

FARES PLEASE!

November 1999

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History



Museum Accreditation Program
Accredited Museum

25 Years of Operations

The Museum is proud to advise there will be celebrations held on Boxing Day, 26th December, to mark 25 years of operating our trams for the public. On that day, in 1974, we commenced our public operation. Trams 38 and 26 provided the service and we hope to do something similar this day.

A sausage sizzle will be held around midday for the visitors and guided tours of the depot and workshop will be available. In the evening a members barbecue will be held followed by a film show (real film from the past - not video) mainly of Ballarat's tramways. We encourage all those who can come along to be with us and join in as we toast 25 years of operation. If members know of others who have been involved over the years and they may not be active now, invite them along.

In order to assist with catering, please let us know if you are coming. Advise the depot either by phone, fax, Email or even verbally.

Social Night Report

An excellent night was had at the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association property at Haddon on Saturday, 6th November. Tram rides were given, as well as a drive for many. A barbecue meal was followed by a film show of tramway and railway subjects taken over a period of time going back 30 years (actually the London trams went back to 1952 and the 'Flip the Frog' cartoon went back to 1936). The night was well attended by our members and we thank the MTPA for such a good and convivial time. Also thanks to the organising group.

Some of the members were late in attending due to an evening charter that was only booked that very day. Fortunately we had the crews in position.

The next social evening will be 26th December after close of business as part of – the 25th anniversary celebrations of operations.

Ballarat Tramways News

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Annual General Meeting

A very successful AGM was held on Sunday 31st October at the Robert Clark Centre. Attended by some 35 members and friends, the meeting heard about the past year and plans for the future year. Also discussed was the future of No. 8 with respect to its colour scheme. Near the conclusion of the meeting, Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia (COTMA) Executive Director, Craig Tooke, presented Museum President Richard Gilbert with out Membership Certificate of COTMA. The Museum was the first to receive its certificate, as recognition of its formative role in COTMA.

Vale Harry Leviston

Harry Leviston passed away in mid October, aged 74. Harry was the owner of

the property in Anderson Street where the saloon portion of horse tram No. 1 was located for many decades. It was through him in 1985 that arrangements were made to acquire the saloon portion for eventual reconstruction and restoration to service. The car had once been used as a sleepout, and Harry had lived in it for twenty years or so. It contained a bed and a wardrobe, and not much else. Four roof ribs had been cut to accommodate the wardrobe, which was a little too tall. Once the car had been relocated to the depot, Harry took a great interest in the ongoing restoration, usually digging into his wallet for twenty dollars to speed the project along. He was an honoured guest when the horse tram finally ran again in November 1992. It must have been a unique experience, travelling down Wendouree Parade in your bedroom of twenty years.



Richard Gilbert receives the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia membership certificate from Executive Officer Craig Tooke during the Museum's AGM on 31/10/1999.
Photo Warren Doubleday

New Sheds for Bungaree

by Carolyn Dean

The Board recently decided to purchase two sheds for Bungaree for off site storage in order to form a single larger shed at a later date. Safety Steel Structures of Dandenong were chosen to supply the sheds which were to be 36' x 20' x 12' (11 m x 6m x 3.6m) in size and covered with a wheat colorbond sheeting.

Delivery was set for 10am on the 4th October 1999. This worked out well as staying overnight at Bungaree meant that all could be up early, however, due to pressure of their delivery schedule, Safety Steel Structures asked if the truck could arrive at 7am! It was agreed to and all was in readiness for the time.

The alarm was set for 6am. At 6.10am the occupants of the house, who were still half-asleep, were rudely shocked when a truck horn sounded a couple of times outside the house. It was not 7am yet. Had there been a black out? Was the alarm set right? The front door was opened to see a smiling faced driver looking from his truck. A cheery Good Morning was heard. It appeared that the truck driver was told he could turn up at 6am. Clothes were hastily put on, and as sleep was wiped from the eyes, one wondered if it was all worth it.

The truck driver drove his truck over towards the tin fence and started to unload. Small pieces came off first, then eventually the bigger beams of the first shed. As some were placed on the ground it was agreed that these would not be moved until the

sheds are built due to the weight of the colorbond and beams. Next came the second shed where the beams were placed on the other side of the truck so as to keep the shed parts separate. While the truck was being unloaded the truck driver said that he would have been here earlier, but he got lost at Wallace. The instructions he was given were not 100% accurate.

At 6.55am all the unloading was done and the truck was on its way back to Dandenong. If the timetable had been adhered to, the truck should have just been coming through the gate! The routine for the day was changed and adjustments were called for. Originally breakfast was first, then showers then onto moving parts of the shed around, but it was not the way it ended up. The lighter pieces were placed in the bungalow out of sight, and the large ones placed on top of the colorbond to protect it from the weather.

The weather was cold, damp and misty. The sun came out at 7am, with the early morning mist glistening on the neatly chewed grass from the 'guest' cattle, them having had a three-week spell on the property prior to the delivery.

After some handy jobs and domestic chores around the house it was time to leave. It was only 11am and all this work had been done. No wonder everyone was tired that night and all slept soundly. The best is yet to come with actually building the two sheds to house the spare parts.

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The Other Ballarat

In the last issue of *Fares Please!* we advised that Warren Doubleday was in California and Nevada for about three and half weeks. As well as visiting a number of rail and streetcar / interurban museums, he also visited the ghost town of Ballarat California. Located in the Panamint Valley in the north of the Mojave desert and one mountain range to the west of Death Valley - it can be very hot during the summer. The town was named after Ballarat Vic. when gold was discovered there in 1897. The town survived for about 20 years until the post office closed in 1917 following the closure of the mines a few years earlier. A few of the adobe type buildings remain along with a general store and some more modern buildings used in movie sets. The area is quite fascinating and Warren remarked that it was well worth the side trip going there for he saw parts of California he probably would not have otherwise seen.

An excellent web site detailing the town history and visitor's stories can be found at www.fieler.com/ballarat/

Warren visited the Western Railway Museum located between San Francisco and Sacramento, the Orange Empire Railway Museum in the south east corner of Los Angeles and the San Jose Trolley Museum. He was made very welcome at all these locations. These museums hold the principal collection of Californian and other western USA streetcars and

interurbans. At Orange Empire he met one of our new members, Sam Sharp with paintbrush in hand, who joined us via our Internet site.

While in California he travelled on the light rail systems in Sacramento (4 coupled articulated streetcars), San Jose – busy extending into Silicon Valley and one of the first of the newer light rail systems in the USA – San Diego. All these systems use street running and private right of ways and put the Sydney light rail to shame in terms of speed of travel, but conversely all have relatively high floor cars. They all had wheel chair access facilities and room to carry bicycles. San Francisco was also visited – looking at the Market St. surface route, cable cars and the new extension being built along the Embarcadero.

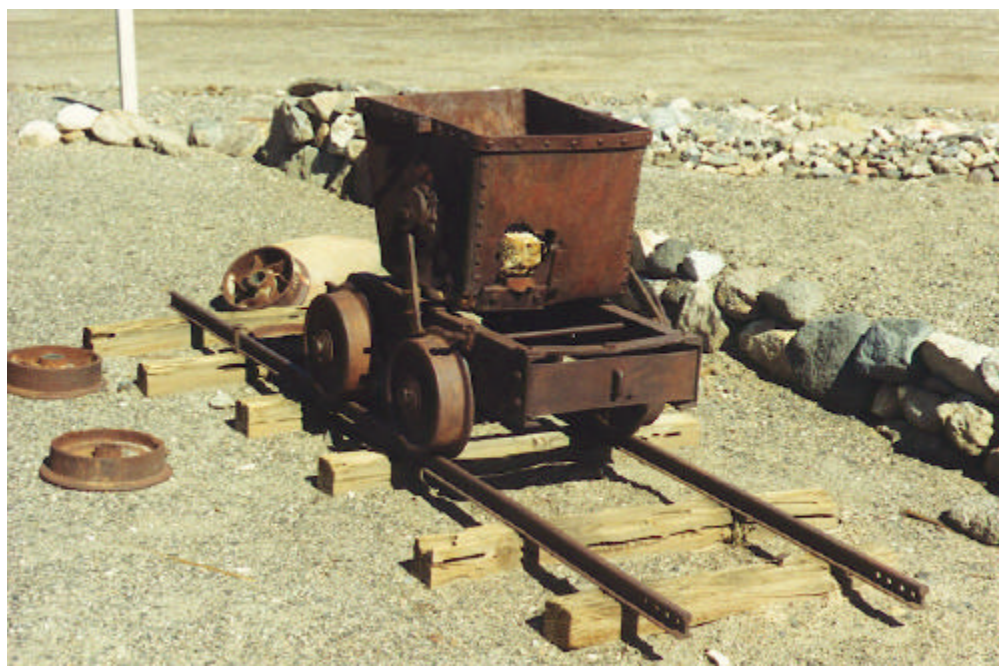
One of the most interesting parts of the trip, was the visit to the California State Railroad Museum and the Nevada State Railroad Museum. Both museums make extensive use of volunteers who are well trained in the knowledge of their museum collections and place in the cultural history of their state.

Top: Ballarat California – remains of post office and that of another building.

Bottom: Old Mining skip – Ballarat California– not the Ballarat City Tramway.

Both photos: Warren Doubleday
2/10/1999.

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Traction Motor Repair Fund:

The direction our tram maintenance area appears to be taking is one where funds are being spent on both preventative and corrective maintenance on traction motors. To this end, the Board has decided to seek funds for establishing a *Traction Motor Repair Fund* Appeal. A good amount of budget money has been used on this area of maintenance, and we are now seeking support from the Membership if you are able to help us.

We have been donated \$ 1,000 from a Member, who wishes to remain anonymous and we are seeking to build this up to a target figure of \$6,000. Achievement of this figure will enable an early return to service of tram No. 33.

All donations are tax deductible and can be sent via the following preferred address or paid at the Depot. Further details on any arrangements you wish to make on the matter can be obtained from the Treasurer.

Please send donations with your details to: Carolyn Dean, 8 Northwood Street, Ringwood East, 3135, on the enclosed form. Please make cheques payable to BTM Museum Fund.

Rail Safety Accreditation

The annual external audit took place on Sat.21st November. Attending from the Rail Safety Directorate was Doug Lamb and Andrew Chlebica. Section 3 of our Safety Management System was successfully audited, with no problems being found.



Offloading the components for the new sheds at Bungaree, 4.10.1999. Photo Carolyn Dean

At the Depot

Just a short report for this issue of *Fares Please!*

Work in the last two months has concentrated around tram No. 28, with painting of the exterior commenced with undercoat and some of the loose interior fittings receiving their first coats as well. The truck has been re-assembled and new leathers installed at the rear of the axle boxes. A new set of motor suspension bearings have been made up for the rebuilt motor and this has been placed back in the truck itself. We are waiting the armature for the second motor to return from Spotswood, where it has been sent for baking and dipping, reworking of the armature shaft and the remetalling of the armature bearings.

Mark McKay has commenced the task of restoring the tramway signalling system back into action. The first step was to take down the existing boxes, all of which need to be repaired. This will be followed by setting up a system on a test bench to test some modified equipment before placing them back up again, section by section.

Tram No. 8 has been cleaned up, the work list determined and a start made on rebuilding the trolley pole base. The base on the tram was badly worn and new replacement base was obtained from Tony Smith from the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association at Haddon, in return for the old parts. Other parts needed to replace most of the missing bits were obtained a recent clean out of a storage building at Preston Workshops.



Mark McKay and Warren Doubleday take down the signal boxes in Wendouree parade for rebuilding. Photo Clare Johnson

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Traffic

New trainee driver: The long wait for Simon Jenkins who has served an apprenticeship around the depot for nearly five years was finally over at the end of October when he celebrated his 20th birthday and was able to begin formal training as a driver.

Springfest

An annual event around the Lake for the past four years, "Springfest" was held on Sunday 7 November. The weather was not kind this year. It was cold early and few people arrived before 11.00am. Sunny and mild weather held up from mid morning but rain set in after 3.00pm and most stalls were forced to pack up early.

It was a disappointing quick end to a day for so many participants, although the tramway performed well and managed to carry 536 passengers in this shortened day. Most travelled one way (to "Save their legs!"). Special signs were out to encourage visitors to use the trams. The Traffic Manager declared it to be a Melbourne Trams day and 661 & 671 performed admirably at the task for which they were so well designed - carrying passengers. Thanks to all those crews who worked on this busy day.

Preston Workshops Clean up

The Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia in association with the Department of Infrastructure recently organised a clean up of a building at the Preston workshops full of spare parts for W's and other materials. The parts have been donated to the Victorian museums. A team effort from the Bendigo Trust, the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association, the Tramway Museum Society of Victoria and ourselves saw a very co-operative work party to remove a number of truckloads of spares. The museum obtained a number of useful parts, particularly for No. 8. On behalf of COTMA, the Museum thanks the Minister of Transport for the donation of these spare parts to the various tramway museums.

Baa, Baa:

The museum has been loaned three sheep to eat down the grass on our property at Bungaree. The sheep are the owned by the Museum President, Richard Gilbert and in fact were purchased by him and will not at this stage appear on the Museum assets or accounts. The farmer who sold them advised they were good for eating once they did their part and ate the grass - well, maybe they could be culled for the COTMA spit roast or will our non farming background and consequent guilt complex prevent us from this course of action.

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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