



Julian driving Dependable – photo by Trish Stuart

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## CASTLEDARE MINIATURE RAILWAYS (INC)

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**No personal letters will be printed without committee approval**

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<b>Signals</b>	Mike Crean			

## **From the Editors Desk – by Trish and Robin**

Welcome to the December Issue of Cinders and Soot. We wish all members and friends of CMR a safe and happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Just a reminder to all that the date for submissions is in the calendar and photos would be greatly appreciated. Submissions will be vetted for formatting, spelling, grammar and appropriateness of content before being included!

### **Members Celebrating their Birthday this Month are:**

John	Ahern
Will	Edwards
Curtis	Lawrence
Xavier	Millman
Terence	Skinner

## **President's Prattle – by Mike Crean**

On behalf of your committee I would like to wish all our members and friends a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

*With the extreme heat in Perth the last few days it has seen our steam locomotives spending a great deal of time in the round house. There have been a number of items added to the hot work bans on days of total fire ban. For more information refer to the DFES web site <https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au>*

*It is a timely reminder to us all to be very aware of possible fire hazards at our railway and remember that our policy is no steam locomotives fire up or run, or open flames during periods of total fire ban. It is also mandatory that we follow the rules for hot work restrictions published on the DEFS web site.*

*A note for those of us that use cutting tools in Gerry's workshop or other areas of the club. The DFES hot work rule bans any activity that can create an ignition source outside a shed or building with an open wall, roof, door or window. This includes grinding and gas cutting of any material that can create an ignition source (a spark). Be aware of the direction of any spark you create. It must not exit the building on days of total fire ban and in any event this would be good work practice at any time.*

The club's Christmas party was held last Saturday around midday on a very hot 40C plus day. The catering was excellent as it has been over the past couple of years. Many thanks to the caterers and our members who organised the function and helped out on the day.

Our junior members were playing trains for a short period and gave it away as the temperature in Wilson approached 42C. It was a little disappointing for them a day of total fire ban had been declared. This meant that our steam locomotives had to remain in the round house for the day and night. With the extreme temperatures during the day and an over night low of around 25c this would have made it very uncomfortable lighting up and driving a seam train on the day.

Our first Sunday running day was a very warm day with temperatures in the high 30's. There were some challenging moments for our signal operators at Niana North with a number of power outages. Public riding numbers were as expected for that time of year. The third running day at Wilson Park was a complete melt down with temperatures in the low 40C's. Only about 63 passengers rode on the trains. With the temperature running over 40C by 10:30 it was decided to call it a day and put all our trains away and head for a nice cool place to relax. The day was the lowest numbers ever carried from Wilson on a running day that had not been washed out by rain.

PLEASE MAKE SURE THE DOORS ARE SHUT AND SECURE.

As always we must encourage and congratulate our junior members on their great enthusiasm and their dedication to the club and its members. Thanks boys and girls, keep up the great work.

Until next time please visit your club and its facilities. They are there for all of us to enjoy.

### **Secretary's Scribblings – by Les Smith**

As we are grey nomads on a holiday until the New Year, we take this opportunity to wish all members and readers a great Christmas and happy prosperous New Year and my personal thanks to all that help given to our Club in 2019. This year, now ending, has been very productive and we now move forward for 2020.

2020 will see Curtis and Dion graduate to steam driving, which we at the Club look proudly towards. Good going fellas! Even more remarkable is that Curtis has been "moon-lighting" down at HOTHAM VALLEY on one of those wonderful W Classes, thanks to Ian Willis. It was noted that Dylan2 had his father come along recently to observe his progress and that Xander is keeping accurate records of his experience to the minute! We hope that Sarah recovers from her knee surgery and gets back to W22 quickly.

A little different event for the Xmas school holidays is that on the last Wednesday of January, the City of Canning will try to have an "Amazing Race" that will feature one of our train sets.

Merry Xmas.

### **DO's Report for Sunday December 1<sup>st</sup> – by Robin Greeney**

On a relatively cool day, we had a significant number of locomotives prepared for operation. At the briefing I raised the possibility that some would need to be withdrawn from service. This became even more critical given the small number of qualified guards available. Many were present at the Club but undertaking other duties - not really appropriate on a public runday.

Guards were also asked to be very vigilant to ensure that passengers kept their hands inside the carriages given the significant number of snakes seen on the last runday. One child was even seen dragging their hand along the ground on that day - right where a snake had been seen alongside the track!!

Our new picket fence in the station made a huge difference to its appearance thanks to the efforts of Terry and the A team - well done guys.

The runday started off slowly with only a handful of passengers on the first train, which departed at the normal start time - and passenger numbers remained low all day. Some trains were left in the yard as a result. Unfortunately we had quite a few "moments of unusual interest". Three trains and one consist developed minor mechanical problems and had to be withdrawn from service. Also power failed in the Niana box in excess of 6 times - each time resetting the points and signals etc. The locos/rolling stock of course failed at the most inconvenient places but due to the reduced passenger numbers the impact wasn't that great.

Even with all the issues, we carried just over 500 passengers on the day. And my hair is still in place - well the little I have that is. Well done to everyone who assisted on the day.



The new picket fence at Niana station not only improves the appearance of the station massively, but is also far safer. The fence has been moved back from Road 1 by 100mm and the gap between pickets is such that small passengers can't poke their hands through the fence - both of which should make the role of Station assistants much easier.

Terry would like to thank all those who assisted with the construction of the fence.

### **DO's Report for Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup> – by Robin Greeney**

Following several 40 degree plus days, the 15th was forecast to be yet another scorcher. It was decided to take two single consist trains out to Wilson and have another prepared and parked under cover at the station at Niana - to be called out if required. That way all trains would be protected from the worst of the heat whilst stationary. The fire train was also located at Wilson as a precaution against any sparking from rails or engine exhaust. When we arrived at Wilson (shortly after 8:40) the temperature was already approaching 36 degrees and going North rapidly. By the time the second train arrived at the station (just

after 9:30) the temperature wasn't far short of 40 degrees. There were two groups of people in the park and one of those appeared to be packing up - almost no one there. The run started at 10:00 but by 10:30 the temperature had risen to over 40 degrees so it was decided to terminate services. One birthday party group was given a last chance to ride the train before closure - and they took advantage of that. By about 10:50 everything was packed up and we returned to Niana.

Thanks to all who fronted up in the heat to provide a service to our passengers - at one stage we had more members present at Wilson than possible passengers in the Park. We still managed to provide 63 rides on the day - not bad considering the conditions!

### **A Message from Sue and Ken**

We would like to take this opportunity to say a very hearty thank you to those club members who took on the organising of the annual Christmas function. In our view, the meal was delicious, plentiful and filling. As we are not certain of all who were involved in the organising [although the obvious ones are there] we won't name names but there is no doubt, you know who you are.



Secondly, from our house to yours, we wish you a safe, happy Christmas and New Year break. Whether you like the traditional full-blown Christmas Day with all the trimmings or a more simplified time, take the time to relax and unwind. Enjoy time with your family and friends and we hope that you will return to the club in 2020 refreshed, revitalised and raring to do your bit for the club.



# CMR Events Calendar 2020

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	29	30	31	1 NY / School RD	2	3	4 Run Prep Work
Jan	5 Niana Run Day	6	7	8 Work/School RD	9	10	11 Track Work Day
	12 Members Day	13	14	15 Work/School RD	16	17 Workshop Night	18 Com Mtg / Work
	19 Wilson Run Day	20 C&S Subs close	21	22 Work/School RD	23	24	25 Gen Work Day
	26	27 Australia Day	28	29 Work/School RD	30	31	1 Run Prep Work
Feb	2 Niana Run Day	3	4	5 Work Day	6	7	8 Track Work Day
	9 Members Day	10	11	12 Work Day	13	14 Workshop Night	15 Com Mtg / Work
	16 Wilson Run Day	17 C&S Subs close	18	19 Work Day	20	21	22 Gen Work Day
	23	24	25	26 Work Day	27	28	29 Run Prep Work
Mar	1 Niana Run Day	2 Labour Day	3	4 Work Day	5	6	7 Track Work Day
	8 Members Day	9	10	11 Work Day	12	13 Workshop Night	14 Com Mtg / Work
	15 Wilson Run Day	16 C&S Subs close	17	18 Work Day	19	20	21 Gen Work Day
	22	23	24	25 Work Day	26	27	28 Gen Work Day
Apr	29	30	31	1 Work Day	2	3	4 Run Prep Work
	5 Niana Run Day	6	7	8 Work Day	9	10 Good Friday	11 Easter Sat/Track
	12 Members Day	13 Easter Monday	14	15 Work/School RD	16	17 Workshop Night	18 Com Mtg / Work
	19 Wilson Run Day	20 C&S Subs close	21	22 Work/School RD	23	24	25 ANZAC Day
May	26	27 ANZAC Holiday	28	29 Work Day	30	1	2 Run Prep Work
	3 Niana Run Day	4	5	6 Work Day	7	8	9 Track Work Day
	10 Members Day	11	12	13 Work Day	14	15 Workshop Night	16 Com Mtg / Work
	17 Wilson Run Day	18 C&S Subs close	19	20 Work Day	21	22	23 Gen Work Day
Jun	24	25	26	27 Work Day	28	29	30 Gen Work Day
	31	1 WA Day	2	3 Work Day	4	5	6 Run Prep Work
	7 Niana Run Day	8	9	10 Work Day	11	12	13 Track Work Day
	14 Members Day	15	16	17 Work Day	18	19 Workshop Night	20 Com Mtg / Work
Jul	21 Wilson Run Day	22 C&S Subs close	23	24 Work Day	25	26	27 Gen Work Day
	28	29	30	1 Work Day	2	3	4 Run Prep Work
	5 Niana Run Day	6	7	8 Work/School RD	9	10	11 Track Work Day
	12 Members Day	13	14	15 Work/School RD	16	17 Workshop Night	18 Com Mtg / Work
Aug	19 Wilson Run Day	20 C&S Subs close	21	22 Work Day	23	24	25 Gen Work Day
	26	27	28	29 Work Day	30	31	1 Run Prep Work
	2 Niana Run Day	3	4	5 Work Day	6	7	8 Track Work Day
	9 Members Day	10	11	12 Work Day	13	14 Workshop Night	15 Com Mtg / Work
Sep	16 Wilson Run Day	17 C&S Subs close	18	19 Work Day	20	21	22 Gen Work Day
	23	24	25	26 Work Day	27	28	29 Gen Work Day
	30	31	1	2 Work Day	3	4	5 Run Prep Work
	6 Niana Run Day	7	8	9 Work Day	10	11	12 Track Work Day
Oct	13 Members Day	14	15	16 Work Day	17	18 Workshop Night	19 Com Mtg / Work
	20 Wilson Run Day	21 C&S Subs close	22	23 Work Day	24	25	26 Gen Work Day
	27	28 Queen's Birthd	29	30 Work/School RD	1	2	3 Run Prep Work
	4 Niana Run Day	5	6	7 Work/School RD	8	9	10 Track Work Day
Nov	11 Members Day	12	13	14 Work Day	15	16 Workshop Night	17 Com Mtg / Work
	18 Wilson Run Day	19 C&S Subs close	20	21 Work Day	22	23	24 Gen Work Day
	25	26	27	28 Work Day	29	30	31 Run Prep Work
	1 Niana Run Day	2	3	4 Work Day	5	6	7 Track Work Day
Dec	8 Members Day	9	10	11 Work Day	12	13 Workshop Night	14 Com Mtg / Work
	15 Wilson Run Day	16 C&S Subs close	17	18 Work Day	19	20	21 Gen Work Day
	22	23	24	25 Work Day	26	27	28 Gen Work Day
	29	30	1	2 Work Day	3	4	5 Run Prep Work
Dec	6 Niana Run Day	7	8	9 Work Day	10	11	12 Track Work Day
	13 Members Day	14	15	16 Work Day	17	18 Workshop Night	19 Com Mtg / Work
	20 Wilson Run Day	21 C&S Subs close	22	23 Work/School RD	24	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day
	27	28 Boxing Day Hol	29	30 Work/School RD	31	1 New Year's Day	2

NOTE: This calendar will be updated as and when notification of special events is received.

## **Duty Roster**

The Duty Roster is located on the notice board in the breezeway and will no longer be published in Cinders and Soot. Please remember to add your name to that list if you are able to assist with any of the positions.

## **Communication around the railway - by Craig Belcher**

A few small incidents of late have prompted me to write this, in the hope of getting some clarity around the railway in the way in which we communicate with each other in the train operational side of the railway.

### **First, some protocols...**

On a public running day, for the railway to function SAFELY, and EFFECTIVELY, there has to be a hierarchy of control and the communication processes that necessarily comes with that. In our case this would be as follows:

1. Duty Officer – Senior member in control of ALL activities on the day.
2. Station Master – In control of ALL activities on the station – reports directly to DO.
3. Signals
  - Niana North / Control
  - Niana South / Control
  - Canning Cabin
  - Wilson Control

These members are responsible for the safe passage of trains through their relevant section of controlled track. And work in conjunction with both the DO and the Station Master throughout the day as required. Control is the nerve centre of the railway on a running day and as such has a lot on their plate throughout the day.

4. Drivers – Operate their locomotives in accordance with the requirements of the railway
5. Guards – ensure safe passage of their trains and passengers which they are conveying
6. Station assistants – to assist with passenger handling on the station

It is vitally important that all operations are carried out through the correct channels. This flows on to both direct “in person” conversation AND all radio communications. It is also important, sometimes critical, that only the relevant people are involved in the discussion to ensure clarity and affirmative outcomes.

### **A few basic guidelines to be remembered**

- The DO’s word is the final word on all operational matters for the day. If asked to carry out a task by the DO, please either carry out said task, or politely decline and explain why you can’t.
- Keep all radio communications clear and concise. Less radio chatter means less confusion around what is to happen.
- If wanting to come off traffic, always give at least one lap’s notice to the DO or Station Master



- For trains out on track, should an issue arise your first point of contact is ALWAYS Control. All other staff will hear the call but control will liaise with DO to make any arrangements required for assistance etc.
- Only required members should be in the signal box at any given time, as these members are generally always busy, the less distractions the better. This means, ROSTERED or RELIEF staff, and the DO only.
- When a call is made over the radio, only the person being called should respond.
- Should an incident on track occur, only one person on site should be liaising with control, again to avoid confusion from too much radio chatter.

To Be Continued – Next Issue....

## **TWO SICK “Puppies” (part 1) - by Les Smith**

It was late in 1958 when a WAGR P Class overhaul at Midland was coupled to her tender after lunch following weighing. My fitter had been assigned this work. A trade assistant threw firewood up onto the footplate and then prepared this veteran for steam up next morning when he would come in early (4-00am) and light-up. By 7-30 the P would be cooking well and checking commenced, watched over by an Inspector. Things went pretty well and I was given the job to go into the pit and check for vacuum piping leaks with an oil flare lamp. Any leaks in the threaded joints were sealed by a dab of warm tar that would be sucked into the “hole”. This was an easy fix but the downside was the sweating and hot water drips that one had to endure. Overnight the P would be taken to the running-sheds and turned ready for a light trial run to Chidlow and return.

Next morning my fitter was given the job to go “trial” and so we went over to the shed to find the P still facing Fremantle. Evidently the turntable was out of action and we were to run up to Chidlow tender first. We moved off to the depot entry point and rang the box for the road down to the station. Down at Midland station we had a green to proceed to Bellevue on the main. A railcar had gone ahead of us and so we ambled along noting that it appeared that the super-heater was not doing its job (too much white steam out of the chimney). We were held at Bellevue for some time whilst waiting for the railcar to come back away from the platform.

Underway again, the cylinder drain cocks were opened but then refused to close on the right hand side and she was sluggish. It was decided to try and fix the cocks at Blackboy Hill, which was the first checkpoint for the bearings. To fix the cocks one had to lie at 45 degrees on the ballast and remove the mechanism and then unscrew the cocks. Some rubbish metal bits were removed from under the seats. This was hindered by the drips from the anti-vacuum valve above the cylinder. Moving on, there was no doubt that this P was a “sick puppy” with white exhaust steam pouring out of the chimney. We stopped at National Park and opened the smoke box and removed the front screen of the spark arrestor. The Inspector looked in and asked for the regulator to be open a little. Steam poured out and it was guessed that the right hand steam pipe had a crack or worse and the debris removed from the drain cocks was from such. We closed her up and dawdled off up to Chidlow.

The normal drill at Chidlow was followed with the “under-age” apprentice left on the engine whilst the driver, fireman, inspector and fitter took lunch at the Hotel. After 45minutes I took a look at the fire to see if any holes had developed. Pressure was down a little but there was steam above the brick arch.....a leak somewhere from a tube down out of sight. The crew returned and after a little blow-up, the road was called for and we set off for home. Back to Midland was basically downhill. At the depot, the fire was dropped and the ashpan washed out. The fitter moved the old girl slowly back to the workshops with me standing ready to activate the handbrake. With now low steam pressure the vacuum brake was not to be trusted.

We were over 90 minutes late and thus one chalked up their first overtime payment. OT was pretty rare at Midland. Next day the P was shunted down to the Tender Pit at the rear of the workshops where sometimes heavy repairs were undertaken. The steam pipe was replaced, the brick arch dropped and rear tube leakage sealed off. After a cold hydraulic pressure test etc the P was gone, presumably to the wheatbelt.....and, the last 4years of her life no longer a sick puppy.

Next month A Sick Puppy - Part 2, a “bob-tailed” P that had a belly ache (or full of salt).

## CMR Photo Gallery



Sarah Prindiville driving Beechina on a Sunday Run day – photo by Ethan.



Luke getting into the Chrissie mood – by Trish



Comet Vale all dressed up for our Christmas party – photo by Trish

CMR Christmas Party Photos – by Trish:



Waiting for lunch  
and trying to keep  
cool!



Members lining up  
for lunch



One of the tasty  
dishes on offer

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