



Eyre Peninsula Railway Preservation Society Inc.

PO Box 2736, Port Lincoln SA 5606

NEWSLETTER

March 2022

PORT LINCOLN MUSEUM TRAIL

The four museums in Port Lincoln (Axel Stenross Maritime Museum, Mill Cottage Museum, RSL Museum and our Railway Museum) have co-operated in the past where mutually beneficial situations have arisen. In April 2021 representatives of the four met to discuss taking that co-operation to a new level.

An outstanding collaborative effort led to the launch in September of the **“Port Lincoln Museum Trail”**. The participating museums (with a contribution by the City of Port Lincoln) funded the printing of a supply of brochures, and these are available at the Visitor Information Centre, at each museum, and at selected accommodation venues.



Above: The logo for the Port Lincoln Museum Trail, used on the brochure, signage, and with social media. Each museum has a special stamp matching their symbol in the logo. The design concept was adapted (with permission) from a similar “Museums in the Port” collaboration between four museums in Port Adelaide.



Visitors have their brochure stamped at the first museum they visit, and this entitles them to a \$1 discount per adult at the other three museums. The discount is valid for three months from first stamp.

All participating museums have reported visitors coming in with stamped brochures, and there was a noticeable increase in visitors until Covid closures hit in January. Both Axel Stenross and Mill Cottage were closed for different periods. The Railway Museum has remained open for our regular Wednesdays as well as Sundays in January.

850 DISPLAY SHED PROJECT

This has been a long-drawn-out process, but we are finally seeing progress on site. One of the difficulties has been the need for each task to wait for previous tasks to be completed, and with different organisations involved, the timing has been fraught.

In December the track where the shed is to be erected was upgraded with heavier rail and partial resleepering. We are very grateful to One Rail Australia for generously undertaking this work for us.

January saw the delivery to the site of all the steelwork for the shed. A combination of Covid-related supply chain issues and a boom in the construction industry in Australia pushed this well past the expected timing.



Just over two years ago the Port Lincoln SES undertook a complex training exercise, placing a Viterra bunker tarp over 850 to provide some protection. This needed to be removed before the loco can be moved, and the SES again attended to that task (a much simpler exercise). We really appreciate their help in doing this.



As this is written we are now waiting for Shillabeers' large crane to be available to move the loco and hopper wagon across. After that, Lincoln Steel will be able to undertake the actual erection of the shed. It has been a long time coming, but we're almost there!



Above: The One Rail track crew. See below for names.*

Port Lincoln Crane Service then lifted the traction bogies for 850 across to the shed track for us (the loco is currently sitting on temporary workshops bogies). The bogies for 850 and for the hopper wagon are now in place ready for the "big move".



** Track crew, left to right: Kyron Newchurch, Chris Rogers, Colin Doyman, Lyndon Martin, Rob Stretton and Denham Bailey (supervisor).*

AROUND THE MUSEUM

Underground Tank

Adjacent to the station building is a large concrete underground water tank. It collected runoff from the roof, and provided water for the toilets and washbasins in the building in the years before town water was connected. Neil Lihou recently completed a fence around the tank to discourage people (and vehicles) from going onto the roof of the tank.



The ground around the tank was heavily compacted and presented Neil with a bit of a challenge when installing the posts, but he persevered! Given the historical significance of the tank, an interpretive sign will be placed there for visitors. We have plans in our archive showing how water was pumped from the underground tank to a pressure tank in the ceiling of the building.

Freight Shed Gate

Up to now we have been relying on a section of fishing net to keep birds out of the rolling stock area at the freight shed. The net had to be pulled aside when visitors were present. The net was badly damaged by vandals last year, so we decided that a proper gate was needed. Kevin Couzner fabricated a suitable metal gate and fence assembly and installed it for us, and we thank him for his generous assistance.

Pipe and Cable Locating

As part of the shed project for 850 and the hopper wagon, we needed to locate electrical cabling and water pipes in the vicinity of the shed. Port Lincoln Data & Electrical and Corny's Cabling generously undertook these tasks for us.

Above: Neil Lihou admires his work. The posts and chain have since been painted.

Tourism Grant

Over the Christmas-New Year period the museum's income was well down on the equivalent pre-Covid period, so we qualified for a State Government Covid support grant for tourism entities. This is the only pandemic assistance we have received over the two years apart from funding for hand sanitiser and antiseptic wipes by the SA History Trust in early 2020.

Vandalism

Disappointingly, we have had several cases of vandalism around the museum in recent months. Forced entry at the Freight Shed on 29 December meant that we had to replace two padlocks. Thankfully there was no other damage or theft on this occasion.

A month later a charming person scratched messages in the slate doorsteps of several doors along the road side of the station building. Other messages formed in dust were washed off. Fortunately the scratches were not too deep, and action was taken following advice from Artlab to minimise the damage to the heritage-listed building.

A HAPPY VISITOR

One of the visitors to our museum in September was a lady who had worked in the Superintendent's office upstairs at the railway station. Maxine Sierat (*nee* Hartley) was a telephonist in the 1960s, and was delighted to see her old switchboard which had been relocated downstairs to the museum years ago, after a new PABX was installed.

Maxine recounted how her job was instrumental in her meeting her husband. He was a relieving linesman who worked on the telephone lines at multiple sidings across Eyre Peninsula.

They must have liked each others' voices, as they often chatted (avoiding the Superintendent where possible). Eventually he asked if she could meet him in front of the station one Saturday morning for a 'first date' — and the rest, as they say, is history!



Above: Maxine Sierat points to her name on the underside of the switchboard deck. The names of many switchboard operators over the years are scrawled there, although the practice was officially frowned on.

He applied for a permanent posting at Thevenard in 1968 so that they qualified for a railway cottage, and they stayed there until 1970 when he transferred to Renmark.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Like many volunteer organisations, the EPRPS desperately needs new, preferably younger volunteers, and by 'younger' we mean under 70!

Most of those who previously gave their time to open the museum and to help out with maintenance and preparation of displays are now in the 'aged and infirm' category, and through no fault of their own are no longer active.

Since the enforced Covid closure in 2020 we have only been opening regularly on Wednesdays. We do also open on most Sundays in school holidays, but cannot keep up with two days per week regularly.

Most of our Committee have been with us for years. As you can see from our Newsletters we are continually updating and improving things around the museum, but we really need new people to come in, relieve the load a bit, and add energy and fresh ideas. Our primary needs are:

- people who can attend for one or two afternoons a month (Wednesdays and/or Sundays), and
- computer-literate people to assist with our archive-related backlog and other office-type tasks.

If you know anyone who may be interested, please point them in our direction!

FROM THE ARCHIVES: METTERS STOVE

Metters Stoves

The original patent was filed in Adelaide in 1896. Metters stoves were manufactured from the 1890s to the 1970s, and were used by generations of Australians for heat, food preparation and hot water.

Tucked away in one of the buildings in the museum precinct is an intact example of these classic stoves. The Porters' Room and Yardmaster's Hut stove is a Metters No.2 New Royal style which was bought new by the South Australian Railways in 1913. It has quite a history!



Above: The Metters stove in the crew room at Port Lincoln.

Kimba Crew Barracks 1913-34

The stove was first installed in the kitchen of the barracks which were under construction at Kimba in September 1913, soon after the line opened. Train crew used it for cooking while they were resting between runs.

Port Lincoln Railway Institute Hall 1934-63

New barracks were built at Kimba in 1934. The old building was dismantled (including stove and brick chimney) and relocated to Port Lincoln where it was re-erected in a

different configuration for a staff classroom. It was used by the Railway Institute as a hall and library.

Porters' Room and Yardmaster's Hut 1964

The current building was erected in 1964, and was specifically positioned around the Metters stove and brick chimney from the Institute building. Train crews continued to use this building until the day of the last grain train on 31 May 2019.

The museum plans on using this building as an additional display area once the 850-HAN shed is complete. This will allow visitors to see a prime example of a 1913 Metters stove still where it has been since 1964.

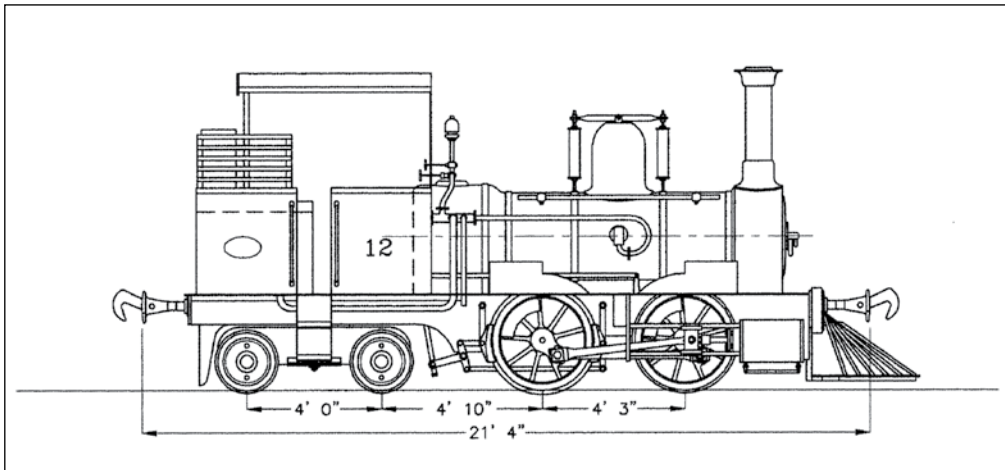


Left: The former crew amenities and Yardmaster's hut at Port Lincoln. Note the brick chimney housing the stove. The chimney and stove date from 1913 in Kimba, and were relocated here in 1934.

EPRPS Office Bearers 2021-22

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V12, the Port Lincoln jetty shunter. Plan drawn by Henry Pattenden.

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