DISTRICT

RAIL

DISTRICT RAIL

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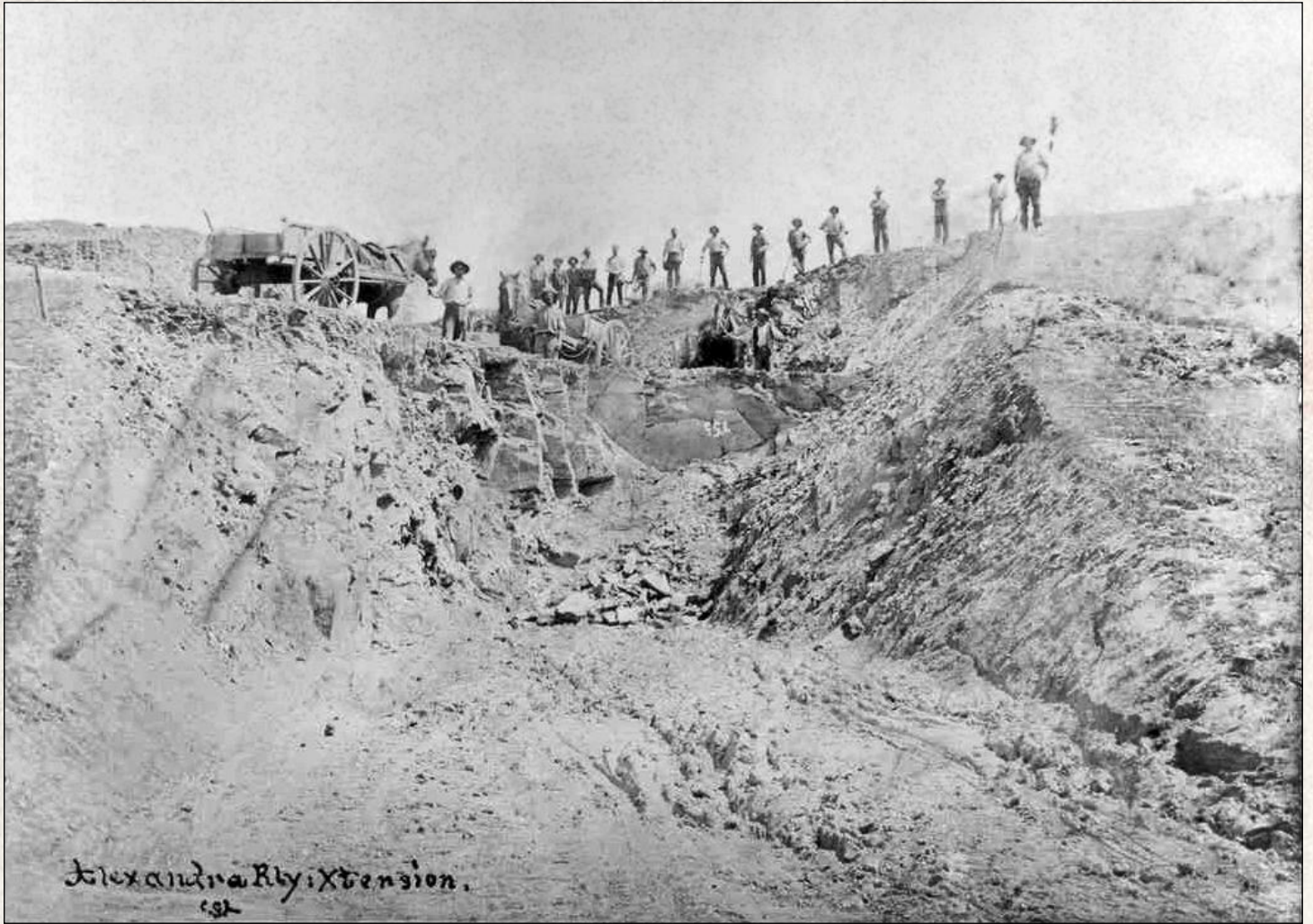David & Debbie Hibbert

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ALEXANDRA

Rail Related Imagery

DISTRICT RAIL

Construction of Eglington Rail Cutting near Alexandra circa 1908

Courtesy State Library Victoria

DISTRICT RAIL

Alexandra Station
Courtesy Hans Schonekas 2010
Photographer Lin Cumming

Aboard the "Spirit of Regress"

By a Correspondent

TUCKED away on an obscure strip of Victorian railway line, I have discovered my ideal train.

I call it the Spirit of Regress. It is Victoria's most spectacular equipage.

My own reason for mentioning it is to let Mr Clapp know that it has an admirer, and to warn him that if he sends along any of his men with air-conditioning plant, all-steel carriages or parlor cars, I, for one, shall be displeased.

I found this wonderful train at Alexandra, and I had the pleasure of travelling in it as far as Koriella and Cathkin. In Alexandra they say that it "runs" to Cathkin. But this is in poor taste. The Spirit of Regress runs nowhere. Like the policeman of fiction, it proceeds.

When I went through the barrier, not having seen the train beforehand, I glanced casually to the left. It was like Wordsworth and the host of daffodils. There stood the Spirit of Regress—one carriage and a line of trucks—in all its antique glory.

My only companion in the compartment (as the locals laughingly call it) was a young man from Sydney, cynical enough to suggest that they kept the train out of sight until you had bought your ticket. He insisted that the quaint upholstery was converted from an old settee belonging to Batman.

I reproved him for this impiety.

As everything else seemed so perfect, I glanced tremulously toward the engine, hoping that it might be coupled on back to front. I felt quite a pang when I realised that its cowcatcher pointed forward.

After a while, when it appeared that we really must be off, there was an affecting little farewell ceremony on the platform and we climbed back into the compartment. The train hesitantly tackled the long slope leading up from the station.

By and by, when the slope was conquered, we rolled along at nearly 10 miles an hour. Through cuttings we languidly sped.

Great excitement at Koriella, the only siding between Alexandra and Cathkin. Also much shunting. My ill-mannered friend laughed heartily at the red flag and red lamp which, as a notice advised, were to be displayed by anyone wishing to join the train.

"Couldn't they step on?" he sneered.

At last we hurtled into Cathkin. The 8¾ miles had been covered in 38 minutes—nearly 14 miles an hour.

Soon I shall return to Alexandra. I want to have another ride in the S. of R. before it is too late.

DISTRICT RAIL

Alexandra Station
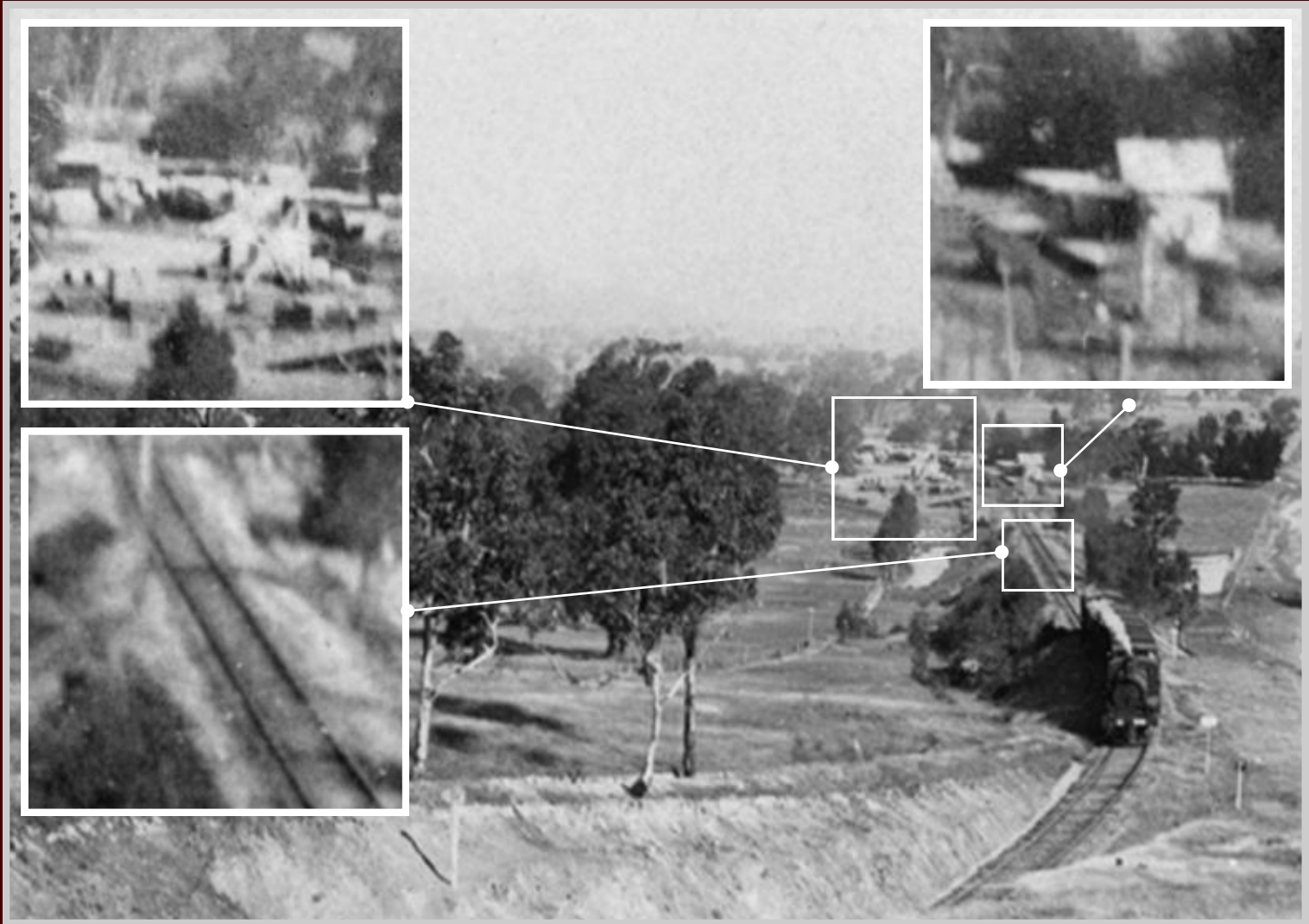
Courtesy Noel & Joan Reichman 2010

DISTRICT RAIL

A train heading for Alexandra in the 1920s

Photograph courtesy Sandra Cumming 2010
Photographer Lin Cumming

TRAIN LEAVING THE ALEXANDRA STATION

A steam train is pictured leaving Alexandra Station circa 1930 and slowly climbing into Victoria Gap (cutting). The station and sawmill are both visible in the background (inset). This is one of only a few images taken from Victoria Gap looking south towards Alexandra. The train appears to be a passenger train based on the carriages.

DISTRICT RAIL

A train as it leaves Alexandra and travels through the Eglington Cutting in 1928

Photograph courtesy Jeanie Webb

DISTRICT RAIL

A train as it leaves Alexandra and travels through the Eglington Cutting in 1928

Photograph courtesy Sandra Cumming & State Library Victoria
Photographer Lin Cumming

DISTRICT RAIL

A train heading towards Alexandra travels through the Eglington Cutting in 1928

Courtesy Sandra Cumming & State Library Victoria
Photographer Lin Cumming

DISTRICT RAIL

The last steam train (K184) from Alexandra heading towards Alexandra

Photograph © Bob Tate 2017

DISTRICT RAIL

The last steam train (K184) from Alexandra heading towards Alexandra

Photograph © Bob Tate 2017

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The last steam train (K184) from Alexandra heading towards Alexandra

Photograph © Bob Tate 2017

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The last steam train (K184) from Alexandra heading towards Alexandra

Photograph © Bob Tate 2017

DISTRICT RAIL

**The last train from Alexandra after travelling through Eglinton Cutting
heading towards Cathkin**

Photograph © Sandra Cumming 2010
Photographer Lin Cumming

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The last train from Alexandra heading towards Cathkin

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Photograph © Sandra Cumming 2010
Photographer Lin Cumming

D I S T R I C T   R A I L

The last train from Alexandra heading towards Cathkin

Photograph © Sandra Cumming 2010
Photographer Lin Cumming

DISTRICT RAIL

Alexandra Station in the mid 1970s

Photograph © Stuart Lodington 2014

DISTRICT RAIL

Alexandra Station in the mid 1970s

Photograph © Stuart Lodington 2014

BONNIE DOON

Rail Related Imagery

DISTRICT RAIL

DERM on the Bonnie Doon bridge

Photograph courtesy Lance Adams 2017

DISTRICT RAIL

T335 nears the Bridge Motel Bonnie Doon

Photograph courtesy Lance Adams 2017

DISTRICT RAIL

T335 on a down Mansfield goods run

Photograph courtesy Lance Adams 2017

DISTRICT RAIL

Y166 nearing Bonnie Doon

Photograph courtesy Lance Adams 2017

CATHKIN

Rail Related Imagery

DISTRICT RAIL

A train leaving Cathkin

Photograph courtesy Noelle Spoldin 2010

DISTRICT RAIL

A train on the way to Mansfield

Photograph courtesy Noelle Spoldin 2010

DISTRICT RAIL

280HP Walker at Cathkin New Years day 1956

Photograph courtesy Lance Adams 2019

MOLESWORTH

Rail Related Imagery

DISTRICT RAIL

Molesworth Station circa 1910

Courtesy Tony Ballino 2013 and Wayne & Jo Miller 2016

DISTRICT RAIL

MOLESWORTH.   MANSFIELD - TRAIN LEAVING. 127.

Train leaving Molesworth Station

Courtesy Tony Ballino 2013

DISTRICT RAIL

Lifting overturned trucks. Molesworth Rly Disaster. 2.

Molesworth 1911 Rail Disaster up Harvey's Gully

Courtesy Lawrence Hood 2010

DISTRICT RAIL

Molesworth 1911 Rail Disaster up Harvey's Gully

Courtesy Lawrence Hood 2010

District Rail

A train on the old Molesworth Bridge

Photograph courtesy Hans Schonekas 2010

SEYMOUR

Rail Related Imagery

DISTRICT RAIL

B Class Steam Locomotive No. 110 on Seymour Coal Stage 13 April 1904

Courtesy State Library Victoria

DISTRICT RAIL

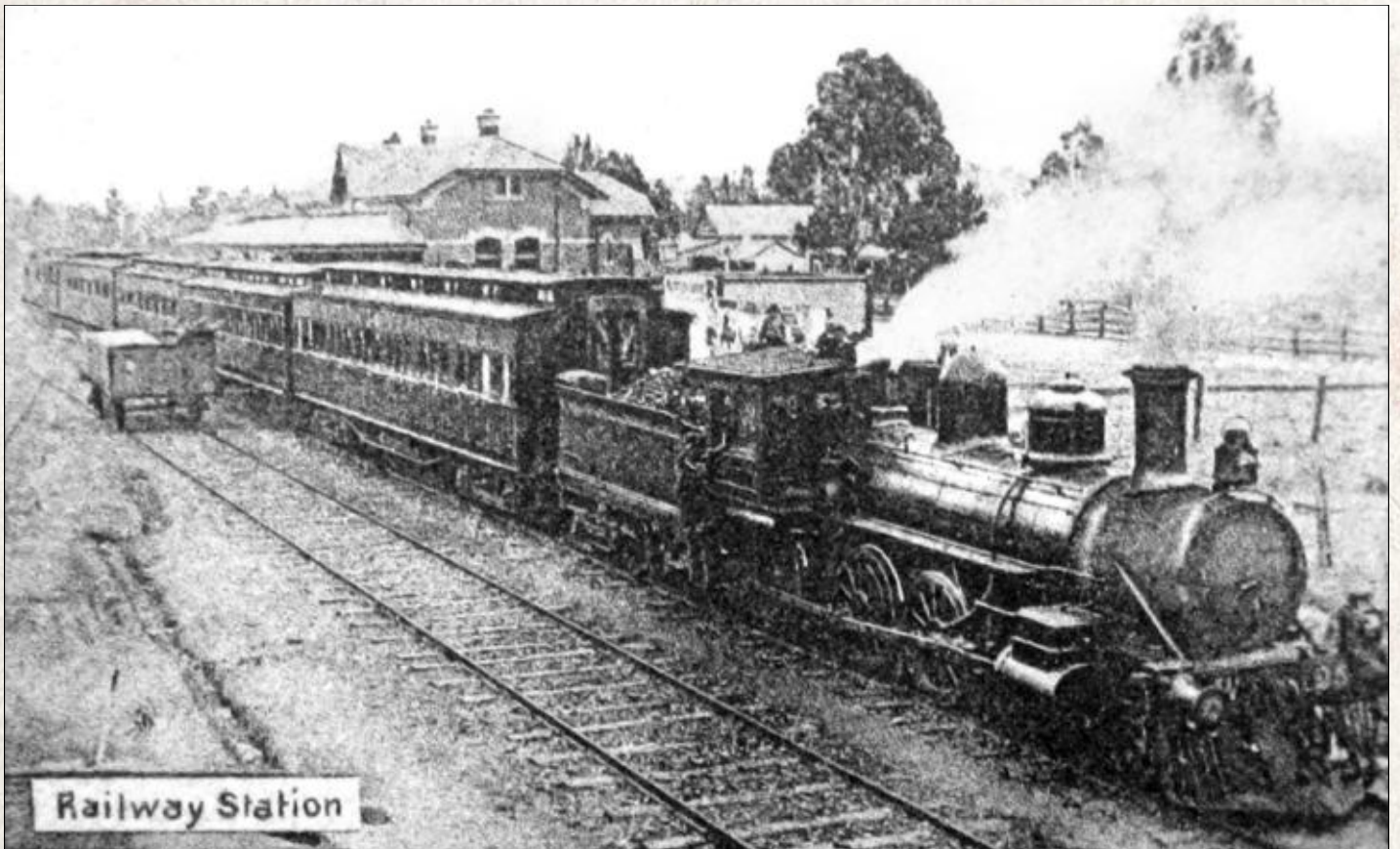**Melbourne Express dashing across the Seymour Rail Bridge**

Courtesy Rod Falconer
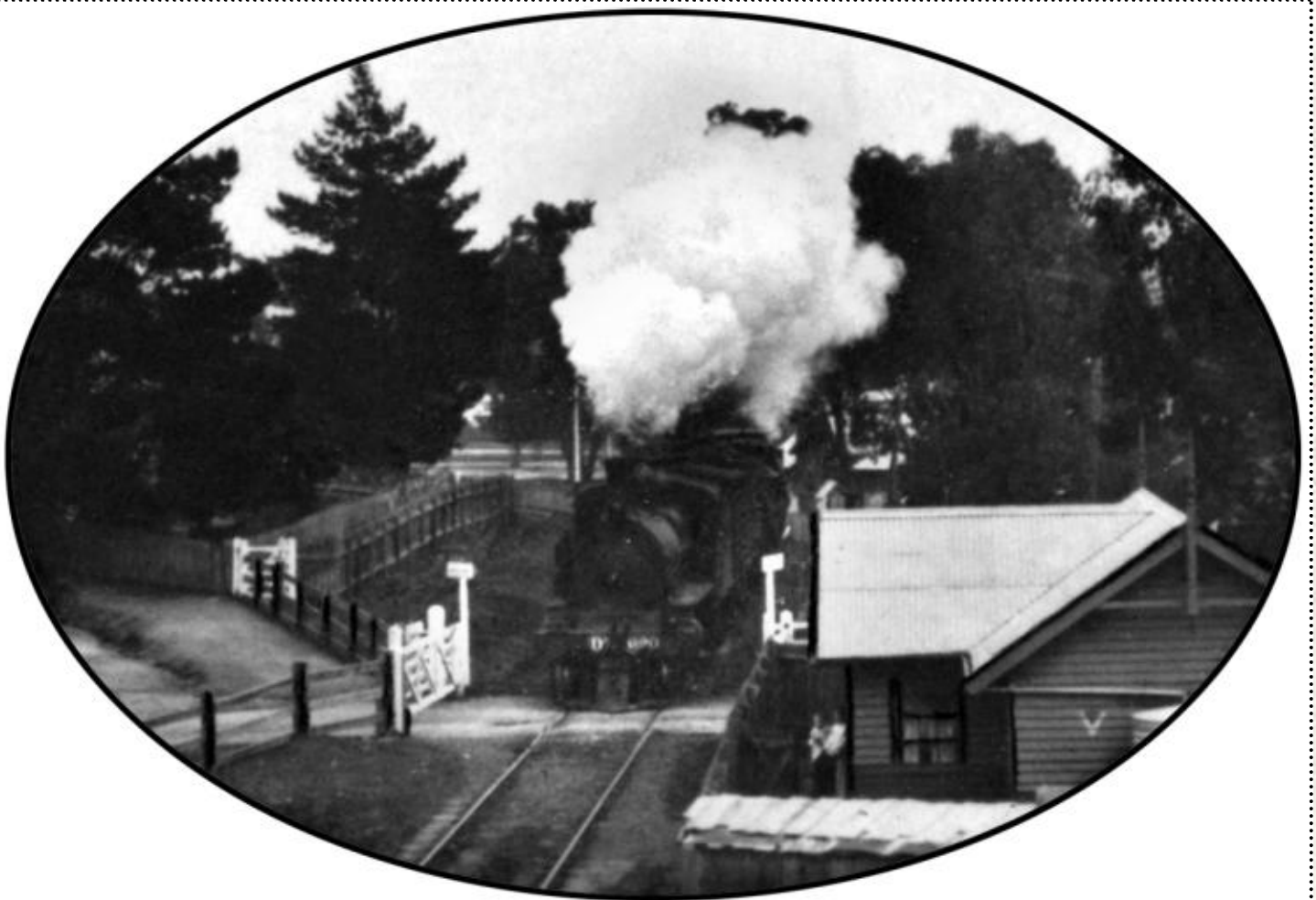Photographer J.P. Campbell

YEA

Rail Related Imagery

DISTRICT RAIL

Yea Railway Station
Courtesy State Library Victoria 2014

DISTRICT RAIL

Melbourne train at Yea rail station

Image courtesy Rod Falconer.
Photograph J.P. Campbell

DISTRICT RAIL

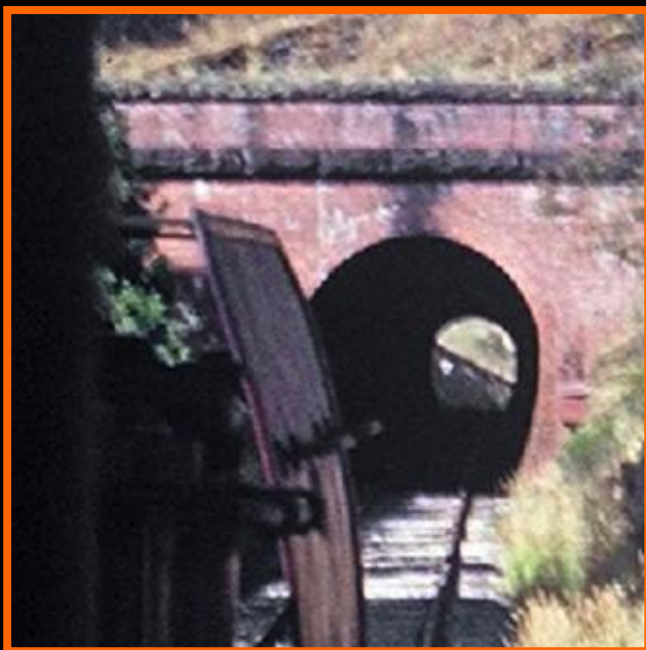
K184 approaching Yea on a special train on 27 May 1972

Photograph © Roger Wilson 2018

HISTORIC SNAPSHOT

Former train driver Jim Rae was driving a J Class loco east along the Mansfield Line when he snapped this just before entering the historic Cheviot Tunnel December 1958.

Cheviot Tunnel is located between the Cheviot Station and the former Balham Station (opened 1892 and closed a year later in 1893). Cheviot Tunnel opened 12 November 1889 and was Victoria's longest rail tunnel (201 metres). The tunnel cut through McLaughlin's Gap at the southern end of the Black Range. The Mansfield branch line closed 1978, with the last passenger train passing through the tunnel 28 May 1977 and the last goods train 8 November 1978. Download the Cheviot Tunnel or the Balham Station Factsheets by clicking on the buttons

OTHER

Rail Related Imagery

DISTRICTS RAIL GAUGES

1800s to Present Day

BROAD GAUGE
1,600MM (5FOOT 3INCH)

The main line from Melbourne to the North branched off at Tallarook and went to Mansfield via Trawool, Granite, Kerrisdale Ballast Pits, Kerrisdale, Homewood, Yea, Cheviot, Balham, Molesworth, Cathkin, Yarck, Kanumbra, Merton, Woodfield, Bonnie Doon, Maindample and ended at the Mansfield terminus. A sub branch line from Cathkin travelled through Koriella and ended at Alexandra. The rail was largely known in our district as the Broad Gauge, though is also been referred to as the Irish Gauge in some circles.

1,029MM (3FOOT 4½INCH)

This gauge was used to bring timber from the Upper Rubicon Ranges to the lower floodplains of the Goulburn river. The timber was then transported to the local mill at Alexandra via Bullock & Horse teams via the roadway. The Alexandra Timber Tramway and Museum (ATTM) have what is possibly the last operating locomotive designed for this gauge in Australia (and possibly the world).

NARROW GAUGE
610MM (2FOOT)
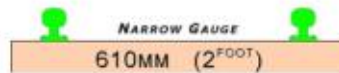
In 1912 a smaller 2 foot gauge rail system was built from Rubicon to Alexandra for transporting timber, marking the start of our Timber Tramway history. This is still in service at the Alexandra Timber Tramway Museum.
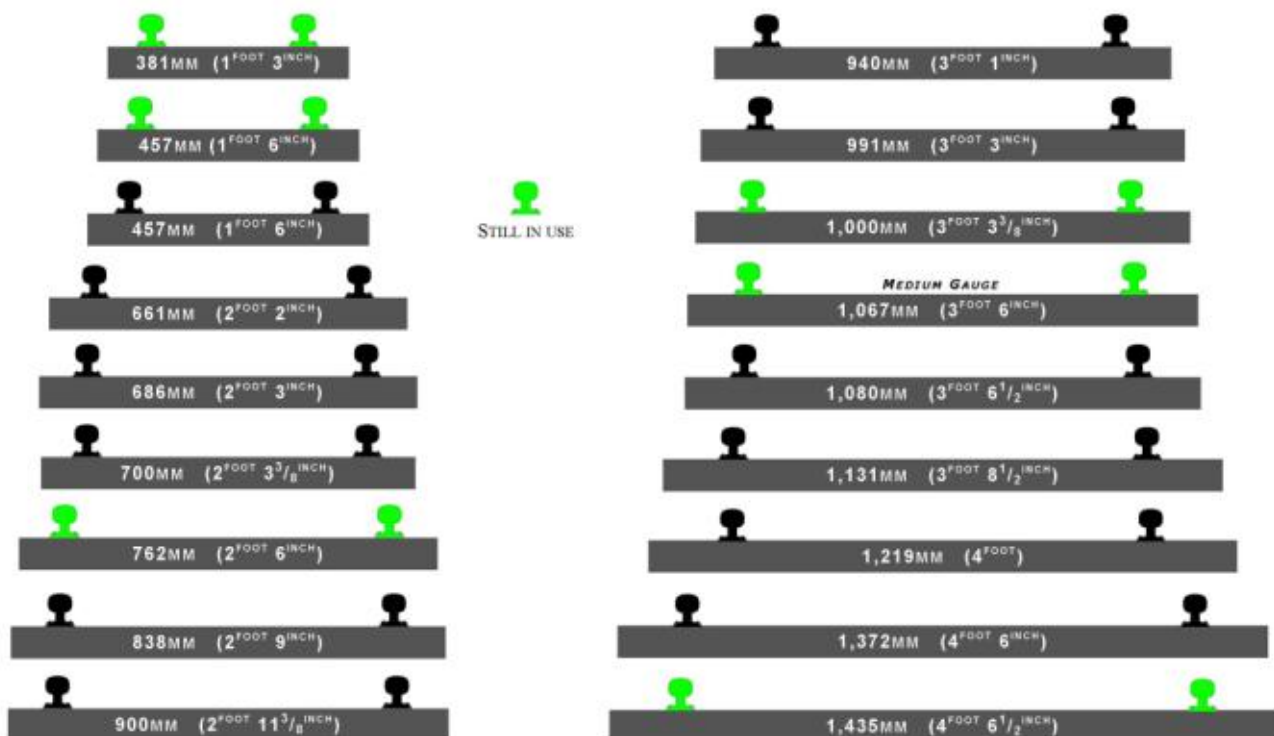
914MM (3FOOT)

The 3 foot gauge was used in the Yea area to transport timber from the nearby ranges to the Cheviot Railway Siding near Cheviot Tunnel. Here the timber was loaded on to trains for transport to other areas.

THE ALEXANDRA TIMBER TRAMWAY MUSEUM HAS A FULLY OPERATIONAL 2 FOOT GAUGE RAIL SYSTEM THAT YOU CAN VIEW AND RIDE ON

www.alexandratramway.org.au

OTHER AUSTRALIAN GAUGES

Left	Right
381MM (1FOOT 3INCH)	940MM (3FOOT 1INCH)
457MM (1FOOT 6INCH)	991MM (3FOOT 3INCH)
457MM (1FOOT 6INCH)	1,000MM (3FOOT 3⅜INCH)
661MM (2FOOT 2INCH)	**MEDIUM GAUGE** 1,067MM (3FOOT 6INCH)
686MM (2FOOT 3INCH)	1,080MM (3FOOT 6½INCH)
700MM (2FOOT 3⅜INCH)	1,131MM (3FOOT 8½INCH)
762MM (2FOOT 6INCH)	1,219MM (4FOOT)
838MM (2FOOT 9INCH)	1,372MM (4FOOT 6INCH)
900MM (2FOOT 11⅜INCH)	1,435MM (4FOOT 6½INCH)

STILL IN USE

Railway gauges have many names depending on who you ask, so we have avoided confusion by only showing gauge measurements

DISTRICT RAIL

On the Puffing Billy Line at Belgrave 2009

Artworkz

Serving the Community