



Australia

Compiled by Leon Oberg

Above: The impeccably-restored 102-year-old Hunslet 0-4-2T No. 1187 *Torpedo* of 1915 is pictured at work hauling guests during the opening day. The locomotive carried its painted name during its 'working' life. *Leon Oberg*

Former NSW Heritage Officer opens narrow gauge garden line

For retired New South Wales (NSW) State Rail heritage officer, Peter Neve, three days of merriment at Junee, in the south of the state, to celebrate his 75th birthday held particular significance, it marked the grand opening of what many would describe as the ultimate garden railway.

Speaking in front of 60 invited friends on 6th February, event 'emcee' Nicholas Pyers said the opening of 'Pete's Hobby Railway', a 350 metre 2ft gauge operation that virtually encircles his home, was "the culmination of a dream for Peter who has nursed a life-long passion for trains".

Mr Neve told his guests a move from Loftus, in the Sydney suburbs to Junee in 2015 provided a "good-size block on which to run a light railway over a decent

length of track which also offered gradients to make the locomotives work".

Junee was originally named Loftus and because Mr Neve spent most of his life living in (Sydney's) Loftus, it was natural his new layout's station be called Loftus, the name-board perfectly reflecting the original construction style, size and typeface of a genuine yesteryear NSW rail station.

Guests were able to ride the two-carriage train throughout the day which was hauled by his fully restored Hunslet (works number 1187) 0-4-2T built in 1915 for Pioneer Sugar's Inkerman mill at Carstairs, Queensland. As reported in *RH* Issue 511, this loco was stripped and commercially restored during 2016.

Another locomotive providing motive power during the event, was Ruston Hornsby 48DL,

built in 1955 and originally used on construction works in Hertfordshire. It is understood to have come to the Gin Gin Sugar Mill (Queensland) via South Africa.

Also located on the Junee property but awaiting restoration are two former Queensland sugar mill steam locomotives, John Fowler 0-6-0T No. 8766 of 1899,

built for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, and an 0-6-2T design, created in South Australia during 1938 by the Perry Engineering Co. for the Amalgamated Sugar Mill's Kalamia Mill, where it worked under the name of *Chiverton*.

Below: The 1955-built Ruston Hornsby 48DL diesel that is also resident. *Leon Oberg*

