

As a believer in the potential of railways to attract tourists and travellers alike, I am writing in the hope that at the very least you can do is stop the removal of RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE while there is the possibility that it can be re-activated as a viable and WORTHY Community asset.

HAVING moved to TAS - from S. Aust. where I had been involved with rail preservation over the last nearly fifty years, especially with the Victor Harbor and Pichi Richi tourist railways. Both these lines were saved initially by a group of determined volunteers, against all the odds and naysayers who said it would be impossible for them to become successful ventures. Despite their length the Victor Railway 35 miles and the Pichi Richi around 28 miles both are thriving today and run totally by volunteers.

TASMANIA is well placed for equally successful ventures having superb scenic lines still extant and an ever increasing number of visitors. However some of these lines are under threat of wilful removal by politicians and others



who are scornful of any attempt to revive them.

What is being underestimated is the community involvement that occurs with these projects. People of all ages seem to be drawn in and become willing participants. Then each generation attracts new people in a process of regeneration. People with all sorts of skills become involved especially retirees who find themselves recharged and young children who seem to find the rail thing mesmerizing, just like we did.

The line to Scottsdale has this potential to provide great community involvement in the running and maintaining of this scenic gem. Despite the 16 ton axle loading on the wooden trestle into the old Launceston station area it is still possible to run trains from there to Scottsdale or any where on the network.

Over 60 cruise ships will be visiting Hobart next year, what a pity passengers cannot alight and catch a tourist train to NAT. PARK & Russell Falls as they do in Dunedin N.Z. for a journey to the Taieri Gorge. This train also carries

cyclists to the rail trail which begins where the railway ends.

Then there is the railway along the north coast from Devenport to Wyward another scenic drawcard ignored.

The Govt. seems obsessed with building cable cars and luxury resorts in our National Parks, whilst totally ignoring the potential of our railways, infrastructure already in place just waiting for someone with drive and imagination to breathe life into them once more.

This can be done successfully as has been proven elsewhere, and the people who can make it happen are already there just waiting to show what they are capable of.

It would be a tragedy if the line to Scottsdale were to become a static bike trail, when as a living and functioning railway it has so much more to offer the tourist and the community, who after all are the rightful owners of the line.

DAVID OSMOND.