



CELEBRATING 150 YEARS of RAIL in BENDIGO

RAIL in BENDIGO TODAY

Almost 3.5 million trips were made on the Bendigo line in the past financial year, testament to the rail renaissance which has seen record-breaking train patronage across Victoria.

New infrastructure and trains in the past five years have resulted in a reliable and economical transport solution, offering a viable alternative to the car. Commuters in the ever-evolving cosmopolitan city of Bendigo have a service which offers a two hour comfortable commute to Melbourne.

V/Line services also carry many visitors each year to see Bendigo's world-class events and attractions, including more than 25,000 people who travelled by train to see the *Grace Kelly: Style Icon* exhibition at Bendigo Art Gallery in 2012.

The majority of Bendigo's train services are made by the modern V/LOCITY trains which can reach speeds of up to 160km/h. These peak service trains can travel from Melbourne to Bendigo in just an hour and 27 minutes.

V/Line is about connecting communities. It is thanks to the foresight of the Victorian railway pioneers 150 years ago that V/Line today experiences record popularity. Without existing rail infrastructure and support from the Bendigo community to build upon, V/Line couldn't deliver what it successfully does today.



Photos above: Courtesy of V/Line

BENDIGO RAIL - COMMUNITY CELEBRATION DAY

Sunday 21 October 2012, Bendigo Railway Station Precinct. This is a free event suitable for the whole family. Most activities do not require booking, for those that do, please refer to booking details below.

EVENT OUTLINE

Tour of historic Bendigo Station

10.30am, meet on Platform Two

Encounter the splendour and history of the Bendigo Railway Station precinct on a short tour.

Arrival of Bendigo's R711 Steam Train

11.45am (approx)

Ensure that you are ready and waiting at the Bendigo Railway Station to welcome the fully restored vintage R711 steam train when it arrives from Melbourne.

Theatrical re-enactment

12 noon

Re-live the famous events of the official opening of the Bendigo Railway Line in 1862 with a classic theatrical re-enactment. This event will feature the City of Greater Bendigo Brass Band, Mt Alexander Rifles and speeches by Sir Henry Barkly, Governor of Victoria in 1862, and the City Mayor.

12.45pm

Short official proceedings will follow the theatrical re-enactment.

Book launch: 'Melbourne to Bendigo Railway 1862-2012'

1.00pm, Victorian Railways Institute (VRI) building

For all those passionate about the history of the Bendigo Line, make sure you book to attend the launch of the Bendigo Historical Society book, *'Melbourne to Bendigo Railway 1862-2012'*. Refreshments will be provided. Bookings are essential. RSVP to BHS on (03) 5442 1005 or admin@bendigohistory.com.

Open House: historic Bendigo Roundhouse

1.30pm-3.30pm, Bendigo Roundhouse, enter via Gate 6, Gladstone Street

Visit the famous 1890's engine shed known as the 'Bendigo Roundhouse' which will be open for viewing. Tours will also be available on demand by retired railway employees.

Steam Train snapshots

3.30pm-4.05pm (approx)

Don't miss out on the opportunity to capture the fully restored R711 vintage team train with a photo opportunity at the station.

Departure of Bendigo's R711 Steam Train

4.05pm (approx)

Farewell the R711 steam train as it departs for its journey back to Melbourne.

BENDIGO HERITAGE TOURS

A variety of heritage tours within iconic buildings in the Bendigo Region will be available. For further information please visit www.bendigotourism.com.

KIDS ACTIVITIES

Throughout the duration of the Community Celebration Day there will be a range of extra activities to ensure that children of all ages experience a memorable day.

Above: Promotional image for the railways and the Bendigo Goldfields; prominent mine owners and directors with new A class steam locomotive and Bendigo station, c1890s, black and white photograph. Courtesy of ARHS, Vic Div Inc. Archives. PROV, VPRS 12903/P1, File H1118

Railway map of Victoria (detail), 1947, paper, glass, wooden frame. Collection of Glenn Thomas. Photo: Ian Hill

150th Anniversary Vintage Steam Train Day trip

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Bendigo Line, take a day trip in the city's own steam locomotive R711. This vintage train has been fully restored by Steamrail Victoria and will be officially re-launched on this day. The train departs from and returns to Southern Cross Station (Spencer Street) also picking up and setting down at selected suburban stations.

For further information: info@steamrail.com.au

Bookings are essential as there is limited seating.

Sunday 21 October 2012

Bookings: (03) 9397 1953 or booking@steamrail.com.au www.steamrail.com.au

Above: Coliban Viaduct, Malmsbury, c1860s, black and white photograph from original negative. PROV, VPRS 12800/P1, File H2811

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For more information please contact:

BENDIGO VISITOR CENTRE

Toll free (within Australia) 1800 813 153

Email tourism@bendigo.vic.gov.au Web www.bendigotourism.com



The City of Greater Bendigo appreciates the tremendous support from the following organisations:



Celebrating 150 years: rail in Bendigo and the Bendigo Brass Band

Celebrating 150 years: rail in Bendigo and the Bendigo Brass Band is an exhibition that explores the long and proud history of Bendigo's rail industry and acknowledges the enduring contribution of the Bendigo Brass Band to the civic and social life of the city.

Friday 6 July - Sunday 28 October 2012

**Post Office Gallery
51 - 67 Pall Mall, Bendigo
Open daily 9am - 5pm
(03) 5434 6179
www.bendigogallery.com.au**

Front Cover captions

Above: Bendigo engine shed known as 'the Roundhouse' with D class steam locomotive, c1890s, black and white photograph. Courtesy of ARHS, Vic Div Inc. Archives

Below: B82 & B83 diesel locomotives at Bendigo Railway Station, c1970, colour photograph. Courtesy of David Bernoth

Celebrating 150 Years OF RAIL IN BENDIGO



1862-2012

150 years of service to the community is an impressive stint. The strength of the rail industry in Bendigo, and its enduring infrastructure, is testament to the people who lived and breathed its development. Introduced in the early 1850s, railways quickly spread across the state of Victoria, linking towns and cities, carrying passengers and freight and providing jobs and a social focus for thousands.

On the 20th of October 1862, with much fanfare, the first official train arrived from Melbourne to the booming gold rush settlement of Bendigo (then Sandhurst). The Bendigo line, one of the most impressive railway lines in Australia, is still in full operation today, boasting impressive architectural feats including the Taradale Viaduct and Big Hill Tunnel. Since its establishment in Bendigo, the rail industry has made a significant contribution to the development and economy of the city.



HISTORICAL OVERVIEW of the BENDIGO RAILWAY LINE

Transport Solutions - Planning the Bendigo Line

The discovery of gold in Bendigo in **1851** resulted in a huge demand for transport services to transfer people and gold to Melbourne and the ports. At first, thousands travelled from Melbourne to Bendigo by foot, on horse-back, by bullock dray or horse-drawn coach. In **1852**, the Melbourne, Mt Alexander & Murray River Railway Company was formed. In 1856, the Colonial Government was forced to buy out the flailing company and established the Victorian Railways Department to complete the line. In **1858**, Cornish & Bruce were awarded the contract to construct the line.

Railway construction contractor's locomotive named 'Bendigo', c1858 - 1863, black and white photograph. Courtesy of ARHS, Vic Div Inc. Archives, K.W. Turton Collection

Opening the Line

The first official train arrived in Bendigo on the 20th of October **1862** carrying the Governor of Victoria, Sir Henry Barkly. Following the official ceremonies was a banquet attended by 800 guests which was followed by a grand ball. The evening was well organised and a huge success until the visitors made their way to the station to catch the 5:30am train back to Melbourne. Confusion reigned as there was not enough water for the engines. The train eventually made its way back to Melbourne at midday.

Building the Line

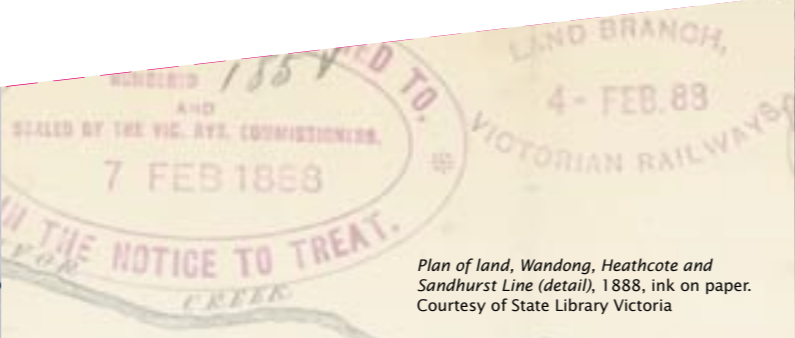
A feature of the Bendigo line is the number of impressive tunnels, viaducts, bridges and culverts designed and built to the best British mainline standards. During construction, strikes and work stoppages were frequent. In July **1861**, matters came to a head when between five to six hundred men marched along the line from Malmsbury to Kyneton destroying property as they went.



Rail enthusiast steam tour vintage train tickets, c1980s, cardboard. Collection of Darren Wright. Image: Ian Hill



Taradale Viaduct under construction, c1860, black and white photograph from original negative. PROV, VPRS 12800/P1, File H2959



Plan of land, Wandong, Heathcote and Sandhurst Line (detail), 1888, ink on paper. Courtesy of State Library Victoria



Bendigo Railway Station Precinct, c1905, postcard. Collection of Darren Wright. Image: Ian Hill

Bendigo Station

At the official opening on the 20th of October, **1862**, there was no Sandhurst Railway Station. By **1863**, a grand station building, including a platform, offices and the Station Master's residence, plus a Goods Shed and small workshop had been built. By **1890**, an additional platform, and a walkway to connect the platforms, had been constructed, as well as a large locomotive shed with 24 radiating lines for turning, housing and maintaining engines. The west wing of the station building was badly damaged in a fire on Christmas Eve, **1965**.



Bendigo Railway Station Platform One, c1970s, black and white photograph. PROV, PTCM2369

Extending the Line

With no substantial engineering obstacles, the extension of the line, from Bendigo to the Murray River at the Port of Echuca, took just two years. Upon completion of this 55 mile (88 kilometre) extension, on 19 September **1864**, the initial boom of state wide railway development ground to a halt and it would be another seven years until railway expansion was continued. By the start of the **1900s** railways had quickly spread across the colony, linking towns and cities like beads on a string.



Knowsley Railway Station platform, late 1800s - early 1900s, black and white photograph. Courtesy of ARHS, Vic Div Inc Archives

Railway map of Victoria (detail), 1947, paper, glass, wooden frame. Collection of Glenn Thomas. Photo: Ian Hill



Bendigo Railway Station Precinct, c1890s, black and white photograph from original negative. Source: Museum Victoria

Working the Line

As railways stretched across the colony, multitudes of staff were required for varying roles and responsibilities involved in servicing the lines. Juniors started off as station porters, locomotive cleaners and workshop apprentices, working their way up the system to become stationmasters, drivers and highly skilled tradesmen. Loyalty, punctuality and dedication were demanded and therefore, working on the railways was not just a job; it was a life.



Assistant Stationmaster hat, c1960s, cotton, vinyl, brass badge, Collection Barry Pianta



Bendigo Railway Station staff, 1940s, black and white photograph. Image courtesy of V/Line

Freight and Goods

A large part of the rail industry in Bendigo was the transportation of goods. Wool, grain, fresh produce, raw materials and livestock were just a few of the things that made up regular goods traffic in and out of Bendigo, one of the principal receipt and dispatch points in the state. The Goods Sheds were a key distribution and storage facility at the station and were primarily occupied by contractors responsible for the conveyance of goods to customers throughout Bendigo.

North Bendigo Rail Workshops, 1982, black and white photograph. Courtesy of Kevin Butler and Mike Butcher



North Bendigo Rail Workshops

On 19 November **1917** Victorian Railways opened the North Bendigo Workshops, aptly located at the intersection of the Swan Hill, Echuca and Heathcote lines. Men at the workshop made a vast array of items for use across the railway system including everything from tools to machinery parts and full locomotives. At its peak, the North Bendigo Workshops had over 600 employees, many who began as apprentices and worked their way up to become skilled tradesmen including boiler-makers, upholsterers, fitters and turners, blacksmiths and carpenters.

A New Era

Post Second World War saw the slow decline of the railways due largely to the increased adoption of more cost effective road transport. Many smaller country stations and branch lines were systematically closed as part of what was known as 'rationalisation of the railways'. By the **1960s**, steam locomotives had all but been taken over by diesel electrics bringing about the end of the steam era. The Victorian Railways came to an end in **1983** when two new organisations were established; the State Transport Authority, operating under the business name V/Line and the Metropolitan Transit Authority. By the late **1990s**, the Victorian railway system was entirely privatised.



T. J. CONNELLY, Sandhurst and 16 Franklyn Street, West Melbourne, Australia 19th century, Locomotive engine lamp, c1860 - 1870, steel, brass, ceramic. Collection of Glenn Thomas. Image: Ian Hill

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

'Melbourne to Bendigo 1862 - 2012'

'Melbourne to Bendigo 1862-2012' is a 60 page illustrated publication exploring the story of rail coming to Bendigo including personal anecdotes from local railway men and women; a wonderful souvenir to celebrate 150 years of rail in Bendigo. 'Melbourne to Bendigo 1862 - 2012' is written and published by Bendigo Historical Society (BHS) and is for sale through the Society and at Bendigo Visitor Information Centre for \$15. To preorder a copy of this book call (03) 5442 1005 and leave your name and contact details.

'Celebrating 150 years: rail in Bendigo and the Bendigo Brass Band'

'Celebrating 150 years: rail in Bendigo and the Bendigo Brass Band' compliments the above named exhibition currently on display at Bendigo Art Gallery's satellite social history space, Post Office Gallery. The catalogue features images of items on display and tells a short history of the rail industry in Bendigo and the evolution of the Bendigo Brass Band. The catalogue is published by Bendigo Art Gallery and is available for sale at the Gallery and at Bendigo Visitor Information Centre for \$9.95.

Bendigo Goods Shed, 1873, black and white photograph from original negative. PROV, VPRS 12800/P1, File H1802

