

THE RIESLING RAILWAY

The history of the Riverton to Spalding Railway, will be my book published in July 2018, to mark the centenary of the opening of the railway to Clare.

This book will not be sold through ordinary book shops. To purchase a copy, you will need to be on the distribution list for this newsletter. I expect to be in a position to quote a price and accept payments late February, and take orders to mid-April 2018.

Newsletter No. 6 September 2017

“BACK TO CLARE” WEEKEND. During the 1920s and 1930s, rural communities served by rail, organized “Back to ...” Events. The South Australian Railways provided special trains and promoted the events. On the weekend of 7th/8th July 2018, the National Railway Museum at Port Adelaide will be doing a “Back to Clare” weekend. This event will be my Adelaide book launch. The Museum’s Bluebird railcar “Kestrel” will be operating over the 1 km section of track within the Museum. Special Clare-line tickets will be printed.



At the National Railway Museum, Operations Manager, Richard Crookall, and Curator, Gabby Sexton, with the headboard for Rx 93.

MONICA McINERNEY’S VISIT TO CLARE

There will be 4 pages of the book dealing with Clare’s last Station-Master, Steve McInerney. Within the book I make the comment that there are two legacies of the railway that continue to work for Clare; The Riesling Trail,

and Monica McInerney. Comment has been made that such a statement in relation to Monica was “drawing a long bow”. My reply is that if Clare did not have a railway, Steve McInerney would have settled in some other railway town.

We had known for some time that Monica would be doing a one-night “gig” in Clare to promote her latest book *The Trip of a Lifetime*. On 3 July, I was approached by the Clare & Gilbert Valleys Council, with a request to have a copy made of Harry Sherwin’s painting, to be presented to Monica McInerney at her visit to Clare on 17th. It had been my intention that this painting would work to promote the book and the railway centenary. An unqualified YES!

4 July was the 99th anniversary of the opening of the railway to Clare. I used the occasion to launch a campaign for the Clare Railway-Children's Adventure Trail (more about that in the next newsletter), by sending e-mails to some folk in Clare. That same day I jotted down a few paragraphs, explaining the historical significance of the scene depicted by Harry Sherwin, and another paragraph about the actual production of the painting.

There were about 250 who attended Monica's event at the Clare Town Hall. One of her topics was a superstition that she has about the number 9 being a good omen for her.



Monica was visibly moved by the framed picture, when it was presented to her by Mayor Aughey. I'm hoping that those double 9s are a good omen too. The photograph is of Monica holding the painting, Mayor Allan Aughey, and Clare's Librarian, Heather Lymburn. It was taken by Lisa Beament.

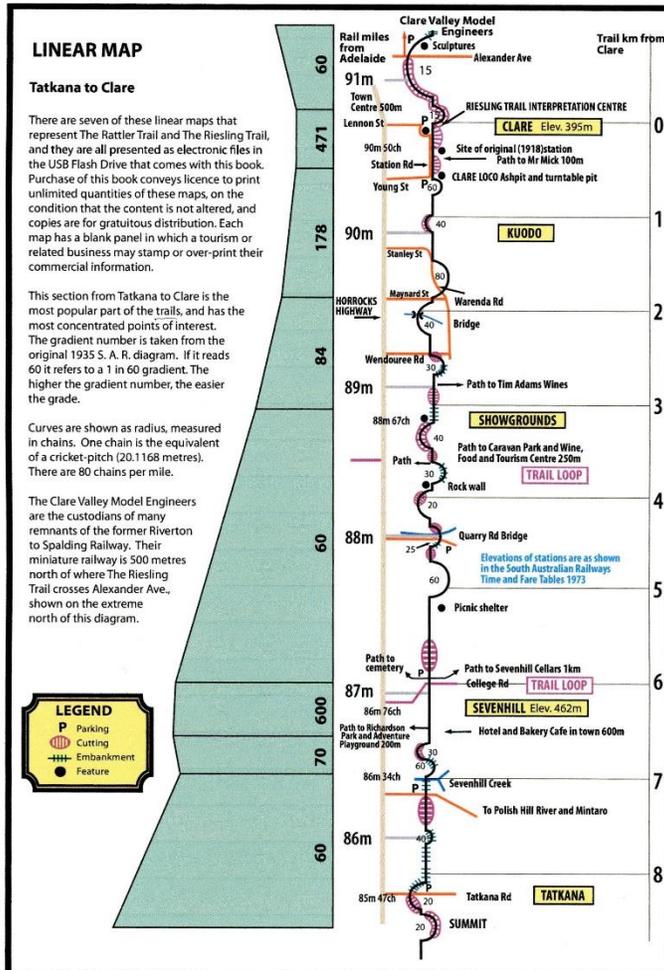
Monica subsequently posted the following on her Facebook page on 30 July.

At the end of my talk, I was so touched (and speechless, actually) when the Mayor of Clare, Alan Aughey OAM, presented me with this beautiful reproduction of a painting by renowned local artist Harry Sherwin, depicting the Clare railway station in years gone by.

My late Dad, Steve was the railway stationmaster at Clare for 35 years...the painting shows not only the station building, and my Dad's office, but in the distance is the of our family home in Clare, the stationmaster's house. I'll be taking this painting back to Dublin with me this week, and it will be given pride of place in my attic office.

BOB, THE RAILWAY DOG. Bob, in real life had a habit of turning up where he was least expected. So too in legend. Bob was before the Riverton to Spalding branch-line (he died in 1895) but was a regular visitor to Riverton. I have been researching the "Terowie-line" drivers of the Broken Hill Express. There is an interesting twist to the Bob story.

PROGRESS WITH THE BOOK. I have finished the first 170 pages of the book, and they are now at the printer to have the page layout done. I will still accept material and shall accommodate that in Addenda pages. I expect to “close off” for inclusion in the Addenda about March, to be in a position to set a price for the book in early April, and to close the order-book mid-April, with printing to be done during May/June. There will be two public book-launches. The first will be on the morning of the centenary, Wednesday 4 July, and will be in the Clare



Valley. The second will span the Friday 6 July to Sunday 8th July, at the National Railway Museum at Port Adelaide. Orders that cannot be collected at one of the launch venues will be mailed out during the following week.

I can understand that people may be hesitant about paying \$100 for a book unseen. To those people I can say that during March and early-April 2018, there will be a high-quality printer's proof of 90+% of the book for inspection, at The Wilson Vineyard at Polish Hill River during weekends.

I have recently completed walking of The Riesling Trail and The Rattler Trail from Riverton to Barinia, for the purpose of producing 7 linear maps. I have attached a scan of the completed map of the section from Tatkana to Clare. The graphic artwork has been done by Greg Judd.

And finally, if you know of

others who may be interested in this book please forward a copy of this newsletter to them, or ask them to contact me, to be added to the distribution list.

Thankyou John Wilson wilsonriesling@internode.on.net