

Tramway Topics

from Allan's, this small band of enthusiasts struggled along under Bandmaster R. Green, helped considerably by the late Mr. A. Paxton, at that time Bandmaster of the Hawthorn City Band. Assisted by nine of his players, the Tramways Band made its first public appearance in February, 1940, at the Athletic Club's picnic at Wattle Glen. When appointed Secretary a month later, Inspector C. Chamier set about organising a campaign for funds for the purchase of the instruments. The Board assisted with a donation of £50, and a year later gave £100, as well as supplying smart and distinctive uniforms. Thus encouraged, the Band felt capable of giving its first recital at Wattle Park in February, 1941. Two months later Mr. W. Howell took over the Presidency. Mr. L. Hoffman became Bandmaster, and he proved himself an able tutor until he resigned last December.

Bandmaster W. May was appointed to the position in January last, and since then he has been unsparing in his efforts to bring the Band to the state of perfected efficiency necessary before an entry could be lodged for the Ballarat competition with any confidence. The appearance and talent of the Band was obvious in the Anzac march. Thanks to the voluntary efforts of the Band, the crippled children's ward at the Austin Hospital has received £350, while other charitable institutions have been helped to a lesser degree. The five seasons at Wattle Park have been appreciated by the public, many letters testifying to the enjoyment derived from the recitals. Representing as it does all branches of the service, the Band acknowledges gratefully the sustained and practical interest taken by the Chairman and members of the Board in its affairs, and recognises that the £375 spent by the Board in the purchase of the instruments was the foundation upon which the success of the Band has been built.

At the moment Mr. B. Cunningham is working very hard indeed over the task of raising funds for the visit to Ballarat. It is estimated that £250 will be required. Tickets for the 14 valuable prizes which have been secured will be available at all Depots shortly. All can help our own Band by supporting this competition.

RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

During the last month, the under-noted retiring gratuities have been passed by the Board:—

Con. J. G. Crowle (43), 18 years' service, resigned, £95; Con. J. Streater (60), Ret. Soldier, medically unfit, £595; Drvr. J. R. P. Shearer (48), 23 years, £249; Drvr. G. Millar (49), 22 years, £225; Con. C. H. Bolger (65), 37 years, £610; Sig. F. Tolson (65), 39 years, £766; Drvr. O. B. Seddon (57), 34 years, £499; Staff

Sig. F. Dainty (65), 43 years, £727; Car Cleaner A. M. Burton (57), 34 years, £479; Pitman C. W. Smith (65), 27 years, £658; Drvr. H. E. Elmslie (60), 24 years, £352; Charman E. Starford (65), 26 years, £554; Drvr. P. L. Pata (49), 29 years, £396; Drvr. J. W. Cooke (51), £95; Pitman H. A. Chatfield (65), 46 years, £787; Draftsman A. F. Bowey (65), 23 years, £911; Roller Drvr. W. E. Barnett (65), 22 years, £576; Con. E. E. Blumfield (65), 39 years, £712; and Starter V. Cocking (65), 42 years, £850.

Death gratuities to the respective next of kin have been paid in relation to:—Scrubber Car Operator W. A. Fee (55), 26 years, £360; Con.-Instructor G. S. Boardman (62), 37 years, £740; and Con. J. E. Longstaff (58), 36 years, £529.

TRANSPORT LOSSES.

Sydney's Accumulated Deficit Nears £1,700,000.

According to the "Sydney Morning Herald," the Department of Road Transport and Tramways ran at a loss of £675,000 for the year which ended on the 30th June last, despite the substantial increases in tram and bus fares, bringing the accumulated deficit to nearly £1,700,000.

Losses, added the paper, seem certain to continue unless the Government again raises the fares or writes off some of the capital indebtedness. Our comment would be that it doesn't seem to matter which way the ledger is squared—the taxpayers will still have to find the money.

While the same paper intimated that Sydney's new trams are to be of the 1933 vintage, although costing over £8,000 each, we are informed that no contract has yet been placed.

FROM VARIOUS SOURCES WE LEARN

That Pittsburgh is in process of taking delivery of another 100 P.C.C. trams.

That after the unsuccessful experiment during the war Rotterdam will never again introduce trolley-buses.

That Amsterdam's new trams are 39 feet long, with seats for 28 passengers and standing room for 50.

That only 15 per cent. of Tokyo's tramway system of 285 miles (operated with 1,713 trams), is out of action; and

That Brisbane's transport workshops are turning out new trams at the rate of two every five weeks. Incidentally, the General Manager (Mr. S. L. Quinn) informs us that the fare increase of 1d. does not apply to one-section passengers, the change there being that a book of tickets for 1/- consists now of nine tickets instead of 12.

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THE RED LIGHT.

R.A.C.V. President Sees It Only For Trams.

The President of the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (Sir Thomas Nettlefold) wants rear red lights on trams, and makes the nonsensical statement that "the number of tram accidents prove the necessity of this."

Well, the motor cars which occupy so high a place in the affections of Sir Thomas carry anything from one to three red rear lights, but these didn't prevent motorists killing 155 people and injuring another 3,391 during the six months which ended on the 31st March last.

In short, motor cars killed more people in six months than accidents in which trams were involved did in many years—and be it remembered that 95 per cent. of our accidents occur in the hours of daylight when rear red lights, or the lack of them, do not come into the picture. As for those which occur at night, all that can be said is that if a motorist has such bad eyesight, or is so negligent, that he cannot see a tram, which is 47 feet long and is lit brilliantly, then he ought not to have a licence to drive. Why, some of them can't even see level crossing gates in daylight, for on the average 10 motorists per month run into these closed railway gates.

Finally, collisions between our trams and buses and all other sorts of motor vehicles numbered but 316 last year, of which only 20 odd concerned the rear of trams. Most were head-on collisions, and not even whole stacks of Roman candles at the rear of the trams concerned could have prevented these or stopped the inefficiency and recklessness of the drivers concerned.

A REQUEST FROM ARGENTINA.

Argentina is the latest country to exhibit interest in our undertaking. Writing from Rosario, Senor Ramon Farrero Gou's letter to the Chairman is as follows:—

"Sir President of the Melbourne Tramways Company, Australia.

Dear Sir,

Being my intention to form a "Graphical Historical Archive of Transportation" direct you to solicit have the amability to send me a photographs of latest view of the vehicles of that enterprise possess in circulation.

It is a indispensable condition that the photographs contains to the car laterally seeing in his totality."

As requested, the "Sir President" has forwarded photographs of our S.W. 6 tram in their "totality."

WHERE OUR S.W. 6's ARE.

The curiosity of the public over details of our management and rolling stock is a constant source of surprise. So far as the latter is concerned, quite a number of people seem to hold the older types in affectionate regard, and appear to miss them when they go off to Geelong, Bendigo or Ballarat.

Another section keep a jealous eye on the allocation of our S.W. 6's. An East Brighton man wrote, grumbling that "Toorak got them all," while another was equally certain that the St. Kilda line was being favoured unduly. As a matter of fact, when the Rolling Stock Department intimates that a new tram is ready for service, the Traffic Department instructs it to be sent to the Depot where at the moment the need for additional cars is greatest.

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Under this system the S.W. 6's have since their introduction been fairly equally distributed between the Depots. About 90 are now in service, and the last return shows they are situated as follows:—

Malvern	8	Camberwell	14
Hanna Street	7	Coburg	8
Preston	8	Hawthorn	10
Glenhuntly	8	Kew	7
Brunswick	7	Essendon	9

In addition, No. 891 (Kew) and No. 923 (Camberwell) are in the Workshops for repairs.

THE LAST 5 CENT. FARE.

New York has at last lost its 5 cent. fare on the subway, the Mayor having in May last recognised the impossibility of continuing a charge which bore no relation to the cost of the ride. He doubled the fare.

Introduced in 1904, the 5-cent. fare has cost the New York City Council scores of millions of dollars. In recent years, it was stated that what between the rise in the cost of materials and the increased wages, each passenger journey was costing the Corporation 10 cents!

WORK IN THE FOG.

One strange feature of the fogs which were such a nuisance to traffic last month was that the mist increased in density the further south one proceeded. This was the case particularly on the evenings of the 14th and 16th, when the fogs were the worst experienced for many years.

Under the prevailing conditions, the work of the men of the Glenhuntly and Malvern Depots was splendid. Their ready and willing co-operation, as the Inspectors on duty have testified, kept the services running, and the Chairman would like all concerned to know how much he appreciates the work of the crews on these occasions.

TRAFFIC HEADACHES IN THE UNITED STATES.

A writer in "The American Mercury" discusses America's traffic headaches, which are, apparently, just the same as our own, and comes to the conclusion that private motor cars and their parking in the business areas of cities are the sole cause. He points out that parking facilities can never take care of anything but than a microscopical fraction of the cars coming into a city, in proof of which he mentions that San Francisco, with 175,000 registered

cars, has provided parking space for but 1,700; Detroit, with 408,000 cars, is talking about an underground garage for 1,000; Los Angeles, with 500,000 cars, is planning space for 2,700; while Cleveland, with 250,000 cars, accommodates 700 in an underground exhibition hall—when the hall is not otherwise occupied!

After studying the traffic problems, the Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association came to the conclusion that:

"Mass carriers can transport people in and out of the Triangle (the main business district) more efficiently than the private automobile, both with respect to street space usage and requirements of terminal facilities. In the huge increase in autos anticipated by 1960 every additional customer that can be won by mass transportation will ease the traffic problem of the motorist and will tend to give economic stability to the area as a central business and shopping district."

That last sentence is true of the central area of all large cities, for it is a fact that on the average the private car deals only with 1.7 passengers, while only from 7 to 9 per cent. of shoppers arrive in the shopping area by other than public transport vehicles.

BRISBANE'S STREAMLINED TRAM.

Attractive Job Provides Favourable Comment.

Many admiring and favourable comments have reached the General Manager of the Brisbane Corporation Transport Department (Mr. S. L. Quinn) over the streamlined tram which has been designed and constructed by the Department's engineering staff, headed by the Chief Engineer (Mr. J. M. Grant). The following are the main dimensions contrasted with those of our S.W. 6:—

	Brisbane	Melbourne
Length over bumpers	49'	46' 6"
Width over body	7' 8"	8'
Truck pivotal centres	22' 6"	
Truck wheel base	5' 2"	5' 2"
Wheel diameter	28"	28"
Height, rail to roof	10' 2"	
Seating capacity	60	48
Crush capacity	—	150
Weight	15½ tons	16.9 tons
Step heights—1st	12"	14"
2nd	12¾"	13¼"

The frame of the tram is of integral construction, there being no separate underframe, all members of which are standard rolled steel sections. Fabricated steel angles and plates go into the body bolster, and welded construction is used throughout. Timber is used only for the floor, framing for

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internal lining and roof sheeting. The interior lining and ceiling is of tempered masonite or bondwood. Exterior panels are 14 gauge steel plate below the waist rail and 16 gauge above. Door openings are finished off with extruded aluminium alloy moulding.

There are four sliding doors on each side of the tram running on ball bearings and manually operated. Quarter-inch plate glass is used for the windows, which are sashless and are operated by full drop spring balances. In the motorman's cabin, the windows are of armour plate glass, the front window being fixed and fitted with an air-operated screen wiper, while the side windows may be lowered on "Young" balances.

Seats are upholstered in brown leather on rubber latex cushions fitted with tubular steel frames. A vertical tubular grab stanchion goes from each panel seat to the ceiling, while new type internal grab handles are fitted to each doorway with a row of grab straps along each side of the aisle. When available, the floor is covered with rubber.

The trucks are of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board design, on wheels 28 ins. in diameter, and are equipped with G.E. 247 motors and air brakes. There is also an emergency hand brake. Under each end of the car is an automatic trip life-guard. With the exception of the roof, which is grey, the whole of the exterior of the tram is painted aluminium.

Interior lighting consists of two rows of 40-watt lamps recessed into the ceiling and covered with frosted glass bowls. The interior is in brown up to the waist rail and biscuit from the waist rail to the ceiling, while the ceiling itself is in white.

SAFETY GLASS.

Supply Position Begins To Improve.

Some misapprehension appears to prevail over the use of safety glass in our trams and buses; in fact, various people seem to be under the impression that safety glass, so far as the Tramways Board is concerned, is non-existent. Actually, for many years, we have been using glass of the wired or laminated class, which splinters when broken but is not liable to fly about as is ordinary glass, in the sliding doors and centre bulkheads of all the S.W. trams and in the front windows of the buses.

But for the war, armour plate glass, which is of the type which breaks down into small pellets without splintering when smashed, would have been used exclusively, even though it was much dearer. During the war, and afterwards, however, it was impossible to procure supplies of this kind of glass. Supplies are still very limited; but the position shows

signs of improving, and it is hoped to obtain sufficient to ensure that every new tram leaving the Workshops will have wind-shields, side doors and rear bulkheads of this glass.

In addition, at the moment the Board's officers are investigating the practicability of re-glazing the windshields and side doors of motormen's cabins in the older trams as they arrive at the Workshops for overhaul with this type of glass.

APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS.

The following appointments and promotions are published for information:—

C. A. Brown, Kew, Probationary Traffic Inspector; J. J. Felstead, Preston Workshops, Sub-Foreman—Foundry Section; A. J. Goodall, H.O., Purchasing Clerk; V. B. Parlett, Kew, Probationary Ticket Examiner; A. E. Williams, Hawthorn, Engineering Asst.; G. B. Banks, H.O., General Clerk; D. D'Alton, Coburg, Probationary Staff Signalman; G. J. Drummond, Carlton Sub-Station, Ass. Control Supervisor; A. Quedsted, H.O., Wages Clerk; and G. F. Stone, Victoria Parade, Special Ganger.

NOW FOR LA TROBE STREET.

The Parliamentary Public Works Committee having recommended the construction of a tramway from Gisborne Street to Spencer Street via Victoria Parade and La Trobe Street, all that is required now to enable a start to be made is the passing of the necessary Bill through Parliament.

When completed, this extension will, it is hoped relieve Collins Street, and it will also provide another direct route to the beach for the people of northern and eastern suburbs. Another advantage is that people from those areas working in the La Trobe Street area will be conveyed to points close to their labour and will thus be saved the necessity of changing trams either at Swanston Street or Elizabeth Street.

THE TRAMWAYS BAND.

Appearance in the South Street Competitions.

There is no doubt that the entry of the Tramways Band in the South Street competitions in October is due to the perseverance, enthusiasm and personal sacrifices of its personnel sustained since the formation of the organisation nine years ago.

On an April Sunday of 1939 eight players, led by the first President, formed the Band at a meeting in the Hanna Street Depot, with Mr. A. Davidson as Secretary and Messrs. R. Broadby and P. O'Rourke as Vice-Presidents. With seven instruments on loan