

# HILLS RAIL TIME

September 2021

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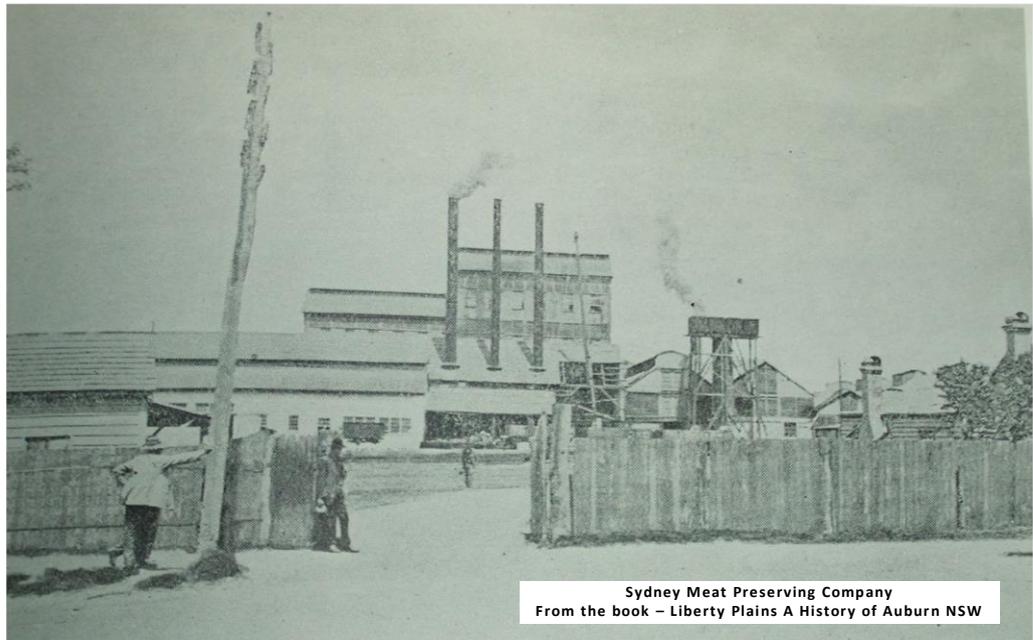
HELLO EVERYONE,  
HARD TIMES IN LOCKDOWN BUT I HOPE EVERYONE IS OKAY.

*Ron Seddon.*

After Ron Mac's newsletter I thought I would have a go at putting pen to paper. Growing up in Lidcombe in the 40's and 50's, I thought I might talk on a few of my growing up years.

There was a little-known railway siding behind the Lidcombe oval and Australian General Electric for the Sydney Meat Preserving Company which was situated on the corner of Parramatta Road and Percy Street Auburn.

The sidings were just situated off the main line and ran down hill to the S M P. After the wagons were delivered to the siding, workers from the S M P would run the wagons down the hill by gravity, after the wagons were emptied, they would pull them back up the hill by an old truck.



Sydney Meat Preserving Company  
From the book - Liberty Plains A History of Auburn NSW

As a primary school

boy my mates and myself often played in a guard's van which happened to be stable in the siding. The paddocks which were owned by the S M P were known as the bull paddocks. As kids on the weekend, we often went to where the sheep were penned and tried to ride them until the caretaker saw what was going on and told us in no uncertain words to P. OFF. The empty paddocks were always used for our bonfire nights. Lots of fun and memories.

My Dad who was a monumental mason and had a yard opposite the Lidcombe signal box so during school holidays my dad would come home for lunch and I would go back with him and sit by the railway line. On occasions a signal box worker saw me watching trains go by and invited me into the signal box and watch the control of signals and points. In those days a train from Liverpool Via Regents Park terminated at Lidcombe platform 3, then ran in reverse to cross over to platform four, then ran wrong road into the old Rookwood Cemetery siding to wait for the return journey. I also spent a lot of my growing years in the Rookwood Cemetery where we had some great push bike trails all through the cemetery. The old mortuary station building was still there in those days including the bell and of

cause the rope was still attached so what would you do, ring the bell of cause. One of the cemetery workers who lived in a cottage just down from the mortuary station would come out with a big stick and told us in no uncertain terms to go you know where.

I was also lucky enough to be shown through the suburban and country signal boxes in Central. Myself and another mate from high school days would often go over to Pippita as a worker's train would pull in to take workers home. If we got there early enough, we sometimes got a ride in the loco while it ran around its train - just a small tank loco.



Pippita was a wooden platform; behind Dairy Farmers off Birnie Avenue Lidcombe, on the Abattoir/Brickworks line; which is now the Olympics line. Access was at the end of what is today a private road now called Pippita off Birnie Avenue.

Another thing I used to do on weekends was to travel into town and then travel by tram to its destination then back to Central and if time permitted would catch another tram to a different destination. Over time I would have reached all of the destinations.



So come on guys, let's hear some of your stories when growing up or some of your travels by train. Stay Safe everyone.

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