

## What's Inside

The Flame Robin    The Old Coach Trail at Orbost    A.G.M.

New Works at Nicholson

Wairewa Landcare

Maintaining the Rolling Stock

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## A Great Wall - stopping erosion and making a statement at Bairnsdale.

One of the biggest construction efforts of the Green Army program over the last two years has been the gradual building of an extensive and important retaining wall to stop erosion of the embankment on the north of the path just inside the entrance to the trail at Bairnsdale.

It has provided participants in the project with good experience of using power tools, building in timber and designing appropriate planting for the new spaces behind the vertical barriers.

Team members have also had some fun adding small murals to some panels. A seat donated by the Shire adds to this significant addition at the 'gateway' to the trail.



*Michael Oxe*

## FLAME ROBIN - *Petroica phoenicea*

If you are really lucky, you may see a Flame Robin this time of year as you travel the East Gippsland Rail Trail. Flame Robins are generally winter visitors to south-eastern Australia and are seen more commonly in higher altitudes.



The Flame Robin is a small Australian robin that reaches 12-14 cm in length. **The male** has a dark slate grey head and upperparts, a small white forehead patch, and white wing stripes on the folded wing and white tail-edges. The male has a bright orange-red throat, breast and upper-belly, black bill and dark brown legs. The lower belly is white. **The female** is grey-brown, darker above, and has a whitish throat and lower belly. The whitish mark on the female's forehead is inconspicuous. Female Flame Robins also have white and buffish marked wings and tail. Immature males resemble females. The main call of the Flame Robin is a thin, pretty, piping descending song. Flame Robins are the only robins that form flocks in winter. Threats to the Flame Robin include land clearing, cultivation and other habitat degradation. Predation by Pied Currawongs also poses a threat to the Flame Robin.

When Parks Victoria ranger, Luke Johnson, moved to Wilsons Promontory he heard the story of how the flame robin got red feathers on its chest.

***"There was a spirit named Yiruk or Wamoon who lived at Wilsons Promontory and one night he decided to travel up to where the Gunai Kurnai people were camping.***

***When they went to sleep he decided to steal their fire. When they woke up they were very angry.***

***The spirit tried to take the fire through the sky world so he made a lasso and tried to lasso it skywards, but his plans were spoiled by the eagle hawk and crow.***

***They flew up and knocked it from his clutches and as it fell down a little robin was sitting there waiting for it.***

***Just before it hit the ground the robin reached out and caught it, put some on its chest and took the rest back to the Gunai Kurnai people. And that's how the flame robin got his red chest."***

The Flame Robin is sometimes confused with the Scarlet Robin which has black upperparts and throat, red underparts and a larger white patch above its beak.

### References:

ABC Gippsland, 8 July, 2015 2:49PM AEST The story of Gippsland's flame robin By Zoe Ferguson  
[www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspeciesapp](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspeciesapp) ; <https://australianmuseum.net.au/flame-robin>

<http://bwvp.ecolinc.vic.edu.au/fieldguide/fauna/flame-robin>

Janice Preston

## Wairewa Landcare Targets O'Grady's Bridge.

This resurgent group is developing a plan to upgrade visitor facilities near the bridge and protect the amazing 201 year old timber structure against risk from fire.

There is great interest in preserving the local history of this bridge, and to help make it more accessible for visitors to our region, adding to the story of our unique bridges alongside the Stony Creek example.

Details will include improvements for safer car parking, adding seating and information signs, and setting up a viewing spot at the eastern end of the bridge.

*Michael Oxer*



**Several Landcare groups have been great supporters of the trail.**



## Management Notes

Several important works items are being planned, in addition to the many small maintenance matters which need attention.

Preparations are being made to carry out grading of the gravel pathway on the Colquhoun section when conditions are suitable (e.g. enough dampness in the ground to get the best results from compaction rolling).

Quotes are being sought to repair (prop up) one of the Nicholson bridge's massive timber bracing stays which has broken from its pier at ground level. Other regular work at this bridge involves keeping the ground under the timber section clear of vegetation as a fire protection precaution. Repairs to parts of the mesh fencing on the bridge have been required because of ongoing vandalism which included recently a three metre panel being cut out.

The committee has been advised of a growing interest from several groups to use the old railway bridge at Bairnsdale for pedestrian traffic. It is in the interests of the rail trail to give strong support for any such development as it would help define a most appropriate entry route across the Mitchell River to the trail.



***Nicholson River bridge during construction in 1910.***

***Two steam locomotives have paused on the bridge.***

## Work in Progress.

A special grant last year from the Victorian Government's Infrastructure Improvements Fund is enabling the trail management committee to add a significant item of infrastructure at Nicholson.

This will take place at the new fresh water drink point with construction of a short length of railway station platform (in replica form), addition on the 'platform' of another of the small red curved roof shelters (as at

Bumberra and Partellis Crossing), a new fence to define the area, more landscaping, and repairs to the pathway. An appropriate interpretation board will be included.

The committee is very keen to learn of any photograph which might exist of the original Nicholson platform.

When completed an official opening event will be held.

*Michael Oxe*



## What is "Rolling Stock"?

The term rolling stock refers to any vehicles that move on a railway. It usually includes both powered and unpowered vehicles, for example locomotives, railroad cars, coaches, and wagons.



**C CLASS STEAM LOCOMOTIVE on the East Gippsland Line**

Locomotives and rolling stock are essential to any railway system, and present the most visible public face of the railways. From an initial collection of just 5 steam locomotives and a handful of carriages and goods wagons in 1859, the Victorian Railways' fleet grew to number 528 steam locomotives, 1,150 carriages and 10,000 goods vans and wagons in 1900, with the railways carrying 55 million passengers and 3.4 million tons of freight. After peaking in 1918 with 817 steam locomotives, the VR engine fleet was to undergo a dramatic change in the early 1950s with the introduction of diesel locomotives. Three hundred steam engines were scrapped in just 12 years and the last steam engines retired another 8 years later.

## Rolling Stock on the East Gippsland Line

D3 class, K class and sometimes N class locomotives were generally used on the line. In 1957, a change was made to diesel, wherein T and Y class locomotives were in service. A rail motor was used from 1924 – 1935. It had the appearance of a motor bus on wheels. When passenger service was stopped in 1935, a special provision was made to attach a carriage to a goods van.

**Next Issue: The Drivers**

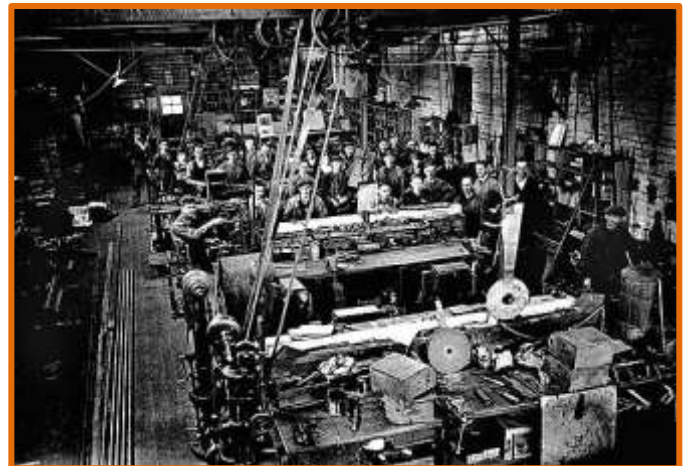


## Maintaining The Rolling Stock

Dieselisation saw T and sometimes Y class diesels in use, often double heading on the timber trains out of Orbost. Thirty timber wagons were specially built for the carriage of timber between Orbost and Westall.

**Boiler-makers, upholsterers, sail makers, blacksmiths, moulders and all sorts of tradespeople worked together to build and maintain all manner of items required by the railways - from state-of-the-art locomotives to the pegs to hold the track in place.**

From the 1900s most of Victoria's rolling stock was produced in government workshops at North Ballarat, North Bendigo, Jollimont, Geelong, North Melbourne, Spotswood and West Melbourne.



**workers on the factory floor in a railway workshop in Melbourne, 1927**

During its peak in the 1920s around 5000 workers were employed within the Newport workshop alone.

**Ref: Museum Victoria ; [engineersaustralia.org.au](http://engineersaustralia.org.au)**

## 'Where am I?'

### Getting Signed On To Help Visitors.

Thanks to some special funding from the Shire (part of the money which helped deliver the Bruthen section upgrade), the trail will soon be carefully surveyed to establish what guide-type and essential information signs are needed.

For the first phase the Shire will engage a consultant to do the survey and evaluation work with a report on details of what is needed. Obvious issues include upgrading existing but degraded signs but also for points of interest.



The essential need is to help visitors feel comfortable when travelling on the trail, particularly with regard to 'where they are'. Work to actually produce and install new signs will take place in 2017-18, using the final part of the five year allocation from the Shire



### Station Ground Walk, at Nicholson, growing up!



Last year this project became a reality thanks to a strong Green Army effort and funding for fencing and plants, with help from Rail Trail Friends and Landcare. Today the seven metre wide, 250 metre long Walk is taking shape as the more than a thousand plants (trees and understory vegetation) grow out of their protective covers. There is a lot of 'gardening' required to control weeds during this early stage but in time that should get easier as the new vegetation dominates. The Walk will establish a new route between Sarsfield Road and the west bank of the Nicholson River, and create a link to the proposed township housing site to the north, and further along the west bank of the river.

*Michael Oxe*



### Next Meeting

**When :** Sunday, July 30 ; 12.00 for lunch; 1.00 for meeting

**(A.G.M. followed by Ordinary Meeting)**

**Where :** Bruthen Pub

Autumn 2017

**OLD COACH TRAIL**

**GRANDVIEW LOOKOUT 1500m**



SNOWY WEST LANDCARE invites you to the opening of the **"NEW"** Old Coach Trail at  
Burn Road, Newmerella on [Saturday 3rd June at 2pm.](#)



Snowy West  
Landcare  
Group

1880s route has been resurrected to form a walking and cycling link  
in the Rail Trail and Grandview Road and Grandview Lookout.

## Valuing Our Business Friends



34 Carpenter St  
Lakes Entrance, Victoria  
3909 Australia

[roz@allambi.com.au](mailto:roz@allambi.com.au)

+61 351551199

**"Clean, very comfortable and close to everything Allambie had everything you could possibly need when on holiday. Hospitality from the hosts was fantastic even ensuring we had somewhere safe to store our bikes. Highly recommended." Jan 2017**

### Allambi Holiday Apartments

- **secure storage for your bikes**
- one and two bedroom apartments
- **free private parking is available on site**
- free WiFi
- **year-round outdoor pool, and barbecue**

All units feature a seating area with a flat-screen TV and DVD player. There is also a kitchen, equipped with a dishwasher and microwave. A refrigerator and kettle are also featured. There is a private bathroom with a shower in each unit.