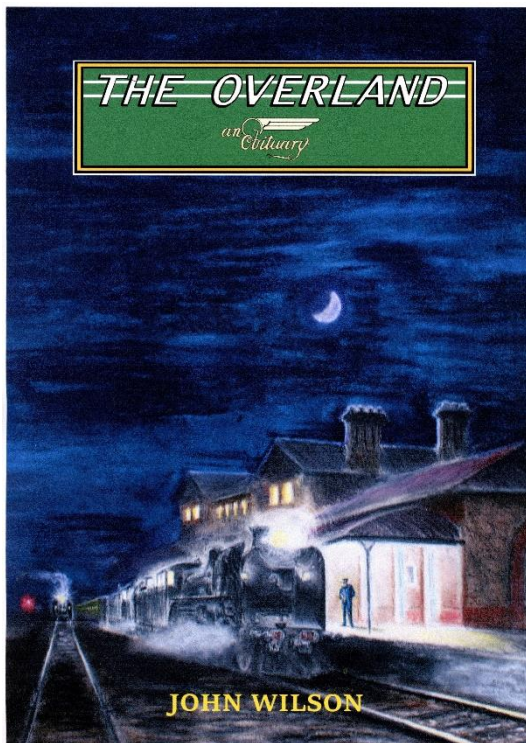


## NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2020

I had expected that we would now be in mourning.

I had even prepared the art-work for the cover. But you can't have an obituary if there is no death certificate.



For the interim I have coined a new subtitle, but reserve the right to revise that title banner depending on how the situation evolves in the coming months.

The cover painting depicts *The Overland* at Serviceton in the late 1930s. The westbound Express has arrived behind a pair of A<sup>2</sup> locomotives. The South Australian 600 class is waiting on the passing siding and will couple on to the Express for the run to Tailem Bend. The painting has been done by Glen Hadden.

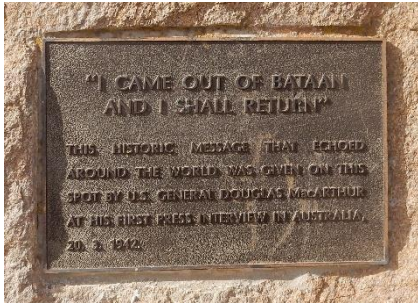
The Victorian Government has extended its support for another 3 months. There has been no advice regarding a plan for moving forward or what is going to happen when we get to the end of March. The question

that emerges from this is – Is the Victorian V/Line looking to take over the operation of a passenger service between Adelaide and Melbourne? I am impressed with the standard of service provided by V/Line in Victoria. I am expecting that there will be some activity and decisions in the next three months. The plan for the book is to go to the printer in late March/early April,



with a view to release of the book late in June. I reserve the right to amend that release into July/August if, in April, there is meaningful ongoing activity regarding the fate of *The Overland*.

One of the interesting side-stories that has emerged from the research relates to the arrival in Australia in March 1942 of General MacArthur. He travelled south from Alice Springs by narrow-gauge train to Terowie where he transferred to a special broad-gauge train. There was some secrecy regarding this special train and there were two reporters, from the *Advertiser* and the *News* who travelled to Terowie. It was at Terowie that General MacArthur made his famous “I shall return” statement, which was conveyed to the World. A special carriage was provided for the General and his family. This was the Commissioner’s car *Murray* and the General continued in the *Murray* car to Melbourne. The *Murray*



car is housed in the National Railway Museum. There had been some uncertainty whether the special car provided for the General was the *Murray* car, but this has now been established. General MacArthur’s oratory has been immortalised by a plaque on the railway platform at Terowie. I had included a photograph of the plaque in *Bob’s Railway*. But when we examine

the reports of both reporters there is nothing about Bataan – what MacArthur said was “I have come through and I shall return”.

We rode *The Overland* at the end of December 2018 on what was going to be its last run. We did not make a booking on the last train of 2019, reasoning that we had said our goodbye.

We have decided to book on the last train scheduled for March. We are planning a rail-focussed weekend. It would be good to assemble a group of rail-oriented folk. If you are interested you will need to make your own arrangements. Here is the plan.

ADELAIDE DEPART OVERLAND FRIDAY 27 MARCH WE WILL BE TRAVELLING RED (ECONOMY) TO ARARAT.

I have deliberately booked standard Red (economy class) for one leg of *The Overland* and Premium Red (first class) on the return leg to obtain a comparison of the level of service. I plan to have proof copies of most pages of the book for perusal and comment during the journey.

ARRIVE ARARAT 1535

VISIT TO THE ARARAT RAILWAY MUSEUM. It is open until 4.00 pm. I hope to be able to convince them to stay open a little later.

DEPART ARARAT 1648. The running time of the VLocity trains from Ararat to Southern Cross is 2 hours. *The Overland*, via the standard-gauge line through Maroona takes 3 hours 15 minutes. The 1648 VLocity train from Ararat waits 20 minutes at Ballarat and has a number of stops en-route to Southern Cross. It is my theory that a fast train journey between Adelaide and Melbourne should involve a change of train at Ararat – this exercise will influence that theory.

ARRIVE SOUTHERN CROSS 1928

STAY IN MELBOURNE FOR FOUR NIGHTS.

SATURDAY YET TO BE ORGANISED – AWAITING ADVICE FROM STEAMRAIL IF THEY WILL BE OPERATING THAT DAY. IF NOT, POSSIBLY A TOUR OF NEWPORT WORKS OR A V/LINE TRIP TO SEYMOUR AND A TOUR OF THEIR RAILWAY COLLECTION.

SUNDAY, DEPART SOUTHERN CROSS BY BENDIGO V/LINE AT 1022, TO ARRIVE AT CASTLEMAINE 1148

DEPARTURE AT 1200 ON VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS RAILWAY, TRAVELLING FIRST CLASS IN THE PULLMAN CAR *MACEDON*, STEAM HAULED, TO ARRIVE AT MALDON 1245. Lunch at cafes etc. in main street.

RETURN TO CASTLEMAINE AT 1530.

THERE IS OPPORTUNITY ON THIS TOUR FOR FOUR (AGILE) ADULTS TO RIDE WITH THE DRIVER. I HAVE RESERVED THOSE PLACES AND PAID FOR THEM. IF INTERESTED YOU WILL NEED TO NEGOTIATE WITH ME.

DEPART CASTLEMAINE BY VLOCITY. WE MAY BE ABLE TO ARRANGE TO HAVE THE CASTLEMAINE SIGNAL BOX OPEN AND CATCH A LATER V/LINE TO SOUTHERN CROSS.

MONDAY -PUFFING BILLY

TUESDAY 31 MARCH. OVERLAND FROM SOUTHERN CROSS 0805 - PREMIUM RED. ARRIVE ADELAIDE 1740

**IMPORTANT. WHEN BOOKING WITH JOURNEY BEYOND (GREAT SOUTHERN RAILWAY), 1800 703 357. ADVISE THEM YOU WISH TO JOIN MY GROUP. MY BOOKING REFERENCE NO. IS GSRR 244706**

**COULD YOU THEN PLEASE LET ME KNOW THE NAMES OF THOSE BOOKED AND YOUR REFERENCE NUMBER. I WILL BE SENDING OUT UPDATES OF THE ARRANGEMENTS ONLY TO THOSE WHO HAVE BOOKED.**

**JOURNEY BEYOND HAVE A SPECIAL (\$59) FARE (NON REFUNDABLE) FOR THE ADELAIDE TO ARARAT SECTOR BUT IT MUST BE BOOKED BEFORE 10 JANUARY. THEY CHARGE AN EXTRA \$20 FOR PHONE BOOKINGS (AS COMPARED TO THE ONLINE BOOKINGS). AS MY REQUIREMENT WAS NOT STRAIGHT-FORWARD I WAS HAPPY TO PAY THE \$20.**

**John (and Pat) Wilson**