blonde daughter quickly added "I'll tell mummy". Ripples of laughter passed through the queues as the conversation details were relayed around. (Darling is a station on the Glen Waverley—Ed.)

CORRECTION

Last month's *News Letter* incorrectly showed Mr. K. F. Phelan of South Dynon amongst the list of deceased staff instead of in the retired list. *News Letter* was contacted by many readers who assured us that Mr. Phelan was only retired, not buried, and that he was still capable of twitching his hands and was his usual joking self.

The error is regretted and *News Letter* hopes that no inconvenience has been caused because of it.

RETIREMENTS

REFRESHMENT SERVICES BRANCH

Coxon, N. (Mrs.), Seymour Refreshment Room, 19/8
 Mitchell, A. (Mrs.), Standard Gauge Buffet Cars, 8/8
 O'Meara, N. (Mrs.), Bookstalls, 8/8
 Roberts, E., Spencer Street Cafeteria, 19/7
 Langford, L. (Mrs.), Warragul, 6/6
 McLure, M. (Mrs.), Spencer Street Cafeteria, 9/5
 Robertson, J. (Mrs.), Colac, 29/8
 Rubas, H. (Mrs.), Mt. Buffalo Chalet, 5/4
 Salter, C. (Mrs.), Girls' Hostel, 14/8
 Scott, J. (Mrs.), Standard Gauge Buffet Cars, 5/4
 Wojtala, K. (Mrs.), Ararat, 15/5

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Bordi, K., Jolimont, 5/6
 Brasher, J., E.R. Depot, 28/7
 Carlyon, E. P., Head Office, 28/6
 Cooper, K. T., E.R. Depot, 27/6
 Cullen, W., Shelter Shed, 15/6
 Erwin, H. W., North Melbourne, 21/7
 Holod, S., Newport, 30/9
 Hoogenboom, M. A., Ballarat Nth., 16/9
 Huddle, J. L., Bendigo North, 23/6
 Johnston, G. C., T.L. Depot, 1/9
 Jones, E. W. F., Newport, 21/7
 Lang, A., Jolimont, 16/6
 Maude, A., Ballarat North, 16/6
 Murphy, W. C., Newport, 9/9
 Pisano, A., Newport, 29/9
 Skey, W. E., Seymour, 20/6
 Thorp, R. C., Bendigo North, 26/9
 Wall, J. H., Jolimont, 11/9
 Wildie, F. A., Newport, 1/9
 Wiltshire, L. K., E.R. Depot, 20/6

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Barnett, J. J., Clifton Hill, 7/9
 Berry, M. T. J., Seymour, 11/9
 Brown, J. G., Spencer St., 6/9
 Cartledge, K. O., Brighton Beach, 1/7
 Crawford, G. S., Wodonga, 22/7
 Episkopou, C. G., Melbourne Goods 23/6
 Flynn, W. J., Essendon, 25/9
 Gebarzewski, J., Melbourne Goods, 27/9
 Goodman R. G., Melbourne Goods, 13/9
 Greenwood, R., Benalla, 10/7
 Griffin, G. E., Ballarat, 19/9
 Kitson, C. R., Melbourne Goods, 8/9
 Lobley, A. K., Pyramid, 22/7
 Lowe, W. A., Spencer Street, 14/7
 Nioa, A., Caulfield, 20/9
 O'Toole, C. W., Benalla, 19/6
 Rae, W. F., Geelong, 26/9
 Roberts, W. R., Bendigo, 20/9
 Ruler, M. E. (Miss), Glenhuntly, 18/7
 Schefferle, A. V., Warrnambool, 1/9
 Taylor, M. (Mrs.), Flinders St., 27/6

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Bryans, A. C. H., Guildford (1), 5/9
 Church, J. J., St. James-Yarrowonga, 23/9
 Davis, F. M., Accounts, H. O., 17/9
 Flewin, G. G., Toora-Yarram, 25/9
 Goeman, P. J., Newport Works, 14/9
 Haskell, T. C., Spotswood Workshops, 4/7
 Heenan, A. G., Warrnambool, 6/6
 Hill, A. H., Dandenong, 2/9
 Kowalski, B., Head Office, 23/6
 Melideo, E., Laurens Street, 13/9
 Minnis, J. M., East Melbourne, 3/9
 McConnell, L. F., Warragul, 1/9
 McConville, E., Flinders St., 29/9
 McDonald, W., Broadford, 8/9

Napier, C. F., Hamilton Works, 19/6
 Schulz, C. W., Dimboola Works, 15/9

STORES BRANCH

Bowker, G., Newport, 25/8
 Clements, G. W., Printing Works, 21/7
 Horan, W. F., Printing Works, 20/7
 Wilson, V. M., Reclamation Depot, 19/8

NEWS LETTER REGRETS TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING DEATHS

REFRESHMENT SERVICES BRANCH

Tomie S., Spencer Street Cafeteria, 27/5

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Dight, K. R., North Melbourne, 1/7
 Edwards, L., North Melbourne, 16/6
 Mannix, B., North Melbourne, 6/7
 Schulz, H. W., Seymour, 28/6

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Neil, G. M. (Mrs.), Flinders St., 24/6
 Gercovich, A. W., Ballarat East, 13/7

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Evans, W. J., Flinders Street Works, 8/7
 McConachy, W. R., Korong Vale, 15/6
 Nawrocki, K., Dandenong, 9/7



WANTED— NEW MEMBERS

Are you aware that only half of the railway men and women are members of the Victorian Railways Institute?

There are therefore approximately 13,000 potential members throughout the State, many of whom if contacted personally and advised of the services available, may join our organisation.

As personal contact by Institute administrative staff is not practicable, the Council seeks recruiting agents. A commission of 50 cents is offered for each member recruited who remains for a minimum of six months.

As well as benefiting financially an agent can, we feel, be of assistance to his fellow railway men or women by bringing to their notice the many services available to V.R.I. members. Agents are supplied with up-to-date pamphlets giving details of these services.

Additional recruiting agents are urgently required, so, no matter where you are employed, be it workshops, running depot, storehouse, station, either in the metropolitan or country area, or of course, head office, you are **WANTED**.

Further details can be obtained from the General Secretary, V.R. Institute, Flinders Street station, auto 2445.

DERBY EVE DINNER DANCE

Continuing Council's policy of providing more social entertainment for members and their friends, a dinner dance has been arranged for Friday, November 3, (Derby Eve) at the Chevron Hotel, St. Kilda Road, Melbourne.

As the evening is intended as a non profit making venture, the all-inclusive price—meals, all refreshments, etc.—will be kept to a minimum.

Naturally, the number of tables available is limited, so any interested railway man or woman who would like to make up a party, should ring auto 1642 or 2445 for further information or a reservation.

More details in the September *News Letter*.

UNDERGROUND EXPLAINED

Of general interest to the citizens of Melbourne and of particular concern to every railwayman and woman is the construction of Melbourne's underground rail loop.

This loop is a most important project not only because it is a massive undertaking, but also because it will be a highly significant factor in the planned improvements to the railway system, and the progress of the city's central business district. It will, in fact, be an extension, and therefore an integral part of the present metropolitan passenger electric rail system.

The Institute Council, aware of the intense interest in this undertaking, has arranged for Mr. Frank Watson, General Manager and Chief Engineer of the Melbourne Underground Rail Loop Authority (MURLA), to lecture on this subject at 8 p.m., on Tuesday, September 12, in the V.R.I. Ballroom, 3rd Floor Station Buildings, Flinders Street.

Although open to all Railway personnel and their friends, preferential bookings will be available to Institute members and their families. For free admission tickets call personally or write to the General Secretary, V.R. Institute, 3rd Floor, Flinders Street station, Melbourne, 3000.

Table tennis

The annual table tennis championships were held at Albert Park in July. The trend of the last few years unfortunately continued, with a drop in participants, 26 players only entering into the various events and of these, 10 were from country areas. The poor response from all railway table tennis players was most discouraging to the organising committee. Although a special event for females was included, this fixture had to be cancelled due to lack of interest.

This year's championship crown was won by Tony Averte, clerk, Flinders Street, who defeated Mal Davey, clerk, Melbourne Goods. The complete list of championship winners is: Open Singles Championship: T. Averte (Metropolitan), Open Doubles Championship: M. Davey (Metropolitan) and G. Roiter (Horsham), Country Singles Championship: G. Roiter (Horsham), Restricted Singles Event: L. Curson (Metropolitan), Restricted Doubles Event: J. Parsons (Warragul) and J. Vasiliou (Metropolitan) and the "B" Grade Singles Championship, F. Speldewinde (Metropolitan).

At the conclusion of play, Mr. G. Smith, V.R.I. Councillor and Treasurer of the V.R.I. Table Tennis Association presented the *L. J. Evans Memorial Shield* to Tony Averte and individual trophies to the various winners.

Golf

During July the V.R.I. Golf Club held a Sunday outing to the Buninyong Golf Course, near Ballarat, and, despite the cold weather, the 37 men and four lady golfers had an enjoyable day. Division 1 was won by W. Short while J. McMahon won Division 2. Mrs. D. Collins won the ladies event.

Ten pin bowling

A request to form a V.R.I. ten pin bowling club has been made and the Council would like to hear from those interested in forming a V.R.I. Club. If ten pin bowling is your sport please get in touch with either Kevin Phelan on auto 1163, or the General Secretary's Office on auto 2445.

Football—A.P.I. v. V.R.I.

This annual match was played at the Junction Oval, St. Kilda, recently, in fine but cold weather. We arrived at the ground full of confidence—after all we had a first-class team, had won the last three contests and our coach had an unbeaten record. What more could you want? At the start of play, a fairly stiff breeze favoured the score board end and, as A.P.I. won the toss, they naturally kicked in this direction. By the end of the first quarter, the game appeared to be following the



Some of the action from the A.P.I. v V.R.I. match. V.R.I. team has the V on their guernseys.

same pattern as in previous years. Our back line was playing well and at quarter time we were only two points down—the scores being A.P.I. 2-3-15 to V.R.I. 2-1-13. In the second quarter we started off like *Heavy Harry* with full steam up, slamming on 3 goals 1 behind before Postal scored. After about 15 minutes had been played we led by 17 points. I think it was about this period that our blokes began to plan the victory dinner, because, believe you me, they certainly weren't worrying about the football match. Unfortunately for the Posties, they could only manage 3 behinds for the quarter, but it was more their bad luck than our good play that had them trailing by 14 points at the long interval. After the break, Postal immediately went into attack and throughout this third quarter had us under a lot of pressure. Again their forward work was a little sloppy and prevented them from setting up a winning lead. Following a stirring speech by Coach Sharp, and with the wind behind us, we at least started the last quarter with some hope of victory. But, oh no, our fellows still seemed more interested in getting the game over rather than winning it and after adding four points to their score, calmly watched the posties kick three goals one behind, in spite of the strong wind in their faces. The final scores read Postal 7-12-54 to V.R.I. 5-9-39. We had been well beaten, much easier than the scores indicated, and the fact that we did not score a goal from about the 15 minute mark of the second quarter speaks for itself. Best in a very disappointing display were Neville Bourke, who battled hard all day in the ruck, Graeme Grose, our captain, who tried everything he knew to lift his side, Ken Huggard, who, after a shaky start, dominated at full back and John Holmes who won on his half back flank. At the presentation function after the game our visitors

were welcomed by Mr. R. M. Wright (General President) and Mr. C. S. Morris (Secretary for Railways, representing the Commissioners), and Graeme Grose reluctantly handed over the perpetual trophy to Terry Allen, A.P.I. captain.

Soccer

Again it is most pleasing to report that the V.R.I. Soccer Club is making steady progress, both in the number of players available for selection and in their general playing style. They have begun to win matches and this has given players the confidence they needed to improve their game. After all, this is their first year of competitive soccer and if enthusiasm and keenness count for anything then it should not be long before they are in the big league. Wally Binder, the Secretary/Manager of the club, has a very dedicated bunch behind him and I feel sure that in the next season or so, the royal blue and gold are colours which will become a force to be reckoned with.

Snooker tournament

With the revival of the V.R.I. Billiard Club and the apparent upsurge of interest in both billiards and snooker, our billiard room is really ticking over at the moment. The club, recognising the fact that the sport is booming, has organised a handicap snooker tournament to be played in the V.R.I. Billiards Room, 3rd Floor, Flinders Street station, on September 18 and 19. The commencing time is 7.30 p.m. and the entry fee 30 cents per player. Entries close on September 11 with the Sports Secretary, V.R.I., (auto 2445) or with Mr. P. Lane or Mr. J. Haecker, Vice President and Hon. Secretary of the V.R.I. Billiards Club respectively. As this a handicap event and is open to all members of the V.R.I., you should keep in mind that old axiom "you've gotta be in it to win it."

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

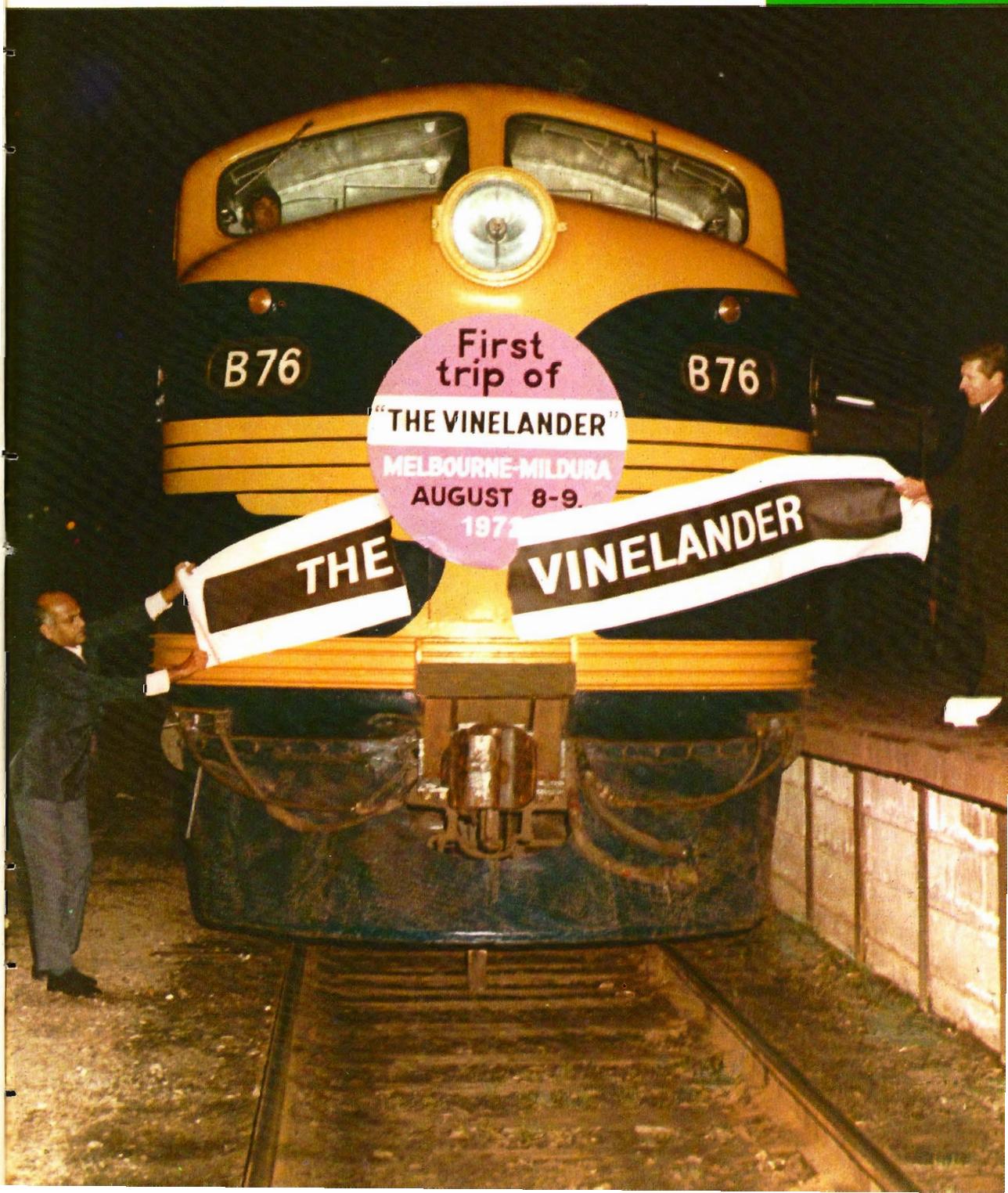
NEWS LETTER

SEPTEMBER



1972

10 CENTS



SUPER HIGHWAYS v SUPER RAILWAYS

In late June, the press announced that the Federal Government was studying plans for a \$600 million scheme to link Australia's capitals with super highways.

Obviously the Government believes the community is prepared to pay for the benefits that will flow from a super-highway network.

This particularly applies to the 750-mile corridor between Newcastle and Geelong, where half of Australia's population is centred.

Before the Commonwealth commits itself to this scheme, has it made itself aware of any alternatives?

Just as super-highways will reap benefits to the community, so will super-railways. The question to be answered is which will reap more benefits, and at what cost.

A super-railway in this transport corridor could be built for less than one third the cost of a parallel super-highway, and achieve many benefits that the super-highway could not match.

Main beneficiary of any improvement in roads is not the private motorist, no matter how much better he thinks the travel is, it is the road transport industry.

If the railway is dramatically improved in this transport corridor, then freight could go much faster than by any super-highway, and passengers, too, will get great improvements in travel times and conditions.

Many conclude from the present high number of commercial vehicles on the roads, that road transport is preferred. But between Sydney and Melbourne road transport organisations make big use of rail freighting; of the four freight forwarding agents operating on this route, one even hires its own train (a second is about to start)—and that's at today's competition level!

With a super-railway and a continuing program of improvements to the major highways, substantial quantities of intercapital freight would move from road to rail. The resultant slowing of the growth rate of commercial vehicles on an improved Hume Highway should clear much congestion and allow more pleasant driving conditions for the private motorist who still prefers to drive between Mel-

bourne and Sydney rather than take a train that could complete the journey in 6-8 hours, or less, and, perhaps even carry his car on it!

Already, about half the present rail route between Newcastle and Geelong is on a super-railway alignment. The track only needs strengthening and minor re-alignments to bring in high speed travel for freight and passengers. The upper passenger speed limit could be 100 m.p.h., 125 m.p.h., 150 m.p.h. or whatever is wanted—the cost will still be substantially less than for a super-highway.

For the remainder of the journey many of the improvements needed to bring the line up to high-speed standard can be made within existing railway boundaries—to bring the Hume Highway to super standard will require enormous land acquisition along most of the route in N.S.W.

In a paper presented to the Australian Road Research Board Conference recently, super highway costs—dual carriageways of express way standards—were put at between \$600,000 and \$1,500,000 per mile depending on terrain. This means that Hume Highway improvements alone may take \$500-600 million.

Assuming rail improvements took \$200 million (one third) then the change left over from the super railway—\$400 million—would go a long way to drastically improving highway conditions throughout Australia, and particularly between Geelong and Newcastle.

Unless the planned highway improvements throughout Australia are accompanied by railway improvements, then a massive transfer of freight to road from rail will take place and highway congestion on the new super-roads will approach present levels. The V.R. sees the Government's role as optimising the balance between the various transport modes to ensure greatest efficiency in transport.

A super-railway, a super highway, or both? Before committing Australia irrevocably to the road scheme envisaged, surely the Federal Government must fully investigate all the alternatives and see that the Australian people get value for their money.

G. F. BROWN

N.S.W.R. INVESTIGATES SHIPPERS NEEDS

A market research survey to ascertain transport needs of 5,000 Sydney based companies and commercial undertakings is underway for New South Wales Railways.

Conducted with the co-operation of the Chambers of Manufacturers and Commerce, the survey is designed to obtain data on freight movement, company attitudes towards NSW, and what is required from rail services.

—*Railway Transportation*

MELBOURNE TRANSPORT THINKING "RIGHT"

Freshly returned from a nine-week overseas tour, the Minister of Transport, the Hon. Vernon F. Wilcox, M.P., said that overseas experience showed that the Victorian Government's present thinking on transport was headed in the right direction.

But in common with countries throughout the world, he said, the biggest problem, apart from finding a proper place for motor vehicles in cities, was "working out proper financing for what we want to do".

He said that although financial aid to States for their transport projects was not part of the recent Budget, he was sure it was "still in the minds of the Commonwealth Government.

"Australia has the only central Government not contributing to urban fixed rail transport.

"The sooner they do, the better for the Australians who live in Melbourne and Sydney," he commented.

Speaking of desirable innovations for Melbourne's rail network, Mr. Wilcox said that he considered automatic barrier systems had the most to offer and added that they will "have to come with the underground".

Commenting on other overseas trends, he said it was time for the oldest form of transport, the foot, to get a chance, instead of being neglected in favour of the motor car.

"Fortunately," he said, "some cities are starting to do something about making special provision for pedestrian malls where the atmosphere is completely changed by the absence of motor vehicles."

Mr. Wilcox advocated the conversion of some "Little" Melbourne streets into pedestrian malls.

WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

The Sun, July 18, reported top U.S. criminal lawyer Melvin Belli as saying "We came in tonight by train . . . we had everything but the gold rattled out of our teeth."

The V.R. Public Relations and Betterment Board immediately wrote to Mr. Belli at his Melbourne hotel asking for details of his apparently uncomfortable journey so that if possible, any complaints could be investigated and rectified. (The V.R.'s P.R. section follows up most complaints reported in the Press this way).

Two weeks later came Mr. Belli's reply, airmailed from Zurich, Switzerland. His comments: "No!!! I loved your railways! Keep it up! All good wishes, Melvin Belli."

Well, what is the truth? Did *The Sun* interview and the V.R. correspond with the same top criminal lawyer called Melvin Belli?

VALUES TO CLIMB AS RAIL LOOP PROGRESSES

"Melbourne's \$117 million rail loop may pay for itself many times over through increasing property values and rates," says *The Age*, August 23.

Recent years have seen strong buying around the ends of Collins and Bourke Street, accompanied by big land price increases.

Activity in the fringe areas to the north, around the sites for Flagstaff and Museum stations, has also been noted, but values there are still only a fraction of central city prices.

"However," the article continues, "if overseas experience is any guide, the underground will cause further increases in prices."

The example of Toronto's 4½-mile subway, completed in 1954 for \$67 million, was cited. That project triggered a \$1,000 million redevelopment of Toronto's main street—two-thirds the total of all development for 1957-66.

Washington's city underground system is expected to boost property values throughout the city by \$840 million. Conservative estimates claim that Washington will receive a \$2.60 return for every dollar invested in the system. Planners say the project will substantially slow the flight to the suburbs.

Mr Chris Lang, of K. Gardner & Lang, has recently studied the implications of overseas subway projects on property values.

The Age reported Mr. Lang as saying: "The more accessible any land is, the more valuable it becomes. As a result of their lack of accessibility, many American and Canadian cities are in danger of losing their economic and cultural vitality. Everyone is paying an increasingly higher price in terms of tension, time and money just to move about."

Mr. Lang believes that instead of trying to finance the loop "today"

TRAIN OF KNOWLEDGE SUCCESS



One of the first duties for Victoria's new Premier, Mr. R. J. Hamer, was to send off the fourth annual Rotary Train of Knowledge chartered by Essendon Rotary. The 88 children aged between 12 and 16 then left for a five-day tour of Gippsland.

by raising central business district rates, the money should be borrowed now and the necessary repayments met from increased assessments flowing naturally from the loop's presence.

He praised the Victorian Government for their foresight in protecting inner Melbourne's accessibility with the underground loop.

But that is not enough to ensure success, Mr. Lang contended. A creative re-zoning for high-rise residential development, the provision of extensive parking facilities at strategic railway stations near the city, and the halting of further freeway construction into the centre must accompany the project, he added.

INSUFFICIENT TRAFFIC CLOSES LINES

Nearly 1,600 miles of Australia's 25,000-mile railway network were closed during the last 10 years because of insufficient traffic.

Western Australia heads the list with 623 miles closed down, Queensland follows with 527, then comes Victoria, 177, South Australia 153, Tasmania 15, and Commonwealth Railways 4.

In New South Wales, a proposal to close some uneconomic lines is being considered.

Offsetting the decline, many new lines are being built either as gauge standardisation projects or for new mineral organisations.

LAND RATE FOR RAIL LOSSES?

The Land Values Research Group has claimed that rail fares and freight rates could be reduced by up to 36 per cent if railway capital costs were levied on land rate charges throughout the State.

The Group, in letters to Victorian country newspapers, said that a rate of 0.76 cents in the dollar on rateable property would cover the Victorian Railways capital cost structure leaving only working expenses to be recovered from fares and freights. This, they claimed, would lead to substantially reduced fares and freights, abolition of the railway deficit, encouragement for decentralization, and a more equitable spread of railway costs throughout the community.

The Group claimed that it was a fallacy that only rail users benefited from railways. "In fact, land-owners also benefit by the availability of Railways," they said.

FRONT COVER

The Vinlander breaks through a paper barrier on its inaugural departure to start the upgraded service to Mildura.

Details of the proceedings to launch the new service are on p. 132

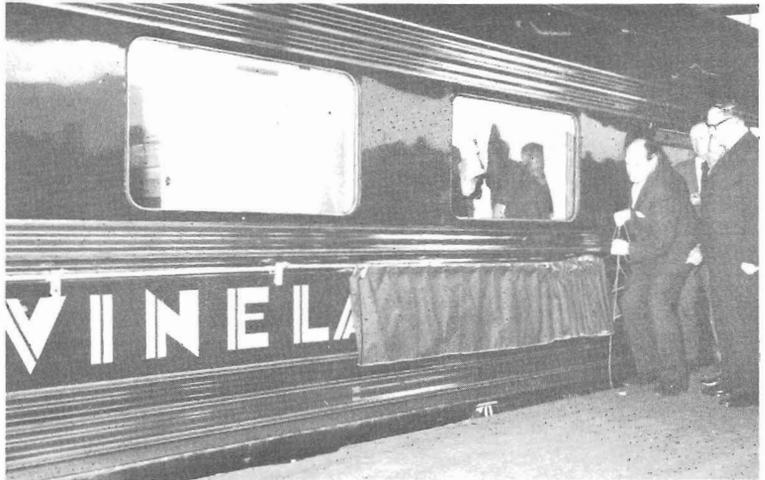
LAUNCHING "THE VINELANDER"

The Melbourne-Mildura named train, *The Vinelander*, ran its inaugural overnight trip from Spencer Street on August 8; the service from Mildura began the following night. Two roomette (single apartment) and two twinette (double apartment) carriages from *The Overland* had replaced older sleeping carriages on the previous unnamed twin trains. The roomette is a first for Victorian intrastate rail travel.

Promotion of *The Vinelander* was through:

- a name-the-train contest launched by *News Letter* in January.
- a series of press statements, photographs and film clips, for newspaper, radio and TV use, starting in February.
- press, radio, TV, pamphlet, poster and sign advertising and window displays.
- official unveiling of the name *The Vinelander* and presentation to the winner of the "name-the-train contest" at a lunch-time inspection on August 8.
- ceremonial send-off on the inaugural run.
- V.I.P. inspection and entertainment in a *The Overland* club car at Mildura, on August 9.
- special "photo-run", Mildura-Redcliffs, on August 10.
- week-end display at Mildura station on August 12-13.

News Letter's exclusive contest



The name *The Vinelander* is unveiled.

brought an immediate response—339 entries for 270 different titles.

Initial material for the news media concerned the \$6.2 million Mildura line relaying to bring better riding qualities. The Public Relations and Betterment Board sent writer K. Baker, photographer J. Schwarz and film officer W. B. Davis along the track to provide stories, pictures and film for TV.

Progress stories and pictures followed at intervals, not only concerning track work, but the conversion of rolling stock and the greater comfort of the new train.

One problem concerning TV commercials—the Railways make their own—was that the train to be advertised did not exist. This was overcome by using a 1/120th scale model on the miniature layout at the Showgrounds.

As news items are issued because of their news value for media and never as free advertising, paid advertising—in two languages at Mildura to reach that district's large Italian community—played an important part in launching *The Vinelander*.

As well as in Melbourne and Mildura newspapers, advertising was placed in Adelaide and Broken Hill papers—promoting driving to Mildura, then using *The Vinelander* and MotoRail to Melbourne. Certain "on line" advertising was also undertaken.

Within hours of *The Sun* col-

umnist, Mr. Keith Dunstan, writing about *The Vinelander* and suggesting that dried fruits should be distributed on the train, the Australian Dried Fruits Board arranged with the Railways for each tray breakfast on *The Vinelander* into Mildura to include a complimentary packet of sultanas.

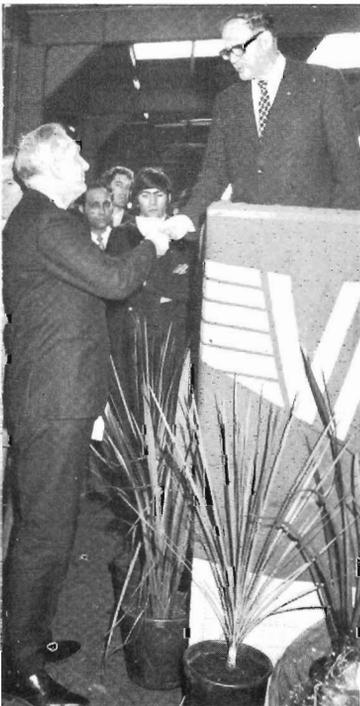
Final week

With Commissioners' approval, a committee of representatives from the Public Relations and Betterment Board (Mr. K. Baker), Traffic Branch (Mr. J. Clancy) and Rolling Stock Branch (Mr. R. Johnson) was set up to plan in detail the final week, with public displays, etc.

Two new pamphlets were prepared: one for general publicity and the other for on-train distribution to sleeping berth passengers. To have them in time and cut costs, both were printed on one sheet of paper and trimmed later. Wednesday Headline messages—one about the train, and another promoting the lunch-time display—were sent to metropolitan stations.

One man greatly involved was Mildura stationmaster, Mr. K. Bailey, who had to maintain "business as usual" while the station was painted, asphalted attended to, bunting positioned, hoardings removed, and so on. He also had new staffing arrangements and many other matters to plan.

A roomette carriage from *The Overland* was sent to Mildura with senior conductor, Mr. J. Freeland, to show



Mr. G. W. Edsall, suggester of the train's name receives his cheque from Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. G. F. Brown.

conductors features of *The Vinelander*. This provided more news for local media, which had been alerted to Mr. Freeland's work with Royalty.

The Vinelander's four sleeping carriages made a few unscheduled return trips to Adelaide a few days before their first run to Mildura—as the result of the airline strike every available suitable carriage was sought for *The Overland*.

Lunchtime preview

About 2,000 Melbourne lunchtimers had a preview of the modernized Melbourne-Mildura train at Spencer Street station and witnessed the unveiling of the train's name on August 8.

On show for two hours, *The Vinelander* was complete with staff to answer questions, along with the mobile advisory bureau staffed by Commercial Agents. MotoRail was demonstrated too.

At 1.15 p.m., the unveiling was performed by the Acting Minister of Transport (Mr. J. F. Rossiter) in the presence of the three members of State Parliament representing the Sunraysia district—the Member for Mildura, Mr. M. S. Whiting M.P., the Hon. B. P. Dunn M.L.C., and the Hon. A. R. Mansell M.L.C.—plus the three Victorian Railways Commissioners and Mr. G. W. Edsall, who suggested the train's name.

Mr. Rossiter said that while Mildura people had agitated for this improved rail service, their forefathers, at the turn of the century, strongly debated whether to have a train service at all. "It was suggested that the line, because of the poor country it crossed, would never pay for the axle grease," Mr Rossiter said.

Mr G. F. Brown (Chairman of Commissioners) said that *The Vinelander* became Victoria's ninth named train—and the only Victorian line with MotoRail for passengers to take their cars with them.

Broke barrier

More than 150 people braved the cold winter night to see the historic event: *The Vinelander's* inaugural departure from Spencer Street. Signalled out by Mr. Brown, the train broke through a paper barrier bearing the train's name (see front cover); the locomotive carried a suitable headboard. The official party on board the train comprised Messrs. E. P. Rogan (Deputy Chairman of Commissioners), M. S. Whiting, M. P., A. R. Mansell, M.L.C., M.R.B. Ronald (Asst. Chief Traffic Manager), H. C. Chandler (Deputy Chief Commercial Manager), G. Tilley (Editor, *Sunraysia Daily*), K. F. Neander (Secretary, Victorian Dried Fruits Board) and other railway officers.

Next morning

Mildura people took great interest in the train and local radio station 3MA gave frequent early morning "flashes" of the inaugural trip's progress. From Redcliffs into Mildura, people lined the roads, workers rushed from factories to doorways, some locals (still clad in pyjamas) raced to back fences, and cars came to a standstill as *The Vinelander* entered the district.

About 200 people on Mildura station with the Mayor of Mildura (Cr. S. Mills) and Town Clerk (Mr. W. Downey) officially welcomed the V.I.P.'s and the train, to Mildura.



MILDURA'S NEW RAIL ERA

Sunraysia Daily billboards around Mildura and district announced "Mildura's new rail era", denoting the lead story that day. V.R. pictures of the Melbourne ceremony had been



Mildura ambassadors Wendy Tschirpig (left) and Colleen Freeman present the Acting Minister of Transport, Mr. J. F. Rossiter, with a dip-tin of Sunraysia products after he had performed the unveiling of *The Vinelander's* name.

sent by 'phone to meet the paper's deadline. Film of the previous day's events was handed to STV8, who added it to footage filmed at Mildura, for later showing on television.

In the afternoon, local dignitaries and business people were hosted by Mr. Rogan in the spare *The Overland* club car, sent to Mildura the previous day, and viewed the new carriages.

In prime viewing time, STV8 interrupted its normal programme to present a 15-minute "live" interview with Mr. Rogan about *The Vinelander* and other railway matters. Six weeks earlier V.R. publicity man



It was a very warm welcome that was extended to Mr. Rogan on arrival in Mildura . . . the girl was the daughter of Mr. Milton Whiting, M.P., and it was as much a surprise to her father as it was to Mr. Rogan.

Kevin Baker told Sunraysia people of preparations being made to launch *The Vinelander* in a 10-minute segment on the same channel.

To Redcliffs and back

A publicity highlight was *The Vinelander's* special run to Redcliffs and back, for making TV commercials and securing still photographs—not possible with a night train under normal circumstances. Accordingly it was filmed in daylight with a Sunraysia background of vines and citrus. At the same time, opportunity was taken to invite school children representatives from the district's 37 schools, including those from across the River Murray, in New South Wales. More than 200 youngsters were on the train, many having their first train trip. Special souvenir rail tickets were printed and each child received a folder of railway project material.

This trip became a "traffic stopper" as motorists on adjoining highways pulled in to watch and wave to the youngsters. The train, complete with Commissioners' train locomotive T400, made an unscheduled stop at Irymple for school children who had gathered on the platform.

Inspection

Redcliffs station was packed with children from three schools. And none was disappointed when railway officials made hurried arrangements to give them all a "crash" inspection of the sleeping carriages. When the Sister-in-charge of one of the schools was thanked for her interest in the train, the children, without prompting, chorused: "Thank you, sir, for showing us this lovely train."

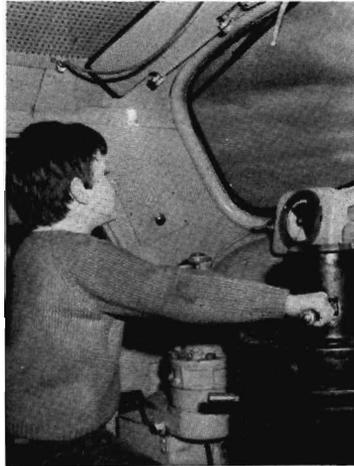
As well, other school children stood at the side of the road near Redcliffs and waved to their colleagues as they went by on *The Vinelander*.

The children on board were naturally of all shapes and sizes; some could barely be seen sitting in the lay back seats of the BZ and AZ carriages.

Sister Ursuline, from St. Francis Xavier School, Wentworth, was amazed that a train could be so



The Vinelander in typical Sunraysia surroundings—a vineyard.



▲ The ambition of many a young boy is to be an engine driver. At Mildura, this young lad got to sit in the driver's seat—and loved every minute of it! Most common question asked locomotive driver Geoff Pianta was "Where's the steering wheel?" One elderly woman struggled up the steps and sat in the driver's seat exclaiming: "This is something I've wanted to do for years."

comfortable.

"I never realised there would be private single bed units on the train," she said.

One 12-year-old who travelled on the train, Peter Grosfeld, had been round the world by jet aircraft, but never ridden in a train. Peter was



▲ The organising committee: (from left) Messrs. J. Clancy, K. Baker and R. Johnson.

▲ Even the renowned cold of a Ballarat night could not daunt enthusiasm for *The Vinelander*. At the Ballarat stop on the inaugural trip, Deputy Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. E. P. Rogan was interviewed by a BTV 6 reporter. Mr. Rogan later gave a 15-minute "live" interview on STV 8.

▶ Wishing that the V.R.'s scale model trains were their own, these two lads would probably be unaware that every time they see the V.R.'s TV commercial about *The Vinelander*, they're looking at this model. Because the actual train did not exist when the commercials were prepared, the 1/120th models were used instead.

amazed with its comfort, although he thought it was travelling slowly at times. He nodded an understanding head when it was explained that the rail track was being relaid, which required the train to reduce speed.

Many commendatory letters have been received from schools and pupils since the trip.

Week-end display

A special long range weather forecast from Mr. Lennox Walker, the Queensland weather forecaster, indicated "fine and sunny with temperatures in the mid 60's for Saturday and Sunday, August 12 and 13, in Mildura". This information was issued to news media . . . how ideal for our promotion!

Nearly 6,000 visited Mildura station during the week-end—the vast majority on Sunday afternoon, when parking was so congested that some people had to walk from two blocks away. Around 100 people were in the train at any one time; one way traffic through the sitting carriages, then to the roomette and twinette, ensured an even flow. Signs directed visitors towards the M O T O R A I L





Week-end display at Mildura included *The Vinlander* being open for inspection, MotoRail demonstrations, freight rolling stock, B-class locomotive and the mobile advisory bureau.

loading demonstrations, then to selected freight rolling stock showing typical wagons of the "Fruit Flier"—a VSX, fresh out of Ballarat North Workshops, and a flat wagon with two types of containers. Placards attached to the wagons stated the type of freight each carried.

A big attraction was the B-class locomotive which was open for inspection.

Youngsters had such a good time that when the train was due to be moved into the carriage sheds, the locomotive could not raise air—the emergency cords had been pulled in the carriages.

The mobile display unit had *The Vinlander* (as used in the TV commercial) and "Fruit Flier" running in miniature, and a bogie exchange model. There was also a pamphlet bar and Commercial Agents manning an advisory bureau. As was the case with the Melbourne display, a special commentary was prepared and taped to tell visitors about *The Vinlander*.

The Mayor (Cr. S. Mills) and the Mayoress made an official visit for "a few minutes"; they stayed nearly 1½ hours examining in detail the various exhibits.

TV film from Mildura was provided, on request, by the Railways for ABV2 and HSV7—plus allied country relay stations.

End result

The whole purpose of the promotion was, naturally, to increase rail business on the Mildura line and only time will tell how successful the project was. A number of rail bookings were made over the display period and many people stated openly that they would "give the train a go". Patronage on *The Vinlander* for the first two weeks was up 979 on the previous figures, making the train worthy of being among the impressive list of named Victorian trains. A station poster and regular advertising will continue to keep *The Vinlander* in public mind.



Mildura Stationmaster Ken Bailey, (left), Traffic Inspector Val Idnurm (centre) and Ballarat District Superintendent Ken Batchelor read new pamphlets issued for *The Vinlander*. The three had a big role in seeing that all went well for the week-end display at Mildura.

BOOK REVIEW

The era of the J-class locomotive on the Victorian Railways, by Stephen Watson and Alan Cameron

Locomotives are the real personalities on the railway scene to railway enthusiasts, and much rail-fan writing revolves around the myriad details of life of a locomotive.

Stephen Watson and Alan Cameron have put together details of the wanderings and vicissitudes of the V.R.'s last steam locomotive class, the 60-strong J-class.

Depot allocations, overhaul dates, mileage run and ultimate fate of each locomotive is shown along with several action photographs of J's.

Compulsory buying for anyone who finds the history and details of steam locos irresistible, the 38-page booklet is available at \$1.20 post free from Mr. S. Watson, 11 Munro Avenue, Edithvale, 3196.

SUGGESTIONS ADOPTED

During July, the following suggestions were adopted and awards granted:

- Modifications to circuit breakers \$1,500
- Deletion of lost ticket information from *Weekly Notice* \$420
- Blank pro-rata monthly tickets to be used when printed monthlies are not available \$25
- Abolition of special race tickets on Broadmeadows line \$20
- Public address system at Werribee \$10
- Holder for securing fuel injectors during maintenance \$10
- Use of *Polycell* instead of flour paste for posters \$10
- Repairs to signal structure at Flinders Street \$5
- Extra carriage on 6 a.m. Geelong-Melbourne train \$5
- Destination of return football specials be shown in advance at Glenferrie \$2
- Informing passengers of dining and club car facilities on *Southern Aurora* \$2
- Re-issue of instructions re barrier gates \$2
- Alterations to form RS 127 \$2
- Posters be placed in waiting room at Flinders station \$2



GOING...GOING... With billowing smoke and a thunderous bang, one of the disused brick piers of the Nepean Highway railway overbridge at Gardenvale is demolished.



When the smoke cleared, the old pier was reduced to chunks of rubble.



Bridge clearance has been raised, and with the other pier removed, road width will have been increased, too.

GEELONG GANTRY. Being erected at Geelong is a 25-ton gantry crane the first major stage of constructing a modern goods handling area for Geelong. For container traffic and general goods, the new crane will speed rolling stock turn-around at Geelong.

VIEWS OF NEWS



FOOTSCRAY QUADRANT blasting was required for the area. Major bridgework is part of the project.



PLICATION. Progress is well under way to provide two additional tracks between South Kensington and Footscray. Considerable work has been done through the half-mile cutting into Footscray, but before this began an independent architect inspected houses adjoining the railway at three locations — Hopkins Street, near Footscray station, Maribyrnong River Bridge and Kensington Road — is a feature of the works. The total cost of the works is estimated at \$5 million, and will enable western suburbs peak services to be greatly improved.

SAFETY INVENTION CENTENARY

Each day as rail travellers are safely whisked to and from their destinations, few if any would probably spare a thought as to why railways, generally, have a safety record second to none. And even fewer would be aware that 100 years ago last month, the system, acknowledged today as the safest and most reliable railway signalling yet devised, was invented by an American schoolteacher.

The best skilled electrical artists of the day declared the system contrary to all known laws of electrical action and averred that it could not work.

But the inventor, 32-year-old William Robinson, knew differently—for five years he had plotted, tested, devised and perfected the railway signalling innovation of all time—the track circuit.

In the system, an electrical charge flows through the rails, signals and associated circuits. When a train enters the (electrical) section, the current is short circuited and the signals, robbed of current, revert to *danger* indications in desired sequences.

This means that in areas controlled by track circuits the train is continually providing its own protection and, in the event of malfunction of the equipment, all signals go immediately to danger.

William Robinson graduated from Wesleyan University and took up teaching, interspersed with sojourns in the oil industry.

Railway accidents in America and Europe motivated him to find a fool-proof method of railway signalling, and only three years after he started his project, he displayed a working model of a track circuit to visitors at a State Fair in 1870.

One railway official saw the potential of the invention and had Robinson instal it for testing at Kinzua station, in Pennsylvania.

Although the railway staff and officials were perfectly satisfied with the performance of the signalling system, Robinson was not.

A perfectionist by nature, he devised test after test to subject the equipment to, to see what shortcomings the system had.

Although the equipment never malfunctioned in practice, Robinson was satisfied that it wasn't foolproof—there were certain eventualities that could cause the signal to show *clear* when there were obstructions, and, most importantly, if the circuit was damaged, all the signals went to *all clear* indications.

He recognised this as the fundamental weakness, and, using that as his basis, devised a new system of track circuit where any failure of the circuit immediately put all signals to *stop*.

Two years later, and another State Fair, saw another working model of his track circuit. This time the model ran through water, and each time the carriage entered the circuit, a bell sounded. Like his earlier prototype, it, too, worked perfectly.



Inventor of the track circuit, Mr. William Robinson.

Again a test installation was provided at Kinzua and again the equipment worked perfectly.

Robinson devised many uses for his circuit, from the start of automatic signalling, to protecting drawbridges and level crossings. He also reduced the apparatus to its simplest form and, at the same time, to its highest efficiency.

From that start, the system was little modified, but adapted into automatic signalling, centralized train control and other systems.

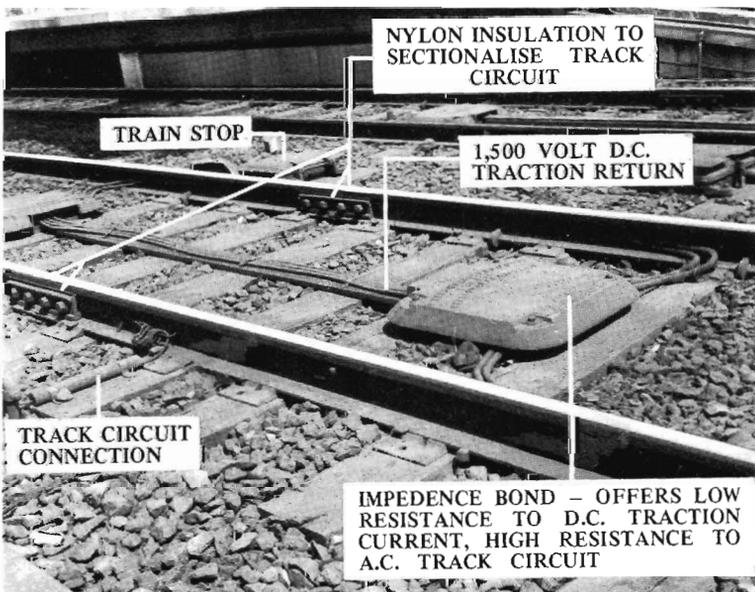
Before the turn of the century the V.R. had installed some track circuits in busy areas, such as North Melbourne.

Throughout the world, and on the V.R., the track circuit has brought enormous improvements in safety and capacity for railways. Also, reductions in manpower content became possible.

Today, the system is represented on more than 1,000 miles of track in Victoria, ensuring that the safety record built up over the years is preserved.

• Robinson's inventiveness went further than railway signals—he patented the coaster hub for bicycles, roller bearings for roller skates and small turbines, and devised the repeating telephone, amongst other inventions.

He died in New York, aged 81, in 1921.



Details of a track circuit.

METRICS—AND RAILWAY CONVERSIONS

Although July 1973 is set as the date for conversion to metrics within the railway industry, many items will not change other than in terminology.

At several A.N.Z.R. conferences on metrification, various recommendations have been made and most have been endorsed by the systems. Major recommendations are:

- capital equipment in the form of locomotives, some rolling stock and buildings, is expected to serve out its life in Imperial Units. (In other words, no special expense will be undertaken in preparing conversions for items with a short-term life.);
- machine tools, laboratory instruments and weighing equipment, where appropriate, will be converted, but, in other cases, replacement will be considered for older equipment;
- identification marks on bridges, wiring standards, speed boards, mileage indicators, etc., will be progressively changed;
- distances will be converted on the basis of even kilometres. Where fractions are known, 0.5 km will be converted to the next km above, and under 0.5 to the next km below;
- passengers' luggage allowances will be converted and rounded off to the next 10kg above. This means that the present intrastate allowance of 84 lb. economy-class will become 40 kg and the first-class 112 lb. will become 60kg. Interstate allowances will become 60 kg

and 80 kg respectively;

- parcels traffic will be rated in 1 kg divisions up to 10 kg, then 10 kg divisions;
- smalls minimum tariff will apply for consignments of up to 150 kg in rating steps of 10 kg;
- All Australian and New Zealand fares and rates books will have a standard format;
- all linear dimensions shown on rolling stock diagrams will be shown in millimetres;
- on rolling stock, tare mass (weight) and capacity will be converted to metric equivalents expressed in tonnes and taken to one decimal place (e.g. 67.3 tonnes), dry volume capacity will be shown to nearest 0.1 cubic metre, and liquid volume will be converted to litres;
- air brake pressures will be calculated in kiloPascals (kPa) with minimum divisions of 50 kPa. For convenience, the conversion ratio 100 lb. = 700 kPa will be used rather than the exact 100 lb. = 689kPa.

Other conversions of existing items to be:

gauge:

- 5 ft. 3 in. will be known as 1 600 mm
- 4 ft. 8½ in. will be known as 1 435 mm
- 3 ft. 6 in. will be known as 1 017 mm

Other gauges can be calculated by multiplying the gauge in inches by 25.4 to get millimetres and then rounding off to the nearest millimetre.

rails:

- 107 lb./yd. will be known as 53 kg/m
- 94 lb./yd. will be known as 47 kg/m
- 80 lb./yd. will be known as 40 kg/m
- 60 lb./yd. will be known as 30 kg/m

A new rail size, 60 kg per metre—equivalent to about 120 lb./yd. — will come into use. Conversion of rail weights from lb./yd. to kg/m is achieved by halving the imperial units.

speeds:

- 25 m.p.h. is 40 km/h
- 35 m.p.h. is 56 km/h
- 45 m.p.h. is 72 km/h
- 50 m.p.h. is 80 km/h
- 60 m.p.h. is 96 km/h
- 70 m.p.h. is 112 km/h
- 80 m.p.h. is 128 km/h

Already we've been told that some of these figures for km/h will be rounded off for road speed limits 56 km/h will become 60 km/h, and presumably there will be others.

An approximate conversion ratio is to divide the mileage by five and then multiply by eight.

mass (weight):

- 1 ton will become 1.02 tonnes
- 8 tons will become 8.1 tonnes
- 70 tons will become 71.1 tonnes
- 114 tons will become 115.8 tonnes
- 355 tons will become 360.7 tonnes
- 1,500 tons will become 1 524.1 tonnes
- 3,000 tons will become 3 048.2 tonnes

Actual conversion formula is 1 ton equals 1.016 tonnes. The term tonnage will remain, but will be pronounced *tonn'ij*.

liquid volumes:

- 1 gallon will become 4.5 litres
- 8 gallons will become 36.4 litres
- 17½ gallons will become 79.6 litres
- 1,000 gallons will become 4 546 litres
- 9,000 gallons will become 40 914 litres

Base unit, the litre, is approximately one quart. Exact conversion ratio is 4.546 litres to the gallon.

Any queries about metric conversion which relate to the railways should be directed to the Chairman, Metric Conversion Committee, Room 205, Head Office.

135 FT. SKID INTO RAILWAY GATES

A probationary driver who crashed through a gate at the Humfray Street level crossing, Ballarat, was fined \$50 by Ballarat Magistrate's Court recently.

Police who attended the scene told the Court that there was 135 ft. of continuous skid mark veering to the wrong side of the road before the gate and 12ft. beyond it. The accident happened at 12.30 a.m.

The driver told the Court that the gates had swung out in front of him suddenly and he was unable to stop in time because his car had skidded in loose gravel.

Police also told the Court that the driver's licence had been cancelled for another offence between the time of the accident and the court case, reported *Ballarat Courier*.

LOCO TO BE NAMED

Geelong Steam Preservation Society will name its Vulcan locomotive *Arthur T. Middleton* after their vice-president who died in March this year.

Arthur—or Terry as he was more familiarly known—was the sub-foreman at Geelong Locomotive Depot until retirement from the V.R. in 1971.

The Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. G. F. Brown, will perform the naming ceremony at the Society's Belmont Common railway, near Geelong, at 2.45 p.m. on Saturday, October 7. Mrs. Middleton and family will be present.

Terry was particularly well known for his geniality and friendliness and had been a driving force in the success of the Steam Society's venture.

He completed his apprenticeship with a young George Brown who later went on to become Commissioner.

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST RAILWAY

One hundred and twenty years ago last month The Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Company, which ran Australia's first steam train, was formed.

The railway, from Flinders Street to Sandridge (Port Melbourne), was only 2½ miles long, yet it was the parent of the 25,000 miles of railway in Australia today.

During the early 1850's there were many proposals for transport between Hobson's Bay and Melbourne. One was for a canal from the Bay at Sandridge, to the city, so that ships could berth in Melbourne.

In 1851, a railway was favoured and a public meeting called at the Mechanics' Institution (now Melbourne Athenaeum). A Mr. George Annand submitted plans for a railway involving a line 1-mile 63-chains long, crossing the River Yarra on a wooden viaduct 800 ft. long, and a jetty at Sandridge. The whole project was to cost \$120,000.

Another suggestion was to build a sea wall across the Bay from Sandridge to Williamstown, along which goods would be carried by horse.

There was a strong opposition to the railway; most speakers advocating the sea wall idea because "of the need to keep seafarers out of the city." As a compromise, the meeting appointed a committee to examine all proposals. But there is no record of any such report ever being presented.

In 1852, the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce supported a railway based on the plans of James Blackburn, Melbourne City Surveyor.

As a result, the prospectus of The Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Company, with J. B. Watson as Secretary, was issued on August 17, 1852.

Capital was \$200,000 in 2,000 shares of \$100 each.

Following a favourable Select Committee report, an Act of Incorporation was passed by the Government and assented to in January 1853.

The act provided for "the construction of a railway between Melbourne and Hobson's Bay and the building of wharves, jetties, etc. . . . the railway would start at the south side of Flinders Street and terminate on the north side of Hobson's Bay . . . the gauge was to be 5 ft. 3 in."

To finance the project, \$70,000 could be borrowed.

Directors were appointed in place of the provisional committee and the company placed orders for the pier and other works, totalling \$40,000 in other colonies and New Zealand.

However, the company soon ran out of money and increased capital to \$400,000 by the issue of more shares.

Embankments were built by Daniel Pritchard; Willoughby and Mason constructed the piers, and the railway bridge over the Yarra was let to Robertson, Martin, Smith & Co.

A quote for \$40,000 to build Flinders Street station was considered excessive and a less pretentious structure was later designed and built.

Williamstown opposition

There was some opposition by the promoters of a rival scheme, which aimed at raising Williamstown to Melbourne's chief port with a direct railway. The larger ships were already berthing at Williamstown, but the completion of Sandridge Pier changed the position.

Four steam engines, being built in England by Robertson Stephenson & Co. for delivery in May 1854, were delayed.

In the meantime, an improvised ballast engine was adapted, using a 4 h.p. pile driving engine fitted to a ballast wagon. This odd contraption was tested and the directors, seated in open wagons, had a demonstration ride on May 30, 1854.

A month later, with the line completed and still no sign of the engines from England, contractors Robertson, Martin, Smith & Co. were asked to



An early photograph of the Hobson's Bay railway at Sandridge Pier.

quickly build a small engine. It took 10 weeks to complete and was the first steam engine built in Australia. The 30 h.p. locomotive had a speed of 25 miles an hour.

There were frequent problems experienced in raising steam and, during a trial, the engine was derailed at Flinders Street.

The company officially opened the line on September 12, 1854—the inauguration of Australia's first steam railway. Public traffic commenced the following day.

"The Argus" reporter at the event recorded how the train "startled cattle" and "... instilled terror into the hearts of the blackfellow and dingoo".

A railway company had been incorporated in Sydney as far back as 1840 and construction was under way, but no line opened there until September 1855, (Sydney-Parramatta (actually Granville)) while Adelaide, with railway legislation dating back to 1850, lagged behind in actual achievement until April 1856.

In 1855, The Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Company amalgamated with The Melbourne Railway Company into The Melbourne and Hobson's Bay United Railway Company which built lines to St. Kilda, Richmond, Cremorne, North Brighton, Pic-Nic, Windsor, Hawthorn, and Brighton Beach, a total of 16½ miles.

In July 1878, the Victorian Railways bought the company for \$2,641,640, although separate management continued till 1881.

Today

Today, the 2½-mile line still serves Melbourne. Although but a shadow of itself in relation to its former role, some 2,500 people use it daily, and it remains a vital link between the shipping industry and Melbourne merchandisers.

AMONG OURSELVES

Welfare changes

Forty-eight year-old grandfather, Keith Taylor, is the new Welfare Officer, replacing 64-year-old Bill Bowe, who has held that post since 1954.

Quietly spoken, Keith has had 11 years experience in Workers Compensation work and has understudied and relieved Bill. He has the necessary dedication and background to carry on Bill Bowe's well known tradition of understanding and helpfulness.

Welfare Officer is one of those positions that requires true compassion, a willingness to listen to other people's problems and advise where practicable.

The Welfare Officer's list of duties is lengthy, involving visiting incapacitated staff in hospitals or their homes; advice to staff of their entitlements from worker's compensation, sick leave, pay, social services benefits, pension entitlements, retirement benefits and other staff privileges; to personally-notifying next of kin of

serious injury and fatalities that occur at work and, if necessary, arranging transport for family members to the hospital, and, in the event of death, assisting next of kin with funeral arrangements and other problems.

Much of this work was originally performed by supervisors and the unions until the V.R.'s welfare officer post was created. The unions fully endorse and co-operate with the Welfare Officer.

Keith's predecessor, Bill Bowe, was Assistant Ambulance Officer prior to 1954. Now he is investigating the potential for the V.R. to become involved in the rehabilitation and re-training of staff after injury, disablement or serious illness.

Matchmaker, matchmaker



The V.R.'s capacity as a matchmaker seems endless—another railway couple, Heather Waldron, V.R.I. Library Assistant, and Ron Carroll, Caster, V.R. Printing Works, have married. Photographed leaving the Croyd Methodist Church after their wedding on Saturday, August 5, their's was one of those romances where Ron went to the V.R.I. Library to take out a book and finished up taking out the Library Assistant.



Mr. Taylor (left) chats with Mr. Bowe.

49 years

Forty-nine years of railway service ended in a round of speeches, best wishes and a presentation on Vic Hanstead's last day with the V.R.—Friday, August 18.

For the last eight years, Vic had been the Signals and Communications supervisor at the Laurens Street depot.

Joining the V.R. in 1923, he started in the signal shop at Newport Workshops. In those days, the Signal and Telegraph section was a separate branch; it was incorporated later into the Way and Works Branch.

Vic has seen many improvements to the V.R.'s communications over the years. In the late 20's, the Harmonic system was introduced, and then followed gradual extension of the telephone network in favour of the Morse network.

The last Morse line, to Mildura, was discontinued in 1969 and replaced by a teleprinter service.

A telephone mechanic on the auto exchange until 1955, Vic then

Hanstead farewell



Five recently retired railway men were amongst the crowd that gathered to farewell Vic. Hanstead. From left to right are Messrs. R. Hendry, A. Webber, S. Bishop, K. Kimber, V. Hanstead and A. Higginbotham.



Keenly practising one Sunday morning for September's first-aid finals were members of the Mildura Novice Team, which was last represented in a State Final in 1961—when they took off the crown! Hoping to emulate 1961 this year are team members Bob Griffiths, John Clarkson, Harry Hill and Robyn Davy. Patient is Jack Reid and coach is Fred Fields.

Every Melbourne Goods Job



Claiming that he had done just about every Traffic Branch job in the Melbourne Yard since he joined the V.R. in 1925 was retiring Superintendent of Melbourne Yard, Mr. Frank Long, left, seen receiving a cheque donated by work friends. Frank started as a number taker, progressed through shunting and foreman grades and eventually made it to the top. He retired on August 23.



progressed in the supervisory field, and during the massive standard gauge project, was in charge of supplying telephone communication material to the work centres.

Never bowled . . . yet

A set of bowls for a man who has never bowled was the gift given by workmates to Dave Little, Electrical Branch Staff Clerk, on his retirement on August 18, after 49½ years with the V.R.

Dave started in 1922, and, during the depression was attached to the Echuca Works Foreman's office.

"Things were so tight there I had to change accommodation from one costing \$4.40 per week to one charging \$3 per week," he commented. "I couldn't afford it."

In those days, the river traffic was still active. A regular duty was to assist paying of the sleeper cutters when they brought their barges of sleepers to Echuca from places like Barmah.

In 1931, he exchanged jobs with a clerk in the Electrical Branch, to let the other fellow get to the dry Echuca climate for health reasons.

Dave then had a run of outs with promotion—each time he reached the senior position in the grade, it was amalgamated with the next division and he found himself amongst the middle order again. This was when class 7 was amalgamated with class 6, and later, class 6 with class 5. But despite these setbacks he made it to the top, and at retirement, was special class.

Dave is well known to early morning joggers around Elwood, for each morning, with the exception of the current winter, he enjoys an early morning dip before heading off for work. Past winters have not troubled him, but this year's swimming season has been cut by other commitments.

His enthusiasm for physical fitness dates back many years.

Before joining the V.R. in 1922, Dave used to go to the V.R.I. gymnasium to work out—a practice that he continued throughout his railway career, and one he will continue in retirement.

"I remember the day when J. J. Brown, now the A.R.U. Federal President, set the world skipping record in the V.R.I. gym," he told *News Letter*.

But what is Dave going to do with the set of bowls? "Master the game, of course," he replied, "I'm fitter than the rest."

Dave Little—"never bowled in my life"—collects his retirement presents a set of bowls.

RETIREMENTS

ACCOUNTANCY BRANCH

Dewar, T. E., Head Office, 1/9
 Fowler (Miss) M. B., Head Office, 21/8
 Plant, H. J., Head Office, 18/8
 Pollock, L. W., Jolimont, 18/8
 Smalley, A. A., Newport, 17/9

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Bannister, A. C., Ballarat North, 11/10
 Barfoot, J. T., Jolimont, 11/10
 Ciach, W., Newport, 12/10
 Comben, T. A., Newport, 18/10
 Corda, A., Jolimont, 2/10
 Davies, A., Newport, 6/10
 De Fazio, V., North Melbourne, 23/6
 Fleming, L., Newport, 29/10
 Guzzardi, G., Newport, 12/10
 Harford, S. M., Head Office, 20/8
 Kovacs, K., Newport, 11/10
 Kritsionis, I., Jolimont, 12/7
 Leonard, G. J., T. L. Depot, 23/10
 Licciardi, S., Shelter Shed, 30/10
 Minett, L. C., Newport, 25/10
 Plant, G. R., Ballarat North, 16/10
 Purcell, W. P., Mildura, 14/10
 Ricato, G., Jolimont, 26/10
 Ryan, T. S., Bendigo North, 31/10
 Simpson, P., Bendigo Loco. 28/6
 Smith, R. A. W., North Melbourne, 24/10

STORES BRANCH

Athanaileas, S., Laurens Street, 28/6
 Byrne, J., Perm. Way Depot, 30/6
 Panzera, A., Newport Workshops, 23/6

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Daly, J. H., Melbourne Yard, 17/7
 Davis, E., Melbourne Goods, 17/10
 Hayhoe, J. A., Branzholme, 21/7
 Kennelly, L. T., Head Office, 7/8
 Mahoney, C. K., North Geelong, 27/10
 Neilson, F. C., Ararat, 24/7
 Nicholson, A. J., Ballan, 16/10
 Overall, F. A., Melbourne Yard, 21/8
 Schefferle, A. V., Warrnambool, 1/9
 Wangemann, A. E., Horsham, 27/10
 Woolcock, R., Flinders Street, 2/9

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Bergin, F., Wodonga, 5/10
 Buckler, A. J., Flinders Street, 14/7
 Cornelius, L. C., Wangaratta Works, 29/10
 Davidson, T. W., Spencer St., Works, 11/8
 Delancy, D. J., Wangaratta S & C, 12/7
 Galloway, R. T., Bendigo Works, 17/10
 Hart, A. G., Woolamai, 12/7
 Havard, I. J., Geelong S & C, 22/10
 Johnson, E. R., Eltham, 19/7
 McNamara, W. J., Meringur, 30/6
 Phefley, R. R., Wodonga, 10/10
 Sherriff, J. G., Head Office, 18/10
 Weller, H., Laurens St., 1/10
 Wright, J. M., Bendigo, 14/7

NEWS LETTER REGRETS TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING DEATHS

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH
 Darcy, L. F., South Dynon, 2/8
 Vasilopoulos, A., Jolimont, 9/8

TRAFFIC BRANCH
 Jacka, R. F., Deniliquin, 13/8
 Knowles, E. L., Merbein, 16/8
 Tebbens, K. J., Deniliquin, 13/8
 Thomson, R., Melbourne Goods, 9/8
 Ward, S. J., Metro. Supt's Office, 14/8

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH
 Hutchinson, A. C., Nyora, 22/7
 Weber, N., Flinders Street, 30/7

Institute INews

TRADING COMPANY TO SERVE MEMBERS

In what would be one of the most important developments in the Institute's history, Council has joined with the Australian Postal Institute to create a new buying service for members. A company—V. P. I. Trading Pty. Ltd.—has been established and financed by the two Institutes, and initially will serve about 40,000 members and their families. A company showroom, situated at 664 Bourke Street, Melbourne, (2nd Floor) near Spencer Street Station, displays a wide range of goods for inspection. Trading hours are 9 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. Monday to Thursday, and 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday. Country members may order by phone or letter.

A daily delivery service, by rail, is available to all country areas.

Harry Johnson, the project manager, explained that this enterprise was started so that quality products could be obtained from manufacturers, wholesalers, and importers, for sale to members at the lowest possible price. Every area of day to day requirements will be covered from nursery products, manchester, sporting and electrical goods, motor car tyres and batteries,



A popular corner of the store is the shoe department. Holding a gym boot is V.R.I. General President Mr. R. M. Wright, and the man with the sand shoe is A.P.I. Senior Vice President and Chairman of Directors of V.P.I. Trading Pty. Ltd., Mr. R. Collins.

footwear, to knitwear, watches, sewing machines, etc. and the buying power of 40,000 members will be reflected in the prices on offer to you, Institute members.

Harry said that with the addition of the V. R. I. members, V. P. I.'s annual turnover should pass \$1 million.

A 32-page catalogue is now available.

Within the organisation, certain staff will deal specifically with V.R.I. members and their problems. If unable to visit personally, then phone railways auto. 1971 or 2231, or postal 67-5201, and ask for Helen McGregor who will look after your needs. Remember, a member's family is most welcome to make use of the facilities available; if your wife is going to town to do some shopping tell her to pop into the store and have a look around. Should you prefer,



Former V.R.I. Sports Secretary, Oss Keating (right) checks the range of golf clubs on display at V.P.I. Trading's showroom. With him is Ian Whitt, Assistant Manager and buyer for the scheme.

write to V.P.I. Trading Pty. Ltd.,
Box 2129T, Melbourne, 3001.

Council feels that this service will prove of immense value to the Institute generally and to Institute railway men in particular. Your only requirement to take advantage of this service is to produce your current membership card.

Ask yourself the question—can you afford not to be an Institute member?

All you can do is save money.



Telephone inquiries are welcome.

DINNER DANCE

As Council's desire to look after the interests of Institute members in particular and railway folk in general, they have decided, whether you are a punter or not, to put you on to a real winner during the Melbourne Cup racing carnival.

A Derby Eve Dinner Dance has been arranged at the Chevron Hotel, St. Kilda Road, Melbourne, on Friday, November 3, starting at 6.30 p.m. The all-inclusive charge of \$17 per double covers pre-dinner savouries and sherries, an excellent dinner, entertainment and all refreshments.

Accommodation is limited and it will pay to book early. Although this function is available to all members of the staff and their friends, preferential bookings will be given to members of the Institute.

Don't forget the date, location and the function, because this is one event in which there are no losers—everybody wins! So, give us an entry, line up at the barrier and have the night of your life.

INSTITUTE SPORT

by Dave Catchpool

Indoor bias bowls

"This could be the start of something big" is the name of a popular song, but it was also one of the comments made at the inaugural Country Indoor Bias Bowls Tournament staged recently at the Glenroy Bowling Club.

As this was the first time that the Institute had held an Indoor Bias Bowls Tournament there were a few who wondered just how it would be received, but the excellent facilities provided for us by Glenroy Bowling Club soon dispelled any fears and a perfect day of social bowling ensued.

During the morning the General President of the Institute, Mr. R. M. Wright, watched play, and at the official luncheon, Councillor Des O'Donnell welcomed teams from Ballarat, Colac, Hamilton, Shepparton Serviceton and Sunshine.

After some very close finishes, Colac No. 2 team, with four wins, ran out winners, closely followed by Ballarat No. 3 with three wins and a tie.

Making the presentation of trophies, Mr. Ron Baggot, Acting General Secretary, congratulated the winners and thanked players.

Table tennis

To those who watched the recent China v. Australia Mixed Doubles Tournament on TV, did the standard of umpiring impress you? Those clear, precise calls were from none other than our own V.R.I. and State Umpire, Angelo Tabone, an Accountancy Branch clerk. So now, I suppose, we will have to add to his list of titles, International Umpire. Well done, Angelo.

Soccer

There is no truth to the rumour that the V.R.I. Soccer Club will take over the position of suspended Croatia Club in the State League, but we hope to enter two teams in the Industrial League next year. So, if you have ever played, or even thought about playing soccer, please get in touch with the Sports Secretary, V.R.I., Flinders Street station, for more information.

Cricket

The annual V.R.I. v. A.P.I. cricket match will again be held at the St. Kilda Cricket Ground, (Junction Oval) on Monday, December 4. Play will be from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with lunch from 1 till 2 p.m. Applications are invited from players (who must be members of the Institute) wishing to represent the V.R.I. Show grade and location, as well as present team playing with, and indicate whether batsman or bowler. Applications must reach the Sports Secretary, V.R.I., Flinders Street station, by November 3.

Selected players will have to make their own leave arrangements.

Golf

The Eastern Gippsland Golf Tournament was conducted during August at the picturesque Newry Golf Course, and again attracted a good attendance with 87 males and 3 females competing for 45 prizes offered by the organising committee.

After a play off, the V.R.I. Championship was won by B. Gordon, fireman, Traralgon, from B. Williams, driver, Traralgon.

Bob Richards, V.R.I. Councillor, presented the prizes.

Bendigo V.R.I. golf tournament

After last year's successful tournament the committee of the Bendigo Golf Club have decided to run their annual event on Sunday, October 29, at the Castlemaine Golf Course. Hitting off time is 11.45 a.m.

Fifteen prizes are available for various events, both for males and females, and the \$5 entry fee includes morning tea and a three course evening meal.

Entries close with J. Kelly, c/o Bendigo Stationmaster, on October 24.

Golf reminders

The following events are listed for the information of all V.R.I. golfers:

Sunday October 1 :
North-eastern V.R.I. golf tournament, Golden Vale Golf Course, Benalla. Hit off time 11.30 a.m.

Monday-Thursday October 2-5:
Country Golf Week, Rossdale Golf Course, Aspen-dale.

Sunday October 15:
Ararat V.R.I. golf tournament, Chalambar Golf Club, Ararat. Hit off time 11.00 a.m.

Sunday October 29:
Bendigo V.R.I. golf tournament, Castlemaine Golf Club. Hit off time 11.45 a.m.

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

NEWS LETTER

OCTOBER



1972

10 CENTS



A HUNT FOR HOPE

In the past, many railway men or women who suffered major work restrictions arising from injury or illness were faced with retirement. Some found this abrupt career halt damaging when coupled to the initial realization of the impact of their restriction.

Largely due to the efforts of rehabilitation services and the understanding of Bill Bowe as Welfare Officer, this situation changed.

Now, most staff with restrictions are given an opportunity to return to work and to retain personal dignity and ambition. In fact, some even get wider career horizons than before.

Not only does the Department gain by retaining the experience of these people, but they no longer have to overcome the problem of feeling "discarded." Once placed in employment, the majority rise to the challenge to continue as

efficient members of the railway team.

With this background, Bill Bowe, Welfare Officer of 18 years most successful standing, is researching the needs and potential for the V.R. to expand its rehabilitation activities. It applies to all disabling circumstances, whether temporary or permanent.

Staff placement is a major problem. At present some are idle because suitable positions are not readily available; so two important matters being looked at are retraining and relocation between Branches.

This investigation is motivated by a desire to see that persons with potential are not denied an employment future just because they have suffered a restricting injury or illness. It is up to all of us to see that this search is successful.

G. F. BROWN

MANSFIELD "MISQUOTED" TOO

Following hard on the heels of the Mervin Belli incident (September *News Letter* p. 130) comes the story of the Mansfield misquote.

June's Chairman's Comments (p. 82) quoted *The Herald's* report of Mansfield Shire officials saying that closure of the line would have little effect, and, shortly after the release of that *News Letter*, a Mansfield councillor wrote to *News Letter* asking the source of the quote.

The required information was relayed back to Council—their reply?

"... The article... is a follow up on another classic example of a daily newspaper placing their own interpretation on remarks made by a person in public office.

"In a telephone conversation with a *Herald* representative, I was asked what was the opinion of the Council on the closing of the railway line, as recommended in the Bland report. I replied that Council had not yet made any decision.

"I was then asked my personal opinion, and I replied 'that my personal opinion will not make much difference to the opinion of Council, as to whether the line is closed or not'.

"As can be readily seen, the omission of several words completely alters the meaning of what I said.

"The Mansfield Shire Council has since resolved that they would not wish to see the line closed..."

Although the article appeared in *The Herald* of March 30, no correction had appeared in *The Herald* (or apparently been requested, judging by remarks) by the end of May, so *News Letter* took the reported statement as accurate.

EXHAUST-FREE DIESELS ON WAY

Total elimination of visible smoke from diesel locomotives is planned by the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors and smoke-free diesels are expected to be available in the U.S. next year.

GM recently announced that it had made substantial progress in this field following the development of exhaust gas measuring and sampling techniques, and the design and testing of new engine components to reduce emissions.

—*Railway Transportation*

MORE 'NO SMOKING' SPACE FOR SYDNEY

New South Wales Railways have announced that smoking accommodation on their suburban trains will be reduced from a 75-25 ratio in favour of smoking accommodation to an equal apportionment between smoking and no smoking areas.

The move follows three months of

testing the new ratio in the new double deck trains.

"The reaction was overwhelmingly in favour of extending the new scheme," N.S.W.R. Commissioner Mr. Neil McCusker told *Railway Transportation*.

• V.R. metropolitan trains have a two-thirds/one-third ratio in favour of no smoking areas.

WHAT PRICE FREEWAYS?

For every mile of inner-city freeway being built in Australia's capitals, authorities could substitute five miles of double railway track... or 95 miles of double tram track... and so on.

This information is contained in a confidential internal report on Government transport priorities, says *Financial Review*.

The report suggests that present planning, programming and priorities of land transport is strongly influenced by the pattern of existing financial structure and methods of financing.

These stimulate highway construction and progressively inhibit public transport development, the article states.

The report argues that very heavy emphasis on freeways no doubt encourages the growth of the car industry, which, under the present system, generates funds at a greater rate for more highway building.

This attracts people away from public transport systems and the spiral continues.

Included with the article was this cost comparison:

Item	Approx. unit cost
Freeway systems	\$16-30 million a mile
Railway track, complete	\$3.5 million a mile
Tram track complete	\$170,000 a mile
Modern suburban train	\$700,000
Modern tram	\$65,000
Modern bus	\$25,000

RAILWAY LAND AND AIR SPACE BIG REVENUE EARNER FOR N.S.W.R.

A \$32.1 million building program for land and air space controlled by N.S.W.R. has been announced for eight sites in Sydney's metropolitan area.

The developments include:

- Kogarah — medical centre, offices, shops and restaurant over the rail lines;

- North Sydney—a 22-storey office development over the station;
- Chatswood—two multi-storey office blocks and shops at the station;
- Liverpool—two multi-storey office blocks, parking station, shops and bus/taxi interchange at station;
- Redfern—a head office for Thomas Nationwide Transport Limited;
- Enfield—a warehouse for Petersville group;
- Chullora—stage 1 of warehouse complex covering 285,000 sq. ft.; and
- Yennora—stage 2 of wool village complex.

Revenue from leasing was \$3.5 million last year and is expected to pass \$4.3 million this financial year.

ALICE SPRINGS LINE FUNDS

Preliminary funds of \$3.4 million were allotted in the recent Commonwealth Budget to start work on the proposed \$54 million standard gauge line from Tarcoola to Alice Springs.

When completed, the line will replace the present flood-prone 3ft. 6 in. gauge line. Journey times between Port Pirie and Alice Springs should be cut by about 12 hours making the rail journey to the "Centre" even more popular.

SOVIET EXPERTISE FOR CALCUTTA UNDERGROUND

Eight Russian railway experts are in India advising local railway officials on construction methods for the planned Calcutta underground.

The Indian Government has considered the project for more than 20 years, and now, with Russian expertise, hope to get the scheme underway soon.

BUMPY RIDE

A car driver told Stawell police after he had been given a breath test in which he registered .160 that he had not had a drink before, or after, driving his car along the railway line at Great Western

The driver later told police that he had got engaged.

Stawell Magistrate's Court fined the driver \$100 and disqualified him from driving for two years. It was the driver's second conviction on a .05 charge.

TULIP TIME



Gum trees are not the usual backdrop to tulip fields, but they are at Silvan where the Tesselaar family grow a million blooms a year.

Up to 40,000 tulips a week, from Melbourne's Dandenong Ranges, were railed from Lilydale to interstate and Victorian country florists and wholesalers during the recent four-week season.

An average of 30-40 boxes, each containing 20-30 dozen blooms, were sent on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for the main markets in Adelaide and Sydney.

Cultivated by the Tesselaar family at Silvan, the tulips were cut in the morning, bunched and boxed, ready to leave Lilydale by the 3.29 p.m. train.

At Spencer Street, the blooms for Adelaide were transferred to "The Overland" and those for Sydney to "Spirit of Progress" to reach their destinations early the following morning.

Sold within 24 hours of picking, up to 600 miles away, they were in the same condition they left the field.

The Tesselaars have about six acres of tulips with about one million blooms.

Mr. C. Tesselaar, a Dutchman from Amsterdam, came to Australia 33 years ago, specially to grow tulips and hyacinths.

"I worked in tulip gardens in Holland and wondered why bulbs were being exported to Australia. I decided to come and find out, Mr. Tesselaar said.

"But just as I began to cultivate tulips, World War II started and vegetables had to take over."

Today, the farm is a real family affair with three sons and a daughter joining forces. There is also some casual help. Although born in

Australia, the family frequently work the field in national Dutch dress.

Mr Tesselaar grows about 10 species of tulip with colourings of yellow, mauve, red, pink, orange and even black.

Once cut, tulips will generally not wither under 10 days, if kept in water.

Asked the difference between Australian-grown and Dutch tulips, Mr. Tesselaar said that the local tulip had a shorter stem and our warmer climate induced virus.

To overcome this, the soil is fumigated, and a 4-year rotation system rigidly followed.

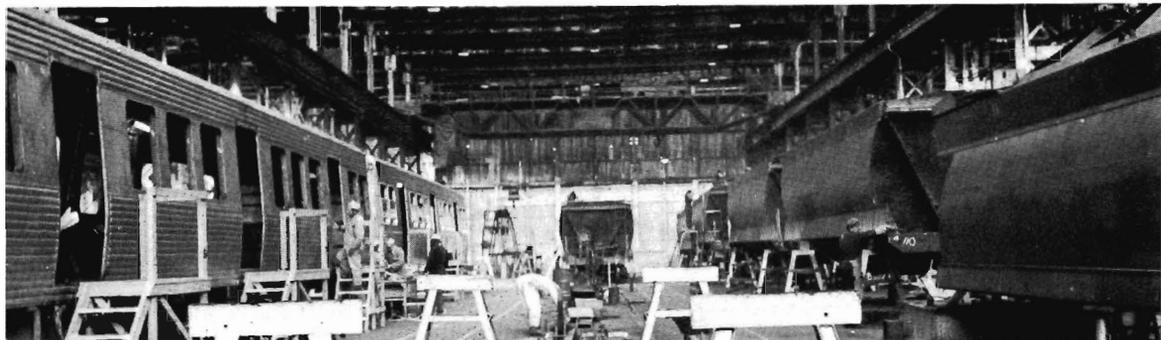
FRONT COVER

Goods by the train load.

Top picture shows tons of fodder being sped to East Gippsland destinations to relieve the severe drought. Each day for months, a complete train of fodder was railed into the area. Spring rains eased the situation temporarily, but by mid-summer, the drought could be even worse.

Lower picture shows a train load of new cars destined for Sydney. Most days, hundreds of new cars are railed from the major manufacturers' factories to interstate destinations.

A WAGON A DAY IS NEWPORT'S RECORD



Assembly lines at Newport Workshops. On the left, new stainless steel trailer carriages for metropolitan trains, on the right, six GJF hopper wagons in varying stages of completion.

Every working day for the last eight months, one 55-ton capacity hopper wagon has rolled off the assembly line at Newport Workshops.



A job well done. The finished article ready for traffic, one of 350 bogie hopper wagons of which Newport built 150.

Careful planning resulted in the construction program of 150 new GJF hopper wagons being completed in that time.

A Wagon Construction Committee planned the stages necessary to achieve the target of one wagon a day.

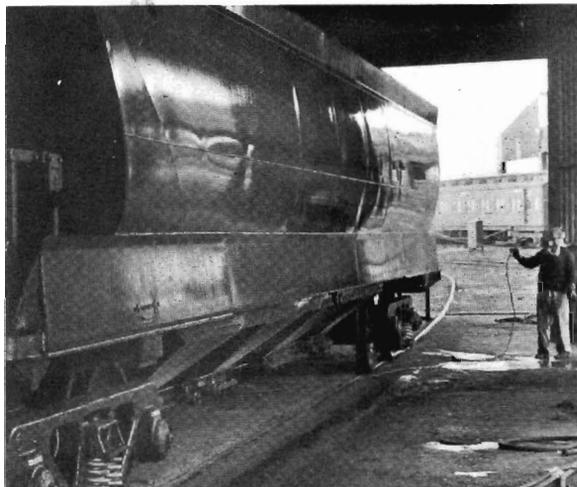
Jigs and patterns were prepared and then the raw materials were cut, stamped and shaped into the various component parts.

Each day a new keel was laid, and each day the construction line in the boiler shop brought a wagon closer to completion.

Seven days later, a completed wagon was moved to the paint shop, and, three days after that, a sparkling new wagon was available for traffic.



All the bits and pieces needed to finish a wagon.



After coming off the assembly line, all wagons are sprayed with a de-oxidine to clean the metal ready for painting and inhibit rust.

Work was divided into three batches of 50. Manpower was increased for the task. Preparatory planning took about eight weeks.

With the momentum built up from the GJF program, Newport is now tackling the task of producing 50 FQX wagons for container traffic also at the rate of one a day.



In the paint shop, wagons go through the following stages over the three days (from right): de-oxidize, primer, undercoat, finishing coat.



Coiled mild steel is unrolled and cut into 45 ft. lengths to form wagon sides.

NORTH-EAST HISTORY SOUGHT

The history of the north-eastern line (Melbourne-Wodonga-Albury) is being sought by the Australian Railway Historical Society, Victorian Division, for a book to commemorate the November 1973 centenary of the line.

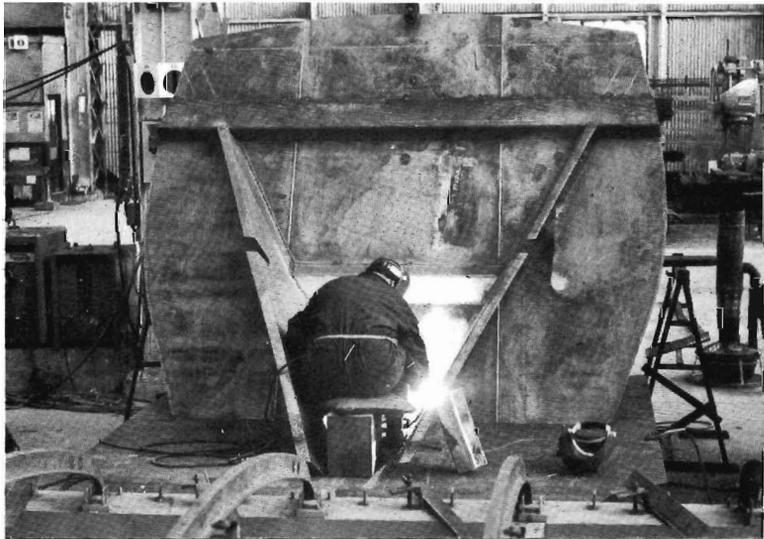
Particularly sought after are photos of the line during any period to help illustrate the proposed publication. All material will be returned after use and acknowledged.

Material should be sent to the A.R.H.S., Vic. Divn., Box 5177AA, G.P.O. Melbourne, 3001.

SUGGESTIONS ADOPTED

During August, the following suggestions were adopted and awards granted:

- Reminder cards be sent to holders of expiring yearly and half-yearly tickets. \$5
 - Perforations on school term tickets be improved. \$5
 - To prevent confusion, "Footscray Road" be incorporated into the address for goods delivered by road to South Dynon Loco. \$3
- Since the scheme began 50 years ago, 10,328 suggestions have been adopted and a total of \$82,895 awarded.



End assemblies are prepared.

"V.R. TO 62" WANTED

Well-known Australian artist, Harold Freedman, is looking for a copy of *V.R. to 62*, for background work to his latest commission—a series of in-depth, graphic paintings of V.R. history.

Harold Freedman's works include the mural in the War Museum in Canberra and the "history of flying" paintings at Tullamarine.

Offers should be directed through the *News Letter* Editor, extension 1181.

MILEPOST

1926

Barnes to Balranald (N.S.W.) line opened for traffic, March 26.

"Geelong Flier", Victoria's first officially named train began running, May 3. (Name later changed to "The Flier".)

Eltham-Hurstbridge electrification August 2; Williamstown Racecourse-Altona, October 2.

Electric street railway extended from Black Rock to Beaumaris, September 1.

SUGGESTIONS BRING IN BIG REWARDS

In the half century that the V.R.'s suggestion scheme has been in operation, nearly \$83,000 has been awarded. During July, two large awards were made for suggestions that will save the Department substantial amounts in years to come.

Although the scheme is normally confidential, the two concerned have agreed to publication of their names and details of their suggestions.

Larger of the two awards was \$1,500 to Electrical Testing Depot Foreman, Evan Beach, who suggested that diodes could replace some contactors and resistors on circuit breaker panels in sub-stations.

Engineers instantly spotted potential in the suggestion—resistors were responsible for the greatest number of failures in the equipment and eight were to be replaced by the diodes—so a prototype panel was built and performed well.

The suggestion was subsequently adopted and Mr. Beach rewarded for his initiative.

Evan had been considering the idea for some three to four years, and recent improvements in diodes reinforced his feeling that there could be something in it. But time and again he held his idea back because he felt there was probably little saving in it.

He had only made one other suggestion through the scheme before.

Lost tickets

Traffic Branch Clerk Alfred Smith's reward for pointing out to the Department the futility of ad-

vertising lost tickets (as distinct from tickets stolen from stations) was an award of \$420.



Mr. Smith

collating the information, checking it, getting it printed in *Weekly Notice*, and then trying to apprehend anyone illegally using the tickets," he told *News Letter*.

"But printing lists of tickets stolen from stations is a different matter. There is a far greater chance of recovering them and apprehending a culprit."

So, for anyone who has been harbouring a suggestion to improve the railways, financial rewards can be gained if the suggestion is adopted.

All suggestions should be forwarded to the Public Relations and Betterment Board, Room 98, Head Office, who have them investigated confidentially.



Evan Beach points to the modified control panels. Blank area shows where contractors have been replaced by diodes (visible at back of panel, tap shaped).

TROUBLE SHOOTER HANDLES COMPLAINTS



Trouble shooter Bob Wilson mans his telephone to handle another complaint.

To handle complaints by telephone from the public at a central point, a *trouble shooter* has been appointed to the Department's Public Relations Section.

He is Robert Wilson, a railwayman since 1966, who took up the post on August 30—to co-incide with publication of a *chit chat* advertisement that day in Melbourne's five daily papers, "Caught with our panto-graphs down", which told the public why the metropolitan services were being upset through a shortage of drivers and guards. The advertisement carried a suggestion that employers who wanted to check "train late" excuses, phone the *trouble shooter*.

Prompt investigation of customers' problems and personal attention win considerable goodwill. Before the *trouble shooter's* appointment, phone calls often went direct or were referred to various branches. Taking phone calls took up valuable time of officers, for unhappy people do like a sympathetic listener. On some occasions, the initial call went to the wrong section, and transfers tend to irk.

By personally taking all possible calls, the *trouble shooter* can save time of other officers, even if they still have to follow up the cause of complaints. However, many can be answered immediately. The personal touch is regarded as most important, and even answers to letters are by phone when practicable, which allows discussion. Most callers and writers appreciate that the Department is prepared to listen to them and act promptly on their behalf. Every week, dozens of friends are being won this way; even if we can't do anything, at least our problem is understood.

DOWN, BUT NOT OUT

No more than half the calls relate to train running, but each day Traffic prepares a list of irregular running which might result in phone inquiries for the start of the day's work. Other calls cover such matters as vandalism, parking, noise, staff, level crossings, lost property, and potential hazards.

Some calls are helpful to the Department; others can result in satisfactory action being taken—like the case of the noise from a substation. Investigations by the Branch concerned revealed it came from cooling fans; it was substantially reduced by reversing the fans' cycle, so that the one nearest the house only operated at the highest temperatures.

TRAVEL BARGAINS

People who live 80 miles or more from Melbourne have been ignoring a travel bargain—monthly and yearly tickets.

If they like city football and/or races, then their savings in the course of a normal year's travel could be astronomical.

For example (all fares quoted are economy, but savings are just as substantial with first-class):

Bendigo—Melbourne, ordinary return \$7.20, monthly \$23.30, yearly \$227.10; Wangaratta—Melbourne, ordinary return \$10.50, monthly \$27.50, yearly \$268.30; Hamilton, ordinary return \$13.40, monthly \$29.90, yearly \$291.30; Portland, ordinary return \$16.70, monthly \$33.50, yearly \$326.80.

Monthly tickets are ideal for those lucky enough to get football finals tickets, and a yearly—used fortnightly makes it worthwhile—is ideal for racegoers, or football fans who follow some other city sport during the summer.

As with all railway periodical tickets, use is unlimited during the the period marked and between the stations named.

Convenient day-return services are run from many country towns to Melbourne on Saturdays.

DIRECT KALGOORLIE—GERALDTON RAILWAY?

The Western Australian Government is preparing a proposal for the Commonwealth Government to help a number of small mining ventures in isolated parts of the State, reports the *Financial Review*.

A new standard gauge railway running north from Kalgoorlie and possibly turning west and continuing to Geraldton is considered the most likely aid to be given.

Such a railway—estimated at \$50



News Letter, March 1972 (p. 36) claimed victory was not far off in the battle with Mallee sands—but Nature had other thoughts. The exceedingly dry year experienced by much of Victoria has taken its toll at Waitchie, 233 miles north-west of Melbourne. There, some farmers hesitated just a little too long before planting, and the westerlies gained the upper hand and piled sand over the line (above) in some of the worst drifts experienced for many years—one round to Nature. Nearby, the results are as planned (below)—a round to the V.R. Special plans have been prepared to halt the sand's advance in trouble spots until the weather breaks. (Wonder what Nature's got planned?)



million—could help establish a number of mining projects at present considered doubtful.

Schemes mentioned in the article are nickel mining and processing at Agnew, uranium at Yeelirrie, iron ore in the Weld Ranges and a number of other ventures before reaching Geraldton, where the possibility of establishing a nickel refinery is mooted.

PENFRIEND WANTED

Nine-year-old Richard Brooks of Burton-on-Trent, England, has written to the V.R. in the hope that an 8–10-year-old son of a Victorian railwayman would like to become a pen pal.

Richard's address is 9 Dalebrook Road, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire, England, and his hobbies are football, fishing, reading and stamp-collecting. His father works on British Rail.

CORRECTION

August *News Letter*, p. 118, inadvertently showed Mr. Robert McAlpine as Chairman of the Town and Country Planning Association. He is Chairman of the Town and Country Planning Association's City Planning Committee.

18th V.R. BALL

Friday, August 31, is the date for the 1973 Victorian Railways Staff Ball. The Committee is pleased to announce that the venue will be the rebuilt Palais Ballroom, St. Kilda.

Although the date is later than usual, the Committee feels that the opportunity to return to the larger Palais—venue of many successful Balls until 1968—is worthwhile.

VIEWS OF NEWS



NINETY YEARS OF SHOW SPECIALS. Since 1882, trains have serviced the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds (then the Melbourne National Agricultural Show Grounds). In 1881 the grounds moved from a St.Kilda Road site to their present venue, mainly because of the availability of the train service. The handy rail service - the barrier gates actually empty into the show area - are very popular and were patronised by more than 217,000 people during the recent Show. On the Show Day holiday, more than 100 return trips were run between the city and the Showgrounds Platform, 3½ miles away.



BIG HAUL FOR BIG LOAD. More than 1,300 miles of rail travel was in store for this huge absorber vessel bound for the Gidgealpa oil and gas field in outback South Australia. The 140-ton vessel was travelling from Melbourne to Telford, S.A., via Albury, Parkes, Broken Hill, Peterborough and Port Augusta to avoid transfers - this route is standard gauge all the way. The vessel was photographed at Violet Town on September 4.



▲ **HUMPS HUMPED.** Getting their first look at Melbourne from the top of the hump in the Melbourne Goods Yard, this consignment of 42 camels bound for American zoos became the first humped beasts to be humped. Last consignment of camels handled in Melbourne was in December 1970; they too came from near Oodnadatta destined for zoos. Wagons were from the camel's home state, S.A.

◀ **NEW BREAKWATER VIADUCT.** One of the biggest remaining main line timber viaducts in the State - Breakwater Viaduct, 3¼ miles out of Geelong - is being replaced by a concrete and steel structure. This crossing, over the flood-prone Barwon River, has been a maintenance problem for years; the new structure should substantially reduce upkeep costs.



Realism was excellent in the ski accident scene except perhaps for the weather—one team stripped to their singlets to improvise bandages, etc. This team, however—Bendigo Loco—runner-up in the Novice, swiftly treated patient Ted Barkmeyer's complaints to the satisfaction of Adjudicator Dr. Jim Cater and Timekeeper John Cole. Team members, left to right, are Frank Roberts, Kevin Murley, Max Goldsmith and Russell Arnold.

Electrical Engineers continued their dominance of recent first aid finals by taking out their third Challenge Shield in four years giving them the right to again represent the V.R. in the teams event at the Australian Railways Championships held in Sydney this month.

Mr. E. M. Sternberg, First Aid Attendant at Ballarat North Workshops, will represent the V.R. in the individual events.

Shield winners

Electrical Engineers No. 1 won the Challenge Shield by 3½ points from Ballarat Workshops No. 3. The 1970 winner and 1971 runner-up, Ballarat Traffic No. 1, filled third place this year.

The senior individual championship was won by Mr. E. M. Sternberg from Mr. H. van Ginkel, runner-up for the last two years.

Geelong Loco. No. 1, who finished last in the Novice Teams event last year, pulled off the form reversal of the competition by bolting in from the Bendigo Loco team, while the Individual was won by Mr. F. R. Harris, a Ballarat North Workshops Fitter and Turner.

Mildura, making their first city competition appearance since 1961, filled fifth place in the novice event.

Sets

The Ambulance Office again devised a varied set of scenarios for the competition. Scenes included a football club room accident, a roadside accident following an advertising hoarding being blown down in a strong wind, a doctor who collapsed in his surgery while treating an injured person, a skier who had hurtled into rough country, and an accident in a plant nursery involving



Winner of the senior individual event, Max Sternberg displays his talents to Dr. J. Peter Bush. Kevin Brophy is the patient being treated and 'Doc' Reynolds plays the sick doctor.

two people and a runaway dump truck.

The painted backdrops added a touch of realism and the patients played their roles well.

Stresses

Under competition stress, the usual minor mistakes were made.

In the football club room incident, most competitors failed to notice the stretcher standing against the wall and they improvised instead.

In the ski accident scenario, most improvised splints from trees branches after discarding the victims skis—which make ideal splints.

And in the transport event, many forgot that the accident was supposed to have happened during wet weather and made no attempt to shield the victim from the rain.

Although minor, and not carrying many penalty points, these over-



Collecting the Challenge Shield has become a regular pastime for members of Electrical Engineers No. 1 team. From left are Peter Nanscawen, Jock Hayhoe, Ron Wain leader, Vaughan Hayes, Ambulance Officer Les Wignall and Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. G. F. Brown, who presented the various awards at the dinner after the tension was off.

sights show the intense pressure that the competitors find themselves under.

Another little sideline was in the nursery scene with the runaway dump truck. Nearly all competitors referred to the fuel odour as a petrol leak although it was obvious the little truck had the distinctive beat and odour of a diesel.

RESULTS

SENIOR TEAMS

- 1 Electrical Engineers No. 1
- 2 Ballarat North Workshops No. 3
- 3 Ballarat Traffic No. 1
- 4 South Dynon Loco. No. 3
- 5 Head Office Works No. 1

NOVICE TEAMS

- 1 Geelong Loco. No. 1
- 2 Bendigo Loco.
- 3 Ararat
- 4 Bendigo North Workshops No. 4
- 5 Mildura
- 6 Spotswood P.W.M.D. No. 1
- 7 South Dynon Loco. No. 1

SENIOR INDIVIDUALS

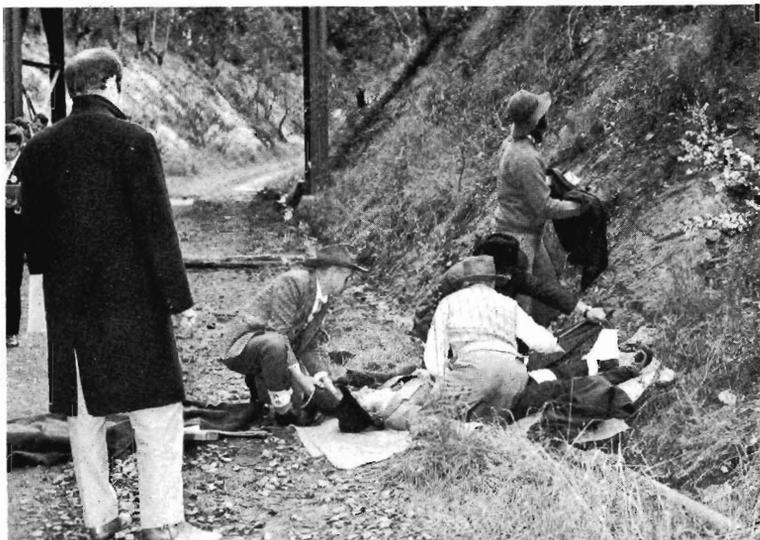
- 1 E. M. Sternberg, First Aid Attdt., Ballarat North Workshops
- 2 H. van Ginkel, Engineer, East Melbourne
- 3 R. R. Wain, Welder, Electrical Depot Workshops
- 4 F. R. Harris, Fitter & Turner, Ballarat North Workshops
- 5 R. C. Lunnon, Maintenance Fitter, Ballarat North Workshops
- 6 A. Phillips, Fitter, Ballarat North Workshops
- 7 A. A. Farrugia, Boilermaker Spotswood P.W.M.D.

NOVICE INDIVIDUALS

- 1 F. R. Harris, Fitter & Turner, Ballarat North Workshops
- 2 P. J. Nanscawen, Test Electrician, Electrical Depot Workshops
- 3 G. L. Nicholson, Auto. Sub. Station Electrician, Batman Avenue
- 4 H. E. M. Foley, Clerk, Room 143 Head Office
- 5 A. C. Clough, Spring maker, Bendigo North Workshops
- 6 R. W. Wood, Driver, Geelong
- 7 R. J. Bowman, Sub-Foreman Spotswood Workshops



Each team is given 60 seconds to assess the scene and read the background notes supplied. Looking anything but confident are Head Office Works members Max Foley, Henry Van Ginkel, leader, Bob Harvey and Jack Salvana.



The transport event at this year's competitions was made a little more realistic by a man at the top of the cutting rolling large stones on to the scene below. Coping with this hazard, as well as treating their patient, were members of Bendigo North Workshops team (from right), Ian Wearne (doing the toreador bit with the rolling stones), Michael Ervin, Bob Holmes (leader) and Ted Trewartha. Patient was Ron Poulter. Adjudicator (back to camera) was Dr. Ralph Howard and Timekeeper was Horrie Patterson.



The winning team in action. Watched by Timekeeper Ken Cribben, Electrical Engineers No. 1 treats patients Tim Nolan and Brian Bedgood in a football club room accident. In the background is the stretcher that most teams overlooked—however, there was another problem, the stretcher was unserviceable.



And this was their reason for looking that way. Victims of the runaway nursery dump truck are Alan Healy (under the bags) and Jack McAdam (on the truck). Adjudicator (centre) is Mr. Hugh Johnston and timekeeper is Tom Chafer, last year's senior individual winner.

Spencer Street

" . . . I would like to express my appreciation to the staff at Spencer Street who were so kind in returning a camera I mislaid on *Intercapital Daylight* . . .

—Mr. G. O'Sullivan, *Braybrook*, writing to the Secretary.

Girl-in-Green and others

" . . . Would you please convey to all concerned my sincere thanks for their help to me when travelling to Nhill and return on *The Overland*.

"Thanks to the genial Stationmaster and his staff at Spencer Street, the staff who arranged accommodation on *The Overland*, railway officials who collected my luggage and, last but not least, the pleasant lass (assistant to the Man-in-Grey) (*Girl in-Green*, *Effie Foster—Ed.*) who looked so charming in her green uniform and took me by wheel chair to where my taxi was waiting . . ."

—Miss M. McBean, *Kilsyth*, writing to the Secretary.

School excursions

" . . . During August, three excursions were run for children of this area on branch lines radiating from Hamilton.

"As organiser, I would like to thank all concerned, both at Head Office and in Hamilton, for their assistance.

"In particular I draw attention to the crews allotted to these runs for their tremendous co-operation, especially Guard Steff, whose patience and unflinching assistance with the young children we were conveying cannot be too highly praised.

"Stationmaster Coleraine must also be mentioned for the hasty wet-day arrangements he obligingly provided for us, as must the Hamilton staff for their tolerance with the demands of carrying some 1,300 children and nearly 70 teachers . . ."

—Mr B. Sykes, *Education Departments Audio-Visual Centre, Hamilton*, writing to the Secretary.

The Overland

" . . . I must write to express my appreciation of the quality of accommodation and service offered on my trip from Adelaide to Melbourne on August 26.

"At all times the Conductor on my particular car (*Conductor Luigi Lesnik—Ed.*) was attentive, courteous and extremely pleasant and helpful although the car was filled to capacity. Each passenger was treated with equal consideration although the Conductor was so busy.

"Try as I might, the only criticism I could make of my journey was that it didn't last long enough!"

—Miss C. Frost, *Croydon*, writing to the Commissioners.

AMONG OURSELVES

Girl-in-Green



Miss Effie Foster, Spencer Street's Girl-in-Green.

Spencer Street station now boasts a Girl-in-Green to complement the Man-in-Grey in giving help to passengers.

Since her start on August 14, blonde 21-year-old Effie Foster meets long distance and interstate trains to assist elderly passengers, mothers with children and young people and children travelling alone.

As a service to elderly, infirm or physically handicapped passengers arriving at Spencer Street station, Victorian Railways arrange to have them met and helped to a taxi.

In her travels around the station area, Effie answers many questions about train services and facilities at the station—making her a roving "Man-in-Grey".

Born at Foster, in Gippsland, Miss Foster's interests are horse-riding, dressmaking, tennis, swimming and Scrabble.

Effie—the name is not an abbreviation—was chosen as the first Girl-in-Green not only for her appearance but for her clear speaking voice, down-to-earth personality and Railways experience. She had been a station assistant at Balaclava for the 18 months preceding training for the Girl-in-Green position.

Her distinctive bottle-green uniform will soon be as familiar a sight around the Spencer Street terminal as the Man-in-Grey, who has manned a desk at the terminal since 1920.

49 years

Forty-nine years is a long time to work for one organisation, but many railway men achieve that level of outstanding dedication to their chosen career. September 13 saw the retirement of another railwayman who had logged up that impressive service—Reg Goodman, Foreman at Melbourne Goods.



Mr. Goodman

Reg started his V.R. days as a lad porter at Footscray and, shortly after, transferred to Melbourne Yard as a number taker. He had other postings around the State until he enlisted to go to war.

During the War, he was captured in the famous incident when the *Orcades*, returning to Australia with troops from the Middle East, put into Djakarta in answer to a call to pick up some stranded Australians. The call was a hoax, and the Japanese captured the ship's entire complement. *Orcades* was sunk and many of those captured ended up on the infamous Burma railway. Reg was interred in Singapore.

After the War, it was back to the V.R. and Melbourne Goods. And last year, he became one of the Foremen.

Off duty, Reg's spare time was taken up with participation in returned soldier and ex-POW organizations.

Mornington, since 1951

Caretaker Mrs. Esther Fraser has a railway background that few could match. It was immediately after her honeymoon that she came in close contact with the V.R. when her husband joined as a repairer at Nayook on the now-closed Waragul-Noojee branch.

While at Nayook, the Frasers' felt a caretaker's life would be good so Mrs. Fraser applied for the next vacancy — and got it. It was at Panitya, a mile from the South Australian border on the Ouyen-Pinnaroo branch and 450 miles from Nayook. But the couple were happy — by coincidence they were from Pinnaroo!

Later postings saw the pair move to Linga and then, in 1950, to Navarre—terminus of a branch that ran



Mrs. Fraser

from Ararat (see *News Letter*, January 1970, p.4). When transferred from Navarre to Mornington in 1951, the Navarre branch stations then became completely unattended, and the line was closed in 1954.

Mornington 20 years ago was vastly different from what Peninsula visitors find today.

"When I came here there was only a goods train once a week but since 1966 there has been a passenger service with six return trips every weekday," Mrs. Fraser said. "In the last 10 years, the town has started to move ahead. Redevelopment and new housing areas seem to be springing up everywhere.

Almost 51 years

Six weeks less than 51 years service for the V.R. was the record of Tom Dewar, a cashier, who retired on September 1.



Mr. Dewar into the Accountancy Branch.

On joining the V. R. in 1921, he was placed in the Audit Branch which was then situated in the North Melbourne Town Hall. These premises were used while the third floor was added at Head Office. In 1929 the Audit Branch was absorbed

Sporting interests have always been big for Tom. He was a foundation member of the V.R.I. swimming and hockey clubs. A keen first-aid-er, he holds the St. John's Ambulance Association Bronze Medal and V.R. Ambulance Silver and Gold Medals.

Amongst his latter day hobbies are walking, stamp collecting and cultivating orchids.

Advertising head retires

Head of the V.R.'s Advertising Division, Mr. Ken Whitby, retired on September 25 after a V.R. career only three years shorter than the existence of the Advertising Division.



Mr. Whitby Branch. In the following years he

Mr. Whitby was only the fourth person to head the Division during its 48 years.

Joining the Department in 1927, Ken was placed in the Auditor of Receipts Branch, and some 18 months later transferred to the Refreshment

Bridge gang



Deep in the tall timber country between Tallangatta and Cudgewa in the far north-eastern corner of the State, the No. 1 bridge gang were off-loading bridge timbers from the thrice-weekly goods train when *News Letter* representatives passed through. Under the watchful eye of Ganger W. Fleming, Skilled Labourers L. Franks, G. Webb and R. Birthsil prepared to empty the wagon.

worked in every section of the Branch except the Bookstalls.

During the later War years, Ken was on the Dining Car Depot staff and recalled that Seymour Refreshment Room often ordered up to 400 dozen pies a day to cater for the hungry troop train passengers.

In 1949 he moved permanently to the Advertising Division and was made Sales Manager in 1961.

For the last two years, revenue from commercial advertising has passed \$250,000 each year.

The division controls all commercial advertising on station hoardings and poster panels, signs and poster advertising inside railway carriages. Although big display panels at stations are being cut back, growth in other areas is mushrooming.

Fired H 220

September 29 was not the best of days for Bill Leslie, Electric Running Superintendent at Jolimont, because that was the day he ended his 47-year working association with the V.R.

Bill's career stretches back to 1925 when he joined as a lad labourer at the North Melbourne Truck Shops (now workshops).

Like so many other youngsters in those days (and today), he wanted to

be an engine driver and transferred to the North Melbourne Depot four years later.

During his time as a cleaner, he met and established a close friendship with Norm O'Shannassy, whose career closely paralleled Bill's. When they went for their driver's ticket, the pair alternated firing and driving, they both transferred to the electric trains and became supervisors on the same day. And now, with Bill's retirement, Norm becomes



Bill Leslie, seated, chats with his successor, Norm O'Shannassy.

the Electric Running Superintendent.

Bill's career on the locos was marked by being one of the three regular firemen for the southern hemisphere's biggest engine, 260-ton H 220. During this period he was also engaged on many test runs of the A2 and C classes, as well as H 220 which was the first V.R. loco. with a mechanical stoker.

Straight after the War, Bill trans-

ferred to electric trains and, in 1955, became a chargeman and, later, a supervisor. In 1965, he became the Assistant Electric Running Superintendent and succeeded Jack Bromley to that post last year.

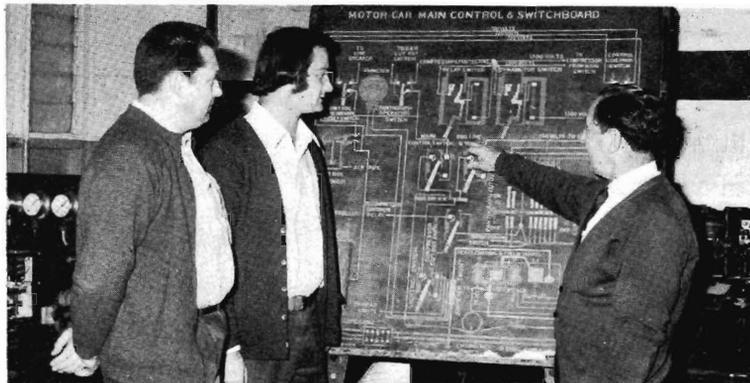
In younger days, Bill was a notable wrestler, who represented the V.R.I. in competitions in Queensland in 1935. These days, the less hectic activity of a round of golf fills in his spare time.

Busy guards



Show time means thousands of passengers, and extra trains—and new rosters. Shown checking rosters with Clerk Alfred Smith at Showgrounds platform were Guards Frank Cochrane (left) and Bruno Tripodi. Show trains carried over 217,000 passengers during the 10 days.

More drivers



To relieve the present shortage of electric train drivers, 28 drivers have transferred from diesels to suburban trains. Shown brushing up on some of the electrical circuitry before their practical exam, are Drivers (from left) Les Steuer and Jim Williams. Electric Running Superintendent Bill Leslie is answering their queries.

RETIREMENTS

ACCOUNTANCY BRANCH

Nilsen, C. P., Ticket Checkers, 19/9
Plant, H. J., Head Office, 18/8

REFRESHMENT SERVICES BRANCH

Whitby, K. V., Advertising Div., 25/9
Bates, F. (Mrs.), Flinders Street, 30/9

Law, A. (Mrs.), Flinders Street, 3/10
Digney, A. (Mrs.), Flinders Street, 14/10
Green, W., Bookstalls, 13/11

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Aiello, A., Jolimont, 2/11
Beswick, W. J., South Dynon, 29/11
Bibra, S. C., Newport, 8/9
Brown, A. E., Newport, 13/11
Conolan, J. L. Geelong, 15/11

Cornell, W. H., Ballarat North, 26/11
Dombrovskis, Z., Ballarat Nth., 2/11
Evans, G. LeM., E. R. Depot, 24/8
Fisher, W. A., Bendigo Loco. 30/11
George, W. B., Shelter Shed, 2/11
Kelly, F. C., Bendigo North, 16/11
Kubrak, Y., Newport, 24/11
Martin, J. N., Newport, 41/1
O'Brien, J. L., Newport, 31/8
Payne, F. H., Bendigo North, 10/11
Quirk, M. A., Jolimont, 21/8
Ralston, B. G., Newport, 30/8
Ratten, T. G., Jolimont, 18/9
Sykes, A. J., Newport, 16/8
Valletta, G., Jolimont, 24/8
Viola, G., North Melbourne, 17/11
Zupo, A., Jolimont, 3/8

STORES BRANCH

Wilson, V., Reclamation Depot, 8/8
Bowker, G., Newport Workshops, 25/8

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Dawson, A. E., Footscray
Fogarty, W. T., Ashburton, 20/11
Gould, J. S., Head Office, 16/8
Hackett, G., Flinders Street, 16/9.
Harrower, E. J., Melbourne Goods, 2/11
Nioa, E., Caulfield, 20/9
Petrovic, R., Head Office, 30/8
Saultry, A., Melbourne Goods, 21/11
Smith, W. B., Melbourne Yard, 8/8
Templeton, A. A., Benalla, 8/8
Tyndall, J., Shepparton, 25/8
Warren, L. B. D., Mordialloc, 26/8

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Cassarino, C., Laurens St., 13/11
Chandler, S. H., Leongatha, 22/8
Chubb, W. G., Aspendale, 1/11
De Haas, A., Warragul, 28/8
Heymig, M., Spotswood, 29/9
Masal, D., Warragul, 24/11
McNish, L. C., Spotswood, 25/10
O'Shea, J. P., Maryborough Works, 4/11
Petrone, G., East Melbourne, 21/11
Smith, N. A., Seymour, 25/8
Steiner, F. A., Flinders Street, 9/11

NEWS LETTER REGRETS TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING DEATHS

REFRESHMENT SERVICES BRANCH

Stephenson, M., Dining Car
Depot, 11/9

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH
Amphlett, W. A., Newport, 20/8
Avery, A. B., Newport, 31/8

STORES BRANCH
O'Connor, J. T., Newport Work-
shops, 8/8

TRAFFIC BRANCH
Eeles, D. P., Flinders Street, 11/9
Johnson, R. H., Melbourne Goods
8/9
Plewinski, A., Spencer Street,
17/9
Short, C. S., Crib Point, 24/8

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH
Braybrook, W., Ballarat, 23/8
Clements, S. D., Spencer Street,
26/8
Maher, J. A., Spotswood, 28/8
Spencer, R. J., Ararat/Willaura,
18/8
Trigila, V., East Melbourne, 11/9

Institute INews

ANNUAL V.R.I.
SMORGASBORD
DINNER



Sixteen of the 25 V.R.I. country centres were represented. This group photo shows some of the representatives with General President Mr. R. M. Wright, Mrs. Wright, and Acting General Secretary Mr. R. Baggott.



The Minister of Transport, the Hon. Vernon F. Wilcox, M.P., an official patron, was present at the dinner for a short time. Here, he chats with V.R.I. basketball star Kathy Lonergan, Commissioner Mr. I. G. Hodges (left) and Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Wright.



Sporting aspects play a big role in the life of the Institute, and the basketball teams are one of the more successful aspects. Here, from right, men's basketball captain Ivan Rendell, Anne Reeves and Kathy Lonergan, were photographed with Institute Acting General Secretary Ron Baggott (right), and Acting Assistant General Secretary Oss. Keating.

Had it been possible for any stranger to gain admittance to the V.R.I. Ballroom on Friday evening, September 15, he could have been excused, even some two or three hours after entry, for asking the question "exactly what is this function?" Such is the informality associated with the Annual V.R.I. Council Smorgasbord.

It was no surprise, therefore, to see the Hon. Vernon F. Wilcox, Minister of Transport, chatting with a representative of the V.R.I. Ladies' Basketball Club, and the Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. G. F. Brown, or his fellow Commissioner, Mr. I. G. Hodges, in earnest conversation with the wife of one of our Country Centre Secretaries, for this is "what it is all about".

This is the opportunity taken each year by the Institute Council to say "thank you" to the Country Centres and affiliated clubs for their efforts in promoting the various services available to members.

Some 30 members were also invited, at random, from the general membership, both country and metropolitan, in the hope that they will become more conscious of the V.R.I. and its activities.

In addition, several other distinguished guests including Sir Robert Risson, Executive Officer of the Metropolitan Transport Committee and Mr. G. Meech, Director of Transport, were in attendance, as were Heads of Branches, Life Members,

Union Representatives, class instructors and members of the Institute staff.

INSTITUTE SPORT

Angling club

Having just spent about \$300 reconditioning their 24 ft. launch, this club is looking for members. While they arrange fishing trips on Port Phillip Bay from time to time, this is not all they show interest in and if you have any worries about fishing, be it bay, river, or lake, they will try to answer your questions.

Further information from the Secretary, J. Williamson, auto. 1278, or V. R. I. Sports Secretary, Flinders Street.

Table Tennis

Warragul District Table Tennis Association held its finals recently and a pleasing aspect was the presence of Warragul V.R.I. centre teams in A and B grades.

The team of Max Cooke, John Parsons, Col Garner and Bernie Thresher won the A grade final 6 games to 5.

The B team of Les Shatwell, Ray Stubbs and Irene Gilchrist, not to be outdone, won their division 8 games to 3.

Congratulations to both teams and may they keep up the good work.

Football

The annual social football match between Donald, (the home team) and Maryborough was played in glorious sunshine at the Donald showgrounds before a very large crowd.

After a hard fought first half, Maryborough held a one point lead 22-21. From the start of the third quarter, Maryborough's overall strength became apparent and they finished the match with 5-7-37 to Donald's 3-4-22.

At a social function after the match, the Donald people made one and all welcome and vowed that results would be reversed the next time these teams meet.

Cricket

As reported last month, the annual match against the A.P.I. will be held on Monday, December 4, at the St. Kilda Cricket Ground, (Junction Oval) from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Selectors will be watching to choose the Victorian team for the Inter-system Carnival in Sydney from February 11-23 next year. All V.R.I. members desirous of selection should forward an application to the V.R.I. Sports Secretary, Flinders Street, not later than November 6, setting out name, grade, location, the team they are playing with and a brief outline of their performances over the last few years.

Selected players, who must have been V.R.I. members for at least six

months prior to the Carnival's start, are reminded that they must apply for leave through their normal Department channels.

Chess

World chess championship players Bobby Fischer and Boris Spassky have brought renewed interest to this ancient game, and the V.R.I. Chess Club would like to hear from Institute members keen to play or learn.

The V.R.I. Chess Club meet and play on Wednesdays from 6.45 to 10 p.m. in Room 2, 3rd Floor, Railway Buildings, Flinders Street, and welcome new members.

Secretary Alwyn Marshall, auto. 2334, or V.R.I. Sports Secretary, Flinders Street, auto. 2445, has further information.

Basketball

Our Wednesday night girl's team was once again placed in C grade of the Victorian Women's International Basketball Association for the 1972 winter season.

Still fired up after narrowly missing the four in the previous season, the girls started at a great rate, winning their first eight games straight, and, continuing the season in the same vein, cantered into top place with only two losses against their name.

The team strength this year has been in the excellent attacking potential of the players, no less than four players scoring over 100 points, and one, Kathy Lonergan, chalking up a



The start of the men's basketball grand final, and it was first blood to the V.R.I. team, as Neville Bourke, (No. 20) got the tap away.

prodigious 319! As only one male player has ever bettered this total it can be appreciated just how good was this effort.

The second semi final was played against East Brighton and our girls were not really troubled to win a scramble game by 14 points (35-21). Good defensive play by Anne Reeves and some deadly shooting from Josie Byrne assured us of victory when any pressure was applied.

The grand final, also against East Brighton, was a much more exciting, and certainly more rugged affair. Teaming excellently, our girls got off to a good start with 10 points to

nil after five minutes of play. Not to be denied, our opponents came back hard, but well into the second half had only reduced the leeway to seven points. Suddenly our concentration wavered, East Brighton then made a desperate last effort and snatched the lead. For a moment we looked lost, then a brilliant goal from Anne Reeves revived the girls' spirits and in an extremely tight finish the V.R.I. battled through to a 36-31 victory.

Our best and fairest award went to Kathy Lonergan who played brilliantly throughout the season, and to her and all the other girls who helped take out this, their first-ever premiership, congratulations and well done.

Country Carpet Bowls Championship

Squeals of delight and moans of anguish were heard during the 1972 Country Carpet Bowls Tournament held in the V.R.I. Ballroom late in August. While interest has waned in indoor bowls, a satisfactory roll up of 17 teams represented Ballarat, Benalla, Bendigo, Geelong and Korumburra.

Ballarat 2 won the men's championship final with comparative ease from Bendigo 2, 24 shots to 12, but the ladies' championship final was exciting.

With Mrs. A. Briggs leading the Ballarat team and Mrs. M. Webb the Benalla Blue side, the tension built up as the 20th end was bowled with Benalla Blue scoring the one shot required to tie 15 all. A further two ends are required to produce a winner. It was not until the last ball was bowled that Benalla Blue managed to scrape home 20 shots to 19.

The men's consolation saw Geelong 1 victors; Bendigo 2 won the ladies' events.

At the completion of play, Mr. R. M. Wright, V.R.I. President, presented the trophies.



And after the effort, the little pennant that makes it all worthwhile. Happy team members after securing their second B-grade pennant are (from left to right, back row) Dennis Kirby, Neville Bourke, Ian Lapsley, Geoff Leech, Gary Katalala, Lindsay Hateley; front row Des Wilson, Ivan Rendell, captain, and Graeme Jones.

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER



1972

10 CENTS



SAFETY FIRST

Every railwayman, at some stage of his career, must have felt the sting of criticism associated with delays to trains.

While railwaymen never set out intentionally to delay trains, there are times when, during breakdowns, our rigid safety systems and practices appear to be compounding the delay rather than relieving it.

But safety is a paramount consideration which transcends all other aspects.

The average passenger is interested only in getting to his destination, and delays are an irritation to him.

Despite appearances, delays brought about by rigid safety systems and practices are not due to the fact that railwaymen don't know their jobs—but that they do, and are doing them with safety.

Unlike road vehicles which have the capacity (sometimes) for dodging other road users, trains don't. Their stopping distances are such that precise knowledge of any obstruction or likely trouble-spot is essential before trains can be permitted to enter affected areas.

When the normal safety systems

are disorganized—as happened a short while ago following a spate of unprecedented events—it is essential that each person associated with the running of any train through an affected area must be personally acquainted with what is going to happen. Any other system would be a dangerous folly.

Even our loudest critic would prefer safety to come before a *Rafferty's Rules* system of dispatching trains at random and hoping for the best.

Railway regulations are not a ritual designed to waste time. They have evolved from past experience and been modified to close loopholes and ambiguities caused by changed operating practices.

They have stood the test of time and given the V.R. a safety record it is justifiably proud of.

For those who are interested in the background to the formulation of some of the regulations, they can do no better than read a paperback entitled *Red for danger*, by Col. L. T. C. Rolt, who was, for many years, the official inquirer into accidents on British Railways.

G. F. BROWN

'SAVE RAIL' SAY ENVIRONMENTALISTS

Environmentalists have come to the defence of Britain's railway system following disclosure of a secret report into the future of British Rail, says *The Herald*.

The report allegedly considers slashing the present 11,600 route mile passenger network to 7,000 miles—or even 3,800! (Before rationalisation in the early 1960's, passenger trains served 20,000 route miles.)

British Rail's expected \$80 million deficit for this year is the catalyst for the report which is designed to make the railways "commercially viable".

If implemented, up to 250,000 passengers would have to find alternative transport to work, and 120 subsidised passenger services outside London would be abandoned.

The *Sunday Times* newspaper accused the civil service report of being "obsessed with the idea of making the railways pay".

The report virtually ignores any environmental disadvantages of the plan, it is understood.

But British environmentalists are appalled at the thought of more buses and giant trucks rumbling along the roads of Britain and are preparing counter arguments.

An estimated extra 459 million miles a year would be travelled by heavy trucks if the planned cut to 7,000 route miles is enacted.

COMMISSIONERS' TOUR—WITH A DIFFERENCE

To all appearances it was a normal Commissioners' tour—*Norman* and *Goulburn* carriages were there, and so were the official parties. Only one thing was different—they weren't V.R. Commissioners.

For three days in mid-October it was the S.E.C. Chairman and Commissioners' tour—visiting Mildura, Horsham and Ballarat districts.

FIRE PRECAUTIONS UNDER WAY

To cope with potentially the worst fire season for many years, more than \$500,000 is being spent by the Victorian Railways in anti-bushfire precautions, mainly in fire-breaks.

Following the dry winter and poor spring rains, fire trains were put on standby in October in Melbourne, Bairnsdale and Seymour to meet any fire emergency on railway land.

Water tenders have been placed

at strategic points in country areas to provide water for fire fighting.

Country railway reservoirs—originally built to provide water for steam locomotives—and now holding millions of gallons of water, have been placed at the disposal of the Country Fire Authority.

An extra 13 small mobile fire fighting trailer units have been put into service, bringing the fleet to 39 units. These trailers are used by railway mobile gangs in country districts.

As usual, 9,000 miles of fire breaks ploughed inside railway boundary fence lines will be the mainstay of the fire fighting plans.

Last year, landowners with property adjoining V.R. land prepared only 550 miles of fire-breaks—about six per cent of the V.R. effort. Most preferred to rely on the railway fire-breaks to stop fires.

WORTH QUOTING

" . . . We could avoid much waste of resources and unnecessary complication of the cities if we accepted the obvious lesson that urban centres are not the place for private transport . . . "

—Editorial of "*The Australian*," October 25, 1972.

TURN THE OTHER CHEEK

The V.R. has long complained about damage to their bridges by road vehicles—but recent incidents at Ringwood caused a great deal of concern, cost and inconvenience, highlighting this very serious problem.

On May 19, a girder under the down line over Wantirna Road, Ringwood, was struck and damaged by a tip-truck.

Substantial damage was done to the girder which was subsequently replaced by a new one. In the interim—five months—all trains from Melbourne passed over the bridge at 10 m.p.h., delaying most trains a little.

Over the week-end of October 14-15, staff worked to replace the damaged girder, and from the Sunday morning, trains were again able to cross the bridge at normal speeds.

But on the following Thursday, fate dealt a new hand; a road vehicle crashed into the girder and decking on the other side of the same track—pushing both tracks out of alignment and damaging the girder. Immediately, another 10 m.p.h. restriction was placed on the bridge.

Patchwork was done quickly, and after a couple of weeks, the speed limit removed.

Passengers on the line were really coming to think that the slow speed into and out of Ringwood was a planned feature, but at the time this

RAILWAYS BOARD TO REPLACE COMMISSIONERS AS GOVERNING BODY

SECOND READING COMMENTS BY THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT (HON. VERNON F. WILCOX, M.P.)

Legislation to replace the present V.R. Commissioners with a seven-man Board, as recommended in Sir Henry Bland's 250-page report into Victorian transport, was introduced to State Parliament in late October. The following are Mr. Wilcox's comments when presenting the Bill to the House.

This measure is one of considerable importance—it provides for the first change in the corporate structure of the Victorian Railways since 1903. It proposes to substitute a Railways Board for the Commissioners as the governing body.

At the time the present corporate structure was set up, the Railways were pre-eminent in the land transport field and operated under monopoly conditions.

Indeed, the Railways were managed by a Board of three Commissioners as far back as 1883. The Commissioners were Richard Speight, who was brought from the Midland Railway Company, England, as Chairman, Alfred John Agg and Richard Ford. These were turbulent times in the history of Victoria and railway management took various forms until 1903 when Thomas Tait (later Sir Thomas), former Assistant General Manager of Canadian Pacific Railway Company, was appointed Chairman with Charles Hudson and W. F. Fitzpatrick as Commissioners.

The monopoly position of the Railways has long since passed and today, the Railways have to compete with other forms of transport which have not only grown rapidly in recent times but have also enjoyed the advantages which new industries often have.

In Australia, road and air, the newer forms of transport, have gained benefits not only from new technologies but from two other great advantages. They have the advantage of not bearing problems from the past in both the development and maintenance of their networks and methods of operation. The second advantage they enjoy is that of very substantial Commonwealth assistance.

The Railways were built by the efforts of the States in days when there was no use of annual tax revenue to pay for capital works; in other words, before the Commonwealth Treasury was in existence or had such huge funds at its disposal. By comparison, however, last year the Commonwealth appropriated more than \$255 million for road expenditures and more than \$134 million for civil aviation—virtually all of it from current tax revenue.



Mr. Wilcox, Minister of Transport.

We have moved from the solid tyre and the T model Ford to the large specialist vehicle, from the steam locomotive to the diesel, from man travelling around the world in 80 days to 80 minutes.

Transport is a complex matter in all communities and, around the world, Governments are moving to deal with the transport problems which have become so much greater with the rapid advances and changes of the twentieth century. For example, it is clear that it is not possible to look at railway operation in Victoria without also looking at the position of road transport.

Legislation which has governed land transport in Victoria was enacted in 1934—38 years ago—and few real changes have been made in the legislation since then. However, in the administration of the transport regulation Acts changes have been made in a piecemeal fashion to meet the circumstances of a particular problem.

It became clear to me, and to others, that the system of land transport and its regulation in Victoria needed to be looked at in a way which was not possible within the ordinary day-to-day activity of Government.

The Government accepted the

need for an inquiry of some depth and appointed Sir Henry Bland, Kt., C.B.E., as a Board of Inquiry. I acknowledged that we were fortunate to obtain the services of Sir Henry.

The over-all objective of the inquiry was to make the best use of our total transport resources and I believe that the report from the Inquiry will enable us to work towards this objective. I have made it clear that this objective will not be achieved overnight; it is a long process to deal with a land transport situation which goes back over many years.

The terms of reference given the Board of Inquiry are familiar but it will be well to repeat one of those terms here: "What changes, if any, should be brought about in the system of transport regulation and the provision of rail services to give the most efficient transport service practicable in the public interest."

The report of the Board contains a number of recommendations which relate to the future efficiency of our land transport system. As I indicated in my Ministerial statement, the Government accepts the general principles contained in the recommendations of the Report as providing guidelines for changes which should be made progressively and over a long period in an endeavour to work towards a position in which the community is able to make the best use of its total transport resources.

It is unfortunate that in relation to the report, some have sought to make much of the recommendation to close rail lines. I make it clear that we do not regard this aspect as one of the most important recommendations in the report and our study of this recommendation bears out the view I have just expressed.

There are much more important matters to be given prior attention and one is the recommendation with regard to the corporate structure of the Railways.

The report recommended that the corporate structure of the Railways should be changed:

"The present Railways Administration should be converted to the type of corporate structure appropriate to a commercial undertaking

of the size and complexity of the Railways. A mixed governing Board comprising men from business and high executives from the Railways service, including a Chief Executive, under an outside Chairman able to devote a fair amount of time to his duties, would be appropriate."

It is proposed to follow the recommendation as to the constitution of the Board and this Bill is necessary to provide for the change. The Bill makes provision for a Board of seven members, one to be appointed as Chairman. It also makes provision for the appointment of a General Manager for the Victorian Railways.

However, the recommendation of the Board of Inquiry that there be a part-time Chairman has not been followed. It is considered that if the Railways are to be given the opportunity to play their proper role in the future transport scene, all the skill and effort required and which can be brought to the task, must be put together; we do not believe that the head of the railway organisation can, at least in the immediate future, fulfil his role working part-time.

I point out that the present Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. G. F. Brown, reaches retiring age early next year and Mr. E. P. Rogan, Deputy Chairman, reaches the same position the following year. I take the opportunity to place on record the life-time of valuable service given to the Victorian Railways by these two men—service rendered in recent years in difficult circumstances. I am glad that these two experienced men will be on the scene during the transition period envisaged with this Bill.

I am sure that the Railways can deliver the goods when under pressure to do so. We have only to look at what they have done in the interstate field for proof of this. The Railways are carrying goods not only as principal carriers but on behalf of what were previously large road freight organisations—and let us have no illusions about this, they get this traffic because it is the most efficient form of moving it; they get it on their merits.

Rail facilities for either passengers or freight must be marketed and the organisation be far more market orientated. The purpose of the Railways is not transport of itself but to provide transport service to industry and commerce, the primary producer and the citizens of this State.

The whole report of the Board of Inquiry revolves around improved capacity and efficiency for the Railways. The recommendations made by the Board in the main hinge upon the Railways being given a more

commercial capacity and on them going into the market place with vigour—when I say market place, I mean not only the freight side of railways but the very important aspect of moving people and providing facilities which attract people.

The purpose of this Bill is to give the Railways a corporate structure which can be market orientated and take a proper place in the transport system.

Much can be said about lack of funds for railway operations and of the problems of the Railways laid at the door of this lack of funds. I do not deny this and indeed have led approaches to the Commonwealth for more funds. The whole question of railway finance—and, indeed, finance for all forms of transport seen as a total industry and community service—must be given much more attention than has been the case in the past.

I now refer to other clauses in the Bill. In the main, other clauses and the schedule to the Bill provide the transition of property, rights, obligations, etc. from the Commissioners to the new Railways Board.

There are, however, three further specific clauses which I should mention. Clause 3 extends the ability of the Board to enter into contracts without Governor-in-Council approval where those contracts do not exceed \$50,000 or extend for more than one year. The present figure is \$20,000 and the proposed amendment brings it into line with other Government authorities.

Clauses 2 and 9 relate to the capacity of the Railways and the Railway Construction Board to carry out work for public statutory bodies. With the added activity in the transport area of recent times it has become necessary to clarify these powers. The Railways and the Railway Construction Board have both been doing work for the Melbourne Underground Rail Loop Authority—the Railways being the contractors for the substantial work going on at Jolimont and the Railway Construction Board constructing a pilot tunnel for the Authority under La Trobe Street at the western end. Some doubt was expressed as to their power to perform work for other authorities—it was thought wise to remove any doubt and the Bill provides accordingly.

I conclude with this observation—for some years now and in great part due to the community's preoccupation with one form of transport, namely the motor car, there have been doubts concerning the place of railways in the transport field.

I have always said that there is a

place for every form of transport in a modern community. Railways undoubtedly have a vital role and must continue to fill their role. Fixed track transport can make a large contribution to the lives of people in both urban and rural areas if it is playing its proper role.

The Board of Inquiry was a step in recognising the importance of a viable transport system to the State and the implementation of a most important recommendation from the Report is evidence of the Government's determination to see that the Railways have every opportunity to play their proper role.

SUGGESTIONS ADOPTED

During September, the following suggestions were adopted and awards granted:

- Issue of statement of accounts \$10
- Improved visibility for level crossing gates at Lydiard Street, Ballarat \$5
- Hand holds on sliding door of Gisborne and other goods sheds be modified \$5
- Future issues of V.R. pens be made to fit uniform pockets \$5
- New locks be lubricated with graphite \$3
- Dynon Outwards Office be renovated \$3
- Draught prevention be improved in bogie brakevans \$2
- New staff slogan for use in *Weekly Notice* \$2
- Envelopes containing photographs be stamped "Photographs, do not bend" \$2
- Platform sheet at Richmond be corrected \$2
- *Points for rail users* poster be exhibited at Totttenham \$1

THANK YOU

Models

"... On behalf of the Flying Angel League (Missions to Seamen) I would like to thank you for the magnificent display of railway models at our annual fair on October 7.

"A special vote of thanks must be extended to Mr. A. Topp of the Public Relations and Betterment Board for the way in which he set up the display..."

—Mr. H. F. Taylor, writing to the Chairman of Commissioners.

HISTORIC LINE 110 YEARS OLD

October 20 was the 110th anniversary of the first trains—three specials—to run between Melbourne and Bendigo. The following day—October 21, 1862—public travel started between the two cities on what has become commonly known as the “main line.”

From 1853–1881, Bendigo was called Sandhurst, but according to the Australian Encyclopaedia, the name Bendigo was used in 1840. In 1852, the town was officially declared “Castleton”, but this name lasted only one year.

By proclamation, the city was renamed Bendigo in May 1891, and the name of the railway station was altered four months later.

Legislation authorizing the Bendigo railway, with future extension to the River Murray, was passed in November 1857; the Board of Land and Works was the construction authority.

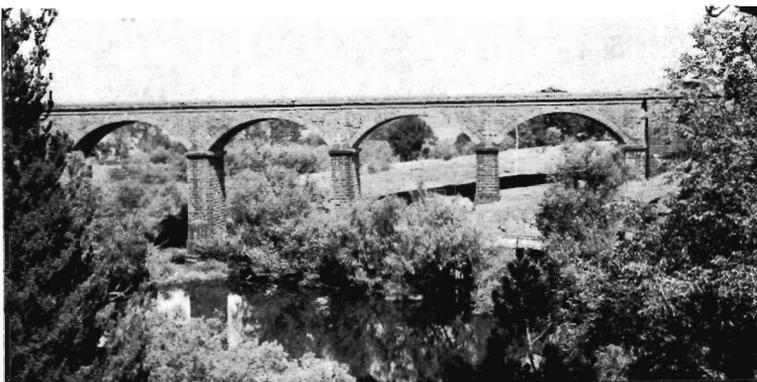
Cornish & Bruce won the contract to build the double-track railway from Footscray to Bendigo—97 miles 5 chains—for \$6,713,874. The task was completed for less than the contract charge. Four years after completion, litigation was brought against the V.R. by the contractors for outstanding payments. The hearing lasted 32 days and more than 830 pages of evidence were recorded.

\$609,000 claim

The contractors claimed \$609,527 from the Queen (Government), but at the trial nearly \$200,000 of those claims were omitted.

The jury found in favour of the contractor, but the Supreme Court corrected the ruling where some legal points were incorrectly interpreted. A sum of \$2,000 was awarded to the Government for wastage of plant by the contractors, but the Government was still left with paying the contractors \$333,840.

The Government immediately prepared their documents for an appeal, but the contractors indicated that they were willing to accept the lesser amount of \$215,039 plus interest if it was settled immediately.



Malmsbury Viaduct, over the Coliban River, received the highest classification from the National Trust. The A classification signifies “of national importance, to be preserved at all costs”.

The difference between that originally claimed and the final settlement figure came from the contractor agreeing to accept fines for non-completion of sections of the work within the contract time (portion of the second line was not opened for traffic until 1863), deductions for overpayments, engine hire of \$119,555 and other relevant charges.

The matter was then promptly settled.

Generally, the route followed that surveyed in 1855, except that originally the line would have by-passed Castlemaine. Representations from residents altered this, despite opposition from Bendigo.

An alternative route was suggested between Melbourne and Woodend—via Essendon, Bulla and the east side of Mt. Macedon—but rejected due to the higher cost.

Notable works

The Bendigo line contains many notable engineering works including:

- Malmsbury viaduct over Coliban River—490 ft. long with 5 masonry arches of 60 ft. It cost \$144,000, and is classified A by the National Trust.

- Taradale viaduct over Back Creek—828 ft. long with 5 spans of 120 ft., cost \$460,000. It is classified B by the National Trust.

- Elphinstone tunnel, 1,264 ft. long. It involved removing 30,000 cub. yards of solid rock, and cost \$132,000.

Between Castlemaine and Bendigo, another tunnel of similar length was needed under Big Hill.

Other structures classified by the National Trust along the route are:

Jackson's Creek viaduct near Sunbury, D; bridge over Riddell's Creek near Riddell, B; Malmsbury station buildings, B; and the three-arched bridge over Barker's Creek, near Harcourt, B.

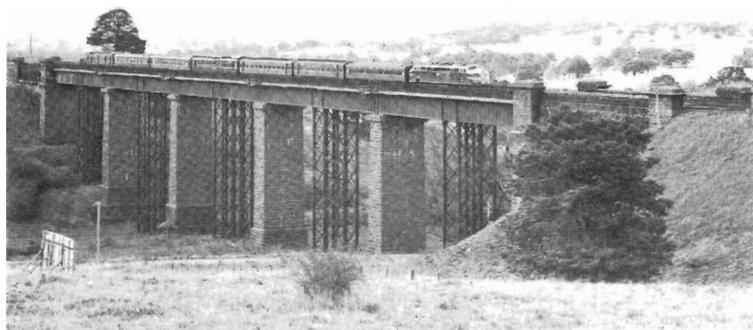
Inaugural day

Three special trains ran on inauguration day. The first carried official guests, including the Governor, Sir Henry Barkly.

A customary banquet followed, and, according to a newspaper report of the day, “. . . some inconvenience was occasioned by the fragile nature of the seats. In several instances these gave way and deposited their occupants on the ground in an unceremonious and laughable manner.”

Something went wrong with the return train arrangements. After people had boarded trains, the doors were locked, but the trains did not move.

After five hours, the imprisoned



A little over four miles from Malmsbury Viaduct is the Taradale Viaduct, classified B. The steel supports were added in 1910 to strengthen the bridge for heavier locomotives.



Malmsbury station buildings are classified B "highly significant, to be preserved".

passengers were told that no trains would leave before daybreak. It was thought that a water pipe had burst and water was not readily available for the engines.

However, one train did manage to leave Bendigo at 11.30 p.m., but only reached Castlemaine.

● The origin of the name Bendigo is interesting. According to the Historical Society of Victoria's book published in 1910, the name Bendigo was given to the venue of a fight be-

tween two miners to settle a disputed claim. The smaller of the combatants won the fight to the plaudits of the watching diggers who encouraged him by calling out "Bravo, Bendigo."

Bendigo was the nickname of an English prize fighter.

At the conclusion of the dispute, the assembled miners announced they would call the place Bendigo in honour of the smaller miner's victory. The actual incident occurred on a property known as Fenton's station.

METRICS ARRIVE



Metrics swept into the V.R. in mid-October with the start of a series of conversion training talks for the 500 men employed in Melbourne Goods Depot. Practical exercises in measuring distances, mass and temperatures in the new units as they will apply to their industry were supported by an entertaining audio-visual film. As an industry, the railways will convert all their business to metric units from July 1, 1973, and the course, following on an introduction to basic metrics through *News Letter*, ensures that the staff hears the correct details for their own industry. After a successful time at Melbourne Goods, the entire course will be taken around to country staff. Departmental rate books and other publications with metric units will be issued early next year.

CREDIT CO-OP MANAGER APPOINTED

Mr. Mick Lorkin has been appointed the Railway Staffs Credit Co-operative Limited's first full-time Secretary/Manager.

Formed at a meeting of Railways officers and employees in June 1971, the Credit Co-op is registered as a society under the provisions of the State Co-operation Act. Its elected Board of seven Directors comprises representatives of the V.R.I., A.R.U. A.R.P.O.A., and A.T.O.F.

Over 900 members contribute regular fortnightly amounts through payroll deductions and over \$97,000 has been loaned to members. The number of members is increasing.

Mick is the son of a former station-master and joined the V.R. as a junior clerk at Head Office.

During 25 years of Railways service he qualified as a Bookkeeper in the Australian Society of Accountants examinations and has held several positions in the Accountancy Branch.

He had a period of service with the Traffic Branch involving accounting procedures at various suburban stations, and has also relieved in the accounting offices at a number of workshops and depots.

Mick is a keen tennis player and a regular team member with the Reservoir Tennis Club in the B Grade competition.

Any queries about the Co-op should be directed to him on auto. 1655 or postal 61 3392.



Mr. Brown congratulates Mr. Lorkin on his appointment to head the Railway Staffs Credit Co-operative, and wishes him every success in the venture.

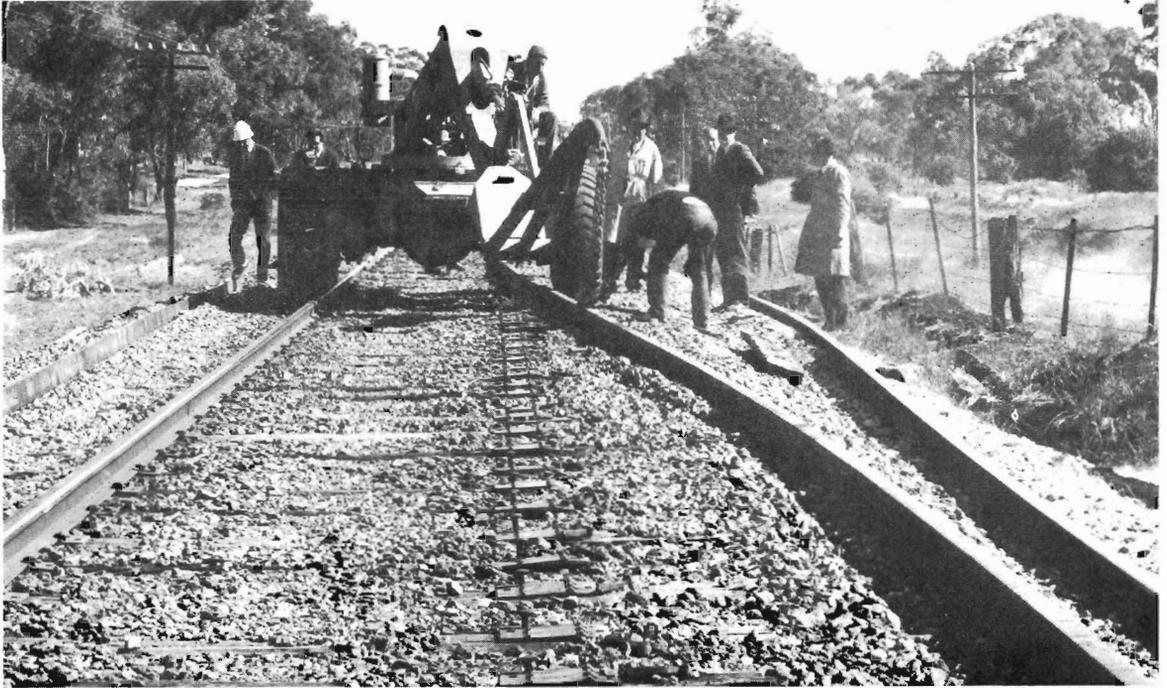
CUSTOMER SAYS

"... In running for a train which was about to leave I dropped a pen, and there wasn't time to retrieve it..."

"Yet, on my arrival at Reservoir I was presented with the pen by the Guard.

"It is a rare pleasure in this era of anonymity to strike an appreciation of goodwill, a most quintessential value of our civilization, in something so highly organized as a railway journey..."

—Mr. R. Harris, Cranbourne, writing to the Commissioners



RELAYING of the 281-mile Ballarat-Mildura line is now in its final stages, with work concentrated in the Maryborough area. Assisting with the heavy work of placing 225-ft. lengths of welded 94-lb. rail is a machine recently purchased from Silverton Rail Services after upgrading work on the Kalgoorlie-Esperance line in Western Australia. The machine, called a *Speedswing*, rapidly positions the three-ton rails ready for spiking by following mechanised gangs.

Victoria Rail

COOK'S TOURIST TICKETS

AT SPECIALLY REDUCED FARES.

TO THE SEASIDE & HOLIDAY RESORTS OF VICTORIA.

GIPPSLAND LAKES. The 200-odd stations on the Gippsland line can be reached by rail from Melbourne, via Sale & Bairnsdale. The 100-odd stations on the Gippsland line can be reached by rail from Melbourne, via Sale & Bairnsdale. The 100-odd stations on the Gippsland line can be reached by rail from Melbourne, via Sale & Bairnsdale.

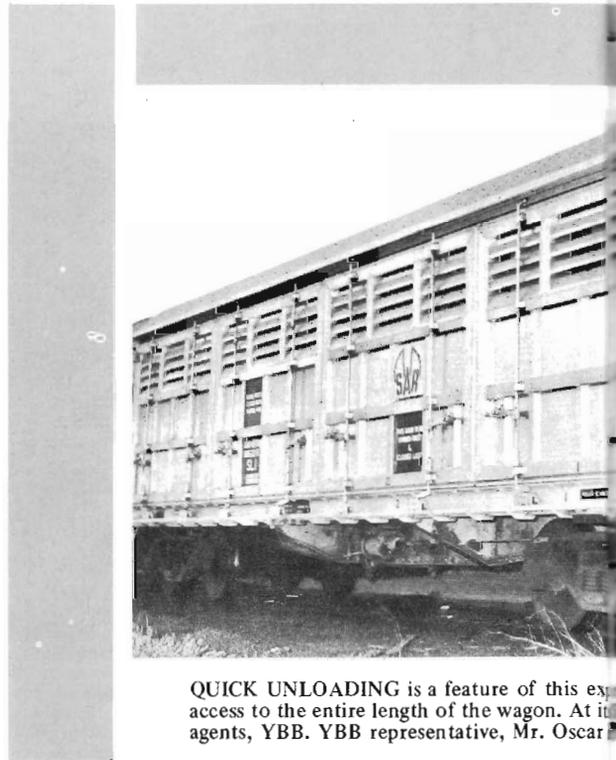
FARES: Via Sale to Lakes Entrance & back, **34/6**, incl. 26/- Via Bairnsdale, incl. **39/6**, incl. 28/-

Return Tickets Melbourne to Sale Lakes Entrance Bairnsdale & back, or vice versa, for **39/3**

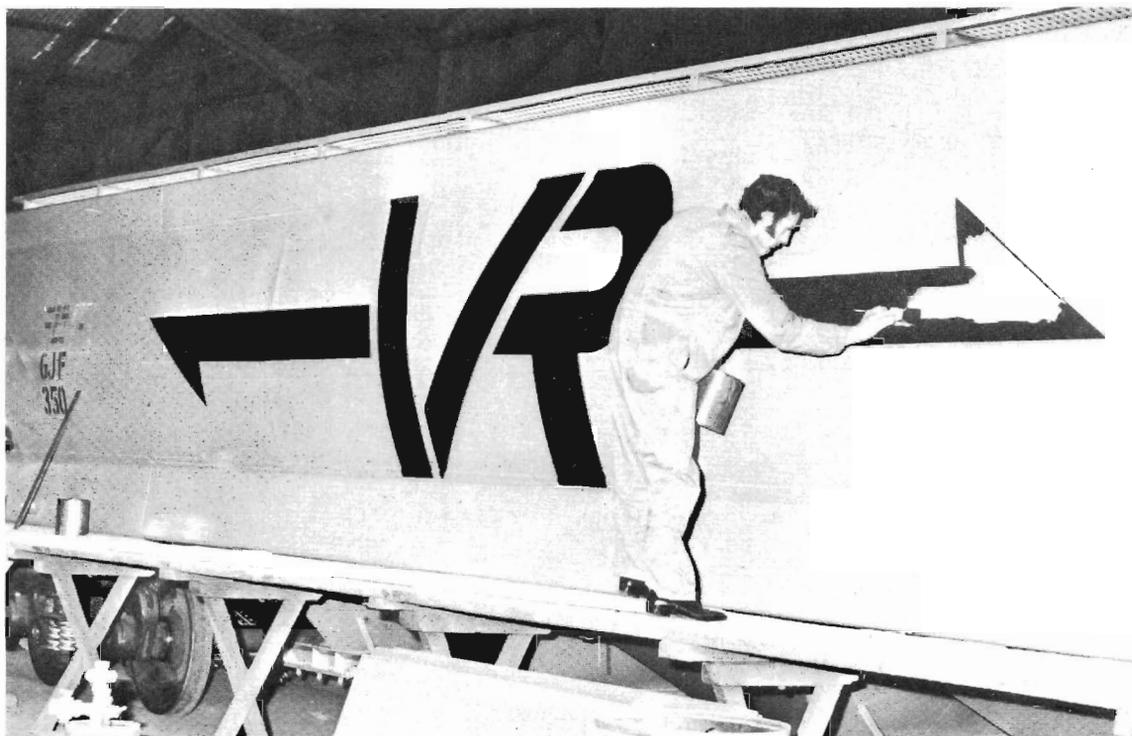
Return Tickets Melbourne to Two Mouths Through Railings to Lake Tyers by Coach from Quantalpa for additional

See the Gippsland Railways for full particulars.

HISTORY was uncovered during recent work at Middle Brighton station. Behind some poster boards was this 1897-vintage poster advertising a Cook's tour to the Gippsland Lakes. The V.R. relinquished their tourist activities in 1959 but are in the process of re-establishing themselves as a tour packager and promoter and one of the tours about to be offered is a week-end at Paynesville on the Gippsland Lakes.



QUICK UNLOADING is a feature of this wagon, giving easy access to the entire length of the wagon. At the Gippsland Lakes, YBB agents, YBB representative, Mr. Oscar ...



LAST ONE. Finishing touches to GJF 350, the last of 150 built recently at Newport Workshops, were being added before the wagon was placed in traffic on October 16. Newport Workshops produced the wagons at the rate of one a day.



imental South Australian Railways wagon. Classed SL, it features two massive doors on each side which, when opened give
 first visit to Melbourne, the wagon was loaded with nearly 20 tons of oranges from Loxton in South Australia for forwarding
 Scacci said that the entire palletised load was unloaded by one fork lift truck in only 25 minutes. This was ideal for his
 company's loading.

PULLING THE RAILWAYS INTO THE NEXT MILLENNIUM

by Ray Dafter, a writer on transport affairs for the Financial Times, London



Britain's prototype Advanced Passenger Train (APT) on its first main line proving run prior to starting the most stringent test programme ever devised for a railway train. The APT project's objectives are to reduce journey time to a minimum by exploiting fully the potential of existing track and signalling equipment and provide superlative comfort at 155 m.p.h. (250kph). British trains at present have a maximum speed of 100 m.p.h. (160 kph). Photograph: London Press Service.

Britain's experimental 155 m.p.h. (250 kph) Advanced Passenger Train (APT) has recently taken to the rails to begin proving runs.

In many ways that first, slow speed run on a five-mile (8 km) stretch of track in the English midlands was as significant for the railways as the maiden flight of a new generation aircraft for the airlines.

British Rail, which is developing the APT at a comparatively modest cost of \$A2.45 to \$A3.92 million (half of which is being found by the Government), sees the train pulling the railways into the next millennium.

On existing tracks

It is a train of the future designed to run on existing tracks, a big advantage over many other high speed railway systems either in use or planned throughout the world, so that capital cost can be concentrated on the train itself.

Transport authorities in the United States of America, Israel, Sweden, Australia and Japan have all been involved in talks about the possible application of the APT to their particular railway systems.

Japan is, of course, already experienced in high speed trains. In mid-1960's the Japanese bypassed their existing system and laid the 320 mile (500 km) line between Tokyo and Osaka, enabling the *bullet trains* to travel at speeds in the 130 m.p.h. (210 kph) bracket. The Japanese system, however, needs new track whereas the British APT does not.

In November last year Mr. James A. Beggs, Under-Secretary of Transportation for the USA, said that Britain led the world in the development of high speed trains for existing tracks.

Twin advantages

The British system has two big advantages: cost (already mentioned) and integration—the new trains can be run alongside conventional stock during the transitional period from old to new.

As Britain's rail system is only partly electrified, the APT is being developed in two versions—one driven by four gas turbine power units at each end of the train, the other with electric motors. One

prototype of each sort will be used for passenger evaluation, entering service in the mid-1970s.

With the development programme on time (an achievement in itself), it is envisaged that the trains of up to eight cars will start operations at about the 125 m.p.h. (200 kph) mark. It seems, at present, that to achieve speeds of around 155 m.p.h. (250 kph) the existing signalling systems will have to be modified and this might take until 1980.

Cutting journey time

Within Britain the APT could cut the journey time from London to Glasgow (410 miles, 655 km) from 6 hours to 4 hours or clip half an hour off the 2 hours 30 minutes run between London and Manchester (200 miles, 320 km). All these times are assuming a 155 m.p.h. (250 kph) speed.

While the first four car experimental unit, called the APT-E, carries out proving runs on a 14 mile (22 km) section of disused track, engineers at British Rail's Technical Centre at Derby are even talking hesitantly of the concept being stretched to much faster trains,

perhaps running at 250 m.p.h. (400 kph).

But these would need a much straighter track and protection against side winds.

The APT's smooth running bogie (the key to its high speed performance), suspension and tilt systems have already been track tested, according to British Rail, with "highly satisfactory results".

Design changes

So far, the designers at Derby, a quarter of whom were recruited from the aircraft industry, have confounded the critics who said that British Rail was attempting too much too fast.

Important design changes have had to be made during the development programme but still the Technical Centre is confident it has the answer to the three main problems—propulsion, stability and braking.

The braking system, for example, is reckoned to be 3½ times more powerful than conventional brakes. The wheels of the APT will be stopped by jets of water mixed with anti-freeze.

The self steering characteristics of the bogie will enable the train to negotiate curves safely while the complicated suspension, with power assisted tilting, has been designed to give a comfortable ride with a maximum body tilt of up to nine degrees

relative to the track.

Airframe principles

The light alloy body constructed on airframe principles will keep down the overall weight and increase the power: weight ratio.

It is possible that the prototype APT's will have a higher proportion of first-class facilities than normal, with passengers perhaps having to pay a premium to travel in it. Some airlines are thinking on the same lines about Concorde operations.

But unlike Concorde, the train will not suddenly break new speed barriers. It will enable Britain's gradual build up in speeds, which has been taking place since the train was invented, to continue.

HANSARD REPORTS

Railways are usually a strong talking point for the State Parliament and Hansard, the official record of Parliamentary debates, shows that for the third session, these were the more interesting railway matters raised:

PATRONAGE

The Minister of Transport, the Hon. Vernon F. Wilcox, M.P., gave outward passenger patronage and revenue figures for the St. Kilda and Port Melbourne lines since 1961-62.

Summarised, the figures are:

St. Kilda Line		
Year	No. of journeys	Revenue \$
1961-62	3,916,639	391,380
1965-66	3,876,695	446,870
1970-71	3,729,849	545,337

Port Melbourne line		
Year	No. of journeys	Revenue \$
1961-62	1,056,942	114,242
1965-66	1,170,739	145,713
1970-71	909,302	134,692

PORTLAND-HORSHAM TRAINS

Mr. Wilcox confirmed that subject to maintenance requirements, the two 600 h.p. air-conditioned rail cars at present on the Ararat-Portland line will operate a daily return service between Horsham and Melbourne joining with a through Portland-Melbourne rail car at Ararat.

Accommodation on the new train will be 60 seats between Horsham, Portland and Ararat, and 120 seats between Ararat and Melbourne. Accommodation could be augmented by adding one or two additional carriages.

The Minister added that detailed schedules and a starting date were yet to be settled.

INQUIRY COSTS

Asked the cost of three recent inquiries into the management and methods of the Victorian Railways, Mr. Wilcox replied that the Board of Inquiry into Land Transport in Victoria, conducted by Sir Henry

Bland, cost \$31,394; the estimated cost of Sir Henry Bland's current investigation into the carriage of wool, bulk grains and petroleum is \$1,500; and the recent examination of the Commercial Branch by W. D. Scott & Co. Pty. Ltd., cost \$5,100.

COMMONWEALTH PARTICIPATION

Mr. Wilcox informed the Leader of the Opposition that the Bureau of Transport Economics at Canberra have studied the needs to carry out some Victorian railway projects. Mr. Wilcox also said that the Bureau was given all information that it asked for, including facts and figures for many matters requiring attention in the transport scene in Victoria, not just in Melbourne.

Answering another question, Mr. Wilcox said that the Bureau of Transport Economics conducted a study of the whole question of urban transport needs in the large cities of Australia. A wider study of railways generally, directed to financing new rolling stock and tracks, was also undertaken.

COMMONWEALTH TAKEOVER

Answering the question "was the Government prepared to hand control of the Victorian Railways to any Federal Government which would accept them," the Premier, the Hon. R. J. Hamer, M.P., replied that his Government would be prepared to discuss a takeover of the capital debt attributed to the railways on the ground that it was a development cost which may well be shouldered by the Federal Government, in line with numerous other developmental costs undertaken by the Federal Government.

'URBAN TRANSPORT BEHIND'—EXPERT

Australia lagged behind the rest of the world in city transport planning, urban transport economist and city planner, Mr. G. J. Connor, recently told newsmen.

Just returned from a two-month fact-finding tour of the world's 20 biggest cities, Mr. Connor commented that of those visited, all had an underground railway system or were in the process of building one.

"But unlike Australia, they kept all their options open and never relied too heavily on any one sort of transport," he said.

"There is no comparison between our trains and the modern comfortable rapid transit trains in America and Europe. There is barely any sensation of movement, they are far more comfortable, considerably faster and completely computerised. By running on fairly straight tracks they don't waste miles or space," Mr. Connor commented.

"Sydney and Melbourne networks run old rolling stock and the tracks weave and curl where they would be far more efficient going in straight lines."

Mr. Connor commented that Australian public transport appeared to be strong on the surface but was actually far behind other countries because it has not applied modern technology, except perhaps in free-way building which was only one facet of moving people. Mr. Connor described freeways as being "fashionable at the moment".

Looking ahead, he commented: "Cities of the future will be ringed with parking stations and we will create pedestrian precincts where the pedestrian is king and all vehicles are kept out.

"There are a number of revolutionary and dynamic new transportation ideas being developed and installed all over the world. But really we never know till they're tried whether they will be successful or not."

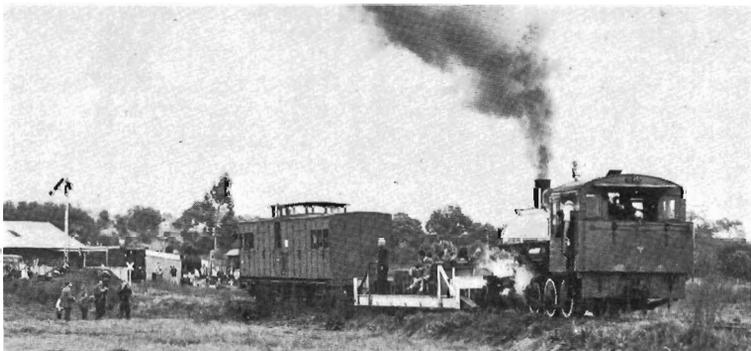
—The Australian

LOCO NAMED AFTER V.R. MAN



Geelong Steam Preservation Society is busily building itself a 3-ft. 6-in. gauge railway to delight children and steam enthusiasts. On October 7, one of their locomotives, a 1916-built Vulcan locomotive was named *Arthur T. Middleton* in honour of well-known V.R. man Terry Middleton who died earlier this year. Terry had been keenly interested in the Geelong venture and was a devoted worker. Chairman of Commissioners Mr. G. F. Brown (*above*) was delighted to perform the naming ceremony—Terry had been an apprentice with him in the 1920's. Looking on at the unveiling was Mrs. Middleton.

After the official business was over, guests and visitors were taken for a ride along the Society's 700-yard track (*below*). The Society has four steam locomotives and an old Queensland Railways rail car. Rides are given every Sunday afternoon at their Belmont Common site (immediately over the Barwon River bridge heading south from Geelong). There are plans for the railway to be extended some miles if a proposed pioneer museum scheme goes ahead.



J.N.R. DEBT RESTRUCTURING

Government finance totalling \$A5,638,000,000 will be given to Japanese National Railways over the next 10 years to restructure their debt payments.

(In 1970-71, JNR was losing money at more than \$A1 million per day.)

International Railway Journal advises that about 50 per cent of the money is for reconstruction and the remainder for subsidies for un-economic lines, and loan interest repayments.

Under this arrangement it is hoped that JNR will show a profit in 1981.

In another significant step, the JNR was granted permission to build a 20-storey hotel, bus terminal, parking lot and shopping arcade at Nagoya station.

RED WRIGGLERS OR SUPER WORMS?

Up to a quarter of a million earth worms—or *Eisenia Foetida* to be precise—are being reeled weekly until mid-December from Diamond Creek to cater for seasonal demands of anglers at stream resorts.

Starting from October about 40,000 worms a week were reeled to places such as Bonnie Doon, Benalla, Deniliquin, Euroa, Koondrook, Leongatha, Mansfield, Mathoura, Mildura, Myrtleford, Nathalia, Numurkah, Shepparton, Swan Hill, Wodonga, Wangaratta, Wahgunyah, provincial cities, suburbs, and as far away as Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide.

The red wrigglers are farmed by Mr. Don Ewers in a converted poultry barn on a 5-acre hill-top property at Diamond Creek. It is said to be Australia's only commercial worm farm. Don, an ex-U.S. Marine, came to Australia 18 years ago.

Worms are sold in lots of 2,000 when around six months old—2in. long—packed in peat moss. Food is added allowing the worms to live, without loss of weight, for 4-6 weeks.

Mr. Ewers estimates his 300 cub. ft. of pits hold 20 million worms, but he has never bothered to stock take—for obvious reasons!

August-September is the main breeding time; ideal for the top selling period from October to Christmas.

Worms lay eggs every 7-10 days in season; the eggs, containing 2-20 worms—(always in twos) hatch after 21 days.

Mr. Ewers said that 1,000 worms produce about 1,250,000 descendants a year.

When not used as bait, they have a natural life of about nine years.



Diamond Creek caretaker J. Lodolo hands packages of Red Wrigglers to Guard J. Vivian

APOLOGY SEPTEMBER *News Letter* SHORT PRINTED

September *News Letter* was short printed by 900 copies.

All connected with *News Letter* apologise to those who missed their regular copy; Spare copies from all over the State were recalled, but the final result was still short.

Printing the extra number was considered, but the cost was prohibitive.

If you have no further use for your copy of September *News Letter*, the PR section would be pleased to receive spare copies for distribution to anyone who missed their regular copy. Contact the PR section on auto 1367 or 1489.

Consignments are taken to Diamond Creek railway station three days each week, to travel by the 4.10 p.m. train. In Melbourne, they are transferred to country and overnight interstate trains.

"I used to make some suburban deliveries myself until I found how low the rail charges were; now almost all my worms go by train," Mr. Ewers said.

(Perishable items, such as fishing bait, are carried by the V.R. at half normal parcels rates.)

The worm farmer started his project after having difficulty obtaining worms for a fishing expedition in 1968; there are 3,000 worm farms in U.S.A.

He also supplies zoos and sanctuaries —each platypus at Healesville Sanctuary, for example, needs 500 red wrigglers a day.

According to Mr. Ewers, there was an art in worm fishing. His special directions were: "Slip the hook under the ring of the worm and then into its tail."

AMONG OURSELVES

Comptroller of Stores retires

Mr. Arthur Thomson, who, for the past five years has been responsible for purchasing \$30 million of railway stores each year, and the control of about \$10 million of material at 100 different points, retired as the top railway store-keeper, the Comptroller of Stores on October 20.

Mr. Thomson had been with the Railways for more than half a century, having started as a messenger in 1922.

After a term at Melbourne Goods Depot he transferred to the Stores Branch where he soon qualified in accountancy.

When the war began, he was Secretary to the Stores Standardization Committee, which had the responsibility of arranging materials due to war shortages.

An amateur knowledge of telegraphy and wireless was used to the full when he enlisted in the R.A.A.F. However, war did not seriously interrupt his cost accounts course; when posted to India in the South East Asia Air Command, his com-

manding officer was given special permission to supervise the exams.

Soon after the war, Mr. Thomson became Branch Bookkeeper, Assistant Comptroller of Stores and eventually reached top position of Comptroller of Stores in January 1968.

Mr. Thompson considers the major improvement he saw in the Stores Branch was the introduction of computerized stores control.

"We did a feasibility study in 1960. Time has shown it to be 100 per cent correct and the economies saved have more than paid for the computer rental," he said.

Award winners



Receiving their Basic Track Maintenance Certificates from Chief Civil Engineer, Mr. Don Wade (left), were Ken McLean of Hamilton (centre) and Colin McDonald from Bairnsdale. The pair had just completed the Track Ganger's School.

Stamps, matchbox labels and coins



Jim Sherriff (left) is farewelled by Engineer of Track and Drainage, Dennis Cowden. In the background are the supersize matchbox labels presented by the staff.

Jim Sherriff retired on October 18 after being librarian in the aerial photography section of the Track and Drainage Division for the last 10 years.

He is a member of the Australian

Matchbox Labels Association and has examples from all over the world. Jim has never really counted his entire collection but "I can't lift the suitcase," he remarked.

His stamp collection, which he valued five years ago at \$5,000.

Jim Sherriff began his railway career as a shunter in the Echuca Goods Shed in 1929 and later worked on the Echuca Wharf loading sleepers and wool from the old paddle steamers into rail wagons.

The red gum and yellow box rail sleepers came down the River Murray mainly on the "Australine" and "Adelaide" from the Barmah region. They were transferred, 17 at a time, on slings. Baled wool came from the Lake Victoria area. There were nearly always two rail shunts a day on the wharf.

Later, Jim transferred to the Way and Works Branch as a repairer and spent a time at Deniliquin. After the depression, he came to Melbourne as part of an amalgamation gang and helped maintain the St. Kilda and Port Melbourne lines.

Soon Jim became a chairman and frequently travelled in the country painting mile points prior to aerial photography.

"We now have some 70,000 prints on record, showing every square inch of Victorian railway lines," Jim Sherriff added.

In retirement, he hopes to make a trip down the Birdsville Track, in between collecting more match boxes, stamps and coins.

Maldon length



Ganger Bob Lang regularly patrols the 11-mile branch from Castlemaine to Maldon.

Maryborough's S.M.

Maryborough's Stationmaster, John Le Roy, is the youngest man in charge of a class 2 station at the moment.



Mr. Le Roy

And in terms of stations, Maryborough would have to be one of the biggest in the State. The massive station buildings stand astride the junction of four lines Castlemaine, Mildura, Ballarat and Ararat—and see up to 35 trains pass daily in the busy season.

"Railway business is holding steady. We get good support from the town and district except for livestock," John told *News Letter*.

"Our passenger business has jumped substantially since *The Vinlander* promotion when that service started."

After joining the V.R. 24 years ago as a lad porter at Mentone, John went on to the relieving staff then gained S.M. posts at Kilmore, Euroa, Lilydale, Deniliquin and Murtoa.

A fisherman, Cairn Curran reservoir is John's favourite spot—and one chosen by many local anglers. In earlier times, John was a V.R.I. footballer, and was on the Institute committee at Murtoa.

Maldon



Maldon Caretaker, Mrs. Joan Tatt, checks a waybill.

Although Maldon has been declared a 'notable town' by the National Trust, railway business from the 600 townspeople can only be described as 'not notable'.

In fact, business is so light some weeks that the train is replaced by a truck from Castlemaine. "That happens about two or three times a year," Caretaker Mrs. Joan Tatt commented.

Nevertheless, Mrs. Tatt, who has been in charge of the station since April 1971, says that the rail tonnage into the town is holding steady. Recently, the town's supermarket switched to rail transport for its groceries, and, added to the other main commodities handled—beer, wool and superphosphate—combine to fill Mrs. Tatt's 11 hours a week at the station.

Mrs. Tatt succeeded her father to control of Maldon station—he was the last A.S.M. there. In younger days, she moved around the State with her father, and recalls living at Tabilk, Buangor, Guildford and Ravenswood before settling in Maldon 20 years ago.

Now that many of Maldon's fine old buildings are being restored, visitors are flocking to the town, and many are calling in to see the quaint little railway station which hosts excellent views of the countryside. Mrs. Tatt says some days there are 10-20 visitors to the station.

Baptism of water

Castlemaine's Stationmaster, Eric Harrison, was welcomed to both S.M. and Train Controller grades by floods—when in Cudgewa in 1957 (following the 1956 floods), "springs kept forming under the railway from Bullioh and regularly washed away the track supports that every second or third train seemed to be derailed" . . . and at train control in Bendigo during the '56 floods: "the Balranald line was washed out in three places, and remained closed for weeks—they eventually took all Wakool's supplies by motor boat from Barham, 22 miles a way on the Murray."



Mr. Harrison

But, during Eric's 31 railway years, there have been less trying times.

He joined as a junior clerk in the Bendigo Goods and later relieved in the district. In fact, he has only been posted outside Bendigo district thrice—Toolamba, Cudgewa and Melbourne train control. At other times, he has worked at Kerang, Charlton and Sea Lake.

Of all the stations he has worked at, he prefers Cudgewa. "Even though the scheduled service was

only three trains a week and we were getting up to 19 because of the start of the Snowy scheme, that small band of railwaymen had a magnificent social set up—not to mention the natural beauty of the district," he said.

But it is Castlemaine that gets his attention now and he is pleased to be able to say that the town gives good support to the V.R., in contrast to some of the other towns he has worked in, notably Kerang. "Although, he added, "Thompson's Foundry is having bad times, and their success is largely the town's success".

Marooned



Rail Motor Driver Jim Daly fills out details of his just-completed run from Castlemaine.

Rail Motor Driver Jim Daly, now stationed at Maryborough for working the branch line to Castlemaine, had the unusual experience of being marooned with his rail motor for about 20 hours during floods in 1956.

Recalling the incident, Jim said that the two rail motors were a little way out from Kurting (on the Bendigo-Korong Vale service) during a downpour when they were confronted with a wash-away. While he and the other driver were preparing to go back, the track subsided behind them stranding the rail-motors and their 80-plus passengers on high ground.

Emergency arrangements swung into action and about two hours later the passengers continued their journey by bus.

Two rail motor drivers and a traffic inspector stayed with the motors until the track was repaired.

Since then, life on the track has been quieter for Jim. Based at Portland for 13 years before transferring to Maryborough 19 months ago, Jim has been with the V.R. for 24 years.

Photography is his main interest and a growing family no doubt provides many subjects for his camera.

RETIREMENTS...

ACCOUNTANCY BRANCH

Wensor, E. W., Flinders St., 14/11

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING BRANCH

Blake, L. E., Distribution Div., 4/12
Giuliano, P., Flinders St., 12/12
Mitchell, A. I., Overhead, 23/10
Nailon, G. S., Overhead, 25/12

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Barfoot, J. T., Jolimont, 25/8
Brereton, E., Newport, 23/12
Carlisle, A. W., Newport, 26/9
County, M. R., E. R. Depot, 14/9
Cox, H. V., Newport, 28/12
Currie, J. A. W., Newport, 22/12
Dean, C. A., Bendigo North, 2/12
Dimitray, V. G., Jolimont, 31/12
Egan, P. F., Ararat, 10/12
Eisenhaendler, B., Jolimont, 2/12
Gillmore, C. W., Bendigo North, 12/12
Greenwood, G., Maryborough, 21/12
Gribble, C. E., E. R. Depot, 20/9
Hayes, E. V., Ballarat North, 31/12
Haynes, H. L., Bendigo North, 24/12
Hurlley, V. S. L., Korumburra, 28/12
Leslie, F. W., E. R. Depot, 29/9
Meredith, V. S., E. R. Depot, 14/9
Plummer, N. A., South Dynon, 11/9
Poprocki, A., North Melbourne, 13/9
Stuart, E. J., Ballarat North, 29/9
Wake, W. H., Traralgon, 27/9

STORES BRANCH

Flanagan, J. C., Head Office, 11/10
Griffin, J., Laurens Street, 18/9
Hugo, R. L., Printing Works, 21/9
Thomson, A. W. Head Office, 20/10
Weekes, F., Newport Workshops, 6/10

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Bartram, R. A., Spencer Street, 22/12
Duffus, L. J., Dimboola, 17/12
Feehan, M. J., Flinders Street, 19/12
Freeland, D. J., Spencer Street, 10/12
Kidd, (Mrs.) E. G., Burnley, 11/10
Milkeraitis, A., Geelong, 14/9
Minard, J. J., Head Office, 11/12
Ramage, L. J., Numurkah, 29/9

NEWS LETTER REGRETS TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING DEATHS

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING BRANCH

Reinking, C. L. E., Testing
Division, 5/10

REFRESHMENT SERVICES DIVISION

Williams, (Mrs.) R., Spencer St
Cafeteria, 10/10

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Burn, W. P., Newport, 10/10
Ledwidge, W. S., Newport, 7/10
Leng, A. J., Ararat, 21/9
May, A. E., Jolimont, 20/9
Smith, R. A. W., North Melb.,
12/10
Willemssen, T. W., Newport, 28/9
Wilson, R. C., South Dynon,
20/9

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Dickie, A. G., Taradale, 19/10
Hall, W. F., Numurkah, 29/9
Hartwell, J., Melbourne Goods,
20/9
Johnson, J. G. R., Melbourne
Goods, 3/9
Matthews, N., Wangaratta, 30/9
O'Connor, P. E., Spencer St., 13/10
Thompson, L., C/- Head Office,
7/10

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Donnelly, W. W., Spotswood, 1/10
Egle, J. A., Spotswood Work-
shops, 16/9
Purves, R. E., Korong Vale,

Smith, J. E. C., Geelong, 5/10
Smith, M., Ballarat, 25/12

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Abritschkin, M., East Melbourne, 30/8
Askew, D. G., Sale, 9/12
Bartley, N. W., Warragul, 11/8
Blight, W. M., Glenhuntly, 19/12
Broughton, D. P., Seymour, 18/9
Clarke, J. W., Cressy, 21/12
Dashper, W. G. K., Cavendish, 4/12
Gibbons, J., Laurens Street, 14/12
Hilton, G. J. A., Spotswood Workshops,
1/12
Hooper, A. E., Elmore, 1/12
Kalms, H. A., Murrayville, 6/12
McLean, T. J., North Shore, 18/12
Nardella, N., Head Office, 13/12
Nuttall, A. C., Caulfield, 14/10
Shurdington, W. H., Nhill, 27/10
Watson, W. A., Korumburra, 13/9
Wright, W. R., Ararat, 27/9

Institute News

STOP PRESS —
LICENSED CLUB
ON WAY

A licensed club is on the way for V.R.I. members. Negotiations are being completed for members to have access to an established club in Flinders Lane, near Flinders Street station.

Club facilities include a dining room for low-cost luncheons—either counter-style or multiple courses—a lounge bar featuring relaxed drinking for gents and their ladies, a men-only main club bar where the men can reminisce, plus reading room, lounge and other usual club facilities.

Details of how to obtain immediate use of these facilities are available from the Institute on auto. 1642 or 2445, and will appear in December *News Letter*.

BEEN TO THE LIBRARY LATELY?

"Read any good books lately?" was a good gambit, a few years ago, when any conversation started to lag, then television took over, not only as a leisure time habit, but also as a subject of conversation. Now the wheel has turned again. Television has lost much of its fascination and many people are again turning to the joys and mental stimulation of books.

Books are the V.R.I. Library's business and all the current best-sellers are available Harold Robbins' *The Betsy*, Irving Wallace's *The Word*, Arthur Hailey's *Wheels*, etc. Best-sellers are not necessarily the best books, and they certainly don't meet all tastes, but the library caters for all tastes. Recommended recent additions are *The Log Across the Road* by S. Ross, a story of the "emerg-

ency" in Malaya; *Tregarron's Daughter* by M. Brent, which is reminiscent of some of Daphne du Maurier's works; Joseph Wambough's *The New Centurions* who are the present day Los Angeles policemen (this is being made into a film, and will no doubt be seen on TV in 10 years); *Penmaric* by Susan Howatch, another broody Cornish story, and many others by such really good entertaining authors as Alan Drury, James Barlow, R. M. Delderfield, Peter Blake, Richard Condon and H. H. Kirst.

Readers who like historical novels, sea stories and Australian fiction will find a bonanza in these areas. *Calico Palace* by Gwen Bristow, in the historical section, is one of the most purely entertaining books in years.

Detective stories, adventure, science fiction and romance are staple diet for large numbers of people, and the library's shelves are all well filled and up to date. Publishers had, for a time neglected westerns, but the demand is still there, and is again being met.

Readers of non-fiction who have not recently used the library will find a big difference now. We have been concentrating in this area lately, and are continuing the process, though demand is so great that new titles don't remain on the shelves for very long. But more new titles are added constantly.

The practical man (or woman) too, is being catered for better than ever—the hobbies, handyman and technical section has been expanded relatively more than any other section of the library, particularly in the more popular fields of gardening, photography, radio/stereo/hi-fi, boats and boating, railway history, etc.

We have manuals covering all models of Holden, Falcon and Valiant, as well as the more popular British and Japanese cars. So much have we added that we have had to move the manuals to a new location.

The children's section has not been neglected. We can't fit all the new books on to the shelves, but so many of our country centre libraries are establishing children's sections that we now have a quicker turnover of titles, and the children seem to be very happy with the arrangement.

This revitalizing of the library stock applies to country centre libraries too, so that all members benefit, whatever their location.

All railway employees are urged to have a good close look at the Institute library service: it is available to all members of the family, and it costs you nothing, if you are a member of the Institute. Book lists are available on request.

If you want to know more about the Institute library, write or phone the librarian (auto 1574).

INSTITUTE SPORT

Golf

The Wimmera Golf Championship held at the Dimboola Golf Course attracted a large entry. N. Haby (Dimboola) won the Wimmera Championship while I. Fechner took out the A grade handicap. Reports indicate that once again this tournament was very well organised and the hard working committee of the Dimboola V.R.I. golf club must be congratulated on their efforts.

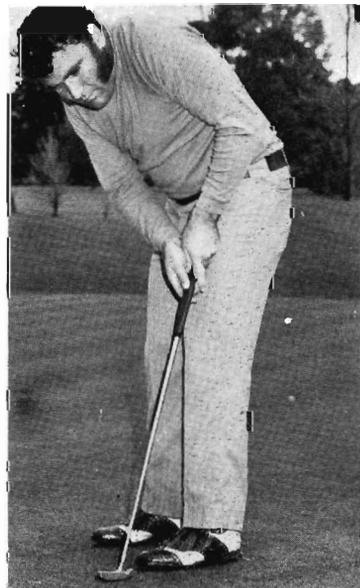
The 4th Annual Grampians Championship was also held recently at the picturesque Chalambar Golf Course and while the course was in good condition, reports have it that the greens were lightning fast.

This did not deter Ian Patterson (Geelong), who won the Grampians Championship with E. Mill (Ararat) winning the A grade handicap.

Central Council was represented at this function by Councillors A. Collins, N. Roberts and I. Adcock.

Country Golf Week

Aspendale's beautiful Rosedale Golf Course was bathed in glorious sunshine as our golfers gathered for the start of country week. From the entries, it was apparent that this year's attendance would be the best for some time. Mr. M. L. G. McKenzie, Immediate Past President of the Institute, welcomed the players at lunch on the first day and declared the week officially open. An 18-hole stroke handicap opened the week and saw some very good individual scores being recorded



State open and country railways singles championship winner, Len Prior of Bendigo.



Enjoying their game of golf during the Country Week while watching Ian Patterson of Geelong hit off, were (from left) Keith Chisholm, of Ballarat, Barry Miles of Bendigo and Greg Seer of Warragul.

until Ararat's Norm (now to be known as Ned) Collins recorded a net 62 (86 off the stick). The handicapper was quickly on the job and Norm continued the week on a considerably reduced handicap.

Tuesday's weather was threatening and overcast, but enthusiasm and keenness were high and participants of the morning's 18-hole stableford event showed just how close were the handicaps by producing a four-way count back, with Bob Coyne (Dimboola) winning from Nev. Joyce (Yarrowonga), Ian Patterson (Geelong) and Alby Warner (Bairnsdale), all on 37. A 9-hole stableford was played after lunch and it was not until very late in the day that we were able to declare Bendigo's Jack (better known as "Swampy") Marsh the winner with a score of 21.

Wednesday saw the 18-hole bogie event won by Howard Humphrey of Traralgon with a score of +6. Howard, one of the most consistent golfers to attend, usually manages to pick up a trophy.

Thursday, of course, was championship day and what a fitting climax to a great week of golf. The State Open and Country Railways Singles Championships were won by Bendigo's Len Prior with a score of 109 off the stick. The Country Open Singles required a play off with Alby Jack (Bendigo) defeating Barry Williams (Traralgon) at the third hole. Dennis Passey of Dimboola took out the Country Minor Singles Championship with a 130. Bendigo once again won the major team

events defeating their old rivals, Geelong, and the minor division was won by Dimboola No. 1 from Traralgon. Congratulations to Jack Marsh (Bendigo) and team also to Dennis Passey (Dimboola) and his boys for their wins in the respective divisions.

Mr. E. P. Rogan, Deputy Chairman of Commissioners, presented trophies to the various winners. Thanks for much of the success of the week rest with Alan Collins V.R.I. Golf Club, Hon. Secretary.

1973 Country Weeks

Railway sportsmen are asked to note the following 1973 dates:
Country bowls week—

February 19-23; entries close on January 29.

Country cricket week—

February 26—March 2; entries close February 2.

Country tennis week—

March 19-23; entries close February 26.

Country golf week—

October 1-4; entries close September 10.

Country indoor bias bowls tournament—Sunday, July 29.

Country carpet bowls—

Sunday, August 26.

Intending participants are reminded that all these fixtures are conducted at top class venues around Melbourne. Applications for leave to attend these fixtures should be submitted through the normal Departmental channels as early as possible.

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

NEWS LETTER

DECEMBER

VR

1972

10 CENTS



\$60 MILLION LOST

Because the actual allocation of loan funds for the V.R. has remained almost static since 1955-56 while labour and material costs have escalated, the loss of purchasing power of those funds through inflation, over the period now totals an estimated \$60 million.

If our loan funds had been retained at 1955-56 purchasing power levels, Victoria's railways would be vastly different from the present system.

For example, modern attractive and efficient trains could have replaced many of the antiquated and costly to maintain metropolitan trains.

The vital work of providing two extra tracks between South Kensington and Footscray—the key to improving train services to all western suburbs and districts—would have been tackled much more vigorously than it is at present, and would have been completed long ago. As well, these other tasks not yet started, would be either completed or well advanced: labour saving centralised traffic control would be in operation between Sunshine and Serviceton, and possibly other areas, and trains on this important line

would be speeded; train running generally would have been improved substantially by power signalling, improved crossing facilities and selective duplication—notably completion of the Geelong works, additional tracks between Sunshine and Melton, beyond Ringwood, Macleod to Greensborough, plus a third track between Caulfield and Cheltenham.

Couple these improvements and savings to a greater attack on the task of replacing obsolete four-wheeled goods vehicles with modern, high-speed bogie freight wagons, and the loss of purchasing power (and modernisation) through inflation in just 15 years represents an enormous chasm forcing the V.R. further and further from profitability.

A *Herald* editorial stated: "An undertaking of such proportions and complexities needs the type of administration that would be expected of a commercial venture of similar size.

"But no amount of outside expertise can rescue the railways from their doldrums without a rejuvenating injection of funds."

A more correct summing up of the Railways' case could not be made.

G. F. BROWN

TRAVEL HABITS SURVEYED

N.S.W.'s new Public Transport Commission is undertaking a detailed study on how to promote public transport in N.S.W.

Convenience, price, appearance and standards of existing public transport in the state are to be investigated.

The aim is to increase public transport use and its earnings.

The study will aim to have office hours staggered and to encourage people to use public transport instead of cars.

• Head of the new Commission in Sydney is Mr. P. H. Shirley, who was on the British Railway Board during the rationalization in the early 1960's and was, at one stage, Deputy Chairman of Cunard Steamship Co.

\$100 FINE FOLLOWS COLLISION

A medical practitioner was fined a total of \$100 by Eltham Court after being found guilty of stopping his car on a level crossing in the path of an approaching train.

Police told the court that a breathalyser test on the car driver gave a reading of .16 per cent, and evidence was given by the defence that the accused was an alcoholic at the time.

Fines of \$40 were imposed for careless driving, \$50 for exceeding .05, and \$10 for driving through a rail crossing while lights and bells were operating.

As well, his licence was cancelled for six months.

BARLEY

First of the new season's barley was railed from Victoria's Mallee district to storage, late last month.

First crop receipts were at Sea Lake, Walpeup, Nandaly and Anuelo.

While some maltable barley is being railed to the Australian Barley Board's main vertical storage at Sunshine, most is stored in Grain Elevators Board silos at railway stations, pending terminal arrangements.

Barley is railed in both bulk hopper and open tarpaulined wagons. The harvest has suffered from drought conditions and only 5 million bushels

of Victorian barley are expected this season.

New season oats and wheat have also started to move.

According to the Victorian Oat-growers Pool & Marketing Co. Ltd., only about 7 million bushels of oats would come from Victorian farms.

UNDERGROUND STARTS AT NORTH MELBOURNE

Rail tracks serving Nos. 1 and 2 platforms at North Melbourne station were taken out of use on November 27 because of work for Melbourne's underground rail loop.

Work, involving the northern line connections to the underground, is expected to last about 18 months.

As a result, slight time-table alterations were made to the Broadmeadows, St. Albans and Williamstown lines peak-hour trains to channel all trains onto the remaining four tracks.

During the construction period, minor delays might occur to peak-hour trains between North Melbourne and Spencer Street stations. Every possible effort has been made to obviate delays and signalling has been improved on the adjacent set of tracks to increase capacity.

SATISFIED CUSTOMER

From the *Yarrowonga Chronicle* comes details of one very satisfied customer:

"Use your railways when you have anything perishable to get to a given spot in a hurry.

"This is the recommendation of a Yarrowonga resident who lodged a perishable parcel at the Yarrowonga railway station on October 13 for dispatch to Korong Vale, 247 miles.

"The parcel, one pound in weight, cost 18 cents to forward and arrived at Korong Vale that evening at 6.15 p.m. Contents and parcel in excellent order."

FRONT COVER

Work on Melbourne's underground loop is now proceeding at several points ringing the city. In the train stabling yard at Flinders Street, many sidings and lines are being moved to make way for the works, and here, near the Jolimont sub station, workmen are laying new rails for what will become the Sandringham lines where they detour around the ramp.

1971-72 ANNUAL REPORT

Dominating the 1971-72 financial year, was the comprehensive report into land transport in Victoria. This document listed several major shortcomings in the present transport scene, not the least of which was the need to revitalise the V.R. into a more commercial minded entity.

Accepted as a blueprint for future transport guidelines, the report, produced against a background of mounting rail losses, tends to overshadow some of the solid gains made by the Department in recent years.

Despite further advances in efficiency, to new records in many areas, wage costs and the retention of obsolete equipment helped inflate the losses to record levels in the face of declining purchasing power from loan funds with a resultant effect on the V.R.'s struggle to modernise (see under *personnel and administration.*)

By comparison with the previous year, income increased by almost \$4 million but was more than offset by a rise of over \$9 million in working expenses.

Wages awards were again the principal rise in expenditure, accounting for \$9,807,000. Since 1964-65, the percentage of labour costs to revenue has increased from 74 to 100 during this difficult last year. In money terms, this means that a profit on goods operation of \$9.5 million has been converted into a loss of about \$6.3 million.

This is a serious decline but against the content of social service activities (*mentioned under that heading*), the overall influence of the freight loss on railway finance is a minor one and the real deterioration is of relatively recent origin and outside the control of the management. Relevant portions of the Bland Report should be assessed in the light of these facts.

Payroll tax, now a State tax, increased \$1,075,000 to \$3,400,047 for the year. It seems a case of robbing Peter to pay Paul to require a Government instrumentality to meet this tax.

The following is a summary of the Commissioners' report to the Minister.

	1971-72
	\$
Gross income	111,966,605
Working expenses charged against revenue ..	138,899,614
<hr/>	
LOSS ON CURRENT OPERATIONS ..	26,933,009
<hr/>	
Interest charges and expenses*	9,077,394
Exchange on interest payments	81,472
Contribution to National Debt Sinking Fund ..	393,013
<hr/>	
TOTAL INTEREST, EXCHANGE, ETC. ..	9,551,879
<hr/>	
DEFICIT	36,484,888
<hr/>	

*Includes \$5,364,564 payable on interest bearing funds used for renewals and replacements.

THE BLAND REPORT

The year's outstanding feature was the Report of The Board of Inquiry into the Victorian Land Transport System, presented to the Victorian Legislative Assembly by the Minister of Transport on March 29, 1972.

The Board accepted many V.R. submissions and, of course, made some recommendations with which the Railways do not agree.

Comments on the more immediate recommendations relating to:

- the railway organization
 - railway staff
 - the railways' role
 - general considerations involved in any attempt to create an entirely commercial organization
 - specific considerations in reduction or cessation of services, and,
 - transport regulation
- were furnished to the Minister.

The Board recommended that the railways should be run primarily as a commercial undertaking. The Commissioners said that they had pointed out that conversion into a commercial undertaking would not be accomplished by simple legislative action but must be an active continuing financial commitment until a modern system evolved.

Successful pursuit of "commercial" objectives will also require that the railway administration is free to manage its own affairs.

The Board directed attention to the serious short-fall of \$32 million in the contribution made by trucks of four tons and over to the road costs attributable to them and, in enunciating a doctrine of "competitive equality" between road and rail, called for this gap to be bridged.

Liberalization of road transport should be dependent upon putting

the railways on "competitive equality" with road. This necessitated providing the railways with modern equipment and either imposing proper fees on road vehicles or subsidizing the railways on the basis applicable to road transport.

"Because the transport function involves door to door service, and a very significant segment of the freight market wants to deal with only one transport organization, it is imperative that railways be empowered to operate road services either directly or by contact," commented the Commissioners. "Furthermore a corollary is that if railways are not relieved of common carrier obligations, that obligation should be imposed on their competitors."

Before the Board was commissioned to undertake its inquiry sections dealing with planning and development, cost research, market research, work study, and organization and methods, had been established. The existing computer complex was supplemented by time sharing of a bureau service and negotiations were in course for the hire of another computer.

Railway accounting and the form of the balance sheet were currently geared to meet Treasury and Audit requirements. Developing a commercial accounting and costing system was a major task involving a restructured balance sheet, establishment of profit centres, extension of responsibility accounting and the extraction of more specialized cost data. This was under way.

The Commissioners suggested in their report that the railways should be prescribed under four broad phases:

- basic function of the Railways
- specific objectives of the Railway administration
- function of the Government; and,

OPERATIONS

	1971-72	1970-71	1969-70
Total goods and livestock tonnage ..	11,608,739	12,490,335	11,835,141
Average haul per ton of goods (miles) ..	172	170	172
Total net ton miles (goods and livestock) in millions ..	1,996	2,119	2,037
Average miles per wagon per day ..	37.10 (H)	36.61	35.36
Average daily wagon output (net ton miles) ..	397	400	378
Average net wagon load (tons) ..	16.11	16.39	16.03
Average ton miles (net) per goods train hour ..	4,088 (H)	4,047	3,883
Average net train load (tons) ..	297	301	300
Standing time (hours) per 1,000 train miles ..	10.6 (L)	11.3	11.8

(H) record high. (L) record low.

- duties of the Railway administration.

Having established these, early decisions were necessary on:

- what are the means of, and resources needed, to achieve the objectives of the railways, and,
- how and when the necessary resources can be made available.

LOAN FUNDS

At \$15,444,234, interest bearing funds were \$444,562 below last year's allotment and inflation eroded their effectiveness still further.

They were used as follows:

RENEWALS AND REPLACEMENTS

Way and Works	..	\$ 3,181,052
Rolling Stock	..	6,498,796
		<u>9,679,848</u>

CAPITAL WORKS

Way and Works	..	5,621,977
New lines	..	142,409
		<u>5,764,386</u>

Since July 1, 1960, \$112 million of loan funds had been used to finance renewals and replacements, involving an interest payment this year of \$5.36 million.

These funds generated no additional earning capacity towards meeting these charges. The unsatisfactory nature of this type of finance was again emphasized.

MARKETING

Fiercely competitive conditions continued unabated and the challenge was met by constant review of train

speeds and schedules, receipt and delivery times for goods, and where possible, specialized equipment. Particular attention was being given to terminal costs, which could render railway costs uncompetitive. Cost research was actively pursued and was being used whenever possible as the initial tool in specified price determinations.

The constant efforts of our marketing division, which was being expanded and strengthened along lines which have proved successful overseas, was supported by both the V.R.'s widespread publicity and that of Railways of Australia.

Most intersystem passenger fares were increased by 15-25 per cent from August 1, 1971. From August 29, 1971, the following average increases applied:

Suburban fares	15 per cent
Country return fares	17 per cent
Parcels rates	20 per cent
Most freight rates	10 per cent

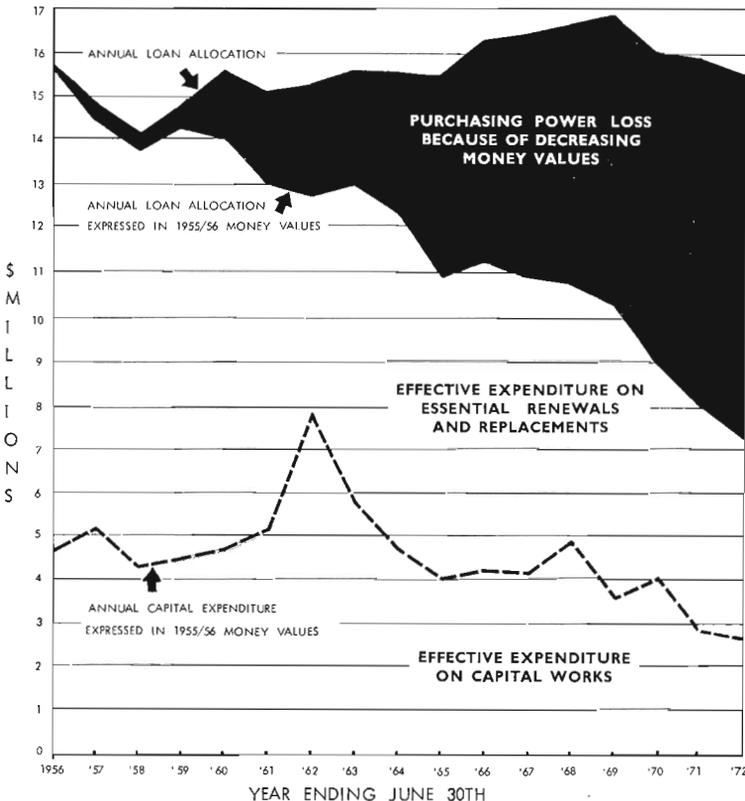
The theory that the railways role should be confined to long hauls or particular commodities has never been subscribed to by the Department. On the basis of quantity and proper terminal facilities, the V.R. was able to win contracts for pipe movements from the northern suburbs to Hastings and Lyndhurst. Road delays in crossing the metropolis with large loads give the railways an exploitable competitive advantage.

INVESTMENT

Program of works to improve suburban train services continued within the meagre limits of available finance.

Major activity centred on the Box Hill group of lines and a third track between East Camberwell and Box Hill was commissioned in January 1972. A new bridge over the River Yarra was completed and other works were well advanced in connection with the provision of a further section of a third track between Burnley and Hawthorn.

Preliminary work associated with the construction of two additional tracks between South Kensington and Footscray commenced. When



The continued deterioration in the V.R.'s capacity to maintain the system properly and undertake capital improvements necessary to provide service at a competitive quality and price is clearly illustrated by this graph. In addition, over-age assets involve excessively high repair and maintenance costs.

completed, a long-standing bottleneck will be greatly relieved and will enable further improvements to commuter services in the western suburbs and on the Geelong, north-western and northern main lines.

Work continued apace on the early stages of the underground railway project in conjunction with the Melbourne Underground Rail Loop Authority. At the close of the year, 900 lineal feet of box tunnel for the Caulfield and Sandringham lines had been completed and a start had been made on the ramp to eventually link the underground to the Box Hill and Glen Waverley lines. New stabling sidings for electric trains were provided near Macaulay to replace sidings in the Jolimont Yard removed to make way for the underground works.

Commuter car park spaces, provided at 137 stations, now total 11,366 as a result of continued development of these facilities. The car park sealing and marking out program was given some impetus by a special Government grant of \$120,000 which also enabled landscaping and tree planting to be carried out at numerous suburban stations.

Improvements to railway property in the metropolitan area have long been wanted by the V.R., but, up till now, this has been quite impracticable within the limits of funds provided.

Further improvements were made to terminal freight handling facilities. Two new 30-ton travelling gantry cranes were provided at the Dynon freight complex while at Geelong, work was commenced on construction of track and erection of a gantry crane for a new container and heavy freight terminal.

Australia's first electronic wagon weighbridge was commissioned at Dynon during September 1971. Complete trains or individual wagons can now be weighed whilst in motion—an important added safety feature.

Modern facilities for the servicing of diesel locomotives were provided at Bendigo.

Railway workshops built 150 new high-capacity freight wagons and 25 modern brake-vans during the year. Although obsolete wagons were being

scrapped as rapidly as replacements could be provided, the present rate of construction was insufficient to arrest a continued increase in the average age of the fleet, let alone improve the situation. This involved the dual disability of a reduced quality of service and abnormal maintenance costs.

OPERATIONS

Drought in East Gippsland necessitated a major lift of fodder during much of the year. To June 30, 3,242 wagon loads had been conveyed to stations between Traralgon and Orbost and the movement was showing no sign of slackening. In addition approximately 9,000 sheep and 15,000 cattle were railed from the drought areas for agistment. This, together with the partial recovery of the pastoral industry and exceptionally heavy sheep traffic from sales in South Australia, led to an overall increase of nine per cent in livestock traffic by comparison with the previous year.

Overseas container traffic on rail continued to grow and constituted an important component of V.R. freight business. Notwithstanding numerous interruptions to shipping schedules by industrial disputes in Australia and overseas, the number of containers exceeded last year's figure by 5,656 and further growth seems assured.

Another growth area lay in interstate motor car movements—principally between manufacturers and distributors in the capital cities. Cars transported by rail increased by 14,648 to 68,161, while the movement of motor car bodies also recorded a healthy increase.

Suburban train services on the Belgrave, Lilydale, Alamein and Glen Waverley lines were augmented and in some cases accelerated as soon as the extra capacity provided by the new track and resignalling between East Camberwell and Box Hill became operative in January 1972.

The introduction of staggered hours for State public servants from March 1972 led to a marked variation in peak period travel patterns. This necessitated adjustments to some schedules and a close watch was being maintained to gauge whether further changes were desirable.

PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION

As at June 30, 1972, the railway staff was 25,715, down 163 on the previous year's total. Since 1961-62, the overall reduction has been 3,586.

Productivity improvement has been in the forefront of V.R. administrative objectives but the Department has had to content itself with the more effective use of labour resources rather than their replacement by capital intensive processes such as centralized train control, with its increased efficiency and reduced labour costs.

Principally this had come about through improved efficiency and generally streamlining operating techniques, although some line closures and reduced services on others assisted.

Despite suggestions to the contrary, staff morale was consistently high.

Staff needs in major adjustments was not a subordinate consideration. Careful and early planning in conjunction with the men's representatives ensured that individual needs and preferences were met as far as possible. Of paramount importance to the successful operation of the system is our staff, the greatest majority of whom are specially trained.

Further scrutiny of staff training procedures and steps to improve the co-ordination and inter-relation of courses for induction, job skills, supervision and management were undertaken. As a result, the administration of classes for instruction in railway skills was transferred from the Victorian Railways Institute to the Departments' Education Section from January 1972.

As in past years, senior officers attended business and higher management courses at the Administrative Staff College, Mt. Eliza, the Melbourne University School of Business Administration and the University of New South Wales. Other staff were continuing part-time studies in several disciplines at universities and technical institutions.

Research Section

A Development and Planning Division was formally established within the Secretary's Branch to co-ordinate the Department's research and planning activities and advise the Commissioners on future planning. Professional economists, engineers and railway personnel with wide experience of practical railway workings are included on the Division's staff, to be augmented as occasions demand. To date, emphasis had been placed on operations and economic research with particular attention being paid to traffic costing as the basis of rate negotiations and the problems of uneconomic lines and services. *A computer-based model*

SOCIAL SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Included in revenue was a recoup of \$1.25 m. towards concessions granted to pensioners and scholars for school travel. The Commissioners welcomed this as what they hoped was merely a first step towards separation in the accounts of all V.R. social service activities from their commercial activities, as recommended by recent annual reports and endorsed in the Report of the Board of Inquiry into land transport in Victoria.

If applied to this year's accounts the total recoups for social services would have been approximately—

**Suburban Passenger Services	\$ 8.4 million
**Country Passenger Services	\$12.1 million

**Excludes interest payments and depreciation for which no cash provision was made.

for costing train operations was developed, investment analysis was being refined, and work was in hand on the design of a computerised system to monitor wagon utilisation as an aid to wagon fleet planning.

The Management Services Division continued the review of clerical, administrative and physical processes with the aim of providing better service at reduced cost. Investigations covered many subjects including the operation of the Melbourne Goods Depot, the handling of parcels and automatic fare collection.

Electronic data processing continued to play an increasing role as an aid to management decision-making and provided a good deal of the information requested by the Board of Inquiry into land transport. A computer time-sharing terminal

was installed to facilitate computations relating to economic analysis, engineering designs, land survey, and other technical investigations.

An Environment Control Officer was appointed to advise on weed control procedures, pollution problems, waste disposal, soil erosion and beautification schemes.

A wide range of recreational activities and services for railway staff and their families was again provided by the Victorian Railways Institute. A new V.R.I. centre was opened at Echuca, the twenty-fifth such amenity in country areas.

Placed on record was the Commissioners' appreciation of the work of the staff during a difficult year. They said: "We have never pretended that the whole system is to the standard we and our

staff would desire, but this in no way reflects on the general body of railway staff who have consistently displayed ingenuity and resourcefulness in making the most of the inadequate funds and facilities available."

OVERSEAS VISITS

The Deputy Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. E. P. Rogan, made an overseas tour to study the functioning of Railway Boards, marketing organizations, automatic fare collection and barrier systems and modern passenger trains.

Mr. P. McColl, Engineer of Tests in the Electrical Engineering Branch, visited Europe during September 1971 to study technical matters associated with electrical equipment and supplies.

S.O.P. BIRTHDAY

Spirit of Progress, probably Australia's most famous named train, was 35 years old on November 23. But the only similarity with the train that made its inaugural trip from Spencer Street to Albury in 1937, is the blue and gold livery. Even the destination has changed—since 1962, the train runs right through to Sydney.

In those early years and during World War II, *Spirit of Progress* represented a tremendous advance in the standard of rail travel, being the first completely streamlined air-conditioned all-steel train in the Southern Hemisphere.

Victorian Railways Newport Workshops built the train of two-class sitting carriages as well as a dining car, and a parlour car with a distinctive rounded end and illuminated name sign.

Because of the curved end, the parlour car was always at the rear of the train; consequently the *Spirit* was run around a loop-line at North Melbourne and Wodonga to position it for the return trip.

During trials, top speed reached was 79 miles an hour, a record at that time for Australian surface transport.

Before going into regular daily service between Melbourne and Albury on November 23, 1937, *Spirit of Progress* was opened for inspection at Spencer Street, Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong and Castlemaine.

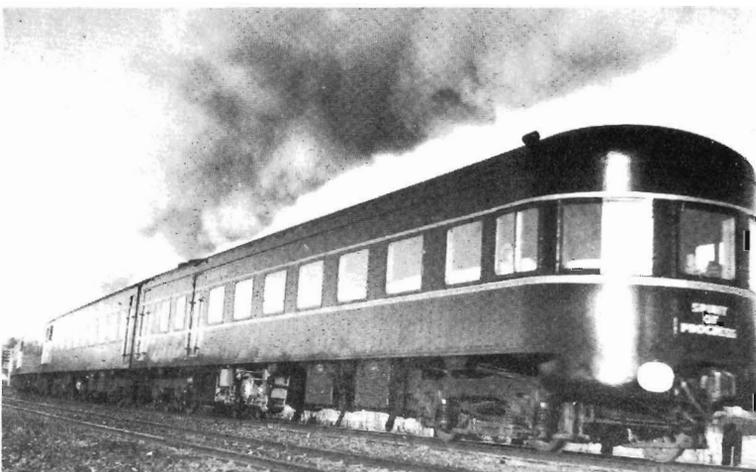
With *Spirit of Progress* came the first stewardess on any Australian Railway; the title was changed to hostess in 1956.

Four 3-cylinder "Pacific" type, S class steam engines, originally introduced to eliminate double heading of the *Sydney Express* with A2's, were streamlined in 1937-38 to harmonize with the blue and gold steel carriages of the train.

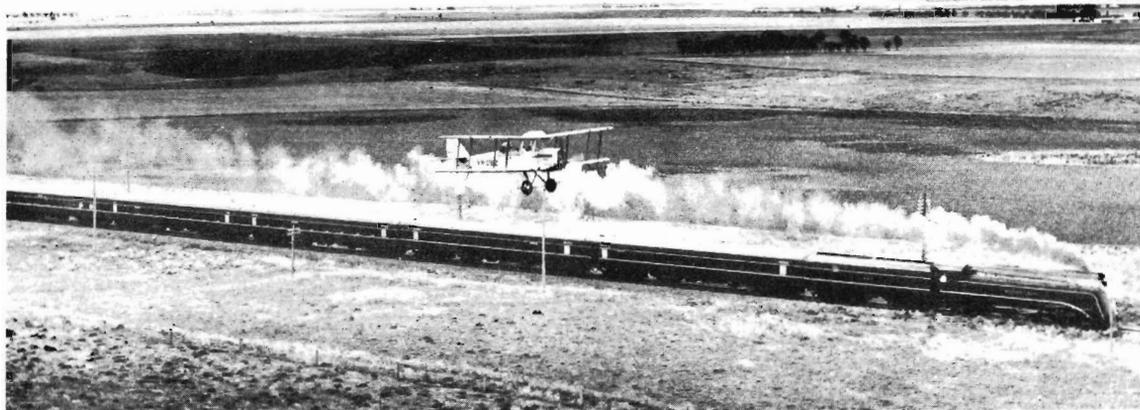
In 1954, blue and gold painted



Spirit of Progress as today's travellers know it.



The distinctive round-ended *Spirit of Progress* parlour car. In 1956, it was transferred to the Melbourne-Albury *The Daylight* service, and when that train also ran right through to Sydney from 1962, it was subsequently converted into the Commissioners' special carriage, *Norman*.



Spirit of Progress on one of its test runs to Geelong in 1937. Paralleling the steam hauled train was a DH4, similar to a Tiger Moth. It was on this trip that the train attained 79 m.p.h.

diesel-electric locomotives replaced steam on *Spirit of Progress*.

Late in 1957, saloon-type carriages, also built at Newport Workshops, were included in the train's make-up. These carriages, in the main, with reclining, lay back seats, are used in the make-up of today's *Spirit of Progress*.

On the Melbourne-Albury broad gauge service, *Spirit of Progress*, as a single train, was able to run both the daily forward and return connections with the two standard gauge N.S.W. night expresses travelling in each direction between Sydney and Albury.

Then came the great day of April 16, 1962. Released from the shackles of a broken gauge, *Spirit of Progress* was readily adapted for the nearly 600 mile standard gauge run between Melbourne and Sydney. Thus the single train became twins, and was the first standard gauge to leave Melbourne in revenue service, 75 minutes ahead of *Southern Aurora*.

Carriages were modernized by including such amenities as floor heating in addition to the radiators, hot water supply to wash-rooms, and improved lighting. Lighting was changed to operate from a special power van, instead of generators under each carriage.

Two compartment carriages were converted to each provide sleeping and sitting accommodation for Canberra passengers, the carriage being uncoupled at Goulburn and attached to a local train for Canberra.

For continuous refreshment service, V. R. buffet cars were also modernized and converted from broad to standard gauge, replacing the former dining car. Finally a *Southern Aurora* type twinette sleeping carriage, and a power generating van, were added to each consist.

Total annual mileage now run by the twin trains comprising *Spirit of Progress* is nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ -million miles.

SUGGESTIONS ACCEPTED

During, October, the following awards were granted for adopted suggestions:

- Handle for line breaker reset switch be more securely fastened \$25
- Modifications to track-liner take off stand \$15
- Alterations to "Account rendered" forms \$10
- Improvements to V.R. cash van for better ventilation in hot weather \$5
- Hand brake locking device for fork lifts \$5
- Corrugated iron fencing at Ballarat North Workshops in vicinity of Motor Truck Garage be replaced by chain wire fence to improve visibility \$5
- Head Office tours for country staff \$3
- Publicity for extensions to off-peak tickets for use between 4 and 6 p.m. \$3
- Head Office ladies' rest room be re-decorated \$3
- Removal of duplicate stock items \$2

MILEPOST

1928

First of four S class (Pacific type, 4-6-2) locomotives built at Newport Workshops, in service, March 14.

First petrol-electric rail motors began operating.

First automatically operated points and signals in the southern hemisphere installed at St. Kilda, October 28.

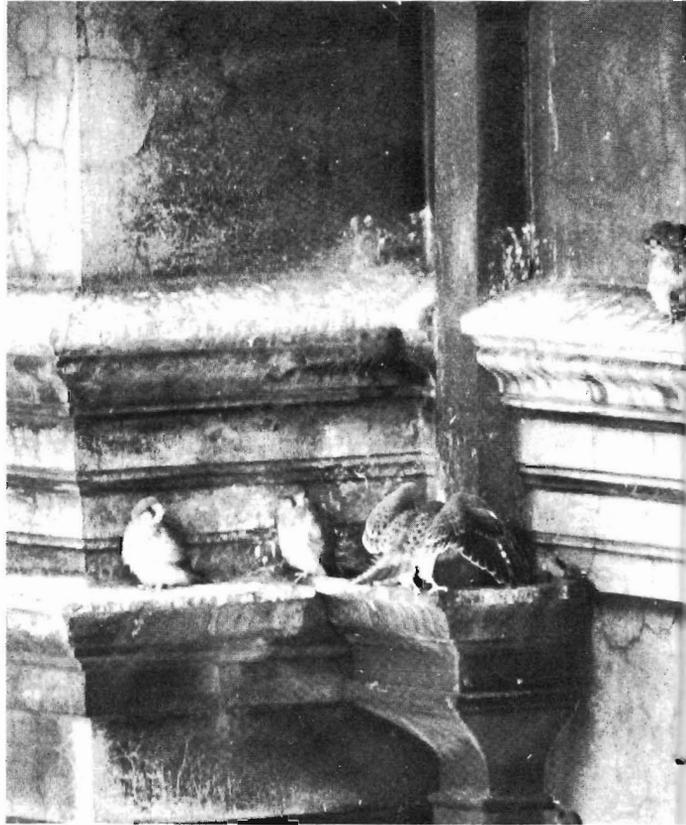
MILLION MILES FOR X34



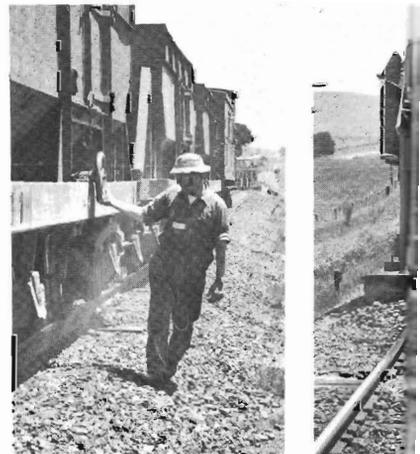
The first of the Victorian Railways fleet of 14 X-class diesel-electric locomotives—the State's most powerful—logged its first one-million miles when it hauled *Southern Aurora* into Spencer Street on November 10 (above). The one-million mark was reached in just under six years since the purchase of the locomotive—X34—on November 14, 1966. Driver of X34 on that trip, Mr. V. Snow, of Wodonga, (left) said that the 1,000,000 mile reading came up on the locomotive's speedometer near Donnybrook. X-class locomotives vary from 1,800 h.p. to 2,000 h.p.; seven are on standard gauge (4 ft. 8½ in.) and the other seven on broad gauge (5 ft. 3 in.).



CARNA HAWKS! The pigeon population at the back of Head Office is surprisingly small considering the number in nearby areas – but when you consider that sparrow hawks nest there year after year, then you realise that life is tougher for Head Office pigeons than their neighbouring feathered brethren. For at least the last 10 years some H.O. workers can recall the family of sparrow hawks nesting on a ledge some 70 feet above the ground. This year, three young hawks were produced, and made a short public appearance while learning the intricacies of flying from their precarious perch. In our photograph, one of the parents has just returned after demonstrating take-off and landing procedures while the three youngsters watched. A few hours later the fledgling trio were all airborne ... which was bad news indeed for the local pigeons.



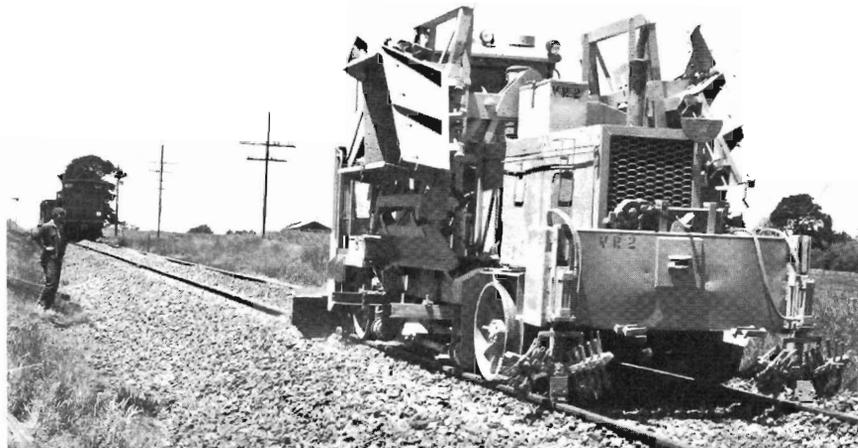
VIEWS OF NEWS



MAINTENANCE. Upkeep and upgrading Victoria's 4,166 route miles of tracks is a continuing task of vital importance to the smooth running of the V.R. Now highly mechanised, the work flows rapidly from the time the ballast train arrives at the scene. In the above sequence, at Burrumbeet, the ganger controls the ballast flow on to the track, while the Kershaw ballast regulator follows behind spreading the ballast evenly for following machines



FLYING OVER. Last of the major bottlenecks which caused delays to trains to the eastern suburbs – the two tracks between Richmond and Flinders Street – will be removed from February 5 when the new flyover near Richmond station is commissioned. All trains from Melbourne that are to stop at East Richmond will travel over the flyover, thereby eliminating many cross moves caused when the trains, from six platforms at Flinders Street, were fed into two platforms at Richmond. As well, four tracks will come into use between Richmond and Flinders Street for trains servicing these busy lines, substantially increasing their capacity.



to lift, pack and line the track. Annually, about \$16 million is spent on this type of work which maintains and upgrades the State's railway network. Incidentally, that puff of smoke under the front wheels of the locomotive was caused by a detonator on the track to warn other workmen in the area.

AMONG OURSELVES

48½ years

Ballarat's Stationmaster, Matthew Smith, retires on December 25 after 48½ years in the service—the last 10½ years at Ballarat.

In a railway career encompassing that span of service, many changes have been seen, but for Mr. Smith, the greatest change was from steam to diesel.



Mr. Smith

"That brought tremendous savings to the Department and meant bigger, faster trains," he said. "It also meant that most stations throughout the network got an overnight service to and from Melbourne.

"But while that was a great change, another we urgently need is to have a door-to-door service—it's a tremendous advantage for the road operators."

Matthew joined the Railways as a junior clerk at South Yarra. His first country appointment was to Bacchus Marsh, in 1928, as a junior telegraphist. He worked at Western District locations until appointed stationmaster at Coleraine, during the War.

"Those days were very busy," he recalled. "A lad and myself regularly handled about 8,000 bales of wool, 30 tons of butter, 6,000–7,000 tons of superphosphate and up to six big livestock specials in season. I guess that was probably about the peak for that area, it's only a shadow of itself now."

From Coleraine, he went to train control in Melbourne and Seymour, then to stationmaster at Yarrowonga, Morwell—during electrification works—Horsham, Hamilton and Ballarat. In later years, he rejected a transfer to Spencer Street: "Ballarat suited me perfectly," he said.

As stationmaster, Mr. Smith heads a team of about 150 at the station. In the District are more than 1,200 railwaymen, who make a big impact on the city's economy.

"We get good support, really," he said. "We're holding our own in very difficult times—that's an achievement in itself."

"And talking of changes, there's been no greater change than the spectacular growth of industry here

BURNT OFF



Summer means fire danger and to the railways that means fire precautions. Burning off grass in Tatura yard when *News Letter* called were, from left: Mick Isuf, Keith Cullerin and Peter O'Brien, all members of gang 5T from Toolamba.

in Ballarat, particularly in the suburban Redan area."

Head Office match



Yet another Head Office couple have journeyed to the altar after meeting on the job. This time, John Coutts, a time-tables officer attached to the Passenger Operations Division, married Gwen McNulty, a typist in the Duplicating Bureau. The wedding was at St. Therese's, Essendon, on November 10.

Fix it

"I guess I'm a fix it sort of person," said recently retired senior clerk of the country passenger time-table section, Jack Minard. "I really wanted a fitting and turning career but I always ended up in clerical positions."



Mr. Minard

To further his interest in wood-working and metal turning Jack undertook a part time course in fitting and turning and put the skills learnt there to good use in his hobby—reconditioning items ranging from firearms to vintage cars.

Stored at the moment is his major project for his retirement years, restoring a 1926 Fiat. "It was my second car and I drove it between 1937–51," he said. "I reconditioned the motor twice during its life then, and again recently—it could run now, but the bodywork needs a lot of attention. I've never come across a record of any other 1926 Fiat being in Australia now."

Jack enjoys dabbling with gardens and his retirement block at Pyalong is already studded with an enormous variety of fruit trees. Pyalong is also handy to another area of great interest to him—duck shooting.

In younger days, he was quite a good shot and won many minor competitions, but now trains his sights on ducks.

Jack joined the V.R. as a junior clerk at Victoria Park in 1923, and the following year transferred to Geelong, where he stayed for 14 years. During that time he had the unusual experience of filling a Rolling Stock Branch position for 18 months while still retaining his Traffic Branch classification.

In 1937 he moved to Head Office to become personal clerk to the then Superintendent, Train Services (now split into Manager Passenger Operations and Manager Freight Operations).

Since then, he has always been associated with time-tables, and, from 1956, was officer-in-charge of the country time-tables section, a position which entailed researching and preparing many submissions for altering train services from time to time.

Third in Warrnambool race

Third placegetter in this year's bike riding classic, the 161-mile Melbourne-Warrnambool race, was 21-year-old Traffic Branch Clerk, Kevin O'Malley.

Kevin, who pulled out at Camp-erdown in last year's race, was beaten only half a wheel into third place about 100 yards behind the winner, Lynton Seddley.

That the race is tough there's no doubt as only about 40 of the 150 starters finished the race. Kevin's time for the distance was 7 hrs. 20 mins.

At the time when the winner made his break away, one mile from the finish, Kevin was near him and planning his own sprint to the line, but Lynton got a big break that the others couldn't catch.

For Kevin, the placing was a tremendous achievement after only five years of competition riding. This year has been his best and his top win was a 75-mile road race out of Coot-a-mundra (N.S.W.). He was an emergency in the Sun Tour, another classic, and hopes to get a start in next year's 1,200 mile race. Only the top 24 cyclists start in the event.

Training is no problem for Kevin—he pedals his bike to and from Head Office—and as he lives at Werribee, that means about 200 miles a week just in commuting! He doubles that mileage at weekends.

Kevin has been with the V.R. for five years, spending most of that time as a junior clerk in Melbourne Goods. Recently he transferred to the Passenger Operations as a bookkeeper.



Kevin O'Malley arriving for work after riding 20 miles from Werribee.

UPGRADING



It's dry and dusty in the drought affected areas, and relaying a railway is heavy work. Presently, the 44 miles between Echuca and Denilquin is being resleepered and sledged in preparation for the relaying gangs. The Echuca Points and Crossing Gang plus the Utility Gang, and swelled by workers on drought relief, are seen here preparing the track for sledding just south of Moira station. The effect of the drought is obvious—this photo was taken at the end of October.

RAILWAY STAFFS CREDIT CO-OP

The past month reflected a greater awareness of the Credit Co-Operative's existence. Payroll deductions authorised by the 61 new members brought regular fortnightly contributions to more than \$11,000. Together with several substantial cash deposits, the Co-operative this month satisfied the loan requirements of 22 members with amounts varying from \$60 to \$3,000.

Membership now totals 996 and \$114,140 has been loaned to members.

Members savings not only earn 5 per cent interest but help members borrowing. Loans approved by the Directors have, in at least three instances, avoided serious consequences for, perhaps, grave illness to, fellow members.

Secretary/Manager Mick Lorkin can be contacted on auto. 1655 or 61 3392.

RETIREMENTS

REFRESHMENT SERVICES BRANCH
Walsh, (Mrs.) M., Spencer St., 18 9
Duffy, (Mrs.) A., Spotswood Canteen, 15/12

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH
Alessi, P., Newport, 10/1
Bodasy-Bodo, J., Newport, 2 1
Brisbane, L. T., Bendigo Loco, 21/1
Cornell, W. H., Ballarat North, 18/10
Crevatin, C., North Melbourne, 8 11
Fleming, J., Newport, 10 11
Harris, W. T., Newport, 24 11
Hocking, J. G., Newport, 12 10
Hoewing, W. W., Newport, 25 1
Horvath, N. J., North Melbourne, 11 1
Kalafatis, A., Newport, 1 12
Kirsten, A. F., Jolimont, 16 10
Lanigan, A. J., Jolimont, 16 1
Mason, D. C., Ballarat North, 2/1
Metaxas, G., Newport, 23 10
Mirabella, G., Newport, 14/1

Molyneux, R. J., Jolimont, 18/1
McKean, A. A., Motor Garage, 8 1
O'Brien, J. N., Shelter Shed, 25/1
Ryder, C. T., Newport, 11/1
Seja, H., North Melbourne, 19/10
Van Berkel, W. A., Newport, 20/1
Whitelaw, J. C., Newport, 27/10
Wilson, G. L., E. R. Depot, 1/11

STORES BRANCH

DeLucá, G., Newport W'shops, 12/12
Dimopoulos, A., Electrical Depot, 1/12a
Doungas, N., Spotswood W'shops, 24/11
Koutoukidis, S., Spotswood, 18/12

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Aicken, W. S., Murtoa, 9/1
Gent, F. G., Melbourne Goods, 25/11
Hall, A. R., Melbourne Yard, 7/1
Harvey, H. C. W. Montmorency, 17/1
James, J. E., Echuca, 28/10
Nanscawen, H. J., Coburg, 8/1
Steel, F. J., Clifton Hill, 15/10

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Abrahams, T. T., Ararat, 30 1
Arbace, G., Spotswood, 31 12
Brown, F. H., Bendigo, 31 12
Crossthwaite, J. C., Jewell, 20 10
Lawley, E. J., Flinders Street, 14 1
Ryan, A. H., Beechworth, 17 10
Smith, C. F. J., Head Office, 20 1
Whitford, V. P., Clifton Hill, 30 1
Woolley, D. G., Heywood, 12 10

NEWS LETTER REGRETS TO RECORD THE FOLLOWING DEATHS

ACCOUNTANCY BRANCH
Hewitt, R. J., Head Office, 11 7

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH
Cummins, J. E., Head Office, 12 11
Dowling, M. J., Jolimont, 26 10
Martin, J. N., Newport, 31 10
Trickey, J. G., Geelong, 10 11

STORES BRANCH
Wilkinson, J., Ballarat, 20 10

TRAFFIC BRANCH
Halligan, D. J., Seymour, 22 10

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH
Seamons, A. J., Nyah West, 18/10

Institute INews

WODONGA CENTRE

Countering the attractions of clubs in nearby Albury is one of the problems facing those who run the V.R.I.'s country centre at Wodonga.

Founded only three years ago, the present membership of 178 is an indication that the Centre should fulfil a need for many railwaymen in the area.

Centre President, John Young, and Secretary, Bill Welch, are proud of the fact that they have been able to add to the Centre's facilities without calling on Melbourne's financial resources.

Some excellent nosing around netted them the only full size billiard table in Wodonga—it was lying derelict under a load of hay on a farm after being sold by the Kiewa Hotel at Tallangatta when the town was moved in the late 1950's. Now fully restored, the billiard table is a popular meeting place for the members.

Despite this success, there is still scope for extra facilities, plus a ladies' committee.

A highlight of the centre's activities each year is the Christmas party. For the coming party, \$135 has been raised. Venue for many staff send-offs, the modern hall is popular for its relaxing social and sporting facilities.

Like all developing centres, Wodonga has plans for the future.

At the rear of the buildings is a large grassed area which the club would like to convert to a bowling green and a tennis court.

The problem facing the members from Wodonga is how to raise the necessary money while still meeting their regular commitments. But this is the sort of challenge that brings out the best in people, and also brings out the workers.



Relaxation time for members. Enjoying a game of pool, are, from left: Caretaker John Wergers, Col. Whitehead, Tas. Ayres, Mick Colston, President John Young and Secretary Bill Welch.



The three-year-old Institute club rooms at Wodonga.



The area behind the club rooms which the Centre would like to develop as a bowling green and tennis court.

V.R.I. DINNER DANCE

The Institute's first venture in this field must be classified as a definite social success, even though the number who attended was disappointing. However, the members and their friends who were present had a thoroughly enjoyable evening, an excellent meal, a top class band, a most entertaining artist and the quality of the service provided by the Chevron staff left nothing to be desired. As council intends to run a similar function in 1973, please watch *News Letter* for the date and venue—and make sure you are not disappointed.

LICENSED CLUB

The Victorian Railways Institute has gained access to the facilities and amenities of a well established licensed club.

These services are available to

financial members of the V.R.I. Services include a ladies lounge, dining room (luncheon only) and normal bar facilities.

The Flinders Lane club is about two minutes walk from the Institute.

On personal representation to the General Secretary at the Institute, a letter of introduction will be given admitting the recipient as an honorary member for a term.

More details can be had by telephoning the V.R.I. on either 2445 or 1642.

INSTITUTE SPORT

by OSS. KEATING

1972 Intersystem Table Tennis Carnival

Back in October, 1969, Victoria, for the first time ever, won the *Commissioners' Shield* in this particular sport. Last October, the Victorian Party travelled to Adelaide, to compete in this year's Carnival and proved beyond any doubt that they had arrived as a force in the railway table tennis world, by a convincing win in the teams championship and bringing the Shield back to Melbourne. In the individual events, we also picked up our share of success. The unlucky Wal Lawrie, who combined the duties of Manager and Team Captain on this trip, had to be content with the runner-up title in

the open singles championship, Wal eventually went down to Geoff Smoult of South Australia after a great five set battle. Gino Roiter and Mal Davey proved their doubles win in Melbourne was no fluke when they defeated the Queensland pair, G. Brydon and L. Jones in four sets.

V.R.I. Billiards Club

After a lapse of some two years, the V.R.I. Billiards Club entered a team in this season's snooker competitions and were placed in section 3 of the Willis group. And what do you know? They won the premier-ship! Not a bad effort for a bunch of so-called rookies. Ten clubs competed in this particular section and our opponents in the final were from the Footscray Club. A very even match finished with the games won standing at 4 all, but we had scored 473 points to our opponents 345 and so the 1972 pennant will hang in the V.R.I. Billiards Room. Congratulations to the players Phil Lane, Ray Lawrence, Des Williams, Eddie Kiesel, Alan Robertson and Greg Pagliaro, who all played their part in winning this flag.

An invitation has been received from the South Australian Railways Institute to play their team in the Annual Billiards and Snooker competition in Adelaide March 12-17. Our team would depart Melbourne, per The Overland, on Sunday, March 11 and arrive back at Spencer Street the following Sunday. Any railwayman, who is a member of the V.R.I. and is interested in being considered for the Victorian team, should submit an application to reach the Assistant General Secretary, V.R. Institute, Flinders Street, by January 26.

Triggs Shield shoot

Information has been received from New South Wales that the 1973 Triggs Memorial Rifle Shoot will be held at the Anzac Rifle Range, Maroubra, Sydney, on Saturday, January 27. The New South Wales Rifle Association is conducting its 98th Open Championship on this range January 25-29, and the Triggs match will be shot during this fixture.

Teams, of from four to seven railway riflemen, will compete. Competitors must be members of a rifle club and the Railways Institute. It is anticipated that this match will be shot over the 500, 600 and 700 yard ranges.

Applications should be submitted to reach the Assistant General Secretary, V. R. Institute, Flinders Street, not later than Friday, December 22. Each applicant should include details of his latest scores (certified by club captain) over 500, 600 and 700 yards.

Country weeks

Country sportsmen are reminded that two important fixtures in the V.R.I. sporting calendar will be held early in 1973. Country Bowls Week will be held February 19-23, and will be played on the A.P.-V.R.I., Middle Park and Carlton Bowling Clubs' Greens.

Entries for the fours, pairs and singles championship close with the Assistant General Secretary, V. R. Institute, Flinders Street, on January 30.

Single entries are most welcome and these players will be placed in composite fours and pairs, and can, of course, contest the singles championship.

Country Cricket Week entries close with the Assistant General Secretary on February 2. This week will be held on the turf wickets at Royal Park from February 26 to March 2, and should be a must for all railway cricketers.

Basketball

The 1973 Intersystem Basketball Carnival (International Rules) will be played in Brisbane, during October, and the V.R.I. Basketball Club is determined to make an all out bid to bring home the *Commissioners Shield*. With this goal in mind, it has been decided to call applications immediately from any male or female railway basketball players desiring selection. The application should reach the Assistant General Secretary, V. R. Institute, Flinders Street, not later than February 2.

From February until the date of departure for Brisbane, the organising committee hope to arrange top class coaching for both sides and a number of special practice matches so that both squads can be welded into strong, confident combinations by the start of the Carnival. The committee also intends to run a number of social events, which if fully supported by members of both squads should help considerably in reducing the cost of competing in this fixture.

I appeal to male and female railway basketballers, or ex-basketballers, who feel they can help us win these Shields to get in touch with me on or before February 2, either at the above address or on auto. 1642. Let's make 1973 Victoria's year.

Golf

The annual golf match against the Australian Postal Institute was played recently at the Northern Golf Club. The course was in excellent condition,

and although the weather was a little on the warm side, conditions were ideal for golf, and the 52 competitors thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The major trophy, the *R. L. Edwards Shield* was retained by the V.R.I. team, winning 12 matches to six, with two squared. The *Peewater Cup* match also saw the V.R.I. team victorious, which means, of course, that our A. P. I. friends hold this most coveted trophy for another year. Individual trophies were won by Bill Thomson of Warragul, who returned a stableford score of 41 points from Alan Collins, 38 points. A.P.I. trophy winners were A. Young (41 points) and D. Pearce (39 points). Our postal friends were given a very warm welcome by Mr. Lindsay McCallum, our Senior Vice-President, and Mr. Charles Morris, Secretary for Railways, representing the Commissioners, presented the trophies.

Carpet bowls

The very strong Sunshine V.R.I. Carpet Bowls Club held its presentation evening recently, when a large number of trophies were handed over to the winners of the various events conducted during the season. The Men's Singles Championship was won by M. Flavell from W. Gadsby and the ladies section by Mrs. E. Shorten with Mrs. J. Vanotti as runner-up. The mixed singles appeared to prove one thing—that the Sunshine ladies are better bowlers than the men! Mrs. J. Lane was successful in an all ladies final, defeating Mrs. E. Shorten for the title. The fours championship went to a four skipped by J. Williams and the runners up were skipped by Mrs J. Lane.

Veteran golfer

How's this for a great effort. Jack Roche, aged 75, and a retired guard, scored a hole-in-one on the par 3 130 yard hole at the Numurkah golf course recently. Jack played a seven iron, the ball carried truly and rolled into the cup. But don't get the idea that this is Jack's only claim to fame. Some three years ago, he shot a 72 (off the stick) on the par 70 course, and by coincidence it happened to be his 72nd birthday.

Jack Roche became actively interested in golf after he had acted as a caddy for some years and is very proud of the fact that he has never had a double figure handicap. Earlier in his career he played off one and was an active member of the Chalambar (Ararat) and Bairnsdale Golf Clubs and was a regular competitor in the V.R.I. Country Golf Week fixture. Today, Jack is a life member of the Numurkah Golf Club and plays off a handicap of six.

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RAILWAY PACKAGE TOURS RETURN

In 1959 the Victorian Railways relinquished their role in packaged tours in favour of the then newly-formed Tourist Development Authority. At the same time, the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, which the Railways started as an "Inquiry Office" at Spencer Street station in 1888, was also handed over to the Authority.

In recent years, the growth of packaged tours — covering travel, accommodation, some meals and occasionally sight-seeing tours, at a single price much cheaper than individuals could match — has been remarkable.

Now the V.R. has re-introduced packaged tours of its own. Five are on sale now, and a further 15 are being investigated.

Reaction to the tours has been excellent. Tour operators and motel owners, after expressing initial surprise that the Railways were interested in becoming involved in these tours, co-operated to the full, and some have even suggested new tours.

Now available are tours to:

Mildura—7 days at the Mildura Country Club (golf fees included) for \$105. Charge includes travel in an air-conditioned sleeping carriage on *The Vinlander* between Melbourne, Mildura and return and accommodation at the Country Club on a dinner, bed and breakfast basis; **Sydney round trip** — taking five days, travel from Melbourne by train to Sale, then coach to Sydney via Princes Highway, calling at Lakes Entrance, Buchan Caves, Narooma and Kiama, then home to Melbourne on *Southern Aurora*—\$97. A similar trip is available starting from Sydney with train to Nowra, and returning to Sydney on *Southern Aurora*; **Paynesville week-end**—Friday night to Sunday night, return train travel to Bairnsdale, coach to and from motel at Paynesville, all meals, \$30; **Sydney week-end**—Friday night to Monday morning, staying at the Commodore Chateau in King's Cross and including a ticket to the stage show Jesus Christ Superstar—from \$41.50 to \$59.50; and, **Lion Safari**—any Sunday, train from Spencer Street to Bacchus Marsh and return, coach to and through Lion Safari with five hours at the Safari. All-inclusive charge is \$2.20—\$2.60 for a trip lasting from 9.35 a.m. to 5.15 p.m. (All fares quoted are for adults, children pay lesser rates but not necessarily half.)

Public response to the Paynesville week-end was such, that in the two days after the first advertisement appeared, 20 bookings were made.

On the drawing boards are plans for tours to Surfers Paradise, Coffs Harbour, Brisbane, Perth, Cairns, the red Centre, and Adelaide, plus local tours to Mildura, Hamilton, Mt. Buller and the Wimmera.

Despite the potential and range of the tours, only three men run the newly-established section, under the

control of the Manager, Passenger Operations.

Two Travel Promotion Officers—30-year-old Graham Currie and 25-year-old David Rashleigh do all the necessary research. The two investigate and plan trips to tourist centres in Victoria and interstate, with Graham concentrating more on canvassing schools for business, and meeting their specialised travel needs.



The team behind the packaged tours— from left, Graham Currie, Ted Statton and David Rashleigh.

Providing all the internal instructions and arrangements, plus bookwork, is Time-tables Officer Ted Statton, with 35 years wide experience in railways operations.

Graham's eight years railway service include three years in the Central Reservation Bureau following five years as a clerk at Heidelberg station; David was a Commercial Agent for 2½ years and, before that, was in the Freight Office and the Accountancy Branch.

Marketing of the new tours is through all stations which can make country bookings, and is supported by advertising and pamphlets from the Public Relations and Betterment Board.

And there is a bonus for railway staff, too. Privilege ticket and pass holders will get further reductions over the already attractive rates on most of the tours!

HANSARD REPORTS

AEROTRAIN

Answering a question about the proposed *Aerotrain* link between Melbourne and Tullamarine Airport, the Minister of Transport, the Hon. Vernon F. Wilcox, M.P., told the House that the Government had given permission for a group representing the French *Aerotrain* organization to submit a feasibility study of the project within a specified time. Although the time limit was subsequently extended, the group did not come forward with anything, he added.

Mr. Wilcox commented that on his recent overseas trip that whenever it came to moving people in large urban areas it was still the conventional steel on steel which did it.

BENDIGO AREA PROPOSALS

Answering Opposition Members' questions about the announced proposition to close Kangaroo Flat, Golden Square and Eaglehawk for the handling of parcels and small goods, the Minister of Transport, the Hon. Vernon F. Wilcox, M. P., told the House: "The withdrawal of services, not the closing of lines, which means the consideration of a variety of matters as long as one's arm when it comes to railways services, is a matter which the Railways Commissioners have been doing something about over many years. Indeed, it is understandable that they should

have been doing something about it because they are attacked on all sides for having deficits that range up to \$40 million in a year.

"As to the withdrawal of part of the services at these three stations in the Bendigo area, the proposal was that wagon loads be dealt with at the stations but that smaller loads would be dealt with at the Bendigo central terminal. On the face of it, it seems a very sensible idea.

"Unfortunately, some people have sought to make the closing of railway lines the most important issue in the Bland Report. It is well down the list of recommendations."

WESTERN C.T.C.

Centralised train control was proposed between Melbourne and Adelaide on the main rail link, but its introduction depended on finances, Mr. Wilcox replied to a question.

"If there was some participation by the Commonwealth, the introduction of centralised train control on this line would be given a much greater lift in priority," he said.

NEW STATION

A new railway station is planned for the vicinity of Lawrence Street, Ardeer, when the line is duplicated and electrified.

The Minister for local Government, The Hon. A. J. Hunt, M.P., said that the works were dependent on the availability of funds.

1973

Terminating dates of Pay Fortnights shown in **Blue**

Public Holidays shown thus — ○

(Good Friday 1974 — April 14)

1973

	JANUARY					FEBRUARY					MARCH						
Sun.	7	14	21	28	...	4	11	18	25	...	4	11	18	25	...
Mon.	...	①	8	15	22	②⑨	...	5	12	19	26	...	5	③⑫	19	26	...
Tues.	...	②	9	16	23	30	...	6	13	20	27	...	6	13	20	27	...
Wed.	...	3	10	17	24	31	...	7	14	21	28	...	7	14	21	28	...
Thur.	...	4	11	18	25	...	1	8	15	22	...	1	8	15	22	29	...
Fri.	...	5	12	19	26	...	2	9	16	23	...	2	9	16	23	30	...
Sat.	...	6	13	④⑩	27	...	③	10	⑤⑪	24	...	③	10	⑥⑬	24	⑦⑭	31
	APRIL					MAY					JUNE						
Sun.	...	1	8	15	22	29	...	6	13	20	27	...	3	10	17	24	...
Mon.	...	2	9	16	⑧⑮	30	...	7	14	21	28	...	④	11	18	25	...
Tues.	...	3	10	17	⑨⑯	...	1	8	15	22	29	...	5	12	19	26	...
Wed.	...	4	11	18	⑩⑰	...	2	9	16	23	30	...	6	13	20	27	...
Thur.	...	5	12	19	26	...	3	10	17	24	31	...	7	14	21	28	...
Fri.	...	6	13	⑪⑱	27	...	4	11	18	25	...	1	8	15	22	29	...
Sat.	...	7	⑫	⑪⑲	⑫⑳	...	5	⑬	⑭	⑮	⑯	...	2	⑩	⑪	⑫	⑬
	JULY					AUGUST					SEPTEMBER						
Sun.	...	1	8	15	22	29	...	5	12	19	26	...	2	9	16	23	30
Mon.	...	2	9	16	23	30	...	6	13	20	27	...	3	10	17	24	...
Tues.	...	3	10	17	24	31	...	7	14	21	28	...	4	11	18	25	...
Wed.	...	4	11	18	25	...	1	8	15	22	29	...	5	12	19	26	...
Thur.	...	5	12	19	26	...	2	9	16	23	30	...	6	13	20	⑮⑲	...
Fri.	...	6	13	20	27	...	3	10	17	24	31	...	7	14	21	28	...
Sat.	...	⑦	14	⑩	⑪	⑫	...	④	11	⑮	⑯	...	①	8	⑫	⑬	⑭
	OCTOBER					NOVEMBER					DECEMBER						
Sun.	7	14	21	28	...	4	11	18	25	...	2	9	16	23	30
Mon.	...	1	8	15	22	29	...	5	12	19	26	...	3	10	17	24	31
Tues.	...	2	9	16	23	30	...	⑥	13	20	27	...	4	11	18	⑮⑲	...
Wed.	...	3	10	17	24	31	...	7	14	21	28	...	5	12	19	⑯	⑰
Thur.	...	4	11	18	25	...	1	8	15	22	29	...	6	13	20	27	...
Fri.	...	5	12	19	26	...	2	9	16	23	30	...	7	14	21	28	...
Sat.	...	6	⑬	⑭	⑮	⑯	...	③	⑩	⑪	⑫	...	①	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪