

Cover: Leyland railmotor 52RM and trailer at an isolated station in country Victoria circa 1948

Below: A Leyland in near new condition at Spencer St station, Melbourne in the late 1920s
(All photos courtesy ARHS (Vic) archives unless otherwise credited)



Double Ended Leyland Railmotor Project



One of the most unique and historically significant projects
in Victoria's railway preservation today

Daylesford Spa Country Railway
P.O.Box 93, Daylesford, Victoria, 3460
dscr@internode.on.net
www.dscr.com.au



Daylesford Spa Country Railway volunteers are well advanced with the restoration of Leyland railmotor 53RM, having sourced an engine, brakes, drive axle, seats and work on the carbody nearing completion. However we need help with big ticket items beyond our resources such as the construction of the bogies, axles, wheels...

Leyland Railmotor Project



Leyland railmotor 51RM in 1931 at Traralgon (Photo Hobbies Plus collection)

History

Double Ended Leyland railmotor 53RM is a unique survivor. One of four such vehicles that entered service with the Victorian Railways in 1925-1926. It is the only example, not just of those, but of the 23 wooden railmotors built between 1922 and 1926 in existence today.



The recently purchased engine for 53RM

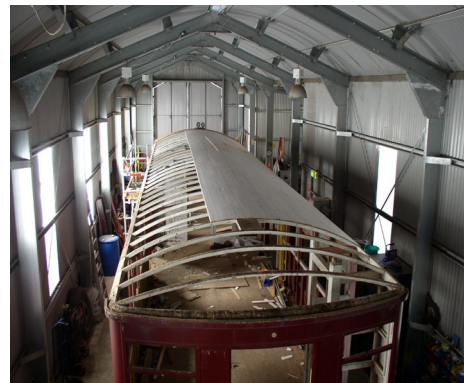
When it was withdrawn from service in 1954, its body was sold to a sawmill near Colac as a bunkhouse and metal components scrapped. The immense importance of the vehicle to Victoria's railways heritage was identified by the DSCR when the derelict body was purchased in 1982 with the aim of one day restoring it to an operable condition to provide a truly unique rail heritage experience.

Works so far

After being stored at Daylesford for many years work really commenced on restoration when the railmotor was placed on temporary bogies and a subframe built to stop the body from sagging. Heritage Victoria awarded the railway a \$20,000 grant to replace the roof and strengthen the frame in 2007

DSCR volunteers have continued over the past 2 years to rebuild the carbody frame which despite being 83 years old is in generally good condition. However areas that had been replaced due to collision damage in the 1940s are extremely poor and require complete frame replacement.

All windows have been removed and are currently being repaired and reglazed along with the doors and internal fittings.



Strengthened roof bows and new boards being fitted



52RM at Mansfield in the late 1940s

How can you help?

Over the last year the braking system, gearbox, air compressor and seats have been sourced and the two engine cooling radiators made to the original plans. Recently a major hurdle has been overcome with a drive axle from an ex South Australian Red Hen railcar being identified along with sanding gear.

To date DSCR volunteers have committed many thousands of hours work on 53RM and will continue to do so. More hands are always wanted so come along and help out. Of course cash donations are always welcomed!



New panelling being fitted to 53RM by DSCR volunteers

However what we are really in need of is assistance in the large items such as the bogies, wheels and controls. Items that are beyond the railways capabilities, not just volunteer but also financial.

So if you work for/ know of a company that may be willing to assist in a sponsorship capacity and undertake any part of the work on those items that have been described, we would love to hear from you.

DSCR holds all of the original VR plans for the Leylands so there is no problem there and modern methods can be used for manufacture, they just need to look like the original items.

Major works still required

- Fabrication of power / non power bogies
- Springs and axle boxes
- Reversing gear box
- Change gear gate and selector
- Engine underframe
- Fuel and water tanks
- Wheels and axles

So if you think you can assist in returning this historically significant vehicle to service please contact DSCR at the below address:

DSCR
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Daylesford VIC 3460
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