

THE WORKSHOPS RAIL MUSEUM

INFORMATION SHEET

BROWN BOMBER: C17 No.974



C17 No.974, otherwise known as The Brown Bomber, at Grandchester Station. Image courtesy of QR.

No.974 is a member of Queensland Railway's C17 Class. The class was originally designed about the time of the World War I as an improved version of the C16 Class which had demonstrated their worth since their introduction in 1903. The cylinder diameter was to be one inch larger and the new locomotives were to be superheated.

The design proved so popular that a total of 227 were built for Queensland Railways between 1920 and 1953 with improvements in design over the 33 years. A further 22 locomotives were built to the same design for the Commonwealth Railways as their NM Class between 1925 and 1927.

During World War 2, Queensland Railways sought to have more C17 Class locomotives built, but were instead supplied with the AC16 Class purchased under a Lend Lease Scheme from the United States and the Australian Standard Garratt type through the Commonwealth Land Transport Board.

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Earlier class members were painted black but the final 40 locomotives, as well as being fitted with roller bearings, were painted in a brown livery with red and green trim. These locomotives were soon nicknamed "Brown Bombers" by railway staff. No.974 was a member of this final batch of C17 class locomotives.

No.974 spent most of its working life on the line between Townsville and Mount Isa and was based at Cloncurry, Charters Towers and Townsville at various times before being sent to Ipswich in the late 1960s.

This locomotive was one of three steam engines retained by Queensland Railways to operate heritage excursion trains following the end of regular steam locomotive hauled services in 1969.

It has been a popular locomotive on these excursions for many years until it was withdrawn from service for a major overhaul in 2001. The work has included the manufacture and fitting of a new welded boiler by Queensland Railway's staff at Ipswich Railway Workshops.

C17 No.974 re-entered service with QR in March 2007.

Specifications (last 40 as built)

Builder	Walkers Ltd, Maryborough
Builder's Number	511
Year Built	1951
Wheel Arrangement	4-8-0
Cylinders	17 inches X 22 inches (Diameter X Stroke)
Boiler Pressure	175 psi
Driving Wheels (Dia.)	45 inches
Weight	Engine 48 tons
	Tender 34.9 tons
Coal Capacity	7.35 tons
Water Capacity	3,050 gallons
Tractive Effort (@ 85% BP)	21,015 lbs

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