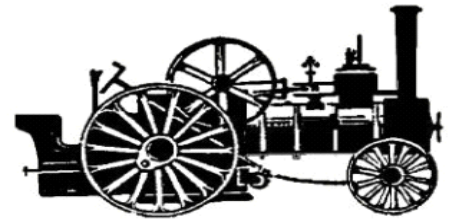


STEAM SUPREME



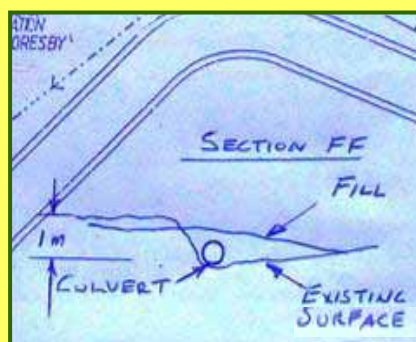
Newsletter from the
National Steam Centre

A Wisp of



Sandstone's Military Collection

In This
Issue



East Drainage



Bay Zero Entrance



It is not always realized that the Military side of things at Sandstone in many ways rival the railway aspect of this South African extravaganza but unfortunately it does not always get the credit it deserves .

Activities for the 10 day show are organized in conjunction with the South African Armour Museum who bring along a selection of more recent equipment which in conjunction with Sandstones own extensive heritage collection culminates in a hands on experience for military enthusiast that would have to be second to none.

Relationship with Army The South African Army very much sees that part of it's role is to contribute to the community and as such a very close working relationship has existed for many years with the Armour Museum located in nearby Bloemfontein and Sandstone . Not only do they provide vehicles and equipment but a large contingent of personnel to assist with re-enactments and demonstrate the vehicles . Activities even extended to the evenings programme when on a number of occasions thought provoking presentations gave an insight into some of the operations jointly entered into with neighbouring countries to maintain the stability of the region .

Unique Vehicles When not being demonstrated these are lined up in the paddock not 2 minutes from the main railway station with .members of the Armour Museum on hand to answer any questions about the vehicles and point out any special features. It is an amazing collection and goes right back to the beginning of the mechanization of war with traction engines from the Boer war and steam locomotives from WW1 . There are the WW2 American machines , post WW2 British equipment and with the later isolation of South Africa a whole crop of home grown machines not seen outside

the country . These are often based on upgraded older equipment but some are built locally for special conditions .

Below *Enclosed Buffel (Badger) Mine proofed Troop Carrier, you can see the lack of flat horizontal under surfaces minimises the impact of exploding land mines. South African made about 2400 for home and export markets .*



Of great interest was quite a range of Soviet equipment that those of us from the west had only read about . Most of these seemed to have been spoils of war originated from the Angolan Bush war of the 1970's . Such a variety of equipment is unlikely to be seen anywhere else in the west .



Left Russian Katyusha self propeller rocket launcher “affectionately “ known as Starlins Organ with over 50 pipes .

Below Russian T72 tank , spoils of war from the Angolan Bush conflict of the 1970's . Note it's low profile compared to the American WW2 Sherman behind which would be hard to miss. Vehicles were demonstrated in operation and even giving rides everyday



Activities A Daily military convoy departed after breakfast from the paddock adjacent to the main railway station .

The range of vehicles varied depending on visitors interests and what the volunteer drivers wanted to give a run . The public was encouraged to ride on the vehicles be it a tank jeep or anti mine personnel carrier . *Where else in the world can you do this ?*



Left Military convoy lined up every morning waiting to take visitors for a ride in the vehicle of their choice . Different vehicles were taken everyday to ensure variety .

Next year Sandstone is looking for enthusiasts with appropriate skills to help with the driving to ease the load on the Armour Museum's personnel .

The convoy usually followed the steam trains to the grass airstrip to see what activities had been arranged down there and then some times a further run down into the valley and along the border dirt road between the farm and Lesotho. The cloud of dust and roar and clanking of about 20 military vehicles was no doubt designed to impress those with thoughts of coming over to do some “ free shopping “ .

Afternoon activities were a bit more structured with a PA system set up in the paddock and the heavier vehicles and tanks put through their paces stalking and attacking in mock battle scenes on undulating ground some distance away . Once over each vehicle was driven back at high speed over a series of ditches and mounds designed to fully



Below The pressure was really on these Armour Museum volunteers to make an emergency over night engine change on this Ferret Scout car . Enthusiasts were invited to visit the Sandstone workshops to inspect the proceedings . Although busy the mechanics still had time to tell me the original engine was malfunctioning due to the oil and petrol being mixed up .

Remarkably the army still had a new spare engine crated in 1957 . It was soon installed and purring away . The British Ferret was from the 1950's but had been updated by SA to better suit local conditions



demonstrating their capabilities. Again the machines were thrown open to the visitors who once more were full of fresh questions after seeing what they could do. With both these activities happening every day it did not take too much arm twisting and whispering in the right ear for the real enthusiast to have had a ride in everything by the end of the show. For me with only limited time due to commitments on others machines I was quite thrilled to get a drive of the Sherman tank

—How good is that ?

Right Look at the pleasure the tanks bring the visitors who flock for a close up look at the Oliphant and T72 after seeing them in action. The Oliphant a locally modified and updated version of the British Centurion tank with improved gun and Continental Diesel replacing the Meteor V12 petrol engine. It is a current SA main battle tank brought down to Sandstone for the show evidence of the close working relationship with the SA Armour Division. (The gun points backwards for travelling).



Special Ceremonies If all this was not enough a number of special military ceremonies were arranged.

The opening event was a tribute to the centenary of the start of WW1. A Military train took spectators down to the balloon



loop and the Sherman tank and Wilf's Landrover were lined up with the train in the background. Photographers and visitors were strategically positioned in great anticipation of some sort of action. A spot appeared on the horizon and with a whoosh and roar the Harvard trainer fighter shot overhead so low that many ducked but those quick enough ended up with a once in a lifetime shot of the 3 mechanisms of war all in photo shot.

The Role of the Railways Mid week military activities centred around trains and a steam locomotive packed with character and a fascinating history, see opening photo, the 1915 Henschel feldbahn engine of a type specially designed by the Germans to supply the front line during WW1. They were small sure footed locomotives capable of running on light portable track that could be moved around at the front line as the skirmish progressed. For the day the Henschel had a military consist of a large field gun, ammunition and crates of explosives in front of a camouflaged van for provision. To keep with the German flavour an Orenstein and Koppel locomotive was hauling a small passenger consist ferrying photographers and visitors around to ensure good shots of the feldbahn in operation. Today it is generally not appreciated the roll steam played in the early days of mechanised war. The scale of conflicts like the American civil war and WW1 was only made possible by the availability of the railway to keep the front line supplied.

Right Sandstone's German O & K Feldbahn (field railway) engine of the types used in WW1



The Big Show A salute to mark the 10 th anniversary of the remarkable relationship between the SA Armour Museum and Sandstone featured the development of mechanization in the armed forces over the last 150 years . It was in the form of a parade to dignitaries and enthusiasts of landmark military vehicles from the collections of Sandstone and the Armour Museum . Fully appreciated was that without this partnership what turned out to be the best display of operating heritage military vehicles in all of Africa would not have been possible .

Right *Everyone was conveyed either by vintage vehicle or steam train to the grassed area by the balloon loop where a dais had been erected and PA system set up adjacent to the railway line .*

Military Mechanization over the Ages



Once Brigadier General Chris Geidenhuys was up on the dais with Wilfred and Lyndie Mole to take the salute the show started as soon as the speeches were over and a surprise presentation for Wilf .



Above *The big Parade started with mounted Calvary . No not 150 year old horses but part of Sandstones security force.*



Above *Next came the first military vehicle a wagon hauled by Africana Oxen . They are specially bred on the farm to keep the line going*



Above *Steam then makes an appearance with the Estates Mighty 1901 Fowler B5 engine imported by the British to move ammunition in the Boer War .*



Above *The internal combustion Mechanisation of WW1 was represented by the 1915 Peerless chain drive truck supplied by the US .*



Left *German WW1 Henschel 1915 steam locomotive which saw action in WW1 . Who would have thought it would still be capable transporting " troops " 100 years later*



Left WW2 vehicles included those supplied by the USA such as the famous Jeep and Dodge power wagon .

Nothing was overlooked for the parade with appropriate Khaki clothes provided for the participating volunteers. Incidentally introduction of khaki dress was a result of the First Boer War following the success of the inconspicuous Transvaal farmers at picking off the British in their red jackets , blue trousers and white pith helmets. This was a major turning point in warfare .

Right Saracen Personnel Carrier of British origin using Rolls Royce straight 8 petrol engine but South African modified with larger wheels suit local conditions, 1950s to 1970s . These were superseded by the South African made Buffel mine proofed troop carrier shown **Below**



Now for the surprise Brigadier General Chris Geidenhuys took exceptional privilege to bestow the presentation of a plaque conferring honorary membership of the Museum of Armoury on Wilfred for the close relationship that exist between himself and the museum and the demonstration of incredible devotion to duty loyalty and service .

Wilf then responded and recollected how 17 years ago at

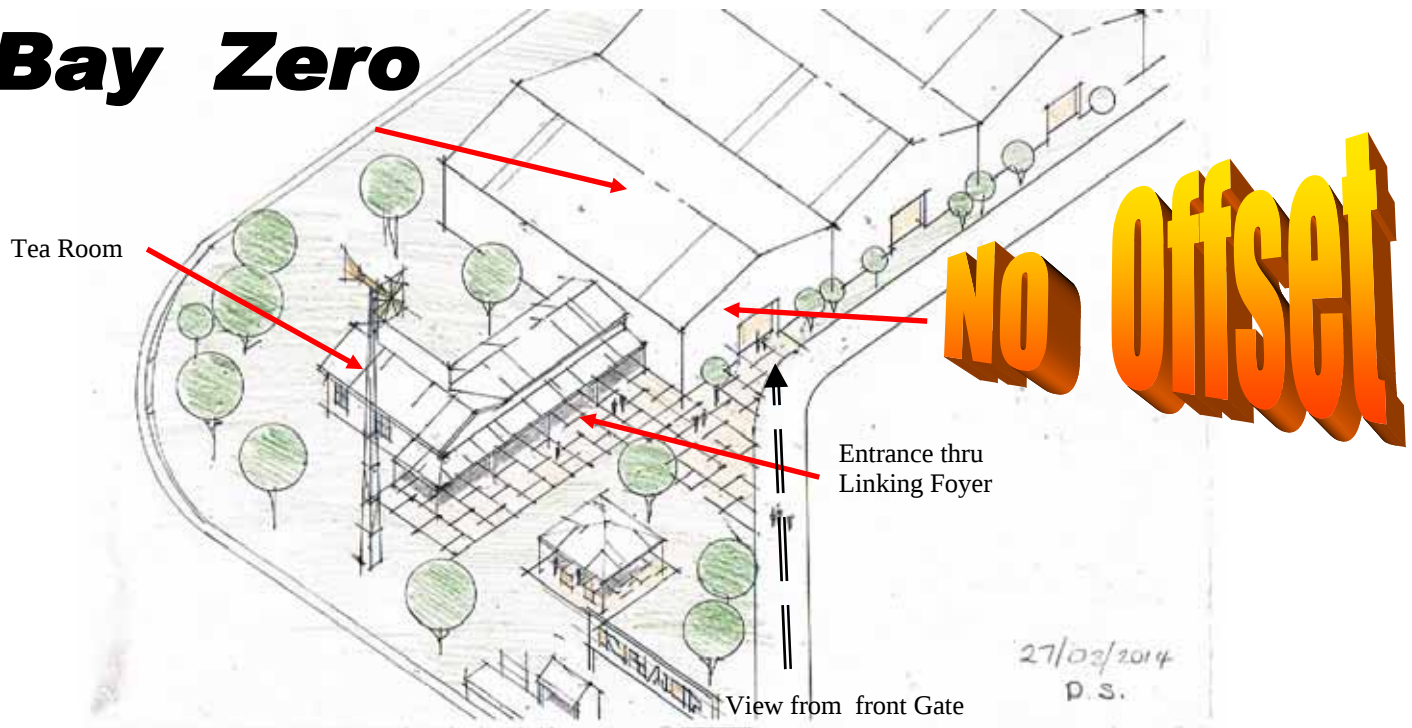
the bar after the Final Parade for a well know solder he was approached by an officer who knew of his historic vehicle interest and asked why he did not collect military vehicles and work in with the Armour Museum . Wilf responded “ I have not thought about it “ and the reply was “ Well why don’t you start now you can pickup one up in the morning “ and he was not kidding so Wilf send a truck and that is how this unique relationship started ...and that man .! - None other than the Brigadier General himself . And that is how what had just turned out to be the greatest Military event in Africa got started .

And it is on again next year . Do not miss it Warwick



Left Everything must come to an end . The Armour Museums Rooikat Mk 1 experimental wheeled artillery vehicle loaded up for its return to Bloemfontain base . They also brought down the Oliphant and T72 tanks , everything else is stationed at Sandstone

Bay Zero



Following general resistance to the setting back of the front of Bay Zero building Architect David Simpson has been kind enough to work up a concept that gives priority to achieving Maximum floor space by simply mirroring Bay 1 .

From his sketch (above) and the following plan it can be seen the main features are :-

Bay 1 Exactly Mirrored

- Full floor area available for engines
- Cheapest construction
- Main Entrance moved to wall facing the foyer

Large Separate Foyer

- Linking Bay 0 and Tea Room
- Front and back walls mostly windows
- Does not take away any engine floor space
- Gives opportunities for WC & Office

Comparing this concept to the established Key Elements :-

Attention Grabbing - feature such as windmill still exists.

Importance - Bay 0 looks just like another tin shed *Bad*

Obvious Public entrance - Attractive but no longer as prominent when entering the front gate . The first view will be the bland front wall of bay 0 *Not as Good* .

Entrance Foyer - Bigger and better with room for office and WC . Unfortunately you no longer get a full view through to main steam hall losing WOW factor of the sugar mill engine.

Not as Good

How it fits in with Long Term Grounds Development :-

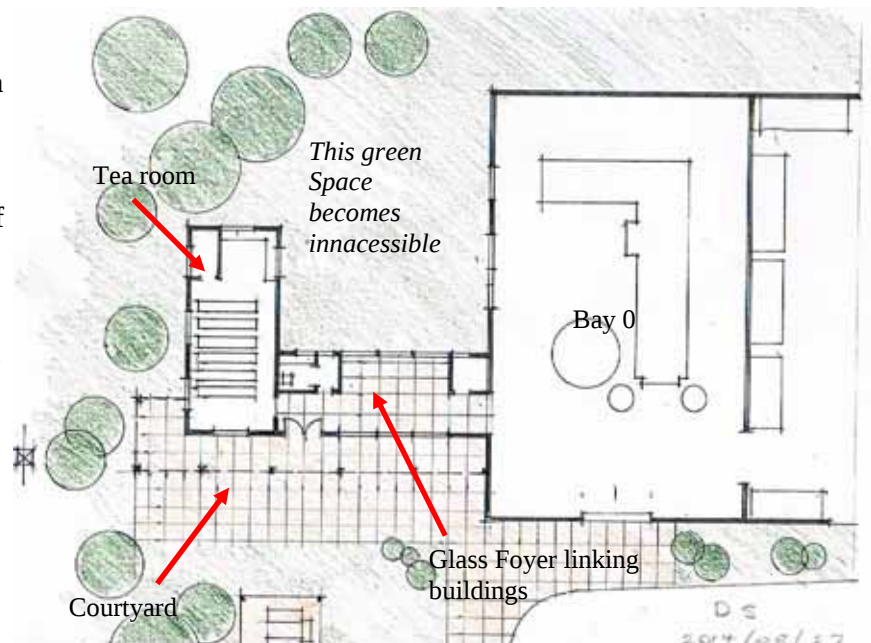
Display Space - more room and better layout for Sugar Mill engine and other displays
Superior

Avoid Impacting Amenity of the Grounds.— With the Foyer linking tea room and bay zero the remaining green area between the 2 buildings will become inaccessible to the public. One of the reasons for shifting the railway line from behind the meeting hall was to landscape this area and use it to offset the green space taken by bay zero . This area will now be come inaccessible to the public *Very bad*

Preserve green corridors and park like feel of the Grounds

The foyer blocks one of the green views out of the grounds detracting from the park like aspect

Adding Bay 0 and linking it with the meeting hall gives a 147 m frontage of industrial style



buildings along the East side which will not help with our objective of getting away from the public perception that we are a construction site or builders yard .

Some fear this will become an worsening problem as future generations have increasingly higher expectations .

Expenditure within Resources. - Bay 0 a becomes simpler construction and less cladding . Avoids the need to build on filled area

Simpler and Cheaper

- Foyer becomes a new building with associated permit and construction costs . Connecting it to meeting hall and bay zero will make it effectively all one building greatly complicating classifications and fire ratings .

Much worse

DISCUSSION

Members feed back from the social meeting universally saw problems with a foyer linking the tea room and bay zero . Not only does it cut off a whole green space but becomes a separate construction project complicating building and fire classifications and adding significant cost not funded by the sponsor . Further more it looses visual impact of the sugar mill engine as you enter the museum .

Not quite so clear was the discussion about the question of setting back the front of the building to make a courtyard. It is accepted it would make the most attractive entrance but there appears to be 2 camps as to how important this is . Some feel we need to enhance the appearance of the museum to make visitors feel more welcome and get away from the perception of a construction site . Others feel with tight resources we should be concentrating on getting the maximum out of our displays and get used to seeing tin sheds . Interestingly there appears to be a loose correlation with those that open up the museum for visitors tending to the first group and those who regularly come down and get stuck into serious restoration in the second . At the social meeting the second were in the majority and it became obvious the easiest way forward was to drop any concepts that involve building offset .

This then leaves the question how do we get the best out of an in line building . Ideas for some sort of obvious entrance that beckons the public with provision for an internal foyer were floated around .

It is felt that with a bit more kicking around an acceptable compromise can be reached .

Following are a number of pics of what other people have done that might help to start the thought process .

Lets have your ideas .

Warwick .

Corner Entrance



Portico



Sails



Old Fashioned (Wheelers pub)



Do Nothing



The pipes being unloaded along the East boundary

A Donation of Concrete Pipes

As appreciated the railway relocation to the East boundary fence requires careful attention to drainage to avoid interruption of water flow. Following informal discussion with the water people we have added a number of culverts on the planning permit application . Then came the question of pipes , well a whisper in the right ear by Phil Randall did the trick with 45 total metre of concrete pipes arriving last Thursday . They may be a bit rough and of varying size but will certainly serve the purpose and what's even better save about \$ 3,500 from the cost of the project .

Willans Crankshaft update

Things are really moving now . The appeal for donations exceeded all expectations to the extent that the preferred option of getting the repair done by the experts in Singapore has become a reality .



Above A shipping crate flat pack of specially treated timber . Once the crank is screwed to the base the sides and lid will be attached.

Donations are being used not only to cover the cost of repair but also contribute to the cost of a specially constructed crate , shipping to and from Singapore and full insurance cover when away .

Who can Fix our Pizza Oven ?

Robert Blair writes -Recently we had a mini bus load of handicapped people visiting the club grounds as an outing. I was showing the group the blacksmith's shop and one young lady piped up I know what that is, pointing at the furnace in the corner. So I had to ask, what is it? The answer was a pizza oven.



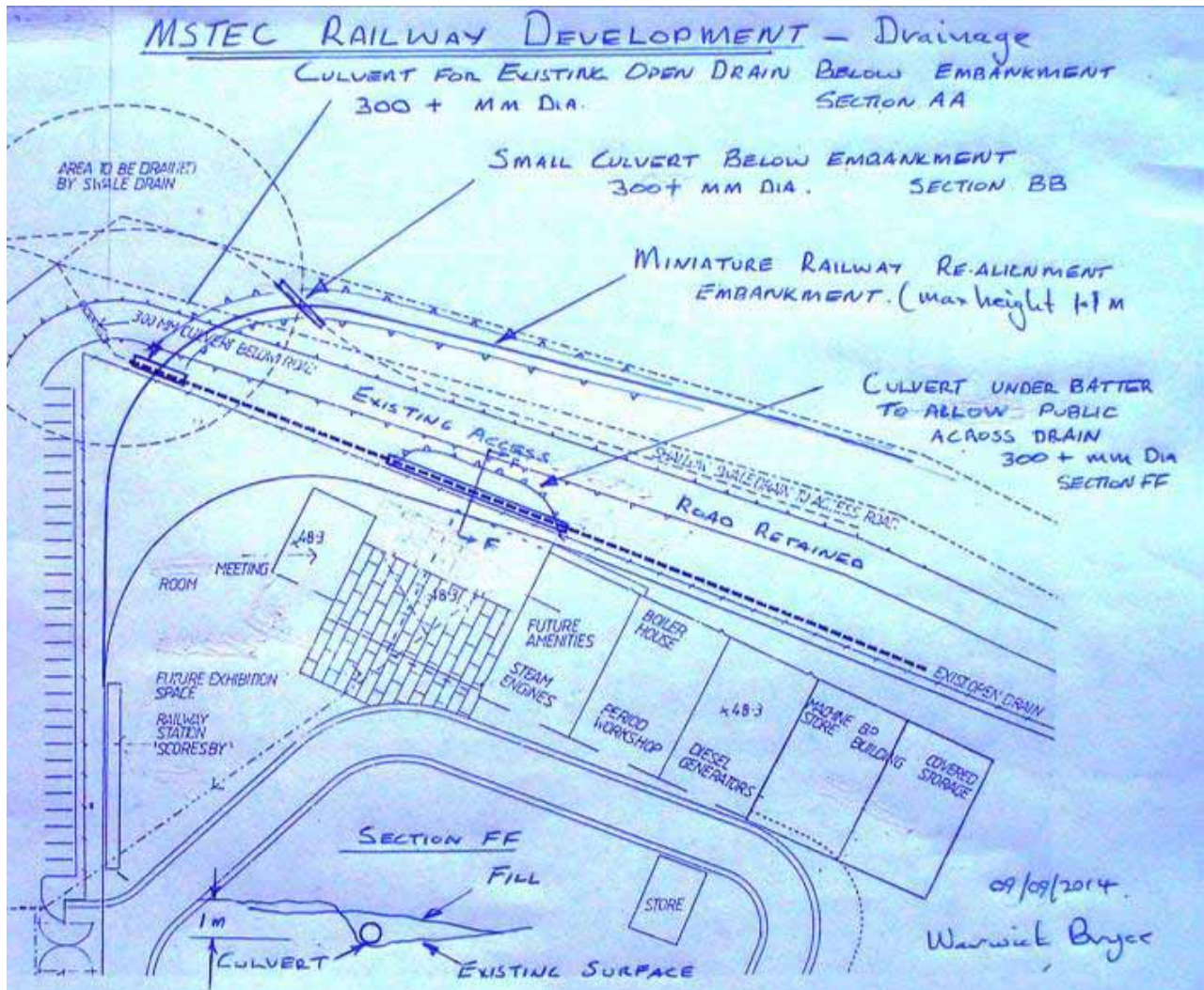
Rob Blair photo

And Stephen Nicholls writes—Fellow Members . The Blacksmith Shop comes along apace with things starting to settle down and those things that are necessary are in place and operational . I am still on search of someone who can rebuild the pizza oven err... furnace brickwork , with help of course and also any members who are interested in learning forge work and the running of the shop . Anyone who can help out in either capacity, could you contact Stephen on 9457 1744

Stephen is looking forward to your replies he has done a tremendous job transforming a shed of junk into a really smart blacksmith shop and who knows if the furnace gets fixed we might just have pizzas .

East Boundary Development

The Planning Permit Application is expected to be submitted this week . This is to gain approval from the various authorities affected for the earthworks and drainage required to relocate the railway , level the ground between the meeting hall and main museum building and to erect an extension to the East end of the main museum building (bay 0) . This is the culmination of a huge amount of behind the scenes work to arrive at the concept that best meets everyone's requirements . While frustrating at times chucking around all sorts of ideas and a healthy amount of discussion is all part of the process of arriving at the best outcome . Earthworks and Sugar mill footings can start once we have planning approval but before building construction can start we need to develop and submit detailed building plans of the proposed construction for separate approval .



Heros & Princesses Festival

It is a community fundraising event to be run by 6 Rotary clubs and the raised funds to go to 5 community groups in the City of Monash (one of these groups is the Salvation Army).

The idea is that the public coming to the event dress up as fairies & gnomes and there are prizes for best costume. Each Rotary Group would run an activity like face painting, also an animal farm. They would also have food vendors.

There would be an entry charge of \$5 per adult or \$10 per family, the only other thing that would have to be paid for would be food and train rides. We run and keep the money raised from the train rides.

This event will be held on Sunday 16th November and the steam and diesel museum to be running.

“Wanted, Flywheel for a 3HP Ronaldson and Tippet Model N engine.
Crankshaft diameter 1.500 inches. Contact Don Whalley, 040-707-4259 or
whalleyd@bigpond.net.au.”