

40 VC 11273

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

NEWSLETTER

JUNE



1963



THE MONTH'S REVIEW

Containers for chemicals

BULK transport of goods—a railway specialty—continues to grow. Starting this month, three stainless steel containers, each 14 ft. long, will be put into service between Cook's River (N.S.W.) and Geelong. They will carry a chemical in powder form used by Shell Refining (Aust.) Pty. Ltd. The containers will be discharged pneumatically and carry back loading on the return trips to N.S.W.

70 this month

IT was 70 years ago, on June 30, that the first locomotive made at Newport Workshops went into service. In its original form it was an 0-6-0 tank type engine, 22 ft. 6 in. overall length, with 3 ft. 6 in. driving wheels, and 25 tons road-worthy weight. It was numbered 526, Z class. Ten years later, the engine was converted to No. 3 locomotive steam crane, and as such is still working. For many years the

crane, with its polished trimmings always sparkling, was a handsome sight, but advancing years have considerably tarnished its youthful lustre.

Bogie Exchange

I have followed with intense interest the development of the bogie change operation which has been pioneered by your system.

In my estimation this innovation has made the most noteworthy contribution to Australian land transport since the diesel locomotive. Our experience of this system has been mainly concerned with Sydney Adelaide and Victorian country/Sydney traffic.

Transit time, and condition of goods on arrival has shown very marked improvement. We look forward to the extension of this system to other break-of-gauge points.

The Victorian Railways are deserving of congratulations on their fine achievements in this field.

—Peter Brown, General Transport Manager, Rudder's Ltd., writing to the Chief Commercial Manager.

FRONT COVER

V.R. HISTORY published : Mr. L. J. Harrigan, author of "V.R. to '62" autographs copies of the history for Mr. G. F. Brown, Deputy Chairman of Commissioners (left) and Mr. E. P. Rogan, Commissioner.

In presenting Mr. Harrigan with the first personalized copy, the Deputy Chairman thanked him for the work he had put into the history which was "the result of a lifetime of study".

In replying, Mr. Harrigan paid tribute to the great help he had received from many railway staff in all grades and locations.

The distribution of the history is expected to be completed by the end of the month. More than 5,000 of the 6,000 copies printed have already been sold, and there is a steady demand for the remaining copies, which are available at £3 each plus postage.

Walkie workie



The communications console (above) in the Centralized Traffic Control Room at Head Office, is mobile so that, when traffic conditions necessitate, a second Train Control Officer may sit beside the first. At the top is the automatic telephone and buttons for the Melbourne-Seymour broad gauge control, using selector telephones. At the left is the "Sunday switch", so called because it enables the Controller to take over, on Sundays, the broad gauge as well as the standard gauge traffic. The lower telephone is for Head Office communication—with roster clerks, other Train Controllers etc.

Time and again, transport costs are quoted as the insuperable barrier to the development of secondary industry in country centres. In a talk, reprinted below, given by Mr. M. McLachlan, Chief Commercial Manager, before the 22nd Annual Conference of the Decentralization League at Mildura, he shows that this old

BOGEY IS A MYTH

The transport industry, and the Railways in particular, are frequently pilloried as the arch-villains in the story of decentralization. But, in fact, no other organization in Victoria has the same stake in decentralization as the Railways. Even if decentralization were not the declared policy of the Government, it would have the full support of the Railway Department, for it is only by the continued growth of population and industry in centres distant from Melbourne that the Railways can hope to gain the traffic volume necessary to fully exploit their great reserve capacity.

A big traffic demand is the very life-blood of efficient railway operations, far more so than for road transport where even the largest organizations consist essentially of a number of relatively small self-contained units. To set up even the minimum railway facilities necessary to meet modern competitive standards—50-60 m.p.h. tracks, efficient signalling and control systems, high-powered diesel and electric locomotives and their maintenance establishments, and so on—is a formidable task ; but once these facilities are there they are capable of handling very big increases in traffic at a very small additional cost to the community.

The financial well-being of the Railways depends upon a big traffic volume to reduce the overhead costs of providing and maintaining these facilities to a payable level, measured on a ton-mile basis. The essential basic traffics for which the railway system provides the only economic means of transport in the quantities required—wheat and other primary products, superphosphate, briquettes, and so on—are insufficient in themselves, at the low rates they return



Mr. McLachlan

to the Department, to cover these overheads and meet direct costs also. Therefore it is on the higher grade traffic in manufactured and partly manufactured goods that the railways must rely to bridge the gap. The growth of population and industry in country centres must necessarily be followed by an increased exchange of goods of this type between city and country.

Rates assist country

This appreciation by the Railways, of the importance of decentralization, is reflected in the railway freight rates structure, which is specifically designed to assist the development of primary and secondary country industries. Fertilizers and primary products are carried at low rates ranging from 2.15 to 3.70 pence per

ton mile ; a good example (of particular interest to the Mildura district) is export dried fruit which is carried for 2.35 pence per ton mile. Not only do the railways offer these very low rates but, what is just as vital, they provide the flexibility and reserve capacity required to meet peak traffic demands as they arise. During the wheat harvesting season there are a lot of extra costs involved in supplying wagons in the numbers and at the places necessary to keep the silos at a level to allow the continued and uninterrupted intake of wheat ; but these costs are certainly not passed on to the farmer in the freight rates.

Secondary industries helped

Turning to secondary industries, there are reduced rates conceded for raw materials and products carried on behalf of Victorian country industries. These are designed to lessen any disadvantage that may be suffered through freight costs by a country industry relying on Melbourne as its main market. They apply to raw materials carried on the down journey (that is, away from Melbourne) and manufactured products moving to the city. These reductions, which are substantial, apply to a variety of country industries, including agricultural implement works, fruit and vegetable canning, jam manufacturers, milk condenseries, rope and twine works, wineries and woollen mills.

They represent a practical and worthwhile contribution by the Railways to decentralization.

This contribution to decentralization is made wholly by the Department as it is not recouped in any way by the Government.

Further assistance by way of a contribution towards freight charges paid is available, through the Division of State Development, to an industry which can supply convincing evidence that it is suffering from the burden of transport costs.

BUT.... HOW IMPORTANT?

At this point, the question arises—just how important are freight costs in influencing the distribution of industry within the State?

The fact is that there are many industries for which freight costs need not present a serious deterrent, for the simple reason that they represent such a small proportion of the finished cost of each unit of production.

The New South Wales Division of Industrial Development and Decentralization recently made an analysis of freight costs as they affect certain industries—with surprising results.

The study showed that a sports shirt, retailing for £2, can be carried 200 miles in a goods train for 352d.—or at a freight cost of 0.75 per cent of the retail price. No country manufacturer of sports shirts will go insolvent meeting this freight cost.

If the sports shirt is sent by passenger train the freight charge is higher, but even then it is only a shade over a penny.

This means that a country manufacturer can send six dozen sports shirts by fast passenger train a distance of 200 miles to the city for the price paid by his city competitor to park his car for one day in a city parking lot.

The New South Wales study showed that freight costs for raw materials would not, as a general rule, exceed those of the finished article. So for about 2d. an article, raw material could be freighted one way, and the finished goods the other.

Certainly all these two-pences add up, and a manufacturer might say that he is worse off than his city competitor.

Country advantages

But this ignores other advantages enjoyed by country industries—a more stable work force (40 dozen shirts could be railed 200 miles for the price of a small “situations vacant” advertisement in a city newspaper); less absenteeism (48 dozen shirts can be freighted 200 miles for the cost of a day’s wages of an average employee); and more production per head, compared with city factories.

Many other items have been similarly analysed by the Division. A typewriter, for instance, selling at £90, can be carried 200 miles for 7/4d. This represents 0.39 per cent of its selling cost. A £10 battery goes the same distance for 4/2d., or 2.08 per cent of its selling price, while a £6 woman’s frock freights 200 miles for a half-penny.

There are, of course, instances where freight costs represent a burden on country industry, but it should be emphasized that this is not the universal pattern.

There, is without any doubt, a whole range of industries which would not be affected by freight charges if they pulled up their present roots in the city and moved to a country centre.

The figures quoted are, of course, from New South Wales, but Victorian freight rates are in nearly all cases lower, so that the arguments are equally applicable to Victoria.

It is clear that country centres interested in attracting industries from the metropolis should make a very close study of the low incidence of freight costs on many types of industries, and give a great deal more publicity to this positive argument for decentralization.

TRANSPORT FREEDOM WILL NOT HELP

Another assertion which often appears in the evidence given before the Parliamentary Decentralization Committee is that all that is needed to trigger off a wholesale movement of industry to the country is freedom of choice between road and rail transport. If this assertion has any sound basis, we should expect to see a remarkable growth of industry in towns within a radius of 50 miles from Melbourne, where such freedom of choice is provided for in existing legislation, and also at places immediately over the border where there is complete freedom of transport under Section 92.

That there is no sign of such a move taking place is further proof of the fact that both transport costs and freedom to choose the means of transport are greatly overstressed as factors determining the location of industry.

In the modern industrial world there are very strong forces causing major industries to group themselves

in a relatively small number of huge complexes. They are:

- the interdependence of one industry on another;
- the economics of large scale production;
- the availability of many different types of skills;
- the proximity to a large reservoir of labour, ensuring the ability to readily expand or diversify.

These forces are so strong that, when industries do not establish themselves in the metropolis they usually go to one of the larger provincial centres where an industrial background is already established.

If decentralization is to make any real headway in Victoria, efforts should be concentrated on encouraging greater industrial development in existing provincial centres where it already exists. With the mechanization of our primary industries, the only way an increasing population can be absorbed is in cities and towns; in other words, by increasing centralization. *The problem is to control this centralization and spread as much of it as practicable over centres other than Melbourne.* However, the number of centres in Victoria capable of this type of development will never be large.

Does country subsidize city?

A fallacy that receives an airing from time to time is that, because the Railway Department’s freight business results in a profit and the suburban passenger business in a loss, the country dweller is subsidizing the city worker.

For a start, this argument overlooks the fact that country passenger services lose far more heavily than suburban. On an absolute basis, the loss on country passengers is nearly twice that on suburban; per passenger mile it is five times greater; and per passenger carried it is sixty times as great.

The real fallacy in the argument, however, lies in its assumption that, while the country consumer pays the freight on goods produced in the city and railed to the country, it is the country producer who pays the freight on country produce railed for consumption in the city. This, of course, is not so. The only logical approach is to accept that the final price to the consumer of every article sold covers all its costs of production, including freight; this applies irrespective of who actually pays the bill to the transport operator.

The city consumer, therefore, is contributing quite a large share of the Department’s freight bill from traffic originating in the country.

One-quarter from interstate

Moreover, with the growing industrialization of the State, the nature of our freight traffic is becoming more diversified, with the emphasis moving from primary products to industrial raw materials and finished products handled in bulk. No less than 26% of our freight revenue now comes from interstate traffic, consisting almost entirely of manufactured goods moving between capital cities, steel products moving from, and scrap steel moving to, the steelmaking centres of New South Wales.

That portion of our goods traffic on which the countryman can reasonably be said to be meeting the freight charges, namely, raw materials and manufactured products hauled for country consumption and primary products hauled for export, accounts for a little less than 50 per cent of our total freight revenue. The rest is being met by secondary industry or city consumers.

Satellite towns

One aspect of decentralization which is put forward from time to time is the possible development of satellite dormitory towns, within a radius of 50 miles or so from Melbourne, as an alternative to a continuation of the outward spreading, all-embracing suburban sprawl. The railway periodical fare structure is particularly helpful to developments of this type—for example, the cost per week of a monthly periodical ticket from Woodend to Melbourne (48½ miles) is £1.9.5d., only 5/5d. more than from Frankston (26½ miles) and certainly no more than it would cost many a suburban motorist to drive daily to, and park his car in the city.

V.R. SPREAD

So far, the Railway Department’s contribution towards decentralization, in its relations with the rest of the community, has been dealt with. But the Victorian Railways itself is very effectively decentralized.

About one-third of all railwaymen—roughly 10,000—are located in the country.

The railways are, therefore, one of the State’s biggest decentralized industries, distributing in the country about £9 million a year in wages.

The second aspect of this question is the distribution of the staff over the State and the incidence of variations in particular places. With such a large number employed, it is inevitable that changed conditions can bring about an ebb and flow of staff at particular places. This happens regularly each year in the wheat areas, where the staff at many places is augmented temporarily to handle the harvest movement.

Moreover, where there has been a decline at one place due to reduced activity in some particular direction, other railway changes at the same place have resulted in the overall number employed being maintained or, in some cases, actually increased.



200 MILES

This applies especially at towns where there are locomotive depots. Because diesel and electric locomotives can run much higher mileages without attention than steam, and also need more skill and specialized equipment to maintain them, the servicing of the Department’s whole fleet of these locomotives is concentrated in a single depot at South Dynon, Melbourne. This must necessarily result in the progressive closing of redundant country steam locomotive depots as the change from steam to diesel takes place. The consequent staff reduction is being achieved by a gradual tapering down due to natural wastage, with staff transfers kept to a minimum.

At several of the places where this is happening, increased railway business—for which, incidentally, the diesel locomotives would be at least partly responsible—has led to an increase in the number of employees

in other sections, with the result that, taking one town with another, the overall employment figures are being maintained.

More staff in country workshops

The workshops at Ballarat and Bendigo are also good examples of the active support the Commissioners give to decentralization as a general policy. In recent years, both workshops have been enlarged and the range of work done, considerably widened. Carriages and wagons previously overhauled in Melbourne are now sent to Ballarat and Bendigo, while many components for suburban train maintenance are now made or repaired at those two workshops.

With the recent installation of wheel and axle turning equipment, Ballarat has been made the centre for the reconditioning and distribution of wheel and axle sets for both the Ballarat and Geelong districts.

This growth in the workshops’ size, and the greater range of work handled, has naturally led to substantial increases in their staff. In the past eight years, staff at Ballarat North Workshops have risen from 480 to 660, and at Bendigo North Workshops from 445 to 710—an additional 445 employees at those two locations alone.

Suggestions have been made that, to offset the gradual reduction in locomotive depot staff at places such as, for example, Ararat, a repair depot be established there. (The overall number of railway staff employed at Ararat has fallen by about 16 in five years.) But, with the fully equipped Ballarat Workshops, only 57 miles away, the establishment of duplicate facilities at Ararat—even to a smaller extent—cannot be justified economically or practically.

It can be seen, therefore, that the adoption of modern methods and equipment has brought about changes which have reduced railway staff at some places but increased them at others. The overall effect is at least to maintain the total number of staff employed in the country.

Ally not enemy

The railways are an active ally, not an enemy, of decentralization.

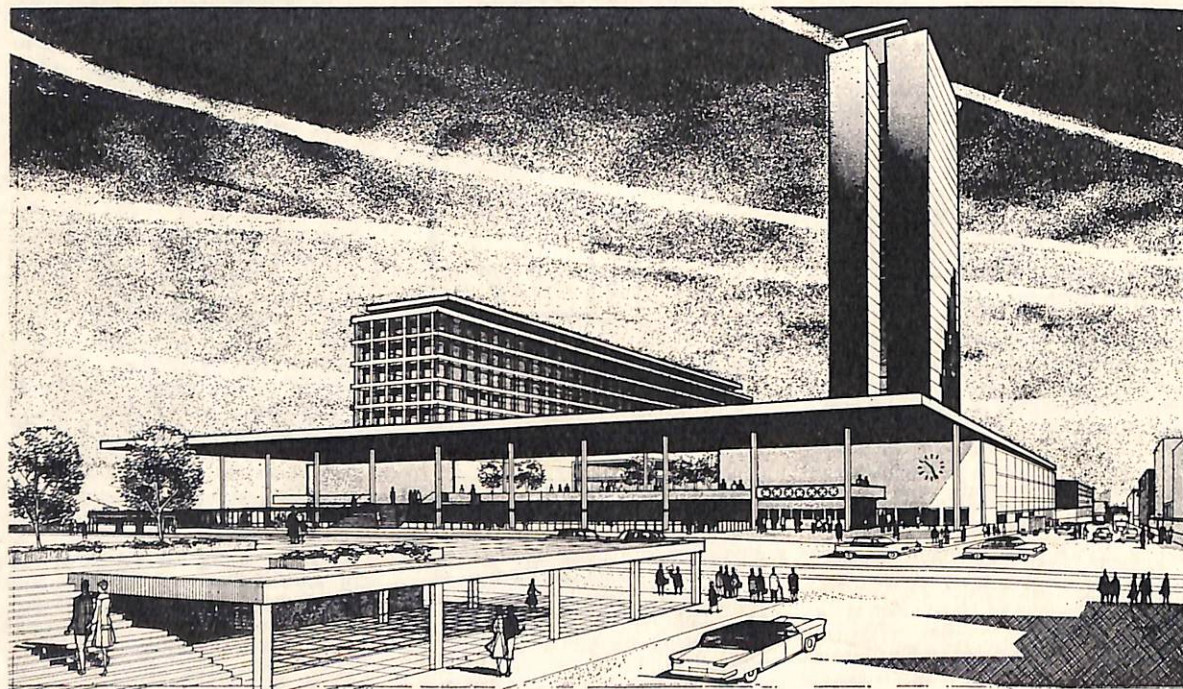
They thrive on volume; the more work they get, the better their services become and the lower the unit cost. Railways are necessary if the primary industry of the State is to survive; but a railway system starved for traffic can never reveal more than a fraction of its true potential.

£30 MILLION PLAN FOR FLINDERS STREET

LAST month, one of Melbourne's biggest and most important projects was announced jointly by the Minister of Transport, Mr. E. R. Meagher, and Mr. H. K. Jones, Managing Director of H.K.J. Pty. Ltd., the company that has signed an agreement with the Commissioners to develop the Flinders Street station site.

The plan, when completed, will remove old landmarks and radically change the Flinders Street station area and the vistas along Elizabeth and adjoining streets.

Instead of the familiar clock tower that has closed the city end of Flinders Street for over 50 years, a tall building soaring up to 30 or even 60 storeys is planned. And, of course, the dome at the Swanston Street end—one of Melbourne's most photographed and most characteristic landmarks—will also disappear.



Artist's impression of the planned new Flinders Street Station buildings, viewed from St. Paul's corner. In foreground is a part of the open plaza of the Princes Gate development (see last month's *News Letter*).

The company behind the plan—H.K.J. Pty. Ltd.—has been formed by 50 Melbourne businessmen and has a 99-year lease on the 10-acre site. Directors of the company are city solicitor Mr. R. N. Vroland (Chairman), development and marketing consultant Mr. H. K. Jones (Managing Director), city accountant Mr. M. I. Tomlins, and master builder Mr. F. O. Watts.

Development of the site will need

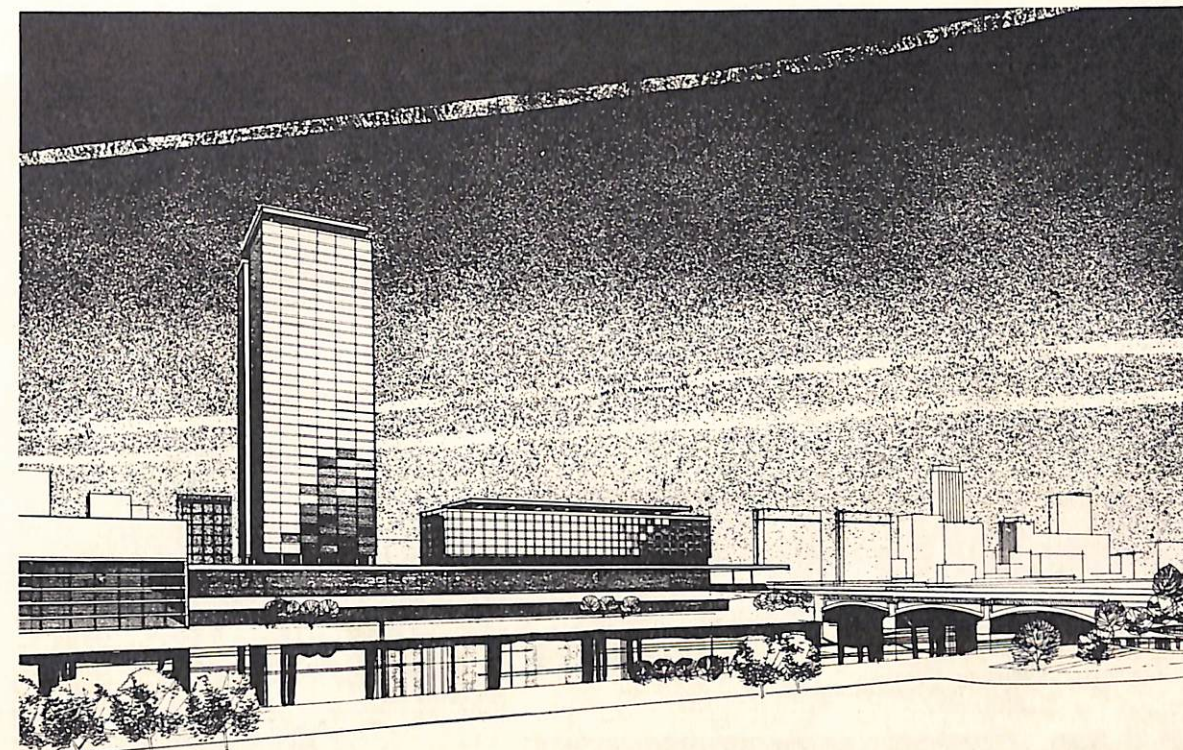
the approval of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, Melbourne City Council and other authorities controlling the City of Melbourne.

Exhaustive tests of the Flinders Street railway station site by the company's architects and their consulting structural engineers have confirmed the suitability of the site for the project.

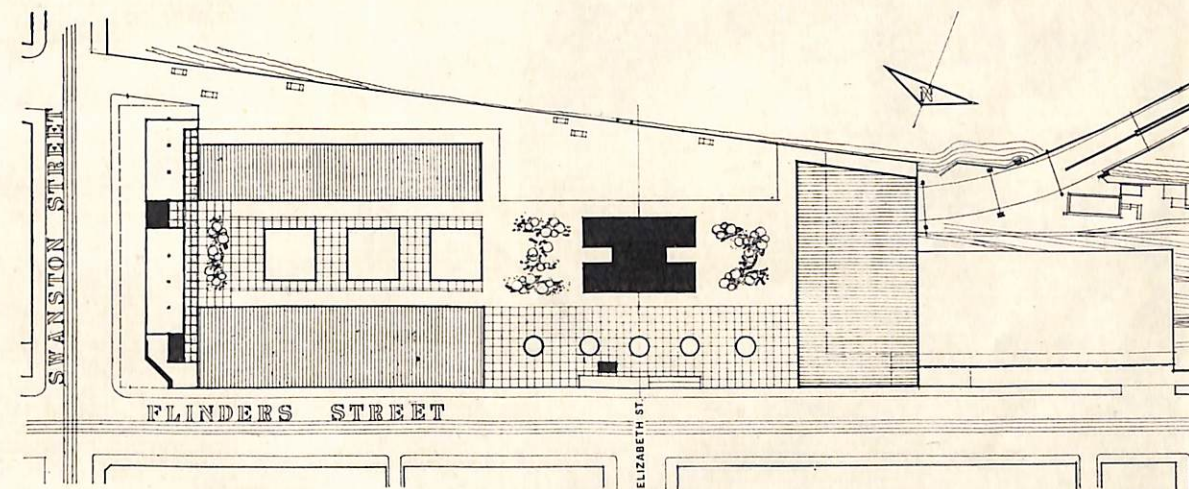
Freestanding low and tall buildings

will be erected and the site developed with due regard to the surrounding landscape and buildings. If the City Council approved, the buildings could be higher than any now in Melbourne or, up to the present, planned.

Every effort will be made to prevent interference with the views and outlook of the historic St. Paul's Cathedral.



Artist's impression of the buildings, viewed from the south bank of the river.



Ground plan of the scheme

Other important details include :

- a spacious city plaza or square surrounded by the buildings ;
- a service road skirting the Yarra river side and leading from Princes Bridge through to Queen Street ;
- provision of a shopping mall, specialty shops, office buildings, a hotel, permanent manufacturers' exhibition, reception room, theatre and professional suites.

Work will begin next year, the company announced. It will be done in stages and completed in seven years. Money for the estimated cost—£25 to £30 million—will be obtained from five overseas countries and Australia.

As far as the Railways are concerned, there are problems associated with the plan that the public may not, at first, fully realize. During construction, trains must be kept running punctually—nearly 2,000 are scheduled through the

station on week days—and the big peak hour crowds handled with a minimum of inconvenience.

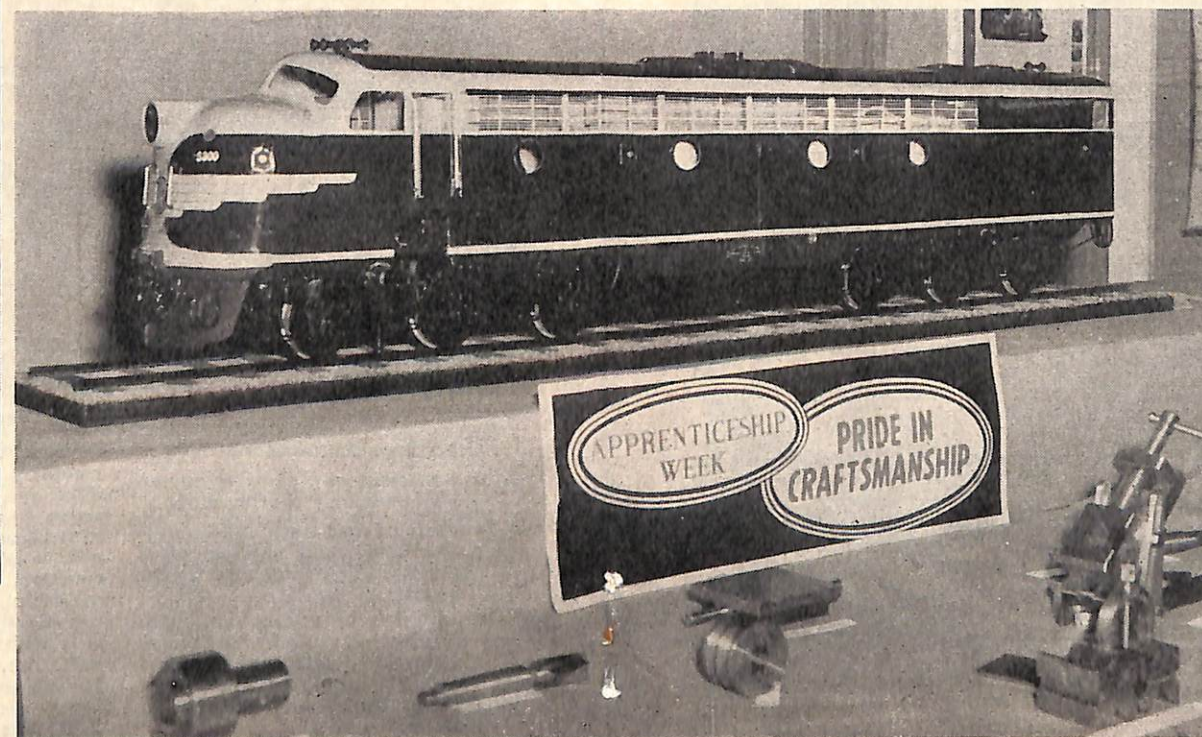
Building of the present Flinders Street station began in 1901 and was completed in 1910. Its design was the result of a competition, arranged by the Victorian Railways in 1899, which attracted 17 entries. First prize, worth £500, was awarded to Messrs. J. W. Fawcett and H. P. C. Ashworth, both of the Existing Lines Branch ; their plan portrayed the building as it exists today.

AROUND THE SYSTEM

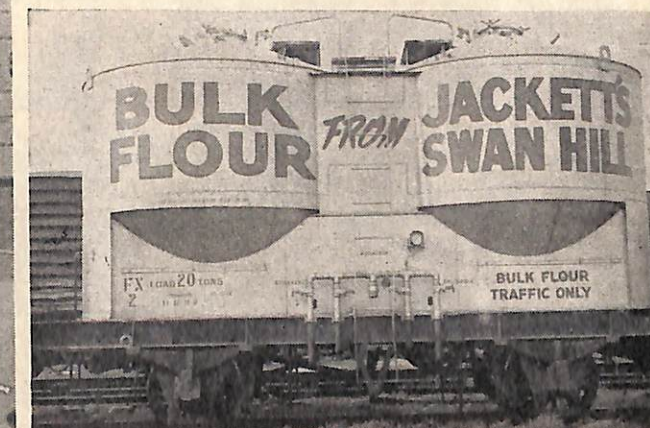
CHILDREN at the Orthopaedic Hospital, Mt. Eliza, are using some of the equipment provided by the hospital's Railway Employees Auxiliary. Donations made by railway staff have now passed £28,000.



THEY'LL STOP TRAINS : Although, these days, no one seems to be beating swords into ploughshares, the Victoria Police and the Victorian Railways co-operate to turn pistols into brake blocks. A batch of those firearms is being placed in a bin for loading into a furnace at Newport Workshops Foundry. After smelting with the other metal in the furnace, they will be cast into brake blocks. The weapons have been confiscated or surrendered, and those not suitable for use by the police are destroyed in this way.



MAINTENANCE of the millions of pounds worth of Departmental buildings is a never-ending job. At Mirboo North, Plumber F. Clowes (on roof) and his assistant, L. Cottier, are renewing the roofing iron on the station verandah.

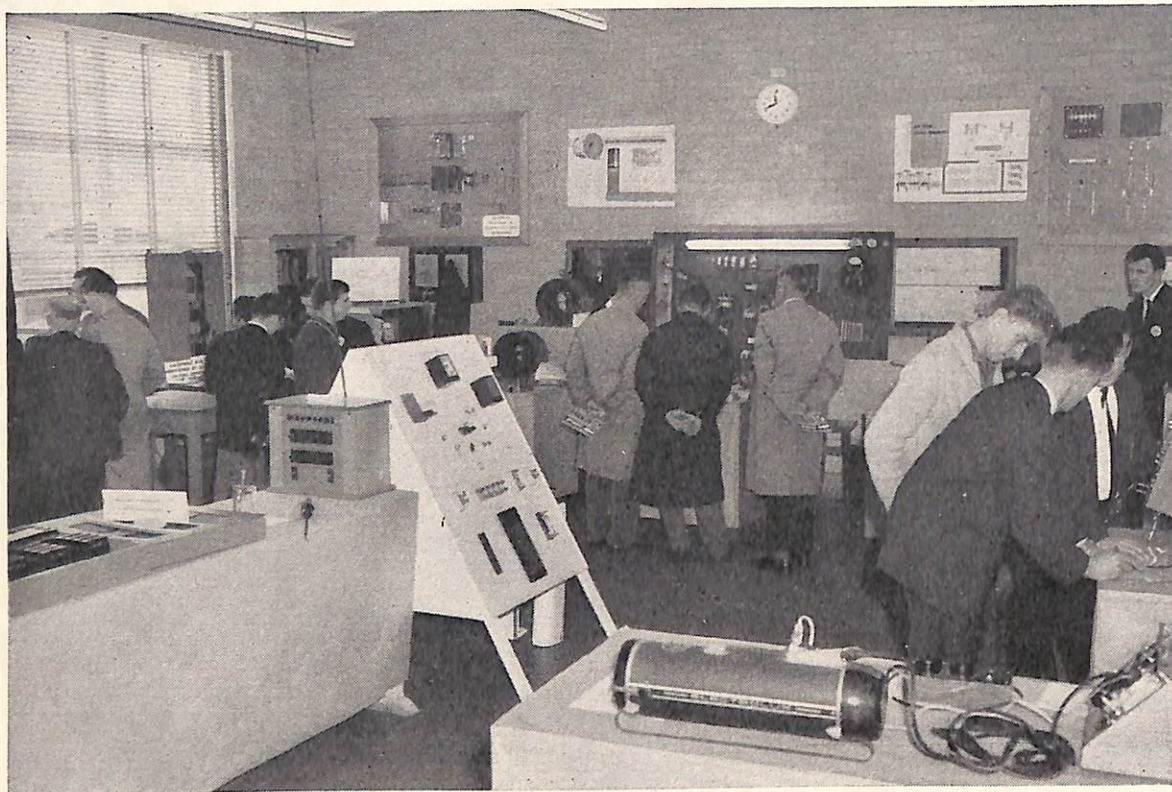


TWO JOBS IN ONE : One of seven special wagons that carry the consignor's flour in bulk and advertise it at the same time. The wagons are discharged pneumatically.

NEW MODEL : Shown at the Apprenticeship Display at the V.R. Technical College, this 1/12th scale model of S 300, made at the Fitters and Turners Training Centre at Newport Workshops, is one of the latest additions to the Department's fleet of models. Building them provides excellent training for apprentices and valuable models that will be used for many years in railway publicity. When placed in displays models are always crowd stoppers.

TRADES BEHIND THE TRAIN

AS the Department's contribution to Apprenticeship Week, the V.R. Technical College and the apprentice manual training centres at Newport Workshops were open for public inspection last month.



General view of exhibits in the electrical display.



Graeme, an apprentice fitter and turner, demonstrates the use of a surface gauge to his parents Mr. and Mrs. D. Whitaker (left). At right is Mr. J. A. Douglas, College Principal.

At the college was a fascinating display that revealed something of the great variety of skills needed to operate a modern railway system. It was a cross section of the crafts behind the train. In the various rooms were exhibits of work from 25 grades of apprentices—a variety that few other industries in the State could equal. Also in the area was the Department's mobile display featuring its model railway and supplying general railway information.

Attracting much attention were the nine accurate 1/12th scale models of a diesel-electric locomotive, roomette, sitting carriage and various freight vehicles. Most were built by apprentices.

The display, as a whole, was educational on three levels :

- to apprentices who saw what youths in other trades were doing ;

- to their parents (and also Departmental supervisors) who could see the sound training the lads were receiving ;
- to members of the public who could realize the " brains behind the trains ".

All of the youths' parents were invited, and—considering the display was held during the week—quite a large number accepted. Indeed, in one training centre where there are 48 lads, the parents of 45 of them came. Some arrived from as far as Wangaratta, and even from Murrayville, 356 miles away. While there, parents were able to meet their lads' supervisors and talk over any problems that the youths might have.

All the apprentices in the metropolitan area and groups from Bendigo North and Ballarat North Workshops were invited. The latter two groups comprised those who had not visited one of the previous displays.

At regular intervals, buses left the College to take visitors to the manual training centres where they saw apprentices engaged on their normal trade training projects.

Educational experts were considerably impressed by the display ; and members of the public commented favourably on the way in which information was so readily supplied by the youths in charge of the various exhibits.

As well as the Newport exhibition, there was an eye-catching display—*Trades Behind Trains*—at the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau in Collins Street. It featured a 1/12th scale model diesel-electric locomotive made by V.R. apprentices, and modern railway equipment that the boys would eventually maintain as qualified tradesmen.



The 1/12th scale models on exhibition.



Instructor D. Martin shows a teaching aid to Mrs. N. Arkley. At right is her son Robert, an apprentice fitter and turner.

HOLIDAY AT 100

AT the age of 100, Miss Minnie Browne, of Gardenvale, decided to take a holiday in Sydney.

It was the first time she had been out of Victoria since she was seven.

So, accompanied by a friend she simply boarded *Southern Aurora* and after a short stay in Sydney returned by the same train last month.

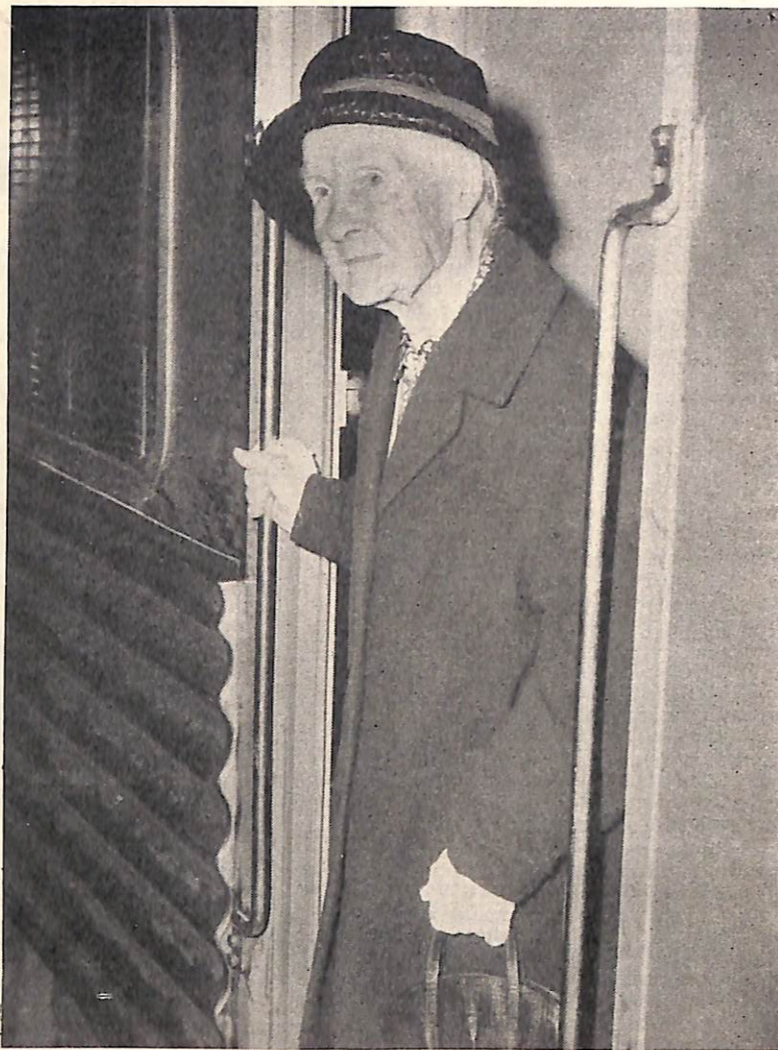
"I went by *Southern Aurora* on the recommendation of a friend" Miss Browne told *News Letter*.

"I had a most enjoyable trip . . . the conductor was wonderful . . . and that breakfast in bed very nice", she added.

Miss Browne came to Victoria as a child, in 1869, from Hobart where her father was City Surveyor.

At first the family lived in Prahran and she recalls the convict gangs working at road mending and the aboriginals living in humpies along Dandenong Road. At her home in Prahran the natives would call to give displays of boomerang throwing in return for a coin. Later the family took a house in Malvern, in which suburb she lived for nearly 90 years.

Next month Miss Browne will be 101 and has decided to celebrate her birthday with a trip to Adelaide on another of Australia's finest trains—*The Overland*.



Miss Browne arriving in Melbourne by *Southern Aurora* last month (Age photograph).

A SHAVING MYSTERY

Do you get a better shave on trains?

THIS question was raised recently by Mr. W. H. Day, a city chemist, who strongly maintained that he definitely does get a better shave on trains, and asked if the Department could throw any light on the matter.

Mr. Day explained that normally it takes him about 15 minutes to shave as he has the difficult combination of a tough beard with a tender skin. He uses a well known brand of safety razor blades but can only get one really good shave out of each blade.

While on a rail trip to Brisbane, about two years ago, he found he could get a much better shave in about a quarter of the time. At that time, he attributed it to a packet of extra good blades.

Recently, Mr. Day went to Perth by train and the same experience was repeated. The blade sliced through his beard and gave him quick and easy shaves. To use his own words, his "whiskers cut like butter", and he shaved in three minutes. What is more, he obtained

three shaves from the same blade, instead of the usual one.

Yet, after leaving the train, shaving was as difficult as ever at his Perth hotel.

Mr. Day has experimented with adding softening chemicals to the shaving water at home, in an attempt to get the same easy shaves, but, so far, without success.

Departmental experts can offer no explanation to account for Mr. Day's experience. If any reader has a likely theory, *News Letter* will be glad to know of it.

The Victorian Railways News Letter

Lines FROM OTHER Lines



The world's first direct-fired, coal-burning gas turbine-electric locomotive which is undergoing road tests on the Union Pacific railroad (America). Designed and built by Union Pacific, the complete locomotive is rated at 7,000 h.p. It consists of a 2,000 h.p. diesel-electric unit, a 5,000 h.p. coal-fired gas turbine unit and a tender which carries coal pulverizing equipment and coal. Total length of the two units and tender is 215 feet. (*Railway Age*)

A private underground

WHEN the usual problem in American cities—traffic congestion caused by private motor cars—threatened decay of the main business area in the Texas city of Fort Worth, Leonards, the biggest department store in the town, came up with a new answer in a private underground railway of its own.

Previously, the firm had bought a large area for free parking, some distance away from their huge emporium. Customers then travelled by bus to the shop. But the buses gave a slow and hot ride. So Leonards built a private, mile-long, double-tracked underground tunnel running between the parking area and their shop—which extends over four blocks. The rolling stock consists of five tram cars equipped with modern seats and air-conditioning.

The underground, opened recently, can carry up to 500 passengers from the parking lot to the store's basement every 3½ minutes.

It begins running at 7.30 a.m. even though the store does not open till 9 a.m. and the ride is free.

Snake-pit

LEWIS MUMFORD, the well-known authority on urban and regional development, in an article in the *New Yorker* magazine, hit out at Britain for its failure to profit from United States' mistakes in transport.

"Britain", he said, "has lately

brought forth a new society dedicated to the perverse object of wiping out the nation's railway system and bringing both people and goods into London by bus and truck. Apparently only the blind and the half fully qualify as traffic experts. Somewhere I've seen the U.S. highway network related to the famous Greek statue of Laocoon—the old fellow and his sons being squeezed to death by some big snakes. A perfect representation of any large U.S. city today—and more serpents on the job every time you look".

(*Railway Gazette*)

Another farm shifted

SIR . . . The news item "Train Shifts Farm" on page 58 of your April issue brought to mind a similar journey in Victoria 43 years ago. In May 1920, a farmer chartered a special train to move his family, furniture, pets, livestock and implements from Boolara to Piangil.

I well recollect the hectic time we had unloading the cattle and sheep in particular, getting them past the curious onlookers in Piangil, and over the Murray to Goodnight, N.S.W., a distance of 9 miles. This involved several crossings by the old punt at Tooleybuc, the capacity of which was very limited, and by the time the whole move was completed we had all "had it".

—Harold W. Holden, 40 Wallace Avenue, Murrumbidgee.

The woman's touch

A major western U.S. railroad—the Burlington—has a reputation for its skilful wooing of passengers. A firm believer in the future of railroad travel, this road pampers passengers with fine equipment and service, says an article in *Modern Railroads*. One of the Burlington's secret weapons to increase its passenger traffic is Mary Lou Gordon, its Supervisor of Passenger Services. Just about any problem that concerns passenger comfort concerns Miss Gordon.

"Railroads can't fight time", she says, "but they can sell the comforts and advantages of train travel . . ."

Expressways

BIGGER and better expressways breed bigger and better traffic jams. This, essentially, was what an independent engineering firm found during an 18-month study of Chicago transport. In their report, the firm recommended, among other things, a £17 million extension of Chicago Transit Authority's rapid transit system in the middle strip of an expressway as "the most effective means of reducing traffic congestion" on existing highways. "Effective public transportation is . . . a necessity if the benefits of a free-flowing transportation system are to be realized," was another conclusion of the report.

—(*Railway Age*)

AMONG OURSELVES . .

Yallourn's A.S.M.'s.



Assistant Stationmasters S. Findlay (left) and H. Collins (right) are both well known residents of Yallourn. Mr. Collins has been there for 26 years and Mr. Findlay, 14 years. They are both keenly interested in local football, cricket, and bowling clubs.

First V.R.I. Lecture

RAILWAYMEN who are planning careers for their sons will be interested in this season's first V.R.I. lecture which will be held in the V.R.I. Ballroom, Flinders Street on Wednesday, June 26, at 7.30 p.m.

The subject will be *Training of the Railway Apprentice* and will be presented in the form of a display to be followed by four lecturettes—

The Selection of the Apprentice, (Mr. R. Turner, V.R. Employment Officer);

The Apprentice at the Various Railway Training Centres. (Mr. S. Curwood, Senior Instructor);

The Apprentice at the Newport Technical College, (Mr. A. Douglas, College Principal);

The Apprentice in the Workshop, (Mr. R. Curtis, Supervisor of Apprentices).

In addition to a display of models and equipment relating to the various trades, and actually made by the apprentices, working exhibits of lathes, etc., manned by the lads will be in operation.

At the conclusion of the evening, a light supper will be served to all who desire it. Free rail passes for off-duty country railway staff who wish to attend are available. Applications for a pass should be made to the General Secretary, V.R.I. Flinders Street.

Leads Centralian tour

LEADER of a Youth Hostels Association tour to Central Australia is Mr. Alan Holliday, a clerk at Melbourne Goods. Leaving by *The Overland* on August 4, the party will establish a base camp at Alice Springs (for which they are taking a portable hostel) and make trips to Ayers Rock etc. as required. They will be returning on August 18-21. Alan points out that the party is open to any *News Letter* readers provided they notify him before July 2. The cost, for those who have a pass, is £37 inclusive; without pass, £55.

Another super record

THE record daily loading of superphosphate made on March 19—9,904 tons (617 wagons)—was exceeded on April 4 when 10,423 tons (651 wagons) were loaded.

Teamwork

MAY I pass on the story of a lost child, namely, my daughter, Christina, aged 3½ years, who was missing for four hours on Thursday afternoon.

The story deals with the wonderful assistance we received from police and railways.

We live just outside Ascot Vale railway station. When my daughter was missing for a period I contacted the Missing Persons Bureau. I was

then advised to contact railway central automatic, which I did with remarkable results.



Mrs. Young

Two operators, Aileen and Nancy, (all the information they gave me when I thanked them) connected me with every station from Broadmeadows to Sandringham.

All I had to do was hang on, then pass to every stationmaster in turn Christina's description.

To me this was a remarkable effort. It was done in a manner so courteous and obliging that you would think it was an everyday occurrence.

To say "thank you" seems somewhat inadequate and I only hope that you may be able to pass on publicly our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the Railways and Missing Persons Bureau.

—Mr. and Mrs. C. Harty, Ascot Vale, in Melbourne "Age". (Railway telephonists were Mrs. Aileen Young and Miss Nancy Le Fevre of the Head Office exchange. Ed.)



Miss Le Fevre

Children's Library

MANY children—and young teen-agers—have been delighted to find a special section of their own at the V.R.I. Library.

During the last six months, hundreds of new books, covering a wide range of interesting subjects, have been bought.

Members may borrow books from this section without extra charge. Inspection is invited, and a complete catalogue available on request. (Write, or ring auto. 1574.)

Warrnambool Tech. reunion

DURING the weekend of July 20 and 21, the Warrnambool Technical College will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of its founding. There will be a reunion of ex-students and former members of the staff. Anyone who is interested may obtain details from the Principal of the College.

Death of Mr N. C. Harris

NEWS LETTER regrets to record the death, last month, of Mr. Norman Charles Harris, at the age of 76. Mr. Harris was Chairman of Commissioners from 1940 to 1950 and a Commissioner from 1933. Prior to that, he had been Chief Mechanical Engineer for five years. Mr. Harris served overseas with the Australian Engineers in the first world war and was awarded the D.S.O. and M.C. In the second world war he was a member of the war railway committee, chairman of the transport sub-committee of the State Emergency Council, and member of the Ministry of Munitions board of area management. He was an active member of the Melbourne Legacy Club, and a trustee of the Dafydd Lewis Scholarship Trust.

Mr. Harris received the C.M.G. in 1949. The Department's new suburban trains were named after him.

Around Victoria

FOR the five days over Easter I travelled with 60 members of the Senior Branch of the Girl Guide Movement around Victoria, in three carriages of your trains - three carriages in which we slept, making various trips around the countryside by bus at each stop and either living off the land in the shape of the local Guide Companies or in your Railway Refreshment Rooms. I would like to tell you how tremendously impressed I was throughout the trip by the standard of helpfulness and courtesy shown us by railway personnel everywhere.

I think they had thought of almost everything they could do to help us and make the trip go smoothly; and our relations with the railways throughout were a real pleasure. I should also add that they were not only helpful, but extremely efficient,

while the standard of service in the Railway Refreshment Rooms (and at Hamilton where we were fed in the R.I.), was of a very high standard. For instance, at Camperdown where we had two breakfasts, I noticed that on both occasions the 60 girls were served, ate a good breakfast and were out of the Room within 25 minutes, yet there was no suggestion of them being hustled or hurried along at any stage. They came in, received their breakfast piping hot, ate it at their leisure and were gone in 25 minutes. For 60 people, this was no mean feat!

Having mentioned Camperdown, I must add that the Station Masters at Camperdown, Warrnambool, Hamilton, Ararat and Ballarat were all most co-operative and so were the catering staff in the Refreshment Rooms, at Hamilton and Ararat also. —(Mrs) A. F. Rylah, Senior Branch Adviser, writing to the Chairman of Commissioners.

The wheat harvest

DELIVERIES of wheat to this Board during the 1962/63 harvest amounted to 64,922,000 bushels. . . . a new record in this Board's bulk wheat receipts. Unfortunately wet weather interrupted harvesting operations and caused damage to many millions of bushels

of wheat.

On the transport side your Department again rendered very effective service and supplied 33,928 trucks to take wheat delivered in excess of country elevator capacities away to other storage. Varying qualities of wheat presented some acute handling problems at Geelong, particularly when it was necessary to ensure that only a fair average of the whole State's wheat crop was being loaded for early shipments. . . . I, therefore, ask you to personally accept this Board's thanks for your valuable help and I wish you to convey the Board's appreciation of such service to your fellow Commissioners and the Officers and Staff of your Department.

At the Board Meeting at which it was determined to convey this letter of appreciation to you, Mr. Evans, the Wheatgrowers Representative on the Board, made a request that you be specially advised that as the Wheatgrowers' Representative he wished to extend to you the growers' thanks and appreciation for the very satisfactory manner in which the season's record wheat harvest had been transported by your Department.

—H. Glowrey, Chairman and General Manager, Grain Elevators Board, writing to the Chairman of Commissioners.

RECENT RETIREMENTS...

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Brens, A., Melbourne Goods
Bewry, L. R., North Melbourne
Barrand, R. D., Frankston
Reed, M. G., O.P.O. Spencer Street
Simpkins, H. G., Geelong
Ryan, M. J., Melbourne Goods
Fewster, J. J., Flinders Street
Webb, F. A. J., Dandenong
Draper, E. N., Spencer Street
Fitzsimmons, J. J., Dandenong
Argall, J. F., Prahran
Rees, J. W., Lilydale
Papp, B. A. (Mrs.), Flinders Street

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

Green, H. K., Head Office
Taylor, D. E., Ironworks, North Melb.
Day, C. P., W.F. Seymour

Gillies, E. G., R.F. Laurens Street
Roberts, A. E., W.F. Bendigo
Kingdom, F. J., R.F. Warragul
Letch, W. H., Spotswood Workshops
Rice, F. G., W.F. Flinders Street
Peterson, A. H., W.F. Flinders Street
Eldridge, A. J., S. & T. Flinders Street
Lancaster, N. P., W.F. Flinders Street
Smith, C. A. (Mrs.), R.F. Caulfield
Spencer, W. J., R.F. Maryborough
Flower, E. W., S. & T. Flinders Street
Barnett, J. T., Flinders Street
Scrofano, G., R.F. Caulfield
Osborne, M., W.F. Ararat

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

BRANCH
McKenzie, R. D., Newmarket Substation

McMahon, J. M., Electrical Workshops,

Spencer Street

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Mann, G. A. B., N.M. Shops
Dunn, H. T., Bendigo North
Dimitrakopoulos, K., Newport
Holmes, C. F., N.M. Shops
Isherwood, N. C., N.M. Shops
McGuire, J., N.M. Shops
Griffin, J., Newport
Lane, E. V., Head Office
O'Connell, T. M., Bendigo
Porter, F., Bendigo North
Hoare, J., Newport
Muziks, J., N.M. Shops
Murray, A., Newport
Menoudakis, G., Jolimont
Long, C. C., Jolimont

REFRESHMENT SERVICES

BRANCH

Shelly, A. (Miss), Geelong
MacDonald, E. (Mrs.), Ballarat
King, T. (Mrs.), Spencer Street

STORES BRANCH

Smith, F. R., Newport Workshops
Storehouse
Swalwell, F., Newport Workshops
Storehouse
Pastras, I., Newport Workshops Storehouse

ACCOUNTANCY BRANCH

McClounan, T. G., Flinders Street
Heron, S., Flinders Street
Pearce, A. J., Flinders Street
Goff, L. E., Head Office
Anderson, F., Flinders Street

...AND DEATHS

TRAFFIC BRANCH

Boucher, N. C., Flinders Street

WAY AND WORKS BRANCH

O'Shea, E. E., Ironworks, North Melbourne
Michailidis, P., C/o Engineer, Special Works

ROLLING STOCK BRANCH

Watson, W. F., E.R. Depot
Scott, J. C. T., Ararat
Willcocks, P. S., Newport

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

BRANCH
Fitzgerald, J., Light and Power Depot, Batman Avenue



RON BAGGOTT'S SPORTS PAGE



A marking duel in the match between Newport and Codon

Football

A five point win over Newport, last year's premiers, has left North Loco undefeated at the head of the V.R.I. Football League ladder.

The outstanding goal kicking performance for many seasons was recorded this month when Brian Rimes, playing full forward for Newport, kicked thirteen of his side's 20 goals against Codon.

Results for the month were :

Loco. 11-12 beat Melb. Yard 4-2
Sub. Lines 11-8 beat Melb. Yd. 3-9
Loco. 7-5 beat Newport 6-6
Newport 20-13 beat Codon 0-4
Loco. 10-9 beat Sub. Lines 3-2
Melb. Yard 8-10 beat Codon 2-2
Newport 18-7 beat Sub. Lines 5-3

Bowls

During the 1963 season the V.R.I. Social Bowling Club played matches under electric light at the Kew, Toorak, Middle Park, Brighton, St. Kilda, Elsternwick, Northcote, Moreland and Richmond Union Clubs. In addition, some Sunday afternoon games were played against the Albert Park—V.R.I. Club.

The season was recently brought to a fitting and successful close when "Guest Day" was held at Albert Park with one rink from each of the above Clubs taking part against rinks from the Social Bowling Club.

Trophies for the winning visiting rink went to Northcote and those for the best V.R.I. rink to that skippered by Stan Stivey.

Golf

THE Latrobe Golf Links were again the venue for the annual match between the Postal and Railways Institutes in which more than 80 players took part, the Postal Institute being host on this occasion.

The teams event for the R. L. Edwards Shield provided the closest contest on record, victory going to the Postal Institute—17 games to 16 with four drawn.

In the individual stableford competition, trophy winners were :

Railways—A. Wilkinson, winner ; L. Cummins, runner up ;

Postal—S. Farren, winner ; W. Pride, runner up.

At the conclusion of play a very happy and informal social function was held at which the presentations were made by Mr. W. Walker, Secretary for Railways, and Mr. A. Stephens Assistant Director Telecommunications. Many other senior officers of both bodies also attended.

New Club

RAILWAY golfers in the district were quick to take advantage of the newly formed Geelong V.R.I. Golf Club. The membership has already passed the 40 mark.

The majority of members attended

the club's first "Captain's Day" at Queenscliff recently for a good day's golf.

Results : Four Ball, G. Scholes and M. Kewish (net 150) ; "A" Stroke, N. Roberts (net 70) ; "B" Stroke, S. Irvine (net 75) ; Secret Nine, E. Brown (net 32).

New members will be welcomed. Further information is available from the Secretary Mr. G. Scholes, C/- Geelong Loco.

Fencing

MEMBERS of the V.R.I. Fencing Club started 1963 with a clean sweep in every competition held so far by the Victorian Amateur Fencing Association. The Open Sabre Championship was won by Mr. E. J. Szakall, who came back from temporary retirement to win that title. Runner up was Mr. L. Tornallyay also from the V.R.I. The V.R.I. 'A' team (Messrs. A. Djoneff, P. J. Hardiman, G. Bardavy, J. N. Simpson, E. J. Szakall and L. Tornallyay) won every event in the three weapon team tournament from five other clubs and recorded the V.R.I.'s 12th win in 13 years for the V.R.I. Council Cup. The Victorian Association's new trophy—the State Cup—was also won by the V.R.I. 'A' team. The V.R.I. Ladies team (Misses P. Brinsmead, M. Learey and J. Salusinszky) were successful in winning the annual ladies' team event which was contested by six clubs.