



*Home of The Downs Explorer*

# December 2021 News Roundup

## *Exciting new member of the fleet*



Following a complete ground-up restoration at Drayton Toowoomba, this marvellous piece of art deco train design will be rolling out of Warwick on specialist trips. Built in 1939 it worked in Tasmania for most of its life, but was almost totally destroyed by fire.

It is now owned and managed by a not for profit consortium and will be based at our SDSR precinct and operate in conjunction with the Downs Explorer timetable.



DP13 seen at Launceston in Australian National livery in 1981



It got little use in the 80s, but was to be seen on special occasions like the Burnie Show and on special charters during the 1990s

The railmotor has a driver station at each end which allows for changing direction without the need to turn the vehicle. A real bonus for destinations like Stanthorpe



The Flier is a diesel - mechanical vehicle, meaning the 102hp Garner diesel engine drives directly to the wheels, rather than via electric or hydraulic motors, as is the case with most locomotives.

One great advantage of DP13 over our other carriage stock is air conditioning and for those hot summer months ...a large fridge!



## End of year reviews

As we come to the end of 2021 what a turnaround from the previous year. The weather has been very kind to us allowing the use of the Steam Locomotive on most of our tours.

Speaking of the Locomotive it would be remiss of me not to mention the recent retirement of John Brady our fitter after 20 years of voluntary work with SDSR.

Thank you John

This year has certainly seen a great increase in patronage already with over 5.500 passengers to various locations around the Downs.

The 2022 timetable has now been planned and will be available on our website.

SDSR has been successful in obtaining in two grants for more water tanks and the extension to the carriage shed.

There have been many changes in around precinct with the moving of the Cottonvale station museum to a new location at the entrance of the precinct.

Work is also pushing ahead on carriage BL573 to become our new refreshment carriage.

We were planning to thank all our volunteers on Sunday 5th December with a Christmas trip to Stanthorpe but recent heavy rain has damaged the track, so plan B is a get together on Thursday 9th December at the precinct....all our regulars are most welcome to attend.

Finally from me, a huge thankyou to all of the SDSR Members, volunteers and Committee for your help and support this year!

Very Happy Xmas

Regards

**Peter Gregory**

SDSR President

Queensland Rail crew were contracted to undertake track repairs within our yard, making it safer, especially for the large WATCO locomotives.

The rail is to be re-aligned to provide more undercover storage in the carriage shed. The building is also to be extended with help of a grant.



### MUSEUM REPORT FOR DECEMBER 2021

Major works have been happening with the re-location of the Cottonvale Museum from within the precinct to its new location at the front of the precinct. The re-location involved the following work -

The DEET office block had to be re-located to a new position adjacent to the new renovation shed. Three pads were made to sit the building on and when it was moved it first had to be rotated 180 degrees before placing it on the pads.

Concrete slabs had to be laid for the museum buildings which now incorporate Cottonvale Station building as well as the Cottonvale Goods shed.

The museum had to be unbolted from the stumps on which it sat, and water and power disconnected.

Bellingham Crane Hire lifted the building and loaded it onto a trailer which transported it to the new site where the crane unloaded it and placed it in position on the new site.

The goods shed was then lifted from where it sat in the yard and located it next to the museum building. A water tank was also re-located to behind the DEET office block to capture rainfall for the garden beds and as an emergency supply for the loco.

Electricians then connected power to all three buildings and installed new lighting in the museum and goods shed.

Garden beds were then established around the buildings and an entrance Pergola has been installed.

I would like to thank all the volunteers that have worked every week during the entire project for the efforts and dedication to the tasks at hand.

Works are still in progress, and they include –

Painting the goods shed inside and out and painting all three buildings on the outside to ensure continuity of colour scheme for the area.

Establishing the outside display items. Track extensions were laid to accommodate the mobile track items on display.

Painting and installing the signal and levers adjacent to the goods shed.

Establishing pathways within the museum area with a new entrance way between the two buildings.

Another job that is getting under way is the installation of a Café Carriage that will encompass a café bar and souvenir shop. It will be located inside the front fence and opposite the museum. It is proposed that once the carriage is installed and opened, we will be able to open the museum on weekdays and promote the facility to the community and schools in the Darling Downs region.

**Kevin Patterson**

Museum Curator.



**IMPORTANT COVID INFORMATION**  
**FROM MID DECEMBER 2021**

**TO COMPLY WITH STATE LEGISLATION, ALL VOLUNTEERS & VISITORS  
TO OUR SITE AND ALSO ALL OUR PASSENGERS WILL NEED TO SHOW  
PROOF OF THEIR VACCINATION STATUS**

**Tickets please!**  
**A m a n d a s u m s u p o u r b o o k i n g s &  
s u p p l e m e n t a r y i n c o m e**

What an amazing 2021 we have had at SDSR. First and foremost I would like to thank and congratulate each and every volunteer at SDSR because all of you make it possible to present to the public what it is we do both in train tours and in people coming through the precinct. We couldn't have done it without you. I am just so excited and thankful to have been a part of such an amazing team.

The Institute Hall has seen an increase in traffic this year between regulars that hire it and other new enquiries and bookings. Dance groups, Table tennis players and The Country Music Group have been a great asset and it is so nice to see the hall used. Such a great feeling to know it is still serving the public of Warwick and surrounds after all these years. We are looking to apply for a grant for 2022 to upgrade the floor to match the newness of the interior paintwork.

2021 has seen us run just shy of 6000 tickets for the year, a mammoth achievement.

To the travellers thank you for your support. You are why we do what we do.

To all that have helped run the train tours on the inside and the outside and front to back, whether you travel with the train or stay behind thank you. Watching the expectation on the faces as they come to board the train, and for the most part the look of pleasure when they leave is priceless.

Knowing the impact our tours has had on the communities of Stanthorpe, Wallangarra and Clifton is heart warming and we are glad we have a connection with businesses in these areas. We are thankful for their support as well. 2021 with all the people, sights, sounds, smell and feel of the train as it comes and goes from the station still gives me goose bumps and a shiver down my spine. It has been a year full of memories to cherish.

Merchandise is a word that is now familiar among us at SDSR and it is exciting to walk into the Warwick Railway Station and see it on display. The range of goods on offer has grown throughout the year and the response from the public in purchasing has been wonderful. It is great to receive photos of people with their purchases or to see what they have done with it. Such a good feeling getting a photo of a little boy sprouting his new hat and of a jigsaw completed and framed. 2022 will see more merchandise on board the train during our tours and opportunities within the community to purchase as well.

The best thing is knowing the public want souvenirs from their time spent at SDSR either at the precinct or on the train.

To all SDSR volunteers hearty congratulations. You make a difference.  
Have an amazing Christmas. Stay safe, keep well and play nice.

**Amanda Blackman**

Bookings & 'Merch' officer



The old parcels shed has been reunited with Cottonvale station, for a museum to be proud of.

Looking brand spanking new, the 'Inspection Car' Garry & Terry have been working on nears completion.  
**GOOD WORK!**



# Money matters

2020 was a challenging year for SDSR as Covid 19 imposed itself on our Heritage Rail Services, but 2021 has been a year of growth, development and acquisitions.

Our little club has become a multifaceted, complex corporation with a major focus now on safety, the volunteers, marketing, compliance, heritage rail tour diversity, modernisation of our administrative systems and processes and specific roles being undertaken by our committee members to spread the workload.

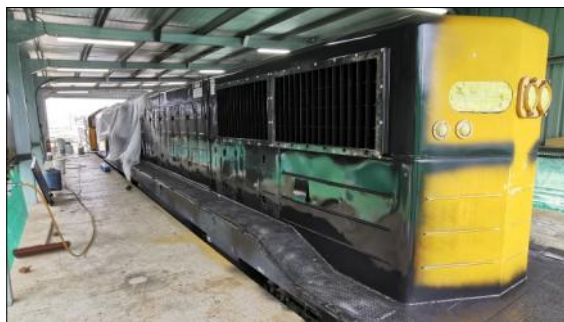
SDSR so far this year has carried over 5,300 passengers, our best year ever. This has come about due to our volunteers who have all worked tirelessly to make the dream for many come alive.

Our founders would be very proud of what they and we all have achieved. SDSR is in a good position financially but we do have major expenses coming up so we need to move forward with all of our plans carefully.

As always if any member has a question please do not hesitate to call or drop in for a coffee. If you're not down on a Wednesday or Thursday to assist please consider doing so... we need your help and drive [or please encourage people you know to do so] to keep the momentum going.

Have a very enjoyable Festive Season.

**Kelvin Hutchinson**  
Treasurer



Sneak peek into the spray booth, Jake Sondergeld has taken on the onerous task of repainting the ex South African diesels repatriated back to Queensland by WATCO for their freight operations. Big thanks to them for funding the track works in our yard. Our own diesel motive power, DH45, sits at Stanthorpe station after another successful driver training run.

## Hello from our new(ish) office person!

My name is Karen Shepherd and I am the Secretary of the Southern Downs Steam Railway. I have been with the SDSR since September 2020.

For those of you that are local you may know my name from the Warwick Credit Union where I worked for 13 years.

I am really enjoying my voluntary time at SDSR learning all about trains and working with an amazing group of people with so many diverse skills.

The role of Secretary for SDSR entails dealing with different organisations

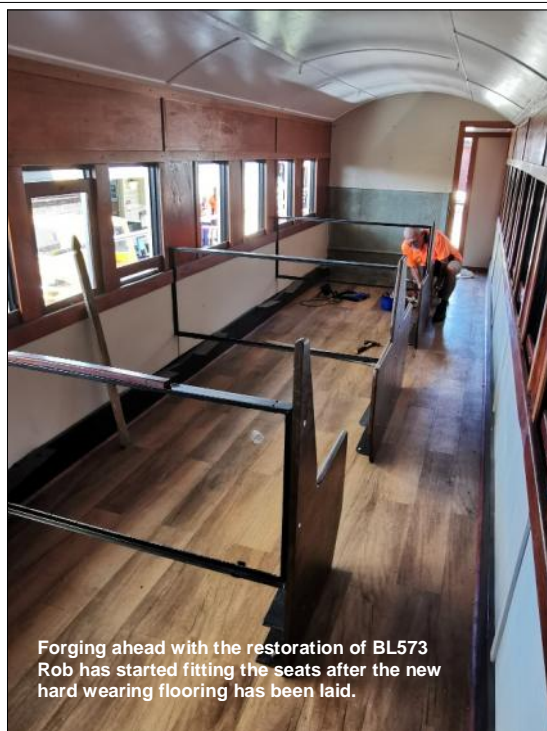
Taking minutes for committee and executive meetings.

Dealing with emails and piles of paperwork.

Organising monthly BBQ's for volunteers and special events and stuffing money in the bank.....before Kelvin has a chance to spend it.

If anyone out there wants to lend a hand and prefers inside work, then get in touch, we can always use the help. Cheers and have a great Christmas

**Karen**



Forging ahead with the restoration of BL573  
Rob has started fitting the seats after the new hard wearing flooring has been laid.

*We wish our supporters  
a wonderful time this  
Christmas  
From all the SDSR volunteers*