

# MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER

## RAILWAY LUNCHEON CLUB

### VISIT TO HELENSBURGH ON 20TH OCTOBER 2010

Over 40 members and friends gathered at Helensburgh on Wed 20th Oct for the Luncheon Club's monthly outing. After a welcome by the SM, and an inspection of the signalling facilities, Stuart Sharp and John Oakes led the group on a tour of both the current (1915) station, and its predecessor which was opened in 1889.

The Illawarra line was opened between Waterfall and Coalcliff on 3rd Oct 1888, but Helensburgh Station was not opened until Jan 1889. The platform building followed 2 years later and was a "classy" brick structure. An SM's, and 2 other, residences were also provided and these are still extant. The station was situated in the narrow space between nos.3 and 4 tunnels and its establishment was due to pressure from the local Metropolitan Colliery. Indeed, it is believed that the name Helensburgh is derived from the name of the Colliery Manager's daughter, Helen.



*The 1889 Helensburgh Station, minus the building which was demolished long ago. The entrance to No.4 tunnel is in the background. Image: David Taylor*

The second (and current) Helensburgh station was opened on 30th May 1915 together with the deviation between Helensburgh and Lilyvale. Both the station platform and building are unique in being curved, this being a feature of only a few stations in NSW.

Among the features of the current station are:-

- "Standard awning brackets" supporting the platform awnings,
- Name of station expressed at bottom of the lower window sashes,
- Cement rendered moulded string course around the building exterior,
- Four-panel external doors
- Fan lights over doors
- Nine-panel small, multi-coloured glass in the upper window sashes,
- Ornamental moulding under the window sills,
- Nine inch diameter "Breech's cowls" (ventilators) through the roof ridge over the toilets,
- Brick chimneys topped with terracotta pots,
- Timber screen with vertical T and G "V" jointed boarding outside the men's toilet, which matched the vertical boarding on the building's gables, &
- Timber finials at each end of the roof.

The group then adjourned back to Sutherland for lunch.

The next outing is to Schofields on Wed 17th November. We meet on the platform there at 11am. Note that the previously advertised outing to Carlingford has been postponed until next year due to illness of one of the staff at the Produce Shed.

*Gary Hughes*



*The current Helensburgh Station. The curved platform and building are evident. Image: Stuart Sharp*