

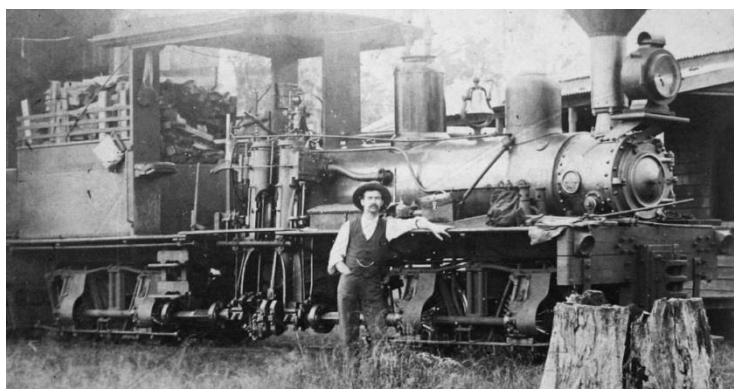
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Munro Tramway Historical Group Inc.



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**Welcome to the Munro Tramway Historical Group Inc.  
first newsletter for 2017.**



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**Office bearers:**

President - Col Seccombe

Secretary - Ian Eustace

Treasurer - John Jeffery

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**UP COMING EVENT**

**Presentation by Bruce Steele**

***"A Visit to Cass Scenic Railroad Park, West Virginia, USA ... the home of  
BIG Shay locomotives"***

**DATE: Thursday 2 March 2017**

**TIME: 7.00 p.m.**

## **PLACE: Perseverance Hall, (Cnr Esk-Hampton Rd and Perseverance Hall Rd).**

**Outline:** During July and August 2016, MTHG members, Bruce Steele and Elaine Brennan, travelled to USA, Canada, Scotland and France to visit three of their children and their families and friends ... and to enjoy the sights and experiences of foreign lands and places!

A slight diversion for two days enabled Bruce and Elaine to also experience the Cass Scenic Railroad Park where a number of Shay locomotives are still being maintained and operational, giving tourists scenic ride experiences up and down mountain-sides in West Virginia, USA.

Bruce has prepared a presentation of those two days (which also included a ride on an even rarer Heisler locomotive ... a 'cousin' to the Shay locos.) to share with meeting attendees.

Please extend an invitation to friends who may be interested in historic trains and railroads.

RSVP Ian Eustace

[Ian.Eustace101@gmail.com](mailto:Ian.Eustace101@gmail.com)

by Tuesday 28 February

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### **From the history desk .....**

In our last newsletter (Newsletter # 2) we related how on 25 September 1896 two Toowoomba journalists embarked on a tour of the A&D Munro company's Cabarlah and Hampton tramway systems and we included some detail from their reports on the first tramway visited, namely Munro's 1 mile wooden tramway at Cabarlah.

We now pick up the story at the point where the journalists and their escorts retire to Duncan Munro's residence, Argyle, for their evening meal before continuing their journey:

After completing their inspection of the Cabarlah tramway, the journalists then retired to Argyle homestead for their evening meal and then, later that evening, continued on to Hampton. In the words of the Chronicle reporter, "at eight o'clock the horses were again harnessed and a moonlight drive of eight miles landed the party at the central camp where the men are engaged in constructing the main tramway from Hampton to Perseverance, a distance of eight miles". The next day they inspected the first completed mile of this main line and along the way they posed for this photo (right). Note that the straight and curved sections of line visible in this photo appear to be steel.

Their report on the inspection of this first mile of track contains some interesting information, some of which appears to contradict material contained in later publications. An example of one such later publication is R.K. Morgan's "Munro's Hampton Tramway", published in 1978. In that publication Morgan relates that "It appears that wooden rails were used initially, but as they wore out quickly these were soon replaced with steel rails purchased second hand from the QGR". Morgan

*Darling Downs Gazette, 26 Sep 1896*



*Credit: National Library of Australia*



A very early view of Munro's tramway showing wooden rails on the straight section and steel rails on the curve. This was taken at the time of a Munro family picnic.

Photo: courtesy the Munro family

supports that proposition with the image (left), supposedly of the main line, the subtitle of which mentions “wooden rails on the straight section and steel rails on the curve”.

But Morgan's proposition comes into question when we see the Chronicle journalist report that the intention was that “whole of the (Hampton to Perseverance) tram line will be laid with steel rails on wooden sleepers”. That journalist did take a “trolley trip” along the completed section (first mile) of that line, so his report was based on first-hand experience.

Also, we know from the Chronicle report on the previous day's inspection of the Cabarlah tramway that it “was laid with wooden rails except on the curves where steel rails are used”.

Perhaps “Morgan's” image above is of the Cabarlah line rather than the Hampton – Perseverance line? Was Morgan unaware of the Cabarlah line and therefore naturally associated this photo with the Hampton-Perseverance line?

An interesting task ahead to resolve these and other questions. If you've got an interest in this area and would like to assist us our research, just drop us a line.



## Successful Funding Application

The committee were successful in their recent funding application to Progressive Community Crows Nest (PCCN – the funding body attached to the Heritage Community Bank in Crows Nest & Highfields). A total of \$25,336 has been granted for work which will include materials to build a shed for a public display of the Shay loco. The money will also purchase signage and photographs as part of the display, the removal of the loco from its current position and restoration works. It also will fund the hardware for a well cover for the old well along the walk. The MTHG would like to acknowledge Crows Nest and Highfields Branches of the Heritage Bank for their generosity.



## Working Bees

The work to be done with the restoration and relocation of the Shay loco is extensive and the funding money received mostly covers hardware. There is some manual work to be done to get all things in order. At a recent meeting some of those attending indicated they would be able to assist with working bees to get the process rolling along. Therefore there will be a series of working bees over the next 6-12 months.

The first one will be held at **8am on Saturday the 4<sup>th</sup> of March** at Ravensbourne Escape, formerly Sketches. The task of this first working bee will be to locate, collect and catalogue the smaller pieces of the Shay engine, other than the 3 large ones. Many hands make light work so if you are keen to attend please let Col

Seccombe know by calling 4697 8277 or emailing [colseccombe@skymesh.com.au](mailto:colseccombe@skymesh.com.au), with a copy to Bruce Steele [bruceas77@gmail.com](mailto:bruceas77@gmail.com). Future working bees will be communicated in newsletters and via email.

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## Website statistics

One of the features of the WIX website package we're using is that it has the facility to record the number of visitors to our site and their country of origin. We activated this "counter" feature the day the website went public, i.e. 4 June 2016, and as of 18 February 2017 it shows that we've had 597 unique visitors view our website. Some of those visitors have made repeat visits and so the total visit count is higher, currently standing at 872.

Of the 597 unique visitors, some 427 were Australian based and some 170 were overseas based. Overseas visitors have come from 21 different countries and while most such visits originate from North America and Western Europe, we've also received visits from some unlikely places, e.g. Kazakhstan, Dominican Republic and Vietnam. We also had an interesting contact from a user in China who, within an hour of visiting our site, sent us an email. That visitor was the CRRC Hangzhou Corporation, the world's largest rolling stock manufacturer, and in their email they stated that they wanted "to avail ourselves of opportunity establishing business relation" which I take to mean that they want to sell us a train. Perhaps the sales department at CRRC saw the Shay photos on our website and thought we could do with some new rolling stock!

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## Report on local history presentation - "Early Settlers of the District" - held at the Perseverance Hall, 6 December 2016

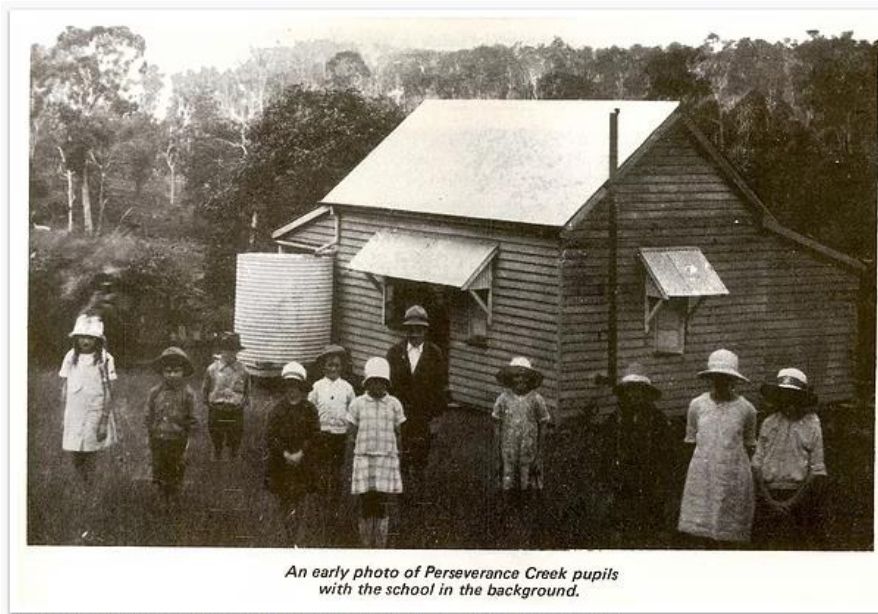
Two of our members – Ian Eustace and Alan Bryce – recently made a local history presentation at the Hall to an audience that included a number of long term district residents.

The material covered included details of the original squatter run that encompassed the Perseverance district, i.e. the Crows Nest run, and details of those who took up the first selections when closer settlement commenced. The material also included some hitherto unpublished accounts of some of the members of those "first families". In fact, it's fair to say that up until recently, while quite a bit has been known about the long-established families in the Perseverance area, e.g. the Shums, the Strohfelds, the Mullers, etc., little has been known about the settlers who preceded these families into the district. The research that Ian and Alan did of those "first families" and the presentation of those findings to the district residents present on the day has gone some way towards redressing that.

It was particularly interesting to hear about the Cameron and Hebbel mill, established on the banks of Perseverance Creek circa 1879, i.e. some 17 years before Munro's established their main Palmtree mill, and the role it played within the local community. It was explained that while no physical evidence remained of that mill, land selection and newspaper records showed that the mill had substantial on-site accommodation for mill workers, both married and single. Here's a transcript of one of those records - a Lands Office record showing the improvements present at the Perseverance Mill in 1880.

Five (5) roomed house, lined, shingled and verandah, occupied by Selector	£100
Sawmill building 85 feet by 45 feet, partly shingled and partly galvanised iron roof	£200
Six 2 roomed huts, floored @ 20 pound each	£120
Store and butchers shop, shingled floored and verandah	£30
Blacksmiths shop	£10
Office	£5
30 chains of 2 split rail fence	£30
Four 1 roomed huts	£20
<b>Total</b>	<b>£515</b>

It was also explained that in order to cater for the children of the mill workers and other nearby residents, a school was built some 2 miles downstream from the mill in 1880. That school, the Perseverance Creek State School, was the first school opened in the district, with Ravensbourne State School opening some 11 years later, in 1891, and Palmtree State School opening in 1901.



*Credit: Crows Nest and District School Centenary 1877 - 1977, Souvenir Book*

Another interesting detail discussed was the influence that traffic to and from that mill had in the routing of the road system that we still use to this day.

Certainly a rich history down there, even before the arrival of the long term district families.

The morning was rounded off with a lunch and a lovely chat amongst members and guests.

There are plans to upload some of the presented material to the website and we'll let you know when that happens.



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## Memberships

If you are not already a member, you might be interested in joining the Munro Tramway Historical Group. It is a lovely opportunity to get involved with this community project especially for those with an interest in old machinery, trains, history, walks and tourism. You can do so via the Application form link below.

### **The annual membership fee is:**

Individuals - \$10.00

Junior members (under 18 years) - free.

### **Payment Options**

#### **1. Direct deposit:**

Account: Munro Tramway Historical Group Inc. Heritage Bank

BSB: 638 070

Account Number: 13911279


#### **2. Cash or Cheque**

Please hand your cash or cheque payment directly to our Treasurer.

### **Membership applications**

While our main focus is the research and documentation of the Munro Tramway and Sawmill, members have a variety of related interests including the local history of the district, bushland rehabilitation and the promotion of the bushwalking and sightseeing opportunities associated with the tramway. If this sounds interesting then join up using our application form available online via this link: [Application form](#)


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Please feel free to share our newsletter with your interested friends and family. Or direct them to the [Newsletters](#) section of the website where all current and previous newsletters are located.

If you are no longer interested in receiving this newsletter please reply to this email, or send an email to [munrotramway@gmail.com](mailto:munrotramway@gmail.com) and we will remove you from the database.

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24 February 2017