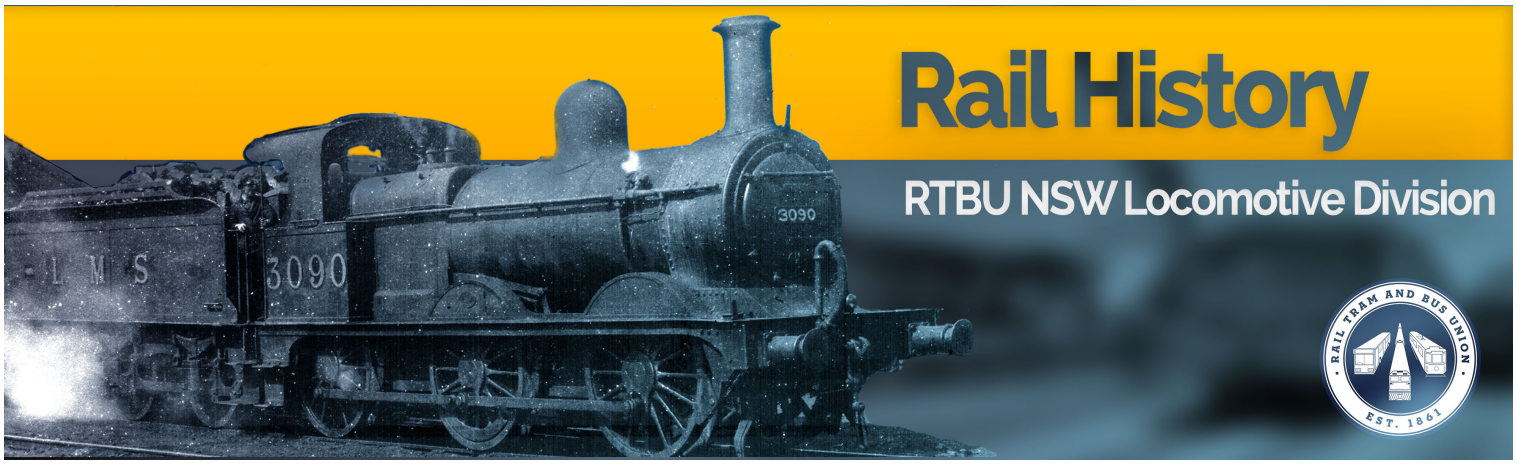


Read below as Bob Newham, Loco Division Passenger Organiser, explores some of the incredible history behind rail in New South Wales. As you will discover, the month of February has many stories to tell…

February 1867

This viaduct is significant because it is the oldest stone arch railway bridge in New South Wales. It is associated with John Whitton the 'father of new South Railways'. It is an imposing sandstone structure, a landmark for the historic town of Picton and its construction contributed significantly to the subsequent railway extension to Albury in 1883 to link with the Victorian line and to the development of Southern Western New South Wales.

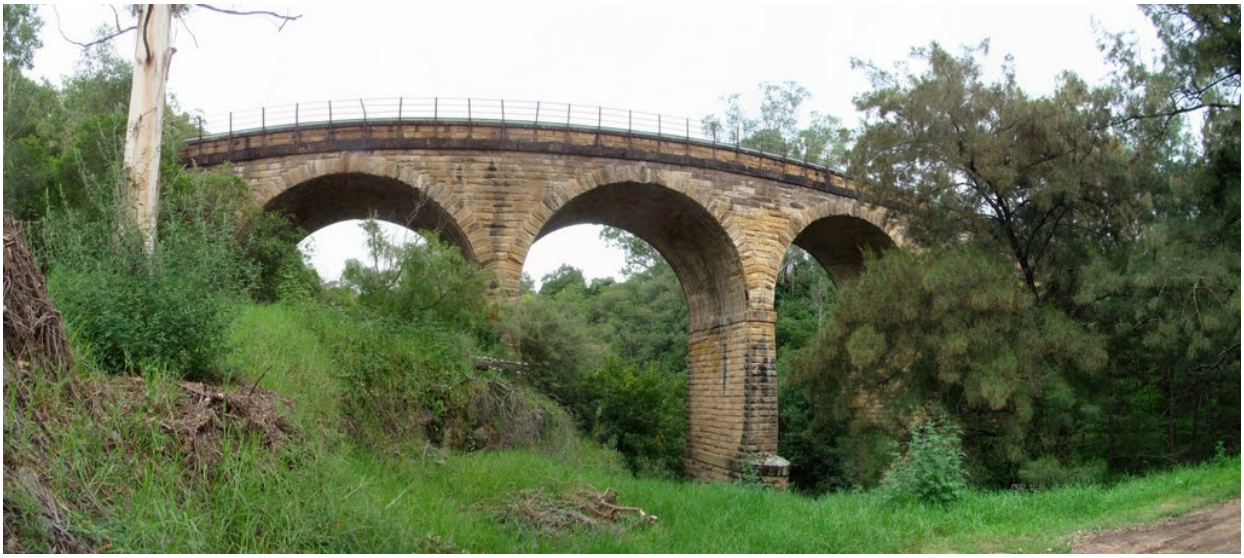
When John Whitton was denied funds to continue with the expensive wrought iron girder bridges he chose the stone arch viaduct for his major bridge works. It has proved to be a most cost-effective structure. It is unique being the first double track stone arch viaduct and retains its original fabric and function. It represents a major technological achievement in the construction of the Great Southern Railway line by John Whitton.

There are five arches of 40 feet clear span which together with pier widths and abutments gives the viaduct a total length of 276 feet. The middle arch is the highest above the creek bed at 78 feet.

The piers are solid stone, founded at shallow depth into rock, tapering to the springing levels of the arches which are solid semi-circular, 20 feet radius and 2 feet 6 inches thick.

At the piers, the internal ‘V’ formed by the adjoining arches are filled by stone rubble to about 15 feet and dished to form a drain. There is a pipe drain down the middle which discharges at the springing level. By this arrangement the ballastered tracks are drained and do not get water logged.

The viaduct opened for traffic on 28 February 1867 for the first section of the extension to Mittagong and cost 10.437 (Pounds).



Picton viaduct over Stone quarry creek

February 1932

The **Rogans Hill railway line** was a short-lived railway line in the north-western suburbs of Sydney, Australia.

A steam tramway opened between Parramatta and Baulkham Hills in 1902, and was extended to Castle Hill in 1910, carrying passengers and produce to and from the area.[1] This tramway departed at Argyle St in Parramatta and tracked north along Church Street to Northmead, then along Windsor Road and Old Northern Road to Castle Hill.

In 1919, the NSW government decided to convert the tramway into a railway to encourage the subdivision of estates for residential use. This involved building a new railway from the Main Western line at Westmead to Northmead on a new right-of way, and then converting the tramway to railway standard along the existing route to Castle Hill. The new section between Westmead and Northmead was built in 1922, and the line opened to traffic to Castle Hill in 1923. It was extended to Rogans Hill in 1924 on a new right-of-way.[2] Stations were built at Mons Road (on the corner of Old Windsor Road), Northmead (on the corner of Brien's Road and Windsor Road), Moxham Road (at Old Windsor Road), Model Farms Road, Junction Road, Baulkham Hills, Cross Street, Southleigh (at Excelsior and Old Northern Roads), Parsonage Road, Castle Hill and Rogans Hill.

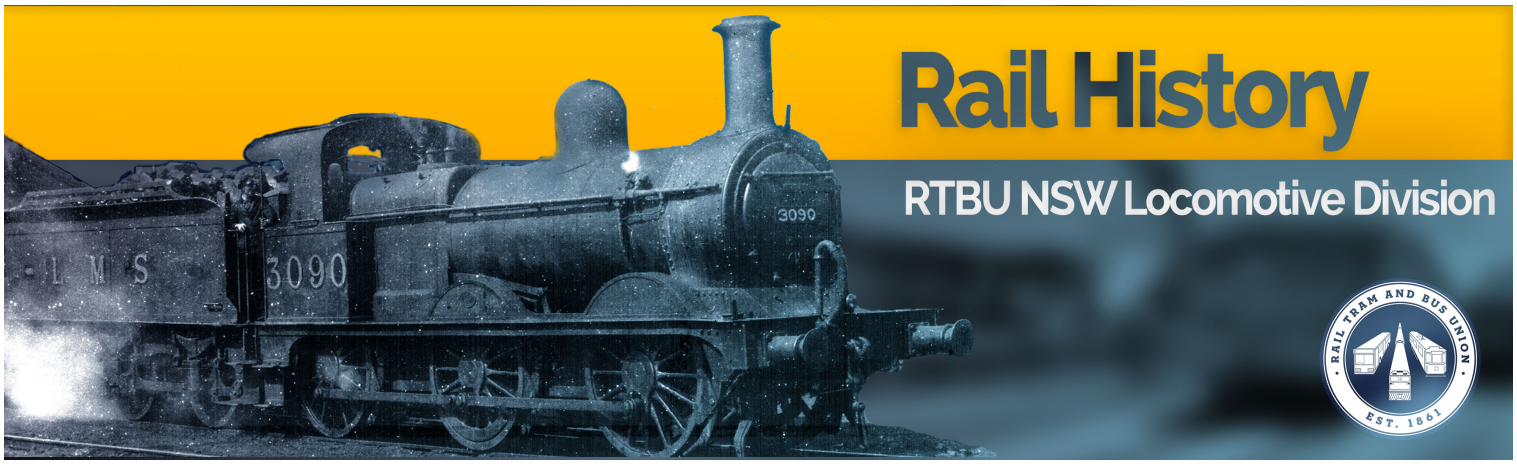
The line was single track throughout, and ran alongside Windsor and Old Northern Roads between Northmead and Castle Hill. An island platform and crossing loop was provided at Baulkham Hills station. Most of the stations were short 20 metre (70 feet) wooden platforms. An office, waiting room and signal box were provided on the island platform at Baulkham Hills.

Passenger service initially consisted of a steam locomotive (20 Class) hauling 3 wooden passenger cars. In later years, CPH railmotors were used.

The line proved to be unsuccessful - unlike the tramway, goods traffic was not carried and the stations were too sparsely spread to be as convenient as the tram it replaced. The rise of motor traffic on the adjacent roadway, which was not divided from the railway, also assisted in the line's demise. Passengers preferred the new and faster motor buses which could take them directly to businesses in Parramatta, and the line closed on 1 February 1932.

The district that the line served is now substantially developed, and is a region of Sydney deficient in fixed-rail public transport infrastructure. A railway to the Hills District is currently being constructed to remedy this, but following a different alignment.

Baulkham Hills island platform 1923



February 1957

The **C30 class** (formerly S.636) was a class of steam locomotives built by Beyer, Peacock and Company and Eveleigh Railway Workshops for the New South Wales Government Railways of Australia.

These 4-6-4T wheel arrangement locomotives were specifically designed to haul Sydney's ever increasing suburban traffic, particularly over the heavy grades on the Northern, North Shore and Illawarra lines.

The first batch of 35 locomotives, built by Beyer, Peacock and Company entered service in 1903/04. Between 1905 and 1917 Beyer, Peacock built a further 60 engines while the New South Wales Government Railways built 50 at their Eveleigh Railway Workshops.

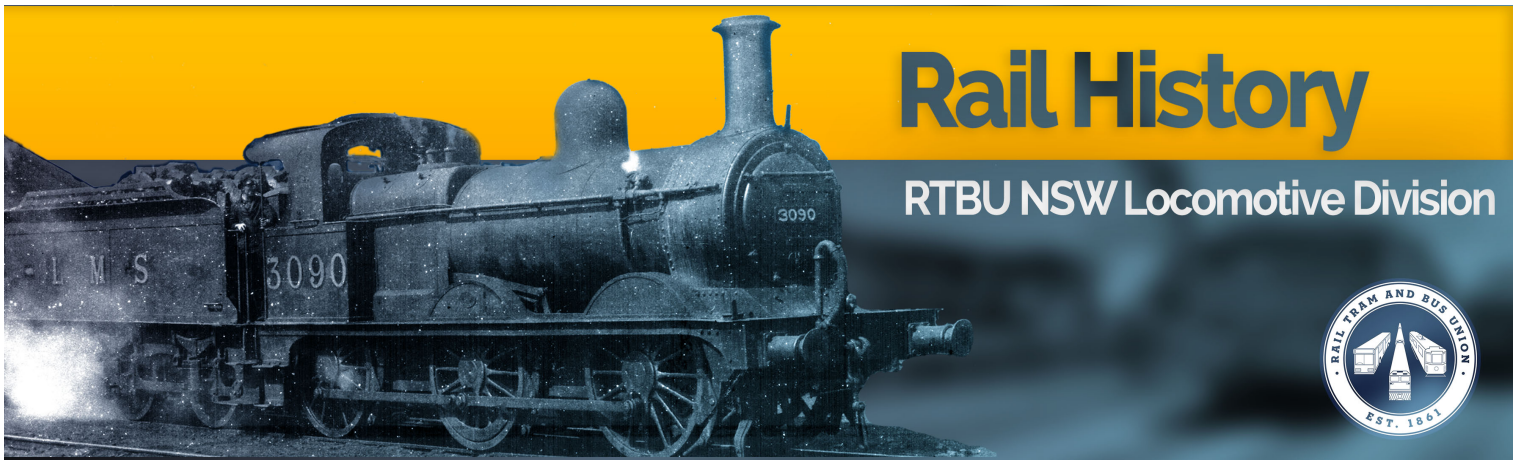
The electrification of the inner suburban lines resulted in a surplus of the class too valuable to scrap. Accordingly, between August 1928 and July 1933, 77 of these locomotives were converted to C30T tender 4-6-0 type locomotives by Clyde Engineering and Eveleigh Railway Workshops to replace older locomotives on country branch lines.

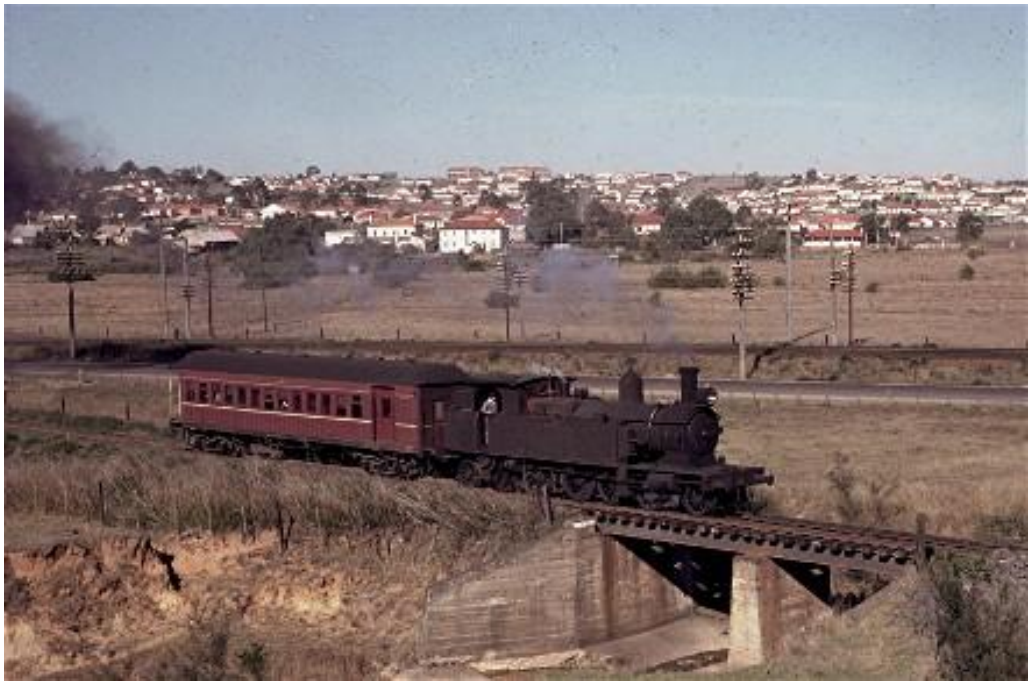
The remaining tank locomotives were mostly employed on Sydney suburban services to Cowan, Penrith and Campbelltown as well as branches to Carlingford, Richmond and Camden. They were also used on suburban services in Newcastle and Wollongong.

A few drifted to the country areas, working on sections where no turntable was readily available, such as Casino to Border Loop on the North Coast line, Leeton and Merriwa and shunting at yards such as Bathurst. The daily passenger trains on the extremely steep Unanderra to Moss Vale line were operated by 30 class locomotives until February 1967.

Following the electrification of the country platforms at Sydney Central station, the 30 class replaced the 26 class locomotives used to shunt carriages in the yard, they being not so dangerous to water under the traction wiring.

The first was withdrawn in February 1957 and by July 1965 the fleet was down to 33, by mid-1971 down to three. The last, 3085, was withdrawn on 22 February 1973. It was the second last steam locomotive in service on the NSWGR.





Class 30 locomotive on a service to Camden in 1962

February 1962

The **70 class** were a class of diesel-hydraulic locomotives built by Commonwealth Engineering, Granville for the New South Wales Government Railways in 1960/61. They were ordered to replace steam locomotives at Port Kembla.

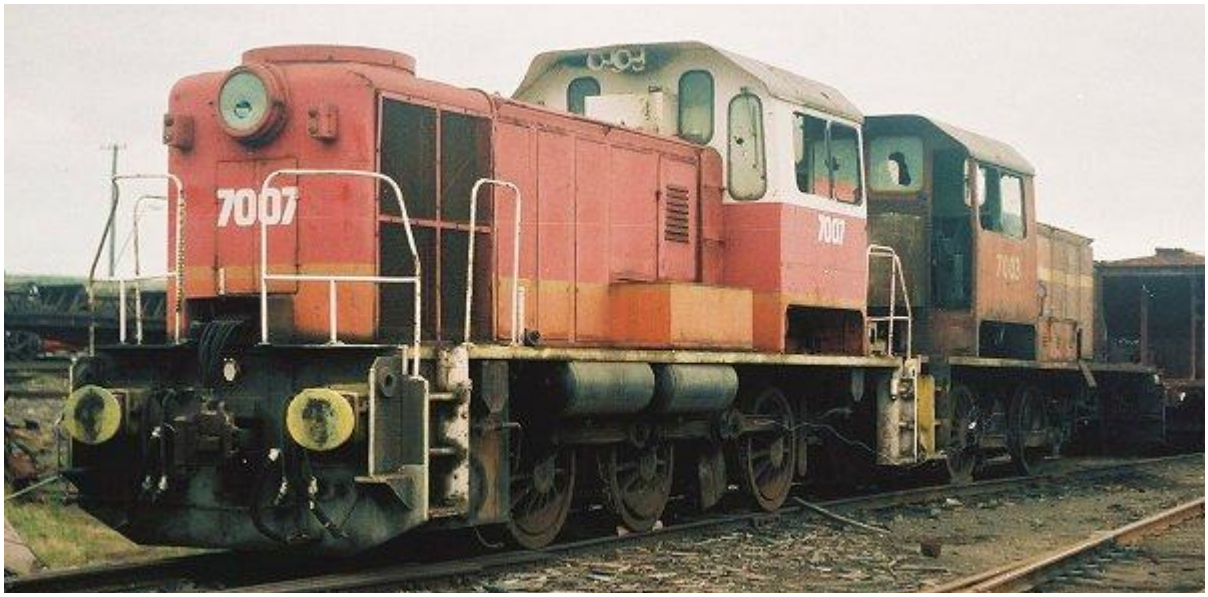
Designated the 70-class, the first was delivered on 15 August 1960. After weighing, the unit worked a 400-ton test load to Botany the following day. As the new servicing facilities at Port Kembla were not then complete, 7001 was temporarily allocated to Delec Locomotive Depot and worked local services. On 28 September 1960 7001 worked its first passenger train, a railway employees' train from Sydney Central to Chullora Railway Workshops.

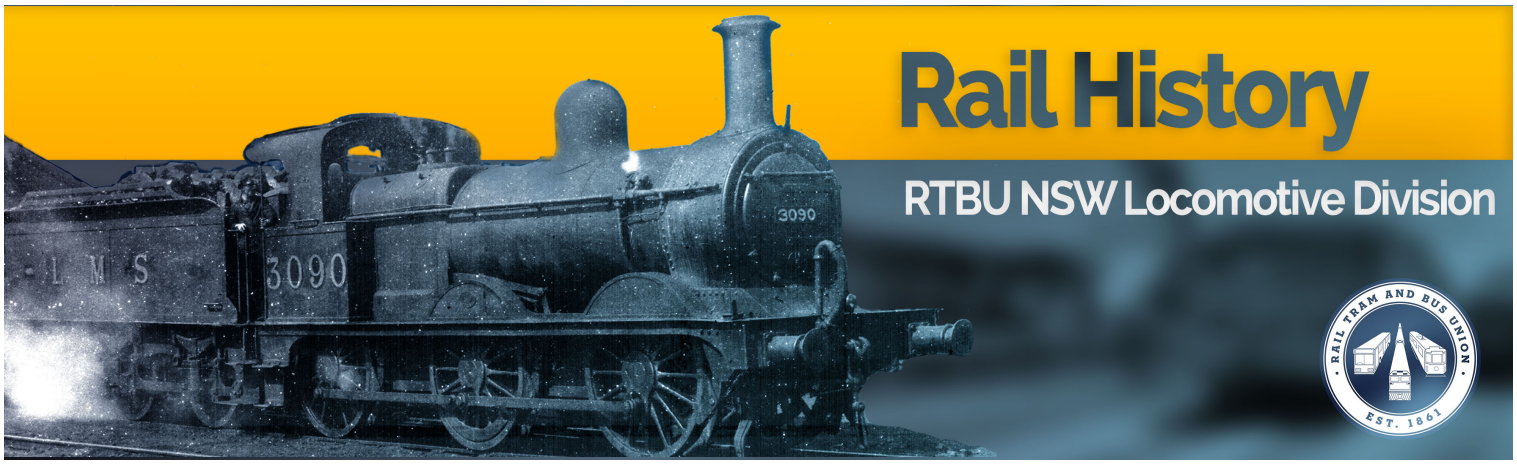
By the end of 1960, a further three of the class had been delivered. On two occasions in 1961, 7003 ventured out on to the Richmond line with the afternoon passenger train from the Abattoirs line.

Whilst the remaining units had been delivered by May 1961, 7007 was not accepted until February 1962. Multiple unit 70s became regular visitors on the Camden railway line prior to its closure, working coal trains from Narellan.

By early July 1963 three had moved at Thirroul Railway Depot for crew training. They operated transfer workings within the Illawarra district and shunting duties at Port Kembla North.

Additional duties for the 70 class were found as shunters in Port Kembla North Yard, transfer workings to the Australian Iron & Steel Exchange sidings at Cringila and even shunting passenger carriages at Wollongong station.



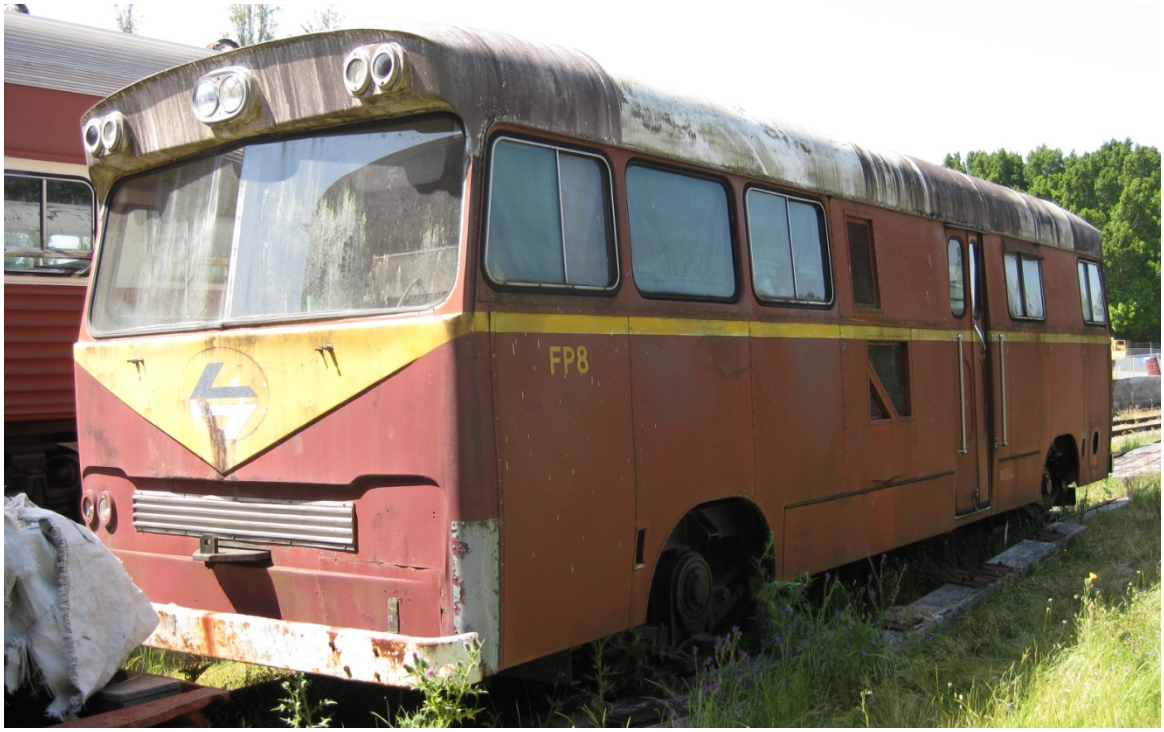


February 1970

The *FP paybuses* were a series of thirteen small 4 wheel railbuses

h built for the Department of Railways New South Wales between 1937 and 1970. The rail buses were intended for use on branch lines whose low passenger numbers did not warrant the use of a larger railmotor.

FP13 was built at the same time as FP7 - FP12 but unlike FP7-12 it was built purely as a rail bus, with FP13 being designed to carry 18 passengers in nine 2 seat throw over reversible seats. FP13 was used as a rail bus on the Cooma-Bombala service. It entered service in February 1970. It suffered a seized engine in February 1974 which coupled with a fuel strike saw the withdrawal of the rail bus service. FP13 was stored until March 1980 when it entered Eveleigh Carriage Workshops for conversion to a pay bus.



Preserved FP 8 at the Richmond Vale Railway Museum in October 2011