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TABLE TALK

FROM THE EDITOR – IS A TRACK UPGRADING BULLETIN A TIMETABLE?

(Text commences on our page two)

by ALBERT ISAACS.

Greater West Trackwork 17 May – 2 June 2003



Greater West Trackwork Travel Information

From Saturday 17 May to Monday 2 June, the Rail Infrastructure Corporation (RIC) will be carrying out major works and maintenance on the Western Line between Blacktown and St Marys stations. The main reason for these works is to allow the completion of essential upgrading in this section of track, in accordance with CityRail's commitment to further enhancing the safety, efficiency and reliability of the train network.

What's happening?

Representing an investment of over \$13 million in the state's public transport infrastructure, work undertaken will include:

- Track reconditioning and reconstruction
- Replacement of overhead wiring and structures
- Laying new concrete sleepers
- Rail grinding and drainage works
- Signaling improvements

During this time, RIC will also take the opportunity to carry out extensive corridor maintenance, such as clearing litter, weeds and graffiti and replacing boundary fencing to improve the overall track presentation.

How does this affect me?

Although part of the track will remain open, the works will have a significant effect on train services on the Western, Blue Mountains and Cumberland Lines.

On **weekdays**, Western and Blue Mountains Line trains travelling from the city will be affected from Blacktown onwards. On the **weekend of 24 and 25 May**, buses will replace trains between Granville and Penrith, and Granville and Richmond. On the **weekend of 31 May and 1 June**, buses will replace trains between Seven Hills and Erna Pains, and Seven Hills and Richmond. Please see the following pages for details.

All Cumberland Line services that operate in both directions between Campbelltown and Blacktown have been cancelled **for the duration of the trackwork**.

Trains will be running to a different timetable and customers are advised that their normal services may not run as usual. Some trains will also have different stopping patterns so please allow additional travel time and check the indicator boards at your station for further details.

Once the works are under way it may also be necessary to cancel some other services to ensure the highest level of safety through the works site.

Essential Travel Information



CityRail

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EDITORIAL – IS A TRACK UPGRADING BULLETIN A TIMETABLE? Continued.

It is the current Table Talk policy to report on rail and tram trackwork and diversions only when they are major or when they involve unusual movements. Nevertheless, there are a small number of Table Talk readers who are vocal in their opinion that any reportage of rail and tram trackwork and/or diversions should be outside the scope of a T.T. current news magazine. (One wonders whether this also applies to the closure of ferry wharves.) One major argument in favour of non-reportage goes like this: bus diversions and hold-ups because of street closures for road works or other reasons (such as street festivals) are so common and all-pervading that they would never be newsworthy and, therefore, should never and would never be reported and,

Train services cancelled

The following services will be cancelled for the duration of the trackwork.

CANCELLATION OF ALL CUMBERLAND LINE SERVICES

There will be no services operating on the Cumberland Line between Campbelltown and Blacktown. Customers should catch a train to Granville and change for alternative services.

Customers travelling between Campbelltown and the city via the East Hills or South Lines are not affected.

5:56AM WYONG TO ST MARYS

The weekday service departing Wyong at 5:56am travelling to St Marys via Strathfield has been cancelled. Customers will need to travel to Strathfield and change for a connecting service on the Western Line.

4:04PM ST MARYS TO WYONG

The weekday service departing St Marys at 4:04pm for Wyong has been cancelled. Customers should travel to Strathfield and change for a connecting service on the Northern Line.

Trains terminating early

The following trains will terminate earlier than normal during the trackwork.

5:21AM CENTRAL TO EMU PLAINS

The weekday service departing Central at 5:21am for Emu Plains will now terminate early at Penrith. Customers who would normally travel to Emu Plains on this service should catch the 5:06am service from Central.

4:27PM CENTRAL TO SPRINGWOOD

The train departing Central at 4:27pm on weekdays for Springwood will terminate early at Emu Plains. Customers who would normally travel on this service to Lapstone, Glenbrook, Baxand, Warrimoo, Valley Heights and Springwood should plan to catch the earlier service departing Central at 4:15pm for the fastest journey home.

5:42PM CENTRAL TO SPRINGWOOD

The weekday train departing Central at 5:42pm for Springwood will now terminate early at Strathfield. Customers who would normally travel on this service should catch the 5:30pm train from Central to Lithgow via Springwood.

Travelling from the city to stations between Doonside and Kingswood

Customers will need to check station indicator boards for details and listen for announcements, as trains will not be stopping as normal and your regular service may not stop at your station during the trackwork. The following weekday services are affected:

11:42AM CENTRAL TO EMU PLAINS

Will not stop between Doonside and Kingswood, please check indicator boards.

2:04PM CENTRAL TO EMU PLAINS

Will not stop between Doonside and Kingswood. Customers should catch the 1:36pm service from Central.

3:18PM CENTRAL TO PENRITH

Will not stop between Doonside and Kingswood. Customers should catch the 3:04pm train from Central.

4:03PM CENTRAL TO EMU PLAINS

Will not stop at Doonside or Rooty Hill.

4:09PM CENTRAL TO PENRITH

Will not stop at Doonside, Rooty Hill or Mount Druitt.

Travelling from the city to Emu Plains and beyond

Because there is only one track open, the fast intercity trains travelling past Emu Plains to the Blue Mountains and beyond will not be able to overtake the slower suburban trains between Blacktown and Emu Plains. This will mean longer journeys on all services travelling west from Blacktown, particularly in the evening peak.

Customers should allow an additional 15 minutes travelling time.

Train services from the Blue Mountains to the city in the morning are not affected and will operate as normal.

Travelling from the city to stations between Lapstone and Valley Heights

Customers will need to check station indicator boards for details and listen for announcements, as trains will not be stopping as normal and your regular service may not stop at your station during the trackwork. The following weekday service is affected:

6:07AM CENTRAL TO SPRINGWOOD

Will not stop between Lapstone and Valley Heights. Customers should catch the service that departs Central at 7:30am.

therefore, the same rule should be applied to train and tram disruptions. However, trackwork usually involves changes of vehicles or, in extreme cases, cancellation of services. Further, diversions of trains or trams causes late running and, often, particular stations get no service or a different service.

It shouldn't be forgotten that complaints and letters to newspapers about advertised disruptions to service are ubiquitous and represent strong public discontent with such alterations to the norm. This is particularly the case in Greater Sydney where there is trackwork somewhere, practically every weekend and major line closings often occur, particularly at holiday periods. (Ironically, when new, potential long-term customers are using the trains.) To a lesser degree, these practices also occur in Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and, in minor cases, Perth.

Weekend trackwork – buses replace trains

SATURDAY 24 AND SUNDAY 25 MAY

Buses will replace trains on the Western Line in both directions between Granville and Penrith, and Granville and Richmond stations.

Customers travelling from the city to Westmead and beyond should catch a train to Granville and change for a connecting CityRail bus service. Reduced train services will continue to operate to Harris Park and Parramatta, however customers should plan to change at Granville for the quickest journey.

Customers travelling to the city from stations between Penrith and Granville and Richmond and Granville, should catch a replacement CityRail bus from their local station and change at Granville for a connecting train service.

There will be a special express CityRail coach service provided for intercity customers travelling to and from the Blue Mountains. These services will operate direct between Central and Penrith.

Replacement buses will operate frequently. There will be signage at stations to direct you to the bus collection and drop-off points. Please allow 20 minutes additional travel time.

INTERCITY SERVICE

ROUTE 1 Penrith to Central and return

ROUTE 2 Penrith, Blacktown, Parramatta to Granville and return

SUBURBAN SERVICES

ROUTE 3 St Marys, Blacktown, Parramatta to Granville and return

ROUTE 4 St Marys, all stations to Granville and return

ROUTE 5 Richmond, all stations to Blacktown, Parramatta then Granville and return

SATURDAY 31 MAY AND SUNDAY 1 JUNE

Buses will replace trains on the Western Line in both directions between Seven Hills and Penrith, and Seven Hills and Richmond stations.

Customers travelling from the city to stations between Seven Hills and Penrith and Seven Hills and Richmond should change at Seven Hills for a replacement CityRail bus service. Customers travelling from those stations to the city should catch a replacement CityRail bus from their local station and change at Seven Hills for a connecting train service.

There will be special express CityRail coach services provided for intercity customers travelling to and from the Blue Mountains. These services will operate direct between Central and Emu Plains stations.

Replacement buses will operate frequently. There will be signage at stations to direct you to the bus collection and drop-off points. Please allow 20 minutes additional travel time.

INTERCITY SERVICES

ROUTE 1 Emu Plains to Central and return

ROUTE 2 Emu Plains, Penrith, Blacktown to Seven Hills and return

SUBURBAN SERVICES

ROUTE 3 Penrith, Blacktown to Seven Hills and return

ROUTE 4 Penrith, all to Blacktown, Seven Hills and return

ROUTE 5 Richmond all to Seven Hills and return

Ticketing

CityRail ticket offices will be open as normal at all stations. You should continue to buy your CityRail ticket, as usual, from your local station. Normal fares will apply.

Fare evasion – it costs us all

You must carry a valid CityRail ticket for your journey on any CityRail train or bus service. Fines of up to \$100 apply if you cannot produce a valid ticket.

Helpful tips

- Be patient – leave home early
- Allow extra travel time
- Remember to take an umbrella and dress warmly as you may have to wait longer than normal

Carry-on items

Bicycles, surfboards, luggage, tools or large, bulky items can be stored in the CityRail bus luggage compartment, however, space is limited and you may have to wait for an available service. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Any questions?...

If you have any questions about travelling during this trackwork, please call the Transport Helpline on **131 500** or visit www.cityrail.info

For our hearing and speech impaired customers, we offer a teletypewriter service on **1800 637 500**

If you have any queries about the works program, please call the 24-hour Metrocedar West hotline on **02 9851 7372**

That being said, T.T. collectors and students of the art shouldn't forget that for many regular commuters, a track upgrading bulletin is the nearest to a 'proper' T.T. that they ever see.

Of course, the above opinions on the place of disruptions in the general scheme of things are mine and I certainly welcome further comment from readers on this subject.

Despite so much trackwork in Greater Sydney, or perhaps because of it, the current upgrading bulletins being produced by S.R.A. (CityRail) are excellent examples of how best to provide the general public with notification of changes, along with specific advice, during periods when the commuter's normal routine has to be modified. GREATER WEST TRACKWORK - 17 MAY-2 JUNE 2003 - ESSENTIAL TRAVEL INFORMATION is illustrated here as an example of the current Sydney genre.

CURRENT RAISININGS ON THE GRAPEVINE

GENERAL

NATIONAL EXPRESS IN AUSTRALIA. NEx has foreshadowed a total withdrawal from all of its remaining Australian operations. Their aim is to rationalise the number of franchises so as to concentrate on those giving good returns. Franchises in continental Europe look like remaining but NEx may even withdraw from some of its contracts in Britain. It is currently the U.K.'s largest train operator, holding nine of the 25 franchises. However, last year, operating profits fell 16% to Stg£33 million. (Transit Australia)

Victoria

UPDATE - METLINK / TRAVELSMART. The Metlink marketing strategy (as described in last month's Table Talk) was launched by the Minister for Transport, the Hon. Peter Batchelor, at Alamein station (the heart of the trial area) on 31st May 2003 and got considerable media attention. However, the local paper in the trial area, Progress Leader, had a two page spread which jumbled up news about Metlink with news about a local council initiative, TravelSmart. Below is part of the Progress Leader spread dealing with TravelSmart:

WA SHOWS THE WAY FOR BOROONDARA

BOROONDARA Council hopes to emulate the success of South Perth Council's TravelSmart program.

The West Australian council spent just over \$1 million on TravelSmart a few years ago, and its manager of engineering and design David Wilkins said it was successful.

As part of the program, the council offered a month's free travel on the municipality's buses to residents who let a council representative visit them at home to explain how to use the public transport system.

It promoted the benefits of taking the bus, walking or cycling, and monitored residents' mode of transport.

Transport services and infrastructure remained unchanged as part of the program, but the council spent \$650,000 on house visits, \$400,000 on marketing information and \$100,000 on evaluation surveys.

The Department for Planning and Infrastructure's results for TravelSmart this year showed increases of 61 per cent in cycling trips, 35 per cent in walking trips, 17 per cent in public transport use and a 14 per cent decrease in car trips, Mr Wilkins said.

He said the program had been so successful in South Perth, the council was considering improving services and infrastructure for public transport users, cyclists and walkers.

He said this included erecting signs for cyclists, promoting safe routes to schools, illuminating bus stops and upgrading bus shelters.

Connex Trains will erect customer information signs at stations.

Connex spokeswoman Lea Jaensch said the train company supported the Infrastructure Department and Boroondara Council in setting up TravelSmart.

"There are many benefits of train travel," she said. "It can reduce travel times, creates less stress, is cheaper, and is better for the environment."

Ms Jaensch said Connex's involvement in TravelSmart included putting "way-finding" signs along the Alamein line, to help people navigate the train system. She said Connex was slowly phasing out older trains and eventually would have new trains on Alamein, Lilydale and Belgrave lines.

No changes to the timetable have been discussed.



NEW VICTRIP WEBSITE. VicTrip launched a new website on 1st April 2003 at <http://www.victrip.com.au>. There is no route-by-route index but one can search for T.T.s by route and a uniform style of T.T. of VicTrip design is brought up. At the time of implementation, the recent changes to bus Routes 506, 509 were shown but not the Grenda and Cranbourne Transit changes of 23rd March 2003. Bus/rail connections are not listed. The maps used are the same as the latest Metlink style maps, as fitted in the new Xtrapolis and Siemens trains. These show the new Metlink colour coding: green = tram; blue = urban rail; navy = V/Line Passenger; red = 'global Met' e.g. the new location of the Met Shop. There are errors on the maps, for example the Docklands tram extension isn't included. (Rail News Victoria)

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SUBURBAN RAIL

Greater Sydney

FALLING PATRONAGE. Patronage on the East Hills line fell almost twice as fast as the rest of the S.R.A. (CityRail) network during the calendar year 2002. The line lost 384,450 commuters (4.9%) over the 12 months, despite soaring usage of the nearby, extended M5 motorway. The general decline in CityRail patronage over the year was 2.7%, from 281.5 million in 2001 to 274 million in 2002 and is believed to be caused by a drop in the number of people working in the C.B.D., along with the increased attractiveness of motoring after the introduction of the G.S.T. (Transit Australia)

LAST SIDING, NORTH STRATHFIELD-RHODES. The Defiance Siding at North Strathfield was removed over the weekend 5th-6th April 2003. This was the last of many sidings formerly on the Down Relief line, North Strathfield Junction-Rhodes. (Rail News Vic.)

MINIMISING THE IMPACT OF WEEKEND CLOSURES. The R.I.C. and S.R.A.(CityRail) are currently examining ways to minimise the impact of weekend service closures on account of track upgrading. The R.I.C. is planning to focus each track closure on a single, larger part of the network rather than closing several lines simultaneously each weekend. CityRail is planning to inform customers of track closures, much further in advance than it currently does. [See also the cover article in this issue.] (A.R.H.S. Bulletin)

Melbourne

RIVERSDALE RAILWAY REFRESHMENT ROOMS. In an unusual but commendable move, a private contractor has taken over the waiting room on the Up platform at Riversdale station and converted it into a refreshment room known as the Rose Tea Rooms. It is advertised as being open during peak hours but has been noted open at other times, even Saturday afternoons. The downside of the innovation is that it precludes people from using the waiting room as a waiting room but, on the other hand, it provides a presence at an unmanned station. The move is interesting as Riversdale could not be described as one of Melbourne's busier stations. (Albert Isaacs)

CONNEX ANNOUNCEMENTS. During March/April 2003, the on-board announcements on Connex trains were changed so as to delete the confusing and grammatically incorrect: "This service completes here". Table Talk would now like to see the end of an even more confusing Connex on-train announcement - as Up Alamein shuttles arrive at Camberwell, the recorded voice states: "Change here for services to Belgrave and Lilydale" but no mention is made of changing for Flinders Street, even though this is a guaranteed connection and most passenger do change to this train! (Rail News Victoria)

Brisbane

CABOOLTURE-LANDBOROUGH. Following the handing down of the Caboolture to Landsborough Rail Upgrade Study in April 2003, the Transport and Main Road Minister, The Hon. Steve Bredhaeur, announced that the State Government would immediately explore the option of a new alignment for parts of the line. (Transit Australia)

Adelaide

BELAIR LINE TRACKWORK. On account of trackwork, buses replaced trains Coromandel-Belair over the Easter period from 1900 on 17th April until 0400 on 22nd April 2003 and again over the Anzac Day weekend, 24th-28th April 2003. (Transit Australia)

New Zealand

UPDATE - AUCKLAND TIMETABLES. In connection with the recent opening of the Britomart station in the centre of Auckland, the three Auckland suburban T.T. leaflets have recently been reissued.

North America

POST SEPTEMBER 11 REBUILDING IN THE NEW YORK AREA. New York's PATH (Port Authority Trans-Hudson) railway resumed services into Exchange Place station in Jersey City, New Jersey, on 29th June 2003. New crossover tunnels and track have been built since the 11th September 2001 attack destroyed PATH's World Trade Center station and flooded the tunnels under the river. (Railway Digest)

Europe

LONDON TRANSPORT PRIVATISATION. The controversial part-privatisation of London's underground infrastructure was completed on 4th April 2003. The Tube Lines consortium had already taken over the responsibility for maintenance of Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines on 31st December 2002 and in April of this year, Metronet concluded financial arrangements to take over the remaining two-thirds of the network. Metronet Rail BCV Ltd. will maintain the Bakerloo, Central, Victoria and Waterloo & City lines and Metronet Rail SSL Ltd will have responsibility for the Metropolitan, District, Circle, Hammersmith & City and East London lines. The company will be required to invest \$17 billion in new track, signalling, communications and rollingstock over the 30 years of the contract. However, London Transport will retain control of the management of the network, including ticketing and the hiring of drivers and station staff. (Financial Times, Rail News Victoria)

MADRID UNDERGROUND. The Metrosur, a 40.5 km underground ring line in Madrid, Spain, recently opened after taking less than 48 months to build. The 29 station line will see trains operating at up to 110 km/h. (Railway Digest)

Asia

SINGAPORE: THE WORLD'S LONGEST FULLY AUTOMATIC RAILWAY. Singapore's North East line, the world's longest and highest-capacity fully automatic heavy-rail suburban line, is expected to open in early July 2003. The 20 km line runs entirely underground, has 15 stations, being designed to carry up to 600,000 passengers a day and to have headways as short as 90 seconds. (Railway Digest)

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L O N G DISTANCE RAIL & RAILWAY BUS

S.R.A. (CountryLink)/Rail Access Corporation

SOUTHERN LINE UPGRADE. Work commenced in February 2003 on a \$6 million upgrade of the Main South line Cootamundra-Jindalee. The main work is an upgrade of the existing marshalling yard at Cootamundra and the building of crossing loops to permit two-way running on the present Down and Up lines.

(Herald [Cootamundra], The Australian, etc.)

UPDATE - BROKEN HILL XPLORER AT ORANGE. The three month trial of bringing the Broken Hill Xplorer right into Orange finished in March 2003. The train again stops at Orange East Fork only. (The Railfan Shop)

RUMOUR DEPARTMENT - EXTRA BROKEN HILL TRAIN. There are strong rumours that the S.R.A. (CountryLink) will introduce a second weekly Broken Hill Xplorer. The train is proving popular with Broken Hill locals who prefer the Xplorer to the Indian Pacific.

Other N.S.W./Victoria

LACHLAN VALLEY RAIL FREIGHT. As from January 2003 L.V.R.F. (the commercial arm of the company which started life as a Cowra, N.S.W.-based tourist railway) has been operating into Victoria. Its train, containing containerised superphosphate from the Sulphide Corporation at Cockle Creek, near Newcastle, is tabled to arrive at North Dynon between 0700 and 0800 on Friday and leave again at 2200. (Rail News Vic.)

Freight Australia/VicTrack

F.A. TAKES ON PACNAT. Competition for freight traffic on the Sydney-Melbourne corridor intensified during the first quarter of 2003 when F.A. launched an intermodal service Dynon (Melbourne)-Cooks River (Sydney), as an extension of the existing Melbourne-Wodonga services. Trains leave both terminals each Mon-Fri afternoon and arrive at the other end the following morning. Intermediate stations are also served. The major start-up customer was freight forwarder Colin Rees Transport which has a three year contract with F.A. to convey containers between the company's Altona North (Melbourne) terminal and Yennora (Sydney) but a number of contracts with other customers have since been signed. Junee and Sydney F.A. crews are involved in the train's operation. (Railway Digest)

PORTLINK. PortLink is a new F.A. service linking freight forwarder C.R.T.'s Altona North terminal with Appleton Dock. The five day-a-week service, which provides an alternative to road transport and is supported by Patrick Stevedores, was launched on 5th May 2003. (Railway Digest)

FERNBANK CLOSED. A recent Weekly Notice entry states that Fernbank (between Stratford and Bairnsdale), which had facilities to cross trains, was abolished from mid-May 2003.

UPDATE - NO MORE STANDARD GAUGE IN VICTORIA. Further to the recent report that the Transport Minister, the Hon Peter Batchelor, had "postponed indefinitely" any work on Victoria's standard gauge project: it has been revealed that current upgrading works as part of the Fast Train Project and the re-opening of passenger services, is seeing the use of concrete sleepers with facilities for broad gauge only rather than gauge-convertible sleepers. Table Talk believes that this short-sighted policy brings a new definition to the word "postponed", the word used by the Minister himself. (It should be noted that recent TransAdelaide trackwork involved the laying of gauge-convertible sleepers.) (Railway Digest, etc.)

BALLARAT MALT TRAFFIC. The amount of containerised malt railed from Ballarat has increased dramatically during 2003, averaging over 20 containers per day, with peaks of up to 40 daily. The Ballarat shunting loco is called on to place wagons two or three times per day. As most of the barley is sourced from the Wimmera, now cut off from Ballarat by rail because of the route of the standard gauge line, there is not much barley delivered into Ballarat by rail. (Rail News Victoria)

FURTHER CTC EXTENSION. CTC working of the standard gauge line Manor Loop-Gheringhap Loop was commissioned on 14th April 2003.

V/Line Passenger

ALBURY STATION. For about three weeks during June 2003, Albury broad gauge passenger trains terminated at Wodonga with buses to/from Albury on account of work at the southern end of Albury platform. XPTs used the northern end, making two stops.

UPDATE - MILDURA PASSENGER SERVICE. The Mildura passenger train is now expected to return as a broad gauge service in December 2004. An announcement to this effect was made at the opening of the upgraded transport interchange at Mildura railway station on 15th April 2003 by the Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure, Mr Carlo Carli. (Newsrail)

Other Victoria

AUSTRAK. Austrak, the Junee-based rail freight company, is in the process of developing a multimodal freight terminal on a 120 ha site at Somerton, Vic., adjacent to both the standard and broad gauge railways and to the Hume Hwy. Trains of up to 1500 m long can be handled and state-of-the-art warehouses will serve both rail and road operations. (Rail News Victoria)

MORNINGTON RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY. The M.R.P.S. has constructed a run-around loop at Mornington (Yuilles Rd) which was commissioned on 18th May 2003. With a similar facility available at Moorooduc, trains now run with locos leading in both directions.

WALHALLA GOLDFIELDS RAILWAY. VicRoads resumed roadworks to repair the damage caused by the big 2002 landslips on the road between Thomson and Walhalla and the road was closed for seven days per week for up to a month, from 2nd May 2003, except that the road was opened three times a day to let vehicles through. W.G.R. was commissioned to operate the train to convey drivers and their passengers from the car park at Thomson into the tourist town of Walhalla but unlike the time of the 2002 landslips, they operated to a standard, publicised T.T. which saw trains leave Thomson daily at 1130, 1320 & 1510. The costs of providing the rail service were billed to VicRoads and there was no charge to passengers. (Rail News Victoria)

Q.R.

TRACK UPGRADING. A \$20 million upgrade Rosewood-Helidon on the Western line is nearly complete and \$14 million of work Toowoomba-Goondivindi on the South Western line is currently proceeding. (Railway Digest)

Q.R. AND CANE RAILWAY CROSSINGS. The following three crossings between the Q.R. North Coast line, north of Rockhampton, and cane railways, have recently been pulled up: Eralka Crossing (north of Mackay) - Farleigh Mill; Lilypond Crossing (Ingham) - C.S.R. Victoria Mill; South Memerside Crossing - C.S.R. Macknade. (Railway Digest)

NEW WORKING TIMETABLE. A new Q.R. Traveltrain W.T.T. was issued dated 31st May 2003 but showing the new services that were introduced in June 2003. This is a commemorative issue to celebrate both the introduction of the Cairns tilt train and 50 years of "lander" passenger trains. (Steven Haby)

Australian Railroad Group (in S.A.)

BARLEY TO N.S.W. A new A.R.G. contract to move feed barley from S.A. to livestock feedlots in N.S.W. commenced on 12th February 2003 and resulted in the longest and heaviest grain trains to have operated in S.A. with three movements in February and March comprising 80 wagons each. Grain originated from silos at Port Pirie, Crystal Brook, Bowmans, Gladstone and Jamestown. (A.R.H.S. Bulletin)

Great Southern Railway

ON-BOARD TIMETABLES. New on-board T.T.s for the Ghan, Indian Pacific and Overland were issued concurrent with the changes of 1st April 2003. Unlike earlier on-board T.T.s, these are dated. (Albert Isaacs)

EXTRAS ON THE OVERLAND. Gold Kangaroo (1st Class) and Red Kangaroo (Economy) lounge cars (from Ghan/Indian Pacific stock) have recently been added to the Overland consist, supplementing the existing diners. It must be remembered that this is really a return to the past situation - when G.S.R. took over the former A.N.R.C. passenger services in November 1997, from the very first night, the 1st Class Lounge Cars were removed from the two Overland consists. (Albert Isaacs)

Other South Australia

UPDATE - BAROSSA TOURIST TRAINS CEASES. The Bluebird tourist train to the Barossa Valley ceased operating as from late-April 2003 on account of problems with third party insurance.

W.A. P.T.A./Australian Railroad Group (in W.A.)/westNet Rail

PERTH-BUNBURY-SOUTH WEST PASSENGER OPTIONS. A W.A. Department of Planning and Infrastructure South West Rail study paper has recently been handed down. The paper follows a W.A. Government commitment to improve the Australind services and offers the following future options:

- making a reduction in journey time a priority (45 minutes could be cut off the present times by using the Mandurah line [under construction], a short line to be built to Pinjarra to join the existing South-West Main line to Bunbury;
- examining possible extensions of the rail passenger network along existing freight lines to Busselton and/or Manjimup and even the option of rebuilding the Busselton-Margaret River line;
- testing community support for a third daily train Perth-Bunbury.

(Railway Digest, A.R.H.S. Bulletin)

Other Western Australia

ETMYLIN RAILWAY EXTENSION. The Peel Development Commission handed over a \$1 million assistance grant which will see the existing tourist railway extended from Etmylin, east of Dwellingup, to connect with the Boddington-Pinjarra railway at Boddington. The Tullis Bridge is to be completely reconstructed. (A.R.H.S. Bulletin)

SOUTH SPUR RAIL SERVICES. S.S.P.S. has been accepted as the contractor to provide rail haulage to Mt. Gibson Iron Ltd. Iron ore will be transported from the Tallering Peak Hematite project near Mullewa to the Port of Geraldton. A 2.5 km loop is to be built near Mullewa on the Pindar line (the last remnant of the Meekatharra line). (A.R.H.S. Bulletin)

New Zealand

OWNERSHIP OF TRANZ RAIL. Toll Holdings made a bid for control of Tranz Rail on 2nd June 2003. The railway has been on the market since the withdrawal of founder, Wisconsin Central, from the company some years ago. It was also revealed that Rail America (parent company of Freight Australia) had recently shown interest in Tranz Rail but had withdrawn before finalisation of the deal after questioning Tranz Rail's financial situation. (Business Breakfast [ABC Television])

North America

FEDERAL FUNDING FOR AMTRAK. The U.S. Government's latest scheme for Amtrak includes more Federal funding for urban rail routes in California and Oregon but will require State administrations to contribute more to Northeast Corridor operations and to the costs of running long distance trains. No formal proposals have as yet been put to Congress. (Railway Digest)

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN STATION. Pennsylvania Station, New York, arguably the busiest station on either of the American continents, is to be replaced by a new station which is due to open in 2008. The new facility will be named after Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who died earlier this year. (Railway Digest)

CAPE BRETON & NOVA SCOTIA RAILWAY. The C.B.&N.S.R. was to close in May 2003 if new traffic couldn't be found. However, a new coal haulage contract will keep this line, which serves Sydney, N.S., open until at least December 2003. (Railway Digest)

South/Central America

WITHDRAWN SERVICES IN COLOMBIA. As at 27th April 2003, the daily passenger train Medellin-Barrancabermeja and the Sunday service Medellin-Cisneros had been suspended and rumours were very strong to the effect that Transferros had gone out of business! (Rail News Victoria)

ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILE. Apart from Cuba, Chile is the only Latin American country currently investing in a state-owned, long-distance passenger system. In April 2003 it was announced that Santiago-Chillán long distance services were to be increased from three to five daily in each direction. There were also discussions in progress with the State-owned operator, Empresa de los Ferrocarriles del Estado, for a Santiago-Temuco day train. From 2005, hourly regional trains Santiago-Batuco should be running (there is currently no service). An extension of the existing Santiago Metrotren system is also envisaged, as is the reopening for passenger traffic of the mainline south of Temuco - passenger trains will travel almost to Osorno and possibly to Puerto Mott. Proposals for a high-speed train Santiago-Valpariso are also becoming more realistic (passenger services do not run on the existing, conventional line). Other possible schemes (some associated with the 200th anniversary of independence in 2015) include the rebuilding of the Chilean section of the former Los Andes-Caracoles Transandine line and some new underground lines in Santiago. On top of this, the Government is also currently making large investments in new rolling stock (suburban and long-distance) and on the rehabilitation of the infrastructure. (Rail News Victoria)

THIRD CLASS TRAVEL IN PERU. After a lapse of 40 years, Perurail has actually re-introduced third class travel on an additional passenger train Puno-Cuzco. Third class is provided for Peruvian citizens only and utilises very old, non-refurbished rollingstock. (Rail News Victoria)

PERU: LINE REOPENED. Perurail (which operates the south Peruvian network) reopened the narrow gauge Ollantaytambo-Urabamba line on 27th April 2003, so as to provide a more frequent bus and rail service for tourists travelling Cuzco-Manchu Picchu. This line, as well as being one of the world's most scenic, also used to provide the tourist with some of the most colourful fellow passengers and journey highlights they would ever encounter. (Rail News Victoria)

SUSPENDED SERVICE IN PERU. Because of the lack of tourists using Inca-class (luxury) carriages, Perurail has suspended all passenger trains on the (Puno)-Juliaca-Arequipa line. (Rail News Victoria)

Europe

GERMANY'S RUBELANDBAHN. Germany's only 25kV a.c. electric line, the Rubelandsbahn, was to be converted to diesel traction but after local protests, D.B. (German Railways) has agreed to renovate the supply system. The freight trains that use the line climb 1 in 16 grades. Table Talk believes that it's a pity that some of Australia's former electric lines that are now diesel-only operated, were not similarly resuscitated. (Railway Digest)

Asia

JAPAN'S SHINKANSEN (BULLET) TRAINS. A J.R. East Shinkansen train recently achieved 362 km/h during trials aimed at raising the maximum operating speed. This is a speed record for a production-model train in Japan. In a parallel move, the peak hour capacity for departures from Tokyo on the busiest section of the Tokaido Shinkansen line will shortly be increased from 11 to 15 trains per hour, with uniform fleet operation at 270 km/h. Tilt trains are being developed to allow 300 km/h tabled operation. (Railway Digest)

IRAQI REHABILITATION. Daily passenger trains Baghdad-Umm Qasr began running again on 7th May 2003, taking 14-16 hours for the 595 km journey. Freight trains on the line are expected to deliver more than 140,000 tonnes of food supplies per month, from the port at Umm Qasr to Baghdad. Work continues on restoration of other Iraqi rail lines. (Railway Digest)

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TRAM/LIGHT RAIL

Melbourne

UPDATE - YARRA TRAMS CHANGES OF 4th MAY 2003. Public T.T.s showing the Yarra Trams changes of 4th May 2003 have now been issued. They include the modified routes (see last month's Table Talk) in their headings. Route 31 (Dockland-St. Vincent's Plaza via Collins St) is not shown in either of the Collins St T.T.s (Routes 109, 112) but Route 95 (Spencer Street R.S.-Exhibition Buildings via Bourke St) continues to be shown in the Route 86 T.T. The Route 48 (North Balwyn) T.T. includes a major error with the inbound and outbound tables reversed as to their headings. That T.T. was therefore withdrawn in early June 2003. The Route 112 (South Melbourne/St. Kilda Beach-City-West Preston) T.T. has tables which are spread over two pages poorly aligned so that the columns that should line up with each other are actually one column out. The Route 109 (Port Melbourne-City-Box Hill) T.T. shows Route 42 locals terminating/originating at the corner of Spencer & Collins Sts rather than at Collins St Extension. It also includes shortworkings Kew Depot-Box Hill, even though these are only shown as running Deepdene-Box Hill. (It is likely that this is because these trams don't use the Kew Depot stop [Stop 29] as they exit/enter the Depot from High St.) The T.T.s now have green covers and the new look map (see last month's Table Talk). Another fault in the new look map (further to those listed in last month's Table Talk) is that it doesn't show short trip sections.

As at 8th June 2003, some Route 75 (East Burwood) stops still did not have new T.T.s displayed, although there was a note at these stops to the effect that some services had been modified by one or two minutes and that new T.T.s would appear soon.

(Craig Halsall, Graeme Cleak)

Brisbane

BRISBANE TRAMWAY MUSEUM. Tram trips at the Brisbane Tramway Museum, Ferny Grove, ceased in late April 2003 on account of problems with third party insurance. It is believed that the Museum's policy would have risen from \$2,500 p.a. to \$45,000 p.a.!

Asia

TAIWAN METRO. The Department of Rapid Transit Systems awarded contracts in April 2003 for the construction of the 15 km Neihu line, an extension of the Mucha VAL automated Light Metro. This mostly elevated line will run Chungshan-Shungshan Airport /Nankang Business Park, with 12 intermediate stations. The fleet of 202 rubber-tyred cars are expected to carry up to 28,000 passengers per hour. (Intl. Railway Journal)



MONORAIL

FUNKY! Metro Monorail is making a marketing pitch at the young people who have moved into new apartments in Sydney's C.B.D. and is using "1970s retro chic" as its new style. The 3.8 km track could be repainted bright blue and the eight stations spectacularly lit at night. Table Talk cannot but wonder how these changes will be viewed by monorail critics who already think that its infrastructure is too intrusive! (Transit Australia)



CABLEWAY

KATOOMBA SKYWAY. The Katoomba Scenic Skyway (in the Blue Mountains, N.S.W.) is to be rebuilt and possibly extended, as part of a major overhaul of Scenic World. The 45 year-old Skyway, which now forms part of the Scenic World complex (as does the Scenic Railway which was originally built in the 1880s to haul coal and oil shale) has many years of life left but is being overhauled so as to fit in with the modern image of the rest of the complex. (Rail News Victoria)



SUBURBAN BUS

Sydney

S.T.A. (SYDNEY BUSES). The following new Sydney Buses T.T.s have recently been sighted:

- Routes 136, 160, 060 (Manly Wharf-Frenchs Forest-Chatswood district) - revised April 2003;
- Routes 139, E54 (Harbord district) - April 2003;
- Routes 187-190, E87-E89, L87-90 (Pittwater district) - April 2003;
- Routes 244-248, 259 (Mosman-City) - revised April 2003;
- Routes 252-254 and 28x, 29x series (New Pacific Hwy-City) - April 2003- TG 3 - no changes noted;
- Route 355 (Marrickville Metro-Alexandria-Bondi Jnc.) - May 2003 - TG 5;
- Routes 431, 434 (Glebe district) - April 2003 - TG 1 - the Friday night/Saturday morning only trips are wrongly shown as running Mon-Fri;
- Route 441, 442 (Balmain) - March 2003, TG 1;
- T-80 (Liverpool-Parramatta T-Way) - 25th May 2003 - some timings have been altered and a new stop, Argyle, added - in Z card format like the first T.T. for this route - now includes a date (unlike the first T.T.).

(Lourie Smit, Michael Marshall, Adrian Dessanti, Derek Cheng, Geoffrey Clinton)

SHORELINK. Shorelink Route 589 (Hornsby-Thornleigh) was updated as from 23rd June 2003. One afternoon service has been deleted and there are some minor timing changes.

(Adrian Dessanti)

CURRENT RAISINGS ON THE GRAPE VINE. Suburban Bus. Continued.

CITYBUS DIRECT. A new C.B.D. T.T. for Route 620 (Dural-City) commenced on 10th June 2003 and shows minor timing changes and one extra trip.

Melbourne

GRENDA CORPORATION. A new T.T. effective 2nd June 2003 was issued for the Grenda Route 850 (Dandenong-Glen Waverley) service. There do not appear to be any time changes. (Bradley Matthews)

CRANBOURNE TRANSIT. A new T.T. for Cranbourne Routes 795-797 was issued effective 24th March 2003. (Michael Marshall)

US BUSLINES. A new US T.T. for Route 695 (Belgrave-Gembrook) was issued dated 1st January 2003. There are no time changes but the T.T. sports a new look map. (Bradley Matthews)

INVICABUS (CROYDON BUS SERVICES). Invicabus Route 681 (Lysterfield-Stud Park-Knox City shopping centre) services were altered as from 26th May 2003. The present T.T. is an A4 photocopied T.T. only and it has been reported that the book T.T. will not be produced for quite some time. (Craig Halsall)

Brisbane

B.C.C. (BRISBANE TRANSPORT). A significant number of T.T.s have recently been sighted, most with an effective date of 28th April 2003:

As from 28th April 2003:

- Routes 101-103, 122 (Inala-Oxley-Corinda, Inala-Mt. Ommaney & Inala-Garden City - Community Buses) - TT101;
- Routes 105, 107, 108 (Indooroopilly-Graceville-Yeerongpilly-Yeronga-City - Citybus) - TT105;
- Routes 122, 123 (Inala-Garden City & Griffith Uni.-Sunnybank-Garden City - Community Buses) - TT122;
- Routes 300, 301 (Hamilton-City & Hendra-City - Citybuses) - TT300;
- Route 334 (Chermside-Kedron-City - Citybus) - TT334;
- Routes 340, 341, 344 (Carseldine-City - Cityxpress / Carseldine - City Precincts) - TT340;
- Routes 344, 345 (Carseldine-Aspley-City via Maundrell Tce. - Cityxpress / Carseldine - City Precincts) - TT345;
- Routes 350-352, 355 (Bridgeman Downs-Albany Creek-City - Cityxpress / Bridgeman Downs-Albany Creek-McDowall-City - Rocket) - TT350;
- Routes 350, 351, 355, 357, 359 (Brendale-Albany Creek-City - Cityxpress) - TT359;
- Routes 354, 358 (Brookside-Mitchelton-Chermside & Brookside-Mitchelton-Toombul - Community Buses) - TT354;
- Route 362 (The Gap-Mitchelton-Brookside - Community Bus) - TT362;
- Routes 365, 366, 372, 373 (Ashgrove-City - Citybus / Ashgrove [Oakleigh] - Community Bus) - TT372;
- Routes 374, 375 (Paddington-City - Shuttle / Bardon-City-Stafford City - Citybus) - TT375;
- Routes 379-381 (Ashgrove-City-Valley & The Gap-West Ashgrove-City - Citybuses) - TT21;
- Routes 380, 381 (The Gap-West Ashgrove-City - Citybus) - TT380;
- Routes 382-385 (The Gap-City - Cityxpress / The Gap-City-Valley - Rockets / The Gap - City Precincts) - TT385;
- Routes 427, 428, 432 (Qld. Uni.-Indooroopilly-Chapel Hill/Kenmore) - TT427;
- Routes 430, 431, 446 (Fig Tree Pocket-City - Cityxpress / Fig Tree Pocket-Kenmore South-City - Rocket) - TT433;
- Routes 433, 445 (Kenmore South-City & Lone Pine/Fig Tree Pocket-City - Citybuses) - TT433;
- Routes 435, 436 (Brookfield-City - Cityxpress & Rockets) - TT435;
- Routes 440, 441 (Moggill-City - Cityxpress & Rockets) - TT440;
- Routes 450, 453-459 (Riverhills-Mt. Ommaney- City - Cityxpress, Rockets & City Precincts) - TT450;
- Routes 460, 461 (Inala-Forest Lake-Indooroopilly-City - Cityxpress & Rockets) - TT460;

.....continued next page/

CURRENT RAISING ON THE GRAPE VINE. Suburban Bus. Continued.Other dates:

- Routes 117, 121, 124, 125 (Acacia Ridge-Salisbury-City / Salisbury-Tarragindi-City - Express / Sunnybank-Salisbury-City & Garden City-Griffith Uni. (Nathan Campus)-Salisbury-City - Citybus) - 12th May 2003 - TT117;
- Routes 119, 120 (Garden City-Griffith Uni.-Tarragindi-City - Cityxpress & Rocket) - April 2003 - TT120;
- Routes 184, 185, 882, 887 (Garden City via Cavendish Rd - Citybus) - March 2003 - TT184;
- Routes 190, 191, 193, 194 (New Farm [Merthyr]-City-West End [Bulimba Ferry]-City-Fairfield Gardens) - 12th May 2003 - TT122;
- Route 204 (Carindale-Camp Hill-City via Old Cleveland Rd) - April 2003 - TT204
- Routes 214-216, 220, 221 (Cannon Hill-City - Cityxpress / Carindale-Tingalpa-City - Cityxpress / Tingalpa-City - Rocket / Wynnum-City - Cityxpress & Rocket) - 14th April 2003 - TT215;
- Routes 222, 232 (Wynnum-Cannon Hill-City - Citybus) 14th April 2003 - TT12;
- Routes 223-225 (Wynnum-Manly/Carindale - Community Buses) - February 2003 - TT223;
- Routes 230, 231, 235, 236 (Bulimba-City-Valley via Riding Rd / Balmoral-City-Valley via Thynne Rd) - April 2003 - TT230;
- Routes 306, 307, 322 (Nudgee-Banyo-Toombul-City, Toombul-Northgate East & Chermide-Wavell Heights-Toombul-City - Citybuses) - April 2003 - TT306;
- Route 320 (Chermide-Wavell Hights-City - Citybus) - February 2003 - TT320;
- Route 321 (Toombul-Kalinga-City - Citybus) - April 2003 - TT321;
- Routes 325, 335, 339 (Boondall - Cityxpress / Taigum via Kirby Rd - Rocket & Cityxpress) - April 2003 - TT325;
- Routes 326, 327 (Bracken Ridge-Sandgate-Toombul / Strathpine-Bracken Ridge-Toombul - Citybuses) - 17th February 2003 - TT326;
- Routes 330, 331 (Bracken Ridge-City - Cityxpress & Rocket) - April 2003 - TT330;
- Routes 360, 361, 364 (Brookside-Everton Park-Enoggera-City, Brookside-Mitchelton-Enoggera-City & Herston-City - Citybuses) - April 2003 - TT360
- Routes 371, 391 (Q.U.T.[Kelvin Grove Campus]-City - Shuttle / Q.U.T.[Kelvin Grove Campus]-Q.U.T.[Gardens Point Campus] - Shuttle) - 24th February 2003 - TT371;
- Routes 475, 476 (Rainworth-City-Valley-Kangaroo Point- Princess Alexandra Hospital - Citybus) - April 2003 - TT475. (Graham Duffin et al)

BLUE DASH SHUTTLE SERVICES. Blue Dash Shuttle Services were designed to enhance accessibility to community, recreation and shopping facilities within the City of Logan and is a joint initiative of the Queensland Department of Housing's Community Renewal Program, Queensland Transport, Logan City Council and Clark's Logan City Bus Service. Two T.T.s were issued dated 12th May 2003 - one for Routes 501-504 and the other for Routes 505, 506. The following services operate:

- Route 501 (Woodridge Plaza-Logan Central-Trinder Park-Woodridge West-Woodridge Plaza) - six services Mon-Sat and four on Sunday morning - approximately 39 minutes round trip;
- Route 502 (Woodridge Plaza -Woodridge East-Slacks Creek North-Woodridge Plaza via Ewing Rd) - services every 75 minutes 0830-1630 Mon-Sat and four on Sunday morning - approximately 31 minutes round trip;
- Route 503 (Woodridge Plaza-Slacks Creek-Woodridge Plaza via Paradise & Queens Rds) - seven services Mon-Sat and four on Sunday morning - approximately 33 minutes round trip;
- Route 504 (Woodridge Plaza-Kingston-Logan Central-Woodridge Plaza) - services every 70 minutes 0830-1600 Mon-Sat and 0730-1130 Sunday - approximately 33 minutes round trip;
- Route 505 (Woodridge Plaza-Marsden-Waterford-Logan Hospital-Logan TAFE-Marsden -Woodridge Plaza) - five services Mon-Sat and three on Sunday morning - approximately 50 minutes round trip);
- Routes 506 (reverse of Route 505) - five services Mon-Sat and three on Sunday morning).

If these route and T.T. changes do not work, Clarks have stated that they will cease the service. However, the low patronage levels may be explained by the fact that the tickets sold on Blue Dash buses are not transferable to other Clark's services.

(Steven Haby, Graham Duffin)

COACHTRANS SKYTRANS. The Coachtrans Brisbane Airport-Brisbane City T.T. was reissued dated 12th May 2003. Skytrans has been added to the service name to assist in its advertising. (Graham Duffin)

CULTURAL CENTRE BUSWAY STATION. Preliminary works in preparation for the \$15.7 million development of the Cultural Centre Busway Station began in late March 2003. (Transit Australia)

New Zealand

INVERGARGILL. The Invercargill local authority's 2001 policy of running off peak services without fares has had a dramatic effect on overall passenger numbers. As well as the couple of shopper routes which are free all day, the main routes do not charge fares 0900-1430. Passenger numbers rose 284% between these times in the first year. The peak time services, which had fare increases, partly in compensation, saw rises of 41%. Overall, ridership was up by 85%. (Transit Australia)

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LONG DISTANCE BUS

National

McCAFFERTY'S GEYHOUND-PIONEER NEW TIMETABLES. A new McCafferty's Greyhound-Pioneer T.T. was issued dated 31st March 2003. The key feature is the renumbering of most services of both McCafferty's and Greyhound-Pioneer so as to place them in a more logical sequence. There has also been some swapping of services between the two parts of the company. The following services have been reduced, altered or cancelled:

- GX560/650 (Adelaide-Perth) - runs on Fridays only instead of Mon,Wed,Fri (this service was daily until recently);
- GX 205/206 (Ayers Rock-Erdunda) - cancelled;
- GX222/342 (Sydney-Melbourne via Princes Hwy) - cancelled;
- GX334/3544 (Brisbane-Dubbo) - reduced to four days per week;
- GX612/621/623/632 (Kalbarri-Ajana shuttle) - cancelled;
- MC418/419 (Townsville-Cairns) - cancelled;
- MC97/98 (Airlie Beach-Cairns) - cancelled;
- MC82/91 (Longreach-Emerald) - cancelled;
- GX910/911 (Sydney-Melbourne) - operates Sun-Fri only;
- GX438/836 (Townsville-Mount Isa) - now operates only thrice weekly;
- MC71/74 (Rockhampton-Emerald) - now operates only twice weekly;
- MC170 (Brisbane-Toowoomba) - now operates only Mon-Fri; MC 176 (Brisbane-Toowoomba) - now operates only Fri,Sun; MC191 (Brisbane-Toowoomba) - increased to daily;
- MC91 (formerly Brisbane-Hervey Bay) - now commences from Byron Bay [as previously noted in Table Talk].

This recent spate of downgradings just highlights how much the interstate bus network has been downgraded over the past few years - it was not long ago that there were three competing interstate bus companies and now there's only one and the number of services run is but a mere fraction of what operated in earlier days! Cheap air fares seem to have affected interstate bus travel even more than rail travel. However, not all the cutbacks can be blamed on the airlines and the cancellation or reduction of local services in Queensland, W.A. and N.T. (as above) is a case in point. (S. Haby)

FIREFLY EXPRESS. Firefly issued a new booklet for their Sydney-Melbourne and Melbourne-Adelaide services, dated March 2003. (Albert Isaacs)

SNOW REGION TIMETABLES. A number of companies have recently issued Winter T.T.s for snow region services available on the web but, at the time of writing, none of these appear to be in hard copy format:

- **PYLES COACHES** - Albury-Falls Creek/Mt. Beauty, Melbourne-Falls Creek/Mt. Beauty, Mt. Beauty-Falls Creek shuttles;
- **TREKSET** - Melbourne-Myrtleford-Mt. Hotham, Myrtleford-Mt. Hotham;
- **MANSFIELD MT. BULLER BUS LINES** - Melbourne-Mt. Buller.

The Pyles and M.M.B.B.L. T.T.s were issued in hard copy format in 2002 and details of the services can be found in last year's issues of Table Talk. (Steven Haby)

N.S.W.

BLACK & WHITE BUSES. Black & White have issued a new Winter/Spring T.T. dated 1st May 2003. It appears to be similar to last year's T.T. for the same period. (I. Smit)

LEVER'S. The Lever's 2003 snow T.T. was recently issued. A daily return is shown, viz: Gungahlin (Canberra) 0505, Cooma 0710, Bullocks Flat Skitube R.S. 0820, Thredbo Alpine Village 0850-1630, Gungahlin 2020. Details of various packages to the snow also appear in the T.T. (Steven Haby)

Queensland

BRISBANE BUS LINES. A new B.B.L. T.T. Brisbane-Kingaroy-Murgon was reissued dated 1st May 2003. This bus no longer serves Biloela. (Graham Duffin)



AIR

Domestic

POINT COOK AIRFORCE BASE, VICTORIA. Operations at Point Cook, the cradle of the R.A.A.F., continue to dwindle. The R.A.A.F. has closed its Williams Air Base but continues to maintain the museum which features flying displays. As at April 2003 the Royal Victorian Aero Club had ceased flying operations at Point Cook but the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology was still running its flying operations from there and the Tiger Moth Club had also been based there. As suburban sub-divisions extend from Laverton towards the base, local landowners continue their campaign to close the airport but retain the museum. (Rail News Victoria)

International (to/from Australia)

EMIRATES. As from 15th May 2003 Emirates have flown daily Perth/Sydney/Melbourne-Singapore-Dubai. Perth was the last of the three Australian cities to get a daily service. However, from 26th October 2003 Sydney-Dubai flights will be non-stop. (Tris Tottenham)

ROYAL TONGAN AIRLINES. R.T.A. commenced a Sydney-Tonga service in November 2002. Was this weekly - Table Talk would like to know? As from April 2003 a Thursday flight was added to the existing service. (Tris Tottenham)

UPDATE - AUSTRALIAN AIRLINES TO BALI. A.A. commenced thrice-weekly direct flights Sydney-Denpasar, Bali, along with an extra weekly service Melbourne-Sydney-Denpasar. The services replace the pre-Bali bombing flights operated by A.A.'s parent company, Qantas. (Herald-Sun)

International (excluding Australia)

UPDATE - LAST CONCORDE. The last British Airways Concorde flight is scheduled for 31st October 2003. The other company operating Concorde, Air France, made its last flight on 31st May 2003. This is despite some previous publicity that suggested that the Air France service would also continue until 31st October 2003. (Tris Tottenham, ABC Television News)



WATER TRANSPORT

Sydney Ferries

UPDATE - HEGARTY'S FERRIES. For the second time this year, Hegarty's Ferries ceased operation on their Circular Quay-Lavendar Bay-Jeffrey Street-Beulah Street route. (See last month's Table Talk for information on the new company that re-started this service.) The last run was at 1910 on 19th May 2003. The main reason cited for the closure was the inability to serve Cockle Bay. (Duncan MacAuslan)

