

FARES PLEASE!

July 2000

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History



Museum Accreditation Program
Accredited Museum

Annual General Meeting

Notice is given that the Annual General Meeting of the Ballarat Tramway Museum Inc. (Association No. A0031819K) will be held at the Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens, Wendouree Parade, Ballarat on Sunday 8 October 2000, commencing at 2.00pm.

Nominations are called for the following positions, which will fall vacant on the Museum's Board of Management on that date:

- President
- Vice President (two positions)
- Honorary Secretary
- Honorary Treasurer
- Ordinary Board Members (six positions)

Any two members may nominate any other member to serve as an Office Bearer or an Ordinary Board Member provided that no persons who at the time of such nomination are an un-financial member.

Members must be financial to be entitled to be a candidate for election, as must be the proposer and seconder in accordance with Rules of the Association. Any nomination is to be sent in writing to the Returning Officer, to reach him not later than 5.00pm on Sunday 24 September 2000.

Nominations may be sent to:
The Returning Officer
Ballarat Tramway Museum Inc.
P.O. Box 632 Ballarat Vic. 3353.

Or may be placed in the Ballot Box at the tram depot. Envelopes forwarded by mail should be endorsed "Ballot Material", on the back of the envelope. The nomination is to be signed by the proposer and seconder and consented to in writing by the candidate. Nominations may be accompanied by a statement (of not more than 500 words) setting out the candidate's policies and record of service.

A member may be nominated as a candidate for more than one position on the Board, provided that upon election to any position on the Board, the member's nomination for any other position shall forthwith lapse.

Ballarat Tramways News

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Member renewals

All members should have received their membership renewals soon after July 1. Thanks to all those members whose membership renewals have already been forwarded and extra thanks to those who have made a donation to our funds. These are gratefully received by our Treasurer. If you have not received your membership renewal, please let our Secretary know.

It is planned to forward donation receipts in the May 2001 issue of *Fares Please!* This will be in time for your tax return. However, if for some reason you require it earlier, please advise our Treasurer at our mailing address, or via e-mail.

Traffic News

The past couple of months have followed the normal quieter pattern that we encounter during the winter period. The first week of the recent school holidays was particularly slow as we competed against very uninviting weather and the pre GST sales. Thanks to all the crews who worked over the holiday period and to those who looked after the trams themselves.

Wanted

The Museum is looking for green Met trousers in good condition in sizes 36 (or 92cm) up. As our workforce ages, it is expanding (on the average) in girth and we have considerable trouble in outfitting it. If you can assist please contact Peter Winspur (9699 2631) or Richard Gilbert (9580 8270)

New Member

The Museum welcomes the following Junior Supporter to membership:

5022 Neil Lardner Ballarat

Bungaree Works

The sheds at Bungaree are now complete and awaiting the installation of track so we can move some trams into them. This will not occur until the warmer and drier weather.

Meanwhile, the timber frame for the small extension to the Bungaree house has been completed. This extension will house the new bathroom toilet and laundry. The external cladding will be completed soon and then following will be the installation of the internal walls, fittings, painting etc.

Jim Parker has finished painting the exterior of the house and it looks just great in its 1920's heritage colours. The repainting of the present kitchen area has been completed having been started by Simon Green. It is now quite fresh with its yellow walls and blue picture railing, mantle piece and window frames.

Model Railway Exhibition

Alastair Reither co-ordinated the model tramway display at the Queens Birthday Weekend Model Railway Display in Ballarat. Good interest in our display was shown. Thanks to all those who assisted in helping to set up and "man" the layout.

Memories of and reflections on Ballarat Trams – Pt 3 – Austin Brehaut

Bogies

My first memory of the bogie cars in Ballarat was in October 1946 when 117 and 132 arrived from Melbourne. On my way home (walking, 1¼ miles each way - we had no car) from church on Sunday morning what should we see on a trial run but (great excitement!) this "Melbourne tram" no 117 travelling down Albert St (what a line to start on!). Later that day (or was it the next Sunday?) when normal services started (the first down our way was at 1.30pm - there were no regular Sunday morning services, though Church and station specials were experimented with for a while, but discontinued) I travelled on 117 still in MMTB livery and number for a couple of blocks on the Gardens via Drummond St Nth line just to see what these "new" trams were like. They soon became very popular, running at first on the Gardens routes and their eastern counterparts. Later, when car numbers increased, they were extended to Sebastopol/Lydiard St Nth. I can never remember them running any of the short-workings. On the Sebas route of course the conductors then had to travel the whole line - I think that by this time conductors had ceased changing over at the loop anyway, though at nights and other times one-man working was used, with single-truckers, which changed over after the evening peak, around 6pm.

After conversion to the Ballarat style, many single-truckers retained a seat behind the driver's bulkhead, with brass rails, but

eventually they were taken away, though the backs were retained in some cars. Obviously they took up valuable space at the trams' entrances. Doors on the single-truckers used to be closed with a sideways operating lift-up latch with a ring for the finger, later replaced with the current pivoting ones.

Kids would also often take it upon themselves, conductors permitting or not, to change the points at the hospital corner for the Gardens or Sebas. routes. (No automatic points in Ballarat!) (The points to Drummond St North were shallower than the deeper ones for the Sebas. line). Or towards the Sebastopol terminus (and maybe others) to change the rear destination sign for the return journey.

Being away from Ballarat in the latter years of tramway operation (I left home in 1954) I wasn't able to take as close an interest as I would have liked in the trams in their latter years, nor get the photos I now wish I had. I was also away (at Apollo Bay) when the system finished in September '71, and could not "enjoy" seeing No. 40 do its graveyard trip, though I saw the end of the Victoria St operation, and took photos of the re-organised Mt Pleasant to Gardens via Sturt St West and return the next day, with the pole being turned at the Gardens loop. Strange sight after so many years of continuous running around the Lake!

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Church & Sunday School picnics

During the war, when motor transport was scarce because of petrol rationing and cars not as common anyway, we used to often use trams to take us from Holy Trinity Church Albert St Sebastopol to the Gardens for Sunday School picnics, generally on Saturdays. There would be two or three trams required. We all enjoyed the trip, and of course later in the day returned whence we had come. We would, where necessary pick up and set down on the way, directing the driver to stop when we saw familiar faces waiting to board.

Talking of Holy Trinity Church, was it bad management, or what, that a hundred yards or so before the church, travelling south, the line changed from the east side to the west side of Albert St, with a stop directly opposite Holy Trinity, at Ophir St corner. That meant that we, who had boarded the tram on "our" (east) side of the road, then had to go back across the road to get to church. Likewise, we had to cross Albert St again, which mercifully was not as busy as it is today, to catch the tram home. If only the line had crossed just a little further on!! (Perhaps this is the real reason why the tram crossed the road at this point - to annoy faithful Anglicans!)

(My 1999 retirement home is just around the corner from this location and not all that far from the former terminus, and today I often travel along Ophir St, once not much more than a gravel track, to reach Albert St but now not having to wait for the tram to pass.)

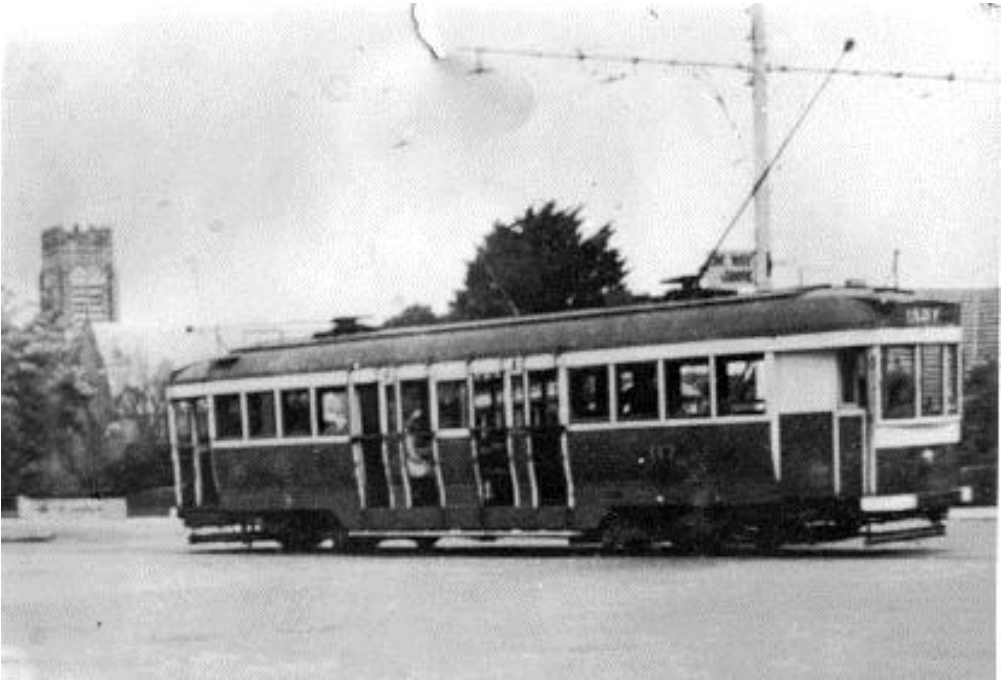
Tramway operation in Ballarat was always flexible, to a degree (though not as flexible as our Museum running!). Trams ran pretty well to time, though there were frequent exceptions, and I can remember late-running trams turning at the Bell St loop and passengers transferring to the following tram which was generally hot on its tail. This was more likely to happen with a ten-minute service when the Rubicon St or Grey St tram was operating. The most flexible was the last run of the day after the pictures, when, depending what time shows at the Regent, Her Majesty's, the Britannia, or the Plaza finished, the cars would leave for their respective destinations. 11pm or thereabouts would have generally been about the latest from the city, with the Depot-bound tram from Sebas. running straight across Sturt St to Depot via Drummond North. There were also times when on various routes, drivers either didn't see the red signal light, or both trams left their loops at exactly the same time - as happened on occasions between the hospital corner and the Urquhart St loop - and the trams met half-way, causing a quick reversal to the loop.

Photos

Top: Ex MMTB 117 in Sturt St, near Pleasant St., shortly after its arrival in October 1945. It was later renumbered to 22 and then to 37.

Bottom: No. 34 crosses Albert St on 21/1/1961 with the Holy Trinity Church in the background. Albert St. Sebastopol looks almost wild at the time of the photo. Both photos: Wal Jack – BTM Archives.

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Sport &c.

The Ballarat City Oval was very popular for many events -- the Ballarat Football League in winter, as well as the annual South St Band contests resuming in the late '40s, and the Fire Brigade demonstrations. "City Oval" trams would often cater for the crowds that were common in those days, until with the end of petrol rationing and with an increase in car ownership these special services eventually dropped off. The "City Oval" destination remaining on the rolls in our trams is a reminder of those days. The Eastern Oval because of its location was unfortunately not so blessed with a special tram service. One would have had to take a Mt Pleasant or Victoria St tram to Peel St, or walk down from Lydiard St via Nolan St from Seymour St. Pre-WWII of course when the Showgrounds was in the present Brawn Ave/Haddon St area, (later Howitt St/Creswick Road cnr) there was a "Showgrounds" sign in use on the rolls, having been later painted over on the "white-on-black" blinds by the "Gregory St" short-working name in the latter years of operation. I have no conscious memory of "Showgrounds" being used in my lifetime, though it would not have been a long walk from Haddon St to the present Showgrounds in days when we walked so much more.

One thing about the Ballarat trams - in common I suppose with many other systems - is that they were user-friendly; they were reliable; they served the people and not bus companies &c whose only "raison d'etre" seemed to be to make money, and not quite so personal.

And doesn't it say so much that many cities, including Ballarat, are lately having second thoughts about restoring trams, whether as a public transport system or for tourist purposes. Long may they live!!!

[When the SEC-run system closed in 1971 and the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society was formed, I just had to become a member from the outset. At that time (see above) I was living away from Ballarat, and weekends weren't convenient for me to come back. But soon after the trams returned to Wendouree Parade I started working as a (necessarily very occasional) conductor, and whenever I was 'home' on holiday would do a couple of week-day stints on 'the platform', which practice continued for many years until I finally retired to Ballarat at the end of 1998 when I was able to give more time in that capacity, and I am thankful that I can at last make some real contribution (in my eyes anyway) to the Society, such as I am able. Who knows, I may yet achieve my childhood dream of becoming a tram driver.]

Footnote: Memory, we must be aware, as I read in a book recently, is not history. Other records may well tell the story differently and more accurately and in more detail, and some of the above is well documented at the Museum. There is undoubtedly much more I might have written, but it would be stretching the brain-cells, and this is probably long enough anyway. But this is as I will always remember the trams. My story, and I'm sticking to it!!

--- APB (30/9/99)

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COTMA Conference Report

The organising team has been busy in preparing plans for the Conference of the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia to be held in Ballarat in November. Carolyn Dean and Richard Gilbert spent two days around town talking to business houses and council and tourism agencies on Conference detail. Much was finalised and the evening allowed for detailed costing analysis to be completed. The Registration Form setting out the actual costs of the Conference, accommodation and Post Conference tours 1 & 2 will be posted and available in early August.

COTMA AGM

This yearly event was held at the Australian Railway Historical Society Vic Div. rooms at Windsor Railway Station on Saturday, 17th June. Attended by members John Phillips, Carolyn Dean, Peter Winspur, Bruce Dixon, the gathering proceeded through the routine of the business of an AGM, then heard the latest news of the forthcoming Conference and other reports from COTMA Member museums. Representatives of the tramway museums at Perth, Brisbane, Sydney, Bendigo and Haddon were among those present. An excellent coffee shop restaurant is located in the old booking office on the station platform, which was patronised just prior to the meeting.



Bungaree house looking much more presentable in its new paint and with the two completed sheds behind. Photo Carolyn Dean 11/6/2000.

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Ballarat Winter festival

The Winter Festival Committee invited our museum to be part of the festival for this year and we willingly accepted. The festival ran from Friday, 15th to Sunday 23rd July. Our contribution was to host a 'Winter Tram Ride' as our part of the event. The following report is from member Mark Peterson whose family enjoyed the night.

It was a chilly but dry night that BTM participated in Ballarat's Winter Festival. A Friday night ride on a tram with supper at the depot was offered and a small group took part. We arrived a Lake Lodge to find tram 14 and a welcoming crew in attendance. Greetings were exchanged and we were off into the darkness, bound for St Aidan's. It was a beautiful sight seeing the distant lights reflected on the lake. On arrival at St. Aidan's the crew reversed the pole leaving us all in the dark (much to the amusement of the kids on board). Heading south for Carlton St, the conductor continued his ticket selling duties just in time, as Traffic Inspector Winspur joined at Depot Junction. At this stage in proceedings a fare evader was detected and threatened with ejection. (Al finally succumbed, as he knew there wouldn't be another tram until the next day). On the return to St. Aidan's we all helped Tom (one of our younger passengers) celebrate by singing Happy Birthday. Our crew were

looking for a meal break in their short shift so we accompanied them back to the depot to take crib. Some lovely nibblies had been prepared and tea and coffee was served. After a quick look around the depot we all boarded and departed for a speedy run back to Lake Lodge via St Aidan's. A few cheerios and we all alighted into the dark and silent surrounds. One of the highlights was the sound and sight of 14 as she trundled down to depot junction. With no traffic or background picnic noise the fading sound of the retreating tram was magical. An enjoyable night was had by all. Thankyou to all who made it happen.

At the Depot

Work on 33's motors is continuing. Following receipt of the armatures with the remetalled bearings, the motors were reassembled on Saturday July 22 and successfully bench tested with 600V power on the Sunday. There is some more minor work to be completed before they can be placed back in the truck. All going well, we should have 33 back in service by the next issue of *Fares Please!* Meanwhile work on 28 is continuing. The recent task has been the removal of the malthoid flooring in the drop ends of the tramcar, which was in poor condition. Though the task sounds simple, it has taken a lot work to remove the small pieces of malthoid that were well stuck to the wooden floor.

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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