



Friday the 13th omen for garden railway

THE garden railway is off and running! At the society's meeting on Friday, May 13, the 32 members present agreed the society should bankroll the start of the project to the tune of \$3,000.

This decision was made after club elder John Shugg outlined the project, the work undertaken to date and the purchase of some initial equipment. The project has been spearheaded by John Turney, who could not attend the meeting due to an overseas trip. He has since had the support of John Shugg, Laurie Morgan, Charles Coppack, Richard Turner, Scotty Andrews and myself.

John Turney has always maintained the project is an extension of our model engineering activities and John Shugg told the meeting that obtaining an Argyle turnout would have a two-fold purpose: To provide the initial points for the steaming-up bay and also to act as a template for the in-house construction of more sets of points.

Progress has been such that all 32 support posts have now been installed 1.2m apart and the track base will have sufficient width to allow double track (triple in places), although initially it will be just a single oval line. A gift of rail has come from our oldest member, Dennis Lord -- 71 x 90cm lengths of Code 220 flat bottom brass rail. This equates to 31.5 linear metres of track -- about 2m short of a full circuit. The gift is worth about \$640 (excluding the postage), so thanks muchly Dennis.

When more turn-outs have been made, the plan is to take the garden railway around and through the trees on the southern side of the allocated block.

Already at least five members have gauge 1 locos ready to run or in kit form.

What would have seemed just a dream a few months ago is now a real possibility -- having



The fun that was AMRA 2016: Clive Jarman driving Boadicea and Steve Reeves on his recently-acquired ex-Ron Collins 4" scale Ruston & Proctor light road engine, in a friendly challenge outside the main pavilion on June 6. The R&P, built by Ron in 1995, has no castings, all parts being fabricated. See report on pages 6-7.

a garden railway at Balcatta ready for post-convention delegates on the Tuesday and Wednesday following the 2018 AALS convention in Bunbury.

On other matters concerning the bigger stuff, the Fab Team has completed a second triple turnout to allow access to the two new 7¼" storage lines in the rolling stock shed. These lines have also been laid.

Ron Casotti has made good progress on the installation of signalling at the approach to the tunnel (see president's report on page 2).

Andrew Manning is establishing a model engineering workshop in the clubhouse and has even proposed setting up our own little foundry to make castings (see story on page 5).

Our April run was a record in terms of money raised, and that was backed up by another excellent run in revenue terms in May.

AMRA has come and gone and such was the enthusiasm of members involved that they are already looking forward to next year with a bigger and better involvement -- possibly a bigger track obviating the need to just run forwards and backwards (see report page 6).

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Two new 'quiet achievers'

EARLIER this year, two men walked through our gates seeking to know more about the club and possible membership.

Both are now fully committed members taking leading roles in our two main projects – the garden railway and a new all-embracing signalling system so urgently needed.

The men in question are Charles Coppack and Ron Casotti. While not wishing to take anything away from more established members, who commit to the club in one way or another every week, our two newcomers have certainly made their mark.

Charles (the “quartermaster”) was involved initially in several other projects before he zeroed in on the garden railway, for which he has supplied all the poles necessary for the track supports in phase 1 with other material requisites in the pipeline. His energy and expertise has added considerably to our ability to get things done.

Whereas Charles is part of a dynamic team, Ron has been working alone on his signalling commission, firstly locating underground cabling which was not on any plan, and then trench digging and laying conduit and signalling wires into the tunnel to provide a “must have” signal protection on the approach to and in the tunnel. Ron was hopeful the new signals would be operational by the end of June.

Then he will turn his attention to the planned integrated system that will control the whole track system, including the back straight when that is brought into use.

Both the garden railway and signalling projects have taken on a sense of urgency in recent months, with the Garden Railway team hoping to have a workable phase 1 well before the end of the year and have something meaningful to offer delegates at the 2018 AALS convention “after party” at NDMES on the Easter Tuesday and Wednesday.

Of course, Charles is not working alone on the garden railway, with lead roles taken by John Turney, John Shugg and Laurie Morgan, with support from Richard Turner, Scotty Andrews and myself. I’m sure that as the

President's Report



by Tom Winterbourn

project continues to gather pace, other support will be forthcoming.

Another member who has been quietly getting on with various projects unheralded is elder statesman Jim Crawford, who is always there to repair anything broken in the electrical line and who has recently repaired the club electric loco trolley.

More importantly, he has overhauled the tank adjacent to the steam-up shed, resulting in all of the recent rain water off the shed roof being pumped up to our main storage tanks. These tanks are now almost full.

The Tuesday crew continues to be the backbone of the society, with the “fab four” almost completing the new approach tracks to the storage lines in the main shed and the two roads inside. This will provide additional valuable space for our growing fleet of rolling stock.

And while this activity has been going on, grounds have been maintained, mostly by George and Richard.

Tom Winterbourn



An unusual view of a departing train at the May public run. Note the large number of passengers waiting for a ride and also Harry's new guard's van at the end of a four-car train hauled by Dave Robinson's “yellow submarine” and driven by Dave Edmonds, with Dave Robinson the guard.

Calendar of Forthcoming Events

General Meeting	Friday	8 July	8:00 pm
Club Run Day	Sunday	10 July	9:00 am — 2:00 pm
Public Run Day	Sunday	31 July	10:00 am — 2:00 pm
General Meeting	Friday	12 August	8:00 pm
Club Run Day	Sunday	14 August	9:00 am — 2:00 pm
Public Run Day	Sunday	28 August	10:00 am — 2:00 pm

New safety measures at public runs

SEVERAL incidents over recent months have necessitated the implementation of new safety procedures at our monthly public running days.

The bottom line is that we must have safety measures in place in the event of an incident.

Signalling, of course, is vital in any railway operation, be it main line or miniature, and to this end we are implementing an integrated system covering all parts of our operations. The first phase of the plan being implemented by Ron Casotti is protecting tracks through the tunnel and this was expected to be completed by the end of June or early July.

In order to ease the load on the duty officer (DO), the role has been split, with a compliance DO looking after rolling stock, in particular couplings and brakes. The operations DO will effectively be in charge of everything that happens on the track, including locos moving on and off the main lines and staff changeovers involving station staff and drivers.

The two-way radios we bought for Sandgropers are being used by the DOs and other key people, such as station staff, to maintain communication and to keep abreast of any problems. Guards are also being introduced to ALL GLT trains, even though they may

only have two carriages. This is to bring guards up-to-speed with safe operating procedures. The guards, who are the train managers (not the drivers), would be expected to know the whistle code and give the driver the right-away with a green flag following clearance to do so by the station master. He or she will hold out the flag until the driver whistles to acknowledge the safe departure of the train from the station area.

The guards will be issued with red and green flags and a red cone. The cone will be placed on the track about 20 paces behind the train in the event of an unscheduled stop. In such cases, the driver will need to give the guard a whistle signal when he/she is ready to move off and the train will only move when the guard is back on the train and waves a green flag.

The operations DO will also ensure visiting drivers have the relevant licences before taking over a train and that they are conversant with the loco and our track.

Trains on both the GLT and raised tracks will also do a double circuit throughout the run, no matter how busy it is, with the GLT trains using the by-pass line to pass trains stationary in the station. This was trialled at the May public run and considerably eased pressure on station staff during busy periods.

Don't forget Bunnings BBQ on August 13

A NOTE for your diary: Saturday, August 13. This is the date on which we “man” the BBQ at Bunnings Balcatta and make lots of money (!) and, perhaps more importantly, display our model engineering expertise and promote our miniature railway.

We applied for this gig earlier this year and the Bunnings PR people were very enthusiastic about us setting up a display of our locos etc. alongside the BBQ. Bunnings will provide the BBQ, corporate

gazebo, fire extinguisher, blackboard (to display price and group), gas, fresh water filled container, trestle table and degreaser, hard broom and bucket (for cleaning concrete pad). We have to supply sausages, rolls, onion and condiments, drinks, esky and ice to keep drinks cool, food grade storage containers, napkins, garbage bags, aprons, disposable gloves, paper towels, cooking utensils, spray-on oil, cash float, cleaning equipment and detergents.

It's Phill this time, not Mr Ed!

With a little bit of tongue in cheek, Ron Collins displayed his attempt at making a loco cylinder following Phill Gibbons' presentation at the previous members' meeting. It appears the cylinder drawing contained some errors — and a very interesting sculpture resulted. Ron then showed his second attempt for a Wombat, designed by the late Bob Brown.

Ron and Steve Reeves are undertaking the redrawing and Steve plans to make it in kit form.

In the photo, the sculpture made by Ron is held by Phill and the Texta drawing (no Autocad here) and the Wombat cylinder are held by Ron.

Details on other Show & Tell presentations in May and June are on page 11.



Mild steel for mainframes

IN the last edition of Steam Lines, boiler inspector Phill Gibbons looked at getting started in model engineering. But first he challenged newcomers to the fraternity to answer the question: Do you enjoy running a steam loco or traction engine ... or do you want to be a model engineer?



by Phill Gibbons

overhaul some 35 years later. The frames are still OK. A NDMES club Blowfly with 10mm frames is still sound after more than 10 years, so the message is go for mild steel, as thick as you can get away with.

Unlike my earlier years in model engineering, when frames had to be hand-cut and filed down to shape, today we have such

modern technology as laser cutting or water cutting. Take advantage of these techniques, as it will save you a lot of time and manual work.

Our fairly-recently departed friend Bob Brown ("Boiler Bob") built an early American loco with the mainframes cast as full size. This loco is on its third boiler, but the frames are still going strong.

Little Engines USA, which builds steam locos up to 7¼" gauge, uses the shelf square bar bolted together -- and they have been going strong for 40 or so years. American locos have what is called bar frames. They are made with two pieces of steel bar about 6" square each side the full length of the loco and the horn blocks are more square bar bolted or welded in. The front and back sections are usually solid and are welded in also.

For more info on the advantages of plate frames over bar frames, go to:

www.steamindex.com/locodesn/frames Next month we will look at coupling and connecting rods.

LOCOMOTIVE mainframes should be made of mild steel, with the thickness varying for each gauge. As a first-up project it is recommended you build from a published design, so you will be OK on thickness if you are building from works drawings. After scaling the thickness of the full size frames, you must then follow on with cast hornblocks and all the full size frame stretchers must be put in.

If you want to simplify the construction, then you must increase the thickness of the frames. Never be tempted to use stainless steel — I did this once and, just like the experts predicted, they cracked through the hornblocks. So, I had to make a new set from mild steel.

Now if you are building a narrow gauge loco, the sky is the limit. I have used 12mm on my American prototype with 50mm diameter axles running in bronze axle boxes.

This loco was used as a club loco at Castledare for some time and, I believe, it is only now getting an

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Workshop (with foundry?) takes shape

MEMBERS who have visited the club recently will have noticed a change in layout on the ground floor of the clubrooms, with the provision of a defined workshop area, although the layout is still a work in progress.

The workshop will be progressively equipped with tools and equipment to allow members to carry out minor maintenance on models and, more specifically, allow members without workshop facilities to use the workshop to undertake some model engineering work.

In some instances, more experienced members may be asked to do some training and/or provide assistance.

Members who have spare tools that would be an asset in model-making and who would be prepared to donate them to the club would further enhance our range of tooling and facilities.

In addition to getting the workshop up and running,



by Andrew Manning

Ron Collins and I have arranged for the club to stock a range of hex and round brass. The stock list, with price list, is on the locked cupboard door near the kitchen. The prices have been set for a small monetary return to the club.

I will use these funds to expand the range of model engineering materials. I also ask members who may have accumulated excess stocks of materials, off cuts, etc. to donate them to the cupboard for sale to members.

It is getting increasingly difficult and expensive to get castings done in WA. The casting process is not excessively difficult and we could establish a facility at our grounds to cast brass, aluminium, bronze and iron. Some of the equipment required may be made available if there is sufficient interest.

I have worked in foundries, had a small facility at home and am happy to assist a group that may want to develop this capability at the club.

BR standard tank engine centre of attention

THE first trial steaming of a garden railway loco at our grounds provided plenty of interest during morning tea on June 21.

However, all didn't go according to plan after Charles Coppack's BR 2-6-4 standard tank was placed on Laurie Morgan's "rolling road", with insufficient heat generated to move the driving wheels. But it was just a minor hiccup in the drive to complete phase 1 of the garden railway project in the second half of this year.

Our picture shows some of the Tuesday morning crew watching intently as Laurie and Charles activate the controls with a remote controller. Behind the BR tank is Laurie's Lynton & Barnstaple Railway narrow gauge tank engine.



Two new storage roads completed

THE latest piece in the track jigsaw at our Balcatta track, the laying of two extra storage roads in the "big shed", has been completed by the fabrication gang.

It follows the completion on April 5 of the second triple turnout to provide access to the new storage roads for 7¼" gauge rolling stock.

The first three tracks in the shed were set in concrete when the floor was laid, but more were required to accommodate our growing fleet of locos and carriages.

The latest two tracks were laid using flat bars pinned on their sides into the concrete floor.

Placing sleepers under the new approach track and then ballasting all-but completed the project the day before our June 26 public run.

Only a few more concrete sleepers remained to be made and inserted in pre-allocated gaps, although the track was usable from June 25.. Thanks again to the track gang for a job well-done

Traction engines a big hit at AMRA

WE were back at AMRA in early June bigger and better than ever, providing about 1500 rides over the three days and creating considerable interest with four traction engines in steam.

With Harry spearheading the transfer of track and equipment on the Friday and Monday evening, it was a seamless operation, accomplished in double quick time. There were many willing hands at the showgrounds, which made for relatively light work and great camaraderie – and much talk about how we can make our involvement in next year's event even better!

It was the first time we have had traction engines on display and in steam and from all accounts, it was a very successful innovation, with Ron Collins, Paul Costall, Steve Reeves and Clive Jarman all kept busy answering questions about machines very few of the expo visitors had seen before.

We used three of the four battery electric locos at our disposal, owned by Noel, Damien and the club, with only Steve's Ocker watching from the sidelines.

There was feedback that our steam engines were missed and already we are looking at reinstating them next year. The only downside was the lack of a comprehensive model engineering display, something which will be addressed at next year's expo.

Tom Winterbourn.



Clive Jarman holds court on the Saturday as he uses Boadicea to explain farm technology from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



Tania drives Noel's battery-electric diesel with a full load of young passengers.



Get 'em early! Jasmine Atkinson (2) of Beechboro, with shovel in hand, gets a quick lesson on firing from Scotty Andrews (partly obscured by Boadicea's chimney).



Lindsay Lockhart (SWMEA) and Phill Gibbons answer questions on the Saturday.



Damelsa Belcher (CMR) offered to help out in the event of a loco crisis. Here she gets the three cars underway in a trial run with a pump trolley early on the Monday morning, with Sean Smith (CMR) in tow.

AMRA (cont...)



Another full load: Noel drives the club loco on the Monday.



It's all smiles and waves as Tania gets away from the "station" driving Damien's recently completed loco.



Posers! Ron and Paul with their respective TEs on the Sunday.



Tom Winterbourn tries his hand at driving Steve's traction engine on the Monday afternoon.

Harry co-opted to the committee

FOLLOWING the departure on extended vacation of Paul James, Harry Roser has been co-opted to the committee for the remainder of this operating year.

Harry was one of two unsuccessful candidates for committee spots at the AGM in October, the other being Steve Briggs, who was co-opted to the committee a couple of months ago to fill the vacancy caused by Gilbert Ness' departure for Tasmania.

Harry has done much for the club in the two years he has been a member. He has been an ever-present at our monthly

public run days, initially with his orange diesel outline Westrail loco, now owned by the club but still maintained by Harry.

He has also provided a carriage for our public runs and at the May run, used his new guard's van for the first time in a four-car train. Harry is a real "can-do" man and recently oversaw the relocation of track, locos and equipment to and from the showgrounds for the AMRA expo.

We welcome Harry to the committee.

Home workshop activity

IN the last edition of Steam Lines, we mentioned some of the loco projects underway in home workshops. Space did not allow the use of accompanying pictures, so here are some now, including a triple dose of 7¼" Juliets.

Tich almost ready to 'hit the rails'

Clive Chapman and Tony Green have been putting the final touches to a rebuild of a 7¼" Tich. Clive says hopefully it will "hit the rails" anytime now! Clive is also re-assembling his 5" GWR 4-6-0 Torquay Manor after a successful boiler test.

Right: The 7¼" Tich being rebuilt by Clive Chapman and Tony Green.



From the article by Gilbert Ness which appeared in the last issue of Steam Lines:

Left: Chain drilling the steel tyres.

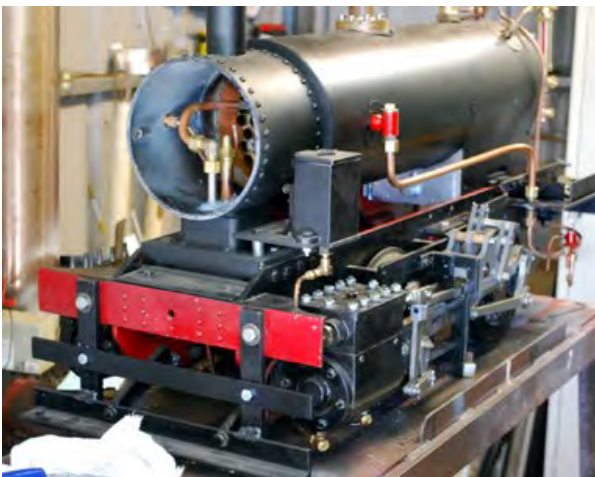


Right: A heated tyre in the oven with wheel at the ready for fitting.

A trio of Juliets

The trio of Steve Reeves, Phill Gibbons and Rob Otway have been working collaboratively on three 7¼ Juliets, with Phill's expected in the steaming-up shed any time now, with only small things to finish off, such as safety chains etc.

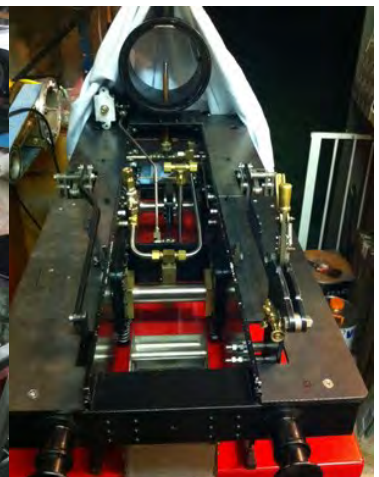
At last report, Steve's loco has passed its boiler test and should be in operation by the end of the year, while Rob's loco is not far behind. Steve built the boilers, Phill built the chassis and Rob built the superstructure and driving wagons.



Phill's Juliet nearing completion.



Steve's Juliet takes shape.



The excellent workmanship is evident in this pic of Rob's loco.

Weather gods kind to us in May and June

OUR May and June public runs were held in perfect autumn-winter weather with excellent support from the public.

The May takings did not quite reach April's record, but were up there with the best of the rest and June wasn't bad either.

The shortage of carriages was very evident, but the trial of doing double circuits on both the ground and raised tracks seem to work well.

At the May run, Scott Andrews fired up and drove the club loco, but as per the new arrangement, this was replaced by the club diesel at 1pm, to allow it to cool down and prepared for storage.

Harry's new blue guard's van was tacked on the back of three carriages and the consist helped considerably in moving passengers.

Support at the June public run was not quite what it was at the two previous runs, but over 30 members signed in to help out. And two more visitors signed membership application forms, including one who was impressed with our operations at AMRA.

One, two, three and four-car trains were operated, including a rare steam double-header by almost identical Heidis, the club loco and the one owned by Scott Andrews.

Here are some pics taken on the two public running days: All drivers carried red flags to protect the rear of their trains in the event of an unscheduled stop. Harry also acquired small red cones to place on the track instead of the flags and has been authorised to buy some more for public run days.



Scott Andrews passes Ed Brown, who is about to leave the station with a full head of steam at the May run.



The club shunter was trialled on a passenger train and performed well at the June run. Here it is being driven out of the tunnel by Steve Reeves, hauling Steve's matching carriage.



If only we were old enough to drive! Junior members Mark Bowring and Meldon Bruce-Hall sit on the relief locos at the June run and watch the trains go by.



Left: Relieved of his station master's duties, John Shugg took to the track as a guard at the May run – and then as driver of Dave's yellow diesel.

Below: Paul Costall cracking brown coal briquettes for Firefly at the June run.



Left: Two Heidis double-head at the June run, driven by Steve Reeves (club loco) and Scott Andrews (his own loco).



A double dose of Tich on June 12

THE handing over a rebuilt loco and the presence of four prospective new members marked the club run day on May 15. The loco is Evelyn, almost completed by former president Dick Langford before his untimely passing and it was handed over to Dick's widow, Noeline, by Andrew Manning, who undertook to complete it.

It was the second hand-over of the loco following one earlier this year and which featured on the front page of the March/April edition of Steam Lines. However, there were some steaming issues and Andrew wanted to sort those out before he gave Noeline the loco.

On May 15, Noeline's daughter Kate Sharpe couldn't wait to get behind the regulator and learn to drive it. She is also now wishing to join the society, along with husband Colin and daughter Claire.

The fourth prospective new member was Keith De Groouw, who is keen to build his own loco and also had a taste of driving behind Richard Turner's Polly loco Suzanne. In fact, Richard was generous with his time and loco, also giving driving instructions to junior member Mark Bowring. And Keith did become a member, being voted in at the members' meeting on June 10.

Clive Jarman also had GWR "Modified Hall" Acton Burnell Hall there for a run.

Andrew was back again at the June 12 club run day with his new Tich, which passed its boiler test. In fact it was one of two of the diminutive 0-4-0s present, the other being that recently rebuilt by Clive Chapman and Tony Green.

Scotty and Tanya gave their Heidi 2 another airing and Steve and Mark Bowring made their second trip in from beyond Northam in two days complete with Mark's Planet (they were at the June 10 meeting).

Fortunately, the weather wasn't too bad, although later in the day it turned really nasty – nasty, it is, if you didn't want the rain and we never admit that!



With steam to spare, Kate drives Evelyn, under Andrew's watchful eye.

Clive Jarman with the 5in GWR Modified Hall, 6991 Acton Burnell Hall.



Left: Mark is in "seventh heaven" after being given a drive of Suzanne, with Richard keeping a watchful eye on him!



Keith De Grauw gets his first drive of a steam loco, driving Richard's Suzanne.

Right: The Tich recently rebuilt by Clive and Tony. Photo: Steve Reeves



Andrew's Tich, which passed its boiler test. Photo: Steve Reeves

Show & Tell miscellany

The Show & Tell segments at our monthly meetings are as strong as ever, with members detailing work undertaken in their home workshops.

Here is a selection of pics taken at the May and June meetings:



Laurie Morgan with his Gauge 1 Shay.



Andrew Manning shows the gear for his Caradoc tractor.



Scotty Andrews showed the boiler for a Rob Roy and asked if anyone had info on building the 3 1/2 inch loco.

Members look on intently as Damien Outram showed his Memound card system.



Ron Cassotti recently bought some non-return valves, thermometers etc. from China.



Steve Briggs gave an entertaining talk of his time as a sheet metal apprentice.



Rob Otway showed the laser cut cab for Steve Reeves' 7 1/4" Juliet loco.



Alan Ward showed the book Steam Trains in your garden, by Brian Wilson.



Right: Andrew Manning showed taps and dies purchased for the club.

10th birthday celebrations in Geraldton

THE Batavia Coast Miniature Railway in Geraldton celebrated its 10th birthday on the weekend of May 13-15, with three NDMES representatives present – Scott Andrews, Tanya Macarthur and Steve Reeves.

Tanya and Scott took up their green Heidi while Steve had his “single” Majestic. Other clubs represented were SWMEA at Bunbury, CMR and Toodyay.

Traction tractions were operated in the middle of the track and SWMEA member Graham Pailthorpe had a miniature hay baler in operation behind his traction engine.

Of interest to NDMES members was the steaming of the WAGR “G” class 2-6-0 built by Phill Gibbons about 20 years ago. The “G”, built to a UK design of the late 19th century, it now owned by Steve Dewers of Geraldton. The ex-Andrew Manning Foden steam truck, also owned by Steve Dewers, steamed well over the weekend.

Steve (Reeves that is) said the miniature railway is in a park on the north side of the town and has only 7¼” track bolted to a concrete base to deter vandalism. This provides a smooth ride.

The point work is electrically controlled with a central panel



Tanya and Scotty: Scotty Andrews and Tanya Macarthur made the trip north with their Heidi.



Majestic: Steve Reeves' Majestic “single” in the foreground with the Phill Gibbons- built WAGR “G” class 2-6-0 in the background.



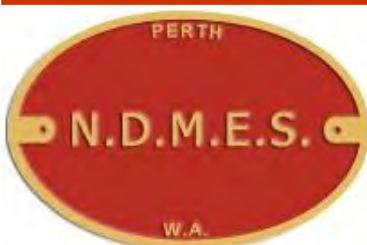
Foden steam truck: Andrew Manning's former Foden Steam truck operated throughout the weekend, pictured here being driven by one of Steve Dewers' sons.

opposite the station – something we have in our present signaling upgrade plan.

The station has just been completed, thanks to a WA Lotteries grant. It combines a club room, kitchen and ticket office. Two sea containers also provide a basic workshop and storage space.

There was a dinner on the Saturday night, which incorporated the unveiling of an honor board, cutting of the impressive birthday cake and presentation of life membership to Lewis Roffey.

Pictures and report: **Steve Reeves.**



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