

FARES PLEASE!

Registered by Australia Post Publication No. VBH3548

September 1987

Annual General Meeting

Members are reminded that the thirteenth Annual General Meeting of the Society is to be held at the tram depot on Sunday, 13th October, commencing at 1:30 p.m. We urge all members to attend on the day. Bring your friends and families and enjoy a day in the Botanic Gardens. After the formalities of the meeting will follow the traditional tram ride along Wendouree Parade for members and their guests. Afternoon tea will also be served.

The following members have nominated for Board positions which fall vacant on A.G.M. day:

Candidate	Proposer	Seconders
<u>President</u>		
Frank Hanrahan	Allan Bradley	P. McDonald
<u>Ballarat Vice President</u>		
Paul McDonald	David Macartney	Len Doull
<u>Melbourne Vice President</u>		
Peter Winspur	Allan Bradley	Frank Hanrahan
<u>Secretary</u>		
Stephen Butler	Warren Doubleday	David Macartney
<u>Treasurer</u>		
Carolyn Dean	Darryl Soden	Glen Mills
<u>Ordinary Board Members</u> (6 positions)		
Alan Bradley	Peter Winspur	Howard Stoney
Richard Gilbert	Don Easton	Peter Winspur
Andrew Mitchell	Don Easton	Campbell Duncan
Garry Wood	Warren Doubleday	Paul Miller

As the number of nominations have not exceeded the number of positions vacant, no election is required. The two remaining vacancies for Ordinary Board members will be filled in accordance with the Articles of Association. Those members who are not able to be present, but still wish their vote to be exercised, may complete the proxy form (enclosed with this newsletter) to authorise another financial member to vote on their behalf.

The meeting will consider a resolution to change the Articles of Association so that the age at which a guarantee is no longer required will be reduced to eighteen years.

News of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society Limited.

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Melbourne Cable Car 593

By Bill Scott

An attraction of living in Australia is the experience of incredibly unusual discoveries in the least expected places. One such example is encountering an elegant Melbourne cable grip car parked on the roadway, outside a dwelling house 340 Km from Melbourne, nearly half a century after cable car operation ceased in Melbourne!

The saga unfolds from May 1965 when grip car 258 was discovered on a vacant building block in Box Hill North. The car was acquired by the TMSV in 1980.

Only the wheel sets, axle boxes, suspension, brake rigging, brake levers and decayed underframe of the car had remained. Therefore, the planned restoration would be a recreation rather than a restoration. The car was to be numbered 593, the next vacant number after the last grip car built by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board in 1923.

Donations of materials, mechanical components and equipment came from two Swan Hill firms, Dunstones Industries, hardware suppliers and Lusty Engineering Pty Ltd, semi trailer manufacturers.

Some original metal fittings were supplied by the TMSV, principally the cast iron stanchion bases and the couplings.

From these beginnings, TMSV member Newton Williams built the Melbourne type grip car illustrated below.



The first act was to dismantle the wheel sets, axle boxes and brake gear for sandblasting followed by painting. In their reassembly all nuts and bolts were replaced, as the originals were not servicable.

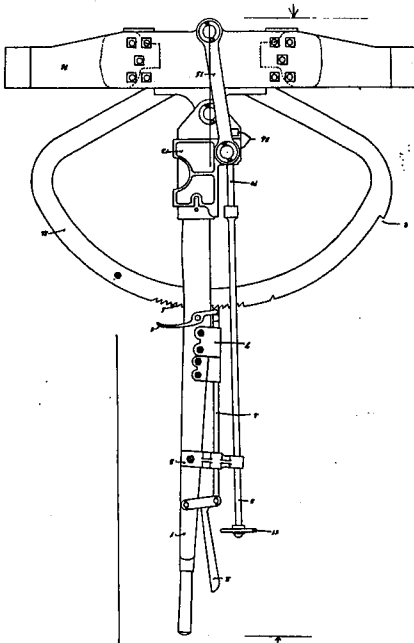
Bodywork followed side and end elevation illustrations made by the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company, in 1889.

Melbourne Cable Car 593 (cont.)

As the plan was to have an operating car, a scheme had been created for running a cable car without a cable.

The general arrangement devised for propulsion was installation of a petrol engine under an end seat driving an hydraulic pump energising an hydraulic motor. This sequence eliminates the need for a gearbox. Further, the tramcar being double ended, requires the ability to travel equally well in either direction. The hydraulic system provides this feature simply by the gripman pushing a floor level knob, attached to a directional lever, which reverses the oil flow. There is a crossover relief valve to protect the hydraulic motor against the car overrunning.

The petrol engine is a 16 h.p. single cylinder four stroke air cooled Kohler with an electric starter and automatic compression release, for easy starting.



The Grip Mechanism

The engine, pump and motor have compatible capacities so that all three are nicely balanced during operation.

The drive train comprises a pinion attached to the hydraulic motor and linked by a chain to a sprocket bolted to one of the four car wheels.

In the days of the Melbourne Cable Tramways, the middle of the three gripman's levers controlled the grip mechanism, which extended down into the tunnel between the running rails, accessed via the slot in the road surface.

In the case of car 593, the "grip" comprises an accurate recreation of the above-road section of a grip, made in accordance with a drawing by the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company dated 7 August 1895. It is connected to the petrol engine and the hydraulic system so that the car's progress along a track can be governed by the same lever arrangement as in the days of cable tramways.

The levers on either side of the grip are the controls for the wheel and track brakes. Accordingly, the car in progress along a tramway is visually indistinguishable from a totally authentic grip car.

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Melbourne Cable Car 593 (cont.)

The grip car's running mate is restored Melbourne trailer 171 of 1887. This saloon was retrieved from Mount Macedon in 1980 and therefore was probably saved from destruction in the "Ash Wednesday" bushfires of February 1983.

Since commissioning, 593 has been displayed and given runs at Bylands, Swan Hill, Mildura, Sydney and Port Kembla, as well as operating on the line of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society.

Further, whilst in Sydney the grip car was insured for loss or damage at replacement value, which was estimated at \$A40,000 based on the cost of materials and professional rebuilding.

The first extensive assessment for 593 under the acid test of regular service in traffic occurred on the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society's line for three successive days over the long weekend celebrations of the March 1987 Begonia Festival.

On the Friday the set ran for the local television station BTV Channel 6 and the Ballarat Courier newspaper gave major front page coverage.

The round trip in service commenced on the depot fan, proceeding along the access track in South Gardens Reserve to Wendouree Parade, then to the Gardens Loop just beyond Lake Lodge.

Both loop points were specially set for manual operation which allowed the grip car to run wrong road around the loop to change ends.

This arrangement ensured the grip car parked on the inner track of the loop away from the general flow of motor traffic in Wendouree parade, a desirable feature since it has open sides.

The weather remained cool or chilly, with showers on the Sunday. Even so loadings were generally good. On occasions even in nippy periods the grip car was loaded and the trailer empty, thus showing passenger preference for the novelty of the open car even in cool spells.

Plans exist to continue running car 593 on various museum and other tracks, perhaps often with trailer 171.

Grip car 593 is a magnificent and ingenious conception making a tremendous contribution to tramway preservation and the middle history of Melbourne.

COTMA Conference

The next biennial conference of the Tramways Museum of Australasia will be held at the Crest Hotel, Kings Cross, New South Wales from 2nd to 5th September, 1988.

COTMA Conference (cont.)

Representatives from the Australasian Tramway Museums find these conferences both informative and educational, strengthening the bond of friendship and co-operation between the museums.

Our Society will be attending and members will be advised of details as they are received from the host group, The Sydney Tramway Museum.

Membership

Membership renewals have been arriving at an excellent rate, however, for those few who have forgotten, a final reminder is enclosed. We welcome the following new members and trust they will enjoy their membership with us.

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
638	Christopher Brownbill	Camberwell
639	Frank Rees	Mill Park

Traffic

The new school holiday arrangements have resulted in August being a very quiet month.

Recently, Mrs. D. McGregor of Ballarat East donated five SEC uniforms to the Society. The uniforms which are in excellent condition belonged to her late husband who was employed by the SEC from just after the war until the system closed in 1971. Our thanks for an excellent addition to the Society's stock of uniforms.

Tramcar and Depot Works

Work is progressing on No.26 which is nearing the end of its mechanical overhaul. Only the installation of the motor suspension bearings remains prior to final finishing of the total restoration.

Horse Tram No.1 is proceeding with various woodwork being prepared while we wait for the corner pillars which are being provided by Sovereign Hill.

On No.1 road the new museum No.39 is nearly ready for external painting. The preparation of the body has shown this car to be in much worse condition than was originally believed but the work of Garry Wood is producing a most satisfactory result.

A recent day's work has seen the repair of the track telephone network along Wendouree Parade. The rigors of weather and council workmen means that we are fighting a constant battle to maintain the phones. For the meantime the phones are all back in service ready for the busy summer period.

G--Fares Please!

Possums

After the depot Hot Water service recently blew a fuse, president Frank Hanrahan attended but no apparent fault could be found.

The service was left switched off and the fuse at the main switchboard was replaced.

An hour later there was a loud bang from the substation and the fuse was found to have blown even though the hot water service was switched off.

Again Frank attended and the wiring was checked to reveal the cause. A possum had chewed the wiring leaving a collection of munched plastic and exposed wires.

As this section of the circuit is always alive the gradual heating of the wires finally caused the plastic to melt and the wires to make contact resulting in the dramatic explosion in the substation.

The possum apparently was not satisfied with its diet of plastic and proceeded to attack the dry catfood. The manufacturer would probably be less than happy to know that the possum made a meal of the cardboard box and left the contents virtually intact.

A Request

Member Bob Lillburn has written asking if any member could assist him with copies of the following photos and postcards.

M&MTB - 'S' class Nos. 154, 155, 167.

M&MTB - 'G' class Nos. 143, 151, 172.

VR - Tram No. 27.

SECV - Postcards (either Valentine or Rose Series) depicting No. 133 at the fountain Bendigo area circa 1947 about to depart for Eaglehawk.

If can assist with any of these items you can contact Bob on (053) 67 1708

Bob has also written an article about Ballarat's Bogie Trams and we will present this in the next issue of 'Fares Please!'

Fares Please! is published six times a year in alternate months commencing in January and is distributed to members and friends of the Ballarat Tramways. For further information regarding the Society's activities and publications, please contact:

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