WELCOME to the fifth newsletter of NSW HRSI. 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 in this letter is separated into 4 core NSW regions – Northern, Western and Southern NSW and Sydney.

MAIN NEWS

Mid 2015 has seen some good news with an increase in some heritage railway stations / yards / buildings moving forward being either reused or in the process of becoming reused. Key projects to note moving ahead include Nimmitabel, Woodstock and Wauchope. Some projects are just starting up while others are moving forward in their lease discussions with agencies and councils etc. Hopefully once all established these projects will bring some joy to the railway heritage scene and local communities. More on the projects can be seen in the state news. Other news is that NSW Govt is moving ahead with overhaul of rail station signage across NSW. Railway museums are hopefully to get first choice on the old signage.

Phil Buckley, NSW HRSI Editor

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CULCAIRN TO HOLBROOK RAILWAY BRANCH LINE REVIEW – SOUTHERN NSW

Information and photos by Phil Buckley and Greg Finster

HISTORY

The plans for a short rural branch line of 26km in length to Holbrook began like others in country NSW with many surveys, public meetings and long drawn out government approvals. It took nearly 18 years from planning to reach the opening of the railway line. Starting in 1883 with a preliminary route survey, some critics thought it would not be a worthwhile idea as the return on costs of such a short line would never be achieved. The main push which considerably helped the line to finally be built, was the growing of large scale wheat crops in the late 1890s in the Holbrook region. This agricultural commodity along with further assessments convinced government railway officials that the line could just be viable. It was determined that the lines construction costs and yearly operating expenses would just be covered by the goods and passenger carried. A report was collated and signed off in September 1900 approving the building of the line. The bill for the railway line passed both Houses of Parliament in early 1901.

CONSTRUCTION STARTED

The branch line construction started in July 1901 heading in an easterly direction from Culcairn to Holbrook and this enabled 3 branch stations Morven, Fellow Hills, Ralvona and a terminus station to be built at Holbrook.

This diagram / map to the left is a post construction map used by the NSWGR for the branch line at Culcairn to Holbrook. The Holbrook line can be seen on the bottom snaking off to the right. It was approved by Engineer in Chief Henry Deane in 1901. (Credit- Map supplied by Ross Jackson)
The line was a very easy grade of 1 in 132 and rose only 145ft along its length and was built by local labour expanding from Culcairn. Only Holbrook station yard had signals installed and these were not normally lit unless required. The other stations had no signals installed. The line was unfenced and thus drivers would need to be alert for livestock. The line opened for services on 5 September but was officially opened by the State Governor on 18 September 1902. Once opened in 1902, the short branch line saw an initially fairly busy schedule - despite speeds of only 20mph. Speeds later reached 30mph - which was quite common for those early 1900s era branch lines. With such a short line the services were operating both ways on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday and these trips would take on average around 40mins each way. They were of a mixed service type, which meant a goods train had a carriage for passengers attached at the end of goods wagons.

These mixed trains connected at Culcairn with the Mail trains heading between Albury and Sydney. Critics predicted in the late 1800s that the line was built, that it would never be profitable due to limited local goods and passenger loadings. This lack of money was proven within a few years of opening with expenses outweighing income. By 1907 the costs were being met finally with some further years seeing quite a good profit margin generated.

A NAME CHANGE

The terminus station was originally called “Germantown”. The inappropriate name was changed very quickly in September 1915 following the outbreak of WW1 combined with strong anti-German feelings in the local community. The town’s new name – Holbrook - commemorates the successes of WW1 era Lieutenant-Commander Norman Holbrook who was a Royal Australian Navy submarine commander.

SERVICE CHANGES

By 1923 services to Holbrook were forever changed with the introduction of the new CPH petrol/diesel railmotors into service in southern NSW. The CPH services operated to a different schedule on a Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday both ways. Meanwhile the goods train only operated once a week on a Monday. Due to lack of patronage in using the CPH, this was dropped by 1924 and a mixed goods/passengers service was reintroduced which was more economical for the railways to provide. Over the next 6 years patronage decreased further and this saw the reduction in 1929 of mixed services to only 2 days a week. 17 years later in 1946 this mixed service dropped to one service a week only on a Monday. By 1940s the train trips each way were taking about 1 hour instead of 40mins. By the late 1950s, the steam era in NSW was beginning to give way to new motive power – diesel locomotives and by 1962 the Riverina and southern NSW were seeing the steam locomotives replaced by 48 class branch line diesel locomotives.

CLOSURE

With declining traffic and line maintenance costs increasing, the branch line saw all forms of mixed passenger services to Holbrook ceased in October 1970. This decline in passenger services was due to every increasing reliance on use of motor cars and buses removing the passengers from many of the NSW country branch lines. Regular goods services ceased in 1974. A few years later with lack of use and less maintenance, speeds restrictions on the line were in some places 10kph. The last official goods service finished in March 1978 with trucks replacing it soon after. By October 1978 temporary fences had appeared on the line indicating it was closed. The entire Culcairn to Holbrook line was booked out of use and closed officially in February 1987. In 2015 the Goods shed is used by a local Mens’ Shed organisation.
**CULCAIRN** - 596.820km, opened 1.9.1880. Main south / branch line junction station.

2015 views – Phil Buckley

Left - The Holbrook line breaks away from the main south line just south of the old former footbridge at Culcairn as seen below. Where the 2 tracks merge, the area on left where grass is growing was the area where the Culcairn/Holbrook line junction was. The line on the right hand side is the former Corowa branch line remains. (Photo: Greg Finster)
Once the Holbrook line leaves the main South it skirts the edge of Culcairn and heads towards a small timber bridge at Willow Bend Creek. It also passes through culverts and level road crossings. Looking towards Culcairn from Gamble street level crossing.

Hume Highway cuts the railway line – and other view as the line crosses a field in 2015.

Left - Looking towards Holbrook the photos show the rail type changing from lighter rail to height weight rail. Right is the site of the Culcairn / Holbrook Road level crossing looking towards Holbrook.
Looking towards Holbrook from near Willow Bend Creek and the remains of the bridge structure.
At the 602 km marker is this small culvert.
MOVERN - 604.060km, opened 18.9.1902. Closed 4.5.1975. A simple layout with a 100ft long platform on the down side of the line, loading bank opposite.

Left Morven station mounds remains and 604 km post and right, Down end points looking towards Holbrook.

Left, Looking towards Holbrook, the down end points and right, Coach Road level crossing.

Looking towards Holbrook at the Coach Road level crossing.

Remains of the Goods Platform looking towards Culcairn.
Left, Morven station platform and goods shed mounds, Right, Up end point lever and annett key.

Photo left - – Looking towards Culcairn with platform on right and goods sheds on left, Photo right - taken near the up end points.
Peter Sweeten has kindly donated a view of a trip in 1973 when ARE enthusiasts visited Holbrook on a tour, stopping at Morven.

**FELLOW HILLS** - 609.436km, opened 18.9.1902. Closed 4.5.1975. A simple layout with a 100ft long platform on the down side of the line, loading bank opposite. No photos available of this station area.

**RALVONA** - 614.726km, opened 18.9.1902. Closed 4.5.1975. Another simple layout with a 100ft long platform on the upside of the line, loading bank opposite. No photos available of this station area.

**HOLBROOK** – 623.194km, opened 18.9.1902. Initial layout saw station platform, building, loop line, 50ft turntable, goods shed and stock yard. No engine shed or carriage shed was built. A water tank and water column was installed for the steam locomotive service along with a coal stage. Silos were built in the yard from 1924 through to 1955. The turntable siding, locomotive siding and loop siding booked out of use in 1962. The station building was demolished in early 1970s. Currently preserved on site is the platform, goods shed, loading banks, hay shed and signal equipment/ground frames. Last train ran to terminus 28.10.1977.

This is a 1901 post construction map, prepared by Engineer in Chief William Deane of Germanton, as Holbrook was known before the name change during the WW1 era. (Thanks to Ross Jackson for supplying this map)
We are able to see what Holbrook station and yard looked like in 1975 and more recent in 2015 using comparison views thanks to photos from the Greg Finster collection. 4 photos that cant be compared are shown below – Goods shed view in 1975 and the remains of the former Locomotive depot. 2015 views of the loading bank and Good shed.

Peter Sweetten captured in 1973 the ARE tour at the terminus.

Greg Finsters 2015 views.
THEN AND NOW - HOLBROOK VIEWS – Greg Finster

Platform in 1975 and 2015

More modern day views of the platform.

Looking from Silo yard and track area towards Culcairn - 1975 and 2015.
Looking wards the terminus area 1975 and 2015

Holbrook station viewed looking from Wallace Street level crossing 1975 and then 2015

Station platform view and sign 1975 and same view 2015
Turntable pit viewed 1975 and 2015 – long covered up and demolished.

Holbrook 2015 views – Phil Buckley

COMMUNITY REUSES OF ABANDONED RAILWAY STATIONS IN RURAL NSW PART 1 – NORTHERN / NORTH WESTERN NSW

Where does the NSW railway network stand in 2015 with vacated station buildings and what have become of them? As the decline of the NSW railway network started in the 1950/60s, many stations that were once utilised by the state government were left vacated, unused and not maintained. Over the years this lack of care has increased. Even as late as 2014 some heritage station buildings were still being demolished.

This is a 3 part article which will investigate heritage railway buildings and their reuse situation in 2015. This includes recent changes/demolitions. Part 1 reviews heritage stations on the main north coast line, the main north line, the Mungindi line, the Gwabegar line and the Coonamble branch line.
In reading this listing, you will notice in northern / north west NSW that there are very few fully reused stations. If they are reused, they are mostly by community groups or museums but not many actual businesses. (We are open to corrections of this listing if you know more details / information).

**Paterson** – NSW Govt vacated but still an operational stop.

**Deepwater** – Still standing, local radio station reuses out ofs room.

**Macksville** – Standing and used with staff in specific hours.

**Casino** – Operational, manned at certain hours and used

**Ben Lomond** – still standing but locked up.

**Glen Innes** – still standing but vacated, last reported 2014 pub has now closed up.

**Martins Creek** – station demolished noted in 2013.

**Lismore** – non-operational line, still standing reused as travel interchange.

**Edgeroi** – Vacated / decaying.

**Walgett** – A recent casualty - station was not wanted by anyone and demolished in 2011 by local council.

**Wee Waa** – Still standing unused / vacated by NSW Govt.

**Inverell** – Removed from station and rebuilt at pioneer heritage museum park outside of town.

**Gunnedah** – Operational NSW Govt station and manned at varied times.

**Cumnock** – Still standing – decaying / vacated by NSW Govt - non-operational line.

**Molong** – Still standing – Reused as Molong community library.

**Millthorpe** – Still standing – Wine retailer business.

**Blayney** – Operational railway station.

**Quirindi** – Standing but unmanned, local craft group lease station rooms.

**Lue** - Vacated / decaying. Non-operational line section

**Rylstone** - Vacated / reused by local person. Non-operational line section

**Stuart Town** – Still standing – unmanned

**Kandos** – Reused as a local café

**Clandulla** – Still standing but unmanned and decaying

**Ben Bullen** - Still standing unmanned and decaying

**Wellington** – Still standing – unmanned but operational line

**Newbridge** – Still standing but vacated / closed off railway station

**Narromine** – Local community group / vacated by NSW Govt.

**Trangie** - Still standing - vacated by NSW Govt.

**Nyangar** – Still standing – Local community museum.

**Girilambone** – non-operational line - decaying / vacated

**Coomamble** – Still standing but boarded up.

**Singleton** – Standing, operational and manned at specific hours.

**Dumaresq** - Still standing on private property.

**Mullumbimby** - non-operational line – decaying / vandalism noted

**Murwillumbah** – travel centre – recently noted as having improvement in 2015.

**Moorland** - Reused / rebuilt at Glenreagh West Depot – GMR

**Tenterfield** – Reused as a railway museum

**Guyra** – still standing reused by local rail heritage organisation and local history groups.

**Black Mountain** - Still standing and cared for by local community groups.

**Bangalow** – Non-operational line - decaying badly, heavily vandalised

**Branxton** – Still standing but unmanned by NSW Govt.

**Werris Creek** – Manned NSW Govt operational stop.

**Tamworth** – operational NSW Govt rail use.

**Willow Tree** – Still standing vacated railway station, operational stop.
Byron Bay – non-operational line, reused as travel interchange / pub.

West Tamworth – closed up / ARTC controlled? Noted to have bad decay/ vandalism damage.

Murrurundi - Standing, operational but unmanned.

Casino West – Station still standing as a railway enthusiast museum and miniature railway area.

Taree – Operational and manned at specific hours.

Glen Innes – Non-operational and a pub recently closed up lease.

Maitland - Manned and current NSW Govt

Premer – Still standing, vacated, semi preserved.

Stuart Town – Operational / standing but unmanned

Moree – Still standing, operational stop and manned only at certain hours

Boggabri – Still standing / operational stop but unmanned.

Narrabri – Manned / Reused by NSW Govt.

Khogle – Standing operational but unmanned.

East Maitland – Unmanned but operational stop.

Wallangarra – Reused as a café/ Queensland Railway heritage train tour destination.

Kendall - Standing but now a craft shop.

Uralla – Still standing but vacated by NSW Govt.

Glenreagh – Still standing but vacated and not restored

Dubbo – Operational and manned

Kempsey – Standing operational but unmanned

Armidale - NSW Govt Manned and operational stop.

Willow Tree – Standing but unmanned

Greta - still standing but vacated / unmanned by NSW Govt.

Scone - Still standing but vacated by NSW TrainsLink / unmanned.

Muswellbrook – still standing and manned at certain times.

Singleton – Still standing and manned at certain times

Capertee – Still standing but unused.

Murrurundi - Operational line but unstaffed station.

Cobar – Still standing unused – vacated.

Mudgee – Non-operational line section – station used as an Indian restaurant

Narrabri – Standing operational but unmanned

Gulgong - Still standing but used only as private rail crew change location / unmanned

Dunedoo – Still standing but used only as safe working location / unmanned

Nambucca Heads – Standing, operational but unmanned

Walcha Road – Standing and used but unmanned
JUNEE SIGNAL BOX OPERATIONS – Interview and photos with Bart Betkowski

Junee in southern NSW has been and continues to be a major rail head for passenger transport and freight. In 2005 Bart Betkowski was working at Junee North signal box as a Grade 3 signaller and took these photos seen below. The signal box closed in 2007. It had a tight spiral staircase used to access the large lever frame which were used to control the north end of Junee yard and access to and from the branch line to Griffith. Centralised Train Control and Train control were down stairs for a long while on the platform. Train Planning was in there to.

Bart says “They revamped upstairs then moved it all up there and is now controlled by employees from ARTC”. “I started at Stockinbingal in 2002 as a trainee Signaller then as a Grade 1 signaller, whilst there and also undertook the Station masters role as a fill in”. Bart then went to Junee North as a Grade 3 Signaller. He recalls “I also learned Temora but never took up there. I then went from Junee north to Train Controller level 2 upstairs”. He then took up transitional network controller on the Sydney South Control board when Medway was placed onto the board doing the Train Controller and signaller combined role then into Train Transit Manager. Bart his railway job left in September 2014 and moved to Newcastle.
BLUE MOUNTAIN STATIONS IN SNOW – WINTER 2015

Snapshots of various NSW heritage stations in snow in past and 2015.

Robyn Ridge - Then and Now comparison of Medlow Bath early 1900s era and a 2015 view in snow.
Adrian Compton views of Newnes platform and signal box on an icy chilly day – July 2015.

Adrian Compton, July 2015 - Clarence station
**Andrew Lawson** - Batlow railway yard August 2015

**Cameron Johnson** – July 17 2015 – at Medlow Bath, Leura, Blackheath, Katoomba
NORTHERN NSW NEWS

DEEPWATER RAILWAY STATION

In August the station was noted as being graffitied and this has disappointed many people.

Photos - Tim Vincent
NEWCASTLE BRANCH LINE


TORONTO RAILWAY STATION

Toronto station was attacked in late July 2015 with tagging graffiti and a break and enter into the station. Currently the Lake Macquarie Historical Society use the station as their base of operations.

WAUCHOPE RAILWAY PRECINCT

Wauchope on the mid north coast of NSW has plans to become the next railway heritage centre in NSW. Such plans may see a long term tourist and business boost for the north coast region. NSWHRSI interviewed Ray Cooper who is part of the organizing committee behind the projects and he explained further details covering the basic outlines of the concept, which is over a year old. The plan is to bring together various community goals into one location overseen by a new not for profit corporation - Hastings Gateway Corporation.

One of the core aims is to create a heritage railway facility which will enable passenger carriages to be rebuilt. These rebuilding plans will operate alongside a new local heritage museum covering aspects of the regions rail, timber and dairy operations. It has been suggested that a few heritage type diesel railmotors will be based at Wauchope - with CPHs being suggested as the most likely types to be used. This will add an additional level of interest to the town and the railmotors will be used for trips in the regional area, thus creating new activities for tourists when visiting Port Macquarie.

Backing for the heritage museum and the rail plans has the northern coast local, state and federal politicians offering their support to the project. A local TAFE college is reported to have expressed interest in creating a course which involve them in helping to rebuild passenger carriages. At the same time this would give local students the ability to learn repair/building and craft skills. It is noted that the former station master's house is to become a part of the project with the aim being for it to be a local area tourism information centre and the Wauchope Historical Society’s new home. No timeline has been suggested as to when the projects will start. Further discussions are still underway with positive discussions with ARTC for leasing of railway land for the community church to be relocated to. Ray served for 46 years in the NSW railways and retired in 1988. He worked from the Victorian border at Corowa to North Star and Murwillumbah almost on the Queensland border and many other towns in between. He spent over 17 years as Station Master at Wauchope before retiring.
WESTERN NSW NEWS

COWRA RAILWAY STATION

The local community leased railway station has recently started to put up in the station waiting room, various photos showcasing rail heritage such as Cowra station and some of the trains that once operated in the Cowra region. The purpose of the photos are to help educate the tourists who visit and look around the station. The photos were kindly donated by noted NSW south coast railway photographer Chris Stratton. Thanks to Russell Denning for the news.

TEMORA RAILWAY STATION

Further work undertaken during July, August 2015 has seen tasks forward the restoration and repair of the station. Early July 2015 works included the first station building room being finished. The Refreshment Room is now 100% complete. It has had the floors sealed, painting complete, door furniture installed. The Refreshment Room’s front entrance has been constructed and the connecting path to Federal Park and toilets poured. Other works have seen the platform gates installed as seen in photos below and the building’s Fretwork which has been taken over to the Iron Foundary in Wagga Wagga for copying to replace the missing/damaged pieces. As the restoration progresses ahead, the next stages to be worked on include the kitchen installation, internal painting on Southern buildings, civil works and heritage interpretation.
During July 2015 saw the following work being conducted at the station – continuation of interpretation works, railway museum room – original station building– repairs and refurbishment commenced.

- external civil works continuing – path, forecourt road / parking area preparation now ready for bitumen sealing.

- By August, Work for the Dole crew had started were working on minor painting and landscaping tasks. The Work for the dole crew has commenced, starting on some internal painting preparation and establishment of the garden. These rooms in the photos are examples of ones yet to be overhauled.

- Internal carpentry work associated with the original railway station building has been completed and painting has commenced. This rooms are examples to be repainted.
• The dilapidated parts of the courtyard have been repaired and replaced where necessary.

• A donated railway trike and fettler trailer will be soon be relocated to Temora station and accommodated in a shed in the repaired courtyard. Photo shows an example of a fettler trike and trailer seen elsewhere in NSW. Additionally strainers and stays for the perimeter fencing have been installed, which saw fencing and gates erected during early September.

• Landscaping plans include new a Sound Shell and this has been finalised and is being enacted in a staged fashion. The Sound Shell will be erected in the extended Park/Railway Forecourt.

Late August 2015 saw an announcement by Dulux Australia that they will support the Temora Railway Station restoration project with a donation of 100 litres of paint. The paint will help to repaint, freshen up and enhance the external surfaces of the railway station, signal hut, refreshment room and court yard sections. Sydney based railway heritage enthusiast Phil Buckley helped organise and liaised between Temora Shire Council and Dulux Australia to achieve this result. Dulux Australia will be given media coverage at the upcoming railway station reopening later this year.
ORANGE EAST FORK DEPOT

Reports emerged in August 2015 in the Sydney Morning Herald a tender was noted for the sell off of the former Orange East Fork Locomotive Depot. There are no further details regarding what is to happen. Orange based NSWHRSI reporter Phil Pedley reported in late August that Lachlan Valley Railway are trying to acquire the site to use it as an operational base for their tours and overhauls. The photos show the site as it was in 2011. The carriages then at the site, have since being moved to Goulburn for use by a private operator.

WOODSTOCK RAILWAY STATION

As reported last issue, repair work to Woodstock station was conducted earlier this year and is still underway as of September 2015. In August 2015 Cowra based HNSWHRSI reporter Russell Denning spoke with the Woodstock Progress Association President and it was revealed that Woodstock Progress Association have
applied for the lease of Woodstock station. The idea is to reuse the station as an Antique Shop. The proposal, if it goes ahead, will see the Progress Association leasing the station and the shop owner taking out a sub leases for 3 days a week selling antiques. Upgrades to the garden are expected to enhance the station landscaping. We will report more news as this proposal develops.

SOUTHERN NSW NEWS

ALBURY RAILWAY YARD

Rail discovery projects in Australia appeal to the public. People have demonstrated a willingness to travel significant distances to visit areas where rail discovery sites are located and to ride on tourist and heritage trains. The Puffing Billy Railway is experiencing a major increase in patronage with 304,000 passengers carried annually and new projects are planned for Queensland, Western Australia and Victoria.

Now there are big plans underway to enable southern NSW to get a bigger slice of the rail heritage tourism market. Plans are being developed for a large scale redevelopment which will hopefully see a massive local heritage museum and rail heritage museum at Albury railway yard be built. Titled “Albury Rail Discovery Centre” the ARDC is a proposed multi-user facility which would be located in central Albury in the now defunct eastern side of the rail yard. Albury railway station once was the largest employer in the region.
The ARDC plans are to have it develop around the historical Transhipment Shed located opposite Albury station, where cameos will be established to showcase the impact that Albury, the community and its railway workers had on the history of Australia, New South Wales and Victoria due to the railways and the rail break of gauge transhipment process. The story appeals not only to a small proportion of people with an interest in rail heritage, but also to community members and tourists in general. A Sound and Light show will also be incorporated in the cameos. The ARDC will not only be a railway museum, it will be also be a community centerpiece where all types of transportation including aviation and vehicles can be on show to the general public.

An artist impression of the proposed ARDC opposite Albury station if it is to be built. Note the heritage transhipment shed on far right and signal box in centre.

The objectives of the ARDC are to protect and preserve Heritage railway assets in Albury and regional centres, work in collaboration with regional development and tourist organisations to offer and market heritage rail tours to regional centres, via discussions and planning with TAFE to develop and pass down specialist skills to younger generations, setup and develop a maintenance and restoration facility to support heritage railway museums, increase tourism to NSW regional centres with heritage railway tours and bring together non for profit organisations with open common user space. Some aspects of the centre will see a Great Train Hall constructed to house visiting trains and rollingstock and be used as a multi-purpose facility plus a heritage railway restoration and trade training facility. Big opportunities are potentially able to be developed which will enhance Albury - Wodonga as a tourist destination through the creation of such a type of hallmark tourist attraction.

The ARDC has the opportunity to significantly increase employment in the region, with 48 full time equivalent jobs flowing directly from the initiative across the region, and 96 full time equivalent jobs created from the direct and indirect contribution across the region.

**BERRY RAILWAY STATION MASTER’S RESIDENCE**

In late July 2015 reports emerged that the former Berry station master’s residence was being planned to be demolished. This house is part of the Berry railway heritage and is owned by Railcorp. The building is a rare timber J2 style design and predates the standard designs of the late 1890s. Currently the building is fenced off and decaying. The local Scout group were its most recent tenants and since they have left, the building has
started to deteriorate. The NSW Govt has stated there is no funds to maintain this historical building and would like to demolish it as it costs too much to repair. To demolish it Railcorp will require to submit a DA. With such a sad outcome, the response from the local community who is upset at this proposal, has seen the start of an action group to ensure the house is retained. Various ideas for reuse have been suggested. There is a page to follow the campaign to save it at https://www.facebook.com/pages/Help-Save-the-Berry-Stationmasters-residence/146830702316372?sk=timeline

NIMMITABEL RAILWAY STATION

We have some good and long waited news to release regarding the future of the Nimmitabel railway station. NSWRHSI has interviewed Howard Charles and Gary Hayes. Formed in 2014, the Nimmitabel Mens’ Shed have successfully taken out a lease to restore and reuse the railway station and yard for their community purposes.

The NMS’s beginning was a project of the Nimmitabel Lion's Club and some other community-conscious locals drew a good response from Nimmitabel’s men. Over 30 members have already signed up to help build the foundations for the NMS. With a growing group and community aspirations, a plan was then set to find a suitable location for the men to work and a lease for reusing Nimmitabel railway station was investigated and taken up. The discussions commenced in mid to late 2014, engaging with a variety of local and state stakeholders. While the station lease was being processed, the Men Shed members undertook some community work including in the sanding back and painting of the town’s preschool. This was much appreciated and was not only good for the preschool staff and children but was very good for the NMS group’s morale too.

Since their formation the NMS have continued to receive good support from The Lions, Nimmitabel Country Club and the Cooma-Monaro Council. The plan to reuse the railway station has already seen a generous donation from the Southern Phone Company which was put aside to reconnect power to the Station Building. The Australian Men's Shed Association has been very supportive and interested in our progress. The NMS are in the running to get a substantial amount from one of AMSA’s grant programs (funded by the Federal department of Health) and a second round of grants for building development.

In late July/early August the Mens’ Shed application for the station and yard lease was finally approved by John Holland and Transport NSW. This means that after a long waiting process, the Nimmitabel Mens’ Shed can now proceed with reusing, restoring the station and preparing for their own community activities. The electricity has been put on with help from Essential Energy, the electricity supplier.

Starting in mid 2015, the NMS are hoping to push on with the twin aims of restoring the station and having it a workspace and social gathering headquarters. The NMS members have had two meetings in the first room of the station where the fire can warm members a little in the cold winter. Winter has made it difficult to work on outside projects, so they have focused on cleaning and restoring the structure room by room. This will involve much scrubbing and sanding and then painting.

The Men Shed are building on the success of their local workings and gained their first commission from one of the businesses of Nimmitabel. Additionally members will be constructing and assembling stands for the Quilting Shop ladies to display their wares in a coming local event.

Looking ahead, the NMS are looking forward to making the station a great place to work and interact in. During the process it will be restored. Balancing these aims may sometimes take careful thought and planning but all are confident that it will develop from this point onwards. NMS has expressed their desire to receive assistance and inputs from every level including heritage enthusiasts, several of whom have expressed keen interest in our progress. After so many years of a quiet/decaying station, the Mens’ Shed is moving ahead and Nimmitabel Station is alive with people and alive with new purpose after so many years of being left to fall apart and vacant.
Working bees started in August 2015 to provide site security and cleaning up of the buildings. The Nimmitabel Mens’ Shed and restoration of the railway station can be followed at the NMS facebook page - https://www.facebook.com/nimmitabelrailway?ref=bookmarks

TUMUT RAILWAY YARD

August 2015 saw construction of a culvert and filling in of the railway tracks from near the northern end of the station platform to the near the old Butter Factory, using cement stabilized decomposed granite sand to produce a walking track. Photos – Andrew Lawson
SYDNEY REGION

ARTARMON RAILWAY STATION

A new passenger lift has being put in place at Atarmon railway station in late August 2015. It is between the building and stairwell area and connects to the main road.

CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION

FIRE AT CENTRAL - On September 26 2015 a fire was reported at 6pm to have occurred in the eastern end of Central railway station main building. The fire started from inside the Hungry Jacks take away shop at platform level in the Grand Concourse area. The fire is understood to have reached up possibly to the 4 levels above in the administration section of the main building via air ventilation ducts. Over 20 fire trucks were observed at the historic railway station with their 40 crew members wearing breathing masks to combat the fire and smoke. Smoke damage is also expected. Further news will hopefully established how much damage has taken place.

Channel 7 photo - https://scontent-lax3-1.xx.fbcdn.net/hphotos-xa1/v/t1.0-9/5720x5720/12063720_1108237892533676_2895982318184503371_n.jpg?oh=77144015602da7e2354dc32653e77e1a&oe=56A354C5

Video footage here - https://www.periscope.tv/w/1DxLZWjRRmGm it plays after 10 seconds of loading.

STATION UPGRADES - As reported in detail in our last issue, further upgrades to tiling, signage and stairwells continues into September 2015 at Central to improve the operations and passenger information. Feedback from commuters has reportedly seen complaints about the poor colour choices of the new platform signage. It is yet to be confirmed when the high level Transport for NSW management project team tasked with the roll out of this overhaul at Central will address this important customer feedback.

ROCKDALE RAILWAY STATION
During late 2014, the station was repainted from its former beige/buff scheme into the standard red/tan scheme. Here we see the new colours and the station looking much better.
TOWN HALL / WYNYARD RAILWAY STATION

Upgrades continue at these stations in mid to late 2015. Last year in upgrades to Town Hall, a WW2 era air raid shelter sign was uncovered. Many modern day residents of Sydney may wonder why this was ever placed here. This is a sign that the railway station was to be a place for people to evacuate to if the Japanese had ever conducted large scale attacks on Sydney in WW2. The Japanese did attack Sydney Harbour in 1942 with mini submarines sinking a ship with 19 sailors killed and the eastern suburbs received shell fire from a mother submarine. Floatplanes also flew over Sydney Harbour unchallenged. Other places along NSW coast such as Newcastle was also attacked by the Japanese submarine force.
YOUR SAY - HERITAGE PHOTOS

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

**Photographer - Lindsay Richmond** – Boorowa station 1970s.

**Photographer - Chris Stratton** – left Toronto 1990 and right Dunheved 1986

**Photographer Chris Stratton** – left, Bogan Gate 1984 and right Dorrigo 1984
Photographer - Mark Zanker – left Deepwater 1996 and right Koorawtha 1992

Photographer Greg Finster – left, Burcher 1984 and right, Walgett possibly 1980s.

Photographer – Brett Leslie – left, Darnick 1986 and right Gundagai 1982
Photographer Allan Hunt – Bredbo yard / signal diagram

Photographer – Gordon Ross – left Barraba 1980s and right Central railway west side carriage shed 1985

Photographer - Robert Paterson – left Kiama 1979 and right Tamworth 1980s
Photographer Adrian Compton – left, Enfield railway yard and right, Eveleigh depot LES both in 1983

New contributors this issue – Steve Bucton, Douglas Moyle, Peter Enlund and Jim Leppitts

Photographer Douglas Moyle – left, Albury 1969 and right, Sandgate Cemetery 1970s

Photographer Peter Enlund – Balldale station seen in 1979
Photographer Steve Bucton - left Gilmore 1977 and right Mudge 1980

Photographer Jim Leppitts – left, Menindee railway bridge 1974 and right, Wagga Wagga railway station 1974

OTHER NEWS

RAILWAY PHOTOGRAPHER NOTICE FROM ARTC – ARTC RELEASES RAIL SAFETY PHOTO GUIDE

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

It is known that railway agencies in NSW (such as ARTC and John Holland Rail) do watch Facebook forums for breaches and combined with reporting of trespassers by traincrews, it has seen there is a need for an education campaign. The result has seen ARTC release an online 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. 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 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

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


NEXT ISSUE

Next newsletter- issue 6 will examine:

- A review of some station master houses across NSW - why they were built and what remains,
- Examine western NSW stations and which are reused by communities or businesses,
- See an exclusive tour of an historical underground abandoned railway station/tunnel in Sydney CBD,
- More insights to news and events covering historical stations around NSW.
To follow NSWHRSI click on the facebook link – https://www.facebook.com/NSWRSI. NSWHRSI can be contacted on the facebook page for story / information or photo submissions.

TAIL END TRIANGLE PHOTO

We leave you with a view of current 2015 view of the former Tarcutta railway station in southern NSW on the former Waaga Wagga to Tumbarumba branch line compared with an older photo when it was still standing. Left, Tarcutta station photo supplied by Tarcutta Progress Association before it was burnt down in 2001. Right, 2015 photo by Sam Kenyon.