



Friends of Archer Park Station & Steam Tram Museum Inc

URL: QldRailHeritage.com/ArcherPark

PO Box 573, Rockhampton, Qld 4700 Australia

Ph: 07 4922 2774 Fax: 07 4927 0120 E-mail: archerpark@rrc.qld.gov.au

Volume 5 Number 1, **February 2011**

TRAM TRACKS

Date Claimers

8 March: *Bush Poets, BBQ & Song Night*; 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, \$5.00 entry, Burgers on sale.

18 April: *School Holiday Programme*, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, short tram rides, karaoke, history questionnaires, food.

Notes from the President

Well 2010 is behind us now and we look forward to a prosperous 2011 although the recent flooding has not provided an ideal start to the year. My heart goes out to everyone who has been displaced or have had possessions lost or damaged by the flood and sincerely hope that none of the 'Friends' have been impacted too badly by recent events.

With Archer Park closed for a period of time, I sincerely hope that some of our volunteers were able to direct their efforts to the flood protection and, although the museum will have re-opened, an even greater effort for the clean-up.

Last year ended on a very sad note with the passing of our long-serving 'Friend' Bill Miller and fellow-member Des Neil's mother. Bill was involved with the Archer Park Rail Museum from the very beginning and was passionate about its future, so much so that he would venture here from his home in Sydney for about a month each year to volunteer and catch up with his friends and fellow-volunteers. Our deepest sympathy goes out to the families involved.

On a brighter note, the Christmas luncheon was well-attended and quite a nice presentation of gifts and goodies was passed on to the Salvation Army to help make Christmas a little special for the less fortunate. They were very appreciative. Feedback from the break-up was very positive and indicated that we made the correct decision to return to Archer Park as the venue and having

the caterers allowed Dot, Wilma and Co the opportunity to enjoy the afternoon.

I am optimistic about the future of the Archer Park Rail Museum and look forward to a steady increase in visitor numbers next year. We, as volunteers, have to work increasingly hard to make visitors feel welcome and pleased with the experience. Word of mouth is the greatest advertisement for any tourist attraction. We rely greatly on the 'Grey Nomads' to support Archer Park and we need them to promote us positively.

Just before ending this column, I would like thank everyone for their support and co-operation during my time as President in 2010. To Dennis, Andrew, other RRC staff and fellow-volunteers, I wish you 'All the Best' for this and future years. I do not intend to continue in an executive role in 2011, so I encourage anyone willing to take on this position to come forward as soon as possible so that a proper hand-over is conducted.

Merv Edmonston

Notes from the Coordinator

The bookwork is now in progress between QR and Rockhampton Regional Council on the steam engine coming to Rockhampton. The volunteers are looking forward to having C17 988 at Archer Park and another exhibit for the museum.

The air conditioner in the refreshment room has still not been repaired after breaking down the week before Christmas. The parts arrived in Rockhampton early February but because the building is Heritage Listed there remains the problem of getting to the unit in the ceiling, whether to cut a man hole in the ceiling or take sheets of iron off the roof. We certainly can't hold any functions in the refreshment room until the system is repaired.

Visitor numbers at the museum are at their lowest in years due to the Rocky floods, and Cyclone Yasi has also deterred visitors from venturing north of Brisbane. With two or three more cyclone to come yet I can't see visitor number improving until April.

It was very sad to learn of Bill Miller's passing a few months ago in Sydney, Bill had been a volunteer at Archer Park since 2000 but has been visiting Archer Park since 1994 and become good friends of my late wife and myself.

Bill came up to Rocky nearly every year and early on stayed with my late wife and myself, then in later years stayed with Dot Marshall. Bill lived for trains and travelled around Australia taking thousands of photos of every class of locomotive he could find and railway installations.

Bill loved Archer Park and said he always felt at home here. You always new when Bill was here because of his laugh, you could hear it all over the museum. I don't know if there are any trains in heaven but I know one thing for certain Bill will make one if there isn't. Rest in Peace, Bill, you will always be remembered.

It was also sad to learn of Des Neil's Mother passing away and Dot Marshall also lost her sister Iris in Young NSW. Our condolences to both Des and Dot on this sad occasion.

DEL 1614 is still not movable, with a valve still not functioning right. The loco will start and run but try to move it and it doesn't want to respond. A seal in one of the valves is faulty and we are trying to get one from Ipswich.

At long last we are getting the gap between the roof and the top of the rooms 'bird proofed'. It's taken two years to get this done with pigeons making there home in this area and nearly every morning pigeon poo has to be cleaned off seats, window sills, platform and tables. Wire netting is going to be in place the length of the station so the pigeons can't land and start nesting.

The Purrey Steam Tram is having a new smoke stack built. The inspection before Christmas found that one side of the chimney had rusted out. The local engineering firm that does our boiler inspections has undertaken to do the job.

New refractory cement has been put around some of the fire bricks in the Purrey fire box.

All fire bars had to be removed, that was the easy part, but when the boys tried to put them back they had a time trying to get them to fit. After nearly half a day they finally got all the bars back in place.

Another problem we have is trying to replace the metal wire cable connecting the ash pan damper door to the handle in the cabin. This stainless steel cable is 3mm thick and it's been difficult finding a Rocky business to supply this type of cable.

As the President of the Friends, Merv Edmonston, will not be standing for the Presidency this year I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for all his hard work, dedication and forward thinking over the past twelve months. I know everyone will join with me in wishing Merv all the best in the future, and thank him for a job well done.

Dennis Sheehan

Gympie Ultimate Steam Festival

The Gympie & District Historical Society, the Mary Valley Heritage Railway Museum and the Woodworks Museum have again combined to present the festival: Friday 22 July 2011 – Sunday 24 July. Details on their web site:

www.gympieultimatesteam.com/

Flood Recovery

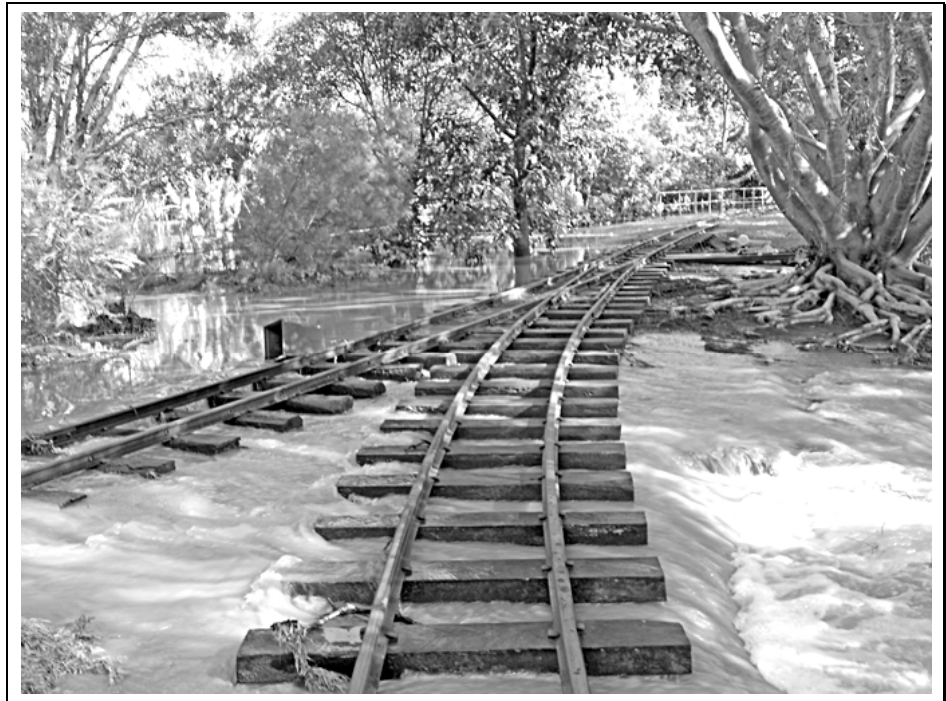
The Australian Sugar Cane Railway, Bundaberg was one of the rail heritage sites hit hardest by the recent floods. Fortunately hard work by their volunteers has been able to return much of the system to operation.

The flood caused major damage to the main running line outside the compound and to the triangle, and minor damage to the rest of the main line. ASCR's track maintenance team, working under Cane Railway Engineers Ron Stitt and Ron Atkinson, has worked miracles in a short period of time with the help of a contractor using a rubber tracked digger. All main line damage has been repaired and other repairs are ongoing.

Details and a number of flood related photos are available from their web site:

qldrailheritage.com/ascr

The Australian Sugar Cane Railway, during the recent flooding in Bundaberg. Flood waters washing out ballast under the triangle (right) and the main line under half a metre of water near the station (below). ASCR photos, December 2010.



Late 1964 outside the old Rockhampton Station. According to photographer Peter Bruce: "C16 421 has just emerged from the train shed and is in Denison Street passing McConnell's Hotel and it's Ultra-Modern Bottle Store. We didn't sample it's wares but we did try Mac's Rockhampton Beer in the station Refreshment Room, it was truly vile. I think the brand died a deserved death just a few years later."



Friends Christmas Function 2011



Air Conditioner Update

The Heritage people have agreed to putting a hatch in the roof to get at the air conditioner, and the repairs mentioned in Dennis' report will likely have commenced by the time this issue is distributed.