

FARES PLEASE!

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September 1989

Annual General Meeting

Members are reminded that the sixteenth Annual General meeting of the Society is to be held at the tram depot on Sunday 15 October commencing at 1.30 pm. 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, the traditional tram ride along Wendouree Parade will follow. Afternoon tea will also be served.

The following members have nominated for Board positions which fall vacant on the day of the Annual General Meeting.

	Candidate	Proposer	Secunder
President	Richard Gilbert	Frank Hanrahan	Paul McDonald
Ballarat Vice President	Paul McDonald	Richard Gilbert	Frank Hanrahan
Melbourne Vice President	Peter Winspur	Greg Rodgers	Peter Walker
Secretary	Chris Jacobson	Peter Winspur	Greg Rodgers
Treasurer	Carolyn Dean	Richard Gilbert	Alan Bradley
Ordinary Board Members	Alan Bradley	Paul McDonald	Warren Doubleday
	Andrew Mitchell	Warren Doubleday	Peter Winspur
	John Phillips	Carolyn Dean	Greg Rodgers
	Greg Rodgers	Richard Gilbert	John Phillips
	Daryl Soden	Peter Winspur	Andrew Mitchell
	Peter Walker	Andrew Mitchell	Greg Rodgers

As the number of nominations have not exceeded the number of positions vacant, no election is required. The only special business to be enacted on the day, therefore, is for the Society's Annual Report to be presented, and for members to vote upon acceptance of the report. Those members who are not able to be present, but still wish their voted to be exercised, may complete the proxy form (enclosed with this newsletter) to authorise another financial members to vote on their behalf.

News of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society Limited.

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Overseas Visitor

Norman Rolfe, from San Francisco, visited our tramway on Saturday, 9th September. He had written to us seeking information on our operation and we moved a number of trams around the depot area for him to photograph. He also rode the service car and took many photographs. He said that our Saturday operation assisted his itinerary greatly as with most museums operate on Sundays only, this restricts the number that can be visited. We also drove him around Ballarat to show where the system had operated and then took him to the railway station where he continued his journey to Melbourne.

School Holidays

The trams will run every day for the September school holidays from Saturday, 23rd September to Sunday, 8th October.

Membership Renewals

Should any member have failed to renew his membership we would welcome a renewal. Your reminder notice is included. The Membership Subscription Rate is \$10.00. Unfinancial Members will be declared as *failed to renew* as from the November Board meeting.

Tourism Information

The State Government has withdrawn funding from the regional tourism companies and as a result Gold Centre Tourism has ceased operations. We, along with other tourist operators in the district, realise that it is important to have a local tourist information office and initially the Ballarat City Council has set up such a centre in Sturt Street. Paul McDonald represented our Society at a meeting called by the Ballarat Regional Board for Planning and Development to discuss what arrangements could be instituted. The meeting decided to form a self funded tourist body and to establish a full time tourist information centre. Our Society has joined up as a Member and we look forward to developments as it is vital that such a centre be established.

C.O.T.M.A. Conference - Wellington

As part of the conference of the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia to be held in Wellington, New Zealand, in June 1990 a group tour will be organised for the participating Australian visitors. Bill Kingsley will convene the planning committee within a month which will organise group air travel, visits to the tramway museums at Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch and rail travel between those places. A sightseeing and travel itinerary will also be planned for those wishing to stay an extra week on the scenic South Island. If you intend being at the Conference, keep a lookout for group travel details in the COTMA Memorandum.

In a Rotary Converter Substation

Dave Macartney has been going through some photocopies of North American Electric Traction Weekly, a magazine published for the then fifth largest industry in the U.S., Electric Interurban and Suburban tramways. Some of the material is fascinating.

The following extract is from the May 20 issue, believed to be in the year 1911. It is the experience of a new substation attendant, Harris Egge, on a newly opened traction line, which used rotary converters to convert the AC to DC power. These machines are basically an AC motor, driving a DC generator on the same shaft. They were the first type of converters, later replaced by mercury arc rectifiers and now solid state silicon diodes, the type the Society uses in its sub-station. By the way, The Met has many of these rotary converters still in service.

"While employed in a cement mill, a friend of mine told me that the transit company, by whom he was employed, was erecting nine sub-stations, and after examining the substation and the work connected with it, the job I thought would just suit me, so I lost no time in sending in my application.

In due time, Station No. 1 was started up. The first two men on the list were to operate it. Shortly afterward, Station No. 2 was to be started, and the day man of No. 1 was to go to Station No. 2 and I was to take his place. After I had spent two days at Station No. 1 to learn sub-station operation, the day man left for Station No. 2 and I took his place.

The first day not much of importance happened except the occasional opening of a breaker, which I must admit seemed of the utmost importance to me at that time. A part of the second day, or day of events, wasn't nearly as bright and clear as the first, as I well remember the heavy blue clouds that hung in and about the station, not rain clouds, but clouds of smoke. The morning of the second day was all bright until around noon, when there was a sudden slowing down of the rotary, then a sudden speeding up of the same, but in the opposite direction to that in which it was rotating when it slowed down. And the way that the rotary gained speed was next to marvellous. There was a car passing the station (which was situated in the middle of a hill), and the motorman was putting his car "on the loop". The station having been started up but a few days before, the d.c. breakers were not set where they should have been, being set too high, so of course, they did not open, while the a.c. breaker (oil switch) was not set high enough, which caused it to open instead.

Now the d.c. breakers all being closed and the a.c. breakers open, no alternating current could get to the rotary to drive it the right way. The direct current, seeing its chance to get in some work, sent a representative from its side and enticed the rotary to change its direction of rotation, which it seemed quite

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In a rotary substation continued

willing to so, and the way it spit fire would have made any Fourth of July celebration feel as though its past efforts had been uselessly spent. After not more than one-half minute of the above manoeuvring, there was a report equal to the that of cannon, caused by wires (loosened by the great momentum) crossing, getting against the frame of the rotary, which was grounded, and a dozen other things a lot of loose wires can do when they once make up their minds to do them.

It is useless to say that the rotary, a 300kw 600Volt machine was ruined. The a.c. side was not burned bad, but the d.c. side was - well! there was not much left, the brushes were broken into small pieces too numerous to count, the rocker arm was broken and twisted, pieces of which were found in all corners. The above effect on brushes and rocker arms, including brush holder, no doubt, due to the raising of the commutation segments, caused by the great momentum catching the brush holders. The armature was a sad sight, there wasn't enough wire left on it to prove that it ever had a winding, the slots that once contained the windings were empty. There were still a number of wires hanging from the armature, all pointing away from the armature, very much resembling the petals of a sunflower. The fields were all stripped of their insulation by the above mentioned loose wires.

Don't think that I was an eye witness to the above, as I, like the ex-moonshiner mentioned in your editorial, had made my exit earlier in the act by way of the door. And now you will ask, why didn't you stop it? Well, as soon as the rotary started to slow down I knew as I know now that something was wrong and jumping up, I saw that the rotary had stopped and was reversing, and with very little time to think and still time to act, the rotary now making many thousand revolutions per minute, my main aim and desire was to put distance between me and the already over-excited machine, which I did without loss of time. What a simple thing it would have been for me to open the rotary breaker, which would have stopped the rotary, but ignorance plus excitement never tends to benefit conditions.

On the side of the rotary is an arrangement made to do the same thing I was supposed to do, viz, open the rotary breaker in case of over-speeding and thereby stop the on-flowing current. This is a simple arrangement consisting of a weight, keyed to the shaft, which works on a hinge not unlike the governor of a steam engine: the higher the speed of the rotary, the farther the weight spreads, till the speed becomes excessive when the weight strikes a switch, closing it and thereby short-circuiting a solenoid that has a weight for an armature. The solenoid being short-circuited, the armature drops, which it turn opens the rotary breaker. Why this protection refused to work was, and still is, mystery to all concerned. The governor and switch worked all right, which was proved by the way both were disfigured, and upon the arrival of the superintendent and chief electrician, the solenoid and wiring were tested with power from the other rotary, and found all right".

Depot and Tramcar News

Work on the restoration of the horse tram continues to be the main area of work for our dedicated staff. Warren Doubleday, with the assistance of new member Andrew Cox, have been busy making up and fitting the various steel parts to the car. By the end of next month, all the metal parts for the lower deck portion of the car should have been made up. Our 1887 workshop complete with arc welders, oxy-acetylene gear, power grinders etc. has been very busy cutting, welding or re-shaping steel, brass etc. to form look-a-like parts.

Some of this work includes making up the brackets for the end canopies, finishing off the end aprons, making up the draw gear for the car, and fitting the end steps. The latter is quite a fabrication effort.

Dave Macartney has in the meantime fitted the roof slats to the main saloon, in readiness for canvassing the roof. His main time over the last two months has been spent learning how to steam bend wood. His success rate is now starting to outnumber the failure rate. The work is being done to form up the roof ribs for the end canopies. Some preliminary work for the stairway has also been carried out.

Internally the car is now basically complete except for the actual seats. Dave has placed malthoid on the floor and given it a coat of paint.

Other work around the depot has been confined to continuing to fit out and repair 39, the future museum display car and making up some metal signs for replacement of the old wooden signs that are to tell the public that the museum is open.

Winter

This winter, as Victorian residents will know, has been one of the wettest for many years. The parkland around the depot is saturated, and in many places one is walking through 50mm or so of water lying on top of the ground. It has not affected work, the inside of the depot remaining fairly dry. It has however resulted in the level of the lake being almost continually full. On more than one occasion during the year, we have been unable to run to St Aidans Drive due to Wendouree Parade being flooded.

New Members

No. 653

Merv Kelb

Wendouree

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Tramway Modelling

A tramway modelling group, known as the Tramway Modelling Association of Victoria has recently been formed. The annual subscription to this new organisation is \$10 per annum. The group meets monthly. Further details can be obtained from the Chairman on the association, Mr. D. Filgate, c/- 16 Good Governs St., Mitcham 3132. Please include a stamped self addressed envelope.

Stafford Stamps

Stafford Stamps exist for the purpose of making available railway and tramway tickets along with other collectible tickets and stamps from the transport field. They have mint condition original tickets, used tickets and reproduction tickets, such as Walhalla railway line issue. For further details contact Stafford Stamps at Box 73 Kew East Vic 3102.

Bendigo Tram Tour

We have recently recieved notification that Tervelka Pty. Ltd. are running a tram tour in Bendigo on Sunday, 12 November 1989 using Bendigo's five W2 class trams throughout the afternoon. The tour commences at 12.10 from the depot. It will connect with Melbourne trains as well. Further information from Tervelka Pty Ltd P.O. Box 382 Golden Square 3555, or phone (054) 41 6203. Cost is Adults \$25.00, Child/Concession \$15.00.

Oops

In the last issue of Fares Please! we noted the 50th Anniversary of the Seashore Trolley Museum. The Museum is located in the state of Maine, not Massachusetts. Our apologies.

Microfilming

Sometime ago, we noted that we had received a grant from the Ministry for the Arts for microfilming the former SECV drawings of the Ballarat tramways. This work is nearing completion. There are some very interesting drawings amongst them. When the necessary cataloging work is completed, these will be available for research work at the depot. A fiche reader is also being purchased.

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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