



NEWSLETTER

13 JUNE 2023

www.sarlinesbooks.com.au

Hello

You haven't heard from us for quite a while and could have wondered if we were still in business. We are pleased to say that we are on the home straight with the next book. It is by far our most ambitious and we are reasonably confident that it will be released about late November and will be worth waiting for.

But we want you to be aware of some changes that we have made to our operation – we see them as positive moves and aimed at giving customers more book for less money.

We suspect that it is the mortgage stress and the general downturn of the economy that is driving a resistance to quality books. It has been suggested by some that we cut our cost by going to soft cover edition.

We will not. But one of the forces that is pushing up the price of the books is that when we go to the printer we must nominate the print run which is generally on the high side and we end up with books hidden under beds etc. When we produced *The Overland - A Social History*, we estimated on the low side and did a reprint, but that co-incided with the slackening of demand so we have lots of *Overland* books under beds.

I will digress here and talk about the retail market. It has nearly evaporated. One of our best outlets was the Railfan Shop in Melbourne. They closed in January. We used to do good trade in Sydney but they haven't ordered for a year. And at home the orders from the bookshop at the National Railway Museum are a fraction of what we used to see.

Now, returning to those boxes of books under beds, they have been paid for and are money tied up, which we estimate accounts for about \$15 of the retail price. Another force driving up the price has been the commission and fees payable regarding the website payment facility, but it was also inflexible and would not allow us to offer special discount, such as for customers who ordered in quantity and often. An additional problem was its rejection of cards issued by credit unions.

So our new trading arrangements will see us take payment and orders ahead of going to the printers, and we will print exactly the number of books that have been paid and ordered. Payment will be direct into our account.

Here's the pricing structure for this new book. We are not accepting payments and orders yet but want to give you plenty of time.

RRP \$84 plus \$15 postage gets us in just under the 'ton'. More to say on that a little later.

But two books will travel for the postage price of one. So, team up with a buddy and we have a special deal of two of the ***Break-of-Gauge*** for \$65 each plus postage if applicable (\$15) That is \$72.50.

We are expecting there will be 7 books in a carton, and if you can rally this many we will do a carton of 7 books for \$390 and we will pay the postage.

The artwork for the front cover of *The Break-of-Gauge - A Social History* has been done by Glen Hadden and depicts the Albury railway station c1938 where 'The Blue', the *Spirit of Progress* has made an on-time arrival and passengers must change to the standard-gauge train at the opposite platform to continue their journey to Sydney. Albury was Australia's most famous break-of-gauge station but it has been long recognised that passengers change trains by themselves. The break-of-gauge station that caused the greatest havoc was Terowie in South Australia.

THE BREAK OF GAUGE A Social History



John Wilson

With contributions by
The family of the late Hon. Tim Fischer

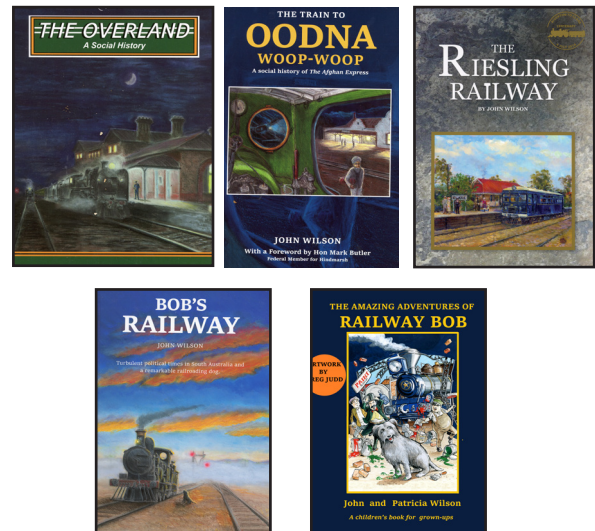
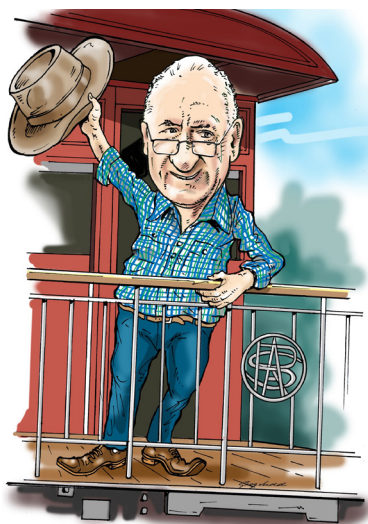
There will be a couple of other deals:

For SteamRanger volunteers and members, you don't need to add postage. Your books will all be dispatched for delivery aboard the Cockle Train. It must be a long time since there were any parcels arrive by rail at Victor Harbor. We will do a similar bulk arrangement for members of PRRPS and the National Railway Museum. The price for those members will be \$55. And, as in the past the books can be collected from our home at Banksia Park, or the Wilson Vineyard at Polish Hill River at a mutually convenient time.

This offer will also apply, in recognition of their special contribution, to members of the Clare Valley Riesling Trail for collection at the Wilson Vineyard, and Friends of the Burra Railway Station where we will deliver.

There will also be a special where you can purchase one copy of the **Break-Of-Gauge** and one copy of those books lurking under beds for \$120 plus postage if applicable. Those other titles are **The Riesling Railway**, the history of the Riverton to Clare and Spalding branch line, **Bob's Railway** - Turbulent political times in South Australia and a remarkable railroading dog, **The Overland - A Social History** and the **Train to Oodna Woop Woop**, a social history of the Afghan express. For **The Amazing Adventures of Railway Bob** we will quote a price. Now the best part. Go to our website and you will find a wealth of material for the **Break-of-Gauge** and there will be more appear in the coming weeks. There are complete chapters that can be freely downloaded.
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This book has been dedicated to the memory of the late Hon. Tim Fischer. Tim was a great advocate for rail. He took a special interest in the Australian gauge problem. He was the Patron of the National Railway Museum. This illustration was done by Greg Judd and will appear on the back cover of the book. The dedication of the book and the illustration have been received most favourably by Tim's family. Judy Brewer Fischer has penned some very kind words of encouragement.



Returning to the matter of price, look at it from the point of view that this will leave you agog regarding some of stupidity that has been engaged by governments, and all because one colony could not get along with the other, and other cross-border jealousies. And if there are enough people out there screaming, maybe reason will prevail. Look at it as an investment in the future of the nation.

I am expecting to start taking orders and payments in August. The planned closing date for orders and payments will be late October with delivery late November. But this is not guaranteed. There is still a large amount of work to do, and the book will be ready when it is ready. It could spill out to January or February.

Please draw this to the attention of others who may be interested. We will be sending out another newsletter when we are ready to accept payment.

John Wilson 13 June 2023

PS. My copy of the June edition of the Victorian NEWSRAIL magazine arrived in the post this morning. It featured an item about the winding up of the Association of Railway Enthusiasts which had been the parent organisation of the Railfan Shop which closed in January. The problem that had brought them down was that the membership, and consequently book sales, was moving on to 'Great roundhouse in the sky' but there were not replacement numbers coming from the younger generation. The books that have been offered to these railway bookshops in recent time have been mostly pure railway enthusiast content. Social history is a different genre, and I suspect that it sits uncomfortably with the clientele that frequents those bookshops. But I suspect that this is where they have missed the train. The interest in social history is very much a wider market.