

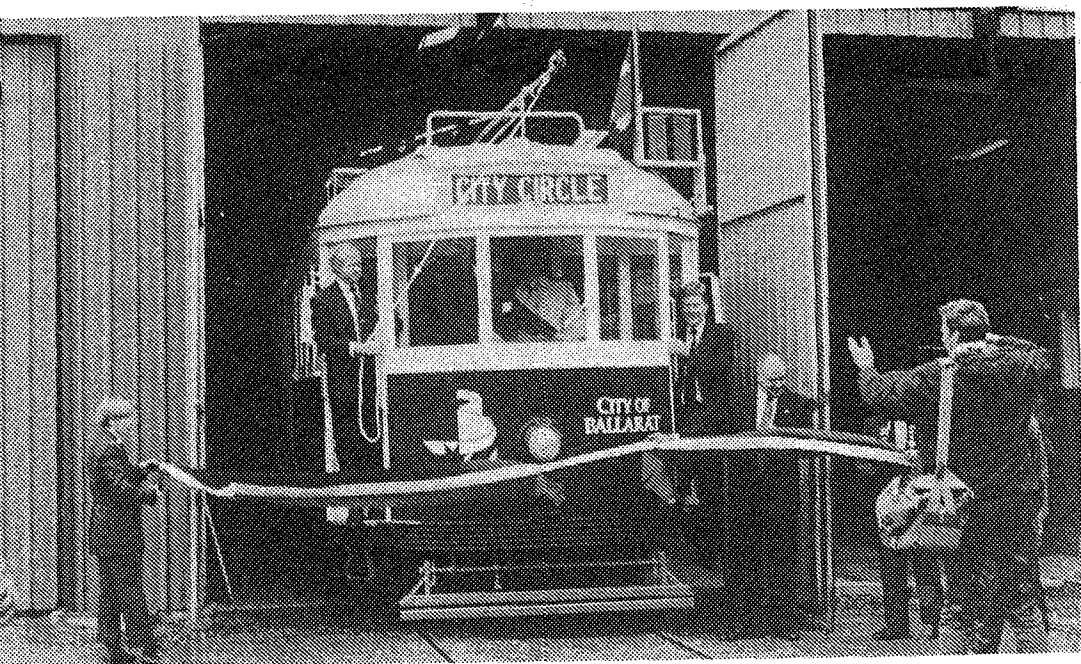
# FARES PLEASE!

January 1996

*Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History*

*Mr. Mr. Mr.*

Museum Accreditation Program  
Registered Museum



The Ballarat Courier Photographer lines up a photo of the launch of the 'Ballarat' tram on December 4, 1996. Photo: Carolyn Dean

## Launching 671

Monday December 4 was an important and busy day for our Museum. Tram 671, as a "new" BALLARAT tram was launched to the public. A good turnout of over 20 members were present when Museum

President Richard Gilbert welcomed all present to the official launch. Together with the members were Vern Robson, Chief Commissioner of the City of Ballarat, our local State Parliamentarians Paul Jenkins and Barry Traynor, the Federal Member for Ballarat, Michael Ronaldson and

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the Director of Sovereign Hill, Peter Hiscock.

After introducing the guests, the ceremony took place where the idea of sending the tram to Melbourne to operate on the City Circle service was suggested. All those in attendance were motivated by the idea.

The launch of the tram was an important occasion as it seems to have started a couple of events that will bring into full prominence our Museum. It may well change the future operation and direction of the Trams in Ballarat. We have certainly achieved a milestone with the event.

At the launch, Peter Hiscock spoke with great enthusiasm of the idea of introducing a tourist tram service in the Ballarat City area and linking with Sovereign Hill. From this enthusiastic speech, a major project may well be underway judging by the well attended public meeting held at the Town Hall on Tuesday 23 January. More of this later on.

Richard particularly thanked Len Millar and Darren Hutchesson for their untiring efforts in overseeing the project of repainting the tram, from designing the new colour scheme to actually carrying out the work.

After the speeches, all those in attendance completed a journey over the track in 671 whilst enjoying chicken and champagne. The tram has since run regularly in service along Wendouree Parade.

## Read All About It!!

There has been so much happening in Ballarat over the last two months. To bring you all the details, we would need a double issue of *Fares Please!*

These have been:

1. Launch of 671 in Ballarat Colours
2. Proposals for a new tramway
3. Funding of a feasibility study
4. A public meeting.

To bring you some of these stories, a supplementary page has been added with a number of articles from the Ballarat Courier. A summary of the items in the news have been:

### *December*

Mon. 4 - the Museum launches 671 in Ballarat City colours - lead item on the WIN TV news.

Tue. 5 - Front cover of the Courier, with colour photo, - *Tram's bid for City Circle.*

Fri. 8 - *Plea for return of city's trams* - Peter Hiscock makes an impassioned plea for re-introduction of trams on Ballarat streets.

Sat. 9 - *Government cool on tram funding* - The Federal Government all but rules funding for trams to return to Ballarat's streets.

Mon. 11 - *Federal fund refusal won't halt proposal* - *Tram Return Vow.* Question whether the Federal Government would fund a feasibility study.

Tue. 12 - *Funding Possible for tram study* - Peter Hiscock 'very optimistic' about the possibility of funding for a feasibility study.

Sat. 16 - *Federal Development Minister, Brian Howe gives a commit-*

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ment to fund the study, if the State Government agrees to split the costs. Letter to the Editor: *Tram return a retrograde step.*

Sat. 23 - Steamrail Ballarat back plans for return of trams; Mr. Musgrove, the Convenor of Steamrail said he 'favoured a tram route from Lake Wendouree to the city, then via Lydiard St and the railway station to Ballarat East, along Victoria St, turning to go via the Eureka Stockade and Sovereign Hill.'

Letter to the Editor - *People need to have say on trams.*

Thu. 28 - Ballarat Tourism Board announces that a Public Meeting has been organised for January 23.

## January

Mon. 22 - *Meeting to push for trams' return* - pre-publicity for the following day. Peter Hiscock said 'It's time that we stopped making these idle comments and actually started doing some work to get the trams back operating again in the city streets.'

Tue. 23 - Public Meeting.

Wed. 24 - Report on the meeting with the heading, *Tram return plan wins enthusiastic support.* Also announced was the adoption by the City of Ballarat, a proposal for a \$2 million upgrade of the facilities for buses, cars, taxis and travellers in general at the railway station. It was noted that the interchange would work in well with any tram proposal in the future.

Thu. 25 - The Courier's editorial opinion was devoted to the trams. The last sentence reading 'A restored tram service should serve Ballarat well into the next century and act as a highly significant regional achievement

to mark the end of the millennium in the region in addition to heralding the promise beyond 2000.' A letter to the editor, from Neville Gower noted that it was 25 years ago that the first meeting was held by the Brown Hill Progress Association to form a group to save the tramway.

The Melbourne Herald Sun reported on the meeting held on Tuesday 23.

Sat. 27 - An article with the heading *Call to unite on tram issue* reported on the Chief Commissioners views that to have a tramway again in Ballarat depended on total community support. This was repeated in the Commissioner's new item later on.

As you can see, the possibility of another tramway system again in Ballarat has been a principal item in the local newspapers. Thanks to Frank Puls and others for collecting the various newspaper articles.

## Return the Trams Meeting

On the evening of Tue. Jan. 23 about 100 people attended a public meeting in the Museum Room at the Ballarat Town Hall. About 12 members of our Museum attended. The Chairman of City of Ballarat's Commissioners, Mr. Vern Robson chaired the meeting. He opened it by saying 'Why we should be returning trams to Ballarat - we are looking for a positive outcome.'

The Director of Sovereign Hill, Peter Hiscock expressed his aspirations for a tramway that links two great tourist precincts within the city. A tram route around Lake Wendouree by

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itself would not link with the city. The example of the Christchurch Tramway which has enhanced that city and become a symbol of civic pride was mentioned often during the night. Peter further said that we owe a debt to the BTM who have saved the rolling stock which will provide a basis for the trams' return.

Ballarat Tramway Museum President Richard Gilbert then spoke. He opened by saying that the SEC trams provided a flavour to the city. Geelong had lost all reference to its tramway. Twenty five years ago, the founders of the BTPS, now the BTM, saved these memories of the SEC operated trams. Today it is time we started to think about their next life. What we operate today, matches our resources in establishing a recognised museum. The Museum believes it is possible to have trams back in Ballarat. The Museum looks forward to being involved in the feasibility study. He mentioned Christchurch, where the Tramway Historical Society is a major player in the success of the tramway. However, it must be a business, not just a nostalgia trip. The trams themselves are 80 years old and will need back up, possibly by newer trams. He noted that most of our present trams came from Melbourne.

Vern Robson followed, speaking at length about the saving of Bendigo's trams and how it was important to have the whole city behind the project. Vern in 1972 was the Acting Town Clerk in Bendigo and was very involved in the process. He said it can be done, but it must be an economic reality.

Paul Jenkins, MLA for Ballarat West said that the State Government is prepared to provide ex Melbourne trams free of charge. The meeting was then thrown open to the floor. Many people spoke, generally favourably, some with questions but in a positive mood to have a feasibility study done. Bill Kingsley gave a very good speech about the success of Christchurch, how much it cost each resident (NZ\$18.72), how it has become their tramway and how trams connect to people.

The meeting closed some two hours after its commencement, with a group to be formed to prepare a brief for the feasibility study. The study itself will be undertaken by a professional organisation. Stakeholders who will form the group are the Ballarat Tourism Board, the Tramway Museum, City of Ballarat, traders, Economic Development Board, Chamber of Commerce, University of Ballarat, Gardens groups and Department of Employment, Education and Training.

The Museum looks forward to serving on this group. The re-establishment of a tramway in Ballarat will provide another life for our trams. Many of the Museum's active members are getting older. New people must come along to preserve the tramcars and continue the operation. This is one means of achieving this, given the right museum safeguards. One of our goals for the feasibility study, is how to avoid another *Save the Trams* movement ever again. Indeed Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History.

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## At the Depot

A number of jobs have been done in preparation for the Christmas - January period of daily operations. These include the annual painting of the floors in the trams, putting the finishing touches to 671, undertaking some work on 40's repaired motor and installing some 50 sleepers.

On December 4, following the launch of 671, attention was diverted to the renewal of sleepers in the access track utilising a back hoe. We were not able to get all the dogspiking completed on the day of the installation, but enough to prevent them from being stolen. This work was completed over the next couple of weeks. We still have some repair work to do, mainly rewelding joints. Thanks to those who assisted in the task on the day and the subsequent days.

Maintenance work on the telephone system was carried recently to restore it to full operating condition. We are planning to re-connect the St Aidans Drive phone, using some overhead wire and the signal wires. This follows the damage done to the cable

in a number of places by the local power company about 12 months ago.

The sign board over the depot fan, saying who we are was taken down in early January for repairs and re-painting, so as to reflect the change in organisation name. We are gradually working through our other signage. Fortunately the use of our trading name of 'Ballarat Vintage Tramway' minimised this need.

## Donations

Those members who made donations at the time of their renewal should find their receipt in this mailout. We thank them for their support.

## Gardens Masterplan

As we reported in the November 1995 issue of *Fares Please!*, the Society was represented at the launch of the Botanical Gardens Masterplan. From the museum's viewpoint, the plan is very similar to that noted in the July issue of *Fares Please!* There are a number of changes to the draft which affect the appearance of the gardens. The document was well received by those attending the launch.

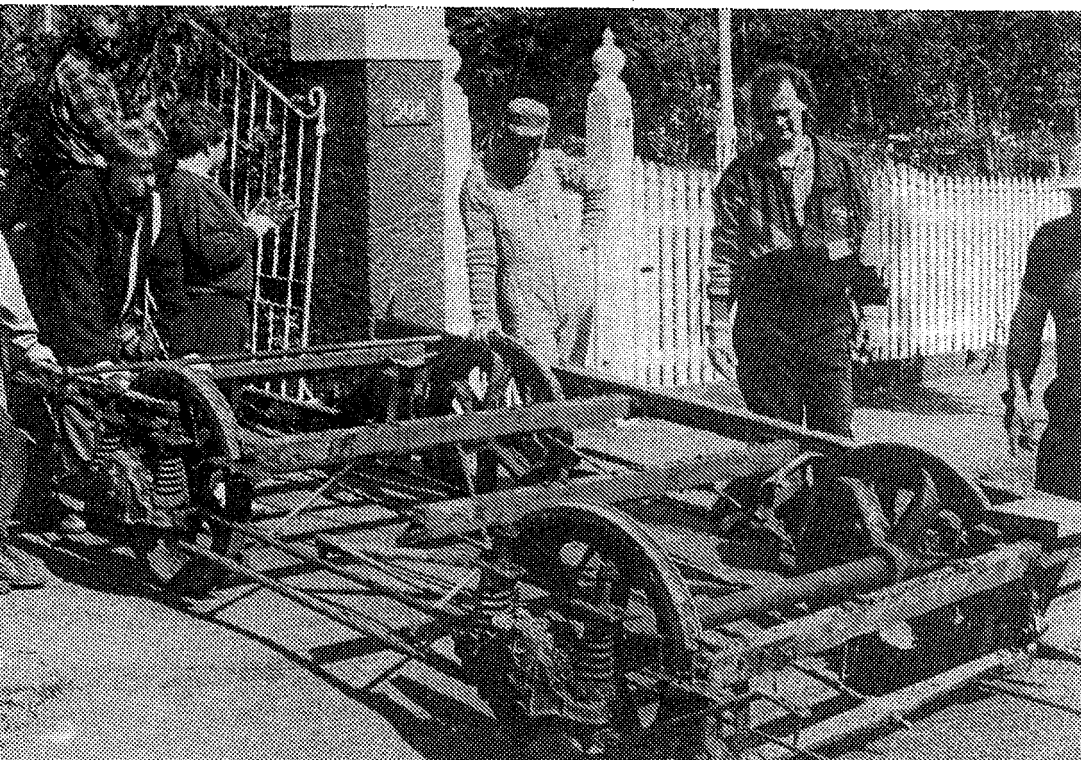
Replacing sleepers in the depot fan 4.12.95

Photo: Carolyn Dean



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On November 11, 1995 a group of Ballarat Tramway Museum workers journeyed to Melbourne to recover the remains of Melbourne Cable Tram Trailer 427 from a house in Glenferrie Road Hawthorn. See *November Fares Please!* for full details. The top photograph shows the wheels and brake rigging in Glenferrie Road. The bottom, the workers: standing from L to R; Warren Doubleday, Carolyn Dean, Mrs. Wickens, Simon Jenkins, Gary Wood, Alan Snowball, Darren Hutchesson. Kneeling; John Phillips, Alistair Reither, Peter Winspur and Paul Mong.

Photo: Carolyn's camera.



## Fleet Conservation Plan

At the December Board meeting, the Board formally adopted the Fleet Conservation Plan. This document looks comprehensively at our tram car fleet and its future conservation. If members would like a copy, could they please contact the Secretary. Parts of it are most likely to be found on our World Wide Web site.

The Board at the same meeting, also adopted the revised Collections Policy of the Museum. The policy is very similar to that formulated in 1992. It has been revised primarily for the name change of the organisation, but updated as well to reflect our current situation. As before, copies are available from the Museum.

## Education Kits

Alan Bradley is busy working on the documentation of a Education Kit that will be useful to school groups visiting our tramway. It is quite comprehensive and looks at a number of subjects such as the building of horse tramways based around the development of Ballarat.

## New Members

The Museum welcomes the following new members:

No. 693 A.Middleton Blackburn South  
No. 694 D.Bowman Mt Waverley

We trust they enjoy their membership with us and would welcome any assistance at the tramway they may wish to make.

## Sales

We have on order a new large size fridge magnet, (90 x 56mm) which will feature the horse tram and also a City Circle tram badge.

## Board Considerations

The Board at its recent meeting considered the Management structure of the Museum and the way Board meetings are conducted. A number of suggestions and ideas were canvassed. General principles were formed, with a formal recommendation to be made to the February 1996 meeting.

Another consideration at the meeting was the Board's view of a Planning Permit application for the development of an Adventure Playground in the Gardens area near the tram depot. Following the advertising of the application, Board members inspected the plans at City of Ballarat Offices and made a report to the meeting. The playground is to be located to the south of our access track between Wendouree Parade and the access track, in the vicinity of the cricket pitch.

The proposed development was raised at the Public Meetings over the Gardens Masterplan and a number of issues have arisen, with many people opposed to the plan. The Board was of the opinion that the playground could be better located. If the development is approved in this location, the Board will seek to have works that are proposed to be carried out in the vicinity advanced to provide a better and safer environment.

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## BTM on the Internet!

Yes the Museum is now on the internet. Thanks to Andrew Cox who has compiled extensive information on the Museum and created for us a Web page. This will be kept up to date with the latest news from *Fares Please!*, as well as news about the proposals for a new tramway in Ballarat. Our address is:-

<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~amcoxy/>

## Traffic

December traffic figures for the tramway operations have been fair. Passenger numbers are up on the last couple of years. Many thanks to Frank Puls and Travis Jeffrey who crewed the tram on Christmas Day. We carried 117 passengers. Travis supplied lollies as gifts to the children who rode. So far for the first six months of the year, patronage is up about 20% on the same time last year. Although this sounds good, it is still down on the average numbers of five years ago. The start of 1996 was quiet, with very few people carried on News Years Day due to incredible winter style weather. After this slow start, the figures for January have been comparable with last year.

## 671 to Melbourne

Arrangements are being made to bring 671 to Melbourne soon to publicise the City of Ballarat, its attractions and of course ourselves. The Minister of Transport and The Met have given their approval in principal, subject to inspections. The aim is to have the tram operate on the City Circle service, like Bendigo's tram.

One problem that has arisen is that to do this, the tram will have to be fitted with different brake blocks. Our present brake blocks are cast iron. While these are satisfactory for our level of service, where we operate at a limited speed on relatively flat ground, these are not suitable for Melbourne conditions. They also have different braking characteristics.

The problem is that to fit the standard Melbourne blocks, substantial alterations would have to be made to the brake shoe holders, the adjusting rods and some of the brake hangers. The W4's trucks are unique to these trams. To do this would take substantial time. The other option being explored with Bendix Mintex of Ballarat is making blocks of similar material to that of Melbourne's, but sized for the W4. This seems to be the best option. Stay tuned.

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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 Museum's activities and publications please contact:- The Secretary,

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