



Diary: Bundy's Last Great Adventure



From 7 August to 10 September 2000, the Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum Society's Bundaberg Fowler and a film crew travelled to most of the Queensland cane mills. From the trip Larry Zetlin produced *Bundy's Last Great Adventure* for Australian TV and a 55 min PAL video from *Gulliver Media Australia*.

Two ANGRMS Society members, Bob Gough and Paul Rollason, took photographs and kept diaries during the trip. Bob's notes cover the period 8-24 August from the point-of-view of an observer. Paul's notes are more extensive and cover the whole trip from the perspective of a Bundy crew member.

Monday 7 August: Nambour

Bob (Observer): 8.00am Bundaberg Fowler Corporation 5, 0-6-2T, 2ft gauge, built under license from John Fowler in Bundaberg (commonly known as BFC5) was loaded onto a low loader at Woodford and transported via the local jail to Nambour.

BFC5 was invited to Nambour by Moreton Mill to haul sugar cane which coincided with their annual Sugar Festival Week. BFC5's area of responsibility is from the Howard Street Yard (easterly) to Moreton Mill (westerly), a distance of approximately 1km. The majority of the journey is up hill with a short flat section.

Approximately 10 full trains are hauled per day, varying in length from either 45 or 50 bins. The reason for the variation is because the sidings that are in the Mill yard are not all the same length. Full bins arrive at the Howard Street yard either by the mills own diesel loco fleet (which collect full bins from the local farm sidings), or, they arrive by road transport - 4 at a time - and are unloaded at a special dock where the semi trailer backs up to the dock and using gravity, the bins roll into a siding.

The weight of each empty wagon (commonly called "bins") is 1.88 tonnes tare. Full bins hold 5 tonnes. The bins delivered by road transport are generally the heaviest. It appears these are loaded with more cane at the farm knowing that the movement while on the road will permit further settling.

Tuesday 8 August

Bob: It was overcast at Nambour and raining on surrounding areas, the locomotive boiler and side tanks were filled with water then a slow fire was lit

before lunch. The steam gauge started to rise by 1.30pm. With 100 psi on the gauge, we oiled up, we then did a light engine run from the mill to Howard Street and back a couple of times. It was then decided to take the loco to Bli Bli approximately 10-15 km east of Howard Street. As the loco

Wednesday 9 August

Bob: The weather was the same as Tuesday and all the mill loco drivers and assistants were placed on track work in Howard street yard. They have a diesel work train with them. We took the Mill's loco crews two at a time for a run

This year the rains came down at the rate of about 75mm per night and the weekend before BFC5 arrived the machines could not move around the fields to cut the cane. Monday 7th evening, 90mm of rain was received in some of the cane growing areas!



Paul (crew member): This morning saw BFC-5 loaded onto a truck supplied by Moreton Mill and transported to Moreton Mill in Nambour where it was unloaded and prepared for work at the mill for the upcoming week as part of the Sugar Festival Week. On route to the Mill, the truck travelled via Woodford prison for the film crew as pick up shots.

had 3 people on board, our driver and fireman plus a mill person (Mr. George Hadley) this special trip was approved. I decided to drive my car and take this opportunity to get some "never before taken" photos of BFC5 at various locations. No other trains were out on the mill railway at this time. Back to Howard street yard and a couple of runs up and down, the time is 4.00pm, back to the mill, fill the boiler and put the loco to bed for the night.

east of Howard St. yard. This is the direction the main line takes. Sugar cane used to be grown west of the mill and up in the hills. The mills two Shay locomotives used to work to Mapleton. A Shay make up from two locos is preserved at

the entrance of the mill. The local newspaper reported that money in the form of a grant is trying to be raised to restore the Shay to working order.

Thursday 10 August

Bob: Today was overcast and again the fields were too wet for cane processing. Another day without any real work for BFC5. The two Douglas Shire Tramway Wagons that are to

Friday 11 August

Bob: The clouds have started to break but the rain was still around. BFC5 continued doing her runs up and down

Tuesday 8 – Friday 11 August

Paul: During this week, BFC-5 was supposed to haul cane from Howard Street Yard up to the Mill as part of the Sugar Week Festival and as normal operations of the Mill. Due to wet weather, no cane was cut or crushed. Members from ANGRMS acting as Crew for this week along with various Mill employees were taken for joy rides. These trips included trips to the Speed Way and to the Maroochy River.

The two wagons arrived at the Mill on Wednesday and when the Crew for the documentary arrived, the two wagons were prepared for the journey. This included attaching the signs to the wagons, arranging the gear and equipment in the wagons and finally attaching the canopies.

During the week the drivers noticed a steam leak from the left header pipe, the main steam pipe from the front tube

Saturday 12 August

Bob: The day dawned bright and sunny and it was hoped cutting could start today, however it was again reported that the fields were too wet. Steam was raised early and new crew of four members, Paul Rollason, Tony Lindsay, Shane Yore & Martin Wiltshire took over the loco, these four fellows were to travel to various sugar mills throughout Queensland for the production of a film documentary about the Sugar Cane Industry. Our two wagons were coupled and as the train left the mill yard, the filming started with several scenes being shot easterly towards Howard street yard. Several retakes were done at various locations including an area called River Depot. On the way to this depot the train had to pass a football field where a large crowd of people and children were present. Just like in the movies, one person had decided to leave their 4 x 4 parked across the train track. It took a while for this person to come over and shift the vehicle. When the owner did arrive she wanted to argue with the Mill representative, George Hadley on the loco. She told George "cane trains don't run on Saturday's". "Cane trains can run anytime in crushing season in spite of the wet conditions" replied George. The children enjoyed watching the loco waiting for the 4 x 4 to be moved and seeing it chuff away.

At the River Depot there is a "lift bridge" over the Maroochy River. This was an ideal area for filming and several hours were spent going backward and forward across it. The bridge was lifted and lowered several times during the filming and credit must go to George Hadley whose job it was to wind it up and down, (It is operated by hand winch). A little rowboat was located close by so for extra effect, it was put out in the middle of the river, with camera and sound men on board.

11.00am we left River Depot for Howard Street yard (express) arriving at 12.10pm. The reason for the departure was that our train had to cross the Currie & Howard St intersection at exactly 12.30pm. This was the signal that the

After several trips with regular Mill crews, the diesel drivers commented on the "get up and go" of our steam loco.

be used in the filming arrived at Nambour today, from Woodford.

Howard Street. We were advertising the Nambour sugar festival to be held on Saturday commencing at 12.30pm.

plate down to the cylinders. This would possibly put a halt to our filming but we decided to see if the Bundaberg Foundry could repair the problem once we got to Bundaberg.

On Friday 11th August, the Crew had to prepare the locomotive for filming as Frank Warwick was coming to film the introduction of the documentary for his program 'The World Around Us'. The loco was spruced up like you have never seen it before. It shined from every inch of paintwork and it looked a treat. After several 'takes', Frank perfected his introduction and the filming for the day was complete by late morning.

Sugar Festival Parade could commence. This went smoothly and while the parade was passing, we moved the train the 100m into the mill yard to take water and clean the fire. After the parade had finished we took the train back to the fields for more filming. About 4.00pm, BFC5 headed back to the mill to drop the fire and retire for the day.



Paul: Today was the day where we would actually start filming footage for the documentary. The filming today was going to be fairly easy as we didn't have to fit into any cane movement schedules as cane was still not being cut or crushed as it was still too wet. Our only time restriction today was to be back in time to take part in the Sugar Festival procession at 12.30pm. Our journey today was to take us out to the lift bridge at River Depot some 15 kilometres from the Mill.

What was to become a ritual each morning of the trip began today, greasing and oiling the loco, filling the bunker with coal, filling the side tanks, checking all the motions, the inevitable cleaning the underframe, washing the rest of the loco and polishing the brass work so it was 'spick and span' for the camera. Our departure time was to be 9am sharp and

at 8.50am the loco crew was ready to roll. After a short wait for the film crew we were under way.

It was my turn to drive for the first segment down to River Depot and Tony Lindsay was my fireman. We headed out of the Mill and across the Old Bruce Highway where the film crew filmed us crossing the old highway and proceeding down Howard Street. We stopped in the middle of Howard Street to pick up the film crew before continuing. Craig our illustrious cameraman hopped onto the footplate to film us working the engine as we proceeded down Howard Street.

We entered Howard Street Yard for a brief stop where the Craig alighted from the footplate and boarded the wagon. We headed out along what the Mill calls the 'Speedway'. This is a nice long straight stretch of track as it heads towards the Nambour bypass and now the New Bruce Highway. We stopped where the line passed under the highway and the film crew alighted from the train to do some filming from the top of the overpass as we passed under it. A number of passes were made and a lot of time was used up here. We essentially had a 40 minute journey down to River Depot, 1 hour of filming at the depot and a 40 minute return journey to make it back for the procession at 12.30pm. It was very quickly explained to the film crew that they had no time to spare and the filming was completed quickly.

At this point in time of the trip, it was good for the film crew to start to understand that some days we had a lot of distance to cover to get to the places they wanted to film and we couldn't cover the distance as quickly as a car especially working on limited track and with Mill traffic. Luckily today there were no train movements but for all the other mills they would also have to deal with the mill traffic and they couldn't occupy any mainline for any length of time. The crew very quickly realised this and planned things accordingly.

It was now an express run down to River Depot. We passed Mill Farm Loop, passed the lines to Paynters Creek and Maroochy Road, and up towards Bli Bli and the Bli Bli Castle. The line at this point winds its way through some very low lying areas and through some hobby farms with some sort of tree farming. Now we started to climb at a fair rate as we crossed the Bli Bli Road where we were met by a number of photographers. From here we entered a very deep cutting which is almost covered by a tree canopy. The beating sound of the loco and the spine chilling sound of the whistle brought a smile to our faces. We now quickly realised that we actually doing what we had planned for the last two years. At the other end of the cutting we passed the branch line to the Punt Line.

Shortly after this we encountered our first physical obstacle. This obstacle took on the appearance of a white Mitsubishi Pajero parked just beside the line but it wasn't parked far enough away for us to squeeze through. George Hadley our Mill representative and Tramway Engineer, was most angry with the owner and he blew the loco whistle for a good 10 minutes. We nearly gave up and it was suggested that we just push the four wheel drive out of the way with the loco. At that time the owner returned to move her car. Her comment was 'I didn't know that the trains were operating

Sunday 13 August

Paul: Since the Mill was closed today, nothing could be done so we all went sight seeing for the day.

on a Saturday.' George very quickly reminded her that the line always had right of way and was supposed to be free at all times especially in cane season as full or empty bins may have to be moved, track work done etc, at any time of the day. The lady continued to argue with George and the film crew filmed it all. George advised her that if it was a full load of cane returning to the Mill it would not have stopped in time and her vehicle may be a wright-off and the lady started to argue again. To avoid any further confrontation we just pushed our way towards the vehicle and she quickly got the message and moved it.

We continued towards River Depot past Thomas Line, Camp Flat Line and Dunethin Line. Once again we were met by a huge spectrum of photographers and on lookers at River Depot. At this point filming was done of George Hadley lowering the lift bridge that crosses the Maroochy River. Once this was done many shots were taken of us approaching the bridge and crossing it from the bridge itself, from the shore, from the train and from a boat which one of the local residents kindly supplied. We spent about 1_ hours here filming all the different angles and scenes.

At the completion of filming, we ran the loco around the wagons and made an express trip back towards the Mill as we were running out of time to be back for the procession. Tony drove back and when we arrived at Howard Street Yard we had to fill the side tanks with the water from our reserve tank in the tool wagon. This was an opportunity for us to use the water pump for the first time. We set up and it only took 4 minutes to load the 1200 litres of water into the side tanks.

Now we had to wait 10-15 minutes before we could head up towards the main street for the procession. Tony headed out of the yard and up closer towards the old highway and we waited for the signal to cross the highway signalling the start of the procession. As we crossed the highway the loco primed badly and showered onlookers with a lovely concoction of water, ash and boiler feed treatment. Back at the Mill we ran around the wagons (with the aid of a tow rope on this occasion) and at this point lunch was looking great.

Larry Zetlin, the producer then organised with George Hadley to do some more filming later that afternoon to get some more pick up shots. We filmed us proceeding down Howard Street this time from the footpath. Once in Howard Street Yard, Shane took over as driver and headed out through the 'Speedway' and to Mill Farm Loop. The film crew filmed us from the hillside as we passed through the valley in the afternoon sun.

We returned to the Mill and shut the loco down and started to pack up the equipment ready for transport on Monday. Since the loco primed during the day, the tarps over the wagons were covered in dirt and they had to be cleaned.

After all was done we cleaned up and went back to our motel rooms to have a rest and prepare for dinner. The film crew decided to show us some footage of the day's work. The footage was great and the loco never looked better!. It shined from every angle and a sense of achievement was felt by all of us.

Monday 14 August: Bundaberg

Bob: The fields were still too wet for cutting and hence, the loco crews and mill workers were put to use by having a big clean up as the new owners of Bundaberg Sugar (which Moreton Mill is part of) were arriving the next day at 8.00am. Our schedule meant that the loco and two wagons had to be loaded up onto road transport and they headed for Bundaberg approximately 300 km north. The loco and wagons were unloaded that afternoon at Millaquin sugar mill loco depot and pushed into the loco shed by diesel. This mill had 3 BFC's. These were No's one, three and six. They had 2x 0-6-2, and 1 x 0-4-2. One Bundy is still stored at the mill.

Paul: For the first time we had to dismantle the wagons and canopies, load it onto a single tri-axle drop-deck trailer to transport it to Bundaberg. The measurements all added up but this was different to actually loading the truck. Our crane arrived and we started to load the trailer. First the loco went on in the middle of the trailer. The loco rested on two sleepers placed under the front and rear buffer plates. The two wagons were the harder two to place as it was difficult to decide whether to support the axle boxes or place the wheels themselves on the sleepers. It was decided that the axle box protectors would bend so we placed the wheels directly on the sleepers and then we used triangular 'sprags' to chock the wheels to help prevent the wagons from moving. These were then nailed down. Now was the

Tuesday 15 August

Bob: A condition of entering the Mills work areas meant that our four crew members would have to participate in a Safety Accreditation course at each mill. After this task was completed, the loco was filled with water the fire was lit and running gear oiled up. The crew washed the loco and wagons and prepared them for an afternoon of filming in the mill area.

Paul: Our first task this morning was to "sign in" as Mill visitors and then do one of the many safety induction courses over the period of the trip. At the loco shed we pushed BFC-5 out of the shed and lit the fire. We filled the side tanks and begun the process of cleaning the loco by polishing the brass and washing it down. We put the loco back over the pit in the loco shed to wash down the motion and underframe with kerosene. One of the maintenance staff approached us and said he had some degreaser that would make it a lot easier, he wasn't wrong. We sprayed this cocktail on and the grease, oil and dirt just dripped off the underframe and motion. We all agreed that we should buy several drums of this stuff for Woodford.

Soon after, Harvey Flanders, Mill Technologist from Bundaberg Foundry, showed up. I had rung Harvey to come and look at our steam leak to see if it could be easily fixed or was it going to be a huge job that would delay the documentary. Harvey climbed under the loco and agreed that it was one of the header pipes and most likely the left one. He suspected that the leak was around the area where the pipe went through the smoke box. Harvey said this was a common problem and that the Foundry would be more than happy to have a closer look at it and repair it when we got to the Foundry later in the week.

The rest of the morning was spent preparing the loco and wagons, talking to Mill employees and getting some coal

onerous task of chaining the whole load down. The process took about 2 hours.

Now we had another problem. The truck trailer had no lights and we had to find a trailer lead that was compatible for the truck and trailer. Once found, we hooked up the trailer and headed towards Bundaberg.

We had lunch at the BP Service Station at Maryborough South at about 2pm. I was constantly on the phone to Bundaberg Sugar between Nambour and Bundaberg to make final arrangements and give them an estimated time of arrival. We arrived in Bundaberg at around 3.30pm and we had a problem. The crane that was organised many months before was on a job and couldn't be used so a replacement had to be organised. I spoke with the crane company what was needed and the weights of the loco and wagons and it was agreed that a spreader bar would be the best way to lift the wagons.

The owner of the cranes personally came down to unload the gear and he did so with the upmost precision. Many press members came to witness the unloading and I was interviewed by both newspaper and radio reporters. The wagons were pushed into Millaquin Mill's loco shed. Next the loco was lifted and the truck was driven out from underneath and the loco was lowered onto the track.

We started to fill the boiler for an early start the next day.

ready for the next couple of days. During this time several Millaquin locos came and went including "Elliott" (a 32 Ton Bundaberg Foundry loco built 1991), Loco 731 (a 24 Ton Baldwin of 1973 ex Bingera Mill), Loco 752 (a 24 Ton Baldwin of 1975) and Loco 59 (a 20 Ton Clyde BN 65,441 of 1965).

Ross Driver, a mill draftsman and a steam loco driver in his younger days, came down to visit us. He shared stories of his steam days and told us about the Bundaberg Botanical Gardens Railway which he helps run. Ross also organised a test of our boiler water to see how it fared up. These tests included pH and total dissolved solids, alkalinity, phosphate and sodium sulphite levels. All of which were in a satisfactory range.

After lunch the film crew arrived to attach the camera to the loco via a scaffold frame which held the camera out to one side of the loco. Shots of the smoke stack and smoke box along with passing scenery could be filmed from here. As filming started we only got about 150 metres until we got to a pole next to the track which was too close for us to get past with the camera and frame attached. With much frustration, Craig our cameraman removed the camera which took him 40 minutes to set up.

A large crowd had now gathered to watch the filming around Millaquin's yard for the afternoon. The filming this afternoon was supposed to show us arriving at Millaquin. The way we did this was to appear to enter the Mill from behind the Mill on the empty bin line. Several shots were taken of us running up and back along the empties line past all the spectators.

After we achieved this we pushed back to the loco shed and banked the loco overnight.

Wednesday 16 August

Bob: We had an early start to ready the train for more film work in mill area then after the rest of loco fleet had departed, BFC5 headed through the full and empty yards onto the main line where more film work took place. A few 'takes' happen just out of the mill yard and it is not long before loaded trains of cane hauled by the diesel mill fleet start heading back to the mill. BFC5 had to return to the Mill yard to allow passage of full trains. By this time a large crowd had gathered as the local radio station was broadcasting the movement of BFC5. This day was also the Brisbane Exhibition Show day which might have been responsible for the huge number of on-lookers. I know of at least 20 rail fans that traveled from Brisbane the evening before on the QR Tilt Train to see the action on this day.

Lots of locals were now watching the filming and often standing in the way of photographers. Once BFC5 crossed Bargara Road and moved into the cane fields, people moved on and left the film crew and rail fans to take their photographs. The train moved onto the Sugar Research siding - Telegraph siding - which is about 2.5 km long. A lot of time was spent just off the main line at the boundary fence at a school. A number of students gathered along this fence to watch the film crew at work.

After a time, the train moved up to where rail fans were waiting and then onto the end of the line. By this time the loco is getting low on water in the side tanks. As luck would have it, the local council was doing road repair work near where the filming was being done. We asked the water truck driver if he would oblige by filling the loco, and after seeking permission from his Foreman we were back in business (no more jokes about council workers leaning on shovels for me!) Several more hours were spent in this area and then it was back to the mainline and headed south some 3 km away from the mill to a "run around siding". More filming was undertaken here & we let several trains pass us, then it was back to the mill to drop the fire & retire the loco in the loco shed for the night.

Paul: Minimal loco preparation was required this morning and we were ready to roll at 9am. First we had to wait for the change in shift so we could follow out the locos so we wouldn't get in their way. Jeff Driver was our Mill employee

Thursday 17 August

Bob: Another early morning start as we loaded the loco and wagons onto our road transport and shifted the train a short distance across the Burnett River, which divides Bundaberg. Arriving at the Bundaberg Foundry (where BFC5 was built in 1952) the loco was unloaded & placed on specially prepared track. Fitters at the foundry decided to investigate a steam leak under the smoke box. The fire crete was removed at the bottom of the smoke box allowing human access to the saddle and the steam delivery pipe for the left hand cylinder. A hole was eventually located and patched. One our crew with a sense of humor said, "the loco was back for its 50 year warranty service". The mill staff wondered if he was serious! The service hole was covered and fire crete replaced. The fire was lit and after some hours the train was steamed in and out of the foundry building where it was built. This was a nostalgic event for many of us. Outside the Erecting Shed are ex QR DH Class loco's waiting to be converted from 3'6" to 2' gauge. They are DH 29, 41 & 47, also SRA 7336. Another loco on site was an ex-NSW branch line and shunting loco. The foundry has previously converted a Western Australian 'M' class DH from 3'6" to 2'. Walkers were the first company to investigate and convert

on the footplate for the day and he too was an old steam driver and he shared his steam day stories just like his brother Ross. Jeff was currently a driver and mainly drove "Elliott". He also trains and assesses the other drivers in the Mill.

Martin was the driver for the day and Shane was his fireman. We followed one of the Baldwin's out with a rake of empties and we were followed by one of the Clyde's with a small rake of empties. Once the Baldwin in front of us had cleared, we proceeded to one of the sidings in No. 2 yard to allow all the other locos to clear. "Elliott" returned with a load of fulls and we were right to proceed up towards Bargara Road where we were filmed travelling past many houses. We crossed Bargara Road next to Bundaberg Brewers several times before we had to proceed to get off the main line.

Most of our filming was to occur on a branch line called Margam Branch which is approximately 1.5 kilometres in length. At Margam Junction we stopped at St James Private School for some of the school children to look at the loco. Various bits of filming were done along this short branch line from all sorts of angles. Closer to Margam we stopped at some road works where the local council happily topped up our side tanks from their water truck.

We then pushed back to the main line again and headed out further along the main line past a major passing loop, across Burnett Heads Road and into a small siding where we were to have lunch but it was decided to get back to the Mill as soon as possible so we could load the loco to take it to the Foundry.

After Loco 732 (a 22 Ton Baldwin of 1973) passed with a rake of full bins we continued out along the Redsoil Branch to another passing loop where we ran around the train before returning to the Mill.

We quickly shut the loco down and no sooner had we uncoupled everything and put things away, the truck and the crane had arrived ready to load us. This was the only time that we didn't empty the boiler and we transported it full. It was a race against time to get it to the Bundaberg Foundry before it closed.

the hydraulic locos from the larger gauges back to two-foot for sugar cane haulage which appears to have been most successful.

Paul: It was a 7am start at the Foundry this morning to unload the loco and find out where this steam leak was coming from. The Foundry had laid some temporary rail for us. This track was fairly elaborate 60 pound rail with concrete sleepers and it extended for approximately 100 metres from inside the Foundry where Bundy was built some 48 years previously, to the fence line of the Foundry.

Harvey Flanders took hold of the situation and he pressurised the boiler with compressed air to see if we could find the leak. The smoke box was opened and cleaned and the leak was identified in the left header pipe at the level where it exited the smoke box. One of the young employees begun to jack hammer out the concrete refractory and the hole in the pipe was found. It was approximately 3 centimetres in length and 1.5 centimetres wide and it was decided to patch it by welding it up as a full replacement may take 3-4 days which would certainly hold up filming. During this discussion and repair, filming took place.

Once welded, the pressure test was done again with no leak. Some new refractory was placed and dried using an oxy torch in the firebox to heat it gently for an hour or so. A fire was then lit, once again with the oxy torch, and steam was quickly raised.



Before we had lunch, Harvey took us on a personal tour through the Foundry and he showed us all the different items of machinery some being the original equipment to construct

Friday 18 August: Mackay

Bob: Another early start at 6.00am at the Bundaberg Foundry. The train was loaded ready for the next leg of the Journey to Mackay. The boiler was still full of water, which had to be drained out. While this was happening we decided to have some breakfast. When we returned to the loco the boiler had just about emptied. Our road transport driver who lives in Bundaberg requested a stop outside the school that his children attend. The children were delighted at this unique sight and asked lots of questions. As the school bell rang and the children moved on, so did we - destination Mackay. We had lunch at Benaraby, south of Gladstone, then moved onto Rockhampton with a stop at Archer Park station. Here we found a friendly group of rail fans that operate a Purrey Steam Tram which used to service the town of Rockhampton. We reached Mackay in darkness, meeting a Mill staff member at the city gates. He guided us to Racecourse sugar mill where the loco and train will stay until Mon 21 August.

Paul: We were back at the Foundry early this morning to load the loco and move out of the way as the Foundry had a

Saturday 19 August

Bob: 8.00am we are now at Race Course Mill, Mackay, and two cranes are used to unload the loco and wagons. Two-way radio and EV alert system are fitted (this transmits a signal and alerts the driver of cars, trucks and tractors etc that are within a close radius of the loco). All locos in the Mackay sugar group have been fitted with transmitters to reduce risk of level crossing incidences. Water and coal are loaded the fire is lit, steam raised and the loco is placed on display on a siding beside a busy main road which runs west of Mackay to various areas for the rest of Saturday afternoon. Retired loco drivers and mill staff call at the loco for photos and talk to the film crew about their experiences driving steam locomotives and working in the sugar mills.

Paul: So far so good. We were running to schedule and at this stage no holdups or obstacles that we couldn't get around easily. We were fortunate enough this morning to have a later start and we had a small sleep in. Our main job this morning was to unload BFC-5 and the wagons, perform our safety checks, fill her up with water and put a fire in her.

Bundy. Several ex-Queensland Railway DH's (Nos DH29, DH41 & DH47) and ex-New South Wales Railway 73 Class (No. 7336) locos were outside being stored for various mills to convert at a later date.

After lunch, several old retired Foundry employees gathered for the media and the film crew. Several shots were then filmed of us running into the Foundry to have the repairs done (done out of sequence of course). The filming only took an hour or so before we shut the loco down and packed the gear up again ready for transport to Mackay the next day.

Since we still had a fair bit of the afternoon left, we headed over to the Botanical Gardens to ride on BFC-3 (0-4-2 Bundaberg Fowler 3 of 1952) which has been restored and operates around the gardens. We were all offered a drive and it was great to have driven a second Bundaberg Fowler locomotive. Both were similar, yet in their own ways very different.

After an hour or so, we thanked the Garden Railway staff and we headed back to the motel.

number of jobs that had to be transported to Brisbane promptly that day.

As usual loading went well and the boiler emptied once we got the loco onto the truck.

Breakfast was next on the agenda followed by more packing back at the Motel. Before we could head out of town, we stopped at a small local school where our truck driver's daughter went to school (Mark Mergard of Mergard Transport). Mark parked the loco outside the school and the school children came out to have a look and ask questions.

Now it was our long drive to Mackay which ended taking up the rest of the day. We had a brief stop at Archer Park Railway Station in Rockhampton where the local media was supposed to meet us but they failed to arrive.

We were greeted at the gates to Mackay City by Paul Aslette, Cane Transport Engineer Racecourse Mill. Paul then escorted us back to Racecourse Mill and to the loco shed where the truck with the loco on the back was put into the loco shed over night so we could unload the next morning.

We met Paul Aslette, Cane Transport Engineer Racecourse Mill, to organise the unloading of the train. Paul quickly showed us around Racecourse Mill's loco shed and showed us where all the facilities were and he told us to make ourselves at home. He also showed us the employees impressive function room/facilities which they had paid for themselves out of their social club fees.

We unloaded the wagons with a front loader with forks. Our next job was to unload the loco. Unfortunately the Mill could only supply a small crane and a Franna. Once again we had to awkwardly lift the loco again a process that we didn't like due to the unstable nature of the process. During the first attempt the loco slipped and fell but luckily enough it was only the weight of the loco and no height was involved. On our second attempt, the small crane blew a hydraulic hose and a second Franna from Pleystowe had to be summoned. Once successfully lifted, we drove the truck out from underneath and we lowered the loco safely onto the track and pushed everything back into the loco shed.

Once over the pit, we completed our safety checks, greased underneath, filled the boiler and prepared the wagons with their covers. My job this morning was to work with the lady that was sent to install the Mill radios. This was to be the most interesting process as we had to install three radios (our UHF, Racecourse's UHF and a Mackay Sugar HF radio which worked on the other three Mill systems), an EV Alert system (to warn nearby vehicles of a loco in the vicinity) and last but not least a GPS (Global Positioning Service). We had more electronics on the loco than we could poke a stick at. Luckily enough Laurie Erb had put lots of thought into the power source and it handled it very well.

The loco was then fired and cleaned as per usual. We degreased under the loco and pressure cleaned the frames and she looked a treat again. We loaded with coal, water and filled the sand domes while talking to the crews of the other locos as their shifts changed. The crew of "Homebush" (18 Ton Clyde BN 55.58 of 1955) even persuaded Martin to polish its builders plate.

After lunch it was time to place BFC-5 on display on McKays Siding just outside Racecourse Mill's yard gates. It had been advertised by the local media and the Mill that the loco would be on display. We made several runs up and down the siding and answered questions from the public. Several old drivers also joined us and they had a chance to drive BFC-5 once again. Filming also took place at this time.

Several locos returned from their shift and we helped them by holding open the catch points over the QR Branch line

Sunday 20 August

Bob: 8.30am - Safety Induction course is conducted for our crew and film crew. Two other ANGRMS members and myself attended the one-hour session. Then it was over to the loco shed to clean down the loco, fill with water and coal, oil the gear, light fire and raise steam. We were out front of the mill for the afternoon again taking retired drivers and mill staff for loco rides up and down this 100m storage siding. These sidings are parallel to the Queensland Railway branch line to Marian Sugar Mill.

Paul: Another late start was in order as today was a slight rest day. Today sore us take part in a safety induction course where we were granted temporary driving status for Mackay Sugar for the week.

As we arrived at the Mill, a QR sugar train, headed by 2497H, heading towards Marion Mill slowed at the catch points as the signal was against them as the catch points had been propped open by the Racecourse Mill drivers. The QR driver then decided to drive straight through the signal. Not a safe practice in my books.

Monday 21 August

Bob: We lit up early for an 8.00am departure starting with film work in the mill yard. This was done while waiting for a helicopter to arrive to pick-up the camera operator and sound operator who were to take shots of the train departing the mill and out into the cane fields. The train is on its way out of the mill yard past the sidings where we spent the last two afternoons over the QR branch and crossing Mt Nebo road. With the helicopter overhead, people were coming out of houses in the area to see what was going on. About 1km south the helicopter landed in a cleared field and the film crew alighted into a pick-up truck which I was driving. These guys rode in the back (we were on mill property) and took moving shots of the train through the cane fields. We came to a siding where the tracks were lined with empty

which runs down to Marian Mill for the raw sugar. These locos included "Finch Hatton" (21 Ton Comeng Bo Bo BN NA59112 of 1977) and "Balberra" (38 Ton Walkers DH70 of 1997).

David Ruhle, Senior Cane Railway Engineer, arrived during the day to discuss the train movements for filming over the ensuing days so that Mackay Sugar could schedule us around all their train movements. David then drove me around to show us where the film crew would like to film. We drove via the old North Eaton Mill site where he showed me the transloader for the cane trucked in from the hills. This is a new facility and Mackay Sugar is trialing some 18 Ton bins which cost around \$13000 each to build. There is not much left of the old Mill but there is a loco depot here where several ex-State Rail 73 Class locos waiting conversion are stored, navies loco "Allendale" (ex North Eton Mill 3 Ton EM Baldwin of 1963) and disused ex North Eton Mill "D6" (16 Ton Bundaberg Jemback).

David then showed me Marion Mills loco shed and Plasser unit. From here we proceeded out to Finch Hatton the end of Marion Mill's line and especially to Uruba Bridge where filming was to take place later in the week. One last photo stop at the bridge at Mirani was in order before heading home.

By the time I got back to Racecourse Mill the rest of the crew had the loco back in the loco shed and banked for the night.

The train was put on display again on McKays siding outside the Mill. Tony and I decided to test out the GPS unit and see what speed we could get the loco up to on the 150m siding. We could only manage 32km/h safely on the fairly rough siding.

Today we were shown through the Mill after which Tony and I were taken out to North Eton again by Paul Aslette to see the transloader up close. Paul also showed us the Ex British War Department Hunslet 4-6-0T (ex North Eton Mill No. 4, BN 1239 of 1916) stored at the old Mill. From here we were taken back to Racecourse Mill to the cane unloading area and then into the traffic control office. Our next task was to quickly put the loco away and head off to the Mackay Live Steamers to play with "Edith" (0-6-0 UK tank loco) modelled on 5 inch scale by one of Racecourse Mills engineers. It was great to play with the small loco. We could only wish we could pick ours up and put it into the back of a car.

A relaxing day in all but quite a good one.

cane bins. At this point we were to meet our mill driver for the day Mr. Lyle Saunders. Lyle told us he had been driving steam and diesel locomotives for over 48 years and that next week he was to retire. He said he couldn't have thought of a better retirement gift than to drive a steam loco over the network just one more time.

While we were waiting beside the empty bins some very large Cane Transporters (which brings the sugar cane from the field to the empty cane bins) arrived. Each of these transporters carries enough cane to fill 3 x 6 ton bins. After a while a train full of bins had been loaded and was departing. We followed it on the main line which connects Racecourse Mill and Pleystowe Mill. At this stage we had a convoy

following the trains including the film truck, cane railway engineer vehicle, engineer in charge of loco and rolling stock vehicle, fire truck and at least 2 other cars. This was a dusty experience traveling through farms in vehicles using only dirt tracks. At each level crossing we came to, there was always a gathering of people to see the train pass and parents and children alike were delighted with the whole experience. We changed mill drivers and swapped two-way radios (with Pleystowe Mill frequency). The loaded train cleared and we were off again crossing the Nebo road and QR branch once more.



A kilometer along the film Producer spots a swimming pool within a private property not far from a siding where it was planned a cane farmer would supply the loco with water. The producer had the unique idea of pumping water from the pool instead what had been pre-arranged. On inspection, the pool water was most green and slimy. The Producer was very keen to place a pick-up hose in the pool and pump away! The ANGRMS crew advised 'You are not going to put that water in our loco'. The Producer looking intrigued replied 'Why not?'. Just looking at the water it had obviously gone untreated or filtered for a couple of years. He was promptly advised "not a chance!"

While this is going on the chap who owned the pool (and who had just completed 3 x 12 hour midnight shifts) heard the noises and entered into a minor altercation with the Producer. Promptly the loco was allowed to move on to the watering terminus as pre-planned. Once full, the train moved towards Pleystowe Sugar Mill. We paralleled Eungulla Road for a few kilometers along footpaths in front of homes, a most unusual feeling. BFC5 then re-entered Pleystowe Mill, where she had spent some 30 years working, for the 2nd time in her life. This was another nostalgic moment.

After many photos and a run past the movie camera, it was time to clear the main line as cane trains were coming up behind us. BFC5 then moved into the exact loco shed she called home for so long, nestling back under the same roof, same walls only 30 years later. Many more photographs were taken around the loco shed with some of BFC5's retired loco drivers and other mill staff. One such retired driver was Clem Zunker who was BFC5's first driver at Pleystowe Mill. The fire cleaned, coal and water taken it was time to head to Marian Mill via the old North Eton sugar mill site. Here we changed mill drivers, radios and oil & water the loco. Our driver for this leg of the journey is Graham Bowmont (Stumpy to those who know him). My son Mark Gough was Stumpy's point's boy for one season. Stumpy has been on loco's in the Mackay area for nearly 40 years including driving ex World War 1 4-6-0 Baldwin loco, one of which is still used at the Dreamworld, Gold Coast. Stumpy is considering retirement at the end of this cane season.

The train then arrived at Marian Sugar Mill late in the afternoon. As darkness falls, the loco and wagons are serviced in preparation for some night filming. As the train is about to leave and travel to Devereaux No. 6 siding (where a cane fire has been pre-arranged with cane farmers Vince and John Pace) the Producer phones the mill to advise all the sidings are full of cane wagons from the days harvesting - leaving no room for filming. A diesel had to be promptly located and dispatched to shunt the full wagons out of the way. Full wagons had also been left across the line of vision of the camera. During the filming I was in the background wearing a reflective safety jacket and apparently the camera picked up on this and I was asked to remove it by the Producer.

After the cane fire it was back to Marian Mill. On the way out of the sidings the last of our two Douglas Shire Tramway wagons de-railed on a curve. We had to re-rail it by the lights of a following fire truck and mill vehicles. The train was late back to the mill for the night.

Paul: We had an early start today as we had to have the loco ready to roll out of Racecourse Mill at 9am as we had to leave between the change of shift and the film crew had convinced Mackay Sugar to hire a helicopter to shoot some aerial shots. Our trip today was to take us from Racecourse to Pleystowe to Marian and then out along a branch line to watch a burn off of the cane.

We arrived at Racecourse Mill at 6.30am to find that we had successfully smoked out the entire loco shed but no one seemed to mind. Luckily enough there was enough steam left (approx. 40 psi) to drive the loco out of the shed. We prepared the loco and I got to and degreased the underframe again so it would look great for filming. In doing so, some of the degreaser accidentally made its way onto the firebox and caught alight. At this point we yelled out "Fire in the hull", and the hose we were using to wash the train was used to extinguish the flames very quickly. We very quickly realised that degreaser was 80% kerosene.

Filming started as we prepared the loco as several old drivers had wandered onto site as they heard "Bundy 5" was back in town. Of course they all had to tell us every little detail of every story they could think of about their days in steam. We only wish that we had the time to sit down and listen to all their stories but we had a schedule to keep and 9am was fast approaching.

All of a sudden the helicopter flew overhead and the film crew departed to meet it. The crew took our handheld UHF radio so they could communicate with us and despite the background noises, communications were very successful. At 9.05 a call was made on the UHF and we were on our way. Tony was the driver for this morning's session and I was his fireman. Our Mill employee was Lyle Saunders. Lyle was due to retire the following week after 48 years service on the locos.

We slowly made our way out of the loco yard, past the bin repair shop and across the catch points for the QR line and then across the Peak Downs Highway. We snaked our way around behind the cane unloading facility where we had to wait for some incoming trains. This didn't amuse the film crew as the metre was running for the helicopter. Shortly after we were underway again. The crew got quite close during the filming to the point where we had bucket loads of cane trash blown through the loco.

Our journey towards Pleystowe Mill took us via No.13 Loop, Cowley Loop, Pleystowe Junction and along the

Pleystowe line. We stopped just before we had to cross the Peak Downs Highway again where we picked up our new Mill employee, Russel Borg, for Pleystowe Mill system. Once the film crew caught up with us we proceeded to cross the highway and the catch points again. As usual several takes were required to film what was to become a regular occurrence of crossing roads and catch points. The arduous task of backing across the highway was of some concern but both Paul Aslette, David Ruhle and the fire truck crew that followed us for the entire time in Mackay, assisted with the traffic control.

A little further on we stopped to take on water from a local farmer's water truck. However our producer decided that it would be better to make it appear we took water from a local resident's swimming pool complete with algae. The owner of the pool had just come off night shift and he did take it too nicely when he awoke to the sounds of a water pump extracting water from his pool. Some quick talking was required to convince him that it was only a set up and a cup of water was all that was taken.

Now well on the Pleystowe system we trundled towards the mill itself going via the Palms line. This line closely follows the road and houses hug the line in sections. Trees line the road and in places partial culverts are made by plants and trees outside the homes. Apparently in this section we created a small fire in the cane trash but our illustrious fire crew extinguished it quickly.

It wasn't hard to tell that we were approaching Pleystowe Mill as there many trees that lined the Pleystowe Estate. Just before we entered the Mill yard we were met by Clem Zunker, Bundy's first driver at Pleystowe. Clem was getting on in age but that didn't stop him telling his stories. The twinkle in his eye when he saw Bundy was all that needed to be said.

Bundy was finally at home as we backed her into the loco shed where she started her working life some 48 years ago. We took the opportunity to fill the side tanks again and have lunch. Outside the loco shed was "Septimus" (16 Ton Comeng BN A2128 of 1961 ex North Eton Mill "D3") and its brake van, "Te Kowai" (18 Ton Clyde BN 56.103 of 1956) and "Habana" (18 Ton Clyde BN 60.215 of 1960). In a shed behind the loco shed was "Seaforth" a 0-4-2 Hunslet (Pleystowe No. 7 BN 1026 of 1910) stored with a heap of other bits and pieces.

After lunch we headed west out of the Mill through the gardens of the estate. We stopped for a photo shot amongst the palm trees that lined the line that enters the full yard. We followed one of the bogied Baldwins out of the Mill. He decided to race us on a piece of parallel track and he was surprised of the get up and go in "Bundy" but Tony had to back off when the two tracks joined.

The line follows the main road for about 2.5km before it heads south into the VP line. At the point where the line turns south, Pleystowe's KMX12 Plasser unit was doing some track maintenance. Not far along the VP line, we had to cross the QR line again. This time there was a draw bridge to cross the line not a set of catch points. The Baldwin loco ahead of us went over the bridge and then we had to wait the allotted time before we could activate the draw bridge.

Soon after we had to pull into a siding with the Baldwin to allow an inbound rake of fulls to pass. The train was headed by "Walkerston" (38 Ton Walkers Ltd ex NSW 73 Class BN

7313). From here we continued towards the old North Eton Mill via the Savannah line.

Once at the old North Eton Mill site we pulled into the old loco shed where we had visited by car in the days before. We filled the side tanks again but this was a slow process as it used a hose not much bigger than a garden hose. The film crew rigged up the jib (camera boom) so they could film the wheels and motion, and surrounding scenery as we moved along.

Forty minutes later we were cleared to proceed towards Marian Mill. It was my turn to drive and Tony's job to fire and now we had a new mill employee, "Stumpy", as we were under Marian control. This was to be an express trip with the film crew proceeding ahead to film us pass. This part of the journey was fairly flat as we rounded the hill along the Allandale line. We had to push on at a fair pace as we had to get back to Marian Mill and leave again as we had to be part of the filming of a cane burn off.

We entered Marian Mill yard and we had to dodge all the incoming traffic. We continued around towards the loco shed and we were directed to the navies depot where we were to refuel and top up the tanks. This took some time and then we got caught up in Mill traffic and couldn't get out of the yard. By this time the producer was on the phone every couple of minutes wondering how long it would take us to get there.

Our destination was Devereux line where the cane fire at Vince and John Pace's farm was to take place. Light was fading fast and we were still in the Mill yard. After determining which way the train should face to get it pointing in the right direction for the return journey at the end of the line, we were given the all clear. Next thing we new was the producer wanted some wagons shifted at the site we had to film at, so the Mill organised one of the Eimco locomotives to go out ahead of us to clear the wagons.

The Eimco powered out ahead of us as we crossed the QR line. This time it was the QR line that had the catch points and cane trains had right of way. The line swung back around the Mill and over the concrete bridge that crossed the Pioneer River. The Devereux line was an interesting one. The line ascended and descended constantly and it had lots of turns as it rounded every little bend as it meandered through the hills. Light was fading fast. We arrived at the filming location just on dusk. The Eimco had shifted all the cane bins and was ready to haul them home. We turned the train and the filming began.

The fire was lit and before too long the whole lot was up in smoke. This was the first time that we had seen a cane burn off up close. Now days burn offs are becoming a rare occurrence.

After the filming it was time to head back to the Mill as it was now 7pm. As we left the siding Shane yelled out to us that something was wrong. Somehow one of the two wagons had derailed. Pitch black and we couldn't see what we were doing, the fire truck boys brought around the truck and shed some light on the situation. With a little bush mechanics, will power, the use of a wooden sprag and a couple of gentle manoeuvres of the loco, we had the wagon back on track.

Now it was to be a quick trip back to Marian Mill. This was to be our first night trip. Tony armed with a small torch and his wits, very confidently fired the loco home whilst I cautiously steamed the loco back to the Mill during which time we had to pick the bugs out of our teeth that were

attracted by the light. Once safely back at Marion Mill we parked the loco in the navies shed where we banked it over

Tuesday 22 August

Bob: After preparing the loco and train we headed west - destination Finch Hatton. This township is almost at the end of the Netherdale branch of the ex Queensland Railways 42 inch gauge and now almost the end of the 2ft gauge. The tramway uses a lot of the QR formation including a very photogenic steel and concrete bridge over the Pioneer River. Further west is a new concrete bridge servicing the tramway and road traffic over Cattle Creek. The old wooden bridge over Cattle Creek is still in place rails and all. The old road is also in place but the bridge has been removed

On to Finch Hatton township and the train is turned on an angle not far from town & backed into the station area. Being an old Queensland Rail building, much photo work including a "take" involving the local police occurs (look for this in the Documentary). After we arrived at Finch Hatton there was woman was moving around the station and train enquiring who was in charge. The film Producer could not be located at that moment so I asked her "could I help", which she responded 'Why weren't we told the train was coming to Finch Hatton'? I told her that it had been in the local newspaper as a press release, but that did not seem to please her. She then said 'Why didn't somebody come and us about the train'? I told her "we only arrived in Mackay late Friday night and we did not know exactly what had been put in the newspapers" with that she left.

After an hour or so we headed off to Cattle Creek at Uruba, a nice scenic spot over the creek where much film is used. After lunch the train headed back to Marian Mill arriving at dusk. After watering and coaling, the train headed for Pleystowe Sugar Mill arriving around 8.30pm, a very long day for the crew.

Paul: Today was to be a long day from the outset. Our journey was to take us from Marian Mill out to Finch Hatton and back by night fall and then to Pleystowe Mill after night fall, some 100 kilometres in total. Of course to achieve this, it was an early start as usual.

When we got to the navies shed, we found the shed completely filled with smoke which had caused havoc with the birds residing in the rafters to the point they couldn't see where they were flying and they knocked themselves out when they flew into the walls of the shed. Luckily enough there was enough steam left from banking the loco overnight that we could uncouple the wagons and drive the loco out of the shed.

Once outside we filled the tanks and washed the loco down whilst we waited for the front loader to arrive so we could load the bags of coal into the bunker. Our departure time was to be 8.00am so we could make it out to Finch Hatton, some 34 km away, by 10am for filming. Our Mill employee was Ted Bobongie who was a South Sea Islander and apparently one the best tamper driver in the Mill. Martin was the driver and Shane was his fireman.

After running the train back around the turning angle on the entry for the 'full' line, we were underway by 10.15am. We headed west towards Mirani at a fair pace. A couple of kilometres out of the Mill I jumped off the train and went ahead with Bob Gough to take photos of the train in various places. Bundy was following one of the bogied Baldwins hauling a load of empty bins out of the Mill. We stopped to take photos of it and Bundy crossing the ex-Queensland Rail

night.

Our whole journey today saw us travel some 64 kilometres.

bridge at Mirani. The bridge is of steel construction with concrete poles and stands over 80 feet from the river bed.

En route to Finch Hatton, we passed the Mirani West, Mt Martin/Langdon, Benholme, Ellwood's and Owens Creek branches as we rounded the large hill near Gargett. A kilometre or so after Gargett we waited for the train to cross the river again. Bob and I spent 20 minutes or so trying to find the best position to take photos as the train crossed the new concrete road and rail bridge. The old wooden bridge is still in place and is covered by lots of tree debris. We climbed out on the bridge but when I came across a fresh brown snake skin we quickly retreated to find another position. It was decided to take the photos from a small hill to the west of the bridge.

Bob and I raced ahead to find Loco 18 "Gargett" (Eimco BN L255 of 1990) returning to the mill with a load of fulls. We chased it back and took several photos along the way.

Bundy continued on past Pinnacle and into a siding just before the junction to Marian Branch. When Bob and I got to the loco, Shane and Martin had jumped off the loco and were worried that they had lost the function of the Mill radios and we couldn't proceed without clearance as "Gargett" was ahead of us returning to the Mill. After some scratching of many heads something started to twig. The steam generator was making an unusual noise and it was struggling. A quick look at the pressure gauge answered my question. The pressure was down to 60psi and wasn't enough to maintain the generator. Shane said he had been shovelling heaps of coal in and couldn't understand why there was no pressure. On opening the firebox doors we discovered that there was too much coal in the box and the coals had settled and nothing was drawing properly. Tony got in and cleaned part of the fire and steam was quickly raised. When we restarted the radios and replaced the fuse we contacted the traffic control office and they were pleased to have us back on air.

Once the Eimco had passed we were able to proceed to the junction of the Tannalo Line. Here we did a quick shuffle of the loco and the train in a siding so we could tow the train back into Finch Hatton. Just outside the old Cattle Creek Mill site was an old siding where we once again shuffled the train back into the right order for filming. Now back the right way we pushed back into the old Queensland Rail Finch Hatton Station. The grounds of the Station were well kept and lots of people were there to greet us. We took time out to talk to the crowd and to go to the toilet. Meanwhile Tony got back to the fire and continued to clean out the coals from the fire which took him the best part of three quarters of an hour.

It was now time for filming. Martin was still driver but Tony took over for a short while as fireman. In the meantime, we had organised the local Police officer to drive down the road and pull the train up to do a "Random Breath Test", but of course Shane and I didn't tell the guys on the footplate. Some filming was done of us going through the trees and about 300 metres out of Finch Hatton Station the Police officer came down the road, siren blazing, and pulled the loco up and asked who the driver was. Tony was very quick to point to Martin and say, "Him." The officer did his little spiel about the fact that this was a Random Breath Test and the driver was required to give a sample. Martin gingerly did

so and of course a zero reading was recorded. Naturally, we couldn't have just 'one take' and several were done to get the right shot. Meanwhile Shane and I couldn't stop rolling around laughing in the carriage. We laughed so hard that our stomachs began to ache. After the scene was shot, Tony approached us and shook his head when he realised that we knew what was going to happen.

We now made our way out of Finch Hatton where Tony was driving and I fired for him. This part of the filming was to be done again from a helicopter. The helicopter followed us from Finch Hatton Station, past the current depot and the old Cattle Creek Mill site and then out of town. The line then snaked its way around a cane field and towards the creek followed by a sharp corner and through a small tunnel. The helicopter got down really low through this section and once again picked up all the cane trash and threw it right through the loco cab. As we exited the tunnel someone was taking a photo of us as we came out of the tunnel. He had his back to us standing on the edge of the sleepers taking a photo of our reflection in a mirror (the mirror is for cars to see if a train is coming through the tunnel). I yelled out to Tony that someone was on the line and Tony threw on the brakes but unless the guy moved we couldn't have stopped. As we rounded the corner we both lost sight of him for a couple of seconds. When he came back into sight he was still on the track looking into the mirror. He took his photo and quickly moved. We only missed him by a couple of feet. At that time I thought we were going to have our first road kill and our hearts were in our mouth.

We continued on to the Uruba Bridge which leads to the Beatrice Creek Line. We pushed back down the embankment and onto the bridge where we made several passes for the camera still in the helicopter. We then stopped on the southern side of the bridge and the helicopter landed. It was now time to take on some water from the creek. We got the water pump and hoses out. It was now time to test the pump properly. The hoses were connected and the train was backed up to the creek. The pump and the camera were started and we began to fill the tanks slowly. All of a sudden the water slowed. We had sucked up some gravel into the impella of the pump. We were able to get the bulk of it out but we couldn't pump as fast as we would have liked and it took out 35 minutes to fill the tanks.

After the tanks were filled we took the opportunity to stage some photographs while the train crossed the Uruba Bridge after which we decided to eat lunch at about 2pm.

Now we had to get motoring quickly so we could get back to Marian Mill before night fall. We essentially had an express run back to the Mill with only one scheduled stop at Mirani. Tony and myself were on the footplate for the journey back to Mirani. As we passed through Pinnacle many families came out of their houses to wave as we passed. Just after Pinnacle and just before we crossed the large concrete road and rail bridge, was a small wooden bridge over Palm Tree Creek in a 'deepish' gully. Of course the film crew wanted to film this 2-3 times.

Just after Gargett we stopped in a siding to get clearance from the Mill traffic control before proceeding. After we

Wednesday 23 August

Bob: Yet another early start from the motel at Mackay to the mill some 20 km out of town. The train was prepared and started moving towards Farleigh Mill. Our train crosses the John Cook Bridge over the Pioneer River. Not far from the mill is another change over point for mill loco drivers and change two-way radio. After a time the train moves off into

passed Ellwood's Branch we crossed a cattle grid and we entered a large cattle property. We stopped briefly to refill our water bottles from the water container in the rear carriage. Underway again, the countryside was fairly flat and open. We continued on until we had to pull off into a siding where the Mirani West branch turns off so we could allow an outbound train pass us.

As we had 20 minutes to wait, the producer decided to film a scene where we boiled the billy for a quick cuppa. There was not much fresh water left so we boiled some water from the tanks and pretended to drink it. The outbound train was headed by Loco 21 "Tannalo" (40 Ton ex NSW loco Walkers Ltd BN 7343 of 1995 and converted by Bundaberg Foundry).

Our next filming location was to be over the Pioneer River on the Mirani Bridge. Once again several shots were taken as we crossed the bridge even from within the cab. When we arrived at Mirani Station, we were greeted by a huge crowd. A quick photo stop and talking to the local was in stall.

The word then came from David Ruhle that we had to get going to get back to the Mill. David said that we could now pick up the pace a little as the line was a little better and was a long straight stretch. I didn't have to be told a second time, we loaded up and I opened the throttle. And open the throttle I did. It was great to finally get up a little speed and blow out the cobwebs. We pushed it hard and when we looked at the GPS unit we were travelling at 52.3km/h. We were quite surprised at what speed we were doing especially when the speed limit is 20 km/h. Mill employees were also somewhat surprised at what our little loco could do.

Back at Marian Mill, we once again pushed back into the navies shed to coal up and take on more water. A short rest, drink and a snack was all we had time for before we had to oil up and get underway again. Our journey would take us into the night as we had to get back to Pleystowe before we shut down.

Tony was to be our driver and I was his fireman for this leg of our journey. We retraced our steps from the day before. We had to change Mill employees from Ted and back to our Pleystowe driver Russel Borg at North Eton. We went back via the Allandale line, the old North Eton Mill site and Savannah line before we had to cross the draw bridge over the QR line. We now had a clear run back to Pleystowe. It was a real challenge to keep our wits about us at night as of course we had no gauge glass lights and we had to rely on a small torch.

Once back at Pleystowe Mill (7.45pm), we turned the train on the small turning angle and slowly pushed back to the loco shed where we were to bank the loco overnight. I had the opportunity to take a couple of night photos of Bundy outside the loco shed. Bundy once again was home and stabled in the same shed as it was back in its working days.

David Ruhle drove me back to Marian Mill to get my car. On return the other guys loaded into the car and we then returned to town to find some food. By this time it was 8.30pm and we all were exhausted after a long day.

Farleigh Mill tracks, past Churchill Siding, up a step hill and over the Bruce Highway where several 'takes' are completed. The train moves to an area where the cane railway crosses the QR on a wooden road/rail bridge and we wait for a QR train to pass, which it did in due course. The

film crew was hoping for a sugar train but had to settle for a southbound freight instead.



The train moved to a yard next to the bridge for more film work. After a session of filming in this turning angle, the train moves off heading to the main line towards Jukes Siding passing scenic Constain Creek. At Jukes, water, coal and lunch are supplied. While we were there, two cane trains pass us and the second one stops and leaves 25 bins of cane for our loco to pull to the mill. Meanwhile our two wagons are loaded onto road transport and two of the ANGRMS crew, Shane Yore and Martin Wiltshire, go back to the mill. (Note two crew rode in the Douglas Shire Wagons while two were on the loco).

BFC5 hooked onto the 25 full bins of cane and heads towards the mill. But there is trouble ahead as she primed significantly. The crew attempted every known practice to stop the priming when the regulator is opened. Steam was now down and gaining pressure almost out of the question and water is also required. At the next siding the train pulls off the main line to raise steam and gain lost water in the boiler. It was decided to leave half the load at this point and head towards the Summit. We went through the new large cutting designed to allow longer heavier trains through to Farleigh Mill. Prior to the cutting, trains had to split in half to pass this area and a second loco was often used. Back then the loco would have two or three trips to fetch it's train over this area and put the train back together then head for the mill. These cane trains can be up to 1200 tons in gross weight. (Of course when we split the train, it was for nostalgic purposes only!)

Our loco arrives at the passing loop at the top of the summit with 50 pounds of steam and not much water showing in the gauge glasses. I had to pick up one of our drivers Paul Rollason from this point, as he had to catch a 4.00pm flight from Mackay to Brisbane this afternoon. I took Paul to the airport at 3.30pm and headed back to find the loco. When I am closer to Farleigh Mill I attempted to call BFC5 on the UHF radio which I had fitted to my car. Tony Lindsay answered advising me they were stuck on a hill and waiting for a diesel to push them over. I headed off the main road towards the railway. When I got near to the area I saw the train on a level crossing doing a goodly speed towards the mill. Upon entering the Mill's Receiving Yard the train was unhooked and moved to the loco shed where the fire was dropped and it concluded the filming for the Mackay area.

Paul: For the fifth morning in a row, we were up fairly early and off to the bakery for a feed before we headed out to Pleystowe Mill. We prepared the loco and gave it a good wash and degrease over the pit. As usual, several locos were in the shed as there was a change of shift. "Walkerston" (38 Ton Walkers Ltd BN 7313 of 1994) was in for a major

service and would be so for most of the day. "Shannon" (28 Ton bogie Baldwin of 1977) was also outside the shed refuelling. It also had two brake wagons hooked up. Also present was "Pleystowe" (24 Ton Clyde BN 64.321 of 1964).

Shane was the driver this morning and Tony was his fireman. Our journey today was to take us from Pleystowe into the Farleigh system, over the Summit, to Jukes siding and then back to Farleigh Mill. As it was only going to be a short trip until the change over to the Farleigh system, we had no Mill employee on the foot plate.

We started out by heading west behind the Mill but not long after we headed north across the Pioneer River. We had to wait for the signal to allow us to proceed over the "John Cook Bridge" a concrete road/rail bridge where the railway line runs down the centre of the bridge. We had to pick up the pace as we had to meet the press at the top of Church Hill at Mulabux where the line crossed the Bruce Highway.

The line wove its way around all the small hills and cane paddocks with a number of small branch lines along the way. We passed Shannons line, Nebia line, Morris Loop, Dews line and then past Habana (where we picked up our new Mill employee Rod McKenzie), Plainview, Ridges Agius and Church Hill Loops. At Church Hill there was a very steep climb towards the Bruce Highway. This road crossing at the top of the hill is a notorious one for accidents as visibility is very poor. When we reached the top we were met by a barrage of reporters both TV and radio. Naturally we did several runs up the hill and over the Highway for the cameras. Shane took the opportunity to put on a display of steam by applying the brake a little and opening the throttle and Tony put plenty of 'green' coal on to make plenty of smoke for the cameras.

From here we travelled via Mulabux and past Mavis bank and Leap lines to a place called Wundaru where the cane line crosses the Queensland Railway North Coast Line by a wooden bridge. We had to wait on the southern side of the bridge and wait for a southbound freight train so we could cross the bridge at the same time the QR train passed under us. A phone call to Queensland Rail Control advised us that the train would be about 15-20 minutes away. Much time was spent deciding which angle would produce the best shot. The cameras were set and we all waited. Sure enough 25 minutes later the QR train was heard. Shane was given the word to proceed by the producer but it was too early and Bundy crossed the bridge before the QR train passed under. Shane quickly tried to reverse but it was too late as QR 2800 Class (2836) with a mixed freight had passed under. The shot was lost. The producer wanted to contact QR for the train to reverse to do it again before he realised it would be impossible.

The was a turning angle on the other side of the bridge where the navies gang were working. They cleared the angle and advised us that Homevale line was under repair and wasn't really ready for us to travel on so we would have to shunt the train around and go via Forrest Hill. We turned the loco around so it would head up bunker first through the Summit so when we returned later that day it would be facing the right direction.

We now cautiously pushed the train down via Forest Hill back towards the mainline at Bourkes Points where we had to wait for "Seaforth" (24 Ton Clyde BN 61.233 of 1961) to return to the Mill with a rake of full bins. Once clear we pushed out onto the main line and started to head towards the Summit

We travelled via Croyden, Hampden Loops, Hampden siding and to Larsens Points. From here we started to climb towards the Summit and at that time the loco started to prime badly. As the loco was going bunker first, Shane had no idea that it was priming. Despite our efforts to yell to the crew it was to no avail as they couldn't hear us. Eventually they realised the problem and opened the drain cocks but in the meantime the carriages, Martin and I were covered in water. As we entered the Summit, the new multi-million dollar cutting, we were awe inspired by the sheer size of the cutting. Water trickled from the sides of the cutting and pooled at the base. Mackay sugar was still in the process of stabilising the walls of the cutting by concrete as they have had several landslides since it was built. The walls of the cutting just towered above us. It was only now that we could understand the feat undertaken to construct the cutting.

We steamed on over the Constant Creek bridge and to Jukes siding. We had lunch here and filled the side tanks and the bunker. Tony and I agreed that we should double the boiler feed treatment to compensate for the dubious water from the water truck which would later prove to be a major error. Paul Aslette was so keen to get us underway, he even started shovelling the coal from the back of his ute and into the bunker.

The country side here was dead flat, dry and full of grass. Cattle inhabited this area and apparently they wander on the track a fair bit to feed on the dropped billets of cane and occasionally one gets hit by a train.

Larry, the producer, decided to film the cattle on the line and then us having to push our way through. A local farmer was conned to bring a bail of hay down to entice the cattle onto the track. Eventually the cattle strayed onto the line and filming was done. The cattle weren't stupid and they hesitated and once the feed was gone they moved away. Before they moved we were able to push our way through.

We now pushed back to Jukes siding and uncoupled the wagons as they were to be loaded onto a truck and taken back to Farleigh Mill. It was now time for the real excitement that I had been waiting for. I had organised with the Mill for us to do a demonstrated haul of cane back to the Mill. We backed up to the 25x6 Ton bins that had been left in Jukes siding and we coupled up. Tony bombed up the fire, brought up a full head of steam. We waited for "Calen" (38 Ton ex NSW Walkers Ltd BN 7330 of 1995) to pass us heading back to the Mill with a huge rake of full 6 Ton bins.

We were now ready for our biggest challenge. I slowly open the throttle and stretched out the rake of bins and Bundy began to bark. She was alive again. We powered on and Tony and I had a grin from ear to ear and we were having a ball. But our excitement was about to be squashed as the loco started to prime worse than we have ever seen. In a matter of 500 metres we had boiled the whole gauge glass of water out the smoke stack and the pressure dropped so quickly even with both injectors going. We came to a

Thursday 24 August: Ingham

Bob: Today BFC5 and wagons are loaded onto road transport for Ingham, north of Townsville but I had to return to Brisbane to start work on Monday the 27 August.

Paul: After a late morning rise and a sleep in, the crew returned to Farleigh Mill where the BFC-5 was stabled over night. The side tanks and boiler were emptied, the two UHF radios, the EV alert system and the GPS unit were removed and the loco and wagons were prepared for transport to

grinding halt on a small rise. Curse it. We rolled back down into another siding whilst we tried to put water back into the boiler. By this time we couldn't even see the water in the gauge glass. Our Mill employee didn't seem phased about the water level as he said that it was common practice, one which Tony and I didn't like. Our driver had never seen a loco prime as bad as this.

It took over 15 minutes before we could see water reappear back into the gauge glass. We must have been awfully close to dropping the fusible plug. We decided to cut off 10 bins in fear that we may not get over the Summit. With a full glass, we tried again and pulled up over the hill with no problems. We crossed Constant Creek where all the photographers and film crew were waiting. We slowly kept going and I was starting to worry that I was going to miss my plane that I had to catch. I had to fly back to Brisbane to work for two days as this was the only way I could get 4 weeks holiday. I called up Bob Gough on the radio to meet us at the bottom of the Summit.

Then came the next hiccup. Both injectors had started to play up probably due to the constant use. Tony attempted to get his working by leaning out of the cab and belt it with a shifter and he got it going. We soldiered on to the bottom of the Summit where the support crew were waiting. By this time we had dropped lots of pressure so we pulled up.

Tony and I scratched our heads to what was going on. The only thing we could put it down to was that we had added extra boiler feed treatment and it was foaming badly causing the loco to prime. Some of the Mill staff then agreed with us. A steep learning curve but what else could we do. Tony was black from head to toe from working so hard to keep the loco going. He was the true hard worker and I was proud to have him as my fireman as I don't think I could have kept up as well as he did.

Sadly I had to leave the loco and return to the Motel to shower and catch a plane. I made a promise to Tony that we would come back some day and do it properly. Tony and Rod battled on and raised pressure again and tackled the Summit and did so with the film crew and photographers recording it all on film. The Summit had never had a steam loco over it so we created history.

The boys then got stuck into it and got her over the Summit only to be beaten again on another hill. They had to wait for one of the other 73 Class locos to give them a little bit of a nudge over the hill. They continued back via Larsen's Points, Hampden Loops, Croyden, Rosewood, Koches and Managers Hill and then finally back into Farleigh. By this time Tony was absolutely stuffed but at least he had not given up and he reaped the "benefits". My only disappointment was that I couldn't have been a part of their triumph, but, I'll be back.

The crew then knocked the fire out of the loco and packed up for the day and rightfully earned the right to knock off for the day.

Ingham. All were loaded onto our truck once again by two Frenna cranes. This practice was not one that the crew enjoyed as it was a fairly dicey procedure and the loco in particular was extremely difficult to manoeuvre. The loco swayed to and fro with the chains slipping several times. We were always glad to see the loco safely on the truck. We much preferred to use a 50 tonne crane and we always had a sigh of relief when one arrived.

The process of loading, tying everything else down and chaining down the loco and carriages took about one and a half to two hours. As we got further into our journey we got this process down to just over an hour.

Friday 25 August

Paul: BFC-5 and wagons were unloaded this morning and the usual filling of the boiler and side tanks, general safety checks and preparation took place. The Crew then went to fill the bunker with coal from Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 "Homebush" (BN 1067 1914), and during so discovered a black snake in the coal. After their hearts returned to a more sedate pace, they realised the snake had been killed by the loader as it picked up the coal. Funnily enough, Larry Zetlin the Director, was trying to organise a scene with a snake for the documentary. Pity he wasn't around for this "little" black snake.

The rest of the day saw the crew prepare the loco for a night scene and barbeque in the grounds of Victoria Mill Estate. At dusk the loco was moved to a location near "Homebush"

Saturday 26 August

Paul: This morning we were able to rise at a respectable hour as the loco was already hot and clean from the day before. We had many onlookers this morning as word had got around from the BBQ the night before. Once again we had old steam drivers coming down to give us their words of wisdom. At times we nearly had to be rude so we could get our work done in preparing the loco and train. Our driver for today was one of the quiet old drivers and the gleam in the corner of his eye to be back on a steam loco certainly didn't go unnoticed. The Mill employee in charge of our movements and safety was Les Sullivan and I can certainly say he went out of his way to fit us into the busy schedule of Mill traffic.

The itinerary today was to run down to Lucinda Point to the sugar terminal and back doing various different things along the way. Once again the producer and film crew were late, thinking they could do what they liked when they liked. When they arrived to start filming they were politely told that they had missed the boat and would have to wait until the sugar train had loaded up. The sugar train was headed up by "Clem Jones" a converted Government Railways DH diesel.

Once under way we headed out along the line to Lucinda first passing the old stone church. Our first stop was the "4 mile" at a set of points where a scene of us pretending to be lost took place. We proceeded past the turn off to Macknade Mill and we proceeded to Halifax where we took on water

Sunday 27 August: Tully

Paul: Today saw us empty the boiler and tanks again and we waited to load the train. This time we had the crane from "hell" to load the loco. To roughly describe the crane, it was a "beastie", all terrain, four wheel drive, monster, 50 tonne crane which didn't even bork at the task at hand.

Once loaded we headed off to Tully Mill. Our task was to be at Tully Mill by 1pm or we had to wait until the next morning to unload as the Rugby League Grand Final was on that afternoon and all the employees wanted to knock off early. After a brief stop at Chris Harts place to look at his

The loco and wagons were then transported to Victoria Mill in Ingham during the rest of that day.

for the BBQ but the Director in his usual style, decided to change the location at the last minute and the entire BBQ settings and the loco had to be moved. The BBQ was supposed to be a scene where the loco Crew met the Mill employees and former steam drivers and all had a yarn or three. Some of the old Italian and Greek drivers stories went on and on and on, and it was difficult to get a break from them.

The BBQ went until late. Just what the Crew needed!!!!. Meanwhile I was on a plane flying back from Brisbane to Townsville. A commuter bus picked me up from the airport and drove me back to the motel in Ingham where I arrived at approximately 11.20pm. Tony tells me that they only arrived back just before 11pm.

with the assistance of the local fire brigade. From here it was off to a siding at the edge of the cane fields just before the line heads into the mangroves. This was to be our lunch stop.

During lunch, Les was telling us a little about the train movements. He was telling us that each sugar train has 100 sugar boxes each carrying 8-10 tonnes of raw sugar. In each box there is approximately \$4000 worth of raw sugar. A quick calculation sees each train carrying \$400 000 worth of sugar. With about 8 trips a day, that's a staggering \$3.2M being exported a day. Pretty impressive for a narrow gauge railway. Let's hope that the drivers keep it on the rails.

After lunch we proceeded to a point in the mangroves to do a scene with us having to stop for a mud crab in the middle of the line which we caught for later consumption. Several run pasts over a couple of the bridges took place and eventually we arrived at Lucinda Point and we proceeded all the way to the loco shed in the Sugar Terminal's grounds. The whole journey was along very flat ground. I was the driver for that day and it was certainly a very pleasant trip.

After the filming here we proceeded back to Victoria Mill. On the way home we offered our old driver a turn in driving as we did at most of the mills. Well talk about it being like a kid in a candy store, it was hard to wipe the smile from his face. Once back at the mill we took our time in shutting the loco down whilst watching the automatic operation of loading the sugar bins.

collection of cane railway rolling stock we made it to Tully about 1.20pm.

We touched base with Rick Chappel, the Chief Cane Inspector, and were directed towards the navies shed where the loco was to be unloaded. We were very surprised once again with the warm reception we got from the Mill staff. This was the case with all the Mills, and all the Mill employees couldn't do enough for us. They all decided to hang around and assist us with the unloading of our train. Unfortunately we had to unload with two Frenna cranes again but awkwardly we did so.

Monday 28 August

Paul: This morning the loco was filled with water and prepared for filming later that afternoon. For the rest of the morning the train was placed on display in a park opposite the Mill where a number of children came to look at a real steam locomotive.

Following lunch, Shane at the throttle, we headed out back through the Mill yard, through several banana farms and heading south west towards the Riversdale branch via Nivala's Loop. Much to Tony's delight and disgust he observed the poor state of many of the banana farms. Tony thought a good dose of Round-up would be appropriate.

Whilst waiting on a small siding for both inbound and outbound trains, our Crew cooked up the mud crab we caught two days prior for the film. We weren't game to touch the crab but our producer tucked into the crab after letting it sit in the sun for a further two hours. If that wasn't bad enough, we were all advised not to eat the cane from the field in fear of a well known problem called Wheels disease. Larry once again didn't heed the warning and ate copious amounts of cane. He had either an iron gut or was extremely lucky.

Once all the trains passed us, which included a pair of Com-Eng locos, a bogied Baldwin (Tully No. 7) and a converted 94 class DH, we proceeded to a long wooden bridge which crossed the Tully River. Several runs were made over the bridge with many photos being taken.

From here we travelled via Piper's triangle and past Flegier's, Jones', and Henry's Loop. We had to pass a number of inbound trains along the way. The film crew

Tuesday 29 August

Paul: Yet another day of filming at Tully Mill. After the usual loco preparation and a good clean this morning we were ready for our journey to El Arish navies depot approximately 20km from the mill. We had to wait for an outbound DH to take a load of empties to El Arish and then we were under way with Tony driving and Shane as his fireman. We stopped about 4km out of the mill at a back packers lodge for banana pickers where we met one of the local farmers to do a scene of pretending to run out of timber (loco fuel). The loco crew chatted to the farmer and some extra timber was obtained from the fire wood pile.

From here we proceeded through Flegler's Estate Loop to a small primary school at Birkalla where we met the whole school of 70-80 children and explained to them what we were doing travelling with a steam train and how a steam engine worked. The crew then answered a number of questions that the children had.

Following this we continued via Ellis' Triangle, Lizzio's Loop and to the catch points at Feluga. We waited here for a Queensland Railway train heading south. We took the opportunity to top up the side tanks using our pump at a small wooden bridge which crossed a small fresh water creek and during this time we also had lunch. In preparation for the QR train, we pushed back across the catch points and waited. A short freight train hauled by a 2800 Class diesel (No. 2833) then arrived on time (strange for a QR train to be on time). Filming took place while the QR train passed and we threw the catch points.

Once again we waited in a small siding at the bottom of the range for Tully No. 8 (the DH that we followed out earlier that morning) to descend with a full load. Both the loco on retard mode and the brake wagon at the rear, worked

organised with the mill staff and the crew of one of the 94 class DH's to do some filming of BFC-5 from the front platform of the DH.

A little further along the line we stopped at a small bridge and creek crossing where we had to wait until dark so we could do a camping scene beside the creek. At this point we pumped more water into the loco using a petrol water pump and we pump the water from the creek whilst the film crew set up tents and camping equipment. Upon dusk filming commenced with our crew talking with a couple of local farmers during which time the billy was boiled and some sausages cooked.

We completed the filming at about 8.30pm and as far as we were concerned not a moment too soon. Not only was it getting late and with at least a 1.5 hour journey back to the mill, but in the distance was an unnerving sound. The two locals confirmed that it was at least two baby crocodiles and all our crew agreed that standing close to the waters edge was not a good idea. The two farmers said that a fairly large crocodile lived not far from where we were. Of course the film crew didn't believe us. The loco was run around the train in a loop not far from the creek and we headed back to the mill. An express run was made and we arrived at the mill at 10.20pm and both Martin and I had not eaten, but Tony and Shane were lucky enough to drive back to the motel and get an early night. Our generous camera man (Craig) organised for some pizza's to be delivered to us. The director continually forgot that once filming had ceased, we still had to get back to the mill and shut the loco down.

overtime to keep the rake of cane under control. Once clear we proceeded up the range crossing the QR line again over an old, wooden, trestle bridge and then stopping on several occasions to take some footage and photographs amongst the dense rain forest.

Arriving at the navies depot at approximately 2pm we topped the side tanks with water again and filmed some pick up shots for the film whilst we waited for time to pass so we could return to Tully hopefully catching another south bound train at the wooden bridge. A little while later the navies train hauled by an 0-4-0 Baldwin (Tully No. 2) arrived back at the depot after a full days work at the bottom of the range. My job for that afternoon was to drive the loco home back down the range. We got to the wooden bridge half way down the range and waited for three quarters of an hour for the south bound QR train. We did several photo runs over the bridge for all those followers and the film crew. Light was fading fast and our frustrated camera man called it quits. The director wanted to wait a little longer but after trying to call the QR office several times with no response he nearly gave up. Finally someone was reached at the office and they couldn't tell us when the train was due. Surprise, surprise QR was back in flying form. Larry probably spoke to the cleaner. We all wondered if this morning's train at Feluga catch points being on time, must have been the previous train being very late. The sun had now dropped behind the hills and we called it quits. An express run back to the mill was now in order. At last a decent run without stops for the camera crew. On the way home I allowed our Mill driver, who happened to be on his day off but volunteered to help us out, an opportunity to have a drive. He was apprehensive at first as he had never driven a steam loco before. He was use to the Baldwins and

DH's. He finally accepted and with a twinkle in his eye gave it a go. He could not believe the power and pickup our Bundy Fowler had. He was extremely satisfied that he had a go and said that it made his day off much more worth while.

About 0.5 km from the mill, a whole group of people, young and old, had gathered to see us come back into town. With permission from the traffic office we stopped outside Tully Scout Group's Den where we were met by the local Cub Pack. As the Cub Leader approached us he asked if the kids could have a look. I shook his left hand (as Scouts do), and said, "yes it would be fine". He looked at me strangely and

Wednesday 30 August: Innisfail

Paul: The morning saw us once again pack it all up and load it onto the truck. Our destination was South Johnstone Mill. We arrived by lunch time where we were met by Dennis DeLuca, Chief Cane Inspector. Dennis sat me down and we had a good talk about where we wanted to film and what time line we could do it in before he talked to the producer.

Once again, 2 Frenna cranes arrived which the Mill had hired to help unload the loco. Unfortunately both cranes

Thursday 31 August

Paul: We stayed overnight at Innisfail and a relatively early start was in order as the loco had to be completely prepared for filming in the afternoon. It was decided to give the train a complete clean including the tubes, smoke box, a good wash, oil cups etc. We all set to and had steam up by 11.00am. While we prepared the train, "Liverpool" (a 32 Ton Baldwin of 1982) spent most of the morning in the workshop with problems with the compressor.

We had an early lunch and shortly after 12.00pm we were on the road, after the film crew arrived again. Today's trip was to take us down to Japoon to do some filming. Our crew for the trip down to Japoon was Tony and Martin. On heading out of the Mill, we swept back behind the Mill itself and across the Silver Bridge. A better description of the bridge is a huge mangled rusty metal relic they called a bridge. It had a 5km/hr speed limit which concerned us all (too fast!)

From here we started to climb the long slow gradient which snaked its way around the side of a hill and towards Pane's siding. We continued through some very dry countryside where the line was fairly flat. We passed No.1 Branch, Little Tableland, German town, Myers, No. 2 Branch and Miskins sidings. Along the way we crossed several small bridges including Stewarts Creek Bridge which was a wooden trestle bridge.

Before we new it we were at the top of the Japoon Range which they call "8 Mile Range". The decent saw us go through some spectacular rainforest and amongst this there were some more great bridges. The temperature change was really noticeable amongst the trees. We could have stayed here all day. At the bottom of the Range there were some road works and as we proceeded across the bridge beside the works, the workers all looked up in disbelief.

On arrival at Japoon, a number of locos were waiting for us at the old depot. The old depot site has a number of sidings, a turning angle and a water tank but the area is fairly well overgrown. After turning the train on the angle, SJ No.1 (Comeng B/N AD1533 of 1962) dropped a rake of full bins in the yard.

We then proceeded back across Erceg's Bridge over Liverpool Creek to a very small siding on the eastern side where some filming through the trees took place. Now we

remarked, "you must have been a Scout in your younger days". I replied, "No. I still am". When I told him that I was the Branch Commissioner for International in Queensland, his eyes nearly popped out of his head in fear. He soon relaxed as he knew I wasn't checking up on him and all the locals proceeded to have a look over the loco.

Half an hour later we headed back to the mill to shut the loco down. We also had the chance to talk to some more old drivers. A small tear was seen in the corner of one driver's eyes. They couldn't believe that a steam loco was back at Tully Mill.

only brought 3/8" chains which were no where near strong enough to lift the loco. The mill rigger then had to scrounge up some 5/8" chains to lift the loco. In the meantime we unloaded the two wagons.

Once all was off, we pushed the train back into the loco shed and filled the boiler. We decided to have an early afternoon to rest as we hadn't really had any time off for the whole journey. And that we did.

had to wait for "Nyleta" (Eimco B/N L253 of 1990) to return from the Mill to collect a rake of fulls. She returned light engine towing only its brake wagon.

After "Nyleta" had collected her load and headed back to the Mill, we proceeded back onto the main line to do some filming over Erceg's bridge. Everyone took the opportunity to take many photographs. The film crew had us do 6 or 7 runs over the bridge but we had the opportunity to show off with plenty of steam, smoke and a wonderful beat from the cylinder exhaust with the brake partially on.



As Shane and I were the Crew for the return journey, we had plenty to look forward to as the Range lay just ahead. The next part of the filming was to take place at the top of the Range as we emerged from the rainforest canopy. As we emerged, we suddenly lost our radios again. After lots of head scratching, we figured out that we had blown the fuses once again as pressure had dropped too low for the steam turbine to catch up with the load placed on it by the UHF radios. It was absolutely great when the radios didn't work, as you couldn't hear the producer trying to tell us how to drive a steam engine. He would come over and ask why we weren't listening to what he was saying. "Radio's dead," was our reply, and he was happy. Of course we could still hear the cameraman (Craig) and sound man (Trevor) via a different UHF radio on a different channel. Maybe this would be a great excuse in the future when we wanted to tune out. Why didn't we think of this earlier? Steam was built up again, the fuses replaced and all worked again. About 3 runs were done for the film crew.

After the filming was complete, it was back to the mill. Just south of Miskins siding we pulled off into a small siding for a train to pass. Our driver advised us that we had 10-15 minutes wait. We had started to run low on water so we decided to pump our reserve tank into the side tanks. Just as we finished filling the tanks, the out bound train passed us.

We now had a clear run back towards the mill. The only train we had to pass was "Nyleta" heading back out with a rake of empties. We had to pull off the main line to let her pass. We did so on the large decent back down the ridge not far from the mill. This section has a very large horse shoe bend where you can see the whole train wind its way around the hill side. "Nyleta" made it seem easy work as she worked the empties up the hill at a fair pace.

Friday 1 September

Paul: At last we had a morning where we could sleep in a little longer than we had been use to for the last three weeks. Tony and I had to madly race round this morning to find some more gland packing as we had developed a leak on the right valve rod and we had no packing left. Both Shane and Martin went out to prepare the train once again, while Tony and I went with the film crew to do so filming at Josephine Falls. We thought this was a great idea until we had to go for a swim. We were as hot as it comes but the water was a little on the cold side, in fact it was down right freezing. We should have guessed, as the only other people swimming were the "Swedes".

After nearly getting thrown out by the National Park's Ranger, as he thought we didn't have permission to film there, but the Producer once again talked his way out of it, we headed back to the hotel to get ready for the afternoon's filming. The journey this afternoon saw us head through the township of South Johnstone and over to Mourilyan Mill.

While Shane and Martin prepared the train for the day, the technician from Mourilyan Mill came to install the GPS unit (Global Positioning System). The unit has a humungous box that had to be attached on the shelf over the bunker of BFC-5. Tony and I were the crew for the afternoon and we pushed back out of the loco shed and onto the main line through the storage sidings for the mill and around to where the Tablelands high sided 'canetainers' are unloaded from the trucks and onto the sets of bogies.

A couple of hundred of metres past this loading facility, we entered the township of South Johnstone. The town is extremely run down and practically deserted. Basically the only thing open and keeping the town alive is the local pub, the "Criterion Hotel". Lucky for us it was open and this is where we had lunch. Unfortunately for us we couldn't have any amber liquid as a refreshment to wash our lunch down. Heaven knows we needed it as today was an extremely hot one. None the less we had the best lunch yet on the trip and we happily devoured it on the front steps of the "Criterion".

Following lunch we then set back a number of times to film the train coming through the town. The film crew filmed us from every angle possible. From the hotel counter, various shop fronts, from the top balcony of the hotel, from the end of the street and even a moving shot from the back of the Ute. We made about 10 or 11 passes through town in all.

After this we headed east towards the Mourilyan system. To get there we had to travel over a couple of kilometres of the old Innisfail Tramway system past No. 6 Branch and to where the Nerada Branch branches off. This was a nostalgic trip and one that we were very lucky to do. This section of line is very run down as either mill does very little

As usual, we allowed our Mill driver, a recently retired employee who had driven steam locos in his career, to have a drive. He was over the moon and he started to tell us some of his stories and showed us how he would deal with certain situations.

Arriving back at the Mill, we shut the loco down as usual. Now we had a bigger problem that the radio wouldn't work at all. I tried to figure out what was going on, but in the process shorted out my multimeter. My fear now was that we may have shorted out something bigger. After a few worrying moments, the major problem was the old mill radio had blown and ours wasn't working due to another fuse being blown. Another busy day but a good one none the less.

maintenance on it. To get onto the Mourilyan system we had to go in a round about way. The two systems don't directly meet up. We had to first go over a diamond crossing over a branch line on the Mourilyan system, then push back around one leg of a triangle and onto the Mourilyan Branch. Two sets of points had to be unlocked so we could get onto the Mourilyan system and lots of dirt had to be cleared from the inner edge of the rail to prevent us from derailing. Cautiously, Tony pushed back along the angle but we derailed several times. Luckily Tony skilfully put the wagons back on by driving forward. More picks and shovels were brought out and the flange-ways cleared. At last we were on the Mourilyan system.

At this stage we couldn't go anywhere as the GPS unit wasn't functioning properly and we weren't showing up on the GPS screen in Mourilyan's control room. Our friend Lindsay Wheeler, Manager of Tramways for Mourilyan and Babinda Mills, sent over one of his technicians to fix the problem which took about 25 minutes. Once fixed we were under way.

We travelled about 1km and had to wait for one of the Clydes to collect fulls from Grima's Line and Pensini's Line. Once he was clear, we proceeded to the triangle just west of the Queensland Rail line and turned east to head towards Mourilyan Mill. "PJ" (A P Johnston) was one of our mill representatives for this system and he and another employee accompanied us back to the mill. We crossed the Government line as "PJ" operated the catch points and we then proceeded past a couple of harvesters in action and then past Stitt's Line.

Next we had to cross the South Johnstone River via the "Queenslander Bridge" which was also part of the old Innisfail Tramway. What a 'dodgy' looking bridge this one was. They assured us that it was fine. We proceeded cautiously across the bridge. We were a little more concerned at this stage because as we proceeded all the pile-ons creaked and groaned as we moved on. What's worse is we could see them moving precariously underneath us. Both Tony and I were glad to reach the other side. Neither of us felt like swimming with the crocodiles underneath the bridge.

Just north of the Mill itself, we had to wait in a passing loop for the trains in front of us to clear. We threw some more coal on while we waited. A short time later we were called through to the Mill and we headed to the loco shed where we were greeted by quite a few of Mill employees who wanted to have a look. We tried to push back into the loco shed but derailed several times over one of the sets of points which were all single bladed. We were told this was a

regular occurrence and the loco crews had requested it to be fixed a number of times. "PJ" said he had got frustrated one day with this set of points and derailed his loco and continued to drive it over the concrete and amazingly put itself back on as the rails curved into the shed. I guess that was one way of doing it and showing the Mill how to get around it. I feel it was a stroke of luck and not good practice, but I suppose his point was duly noted.

Lindsay Wheeler came down to meet us and ordered the track gang to fix the bent point frog for us. After heating it for 15 minutes with an oxy torch it was gently persuaded back into place with a 8 pound sledge hammer and lots of muscle. The crews cheered as we successfully pushed over the set of points as it had finally been fixed. Our next problem was that we couldn't now get the train into the shed as the curves were too tight and the pony truck under the

Saturday 2 September

Paul: Yet another day arose. By this time, each day just seemed to merge into the next and it didn't even feel like our head had hit the pillow. Our trip today was to take us to Babinda Mill via the old Goondi Mill site. Locos numbers 13, 14 and 18 (all Clydes) were in the loco shed this morning. No. 14 even comes equipped with a bicycle for riding around the train when a fireman has to get off the loco to throw the catch points on one of the branches as the train can't stop just on the other side of the QR line and it is a fair walk for the fireman otherwise.

After the usual loco preparation we headed off but first we had to go the Australian Sugar Museum at Mourilyan for some filming with a small stationary Fowler steam engine. A huge crowd gathered in a park alongside the Mourilyan Harbour line near where it crosses the highway. We crossed the highway a number of times holding up the traffic time and time again. What scared us the most was seeing a Greyhound coach waiting at the lights. We watched several of them precariously as it was only weeks beforehand where a Greyhound coach cleaned up a Bundaberg sugar loco near Gin Gin.

We had an early lunch here before heading off towards the old Goondi Mill site. We travelled back via the mill and across the Queensland Bridge. Our entourage of photographers had us do several runs over the bridge. Both Tony and I felt it was safer to get off and watch rather than go for a swim.

Proceeding on, we crossed the QR line again and headed north at the triangle, past Mitchell's Siding and up to Rungert's line where we had to pull into the branch line to wait for an inbound load of fulls. After this train crossed we continued passed Two Mile branch, Park's Line, Stoter's Line, across the Pacific Highway and into the Goondi Mill site.

At the Goondi Mill site, we looked over the many disused bulk sugar wagons, a Simplex loco used for track work, a tamper, old loco No. 11 (Walkers Ltd of 1956 which was used at the Mourilyan Sugar Terminal) and various other pieces of equipment. Meanwhile we topped up the side tanks and had a couple of cool drinks ourselves. Shane and Martin took the train to turn it on a turning angle just across the QR line again near the Sundown branch.

After about three quarters of an hour here, we were under way again. We headed south for a short bit until we got to Stoter's Line again where we left the main line to head north towards Babinda Mill. Yet another stop was made at the

loco started to lift. We decided to leave the train just outside the shed fearing another derailment.

Once again we shut the loco down and filled the side tanks for the next day. Lindsay Wheeler then invited us up to have a look at the control room and talk about what we were going to do the next day. The control room was out of this world. Lindsay demonstrated how he could see every loco on both the Mourilyan and Babinda systems and he could also tell what loco it was, which direction they were moving, whether they were stationary, and what speed they were travelling (look out guys, someone's watching every move you make). He even showed us what "Bundy" looked like. The operators had put a tiny picture of a steam engine into the program which even had smoke emerging from the stack.

The day ended again and we headed back to the motel.

bridge which crosses the North Johnstone River for several run pasts for our photographers.

We now had an express run towards Babinda as this mill was on a weekend shut down and no locos were working on the lines. We proceeded past the branch lines to Bovrme's Line, Todd's Line and across the Russell River. Just north of the Russell River we ran the loco back around the train and headed west past Beyan Loop and towards Miriwinni where we crossed a set of catch points at the QR line and then we crossed the Highway again. This last part of the trip was extremely dry and dusty and for Tony and I sitting in the rear carriage we were choked by loads of dust.

The main line now paralleled the Highway as we headed north past Mount Bartle Frere and the Happy Valley Branch. We were able to keep up a fair speed through this section for the line. Quite good in comparison to the rest to Bundaberg Sugar's line. At last, late afternoon, we arrived at Babinda Mill, all hot and tired. While Shane and Martin talked with the locals, Tony and I took the opportunity to go with Lindsay to a place called Boulders which is a local swimming hole. It was a little cool, but one might say it was more "brass monkey" water. However it was good to rid ourselves of all the dust.

We returned to Babinda Mill to hose off the dust from the loco and fill its side tanks ready for the next day. Lindsay then showed us over some of Babinda's locos which consisted of 7 Comeng's and 2 Clyde's. This included "Russell" (Comeng B/N A2027 of 1958), "Harvey" (Comeng B/N AD1138 of 1960), "Allison" (Comeng B/N C2234 of 1959), "Morrison" (Comeng B/N AD1239 of 1962), "Josephine" (Comeng B/N A1821 of 1956), "Bartle Frere" (Comeng B/N AH3979 of 1964), "Bramston" (Comeng B/N AH2460 of 1962), "Goondi" (Clyde B/N 55.56 of 1955) and "Daradgee" (Clyde B/N 56.90 of 1956). Lindsay showed us how they were upgrading the Comeng's by placing new motors, cabs, engine hoods and a complete rewiring of the cab controls. The electrician had certainly done a very neat job wiring the cab controls. These upgraded locos included "Russell", "Josephine" and "Bartle Frere" from memory.

Once we had finished here, we headed back to Innisfail but on the way we stopped off at a friend of Shane's who had a magnificent model railway layout which he modelled the Kuranda Range. The model of Stoney Creek Falls and the bridge over it was out of this world.

Sunday 3 September

Paul: It was back to Babinda Mill this morning bright and early as the film crew wanted an early start. We loaded up with coal, installed Mulgrave's radio and washed the loco as per usual. We now had the whole preparation process down to 50 minutes. Steam was quickly raised. We actually took the train around to the old loco shed to wash it and fill the tanks as the hose and water pressure here was much better.

As usual, the film crew were late and then they decided to do interviews with some of our crew. When the crew were finally ready, the producer then decided to push back to the golf course on the southern side of the township of Babinda so they could get some shots of the loco going through the middle of the golf course with Mount Bartle Frere in the distance.

Owen Lewis, from Mulgrave Mill, joined us this morning to see us into the Mulgrave system. Owen used to work at Babinda as a loco driver and his favourite loco was No. 4 "The Kaiser" a 0-6-2 Orenstein & Koppel built in 1908. Owen said, "It was a sad day when they cut her up and I had to leave the site when they did so." Owen was very familiar with the Babinda system and he talked us through it and told us many stories along the way.

We set out of the Mill and crossed under the Pacific Highway through a small tunnel. As we emerged from the underpass, we were immediately faced by a set of catch points over the QR line. Of course the film crew wanted to film this from many different angles. The film crew also didn't realise just how far we had to travel to get to Mulgrave Mill by mid afternoon and then do some filming out on the Little Mulgrave Branch.

At last we got underway at about 11.15 am and travelled parallel to the QR line for some distance up to near Mustafa's Loop where we stopped on the main line for lunch. Vlad Polish, Cane Supply Manager for Mulgrave Mill, met us here to see how we were and then followed us all the way to Mulgrave Mill. As we set off after lunch, a south bound QR train passed us and we exchanged a series of whistles between the two locos.

This section of line was in extremely poor condition and was all over the shop. We had to keep a fair pace but our speed was limited to the condition of the line. There were many holes in the road in this section and all of us held on. I was the driver for today and it was both fun in some ways but frustrating in other ways. I am pleased to say that Greg Stephenson's track work at Woodford was far better than the best piece of line on some systems.

As we neared Bundy's Loop at the end of the Babinda system, the cane became sparse for a short while as we passed through some thick scrub. As we rounded a corner there were some cattle on the line which of course the film crew had to film. A little further on we reached the end of the Babinda system and entered the Mulgrave system at a place they call Fishery.

As usual, the connecting piece of line was in even worse condition. The rails were nearly covered by dirt, the line partially overgrown and the bridge we had to cross was suspect. None the less I proceeded cautiously as to not drive the loco into the dirt, and we made it no worries at all. We instantly knew when we were on the Mulgrave system as the standard to the track improved out of sight. It was now full steam ahead with basically an express run to the Mill so we could try and do some filming out on the Little Mulgrave Branch later that afternoon.



After crossing the dodgy looking bridge between the Babinda and Mulgrave systems as mentioned in my last article, we entered the Mulgrave system at Fishery Falls. Once again we instantly knew we were on the Mulgrave system as the standard of track work was far superior and a pleasure to travel on. We now had the opportunity to pick up the pace and get to Mulgrave Mill so we could get out along the Little Mulgrave Branch later this afternoon. Our Mill representative, Owen Lewis, said we could give it a little. I opened the throttle and away we went. Owen's eyes lit up as we rekindled his memories of his steam days once again.

As we made our way around to the Fishery Branch, still doing a fair pace of 40-45km/hr, Tony suddenly yelled, "Split points." I couldn't see the points as we were rounding a corner. We jammed on the brakes and slowed quickly but couldn't pull up before the points. Fortunately, as we hit the points, the vibration of the loco must have thrown the points over and we proceeded over the points without a problem much to our relief.

We came to a point very close to the Mulgrave River which was a change from the very dry surroundings. At one point there was a branch line which crossed the river out to Deeral. The film crew once again wanted shots of us crossing this bridge. The bridge was a large, concrete, road/rail bridge and it was a fair height off the water which incidentally was flowing quite well and was crystal clear despite the lack of rain. We asked Owen if it was a good place to swim. He suggested it wasn't as there were a few crocodiles around this area. That literally put a dampener on it.

After a number of runs over the bridge it was time to head on. We proceeded past the Charinga and Meerawa Branches. The lay of the land around here was fairly flat but we had Malbon Thompson Range on our right and Walsh's Pyramid on the other side of the valley. As we got closer to Aloomba, Owen asked us to slow down and give a couple of long, loud blows on the whistle to alert some of the town folks who were old steam drivers. The driver in particular who was one of his good mates, was sitting on his veranda in the distance. Even though he was about 700-800 metres away, I reckon you could see his eyes open wide in disbelief as we drove past. He got up and gave a big wave as I think he knew it was Owen on the loco by the way Owen blew the whistle. I think we made that old timers day.

As we approached the Behana Gorge Branch, we had to pass an outbound train of empties. We slowed enough to have a quick chat to the drivers of this DH. Their first comment was, "Owen, what are you doing on the loco?" Owen had only retired as a Cane Inspector a few weeks before. We

knew from the reception they gave Owen, that Owen was one of the well liked Inspectors and this wasn't hard to believe. They could not get over that another steamer was on the Mulgrave Line and whilst they were pleased they said, "You can keep your loco as it looks like too much hard work, and ours has air conditioning." A fair comment I thought.

We had to wait here for a while as another load of fulls had left just prior to us getting there so we had to let him get ahead a little. Damn!!!! This meant a slower trip. Owen said don't worry as he will pick up the pace and shouldn't hold us up. We continued past Walsh's Pyramid, (one of our locos, a Hudswell Clarke, was named "Pyramid" after this). We were only a few kilometres from the Mill and the time was only about 2.45pm. It was decided that we still had time to go to the Little Mulgrave this afternoon. So we pressed on.

Just outside the Mill and just before we had to cross the Mulgrave River again, Traffic Control called us up to stop on the decent to the River as the train in front of us, a Comeng, had derailed a couple of bins on the approach to the bridge and they were still clearing the line. Fortunately, it was the last couple of bins and some were left derailed on the southern approach to the bridge. The crew only realised once they had crossed the bridge as their tail stock was missing and the last bin still on the rake was derailed. Somehow they managed to drag the bin across the bridge were it righted itself back onto the line. Owen was relieved. This could have seen us wait all afternoon here if the train derailed on the bridge. The crane came and removed the bins and within 15minutes we were under way again.

We crossed the Mulgrave River and up behind the Mill, we then entered the Mill yard, past the loco shed, past the weigh bridge and then to the bin repair shop. At this point we filled the tanks and when the film crew arrived a decision was made between us, the crew, Owen and Vlad Polish that we had plenty of time to do some filming along the Little Mulgrave Branch. I was ecstatic as this is one part of the trip I was really looking forward to as I always wanted to go on the Mulgrave Rambler but it had ceased operation last time I was here.

Rebecca provided us with some Vegemite sandwiches and a drink for afternoon tea which went down really well. Tony and I finished oiling up again and we gave the train a quick wash to spruce it up a little as it was covered in dust. During this two locos pulled up to refuel. One was "Number 13", a 18 ton Clyde BN 64.316 of 1964 (ex-Hambeldon Mill) who's cab was lowered, like a number of other locos, so it could negotiate a number of low bridges such as the one under the QR line at Redlynch. The other loco was "Mulgrave", a 38 ton Walkers Ltd DH31 converted by the Bundaberg Foundry in 1995, and it towered over the Clyde in front of it.

It was now time to head off down the Little Mulgrave and we had a loco to escort us as the film crew wanted to film us from this loco. This loco was "Number 5", a 16 ton Comeng BN A1005 of 1955. Owen had to leave us as he had a function to go to, so Vlad very quickly volunteered to ride with us on the footplate.

We headed out around the back of the Mill and Gordonvale Station, past where the Mulgrave Rambler was stored, and across the QR catch points. "Number 5" took off and was to meet us later. As we crossed over the Bruce Highway we entered some thick rainforest as we descended down into the valley. We meandered through a number of cane fields and then back into the thick canopy of trees. There were a

number of small bridges to cross as we hugged the banks of the Little Mulgrave river. The soil in this area was very sandy and as we progressed through the canopy you could see where the flood plane was and I can tell you that in flood the water would have been through the cab of our loco. Vlad told us that every time it floods, the Mill has to excavate all the sand from the track. Up to a metre can cover the line in this area. This was evident by the culvert they had dug to re-exposed the line.

Through the canopy it was great to put your head out of the cab and open the throttle and listen to the beat of the exhaust echoing off the trees. The whistle also sounded fantastic as it was a surprisingly, completely different sound.

We caught up to the diesel at a small branch line that crossed the river. It was decided that we wouldn't film over this bridge as we were running out of time. However the film crew decided that it would be a good idea to mount the camera on the front of the Comeng's coupling. After about 20 minutes, we were ready to film. We backed back up the line a couple of kilometres and filming began. The camera was set and Craig, the cameraman, waved me on closer and closer to the diesel. Most of the filming was done through the dense canopy of trees and some good shots were achieved.

We proceeded towards Rushworth's Bridge which crosses the Little Mulgrave River twice. A steep descent down to the River and onto the bridge was next and we were greeted by a large crowd swimming in the popular swimming hole. The Crew filmed us coming down the grade and onto the bridge and then several shots were taken from different angles as we crossed the bridge.

Now it was time to turn the train. The place to do this was at Buhse's Tank where there was an old turning angle. To get there we proceeded up a steep grade out of the river bed, across Gillie's Highway which was at the top of the grade, and a kilometre down the line was the turning angle. As usual, the angle was overgrown and we had to push back around it with caution. Thankful again that we didn't have a mishap, it was back to the bridge for some more shots. The crowd gathered in larger numbers to see what was going on.

Once the shooting was finished here, it was back to the Mill for the night. The return journey was only going to take us less than half an hour. I handed the driver's role to Tony for the return trip as it was an experience not to be missed with some steep little grades and travelling through the trees. Vlad was offered a drive but for the first time he said that he didn't want to. Tony had no problem with it and express trip back to the Mill was in order.

The train was stored outside of the bin repair shop for the night as the Mill didn't want it in their nice clean loco shed. The usual shutting down of the loco occurred and we banked it overnight again.

Vlad then took us around to where "The Mulgrave Rambler" was being stored. "Nelson" (Fowler 0-6-0 Tender locomotive BN 20273 of 1934) was stored in a shed whilst the carriages were stored in the open. "Nelson" was in a fairly bad condition in a number of ways. It had been converted to a diesel fired locomotive, all oil points had been converted to grease and many new gauges had been placed all through the cab and up near the stack. A compressor was also housed in the tender for braking and to assist the atomising and pressurising of the diesel. The carriages were in equally poor condition with paint peeling,

rotting timber and windows falling out. Quite a shame actually.

Monday 4 September

Paul: An early start again was in hand as today was a long journey up to Redlynch and back. This morning one of the main jobs was to clean all the dirt from under the loco. After some quick firing we made our way over to the loco shed and we sprayed under the loco with a white foam (supposedly degreaser). Well it didn't do a great deal and shampoo would have done a better job.

In the meantime, a cameraman/reporter wanted me to do an interview for a new rural Channel 7 program. This took 20 minutes or so and the other boys had the loco ready in this time. Martin was the driver and Shane the fireman for the trip up to Redlynch and they now had to wait until all the Mill traffic was out of the way. They were to follow "Gordonvale" (a 38 ton Walkers Ltd DH13 converted by Bundaberg Foundry in 1995) with a rake of empties out of the Mill.

Once again, the film crew had other plans for Tony and myself. They wanted us to do some filming around "Nelson" and talk about the loco and what state it was in. This took around 30 minutes.

As filming finished Martin and Shane got the all clear and had to leave without us. They headed out around through the yard and headed north. Vlad drove us to catch up with the train and we did so around the Highleigh Branch. It took a while to attract Martin's attention and once he realised we wanted to get aboard, he stopped. We continued to follow "Gordonvale" out and we passed "Number 11" (a 18 ton Baldwin of 1972 which was an ex-Hambeldon Mill loco) which was parked in Meringa's siding with a rake of fulls.

Our next stop was at the new overpass over the Bruce Highway. A army of camera crews and reporters met us here. Needless to say we made a number of passes over this huge concrete masterpiece for the spectators. Meanwhile, Tony and I decided to sit back and relax devouring soft drink, chips and dip. (Well it was the closest thing to a glass of champagne or beer and caviar when you are out in the open and on duty.)

Next we proceeded up through Sawmill Pocket, Poultry Farm, Wrights Creek and past the old Hambeldon Mill site, passing "Number 19" (a 18 ton Clyde BN 65.435 of 1965 ex-Hambeldon Mill) and its brake van, and up to where the line rejoins the Highway. We pushed back and did several runs through the new Delfin estate. It seems strange for a new estate to have a cane railway through it. (Where can I find a suburb like that one in Brisbane? This would be my dream) It was quite picturesque travelling through the palms and across the small bridge over the lake.

It was now time to have lunch beside the track where it met the highway. We had to wait here for "Gordonvale" to return from Redlynch as there was only one passing loop between here and the tunnel and we would not have made it in time. After lunch we pushed back to the Delfin estate where we got off the mainline and into a small but overgrown siding. At long last "Gordonvale" arrived and we could proceed.

Now we travelled up behind St Mary's School where all the school kids stared in amazement. Travelling through the suburbs of Cairns amongst all the houses felt really strange. Parents and their children rushed to their fences to give us a wave. We felt like the Queen waving back. On the climb up

We left for the evening, found our hotel, cleaned up and went to dinner.

to the tunnel we could look over Cairns and the view was great.

Suddenly, for no apparent reason to Tony and I, the train came to a halt. The boys in the loco realised that there was no water left in the tanks and that was the reason why they couldn't get the injectors to work. We all got out, set up the pump and pumped our 1200 litres of water in the reserve tank into the side tanks.

The film crew caught up to us again and they wanted to film us travelling up to the tunnel with Cairns in the distance. Once again we had to pull off into the siding to allow "Number 18" (a 18 ton Clyde BN 64.379 of 1965 ex-Hambeldon Mill) pass us on his descent from the tunnel with a load of fulls.

Once clear, we had a quick run up to the tunnel. The tunnel is approximately 300 metres long and quite an experience. Inside was obviously dark but also cool and damp. As we exited the other end, Greg Stephenson and Rob Deskins were waiting to take photos of us emerging. They had been standing there for 2 hours waiting for us. I hope that it was worth it? The Crew had us do several runs through the tunnel with them in the cab and then they got off the train and we did several runs as we exited the tunnel.

From here we descended down the hill meandering through houses once again until we got to Redlynch depot. At the old depot, we ran the loco around the train and started to fill the side tanks. Unfortunately there was only a garden hose with very little pressure, so it took a long time to fill the tanks.

It was now late afternoon and we had a long journey back to the Mill. Martin went back with the film crew while Shane opted to drive Rob's ute back while Greg and Rob came for a ride back in the train when they were offered by the Mill staff.

Tony was to drive and I was to fire for the return journey. We bombed the loco up, filled the gauges and head off. About 0.5 km from the depot we had to pass a loco heading out with some empties. At this point we realised that we had no UHF radio transmission. We could receive but not transmit. This had us confused. The pressure was OK and everything seemed right. Maybe it was a dead spot. As we passed the other train they said they couldn't even hear us at 100m. This crew radioed back to the Mill to tell them our radio was down and the modern convenience of a mobile phone was to be our communication with the Traffic Office. We got the go ahead anyway.

We bombed the loco up again for the long trip back up the steep hill back to the tunnel. We choked out the guys in the carriage as we went through the tunnel. (Sorry guys). As we came out of the tunnel, it suddenly dawned upon me that Martin and Shane had rightly turned the generator off while we were at the depot. This must have been enough to drain the battery and the fuse had blown. We replaced the fuse promptly and the Mill traffic office was over the moon to have us back on the air.

As we started to head through the suburbs again it was dark. Now all the bugs had come out and we dared not open our mouths as every time you did so several bugs had to be picked from your teeth. Just the time you need a dentist!!!! The other hard part of driving at night was that we couldn't

see the gauge glasses as we have no gauge glass lights. I had to constantly check them with a small torch.

The return journey was uneventful and we only had to pass two trains. Upon return to the Mill we quickly shut the loco

Tuesday 5 September: Mossman

Paul: Our task today was to load up the train onto the truck and transport everything to Mossman. A Mulgrave Mill tip truck also kindly transported two 1 ton bags of coal up to Mossman as this is all the coal we had left. While we waited for the crane, the navies headed out to do some track work. They took their KMX 12T made by Plasser Australia out for their day's work. I think we should buy/steal one of these for Greg and his track work team. Unfortunately we couldn't squeeze it onto the truck.

Once loaded, we all headed for Mossman. On the way we stopped at the old Hambeldon Mill site where Hambeldon Mill No. 4 (Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0 tender BN 1549 of 1924) is stored under shelter. Also along the way we had to stop beside the road with the truck and loco for a press interview for Channel Ten and Channel Nine.

We headed directly for Mossman Mill and we grabbed lunch before we got to the Mill itself. Once the truck arrived we were greeted by John Quaid, Field & Transport Manager, at it was decided to lift the loco off straight away.

Once off, we bolted the couplings back on, filled the boiler and tanks, and then we gave the train a good wash and degrease before pushing it back into the loco shed for the

Wednesday 6 September

Paul: An early rise again today so we could have the train ready for the display with the media at midday. The usual preparations occurred this morning including loading the bunker with coal. Steve Baker visited us at the depot as he was on holidays.

This morning was a mill maintenance day so there wasn't to be any cane crushed today and most of the locos had made their way back after their night shift. "Douglas" (18 ton Comeng BN AL2562 of 1963), "Faugh-A-Balough" (18 ton Comeng BN AL4190 of 1965) and "Daintree" were in the loco shed. We had a chat to the crews whilst we prepared the loco. "Douglas" was in for a fair length of time as it had broken a journal on the left centre wheel.



At about 11.45am we pushed back around to the tourist office where all in sundry were waiting for us. The camera crews did their filming and I did an interview with a freelance TV journalist and the interview appeared on the ABC later that night. We also chatted to a couple of old steam drivers before having lunch. Also here is "Speedy" (Bundaberg Fowler No. 6 of 1952) which is in a fair

down and took a couple of night photos with the Mill in the back ground.

The time now was 8.15pm and we had to race back to the hotel to shower, clean up and find some dinner.

night. The chief mechanic of the loco shed showed us around the depot, had a good chat and assisted us in every way he possibly could.

The boys all needed a early day as they were all looking a bit worse for ware. Some would say that is normal but I can tell you I was surprised that we were all still hanging in there. We decided to have a look around this afternoon. Trains were coming and going all afternoon. These locos included "Ivy" (18 ton Comeng BN AL4181 of 1965), "Cook" (18 ton Comeng BN AL3372 of 1964), "Mossman" (18 ton Comeng BN B1719 of 1957), and "Daintree" (28 ton Baldwin of 1977). All were coming and going between shifts. We also had a visit from the two lovely ladies from the Mill Tour office come and pay us a visit. They invited us back to the gift shop to chat with Wally Gray, Supervisor - Tourist Operations. We mentioned that he had organised the local press including television to be there the next morning for an interview. Wally also aims to have a tourist train up and running within 2-3 years. They also offered us a mill tour whilst we were in Mossman.

We returned to the Hotel for a beer and a rest before heading out to the local RSL for dinner.

condition and could be easily restored. A number of wagons and a Malcolm Moore are also here.

Our journey today was to take us north of the mill all the way to Lombardi's along the Whymbell Line where we were to film the end of our journey even though the next day was going to take us south to Port Douglas. At about 1pm with Tony as driver and myself as fireman, we headed down the main line into Mossman itself. Everyone came out to observe us 'chuffing' down through the main street and into town. The film crew filmed us from the back of their ute all the way through town and past the pub.

We travelled via Queens and Drumsara Flat to a bridge which crosses the Mossman River. We had the film crew meet us here for some filming over the bridge. This wooden bridge supported by concrete pylons was set amongst some spectacular dense rainforest. The river was crystal clear and only 1 metre deep. We bombed the fire up with green coal to make plenty of smoke and we took some of our own photos with the brake on and plenty of steam.

The film crew took shots from beside the bridge at cylinder height, from a small boat under the bridge and from the bank. The cylinder height shot was great as it was an overcast day and the steam from the cylinder drain cocks engulfed the camera as we went past. From my point of view from the cab, I thought the filming was all over as I thought we were going to hit the camera. The cameraman pulled the camera away at the last second. To me it looked at first that we had hit the camera and the documentary would all be over and someone would have to explain to the camera's owner how we destroyed a \$280,000 piece of equipment. Fortunately we didn't damage the camera and the shot was superb.

Now it was to be an express trip past Rankine's, Nolis loop, Hearn's loop, Hingley's loop, Crees siding and past the golf links. The next section of line was fairly straight and we

could pick up the pace a little. The clouds above were threatening rain and filming was looking doubtful. So far we had got through the whole trip without any rain and now was not the time to start. We passed Missingham's loop, Llyod's siding, Drovandi's loop, Rocky Point Branch, and we rolled into the township of Miallo. The local primary school met us here for a approximately 25 minutes. The Crew took the opportunity to take questions from the 200 or so children as we educated them about steam locomotives and what our trip was all about. We had done this a couple of times over our journey and it was just starting to become easier. We also showed a few of the children through the cab of our loco.

We had plenty of time to spare as the helicopter ordered to do the filming this afternoon had been delayed. We casually trundled on past the Syndicate Line, Puglisis Loop, Ponzo's siding and into the Whymbell Line. Filming was to take place at the end of this line so we travelled past Dipalmas Loop, Hall's Loop and Andrew's Loop where a number of 'cane-tainers' were being loaded for transport. We crossed a small bridge and through Lombardi's Loop and literally to the end of the line. We even scuffed off the grass until we found the end of the rail. The film crew filmed us reaching

Thursday 7 September

Paul: The final day of filming had arrived. The day was completely fine with not a single cloud in the sky. We all got in and cleaned the train and prepared it for its day's journey. Needless to say we were getting sick of it but it was done in record time.

Our journey today was to take us down to Port Douglas to meet with the "Bally Hooley" commuter service. Shane was the driver for the trip down Port Douglas and I happily fired for him.

We headed south out of the Mill at about 9.30am via Brie Brie, Rex No.1 and Council's loops to the junction about 2km from the Mill where the line crosses the highway. In this region there were two or three wooden trestle bridges and a steep grade just after we passed the Cassowary Line. Now we had a straight run south past McCracken's, White's, Twine's, Pye's, Goodman's and McClland's loops.

When we got to the junction where the Port Douglas Branch branched off, we had to unlock the set of points. It took a while to unlock the points. At first we thought we had the wrong key but after Tony and I giggled with it, it finally open easily.

Shane moved the train onto the Port Douglas Branch and the points re-locked behind us. We were now on the formation of the old Port Douglas Shire Tramway. This part of the line was in very poor shape and we had to proceed with caution. If the loco derailed here I am sure the only way we would get back on was with the assistance of the millions of sandflies in the mangroves either side of the line.

As we emerged from the mangroves we crossed another dodgy bridge and I didn't like it one bit as all the pylons moved down as we crossed it. We now found ourselves at St Crispins where "Bundy" (Bundaberg Fowler No. 2 of 1952) was in steam and awaiting our arrival. Finally, two operational Bundaberg Fowlers were side by side. I must say that our loco was in far better condition and the motions of ours were in tip top shape in comparison.

BFC-2 was operating the commuter service from St Crispins to Marina Mirage. They proceeded ahead of us so we could do some filming along the way. We stopped at the Reef Resort where the film crew tried to get some tourists in their

the end of the line. Then some closing shots for the documentary were made as we all gathered around the front of the loco and stood up on the cab and drank heaps of water to celebrate.

We now had to push back to Andrew's Loop to wait for the helicopter. Three quarters of an hour later it flew over and missed us. Apparently it had to return to Port Douglas to re-fuel. When it finally arrived, the side door was removed and Craig the cameraman was harnessed in and filming begun. Since the clock was running and we only had the helicopter booked for an hour, we had to move fast. Besides the metre was running at a \$1000/hour.

The chopper tracked us to the end of the line again, and again, and again. As we reached the end the helicopter started to ascend into the clouds and up the mountain side whilst filming the rainforest canopy below.

Now that we were finished for the day, we headed straight back to the Mill with Martin and Tony at the Helm. The usual shutting of the loco down and banking it overnight occurred yet again.

This night sore us dine out with the film crew at the loco pizza place.

swim suits to drink cocktails by the pool as we passed by. You would not believe how hard it was to find two volunteers. You wouldn't think it would be that hard in a resort town. At last, two were found and the shot taken.



Now we had to proceed to the mid point on the line where there was a passing loop so we could allow BFC-2 to pass once again. Shane then pushed back to the Radisson Hotel where we were to do more filming. We were greeted by Xavier, the concierge, where I handed him the keys to the loco and said, "Park this please!". Poor Xavier was left scratching his head and further confused when Tony advised him not to scratch the paint work. The four of us, grubby as we were, tramped through the resort as morning tea was awaiting us. A massive fruit platter was brought out and the film crew filmed us devouring it much to their disgust.

On our way down to the Port itself, we passed the loco siding for the "Balley Hooley" service. Stationed here was "Mowbray" a 12 ton Baguley of 1954. On arrival at the Port/Marina Mirage the film crew eagerly awaited our arrival. As we pulled into the station, a Japanese wedding party had arrived for photos. Once again, several shots of us arriving from many different angles through the marina were taken. Frustrating as it was we all knew that the end was near with only about half an hour of filming to go.

Before we could have lunch, we had to shuffle the train around to allow the "Balley Hooley" to enter the station and

turn itself so it could then depart on schedule. Suddenly, all our hearts were in our mouths and with a deep sinking feeling in our hearts as we discovered the builder's plate from BFC-5 was missing since we had our stop at the Radisson Hotel. After a quick chat amongst the boys we decided to call the police. Our great trip was tarnished with the theft of this sentimental piece. As we started to phone the local police, I had a tap on my shoulder from Trevor, our sound man. He assured me it would be alright. It hit me a few seconds later that he was the culprit and we were all the victims of an elaborate and cunning payback. The whole trip we had given Trevor hell and he got his own back and he did it so well. We acknowledged that we had been out done. Thankfully, the plate had not gone for good, as we didn't know how to break it to David Mewes.

As we had lunch, we parked the train under the water tank and filled the side tanks in preparation for the return journey. We uncoupled BFC-5 and Shane ran the loco onto the turntable at the end of the line. I jumped off the footplate and unlocked the turntable and turned the loco. I was very surprised that it was extremely easy to turn the loco. We then ran around the train ready for the return journey.

At last the filming was over. We couldn't believe it and it was hard to comprehend that four weeks of filming was all over. Whilst a feeling of joy surrounded us all, a slight cloud of disappointment came over us.

My role for the afternoon was to take the train back to Mossman Mill. Away we went for the journey home. We passed BFC-2 at the passing loop and we thanked them for their assistance. As we passed each resort all the tourists

Friday 8 September

Paul: At last, a sleep in. We packed the car and headed to the Mill at 8.30am to load the train onto the truck and send it back to Woodford. The quickest time yet saw us load the lot in 50 minutes including emptying the boiler and tying everything down. We waved the truck good-bye and the feeling of the end started to settle in and become reality.

Postscript

I hope everyone enjoyed my recollection of our journey. I felt a sense of satisfaction in writing these memories and it brought a smile to my face as I remembered what we achieved. By writing these articles I hope you could partially share my experiences.

Disbelief still clouds the four of us but we all had a good time and we all agreed that it was a once in a life time experience and given the chance, we would do it all over again, be it with a few alterations.

The four drivers would like to thank all those involved in the project including David Mewes, Leslie Beahan, Bob Gough,

Acknowledgments

These diary notes originally appeared with thumbnail images on the ANGRMS web site (www.ANGRMS.org.au). They have been consolidated and reformatted in this note with a slightly different selection of images. Bob and Paul's images are available at www.zelmeroz.com/albumquery.

Moreton Mill closed in 2003, Fairymead Mill in 2004. BFC5 returned to Woodford but was withdrawn from service for major repairs in 2005. Speedy (BFC6) has been restored and in 2005 was operating with Bundy (BFC2) at Mossman.

Lynn Zelmer

were out to wave, especially Xavier at the Radisson Hotel. We then had a brief stop at St Crispins where we had a drink and topped up the oil on the motions whilst we waited for clearance to proceed to the main line.

Once again I cringed as we crossed that rickety bridge but we battled on down the old formation through the mangroves and back to the main line. We got the all clear to proceed and the points had already been unlocked. The only stop we had between here and the Mill was at "Goodman's Loop" where we had to pass an outbound rake of empties. From here it was an express trip back to the Mill however we did slow over the bridge over the Little Mossman River where we fed the fish with bread. The fish come to the surface around the pylons when they hear a train coming as a few of the drivers feed the fish as they pass.

Poor Shane was quite exhausted by this stage but he battled on and got us home keeping a good fire up for me and as the Mill came into sight you could see that trait smile of Shane's emerge through his blacked face. We shut the loco down for the last time. We knocked the fire out, filled the boiler out of habit and we removed the couplings and canopies from the wagons in preparation for loading the next morning.

After this we headed back to the motel for a fabulously cold beer and a relaxing swim in the pool. At last we could let our hair down and reminisce about the whole journey. Disbelief still clouded us but we all agreed we had a good time.

This night saw our Crew celebrate at Port Douglas at a seafood restaurant called "On the Inlet". You haven't tasted seafood until you experience it here.

We then went around to have the Mill tour we were promised before thanking everyone for their help.

A two day car journey home finished off the trip and all that remains is the memories, experience and the friendships acquired.

Greg Stephenson, Bill Blannin, Rob Deskins (and other members I haven't mentioned), the film crew and of course all the Mill staff who made it all possible. Last but not least, we would also like to thank our families and loved ones who allowed us to go away and have an adventure of a life time.

This was unfortunately, due to increasing legislation, and was probably "Bundy's Last Great Adventure". But we shouldn't let things dwindle away. We can still preserve steam and create our own journeys for all to share by extending our own railway.

Paul Rollason

