



Issue 33

5th November 2020

Dear all,

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you that I had a call from Ray Parsons this afternoon to inform me that Sheila passed away at 3.00 pm. Many of you will have fond memories of enjoying many Wednesday summer afternoons with Sheila and I am sure you will all join me in passing on our sympathy to Ray and his family at this sad time.



Keep Safe everyone.

Mike W

Brief club house NEWS

The club house roof is very close to completion, the flat roof areas have been finished and all that is remaining is to finish off the tiling that was held back until the flat roofs had been finished.



It is hoped the rest will finish by Friday 6th Nov.

The flat roofer had ordered a skip to take away the old roofing material and we have taken the opportunity to fill the empty space he left with the concrete lumps dug up when replacing the old jungle fence.

I spoke with Hazel on Monday and Norman, who had been in intensive care, had just moved back onto a ward and was progressing well. Hazel had sent last week's Wharfedale addition for Norman to read in hospital.

With the government's latest Covid-19 restrictions now in place the committee has electronically communicated and we feel we have no choice but to cease all activities, other than security checks, until the next government's announcement is made,

Thanks as always to the security team.

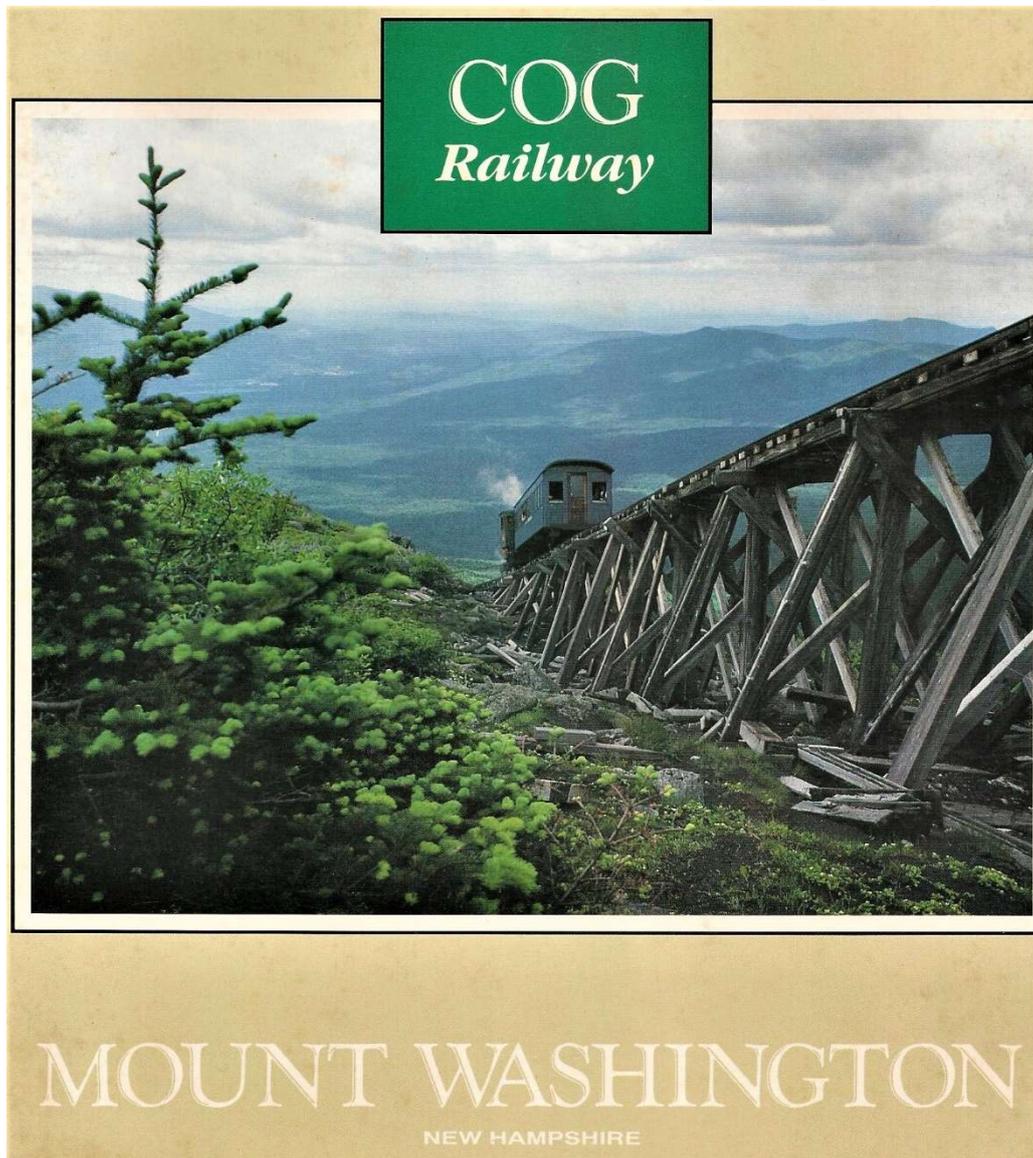
Mike W.

Mike P's musings No.31

Being locked down again, we have plenty of time to reminisce and perhaps appreciate the freedom we always took for granted before.

Back in the late 1990's, I worked each autumn in Canada and New England, and I loved it! New England had nice people, not as loud or zany as Americans on the west coast, and beautiful scenery and cool autumn temperatures. I always tried to incorporate interesting morning stops on my tours, rather than just pulling up with all the other coaches at a service centre with just Macdonald's, or a "Wendy's".

Although strictly on a "leaf peeking" tour, I seldom failed to fit in a few railway visits, claiming essential interest or suitable toilet facilities (always a good one, that!). One of my favourite (although strictly rather too early) mid-morning stop's was at the base station of the Mount Washington cog railway.



We had stayed overnight, at nearby North Conway, New Hampshire, and drove up through Crawford notch (notch is an American word for a mountain pass). Just a short detour off of the main highway brought us to the Marshfield base station of the cog railway. The base station was at 2,569 feet above sea level in the famous White Mountains.

Our luxury tour bus, in those days, was an old MCI (Motor coach industries) hired from Brown's coachlines. If you have ever watched an American movie and seen the greyhound buses of the 70's and 80's, you know what I mean. Getting to 2,500 feet above sea level in one of these old "grinders", with 44 passengers and luggage for a 2 week tour, took some doing! Anyway, I digress. I always tried to make the base station soon after 9am, and definitely before 9.30am when the first train left for the summit.

The Mount Washington cog railway has the distinction of being the world's first cog, a great reason for diverting from my tour route! It also had, at that time, a new museum and coffee shop on two levels with clean modern toilet facilities, another plus for senior citizens who had had far too many refills at breakfast an hour previously!

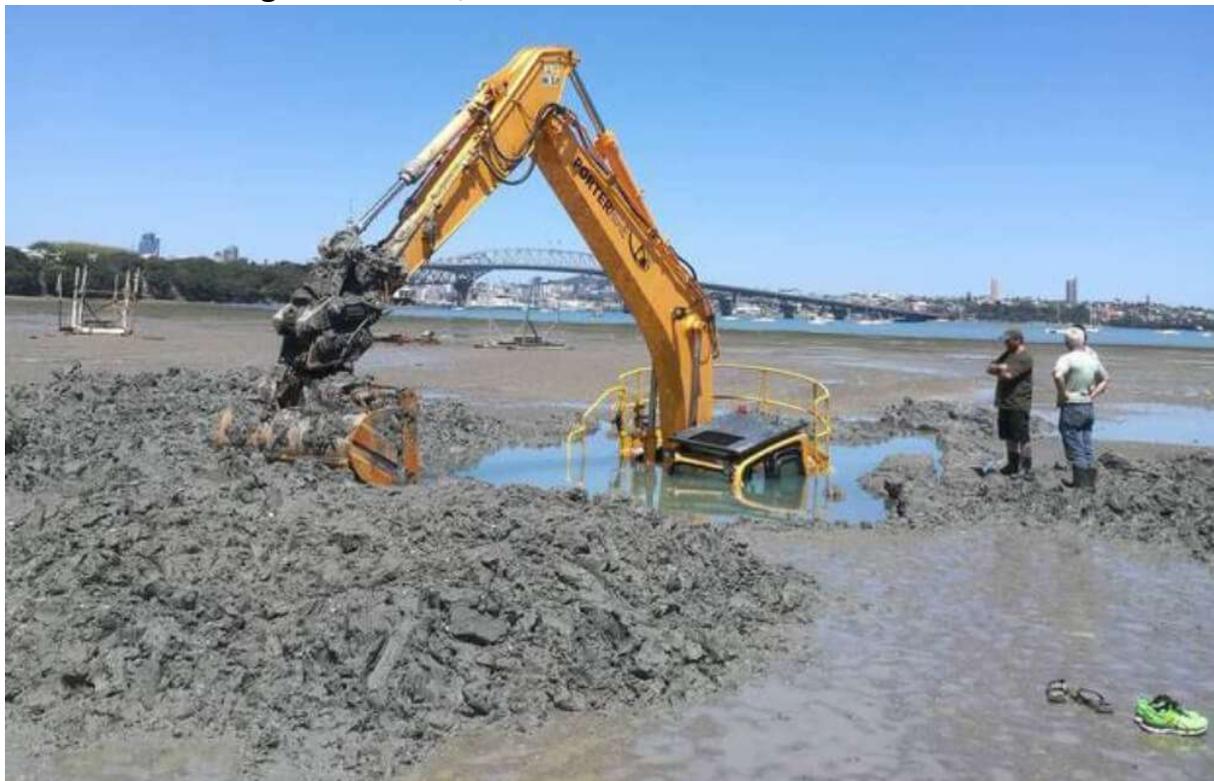
Soon after 9am, the quaint little engines with tilted boilers were manoeuvring around the semi derelict track-work in the yard, hooking up to the single coaches and getting ready to take their passengers to the summit, 1 hour away,(including a stop for water en route). Sometimes, there were as many as 4 or 5 of them getting prepared and spreading thick acrid smoke from their spark arrestor chimneys, all over the car park. Very atmospheric!



It's a 3 hour round trip to the top and back, so there was no way I ever got to go up! We were always on a fairly tight schedule and had to watch our drivers' driving hours, so that we didn't get stranded, with him "out of hours", before reaching our nightly destination. Anyway, we never left this particular morning stop until 9.45am, by which time the first train had departed and fought its way up over the first set of wooden trestles in a glorious cloud of steam and smoke! Nothing environmentally friendly about it, but very spectacular! I miss those days! TBC.

Mike. P

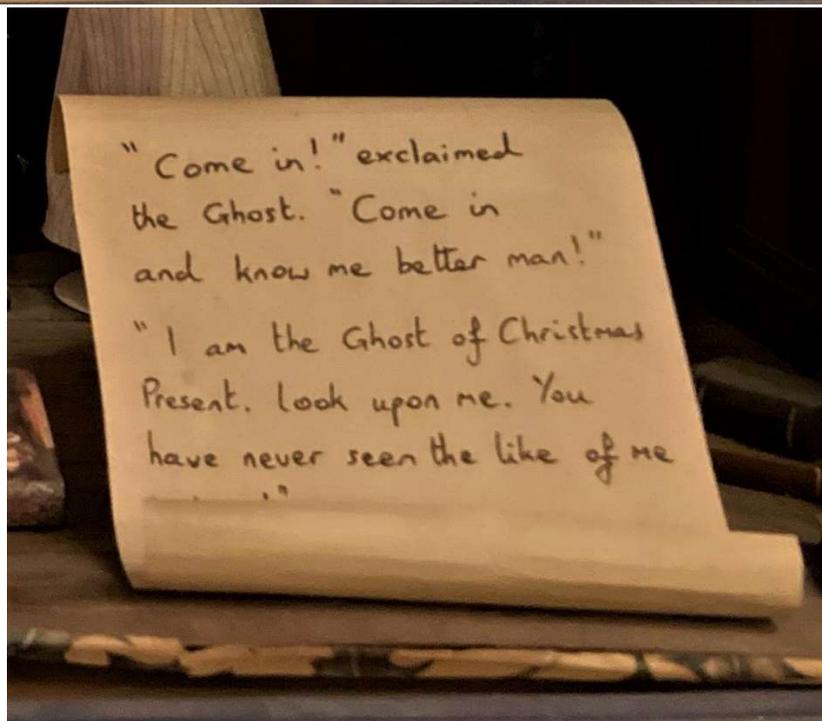
An Oh dear:- A boating club owner of a 4 x 4 Land Rover parked his vehicle on the beach and it got stuck but the digger sent to rescue it got seriously stuck as well and sat fully submerged in the sand and mud for more than three days. The incident occurred on Auckland Beach in New Zealand, much to the bemusement of local residents and news outlets. Thankfully, officials stopped to consider what might happen to other machinery before sending in other equipment to rescue the digger. It was a touch too little, too late. Estimated damage value \$50,000



Mike.W.

Andrew Ellis

This room box I made using odds and ends some years ago. I used an old cardboard box, scraps of wood, tea bags to stain the wallpaper and oddments that I had in my spares box. Scrooge is from World Of My Own miniatures and the Ghost is made out of modelling clay. The coat was made by my mother from oddments. Other bits were bought over the years at dolls house fairs. I have always loved Christmas and this scene is my favourite scene from my favourite Dickens story, A Christmas Carol. Charles Dickens was clearly enthused when he wrote it.



Firing a GWR Castle.

By John Richardson.

(part 2).

When the alarm sounded at 4.30a.m. the following morning, the temptation to turn over and go back to sleep was almost irresistible. Bed at this hour is at its most inviting and my wife was muttering something about needing my brains tested but I eventually managed to drag myself up. My back was so stiff that I could hardly stand up straight and my arms felt like they had been through a mangle – could this be the end of my love affair with steam? However, by the time I had drunk a cup of coffee, swallowed some toast and got out into the fresh air, I began to feel a little better. I have never been very keen on the actual getting up bit of an early start, but having done so, always reckoned it was the best time of the day.

The Hog's Back was still shrouded in mist as I drove over it and further down beyond Farnham, the verges were full of rabbits. The spring foliage on the many trees beside the A31 looked wonderfully lush and green and by the time I turned into the yard at Ropley, I was feeling mentally refreshed at least and ready for another dose of unpaid hard labour.

My latest driver was Andrew Netherwood, the head boilermaker of the MHR, with fireman Doug Mills. The latter turned out to be as good a mate to me as Richard had been the day before and let me do half the firing – which was a bit of mixed blessing, given the state of my back and arms. Andrew commented on the huge pile of coal on the tender and looked a little sceptical when I told him we had burnt a similar amount the day before.

Our trips followed much the same pattern as on the previous day, with no shortage of steam and plenty of shovelling to do. On one occasion I seemed to be struggling a bit, so Doug had a good squint at the fire. He could see that some of my long shots had dropped short, probably due to a lack of 'welly' from my tired arms. This had formed a bit of a hump three quarters of the way down the box, so it was just a matter of getting out the long rake and pushing the coal forward, which soon had the pressure gauge going the right way again.

Just for an experiment, we had a try at the Great Western firing technique, which was to leave the doors open and the flap up, dropping it with the chain for each shot and then restoring it with the shovel blade afterwards. Neither of us reckoned very much of this palaver and we soon reverted to our normal method, which was to open the doors, throw in half a dozen rapid fire shots and then close them again. To be fair, the Great Western used a shovel which was twice the size of anyone else's, so maybe that made it worthwhile doing.

The only other real incident of the day was when I managed to hit the already loose deflector plate rather harder than usual and it fell into the fire. We were about half a mile out of Alton and really blasting up the hill when this happened and Andrew decided we would have to stop to fish it out. Of course, we had a great box full of fire, so the engine was blowing its head off at the safety valves while we struggled with the fire-irons and shovel to extract it. When we finally got it out, it was glowing bright red and well and truly battered out of shape, so we just dropped it in a corner of the cab and carried on without it. Andrew restarted the train up the 1 in 100 gradient without slipping and we accelerated rapidly away.

The ability of this high stepping engine to get hold of a train on a gradient is one of its most surprising features and is just as impressive now as it must have been in 1925, when one of them was sent over to the LNER at Kings Cross on an unofficial exchange trial and soundly thrashed the resident and much larger Pacifics. Some commentators noted that the 'Castle' had got to Finsbury Park in the time it took the Pacific and its train to clear Gasworks tunnel! Sir Nigel Gresley, the Locomotive Superintendent of the LNER, was not the sort of man who was afraid to admit a mistake and immediately set about redesigning his Pacifics with longer travel valve gear and higher pressure boilers in Great Western fashion. When these modified engines appeared in 1927, they were amongst the best in the country and with further development became the 'A4's of record breaking fame.

This time when we disposed of the engine at the end of the day, I counted the barrows of char we removed from the smokebox. The grand total was 13, which remains the most I have ever seen taken from any engine on the Mid-Hants - and was at least twice as much as there was coal left in the tender! Two questions were nagging at me as I staggered back to the Mess rooms for a wash up. Firstly, back in their heyday, a Castle with that much coal would have been expected to take a 12 coach train from Paddington to Exeter or occasionally to Plymouth (which is 225 miles), with some to spare, so how come we had used it up with 6 coaches and 80 miles? Apart from the incident with the deflector plate, we hadn't wasted any by letting the engine blow off steam, so where did it all go? Secondly, how did those firemen in the steam era stand doing this sort of thing every day on their own, when it had nearly killed me in just two days, even though I had only done half the work!

On the way off shed, I spotted Bob Deeth (our locomotive superintendent) and put those questions to him – he grinned a bit when he saw the state I was in, but explained that stopping passenger trains were often harder work than the expresses, especially on a line like ours, where four round trips means 40 miles of hills to climb and 12 restarts against the gradient. An express train, once it was up to speed, had plenty of momentum and could run long distances with very

little steam on a favourable road. It also has to be said that 'Defiant' was not in very good nick and a Castle on top form would have been a lot more economical. As for the fireman, they would not be expected to light up and dispose of their own engines as well as running the trains.

Despite giving me two of the hardest days' work in my life, I remain an unrepentant admirer of the Great Western in general and 'Castles' in particular. I am not saying that there aren't any better or more powerful engines around, but for me at any rate, they are the most beautiful. One glimpse of that classic outline, set off by the polished brass and the copper capped chimney will always be enough to make my heart skip a beat and set me to wondering whether there isn't something more to a steam engine than just the inanimate metal from which it is made.

Many people have commented that the steam locomotive is more like a living creature than any other man-made object. I have sometimes wondered where this idea came from. Perhaps it dates back to the Ancient Greeks, whose hypothesis was that life sprang from four elemental forces which they believed were earth, air, fire and water. These are all there in a steam loco: the fire and the water are obvious, coal is of the earth, and when it is working hard, the engine may be so hungry for air that it can suck the coal off the shovel, so there you have it.

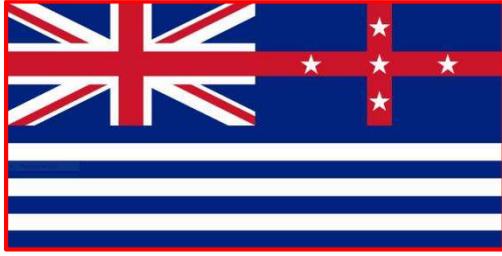
Errata. Just checked my diary and found that these events took place in 1995 not 1997 as stated in part 1.

John R



5080 on currently on Static display at Buckingham Railway Centre

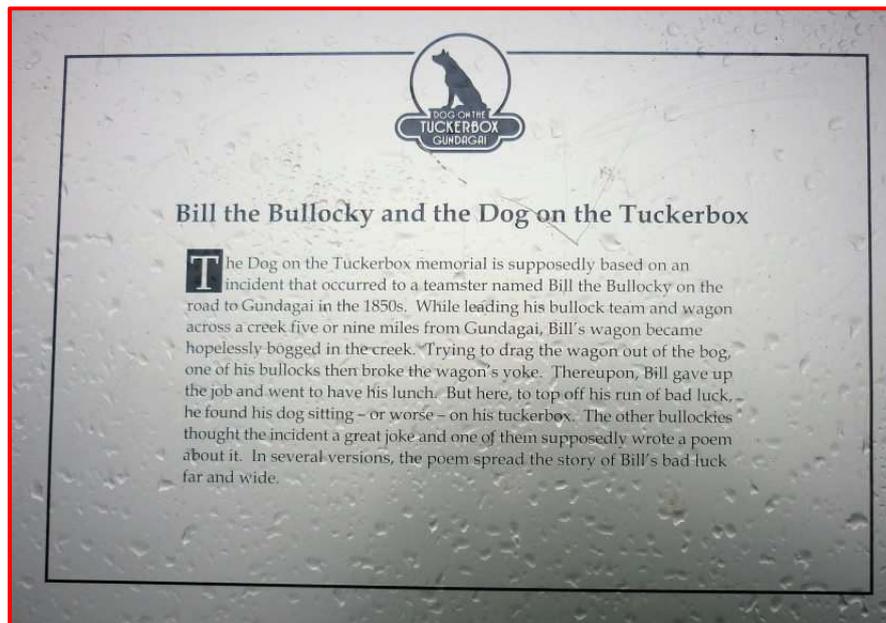
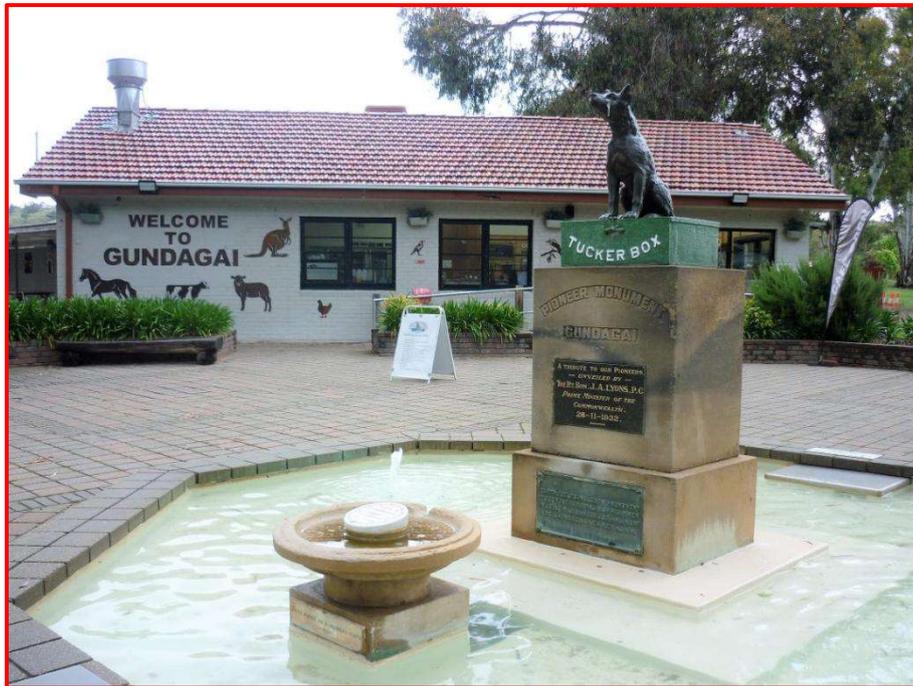
News From Afar - 4 Nov.



Grevillea Robyn Gordon



A day a Wagga Club (WWSME) via the Road to Gundagai. (includes some Orstrayliana)



On The Road To Gundagai

*Oh, we started down from Roto when the sheds had all cut out.
We'd whips and whips of Rhino as we meant to push about,
So we humped our blues serenely and made for Sydney town,
With a three-spot cheque between us, as wanted knocking down.*

*But we camped at Lazy Harry's, on the road to Gundagai
The road to Gundagai! Not five miles from Gundagai!
Yes, we camped at Lazy Harry's, on the road to Gundagai.*

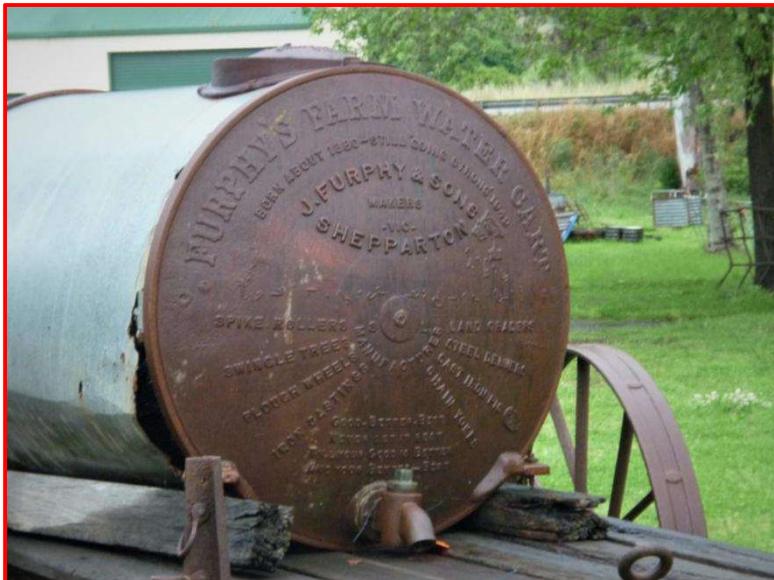
*Well, we struck the Murrumbidgee near the Yanko in a week,
And passed through old Narrandera and crossed the Burnet Creek.
And we never stopped at Wagga, for we'd Sydney in our eye.
But we camped at Lazy Harry's, on the road to Gundagai.*

*Oh, I've seen a lot of girls, my boys, and drunk a lot of beer,
And I've met with some of both, chaps, as has left me mighty queer;
But for beer to knock you sideways, and for girls to make you sigh,
You must camp at Lazy Harry's, on the road to Gundagai.*

*Well, we chucked our blooming swags off, and we walked into the bar,
And we called for rum-an'-raspb'ry and a shilling each cigar.
But the girl that served the pizen, she winked at Bill and I
And we camped at Lazy Harry's, not five miles from Gundagai.*

*In a week the spree was over and the cheque was all knocked down,
So we shouldered our "Matildas," and we turned our backs on town,
And the girls they stood a nobbler as we sadly said "Good bye,"
And we tramped from Lazy Harry's, not five miles from Gundagai;
A B Banjo Paterson.*

...



A furphy is Australian slang for an erroneous or improbable story that is claimed to be factual. Furphies are supposedly 'heard' from reputable sources, sometimes secondhand or thirdhand, and widely believed until discounted. The word is said to derive from water carts designed and made by a company established by John Furphy of J.



Paul Stanley's Loco above - Hastings Valley Miniature Railway Society
Hastings is in northern NSW - a long drive to Wagga.





Above - Lovely Queensland smoke and right another 'deep and meaningful'.



In the Botanical Gardens adjacent to the Club.



At CMR - Not identified by me - Will wait for Trevor to ID

Monday tasks.



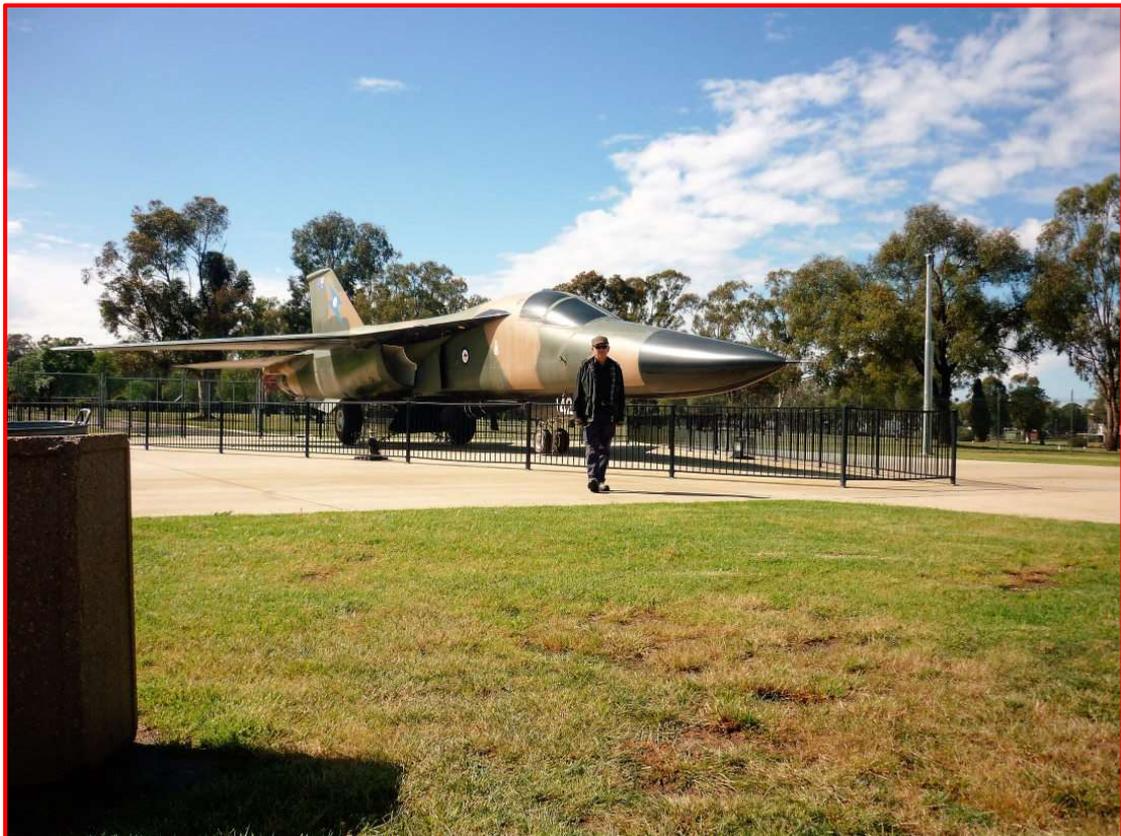
Keith doing some panel beating of the old iron prior to fitting back on the roof Wednesday.



Draining the swamp, or trying to, but keeping my eye open for crocodiles. Do you believe that?



Get the point? F 111 - RAAF Museum Wagga.



Wednesday 4th November 4, 2020



Keith and I got the roof on at last. A concrete slab will be put underneath.



John O has sorted the electrics and the 42 Class is operational again powered by 4 x 12v x 120 amp hour batteries. A 24 V system. 7/4 gauge.

Stay well.

David - Canberra - 4th November 2020

Special Trains.

Part 2. Re Birth FCAF, (Ferrocaril Austral Feugo}

End of the World line on the Isla Grande de Tierra del Fuego

In 1994 the line was rebuilt as a tourist railway in 500 mm gauge and began services again as a luxury tourist's attraction with champagne dinner services. A new 2-6-2T steam locomotive called "Camila" was brought from England in 1995 along with another made in Argentina and three diesel locomotives. Two Garretts have also been obtained.



Camila before Modifications

Camila, the FCAF's second steam locomotive was designed and built in the UK by "Winson Engineering". It is of 2-6-2T arrangement and weighs an estimated 7.5 tons. The design was based on the steam locomotives of the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway in England. Camila was built between December 1994 and February 1995 in Daventry.

It appears Camila gave good service during the FCAF's early days, but as passenger traffic increased and demands on the line's locomotives became more severe, it became clear that the engine had some serious shortcomings. The engine lacked superheating, an efficient exhaust system, or a streamlined steam circuit, which gave it dismal thermal efficiency and low power.

When the engine was overhauled, it was found that some frame components were improperly aligned, which resulted in excessive friction and wear.

Shaun McMahon, the Technical Manager of the FCAF, worked with L. D. Porta to devise a plan for improving the performance and reliability of Camila. It was determined that a two-stage modification plan would be implemented, to allow the work to be accomplished within the allowable time (dictated by the railway's operating season) and budget. It was believed that Stage I of the modifications would result in significantly improved operational economics which would help justify the second stage of the modifications. Phil Girdlestone in South Africa, via his company Girdlestone Rail, assisted in the work by fabricating the entire Lempor Exhaust system as well as supplying replacement parts and components for the overhaul.



After rework

The train leaves from the 'End of the World' station about 5 miles from Ushuaia's Airport. The route travels along the Pico Valley in the Toro gorge and on to Cascada de la Macarena station where visitors are able to learn about the Yamana people and climb to a viewpoint at a 15-minute stop. The train then enters the national park and the forest, travelling through the valley below the mountains, reaching El Parque station where tourists can return by coach or train.



There is a plan to extend the line to a new station closer to Ushuaia and connect the station to the city with a tram.

UK connection.

The 'Camila' has a connection with the Bure Valley Railway Norfolk 15 inch gauge locomotive "Mark Timothy" which was built by Winsons around the same time and with similar inbuilt problems as Camila although on a different gauge.

Engineer Ian Gaylor, a Bure Valley Railway volunteer, became aware, first hand, of the shortcomings of the original locomotives when operating them. He was asked in 2001 to sort out problems with locomotive 'Mark Timothy' by owner Alan Richardson.



"Mark Timothy" on the Bure Valley Railway.

Mike W.

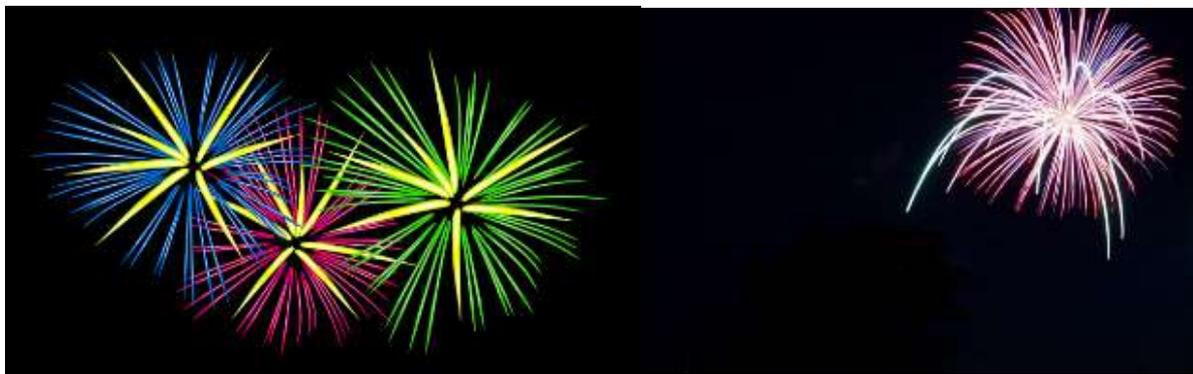
Puzzle Corner.

Lorema's last week's Challenge.

Name the country by adding the missing vowels:-

NGLND = ENGLAND

1	MRTN	Mauritania
2	NGL	Angola
3	GND	Uganda
4	SML	Somalia
5	LBY	Libya
6	LBR	Liberia
7	MNGL	Mongolia
8	RMN	Armenia
9	GRG	Georgia
10	LS	Laos
11	CDR	Ecuador
12	GYN	Guyana
13	HNDRS	Honduras
14	PNM	Panama
15	STN	Estonia
16	LTHN	Lithuania
17	ZRBJN	Azerbaijan
18	MN	Oman
19	TWN	Taiwan
20	TLY	Italy



Lorema's this week challenge.

Fruit and Veg Quiz.

1	Which edible crop has varieties known as Hardy, Tarty and Prince Albert?	
2	Which vegetable has the Latin name of Brassica rapa?	
3	What is the distinctive flavour of the vegetable Fennel?	
4	Where on a citrus fruit would you find the zest?	
5	Which fruit is banned from public transport in Singapore due to its smell?	
6	How is the fruit known as Ananas in French, known in English?	
7	In which country did the fermented vegetable dish Kimchi originate?	
8	Cambridge no5, Welland and Bedford are all varieties of which vegetable?	
9	Which fruit juice is added to gin to make a gin gimlet?	
10	What is the area of New York City's Central Park containing a memorial to John Lennon , known as?	
11	Avola, Kelvedon Wonder and Little Marvel are all varieties of which vegetable?	
12	From which fruit is the drink Kirsch made from?	
13	What is the official fruit of the US State of Georgia?	
14	What is the scientific name of the Cabbage family?	
15	What name is given to the Spring Onion in the USA?	
16	What is the French name given to the Snow Pea?	
17	Which edible crop has varieties known as Apache, Kestrel and Vivaldi?	
18	What is the other name for Ladies Fingers?	
19	What are Greentops, Bronze Tops and Purple Tops?	
20	What is a Raphanus Sativus?	

My thanks go to all who keep sending me the material.

If you have something for the NEWS please contact me

mike.wakeling@btinternet.com **Mobile** 07921819724