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

A large interest was generated in the first issue which has helped to inform people of recent happenings across NSW.

We hope you enjoy this 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, Murwillimbah, Cowra, Guyra, Laidymith, 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 of the remaining stations remains relatively unknown at this time.
NSW HERITAGE RAILWAY STATION DESIGNS 1850s – 1940s

A brief review to help readers to identify the main different styles of heritage railway station buildings that can be found across NSW. Railway stations come in a few different type of building and design styles, which were influenced primarily by the ability to develop new building materials and at same time to be constrained by the accountant’s bean counting of costs to build such structures. The development of railway stations across NSW is also able to show how new technologies and building styles were adapted and in some cases added to existing designs. Initial large / main stations in the early 1850s were built with stone / timber, iron and corrugated steel sheeting. Some were from bricks. Minor stations were built with timber / iron construction in the platform bases / station buildings. By the mid-1870s railway stations were being built to a Victorian era style which saw the wider use of bricks. Many stations were built even into the 1920s and onwards from timber. By the early 1900s the next style of suburban and rural stations saw further use of bricks in their construction. The late 1910s/early 1920s saw the NSWGR move to “Pre Cast” / PC concrete style and these were used in a variety of station designs though in limited locations across NSW. By the 1940s elaborate platform awnings at stations were beginning to appear with steel beams along with minimalistic station features. The many different station buildings across NSW was a logistical challenge for NSWGR to manage due to so many different features, layouts and building components used. Some were standardised such as across the inner Sydney region but out in the country, there was more variety. Stations in 2014 do away with heritage aspects and adopt a bare, glass / concrete look along with minimal staff resources. In the 21st Century the remaining heritage type station buildings still standing in NSW, provide the tourists the chance to see a glimpse into the large variety of architecture styles which spans nearly 80years.

Timber - Crookwell

Stone - Bowenfels

Brick - Berowra

Concrete – Lowanna
NORTHERN NSW

BLACK MOUNTAIN / BEN LOMOND RAILWAY STATIONS

The New England Rail Trail organization is organising via its local member, to obtain information on the former Northern railway line in order to secure its conversion from a disused railway line in to a multipurpose community rail trail.

TRANSPORT FOR NSW has been approached by the local member of state parliament to provide information, so the line capacity can be assessed before a rail trail submission is made.

BROADMEADOW LOCOMOTIVE DEPOT (BMD)

In August the management committee of Transport Heritage NSW were noted visiting the Broadmeadow Roundhouse to inspect the site and talk with local stakeholders. The discussions focused on working towards a way to bring the historic railway site back into active use. The site has strong potential to become lower Hunter heritage railway tourism draw card.

(Brief courtesy of Wiki / Shed Rat)
Currently stored in and around the roundhouse, is a variety of RTM rollingstock which was moved from Thirlmere a few years ago. (Visit news courtesy John Brougham)

BYRON BAY RAILWAY STATION

A plan to use a restored 620 class railmotor set to move tourists from the North Byron Beach Resort into Byron Bay is in the advanced development phase. The railmotor is being currently worked on and the project developers are discussing with the NSW government and the local council what is needed to make their plans go ahead. See more at http://www.echo.net.au/2014/07/rail-line-plans-get-byron-moving/

GLENREAGH RAILWAY STATION

Correction - In the previous HRSI issue, it was stated that the Glenreagh railway station is likely to be demolished in late 2014. The information was incorrect with the situation being clarified, the station is instead only being considered for a potential demolition, pending further ARTC reviews and final assessments. Additionally, after a long time of preparing documentation, in mid 2014 GMR was approved by the national rail safety regulatory for specific accreditation to move rollingstock around on site as needed and to conduct repairs to them as required.

This approval now means GMR can also look forward to a restart of the various tasks needing to be done along the line such as repairs to the railway track and conduct more weed clearing using for example the various the trikes they own. But before they can do any of these actions, further paperwork approvals are needed and planning put in place but it hoped some of the rollingstock movements can be done by late 2014 or early 2015.

LISMORE RAILWAY STATION

It is now 10 years since the last train service visited Lismore. The ALP government cut the service and denied all the north coast population access to the rail service. This cut similar to the planned Newcastle one below has created much division within communities, politicians and businesses. Here is a reminder of the past that was once - http://www.northernstar.com.au/news/milestone-for-railway-line/2258825/
NEWCASTLE BRANCH LINE
Mid 2014 has seen a series of rapid developments with the city of Newcastle descending into major ICAC related issues – which saw the current Mayor stand down. The former Mayor has been noted on public record as favoring the closure of the Newcastle Branch line. Many locals and some state politicians want the termination and closure of the Newcastle branch line section to be halted while the ICAC investigate several issues which could connected to the railway issue.

Additionally Transport for NSW has started in September 2014, early project survey / site work for the preparation of the new station and tram lines. The branch line truncation is expecting to take place on December 26 2014.

Locals are strongly protesting to keep their transport access open and intact – this website may be useful to some http://saveourrail.org.au/?page_id=2

TAMWORTH RAILWAY STATION
A proposal in early 2014 to enable Tamworth residents to access Newcastle / Sydney via a daily train trip was discussed.

The proposal is mainly concerned with whether the local demand is high enough to actually provide the service. If it was to be implemented, the heritage Tamworth station would see more passenger movements. Tamworth in August 2014 saw a visit by a heritage steam train organization which brought much interest back to the railway station and branch line.

WALLANGARRA RAILWAY STATION
The last QLD Winelander rail tour train visited Wallangarra station in early 2014. Originally the station was the main north line to QLD from Sydney and functioned as a dual station / change of gauge station for QLD trains in the old days.

The station was moved off the railway station platform to a private location, to be reused or preserved by locals. The website news had last updated in 2011 with no outcome to what had happened, so HRSI contacted the Walgett Shire Council to find out what was the situation. The Council confirmed in response that the Walgett railway station, was sadly demolished in 2011 and had been estimated to cost $4,000 in funds to bring in an external removalist. Nothing was saved from the station unfortunately either. (Photo from Walgett District Historical Society)

WALGETT RAILWAY STATION
In 1994 Walgett railway station was given by the SRA to the Walgett Shire Council. In researching heritage station issues, a website a few years ago had indicated that the Walgett station was hoping to be preserved.

Since the closure of the NSW side since late 1980s, the station had become a local railway museum / function / tourist centre and still has seen a few QLD train movements over the years. With the last Winelander train for now to have come and limited visit / tourist tours from SDSR for the foreseeable future, what this will mean for the future of the station and town is unknown at this time.
WESTERN NSW

CANOWINDRA RAILWAY STATION

In more interesting news, part of the former Canowindra railway yard it seems, is to become a retirement home according to recently released news and site plans. See more at http://www.canowindranews.com.au/story/2514724/retirement-village-moving-ahead/ and these 2 views show roughly where it will go in the southern end of the yard.

Blayney to Demondrille branch line in September 2009, Cowra station has remained used but not in a rail sense. The station layout is quite interesting to railway enthusiasts as has its own cellar, former travellers accommodation rooms, a former bar/dining room and various photos on display of the station over the years. The gardens are looking beautiful and they have a grant to repair the bank on the opposite side of the carpark to its original design.

The CAVC (Cowra Antique Vehicle Club) has won a grant to restore a fair part of the gardens to their prior glory - yet to be completed because of a hold-up with the donated 8 metre sleepers.

The gardens around the building have been restored, including the large pots on the platform. Thanks to Russell Denning for the information and photos. We will have a bigger update on Cowra in a future issue.

COWRA RAILWAY STATION

The station is now under the care of the local Cowra Antique Vehicle Club and 3 other tenants. The Car club has the station open on the last Sunday of each month for tourists and visitors to see this unique building. Since the line was closed of the

ESKBANK RAILWAY STATION

The Eskbank railway station heritage project is moving ahead slowly with the ERHC management team working with Lithgow City Councils CBD revitalisation committee. This is due to Eskbank sits as the front door to the main street, as well as the whole heritage park concept.
(News courtesy of Michael Wilson) More about the Eskbank railway heritage centre project can be seen at http://eskbankrailheritage.wordpress.com/

MOULONG RAILWAY YARD

It has been noted in October 2014 that the former Molong railway barracks building has now been demolished.

The building was located in the south east end of the railway yard near the turntable / silos. Thanks to Phil Pedley for the news.

TARANNA RAILWAY STATION

It has been reported online that the platform light poles at Tarana station were removed in July 2014. Here we see the poles as they were at Tarana station in 2012.

At the time of publication this is yet to be confirmed. These tall timber light poles were once common all across NSW station platforms but over the years the majority have been removed due to safety issues.

TEMORA RAILWAY STATION

In late August 2014, the Member for Murrumbidgee, Adrian Piccoli announced that the historic Temora railway station has been approved for a $100,000 government grant. This grant money will be spent on cleaning, repairing and customising the railway station so it can be reused by the local residents and local community groups.

The long waited outcome and announcement from the Heritage Grants Major Works program was crucial to the station’s future, as it has remained vacant and minimal repairs over the last few decades since passenger use stopped. It has been a long process to get such a significant grant but this money will ensure a major long term boost for the town, as its railway station becomes a tourist and local community centre. The planned adaptive reuse of the railway station will see it having a museum, visitor facilities, youth centre and exhibition space across the many rooms. John Holland Group contractors have already started doing some of the initial site clean up works, with more to come once a restoration schedule is worked out.

More can be seen on the Temora station project at their website - http://temorarailwaystation.wordpress.com/
See the NSW Government press release below for more details about the station grant.

"TEMORA AREA’S HERITAGE TO BENEFIT FROM NEW INVESTMENT"

Member for Murrumbidgee Adrian Piccoli advised that the heritage of the Temora area will benefit from $108,000 under the NSW Government Heritage Grants Program. "I’m delighted these grants have been awarded for valued heritage services in the local area," Mr Piccoli said.

"Particularly exciting is the award of $100,000 under the Heritage Grants Major Works program to Temora Shire Council for conservation works at the State Heritage Register-listed Temora Railway Station. "The adaptive reuse works will see the State Heritage Register-listed former railway station, which dates back to the late 19th century, transformed into a museum, visitor facilities, youth centre and exhibition space. "Temora Railway Station is a major station complex with a significant third class station building of substantial scale, well detailed and one of the best surviving buildings of its kind in the state."

Funds of $5,000 will also be available for use under the Temora Local Heritage Places Implementation program, while $3,000 is available for the Temora Heritage Advisor Implementation program to continue heritage advisory service for the local government area," Mr Piccoli said. The NSW Heritage Grants program is designed to provide direct financial assistance to private owners, councils and community-based organisations to maintain and improve their heritage assets. Mr Piccoli said the NSW Government is committed to caring for places of heritage significance and supporting projects which protect our heritage while adapting sites for new uses. "New heritage projects can also boost tourism and employment opportunities, particularly in rural and regional communities," Mr Piccoli concluded. A full list of projects funded under the 2014/15 NSW Heritage Grants program can be found at http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/Heritage/funding/

VALLEY HEIGHTS DEPOT

Celebrating its 100th anniversary this year, the Valley Heights Locomotive Depot has been the focus of much rail heritage attention already from steam train visits to tourists visiting the depot on the open days.

As part of improvements to the site this year, repairs underway since early this year to the ash pits in the Departure road have been done to improve the safety of the depot. The timbers that run along the top of the ash pit walls which support the rails have been condemned due to age. The repair work will involve renewal of the old timbers so rollingstock can once again move over the ash pits. (Thanks to Andrew Testor for information and photos).
Also a former western line “BRakes” landmark has been moved to the Valley Height Depot. The sign will be guarding the approach to the VHD’s turntable. Thanks to Phil Pedley for this news.

More on the Valley Heights Depot can be seen at http://infobluemountains.net.au/locodepot/

SOUTHERN NSW

BATLOW RAILWAY STATION

Batlow railway station / yard which is mostly removed and demolished, has had a platform sign from the former station reinstalled in the yard area to allow locals and tourists to understand the significance of the location. (Photo courtesy of Andrew Lawson)

BOWNING RAILWAY STATION

It was reported in July 2014 that the station has been vacated and lease finished due to white ant damaging the structure.

This is yet to be confirmed at time of publication. What this site issue means for future reuse of the station is unknown at this time.

BULLI RAILWAY STATION

Bulli station is having a makeover with a refurbishment of the down / platform 2 now underway. The works are designed to make the station accommodate 8 car trains along with new lighting, fences and a safer platform level for passengers.

These upgrades to the station are expecting to be completed by February 2015. The heritage down platform station building is home to the Bulli Black Diamond Heritage Centre – see more at http://blackdiamondheritagecentrebulli.wordpress.com. Photos Phil Buckley and Pamela McGovern.
COOMA RAILWAY STATION

The Cooma Monaro Railway organisation has had to cease their CPH railmotor operations in early 2014. This cease notice was issued by the national rail regulator, which requires CMR to update and improve their Safety Management System and station area to meet ONRSR conditions. CMR have created a new sub committee to manage the SMS issues, which will focus on resolving the issues so they can return to operation as soon as possible.

DUNMORE RAILWAY STATION

With the construction of Flinders station proceeding, the future for the soon to be closed Dunmore railway station is still to be decided. A southern NSW bicycle association wishes to influence the NSW Govt so that they retain the walk/bike railway crossing once Dunmore station closes. The historical station may be readapted after closure for local community groups or be sealed off due to security issues.

GUNDAGAI RAILWAY STATION

GHR has had working bees every month since June 2014, with progress focusing on working towards their master plan aims. Members come from far away as Wagga Wagga, Tumut and Sydney, along with locals who have pitched in with making efforts to tidy up the railway yard. Additionally growing local interest in the project has seen more website visits, increase in followers on their facebook page and much local support come forward along with external donations to help offset costs.

In July 2014 GHR was site of a private wedding ceremony at the station platform. Local reuse is increasing with recent examples of a private BBQ, church group and looking ahead a local political party has already booked the station for a member’s party. GHR submitted a grant application for photo display frames and exhibit space for mannequins in October 2014 to the NSW Govt. GHR will know by the end of the year what is their grant outcome.

(Phil Buckley photo)

(Photos from Nathan Davis)
NIMMITABEL RAILWAY STATION

In another positive sign for NSW railway heritage, we can announce that the long awaited project to preserve the Nimmitabel railway station is now underway. The station is to be restored with what is understood to be assistance from Cooma Council and it will be run by the Nimmitabel Mens Shed, who recently formed.

for project to preserve the Nimmitabel railway station is

It is expected an extensive site clean up, upgrade and repair / restoration of the railway station will take place over the next year or more. We will have more news on this exciting development soon to share. Nimmitabel is the highest station on former NSWGR branch lines in southern NSW.

SYDNEY REGION

ARTARMON

A new lift is planned to be put in at Artarmon station to provide passengers with easier access. It is expected that this change will not significantly impact on the heritage aspects of the station.

BANKSTOWN STATION

The station is slated for upgrades to the station layout and entrances. This will improve the access and public transport interchange facilities.

The main concourse clock was also replaced in mid 2014 and now hangs proudly from the roof. The floor of the concourse is also being upgraded with what was observed as new tiling and sealant being put in.

CENTRAL STATION

Upgrades still continue on the main concourse with new building developments in the former ARHS bookshop underway.

An interesting that many people may not be aware of is that the original Central station ended where the current platforms
begin. As shown below in the photo, the 2 end platform buildings is the rough area where the old station yard once existed. The newer 1906 era Central Station which was a long waited for station, has proven to be able to cater for the expanded passenger growth which was predicted. It was built on a former burial ground called the Devonshire Street Cemetery.

**NORTH EVELEIGH WORKSHOPS**

At North Eveleigh workshop end where the rail yard used to be for servicing and repairs of carriages and vans, it was noted in August 2014 to be screened off for as a car park site.

This area has seen heavy graffiti damage and several parts of the buildings suffer structural failures overs the years and collapse.

**SOUTH EVELEIGH WORKSHOPS**

During May 2014 major construction started on the new apartment blocks at South Eveleigh yard.

The City West Housing organization is in charge of the project which will see their latest project at Eveleigh, with room for 7 storey residential apartment building which will see built 88 units, with basement car parking for 39 cars and 88 bicycles, a roof top garden and landscape works. The site works is expecting to be completed by December 2014. These new apartment block are part of a government initiative to bring more people to the CBD for affordable renting.

It is for some railway enthusiasts somewhat questionable .... placing this apartment on railway heritage land.

**CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER BUILDING, EVELEIGH**

This large office building has been left rather unloved after site cleanup repairs started in late 2013. In mid to late 2014 the building is still not restored and reused.
REDFERN RAILWAY STATION

With the station’s platform buildings repainted and restored back to a decent standard work has now moved onto the main concourse building structure with work being undertaken in August/September to restore the roof dome and chimney stack.

WEST RYDE RAILWAY STATION

Located on the northern line, West Ryde’s Platform 3, has been as noted to be replaced from September 2014 through to April 2015 with a new style concrete platform. The current platform wall / face is a concrete design that dates an older era. Platform 2 still has some original brick structure in place. West Ryde’s original brick and timber station buildings dating from the late 1800s have not been preserved and were demolished a long time ago.
YOUR SAY - HERITAGE PHOTOS

Every issue HRSI will try to publish a selection of heritage photos from various railway photographers, showing the different NSW stations as they once were.

A former station now no longer in existence is the Spring Hill railway station which was located in western NSW near Orange. Chris Stratton took these photos in the 1980s when it was still standing.

Railway photographer Mark Zanker photographed Weethalle, left on the Barmedman to Rankins Springs line NSW in 2000. On the right his photo of Binnaway from 1977 shows how it once looked.

Mark Zanker also photographed Gilmore 1976 left, and Coonabarabran in 1979 right.
Photographer Greg Finster has shared his photos of the Eugowra and Canowindra station from 1970s and 2014 views.

Canowindra

Eugowra

OTHER NEWS

RAIL TRAILS IN NSW – UPDATE

NSW has seen a lot of local community groups pop up expressing their desire to reuse former branch lines across NSW. 17 groups are striving to get access to the lines covering locations such as Wagga Wagga to Ladysmith, Tumbarumba to Rosewood, Goulburn to Crookwell, Bungendore to Captains Flat, Culcairn to Corowa, Kandos to Gulgong, Tumut to Batlow, Gundagai to Tumut, Black Mountain to Ben Lomond (New England Rail Trail), Monaro (Michelago to Cooma, also Cooma to Bombala), Molong to Dubbo, Cowra to Eugowra, Casino to Murwillumbah (Northern Rivers Rail Trail), Merriwa to Denman, Balmoral Village to Braemar (The Loop Line), Wolgan Valley Wilderness Rail Trail, Otford to Stanwell Park.

***** In news as we go to press, the NSW rail trail bill was noted as being defeated in the NSW Parliament in October 2014. What this means for the rail trail advocates and their cause is rather unknown at this stage. It is suspected that rail trail proponents will keep pushing ahead with their plans meanwhile to see railway lines in the country to be ripped up and turned over to them.*****
RAILWAY PHOTOGRAPHER NOTICE FROM ARTC – ARTC RELEASES RAIL SAFETY PHOTO GUIDE

ARTC has released an online rail safety to ensure enthusiast don’t trespass or cause a problem with railway operations while taking photos. With significant number of NSW railway photographers posting online on facebook pages photos from within the railway corridors across NSW, they are needing to be reminded of the consequences. Many photographers don’t know that there are serious fines and police action if you are found inside an operational railway corridor. The worst example is that someone could be seriously injured or killed by a train they don’t see coming. See http://www.artc.com.au/library/News%20-%202014-08-09.pdf and http://www.artc.com.au/Article/Detail.aspx?p=6&np=4&id=434 for more details

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 likeminded 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 finalized.

Recommended links –

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

NEXT ISSUE

Next newsletter will focus on news, a few station heritage reviews and more historical insights. To follow HRSI click on the facebook link – https://www.facebook.com/NSWRSI. HRSI can be contacted on the facebook page for story / information or photo submissions.

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We leave you with railway art as seen on display at Henty railway station in southern NSW.