WELCOME to the first HRSI newsletter. The objective of this newsletter is inform, educate and provide insights about the latest updates, plans and heritage news relating to Heritage Railway Stations and Infrastructure (HRSI) across NSW. The news in this letter will be separated into 4 core NSW regions – Northern, Western and Southern NSW and Sydney.

Future issues will deal with updating readers on the interesting and details of each area as they occur. Features stories on stations will appear at times to help educate readers of the NSW heritage.

We hope you enjoy this first issue of heritage railway station and infrastructure news.

Phil Buckley, HRSI

MAIN NEWS

The big issue facing NSW rail heritage and buildings preservation in mid 2014, is now the growing theme of “Rail Trails”. This concept is being imported from Victoria by people wanting to take over dormant railway lines for other uses. Many stations on closed/disused lines such as Black Mountain, Byron Bay, Murwillumbah, Cowra, Guyra, Laidsmith, Gundagai, Crookwell are all core parts of a plan by Rail Trails NSW to reuse them as locations for bike / horse rides and for trail walkers to have breaks at. What impact this has on reuse or ongoing preservation remains relatively unknown at this moment. The other state wide issues include the neglected and ongoing decaying stations not being properly preserved and thus falling down from disrepair over the years.

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NORTHERN NSW

2014 has, so far not seen much happen recently. However there are several looming issues which may impact on NSW heritage railway sites.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH LINE

The NSW Government, under Premier Mike Baird, has announced that, as of December 26 2014, the Newcastle inner city branch line is to be truncated back to Hamilton station.

This station dates from 1915 and it would be disappointing to see in its 99th year an important heritage station be demolished. The GMR project news and history can be followed on facebook at https://www.facebook.com/glenreagh.railway

Fact – Did you know between Hawkesbury River (Brooklyn) to Broadmeadow station there are only 5 stations left intact with some form of heritage in their structure or are original outright.

BEN LOMOND RAILWAY STATION

One of the most heavily promoted projects is in northern NSW at Ben Lomond. The Guyra Council is pushing ahead with local Rail Trail proponents to create a rail trail from Guyra to Ben Lomond station. The Ben Lomond station is the highest in northern NSW and the station requires some significant funding spent to make it safe for rail trail reuses.

GLENREAGH RAILWAY STATION

Glenreagh railway station is to have demolition work done by ARTC in later half of 2014. The site custodians Glenreagh Mountain Railway are trying to negotiate an outcome that will see the station preserved for future reuse.

SINGLETON RAILWAY STATION

The platform of Singleton has been noted to have been replaced and overhauled with a new platform base. This will ensure a level platform and safe walking area for passengers.

NAMBUCCA RAILWAY STATION

Local residents are trying to get XPT afternoon services reinstated to their heritage station. Their nearest station is Kempsey but they don't see why they need to drive when they have their station already in use.
WESTERN NSW

CLANDULLA RAILWAY STATION

The Clandulla community, located on the Gwabegar railway branch line has started to plan for an overhaul of their decaying local railway station which has sat unused for a few years. A proposal started in early February 2014 at a meeting held which a good number of locals and project organisers attend.

The outcome was positive and it was felt that it is long overdue that some added effort be made to save the station. Locals had tried for nearly 15 years to get the station restored but have lacked the drive until now. Local business and organisations, along with the nearby Kandos railway café are supportive of the idea of seeing a revitalised station. It would enable the village to have a local community focal point where it could then hold markets at, enable an art gallery combined with a local railway heritage centre to be created and be a visit spot for tourists. Since the meeting, further local level organising of the project base has taken place to align with community needs and project. Future planning is to see an incorporated structure set up which will help form the basis for acquiring funding, sponsors and further government support. The project has some very determined local backers.

The project can be followed on facebook at -
https://www.facebook.com/groups/1468648580018313/

TEMORA RAILWAY STATION

The Temora Shire Council has applied for a heritage grant that will hopefully help turn their important historical railway station into a new future tourist attraction for the town.

The station project can be followed on facebook and website below -
https://www.facebook.com/groups/494316453913386/
http://temorarailwaystation.wordpress.com/

RYDAL RAILWAY STATION

The local Rydal community group who help maintain the station for community purposes, has started in the last year, to restore their guards van for long term static public display.

The guards van was on show at the station before it was moved to a nearby property for restoration.
SOUTHERN NSW

ALBURY RAILWAY STATION

A local project is aiming to revitalize the eastern side of Albury railway yard to cater for rail tourism by restoring and preserving Albury rail heritage. The plans also see a 1950s era 900 series DEB railmotor set to be moved to Albury, where it will be restored and used in rail tours around southern NSW hopefully. It will be housed in the upgraded former goods shed. The new site heritage base will also cater for other heritage operators who visit Albury. Also new track is to be placed into the yard, an overhaul of the turntable and the signal box is planned to be restored. All of these aspects will see the heritage precinct become a key part of the town’s future rail heritage. They have a facebook page to follow - www.facebook.com/groups/LVRAlbury/

TUMUT RAILWAY STATION

In early 2014, new tenants, the Tumut Branchline Modellers Railway group taken over the lease from the former craft shop. TBMR members Peter and Andrew are now in place with their railway model set up in the former Parcel Office area. They display re-creations of Tumut and Gilmore stations. Historical photos are also on show at the station rooms. More about the Tumut line can be seen at www.facebook.com/groups/165581586831181/ The TBMR website is - www.tumutbranchline.com

BOMBALA RAILWAY STATION

The Bombala railway station members have brought onsite more rollingstock formerly stored at Royalla and Canberra. This will enhance the station’s tourism displays. The Bombala project is run as a Council 355 project and relies on limited funding and community support. Members are currently fixing the yard up with various upgrades/repairs and have started repainting their new display rollingstock.

GUNDAGAI RAILWAY STATION

The GHR project has had some changes with a new caretaker taking up residence in early 2014. New station events such as hosting local community groups and encouraging tour groups has brought an increase in people visiting the station. A community BBQ in June 2014 attracted increased local interest, which has resulted in working bees starting in July 2014. The working bee will focus on cleaning up the site to make access easier for members and to also help upgrade the site as part of the long term master plan. More can be seen at www.gundagairailwaymuseum.wordpress.com/ and www.facebook.com/GundagaiHeritageRailway

MARULAN RAILWAY STATION

Recent improvements to Marulan Station include an access ramp and footpath from Platform 1 to the existing pedestrian level crossing, an access ramp and footpath leading to Platform 2. Other improvements include new balustrade and hand rails along with tactile surfacing, lighting and CCTV cameras.
SYDNEY REGION

Significant overhauls have taken place in Sydney in last few years and are ongoing. There are several main developments happening at present. These are detailed below.

STATION OVERHAULS

Main / well patronised / busy stations across Sydney are undergoing an upgrade / refresh program. This program will see some heritage stations such as Asquith, Berala, Caringbah, Carramar, Chester Hill, Granville, Gymea, Lidcombe, Parramatta, Penrith, Redfern, Strathfield, Fairfield, Rockdale, Bankstown, Mount Druitt, Liverpool, Campsie, Hornsby, Epping, Artarmon, Westmead, Gordon, Campbelltown, St Peters, Sutherland, Sydenham, Turramurra and Milsons Point have the following types of work implemented: deep clean, painting and refresh of customer toilet facilities, new water bubblers, new seating, additional bins, improvements to station security, with improved lighting and additional, help Points where needed, removal of redundant equipment and general de-cluttering, improved landscaping and pigeon proofing to ensure general cleanliness around stations.

CENTRAL STATION

Opening originally in 1855 as the Sydney Yard and then after extensions as the current station in 1906, Central is the rail hub for Sydney with both country and suburban lines connecting at the station via the many platforms.

Being the largest station in NSW, it is well known by travelers and tourists alike. A major overhaul of the main concourse area is underway in mid 2014. The former booking office section which housed the ARHS Bookshop and Office of Rail Heritage / RTM is now in the midst of a big upgrade with installation of new ticket offices and other information services. The NSW Govt is aiming to make the large station showcase its original beautiful structure.

Other upgrades include new lighting that is aimed to return the concourse back to how it was in the early years with better lighting of the public area. The whole of Central building is reported to be undergoing a long term overhaul, with this work only the beginning.
HORNSBY STATION

As part of a $550,000 overhaul, the station is slated for a painting of the concourse and replacement of the roof over platforms 4 and 5. Some building upgrades are already underway. The start in June 2014 is shown above and below. Workers were noted putting in new insulation for the ceiling / roofing. Hornsby originally didn’t have a platform, The expansion of the freight and traffic heading north created a need for the new platform which was built on the original roadside area.

CONCORD WEST

Concord West station has being overhauled as part of the new freight line upgrades. The last remains of the stations original infrastructure was removed in late 2013. The 1920s era waiting shelter / booking office on Platform 1 was demolished and not retained in any form. The structure was replaced by a white shipping container with some of the sides cut out and with seating installed. Also slated for removal are the existing concourse booking office building and stairs.

ARNCLIFEE STATION

The station is to be upgraded with lifts, awnings and other new infrastructure. Whether this impacts on heritage aspects is yet to be determined.

TOWN HALL STATION

The 1930s era Town Hall is undergoing an overhaul with improved signage, new tiling, new lighting and new layout to cater for passenger demand. The $8m of works to Town Hall Station will consist of around 8,000 sqm of new tiling on its six platforms, fresh paint, improved lighting and upgraded staircases. The station has seen many updates over the years and this will be one of its most costly.
CME BUILDING, EVELEIGH/REDFERN

Since 2013 this grand historical building is undergoing a major overhaul which with structural works, tree/bush removal and internal works underway.

REDFERN STATION

At Redfern some of the station buildings on the 7 platforms have been repainted over the last few months.

There has been removal of peeling paint and application of new paint. Currently it appears that some reinforcing work is occurring on some of the island platforms. The old waiting rooms in each building remain sealed off to public access.

Some lifts will be installed in the future as part of a station upgrade.

WYNARD STATION

A planned $100 million upgrade of the 1930s era Wynyard Station will see an overhaul of the concourse/ticket area to reduce clutter. Customers will be able to move more easily in and around the station and wider ticket gate area. The work will also include an upgrade to the platforms, new lighting, new tiling, an overhaul of the retail outlets, a fresh coat of paint and new signage.

RIVERSTONE RAILWAY STATION

Recent improvements included regrading the internal ramp near the ticket office and construction of a new ramp between the platform and Garfield Road.

WINDSOR STATION

Heritage Windsor railway station is all quiet as a more modern and newer style station next door is now operational.

The old station in July 2014 now appears to be up for lease.
HERITAGE PHOTOS

A selection of Sydney railway station views showing the building and design features.

1st row Parramatta, Hornsby and Epping. 2nd row Gordon, Berowra and North Strathfield.
Recommended links –

NSW railway stations [http://nswrailwaystations.wordpress.com/](http://nswrailwaystations.wordpress.com/)


**Heritage relics surviving in 2013** - Nyngan railway relics - signal post with semaphore arm and station road level crossing gates.

**NEXT ISSUE** - Next newsletter will focus on news, heritage reviews and helpful hints on how to identify station features and designs. To follow HRSI click on the facebook link – [https://www.facebook.com/NSWRSI](https://www.facebook.com/NSWRSI).

HRSI can be contacted on above page for story / information or photo submissions.