

# FARES PLEASE!

November 2000

*Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History*



Museum Accreditation Program  
Accredited Museum

## AGM

Approximately thirty-five members and friends attended the Museum's Annual General Meeting on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October at the Robert Clarke Centre in the Botanic Gardens. After serving for twenty years,

Alan Bradley stood down from the Board and Alastair Reither took his place. Simon Green was nominated from the floor to fill the other vacancy. After the meeting afternoon tea was served followed by the traditional tram ride using recently returned to service tram No. 33.



No. 33 does the AGM "Members Special", 8 October 2000.

Photo Earl Ewers

# Ballarat Tramways News

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## The COTMA Conference

The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference of the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia concluded in Ballarat on Wednesday, November 22. This most successful Conference commenced with around 70 of the 100 Delegates arriving in Ballarat from Melbourne by steam train. The West Coast Railway very kindly assisted us to supply the train hauled by Locomotive R 711. This product of the North British Locomotive Works with its 115kph running impressed our guests, especially those from the 3'6" gauge areas of Australasia. The provision of the steam train came as a surprise to most and especially the few V/Line bus passengers incorrectly directed to our 'additional' service to Ballarat.

Delegates to the Conference were welcomed by Lindsay Richardson, Chairman of COTMA at a function held at the Mid City Motel. The next speaker was His Worship, Councilor John Barnes, the Mayor of Ballarat, who welcomed all the delegates and then impressed them all by telling of his escapades during the last weeks of tram operation. A group of students hijacked a tram at Mt Pleasant and had the tram run to the Barkly Street corner and back to Mt Pleasant where the driver was then tied up and the SEC contacted by phone, The Driver was rewarded for his good humor throughout the hijack by a gift of a slab of beer from the hijackers. The State Member of Parliament for Ballarat West, Karen Overington, told of her fond memories of riding the trams during her childhood. She also spoke about the

enthusiasm of volunteers and congratulated us on our enthusiasm for this tramway conference.

The Honourable Michael Ronaldson, Member for Ballarat in the Australian Parliament also made mention of his memories in riding the trams in his youth. He next mentioned the record numbers attending the conference and congratulated the original conference members that were also attending this conference. He also mentioned the City tramway project and was enthusiastic about getting trams back to Ballarat. He spoke about the expertise and knowledge that the various museums possessed.

Saturday morning saw the first of the workshop discussion sessions at the Mid City Motel. In the afternoon the delegates travelled to the tram depot for the Official Group Photo and a familiarisation of our tramway museum. Tram rides were the order of the day with the hosts running out Maximum Traction tram No.40 along with the service car No.33. A pleasant and relaxed afternoon was had by all.

At 4pm the group returned to the motel in preparation for the evening activities. The buses departed at 5pm for the Central Highlands Railway at Daylesford. On arrival the group took time to look at the archives within the station building and to purchase souvenirs before boarding the 280HP Diesel Rail Car for the 30 minute ride to Bullarto. The Bullarto Community Hall was the location of our evening entertainment. A short walk across the goods yard from the station saw us at this

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absolute gem of Australian country halls. The caterers had the spit roast dinner cooking, the bar was serving and conversation was at full pitch. After the meal, the first of the 'brag' sessions took place. In this part of the conference programme the COTMA member museums show a video or slide presentation of their activities over the past two years. The Brisbane Tramway Museum was on first and presenter Peter Hyde explained the museum's activities over the last two years detailing the problems they have had with the stop start nature of the proposed Brisbane Light Rail system. The Archer Park Station & Steam Tram Museum, Rockhampton session gave us a fascinating look at the operation there. Our Guest Delegate, David Frodsham, from the National Tramway Museum of Crich, England, gave us a slide presentation of activities at this outstanding museum.

The night was getting late and the group made its way back to the station and enjoyed a late night run back to Daylesford on the 60 pound rails. Our buses returned us to Ballarat by midnight.

Sunday morning saw more workshop discussion sessions and an after lunch visit to Sovereign Hill Historic Park. Dinner was had at the Charlie Napier Hotel in time for the delegates to attend the well known sound and light show 'Blood on the Southern Cross' which tells the story of the Eureka uprising.

Monday saw the workshop discussion sessions held at the Robert Clarke Centre in the Botanic Gardens. Although it almost rained in the morning, the weather for the

first two days was unusually warm and humid. The afternoon allowed for free time before the evening visit to the Museum property at Bungaree.

As usual, the weather was not good at Bungaree. It is a good bet the weather at night turns to strong wind and cold and almost certainly accompanied by rain. On this night the wind was a cold southerly and delegates sheltered in the house and new tram storage sheds to enjoy pre dinner drinks and food. Fortunately it did not rain! We had the dinner at the local Bungaree Football Club rooms where the bar was open and an excellent slide show was presented. This looked at locations from the time the trams ran and compared them with the same scene today.

The COTMA Conference General Meeting was held on the Tuesday. The meeting was successful with good questions and suggestions. After the meeting concluded, the buses took Delegates on a tour of Ballarat following the old tram routes. There was a lot to see. Many tram stops are still visible with the familiar red and white bands painted on posts and the Webster Street power feeder route to Drummond Street North attracted a lot of attention. Delegates were also impressed at the architecture of city buildings and the turn of the last century housing being so well restored and maintained.

That night the Official Dinner was held at the Mid City Motel. This is a 'dress up' night where it has become tradition to relax over a higher quality dinner and style of evening. A slide show of the history

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Clockwise: Arriving at Ballarat with R711  
Registering at the Mid City Motel  
Central Highlands Tourist Railway's 280HP Rail car at Daylesford  
Queuing for dinner at the Bullarto hall  
Group photo at the opening the MTPA museum at Haddon  
John Phillips MkIII bus and Central Deborah's Volvo bus at Ballarat used to provide transport during the Conference  
Inspecting ESCo No. 12 at BTM's depot  
Mike Ryan presenting details of the Department of Infrastructure's heritage studies at the Robert Clarke Centre.  
Photos Andrew Cox and Warren Doubleday



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## COTMA Continued from page 3

of the COTMA Conferences created a lot of interest. Our Guest Speaker was Bruce Gamble from the Western Springs Tramway. He spoke to us about 'the MOTAT Act' which is an Act of Parliament to support the Museum of Transport and Technology site.

A new initiative of COTMA is the Achievement Awards. The awards allow for any project considered by the member museums to be noteworthy to be submitted. The first of these awards was made on this night.

- Tramway Historical Society of Ferrymead for their reconstruction of Christchurch Tramway Board tram No. 1.
- Australian Electric transport Museum (Adelaide) for the refurbishment of Glenelg tram No. 360.
- Western Springs Tramway (Auckland) for the creation of the MOTAT Act.

The Conference Committee wishes to congratulate the winners of the Awards for their hard work in achieving their goal.

Our final day of conference activities was held on the Wednesday where the delegates could drive trams under supervision in Wendouree Parade and along the depot access track. This friendly and cohesive day culminated in a delightful lunch served at the depot and a visit to the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association at Haddon. We were made welcome at the Haddon site and spent a fair amount of time looking around. At 4.20pm we were gathered together for a special occasion. The MTPA officially opened their doors to the public. After this surprise opening we travelled on our buses back to the motel for the dinner and the last of the brag shows.

On the Thursday morning some of the Delegates returned to Melbourne and the majority joined Tour 1 to Maldon for a ride on the Victorian Goldfields Railway followed by a visit to the Central Deborah Bendigo Talking trams. The tour continued to Bylands on the Friday to visit the Tramway Museum Society of Victoria. After a 'free time' weekend in Melbourne a group of 22 delegates joined Tour 2. This most enjoyable Post Conference Tour spent the week travelling from Melbourne to Mount Gambier via the Great Ocean Road returning via Penola and Halls Gap. Part of this itinerary allowed for a full visit to the Portland Cable Trams project.

The Conference ran well and any small glitches were noted and will be passed on to the next Conference Organisers for the Brisbane/Rockhampton Conference in 2002. The organisers of our conference are to be congratulated on an excellent event. The bus transportation was provided by Central Deborah's Volvo and John Phillips Mark 111. Thanks to the drivers, John Phillips, Len Millar and John Shaw for giving up their conference time to drive the buses. An excellent Partners Programme was run by Stephen Butler. He drove the mini bus to many interesting locations and along with his excellent public relations skills impressed the partners who bought him a few gifts for his good work. David O'Neill drove the mini bus on the Wednesday and good comments were made too on his efforts by the partners.

Andrew Cox maintained an excellent day by day website for those on the internet. Photos of the events in *Fares Please!* and others can be seen on our website.

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## At the depot

Most of the work since our last report has been towards getting ready for the COTMA conference. One of tram 33's motor suspension bearings decided to run a little on the warm side – resulting in further adjustments to the offending bearing. Since then, no problems.

Work on the installation of new plywood overlay on the floors in tram 28 have been completed and the floors covered with malthoid and given initial coats of paint.

The installation of a sound system (radio, amp and speakers) operated from a 12V battery power supply has been undertaken to trams 661 and 671 in time for the busy Christmas charter season. It will be finally fitted off early next year.

Commissioning of scrubber tram No. 8 is continuing. Following the installation of the controller in No. 2 end, checks of the line breaker, switches, control systems, compressor and other systems, the missing piece of the main power cable that had been cut many years ago to make the tram inoperable was replaced and the tram's trolley pole placed on the overhead. The compressor missed a beat initially, the shock of seeing DC power again after all these years, but quickly started pumping up air tanks once again. To enable the compressor to run, a number of piping caps had to be placed in No. 1 end on a temporary basis to overcome missing gauges and a sand valve. We also found that a piece of air piping was missing on the air brake system. Again a replacement section of pipe was found to overcome the problem and the air brakes tested - the whole tram lifts up about 20mm when the air brakes are applied.

Later the same afternoon, 12 November, power was applied to the motors and the tram moved off under power for the first time in about 10 years. Further testing was done as part of the recommissioning programme to check the tram, the controllers and various systems. A number of air leaks were found, particularly in the scrubber block actuation system.

Further work currently being undertaken is the installation of equipment in No. 1 end which was removed during the days of storage at Malvern, recommissioning of the water supply system for the scrubber blocks and some minor repairs to body of the tram itself.

A number of tasks will need to be done prior to the use of the tram in Wendouree Parade. In particular preparing a training programme, maintenance programme and consideration of the safety aspects of the tram operation. However, it can now move around the depot fan. Congratulations to all those who made this possible.

Work on the lifting of tram No. 27 for a truck overhaul has been commenced. Initially commencement took place as part of a COTMA workshop. The delegates from Perth Electric Tramway Society expressed interest in how to lift a single truck tram and they are planning to commence work on lifting Ballarat No. 31 so it can receive attention to its wheels. By the end of the workshop, the No. 27 had been positioned ready for the removal of the truss rods and the placing of the beams underneath the tramcars. Thanks to those who provided assistance on the day.

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## BTM Archives now on AMOL

Recently made available on the Internet was the Museum's collection database and associated images. These are now available through the Australian Museums On Line (AMOL) site - [www.amol.org.au](http://www.amol.org.au) There are about a 1000 images so far. Further work to improve the presentation and overcome some minor difficulties needs to be done. It is well worth visiting.

Once in the AMOL site, go to "Open Collections" and then "Collections", and enter your search request in the search term box "Keywords". For example "tram 18" or "Wal Jack" and then see what results it lists. Double clicking on one of the results gives the details of the object. Images can be viewed via the search results. The search can be limited to just the BTM data base by selecting, "Limit the Search to Collection" drop down box.

The placing of the Museum's collection on line was part of the conditions of the grant from AMOL last year. It also enables the Museum's collection to be made available to a wider audience. If you don't have access to the Internet via home, you can generally access it through a library.

## New Members

The Museum welcomes the following new junior supporters:

5024 Kathryn Hutchesson of Bendigo

5025 Brenton Davis of Ballarat.

## Season Greetings

The Museum extends Season Greetings to all our members and friends. We hope the forthcoming Christmas will be joyous and that the New Year goes well.

## Traffic

The annual "Springfest" market was held around the Lake on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November. This year visitors were prepared for the changeable weather and braved the showers all day. The tramway performed the role of a public transport service with the two "W's" providing the service. 596 passengers were carried. Thanks to the crews who manned the trams on this busy day.

As part of the COTMA conference, a tram service was operated on every day to enable delegates and other visitors to ride the tramway.

As usual, tramway services will operate every day from Christmas day to the end of the January school holidays.

## Membership reminders

Membership reminders have been mailed to those people who have not yet renewed their membership. The Museum looks forward to your support by renewing to enable us to continue our activities.

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**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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