



SteamRanger's Heritage - an insight into our past

BACKGROUND

Advertised as an excursion to celebrate the Kingston - Naracoorte Railway Centenary, this train was initially planned to feature steam loco 621

However concerns regarding its reliability resulted in a change to loco 520

Passengers were accommodated for two nights in Naracoorte and continued on to Mt Gambier and Snuggery on the Saturday with additional cars being added for local passengers.

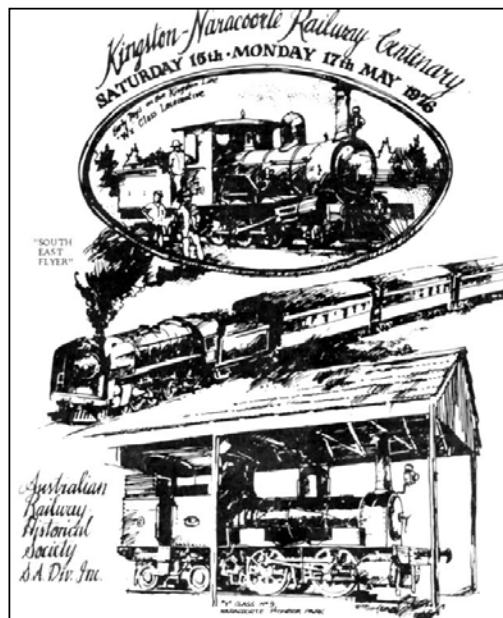
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SOUTH EAST FLYER

Saturday 15th to Monday 17th May, 1976

ARHS Recorder June 1976 pages 136 to 143

Contributed by Mr Dean Harvey, ARHS Tours Manager



A proposal to run a rail tour of some 660 miles with one steam engine is quite a challenge in 1976. For one thing there are simply no facilities for servicing steam engines outside Adelaide and on a trip of this length the locomotive needs comprehensive greasing and other attention en route. It needs to be fuelled and watered many times.

Preferably too there should be steam fitters available to carry out any running repairs that become necessary, but it was not surprising that after 15 years of dieselization in the South East none were available.

Loco Preparation

Originally we intended to use engine No.621 on the tour as being a fully coal fired locomotive, the problems of fuelling en route would be simpler. Also the cost of operating "the Duke" is lower than the big "northern No.520". During preparations for service this year one superheater element was found to be leaking in several places in 621 and had to be replaced. As all the remaining elements were 2 years old, further trouble could be expected unpredictably and the worst possible time for failure would of course be the long trip to the South East. On the face of it at that time, however, No.621 was just as good a risk as No.520 in which the elements were also 2 years old.

Work on preparing No.520 for service commenced after 621 had completed its B.I.T. (Boiler Inspection Test) and two superheater elements were found to be leaking at the initial hydro test. These were replaced but the next hydro test revealed another 2 leakers. Bad news indeed because when more than 3 elements go at one time it has always been standard practice to change the lot as experience in the steam days has shown that the engine will no longer be reliable until this is done. A reconditioned set of 32 elements had been completed just a few days beforehand and as these had been ordered by the Society way back in 1974 it can be appreciated that this was rather too close for comfort — we had hoped to get another season or at least part of a season from the old set.

It was decided to replace the lot and great credit is due to the small team lead by Acting Sub Foreman Don Dunkley who really got stuck into the big job. Four men worked all day on the Saturday and then by the following Thursday the locomotive was ready to be transferred to Mile End Diesel Depot where fuelling and other preparations were completed on the Friday and Saturday in readiness for its first tour of the season on Sunday 9th May. Both 621 and 520 were required on this day to operate trains to Nuriootpa which the Society were running for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons in connection with their international conference at Adelaide. The two engines gave faultless performance.

The full set of reconditioned elements in No.520 altered considerations for the South East tour as this locomotive was now a very much lower risk for failure than engine No.621. Superheater elements are one of the most common causes of failure of steam engines in traffic and at least for the foreseeable future we had no worries on this score with No.520. So 520 it must be!

Tour Viability

Next problem was passengers — we simply did not have enough prepared to pay the high cost of the tour. Also there was insufficient coal available in Adelaide to run the tour due to a series of delays in delivery by ship from Newcastle. Kevin Rogers advised our colleagues in Naracoorte of these sad tidings and, as the request for running the tour had come from the South Eastern Historical and Restoration Society, they were naturally most upset. It looked as if the centenary of the Naracoorte - Kingston line would have to pass unnoticed and the steam train that South East people so dearly wished to see would not arrive. But then things started to happen; the Member of Parliament for the area, Alan Rodda, contacted the Railways then the Minister of Transport, Mr Virgo and asked that special consideration be given to running the tour at lower cost. The Tours Manager was asked to contact Mr Virgo who said he felt that the tour should go ahead and would look into the possibility of reducing the railways quote.

Eventually 10 days before the trip was due to run the Minister directed that the charge be reduced to a figure which then made it a viable operation for us. It was the first time in 16 years of steam train operations by the Society that a reduction of cost had been effected and we are grateful to Mr Virgo for his positive assistance.

Coaling

So the financial side was solved but how do you run a steam train without coal? The General Manager of the State Transport Authority (Rail Division) immediately began enquiries for suitable coal through the local agents R. W. Miller & Co. Ltd. It was indeed fortunate that coal was just being prepared for shipment to South Australia. This was high quality Muswellbrook washed cobbles eminently suitable for our steam locomotives which had been made available as a result of prior lengthy negotiations and many interstate phone calls by the Tours Manager in an effort to obtain a satisfactory grade of coal instead of the high ash, low calorific value coal we received in 1975.

The problem with coal these days is that almost all the collieries are geared to fine coal production which is not suitable for locomotives.

On Wednesday 5th May an order was placed for 40 tones to be urgently railed to Mile End Diesel Depot, but time was beginning to run out. To make matters worse Millers received a Telex next day which read —

"Due to B.H.P. strike Newcastle, no wagons available. Railways estimate 7 to 10 days delivery Adelaide. Suggest road transport probably cheaper also."

The State Transport Authority (Rail Division) were understandably not interested in road freighting the coal and arrangements were made so that as soon as a truck was available and filled it would be given special attention to ensure the earliest possible delivery to South Australia. On Friday 7th May BOX wagon No.28424 was made available unexpectedly, loaded inside an hour and put into traffic. It was to travel via Newcastle, Sydney and Broken Hill to Mile End. No more could be done until Monday morning and if all went well delivery could be expected by the Monday evening.

All did not go well and on Monday morning enquiries revealed that No.28424 was lost! It wasn't the railway's fault as the consignor had incorrectly carded the truck to Melbourne Diesel Depot! Sydney railway staff advised that if the truck had already passed them and was on its way to Melbourne then anything could happen. On the busy Sydney-Melbourne line loading was being detached at Goulburn, Junee and Cootamundra due to saturation traffic. If it did get through to Melbourne there would be a major delay at the bogie exchange where already hundreds of vehicles were bottlenecked and even a top priority couldn't do any good there. What a mess. Things were very gloomy indeed and it seemed unlikely that the coal would arrive in time for the South East tour.

A ray of sunshine at last! Out of the blue came news late on Monday that the truck had indeed been headed in the right direction after all and although still carded to Melbourne Diesel Depot it was at that time speeding down the track from Broken Hill to Peterborough. Among the first through the bogie exchange at Peterborough it was quickly despatched to Mile End and arrived there on Tuesday morning. Full marks to the railways for what surely must have been the fastest truck load of coal ever handled between Hexham (near Newcastle) and Mile End.

That wasn't the end of the coal problem because 4 Y trucks were now needed to disperse the coal ahead of our tour train but the Trucks Officer at Adelaide could not supply any for several days. Mr Colin Moore, Foreman of the Diesel Depot worked wonders as he often does and independently obtained trucks from various sources — once again the impossible was achieved. By Wednesday night all trucks were on their way southwards; Y4267 was detached at Tailem Bend and the three remaining trucks were in the consist of No.161 Naracoorte goods departing Tailem Bend at 6.00 a.m. on Thursday 13th May. Also on this train was TCO13 full of fuel oil and OBF352 with fuel oil pump, flexible hosing and the compressed air operated greasing machines. Y4242 with coal was detached at Bordertown and Y3296, OBF352 and TC013 safely reached Naracoorte at 6.00 p.m. Y3510 with coal was forwarded from Naracoorte on No.547 South East goods at 2.30 a.m. on Friday and arrived at Mount Gambier just after 7.00 a.m. Coal and fuel oil were now in position throughout and we had less than 24 hours before train departure from Adelaide. Cannot cut it much finer than that. That this stage of preparations was satisfactorily achieved is a credit to the people at Mile End Diesel Depot as also we are obliged to them for the careful preparations given to engine No.520 for the long journey ahead.

Although extremely busy in the day to day business of providing diesel power for regular trains, coping with an embarrassing shortage of labour, Mr Moore and his staff gave us all assistance they possibly could. This has been a major factor in the success of tours such as the "South East Flyer".

Fire Risk

While all this was going on, we were confronted with another spoke in the wheel — on Thursday, just 2 days before the train was due to run, issue of the Train Notice was halted because of fire risk considerations. The position of fire risk assessments is now bordering on the ridiculous. We can show how year by year since 1966 there has been continual erosion on the approved dates available for operation of steam tours. If we had started a fire there could certainly be some basis for amending the period of operation but, in 16 years our trains have never been guilty of starting a single fire. Indeed in early days we were operating right throughout the summer.

One of the reasons for our low fire risk is the particular attention paid at all times to spark arrestor screens which was not possible in the busy days of regular steam train operation. Nevertheless despite our good record, for the first time ever a steam train tour was in possible jeopardy in mid May because of fire risk. Even most school children would have been aware that although the countryside was not green due to the non arrival of autumn rains there was a desperate shortage of feed throughout the State and there was hardly any grass left to burn. If the position were not so serious it would be laughable and should the trend over the past 10 years continue then very soon we will find fire risk considerations being raised in mid winter.

Later on the same day permission was finally given for the train to operate but the delay held up many crucial arrangements and we know caused considerable friction and frustration within the Railways themselves not to mention the calamitous effect on the Society's organizing team.

Final Preparations

Then on the day before the tour other disasters occurred one after another. First the Frances water column, which the Stationmaster had kindly flushed on our behalf for a short period daily for several days, suddenly ceased to produce water. There were several theories, the favourite one being that a possum may have become wedged in the spout. Finally, however, an estimated 21 birds nests were tediously removed and all was well again. According to the engineers at Murray Bridge, the Frances water column didn't exist, we were lucky they had forgotten it was there or it may well have been removed long ago.

As background to the next disaster it should be mentioned that we had been alarmed to learn a week or so before the tour that the Mount Gambier and Naracoorte columns had recently been changed over from the normal overhead tank feed to direct mains operation. Our experience with mains operated columns has been dismal; they are invariably very slow running which must be very time consuming when filling tanks for the poison train. More's the pity when both concrete tanks are known to be in excellent condition, the Naracoorte one having been built as recently as the 1950s during the gauge widening project.

Anyway we received a message that delivery of water from the column at Mount Gambier was so strong we'd better watch out or it might go straight through the bottom of the steam engine tender! Encouraging news but on past experience very difficult to believe in relation to mains operated columns. It was not very surprising then on Friday morning to be told that the Mount Gambier column had become totally inoperative — it had been O.K. earlier in the week apparently. With the help of Assistant Superintendent Darcy Curnow at Mount Gambier, the Fire Brigade at Mount Gambier were contacted and we were to be advised during our journey on Saturday if they could assist. An unresolved problem indeed.

Then came news that the Mount Gambier super grab which was to load our coal could only lift 10' which was insufficient for the 14' required to safely load No.520. There was another super grab operated by the opposition company which did have an adequate lift but the sole operator was going fishing to the Coorong for the long weekend. After many phone calls the operator of a similar unit at Penola kindly agreed to come down to the Mount to load our coal and yet another last minute disaster was averted. Surely this was the trip that nearly never was! In contrast the trip itself operated with almost clockwork precision and the carefully concluded arrangements proved satisfactory in almost every respect.

Saturday 15th May

Departure from Adelaide was at the ungodly hour of 6.58 a.m. and its pleasing to report that all but a few made it. We picked up Pat and Jack Taylor at Blackwood and Graham Crack at Nairne. Actually Jack had phoned the Tours Manager the day before to check that we would be making a stop at Blackwood. Due to sickness and the labour shortage at Mile End, no one could be provided to clean the locomotive for the tour and it was quite grimy. Not at all good for a much publicised tour. Jack's phone call came just at the right time and he was coopted to assist the Tours Manager clean the loco starting at 4.00 p.m. Two very tired chaps had no trouble sleeping Friday night - what there was left of it!

All went well as far as Blackwood but it soon became evident that No.520 was not steaming well. Every bit of the 10 minute scheduled stop at Long Gully to cross No.218 redhen and No.240 the Up Overland was needed to raise steam. By Mount Lofty the pressure was down to 140 p.s.i. and we had to stop 13 minutes to raise steam and inject water into the boiler. Now out of our path, we were held 22 minutes at Aldgate to cross No.282 redhen and No.198 Express Goods and to allow No.281 Mount Gambier bluebird to pass. Then a clear run to Nairne where a stop had been arranged to pick up Mount Barker member Graham Crack.

At Petwood we crossed No.336 Up Taillem Bend passenger on the fly and continued in good style to Callington where we crossed the V.R. Track Recording Unit. A short stop was made at Murray Bridgeto pick up our old friend, Traffic Inspector Bill Moloney and then a smart run to Taillem Bend arriving 24 minutes late at 10.43 a.m.

Whilst passengers set off to enjoy a very early smorgasbord lunch at the Riverside Hotel, engine No.520 was quickly released to the loco depot for coaling and watering. A larger Case front end loader handled the coaling and we knew in advance that it would not be ideal for the job as the width of the scoop was twice the length of the 520 coal bunker. This meant that half the coal was deposited on the top of the oil tank and had to be shovelled by hand into the coal bunker.

Kim Bird and Dean Harvey did some energetic shovelling. The big Case unit was difficult to manouvre on the Stores platform and instead of the coal truck being on the same track as the locomotive it had to be located some 200 yards away on another line. The smaller and more convenient front end loader usually used was out on a job up Pinaroo way. Roley Dawson, Loco Foreman at Taillem Bend, had taken the precaution of having a dry run with the Case unit and so the problems on the day were minimised by strategic placing of the coal truck.

Fuel oil on engine No.520 was checked and it was found that a mammoth 700 gallons had been used to cover the first 75 miles of our 240 mile journey, leaving only 700 gallons for the remaining 165 miles. A conflag with loco Inspector Irwin Bastian who joined us at Taillem Bend for all points beyond and Taillem Bend driver Ray Bolt resulted in a decision not to take any dieseline to supplement the remaining fuel oil. Diesoline was used to top up 520s at Mount Gambier in the steam days, but was to be avoided where possible because its heating characteristics are not as satisfactory as the fuel oil normally used.

You need a lot more dieseline to cover the same distance and we did not want to dilute our oil fuel with consequent problems during later sections of the tour. Once coaling was completed No.520 went on to the turntable and into the roundhouse to take water. Even Taillem doesn't boast a water column these days and taking water is a laborious business using 2 fire hoses. It took % hour to fill the hungry tender.

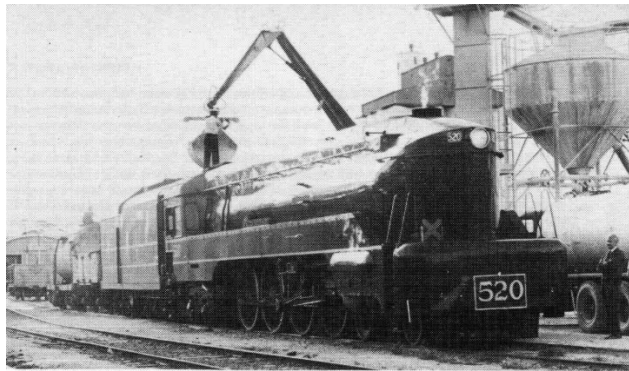


With the signal at 90 No. 520 storms out of Taillem Photo: J. Ramsey

At 12.29 p.m., 42 minutes late, Ray Bolt opened the regulator and the special eased out of Tailem. Soon after leaving, sand was fed into the firebox while the engine was working hard to clear the oil sooted tubes which had caused poor steaming through the hills. For the remainder of the tour the engine steamed excellently and indeed used only 350 gallons of oil from Tailem Bend to Naracoorte.

In next to no time we were ticking off the miles at one a minute; Cookes Plains, Coomandook, ' Ki Ki , Coonalpyn all flashed by then speed reduced to a sedate 65 km/hour for an extremely long speed restriction — all 33 km of it. Passengers were relieved to hear the engine pull away smartly at the end of the restriction and soon the tall gums either side of the track heralded our approach to Keith.

The train stopped short of the station and took water direct from a 12" main per favour of the Keith EPS unit. Unlike our last trip we did not have to clean the fire (drop ashes) thanks to the low ash Muswellbrook coal being used. After 21 minutes we were off on our way again only 26 minutes late despite the long restriction.



Coaling and watering at Bordertown Photo: J. Birt

At Bordertown passengers tucked into afternoon tea supplied by the good ladies of the C.W.A. Meanwhile No.520 proceeded to the super grab where more of that lovely Muswellbrook coal was quickly loaded on to the tender and the E.F.S. kindly replenished our water from a 9000 gallon tanker. Brisk work enabled us to get away in 27 minutes and cross No.312 Fast Goods from Serviceton at Wolseley. Unfortunately we were held 21 minutes to cross No.152 goods from Mount Gambier and this rather put paid to our chances of arriving at Naracoorte on time. Driver Ray Bolt certainly tried though and, apart from the kilometre of 15 km/hour near Bangham where a truck had been derailed a few days earlier, we really raced along. Two photo stops one at 319 km and the other at Bangham station were the first opportunity for passengers to photograph No.520 in action and, although the shadows were rather long by this time, it was impressive stuff.

The scheduled stop at Kybybolite was deleted to save time and with remarkable swift staff changing by guard Bill Lewis the whistle heralded the arrival at Naracoorte only 5 minutes down on our schedule. Excellent running considering we departed Tailem Bend 42 minutes late and suffered an unscheduled stop of 21 minutes at Wolseley. Naracoorte gave us a warm welcome to the skirl of the bagpipes of the Highland Pipe Band and the greetings of a large crowd of local people.

All 4 cars were watered soon after arrival, then the train was remarshalled and 3 extra steelcars added ready for the Sunday run to Mount Gambier. No.520 was stabled in the 2 bay roundhouse alongside TCO1 3 containing the fuel oil. Passengers had been whisked away in taxis to various motels and hotels and later rejoined at the Mill Museum for an excellent meal catered for by the Southern Eastern Historical Society. Ted Wortley, the Secretary-Treasurer, livened the evening with numerous short speeches; there were impromptu competitions for the best looking teenager (female of course) and the oldest passenger. Everyone who got up seemed to get a prize. Even Dave Eddy, who acted convincingly as a horse for one young lady, got a can of Coopers.

But as the night's festivities progressed there were others who quietly disappeared to attend to the 520s requirements. Rodney Gower and Graham Crack assisted Nicki Anic-ivic from the Mile End Diesel Depot to pump fuel oil into the tender. Preparations were then made to grease the locomotive. The greasing machines operate on compressed air and Ted Ludwig, President of the S.E. Historical Society had supplied at our request a compressor for the purpose.

Unfortunately this compressor turned out to be a boy on a man's errand, because as soon as the greasing machine was operated the air pressure rapidly dropped from the desired 100 p.s.i. to next to nothing. Well the engine had to be greased, it was 9.45 p.m. on a Saturday night but somehow we simply had to obtain a bigger compressor and quickly.

Back at the Museum the Tours Manager put the problem to Ted Ludwig and Ted Wortley; it certainly was a tall order at this time of night. Several Naracoorte people were contacted but couldn't help, then Ted Ludwig had a brainwave and disappeared to the home of plumber Max Garrock who had retired for the night. Max told Ted he was welcome to the loan of his huge wartime manufactured Broomwade compressor but to "hurry up and get to hell out of there and let a man have some sleep".

If anyone thought they saw this springless, lightless monster scurrying through the back streets of Naracoorte behind a utility about 10.45 p.m. on the Saturday night they may not have had too much to drink after all! Anyway once on site at the roundhouse it did the job admirably and by 1.00 a.m. Nicki had finished and was on his way back to the motel for some well earned shuteye.

Sunday 16th May

At 4.00 a.m. the fire was lit in engine No.520 and by 8.00 a.m. it was in traffic coaling at the super grab. Only a very minimum of Naracoorte water was taken as it is very hard and has undesirable scaling characteristics for locomotive boilers. In any case the column, now on mains pressure, was so slow that it would have been very time consuming to fill the tender.

"Sir Malcolm Barclay Harvey" (engine No.520) steamed out of Naracoorte at 9.20 a.m. on the dot with its 9 car special for the Mount. Almost immediately another severe per way restriction was encountered; 14 km at 40 km/hour and then a further 2 km at 50 km/hour. We lost 10 minutes on the scheduled running time before normal speed was resumed and the 140 extra passengers who joined us at Naracoorte then began to share the enjoyment of a big steam train working fast. At Penola 38 new passengers joined the train and we sped off to Kalangadoo and Wandilo. A spectacular photostopin the pine forest (1928 *Pinus radiata*) near Wandilo can only be described as superb. Arrival at Mount Gambier was 5 minutes early at 11.32 a.m. Here the brake-van was reversed and a 700 class car, a BD airconditioned car and an 8300 class brakevan were added to the Millicent end of the train. No.520 then steamed to the loco depot, turned on the table and began taking water.

All efforts to render the water column operative on the Friday had proved abortive and the Fire Brigade were ready with a pump connected to a fire hydrant near the turntable. We hope they never have a serious fire at the loco depot because delivery was poor and even with the pump it seemed that the tender would never fill.

The Fire Officer in charge suggested that we transfer operations to the Bertha Street level crossing 300 yards away where a large high pressure main is located. This was done and water output increased greatly. It was frustrating to see the perfectly sound concrete water tower dominating the loco depot and to know that only a few weeks before our tour it was disconnected from the column. It is understood that the overhead tank is to be demolished which can obviously only be done at considerable cost and for no apparent purpose or gain.

At the conclusion of watering the loco was quickly coaled at the Phosphate Corporation super grab and we left for Snuggery nearly 25 minutes late. Over 200 Mount Gambier people joined the 13 car train for the run out on the Millicent branch. It was obvious too from the crowds watching our departure from various points in the Mount that our train made an impressive sight as it steamed westwards with local engineman ten Virgo in charge. The speed limit on the Millicent line was reduced to 60 km/hour in 1974 and hasn't been raised since so performance was quiet and restrained. This didn't matter at all because the run to Snuggery is through very pleasant countryside and it gave us more opportunity to appreciate it. The absence of telephone wires reminded us that Train Control phones are radio operated on this line.

A short stop at Tantanoola to pay our respects to the tiger and then very soon we reached Snuggery. Efficient work by the guard and Traffic Inspector assisted by Tailem Bend guard Bill Lewis, who just came out to Snuggery for the trip, resulted in the Train Order being ready by the time the engine had turned on the triangle. Reduction of the stop at Snuggery by 12 minutes and deletion of a photostop enabled us to arrive back in the Mount on time at 3.45 p.m.

Water again per favour of the Fire Brigade at Bertha Street level crossing and then in quick time No.520 was back at the station to detach the 3 cars previously added for the Mount Gambier to Snuggery run. After an on time departure at 4.45 p.m. Ray Bolt was again master of the regulator and we were on our way to Naracoorte for the overnight stop. It is unlikely any passenger who alighted for the tape recording stop beyond Wandilo will ever forget it. We stood between a long stand of huge pine trees, it was just after 5.00 p.m. and the wind had dropped away completely. From 1/2 mile away the whistle echoed again and again through the trees while we waited spellbound as No.520 blasted out of Wandilo station towards us. Every beat banged off the giant trees and echoed backwards and forwards again and again in an almost deafening crescendo as the locomotive bore down upon us.

It was an awe inspiring experience of sight and sound as a perfectly symmetrical tower of smoke ascended straight up to the sky spreading out like a funnel perfectly framed by the trees. A tremendous farewell to steam in the South East. Fast running for the remainder of the journey except for the long restriction near Naracoorte brought us to that town 1 minute early at 6.40 p.m.

Probably no one was aware that at 6.15 p.m. an important event occurred during the homeward run to Naracoorte. David Jensen, a regular steam tours traveller and member of the Society asked another member Vanda Bovill if she would consent to marry him. This proposal took place in the vestibule of Car 781 but, before Vanda could say 'Yes' or 'No', another gentleman came out into the vestibule and began talking. Eventually, however, privacy was restored again and I'm pleased to report that Vanda said 'Yes'. The happy couple first met while watching emergency lighting arrangements being rigged up on engine No.621 at Kadina during the Cornish Festival tour in 1975 when the headlight failed. It is very appropriate that they became engaged on a steam tour such as the South East Flyer.

That evening a commemorative dinner was held at the Kincaig Hotel to celebrate the centenary of the Naracoorte - Kingston line. Councillors from Kingston, Lucindale and Naracoorte spoke recalling the steam days as they remembered them. Mr A. Rodda M.P., Mr. Darcy Curnow, Assistant Superintendent from Mount Gambier, Mr Ted Ludwig, President of the South Eastern Historical Society, driver Ray Bolt, Kevin Rogers and Dean Harvey also addressed the guests.

Monday 17th May

The centenary run to Lucindale on the Monday morning behind engine No.837 was poorly patronised by the locals; it seems history and cheap fares are not enough, its just got to be steam. The trip itself was uneventful and ran to schedule however, the train was held at the home distant signal entering Naracoorte because the yard was almost totally blocked by a long goods from Tailem Bend which was equal to 138. Naracoorte yard, it appears, was never designed for such big trains. The presence of the goods train also hindered the coaling of engine No.520 which had to be done on the opposite side of the yard to the roundhouse. It is a credit to Stationmaster Jack Snoad and his staff that the delay was minimal and that the impossible was achieved.

Prior to this at 7.00 a.m. Nicki Anic-ivic and David Jones turned out to grease engine No.520 and replenish oil fuel. Greasing wasn't quite completed by the time the locomotive had to transfer to the other side of the yard for coaling and so Nicki had to go with it and finish the last few items while this operation was in progress. It was great to have Nicki with us on the tour and he certainly worked very hard to ensure that there was no lack of lubrication on "Sir Malcom" which is absolutely essential for long life and trouble free running of the working parts.

At 11.30 a.m. we farewelled our Naracoorte friends and steamed out majestically on the homeward run to that magnificent warble of the 520 whistle. There is a certain magic about steam trains in the South East, perhaps brought home most by the echo from the tall trees as the loco accelerates out of a station like Hynam; or after slowing to 20 m.p.h. for the facing switches at Kybybolite, the regulator is pulled wide open and that powerful 520 beat punches back off the tall gums on both sides of the yard and the whistle sounds urgently for the level crossing ahead while the engine picks up speed fast. Ray Bolt our driver brought that magic home to every passenger.

*520 leaving Wolseley after crossing the
down BlueBird (John Ramsey)*



During the forward journey we had lost the brass lubricating cup which oils the slide bar on the engineman's side and makeshift arrangements became necessary. In fact we left Naracoorte tied together with string! Cotton waste liberally saturated with oil was placed in the well where the cup had been and this was held in position with twine. During the journey home our homemade lubricator had to be replaced three times and oil added frequently, but it did the job quite well.

A stop was made at Frances for water, the best brew in the South East, but with a few extras this time as we recovered several small redfin fish from the sieve of 520s tender. Actually we didn't discover them until we were about to take water at Bordertown almost an hour later and they were still quite lively even then. After taking coal, water and attending to engine requirements at Bordertown, the crew joined passengers for an excellent luncheon provided by the C.W.A. ladies on the platform. Then a fast non stop run to Keith, more water for the locomotive and finally the sprint to Tailem where arrival was at 4.38 p.m. 12 minutes early.

Farewell to Ray Bolt, fireman Heinz (Happy) Appitz and acting Loco Inspector Irwin Bastian. Special mention should be made here of the capable and positive assistance received throughout from Irwin both by the crew and the Society; he made a very valuable contribution to the tour.

Engineman Ray Bolt is a long time friend of ours and there is no doubt that his skilful and spirited handling of engine 520 from Tailem Bend onwards was a major factor in the success of the tour. Passengers were impressed with the quick staff changes and efficient train handling by Guard Bill Lewis who cooperated to the full with the Society and was even seen on occasions shovelling coal forward in the tender. At Tailem we also farewelled Traffic Inspector Bill Moloney another old friend, who left no stone unturned to ensure continued smooth running throughout to the Society's requirements and he always did it with a smile too.

Keith Fitzpatrick engineman and veteran fireman Joe Raman did the honours through the Mount Lofty Ranges. Keith has always been a specialist at the regulator and this run was no exception. It was sheer delight to listen to No.520 as it stormed up the Lofties, never faltering and gaining time on the schedule all the way. Arrival at Adelaide 20 minutes early speaks for itself and was a splendid finish to possibly the best broad gauge tour the Society has operated.

Loads were as follows: —

Adelaide - Naracoorte	CD1.606, 703, 781,503
Naracoorte - Mt Gambier	CD1, 1/700,2/780,503,781,703,606
Mt Gambier - Snuggery	CD1, 606,703,781,503,2/780, 1/700, 1/700, IBD, 8300 brake