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SUBMISSION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
BALLARAT TRAMWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY, AT THE
INVITATION OF MR RICHARD GILBERT, PRESIDENT, B.T.P.S.
FROM ROBERT ASPINALL EX MMTB EMPLOYEE
AND SCRUBBER CAR OPERATOR - 5 YEARS.

RICHARD RECENTLY ASKED ME TO SHARE ANY KNOWLEDGE
I HAD GAINED OVER THE YEARS WORKING ON
SCRUBBER CARS, PARTICULARLY NO 8, AND TRACK
MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES PRACTICED BY THE M.M.T.B.
(A THING OF THE PAST, IT APPEARS)

I FIND MUCH PLEASURE IN BEING ABLE TO SHARE
SUCH KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE WITH AN ORGANISATION
THAT HAS BUILT UP A REPUTATION OF ADOPTING THE
CORRECT AND TRADITIONAL METHODS OF OPERATING A
CONVENTIONAL TRAMWAY SYSTEM.

AFTER COMMENCING WORK FOR THE "BOARD" AS
A JUNIOR CLERK THEN PROGRESSING THROUGH - DEPOT MASTERS
CLERK, CONDUCTOR, TRAINER CONDUCTOR, MOTORMAN, ~~SHED~~
T.M.O., SHED LABOURER, CAR CLEANER, PITMAN,
BREAKDOWN WAGON, WHEEL GRINDER, I BECAME A
SCRUBBER CAR OPERATOR FOR ABOUT 4 OR 5 YEARS BEFORE
HAVING A "BREIF" PERIOD IN A TRACK GANG AND
MOVING ON TO WORK IN THE A.T. + M.O. E.A.
OFFICE AS THEIR BOOKKEEPER.

DURING THE PERIOD ON THE "SCRUBBER CARS",
I OPERATED CARS 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 AND 233 AND
OPERATED OVER ALL TRACK IN MELBOURNE.

OBJECTIVES OF SCRUBBING / FLUSHING.

① SCRUBBING

BETTER TRAMWAY SYSTEMS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

USE A VARIETY OF "WORKS VEHICLES" FOR MAINTAINING TRACK. EVEN THE SMALLEST OF TRAMWAY SYSTEMS USUALLY OPERATE AT LEAST ONE SCRUBBER CAR.

PERIODICAL SCRUBBING OF RAIL REMOVES CORRUGATIONS FROM THE RAIL HEAD BEFORE THEY CAUSE TOO MUCH DAMAGE.

FOR OVER 100 YEARS, ENGINEERS, STUDENTS AND ACADEMICS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO CONCLUSIVELY PROVE WHAT CAUSES CORRUGATIONS IN BOTH TRAMWAY AND RAILWAY RAILS. I KNOW OF A NUMBER OF LOCATIONS IN MELBOURNE WHERE THERE WERE CORRUGATIONS 25 YEARS AGO, AND DESPITE RENEWAL OF TRACK OVER THE PERIOD, HAVE RE APPEARED THERE IN THE NEW RAIL.

- CHAPEL ST, DROOP ST, SYDNEY ROAD COBURG AND TOORAK ROAD.

WHILST I DID NOT NOTICE ANY CORRUGATIONS IN WENDOUREE PDE, I DID NOTICE A VERY DIRTY RAIL HEAD AND GROOVE, WHEN CLEANED UP, WHO KNOWS WHAT MAY APPEAR?

OVER THE YEARS I HAVE READ MANY ARTICLES REGARDING TRACK AND RAIL CORRUGATIONS, PARTICULARLY THOSE FROM THE "PERMANENT WAY INSTITUTION", - AN INTERNATIONAL BODY OF RAILWAY & TRAMWAY CIVIL ENGINEERS.

SCRUBBING RAILS IS DONE WITH A "DRIBBLE" OF WATER ON THE RAIL HEAD, JUST BEFORE THE SCRUBBING BLOCKS. HOWEVER WHEN SCRUBBING RAILS TO REMOVE LEAVES, THE SCRUBBING IS DONE DRY.

REMOVING LEAVES SQUASHED BY TRAM

WHEELS DURING THE "LEAF SEASON" IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE AS ANY TRAM DRIVER WHO HAS LOCKED THEIR WHEELS UP ON LEAVES WILL TELL YOU - IT IS A SIMILAR FEELING TO ICE SKATING !!!

② FLUSHING.

YOUR SOCIETY WAS LUCKY TO RECEIVE N^o 8 FROM MELBOURNE. WHILST IT WAS THE NOISIEST AND ALMOST ROUGHEST RIDING SCRUBBER, IT WAS THE MOST USEFUL AND VERSATILE CAR.

FLUSHING IS DONE FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS ALSO, THE MOST OBVIOUS BEING TO REDUCE DUST - WHICH I NOTICED IN BALLARAT WAS A BIG PROBLEM - THIS DUST COVERED PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS, MOTORISTS, YOUR PASSENGERS, NOT TO MENTION THE PAINT AND VARNISH OF THE TRAMS THEMSELVES. WHILST THE 100 YEAR OLD G. E. MOTORS WERE A FINE ROBUST DESIGN, THEY TOO HAVE LIMITS ON HOW MUCH DUST AND DIRT THEY CAN DIGEST BEFORE FLASHING OVER.

A CLEAN TRACK, FREE OF CORRUGATION RESULTS IN LESS VIBRATION THROUGH THE WHEELS, AXLES, MOTOR SUSPENSION BEARINGS, AXLE BRASSES, HORN STAY LINERS etc etc etc WHICH WILL EXTEND THE LIFE OF THE MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL COMPONENTS OF THE TRAMCAR TRUCK/S AND REDUCE THE OCCURRANCE OF "LOOSE" BODY WORK AND FITTINGS.

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT ALL OF THE REASONS, SAVINGS, REDUCED MAINTENANCE COSTS

THAT I'VE CITED, YOU WILL KNOW WITH ALL VICTORIAN TRAMWAY SYSTEMS - AND MOST IN AUSTRALIA AND THE WORLD HAD/HAVE VEHICLES EQUIPED TO SERVICE AND CLEAN THE RAIL.

LOGISTICS

No 8 SHOULD BE THE FIRST CAR OUT EACH RUNNING DAY TO CLEAN THE TRACK, ONE RETURN TRIP SHOULD SUFFICE (AFTER THE INITIAL BIG "CLEAN UP") SCRUBBING AND FLUSHING. AND BEFORE THE UN INFORMED SAY THAT "THAT WOULD WEAR THE RAIL AWAY IN NO TIME" I WOULD ESTIMATE THAT AT CURRENT USAGE, THE RAIL HAS 50 YEARS PLUS OF LIFE LEFT IN IT, AND THE SCRUBBING WILL PROBABLY EXTEND THE LIFE OF THE RAIL!

FILLING WITH WATER IS EASY - BY USING THE STAND PIPE ON THE LAKE SIDE OF THE TRACK (EAST) BETWEEN THE DEPOT AND LOOP - DEPENDING ON PRESSURE, THIS SHOULD TAKE 5-10 MINS. A FIRE HYDRANT FITTING, EACH END OF A LARGE DIA. (3-4") RUBBER HOSE OF SUITABLE LENGTH IS REQUIRED FOR THIS PURPOSE AND IS STORED ON THE CORRECT-SIDE - FOR FILLING OF THE CAR. THE CAR HOLDS JUST OVER 1000 GALLONS - OR ABOUT 4500 LITRES AND SHOULD BE LEFT FULL AT ALL TIMES - 1. TO PREVENT OXIDATION AND 2. SO THE TRAM IS ALWAYS "READY TO GO"

I AM QUITE PREPARED TO TRAIN MOTORMEN

IN THE OPERATION OF THE SCRUBBING AND FLUSHING EQUIPMENT AND OTHER EQUIPMENT ON THE TRAM AS WELL AS METHODS OF SCRUBBING AND CHANGING/CHIPPING THE BLOCKS.

OTHER DUTIES FOR N^o 8

IN BALLARAT, I OBSERVED THAT THE FIRST AND LAST TRAM EACH DAY ARE USED TO "PUT OUT" THE SIGNS AND TO "COLLECT" THE SIGNS EACH RUNNING DAY. THIS IS CAUSING SOME DAMAGE TO THE SEATS IN THE PASSENGER TRAMS, AS WELL AS BEING A SLOW PROCESS, ESPECIALLY IF PASSENGERS ARE BOARDING AND/OR ALIGHTING.

THE WESTERN SIDE OF N^o 8, COULD / SHOULD BE FITTED OUT SO THE SIGNS CAN BE STORED ON, AND "PUT OUT" AND "COLLECTED" BY N^o 8 ON ITS FIRST + LAST TRIPS - WHILST CLEANING THE TRACK.

I OFFER THIS REPORT TO THE BOARD IN ALL SINCERITY AND HOPE THAT IT IS ADOPTED AS POLICY AND PUT INTO PRACTICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Yours FRATEERNALLY

Robert Aspinall

20/02/2001