

## **ROBERTSON HERITAGE RAILWAY STATION INC**

### **BUILDINGS AND MAINTENANCE**

#### **Report by Neil Harvey for the 2017 Annual General Meeting**

This year has been very busy with the following work being carried out:

1. **Concrete Cancer Project** – This ongoing and serious maintenance concern was finally completed early 2017. I am very happy with the result. The project was funded jointly by ARTC and a grant we received. There remains a need to repaint the station building, signal box, destination sign and lamp shed. Despite several representations to ARTC, together with two quotes, I have yet to receive approval to go ahead with the re-paint project. This must be addressed since the concrete repairs are left unprotected.
2. **Re-Roofing the Fettlers Shed Gallery** – The roof of the gallery had been a problem for several years but funds were simply not available to address the problem. Two quotes were in the range of \$17000. Earlier this year we received very heavy rainfall and the roof leaked considerably resulting in further damage to internal walls, for example mould and distortion of walls resulting in wall tiles in the gents toilet and utility room coming loose, damage to some of Ian's photographs, some carpet damage and water marks on a number of walls. I had contacted ARTC on previous occasions to have this problem addressed but to no avail. However, after the heavy rain mentioned earlier I once again contacted ARTC with a new quote of less than \$10000 and ARTC agreed to make repairs. Repairs were successfully completed shortly thereafter.
3. **Re-painting the Fettlers Shed Gallery** – Once the roof repairs were completed Ron Middleton, Russell Barwise and I began to repaint the ceilings and internal walls of the gallery. This required a lot of preparation (eg cleaning walls and ceilings, filling holes, removal of fittings etc) which is usual for any repainting project. At the time of writing this report a repaint of ceilings and walls has been completed in the gallery, kitchen, exit vestibule and ladies and gents toilets. The rooms that have yet to be done include the disabled toilet, model train room, entry foyer and utility room. The small lockable storage cupboard off the gallery room does not require repainting. I would very much like to thank Ron Middleton and Russell Barwise for their invaluable help; it simply would have been beyond me alone and to arrange a contractor would have been a very costly option.
4. **Plumbing Repairs** – This year we had to make plumbing repairs on two occasions. The ladies toilet in the station building was leaking and was repaired. The plumber also replaced a tap on the station platform. Also, at one point we lost water connection to the whole railway precinct because a lawn mowing contractor for ARTC ran over the meter within the rail corridor off South Street. This was repaired after a few days.
5. **Electrical** – The gallery's overhead lighting required some attention so I arranged Electrician Robert Handley to make some interim repairs. Ideally the lighting system needs replacing as I am still not happy with the lighting and suggest that the lighting system will have to be replaced with more effective lighting in the future. As discussed above electrical appliances have also been tested and passed safety inspection.

### **GALLERY Report**

#### **Report by Anne Wilson for the 2017 Annual General Meeting**

2 exhibitions were held in 2015-16, the October Spring flower art show and the Fettlers Heritage Art Prize. Both had good attendance with high quality works. Although not many major works were sold, profits from the exhibitions were about \$700. Further, favourable comments were received from visitors and other users of the Gallery space.

The gallery is also available for hire and an additional \$540 was received from donations and hiring fees.

The gallery is also used by members as a space for history meetings and for the model train group.

Finally this year the Fettlers Shed annexe was enhanced by enclosing two sides with clear panels and high lattice. This has made the space of much more use for food serving and will provide a weather protected space for displays (in particular the model railways at the coming Spring Event).

### **HISTORY OF ROBERTSON Report**

#### **Report by Helen Tranter for the 2017 Annual General Meeting**

The History part of RHRS began as an opportunity for preserving historical items about the village which might otherwise be lost, including the memories of older residents such as Nance Morrow and Fred Wood, who were interviewed. Donated material was copied if necessary and stored chronologically in ring files. A detailed survey was done of the gravestones in the Robertson cemetery and a copy made of early burial records.

Old school photos have been donated, some students identified, and notes collected on early schools. A complete collection of issues of Robertson News is kept. Over the years, history displays have been mounted, usually in the Station, in Heritage week. There is a small library of books and maps which are available for people to look at or use for research.

At the start, computer research was limited. More recently, a large collection of Robertson data has been donated by Andrew Kennard and this has been an important base on which to build further research, particularly using the resources of Trove.

Now, with more information, a more efficient retrieval system is needed and this is being developed, based on 3 systems:

**1) Names:**

Name Index to 1920, produced by Andrew Kennard, referring to electoral rolls, directories etc.

Card System to record basic dates, occupations etc. as they become available.

Ring Files (4) with more detailed material, newspaper reports etc., on people and families.

**2) Time:**

Ring Files in year periods, which includes industries and events; also files of newspaper items from Trove.

**3) Places:** particularly relating to the original 14 Hoddle St., 5 Lot Sections, covering the businesses and their owners over time.

Twice monthly meetings are being held in the Fettle's Shed Gallery (2nd & 4th Wednesdays) when any members or friends are welcome to come to find out, or provide, information. Jane and Jim Wilson and also Frances Bailey are helping with this, but more people are always welcome. It could be possible to hold some weekend meetings to make the material available to more people.

## **MODEL RAILWAY GROUP**

### **Report by Neil Harvey for the 2017 Annual General Meeting**

(1) I am very happy to report that this group has increased its membership to eight people with the latest member, Noel Rothwell, starting with us only a couple of months ago. The group meets every Friday afternoon and recently has also begun to meet on Sunday afternoons. I have recently ordered road side banners to advertise when we are open. Not all members come on both days. This year we made significant improvements to the large N Scale layout by way of improving the support bench on which it rests. This model was often required to be moved when the gallery was used for other purposes. Moving the display was an awkward and onerous task requiring several of us. Moreover, moving it often caused damage to the layout. I had made some preliminary designs for a moveable table. New member Noel Rothwell took it further by seeking the help of a local fellow called Ian Field who built a support table out of steel free of charge, a very generous donation. It also consists of wheels that can be lowered with a lever and the whole display only requires one individual to move it around. It is a significant improvement and it has allowed us to make repairs to the layout so that model running is much more reliable and easy to run.

(2) The group began a new but small N Scale layout based on an American scene. This is now virtually complete. This means we now have three layouts owned by RHRS.

(3) The group has also been involved on social outings to rail model exhibitions in Canberra, Liverpool and Thornleigh.

(4) As discussed above the group has agreed to meet on Sunday afternoons so that tourists may view the displays and make a monetary contribution. Currently an order has been made for road side banners advertising that the displays are open for viewing. We are hopeful this will attract new members and provide at least a modest source of income for RHRS.

(5) At previous RHRS meetings it was decided to investigate the feasibility of building another room to house, run and build models. Preliminary investigations are not promising in my view. Initially I thought a garage by Ranbuild would be suitable but the heritage people at ARTC would want the heritage factor to be included which would add significant amounts to the cost and would also require a "Heritage Impact Statement". Soon I shall seek advice from local architect Kathy Barnsley to see if this is financially feasible and if grants would be available to fund it. Ron and I considered a portable building which hopefully would overcome the heritage concerns since it could be moved readily. We visited "*Affordable Portables*" in Smithfield and spoke with their General Manager, Charles Sass. Charles spent an hour with us and showed us around the large factory. In previous years 2nd hand portables were readily available for purchase but recently suppliers don't have any stock at all and don't think this will change in the near future. The option is to buy two 12metre x 6.4metre buildings and join them together. It is expected such a project would cost \$70000+. Of course this would require approval by ARTC and I'll investigate that in the next few weeks.

## **SAFETY REPORT**

### **Report by Neil Harvey for the 2017 Annual General Meeting**

I am happy to report that no injuries or safety issues occurred or were reported in the last nine months. Electrical appliances need to be inspected by a qualified electrician on an annual basis and this was recently done. I reviewed the SMS earlier this year to determine if any changes were required. The SMS looked sound so I made no changes. Nonetheless, a requirement is that the SMS receives at least an annual review and the future Safety incumbent is required to review the safety processes to ensure that the SMS is regularly used, understood and applied. If a safety or health issue requires a change to be made to the SMS it should be done immediately rather than to wait for a scheduled annual review.

**Finally I would like to thank the President Ian Wallace and the ARTC Committee for their support and encouragement throughout the last year.**