

FARES PLEASE!

March 1995

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History

MR. MR. MR.

Museum Accreditation Program
Registered Museum

Your Board Goes Strategic Planning!

The BTPS Board met at Sovereign Hill for an all-day planning session on February 25. The meeting was convened because it was felt that the Society needs to objectively appraise how it's doing, to have in place strategies and machinery to cope with the future, and to take the fullest advantage of any opportunities that may occur.

The day's agenda started with a talk by Elizabeth Downes, Project Officer with the Central Highlands Historical Association. Elizabeth discussed with us for an hour, matters such as Museum Ethics and Museum Accreditation. How best do we preserve/conservate our historical items? How best should we operate the Museum? What are the rights and responsibilities of volunteer workers?

Elizabeth sourced many of her answers in the Burra Charter, a set of guidelines for 'conserving places' drawn up at a conference in 1988 at Burra (SA). An interesting poser for museums such as ours is "what IS original"?

Next, Sovereign Hill's Chief Executive Officer, Peter Hiscock, spoke to us. He noted that our Society is owed a debt of gratitude for preserving the Gardens portion of the old Ballarat tramway, and for taking a strong museological stance since 1971. It is essential to take history seriously, he said.

Peter proclaimed himself to be an advocate for trying to re-establish some of the former tramways of Ballarat. A tram link could bring together Ballarat's scattered tourist attractions. Repeating themes that he has already spoken locally about, he suggests perhaps re-creating the tramway in Sturt Street in the City (now that Ballarat's by-pass has eased through traffic). If that section is judged successful, the line could be extended up to our Lake tramway, and down to Sovereign Hill. With some half a million visitors each year, it is Ballarat's premier tourist attraction. Peter enthused about getting visitors to stay in Ballarat a second day "to take it all in"!

News of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society Limited.

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Funding is critical and the tramway would need to be self-sufficient after it was opened. The new central city tourist tramline in Christchurch (NZ) is a marvellous precedent. Other cities (Sydney and Hobart come to mind) are looking into the matter. In Victoria, Bendigo Trust's tramway and Melbourne's City Circle demonstrate the pulling power of tourist tram services.

He sought an expression of support from the Board and pointed out that the next step would be to talk to the Commissioners of Ballarat City and the new local Tourism Board.

After thanking Peter for his words and challenge, the Board moved into the day's third session which looked at the Society's directions and the future. We examined the tram link proposal objectively, the likely problems and the fundamental impact on our existence. We also looked into the position of the existing Lake tramway, future development issues and we looked at where we need to be in relation to fellow users of the Lake and Gardens.

The controversial issues of sponsorship and increased publicity were investigated, and we also cast a hopeful eye on the "next generation" of Ballarat tram preservationists - our young members and those who are not yet members.

Session 4 was based on Operations and the Tramcars. We decided to increase the exposure of the Horse Tram and we looked at ways to improve how we operated each day. Greg Rodgers and Richard Gilbert will prepare a training course for our volunteer crews to help them with improving our customer focus.

The possibility of operating a BTPS tram in Melbourne, perhaps like Bendigo's 470 on the City Circle was appraised and we decided to set up a (short life) Car Committee to advise the Board on "what to do" with the Society's tram fleet. We need to make the best decisions about how we will 'restore' each tram in order that it fits in with our general objectives and makes a proper contribution to telling the story of Ballarat's trams.

The final session looked in what is involved in securing Museum Accreditation and the proposed Rail Safety Accreditation Act. With resignation we realise that we will be involved with a small mountain of paperwork when this Act is proclaimed. Finally the Board looked at its own procedures, especially for its monthly meetings. Some improvements should lead to efficiencies and create room for a regular objective look at our operation, and administration as well as the future and its opportunities.

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ELECTRIC SUPPLY COMPANY EMPLOYEE REGISTER

By Alan Bradley

Continued from Jan. 95 issue

Point attendants.

During the ESCo era all cars terminated at Sturt & Grenville Sts. Cars heading westwards along Sturt St encountered a set of points on a steep grade just before Lydiard St. Stopping a hand-braked car on the hill was physically demanding, and potentially hazardous, especially with one-man operation, as without a conductor the motorman had to leave his car and change the points himself.

In 1913 the ESCo tried a technological solution, and received permission from the Ballarat City Council to manually operate this point from the Grenville St traffic shelter by running an underground pipe across the road, to join an overhead steel wire suspended from poles. It is not known whether this was actually installed, or if it was, how successful it was in operation.

Between 1915 and 1934 the ESCo tried a more basic solution, employing "point attendants" who, according to the register, were boys of 14 or 15. They rode the cars from Grenville St and changed the points and re-set them as required.

In 1932 the ESCo incurred the wrath of the union by curtailing their hours, so that motormen had to set the points themselves between 7.40 am &

11 am, and from 7 pm to 11 pm. After August 1937 Lydiard St trams were through-routed to Sebastopol, so the points in question were rarely used after then.

Inspectors and ticket examiners

A notable casualty of the early years of ESCo management was Peter Hodgetts, who had an earlier career with the legendary stagecoach firm Cobb & Co, then became manager for the Ballarat Tramway Company's horse tramway. The ESCo register records that he was engaged 1/9/1905 as "traffic inspector", previously "horse car manager". Despite a "very satisfactory" record he left on 31/5/1906, "services no longer required". The 'Ballarat Courier' of 15 October 1906 records that he resigned to enter business as a hay and corn merchant. At his farewell presentation he said that during the horse tram era he have been given more latitude in managing traffic and he preferred working for the previous company to working with the ESCo.

The entry for H.P. James shows that he commenced as a car cleaner in 1905, "transferred from conductor", became Ticket Examiner on 25/9/1907, and was appointed permanent Traffic Inspector in 1911.

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was promoted to Senior Inspector 1/9/1923, then Traffic Superintendent in August 1924. "Excellent, held in highest regard by management & employees. Mr Knox described as the most successful Traffic Superintendent the ESCo have had. His going was a great loss to the ESCo". However, at some stage he came back to work for the SEC as an Inspector.

Another inspector who was immortalised in cartoon in the 'Courier' of 31 March 1949 was Fred James, just over two months before his death aged 61.

*Around Ballarat
with
DUDLEY GORDON '49.*



Arthur Hugo (known as Peter Hugo) commenced as a casual conductor in 1911, became a casual motorman on 1/11/1912, and became permanent on 2/9/1915. He became an Inspector on 10/9/1922. In 1934 the SEC appointed him Senior Traffic Inspector, a position he held for the next 22 years. When he retired in August 1956 he told the "Ballarat Courier" that when he began work as a casual in 1911 he worked for the first fortnight without pay as a trainee. As a casual he would report for duty at 6 am hopeful of obtaining work, and if there wasn't any he would return at mid-day, and perhaps again at 3 pm. In his early years there he worked seven days a week from 6 am to 11.45 pm in all weather without windscreens, as a result of which he caught pneumonia. These were supposedly "the good old days".

Vic Mawby commenced in 1921 as a casual motorman, became permanent on 15/12/1922, and was promoted to Traffic Inspector in August 1924. He eventually rose in 1950 to become the SEC's Tramway Superintendent in charge of the three systems at Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong.

*Ballarat Inspector, Fred James.
Ballarat Courier 31 March 1949. We
are not sure what the reference to 'The
unofficial fountain' means.*

The Great War

The Avenue of Honour in Sturt St West, which contains a tree for every Ballarat lad who served in the First World War, is a fitting reminder of the war's impact on Ballarat. Numerous entries in the register confirm that the ESCo was also affected: "To join the expeditionary force", "enlisted in AIF", "volunteered for active service", and sadly, "killed on active service".

One of the luckier ones was E.J. White who commenced at the age of 19 as a conductor on 23/9/1914. "Volunteered for active service 15/7/15". Transferred to motorman 25 July 1919. "Resumed duty as casual motorman after four years service 19/8/19".

Bus men

Most members will know that Davis Buslines operated the tramway replacement bus service from 1971. It is not so well known that the founder of Davis Buslines, Herbert Arthur Davis, was at one time a Ballarat tramway conductor. The register shows that H.A. Davis commenced as a conductor on 9/10/1912, transferred from junior ranks. His record was "good", but he was discharged on 21/5/1915 (when one-man operation was extended) due to "reduction in service". He enlisted for war service, and after the war ran a soldier

settlement farm in Cape Clear. When the crop failed he went into the motor bus business, won the contract to replace the Buninyong railway passenger service in 1930, and the rest is history.

Motorman R. Bowd commenced on 18/8/1905, and resigned on 29/1/1924. Remarks: "Left service of own as a motorman with the Company". Motorman Henry George Weston (who commenced on 16/1/1907) also resigned on 29/1/1924. "Took up motor bus business against company".

At this time the ESCo was badly affected by unrestricted motorbus competition, one of the favourite tricks of the bus operators being to run just ahead of a tram and pick up its passengers. Weston's bus operating activities are unknown, but Bowd is known to have applied in 1925 to run a service along Doveton St South, Dana & Talbot Sts to Rubicon St. Operators did not always stick to their own route, and it was common for them to run elsewhere if the business was better. All this changed in 1928 when Parliament gave the Ballarat City Council power to licence operators on certain routes, and many of the bus operators of that time left the industry.

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After a convivial and satisfying meal at the Society's favoured hostelry, the Brewery Tap at Warrenheip, we returned to Sovereign Hill for a Special Board Meeting to set in place resolutions implementing the day's planning decisions. The Board decided that it supports in principle an investigation into the establishment of a new tourist tramway in Ballarat.

To finish off the day, we then adjourned to a viewing of Sovereign Hill's spectacular sound and light show; "Blood on the Southern Cross" dealing with the Eureka uprising. The dramatic commentary/sound and light effects were awesome!

Your Board benefited enormously by the day's hard work and concentration. It was able to sit back and view our collective situation objectively, to remedy some minor problems and to look into the future, focussed on Peter Hiscock's suggested Tram Link. We have some challenges ahead and we have a lot to be proud of already. It is good to be told by outsiders (who are experts in the field) that the Society is doing a good job, but it is a sobering thought to realise just what lies ahead.

Vale Melton Foo

We reported the sudden passing of one of our founding members in the last issue of Fares Please!, just as we were going out to press. The funeral was held on Tuesday January 31, at which the Society was represented.

Melton was one of the people

instrumental in setting up the tramway in 1971. In that year, the Brown Hill Progress Association joined with the Melbourne group of tramway enthusiasts with the intention of saving part of the Ballarat Tramway system. Melton was the spokesman for the Brown Hill Progress Association and the late Bill Jessup was the spokesman for the Melbourne group. At our joint meeting at the Ballarat Civil Hall in July 1971, the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society was formed and Melton became Member Number 1.

Always supportive of our aims, Melton pursued with vigour the idea of saving part of the tramway system with a vision to operating along Wendouree Parade, through the Botanic Gardens. Not long after becoming involved in our Society, Melton stood for election to the Ballarat City Council and succeeded in his aim. Maybe the political lobbying of the tramway society engendered his interest in bigger political arenas. As he served successive terms, he became Mayor of Ballarat and was always a good contact for us to obtain Council views of the Society, traffic management schemes, lake environmental issues and the like.

Melton was a regular attender at our Annual General Meetings and was certainly a driving force during those early days of establishing the Society and building the foundations of the progressive organisation it is. We reiterate our condolences to his wife Marjory and his family.

Begonia Festival

The 1995 Begonia Festival saw the Society again run a tramway shuttle service for patrons. The opening of the new Robert Clarke Begonia House was an instrumental part of us carrying more passengers than in previous years. This year Wendouree Parade was blocked off just to the north of the access road to the depot. Windmill drive was blocked off for its full length. As cars arrived at Carlton St. they were diverted straight into the car park instead of driving along Wendouree Parade looking for a parking spot. This made Wendouree Parade a lot more pleasant place. The Council is to be congratulated on this initiative.

Tramway services began on Friday, March 3 and continued through to Monday, March 13. Thanks to all our drivers, conductors and OIC's who assisted over the 11 days of operation.

During the Begonia Festival long weekend, we had welcome help from one of our Sydney members, Bruce Worthington. As was the case last year, Bruce helped in a substantial way in handling the 'Revenue Clerks' job at the depot. It was also good to have the time to mix with Bruce socially over the three days.

New member Michael Parker was thrown right into the 'deep end of the pool' when he spent his first day

conducting during the long weekend of the Begonia Festival. On the Sunday, when over 1000 people travelled, Michael sold over 200 tickets. He said he looks forward to quieter times on the trams.

Simon Jenkins who also recently joined, had his first taste of what it is like to be a busy conductor as well. Simon operated as an 'Assistant Conductor', but took the full brunt of the many passengers and survived.

In particular thanks to the following people for their assistance over the period in keeping the tramway running, clean or just making it happen. Stephen Butler, Carolyn Dean, Warren Doubleday, Richard Gilbert, Clayton Giles, Simon Green, Frank Hanrahan, Darren Hutchesson, Travis Jeffery, Simon Jenkins, Bill Kingsley, Dave Macartney, Len Millar, Andrew Mitchell, Paul Mong, Dave O'Neil, Michael Parker, John Phillips, Frank Puls, Alistair Reither, Greg Rodgers, Roy Sheedy, Peter Winspur, Gary Wood, Bruce Worthington, and Gavin Young.

Begonia Festival Traffic

This year, about 500 more passengers were carried than in 1994. This means a total of about 5,350. On the long weekend, we carried over 1000 passengers on each of the three days. This was a first for us. On nine of the eleven days, we carried more people

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than the same day for the previous year. The two days we were down were the mid week Wednesday and the Sunday of the long weekend due to poor weather.

It was interesting to see the number of passengers travelling back to the car parks from the gardens was heavier than in past years. Just on two thirds of the passengers carried made a single journey, which shows the nature of the service offered. On the Sundays and the public holiday Monday, we ran three cars in service.

At the Depot

One major task undertaken during February was the repair of our telephone system in the Gardens, accidentally damaged after last years Begonia Festival. This took some frustrating detective work, but after a while we got the telephone at the loop up and running, only to find the following day it had failed. Gary and Warren persevered and finally got all the phones working except St Aidans Drive, although somehow we did get it to work for 1.5 phone calls. It would appear that the SEC damaged the cable when installing their underground cables recently.

Tramcar 33 re-entered service after new No. 2 end motor suspension bearings were fitted in time to assist during the Begonia Festival.

The repair of No. 40's motor armature has been completed by the Adelaide based firm of AC-DC Electric Motor Repairs. A local Ballarat firm transported the armature from Adelaide back to Ballarat during March. It was delivered to Miller Bros. where they will re-metal and refit the armature bearings.

The construction of the Archives Room has been virtually completed, with only some minor touch up painting being required. It is planned to move into the room during April and finally we can continue the cataloguing of our archives in a good environment.

New Members

The Society welcomes the following new member.

No. 685 Mr. Michael Parker - Highett

Central Highlands Journal

Enclosed within the mailout is a brochure for The Central Highlands Historical Association's 1994 Journal. Acquisition of this journal by anyone interested in the history of the Central Highlands area of Victoria is strongly recommended.

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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