

# FARES PLEASE!

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## September 1990

### Annual General Meeting

Members are reminded that the seventeenth Annual General meeting of the Society is to be held at the tram depot on Sunday 14 October commencing at 2.00pm. 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.

Preceding the Annual General Meeting shall be a meeting of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society Co-operative to discuss the winding up of the Co-op.

A separate notice of meeting will be forwarded to the Society members who are members of the Co-operative, by the means of the Annual Report which will be posted at about the same time as *Fares Please!*

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

	Candidate	Proposer	Seconder
President	Richard Gilbert	Andrew Mitchell	Peter Walker
Ballarat Vice President	Paul McDonald	Dave Macartney	Barry McCandlish
Melbourne Vice President	Peter Winspur	Richard Gilbert	Greg Rodgers
Secretary	Chris Jacobson	Warren Doubleday	Carolyn Dean
Treasurer	Carolyn Dean	Bruce McLean	Gary Davey

### Ordinary Board Members

Alan Bradley	Andrew Mitchell	Richard Gilbert
Warren Doubleday	John Phillips	Peter Walker
Andrew Mitchell	Richard Gilbert	Alan Bradley
John Phillips	Bruce McLean	Gary Davey
Greg Rodgers	Richard Gilbert	Chris Jacobson
Peter Walker	Carolyn Dean	Alan Bradley

# News of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society Limited.

### AGM cont.

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 vote to be exercised, may complete the proxy form (enclosed with this newsletter) to authorise another financial members to vote on their behalf.

### Membership News

The Society welcomes the following new members:-

No. 657 Peter Keen	Murrumbidgee
No. 658 Rick Bean	St Kilda
No. 659 Jenny Puls	Ballarat
No. 660 Margaret Reither	Ballarat

It was with regret that we recently learnt of the death of long standing member, Mr. A. Blackie of Ararat. (No. 125).

Membership Renewals have been coming in well. Donation slips and membership cards for those who have renewed recently will be forwarded in the same envelope as the Annual Report.

For those who have not yet renewed, a membership reminder will be forwarded shortly. Your renewal would assist our Membership Officer, and assist the Society in achieving its aims this financial year.

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### Alistair Turns Eight!

The tramway's most enthusiastic enthusiast Alistair Reither, recently celebrated his eighth birthday with a full scale kids party on board No. 26. The depot was inundated with eight year old boys scoffing down sausage rolls, savelys and other goodies as if there was no tomorrow. The staff also managed to put away a fair amount of tucker. Alistair's request for a depot key as a birthday present met with a stony silence. As a result of the party, Dave has become expert at de-bogging cars (the motor type) in total darkness with 661 and a long rope.

### Traffic Notes

Training of two new drivers, Phillip Bertram and David Tidy has commenced. Three new conductors have also joined our ranks; Frank and Jenny Puls, and Len Millar. We welcome our new staff to our traffic ranks which will greatly assist our Roster Officer.

The September school holidays will see our trams running every day for two weeks.

Passengers during the past two months has been good. The effect of higher petrol prices however, may see a drop off in passengers. We will have to wait and see.

## BEWARE OF TRAINS!

Alan Bradley

With the impending demise of the level crossing gates in Lydiard St. North, it is worth considering the impact that level crossings had on tramway operation in Ballarat.

The horse tram line to the Gardens, opened on 21/12/1887, crossed the Phoenix Foundry's access line at the Sturt and Armstrong St. corner. This access line was built to allow newly-built steam locomotives from the foundry to steam their way along Armstrong St. to the main line. The access line closed along with the foundry in 1906, but part of the line was retained between the tram tracks on the north side of Sturt St. This track has since been relaid on the footpath nearby.

The Soldiers Hill line, which went via Lydiard and Macarthur Sts. to the lake, had two level crossings: in Lydiard St. near the railway station, and in Macarthur St. near the present-day railway workshops. When the horse tramway was still in the planning stage the Public Works Department objected to the supposed dangers of the Lydiard St. crossing, and suggested a deviation via Ararat St., the Armstrong St. bridge and Seymour St. But the department later withdrew this objection, as long as the Ballarat City Council was prepared to risk delays to tramway traffic when the gates were closed.

The Soldiers Hill line was built after the opening of the Gardens lines. By May 1888 the contractors had finished the line, except for the two level crossings, which the Victorian

Railways insisted on installing itself. Six months later no work had been done, so the Mayor and Town Clerk of Ballarat went to see the Railway Commissioners. The two level crossings were quickly installed, and the Soldiers Hill line opened for traffic on 27/12/1888.

Both the Lydiard St. and Macarthur St. crossings were protected by interlocked gates worked from a signal box. In January 1890 a tram was crossing at Macarthur St. during a high wind when one of the gates swung with great force against the side of the tram, derailing it and breaking some of the glass and woodwork. One of the passengers onboard was injured.

Meanwhile the town of Ballarat East (which was administered by a separate council until 1921) was planning a separate system of its own, to be operated by battery trams on an extensive series of routes. One of the proposed lines went along Humffray St. North to Brown Hill, and involved a level crossing near the Ballarat East station. The VR objected to a level crossing, but upon being reminded that Ballarat had two such crossings the objection was withdrawn. Alas, Ballarat East never saw its battery trams, and in fact no tramway line was ever laid along Humffray St. North.

At about the same time the Buninyong railway line was being built, and originally a level crossing was planned at Victoria St. However the Ballarat East council protested, mainly because a level crossing would

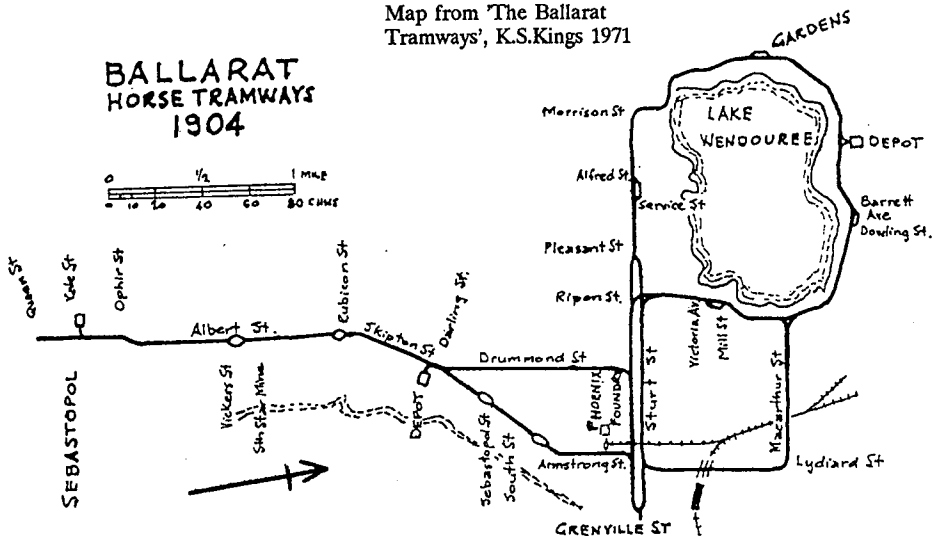
# 4- Fares Please!

disfigure beautiful Victoria St., but also because battery trams were planned to run there. The VR decided instead to build a bridge, so when the Buninyong line opened in 1889 trains ran beneath Victoria St. Although the battery trams never operated, electric trams eventually ran over the bridge in 1905.

During 1905 the Electric Supply Company (ESCO) electrified the Ballarat horse tramways. The Soldiers Hill line was altered to run straight up Lydiard St. North to Gregory St. Services along Macarthur St. were withdrawn, except for the section west of Drummond St., which became part of the Drummond St. North line. The disused track in Macarthur St., including the level crossing, was removed in 1909.

On 18/8/1905 the electric tramways in Ballarat were officially opened, but the Lydiard St. North line was not opened for traffic, because once again the VR had delayed the installation of the level crossing. This time the ESCo. took the matter into its own hands and built its own crossing, using surplus horse tram rails. Services on this line commenced on 31/8/1905; but the crossing soon had to be replaced, as several trams became stuck halfway across. Traffic delays were a regular occurrence at this crossing, and the Ballarat City Council repeatedly asked the VR to place the line under Lydiard St. In May 1911 the ESCo. told the council of a survey it had taken on one day in which the gates were closed 45 times for an average of 2.2 minutes. The longest time the gates were closed was 9 1/2 minutes. Trams were delayed on average for 51 seconds.

Map from 'The Ballarat Tramways', K.S.Kings 1971



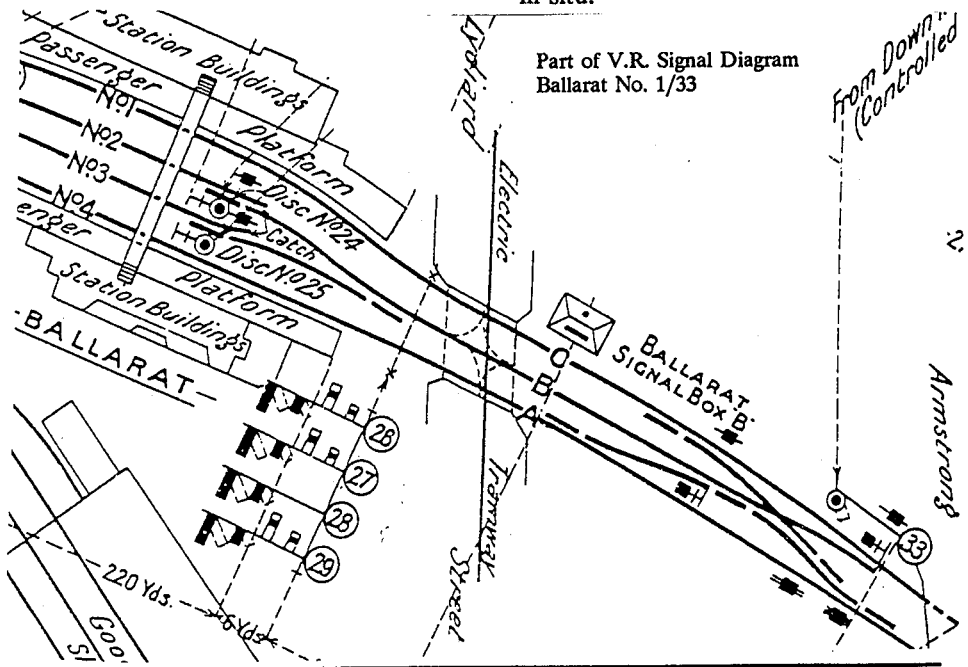
The Lydiard St. crossing was renewed in 1937. The rumbling of a tram over the level crossing is a distinct memory of a ride on the Lydiard St. North line. Since then the street scape has changed. The old Victoria House near the station disappeared at about the same time as the trams. The Railway Hotel became a bistro. On the positive side the railway station finally got its clock, the Mining Exchange regained its verandah, and other buildings have been renovated.

Soon the gates, signal box and signal gantry, for many years an integral part of that street scape, will go the same way as steam locomotives, red wooden carriages and guards' vans. Similar changes will occur at the Humffray St. and Macarthur St. crossings .

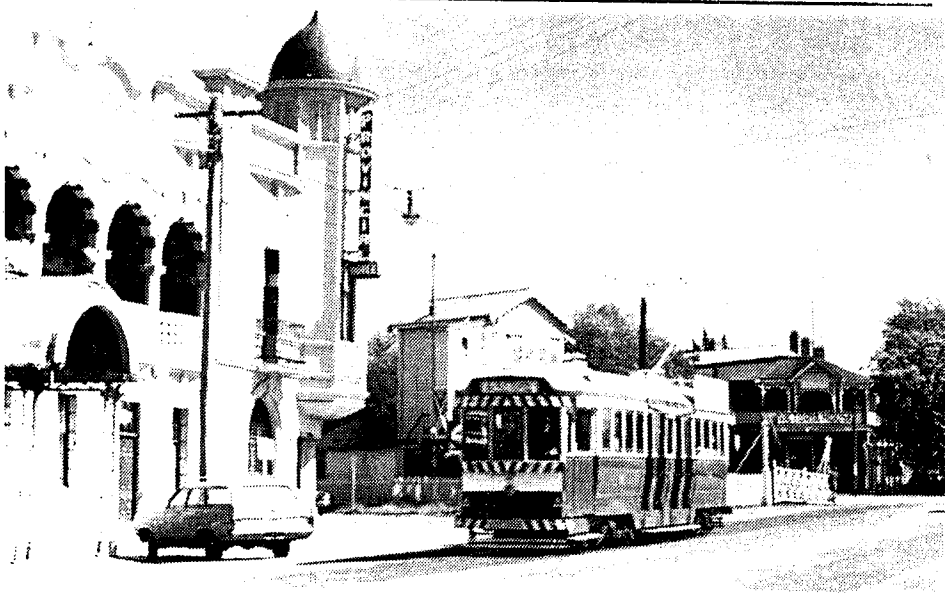
Get those photos while you can!

Editors Notes: Jack McLean has provided the dates of Interlocked boxes and gates at Lydiard St being 11.5.1885, Macarthur St. 22.3.1886 and Ballarat East (Humffray St.) as 5.4.1880. The signal gantry at Ballarat dates from 1910.

The replacement of the mechanical signalling, possibly one of the largest installations left in the world remains in the planning stage. A shortage of funds will probably see this work delayed to replace this section of double line consisting of six signal boxes and four sets of interlocked gates. The other boxes are at Warrenheip, Ballarat Station (A box at the Melbourne end), and Linton Junction which also has a set of interlocked gates. There has been considerable local pleading to have the gates and box at Lydiard St. preserved in-situ.



## 6- Fares Please!



Tram 37 travels southwards after crossing the Railway Level Crossing in Lydiard St. Victoria House in the background has long been demolished, as has the canopy to the Provincial Hotel.  
Photo: Keystone, Ballarat.



Humffray St. level crossing in 1960. To the right of the picture is the Ballarat East station building, demolished in 1962.  
Photo: Ballarat Courier.

## At the Depot

A number of jobs have been advanced around the depot since our last report.

On the Horse tram, Dave has completed the basic rib work for the second canopy and has covered the lower portions of the saloon roof with canvas. Materials for the construction of the first staircase have been ordered from Miller Bros. This involves two sheets of thin steel cut to the correct width and rolled at different radii and angles to form the inner and outer sections of the staircase. The portions that make up the staircase verticals have also been ordered. It will be sometime however, before actual assembly work begins due to some other work that will be needed over the October/November period. More next month.

Dave has virtually finished the repainting of No. 13. The outstanding job is some minor touch ups to the outside of the car. Internal work has been completed.

On No. 39 Barry has completed the basic frame for the roof that extends from the car to the wall, and has made a start on removing the end saloon to the level of the drop centre floor. This will leave only one section of the car at a higher level.

New trolley wheels ready for turning have been delivered from the foundry. These have been cast using a new pattern, which is far more precise than our previous one, which will cut down the amount of material wasted and the time taken to machine it.

The work to repair W3 661's No. 1 end truck has been completed and the car returned to service. In our last report, we said that it was planned to repair the cracks in the fixed transoms by welding. When the trucks were removed, it was found that the cracking was far more extensive than thought, and that welding of the cracks would not be satisfactory. It was determined that it would be best if the affected sections of the steel channels (200mmx75mm) were cut out and new sections welded in. This was carried out during August using a welder from Miller Bros.

Following the welding, eight new 23mm diameter holes had to be drilled through the transoms that hold the motor support brackets in position. This work was done with a borrowed magnetic drill. It took longer to position the drill accurately than to drill the actual holes.

A fortnight later, the truck was reassembled and the car jacked up at one end, and the truck changed over. Unfortunately it was not possible to complete the job in one weekend, but it could have been had another job not had to be done as well. A fortnight later, the truck was reconnected, the life guard installation completed and the car tested.

This was quite a heavy repair job for our small team of volunteer workers, who handled it relatively quickly. Warren thanks David Tidy, Andrew Cox and Peter Walker for their assistance.

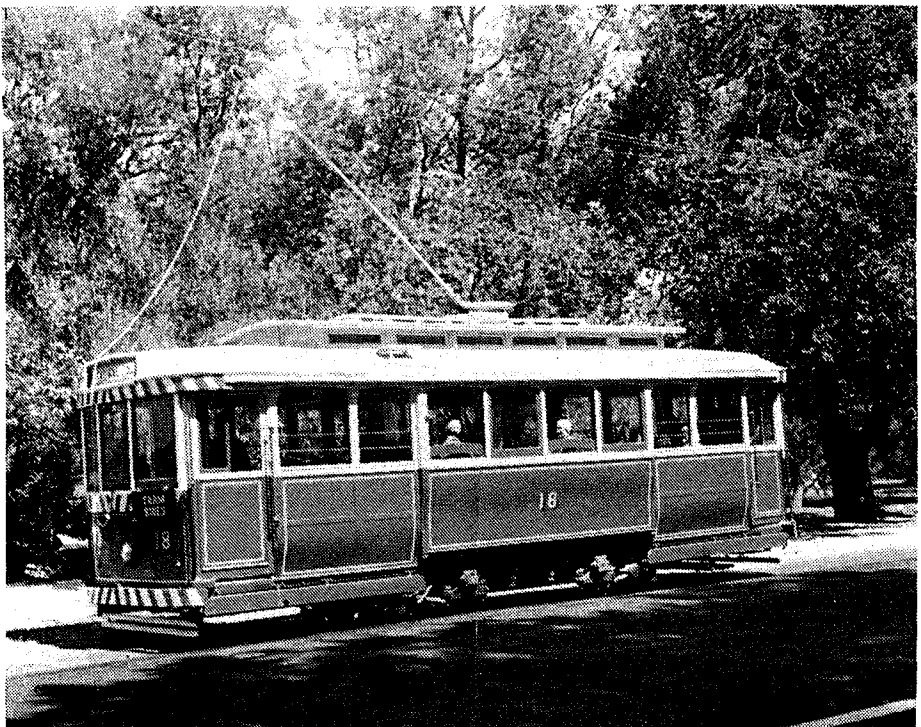
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### At the Depot cont.

Opportunity of having a welder at the depot during the 661 truck repairs also allowed some brackets for a jib crane to be welded to the columns between 5 and 6 roads. Following the installation of the brackets in two places, the two tonne jib crane from the old SEC tram depot was installed. This involved some tricky lifting of a heavy steel section just above car height. Two pulley blocks that had not seen any use for many years were

overhauled; and by means of some rope, and 671's roof, the beam was positioned. The jib crane has already been used to reassemble 661's truck. It made the job a lot easier.

Another job for the crane in few months time will be to lift out the engine of the tower truck to enable the Welsh plugs to be refitted and a new clutch plate installed.



Tram 18 runs along Wendouree Parade, soon after its restoration - 9.3.85.

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*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:- The Secretary,

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