

**CASTLEDARE
MINIATURE RAILWAYS**

W.A. (INC)
www.castledare.com.au

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Castledare Miniature Railway
P.O Box 337
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All information on this page ratified by Management Committee on 17th April 2009

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No personal letters will be printed without committee approval

First Aid Officers: Fran Jones, Keith Watson, Tania Watson

The Castledare Miniature Railway is sponsored by:

Coal Supplies: The steam locomotives at the Castledare Miniature Railway operate with coal supplied by Premier Coal

Cover page: Don Bowyer relaxing while daughter Joanne (first lady driver at CMR) and Brendan take the controls.

Photographer: R Matthews

President's Report

Member's day was bright and sunny with no rain which was the complete opposite of what was forecast, but of course no great surprise there. As both Phoenix and Percy had undergone their 3 year boiler hydrostatic test the previous day I was keen to get both engines in steam and check safety valves and make sure all was in order. Phoenix was first to have a fire in it, and whilst waiting for steam to be raised, Colin Cave arrived for a run in Sir Charles Court. Of course Colin needs some assistance to set the road out of the yard and send him in the right direction towards the wetlands. As we all know a watched pot never boils so when I got back to the Loco shed Phoenix had both safeties blowing steam way into the air. The boiler was then filled and a good fire made up and then with the safeties blowing off at 90 psi an accumulation test was done and everything was in order. Phoenix was then moved to one side and left to simmer for running a bit later. Next Percy was given the same treatment, Percy being a vertical boiler was soon in steam and all proved to be satisfactory there and a quick couple of laps around the short loop proved it is good again for another 3 years. Percy then had its fire dropped and was put away in the shed.

Now it was time to have some fun with Phoenix, so the fire was made up and the blower turned up and in no time 90 psi was reached again and off we went for a couple of laps around the short loop to check all was in order. Now as with any steam engine they perform better under load, so the red set was dragged out of the carriage shed and coupled up to Phoenix to see if it still had what it takes. Once out of the yard and past the station the regulator was opened up and that distinctive bark from its exhaust echoed back as we past the canteen. Then slowing for the double bridge, and after a short acceleration, coast out to the first loop and time to build the fire and top up the boiler and tootle along and enjoy the scenery.

The red set, as we all know, is made of wood and is rather heavy so it's always a good load test when there are no passengers. Of course out at Wilson some would say you should get a bit of a run up before the bank, but I like to slow right down when the train is half way around the bend, open the regulator, and sit back as it accelerates up the bank, safeties blowing and the exhaust deafening and a grin from ear to ear. Then a good long blast on the whistle as it tops the bank into the station, this is to me pure magic. The same can be repeated at the river bend on the reverse curves towards the double bridge. Yes folks, that's what Member's days are all about, just having fun playing trains all within the confines of common sense. The fire was then dropped and Phoenix was also put away in the shed. I would like to thank Steve Reeves, who performed the boiler inspections on both engines, and the time he spent is much appreciated by both me and Mary Millman.

Also that day, Don Bowyer, his wife Judy and family friends, along with Eric and Mike Crean had fun playing trains. And by 1.00 pm it was time for a BBQ lunch. With the pangs of hunger removed and as I had been doing some work on the rear axle of Denis, I decided best to make sure everything is ok before its next call of duty, so another bit of oily rag was set fire to and with wood and coal in the fire box steam was soon raised. All the usual checks made and a good oil around and it was out onto the turntable to see if the clunk had been fixed, or at least reduced. To my delight the clunk under ones bum from the rear swiveling Klein-Lindner Watson radial axle had been reduced to a far more pleasant and bearable rumble and I think that this is just how it has possibly always been. Should last another 40 years ☺

All in all a long, but very enjoyable, day boiling water and having fun. Pity a few more members did not take advantage of the fine weather, but it's all up to yourselves.

The day before Member's day was the monthly track work day with the weather being the complete opposite from the forecast again. Do they just stick a finger in the air and take a guess! Now I have to say, seriously, that the turnout from the membership for this work day was very disappointing. Those that did turn up were Craig Belcher, John Watson, Mike Crean, Geoff Thompson, Richard Stuart, and of course Stork. These members between them removed a 10 meter section of track, dug out the old ballast, which was the purpose of the work, and got rid of a hump in the track. They also leveled the base and compacted it and re-laid the section of track with new ballast and expansion joints. A good morning's work by the same dedicated few, most of whom were committee members. Now I know 2 members, one being on holiday and another on a course, had reason not to be there, otherwise they would have normally been there. And I'm sure there are members with very good reasons not to turn up, but there must also be quite a number that if they had thought about the club and its needs could have made the effort and a lot more much needed work could have been done.

We are now in spring and very soon the heat of summer will make track work very hot and hard work. At this time there are about 15 new lengths of T Rail being made up which will replace the existing track between the double bridge and the lagoon. When the call goes out for help with this work, I and your committee will expect a much better attendance. The October track day will be spent checking out the Fern road and Canning loops ready for summer running in November. Remember many hands make light work and that's what being a club member is supposed to be all about. No Track, No Railway.

The September first Sunday run was also Father's day. Not being there, I am unable to say how the day went, but I'm sure someone else will have submitted a report for this normally busy day.

I was, however, at the Wilson Run Day on the 16th. The forecast was for once about right, which was a shame because showers were forecast and indeed there were many showers, but it seems this did not deter the punters. I had Denis in steam and Vic had his loco on duty as always. There were a few times we made a stop at Niana waiting for the rain to stop, but I think for the first time in a very long time, I actually wore wet weather gear, but it is nice and warm driving Denis ☺ Thanks to all those members who braved the wintry conditions.

The new passenger race, which was installed by the Wednesday crew, seems to have worked very well in keeping ticketed passengers separated from those waiting to purchase tickets. Along with having the tickets punched at the top of the slope, things seem to be very much improved for all concerned.

September, so far, has been the wettest since about 1918 and this along with the warm weather will mean the grass banks will soon have very long grass on them, so if you can spare some time, there are two wiper snipers in the shed. The removal of long grass close to the track means a tidier looking railway and also a very much reduced fire risk for the summer.

Roger Matthews
President, Castledare Miniature Railway



FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK

Following are some of the items that have been discussed at Committee meetings and they are listed here in an endeavour to keep members informed of the current goings on. If any members have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact a Committee member. Contact details for all members of the committee are published elsewhere in the magazine.

From the Committee meetings held:

- ⇒ Station Staff to wear orange safety vests on run days. Duty officer to wear the yellow vest
 - (This, along with punching tickets before boarding kept the trains moving better)
- ⇒ Vandalism is an ongoing problem – all members need to be vigilant when at the grounds to ensure they check all doors, etc. are closed securely prior to locking up
- ⇒ Member's Christmas party to be held at the club on Sunday 12/12/09 - more later - keep this date clear
- ⇒ Plans are being drawn up to increase the width of the carriage shed
- ⇒ Saturday 3rd October CMR Birthday run with a BBQ tea followed by a late run if members wish and the weather is favorable
- ⇒ Sandgroper weekend – 7th and 8th November. Details and Registration Form can be found at the end of this newsletter.



DATES FOR THE DIARY:

Public Run Days

- Sunday 20th September – Public run day – Wilson Station
- Sunday 4th October - Public run day – Niana Station
- Sunday 18th October - Public run day – Wilson Station
- Sunday 1st November - Public run day – Niana Station

Work days / nights – all members welcome to participate

- Wednesday 23rd September - work day
- Wednesday 30th September - work day
- Wednesday 7th October - work day
- Saturday 10th October – work day/track work
- Wednesday 14th October - work day
- Friday 16th October - work night
- Wednesday 21st October - work day
- Wednesday 28th October - work day

General Dates for inclusion in your Diary

- Saturday 3rd October – Prepare railway for run and General Meeting at 10am + CMR Birthday celebrations
- Sunday 11th October – Members fun day come and join in just sit, relax, catch up with fellow members for a chat, or play trains (no work) - **BYO picnic or barbecue lunch**
- Saturday 31st October – Prepare railway for run day and General Meeting at 10am
- Sunday 8th November – Members fun day come and join in just sit, relax, catch up with fellow members for a chat, or play trains (no work) - **BYO picnic or barbecue lunch**

Additional Dates to be remembered

Assistance required for the dates below:

- Sunday 11th October – Display at Railfest – volunteers required to man the display (after Baby Edwards Naming ceremony!)
- Friday/Saturday 6th/7th November – Canning Agricultural show - volunteers required to man the display
- Sunday 15th November – Conductive Education – approx 300 people from 10am (as this is also the Wilson run day we will require all hands on deck!)
- Sunday 29th November – Bunning’s Social Club – approx 100 people
- Saturday 5th December – Caribbean Club – approx 100 people
- Sunday 13th December – Panoramic Resources – approx 100 people – Canteen service required

Special Event

- Sunday 11th October at 10am - Baby Edwards Naming Day. All are welcome to join Sharon, David and family celebrate this occasion (BYO picnic).



Rail Ramblings....

5" upgrade work

Since the convention has come and gone, there have been a few occasions where the 5" track has been used. This has been good to see and I hope we see more of it. That being said, there is still work to do on the 5" as time permits, some of which includes point work upgrades and rail replacement in a couple of sections. To those using it, I ask for constructive criticism, and should any issues arise, no matter how small, please tell me so as they can be attended to in due course. The track held up relatively well over the convention, though several engines experienced some problems. The aim now must be to sort out these issues once and for all. The stability of the ground our railway is on doesn't help, but this is being gradually worked on with roadbed improvements.

General Track work

Recent work around the railway has included some spot ballasting work in the wetlands and the complete rebuild of the roadbed on a large part of the clubroom curve. This latter project is not complete as yet but is already a vast improvement over what it was. The methods employed here have also been used in other spots on the railway with great success in improving the roadbed (where previously there was none) and smoothing out track irregularities. Along with this the ash pits in road 3 & 4 in Niana station have been completely rebuilt with some minor tweaking left to finish this job, thanks to the Wednesday crew for completing this work.

One thing the convention did show was that the track itself is in reasonable shape, it's the expansion joints that let it down. There are various reasons as to why this is, but the major factor is the old timber sleepers that were in place have rotted away leaving the joints totally unsupported. This in turn leads to the rail ends being able to bend downwards to varying degrees, resulting in a track that is anything but smooth. It is felt that while the number of joints in the track probably aided in its construction, there are far more than is actually needed. It is planned that approximately 50% of the expansion joints in the track will be eliminated in conjunction with rail straightening and welding of the joints.

Components for new expansion joints are starting to appear at the railway, thanks to Don and his mill, there will be a lot more of these required, and other items to be made for future work as well. So if anybody feels they can't assist with the heavy work at the railway, but can with manufacture of items offsite, help is always welcome. To eliminate the issue of the sagging expansion joints we will be returning to the method of bolted joints using 2 M12 stainless steel bolts passing through 25mm square cross bars. Interestingly this is an area where the economic downturn will help us, as quotes for the stainless bolts have revealed. The pricing is the same if not better than for equivalent sized bolts in zinc steel..!

New track of the T rail configuration is under construction for the section from Bayou Bridge to Aberup, which will likely be installed in the early months of next year. This rail is on bigger and heavier sleepers to give more bite into the ground to help prevent movement, and should result in a much smoother riding track through this section. It is envisaged that these larger sleepers will quite possibly be used in some areas on curves alternating with our standard smaller size, again to mitigate movement of track in curves.

To speed up the process of welding the T rail a welding beam has been erected outside the workshop. This new jig and the use of a second welder should see the time taken in welding heavily reduced, meaning less time assembling and more time available for other things.

The next month sees us change from regular Wilson running to our summer circuit. With this will come some work on the Fern road section, mostly joint lifting along with selective sleeper replacement and top up ballasting. The Canning section looks to be ok, although since Easter road 2 in Canning station has already sunk by about 2 inches and will require releveling before we start heavy running down there.

That about does it for now, my thanks again to the regulars who turn out to do the track work and keep the railway moving, great work guys, the effort you put in is greatly appreciated.

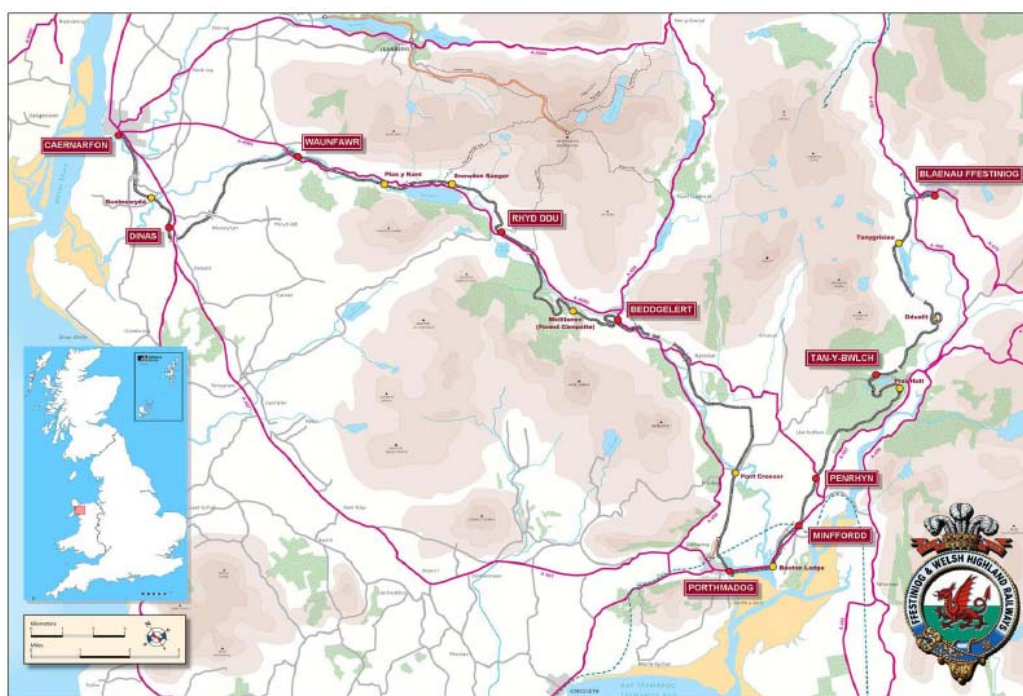
Craig
Track Master

A WELSH HIGHLAND ADVENTURE

By Richard & Trish Stuart

The old Welsh Highland Railway (WHR) was legendary amongst narrow gauge railway enthusiasts. It was cobbled together from a number of small lines and tramways in the 1920s and operated with a random collection of quaint old rolling stock. Never a commercial success, it didn't last very long, and was mostly lifted for scrap metal in the Second World War. However, it passed through some of the wildest scenery in North Wales, and acquired a mythical status amongst railway enthusiasts.

As far back as the 1960s, wistfully optimistic railway enthusiasts had dreamed of re-opening the fabled line. Over the years, a short length of track was laid in the flat lands near Porthmadog, but the goal of opening the section through Snowdonia remained out of reach. Then, in the 1990s, a unique set of circumstances came together in a once-in-a-millennium alignment. Financial boom times combined with new sources of funding from the National lottery, a Millenium Project initiative, patriotic enthusiasm from the newly formed Welsh National Assembly, a credible re-opening proposal from the successful Festiniog Railway, and reported support from HRH the Prince of Wales himself. As a result, the WHR suddenly found itself with the money and the legal powers to obtain the old trackbed and rebuild the railway. One imagines that even the line's most ardent supporters may have shocked themselves with this outcome.



Where to find us

The route of the Welsh Highland Railway (from the Welsh Highland Railway downloadable e-brochure, www.festrail.co.uk)

The original WHR connected with the Festiniog Railway at Porthmadog, then ran through the streets of the town, crossed the Cambrian main line on the level, and traversed the Highlands of Snowdonia to a junction with a standard gauge branch at Dinas, near Caernarfon. As the standard gauge branch had long since closed, the new WHR was extended over the old standard gauge trackbed, to a new terminus in the shadow of Caernarfon Castle. Re-building began at the Caernarfon end in the 1990s, finally re-instating the street section through Porthmadog to re-connect with the Festiniog Railway in 2009. One or two test trains have so far made the through journey, but in a possibly ominous echo of the original failed WHR, a dispute with the local authority has delayed public passenger services into Porthmadog until at least next year. In the meantime, scheduled trains run between Caernarfon and a temporary terminus at Hafod-y-Llyn near Beddgelert.

The author's interest in steam railways was at least partially fuelled by family holidays to North Wales in the late 1950s and early 60s. Strong childhood memories remain of exciting narrow gauge steam trains in scenic settings, running under slate grey skies in the pouring rain. Nearly 50 years later, the holidaying Stuart family returned to North Wales to find that little had changed, particularly the grey skies and pouring rain. A ride on the new WHR had been an ambition for some years, and we finally parked the car in the shadow of historic Caernarfon Castle, bought tickets, and waited for the train to arrive. A particular attraction of the WHR is the use of ex South African Railways Class NG/G16 2-6-2 + 2-6-2 Beyer-Garratt locomotives to handle heavy trains over the demanding route, and the sound of an approaching train raised eager anticipation. This turned to a collective groan from the crowd on the platform when a diesel locomotive appeared at the head of the train. What a let-down! Resignation set in until the rear of the train appeared with a huge narrow gauge Garratt attached. There was an audible sigh of relief across the platform. Given the threatening look of the sky, we declined the opportunity of a ride in the open sided cars and took up seats inside a covered carriage. This turned out to be a wise move.



Oh no! It's a diesel!

Photo: Trish Stuart



That's more like it. A magnificent NG/G16 Beyer-Garratt

Photo: Trish Stuart

The rain started soon after departure, and was well established by the time we reached Dinas Junction. This is the main base for the WHR, with various interesting bits of unrestored locomotives lying around in the yard. The diesel was uncoupled here, leaving the Garratt to press on towards Snowdonia in the rain. As the downpour increased, the train went slower and slower until it was virtually at a standstill. A glance out of the window showed the reason. The front unit of the Garratt was slipping wildly on the wet rails, and the crew's heads were hanging out of the cab as they struggled to bring the beast under control. It took several minutes to restore a modest rate of progress, but the challenging nature of the line became quite clear. Apart from the gradients, there is hardly a straight length of track on the line. Through the carriage window, broadside views of the Garratt repeatedly appeared as the train entered sharp curves. A few seconds later, the loco would re-appear in profile on the other side as the Garratt and its twelve car train snaked its way up through the hills.

There were stops at very Welsh sounding stations such as Waunfawr, and then Rhyd-Ddu, where passengers were entertained by a family's lengthy preparation of their bicycles in the pouring rain. After much fiddling about, they cycled off towing trailers containing several small children and a very large dog.



The cycling dog of Rhyd-Ddu

Back to N Wales – 50 years on

Photos: Trish Stuart

The train then pressed on over the summit of the line and began the descent towards Beddgelert. In the Beddgelert Forest, the snaking route of the railway became extreme. In places, the line could be clearly seen, heading in the opposite direction, only a couple of fields away. Meanwhile, the rain became heavier, pouring down the windows in rivulets, and finding its way inside until the carriage floor was awash. There was a stop at Beddgelert, then the highlight of the journey through the Aberglaslyn Pass, recently voted the most spectacular scenic location in the UK.



The photo is not blurred – It's just the North Wales rain

Photo: Trish Stuart



Running round at Hafod-y-Llyn

Photo: Trish Stuart

The train terminated at Hafod-y-Llyn, where the Garratt ran around and started the climb back to the summit. With the gradient against it, the loco again slipped to a standstill before the crew regained control and restored progress. By this time, it was well over two hours since Caernarfon, and the journey began to feel like an epic adventure, enhanced by the wild weather outside. Familiar landmarks were passed, including the reverse loops in Beddgelert Forest, and there was still a long way to go. We passed roaring flooded streams, stormy lakes and towering mountain crags, before making it back to Dinas Junction. On the final leg, the rain eased up, and it was merely drizzling as we arrived back at Caernarfon. After four hours, the train had started to feel like home, and it felt like a major upheaval to leave the carriage. A quick chat with the friendly guard confirmed the changing moods of the North Wales weather. He said that every trip could feel like a different railway, depending on the weather at the time.

A final observation as we drove away indicated why the original line had not been a commercial success. It had taken almost two hours to reach Beddgelert on the train. In the car, on a slow road, it took about 20 minutes. We can only wish the new Welsh Highland Railway good fortune in its new career as a tourist attraction. And a target for the future is to return and travel the combined 40 mile length of the WHR and Festiniog Railway in one marathon journey.

Notice Board

Katanning Miniature Railway Inc – wish to purchase:

7¼" Diesel/Petrol or Electric Loco in good condition to use as a Club Loco.
Please ring Tony Stock or email a photo of the Loco and details to
abj@westnet.com.au.

Thank you for your help.
Julie Stock
Secretary/Treasurer

For Sale – CMR DVD and CMR logo sew-on patches

Don Bowyer was commissioned to put together a CMR DVD depicting our history as well as some current footage. He has done an extremely professional job and the first batch of DVDs has sold out. Another order has been placed and when received you will be able to purchase them from the Canteen at \$5 each.

CMR logo sew-on patches are also available from the Canteen at \$5 each.

Positions Vacant – Ladies or Gents

The Canteen requires volunteers to help out with the serving of refreshments on the first Sunday run days. No previous experience required, only a few hours a month, good vantage point to watch the trains pass, great job satisfaction – no remuneration! If you are able to assist, please contact Fran Jones.

Wanted:

Are you building a loco?
Have you been on an interesting train trip?
Do you have any train stories to tell?

If you answered 'yes' to any of the above questions, then please share your experiences with your fellow club members. We are looking for articles from our members to include in this magazine. Let's make it interesting to read, and if you can provide photos too, that will make it all the more fun. Please email all contributions to Trish at the address on the second page of this edition.

Private Parties:

Please note that Private parties, held on Public run days, MUST operate from the designated station of the day.

Security:

Members are reminded not to leave valuables on display in parked cars. Vehicles parked on the top car park have been broken into recently.

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

Please do not forget to advise us if you change your email address. This will ensure that you always receive your Cinders and Soot notification. Thanks.

If you wish to contribute an article to Cinders and Soot, please note that the closing date is the 15th of each month. Please send your contributions to Trish Stuart at the email address on the page 2.

2009 SANDGROPER WEEKEND 2009

The South West Model Engineers Association invites all Western Australian Model Engineers to participate in the 6th Sandgroper gathering.

The event, held at the South West Model Engineers Association grounds in Forrest Park, Bunbury on Saturday the 7th and Sunday the 8th of November 2009, will start at 9:00am on Saturday and finish early on the Sunday evening.

Our Club looks forward to catching up with model engineers from all over Western Australia, as all model engineering clubs in Western Australia have been notified of the event.

The registration fee for Saturday is \$10 per person and for Sunday is \$5 per person this will provide you with tea and coffee all day, along with morning and afternoon tea on both days. On Saturday an evening meal will be provided to all who register for the evening meal at \$20.00 per head.

If you wish to attend the evening meal but require special meal, please discuss your needs with either Ian Morrison (9725 2206) or Jeff Clifton (9725 1994) from the South West Model Engineers Association.

If you intend to run a steam locomotive on the weekend, please bring your current boiler certificate to the gathering. Our club will supply coal, char, steam oil and light up wood for the event. Fuel for internal combustible engines will be your responsibility on the weekend.

Registration forms are available from your Society or from the South West Model Engineers Association or you may photocopy if required.

Completed forms must be received by close of mail on Friday 30th October 2009 to allow for catering numbers etc to be calculated.

Send forms and payment to
South West Model Engineers Association 55 Turnberry Way
Pelican Point WA 6230

We Hope to see you all there in November



2009 SANDGROPER GATHERING

REGISTRATION FORM

Name : _____

Names for Badges (block letters) : _____

Address : _____

Phone : _____

A.A.L.S Affiliated Society : _____

I wish to register for the Sandgroper Gathering. Enclosed is my registration fee for myself, partner and/or children as well as the evening meal on Saturday (if indicated bellow)

- REGISTRATION FEES
- Saturday \$10 per person
 - Saturday's Meal \$20 per person
 - Sunday \$5 per person

Number of people attending Saturday 7 th		
	Number for Meat	Number for Chicken
Number of people attending Saturday Dinner (Please indicate numbers in the meal type column)		
Number of people attending Sunday 8 th		

If you require a special menu, please contact **Ian Morrison on 9725 2206** or **Jeff Clifton on 9725 1994**

To assist in planning the catering, we would appreciate receiving completed registration forms before the close of mail on Friday the 30th of October 2009.

I **will / will not*** be bringing a locomotive or traction engine (*Please delete as required)

Please send your completed registration form, **WITH** payment, to:

South West Model Engineers Assn (WA) Inc
55 Turnberry Way
Pelican Point WA 6230

If you have any questions regarding this event, please
phone Ian Morrison on 9725 2206 or Jeff Clifton on
9725 1994

We look forward to seeing you all there!!