

ORBOST HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

P.O. BOX 284 ORBOST VIC 3888



President: Beryl Macalister
Vice President: May Leatch
Secretary: Paul Dawson
Treasurer: Paul Dawson
Museum Curators: Eddie Slatter
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NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER, 2005

ITEMS FROM THE

Snowy River Mail

Wednesday evening, October 3rd, 1934:

Mr. Jack Lynn, whilst engaged in working on his land at Lochend last Friday, had occasion to hop over the fence. On landing, he trod in a hole, the result being that his right ankle was badly sprained and a chip of bone taken away. Mr. Waddell happened along whilst he was in a recumbent position, after the incident, and seeing him in the shade, jocularly enquired if he were having a spell? Spell's all right! ejaculated Jack, as he rose and hopped away to seek medical assistance.

The stone to form the Memorial on the site of Captain Cook's cottage in England, was taken from the Cape Everard quarry, and removed by Mr. G. H. Dowell, of Cann River, to the landing stage at Cape Everard. It was taken therefrom by the Cape Yorke, the lighthouse ship, to Melbourne.



Orbost – Bairnsdale Rail Motor Passenger Train. Driver: Fred Christmas

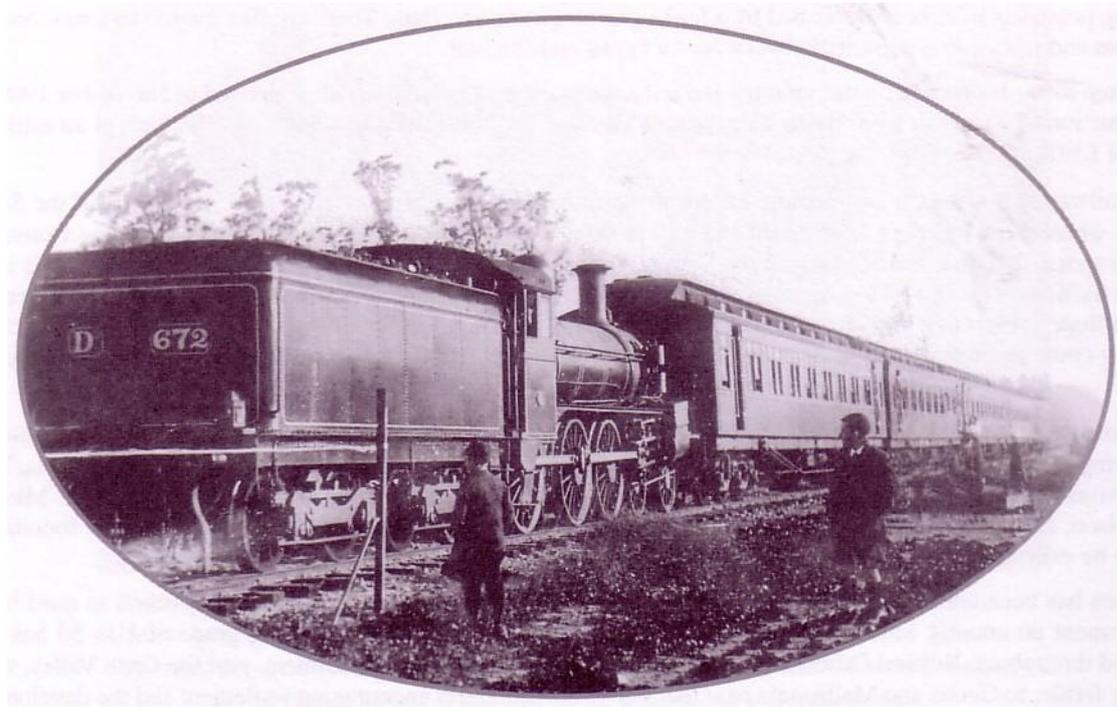
OUR RAILWAY SERVICE

Rumors of Alterations

That the passenger service on the Orbost-Bairnsdale section of the East Gippsland railway has almost become depleted, is an ocular fact to be seen daily. There are more reasons than one for such a circumstance, and all the fault of the Railway Department!

The service in the first instance is far too slow, Orbost being left at 10.10 a.m. and Bairnsdale reached at 1.45 p.m. – a 3 hours 45 minutes journey for a distance of 60 miles, whereas the service car going via Lakes Entrance, reaches its destination in nearly two hours better time.

There are the deadly stops at stations, while the engine puffs fussily about amongst trucks in the railway yard, and yet again many people are somewhat chary about travelling by train, on account of incidents in the past that might have turned out more deplorable than eventuated.



Orbost-Bairnsdale First Special Goods and Passenger Train

Rumor now has it that the Department has decided to eliminate the passenger service altogether, and instead of finishing up the rail and car service at Lakes Entrance, as at present, to continue such service by road to Orbost.

If that were decided upon, it would be of considerable convenience to Orbost, as passengers, mail and papers would reach their destination hours earlier, and Orbost people would be placed two hours ahead in the Commercial World.

It must be taken into consideration by the Department that the present passenger carriage weighs 30 tons, and with that eliminated from the haulage two extra sleeper or maize trucks could be added to the make-up of the train and be a much heavier wage earner than under the present system.

But, as we state, it is all a matter of "Rumor". All know that "Rumor" is a lying jude; still in nearly all cases – "Where there is smoke, there is also fire?"

Wednesday evening, October 17th, 1934:

Bombala-Orbost Railway

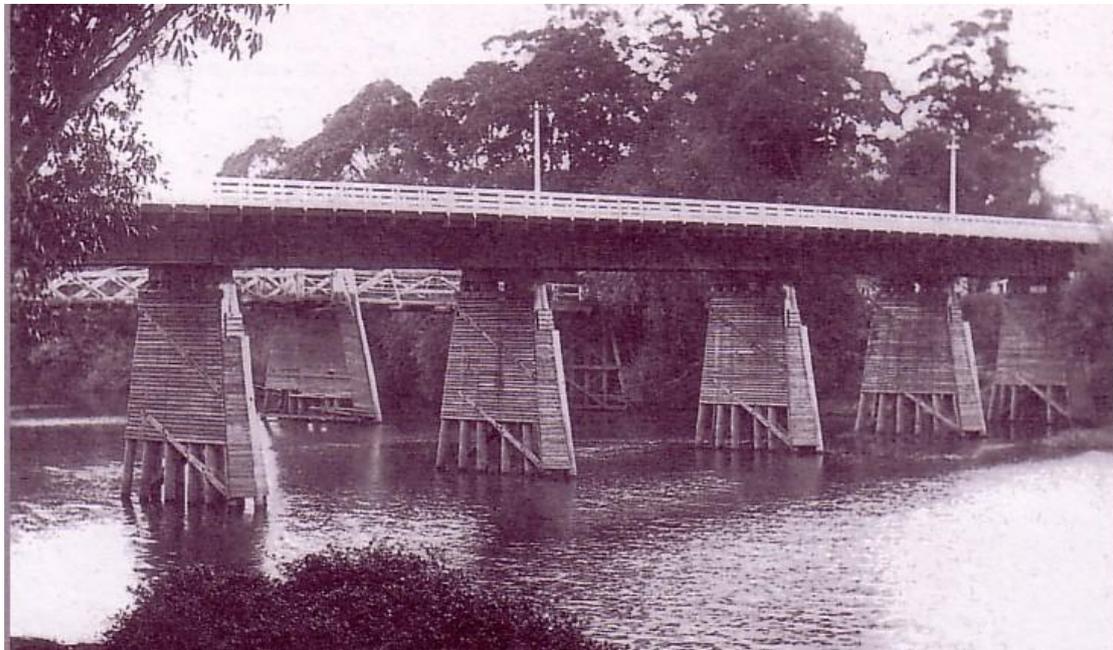
The long discussed question of a railway from Bombala to Orbost has been revived the Australian Natives' Association, and resolutions urging its construction were submitted to and carried by the annual conference held at Canberra recently.

From 1925 to 1927 the movement for this railway was particularly active and full of life, but the authorities evidently thought the time was not opportune, or the cost was more than the advantages warranted. So that apart from the various reports and arguments in favor of competitive routes no progress was made. The information gained at that time was, however,

very valuable, and will prove useful in the resumption of the agitation now or at any future time. The Victorian Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways furnished a report in December, 1927, from which we take the following extract:

“The Committee strongly recommends the Victorian Government to take up this matter with the Government of New South Wales, with a view of having a joint investigation by the Public Works Committee of that State and the Railways Standing Committee of this State (in a similar manner to that adopted in connection with the Riverina Border Railways) as to the desirability of constructing a through line to New South Wales from the Victorian terminus at Orbost. A widely framed reference would permit of the Joint Committees investigating the possibilities of a line to Eden or Bombala (or both), and also deal with the matter of uniform gauge so far as this particular proposal is concerned.

At Bombala, New South Wales, the 4ft. 8½ in gauge is encountered, and in view of this gauge having been selected by the Uniform Gauge Commission as that most desirable for Australia, it may be that any extension beyond Orbost should be on that basis. On a through route to Canberra or Sydney this would mean one change at Orbost, as at Albury, but there would be also the important factor to be considered that the main Gippsland line is a more isolated section than the Melbourne to Albury line, having fewer branch lines radiating from it, and a conversion of the whole line from Melbourne to Orbost (and probably branch lines) could, if considered desirable, then be brought about with far less inconvenience than would be caused by changing the gauge on the Melbourne-Albury section with its numerous and lengthy branch lines.”



The second Snowy River bridge at Orbost was built as a combined effort by the Victorian Railways and the Country Roads Board at a cost of £35,000 to be used as a combined road-rail bridge to facilitate the extension of the rail line to Bombala in New South Wales.

That report was never acted upon, and the joint committee was not appointed to report further as to the desirability of the line or otherwise. If the A.N.A. can put a bit of weight behind their agitation for the line there may be something doing at an early date. Vast quantities of evidence were taken both by the Victorian Railways Commission and the New South Wales Public Works Committee, and their investigations covered the proposed connections by rail between Orbost and Bombala, and between Bombala and Eden. This will all be available and will not require much additional evidence to bring it up to date.

The contentions of the A.N.A. that it is a necessary national work, a step in the direction of a uniform gauge, and will absorb a large number of unemployed in a useful work cannot be denied. It will also be a valuable strategic railway from a defence point of view. Whether it will be a commercially payable proposition is not so certain in these days of good roads and reliable and quick motor transport. It will certainly improve the chances of reducing the losses on the Orbost and Bombala lines, which at the present time are considerable, as it will carry a lot of traffic to and from the Federal Capital. Beyond that there is room for a lot of argument as to its utility.

Advertisement:

DAILY PASSENGER SERVICE

ORBOST – BAIRNSDALE

Cars leave Orbost 11 a.m., arrive Bairnsdale
1 p.m.

Cars leave Bairnsdale on arrival of Melbourne
train, arrive Orbost 5.30.

BOOKING OFFICE

Dimmatina's Orbost Café, Phone 127.

Greig's, Regal Café, 142 Main St. Bairnsdale.

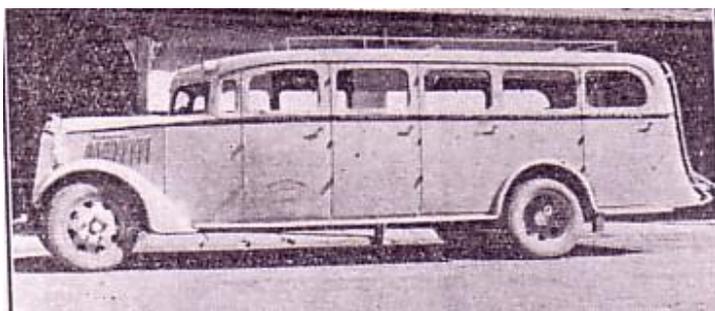
For Hire Day and Night – 2 Cars, Ring 75.

Cars connect with Melbourne Trains and cars
both ways daily.

All cars Licensed and passengers insured.

Melbourne cars leave Dimmatina's 11 a.m.
Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

J. RYAN, Proprietor.



Ryan's Motor Service Orbost-Bairnsdale 1937