



Friends of Archer Park Station & Steam Tram Museum Inc

URL: QldRailHeritage.com/ArcherPark

PO Box 573, Rockhampton, Qld 4700 Australia

Ph: 07 4922 2774 Fax: 07 4927 0120 E-mail: archerpark@rrc.qld.gov.au

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TRAM TRACKS

Christmas Closure

Archer Park Rail Museum will be closing for the holiday season from Christmas Day to January 3, inclusive. The museum will open to the public again on Monday January 4, 2010. Purrey steam tram rides will recommence Sunday February 14, 2010.

2010 Functions and Events

Sunday February 14: Purrey steam tram rides restart, 10 am - 1 pm, and continue every Sunday until November 28. The steam tram also operates Wednesdays during school term breaks.

Thursday March 11: Bush Poets and BBQ Night, 6-9 pm, \$5 entry.

Wednesday April 11: School holiday program & tram rides, 1-4 pm, usual entry fees apply.

Sunday April 18: Gold Coin Carriage Shade Capers, 9 am - 1 pm, tram rides \$2.

Thursday June 10: Bush Poets and BBQ Night, 6-9 pm, \$5 entry.

Sunday, June 27: Gold Coin Carriage Shade Capers, 9 am - 1 pm, tram rides \$2.

Wednesday, June 30: School holiday program & tram rides, 1-4 pm, usual entry fees apply.

Wednesday, July 7: School holiday program & tram rides, 1-4 pm, usual entry fees apply.

Sunday, August 29: Gold Coin Carriage Shade Capers, 9 am - 1 pm, tram rides \$2.

Thursday, September 9: Bush Poets and BBQ Night, 6-9 pm, \$5 entry.

Wednesday September 22: School holiday program & tram rides, 1-4 pm, usual entry fees apply.

Wednesday September 29: School holiday program & tram rides, 1-4 pm, usual entry fees apply.

Sunday, October 31: Gold Coin Carriage Shade Capers, 9 am - 1 pm, tram rides \$2.

Tuesday, November 2: Melbourne Cup Luncheon, 11:30 am - 3 pm, \$15 each.

Sunday, December 12: Archer Park 111th Birthday Celebrations.

Volunteer News

Friday, December 4: Volunteer Christmas party, 6 pm at the Frenchville Club (Coffee Club).

Volunteer Hours for September: 784 hours, plus a significant number of unrecorded hours by the executive, etc.

Work on Sleeping Car JCS 1007 is progressing well with all sheeting installed and undercoating nearly finished. Peter has done a good job on staining the new internal sheeting.

The Friends have agreed to pay roughly \$2700 for a transformer to power up all the lights in JCS 1007 and Special Car 434, plus two days of rewiring to get every light operative. The coaches will then be coupled together so visitors can walk through both without getting up and down extra steps.

Personal Notes From the Coordinator

QR has now abolished the 'Pink Card' or Trackside Safety Card. Their new system, called *5 Trackside Lifesaving Rules*, will apparently not apply to Archer Park as we already have adequate safety procedures in place.

Rail Safety is currently auditing our operations, adding to the work load but hopefully not disrupting our regular operations too much.

We are very happy that Archer Park has four new volunteers, Peter Allen, Colin Leahey, Lyn Pegler and Pat Riordan, I know you will all make them feel welcome and help them adjust to the work at the museum.

The last Bush Poets and Barbi Night saw sixty five people attend the night. We had five bush poets and the former Mayor of Rockhampton, Lea Taylor, sang seven or eight songs instead of reading poetry. The 2010 calendar has three Bush Poet nights scheduled.

Yours truly, with around thirty other Council staff, attended a presentation at the Gardens in

October to receive certificates and gifts for years of service. I have notched up ten years of Council service and received a s/s Frypan. In total I've been at Archer Park for fifteen years, starting as a volunteer president in 1994.

I had a visit from Kevin Wright, the Group General Manager of QR Operations in Brisbane. He bought me up to date on Heritage and what was happening with surplus QR rollingstock.

Carriage Shade Capers held on Sunday the 25th saw 204 visitors attend the day, a far cry from the usual 370 we see normally. We didn't get good advertising for the day and Rocky had other functions running on the same day.

It's good see Phil on the mend and just about back to his old self after his big operation. Take it easy Phil and just delegate.

Four of our tram crew are off to the doctor for their second annual medicals. Because they are over sixty, they have to front up every year for a medical so they can work the tram. At \$200 a visit it becomes expensive, especially for our extra small operation.

We are looking at putting truck horns on the tram instead of using the aerosol gas cans to warn motorists on the level crossings, The cost

of buying canisters of gas has increased and just adds to the cost of running the tram.

Henry & Merv have completed another garden bed outside the back fence with plants and a drip feed watering system.

Archer Park and Mt Morgan have been asked to report on the opening and closing times and whether times should be changed, especially in the summer months when visitors numbers are at their lowest. Times could be changed to shorter opening hours.

I have found a chap who can take our tram drivers for their steam tickets and not cost us the earth. He will come to Rockhampton, take our chaps through on the tram and it will only cost around \$100 each.

I will be going on holidays from December 25 to January 17.

As this Newsletter will be the final one this year I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all our volunteers for all their hard work during the year and their friendship. This also goes to our guys who work the Tram. Thanks also to John Kennedy for doing the bulk of the driving while Phil was in Brisbane.

Dennis Sheehan



QR BB 18 1/4 #1079 with C17 #974 behind taking coal and water on one of the 'Sunshine Express' historical runs up the coast. Gordon Leech, photographer. A colour version of this image can be found in the OldRailHeritage.com image collection.

Queensland's Sunshine Express

Burke, David (2009). **Chasing the Sunshine: The story of Queensland's Sunshine Express**, Brisbane: Queensland Museum.

Your editor recently purchased a copy of 'Chasing the Sunshine', a new and highly recommended book from the Workshops Rail Museum, Ipswich. This glossy publication is part of the museum's contribution to Q150, the celebration of Queensland's 150th birthday and costs roughly \$35 plus postage.



QR promotional poster from *Chasing the Sunshine*.

The author, David Burke, obviously had access to the full archives of the Queensland Museum and has included extracts from a wide range of historical documents, including QR publications, diary entries and posters, as he documents the development of Queensland's railways and the *Sunshine Express*.

The Trans-Australian Railway crossed three states and the Nullabor Plain for a distance of 1051 miles. A Federation project to connect east with west, it was completed in five years.

Queensland's Brisbane to Cairns line was begun at roughly the same time, but required 35 years to complete its 1043 miles.

Burke describes the challenges of building the line, the new tourist industry and the name train introduced in 1935 that defined rail traffic in Queensland for several decades.

With the airlines beginning to charge for individual service items it is interesting to see that *Sunshine Express* passengers could hire ice chests, rugs and pillows at major stations. Refreshment rooms were an important part of rail travel but station stops were kept as short as possible and travellers obviously learned to queue for their meals and eat them quickly.

Although replaced by the *Sunlander* in 1953, the name lives on in the monthly ARHS(Q) *Sunshine Express* live steam trips around Brisbane and area.

110 Years at Archer Park

Last issue we had Darryl Baker's photo of Archer Park Railway Station with the white paint scheme prior to restoration. As Archer Park celebrates 110 years from its opening we have a brief note on its beginnings.

Potential links to Port Alma or Broadmount were explored to replace Rockhampton's river port, with the government deciding in 1894 on Broadmount, and a connection to the Central Railway via a bridge over the Fitzroy.

A new Central Station (now known as Archer Park Station) helped justify the Junction Railway extension through the city. A rudimentary building served as the station until the current building, authorised in 1899, was completed.

The final plans for the station were drawn by QR draftsman Henrick Hansen in 1898. It was erected by Thomas Butterworth Renshaw and Harry Ricketts and opened to the public on 11 December 1899, just over a month after the opening of the Junction Railway and the Alexandra Bridge.

Additional details, references and a two page handout, can be downloaded from the web site: <http://qldrailheritage.com/archerpark/archives/archives.html>