When a leading zero is significant
About The Times
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The recent change to Sydney’s eastern bus routes under the title *Better Buses East* saw the disappearance of the last routes in the area using the ‘industrial’ route numbers with leading zeros – 040 and 048.

Sydney was one of the few places in the world, perhaps the only one, where a leading zero was significant in a bus route number – that is a route 005 was different to route 5. The former was an industrial service once run from Rockdale Station to Waverley Depot, while the latter was used for a ‘sports’ service from Ashfield Station to Canterbury Racecourse and also from Kent Street Parking Centre to the old Showgrounds.

A complete history of Sydney’s industrial services would be close to impossible as some were operated as charters, whilst others had a very short life. Many industrial services had route numbers in the normal series such as 367 from Syndeyham Station to Bondi Junction, whilst others were remnants of old routes such as 013, originally 319 the Cleveland Street service.

For many years a separate *Guide to Industrial Services* was published for the south-eastern suburbs of Waterloo, Alexandria, Botany, Mascot and Pagewood where many of Sydney’s large companies had factories. This area, north of Botany Bay and surrounding the Alexandra Canal, had been swampland and over the years between the wars was drained and turned into industrial estates, booming in the post World War 2 period.

The trams in the area had provided a limited industrial service, concentrating on Randwick Workshops and the WD and HO Wills tobacco factory at Kensington (opened 1913). Some trams on the Daceyville line were extended to Maroubra but overall the inflexibility of trams limited their ability to serve new factories away from existing tracks.

The earliest Guide in my collection was published by the Department of Government Transport in March 1966 (*below*). Earlier editions probably exist as the 0xx series of numbers came into use from June 1957 with the demise of the tram routes in the area. The 24 page book is an untidy hotch-potch of timetables, routes, maps and fare-tables. As can be seen on the cover it is a typed document with routes broadly grouped by their origin points such as St Peters Station, Redfern Station, and Leichhardt etc.

Page 2 (*our page 4*) shows the timetables for routes 041, 045, 047 and 051 in departure sequence but not giving run or arrival times – not much help if you had to clock on (other routes do have run times). Page 4 has a map (*also on our page 4*) of these and other routes. Note the many factories in the area served varying from soft drink manufacturers, through light industries such as Columbia Pen-

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[1] Brisbane’s trams also used leading zeros but not blank.
cils to heavy industries, and probably polluting ones, such as Austral Bronze and Australian Iron and Steel.

Most routes operated Mondays to Fridays only but routes 042 and 052 (page 11, our page 5, top left) provided an early morning service from Leichhardt and Sydenham Station to Botany Road. In this case a full timetable was made available.

Similar books were published by the DGT in, at least, January 1969, January 1971 and July 1972; the Public Transport Commission in April 1974, April 1976 and August 1979. During this period there were many route and time changes as the industries changed, working hours shortened, and shift times altered.

The first change of format appeared with the Urban Transit Authority’s second issue, undated, where blue ink was used and the timetable numbered E221, i.e. issue 2 of Eastern timetable 21 (our page 5, top right). Otherwise the contents remained the same typewritten mix.

The next issue, renamed Industrial Bus Services – Timetables, was on 3 November 1985, printed in green and for the first time typeset. The maps however were the same style as originally and the layout whilst considerably improved was still unfriendly. Of note in this timetable is the 013, mentioned earlier, with only one journey from Coogee to City Road (our page 5, lower left).

From the worst to one of the best, the new standard sized South Eastern Industrial Area timetable of 2 November 1986, with the cover in blue ink, timetables in black, with UBD maps overlaid with blue, red and green coloured routes. This issue was for a complete reorganisation and simplification of the area’s industrial routes. Apart from the new 043 (Sydenham Station to Airport), promoted by a separate handbill, the 06:08 run of route 040 was the only weekend industrial service

(Continued on page 6)
ROUTE 045: SYDENHAM STATION - GARDENERS AND ROTARY BOWLS
via GILMORE AVENUE (Continued)
ROUTE 051: SYDENHAM STATION - NORTH JUNCTION (Continued)

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<td>7:00</td>
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GUIDE TO INDUSTRIAL SERVICES

ROUTE 045: REDFERN STATION TO AMELIA STREET, WATERLOO

ROUTE 046: REDFERN STATION TO BOURKE & GARDENERS RDS, MASCOT
The 043 operated four journeys on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays and these only lasted until 26 April 1987.

The next issue of the booklet was the last, dated 18 October 1987, it had few changes, other than being in blue ink throughout (its cover above, map on our cover, contents page right). Route 080 from Mascot to Bondi Junction was one of the routes that were deleted at this time.

The next set of eastern suburbs changes, 5 August 1990, saw the few remaining south eastern industrial services distributed amongst normal timetables. Routes 040 (Redfern Station to Zetland) and 079 (Dolls Point to Redfern Station – 1 am journey) placed in the 301 timetable; 041 (Railway Square to Airport via Redfern), 046 (Railway Square to East Botany) and 047 (Redfern to Pagewood) were with the Botany Road timetables (309, 310).

Route 079 was last run on 15 February 1992, 041 was replaced by the current 305 from 12 Jun 1993, 046 and 047 were deleted from 02 February 1999.

Route 048 was a new service introduced on 5 August 1990 from Bondi Junction to Alexandria. Other industrial services were operated elsewhere in Sydney such as services to Chullora (029 – 035), 061 in Strathfield, and 090 to Pyrmont.
Three stations of the late Victorian Railways are Cobden Road, Poonboon and Stony Creek. What do these three stations have in common?

First, they're all closed (although two of them are V/Line bus stops ¹)

Second, their names are concerned with watercourses

Third, their names contain the word 'Stony' ²

Fourth, they all served very small communities

Cobden Road is better known as Stonyford (it was renamed two months after opening) and Poonboon is the construction and opening name for Stony Crossing. As Stony Crossing is on the Wakool River, the name is probably descriptive and Poonboon is likely to be a local aboriginal name.

If one looks at a map of the Victorian Railways in its heyday, one is immediately struck by the seven and two half equidistant parallel railways that run approximately north west towards the Mallee on both sides of the Victoria/New South Wales border. These lines are, from the north:

1 Barnes to Balranald
2A Elmore to Cohuna
2B Kerang to Stony Crossing
3 Bendigo to Yungera (Swan Hill line)
4 Korong Vale to Robinvale (and Koorakkee)
5 Korong Vale to Kulwin
6 Maryborough to Mildura (and Yelta)
7 Murtoa to Patchewollock
8 Horsham to Yaapeet

This article deals with the least significant of these lines.

The Stony Crossing line was constructed under the Border Railways Act of 1922 and extended the existing Kerang to Murrabit line that was opened on 20th December 1924. Murrabit is a small township on the Victorian side of the Murray River 15 miles (24 km) north of Kerang where the railway station was located prominently in the centre of town. Similar to Robinvale, Bomaderry (Nowra) and even Yelta³, the river bridge at Murrabit is in direct alignment with the station yard and the road curves round to reach the bridge although in this case the river is about 3 km beyond the town at a locality known as Gonn Crossing.

The 39½ mile (64 km) extension from Murrabit to Poonboon opened for traffic on 16th March 1928. There are no settlements along the way and nothing at the terminus. Farms and mallee scrub are all that you'll see, even in 2002 - the area served by the railway is about as well populated and only marginally more scenic than the SAR's Karoonda to Peebinga line - at least there was an interesting combined rail and road lifting bridge and a handful of creeks to cross on the way to Poonboon.

The opening service to Poonboon was likely to be a twice weekly extension of the existing service to Murrabit. The country timetable of 18th June 1928 contains what is probably close to the initial service as it was issued less than three months after the opening. (illustration below)

The passenger service of mixed trains is leisurely (Poonboon to Kerang averaged just 11½ mph) with considerable recovery time especially between Murrabit and Kerang. It is designed to provide a shopper’s service into Kerang from Poonboon on Friday and from Murrabit on Monday and Friday, as well as to connect with Melbourne trains Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Nevertheless, there must have been a goods train (or light engine) from Kerang to Murrabit late Wednesday morning and Murrabit to Kerang late Monday afternoon. Given that Victoria had some long rest jobs at the time, Wednesday evening to Friday morning and Friday evening to Monday morning at Poonboon may well have been the crew working, otherwise light engine mileage would have been very high and one can't imagine that there would be the need for four goods services each week! If such long layovers were the case, just how did the crews fill in their time?

Poonboon was renamed Stony Crossing on 1st June 1929. The timetable of 19th September 1929

Ah yes, Poonboon—redolent of many things, it takes its place with Tooleymbuc, Coomaroop and Kyalite as one of the outposts of the Murray’s dreary plains. I’d warrant that yesterday, you could not have pointed to Poonboon on the map if your life depended on it. But after reading this article by DAVID HENNELL, today you can do so freely and without embarrassment.
The passenger service to Murrabit was still 3 trains per week and the Wednesday and Friday trains continued to provide both a shoppers' service to Kerang (albeit with less shopping time) and connections to and from Melbourne. The symbol G means goods train with car attached. The footnote about travelling to Stony Crossing on goods trains was standard in public timetables of the period. The comment "On occasions the Goods Train may depart Murrabit earlier than 2 a.m." indicates that the Saturday Down and Monday Up were the Stony Crossing train which may already have been conditional beyond Murrabit by this time.

By the timetable of 28th September 1936 (middle, below) all trains were running earlier but although connections at Kerang on the Down were marginally better, those on the Up were significantly worse.

The service shown in Country Train Service circular W.T.T. 100/40 commencing 21st May 1940 (columns 2 and 3, below) consists of a weekly shopper's train from Murrabit into Kerang on Wednesday - more time for one's purchases but a poor connection to Melbourne. The heading of the Down train column is misleading as it and Note A don't refer to the branch line. The footnotes refer to the goods trains and light engines.

The timetables from 1932 onwards make much more sense when one reads the Northern and Midland District working timetable of 28th October 1940 (page 9, lower right). The train numbers have been altered from those of earlier in the year and the car goods is back to running twice weekly. The light engines tell us that crews were not based at Murrabit and the passenger car (or caravan) travelled just 60 miles each week. The Stony Crossing train was conditional beyond

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending 30th June</th>
<th>Westby - Murrabit section</th>
<th>Ballbank - Stony Crossing section</th>
<th>Total outward passengers Westby - Stony Crossing</th>
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<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>1073</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1168</td>
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<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>577</td>
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<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>925</td>
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</table>

(above) shows the same service as that in 1928 but with the new name for the terminus. In this issue, however, the only intermediate time given between Murrabit and Stony Crossing is Wetuppa which was a loco watering station.
Murrabit - the double dagger (‡) symbol is the VR's notation for a train that runs only if required. After completion of the extension of the Yarrawonga line into New South Wales to Oaklands, the Fordson rail tractor (1 RT) used during the construction period was transferred to Kerang to operate services to Stony Crossing and was the motive power for Nos. 61 and 98. The operating instructions for the rail tractor make interesting reading (loads and operating instructions on our page 10 and 11).

The residual passenger service to Murrabit had been withdrawn by the country timetable of 15th December 1941, (above, right) no doubt due to the exigencies of wartime traffic and falling patronage.

Given the loads quoted for the rail tractor and the nature of the service provided, it is readily apparent that traffic to Stony Crossing was very sparse - so sparse that the service was suspended beyond Murrabit during 1943. As no source I've seen has a more precise date, it may well be that traffic had fallen off to such an extent that the last train to Stony Crossing may have run some considerable time before anyone realised that it was, in fact, the last train.

Murrabit was still served by two goods trains each week (our page 12, upper) in the 6th October 1947 working timetable and the table maintained the fiction that Stony Crossing still existed. However, the Murrabit stationmaster had been replaced by a caretaker by this time.

The restricted service listed as commencing on 19th November 1951 indicates that No. 1 Goods departed Kerang at 5.30 a.m. Monday only and returned from Murrabit as No. 2 at 7.30 a.m. The normal service at this time was intended to be Monday and Wednesday running to these times, as well as a Friday conditional.

The Murrabit to Stony Crossing section was officially unused from 4th November 1952, some nine years after suspension of the service, and this change of status probably brought about the inclusion of the note beside stations Ballbank and beyond that appeared in later working timetables. Westby was closed to all traffic on 18th January 1954.

By the late 1950s, one goods train per week was the norm as is shown in the WTT of 9th November 1959 (our page 12, lower).

The end came swiftly and unexpectedly. When the last train to Murrabit departed Kerang, no-one knew that it was to be the last train (shades of Shelbourne and Gembrook!). A bridge near the site of Westby partially collapsed as the returning weekly train was crossing

(Continued on page 12)
## Kerang and Stony Crossing

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<td>Murrabit</td>
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### Engine Requirements

**Down journey**—
- Wetuppa .... 15 minutes.
- Up journey—
  - Wetuppa .... 16 minutes.
  - Murrabit .... 10 minutes.

**(c) Ascending grades—** At Mileage, Speed Necessary (Mile per hour)

**Down journey—**
- 180 approaching Westby ... 20

**Up journey—**
- 180: approaching Westby ... 20

The Fordson Tractor is authorized to haul approximately 100 tons at an average rate of speed of 12 miles per hour. If the load be increased, speed will be proportionately reduced.

The following instructions must be observed in connection with the working of the Fordson Tractor:

**Fordson Tractor Service**

1. A train run by a Fordson Tractor will be worked by two men, i.e., a Driver and a Guard, and may run only on a line that is jointly agreed to by the Chief Mechanical Engineer and the General Superintendent of Transportation.

2. Only an employee certified for the purpose by the General Superintendent and Chief Mechanical Engineer must be allowed to drive a Tractor on any part of the Running Lines or on any siding. He is to operate the Tractor personally, and under no circumstances allow any unauthorized person to operate it.

3. Only authorized persons are allowed to ride in or on the Tractor. Except in the case of necessity no official must engage in conversation with the Driver whilst the Tractor is in running.

[continued next page]
FORDSON TRACTOR SERVICE—continued.

(4) If the Driver when on duty is required to leave the Tractor he must see that the fuel supply is cut off and that the Hand Brake is hard "On."

(5) The Tractor when running a train must always run engine first in the direction in which the greater amount of loading is offering.

(6) Unless specially authorized by the General Superintendent of Transportation, a train hauled by the Fordson Tractor must have a Brake Van in the rear and the Guard must ride in the Van.

(7) The train will be controlled by Hand Brakes only, and the Guard must, when approaching a station or any other point at which the train is to stop, or when descending grades, be prepared to assist the Driver by use of the Van Hand Brake.

(8) Should the Tractor be required to operate during darkness proper Head Signals must be carried.

(9) A Train operated by the Fordson Tractor must not be admitted to an occupied road in accordance with Regulation 108, neither must a train hauled by a Fordson Tractor be set back on to another train when either train is conveying passengers.

(10) The Murrabit Line is worked under the Train Staff and Ticket System, and the Rules contained in Appendix II., Book of Rules and Regulations and the supplementary instructions shown in the General Appendix, also any other Rule, Regulation, or Instruction contained in the Book of Rules and Regulations which apply to Steam trains will, in so far as they apply, be applicable to trains hauled by Fordson Tractor.

(11) The Time Table between Kerang and Murrabit is based on an average rate of speed of 12 miles per hour, which will permit of a load of approximately 100 tons being hauled. If the load be increased, speed will be proportionately reduced.

(12) The maximum rate of speed for a train hauled by Fordson Tractor between Kerang and Murrabit is 20 miles per hour, subject to a maximum speed of 15 miles per hour not being exceeded when hauling 50 per cent. or more of the Tractor’s load capacity. When passing over Points a speed of 5 miles per hour must not be exceeded.

(13) When approaching Kerang on the Up journey and Murrabit on the Down journey, the Driver must have his train well under control, so as to be able to stop at the Home Signal whether the Home Signal is at “Proceed” or not. If he finds when approaching the station that the Home Signal is at “Proceed” he may enter the station, keeping his train under proper control. Before the Home Signal is placed at “Proceed” at either Kerang or Murrabit for the Tractor train to arrive, the platform road must be clear to the fouling point at the opposite end of Yard.

WEDDERBURN JUNCTION AND WEDDERBURN.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goods Engine Running Time</th>
<th>Through</th>
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<td>Roadside Sectional Loads</td>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Load Schedule</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1/16 of Full Load</td>
<td>1/16 of Full Load</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 14 16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>From—Wedderburn Junction Wedderburn</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 13 15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Wedderburn Wedderburn Junction (c)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) Ascending grade.

Notes.

Up journey—Speed Necessary, (Miles per hour.)

146 approaching Wedderburn Junction 20

— 115 —
it, so the service to Murrabit was suspended on 20th April 1961. The entire line from Kerang to Stony Crossing was officially closed on 20th December 1961 and it had only taken 18 years.

Footnotes

1 One of them has a daily service, the other one a service on Sunday and Christmas Day only.

2 We could add Stony Point here but it's rather insulting to call Westernport Bay a mere watercourse.

3 The bridge over the Murray River was designed and located for a railway extension from Yelta to Wentworth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Down.</th>
<th>KERANG-MURRABIT-STONY CROSSING.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feet.</td>
<td>KM.</td>
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<td>MELBOURNE (Sp. W.G. W.G. dep.</td>
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<tr>
<td>170</td>
<td>KERANG</td>
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<td>190</td>
<td>Myall N.C.</td>
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<td>224</td>
<td>MURRABIT</td>
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<tr>
<td>254</td>
<td>Ballan N.C.</td>
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<td>259</td>
<td>Nairne N.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>261</td>
<td>Wattle N.C.</td>
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<td>265</td>
<td>Glenrowan N.G.</td>
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<tr>
<td>268</td>
<td>Ballan N.C.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Up.</th>
<th>KERANG-MURRABIT-STONY CROSSING.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feet.</td>
<td>KM.</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>MELBOURNE (Sp. W.G. W.G. arr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>254</td>
<td>STONY CROSSING N.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Time Table Oddity #2- Onward and Upward?

This journal—and particularly the current editor—has often speculated upon the origin of the terms “Up” and “Down” in railway jargon. We have advanced the idea that it derived from the style of timetables in which there was a centre column of station names with the principal terminus at the top, in which the columns to the left of the station names were read downwards and those to the right were read upwards.

It was pleasing therefore to find the timetable below in the Spring 2002 edition of our companion publication, The Timetable Collector, journal of the National Association of Timetable Collectors. It is the employee timetable of two early Ohio lines, the Little Miami, Columbus & Xenia and the Hillsborough & Cincinnati.

Here the columns are actually headed “Upward Trains” and “Downward Trains” an example, I hoped, of what logicians call a ‘confirming instance’—but, whoa!—the “Upward” column reads downward and the “Downward” column reads upward.

What can this mean?

It would appear that in most U.S. states immediately to the south of the Great Lakes, “Upward” means “Upstate” or northward or towards the water and “Downward” the reverse of that.

So, on this, I am afraid we are no further forward or upward. Perhaps we have actually gone backward.
Hints for Traffic Men.

Don't use buffer as support in springing to or from platform.
Don't stand near engine injector exhaust.
Don't step on buffer spindle.
Don't walk between buffers.
Don't sit on point levers; hold with hands.
Avoid engines when front cocks open and blowing; you cannot see in the steam.
Don't sit in doorways of brakevans; the door slides.
Don't forget the counterweight of a signal post drops at intervals.
Mind your hand when cleaning points.
When alighting from brakevans be sure there is a step.
When working on trucks in wet weather, remember that all ironwork, bolts, &c., will be slippery.
Keep the track clear of couplings, &c.
When window open, or you are in guard's lookout window, beware of passing trains.
Stand clear after exchanging staffs.
Retain your hand lamp when in the yard. Do not in any case set it down.
Get an understanding with your engine crew to ensure prompt acceptance of signal.
Watch the release lever on a truck fitted with auto. coupling.
Watch the draw-hook behind you when coupling up.
Put back the sliding panels of sheep race when work completed.
Do not pass between buffers and draw-hook—stoop underneath.
Watch the open car door when train stops or starts—it may close on your hand.
Be sure no chains or ropes are hanging from emplaces when pulled out.
When exchanging staff or tablet, see that you are clear; the engine exchanger may be projecting a little if the driver isn't watchful.
When you've exchanged, step back; there may be loose sheets, ropes, or projecting loading.
Keep your tablet a long way from your face when ready to exchange, also look out that the fireman's sling doesn't find your face. At night, try rolling a piece of white paper round the cane to help the light when on the other side. Don't cross over long couplings in the dark (a tunnel in day-time); wait till the train goes out.
Don't cross the line close to train, trucks, or trams; give them the chance to move a little before hitting you.

Good advice, from a 1946 New South Wales Railways Western Division Working Time Table. Perhaps a wag at the Government Printing Office was responsible for this. At any rate, it disappeared in later editions.
Graphic Insight

By Chris Brownbill

You could probably count on one hand the public transport services in Australia that use the same rolling stock today as they used forty years ago. Examples that come to mind are the Adelaide to Glenelg tramway (where H class trams have operated since 1929!), to some extent some Melbourne tram routes, and Victoria’s South-Western main-line railway from Melbourne to Warrnambool. This month, Graphic Insight takes a closer look at the latter service where 50-year-old B class diesel locomotives and their sprightly 40 year old S class sisters haul trains of traditional heavy cars including ex Spirit of Progress compartment passenger cars under the banner of West Coast Railway.

To look through the looking glass, we use table 27 of the Victorian Railways Country Time-Table, Winter Edition July 17-November 5 1961. This shows us that on Mondays to Saturdays “The Flier” left Melbourne at 8:25am, and stopped at 19 stations before arriving at Port Fairy at 1:55pm. Some stops at smaller stations occurred on three days per week only, some being Tue, Thur and Sat only, others being Mon, Wed and Fri only, whilst another is Tue, Wed and Thur only. By contrast, the V/Line South West Victoria timetable of 27 January 2002 tells us that the modern-day counterpart of this train departs Melbourne at 8:48am, and stops at 6 stations en-route before terminating at Warrnambool at 11:58am. The final leg beyond Warrnambool to Port Fairy was amputated on 12 September 1977.

Our graphs below illustrate the journey times from Melbourne to the stations and areas around the stations on this line. The circles show the location to which it is possible to reach in specific journey time by travelling by train to a station, then taking 5 minutes to transfer to a car then driving at an average straight-line speed of 40 mph (65 km/h).

The 1961 graph illustrates the greater density of stops along the way, and the shorter average distance that it is necessary to travel by car to any given location. The 2002 graph shows that the number of stops has been dramatically reduced, however the journey time is also dramatically reduced, so that whilst the average property-owner would have further to drive to reach a railway station, it really is a superior service in the 21st century even though the same rolling stock is used. One has to wonder whether the course of public transport history would have been different had services of today’s speed been offered in the 1960s when the car was eating in to rail’s market share.