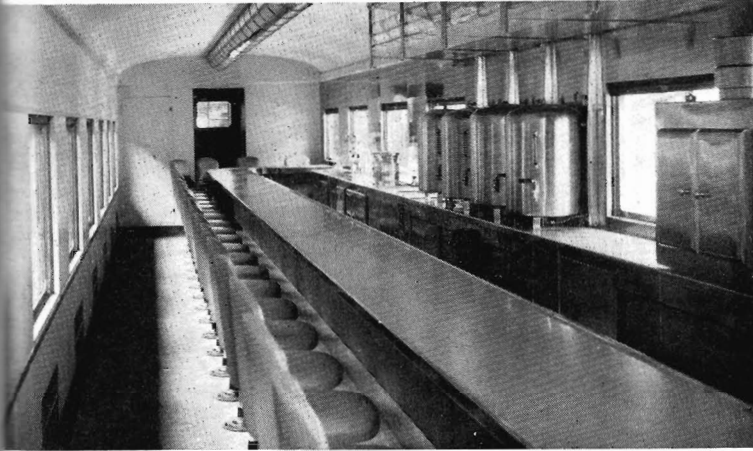


The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

January, 1939

Issue No. 100

First All-Steel, Air-Conditioned Buffet Car Now In Service



PICTURED above is Australia's first all-steel, air-conditioned Buffet Car (Wimmera) now in service on the 5 p.m. "down" and 8.15 a.m. "up" Albury expresses. Twenty-seven modern "sit-up" cafeteria chairs, upholstered in tangerine chrome leather, are provided at the long counter where varied meals and light refreshments are served throughout the journey. An attractive interior decorative scheme features a light brown rubber linoleum floor covering and the window sills in tangerine, while the walls and ceiling are shaded in cream. Steam, produced from the slow-combustion coke-burning stoves, is used for heating all soups and broods, while special electric refrigerators, drink mixers and fruit juice extractors are installed. The exterior of the car is painted in red, with a silver band, above and below the windows, running the whole length of the vehicle.

MORE AMBULANCE CORPS TO BE FORMED

Watch For Visit Of Organising Officials

FOLLOWING the success achieved last year in substantially increasing the enrolment of first aid students, special attention is being taken this year to revive and introduce Ambulance Corps at many centres where it is deemed necessary throughout the State.

Having obtained a first aid certificate each railwayman is then eligible to become a member of an Ambulance Corps. Each Corps consists of six members, from which a superintendent is chosen. The Corps meet once a fortnight throughout the year.

Payment is made by the Department for attendance at each meeting: 3/- per night for a superintendent; 2/6 for each member. It is usual to have two emergency members, each capable of filling any temporary vacancy in the Corps. Each of these emergency members receives 2/6 every time he attends as a substitute member.

As members of a Corps, railwaymen may compete in the District, State and Interstate Ambulance Competitions. But apart from the honour of achieving success in competitions, there is the satisfaction of knowing that membership of a Corps adds immeasurably to a railwayman's usefulness in case of an accident. Working worked together and studied each other's methods, the Corps working as a single unit is enabled to act with greater proficiency, speed and effect.

The Ambulance Officer and his staff plan to commence a comprehensive organising tour on January 2 throughout the metropolitan and country centres.

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH CHIEFS' NEW TITLES

FROM January 1, the titles of most of the principal administrative officers of the Way and Works Branch will be replaced by designations which more closely define the particular activity controlled.

Details are: Chief Civil Engineer (formerly Chief Engineer of Way and Works); Assistant Chief Civil Engineer (Assistant Chief Engineer of Way and Works); Engineer of Special Works (Superintending Engineer); Engineer of Track and Drainage (General Service Engineer); Engineer of Structural Design (Structure Engineer); and Engineer of Machinery and Water Supply (Water Supply Engineer).

The Branch will continue to be known as the Way and Works Branch. The changes in the titles of the senior officers of the Branch bring them more closely into line with those in other States and overseas.

BRIDGE BUILDERS BUSY IN 1938

EXTENSIVE bridge renewal and reconstruction works have been carried out by the Way and Works Branch during the year. Some of the works are in continuation of the policy of strengthening bridges to carry heavier locomotives and trains.

Several of these works, financed by the Melbourne City Council, have been in connection with the lengthening of bridges to provide increased width of roadway, such as at Punt Road, Richmond, where an additional span of 30 feet will double the width of the roadway. This work will be completed early this year.

The footbridge over the railway lines near the Melbourne Cricket Ground has also been extended by an additional span.

The Kent Street bridge, Ascot Vale, is being widened by 52 feet. The old abutments have been extended to carry the new superstructure. The bridge over the River Yarra at Hawthorn has been lengthened by an additional 50 feet span to carry it over the Yarra Boulevard. This work was financed by the Public Works Department.

The bridge over the railway line at Chapel Street, Windsor, is being progressively reconstructed. Work is soon to start on the second section.

Military Training Leave

THE following intimation from the Commissioners on April 5, 1937, is reissued for the information of the staff:—

"The Commissioners approve of any officer or employe who is a member of the Defence Force being granted leave with full pay to attend a training camp or school of instruction in which his unit is participating.

"In cases in which the exigencies of the Department do not permit of an officer or employe being released to attend a training camp or school of instruction in which his own unit is participating, he may, if he so desires, be released to attend an equivalent training camp or school of another unit.

"The leave of absence is not to be deducted from annual leave, and is contingent upon the officer or employe concerned submitting an application accompanied by documentary evidence from the Military, Naval or Air Force Officer-in-Charge as to the arrangements to be made, and furnishing subsequently a certificate of attendance."

The Month's Topic

Eyes Front!

MANY people regard the first day of January as specially set aside for retrospection. They are inclined, perhaps, to brood over "what might have been done" had this or that happened.

There is a tendency to dwell on missed opportunities and the inevitable sins of omission and commission—to get a little sentimental about it all and, finally, after a few pious resolutions to let it go at that.

Looking back is, of course, valuable in its way, but mistakes lose relative proportion if they are lumped together for purposes of bewailment.

There is too much to be done in 1939 to waste time over 1938's spilt milk, or even 1938's achievements—other than to record them for future guidance. One does not clear a hurdle by looking back at the last one.

Thus, the obvious slogan for 1939 is **EYES FRONT!**

Undoubtedly, January 1 is the time for every railwayman to look far ahead with the fixed determination to reach the highest pinnacle of service, irrespective of grade or branch. With every member of the railway team imbued with that spirit, the Victorian Railways will become an even greater force in the development of this great State . . .

INTRODUCING—

MISS Isabella Bradshaw who was last month appointed Railway Dietitian and Welfare Officer to relieve Miss Betty Wilmot who has been granted extended leave to carry out special work for the Commonwealth Department of Health. Miss Bradshaw possesses an extensive practical experience for a position which is becoming increasingly important in the Refreshment Services Branch. For the past 5½ years she has been the Chief Dietitian at the Alfred Hospital. She completed a practical course in dietetics at the Medical Centre and Columbia University, New York. Later she studied food services in hospitals in England and on the Continent for 12 months. Miss Bradshaw is also a certificated nurse of the Royal Melbourne and Women's Hospitals.



NEW BRIDGE TO AID RAIL—ROAD TRAFFIC

THESE RAILWAYMEN ARE REAL SALESMEN!

INTELLIGENT salesmanship on the part of a railwayman at a country station formed the text of a message on the front page of the "Weekly Notice" of December 6, and by direction of the Commissioners it is reprinted in the "News Letter":—

"Hearing of the prospect of a family making a journey to Western Australia, a shunter at a country station promptly advised the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, Melbourne, and suggested that information regarding the train service and fares be furnished to the intending travellers. This was done, and as a result of this railwayman's initiative rail tickets to the value of £73/18/- were issued to the party.

"This is a striking instance of alert salesmanship, and should inspire other members of the service to do likewise whenever the opportunity offers, whether in respect of passenger, goods or live stock traffic."

Since the publication of that report, it has been discovered that a suburban railwayman, prominently associated with a regular social function, announced to the audience the details of the reduced Sunday fares which were introduced on December 4. As a result, he answered 30 enquiries regarding Sunday rail travel.

These two examples of keen, practical interest in promoting the interests of the Department have given the Commissioners the greatest satisfaction.

City Station Additions Are Proposed

NEGOTIATIONS are proceeding between the Melbourne City Council and the Department for the construction of a new vehicular bridge over the railway line leading to the Princes Bridge station at Spring Street, Melbourne. The Way and Works Branch will undertake the work, the cost being shared by the Council and the Department.

This bridge will serve a dual purpose. With the closing of portions of Wellington Parade South situated on the western side of the site of the new structure, the Department will obtain land which will facilitate the completion of an important proposal providing for the rearrangement and extension of the platforms and sidings at the Princes Bridge station.

This latter scheme forms part of the proposals being considered by the committee of Departmental officers now engaged on a comprehensive survey of suburban rail traffic facilities. The committee comprises Messrs. J. M. Ashworth (Chief Civil Engineer), S. P. Jones (Signal and Telegraph Engineer), and G. Rogers (Metropolitan Superintendent).

The bridge will provide direct connection between Spring Street and Wellington Parade South for traffic entering and leaving the city via the new road at the rear of the Melbourne Cricket Ground and connecting with Punt Road and the recently opened Hoddle Bridge over the River Yarra.

Retiring V.R.I. General President Pays High Tribute To Members

"MY most vivid memory? Easily the splendid spirit of self-help displayed by members who have worked enthusiastically to advance the interests of the Institute," said Mr. Donald Cameron (Chairman of the Staff Board) on relinquishing the position of General President of the Victorian Railways Institute.

As Staff Board Chairman, Mr. Cameron deals with a wide variety of matters affecting the Departmental and personal affairs of railwaymen, and for that reason alone the position of President was congenial to him. "I have found it invaluable for getting to know hundreds of railwaymen in all grades and their families, and I have been able to clear away many grievances and misunderstandings on staff matters," he said.

"It is with great regret that I sever official association with the Institute," he said. "But for exceptional pressure of Departmental work, I would have been prepared to continue. I thank the members of the Central Council and the commit-

tees of country centres for their work, also the wives of members who have helped wonderfully in the success of country centres." Of the General Secretary (Mr. W. E. Elliott), the staff and instructors, Mr. Cameron also spoke in most appreciative terms.

He looks back with satisfaction on the fact that during his Presidency the Institute membership reached an all-time high: 14,776 in 1938 when the railway staff totalled approximately 24,500, as against 11,500 members in 1929 when the railway staff was 29,500.

"For an amazingly low membership fee," Mr. Cameron added, "railwaymen have a unique opportunity of fitting themselves to become eligible for promotion within the Department. The Department will continue to take favourable notice of those who strive to improve themselves through the Institute classes."

A member of the Institute since it was formed in 1910, Mr. Cameron became a member of the Council in 1920, First Vice-President in 1924 and General President in 1934. Mr. H. S. Sergeant (Comptroller of Staff) is his successor.

Brief Review Of Main Rail Developments In 1938

MUCH ACCOMPLISHED—BIG PLANS FOR FUTURE

ALTHOUGH overshadowed by the year 1937 when "Spirit of Progress" made its memorable entry into service, the railway year just closed was nevertheless a period when the Department made substantial progress in its policy of rendering improved all-round service to the community. In carrying out this policy, railwaymen in all grades maintained a standard of service in which the finest teamwork and co-operation predominated. Expressions of commendation from the public prove that railwaymen generally recognise the vital principle of giving the maximum of satisfaction to patrons, whether passengers or users of the freight services.

IN this necessarily brief review of 1938, it is possible only to indicate some of the major developments. Of great significance was the installation of the suburban train control system, which is destined to promote the efficiency of suburban train running, particularly during abnormal traffic periods. The equipment used by the train despatchers' desks is the most modern of its kind in the world.

Fare Reductions

An important innovation was the introduction of greatly reduced Sunday return fares for travel on the electrified lines. These fares provide particularly for travel by families and organised parties desiring to make visits or trips to the hills and the seaside. The outer-suburban periodical fares to Melbourne were also very materially reduced.

A milestone in the continuous plan of accelerating passenger trains—introduced early in 1934—was passed in 1938 when the total weekly reductions in travelling time exceeded 700 hours—703 to be exact.

Improved Tracks

During the year, a further program of extensive relaying and strengthening of tracks was carried out—designed to enable heavier trains to run to faster schedules and to make travelling more comfortable for passengers. Concomitant in this plan was the completion of the relaying of the line between Newport Junction and Geelong. Rails welded into lengths of 25 feet, including two experimental sections of 4,747 feet and 4,321 feet, together with other features of modern track construction, make this section one of the finest railway tracks in Australia.

November 23 was the first anniversary of the launching of "Spirit of Progress." This all-steel, streamlined, air-conditioned train has amply fulfilled the predictions made before it entered service. During the 12 months, 209,000 passengers were carried, an increase of 28,000, or 15 per cent., compared with the patronage of the "Sydney Limited" for the preceding year. This increase is all the more significant when it is re-

membered that in the busy months of December, 1937, and January, 1938, Interstate traffic was seriously affected by the infantile paralysis epidemic. The uniformly good service of "Spirit of Progress" has fully demonstrated the adaptability, skill and workmanship of Australian craftsmen in constructing one of the world's finest trains.

Australia's first all-steel, air-conditioned buffet car went into service on the Albury express on December 20. Since April, 1937, a composite buffet-and-sitting car has been in service on the Bendigo line. Besides providing passengers with varied refreshments under comfortable travelling conditions, buffet cars are important factors in reducing the overall travelling times. They remove the necessity for stops for refreshments en route. More buffet cars will be operated on lines where the conditions are appropriate for their use.

£1,000,000 Scheme

Preliminary action was taken to introduce a scheme for modernising the plant and equipment at the Newport Power Station. An estimated expenditure of more than £1,000,000 is involved. The existing plant has been in operation for over 20 years, and under present day requirements it has reached a stage where early replacement is essential. By using various existing facilities and plant which do not require replacement, the cost of completely modernising the Station will be approximately 55 per cent. of the cost of a new Station.

Expanding Tourist Traffic

Outstanding among the tourist traffic activities were the steps taken to stimulate travel from Western Australia and Tasmania to Victoria. In association with the New South Wales and Queensland Governments, the Eastern States Government Tourist Bureau, which provides a comprehensive service for people whether travelling by rail, road, sea, or air, has been established in Perth, with an officer of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau as Manager. A representative of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau is also located in Hobart. Thus, Victoria is now actively represented in every capital city in Australia.

Owing to expanding business, it was decided to move the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau from

Queen's Walk to new premises on "The Block" in Collins Street, Melbourne—a part of the city where all the leading travel organisations are situated. The new premises will be occupied about August of this year.

Big Traffic Survey

Impressed by the need for more efficiently coping with the traffic over suburban lines the Commissioners appointed a committee of Departmental officers to conduct a comprehensive survey of every aspect of traffic operations in the suburban area. The carrying out of the scheme ultimately adopted will, of course, be spread over a number of years.

Victorian Railways locomotive history is in the making at the Newport Workshops where three express locomotives of the 4-8-4 type are to be constructed—the first will be ready this year. Known as "H" class, these streamlined locomotives will be the largest, heaviest and most powerful in the Victorian Railways service. They will obviate the costly double-heading of heavy passenger trains on the western line between Melbourne and Ararat. Six additional "X" class locomotives were placed in running on goods trains during the year.

280 New Trucks

Notable additions to the truck stock included the construction of 80 sheep trucks. These trucks were constructed of Cor-ten steel, which has the manifest advantages of lighter weight, greater strength and greater corrosion resistance. Two hundred "GZ" trucks, with wheat-proofing features for the carriage of bulk wheat, were also constructed as part of a program of providing 300 trucks of this type.

Steady progress was made with the air-conditioning of passenger stock. During the year eight vehicles were fitted with this equipment. The Department now possesses 24 air-conditioned vehicles including sitting, sleeping, dining, parlor and buffet cars.

A review of the year's developments would be incomplete without mention of the gratifying increase in practical interest in first aid. During six months of the year, over 2,500 railwaymen enrolled in first aid classes—the greatest number enrolled in any one year in the Department's history. It is hoped that a substantially greater number of railwaymen will enrol this year—and thus equip themselves to render the humanitarian service which first aid knowledge provides.

INTERSTATE DEBATES LIKELY THIS YEAR

ALTHOUGH the V.R.I. Debating Society has been functioning for only two years, its members have made such splendid progress that Interstate Railway Debating Contests are likely to be held this year. It is hoped that railway debaters from New South Wales and South Australia will compete against Victoria.

This interesting development was announced last month by Mr. W. Stewart (President of the Society) who said that the Society's varied syllabus, designed to give members all-round public speaking experience, had amply proved its worth.

Individual winners of trophies competed for during the year were: Prepared Speech—Mr. C. W. Sandford (Electrical Engineering Branch); Impromptu Speech—Mr. W. J. Crowl (Railway Classification Board's staff); Dramatic Item—Mr. Harold Millane (Way and Works Branch); and Best Debater—Mr. P. McIvor (Transportation Branch).

Two teams competed in the Victorian Debaters Association's Competitions: one team won four of the five debates, and there were bright prospects that it would win the Grade Championship.

Recognising the potentialities of debating and associated activities, the V.R.I. Debating Society presents attractive opportunities for members of the service—of both sexes—to become proficient in public speaking. This progressive Society will resume its regular meetings in February next.

"ON TIME . . ."

HEARING that to mark his retirement from the service his fellow railwaymen at the Bendigo Loco. Depot had presented Mr. Frederick Bates (Enginemen's Instructor) with a gold watch, a former colleague said: "Well, if the watch keeps as good time as Fred. did while driving a locomotive it will be a beauty!" A neat tribute—one that symbolised the objective of this very painstaking railwayman who retires with the satisfaction of knowing that the Department "greatly regrets the loss of a valued official." Mr. Bates was located as a driver at Wodonga for 16 years, and for most of that period he had the honour of driving the "Sydney Limited." He was transferred to Bendigo as Night Depot Foreman just before the "Pacific" locomotives made their appearance on the Melbourne-Albury run. Mr. Bates possessed a comprehensive knowledge of locomotives and he was specially fitted to impart it to many hundreds of loco. men. During recent years he was invaluable in the plan for accelerating train services. He carried out many important tests in the Bendigo District on trains planned to run to faster schedules with heavier loads. —F.A.

"Queen Of Railways"

BIG CARNIVAL FOR LIFE SAVING SOCIETY

HERE is a smiling picture of Miss Ruby Banks, of the Flinders Street station Refreshment Rooms, who has been chosen as "Queen of the Railways," in a spectacular Queen Carnival being



Miss RUBY BANKS

organised by the Royal Life Saving Society of Victoria. She is a member of the V.R.I. Life Saving and Swimming Club which promises to play a leading role in the Carnival. Promoted with the object of raising funds for the Royal Life Saving Society and to assist individual clubs associated with the Society, the Carnival will reach its climax at the Melbourne Town Hall at the end of April next. In the midst of much pomp and ceremonial, His Excellency the State Governor (Lord Huntingfield) will "Crown" the winning "Queen." Although there are 18 other "Queens," Miss Banks possesses an excellent chance of topping the poll. As the railways' representative she should command tremendous support, each vote costing one penny each. Tickets will soon be available, and railwaymen generally are invited to support their own representative.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

CLERK R. E. Williams, of Seymour, on the first; Skld. Labr. A. J. Kirkwood, of Nth. Melb., and Ganger C. R. D'Arbon, on the second; Undgr. Repr.'s Asst. W. C. Power, of Jolimont Workshops, on the third; Asst. Eng. G. S. Luttrell, Skld. Labr. S. Smith, of Oakleigh, and Clerk T. H. Barber, of Elwood, on the fourth; Senr. Skld. Labr. W. C. Gunstone, of Oakleigh, on the fifth; Carpenter A. V. Dale, of Seymour, Repr. J. J. Kilby, of Bendigo, and Lad Labr. J. C. May, of Newport Workshops, on the sixth; Asst. Chief Elec. Engineer C. G. H. McDonald, on the seventh; Repr. W. R. Broughton, of E. Camberwell, and Elec. Train Driver R. Uniacke, of Brighton Bch., on the eighth; Asst. Estate Officer A. H. Rogerson, B'mkr. W. A. Case, of Ballarat Workshops, and Fitter & Turner A. A. McKean, of Jolimont Garage, on the ninth; Fitter H. C. Lancashire, of Newport Workshops, Clerk R. G. Finch, of Ararat Loco. Depot, and Clerk L. C. Rogers, of Nth. Melb., on the 10th; Clerk C. L. Myers, of Traffic Bch., on the 11th; Supvr. of Road Transport C. G. Walker, Clerk H. E. Wain, of Nth. Melb., and Ldg. Shunter A. E. Coles, of Newport, on the 12th; Asst. Elec. Engr. J. E. Robinson, of Overhead Depot, on the 13th; Sig. Adjstr. R. Strugnell, of Bendigo, and Labr. W. J. Jamison, of Melb. Goods, on the 14th; Ganger R. McIntosh, of Heathcote, on the 16th; Skld. Labr. P. A. Flower, of Flinders Str., and Elec. Fitter-in-Chg. J. J. E. Garbett, of Caulfield, on the 18th; Repr. P. Allen, of Ballarat, on the 19th; Mach. Moulder H. E. Martin, of Newport Workshops, Labr. G. Andrew, of Newport Workshops, and Stationmaster J. A. Millar, of Nyahwest, on the 20th; Sglnr. R. Penny, of Ballarat East, on the 21st; Clerk S. Lawley, of Spotswood Workshops, on the 22nd; Prr-in-Chg. M. J. Moloney, of Tatyoon, on the 24th; Betterment and Suggestions Bd. Member L. C. Bromilow, and Head Office Caretaker A. V. Collatz, on the 28th; Eng. Dvr. H. E. Fulton, of Bendigo, B'smith J. Cumming, of Newport Workshops, and Shunter C. A. Lewis, of Melb. Yds., on the 31st. —M.W.

RELIEF COMMITTEE APPRECIATES HELP

IN a letter to the Commissioner forwarding a copy of the Committee's annual report, the Chairman of the State Relief Committee (Mr. A. E. Moss) said:—

" . . . I would also like to make reference to pages 9 and 10 of our annual report expressing thanks to the many members of the Railway Department who have taken time to time render unclaimed assistance to this Committee, and would be glad if you would express these sentiments in your staff publication."

"W.W." RETIRES

FASCINATED by railroading before he began his career in the Department almost 50 years ago, Mr. W. W. Reid (Special Officer in the Traffic Branch) retires this month with the lure of trains, tickets and travel even more firmly implanted in his mind. When he became a stationmaster in 1911 he had gone a long way towards realising one of his boyhood ambitions. To wend his way through the Department and ultimately control one of the busy city stations was the way he would have preferred to go. But his capacity had not escaped notice and after a period as a relieving stationmaster he was appointed a Traffic Inspector in the Gippsland District. In 1920, he was selected for the position of Special Officer, and with the whole State spread before him he took over a congenial position making investigations into all aspects of transportation and traffic questions. In this he was a complete success. Mr. Reid leaves the service with warm friendships throughout the Department—and the tribute to him will be tangibly shown in a handsome presentation which Mr. J. McClelland (General Passenger and Freight Agent) will make on the behalf.

AFTER THE CUP

INTERSTATE railway cricket history will be made at Brisbane next month when the States will be represented in a series of matches for the "Mick Simmons" Cup. The Cup is now held by Western Australia, but a State-wide search a team has been selected from the Victorian Railways which is prepared to emerge the winners. The Victorian team is: F. Boadle—Captain—(Nth. Melb. Loco. P.O'Connor—Vice-Captain—(Transportation); S. Salter, D. Bragg, R. Riley, L. Blackie, P. Baldi (all of the Transportation Branch); W. Martin, P. J. Smith and L. Walker (Spotswood Rolling Stock Branch); J. Askew (Spotswood Workshops); I. Stick (Ballarat) and J. Janson (Ballarat). The team will be under the leadership of Mr. Roy Kydd, Sports Secretary of the Victorian Railways Institute, who has wide experience in that capacity should witness the success of the social side of the trip, the visitors will be the guests of the Queensland Railways Institute which has planned a social and sightseeing program. Next year the Interstate Cricket Carnival will be held in Melbourne.

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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

February, 1939

Issue No. 101

STRIKING RAILWAY EXHIBIT AT NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR

CONSPICUOUS in Australia's exhibit at the New York World's Fair (opening on April 30 and continuing for an indefinite period) will be a remarkable sectionalized scale model of the body of the parlor-observation car of "Spirit of Progress." The model is now en route to New York, and as part of the Australian Travel Exhibit, it should be a striking demonstration of Australia's outstanding achievement in modern railway comfort.

Built in the car shop at the Newport Workshops, the model is 10 feet 2 inches long and conforms throughout to a scale of approximately one-eighth of full size. Except for the air-conditioning equipment, the model is complete in detail—even to the upholstered chairs, tables and book shelves, miniature telephone, writing paper, envelopes, venetian blinds.

It is a model which reflects the greatest credit upon all who were associated with its construction.

The model will be mounted in a vertical timber frame in such a way that from one side visitors will be able to see the complete exterior of the car and portion of the semi-circular car end. About two-thirds of the length of the roof and wall are cut away from the other side of the car to enable the interior fittings to be seen to the fullest advantage.

All Features Reproduced

The cut-away section is to be reproduced by a sheet of glass specially moulded to follow the contours of the wall and roof of the car. The layers of sound-deadening and insulating materials, roof sticks, ceiling, panelling, and air-ducts are faithfully reproduced in the cut-away parts of the roof, walls and floor.

Laminated wood has been used in the construction of the main part of the body. The sides are plywood, while the roof section is a piece of pine moulded into shape. The semi-circular end is reproduced by bending a sheet of hardboard to shape round a wooden core.

The interior fittings are complete—right down to the smallest detail. Specially selected fine grain walnut and cedar veneers are utilized exactly as in the panelling of the parlor-observation car of "Spirit of Progress."

Velvet of the proper shade was used for the carpet and the tint of the upholstery in the chairs and settees has been retained. The ivory and chromium smokers' stands are also reproduced.

Coat and hat hooks, mirrors and other fittings in the lavatory compartments have been copied. The double windows are glazed with glass and the exterior is painted royal blue with two longitudinal gold bands.

* * *

On the return of the model to Victoria, the Commissioners will consider the question of making it available for public inspection at various selected points.

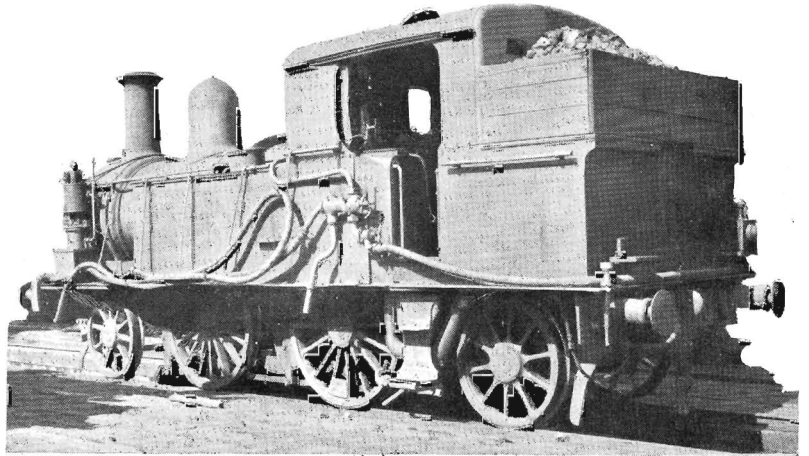
Transport Regulation Necessary, Says Minister

THE Minister for Transport (Mr. H. J. Hyland) announced last month that he had asked the Transport Regulation Board to submit a report setting out what amendments, if any, they considered desirable to existing legislation covering the operations of road transport vehicles in Victoria.

Stating that legislation was desirable to regulate road transport effectively and check the loss of £1,000,000 a year to the railways by road competition, Mr. Hyland said that it was absurd that a big firm should be allowed to run a fleet of huge trucks and trailers all over Victoria at a licence fee of 5/- a year per vehicle. This is, of course, exclusive of registration fees payable under the Motor Car Acts.

Mr. Hyland added that if Cabinet approved he would introduce this year an amending Bill which would impose effective road transport fees and re-organize the whole transport control system. The new charges, however, would not drive motor vehicles off the road as had been done in other States.

V.R. OLDEST WORKING LOCOMOTIVE



The oldest locomotive still in service in the Department is not 317 "R," which was constructed by the Phoenix Foundry Co., at Ballarat in 1883. On the contrary, the distinction belongs to 178 "F," which was built by the Company in 1880 as a 2-4-0 tender engine.

This engine, together with some others of that class, was later re-built as a 2-4-2 tank engine for suburban working, and is now used as a mobile boiler washing engine at the North Melbourne Locomotive Depot.

The Month's Topic

REDUCED REVENUE EXPECTED

IN a review last month of the prospects for the current financial year, the Commissioners said that the railway revenue had been seriously affected by the partial failure of the wheat harvest owing to the abnormally dry season which has been experienced.

The Department's original estimate of the wheat yield was 45 million bushels, but it is now unlikely that it will exceed 19 million bushels. The loss of revenue from wheat traffic alone is estimated at over £400,000, while the loss of railway business in other directions is likely to amount to a further £300,000.

Another factor which is reacting on the railway finances is the continued uncertainty of the transport position. Under existing conditions, the railways have a monopoly of the lower priced freights, but road operators have the right to compete for the transport of the higher priced commodities—often with farcically uneconomic results.

Freight Anomalies.

As the Commissioners have emphasized on numerous occasions, the railways, in order to retain business, must make drastic rate reductions based neither on mileage nor service. The effect of this competition is obvious in the many anomalies in freight rates throughout the State which, in themselves, are a devastating criticism of the present unstabilized transport situation.

Despite these disabilities, the railways are continuing to improve their service to the public. The construction of additional buffet cars for main country lines; improvements in tracks; extensions of air-conditioning—the outstanding feature of modern passenger transport; reductions in fares and improvements in passenger and goods services, are features of the progressive program being pursued by the Commissioners.

These improvements have unquestionably placed the Commissioners in a better position to meet competition and attract transport to the rail. Further evidence of this continuous improvement will be seen during the current year.

New Ambulance Corps Being Formed

CONTINUING the stimulation of interest in the first aid movement, the Department's Ambulance officials are now making a comprehensive tour of many country centres where it is planned to establish and revive existing Ambulance Corps.

Visits will be made to Ararat, Bairnsdale, Ballarat, Colac, Donald, Hamilton, Horsham, Korumburra, Murtoa, Mildura, Numurkah, Ouyen, Seymour, Shepparton, Swan Hill, Sale, Warrnambool, Wangaratta, Wodonga and Warragul.

It is also planned to form Ambulance Corps at Spencer Street, Flinders Street and Lilydale; also on the Essendon, Williamstown, Eastmalvern and Clifton Hill lines.

Apart from the fact that any member of a Corps holding a first aid certificate is eligible to receive special fees, there is the more important aspect that each active Corps greatly strengthens the all-round effectiveness of the Department's first aid organization.

In view of the vital character of first aid and the potentialities of each Corps, the Commissioners earnestly appeal to all railwaymen for that interest which is so valuable in the formation of these Corps.

Above all, it is imperative that once the Corps has functioned the enthusiasm of individual members must be sufficiently strong to ensure the continuance of the Corps.

SERVICE

"It is my pleasure to place on record the very courteous and efficient service offered to me by the young lady in charge of the Fruit and Newspaper Stall on the Geelong Railway Station.

"I wished to purchase a stamp which was not available at the moment at the Book Stall, and the attendant very kindly attempted to purchase one at the Booking Office.

"As she was not successful, I returned to my seat in the train and was surprised and pleased to find that the attendant had been successful in another direction and brought the stamp to me in the compartment.

"This was such a striking example of 'going the second mile' that I thought I would like to advise you of the high standard of courtesy adopted by your representative at Geelong."

—Mr. Alec. S. Eggleston, Registered Architect, of Collins Street, Melbourne, writing to the Chairman of Commissioners.

INTRODUCING—

GRAHAM THORLEY, apprentice pattern-maker at the Newport Workshops, for whom leading Melbourne painters predict a successful career as an artist.

Conspicuous for the quality and variety of his artistic work, Graham, who is only 17, recently won a scholarship presented by a Melbourne daily newspaper for competition among juvenile artists. Since he was 12 years of age he has attended the Swinburne Technical College, Hawthorn, where he quickly completed the primary course and won a scholarship in commercial art. Graham has a



studio in his home, and the walls are adorned with reproductions of the Old Masters and with many striking examples of his own work which are said to be equal in quality and drawing many pictures seen at professional exhibitions. He is enthusiastic about his art. His parents often find that he has risen from his bed in the middle of the night to represent in colour or crayon an idea that he has suddenly discovered.

FINE CATERING FEAT AT SEYMOUR

CONGRATULATIONS are being showered upon the staff at Seymour Refreshment Rooms for their outstanding catering performance on January 11, when three special train loads, with a total of nearly 1,000 scouts returning from the Sydney Jamboree, arrived at short intervals for breakfast.

Precise plans had been made to provide the boys—each with a ravenous size appetite—with breakfast during the scheduled stopping times of the trains at Seymour; the first train to stop 45 minutes and the others within 60 minutes.

Due, however, to heavy traffic, generally the trains reached Seymour behind schedule. As a result, the meal times had to be greatly accelerated and the boys were fed with sausage, potatoes, bread and butter, tea and coffee in the shortest possible time. These are the statistics of the occasion:—

325 fed in 17 minutes.

334 fed in 40 minutes.

313 fed in 34 minutes.

There was an interval of only 10 minutes between the departure of the first train and the arrival of the second train; 32 minutes between the second and third trains. However, all the staff rose magnificently to the occasion, and the meals were served, dishes, etc. washed, tables re-arranged—in fact everything was done to the entire satisfaction of everyone.

Incidentally, the boys disposed of more than 450 lb. of sausages . . .

RAILWAY PROPERTY DAMAGED BY BUSH FIRES

Valuable Service By Railwaymen

BUSH fires, which ravaged Victoria last month, caused severe damage to railway property throughout the State.

"Hotham Heights," Mt. Hotham, and "The Bungalow," Mt. Feather-top, were completely gutted. This is a severe loss not only to the Department but to the tourist industry of Victoria as both places possessed an all-the-year attraction and particularly ranked high among Victoria's snow resorts.

The railway buildings at Noojee were destroyed—the sole exception being a concrete Departmental residence. The 295-foot long timber bridge between Noojee and Nayook was reduced to a ruin of twisted rails and blackened trestle stumps. This bridge was 69 feet high and carried a single track railway across the deep gully. A road bridge over the railway near Erica was also destroyed, while minor damage was done to two small bridges on the Walhalla line.

On the Heywood-Mt. Gambier line, a wooden bridge near Lyons, 80 feet long and 36 feet high, was destroyed and three small bridges on the Hamilton-Portland track suffered fire damage. Three bridges on the Colac-Beech Forest narrow gauge line were destroyed and other damage on the line was also reported.

Wooden culverts, telegraph lines, cattle pits, fencing and sections of track in various places were destroyed or damaged.

Railwaymen's Aid

Throughout the State excellent work was done by station staffs, works gangs, and other railwaymen, who won high praise for their strenuous efforts to cope with the fires.

In response to an urgent appeal from the Curator of the Sir Colin MacKenzie Sanctuary, at the height of the menace on Friday, January 13, a party of 34 volunteer railwaymen was conveyed to Healesville by railway, road motor bus and truck, and did excellent work in fighting fires and turning breaks.

A call was made for men to stay at Healesville overnight and 14 members of the party—the full number required—volunteered. Foodstuffs for these railwaymen were provided by the Refreshment Services Branch and conveyed by car from Melbourne.

The railway team was highly commended by the local authorities for the assistance they rendered.

Special trains were run by the Department to carry volunteers to the fire front and refugees to the safety and care of special camps.

A feature of the general disaster was that the destruction of the bridge on the Mt. Gambier line isolated Wirth's Circus which was in that town, and it became necessary to send a relief train from Melbourne to pick up the circus which, with all its collection of animals, had journeyed by road past the damaged track to meet the relief train.

NEW V.R.I. PRESIDENT

MR. H. S. Sergeant (Comptroller of Stores) is the new General President of the Victorian Railways Institute. His appointment by the Commissioners followed the retirement from the Presidency of Mr. D. Cameron (Chairman of the Staff Board).

A member of the Institute since it was established in 1910, Mr. Sergeant has always been devoted to the development of the organization.

In 1929, he was appointed one of the Commissioners' representatives on the Council. He was Vice-President in 1924 and First Vice-President in 1935. He was also actively associated with two of the Institute's most important Committees: Chairman of the Finance Committee and Chairman (later Member) of the House Committee.



Other changes in the Executive of the Institute include the appointment of Messrs. C. G. Walker (Supervisor of Road Transport) and W. H. Swaney (Chief Clerk, Way and Works Branch) as Vice-Presidents. New representatives of the Commissioners on the Council are Messrs. F. P. Mitchell (Bookkeeper, Stores Branch), W. Stewart (Special Officer, Way and Works Branch) and F. L. Wright (Fitters' Assistant, Newport Workshops).

REDUCED SUNDAY FARES POPULAR

FIGURES compiled last month show that the greatly reduced day-return fares for Sunday suburban travel—introduced on December 4—have resulted in increased traffic.

For the 7 Sundays, December 4, 11, 18, and 25, and January 1, 8, and 15, a total of 15,451 additional return journeys were made compared with the normal average Sunday travel prior to the introduction of the reduced fares on December 4.

An outstanding feature is the very attractive fares for children under 16 years of age: for travel from anywhere to anywhere on the electrified lines, the first-class return fare is 9d.; second-class return, 6d.

For adults, day-return tickets are on issue at little more than single fare.

In addition, there is every inducement for families to travel by rail on Sundays. For example, a family excursion ticket—covering the travel of two adults and four children, including two children over 14 and not more than 16 years of age—from Williamstown to Upper Ferntree Gully, costs only 6/-.

There is a reduction of 10 per cent. in the Sunday special return fares for organized parties paying 20 adult fares. One free ticket is issued to the organizer of each such party.

Change in Colour Plan of Country Tickets

AN important innovation in colour schemes, designed to facilitate the checking and collection of country tickets, has been adopted by the Commissioners on the recommendation of the Ticket Committee. The new plan, which will be introduced gradually as the present stocks of tickets become exhausted, marks the elimination of many colours which are confusing to ticket collectors.

Yellow and brown will be used for first-class tickets; blue and grey for second-class tickets. Separate colours will be maintained for journeys in the "down" and "up" directions as follows:—

	"Down"	"Up"
1st class single ...	Yellow	Brown
2nd class single ...	Blue	Grey
1st class return ...	Yellow	Brown
2nd class return	Blue	Grey

In effect, the colour plan provides that tickets coloured yellow and blue will be collected from passengers travelling in the "down" direction, and brown and grey in the "up" direction, with the exception that tickets issued for any journey involving both "down" and "up" travel will bear the "down" colour for the forward journey and the "up" colour for the return journey, with a white circle left blank in the colour.

BULK HANDLING WHEAT SCHEME PARTLY READY THIS YEAR

CONSIDERABLE progress has been made with the plans for the introduction of the bulk handling of wheat. Mr. A. K. Bartel (Engineer of Track and Drainage and the Railways' Representative on the Grain Elevators Board) forecasts that portion of the scheme serving the Geelong Terminal will be operating at the beginning of the next wheat season.

Of the 81 elevators to be constructed in the western and north-western areas serving Geelong, 30 are now being built. The total capacity of the 81 elevators will be 9,365,000 bushels. The Geelong Terminal will hold 2,250,000 bushels in 28 main bins and 18 inter-spaced bins.

The construction of the elevators is being undertaken by the Grain Elevators Board. Meanwhile, the Department is proceeding with its part of the work—the wheat-proofing of trucks and alterations and additions to sidings at many of the stations where the elevators will be located.

So far, nearly 1,000 of the GZ and G type of trucks have been adapted for the carriage of wheat in bulk. In addition, 500 trucks of the GY class will be constructed—a new type of truck of an improved design.

The principal wheat-proofing features of these trucks include the installation of door fastenings to provide for sealing the doors; the abolition of peep-holes and covers in the doors; and the elimination of the slack between the removable stanchion and support. When not carrying wheat, these trucks can, of course, be used for general goods purposes.

From a railway viewpoint, the biggest single undertaking will be at Geelong where extensive track works, to accommodate the entry and departure of long wheat trains, will be carried out.

V.R. TIME-TABLES PRAISED OVERSEAS

IN a recent issue of the "Railway Gazette" (England), a correspondent who described himself as a printer "with the life-long hobby of collecting railway time-tables and other material associated with railways," paid a high tribute to the Victorian Railways public folder time-tables.

In the course of an interesting letter, the writer said:—

"Perhaps the easiest-read time-table in the Empire is the Victorian Railways folder as re-arranged a few years ago. To me it seems to combine the good features of British and American time-tables. The folder style is easier for the pocket or desk than the book style. The printing is fairly good, though a more legible type is possible. The map is good. Other Australian time-tables are likely to be over-bulky."

VERSATILE AND VALUABLE.

FOR two reasons alone it was fortunate that Mr. C. R. Whitelaw was the Stationmaster at Mornington last month when fire suddenly swept down with such devastating results in a large portion of Dromana. As the well-known owner, operator and announcer of experimental radio station VK3BH, he promptly stopped his regular musical program to broadcast two urgent appeals for volunteers to hasten to Dromana. From these two announcements, it is estimated that nearly 200 people unhesitatingly responded. Having broadcast his appeals, Mr. Whitelaw lost no further time: he closed his station—and donned the uniform he proudly wears as a member of the Country Fire Brigade movement. . . . Reporting to the local fire station, he was told to remain in charge of six men with a hose carriage and pump to stem any outbreak in the vicinity of Mornington. Mr. Whitelaw's hobbies are firefighting and radio broadcasting. He joined the Prahran fire brigade in 1907, and wherever he has been located as a railwayman since then he has been actively associated with the local fire brigade. He is one of the best known personalities in Australian amateur radio circles. Since 1918, he has been "on the air" entertaining at many country centres with equipment mostly built by himself. He is a foundation member of the Wireless Institute of Australia. . . .

—T.D.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS.

PARCELS Porter J. A. Frederick, of Ballarat, and Labr. T. F. N. Smith, of Reclamation Dept., on the second; Plumber H. J. Smead, of Newport, and Line-man-in-Charge J. Hynes of Spencer St., on the third; Elec. Fitter C. E. Hamley, of Elec. Depot, Spencer St., on the fourth; Elec. Train Driver J. E. Johnson, of Jolimont, Porter-in-Charge W. S. Redpath, of Lest Property Store, and Signalman C. O'Malley, of Flinders St. "B" Box, on the fifth; Clerk P. H. Chamberlain, of Terminal & Eastern Acctg. Office, on the seventh; Clerk R. A. Harris, of Jolimont Garage, on the eighth; Striker T. W. Russell, of Newport W'shops, on the ninth; Asst. Stn. Master J. T. Lawson, of Lilydale, and Plumber W. W. W. Sharmar, of Ballarat, on the 10th; Elec. Fitter-in-Charge P. H. Ratcliff, of North Melb., and Clerk J. McK. Stewart, of Acctcy. Bch., on the 11th; Fitter J. McD. Graham, of North Melb., on the 12th; Repairer J. Robinson, of Tottenham, on the 13th; Fireman H. Ludgate, of Jolimont, on the 14th; W'maker H. Tindle, of North Melb. W'shops, on the 16th; Works Ganger J. McK. Waugh, of Ararat, on the 17th; Optg. Porter T. C. Gale, of Moe, Storeman J. G. Flannery, of Spotswood Storehouse, and Turner C. E. Terry, of Newport W'shops, on the 18th; Stn. Master C. R. Whitelaw, of Mornington, on the 19th; Genl. Passgr. & Freight Agent J. McClelland, Chief Clerk W. H. Swaney, of W. & W. Bch., and Ganger C. H. Salt, of Hawkesdale, on the 20th; Clerk W. E. Stevenson, of Melb. Yards, on the 22nd; Stower A. H. Lincoln, of Melb. Goods, on the 23rd; Roadmaster A. L. Abbott, of North Melb., and Works Sub-foreman H. F. Frencham, of North Melb., on the 24th; Clerk P. C. Keay, of Acctcy. Bch., on the 25th; Clerk W. A. Enderby, of Secty's. Bch., on the 26th; Road Foreman J. P. O'Loughlin, of North Melb., on the 27th; Chief Electrical Engineer H. P. Colwell, and Clerk A. L. Spalding, of Box Hill on the 28th. —A.K.

DEATH OF DR. JOHN GORDON

DR. John Gordon, C.M.G., M.D., M.S., F.R.A.C.S., L.R.C.P., whose death occurred last month, was well known and was greatly respected by the thousands of railwaymen who came under his official notice during the decade in which he was Railways Medical Officer.

Prior to his entry into the Department in September, 1924, Dr. Gordon was an examiner in surgery at the University of Melbourne, and Senior Honorary Surgeon at the Melbourne Hospital. From 1914 to 1918 he served with the A.I.F. Medical Corps in Egypt, Gallipoli, France and England. Dr. Gordon retired from the Department on February 10, 1935.

ANOTHER RAILWAYMAN PASSES.

IT is with regret that we record the recent death of Mr. T. E. Carmody (Melbourne Goods Superintendent) after 40 years' service in the Department.

Occupying a number of positions in the Goods Sheds, culminating in his appointment as Melbourne Goods Superintendent in August last, Mr. Carmody had given most of his service at this depot.

A member of the original first corps at the Goods Sheds, he was keenly interested in the movement and gave great support to it.

Mr. Carmody, a widower, was mourned by a son and daughter.

POPULAR V.R.I. INSTRUCTOR

THE Station Accounts and Management classroom at the Institute was recently the scene of a happy function when members of the Stationmasters' and Assistant Stationmasters' class (country and suburban) made presentation to Instructor N. W. McDonald. After eulogistic references were made by several speakers to the sterling qualities of the popular instructor, he was presented with a suitably inscribed gold wristlet watch and a letter of appreciation. Since his appointment as instructor in 1929, Mr. McDonald has been noted for his invaluable assistance and advice generously given to his students at all times. His previous wide experience as Assistant Stationmaster, Relieving Assistant Stationmaster, and Relieving Stationmaster, has eminently fitted him for the post which he so capably fills.—

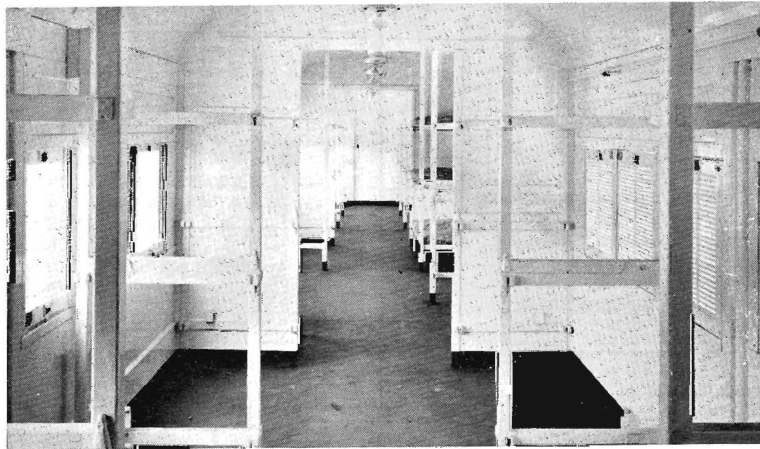
Wholly set up and printed in Australia by the Victorian Railways Printing Works, Laurens-street, North Melbourne, for the Publishers—The Victorian Railways Commission.

The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

March, 1939

Issue No. 102

New Railway Ambulance Car



Portion of the new railway ambulance car—see story in page 2. When this photograph was taken, only three of the 41 beds had been fitted in position.

"SPIRIT OF PROGRESS"

MR. BRUCE'S TRIBUTE : CRITIC ANSWERED

WHEN Mr. S. M. Bruce, High Commissioner for Australia in London, stepped from "Spirit of Progress" on his arrival from Sydney recently, almost the first words he uttered to the waiting pressmen were in the highest praise of the train.

With obvious pride in the fact that an Australian railway system could make available such an exceptional standard of rail travelling comfort, Mr. Bruce said:—

"And 'Spirit of Progress'! Well, it is the finest train I have ever travelled on—quite the best in the world. I travelled on a crack American train—'The Super Chief'—running from Chicago to Los Angeles, but it was not superior to the Victorian train."

* * *

TRENCHANT REPLY BY MR. CLAPP

"Spirit of Progress" also figured in the news recently when a correspondent in a Melbourne daily newspaper alleged that new bogies had to be built for the train after it had been placed in running.

In the course of a trenchant rebuttal of the writer's statements, Mr. H. W. Clapp (Chairman of Commissioners) said: "There is no truth in the writer's statement. No bogies have been scrapped and no extra bogies have been used. All the bogies

that were originally constructed are still in the train. The defect referred to was of such a minor character that it was rapidly remedied without interfering with the running of the train.

"Actually the bogie designed specially for 'Spirit of Progress' is the most successful and best riding passenger bogie in the Victorian Railways service. This has been overwhelmingly demonstrated by the record smooth-riding of the train—a record attested to by thousands of travellers, many of them with world-wide experience of railway travel.

"I can only add that the low wear factor indicates that it is a highly satisfactory railway carriage bogie.

"Insult To Tradesmen"

"Personally I consider the writer's reference to the train an unqualified insult to the highly efficient tradesmen who were responsible for its construction," Mr. Clapp added.

"One of the greatest authorities in the railway world declared to me that he had never before seen such a rare quality of workmanship as is exhibited in 'Spirit of Progress'—even in the latest trains built abroad. In other words, he stated that he considered the train a 'magnificent job'."

FIRST AID INTEREST STILL GROWING

NEARLY 1,000 enrolments . . . the creation and re-establishment of Corps . . . classes for female employes. . . Those are some of the early highlights resulting from the activities of the Department's First Aid Organization in 1939.

This gratifying reawakening of interest over a widespread area of the State follows the achievement last year when in six months over 2,500 new enrolments was a record in the history of the Department.

Active organizing by Mr. V. E. Southwood (Ambulance Officer) and his Assistants is being supplemented by enthusiastic responses by many railwaymen to assist in the formation of classes and corps.

With a continuance of such whole-hearted co-operation, particularly after classes or corps have been commenced, the Department's first aid organization should gradually reach that strength and efficiency which the Commissioners so earnestly desire.

Central Train Control Has Microphones Now

WITH the recent addition of microphones to all the country train despatchers' desks in Central Train Control, Spencer Street, the modernization of this activity has been completed. Some of the desks were already equipped with microphones which quickly demonstrated their superiority over the breast-telephones formerly used by the train despatchers.

Each desk is also provided with a loud-speaker (receiving) apparatus: thus the train despatcher is assisted in compiling the necessary records on the graphs.

It is worthy of mention that the Victorian Railways were the first railway system in the world to employ microphones in this manner. Since the first one was installed, the Department has received enquiries from leading overseas railways and engineering enterprises for details of the innovation and the way in which the many problems associated with its effective use had been overcome.

Considerable amplification is necessary for the operation of both the loud-speaker and the microphone. Since these highly sensitive units are necessarily in close proximity one of the main problems which departmental engineers successfully overcame was the elimination of interference between the loud-speaker and the microphone.

The Month's Topic

SERVICE BEFORE APPEARANCE . . .

A RECENT special display advertisement in the Melbourne daily newspapers—one of a series being featured from time to time on various railway subjects—dealt with an aspect of the Department's policy which railwaymen generally will readily appreciate.

Under the caption "SERVICE BEFORE APPEARANCE," the advertisement anticipated the thoughts of the public. It mentioned that some stations, bridges or other features of the Victorian Railways apparently needed repainting or otherwise modernizing—and "you may have wondered why they are not all receiving attention."

From that point, the advertisement proceeded to stress the vital importance—from the public's viewpoint—of the Department's capacity to render SERVICE in its broadest sense. If funds were available for the purpose the appearance of the property would receive attention.

Where Money Goes

THIS LED UP TO THE POINT OF THE STORY, VIZ., THE LIMITED AMOUNT OF MONEY AVAILABLE IS BEING DIVERTED INTO MORE USEFUL CHANNELS . . .

For instance, railway tracks throughout the State are being continuously improved . . . bridges are being strengthened. The locomotives could be brightened, but the available money is being spent on improving them mechanically. These improvements to tracks and locomotives enable passenger and goods trains to be run at greatly accelerated schedules. Another outstanding improvement is the introduction of air-conditioned carriages, dining and buffet cars. . .

Although fully recognizing that the appearance of some sections of the property is not all that could be desired, the Department is not neglecting essential maintenance—which goes beyond appearance to the basic factors of safety and dependability. In other words, the aim of the Department is to render the best possible service at the lowest possible cost. . .

Railway Ambulance Car For Military Authorities

AT the request of the Defence Department an experimental railway ambulance car has been provided. Converted at Newport Workshops from a swing-door "BPL" type excursion car, the new vehicle has cot accommodation for 41 casualties. Beds are arranged in tiers of three on either side of a central aisle. The middle tier of bunks is hinged so that, when lowered from the horizontal position, reclining seat backs are provided for the lower tier, which may then be used for sitting-up patients.

The "BPL" type car was selected because of its suitability for rapid conversion in case of emergency and for its greater carrying capacity. At the same time the dimensions and weight of the car enabled it to be operated on any broad gauge line.

Alterations to the body of the car include the removal of all original seats and partitions and the sealing of the side doors near the ends. Pintsch gas lighting is retained, with provision for emergency lighting with kerosene lamps in the event of gas being unobtainable. A wash basin and gas heater are installed.

Model For States

Intended as a model for similar cars to be built in other States, the car will be inspected at Albury and Adelaide by military and railway officials.

The exterior is painted with moonstone grey synthetic lacquer with two large red crosses on either side and a large red cross on a white ground on the roof. The interior is painted all white.

INTRODUCING—

MR. D. J. Henderson, Secretary of the State Relief Committee—and still a Victorian Railwayman—who, for the past five years, has carried out with conspicuous success the organizing work of the largest individual relief organization in Victoria.



Statewide in its scope, the Committee distributes each year food and other necessities valued at over £20,000. Mr. Henderson's energy and organizing capacity were highly extolled during the acute distress following the recent bushfires. Quickly, the Committee sent him and other officers into the heart of the devastated areas, their prompt survey and assistance to over 3,000 people ranking high in the records of charitable work in Victoria. Bushfire relief has been the biggest undertaking of its kind yet attempted by the Committee. In most cases it has been necessary to feed, clothe and provide furnishings for sufferers. When told, the full story will achieve an almost epic distinction. Mr. Henderson's career has been a varied one; 4 years abroad with the A.I.F.; 4½ years with the South Australian Railways; 12 years in the Victorian Railways as an electrical fitter, including experience in engineering and railway companies in England and America; nine months as organiser of the Victorian Boys' Employment Movement. . .

"HOTHAM HEIGHTS"

New Guest-house Is Unusual V.R. Job

BEHIND the rather laconic statement "that 'Hotham Heights'—an alpine accommodation house at Mt. Hotham will be rebuilt" lies the story of an undertaking which ranks as the biggest work of its kind in such a remote area of Victoria and at such an altitude.

Destroyed in the recent bushfires, "Hotham Heights"—in the heart of Australia's finest skiing terrain—must be available for the fast-approaching trek of skiing enthusiasts from all over the Commonwealth.

The house will be situated 6,000 feet above sea level on the highest motor highway in Australia. . . It will be 35 miles distant from the nearest railway station (Bright) . . . the highway has grades as steep as 1 in 10, with an average of 1 in 12 for 19 miles to 6,000 feet. . .

Race Against Time

Obviously, therefore, the Way and Works Branch is undertaking no normal constructional work. This is emphasised by the fact that about 50 tons of material for building and finishing purposes will need to be transported over the precipitous Alpine Highway from Bright—virtually a race before the heavy snow drifts make road traffic impossible.

The material ranges from timber—25 feet long, steel, concrete and boilers to such fragile equipment as glass, crockery and electrical equipment. . .

Construction work has already started, the plans providing for a spacious lounge-dining room, bedrooms, drying room, bathrooms, a sun deck, central heating throughout, hot and cold water service, electric lighting, sewerage and other amenities which will surprise and delight visitors in a cosy, comfortable atmosphere.

Bigger Next Year ?

The building is the nucleus of a larger structure and provision has, therefore, been made for future extensions.

In addition to ground and first floors, there will be a semi-basement in masonry, hewn to random sizes, and obtained from a nearby quarry.

BUSH FIRE DAMAGE COST OVER £20,000

Most Extensive Yet

REHABILITATION of railway property destroyed and damaged when Victoria's worst bushfires occurred in January last will involve an estimated expenditure of more than £18,000. That figure excludes the loss of "Hotham Heights," Mt. Hotham, and "The Bungalow," Mt. Heathertop—two of the three alpine guest-houses controlled by the Department.)

Although probably the greatest loss the Department has ever incurred through bushfires the cost of the recent devastation was less than one-half of the damage caused mainly in Gippsland by unprecedented floods over a large area towards the end of 1934. On that occasion the damage was estimated at £51,000.

Big Bridge Destroyed

Most of the bushfire damage occurred on the Warragul-Noojee and Colac-Beech Forest lines. Besides the station buildings at Noojee, sleepers, fencing, telegraph lines and a railway bridge 295 feet long and 70 feet high were completely destroyed. It is expected that the new bridge will be erected and ready for traffic about four months' time.

On the Colac-Beech Forest line, three railway bridges were destroyed and one other damaged. Extensive damage was also caused on the Heywood-Mt. Gambier, Moe-Walhalla, Hamilton-Portland and Upper Fernside-Gully-Gembrook lines.

"I Love Railroading"

(By a Young Railwayman)

HAVE you ever noticed just what it is about railroading that once it gets in the blood, sets you thinking and dreaming trains? Railwaymen may think of themselves as a race apart in succumbing to the fatal fascination of railroading, but they aren't! There are many hundreds of men and boys of all ages and walks of life outside the service in the grip of this same spell. This they endeavour to appease by photographing trains, collecting data or talking "railways" to their friends. I know, for I was one of them!

* * *

Now things are different—I am a small cog in the immense organization of the Victorian Railways—I have a part behind the scenes in making the wheels go round "on time all the time" and I love it!

There is something indefinably appealing about the smell of hot oily steam and coal smoke; of roaring wheels and the melancholy howl of a chime whistle echoing from the hills; of the sight of a swift passenger train or a rumbling freight; in those long parallel ribbons of polished steel crossing rivers and mountains and running on endlessly into the horizon. There is something grand and impressive about railroading alright—once you get the smell of smoke in your nostrils and cinders in your hair you know the joy of being "once a railwayman always a railwayman."

New Refreshment Services Chief

MR. A. W. Keown, F.O.A., was last month appointed Superintendent of Refreshment Services. On the creation of the position of Advertising Manager in 1923, Mr. Keown who was then an advertising executive in a leading Melbourne company, accepted appointment in the Department.

Later he became closely associated with the whole of the Refreshment Services Branch as Assistant Superintendent. For the past 18 months he was acting Superintendent.

In recent years Mr. Keown has played an important part in carrying out with success the Commissioners' plan to stimulate interest in skiing.

No other Branch in the Department possesses such a diversity of activities as those controlled by the Superintendent of Refreshment Services. Besides the railway refreshment rooms throughout the State, there are two accommodation houses at alpine resorts; dining and buffet cars; children's nursery; dietician's activities; advertising division; poultry farm; bakery, butchery and laundry; and book, fruit, drink, sweets and tobacco stalls.

Mr. Keown served overseas with the Australian Imperial Forces, and on his return to Australia he became the author of a book "Forward With The Fifth," an historical narrative of the activities of the 5th Battalion during the Great War.



RAIL HELP IN SERIES OF DEFENCE TACTICAL EXERCISES

DESCRIBED by high Military officers as a most valuable rehearsal in the rail transport of troops, horses and heavy military equipment in times of emergency, a series of tactical exercises—in which the Department closely co-operated—was carried out last month at the Broadmeadows and Sunbury stations.

A train 800 feet long and consisting of an "A2" locomotive, a van, 2 BPL passenger carriages, 2 Q trucks, 12 M trucks and a Z rake van was used for the conveyance of 120 trainees, 105 horses, 4 field guns and other military vehicles.

All the loading bolsters and side supports were removed from the Q trucks. The trucks were marshalled on one block and with the normal raps bridged by portable ramps, the trucks virtually became one continuous flat truck for loading and unloading purposes.

Of chief importance was the expeditious loading, lashing and unloading of

the military equipment. The Q trucks were placed in the siding at the new end loading ramp at the Broadmeadows station. Loading was thus carried out from the end of the block of trucks instead of from the customary side position.

Each military vehicle was run on to the first Q truck and then rapidly moved along the series of flat trucks towards the far end. Experienced goods sheds railwaymen gave valued practical demonstrations of the correct method of securely lashing the vehicles to the trucks. By means of specially constructed gangboards, side unloading was carried out at Sunbury.

Railwaymen Thanked For Bush Fire Help

"IT is with very great pleasure I acknowledge with thanks the valuable and timely service rendered by you and your colleagues in providing special trains and buses for the transport of volunteers during the period when recent disastrous bushfires raged.

"Those of your staff concerned displayed that courteous efficiency which is so characteristic of the Victorian Railways.

"Let me assure you that their efforts were instrumental in helping to save the lives and property of the residents of Bright, Cudgewa, Corryong and the Yarra Valley."

—Mr. A. Galbraith, Chairman, Forests Commission of Victoria, writing to the Chairman of Commissioners on February 6.

In expressing appreciation of Mr. Galbraith's tribute, Mr. Clapp said that railwaymen were more than ready to join with other members of the community in assisting to save lives and property, and in helping to ease the burden on those who unfortunately suffered severely through the disastrous bush fires.

Personal Postscript

Apprentice—Engineer

MR. J. N. GEORGE'S recent appointment to the position of District Engineer, Bendigo, has a particular significance for apprentices in the Department. He began in the service in 1914 as an apprentice fitter and turner and, by taking advantage of the opportunities open to lads in that grade, he eventually became a member of the professional staff. Twenty years after entering the service as an apprentice, Mr. George was appointed a member of the Board of Selectors of apprentices; in 1936 he was again on the Board of Selectors. In 1920 he was located at the State Mine and later he transferred to the Way and Works Branch as a draughtsman in the Water Supply and Machinery Division. In 1925, he was appointed Assistant Engineer. Later, in 1928, he secured 12 months leave to gain further experience of a particular phase of engineering outside the Department.

—T.A.W.

* * *

Continental Skiers

THE re-engagement of Mr. Franz Skardarasy, the Continental skiing instructor, to conduct a skiing school at The Chalet, Mt. Buffalo National Park, is a reminder of the approach of the winter snow sports season. In recent years, skiing has made phenomenal strides in popularity and in that development Mr. Skardarasy's two seasons at Mt. Buffalo National Park (1936 and 1937) have played a most important part. Hailing from the Austrian Tyrol with the hall mark of skiing efficiency—graduation from the Hannes Schneider School of Skiing—Mr. Skardarasy is a graceful and accomplished exponent of the Arlberg system. While in Victoria before, Mr. Skardarasy was the author of a book on skiing, and it was described by leading skiers as being one of the finest contributions towards a greater understanding of the sport. He will be accompanied on this occasion by Mr. Anton Walch—also a highly qualified Continental skiing instructor—who will be located at "Hotham Heights," Mt. Hotham. Mr. Walch was at Mt. Hotham last winter season, and proved an outstanding success in demonstrating the Arlberg system of skiing.

—F.S.

March Birthdays

CLERK R. Brown, of Accty. Bch., on the second; Commissioner M. J. Canny and Architect S. Steel, of Spencer St., on the third; Foreman Car Painter H. W. Johnston, of Newport and Skld. Labr. A. Henderson, of Nth. Melb., on the fifth; Signalman W. Bannon, of Merri, Auditor of Expenditure N. J. Lester and Driver T. Denholm, of Swan Hill, on the seventh; Ganger H. J. Schreeder, of Nhill, on the eighth; B'maker E. Cole, of Newport and Goods Foreman F. A. Henwood, of Melb. Goods, on the ninth; Clerk W. H. Conroy, of Traffic Bch, on the 10th; Telegraphist W. J. Okey, of Spencer St. and Road Foreman E. E. Schurer, of Flinders St., on the 11th; Carpenter E. J. Fisher and Driver V. Brown, of Nth. Melb., on the 13th; Clerk C. A. Gemmell, of Korumburra and Clerk A. W. O'Meara, of Head Office, on the 14th; Fitter and Turner J. M.

Helping Hospital

OF the many ways in which groups of railwaymen assist charitable institutions mention must be made of the Ballarat Railway Auxiliary of the Base Hospital. Nearly 150 of the local railwaymen are associated with the Auxiliary which, over the past 10 years, has given the Hospital nearly £2,000 in cash, gifts and other ways. Chief among the Auxiliary's recent activities are the furnishing of the Nursing and Domestic Staffs' quarters; £60 towards the cost of stainless-steel auto trays for the wards; an X-ray plant (valued at £205) and a Kiosk at which sweets, tobacco, etc., are on sale within the Hospital Grounds. Each year the Auxiliary provides the Christmas Tree for the young inmates of the Hospital. Though he is not a railwayman, the untiring efforts of Mr. R. McLennan on behalf of the Hospital secured his election as President of the Auxiliary this year. Mr. J. Cody, of the Ballarat station, is Secretary, while Mr. H. Jephson, who was for nearly 10 years Secretary of the Auxiliary, is now the President of the Hospital.

—D.

A.I.F. Cricketers' Manager

FOR one railwayman the cricket match next month at the Melbourne Cricket Ground between the former Test players and members of the famous A.I.F. cricket team will start a flood of reminiscences. He is Mr. Ernie Cameron (of the Rolling Stock Branch clerical staff) who, as Lieutenant, was the Manager of the A.I.F. team which after the Great War toured England, Scotland, South Africa and Australia. In that tour were such outstanding cricketing personalities as H. L. Collins, J. M. Gregory, J. M. Taylor, C. E. Pellew, W. A. O'Connell and the late Carl B. Willis. Mr. Cameron will also be remembered as one of the finest rovers in the history of Victorian League football. He played for Essendon between 1905 and 1912, and was a member of the brilliant ruck combination—Busbridge, Bucher and Cameron. He represented Victoria in many Interstate and Carnegie games. A brother, Mr. A. A. Cameron is the Assistant Comptroller of Accounts.

—D.A.S.

THESE APPRENTICES HAVE BIG OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT

FINISHING first and second respectively in the special scholarship examination at the Department's Technical College, Newport. Apprentice Electrical Fitter R. W. Treasure and Apprentice Boilermaker J. J. Dunlop have both been allotted scholarships for the full-day Diploma Course at the Melbourne Technical School. Apprentice Electrical Fitter V. R. Heywood has been selected for a free place in electrical engineering at the Melbourne University.

Apprentice Treasure gained his intermediate certificate and also completed portion of the Diploma Course at the Sale Technical School where he also won the "William Pearson Memorial Scholarship." Apprentice Dunlop gained his intermediate certificate at the Wangaratta High School where, in his final year, he also won the Gold Medal presented by the Mayor of Wangaratta.

Apprentice Heywood matriculated—with honours in some subjects—at the Church of England Grammar School, Melbourne, prior to entering the service.

To Apprentice Electrical Fitter I. D. Cameron, of Spencer Street, has fallen the distinction of being the first Victorian Railwayman to gain admittance to the Royal Melbourne College at Duntroon. Passing excellent educational and physical examinations he has been selected as a Staff Cadet.

Sunday Organized Traffic Shows Increase

A SUBSTANTIAL increase in the rail travel by organized parties has been a gratifying sequel to the introduction of greatly reduced return fares for travel on the electrified system on Sundays.

Since December 4, over 1,000 people have journeyed or booked in advance for travel in organized groups. Some of the parties each comprising between 400 and 600 persons are associated with cricket and athletic clubs, industrial undertakings, etc. The travel has been principally to the seaside, including Frankston, Newford, Carrum and Aspendale.

Some of this travel represents entirely new business, while portions is known to have formerly patronized road transport.

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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

April, 1939

Issue No. 103

20 Years Of Suburban Electric Train Services Reviewed



DO YOU REMEMBER THIS? Taken from the footbridge near the Melbourne Cricket Ground, this photograph shows three suburban steam trains approaching Richmond in pre-electric traction days. Each train is being hauled by an "E" class locomotive.

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS SINCE FIRST TRAIN RAN IN MAY, 1919

MAY 28 next will be a significant date in the history of the Victorian Railways: it will mark the passing of two decades since the first electric train service began operating in Victoria. Railwaymen generally will, therefore, welcome the opportunity of looking back on some of the outstanding developments which have occurred since the first electric train ran between Essendon and Sandringham on May 28, 1919.

This review is particularly appropriate for the reason that consideration will shortly be given to the Departmental Committee's report following its comprehensive survey of all aspects of traffic operation in the suburban electrified area.

Victorian River Names For Buffet Cars

DISTINCTIVE names commemorating rivers in Victoria have been selected by the Commissioners for the existing and future Buffet Cars.

Names already chosen are.—“Taggerty,” “Wimmera,” “Mitta Mitta,” “Moorabool,” “Tanjil,” “Kiewa” and “Moyne.”

The “Taggerty,” a specially converted “AE” carriage, was the first Buffet Car to be placed in running on the Victorian Railways system. It went into service in April, 1937.

First All-Steel

The “Wimmera” was the first all-steel, air-conditioned Buffet Car to be constructed for the Victorian Railways service, and it went into running in December last.

In the saloon of the “Mitta Mitta,” which is of all-steel construction and equipped with air-conditioning mechanism, the ceiling and walls and counter front are in varied shades of grey; window sills are in tangerine, with the rubber floor covering in a combination of grey and brown.

Attractive Lighting

A new type of lighting system was devised in consultation with the State Electricity Commission. It consists of a series of louvred lights which are claimed to give a softer though greater illumination, than the rough lighting.

63 AMBULANCE CORPS NOW FUNCTIONING

AS part of the widespread first aid “drive” for 1939, there have been very encouraging results from the steps taken to stimulate interest in Ambulance Corps.

Prior to the beginning of this year, there were 49 Corps actively operating in various parts of the State. Since then, 14 additional Corps have been formed or re-established, while it is expected that 18 more will shortly be functioning after the completion of local first aid classes, which are now being formed.

Value Of Corps

Corps are the foundation of an efficient Ambulance Organization, and for that reason the Commissioners are anxious that they should be formed wherever warranted by local conditions. The 63 active Corps are located as follows.—Metropolitan District, 35; Geelong, 5; Ballarat, 6; Bendigo, 8; Seymour, 5; and Gippsland, 4.

There are many inducements for railwaymen to qualify for membership in a Corps. In addition to receiving payment, members become eligible to compete in the District, State and Interstate Railway Ambulance Competitions.

But most important of all are the opportunities for displaying teamwork. Having worked together and studied each other's methods, the Corps working as a single unit in the case of a serious accident is able to act with greater speed and efficiency.

ALTHOUGH the conversion from steam to electric traction was commenced in 1913, the change-over to electric traction was delayed owing to the difficulty experienced in obtaining equipment from abroad during the Great War of 1914-18.

Most of the conversion work was completed by 1923, but numerous small extensions have been made until as recently as 1930.

The work of converting the suburban lines from steam to electric traction still stands as one of the largest schemes of its kind in the world.

Efficient Change-Over

A noteworthy feature was the efficient manner in which the traffic was handled during the period of transition from steam to electric traction. The whole of the comprehensive operations were carried out with no inconvenience to passengers.

Today, the electrified system covers 437½ miles of single track, including sidings, or 173 route miles. More than 130,000,000 passengers are carried annually, the train mileage being almost 7,500,000 each year.

The total number of suburban passenger journeys increased from 103,688,000 in 1919 to a maximum of 160,154,499 in 1926-27. Since then, increasing competition has reduced passenger journeys on the suburban lines.

From a record “low” (since electrification was completed) of 120,848,507 passengers carried in 1931, a recovery was made, and in 1937-38 the total had risen to 132,035,095.

(Continued in Page 3)

The Month's Topic

RAIL TRAVEL SAFETY

IN a front page message on the "Weekly Notice" last month, the Commissioners, in stressing that railway travel is "Unequalled for Safety," said: "In the last 10 years over 1,400,000,000 passengers were carried on the Victorian Railways system without a single fatality due to a train accident."

Behind the striking safety record of the Department, lies years of safety education, combined with the use of the most modern equipment. Safety appliances, together with a comprehensive set of safeworking instructions, ensure the safe carriage of passengers. But that is not all.

Physical Fitness Vital

TRAIN crews are subjected to periodical physical examinations, including exacting vision and hearing tests. Nothing is left to chance where the human element is concerned. Before a train is put into service, the mechanism and equipment are examined to ensure that every car is in proper working order. The tracks and points, signals and their controlling apparatus are all regularly inspected by experts.

* * *

"SAFETY FIRST—AND ALWAYS" IS MORE THAN A SLOGAN OF THE DEPARTMENT: IT IS A SYMBOL OF THE MOST IMPRESSIVE ASPECT OF TRAVEL ON THE VICTORIAN RAILWAYS . . .

INTRODUCING—



MR. W. S. Redpath, Officer-in-Charge, Lost Property Store, Spencer Street, through whose hands pass each year probably the greatest miscellany of articles in the State. Everything imaginable—from lipstick to explosives—finds its way into the Store, the never-ending trail of forgotten things being a complete answer to the witticism that pro-

fessors are the world's most absent-minded people. Of the 40,000 articles which come into the Store each year, about 50 per cent. are retrieved by their owners. The balance is sold by public auction. Once, the owner of a very handsome leather suitcase was eagerly awaited at the Store. The case contained a complete burglar's outfit—revolvers, torch, jemmy, skeleton keys and mask. But, to the profound chagrin of the waiting detectives, the owner thought it unwise to appear as the claimant . . . With the exception of three years overseas with the A.I.F., Mr. Redpath has been associated with the Store since 1913, the last eight years as Officer-in-Charge . . .

STRIKING FACTS FOR ALL VICTORIANS ABOUT THEIR RAILWAYS

"STARVE Your Railways And Then—What?" is the challenging title of a folder issued by the Commissioners last month to bring before the public the vital need for greater practical support of the railways. Salient points in the folder are as follows . . .

Essential for our everyday needs, and vital if war should come, dare we let the railways system be starved into inefficiency by lack of revenue? This year a railway deficit of more than £800,000 has to be faced.

Inescapable costs in excess of railway earnings have been met by taxation, but a large cost represented by depreciation has never been paid at all. Constantly accumulating, it exists as a liability for future years.

Heavy losses of the best of the traffic to road competitors and the concession of greatly reduced rates to stem the competition, make it impossible to earn the revenue necessary for the efficient maintenance and operation of the railway system.

Unlike the railways, the road haulier may choose the goods he will carry and the places he will serve. Giving partial and selective service only, he is, moreover, heavily subsidized in that he is provided with highways at negligible cost to himself.

Starve the railways, allow the locomotives and rolling stock to become worn out and obsolete, permit the

tracks to become unfit for fast or heavy traffic, and then—what?

What will happen to a bumper wheat harvest awaiting transport? How will the millions of head of live stock be moved rapidly to the markets?

What shall we do if war should come, with its tremendous demands for the movement of men and material and of the great tonnage of coastal trade that would look to railways for transport if shipping were interrupted?

Indispensable in time of peace and a vital agency of defence, the railways are one of the main bulwarks of business and industry and of national security.

CAN THE FARMER, TRADER, CONSUMER, TAXPAYER AFFORD TO ALLOW THE RAILWAYS TO BE STARVED INTO EXHAUSTION AND INEFFICIENCY?

Important Tourist Travel Developments

TWO recent developments are indicative of the ever-growing value of the tourist industry—the staff at the Eastern States Government Tourist Bureau, Perth, has been increased; and a Western Australian Representative is now located at the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, Melbourne.

Established in August last to provide a comprehensive service for all visitors to Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, the Eastern States Government Tourist Bureau has amply proved its value in stimulating tourist traffic from Western Australia.

Mr. Gordon K. Peart, of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau's staff, is the Manager. From last month he has as his assistant a member of the staff of the New South Wales Government Tourist Bureau, Sydney.

By rail, Perth is only 2½ days' travel from Melbourne, 2 days by air and 6 days by steamer; from Sydney, 3½, 3 and 8 days respectively; and from Brisbane, 4½, 3 and 11 days respectively.

With these attractive travelling facilities, combined with the many outstanding tourist resorts in the eastern and western portions of the continent, there is obviously great scope for increasing tourist traffic in both directions.

AN increasingly important part is being played by the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau in broadening the general knowledge of school children by travel. The latest development is a series of day tours to the Sir Colin MacKenzie Sanctuary for Native Fauna, Healesville.

Last month, 1,500 children in five parties each consisting of 300 spent profitable days at the Sanctuary. Here kangaroos, wallabies, emus, koalas, platypuses and many other examples of Australian fauna are viewed in an extensive reserve which retains its distinctive bush atmosphere and environment.

Talks To Students

In March, the Department was associated with an educational experiment which is believed to be unprecedented in Victoria. Pupils in the senior grade at the Lee Street State School, North Carlton, who have displayed interest in transport matters have been selected to form a Tutorial Grade in which special instruction in transport is given.

For the opening of the experiment, Mr. P. H. O'Keefe, of the Secretary's Branch, delivered three addresses on the history and development of the Victorian Railways up to the present time.

UNIQUE MAP MADE FOR N.S.W. RAILWAYS

ENCLOSED in a handsome oxidized bronze frame 10 feet long and 9 feet high, a large-size map transparency of the entire New South Wales railway system was completed last month by the Special Services Division of the Way and Works Branch for public display at the Wynyard railway station, Sydney.

Drawn to a scale of eight miles to one inch, the map incorporates many unique features, the chief being the colouring and lighting of the railway lines, station names and geographical features. The brilliancy of the effect is particularly emphasized by the fact that the details are shown on a black opaque background.

The railway lines are in bright scarlet, with the station names in pearl white. Mountains, rivers and towns are in jade green, while the coastline is featured in a deep opalescent blue.

New Method

A new technique was evolved in the production of the map, which was built up from plans obtained from the Lands Department, Sydney. The original land plans were photographically enlarged, and the railway system was re-drawn.

The map was again photographed in negative form, with those features which previously appeared in black on a white ground converted to white on a black ground.

The map is divided into numbered six-inch squares, thus facilitating the indexing of station names. The names are listed in alphabetical order on each side of the map, together with the number of the square in which the station name appears.

Big Track Works In Hand

IN continuation of the State-wide plan for improving tracks, a commencement has been made with the strengthening and re-conditioning of the Geelong-Warrnambool line.

Work is proceeding between Warrnambool and Irrewarra; Pirron Yallock and Stoneyford; Terang and Garvoc; and in the vicinity of Larpent. The work consists of the provision of additional sleepers and ballast and the widening of banks.

Other track works in progress include the relaying of the Ballarat-Mildura line with 80 lb. rails, released from the Bendigo line and welded into lengths of approximately 200 feet.

On the Bendigo line 34½ miles have been relayed with 90 lb. rails, welded into lengths of 225 feet. At present, relaying operations are being carried out between Gisborne and Macedon.

Sidings to serve the new coal mining area being opened at Kirrak in the vicinity of the State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi, are now being constructed.

ELECTRIFICATION—CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

Benefits Of Electric Train Services Briefly Outlined

ONE of the greatest tests of the capacity of the electric suburban system occurred during the Melbourne Centenary Celebrations in 1934. Throughout the day and night on October 18, 1,092,350 passenger journeys were made on the suburban lines. Over 500,000 passengers passed through Flinders Street station barriers. During the day 2,562 trains arrived at and departed from Flinders Street and Princes Bridge stations, an increase of 448 or 21 per cent. over normal.

For a two-hour period trains were being signalled at the rate of 102 per hour, or an average of one every 36 seconds, at the west end of the Flinders Street station. During the period of the tramway strike from October 16 to 19, 1934, 118 trains (the maximum possible) were in service during the morning and evening peak periods.

Another big transportation feat was registered on Anzac Day, 1927, when the traffic handled constituted a record for a limited peak period. On that day nearly 2,450 trips were made by electric trains.

Since electrification, outer suburban areas as far distant as Frankston and Lilydale have been brought within the ambit of increased train services. The frequency of train services has been increased on all lines, until during peak periods on certain busy sections trains run regularly at intervals of only two minutes.

Greatly accelerated services have been provided on all lines. Examples of reduced travelling times are: Mordialloc (16½ miles from Melbourne), now reached from Flinders Street in 15 minutes less than under steam conditions; Sandringham (11½ miles) in 11 minutes less; and Ringwood (15½ miles) in 18 minutes less.

SPECIAL TRAIN TRAFFIC INCREASES THIS YEAR

ALTHOUGH there is still one month before the end of the 1938-39 season, figures so far available reveal that there has been a very substantial increase in the special train traffic within the suburban and outer-suburban areas (Sundays and Cup Day excepted) on behalf of schools, industrial firms, sporting bodies, etc.

Similar country special train traffic to Melbourne also increased. It would have been very much greater but for the severe drought affecting the number of passengers on the various special trains.

Comparative suburban traffic figures are as follows (the 1937-38 season was adversely affected by the infantile paralysis epidemic):—

	Suburban	
	Trains	Passengers
October-April '36-37	132	44,750
October-March '38-39	195	60,800

The frequency of train services has, in some instances, been increased by as much as 35 per cent.

During peak periods up to 105 seven-car electric trains are in service, some of them running express for substantial portions of the journey.

Greatly improved train services on Sundays are now provided on all lines. Trains commence earlier in the mornings and services, which some time ago ceased at 10.30 p.m., continue until midnight.

An innovation which has been of great benefit to patrons and has produced increased traffic, has been

GOVERNOR-GENERAL LIKES MT. BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK

"THERE is little doubt that Mt. Buffalo is one of the beauty spots of the world," wrote His Excellency the Governor-General (Lord Gowrie) in a letter to the Chairman of Commissioners (Mr. H. W. Clapp).

The letter is as follows:—

"Dear Mr. Clapp,

This is just a line to thank you and your Commissioners for enabling my wife and me to spend a very delightful time at Mt. Buffalo.

"We had heard a great deal of the beauties of that district, but they far exceeded all our expectations. In fact, there is little doubt that Mt. Buffalo is one of the beauty spots of the world.

"We could not have been more comfortable. Mr. and Mrs. McClelland and their staff took the greatest care of us. Nothing was too much trouble for them, and we are more than grateful to them for all that they did.

"We spent three days touring round the burnt areas, and we met many people who had been through some terrible experiences, but their courage was beyond all praise.

Yours sincerely,
GOWRIE."

the running of the special express trains to Flemington and Williamstown racecourses and the Showgrounds Platform from No. 1 Platform, Flinders Street.

In addition, certain trains to the Showgrounds from the eastern, northern and southern suburbs run right through to the Showgrounds, returning direct to the suburbs in the evening.

Five electric parcels coaches run to fast schedules on certain lines. They relieve the ordinary passenger trains of parcels traffic, thus contributing to faster passenger train services.

(TO BE CONTINUED IN THE MAY ISSUE.)

Personal Postscript

Suburban Traffic Expert

WITH the recent premature retirement through ill-health of Mr. Les. H. Barrett (Officer-in-Charge, Suburban Trains Division, Room 2), the Department loses the valued services of a railwayman whom many regarded as possessing an unexcelled general knowledge of suburban train operations. A year after the suburban electric train services commenced in 1919, Mr Barrett became the first Metropolitan Train Running Officer. His success in that position led to his transfer in 1924 to the Timetables Division. From then onwards he was exclusively engaged on the suburban side of train services. His outstanding capacity was fully demonstrated during the visit of H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester and the associated Centenary Celebrations in 1934. At a recent farewell function when Mr. Barrett was presented with a wallet of notes, Mr. W. R. Price (Superintendent Train Services) referred particularly to his work during that period of unprecedented rail traffic. Mr. Barrett had 42 years of railway service, interrupted only when he was abroad with the A.I.F. between 1916-19. He leaves the Department with the sincere wishes of a wide circle of friends. —B.

Revue To Shakespeare

IF you tune in to 3XY on Good Friday evening, April 7, you will have the opportunity of hearing a fellow-railwayman—Mr. Bernard Lamble (Senior Messenger, Transportation Despatch Room). He will be prominent in a production of Monsignor Robert H. Benson's Passion Play "The Upper Room." This will be no radio novelty for Mr. Lamble who has already broadcast from most of the Melbourne stations. Fifteen years ago, he joined the V.R.I. Dramatic Company, and since then he has become a leader in amateur acting circles. Mr. Lamble has played all types of roles in comedies, dramas and melodramas. In addition, he has appeared in Shakespearian roles. His most recent characterization as Crichton in "The Admirable Crichton" at the Apollo Theatre was hailed as a brilliant performance. The winner of several first prizes at South Street Competitions, Mr. Lamble, in one outstanding performance, gained 97 points in a possible 100 in the Men's Character Recital. On that occasion, he took the part of the Duke of Buckingham in "Henry the Eighth." —O.A.

"Bill" Godden Retires

OF the many tributes paid to Mr. W. H. Godden (former Assistant Ambulance Officer) on his retirement, there was none greater than the presence at his recent farewell in Melbourne of railwaymen from many distant parts of the State. They came to pay their respects to a man who had never ceased spreading the gospel of first aid. Mr. Godden was a skilled first aid man. He was more: he was an enthusiastic one, and many railwaymen in the service today are the proud possessors of first aid certificates for which Mr.

Godden's initial—and consistent—persuasion was responsible. His big moment came in 1916, when he realized the ambition of all ambulance men—he won the Victorian Railways Individual Championship. For three years he was the active Superintendent of No. 2 Corps, Spencer Street. In 1923, he was appointed Assistant Ambulance Officer, and at all subsequent District, State and Interstate Competitions he was in the forefront of all the detailed organization of these events. —S.J.A.

Bright Future

IF the success achieved by Apprentice V. T. Hodgens at the Melbourne Technical College is any criterion, then the future should be particularly bright for this enthusiastic young railwayman. A former student at the Newport Technical College and the recipient of a Free Place at the Melbourne Technical College for the Diploma Course of Electrical Engineering, Apprentice Hodgens is amply fulfilling the Commissioners' expectations. In the Electrical Engineering Division at the College, there are nearly 50 students who, like himself, are scholarship winners. But despite that talented opposition, he secured the highest marks in 1937—and he repeated that feat at the recent examinations for 1938. For these successes, he was awarded special prizes. A farmer's son of Nyahwest and a product of the Swan Hill High School, Apprentice Hodgens is proceeding along sound lines. While concentrating on his studies, he is devoting his leisure to many forms of sport. That is an essential blending of interests which, of course, is a precaution against the possibility of "mental staleness." —M.

MR. HARRY GRONN'S DEATH

WITH the recent death of Mr. T. H. Gronn, a former locomotive driver with 46 years' service in the Rolling Stock Branch, there passed one of the best known railwaymen in Ballarat and surrounding districts.

For 23 years, Mr. Gronn was the driver of the 1 p.m. yard pilot at Ballarat. For most of that time, he drove an old Belgian "R" class pilot engine which became familiarly known as "Harry Gronn's Pilot." Although the veteran locomotive has since been withdrawn from service, the present engine on the 1 p.m. pilot is still known by that term.

Mr. Gronn, who has two sons in the service—one in the Ballarat District Superintendent's office and the other at the Bendigo Workshops—started in the Department in 1889 at the North Melbourne Loco. Depot. For varying periods he was located at Wallan, Dookie, Seymour, Shepparton, Bendigo and Brighton.

IF THIS LOCO. GOES, TELL MR. RIPLEY!

IN our contemporary "The New Zealand Railways Magazine" there appeared some time ago the "Impressions of a young lady, after seeing a locomotive being built." Her description is inclined to be distorted, with perhaps a suggestion that locomotive building is more or less haphazard. However, read it for yourself!—

"I was conducted over the Newport Workshops the other day. They were building an engine there so I will describe what I saw.

"They pour a lot of sand into a lot of boxes and then throw old stove pipes and things into a furnace, and then they empty the molten stream into a hole in the sand and everybody yells and swears.

"Then they pour it out and let it cool and pound it, and then they put it into a thing that bores holes in it. Then they screw it together and paint it, fill it with steam and it goes splendidly.

* * *

"Then they take it to the draughting room and make a blue print of it.

"There is one thing I forgot—they have to make a round cigar thing that fits on top of the flat piece with the wheels on. At any rate, one man gets inside and the other remains outside and they make a great noise, and then they tie it to the other thing with bits of wire and you ought to see it go.

"It's really marvellous" [how it goes!]

April Birthdays

ASST. Engineer G. N. Parker, of Bendigo Office, Driver F. Wiegand, of Bendigo Ldg. Shunter J. P. S. Pearson, of Melbourne Yard, on the second; Passenger L. J. Matthews, of Ballarat, on the third; Messrs. D. J. Davis, of Spotswood, and J. Porter G. Pollock, of Serviceton, on the fourth; Repr. J. L. Colcott, of Camperdown on the sixth; Clerk L. Parker, of Acacia Bch., and Clerk V. Took, of Tocumwal, on the eighth; Carpr. J. McL. White, of Geelong, on the ninth; Commissioner N. C. Harris, and Weighbridge Attch. W. Lewis, of Bendigo, on the 10th; Clerk L. Jebson, of Acacia Bch., and Clerk E. Linden, of Secretary's Bch., on the 11th; Clerk L. R. O'Brien, of Spotswood, on the 12th; Clerk F. D. Beeching, of Secretary's Bch., Skld. Labr. H. Taylor, of Flinders St., and Elec. Fitter's Asst. G. Falkingham, of North Melb., on the 13th; Clerk S. Slattery, of W. & W. Staff Office, on the 15th; Paymaster P. Gleeson, on the 16th; Ldg. Ganger W. A. Brien, of Spencer on the 19th; Stores Bch. Chief Clerk H. Agg, Elec. Train Driver W. A. Woodhouse of Jolimont, and Iron Machinist A. E. Martin, of Newport Wkshps., on the 20th; Turner T. Senior, of Spotswood Wkshps. on the 21st; Repr. W. Grant, of Caulfield Goods Checker M. Maher, of Melbourne, and Shift Electrician A. E. H. Yenick, of Caulfield, on the 22nd; Ganger R. Ross, of Homewood, on the 23rd; Fireman H. R. L. Falls, of Ararat, on the 24th; Car Services Manager C. J. Ramsay, of Caulfield, on the 25th; Clerk A. Hill, of Flinders St., and Skld. W. H. Dwyer, on the 25th; Inspector Accounts H. T. Gale, and Elec. Sub-Former E. T. Holford, of Newport, on the 24th; the Sig'man W. S. Gilmore, of Geelong, on the 25th; G. Outten, of Newport, Repr. H. Bigmore, of Flinders St., and Line Asst. H. H. Beswick, of Batman Ave., on the 27th; Shunter T. L. Skepper, of Melbourne Yard, and Train Examr. L. J. Ross, of North Melb. Wkshps., on the 28th; Clerk H. R. Brady, of Metro. Supt.'s Office, Goods Guard G. W. Franklin, of Bendigo, and Blacksmith J. P. McPherson, on the 29th; Fireman J. A. Liddy, of Jolimont, and Repr. G. J. Taylor, of Natimuk, on the 30th.

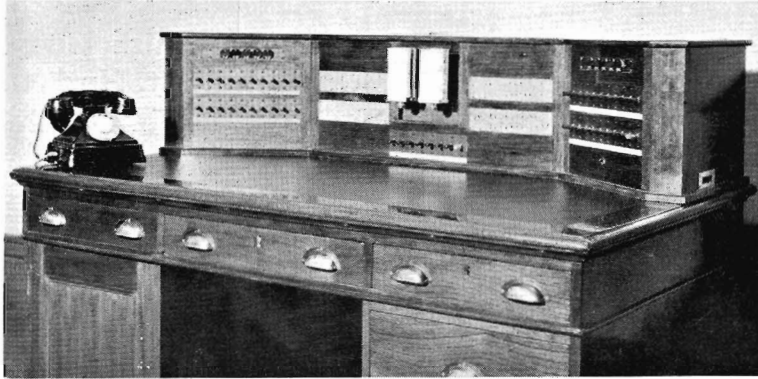
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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

May, 1939

Issue No. 104

"Nerve Centre" Of Melbourne Yards Control



Pictured above is the new control table which will be the focal point in the series of loud speakers to be erected in various parts of the Melbourne Yards. (See story in page 3). In the centre of the table, which will be occupied day and night by an Assistant Yard Superintendent, are two microphones, with loud speaker (receiving) apparatus on each side.

UNIQUE COLLECTION OF WILDFLOWERS FROM MT. BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK

THROUGH the generosity and enterprise of Mr. W. Russell Grimwade, the well-known Melbourne businessman, a unique collection of 125 specimens of the flora found at Mt. Buffalo National Park will shortly be available at The Chalet for inspection by guests interested in wildflowers. Many of the specimens are not found elsewhere in Australia.

The collection, which represents a wide but not necessarily complete survey of the flora found in the National Park, forms an approximate census of the natural vegetation growing there at the coming of the white man.

Accompanying the specimens, which are contained in a new, hand-somely-constructed cabinet is a message on parchment from Mr. Grimwade. He expresses the hope "that this flora will stimulate an interest in Victorian vegetation that may lead to its better protection. Much of it is being rapidly exterminated."

Mr. Grimwade also pays a high tribute to Mr. P. R. H. St. John—for 54 years on the staff at the Melbourne Botanical Gardens—who collected, identified, mounted and labelled each of the specimens in the collection.

"I am honoured," wrote Mr. Grimwade, "to give this collection to the Commissioners to hold in trust for their fellow countrymen and their visitors to The Chalet."

Bureau's Air Flight Booking To England

VICTORIAN Government Tourist Bureau history was made last month when a ticket was issued for travel across the world by air from Australia to England and return.

Costing £342, the ticket easily represented the highest individual fare ever paid at the Bureau. Other long-distance airplane bookings made at the Bureau include a number of tickets to Singapore.

These transactions are striking evidence of the comprehensive travel service which is available at the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau and Branches where bookings may be made for travel by rail, road, sea and air.

FIRST 20 YEARS OF ELECTRIC TRAINS

Widespread Improvements Made

How the Melbourne and suburban electric train services had vastly improved various phases of rail travelling since they were introduced on May 28, 1919, was told in the News Letter last month in a review of the first 20 years of operation of the system.

In the following article, the comprehensive measures taken to increase the reliability and general efficiency of the system, together with widespread suburban track betterment works, are dealt with.

BY the provision of high-speed circuit-breakers in "tie stations" located at specially selected points, the reliability of services during abnormal weather conditions, such as lightning, has been improved. Soon the supervisory control of power supply and distribution will be brought into use, thus further increasing the efficiency of the electrified system.

Good Timekeeping

Train timekeeping has been greatly improved since electrification. The recently completed suburban train control system—the most modern installation of its kind in the world—has already proved of great benefit in facilitating traffic, particularly in the event of any dislocation of ordinary services.

Other developments include the progressive installation of greatly improved lighting in trains; a loud speaker system for making train announcements at the Flinders Street and Princes Bridge stations; the gradual repainting of passenger carriages in rose pink and moonstone grey; and the introduction of "The Boat Train"—painted in blue and silver and floodlit at night—which runs to Port Melbourne when overseas passenger steamers are berthed at Station Pier.

Twelve electric locomotives are in service for suburban goods and shunting work in the Flinders Street passenger yard.

(Continued in Page 3, Column 3)

The Month's Topic

RAILWAYMEN SPLENDID IN EMERGENCY

MAGNIFICENT teamwork by hundreds of railwaymen in many grades was responsible for the quick restoration of train services which were seriously dislocated following the sudden and torrential downpours of rain in various parts of the State last month.

In three instances, important main line services on the Albury, Serviceton and Mildura routes were affected, thus making it more than ever imperative that normal running should be resumed at the earliest possible moment.

With one paramount objective—a minimum of inconvenience to our patrons—the railwaymen concerned worked with such inspiring industry that potentially prolonged interruptions to traffic were avoided.

Alternative Services

WHILE the tracks were being restored—in some cases necessitating work throughout the night in heavy rain—other railwaymen in the train operating sections were swiftly planning and introducing alternative train services. Those who have only the faintest idea of what is involved in such circumstances will readily appreciate the magnitude of the task which confronted these railwaymen.

TO EVERYONE ASSOCIATED WITH THE WORK OF RESTORING THE TRAIN SERVICES, WE OFFER OUR warmest THANKS AND CONGRATULATIONS. IN EVERY RESPECT THE WORK EXHIBITED THE HIGHEST STANDARD OF THE SERVICE WHICH WE ARE PROUD TO SAY IS A BY-WORD WITH PATRONS OF THE VICTORIAN RAILWAYS . . .

**HAROLD W. CLAPP
N. C. HARRIS
M. J. CANNY**

NEW DEFENCE ACTIVITY CREATES RAIL TRAFFIC RECORDS

SINCE the beginning of the year, the influx of many thousands of military trainees and equipment to camps at Broadmeadows, Seymour and other locations has created rail traffic which has not been equalled since the Great War of 1914-18. Conspicuous in this traffic was the formidable task which confronted the Department last month when over 1550 cavalry trainees, together with 1350 horses, had to be conveyed on return journeys between many country centres and Broadmeadows.

At the conclusion of the camp, seven special trains, each averaging four carriages for trainees and 20 "M" cattle wagons for the horses, were despatched between 10 p.m. and 10 a.m. to the North-eastern, Goulburn Valley, Eastern, South-eastern, Western and South-western districts.

A vast amount of preparatory work was involved, especially in view of the abnormally large number of horses to be loaded. Much thought was given to the planning of train movements and the shunting and loading arrangements.

Difficulties Overcome

The work was made more difficult because the loading facilities at Broadmeadows station are not designed for the efficient handling of big military trains for mounted units.

Mr. W. R. Price (Superintendent of Train Services), who possesses considerable experience in the handling of troop trains in peace time and on active service, carefully explained to the various military officers at the camp the comprehensive arrangements made to ensure that all the loading and despatching operations were carried out successfully.

INTRODUCING—

SISTER M. Polkinghorne, S.R.N., R.V.C.N., who was last month promoted to the position of Sister-in-Charge of the Children's Nursery, Flinders Street station. As a considerable portion of her career in the nursing sphere has been devoted to the care and management of children, Sister finds her new position "most congenial and pleasant, especially as the mothers are always so delighted with the care which the nursing staff bestows upon the children." Sister Polkinghorne, who is the holder of the Triple Certificate (General, Midwifery and Infant Welfare),



was trained at the Geelong Public Hospital; later she had extensive experience in various Tasmanian hospitals. Her infant welfare training began at a hospital associated with the Berry Street Foundling Hospital, East Melbourne, later relieving the Matron at the last-mentioned institution. Sister's knowledge of the technique of caring for children was further widened by experience at the Oakleigh, Sale and Colac Baby Health Centres. . .

Race To Finish Guest House At Mt. Hotham

NEARLY 50 men—carpenters, plumbers, painters, electricians with labourers recruited from amongst local farmers, high plains cattlemen and others who live in the remote alpine region of north-eastern Victoria—are now engaged in a race against time which is being anxiously watched by skiers in all parts of Australia.

Will these men—now working enthusiastically on the crest of Mt. Hotham, 6,100 feet above sea level—complete the building of the new "Hotham Heights" guest-house in time for the fast-approaching opening of the skiing season?

If It Snows—

If heavy snow falls meanwhile do not make the precipitous Alpine Road from Bright impassable for vehicular traffic, they will complete the job in time.

"Hotham Heights" was destroyed during the fierce bush fire in January last, and now a new, modernly-appointed guest-house is rising on that site under the direction of the Way and Works Branch.

A vital factor in the completion of the house is the uninterrupted supply of building and furnishing materials. Nearly 300 tons of this material have to be transported by motor trucks over the highest motor highway in Australia.

Provided that the road is not obliterated by snow drifts, the new "Hotham Heights" will be ready for the King's Birthday holiday weekend in June. From then onwards, skiers will be flocking to Mt. Hotham which is one of the finest skiing resorts in Australia.

Many Comforts

The new building, which will provide accommodation for 32 guests, will include a spacious lounge-dining room, bedrooms, drying room, bathrooms, a sun deck, central heating throughout, hot and cold water service, electric lighting, sewerage and other amenities which will make this alpine guest-house a snug, comfortable haven for skiers.

Loud Speakers For Melbourne Yards

PREPARATIONS are now being made for the introduction of a series of loud speakers by which the movements of goods trains in the Melbourne Yard will be controlled from a central point in the Yard. This, it is believed, will be the first occasion in which equipment of this type has been adopted for such a purpose on any railway system in the world.

This innovation in rail operating technique will increase the efficient working of the many thousands of trucks through the Yard, thus providing better service for patrons and minimising delays to traffic.

The focal point of the new service, which provides for the installation of loud speakers at 10 "key" points, will be the reconditioned, sound-proof office now used by the Yard Foreman at Dudley Street, West Melbourne.

Under the new method of operation, an Assistant Yard Superintendent seated at a table fitted with microphones, loud speakers and automatic and harmonic telephone services, will be enabled to contact quickly all the important locations without the necessity for leaving his office.

In turn, members of the outside Yard staff and railwaymen at other locations will be able to confer promptly with the Assistant Yard Superintendent.

TRAVEL NEWS IN BRIEF

FOLLOWING closely on the recent Reso Tour from Victoria to New Zealand, a party from the Sister Dominion made a comprehensive Reso train tour in Victoria last month. A number of representative Victorians joined the party. Visits were made to Albury, Corowa, Rutherglen, Mt. Buffalo National Park, Shepparton, Yallourn, Warragul, Mt. Gambier, Portland, Warrnambool, Colac, Ballarat, Great Western and Mildura.

* * *

To cope with expanding business, a Branch of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau was opened last month at 99 Macquarie Street, Hobart. Since August last, Mr. C. E. Williams, the Victorian Representative, had been located at the Tasmanian Government Tourist Bureau, Hobart—the first occasion on which Victoria had been directly represented in Tasmania.

* * *

No greater tribute to the popularity of the Holiday Train tours can be recorded than the fact that last month the whole of the 97 berths on the train were booked for the next Christmas-New Year tour. And these bookings were made in advance despite the fact that the itinerary for the tour has not yet been planned . . . !

* * *

Many hundreds of school children in Victoria and from South Australia, New South Wales and Tasmania will be travelling in Victoria during the May school vacation on special tours incorporating both sightseeing and educational features, arranged by the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau. Parties will visit Cowes (Phillip Island), Lakes Entrance, Wye River, Port Campbell, Lorne, Point Lonsdale and Wilson's Promontory. Some of the tours from the other States are confined to Melbourne and adjacent resorts. In addition, a party of Victorian scholars will visit South Australia.

ELECTRIFICATION—Continued

Big Developments "Behind Scenes"

ELECTRICALLY wired goods sidings permit electric goods train working between Melbourne and St. Kilda, Sandringham, Dandenong, Frankston, Lilydale, Upper Ferntree Gully, Eastmalvern, Kew and Hurstbridge.

Power signalling with automatic signals, which provides for increased track capacity and safety under intensive traffic, has been greatly extended and improved since the introduction of electric traction. It is in use over most of the busier sections.

"Safety First"

Trip gear, which automatically applies the Westinghouse brakes if a train attempts to pass a signal at danger, is installed throughout the power signalling area. All electric trains are fitted with this gear.

Power for the operation of the train is distributed from the Newport Power Station to the main sub-stations by means of underground cables. Boilers have been ordered for the first section of a big scheme, estimated to cost more than £1,000,000, for modernizing the Newport Power Station.

There are 21 sub-stations in the electrified area, of which 12 are automatic in operation, supplying current to the trains. These 12 sub-stations run unattended, all switching, starting and stopping arrangements being performed by an ingenious system of automatic relays.

Power Supply Network

A total of 152 miles of transmission cables outside the inner-suburban area is carried on extensions of the overhead track structures. There are 141 miles of underground cable in the inner-suburban area.

In recent years, practically the whole of the tracks in the suburban area have been improved and strengthened by reballasting and resleepering.

Sections of the tracks have been relaid with heavier rails welded into long lengths, providing much smoother and quieter running, with reduced maintenance costs to the Department.

The drainage of tracks and station pits has also been made more efficient.

Symbol Of Service

In this necessarily brief review of the first 20 years of electric traction on Melbourne's suburban lines, there is the same story of constant improvement, and of technical development, which is manifested in all the widespread services that the Department renders to its patrons throughout the State.

ELECTRIC TRAIN SERVICES AT A GLANCE

ROUTE miles—173. . . Track miles—437. . . Train miles per annum—7,500,000 (average). . . Number of carriages—856. . . Sub-stations—21. . . Transmission lines mileage—292. . . Fuel used for power generation—150,000 tons of coal per annum. . . Greatest number of passengers in one year—160,154,499 in 1926-27. . . Greatest number of passenger journeys in one day—1,092,350 on October 18, 1934. . . Latest tally of number of passengers per day through Flinders Street station—282,426. . . Number of trains per day through Flinders Street station—2,170. . . Longest electric train journey possible—Frankston to Lilydale (50 miles).

Newport Power Station Chief Retires

ALMOST on the eve of the 20th anniversary of the commencement of the Melbourne and suburban electric train services, Mr. A. Horton who, throughout that period, had administered the "nerve centre" of the system, reached the retiring age. Mr. Horton was Engineer-in-Charge of the Newport Power Station, and on his departure from the service there were many flattering tributes to his work. For the past 18 months he has been Acting Assistant Chief Electrical Engineer.

Wide experience in many varied engineering undertakings in England, Canada, South America, and South Africa preceded his arrival in Australia in 1913.

He had been chosen by Messrs. Merz and McLellan, Consulting Engineers of London, to supervise the erection of the building and the installation of all the mechanical equipment at the Newport Power Station.

His success in that position was a vindication of the judgment of Mr. Merz who selected Mr. Horton as being eminently suitable to take charge in 1918 of the operation and maintenance of the Power Station.

Mr. Horton leaves the service with an enviable reputation.

Senior officials testify that the successful and efficient operation of the Newport Power Station was largely due to his engineering knowledge, organizing ability and capable administration.

V.R.I. DEBATEERS' FINE EFFORT

ALTHOUGH competing for the first time in the series of debates conducted by the Victorian Debateers' Association, the Victorian Railway Institute's "C" Grade team was responsible for one of the finest performances ever recorded in the Association.

Losing the first debate, the V.R.I. Team, consisting of Messrs. H. Millane (Way and Works), W. Stewart (Way and Works) and C. H. Sandford (Transportation), made a meritorious recovery, winning each subsequent debate and qualifying for the final.

By the narrowest of margins—two points—the team was defeated by the experienced A.N.A. representatives.

An analysis of the points awarded each of the six debaters by the three adjudicators reveals that the outstanding performance of the night was registered by Mr. Stewart, who is well-known as a Special Officer of the Way and Works Branch.

Mr. Sandford's progress in the V.R.I. Debating Club has been very rapid. His flair for gaining a comprehensive knowledge of each subject debated won public recognition last month when he was one of the principals in the "Heckle Hour" broadcast from 3DB-3LK.

Mr. Millane, who is prominent in amateur theatrical circles, took a leading part, last month, in the successful production of a series of "broadcast playlets" at one of the regular meetings of the V.R.I. Debating Club. The V.R.I. Wireless Club co-operated splendidly.

Newport "Lyre Bird"

RAILWAYMEN at the Newport Workshops aver that, as mimics, there is very little difference between the lyre bird and Mr. C. E. Morgan, Loco. Crane Attendant and Shunter at the Workshops. As a boy he quickly developed the highest note of the whistling birds and he is now a much sought entertainer at charitable concerts and other functions. At a recent Community Singing Broadcast from the Melbourne Town Hall he was the "hit" of the afternoon. The children at the Austin Hospital never allow Mr. Morgan to leave without an extraordinarily good impersonation of a world-famed "sailorman." And just to add a note to his versatility, it should be mentioned that he is a prominent member of the Yarraville Boomerang Mouth Organ Band which recently competed in the P. & A. Parade over 3KZ. Mr. Morgan has been with the band for the last 18 months, varying his contributions with some brilliant whistling performances. So, should you be admiring some sweet whistling birds on your next visit to the Newport Workshops, you can be sure that the notes are those of "Micky" Morgan.—R.

Ballarat Railman Wins Stawell Gift

SELDOM before has a crowd—estimated at 20,000—been so thrilled as on Easter Monday last, when a young railwayman, Len. W. Sprague, of the Ballarat Accounting Office, won the world's richest sprint event, the famous Stawell Gift.



Melb. "Herald" Photo

Few people knew, however, that about a week before the race a serious muscle weakness in one foot nearly deprived this popular young athlete from achieving his ambition.

This development profoundly disturbed his father who has been a life-long follower of the sport. Expert treatment in Melbourne was rewarded with success, but not without intense anxiety on the part of everyone, excepting Len. He said determinedly: "I'll run in the Gift if I have to do it on one leg!"

Besides winning the Stawell Gift (130 yards), Len also annexed the 75 yards sprint, and thus joined a select band of five who have won the double during the past 62 years.

He is an all-round athlete. Proof of that is his phenomenal performance at Eltham a few years ago. Almost single-handed he won the shield for his team by winning the 100, 220 and 440 yards events, the high and long jump, and finishing second in the hop, step and jump. Of his team's 37 points, he was responsible for 36!

In addition to running, Len is also a skilled baseballer and cricketer.

His success in the Stawell Gift created widespread enthusiasm in Ballarat, and the "News Letter" is reflecting the wishes of all railwaymen in warmly congratulating such a splendid sportsman on a great achievement.

WHEAT - PROOF TRUCKS CARRY WATER, TOO!

THE adaptability of the "GZ" trucks, which are specially wheat-proofed for the carriage of wheat in bulk, is revealed in their use in recent months for the successful transport of water—principally for locomotive requirements at various depots.

Additional sealing of the doors, boards placed across each end to prevent the water surging over the top, and the provision of a small outlet for emptying the water, have made these open trucks efficient for the purpose.

Latterly, 24 "GZ" trucks have been in use as a train to convey approximately 50,000 gallons of water daily from Stawell to Ararat where a lack of sufficient rain had depleted the public water storages.

Each "GZ" wagon has been loaded with 2,500 gallons of water. This is only half the capacity of a high-sided truck of this type, but the reduced load was carried as a precaution against loss during transit.

Loading And Emptying

Loaded at Stawell from the ordinary water column used for locomotive requirements, these trucks have been emptied at Ararat by means of a hose, fitted to the outlet in the truck, conveying the water into specially provided troughing along which the water runs to underground tanks.

Although 155 of the standard water tank trucks and 52 open "I" trucks—the latter each fitted with temporary tanks—have been in almost continuous use in various parts of the State since the beginning of the year, it was found impossible to cope adequately with the water shortage until the "GZ" trucks were pressed into service.

May Birthdays

GOODS Guard C. Hoskins, of Nyora, on the first; Fitters' Asst. A. J. Driver, of Newport Wkshps, Asst. S.M. M. E. Larkins, of Cope Cope, and Optg. Porter A. E. Thornton, of Victoria Park, on the third; Driver A. E. Barnes, of Seymour, and Miss W. Parkinson, Typiste, of Flinders-st., on the fourth; Ldg. Hd. Machinist R. F. Rickarby, of Newport, on the fifth; Chairman of Comms. Harold W. Clapp on the seventh; Turner D. W. Henderson, of Newport, and Telegraphist A. Eaton, of Seymour on the eighth; Driver W. M. Prece, of Jolimont, and Skld. Labr. G. A. Lockwood, of Geelong on the ninth; Sig. & Tele. Supvr. G. W. Stevens, of Ararat on the 12th; Repr. G. Waters, of Mernda, and Stn. Master J. R. Dempsey, of Lismore on the 14th; Carpenter H. J. Griffiths, of Flinders-st., and Clerk H. Loveluck, of Acctcy. Beh., on the 15th; Clerk F. Du Bourg, of

Acctcy. Beh. on the 16th; Principal Fitter Officer E. Hawken on the 17th; Clerk W. G. Leed, of Bendigo Loco., C. & W. on the 18th; F. A. Sanderson, of Newport, and D. Moffatt, of Acctcy. Beh. on the 19th; Guard C. Nash, of Melb. Yds., and Asst. S.M. A. Powell, of Brighton Bch. on the 19th; Stn. Master W. O'Connell, of Ararat on the 20th; Ganger F. C. Norton, of Warburton on the 21st; Elec. Fitter on the 21st; Asst. C. E. Morden, of Footscray, and Orderman C. F. Turner, of Newport Loco. Sheds on the 22nd; Subr. Labr. on the 22nd; J. T. Valle, of Flinders-st. on the 23rd; Driver T. F. McKenzie, of Jolimont on the 25th; Comms. Special Officer J. L. on the 25th; well, and Painter T. J. Tyrell, of Melb. on the 27th; O'head Supt. G. S. on the 29th; Asst. Engineer W. J. on the 29th; W. & W. Hd. Office on the 30th; Painter R. J. Young, of Nth. Melb. on the 31st. —L.J.

The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

June, 1939

Issue No. 105

Vain Attempt To Face Facts Squarely

V.R. Anti-Gas Lectures

AS part of the Commissioners' plans for protection of the civil population and of essential services against possible gas attacks, a series of lectures is now in progress.

The objective is to increase the existing trained nucleus qualified to carry out first aid and decontamination duty, and also to pass on their knowledge to their associates in the more vulnerable localities.

Railwaymen, representing many grades in the service, are attending the lectures which are being conducted by Mr. W. J. Blackburn (Assistant Ambulance Officer) and Mr. C. C. Mitchell (of the Accountancy Branch and a leading first aid man) under the direction of Mr. V. E. Southwood (Ambulance Officer).

Following on the attendance two years ago of a number of railwaymen at classes conducted by the Defence Department, the Ambulance Officer gave further instruction in anti-gas measures.

As a result there are nearly 500 railwaymen trained and available to instruct others in the event of chemical warfare being waged against our cities.

COMMISSIONERS HAVE COMPLETE AUTHORITY FOR STATEMENTS

IN a futile attempt to refute the facts presented in the folder "Starve Your Railways and Then—What?", the Chamber of Automotive Industries, which is largely concerned with the sale of motor vehicles, has issued a reply. Referring to the Commissioners' folder, the Chamber says "it contains so many inaccuracies and reflections on other Government Departments that it seems regrettable that it should have been issued."

The Commissioners have now prepared a further folder in which it is emphatically declared that for every statement in "Starve Your Railways and Then—What?", there is full authority. In its criticism the Chamber has preferred to diverge from the facts rather than face them squarely. In some respects, the divergence is so wide that it may well be construed as deliberately misleading.

OF the facts challenged by the Chamber, it is pertinent here to mention a very important one. In their original folder, the Commissioners said, *inter alia*, that "giving partial and selective service only, he

(the road operator) is moreover heavily subsidized in that he is provided with highways at negligible cost to himself."

Criticizing that statement, the Chamber said that "the motor truck operator considers that he is grossly overtaxed. In 1938, taxes paid on motor vehicles in Australia (including petrol tax) was £21,230,000 for the year."

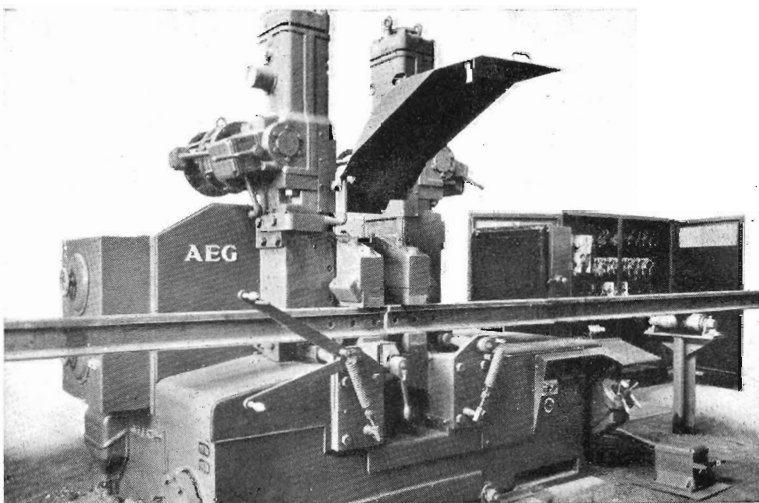
FACTS ARE HERE

The Chamber of Automotive Industries does not disclose the data on which it has computed the amount of £21,230,000. Presumably, it includes fees and taxes that come from private motor cars, which represent about 70 per cent. of the total number of motor vehicles registered in Australia.

"Pointless Figure"

The figure is pointless in relation to the matter under discussion, i.e., competition by commercial vehicles in Victoria. Full justification for the Commissioners' statement is contained in the Report of the Transport Regulation Board appointed in 1933 to investigate and submit recommendations relating to "the better and more economic co-ordination and the better regulation and control of railway and road transport."

(CONTINUED IN PAGE 2)



INSTALLATION OF A SEMI-AUTOMATIC flash-butt welding machine at the Newport Workshops is a reminder of the remarkably efficient automatic flash-butt rail welding machine, pictured above, which has been in use at the Spotswood Permanent Way Materials Depot since August, 1936. The picture shows two rails clamped in the "jaws" of the machine ready for welding. A weld is made in from 1½ to 2½ minutes, according to the weight of the rail. A total of nearly 46,000 welds, representing 167 miles of single track, has been made by the machine.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

The Month's Topic

HUGE RAIL PURCHASES

FEW people realize the tremendous value of the huge railway purchases to Australian manufacturers and primary producers. 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 £2,213,400. Of that amount about £1,912,900 (86 per cent.) represented purchases of Australian goods. Of the imports (most of which could not be manufactured here), £234,600 worth came from Great Britain, while foreign imports represented only one per cent. of the total purchases.

All Commodities

PRACTICALLY every commodity is purchased by the railways. Coal, rails, sleepers, timber, castings, steel tyres, cloth for uniforms, rope, leather, oil, paint, stationery and many other classes of goods appear in the list.

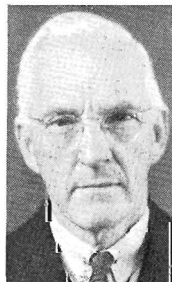
Huge quantities of foodstuffs are used by the Refreshment Services Branch. Last year the purchases included 141,000 lb. of sugar, 99,000 lb. of butter, 103,000 4-lb. loaves of bread, 17 tons of raisins, 114,000 gallons and 218,630 bottles of milk, 14,000 bottles of sauce, not to mention the tons of meat, fish, fruit, vegetables, groceries, etc.

It will be obvious, therefore, that expanding railway business possesses a very real interest for Australian manufacturers and primary producers generally. If those sections of the community made greater use of their railway service, they would be helping to build up a bigger local market for their own products . . .

INTRODUCING—

MR. W. Howieson, Railways Photographer, new examples of whose photographic art now being

placed in railway carriages are winning the warm appreciation of passengers. For 33 years, Mr. Howieson has been faithfully recording the pictorial richness of the Victorian scenery . . . he has roamed all over the Victorian Railways system . . . he has encircled Australia by rail, steamer, camel



Competitive Motor Vehicles Are Heavily Subsidized By Taxpayers

The Board stated (*inter alia*):—

"We therefore think that it is safe to assume that the total expenditure by municipalities in respect of roads during the 21 years 1912-1932, not including amounts paid to the Country Roads Board and loan expenditure still outstanding, was not less than £25,000,000.

"From the whole of the foregoing figures we arrive at the following results:—

1. Excluding loan expenditure by municipalities not yet repaid the total amount expended in respect of roads in Victoria for the 21 years 1912-1932 was not less than . . . £52,934,266
2. Of this amount there can be attributed to motor vehicles:—
 - (a) Payments under the Motor Car and Motor Omnibus Acts . . . £8,048,740
 - (b) Customs Duty on Petrol . . . £1,766,143

A Total of . . . £9,814,883

or 18.54 per cent. of the total expenditure.

Motor vehicles have also provided expenses of administration of the Registration Branch, amounting to £366,547.

3. Private motor vehicles have contributed not less than £5,550,000, and purely commercial vehicles not more than £2,500,000, of the amount under the Motor Car and Motor Omnibus Acts.
4. It is impossible to apportion between private and commercial vehicles, with any great degree of accuracy, the amount of Customs Duty on petrol, as the necessary data are not available for the period during which the amount has been provided. We have obtained information from a number of owners of large commercial motor fleets, from which we conclude that the percentage attributable to commercial vehicles is approximately 35."

Miles Of Meat Pies !

"**O**BVIOUSLY a striking tribute to the excellence of the product," said Mr. C. J. Ramsay, Manager of the Dining Car Services, when he announced last month record-breaking business in the output of meat pies.

Figures taken out for the period from April 2-29, showed that 4,392 dozen meat pies—52,704—had been made at the bakery at the Dining Car Depot, North Melbourne.

"Yes, a total of 52,704 pies is certainly a mammoth figure," Mr. Ramsay agreed, adding that "if they were placed end on end they would almost cover the distance between Manangatang and Cocamba—roughly 4½ miles !"

and airplane . . . he has penetrated into the very heart of the Continent. In brief, he has been behind the camera securing an extraordinary range of subjects, but it remained for him to have one of his rarest experiences only last month. The photograph at the left is the first time he has been in front of a camera for 20 years . . . Mr. Howieson's reputation as a photographer is emphasized by the fact that he has on several occasions been one of three judges casting critical eyes over photographs entered by the world's leading photographic artists at important Exhibitions held in Melbourne.

In other words, the registration fee for the competitive commercial truck, on the basis of road use, is less than one-sixth of that paid by the private motorist, despite the fact that the heavier weight of the former causes greatly more damage to the roads.

It is thus clear that the competitive commercial motor vehicle is heavily subsidized by taxpayers, ratepayers, and also private motorists.

A typical freight vehicle operating in long-distance competition with the railways weighs not less than 2½ tons, has a carrying capacity of approximately 5 tons, and pays a registration fee of about £25. Its mileage is commonly as much as 45,000 a year.

Striking Examples

Assuming it carries a full load in one direction and half-loading on the return journey, the registration fee is equivalent to 1/9d. per 1,000 ton miles. For a typical private car, weighing about 30 cwt., carrying an average passenger load weighing not more than 5 cwt. and travelling 5,000 miles a year, the registration fee is approximately £8, which represents 11/5d. per 1,000 ton miles.

A similar comparison may be made in respect of the petrol tax. (If crude oil is used, no fuel tax at all is paid.) The competitive truck operator carrying the loading assumed and using 1 gallon of petrol for every 10 miles, pays 7½d. for every 6½ ton miles.

The private motorist with a petrol consumption of 1 gallon for 18 miles, pays the same amount for half that ton mileage.

RAILWAYS' PART IN MELBOURNE CARNIVAL

PRICIPALLY through the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau and Branches, the Department will play a leading part in publicizing the spectacular Carnival to be held in Melbourne between October 21 and November 28.

Preliminary details of the Carnival reveal that it will be conducted on a scale comparable in interest and entertainment with similar events held overseas. Highlights of the program include a fortnight's musical festival, a £1,000 band contest; a quick step marching competition; and the conversion of the Treasury Gardens into a Garden City with a living floral carpet.

Mr. V. F. Letcher (Manager, Publicity and Tourist Services) is representing the Commissioners on the Floral Pageant and Publicity Sub-committees established by the Melbourne City Council.

FLASH-BUTT WELDER AT NEWPORT WORKSHOPS

ENCOURAGED by the success of the automatic flash-butt rail-welding machine now in use at the Spotswood Permanent Way Materials Depot, the Commissioners have installed a smaller semi-automatic flash-butt welding machine at the Newport Workshops. It will be used for an increasing amount of specialized and general welding processes.

Purchased as a result of tests with the machine at Spotswood which showed the superiority of flash-butt welding over the older resistance method, the new machine has many advantages and will enable a reduction in time to be effected in making welds.

High quality welds, such as the welding of high-speed steels to ordinary carbon steels, enabling substantial savings in machine tool manufacture, can be made.

Machine's Varied Use

Specialized work to be performed by the new machine is the welding of angle iron door frames for trucks, butt-welding of door and ridge stanchions, renewal of ends of superheater elements and reconditioning the ends of steel boiler tubes. In addition, the machine will be very useful for a great variety of general welding work.

The machine can weld sections up to 2½ inches square maximum sectional area and as small as .3 square inches minimum sectional area. The power supply is from 440 volt 25 cycle mains and the whole machine is self-contained.

An outstanding feature of the machine is the facility it provides for making mitre welds and welds on unequal sections, and to weld thin materials equally as well as structural shapes.

Despite its increased capacity, compared with the existing resistance welding equipment, the new machine is not expected to consume a greater amount of electrical power.

SERVICE

DEAR Sir.—A few words of appreciation are never amiss. I would like to thank your staff at Flinders Street on the excellence of their loud speaker arrangements in announcing trains, and in particular for their thoughtfulness this morning.

"As the passengers from the Lilydale-Croydon line were alighting about 9 a.m., the announcer notified that the 12 noon train for Croydon and Lilydale would be leaving from No. 2 Platform in future, instead of No. 1 East end. This was quite a serviceable piece of information, and was appreciated by myself and others who live at Croydon.

"While writing I would also state that the announcing of trains from Spencer Street is also appreciated."

—Mr. R. E. Boardman, Secretary and Accountant, 528 Collins Street, Melbourne, writing to the Chairman of Commissioners.

Track Locking At Crossing Stations Will Aid Movements Of Traffic

TO enable the heavy fast traffic (both passenger and goods) to be handled with greater efficiency, track locking at single line crossing stations is now being carried out on the main Serviceton and Albury lines.

Track locking protection was completed and brought into operation at Burrumbeet in March. The installation of similar equipment at Mangalore is now being carried out in conjunction with the relaying, resignalling and re-arranging of the junction trackwork at the "up" end of the station.

Similar work will later be undertaken at Trawalla (on the Serviceton line) and Bowser (Albury line).

On the Geelong line, track locking and Track Block working will be installed between North Geelong and Geelong.

These works should eliminate delays to train movements which

occasionally occur because of the present restrictive signalling system.

Preparations are being made for the installation of power signalling between Carnegie and Oakleigh.

When finished, this work will enable a greater frequency of service to be provided at peak periods and will eventually permit of a reduction in the overall travelling time between Melbourne and the outer-suburbs on the Oakleigh-Dandenong line.

An important development in the power signal working between Carnegie and Oakleigh is the decision to use colour light signals of the "searchlight" type. (The efficiency of the "searchlight" signal has been fully established at Caulfield where one has been in use for some years past.)

"Searchlight" signals represent a marked improvement on the ordinary treble-light signals. They have a single lens with a movable vane, thus enabling red, yellow and green to be displayed through the one lens.

Trentham Is Again A Prize-winner

ANNOUNCEMENT last month of the prize-winners in the annual Tree Planting and Station, Depot, Barracks and Rest Houses Decoration Competitions further emphasized the widely-held belief that Trentham station ranks as one of the most picturesque in the State.

In the Bendigo District section for maintenance work, the Trentham station gained first prize with the high aggregate of 88 points. For the past 20 years, this station has figured among the finalists, winning on many occasions the first prize. Messrs. C. A. Curthoys (Station-master) and H. C. Waterman (Operating Porter) are deserving of special congratulations for their consistent interest and fine gardening sense in beautifying the station precincts.

The honour of gaining the highest number of points—95—in the Competitions went to the Wandin station in the new works section of the Metropolitan District.

Over the past 15 years, this station has repeatedly won praise as a location where railwaymen manifest great pride in the appearance of the station and surroundings.

A general review of the competitions reveals that owing to the abnormally dry season experienced, the number of entries was below normal. However, there was a number of new competitors whose interest in the beautification of Departmental property was rewarded by inclusion amongst the prize-winners.

RAILWAY LIBRARY FOR HEAD OFFICE

LAST month the Commissioners approved of action being taken to create a Central Railway Library for Departmental use. First of its kind to be established by the Department, the new Library will be located in the Administrative Offices at Spencer Street.

In the various Branches of the Department there are numerous books, magazines and printed reports dealing authoritatively with all aspects of railway operation—from rails to rating. These publications are highly valuable inasmuch as many of them deal with the fundamental features of railroading.

With the exception of those publications in regular use in the different Branches, it is proposed to transfer the remainder to the Library where they will be catalogued and made available on a much more general scale than is possible as present.

An important feature of the Library's activities will be the indexing of important subjects covered in the numerous overseas railway and technical journals which are regularly received by the Department. The facility of immediate reference to the matters dealt with in these publications will prove of great value to railwaymen.

The Library will be under the control of a committee representing the Secretary's, Rolling Stock, Way and Works, Electrical and Accountancy Branches. Mr. R. M. Harvey (Member, Betterment and Suggestions Board) will be the Chairman.

V.R. INSTITUTE'S BIG SPORTING PROGRAM FOR THIS YEAR

WITH the Department rich in baseball talent, the Victorian Railways Institute seems assured of success in its latest plan to enter for the first time a team of baseballers in an Interstate Railways Competition.

Already railwaymen regularly take part in Interstate carnivals devoted to football, golf, bowls, cricket, table tennis and other sporting events.



Joe Plant

NEGOTIATIONS are now in hand for Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland baseball teams to meet in a series of contests in Sydney in September next.

Among the railwaymen who are expected to be available for selection are Joe Plant, the well-known Fitzroy and Victorian cricketer and baseballer; Jack Ellis, Jr., of the South Melbourne baseball club; Harry Whitford, of the Essendon team; Ernie Simpson (Brunswick) and Bob Reilly (Northcote).

Ballarat railwaymen are leaders in the local baseball competitions, and from this team it is hoped to secure a number of good players, including Len Sprague (winner of this year's Stawell Gift), Ron Jansen and Stan Spiers.

When the team is ultimately assembled, it should not lack expert coaching. Jack Ellis, of the Accountancy Branch, is the coach and selector of the South Melbourne team, and a former player and manager of Victorian teams. As a member of the Victorian Baseball Council he is one of the best known baseball personalities in the State.

Other Events

IN addition to baseball, there are many other Interstate sporting events, to be held during the next eight months, which emphasize the manner in which the Victorian Railways Institute provides splendid opportunities for railwaymen interested in sport.

Australian Rules football teams from the New South Wales, South Australian and Tasmanian Railways will play in Melbourne at the end of August. Table tennis teams from New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia will be in Melbourne during September next.

For the first time, an Interstate Billiards Championship is to be organized. Several of the States have already expressed their entire agreement with the proposal. Should it eventuate, the contests will be held in Melbourne later in the year.

In February next, cricket teams from every Australian railway system will take part in Melbourne in the annual carnival.

CANADIAN ROYAL TRAIN DRIVERS' HONOURS

WHEN Their Majesties the King and Queen travelled by rail across Canada last month on their historic visit to the Sister Dominion, the drivers of the Royal Train were two Canadian railwaymen who had been firemen together on the Royal Train when the late King George V. and Queen Mary visited Canada in 1901 as the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall.

Eugene LeClerc was selected to drive the Royal Train from Quebec to Montreal, and George Moulds from Montreal to Ottawa.

It was to be one of the last trips for each of these proud veterans. LeClerc was to retire on a pension at the end of the journey. Moulds was due to retire on June 20.

Their selection to drive the Royal Train created widespread interest and approval in Canada. They achieved two honours which are unique in the history of the Canadian Railways: they were the first in Canada to pilot a train bearing reigning monarchs; and they were the first in the British Empire, outside of Great Britain, to handle a train carrying King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.

June Birthdays

TURNER N. Stafford, of Newport, and Plant Atndt. J. Noonan, of Newport Power House, on the second; Parcels Porter L. C. Gilbody, of Mildura, on the third; Clerk P. J. Maynard, of Trans. Staff Office, on the fifth; Subr. Guard J. O'Grady, of Flinders St., and Clerk J. F. Toohy, of W. & W. Staff Office, on the sixth; Clerk J. W. Kelly, of Acctcy. Bch., on the seventh; Engineer of Track and Drainage A. K. Bartel, Repr. J. P. Monohan, of Ballarat, and Sig. Ganger E. E. Warren, of Spencer St., on the eighth; Clerk C. Donaldson, of Elec. Eng. Bch., Storeman R. J. Graves, of Spotswood, and Carpenter J. W. Dingle, of Spotswood, on the ninth; Repr. A. J. Price, of Deer Park, and Ldg. Shunter A. S. Rushton, of State Coal Mine, on the 10th; Asst. Architect G. Bartholomew, Upholsterer A. G. Love, of Jolimont, Signalman E. C. Willox, of Castlemaine, and Repr. H. Chard, of Riversdale, on the 11th; Moter Trolleyman G. Bryand, of Newport, on the 12th; Iron Machinist W. Potter, of Spotswood, on the 13th; Advtg. Sales Mgr. G. P. Mulcahy, and Car & W. Bldr. R. C. Ellis, of Newport, on the 14th; Chief Spl. Officer J. E. McDowell, and Labr. S. L. Gaywood, of Newport, on the 15th; Signal-

Retired Railman Is Feted

TRIBUTE TO Mr. T. F. BEARY

IN Melbourne on May 18, there was no happier man than Mr. Thomas F. Beary, well-known to thousands of railwaymen as a former Safe Working Officer. It was his 77th birthday, and to mark the occasion nearly 30 of his associates at present in the Department tendered him a dinner.

Mr. Beary retired from the service 12 years ago, and it was a striking tribute to the veteran that the severance of every-day official contact strengthened rather than diminished the high regard in which he is held by his old colleagues.

Mr. Beary is still recognized as one of the greatest Safe Working Officers ever connected with the Department. His profound knowledge of this intricate subject was equalled by his understanding of and interest in the classics.

Menu Card Is Feature

Knowing this, the committee arranging the dinner prepared an unusual menu card. On the back of the card there was a quotation symbolic of the job or main personal characteristic of each of the hosts at the dinner.

Examples of the aptness of the quotations are.—W. R. Price (Superintendent Train Services)—"O great corrector of enormous times"; Beaumont and Fletcher; M. F. Baynes (Safe Working Officer)—"Found thee a way; a sure and safe one" . . . Henry VIII; W. Forrest (Asst. Signal and Telegraph Engineer)—" . . . to plan fixed sentences, and keep their secrets"; Wm. Shenstone; C. H. Saunders (Senior Block and Signal Inspector)—"Phosphor, bring the day, whose conquering ray may chase these fogs" . . . Francis Quarles; G. Rogers (Metro. Superintendent and member of Transport Facilities Committee)—"I stood within a maze, but not without a plan"; G. E. Young . . .

man A. W. Porter, of Melb. Yd., and H. D. Chandler, of Traffic Bch., and Signalman W. Nicholls, of Nth. Geelong, on the 16th; Clerk T. W. Godwin, of Spotswood, and Porter-in-Chg. C. E. Wilcox, of Heyington, on the 18th; Stewer C. Maple, of Melb. Goods, on the 19th; Mechanic H. H. Hopkins, of Dist. S. of Melb., on the 20th; Skld. Labr. W. M. of Nth Melb., and Skld. Labr. L. S. of Spencer St., on the 21st; Chief Archt. H. Sutcliffe, on the 23rd; Skld. Labr. A. Scott, of Maryborough, on the 24th; J. H. McFarlane, of Newport, on the 25th; Asst. V.G.T. Bureau Manager R. W. Wetherpoon, and Yd. Ganger R. of Flinders St., on the 26th; Tube F. P. Praed, of Nth. Melb. Loc., on the 28th; Staff Board Member J. and Signalman J. J. Ramsay, of Altona, on the 30th.

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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

July, 1939

Issue No. 106

MR. HAROLD W. CLAPP'S NEW APPOINTMENT WITH FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Highlights Of Great Service To State

FROM a railway aspect the appointment last month of Mr. Harold W. Clapp, M. Inst., E.E., as General Manager of Commonwealth Aircraft Construction there were two outstanding reactions: pride in the knowledge that Mr. Clapp's notable attainments as an administrator and engineer had won such recognition by the Commonwealth Government; and sincere regret that his transfer to another sphere meant the loss of the inspirational force behind the whole of the activities of the Victorian Railways.

Mr. Clapp's appointment as Chairman of Commissioners in 1920 followed a visit to America by a member of the State Cabinet of the day. As a railway manager in America, Mr. Clapp had established an enviable reputation which was immediately confirmed and enhanced in Victoria. Ultimately, he became one of the leading railroad executives in the world.

IN every section of the Department there are enduring imprints of Mr. Clapp's enterprise, tenacity and enthusiasm. He brought all his skill to bear upon the details of countless developments, exhibiting throughout the years a grasp of essential detail aptly described by an intimate as "simply amazing."

On his appointment in 1920, the Victorian Railways entered a new era in which the whole of the operations became influenced by one abiding objective: SERVICE. Himself the possessor of boundless energy and a complete understanding of the functions of a national railway system, Mr. Clapp unceasingly emphasized to all railwaymen their great responsibilities as members of the "railway team."

Improved Public Relations

As a result of this new enlightened outlook on the part of the staff, the relations between the people of the State and the railways were dramatically transformed from aloofness—often actual unfriendliness—to co-operation and sympathetic understanding. Letters of appreciation, supplemented by verbal commendations, have amply demonstrated the radical change that has taken place.

From the outset of his record-breaking term as Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. Clapp manifested a deep personal interest in the education of railwaymen. "We are still at school" . . . "The best railroad man has still a lot to learn about his business" . . . these and similar remarks by Mr. Clapp epitomised his views on the importance of education.

Within a month of his appointment he had established frequent contact with the Council of the Victorian Railways Institute and set the basis for the powerful educative influence which the Institute now exerts.

WARM-HEARTED WISHES

MR. Harold W. Clapp takes up his new duties with the warm-hearted wishes of every member of the railway service. His conspicuously successful term as Chairman of Commissioners is sufficient warrant for predicting that he will be equally as resourceful, imaginative and enterprising in the position to which the Commonwealth Government has appointed him.

On behalf of all his former colleagues throughout the railway service, the "News Letter" congratulates Mr. Clapp, and expresses the earnest hope that he will retain his magnificently inspiring vigour and vision in all his efforts in his new position.

He also directed his energies towards improving the scope for advancement for apprentices, and in March, 1923, the Newport Technical College was opened. Better training methods and a general improvement

in facilities for apprentices followed, until the Victorian Railways system for training apprentices became generally recognized as unsurpassed in Australia.

Born at Melbourne on May 7, 1875, and educated at the Brighton Grammar School and the Melbourne Church of England Grammar School, Mr. Clapp, at the age of 18, commenced a three years' apprenticeship with the Otis Engineering Company of Melbourne. Later he was prominently associated with the operations of the Brisbane Tramway system. With the practical experience thus gained, he went to America in 1901 to broaden his general knowledge.

Overseas Experience Value

Mr. Clapp has never forgotten the benefits he derived from his youthful years in America and, in keeping with his plan to promote the educational opportunities for young Victorian Railwaymen, he has given every encouragement to employes in all grades to widen their experience overseas. Besides granting extended leave of absence, he has furnished them with invaluable letters of introduction to railway and other enterprises overseas.

In addition, Mr. Clapp evolved the plan under which leading officers of the Department went abroad on missions to acquaint the Department with the latest practices in all spheres of railway operation.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2, COL 3)

The Month's Topic

INSPIRATION FOR . . .

FIRST AID STUDENTS

THE enthusiasm exhibited by members of the newly-formed first aid class at the Bendigo North Workshops (as mentioned on this page) has particular points of significance for railwaymen in all grades of the service.

If the keen practical interest of these men were emulated throughout the Department, the membership of the first aid organisation would now reach that standard of efficiency which the Commissioners so earnestly desire.

The advantages of a complete knowledge of first aid in an emergency are too obvious to need much elaboration. Frequently familiarity with first aid in an emergency makes all the difference between a valuable helper and a useless bystander.

Looked at from the purely departmental viewpoint, the rendering of first aid is an example of service that merits and gains the appreciation of our patrons.

Invaluable Anywhere

But there is another aspect—and it concerns every railwayman, irrespective of grade or branch. A knowledge of first aid is invaluable both at work and in the home circle. Here again the capacity to apply first aid as a temporary expedient until medical advice and treatment are available is obvious to everyone. The lack of this knowledge is strikingly manifested every day.

Railwaymen have an unsurpassed opportunity for acquiring an understanding of first aid. The Department's State-wide first aid organisation is expertly controlled and fully equipped to impart the necessary tuition. Books, bandages and instruction are free. Passes are issued for travel from home stations to stations where classes are conducted.

For the reasons mentioned, every member of the service is advised to take up the first aid course. Not the least attractive feature is that first aid is wonderfully interesting. It is not surprising to note the number to whom first aid has become an absorbing hobby.

To All My Fellow-Railwaymen

IT is not easy for me to leave you. For nearly a score of years I have been one of you, and I am not likely ever to forget the pride I have always felt in my association with a team which I am convinced is unrivalled in its enthusiasm and efficiency.

Because of my knowledge of the men and women who comprise the railway staff, and particularly because I am not unmindful of their loyal co-operation which has so greatly assisted me in my own task, I leave the service with a deep sense of personal loss. The reasons for my severance of a long and happy association will already be known to you. Suffice it to say that it has seemed my clear duty to take the step.

My thoughts will continue to be with you and with the great service in which, through good times and bad times, we have for so long worked together. I feel I shall always be one of you, but I must say "Farewell." From the depths of my gratitude I wish also to say—to each and every one of you, wherever you are or whatever your job—"Thank You."

Donald W. Clapp

June 30, 1939.

Chairman.

BENDIGO RAILWAYMEN ARE KEEN ON FIRST AID

IF enthusiasm and consistent attendance at first aid classes are any indication, the No. 1 Corps at the Bendigo North Workshops should play a prominent part in the District and State Ambulance Competitions next year.

A note to the "News Letter" from Mr. G. Trembath, the Assistant Secretary of the Corps, reveals that the newly-formed class at that centre is composed of enthusiastic first aid students.

He said that in a class of approximately 70, the average weekly attendance is 62.

"The class is functioning very satisfactorily," Mr. Trembath said, "under the capable guidance of the instructor, Mr. A. L. Stevenson, a blacksmith at the workshops. Mr. E. Hocking (Superintendent, No. 2 Corps) is rendering valuable assistance, particularly in the care of the equipment.

"Other members of various Corps and Mr. J. Christopher, a former veteran instructor, are also co-operating in every possible way."

CONT'D. FROM PAGE 1

MR. CLAPP LEAVES FOR NEW SPHERE

MR. Clapp's highly beneficial work in this connection culminated in his own tour of investigation overseas five years ago. In an 80-page report, he surveyed a comprehensive field of rail, road and air transportation. He brought back a vast amount of invaluable data, and has gradually introduced many innovations which have placed the Victorian Railways amongst the most modern railway systems in the world.

Although essentially a railwayman—"there is no more fascinating calling on earth" he has often said—Mr. Clapp took a wide, practical interest in the general progress of the State. Asked on one occasion what career other than railroading, he would have followed, Mr. Clapp promptly replied: "I would have gone on the land."

Aid To Primary Industries

In his tours of inspection of country lines, he was indefatigable in discussing the problems confronting primary producers. As a result he had a profound knowledge of all phases of rural endeavour. It can be confidently stated that few, if any, men in Victoria have done more to promote the well-being of primary producers than Mr. Clapp.

He brought all the resources of the Department to bear upon intensive and successful publicity campaigns urging people to "Eat More Fruit"; "Use More Wool"; "Drink More Milk"—and in numerous other directions he stimulated the consumption and use of primary products. The running of the "Better Farming Train" ("an agricultural college on wheels") and the "Reso Train" (primarily to bring together city businessmen and primary producers) were two outstanding activities by Mr. Clapp.

Mr. Clapp's administrative genius in all spheres of railway operation—from major principles of train operation to office and workshops methods, from rolling stock construction to railway housekeeping—is known throughout the Commonwealth and beyond.

Tribute To Staff

In all respects, Mr. Clapp has never spared himself in promoting the welfare of the Victorian Railways. He was immensely proud of his position as Head of the State's national railway system; but he was even prouder of his "fellow-railwaymen." As he frequently remarked: "Without the steady co-operation, loyalty and unremitting sense of duty so characteristic of every railwayman, all the Department's progress would have been impossible of accomplishment."

Big Stimulus To Victorian Skiing

DEPARTMENT'S VALUABLE WORK

THE arrival last month of two Continental skiing experts to conduct Arlberg Skiing Schools at Mt. Buffalo National Park and Mt. Hotham focusses attention on the big part which the department is playing in stimulating interest in the skiing attractions of Victoria.

Comprehensive publicity campaigns featuring all Victorian skiing resorts and the provision of facilities for the enjoyment of this fascinating winter sport have enabled the Department to build up tourist traffic at a time when ordinarily the number of holidaymakers travelling is below that of other seasons. This policy, moreover, adds substantially to the value of Victoria's tourist industry.

EACH winter season since 1936 a Continental skiing teacher, possessing the highest European qualifications, has conducted a Skiing School at Mt. Buffalo National Park. Last year for the first time a similar school was held at Mt. Hotham. As a result, over 3,000 people have had the benefit of modern skiing tuition never previously available in Victoria.

Most of these people had never experienced snow conditions, and their rapid passage through the elementary stages of skiing has made them eagerly await each winter season for further skiing holidays.

Considerable betterment works at Mt. Buffalo National Park and Mt. Hotham, including the clearing and grading of tracks and ski runs, have been carried out in conjunction with the State Tourist Committee.

Ski Tow's Advantages

In addition, the Department has provided at Mt. Buffalo National Park a ski tow which has proved to be a most successful and valuable novelty. Consisting of a moving, endless rope alongside the steep Cresta Run, the ski tow enables skiers to return to the top of the run without an arduous climb, thus providing more opportunities for all the thrills of downhill running.

Outstanding features of the Department's work are the many improvements to the accommodation and facilities at Mt. Buffalo National Park and Mt. Hotham.

Additional *de luxe* bedrooms, bed sitting rooms and suites have enhanced the reputation of The Chalet, Mt. Buffalo National Park, as one of the finest guest-houses in Australia.

Destroyed by bush fires in January last, "Hotham Heights," Mt. Hotham, has now been rebuilt on the original site 6,000 feet above sea level in the highest part of the Australian Alps. It provides up-to-date accommodation and general skiing services which are surprising in their quality and scope.

It is worth noting that the recent installation of an electric lighting system makes "Hotham Heights" the highest house in Australia to possess such a facility.

The appointment of a Snowline Representative of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau at Harrietteville is another valuable convenience.

This experienced skier, who was first chosen for this service in 1936, has been immensely helpful, providing personal escort where required to all skiers travelling beyond Harrietteville to "Hotham Heights" and, before their destruction by bush fires this year, to the "Hospice" at Mt. St. Bernard and "The Bungalow" at Mt. Feathertop.

Commonwealth-wide publicity featuring all the skiing resorts of Victoria has greatly increased the popularity of skiing.

Each year descriptive articles and advertisements appear in numerous magazines, journals, etc., striking posters and attractively illustrated folders and booklets are widely distributed; photographs are circulated; films (with commentaries) are screened; and window displays are arranged at the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau and Branch Offices.

RAIL CENSUS, JULY 2

A COMPREHENSIVE State-wide stocktaking of Departmental rolling stock and equipment will be carried out on Sunday, July 2. For the first time the annual stocktaking of tarpaulins, lashings and standards will be undertaken simultaneously with the triennial census of every type of rolling stock—from dining cars to powder vans.

Sunday is always chosen for stocktaking of this kind, as it is the one day in the year when the greater part of the rolling stock and equipment is idle. Thus, an accurate check is more readily made.

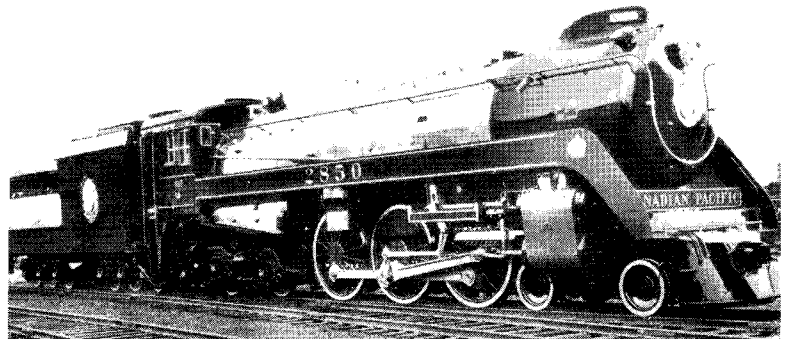
More Buffet Cars In Service

FURTHER evidence of the modern rail facilities being made available for passengers was the introduction last month of two more air-conditioned Buffet Cars.

One of these cars is attached to the 5.12 p.m. train on Mondays to Fridays (5.52 p.m. on Saturdays) from Melbourne to Warrnambool and to the 7.20 a.m. daily train from Warrnambool to Melbourne. The other car runs on the 2.30 p.m. train on Mondays to Fridays (1.25 p.m. on Saturdays) from Melbourne to Horsham and the 8.15 a.m. daily train from Horsham to Melbourne.

For some time past, Buffet Cars have been running on the Bendigo and Albury lines. It is planned to place three more Buffet Cars in service: two on the Mildura line and one on the Bairnsdale line.

For the convenience of 39 girls employed on the Buffet Cars, together with those employed at the Laundry, the Department recently provided a series of comfortable rest rooms, including a spacious lounge room furnished with roomy, restful arm chairs and settees; two hot and cold shower baths; and modern individual lockers for the girls' wearing apparel.



(Photo, courtesy Victorian Representative, Canadian Pacific Railway)

SCHEDULED for the biggest job ever assigned to a steam locomotive, the Canadian Pacific Railway's locomotive 2850 hauled the Royal Train with Their Majesties the King and Queen on their 3,000-mile trip across Canada recently. Specially refitted and decorated for the occasion, this 4-6-4 type locomotive was a mass of shining stainless steel, royal blue, silver and gold. The general decorative scheme comprises a background of deep blue on the underframe, smokebox, front of engine and all marginal work on engine and tender. The sides of tender, cab and running boards are painted royal blue.



Personal Postscript



YOUNGEST GOODS SUPERINTENDENT YET

WITH characteristic efficiency, vigour and enthusiasm, Mr. Frank D. Greene has quickly settled down to what promises to be a most successful term as Melbourne Goods Superintendent. At the age of 45 he thus becomes the youngest railwayman to control one of the busiest railway activities of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. The last 13 of Mr. Greene's 32 years of service were directly connected with the Train Control System. Actually he worked on the first modified form of a train despatcher's desk introduced at Dandenong in 1922—four years before he was selected for transfer to Spencer Street on the establishment of Central Train Control in 1926. His appointment early in 1934 as Chief Train Despatcher was a tribute to his

ability. It synchronised with the commencement of the State-wide plan for accelerating train services which has resulted in the travelling times of all passenger trains being reduced by an aggregate of over 700 hours a week. Mr. Greene commenced in the Department as a Messenger at the Ballarat station. To give some idea of the extensive practical railroading experience he has gained during the intervening years, it is worth recording that he has been successively Clerk, Night Officer at Stawell, Assistant Train Running Officer, District Superintendent's Clerk, Train Despatcher, Senior Train Despatcher, Chief Train Despatcher and Relieving Metropolitan and District Superintendent. —H.M.

NEWPORT WORKSHOPS BAND'S BIG CHANCE

MEMBERS of the Newport Workshops Brass Band have now commenced practicing in earnest for the £1,000 Band Contest which will be one of the highlights during Melbourne's first spectacular Spring Carnival this year. With many outstanding performances to their credit in the past, Band officials are justifiably confident that these enthusiastic railwaymen will be figuring prominently in the final contests. At charitable concerts and in public gardens on Sunday afternoons the Band has given great pleasure to thousands of music lovers. Now each month,

until October next, the Band is finding pleasurable recreation at the Dances which it is sponsoring at the Victorian Railways Institute, Melbourne. Mr. N. W. Armstrong, the Honorary Secretary of the Band, is delighted with the ever-increasing patronage at the Dances. "A good floor . . . a good orchestra . . . and a good, sociable crowd," he says, are only some of the reasons for the success of these functions. Primarily, the object of the Dances is to secure funds for the purchase of new uniforms, instruments, etc., for the Band. —A.W.N.

July Birthdays

ENG. Asst. W. O. Galletly, of H.O., Ldg. Shunter A. C. Stewart, of W'town Pier, and Eng. Drvr. L. Lynch, of Nth. Melb. Loco., on the first; Ganger A. L. Ragatz, of Greensborough, on the second; Goods Supt. F. D. Greene, on the third; Composer A. Svensson, of Printing Works, on the fourth; Ganger E. L. Van, of Ultima, and Trn. Exmr. W. T. Weeks, of Jolimont, on the fifth; Eng. Asst. K. C. Cousin, of W. & W., on the sixth; Machinist T. E. Kersley, of Printing Works, on the seventh; Plant Attdt. H. E. Gilbertson, of Newport Power Station, on the eighth; Asst. Comptroller of Accounts A. A. Cameron, on the 10th; Signalman J. Pauline, of Graham, and Tool Storeman F. G. Groves, of Bendigo W'shops, on the 11th; Eng. Drvr. T. W. Ellis, of Bendigo Loco., Repr. W. A. Wright, of Eaglehawk, and Fitter G. Grieve, of Flinders-st., on the 12th; Painter J. C. Robin, of Flinders-st., on the 13th; Asst. Photographer A. L. Reid, and Clerk J. F. Slade, of Acctcy. Beh., on the 14th; Clerk L. J. Dalcum, of Newport Power Station, Iron Mach. L. R. Livingstone, of Newport, and Stn. Master J. Menhennet, of Burrumbeet, on the 15th; Clerk L. G. Haworth, of W. & W., and Clerk H. V.

Roper, of Newport Goods, on the 16th; Clerk A. W. Geuer, of Acctcy. Beh. and Ldg. Shunter W. E. Kearney, of Melb. Yards, on the 17th; Goods Checker S. Tippet, of Mildura, and Elcc. Fitter's Asst. T. P. Bolger, of Nth. Melb., on the 18th; Comptroller of Stores H. S. Sergeant, Ganger M. J. Monaghan, of Erica, and Stn. Master V. V. Asmus, of Nth. Fitzroy, on the 19th; Bookkeeper J. F. Timms, of Acctcy. Beh., Porter H. E. Gibbs, of Surrey Hills, and Ganger T. G. McNair, of Bunaloo, on the 20th; Boilermaker J. E. Outten, of Ballarat Loco., on the 21st; Publicity & Tourist Services Mgr., V. F. Letcher, on the 22nd; Driller H. McPhee, of Nth. Melb. W'shops, and Fireman H. J. Hendra, of Nth. Melb., on the 23rd; Carptr. B. E. Clifton, of Flinders-st., Works Subforeman W. A. Walters, of Spencer-st., and Signalman T. O'Dwyer, of Moreland, on the 24th; Optg. Porter H. L. Gabbe, of Eastoakleigh, on the 25th; Storeman J. J. Charles, of Newport Loco. Storehouse, on the 27th; Labr. C. V. Bensley, of Jolimont, on the 28th; Stn. Master T. Leydon, of Kilmore, on the 29th; Fitter T. H. Creeley, of Jolimont W'shops., on the 31st. —S.S.

POPULAR BENDIGONIAN

GIFTS of a gold watch for himself and an easy chair for his wife together with appropriate musical selections by the Workshops Harmonica Band were features of a highly successful farewell function to Mr. George C. Jones (Fitter, Bendigo North Workshops) last month. After 23 years of continuous service at the Workshops Mr. Jones had become one of the most popular and highly respected identities. The quality of his work was emphasized by speakers from all sections of the Workshops. Apart from his departmental duties, Mr. Jones has been a well-known figure in the public life of Bendigo. For some time he was President and Assistant Secretary of the Amalgamated Engineering Union. He has been a Justice of the Peace since 1924; for a period he was Assistant Secretary of the Bendigo Football League, of which he is also a life member; and he is also a Life Governor of the Bendigo Base Hospital. A gift which gave the departing veteran immense pleasure was a replica of the type of shadow board used in Workshops for the efficient custody of tools. Mr. Jones had designed and manufactured many of these boards. Consisting of highly polished wood suitably inscribed and containing a selection of tools, the miniature board is a handsome piece of craftsmanship for which Mr. J. Chamney (Coppersmith at the Workshops) was responsible. —A.L.S.

Railway Cabaret Ball On July 19

JUDGING by the number of advance bookings, the Railway Cabaret Ball for 1939 promises to eclipse all attendance records for this outstanding event in Melbourne's winter social season.

The Ball will be held at the Palais de Danse, St. Kilda, on Wednesday, July 19. Dancing will be from 8.30 p.m. to 2 a.m. Special "floor" items will be featured. Each ticket costs 10/6d., all-inclusive.

As the Ball will be conducted on Cabaret lines, each person attending will be assured of seating accommodation at a table. Reservations may now be made at the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, Queen's Walk, or at the Victorian Railways Institute, Flinders Street railway station buildings.

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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

August, 1939

Issue No. 107

Big Plans For Emergency

SUPREME IMPORTANCE OF RAILWAYS

SUBSTANTIAL progress is being made by the Department with its comprehensive part in the plans to protect the civil population and vital national undertakings in the event of war. These plans are being formulated under the general direction of the State Emergency Council, which was established by the State Government.

As the Administrators of the State's principal transport medium, the Commissioners are naturally vitally concerned in this matter.

In a national emergency the railway system would, of course, be of supreme importance, and to ensure adequate protective measures, the Commissioners have created a Departmental Committee consisting of Mr. N. C. Harris (Commissioner) and the Heads of the larger branches.

Unprecedented

This Committee's work embraces a field without precedent in the history of the Department, including the preparation of a special safe working code for train operations under emergency conditions; alternative methods of handling traffic in event of local disorganisation; and protection of important structures and of personnel.

As part of the plan to train railwaymen in anti-gas measures, classes of instruction—similar to those held in Melbourne—were

conducted at Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Wonthaggi.

Another important feature is the study of lighting restrictions in the event of an aerial attack. A representative committee of all the electrical authorities mainly concerned, including the Department, is now dealing with this question.

Light Dimming Device

MR. E. O. OLSSON (Assistant Engineer, Electrical Engineering Branch) is responsible for a valuable contribution to the plans for precautions during air raid attacks.

His device, which has received the endorsement of the Lighting Committee of the State Emergency Council, solves the problem of effectively dimming outside lighting, particularly on the platforms of railway stations.

Tests were recently carried out at night at Yallourn and Broadmeadows, and the pilots of aeroplanes reported being unable to locate the areas where the exterior lights had been screened.

Mr. Olsson's device can be rapidly and cheaply manufactured by ordinary processes, and it is capable of being quickly and easily attached in a sudden emergency.

Briefly, it prevents the emission of direct rays from the filament; screens any brightly-lit reflecting surfaces; and by the use of multiple reflection emits an evenly diffused cone of light.

GIRLS' EXCELLENT FIRST AID WORK

THE record of the girls in the Administrative Offices was the most outstanding feature of the first departmental ambulance examinations for 1939," said Mr. V. E. Southwood (Ambulance Officer). "Of the 21 girls who sat for the examination, 20 gained first aid certificates."

This was the first class for girls which had been started for many years. "Actually, it was no great surprise to me when the results were announced," was Mr. Southwood's complimentary comment.

Throughout, he said, the girls who took part in the examination had maintained a consistent attendance record; their attention to the lectures was most marked; and the interchange of ideas in between classes contributed very largely to the excellence of the performance.

Mr. Southwood added that the great interest which the girls had displayed in first aid was worthy of emulation by all other ambulance students. It is obvious that the maximum benefit is only obtainable by regular attendance at the classes.

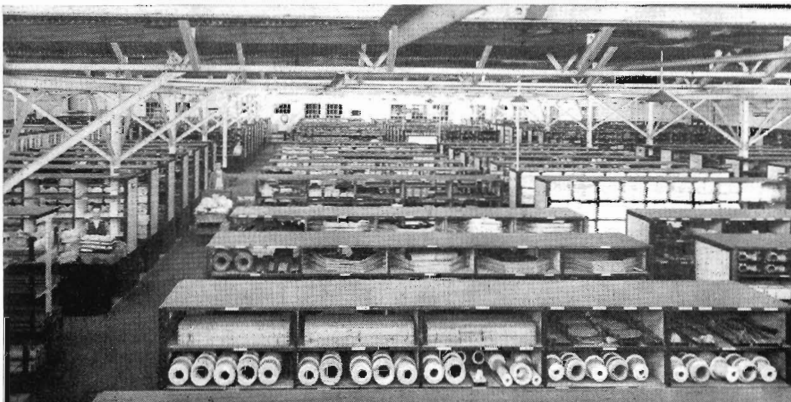
New, Modern Station At Prahran

REPLACING the wooden premises erected in 1881, the new station buildings on the "up" side of the Prahran station represent a notable development in railway station architecture in Victoria.

The building is of red brick and reinforced concrete. The exterior is modern, yet pleasing in its simplicity. In every respect, the new building assures improved facilities and comforts for patrons.

The interior of the booking office is divided by a partition of the finest selected mountain ash arranged in squares, with a beading separating each square. Modern "dagger" ticket cabinets are provided within easy reach of the booking clerks. The cash drawers are of an improved type.

The inside walls of the booking office are a feature. They are faced in natural cream bricks which reflect the indirect lighting from the ceiling lamps. The shelves, counters and cupboards are all of specially-selected fine-grain mountain ash.



LAW, order, cleanliness and efficiency are the outstanding features of the General Storehouse, Spotswood. A section of the Storehouse is shown in this photograph.

The Month's Topic

OF VITAL MOMENT TO ALL RAILWAYMEN

A RECENT message from the Commissioners on the front page of the "Weekly Notice" demands the closest consideration by every member of the service. It reads:—

"The difficult financial situation in the Department imposes upon everyone a personal obligation to eliminate wastage of every kind.

"One of the countless ways in which unnecessary expense can be avoided is by exercising the utmost care in the handling of tarpaulins. Remember: many tarpaulins (which this year will cost £11/10/- each) are irreparably damaged solely through mishandling.

"We ask your co-operation in the economical use of all material. Failure in this respect must inevitably affect the ability of the Department to maintain the present amount of employment."

Employment Effect

In other words, expenditure due to wastage and carelessness of any kind seriously reduces the amount of money available for essential works and services. With the diversion of money into unproductive channels, there must be reactions which will "affect the ability of the Department to maintain the present amount of employment."

All members of the service, regardless of branch or grade, are, therefore, urged to give this matter their earnest attention. Resolve now to exercise the utmost vigilance in guarding against all forms of waste whether of material or time—right down to the smallest detail. Make that a rule!

More Business Needed

Coupled with that determination, let each railwayman become an active, enthusiastic salesman for all phases of the Department's business. What can be achieved in that direction is strikingly demonstrated in the story on this page recording the successful efforts of Mr. H. H. Ross (Assistant Stationmaster, Moonee Ponds) to secure the rail transport of more than 11,000 sheep.

In brief: "WAGE WAR ON WASTE!" . . . "GET MORE BUSINESS!"

Inspiring Example Of Salesmanship



MR. H. H. Ross (Assistant Stationmaster, Moonee Ponds) is responsible for one of the finest feats of salesmanship yet reported to the Commissioners. He was instrumental in securing the transport by rail of more than 11,000 sheep. Last month the sheep were conveyed from Tocumwal to Yea: two special trains, consisting of 72 and 44 trucks from Tocumwal to Seymour, and four trains thence to Yea.

While attending a social function in a Melbourne suburb, Mr. Ross heard a casual remark that "some thousands of sheep were coming down by road from beyond Bourke (New South Wales) to Victoria." Following the matter up, Mr. Ross ascertained that over 11,000 sheep were to be moved. He discovered that the purchaser of the sheep lived at Yea, and with the Department's ready approval he went to that district to discuss the matter.

Mr. Ross gave the owner of the sheep a complete survey of the charges and the service which the Department could give once the sheep reached the Victorian border. As a result, the Department secured the business, the freight charges totalling £225. But that is not all. Practically all the sheep are about to be shorn, and Mr. Ross has obtained a promise from the owner that the wool will be sent by rail to Melbourne. . .

FIXATION OF FREIGHT RATES IS NO SOLUTION OF RAIL-ROAD PROBLEM

Tribunal Would Be Flouted

RAILWAYMEN are no doubt familiar with the oft-repeated argument that the problem of rail and road competition would be solved by the creation of an independent tribunal to fix freight rates.

It is appropriate, therefore, to emphasize that, in the opinion of the Commissioners, the solution of the problem cannot be looked for in that direction.

So long as thousands of road vehicles are permitted to engage in competitive carrying, it is futile to talk about fixing freight rates. By this time, everyone must know that the conditions already prescribed by law to govern the conduct of hauliers are honored more in the breach than in the observance.

"Evasion Easier"

The prescribed industrial standards are commonly flouted, despite the efforts of the authorities to enforce them. It would be even easier for hauliers to evade any prescribed schedule of rates.

Numerous subterfuges could, and no doubt would, be employed.

In any case, rates fixation would not touch the numerous vehicles used by traders and others for carrying their own goods in the course of trade. These vehicles constitute a serious source of competition.

The existing policy of transport regulation is directly opposed to the principle of stability of rates. With the widespread duplication of trans-

port facilities now permitted, the obvious corollary is competition in rates.

The only reason for the existence of the long-distance road competition is that they have offered lower rates for certain classes of goods.

The railways must meet these rates or lose the business, and must also be able promptly to quote rates sufficiently attractive to satisfy traders.

Your Radio Programs

RAILWAY SESSIONS

- 3XY** 7.0 a.m. and 10.0 p.m. Monday to Saturday; (12 noon and 10.0 p.m. Sundays) News Session, 8.45 a.m. Monday to Saturday—Service Information, 3.30 p.m. Monday to Saturday—Women's Session.
- 3AW** 8.0-8.15 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday—Musical Session.
- 3KZ** 8.0 a.m. Monday to Saturday—Service Information, 7.15-7.30 p.m. Wednesday and Friday—Musical Session.
- 3UZ** 8.15 a.m. Monday to Friday—Service Information, 8.45-9.0 p.m. Tuesday and Friday—Musical Session.
- 3DB** 7.45-7.55 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Saturday—Musical Session.

and merchants that they will obtain no advantage by using their own vehicles instead of the railways for the carriage of their goods.

The important thing is to obtain the business. Its loss by the railways can only mean one thing—even greater deficits than ever.

V.R. PRINTING OUTPUT RECORD LIKELY

ALTHOUGH final figures are not yet available, officials at the Railway Printing Works, North Melbourne, believe that the financial year just closed will be a record in the history of the Department's printing activities.

In addition to a substantial increase in work for most of the Branches of the service, the Printing Works have produced nearly 2,000,000 separate pieces of publicity matter for the Publicity and Tourist Services Division of the Secretary's Branch.

This huge quantity of printed matter includes folders and booklets (approximately 750,000); handbills (340,000); "News Letters" (250,000); and leaflets featuring rail and road services to tourist resorts (182,000).

Millions Of Tickets

For the various Branches, the Printing Works have printed many thousands of books, forms, waybills, special time-tables, etc. In the paper-cutting section, approximately 30,000,000 tickets have been cut to various sizes for printing by the Government Printer.

In all phases of printing, the output from the Railway Printing Works compares favourably with the production from the leading commercial printers of Australia. Printing experts from overseas have highly praised the general layout, equipment and excellence of the conditions under which the staff work.

Holiday Train Revenue Passes £10,000-mark

WITH the running of the Holiday Train tour at the King's Birthday week-end recently the Departmental revenue from this highly popular tourist feature has passed the £10,000-mark.

Altogether, £15,655 has been paid by 3,681 passengers who have participated in the 44 tours organized since the train began running at regular holiday periods.

Of the total amount received, more than £5,000 have been disbursed to hotel and guest-house proprietors for meals and accommodation; to road and steamer services for transport around the various districts; and to companies providing dancing and theatre entertainments.

Apart from benefiting the various districts visited, the Holiday Train has stimulated general holiday traffic.

Having viewed the leading scenic and sporting attractions of the districts during the necessarily brief visits made on the Holiday Train, many of the passengers have later spent more extended holidays in those areas.

New Sidelights On Faster, Extra Country Train Services

NEW, striking aspects of the improved country passenger train services are revealed in an analysis prepared last month by the Superintendent of Train Services. They give additional emphasis to the now familiar statement "that compared with 1934 the weekly travelling time on all lines on the Victorian Railways System has been reduced by over 700 hours."

BUFFET CARS' INFLUENCE

FASTER running generally, with a greater proportion of express trains, is reflected in the higher average overall speed of 32.2 miles per hour for steam passenger trains, compared with 27.9 miles per hour in 1934.

An important factor in the accelerated running has been the introduction of buffet cars which eliminate the halts previously necessary for refreshments *en route*. Three more buffet cars soon to be placed in service will provide further opportunities for reduced overall travelling times.

A conspicuous feature of the improvement is that the slow mixed and car-goods mileage now represents only 18 per cent. of the total mileage, compared with 36 per cent. in 1934.

Fastest Trains

Included in the steam passenger trains which achieve an average speed of 32.2 miles per hour, are 12 regular trains which have an average overall speed exceeding 40 miles per hour. Eight of these trains average 45 miles per hour or higher—one, "Spirit of Progress" on the "up" journey from Albury, averaging 53.2 miles per hour.

An indication of the greater frequency of country passenger services is the rise in the passenger and rail motor mileage run each week. In 1934 it was 51,210; now it is 76,150—an advance of 24,940 miles, or 49 per cent.

Including the mixed and car-goods services, the total weekly mileage for country passenger-carrying trains rose from 79,235 in 1934 to the present total of 92,412. Notwithstanding this increase in train mileage, the total train hours are actually five per cent. less than in 1934.

Later Departures

The later departure times from Melbourne of such important trains as "Spirit of Progress," 6.30 p.m. (formerly 5.30 p.m.); "The Overland," 7 p.m. (formerly 4.30 p.m.); and the Mildura train, 7.40 p.m. (formerly 5.6 p.m.) are further examples of much-appreciated improvements made during the past 5 years.

Service

"**D**EAR Sir—Will you please convey my sincere thanks to the official (I think it was one of the staff at Williamstown station) who was responsible for the return of my music case which I left in the 7.46 p.m. 'up' train from Frankston to Williamstown on a recent Saturday.

"I am very thankful to the official for the manner in which he packed the contents—cups, etc.—so that they would not get damaged, as when I put these articles in the case I did not pack them in any way."

—Mr. W. J. Rogers, of 103 Playne Street, Frankston, writing to the Secretary for Railways.

TO ASSIST MR. CLAPP IN AIRCRAFT WORK

TO occupy important positions in Aircraft Construction under Mr. Harold W. Clapp, General Manager, the following officers have been granted leave of absence by the Commissioners:—

Mr. H. S. Sergeant (Comptroller of Stores); Mr. V. F. Letcher (Manager, Publicity and Tourist Services); Mr. E. L. Cook (Secretary to Mr. Clapp); and Mr. A. A. Holdaway (Clerk to Mr. Sergeant).

Brief details of their careers are as follow:—

MR. SERGEANT—Entered Stores Branch as junior clerk in 1898. Went overseas in 1929 with Branch Chief to investigate modern storekeeping methods. Appointed Travelling Storekeeper, 1925; Outdoor Stores Superintendent, 1928; Assistant Comptroller of Stores, 1933; and Comptroller of Stores, 1935.

MR. LETCHER—Started in service in 1910 in Claims Agent's section. Later successively Secretary to five Commissioners, including two Chairmen. Appointed Commissioners' Special Officer, 1925. Led delegation of railway Officers to America; appointed Chief Clerk, Secretary's Branch, 1929; and Manager, Publicity and Tourist Services, 1935.

MR. COOK—Commenced as junior clerk in Disc. Sup't's Office, Ballarat, 1920. Later, successively Secretary to Chairman, Development and Migration Commission; and to Minister for Public Works. Appointed Secretary to Mr. Clapp, 1938.

MR. HOLDAWAY—Started in Electrical Engineering Branch, 1918. Transferred to Stores Branch, 1926. Later, Secretary of Stores Standardisation Committee. Appointed clerk to Mr. Sergeant, 1938. Holds degree of Bachelor of Commerce, and is qualified accountant (A.F.I.A.).

Personal Postscript

Sister Rogers Leaves

MANY hundreds of railwaymen gathered at the Newport Workshops last month to demonstrate to Sister A. Rogers their esteem—and, above all, their sincere regret that she was severing a happy association with the Department. For the past decade, Sister Rogers had been Casualty Officer alternating at Newport, Spencer Street and Spotswood, and railwaymen had many manifestations of her skill and kindly attention. Glowing tributes to her ability and human outlook were paid by many speakers, and on behalf of the staff, Mr. E. H. Brownbill (Workshops Manager) presented Sister Rogers with a handsome clock—and a handbag liberally lined with notes. . .

Successor

SISTER A. McCurdy, who has been appointed to succeed Sister Rogers, comes to the Department with credentials testifying to substantial experience in the class of work on which she will be engaged. A highlight of her career is the three-year period she had as Sister-in-Charge of the Casualty Ward at the Geelong Public Hospital—an institution handling the greatest number of casualty cases outside the Metropolitan area. Sister McCurdy was also engaged at the Gippsland Base Hospital at Sale and the Wangaratta Base Hospital. Incidentally, Sister A. Hood, another of the Department's Casualty Officers, is now located at The Chalet, Mt. Buffalo National Park, for the duration of the current snow sports season. —A.R.

Mr. LEO. R. CALIGARI

Death Of Popular Railwayman

RAILWAYMEN in all parts of the State will learn with profound regret of the death last month of Mr. Leo. R. Caligari, Telegraphist, of Benalla. He was 37 years of age.

Possessing a high reputation as a loyal and efficient railwayman during 21 years of varied service, Mr. Caligari was one of the most skilful and enthusiastic members of the Department's ambulance organisation.

He exhibited a deep interest in first aid and as class instructor and superintendent of the Benalla Corps he was the prime factor in the virility and success of the local first aid movement.

"Leo's passing is a tremendous loss to our activities" was one of the many high tributes paid by ambulance officials who were in a position to assess the real value of Mr. Caligari's work and influence.

First Aid Enthusiast

Mr. Caligari gained his first aid certificate at Daylesford in 1919—three years after he entered the service. Transferred to Benalla in 1932, he immediately became a driving force in ambulance affairs.

In 1932, the Benalla Corps won the championship of the Victorian Railways Ambulance Competitions. From then onwards until 1937, the Corps each year won the north-eastern district competition.

In 1936, the Corps again won the championship, and on this occasion represented the State at the Interstate competitions. In that year Mr. Caligari won the individual event for the north-eastern district.

August Birthdays

ENGINEER of Maintenance E. Richard, H.O., and Elec. Train Drvr. A. H. Guymer, of Jolimont, on the second; Train Examnr. A. W. Abbey, of Jolimont, on the third; Metro. Supt. G. Rogers, and French Polisher G. E. Elsum, of Newport, on the fourth; B'maker T. R. Newington, of Newport, and Sigman J. A. McLeish, of Clifton Hill, on the seventh; Striker T. D. Rendall, of Nth. Melb., and Insp. of Ironwork H. J. Wigley, on the eighth; Substn. Dist. Engr. T. H. Archibald, of Fldrs. St., on the ninth; Clerk A. Priestley, of Accts. Bch., and Sig. Adjstr. L. W. McKenzie, of Sale, on the 10th; Trn. Despatcher F. C. Kaiser, and Carptr. J. Lamont, of Nth. Melb., on the 11th; Repr. J. Grogan, of Geelong, on the 13th; Clerk W. M. Houston, of Printing Wks., Senr. Timekr. J. Dearden, of Nth. Melb., Asst. Engr. W. Fox, of Fldrs. St., and Stn. Mastr. H. L. Eustace, of Pyramid, on the 14th; Labr. L. Ellis, of Trn. Lighting Dpt., on the 16th; Mach. & Water Supply Engr. W. Stephen, and Ganger J. H. Hardy, of Benalla, on the 17th; Eng. Drvr. E. Oppy, of

M'borough, Clerk W. Hodges, of Accts. Bch., and Ptr. W. O. Sinclair, of Spencef St., on the 18th; Fitter G. Semple, of Newport Power Stn., on the 19th; Engr. W. P. Hambridge, and B'mks. Help P. Quinlan, of Spotswood, on the 20th; Elec. Train Drvr. W. F. Vanselow, of Jolimont, on the 21st; Carptr. W. Hubble, of M'borough, on the 22nd; Dist. Supt. T. H. Maddern, of Seymour, and Ganger J. Lawrence, of Merlynston, on the 23rd; Ganger R. Beavis, of Rainbow, on the 24th; Goods Guard A. G. Onley, of B'rat. and Labr. A. Mitchell, of Melb. Goods, on the 25th; Elec. Fitter J. V. Clifford, of Nth. Melb., on the 26th; Clerks C. H. Carson and G. B. Davidson of W. & W. Staff Office, Repr. R. Harper, of Elsterwick, and Clerk C. K. Davies, of Accts. Bch., on the 27th; Storeman T. Swales, of Geelong, on the 29th; Asst. G.S.T. R. G. Wishart, Mt. Buffalo Nat. Park Chalet Mgr. L. McClelland, and Striker A. T. Hopkins, of Newport, on the 30th; Goods Checker W. M. Wall, of Geelong, and Stn. Mstr. J. H. Koster, of St. Arnaud, on the 31st. —R.P.

"Diggers" Secretary For 20 Years

TO mark his 20th successive year as Honorary Secretary of the Railways Sub-section of the R.S.S. I.L.A., Mr. Ron. H. Wishart (Clerk, Stores Branch) last month received a series of tangible expressions of his successful efforts on behalf of returned soldiers and their families. From the Bendigo Branch, Mr. Wishart was the recipient of a silver tea and coffee service; from the Ballarat and Geelong Branches, wallets of notes; and from members at the recent annual meeting, a wallet of notes and, for Mrs. Wishart, a case of cutlery. At the annual meeting, Mr. J. K. Donald, Senior Past President (Clerk, Transportation Branch) paid a handsome tribute to the work which Mr. Wishart is performing in all manner of human problems affecting the individual welfare of returned soldiers. Mr. Wishart played a leading part in the creation of the organisation in 1919. He was elected Honorary Secretary on that occasion, and each year since then he has been re-elected unopposed.

—G.J.C.D.

Mr A. C. Adamthwaite

BRIGHT LINE IDENTITY PASSES

JUDGING by the stream of enquiries from holidaymakers travelling on the Bright line to Mt. Buffalo National Park and other alpine resorts, there is Commonwealth-wide regret at the news of the death of Mr. Albert C. Adamthwaite (Guard).

For the past 16 years, Mr. Adamthwaite, who was affectionately known as "Adam," had been the outstanding identity on the Bright line, having a cheery word for all passengers and performing countless little acts of service which gained for him the lasting affection of thousands of people.

Mr. Adamthwaite will be remembered as the "co-star" with a cocker spaniel in a unique newspaper delivery act from a moving train each day.

As the train approached, the dog—known far and wide as "Paddy"—would run beside it. Springing with unerring judgment, he would grasp the parcel of newspapers held out to him by Mr. Adamthwaite, and scamper homewards with the applause of delighted onlookers ringing in his ears.

Three years ago "Paddy" was fatally bitten by a snake.

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

The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

September, 1939

Issue No. 109

GREAT NEWS FOR HOLIDAYMAKERS!

Chalet Tariff Reduced

AS an inducement to holidaymakers to visit Mt. Buffalo National Park during the delightful spring and autumn periods, a substantial reduction is to be made in the daily tariff at The Chalet.

Between September 16 and December 16 of this year and from the end of Easter to June 30, 1940, the rate for visitors staying seven days or more will be reduced from 16/6 per day to 11/6 per day.

During these periods the price of an all inclusive 8-day trip from Melbourne to Mt. Buffalo National Park will be reduced from £7/15/- to £5/19/6d. These tickets cover first-class return rail travel to Porepunkah, meals en route in each direction, return motor transport between Porepunkah and The Chalet, and seven days' accommodation at The Chalet.

Visitors to The Chalet during the periods mentioned are assured of that high standard of accommodation, service and cuisine which qualify this guest-house for its pre-eminence in Australia.

PATRON'S TRIBUTE TO KINDNESS

"DEAR Sir,

I feel it is a duty to write to you *re* the kindnesses extended to my mother and self by the young porters at Richmond station.

My mother is blind and practically an invalid. We go to Richmond every Saturday and Sunday. We never have to make a request for assistance for my mother and chair. Those "lads" volunteer in such a way that one feels life still holds joys, though we have such strains and worries through illness, etc.

The guards from Glenhuntly to Flinders Street also seem to enjoy helping their fellow-creatures. We travel at all hours, but the same spirit comes uppermost. I must specially mention Guard No. 734 (Guard L. T. Larsen). He seems to make it a joy helping lift mother in her chair in and out of the van. Another Guard No. 523 (Guard R. A. Cathie) makes us feel it is a pleasure to help us."

—Miss Irene D. Robinson, 23 Laura Street, Glenhuntly, writing to the Secretary for Railways.

Unique Trout Investigation At Mt. Buffalo National Park . . .

INTRODUCING

MR. W. T. ROBERTS, Chief Telegraph Officer, Spencer Street, who directs the activities of one of the busiest railway centres of its kind on the Australian Railway system.



Which is not altogether surprising for, as a precocious boy of 8, he first became fascinated by the marvels of telegraphy. A friendly railwayman at Ringwood gave the child every encouragement to acquire a practical knowledge of telegraphy, and when young Roberts

joined the service in 1898 he just naturally became a junior telegraph operator. As one of two chosen from more than 50 candidates, he

"Peeps Behind Scenes"

THIS month the "News Letter" commences a series of articles touching briefly on important yet comparatively little-known phases of the Department's operations. The first article takes you "behind the scenes" at the Telegraph Office, Spencer Street—the pivotal point of the State-wide network of circuits over which the business of the Department is facilitated to an extent beyond estimation.

Now turn to page 3, column 2.

quickly demonstrated an aptitude for operating which ultimately gained for him a front-rank position amongst the Department's telegraphists. Soon, he was at Spencer Street where he remained until 1923, when he began a 10-year term as Officer-in-Charge, Bendigo Telegraph Office. While there, Mr. Roberts played a prominent part in public affairs, particularly in promoting the interests of local schools. He was the telegraph instructor, and for a term, President of the local V.R.I.

FIRST of its kind to be attempted on such a scale in the Commonwealth—probably the world—a project now being carried out at Lake Catani, Mt. Buffalo National Park, is of exceptional interest to railwaymen because—

it relates to little known aspects of the life and habits of trout; and the leader of the work is a railwayman—Mr. D. S. Quayle, of the Ballarat Goods Sheds clerical staff.

In winter, Lake Catani is frequently frozen and forms a natural ice skating rink for guests. At other seasons, the Lake provides swimming, boating—and trout fishing. In recent years, however, there has been a marked decline in the size and condition of the fish. Concerned about this aspect of a most popular resort, the Commissioners deputed Mr. Quayle to carry out a comprehensive investigation.

Railman's World Reputation

In appointing Mr. Quayle for this task, the Commissioners availed themselves of scientific training and knowledge which have made Mr. Quayle one of the world's foremost authorities on the breeding and habits of trout.

He is Honorary Secretary and Research Officer of the Ballarat Fish Acclimatisation Society, and with Professor F. Wood Jones he is a Vice-President of the Victorian Fresh Water Research Committee. He is the only recognised Australian authority on the scale of trout.

The project is being materially assisted by the valuable advice and assistance of Mr. P. R. H. St. John, the well known botanist, who was for 54 years on the staff at the Melbourne Botanic Gardens.

Mr. Quayle's first examination, in November last, of the trout scales in Lake Catani revealed that the average weight of the fish at 3½ years was only 8½ ozs. (The weight of a fair-conditioned lake trout of this age is from 2 to 2½ lb.).

(CONTD. IN PAGE 2, COLS. 2 and 3)

The Month's Topic

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS 85 THIS MONTH

FOR Victorians generally and railwaymen particularly, September 13 has a special significance: it will be the 85th anniversary of the opening of the railway line from Flinders Street to Port Melbourne (then known as Sandridge). 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).

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

Queer "Locomotive"

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. (Actually, the "locomotive" was an improvised tractor consisting of a stationary engine mounted on a railway truck! The two engines ordered from England had not arrived.)

On the journey, a band played stirring music, and on arrival at Sandridge greeted another exciting throng of colonists who 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.

Immense Strides

What a contrast with 1939! Giant locomotives . . . the streamlined, air-conditioned "Spirit of Progress" running at 70 m.p.h. . . . suburban electrification . . . nearly 5,000 miles of tracks . . . air-conditioned buffet cars introduced. . . . In brief, rail travelling amenities which compare favourably with those on the world's best railway systems.

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!

V. R. Staff's Splendid Charitable Efforts Cover Wide Field

WORTHY of emulation by members of the service generally is the splendid charitable work carried out by groups of employes in various sections of the Department. Operating quietly yet effectively, these groups are making substantial contributions towards the up-keep of hospitals and other institutions in a manner which reflects the greatest credit upon these enthusiastic voluntary workers.

There are many instances of this unselfish work. The Refreshment Room Girls' Auxiliary has raised more than £1,000 for the Victorian Hospital for Blind Babies.

Since 1892, the Ballarat Railway Carnival Committee, through its annual function, has been instrumental in securing nearly £40,000 for the Ballarat Orphanage. The Ballarat Railway Auxiliary of the Base Hospital is another body of railwaymen performing a fine charitable work. Over the past 10 years, nearly £2,000 in cash and gifts have been donated to the Base Hospital.

From Bendigo also comes news of a similar character. Local railwaymen work each year in promoting the success of the Bendigo Easter Fair, the proceeds of which go to local charitable institutions. Last year, a cheque for £390 was the result of their efforts.

In other parts of the service, employes are helping deserving causes; in a number of cases inspiring work is being done by individuals not only by contributing money but by performing valuable services.

Just now there is a pressing need for the utmost practical help to relieve distress, particularly amongst school children. A plan recently launched, known as "Adopt a School" Fund, merits the sympathetic consideration of railway men and women.

It provides a valuable medium for employes of large organizations to contribute a few pence a week for the purchase of food for scholars known to be suffering from malnutrition. The "News Letter" commends this appeal for the urgent consideration of every member of the service, particularly in the metropolitan area.

DISTRICT FIRST AID COMPETITIONS

RELECTING the marked advance in recent years in enrolments in the Ambulance Movement, the entries for the forthcoming District Corps and Individual Competitions are the highest ever recorded in those events.

Sixty-two Corps and 329 qualified ambulance employes have nominated for the senior and novice Corps and individual sections.

A gratifying feature of the entries is the number of railwaymen who, having obtained their first aid certificates some years ago, have once again become actively associated with the Ambulance organization.

The District Competitions will start this month and end early in October. The State Championship will be held on October 27 and the Australian Railways Championship will be decided in Sydney on November 22.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

How Trout Problem Is Being Attacked

AN analysis of the stomach contents of the fish showed a substantial lack of proper food. Dredging of the Lake was also undertaken, the results indicating that there were no aquatic insects of food value due to a lack of aquatic vegetation.

Further investigations in March last showed that the acidity of the water feeding into Lake Catani was responsible for the absence of aquatic plants which in turn are necessary for the cultivation and survival of the aquatic insects. It was also established that the natural reproduction of the fish was excessive each year.

To overcome these factors, Mr. Quayle and his associates arranged to neutralise the acidity of the lake water; establish aquatic plants and insects; and remove most of the present fish from the Lake until the food cycle had been completed and established.

The acidity problem has been attacked by using limestone distributed at carefully-chosen points in the

streams feeding the Lake. This month and in October, hundreds of cases of aquatic plants will be planted in hollow, square nurseries which have been constructed and placed in the Lake. Aquatic insects will be introduced to the vegetation, and new stocks of trout will be liberated in the winter of 1940.

In addition, large quantities of ti-tree and shrubs are to be planted around the Lake margin. The insects which inhabit this vegetation provide essential food for the fish.

By means of fish traps placed in the principal inlet streams, the existing trout are gradually being removed from Lake Catani and transferred to the Ovens River.

So far the results achieved have exceeded Mr. Quayle's expectations. Provided vegetation is established, the growth rate of trout should reach normal proportions. The whole of the operations have aroused widespread interest among anglers and angling societies.

"TALKIE" FILMS WILL SHOW VICTORIA'S HOLIDAY ATTRACTIONS

FILMS vividly portraying the principal tourist attractions of Victoria are now being prepared by the Department in conjunction with the Commonwealth Cinematograph Branch. The general entertainment value of each film is enhanced by an appropriate descriptive commentary (the voice of a leading Melbourne radio announcer) over a musical background.

These films are being prepared primarily for screening through the Interstate Branches of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau. This form of publicity should be invaluable in stimulating tourist traffic to Victoria. Copies of the films will be included in the Department's wide variety of pictures screened at various entertainments in the suburban area.

It is understood that the Commonwealth Government will be able to arrange for some of these films to be screened overseas.

The Commonwealth Government is also preparing four travelogues from the material obtained by the Department and these films are assured of a screening throughout Australia and New Zealand, and at a large number of theatres in England and India.

New Buffet Car's Main Features In Brief

ANOTHER Corten steel, air-conditioned buffet car—named "Tanjil"—was placed in service last month. Constructed at the Newport Workshops, this car is all welded. This is a new departure in passenger rolling stock construction in Victoria.

In the buffet saloon, which is 35 ft. 11 ins. in length, 19 modern "sit-up" cafeteria chairs are provided at a counter where grills, entrees and varied light refreshments, sweets, milk and fruit-juice drinks are served. Tobacco and cigarettes may also be obtained. In addition, there are two first-class passenger compartments, each seating six people.

The interior decorative scheme is particularly attractive. A variegated rubber linoleum, incorporating shades of ivory, slate grey and buff, covers the floor in the buffet saloon, while the walls and ceiling are shaded in cream with blue window sills. The cafeteria chairs are upholstered in royal blue chrome leather, which is also used for the seats in the passenger compartments.

The distinctive lighting scheme consists of a number of louvred lights recessed into the ceiling of the saloon. The front of the buffet counter is also illuminated. Wide double windows of unshatterable glass provide wide-spread views.

Spencer Street Telegraph Office Is System's "Nerve Centre"

THE Telegraph Office at Spencer Street has been aptly described as the "nerve centre" of the vast Victorian Railways system. It functions throughout the 24 hours of each day, receiving and despatching messages from and to all parts of the State and beyond.

In the operating room, there are 25 Morse instruments. These connect with circuits which extend to almost every railway terminus in Victoria. They connect also with Adelaide and Sydney; and there are three lines to the Postal Telegraph Office, Elizabeth Street, for the direct transmission of private telegrams.

All railway telegraphic business from Queensland and New South Wales to South Australia and Western Australia, and *vice versa*, is relayed at Spencer Street. On the 25 telegraph circuits there are superimposed lines which enable telegraphic, selector and ordinary telephonic messages to be

dealt with simultaneously. Up to 15 operators and one supervisor are at work at the same time.

The number of telegrams transmitted and received per day is approximately 5,000, supplemented by upwards of 1,000 telephone messages to and from metropolitan stations and depot offices.

As can be imagined, the telegraphists in the Spencer Street office are the possessors of first-class telegraph certificates with many years of practical experience. Most of them are capable of operating with both hands, thus relieving the strain normally placed upon the right wrist.

Strange as it may seem, telegraphists at Spencer Street, when receiving messages—all by "sound"—are able immediately to identify the particular telegraphist operating at the other end. "We can detect the characteristics of the dots and dashes just like you would recognise a person's handwriting," one official said.

Ordinarily, the business of the office is conducted with clock-like precision. Even when floods, bush fires and other adverse factors seriously affect the normal procedure, the watchword of the telegraphic world—"Instant attention to every telegram"—is faithfully adhered to wherever humanly possible.

In cases of temporary cessations of service due to interruptions on any sections of the circuits, messages from Spencer Street are transmitted by alternative routes, the elasticity of the network permitting cross-country "tie-ups" to be quickly established.

AIRPLANE BUILDING AT NEWPORT WORKSHOPS

THE Victorian Railways will play an important part in the manufacture in Australia of Bristol Beaufort Aircraft. Many component parts for the aircraft will be manufactured and assembled at the Newport Workshops where a special section of the Shops is being equipped for the purpose.

The work allotted to Victoria is the construction of complete fuselage components. Such of this work as cannot be undertaken in the railway workshops will be sub-contracted to outside engineering firms.

After the components have been assembled at Newport, they will be delivered to the Aircraft Main Assembly Workshops (which are to be established in Melbourne) where they will be built into the completed aircraft.

Under the Commonwealth Government's scheme, approximately 80 railway employes are being sent to England to undergo an intensive course of training at the works of the Bristol Aeroplane Co.

Victorian Railwaymen who have already left under this scheme are: Messrs. F. T. McAuley (Workshops Foreman); J. Broad (Production Engineer); R. J. Murray (Sub-foreman); J. Addison (Fitter); H. G. McAulister (Fitter); and F. R. Philpot (Clerk, Stores Branch) who will enquire into store-keeping practices.

The next group of Victorian Railwaymen selected for this training will leave on September 5. They are Messrs. D. A. Swires (Assistant Chemist); F. W. Stock (Production Examiner); E. R. Nicholson (Sub-foreman Boilermaker); and E. A. Fitch (Fitter).

Ballarat Tourist Bureau Opens This Month

FURTHER evidence of the significance of a tourist organization in facilitating the movements of holiday-makers is revealed in the decision to establish a Branch of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau at Ballarat. Mr. R. G. Caddell, of the Ballarat Parcels Office clerical staff, will act as Tourist Officer.

Although the provision of a comprehensive travel and accommodation service to visitors to Ballarat will be the principal activity of the new Bureau, it will also function on the same wide-spread scale as the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau and Branches. In other words, it will operate on a "two-way" basis.

Thus, the big population of Ballarat and surrounding districts will have convenient access to an office catering for general holiday travel by rail, road, sea and air.

Included amongst the many services of the Bureau will be the booking of hotel or guest-house accommodation anywhere in Victoria. No extra charge to the tourist is made for this facility.

Personal Postscript

Getting Better — And Better

READERS of the former "Victorian Railways Magazine" will be heartened by the news that Cliff Cheong, a member of the Magazine staff, is making a splendid recovery after a serious and prolonged illness. Cliff's versatility and brisk style of writing foreshadowed the success he has achieved as a journalist since leaving the Department in 1933. First on the "Listener-In" and later on the general reporting and sub-editorial staff of the Perth "Daily News" (including a period as Cable Editor), Cliff is now a valued member of the literary staff of the "Sun News-Pictorial." Always interested in baseball, Cliff was mainly responsible for the introduction of

the game in Western Australia. While reporting a cricket match between England and Western Australia a few years ago, he saw many glaring weaknesses in the fielding ability of the local team, "the catching and returns to the bowlers being atrocious." Through the "Daily News," he immediately started a campaign for the introduction of baseball as a means of cricketers gaining proficiency in fielding. In the first season, he wrote more than 50,000 words on the sport. The game quickly flourished, and one of the outstanding results of his work was the appearance of a Western Australian team in the recent Australian Baseball Carnival in Melbourne. . . —F.R.A.

FORMER RAILMAN IS ON WAY TO OPERATIC FAME

DURING the present Australian tour of Miss Marjorie Lawrence, the famous operatic soprano, a former member of the Stores Branch—Mr. Alfredo Luizzi—has been the principal supporting artist. At the Melbourne Town Hall on Friday, September 8, Miss Lawrence will give tangible evidence of her appreciation of his efforts by singing at a special concert arranged to assist Mr. Luizzi to pursue his studies abroad under one of the leading continental teachers.



Mr. Luizzi is one of Australia's foremost baritones, recent successes in the "Sun" Aria and at South Street setting the seal upon his reputation. When Mr. Lawrence Tibbett, the American baritone, was in Melbourne he heard Mr. Luizzi sing an aria, and he then strongly advised the talented young Australian to seek further laurels overseas. Tickets at specially reduced prices are obtainable at the Victorian Railways Institute, Melbourne.

50 Years At Newport

FIFTY years, six months and 25 days' service in the Department will be the splendid record of Fitter H. E. Wignall when he retires from the Newport Workshops on September 12. Easily the "oldest inhabitant" of the shops—he was one of the first to take duty there when they were established—Wignall commenced as an apprentice in the long-since demolished Williamstown Workshops. Since 1907 he has been a member of the staff in the Tool Room. Mr. Wignall's father was a driller at the Newport Workshops for 26 years, and his wife was for 28 years in the Refreshment Services Branch, including a term as Manageress of the Food Refreshment Room. The name of Wignall will continue to figure in the railway records, for his son is a Locomotive Inspector and his grandson is an apprentice fitter.

Paddy's Garden

GARDENING enthusiasts in the Moonee Ponds district have heard with dismay that Paddy O'Brien, Gatekeeper at the Park Street crossing, has reached the retiring age and will live at Mornington. His garden, flanking the railway line for nearly 200 feet, has for many years been a "show place." It has brought endless delight to many thousands of people, including those who only get fleeting glimpses of this celebrated garden as their train sweeps past. In the Departmental garden competitions, Paddy's skill gained for him the unusual distinction of winning the sectional prize 15 years in succession. He was a recognised authority on the cultivation of flowers, people from all parts of the district seeking his advice—and accepting it without demur. In his zeal for gardening perfection, Paddy thought nothing of importing seeds from the Northern Hemisphere. If his garden was the prettiest one could see, it was also the neatest, for Paddy waged a relentless war on weeds, paper matches and anything at all which offended his conception of what a garden should look like. It is safe to predict that soon the people of Mornington and thereabouts will be flocking to see Paddy's new garden. —W.S.

T.T.

MEMBERS of the V.R.I. Table Tennis Association are now training with great zest for the forthcoming carnival in Melbourne when teams from the New South Wales and South Australian Railways will play for the Australian Railways Championship. The carnival commences on September 3. Now in its third year, the Association is experiencing its most successful season due mainly to the work of the secretary (George Matthews, Electrical Engineering Branch) and the enthusiasm of the players. Two of the three teams competing in the Victorian Table Tennis Association matches are assured of playing in the semi-finals of their respective grades. It is predicted that the experience gained by the players in those games will be reflected in their play in the important interstate matches. The Victorian team comprises: Les. Dalcum (Elec. Eng. Branch), Captain; Laurie Lynch (Secretary's), Vice-captain; Alan McCall and Dave Jones (Elec. Eng.); Bill Colwell, Jack Cashman, Jack Conboy, Ron Featherstone, Joe Diamond, Colin Macleod, Harry Whitford and Graham Walbran (Accounts); Ron Smith (Secretary's); Keith McLellan (Transportation); and Joe McClelland and Jim Commons (Stores). —L.P.

Band Lovers' Treat

MUSIC lovers who attend the weekly mid-day concerts in the Melbourne Town Hall are eagerly looking forward to the appearance on September 1 of the Victorian Railways Military Band, the first band of its kind to be chosen for a concert which maintains a high standard of entertainment. Pardonably delighted at this opportunity of demonstrating their ability, the Bandsmen are rehearsing in a manner which indicates complete success—and a rare treat for those who appreciate band music of outstanding merit. For the last 40 years, this Band has brought pleasure to many thousands of people in public gardens, hospitals, charitable institutions and other public gatherings.—N.C.

September Birthdays

TYPEWRITER Mechanic J. Tanner, of Spencer St., on the first; Eng. E. G. Godfree, of H.O., Ganger J. Porter, of Yallourn, and Fireman E. Ciantar, of Newport Power Stn., on the second; Elec. Fitter C. Coutts, of Jolimont, on the fourth; Minor Mach. F. A. Spilling, of Newport, and Porter R. S. O'Connor, of Murtoa, on the fifth; Trn. Examiner T. Orchard, of Bendigo, on the sixth; Lineman W. Eastman, of Geelong, on the seventh; Secretary for Railways E. C. Evers, Chief Mechanical Engineer A. C. Ahlston, and Telegraphist E. H. Dempster, of Bendigo, on the eighth; Eng. Driver O. Donohue, of Seymour, and Anglesmith S. W. Ashford, of Newport, on the ninth; Clerk J. L. Burke, of R.S. Bch., and Mach. A. G. Gale, of Printing Wks., on the 10th; Skld. Labr. D. McDonald, of Spencer St., on the 11th; Signalman J. F. Kelly, of Warragul, on the 12th; Fireman P. Kelly, of Ouyen, Asst. Stn. Master B. R. Gleeson, of Bell, and Shift Electn. N. W. Roberts, of Nth. Fitzroy Sub-station, on the 15th; Clerk W. L. Watson, of Estate Office, on the 16th; Clerk T. M. Egan, of Newmarket Goods, on the 17th; Clerk B. J. Reardon, of W. & W. Staff Office, Shunter A. E. Coad, of Newport,

and Storeman S. Couch, of Korumburra Works Store, on the 18th; Refresh. Serv. Staff Clerk N. S. W. Chandler, on the 19th; Storeman J. T. Murphy, of Laurens Depot Storehouse, on the 20th; Painter R. J. Courtney, of Nth. Melb., and Guard R. F. Fox, of Ouyen, on the 21st; Eng. E. B. Slater, of H.O., Clerk W. Harley, of T. & E. Acctg. Office, and Ganger W. Jansen, of Colac, on the 22nd; Examiner J. McAnulty, of Jolimont, and Layer R. H. Thomas, of Nth. Melb., on the 23rd; Ganger J. White, of Lubeck, on the 24th; Assist. Sig. & Tel. Eng. W. Forrest, of Geelong, on the 25th; Eng. E. V. Bruce, of Grassdale, and Clerk C. Reid, of Melb. Goods, on the 25th; Eng. Assit. G. G. Munro, of H.O., Eng. Assit. H. W. Emery, of Elec. Eng. Bch., on the 26th; Clerk J. Cotter, of Acctcy. Bch., on the 26th; Turner C. Flenley, of Jolimont, on the 27th; Equip. Examnr. F. P. Brown, of Jolimont, on the 27th; Assist. Stn. Master W. A. Dillon, of Glenhuthy, and Labr. W. Kiernan, of Nth. Melb., on the 29th. —V.R.I.

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The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

October, 1939

Issue No. 110

We Must All Do Our Part!

COMMISSIONERS' STRIKING APPEAL

"WITH the Empire at war in defence of our cherished ideals of justice and freedom, there is a solemn obligation upon everyone to do his part loyally and cheerfully. . . Whilst many railwaymen already have the honour of serving with the armed forces of the Commonwealth, we can all help by doing our best to maintain and increase the efficiency of our fine railway system under war conditions. . . To mention only one way, it is obvious that many classes of material that we use will be less easy to get. It is vitally important that we avoid extravagance in any direction. Waste of any kind must encroach on our national reserve of both man-power and material."

IN that brief, impressive message issued last month, the Commissioners appealed to everyone to do all that is humanly possible towards a successful prosecution of the war.

It is an urgent call to those whose work will be within the framework of the Department. Train movements; track and bridge maintenance; signalling activities; workshops operations . . . the whole of the Department's activities must be "geared" to withstand any demand made upon them in a sudden emergency.

Waste Is A Crime

Stores and materials are the "life-blood" of the Department. Shortages, delayed supplies and increased prices must be resolutely met. Hence, waste of any kind is inexcusable . . . it is a dereliction of duty at any time—it is a tragedy in wartime.

Discard nothing that is of the slightest potential value. Send it to the Reclamation Depot, Spotswood, where miracles are performed in restoring a great variety of "obsolete" material for further use.

Railwaymen can also exercise their minds in exploring possibilities of using substitutes for materials which may become unobtainable in the future.

Collective Thinking

Visualise the possibility of your own job being affected by the absence of what has been regarded as essential material. How would you adapt your methods to the changed circumstances; what materials could be used as an alternative?

Let every member of the Department concentrate on this and allied problems. The exercise of care and foresight must result in incalculable benefits to the service—and to the Nation.

First Aid's Great Value Now

"IT augurs well for Australia when in the Australian Railways there is the nucleus of an efficient ambulance organization ready to act in a time of national crisis." That prophetic statement was made by a New South Wales doctor at the Australian Railways Ambulance Championships just 12 months ago.

Important in the community under ordinary conditions, a knowledge of first aid is of the highest significance to the well being of the civil population under the deplorable conditions associated with aerial warfare.

To act swiftly, calmly and effectively in aiding injured people is frequently the determining factor in saving lives. That is the priceless reward for taking a first aid course. It provides the possessor of a first aid certificate with assurance and skill which are within the reach of every member of the railway service.

The Department's first aid organization offers an unsurpassed opportunity for railway men and women to learn first aid. Books, bandages and instruction are free. Passes are issued for travel to stations where classes are conducted.

ENROL NOW . . . MAINTAIN YOUR INTEREST AND ENTHUSIASM — AND RECOGNIZING THE GREAT POTENTIAL VALUE OF FIRST AID IN A GRAVE NATIONAL EMERGENCY, DETERMINE TO OBTAIN YOUR CERTIFICATE NOW.

Railmen's Chance To Help In A.R.P.

RAILWAYMEN over the age of 45, who reside in the metropolitan area have the opportunity of rendering valuable assistance in the Air Raids Precautions organization for the protection of the civil population.

Cr. A. W. Coles (Lord Mayor of Melbourne) has stated that "we are not pushing on with this movement in the belief that air raids are imminent. But a plan could not be devised on the spur of the moment. So, some kind of permanent organization must be established and kept in working order."

Throughout the suburban area, the various Municipal Councils are steadily proceeding with protective measures within their respective areas.

Men over the age of 45 years are wanted for enrolment in First Aid and decontamination squads and in demolition and rescue parties. Women also are being enrolled for emergency services.

Railwaymen, who are willing to help, are urged to get in touch with their local Councils and volunteer their services for this very necessary precautionary work.

STILL VITAL NEED FOR SECRECY

ISSUED to every member of the service on Monday, September 4—the day following Britain's declaration of war against Germany—the notice from the Commissioners stressing the need for preserving secrecy must not in any circumstances be forgotten . . . there must be no relaxing of vigilance.

To refresh the memory of each individual, that message is reprinted here:—

The attention of every member of the staff is specially directed to the necessity for preserving secrecy upon any official action or event connected in any way with the war situation, including any movement of armed forces and military supplies or precautionary measures of any kind.

Apart from its civil aspect, any failure to observe this instruction will be regarded as a serious breach of Departmental discipline.

The Month's Topic

ROYAL SHOW REFLECTIONS

LAST month's Royal Show in Melbourne—that spectacular pageant of the State's agricultural, pastoral and horticultural wealth—makes it opportune to present a few observations on the character of the railway service to the man on the land.

All sorts of things, unappreciated and possibly not understood by the average layman, are responsible for the ever-improving quality of railway service received by the primary producers. Better tracks, better locomotives, wider facilities for train control all play their part as do the men behind the machines, the great army of railwaymen most of whom are constantly on the alert to effect improvements in their own sphere, and thus raising the overall standard of service.

Safe Service

The railways can point to a service for the farmer, grazier, fruitgrower, etc., that has lowered the margin of error to a minimum. Though nearly 6,000,000 tons of goods were carried by the railways during the last financial year, the claims for loss, damage or delay amounted to less than 4d. per 1,000 tons carried one mile.

The ease with which the Railways carry to the metropolis or the seaboard as many as 100,000 bags of wheat in a day is sufficient evidence of their efficiency and reliability.

The further fact that this wheat is carried at an average rate of 4/5ths of a penny per ton mile is additional testimony to the cheapness of the service—a service beyond that of any other form of transport, even assuming that it were physically capable of performing the task.

Faster Transport

The same story could be told of the railways transport of wool (last year 550,000 bales), of livestock (nearly 12,000,000 head), and of other commodities, all transported effectively and at appreciably greater speed than was possible five years ago.

Acceleration of goods services has been maintained practically parallel with the speeding up of passenger timetables, with the result that the majority of farmers, graziers and fruit-growers as well as city merchants are assured of much later loading times than formerly and much earlier arrival times in the metropolis.

Irregular Travelling Offences Totalled Nearly 19,000 Last Year!

ALTHOUGH it is impossible to reveal details of the methods of the Department to detect irregular travelling, this surprising fact can be disclosed: last year nearly 19,000 cases were reported to the Department. The majority of those cases were detected by the travelling special ticket checkers who are continuously engaged in checking tickets on trains.

EDUCATIONAL TOUR BY APPRENTICES

“WONDERFULLY educative... We have added tremendously to our knowledge.”

Those and other comments by the 20 apprentices who returned last month from a special tour in New South Wales summarise the reactions of these youthful railwaymen.

Under the control of Mr. W. H. Grace (Principal, Newport Technical College), these apprentices, whose progress at the College has been outstanding, visited the principal engineering activities of the New South Wales Railways, including the electric car repair shops at Chullora; running shed at Enfield; Eveleigh workshops; and carriage workshops. Private engineering enterprises inspected embraced the B.H.P. works and the Cardiff Locomotive workshops, Newcastle; The Wide Bay Power Station; A.W.A. works; signal engineers demonstration room; and a big tobacco Company's operations.

Mr. Grace declared that the apprentices were particularly impressed by the warmth of the reception by Mr. T. J. Hartigan (Chief Railways Commissioner). Mr. Hartigan emphasized the benefits of the scheme under which selected apprentices of the Victorian and New South Wales Railways exchange similar visits each year.

POINTS FROM 1938-39 ANNUAL REPORT

IN 1938-39, the goods business and the passenger traffic represented by the goods ton miles and the passenger miles, were 156.5 and 106.6 per cent, respectively greater than in 1907-08. Yet the increase in train mileage was equivalent to only 82.3 per cent.—indicating substantial economic advantage.

In 1920-21, 38-13 lb. of coal were used for every 100 gross ton-miles hauled by locomotives. The corresponding figure in 1938-39 was 26-09 lb. This striking reduction has been of enormous benefit, and the Department's coal bill for 1938-39 (after equating for various classes of coal) was £220,000 less than if the consumption per ton-mile had been the same as in 1920-21.

The amount of claims paid in respect of consignments missing, damaged or delayed was £12,590, or £886 less than in the preceding year.

An additional 374 wagons, 4 cars and 16 steam locomotives were fitted with automatic couplings. Thus, at June 30 last, the total number of cars, vans and wagons completely equipped was 16,879, including 78 per cent. of the total goods stock.

In pitting their ingenuity against the keenness of the special ticket checkers, offenders overlook, among other things, the various symbols, marks and other safeguards which appear on railway tickets.

Meaningless to the uninitiated, these indications are immediately obvious to special ticket checkers in circumstances of irregular travel.

Due to special safeguards employed, the irregular transfer of weekly periodical and workmen's weekly tickets is becoming increasingly difficult.

The irregular transfer of tickets from one person to another is one of the most serious offences against the Railway By-Laws, rendering the persons concerned liable to a fine as high as £20. In addition, the wrongdoer sometimes receives embarrassing newspaper publicity.

Looking Back To 1914-15

“WHAT was happening in the Department during 1914-15—the first year of the Great War?” That question, asked by a youthful member of the service who was not born until after 1918, led to an examination of the Commissioners' Annual Report for the year ended June 30, 1915. Here is the pith of that Report...

The Commissioners were: Messrs. C. E. Norman (Chairman), L. McClelland and E. B. Jones. Mr. W. Fitzpatrick, C.M.G., who is still alive, had retired from the Chairmanship in April, 1915. Heads of the larger Branches were: Rolling Stock (Mr. W. M. Shannon), Way and Works (Mr. J. H. Fraser), and Transportation (Mr. C. Macaw).

In addition to the general retrogression of business due to wartime conditions, the Department's finances were further seriously affected by an exceptionally severe drought. For instance, only 174,000 tons of wheat were railed—a drop from 812,000 tons in 1913-14. Starving stock, fodder and seed wheat were carried at less than schedule rates.

Big Staff

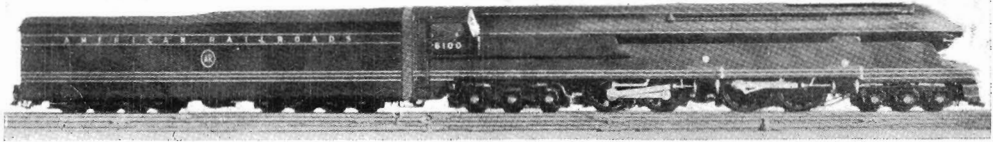
There were 27,030 employees, including 13,537 in a temporary capacity, this being an abnormal number due to the big works program then in progress. The basic wage was 8/- per day. So far, 2,073 railwaymen had enlisted for active service overseas; of these 55 had made the supreme sacrifice.

Many important works then in progress or about to be commenced were adversely affected by wartime conditions.

Highlights were: retarding of conversion of suburban system from steam to electric traction commenced in 1913; plans made for automatic signalling; regrading and duplication of South Yarra-Caulfield line nearing completion; regrading of Camberwell line in progress; duplication of Flinders Street Viaduct completed between Market and King Streets, but delayed on last section to Spencer Street; 40 miles of new lines opened for traffic; 304 miles under construction.

U.S.A. HAS WORLD'S BIGGEST STEAM PASSENGER LOCOMOTIVE

HERE is a picture of the largest and heaviest steam passenger locomotive in the world. It is an outstanding feature at the New York World's Fair. It is 140 feet long and weighs 473 tons with its immense tender, which is carried on 16 wheels. It is designed to haul a 1,000-ton passenger train at 100 m.p.h. on level track. The locomotive is streamlined and has the 6-4-4-6 wheel arrangement. It has two pairs of cylinders each driving independent groups of four driving wheels. The boiler pressure is 300 lb. per sq. in. and the driving wheels are 7 feet in diameter. The tender carries 20,200 gallons of water and 23½ tons of coal and when fully loaded weighs over 200 tons. This giant locomotive was built at the Pennsylvania Railroad shops.



GREAT VALUE OF HALLADE RECORDER

GANGERS are being greatly assisted in ensuring a high standard of track maintenance by the Hallade Track Recorder, a small ingenious machine which indicates imperfections in the tracks. The defects are of a kind which, although not ordinarily visible to the naked eye, may give rise to uncomfortable travelling conditions through the jolting, oscillation and surching of railway carriages.

When in use, the machine occupies only a small space in the compartment of a passenger train. As the train speeds on, a band of paper (or chart) is running through the machine, accurately recording the nature and location of any track defects. After the test run, copies of the chart are distributed to the track forces who are thus enabled to adjust irregularities in the early stage of their development.

In view of the highly successful results which have been achieved, a new program is now in operation providing for the fuller and more frequent use of the machine.

Under this arrangement, the machine will be in use once every three weeks over the Melbourne-Albury, Melbourne-Geelong and Melbourne-Serviceton lines; every two months on the Melbourne-Bendigo, Ballarat-Mildura, Geelong-Warrnambool and Melbourne-Sale lines; and every three to four months on 14 other lines.

OVERSEAS INTEREST IN BUFFET CARS

A PHOTOGRAPH of one of the Department's air-conditioned buffet cars which was prominently featured in the "Railway Age"—a leading journal published in America and circulating throughout the world's railway systems—was responsible for a significant letter being recently received from the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway of Canada.

In his letter the Superintendent of Motive Power and Car Equipment mentioned that "as we are preparing designs for a restaurant car the photo-

New, Attractive Tariff At The Chalet

THE prevailing reduced tariff at The Chalet, Mt. Buffalo National Park, provides a splendid opportunity for holiday-makers to experience the springtime attractions of one of Australia's finest alpine resorts. For £5/19/6 an all-inclusive ticket may be purchased from Melbourne, including rail and motor travel and seven days' accommodation at The Chalet. This reduced tariff will be available until December 16, and again next year from March 30 to June 30. Magnificent mountain air adds zest to explorations discovering

the widespread panoramic effects, the colourful wild-flowers and the arresting geological features with which the National Park abounds. The Chalet provides an unsurpassed standard of accommodation, service and cuisine. Social life is always an attraction at The Chalet. The range of entertainments is extensive, including card and music rooms, ballroom, billiards, table tennis and a weekly "talkie" show.

Railwaymen on annual leave should bring Mt. Buffalo National Park into the forefront of their holiday plans.

FIRST AID COACHING APPRECIATED

"**DEAR SIR**—On behalf of the St. John Ambulance Association and the First Aid class, I have much pleasure in thanking you for the use of your Ambulance Room, and also thanking your Ambulance Squad for the generous way in which they gave their time and skill in coaching us for the examinations.

That they did their voluntary job well is shown by the fact that all the members except one passed the examination. Please accept this as expressing the feeling of each member of the class."
—Mr. J. Hembry, Heatherton Road, Dandenong, writing to the Stationmaster, Dandenong.

Railways' Part In London Evacuation

RAILWAYMEN who heard the recent direct broadcast description from London of the evacuation of many thousands of children will recall the high tributes paid to the precision with which the rail transport arrangements were carried out.

Information just received by the "News Letter" reveals the completeness of the preliminary organisation upon which the success of the huge undertaking rested. Plans were made with such thoroughness that it was confidently predicted that 4,000,000 people could be moved, mainly by trains, within 70 hours of an alarm being given.

Railway companies held numerous rehearsals of the greatest projected rail transport movement in modern times. The time-tables for only three days' working ran into hundreds of pages.

Over 1,200 detraining stations in all parts of England were selected. The staff at each of these stations had the most detailed outline of their duties, including plans for the utmost co-ordination with the local authorities responsible for the accommodation of the people evacuated.

graph is of interest." The Superintendent asked that full data be forwarded to him, and added that they "desired to make a study of your car's features."

As a result, detailed descriptions, photographs and essential drawings have now been despatched by the Department to the Canadian railway authorities.

This matter is mentioned here because it is a tribute to the Department's progressive policy of introducing modern railway equipment.

MARYBOROUGH RAILWAYMEN HAVE UNIQUE MUNICIPAL RECORD . . .

PAST and present railwaymen of Maryborough have a record for active participation in municipal affairs that must be unapproached elsewhere in Victoria—probably in Australia.

Of the nine councillors in the Maryborough Borough Council, two are in the railway service and two are retired railwaymen. Three have been Mayor, the present occupant of that office being Mr. J. Pascoe, Clerk of the Goods Sheds. Mr. Pascoe's father was also a Mayor of the Borough some years ago. This is the first occasion in the Borough's history of a son following in his father's Mayoral footsteps. Incidentally, Mr. Pascoe is one of the keenest "first aiders" in the service.

In 1938-39, Mr. J. T. Roscholler was Mayor. At the time of his retirement from the Department, he was Stationmaster at Ballarat. Previously he had been a Train Running Officer in the Maryborough District.

When Mr. S. Poole, retired engine driver, was Mayor he made history in several ways, particularly in his devotion to his Mayoral duties. He was rostered on the Maryborough Yard Pilot and he often received deputations from ratepayers during "crib" intervals!

Fourth railwayman in the Council is Mr. C. P. Stoneham, Clerk in the Booking Office. The most youthful member of the Council, Mr. Stoneham has already played a prominent part in local affairs. He is an excellent debater.

And to complete this unusual record, it must be mentioned that in the neighboring Shire of Newstead, the President is Mr. J. A. Roberts, one of the best known of former railwaymen in the State, and also an ex-Mayor of Maryborough.

News In Brief

RADIO listeners throughout Australia heard a direct broadcast from the "Man-in-Grey" at the Spencer Street station last month. Chosen to inaugurate the "Melbourne Speaks" series of broadcasts, the "Man-in-Grey" was heard answering types of questions passengers sometimes ask. A portable microphone was moved amongst the crowd of interested on-lookers. Questions on many aspects of railway operation were put to the assembled people by the announcer, and their replies were either confirmed or corrected by the "Man-in-Grey."

* * *

How Guard A. Isles and Engine Driver P. Cantillon rendered first aid at Woomelang to a footballer suffering a broken collar bone and shock is revealed in a letter of warm appreciation from the victim—Mr. Gerald D. Beare, of St. Arnaud. No doctor was available at Woomelang, and "but for these two railwaymen I would have collapsed." Significantly Mr. Beare adds: "Their method of setting and slinging the arm later met with the highest praise from the doctor, and has meant a great deal to my recovery." This incident should inspire railwaymen to acquire a knowledge which can be so effectively applied at a critical moment.

* * *

The exhibition of a model of the parlor-observation car of "Spirit of Progress" at the New York World's Fair excited considerable interest. This is reflected in the letters which the Department has received from various American people. Praising the modern construction and appointments of the car, the correspondents have sought further information on other features of the Victorian Railways.

* * *

To complete the collection of Victorian Railways photographs at the Technological Museum, Melbourne, the Department is supplying 69 prints, together with a selection of diagrams. The Museum will then possess one of the most complete pictorial records of Victorian Railway developments in existence. Included in the Museum's existing stock of photographs are a number of the earlier locomotives which are not in the Department's collection. These are being made available for copying purposes.

Orators In Embryo

IF the enthusiasm and progress of members of the V.R.I. Debating Club are any criterion, the rather "faded" statement that "public speaking is a lost art" will look more tattered and worn. In a few seasons, the Club has become a real force in debating circles, experts particularly commending the members for their versatility. Railway men and women who are in the Club have quickly advanced from the raw, hesitant stages of public speaking to that most helpful period when fluency—and confidence—make them equal to meet those embarrassing moments when one is unexpectedly asked "to say a few words." Members of the V.R.I. Club have had the benefit of a relatively long-range plan of tuition, and now the wisdom of the policy is reflected when they are in open competition with other clubs. Continuing this policy, the Club has arranged a further series of competitions, available for its members during October and November. These will be in three sections: Impromptu Speech (up to 7 minutes); Prepared Speech (up to 10 minutes); and Dramatic Speech (5 minutes and must be memorised). Members of the service generally are invited to hear these events—and to become actively associated with this virile, progressive Club.

On The Air

CHOSEN to open the National Broadcasting program from 3.00 on Friday evening, September 16, the Victorian Railways Institute's Choral Society acquitted themselves handsomely. It was easily the most important engagement of these 60 enthusiastic railway men and women, the quality of their rehearsal foreshadowing the success of the broadcast.

The Men In White

BILL Blackburn (Assistant Ambulance Officer), is, as most railwaymen know, the leading League football umpire who again officiated during the recent series of semi-final and final games on the Melbourne Cricket Ground. But not many railwaymen are aware the Allan Coward, the other field umpire in the final football battles, is a car painter at the Jolimont Workshops. He joined the service in 1925. His selection in the important games was widely approved. His performances in what is conceded to be the most onerous in the Australian sporting sphere, were particularly impressive. Formerly a footballer himself, Allan has been connected with the League for six years. Football fans in many parts of the State know him as a keen, efficient umpire at numerous games in the country football League. Contrary to the general belief, umpires must train as hard as the players. Unlike the players the umpire is on the move all the time and above all, the need for concentration is greater. Allan has always been assiduous in physical training, and it is this stamina, together with a wide knowledge of the rules which has won the commendation of the critics of the game.

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

October Birthdays

STN. Master V. A. Bracher, on the first; Metro. R.S. Supt. J. Noonan, on the second; Repr. H. R. Woods, of Stavely, on the third; Fireman J. H. Williams, of Maryborough, and Telegraphist D. Sheehan, of Spencer St., on the fourth; Lineman H. E. Mundy, of Overhead Depot, on the fifth; Ganger E. R. Gibson, of Kaniva, and Clerk W. L. McGrath, of Estate Office, on the sixth; Genl. Supt. of Transpnt. M. A. Remfry, and Trn. Examnr. R. F. Holmes, of Nth. Melb., on the seventh; Genl. Services Officer G. Massey, and Optg. Porter G. D. Coates, of Murrayville, on the ninth; B. & S. Board Member R. M. Harvey, Repr. T. W. Webb, of Nth. Geelong, and Gds. Checker J. A. Tippet, of Geelong, on the 11th; R.A. Stn. Master J. A. Foster, on the 13th; Skld. Labr. J. Carmody, of Nth. Melb., and Clerk F. J. Earl, of Spencer St., on the 14th; Pt. Cleaner J. Sullivan, of Ballarat, on the 15th; Yd. Foreman F. D. Rogan, of Flinders St., Ldg. Hand Testg. Electn. E. H. Winter, of Spencer St., and Labr. S. J. Gibbs, of Newport, on the 16th; Rd. Foreman W.

Mountford, of Korumburra, on the 18th; Labr. E. P. Swanson, of Nth. Melb., Skld. Labr. C. E. Schade, of Nth. Melb., and Shift Electn. D. L. Gilbert, of Newport Power Stn., on the 19th; Clerk D. E. Connell, of W. & W., on the 20th; Skld. Labr. R. A. McFarlane, of Reclamation Depot, on the 22nd; Hall Officer W. Wedgwood, on the 23rd; C'smith L. L. Oates, of Newport, Skld. Labr. W. L. Cure, of Nth. Melb., and Repr. H. Chenoweth, of Koonwarra, on the 24th; Fireman W. G. Whitmore, of Benalla, on the 26th; Turner C. Shepherd, of Newport, Gds. Guard H. M. Cann, of Benalla, and Lineman S. Grieves, of Wangaratta, on the 27th; Clerk R. R. Mayne, of Ballarat Workshops, and Sig. Porter M. Murphy, of Newlyn, on the 28th; Labr. W. H. Dean, of Jolimont, on the 29th; Clerk J. C. Wolff, of Newport Workshops, Signalman C. J. Kellett, of Oakleigh, and Engr. N. K. Campbell, of Head Office, on the 30th; and Refresh. Services Chief Clerk F. C. Campbell, and Eng. Dvr. H. Oxley, of Traralgon, on the 31st. —R.G.M.

The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

November, 1939

Issue No. 111

BIG QUESTION FACING US ALL

“**W**HAT am I doing to help the Empire emerge victorious from the present desperate struggle with a foe whose ideals are repellent to every freedom-loving Australian? That is the big question which must be ever present in our minds . . . it must be the dominating thought of every patriotic Australian.

How can we best help? That is the keynote of this special message from the Commissioners. Hundreds of railwaymen are nobly fitting themselves to serve as members of the naval, military and air forces. In their case nothing further can be said.

Indispensable in peace time, the railways attain even greater significance in war. A railway sys-

tem efficient in every detail is, therefore, the paramount concern of those railwaymen who continue to serve within the Department.

That desired standard of efficiency can be made possible by a general and sincere declaration of war against wasteful, uneconomic methods wherever they may exist—and by a determination to avoid extravagance of time or materials.

Nothing short of “our best” effort is the duty of us all. Loyalty demands, firstly, the closest attention to our work, devoting ourselves to the daily task with all our energy and concentration. Secondly, it imposes the obligation of being ever on the alert to detect ways of improving the service generally.

Suggestions From All Railwaymen Are Urgently Wanted

NEVER before has it been so essential for railwaymen to let the administration have the benefit of their ideas for improving the service.

Since the suggestions plan was introduced in 1921, more than 40,000 ideas have been received by the Betterment and Suggestions Board. Though gratifying, that figure is not so impressive when it is remembered that on the average there have been considerably more than 20,000 employes in the service each year.

Surely it is not too much to expect that each employe will submit at least one suggestion a year. For the thoughtful railwayman there is an immense field to exploit; from tickets to tracks; luggage to locomotives; stationery to stations . . .

A minimum award of 10/- is paid for each adopted suggestion, the value of which previously merited a commendatory entry only. Higher awards are, of course, paid for more valuable suggestions.

Each member of the service is earnestly asked to apply himself to this great drive to improve the service . . . to help maintain the Department in a position ready for the tremendous task which a more serious turn in the war would immediately create.

CHEAP FARES FOR CAMP VISITORS

FOR the convenience of visitors to the military camps in the Seymour and Mt. Martha districts, cheap day-return fares are now available from Melbourne every Sunday.

Special trains leave the city at a convenient hour on the Sunday morning and return in the evening, thus allowing relatives and friends to spend a reasonable period with the troops. A return bus service operates from the stations adjacent to the camps.

The Seymour Refreshment Rooms are open for counter luncheons and light refreshments.

From Melbourne the return fares are: To Tallarook and Seymour—1st 7/6d., 2nd 5/6d. To Mornington—1st 5/7d., 2nd 4/5d. Children under 14 years—half-fare.

Military Rail Traffic Biggest In 25 Years

LAST month's military rail traffic, comprising troops, guns, horses, stores and other equipment, to the camps in the Seymour and Mt. Martha Districts was on a scale comparable with the heaviest handled during the Great War of 1914-18. It was a triumph of co-operative organization between the Department and the Defence authorities.

October 9 was the busiest day. The troops for the camps in the Seymour area were conveyed in 10 special trains from the North-Eastern, Goulburn Valley, Eastern, South-Eastern and Metropolitan districts. These trains, some of which consisted of 12 carriages, arrived at Seymour and adjacent stopping places within a period of six hours.

In addition to the 82 carriages used for the personnel, numerous open trucks were pressed into service for the transport of field guns. As a result of prior test loadings, which revealed the most efficient way of loading and lashing the guns, this part of the operations was carried out with precision in all cases.

Ordinary Trains Unaffected

A noteworthy feature of this military traffic was the scheduling of the special trains on the forward and return journeys without interference to the ordinary passenger and goods trains on a particularly busy day.

Once the trains were in running, the great value of the train control system was demonstrated. Central and Seymour Train Control, together with the train crews and numerous other railwaymen along the route, co-operated splendidly to ensure a performance which gained the high praise of Major-General E. A. Drake-Brockman, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D., General Officer Commanding the 3rd Division.

In addition to carrying the troops now in training back to their original starting stations this month, the Department will transport large numbers to other camps.

Special trains have also been run for the troops on Saturday-Sunday leave. Greatly reduced return fares to Melbourne have been fixed.

The Month's Topic

RAILWAYS' PART IN WAR TIME

ELSEWHERE in this issue is an article describing the part which the railways are playing in the movements of troops and material to and from military camps in various parts of Victoria. Though on a large scale, this transport job does not, of course, represent anything like the maximum effort of which the Department is capable.

The task that the railways already have been called upon to undertake demonstrates that, in the mass transport conditions of wartime, the railways are indispensable, unchallengeable.

It has been claimed by a motor transport propagandist that "200,000 motor trucks and over 600,000 cars can convey immense quantities of material and innumerable soldiers to any part of the coast."

Obvious Flaws

Conspicuous among the obvious flaws in that argument is that 800,000 persons sufficiently able-bodied to drive laden motor vehicles over "bush tracks" day and night would thus be segregated for long-distance transport. In other words, this road transport would require one man for every 8 or 10 tons, or 50 men for every 500 tons.

Contrast this wastage of man-power with the fact that the transport of 500 tons by rail would be handled by a crew of three—the driver, fireman and guard!

Again, motor fuel, unlike that used by railways, must be brought from overseas. In the event of war in Australia, petrol for purposes other than purely military requirements would have to be severely rationed.

Military experts all over the world have proclaimed the superiority of rail transport in time of war. One—Colonel J. C. Frink (Chief of the U.S.A. War Plans and Training Branch)—said:—

"The importance of the railroad transportation system in its relation to defence can, I think, be summed up in one word—indispensable."

With their assured supply of wholly Australian fuel, the railways are necessary to business and industry at all times. But in war they are one of the main bulwarks of our national security.

New Tourist Bureau Symbolizes Growth of Travel Business

TO those who can recall the first Victorian Government Tourist Bureau opened on the corner of Collins and Swanston Streets, Melbourne, over 30 years ago, the new premises to be opened on Monday, November 13, on "The Block," 272 Collins Street, will be a reminder of the importance and value of the State's tourist industry.

SOOT BANISHING PLANT AT NEWPORT "A"

ONE of the many interesting features of the modernizing of the Newport "A" Power Station is the decision to install two electro-static dust precipitators. They are the first of their kind to be used in Australia.

These two precipitators, which will cost more than £31,000, will be erected on the roof of the boiler house over 100 feet from the floor level, and will eliminate the emission of grit and soot.

Briefly, the precipitators consist of nests of hexagonal steel tubes arranged like an exaggerated honeycomb. Hanging through the centre of each tube is a twisted wire weighted at the bottom.

A high electrical pressure of 70,000 volts is maintained between the hexagonal tube and the wire, thus producing a high potential electrical field. After leaving the boiler, the products of combustion pass through the hexagonal tubes and the particles of dust and soot, becoming highly electrified, adhere either to the tube surface or to the central wire. The clean gas then passes out through the stack.

A specially-constructed vibrator then causes the dust to be shaken off into a hopper for discharge into the ash system.

Preceding the original Victorian Government Tourist Bureau was the small, unpretentious "Railway Information and Central Booking Office" at Flinders Street station. This office was primarily concerned with railway travel. However, with the growth of population and the greater scope for holidays, it became apparent that a larger, more comprehensive travel service was needed.

Thus, the Commissioners established the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, and after moving to its present site in Queen's Walk, the Bureau steadily widened its functions. Today the Bureau offers a complete travel service—by rail, road, sea and air—which is unsurpassed by any other tourist organization in the Commonwealth.

State Benefits

It is proving of immense value in stimulating travel not only within Victoria but also from all the other States where Branches of the Bureau are actively—and successfully—building up a travel business highly lucrative to this State.

Expanding business and the necessity for the Bureau to be in a more prominent—and more convenient—situation have led to the selection of the new premises fronting Collins Street in an area where all the principal offices catering for tourists are located.

The Commissioners are confident that the new Bureau will permit of a higher standard of service being at the disposal of all patrons.



PICTURED HERE is the overhead crane at the Reclamation Depot, Spotswood. It hovers over the twisted mass of iron and steel and picks up two tons at a time by electromagnetic. Since the Depot was created in 1926, the value of materials sold and or issued totals nearly £1,000,000. Under present war time conditions, the Depot is of immense importance.

BULK HANDLING NEXT MONTH

VICTORIAN railway and rural history will be made next month when the State's first scheme for the bulk handling of wheat will be introduced. It is intended to bring into operation part of the scheme serving the huge Geelong terminal elevator.

A total of 53 elevators—including six owned by millers—will be functioning. These elevators, situated at stations in the Mallee and Wimmera Districts, have a total storage capacity of over 6,000,000 bushels. The complete scheme for these areas provides for 91 elevators being constructed.

Meanwhile, the wheat-proofing of railway trucks and alterations to tracks and sidings are proceeding. Approximately 1,200 trucks are suitable for the carriage of wheat in bulk, and it is proposed to construct a further 250 during the present financial year. In addition, ordinary goods vehicles can be used, if required, by placing canvas aprons over the doors of the trucks.

25,000 Racing Pigeons Sent By Rail

NEARLY 25,000 racing pigeons have added variety to the freight being handled at present by passenger trains on the northern and north-western lines. They have been carried to various stations in specially-constructed baskets, each holding 20 birds, and released to compete in the annual Homing Pigeon Races to Melbourne.

Pigeons have been released as far away from Melbourne as Ouyen (242 "flying" miles) and Mildura (300 miles). In two instances, birds taken to South Australia have flown back to Melbourne from Yarrawie (475 miles) and Carrieton (520 miles).

Birds have also been carried by rail from South Australia and New South Wales for release from various Victorian centres.

How the pigeons find their way back to their lofts has never been satisfactorily explained. The world's record flight by a homing pigeon is 7,200 miles.

On August 15, 1931, this pigeon was released in Arras, France, and after 24 days it found its way back to Saigon, Indo China. As it was taken to France in the hold of a ship travelling around India and through the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, it had no opportunity of selecting landmarks.

It was a message carried by a bird called Cher Ami that saved from annihilation the famous "Lost Battalion" of the American Expeditionary Force.

Handling Special Cup Day Traffic Is One Of Year's Biggest Tasks

PLANS have been completed for handling over 200,000 passenger journeys by special trains on Melbourne Cup Day. Of this total, nearly 100,000 will be made between the city and the Flemington Racecourse Platform. Most of the remainder will consist of Sunday School and other picnic parties whose rail travel on Cup Day to the nearer hill and seaside resorts is the heaviest of the year.

SHORTLY after 9 a.m. on Cup Day, an electric train will leave No. 1 platform, Flinders Street, for Flemington. This will be the first of the fast and frequent service. Stopping at No. 8 platform, Spencer Street, each train will take only 13 minutes to the Racecourse platform.

For the movement to the course, 15 trains, each consisting of eight carriages and providing accommodation for nearly 800 people, will be used. Nineteen trains will be available for the return traffic. It is expected that about 100 return trips will be run.

Peak period for the forward traffic will be between 11.17 a.m. and 12.51 p.m. when 23 trips will be made from Flinders Street and 12 from Spencer Street—a total of 35 trips in 94 minutes, or one train about every three minutes.

At the end of the day's racing there is an exodus from the course—if an unfancied candidate wins the last race! Should however, the "favourite" win, there is an obvious effect upon the rush to the platform. Because of these contingencies, the railway time-tables must necessarily be flexible.

Between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m., up to 50,000 people will be moved by trains from the racecourse, a two-minute frequency being maintained on the section between Newmarket and Kensington.

Almost simultaneously with the start of the return race traffic, nearly 70 special trains carrying picnic parties will commence to leave on the return journey from hill and seaside resorts.

To assist in the handling of this last-mentioned traffic, race trains will be released as quickly as possible at Flinders Street and run express to Ringwood, Upper Ferntree Gully, Williamstown and other stations.

Contrary to the general belief, the Department's biggest traffic problem during the Cup meeting occurs on Derby Day—not Cup Day. On Derby Day, the Department is called upon to handle the heavy special race traffic to the racecourse, together with the normal mid-day peak business traffic from the city.

BIG RECLAMATION "DRIVE" IN HAND

ANTICIPATING a scarcity and increased prices of many materials, particularly those purchased overseas, the Commissioners, immediately following the outbreak of war, deputed the Departmental Stores Standardization Committee to concentrate on questions dealing with substitutes, salvage and reclamation.

The Committee consists of Messrs. L. C. Stewart, Acting Comptroller of Stores (Chairman); W. Stephen, Engineer of Machinery and Water Supply; W. O. Gaffety, Engineer, Rolling Stock Branch; and G. L. Rayment, Stores and Tender Officer, Secretary's Branch. Mr. A. W. Thomson, Clerk, Stores Branch, is Secretary.

The Committee has been meeting once a week, and as a result many matters, revealing opportunities for substantial savings, are being closely investigated.

Of the Committee's reclamation activities, the attention given to cotton waste and sponge cloth is of outstanding interest. These two items are extensively used by employes, particularly in workshops and locomotive depots and on locomotives.

Each year the Department buys 100 tons of cotton waste, costing over £3,200. Purchases of sponge cloths amount to more than £2,200 a year.

Cotton waste and sponge cloths are imported. As normal supplies are not now obtainable, the Committee is conducting reclamation experiments which promise to be highly successful.

Initially, all the used cotton waste, free from substances of a metallic nature, is being collected at the North Melbourne Loco. Depot for dry cleaning purposes. (For the reasons stated above, railwaymen to whom these items are issued are specially urged to return them after use to the Department.)

So far, the absorbing qualities of the sponge cloths and waste after dry cleaning appear practically equal to the original article.

Before dry cleaning, the excess oil in the cotton waste is being extracted by a centrifugal separator. In turn, this oil is being sprayed on coke which is now being used for locomotive lighting up purposes instead of used cotton waste.

(Details of some of the other activities of the Committee will be given in future issues of the "News Letter").

MR. JAS. TAYLOR'S DEATH

THE death last month of Mr. James Taylor, former Assistant Manager of the Newport Workshops, caused profound regret amongst a wide circle of friends, particularly at the Newport Workshops. He had retired from the service in 1935.

With the exception of two years as the first Manager of the Ballarat Workshops when they were opened in 1917, Mr. Taylor's 35 years as a railwayman were all spent at Newport.

He commenced there as a fitter and turner, and after extensive experience in many grades in various parts of the works, he rose to the important position of Assistant Manager in 1919.

Mr. Taylor served his apprenticeship in Scotland and arrived in Victoria in 1889. Prior to entering the railway service he was on the staff of several large private engineering establishments.

Mr. Jack Colligan Passes

ANOTHER well-known railway identity who passed away last month was Mr. Jack Colligan. At the time of his retirement in 1931, he had the unique record of 35 years' continuous service as the Parlor Car Conductor on the "Sydney Limited" between Melbourne and Albury.

As can be imagined, Mr. Colligan became well-known to thousands of regular travellers, many of Australia's leading citizens over the years being firm friends of the genial Jack Colligan.

One of his most treasured possessions was a diamond tie pin which the late Dame Nellie Melba was delighted to give him in recognition of many examples of thoughtful service.

Mr. Colligan began in the Melbourne Goods Sheds in 1885, and after transfer to Spencer Street station a few years later he became "perambulating porter." It was his job to move around the station platforms answering all sorts of questions on railway subjects. Virtually, he was the fore-runner of the Man-in-Grey we know today.

Retirement Of Mr. G. S. Luttrell

ILL-HEALTH was responsible for the premature retirement of one of the best known suburban railwaymen—Mr. G. S. Luttrell, First Assistant to the Metropolitan District Engineer. Most of Mr. Luttrell's 38 years service were spent in the suburban area, and he thus gained an extensive knowledge of engineering problems connected with heavy rail traffic. Latterly he has been carrying out exploratory work for the Departmental Transport Committee investigating future suburban rail traffic needs. Two highlights of Mr. Luttrell's career were his work in connection with the building of the present Flinders Street station, and the erection of the overhead equipment for the suburban electrified railway system. For his work in the latter sphere, Mr. Luttrell was specially commended by the Commissioners. To Mr. Luttrell, who is at present an inmate of Epworth Hospital, his many friends extend the warmest wishes for a speedy and complete recovery of health.

—T.L.

V.R. INSTITUTE HAS GOOD YEAR

A MUCH sounder financial position... an increased membership... and a continuance of the usefulness and popularity of the educational classes were highly encouraging features of the annual report of the Victorian Railways Institute presented to members last month.

Covering a comprehensive field, the Report is striking evidence of the facilities which the Institute provides for railwaymen to increase their educational standards and to participate in social and sporting life—all for a very nominal fee.

Assets of the Institute totalled £24,240, while liabilities were £12,722. The income and expenditure account showed an excess of receipts over expenditure of £58, compared with a deficiency of £227 last year. Income totalled £18,232—an increase of £2,142. The expenditure increased by £1,858 to £18,174.

The membership of 14,956 was evidence that the increase over the last five years is still being maintained.

November Birthdays

MINOR Machinist J. Lee, of Newport, on the first; Elec. Fitter R. R. Skinner, of Bendigo W'shops, on the third; Goods Checker W. Carter, of Melb. Goods, on the fifth; Chairman of Staff Bd. D. Cameron, on the seventh; Repr. A. J. Foot, of Surrey Hills, Clerk H. J. Lent, of W. & W. Beh., and Fitter A. G. Langton, of North Melb, on the eighth; Clerk E. K. Rolls, of Sandringham, and Yard Foreman D. G. Groves, of Seymour, on the ninth; Fitter and Turner W. A. Hamilton, of Nth. Melb. W'shops, and Signalman C. W. Knox, of Macaulay, on the 10th; Plumber S. W. Weatherill, of Newport, on the 11th; Stower A. M. Farquer, of Melb. Goods, on the 12th; Lineman C. A. Hopkins, of Spencer St., and Labr. J. Harris, of Spotswood, on the 14th; Boilermaker A. Matheson, of Seymour, Clerk H. R. Scown, of Nth. Melb. Loco., Repr. W. Hull, of Spencer St., and Relieving A.S.M. C. Barrett, on the 15th; Fireman W. F. Andrew,

of Nth. Melb. Loco., on the 16th; Auditor of Revenue R. E. B. Lee, on the 17th; Secy. of Refresh. Services A. W. Keown, and Clerk W. J. Dandie, of Accts. Bch., on the 18th; A.S.M. J. McCartney, of Coburg, on the 19th; Clerk T. E. Cronin, of W. & W. Beh., on the 21st; Elec. Fitter A. Case, of Spencer St., and Storeman H. Etheridge, of Newport Loco. Store, on the 22nd; Cable Jointer J. Watson, of Overland Depot, on the 23rd; Carpenter H. S. Bartlett, of Maryborough, and Optg. Porter P. Power, of Sale, on the 24th; Train Examiner L. W. Welch, of Nth. Melb. W'shops, and Painter W. A. Blake, of Flinders St., on the 25th; Engr. A. F. Maclaren, of H. & S. Bch., on the 26th; Repr. C. S. Edgar, of Clunes, on the 28th; Repr. C. S. Edgar, of Portland, and Saw Doctor S. C. Young, of Spotswood, on the 29th; Clerk J. Sharkey, of Bendigo, and Ganger W. Ritchie, of Glenalbyn, on the 30th.—W.G.C.

Accountancy Corps

SCORING 447½ points, the Accountancy Branch No. 1 Corps won the Victorian Railways Ambulance Championship at Mt. Evelyn on October 26. The Dandenong Corps (432 points) was second, followed by the Benalla No. 1 Corps (408 points). Mr. P. Delmenico (Superintendent, Dandenong Corps) won the Senior Individual event.

Results of the Novice Corps events were: North Melb. Loco., first; Castlemaine, second; and Newport Workshops No. 2, third. Mr. E. J. McMaster (Superintendent, Jolimont Guards Corps) won the Novice Individual event.

In announcing the results, Mr. M. J. Canny (Commissioner) warmly thanked the competitors for their keen, practical interest in a

First Aid Winners

Movement which "in wartime was of tremendous importance." He emphasized that Mr. N. C. Harris (Commissioner) and himself would do everything humanly possible to encourage the growth of the first aid movement.

Supporting Mr. Canny's comments on the significance of first aid, the doctors who acted as adjudicators also paid a tribute to the marked improvement which had occurred in the quality of the work performed by the competitors.

Interstate Events Off

FIRST aid enthusiasts throughout the service will regret to learn that, due to wartime conditions, the Australian Railways Ambulance Championships planned to be held in Sydney this month have been postponed indefinitely.

Although this Competition has been suspended, the activities of the First Aid Movement within the various States will, of course, be maintained.

APPRENTICES SEE EDUCATIONAL FILMS

THE screening of a number of educational films at the Newport Technical College is additional evidence of the attractive opportunities for instruction which the Department provides for apprentices.

Twelve films, dealing with a wide range of engineering and allied subjects, were shown, and they were specially selected to permit of first, second and third year apprentices seeing films which were appropriate to the lectures delivered during the year.

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

The Victorian Railways NEWS LETTER

December, 1939

Issue No. 112

Tourist Traffic's Value Emphasized At Opening Of New Bureau

TODAY can be regarded as a red letter day in the annals of Victorian tourism," said the Minister of Transport (Mr. H. J. Hyland, M.L.A.) on November 13 when officially declaring open the new premises of the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau at 272 Collins Street, Melbourne. By invitation nearly 250 representative citizens attended the ceremony, afterwards making a close and appreciative inspection of the Bureau.



FOR A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW TOURIST BUREAU,
SEE PAGE 3.

Mr. Hyland pointed out that the gross revenue of the Tourist Bureau in Melbourne was £410,000 last year—an increase of £36,000 on the previous year's figures. There was no doubt that, as a result of the shipping restrictions, more people would spend their holidays in Australia—"starting with Victoria."

Saying that the tourist traffic can rightly be described as "one crop which is not over-produced in this State," Mr. Hyland expressed confidence that the facilities created for service by this most modern and centrally situated Bureau would promote tourist traffic and add considerably to the State's revenue.

In welcoming the visitors, Mr. N. C. Harris (Commissioner), said that the former offices in Queen's Walk had become incapable of handling business at peak periods. Even under the present wartime conditions, there was every indication of a striking improvement in our tourist business.

The citizens of Victoria have every reason to be proud of the new premises. The completion of the work to schedule represented one of the finest demonstrations of teamwork he had seen, declared Mr. Harris. He expressed the Commissioners' admiration for the way in which the work had been carried out, specially commending railwaymen for their part.

Mr. Harold W. Clapp, who also spoke, said that the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau and its officials had a world-wide reputation for service, built up through years of intensive application, loyalty and enthusiasm.

The Bureau again showed the true "spirit of progress" for which the Victorian Railways are well-known. "I want to tender my thanks," he said, "to all my old associates for the great work they have done in carrying out this job."

RAIL CO-OPERATION APPRECIATED

Elevators Board's Thanks

THE Grain Elevators Board welcomes the opportunity of recording its warm appreciation of the co-operation received from the Railways Department," said Mr. C. R. Henderson (Acting Chairman of the Board) in an interview with the "News Letter" last month on the eve of the introduction of the bulk handling of wheat scheme.

In numerous directions, Mr. Henderson stated, the railways administration and hundreds of railwaymen had facilitated the Board's operations.

From the outset—in the selection of sites for elevators, the provision and alteration of siding tracks, the relocation at many stations of platforms and other structures to make way for the elevators, the punctual delivery of huge quantities of con-

SERVICE

"DEAR Sir.—I am instructed by His Grace the Archbishop to communicate with you and to convey his sincere gratitude for the invaluable assistance given by the officials of the Railways Department during the Victorian Catholic Centenary Celebrations, which have just been brought to an end. His Grace deeply appreciates the sympathetic and efficient attention given by your officials in arranging transport for the large crowds which assembled for the various functions."

—Dr. Patrick Lyons, Administrator, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, writing to the Commissioners.

structional material and the wheat-proofing of trucks—the Department has steadfastly maintained a rate of progress to conform with the Board's program.

"All your men seemed conscious," he said, "of being associated with an undertaking which I believe will be of undiminished value to the State as a whole."

Asked to indicate how railwaymen could best co-operate during the actual operation of the scheme, Mr. Henderson said: "I feel quite sure that the train operating staffs will rise to the occasion and ensure an even, reliable flow of trucks to keep the elevators free for the reception of wheat from the district farms.

"That, in short, will be the railwaymen's best and most valued contribution towards the success of the scheme."

SERIOUS SHORTAGE OF TARPAULINS

IN a front page message on the "Weekly Notice" last month, the Commissioners emphasized the need for handling tarpaulins with the utmost care. That message reads as follows:—

A CRITICAL SITUATION.

Due to a complete cessation of supplies of canvas from overseas, the position regarding tarpaulins is most critical. To meet this situation, existing stocks of canvas must be conserved for use in more extensively repairing damaged tarpaulins. It is unlikely that material will be available for new tarpaulins for many months.

We ask all railwaymen concerned never to forget that tarpaulins are absolutely essential for the proper protection of much of the goods traffic.

THEREFORE, IT IS YOUR DUTY TO TAKE THE UTMOST CARE OF EVERY TARPAULIN.

It is, the Commissioners feel, scarcely necessary to elaborate upon the seriousness of the position confronting the Department. It is unprecedented, and can only be successfully overcome by the sincere resolution of every railwayman concerned to refrain from any act or neglect that might result in the slightest damage to a tarpaulin.

Inexcusable Damage

Strict adherence to a few elementary principles is all that is needed to effect a State-wide improvement in the handling of tarpaulins. For example, tarpaulins are severely torn if forced over the sharp projecting corners of such loading as machinery, cases and seasoned timber. That is inexcusable. This damage can be avoided by the judicious use of padding at the angles.

Prolonged and unnecessary exposure to weather and their use for other than normal purposes are two other very prevalent causes of damage. Again, damaged tarpaulins should not be allowed to remain in service. If a tarpaulin is torn, it should be immediately withdrawn from service and despatched to the Melbourne Goods Superintendent. Repairs can then be made before irreparable damage is caused.

As the Commissioners have clearly stated, it is the duty of all railwaymen concerned to take the utmost care of tarpaulins. They earnestly desire and rely upon a 100 per cent. response to that appeal.

Air Force Chief Was Stationmaster

OF the many past and present Victorian Railwaymen who are playing an important part in the prosecution of the war, the most distinguished is the Chief of the Royal Australian Air Force—Air Vice-Marshal S. J. Goble, C.B.E., D.S.O., D.S.C., Croix de Guerre.

Air Vice-Marshal Goble's brilliantly successful career in aviation began during the Great War of 1914-18.



After eight years in the Victorian Railways culminating in his appointment as a Relieving Station Master, he went overseas in 1915. He secured an appointment in the Royal Naval Air Force, which was later merged into the Royal Air Force.

In recognition of his services in attacking two hostile machines at close range and bringing one of them down, he was in 1916 awarded the D.S.C. Early in 1917, he was awarded the D.S.O. for conspicuous bravery and skill in attacking hostile aircraft on numerous occasions.

As Lieut.-Colonel Goble, he returned to Australia in 1919. Five years later he had the distinction of making the first flight around the Australian coast. For this historic aerial survey he was awarded the Britannia Trophy.

IMPROVED FURNACES SAVING £5000 A YEAR

ALTERATIONS to oil-fired furnaces now under way at the Newport Workshops have already resulted in a reduction of approximately £5,000 a year in the Department's fuel bill, whilst adding to the general efficiency of the shops and also assisting towards the elimination of waste, especially in the case of imported materials.

Following experiment and research, large furnaces have been rebuilt to smaller dimensions and considerable fuel is saved whilst maintaining former outputs—in one notable instance the actual production has been nearly doubled.

Another factor in the savings is a lessened demand for firebricks which now require less frequent replacement owing to the improved distribution of heat in the furnaces. In addition, by using the heat more effectively in the furnace, the surroundings are much cooler and the work has become much more comfortable, especially in summer.

A further example of economical operation is a furnace with a "hot" end and a "cool" end; the former for hardening steel by the direct heat from the burner and the latter for tempering steel in the relatively cool gas blown from the "hot" end.

A newly created oven dries insulation blocks for locomotive boilers—previously these were dried by the escaping heat from the old furnaces.

Striking Model Railway Wins Prize

A SCALE model of the Melton railway station—complete with platform, buildings, working signals, level crossing, sidings, crane, stock yard, etc., together with surrounding shops, homes and animal life—was the cynosure of all eyes at the highly successful Models Exhibition at the Melbourne Town Hall last month.

Prepared by members of the Victorian Model Railway Society and occupying a space 40 ft. long and 10 feet deep, this exhibit proved the most fascinating and interesting feature of an Exhibition with rail, sea, and air transport models estimated to be worth £75,000. It won the "T. S. Nettlefold" Cup for the best display.

Over tracks of 1½ in. gauge, with ballast, sleepers and other track appurtenances, replicas of "The Overland"; the Mildura train; a petrol electric rail motor; and a mixed train—each complete in every external detail—presented a series of movements carried out daily at the Melton station. The trains were electrically propelled, power being picked up from a centre rail.

Melton is a crossing station, and to allow "The Overland" to sweep through at surprising speed, the rail motor and the mixed train drew into the station platform, and then, with signals working in accordance with strict safeworking principles, moved into No. 2 road.

The movements were heightened by appropriate sound effects. The whole of the operations and the setting could be likened to the diminutive impression obtained from an aeroplane at great height.

In addition to this display, there were many other models of Victorian and overseas locomotives, including a very fine scale model of an early Hobson's Bay Railway locomotive presented to the Department by Professor W. N. Kernot.

* * *

To members of the Victorian Model Railway Society and others associated with the Exhibition, the "News Letter" extends warmest congratulations on a very fine achievement.

Popularity of "Spirit of Progress" Maintained

"S" CLASS LOCOMOTIVES' GRAND WORK

PREDICTIONS that "Spirit of Progress" would be a traffic-builder have been amply fulfilled. In the first year of operation—commencing from its inauguration on November 23, 1937—the train carried 209,000 passengers, or 28,000 more than were carried by the former Sydney Limited during the preceding 12 months.

Since then, public patronage has risen even further. The figures for the second year ending on November 22 last reveal a total of 222,371 passengers carried—an advance of 13,223 on the already highly satisfactory result during 1937-38.

This striking evidence of the popularity of the train is not surprising, and bears out the soundness of the undertaking. Without a doubt, "Spirit of Progress" ranks with the world's finest trains.

The non-stop run in each direction between Melbourne and Albury is a highly important feature of the journey, with 70 m.p.h. as the maximum permissible speed. In maintaining these express runs, the "S"

class locomotives are responsible for outstanding performances.

The quality of the four "S" class locomotives is demonstrated by the fact that since they were placed in service on the Albury line between April, 1928 and November, 1930, and up to November 23 last, they had run an aggregate of 2,243,949 miles.

Mileages Compared

Furthermore, it is interesting to record that 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 yearly mileage of each "S" class locomotive was 59,114, compared with 35,353 by the "A2" class; 32,537 by the "C" class; and 23,531 by the "X" class.

Reclamation Drive Yielding Results

ACTIVE steps in the reclamation field by the Stores Standardization Committee continue to yield substantial benefits to the Department. As announced in last month's issue, the Commissioners, on the outbreak of war, directed the Committee to concentrate on questions dealing with substitutes, salvage and reclamation.

As an instance of the long-range view adopted by the Committee, it is appropriate to mention that plans have been made to guard against a possible stoppage of supplies from overseas of locomotive speed recorder charts.

Not Locally Made

No plant is available in Australia for the successful manufacture of these charts, and if the war is prolonged and it ultimately becomes necessary to do so, reclamation of the existing charts can be undertaken.

Investigations by the Committee show that by washing the surface of the used chart, the indicator markings can be readily removed without destroying the surface coating. Already, reclaimed charts have been subjected to surface tests with satisfactory results.

Shop Early—Post Early Travel Between 10 and 4

RAILWAYMEN generally are urged to co-operate to ensure the complete success of the campaign exhorting people to "SHOP EARLY—POST EARLY—TRAVEL BETWEEN 10 AND 4."

Crowded streets and shops prove an endurance test for staffs and customers, particularly at Christmas time. By shopping before the last-minute rush you have the leisure to make a better selection.

By posting early, there is the assurance that your Christmas mail and presents will be received before Christmas—when they are most appreciated by the recipients. Moreover, early posting helps greatly in easing the strain on the Postmaster-General's Department.

Trains Congested

Peak period suburban rail traffic is unnecessarily aggravated by the exodus of shoppers from the city. The increased demand for accommodation on trains already heavily laden with workers causes discomfort which can be easily avoided.

Many thousands of people travelling in the off-peak periods have the benefit of reduced fares amounting to little more than single fare for a return journey. Off peak tickets are issued on Mondays to Fridays inclusive (Public Holidays excepted) to Melbourne from outer-suburban stations and stations on electrified lines beyond the suburban area.

These tickets are available for travel by trains timed to arrive at Flinders Street or Princes Bridge not earlier than 10 a.m. and to depart on return not later than 4.30 p.m. The minimum fares are: 1st class, 1/-; 2nd class, 9d.

HIGHLIGHTS OF NEW TOURIST BUREAU

Conveniently Located In Heart Of City

SITUATED at 272 Collins Street, Melbourne — on "The Block" between Swanston and Elizabeth Streets—in a more prominent position to cope with the rapidly expanding tourist business.

Comprises all modern aids for the efficient conduct of a travel and accommodation service unrivalled elsewhere in Australia.

Railway Booking and General Tourist Enquiry Counters flank a spacious ground-floor Hall 146 feet long and 33½ feet wide (see picture in page 1). Ticket cabinets (of most modern railway design), counters and panelling typify the outstanding beauty of Australian timbers.

Above the General Enquiry Counter is a striking mural decoration, covering a panel of 900 sq. feet, portraying the dramatic advance in road, rail, sea and air transport—the services catered for by the Bureau. Large photographic images of a modern train, motor car, ship and aeroplane contrast vividly with representations of the earliest of these forms of transport. This mural is a unique decorative design, and is attracting widespread attention.

In the Booking and Enquiry Hall a novel floor covering features representations of Australian animals copied from aboriginal drawings which have been found in caves in Central Australia.

Modern lighting systems enhance the general appearance of the Bureau. Concealed lighting behind the glass panelled ceiling supplements daylight during dull periods. Fluorescent lighting is employed over the Railway Booking Counter. The combination of pale blue and gold colours approximates very closely to daylight, providing ideal conditions for patrons and the staff.

An innovation is a Visitors' Lounge on the mezzanine floor. Roomy, quiet and restful, the Lounge features modern furnishings, including two writing tables. From the wide window of the Lounge visitors overlook the life of Collins Street.

The equipment includes an automatic telephone exchange, providing for an internal network of telephones to all parts of the premises. Direct lines are provided to a number of leading city travel organizations. The Bureau's telephone number is F.0404.

FORMER RAILMAN NOW HOLDS BIG NEWSPAPER JOB

In railway circles there will be pleasure at the news that Mr. Richard Hughes, a former Victorian Railwayman, is occupying the important position of Chief-of-Staff of Australia's newest Sunday newspaper which was published in Sydney last month.

Mr. Hughes will be widely remembered as a former general writer and Editor of "The Victorian Railways Magazine"—and later Editor of "The V.R. News Letter." At the time he left the Department in 1933, he was Assistant Publicity Officer in which post his all-round literary ability was a powerful factor in the comprehensive publicity media employed by the Department.

His first journalistic appointment was with "The Star," Melbourne, and from the outset, as roundsman and special writer, he began to fulfil the most sanguine expectations. His subsequent advancement in the newspaper sphere has been unusually rapid.

Four years ago he accepted an appointment as a Sub-editor on the Sydney "Daily Telegraph," of which newspaper he is now Deputy Chief-of-Staff.

While with that newspaper he has carried out many important news assignments, including one to New Zealand to write syndicated articles on a crime mystery which created world-wide interest.

Before his departure from Melbourne, Mr. Hughes was prominent in debating affairs. For two successive years he was the Victorian Debating Champion.

Mr. J. Southam's Death

WITH the recent death of Mr. James Southam there passes a railwayman whose capacity and kindly personality won for him permanent affection throughout the service. His death occurred soon after retiring from the position of Chairman, Board of Discipline, to which post he was appointed in 1934.

For all but four of his 48 years in the Department, Mr. Southam was associated with the Claims Agent's Division. Two years in the Melbourne Goods Sheds and two years as Secretary to one of the Commissioners preceded his transfer to the Claims Agent's office where he began a close and long association with the late Mr. H. W. Hawkeswood, Claims Agent.

In 1914 he succeeded Mr. Hawkeswood.

V. R. I. Debaters' Virile President

BOTH as an office-bearer and an active debater, Mr. C. W. Sandford, of the Electrical Engineering Branch, is a tower of strength to the Victorian Railways Institute's Debating Club.



A member of the Club since its inauguration several years ago, Mr. Sandford is now the President, and during the past 12 months he has applied himself with enthusiasm and vigour in promoting the Club's interests. As a debater, he made Club history this year. He won two of the cups donated by the Club—one for the best impromptu speech and the other for scoring the greatest number of points in any three debates.

In addition he shared first place in the competition for Prepared Speeches. As befits such a progressive organization, the V.R.I. Debating Club holds an annual Christmas Social, and with Mr. Sandford in the forefront of the arrangements, the forthcoming function at the Institute, Melbourne, on Saturday, December 9, looks like excelling all previous efforts.

SPLendid "GET-TOGETHER" CLUB AT GEELONG

If the expectations of the 20 committeemen of the Geelong Railwaymen's Picnic are realized there will be very few local railwaymen and their families outside of Queenscliff on Sunday, December 10. That is the day of their now celebrated annual Picnic which was attended last year by over 1,000 people.

Two special trains will take this army of excited pleasure-seekers from Geelong to Queenscliff where a big sporting and general entertainment program will enable everyone to participate.

For the children there will be ice cream, soft drinks and toys, while trophies will be awarded to the winners of the various foot-running events.

At present there are about 300 railwaymen from Geelong and surrounding districts in the Club. Members pay 6d. per fortnight for about 11 months of the year, the resultant fund paying all expenses of the Picnic, including transportation.

The Committee, of which Mr. D. Robertson, Guard, and Mr. J. Cannon, Guard, are President and Secretary respectively, are deservedly enthusiastic about the rapid success of the Picnic since it began only five years ago. Nevertheless, they feel that more local railwaymen should join.

"The Picnic offers a grand day's outing, especially for the children," said Mr. Cannon. "We look forward to increasing our active membership to over 700—the potential railway strength of Geelong and surrounding areas."

FIRST AID STRENGTH STILL BELOW NEEDS

NINETEEN hundred and thirty-nine has been one of the most successful years in the history of the Department's ambulance movement," said Mr. V. E. Southwood (Ambulance Officer) in a review of the year's operations up to November.

When the results of the first aid examinations for the full year are available the number of employees qualifying will show a substantial improvement on last year's figures.

"At the same time," Mr. Southwood stated, "the number of first aid certificate holders is still much below essential requirements. The number of railwaymen, particularly those associated with train running, qualified in first aid can—and must—be increased."

Hardly a day passes without some striking illustration of the value of first aid in emergencies, he said. Recently, a pedestrian was knocked down by a motor car in a city street. On a tram car passing at the moment was a qualified first aid man.

The victim was bleeding profusely, and rushing to the scene and quickly summing up the man's desperate plight, the first aider maintained digital pressure until the arrival of the Civil Ambulance when a tourniquet was applied. Doctors later stated that this prompt action saved the man's life . . .

December Birthdays

FIREMAN W. V. Owens, of Ferntree Gully, and Machinist E. L. Paroissien, of Printing Divn., on the first; Stn. Master J. G. Henderson, of Warrenheip, and Carpenter B. F. Esposito, of Bendigo, on the second; Engr. R. Cannington, of H.O., on the fourth; Clerk J. A. Furnell, of Tpn. Bch., on the fifth; Blacksmith E. Duffy, of Spotswood, on the seventh; Labr. J. Wallace, of Ballarat, and Storeman C. E. Davies, of Nth. Melb. Ptg. Divn., on the eighth; Striker D. S. Simpson, of Newpt., and Clerk J. J. Meares, of Room 2, on the ninth; Senr. Skd. Labr. W. A. McLeod, of Echuca, on the 11th; Draughtsman E. W. Hammett, of H.O., Senr. Inspector of Ironwork T. E. Clarke, of Nth. Melb., and Parcel Porter R. J. Smith, of Mildura, on the 12th; Engine Drvr. R. J. Matheson, of Nth. Melb. Loco., on the 13th; Asst. Engr. L. A. Seedsman, of H.O., and Fitter R. J. Crowe, of Spotswood, on the 14th; Repr. J. Jenkins, of Glen Iris, on the 15th; Labr. T. E. Peel, of Nth. Melb. Loco., and Machinist T. Scrivenger, of Ptg. Divn., on the 16th; Bricklayer J. McCall, of Wangaratta, and Elec. Mech. D. J. Sullivan, of Spencer St., on the 18th; No. Taker R. B. Groves, of Seymour, Fireman C. W. McQueen, of Geelong, and Foreman Painter H.S. Love, of Jolimont W'shops, on the 19th; Dining Car Services Manager C. J. Ramsay, and Ganger T. Edwards, of Mornington, on the 20th; Fireman J. D. McCarthy, of Ararat, on the 23rd; Clerk P. Hoinville, of Yarraville Goods, Labr. H. Summers, of Geelong, and Train Examiner J. Moore, of Benalla, on the 24th; Clerk T. J. Leonard, of Seymour, on the 25th; Fireman H. Norris, of Bendigo, on the 26th; Repr. P. Fleming, of Hawthorn, and Fitter's Asst. J. Reilly, of Newpt. W'shops, on the 27th; Subn. Guard H. F. Miskan, of Ringwood, on the 28th; and Clerk T. J. Jones, of H.O., on the 31st. —L.T.L.

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