NSW HERITAGE RAILWAY STATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE NEWS

WELCOME to the 11th NSWHRSI newsletter. The objective of this newsletter is to 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 is separated into 4 core NSW regions – Northern, Western and Southern NSW and Sydney.

MAIN NEWS
Further work around NSW has seen some stations upgraded and restored as part of the refresh programs. Insights to various former rail workers experiences and part 2 of the Westby branch line review is covered in this edition.

Phil Buckley, NSW HRSI Editor

Credits/Contributors this issue – Australian Rail Maps, Trove, Greg Finster, John King, Wayne Brown, Phil Pedley, Russell Denning, Andrew Lawson, Peter Watters, Graeme Knappick, Warren Banfield, Garrett Fitzgerald, Brett Leslie, Chris Collins, Peter Burr, Mark Zanker.

Copyright © 2014 - 2017 NSWHRSI. All photos and information remains property of NSWHRSI / Phil Buckley unless stated to our various contributors / original photographers or donors.
BRANCHLINE REVIEW - WESTBY BRANCH PART 2

In our last issue we covered Part 1 of the Westby railway branch line review - the history, operations and first stage closure. In part 2 we discuss the closing down of the line and present day remains of the infrastructure.

CLOSING DOWN OF THE WESTBY BRANCHLINE

Until 1952 timetabled services scheduled as below were normal to Westby.

With the line’s partial closure by the bushfire that stretched from near Mangoplah to Westby in 1952 this left the section from The Rock to Mangoplah as the only part operational. This remained in use until the 4 July 1956. Total closure of the Westby branch line was enacted to take place on 10 July 1956. This later date refers to the date of the Act of Parliament being enforced (Ed note: similar to what we are seeing right in May 2017 for the Tumbarumba branch line section which is to become a rail trail…). It is understood from research that timetabled trains stopped working the Westby branch line sometime during the wheat season of 1955-1956.

The signals at the Rock branch junction were taken down in 17 July 1962 and involved the disconnection of Levers 9, 33 and 36 in the Rock signal box. Additionally the Westby junction points were spiked in the closed position and were later removed. Frame E / groundframe was redundant and dismantled along with other minor associated equipment. One last change was the renaming of three signals in the signal box to remove all trace of the Westby branchline operations. The removal of the Westby branch line was hotly debated locally for years afterwards but the reality is the branch line was not worth the investment money as the outbound farming traffic and passenger traffic was not viable.

In 2017 a survey of the line’s infrastructure and remains was undertaken by NSWHRSI reporter Greg Finster who has supplied these views. By gaining approved access to farmland from local farmers, Greg was able to
obtain rarely seen station views for NSWHSRI. Greg’s mid summer visit to these station sites meant he had to endure extreme hot weather, flies, grass/weeds, electric fences, live stock and bugs. NSWHSRI and or readers all appreciate your work Greg 😊.

**Westby line stations remains in 2017**:

**Birdlip railway station** - Unfortunately no photos available as this is in 2017.

**Mangoplah railway station (Photos Greg Finster)**
Mangoplah railway station (Phil Buckley 2015)
Burrandana railway station (Phil Buckley photos 2015)

Pulletop platform (Greg Finster photos)
Westby railway station (Phil Buckley photos 2015)
Westby railway station (Greg Finster photos)
As can be seen, via these exclusive photos for NSWHRSI of the station, the sad aspect is these magnificent railway stations of the 1920s are slowly fading into oblivion with each passing year. It would be nice to see these restored as local tourist attractions to bring people out into the small towns of NSW south east but sadly that will never likely happen......
A NSWGR YARD SHUNTER AT ROZELLE - John King recollections

NSWHRSI has interviewed John King, a former NSWGR railway worker regarding his experiences in the 1960s when he worked as a yard shunter. Sydney has much rail history which was centralised around Darling Harbour Goods Yard, Rozelle Goods Yard and Balmain Coal Wharf Loader. Darling Harbour/Darling Island was the main centre built in the late 1850s. It expanded around to include the Rozelle area by early 1900s. As imports and exports increased Darling Harbour expanded to meet the needs of goods movements over the next few decades. An overview of detailed history of the inner Sydney goods yards at Darling Harbor and Rozelle is outside this short story and may be addressed in a future newsletter.

John King recalls....

Until I joined the NSWGR at 15 back in 1965, I had never heard of a Shunter or what they did. After joining the railways working as a Junior Station Assistant at North Strathfield, I soon learned what a Shunter does and decided I wanted to qualify as one. Firstly I had to study and pass the safe working subject “Shunting duties”. This subject is just one of the safe working subjects needed to become an Assistant Station Master which was my aim on the Railways. Also other positions required shunting ability - SM, ASM, Guard, Signalman, Swsa,Train driver etc. A person had to be 19 years of age to carry out shunting or other safe working duties on the railways. This subject was taught in the Railway Institute either in the full time “Shunter’s school “or by studying 1 night a week. I choose the latter.

A shunter is a person who makes up trains either passenger or goods to go another destination. i.e. say Darling Harbour (for goods trains) or to another railway station/line or Eveleigh [for passenger trains]. Shunters are required to get between carriages to place the hook coupling on the adjoining carriage and join air hoses. A shunter usually moves at a fast pace and could slip or fall over quite easily and could possibly get hit by the train. Shunter’s have various hand signals to indicate to the Train Driver what he wants him to do, whether to go slow, stop suddenly , go fast etc. For this story, we will discuss how I worked around Goods trains.

At age 19 I became a Shunter in 1969 at Balmain Coal wharf and Rozelle yard. A typical day example) could include working as followed:

A train arrives at Darling Harbour from say Dubbo, A train with 40 wagons arrive with 5 wagons for Darling Harbour while the others 35 wagons would need to go to various stations in NSW and Queensland. The first thing the shunter would do, would to get the wagons off the train for Darling Harbour and shunt them to where they were required. A shunter would then have the train reverse along the track, then change points for shunting the 5 wagons to go onto the line required, uncouple those wagons, stop the train suddenly and those wagons would break away from the rest of the train and travel on their own into the other line.

He would then repeat the operation shunting the other wagons into other lines to make up trains to go in a particular direction ie goods train to Brisbane or Albury, etc. A Shunter would be probably riding on the step of the 1st of the 5 wagons to operate the manual brake when they are required to stop. So I would have 2
trains made up out of the 1 from Dubbo plus any wagons from other places that might be in the yard waiting for that outbound train to be made up.


The same shunting is carried out in the same manner at every yard to make up trains to go in various directions. At the coal wharf the coal would come in on a coal train from Glen Lee out near Campbelltown. Usually the train would be headed by a 36 class steam locomotive with maybe about 25/35 wagons at a time to Rozelle yard. Once arrived a shunting engine would connect to the wagons and push them up to the coal unloader near the wharf. They would then be emptied by private contractors (eg the Miller Group). As each wagon was shunted over the coal chute under the track, the contractor would open each door at the bottom of the coal wagon to let the coal fall out.

The coal would then go by conveyer belt to either the waiting ship or to the coal heap near the wharf to wait for a ship to come in. After the wagon was emptied, it would be pushed along until another one was over the coal chute, then the Shunter and myself would jump on the emptied wagon, ride the wagon down a steep grade, through a set of spring loaded points (that were permanently set for another track when you come back down), then up a man made incline made out of timber. As the wagon got a fair way up the hill it would then reverse back down through the spring loaded points into another track.

The Shunter and myself, while riding on the wagon we would control the speed by using the manual handbrake to slow the wagon down once it got close to the other wagons that had already been brought down by the Shunter.

Quite often a wagon would get derailed going over the spring loaded points as the coal would often fall off the chute and into the points below. When we rode the wagon over the points on return from the incline, one set of bogies would go back up the track we had came down and the other bogie would head up the track we wanted to go into. This action would cause the wagon to become derailed with us riding on it and quite often we had to jump of and move away quickly. There were at least up to 4 wagons a week which would derail. This meant holding up the whole process of unloading the wagons for several hours while the derailed wagon was placed back on the line. If a ship was in, any wagons they were derailed would hold up the ship being loaded and this meant quite a large fee to the coal company. If the ship wasn’t loaded on time it could also miss the high tide.

The Shunter would then make sure that the wagon had coupled to the rest of the wagons sitting there and also connect the air hoses together. Once a full train was made up - about 25/35 wagons – a steam locomotive would take them into Rozelle yard, where a 46 class electric locomotive would then connect and take the empty wagons back out to Glen Lee to be refilled.

I finished up shunting work in Rozelle yard in 1970 after I was appointed Assistant Station Master at Gundagai railway station where I served from 1970-1973. I continued to do shunting work at Gundagai as I was required to do the duties as an ASM. While at Gundagai I was shunting a train in winter time and I recall that I was running across the sleeper deck in front of the Fettler’s shed and I slipped over and slid along the sleepers. I stopped a foot away from the train wheel. Luckily for me, the train guard saw me fall and stopped the train
just in time. So as you can see it was a very dangerous position on the railways being a shunter. Below photos show the preserved Gundagai railway station (2012) with views of its former goods yard infrastructure, rail track and ground frames.

As I reflect back on nearly 50 years on from my railway shunting work, I realise how dangerous shunting work can be. Quite a few shunters have been killed doing their job. I recall a shunter being caught between 2 couplings while shunting a passenger train at Sydney station. Sadly he passed away once the train was separated. Despite the hard work, risks and challenges faced, it was for me a very rewarding job that I loved doing. It was one that kept you on your toes and required eyes in the back of your head.

Rozelle yard in the 1990s can be seen in far middle upper centre of this photo -

Rozelle railway yard relics as seen in 1990s by Don Jones -

Rozelle yard seen in 1990s by Don Jones http://4.bp.blogspot.com/--e9gwq6aIKOU/T1NQ6XMy_MI/AAAAAAAAAtM/1EPn3Rn5Wos/s1600/01+Eastern+end+of+Rozelle+yard+-+Don+Jones.jpg
Rozelle yard seen in 1990s by Don Jones http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-XOYRVRi1SX8/T1NRD7jEE4I/AAAAAAAAAtU/yDQH-fuYgog/s1600/02+Rozelle+Yard+looking+west++Don+Jones.jpg

Some of the traffic that used to pass through Rozelle before it closed down - http://www.flickriver.com/photos/tags/rozelleyard/interesting/. For a good insight to the history of the inner city Goods line this link may be of interest - http://www.visitsydneyaustralia.com.au/lost-rail-rozelle.html

JOHN KING’S RETURNS TO GUNDAGAI RAILWAY STATION 2016

As mentioned in the August 2016 newsletter, John King took up the role of the caretaker for the Gundagai railway station, going full circle nearly 45 years later back to his former railway station. Due to various reasons John finished up at Gundagai Heritage Railway in February 2017.

______________________________
TUMUT BRANCH LINE RAILWAY HISTORY

Have you ever wanted to learn more about the southern NSW branch line from Cootamundra to Tumut? This website helps to explain some of the history behind it and rail models created by some enthusiasts - http://www.users.on.net/~pprewett/tumutbranchline/

______________________________
METAL NSWGR RAILWAY TICKETS

The NSWGR once issued yearly passenger metal tickets. On left is a Thornleigh to City ticket issued 1972 and on right, is a Pymble to St Leonards ticket issued 1972.

On left is a Woy Woy to Central ticket issued 1972, on right is A Warrawee to City ticket issued 1972.
HILLSTON NSW RAIL HISTORY

A few quotes of rail history interest from "The Pages of the Past"...a section of the Hillston-Ivanhoe Spectator.

The original Bill for construction of the Railway to Hillston went through Parliament in December, 1915. Prior to that the nearest rail head had been Carrathool with bullock and horse wagons used to carry loads back and forth”.

"Griffith - Hillston line to open 18th June 1923. It was definitely stated during the visit of inspectors on Tuesday last, that Monday 18th June would be the date of the first passenger train to arrive in Hillston and that the line would be officially opened that day. The first appointed station master was Mr Buddidge. “On 18th June 1923, the night was dark, cold and bleak but 300 people were at the station to greet the steam train.”

Hillston to Roto Railway. A staff survey with a gang of men have commenced work in connection with the railway line from Hillston to Roto. Work will commence at both ends.

December 6th 1928 27/10/1927

The annual report of the Rail commissioner revealed a loss for the year of £1,311,816 . The loss on the Hillston to Temora line was £15,674. Trida to Ivanhoe £ 21,125. Offset by income Hillston £18,777, Merriwagga £ 2049, Ivanhoe £11936, Griffith £43,931. It seems that it took from 1883 to 1923 for a rail service to connect Hillston to the Temora line.

Present day Hillston station in 2016, seen above right, has just the signal hut remains remaining.
NEVILLE SIDING NSW - RAIL ACCOMMODATION FOR TRAVELLERS

Fortunately in some NSW towns people took it into their own hands to ensure preserved buildings would remain local, sometimes removing these buildings from the railway land. One example is at Mandurama in central west NSW.

Below is a rare photo of the Mandurama railway station c1890 when it was used on the Blayney to Demondrille branch line. Photo EAJ Lumme, courtesy of the National Library of Australia collection.

Nowadays it is a place for rail enthusiasts to stay overnight, Neville Siding in the NSW central west. There are rail carriages and the former historical Mandurama railway station as accommodation for travellers. See more at http://www.nevillesiding.com.au/
BOOK REVIEW - STATIONS ON THE TRACK by J.M. Cottey.

This book examines history and operations of a select few key stations on most main and branch lines across NSW. Extensive information, covering why lines were built, along with station designs, drawings, photographs, historical notes and operating details are included for most of the locations and include Glen Innes, Werris Creek, Forbes, Wellington, Junee, Hay, Wollongong and more. NSWHRSI understands that copies of this book should still be available in Hay NSW from The Riverina Grazier shop.
NSW NEWS

DID YOU KNOW? - Just a few of the heritage railway stations across NSW that have been completed by the NSW Government Station Refresh team over the last 3 years include Milsons Point, Petersham, Wagga Wagga, Tamworth, Bowral, Campsie, Town Hall, Central, Gordon, Mittagong, Goulburn. There is an aim to complete many more over the next 4 years. We wish them well in preserving the state’s operational railway heritage.

NATIONAL TRUST AWARDS 2017

In April the National Trust recognised several rail events and projects with awards for contribution towards heritage in NSW. Sydney Trains and rail projects around NSW were recognised for various projects across the year. Winners included:


NORTHERN NSW NEWS

BROADMEADOW LOCOMOTIVE DEPOT

During May 2017 the NSW Govt cut off access for volunteers to the Broadmeadow railway depot, claiming dysfunctionality within the project. See the NBN news video for further information at https://www.facebook.com/nbntelevision/videos/10155368298938331

CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH BRANCH LINE

The Byron Bay...... privately operated (note the clue)...... small railway revival is nearly complete as we go to publication. The railmotor is being moved there from Lithgow for a June commencement date. Meanwhile much track overhaul and the building of 2 new mini stations have been completed. For the moment the train will not be travelling to the heritage railway station in Byron Bay CBD. Wayne Brown has given NSWHRSI these insights of the new stations built and in place infrastructure.
Between March and June 2017, John Holland Rail is planning to remove all level crossing signage from the non-operational CRN area of Casino to Murwillumbah. Such locations will include Casino, Murwillumbah, Mooball and Burringbar.

Making it confusing for locals up in north east NSW, a transport forum held at Ballina in late February 2017 was to discuss how the State Governments plan to develop public transport infrastructure to enhance the connectivity between North East NSW and South-East Queensland. Some plans suggested expanding rail transport around Byron while others would like a rail trail formed. The latter will not really help public transport. See more at https://www.northernstar.com.au/news/cross-border-transport-projects-on-the-move/?ref=hs

CIVIC RAILWAY STATION


GUYRA RAILWAY STATION

There are plans to expand the Guyra railway tourism trike rides from the current 2 Km to 3km north of the station. In April 2017 ISTR officials visited the site to start discussion regarding implementation of the expansion ideas with the operators who feel the expansion would bring in more tourists. See more at http://www.armidaleexpress.com.au/story/4550081/push-to-get-trike-back-on-track/
March 2017 demolition work was observed to have started on this signal box in the north west end of the yard. The Signal box was built in 1923 but has been vacant for many years since CTC was introduced. Unlike boxes at Moss Vale and Yass Junction which have been maintained, Muswellbrook is in a poor condition due lack of upkeep. The
photos here date from September 2010. A NSW Govt historical website has information on the signal – “SIGNAL BOX (1923). The signal box is an elevated, two storey signal box constructed of a timber frame, pre-cast concrete and asbestos cement cladding. The lower floor construction comprises a drop-in, pre-cast concrete panel between concrete uprights and conventional timber framed construction on the upper floor. The signal box has a hipped roof with broad overhanging eaves, clad in fibro asbestos laid in a diamond pattern and terra cotta ridge capping. The windows are timber, double hung sash with between 6 and 9 panes. Access is via a steel access ladder and there is a toilet on the upper landing.”

NEWCASTLE BRANCH LINE

One of the best indicators that the Newcastle railway line removal was motivated for the building of new housing/apartments, appeared in March 2017. A Revitalising Newcastle spokesperson stated - "But while the park preserves the open nature of the corridor, plans for an “affordable housing” block on a section of line west of Merewether Street are causing arguments even before they have been formally announced. Mr Cassel unveiled the affordable housing proposal at a recent meeting of Newcastle City Council's building better cities committee." See more at http://www.theherald.com.au/story/4553078/head-of-steam-on-corridor/?cs=305. The public were told a few years ago in that no such structures would be built on the railway corridor. Being lied to by politicians only further erodes the NSW public trust in Government. See story at http://www.theherald.com.au/story/4604877/rail-corridor-housing-for-teachers-nurses/?cs=305

In May 2017 plans were discussed for finalising the Newcastle former corridor layouts - http://www.theherald.com.au/story/4651195/shop-top-housing-plazas-in-rail-corridor-plan/?cs=305#slide=1

See more at http://www.theherald.com.au/story/4553078/head-of-steam-on-corridor/?cs=305. April 2017 saw an announcement by the NSW Government to head towards building housing on the former Newcastle railway corridor. This vision is a turn around from what the public were told a few years ago in that no such structures would be built on the railway corridor. Being lied to by politicians only further erodes the NSW public trust in Government and drives more voters to the minor partied who listen more to people concerns. See story at http://www.theherald.com.au/story/4604877/rail-corridor-housing-for-teachers-nurses/?cs=305

**NEWCASTLE – WICKHAM STATION**

The construction work to replace the old Wickham station was progressing in March 2017. See photos of the tracks and foundations of the perway being laid here - [https://www.facebook.com/revitalisingnewcastle/posts/1243520482429630](https://www.facebook.com/revitalisingnewcastle/posts/1243520482429630)


**OURIMBAH STATION MASTERS HOUSE**

During March 2017 came reports that the station masters house is due to be demolished. See more at [https://www.facebook.com/abccentralcoast/photos/a.208069562541894.62538.161191673896350/1636359299712906/?type=3&theater](https://www.facebook.com/abccentralcoast/photos/a.208069562541894.62538.161191673896350/1636359299712906/?type=3&theater)

**WYONG STATION MASTERS HOUSE**

During March 2017 ABC news reported that the station masters house is due to be demolished. See more at [https://www.facebook.com/abccentralcoast/photos/a.208069562541894.62538.161191673896350/1636359299712906/?type=3&theater](https://www.facebook.com/abccentralcoast/photos/a.208069562541894.62538.161191673896350/1636359299712906/?type=3&theater)

**WESTERN NSW NEWS**

**BLAYNEY TO DEMONDRILLE BRANCH LINE**


**COWRA**

During April 2017 a massive auction held at the Cowra military and rail museum saw hundreds of rail items from signal posts, staff boxes, station seats, railway platform signs, trikes, lamps and many other items sold. Some items went for very very high prices while other items went well priced. It is very sad to see a very well collated collection broken up like this but the owner had their reasons. The ABC news reported on the lead up to the event - [http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-03-31/working-world-war-ii-tank-for-sale-at-cowra-museum-auction/8402628](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-03-31/working-world-war-ii-tank-for-sale-at-cowra-museum-auction/8402628)
ORANGE RAILWAY STATION

Repainting of the Orange railway station in the latest heritage paint scheme was started in late February 2017. The station was repainted 2015, as reported by NSWHRSI’s Phil Pedley, into new orange/red colours. Before this it had a white/cream colour scheme as NSWHRSI observed in 2011. Orange railway station 2011 colours left and right 2015 colours, by Phil Buckley.

By March 2017 the building had begun to be stripped and areas were tested for the new colours. Phil Pedley provided these photo updates below.

Phil Pedley also advises NSWHSRI readers that LVR who has taken out the lease at the Orange railway locomotive depot, is now doing weekly working bees cleaning up the site, prior to any further work and rollingstock appearing.

RYLSTONE RAILWAY STATION

In March 2017 a petition was launched to reopen the 7km section from Kandos to Rylstone in central west NSW, see media story here http://www.mudgeeguardian.com.au/story/4505611/rail-link-petition-gathers-steam/?cs=1233. Many locals want the line to Gulgong reopened via Mudgee and north to Coonabarbran and beyond. State Governments do not seem to see any need to fund beyond minimum for passenger services to country areas nor implement any major funding to bring back public rail transport to towns across the Central West of NSW. Many NSW voters would prefer to take a train than a bus, to visit the wonderful towns and inject tourism dollars into the region.

WOODSTOCK RAILWAY STATION

At Woodstock railway station in May 2017 a new concrete ramp and a new metal fence on the platform were added to the infrastructure. Some people think that this type of platform fencing will cut off easy access to any future train service. NSWHSRI Central West reporter Russell Denning photos taken May 2017.
SOUTHERN NSW NEWS

ALBURY RAILWAY STATION

Ongoing refresh work has continued at Albury railway station with internal and external tasks being achieved. Examples of the work have included resurfacing of platform, waiting room repainting, roof rework and brick work cleaning. Upgrades to bus terminal is underway too. Greg Finster took these photos in May 2017.
In April 2017 the original 1883 era Binalong railway station in south west NSW, went up for sale with a price of $560,000.

**BINALONG RAILWAY STATION**
See the photos of the inside of the building and historical views on the website listing at https://www.domain.com.au/38-fitzroy-street-binalong-nsw-2584-2013242573. The station building changed since it went out of service in 1915. It was replaced by the newer Binalong railway station around 400m away on a new track deviation. Right is an early 1900s era photo showing the original Binalong railway station when it was operational.

GOOLGOWI RAILWAY STATION


GUNDAGAI RAILWAY BRIDGE

It is reported that in March 2017 an application to downgrade the protection on the historic Gundagai railway bridge was made to the NSW Govt. The wish is to remove its heritage title so that the rail agent John Holland Rail could start to knock down sections of the bridge instead of repairing its decay. The bridge, built in 1903 for the new extension to Tumut the railway bridge, was last officially used in 1984 to carry the last goods trains. Since then the wooden structural areas of the bridge have started suffering from either neglect. Despite its heritage status, Gundagai Rail Trail organisation has started working with Gundagai Historic Bridges Inc to try and save the railway bridge so it can be used for bicycle and walkers only. The similar 1800s era road bridge next to it was last used in 1978 and has suffered badly over the last 4 decades. It has been suggested that the road bridge is ready to fall down due to frequent flood damage, lack of funding from government maintenance, environmental impacts and just sheer ageing.
LADYSMITH RAILWAY STATION

During May 2017 it was 100 years since trains first departed from Ladysmith railway station on the now closed down Tumbarumba branch line. Tumbarail had a celebration at Ladysmith railway station and this attracted a crowd of people and various exhibits for visitors to see. A new heritage style station sign was also unveiled at the event. See more at https://www.facebook.com/WINNewsRiverina/videos/1367956783291459/?autoplay_reason=user_settings&video_container_type=0&video_creator_product_type=2&app_id=2392950137&live_video_guests=0

TEMORA RAILWAY STATION

During April 2017 Temora railway station was recognised nationally in being awarded the National Trust Award, for the adaptive reuse of Temora Railway Station. The NSWHRSI Editor played a small part in helping to get Dulux Australia to donate 100 litres of the Terracotta red colour paint (as a donation) for repainting of the main buildings in 2015-2016 period. It is a pity other NSW towns cant follow this town example and restore their stations over a few years like this to gain tourism benefits.

TUMUT RAILWAY STATION

New interpretative signage has gone up in the Tumut railway station and precinct area to help educate people to the town’s railway heritage. Thanks to NSWHRSI southern reporter Andrew Lawson for these photos.
In March 2017 a plan to reinstate local daily rail services between Wagga Wagga and Albury appeared in local news. This was coupled with a council plan examining ideas to bring in some potential form of local rail commuter services. The vision is to see a return to a daily service connecting the Riverina main line towns with Griffith. Such local services locally died out in the 1980s when the NSW Government removed all branch line and local services from most NSW areas and moved everyone to buses. See the story for more news - http://www.dailyadvertiser.com.au/story/4602728/wagga-to-albury-commuter-train-proposed-poll/?cs=147

In April 2017, Wagga Wagga railway station was observed being repainted after the current paint was stripped back to brickwork. Peter Watters took these photos of the station refresh works underway. He noted that there was a lot of work going on out the front of the railway station in the forecourt area and that there was resurfacing of the carpark, station building, roof repairs along with temporary fencing going up everywhere.
TUMBARUMBA BRANCH LINE

It appears the NSW Transport Minister started to officially close down the southern NSW railway line from Rosewood to Tumbarumba on May 3 2017, with the start of the Bill through Parliament to enable this. [https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/bills/Pages/bill-details.aspx?pk=3390](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/bills/Pages/bill-details.aspx?pk=3390). NSW legislation like this was used to close and then remove the heavy rail to Newcastle CBD during 2014-2017. Up until Newcastle, only 8 lines in NSW have ever been closed by formal proceedings - Campbelltown-Camden, Batlow- Kunama, Booyong-Ballina, Glenreagh-Dorrigo, East Maitland-Morpeth, Roslyn-Taralga and the The Rock-Westby. It is claimed that the closure of the Tumbarumba railway section by Parliament could enable the creation of a Rail Trail from Rosewood to Tumbarumba. Rail trail proponents state that this trail will bring in millions and millions of dollars of tourism income each year from bike riders and walkers.

What railway line in NSW is next? The sad fact is that many country people are cut off from former NSW rail services and that difficulty will only increase if such closures continue.
SYDNEY REGION

CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION

On 22 March 2017 Premier Gladys Berejiklian unveiled "Central Walk" which is part of a new plan for Central railway station in Sydney. This plan involves a new pedestrian underground walkway beneath Central. Its purpose will be to link hundreds of thousands of commuters who use suburban trains each day with the new metro line and light rail. Construction is due to start next year and be completed within 3 years. See more at http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/major-new-walkway-for-central-station-to-link-metro-and-suburban-train-lines-20170321-gv3hw1.html

it was observed in March 2017 that fencing, awning and columns were being repainted as part of ongoing restoration and maintenance work around Central railway station Western Forecourt area. NSWHRSI recorded workers applying primer to the many columns, seen right and below.

By May 2017 this work had been completed and new colours were noticed.
The new food businesses for the Grand Concourse area which have being missing since the Hungry jacks fire are hopefully get closer to opening, with signage indicating the former food court area and the old Rail heritage offices are to become food shops.

In May 2017, Platform 15 at Central station was noted to be fenced off with a low metal fence on the edge. It appears that this is to stop people falling off prior to the demolition of the platform.

In April to May 2017 engineering works at Central uncovered the old small wagon turntables used from 1850 onwards when Central was in its original layout. See more at this link

https://www.facebook.com/TransportForNSW/videos/811716152319699/
CME OFFICES, REDFERN

The restoration of the NSWGR Chief Mechanical Engineer's (CME) offices continues at Redfern / North Eveleigh. The building has been externally restored with new paint, new timber along with brick repairs. Internal repairs to make the building useable under the expansion of the NSW Govt plans to reuse the railway yard, means the building will possibly become a commercial or private site in the longer term.

CROYDON RAILWAY STATION

The upgrade to the station which is planning to install a new concourse, station office building and new stairs and lifts to all 3 platforms is still continuing in May 2017. Plans are expecting to see this upgrade finalised by September 2017. The heritage platform buildings are currently not being altered.
The old heritage style timber overheard concourse building and associated platform stairs were demolished by May 2017 as part of the final works in completing the station upgrade at Flemington. The new overheard concourse and walkway is now much closer to the station buildings. Staff have now moved back into the platform buildings for work.

Before demolition works in 2016.
Flemington railway station May 2017

By May 2017 the old concourse is now demolished......nothing remains.

New concourse is in use.
A view of the former Flemington yard siding now the fruit market area.

GRANVILLE RAILWAY BRIDGE

40 years after NSW worse ever railway disaster, which saw a large death toll, the NSW Government has only now apologised to the victims, survivors, families and workers who were at the crash site. See more at http://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2017-05-04/granville-train-disaster-victims-finally-get-apology/8494010. The accident saw massive funding to bring track maintenance up to a safer and more suitable level.

LARGE ERECTION SHED

In March 2017 Sydney media published various stories on 3801 Ltd which had been locked out and evicted from the Large Erection Shed (LES) at Eveleigh railway yards. According to online comments from rail enthusiasts, the suspicion is that this could lead in to either demolition or take over of the LES for “other” purposes as was planned a few years ago. Transport NSW states that the LES is to become a multi user facility and requires 3801 Ltd to remove all of its rolling stock and items. 3801 Ltd claims it cannot easily find a new location in or near Sydney over the last few years and that it should have been made aware of this upcoming change. See media report at http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/future-of-sydneys-vintage-trains-unclear-as-3801-tour-company-evicted-20170308-gut8gm.html. (The editor once worked at 3801 Ltd as a volunteer in 2009-2010, so got to see inside the LES and marveled at some of its historical features, see photos below).
LEURA RAILWAY STATION

Regular Blue Mountains NSWHRSI contributor Graeme Knappick observed that in late February 2017 the old stairs at Leura were removed and new ones were put in. This work is being conducted as part of the TAP program. By March 2017 more extensive work was being undertaken.
MARRICKVILLE RAILWAY STATION

In March 2017 NSWHRSI received a news update from the Refresh Program which is underway with the Sydney Trains Station Projects team. They are nearing completion of Marrickville railway station. This Refresh Project has involved extensive heritage restoration works by the team restoring tuck pointing, brick repairs, glazing, vintage door replacement and reactivation of the original colour scheme.

MORTUARY RAILWAY STATION

Observed in May 2017 are what is understood to be further work in the area around the station associated with the extension of the Goods Line walkway.
PENRITH RAILWAY STATION

In February 2017 Graeme Knappick observed further progress on the new concourse at Penrith railway station along with changes to the old original station building ticket office, which has seen the old ticket room area bricked off.
PETERSHAM RAILWAY STATION

Petersham railway station was finally repainted by April 2017 into its new colour scheme.
SYDNEY REGION

The NSW Government is examining a report which looks at whether to split UrbanGrowth NSW back into Landcom and UrbanGrowth. Bottle necks are occurring in progress across several key projects. Some suggest that this 2 prong approach is necessary but we have to wonder about the affect on heritage and rail systems around NSW. Transport and heritage can be impacted by their decisions. See more at http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/future-of-urbangrowth-nsw-unclear-after-government-report-recommends-split-20170301-guo62h.html

THORNELEIGH RAILWAY STATION

During March 2017 the old Thornleigh railway station pedestrian footbridge was partially overhauled with the western side stairwell area repainted. It is expected the rest of the bridge will be completed during trackwork weekends. The bridge is made with steel from the same company who supplied steel for the Sydney Harbour Bridge.
YOUR SAY - HERITAGE PHOTOS

Every issue HRSI will publish a selection of heritage photos from our growing collection of various railway photographers (30+ now contributing), showing the different NSW stations as they once were from 1950s up to recent times.

Photographer Warren Banfield view left, of Harden railway station in 1983 and right, Michelago railway station in 1986.

Photographer Garrett Fitzgerald view left, of Bangalow railway station in 2016 and a tunnel on the Murwillumbah branch line in 2016.
Photographer Brett Leslie view of left, Deepwater railway station in 1987 and right, Narrandera 1985.

Penrith railway station – left, 2016 day time view via Phil Buckley and right, 2017 night supplied via Graeme Knappick

Photographer Chris Collins views of left, Casino signal box 1993, and right, Nana Glen signal Box 1970s (in his collection)
Murwillumbah railway station seen in 1995 when operational on left, photographer Peter Burr and on right, Phil Buckley view in 2011, when it was closed down and no longer operational. Note the tree growth.

Bombala railway station left, 1921, right 2011, by Phil Buckley

Cootamundra railway station - Photographer Mark Zanker view 1974 left, contrasts with right, photographer Peter Watters 2017 view

Scan of a photograph showing Milson Point / North Sydney / Lavender Bay railway station (before the Sydney Harbour Bridge came into use) as it was reproduced in a magazine more than 70 years old and now in the Public Domain. Source Railway Magazine (1933) "Overseas Railways: Some Australian Railway Scenes", 72 (432), p. 444.
OTHER NEWS

RAILWAY PHOTOGRAPHER NOTICE FROM ARTC – ARTC RAIL SAFETY PHOTO GUIDE

From photos/videos uploaded to various facebook groups over the last year, more and more modern day era railway enthusiasts are taking risks it has been observed accessing/walking into live/operational main line corridor areas and accessing closed off station areas along with signal boxes without permission or the awareness of what they are doing is “unsafe”.

It is known that railway agencies operating in NSW (such as NSW Transport, Police Transport Command, ARTC and John Holland Rail) do watch facebook and online forums for breaches and combined with reporting of trespassers by train crews, it has seen there is a need for an education campaign. The result has seen ARTC release an online national rail safety guide to ensure enthusiast don’t trespass or cause a problem with railway operations while taking photos. Many photographers don’t know that there are serious fines and police action if you are found inside an operational railway corridor without a proper and valid reason.


FUTURE RAILWAY STATION TOURS – COME ON BOARD!

With the above notice in mind, in the future HRSI is examining offering group tours of some of the heritage railway stations across NSW, to help like minded enthusiasts photograph the buildings and learn about why the railway stations were built and used. Tours may include northern, western and southern NSW and could be done over a weekend in some cases or a few days, depending on the level of demand and interest shown. More details will be released when planning is finalised.

Recommended links –
NSW Heritage Railway Stations and Infrastructure facebook page - https://www.facebook.com/NSWRSI?ref=bookmarks

NSW railway stations http://nswrailwaystations.wordpress.com

Sydney railway stations http://sydneyrailwaystations.wordpress.com

Northern NSW railway branchlines page - https://www.facebook.com/northernnswrailwaybranchlines/?ref=bookmarks

Western NSW railway branchlines page - https://www.facebook.com/westernnswrailwaybranchlines/?ref=bookmarks
Southern NSW railway branchlines page -
https://www.facebook.com/southernnswrailwaybranchlines/?ref=bookmarks

HERITAGE RAILWAY STATIONS PROJECTS - A variety of NSW volunteer run heritage railway stations projects are online with websites and facebook pages. All of these projects have links to their actual website on the facebook pages to enable readers further into their projects and news. Join their facebook too if your interested.

Cowra - https://www.facebook.com/Cowra-Railway-Station-348015252063485/?fref=ts
Gundagai - https://www.facebook.com/GundagaiHeritageRailway/?ref=bookmarks
Temora - https://www.facebook.com/groups/494316453913386

Other pages of interest

Closed and Abandoned railway lines in Australia facebook page - which covers NSW at times https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=531274093606869

Like to learn a very indepth history of the NSW railway system this link may appeal - http://www.transportheritagensw.com.au/#!thematic-history/c1jyt


Railcorp state heritage register listings of stations and detailed information -

NSW station name listing - http://www.ozrevenues.com/Articles/nsw-railway-station-names.html

NEXT ISSUE

Coming up in our next NSWHRSI newsletter- issue 8 due out July 2016, we will examine:

- Branch line review – Tumbarumba branch line.
- Insights to how Railway Refreshment Rooms operated in the past across NSW.
- Examine some of the Signal boxes/huts that remains across NSW.
- Plus all our regular insights to heritage stations news, developments and events around NSW.

To follow NSWHRSI click on the facebook link – https://www.facebook.com/NSWRSI. NSWHRSI can be contacted on the facebook page and welcomes any stories / information or photo submissions.
TAIL END TRIANGLE PHOTO

We take you back to 1970 when Greg Fitzgerald flew over Chullora railway workshops and the famous Enfield goods yard.