

The Railway Luncheon Club April 2009

Epping

The popularity of the Railway Luncheon Club concept is increasing with 34 members enjoying another excellent day out - this time at the western end of CityRail's brand new ECL railway - Epping Station.

Stuart Sharp welcomed the luncheon club participants with a quick talk outside the station's electronic gates on the modern elevated entrance structure. Stuart then sought permission from the duty manager to take the group firstly to Platforms 1 and 4 where we congregated under the 1899 station's awning. The Eddy era island type station features the only round gusseted awning supports remaining on the system. When built, Epping represented the Federation style 'home grown' architecture of the 1892 - 1932 period. The first was Kiama - the last was Wickham - which features plinth lines in the brickwork and stone corbels. Epping has also been named 'Field of Mars' and 'Carlingford' in the past. Of course, for most of its life, Epping featured an unusual central terminating road with platforms either side. So in pre-automatic door times one could get on or off the train from either Platform 2 or 3. This unique arrangement ceased in 2004 when Platform 2 was closed.

The original brick station was given a repaint into red paint as part of the 'station sparkle program' in 1991. In the late nineteen seventies, Epping Signal Box welcomed the first female signal person in the state; her name was Patrica Groves.

The luncheon club members then moved down two set of escalators (and also by lift) to the new ECL Platforms 5 and 6 and gathered at the northern end of Platform 6. Here Stuart had arranged for a special guest, John Brown, recently retired RailCorp Operations Manager, to speak to us about the technical details of the ECL. His talk was enlightening and the members were very attentive and appreciative of what John experienced in commissioning the ECL.

Most members then adjourned to lunch at the nearby Epping Hotel (located just beneath the station's western stairs. The next Railway Luncheon Club will visit Hornsby Station and members are invited to meet at 11.00 am sharp outside the ticket barrier on Wednesday 20 May.



Upper left image: The Railway Luncheon Club participants listen attentively as Stuart Sharp explains the features of the original brick station building.

Upper right: John Brown, recently retired RailCorp Operations Manager, reads his notes regarding the construction and commissioning of the ECL.

Left: ECL Platform 6. But Platform 5 is mainly used pending ECL through running in November 2009.

Right image: In this view peering into the tunnel at the northern end of Platform 6 one can just make out the blind tunnel mouth to the left of the Down running line connection to Hornsby. Can it be assumed this tunnel will eventually proceed westwards towards Parramatta?



Story & images by Ross Verdich

North Queensland by Rail—Second Division

Our first tour, run in conjunction with Tony Bailey of Mercury World Travel is now sold out! A Second Division of the tour will depart from Sydney on Tuesday 13 October. The all inclusive twin-share cost is \$3895, and includes:

- Fly Sydney to Cairns
- 4 Day *Savannahlander* tour Cairns to Forsayth and return.
- Full day Charter on the *Gulflander* from Normanton to Croydon and return.
- Diesel Tilt Train from Cairns to Townsville (overnight Townsville).
- To Mount Isa on the *Inlander*, plus day tour of Mount Isa.
- Coach transfer to Longreach—visit the Stockman's Hall of Fame and Qantas Museum.
- Daylight run on the *Spirit of the Outback* from Longreach to Rockhampton. Daylight run to Brisbane on the Electric Tilt Train.
- Option for return flight to Sydney or travel on Daylight XPT from Brisbane to Sydney.

We require a nonrefundable deposit of \$350 for this Second Division tour by Monday 4 May.