

# Farewell to Geelong

On the evening of Sunday, 25th March, the last trams ran in Geelong — second city of Victoria.

To mark the occasion, our Research Editor, Mr. K. S. Kings, has prepared the following account of the origin, growth, and final abandonment of the Geelong tramways.

Electric tramway services commenced in the city of Geelong on 14th March, 1912. The day was suitably marked in the typical gala style of the time, with the trams decorated, all schools in the district given a special holiday, and the local population filling the streets. Car No. 4 had the honour of being the official "first tram". It was decorated with white blossom and was driven by the Mayoress. The first tram for Geelong West followed up Moorabool Street, decked with red and white blossom, followed by the Newtown tram, gay with pale blue flowers. As part of the opening ceremony, the Mayor gave the trams official permission to enter the city.

Public transport in Geelong had previously been catered for by horse buses. The new service was instituted by the Melbourne Electric Supply Company Limited. The service started with two routes — Newtown and West Geelong. There was a branch to

the railway station from the city, together with a short line to the Wharf. The depot was served by a short spur off the Wharf line. All track was single except for a short section in the city. Passing loops were provided where required. The original rolling stock consisted of seven motors and four trailers. The motors were of the open California combination type, but with a distinctive body styling not found anywhere else in Australia. The trailers were open toastracks. They were all built by the Adelaide firm of Duncan & Frazer at the Geelong Depot.

## Extensions

The first extension was made in November, 1913, when a single track line was built from the main city intersection to the Barwon River, at South Geelong. During 1913-14, trailers 1 and 4 were motorised. Traffic steadily increased, and three more motors were added in 1915. They were numbered 8 to 10, and were of the same design as Nos. 1-7. They were also built

tramways when it is already difficult to obtain sufficient funds for the development of generating plant throughout the State.

Undoubtedly the correct solution would have been the creation of a Geelong and Suburban Tramways Board, but the attitude of the councils concerned made such a move impossible. That the councils were out of step with their ratepayers seems certain, but it is not so certain that the ratepayers took adequate steps to impress their views on their elected representatives. To visitors it often seemed that the general public was quite confident that tram scrapping proposals would never come to anything and that there was no need to worry.

They know differently now, but much too late. It will be essential to see that future threats elsewhere are met by an alert and educated public, prepared to tell its representatives in no uncertain terms what it wants and that it is determined to have it.

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by Duncan & Frazer, but at their Adelaide workshops. The two motorised trailers were numbered 11 and 12. Late in 1912 the M.E.C. bought three Milnes-Daimler buses and commenced a service over the future East tram route. They were numbered 1-3. They averaged 104 miles per day, and consumed 28 gallons of Pratt's Benzine each. Body style was the same as the tramcars, suitably adapted as a bus body. They successively wore out the roads along various streets, being re-routed as circumstances demanded! They were finally replaced by electric trams to East Geelong on 12th October, 1922. It was decided to sell the chassis and bodies separately. The latter were in very poor condition, and were heavily braced. In order to remove the bodies from the chassis, the bracing was removed, and ropes attached, whereupon the body timbers disintegrated!

#### Expansion in the 'Twenties

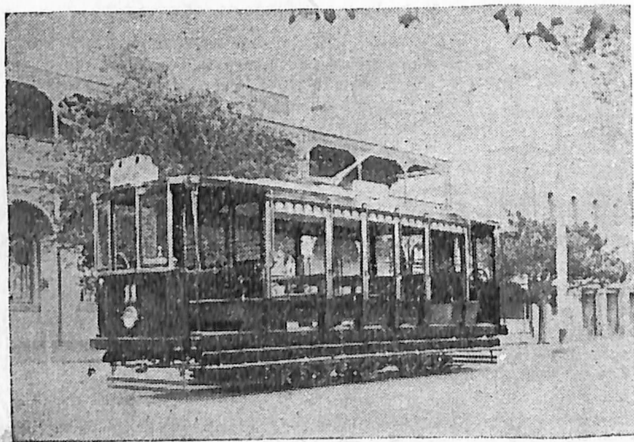
In 1924, two Birney safety cars arrived from America. They were built by the Brill Co., and were numbered 14 and 15 — No. 13 was left blank, possibly for superstitious reasons. In their original condition they were fitted with two trolley poles and trolley retrievers. These fittings were removed during 1937, and a single trolley pole fitted. To cater for mounting traffic and planned extensions during the middle '20's, eight more cars were built in 1925. They were large (35 feet long) closed combination cars on Radiax trucks. Once again their body style was unique in Australia. Exceedingly massive in appearance,

they had clerestory roofs and two trolley-poles, and were numbered 16-23. Once again the contract went to an Adelaide firm — Pengeley & Co., of Edwardstown. Another rolling stock change in 1925 was the scrapping of the two remaining trailers.

During 1926 it was decided to scrap the two toastrack motors. In 1928, an open toastrack trailer was bought from the Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board. It had formerly belonged to the North Melbourne Electric Tramway & Lighting Co., having been acquired by the Board in 1922, and was built by Duncan & Frazer in 1906. The seats were removed, a large cylindrical tank installed, low sides constructed, and scraper gear fitted. It was placed on the truck from the scrapped motor, No. 11, and entered service during 1929.

Three new routes were opened in fairly quick succession: Chilwell, on 13th September, 1927; Belmont, on 16th October, 1927 (an extension of the South Geelong route); and North, on 6th July, 1928.

The final extension was constructed during 1930. It was a short branch off the East Geelong route to Eastern Park, and was opened on 1st September. Its prime purpose was to serve the football ground situated in Eastern Park, and it became largely redundant when the main League games were transferred to Kardinia Park (on the Belmont route) some years later. During 1928, seven open California combination cars were purchased from Melbourne,

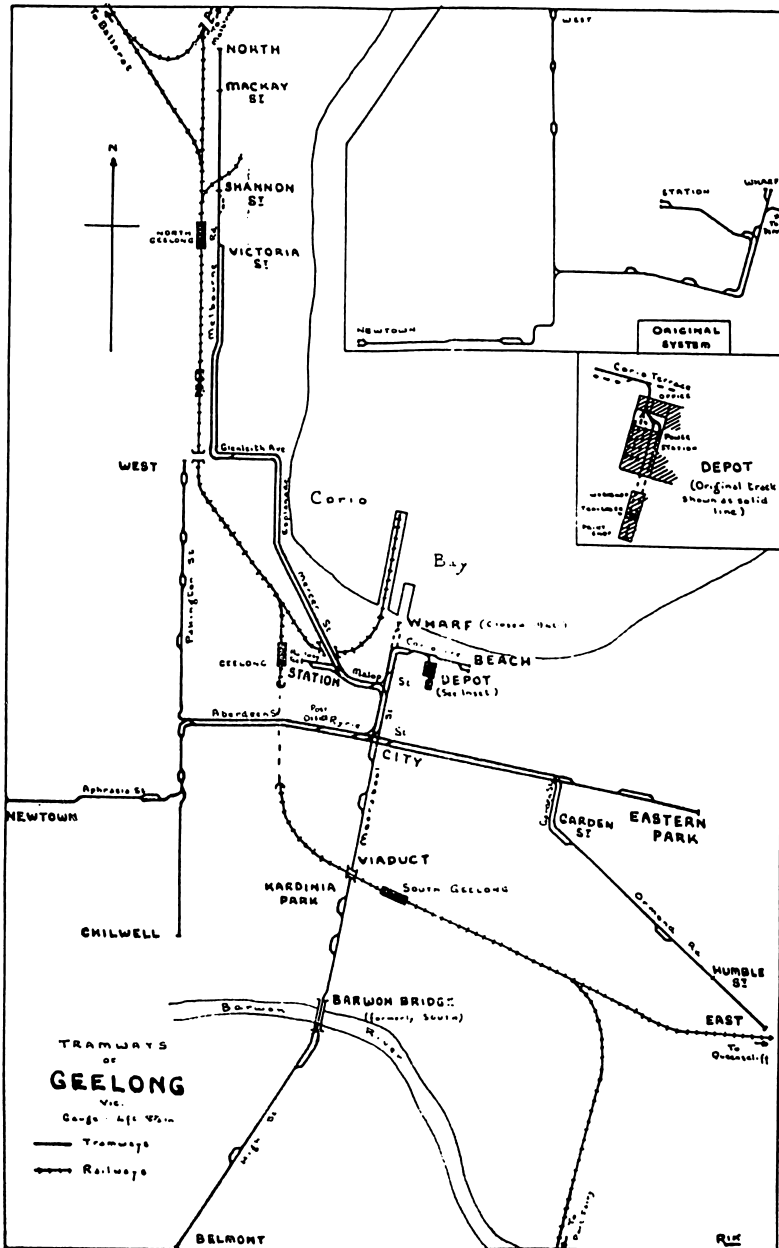


#### MOTORISED TRAILER

No. 11, a 40-seat toastrack, in her hey-day.

(Official photo.)

and numbered 24 to 30. As a result of the world depression, eight cars, Nos. 3 to 10, were converted for one-man operation in 1931. The end compartments were suitably

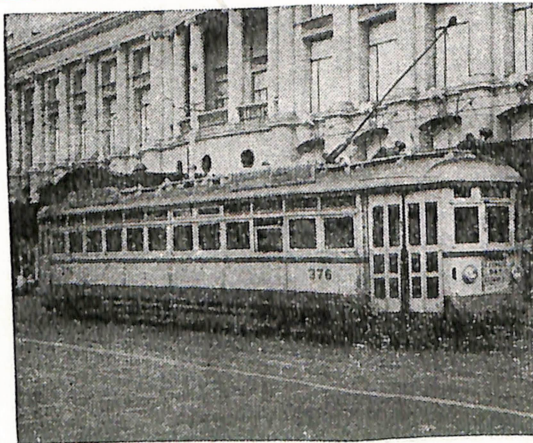


# Silver and Scarlet

altered by re-arranging the seating, cutting part of the motorman's bulkhead away, and fitting waist high side panels and swing doors. Nos. 1 and 2 were converted during 1935, while four of the "Pengelley" cars, Nos. 16-19, were altered likewise in 1939.

## Transfer to S.E.C.

Early in the century there had been much talk of forming a State organisation to control the electricity production and supply in Victoria. Consequently, the Victorian State Parliament passed a Bill during 1918 creating the State Electricity Commission, with power to absorb the then existing private companies. Two firms were involved; the M.E.C. (which ran the Geelong trams) and the Electricity Supply Company



It's carnation red, actually, under whatever name, the Adelaide M.T.T.'s new colour scheme emphasises the clean lines of F class car No. 211. Of the 84 cars in the F and FL Classes, 51 have been repainted in the new style. The other 33, including four out of service through accident damage, are not likely to be repainted in this style.

The interior of No. 211 shows a new attractive cream and green finish recently introduced; this car, however, has not had the bulkhead seat removed and driver's door fitted as done to other cars passing through the shops.

No. 376 (left), the first of 20 of the 30 H class interurbans to appear in the new colours, photographed at the Victoria Square terminus of the Glenelg line.

(Blocks by courtesy Frank M. & Co., advertising agents.)

## Cover Picture

A 3-car limited express passes through Ashiya, on the Haneyama electric line between Osaka and Kyoto, Japan. The 20 m. 10 ch. run is made in 27 minutes. The cars shown are of the "301" class, introduced in 1955, while the photograph was made by our Japanese correspondent on 26/3/55.

Unlike the mainline railways (4 ft 6 in), Japanese interurbans and transit lines are usually standard gauge.

### Disposal of Cars

Bogie car No. 38, one of the two which were not transferred to the other S.E.C. systems, has been bought by the City of Newtown and Chilwell, and will be placed in Queen's Park "as a memento of former days". Tenders have been called for the disposal of bogie car No. 31, and the single-truck cars.

### Few Employees Transferred

Sixteen former tramway employees have joined the Trans-Otway Bus service, but none have gone to the other concerns which took over the erstwhile tram routes. Trans-Otway employs "swinger" buses to handle peak loadings.

### BRISBANE, Q.

Latest car on the road is still No. 543, work having been suspended on Nos. 544-7 owing to lack of funds. Cars 542-3 have solid wheels. A trolleybus is undergoing a major rebuild at Milton Workshopsh.

### BALLARAT, Vic.

Unconfirmed reports state that an extension of the Sebastopol route, already the longest in Ballarat, is contemplated, and that a survey has been made. The extension would serve a newly developed residential area.

### MELBOURNE, Vic. (M.&M.T.B.)

The long-overdue reconstruction of tramway tracks in St. Kilda Road has commenced. Work is proceeding north from Commercial Road and will extend to Princes Bridge. As part of this work, a crossover will be provided in St. Kilda Road immediately north of Commercial Road junction. The lack of a crossover in St. Kilda Road south of Domain Road has long been felt. Full details of the work, which provides for temporary tracks to be laid on the roadway to enable services to be maintained, will be given in a future issue.

### Tail-lights for Trams

When the question of rear lights for trams was discussed recently in Melbourne newspapers, it was pointed out that trams operated by the Victorian Railways not only have red tail-lights, but also four strips of reflecting tape. Adelaide's 'F' class cars have also been equipped with the tape.

## Farewell to Geelong—

(Continued)

of Victoria (which ran the trams in Ballarat and Bendigo). Both firms had a 30 years' franchise for their tramways; the former expired about 1930, and the latter about 1934. The S.E.C. purchased the M.E.C. (including the Geelong trams) after considerable political wrangling. The Commission considered that it should not operate any tramways, as it was primarily an electric power production and supply body. However, as the local Council, Victorian Railways, M.&M.T.B. and other suggested bodies successively proved unwilling, the S.E.C. finally "inherited" the Geelong tramway system late in 1927. The Geelong tramways were in quite reasonable condition, and the S.E.C. spent little money on repairs after taking over, although many additional cars were purchased and the final extensions constructed.

### Rolling Stock Exchanged

The year 1936 saw an interesting adjustment of rolling stock. The S.E.C. bought four more Birney safety tramcars from the Municipal Tramways Trust, Adelaide. These cars were declared surplus when the Port Adelaide isolated system was closed early in 1936, and, unlike other combination and toastrack cars, were not returned to the main Adelaide system for further use. They were transported to Geelong, and were numbered 27-30. The four cars previously bearing these numbers were transferred to Ballarat (which was also now operated by the Commission). The new Birneys varied in minor ways only externally, but featured transverse tip-over seats, whereas Geelong Nos. 14 and 15 had longitudinal seats. They were also built by the Brill Company. The six cars operated successfully in Geelong for many years and were popular with passengers and crews alike.

### Final Extension

The final adjustment to track occurred on 9th October, 1940, when the short length of track serving the wharf was relocated and extended from the Depot to what was called the Beach terminus. With the acquisition of more cars during the years, the original two track depot had been extended to five roads, while the original two roads were extended across the back street into another building. This was termed the Workshop, and was divided into two sections. The larger portion was the general workshop and had a small

(Continued overleaf.)

"back way" along Grenfell, Pulteney, and Wakefield Streets. Certain curves on the Richmond line really showed up the 58 ft. length of No. 381, an overhang of six feet from the outer rail being observed on one curve.

The co-operation shown by officers and staff of the M.T.T. in arranging what must have been the two most unusual special runs in Adelaide's tramway history is greatly appreciated, and the thanks of interstate members go to their Adelaide colleagues for a really worthwhile and enjoyable convention.

## TICKETS

The range of tickets issued on the trams, buses, and trolleybuses of the Municipal Tramways Trust, Adelaide, has been extended, with considerable changes in the colours used, to meet the requirements of the greatly increased fare schedule of the present day. A brief description of both old and new tickets is given below. (All tickets are printed in colour on white paper unless otherwise stated.)

	<b>Old</b>	purple	(c)
1d.	black	black	
2d.	pale blue	orange	(c)
3d.	pink	red	
4d.	yellow	(redundant)	
5d.	light green	pale blue	
6d.	orange	(redundant)	
7d.	red	orange	
8d.	brown	brown	
9d.	mauve	(redundant)	(r)
10d.	dark green	(redundant)	(r)
11d.	pale grey	<b>New Tickets Only</b>	
1/-	dark blue	1/1d. black	
1/-	red on yellow	1/2d. dark green	
1/6d.	red on blue	1/3d. pink	
	<b>New</b>	1/4d. purple	
	(redundant)	1/5d. pale blue	
	pale blue (c)	1/6d. orange	
	purple (c)	2/- black (r)	

NOTES: (c) Child; (r) Race Ticket.

### Special Tickets

Other tickets issued (colours unaltered) include Transfer (red), Special Concession (red; green), Parcel (black on green, gummed), and Newspaper Parcel (black on cream, gummed).

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## Farewell to Geelong—

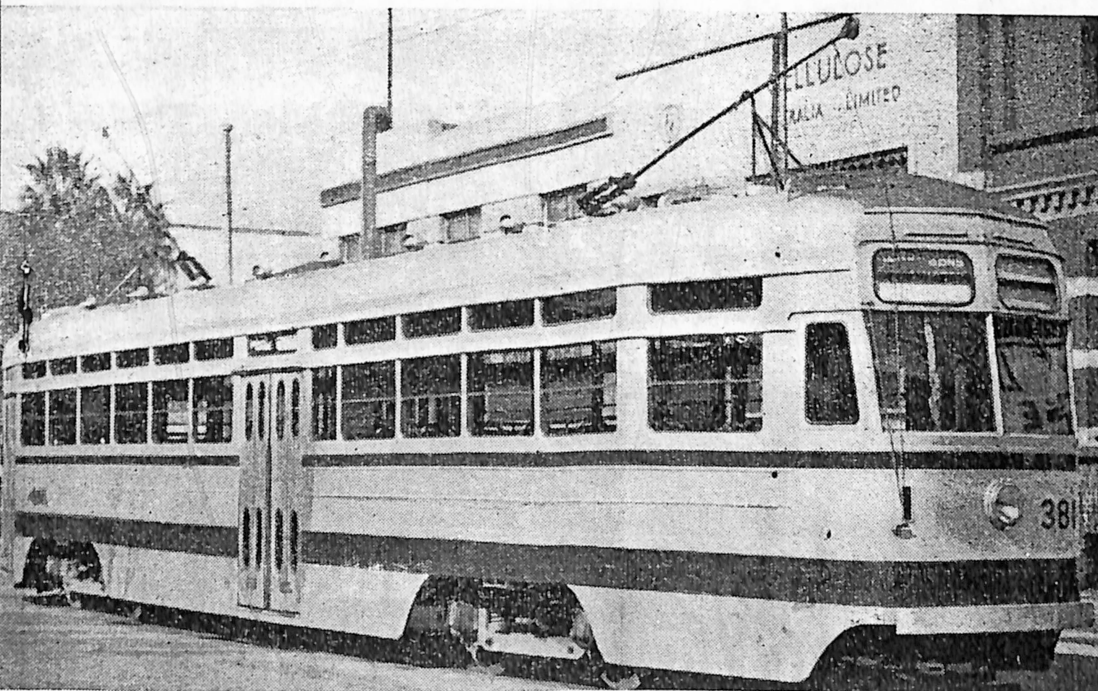
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### Post-War Rolling Stock Changes

During World War II the 27 single truck tramcars carried heavy traffic under difficult conditions. It was not until after hostilities ceased that additional rolling stock was acquired. The "new" cars were maximum traction bogie units from Melbourne, being "C" class on that system. The first arrived in January, 1947, and entered service in May, being numbered 31. Four more identical cars arrived later the same year and in January, 1948, entering service numbered 32-35. A sixth bogie arrived from Melbourne later the same year and was numbered 36. It differed slightly, having originated with the Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust, whereas the other five cars had commenced running with the Hawthorn Tramways Trust. To off-set this acquisition, and as part of a general modernisation of rolling stock on the S.E.C.'s three tramway systems, the six Birney cars were assigned to Bendigo. Nos. 27 to 30 went during the second half of 1947; No. 14 during 1948, while 15 remained until 1949.

The next rolling stock additions arrived during April, May and June of 1951, when four more bogies were purchased from Melbourne. They were numbered 37 to 40 and were identical with 36. They entered service during 1951-52. All ten cars were completely overhauled and painted before being issued to traffic and had several small modifications made to conform to standard S.E.C. tramway practice. As the loss per year was steadily mounting, the Commission tried hard to institute one-man operation (which Union pressure had virtually abolished after the War) in order to save traffic expenses. During 1953, No. 39 was altered to facilitate operation by one man but the Union immediately refused to run it as such. End doors were fitted, the drop-centre seating re-arranged, and two of the doorways on each side panelled, while the other was fitted with a door. It continued to be used — by two-men crews.

It is interesting to record that Geelong has had only one re-numbering (on its own roster). No. 25 was involved in two accidents (a derailment and a collision with a truck, with subsequent derailment) in 1951 and was consequently re-numbered 28 in order to remove the association of Car No.



(Continued from page 5)

25 and two bad accidents from the public mind. From about this time, Nos. 24 and 26 were not used and were soon cannibalised for small parts. No. 28 became the "spare" one-man car and saw little service. These three cars retained the old colour scheme (with cream rocker panel), whereas all other passenger cars had this section painted standard green.

#### Zebra Stripes

As a result of several bad smashes with motor cars on the North single track (this

is on the main Melbourne highway), it was decided to paint the dashes of all trams with black and yellow diagonal stripes and illuminate same with a canopy light (similar to Melbourne SW6 class cars). The first cars appeared during the second quarter of 1956 and they became known as "zebra" cars. Only five or six trams had been fitted when the closure plans were announced and work immediately stopped. Only two single truck cars were done—Nos. 4 and 5—and the latter did not receive the canopy light cover. So as no

to arouse too much public interest for further conversions of the cars to "zebras" the light globes were removed and they ran un-illuminated at night.

#### Route Changes

In December, 1952, alterations to the routing of services was made. Previously, North cars worked through to Belmont; Newtown to Station or Beach; East to Chilwell; West to Station or Beach; while Eastern Park ran as a shuttle to the city intersection. Under the re-routing, North and Belmont cars still worked through. However, the others were changed thus: East paired with West; Newtown with Eastern Park; Chilwell worked to Beach or Station. This arrangement continued until the closures commenced. Former regular short workings comprised: East—cars turned back on the single track at Humble Street. North—cars turned back at the end of the double track at Victoria Street; there was also at least one run in which two cars proceeded on to the single track, the second one turning back at Mackay Street, about one stop before the terminus. Belmont—railway bridge.

#### Indicator Lights

The Geelong trams used coloured route indicator lights for many years. There were four lights—red, white, blue and green—fitted in a box on top of the destination box at each end of the cars. The code was: Newtown—green; West—red; East—blue; Chilwell—green and blue; Belmont—white; North—red and white; Eastern Park—blue and white. When the trolley cars appeared in 1947 there was some concern as to whether or not they could successfully run at night without the colour route lights. However, any fears were quickly dispelled, and it was soon decided to remove the colour light boxes from the single truck cars. The only cars which did not lose them were No. 23 and the three ex-Melbourne cars, Nos. 24, 26 and 28.

#### Moves to Close the Tramways

The end of the Geelong tramways can be traced back many years. The first positive step towards closure was possibly taken over 25 years ago, when the S.E.C. were forced to assume control of the system which it did not want. Other contributing factors have been the low fares charged, continued Union refusal (until far too late) to one-man the cars for any appreciable part of the week, and pressure by certain

factions seeking the substitution of buses for trams. In 1949, Mr. H. H. Bell, Jr., Permanent Way Engineer of the M.&M.T.B., was asked by the State Government to investigate Geelong's public transport and report thereon. In brief, he recommended the closing of the tramways and substitution of diesel buses. Subsequent to this, a committee of the A.E.T.A. made its own investigations contained in a report dated April, 1949. There were no major positive moves in the position until another State Government asked the Transport Regulation Board (which licenses bus routes and truck operators) to investigate and report. The Board held public hearings at the end of October, 1953, at Geelong. One year later, November, 1954, the Board's report was made public. It recommended closing the tramway system and substituting buses—preferably publicly-operated to private enterprise. About six months later the Minister for Transport announced that the Government had decided to close the tramways and substitute diesel buses—privately operated. Despite public protest meetings, and a monster petition signed by over 16,000 people, the Government refused to change its decision and announced the schedule of abandonments in November, 1955.

#### First Routes Go

The Geelong tramway system slowly died during the first quarter of 1956. All last trams on the various routes ran on Sunday nights, the buses taking over from the Monday morning. The first closing took place on January 8th, when the heavy through route from East to West finished, together with Chilwell to Beach and Railway Station. However, on sunny Saturday and Sunday afternoons a single truck car ran a shuttle from the city intersection to the Beach terminus until early March. The next closure was the through route from Newtown to Eastern Park, which finished on January 22nd. As Ryrie Street had now been cleared of its five routes the S.E.C. rushed the removal of overhead wires and centre poles. Additional crews and vehicles were pressed into service, including those from Ballarat and Bendigo, and considerable overtime worked. It appeared rather obvious that, if there were a public outcry against the buses, the trams would not be capable of returning.

#### Final Closing

The long through route, Belmont North, was severed on March 4th, when North was



closed, and Belmont cars terminated in the city at the facing crossover in Moorabool Street, near Malop Street. As no tram service now served the railway station certain of the Belmont cars were diverted to the Station spur until Friday, March 23. Sunday, March 25, saw the last passenger trams serve Geelong—Victoria's second city. Two of the converted "Pengelley" cars—Nos. 17 and 18—provided the afternoon service and were changed over for two bogies—Nos. 31 and 38—about 8 p.m., to handle the extra loading caused by people having a "last ride". Car No. 4, which had officially opened the service 44 years previously, was suitably decorated to run as the official last car. Bogie 31, the second last regular passenger car in from Belmont terminus was speeded up and returned to the city in time to follow No. 38, the last ordinary car scheduled from Belmont, on the out-bound trip. No. 4 preceded these cars, in order to be the last back to the city. The crowd wanting to ride the last tram was so large that a third bogie car was run out—No. 33—and followed the other cars to Belmont. It was driven by the pitman on duty in the shed, with the Inspector on duty acting as Conductor.

The four trams were followed by a police escort and scores of motor cars. Thousands of people lined the route, packed the roadway at the terminus, and crowded the main city intersection. The return trip to Belmont was probably accomplished in record slow time, to the accompaniment of blaring car horns and the playing of "Auld Lang Syne". After a presentation to a

former mayor of Belmont (who had opened the Belmont extension in 1927) at the Barwon River Bridge, and a presentation to the Mayor of Geelong upon return to the main city intersection, the cars returned to the depot and the Iron lattice-work gates quickly closed. Thus ended over 44 years of service to the people of Geelong by the Geelong tramways.

The last cars on the various routes were: Chilwell—1; West—7; East—18; Newtown—18; Eastern Park—19; North—6; Station—18; Beach—regular—1; Beach—last city shuttle—not known, but was probably one of Nos. 1-9 group.

#### Disposal of the Cars

Of the 31 trams with which Geelong enter 1956 with, only eight will continue to see service. All the single truck cars and two of the bogies (Nos. 31 and 38) will be scrapped and sold. This is the reason why 31 and 38 were allocated for the last night—it didn't matter if the public started the scrapping! Of the eight bogies to remain, five have gone to Bendigo and three to Ballarat, in which cities they will continue to serve the public. All the serviceable equipment that is interchangeable with cars in Ballarat and Bendigo will be salvaged and used on these two systems, as will much of the overhead wire and fittings, and rails and special work. The workshop has already been taken over by another branch of the S.E.C., while all overhead is down and track will be removed during the next three years

(Continued overleaf)



Two famous Geelong cars: (Left) No. 4, which had the distinction of being both the first and the last car to carry passengers on the system and (right) No. 14, the first Birney. No. 4 was photographed in the green-and-cream colour scheme later changed to that used on No. 14.

# Electric Railways

Edited by

A. W. PERRY

## N.S.W. RAILWAYS

### ELECTRIFICATION OF STEAM LINES Western Line

Both structure bases and sectioning huts are to be seen as far west at Bowenfels, while structures extend to Medlow Baths, with some gaps. Overhead is complete from Blaxland sub-station to Falconbridge, and is being erected thence to Woodford. Lawson sub-station supervisory control room now controls the Sydney-Lithgow high tension A.C. supply. All sidings on the Blue Mountains are being wired with simple catenary; mainline wiring is compound catenary.

### Metropolitan Goods Line

Structure bases are now being placed in the Rookwood-Chullora Junction and South Enfield-Canterbury sections.

### Suburban Area

The erection of structures in Clyde Yard, and in Sydney Yard from the yard throat to platforms 1-8 is rapidly nearing completion (Nos. 9-15 are already wired). The special type of loco water column for use in electrified areas (to avoid danger of fouling overhead wiring) is being erected throughout Sydney Yard; some persons (including railwaymen!) have been heard to enquire if these are bowsers for the diesels.

### ROLLING STOCK NOTES

#### Power Doors Successful

On 21/12/55, Australia's first suburban electric train with power-operated doors — 8-car set F39 — made its official trial run from Sydney (steam station) to Homebush and return. Representatives of the press on board were given a thorough demonstration of the safety features provided. The train commenced off-peak service on 9/1/56, and all-day service on 23/1/56. The expected

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and the roads reinstated. And thus the Geelong trams pass into history, while the taxpayer remembers that it will cost him £298,000 during the coming three years for the State Electricity Commission to compensate the local Councils for reinstating the roadways!

delays at City stations in peak hours do not seem to have eventuated. The set comprises motors C3464, C3469, C3519, C3520 and trailers T4630, T4632, T4633 and T4634. C3521 and T4631 are also fitted with the doors for use as spares.

The experiment has been declared a success and all trains will ultimately be so fitted. It is believed that new cars will be fitted before being placed in service.

#### Roller Bearings

Several motors now have Timken roller bearings on the leading (non-motor) bogie, a smoother ride being reported.

#### Fibre Brake Shoes

In a few weeks' time, it is planned to commence fitting all suburban electric cars with fibre brake shoes. Semi-official reports state that mileages of 40,000 to 60,000 have been obtained for these brake shoes, as compared with 18,000 for steel shoes.

#### Loco in Passenger Service

On Monday, 23/1/56, the experimental electric loco, No. 4501, commenced regular passenger service on Mondays to Fridays, hauling the 5.23 a.m. and 5.28 p.m. trains from Central to Penrith, and the 6.58 a.m. Penrith to Central. Acceleration is slower than with the multiple-unit sets, but the higher maximum speed offsets this to a considerable extent.

(Information as at 5/2/56; held over from previous issues through lack of space.)

## "THE BRIGHTON ELECTRIC LINE"

Mr. Marshall-Wood's delightful account of the St. Kilda-Brighton tramway, written specially for the 50th anniversary of the line.

On this month's cover is reproduced one of the many illustrations which appear in the book.

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