# PORT BAY EXPRESS

Official Newsletter of the Portarlington Bayside Miniature Railway Inc.

**Volume No.8 – Issue No.8.** 

**August**, 2023.



Graeme Robinson drives "James" and passenger train passing the Point Richards Signal Box and arriving into Platform No.1 on a cloudy Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2023. Graeme is one of our happy band of volunteers whose help we much appreciate. We need more volunteers – want to join us ??. (Picture: Brian Coleman)

### **OUR PRESIDENT REPORTS:**

• We are holding a few Working Bees on Sundays when we are not running and your assistance is earnestly requested. It is very important to get a few jobs completed that are "on the books" and your valued help is always sought. Notices will be sent out when they are being held. Please support them.....

- It is still obvious that we need more volunteers. All members are strongly encouraged to try and recruit a new member into our ranks to ease the burden of us all...Please consider!!.
- The month of July turned out to be a good month for the mini railway, what with 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday running (2<sup>nd</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>) plus a Winter School Holiday Run (5<sup>th</sup>) made for that "little bit extra" running calendar with a slight increase in passengers carried being noted and recorded.....

**Keith Stasinowsky – President.** 



# FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK:

- There are vacancies for Party Bookings. The miniature railway makes for that ideal facility for your family. Contact our Party Bookings Person Keith on 0476-124-598.
- Have you renewed your membership Subscription yet ??. Renewal Forms have been issued to all members and you are requested to renew your subscription without further delay.
- The Q Train, Libby Coker, MP & Alison Marchant, MP have joined our band of Carriage Advertising Sponsors. Their support is very much appreciated.
- Our 8<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, 12th August, 2023. Formal Notices have been sent out and the Annual Report is being finalised as we go to press.

Brian Coleman - Secretary.

#### Australian Miniature Railways. Part 5 – St Kilda Railway

From the early days of Melbourne, St Kilda has been an attractive place to be close to the beach. Closer to town, at Port Melbourne, the land was flat and swampy. A hilly part of St Kilda is close to the beach, giving good views across Port Phillip Bay. This became a popular beach for swimming which in turn made it the obvious location for hotels and entertainment facilities like theatres and Luna Park. A showman with a miniature steam train would have seen the St Kilda foreshore as the best site for good patronage.

Newspapers from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century report miniature railways at many locations, near the beach or for special events. These railways soon moved on, leaving no trace. The St Kilda railway remarkably stayed put from about 1924 till 1957. It was simply the best location in Australia to expect a steady flow of patrons over the warmer months each year.

This 1924 aerial photo on the right, from the State Library of Victoria, shows the circular 12

inch gauge track in the large open area near Luna Park, and behind the Palais Theatre. This railway has characteristics similar to other semi-permanent tracks. In the 1960s a similar railway beside the Murray River at Echuca did not even have the fence and ticket office. For a season, a beach carnival train could be left on site protected by security staff. For St Kilda's first railway, and at Echuca, the train was stored off site and brought for an afternoon's running.

Luna Park had some redevelopment work

done, and in 1923 new attractions, seen in this photo, include: The Big Dipper (A second roller coaster located inside the Great Scenic Railway), The Whip and the Carousel (Electric powered and built 10 years earlier). Weniger's steam powered carousel is at the bottom of the photo. The cable cars seen in The Esplanade, ran till August 1925.

At right – Les Poole's photo of the original St Kilda locomotive, in 1926. (Len Whalley collection.)

This is the original small circle of 12 inch gauge track. In the left background is the concrete mixer used for the construction of the rebuilt Palais Theatre, completed in 1927.

This locomotive is a Jenny Lind type refinement of Stephenson's popular 2-2-2 Patentee Class. It was 2m long, with the original tender, and had 305mm driving wheels.

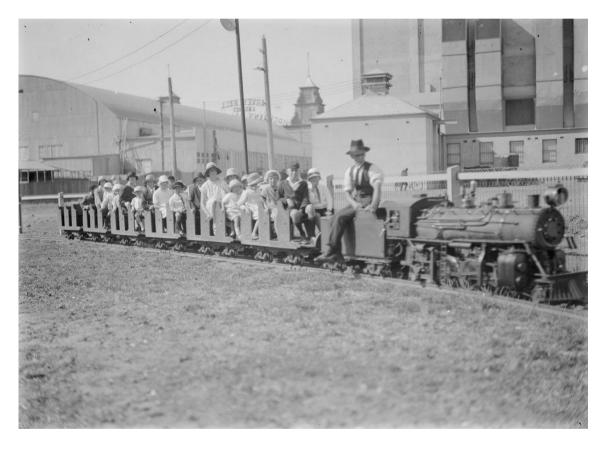




The track has the appearance of being in place for a long time, supporting the idea of a construction year of 1924 or earlier. The rails are set in slots cut in the timber sleepers. This same track was photographed in 1927 in Sydney, with this locomotive and carriages.

A locomotive of a similar size to the 2-2-2 was built in 1924 in South Melbourne by Aldolph Lutz, with a rivetted copper boiler made by Herbert Thomson. The boiler inspection records show the Thomson boiler as having two safety valves and two water gauges, whereas this locomotive had one of each.

In 1926/1927 the Palais Theatre was re-built after a fire, and the miniature railway was reconstructed close to Jacka Boulevard. The track now had a straight section on each side between the semicircular ends and used 14lb/yd rail. A very significant aspect of the new railway was the change to 11 inch gauge. Standardisation on 12 inch gauge was just getting established, so this change threatened to disrupt the move towards the general acceptance of 12 inch gauge.



This 1928 view, above, of the newly re-built railway shows off the straight section of track running beside the car park set up for the newly re-built Palais Theatre, seen in the right background.

A. Green - State Library of Victoria



Les Poole's 1926 photo of the second St Kilda locomotive, on the new track. (Len Whalley collection.)

This stopping place, at the end of the station, gave people in Jacka Boulevard an excellent view of the locomotive. This rare side view gives a good idea of how big this locomotive was. The design of the locomotive is of the 1920s rather than the more common practice of modelling a former classic style. Typically, a showman's locomotive was large enough to comfortably handle a full train. The tenders were just big enough to carry the driver, some water, and some fuel. Any additional weight or size created more work when relocating the train. The huge proportions of this, and the following steam locomotive are more suited to hauling a long train on a railway of at least 2 kilometres in length.

#### Locomotive details:

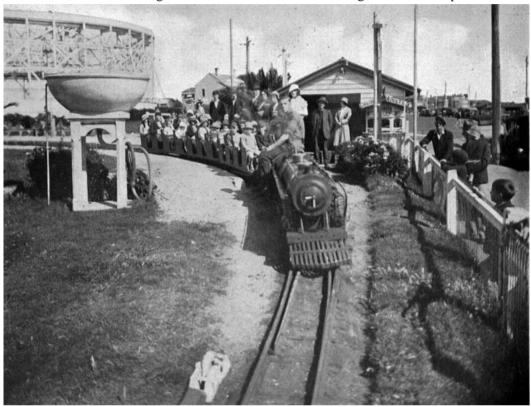
Engine length 2.4m (8 feet)
Tender length 1.2m (4 feet)
Total length 3.6m (12 feet)

Driving wheels 270mm (10½ inches) estimate

This 2-6-2 locomotive was built in Melbourne in 1926 and replaced the 2-2-2 Jenny Lind steamer which had gone to Sydney. In 1928 it was purchased by the Trindall family of carnival operators. This 2-6-2 locomotive has been reported being operated, by the Trindalls, along the coast of Queensland and has been seen operating in Brisbane in the 1990s.

Between 1926 and 1931 the St Kilda railway was developed as a permanent facility. A siding and timber shed were built to house the locomotive. A concrete water tank was made. In a 1931 promotional booklet, held by the State Library of Victoria, the relocated railway is described as "complete with signals, bridges and tunnels".

This type of railway usually stored the train in the tunnel, using doors each end for security. The train storage tunnel was most likely built in about 1926 to house the carriages seen above, behind the Trindall's 2-6-2 locomotive. **The photo, below, from the 1931 booklet is well composed, showing the closeness to Luna Park, meaning this site as just over the road from the beach.** The huge modern steam locomotive is the focal point and was an attraction on its own. In just five years, this is the third locomotive to run at this site. This locomotive follows the same general design as the Trindall's locomotive. The long boiler indicates it has six driving wheels. The position of the pony



wheels, seen through the cowcatcher, tell us it is a 2-6-2, as for the Trindall's locomotive. It has generous proportions, and again is of a contemporary USA style.



**c.1948 Aerial view** – **C Pratt**, State Library of Victoria

Comparing this c.1948 photo with the 1931 photo: The water tank is easily found and gives a convenient location reference. Opposite the water tank was still a popular place to lean on the fence and watch the train. The tunnel mentioned in 1931 is visible on the curve closest to Luna Park. The timber shed at the end of the station, and its siding, has been removed. A low barrel roofed train storage shed has been added inside the straight track facing the theatre.

At present, on the "Triangle" across the road from Luna Park the 1927 Palais Theatre is still a popular venue hosting national TV events like "Little Big Shots". The remainder of the Triangle is car park and lawns.



Above is a current view of the St Kilda 12 inch gauge railway site from 1924 to 1957. (Google Maps October 2019. Copied 20-Jun-2021) The site is viewed from Jacka Boulevard with the Cavell Street intersection at the right. Background features include the 1927 Palais Theatre, the 1912 Luna Park timber framed roller coaster and the residence at No. 2 Marine Parade, as seen in the 1931 photo. The palm in the middle of this view is close to the position of the railway water tank where the locomotive stopped, as seen in photos from 1931 to 1948.

Historically, the permanent nature of the St Kilda railway meant that all showmen visiting Luna Park, and this railway, over three decades witnessed the same practical features of this railway. A railway of this size could be temporary or permanent. The track gauge was an optimum size for carriage stability, while using locomotives that could be of a moderate size and not too heavy to transport. Showmen came to see the various carnival rides at Luna Park. They could not miss seeing this railway.

The first steam locomotive went to Sydney and operated on a permanent railway. The second steam locomotive went to Queensland for 50 years' service on the carnival circuit. Newspaper references in the 1920s in other states refer to (sensational) miniature railways direct from Melbourne (St Kilda.). The influence of the 12 inch gauge railway at St Kilda reached from Perth to much of New South Wales. The earliest record found of 12 inch gauge in Melbourne is the 1924 aerial photo of the original St Kilda track. Les Poole's 1926 photo of the Jenny Lind 2-2-2 confirms the track gauge. Herbert Thomson's 11½ inch gauge locomotive, built in 1914, had been seen for about 10 years. It is as if the builder of the Jenny Lind had rounded the track gauge up to the nearest inch.

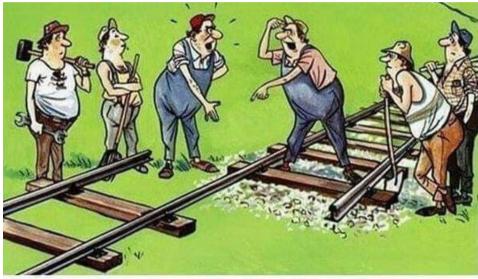
In 1926 in Sydney, two 12 inch gauge NSWGR 12 Class 4-4-0s were built. Currently, insufficient information has been found for the accurate dating of the Melbourne or Sydney locomotives. Government boiler records might give the actual dates.

In 1928 Arthur Birch of Bankstown, Sydney, chose 12 inch gauge rather than 7¼ inch when starting to build a large scale steam locomotive. Forty years later he retired to build the Smokey Mountain Railroad at Warnervale, NSW.

With 12 inch gauge having been established in St Kilda, there is a similar story for 11 inch gauge. As for the earlier railway, in 1926 a rare track gauge was chosen for the new railway, and again the track gauge was close to optimal for a commercial railway. Like the earlier railway, the prominent location effectively promoted the track gauge for use on similar railways. Following the relocation of the whole 11 inch gauge train to Brisbane in 1928, it is likely the St Kilda railway soon reverted to 12 inch gauge. Over the next 20 years, at least seven 12 inch gauge steam locomotives were built in Victoria and at least two others built to 11 inch gauge. This outcome suggested the original 12 inch gauge railway left a big, and lingering impression.

For technical details of the standard gauge Jenny Lind type 2-2-2 locomotive see <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jenny\_Lind\_locomotive">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jenny\_Lind\_locomotive</a>

**Next instalment – Definitions relating to miniature railways.** (To be continued)





# Yarra Valley Railway Information No.28. Weed control on the Railway

An often overlooked part of running a railway is the control of weeds. Weeds that grow along the track itself need to be prevented from growing. If left untreated they can cause wheels slip by trains and they also result in clogging up the ballast restricting the all important drainage from the track bed that is essential for safe operations.

There are also weeds that grow beside the line that must also be controlled. One of the most significant weeds is Blackberry. Left uncontrolled Blackberries quickly take over entire large areas. They are spread by birds consuming the berries and then excreting the seeds which are not digested as they pass through the bird's gut. A new plant grows from the seed, so it will never be possible to get rid of Blackberries.

In days gone by the weeds were killed by the use of a special "Weedex" train which carried thousands of gallons / litres of water in tank wagons. The plants along the line were absolutely drenched in a plant poison.



In this John Dare photo, the Weedex train is leaving Yarra Glen on its way to Healesville, March 1974. Now the YVR uses small quantities of water to carry the herbicide used to kill the plants. The pressure is provided by a small petrol motor driven pump which sprays the track and the area on each side of the line. A long hose enables clumps of weeds some distance from the track to be reached.



Pictured above: Weed spraying from Nissan Hi-rail vehicle.



Pictured above: Extended hose allows spraying of blackberries.

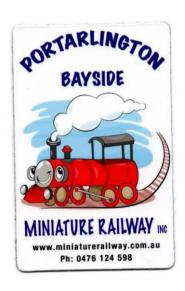
# **SOME OF OUR SOUVENIR RANGE:**



CAN COOLERS \$7.00 ea.



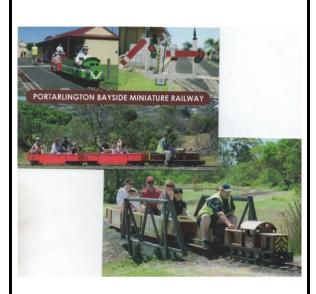
ENGINE DRIVER CAPS \$20.00 ea.



FRIDGE MAGNETS \$3.00 ea.



KEY RINGS \$4.00 ea.

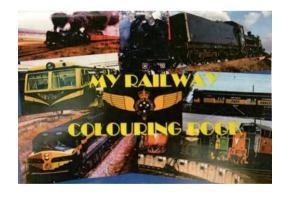


POSTCARDS \$ 1.00 ea.



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**JUST SOME OF OUR** 

**SOUVENIRS.** 

IF YOU CANNOT SEE IT -

JUST ASK.....

SOME OF THE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT OUR STATION KIOSK



#### SOMERTON by Trevor Penn

IN EARLY September 1939, few railway enthusiasts owned a car and most worked on Saturday mornings. For a cheap, after work excursion however they could ride either the 12.25 pm or 1.18 pm Sparks from Flinders Street to Fawkner, connecting with a tiny four-wheeled AEC railmotor that bounced its way to Somerton [above] via Campbellfield and the imaginatively named North Campbellfield, for a pleasant afternoon of mainline train watching.

For those such as Guy Bakewell who could afford a decent camera, there were things like this to capture on celluloid. En route to Seymour is X28, a handsome and capable 2-8-2, seen here passing through the hand operated gates protecting the Somerton Road level crossing.

The big Mikado retains her original shapely funnel and round topped firebox, but her appearance would be drastically altered in the coming years with the fitting of a Belpaire boiler and a Modified Front End, with its austere looking funnel and large smoke deflectors.

Other things were about to change.

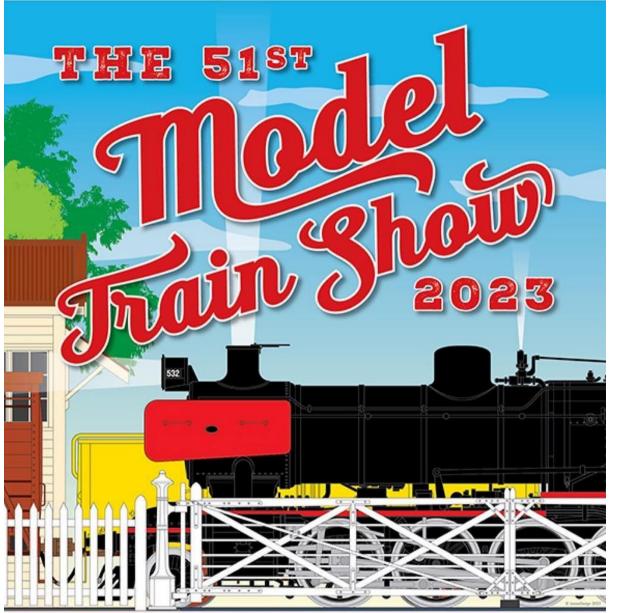
GERMANY'S TROOPS INVADE POLAND screamed the headlines in that day's *Argus* newspaper. Mother England was now at war, and so were we. On page 2 there were accounts of "Vital Activities To Safeguard The Nation".

Police guards and armed troops would henceforth patrol important railway installations, the State Electricity Commission had plans for "the instantaneous darkening of the city and suburbs" and so on. Among the first casualties of the war were Prime Minister Robert Gordon Menzies' plans for an indulgent weekend at "Talindert", the palatial Camperdown property of grazier Thomas Manifold, "whose hospitality was a byword". Menzies' car was stopped by the police at Colac, and the Honourable PM was forced to join his Ministers in a "rush to the City".

Bugger.

An interesting article from the hand of Trevor Penn that appeared in the pages of Loco Lines, the publication of the Rail Tram & Bus Union – Locomotive Division. Trevor is a "Victorian Railways" Engineman of some repute, who early in his railway career worked as a Block Recorder at West Tower, in the Melbourne Goods Yard. He has written many and varied interesting railway stories over the years.....

# AMRA VICTORIA PRESENTS



# AUGUST 5 & 6

TOWN SQUARE PAVILION, MELBOURNE SHOWGROUNDS SATURDAY 9AM TO 5PM. SUNDAY 9AM TO 4PM

GENERAL ADMISSION: FLAT RATE \$15. ALL CHILDREN UNDER 16 YEARS OF AGE FREE IF ACCOMPANIED BY A PAID ADMISSION. ENTRY VIA GATE 5, LANGS ROAD, FLEMINGTON.

W W W. A M R A V I C . C O M . A U

# **CAMERA CORNER:**



Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2023, sees a cold cloudy winters day at the PBMR. Bendigo Bank driven by David Dobney can be seen arriving into Platform No.1 at Point Richards after completing another run. David is one of our loyal volunteers whose help to the miniature railway provides great service to our visiting public. Well done to all our loyal volunteers and members, your help and assistance is always appreciated.

(Picture: Brian Coleman)

### **SAFETY BULLETIN BOARD**



These safety messages appeared in a Victorian Railways publication during the 1960's.

#### **OUR MONTHLY PASSENGER TALLIES - From January, 2019 - to current:**

Month	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Month	2020	2021	2022	2023
January	2214	2708	1890	2599		July	-	373	604	809
February	698	1044	-	427		August	-	372	502	
March	897	1257	1324	606		September	-	224	866	
April	-	1718	2315	1975		October	-	1610	497	
May	-	990	1017	212		November	-	939	688	
June	-	630	476	829		December	1290	1601	803	
TOTALS	10551	<u>9637</u>	12141	10608			<u>5099</u>	13466	10982	
	FY	FY	FY	FY	FY	1	YR	YR	YR	YR

Railway carried 809 Passengers during July, a gain of 205 Passengers or + 33.94 %

Results for the current 2023 – 24 Fiscal Year are 809 Passengers or a gain of 205 0r + 33.94 %

Figures represent a loss in traffic for the 2023 year of 228 Passengers or - 2.96 %.

Passenger train operations were suspended from  $22^{nd}$  March, 2020 to  $6^{th}$  December, 2020, from  $18^{th}$  July, to  $31^{st}$  July, from  $21^{st}$  August, 2021 to  $10^{th}$  September, 2021 & from  $22^{nd}-27^{th}$  September, 2021 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic crisis. Closure from  $29^{th}$  January  $-5^{th}$  March, 2022 due to urgent track-works etc.

Port Bay Express August, 2023

#### **SPECIAL TRAIN / PARTY BOOKINGS NOTICE BOARD :**

Special Train / Party Bookings have been received, as under:

DAY & DATE	TYPE:	TIMES OF HIRE:	No. of Trains:	No in group

#### **AUGUST BIRTHDAY WISHES:**

The following members have birthdays which fall during the month of **August** and the railway would like to record our congratulations and sincere best wishes on their happy occasion. We hope that they will have a great day and that all their birthday wishes will come true !!.

David Dobney	Dave Hubbard	Joe Vella

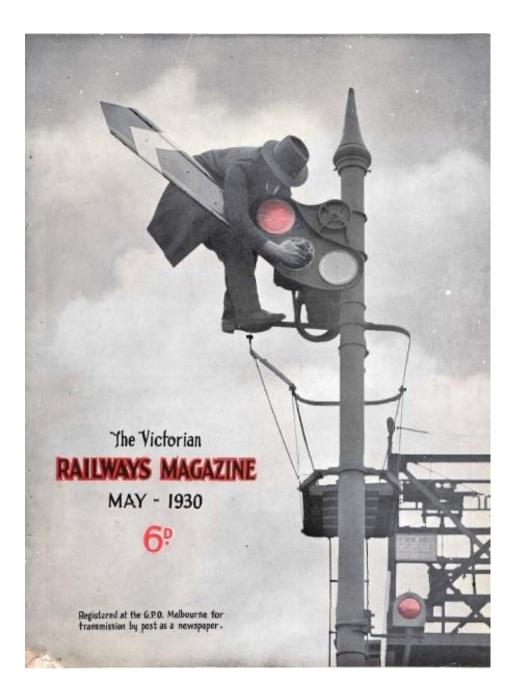
#### **TRAIN RUNNING ROSTERS:** (Harm Jager – Roster Clerk.)

The August Train Running Roster is being issued. Members are asked to note the dates which they have been rostered and to ensure that they attend on their rostered day of duty. If you cannot attend kindly find a replacement. The draft September Roster is to be circulated to the members, for comment soon. For Roster Enquiries, contact Harm Jager, Roster Clerk on Mobile Tel No. 0481-117-981. Email: harmjager78@gmail.com.au

REMEMBER: IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND - CONTACT HARM JAGER ASAP....



PBMR Bumper Stickers (as pictured above) available at our Station Kiosk – Only \$2.00 each.....A great little gift idea for that someone special....



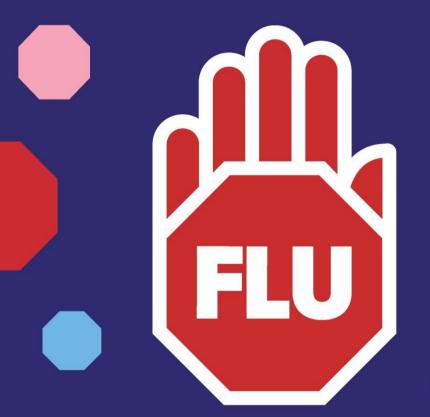
A very interesting front cover picture from the Victorian Railways Magazine of May, 1930. The picture shows a railwayman cleaning the signal lenses of an upper quadrant Semaphore Automatic Signal. In today's modern world such an activity would just simply not take place due to overriding Occupational Health and Safety obligations and requirements. Back in 1930 it was quite a different era. Food for further thought just how much our world has changed from those innocent past times until now.

# **THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH:**



# DON'T TAKE THE RISK THIS SEASON

**GET THE FLU VACCINE.** 



The **INFLUENZA** vaccine is recommended for people aged 6 months and over and provided **FREE** to those most at risk from influenza and its complications.

Ask about the influenza vaccine today.

health.gov.au/immunisation





# **WANTED TO SELL:**

# **CURTIS CONTROLLERS (24V 110 Amp)**

- Available for Immediate Sale. \$265.00 ea.

CONTACT: Keith on MOBILE No. 0476-124-598.



Ornithologist? -Incorrect

Zoologist? No

Entomologist?

Much closer but wrong

Arachrologist? -Wrong again.

Mothologist?

Hmm, looks good - better check the Dictionary -No such word

- still wrong!

It's the Editor looking hopefully in the Mail Bag for Articles or Topical Notes How About It ? ? ?

(SLSV - BWN)

Thank you to the Office of Steve McGhie, Member for Melton for support and printing.

# **PBMR – CALENDAR OF EVENTS:**

DAY & DATE:	EVENT & TIMES:
Sunday, 6 <sup>th</sup> August, 2023	Ordinary Running Day 11.00 am to 3.00 pm
Saturday 12 <sup>th</sup> August, 2023	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING –
	- COMMITTEE MEETING
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> August, 2023	RAILWAY CLOSED
Sunday, 20 <sup>th</sup> August, 2023	Ordinary Running Day 11.00 am to 3.00 pm
Sunday, 27 <sup>th</sup> August, 2023	RAILWAY CLOSED
Sunday, 3 <sup>rd</sup> September, 2023 (Father's Day)	Ordinary Running Day 11.00 am to 3.00 pm
Saturday, 9 <sup>th</sup> September, 2023.	COMMITTEE MEETING
Sunday, 10 <sup>th</sup> September, 2023	RAILWAY CLOSED
Sunday. 17 <sup>th</sup> September, 2023	Ordinary Running Day 11.00 am to 3.00 pm
Wednesday, 20 <sup>th</sup> September, 2023	School Holiday Run 11.00 am to 3.00 pm
Sunday, 24 <sup>th</sup> September, 2023	RAILWAY CLOSED
Wednesday, 27 <sup>th</sup> September, 2023	School Holiday Run 11.00 am to 3.00 pm
Sunday, 1 <sup>st</sup> October, 2023 (DST Begins)	Ordinary Running Day 11.00 am to 4.00 pm
Sunday, 8 <sup>th</sup> October, 2023	RAILWAY CLOSED
Saturday, 14 <sup>th</sup> October, 2023	COMMITTEE MEETING
Sunday, 15 <sup>th</sup> October, 2023	Ordinary Running Day 11.00 am to 4.00 pm
Sunday, 22 <sup>nd</sup> October, 2023	RAILWAY CLOSED
Sunday, 29 <sup>th</sup> October, 2023	RAILWAY CLOSED

#### **THINGS TO REMEMBER:**

Summer Timetable to began on <u>Sunday</u>, <u>1st October</u>, <u>2023</u>.

Running 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month - 11.00 am to 4.00 pm.

- Party Bookings: See "Special Trains Notice Board" Page 17.
- Volunteers are always required Contact Harm Jager !!!.

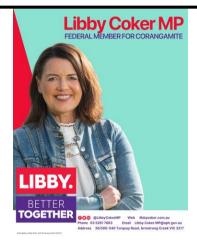
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# THE TAIL DISC:



LOOKING FOR A NEW HOBBY - WE NEED YOU !!

NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.

VACANCIES EXIST FOR STATION STAFF, SIGNALLERS,

DRIVERS, HANDYPERSONS, KIOSK STAFF ETC ETC...

APPLY AT OUR STATION...

EMAIL:	secretary@miniaturerailway.com.au	<b>FACEBOOK</b>	<b>Miniaturerailway</b>
WEBSITE:	www.miniaturerailway.com.au	PHONE:	0476-124-598
POSTAL:	P. O. Box 419, Portarlington. 3223. Vic		Port Bay Exp August 2023