

Operating Heritage Australia

Minutes

Meeting Monday 6th July 2020

Present: Chris Martin, Mike Beale, Peter Garnham, Neil Meyers, Bruce Marich, Jenny Fawbert, Richard Clarke, Michael Hough, Neil Hogg

Apology: Glenn Rigden

1. What's happening in the world of operating heritage?

- Peter – some car runs, NHMA AGM conducted by post, applying for 4 x steam trains for next year's Maitland Steam Fest race
- Chris – Sheffield building passing loop & station, planning to re-open 1st August, 4 x mainline operating preservation groups to work together (\$200m public liability costs \$100k each or \$170k for 4), NSW govt insures with \$1m excess so operators only need insurance for \$1m
- Mike – CHMC not much happening, AHMF quiet, events cancelled and sponsorships refunded, CHMC 50th anniversary on last weekend in October under threat as restrictions won't allow everyone to attend anniversary dinner
- Jenny – individuals out driving, concern for older members
- Bruce – shipyard conducting essential work, James Craig continuing maintenance, No cruises, no income
- Neil M – building and restoration projects continuing, Newport Railway Yards **not sure what was said**
- Richard – volunteers have continued to work (workshop and track work), no revenue, looking for grants, community service people not coming so weeds are growing, meeting local member of parliament
- Michael – HARS busy, recommends opening as people are desperate to get out of their homes, e-shop selling around \$120/week especially digital products, Mountain Lion Productions can convert DVD to digital download, QANTAS offering flight on last 747s before retirement, post-COVID unemployment conditions likely to be relaxed so apply for unemployed people (register with Centrelink), Military Armour Museum closing – OHA can become the environmental scanner for operating heritage

2. OHA Activities

- Letter to Minister asking for all export items to be subject to Export Permit and assessment during crisis – sent 14 April
 - No response
- Update on Australian Heritage Strategy submissions
 - Response from department – not formally open yet but happy to receive submissions from us whenever ready
 - OHA letter ready to go
 - EA letter with EA Board – they want some things added. NH to push for meeting with Minister for the Environment.
 - We will copy the Minister to introduce OHA
- Working with Cultural Property Section to identify objects under threat of export
 - Neil M – more auction items identified
 - Our positive feedback to Dept. after Holden Monaro auction was much appreciated
- PMCH Act
 - Meeting with Minister scheduled for 10th July – Neil H to report to OHA
- OHA PO Box 397, St Ives, NSW, 2075

3. Other Opportunities

- Engineers Australia is promoting travel (to EA members) to visit engineering/industrial heritage sites. – Will include operating museums and events
- Tourism – how do we tap into official tourism channels?

4. University of Canberra Focus Groups

- Chris has been invited to participate in some focus groups convened by the University of Canberra to consider:

Australian legislation for the built environment is not well suited to the preservation of still-active industrial heritage, such as the assets managed by Sydney Water and Transport for NSW. Heritage legislation, for example, focuses on the preservation of physical fabric rather than process and intangible heritage, meaning that individual physical components can be saved while the intangible heritage of the overall purpose and identity of a site or network is lost. Safety legislation, for example, sometimes drives one-size-fits-all changes that conflict with heritage aims as it does not take into account the detail of individual contexts. This pilot project aims to identify areas where the alignment between various areas of legislation, heritage practice and preservation outcomes could be improved.

Some of the unintended adverse consequences are:

- Need for multiple licences and other duplicated costs of compliance
- Total asbestos ban
- Inappropriate regulation (steam, vintage aircraft, vintage cars)
- Customs duty
- Legislation that ignores the whole context – that does not protect the aspects that could provide provenance and authenticity
- Lack of legislation to obstruct the fragmentation and dissemination of the intangible components
- Legislation that does not provide for the recognition of the value operating scientific, technical and engineering heritage YET covers all manner of environmental and built-environment heritage
- Need for heritage operators to comply with same regulations applied to current technology
 - Eg. Flight Engineer no longer exists as a CASA qualification but CASA requires one for flying Constellation (contradictory)
- Need to quantify economic and societal benefits of operating heritage

5. Employment Opportunities Within Operating Heritage Organisations

- OHA can:
 - Test views, canvass opportunities
 - Offer a way to speak to diverse groups
 - Give common-sense advice
 - Provide exemplars
 - Simplify the process of dealing with operating heritage
- Work for the Dole
 - Calibre of people often not high
 - Older (over 50) workforce generally capable but find it difficult to get permanent employment
 - 50-59 years – 30 hrs/fortnight; Over 60 years – 10 hrs/fortnight
 - Consider all opportunities – women, administration, trades, building, auditing, cataloguing, customer service, IT, graphic design
 - Prepare “Positions Vacant” board

- Contact your local Centrelink Office
- Advocate for removal of requirement for over 50s to apply for three jobs per week if working for a heritage organisation (removes congestion in job applications)
- Produce “flyer” for distribution to organisations – NH
- Tourism
 - Contact tourism authorities – start by finding out who – NH
- And “softer” benefits
 - Mental health
 - Community involvement
 - Charity fund-raising
 - Training

6. Maintaining Momentum

- Tell your members that they were responsible for the tightening of controls on export permits (Holden, tractor, auction items). The large number of passionate people speaking up is getting attention. Encourage them to keep it up.
- Produce flyer for distribution to all operating heritage people congratulating them for their part in the recent progress – Holden, machinery, icebreaker, cars – and encourage them to tell us of more items under threat and to keep speaking out. – NH
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7. Other Subjects

- Automotive Historians Association Conference in Castlemaine in October will include a panel discussion on preserving books and manuals

8. Next Meeting 3rd August 2020