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A Big Step Forward



If one needs any tangible evidence of the growth of the club over recent years, look no further than the track.

With the completion of the ground level track two years ago, attention turned to carriage storage and a couple of months ago the new 5" shed with its "bendy track" approach was completed.

Work is well under way to provide accommodation for 7¼" rolling stock and fabrication, with the new 12m x 7m x 2.7m green shed up and ready for its concrete base, approach track and carriages. When this has been completed, the tunnel will revert solely to its original intended use – to provide a tunnel for passengers to ride through.

The following details on the new carriage shed project were provided by "project manager" Andrew Manning and President Paul James.

Andrew said the new storage shed/track fabrication workshop was built with funds received from FMG for work carried out on the helix ore unloader project. The 5" workshop was similarly funded.

The Highline shed was erected over two days immediately following Easter. The outline plan at this stage is to have the concrete floor to the workshop side of the shed laid ASAP so we can install the track jig and store the new track steel under cover.

"Following on from that we will need to get 3 phase power to the shed in the near future before the new roads go in," he said. "Once the jig is installed, work will start on track building, first the tracks to be cast in the shed floor (3 runs of 12m), then the floor can be completed.

The "track gang", Ian Huxtable, Andy Davies and Ken Cooper, check the alignment for the new "main line" track over the tunnel bridge. The track coming in on the right will be the new access track for the head shunt and access to the 7¼" storage shed and fabrication shop (background).

Photo: Tom Winterbourn

"Following that, the new curved sections will be built to enable the realignment of the GLT's western end. Ken and Andy have already laid out the centre line of the new curve.

"We will need to arrange some earthworks to get the shed floor levelled and the bed established for the points coming into the three storage roads.

"I would expect this work to take around 3 to 4 months, depending on members making themselves available to assist with sleeper making, track tie cutting and drilling, welding, earth works, as well as all of the other activities that need to be completed each month to maintain and develop the site."

Andrew said the shed will have three storage tracks and a loco service track connected to a line running west of the existing track and terminating near the container to the north and connecting to the south onto the track running beside the Men's Shed.

"To make this possible, and to improve the existing alignment of the ground level track around the western end of the grounds, the points on this track are to be removed and the track re-aligned slightly east of its current position to provide a continuous curve across the tunnel cutting," he said.

(Continued on page 2)

Calendar of Forthcoming Events

General Meeting	Friday	9 May	8:00 pm	
Club Fun Run Day	Sunday	12 May	9:00 am — 2:00 pm	
Public Run Day	Sunday	25 May	10:00 am — 2:00 pm	
AMRA	Friday—Monday	31 May – 2 June	Daily, long weekend	Claremont Showgrounds
General Meeting	Friday	13 June	8:00 pm	
Public Run Day	Sunday	29 June	10:00 am — 2:00 pm	

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A Big Step Forward (cont...)

“Once the track has been realigned, there will be sufficient space to bring the track running up beside the Men’s Shed around parallel to the mainline towards the container. This line will provide access to the storage shed as well as a shunting area.”

Andrew said provision would be made in the layout for the future connection of this outer track to the inner track just west of the footbridge.

Paul said the completion of the ground level track created several new challenges.

“Originally this track was to be a single outside loop, but somehow ended up being the great track arrangement we now have,” he said.

“But the double loop created a need for riding car storage, so the main aim turned to freeing up the tunnel so members could run locos regularly with easy access to the track in general.

“With this in mind, the decision was made several months ago to install a new shed, to be used as both storage and workshop.”

Paul said the order for the shed was placed in January with erection taking place immediately after Easter.

“It is pleasing to note that the track building jig is being readied, some track position laid out and work is already progressing,” he said.

Tom Winterbourn

March Public Run Day

Eight Birthday bookings, strong general support and perfect weather ensured the March public run day on Sunday, March 30, was one of the busiest for some time.

Added to this was a party of six members of the South-Western Model Engineers Association at Bunbury, which drove up to “check us out” and, more specifically, look at our carriage braking system (see page 2).

At one stage, the queue for rides extended over the bridge and down the ramp almost in to the picnic area.

Three 7¼” locos, including David Robinson’s diesel outline, and four 5” locos kept the passengers moving.

A pictorial roundup of the day is presented here.

Tom Winterbourn, Editor



The queue for rides stretches along the race, up the steps, over the bridge and down the ramp almost to the picnic grounds.



“Happiness is...”: A smiling Ed Brown is framed by the cab of Ron Collins’ gleaming 0-4-0 as he steams up ready for the first run of the day.
All photos: Tom Winterbourn



David Robinson from Serpentine, who helped move the big crowd with his Westrail diesel outline loco.



Ian Huxtable is caught by surprise as he prepares a BBQ lunch for members.



Paul Costall gives the traditional salute as he emerges from the tunnel on Firefly.

March Public Run Day (cont...)



Robert Otway emerges from the tunnel driving the club loco.



Ron Collins has steam to spare as he drives his loco approaching the tunnel bridge.

Happy Chappies

The club again looked after the BBQ for Hare & Forbes at its bi-annual sale on March 27-29. Three early “sizzleateers” on the first day, Stan Armstrong, Clive Chapman and Colin Osborne, seem happy enough in their work.

More than a dozen members volunteered their time to man the BBQ over the three days of the sale and many took advantage of the 10 per cent discount on the sale price offered to NDMES members.

And, of course, the efforts of these club members went a fair way to keeping John Turney, as the keeper of the club’s accounts, happy!



New Carriage Storage Shed



As reported in the last newsletter, the new 5' raised track carriage storage shed with “bendy track” approach is now complete.

The shed easily accommodates 12 carriages and a loco – all of which would previously have been stored in the tunnel. The picture was taken before the March public run.

The carriage shed again proved a great asset at the latest run on April 27, with a seemingly seamless transfer of carriages from the shed to the track, and vice-versa, via the “bendy track”.

Message from the President

The past two months have seen much activity at NDMES, including the Hare & Forbes March sale sausage sizzle and model display, our club run day and the monthly public run days on March 30 and April 27.

While the club run day was a little subdued, the March and April public run days were well attended and extremely busy. Both days saw three 7¼ inch gauge locos in operation with several 5 inch gauge locos on the raised track making the most of passenger haulage.

The arrival of Harry's petrol powered Westrail loco has been a welcome addition to the three regular steam locos. These days have been well-attended by members, all seemingly enjoying the usual challenges, lunch and social atmosphere.

On the grounds and building front, we are now in a position to use the completed raised track storage facility and bendy track, thanks in the main to Ken, Andy and Ian. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who had input in this venture.

The next major project is the rearrangement of track to provide carriage access to the newly erected larger shed at the rear of our site. Eventually this will provide suitable storage for ground level cars and a workshop area primarily for maintenance and fabrication.

I would like to remind members that preparation for this year's AMRA exhibition over the long weekend in

June is well underway. Steve is preparing and taking care of the roster, while Damien is organising the display layout.

During the past few weeks we have had visitors from several clubs, including Bunbury, Esperance and Geraldton. In every case they have praised the fabulous facilities and site we are so fortunate to have.

Finally, I would like to thank members for their on-going support and remind them that, like others, this society is only as strong as its membership and their participation. Until next time, happy steaming.

Paul James, President

Invitation Run

Plans are still formalising for the invitation run planned for September, with invites being issued to other WA clubs to come and enjoy a mini-convention camaraderie. As part of the planning for this event, the 7¼" steam-up shed is being upgraded to provide two extra bays, another 7¼" track and a dual gauge track to allow for bigger 5" locos easy access to the ground level track via the turntable.

Progress on this work will step up a gear when the track jig is relocated into the new 7¼" shed, allowing work to start on the curved roads from the bays to the turntable. A full report on the steam-up bay project will appear in the next edition of Steam Lines.

Committee Musings

Some of the items discussed at the March committee meeting were:

- ♦ Paul James is making numbered identification tags for the 5" carriages now the new carriage shed is completed.
- ♦ Ken Cooper gave a progress report on "bendy track" and riding car storage shed, which is now all but completed.
- ♦ Paul James is to organise new signage for the clubhouse in association with Les Harris.
- ♦ Andrew Manning will coordinate future Friday club meetings items of interest.
- ♦ Work continues on the steam-up bay upgrade.
- ♦ The reticulation/sprinkler upgrade continues under the control of Andrew Manning and George Palmer. Solenoids and the controller will be relocated to picnic area.
- ♦ Paul James has overseen the container roof repairs with the fitting of the roof cover, ready for the winter rains.
- ♦ The club newsletter, Steam Lines, has been reproduced after a gap of almost three years, with Tom Winterbourn the new editor and Jim Clark the publisher. It will be produced every two months at this stage. The committee suggested a copy goes to AME and selected other clubs.
- ♦ It was agreed that a donation of \$1,000 be made to the Hills Bushfire Appeal.
- ♦ Damian Outram and Steve Reeves to coordinate the club's AMRA display and track layout, fencing, driver roster etc. Damien suggested we purchase new signs for wall mounting. Price per ride will stay at \$2. Steve to organise roster and display items.
- ♦ The Hare and Forbes sausage sizzle was on again on March 27-29, with Tom coordinating.
- ♦ An invitation run in September is being organised on the day set aside for the club run day. Damian Outram to notify other WA clubs of the dates.
- ♦ Track modifications and a new layout are being implemented to provide access to the new 7¼" shed, to be erected early April. This involved the realignment of the main line, the removal of the facing points leading to the bridge, new tracks to the shed and a passing loop.

A Tale of Two Britannias!

by Tom Winterbourn



Jim Clark (holding one of the “Oliver Cromwell” smoke deflectors) explains his Britannia project to Bill Walker. The boiler is on the left, and main chassis to Jim’s right and, in the background, the near-completed 3 inch scale Allchin steam traction engine.

Photo: Tom Winterbourn

Similarly, Jim’s Britannia has also been on hold while he completes his 3” scale model of an Allchin steam traction engine (a story for another day). That should be completed by the end of the year and then he aims to finish off the Britannia, which is more than 80 per cent

The Perth Hills may soon be alive to the sound of Britannias!

Well, maybe that’s stretching the imagination a little, but two of the iconic British Britannia Pacifics are being built east of Midland.

One is pretty well known to members, Jim Clark’s 5” 70013 “Oliver Cromwell”, the name being selected as it was the last working Britannia on British Railways.

The other is being built by prospective member Bill Walker. It is a 7¼” model, 70040 “Clive of India”, so named because it was being built at the former LMS Crewe locomotive works at the time Bill started his apprenticeship there.

Bill, a former BHP railway manager in the Pilbara, acquired the plans for a 3½” gauge Britannia (which he scaled up to 7¼”) and immediately became enthused at the thought of one day in retirement driving it either on a private track on his Sawyer’s Valley property or at a local miniature railway.

But when he eventually did retire, Bill went all academic and decided to study for a degree, putting the Britannia on hold. On graduating, he decided to study for a Masters’ degree, which again he achieved.

Was the Britannia getting any closer to being continued? No! Bill then decided to go for his Doctorate (PhD)!

I have known Bill for over 30 years and have tried several times to encourage him to return to model engineering, even showing him around NDMES’ track and facilities. But this lack of success called for a more determined approach, so a meeting with Jim Clark at his Darlington home was arranged.

It sort of worked, in that Bill intends to work on the loco again when he finishes his PhD thesis (on Pilbara’s railways) in about 18 months’ time.

complete. Most of the machining has been completed; it’s just a case of putting it all together.

Bill has been involved with railways all his life, starting work as an apprentice at Crewe and then going on to become shed master at several north of England sheds, including stints as acting manager at Gorton (Manchester), one of England’s “top 10” sheds with an allocation of 166 locos in 1950, as well as Heaton Mersey at nearby Stockton.

After a spell at the Hong Kong railway, he went back to England for a short time before migrating to Australia with wife Sylvia. He joined BHP’s railway department as rolling stock superintendent at Port Hedland.

He acquired the Britannia plans in about 1990 and borrowed the patterns for the castings from Keith Watson. The castings were made at various small foundries around Perth.

He did some work on the frames and rods over the following two to three years, but no work on the boiler. In fact he has done no more work since he started uni studies on his retirement from BHP in 1996.

“I hope to start work on it again when I complete my PhD thesis,” he said.

Meanwhile, Jim hopes to switch his attention to “Oliver Cromwell” when he completes his Allchin traction engine later this year (he hopes to have it operational at Sandgroppers in Bunbury, on the weekend of November 8/9).

The Britannia project came about at a time when Jim was looking for a challenging model engineering project.

“I had always fancied building a large steam locomotive and I particularly liked the look of the

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A Tale of Two Britannias!

(cont...)

(Continued from page 6)

Pacific type, such as the A3 or the NSWGR 38 Class,” Jim said.

“In about 1997, former NDMES member Alan Marshall was returning to the UK and had for sale some parts for a Britannia — a set of scale plans and a few castings, including wheels, cylinders and a collection of other bits and pieces. I liked the look of the Britannia, the last of the Pacific-style locos made by BR, so I bought the bits.”

Jim then bought the rest of the castings from a model engineering supplier in the UK. Being mostly cast iron, they cost nearly as much to airfreight to Australia as all the other bits together!

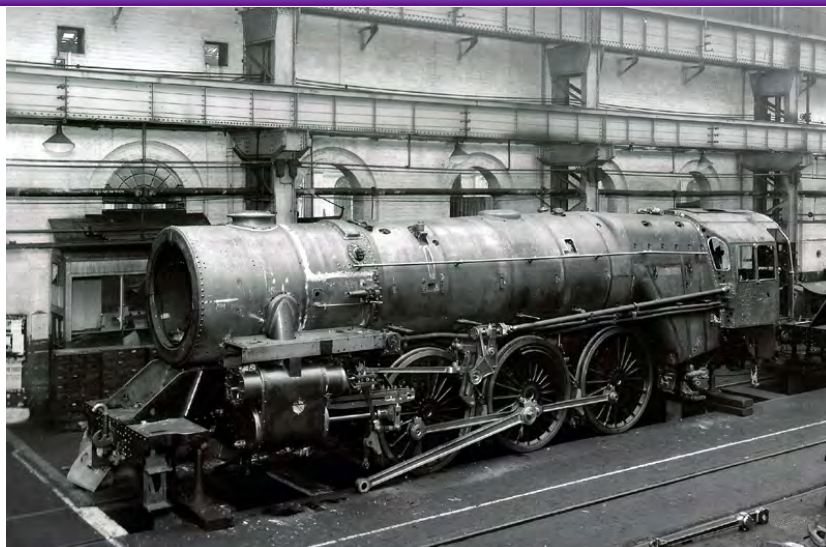
Jim started with the loco main frames. The plates, along with other frame components, were laser cut from steel sheet. He transcribed the frame drawings from the paper blueprints into CAD format and then produced the outlines to scale in metric dimensions and provided files ready for the computer-based laser cutter.

The wheels were machined to AALS wheel standards and mounted in sets, quartering the driving wheels. The front bogie assembly and the rear pony truck, each of which was a fairly complicated unit in itself, were completely assembled, tested and painted as self-contained projects. Finally, the completed cylinder assemblies were mounted on the chassis and Jim had everything moving smoothly.

Jim then decided to take a break from loco construction and started on the tender, the design of which broke away from traditional British design. Again he had the frames laser cut and then machined up the wheel sets as before. He had a rolling chassis quite quickly, although the body of the tender presented a few challenges.

“It is a complex design with a coal bunker sitting inside the water space so I decided to make it as two separate sub-assemblies so I could have some chance of reaching all the joints to rivet and solder them, as everything had to be watertight,” he said.

Then came the challenge of the boiler. Jim spent much time making CAD drawings and studying the AMBSC code. Half way through the brazing stage, the screws were replaced with copper rivets and the two sub-assemblies were first individually brazed up, and then later brazed together. Then the copper rod stays in the firebox walls were fitted.



A Britannia under construction at Crewe works in the mid-50s.
Photo courtesy of Bill Walker

It had always been Jim’s intention to gas fire the loco – he preferred the convenience and cleanliness of gas firing which, he considered, outweighed the authenticity of coal firing, with its attendant dirt, clogged boiler tubes and massive cleaning task after each run!

However, he met with some resistance to getting it approved, as there was at the time no gas firing “code” for miniature boilers. This stalemate delayed the progress for several years, during which Jim started on the Allchin.

Despite the negativity he encountered, Jim went ahead and made gas burners for the boiler, using a design called “Marty Burners”, based on a US design published on the Internet. These burners were quite easy to make and work well. The four burners are fitted into the Britannia ashpan, with the burner intensity controlled by a single gas valve in a common feed to all four.

The completed boiler has a brass cladding, which was almost as difficult to make and fit as the boiler components themselves – tapered barrel, compound firebox angles, et al.

“Finally, the cab, boiler and chassis could be temporarily united with the tender to get an idea of how the completed locomotive would look – and yes, there was a happy smile, as it all fitted together!” he said.

With any luck, Jim’s Britannia should be seen at the club track sometime towards the end of next year.

Tom Winterbourn

February General Meeting



One of the biggest roll-up of members for some time, about 30, heard an interesting talk on model engineering from Chris Wilkins at the club meeting on February 14.

Although Chris is not from the miniature railway fraternity, his lack of an engineering background and what he has achieved, proved very interesting. He displayed an aircraft radial engine he had made, also a complex clock.

At the end of his talk, he fielded many questions from interested members.

Ken Austin also gave a short presentation on cutting and hobbing a 4-start worm gear.

Tom Winterbourn

Who Is He?



Who is this well-known NDMES club member? Any ideas? All will be revealed in the next newsletter.



Above: Chris Wilkins with some of his model engineering he brought to the meeting.

Right: Ken Austin pictured during his "show and tell" presentation.

Photos: Tom Winterbourn



Bunbury Visitors Inspect Carriage Braking System

A group of members of South West Model Engineers Association at Bunbury dropped in on our public running day on March 30 and was impressed with what it saw.

The group was at Balcatta mainly to look at the braking systems on our carriages, but also took advantage of the visit to look at projects just completed and underway, including the "bendy track" approach to the new raised track carriage storage shed and the site of our new 7¼" maintenance shed, which has since been erected.

They picked a busy day to visit, with eight private bookings, plus normal patrons, keeping the three ground level track and four raised track trains gainfully employed for most of the four-hour operation. Jeff said after the visit the group was impressed with what it saw at Balcatta.



Pictured in the station area are Luke Fenn, SWMEA secretary Ian Morrison, SWMEA vice-president John Matthews, John Shugg and SWMEA stalwart Jeff Clifton.

2014 AALS Convention Report

The vagaries of Melbourne's weather were much in evidence at the 2014 AALS convention, but one official couldn't see what all the fuss was about.

"Look," he said, "Melbourne's temperature is consistently around 32 degrees – Fahrenheit one day, Celsius the next, with maybe some days in between!"

As beautiful as Melbourne is, you have to have a little sense of humour when it comes to its weather.

But the convention organisers, the Tullamarine Live Steam Society, struck a win-win deal with hardware giants Bunnings, with each delegate being given a green Bunnings poncho on arrival. And did we need it on the Friday day when, at times, there were few people out on the expansive and interesting Bulla track or in the steam-up bay areas. However, the club rooms, with a continuous supply of tea, coffee and cakes, were crowded!

But the Saturday was great, with the sun out and big crowds. The atmosphere had returned, if only for a day, as the remaining days of the convention seemed to lack vibrancy.

At the AALS AGM, it was confirmed that the 2015 convention will be at Penfield in Elizabeth, Adelaide (details at the clubhouse) and Lake Macquarie (Newcastle, NSW) put up its hand to stage the convention in 2016. There was no offer forthcoming for 2017.

Pictures taken on the first three days of the convention are published in the following pages.

Tom Winterbourn



Steve Reeves with the Wombat he will be writing about in future AMEs.

All Convention photos: Tom Winterbourn

Steve Reeves has submitted his "take" on the convention, which is printed here:

I arrived at Bulla on the Thursday before Easter with a 5" Wombat 0-4-0T, having driven with Paul Sherman from Adelaide.

It was a fine and sunny day, so we had a steam-up lasting well in to the night.

Tullamarine Live Steam Society had spent about 30,000 man-hours over two years, adding new steam-up bays, storage sidings and turntables. But unfortunately it neglected the main track, which was pretty rough and, as a consequence, there were many derailments.

Registrations totalled 130 engines and 400 delegates, although only about 100 engines arrived.

I saw six Blowflies and six Simplexes.

Best loco was a 5in Leek & Manifold 2-6-4T. Another fine model was a 2-6-4T based on the Roger Marsh "Tinkerbelle" design in 7¼" — a very big loco.

NSW was represented by class 12 and 13 4-4-0 tender and tank locos plus C38s. All had scale rolling stock.

In 7¼" gauge, there were three Black Fives, also Heidis, Little Limas and Sweet Creeks.

Several 3½" gauge locos ran on the ground level track, including a South African 2-8-4T and a Maisie.

There were three traction engines, a 3" scale Cliff & Bunting, a 4" scale Marshall and a 4" scale

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The 7¼" loco and carriage storage shed at TLSS.

2014 AALS Convention Report (cont...)

(Continued from page 9)

Case, which won the best traction engine award. Truly magnificent.

There was also a nice display of Gauge 0 and 1 rolling stock, including a demonstration portable track.

DNC again had a good display, but unfortunately Ian Ramsey lost his wife to cancer since the Warner (Brisbane) convention.

The weather was cold with some rain, but the meals were good.

There was some drama at the AMBSC AGM due to a rogue Diamond Valley Railway member, but all was eventually resolved.

On the Sunday, there was a bus trip to Puffing Billy Railway. This group goes from strength to strength. It now has 5 working NA 2-6-2Ts, the G42 2-6-0 + 0-6-2 Garrett and the Climax. The latest project is a NGG Garrett.

On the Monday I visited the Maldon Castlemain Railway, where for \$35, you can have a 45-minute footplate ride. I had a ride on a 5ft 3in gauge 2-8-0. This is a small group, but very friendly.

There were many post-convention running days in the second week. In my opinion, the best was on the last day, at the Box Hill Miniature Steam Railway Society, where I saw an 0-4-2T Thunderchild, built by a certain Phil Gibbons in 1982!

Steve Reeves



The Editor is inviting suggestions for a caption for the above pic, to be published in the next newsletter. So, please keep your suggestions printable. The winner will receive a day pass to the next public running day!



Paul Sherman and Koojedda.



Leon Brack (NSW) tries out his recently obtained 5" NSW 38 class.



Pretty in red! A 7¼" NSW 38 class.



A nice little 5" gauge 4-8-2 tank engine.

2014 AALS Convention Report (cont...)



Round the meal table on the Saturday night: From the left, AALS stalwart John Wakefield (SA), Jenny De Gouw (WA), Cheryl and Bruce Innes (Qld), Vaya and Mike Creen (WA), Paul Sherman (SA) and Steve Reeves (WA). Tom Winterbourn (WA) was taking the pic!



Dr Allan Wallace (SA) with his almost-completed 7¼" Black 5. It ran perfectly all weekend.



Katie, a 2-6-4 7¼" tank engine.



One way of keeping smoke out of your eyes!



Mike Creen with his NSW 44 class, which he brought over from WA.

2014 AALS Convention Report (cont...)



Left: Convention regular John Steadman (Vic) keeps a watchful eye over grandson Brock, with wife at the rear.



One of the few regular female convention drivers, Belinda Steadman (Vic), introduces seven-month-old daughter Ariah to the smell of oil and smoke!



The "other" Wombat at the convention, driven by Barrie Olney (Vic).



A freelance 7¼" Pacific which has similarities to a NSW 38 class.



For the Britannia boys, a 5" Iron Duke.

2014 AALS Convention Report (cont...)



A general overview of the 7 1/4" steam-up bays on the Saturday.



Power and Glory, based on a Great Western 2-6-0T.



This 5" British 2-10-0 Evening Star was a big attraction.



A nice model of a 3 1/2" 0-4-0T Juliet.



The weird and wacky! Steve Cilia (Gosford, NSW), dressed as a man of Middle Eastern origin drives a 7 1/4" diesel past a metal fabrication of a dinosaur.



One of three traction engines at the convention.

Three examples of early American classic 2-6-0s.



Poetry in Motion!



Eat your hearts out Ron, Paul C, Clive J, Jim C, Ken et al! While driving along the main road between Christchurch and Timaru, in the middle of nowhere, on April 16, I was gob-smacked to see a steam traction engine coming towards me. Unfortunately I didn't have the presence of mind to grab the camera and record it for posterity, being at that moment more interested in waving to the driver!

As I continued on my way, I became increasingly annoyed at this unforgivable lapse.

But I needn't have worried, for another 20 km or so further along the road, again I saw smoke in the

distance. This time I pulled over and took this side-on shot of another steamer, with smoke from the chimney flowing perfectly over the two-man crew.

Apparently the two machines had been at a steam fayre in Christchurch and were on their way home pulling a caravan of sorts. And believe me, it was some distance they had to travel.

And no, I have no idea of its manufacturing origin.

I guess it's not every day you can travel along a main road and meet not one, but two such representatives of a bygone steam age. Good on you, NZ!

Tom Winterbourn

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