

FARES PLEASE!

March 1999

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History



Museum Accreditation Program
Accredited Museum

Begonia festival operation

The social side of our organisation worked well during this busy period. A barbecue evening was organised by our social group and held at the *home* of John Clowes at Smeaton. For us city folk from Melbourne and Geelong it was great in itself just to be under the stars far from city lights and enjoy the quiet of a small country town. The barbecue was followed with a slide night of most interesting and absorbing tramway slides. Thanks to all the contributors. We were all enjoying the night greatly and only the labours of that day and the thought of those the next dragged us away from a most enjoyable time. Particular thanks are expressed to John and Merl Clowes for hosting such an enjoyable night such an inviting location.

So popular was the spirit of those working together for the tram operation that we had twelve members 'in for dinner' at Bungaree house the next night. This big stew-up was followed by an impromptu slide show which went on till late in the night.

It is important to reflect on the social mixing of our membership in events such as this, and the strength of the Museum is upheld by gatherings such as these.

Bungaree Property

Bungaree Property: Just a reminder that we have around 50 head of livestock grazing our property at Bungaree and visitors are asked to keep the front gate shut to avoid letting our neighbours stock, conveniently eating our grass down, from getting out on the road - and the railway, (we don't need to see if the cowcatcher works, for that purpose on a Sprinter).

Telstra attended to repair a line fault to our telephone at the house just prior to the Begonia Festival and it was found our livestock had trampled down a Telstra cable junction. Prompt work had the telephone service restored.

A town-planning permit has been submitted to the Shire of Moorabool to place a storage shed to house some of our trams and spare parts in an off-site store.

Ballarat Tramways News

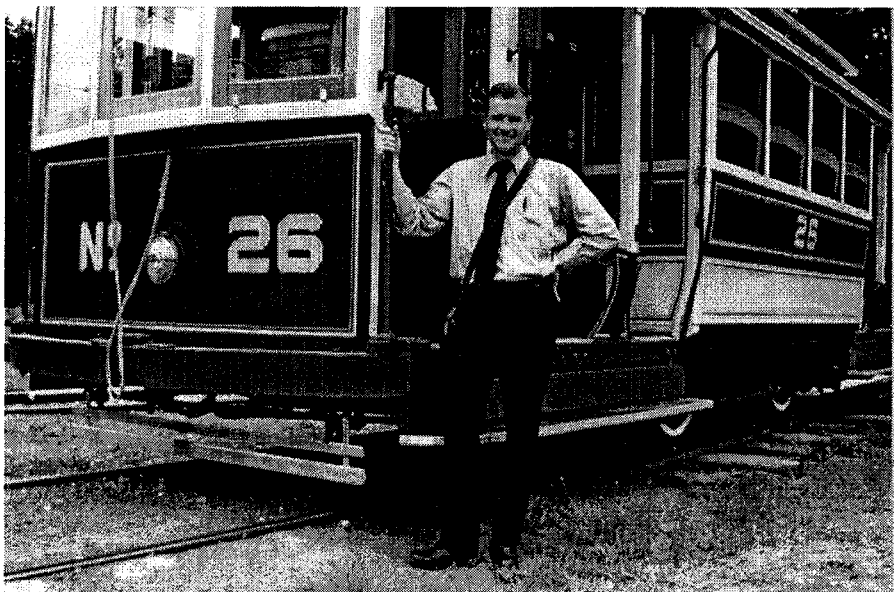
2..Fares Please!

Increase in Conductors ranks

Some could call it poaching; the more accepted statement is 'Recognition of prior skills'. We have been fortunate to join our ranks of operating staff, persons who have been active in other tramway museums and their personal circumstances have seen them move to Victoria. Stuart Keenan, quite active with the Sydney Tramway Museum, has moved to Melbourne and was quickly trained, with recognition of prior skills, to the position of Conductor. He conducted during the first Sunday of the Begonia festival, which threw him in at the deep end with walls of passengers and intricate operating moves with more than one tram in service.

The next week, whilst Stuart had a deserved rest at the AETM, Adelaide's tramway museum. Former AETM Conductor, Kent Rayson, now resident in Geelong was trained and pressed into operation for the second weekend of the Begonia Festival. By the Monday Kent was worn out but jubilant at the fact that our operation was so much like the real thing of operating busy trams in busy traffic conditions.

Mark McKay is a Ballarat member and shows much ability to take up the Conductors job as those with experience elsewhere. He has been with us for around three months and worked hard and professionally for our Museum during the Begonia Festival.



Stuart Keenan, recently moved from Sydney to Melbourne had his first day conducting on the trams during the Begonia Festival. Photo Richard Gilbert.

Begonia Festival Traffic

For this year's Begonia Festival, the Parade was not closed to traffic. This has seen a significant impact on our figures as people were able to drive through, drop people off and then find a car park, if they could. Total passenger figures for the weekends and the Monday public holiday dropped from about 5500 for 1998 to 3600 for 1999. However, we charged all travellers \$1 for Adult and 50c Children irrespective of the travel distance. This was to try and make the often complex explanation of fares easier and ensure we got all the fares on the short distance travelled. To our satisfaction, it turned out that the average revenue per passenger was significantly improved and the total income was only slightly down on previous years.

The best day was 1033 on the Sunday of the long weekend. On the Monday public holiday we carried 989 passengers despite being 'off the road' due to the procession for over two hours. All in all, with the road being open for the first time in six years, we carried more passengers under this arrangement than we did except for 1975.

The road traffic was more orderly than previous years, as the road has been significantly narrowed in places, however we were often delayed by people moving in and out of car parks, despite the car park being designated "No Standing". Our crews did a great job in keeping the service moving, at times with pedestrians and cars often wandering all over the place. One regular Melbourne tram driver commented

about the difficulty of driving in these conditions.

We had a good number of Traffic Staff for the entire festival period and the addition of three new Conducting staff assisted greatly. It is good to know they enjoyed the Begonia Festival and our intensive operation so well and we welcome them to the fold. They certainly passed the entrance exam. At times, we even had a minor surplus of staff and good use was made of them. For example, when the crowd watching the line dancers or boot scooters (thought that was a dead craze ed.) spilt over onto Wendouree Parade tram track and blocked the footpath, tramcars had trouble in getting through. The music drowned out the gongs and we had to have people standing with a loud hailer to shepherd the tramcars through.

On another occasion, we had sufficient crews to run four tramcars in service during the late afternoon. The service was arranged so we always had a tramcar at the Gardens Loop.

Finally we take this opportunity to thank all those members who assisted with tramcar operations during the Begonia Festival Period - we worked well as a team in often stressful situations.

New members

The Museum welcomes the following new members:

- No. 720 Stuart Keenan - Mentone
- No. 721 James Parkhill - East Geelong
- No. 722 Knowles Tivendale - Ballarat
- No. 723 Bruce Dixon - Albert Park

4. Fares Please!

Photostory 4

Looking Back at the Ballarat Tramway System

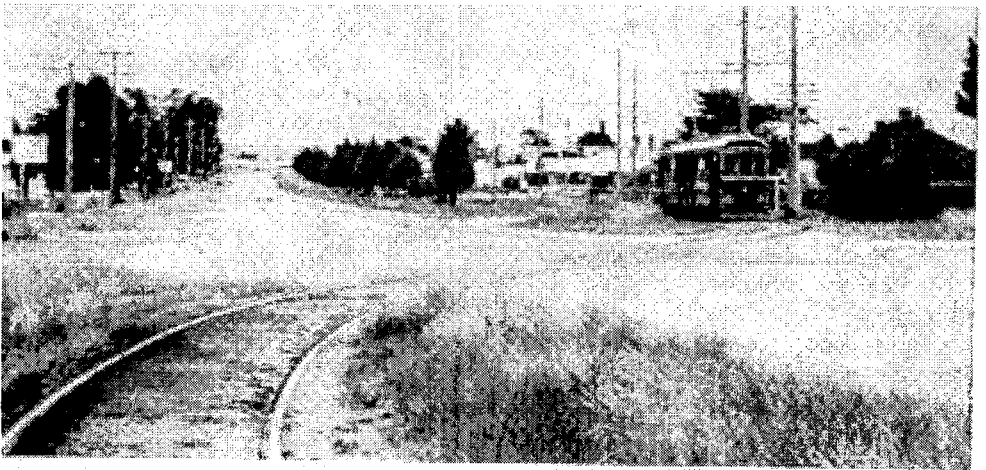
Albert St. Sebastopol was the section where the tram track in Ballarat travelled on one side and then the other side of the roadway. As we illustrated in the last issue of *Fares Please!* the track crossed to the east side at Rubicon St and continued along Albert St until it reached Victoria St. There it swung over to the western side by crossing the roadway. In this vicinity, the tramway had a very rural atmosphere, with Albert St. being the main road to Colac. The road was sealed, but occupied only a small portion of the total road reserve. Today, it is a four-lane highway with few if any remnants of the tramway ever being there.

The first photograph reproduced from Keith King's book; "The Ballarat Tramways" shows the rural nature of the tramway, with a bogie car crossing the street during the early 1950's.

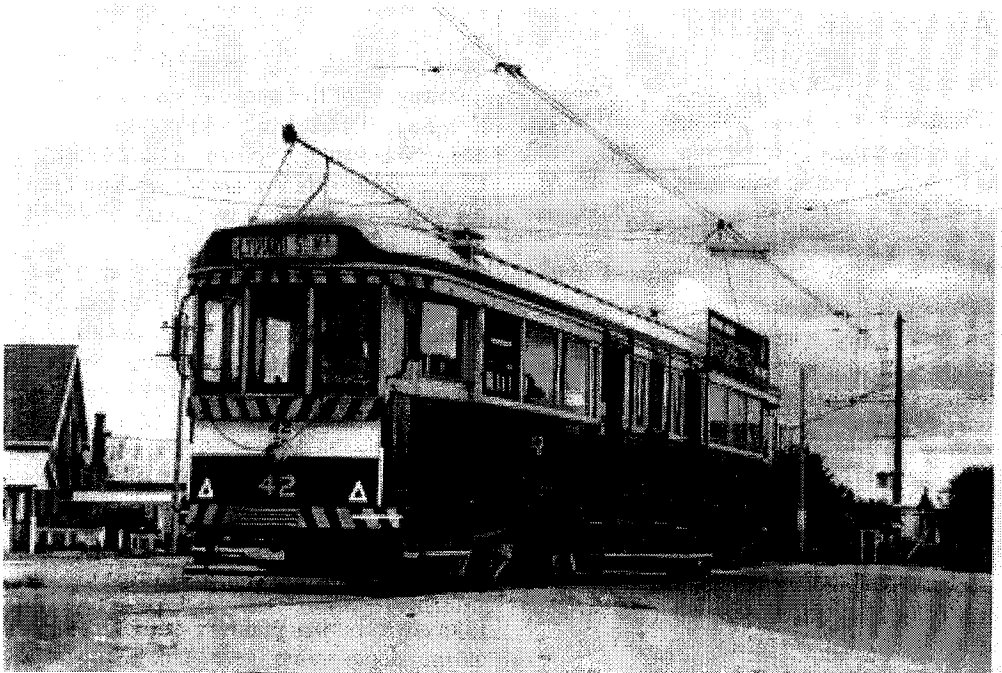
Why did the tramline cross the street about half a mile before the Sebastopol terminus? It was not to terminate the tramway nearer to the Royal Mail Hotel, though this may have helped the case. A weigh bridge was located on the eastern side of Albert St at about Ophir St. and it appears that the horse tramway was built in 1893 to this layout to avoid this obstacle.

The second photo (Ballarat Courier) shows bogie tram 42 crossing the street in October 1969, with no warning signs, bells or lights to warn motorists of its presence. Try that today! The route to Sebastopol was dark with little street lighting and the tramcar with all its lights really stood out as a beacon.

The third photo by Warren Doubleday on 27 December 1998 shows the location today. The large central median, with right hand turn facilities and plenty of street lighting is a contrast to that of about 30 years ago. However, some features remain the same, such as the church hall on the left side of the photograph.



Fares Please! ..5



6. Fares Please!

At the depot

The Begonia Festival period sees a change in emphasis for our depot staff. Effort is concentrated on keeping the trams clean and ready for traffic with other tasks taking a bit of back seat.

Work on tram 28 has continued with various tasks being undertaken to preparing the tram for its repaint. One job has been scraping off the green paint on the circuit breakers at either end of the tram. The painting of these appears to be once only in the life of the tram, as no other colours were found under the green paint, other than the black metal. Ian Seymour of the Australian Electric Traction Museum in Adelaide has advised that he has begun the task of turning the wheels from 28 on the wheel lathe. Bill Kingsley was visiting the Museum at the time and help with getting one of the wheels into the lathe.

The repair of the phone system has turned out to be a somewhat more labour intensive job than first thought. We have discovered a number of cable breaks in the system due to the in digging up of the road and park being undertaken on a very hap hazard basis by various contractors. If we can't find the breaks or on the other hand by the time we fix them, it may have so many joins in the cable, it could be beyond repair. Alternative options are being considered.

Two new display boards giving the story of ESCo tram No. 12 have been set up in the shed. These tell of No.12's place in the public transport history of Ballarat and the reconstruction of the tram.

Charters

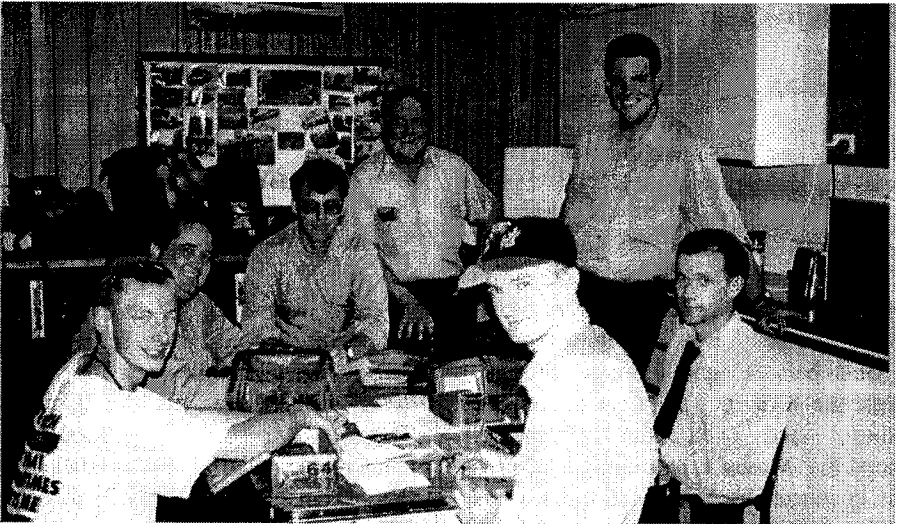
March has been a busy time for the tramway, with the weekday running during the Begonia Festival and a number of charters as well as the Wednesday running. Charter groups during the month have been the Neerim South Primary School, Portland Primary School, Auzeland Tours (ex Newcastle) and a booking from Hertz Rental Cars for a photo shoot with tram 26. Thanks to the crews who assisted in enabling these charters to occur. Another event for which we operated the tramway was "The Long Lunch" held in the Gardens on Thursday 25 March. This event was a \$60/head lunch held on a long table, which we understand was quite successful.

Web site news

Like any suburban mailbox, our E-mail box at the depot often gets junk mail from various people flogging things, weight loss etc. However we often get some interesting mail items.

The first from the Como-Harriet Street line, operated by the Minnesota Transportation Museum in Minneapolis advising that they had a set of ex Melbourne No. 11 trucks with motors and 1B trucks for sale. They requested information from us about which type of tram the No. 11 trucks were from. We were able to advise that there were only four of this type apparently built and according to Destination City they were used under Y1 610 and 612.

The second was from a tramway museum in the Czech Republic that they had available for disposal a Tatra T2 single ended tramcar that ran in Ostrava.



Setting up for traffic duties for Sunday 28 Feb. 1999 Begonia Festival running is (Left to Right) Paul Mong, Stephen Butler, Simon Green, Roy Sheedy, Simon Jenkins, Mark McKay and Stuart Keenan. Photo Richard Gilbert.



The Begonia Festival's floral carpet featured a Ballarat tram in one of its sections, along with buildings seen in the Botanic Gardens. Photo Anita Bagley.

8. Fares Please!

Social club – next event

Forthcoming Member Event

Saturday June 5 – Melbourne Tram Depots – by public transport

On this date, we intend to journey to Melbourne by train and visit Southbank, Hawthorn and Malvern Depots by tram. It is planned to be shown over the (almost) new Southbank Depot, have a browse amongst the heritage tram fleet housed at Hawthorn and see the Tramway Memorabilia Museum adjoining Malvern Depot, conducted by Norm Maddocks.

We don't want to charter a special tram. We just want to sample ordinary service tram travel. However if bookings (compulsory) were large in number, then it would not be fair to the driver or passengers on a service tram for us to unexpectedly fill a tram. If we do need to charter a tram – probably it will be a Southbank "W" tramcar.

Please book a place on the tour with Len Millar c/- the BTM's mail address of by phone on 5476 2016. It will be on a "Pay-your-own-fare". A gold coin donation may be appropriate at Malvern. Should a chartered tram be necessary, the cost should be about \$5 per head. Please book!

Melbourne based members are welcome to join us, but please advise Len that you are coming so we can keep a tally of the numbers and advise you the starting time at Southbank.

COTMA Conference 2000

The organising committee had deliberations recently to settle on a date and accommodation venue for the year 2000 Conference of the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia. The Conference will be held in Ballarat from Saturday, 18th to Thursday 23rd November 2000.

Accommodation will be taken up at the Mid City Motel. A brochure with initial details will be produced within about two months for distribution to COTMA affiliated museums.

Article on ESCo No. 12

The Feb. – March 1999 issue of *inSITE* the newsletter of Museums Australia Inc. published a one page article on Electric Supply Co (ESCo) Ballarat tram No. 12. The article covered the history of the tram, what we have done to it so far and what our plans are. It included a photo of the tram being reconstructed.

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.

E-mail: btm@netconnect.com.au

Our web page: <http://www.btm.org.au>
