

FARES PLEASE!

January 1999

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History



Museum Accreditation Program
Accredited Museum

Rail Safety Accreditation

The Museum has been advised that its application for Rail Safety Accreditation was approved during mid December. The Museum is now the only Victorian rail based Museum with both Rail Safety and Museum Accreditation. Rail Safety Accreditation was obtained with no non-conformances being noted by the auditors.

Thanks go to the Safety and Incident Management Committee of the Board, comprising Greg Rodgers (Chair), Peter Winspur (Secretary), Richard Gilbert and Warren Doubleday for putting all the paperwork together and achieving this legislative requirement. The documentation for this application comprised one large A4 sized folder, which was about the same for the Museum Accreditation application a year ago.

Just because we have the certificate, doesn't mean the end of the paperwork. Regular internal and external audits will be necessary, along with implementation of the findings of these audits.

As part of the implementation of the safety programme, all crew members were sent a copy of the Operations Manual for their information. This details the requirements of traffic staff, their duties and the actions at the time of incidents to be undertaken. While regular updates will be made, these will only be made to the Operations Manual that is located in the Depot Office.

Get well's

Two of our active members have recently been put off the road for various reasons. Austin Brehaut who recently retired and returned to Ballarat, has been an occasional conductor for many years. Unfortunately he has been hospitalised with a heart problem. He is on the mend we understand, and we wish him a speedy recovery.

Darren Hutchesson recently suffered a knee cartilage problem and has been restricted to home for a while, while he mends. Hopefully he will mend quickly and be back in action.

Ballarat Tramways News

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Road works

The City of Ballarat, as part of the Gardens Master plan for the Botanic Gardens and the Lake foreshore, has been carrying out roadworks in Wendouree Parade over the last couple of months. These have comprised road necking installations to enable pedestrians to cross the road and to reduce the width of the Parade at strategic locations. The outcome of these will be to improve parking discipline and narrow the road; thereby hopefully reduce the speed of traffic in the Parade. With reference to traffic speed, we have been advised that the police will be out watching for speeding vehicles using speed cameras.

These works have been undertaken at depot junction, involving significant road works in the area and smaller crossing points near

the Kiosk and the floral clock. The works at depot junction have reinforced the change over from angle parking to parallel parking at the point where we often had trouble with parked cars. Unfortunately during these works, our main phone cable was broken. The Museum has been left to repair this, even though the contractor was made aware of it.

Just before the work commenced, some quick discussion was had with Council Officers over the plans, which could have had passengers stepping off a tram onto an uneven surface. Following discussions the kerb was relocated to ensure passengers were stepping off onto an even height surface. One of the benefits to us was that about another 100m of roadway was resurfaced.

The new road kerb and channel that will narrow the width of Wendouree Parade at the location where our tram track crosses Wendouree Parade, 12 December 1998. Photo Warren Doubleday



At the Depot

It's amazing sometimes, how things come in twos or threes. Tram compressor problems have recently gained prominence. Though it took a while for them to be solved, they were overcome with minimum cost and both tramcars are back in service. Trams 13 and 18 both developed, a problem of sluggish pumping and valves appeared to be the problem. Then 13 fixed itself – one of those transient problems we thought.

So after pulling the head off 18's compressor, we found the valves were OK, but it still pumped sluggishly. Change the oil, needed a change anyway. Still no solution. Then it stopped pumping altogether. The solution at last – the armature brushes had worn down to the point that they could not carry the current when pumping against high air pressure. Brush changeover – that problem was resolved. A few days later, 13's compressor started to play up again. This time pull the head off to find one of the valves had actually broken. Simple job of brazing it back together again with the help of a skilled welder, as they are of very light metal construction. Put it back together again – and it works well. All in the day of running a tramway.

School holidays has seen virtually all the operational fleet used during the period, with some operation of bogie trams on weekdays with the improved availability of staff wanting to run a bogie tram. This has kept the depot maintenance staff busy with tram cleaning, servicing and fixing those minor bugs that often occurred. Thanks to the depot staff who have more than just kept the wheels rolling around.

Works on tram 28 has seen good progress. The clerestory window refurbishment, being undertaken by Darren Hutchesson with some assistance from Anita Bagley is virtually complete. Paul Mong has almost completed the rubbing down of the drop end seats. This job is a long and tedious one. The tram has been lifted, the truck removed and the tram body lowered onto blocks to enable easy access to the interior of the tramcar and the side panels. The truck has been dismantled, the reason why it is high on one corner than the others sorted out – to do with the axle brasses and the boxes and the wheels sent away for turning. Rubbing down of side panels and roof repairs are also underway.

With the aid of John Clowes, 28's wheels were trucked during early January, to the Adelaide based Australian Electric Transport Museum at St. Kilda. This group acquired the wheel lathe from Preston Workshops and has been set up to enable worn museum wheels to be turned. While the wheels are away, we will reassemble the truck to check whether it is square and how worn are the various parts to ascertain what repairs are required.

The telephone system: Due to the roadworks at Depot Junction, the contractor managed to excavate and break our main trunk cable, even if it was in an orange conduit. After repairs, we were only able to get one phone working again, so the cable is possibly broken under the road, having been pulled by the backhoe. More repairs are needed. At the same time, Gary Wood is undertaking a refurbishment of the power supply and cabling to the phone system. We hope to get it fully back into action in time for the Begonia Festival.

4. Fares Please!

Photostory 3 Looking Back at the Ballarat Tramway System

The Sebastopol route was Ballarat's longest route and one of its most interesting. With a combination of centre of the road and side of the road running it formed one of those fascinating things that engendered interest in the Ballarat tram system.

After running down Drummond St. South meeting up with Skipton St. and then Albert St, it turned into a side of the roadway tramway by crossing the road on a very gentle curve at Rubicon Street.

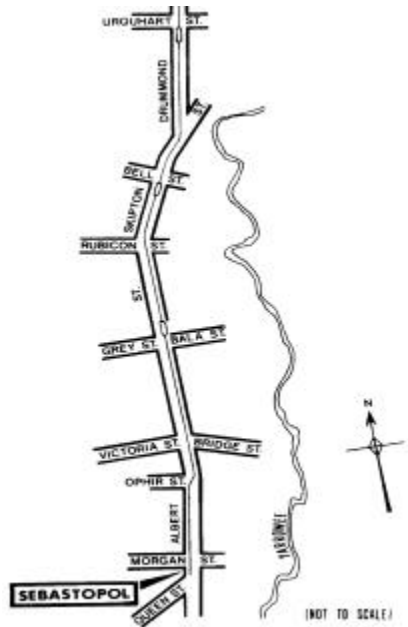
The Ballarat Courier photograph (page 4) taken in May 1970 shows tram 18 crossing the roadway on its way to Sebastopol. The tree on the left was removed because it obscured motorists' view of oncoming trams. It is also interesting to note that the second pole behind the tree has had its tram stop markings painted out and the tram stop moved to the another two poles down. Tram 18 is opposite the old pole.

Our comparison photo (page 5) by Warren Doubleday on 27 December 1998 shows the location as it looks now. A large roundabout has appeared, the Ford dealer has rebuilt their premises, but the buildings on the left side of the road, have largely remained the same.



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Road directional markings and the clutter of signs at the roundabout are typical of today's traffic management systems. Kerb and channeling has appeared to direct water runoff to drainage systems and many more streetlights to assist us at night. Gone are the times, when the trams often provided the only bright thing on a Ballarat road way at night. Also in the photograph are many more motor vehicles than seen in the previous one.



6. Fares Please!

Bylands via Bendigo – Len Millar

Fourteen members left our Museum at 8.30am on Sunday, Dec 6 for an excursion to other tramways in Central Victoria.

First stop was to inspect the BTM's two trams stored at the home of Len Millar and Darren Hutchesson at Newstead. Sebastopol tramcar No. 21 and M&MTB N class tramcar 121 are stored off-site under cover in a large shed on the property, while privately-preserved Melbourne X1 class tramcar 463 sits outside under a tarpaulin.

Since the 600 volts DC has not been switched on (yet) the midi-bus set out for Bendigo. Our arrival was timed such that most of the tour group enjoyed a ride from the Central Deborah Gold Mine terminus up through Charing Cross to the Depot on the "service" tram, SW2 car 275. We inspected the "new"(relaid) track in to the Paint Shop, tram 976 undergoing its conversion for *meals on wheels* as a *Cafe Tram* and lots of other treats that would be lost on the general public. Then it was off out of the Depot on Birney 302, just ahead of 275. The idea was to precede the service tram up to the North Bendigo terminus and then follow it down as far as Caledonia Street. Our driver, your correspondent then parked 302 so that we could go over and "invade" the Gasworks Depot - where the public usually do not get to visit.

We then completed a tour of the system and grabbed some lunch. On our return to the Depot Tramway Superintendent, Dennis Bell greeted us. He welcomed us, and then generously declined our offered charter fare, but he did ask us to empty out our pockets before we left and he

wanted to check the bus boot to see that we hadn't purloined a Birney or two!

Next stop was Hudson Park in Kilmore where we enjoyed a ride or two on the motorised cable tram set - courtesy of the Tramway Museum Society of Victoria. The cable tram set ran on our Wendouree Parade tramway many years ago during a Begonia Festival. It is great fun!

Our final call was to the TMSV's Bylands Museum. President Rod Atkins welcomed us, briefly described the history of the Bylands development and then guided us around the various depot buildings. We were able to see a fine and comprehensive collection of the various types of trams that have operated in Victoria over the last century. We were then treated to a ride on preserved Melbourne W5 tramcar 782 over the Museum's tramway, as well as on Ballarat bogie tramcar 36 and Melbourne X1, No.467. We thanked our hosts for our red carpet treatment.

Traffic

Passenger traffic during December 1998 was very poor. The very poor Boxing Day, it rained all day, resulted in a very low number of passengers. During January, passenger figures have been below expectations with weather that has not been conducive to travelling to the Gardens, either too hot (good beach weather, or just sit around and do nothing) or too cold. A couple of evening charters have improved the figures a bit. The main result of this is that our income is down, while our expenses are not. Thanks to all the staff who ran the trams over the holiday period.



Tram 26 being driven by Anita Bagley passes the roadwork site showing the new kerb and channeling at our Depot Junction tram stop. The tram track had been surfaced when this photo was taken on 12 December 1998, but the new roadway around the stop itself was not completed until about a month later. Photo: Warren Doubleday

New Members

The Museum welcomes the following new members.

No. 718, M.McKay - Ballarat

No. 719, K. Rayson – South Geelong

Donations to the Archives

Donations to the museum's archives keep coming – generally at a pace faster than we can keep with up them. George Netherway, through Neville Gower, has donated many papers about the early days of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society. Also the ARHS Vic Division and our own collecting activities have added to our collection.

Our Web Page and Email

Andrew Cox continues to maintain our Internet Web page with gusto. During Christmas the tram at the top of the page was decorated with flashing lights, outdoing the decorations on tram 18 at the depot – actual flashing lights perhaps next year? Andrew has added details of charters, fares and other information that had been requested by our many visitors to this well constructed site.

Since the recent addition of a depot Email address, we have started to receive quite a bit of correspondence through the address. This is now being handled in line with of the correspondence being received through Australia Post.

8. Fares Please!

Forthcoming Member's Events

Saturday, March 6 - BBQ at John Clowes' home, Smeaton.

All members are cordially invited to a BYO barbecue at John and Merle Clowes' home, about a 30 minute drive from the depot, Frederick Street, Smeaton. A feast of Ballarat slides will be screened going back as far as our oldest photographer. If you have some dusty old SEC era slides, please dust them off and bring them along! Time: 6.30pm onwards.

BYO drinks, and \$5 to defray the cost of feeding you! You MUST book (by Saturday February 27th, by writing to Darren Hutchesson, at the Museum's postal address or by phoning him on (03) 5476 2016. Please pay your \$5 on the night.

The timing of the barbecue/slide night coincides with our busy Begonia Festival long weekend - when all hands to the pump would be welcomed!

And then!

Saturday June 5 – Melbourne Tram Depots – by public transport. Planning is to visit Southbank, Hawthorn (historic fleet) and Malvern depots, including a visit to the Tramway Memorabilia Museum at Malvern. It is not intended to hire a tram,

but to travel by public transport. It will be pay your own way, with a gold coin donation to the Malvern museum. More details in the March 1999 issue of *Fares Please!* Your organiser is Len Millar.

After this event, the following are being planned:

Saturday Sept. 4 – BBQ and videos at Haddon. Your organiser is Alastair Reither.
Saturday December 4 – Maldon via Daylesford – visit the Central Highlands Railway at Daylesford and Victorian Goldfields Railway at Maldon. Your organiser is John Clowes.

Details of these planned trips can be obtained from the respective organiser. More information will be given in the relevant issue of *Fares Please!*

Fire main installation

During the reconstruction of Gillies Street the fire main itself has been installed to the back door of the depot. The size of the main allows for a future sprinkler installation within the building. Quotes to install a hose reel within the depot are currently being obtained. The City of Ballarat has provided a grant for this installation.

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 activities and publications, please contact : The Secretary, Ballarat Tramway Museum Inc. (A0031819K), P.O. Box 632, Ballarat Vic. 3353. Phone / Fax (03) 5334 1580.

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