

FARES PLEASE!

March 2000

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History



Museum Accreditation Program
Accredited Museum

Begonias

The Year 2000 Begonia Festival was held in wonderful fine weather from 3 to 13 March. It was a great success from the opening by the Premier until the Procession on Labour Day. The usual intensive tram service with discount fares was provided by the Museum and patronage was higher than last year on every day except Labour Day when the hot north wind whipped up the dust and sent many people home early.

The highest number of passengers for one day was 1145 on Sunday 12th. Alastair Reither held the record for the most number on one trip at 78 and Simon Jenkins sold the most tickets (388) for one day. The dedication of our small band of workers was tremendous and they were all a credit to the Museum.

Trams 671 and 18 in Begonia Festival Service on Sunday 12 March 2000. Photo Carolyn Dean



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Visit of H. M. Queen Elizabeth II

Queen Elizabeth visited the Gardens on 24 March. At first the possibility of providing transport for the spectators was canvassed, but a total exclusion zone north of the Lake Lodge Pavilion and the need to cut power due to the low flying helicopters used in the SES demonstration put paid to the idea. Instead, trams were placed strategically on the depot fan and access track and the Museum was opened to visitors. A steady trickle of people came through during the afternoon.

Charters

Charter business is booming with recent visits by the Veteran Car Club on 19 February, the AETA on 20 February, 113 children from St Patrick's Primary on 3 March and 145 adults attending a conference at Loretto College on 25 March. Friday 31 March will see a very large group of Rotarians from Walkerville, South Australia.

Visit to Bendigo

On Monday 27 March, Warren Doubleday, Peter Winspur and Alastair Reither transported two armatures to Bendigo to be baked and dipped by our friends at the Bendigo Tramways. Peter and Warren took the opportunity to discuss various issues with Superintendent Tim Borchers. We thank Tim for his hospitality.

New Members

The Museum welcomes the following new members:

725 Mrs L. Purcell - Strathmore
726 Mr A. Purcell - Strathmore
727 Mrs G. Lowe Ballarat

and new junior supporters

5019 Mr S. Boon - Wendouree
5020 Mr R. Lowe - Ballarat
5021 Mr L. Lowe - Ballarat

A new Cat

Simon Green recently brought a new cat into the depot to replace our previous one, which passed away recently. Being introduced into the depot during the Begonia Festival did not help and it was generally sleeping under a seat in 33. Since then it is getting use to its new surrounds.

Rail Safety info to Belgium

Following the visit of four tram enthusiasts from Belgium, we recently received a request for a copy of our Rail Safety documentation. This was duly forwarded. Could be interesting in trying to marry tramway operations in Ballarat with those in Belgium. We were pleased to assist another Museum.

Members evening

A very successful members evening was held on Sunday March 12 at John and Merle Clowes' home at Smeaton after the running of the tram service during the Begonia Festival. Following a great BBQ dinner, a slide show featuring slides of Warren Doubleday's recent trip to the west coast of California, including a visit to our sister (well hardly) town of Ballarat California. Following this, some of Travis Jefferys slides of Ballarat trams in the 1960's were shown.

Correction

In the last issue of *Fares Please!*, the caption of the photograph of No. 21 turning from Sturt St. into Drummond St. South should have said the "Southern Cross Hotel", not the "Western Hotel".

At the Depot

With the busy Begonia Festival and work at Bungaree, some of the depot jobs have taken a bit of back seat. However, work on 28 continues with more interior work being completed and the undercoating of the exterior and filling up the tail lamp holes in the No. 1 end of the tramcar. The reassembly of the truck was completed and tested on Wendouree Parade – no warm bearings. A photographic record of the installation of the motor was also made.

Work on the motors of 33 is progressing with the commutator and fields coils being rewrapped. One of tram 32's armatures

was removed and along with the good armature from 33, shipped to Bendigo for baking and dipping by a local firm. After Easter, it is planned to lift the tramcar 33 to enable the removal of the top halves of the motor and following a clean up, commence the process of reassembling them.

A new trolley pole base and pole have been fitted to Scrubber No. 8. The first step in making this car operable. It had been hoped to have this project more advanced by now, but too many other tasks have got in the way.

btm.com et al

Just dreaming, perhaps we should float btm.com, make our fortune and retire from running the Museum. Nice dream – however our web site continues to get very good comment from people, outside the normal tramway enthusiast ranks who visit it. Very positive comments were received from a senior member of the State Library of Victoria during a presentation by our Museum Services Manager of a case study on our imaging database at a recent seminar organised by the Library on Imaging.

The content of our site continues to grow, especially with the forthcoming COTMA Conference. With the assistance of the Australian Museums on Line, we should soon have our collection available on the web. More on this soon. Our Web Master Andrew Cox has also recently put together a site for the Association of Tourist Railways of Victoria, which will soon be formally launched.

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Bungaree Sheds

We have commenced to add another two sheds to Australia's stock take of *sheds for boys' toys!* Over the weekend of March 25 and 26 the steel frame for the sheds were erected. On Friday 24 March 2000, John Phillips our Project Manager met the hole driller on site at about 8am and drilled the necessary 18 foundation holes during the morning. Following a clean out, inspection by the Shire Building Surveyor and watching the Queen's entourage as it sped along the Western Highway with its numerous helicopters, preparations were made for a start on assembling the frames the following day.

On the Saturday, a work party of about 10 commenced to assemble the frames. This was the easy bit. By Saturday evening, we had the frame for the first shed up and secured – we were on a steep learning curve, reading the instructions – just like any kit built object. We made a few boo boos which were sorted out – score say 7.5 out of 10. The following day, the second shed frame was positioned and more quickly finished off, along with a few outstanding jobs on the first frame. Score 9.5 out of 10. Now if we could only do a third one!

The following Monday morning saw the concrete truck arrive and the holes which were just over a metre deep – to hold the building down as there is no concrete floor – filled and the job completed.

The weekend was a very social occasion with the sustenance provided by the ladies – (we could get into some more Aussie shed theory here but won't). All in all, a very successful time. The weekend of April 8 and 9 is programmed to sheet the walls of the shed. More news next issue.



Kevin Taig completes the concreting.

Thanks to the following people:
Anita Bagley, Phillip Bertram, Carolyn Dean, Warren Doubleday, Richard Gilbert, Simon Jenkins, Darren Hutchesson, Len Millar, Jim Parker, Glen Parkhill, John Phillips, Alastair Reither, Alan Snowball, Janet Taig, Kevin Taig, and Peter Winspur.



Top left – drilling the foundation holes;
Bottom left – standing the rear wall of the second shed

Top right – briefing session
Bottom right – the two shed frames complete.

All photos – Carolyn Dean

The Five O’Clock Rush

Did you think no one in Ballarat ever reads the tram destination signs?

One Saturday in February, I was all packed up, when a group came over and said: “You’ve put up DEPOT. Does that mean you’re going in? We haven’t had our ride yet! I decided to allow an extra trip. When I got them back, another six people were waiting. I finally did five extra trips, running in at 6.15pm. The shed crew, who were waiting to put the tram away and then rush off to Daniel

Daniel Edwards’ birthday party were not amused.

Question: Would patronage increase if we displayed DEPOT all the time?

David Frost.

Bungaree House

Jim Parker has commenced to repaint the Bungaree House – a much needed job. Simon Green along with Carolyn Dean have started to repaint the kitchen. Other rooms will follow in due course.

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Memories of and reflections on Ballarat Trams – Pt 2 – Austin Brehaut

Living close to Rubicon St had its advantages. With the short-workings operating from about 12 noon to 6pm on week-days in between the Sebastopol trams on a 20 minutes service for each route, giving us a 10-minute headway (I can't be specific about the years when any particular time-table operated), after school or on Saturday mornings, as and when I could I would meet the trams and with the OK or not of the conductor would turn the pole. Some of the pole springs were a little strong for young muscles, but I generally managed. Layover time there was 5 minutes, which gave time as appropriate to talk with the crews who were willing to put up with this tram-mad kid! Later, the Rubicon St working was extended to Grey St Sebas. (the loop), and as I remember the 6.05pm from the city (6.20pm at Rubicon St) was the first run extended to Grey St before the full change. The first tram I remember seeing the new destination sign on was No. 20. What has always made me wonder is why "Grey St" was the designated destination, when Grey St was to the west of Albert St, while Bala St ran to the east, on which side of the road the tramline was situated. And Grey St" is really "Gray St" anyway. I've never found the answer.

The scrubber car also stopped in our direction just south of Rubicon St, where the grooved rail finished, and therefore we saw a bit of it and it took me a while as a child to work out why it stopped there. The loop rail and possibly where the line crossed Albert St further down must have

been cleaned by hand, remembering the cleaners on their bikes with broom and oil can plus anything else they could carry to various parts of the city oiling the outsides of the curve rails where the flanges rubbed, and cleaning and oiling the points. The old SEC road roller was very much part of the tramway scene, compacting where track works were carried out, as well as the old welding truck with its overhead contact wooden pole and the operator sitting line side with his welding face shield. As kids we always preferred to look at the blue arcing direct, though of course we should not have.

Fares

In my younger days, the fares from the City (Lydiard St/Sturt St cnr) to Rubicon St were 3d for adults and 1 1/2d for children. To the Sebastopol terminus was 4d adults and 1 1/2d for kids. 3d tickets were orange, and 1 1/2d pink. 4d were I think green. There were also special fares to the intermediate sections, eg Lydiard St to Dawson St, Drummond St, or Main Road; Rubicon St to the Sebas Town Hall or to the terminus. These were 1d or 2d, and payable by buying a strip of 12 cardboard tickets for 1/- or 2/-, which were redeemed for a paper ticket on the tram for each journey. You could not pay 1d or 2d cash. No concession ticket and you paid full fare. Talking of cash, if you offered 2/- for a 1 1/2d fare, you weren't too popular with the conductor, who no doubt was tempted to give change in pennies! There were also "transfer" fares, from Rubicon St to the

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Gardens via "Sturt St W" or "Drummond Nth". I don't remember whether they also applied from Sebas terminus, as we didn't have occasion to go beyond Rubicon St, but probably did. These were the same price as to the City but the tickets were different, with more detail down the sides to be punched, and were cancelled by tearing when you boarded the Gardens tram at the Hospital corner. You could also get an "extension" from the Lydiard St North tram at the PO corner, having travelled in from the deep south, to take you on the Mt Pleasant or Victoria St trams to the Bridge St/Main Rd corner. No extra charge.

Tourist Tickets for 1/- were commonly used, even by locals who wanted to do a few trips on any one day. Originally trips were unlimited, but later were restricted to two trips on any one route. Trams were frequently used for carriage of small parcels, with special tickets. The Herald afternoon newspaper was delivered to our local newsagent by tram, and dropped off in late afternoon beside the line opposite the shop (if the newsagent didn't get to the tram first).

Trip Way-bills used to be placed in a wooden frame and left between entries in a slot under the boxes behind the driver's bulkhead. The Inspectors (like the schools' District Inspectors to teachers, which your writer remembers vividly both as pupil and teacher) were often seen as bogey-men, checking on the validity of the tickets, especially if we'd tried to evade paying our fares (and sometimes succeeded). I never asked the conductors what they thought of them. And since they were recruited from

drivers (sorry, "Motormen") and conductors, there were one or two stinkers there too, whose spots never changed. And remember the "Motorman", "Conductor" and other ranks' silver badges on the caps and jackets? The enamel notices on the trams (which remain to today) were very formal in their wording, weren't they! Wouldn't it have been easier and shorter to say, for example, *"Please don't talk to the driver while the tram is moving"* instead of *"Passengers are requested not to enter into conversation with the Motorman while tram is in motion"*? But not so in the formality of the early 20th Century.

School trams

I started Ballarat High School (BHS) in 1945 and frequently used the trams, especially in winter time. From 1946, when I attended the "Main School" (Form 1 children attended buildings at Pleasant St State School), we used special trams "Sturt St West" terminating at Sturt St/Hamilton Ave corner to go to and from school. We were expected to use these and not the regular service trams. Woe betide anyone from BHS who went to the Carlton St loop to board a Mt Pleasant tram - the conductors were not pleased, and we were often made to change to the school trams! Rivalry of course was rife between High School, St Pat's College, and Ballarat College students on the same tram! We paid concession fares by buying a monthly student ticket for 4/-, which had the month of issue rubber-stamped on in big letters. There were probably school specials on other lines, but not in my experience. At some stage, a special school car would run

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in tandem with the 7.55am from the City to Sebas, turned at the loop, and ran back with the 8.15am from home. This run was possibly also related to the establishment of the then Sebastopol Technical School in Hertford St (always "Smythes Road" to us).

To be continued in the next issue.

Urgent Repairs

On the second Sunday of the Begonia Festival, a broken rail was detected on the hill near Carlton Street. The rail had cracked across some 140 mm from an existing joint, leaving a loose portion, which threatened to come out altogether. A 5-kmh speed restriction was imposed until the situation could be rectified. It was decided to cut the rail on either side of the problem area and install a new section. A one metre length of matching rail was dug out of the assorted ironmongery under 6 road, and the date of Monday 20th March set for the replacement. (Initially some thought had been given to Friday 24 March, until Dave Macartney was reminded that Her Majesty's motorcade could be affected – let alone incurring the wrath of Council etc. – Ed.)

Glen Parkhill was able to supply his welding/power-generating trailer, an electric jackhammer was hired and we were ready to go. Alan Snowball

commandeered the jack hammer and looked every inch the part of a Council road employee. It was necessary to excavate a wider section of roadway opposite the two saw cuts, as the manual rail saw was making a comeback after some years of idleness. It was decided to use this, as it gives a clean square cut, despite being very slow in operation. Oxy equipment was used to make the final cut through the foot of the rail, as it would have required even more excavation to accommodate the swing of the saw at the end of the cut. As was so often the case with this saw, the blade jammed in the cut at the finish, not helped by the clamp being loosened prematurely and the other end of the cut section being heated, causing minor expansion. Another broken blade resulted.

The offending section of rail was removed with the sun well over the yardarm, and it was a great relief to find that the replacement section lined up perfectly; even the level of wear on the head and flangeway was virtually identical. Glen baseplated and welded the new section in and the gaping hole in Wendouree Parade was filled in just as the sun was disappearing. Inspection of the failed section of rail revealed that the web had split longitudinally back from the joint just above fishplate level probably some thirty years or more ago, then had slowly worked its way up to the surface over a long period of time.

Thanks to all those who participated in this urgent repair.

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>
