

FARES PLEASE!

May 2001

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History



Museum Accreditation Program
Accredited Museum

Official Launch of the Gold Tram

The official launch of the Gold tram will take place on Thursday June 14, 2001 at 1.30pm. The Mayor Ballarat, Councilor David Vendy will be doing the honours. The launch will take place at the depot.

Members and Friends of the Museum are very welcome to attend the event.

30th Anniversary

Yes it is almost 30 years since the closure of the SEC operated Ballarat Tramways. A celebratory dinner is being planned for Saturday September 22 at the Lake Lodge. More details in the next issue of *Fares Please!* Keep this night free. The actual date for closure was 19 September, but as this is mid week this year, it was thought that the following Saturday night would be more appropriate. Films and presentations of the Ballarat tramways will be shown on the night.

The month of May 1971 saw the formal establishment of the Lake Wendouree Tramway Committee, which later the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society.

Ballarat City Tramway

In early May, it was announced that the Ballarat Tourism Board had been successful in obtaining a grant for \$73,000 for a Ballarat Trams and Transportation Study. The aim of the study is to present a final feasibility into the Ballarat City Tramway proposal including a public consultation phase. Funding was provided by the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business. Advertisements for consultants were recently placed in the Age and The Courier. The Museum will be providing input to the consultants. The final study report is not expected until early 2002.

Ballarat Tramways News

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The Netherway's Remembered

One of the founding members of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society was George Netherway, who passed away in April 1999, followed 12 days later by his wife Noelene. To commemorate his life long interest in Ballarat and its tramways, his family arranged with the City of Ballarat to sponsor a seat in Wendouree Parade. Located adjacent to the pedestrian crossing by Lake Lodge, the seat allows a person to watch the trams and people pass by unhindered by parked cars.

The words on the plaque read:

In memory of George and Noelene Netherway, always enquiring, always advocating Ballarat, its heritage and its tramways.



Len Doull and Frank Pulls look at the seat commemorating the life of founding member, George Netherway. May 2001. Photo Warren Doubleday

Membership Renewals

Members will be shortly receiving their renewal for Museum Membership. Membership rates have been kept the same as last year. The Secretary and Membership Officer will appreciate your early renewal. As has been the case for the last two years, we will be accepting Credit Card payments for renewals.

Donations

The end of the financial year is approaching and receipts for donations made during the year are enclosed. If you have made a donation check your envelope closely. If you wish to donate to the Museum this financial year, please do so now to qualify for a tax deductible donation this financial year.

The Gold Tram

Our newest tram, No 45, has been running every weekend and has been attracting much very favorable comment from the passengers. It has proved popular with the crews as well particularly with the cooler weather approaching. Unlike our fleet of four wheelers, the driver is actually inside with the passengers. The tram does look quite magnificent in Wendouree Parade and we would encourage all Members to see and ride it.

Alan Bradley has prepared a short article on the former Gold trams of Ballarat and Bendigo. A more detailed article will appear in the August issue of Trolley Wire.

Why No. 45?

The number carried by Bendigo 18 while in Ballarat is No. 45. Some people have asked why 45, not 46 or some other number. The Museum determined that a second 18 was not the best; why confuse it with our No. 18. We could have numbered it 46, on the basis that trams the Museum has acquired since closure: W3 661 would be 44 and W4 671, tram 45 as if continuing on from the SEC Ballarat numbering. We however determined that its original number (Prahran and Malvern Tramway Trust number 45) would be more appropriate – less changes for history that way. This was its number while working for the MMTB.

Some other more whimsical numbers were also briefly considered:

18 (3rd) – following the *Destination Eaglehawk* methodology of car numbering as the third electric tram in Ballarat to carry that number.

22 – why not, Ballarat already has had four of these, so why not a fifth?

Archives – Donation – Les Denmead

Those members, who were around when the Ballarat and Bendigo systems closed, would remember Mr. Les Denmead as the Tramway Superintendent. During early March, the Museum received, a sizeable parcel of about 100 items from his daughter who now lives at Nowra NSW. His family advised that Les passed away some 17 years ago. Les joined the MMTB in December 1936 as a Conductor, became a Bus Driver in 1938, Bus Starter in April 1946 and an Inspector in June 1946, leaving the Board in December. 1948. He joined the SEC in Benalla in 1950 and became Branch Tramway Superintendent located in Ballarat in 1951 and Tramway Superintendent in 1966. He retired from the SEC following the closure of Ballarat Tramways.

The collection consists of well over 100 items with many photographs, tokens, passes and other memorabilia. The collection will take about 3 to 4 months to fully catalogue and store. Thanks to his family for the valuable donation.

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The First Centenary Gold Tram

By Alan Bradley

Ex-Adelaide single truck car No.69 was received in the late 1930s. Still in its Adelaide number and colours it was specially decorated with wax paper flowers for the 1938 centenary of European settlement in Ballarat. Afterwards it was painted green and numbered 23, but remained in its original format (similar to our own No.26). By the late 1940s No.23 was little used, owing to the increasing number of bogie cars in use.

1951 saw the centenary of the discovery of gold in both Ballarat and Bendigo. No.23 was painted in gold, with a pick and shovel on both ends. The gold tram made its public "debut" in March 1951, during the Easter centenary celebrations, but was not used for several months afterwards owing to power restrictions.

On 20 August 1951, the centenary of the gold discovery in Ballarat, No.23 and another single truck tram met a Cobb and Co stagecoach, which had been driven from Melbourne, at the Victoria St terminus. Both trams, which carried old-timers from the gold rush days, followed the stagecoach into the city where a "gold memorial" cairn was opened in Albert St.

No.23 then returned to the depot via Ripon St-its last run, and it was scrapped soon afterwards. It had been intended to exhibit it in Bendigo, but Bendigo car No.22 (an ex-Melbourne R class) was decorated instead. The Bendigo centenary took place in November 1951. The body of Ballarat No.23 went to a property in Navigator, but was apparently broken up many years ago. The body of Bendigo No.22 has been obtained by the Central Deborah, Bendigo for restoration.

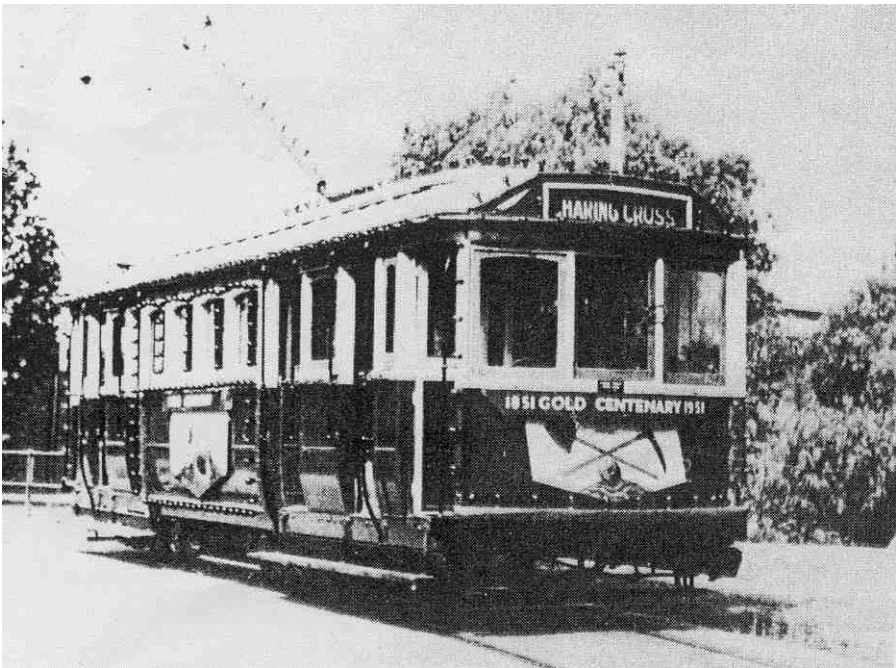


Left: - No. 23 in Sturt St. 26/3/1951
Photo Ron Fluck.

Top Right - No. 23 at SEC Depot gates
Photo SEC Official.

Right - Bendigo 22 in 1951. Photo from *Bendigo and its Vintage Trams*, Bendigo Trust.

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St Petersburg Trams

We recently received advice by e-mail from the St Petersburg Tramway Preservation Foundation of a new CD ROM publication titled "Trams of St Petersburg 1860 –2000" Digital Encyclopaedia. St. Petersburg is the world largest tramway system, the oldest in Russia one of the first in Europe. The CD-ROM contains over 2,000 original colour and black and white photographs, 64 technical drawings, track network maps and plenty of other tram related data. For details of the CD-ROM, see <http://www.discusmedia.com/encycl.htm> and for the Foundation itself, see <http://www.mapserv.ru/railnet/e>

Fares Please!

The response to the colour issue of *Fares Please!* was very positive. Although colour printing is expensive, the Board has agreed that there should be at least one colour issue every year. *Fares Please!* is available on our web site at www.btm.org.au soon after it is published. All photos taken in colour are available to be viewed and can be printed printed in colour.

Commissioning No. 8

Work to fully commission No. 8 is continuing. The next part of the project will be to bring the lighting circuits back into action, though it is unlikely that we will be operating the tram at the dead of night in Ballarat, as it once did in Melbourne. A set of training notes has been prepared and it is planned to commence operator training soon.

Driver Training

After so many years as an apprentice, Alastair Reither has finally commenced his driver training. Whilst training him the Traffic Manager makes it a rule to try and enthuse all the younger passengers by suggesting to them that we are always looking for new drivers. Paul Mong will be our next student. At the other end of the scale, Roger Salen is also training. A retired school teacher he will be most valuable in assisting to keep the wheels turning on the 195 or so days the Museum operates each year.

Begonia Festival

The Ballarat Begonia Festival could not have hoped for a better build-up to it's 50th anniversary next year by winning this year's 2001 Goldfields Tourism Award. The gold award in the significant events and festivals category for the 2000 Begonia Festival was announced on May 8 in Bendigo, confirming the Begonia Festival as one of Victoria's most important events. "The award was won in terms of what we achieve in promoting Ballarat across the state but also nationally and internationally," the Begonia Festival's proud director Ron Egeberg said yesterday. This year saw the introduction of Garden 2001 – An Open Space Odyssey, a two-hour journey of discovery through eight gardening attractions at the Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. "Next year we have great plans to improve on Gardening 2001 and intrigue visitors with our Gardening 2002 event," Mr Egeberg said. "*The Courier*" 11 May 2001.



The scene at the depot on Sat. May 12 during the replacement of sleepers in the Depot fan area.
Photo Warren Doubleday

At the Depot

Activities at the depot over the last two months have been quite varied. The major task has been the installation of 47 Sleepers along the access track and depot fan. A few remain to be spiked, then the job of packing, lifting and lining the track follows.

This was done over two days, the first effort being undertaken on Sat. May 12, when nine new sleepers were installed and all the old ones removed with a group of Community Service workers providing the labour. The following Wednesday, another 38, fresh off the sleeper cutters truck were installed. Jim Parker and Alan Snowball worked quite hard with the contractor on

Wednesday in placing the new sleepers under the line. The use of the backhoe made the job easy and quick to complete, but it still took the day by the time drilling and spiking along with tidying up was undertaken.

It was interesting to note that sleepers being removed were second hand when we got them in the 1970's. They have lasted almost another 30 years. We have about another 80 sleepers yet to replace in the access track and fan and these will be done over the next five or so years. A number of broken joints in the fan have been welded as well. A few more remain to be done.

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At the Depot continued

On the tramcar tasks, No. 27's truck is currently being dismantled. Work on the this truck will be extensive as a number of parts are quite worn. The repainting of tram 28 is continuing slowly. This job has taken second place recently due to the amount of other work needing to be done.

Other tasks have been the:

- Annual infrastructure inspections.
- Rewiring the display area lighting.
- Dismantling the roof of No. 12, piece by piece, so it can be sanded down, repaired as needed and then rebuilt.
- Fitting windscreen wipers to No. 8 and repairing other minor items, leaks to this service vehicle.
- Servicing tramcars.
- Debugging No. 45 and servicing it.
- Keeping the place clean and tidy.

New Members

Mr Geoff Collett of Canberra (No 736) has joined and James Broadhead of Alfredton (No 5026) has become a Junior Supporter. We welcome them both.

Bungaree

Providing better facilities at the Bungaree house continues with work being carried out by John Phillips, assisted by Carolyn Dean. The new bathroom has been commissioned with painting and some tiling yet to be completed. Work to extend the kitchen into the old toilet area has been commenced.

John Phillips has been constructing a cattle proof fence on our museum property at Bungaree to keep our occasional visiting cattle from the property next door from mingling with our three 'museum' sheep. Construction of the fence will enable happy co-habitation between the sheep which keep our house grounds trimmed and the 50 head of cattle which keep our three acres of property trimmed. Prior to the fence being completed, the sheep had to be kept in the immediate house grounds whilst the cattle were on the big block, or, as was the case once when the cattle retreated to their property our sheep followed along and John Phillips and others had to set forth and find them and herd them back.

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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