

# PICNICS *at* THE FALLS

*A History of the Lal Lal Racecourse  
and its Railway*

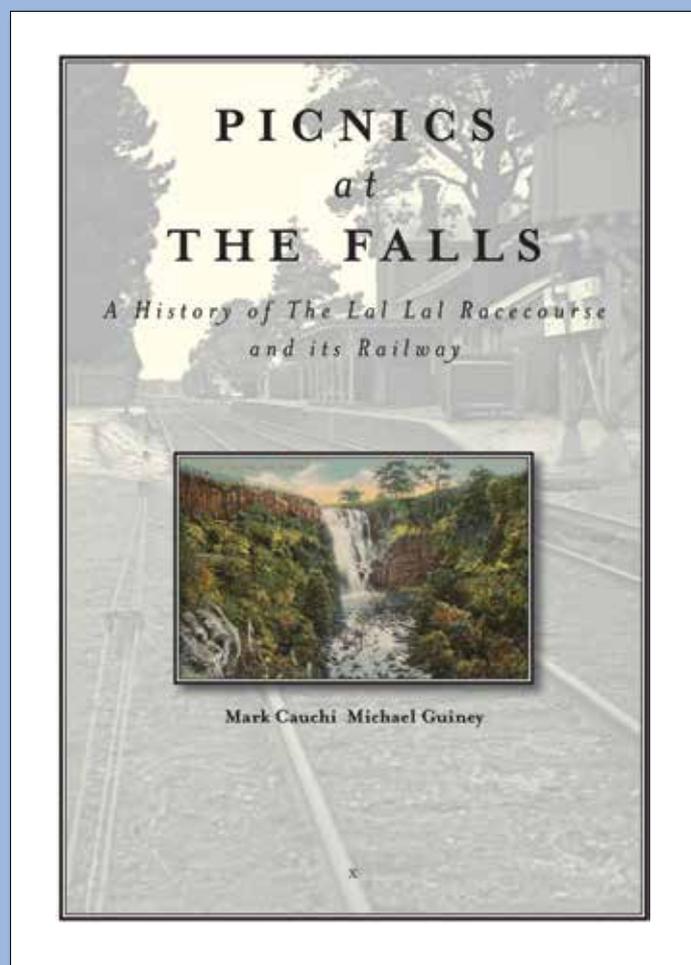
**Mark Cauchi and Michael Guiney**

**T**he New Year's Day races at the Lal Lal Falls Racecourse was for many years one of the most popular holiday events in the colony of Victoria. The picturesque falls nearby was the natural attraction and the race meeting at its peak during the late 1880s, drew in excess of 30,000 holiday-makers to this scenic and remote location.

There was no other activity that found such a universal attraction – horse racing was indeed a community affair and it played an important role in bringing people together, especially in rural areas. The local races became a meeting place where friends and family could share a day out and so public holidays became synonymous with key picnic race meetings. The annual New Year's Day meeting at Lal Lal Falls was a typical Australian holiday festival happily combining these national tastes for racing and picnicking.

Built as part of the famous Railway Construction Act of 1884, the branch line railway that served this racecourse was at one stage said to be the most profitable in the colony. This is the story of how a fledgling race meeting became the Melbourne Cup of the country and the role the railway played in its popularity and success. It is also the story of how the racing club committee took their success and well-deserved reputation for granted which, when challenged by rival attractions, resulted in the gradual decline and demise of the racing club, their annual race meeting and the branch railway.

Picnics at the Falls is the second in a series of new railway histories from Mark Cauchi and Michael Guiney combining serious railway research and relevant social and local history. It is a superbly written, definitive history of the Lal Lal Falls, the racecourse, and its branch line railway. *Continued* →



The book, professionally designed, contains 88 pages of meticulously-researched history printed on 150 gsm Satin art paper and includes 64 black and white photos and diagrams. The full-coloured cover is printed on 300 gsm satin stock, with a gloss cello sheen laminate.

Copies of the book are available directly from the authors at the price of \$48.00 plus \$10.00 handling and shipping to locations within Australia. To purchase multiple copies, please enquire for a specific shipping price. If you would also like a copy of the authors' first book in the series, *The Bungaree Racecourse Railway*, we are offering both books at the special package price of \$62.00 plus \$15.00 handling and shipping to locations within Australia.

Orders can be placed by sending an email request OR by completing and posting the request form on this flyer OR by contacting either of the authors by phone. All books will be mailed to purchasers by Registered Post.

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