

March 2012

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Landcare Group Plans To Tackle The Weeds At Orbost



The newly-formed **Snowy West Landcare Group** has successfully received funding for their first project to protect and enhance the vegetation at the Burn Rd start of the EGRT. There will be selective professional weed eradication and volunteer planting of endemic plants including *acacia maidenii*, an endangered species of wattle.

The group has also submitted an application for another grant to further improve the trail from start of the trail up the hill toward Newmerella.

Members of Snowy West Landcare group meeting with the Rail Trail Committee of management discussing the proposed work.

Scarecrows in a wide variety of shapes and sizes are appearing all over East Gippsland as the East Gippsland Art Gallery's "Scarecrow Trail" takes shape.

This one, (pictured on right) on the highway at Newmerella, was created by the Snowy West Landcare Group. It points the way to the Rail Trail.



Another Seat For Nicholson

The picture at left shows a seat installed at Sarsfield Road, Nicholson, in memory of Jan Martorana-Cleeland, a cousin of Michael Oxer and Marg Holt.

A similar seat is located near the Nicholson Bridge in memory of Marg's late husband Barry, a former President of Railtrails Australia.



A seat (like the ones above) can be donated for just \$250 (plus \$25 for an optional name plate to details supplied) and located at the donor's choice by agreement with the management committee.

Interested? Email a note to: eastgipprailtrail@wideband.net.au to discuss options.

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New Storyboard for Waygara



Clarrie Stevens standing proudly next to the storyboard designed and researched by Friend, May Leatch for the Waygara site.

Please be seated!

You have visited the Trail, taken away memories and photos. Why not leave a seat?

The donation of a seat to the Trail has a double benefit. Made by members of the Rotary Club of Mitchell River with donated materials and labour, one of these seats helps their community efforts and leave the Trail a long lasting gift for the use of visitors.

Ideal for a group to remember their visit. Some of the 10 seats already installed are memorials, others have been given in the name of a family.

Michael Oxer

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Mick Sutton (VicForest) ; Clarrie Stevens and Janice Preston (Friends)

Retired Orbost sleeper cutter ,Clarrie Stevens, was born in a bark hut at Newmerella in 1919. His father was a sleeper cutter from Tasmania and came to East Gippsland to work on the building of the Bairnsdale to Orbost Railway line. From the age of 14 Clarrie followed in his father's footsteps working in the timber industry until he retired 1985.

This board honours Clarrie and all other East Gippsland timber workers.

Meetings and Activities



Meetings

May 14 : Nowa Nowa

Aug 12 : AGM Bruthen

Nov 12 : Nicholson

Activities

May 6th Ride from Bruthen along rail trail to **Gippsland Lakes Discovery Trail [Mississippi Ck]**

Approximately 40k – total. Alternative is to meet at corner of rail trail and Seatons track, near Display sign at start of track, to do Discovery Trail for shorter ride. Track is rough need hybrid or mountain bike.

Leave Bruthen at 10am – or Seatons track at 11am, BYO Lunch at Log crossing picnic ground.

June 2nd 3rd – Goulburn River High Country Trail

This will be a weekend ride based in Yea. This is the newest trail – on completion it will be 134k long from Tallarook to Mansfield.

Accommodation options – Yea Motel, or Tartan motel in Yea.

Yea Caravan Park has self-contained cabins 5797 2972

Yea will be the base for this ride start from 10.00am – can do any distance as ride out and back.

Yea - Tallarook 38k

Yea – Alexandra 34k

See www.victorianrailtrails.com.au for details

Contact : Sue Peirce 5156 8228 or 0419 288 722 or peirces@wideband.net.au if you plan to come on these rides

June 24th Working bee Sunday – planting near Bairnsdale between entry and Phillips Lane . Start at 10am – morning tea provided bring gardening gloves, planting equipment provided.



New Trailer Donation

Another view of the new work trailer. It even has a spare wheel slung under the tray and considerable floor space for extra water, drums, tools etc.

This very bright addition to the Trail Committee's resources is thanks to a generous donation more than two years ago of a part built but very solid 4'X4' trailer, by a member of the Bayside Touring Club (cycling; metro Melbourne) and more recently an amazing welding fit-out by Archie Sutherland (of Nicholson River Landcare) aided by Committee member John Nelson.



The tank and spray will be used for weed control.

The 200 litre 12vV spray tank with hose reel purchased in 2010 thanks to a grant from the Federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Service & Indigenous Affairs (\$1751), has been installed, with various carry boxes for tools and equipment. We look forward to the addition of some colourful "artwork" from a budding graphics designer.

This trailer will provide an invaluable addition for use with the Landcruiser ute.

Thanks Archie and John!

Michael Oxer

Nicholson River Landcare Group Hard At Work



The Nicholson River Landcare Group has been working on a 100m section of the reserve at the eastern end of the Trail's Nicholson River Bridge since early 2011. They are hard at work rebuilding habitat for native birds and animals on the Trail Reserve. Several hundred indigenous shrubs, trees and grasses have been planted. Thanks to good rains last year and regular weeding, this effort is being rewarded with excellent plant growth. A seat and new paths have been added, providing extra walking path options near Nicholson. Well worth exploring.



Picture left

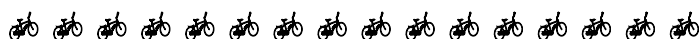
The group removes yet another trailer load of invading ferals.

Michael Oxer

Thanks to a very generous farmer and Landcare member in the Nicholson area, the Trail Committee and Landcare now have access to a 4X4 ute on a long term loan. With 420,000 kms on the clock, this 1988 Landcruiser is no pretty face but with some TLC from very helpful DSE people at Nowa Nowa some of its deficiencies are being fixed. It will reduce the need to use private maintenance work and add a high level of flexibility for tackling some of the tougher jobs.



Many thanks Leo!



RAILWAY OUTPOSTS - NOWA NOWA



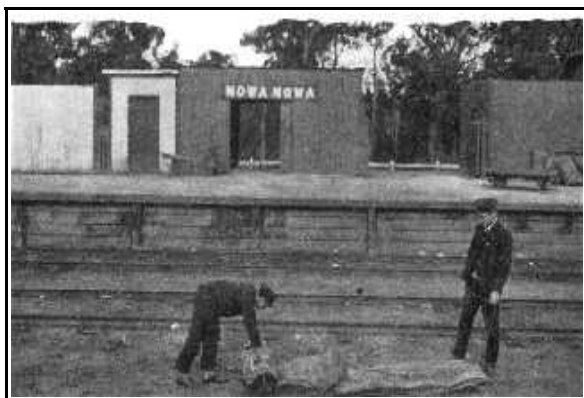
This description of Nowa Nowa was part of an article written in July 1928 and printed in The Victorian Railways Magazine.

"Two hundred and seven miles easterly from headquarters lies the railway outpost of Nowa Nowa, ranked officially as a ninth-class station, but, from a scenic viewpoint, possessing strong claims to first-class rank. Crystal clear Lake Tyers meets a rippling stream beneath the towering railway bridge, two hundred yards from the station. Bellbirds tinkle all day long in the forest of tall gums surrounding the little platform and goods yard."

Nowa Nowa Railway Station had been opened on Monday, 10 April 1916 to service the town of Nowa Nowa as part of the Bairnsdale to Orbost line.

The article continued:

"All told, £5061 railway revenue was earned during the last 12 months by Stationmaster C. A. Board, who has controlled Nowa Nowa for two years, and his assistant, Operating Porter J.W. Haines...." (pictured below)



Timber, marble, wool, wheat, skins, live stock, butter, honey and wattle bark freight all swelled that revenue. The marble represents a yearly aggregate of approximately 500 tons and is brought from Buchan into the shadow of Nowa Nowa's 10-ton crane by eight-horse teams.

Timber arrives as sleepers, blue gum logs ... from the local mill. One mammoth log loaded in the station yard some time ago tipped the scale at 8½ tons. It needed a single truck to itself... The average output of sleepers is about 2,000 a month.

The district's wheat yield last year was 2,000 bags. (Wheat was grown along the fertile river flats from as early as 1870) Seven hundred and sixty bales of wool were railed from the station last season, after a competitor's bid for transport by boat had come within an ace of success. That it failed was due in great measure to the interest of a local road carrier. And thereby hangs a tale..."

Vernon Tuck and Alexander Ramsay were storekeepers and carriers in Buchan. Tuck was able to persuade the local pastoralists to use road and rail transport as opposed to shipping which loomed as a threat to the railway.

"That day he spoke to the leading pastoralists, convinced them as a road man that the railway was the best way, and triumphantly brought the wool into the station in his wagons. A shining example, if ever there was one, of the possibilities of co-ordination between road and rail."

Unfortunately the station has long since closed, with the last train passing the site in 1987. The transport of freight was no longer viable.

Next issue : Timber mills at Waygara

Old Signal In New Spot

The last single header leaving Orbost. The signal can be seen on the right in the photo below.



Kerry Seaton standing in the spot where the refurbished signal once stood.

Locating the original site of the soon to be installed railway signal at Orbost was a simple exercise in detective like investigation. There were many hundreds of railway photos in the Orbost Historical Society records and it just needed some time and studying to find one which showed the signal in its original setting.

The signal won't be replaced near the old station as that is not in the present rail trail reserve. Instead, it will be placed at the trail head next to the table setting and shelter shed. Kerry Seaton, from the Committee of Management, has taken on the project of completing the refurbishment and installing the signal.

Kerry who once worked on the railway the explained the old photo:

"Single header refers to the one single locomotive pulling the train, which in the photo appears to be a light mixed goods train, only needing one locomotive to pull the train up the steep hill to Prestons Rd. Any bigger and two locomotives are linked together with just the single crew or they would use a locomotive at the rear (bank engine) to assist the train out of the station and up the hill from where the Bank engine would return to the yard.

The signal in the photo is a two position "Home arrival signal". The signal is situated just outside the station yards to protect any shunting movements within the yards from trains arriving from Bairnsdale.

I can't see a Guard's van on the rear of the train in the photo so that makes me suspicious that it is possibly the last train shunting in the yard before its departure and not its actual departure. "



Good News

From Andrew Sharpe:

The Telstra Optic Fibre cable installation between Newmerella and Fairweather track is due for completion on 27th March.

An on site inspection will be carried out to determine any restoration work required.