

# THE WORKSHOPS RAIL MUSEUM

## INFORMATION SHEET

# CLASS DL

## 3'6" GAUGE DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES



DL1 in the Paint Shop at the Ipswich Railway Workshops in 2002.

Photo: *D. J. Mewes*

Queensland Rail is credited with building Australia's first Government owned diesel locomotive for a State railway system. The first diesel locomotives used in Australia were privately owned and operated one on a two feet gauge timber railway in Victoria in 1935 and another on a sugar mill railway in Queensland in 1937.

Queensland had a number of lightly built, lightly trafficked lines that were operated by railmotors. Amongst these was a section of line between Ootann and Forsayth on the Etheridge Railway. A diesel motor was acquired for a railmotor on this line, in 1935 but about this time traffic had increased on this section of line such that the use of a light diesel locomotive was suggested.

Thomas Pugh formerly from the Victorian Railways began the design of a diesel locomotive with this work being taken over by Mr Cyril Renton at the Ipswich Railway Workshops drawing office, following the sudden death of Mr Pugh.

The diesel locomotive was built in 1939, at the Ipswich Railway Workshops, as an 0-6-0 with outside frames. The driving wheels were connected by means of siderods with a jackshaft to a gearbox under the cab floor. It was powered by a 150 hp Gardner 6-cylinder diesel motor derated to 133 hp.

Before entering traffic the locomotive was converted to a 2-6-0 at the instigation of the then new Railways Commissioner, C. A. Murton, who felt that it needed additional stability for the sharp curves and steep grades of the Etheridge Line.

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This first diesel locomotive was given the number DL1 and named "*ETHERIDGE*".

A second DL Class locomotive was supplied through the agency of the Drewry Car Co., London being built by Robert Stephenson and Hawthorne Ltd, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Numbered DL2 it carried the name "*FORSAYTH*".

Traffic on the Etheridge Line increased to such an extent that, although the line had been upgraded to take B15 Class locomotives, it was felt that the building of a further two DL Class locomotives was desirable. These two were DL3 "*MT. SURPRISE*" and DL4 "*ALMADEN*", built by Walkers Ltd, Maryborough in 1961.

The DL Class were operated with a driver only. The two locomotives purchased from Walkers Ltd in 1961 were fitted for multiple unit operation when delivered and the two earlier units were fitted with this equipment soon after. They could be joined in multiple-unit to operate with a single driver in twos, threes or occasionally all four together depending on traffic requirements.

Following rebuilding of the line by 1968, 60 ton diesel electric locomotives were permitted to operate over the Etheridge Line. The four little DL Class locomotives were dispersed to other parts of the State as shunting locomotives. DL3 worked at Wallangarra for a time in 1972 before being replaced by DL1 which first received modifications to its cab as befitted the colder weather at that location.

DL3, late in 1972, became the workshops shunter at Ipswich Railway Workshops to be joined by DL1 in 1976 as a shunter was no longer required in Wallangarra. DL2 and DL4 acted as shunters in Townsville and at Ayr. Despite all four locomotives being written off in 1987, three continued to be used until 1993.

**DL1** was retained by Queensland Rail for preservation and is now to be seen in The Workshops Rail Museum. It is still considered operational and is available to Queensland Rail for use if required.

**DL2** was preserved at Forsayth

**DL3** was sold to the Australian Railway Historical Society for their Rosewood Railway Museum project.

**DL4** was overhauled and now resides at Normanton for use when required on Gulflander services.

## Dimensions:

<b>Class</b>	DL	<b>Length</b>	23 feet 6 ½ inches
<b>Width</b>	7 feet 1 inch	<b>Height</b>	10 feet 11 inches
<b>Driving Wheel (Dia)</b>	36 inches	<b>Horsepower</b>	133 hp
<b>Engine</b>	Gardner 6-cylinder diesel Model 6L3		
<b>Weight</b>	17.5 tons (DL2 weighed just over 18 tons)		

## References:

1. Rolling Stock History Cards, DL1, Queensland Railways

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