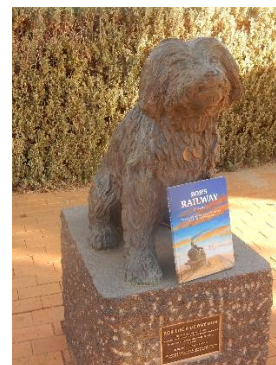


JULY 2019



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Bob's Railway had two launch events. The first was at Peterborough on Wednesday 8 May and the second was at the National Railway Museum on Sunday 12 May

OTHER RAILWAY DOGS

At the book launch events, the question has been asked several times, regarding other famous railway dogs, both in Australia and overseas. I have pursued this line of enquiry and have no doubt that in Australia, Bob was without peer. There was a railway dog called "Boofhead" at Temora in the NSW Riverina in the 1960s but he did not achieve widespread notoriety during his lifetime. In the 1930s "Jerry" was a driver's dog who became well-known to travellers on the narrow-gauge (2 ft. 6 in.) Gembrook line. People seem keen to compare Bob with W.A.'s "Red Dog" who was the subject of a book and film. I'm sorry, "Red Dog" admirers, but "Red Dog's" story doesn't come anywhere near Bob's.

In the rest of the world there have been three railway dogs, when measured by the notoriety they achieved, that stand shoulder to shoulder with Bob. In Japan there was "Hachiko" who was not a railway dog in the sense that he rode the trains, but he was a railway-station dog. His master was a professor and each day he would go with his master to the Shibuya station. His master died and for 9 years, 9 months and 15 days, he continued to go to the station. The people of Tokyo were so moved by his loyalty that they had a statue erected at the station while "Hachiko" was still alive. More recently there has been a statue of the Professor and "Hachiko" erected at the University of Tokyo. There have been movies about "Hachiko".



In the US there was a dog called "Owney" who accompanied the mail bags on the railroads. He became the mascot of the Postal service. He was depicted on a US postage stamp in 2011. His train-riding adventures were about the same era as Bob, although, to be pedantic Bob was 3 or 4 years ahead of "Owney". There is no statue of "Owney", but after his death in 1897, his skin was stuffed and he was put on display in a glass case which is now in the Smithsonian Institute.

In the 1950s there was a dog in Italy called "Lampo" who was a compulsive train-traveller but would only go by passenger train. No matter where he travelled, he always returned to Campiglia station and its assistant station-master Elvio Barlettani. He became famous in his own lifetime following his return to Campiglia after being lost for months. There are many similarities between the stories of Bob and "Lampo". There are two statues of "Lampo". The first is a marble sculpture that was erected at the Campiglia station.

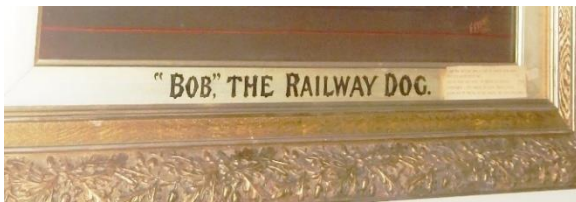


The second is a bronze replica that resides in a private garden in Sydney's Blue Mountains. This second statue was commissioned by an Australian called Col whose travels had landed him, quite accidentally, at Campiglia. He was moved by the story displayed on a board near the ticket office that he set out to have the bronze replica. He made a global search of sculptors and selected Lena Toritch of Utah to do the bronze version.

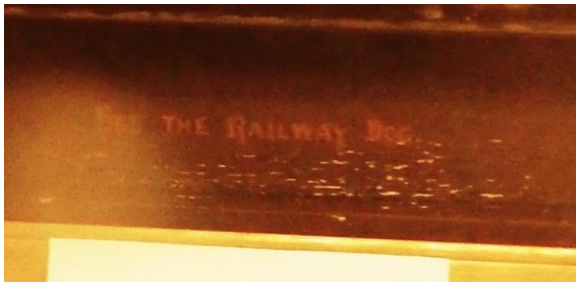
PAINTINGS OF "BOB, THE RAILWAY DOG" BY F. ABBOTT.

The Hindmarsh Historical Society kindly had one of their committee, Trevor Porter, bring the painting of Bob that had originally been above the door of the AFULE office in Trades Hall, to the event at the National Railway Museum.

When I had photographed it at the Hindmarsh Museum it had been in an awkward position and



was poorly lit, and I was unable to clearly see the artist's insignia and date. At the National Railway Museum, it was mounted (appropriately, I thought as both were dear to the enginemmen of Peterborough/Terowie) on Garratt No. 409. The insignia was F. Abbott 1898, which was 3 years after Bob had died.



I had been aware that there was a similar, but smaller, painting at Terowie, and negotiations resulted in one of the Terowie Community bringing the painting to the Peterborough event. The painting was in poor condition with some abrasion and flaking of the paintwork but was obviously a replica of the larger painting. It was in a plain frame. There was no insignia or date, but these could have been obscured by the frame.

The artist had incorporated the title of the painting on the tender. I have sought some information from the Terowie community regarding the history of their painting. About that era there was an F. Abbott in Terowie. In 1889 Terowie established an annual Art Exhibition with one of the awards going to F. Abbott.

WIRE SCULPTURE OF "BOB"

It is said that when Bob died, he was skinned and there was a plan to have his skin stuffed and placed in a glass cage. There is uncertainty whether the stuffing ever happened, but the National Railway Museum now has a wire-sculpture of Bob, along with his famous collar in a glass display case. The wire sculpture has been produced by Barbara Parry of Peterborough. It involved 140 hours of work by Barbara. It is not the first "wire Bob" that Barbara has done, but it is the only one that is on public exhibition. She had previously done a "wire Bob" for a fund-raising event. That sculpture is now privately owned.



Barbara Parry with "Bob"

The display comes with a series of audio narratives about Bob that have been recorded by former ABC identity, Bill Mudie, based on some of the stories included in ***Bob's Railway***.

Even in death, Bob has continued to generate stories

Wayne Kitchener said that as a kid, growing up in the Norwood area in the 1950s the local barber's shop was on The Parade. The barber was Len Bell, and on display in the Len's shop was a photograph of Bob, the railway dog. What was particularly striking to Wayne was that Len's hair-style was parted in the middle and just like Bob's.

THE BOOK ON THE "OVERLAND"

The next book will be on the "Overland", although I am not sure that will be the title. Some years ago, Bill Callaghan published a book called "The Overland Railway" which was less about the train and more about the railway corridor between Adelaide and Serviceton. I am contemplating a title that avoids confusing the two books. I will be dealing with the train, and it will be as much about the Victorian side as the SA side.

There will be a chapter in the "Overland" book that chronicles "incidents and accidents". That is nearly complete. There will also be a chapter that deals with some of the more frivolous happenings – folklore stories. I am keen to hear of those stories.

Then, in about September 2021 there will be a book dealing with the Break of Gauge. It will be timed to coincide with the centenary of the 1921 Royal Commission on the break of gauge, which achieved very little. My original plan had been to confine this book to the South Australian situation but it will look at the national situation.

Naturally I will be seeking photographs relating to both books.

There has been confusion regarding the naming of the Overland, when it occurred and the derivation of the name itself. The SAR, in Weekly Notice 44 of 1935 announced that the name would apply henceforth. But Victorian sources consistently refer to it as having happened in 1926. Some sources mention 1936 but that appears to have been the year that the streamlining of the 500Bs (with the exception of 506) occurred. What happened was that in 1926 the Victorian Railways Commissioners decided to give names to some of their trains, and in the list was the "Overland". But it seems that in their haste they overlooked the fact that South Australia should have been consulted. Chief Commissioner Webb appears to have been not impressed, and nothing further was heard of the "Overland" for another 9 years. There has been no offer of explanation, either in 1926 or 1935 of the origin or significance of the name.

Bob Sampson at the National Railway Museum kindly forwarded a copy of "Bob's Railway" to Museum Patron, Hon. Tim Fischer who has sent the following:

Dear John,

You have a right to be very proud of your book "Bob's Railway" which is a very colourful but also scholarly work mainly re SAR and South Australia rail development, my congratulations and best wishes.

There is a good market for rail books of this nature, my "Steam Australia" book has just gone to a third reprint, unreal and now through 6,000 copies sold thanks to the photos and all support from the National Library.

May I wish you the best through this burst of winter, maybe time to return to warmer Pichi Richi Railway region and all its delights. Cheers, Tim Fischer.



*From the Collection of Stuart Hicks
c1907.*

In mid-July we ventured into western Victoria gathering material for the “Overland” book. We called in on Stuart Hicks at Kaniva. Stuart has an “Overland” Twinette car that is the centrepiece of his “Overland” Museum at Kaniva. A timber-bodied “Overland” sleeping car *Pekina* is also part of the collection. Stuart has the Twinette car fully enclosed in a shed

and is in the process of extending the cover to include *Pekina*. There are many items of memorabilia in the collection. Presently the “Overland” Museum is not open to the public, and Stuart is not yet ready to set an opening date. Both Stuart and myself are working towards doing a book-launch of the “Overland” book about September 2020 at Kaniva.



*Great Western
Champagne Cellars
between Ararat and
Stawell.*

*NR 101 with the west-
bound “Overland”
Tuesday 16 July.*

RETAILERS OF “BOB’S RAILWAY”

National Railway Museum – Port Adelaide; Meg’s Bookshop – Port Pirie; Steamtown Rail Heritage Centre – Peterborough; Orient Express – Unley; Clare Regional History Group; The Railfan Shop – Mont Albert – Vic.; OpenBook-Howden – Paul St. St Marys SA.

Library Supplier: ALS Library Services – Edwardstown.

There is an 8-page synopsis of *Bob’s Railway* on the website.

www.sarlinesbooks.com.au

John Wilson