



SteamRanger's Heritage - an insight into our past

BACKGROUND

On 29th January 1988 the ARHS operated a special "Royal Train" between Victor Harbor and Goolwa as part of a visit to Australia by the Prince and Princess of Wales

This file contains;

- a report on the event by the organiser Mr Dean Harvey,
- a report by long time ARHS volunteer John Ramsey and
- a copy of the special Train Notice prepared for the day

As well as the Royal Train, other services were offered for locals and enthusiasts as shown in the Train Notice

THE ROYAL TRAIN - 29TH JANUARY 1988 **The organiser's Report**

Contributed by D.L. Harvey, Director SteamRanger

Extract from ARHS publication "50 Years of ARHS SA Division" pages 65, 66
Compiler Ivan Marchant ISBN 09581036 07 (2002)

In early 1987, I got wind of a possible Royal Tour of Australia by Their Royal Highnesses, The Prince and Princess of Wales, and that this would include South Australia. What better, I thought, than to give them a trip on our Cockle Train.

Lots of negotiations, lots of letters, lots of competitors but finally the State and Federal Governments agreed to recommend to Buckingham Palace a program for January 29 that included our train as a major part of the day's events.

Detailed planning commenced in December 1987. Security was a paramount consideration and we had to cover every possibility to ensure that strategies were in place to ensure that a breakdown of a locomotive or any other item did not affect the schedule. Government railways had always done a first class job with Royal trains and we were determined that our train would be impeccably run. It was the first time a volunteer body had run a Royal train in Australia and to this day, we are the only one in Australia to have that honour.

A five page Train Notice was issued to cover all operational movements associated with the special train. A track inspection vehicle departed Port Elliot at 7.45 a.m. for Goolwa and had to arrive no later than 9.00 a.m. A second one left Port Elliot at 8.00 a.m. for Victor Harbor where it had to arrive by 9.00 a.m. Careful track inspections were carried out.

At 9.20 a.m. the empty special left Goolwa Depot for Victor Harbor powered by Diesel Electric 909 hauling 621 (tender first) and Rx207 (tender first). The consist of this train from the rear was Cars 70, 71, 61, 54, 65, 63, and baggage 83. On arrival at the facing switches at Victor Harbor, 909 was detached and proceeded to the turntable and was turned. The train was hauled to the platform by Rx207 and 621 where the engines were detached and ran round the train to stand on the crossing loop at the Adelaide end of the platform.

The Station Master Bob Willis obtained a Train Order for 909 to proceed to Goolwa and it departed at 10.35 a.m. The diesel made a scheduled stop at Middleton (10.50 a.m. to 11.14 a.m.) - a backup as a precaution in case of the unlikely failure of 621 on the Royal train. After departure of 909, Rx207 and 621 were shunted back to the main line and all facing switches clamped for the main line.

Clamping switches is a security measure usually undertaken for the passage of Royal trains to prevent saboteurs illegally throwing the switches. We did it according to the book. Rx207 was to be on standby at Port Elliot and left Victor at 10.50 a.m. After the Rx was safely tucked away at Port Elliot as yet another standby, the switches were clamped there also. At Middleton the track crew clamped the switches there as well. 621 had already shunted back to the train and the scene was set.

Weatherwise it was a cow of a day with above century temperatures and a vile north wind. Meanwhile Their Royal Highnesses were approaching Victor in the Government Rolls Royce with a broken down air conditioner - not a great introduction to the South Coast after leaving U.K. in chilly wintry weather. The Prince of Wales rose above all this but Princess Diana was rather frazzled by our mid summer extremes. There was the customary line up of dignitaries along the platform including our President Ralph Lee and secretary Alan Raphael who were introduced to Their Royal Highnesses. I then accompanied Prince Charles to the locomotive and after showing him the engine nameplate bearing his Father's title, introduced him to driver Bill Hassam and fireman Ian Johnston.

The Royal Carriage was car 71 of "Robbery under Arms" fame and as soon as Prince Charles and I boarded, we were on our way. At the time, we were desperately trying to get Premier Bannon to bite the bullet and support our proposal for taking over the Mount Barker Junction - Strathalbyn section which AN had effectively closed without warning. On the journey to Goolwa, I alerted Prince Charles to our dilemma and the lack of any meaningful direction from the Premier. In the ceremony at Goolwa after our arrival, Prince Charles spoke off the cuff very forcefully about the need for the Government to act quickly to save that important link in the SteamRanger route. Premier Bannon standing alongside His Royal Highness didn't know which way to look! It all helped our cause.

The Protocol Officer of the State Government (Cuijeta Ahwan) wrote to me after the event thanking me for my assistance and also stating "You must be extremely pleased to have received the support of His Royal Highness concerning the continuation of the line between Mount Barker and Strathalbyn". Many other letters were received from VIPs. Despite the weather, the Royal Train was an outstanding success and gave us worldwide promotion. One of the cars on the train was jammed full of reporters from twenty-six different countries.



ROYAL PARTY ON TOUR

1st February, 1988

From: The Private Secretary to T.R.H. The Prince and Princess of Wales

Dear Mr Harvey

The Prince and Princess of Wales have asked me to say how much they enjoyed their ride from Victor Harbour to Goolwa behind the 'Duke of Edinburgh'. It was a splendidly exciting and nostalgic journey as well as an excellent way to see the coastal scenery.

Their Royal Highnesses are most grateful to you and your staff for making this possible and would be pleased if you would pass on their thanks to everyone concerned.

Their Royal Highnesses wish you every success in the continued operation, and indeed extension, of SteamRanger.

J.R. Riddell

Sir John Riddell

Mr. Dean Harvey, OAM

THE ROYAL TRAIN - 29TH JANUARY 1988

An Enthusiast's Report

Contributed by John Ramsey

ARHS Recorder February 1988 pages 68 - 73

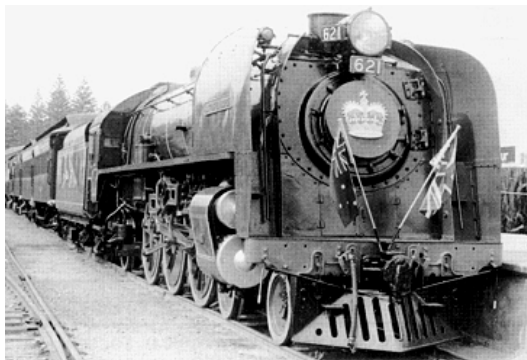


Photo: John Ramsey

Friday, 29th January 1988 will go down in the history of this Society as a grand day for SteamRanger and the Victor Harbor Tourist Railway. At 12 midnight, as the last of the "stayers" at the Goolwa Depot climbed into bed, Peter Brown and Phillip Neville commenced the preparation of engines 621 and Rx207. By dawn steam was well and truly on the gauge and the last minute cleaning, dusting etc. commenced.

At 0650 hrs at Victor Harbor, Brian Busch contacted STA Control to take over Train Control duties for the VHTR for the day. Graham Crack and Graham Bull contacted Victor Control shortly thereafter for permission to commence their run on a 'quad' to Port Elliot to pick up members of the SA Police STAR Force who were to inspect every inch of the track. Bob Johnston (retired AN Station Master and Loco Manager Ian's father) reported open at Port Elliot shortly before the quads arrived from Goolwa. The quads uncoupled with Graham Crack returning to Goolwa and Graham Bull continuing onto Victor Harbor. At 0800 hrs Chris Drylamik commenced duties as Station Master, Middleton just as the quad to Goolwa passed. At Victor Harbor, Bob Willis books on as Station Master with Chris Cooper as ASM. At 0825 hrs the quad from Port Elliot arrived.

Out at the Depot the pace quickened. Roy Meaney (Guard for the day) arrived for duty and reported to Control. Engine crews arrived for their allotted duties and Goolwa Station opened with Bob Haebich as Station Master and Jack Forbes as the ASM just as Graham Crack arrived with STAR Force members.

Train Order 1 was issued to the Goolwa Depot at 0859 hrs for Train No. 6511 to 'Proceed to Victor Harbor'. What a sight! Engine 909 led engine 621 and Rx207 out of the Depot followed by cars 83, 63, 65, 54, 61, 71 and 70 at 0913 hrs. Engine 909 was crewed by Roger Sallis (Engineman) and Peter Soar (Observer), 621 has Bill Hassam as Engineman and Ian Johnston firing and Rx207 is crewed by Engineman John Heyer and Fireman Brenton Job.

A stop at Goolwa (0920-0923) and the train continued through Middleton at 0938 and Port Elliot at 0944 to arrive at the Home Signal at Victor Harbor at 0956 hrs, on time. Engine 909 was cut off and went to the turntable while 621 and Rx207 moved toward the platform with the carriages. As soon as the train docked at the platform the Security precautions that accompany Royal Visits swung into full gear. The train was searched for such things as bombs, suspicious parcels and other dangerous items. Sniffer dogs checked every inch of every carriage.

The two steam engines uncoupled and ran around the consist while 909 came toward the Station to collect a Train Order. Train Order 2 was issued to the crew of 909 for the loco to proceed light to Goolwa. The two steam engines ran across Coral Street and 621 uncoupled and reversed onto the train at the Platform to allow an air test to be conducted, and the level crossing gates to be opened. At 1035 hrs engine 909 departed for Goolwa passing Port Elliot at 1042 hrs and arriving at Middleton at 1049 hrs. Train Order 3 was then issued to Rx207 to 'Proceed to Port Elliot' which departed at 1050 hrs and arriving at 1100 hrs. Engine 909 departed Middleton at 1108 hrs and arrived Goolwa at 1120 hrs.

So far so good. All trains on time or better. As Train Order 4 was being issued to the Royal Train to proceed to Port Elliot and cross Light Engine No. 6517 (Rx207) came the news "The Royal party's running about 20 minutes late". A quick change of lines on the Control Graph and it was ascertained that the public train scheduled to depart Goolwa at 1300 hrs could still be able to run on time.

At approximately 1120 hrs the Royal Party arrived and for those in the SM's office a good view of the Prince and Princess was had as they walked around the quadrangle talking to the locals before entering the station to meet the Mayor. On the Platform SteamRanger officials were introduced to the Royal Couple before a walk to the engine to meet the loco crew. A Royal whistle indicated that the Prince, at least, had found the right cord to pull.

The Royal Train moved off at 1137 hrs, 22 minutes late, the Royal Party being seated on the seaward side of the carriage so as to observe one of the finest scenic beauty spots that can be seen from a train in Australia. The train passed Port Elliot at 1147 hrs, 21 late, and Middleton at 1153, 20 late. The train terminated its journey at Goolwa at 1204 hrs, also 20 late.

Rx207 worked on the cross of the Royal Train to Victor Harbor tender-first then turned and ran to Goolwa tender-first to work the 1300 hrs train to Victor Harbor as the exit to the Depot at Goolwa was blocked by the festivities associated with the official opening of the Signal Point River Murray Interpretive Centre.

At 1305 hrs 621 hauled 909 to the Depot. 621 turned and ran back to Goolwa to work trains to Victor Harbor which departed Goolwa at 1430 and 1605 hrs. The last train for the day arrived back at the Goolwa Depot at 1730 hrs and at 1750 hrs VHTR Control was returned back to STA.

Despite unfavourable weather conditions (century heat and north winds) the entire exercise went off like clockwork, a result which reflects on the capabilities of SteamRanger volunteers to work as a team to show all and sundry that we are an organisation run in a professional manner by competent persons.



621 departs Goolwa for the depot .
The background is full of river boats including the locally based "Mundoo"



621 hauls the consist of the Royal Train back to Goolwa late in the afternoon



Prince Charles and Princess Diana meet ARHS officials on the platform at Victor Harbor station prior to boarding the train to Goolwa



SteamRanger Director Dean Harvey espouses the attributes of 621 to Prince Charles as they walk to board the Royal carriage at Victor Harbor.



A smile for the TV camera from Prince Charles prior to boarding the Royal Train to Goolwa



Princess Diana talks with SteamRanger Director Dean Harvey on the Victor Harbor platform

All photos: Geoff Doecke

**AUSTRALIAN RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY (SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION) INCORPORATED
STEAMRANGER TOURS - VICTOR HARBOR TOURIST RAILWAY**

TRAIN NOTICE NUMBER 5/88

27 JANUARY, 1988

On **FRIDAY 29 JANUARY, 1988** the following extra services and instructions **WILL APPLY** in connection with the operation of a **ROYAL TRAIN SERVICE** between Victor Harbor and Goolwa, in addition to details already printed in Train Notice Number 3/88 dated 15 January, 1988. For security reasons persons having access to this train notice **MUST NOT** discuss its contents with those not involved in the running of services on this day. Attention is drawn to details contained in Train Notice Number 2 of 11 January, 1988 re the operation of services **AFTER** the **ROYAL TRAIN** on this day.

TRAIN CONTROL

Train Control will be handled via the Party Line Telephone using a VHTR Train Controller at Victor Harbor in lieu of the normal STA Train Control via Telecom. If the Train Controller cannot be raised when calling out on the Party Line phone the code ring for that Officer is one long ring.

STATION HOURS OF ATTENDANCE

Station Masters will be in attendance for train working requirements as follows -;

VICTOR HARBOR	0800 to 1705 OR 1845 if 6527/6528 Works
PORT ELLIOT	0730 TO 1200
MIDDLETON	0800 TO 1200
GOOLWA	0845 TO 1725 OR 1910 if 6527/6528 Works

TRACK INSPECTIONS

A track inspection vehicle will depart PORT ELLIOT at 0745 hrs for GOOLWA and must arrive at GOOLWA not later than 0900 hrs. A second track inspection vehicle is to depart PORT ELLIOT at 0800 hrs for VICTOR HARBOR and must arrive VICTOR HARBOR not later than 0900 hrs.

TRAIN NUMBER	6511	6517
Goolwa Depot dep	0920	
Goolwa pass	0925	
Middleton pass	0938	
Port Elliot pass	0944	Light Engine
	dep	1135 -- 6516 (Royal Train)
Victor Harbor arr	0956	1147

NOTES RE TRAIN 6511

SPEED - the speed of No. 6511 **MUST NOT EXCEED 40 Km/h**

POWER - 909 HAUL 621 (tender first) Rx207 (tender first)

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Working of Number 6511 cont.

LOAD - Engines, 83, 63, 65, 54, 61, 71 70

WORKING - On arrival at the facing switches at Victor Harbor detach engine 909. which is to proceed onto the turntable to turn. The train to be hauled into the platform by engines Rx207 and 621. Detach engines 621 and Rx207 and run round and stand on the crossing loop opposite the Adelaide end of the platform. **SPECIAL NOTE** the last switches leading from the main line to the Causeway at VICTOR HARBOR MUST BE SET for the MAINLINE prior to this movement and the **HORSE TRAM OPERATOR MUST BE ADVISED NOT TO ALTER THEM UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES**

Engine 909, after turning. is to be admitted to the mainline to obtain a train order and work Number 6512 Light Engine to Goolwa at 1035 hours.

After departure of engine 909, engines Rx207 and 621 shunt to main line. Engine 621 attaches to passenger cars and engine Rx207 works Number 6514 Light Engine to Port Elliot at 1050 hours. After shunting Rx207 and 621 back to the main line at Victor Harbor **ALL FACING SWITCHES FOR NUMBER 6516 "ROYAL TRAIN" MUST BE CRAMPED IN THE NORMAL POSITION AND REMAIN SO UNTIL AFTER THE PASSAGE OF NUMBER 6516 "ROYAL TRAIN"**. Similarly facing switches at MIDDLETON for NUMBER 6516 ROYAL TRAIN MUST BE CRAMPED IN THE NORMAL POSITION AFTER DEPARTURE OF THE TRACK INSPECTION VEHICLE AND REMAIN SO UNTIL AFTER THE PASSAGE OF NUMBER 6516.

Engine 621 and consist work number 6516 "Royal Train" at 1115 hours.

NOTES RE 6517 LIGHT ENGINE

This movement works TENDER FIRST to VICTOR HARBOR. On arrival at Victor Harbor Rx207 to be admitted to the turntable and turn. After turning Engine Rx 207 is to work to station to obtain a train order, then work Number 6518 Light Engine at 1210 hours TENDER FIRST to GOOLWA.

TRAIN NUMBER	6512	6514	6516	6518
Movement	LE	LE	Royal Train	LE
Power	909	Rx207	621	Rx207
Victor Harbor dep	1035	1050	1115	1210
Port Elliot arr	-	1100	-	-
pass	1045		1128 -- 6517LE	1222
Middleton arr	1050		-	-
dep	1114		-	-
pass	-		1133	1228
Goolwa arr	1126		1144	1240

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STEAMRANGER TOURS - VICTOR HARBOR TOURIST RAILWAY**

TRAIN NOTICE NUMBER 5/88 - PAGE 3

NOTES RE 6512 LIGHT ENGINE

SPEED - the speed of Number 6512 MUST NOT EXCEED 50 Km/h.

WORKING - On arrival at Goolwa take Crossing Loop and stand clear of fouling the main line at the Victor Harbor end of the loop. On arrival of Number 6512 in the Crossing Loop at Goolwa, FACING SWITCHES FOR NUMBER 6516 "ROYAL TRAIN" MUST BE CRAMPED IN THE NORMAL POSITION UNTIL AFTER THE PASSAGE OF NUMBER 6516. Engine 909 work 6520 LIGHT ENGINE coupled to Engine 621 at 1305 hours to GOOLWA DEPOT (see Train Notice 3/88)

NOTES RE 6514 LIGHT ENGINE

SPEED - the speed of number 6514 MUST NOT EXCEED 50 Km/h

WORKING - On arrival at Port Elliot take Goods Siding and stand opposite the Station Building. After the arrival of Number 6514 at Port Eliot the FACING SWITCHES FOR NUMBER 6516 "ROYAL TRAIN" MUST BE CRAMPED IN THE NORMAL POSTION UNTIL AFTER THE PASSAGE OF NUMBER 6516 Engine work Number 6517 LIGHT ENGINE at 1135 hours to Victor Harbor TENDER FIRST.

NOTES RE 6516 ROYAL TRAIN

6514

POWER - 621 "Duke of Edinburgh"

LOAD - Engine, 70 71 61, 54, 65, 63, 83.

WORKING - The "Royal Train" will convey their Royal Highnesses The Prince and Princess of Wales from Victor Harbor to Goolwa.

On arrival at GOOLWA stop with the centre vestibule of CAR 77 opposite the Pedestrian Exit at the centre of the STATION BUILDING. After the crowd disperses MOVE THE TRAIN FORWARD and stand. Just prior to LIGHT ENGINE 6518 (Rx207) arriving at 1240 hours and coupling to the Victor Harbor end of the consist, uncouple and proceed to Crossing Loop and attach to Engine 909 - Work 6520 LIGHT ENGINES to GOOLWA DEPOT at 1305 (see Train Notice 3/88 for details)

NOTES RE 6518 LIGHT ENGINE.

WORKING - Tender first Victor Harbor to Goolwa. On arrival at Goolwa attach to passenger consist on main line and work number 6519 Psgr at 1300 hours to Victor Harbor (see Train Notice 3/88 for details).

FIRE BANS

In the event of a fireban on the day alternative arrangements will be made to work number 6511 Empty Train with Engine 907 leading Engine 909 ("B" end leading). On arrival at the facing switches at Victor Harbor Engine 907 is to

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be detached and admitted to the turntable for turning. Whilst this takes place Engine 909 is to haul the consist into the platform, cut off and run back on the crossing loop to stand opposite the Adelaide end of the platform. Engine 907 after turning to be admitted to the main line back to the station to obtain a train order to work number 6512 Light Engine at 1035 hours to GOOLWA.

After the departure of engine 907, engine 909 is to be attached to the consist of the "Royal Train". At this time all facing switches for number 6516 MUST BE CRAMPED for the MAIN LINE.

Numbers 6514 Light Engine 1050 hours VICTOR HARBOR TO PORT ELLIOT, 6517 Light Engine 1135 hours PORT ELLIOT TO VICTOR HARBOR and 6518 Light Engine 1210 hours VICTOR HARBOR TO GOOLWA WILL NOT WORK

The working of motive power on the Public Train service will be arranged by the Train Controller on the day.

B.P.Busch,
Operations Officer,
Dry Creek,
27 January, 1988.

