



Restored 621 'Red Rattler' at Steamfest!

After the cessation of World War II hostilities the New South Government Railways embarked on a program of passenger fleet modernisation using aluminum construction skills developed to support wartime demand for aircraft components.

Classified as 620/720 DAB sets, construction of the initial order of cars was undertaken during 1961 and 1962 at the NSWGR Departmental Rolling stock workshops Chullora.

Class leader set 621/721 commenced trials on the 8th August 1961 with a run to Penrith and return and following a second trial to Katoomba 2 days later was delivered to Newcastle on 21st August 1961. The Newcastle Morning Herald of the following day announced the arrival of the "New Diesel Train" quoting District Superintendant Mr. Jones who said "The diesel would go into service after drivers had been trained. It would be used on all runs." The unit entered service at Newcastle on 4/9/61 and from this time became affectionately known as the "Red Rattler".

621 was rostered to perform the last regular 620/720 service to Dungog mismatched with trailer car 725 on 2nd June 2007 whilst a special RailCorp run to Paterson officially farewelling the sets with invited guests on



October 29th of the same year seeing it reunited with trailer 721.

After a period of storage at Broadmeadow 621 & 721 were nominated as RailCorp core collection heritage units and future custody was offered by tender. Following a successful tender, the unit was allocated to The Rail Motor Society under a custodial agreement. The units operated a special trip for members to deliver them to Paterson on 5th October 2008.

During their service life 621 & 721 spent all of their time on Hunter services. It is therefore fitting that this unit is preserved in the Lower Hunter region and has seen a number heritage services since joining the Rail Motor Society's fleet.

The Rail Motor Society volunteers dedicated many hours into the restoration of the two-car unit which has been repainted in the original Indian Red livery with the traditional "whiskers" lining.

The paint job was the result of a concerted effort by Society members assisted by volunteers from Maitland Rotary Club. Additional works included the repair of a number of minor areas of corrosion and the replacement of timber flooring around the entrance door areas of NPF 621.

In January 2010 621/721 took to the tracks beautifully restored and to the delight of passengers and enthusiasts. During Hunter Valley Steamfest 2011, The Rail Motor Society will operate excursions to Newcastle, Paterson and Branxton using the 621/721.

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