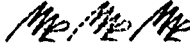


FARES PLEASE!

March 1997

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History



Museum Accreditation Program
Registered Museum

New Wire in the Parade

Over the period Monday March 3 to Wednesday March 5, the Museum's volunteer workers replaced the overhead trolley wires between St Aidans Drive and the section insulator just to the north of Gardens Loop. This involved both contact wires utilising some 930m of trolley wire, or about 460m of route length.

On Sunday March 2, some overhead stringing equipment was borrowed from the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Assoc. at Haddon. To assist in the stringing of the new wire 35 hanging loops were made up to support the wire from the old trolley, as it was rolled out prior to being secured in position. These loops were made up from scrap trolley wire and proved to be very successful.

On Monday March 3, a crew went through loosening off the screws in the some 50 or so trolley wire ears on this section and the bolts that hold the ears to the hangers. Most of them came undone, but a few could not be undone due to the screw heads having either sheared off or been burred

over. These were marked so that when the wire replacement time came along, these ears could be left in position. The most difficult and time consuming task was undoing the four steel screws that hold the rubbing bars into the section insulator. Much cursing and swearing saw three come out, but one was totally obstinate. This had to be drilled out, and then it sheared off in the hole. A new hole had to be drilled to enable its refitting. The Bendigo Trust loaned us a specially built frame to hold the cable drum allowing it to be rolled out from a trailer.

On Tuesday, the north bound wire was replaced. The day commenced soon after 8.30am for some and finished about 7.45pm, with the whole of the north wire in position, but the last section of the old wire still remaining up in the air. The time consuming part was changing over the ears on the curved sections. Had it been 460m of straight wire the task would have been very easy.

The running out of the trolley wire using the cable drum holder frame from Bendigo was a relatively easy

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task. The reel was loaded onto Alan Snowball's tandem trailer and then towed slowly by a Holden one tonner, while the tower truck drove along behind as well, with the crew lifting the wire into position using the hanging loops. The wire was run out for about five or six pole lengths and then tensioned. After this the ears were changed over either re-using the old ears or as generally was the case, using reconditioned ears. As the changeover occurred, the old wire was supported using the hanging loops, prior to lowering it down to the ground. The old wire was then run over the top of the back of the truck and then cut into small lengths.

Work the following day commenced at 8.0 am. The first job was to take down the last section of old wire on the north bound trolley and then run out the first section of the new wire on the south bound trolley commencing again at the section insulator. The day generally went smoothly until we tensioned the last section and we saw the wire we had erected the previous day did not have sufficient tension.

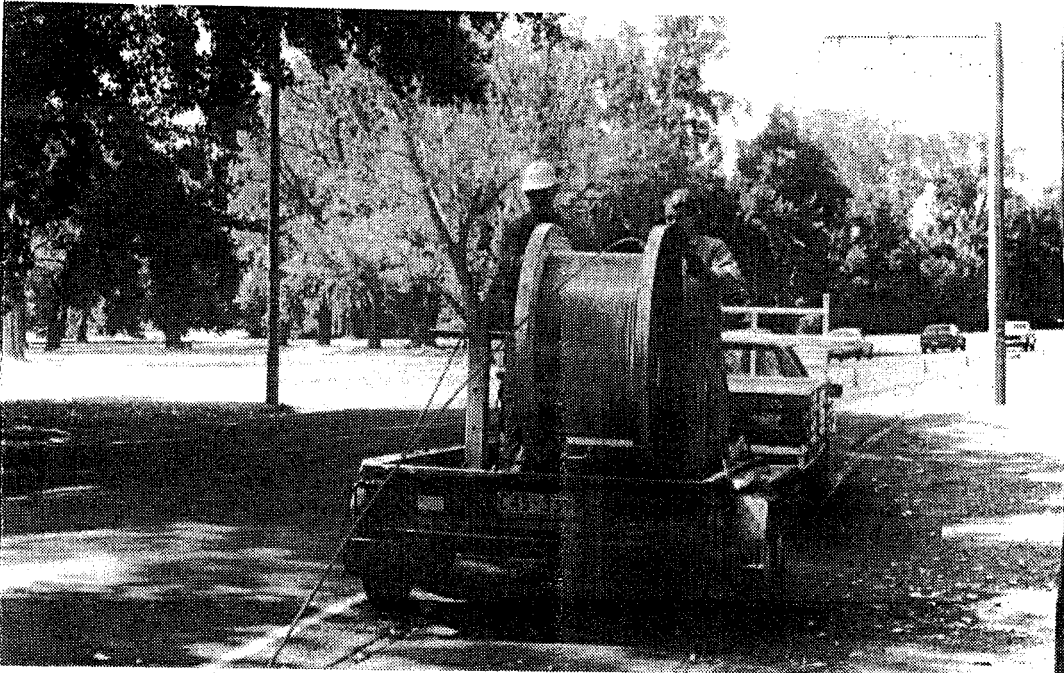
The re-tensioning of both wires in conjunction with each other took some more time. The final screws were tightened just after sunset. The tools were then packed up and a tram was taken out to enable a check to be made. This was of course after removing the two earths we had placed to protect the overhead crews and de-isolating the sub-station.

Tram 33 ran out with lights blazing in almost total darkness. The test proved most successful with no sparking from the trolley wheel except at a couple of ears. The trolley wheel also ran a lot quieter on the new wire. The following day, we took the old trolley wire to the scrap merchant and received about \$600 in return.

While we were doing the job, some samples of the worn trolley wire and ears were taken for the Museum's collection. At one location on the second day, the old wire partially broke as we were putting up the new wire. It held on until it was time to lower it down.

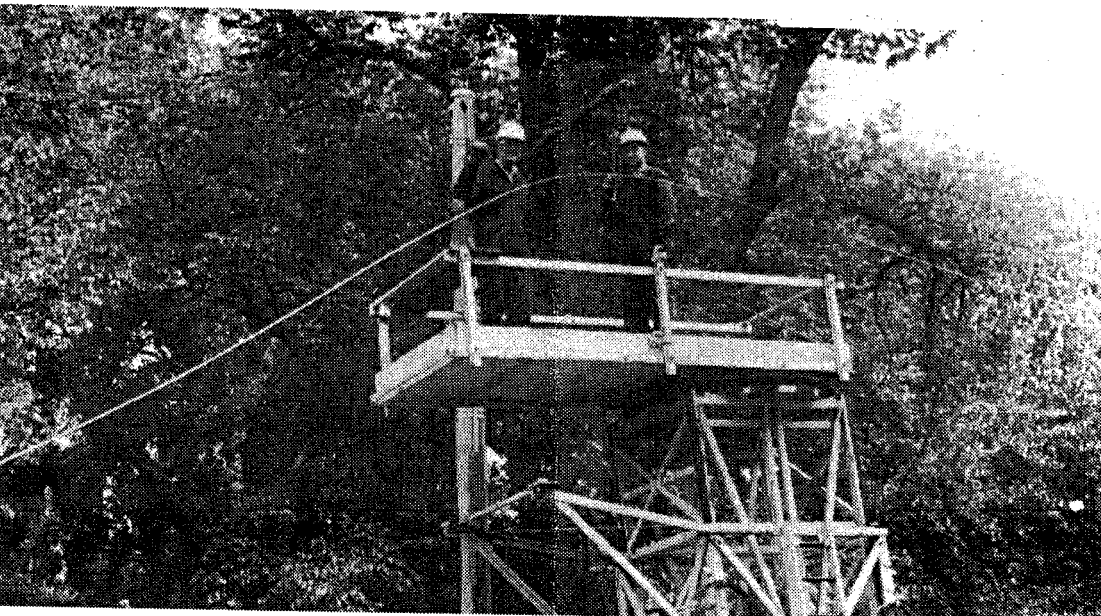
Some further work to adjust the positioning of the wire on the bracket arms and to the curve pull offs was done on March 20. In about six months time, we will need to re-tension the trolley wire again after its initial strain or stretch period. The next section we will do is the wire from Depot Junction up to Carlton St. This is planned for November or December this year. This will give us time to recover as many of the old ears as possible, and prepare the section for the changeover.

The way we worked the changeover was quite successful. With about two and half crews available to doing the necessary work on the top of the tower truck, we took it in turns on top. Only when the wire was being run out were all the workers needed. This gave the truck crews a rest break



Rolling out the new wire is Warren Doubleday and Clayton Giles, while Alan Snowball drives slowly along Wendouree Parade. PHOTO Carolyn Dean

On top of the tower truck are Peter Winspur and Simon Jenkins, taking a short break while suspending the new wire off the old. PHOTO Carolyn Dean.



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and kept the truck going, except when it needed a break for fuel. It idled away a full tank of petrol every day.

Again the Museum thanks the Ministry of Transport, the former Minister, Alan Brown and Paul Jenkins, the Member for Ballarat West for the donation of the trolley wire. It was just in time in a couple of places.

Many thanks to following people who assisted. Our apologies if we left any one out. Barry McCandlish, John Phillips, Warren Doubleday, Paul Mong, Peter Winspur, Andrew Mitchell, Alastair Reither, Simon Jenkins, Alan Snowball, Clayton Giles, Robert Harding and Andrew Cox. Some put all three days in, while others only had a few hours to spare. But thanks to them all. Also many thanks to the Bendigo Trust and the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Assoc. for the loan of equipment.

Tramway Feasibility Study

Richard Gilbert, Warren Doubleday and Frank Puls attended a meeting of the City Tramway Committee on February 5 at Sovereign Hill. This meeting followed the announcement of a Federal Government grant of \$20,000 towards the feasibility study. The meeting discussed the various issues to be covered by the study. The engineering aspects of the study are to be investigated as an initial aspect in order to determine likely costs. A marketing study will also be needed to be undertaken.

Special General meeting

The Special General Meeting of the Museum as advised in the last issue of *Fares Please!* took place as planned. The resolution to make a minor change in our rules to enable us to maintain our Business names was approved by the meeting.

New members

The Museum welcomes the following new members to our ranks:
No. 706 S.Roberts East Burwood
No. 707 M.Massarotti Sebastopol
No. 708 L.White Alvie

COTMA

Plans are being set up for the Conference of the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia to be held in Christchurch, New Zealand in May/June 1988. Conference Organiser, Bruce Dale, is visiting Melbourne and met with the COTMA Operations group on Friday April 4 to discuss at first hand, the latest ideas.

The Conference will run from Saturday 30th May to Thursday 4th June and the basic price will be around NZ\$860. Members of our museum are welcome to attend and advice on booking will be published in a future edition of *Fares Please!*

The Annual General Meeting of COTMA will be held in Melbourne on May 25. Chairman Lindsay Richardson, will travel from Perth to join with other museum delegates.

Begonia Festival

The 1997 Begonia Festival was another successful operating period for the Museum, with a record number of passengers carried on one day being achieved. The Festival began on Friday March 7, reverting to the format that operated between 1988 and 1993, that is the first weekend, being the long weekend and the street parade being held on the Sunday of the second weekend.

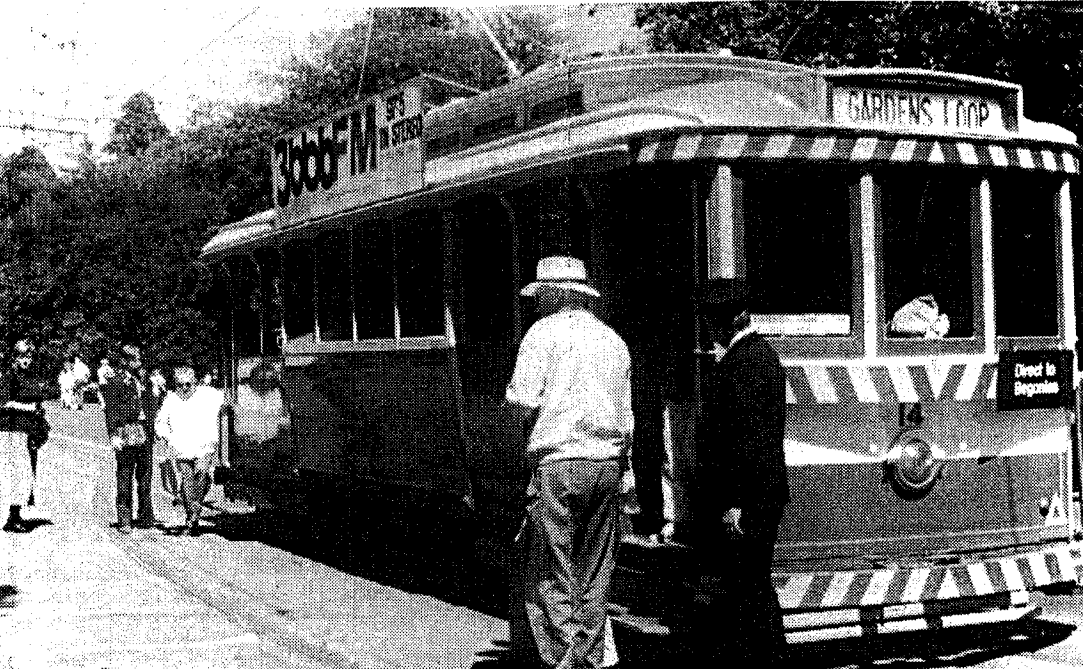
On the Friday, many passengers were carried by the tram. The Saturday of the long weekend saw some 779 being carried. On Sunday, we carried the same number of passengers as on our first long weekend Sunday way back in

1975, 1455 passengers. (The auditors will find an error somewhere! Ed.)

The following day, after the Grand Prix in Melbourne saw our largest daily total ever - 1729 passengers. This just beat the record number last year by eleven. The final weekend was quieter than the first weekend, but still just under 1300 passengers were carried. The total for the festival period was 5691 compared with 5828 last year.

The road closure made for a good environment. The festival was well organised with a bulk ticket for the various events and visitors being given a map showing where the car parks, the events, toilets were and even the

Richard Gilbert supervisors the unloading from Tram No.14 at the loop, while Assistant Conductor Paul Mong, stands by the rear door. PHOTO Carolyn Dean.



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location of the tramway Museum. The organisers are to be congratulated on this years festival arrangements.

As we have done for the last few years, we operated three trams for most of the busy days: two bogie trams and a single truck generally being used. The single truck trams ran the shuttle service between the loop and depot junction, with occasional extensions to Carlton St. or the depot to pick up passengers. The hire of two megaphones proved their worth, with passengers being encouraged to board the trams at the junction or the loop for their return trip to the car parks.

Thanks to all those who assisted over the period. It is good to see all them work well together and gather those numbers of passengers. The day commences at 8.00am and finishes about 8.00pm with the trams being cleaned and readied for the following day.

Back to Ballarat 1998

Announced just before the Begonia Festival was a "Back to Ballarat" programme. The major objectives of the programme are to:

- To achieve a landmark year which will encourage people to return to Ballarat to celebrate all that Ballarat has to offer.
- To create widespread community participation from many and varied groups.

- To create hallmark events on the theme (eg Eureka, Begonia Festival and a Lydiard Street Alive Festival.
- To create and enhance a spirit of pride and participation among the present citizens of Ballarat.



The year is planned to commence with the opening of the Eureka Centre in December 1997. A major event will be Lydiard Street Alive planned for 25 and 26 July 1998.

The Museum is now considering various ways it can take part in the programme. Stay tuned for further news.

Land at Bungaree

Announced at the last Annual General Meeting of the Museum, was the planned acquisition of land and members house at Bungaree. This comprises most of the PTC land on the northern side of the former railway station, that is, the former passenger side. A narrow access to this block is available by the side of the General Store.

Following sorting out some drainage problems with the PTC, the Museum was recently formally advised that the block could be purchased for \$20,000, including the house. After consid-

ering valuation advice, the Museum Board determined to purchase the land. We have yet to receive our "Crown Grant" certificate.

The house will continue to be used for members accommodation along with some upgrading. In the medium term we plan to construct a shed to house our metal spare parts that are currently stored under the trams in the depot and in the long term, a larger shed to provide an off site storage area for our trams.

On the Internet

(Or the advantages of having a presence!)

We recently had a primary school group from Neerim South, a town to the north of Warragul, visit the Museum. When asked how did they find out about us, we were a little surprised to hear "on your Internet page".

Our home page continues to attract interest and has received favourable comment from our peers. It is likely that we will be changing our home page address soon, by moving to a different server. The page is also being revised as time permits, along with updating the links to the other tramway and railway museums or organisations. Thanks to Andrew Cox.

Our Manager Museum Services, Warren Doubleday, recently attended

a seminar organised by the Museum of Victoria about getting Museums "On Line". This discussed the Australian Museums On Line (AMOL) project, whose aim is to have about 80% of Australian Museums collection information, programs and general information on the internet within four years.

AMOL has a sister project in Canada, known as CHIN, the Canadian Heritage Information Network. Two speakers from Canada told of their experiences so far.

The Museum of Victoria has recently created a new museum entity know as the "Virtual Museum". Its Director is Boyce Pizzey who was the previously the Director of Science Works. One of the aims of this new campus of the Museum is to increase its visitation to the Museum, that is, reach out to new audiences within Australia and overseas. Market research showed that only about 10% of Victorians have visited one of the Museum's five campuses.

Our Museum has submitted a grant application to Arts Victoria for funding for the acquisition of a new computer system and the associated cataloguing software that would enable us to become part of AMOL. The Gold Museum Ballarat is already part of this project.

AMOL can be reached via <http://www.nma.gov.au:80/AMOL/>

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Marketing

Some Board members recently met to discuss how we see the Museum from a marketing viewpoint and where we should aim our marketing effort. This was part of us producing a marketing study. One of the outcomes was the confirmation that we cannot just market ourselves alone in Ballarat, and that most people do not come to see us only. The Gardens and the other attractions in the area have to be publicised as well. We rely on the Lake and the Botanic Gardens to assist us and we assist them too in attracting visitors.

Horse Tram

The planned operation of the horse tram on Sunday Feb. 23 did not take place due to very hot weather the preceding few days. With the temperature well over 35°C for many successive days, the horses did not fare well, just like us humans who were suffering too. The operator advised that they were not the fittest, so we had to cancel the operation. At least the electric trams did not fail, although the crews were a bit worn out by the end on some of the hot days we had during February.

No. 18 - Mon. 6-1-97 *Ken Peake, one of David Frost's passengers.*

With a shake, a rattle, a bit of bump
were off on a tramway ride.
Around the lake for goodness sake
tram No. 18's Ballarat's pride.

A journey into history's page
a lovely journey to history's past.
The electrics motors ticking slow
how I long for those days to last.

A shake, a rattle, oops another bump
off on a tramway ride.
Around the lake for goodness sake
No. 18 is Ballarat's pride.

The slatted seats made of wood.
leather upholstery - a wooden back.
So shake and rattle, oops another bump
on Ballarat's old tram track.