



# Smokestack

**All Aboard!** Emmaus Rotary Club 



**POTTSVILLE  
TRAIN EXCURSION**  
**SATURDAY, MAY 20 8 AM - 6 PM**

Emmaus Rotary Club presents a day out by rail with the Reading & Northern Railroad.  
Depart from the Outer Station Reading, PA for a fun-filled day in Pottsville, PA.



**Pottsville**  
Depart from the Outer Station Reading, PA for a run to Pottsville, PA.



**Trolley Bus**  
In Pottsville, take the trolley bus around town to various tourist destinations.



**Port Clinton**  
Late afternoon, stop in Port Clinton to tour the railroad's headquarters & facilities.

**Tickets \$99**  
Register at [emmausrotary.org](http://emmausrotary.org)  
Proceeds benefit the Emmaus Rotary Club's 100th Anniversary Celebration

Just a change from my rail subjects it seems member's contribution

ad for his Club's latest excursion. Wade George of the Rotary Club of Emmaus writes a few days ago that IFRR members might like to know about this rail orientated fundraiser – and why not! It's their 100<sup>th</sup> year and it's also raising funds.

concentration on British right to reward a of the above with a free

*April/May 2023*

## RI Convention

The Melbourne date approaches, and I thought we should honour my promise of a Convention Newsletter to keep all members informed. I'm sorry I cannot be there myself for various health reasons. Melbourne is one of my favourite cities (trams and railways!) and indeed I worked there for a short while in 1981 and I've been back twice on Museum and Rotary Conventions. I hope as many as possible of IFRR members can enjoy the City, Rotary and the Rail interests around the area.

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Imagine what's next

2023 Rotary International Convention

Not long to go now. To organise a visit or two during or after the Convention fellow Director Curtis Reinhardt is looking at contacting fellow Rotarians in Melbourne that he met at the last Convention in Houston, Bruce McNaught in Brisbane will also try but is very busy in his own Club and District now so may be a little compromised.

Anyone in the Melbourne area who is happy to help will be gladly seconded! I understand the restaurant trams are not operating at present but there are interesting rail trips available to places such as Ballarat and Bendigo as well as the obvious one to Puffing Billy to the east of Melbourne in Belgrave. Other ideas are most welcome. Fellow Director Bruce has also been in touch with the organisation Trams Down Under (TDU) to see what is possible in the light rail direction. I've been a member of TDU for a while and there should be some information amongst the Melbourne local members. Do let us know all you Australian Members if you have some ideas!



*A recent view from the TDU files. No it's not San Francisco but Melbourne many years ago when that City too had cable cars. Collins Street and Elizabeth Street in the late 1880s.*

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### Database

Just a quick reminder that if you change Clubs or home address/email etc please inform Bruce McNaught on [bruce@brucemcnaught.com](mailto:bruce@brucemcnaught.com) as he very efficiently runs our database. This will ensure you continue to receive Smokestack and other communications.

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### Possible Merchandise?

Last year President Mike Waddell of the Rotary Club of Emmaus, PA, asked if we had any merchandise or a pin to give to another member. Most members will realise that we don't, but it occurs to me to wonder if IFRR members would want such items. We have to remember that we have no dues and so there would be difficulty in meeting the cost. Do members have any thoughts?

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### New Garden Railway

Curtis mentioned late last year a new railroad in his area that is refurbishing equipment from all over the world. He hopes to contribute more soon. This is the Norgrove Railway in the central California Coast. Looks like a big garden from this UK person's point of view!

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### Sydney Light Rail

Last November my fellow Director Bruce travelled to Sydney (Australia) to join a cruise which left from Circular Quay and stayed overnight in a lovely hotel in George Street. He looked out the



window down at the light rail trams running up and down the street. Suddenly, it dawned that something was seriously amiss. This is what he saw: Can you see it? Yes! – The Pantograph is down and there are no catenary wires. Now over to Bruce for his story ... I pointed this out in amazement to my wife who replied, “Yes dear – that’s nice, hurry up I want to go shopping.”

Was the vehicle running on batteries? If it had power on the rails, how come the pedestrians who were walking all over the tracks weren’t getting zapped? I really needed to do some googling!

I discovered that on the line from City Hall to Circular Quay these Sydney trams use a Ground Level Power Supply system.

This clever system developed by Alstom supplies 750 volts DC to the tram through a third rail (which can be seen in the photo above) but which is only energised when it is under the tram.

Thus, people can safely walk on the rail with there being no danger. As the young lady in the pink top is demonstrating in this photo.

The Alstom APS, also known as Alimentation par Sol or Alimentation Par le Sol (which literally means



"feeding via the ground"), is a form of ground-level power supply for street trams.

The Sydney system is also referred to as the APS but the marketing folks have “translated” it to “Aesthetic Power System” in Sydney. I was surprised to learn that Alstom's APS technology is currently in operation in 11 cities on four continents (including Bordeaux, Tours, Rio de Janeiro, Istanbul, Dubai, Lusail and as I now am aware, Sydney).

I couldn’t wait to walk up to the City Hall tram stop to watch the pantograph being lowered as the tram entered the APS track. As we headed out to the shops, I suggested to my wife that while she enjoyed shopping in the beautiful Queen Victoria Building, I would go for a walk up to Town Hall Station. “Why?” she asked. “I want to see the pantograph being lowered.” Said I.



*This photo shows the pantograph up and contacting the catenary as it stops at City Hall.*

“Of course, everyone would want to see that!” she replied muttering something about boys as she walked away. Happily, the situation at Town Hall was as I expected.

I crouched down and I could only just see the skate attached to the bogie under the tram. I couldn’t take a photo as the young ladies wearing short skirts getting on and off the tram seemed very suspicious of my motives.

So my IFRR friends, I do encourage you to visit Sydney when you come to the Melbourne Convention and view these beautiful Australian trams. Do be sure to go to Town Hall to watch the pantograph going up and down.

Bruce McNaught



*This photo shows the scuff marks on the centre rail made from the skate.*

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### Another possible trip



Member Michael Luck sent us a photo of his trip from Sydney to Perth when touring Australia in December last year. This is anything but a local commuter line!! We hope that Michael might be persuaded to write something more in due course.

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### IFRR Meeting During Convention

Curtis suggests that IFRR members can meet near the House of Friendship. There has been no need to book a room specially so it will be a matter of staying in touch with Curtis or Bruce at the time.

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### Toronto Railway Museum

TRM always keep in touch with regular emails since IFRR visited at the Toronto Convention. The latest is the happy news that they have been busy in the latter part of 2022 and now preparing for their summer activities. Already their online lectures are proceeding. May 18 at 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm is the next Online Lecture entitled: Rails Across Ontario.



[bounce+r.542.20527.c40b3ada2308f49e@trha.ca](mailto:bounce+r.542.20527.c40b3ada2308f49e@trha.ca) is the email they recommend to find out more. <https://torontorailwaymuseum.com> is their website.

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### Railway Children

I make no apologies for continuing to one of my favourite Charities – the Railway Children. Supporting children in danger of abuse and trafficking from railway stations all over the world. Charlotte lives in a busy and chaotic home and struggles to get time and space to herself. Her relationship with her mum and stepdad can be tense and difficult, and she has had to work to manage her mental health in the past. We met Charlotte when she had been reported missing after she had run away to see her girlfriend. Knowing where she was heading, her mum was able to get in touch with British Transport Police, who waited for Charlotte at the station. Thanks to the Charity and everyone’s donations we were able to work with Charlotte and provide the vital emotional support she needed and is now better equipped to deal with challenging times. Just one example from around the world.



This is my favourite as it combines Railroads with a Charity worthy of Rotary support. DO think about it and find out more. They can talk to your Rotary Club too. My own Club had an hour’s talk from David Maidment, the originator of the Charity and he held our attention for the whole time without break. Well worth a listen! Email [hello@railwaychildren.org.uk](mailto:hello@railwaychildren.org.uk) at any time.

The Charity can invite you to find out more about their work in the UK and the impact your support has on vulnerable children across the country. They will be holding this exclusive Q&A session online on **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May at 12pm UK time (BST)** - and they'd love you to be there.

You'll have the opportunity to meet our project workers, as well as hear from members of the rail network and British Transport Police who are a crucial part of our mission to create a safety net which protects children across the UK. Also there may be chance to discover their work elsewhere in the world, in particular one hopes where they started in India.

If you are unable to join the session live you can still register and they will send you a recording of the session after the event. I would recommend emailing to register your place and ask the questions that are important to you. They then send you a link to join the event via Zoom.

**Railway Children - registered charity no: 1058991. Tel: +44 (0) 1270 757 596**

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*Your President*

*Photo: Enid Bracegirdle.*

And now for something completely different. Your President has also an overwhelming interest in buses and in particular his long-gone local company North Western. This was formed 100 years ago in his home town of Macclesfield in Cheshire and last weekend was a great celebration at the local Manchester Transport Museum. Lots of preserved vehicles including this Leyland coach from 1938. A nostalgic ride!

I have no more to report. As ever we rely on you the members to tell us more. Anything historic would be a welcome addition but most of all anything where ROTARY is involved.

**In the meantime I wish all who are going to Melbourne a happy and productive time.**

Let us know your interests and how you want the IFRR to continue. We need to hear from you.

*Bob*

Robert Bracegirdle  
President IFRR

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As ever, some late additions and information appear, relating to the Convention.

IFRR Board Member Curtis Reinhardt will lead an informal **Annual Meeting** early afternoon on **Sunday, May 28th**. **Any members or interested Rotarians should meet Curtis at the Music Fellowship Booth #329 in the House of Friendship at 1pm that day**. This time should allow everyone attending the Opening General Session (in the Rod Laver Arena) adequate time to move to the HOF (in the MCEC Building.) The Opening Session is scheduled to conclude at noon. Once assembled we will go off to a quiet corner or meeting room (TBD) for our meeting. Depending on the strength of the WIFI signal in the Convention Center we might be able to set up a Zoom meeting for that time too so that other IFRR members and Executives can join us through my computer.

At the meeting we will discuss any possible railroad related IFRR group activities that might be possible to set up during the Convention. Several regional museums and excursions are listed in the below Melbourne area tourism link. A quick run out to a museum mid-week might be possible. Furthermore, I am thinking that some of us could take a group ride on the Puffing Billy on Thursday after the Convention. (A casual search of the Puffing Billy website leads one to believe that we should be able to buy advance tickets only a few days in advance). *Fully recommended by President Bob!*



*Puffing Billy's standard publicity photo.*

Please email **Curtis** if you will be attending the meeting on Sunday. And for local Aussies that are attending: please send Curtis your suggestions for group activities during the week and any local tips you might have on Puffing Billy. [puffingbilly.com.au](http://puffingbilly.com.au) is their website.

Thanks, Curtis

Curtis Reinhardt, IFRR VP

805-773-4173. (Texts will probably work in AU. I'm not sure about how my US phone will work down under.)

[curtis@curtisreinhardt.com](mailto:curtis@curtisreinhardt.com). (email should work for sure).



*Sacramento Museum Train CA.*



*Cripple Creek CO*

Finally two photos from one of my model railway colleagues now living in Germany but visiting USA regularly. More in the next **Smokestack**. He has lots of photos he tells me.

