

FARES PLEASE!

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March 1990

That Hailstorm

Fares Please! missed reporting the November 1989 Hailstorm that struck Ballarat. Dave Macartney was our on the spot reporter. Dave took shelter during the storm in a former tram stop shelter near Forest St.

Thursday 16 November started as a pleasant spring day, but by mid afternoon ominous black clouds has started to build. By 7 p.m. the sky was black with clouds boiling against one another. An ever blacker cloud swept in from the south west beneath the others and with a noise like an express train the hailstorm to end all hailstorms swept across the lake. For fifteen minutes hailstones larger than golf balls hammered down, slicing leaves and twigs off the trees until Wendouree Parade was buried ankle deep in foliage. The water birds suffered terribly, with many harrowing scenes of dead and injured sea gulls and water hens around the margins of the lake. The fibreglass skylights at the tram depot were badly damaged, and were replaced during the following week by the City Council's roofing contractor. The Society's building insurance arranged through the Council, came to the rescue. The glass houses in the Gardens were severely damaged, and it was feared that there would be no begonias for the Festival, but the plants recovered quite well.

On Thursday, 8 February 1990, hail was once again forecast. Ballarat's motor car dealers who have suffered greatly in the first storm, removed all their cars to covered

accommodation at the Showgrounds, while the Council took precautions to protect the glasshouses. In spite of the anti-hail precautions, it was lightning which did the damage this time, scoring a direct hit on the 120 year old sequoia beside the Adam Lindsay Gordon cottage, and bringing the top half of the tree crashing down into the plant nursery causing \$8,000 damage. The tree was on the Register of Significant Trees and will leave quite a gap in the top end of the Gardens.

Sun, Publicity and Passengers

The glorious sunny summer continued through January and after a slight pause in early February resurfaced right up to the Begonia Festival. As reported in our last *Fares Please!* our patronage has been very encouraging this year. We carried about 5,100 passengers in January, some 1450 more than last year and the most for 12 years. February after a slow start, due to wet weather, gathered momentum and saw good loading continue. During the Labour Day weekend, we carried 1713 people, which was average.

January's *Fares Please!* and a Press Release led to a mention in *A Place in the Sun*, a full page article in the *Ballarat Courier* and the front page story in *Muse News*, the journal of the Victorian branch of the Museums Association of Australia. Our thanks to the various organisations.

News of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society Limited.

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A number of Charters have been run for school and other organisations, the biggest being for the Ballarat Veteran and Vintage Car Club. They had some beautiful old vehicles on display at their rally, but we would have won handsomely in an average age competition.

We can normally accommodate most requests for charters. The minimum rate on weekdays is \$40 and charters at weekends are normally by negotiation. We are happy to have school groups, wedding parties or any other group who may be interested in something a little different.

At The Depot

Work on the recladding of the original portion of the shed has been completed. The sign that has been located on the front of the shed since the early days of the Society has once again been repainted, and reinstated to its former position. The next job is to repaint the door surrounds.

Horse Tram No. 1 has taken a bit of back seat to other work recently. January to March is the busy operational period for the tramway. This forces the re-allocation of our small work force resources to car maintenance and operations. The manufacture of the steel steps is almost complete. The assembly of the end roof canopies has begun. When these are completed, the horse tram will really start to look like a tram. Visitors to the depot have shown extensive interest in the tram, and have remarked on the work done by the Society's workers so far.

One interesting problem that was encountered recently, was the failure of the rear gasket on the air brake cylinder on tram no. 18. This made the car unserviceable as an air braked car. This was the first failure of this nature that we have encountered. To replace the gasket required dropping the cylinder from the

underside of the tram. Our pit jack was used for this task, making it a lot easier, but which involved some delicate balancing of the cylinder. One messy part of the job was the amount of dust that had collected over the top of the support brackets over the years. The whole job required about a days work overall. To put the cylinder back into position was a lot easier than dropping it. The experience gained on the way down was very useful, as it involved some juggling of the cylinder over other parts of the truck. The hair shampoo was needed for Warren and David Tidy after this job. In the meantime, Andrew Cox was learning all about those fickle trolley wheels. Its amazing how similar faults seem to happen at the same time. February and March has seen a number of trolley wheel problems. Hopefully they will go away now for a couple of years.

A quotation has been requested from Ballarat plumbers for the replacement of part of the valley gutter between the old and new sheds, which has rusted out. The gutter is leaking badly after raining, and this will eventually lead to deterioration of equipment etc.

Other jobs being undertaken are the repainting of No. 13. Preparation of 13's windows has been completed as has been the repainting of the roof.

The Society's Board and the weekday workers, David Macartney and Barry Macandlish held an on site meeting over the Labour Day weekend to discuss the Museum Display tram, No. 39. There had been a lot of discussion over the final form of the museum. A good meeting enabled a lot of input and final proposal was evolved. Electrical rewiring of the car roof for 240V wiring has been undertaken. To enable better display access the centre door panels are being closed in. The installation of the front life guard and steps have been completed. Planning for the actual displays is about to commence.

THE 1922 STRIKE

Alan Bradley

As Melbourne recently had a long and bitter tramway strike over the issue of driver-only trams, it is appropriate to look back at Ballarat's 1922 tramway strike over a similar matter. The introduction of one-man operation.

One-man operation began in Ballarat in 1893, when a single-deck horse tram came into operation. It was manned only by a driver with a farebox, and was used mainly on the Drummond St. South shuttle. The other horse trams in Ballarat were double-deckers manned by a driver and conductor.

The Electric Supply Company electrified the Ballarat tramway system in 1905, and initially operated all its electric trams with two-man crews. In 1913 one-man operation was tried as an economy measure on the Drummond St. North line. Despite protests from the Australian Tramway Employees Association and the Ballarat City Council, the Company decided it was successful and decided to extend the system to other lines. This led to a dispute with the Union, and the Industrial Registrar was called in to arbitrate. Having seen the one-man system in operation, the Registrar determined that it could operate on four lines (Drummond St. North, Lydiard St. North, Victoria St. and Mt. Pleasant), but that two-man crews would still be required on the Gardens and Sebastopol routes.

In 1915 the one-man system was extended to cover the two Gardens routes, leaving only the Sebastopol route worked by two man crews. The Company told the Union that the move was necessary due to a manpower shortage caused by the First World War.

The Electric Supply Co. was the first electric tram operator in Australia to run one-man cars, and so had to develop the system from its own experience. A "pay as you enter" system was used on city-bound cars, and a "pay as you leave" system on

outward-bound cars. On Sundays during busy periods this system was reversed on the Gardens lines; however conductors were still required on Gardens trams during holidays when the heaviest loadings were carried.

The Company also altered its 18 standard cars by turning the end platform seats to face inwards, and by placing hinged gates marked "enter front end" at each entrance. "Pay as you enter" or "pay as you leave" signs were displayed at the base of the windscreens. Once onboard, passengers paid their coins into a farebox mounted behind the driver, which was fitted with glass windows and mirrors to enable the driver to see the coins.

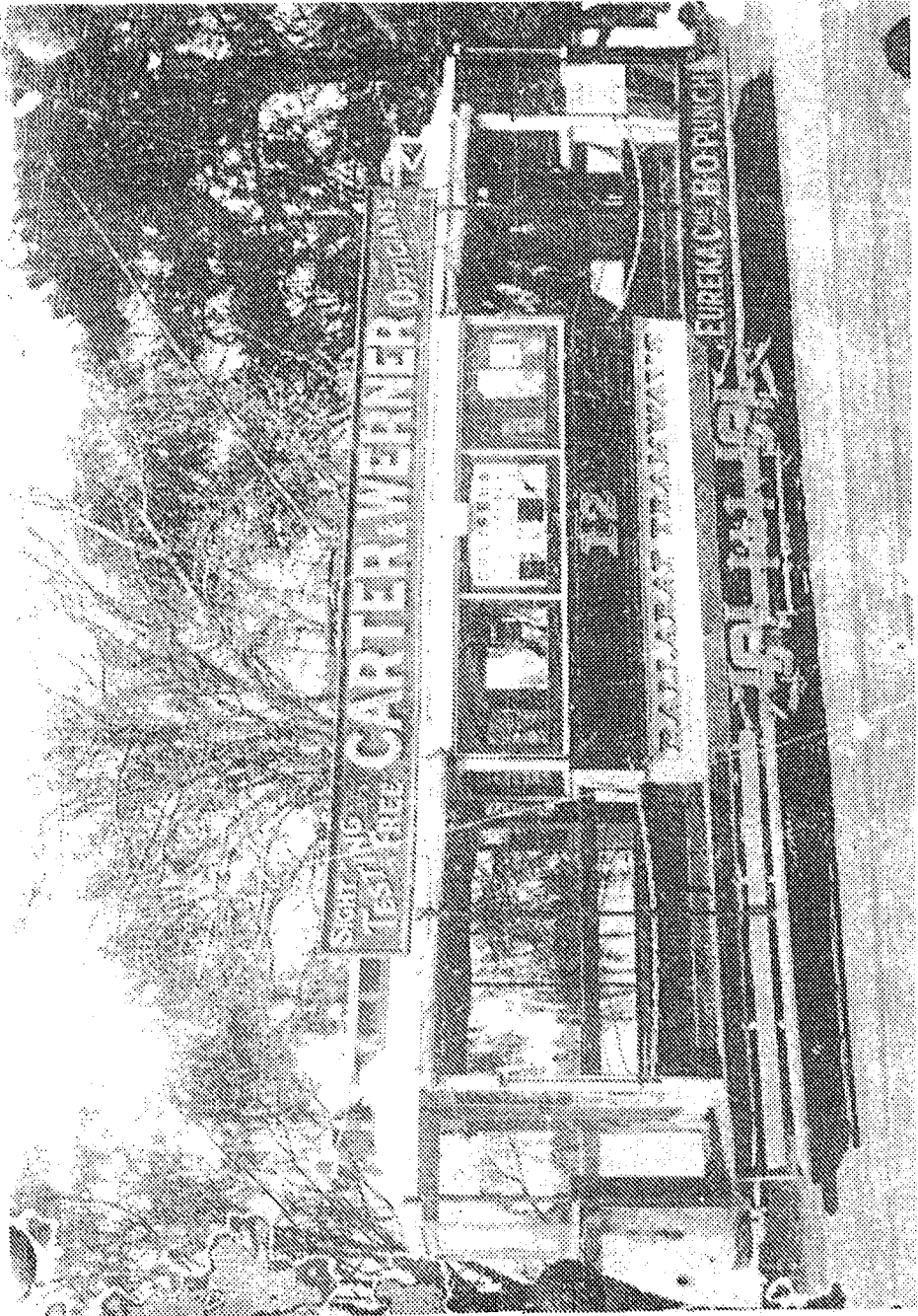
Initially the drivers did not receive additional pay for their extra duties. In 1919 the Company and Union reached an agreement by which drivers of one-man trams received an extra ten pence per day. In that year the Company's General Manager, P.J. Pringle, wrote to the Tramway General Manager at Invercargill, New Zealand, and made a statement which would prove premature three years later:

'The question, however, as to the running of one-man trams is a matter which is not even criticised. The Federal Union realises that it is in every way suitable for our undertaking, that it works satisfactorily, and it enables our drivers to earn higher wages than they would under the two-man running.'

The strike

Early in 1922 the Company placed notices inside the trams stating that under no circumstances must a driver handle a passenger's money, and all fares had to be placed by the passenger in the farebox. Uniformed inspectors were replaced by plain clothes "spotters" who were to check for breaches of this rule. The employees' resentment at these steps by the Company

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Electric Supply Co. No. 12, in One Man Days, outside the depot Wendouree Parade

also stirred up the old grievances against the one-man system. On 18 April 1922 the Company met the Union, and agreed to withdraw the notices and the "spotters". However the demand to abolish the one-man system was refused, and the Union immediately called a strike.

The Union brought up its long-standing objection to the alleged lack of safety of the one-man system. A famous incident was recalled in which a driver had fallen off his tram at the Gardens, and the driverless tram travelled along Sturt St. as far as Ascot St.; it stopped only because the jolting over the Ripon St. points bounced the trolley pole off the overhead wire. However, the Company's statistics showed that boarding and alighting accidents had been reduced to one-sixth of the number that occurred during the days of two-man crews.

The Company pointed to the number of cities now operating one-man trams in Australia and overseas. The Union claimed that one-man operation was more physically demanding in Ballarat than in other cities, as drivers had to stand and operate handbrakes all day. It claimed the men

preferred the assistance of a conductor to the extra pay (their colleagues on the Bendigo system obviously preferred the extra money, as they took no part in the strike).

The dispute settled

The strike lasted for two weeks. On 25 April the men agreed to man the trams to take people to and from the Anzac parade in Sturt St. West. The Company agreed to hand over the takings to the Hospital appeal for this day. The City Council, anxious to end the dispute, called a conference for both sides on 5 May. Both sides came to an agreement by which the men returned to work, and the Company re-employed conductors on the Gardens lines (as per the 1913 agreement), pending the hearing of the dispute by the Arbitration Court.

Mr Justice Powers visited Ballarat and inspected the one-man system in operation. On 26 June 1922 he handed down a decision favouring the continued operation of the one-man system.

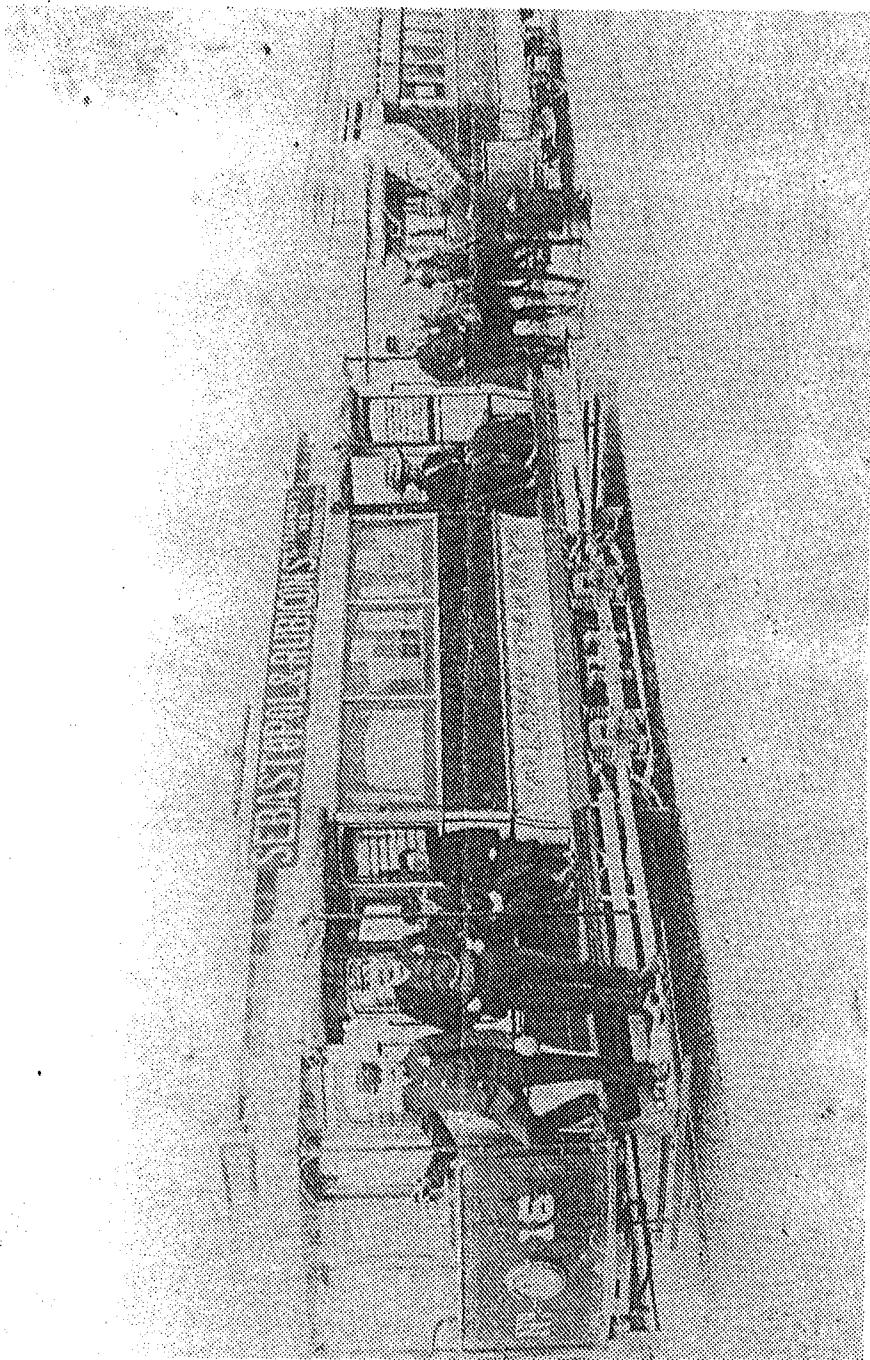
All Those Doors!

One interesting facet of Ballarat's Trams was the door layout. With both kerbside and centre of the road running on the various routes, its cars were built or modified to suit both conditions. The SEC's single truck trams were rebuilt to suit when they came from Melbourne in the 1920's, by providing two swing doors on either side of the drivers seat. A hinged half window was fitted to enable fare collection. As the trams proceeded on their journeys, these doors, and windows had to be frequently swapped over to enable loading and fare collection to be done. The same procedures had to be done on the bogie cars, but these were done by the conductors.

An example of this extensive door swapping was the Lydiard St. to Sebastopol route. There was a number of door changes to

make as the tram proceeded on its journey. When leaving Lydiard St. the left hand door was open, as it was centre of the road running. On reaching Sturt St. the right hand door was opened, the left hand one closed and the position of the 'Pay as you Enter' sign changed. In Sturt St., the trams ran along either side of the median strip. Upon turning into Drummond St. South, the doors had to be changed again, as the line reverted to centre of the road running. This suited the next portion of the line where it ran along the left hand kerb in Albert St. past the Sebastopol shops. But after Taylor St. the line crossed over the road and ran in the right hand kerb to Sebastopol terminus, necessitating the third door changeover. At least the doors were right for the start of the run back to Lydiard St North. On the way, however four intermediate door change overs were required and a fifth on reaching the terminus. The doors certainly got plenty of use.

G. Fares Please!



Electric Supply Co. No. 16, in Two Man days, with a Horse Tram

COTMA

The 1990 Conference of the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia being held in Wellington New Zealand from 1st June is at the stage of having bookings accepted. Our Society is arranging a group booking for those travelling from Australia and a tour of the South Island after the conference. The Wellington Tramway Museum will be sending out Registration Forms shortly.

To secure a cheaper 'Apex' fare which from Melbourne is \$539, all travel bookings must be made by 16th April. If you wish to book with the group, or travel on the tour after the conference, contact Richard Gilbert at 3 Oak Ave. Mentone 3194, or telephone (03) 583 8034.

Badges

Our enamel badge range has been added to with the production of a Victorian Railways flat topped 'T' class diesel electric locomotive. The price is \$4.00 and the badge is available from the tram depot, or The Railfan Shop in Melbourne. A Diesel Electric Rail Motor badge is currently in production.

Exhibition

The Ballarat Model Railway Spectacular will be held over the Queens Birthday Weekend from 9th to 11th June. Our Society will have a stand there and as the COTMA conference will also be on in Wellington we will be needing some more volunteers to set up and staff our display. Please let us know if you can help.

Personnel News

Jackie Edwards, a former full time weekday worker at the depot, gave birth to a healthy 6lb 8oz (good to see these old measures still in use ed.) boy named Daniel Francis on 26th February. The Society wishes both the best of congratulations and we wonder if we will gain another hard working member in a few years. We look forward to seeing both Jackie and Daniel at the Depot.

Maurice Stanley, one of Driver/Conductor for some years has decided to return to England to live after 23 years in Australia. Maurice joined the SEC tramways at Ballarat in 1967 and spent a couple of years on them, before joining the railways as a locomotive fireman, before becoming a electric train driver. Maurice will still be keeping contact with the Society as one of our six overseas members. We wish him well on his new ventures in Leeds.

Overseas Visitors

Robert Hepp, a tramway enthusiast from St Louis, called in at the depot on Sunday 25th March. He spent a couple of hours at the depot and along the line photographing the trams.

During the last few years, we have noticed a steady increase in overseas visitors, both tramway enthusiasts and general tourists to Ballarat. A market for us, which is probably not worthwhile advertising for, but information be available locally.

Tourist Centre

A new tourist information centre building is currently being constructed in Sturt St, at Albert St where the gold monument is located. This is an ideal position for visitors to Ballarat. It is right at the start of Sturt St, for tourists entering the city, and close to the centre of town for those staying here for a few days. The office is now funded by Tourist attraction operators and it has been seeking a site for its office since closure of the Gold Centre Tourist Authority, who had their office near the Railway station.

Flashing Lights

Andrew Cox is fitting two yellow rotating lights to the Society's tower truck. This will give the vehicle a higher profile when it is parked in the street whilst working on the overhead wiring. Such safety devices are becoming very necessary these days.

Cats

Many members will know of our three legged cat, who is often patted and commented on by our visitors. No, the cat did not get run over by a tram is a frequent answer to the oft asked question about its missing leg. For some reason, she never got a name, other than 'The Cat'. Recently another stray female cat moved into the back portion of the shed and gave birth to a small fleet of cats. This time Dave Macartney named them; Duncan, Fraser and Meadowbank. Duncan and Fraser have recently left the depot, Meadowbank,

an all black cat remains to share the depot with our old faithful resident cat of at least 10 years.

Ceiling Signs

When we last raised our souvenir prices, it was recognised that we needed to renew the posters or signs that go on the ceilings in our trams that advertise these items. John Phillips produced some updated signs. We decided to have them laminated on one side only in order to protect them, but this made them curl up and they proved impossible to satisfactorily glue to existing cards. It will be easier to reprint the posters, which will not be laminated. Back to the drawing boards, so to speak.

Postal Change

Australia Post have recently notified us that the Society's mailing postcode will change. A new postcode number 3353 has been allocated for the exclusive use on mail intended for private box holders at Ballarat Post Office.

Information Sought

Bob Lilburn is seeking information regarding details of an old tram body at Walpa, near Bairnsdale. Bob would be grateful for any information and can be contacted at 4 Mitchell Court Bacchus Marsh Vic. 3340.

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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