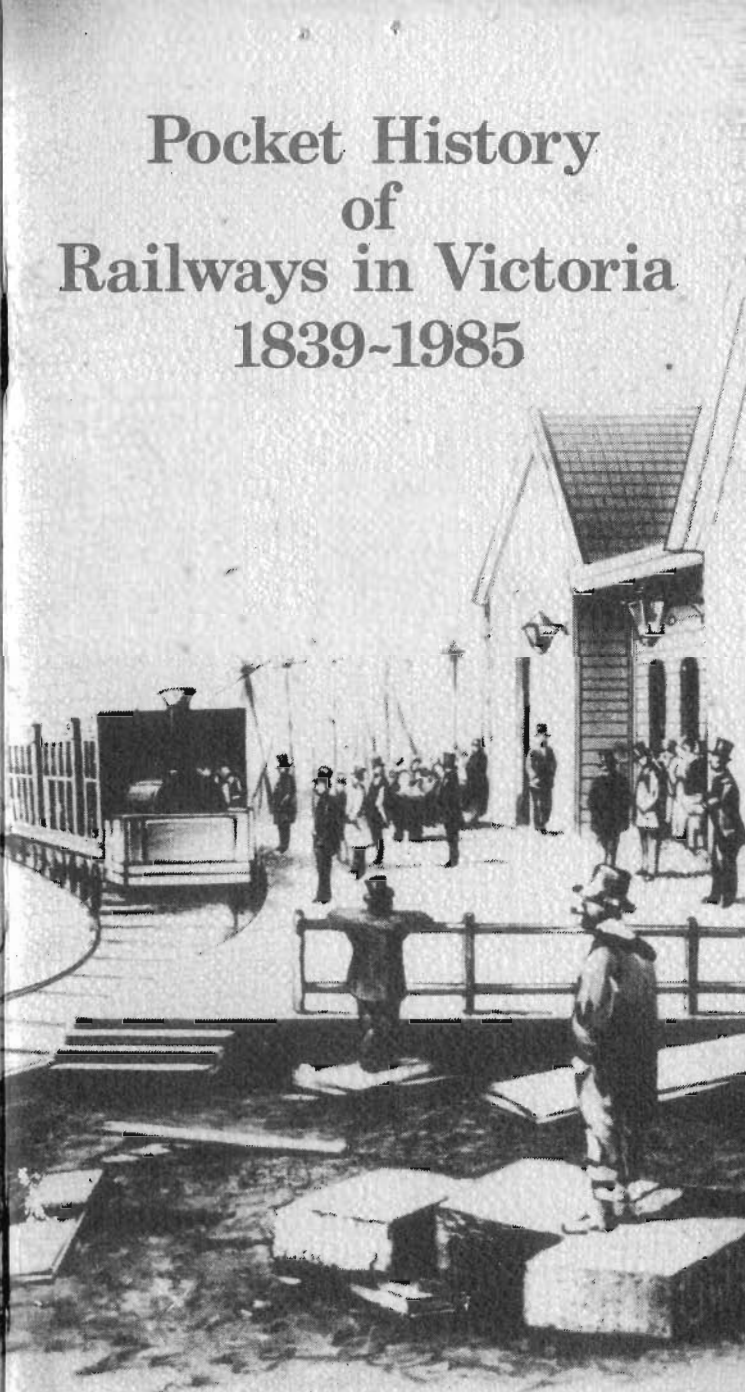
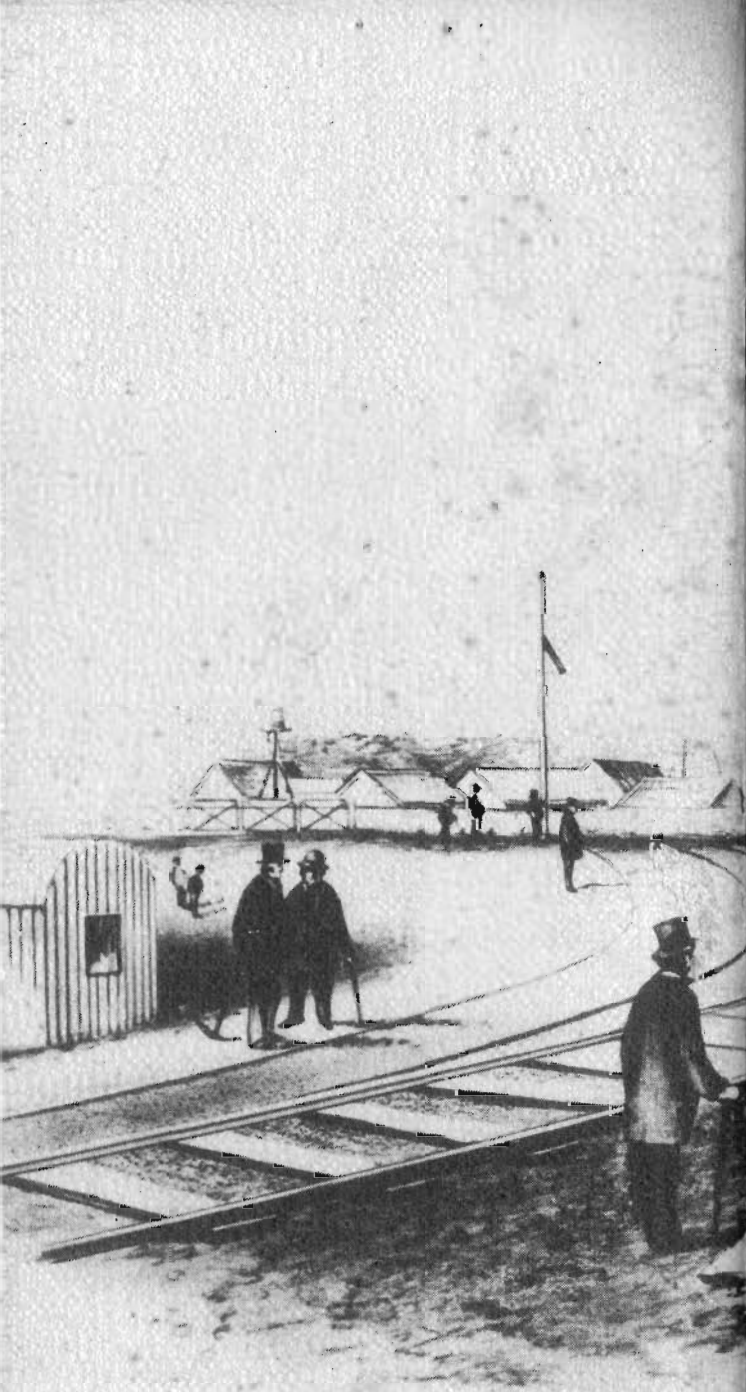


Pocket History of Railways in Victoria 1839-1985



Produced by V/Line Public Relations

STATE TRANSPORT AUTHORITY
VICTORIA

1839 First plan for railway. Robert Hoddle, New South Wales Government Surveyor at Port Phillip District, marked out a town site at The Beach (now Port Melbourne) and planned a line from Melbourne. This did not eventuate, neither did other similar schemes through the next few years.

1851 The colony of Victoria established, July 1.

1852-53 Eight private railway syndicates formed.

1853 Three private companies authorized by the Government to build railways: Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway, January 20; Geelong and Melbourne Railways, February 8; Melbourne, Mount Alexander and Murray River Railway, February 8.

1854 First steam railway in Australia — from Flinders Street, Melbourne to Sandridge (now Port Melbourne) — officially opened, September 12, by Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Co.

1855 Extensive surveys in Victoria for proposed Government trunk railways.

1856 Victorian Railways Department established by the Government purchase of property and assets of the Melbourne, Mount Alexander and Murray River Railway Co. Completion of the company's Melbourne to Williamstown line undertaken.

1857 Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Co. line opened from Melbourne to St. Kilda, May 13.

Victoria's first country railway, Geelong to Greenwich (Newport) opened, June 25, by Geelong and Melbourne Railway Co. Parliament authorized the construction and financing of the trunk railway from Melbourne to Sandhurst (now Bendigo) and Echuca, and from Geelong to Ballarat, November 24.

Melbourne and Suburban Railway Co. and St. Kilda and Brighton Railway Co. authorized to build lines from Melbourne to Hawthorn and Brighton, November 24.

1858 Contracts awarded for construction of trunk railways; which began, Melbourne — Bendigo, June 7, Geelong — Ballarat, August 26. First hearse in service. These were used until July 1953.

1859 Spencer Street (or Batman's Hill) station opened and the first Government lines inaugurated; Melbourne to Williamstown and to Sunbury, January 13. Public traffic opened to Williamstown, January 17; to Sunbury, February 10.

Private railways opened: Princes Bridge to Richmond, February 8, and Cremorne (near River Yarra), December 12, by Melbourne and Suburban Railway Co.; St. Kilda to Windsor and North Brighton, December 19, by St. Kilda and Brighton Railway Co. Melbourne and Essendon Railway Co. authorized to build line, February 24.

1860 Geelong and Melbourne Co.'s railway purchased by Government, September 3.

Melbourne and Suburban Railway Co.'s lines extended from Richmond to Pic-Nic (near Burnley), September 24, and from Cremorne to Windsor, December 22.

Melbourne and Essendon Railway Co.'s line opened, November 1.

1861 Flemington Racecourse branch line from Newmarket opened by Melbourne and Essendon Railway Co. February 28.

Government Railway extended from Sunbury to Woodend, July 8; Melbourne and Suburban Railway Co.'s line extended from Pic-Nic to Hawthorn, April 13; and St. Kilda and Brighton Railway Co.'s line extended from North Brighton to Brighton Beach, December 21.

1862 Melbourne and Suburban Railway Co. sold to Melbourne Railway Co., March 31.

Government railways opened: Geelong to Ballarat, April 11; Woodend to Kyneton, April 25; Kyneton to Bendigo, October 21.

First of four prisoners' vans in service; withdrawn by 1873.

1863 Contracts awarded for Bendigo to Echuca railway: Sandhurst — Epsom, May 20; Epsom — Echuca, August 4.

1864 Melbourne and Essendon Co.'s line closed, July 1; Bendigo to Echuca railway opened, September 19.

1865 Melbourne and Hobson's Bay, and Melbourne companies amalgamated as Melbourne and Hobson's Bay United Railway Co., June 30; St. Kilda company purchased, September 1.

First mail-sorting van in service, withdrawn from service, August 27, 1932.

1867 Melbourne and Essendon railway bought by Government, August 8.

Flemington Racecourse line re-opened, November 30.

First Royal Train (for Queen Victoria's son H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh), December 13.

1871, Melbourne to Essendon line re-opened, January 9.

1872 First locomotive built by Victorian Railway (No. 100), passenger class 2-4-0 type, at Williamstown Workshops) went into service, January 24; seven locomotives built at Williamstown to 1879.

1872-73 North-Eastern railway, Melbourne to Wodonga, opened in sections; completed November 21, 1873.

1874-77 Railway extensions in Midland, Western, Southern and Eastern districts.

1876 Deniliquin and Moama Railway Co. (N.S.W.) line opened and connected to Echuca (Vic.) July 4.

1878 Purchase by Government of Melbourne and Hobson's Bay United Railway Co. authorized as from July 1.

1879 Gippsland railway, Sale to South Yarra and Melbourne, completed, April 2.

1883 First rail motor car (Rowans Steam Car) in service, May. Wodonga — Albury connection, June 14; Melbourne — Sydney service inaugurated, August 21, with break of gauge at Albury.

1884 Victorian Railways Department placed under management of three Commissioners, February 1.

1887 Victorian and South Australian railways connected at Serviceton, via Geelong and Ballarat, January 19, thus linking Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. The first Adelaide Express.

1889 Present Newport Workshops opened and staffs of old workshops transferred.

1890 City Morgue, near Princes Bridge Station entrance, demolished and the site taken over by the railways.

1890-91 Opening of Outer Circle Railway: Burnley — Waverley Road — Oakleigh, March 24, 1890; Camberwell — Waverley Road, May 30, 1890 Riversdale — Fairfield Park, March 24, 1891.

1891 Viaduct between Flinders Street and Spencer Street stations opened, November 23.

1893 Victorian Railways Administrative Offices, Spencer Street, completed, January.

First locomotive built at Newport Workshops (0-6-0T motor type, Z 526) went into service, June 30. (From 1892 to 1962, 560 locomotives were built at Newport).

1899 First Victorian narrow gauge (2 ft. 6 in.) line opened: Wangaratta to Whitfield, March 14.

1901 Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York left Port Melbourne in Royal Train for Brisbane, May 18, after Royal Train visits to Victorian country centres.

1902 New type (4-6-0 DD class) locomotive built at Newport Workshops. (By 1921, 261 had been supplied, built by both V.R. and private companies).

1905 First railway bus service — Prahran station to Malvern Town Hall — inaugurated, December 1. This was the first use in Victoria of self-propelled vehicles for public passenger traffic; steam powered, the bus service was abandoned, June 17, 1906.

1906 St. Kilda and Brighton Electric Street Railway opened to Middle Brighton, May 7; to Brighton Beach, December 22. First permanent electric tramway in Victoria.

1907 First A2 class (4-6-0 type) locomotive in service, December 2. (The V.R. built 185 to 1922).

1908 First of two hospital cars (converted carriages) in service.

1910 Flinders Street station completed.

"Tait" (sliding door) carriages introduced on metropolitan line, January 4.

Victorian Railways Institute opened, January 22.

1912 First petrol rail motor in service, May 13.

1913 Electrification of Melbourne metropolitan railways project commenced, December; progress delayed by World War I.

1914 Sandringham to Black Rock electric street railway recommended by Railways Standing Committee in October at estimated cost, including rolling stock, of \$93,000.

1915 Murrayville (Vic.) — Pinaroo (S.A.) line opened, July 29. First automatic signalling in Victoria, Richmond to Hawksburn and to Prahran, with an electro-mechanical interlocking at South Yarra, October 4.

1917 Workshops opened at Ballarat North, April, and Bendigo North, November. (Thirteen locomotives built in each shop, 1919-22). Malamganee (now Puralka) — Mount Gambier (S.A.) line opened, November 28.

1918 First electric train in Australia ran Newmarket power sub-station to Flemington Racecourse, 1¼ miles, October 6.

1919 First portion — three quarters of a mile — Sandringham to Black Rock electric street railway opened for traffic, March 10.

First electric train service in Australia, Essendon to Sandringham, May 28.

1920 Royal train for Prince of Wales (Edward VIII) Royal Tour, June 1-4.

Entire Sandringham to Black Rock electric street railway in service, with passenger sections covering Sandringham station to Bluff Road, and Bluff Road to Black Rock.

1921 First single-line automatic signalling in the Southern Hemisphere installed between Upper Ferntree Gully and Belgrave with crossing loop at Upwey, December 22.

1922 V.R. apprenticeship classes began at Newport Workshops, February 27.

First Reso (Victorian National Resources Development Train) Tour, August 28 to September 2, to Mildura and Swan Hill districts.

Extension of border railways from Victoria into N.S.W. authorized, September 14.

1923 First V.R. Technical College opened at Newport, March 11.

Electrification of Melbourne metropolitan railways, completed, April 15. Later extensions to outer metropolitan areas.

First electric locomotive; goods class Bo-Bo type, built at Newport; electrically equipped at Jolimont Workshops; in service, July 20.

First wig-wag signal installed at Amess Street level crossing North Carlton, August 22.

1924 Train control system first introduced, Dandenong — Nyora, August 27; extended progressively in subsequent years.

Better Farming Train introduced, October 13; discontinued in 1937.

Victorian Railways produces Victoria's first raisin bread, commercially.

Extension of electric traction to outer metropolitan areas commenced: Camberwell — Ashburton, October 30; Ringwood — Croydon, November 28.

1925 First remote controlled points and signals in Victoria, at Goulburn Junction in the Tallarook to Seymour section, controlled from Seymour, August 16.

Ringwood — Upper Ferntree Gully electrification, October 12; Croydon — Lilydale, November 30.

1926 Barnes to Balranald (N.S.W.) line opened for traffic March 26.

"Geelong Flier", Victoria's first officially named train began running, May 3. (Name later changed to "The Flier").

Eltham — Hurstbridge electrification, August 2; Williamstown Racecourse — Altona, October 2.

Electric street railway extended from Black Rock to Beaumaris, September 1.

1928 First of four S class (Pacific type, 4-6-2) locomotives built at Newport Workshops, in service, March 14.

First petrol-electric rail motors began operating.

Victorian Railways commercially produces first freshly squeezed orange juice for sale in Melbourne.

First automatically operated points and signals in the Southern Hemisphere installed at St. Kilda, October 28.

1929 Darling — East Malvern electrification, February 3; Reservoir — Thomastown, December 16.

1930 East Malvern — Glen Waverley electrification, May 5.

1931 Electric street railway from Black Rock to Beaumaris closed, August 31.

1932 First flashing light signals installed at Moorabbin Road, Mentone, March 16.

1933 First all-welded goods wagon in the world built at Newport Workshops, July 21.

1934 Duke of Gloucester left Melbourne by Royal Train for Canberra, October 22, after Royal Train visits to Victorian country centres.

1935 First air-conditioned passenger carriage in British Empire (36 AE) began running on Melbourne — Albury line, December 23.

1936 "The Boat Train" inaugurated, March 7; discontinued, October 1939.

1937 Air-conditioned, streamlined "Spirit of Progress" (built at Newport Workshops) began service, Melbourne — Albury, November 23.

First train hostess in Australia on "Spirit of Progress".

1938 Yarrowonga to Oaklands (N.S.W.) extension opened, August 15.

1939 First steel buffet car, "Wimmera", in service, December 19.

1941 "Heavy Harry" locomotive (H 220, Pocono type, 4-8-4) built at Newport Workshops, in service, February 7. (Now in Railway Museum, Nth Williamstown).

1948 First diesel rail-car placed in service, March 15. Ashburton — Alamein electrification, June 28.

1949 First roomette sleeping carriage in service on "The Overland", December 9.

1950 First twinette sleeping carriage on "The Overland", December 9.

1951 Victorian Government Centenary — Commonwealth Jubilee train travelling exhibition, February 1 to June 30.

First R class locomotive (Hudson type, 4-6-4) built by North British Locomotive Co., Scotland, in service, June 27.

First F class, 350 h.p. diesel-electric shunting locomotive placed in service, September 6.

1952 First B class, 1 600 h.p. main-line diesel-electric locomotive (B 60, "Harold W. Clapp", Co-Co type) built by Clyde Engineering Co. Pty. Ltd. N.S.W., in service, July 15.

Diesel-electric locomotives haul "The Overland", Melbourne — Adelaide, for the first time, October 13.

1953 First L class 2,400 h.p. main-line electric locomotive (L 1150, "R.G. Wishart", Co-Co type) built by English Co. Ltd., England, in service, March 3.

1954 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II toured parts of Victoria by Royal Train, March 3-6.

Parliamentary Public Works Committee recommended construction of underground city railway, March 31.

Melbourne — Warragul electrification, July 22 first main-line electrification in Australia.

Spotswood — Newport Power Station line electrification, September 13.

First Victorian relay interlocking — without mechanical locking between levers — installed with automatic signalling Nar Nar Goon, October 10.

1955 First T class 950 h.p. diesel-electric branch-line locomotive (Bo-Bo type), built by Clyde Engineering Co. Pty. Ltd., N.S.W. in service, August 2.

Degraves Street Subway, Flinders Street, opened August 31.

Warragul to Moe and Yallourn electrification, September 19.

1956 First automatically-operated boom barriers replaced hand-operated gates at Toorak Road, Tooronga, February 6.

Extension of electrification to Traralgon, March 15.

First of new metropolitan electric "Harris Trains" in service on Essendon — Sandringham line, March 15.

Inauguration of "The Daylight" express thrice weekly Melbourne to Albury and connecting to Sydney, March 26. (Increased to six-days-a-week, September 26).

Sandringham to Black Rock electric street railway closed, November 5.

Duke of Edinburgh, travelled by Royal Train to Morwell — Maryvale, December 5.

1957 Electric street railway between Middle Brighton and Brighton Beach closed, January 1; Elwood — Middle Brighton section closed, July 1.

First S class 1 800 h.p. diesel-electric mainline locomotive, "Matthew Flinders" (Co-Co type) built by Clyde Engineering Co. Pty. Ltd., N.S.W. in service, August 18.

"Mildura Sunlight" — first daylight service between Melbourne and Mildura — September 3, introduced air-conditioned saloon type carriages to country passengers; service withdrawn May 1967.

Construction of standard gauge railway Melbourne — Albury started, November 4.

1958 Royal Train to Ballarat for H.M. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, March 2.

Centralized traffic control; East Malvern — Glen Waverley line, September 7; replaced by automatic signalling when line duplicated, June 28, 1964.

One-class suburban travel introduced, September 14.

1959 Electric street railway section — St. Kilda to Elwood — closed, February 28.

First M class 150 h.p. diesel-hydraulic shunting locomotive (0-6-0 type) built at Newport Workshops, March 13.

Fawkner — Upfield electrification, August 17; Thomastown — Lalor, November 30.

Royal Train, visit of H.R.H. Princess Alexandra, September 16.

First W class 650 h.p. diesel-hydraulic shunting locomotive (0-6-0 type) delivered from Tulloch Ltd. N.S.W. December 21.

1960 New V.R. Technical College opened at Newport Workshops, July 4.

1961 First standard gauge train (ballast) ran, July 6. Flexi-Van service opened to Adelaide, September 26. Extended to Sydney, April 16, 1962.

1962 Opening of Dynon freight terminal and standard gauge Melbourne — Sydney freight service, January 3.

Upper Ferntree Gully — Belgrave line rebuilt to broad gauge and electrified, opened February 19.

V.I.P. run of "Southern Aurora" from Sydney to Melbourne, April 12-13. Melbourne — Sydney standard gauge public passenger service started, April 16.

Last broad gauge run and first standard gauge run of "Spirit of Progress", April 16.

New Car Shed, South Dynon, first used, May 7.

New Diesel Shop, South Dynon, in full operation, July 2.

1963 Centralized traffic control signalling on standard gauge line opened in sections: Wangaratta to Wodonga loop, January 21; Seymour to Wodonga, February 4; West Footscray to Seymour, March 4. Complete C.T.C. system officially opened, March 5.

"Victorian Railway to '62" by Leo J. Harrigan — published, March.

Bogie Exchange Centre — Australia's first — opened at Dynon, April 8.

1964 Bogie Exchange Centre opened at Wodonga, January 13.

Melbourne Goods Yard \$14 million hump shunting plan announced July 13.

First installation of push-button signalling — to replace lever operation — used in Camberwell signal-box, November 8.

Lalor — Epping electrification, November 30.

New platform and tracks for Princes Bridge station (Princes Gate project) opened, December 15.

1965 North Melbourne Locomotive Depot demolished, January 20.

Melbourne — Brisbane five-day-a-week freight service introduced, May 3.

Gowrie station opened and regular passenger service established between Fawkner and Upfield, May 17.

Longest freight train (40 vehicles, gross weight about 1400 tons, nearly half a mile long) run in Victoria, Melbourne — Adelaide, July 28.

Last steam locomotives withdrawn from North Eastern and Gippsland districts, October 15 and 26 respectively.

First consignment of containerized mail, October 19.

First consignment of quick frozen vegetables shipped from Devonport, Tasmania, railed from Melbourne to Sydney under co-ordinated sea-road-rail scheme, December 1.

1966 New GJX wagon — first aluminium, bogie type 57-ton capacity, bulk wheat wagon. Built for V.R. by Tulloch Ltd., Rhodes, N.S.W. — in service, February 2.

First phase of Melbourne Goods Yard re-arrangement scheme completed, February 5.

Decimal currency fares and rates introduced, February 14.

"Gippsland Industries Train" — first to run in Victoria for a trade and industry exhibition — began Latrobe Valley tour from Melbourne, February 18.

New CSX wagon — first of a number of Newport Workshops built wagons for the Port Kembla — Melbourne — Adelaide steel traffic. In service, February 24.

Flinders Street platform No. 1 extended to 2322 ft., March 28.

New FX wagon — first of four, bogie-type 40-ton capacity bulk flour wagons built at Newport Workshops — in service July 28.

First X class 1800 h.p. diesel-electric main line goods locomotive, (Co-Co type) built by Clyde Engineering Co. Pty. Ltd., N.S.W., in service, August 16.

Passenger service between Baxter and Mornington restored, September 12.

Re-opening of the 39-mile line between Avoca and Ararat, October 29.

1967 Steam locomotives ceased running beyond Hamilton in the Western District, June 8.

Mini-buffet service introduced on the Melbourne — Albury trains, July 17.

Clock tower above Spencer Street station since 1910, removed, August 19.

Off-peak fares extended to allow travel on suburban trains reaching Melbourne between 8.55 a.m. and 4.00 p.m., September 25.

1968 One-class travel introduced on Yarram and Wonthaggi lines, February 1.

New Bendigo station buildings opened and V.R. hump flag publicly flown for the first time, May 10.

Opening of new Portland station, June 29.

Exhibition of rolling stock and track equipment etc., to commemorate the first electric train to run to Flemington Racecourse, held Spencer Street station, October 5—6; attracted 75,000 visitors.

West Tower and Melbourne Goods Yard's new arrival roads opened, December 2.

Mining ended at State Coal Mines, Wonthaggi on December 20.

H class locomotive No. 1 — first of five diesel-electric hump shunting locomotives — in service December 20.

1969 Special 1½ miles railway line built as extension from Appleton Dock to serve new container wharves, March 14.

First of 70 new FQX wagons 63 ft. long standard flat wagons — in service, March 21.

Railway from near Welshpool to Barry Beach available for service, April 2.

Long Island line, from half way between Tyabb and Hastings, available for service, April 29.

New station buildings opened at Numurkah, May 29.

Female carriage-cleaners began work at Glen Waverley, October 20. Others subsequently employed at other terminals.

1970 The term, "second-class" dropped from railway usage, "economy" used where applicable, March 1.

New X class locomotive No. 37 — first of new 2200 h.p. diesel-electric locomotives — into service, April 9.

Club car introduced on "The Overland", November 2.

First freight train sorted over Melbourne yard hump, August 25.

Melbourne's automated hump yard, first of its kind in Australia, officially commissioned December 9.

1971 First 75 ft. long metropolitan carriages — with features of next (stainless steel) trains — went into running, January 18.

Melbourne Underground Rail Loop Authority established, February 1.

Cafeteria car added to "The Overland" for economy-class passengers, February 22.

Work on Melbourne's Underground Loop project officially began — June 22.

1972 The Bland Report was presented to the Victorian Legislative Assembly in March.

"The Vinelander" inaugurated between Melbourne — Mildura, August 8.

First suburban stainless steel train went into service during December.

1973 Rail played a dominant part in transporting crowds to and from the 40th Eucharistic Congress Festival — February.

Last Chairman of Commissioners, Mr. G. F. Brown, retired — May 7.

VR Board of seven members became governing body of the Railways May 3.

Mr. A. G. Gibbs appointed Chairman of the Board — July 1.

Railways goes metric — July 1.

“Southern Aurora” takes on MotoRail — July 1.

Contract let for construction of Museum station as part of Underground Loop work — August.

One hundred years of trains to North-Eastern Victorian — November 19.

Upgrading of Glen Waverley line began — November.

VR monthly magazine “News Letter”: renamed “Rail Ways” — June.

1974 Swing-door trains make final run from Port Melbourne to the city — January 26.

Announced that Horsham would be Victoria's first regional freight centre — March.

Tenders for the supply of concrete sleepers for Sunshine — Deer Park track duplication and South Kensington — Footscray quadruplication — March.

Commercial Branch becomes Marketing Branch — May.

Creation of Personnel Branch — June 9.

Centenary of Maryborough — July 7.

Longest passenger train — 18 carriages — to N.S.W. left Spencer Street — August 22.

Refreshment Services Branch becomes Trading and Catering Branch — September 5.

Family tickets made available for all suburban rail travel — September.

1975 Extension of suburban service from Dandenong to Pakenham — January 20.

New flashing revolving red light — installed at the Glenferrie Road level crossing, Kooyong — March.

Centenary of Ararat — April 5.

Road service, in conjunction with Ansett Roadways, between Melbourne and Hamilton — July 1.

New accounting and costing system introduced — July 1.

Suburban fare scales revised by the introduction of 18 charging zones — August 10.

Opening of Kananook Station — September 8.

\$1 million computer installed — September.

Royal train for visit of H.R.H. Princess Margaret — October 27.

“X” Class diesel commences service — November 14.

New medical centre begins operation at Spencer Street — November.

The 2,000,000th wagon humped at Melbourne Yard — November.

Central reference library opened at Head Office.

Railways Act amended to increase the number of Board members from seven to eight.

1976 New “E” signal box begins operation in first step towards remote controlled metropolitan signalling system — March 1.

Planning Branch formed from the Development and Planning Division and Management Services Division — March 28.

First freight centre commences at Horsham — April 6.

New VicRail logo introduced — April 12.

Centenary of Deniliquin railway — July 4.

Suburban fare zones reduced from 18 to 13 — July 4.

Formation of Financial and Management Control Branch — October 25.

Smoking banned in suburban trains — November 15.

Yarraman station opened — December 22.

Operation “Kid” (Kids In Danger) introduced — September 1.

1977 Extension of Freight Centres Hamilton, Ararat, Portland, Warrnambool, Camperdown, Colac, Bairnsdale.

Freight Branch created — February 1.

New Number “2” signal box commences at Spencer Street — second stage of METROL — February 12.

Introduction of automatic ticket machines at St Kilda and Heidelberg — March 21.

V.R.'s most powerful diesel the 3300 h.p. “C” class starts — May 17.

VicRail Law Enforcement Academy opens — June 10.

Introduction of buffet car on “Vinlander” — July 18.

Inaugural meeting of the directors of VicRail Pipeline Pty. Ltd., — August 12.

Operation “Kid” presented with award from National Safety Council as a significant contribution to child safety — September 1.

Last narrow gauge train operated by VicRail between Belgrave and Lakeside — October 1.

Centenary of Hamilton line — October 1.

1978 Freight Centres opened:

Seymour, Benalla, Wangaratta, Wodonga, Yarram, Woodend, Korumburra, Shepparton, Orbost, Echuca, Bendigo, Kerang, Swan Hill, Mildura, Castlemaine, Donald, Maryborough and Ouyen.

Contract road coach services commenced between Woodend — Daylesford 15-5, Maryborough — Ballarat 29-5, Robinvale — Swan Hill 6-6, Bendigo — Ultima 6-6 and Castlemaine 11-7.

New station opened at Mildura — April. MotoRail introduced to “The Overland” — November 6.

New viaduct, increasing number of tracks between Flinders and Spencer Street from four to six opened December 11.

1979 Freight Centres opened:

Warragul, Traralgon, Morwell, Moe and Ballarat.

Contract road coach services commenced between: Bendigo — Deniliquin 11-6, Bendigo — Cohuna 11-6 and Benalla — Yarrowonga 15-10.

Royal Silver Jubilee Train on display throughout Victoria — January and February.

Stainless steel suburban train contract extended by a further 54 motor carriages, making a total of 59 stainless steel suburban trains — April 4.

Track duplicated and brought into service between Macleod and Greensborough — September 3.

Introduction of flexifares, suburban charging zones reduced from 13 to eight and off-peak fares extended from Geelong to South Geelong — September 16.

In conjunction with "The Age" newspaper, 125 years of Australian railways celebrated, September 16.

Formation of Workshops Branch — November 19.

1980 Completion of the network of 35 freight centres throughout rural Victoria with the opening of centre at Geelong — April 29.

Contract road coach service between Horsham and Serviceton commenced September 1.

Second successive record wheat harvest — 3,705,000 tonnes.

Program for the safe handling and transport of liquefied petroleum gas wins a National Safety Council Award for best contribution to safety in Australian industry.

Formation of Transportation and Operations branches, February 11.

Her Majesty The Queen inspects Museum station and names "The Queen Elizabeth Plaza" — May 29.

Several platforms at Flinders Street renumbered, Princes Bridge platforms renamed Flinders Street and taped train information announcements introduced — June 29.

Mr. A. G. Gibbs, Chairman of VicRail Board retired June 30, Mr. A. S. Reiher appointed Chairman from July 1.

MetroCard suburban travel system combining train, tram and tramway bus travel introduced — August 1.

Control of suburban trains from METROL commenced September 13.

Hand-over of Museum station from MURLA to VicRail, November 14.

Introduction of new uniform for Investigation Officers — November 21.

First trial run of train through City Loop — December 4.

1981 Official opening of Museum station, Burnley and Caulfield crossing loops — January 24.

Regular passenger carrying journeys through the two crossing loops start — January 26.

Contract road coach services commenced between:

Lilydale — Healesville 16-3, Ballarat — Donald 30-3, Ballarat — Geelong 30-3, Shepparton — Cobram 27-4, Echuca — Murchison East 27-4, Melbourne — Yarram 9-6, Frankston — Mornington 15-6, Frankston — Stony Point 22-6, Hamilton — Ararat 14-9 and Heywood — Warrnambool 14-9.

Opening of the Melbourne — Geelong line duplication, with the completion of the final stretch of track between Little River and Corio — September 20.

Handover of first "New Generation" air-conditioned suburban train to VicRail — September 25.

Start of "New Deal for Country Passengers" with the introduction of InterCity and InterUrban services, first of the "N" country passenger carriages and computerised booking system for InterCity trains commenced — October 4.

Introduction of TravelCard, replacing MetroCard, allowing interchange on trains, trams, tramway buses and private buses. Rail zones abolished. Melbourne divided into three zones October 4.

Two new gantry cranes, costing \$1.5 million came into service at South Dynon freight terminal — December 11.

Free suburban travel on Sundays in December 1981, and January 1982.

Record grain harvest movement on rail of 4.2 million tonnes.

1982 The King of Sweden, Carl XVI Gustaf visited METROL — April 3.

Two-way radios on suburban trains, with a direct link to METROL, commenced operation — June 15.

Centenary of Dimboola — July 1.

Ginifer railway station opened, named after the late Mr. Jack Ginifer, MLA — October 31.

Integration of the Clifton Hill group lines into the City Loop and the commencement of the City Circle service — October 31.

Trial run between Albury and Melbourne of NSW's Express Passenger Train (XPT) — November 28.

Completion of the Ringwood — Bayswater track duplication — December 13.

Opening of the computerised train catering complex at Spencer Street — December 13.

First running on a trial basis of the Daylight Overland, Adelaide to Melbourne daytime passenger service — December 20.

1983 Opening of Parliament underground station — January 22.

Higher by-law infringement penalties of up to \$500 — February 1.

Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales travelled by Royal Train from Melbourne to Ballarat — April 15.

Introduction of the Rail plus Two suburban ticket — May 23.

Two-way radios train to base on North Eastern Broad and Standard gauge and Serviceton line trains — June 30.

End to end radios on non-urban trains commenced throughout the State — June 30.

VicRail ceases to exist — June 30.

The State Transport Authority and the Metropolitan Transit Authority came into being — July 1.

The State Transport Authority announces its new livery and logo — the V/Line — August 21.

Superfreighter service introduced between Melbourne and Sydney — for overnight container delivery — September 8.

New station complex at Sale opened, eliminating 95 year-old "dead end" operation — November 9.

Fully integrated wholesale fruit and vegetable siding opened Melbourne, December 6.

1984 The new rail loop at the Geelong grain terminal reduced turnaround time of grain trains from 24 hours to 3 hours.

V/Line Access, customer service for telephone inquiries, opened on January 9. (03) 62 3115 or toll free (008) 13 6109.

V/Line day time road coach service between Melbourne and Mildura inaugurated — April 30.

V/Line took over the administration of the Geelong Transit System, the first of Victoria's regional transit systems to be co-ordinated and administered by V/Line — July 1.

V/Line embarked on major program of upgrading 24 locos and building 40 new locomotives for passenger and freight services. This involves the building of 15 G Class locos and 25 N Class locos.

Superfreighter Service expanded from Melbourne to Brisbane — September 1.

Four A Class diesel locos were named after the four triple Brownlow medalists from the Victorian Football League: Hayden Bunton, Dick Reynolds, Bob Skilton and Ian Stewart — September 23.

Official opening of locomotive plant of Clyde Engineering at Somerton — Victoria, for building of V/Line's P, G and N Class locos — October 19.

V/Line's Freightgate network implemented, covering 26 Victorian towns and cities — November 18.

South-West co-ordinated coach service from Mt Gambier to Warrnambool and return, commenced — November 19.

100 new 55-tonne grain wagons built between 1983-84 and 1984-85, making a total of 544 bogies in the V/Line grain freight network.

Speedlink passenger service inaugurated between Sydney and Adelaide via V/Line Coach from Albury to Mildura — December 2.

Express Parcels Dispatch Centre opened at Spencer Street, with fully automated handling system — December 6.

Passenger train service re-introduced from Melbourne to Korumburra and Leongatha and return — December 9.

Inverloch — Lang Lang — Dandenong integrated coach-rail services commenced — December 9.

1985 Westona Station opened on the Werribee Line — January 21.

V/Line announced a major upgrade of Ararat — Portland line and marshalling yards at the Portland grain terminal — February 5.

V/Line launched "Aussie Made Holidays" with a choice of 63 holidays throughout Australia — February 20.

Transport House, V/Line headquarters, opened at 589 Collins Street, Melbourne — February 28.

The Minister for Transport announced a new program to build 100 new "bogie hopper" grain wagons — March 1. This will increase the bogie wagon grain fleet to 644, doubling the number of grain hopper wagons in three years.

Dianne Brown became the first woman in Australia to qualify as a locomotive driver — May 22.

Flagstaff station on the Melbourne Underground Rail Loop opened — May 27.

Ballarat — Geelong Sunday coach service commenced — June 2.

Warrnambool — Ballarat coach service commenced — June 3.

V/Line Booking Centre opened at Henty Plaza, Portland — June 3.

V/Line introduces first five-year draft corporate business plan — June 5. The main objective of the plan is to make V/Line more cost-effective in its operations.

Metropolitan Transit Authority announced \$18 million program to replace all the overhead power lines on the suburban rail network — June 13.

V/Line Travel Centre opened at Transport House — June 17.

The Railfan Shop opened at Transport House — June 24.

V/Line introduces new uniforms for train catering staff and new menus on the Southern Aurora — July 14.

V/Line's "Youth Saver" fare introduced for passengers under the age of 25 — August 18.

Murray Express Albury — Mildura coach service inaugurated — September 2.

Dandenong — Cowes coach service commenced — September 2.

By mid October 1985 virtually all of V/Line's passenger carriages had been air-conditioned.

Tocumwal — Shepparton — Melbourne and Shepparton — Melbourne coach services commenced — October 27.

Yarrowonga — Benalla — Shepparton coach service introduced — October 28.

Two man crewing of all freight trains. The first two-man crewed freight train ran on November 11.

Melbourne — Adelaide co-ordinated daylight train-coach service commenced — December 9.

During 1985 V/Line began a \$33 million program of investment in new sidings, trackwork, signalling, crossing loops and bridges to service the grain industry.

A multi-million dollar program of upgrading passenger facilities at twenty-five country and regional stations (1984-1987) saw eighteen stations completed by Christmas 1985: Ararat, Bacchus Marsh, Ballarat, Benalla, Camperdown, Castlemaine, Colac, Kerang, Ryneton, Morwell, Numurkah, Shepparton, South Geelong, Terang, Wangaratta, Warrnambool, Wodonga, Woodend.