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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### ATHRA MEMBERS AT STEAMFEST!

One of the highlights for the SteamFest Committee this year will be a visit from 30 members of ATHRA, the Association of Tourist and Heritage Railways of Australia touring group. From all states of Australia they are the peak body that represent members from Australia's 70 historic railway societies. After SteamFest their 6 monthly meeting will be hosted in Sheffield following a tour around the North and West Coasts. SteamFest, last year won the National ATHRA award for Tourism Promotion which was presented by Queensland's Transport Minister Rachel Nolan.



*Caption: Chris Martin receives the ATHRA tourism promotion award from Queensland's Minister for Transport and member for Ipswich MP Rachel Nolan*

### 1897 HORNSBY OIL TRACTOR FOR SALE AT STEAMFES.

The organizers of the annual SteamFest in Sheffield are expecting their usual crowd of around 5000 people and this year one lucky person has the opportunity to take home one of the world's rarest vintage tractors.

There won't be an auction but people will have the chance to buy the 20HP Hornsby Oil Tractor built in 1897. This tractor was first exhibited at last year's SteamFest following restoration by Mr Eric Howe of Latrobe. However the decision has now been made to sell the single cylinder tractor which weighs about 7 tons. The tractor is significant because it marks the transition between steam power and the internal combustion engine.



*Caption: Only 3 of these oil engine tractors were ever made. This is one of two still left in the world.*

Mr Howe has not put a sale price on the engine but is willing to talk privately to enthusiasts. Last year a Ransom traction engine sold at auction in Sassafras to a southern buyer for a record Tasmanian price of \$180,000. The Hornsby is a much rarer machine.

The President of the SteamFest committee, Mr Chris Martin, said it would be a rare opportunity to buy such a historically significant engine and it would be really good to see it go to a Tasmanian buyer. If it is sold to a mainland buyer this year's SteamFest on March 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> will be one of the last chance for Tasmanians to see the engine.

"There will be 10 working traction engines and steam rollers, daily displays of chaff cutting, grain threshing and straw pressing as well as steam train rides and tractor pulling competitions," Mr Martin said.

"SteamFest is not just for the old timers. It's also an opportunity to educate younger members of the community about the sustainability of old farming practises.

If any younger members of the community are interested in learning more about steam, railway operations, buildings restoration and tourism development, we would love to hear from them." Mr Martin said.

**END**

**For more information contact**

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Or refer to [www.redwater.org.au](http://www.redwater.org.au)**