



Friends of Archer Park Station & Steam Tram Museum Inc

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Volume 7 Number 5, **October 2013**

TRAM TRACKS

Date Claimers

27 Oct 2013: Family Fun Day

Friends of Archer Park Executive

President: Alex Limkin

Vice President: Bob Rallings

Treasurer: Ross Carter 0407 038 065

Secretary: Phil Augustine 0429 094377

Meetings of the **Friends of Archer Park** are normally on the fourth Wednesday of the month in the refreshment room, so the **next meeting is 12:30 pm, 23 October 2013.**

Friends' Matters

The Council proposal to change from staff management of the Museum has been a major topic of discussion amongst us for the last couple of months. As committed Friends and Volunteers we are very interested in the future of our workplace. Later in this newsletter I've tried to summarise what's currently happening. At this stage we must thank our Managers for keeping us "in the picture" and answering our questions.

Since it has been resolved that Archer Park will continue to operate we've agreed to fund the restoration of the fibreglass mannequins on the platform. Approximately \$11,000 was involved as the figures were becoming damaged and tatty after years without repair. They are still an attraction for visitors. We have further suggestions for audio visual enhancement of some of our other exhibits but have yet to plan and cost these ideas.

Another issue for this time of year is planning our Christmas Party. At this stage the party is to be held at Archer Park Refreshment Rooms on Saturday, 23 November. An outside contractor has been arranged for catering the meal. Costs approved at a recent meeting are \$15 for

Members and \$25 for non-Members. – two complimentary soft drinks are included. For timing – station opens at 3.00pm; meal is served at 5.30pm.

We would like to see as many of you as possible so if you can come please let Dennis Sheehan or Ross Carter know so we can notify numbers to caterer.

Finally, a comment on missing Friends – Wilma Coghlan – our stalwart in the kitchen has been very ill but Dot assures us she is starting to recover. We wish you a full recovery Wilma and hope to see you again soon. The other absentee is President Alex who's on a world touring holiday for another month yet – lucky begger. Let us not forget Dot Marshall who just had a trip to Colombia for a family wedding which she thoroughly enjoyed.

Activities

The Family Fun Day at the end of August was a good one and the City Band, Star Wars Storm Troopers, and Medieval Knights provided some good entertainment for visitors. Customer numbers were down on what we'd hoped but good considering the various other events scheduled around town that day. Roll up of Friends and Volunteers to help was good as usual and we thank them all for their efforts.

Another notable event was the two day railway first aid competition for Aurizon staff and friends. All went well with various mock up injury scenarios throughout the museum. Such scenarios were a bit of a shock to visitors and our volunteers on these days until they perceived what was actually happening. Archer Park is one of the most favoured venues for the first aiders and their trophies are on display in the rail room.

The Museum

Future management of the Museum is the issue which concerns us most at present.

In recent months the Rockhampton Regional Council has decided to change management of community facilities to community control. This involves heritage assets such as Archer Park Rail Museum and others. The main reason is to reduce costs to Council and therefore ratepayers.

General Manager Michael Rowe addressed a gathering of Friends and Volunteers on 9 August to explain the change procedures.

For Archer Park Museum, Council favours a Management Rights Model which allows another party to manage/operate the facility under agreed conditions. The facility will remain the property of the Council who will be responsible for its overall maintenance and upkeep.

The status of the Friends' Association and Volunteers in the new operation is unclear but as "stakeholders" we may be considered in negotiations with any favoured tenderer and he/she may enter into an agreement with us for help in operating the Museum as we currently do.

Tenders have recently been called for Expressions of Interest in operating the Museum – closure date is now 23 October 2013. Council Officers expect that, if satisfactory tenders are received, an agreement can be finalised to allow Council staff, with their equipment, to vacate by Christmas and the new operator to commence from 2 January 2014.

If no satisfactory tenders are received other options will be checked out.

Closure of the Museum is not an option for Council. So, for us, it is "business as usual"

looking after our customers and carrying out repairs and maintenance.

Friends' executive has registered with Council and taken out a set of documents to keep up with what's happening but it is very unlikely that our Association will be tendering.

Around the Museum

The mannequins on the platform have now been repaired by the contractor – mostly it's a good job.

The major works at present are the re-sleepering of track by John Kennedy with assistance from his nephew Ryan and particularly John Cole. John K. has taken weeks of leave from his regular job to undertake this arduous work – the work with old equipment is much harder than his regular job.

The sequenced sound system which goes with the mannequins includes typical sounds from a Railway Station of old – voices of staff and passengers and the clatter of trains. The system computer and some of the peripherals have given a few problems recently (it's getting old too). The system has now been all but completely repaired by an RRC expert. The volumes of the repaired systems are now quite loud.

Pick up of coke fuel from Bowen for the Tram has been an issue in recent times – a private truck operator has now been arranged to do the job for a reasonable price.

Out the front, the problem of townies filling up our car park is being addressed. Council are installing a series of 4 hour parking limit signs. For those of us working at the Museum and needing to park for the day – we'll get permit stickers for our cars.



Almost every area around the Museum was occupied with 'bodies' and first aid apparatus as Aurizon teams competed for their annual First Aid competition.



