



R.I.P. JACK.

IN RESPECT OF OUR ESTEEMED
MEMBER JACK BELLOTTI.

FOND MEMORIES OF TIMES PAST IN
OUR CLUB HOME AT THE MIDLAND
RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO JUDY
AND FAMILY.

FROM MEMBERS OF THE MACHINERY
PRESERVATION CLUB OF W.A. INC.



VALE. JACK BELLOTTI. 1931 – 2017.



The Machinery Preservation Club of WA Inc. lost a valued member on Christmas day 2017, when Jack passed away after a fairly long and painful illness.

In celebrating his life, we honour his close family; wife Judy and their four children, Neville, Jane, Elizabeth and Darryl. Jane unfortunately had also passed away in 2017 after a long illness.

Jack was born on the 20th October 1931 at Kojonup. The Bellotti family, like all emigrant families of this era, battled to gain a foothold in their new country. Jack had little education and started work early in life with a dam sinker, then laying sewerage pipes in Albany. Upon attaining the age of 21, he joined his father who worked as a Railway Fitter at Punchmirup. 1961 saw Jack marrying Judy Jones, and they lived happily ever after.

A job within the WAGR at Muradup came up, but Jack battled in applying for the job, as it involved book-work (not one of Jack's strengths at the time). He was told that "Turnpenny" (another employee) would assist, but after being appointed, Turnpenny booked off sick and Jack had to get his return in that day. Judy came to the forefront and told him he had to.... Jack grizzled, but Judy put her foot down; Jack completed the returns and happiness returned. Their next move was to Trackmaster at Jennacubbine, then Goomalling and then to First Class Trackmaster at Merredin, in charge of a section of the Standard Gauge, and the West Merredin Railyards. This job was more involved due to a higher frequency of trains travelling much faster, and safety was paramount.

Bob Wallis writes - About this time our small family (2) arrived from Meekatharra, via a short spell at Perenjori and were allotted a house next to the Bellotti's, at No 6 Ellis Road Merredin. Life was good in Merredin; plenty of schooling for the children, and a much larger town with more opportunities.

The Bellotti's were good neighbours and we got on well. Jack enjoyed his trips to the Merredin Rubbish dump in "Old No 1" – a valiant ute that always came back with a greater load than it went out with. He enjoyed a bit of mechanics, did his own oil changes etc and fixed up things around the place. Judy told me once, that on a very hot day he returned and the chooks had upset the water bowls and most were nearing death, as no water was evident. Jack devised a syphon method so when the water level dropped the syphoning action kept the now cemented bowl full. One day, at work he

slipped and fell down the standard gauge embankment and broke his leg. This time off work allowed him to sit in the shade near his shed and think. Often our now youngest son, Christopher, would come over via the adjoining gate and you could hear them both 'bull-dusting' to each other. During this period Jack also devised a contraption for cleaning the dip-stick of your engine. Instead of wiping the oil off with your singlet, this device, made from two strips of tin with carpet riveted to the prongs and bolted in to the engine bay, not too far from the dip stick (mind you) was made. I don't know how many he made but everyone who visited walked away with at least two of them. They were a great idea!

A bit later on, the Inspector of the Permanent Way (IPW) was about to retire, so he set about teaching Jack the job. Before Ray retired the job was advertised and because Jack knew the job, along with his experience on the Standard Gauge Railway, he was appointed, which was a major step in his life, along with remuneration (and bookwork).

With our family increased to five children, we eventually left Merredin in 1992 to move to Perth. Jack and his family had left some time before us and were already settled there. Soon after Jack decided to retire, and to get him out of Judy's hair, I encouraged him to join the MPC. The rest is well known.

RIP Jack, your old mate Bob.

Jack joined the Machinery Preservation Club of WA soon after we moved into our home at the Midland Railway Workshops; and soon became a well-known and happy member. No job was too hard or too menial for Jack, and for a long time he was the only source of drinking water for the members, as we had no mains connected in the early days and Jack would bring containers of rain water for each Tuesday work day. Jack was also responsible for keeping the billy boiling and one of his favourite tasks was to ring the 'bell' to call members to 'smoko'. Jack was a never-ending source of railway track stories, with a marvellous and wicked sense of humour and his catch-phrase "I nearly didn't come today" will long be remembered by all of the members who knew him.

The regard in which Jack was held was highlighted by the large number of MPC members who attended his funeral and provided a guard of honour as he left the Anglican Parish Church in Mundaring, and again at the interment at the Wundowie Cemetery, where three MPC life members were amongst the pall bearers.

Ralph Thomas, President, Machinery Preservation Club.

