



“A Massive year for DownsSteam”



The man responsible of giving The Great Divide Scenic Railway its distinctive navy and gold livery, reminiscent of some of the Orient Express, has been honoured with life membership of DownsSteam.

At the end of Sunday's volunteers Christmas party, DownsSteam chair Ros Scotney made Peter Tierney a life member of the organisation to which he has donated countless hours of both his time and artistry.

Ros paid tribute to Peter's countless hours of service to the organisation, which he has maintained even despite his deteriorating health.

“So many times when I come down here, I see Peter sitting on a stand painting these carriages, even on the hottest days,” Ros said.

Responding to the announcement Peter told the gathering he could read between the lines of his life membership.

“It means I'm going to be here for the rest of my life,” he joked.

Last weekend's Christmas party wrapped up what has been an epic year for DownsSteam with massive progress made on our two restoration projects putting us well ahead on our journey towards getting the Great Divide Scenic Railway fully operational.

Loco 106:

In the last half of 2016, restoration work on 106 has been focussed around finishing the loco's main driving wheels and carrying extensive repairs to the main frame.

All of the loco's axle boxes have returned from Olds Engineering in Maryborough where they were machined and overhauled.

But some of the most significant work involved cutting out and replacing large sections of the loco's main frame which had lost up to forty per cent of their thickness in some sections due to corrosion brought about by years of water and coal dust finding its way from the cab down into locomotive's frame.

The worst sections had to be completely cut out and replaced by new steel which, due to the position of the section in relation to the overall strength of the loco's structure, could only be carried out by a certified structural welder.

The last few weeks of the year have also seen a new rear buffer beam and footplates installed to complete the drag box on the steam locomotive while its wheels have had their journals profiled to ensure the smooth and cool running of 106's running gear.



From the Chair

Hello members of DownsSteam. As we farewell 2016 I reflect with a great sense of pride being Chair of this great organisation.

This year thanks to our dedicated team leaders and volunteers we have seen great progress in the three rolling stock restoration, these being Engine 106, the Bell Diesel 1172 and DP13 the Gatsby Flyer.

We have welcomed some extremely skilled volunteers and this has been of great assistance to our long time volunteers.

As we look forward to going out onto main line hopefully in the first half of 2017 a lot of planning of our proposed trips will start in earnest.

I must thank our catering team for their dedication.

They are our "bread and butter" so to speak and we could not function without the income they bring to DownsSteam.

From the bottom of my heart thank-you to all members who contribute in so many ways.

Christmas wishes to you all, as we look forward to seeing DownsSteam become a leader in the tourism sphere in the region in 2017.

Ros Scotney. Chair



DP 13: The Gatsby Flyer:

The final months of 2016 have seen major progress towards the restoration of our DP 13 rail motor, "The Gatsby Flyer".

With the invaluable assistance of Grant from the Sunshine Coast and his rare expertise on a tool called the English Wheel, the rail motor's outer sheeting has been completed and ready for painting.

Meanwhile inside, the electrics have gone in, the power bogie re-installed and work on installing the air-conditioning unit and the re-upholstering of the passenger seats is on schedule.

Beneath the rail motor, the last set of tyres have been turned and fitted to the power bogie and the diesel, transmission and gearbox are almost ready to be tested before being reinstalled.

Around the site:

Visitors to the DownsSteam precinct are now greeted by a bilingual sign directing them to all of our major attractions and inside the (now air-conditioned) Dreamtime Carriage, the audio of Robert Ketton's interview with Dom after he'd completed his amazing work now plays through a newly installed set of speakers.

This latest addition means visitors can now have Dom's own voice guiding them through the carriage, explaining the significance of each panel and the meaning of the symbols they contain.



“Fifty Parties”: 2016 through the eyes of the Catering Crew

The catering crew have survived another year.

We have catered for approximately fifty events, some with seventy guests others with only fifteen.

Sometimes we've had two events in a day, sometimes four in a week and sometimes weeks without any.



The highlight of my year was the arrival of some steps made by Neal Maker, so the large central door in the kitchen car, which had never been opened before, could be opened, lowering the temperature by a few degrees.

We have a small, but great, team of volunteers who are eager to help out.

Special thanks to the washing up crew in the tram - without them it would be total chaos in the kitchen car.

After most events we go home loaded up with bags of washing, weary but completely satisfied we've done our best.

Maybe there are members who aren't into catering but who could do the washing for us.

My goal for next year play more golf !!

Catering manager: *Gwen Cooper.*



Loco 106

Buy a rivet, buy a bolt,
Or even buy a nut,
To fix Toowoomba's heritage,
Your steam train that's kaput!

'O' can you spare a bob or two,
Or maybe a few quid?
I once rolled proudly down the line,
Recall now what I did

I carried families here and there,
Both up the Range and down,
A million miles I'd estimate,
With my ever-chugging sound

Downs Steam's willing workers,
Have worn fingers to the bone,
Now I'm asking for your help,
As I lay here all alone

Funds they need to finish me,
So I can run once more,
One-fifty thousand sounds a lot,
And I guess it is, for sure

But I can take you back in time,
When train travel was fun,
Ten dollars from each household,
So once again I'll run

I need to huff, I need to puff,
To fill my head with steam,
Would you please contribute,
create reality from dream?



Peter Eldridge
showing tv host
and tour leader
Scott McGregor the
rolling stock.



The Year in Train(ing) !

SARC – 35 members

During the year, 7 more members attained the National competency TLIF2080C – Safely Access the Rail Corridor (SARC) which enables them to work as Rail Safety Workers within the railway corridor owned by Queensland Rail. This is certainly an outstanding effort and despite some frustrating delays with the processing of the paperwork with the Network Owner, those involved should be proud of their achievement.

A further 7 or 8 will attain or renew this competency early in 2017.

All DownsSteam volunteers working in the railway corridor will need this competency to be able to fill operational roles aboard our rail services when they commence.

SAFETY INDUCTION – 68 members

All members working on site at Drayton are required to have completed a Safety Induction. This course is conducted regularly on site and is a requirement under the Work Health Safety Act. This number is steadily growing, but further emphasis is required to achieve 100% compliance! If you haven't had a Safety Induction, arrange one today!

GENERAL OPERATIONAL SAFETY – 20 members

This relatively new course has been embraced by many members and numbers are increasing steadily.

COMMUNICATIONS – 34 members

A basic course in communications in the railway environment is mainstay for many operational roles.

OBSERVANCE OF SIGNALS – 30 members

Likewise, this course gives an overview of what railway signals mean and provides a basic understanding necessary for many operational roles.

SHUNTING THEORY – 19 members

No train can be marshalled without shunting! A must-have necessity for those roles involving rail traffic operation.

SHUNTING PRACTICALS – 4 members

To date, only 4 members have participated in a practical shunting assessment, primarily due to 1172's batteries failing during the latter half of the year. It is anticipated as soon as practical to continue these assessments as all members who have completed the shunting theory course are eligible.

DTC SAFEWORKING – 12 members

A course specifically for those interested in the operational roles of the Rail Traffic Crew, to maintain rail traffic separation on the main line network.

CARRIAGE ATTENDANT – 21 members

Members continue to embrace this course well, which provides insight into what is required to look after our passengers on rail traffic tours.

2017 next year planned courses so far –

- 12-January – DTC
- 28-January – General Operational Safety, Carriage Attendant
- 7-February – Shunting Theory
- 16-February – General Operational Safety, Carriage Attendant,

SARC

Peter Burkitt - Operations Training Manager.



Merry Christmas from DownsSteam !