

2 Tonne Scotch Derrick Crane in the Railway Yards at Robertstown

History

The crane at Robertstown was erected in early 1900's and was used for unloading heavy equipment that came to Robertstown via the railways for farmers and various others and was a valuable asset for the community.

The last freight train out of Robertstown was railway trucks loaded with grain on the 21st February 1990 driven by a Mr Errol Herrman who lived @ Gawler and trains continued to operate to Kapunda and Eudunda after that date. With the closing down of the Railway Line from Eudunda to Robertstown in 1990's the crane had served its purpose and was very rarely used.

It stood there for quite a few years, part of it got slightly burnt within a fire that was in the gardens and it deteriorated to the stage where it collapsed and has been in that state ever since as can be seen today.

At a meeting in 2006 of the Robertstown Community Management Inc., the issue of its state was raised and it was decided to be left as an agenda item to be restored at a later date.

At another meeting in 2010 several members of the committee volunteered to investigate the situation and report back at a later date.

It was reported that it was the only one of its kind in the State of South Australia and as a result of this it was decided to investigate its restoration which included the procuring and cost of suitable wood and other materials, labour to do it and the use of equipment to complete the project.

During the time of investigations and research a copy of the original drawing of when it was built was obtained and this has been a very "valuable find" for reference.

Various places were contacted and it was found that the costs were excessively high and it was very difficult to get someone to do it because of the nature of the job.

At the June 2014 meeting of the Robertstown Community Management Inc. due to all of the research that had taken place and no solution to its restoration had been obtained in being able to procure the material and anyone to do it, Mr. Adrian Menzel who had been one of the volunteers with the project from the beginning and knew "first hand" of its condition and suggested that due to not being able to get the job done from elsewhere, that he believed that he could see no reason as to why the Local Community could not "band together and get the job done" along with other people who wish to assist from outside of the area whom may have an interest in the railway's or cranes, they are quite welcome to join in.

He proposed that he would be prepared to co-ordinate the project seeking and asking locals for the donation of some materials being timber, steel & paint, the use of small equipment like portable generator/s, welders, drills etc., the use of larger equipment for lifting e.g. Front End Loader and/or Manitou/s plus persons who are prepared to volunteer themselves to do the job in either using their equipment or just themselves to come along at various pre-advertised times to eventually complete the project.

An approach was made to the Robertstown Hotel & Community Social Club for assistance and they requested a timetable and approximate costs for the project which was prepared by Mr Adrian Menzel and sent to them. They discussed this in depth and deemed that the project was beyond restoration and would like to see it left as is and see a plaque erected and the area fenced off.

At the August 2017 meeting of the Robertstown Community Management Inc this was further discussed and finally decided to conduct a Public Meeting in the gardens by the crane to discuss the issue and make a final decision.