

Second life planned for Cossack line

PLANS are well underway to re-establish the historic railway line that for many years operated between Cossack and Roebourne.

A route has been examined by railway engineers and discussions for a lease of the Permanent Way are at the advanced stage with the Department of Lands and Surveys.

The venture is to be undertaken by the Cossack Project Committee which will be guided by officers of Hamersley Iron Railways.

When it is completed, the railway will run a steam locomotive and carriages. There are two suitable engines and four railway carriages available in the immediate area.

The Pilbara Railways Historical Society has a very strong, keen membership in the Pilbara and there is no doubt that they will show interest in the project.

The railway will operate as a tourist attraction, and is certain to attract crowds to the Roebourne Shire during the season. It will provide a source of income to help further future restoration and development of Cossack as a public recreation centre.

The next step involved in the project is a survey to be done of

those parts of the route which pass through Cossack and Roebourne. Plans need to be drawn up for bridges and culverts, and it is hoped to start on the earthworks in the near future.

The expected completion of the Cossack-Roebourne railway depends on the availability of reject rail and sleepers from various defunct and operating railways in the region. However at this stage is safe to say that the laying of the track might be programmed for sometime in 1980.

When it was first suggested that a tramway be constructed connecting Cossack with Roebourne, Cossack was a very busy port and served as sole entry and exit point for supplies to the entire Pilbara area.

It had operated as the only port facility through a boom time, and was for many years headquarters to the pearling fleet. This was in 1882, eighteen years after the first settlers came to the area.

Travel between the bustling port of Cossack and Roebourne at this time was very expensive and a sometimes impossible task — some seven miles over marsh and salt flats and during some

tides the road was covered with two feet of water.

The proposal for a modest, small-cost tramway over the short distance included one estimated cost of £15,000 and it was pointed out that transport could possibly assist to open up known mining fields, unworked because of cost. Nothing was immediately decided but in 1884 £150 was appropriated for a survey of a railway line from Cossack to Roebourne.

The Bill to authorise the construction of the tramway was passed on July 2, 1886, and tenders were called for the Cossack-Roebourne tramway and the Post and Telegraph Station and the Tramway Station in the Government Gazette on December 8, 1885. The contract was awarded to Mr W. Watkins at a price of £11,639.

When completed, the Cossack - Roebourne Tramway covered a distance of 8 miles and 16 chains, and came into operation on June 21, 1897, though not officially opened until some time later.

The official opening was a "red letter day" for the area and nearly all the local population was present at the ceremony to toast the line in champagne.

By KATHY VAN RAAK

Trams lose a record \$35 m.

THE Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board had a record operating loss of more than \$35 million for 1978-79, according to its latest annual report.

By GARY WALSH

Its deficit was cut to \$2,886,712 after the State Government contributed more than \$32 million.

Last year the operating loss was \$31.5 million.

The report, which was presented to Parliament yesterday, says that "despite the effects of industrial action" patronage increased slightly during the year.

The number of passengers carried on trams dropped by 226,000 to a little more than 101,000,000, while patronage of tramways' buses rose by more than 500,000 to almost 20,000,000.

The total result was a passenger increase of 361,131.

The report says this increase was achieved de-

spite of a rise, mainly because of the success of the "Travel Permit" and "Day Tripper" tickets.

Labor's transport spokesman Mr Crabb said yesterday that waste and mismanagement in the board had reached "scandal proportions."

He said the loss was the result of gross mismanagement.

Mr Crabb said \$10 million of the loss related to the board's bus operations.

He said the report showed the board spent more than \$13,000 maintaining each of its 278 buses.

Penny Royal tram gets the go-ahead

Launceston's controversial Penny Royal tramway has been given the official blessing of the Department of Main Roads.

The Minister for Main Roads, Mr Field, intervened in the issue last week and yesterday gave his official approval.

Mr Field said the tramway could go ahead as soon as engineering details were discussed.

And the department has dropped a condition that a two-metre high cyclone fence be erected on the boundary.

A condition of approval is that the land be suitably landscaped.

But Mr Field said this was a formality.

"The department and I appreciate that all Mr Roger Smith's developments at the Penny Royal complex have been attractively landscaped," he said.

"His latest project will add to the excellent attractions already provided.

"The tramway will be an asset to the city and to Tasmania's important tourist industry."

The managing director of the Penny Royal group and developer of the Gorge Quarry gunpowder mill, Mr Smith, said last week that what he called bureaucratic bungling by the DMR had

the tram link between the gunpowder mill site and the Penny Royal complex.

About \$50,000 had been spent restoring the old tram No. 16 to run on the tourist route.

The issue was taken up by Mr Bushby, MHA (Lib. Bass), who said that Mr Smith had the support of the people of Launceston in the development.

Mr Bushby also accused Mr Field of indecision and bureaucratic bungling on the issue.

Concern over cables

Mr Field said yesterday that Mr Smith had varied the tramway route in accordance with the department's requirements.

It would not be necessary to relocate the access boundary or build a cyclone fence, as had been suggested.

The department had also been concerned at the possi-

ELECTRIC

BUSES

STUDIED

By GEOFF STRONG

The Melbourne Tramways Board may introduce electric trolley buses to counter fuel price increases.

In its latest report to Parliament the board said diesel fuel prices were expected to rise 57 per cent in the next year but electricity costs only 18 per cent.

The report also showed an annual loss of \$35.6 million, up \$6.2 million on the previous year.

The board said that in view of present fuel costs the wisdom of retaining trams became more evident and the potential of the

The Tramways Board said the cost of trolley buses, which run on overhead wires similar to trams, and their energy efficiency and environmental attractiveness was being studied.

The opposition transport

LEONORA TRAM TO BE RESTORED

The people of Leonora and students of the Eastern Goldfields Technical College will benefit from a project to restore a tram that used to run between Leonora and Gwalia early this century.

The old No. 1 electric tram, which has not been used since 1915, arrived in Kalgoorlie by low-loader to be restored by students of the technical college.

When completed, the tram will be returned to Leonora to go on display as a tourist attraction.

The deputy principal of the college, Mr V. Gray, said he expected most departments of the college would be involved in the project at some stage.

In the early stages some admission studies groups would be involved particularly pre-apprentices.

However, there were jobs to be done in the restoration that would involve most trades.

The tram was first put into commission in 1908 to replace the steam tramway, but was only used for seven years until the municipal power house was destroyed by fire and the electrical tram service was suspended.

The tram then remained at Leonora, unused, and virtually intact, until 1958 when its four-wheel bogey was cut up for scrap and the body was bought by Mr Gordon Leaney for use as an extra bedroom.

Since then the tram has been in Mr Leaney's yard at Leonora. He recently donated it to the Leonora Tourist Committee.

TRAM BLOW

State Government failure to fund the East Preston tram extension was a bitter blow to the northern suburbs, the Member for Bundoora, Mr John Cain, said last week.

Hopes to start work on the extension before the end of 1979 had been dashed, Mr Cain said.

BENDIGO'S talking tourist trams are again playing a role in our Christmas festivities.

As most kids know there are many of "Santa's helpers" around the world, because just prior to Christmas there are so many children to see that Santa Claus can't see them all.

So each year these helpers talk to the kids about their Christmas wants.

Bendigo's "Santa" is due to arrive today (Horrors, did we hear from the parents? Is Christmas that close?).

From today, "Santa's tram" will run in Bendigo each Friday evening at 4.45 pm and Saturday morning at 8.45 am, arriving at 5 pm and 9 am respectively at the Myer store in Pall Mall.

Each tram will carry Santa and 40 children, and when it reaches the store, they will accompany Santa to his "castle" on the second floor.

This year, a procession will accompany the tram on its first journey... at 8.45 am today.

As it's the International Year of the Child, the procession will be led by marching girls carrying international flags, and a brass band.

The procession will join the tram at the corner of Pall Mall and Mundy St, and proceed "down the Mall."

On arrival, Santa will be officially welcomed by the Mayor of Bendigo, Cr R. Campbell, and free gas-filled balloons and sweets will be given to the children in the crowd.

Yes, it's that time of year again!...

Gala planned for trams' jubilee

The State Transport Authority is arranging a huge celebration for the golden jubilee of Glenelg trams.

The plan involves a giant carnival at Glenelg on December 16.

The main attraction will be rides in historical trams and exhibitions of model trams and trains.

It will tie in with a procession along Jetty Rd of horse-drawn vehicles, veteran and vintage cars, bands and historical buses.

Interest

Celebrations will commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the first tram to use the Glenelg line.

Marketing superinten-

By Ben Hickey

"We are planning a photography competition with about 70 prizes for children," Mr Drennan said.

History

"And we hope that schools will be able to charter some of the old trams before they go back to museums."

Organisers will prepare a pictorial history of the tramway for a booklet.

A surf life-saving carnival and a regatta on Glenelg beach will com-

Tramway attracts 12,000 patrons

The Van Diemen Light Railway Society carried more than 12,000 passengers during the year, the president (Mr E. G. Stewart) says in his annual report to be tabled at Devonport tonight.

The figure includes 7000 adult passengers and 5015 children.

"During the year the Don River Tramway has been a popular destination for young and old and we have had many visitors from interstate and overseas," he says.

"We have been able to continue paying our way and not be encumbered on any organisation in the form of financial restraint."

This is due to action taken by the society during the year when it entered into a "tender" agreement with the Australian National Railways Commission, he says.

CARNEGIE TRAMS

(Question No. 1172)

Dr VAUGHAN (Glenhuntly) asked the Minister of Transport:

When model Z3 or another model in the Z series of trams will be operating regularly on the Carnegie route?

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport)—The answer is:

I have been advised that the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board has no immediate proposal to operate Z class trams on the Carnegie route.

SYDNEY ROAD TRAMS

(Question No. 1185)

Mr GAVIN (Coburg) asked the Minister of Transport:

When the new "Z3" trams will operate regularly on the North Coburg-Sydney Road tram route?

Mr MACLELLAN (Minister of Transport)—The answer is:

It is expected that "Z" class trams will be operating on the North Coburg tram route within the next few months.

Transport grants

THE Federal Government has granted \$12 million in 1979/80 to Victoria under the States Grants, (Urban Public Transport), Act 1978, the Federal Member for Casey, Mr. Peter Falconer announced

\$8,533,000 will go towards acquisition of suburban electric trams by the Victorian Government and \$3,467,000 towards the acquisition of trams."

Mr Falconer said that payments to the States will