

Allison Waddington

From: Marilyn Broomhall <
Sent: Friday, 2 November 2018 3:30 PM
To: ner
Subject: Tasmanias North East Railway Corridor

Members of the Committee

Dear Members

My name is Ross Broomhall, I am 71 years young and I have resided at since 1984. I am a retired, self-employed electrical fitter/armature winder (diesel electric loco-traction motors, etc.) My workshop as in No 3 Shed, Kings Wharf trading as AWE Electrical and still trading today.

I joined the Launceston Tramway Museum Society in 2002 after I was asked to supply 200-500 volt DC to test the traction, motors under Tram 29 to enable it to move outside for the first time. Later this generator set was mounted on to a gangers flat 2 axel trailer which runs No 29 at Inveresk today for tourists to enjoy.

Two years ago I joined LNER and was elected as a Director. I can see great opportunity for a world class heritage railway from Launceston to Scottsdale, from Turners Marsh through Karoola, to Lalla, Lilydale Falls and through the tunnel, on to Denison Gorge to Wyena.

I have walked the railway line from Turners Marsh to Lilydale, from Lilydale to Tunnel, and Lebrina to Golconda. I found the line to be in very good condition. This line had been upgraded during Australian National ownership to carry 2000 ton log trains, but the trains were only loaded to 1000-1500 tons.

The bridge over the Pipers River at Karoola was replaced in 1991 using bridge beams from the old Ghan line near Oodnadatta, South Australia. This is a piece of history and heritage. At present the Wyena bridge needs only a new deck.

The former Dorset Mayor, Barry Jarvis had proposed a heritage steam train to run from Launceston to Scottsdale before his untimely passing.

The LNER stage one was Lilydale to Wyena and back. Stage two from Lilydale to Turners March and return, due to the fact more work was needed on that section of line to bring it up to standard. The railway track between Lilydale station and Karoola is in poor condition compared to the rest of the line, rotten sleepers and drainage problems and land slip.

Mr Guttweinn's stage 1, Lilydale Falls to Turners Marsh, Stage 2 Turners Marsh to Coldwater Creek and stage 3 Coldwater Creek to Launceston was actually never to be part of the bike track.

The Government's adviser, Ray Bartlett, spent two days riding the line in a Hirail vehicle and somehow found so many frozen fish plates.

After many hours of walking the line over several days with a hammer and spanner I only found a few frozen fish plates, because most had been welded on top of the rail (photo enclosed). Much of the rail line is butt welded, from length of 1 km to 3 km around curves and mounted on steel sleepers. Where the sleepers are wooden on straight stretches one in four are on steel sleepers.

Bob Vanselow's track assessment points to the low cost to return most of the rail trackage for use with 15 tonnes axle load suitable for DP14 railcar and trailing carriage.

In the 1970s when TGR was struggling to make ends meet it was sold to Australian National in 1978. During that time culverts and small bridges on the mainline were replaced. The Karoola bridge was replaced in 1991, and the Lilydale Falls bridge had the centre column replaced. In 1997 AN sold the railway system to Australian Transport Network and in February 2004 ATN sold to PNT (ASCIANO). This turned out to be most unsatisfactory for the rail network. They removed the crossing lights on the North East Line.

In October 2009 the Tasmanian Railway P/L was formed to take over PNT at a cost of \$40 million. The Tas government paid \$32 million for all the above rail infrastructure and \$1.00 for 632 km of railway line infrastructure which included 213 kms of line which were not in use at the time including Coldwater Creek to Tonganah. This is part of the line which we wish to take over to form part of a world class heritage railway.

Don River Railroad started with nothing but bare earth and is now operating a successful tourist rail business. The West Coast Wilderness Railway began in a rain forest with no trackage and at a cost of \$44 million approx. The LNER has all trackage and station platforms in situ, some of which are heritage listed, as is the Scottsdale station building and platform. Pity it has been vandalised and neglected by the local authorities. To tear up all this for the pleasure of a few bike riders and their supporters would be heritage vandalism. The tourist railway would bring many more visitors to Tasmania from all over the world as many wealthy people take rail holidays. Also only young fit people ride bikes, whereas the train can cater for older or disabled people as well as young and fit. The carriage will also have facilities for the carriage of bikes, thus catering for all.

As for setting up we have a crew of fifty volunteers, qualified in all aspects of railway maintenance, some retired some still working, keen and ready to get started.

yours sincerely

Ross Broomhall.