

The V.R. News Letter

January, 1936

Issue No. 64

Selector System

SUBURBAN PLANS

PRELIMINARY arrangements will be commenced this month for the installation of the selector telephone system throughout the suburban area.

When completed, the suburban services will be operating under the same efficiently-controlled conditions as the major portion of the country train services.

The most modern equipment will be used, and the apparatus and Train Dispatchers will be located on the ground floor in the Head Office at Spencer-street.

Present plans provide for 220 suburban stations, offices and depots being brought within the scope of the scheme.

The decision to locate the Central, Eastern and Suburban control sections in rooms adjacent to the offices of the Superintendent of Train Services has created opportunities for a big re-arranging of offices in various parts of the Head Office.

It is planned to re-locate 46 offices, the objective being to bring all the various divisions in the respective branches as close as possible.

Following the contemplated moves, the normal workings of the Branches concerned should be greatly facilitated, with resultant increased efficiency.

Train Lighting

NEW FITTINGS

SUBSTANTIALLY increased lighting efficiency in the carriages of suburban electric trains is now following the extensive experiments carried out by the Electrical Engineering Branch.

Of the two types of lamp fittings in use in the cars, approximately 60 per cent. of the vehicles are equipped with "Sudan" shades mounted on tee-shaped pendants, while the remainder contain converted Pintsh gas fittings.

Satisfactory results are being obtained from the "Sudan" shades, and in order to raise the standard of the other type, new enamelled reflectors, which reflect more light in the direction of the corner seats, have been designed. Further improvements are being made by introducing internally-frosted globes which permit the use of partially clear glass outer bowls.

These innovations, combined with a white paint treatment of the ceilings and upper portions of the cars, have increased the lighting efficiency in the corners of the cars by more than 40 per cent. and slightly above that of the "Sudan" type.

So far, the following vehicles have been fitted with the new type of reflector: First class, 157; second class, 58; composite first and second class, 136.

"Pacific" Locos.

VALUE CONTRASTED WITH OTHER CLASSES

RAILWAYMEN will read with great interest the following figures which strikingly demonstrate the value of the "S" class locomotives.

The four "S" class locomotives were placed in service between April, 1928, and November, 1930, and up till December 5 they had run an aggregate of 1,398,071 miles.

The mileage per annum of each "S" class locomotive is considerably greater than that obtained from any other type of departmental locomotive. For the financial year ended June 30 last, the average mileage of each "S" class locomotive was 56,198, as compared with 27,702 by the "X" class, 27,644 by the "C" class and 26,863 by the "A2" class.

Between Overhauls

The mileage run by the "S" class between major overhauls also far exceeds that of the other standard classes: "S" class, 82,000 miles; other standard classes, 65,000 miles.

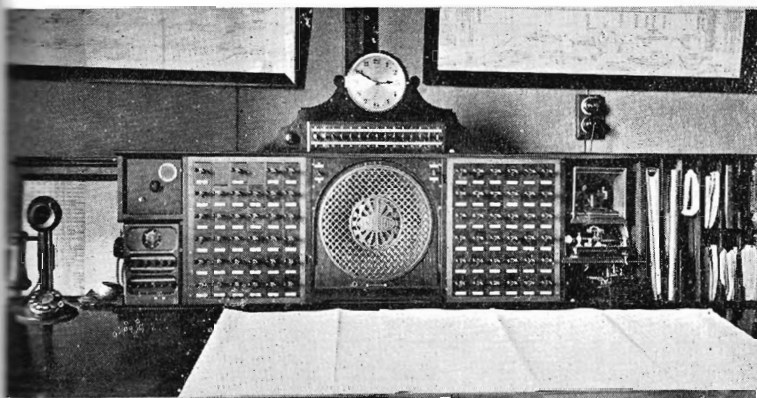
Although the travelling times of the Limited expresses between Melbourne and Albury were reduced by 30 minutes in July last, the "S" class locomotives, which haul the expresses, have continued to register a high standard of timekeeping.

Following is an analysis of the timekeeping of the expresses for the five months ended November 30:—

Timekeeping

ON BASIS OF—	"Up" Express.	"Down" Express.
Strictly on time ...	76%	88%
Up to 5 mins. late ...	88%	94%
Up to 10 mins. late ...	91%	98%

In the above table are included instances of the expresses losing time *en route*, or of late starting from Albury, through causes in no way associated with the "S" class locomotives. On many of these occasions, the expresses have made up time on the journey and arrived to schedule, or the margin of late-running has been reduced.



Typical equipment at the desk of a Train Dispatcher under the system of country train control. In the centre is the loud-speaker which transmits the voices from the stations connected to the system. Surrounding the loud-speaker are the keys which, by a mere turn, enable the Train Dispatcher to establish immediate telephonic contact with the stations required. In the foreground are the graphs on which are recorded the movements of all trains within the controlled section.

The Month's Topic

On the Eve of Big Developments

SPACE limitations alone prevented a more extended review of the many major happenings in the Department during the last 12 months.

* * *

It is well to emphasise, however, that every railwayman can take pride in the knowledge that his own conscientious, individual effort has contributed to the great service which the Department renders the whole community.

* * *

Transport Trends

What of the future? Air-conditioning has just been introduced, and preparations are also being made for the construction of a modern, all-steel train for the Sydney Limited route.

We believe that every railwayman realises the great significance of these developments in rail transport. Apart from the substantially improved travelling conditions for passengers, these ventures are further striking evidence of the Department's consistent endeavors to keep abreast of world movements in modern transport.

After all, if any organisation remains indifferent to progress, it cannot hope to survive.

* * *

Historic Year

In deciding to introduce air-conditioning, the Department is in the highly advantageous position of possessing all the experience and knowledge gained after exhaustive practical demonstration overseas. What air-conditioning has achieved abroad will be comparably repeated in Victoria—of that there is not the slightest doubt.

* * *

For these reasons, we enter upon 1936 eager and expectant, fully convinced that the near future will be historic in the annals of the Victorian Railways.

Attracting Tourists from New Zealand

MRS. L. DREXLER, Travel Hostess at the Government Tourist Bureau, leaves this month on an official visit to New Zealand.

The object of her tour is to gain first-hand information concerning New Zealand tourist resorts and to investigate the possibilities of promoting tourist traffic from New Zealand to Victoria. Mrs. Drexler will make contact with all the leading travel agencies and will also deliver addresses on Victoria's tourist attractions and the South Australian Centenary Celebrations.

Following the submission of her report, a publicity campaign in New Zealand will be planned.

* * *

WINNER of a nation-wide Essay Competition on Australia conducted in Canada by the Australian Trade Commissioner (Mr. L. R. Macgregor), Miss Grace Patullo, of Montreal, Canada, is now in Australia as the guest of the Commonwealth Government.

Miss Olive Norman, of the staff of the Government Tourist Bureau, was selected to be Miss Patullo's companion on her trip to Western Australia. Miss Norman, who has been on the Bureau staff for some years, is well-equipped to impart information on many phases of Australian life and conditions.

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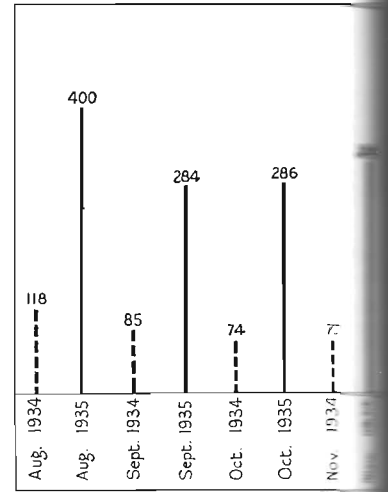
INTRODUCING—

SISTER M. NORTHCOTT, Sister-in-Charge of the Railways Nursery—the only one of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. In selecting



Sister Northcott to control the Nursery on its establishment in 1933, the Commissioners were fortunate in securing the services of such a widely-experienced nursing expert. After her five years' training at the Glasgow Western Hospital, Scotland, she was appointed Sister at the Royal Hospital for Children, Edinburgh. In 1921 she arrived in Melbourne to take over the position of trained nurse at Government House during the term of office of Lord Stradbroke as Governor of Victoria. Subsequently Sister Northcott was a Sister at the Queen Victoria Hospital, Melbourne, and Matron at Sale, Hay (N.S.W.) and Mildura Hospitals. To Sister Northcott is due much of the credit for the popularity and success of the Nursery. Enthusiastic, thorough and possessing an aptitude for ingratiating herself with her tender charges, she continues to retain the confidence of an ever-increasing number of mothers who entrust their children to the care of herself and staff.

Suggestions Showed Big Yearly Rise



AT the time of going to press the suggestions received during 1935 had totalled 2,630—the highest yearly number recorded since 1928 when 3,129 suggestions were submitted to the Betterment Publicity Board.

Following are the totals over the seven years' period. These figures show that the downward trend since 1928 has been effectively arrested.

Year	Number of Suggestions
1928	3,129
1929	2,262
1930	2,110
1931	653
1932	992
1933	1,374
1934	1,093
1935 (Incomplete)	2,630

A significant feature of the above figures is that the number of suggestions received during the year just closed, when there were 22,000 railwaymen, compares more than favourably with 1928 in which year there was a much greater staff—28,000.

The Commissioners are highly appreciative of the splendid response of railwaymen during 1935, and they look with confidence to 1936 being productive of a substantially greater number of suggestions.

* * *

THE following ideas which have recently been adopted are indicative of the nature and of the very wide range of suggestions submitted:—

- Installation of a test bench at the Newport Power House;
- That table of trains, Flinders-street to Spencer-street, be incorporated in the suburban public timetable;
- To weld bronze keep stops in locomotive axle boxes;
- To use a roller on trip arm of (train stops);
- Improvements to worm wheels of stoker equipment at the Newport Power House;
- An improved mandril for use in connecting rods at overhaul in Departmental Garage.

Notable Rail Developments in 1935 Reviewed

ALL BRANCHES CONTRIBUTED TO YEAR'S WORK

NINETEEN hundred and thirty-five will rank as one of the most notable in the history of the Victorian railways. Of outstanding importance was the presentation to the Government of a report by Mr. H. W. Clapp (Chairman of Commissioners) following his all-embracing tour of investigation in England, Europe and North America.

Further spectacular train accelerations, including faster Sydney and Adelaide Expresses, far-reaching im-

provements to locomotives giving a 33 per cent. increase in horsepower, a new automatic telephone exchange, automatic couplers on main line country carriages and the amalgamation of the Central, Eastern and Suburban train control systems, together with the decision to install a suburban selector telephone system—and many other developments in all parts of the service—were also milestones in the Department's progress.

Conditioning

Chief amongst the recommendations by Mr. Clapp was the building of an all-steel train for the Sydney Limited express route. It was constructed of a new high strength alloy steel known as "Austen", air-conditioned throughout and equipped with every modern appliance, the new train is expected to make its appearance early in 1937.

After personal observations in the United States of the traffic-building facilities of air-conditioning, which provides a dustless, draughtless flow of air in the carriage with the temperature and humidity automatically controlled in accordance with the temperature outside, Mr. Clapp recommended the purchase of two sets of air-conditioned equipment. One set has been installed on the main line country carriage—the other will be used on one of the dining cars.

Refrigerated Trains

Commencement was made on the fitting of a "buffet" car which will provide novel refreshment facilities for railway travellers in Victoria. A new passenger carriage is now being fitted for service as a composite "buffet" and 3-compartment first class passenger vehicle.

Up to the present, the weekly saving in travelling time throughout the State aggregates 420 hours. Notable time-saving improvements were introduced on the Melbourne-Sydney and Melbourne-Adelaide express routes. Departure and earlier arrival times were fixed. The overall running times were also substantially reduced.

For the first time, the special electric train services for the Royal Show and the Melbourne Cup meeting were operated from No. 1 Platform, Flinders-street. These improvements were greatly appreciated by rail patrons, and resulted in increased traffic. The innovations created many transportation problems, but these were overcome in the most praiseworthy manner.

Train Control Merger

It was decided to amalgamate the Central, Eastern and Suburban Control systems and certain sections of the Rolling Stock branch and locate them in the Head Office adjacent to the time-tabling division. A suburban selector telephone system was also approved. The proposed grouping and co-ordination of these activities will lead to greater train operating efficiency.

Locomotive front-end developments, involving variations in size and location of the blast pipe, diameter of funnel, type of smoke box arrangement, superheater element main steam pipe details and modifications of grates, continued to yield substantial benefits. Up till the end of last year, the alterations had been installed on 121 locomotive—"S" class (3); "A" (78); "C" (22) and "D3" (18).

Increases of up to 33 per cent. in the horsepower of existing locomotives at certain speeds have been attained thus presenting opportunities for striking improvements in train schedules.

New Telephone Exchange

Comprising all the most modern developments in telephone mechanism, a new automatic telephone exchange was installed in the Head Office in February last. The new exchange has effected a substantial improvement in the general efficiency of the telephone services. The new system has clearly demonstrated its capacity to handle successfully an exceptional volume of business at peak periods.

A comprehensive and sustained publicity campaign to stimulate traffic included the erection of two large

illuminated "Neon" signs in prominent positions on the Flinders-street station building, and the opening of branches of the Government Tourist Bureau in Sydney, Adelaide and Mildura.

The number of suggestions submitted by railwaymen revealed a gratifying increase as compared with 1934. (This matter is also referred to in page 2, col. 3.)

Track Betterment

An extensive programme of track betterment works was again carried out during the year, principally by means of money received from the Government's Unemployment Relief Fund. The works comprised re-conditioning and strengthening of country tracks and improving the drainage of suburban lines.

Among the other activities of the Way and Works branch was the draining and re-conditioning of the double tracks in the Elphinstone tunnel. It was one of the most unusual track operations carried out by the Department in recent years.

An important phase of the work was the use of 110 lb. welded rails. The rails extend beyond the ends of the tunnel, which is 1,254 ft. in length—the longest tunnel in the State. The welded rails have a total length of 1,700 ft.—the longest length of rails yet to be laid integrally in Victoria.

Another big rail welding work was undertaken in the Geelong tunnel where 110 lb. rails were welded into lengths of 1,530 feet.

Auto. Couplers

In addition to continuing the installation of automatic couplers on trucks, locomotives and vans, this equipment was installed for the first time on broad-gauge country passenger vehicles. Both the Sydney Limited and Albury expresses are now being operated as completely automatically-coupled trains.

Personal Postscript

Ballarat's Loss

WHEN Charles Dunstan, Officer-in-Charge of the Ballarat Goods, retires this month, there will be widespread regret not only in railway circles but among the business community. Naturally he is loth to leave a position that has been so congenial—and his life's work. Throughout his 19 years in control, he has had one all-embracing objective—the rendering of the highest degree of service to Departmental patrons. That he has achieved an outstanding success in this direction is amply demonstrated by the many glowing tributes paid to him by leading Ballarat businessmen. Mr. Dunstan possesses a wide, practical knowledge of goods work, gathered in many parts of the system. He set a firm foundation when he started as a junior clerk in the Melbourne Goods Sheds in 1887. Later he was Officer-in-Charge of Echuca Goods and also Wharf Master during the wool traffic on the Murray River. Among the positions he successfully occupied were Stationmaster's Clerk at Ballarat, Chief Booking Clerk at Geelong and Chief Clerk in the Maryborough District Superintendent's Office. He was the first railway man to occupy that position. Mr. Dunstan is a brother of the Premier of Victoria (Hon. A. A. Dunstan, M.L.A.), while a son, Vernon, is a clerk in the Secretary's Branch at Spencer-street.—S.A.

Sporting Administrator

KEN DONALD, of the General Superintendent's Office (Room 1) has had a silver tray mounted on rosewood and a seven-piece tea and coffee service added to the many tangible expressions of appreciation of his services in the sporting sphere. These handsome gifts were the North Suburban Cricket Association's recognition of his 20 years as President. One of the three largest junior cricket bodies in Australia, the Association has had the benefit of Ken's services since it was formed 25 years

ago. If anything, Ken is better known for his active work with the Victorian Football Association. He was the Assistant Secretary for 21 years. For the past 14 years he has been either captain or vice-captain of the St. Peter's (Brighton) cricket team. He is also a first-aid enthusiast, and has been a steward at all departmental competitions held. —H.C.H.

Senior S.M. Retires

EDWIN JAMES KAVANAGH, the Senior Stationmaster in the service, retired last month after presiding over the busy Spencer-street station for more than four years. Ever the completely efficient railroader, his term as S.M. was characterised by an attention to detail that placed his administration there on a par with that of the many prominent Stationmasters who have preceded him. His wide knowledge of transportation working was exemplified when he was chosen for the responsible post of Examining Officer for Stationmasters' and Assistant Stationmasters' certificates. Apart from railways, Mr. Kavanagh's main hobby is thoroughbred racehorses. Reared in the north-eastern district where the Kelly Gang roamed, Mr. Kavanagh at an early age became a keen lover of horses. He possesses a remarkable memory for the pedigrees of scores of racehorses, including Phar Lap, Manfred, Heroic, Amounis and many other celebrities of the turf. Mr. Kavanagh entered the service in 1887, and was appointed relieving Stationmaster in 1908. He was a Traffic Inspector in the Metropolitan area in 1921.—T.M.

January Birthdays

Asst. Stn. Master F. A. Farmer, of Thornbury, on the first; Plant Attendant W. C. Collins, of Newport Power House, on the second; Rng. Gear Repairer A. Nelson, of Nth. Melb. on the third; W. & W. Engineer G. S. Luttrell, of Nth. Melb. on the fourth; Porter J. T. Daly, of Wonthaggi, on the fifth; Fireman L. J. Conn, of Newport Power House, on the sixth; Asst. Chief Elec. Engineer C. G. H. McDonald, Trn. Despatcher R. F. Dodds, of Spencer-st., and

Fitters' Asst. J. P. Connelly, of Flinders on the seventh; Ganger H. Wines, of Geelong, on the ninth; Clerk C. L. ... of G. P. & F. A's Bch., on the 11th; Transport Supvr. C. G. Walker, Labr. Ryder, of Newport Workshops, and Cutter H. Byrne, of Printing Works, on the 12th; Carpenter A. G. Thomas, of Ballarat, on the 13th; Car & Wagon Repairer Schmidt, of Newport Workshops, on the 14th; Ganger R. McIntosh, of Ballarat, on the 16th; Fireman C. H. ... of Ararat, and Skld. Labr. L. G. ... of Wangaratta, on the 17th; Ganger O'Reilly, of Donald, on the 18th; Clerk E. W. Johnson, of R.S. ... of Miss H. C. Stanley, of Duplicating ... on the 20th; Train Register Clerk Dewsnap, c/c Metro. Supt., on the 21st; Skld. Labr. C. E. Coe, of Bendigo, on the 22nd; Clerk E. A. Pleydell, of Clarendon, on the 23rd; Skld. Labr. F. J. ... of Spencer-st., on the 24th; Ganger Nolan, of Flinders-st., on the 25th; Motor Driver J. H. Innes, of Ultima, on the 26th; Asst. Stn. Master R. ... of Donnybrook, on the 27th; B. & P. Member L. C. Bromilow and Clerk Cumming, of Mordialloc, on the 28th; Storeman A. J. H. Amery, of Traill's Depot, on the 31st.

Musical Bendigonians

Railwaymen at the North Bendigo Workshops have exhibited a most worthy "social sense." Responding to appeals by energetic colleagues, they have largely financed the formation of a Mouth Organ band, which is now in the pride of Bendigo. About nine months ago, 25 railwaymen set out as aspirants to become masters of the mouth organ. So well have they succeeded that the band, with Frank Palmer as conductor, has been acclaimed at numerous concerts in Bendigo and surrounding districts. They have also performed over the local "B" class broad-gauge station. Much of the credit for the band through the pioneering to its present strong position is due to Les. Eddy. "He was particularly enthusiastic," said a colleague. The office-bearers are: President, H. ... Vice-presidents, G. A. Curtis; J. ... A. Barry, J. Stapleton, G. ... Beecroft, N. Clarke, D. Gault, ... Ebdon and M. Gardner; Secretary, Treasurer, F. Brown; Committee, Clarke (Chairman), W. Cummins, Eddy, J. Osborne, F. Rogers, R. ... B. Frayne, H. Watson and J. ... —B.

Last Mile Post

RAILWAYMEN all over the State learn with profound regret of the last month of Mr. Patrick Zinnow, one of the best known locomotive drivers in the State. Shortly after reaching the North Melbourne Locomotive Depot to commence duty on December 9, he collapsed whilst talking to a member of the staff.

Mr. Zinnow was a picturesque person, possessing an unflinching sense of humour and a store of amusing railway reminiscences gathered during 36 years of service. He was among the most popular and respected of the railwaymen at the Depot.

For the past 14 years, he was the driver of the locomotive that regularly hauled the special train for Wirth's Circus.

The V.R. "News Letter" is issued monthly by the Victorian Railways Commissioners for the benefit of railwaymen in the service. Personal papers and other brief succinct contributions should be addressed to the Editor, Betterment and Publicity Board, Head Office.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia by the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Laurens-street, North Melbourne, and published by the Victorian Railways Commissioners.



DEAFNESS GONE...!

The Western Electric Co. stands behind the
WORLD'S GREATEST DEAF-AID—the ...

AUDIPHONE

SPECIAL CONCESSION:—
Allowed to Railwaymen and their Families.

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370-2 Bourke Street, Melbourne, Cl.

The V.R. News Letter

February, 1936

Issue No. 65

Air-conditioning

STRIKING SUCCESS ACHIEVED

First carriage to be equipped for air-conditioning in the British Empire, 36 "AE" made its eagerly-awaited appearance in regular running on the Sydney "Limited" on December 23.

It is intended to demonstrate the car on the Mildura line service and on the "Overland" at an early date.

The car was an immediate success, appreciative comments by passengers testifying to the unique standard of travelling comfort which was produced.

There is no doubt whatever about the immense superiority of the air-conditioned car over the present standard type of railway carriage. In addition to providing cool, fresh air and a comfortable temperature and humidity maintained regardless of the weather outside, the car has eliminated dust, draughts and has substantially reduced the noise inseparable from travelling.

Passenger's Tribute

The purity of the air in the smoking compartments contrasts noticeably with the smoke-laden atmosphere in the smoking sections of the ordinary passenger-vehicles.

After travelling in the air-conditioned car, one passenger enthusiastically summed up his impressions in this way: "I take this opportunity of congratulating you on the air-conditioned ventilation. Although today's temperature was not so high, the absence of noise, smooth running and equable temperature in the car from Albury made what is generally a very tedious journey one of pleasure."

Big Rail Welding Developments on Victorian Railways

AUTOMATIC MACHINE ORDERED

AN automatic flash butt welding machine is expected shortly to arrive from Germany—the only known source of supply for this type of machine.

THE capacity of the automatic machine is 64 welds per day, and the welded sections have practically the same tensile strength as the original metal.

Special arrangements are being made for the installation of the machine at the Permanent Way Materials Depot, Spotswood. An expert from Germany will supervise the assembling and erection of the machine, and also instruct the staff in operation and maintenance.

Varied Use

Although primarily intended for rail welding, the machine will also be used, wherever practicable, for welding on various kinds of rolling stock assembling.

Rail welding results in savings in maintenance of both permanent way and rolling stock; longer life of rails due to fewer joints; reduced costs for relaying owing to the increased life of the rails; reduction in initial costs and maintenance where joints are bonded; improved electrical conductivity; and quieter, smoother and more comfortable travelling owing to the absence of the continual pounding of the joints.

Old Rails Reclaimed

A further and important advantage made possible by welding is that secondhand serviceable rails can be made almost as good as new by cutting off the worn ends and welding the rails together into suitable lengths.

Rail welding was commenced in Victoria in 1931, the "Thermit"

process, which has been extensively used on the Continent, being adopted. Lengths of 225 ft. have been generally adopted for 100 and 110 lb. rails on the straight and on curves over 60 chains radius in the suburban area.

Country Lines, Too

On country lines, the lengths depend on the kind of ballast and type of track construction. Lengths of 103 and 160 ft. have been installed on tracks laid with 75 lb. and 80 lb. rails respectively.

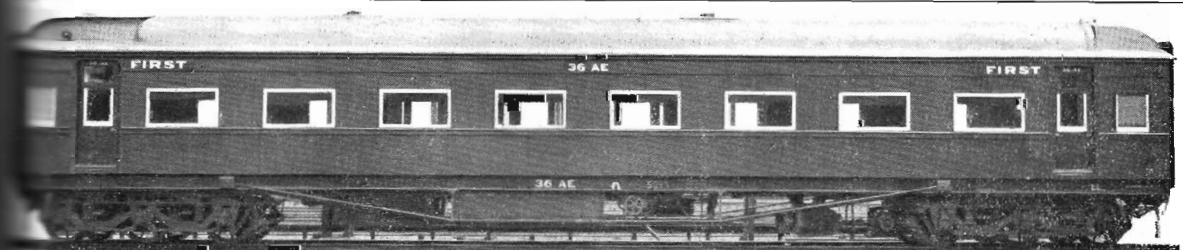
Last year the rails in the Elphinstone tunnel, on the Bendigo line, were welded into lengths of 1,700 ft.—the longest length of rails yet to be laid integrally in Victoria. Rails welded into lengths of 1,530 ft. were also laid in the Geelong tunnel.

About 20,000 welds, representing 76 miles of single track, have been made in Victoria up to the present.

In addition to the "Thermit" welded rails, about 700 joints have been electrically-arc welded at the Flinders-street station platforms, and an experimental group of 100 Linde welded (oxy-acetylene) joints are still under observation.

Welding on Crossings

Long-welded rails have also been installed over numerous level crossings in various parts of the State. In this way maintenance costs, due to the disturbance of the track at the rail joints, will be considerably reduced.



The demonstration air-conditioned car, now in running on the Sydney "Limited," showing the wide, hermetically-sealed windows which permit more expansive views of the landscape. The major portion of the air-conditioning equipment is situated beneath the car.

The Month's Topic

Careful Crossing Campaign

CROSS CROSSINGS CAUTIOUSLY!" Once again the Department is conducting a State-wide publicity campaign on a subject that affects every member of the community.

It is a lamentable fact that, despite thousands of accidents at level crossings—numbers of them having a fatal sequel—many road-users still fail to exercise that degree of care which a railway level crossing so obviously demands.

It is this continued lack of caution which has caused the Department to give close and unremitting attention to the subject of reducing accident risk at crossings.

All Crossings Inspected

For a number of years a Level Crossing Committee, comprising experienced officers of the Way and Works and Transportation Branches, has functioned closely with a representative of the Royal Automobile Club and municipal councils. Thorough inspections have been made of crossings, and considerable expense has been incurred in affording greater protection.

Where practicable, level crossings have been replaced by subways or overhead bridges, but this work must obviously be governed by financial considerations.

Each level crossing is equipped with one or more standard railway crossing signs. Where necessary the wing fencing is also painted white. Where the approach to the crossing is such that it cannot readily be seen, warning signs, which are now standard throughout Australia, are erected either by the Department or by the Country Roads Board.

Train Headlights

To equip all the open level crossings—totalling more than 3,000—with gates or automatic warning signals would involve a huge expenditure. However, 34 wig-wag or flashing light signals have been erected where extra protection is necessary, while a considerable amount of money has been expended in providing interlocked gates.

Powerful electric headlights have been installed on 213 locomotives and on nearly 400 suburban carriages.

30,000-Mile Tour By Mr. C. H. Holmes

TRAVELLING by train, aeroplane and ship, Mr. C. H. Holmes, Director of the Australian National Travel Association, will cover nearly 30,000 miles on an official world tour.



Mr. Holmes is a former Chairman of the Betterment and Publicity Board which post he left in 1929 on the inauguration of the Association.

Leaving Brisbane by aeroplane on February 5, he will travel via Java, Sumatra, Malaya, Siam, Burma and India, thence up the Persian Gulf to Baghdad. Leaving the aeroplane at Baghdad, he will undertake a 5000-mile trip across the Assyrian Desert to Haifa, thence by train to Jerusalem and Gaza, where the London Air Mail will be rejoined.

He will call at Alexandria, Athens and Brindisi, where the train will be taken to Paris, and the journey to London completed by air.

From London Mr. Holmes will, if the schedules are convenient, travel by the "Queen Mary" to New York. He will cross the United States of America and Canada, and return to Australia via New Zealand.

DINING CAR REVENUE RISE

A noteworthy advance in the dining car revenue on the Sydney "Limited" was registered during the four-weekly period ended January 11. The services included 2,544 dinners, 2,781 breakfasts and 4,679 refreshments.

The number of breakfasts alone averaged just below 100 per day. The revenue for the period was the highest for any period since May, 1930.

INTRODUCING

Conductor Joe Keppell, of Spencer-street, who is now "air-minded." In other words, he is one of the first conductors to become proficient in controlling the temperature and humidity in the air-conditioned car on the Sydney "Limited."

His progress as a conductor is a vindication of the judgment of ex-District Superintendent F. J. Kilmartin, who insistently urged Joe to apply for a vacancy 13 years ago. Since then, this quiet, methodical railwayman has efficiently attended to the comforts of thousands of train travellers in many parts of the State, including Royal, Reso and Holiday trains. His aptitude for the work led to his selection for the responsible post of Conductor on the Vice-Regal State Car two years ago.



Reducing Lightning Damage In Suburban Area

TO reduce the possibility of damage to the overhead wiring, rolling stock, electric equipment and tracks due to severe lightning and wind storms the Department is erecting a number of "tie" stations at selected points in the suburban area.

Varying in length from 11 to 31 ft., "tie" stations have already been erected at Clifton Hill, Boroondara, Footscray, Toorak, North Melbourne and Hawthorn and the Melbourne Yards.

Circuit Breakers

A further four "tie" stations are now being designed for erection at Princes-bridge, the Flinders-street, Balaclava and Moorabbin. It is expected that they will be completed within the next six months.

High speed circuit breakers are automatically "cut out" the power section when abnormal conditions will be installed in these "tie" stations. High speed circuit breakers are also installed in a number of automatically-operated sub-stations.

The most usual cause of damage is lightning. A lightning flash strikes the lines to a high voltage and "spills over" the surface of porcelain insulators in the form of a spark. The spark is harmful.

"Tie" Station's Value Quickly Shown

SIX days after they were installed in the "tie" station at Footscray in December last, the high speed circuit breakers gave a convincing demonstration of their great value.

Lightning flashed over an important insulator at South Kensington, but beyond burning the surface of the insulator no harm resulted. The power supply was not interrupted.

Twelve months ago a lightning storm caused a serious breakdown of train services at the same station. The insulator was broken, allowing the wires to fall on the track. Single line working was in operation for several days.

Itself, but its passage through the forms a conducting path along the 1500 volt power current in the form of a fierce arc. If allowed to persist its heat will crack the porcelain and the wires will fall.

Practically the whole of the equipment for the high speed circuit breakers is being obtained while apparatus, standard in the Department, is being used. The auxiliary equipment for operation of the circuit breakers has been developed and, with some exceptions, manufactured in the Street Workshops.

Bowling to Don Bradman

“CHAMPAGNE OF MY CAREER”



AFTER playing his 12th game in the Victorian cricket team, Joe Plant, of the Accountancy Branch, has given the “News Letter” an intimate account of a bowler’s viewpoint of Don Bradman during the recent Sheffield Shield match, Victoria v. South Australia. Don amassed another mammoth score of 357, including 109 before lunch on the second day.

Joe has been a consistent all-rounder in the Victorian side, bowling, batting and fielding very impressively.

(By JOE PLANT, VICTORIAN ALL-ROUNDER)

Don’s diminutive form emerged from the dressing-room on his way to the wicket, his bat appeared to be of the standard width. He took block, the bat miraculously widened. And so it expanded when approaching a flawless bowler whose bat was as wide as a door. At that is how it seemed to me mutely bowling to him for two

is the master batsman, and two days rank as the “champagne” of my cricket career. To a maiden over to Bradman was a matter of experience, but I soon realized that he was merely “playing the bowling.”

In some respects, I preferred bowling to Don. While he was batting I had many rests—that is to say he scored so freely and so contentedly that the ball spent a good deal of time travelling to all parts of the field. All I had to do was to wait for his return!

Weak Strokes

I have bowled against hundreds of batsmen, all of whom have had weak strokes which can be expected by a bowler. But Don Bradman has not one weak stroke in his bowling repertoire. And his ability in placing a carefully-placed field is amazing. Of this I am painfully conscious!

Once while I was bowling to him, a strong off-side field placed, the ball of mine, at least one foot inside the off-stump, was nonchalantly sent to the long-on fence. I mutely appealed to my captain (Keith Rigg) to get a fieldsman out there, but he shook his head. “What’s the use?” he wearily asked, “You can’t place a field for him!”

Humor was infused into the end of the match. Don decided to bowl the final over. I was batting at the time. “What,” I said, “Are YOU going to do?” “Yes,” he impishly replied, “I’ve bowled better batsmen than you. I immediately recalled that he had secured Walter Hammond’s

Few will forget that memorable occasion in a tense Test match when Hammond with a score of 80 was bowled by Bradman in the final over of the day. Remembering this, I relentlessly guarded my wicket, and played each ball with meticulous care.

Language Problem

TOURIST Bureau Manager W. T. McConnell’s daily mail brings letters from many strange parts of the world.

He confesses he was nonplussed when he recently opened a letter which contained the following name and address—

*Seamus Padiag Uasal O’Murchadha,
Baile Na Pruchtiasa,
Meathus Triun,
Comndae Na Longphuirt,
Saoorstat Eireonn.*

After careful enquiry he was assured that his correspondent hailed from the Irish Free State.

oblivious of the advice to “have a go.” He beamed when the over proved to be a maiden, and triumphantly left the field with the following bowling analysis: 1-1-0-0.

Only those who bowl against him realise fully the calibre of Bradman. His quick eye, dancing footwork, stamina, accurate placing and power place him far ahead of any batsman we have seen. He is truly “greater than the game.”

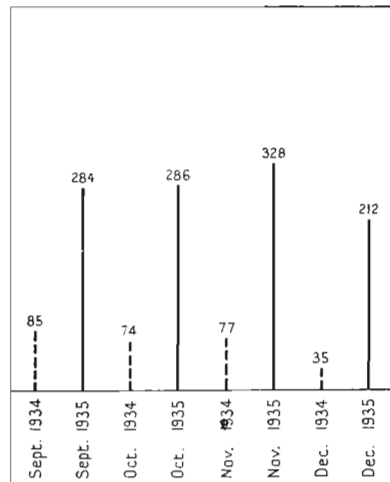
Ararat Railwaymen Praised

DESCRIBED as “one of the most interesting features of the procession,” the model of the “C” class locomotive was awarded first prize in the recent procession arranged for the Gala Day for the Ararat and District Hospital.

The Commissioners directed that the prize money (£1/1/-) be donated to the funds of the Hospital.

In expressing thanks for the Department’s action in making the model available, the Gala Committee paid a tribute to the voluntary work performed by Ararat railwaymen.

Suggestions Kept Up In December



THIS graph showing the number of suggestions submitted to the Betterment and Publicity Board is worthy of more than passing notice by every railwayman.

December is a short-working month and, perhaps, with the approach of the Christmas holidays, most railwaymen are prone to relax a little in making suggestions.

However, the total for last December reached the gratifying total of 212, compared with 35 for 1934, thus maintaining the substantially increased flow of suggestions that was such a conspicuous feature of 1935.

This total of 212 for December was the highest for that month since 1927, when 227 suggestions were submitted to the Board.

The monthly aggregates for December in each year between 1927 and 1935 are as follows:—

December, 1927	...	Suggestions	227
" 1928	...	"	212
" 1929	...	"	137
" 1930	...	"	96
" 1931	...	"	22
" 1932	...	"	112
" 1933	...	"	70
" 1934	...	"	35
" 1935	...	"	212

* * *

THE following ideas which have recently been adopted are indicative of the value and of the very wide range of suggestions submitted:—

- That portions of steel stranded wire of overhead equipment be encased in lead piping;
- Relative to a proper goods rating classification for by-products of meat works;
- A method of working goods trains via North Geelong, and the provision of a water crane at “A” Box, North Geelong;
- That form G. 190 and stamp used for endorsing instructions thereon be abolished;
- To reduce wear of crank stands for point rod connections by use of a heavy washer;
- Improvements to feed water regulators at “A” Station, Newport Power House.

Personal Postscript

Printing Personality

AS Monotype Keyboard Operator Arthur King, of the departmental Printing Works, approached this "copy" he was nearing the completion of setting his final issue of the "News Letter." He retired last month after 30 years of invaluable service. Since it commenced in October 1930, the 65 issues of the "News Letter" have been set by him with a speed and accuracy which have won the highest appreciation. His departure is a pronounced loss to the Department—"Arthur is one of those irreplaceables, both as a craftsman and a man" was the deservedly high tribute by Mr. Milton F. Gray, Printing Manager. Arthur is the quiet, unassuming possessor of a record that is probably unique in the Department. Throughout his 30 years of service, he was late on only two occasions! Twice in 1930—after 24 years of remarkably consistent punctuality—he "missed the clock." But his record was blemished only to the extent of a meagre 17 minutes. To all the expressions of esteem that Arthur carried with him on his retirement, I add mine: "Well done, Arthur, and all the best!" —G.

77—And Just Retired

FEW railwaymen outside the Department have such a record of continuous association with important railway work as Rail Shop Foreman Harry Pitt, who recently retired from Thompson's engineering works, Castlemaine. Now 77 years of age, he was employed by Thompson's for 55 years, 46 of them being in the position of Rail Shop Foreman. During that time he was actively and closely connected with the manufacture of more than £1,000,000 worth of points and crossings for railway tracks in all parts of the State. Some of the biggest track-layments used by the Department passed under Harry's appraising eye. Throughout his long service, the popular veteran exhibited a high standard of workmanship, his courtesy gaining him hundreds of railwaymen as firm friends. This was tangibly shown when on his retirement present and past Departmental rail inspectors made him a gift of a case of pipes. —B.V.K.

Telling South Australia

CHOSSEN for the management of the Tourist Bureau Branch Office recently established in Adelaide, Bert Streckfuss, of the G. T. Bureau staff, is well-equipped to stimulate tourist travel from South Australia to Victoria. Since transfer to the Bureau in 1925, he has had wide experience of tourist traffic essentials. It was largely due to his enthusiastic and thorough organisation that the educational day-tours to Yalourn for scholars have been such an outstanding success. He also extended the idea by arranging school vacation tours, combining scenic and educational features, to a number of the leading tourist resorts. For some time he was one of the Bureau's officers deputed to meet visitors on Interstate steamers arriving in Melbourne. —J.C.

Variety

SIGNALMAN, cricketer and landscape painter . . . Such in brief has been the varied life of Alf. Jones, who retired last month after a record-breaking term of 25 years in the Box Hill signal box. In his early days, he was a block recorder at Princes Bridge when Mr. C. Miscamble, a former Commissioner, was the Signalman-in-charge. Alf. operated the signal levers at many places, and wherever he went he was a star and versatile cricketer. In fact, his scores have a distinct Bradmanesque touch. He played cricket in various grades for 41 years, and during that time scored 58 centuries. The last time he topped the century—140 not out—he was 55 years of age. He was also a wicket-keeper and a right and left hand bowler. Now that he has retired from signalling and cricketering, Alf. intends to devote more of his leisure to landscape painting in which sphere he has been more than ordinarily successful. A pupil of the late Walter Withers, Alf. has been consistently represented by oil and water color work at the annual exhibitions of the Victorian Artists' Society for the past 15 years. Many of his paintings have found their way into homes in overseas countries. —A.S.

Young Executive

SPECIALLY recommended by the University Appointments Board because of his brilliant record as a student, Ted Rogan, of the Secretariat Branch, was last month appointed to a high executive post in the National Gas Association of Australia. Although only 26 years of age, he has a background of commercial essential and bespeaks years of unremitting and successful study. Last year, he received the degree of Bachelor of Commerce at the Melbourne University. In 1925 years previously he had passed the examination of the Federal Institute of Accountants. He was then 21 years of age. Ted entered the railway service in 1925, and after eight years in the Rolling Stock Branch he was transferred to the Secretary's Office. He was attached to the Staff Branch until September last when he was transferred to the staff of the Commission of Commissioners.

February Birthdays

LDG. Painter W. Poynton, of 121 Bch., and Clerk A. C. Cook, of 10 Bch., on the first; Driver E. Hoeberl, of 121 Bch., on the second; Driver E. Fairy, and Fitter and Turner R. J. Bendigo Wkshps. on the third; Driver Moran, of Accey. Bch., on the fourth; Signalman C. O'Malley, of Flinders and Blacksmiths' Striker R. J. Newport Power House, on the fifth; Fitter W. K. Jarvie, of Flinders sixth; Estate Officer R. F. Calverly, maker A. F. Cunningham, of Wkshps., on the seventh; Carpenter Grigor, of Sale, Storeman G. Spotswood, and Clerk D. A. Traffic Bch., on the eighth; Clerk Galt, of Spotswood Reclamation the ninth; Elec. Fitter S. J. Jolimont Wkshps., on the tenth; Wkshps. Manager G. A. Curtis, Mechanic H. N. Foster, of Spotswood the 11th; Rail Medical Officer D. M. Little on the 12th; Fitter V. E. Little, of Newport Power and Clerk A. C. Austin, of Accey the 13th; Fitter A. A. Garratt, of Signalman A. Leitch, of Flinders the 15th; Platelayer J. E. McGee, District on the 16th; Fireman J. of Nth. Melb. Loco., on the 17th; maker R. H. Thompson, of Ballarat and Shunter R. Penhallurick, of on the 18th; Gds. Checker P. A. Melb. Goods, and Elec. Fitter C. of Flinders-st., on the 19th; Gen. Freight Agent J. McClelland, master C. Kelly, of East Camber Wagon Bldr. A. N. Dowling, of N on the 20th; Asst. Stationmaster nedy, of West Footscray, on the 21st; master A. L. Abbott, of Flinders R. R. Fleming, of Spotswood Wkshps. Yd. Foreman H. Jupp, of Melb. W 21th; Toolsmith J. R. Myerscough, port Wkshps., and Optg. Porter Emerson, of Heyington, on the 25th; A. C. Aldersea, of Metro. Dist., on Supt. Pass. Train Service W. R. Optg. Porter J. P. Leonard, of on the 27th; Chief Elec. Eng. Colwell, and Clerk L. A. Melb. Wkshps., on the 28th.

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The V.R. "News Letter" is issued by the Victorian Railways Commission as a service to railwaymen in the service. Personal and other brief succinct contributions should be addressed to the Editor, Betterment Policy Board, Heat Office.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia by the Victorian Railways Printing Press, Laurens-street, North Melbourne. Publishers—The Victorian Railways Commission.

The V.R. News Letter

March, 1936

Issue No. 66

CLEVER CANINE IDENTITY PASSES

PADDY is dead. He was attacked and badly bitten by a snake. He is the blacker spaniel whose daily performance of cleverly taking delivery of a parcel of newspapers from a passing train was one of the "highlights" on the Wangaratta-Bright line. Hundreds of holidaymakers bound for the Buffalo National Park witnessed Paddy's unique effort.

Each day he impatiently waited for the approach of the train. When he heard the far-off whistle of the locomotive reverberating down the Owens valley he dashed for the railway line. He started barking and keenly watching the guard A. Adamthwaite to lean out of the train. Paddy would run beside the train. Springing with unerring accuracy, he would grasp the parcel and dash out to him and triumphantly scamper homewards with the applause of the onlookers ringing in his ears.



Although the parcel was firmly wedged between his teeth, Paddy never once tore the flimsy paper wrapping.

Auto. Couplers On Carriages

EQUIPMENT'S VALUE DEMONSTRATED

THE decision to fit automatic couplers on all the Victorian and South Australian joint-line carriages represents a further important stage in this work.

Since the introduction of automatic couplers in 1926, the following motives and vehicles have been fitted with: Locomotives, 271; carriages, 283; trucks, 15,044; vans,

These modern automatic couplers are nearly five times as strong as the old type, and as a result of their use on trucks, train loads are now limited practically only by the tractive effort of the locomotive. They are a highly important factor in the economies of substantially increased loads.

Combined with the improvements in brake equipment, the automatic couplers have greatly reduced the quantities of damage to rolling stock merchandise in transit.

Of major importance, too, is the greater measure of safety that is provided. There is practically no danger of broken connections resulting in "breakaways" of trains.

Where carriages have been fitted with automatic couplers, the riding qualities have been greatly improved and the elimination of "slack" action between the vehicles.

Superannuation Act Amendments

IMPORTANT FEATURES

THE most important of the recent amendments to the Superannuation Act gives to all officers who are not now contributing for the full number of units appropriate to their salary the right to elect, not later than April 1st next, to increase the number of their units.

Provision is also made for the ceasing date of an officer's contributions being regulated by the date on which the first contributions became payable on account of the several units for which he contributed. This means that in almost all cases where an officer has increased the number of his units there will be more than one ceasing date. In the past, there has been one ceasing date, which was regulated by the date on which the first contribution was made to the Superannuation Fund.

DISCRETIONARY POWER

The remaining provision relates to the date from which an ill-health pension becomes payable. The Superannuation Board now has discretionary power to pay a pension from an earlier date than was legally permissible prior to the amendment.

Air-conditioned Dining Car on Sydney "Limited"

ANOTHER milestone in the history of the Department was passed on February 13 when the "Avoca" all-steel dining car, equipped for air-conditioning, was placed in regular daily service on the Sydney "Limited."

Repeating the outstanding success achieved by the air-conditioned passenger car which commenced running on the Sydney "Limited" on December 23, the dining car continues to be the subject of highly appreciative comments from patrons.

New light fittings, representing a complete departure from train lighting standards in Victoria, and altera-

DESPITE the liberal explanations of air-conditioning, there are still people who imagine that the atmosphere they breathe in an air-conditioned car is by some chemical magic manufactured underneath the car.

Perhaps this point should be made quite clear: Conditioned air is FRESH AIR, but it is filtered, purified and maintained at a comfortable temperature.

tions to the interior have added greatly to the general attractiveness of the car.

The greatly enhanced comfort of the dining car, combined with the customary excellence and variety of the meals, is expected to be a potent factor in attracting increased patronage. It is worth mentioning that the revenue received in the dining car is now greater than at any period during the past six years.

PASSENGERS VOTE

ON ALTERED SCHEDULES

AN interesting development last month was the decision of the Department to conduct ballots among regular travellers on the subject of suggested alterations to train schedules.

All passengers on three Essendon-Broadmeadows line trains were handed circulars outlining the suggested alterations in the running of these trains. They were asked to indicate their preference and subsequently return the circulars to the Department through the local stations.

In each case, a substantial majority of the passengers revealed that they desired the alterations which were immediately brought into operation.

Ballots will be held only in cases where there is no Departmental objection to the proposal, and where there is a doubt as to whether the majority of passengers would be inconvenienced.

The Month's Topic

Rail Travel's

Keynote is Comfort

"ANYWHERE to Anywhere" is the descriptive slogan adopted by the Department to give prominence to the innovation of reduced country return fares operating throughout this month.

Elsewhere in this issue an outline is given of these substantially reduced fares. These alone provide railwaymen with powerful talking points on the all important matter of stimulating rail travel.

In addition to these special fares, there are other aspects which demonstrate the superiority of rail travel over all other forms of land transport.

Relaxation

Unquestionably railway travel provides exceptional opportunities for a high standard of relaxation, including facilities for reading, writing and sleeping. On country trains, toilet facilities are available at all times and generally rail travel, especially on long distances, has a degree of comfort not approached by any other form of land transport.

Train travelling comfort is greatly enhanced by the knowledge that complete safety is assured. The reliability of the men and equipment associated with the railways has become a by-word. It is of paramount importance to passengers.

Safety

Each railwayman connected with train operations is mentally and physically sound in every way. Eye-sight and hearing must conform to a very high standard, and "Safety First" is always the guiding principle.

Trains traverse an exclusive right-of-way, and the equipment, regularly tested and examined, is as dependable as human ingenuity can make it.

In brief, every member of the service possesses a unique opportunity for advocating the attractiveness of rail travel. The reduced fares and the superior comforts of rail travel provide railwaymen with effective talking points in stimulating traffic.

ANYWHERE to ANYWHERE

RETURN fares throughout March are on the most attractive scale ever offered over such a long period. The reductions range from 33 to 60 per cent. below the ordinary fares.

From March 1 to 31, first class return tickets will be issued at slightly more than one-half the ordinary return fare, and second class return tickets at two-thirds the ordinary return fare. These tickets will be available for return for one month from date of travel.

Where the train service permits a day return journey, first-class return tickets will be issued at less than one-half the ordinary fare, and second-class return tickets at one-half the ordinary fare.

Excepting the suburban lines, these greatly reduced fares are available over the Victorian Railways system, including the Balranald, Denilquin and Stony Crossing lines. They are also available for travel to and from Albury (N.S.W.) and Mt. Gambier and Pinnaroo (S.A.).

* * *

RANGING from "Neon" signs to handbills, the present publicity featuring the "Anywhere to Anywhere" fares during this month represents the most comprehensive campaign yet carried out by the Department.

The following illustrates the variety and State-wide scope of these publicity activities:—

"Neon" signs at Flinders-street station; Posters (40 in. x 25 in.) at all stations; Posters (40 in. x 25 in.), advertising Melbourne events in March, at all stations; Posters (6 ft. x 3 ft.) at Flinders-street, Spencer-street, Princes Bridge, Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong stations; Posters (20 in. x 25 in.) at all Shire Halls and technical schools; Wednesday Bulletins at all suburban stations; Front page of "Weekly Notice"; Handbills; Window displays at the Tourist Bureau and Branch Office, Spencer-street; City theatre screen advertising; Radio broadcasting; Press announcements in all Melbourne daily and country newspapers; Display advertising in Melbourne daily papers; Advertising in all country newspapers; Advertising in Magazines.

INTRODUCING—

STATIONMASTER Charlie Whitelaw, of Mornington, who is better known perhaps as the owner and skilled operator of radio station VK3BH. A foundation and leading member of the Wireless Institute of Australia, he became fascinated with radio 28 years ago. Since 1919, he has been "on the air" entertaining at many country centres with equipment mostly built by himself. Always noted for his powerfully-constructed sets which have brought him radio friends in remote parts of the world, Charlie gained Commonwealth-wide prominence in 1926. Listening in on 32



First Year of Rail Telephone Exchange

STATISTICS of the faults that have occurred demonstrate the great reliability of the apparatus of the new railways automatic telephone exchange. In the first month, the exchange completed its first year of operation.

During the year there were 132 faults in the mechanism. The most serious was of a minor nature and in no instance was it sufficient to cause the slightest interruption to the service.

On the basis of the more than 5,000,000 calls which have passed through the exchange, there was less than one fault for every 40,000 calls. Comparisons with similar equipment in other parts of the world reveal that this proportion of faults is exceptionally low.

Record Days

As an illustration of the capacity of the exchange to handle an exceptional volume of business, it is significant to mention that on Christmas Eve there were 22,500 inter-departmental calls and 3,287 calls from the public network, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. This was the busiest day yet experienced.

Long-distance telephone conversations between Melbourne, Ballarat and Melbourne and Bendigo have been considerably curtailed in addition to increasing the capacity of these lines, the necessity for providing additional facilities has been postponed.

Failures to replace the receiver promptly after the end of a conversation and inordinate delays in commencing to dial after removing the receiver were particularly prevalent during the first six months of operation of the exchange.

These irregularities have been substantially reduced, thus materially aiding the attainment of a greater all-round service from the exchange.

metres at Benalla, he heard a faint but very persistent voice calling "Australia". Answering the call, he was surprised and delighted to hear Captain (now Major) Hubert Wilkins, the Australian explorer who said he had a special message for the then Prime Minister (Hon. S. M. Bruce) from the Arctic region near the North Pole. Mr. Bruce gratefully acknowledged the message, and asked Charlie to transmit a congratulatory reply. "Yes, I have a radio, but then I like fire-fighting better!" is Charlie's toral reply to the expected admission. Hence the position of him clad as a fireman. He took part in firefighting at Prahran in 1907, and his interest has never flagged. He has been an active country fire brigade member at many centres, including Eaglehawk, Benalla, Stawell, Woomelang and Albury. For the past 2½ years he has been connected with the Ascot Vale Fire Station.

Road, Rail, Air and Sea

TOURIST BUREAU SERVES ALL TRAVELLERS

SERVICE to the traveller in its broadest sense" is descriptive of the diverse activities of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau.

That the Bureau is efficiently fulfilling its function is amply demonstrated by the thousands of enquiries—personal, written and telephonic—that pour into the Bureau each week. It is conservatively estimated that these enquiries normally total more than 10,000 per week.

A **COMPREHENSIVE** service is provided by the Service section where the latest information is available on travel by road, rail, air and sea. In addition, complete details are given of hotel and guest house accommodation throughout Victoria, reservations are made for accommodation at all the leading city hotels. Bookings are made for River Murraumbidgee, cruises to Tasmania by over-sea steamers and pleasure trips on the River Yarra. Reservations are effected for air services between Melbourne and Perth, Melbourne and Sydney and for all services conducted by the Q.A.N.T.A.S. Company in the southern part of Australia.

Service Details

Complete information is given concerning all road services, and bookings are made for such services as contact with the railway system. The Bureau is in the near future, book for all the passenger services operated under the authority of the Transport Regulation Board.

Among the "all-the-way-by-road" services for which the Bureau books are sightseeing tours around the State and the nearer resorts; Victorian and Interstate tours conducted by the Pioneer Tourist Bureau; one-day and two-day cruises operated by a company recently licensed by the Transport Regulation Board; and tours of the Murray Valley between Melbourne and Swan Hill.

Inclusive weekly tours and Holiday Train cruises providing transport by rail, road and steamers, as well as national day and vacation tours for children are important features of the Bureau's all-embracing travel services.

Travel Hostess

For the convenience of overseas country visitors to Melbourne, specially qualified Travel Hostess are available in the Bureau to furnish information on travel, hints on places to visit, particulars of amusements and accommodation, etc.

All overseas vessels carrying passengers are met at Port Melbourne by representatives of the Bureau who give assistance concerning all phases of travel—whether by road, rail, air or sea—and give advice in regard to hotel and guest house accommodation.

A vast amount of departmentally-prepared publicity matter covering all the State's principal tourist resorts, as well as literature prepared by private hotel, guest-house and transport agencies is widely distributed by the Bureau.

All these functions and many other items of travel service, combined with the establishment of branches in Sydney, Adelaide and Mildura and the location of a Victorian Representative in Brisbane—all providing the same comprehensive information as is available at the Melbourne Bureaux—place at the disposal of the tourist an invaluable amount of information.

Retirement of Mr. P. T. Meares

THE news that Mr. P. T. Meares, Transportation Branch Staff Officer, reaches the retiring age this month will be read with great regret by railwaymen wherever a train is operated in this State.

Summarising the many high tributes paid to the veteran who has completed nearly 50 years of invaluable service, it can be confidently stated that Mr. Meares' analytical mind, keen grasp of all staff complexities and, above all, a very human outlook, combined to make him the ideal occupant of a very onerous post.



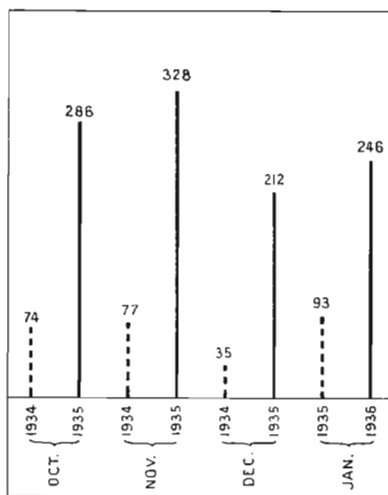
Mr. MEARES

For 34 years, he was a member of the Staff Office, and during that time his unabating anxiety to hold the scales evenly between the Department and the individual railwayman became a by-word.

Mr. Meares will leave the Department with the kindly wishes of all, but particularly of the younger members of the service. At all times he was eager to pass on to them the benefits of his ripe experience and judgment.

At the Victorian Railways Institute, Flinders-street, on Saturday, March 14, he will be the central figure at what promises to be a memorable social function. The Committee expects that railwaymen from all parts of the State will attend to farewell Mr. Meares.

WANTED—22,000 IDEAS A YEAR!



THIS month's graph showing the flow of suggestions to the Betterment and Publicity Board is of great significance.

It will be noticed that while the totals for the months of October, November and December (1934) and January (1935) fell short of 100, the aggregates for the corresponding months in 1935 and 1936 soared above 200.

Although these consistent rises in the number of suggestions are very gratifying, they indicate that only one railwayman in 100 is at present availing himself of the great potential benefits of the suggestions scheme.

Bright Prospects

State-wide in its ramifications and embracing almost an unlimited number of varying operating features, the Department is always a fertile field for the observant railwayman to suggest means of improving the service. Remember—on an average, one in every six suggestions received by the Board is adopted.

There are, too, the bright prospects of securing monetary rewards for any adopted ideas. It should not be overlooked that for every two adopted suggestions (which previously would have returned only commendatory entries) received in any one year, a reward of £1 is now paid.

* * *

THE following ideas which have recently been adopted are indicative of the value and of the very wide range of suggestions submitted:—

- To include in the Working Timetables an index for loads and running schedules;
- To drill oil holes in little end brasses before halving the brass;
- The provision of earthing cables in transformer chamber at the Newport Power House;
- That signal wires be labelled to indicate the signals to which they apply;
- A new design of air valve for use on pointing machines;
- To terminate the 6.10 p.m. 'down' train at Mordialloc instead of Aspendale.

Personal Postscript

Tribute

"HE has rendered that service which entitled him to the esteem of his employers, and, by his never failing courtesy and uprightness, retires carrying with him the seal of good fellowship, the highest honor his fellows can bestow." That glowing tribute appeared prominently on the attractive souvenir programme of the recent farewell social to Mr. George H. Farrelly, Manager of the Spotswood General Storehouse. It accurately summarises the feelings of his many friends both inside and outside the service. Mr. Farrelly's six-year term as presiding officer over the Department's "nerve centre" of the stores organisation was characterised by that care and efficiency which he had always displayed in other important positions in the Branch. In the course of his 49 years of service, he had been Stores Inspector and Chief Clerk of the Branch. In that period he gathered a wide experience of the thousands of articles purchased by the Department, and his knowledge was an invaluable factor in the smooth operation of branch activities. His colleagues' parting gift was a handsome wireless set. —H.D.A.

Roaming S.M. Retires

ONE of the best known Stationmasters in the service, Bill Killeen recently retired, the last three of his 49 years' service being spent in charge of Williamstown Pier. Between 1887 and 1908, during which he rose from block recorder to Stationmaster, he moved around very little. But once in possession of his S.M.'s cap, he developed nomadic tendencies, and for the next 18 years roamed all over the system as a Relieving Stationmaster, Traffic Inspector and Train Running Officer. As R.S.M., Bill became a conspicuous personality at many leading stations. In 1926 he was appointed to Port Melbourne, and six years later moved just around the Bay to Williamstown Pier. Bill was a sound transportation railwayman whose tact, preciseness and general efficiency made an impression on railway patrons wherever he was located. —P.T.

Ideal Secretary

FOR six years Personal Secretary to the Chairman of Commissioners—a position demanding capacity, dependability and energy of a high rank—Harry Hodgins has now been promoted to the Secretaryship of the Railways Classification Board and State Mine Industrial Tribunal, a dual post of high responsibility. Harry's widespread panorama of railway affairs generally, gained during his valuable association with the Chairman, foreshadows that he will be equally successful in staff matters. He is one of a number of clerks who, passing from the Melbourne Goods Sheds through Room 1 (Transportation Branch) have completely justified their selection for transfer to the Secretary's Branch. Last month he completed 26 years' service in the Department, 11 of them being in the Transportation Branch. —C.

Secretarial Successor

JACK PRETTY, of the Betterment and Publicity Board, confesses that he received the biggest thrill of his life when he was chosen as Personal Secretary to the Chairman of Commissioners. With characteristic preciseness, he was immersed in the Board's multifarious printing and advertising details when a summons came from the Chairman. Overnight he found himself transplanted into one of the coveted positions in the Department. Jack has all the attributes for a successful term with the Chairman, and his friends confidently predict that he will be seen at his best when the greatest pressure is on. This is amply demonstrated by his notorious enthusiasm for hard work. A returned soldier and licenced shorthand writer, he has had varied experience in many parts of the Secretary's Branch, including a term of four years as Registrar of the Board of Discipline. For some years, he was closely associated with the printing and checking of the Commissioners' Annual Report. —L.P.

March Birthdays

CLERK N. F. Mills, of Estate Office, on the first; Clerk G. M. J. Carns, of Traffic Bch., on the second; Commissioner

M. J. Canny, Staff Board Member Brennan, Architect S. Steel and Fencer O'Brien, of Wangaratta, on the third; P. V. P. Lyons, of Nth. Melb., and Driver C. O'Neill, of Spotswood, on the fourth; Car Painter E. J. Plant, of Nth. Wkshps, and Ganger W. G. Nibb, of Melton, on the sixth; Signalman W. B. of Nth. Geelong, and Clerk J. A. Keane, of Acctcy. Bch., on the seventh; Fireman Walters, of Yea, on the eighth; W. J. Harris, of Warragul, on the 10th; Conductor G. T. Harding, of Elwood, Gent. Metro. Manager L. C. Brown, of Refresh. Bch., on the 12th; Fitter Mahon, of Jollmont, on the 14th; A. J. Lunn, of Spencer-st., and Clerk Ewels, of Acctcy. Bch., on the 15th; Help L. F. Mahony, of Bendigo, on the 16th; Shunter A. J. Candy, of Ararat, on the 17th; Ganger E. E. Hyde, of Geelong, on the 18th; Shunter G. Dickson, of Melb. Yd., on the 19th; Shunter E. L. of Flinders-st., on the 20th; Boiler M. Tyrell, of Newport, and Clerk Woolfe, of Spotswood Storehouse, on the 21st; Fitter & Turner A. W. Upton, of Ballarat, and Clerk G. N. Foster, of Melton, on the 22nd; Apprentice Saimaker Pithie, of Newport, on the 23rd; Electrician J. C. Crossie on the 25th; Stationmaster A. S. Harley, of Geelong, on the 26th; Chief Clerk R. Dickinson on the 28th; Porter R. of Warragul, Clerk F. A. Ferguson, of Acctcy. Bch., and Supt. Loco. Supt. Dillon on the 28th; Repairer R. G. of Lethbridge and Elec. Mechanic Roberts, of Flinders-st. on the 30th; T. W. James, of Glen Iris on the 31st.

Last Mile Post.

HORACE WILLIAM BLESSLEY

AFTER a prolonged illness, H. W. Blessley, Assistant Commercial Agent, died last week. He was a returned soldier with many years' active service abroad to his credit.

"Mr. Blessley's passing is a loss to the Department," said W. L. Middleton, Commercial Agent, in paying a high tribute to the round ability and enthusiasm of Mr. Blessley displayed. "He was expert in all phases of goods work, completely vindicated his selection from 200 applicants for the post of Assistant Commercial Agent."

His wide knowledge and aptitude for salesmanship, allied with a patient and forceful personality made an ideal officer in the State campaign to regain traffic that had been lost to competing services.

Mr. Blessley was closely associated with the introduction of Freight Contracts. It was an undertaking that bristled with complexities, but he gained an outstanding success in stimulating the acceptance of Freight Contracts by railway patrons in many parts of the State.

The V.R. "News Letter" is issued monthly by the Victorian Railways Commissioners for the benefit of railwaymen in the service. Personal papers and other brief succinct contributions should be addressed to the Editor, Betterment and Publicity Board, Head Office.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia by the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Laursen-street, North Melbourne. Sole Publishers—The Victorian Railways Commissioners.

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The V.R. News Letter

April, 1936

Issue No. 67

Reductions in "Off Peak" Suburban Fares.

"ANYWHERE TO ANYWHERE" SCHEME CONTINUED.

FOLLOWING the announcement to continue through April the "Anywhere to Anywhere" fare concessions, which were initiated on March 1, the Commissioners' decision to give a month's trial from April 1 to 30, to a scheme of special fare reductions to passengers travelling from suburban stations and stations located on electrified lines beyond the suburban area in the "Off Peak" hours constitutes an event in railway history.

Either of the above decisions would have excited favorable comment, but the cumulative effect of the two together, particularly in a month in which Easter occurs, must result in a gratifying public response.

The continuance of the "Anywhere to Anywhere" reductions that during April, over the suburban rail system (suburban lines electrified) passengers will enjoy 1st class return travel at a rate slightly less than half the ordinary fare, and 2nd class return travel will be available at two-thirds of the ordinary fare. For a day return, wherever the scheme permits a day return journey to be made, the 1st class return fare will be less than half the ordinary fare, the 2nd class return fare being half the ordinary fare.

Day Return Concessions

The day return rate of reduction will apply specially to travel to and from Melbourne on April 8, and to the ten late night special trains from Melbourne to the country on April 9 (Easter Eve), but the concessions in these instances will have the availability of one month from April 1. All the above concessions, of course, will be subject to a maximum of 3/2d. 1st return and 2nd return.

The concessions for travel in the "Off Peak" hours on the suburban lines should prove extremely popular. Passengers travelling by trains to Melbourne from stations on the suburban lines and on lines outside the suburban area served by electric trains will arrive at their destination not later than 10 a.m., and depart from Melbourne on the return journey not later than 4.30 p.m. on the same day. They will be entitled to a return fare at nearly the single fare rate.

The reduced fares, which will be subject to minimum charges of 1/- for 1st class and 9d. for 2nd class, will be available from Mondays to Fridays, inclusive, with the exception of Good Friday, Easter Monday and Easter Tuesday.

It is worth noting that passengers returning to stations between Rosanna and Hurstbridge, Ringwood East and Lilydale, Holmesglen and Glen Waverley and Aspendale and Frankston, which are not served by a train leaving Melbourne shortly before 4.30 p.m., will be able to travel by the first train after that time.

NEWPORT WORKSHOPS PICNIC.

REVIVED after a lapse of 11 years, the Newport Workshops Employees' Picnic Club arranged a picnic for nearly 1,000 people at the Aspendale Racecourse on March 1.

Two special trains left Williamstown for Aspendale where a big and varied sports programme, together with amusements for the children—merry-go-round, miniature steam train, Punch and Judy—were provided.

Ice cream and sweets were provided free of charge to the children by the Committee. The Newport Workshops Band was in attendance, and a dance was held towards the close of the day's outing.

Expert Ski-er for Mt. Buffalo—Victoria's Snowfields.



SKI-ING in Victoria is expected to receive its greatest impetus when Franz Skardarasy, a Continental ski-ing expert, arrives on June 9 on a six months' special engagement.

He will be accompanied by his brother, Ernst, who is returning as a ski-ing instructor at Mt. Kosciusko. The presence of a ski-ing expert at Mt. Kosciusko last winter led to substantially increased patronage, and it is confidently expected that the innovation will be equally successful at the Victorian Alpine resorts.

Highly Qualified.

Franz Skardarasy, who is 26 years of age, is an Austrian. He has passed with honors through the famous Hannes Schneider School of Ski-ing Instruction.

In addition to being an accomplished ski-er, whose knowledge will be invaluable to both experienced and non-experienced ski-ers, he speaks English, French and German.

* * *

In readiness for the forthcoming winter season, a modernising of the snow sports equipment is also being carried out at Mt. Buffalo National Park, where the popular Cresta run is expected to witness a great assemblage of ski-ers during the forthcoming winter.

For the Victorian Ski Championships in August next, a jumping platform is to be erected at Mt. Hotham. Improvements are also being effected to the "Bungalow," Mt. Feathertop.

The Month's Topic

Tourist Bureau's Wide Activities

THE rapidly developing activities of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau are shown by the statement recently revealed in a Departmental broadcast that the Bureau answers orally or by letter over 10,000 inquiries a week.

These inquiries cover all phases of travel—road, rail, sea and air—and it is the proud claim of the Bureau that it never turns away any person without the information which is desired.

Progress in the Bureau's work as a travel adviser has come with the public realisation of the fact that there is no specialisation in its energies; it is there to serve the whole community.

Already booking for road services co-ordinated with the railways, the Bureau will, in the near future book for all the chief passenger services operated under the authority of the Transport Regulation Board. This is a timely indication of the Bureau's broad field of endeavor.

Special Booking Facilities

With the establishment of a special service to book tourists and travellers for hotels and guest-houses throughout Victoria, the Bureau will immensely enhance its value, and increase its utility as a convenient central office where all the varying travel demands will be met.

It is not overstating the case to say that the Bureau's travel information is encyclopedic, and that it is one of the biggest influences in the community in making Victoria better known to Australians.

Nothing could better illustrate its work in the latter respect than the number of students who have been booked by the Bureau's representatives for various tours in Victoria during May, June, July and August. In addition to parties from Victorian schools, there will be parties from three other States—South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland—and they will be able to undertake escorted tours by rail, road and boat that will not only afford them the maximum of holiday, but will be of a definite educational value.

Assistant Dietitian Appointed

TO assist in the general plan of raising the standard of refreshment services for rail travellers, Miss E. S. Ramsay has been appointed Assistant Railways Dietitian.



Her qualifications and wide practical experience of dietetics, allied subjects and kitchen organisation should prove invaluable in supplementing the diverse activities of Miss Betty Wilmot, Railways Dietitian and Welfare Officer.

At the time of her appointment to the Department, Miss Ramsay was dietitian and lecturer and examiner for nurses in invalids' cooking at the Geelong Public Hospital. She was formerly Supervisor of Food Services at the Austin Hospital.

In addition to obtaining her diploma of domestic science, Miss Ramsay qualified as a dietitian at the Alfred and St. Vincent's Hospitals.

New Rail Motor Sedans

WITH the purchase of six "Dodge" sedans for use as rail motors, the Department will greatly improve certain Postal Motor services now operated by "Sheffield 40" and "Casey-Jones" gang motors, and at the same time stimulate passenger traffic.

The new vehicles will run on flanged steel tyres and will have comfortable seating accommodation for six passengers and driver as well as provision for luggage, mails and parcels. The chassis, on which will be mounted Australian bodies, equipped with armour-plated glass, will be the "Dodge" LE. 30 type fitted with 6-cylinder 23.44 horse-power engines.

Increased Mobility

Mechanism for turning purposes (similar to that incorporated in the "Dodge" Inspection Cars) will give increased mobility especially in running trips to and from stations not equipped with turntables.

It is intended that the new rail motors will be operated on the following lines:—

Ararat-Avoca.
Horsham-Goroke-Kanagulk.
Birregurra-Forrest.
Irrewarra-Cressy.
Shepparton-Dookie.
Donald-Woomelang-Mildura.

Mr. BROWNBILL NEW DISTINCTION

A 10,000 word thesis on improvements to Locomotives on the Victorian Railways submitted to the Board of Examiners of the Melbourne University has gained for Mr. E. H. Brownbill, B.E.E., B. Mech. E., Engineer of the Rolling Stock Branch, the higher distinction of the degree of Master of Mechanical Engineering.

By this further success, Mr. Brownbill, who is 34 years of age, becomes the only one in the Department to possess such a degree.

His contribution, which comprehensively and lucidly dealt with most far-reaching improvements to locomotives carried out by the Department in recent years, was highly praised by the Examiners.

Mr. Brownbill has been intrinsically associated with highly intricate investigations and tests to locomotives that have been crowned by outstanding successes.

It is estimated that the improvements to the front ends of locomotives have led to an increase of up to 10 per cent. in the horsepower of certain locomotives at certain speeds.

Mr. Brownbill joined the Department as an engineering student in 1925 after a brilliant career at the University.

INTRODUCING—

CARTER HOGAN, operating at Spotswood, who is looking forward more than anyone else to the projected tour to Australia of Richard Crookall, celebrated American tenor, so popular with radio listeners. Carter has

written an "Australia" which circles predictably the ideal song for Carter's Song compositions. Carter's Eight years ago rather dithered, tempted and prodigious "Memories of a haunting waltzody. Since he has composed popular tunes, dies as "Under a Harvest "Land of Nights" and several fox-trots steps. Just now, James Forster, well-known Irish-Australian, two of Carter's compositions, negotiating for releases, one of the leading British phone Recording Companies.



Carter Hogan, a member of the staff at Spotswood Station.

School Vacation Tours

WIDESPREAD TOURIST BUREAU ACTIVITIES

FOSTERING travel amongst the scholars of both State and Public schools is one of the rapidly developing activities of the Government Tourist Bureau.

The idea of organising scholars' vacation excursions—not only within Victoria, but also to and from other States—has a high educational value, and the response of various schools to various suggestions for vacation tours has been very gratifying.

Up to the present the following extended tours during vacation time have been organised. A party of scholars leave Adelaide for Cowes on May 8, another Adelaide party is booked for the winter sports at Mt. Buffalo National Park in August. Brisbane scholars will visit the great mountain in June, and there will be a party from Melbourne for the week, 23-30.

Ports Visited

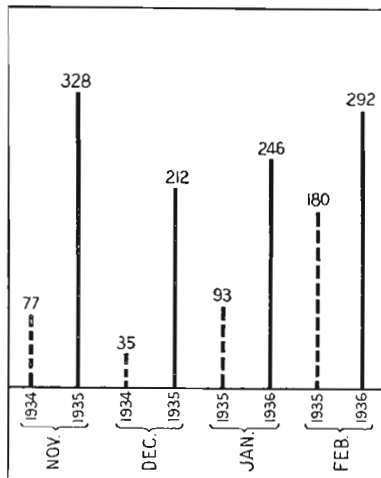
Parties from Melbourne will also visit Cowes, Lorne and the Gippsland coast over the same period. Lorne is the objective of a selection of parties from the Albury and Wagga districts for a week from May 9,

whilst the same enchanting resort will be the attraction of a party from the Mildura Schools later on in the month.

Further tours to Mts. Feathertop and Hotham, and also from Melbourne to Adelaide, are now being arranged, whilst day trips to Yallourn and Cowes have been promoted.

The benefits to be reaped, not only by the scholars themselves, but also by the State as a whole, are of great importance. Travelling thus in company, the scholars broaden their outlook and also gain a valuable knowledge of their State and its resources, whilst enjoying all the time a particularly fine holiday.

LEAP YEAR — FOR SUGGESTIONS



A STEADY increase in the flow of suggestions received by the Betterment and Publicity Board is indicated in the above graph. The leap from 212 in December last year to 246 in January and then again to 292 in February is a highly commendable beginning for 1936.

As illustrating the consistent interest which some railwaymen display in the activities of the Betterment and Publicity Board, it is worthy of mention that two members of the service have each submitted more than 200 suggestions.

Another railwayman has nearly 150 suggestions to his credit, while four others are fast approaching the century-mark.

An examination of the proposals submitted by these railwaymen reveals that they have not confined all their ideas to subjects related in some way to their every-day jobs.

Wide Field of Ideas

On the contrary, they have covered a comprehensive field, the variety of suggestions demonstrating that they are ever on the alert to observe ways and means of improving sections of the service which are *remote from their own particular spheres*. That is a feature of the suggestions scheme that cannot be over-emphasised.

The following suggestions which have recently been adopted are indicative of the value and of the wide range of suggestions submitted:

Quicker release of train engines at Bendigo.

That the projecting portion of leading at window ledge on Rail Motor Trailer be reduced.

Method of strengthening "C" nuts for injector pipes on engines.

That papers for stations Cranbourne to Dalmore on No. 1 Down Goods be taken on to Koo-Wee-Rup and returned by the "up" stopping train.

That tricycle mirrors be fitted with a rain shield.

An improved soldering iron heater.

THE BOAT TRAIN

A **NOTABLE** event in the Victorian Railway's history occurred early in the month when the boat train commenced running between Flinders Street and Port Melbourne Pier.

This colorful train consisting of sliding door carriages painted in blue, with silver roofs, and gleaming in vivid contrast on the decks of the roofs of three of the cars the red lettering "THE BOAT TRAIN," is striking evidence of the continuity of the Commission's policy of "Service."

The train will be in regular use to convey passengers to and from overseas berthing at the Port.

In view of the fact that first impressions are the most important, it is expected that this distinctive train, waiting on the platform and departing liners will lend a touch of color to the drab outlook of the Port.

The Department is only moving the times in conferring a special quality on this train, which has joined the noble company of decorated coloured trains in running to other States and overseas.

That the public is pleased with this contribution to a brighter Melbourne is evidenced by the tendency towards increased business, and this train should be valuable in helping to develop a favorable first impression of this State and its railways in the minds of overseas visitors.

V.R.I's Nominee— "Queen of Song"

RAILWAYMEN are invited to vote for the V.R.I. Choral Society's nominee (Miss Elsie Anderson, of the Traffic Branch) in the "Queen of Song" contest now being conducted in Melbourne.

Miss Anderson is one of seven entrants, each representing different societies affiliated with the choral association of Australia, striving for pride of place at the Coronation Ceremony which promises to be a brilliant pageant at the Melbourne Town Hall on Tuesday, April 21.



All stations, workshops and depots have been circulated by the Secretary of the Society (Mr. C. Lycett, of Room 141, Head Office).

Formed only three years ago, the V.R.I. Choral Society has made remarkable progress, and railwaymen and their families are continuing to seek membership.



Personal Postscript



"J.H.R." Retires

AFTER April 2, perhaps the best known signature to station staffs throughout the system will be missing from official memoranda and passenger refund orders. Mr. J. H. Reilly, Principal Fares Officer in the Traffic Branch, retires on that day after 50 years' service. His knowledge of all phases of passenger fares, regulations and coaching rates is unsurpassed in the Department. The Passenger Fares Book—one of the most important and voluminous publications issued by the Department and the basis of the passenger revenue—has always been beside him, but it is safe to say that his comprehensive knowledge made it rarely necessary for him to consult it. Few railwaymen are so popular and so widely respected as Mr. Reilly. To his long list of daily callers he remained ever courteous, serenely unruffled and, above all, most helpful, and his departure is sincerely regretted by all who had the privilege of being associated with him. He is one of the two remaining original members of the Traffic Branch—Mr. J. McClelland (General Passenger and Freight Agent) has the longest service in the Branch. Mr. Reilly's first 17 years of service saw him as an efficient booking clerk, goods clerk, Assistant Stationmaster and Relieving Stationmaster. —S.B.

"Magpie"

RON. TODD, the block recorder at the Viaduct Signal Box, is a railwayman whose sporting exploits seem destined to bring him even further into the public eye. The rudiments of football and cricket have been very firmly grasped at an early age—he is only 19—by this tall, unassuming railroader. His several impressive appearances with the Collingwood League Football 18, including one of the final's against South last season, indicate that he should be a successful successor to the famous Gordon Coventry on

the forward line. Last year, he toured the Northern States with the Magpies, and made a great impression in the various games against South Melbourne. For most of the season, he played with the Second 18, and won the trophy for the best and fairest player in the club. Playing cricket this season with the Heidelberg Line in the V.R.I. Metropolitan Competition, Ron. has several Grimmett-like performances to his credit. —R.C.H.

Energetic and Enthusiastic

WHEN it was decided to re-establish the Newport Workshops Employees' Picnic Club after a lapse of 11 years, the position of Secretary was filled with lightning-like speed. As a matter of course club members looked no further than Norm. Armstrong, the popular Telephone Attendant on the Shops' switchboard. They knew they could obtain an efficient, energetic or enthusiastic occupant for the responsible post. Although he modestly disclaims all credit for the Picnic's outstanding success—"it was teamwork," he says—he nevertheless attended to all the numerous details with a preciseness that left no doubt about ultimate success. Norm. is also the proud Secretary of the Newport Workshops Band, and glowingly tells you of the Band's achievement in winning the "C" Grade Centenary Championship at South-street Competitions in 1934. He is also Secretary of the Newport Workshops sub-branch of the returned soldiers' League. A returned soldier, with over three years' active service in the A.I.F. Norm. can rightfully claim to be one of the youngest to enlist in the A.I.F. When he went into action at Gallipoli in 1915, he was only 14 years of age. —A.E.

April Birthdays

SIGNALMAN Z. P. P. Jones, of Colac, on the first; Bookstall Manager Letcher and Elec. Train Driver Anderson, of Jolimont, on the second; Laborer J. V. Young and Toolmaker Stewart, of Newport, on the fourth; painter I. W. Benson, of Sale, on the fifth; J. Munday, of Melb. Yard, on the sixth; Clerk W. A. Paxton, of Refreshment, on the seventh; J. C. Jinks, of Bendigo, on the eighth; Opertg. Porter W. McKervis, of Ballarat, on the ninth; Clerk C. J. Jinks, of Bendigo, on the tenth; patch Clerk E. P. Linden, of Sale, on the eleventh; Clerk N. L. Leitch, of Acctey. Beh., on the twelfth; Asst. Officer P. E. Cooper and Porter Alford, of Colac, on the thirteenth; J. M. Allsop, of Acctey. Beh., on the fourteenth; Clerk H. H. R. Woodford, of Elec. Beh., on the sixteenth; Fitter's Asst. G. W. N. Nth Melb. Loco., and Control Clerk W. J. A. Anderson, of Elec. Beh., on the seventeenth; Clerk B. J. Wood, of Ballarat, on the eighteenth; Fireman J. L. E. Leveille, of Newport, on the nineteenth; Clerk H. D. Storey, of Ballarat, on the twentieth; Clerk E. J. Storey, of Caulfield and Stcreman T. P. Spotswood, on the twenty-first; Asst. J. Lynch, of Newport, on the twenty-second; Asst. Signal Adjuster W. B. Lewis, of Melb., on the twenty-third; Skilled Laborer J. Jacobs, of Oakleigh, on the twenty-fourth; Ganger M. Maloney, of Nth. Melb., on the twenty-fifth; Signalman W. S. Gilmore, of Colac, on the twenty-sixth; Special Inquiry Officer of Traffic Beh., on the twenty-seventh; Help G. T. Smith, of Newport, on the twenty-eighth; R. J. Gordon, of Nth. Melb., on the twenty-ninth; J. J. Palmer, of Acctey. Beh., on the thirtieth; Fitter & Turner A. R. Goodman, of Ballarat, and Goods Checker J. S. Sippon, of Ballarat, on the thirtieth.

Presentation to Mr. P. T. Meares

THE social function at the Institute last month to honor well Mr. P. T. Meares, as the Victorian Railways Staff Officer was one of the most successful ever held.

All records of the Institute were broken when more than 350 railway and ex-railwaymen were present to wish him good health. Mr. Meares, General Superintendent of the Victorian Railways, presided at the gathering and the toast of the evening was proposed by Mr. Don. Cameron, Chairman of the Staff Board, and General President of the Institute.

No greater tribute to Mr. Meares' popularity could be found than that his railway friends clubbed together to present him with a very substantial wallet of notes.

In addition, a special presentation was made to him on behalf of a group of retired Stationmasters. He took this opportunity of thanking all those who so generously contributed, particularly those whom he will be glad to thank personally.

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The V.R. News Letter

1936

Issue No. 68

Further Big Train Service Improvements

ADELAIDE AND MILDURA LINES BENEFIT

NOTABLE train service improvements, introduced on April 20, included a 60 minutes' later departure time of "The Overland" from Melbourne to Adelaide; a corresponding reduction in the through travelling time to Adelaide; and the running of six trains, instead of five, weekly each way between Melbourne and Mildura.

Principally due to the vastly improved capacity of the "A" class locomotives following important front end modifications, these new services are further achievements in the continuous State-wide overhaul of train services.

Fixing the departure time of "The Overland" at 6.45 p.m., instead of 6.15 p.m., the Department has conferred a substantial benefit on the travelling public.

Representing the latest departure ever scheduled for an important capital express from Melbourne, the altered timing is of particular significance to business men who make frequent and hurried journeys between Melbourne and Adelaide.

Greatly improved train services have been introduced on the Melbourne-Adelaide route in recent years. For 25 years the express left Spencer-street at 6 p.m. In October, 1934, it was altered to leave at 5.10 p.m., and the through travelling time was reduced by 30 minutes.

In May, 1935, a further notable improvement was made—the departure time was scheduled at 5.45 p.m., a saving of 35 minutes in travelling time.

Departure Time

Therefore, in less than two years, the departure time of this important train from Melbourne has been altered from 4.30 p.m. to 6.45 p.m., while maintaining the original arrival at Adelaide and reducing the travelling time by a total of 135 minutes.

During the same period—since October, 1934—the former alternative departure times from Adelaide of 6 p.m. on four days a week and 6.30 p.m. on two days a week have been made uniform at 6.35 p.m. (Sundays excepted). In this a saving of 105 minutes (35 minutes on the days when connection made at Adelaide with the express to Western Australia) has been effected.

Passengers travelling from Melbourne to Mildura have also greatly benefited from the accelerated and improved schedules which have been introduced concurrently with the Melbourne-Adelaide alterations.

In October, 1934, the departure time of the Melbourne-Mildura train (four days a week) was altered from 5.6 p.m. (6.55 p.m. Saturdays) to 6 p.m. (7.10 p.m. Saturdays) with an acceleration of 30 minutes—30 minutes on Saturdays.

In May, 1935, the service was increased by one train per week and accelerated by 50 minutes. The departure time from Melbourne was also altered to 6.50 p.m. (7.10 p.m. Saturdays).

Six Trains, Now

The improvements introduced last month provided another train in each direction—six instead of five—and a later departure time from Melbourne—7.20 p.m. daily, with a further saving of 30 minutes (35 minutes on Saturdays).

Passengers travelling from Mildura to Melbourne have also shared in these greatly improved services. Prior to October, 1934, the train left at 8.30 p.m. on four days a week, arriving in Melbourne the next day at 9.55 a.m. The train now leaves at 8.45 p.m. on five days a week and 9 p.m. on one day a week (Sundays) arriving in Melbourne at 8.50 a.m. (8.55 a.m. Mondays).

The combined effect of this progressive series of improvements has been to increase the Mildura service from four to six trains a week in each direction, and to curtail the travelling time for through passengers by almost two hours from Melbourne to Mildura and by 80 minutes from Mildura to Melbourne.

Dogs' Hospital

RAIL CAR'S UNIQUE USE

MANY discarded old type railway carriages which are no longer serviceable have been sold and are now being used in varied ways—as sleeping quarters for farm employes, as week-end "shacks" and even as sporting clubs' dressing rooms.

And now word reaches "The News Letter" that an old "AB" carriage, built in 1879, has been raised to the dignity of an ultra-modern Dogs' Hospital and Rest Home!

Miss B. Boddington-Williams, of Kangaroo Flat, is responsible for this enterprise. She recently purchased the veteran vehicle and transformed it into a canine retreat that must rank as one of the most remarkable of its kind.

Compartments Adapted

The under-gear, seats, lamp fittings, etc., have been removed. Every square foot of space has been efficiently utilised, and the interior has been painted a soft, pale green.

Miss Boddington-Williams has displayed considerable ingenuity in adapting each of the seven compartments. The first is the kitchen where varied meals are prepared and passed through a window to the kennel maid. Next is the bathroom, complete with hot and cold running water, a cement bath large enough for the biggest Airedale, and a drying table. Adjoining is the general store.

Then follows the most interesting sections of all—the surgery and dispensary! Here all canine ailments are diagnosed and treated by Miss Boddington-Williams who studied veterinary science in South Australia.

Kennel Comfort

The next compartment is set aside as a stripping and grooming room, with marble-topped benches for grooming the dogs each day. The seventh compartment is used as an office.

A feature of the adjacent kennels accommodating the "permanents" and "boarders" is that each dog is provided with a locked covered run and bedroom, allowing standing room for attendants.

All types of dogs, especially Sealyham Terriers, Dachshunds and Airedales, are bred on the premises. Three of these dogs are valued at exceptionally high figures.

The Month's Topics

Better Service For Rail Patrons

IN this issue, further striking evidence is given of improved train services on the Melbourne-Adelaide and Melbourne-Mildura lines.

What has been accomplished on these lines has been repeated—in many cases, surpassed—in other parts of the State. Since 1934, spectacular transformations have taken place in country train schedules—all as part of the continuous State-wide review of train services.

Although a substantial measure of improvement has been achieved, it must not be imagined that finality has been reached.

Every day the schedules of trains in some part of the system are being critically reviewed; and wherever practicable improved services are being introduced.

* * *

V.R. Institute's Value Appreciated

JUDGING by the remarkable rise in the membership of the Victorian Railways Institute, an ever-growing number of railwaymen throughout the State are realising the widespread advantages which accrue from active association with the Institute.

A wide range of educational subjects, covering general commercial courses and specialised railway working, allied with tuition in the pianoforte, the violin, voice culture and production and dramatic art demonstrate the attractive opportunities for railwaymen inspired by the urge to improve their positions not only in the service but in the world at large.

Social, lounge, billiard and dancing rooms provide endless scope for recreation. These facilities are also enjoyed by railwaymen at 12 country centres. In the sporting sphere there is a modernly-equipped and expertly staffed gymnasium at Flinders-street, and a spacious general sports ground at Royal Park.

Not the least important feature of the Institute is its fine library which contains nearly 35,000 books catering for all the varied reading tastes.

New Suburban Tickets To Be Issued

PREPARATIONS are now being made for the early introduction of a new type of ticket—known as the "scheme" ticket—for ordinary single and return suburban issues.

The "scheme" ticket will be issued for one journey to a group of stations on various lines to which the same fare applies.

Following the introduction of these new tickets, the printed stock of tickets and accountancy work at suburban stations will be substantially reduced, while the issue of blank suburban tickets will be almost entirely abolished.

After the efficiency of the new tickets has been demonstrated at Caulfield and Footscray, it is expected that the scheme will be extended throughout the suburban area.

SERVICE

"LAST evening my daughter, coming from Upper Ferntree Gully, gave up the wrong half of her ticket at Richmond in changing for another suburb. The checker came into the train and when she explained what she had done, the checker said, 'That's all right, Miss. I'll telephone your station and let them know it is all right.' When she arrived at her home station, the porter said, 'Yes, Miss, that's all right. I've heard about it.'

"Such courtesy and commonsense deserve great commendation and should be known. It is equal to the London policeman telling a lady in my presence, not to get worried as he knew she did not mean it when she took the wrong turn and held up the whole of the traffic. More of this kind of thing would help everyone."

—Quotation from letter received from Mr. T. W. Haynes, of 499 Little Collins Street, City.

INTRODUCING—

ERNIE CAMPBELL who, as officer-in-charge, presides over the Newmarket Livestock Siding. Both for its size and the huge volume of livestock traffic, this railway activity is the biggest of its kind in Australia.

From all parts of the State, 75,000 trucks, bringing nearly seven million sheep, cattle and horses, converge on the Siding yearly. Asked how this vast, complicated business was so smoothly handled, Ernie became lyrical. "At this place," he enthused, "organisation, co-operation and enthusiasm are the prime factors—and I get them in

'full truck loads' from everyone!" In those terms, he pays a generous tribute to the efficient and helpful assistance which railwaymen, agents and drovers render every day. At the same time, it must be emphasised that Ernie's own wide, practical transportation experience exerts a big influence.



Ernie Campbell

Export Fruit Traffic

LOUVRE TRUCKS IN DEMAND

AN exceptionally heavy demand for louvre trucks for transport of fruit was a feature of the export fruit season now nearing completion.

The traffic in grapes, tomatoes, Goulburn Valley and Queensland fruit was handled simultaneously with the fruit for export overseas.

To satisfactorily cater for heavy perishable traffic, which converged on Melbourne from all parts of the State, the whole of the existing stock of 1,245 louvre trucks was pressed into service.

During the export fruit season from February to May, fruit for various parts in the United Kingdom will be loaded into 56 steamers. It is estimated that 635,000 cases of apples and 350,000 cases of pears will be exported.

It is an undertaking which demands a skilled organisation and the close co-operation of the staffs at all stages in the fruitgrowing districts.

Many of the ships are carrying fruit destined for a number of countries and to facilitate unloading operations it is essential that the loading arrangements into the ships at Port Melbourne and Victoria Dock be carried out systematically.

Careful Organisation

To enable this important objective to be achieved, instructions are issued each day from the General Superintendent's office setting out the days of loading, the overseas destinations, the shippers' names and the quantity of fruit for each ship.

Guided by these instructions, the loading and despatching of trucks and trains from the originating stations is being organised to bring the trucks alongside the ships in overseas order.

DIESEL ENGINES FOR RAIL MOTORS

AFTER a little more than a half of the stipulated six months' trial, a complete Diesel engine fitted to one of the Department's "A" class rail motors has strikingly demonstrated an avenue for substantial annual savings in fuel consumption.

Tests carried out on the Fawkner-Somerton and Bendigo-Heathcote Wallan lines have revealed the mileage obtained with the complete Diesel engine per gallon of fuel at least two and one-half times as secured when using the standard petrol engine.

It has now been decided to purchase four additional engines of this type for use on rail motors operating on the Fawkner-Somerton; the Melbourne-Sea Lake-Kulwin; Tallangatta-Wodonga; and Mornington-Somerton lines.

Snake Bite Attention Outlined

IN this article, Dr. C. Kellaway, recognised as one of the World's foremost experts on snake venoms, sets out the immediate action to be taken in the case of snake bite.

Prepared at the request of the Department, Dr. Kellaway's invaluable advice should be thoroughly grasped by all railwaymen—and, at every opportunity, passed on for the benefit of others.

The bite is upon the limb, at once apply a ligature between the bitten part and the heart—enough to obstruct completely the flow of the blood. For on the upper limb, the ligature should be applied above the elbow, for those on the lower limb, the knee.

Incisions on the wrist, fore-arm below the knee are unsatisfactory as they fail to obstruct deep arteries. If a finger or thumb is bitten, a ligature should also be applied round the base of the digit.

V.R.I. MEMBERSHIP NEARS RECORD

Victorian Railways Institute Officials are jubilant at the rapid and consistent rise in membership throughout the State. According to the General Secretary (Mr. W. E. Elliott), there are 12,442 members—only 40 short of the highest membership reached by the Institute 10 years ago. The indications are that the record will be eclipsed very soon.

A highly significant feature is that the record was attained when the staff totalled nearly 29,000, whereas the present staff personnel only 22,000.

"Also every member is financial," Mr. Elliott proudly.

The best kind of ligature is a piece of rubber tubing with stout walls from 1/4 to 1/2 in. in diameter. The ligature should be applied **WITHOUT ANY DELAY**. Snake venoms are absorbed with extreme rapidity.

The surface of the bite should be washed with clean fluid to remove dirt from the surface, and the bite and the surrounding tissue quickly washed—an area about 1/2 inch square and 1/2 inch deep being removed. This requires much physical courage in most snake-bitten persons who are reluctant to make deep incisions along the line of the punctures.

Excision of the area of the bite has no value whatever unless made out within two or three minutes. A bandage applied from the ligature downwards to the bite, stopping out blood in the ligated area through the incisions or excisions, is of value. In this way, the venom is squeezed out from the bitten part.

If the bite is on some part where a ligature cannot be applied, wash the surface with any clean fluid that is available and cut out the area of the fang punctures **WITHOUT ANY DELAY**. Then apply suction to the wound.

Before carrying out this part of the treatment it is well to be sure that you are dealing with the bite of a venomous snake. This may present one, two, three or four punctures—one if only a single fang has entered, and three or four if on one or other side of the serpent's mouth reserve fangs have been present.

In bites of non-venomous snakes the puncture marks are more numerous. Because non-venomous snakes have dirty mouths, cleaning up and later fomenting are the only requirements. Septic infection is the danger.

A snake-bitten person should not be allowed to walk, particularly if the bite is on the leg, because this may render the ligature ineffective. The person should be carried to the doctor without delay. Alcohol should not be given except a very small dose. Hot coffee is the best stimulant beverage.

Warm and Quiet

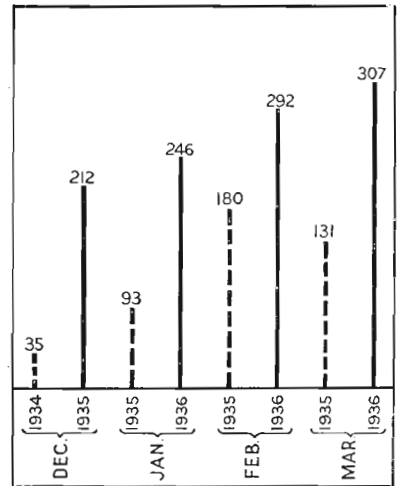
The patient should be kept warm and quiet and should not be walked about or slapped to ensure wakefulness. To ensure diagnosis of the bite it is advisable, if possible, to exhibit the dead snake to the doctor in order that appropriate antivenine treatment may be given.

To save time, it will often be possible to bring the doctor to meet the patient. If some time elapses before a doctor is available, care should be taken not to leave the ligature on too long. After half an hour it should be lifted for half a minute till the limb flushes with the entry of blood, and then re-applied.

It should be realised, however, that every time the ligature is lifted venom is entering the body from the bitten part. If antivenine is not immediately available the patient should not be despaired of, since good results are sometimes obtained from the use of the remedy even after some hours.

Finally it is necessary to keep the patient in good heart. No person bitten by a snake and treated adequately with suitable antivenine is in danger of succumbing. It is important not to alarm the patient and to add to the danger of the snake bite the serious complicating effects of fear.

SUGGESTIONS SHOW CONSISTENT MONTHLY RISE



ONCE again the graph shows that the monthly total of suggestions has passed the 300-mark. In addition, it reveals the continued practical interest that railwaymen are displaying in the suggestions scheme.

This gratifying consistency represents the very apex of co-operation—and the Commissioners highly appreciate the suggestors' efforts to promote the general well-being of the service.

* * *

Ideas Recently Adopted

THE following suggestions which have recently been adopted are indicative of the value and of the wide range of ideas submitted:—

That the 7 a.m. "Down" goods Traralgon to Briagolong return via Stratford and Sale;

A drift method of reclaiming armature brasses, suburban electric trains;

That report form be not printed on back of Guards' Statement of Running, T.R. 27, 29-32B and 32C;

A New Idea may be worth £1, £10 or £50 or even more to You

Improvements to doors of drop hammer oil furnaces;

Posters showing rail routes to suburban football grounds be displayed in hotels and tobacconists' and hairdressers' premises in Metropolitan area;

That plug-holes in hand hole covers for boilers be recessed to leave 8½ threads only.

Personal Postscript

Bendigonian Retires

THE many friends of Jim Stapleton, Foreman Blacksmith at the Bendigo Workshops, will be sorry to learn that ill-health was responsible for his recent retirement from the service. Jim's happy, genial disposition will be missed at the Shops. With a background of music rendered by the Workshops' Mouth Organ Band, his fellow-railwaymen gathered in force during a recent luncheon interval, and demonstrated unmistakably their affection and esteem for him. On their behalf, Mr. G. A. Curtis, Workshops Manager, presented Jim with two easy chairs—one for Mrs. Stapleton. Mr. W. Hosking, President of the Shops' Committee, supported by Messrs. Ceresa, Stevenson, Edgar, Beecroft, Jones, Preston, Hickey and Hogben each praised the veteran railroader. Jim was equally well and favorably known at the Newport Workshops where he was employed from 1901 to 1926. In the latter year, he received promotion to the position of Foreman Blacksmith at Bendigo North. —A.L.S.

Sprinters

AMONG the strongest contenders for the coveted Stawell Gift at Easter were two railwaymen from the Frankston line—Tom Graham (Yard Porter, Mordialloc) and Dick Stamp (Porter, Edithvale). Although neither competed in the final, each had the distinction of winning a heat against some of the best runners in Australia. Chief among Tom Graham's performances during a five-year career are victories in the Maryborough Gift (1933) and the Bairnsdale Gift (1936). Dick Stamp revealed his versatility as

a runner after elimination from the Stawell Gift semi-final (130 yards). He went on to win the 220 yards handicap. One of the much-fancied runners for the Gift, his ability as a sprinter foreshadows that many successes will come his way. Other notable track feats include victories in the 220 and 100 yards handicaps at Mildura, and runner-up in the Inglewood Gift. Both these fine runners were "discovered" by Clerk Dick Cumming, of Mordialloc, to whose wise training and general coaching they owe, in a large measure, the successes they have achieved. —A.P.R.

"Believe It or Not"

HERE is a feat that would arouse the unbounded interest of that indefatigable seeker of the world's unusual happenings—Robert L. Ripley. Car Builder George Seabridge, of the Newport Workshops, has never been late for work throughout his Departmental career of 40 years! When he started in the service, he decided that punctuality would be one of his objectives, and despite many vicissitudes he has stuck to his allotted task and triumphed. His feat recalls the records for consistency created by Miss W. Burrige, of the Powers Machine Division, and ex-Monotype Operator, A. F. King, of the Departmental Printing Works, both of which were referred to in recent issues of the "News Letter." Their respective records of daily "beating the clock" ranged over 10½ and 36 years. —P.

50 Years' Service

STATIONMASTER E. T. Evans of Richmond retired recently with a record of just on 50 years' active railroading to his

credit. He was engaged on transportation work during the last of his railroad life. Twenty-eight years ago he received S.M.'s cap, and then began a trek to numerous stations in the State, among them being Ringwood, Burnley, Ringwood, Rainbow and Kerang. He settled down in the Metropolitan area in 1920. After ten years at St. Kilda he moved across to Richmond in 1931.

May Birthdays

LABORER J. Slattery, of Newport Shops, on the first; Porter A. N. King, of Camperdown, and Storeman Winstanley, of Spencer-st., on the second; Repairer J. Brennan, of Longwood, on the third; M. McCormick, of Secretary's Branch, on the fifth; Carpenter T. F. Bennett, of Mordialloc, on the sixth; Chairman of the Victorian Railways Commissioners H. W. Clapp and T. Doran, of Bendigo, on the seventh; Elec. Train Driver A. J. S. Jolimont, on the ninth; Telegrapher L. Clancy, of Seymour, on the tenth; Engineer W. C. Pratt, of Elec. Branch, on the 11th; Clerk B. A. King, of G. P. & F. A's Branch, and Asst. S. C. Owen, of Head Office, on the 12th; Clerk T. F. N. Gray, of Richmond, on the 13th; Storeman H. G. W. Ballarat, on the 14th; Driver D. W. of Maryborough and Actg. W. H. Inspector E. Buinell, on the 17th; Mottat, of Accty. Branch, on the 18th; Sub-station Cleaner J. W. of Flinders-st., and Fireman J. M. Geelong, on the 20th; Ganger F. C. of Tarnagulla, on the 21st; Fireman Sims, of Bendigo, on the 22nd; Moulder L. R. Sinclair, of Bendigo, on the 23rd; Workshops Manager P. R. Leslie, of Asst. A. Reynolds, of Newport on the 24th; Repairer E. Beyer, of worth, on the 25th; Horse Tram W. Gilbert, of Welshpool, on the 26th; Commissioners' Secretary J. L. on the 27th; Engine Cleaner L. P. of Donald, Suptdg. Engineer J. of gomery and Clerk F. R. Philpott, of Bch. Head Office, on the 28th; Supt. J. B. Berkery, of Spencer-street, on the 29th; Supt. G. S. Scott, on the 30th; F. L. Campigli, of Bendigo, and Asst. F. O'Carroll, of Overhead on the 30th.

SLEEPING CAR COMFORT ON "THE OVERLAND"

ACTION is now being taken by the Department to provide a greater travelling comfort during the winter for sleeping berth passengers on "The Overland" running between Melbourne, Adelaide and on the Mildura line.

Sleeping berth passengers have the privilege of obtaining the use of a hot water supply free of charge, and to ensure that a supply of hot water will be available at all times, an improved type of gas water heater, fully automatic in operation and with automatic control, is to be installed in the Victorian and joint-stock sleeping

The V.R. "News Letter" is issued weekly by the Victorian Railways Commissioners for the benefit of railwaymen in the service. Personal notices and other brief succinct contributions should be addressed to the Editor, Betterment Committee, Publicity Board, Head Office.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia by the Victorian Railways Printing Department, Launceston-street, North Melbourne. Sole Publishers—The Victorian Railways Commissioners.

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Suburban Trains

“OFF-PEAK” SERVICES IMPROVED

Travellers on the Williamstown and Eastmalvern lines will have the benefit of substantially improved “off-peak” services when the winter suburban time-tables come into force on

On the Williamstown line, there will be a 15 instead of 20 minutes’ service on week days and Saturdays. This will involve the scheduling of 10 additional trips on week days and Saturdays respectively.

On the Eastmalvern line, the present 30 minutes’ service will be replaced by one of 20 minutes’ frequency daily, Saturdays and Sundays included. There will be 11 extra trips on week days, 12 on Saturdays and 13 on Sundays.

A further improvement will be the scheduling of the first Sunday morning trains from the suburbs to the city. This arrangement will provide more time for passengers transferring at the city from suburban to city trains.

Railwaymen Highly Praised

AIR-CONDITIONING EXPERT’S FAREWELL MESSAGE THROUGH “NEWS LETTER”

High tributes to the efficiency, co-operation and enthusiasm of railwaymen who have been associated with him in connection with the introduction of air-conditioning of railway carriages in Victoria were paid by Mr. A. H. Chilton, M.I.E.E., A.M.I.M.E. (Chief Electrical Engineer and Manager of the Railway Department of J. Stone & Co. Ltd., England), on the eve of his return to England last month.

Mr. Chilton was responsible for the design and application of the air-conditioning units now in operation on a country passenger carriage and an all-steel dining car.

He has had a wide experience of railways in England, India, North America and Europe, both as a railway executive and as a special representative of his Company. Hence the significance of his special message to railwaymen through the “News Letter.”



“Two factors have made my work so successful and pleasureable,” said Mr. Chilton. “Firstly, the pronounced

spirit of goodwill and enthusiasm between the Administration and my Company. Never before have I known such cordial relationship between client and contractor.

“Secondly, the continuance of this spirit right through the ranks of railwaymen—at the Head Office, the Newport Workshops, other associated sections and on the vehicles themselves.”

He warmly praised the keenness and ability displayed by all the railwaymen concerned in successfully grasping the fundamentals of the air-conditioning equipment. “It was a distinct triumph, and you have every reason to be proud of such a skilled body of men,” he said.

“Remarkably Beneficial”

Commending the Department for its progressiveness in introducing air-conditioning, Mr. Chilton said that he had seen the remarkably beneficial influence air-conditioning had exerted in regaining passenger traffic in America. “As the equipment becomes more gradually applied in Victoria, the travelling public will further tangibly recognise its outstanding merits,” he said.

Summing up his impressions of the Victorian Railways generally gained during country inspectional tours with the Commissioners, Mr. Chilton expressed the view that for “orderliness, cleanliness and general efficiency this railway system is unexcelled by any other that I have seen.”

“Before I leave,” he said, “I want to thank everyone for their generous co-operation. It was a magnificent gesture that greatly lessened the magnitude of the work. History has been made—these air-conditioning equipments are the first to be introduced in the British Empire—and I share your pride in the knowledge that the Victorian Railways have displayed such vision in taking the first step.”

BIG GAINS FROM NEW “SCHEME” TICKETS

There is a specimen of the “scheme” tickets experimentally placed on issue at Caulfield and Footscray. These tickets are issued for one journey between a group of stations on various lines to which the scheme applies.

Illustrating the immense potential benefits of “scheme” tickets to the Department, it is worthy of mention that the stocks of ordinary daily tickets at Caulfield and Footscray have been reduced 25 per cent.

A substantial reduction in station accountancy and the almost entire abolition of blank tickets are other advantages that accrue to the Department.



WHY SWASTIKAS ARE APPEARING IN TIME-TABLES

Many railwaymen have been intrigued by the appearance of swastika symbols in the latest of the working time-tables. Here is the reason—and some little-known facts about the swastika.

Swastikas prominently indicate to passengers any instances where there is a difference between the train departure times shown in the public and working time-tables.

Occasionally, the intermediate station departure times in the public time-table are earlier than those shown in the working time-table. The trains arrive at the station platform at the times shown in the public folder, but to

permit train crossings on single lines they “put back” into No. 2 road, and eventually depart from that point at the later time shown in the working time-table.

“Swastika” is a sanskrit word meaning “well-being.” “Harnsworth’s Concise Universal Encyclopaedia” has the following to say:

“Although traced to (ancient) pre-Aryan Europe, it is primarily an Aryan sun-symbol, being found at Troy and in India. Buddhist migration carried it to China and Japan; it may also owe its presence in America and West Africa to cultural migration. It was freely employed in early Christian art.”

The Month's Topic

LOCOMOTIVES' AMAZING SPEEDS

THE big part which the steam locomotive will continue to play in rail transport was emphasised by Mr. H. W. Clapp in an address last month.

He declared that, following his contacts with some of the world's leading mechanical engineers overseas, he was convinced that the steam locomotive is only now entering upon a new and greater era of usefulness.

Extraordinary Improvements

Expressing astonishment at some of the developments in steam locomotive practice overseas, he said that everywhere extraordinary improvements were occurring. As a result, speeds previously thought unattainable were becoming almost commonplace.

In England, the leading steam trains have reached speeds of over 100 miles an hour hauling train loads of 200 tons. In Germany, a steam train on a test run attained 120 miles per hour. In America, a streamlined steam train cruises at 100 miles per hour.

While such speeds were not at present feasible in Victoria—the prospective traffic would not justify the huge sum involved in levelling grades, eliminating crossings and strengthening tracks to the extent required—Mr. Clapp stated that the unremitting research overseas in locomotive design and operation was being closely followed on the Victorian Railways. As a result, our locomotives were being steadily improved.

Benefits at Small Cost

Important front-end modifications on locomotives had yielded results exceeding the most sanguine expectations. It is estimated that the horse-power of these locomotives at certain speeds had been increased by 40 per cent. In addition, maintenance costs had been reduced, while there had been a nine per cent. saving in fuel.

And these substantial benefits had been achieved at an average cost of only £140 per locomotive!

V.R. Printing Among World's Best

THIS month, the "News Letter" commences a series of brief articles dealing with Departmental activities which, although comparatively little known, are nevertheless integral factors in the general efficiency of the service.

* * *

With justifiable pride, the Department has always welcomed the visits of printing experts in Australia and from abroad to the Railways Printing Works at North Melbourne. These visitors have highly praised the general lay-out, the equipment and the excellence of the conditions under which the staff work.

The building is 300 ft. long, 100 ft. wide and 24 ft. from the floor to ceiling. Perfect natural lighting and ventilation are two outstanding features. Of saw-tooth design, the roof provides 1,800 ft. of roof lighting that penetrates every corner. Ventilation is provided by means of 84 nine-inch dome ventilators in the roof.

As an adjunct of the Department, the Printing Works occupy a position

of great importance. There is a tremendous annual output of printing and stationery.

Thousands of books, forms, time-tables, posters, publicity and many other printing requirements are promptly and efficiently produced—with substantial savings to the Department.

Some idea of the output will be gained by the fact that approximately 1,500,000 pieces of publicity have been printed for the Betterment and Publicity Board for the 12 months ending April 30 last.

Exhibiting a variety of types, colors and lay-outs, these productions strikingly demonstrate the quality of the work performed in all phases of printing, the Railways Printing Works are comparable with the world's leading commercial printers.

An Invitation:

WOULD you like to inspect the Railway Printing Works? If so, get in touch with the Manager (Mr. Milton Gray)—he will be glad to arrange a mutually convenient time.

SERVICE

"MAY I express my gratitude for the kindness shown to us recently at the Richmond Station.

"We alighted there with two invalids in chairs. As there were no ramps we would have been obliged to go on to Flinders-street but for the kindness of your porters who showed only pleasure in helping and who also assured us the chairs would be carried up on our return from the gardens. This was done in the kindest manner.

"Such kindness as this makes life so much easier to those who have cripples in their charge. I cannot possibly express my gratitude on paper enough."

—Miss M. Grant, of Ellesmere-road, Windsor, writing to the Chairman of Commissioners.

—♦♦—

INTRODUCING—

AMBULANCE Officer V. E. Southwood who, as a very junior typist, entered the Ambulance Organisation 21 years ago. For the last six years, he has controlled the

State-wide activities of this highly important division. Just at present, Mr. Southwood is all smiles. Efforts now in progress to stimulate interest in first aid have already resulted in more than 850 railwaymen joining the Metropolitan first-aid classes.

"Never in the history of the organisation has such a large number joined up in one group," he said enthusiastically. "Still, I want to see every member of the service manifesting a practical interest in first-aid. It is a priceless asset in an emergency, whether on the job or away from it."



"MANY HAPPY RETURNS"

ON June 7, the Railways Nursery—the only one of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere—celebrates its third birthday.

Since the Nursery was opened at the Flinders-street station in 1933, the attendance has aggregated nearly 34,000.

Notable for its expert staff, completely equipped cot-rooms and playrooms and hygienic cleaning plant for food utensils, the Nursery continues to prove a boon to mothers desiring a carefree day in the city.

V.R.I. Wireless Club Activities

RAILWAYMEN in the most remote parts of the State who possess wireless receiving sets of five or more tubes can listen in to the programmes broadcast between 12.30 p.m. and 2.30 p.m. each Sunday from V.K.3.R.I. The wavelength is 232.3 metres.

With a membership of nearly 100, the Victorian Railways Institute's Wireless Club's amateur station at Flinders-street is noted for the consistently high quality of the music transmitted.

Varied advantages accrue from membership. Both country and metropolitan members receive substantial concessions in the purchase price of wireless sets and parts and also in repair work.

At regular monthly meetings the latest radio developments are discussed and explained, thus enabling members to reap the utmost benefit from their sets. In addition, publications devoted to all aspects of radio are circulated among members.

Railwaymen in all parts of the State are invited to join the Club.

Next Victorian Ski-ing Season Should Be Most Successful Yet

COMPREHENSIVE plans have been made for the forthcoming winter sports season at Victoria's four leading Alpine resorts—Mts. Buffalo National Park, Hotham, Feathertop and St. Bernard.

Outstanding features of the arrangements include the special engagement of Franz Skardarasy, the Continental ski-ing expert; the provision of a ski-jumping platform at Mt. Hotham; the clearance of additional tracks and the provision of enlarged facilities and accommodation at Mts. Buffalo, Hotham and Feathertop; and the appointment for the first time of a "Snowline" Representative of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau at Harrietville.

...LE to reach Melbourne from Austria this month, Franz Skardarasy's course of instruction in most modern ski-ing technique is to be a dominating factor in popularising this exhilarating sport. He has passed with honors through the Hannes Schneider School of ski-ing—one of the most famous in the world.

...at Mt. Hotham, where the first of the Victorian Ski Championships will be held in August next, a ski-jump has been erected. Jumps of more than 50 metres can be attained, visitors will be enabled of witnessing one of the most spectacular features of ski-ing.

Improvements to the ski-ing tracks at Mts. Buffalo, Hotham and Feathertop will make available greatly increased scope for ski-ing. The snow which can now be used on the road leading to the celebrated Cresta Run at Buffalo.

The sports equipment at "The Depot" is being modernised by the addition of new ski, bindings and boots, while an improved standard accommodation will be available at Mts. Hotham and Feathertop.

"Snowline" Representative

Another important innovation, which will be of the utmost advantage to skiers, is the appointment of a "Snowline" Representative of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, located at Harrietville throughout the winter months, this experienced representative will facilitate the arrangements and act as guide, if required, to all skiers whether coming by road direct or by combined rail-and-road services to Mts. Buffalo, Hotham, Feathertop and St. Bernard.

Attractively illustrated booklets concerning those resorts are being prepared for widespread distribution through the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau and Branch offices. Details of the road and combined rail-and-road services, descriptions of routes beyond Harrietville and details of accommodation and costs of the essential information—are being set out.

Train Control

MERGER PLAN PROGRESS

THE amalgamation of the Central and Eastern Train Control sections and their location in the Head Office adjacent to the Time-tabling Division is rapidly nearing completion.

At a later date, the suburban Train Control section will be operated under the selector telephone system and removed from Flinders-street to the Head Office.

When this phase of the work is completed, the organisation for efficiently handling all passenger and goods train operations, including time-tabling, crew rostering, engine allocation and truck distribution will be on a scale never before attempted.

1,200 SCHOOL CHILDREN ON VACATION TOURS

A FEATURE of the tourist traffic last month was the organisation of large parties of school children on vacation tours.

Altogether 1,200 children travelled on the specially planned tours arranged by the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau.

Of this number, 400 came from Adelaide, 60 from Albury and Wagga, 690 from Melbourne and 50 from Mildura.

They were distributed over three resorts—878 went to Cowes, 172 to the Gippsland Lakes and 150 to Lorne.

tion and truck distribution will be on a scale never before attempted.

Under the merger scheme, the Truck Supply Room—known for a great many years as Room 10—will disappear as a separate entity.

The goods train time-tabling and truck distribution, formerly carried on by Room 10, will in future be an integral part of the train control system.

The other activities previously carried out in Room 10—demurrage, re-consigning of trucks, preparation of statistics and so on—will be performed by a separate section where other train operating statistics, including electric trains, will also be compiled.

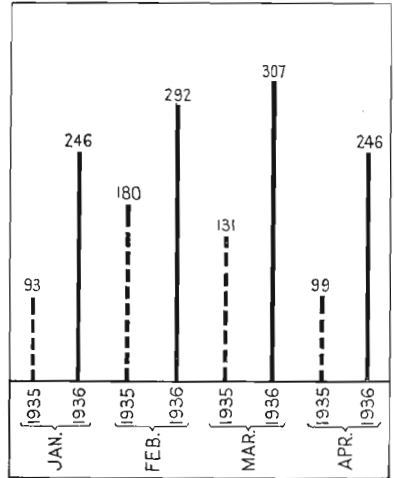
"We Buy Brainwaves"

THAT is the appropriate title of a folder issued last month for distribution by the Betterment and Publicity Board. Copies are being circulated throughout the service.

Here is a folder that demands the keenest and consistent attention of every member of the service, irrespective of branch or grade.

In addition to outlining the simple procedure for submitting suggestions and for taking out letters-patent in the case of inventions, the folder presents arresting reasons why railwaymen should submit suggestions.

A striking passage in the folder reads: "The service needs brainwaves. The character, efficiency and the future of the great industry to which we all have the honor to belong depend upon the service we are giving with our brains."



Ideas Recently Adopted

THE following ideas which have recently been adopted are indicative of the value and of the wide range of suggestions submitted:—

That the steps on station side of Thompson-street bridge, Williamstown, be replaced by a ramp;

That the scale of weights for motor cycles in P.F. 13/1 be revised;

An improved type of plug cutter for workshop sawmills;

Provision of a counter-weight compartment on Bathgate indicators;

A jig for use in re-conditioning lamp sockets, suburban electric trains;

To re-locate the steps on back of tenders fitted with electric lighting.

Personal Postscript

Fares Expert

HAVING had a Passenger Fares Book on his table for the past 28 years, new Principal Fares Officer E. Hawken, of the General Passenger and Freight Agent's Branch, is no stranger to the important duties he recently assumed. In addition to knowing the P.F. Book from cover to cover, he can give you "the story behind the news" of each of its numerous provisions. For the first eight of his 36 years' service, Mr. Hawken was in the Transportation Branch—as a booking and parcels clerk at country and suburban stations and as District Superintendent's and Stationmaster's clerk at Bendigo. After filling each of the positions in the Passenger and Parcels Division of the Traffic Branch, Mr. Hawken was appointed Special Officer in 1923. Devoting particular attention to many phases of parcels traffic, he achieved a notable success in all parts of the State. For a period he was Acting Chief Special Officer and Supervisor of Weighing.

—F.D.R.

What Next . . . ?

B.COM., A.F.I.A., A.C.A.A. . . . For the present, at any rate, those are the only letters that Alex. Petrie, of the Betterment and Publicity Board staff, has the well-earned privilege of affixing to his name. As those distinctions have been gained during the past eight years and he is still a keen student, there will be no surprise if he keeps on adding to his achievements. While becoming a Bachelor of Commerce, an Associate of the Federal Institute of Accountants and an Associate of the Australasian Institute of Cost Accountants—in the latter examination he was awarded a special prize for heading the list in Final Costing for Victoria—Alex. has revealed his versatility by winning an Essay Competition at the South Street (Ballarat) Competitions in 1933. The subject of his 1,000-word discourse was "32 Years of Federation." The most recent addition to the Board's staff after 15 years' service in the Accountancy

Branch, he has displayed an aptitude for descriptive writing on Victoria's tourist features. By the way, he is a member of the Economic Society of Australasia and an Associate of the Institute of Public Administration.

—W.E.

Ararat's Tribute

AN inscribed gold watch, a pipe and tobacco and a crystal salad bowl—together with high praise for his fine record of 25 years' service in the Department—were received by Fitters' Assistant Gus. Sevansson when he retired last month at Ararat. Depot Foreman G. R. Critten and many other speakers made it quite plain to the veteran that he was one of the most popular railwaymen in Ararat. If Gus. excelled in the Locomotive Depot, he was equally active in the Departmental first-aid movement. For many years an enthusiastic participant in this important work, Gus. was the holder of the highest V.R. first-aid award—a gold life membership medal. Always anxious to spread a knowledge of first-aid Gus. was for the past 10 years a skilled lecturer and class conductor at Ararat.

—S.

June Birthdays

LABORER F. C. Rogers, of Bendigo Workshops, and Clerk H. T. Blake, of Accty. Branch, on the first; Fitter and Turner E. Short, of Newport Workshops, on the third; Stationmaster P. Letch, of Lilydale, on the fourth; Fitters' Assist. F. D. Maher, of Nth. Melb., and Clerk W. P. McCaskill, of Caulfield, on the fifth; Ganger W. Crowhurst, of St. Arnaud, and Elec. Fitter R. J. Clarke, of Spencer-st., on the sixth; Clerk L. H. Barrett, of Room 2, and General Service Engineer A. K. Bartel, on the eighth; Skld. Labr. T. W. Webster, of Signals Division, on the ninth; Clerk J. L. Dundas, of Accty. Branch, on the 10th; Ticker Collector G. R. McQuillin, of Flinders-st., on the 11th; Clerk K. A. Lyon, of Trans. Staff Office, and Watchman G. Bryand, of Spotswood Storehouse, on the 12th; Advertising Manager G. P. Mulcahy, and Paper Cutter Ligar Allen, of Printing Works, on the 14th; Chief Special Officer J. E. McDowell, and Engineering Asst. R. A. Goodhind, of Nth. Melb., on the 15th; Clerk J. F. Cleary, of Dimboola, on the 16th; Fireman P. Holden, of Ouyen, and Skld. Labr. J. W. Davidson, of Flinders-st., on the 17th; Fireman R. E. Mee, of Traralgon, and Clerk L. H. Hick, of Accty. Branch, on the 19th; Elec. Fitter L. Holland, of Ballarat Workshops, on the 24th; Claims Agent P. A. Fankhauser, on the 25th; Asst. G. T. Bureau Manager R. T. Wotherspoon, on the 26th; Repairer T. F. Vernon, of Korong Vale, and Signalman N. R. Lynch, of Geelong, on the 27th; Clerk V. P. McCormack, of Horsham, on the 28th; Truck Washer P. W. Murray, of Melbourne

Yard, and Painter A. E. Cotton, of Flinders-st. Overhead Depot, on the 29th; Betterment and Publicity Board Member Fowler, Under-gear Repairer W. C. Hume, of Maryborough, and Clerk G. T. Hume, of Accty. Branch, on the 30th.

V.R.I. Members in Olympic Team

THREE leading members of the Australian Olympic team that left Melbourne for Berlin last month are members of the Victorian Railways Institute's Gymnasium. They are: Dick Garrard (wrestler), Jack O'Hara (wrestler) and Fred Woodhouse (pole-vaulter).

Each has an imposing record in the sporting sphere. Dick Garrard has already represented Australia in the Empire Games, where he gained the distinction of becoming the holder of the Empire welter-weight wrestling championship. A member of the V.R.I. Gymnasium for many years, Dick also excels in other branches of sport, notably long-distance swimming.

As an amateur wrestler, O'Hara has gained Australian notice. He is the present holder of the Australian middle-weight title. Apart from wrestling, Jack does much time to water-polo. He is a member of the Victorian water-polo team in 1934.

Fred Woodhouse is the under-pole-vault champion of Australia. In the recent National Games in Adelaide, he created an Australian record when he jumped 13 ft. 3½ inches. He is also the Victorian high-jump holder.

LOCOMOTIVE BUILT IN LESS THAN 10 HOURS

HOW long does it take to build a locomotive? was the question "News Letter" put to one of the leading departmental engineers last month. "Well, it all depends," and he gravely enlarged upon the varying factors that must be considered.

It, therefore, required much persuasive argument to convince him that in 1891 the London and North Eastern Railway Company made history by constructing a locomotive in only 9 hours 45 minutes!

Intended to demonstrate how easy a locomotive could be put together, this record-breaker lasted longer than expected, and when recently scrapped it had a mileage of 1,127,750 to its credit.

The V.R. "News Letter" is issued monthly by the Victorian Railways Commissioners for the railwayman in the service. Personal papers and other brief succinct contributions should be addressed to the Editor, Betterment and Publicity Board, Head Office.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia by the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Launceston-st., North Melbourne. Sole Publishers—The Victorian Railways Commissioners.

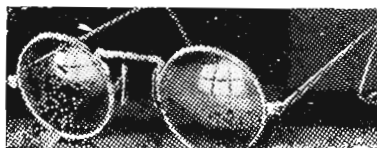
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The V.R. News Letter

1936

Issue No. 70

Mr. C. H. Holmes' World Tour

BIG TRIBUTE TO VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

AFTER travelling around the troubled world by air to London, through the teeming East and Europe and returning home via America, one develops a vivid appreciation of the advantages we enjoy in this land of ours. To my mind our greatest attributes are the racial purity of our people and the fact that we are one of those red patches on the map of the world. I feel that it is a great thing to belong to the British Empire whose stability and sane government are a day the envy of the rest of the world.

No eulogy is too high for the service offered between Australia and England by the Empire Airways and the Imperial Airways.

Business of Plane

On the plane I usually left my hat on the window ledge and my hat frequently claimed it would fall off and get broken. Well today it is broken—but it fell from the table of a 100-ton ship crossing the Atlantic.

After travelling for 2,700 miles to Canada where I hardly saw the snow so thick was the blanket of snow, I realised that our Australian winter is really worthy of the name, for here the coal and agricultural industries are not interrupted by the year round snow. Sunshine and the temperate climate are among Australia's best natural assets.

Millions of pounds are spent in the outside world by travellers on their journey far to seek sunshine and escape the severe winter of the Northern Hemisphere. Thus, the Australian National Travel

Association is making it a big feature in overseas advertising, coupled with the pronounced advantage in exchange.



Mr. C. H. Holmes
Director A.N.T.A.

I travelled from Brindisi to Paris by train, then to Northern France, from New York, via Washington, to Buffalo and Montreal, across Canada, and down into California, and have returned with the conviction that the Victorian Railway system is one that all of us can well be proud of.

Vic. Railways Praised

It is evident that the big developments now taking place in Victorian railroad services will place the system well ahead of most countries of the world and leave none superior, while today there is no suburban electric service in advance of that of Melbourne.

The Victorian Railways stand high in the estimation of railwaymen the world over, and I was greatly surprised at the extent of their knowledge. It was gratifying as a former railwayman when travelling abroad to realise that in far off Victoria we had such a modern system of railway transportation which was being further developed on such progressive lines.

In India, Palestine and Syria railway people were particularly interested to hear of the air-conditioning developments on the Victorian Railways. On the French trains one nearly suffocates in the artificially-heated cars, and, if you seek to obtain fresh air, other passengers violently expostulate. Obviously they love heat conditions akin to those of an incubator.

The best meals I had on an overseas train were on the Canadian Pacific system and they took me back to the well-cooked and well-served food on the Victorian dining car service.

I have returned, too, with not a little pride in the facilities afforded in Australia, with its comparatively small population, in transportation by rail, air, road, and coastal ship, which are generally excellent and compare well with facilities offered in the outside world.

New All-steel Train

PROGRESS OUTLINED

DESTINED to introduce a new era of rail travelling comfort and to embrace features of train construction entirely different from any yet seen in Australia, the new air-conditioned all-steel train for the "Sydney Limited" service is steadily progressing towards completion at the Newport Workshops.

It is hoped that the train will be in service in January next. The preparatory work on the 12 vehicles is practically completed. Nine have been laid down, and of these two bodies have been finalised, except for interior fittings. The remaining seven are in various stages of construction.

As it represents one of the most important undertakings yet embarked upon by the Department, State-wide interest has been aroused by the recent release of some of the new train's details.

Of outstanding importance is the decision to use Corten steel in the construction of the train. The latest development in the steel industry, Corten steel possesses characteristics which make it highly satisfactory for railway use.

Value of Corten Steel

It has physical properties superior to those of ordinary mild steel; much greater rust resisting properties, and a considerably greater yield point value.

To be built with the bodies and underframes integral, the new vehicles will thus be of moderate weight, at the same time including all the safety features of the original type of all-steel car, which has nearly twice the weight.

It is anticipated that the weight of each finished vehicle, with air-conditioning and other equipment will be only slightly more than the existing Express passenger carriages having the conventional steel underframe and wooden body.

Many of the structural members of the new cars are pressings which were fabricated at the Newport Workshops from Corten steel purchased in sheet form.

The Month's Topic

Bulk Handling of Wheat

OUTSTANDING amongst railway developments last month was the decision of the Government to proceed with the scheme for the bulk handling of wheat. Elsewhere in this issue, the chief features are briefly outlined.

As the State's principal transport agency, the Department is, of course, vitally concerned in this plan. Much preparatory work in the alteration of trucks and tracks and the building of new sidings will precede the introduction of bulk handling of wheat.

Apart from many other considerations, there is an aspect which is of particular interest to railwaymen. The bulk handling of wheat is a timely reminder of the close relationship that exists between the railways and primary producers.

Cheap, Rapid Transport

Obviously, the wheat harvest is of no value unless it can be sold, and it cannot be disposed of unless there are the best facilities for cheap and rapid transport to the seaboard. Further, it must be carried expeditiously and at rates which will enable the wheat to compete on the world's markets with the grain from other countries. And the railways, unquestionably, are the only transport medium that can meet those conditions.

Figures relating to the carriage of wheat strikingly vindicate this statement. For the 1934-35 season, when the wheat harvest was much below average, 809,973 tons of wheat were carried by rail an average distance of 167 miles and the average rate per mile for each ton handled was only five-sixths of a penny!

Fertilisers, which are of such paramount importance to primary producers, were carried at an even lower rate. On the basis of a 164-mile haul for the carriage of 335,201 tons of fertilisers, the average charge was only one-half-penny per ton per mile.

Service!

I AM directed by resolution of the Victorian Fruit Marketing Association to write expressing our appreciation to you for the effective manner in which the railway services associated with the 1936 fruit export season were conducted and for the courtesy at all times shown.

"It is a pleasure to convey to you this expression of appreciation and goodwill as the services rendered by the Railways Department were of substantial value.

"These services, in fact, are of national importance as they are so vitally connected with the export trade."

—Mr. R. E. Boardman, Secretary of the Association, writing to the Secretary for Railways, on June 4.

During the export fruit season (February 27 to June 16) mentioned in Mr. Boardman's letter, more than 1,000,000 cases of fruit, comprising apples, pears and plums, were transported by rail from many parts of the State to the seaboard.

Careful preliminary planning enabled 60 overseas steamers to be expeditiously loaded, and the highly efficient manner in which the whole work was performed reflects great credit upon the hundreds of railwaymen concerned.

Altogether it was a big job and the knowledge that the Association was impressed by the services rendered by railwaymen was highly gratifying to the Commissioners.

INTRODUCING—

FOREMAN W. Featonby, of the Newport Workshops, who, as foreman-in-charge of the steel construction shop, is in immediate control of the building of the new air-conditioned all-steel train for the Sydney Limited service. Involving many new methods of construction, the use of a new type of steel (Corten) and a greater degree of welding and insulation than ever before incorporated in carriages, this work is, of course, highly responsible.

Still Mr. Featonby has a complete grasp of the numerous details and, with justifiable pride, is watching Australian railway history being made. Only 35 years of age and in control of nearly 600 tradesmen, Mr. Featonby has been in the Rolling Stock Branch for 22 years. For six years he was in the Drawing Office at Spencer Street, being engaged in both the locomotive and car and wagon sections. He has been closely associated with the development of welding in its application to railway vehicles in this State.



NURSERY'S NEW PLAYGROUND

SYNCHRONISING with the third anniversary of the establishment of the Railway Nursery at Flinders Street stands a new open-air playground and sun-room were opened on July 4 as a further service available to children attending the Nursery.

Situated on a flat roof 60 ft. x 100 ft. adjoining the Nursery and overlooking the passing trains, the playground has been highly praised by the health and child welfare authorities.

The new playground is notable for the special safety precautions. The windows of unbreakable glass and wire guard of small mesh has been provided. As a further guard against climbing, various abutments have been wired in.

Sliding roofs, together with hinged afford shade from the sun and protection from the wind and rain. The floor is green, the floor consists of a specially prepared malthoid sheeting, which provides an ideal surface for children.

Portion of the playground is reserved off for the protection of the children when playing with their toys while swings, tricycles, scooters, barrows, toy trains, etc., are provided for the entertainment of the children in other parts of the ground.

Mrs. H. W. Clapp officially opened the playground in the presence of the Minister for Transport (Hon. J. Bussau, M.L.A.) and Mrs. Clapp, Mr. H. W. Clapp, Mr. and Mrs. Harris and Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Clapp and other guests, including health and child welfare representatives.

7-Days-a-Week Service between Melbourne and Adelaide

A FURTHER important decision for rail travellers was the decision to increase the service between Melbourne and Adelaide from six to seven days weekly in each direction.

Under the new schedule to be introduced on July 4, "The Overland" will leave Melbourne for Adelaide on Saturdays, while in the reverse direction it will depart from Adelaide on Sundays.

Sixteen years ago, there were only three trips weekly in each direction between Melbourne and Adelaide. The first service from Melbourne consisted of a 4.30 p.m. train daily and the return train on Mondays, Thursdays, Saturdays, the latter train in connection with the Trans-Australian express to Perth.

BULK HANDLING OF WHEAT Chief Features of Scheme

SCHEME approved was submitted by the Grain Elevators' Board—Messrs. C. Judd (Chairman), C. H. Finney (Assistant Chief Engineer of Works) and C. R. Henderson (representing wheatgrowers). The Board's Chief Engineer is Mr. F. W. M.C.E., Chief Engineer for Railway Construction.

Estimated to cost £1,881,348, the proposed scheme is expected to be completed for handling the 1938-39 harvest.

The Board's administration and maintenance charges and the cost of necessary alterations to railway tracks and trucks, etc., are set down at £8,878.

Elevators are to be built at 138 railway stations, and terminal elevators at Geelong and Williamstown.

Country elevators will range in storage capacity from 65,000 to 300,000

bushels of wheat, the latter being at Minyip. The terminal elevators at Geelong and Williamstown will have capacities of 2½ and 2 million bushels of wheat respectively.

Provision has been made at each of the three smaller types of elevators for three receiving hoppers, which will permit the receipt of wheat from farmers' waggons at the rate of 2,100 bushels per hour. Each of the larger types, with five receiving hoppers, will be capable of receiving wheat at the rate of 3,000 bushels per hour.

Each elevator at Geelong and Williamstown will be capable of receiving wheat from railway trucks at the rate of 20,000 bushels an hour. Loading into the ships will be at the rate of 64,000 bushels per hour, thus enabling a complete cargo to be loaded at each terminal in one day.

Improved Telephone Facilities

A FURTHER important stage in the reorganisation of the telephone services was reached last month when the switchboards and local extensions at Melbourne Goods Sheds were eliminated. They were replaced by new automatic lines, including direct services to parts of the Sheds not previously provided with telephone communication.

Together 64 new automatic lines were installed, making a total of 74 lines serving the whole of the Sheds.

This development represents the second phase of a comprehensive scheme under which it is planned to eliminate the switchboards and local extensions at the Jolimont Workshops, North Melbourne Car and Wagon Works, the North Melbourne Locomotive Depot and the Melbourne Yard.

New direct automatic telephone services will be provided at those locations before September 30.

The final part of the metropolitan telephone reorganisation scheme provides for the establishment of a sub-exchange in the Newport-Spotswood area. This sub-exchange will serve Newport and Spotswood Workshops, the Newport Power House, Spotswood General Storehouse and other Departmental activities at that locality.

This sub-exchange, which will be linked with the main telephone exchange, is necessary because of the Newport-Spotswood area is outside the sphere of direct automatic operation.

THE ONE SURE THING

"Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'Press On' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race."—Calvin Coolidge.

RECORD FERTILISER TRAFFIC

A PROMINENT feature of the goods traffic is the record tonnage of fertilisers now being carried by rail. The increase is attributed mainly to the substantial extension of the practice of applying fertilisers for the top-dressing of grazing lands.

From January 1 to June 25 last, 320,233 tons had been carried, as compared with the previous highest record of 309,601 tons during the corresponding period in 1930. A further relative comparison reveals that this season's total is 58,820 tons in excess of that for 1935.

On March 25 last, 5,968 tons of fertilisers were loaded—the heaviest loading day ever experienced. The nearest approach to this figure was registered on April 9 of last year when 5,535 tons were loaded.

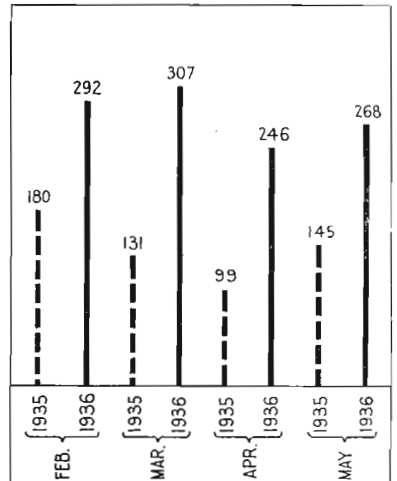
Suggestions Mount Up

AS this issue of the "News Letter" went to press last month, the number of suggestions received by the Betterment and Publicity Board for the financial year which commenced on July 1, 1935, totalled 3,436.

Although incomplete for full comparative purposes, this total is 2,135 in excess of the aggregate for the financial year 1934-35, when 1,301 suggestions were submitted to the Board.

As demonstrating the remarkable reawakening of interest in the suggestions scheme, it is worthy of mention that after only four months (July, August, September and October) of 1935 had elapsed, the number of suggestions received had passed the total for the 12 months of 1934-35.

A further feature is that the total of 1935-36 is the highest yearly aggregate since 1928-29, when 3,522 suggestions were received.



Ideas Recently Adopted

THE following ideas which have recently been adopted are indicative of the value and of the wide range of suggestions submitted:—

- A transporter for the steam pile-driving winch;
- Alterations to procedure when trains cross at Bacchus Marsh;
- Improvements to the springs and valve of locomotive cylinder compression valves;
- To secure together the window frames in "W" class carriages;
- Improvements to "Williams'" resilient ball-bearing clips for points;
- Amended schedules for No. 12 train from Bendigo on Sundays.

Personal Postscript

Chrysanthemums

ALREADY possessing a State-wide reputation as a successful grower of chrysanthemums, Operating Porter Tom Ray, of Traralgon, has now gained further prizes which have placed him in the front rank of growers of this magnificent flower. At the recent Melbourne Royal Horticultural Show, he was awarded the following prizes: Six chrysanthemums, 1st; six reflexes, 2nd; three pinks, 1st. In the amateur division, Tom, for the second time, won the most coveted trophy — the James Millard Cup. If he wins this prize again, he will become the holder of the Cup. He was the only exhibitor to win three first prizes at the Show. At last year's Show, he gained many awards, including his third win in the competition for the Dr. Inglis Cup, which he now holds. —A.C.

Supervising Guard No. 1

FEW railwaymen have occupied such a diversity of Departmental positions as Supervising Guard. Bill Mills who retired last month after 50 years' service. Entering the Department in 1886, Bill was, in turn, block recorder, number-taker, porter, head porter, assistant signalman, signalman, ticket collector, suburban guard, goods guard, acting yard foreman, and, finally, supervising guard. Bill was the first railwayman to occupy the position of supervising guard. It was created in 1921, and working closely in association with the train running staff, he travelled all over the State instructing guards in the most efficient methods for working trains, particularly during shunting movements. It was a position for which Bill was admirably fitted, and his colleagues testify to the big part he played in bringing train operating to its present high standard of efficiency.

Incidentally, Bill was one of the first ticket collectors appointed at Princes Bridge in 1900. He was the proud wearer of Badge No. 1. —T.M.

Signalling Veterans Retire

NOW on final leave, Messrs. A. E. Colson (Senior Block and Signal Inspector) and A. W. Murfitt (Block and Signal Inspector) will reach the retiring age on July 3 and 13 respectively. Mr. Colson, who has occupied the position of Senior Inspector for 10 years, retires after a career of nearly 50 years. Some years ago, he enjoyed an extensive holiday tour abroad, when he made himself familiar with all the latest safeworking developments. Mr. Murfitt has been a railwayman for nearly 49 years, the last 16 of which he was an inspector. It can be said of both veterans that throughout their career they rendered the highest degree of service which, their colleagues appreciatively say, will prove an inspiration to all railwaymen engaged in the safeworking sphere. Each became associated with signalling when it was more or less primitive, and each has retained his link with this important phase of railroading until the present-day system of power signalling. An outstanding characteristic of both Messrs. Colson and Murfitt was their unremitting desire to render the utmost advice and assistance to the younger railwaymen. —C.H.S.

July Birthdays

GANGER H. A. Gunstone, of Kernot on the first; Chief Train Despatcher F. D. Greene, and Shift Electrician S. R. Collyer, of Flinders-st., on the third; Plan Room Attndt. A. H. Doyle, of Head Office, on the fourth; B'maker's Help A. McInnes, of Newport Wkshops., and Clerk J. P. Flood, of Bendigo, on the fifth; B'maker A. Speight, of Bendigo, and Clerk T. J. Garland, of Acctcy. Branch, on the seventh; Elec. Welder A. J. Black, of Spotswood Wkshops., and Clerk J. O. Hunt, of Acctcy. Bch., Flinders-st., on the eighth; Vic. Govt. Tourist Bureau Manager W. T. McConnell, Sig. Porter W. Green, of Brooklyn, and Clerk L. J. Miller, of Acctcy. Bch., on the ninth; Insp'r. J. Paterson, of Newport Wkshops., and Hostler A. W. Rennolds, of Nth. Melb. Loco., on the 10th; Car and Wagon

Blder. F. A. Patterson, of Nch. Melb. Storekeeper J. A. Bishop, of Newport, on the 11th; Chemist W. S. Macartney, of Newport Wkshops., on the 12th; Turner N. E. McInnes, of Newport Wkshops., and Relvg. Clerk J. Godden, of Stores Bch., on the 13th; Photographer A. L. Reid, and Clerk J. Godwin, of Prahran, on the 14th; Loc. Attndt. W. R. Rawnsley, of Newport, and Repairer W. F. Duncan, of Seville, on the 15th; Clerk L. G. Haworth, of Head Office, and Guard T. C. Germaine, of Melb. Yc., on the 16th; Night Officer V. J. Gaywood, of Head Office, and Asst. Elec. Engineer M. H. C. Flinders-st., on the 17th; Goods Guard J. Gibson, of Bendigo, on the 18th; Comptroller of Stores H. S. Sergeant, and Repairer W. H. Boase, of Spotswood, on the 19th; Superintendent and Publicity Board Chairman J. Letcher, and Shunter S. Bell, of Flinders-st., on the 22nd; Driller R. B. Smith, of Newport, on the 24th; Foreman Artisan W. E. Newbould, of Newport Power House, on the 25th; E. G. Herrick, of Broadford, on the 26th; Dist. Supt. J. S. O'Haire, of Ararat, on the 27th; P. L. McInerney, of Newport, and Clerk J. Baker, of Traffic Bch., on the 27th; C. S. Pendlebury, of Newport Wkshops., on the 28th; Asst. Chief Engineer C. H. Gibson, of Melbourne, on the 29th; Goods Checker D. A. Gibson, of Melb. Goods, on the 30th.

Interstate Railway Football Match

FOR the first time since the formation of the Railway Institutes of South Australia and Victoria, will meet in a football match.

Timed to start at 2.45 p.m. on Wednesday, July 15, the game will be played at the St. Kilda football ground. As the Victorian team include several prominent League footballers a keen and exciting contest is expected.

After arrival in Melbourne on July 14, the South Australian team which will be accompanied by Mr. S. Pickering (Director of the Victorian Australian Railways Institutes), is well-known to many Victorian railwaymen, will attend a reception party, a smoke social, embark on a tour of the nearer hill resorts, Geelong and attend the League football match between St. Kilda and Melbourne.

The party will leave Melbourne for Adelaide on Sunday, July 16.

TOURIST BUREAU DANCE

THE staff of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau are holding a Dance at Paul Bibb's on Thursday, August 20. The public will go to assist the Austin House.

Tickets (7/6d. including tax) are obtainable from the Joint Secretaries Miss Ivy Chimes and Mr. G. Williams, c/o Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, Queen's Walk.

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The V.R. News Letter

August, 1936

Issue No. 71

Co-ordinated Road-Rail Service Reveals Value to Community

ILLUMINATING evidence of the standard of transport that can be rendered by a highly organised co-ordinated road and rail service was furnished at a recent sale of approximately 1,600 tons of material following the cessation of work on the Victorian portion of the Hume Weir on the Murray River.

Transport problems successfully encountered were entirely different from any that had previously confronted the Department.

In the catalogue, there were more than 2,000 items, including scrap iron, rails, building materials, etc., a large proportion being than ordinarily heavy. The sale was situated about 15 miles from the nearest railway station—Ebden, where the normal arrangements were not, of course, equal to handling such consignments.

A preliminary review of the position indicated that the success of the sale was primarily dependent upon the provision of adequate road transport to the site to the Ebden station. It was also highly important to quote low road and rail freight rates from the sale to destinations in different parts of the State.

Salesmanship

An efficient co-ordinated road and rail service was arranged by the Department and attractive through rates from the site of the sale were offered. Thus the bidding commenced prospective buyers were in the highly advantageous position of knowing their commitments.

Two Commercial Agents attached to the staff of the General Passenger Freight Agent (Messrs. L. R. Burgess and R. C. Burgess) attended the sale, and by careful planning and the assistance of the numerous items, they maintained continuous contact with prospective buyers, providing quotations and thereby exhibiting a high degree of salesmanship in unusual circumstances.

Their efforts, supplemented by the wholehearted co-operation of the staff concerned, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission and auctioneers, led to 1,150 tons of material, 1,600 tons offered being transported by rail. Of the balance, 200 tons were purchased locally, 100 tons were delivered at the Albury railway station and 150 tons were unsold.

Together, it was a notable achievement, the thorough organisation and co-operation of the Department in arranging such an inspiring co-ordinated road and rail service being warmly appreciated throughout the sale.

Biggest Furniture Consignment Yet

THE Department was responsible for a particularly good transport performance last month. Thirty-eight road van loads of furniture, weighing more than 25 tons and consisting of many highly polished, glass and other fragile articles, were despatched by rail from the Melbourne Goods Sheds to Wangaratta without damage during transit.

Nearly 1,200 items were included in this big consignment, which necessitated the use of 10 trucks—eight "V" type and two louvres.

Special arrangements were made to protect the furniture from damage, 3,400 straw-filled packing bags, 2,400 pieces of dunnage and 80 pieces of special flock packing being used for stowing purposes.

Tourist Activities Expanding

LAST month, a Branch of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau was opened at 204 Adelaide Street, Brisbane. Mr. A. E. Williams, who has been the Victorian Representative at the Queensland Government Tourist Bureau for the past five years, has been appointed Manager.

Situated in one of the busiest parts of Brisbane and fully equipped to render comprehensive travel service to all holidaymakers proceeding to

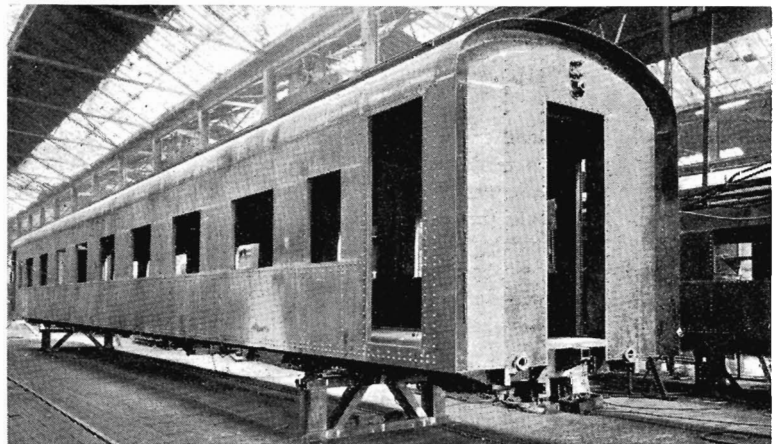
V.R. BROADCASTS FROM 3AW

COMMENCING last month and continuing until June 30 next, the Railway Session will be heard from 3AW, Melbourne, each Tuesday between 8 and 8.15 p.m.

Items of special interest to railway travellers, covering concession fares, holiday tours, train alterations and other topical travel details, many presented in attractive dialogue form, are included in the broadcast each week.

Victoria, the new Bureau should greatly stimulate tourist traffic whether by rail, road, air or sea.

As illustrating the increasing importance of the tourist industry, it is significant to mention that within the past 18 months other Branches of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau have been established in Sydney, Adelaide and Mildura.



PICTURED above is one of the Corten steel carriages now being built at the Newport Workshops for the Sydney Limited service. Outstanding features which will interest railwaymen include the building of the carriage body integrally with the underframe; an elliptic roof; and the installation of air-conditioning and automatic coupler equipment. The reduction of air resistance is being achieved by keeping the windows (wider than usual) and doors flush with the carriage sides, and the provision of aluminium slippers forming a shield or cowling between each vehicle.

The Month's Topic

Riverina

Transport Facts . . .

DURING last month, the Riverina rail-road question figured prominently in the press.

It has been asserted that the withdrawal of road transport between the Riverina and Melbourne would divert traffic to Sydney. That is a fallacy. Many Riverina woolgrowers have large financial interests in Melbourne, and their wool has always been despatched to Melbourne.

For wool and other commodities mainly carried by road transport, the available railway rates or the combination of rail and road rates between Melbourne and the places where competition is chiefly active are lower than those to or from Sydney.

Victorians Pay !

An aspect of the situation that demands emphasising is that very heavy operating losses on five developmental lines constructed in the more sparsely settled parts of the Riverina are being borne by the Victorian taxpayers. Last year, these losses amounted to £59,366 ; the aggregate losses since the commencement of operation are £532,816.

Railways are absolutely essential to the Riverina. Proof of that statement is furnished by the fact that last year on the Deniliquin, Balranald and Oakland lines, approximately 461,000 bags of wheat and 12,000 trucks of live stock were carried by railway to or from Victoria.

Low Rail Rates

Obviously, this immense transport task could not have been carried out by road transport. Neither could it offer such low rates for these commodities : wheat, approximately three-farthings a ton-mile ; superphosphate, necessary for wheatgrowing and the top-dressing of pastures, one-halfpenny a ton-mile.

There is no reason why the whole of the transport requirements of the areas concerned cannot be efficiently catered for either by railways or by the co-ordination of rail and road transport, in substitution of the existing "through" services which are a particularly bad example of wasteful duplication.

Air-conditioning's Winter Comforts

WITH the advent of colder climatic conditions, it is opportune to stress that passengers travelling in the air-conditioned carriages will continue to enjoy the superior comforts made available by the operation of the equipment.

During the cold weather, the heating unit of the air-conditioning equipment is automatically switched on when the temperature falls below the desired level, and it is switched off when the requisite temperature is attained. By this means, a constant and comfortable temperature is automatically obtained.

There is, too, the provision of a dustless, draughtless flow of pure air at frequent and regular intervals, while the noise is reduced to a minimum.

Patronage and Mileage

Since the air-conditioned country passenger carriage (36 "AE") was first placed in service on December 23 last, more than 7,500 people have experienced the high standard of comfort afforded by this modern equipment.

Altogether, the carriage has travelled over 50,000 miles while in running for varying periods on the Melbourne-Albury, Melbourne-Mildura, Melbourne-Bendigo and Melbourne-Adelaide lines.

More than 37,000 people have patronised the air-conditioned dining car for meals and refreshments. This car has been in running on the Sydney "Limited" between Melbourne and Albury since February 13, the total mileage covered being in the region of 60,000.

V.R. Engineer's Distinction

BY his elevation to the Chairmanship (Melbourne Division) of the Institution of Engineers, Australia, Mr. R. M. Harvey, Substation Engineer of the Electrical Engineering Branch, has taken a responsible position in the direction of one of the foremost organisations of its kind in the Commonwealth.

It is a distinction that has never before been conferred on a member of the Victorian Railways staff, and is the culmination of Mr. Harvey's active work throughout his association with the Institution.

Embracing all phases of engineering, the Institution's membership comprises practically all the Australian engineering personnel. Broadly, its objectives are the maintenance of the standard of engineering education and professional conduct for the protection of the public and the improvement of the engineer's status.

Since Mr. Harvey joined the Department in 1919 after active service overseas, he has been prominently associated with many of the outstanding education developments, including the present widespread scheme to improve the reliability of the electrified railway services.

Service

"I AM just writing this brief note to express my appreciation of a job of fine despatch on the part of the railways."

"I telephoned to Melbourne on Tuesday morning, June 30, to order a 16-ton truck of superphosphate, and at 8.30 on Wednesday morning, the truck was delivered to me at West Charlton grain siding."

"I consider it very fine work, and wish to express my greatest appreciation of such good work."

—Mr. J. T. Dwyer, of Charlton, to the Chairman of Commissioners

INTRODUCING—



Mr. E. Gribble, Manager of Hotham Heights, Hotham—a lonely corner of the Department—and Gribble who have now completed their third year in controlling Australia's highest permanent inhabited house. Although the house is situated in the heart of the Australian Alpine region, the snow makes vehicular access impossible for half the year, many housekeeping problems arise 6,000 feet above sea level, efficiently solved by their hosts. They direct the diverse guest-house activities smoothly and efficiently, assuring that cosiness and excellent "fare" which combine to make a day in the Commonwealth's unrivalled skiing resort a great day. Blazing fires, a hot and cold water service, hot showers, a drying room, wireless telephone facilities surprise and delight all who experience "Hotham Heights" during the winter. But, as Mr. Gribble enthusiastically prophesys : "I shall come back again when the snow has gone—and then to describe adequately the grandeur of Mt. Hotham in an entirely different setting you'll need a dictionary for further superlatives !" And he is right, for visitors during the period of the year are enraptured by the surrounding country's splendour and warmly appreciative of the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Gribble.

Austrian Expert Gives Victorian Ski-ing Its Greatest Impetus

VICTORIAN ski-ing history was made between June 19 and 26 when Franz Skardarasy, the Austrian ski-ing expert, conducted an Instructional School of Ski-ing on the magnificent slopes of Mt. Hotham. For the first time, both experienced and inexperienced skiers had the marked advantage of systematic tuition—the former being enabled vastly to improve upon and correct their present styles, while the latter learned those fundamentals that will prove of inestimable value in progressing along sound lines.

From a week that was in every way a memorable one, there emerges one outstanding impression—the masterly skill of Franz Skardarasy. To see him gliding smoothly along a level, snow-covered track was in itself an education. Perfect balance and precise and effortless movement gave a fore-taste of his great ability.

He retained his poise and control through the various stages of the classes until his demonstrations of more advanced ski-ing rose to even greater heights. Without the benefits of his keen expert tuition, the discerning skier is able to learn much that would enhance his own style.

Although the Instructional School lasted for less than a week, the time was sufficient to demonstrate fully the reasons for the Arlberg ranking amongst the greatest in the world. There is nothing happened about the Arlberg system. It is a highly efficient method that begins at the very beginning, progressing gradually with the various stages mer-

Learners Benefit

The Arlberg system is not only of immense advantage to the novice. On the contrary, the advanced skier finds a system of intrinsic value. The advanced skiers attending the Instructional School frankly admitted that although seemingly proficient, they had never before realised that many of their methods were unsound and faulty.

From the party of 31, including leading representatives of various Ski Clubs and the Victorian Government Forest Bureau, Skardarasy formed three classes: A, B and C, the latter comprising those who had no previous experience of ski-ing.

Each class received instruction daily, strictly in accordance with established principles of the Arlberg system.

Opening with a full and complete description of the movement to be performed, Skardarasy then proceeded to present a perfect, practical demonstration. Standing before the class in readiness to carry out the movement, he lucidly explained each detail—position of ski, knees, bending of the hands, eyes and so on—and then completed the movement with wonder-ful grace.

Skardarasy repeated all the essential details and as the pupil proceeded on his ski, the keen eyes of the instructor unerringly detected all the faults. With amazing rapidity, Skardarasy pointed out deviations from his instructions, seeing, at times, three and four defects simultaneously. Without a doubt, the Arlberg system is thorough and complete.

High praise was accorded Skardarasy for the skill and patience he had displayed. His presence in Victoria, it was agreed, is destined to give ski-ing its greatest impetus.

Physical Culture for New Lad Porters

A RECENT interesting development is the decision to include a course of physical instruction in the preliminary training of new appointees to the grade of lad porter.

Altogether 110 lads in groups of from 35 to 40 attended the first nine-days' physical culture class which was conducted by the Director of Physical Training (Mr. G. S. Corkill) and his Assistant (Mr. L. Copeland) at the Victorian Railways Institute, Melbourne.

Embracing all the most modern ideas of physical exercises, the course specially featured skipping and instruction in rudimentary boxing—two of the most important body-building exercises.

Recognising the great potential benefits to be derived from this training, the lads enthusiastically applied themselves to the various exercises, and without exception displayed particular aptitude in assimilating information on the subject.

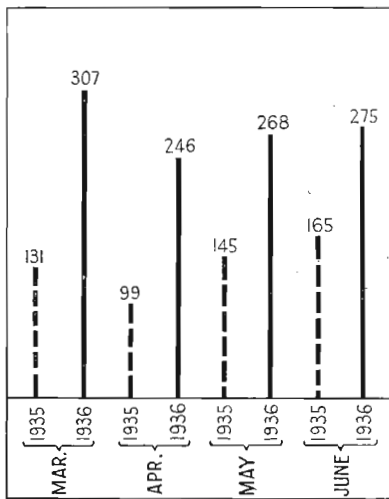
Expressing appreciation of the keen interest which Messrs. Corkill and Copeland manifested in the innovation, the Commissioners directed that physical training be continued for all new lad porters.

Useful Hint for Suggestors

ALTHOUGH every practicable step is taken by the Betterment and Publicity Board to acquaint itself with the subsequent adoption in some section of the Department of a suggestion which the Board has been obliged to reject previously, one or two instances have occurred where, unknown to the Board, a rejected proposal has eventually been put into operation.

It is, of course, desired that full recognition be accorded to the suggestor of an adopted idea, and any member of the service whose suggestion has been adopted after rejection by the Betterment and Publicity Board, should communicate with the Board immediately.

The matter will be investigated without delay, and consideration will be given to the question of granting credit to the original suggestor.



Ideas Recently Adopted

THE following ideas which have recently been adopted are indicative of the value and of the wide range of suggestions submitted—

- A jig for assembling and finishing "D4" class reversing lever gear;
- That Form A. 171 replace Forms A. 632, A. 633 and A. 205;
- The abolition of a P.C.R. crossing near Garfield;
- That No. 5 mixed train be extended from Maroona to Ararat daily, returning at 2.55 p.m.;
- An improvement to the insulation of G.E. 247 tramway armatures;
- An improvement to facilitate removal of vertical shaft brushes on Cottew gate gear.

Personal Postscript

Ski-ing Achievements

PRIDE of place as the most accomplished woman skier in the Department must be awarded to Miss Beryl Kermodé, of the Stores Branch. From a somewhat diffident introduction to the exhilarations of ski-ing in 1929, she has since become an enthusiast, registering an impressive record of outstanding cross-country journeys in the remote Alpine region of North-eastern Victoria. In 1931, she was the first woman to ski across the lofty Bogong High Plains. Carrying a rucksack, camping in huts and encountering adverse weather, she performed this feat which severely tests the stamina and courage of the most robust men. After winning the women's championship of the University Ski Club at Mt. Hotham in 1932,

Miss Kermodé two years later gained further prominence by being the first woman to ski on the summit of Mt. Bogong (6,508 feet), Victoria's highest peak. This performance was full of merit. To reach her objective she skied across the "Razorback," which links Mts. Hotham and Feather-top—and generally regarded as one of the most hazardous ski-ing routes in Victoria. Miss Kermodé has also a complete knowledge of the ski-ing runs at Mts. Buffalo, St. Bernard, Buller and Donna Buang. An ardent devotee of the open road and an active member of the Melbourne Women's Walking Club since 1929, she has walked and ridden on horse-back along most of the State's by-ways between the Murray and the sea. —P.H.

40 Years Timetabling

FORTY years continuous service in the passenger train timetabling division of the Head Office was the unique record possessed by Mr. T. M. Kennedy who retired from the Department last month after nearly 50 years' service. With the sole exception of Mr. F. E. Fewster (Officer-in-Charge, Transportation Despatch Room), he was the oldest remaining member of the original staff who entered the Head Office in 1892. Even as a youth, Mr. Kennedy was noted for his clear and precise penmanship which, with the passing of the years, still retained its distinctive clarity. He entered the service at Geelong in 1887, and for the first five years he was a contemporary of Mr. T. B. Molomby, who subsequently became a Commissioner. He served in all sections of the timetabling division, and in 1924 he was appointed Officer-in-Charge of the Guaranteed Special Trains room. —K.M.

A Thousand Regrets

THREE years ago, Miss Olive Clack, of the Telephone Exchange, made Melbourne Goods Sheds history by becoming the first of her sex ever to be employed at the Sheds—and, incidentally, the Department's first telephonist. She took control of the switchboard, and although the whole of the telephone business passed through the switchboard to and from 60 locations, Miss Clack immediately justified her selection by becoming intimately acquainted with the numerous activities and locations in the sheds. She quickly built up, too, a reputation for promptitude and courtesy which greatly facilitated the large amount of telephonic business. With the substitution of direct telephone services for the switchboard, Miss Clack has now been transferred to the Main Exchange in the Head Office. Recently, on behalf of an appreciative staff, Mr. A. I. Robert (Goods Superintendent) presented her with a travelling case and rug—and made it plain to a very embarrassed young lady that 1,000 men regretted her departure. —W.J.E.

Signalling Sportsman

FOLLOWING closely on the ment last month of Messrs. Colson and W. Murfitt, as in the July "News Letter," another signalling expert—Block and Signal Inspector D. Beddoe—is now on file. Like his two former colleagues, Beddoe devoted the whole of his life to the safeworking side of the Department, passing through the grades of recorder and signalman to Block and Signal Inspector. As a reliever of man between 1889 and 1920, he operated the leavers in more than one box—the important "A" at Flinders-street—being three years. Mr. Beddoe was a Block and Signal Inspector in the Ballarat district between 1922 and in the Metropolitan area until his retirement. Always a sportsman, he takes an active part in the administration of the Railway Football League. Vice-president of the League, he has been, for the past years, President of the Eastern team.

August Birthdays

LINEMAN'S Asst. G. E. Yearwood, Flinders-st., on the first; V. A. Baker, of Seymour, and J. Hansen-Knarhoi, of Carlisle, second; Metro. Supt. G. Rogers, fourth; Clerk A. J. Harris, of Melbourne, and Clerk E. A. Daly, of Accty. Bch., fifth; Eng. Asst. R. S. Miller, of Bch., Head Office, and S. I. O'Connell, Gossip, on the sixth; Porter A. H. Gossip, of Dimboola, on the seventh; Locomotive Repairs' Asst. A. R. Reeves, of Melbourne, Wkshops., on the eighth; F. G. Chandler, of Newport Wkshops., and Watchman T. H. Harrowford, of Melbourne, Head Office, on the ninth; Ticket Checker G. G. Gately, of Spencer-st., on the tenth; Driver W. J. O'Shannessy, of Melbourne, Power House, on the 11th; E. J. Lucas, of Newport Wkshops., Skld. Labr. R. McGlynn, of Melbourne, on the 12th; Repairer J. Grogan, of Melbourne, on the 13th; Clerk W. M. H. G. Cassells, of Newport Wkshops., on the 14th; Porter R. K. Hare, of Maryborough, on the 15th; Elec. Fitter-in-Charge J. W. Ballarat, on the 16th; Water Engineer W. Stephen, and Shunter G. Garlick, of Melbourne, Yard, on the 17th; Train Driver E. Rodgers, of Melbourne, on the 18th; Fireman R. K. Rowbottom, of Melbourne, Power House, on the 18th; Eng. Asst. Hambridge, of R.S. Bch., Head Office, on the 19th; Gatekeeper P. Lynch, of Ballarat, and W. G. Hough, of Accty. Bch., Head Office, on the 20th; Storeman-in-Charge J. G. Gately, of Melbourne, on the 21st; Dist. Supt. T. H. Madden, of Melbourne, on the 22nd; Storeman J. G. Marmion, of Melbourne, on the 23rd; Clerk W. G. Mongan, of Flinders-st., Head Office, on the 24th; Clerk A. E. F. Spotswood, of Melbourne, General Storehouse, on the 26th; Skld. Labr. F. G. Hebb, of Melbourne, on the 27th; Clerk A. W. Cobham, of Melbourne, Head Office, on the 27th; Signaller Green, of Nth. Carlton, and Fireman Scott, of Newport Power House, on the 28th; Carpenter G. R. Gossip, of Melbourne, Flinders-st., and Clerk R. C. M. Gossip, of Geelong Accounting Office, on the 29th; Elec. Mechanic W. E. Neilson, of Melbourne, on the 30th; Commrs.' Special Officer R. G. Gossip, and Mr. Buffalo Chalet, of Melbourne, on the 30th; Repairer Irvine, of Sea Lake, and Sig. Porter Ginnane, of Bet Bet, on the 31st.

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The V.R. "News Letter" is issued by the Victorian Railways Commission, a railwayman in the service. Personal papers and other brief succinct contributions are addressed to the Editor, Betterment Publicity Board, Head Office.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia by the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Laupers-street, North Melbourne. Publishers—The Victorian Railways Commissioners.

The V.R. News Letter

September, 1936

Issue No. 72

Train Control Merger Nears Completion

FRANZ SKARDARASY ON SKI-ING

VERY fine indeed—and it should prove invaluable to both experienced and inexperienced—is the opinion expressed by a prominent Victorian skier after reviewing "Ski-ing," the booklet written by Franz Skardarasy, the visiting Austrian skiing expert, and produced last month by the Department.

Diagrams, accompanied by concise descriptions of each stage of skiing from merely standing on the level to the more advanced movements, may say the fundamentals of the famous Arlberg system now being taught in Victoria for the first time by Franz Skardarasy.

Hints are also given on clothing, equipment, ski-waxing and other essential factors in ski-ing.

Attractively produced on art paper and priced at 2/- each, the booklet is now on sale at all railway bookstalls and at the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau and branch offices at Spencer Street Station, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Sydney.

Advertising Division's Work Praised

WHEN the Commonwealth Government decided to embark on a publicity campaign to recruit volunteers for the Militia Forces, the V.R. Advertising Division undertook to arrange the display of nearly 100 posters at all stations in the Commonwealth.

Negotiations were carried out with the railway systems, agreements concluded, posters allotted and displayed, and accounts settled. In this way, the Defence Department relieved of a vast amount of work, the following appreciative letter addressed to the Advertising Sales Manager testifies to the excellence of the work performed:—

I am directed by the Minister for Defence to state that the whole of the arrangements which you kindly undertook for this exhibition of posters throughout Australia are very satisfactory, and appreciation is expressed to you for the efficient service rendered.

(SIGNED) M. L. Shepherd,
Secretary, Department of Defence.

BIG OPERATING INFLUENCE

AS we go to press the plan for amalgamating Central (Spencer Street) and Eastern (Flinders Street) control systems is practically completed. The operation of the new organisation is expected this month.

Located in the Head Office at Spencer Street adjacent to the time-tableing division on the ground floor and now incorporating crew rostering, locomotive allocation and truck distribution activities, the combined sys-

FACTS ABOUT THE SYSTEM

FIRST introduced in the Victorian Railways in 1926—selector telephone system now covers 2,022 route miles—total of 475 stations connected. The system is proving invaluable in promoting better train timekeeping; reducing coal consumption; reducing costly standing time of locomotives and trains; increasing loads; and generally in obtaining better use of the rolling stock throughout the State.

tems are destined to exert a major influence on the efficiency of passenger and goods train operations.

In creating quarters for the new organisation, provision has been made for the eventual establishment of a suburban control system. A train despatcher will be located in each of six rooms, which have been specially adapted to ensure complete freedom from outside noises.

Sealed double windows and the extensive use of "sorbsound" acoustic material in the ceiling and around the major portion of the walls, combined with tight-fitting doors, eliminate all extraneous noises. An air-conditioning plant has also been installed.

As a further means of promoting efficiency, all the train despatchers' desks will be equipped with microphones in substitution of the present "breast telephones." Experience has demonstrated that by the use of microphones the train despatchers' voices can be heard much more clearly at stations and depots.

New Lighting System at Flinders Street

HIGHLY favourable comments concerning the new lighting installations on Nos. 6 and 7 Platforms, Flinders Street station, have been made by members of the travelling public.

Combined with the special color treatment of the underside of the roof and verandah principals, the new lighting system represents a marked improvement on previous standards, greatly enhancing the general appearance of the platforms.

Consisting of 33 twelve-inch "Superlite" direct lighting units each of one-piece glass entirely enclosing a 150-watt lamp, the lamps are spaced at approximately 15 feet intervals and mounted 12 feet high.

America's Striking All-steel Train

IN view of the expected appearance early in 1937 of the Corten steel train for the Sydney Limited service, departmental engineers have been specially interested in the recently arrived details of "The Green Diamond," one of America's latest streamlined trains.

Painted on the exterior in two tones of green, the tones being separated by red stripes bordered with silver, "The Green Diamond" is now operating a daily return service between Chicago and St. Louis—a round journey of 588 miles. Although stopping at seven stations in each direction, the train is scheduled to complete the journey at the rate of a mile a minute.

It is a five-unit, Diesel-powered (1,200 h.p. engine), roller-bearing train, fully air-conditioned and built of Corten steel, with aluminium dominating the interior finish. Weighing only 230 tons, it is about half the weight of a standard steam operated passenger train of the same capacity.

Measuring 330 ft. in length, "The Green Diamond" consists of the power unit, the mail-baggage-express unit, two passenger cars and the kitchen-lounge-observation car. It has a seating capacity for 120 passengers, plus 24 at the dining tables.

Strength, safety and speed, as well as low operating costs, are embodied in this striking train. One of its outstanding features is passenger comfort—smooth riding, spaciousness, deep, restful seats, modern attractive decoration, radio

The Month's Topic

WIDESPREAD

TRACK IMPROVEMENTS

COMMENCEMENT last month of the first stage in the eventual strengthening and reconditioning of the Newport-Geelong line is a further reminder of the widespread improvements that have been effected to railway tracks in recent years.

It is proposed to relay the line with new 90-lb. rails, and at the same time provide additional sleepers and ballast. The rails will be welded into lengths of 225 ft. and, for the first time in Victoria, steel-bearing plates are being provided between the rails and the sleepers throughout the line. These plates afford a substantially better base for the rail and a greater bearing on the sleepers. The released 80-lb. rails will be welded into long lengths and relaid on the Toolamba-Echuca line.

Longer Rails

Rail welding, incidentally, is one of the most arresting developments in railway track work. By effecting a reduction in the number of joints, the longer rails lessen track maintenance costs, increase the life of rails and reduce the wear on rolling stock. In addition, the longer rails provide smoother and quieter riding, improving the comfort of rail travelling in a very marked degree.

Track improvements are, of course, vitally important in the modern trend towards considerably higher train speeds. Recognising this factor, the Department in recent years has embarked upon a comprehensive track betterment policy.

And now the tracks on the Victorian Railways system are gradually approaching a standard of efficiency never before attained in the history of the Department.

Operating Costs Less

On many lines throughout the State, bridges have been strengthened and tracks reconditioned to permit of the more economic haulage of heavier loads at greater speeds.

With the same object, many sections of line have been regraded. Among the many advantages which regrading has afforded is the elimination of the use of "assistant" locomotives that were formerly necessary to help trains over the severe grades. In this way, there has been a material reduction in operating costs.

Faster Goods Trains Planned

FOLLOWING the outstanding success which is being achieved in accelerating passenger train services—already since April, 1934, travelling times have been reduced by about 500 hours per week and many extra trains have been introduced—an intensive review of the whole of the goods train services is now being made.

These faster trains accomplish the two main objectives, i.e., later and more convenient loading times and earlier and more suitable delivery times at intermediate and terminal stations. In the latter case, special attention is being directed towards the fixation of Melbourne arrival times which will more suitably meet marketing requirements.

Goods train planning is very

complex. Among the chief problems encountered are the marked fluctuations in loading; variations in times required for attaching and detaching trucks *en route* influencing overall performances of trains; congestion in the Melbourne Yard Goods Sheds must be avoided; planning arrivals at convenient intervals; and perishable consignments and other commodities such as potatoes and onions, each with its own special marketing problems, all to be carefully considered.

Substantially improved goods services have already been introduced in various parts of the State. Some of the more recent alterations embrace goods trains on the Bendigo, Swan Deniliquin, Mildura, Warrnambool, Adelaide, Ballarat, Benalla, Bairnsdale and Yarram lines.

SERVICE

"MY brother intended leaving by the Sydney express recently, but at 5.45 p.m. I received a message which made it inadvisable for him to travel. On ringing the Stationmaster's office at Spencer Street, I explained the difficulty and the official very courteously said he would do his best.

"My brother, who was seated in the train, heard the call for him through the platform amplifiers, and in less than a minute from the time I made my request, my brother was speaking to me on the telephone.

"This episode is an example of courteous assistance and efficiency of a very high standard, and I would be pleased if my thanks could be conveyed to the official concerned."

—Mr. A. T. Miles, of Ringwood, writing to the Chairman of Commissioners.

INTRODUCING—

LOCOMOTIVE Driver Paddy Horan, of Geelong, to whom locomotives are more than a means of livelihood. Despite the march of time, he has retained that wide-eyed interest he displayed as a boy, and now Paddy thinks the next best thing to driving is talking about locomotives. Twenty-six years ago, he stepped on to the footplate a fully-fledged driver, and as he says "I can still remember the thrill I got to find my boyhood dreams had come true." Some



years later, his passion for locomotives imbued him with the desire to have one in his own backyard—and he built a working model of the old "D" type. Now, desiring to keep abreast of modern trends, Paddy is building a replica of an improved "A2" class. "Yes," he admits, "it will take me a long time to build this one, but then it's my hobby, and the longer it takes the better I'll like it." Since 1906, Paddy's headquarters have been at Geelong.

Rail Motor Sedans For Branch Lines

PREPARATIONS are being made for the introduction of six rail motor sedans for service on a number of country branch lines where the passenger traffic is relatively small. This will be the first occasion on which this type of transport has been made available for regular passenger purposes.

Running on flanged steel rails, each vehicle will provide roomy and comfortable seating accommodation for passengers and a driver, as well as provision for the carriage of parcels of luggage, mails, newspapers and parcels on the roof and at the back.

Measuring 5 ft. 10 in. wide and 10 ft. 9½ in. long over the wheels, each sedan has three seats for two passengers and the driver, and two each for four passengers. The vehicles will be painted with distinctive chrome and black stripes. This means, the vehicles will be much more conspicuous to road users at level crossings.

Improved Services

With the running of these sedans there is every likelihood that passenger traffic on the lines selected will have the benefit of a much improved service, accelerated and increased, and substantial reductions in the travelling times to and from Melbourne.

In some instances, the sedans will be able fully to cope with the passenger traffic, thus enabling goods traffic to be dealt with exclusively by goods trains in substitution of mixed services. The goods trains will then be scheduled at times convenient to goods and live stock loaders, with earlier deliveries to Melbourne for market purposes.

More Rail Welding in Sight

AUTOMATIC MACHINE INSTALLED

FURTHER demonstrating the Department's unremitting efforts towards a higher standard of efficiency, an automatic flash butt welding machine was installed last month at the Spotswood Permanent Way Materials Depot.

Although primarily intended for welding rails into longer lengths, the machine will also be applied, wherever practicable, to other work from the various workshops.

THIS machine is the most modern and efficient of its kind in the world. An outstanding feature of the three basic operations—preheating, flashing and upsetting—are automatically performed.

Designed to operate on single phase 25 cycle alternating current, the machine is capable of performing 60 welds a day.

Operations Described

Briefly, the two sections of rail are clamped in the machine and brought together. As the current flows through the points of contact, the steel is warmed up. By means of controlled separation and reunion, the rails are effectively preheated. Then comes the flashing during which the rails are slowly pressed together with increasing force while the molten metal falls in a shower of sparks.

During this process, the rails attain the correct temperature for welding and are united with a powerful upset operation. The three operations controlled automatically by the machine are governed by the voltage drop across the weld as the resistance changes due to the heating and softening of the materials in the rails.

Discussing several beneficial features of the machine, Mr. J. M. Ashworth (Chief Engineer of Way and Works) said that the excellence of the automatic flash butt method had been established, the weld being almost the full strength of the rail. The process is more rapid than any other and,

TRAIN ON THE TABLE!

THE Royal Palace in Gwalior, India, contains a miniature train made of silver and operated by electricity. The train travels slowly around the Maharajah's great dining table with its trucks loaded with wines, condiments and fruits. Removing and replacing the dish automatically stops and starts the train.

("Readers Digest.")

when carried out on a large scale, much cheaper, even allowing for the initial expense and transport costs from the workshops to the site of the work.

He added that when welding rails *in situ* the "Thermit" method will continue to be used. Since the Department commenced welding rails into longer lengths five years ago, approximately 27,000 welds, representing about 100 miles of single track, had been made.

Looking Back 82 Years

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST TRAIN

FOR the 22,000 members of the railway service, September 13 has a special significance. On that date in 1854, the line from Flinders Street to Port Melbourne (then known as Sandridge) was opened for traffic. The service was operated by the first train to run in Australia.

* * *

On the day before there was something in the nature of a rehearsal. And what a day! Bright enough, but a little on the warm side. Perhaps it was rather unpleasant for the group of distinguished colonists gathered expectantly around the State Governor (Sir Charles Hotham).

Pent Up

Top-hatted, mutton-chop whiskers fluttering in the breeze, they nervously clasped their hands behind the tails of their immaculate frock coats. Obviously, they were conscious they were stepping into History.

Precisely at the scheduled departure time of 12.20 p.m., the locomotive, hauling four carriages, fussed out of the Flinders Street station on its epoch-making journey. A band played stirring music, and hundreds of colonists, including miners and bullock drivers, cheered themselves hoarse.

All of which contrasted noticeably with the almost ironplate dignity of the Governor and the other guests on the celebrated train.

Music, Too!

On the journey, the band continued to play inspiring music, and on arrival at Sandridge another excited throng of colonists greeted the quaint little train and its passengers—all profoundly solemn except the red-faced and thirsty bandmen!

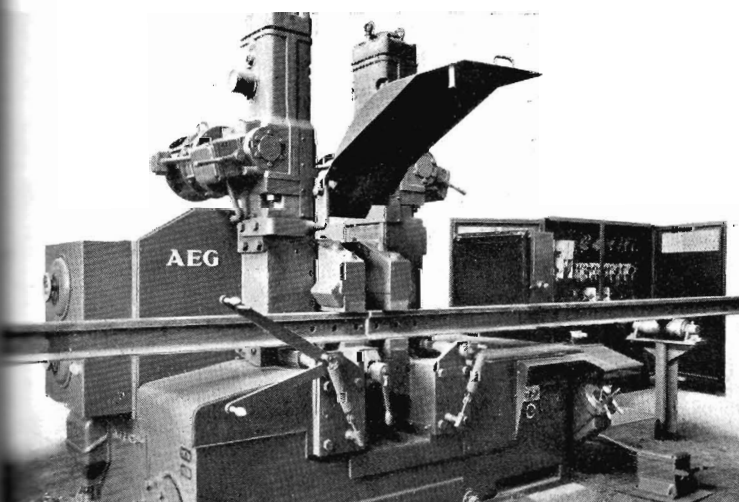
Thus, Victoria's first railway was ceremoniously opened for traffic. There were unpretentious stations; diminutive locomotives; undeniably small carriages—such were the railways of those far-off days.

Indispensable

What a contrast with 1936! Giant locomotives... the noted Sydney "Limited" running at 70 m.p.h.... suburban electrification... nearly 5,000 miles of tracks... air-conditioning introduced... an all-steel train in the making...

* * *

Indispensable in 1854, the railways have continued to play a magnificent part in the State's progress and prosperity. And they are just as indispensable today. So, on September 13—Many Happy Returns to the Victorian Railways!



DEPICTING two rails clamped in the "jaws" of the automatic flash butt welding machine ready for welding. After the rails are adjusted in position, the weld is made in about two minutes. The machine weighs 11 tons.

Personal Postscript

Star League Footballer in Embryo

CHAMPION V.R.I. singles tennis player, 1936 . . . champion mile and half-mile runner of Albury and Riverina district schools . . . champion Albury "B" Grade singles tennis player, and described as Australia's champion schoolboy footballer! There is the imposing sporting record of Percy Walters, of the Melbourne Goods Sheds, and he is aged only 17! Two silver cups, many handsome trophies and highly-flattering press notices are tangible evidence of the phenomenal success which this modest young fellow has achieved. Albury has produced Haydn Bunton, Gordon and Douglas Strang, Maurie Hunter and many other footballers who have shone with League teams, but none has displayed such championship potentialities as Percy.

All the League clubs have striven to secure his services, but, as he says, "I've always had a fancy for Melbourne, and that's the team I am hoping to play for." This year he played a prominent part with the Melbourne Goods Sheds team which gained the Railways Wednesday League pennant; on Saturdays he plays with the Ormond Amateurs, which team is also favourably situated in the fight for the premiership. While in Albury, he played rugby for one season, but he prefers the Australian rules game which he thinks is more spectacular. Percy is a rover and pocket-forward, and his prowess there seems destined to make him play a conspicuous part in League football within the next few years. —J.L.McA.

straying note; or he will, if you be persuaded, cook a pudding in the very best felt hat—and not that headgear! Ask any one of hundreds of railwaymen, and they will tell you how Pat mystifies them, for he is an accomplished magician. With a repertoire of over 200 feats of nearly 50 of which he has done himself, he is a completely-entertaining figure at practically all the metropolitan railway farewell functions. Just show his versatility, he brings up several grotesque-looking dolls and presents an uproariously-funny jugglers' turn. He only became interested in magic five years ago, he has shown such adaptability that he is now one of Melbourne's best in that branch of entertainment. Before he left me the other day he calmly swallowed the cigarette while smoking . . . !

September Birthdays

TURNER W. S. Johnson, of Nth. Loco., and Wks. Ganger C. E. Wainwright, on the first; Clerk B. C. Wainwright, of Melb. Goods, and Asst. Engineer W. Emmerson, of Head Office, on the second; Skld. Labr. J. G. Kelly, of Spencer St. Relvg. A.S.M. W. K. Brodie, of Head Office, on the fifth; Optg. Porter A. H. Brown, of Nth. Richmond, and Clerk S. P. C. of Flinders St. Acctg. Office, on the sixth; Secretary for Railways E. C. Evers, and Graphist E. H. Dempster, of Bendigo, on the seventh; Night Officer M. A. Brown, of Maryborough, on the eighth; C. & W. F. L. Carter, of Newport Workshops, Clerk A. R. Vranizan, of Stores, on the ninth; Shift Electcn. A. S. L. Mid. Brighton, and Miss Tobe, Secy's. Bch. Typing Bureau, on the tenth; Fitter & Turner T. L. Chambers, of Repr. A. L. Scroop, of Tarragona, Clerk W. S. Judd, of Acctcy. Bch., on the 11th; Elec. Fitter L. N. Harris, of St., on the 12th; Clerk T. J. McArthur, Supvr. of Weighing's Office, and P. B. Payne, of Surrey Hills, on the 13th; Equip. Examiner J. F. Golding, of St., on the 14th; Fitter G. C. Gills, of Nth. on the 15th; Signalman A. H. Clifton Hill, on the 16th; Skld. Thorne, of Ashburton, and Motor man J. Watson, of Newport Loco. on the 17th; Passgr. Divn. Officer, D. Christie, of Acctcy. Bch., on the Refresh. Bch. Staff Clerk N. S. W. and Signalman A. E. Allan, of Nth. on the 19th; Elec. Fitter G. H. Nth. Melb., on the 20th; Engnr. T. Gorman, of Geelong, on the 21st; L. P. Youlden, of Brat Storehouse, 22nd; Fireman J. E. Chapman, of Labr. K. A. Lotton, of Spencer, on the 24th; B.M. Help G. P. Goodwin, Melb., on the 25th; Dining Car D. Dunbar, L.H. B. Maker P. Newport, on the 26th; Librarian A. H. Jones, of Flinders St., on the Labr. G. J. Catlin, of Newport, on the 28th; A. H. Parkinson, of Geelong, on the 28th; Carpenter J. S. Penally, on the 29th.

Popular Bendigonian Retires

THERE were few better-liked railwaymen at the North Bendigo Workshops than Jim Keating. This was amply demonstrated recently when a big gathering of his colleagues farewelled him on the eve of his retirement from the service. "He was one of the finest type of men, being always keen to assist the younger men in learning their trade" said Mr. G. A. Curtis (Workshops Manager)—and that was the keynote of the many speeches delivered by representatives from all sections of the Workshops. His enthusiasm for the progress of younger men found further expression in his many activities outside the Workshops. He had been President of the Bendigo Victorian Railways Institute Committee and cricket club; the Workshops cricket club; and Vice-President of the Railway carriers' club. For seven years he was

President of the Bendigo Professional cycling club. At his farewell, the Workshops mouth organ band enlivened proceedings with a number of items, and later Jim received several tangible expressions of the goodwill of his fellow-railwaymen—a handsome watch for himself and a crystal salad bowl for Mrs. Keating. Many railwaymen at the Newport Workshops will remember the popular veteran when he was employed there between 1918 and 1925. —S.

"Quickness of the hand . . . !

BESIDES being an efficient railwayman, Pat O'Sullivan, of Albion, can swallow individual needles and a piece of cotton, and then effortlessly withdraw the cotton with the needles neatly threaded through the cotton; he can take your £1 note, very carefully wrap it in your handkerchief, lose the note and, some anxious minutes later, allow you to cut a lemon when, with much relief, you find the temporarily

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The V.R. "News Letter" is issued by the Victorian Railways Commissioners for the benefit of railwaymen in the service. Personal notices and other brief succinct contributions should be addressed to the Editor, Betterment and Publicity Board, Head Office.

Wholly set up and printed in Australia by the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Launceston-street, North Melbourne. Publishers—The Victorian Railways Commissioners.

The V.R. News Letter

October, 1936

Issue No. 73

Unique Graph Production Method

TRAIN CONTROL SYSTEM WILL BENEFIT

EMBODYING features that make it entirely novel and, in many ways remarkable, a new method of producing graphs for the train control system has been devised by Mr. G. Massey, the departmental engineer responsible for the production of graphs. In addition, he has completely redesigned the graphs.

This development is considerably in advance of anything yet attempted in Australia, enabling the graph system to be utilised in the suburban train control system and in many other directions.

NOW transferred from the fourth to the ground floor of the Administrative Offices at Spencer Street the combined train control system represents the most modern methods and developments.

Each control officer sits in a separate room. Facing him is a microphone which enables instant communication to be established by telephone over the selector lines to the control station in his district. Connected with the board is a loudspeaker through which the control officers communicate with the control officer. On his desk is a graph indicating the running of all time-tabled trains.

Graphs' Limitations

While efficient to a point, the graphs hitherto used had many disadvantages. Prior to the graphs being used to the controllers each day, it was necessary to draw the graphs of the regularly-scheduled trains for both passenger and goods services by hand.

This disadvantage, among others, prevented the use of graphs for the suburban train control system owing to the time it would have taken each day to draw the numerous and complicated schedules of the trains making up the metropolitan electric service.

It thus became necessary for the control officers to work from time-tables, thereby considerably limiting the efficiency of this section of the train control.

These disadvantages were indicated to Mr. Massey, and he was instructed, if possible, to effect general improvements in the train control graph system.

WHILE it is not practical to indicate in a short article the technicalities of the new design graph, the novel method of production may be briefly described. This method makes use of the well known ferro-printing process, the cost for which is available in every

large engineering organisation.

With the new method, the train schedules are drawn with prepared ink on specially celluloid-treated paper. By means of an ingenious process, this drawing is then converted to a negative. That is to say, the white surface of the paper is turned black and the black lines of the train schedules appear as transparent lines on the black ground.

This negative is then placed over a sensitised graph form, and the transparent lines are thereby printed on the form. Any train alterations can be immediately made on the negative and any number of prints can be made as required.

Thus, under this system, the whole of the time-tables can be converted into graphic form on master negatives which can be readily kept up-to-date and from which prints can be made whenever necessary.

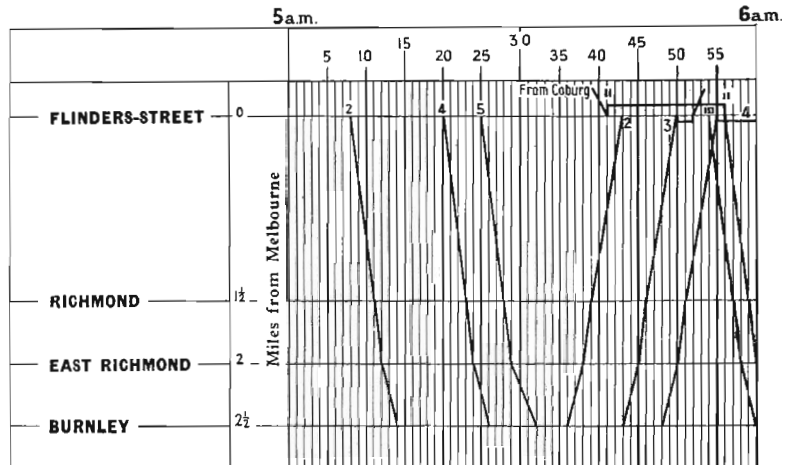
New Booking and Enquiry Offices at Flinders Street

A NEW country booking office, embodying modern facilities; an enquiry office for country and suburban travel enquiries; and a public address system, are to be provided at the Centre Entrance (De-graves Street) to the No. 1 and No. 1 East platform of the Flinders Street Station.

Under this plan, passengers will purchase tickets in a spacious enclosed booking hall. A modern mountain ash counter, with an ornamental bronze grille of the bank type, will be installed, and to regulate the movements of passengers to and from the counter, an appropriate number of barriers will be provided.

Country and also suburban travellers will welcome the provision of the enquiry office where a comprehensive service will be available. It will be in charge of an officer of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, and will be the first of its kind to be established.

The public address system will be similar to that which has proved so successful at the Spencer Street Station. A microphone will be provided for the use of the Man-in-grey, whose announcements will be transmitted through amplifiers situated at selected points along No. 1 Platform—the principal platform for the departure and arrival of country trains.



SECTION OF TYPICAL TRAIN CONTROL GRAPH.—To ascertain the arrival or departure times, follow the horizontal line from the station name to the point at which it intersects the sloping train line. Then follow the vertical time line upward from the intersection point of the station and train lines and read the time on the horizontal time scale. Thus, No. 2 Down train arrives at Burnley at 5.14 a.m. Likewise, No. 11 train arrives at Flinders Street at 5.41 a.m., waits 15 minutes (as indicated by the horizontal line) and departs at 5.56 a.m., arriving at East Richmond at 6 a.m.

The Month's Topic

TRANSPORT QUESTION VITAL TO RAILMEN

IN their recently-issued Annual Report for the 1935-36 financial year, the Commissioners make a striking survey of the present transport regulation position—a question that is of vital import to every member of the railway service.

Proof of that statement is furnished by the fact that the railways have been deprived by competitive road transport of goods revenue amounting to at least £1,000,000 a year.

So much misconception exists on the general question of road transport that it is necessary to emphasise that road competition for the long-distance carriage of goods owes its existence solely to the nature of the railway rating structure which fundamentally is based upon and dictated by national economic needs.

The underlying principle is that the more valuable commodities make a higher contribution towards the cost of railway service than the lower valued goods.

Victoria is now alone in the Commonwealth in authorising direct competition by long-distance road transport against the national railway system although, in common with the rest of Australia, its prosperity rests upon the success of its primary industries, which must continue to be dependent upon railway transport.

From the economic point of view, it is dangerously unsound to permit the indispensable railway system, representing a huge capital investment and capable of providing comprehensive and efficient service, to be open to the destructive competition of road transport which provides a partial service only to a relatively limited section of the community.

Rationalisation of transport is a pressing necessity, and the proper approach to this must be a recognition of the national economy and of the part railways and principles of railway rating play in the business and industrial life of the community.

Educational Tours for School Children

FIGURES released last month demonstrate the great success of the tours organised by the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau and its branches for the benefit of school students during the September vacation. Many students in Victoria and from other States were enabled to enjoy in Victoria and in points beyond the maximum of educational travel, comfort and enjoyment for a relatively cheap all-inclusive fare.

More than 1,500 scholars of varying ages took part in numerous tours arranged to holiday resorts, including The Grampians, Mt. Kosciusko, Lakes Entrance, Mt. Feathertop, Lorne, Adelaide-River Murray-Mildura, Cowes and Mt. Buffalo National Park.

A feature of the vacation period was the number of school children booking for tours arranged by the Adelaide Representative of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, 387 children going to Cowes and 111 to Mt. Buffalo National Park. Scholars also booked from Sydney and Mildura.

Service

"HAVING spent three winter holidays at Mt. Hotham, I should like to take this opportunity of paying a tribute to the splendid work being done by your representatives, the Gribble family, at Hotham Heights.

"On all occasions they have gone out of their way to make our stay a pleasant one and have always earned our admiration for the way they manage under conditions which are far from easy. Last month we experienced three weeks of appalling weather which would have made our stay unbearable had not the management been entirely sympathetic to us in every way.

"These remarks appearing from 'out of the blue' may cause surprise, but they are prompted merely by a desire to give credit where it is due."
—Mr. Allan Walkley, of the Adelaide University, writing to the Department.

INTRODUCING—

HARRY HUMPHRIS, of the Refreshment Services Branch, whose variety of positions since he became a railwayman, is probably the most surprising in the service. Artisan-in-Charge at Flinders Street, he is also the Department's fish buyer! Representing the dining car services, refreshment rooms and The Chalet, he expertly bids each day, the weekly aggregate purchases being



hundred-dozen; schnapper by the ton; Murray cod by the hundred-weight;

Sunday Night Trains To Run Later

BIG SUBURBAN PLANS

A FURTHER and outstanding illustration of the growing attractiveness of travelling is the decision to introduce on October 4 many Sunday night trains, together with considerably later departure times of the "last" trains, from Melbourne.

With few exceptions, all suburban lines will benefit under this comprehensive plan. Altogether 20 additional trains will be scheduled, with the timings of 21 other trains slightly varied. The amended timetables have been made to provide the maximum number of train connections at Melbourne and the junction stations, including Richmond, Burnley, South Yarra and New Melbourne.

Latest Yet

A feature of the new scheme is that the departure times of the "last" trains from Melbourne are the latest ever fixed by the Department for Sunday services, the last train to leave Melbourne being at 11.14 p.m. for Sunshine.

The last train to reach Melbourne will be timed to arrive from Sunshine at 12.3 a.m. (Monday), but this will not, of course, connect with others.

* * *

These important developments together with the aggregate reduction of nearly 500 hours per week in overtime line services and the present wide review of goods trains schedules present railwaymen with excellent opportunities to stimulate both passenger and goods business.

garfish by the quarter-ton—which he can buy as easily as the State's largest buyer of fish. He is the handy man of the Branch, having at various times acted as Manager at "Hotham Heights," Mt. Hotham, and "The Bungaree," Mt. Feathertop. He also played a prominent part in the catering for the visit of H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester to Portland in 1934 and, in business settings, for all the Mystery of the White Workshops between 1914 and 1915. A lad laborer, apprentice car and engine builder and carpenter, Harry became the somewhat unexpected ambassador becoming a cook! And now he is a competent chef, having acted in that capacity for the Department. He is, too, quite at home on ski!

Cor-ten Steel Train in Big Broadcast INSULATING MEASURES TO BE FEATURED

RADIO listeners throughout Australia will hear a realistic broadcast through 3AR on October 3 at 10 of the busy scene at the Newport workshops during the building of the Cor-ten steel train for the Sydney Limited service. They will hear, too, the deafening clatter of rivetting and hammering sounding from the train which has caused great interest throughout the Commonwealth and beyond.

After a concise description of the fully-planned methods of assembling the carriage structures, including reference to the extensive welding, workers will be told of the sound-proofing and heat-resisting materials being fitted to the roof, walls and floor of each vehicle. These insulating measures form, perhaps, the most interesting feature of the train.

Insulating Described

The first layer forming the floor is a sheet of aluminium. Above it is a complete layer of keystone Cor-ten steel, the grooves being riveted instead of round like corrugated iron.

Cork layers are fitted into these riveted grooves, and on this is laid to a depth of several inches a composition cork board which produces a very efficient sound and heat insulation. Then a layer of sponge rubber is placed over the top of this insulation to form the actual floor surface beneath the floor carpet. The walls and roof are treated differently.

First, a layer of sound-proof felting is cemented to the inside of the steel "hull." Then "Alfol" aluminium paper, resembling the silver paper in boxes of chocolates, is crinkled and placed against this felt layer. Over the top is placed another aluminium preparation which holds the foil in place. The crinkled "Alfol" foil provides air-forming spaces which immensely minimise within the car the effect of changes in the outside atmosphere.

Over the top of all this felt and aluminium foil comes the actual inside wall of the carriage which is built of veneered panels featuring specially selected Queensland walnut, Western Australian jarrah and Queensland silver silkwood.

After describing the provision being made for the fitting of the air-conditioning equipment, the broadcaster will mention that when completed the end of each car will be covered by an aluminium and steel apron which moves in grooves at the side of the carriage.

Safety Enhanced

This apron is so adjusted by means of rods and springs that no matter whether the train is running on the straight or around a curve it constantly retains the proper alignment with the side of the carriage.

In addition, the ends of the carriages are enormously strong which, of course, greatly enhances the safety aspect of each of the twelve vehicles—nine passenger carriages, one parlor-observation car, one dining car and a luggage van.

Lower Fares Until Further Notice

THE "Anywhere to Anywhere" country fares, introduced on March 1 last, and the suburban "Off Peak" fares, introduced on April 1, will now be continued until further notice.

It is interesting to record that although the country "Anywhere to Anywhere" fares represent reductions ranging from 33 to 60 per cent. below the ordinary fares, the revenue from passenger business has closely approximated the revenue for the same period of last year, thus indicating a substantial increase in the number of passenger journeys.

A similar result has followed the innovation of the suburban "Off Peak" fares, which are based on reduced journeys at about single fare.

Air-conditioning To Be Extended Soon

FOLLOWING on the highly satisfactory results obtained from the two experimental air-conditioned vehicles—a first class country passenger carriage and an all-steel dining car—arrangements have been made to extend the innovation to first and second class carriages.

Fourteen additional sets of equipment have been ordered for fitting in vehicles running on certain country lines where the conditions justify air-conditioning.

The first two sets were imported from England, but except for a relatively small portion of the equipment, future requirements are being manufactured in Australia.

In addition to the ordinary passenger vehicles, it is possible that some of the sleeping cars running between Melbourne and Adelaide and Melbourne and Mildura will also be air-conditioned.

Depth of Commissioners' Annual Report

THE percentage of working expenses (exclusive of electric tramways, road motor services, pensions, etc., and expenditure charged to Unemployment Relief Funds and to the Commonwealth Grant for Rehabilitation—storms and floods) to gross revenue was 65.71 as compared with 65.09 in 1934-35.

* * *

A net increase of £347,957 in the Capital Account during the year brought the total to £76,689,384, including stores and materials.

* * *

In 1935-36 the goods business and the passenger traffic, as represented by the goods ton-miles and the passenger miles, were 156.03 and 88.64 per cent. respectively greater than in 1907-8, yet the increase in train mileage was equivalent to only 64.18 per cent.—indicating substantial economic advantages.

The net revenue of £2,843,503 represents a return of 3.65 per cent. on the total property investment, including stores and materials, as compared with 3.62 per cent. for the year 1934-35.

* * *

Percentages of trains on time during the year were: Country passenger trains, 83.51; Country mixed trains, 83.36; and Suburban electric trains, 84.00.

* * *

Goods traffic showed an increase of 300,444 tons (equivalent to 0.67 per cent.) over the previous year, and the revenue by £181,097 (4.68 per cent.). Livestock traffic advanced by 53,689 tons (8.83 per cent.) with an additional revenue of £34,091 (4.95 per cent.).

* * *

The revenue from refreshment rooms and stalls and dining-car services was £292,443, or £915 more than in the preceding year. The revenue from book-stalls also increased, amounting to £64,036, as compared with £61,274 during 1934-35.

New Colour Scheme For Suburban Stations

FOLLOWING the widespread approval accorded the recent painting of Nos. 6 and 7 Platforms, Flinders Street Station, in ivory and green and the introduction of a new lighting scheme, it has been decided similarly to improve the remainder of the platforms at that station.

It is also proposed to carry out future paintings of suburban stations in the same combination of colours.

Consideration is also being given to the question of adopting ivory and green whenever the repainting of signal boxes and departmental residences in the suburban area becomes due.

As the first step in the suburban scheme, it is proposed, as an experiment, to use these colours in repainting the station, signal box and departmental residence at Heyington.

Personal Postscript

Railwayman-Debater

CHIEF Clerk of the Supervisor of Weighing's Office for 21 years, Tom McGlade has now retired from the Department after nearly 50 years' service. His position called for a wide knowledge of the multitudinous commodities and general merchandise carried by the Department. It was important, too, as a revenue-protecting medium. To that post, Tom brought an extensive practical railroad experience. Successively he was located in the Melbourne Yard, Melbourne Goods Sheds and Spencer Street Main Booking Office, and as Assistant Station-master at North Fitzroy and Port Melbourne Pier. Always keenly interested in debating, Tom was one of the finest public speakers in the service. For 10 years he was an active debater, and on the formation of the Victorian Debaters' Association he became one of its principal adjudicators. His penetrating summings-up at the end of a debate when all phases of public-speaking technique were expertly discussed have, it is generally agreed, been a factor in raising the standard of debating. —J.S.

City Councillor

LAATEST railwayman to manifest a keen practical interest in public affairs is Clerk Jack Astbury, of Warrnambool, who was recently elected unopposed to the Warrnambool City Council. Aged 36, he is the youngest member ever to take a seat at that Council table. Since his election he has been busy acknowledging congratulations from friends and colleagues. Although this was his first attempt to enter the municipal sphere, Jack was not without that experience which will assuredly make him an invaluable councillor. A member of the Warrnambool Apex Club since its inception, he was President during 1933. The club is a young man's movement with the ideals of Fellowship and Service, and it was with the desire to carry those objectives further that he decided

to enter the Council. A railwayman since 1918, he has been located for varying periods at South Yarra, Portland and Victoria Park. For the past 15 years, he has been stationed at Warrnambool, mainly on goods work. —M.

Premiers Celebrate

"A GREAT night . . ." That epitomises the views of the 150 people who attended the V.R.I. last month when the Melbourne Goods Sheds football team celebrated the winning of the premiership of the Railways League. Actually it was a dual function—Charlie Corbett, the popular Officer-in-Charge of the Perishable Shed, was also farewelled on his retirement from the service. With Mr. A. I. Robert (Goods Superintendent) presiding, the excellent and varied programme, combined with the catering, provided splendid entertainment. It was the team's second successive premiership; thus they continue to retain the much-coveted Commissioners' Cup. While many tributes were paid to officials and players, special praise was accorded Harry Hattam, of the Melbourne Goods Sheds. A former well-known back-pocket player for the St. Kilda team, Harry has coached the Goods Shed's team with great success, the team having been defeated only twice during the past two seasons. The success of the function was largely due to the admirable organising carried out by Clerks H. J. Baring and T. V. Hartnedy. —E.J.B.

Sure Shot

MENTION of the retirement of Charlie Corbett reminds me of the Commonwealth-wide fame he has achieved as a rifle shot. For over 40 years, he has been an ardent devotee of this sport, and the passing years have not diminished his keenness. Many triumphs have come his way. One of the oldest trap-shooters in the State, he has been the Victorian Champion on several occasions, achieving his outstanding success in 1932 when he became the Australian Champion. Charlie has also excelled in claybird shooting, winning the first Commonwealth Championship conducted a few years ago. And he is regarded as one of the best claybird shooters in Victoria at the present time. In view of his remarkable ability with the rifle,

it is not surprising to hear that he is also revealing championship Donald Corbett has won the Australian and Victorian titles in the small bird and claybird competitions. On behalf of the staff, Charlie was presented with a wallet of his by Mr. D. Cameron (Chairman of Staff Board and President of the substitute).

Getting Together

INSPIRED by the broad object of "getting together off the job and knowing one another better," the Social Shift Electricians (District Section) of the Electrical Engineering Branch have formed an Association. Judging by the results of the first Social held last month, the new movement seems assured of becoming a permanent feature. More than 100 attended and thoroughly enjoyed splendid catering and varied programme. With Ernie McAllan as Secretary, the Social Committee worked enthusiastically, and all warmly commended them for efforts in successfully launching the movement. This "get-together" association is worthy of emulation by sections of the Department, and will be glad to give all information to any enquirers. He can be reached at the East Camberwell Sub-station.

October Birthdays

CLERK F. S. Kent, of Rolling Stock Head Office, and Ganger T. E. of Willaura, on the first; Metro. Depot Supt., J. Noonan and Clerk J. A. of Traffic Bch. on the second; Repairer W. McGhee, of Tunstall, on the third; Asst. C.M.E. H. N. May, and Ganger Tully, of Kilmore, on the fifth; Iron H. P. Goodwin, of Newport, on the sixth; Genl. Supt. of Transpnt. M. A. Ganger J. G. Brown, of Lake Charles Storeman-in-Charge G. P. Hare, of Melbourne, on the seventh; Elec. Sub. A. R. Downes, of Heidelberg, on the eighth; Engineer G. Massey, and Signaller Fitzgerald, of Essendon, on the ninth; Ganger E. P. Pardy, of Sunbury, Fire Turner, of Newport Power House, and Cutter S. Morris, of Printing Works, on the tenth; Elec. Engineer R. M. H. Flinders-st., and Tram Motorman Daniels, of Elwood, on the 11th; Chief E. A. McCure, of Ararat, and Storeman-in-Charge A. Norman on the 12th; Refresh. Services W. D. Bracher on the 13th; Clerk W. J. Dawson, of Melbourne, on the 14th; Skld. Labr. S. H. O. of Ararat, Elec. Mechanic W. L. S. of Overhead Depot, and Clerk P. W. of Stores Bch., on the 15th; Storeman W. J. Faull, of Bridgewater, and Electrician E. H. Winter, of Spencer-st., of Newport Power House, and Clerk W. Winter, of Acctcy. Bch., on the 17th; Train Driver M. W. Darey, of Melbourne, and Clerk W. E. Gahan, of Acctcy. Bch., on the 19th; Fitter and Turner P. W. of Elwood, of Yea, on the 21st; Driver Glenister, of Nth. Melb. and Engine Driver N. Johnson, of Benalla, on the 22nd; Officer W. E. Wedgwood, of Head Office, and Guard A. C. Driver, of Melbourne, on the 23rd; Ganger E. J. Stephens, of Acctcy. Bch., on the 24th; Repairer W. A. Tomlinson, of Hawthorn, on the 25th; Parcels Porter Davies, of Spencer-st., on the 26th; Asst. A. J. Jones, of Jolimont, and J. G. Hagg, of Acctcy. Bch., on the 27th; Skld. Labr. S. McCormack, of Flinders-st., on the 30th; and Refresh. Services Chief Clerk F. C. Campbell and Porter F. T. Davies, of Eaglehawk, on the 31st.

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The V.R. News Letter

November, 1936

Issue No. 74

Striking Tribute to Air-conditioning

I am pleased to inform you that our girl arrived safely in Mildura yesterday morning (October 22), and was not in any degree the worse for her trip from Melbourne.

The arrangements made by your office were excellent, and the comfort and perfection of the air-conditioned car overcame those difficulties and problems of travel which one usually associates with a trip into the Mallee during the winter weather.

As I told you in Melbourne, our girl was suffering from rheumatic fever, a bacterial infection of the blood, which also affected the valves of the heart. The doctors responsible for her condition were concerned with the gravity of the decision to allow her to travel to Mildura.

By road, rail and aeroplane transport all given consideration, and I am pleased that we finally decided on rail transport in the air-conditioned car. The uniform temperature, freedom from dust and noise were the features of the transport which gave our girl every chance of travel in safety.

I would like you to convey to the staff concerned, heartfelt appreciation for my wife and myself for their assistance and interest in this matter.

Copies of a letter received last month from the Chairman of Commissioners.

Red and Grey for Suburban Trains

RESPLENDENT in new and distinctive colours—red and moonstone grey—an electric train made its first appearance on October 31.

Intended as an experiment and the prelude to the eventual change of colour of the entire suburban rolling stock, the newly-painted train is scheduled to operate in the race traffic on the four days of the Cup meeting. On the intervening days and until further notice, it is proposed to run the train on the Essendon-Sandringham line.

Red is the predominant colour. Below the belt rail the colour is red; then grey to the transom; red to the cornice; and grey on the roof. A series of black lines up to one inch thick and a yellow line is painted longitudinally along the sides of the carriages.

Standard type of lettering on the sides of the vehicles is in aluminium on a red background.

It is not proposed to alter the colour scheme of the interiors of the carriages.

Child's Life Saved by Railwayman

DISPLAYING great bravery recently, Operating Porter G. W. Barnett, of Springhurst, dramatically saved a child aged six from drowning in the flood-swollen waters of the Murray River at Wahgunyah. An ardent fishing devotee, he was sitting quietly by when, hearing the frantic screams of some children, he dashed along the bank and unhesitatingly plunged into eight feet of water. There was an under-current running, and it was only after a grim struggle that he was able to grasp the child and bring her safely to the bank. The merit of his heroic act is enhanced by the fact that he is aged 57 and at the time was fully clothed. Although he modestly disclaims all praise for his bravery, his colleagues are justifiably proud of George. This was not, however, the first time he has distinguished himself. During the Great War, in which he served for four years, he was twice mentioned in despatches for gallant services in the field. Widely known and respected locally, George is the energetic Vice-President of the Springhurst Progress Association. He has been in the service since 1912, being located at many stations, including Greensborough, Mernda, Balmoral, Windsor and Heidelberg.

Franz Skardarasy's Big Influence on Ski-ing

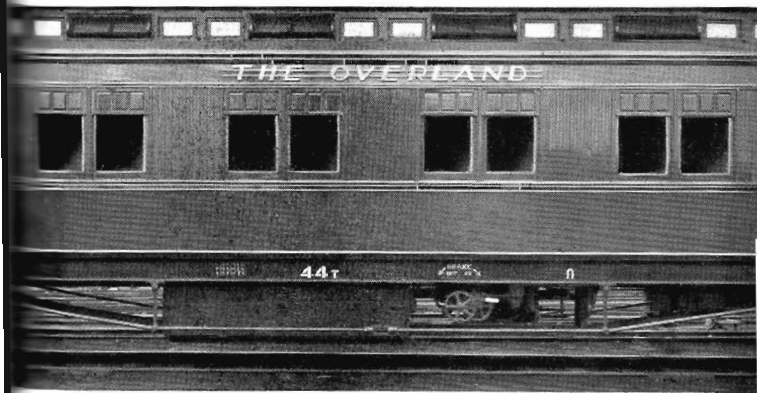
AFTER a completely successful engagement during the snow sports season, Mr. Franz Skardarasy, the Continental ski-ing expert, left Melbourne last month on his return to Europe.

Described by the Ski Club of Victoria as "heralding the dawn of a new era of ski-ing in Victoria," the engagement of Mr. Skardarasy by the Department is destined to prove the biggest single factor in stimulating interest in that winter pastime.

In addition to being of immense advantage to inexperienced skiers, Mr. Skardarasy's tuition, embodying the famous Arlberg technique, has had a marked effect in correcting and improving the methods of the more advanced local skiers.

Although this was the first occasion on which the services of such an expert had been made available in Victoria, nearly 950 holidaymakers attended the ski schools at Mts. Buffalo National Park and Hotham. Of these, 341 passed either the preliminary or intermediate tests.

Mr. Skardarasy's popularity was demonstrated when, on the eve of his departure, he was farewelled at a dance in Melbourne organised by the various ski-ing clubs. A presentation was made to him. Speaking on behalf of the associated clubs, the President of the Ski Club of Victoria warmly praised Mr. Skardarasy and commended the Department for its enterprise in bringing such an expert to Victoria.



HIGHLY FAVOURABLE COMMENT has been evoked by the colourful appearance of the first two vehicles—painted green, with narrow cream and black lines—that have been placed in service between Melbourne and Adelaide. In this picture, the enhanced effect of the longitudinal lines is evident. The words "The Overland" consist of chromium-plated lettering.

783 Apply for Vacant Apprenticeships

FOR the 134 apprenticeship vacancies in the Department, 783 applications were registered when the closing date was fixed on October 9. Of these, 447 applications were received from the country districts and 336 from the city and suburbs.

The greatest number of applications (338) were received for the position of fitter and turner (58 vacancies). For the nine vacancies in the position of electrical fitter no

fewer than 204 applications were received. Altogether, lads were required for 19 trades, ranging from fitting and turning to springmaking.

Between November 2 and 27, applicants will be interviewed by the Departmental Board of Selectors, sitting in Melbourne, Geelong, Bendigo, Maryborough, Ballarat, Ararat, Traralgon, Wangaratta and Seymour.

Those lads selected will subsequently attend the educational and medical examinations in Melbourne.

The Month's Topic

RAILWAYS' VALUE TO LOCAL MANUFACTURERS

FEW railwaymen realise the tremendous value of the huge railway purchases to Australian manufacturers. Here is some illuminating information on this subject, which railwaymen should remember when discussing phases of the Department's activities.

When purchasing materials, the Department's policy has always been to "Buy Australian Made." A percentage preference is given first to Australian manufacturers, and then to British manufacturers.

Last year the railways shopping bill was approximately £1,677,000. Of that amount, about £1,494,000 represented purchases of Australian goods, and £183,000 imported goods. Of the imports (most of which could not be purchased here), £131,000 worth came from Great Britain. Foreign imports represented only approximately three per cent. of the total purchases.

Coal Is Big Item

Coal is, of course, one of the principal items on the railway bill. Some of the coal comes from New South Wales, but most from Wonthaggi. Then come rails, sleepers, and bridge timbers. Castings, forgings, and steel tyres run into a large sum. General stationery alone costs about £20,000.

Every year the Department purchases thousands of yards of serge cloth for uniforms, 100 tons of rope, ten tons of leather, £1,000 worth of screws, 700,000 luggage checks, one ton of printing ink, and 5,000 brooms.

The Refreshment Services Branch of the Victorian Railways used last year nearly 550,000 lb. of meat, 132,000 lb. of sugar, 95,000 lb. of butter, 100,000 4-lb. loaves of bread, 15 tons of raisins, 78,000 gallons and 235,000 bottles of milk, and 12,000 bottles of sauce.

It will be seen, therefore, that expanding railway business would have a very real interest for Australian manufacturers generally. If firms and factories made greater use of their railway service, they would be helping to build up a bigger local market for their own products—a market in which they secure preferential treatment.

General Appendix and Weekly Notice

TO BE ISSUED IN MORE CONVENIENT SIZES

A NEW and revised issue of the General Appendix—the first since 1928—is now being distributed throughout the service. It will become effective after midnight on December 1 next.

A task of considerable magnitude confronted Mr. M. F. Baynes (Safety Officer), assisted by Mr. W. Hoatson (General Superintendent's Office), when they commenced the important work of revision in February, 1935.

It demanded an exceptional knowledge of a comprehensive section of the Department's activities, and the "News Letter" adds its congratulations to Messrs. Baynes and Hoatson on the successful completion of a big job.

By inserting in the working timetables numerous instructions which cover approximately 100 pages in the present General Appendix and using 8 pt. instead of 10 pt. type, it has been possible to reduce the size from 6½ in. wide x 9½ in. deep to 4½ in. x 7½ in. In its new form, the General Appendix will be found more convenient to handle.

Arising out of the plan to reduce the size of the General Appendix, it has been decided similarly to reduce the size of the Weekly Notice, commencing with the issue on Tuesday, November 3.

INTRODUCING—

PARCELS Foreman David Davies, of the Spencer Street Outwards Parcels Office, to whose enthusiasm, courtesy and efficiency the smooth-running of this important



railway activity is largely due. The most important parcels office in the service, the O.P.O., is now entering on its busiest six months' period, reaching its peak at Christmas when, during the four days preceding December 25, as many as 25,000 parcels will be despatched to all parts of Australia. "I look on the O.P.O. as my own business" says Dave, and therein lies the reason for the exceptional reputation he has gained both inside and outside the Department for his unabating keenness to render the highest standard of service. With justifiable pride, he demonstrates that you can lodge a parcel at the counter—and be on your way home in less than a minute. His consecutive term of 28 years at Spencer Street is the longest of any of the staff. For the last ten years, he has been parcels foreman.

Railwaymen will be surprised to learn that this important publication is now approaching the 50th year of issue. It made its debut on November 9, 1894. The first of its kind was issued by any Australian railway system, the Weekly Notice now being a much different publication to that of 42 years ago.

The most significant change in the Weekly Notice occurred on October 11, 1920, when "The Commissioner's Message to the Staff" first appeared on the front page. This message has proved to be one of the most distinctive media for the direct and frank discussion of numerous phases of railway working, providing an invaluable link between the Commissioners and the staff.

English Goods Trains Have Quaint Names

FORMER Engineering Assistant J. Allnutt, of the Rolling Stock Branch, who went overseas two years ago for further experience, has sent the "News Letter" an appropriate clipping from the London "Daily Telegraph" concerning the colloquial names applied to a number of goods trains running to London.

With the headings: "The 'Early Bird' Feeds London; Nicknames for Freight Expresses," the newspaper item reads as follows:—

Most people have heard of the Royal Scot, Silver Link, T. & N. Limited, but few have heard of the main's "dawn expresses"—"the Sparagras," "Flying Pig," "Early Riser," "Biscuit."

Friendly names—"the Farmer," "the Early Bird," "the Feeder"—have been used by railwaymen for years to describe those thundering freight trains which race across sleeping England. Now, for the first time, they have received official recognition.

The "Mopper Up"

How much more fascinating do you know that your goods are coming to London by the "Mopper" rather than proceeding by an accelerated "E" Freight Train.

Take "the B.B.C." That is a railwayman's nickname for the train a.m. to Wolverhampton. The "B.B.C." brings London's smokes from Birmingham and "the Sparagras"—pure Crewe—takes asparagus from Wolverhampton to Crewe.

"The Meat," "the Hardware," "the Cocoa," "the Bacon" are names themselves, but it must have been sheer pride in achievement that has bred such names as "the Treacle" and "Pen Flier," "Northern Flash," "Searchlight," "Moonraker," "Cer," "Flying Skipper."

New Uniforms and Caps for Staff

ELECTRIC TRAIN DRIVERS AND SHUNTERS AGAIN

MORE modern and attractive types of uniforms and caps are to be supplied to various sections of the staff who come in contact with the travelling public. It is expected that the first issues will be made this month. The uniforms will be of a lighter shade of blue than the present clothing.

The major feature of the new plan includes the re-introduction of the concession under which the Department supplies uniforms to electric train drivers and shunters. Details of the new clothing and caps are as follow:—

Stationmasters
Single-breasted, square cut coat with blue piping, instead of rounded coat with brown piping. The initials "V.R." will be shown in silver on each lapel. Cap, with blue piping around the top; the patent leather chin strap and gilt buttons will be removed and replaced by oak leaf braid.

Suburban Guards, Ticket Collectors at the City Stations and Tram Conductors

Double-breasted, instead of single-breasted, coat with blue piping. The Ticket Collectors at the city stations will also be equipped with a navy blue overcoat with "V.R." on each lapel.

Stationmasters

All Stationmasters' uniforms will have a gold crown on each side of the collar. The caps for Stationmasters at Spencer Street, Flinders Street, Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong will have a gold crown and their title

"Stationmaster" in gold bullion on the front face of the cap. The peak will have a band of gold braid on the edge. For other Stationmasters, the caps will have two wider bands of gold than at present, while the patent leather chin strap and gilt buttons will be removed.

Asst. Stationmasters

Gold bullion "V.R." on each side of the coat collar.

Electric Train Drivers

Square cut coat with blue piping and cap with blue piping.

Shunters

Same uniforms as proposed for porters, with nickel "V.R." badges for the lapels. Shunters are already supplied with waterproof overcoats, pull-ons and hats, and this arrangement will continue.

A number of other matters of minor detail have not yet been finalised.

Turning: W. R. Coghill, W. H. Chapman, W. J. Gates and S. J. Wheeler (Rolling Stock) and Jas. Smith (Way and Works). Electrical Fitting: J. S. Larson (Way and Works) and V. Hodges (Electrical Engineering). Boilermaking: H. J. Allan, L. R. Hart and J. S. McKenzie (Rolling Stock). Blacksmithing: G. V. Smith (Rolling Stock). Carpentering and Tinsmithing: H. A. Cawthorne and G. Dunlop (Way and Works).

"Scheme" Tickets System to be Extended

FIRST introduced experimentally at Caulfield and Footscray in May and June respectively, the "scheme" tickets (issued for one journey to any one of a group of stations on various lines to which the same fare applies) have fully demonstrated their value.

These new tickets have now been placed at one window in the Flinders Street suburban "A" booking office, and the system will be extended to include Richmond "A" booking office on December 1.

In addition to effecting a considerable reduction in the stocks of ordinary daily tickets and bringing the tickets closer to the booking window, the introduction of these "scheme" tickets has led to a substantial reduction in the daily accountancy work.

Big Revenue Rise at Tourist Bureau

FIGURES compiled last month covering the activities of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau during the 1935-36 financial year strikingly demonstrate its great value to holidaymakers.

Embracing a comprehensive service covering road, rail, sea and air transport, the Bureau's revenue for the year, compared with 1934-35, showed an increase of £44,533, all items of revenue revealing a substantial advance.

A feature of the importance of tourist travel was the opening during the year of two additional Branch offices of the Bureau—one in Adelaide and one in Mildura. (Subsequent to July 1, the Brisbane Branch office was established; thus there are now five Branch offices, including those at Spencer Street and in Sydney.)

Interstate Activities

Created to stimulate Interstate travel to Victoria, whether by road, rail, sea or air, these Branch offices in the other Capital cities have already demonstrated their value, and with an even more vigorous policy during the present year, it is confidently expected that they will lead to a greater flow of holiday-makers to Victoria.

"Owing to the unsettled condition of European affairs," said Mr. W. T. McConnell, Bureau Manager, in his report, "an increased number of tourists from the United States of America and other countries arrived in Victoria. Many of these visitors passed through the hands of our Representatives in the other States, and the numerous expressions of thanks received indicate that all concerned rendered service of a high standard."

Railman's Daughter in Feature "Talkie"

THE many friends of Mr. L. C. Brown (Metropolitan Manager, Refreshment Services Branch) will be interested to learn that his accomplished daughter, Coral, has a prominent role opposite Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., in the film "The Amateur Gentleman," which will be screened in Melbourne shortly.

After many brilliant stage successes in Australia, Miss Brown left for London two years ago, and since her arrival there she has greatly impressed local producers and critics in a series of stage plays calling for considerable versatility.

Among Miss Brown's outstanding stage performances was the role she played opposite Paul Robeson, the noted American negro singer, in "Basilik" at the Embassy Theatre, London. She has also appeared in several English films with Roland Young.

Educational Tour by 13 Apprentices

O see at first hand the operations of a number of the most outstanding railway and private industrial enterprises and thus broaden their general knowledge, a group of 13 railway apprentices left Melbourne last month on a seven-days' educational tour of New South Wales.

Drawn from the Newport, Spotswood, Ballarat and Bendigo Workshops and the Electrical Engineering Branch, the apprentices travelled in charge of Mr. W. H. Grace (Principal, Newport Technical College). Mr. T. McAuley (Supervisor of Apprentices) also accompanied the party. Of an average age of 19 years and generally selected for the tour because of their generally high standard of their work during their two years' apprenticeship, the lads were the guests of the New South Wales Railways Department. A reciprocal arrangement exists for an interchange of visits to apprentices of both systems.

The names and trades of the apprentices are as follow: Fitting and

Personal Postscript

Craftsman

WHEN Leading Hand Carpenter Dave Jack, of Oakleigh, received a pair of field-glasses on the eve of his retirement last month, it was facetiously suggested that they would often be focussed on some piece of carpentering work. And this is quite possible for Dave was a highly-skilled craftsman who revelled in the finer points of his trade. He applied himself with the same preciseness to rough, undressed timber as he would when dealing with glass-like, highly-polished woods. Dave has left the service with an enviable reputation for thoroughness and devotion to duty. His retirement is a reminder that three generations of Jack's have a record of nearly 80 years unbroken railway service in Victoria. His father was an Inspector of Works, having started soon after the opening of the first railway in 1854. Dave himself had 31 years' service, and now his two brothers (Hugh, of Spencer Street, and Bill, of Oakleigh) and his son (Harold, of the Advertising Division) are determined to celebrate a railway centenary of their own. Now touring in New Zealand, Dave has the field-glasses which were the gift of appreciative railwaymen of all branches on the Caulfield-Frankston line. —D.S.

Bisleywards ?

LEW Gibson, of the Secretary's Branch (Staff Board), has been so consistently brilliant as a rifleman, that his friends are confidently predicting he will realise the ambition of all riflemen by winning selection next month in the Australian team to compete at Bisley in 1937. Recently he crowned a series of outstanding efforts by creating an Australasian record with no fewer than 43 consecutive bulls-eyes at 300 yards. Veteran riflemen were amazed at this performance which was made during a 50 mile-an-hour gale across the range at Port Melbourne. Other highlights of his impressive record include representation of Victoria in three Interstate matches, including the Commonwealth matches in Adelaide during the current Centenary Celebrations. In opposition to between 500 and 600 of the leading riflemen, Lew has nearly won the coveted Sydney

King's Prize on two occasions. In addition, he has won the Quarterly Medal and Clasp, Metallists' Championship and other honors at No. 19 District Union, Port Melbourne. As a member of the South Melbourne Rifle Club, he has won the club's championship five times during the last seven years. Aged 29, Lew has tremendous enthusiasm and already he has established a reputation as an excellent coach. Asked to reveal the secret of his phenomenal marksmanship for the benefit of other railwaymen aspiring to championship class, Lew summed it up in two words: "Shoot straight!" —A.S.

New D.S.'s Chief Clerk

BALLARAT District Superintendent's new Chief Clerk is Tom Dwyer, of the General Superintendent's office. Although this is Tom's first excursion into the country railway sphere, his 23 years in Room I have given him a wide administrative experience which foreshadows success in his new job. For more than ten years, he has occupied the secretaryship of the Transportation Officers' monthly conference. In that position, he has gained an invaluable insight into district activities throughout the State. For the first seven years of his railway career, Tom was located in the Melbourne Goods Sheds. Tributes to his ability and popularity were paid to Tom before his departure last month on leave. On behalf of the conference members, the chairman (Mr. M. A. Remfry, General Superintendent of Transportation) presented him with a fountain pen, while his former colleagues in Room I farewelled him with a travelling rug. —H.M.

November Birthdays

SHIFT Electrician A. H. Cadman, of Newport Power House, on the first; Elec. Fitter C. A. Sharpe, of Flinders-st., on the second; Shedman E. J. Harrower, of Maryborough, on the third; Elec. Trn. Driver T. H. Cosham, of Jolimont, on the fourth; Sawyer W. R. Coulton, of Newport Wkshps., and Sig. Porter W. D. Grinter, of Newport, on the fifth; Staff Board Chairman D. Cameron, and Clerk J. C. Callaghan, of Bendigo Accounting Office, on the seventh; Pipe Joiners' Labr. O. Patten, of Ironworks' Division, on the

(Continued in Col. 3)

Former Chief Engineer E. H. Ballard's Death

WITH the death last month of Mr. E. H. Ballard, M.Inst.C.E., a former Chief Engineer of Way and Works, there passes a man who has left his imprint upon our outstanding railway works and practices.

A firm, but just administrator, Mr. Ballard, throughout his ten years as Chief Engineer, displayed a high standard of executive ability, specialising to a large extent in standardising engineering methods and materials. Among the many reforms introduced was the appointment of District Engineers at the country centres.

Although a civil engineer, Mr. Ballard early exhibited a preference for signalling work, being associated with that work exclusively between 1895 and 1905. He was largely responsible for introducing into Victoria the changing of the signal from white to green when indicating "clear."

Of the many undertakings in which he was connected, perhaps the most important were the duplication and regrading carried out between South Yarra and Caulfield and regrading on the Box Hill line. The remodelling of the Bendigo, Geelong, Ararat, Seymour and Dandenong station yards was carried out to his design.

For many years, he was Chairman of the Australian Commonwealth Engineering Standards Association.

At the time of his death, Mr. Ballard was aged 71, and had retired from the Department in 1928 after 42 years' service.

(Continued from Col. 2)

eight; Elec. Subn. Guard A. J. Harrower, of Flinders-st., on the ninth; Clerk D. O'Mahony, of Spencer-st., on the tenth; Ganger M. S. Rogan, of Donald, on the 11th; Fireman W. B. Grigg, of Newport Power House, on the 13th; Clerk J. Maher, of Room 2, on the 14th; Fireman H. F. Jordan, of Elsternwick, Clerk J. Yole, of Traffic Beh., and Ldg. Hand J. M. Examiner J. Moloney, of Jolimont, on the 15th; Upholsterer E. V. C. of Jolimont, on the 17th; Asst. Supt. of Services A. W. Keown, and Signaller Bignell, of Sth. Kensington, on the 18th; Carpenter A. Lillico, of Korumburra, on the 20th; Skilled Labourer C. J. of Flinders-st., on the 21st; Tram Conductor J. A. Bower, of Sandringham, and L. E. Pirani, of Acctcy. Beh., on the 22nd; Clerk F. T. Briggs, of Richmond, on the 24th; Optg. Porter W. P. Gymba, of Moorabbin, on the 26th; Fitter W. H. Gledhill, of Newport Works, and Actg. Ganger W. J. O'Brien, of Newport, on the 27th; Relvg. Clerk C. R. of Stores Beh., on the 28th; Control Eng. L. Aitken, of the Newport Power House, on the 30th.

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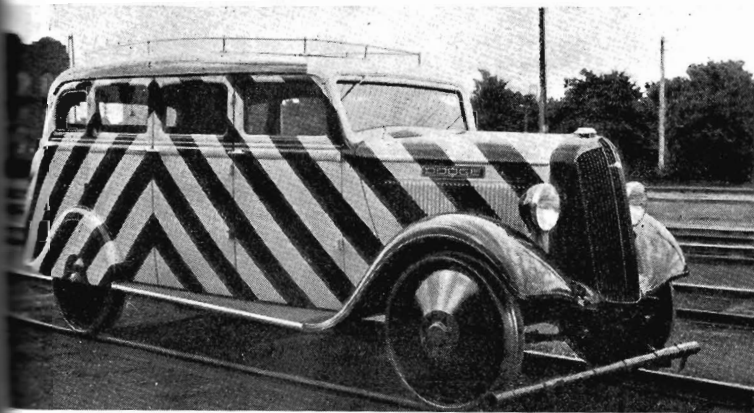
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The V.R. News Letter

December, 1936

Issue No. 75



FIRST OF ITS KIND to be used for regular passenger traffic in Victoria, the passenger mail motor provides comfortable seating accommodation for 12 passengers and a driver. Provision is also made for 12 cwt. of luggage, mails, newspapers and parcels on the roof and at the back. Distinctive yellow chrome and black stripes are painted on the vehicle. By this means, it is much more conspicuous at crossings.

Passenger Mail Motors Introduced

IMPROVED TRAIN SERVICES

VASTLY improved passenger and goods train services will follow the introduction of a passenger mail motor service on the Shepparton-Dookie-Katamatite line on November 30. On the same day, passenger mail motor will be placed in service on the Horsham-Goroke line.

Replacing the existing mixed train service on the Shepparton-Katamatite line, the passenger mail motor will provide a passenger service of seven trips in each direction weekly between Shepparton and Dookie, and four trips weekly between Dookie and Katamatite compared with the present tri-daily service. Connecting daily with the morning train from, and the afternoon train to Melbourne and running on an accelerated schedule, the vehicle will provide a much faster through service.

In the operation of the principal Goulburn Valley line goods train services, the passenger mail motor will have its most beneficial influence. The goods trains are largely governed by the mixed train services on the Katamatite and Picola lines. However, by introducing the passenger mail motor

service and augmenting the A.E.C. rail motor service on the Numurkah-Picola line, the goods and passenger trains on the branch lines concerned will be operated separately.

As a result, both the branch line and the main Goulburn Valley line goods train services will be substantially improved. On the "up" journey, later loading times at the principal fruit despatching stations and earlier arrivals in Melbourne will be provided, while on the "down" journey, consignors will have the benefit of earlier deliveries.

Horsham-Goroke Line

With the advent of the passenger mail motor on the Horsham-Goroke line, passengers will have the benefit of a much superior standard of travelling comfort. Provision is made for an extra return trip per week to Goroke, and an additional return trip on Saturday nights between Horsham and Natimuk. The passenger mail motor will also operate the existing postal motor services on this line on Mondays and Wednesdays in substitution for the Sheffield gang car, thus providing excellent passenger accommodation on those services.

Altogether, six passenger mail motors have been ordered; the remaining four will most likely be placed in service on the Birregurra-Forrest, Ararat-Maryborough and Murchison East-Girgarre-Colbinabbin lines.

Central Accounting at Spencer St. O.P.O.

COMMISSIONERS' approval has now been given to the establishment of a Central Accounting Office at the Outwards Parcels Office, Spencer Street. At this office, the whole of the bookkeeping at present performed at the parcels offices and cloak rooms, Spencer Street and Flinders Street, will be carried out.

An integral part of the scheme is machine accounting, and to assist the introduction of this more efficient system, which has operated so suc-

Other States Reduce Rail Loan Liability

VICTORIA is the third State where action has been taken to reduce the capital indebtedness of the railways by transferring a portion of the loan liability to the General Account of the State. As from July 1, 1931, the loan liability of the Queensland Railways (£64,184,569) was reduced by £28,000,000—or 44 per cent. In Tasmania, an Act has been passed through both Houses of Parliament reducing the capital indebtedness of the railways from £6,593,373 to £1,855,373—a reduction of 71 per cent. Interest on the amount written off (£4,738,000) will be a direct charge against the Consolidated Revenue of that State. Provision is also made for an annual payment from Consolidated Revenue of £94,000 per annum over a period of eight years for railway replacements and depreciation.

cessfully at the Melbourne Goods Sheds, three accounting machines of a more modern type are to be purchased.

An outstanding feature of machine accounting, as demonstrated at the Melbourne Goods Sheds, is the great advantage it provides for securing a daily sectional balance.

Cash Registers, too

Incidentally, it is proposed to replace the present unbusiness-like "tills," with four cash registers—one each for the Inwards Parcels Offices, Spencer Street and Flinders Street, and two for the Cloak Room, Spencer Street.

After the new system has been in operation over a period, consideration will be given to the question of providing seven additional cash registers at other points in the parcels offices and cloak rooms.

THE MONTH'S TOPIC

Fare Reductions and Faster Trains

RECENT developments embracing fare reductions and improved train services emphasise the ever-increasing attractiveness of railway travel. Both country and suburban passengers are reaping benefits under these plans.

In addition to the greatly reduced "Anywhere to Anywhere" fares which will continue until further notice, lower fares are now charged for country periodical tickets. Commencing at 50 miles, the mileage fares have been reduced by approximately 25 per cent., first class, and by 15 per cent., second class. For distances of less than 50 miles, a graduated reduction is available for certain mileages.

Country passengers also possess the marked advantage of substantially faster train services. Compared with two years ago, the travelling time on country lines has been reduced by nearly 500 hours per week.

Suburban Features

In the suburban area, the concession of return tickets at nearly single fare for "off-peak" travel from outer-suburban stations to Melbourne between 10 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. is to be continued until further notice.

And now, the already attractively-priced "Family" tickets to St. Kilda and Port Melbourne have been further reduced on Sundays. Covering the travel of two adults and four children or one adult and five children, these tickets are issued from Melbourne and all stations distant not more than 10 miles from Melbourne at only 2/6d., first return, or 2/-, second return. The tickets are available for travel by all trains on Sundays.

Outstanding in the comprehensive plan to improve Sunday suburban train services is the running of the "first" trains earlier and the "last" trains later. In addition, there are many extra trains on Sundays to and from the suburbs between 9.20 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Every member of the railway service should become fully acquainted with these important developments—and at every opportunity give them the widest possible publicity amongst his friends.

Automatic Rail Welder Soon Gives Results

FIRST placed in operation at the Permanent Way Materials Depot, Spotswood, on August 28 last, the new automatic flash butt welding machine has quickly demonstrated the major influence it will exert on the future rail welding programmes of the Department.

Tests carried out at the Melbourne University show that rails welded by the flash butt process are practically equal to the full strength of the rail.

A further important feature of the automatic flash butt machine is its high operating speed. This particular welding process is much cheaper than the Thermit method (which has hitherto been used for rail welding on the Victorian Railways), even allowing for transport costs from the depot to the site of the work.

Last month the machine gave a foretaste of its remarkable capacity to cope with an urgent rush of work on the Newport-Geelong line which is being relaid with new 90 lb. rails welded into lengths of 225 feet.

For the period from October 6 to November 14 (excluding Saturday afternoons and Sundays), two shifts each of 44 hours per week carried out welding operations on the machine. In that time, 2,538 welds were made.

Service

"Dear Sir,

At a meeting of the members of the Mildura Packers' Association held yesterday (November 4), appreciation was expressed at the great assistance rendered to the industry by the Victorian Railways in speeding up consignments of crude oil, with which growers were able so successfully to combat the frost menace last month.

"Please convey to those officers concerned our thanks and appreciation for the great assistance rendered."

—Mr. A. R. Hampton, Chairman of the Association, writing to the Chairman of Commissioners.

INTRODUCING—

A RAILWAYMAN who, during the present orgy of cricket, will be very much in the limelight and yet, paradoxically, remain comparatively unnoticed. He is Andy Barlow, of the Newport Workshops—better and Internationally known as Victoria's No. 1 cricket umpire. Opening batsmen particularly have their responsibilities, but it is doubtful if their's is any greater than those of the undemonstrative, white-coated umpires who must never bat an eyelid during the match. Andy, for instance, must pay strict judicial



heed to the full-throated appeals of "O'wzat?" from O'Reilly, Allen,

Supervisory Control

POWER SUPPLY SAFEGUARDING

TENDERS for the supply of material for a comprehensive scheme designed to increase substantially the efficiency of the suburban electrified system were received last month.

The scheme is known as "Supervisory Control." The nerve centre is a control room from which will be pointed all units in the power supply system—sub-stations, circuit breakers, cables and overhead wires—checked continuously and effectively supervised by a control engineer.

In this way, any abnormal conditions that arise can be immediately observed, the location defined and instant action taken to prevent an extension of the trouble. In addition, much greater direct control can be exercised over the power supply required to meet changes necessary during traffic fluctuations throughout the day.

Instant Indication

As the first step, a control room is being erected at Flinders Street, a location that is geographically ideal for the purpose in mind. In this room there will be a large diagram showing the whole of the components of the electrified railway system, with various switches and circuit breakers distinguished by small colored lights which are automatically illuminated when any faults occur.

At the control engineer's disposal there will be keys corresponding to the diagram, and by merely touching the keys the switches and circuit breakers may be operated. The operation is effected through electric impulses sent out over the telegraph wires and responded to by apparatus somewhat similar to that of an automatic telephone exchange.

Grimmett, Voce—and Duckworth too! The results of those who may decide the batting for such stars as Bradman, Hambleton, McCabe and Leyland—and, in the case of the irrepressible Don, who has thousands of people immediately brooding on the glorious uncertainties of cricket. In recent years, a West Indian cricketering giant has been subject to keen, decisive decisions by the imperturbable Andy. During the Great War, he also umpired in many matches played overseas by the celebrated A.I.F. team. It must not be overlooked either that he was a League football umpire for eight years. Now, he is with the Amateur Association, last year going to Adelaide for the Carnival.

Comptroller of Accounts to Retire

MR. T. F. BRENNAN'S NOTABLE CAREER

WITH the retirement this month of Mr. T. F. Brennan, F.I.C.A. (Comptroller of Accounts), there closes an official career notable for outstanding service rendered not only to the Department, but in other governmental spheres and the accountancy profession generally. Of his 30 years' governmental service, 30 were spent in the Railways Department.



MR. BRENNAN'S retirement follows closely on the introduction in Parliament of a Bill to transfer £30,000,000 from the Ways Capital Account to the General Account of the State. He was a member of the Special Committee—appointed by the Minister for Railways in 1932—to investigate the capital needs of the Victorian Rail-

ways. A provision in the Bill for the establishment of a Renewals and Replacement Fund, into which will be paid each year such amount as Parliament may appropriate for the purpose, subject to a minimum of £200,000, is of particular pleasure to Mr. Brennan. More than 25 years ago, he was the first to stress the vital need for applying this business principle to the railways, and he has continued vigorously to advocate the creation of such a

operations of the State Coal Mine; and, in the following year, in association with Mr. E. V. Nixon, a Melbourne accountant, and Mr. E. C. Eyers, Secretary for Railways, he reported on the transfer of railways capital to the General Account of the State.

For the past 30 years, Mr. Brennan has been indefatigable in advancing the general interests of his profession. He has written prolifically on all phases of accounting, and has delivered many addresses. A Fellow of the Commonwealth Institute of Accountants, a Licensed Company Auditor and a Licensed Municipal Auditor, Mr. Brennan is a Past-President of the Commonwealth Institute of Accountants and of the Commonwealth Accountants' Students' Society.

He is also a Past-President of the Victorian Railways Institute, and a Life Governor of the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind.

New Scenic Photos for Carriages

THE provision of newer, larger and more attractive photographs of Victorian tourist resorts proposed for the interiors of all country and suburban passenger carriages has been the subject of much favorable comment.

As there are nearly 20,000 existing photographs to be replaced, the completion of this work will necessarily be prolonged.

One feature of the new plan is the elimination of the mounts and descriptive letterpress and the use of a single title on each photograph. Larger photographs occupying the full size of the frames are being installed and photographs of a particular resort, rather than a series of resorts, concentrated in each compartment. In the suburban sliding door rolling stock, one resort only will be featured in each carriage.

All the photographs will be reproductions from new negatives secured by the Railways Photographer. It is planned to change the bulk of them more frequently than in the past.

New photographs have already been fitted in the vehicles on the Sydney Limited; the Boat Train; the newly-painted electric train; and in the air-conditioned passenger carriage on the Mildura line.

Tasmanian Rail Enquiry By Two V.R. Officers

TO carry out comprehensive investigations of the Transportation and Rolling Stock Branches of the Tasmanian Railways, Messrs. W. R. Price (Superintendent of Train Services) and E. H. Brownbill (Engineer, Rolling Stock Branch) have been made available to the Tasmanian Government.

These two officials will submit recommendations covering all aspects of passenger and goods train operation, workshops practices, locomotive and truck repairs, etc.

Both Messrs. Price and Brownbill are eminently suited for this responsible task, and the "News Letter" warmly congratulates them on their selection by the Commissioners. They have been prominently associated with many important departmental developments, chief among these being the introduction of greatly accelerated train services in recent years, in which, of course, the improved locomotives have been an important factor.

Mr. Price has had a wide practical experience of transportation work during his 31 years of service. Successively, he has occupied the posts of

'WARE PETROL IN HOUSE!

MANY serious accidents—some fatal—have resulted from carelessness in the use of petrol for clothes and hat cleaning and other domestic purposes, and the National Safety Council of Australia (on which the Department is represented) is now actively advocating that petrol should not be used in the household.

As an alternative, the Council urges the use of carbon tetrachloride which, as a cleansing liquid, is equally as effective as petrol. Carbon tetrachloride can be readily purchased.

Railwaymen, with their families, represent a substantial proportion of the community, and they are urged to accept the advice of the National Safety Council of Australia—and to induce their friends to do likewise.

clerk, Night Officer, Relieving Station-master, Traffic Inspector, Train Running Officer and Chief Train Despatcher, culminating in his appointment as Superintendent of Train Services in 1934, when a commencement was made with the State-wide train service improvements. Soon after, traffic plans were made for the Royal visit and the Victorian Centenary Celebrations.

Mr. Brownbill has had a brilliant career since joining the service 11 years ago. The only Master of Mechanical Engineering in the Department, he also possesses the degree of Bachelor of Electrical Engineering.

He has been closely connected with highly intricate investigations and improvements to locomotives that have resulted in an estimated increase of up to 40 per cent. in the horsepower of existing locomotives at certain speeds.

Thomas Tait's Choice

It is not generally known that Mr. Brennan's entry into the railway service in 1906 followed a Commonwealth-wide search for an officer capable of organising the Department's accounting methods. At that time he was a member of the Auditor-General's staff, and from all the applicants for the position of Assistant Accountant he was selected by Sir Thomas Tait, a former Chairman of Commissioners.

It is impossible adequately to review the importance of Mr. Brennan's position as chief financial adviser of the Department—the State's biggest business undertaking with a capital of £76,000,000. It is sufficient to say that his career has been characterised by an outstanding executive career, notable for conspicuous judgment and sagacity in dealing with problems of the highest significance.

Occupying a foremost position in the profession as an accountant, Mr. Brennan has carried out many important investigations on behalf of the Government. In 1911, he was a member of the Royal Commission which enquired into the affairs of a large insurance company; in 1913 he examined the accounting system of the Tasmanian Railways; in 1930 he was a member of the Commission appointed to report on public service companies; in 1931 he was a member of the Board which investigated the

Personal Postscript

Statistical Expert

THERE are at least three notable features associated with the career of Mr. M. J. Brennan who commenced final leave last month prior to retirement. He was the first Officer-in-Charge of the Powers Machine Accounting Division of the Accountancy Branch, continuing to occupy that post from 1925 until his retirement; ten years ago in company with two other Departmental Officers he carried out on behalf of the Department an important office systems investigation in the United States of America; and, not the least significant, he has completed almost 50 years' service in the Department. Powers machine accounting has been one of the most arresting office innovations in modern times. It has exerted a tremendous influence, and it is largely due to Mr. Brennan that the system has grown to be such an outstanding factor in increasing the efficiency of the Department's book-keeping and costing methods. Many years ago, he revealed a flair for statistics, and after a wide practical railroad experience at numerous stations he was appointed Statistical Officer of the Transportation Branch. Mr. Brennan leaves the Department with the best wishes of his legion of friends—and a record of a consistently high standard of service. He is a brother of Mr. T. F. Brennan, Member of the Staff Board. —V.R.M.

Last of "The Big Four"

DESCRIBED by his colleagues as the last of the veteran Block and Signal Inspectors—Messrs. A. E. Colson, A. W. Murfitt and D. Beddoe have all retired within the past few months—Mr. W. J. Pearson is now on final leave prior to severing a 49 years' association with the Department. These highly skilled safeworking men comprised "The Big Four," each with a career that bears a striking resemblance to the other. Signalling and safeworking generally occupied them

throughout their official lives—and each was a railwayman whose deep fascination for the job found expression in pleasurable imparting his wide practical knowledge to those younger railwaymen who are "carrying on." And those younger railwaymen appreciatively declare that they have been set a standard of service that may be equalled, but rarely excelled. For the past 14 years, Mr. Pearson supervised the safeworking side of the Melbourne Cup traffic, and, appropriately enough,

Unique—Both Ways!

OCCUPANT of a unique position—the only Saw Doctor in the Department—Arthur Thompson, of the Spotswood Workshops, retired last month after 40 years' service. And there is this further unique feature: throughout his railway career he was never late nor away sick! For the past 24 years, he was the dignified specialist who revived all the ailing saws, which would emerge from his expert diagnosis and attention gleaming and ready for further onslaughts on the toughest of timbers. Maybe his constant association with saw sharpening had something to do with his sharp punctuality. At least, his record for consistent "on time" attendance must be unparalleled in the Department. Old time football followers will probably remember Arthur as a stalwart of the Carlton League team. By the way, one of his first jobs in the Department was in the ice works. —H.F.S.

the recent meeting was his last official assignment. Mr. Pearson commenced his career as a block recorder at Princes Bridge in 1887 when the signal box was controlled by Signalman Charles Miscamble, who later rose through the ranks to a Commissioner-ship. —C.H.S.

Fostered Friendliness

QUIET, unassuming and always the diplomat, he is responsible for the friendly spirit which exists between the Department and

its patrons at Bendigo." That truth was publicly expressed at a memorable farewell function last month when R. J. Laird, Clerk-in-Charge, Bendigo Goods Sheds, retired after a 15-year term in that position. Parliamentary, civic, banking and railway representatives all warmly praised the veteran, who received a wallet of gold and a silver coffee service. Mr. Laird was stationed at Bendigo for 32 years altogether he had 48 years service being located for varying periods at the important stations, including Echuca, Castlemaine and Hamilton. He was a member of the Bendigo United Friends Societies Dispensary Board and Bendigo Football League Tribunal. Recently he was appointed Adjunct for the Debating Section of the Bendigo Competitions—a position for which many years of active interest in debating make him eminently fitted. D. Cameron, Chairman of the Debating Board, represented the Commission at the function, which was presided over by Cr. W. M. Bolton (Mayor of Bendigo). Fred Spooner and Jack McPherson of the local railways staff, expressed themselves as organisers.

December Birthdays

B'MAKER L. C. Blackburn, of Bendigo Workshops, on the first; Live Stock W. Robert, and B'maker H. R. Baskin, Newport Workshops, on the second; Adjuster E. D. Eastham, of Sale, on the R.S. Engineer R. Cannington, on the Elec. Subn. Gd. W. F. Riggs, of Portland, on the sixth; Repairer A. E. Bradshaw, and Storeman C. E. Dwyer, Printing Wks., on the eighth; Clerk Meares, of Room 2, and Stn-master Richards, of Korumburra, on the ninth; Repairer W. V. Matthews, of Derby, and Shift Elecn. G. H. Wright, of Newport Power House, on the 11th; Storeman W. G. McCracken, of Warrnambool, on the 12th; Elec. Subn. Gd. L. McEwen, Flinders St., and Clerk H. L. Ross, Acctcy. Bch., on the 13th; Asst. Adjuster J. Dawson, of Korumburra, on the 14th; Repairer F. Leister, of Frankston, on the 15th; Relvg. Optg. Porter J. W. of Seymour, Elec. Subn. Gd. A. J. of Essendon and Clerk J. J. A. of Geelong Acctg. Office, on the 16th; A. Tookey, of Nth. Melb. and P. White, of Seymour, on the 17th; J. McCall, of Wangaratta, and Asst. A. J. Gribble, of Flinders St., on the 18th; Storeman C. N. Molyneux, of Nth. and S. I. Officer A. Lee, on the 19th; Services Provodore H. L. Kennedy, Car Services Mgr. C. J. Ramsay, and Fitter N. L. Daly, of Nth. Melb., on the 20th; Block & Tackle Hand G. of Newport, Asst. Stn.-master E. and Clerk E. H. Bryan, of Flinders St. Officer, on the 21st; Undergear Asst. P. J. Bigham, of Jolimont, on the 23rd; Supt. Loco. Running A. R. on the 26th; Clerk F. D. Cadan, of Acctg. Office, and Clerk L. C. of Acctcy. Bch. on the 27th; Painter Williamson, of Korong Vale, and G. M. Croker, of Printing Wks., on the 28th; Asst. Goods Supt. W. Armitage, Fireman E. B. Halse, of Hamilton, on the 29th; Comptroller of Accounts Brennan on the 30th; and Skld. Murray, of Nth. Melb. and Porter McDermott, of Ararat, on the 31st.

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Wholly set up and printed in Australia by the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Laurens-street, North Melbourne. Sole Publishers—The Victorian Railways Commissioners.