



Eyre Peninsula Railway Preservation Society Inc.

PO Box 2736, Port Lincoln SA 5606

NEWSLETTER

August 2015

EYRE PENINSULA RAILWAYMEN AT WAR

For the Museum's contribution to this year's SA History Festival a major display was prepared, honouring those EP railwaymen who served in the First World War, the Second World War, Korea and Vietnam.

The centrepiece of the display features two honour rolls. One was created by local railwaymen after the First World War and is part of the Museum's archive collection. The second honour roll was prepared for the display, and lists those who served in subsequent wars. Many service records are included as part of the display.

The official opening was on 19 April, and Mrs Dorothy Hicks (sister of one of the railwaymen who paid the ultimate price) very graciously performed the opening. A large crowd was present, including many from the families of those who served.



Our thanks go to John McGeever and Les Walter for the countless hours they spent in preparing the display.

Mrs Hicks unveiling the display (above), and visitors in the display room on the opening day (left).

GRAIN LUMPERS' STORY

One of the most physically demanding jobs imaginable was the handling of bagged grain in the days before bulk handling. The strength and endurance needed to be a lumper were almost unbelievable, and people today find it hard to comprehend just how amazing the feats of these men were.

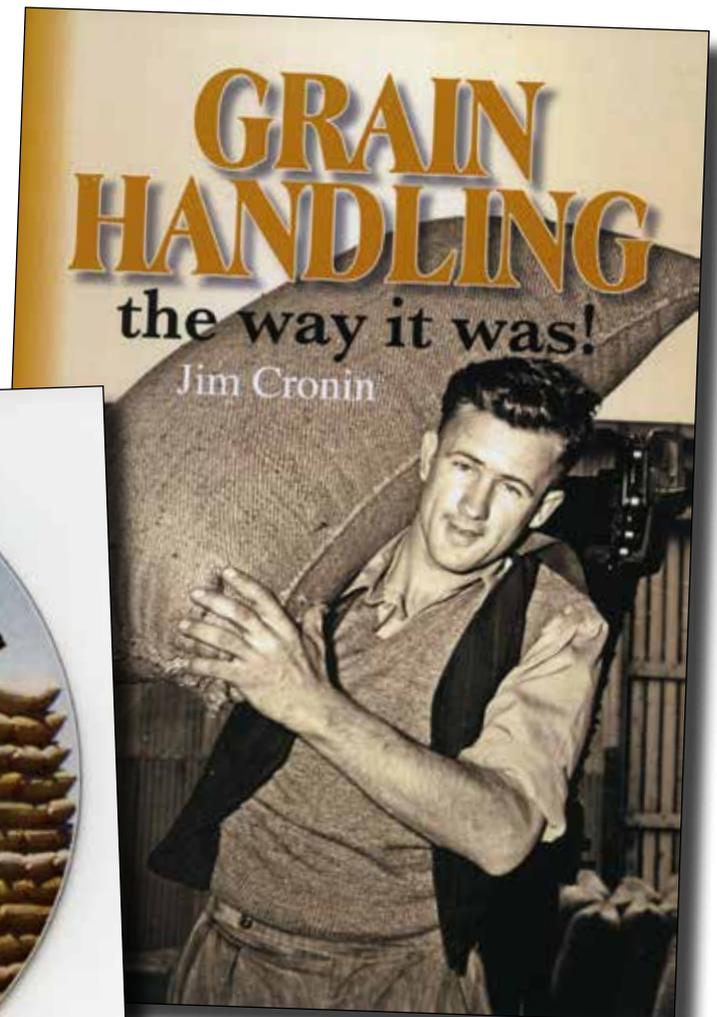
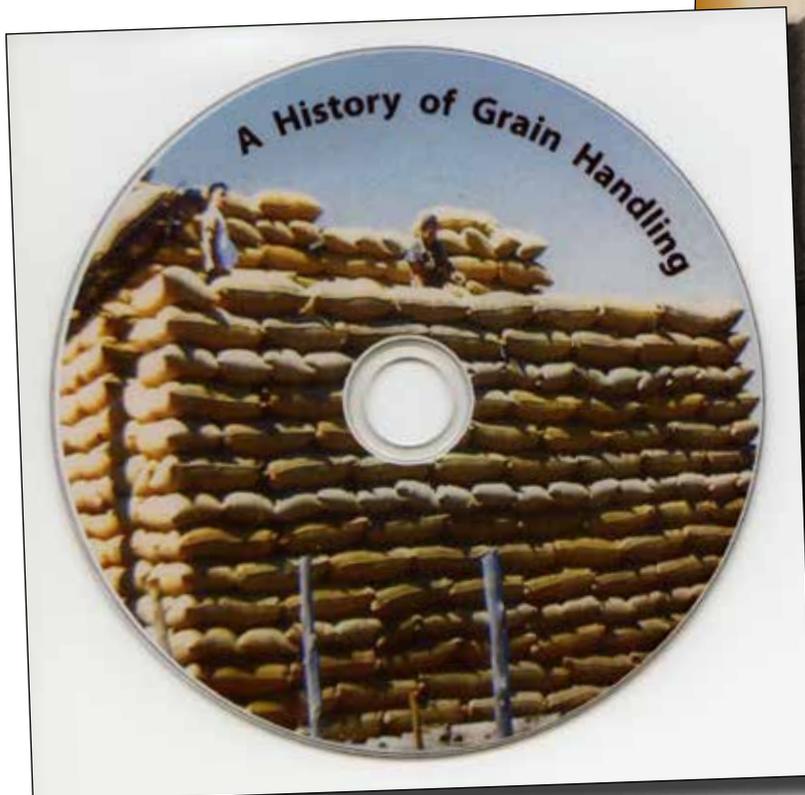
South Australia was the last state to introduce bulk handling, making the transition in the 1960s. Jim Cronin had the foresight to take some colour movie film of bag sewing, stack building and stack outloading to rail. We are incredibly fortunate that this historically-significant footage has been preserved. Unless we were around at the time, it is only by watching movie footage of the feats performed by Jim and his mates that we can fully grasp just how skilled (and strong) these men were.

The movie footage has been made into a DVD, and is accompanied by a very interesting description of the activities filmed, narrated by the late Don McSweeney.

We have been given permission to show the DVD as part of our bagged grain handling display at the Museum. It has proved to be very popular with our visitors, many of whom sit and watch the whole 20 minutes.

The DVD is a great companion to Jim's book *Grain Handling: the way it was*, which gives an extensive description of the lumper's life. Together they form a fitting tribute to a past era.

We have copies of the DVD and the book available for purchase at the Museum for \$20 each, and will happily post copies to purchasers who can't make it in to the Museum.



PLANS COLLECTION SCANNED

The Museum is very fortunate to have in its archives a large collection of engineering plans and diagrams from the South Australian Railways and Australian National Railways on Eyre Peninsula. Some of these date back as far as the construction of the first railway at Port Lincoln in 1906, and form a unique resource for researchers. Many have handwritten annotations, and these can be just as significant as the original plans as they can describe changes which occurred through the life of the subject entity, and give dates to these changes.

Many of the plans are the only known copies still in existence, and as such the museum has been concerned for some time at the lack of backup copies. There is also the issue of accelerated deterioration of the originals when handled for research or display. Scanning of the plans to make digital copies is the obvious solution, with the copies backed up off site and also available for researchers.

Scanning of the plans was not a straightforward matter, as the size of them required a large format scanner. Purchase of such a device is beyond the Museum's resources, and in any case it would not be needed on completion of the project. We applied for a History SA grant to rent a suitable scanner for six weeks to scan the historically-significant plans in the collection, and were delighted when our application was successful.

Over six weeks a total of 1,300 scans were completed. This total included the majority of the plans from the archive drawers in the reading room, and a number of other documents which are larger than A3 size and thus difficult to scan with readily-available equipment.

We now have digital copies (and a backup) of the irreplaceable plans in our collection, ensuring the detail in them will not be lost if a disaster occurs.



The scanner and the laptop computer which controls it, set up in the Museum's reading room.

FROM THE ARCHIVES – SAR's PROPOSED LIME SAND LINE

BHP's heavy haul 'tramway' from their Coffin Bay limesands mine to their Proper Bay terminal and jetty is well known. It operated from 1966 to 1989. All track has been lifted, and the remaining rolling stock and facilities at Proper Bay are likely to disappear in the near future as the site is redeveloped.

What is not well known is that when the limesands project was first proposed in 1961, the SAR expected that they would build and operate a new branch line to haul the limesands to the existing bulk handling facilities at Brennen's Jetty in Port Lincoln.

The SAR Mechanical Branch proposed using a 930 class diesel-electric for this line. The 930s were a broad gauge 1800 HP loco, twice the power of the 830s. A narrow gauge version was offered by the builder.

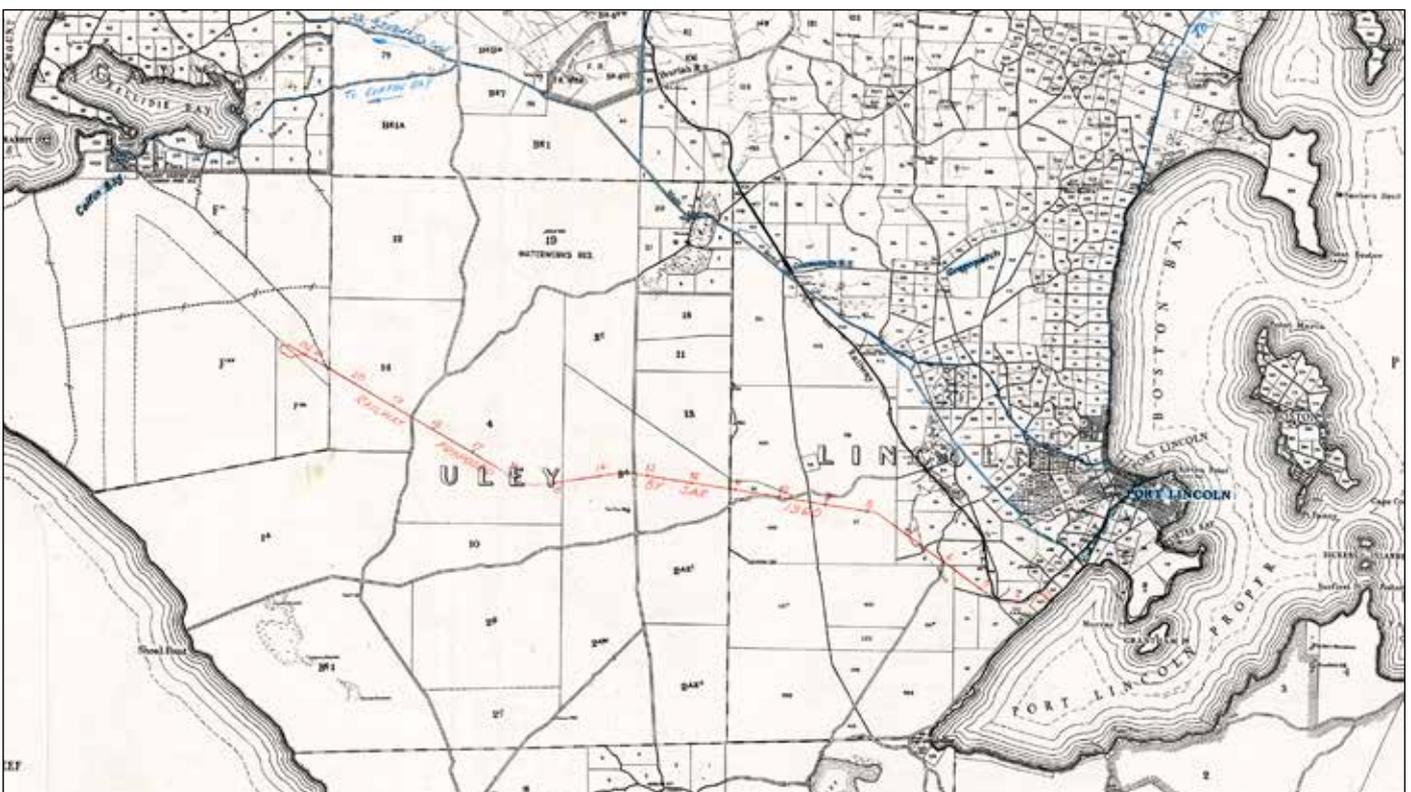
The SAR also conducted discharge flow tests. An HFN hopper was filled with the limesand, and hauled to Duck Ponds Creek where the train stopped with the hopper wagon on the bridge. The load was dumped through the bridge framework so that the

flow characteristics of the material could be assessed by technical staff.

Until recently the proposed route of the new line was not known. Earlier this year the Museum carried out a scanning project on our plans collection (*see previous page*), and a hand annotated plan of the route came to light. This is shown below (route in red).

The new line would have diverged from the existing main line at 3¼ miles from Port Lincoln, just past the GPD. It would parallel the main line but at a lower level, avoiding much of the climb up Northside Hill. The line would diverge just before Grantham and travel in a WNW direction to the mine site. A balloon loop was to be provided at the mine. The distance from Port Lincoln to the mine would be 21¼ miles (34¼ km).

History tells us that the Government and BHP came to an arrangement for BHP to build their own line, and the opportunity for the SAR to build a new branch line and run a heavy locomotive on Eyre Peninsula faded into the realm of 'what might have been'.



THE LIGHTER SIDE: 'CURSE THE RESIDENT ENGINEER'

This is another story from the collection of the late Norm Hann, a former SAR steam driver. Twenty of his wonderful narratives have been donated to the Museum by David Richardson, who fired for Norm in the Murraylands.

Nine hours working on the engine, nine off resting, monotonous scenery, low sandhills running parallel east and west. These hills of red sand are covered with sparse spinifex grass and whipstick mallee.

Hot dusty days, followed by cold chilly nights.

With very few embankments of cuttings, the railway tracks follow the contours of these sand-hills. At most times the train is traversing two or more of these sand-hills at the same time, causing a run in and out of slack between the couplings which was hard to control, causing the brake and relay van to be moving either slow or very fast in just a few yards of travel.

As much as possible the crews avoided cooking or eating whilst travelling between Kimba and Darke Peak because it was almost impossible to stand upright over these sections, known as the switchbacks by the railway blokes.

One day it came about that Len and Mudrock had to cook while travelling over this section and Len passed a remark to Mudrock to the effect that the railways didn't go to much expense when they laid this piece of track.

M u d r o c k replied, "Well Len at least we have the satisfaction of knowing that the fellow who surveyed this railroad knows exactly what we think of it". So, he related in detail about the time back

in the early days, when the Resident Engineer was travelling over these switchbacks in the relay van with the crew.

The fireman had just completed a masterpiece of juggling and ballet dancing, managing to cook a meal without spilling his food, placed it on the table, turned towards the stove to add hot water to his coffee when the van jerked almost to a stop and picked up to approximately twenty miles per hour in just over a few yards, upsetting his hot meal all over the floor. The fireman threw his coffee on the floor to join the rest of his meal, raised his voice in anger and said "The fellow that designed this bloody railroad ought to have it jammed up his bloody so-and-so".

The Resident Engineer looked up and in his very English voice, replied "You must think I have a very accommodating backside".

The track profile between Darke Peak and Kimba is still much the same as it was in the 1960s. At least now there are no brakevans to torture the crews. This May 2014 view shows an empty grain train leaving Waddikee, bound for Kimba.

Peter Knife



PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

It is with pleasure that I present this report on the activities of the Society for 2014/15.

Our major project for the year was the Eyre Peninsula Railwaymen at War display for History Month 2015. John McGeever put in countless hours researching the details, and arranged for the preparation of an honour board for Eyre Peninsula railwaymen who served in the Second World War, Korean War and Vietnam War. This board is now a companion for the First World War honour board which was created by EP railwaymen, probably eighty or more years ago. Les Walter supported John right through the process, helping track down material and preparing service records for the display. We are greatly indebted to both men for their efforts. The official opening a week before Anzac Day was very well attended. Mrs Dorothy Hicks, sister of one of the Second World War railwaymen who gave his life in the war, was the guest of honour performing the opening.

To provide a suitable display area for the Railwaymen at War display, it was decided that the Porters Room should become a dedicated display room. We are grateful to Les Walter for agreeing to give up his work area for this purpose. The walls were patched up and the room painted, then proper display lighting installed on a suspended track around the room. This has improved the display area immensely.

We took the opportunity of having electrical work done to fix a couple of other issues, especially the provision of proper lighting in the toilet.

Another significant project was the scanning of most of the Museum's collection

of engineering plans and diagrams. We were fortunate to receive a History SA grant to cover the rental of a large format scanner, and the work was completed over a six week period with 1,330 items scanned. We now have a digital backup of these historically-significant items, and the scans can be accessed for research instead of the originals to minimize the risk of damage and deterioration.

There were two significant additions to the freight shed displays this year. A small bag elevator was donated, and John McGeever put together a blacksmith's forge display which has proved very popular with visitors.

At the station, we were very fortunate to be given permission to set up a rolling display of Jim Cronin's bagged grain handling DVD. This runs for about 20 minutes, and has attracted much interest with many visitors watching the full video.

Admission prices for adults and concessions were raised slightly during the year, the first increase for ten years. Attendances have been down a little on previous years, in part because we are only open two days per week, but the increase has meant that our income from this source has remained fairly constant.

We were delighted to welcome Des Wiseman as a regular volunteer for opening the museum. I thank Des and the other regulars – Bob Prout, Don Atkinson, Trevor Hoskin, John McGeever, Murray Wright and Maggie Knife – for their valuable contribution to keeping the doors open. And to the whole Committee, I thank you for your support and participation in another worthwhile year.

Peter Knife

*Do you enjoy tinkering with machinery? Doing handyman jobs? Talking to visitors? Searching documents and books for historical details? **Whatever your interest, we can use your skills!** Volunteering for just a few hours a month would be a valuable contribution to the museum and the community.*

FIRST EXPORT WHEAT SHIP AT PORT LINCOLN

The first ship to load export wheat at Port Lincoln was the French barque *Emilie Galline*. It arrived on 2 April 1909, and the event was so significant that the town put on a civic reception for the Captain and officers of the ship eight days later:

First Wheat Ship at Lincoln.

WELCOME TO OFFICERS.

The residents of Lincoln tendered a welcome to the Captain and Officers of the French ship "Emilie Galline," on Wednesday evening last. About 50 gentlemen, representative of all interests of the town and district, met in the Council Hall to do honor to the occasion. The building was artistically arranged with flags, conspicuous among them were the English and French Ensigns hung together. A light repast was provided, and other things that "maketh the heart glad," and from the enthusiasm manifest throughout the proceedings there were many hearts glad that night. The Flinders Brass Band discoursed some pleasing melodies outside the Hall previous to the commencement of the social.

Mr J. D. Bruce, who occupied the chair, in a few brief remarks stated the purport of the meeting, and the pleasure it gave them to welcome the officers of the first wheat ship to their Port. He apologised for the absence of several prominent townsmen.

The toasts of "Our King" and "The President of the French Republic" were drunk with musical honors.

As was customary on such occasions, further toasts were proposed and responded to eloquently, including to The Captain, The Officers, The Town and District, The Ladies, The Visitors, The Press and The Chairman. Those still coherent then sang *Auld Lang Syne*.

Tragedy struck the very next day though:

FATAL ACCIDENT AT LINCOLN.— While working in the hold of the *Emilie Galline* unloading ballast, in the early part of last week, a stone fell from the basket about 50 feet striking a sailor named Charles Ligour on the head. The unfortunate man who was at once found to be seriously injured was conveyed to the hospital where he died early on Thursday morning. The funeral took place on Friday at 8 a.m. The captain officers and men marched from the hospital—the coffin being covered with the french flag—to the Roman Catholic Church. Here prayers were offered by the assemblage for their dead comrade after which the cortege proceeded to the cemetery. The Rev. Father Kelly officiated at the Church and grave. The full name of the deceased was Charles Marie Ligour. This regrettable accident has been the subject of many sympathetic expressions from the townspeople.

The townsfolk later erected a headstone to honour the sailor, and in 2013 a replica plaque was added to the grave.



First export wheat ship at Port Lincoln

A return function was hosted on the ship at a later date, with the Flinders Brass Band headlining an evening which was a fund-raiser for local charities. Musical items included the *Marsellaise*, with the crew joining in the singing. A wide variety of performers entertained all present (a little like the present-day Port Lincoln Mayor's concert!). Toasts were drunk with 'bumpers of champagne'.

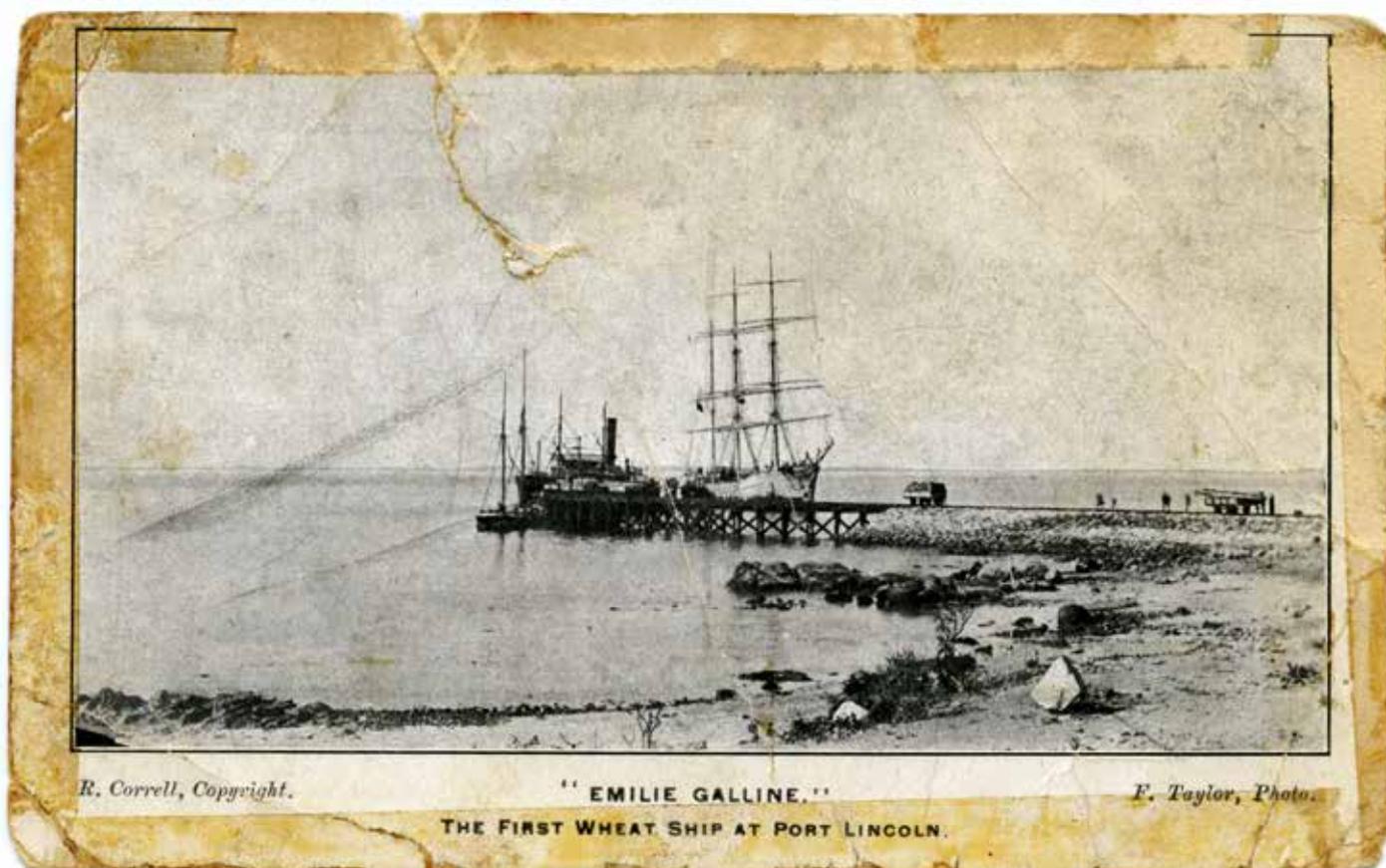
The *Emilie Galline* finally set sail on 14 April 1909. The departure was not uneventful, as described in the article on Page 9.

The newspaper articles are reproduced from the *West Coast Recorder* on 17 March, 14 April and 24 April 1909.

The old postcard reproduced below shows the *Emilie Galline* and one of the coastal ships at the Kirton Point jetty.

Lincoln's First Wheat Ship

The *Emilie Galline*, which arrived in Lincoln in March, completed her loading last Saturday, is timed to leave Boston Bay to-day (Wednesday), for the United Kingdom. It is the intention of the captain, if a fair wind should offer, to sail out of the harbour, otherwise the *Paringa* will tow the ship outside. The *Emilie Galline* takes 27,789 bags of wheat, or a total of 95,597 bushels, a gross tonnage of 2,579 tons. The vessel took in the whole of the cargo alongside—drawing 20 feet forward and 22 feet aft. The loading was commenced on March 11 and finished in 13 days, which is considered fairly smart work. The vessel was loaded by Mr Ross Sharp, for the Farmers' Union, and in the opinion of the captain was very creditably carried out. When she left the jetty the wheat ship had four feet clear water under her. During their stay in Lincoln, Captain Arnaudsizeon and his officers made a host of friends, and many good wishes follow them on their long voyage.



R. Correll, Copyright.

"EMILIE GALLINE."

F. Taylor, Photo.

THE FIRST WHEAT SHIP AT PORT LINCOLN.

First export wheat ship at Port Lincoln

THE EXIT OF THE EMILIE GALLINE.—

After a peaceful sojourn of six weeks in Boston Bay the departure of the French barque on April 14 was marked by an incident that must have caused considerable anxiety to those on board. After the south heads were past, strong winds and a heavy sea were met, but everything went well with the tow by the Paringa until about eight o'clock, when the line broke at the swivel on board the ship. This was not discovered until some little time after, when the steamer put about and came on the Emilie Galline helpless broadside on to the seas. As it was impossible to pick her up, Captain Thompson shouted out directions to the French captain to set his sails and the course to

take. After a time this was done but it is stated that the ship at one time was in dangerous waters near the islands. The Paringa piloted the barque for some hours until Captain Thompson was satisfied she was in open waters. The opinion is generally expressed that the Emilie Galline with a favorable wind might easily have sailed out of the north entrance during the afternoon, and got clear of all the islands in the day. The amount of towage paid by this wheatship while in the harbour and in towing out, amounted to something like £80. While this is not the best possible advertisement for Boston Bay it is hardly likely that future vessels arriving—particularly British—will go to this needless expense.

MEMBERSHIP 2015/16

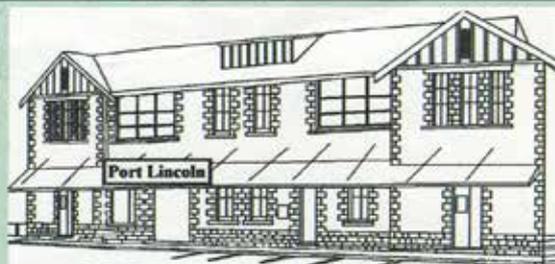
Membership fees for the 2015/16 year are now due – \$10 per member.

If you would like to use direct bank deposit for renewals, the museum's bank account

is: Bendigo Bank, BSB 633-000 and account 136921376 (please include your name in the details).

Eyre Peninsula Railway Preservation Society

Application for membership



name		
postal address		
street address		
town & pc		
phone h & w		
fax		
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e-mail		
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I wish to:
 Receive newsletters by e-mail post

Renew my membership / Become a member
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Forward your payment of \$10 per member to:
Eyre Peninsula Railway Preservation Society
 PO Box 2736
 Port Lincoln SA 5606

Receipt No.
 Date

EPRPS Committee 2015-16

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