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***READY TO ROLL***



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## READY TO ROLL

Railways are an integral part of the economic structure of the State. There was, therefore, no alternative after the last war but to embark on a programme for completely rehabilitating and modernizing the System.

As a result, many hundreds of miles of track have been reconditioned and re-laid, thousands of worn out trucks have been replaced, new suburban electric trains and air-conditioned country cars have been placed in service and diesel locomotives are running nearly half the annual train mileage. In addition, millions of pounds have been spent on new works such as duplication and electrification of the Gippsland line, duplication of various suburban lines, modern lifting appliances for goods depots, new stations and many other improvements essential to prompt and efficient handling of the traffic offering.

The Railways stand ready to continue playing the same dominant part in the State's development and economic welfare as they have done for over one hundred years.

Heavy losses have been incurred in recent years, but these can be attributed almost entirely to the community's failure to use its rail system to capacity.

During 1957/58, the Department was able to reduce working expenses £1,005,100 below those of the previous year by decreased maintenance costs and by more efficient operating methods.

These savings were offset as increased expenditure rose by £142,500 for higher salaries and wages payable under awards, and payroll tax, £92,000 for pensions and superannuation, and £129,500 for other items, as well as £106,500 paid to the Brighton and Sandringham Councils in connexion with the dismantling of tramways in those municipalities.

Less wheat hauled and lower rates introduced to meet road competition were reflected in the revenue fall of £1,431,500. Total tonnage of goods carried for the year—8,385,211 tons—was 550,253 under the 1956/57 figure. Excluding wheat traffic, which was low because of the dry season, the total goods carried was only 30,306 tons short of the previous year.

After interest and other debt charges of £3,596,499 had been met, the deficit for the financial year was £5,881,706—£688,971 greater than 1956/57.



## goods traffic

Further dieselization of our goods mileage (to 47%) and accelerated services not only produced large savings in working expenses but substantially increased the capacity of the System.

Under the forwarding agents' scheme introduced in earlier years to combat road competition, interstate rail business increased materially after the adoption of an incentive rate for bulk loading handled. This arrangement provides for a lower rate to be charged when a specified minimum is exceeded. During the seven months the rate operated, traffic from Melbourne to Sydney increased by 59% and from Sydney to Melbourne by 49% compared with the same period the previous year.

As a further inducement to use rail transport, special wagons for the carriage of pulpwood, bulk cement and Masonite were built. Box wagons for loading by fork lift trucks were under construction.

Superphosphate traffic reached a new high of 626,411 tons—57,176 tons more than the record established in 1954/55 and 101,905 tons more than in 1956/57.

Livestock traffic at 506,648 tons showed an increase of 61,413 tons over the previous year, and brought in £252,268 more revenue; dry seasonal conditions necessitated heavy stock movements.

INFLATABLE DUNNAGE IN USE AT MELBOURNE GOODS SHED



HAPPY CROWDS ALIGHTING FOR 1958 ROYAL SHOW

## passenger traffic

Although country passenger journeys declined by only 119,805 by comparison with the previous year, since 1937/38 they have fallen from 5,850,581 to 5,029,988. The introduction of costly air-conditioned carriages on main-line and interstate trains and improved timetables had little effect, undoubtedly due to the popularity of private cars.

Suburban passenger traffic increased by 376,668 to 162,631,736 journeys, but revenue decreased by £33,526 as more passengers travelled second class. (One class travel was introduced after the end of the financial year.)

Unfortunately for suburban travellers, a heavy burden of fixed costs must be charged against their system, owing to the uneven spread of traffic over the day. While all available rolling stock is necessary during peak operating periods, a much reduced service is sufficient for the rest of the day. With traffic spread more evenly over the day, only two-thirds of the present costly fleet of trains would be required.





HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER VISITS BALLARAT

## goods handling

Close liaison with rail users regarding packing and handling of their goods has been a most important factor in fostering goodwill and obtaining new business. The importance of adequate packing in the interests of the manufacturer, the retailer and the customer is always stressed.

Practical assistance to rail users has been rendered by the development of inflatable rubber dunnage which is used to fill the space between fragile loads and containers of different sizes in rail wagons. This prevents movement and damage in transit and fifty additional units are on order.

Orders have been placed for two electrically operated machines to stow freight pallets in rail wagons. They will reduce considerably loading and handling costs and at the same time minimize the risk of damage.

## gauge standardization

Work on this project has been proceeding to the limit of funds available. The Commonwealth intimated that it is prepared to meet 70% of the cost (estimated at £10½ millions), subject to the balance being shared by Victoria and New South Wales. The whole of the fund required will be advanced by the Commonwealth in the first instance; the States will then repay their amounts, plus interest, over 50 years.

Construction work during the year was concentrated on duplication of bridges, extension of culverts and establishment of camps from Euroa to Wodonga. At the close of the year, 486 men were employed—this number will be progressively increased during 1958/59.

## special traffic

During the visit to Victoria of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, a special train was run between Melbourne and Ballarat for Her Majesty to attend the Begonia Festival.

The largest single excursion handled during the year was for the annual picnic of General Motors-Holdens Ltd. at Pakenham, when 4,530 passengers were transported.

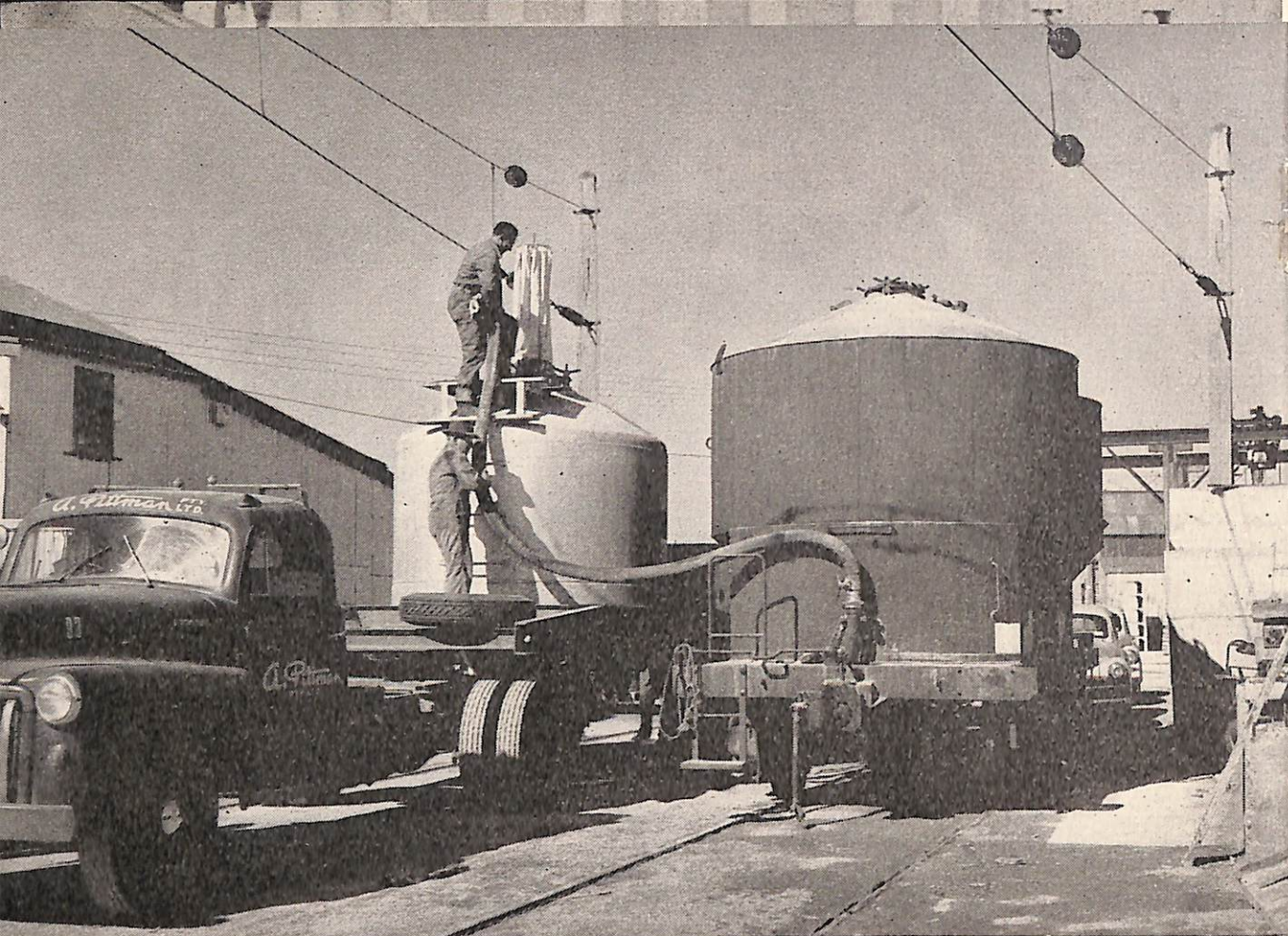
Other special trains conducted during the year included a Reso train to the Western District and a number of excursions arranged in conjunction with the Holiday Train Association.

A new record was established when 726 passengers travelled by special train after attending the Annual Steeplechase and Cup Meeting conducted by the Warrnambool Racing Club.

Seven League football clubs used rail motors to travel to South Geelong for matches at Geelong in the 1958 season.

An unusual charter was made when Macleod High School engaged a special "Train of Knowledge" for 200 pupils to make a six day tour through Western and Northern Victoria.





DISCHARGING CEMENT FROM BULK WAGONS

## new rolling stock

Construction of new rolling stock in Railway Workshops totalled 451 vehicles for the year, consisting mainly of open goods wagons, and box louver wagons. Seven new air-conditioned country passenger cars were completed and construction of additional cars is continuing.

Replacement of obsolete steam locomotives with diesel powered units continued. Ten new 1,800 h.p. diesel-electric locomotives were placed in main line service and twenty-five 600 h.p. diesel-hydraulic shunting locomotives are on order. These units can be used for suburban goods services, main line transfers and live-stock movements between the main marshalling yards.

Tenders for ten diesel-electric locomotives in the 900-1000 h.p. range for main line and branch line operations were being considered.

At June 30, 26 new "Harris" type suburban trains of the initial 30 on order had been placed in service. Tenders for a further 30 trains were under consideration.

## grade separation

Grade separation work was continued at various localities. An overline bridge at Frankston Road, Dandenong, was opened for traffic. Elimination of the Napier Street crossing at Footscray was well advanced. The bridge to carry rail traffic over the roadway was completed and the excavation necessary to lower the road level was being made.

The major operation at Moorabbin level crossings had reached the stage where a temporary station and tracks are in operation. Excavation to a depth of 18 feet for the new tracks and platforms was in progress while steelwork for the new bridge structures is gradually assuming shape.

Planning for the grade separation project at Melbourne Road level crossing, Newport, is in progress.

Other grade separation work was carried out by the Country Roads Board with the co-operation of the Railway Department at Heidelberg Road, Clifton Hill, and at the Corio level crossing on the Princes Highway where a bridge is being constructed over the railway.

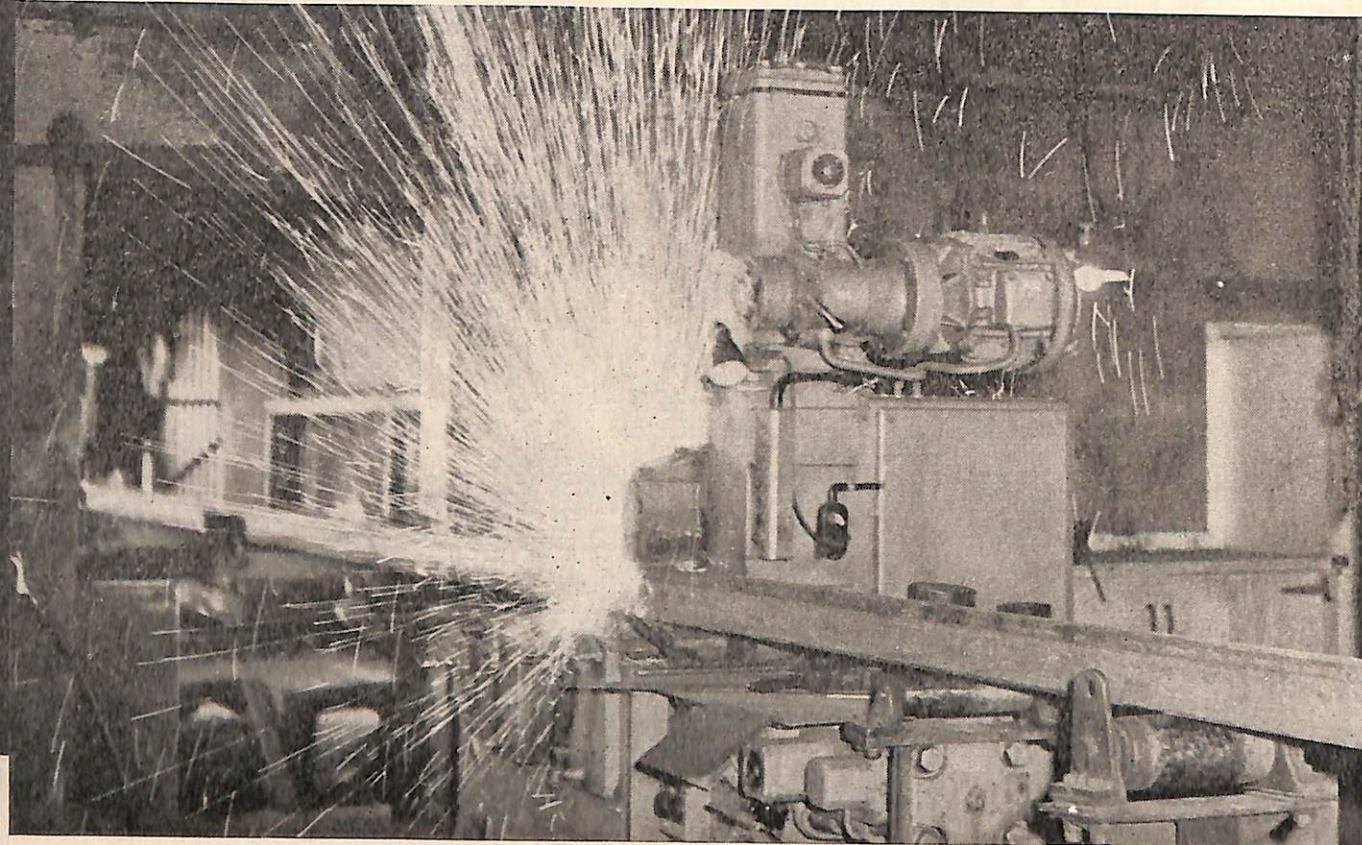
EXCAVATIONS AT MOORABBIN UNDERPASS







NEW BRIDGE FOR STANDARD GAUGE TRACK AT BENALLA



FLASH BUTT WELDING MACHINE FOR RAIL WELDING

## track works

Major relaying work on country lines is being carried out by two mechanized gangs. During the year 113 miles of track was relaid of which 23 miles were in the suburban area.

Ordinary track maintenance and relaying involved the use of 190,000 cubic yards of ballast, 702,000 sleepers and 17,500 tons of rail. Renewals of crossings and points totalled 203 and 263 respectively.

Trackwork alterations were made to Nar Nar Goon, Yarragon and Trafalgar yards.

Work proceeded on the development of Dynon Goods Terminal, as well as making rail connexion to the new Appleton Dock where sidings on Harbour Trust property have been provided. Additional sidings for handling coal traffic from the dock will be provided on railway property at South Dynon.

## suburban lines

Tangible evidence of Melbourne's constantly growing population, particularly in outer suburbs, is shown by work done on suburban lines in the last year.

New stations were either opened or in course of construction at Laburnum, Heatherdale, Jacana and Patterson.

A new station and extra tracks at Richmond, duplication of the Heyington-Eastmalvern line, construction of a loop between Syndal and Mount Waverley, and duplication of line between Croydon and Mooroolbark were typical of the works completed or in hand.

Platelaying for the duplication of the line between the Heidelberg tunnel and Macleod and the construction of a new platform and station buildings at Rosanna were commenced.

## workshops and equipment

A continual policy of workshop modernization is being implemented. At Newport Workshops, a re-organized car and wagon wheel centre was brought into operation to relieve congestion and improve efficiency. Foundry potential was increased by the mechanization of sand conditioning and coremaking and the introduction of carbon dioxide mould treatment.

Among the new machines was a 200 ton power press installed in the steel preparation section for the forming of hot or cold steel pressings. A universal plate cutting machine in the boiler section will be used for sectioning general structural steel members.

At the Spotswood Rail Welding Depot, a second flash butt welding machine was installed. This will provide ample capacity for future welded rail requirements.





STAFF AT CENTRAL RESERVATION BUREAU

## central reservation bureau

To streamline rail booking facilities, a central reservation bureau was established at the administrative offices, Spencer St. Air-conditioned and sound proofed, the new section is equipped with a special telephone system which, by directing calls into whatever line is vacant, enables booking business to be handled with a minimum of delay.

Allocation of sleeping berths and seats on trains, formerly handled by the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau and the main booking offices at Spencer Street and Flinders Street, is now centralized in this bureau.

First introduced in September 1957, the bureau was thoroughly tested during the Christmas and Easter holiday periods when it was found that interstate and Victorian bookings were materially facilitated.

It is also proving a valuable aid in co-ordinating bookings requested by booking agents who have been authorized by the Department to sell rail travel.

## refreshment services

Refreshment services provided revenue of £1,927,162—£61,919 more than in 1956/57. Extended trading hours and the popularity of the various activities, including the new flower stall at Flinders Street station, were the main factors leading to the increase.

A mobile trolley service to provide light refreshments to passengers in their seats was introduced on "The Daylight" on peak loading days and this innovation has proved very popular.

Another alteration made was the provision of refreshment facilities in the Club Car running on "The Daylight" which is available for all passengers on the train.

Although revenue from country refreshment rooms and dining, buffet and restaurant cars remained practically the same as in the previous year, alterations and economies improved the trading results by more than £16,000.

Useful revenue came from drink vending and shoe shine machines on suburban stations. A number of sites on suburban stations was let to a vending machine operator and the financial result was so satisfactory that additional machines will be installed and operated on this basis.

The Chalet, Mt. Buffalo National Park, was again a popular spot for holiday-makers. Amenities for guests were improved by adding facilities for croquet and clock golf.

REFRESHMENTS IN CLUB CAR OF "THE DAYLIGHT"





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