

# FARES PLEASE!

July 2003

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## *Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History*

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Museum Accreditation Program  
Accredited Museum

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### **Health Standards for Safety Workers”**

The Department of Infrastructure is developing a new Code of Practice for health standards for people involved with the operation of rail vehicles. Although intended to improve and make more rational health standards for workers employed by the large train and tram companies, heritage operators have been caught up in a “one size fits all” approach. To date representations from the Association of Tourist Railways and individual groups have achieved little. The criteria used will place a Ballarat tram driver in the same category as a mainline train driver. For our older drivers it will require regular comprehensive and expensive medical examinations by nominated doctors.

### **Public Liability Insurance**

There has yet to be a breakthrough in resolving the issue of public liability insurance. The present Deed of Indemnity with the State Government has been extended for six months to 31 December 2003. Premiums will remain the same. At present the Museum is required to pay \$220 per week for PLI and TAC insurance. This equates to over \$60 per operating day.

### **“Rail**

### **Tram Pull**

The Rotary Club of Ballarat recently instigated a group called Young Ambition for its junior members. As one of their first enterprises they organised a tram pull competition in Wendouree Parade to raise money for a playground for disabled children. Teams were required to pull a tram the length of the Loop against an opposing team on the other track. All this was to take place on Sunday 25 May, so some “rollability” trials were carried out at the depot on the previous day to identify two evenly matched cars. Eventually Nos. 14 and 33 were selected. Some nine teams presented themselves on the day, with a round robin contest being followed by an elimination series. B & D Technologies won the contest, but tram pulling was the winner on the day, with some \$8,000 being raised and the organisers vowing to return next year. The Museum may well field a team next time, probably the oldest team in the contest, but a bit of judicious tampering with the hand brake mechanisms should give us the edge we will need. In the words of W. C. Fields, anything worth having is worth cheating for.

*(By Dave Macartney in the May issue of Trolley Wire)*

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# **Ballarat Tramways News**

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## **New Members & Membership Renewals**

The Museum would like to welcome the following:

New member:

Peter Hird of Moonee Ponds (No. 749)

New Junior Supporter:

Harmon West of Port Macdonnell (No. 5031)

Membership renewal notices for the 2003-2004 year have been posted. Rates have been held at the same level as last year. Our thanks to all those members whose renewals have already been forwarded and extra thanks to those who have made a donation to our funds. If you have not received your membership renewal, please let our Secretary know.

It is planned to forward donation receipts in the May 2004 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.

## **Traffic**

### **New Conductors**

Having just turned sixteen Assistant Conductor Ben Shields has now qualified as a full conductor. Long time Assistant Conductor Sam Boon is now counting the days to 30 August when he also turns sixteen! Training has already been scheduled.

### **Begonia Festival**

The Begonia Festival has a new Director, Barbara Chalkley, who is at present meeting supporting groups to discuss the future direction of the Festival.

We recently had a fruitful meeting with Barbara and over the next few months the format of the 2004 Festival will be finalised.

### **Depot Car Park**

Due to restricted access, the car parking area near the Depot is now limited. If you are visiting us please park next to the roadway and be careful of the muddy areas. Please do not drive up to the Depot door itself, unless absolutely necessary, as this will damage the parklands

### **Track Telephones**

Most members will be aware that for many years the museum has operated a system of track telephones along the length of the line to allow communication between the tram crews and the Depot. As a consequence of excavations in the Gardens area the cables for these phones have often been cut and for some time only a small number of the phones have been working. In light of our increasing awareness of risks and the focus on public liability the Safety Management Committee along with the BTM Board decided that having metal boxes mounted at approximately head height on our poles was no longer an appropriate solution and therefore all of the track phone boxes have now been removed. On most normal service days the communication needs of the tram crews are covered by the museum mobile phone which is carried on the service tram. For busy periods such as the Begonia Festival other options are currently being explored to provide communications between the major points of our operation.

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## In The Workshop

The workshop team has made good progress over the past couple of months with some major works nearing completion and many other items being worked on as part of the normal maintenance schedule.

The truck for No. 27 has now been completed with both motors in place; all bearings packed and final fitting of the various parts that make up the whole assembly. Work is currently underway on checking and repairing the brake rigging underneath the tram and when completed the body will be lowered onto the truck ready for re-commissioning.

Continued stripping down of scrubber No. 8 has revealed that while history records that this tram was built using the cabs of a former C class maximum traction car, the reality is that little remains of the original cabs owing to many repairs during its years of service in Melbourne. Beneath the many layers of paint lies a patchwork of old and new materials with most panels showing no signs of the original MMTB green from the time when it was built. Both cabs have now been fully stripped externally with sanding, filling and priming now proceeding.

No. 45 (The Gold Tram) developed a fault in the line breaker under the car while in service recently. The small spring that holds tension on the jaws of the line breaker came loose and while a relatively minor fault in itself the resultant flashover caused considerable damage including a hole punched directly through the line breaker case itself.

The workshop team had the unit stripped down, repaired and reassembled in a little over a week, with particular attention to securing the offending spring, and No. 45 has returned to normal service.

## Wow! What was that?

We were at the Carlton Street terminus in No. 18. I walked through the tram from one cab to the other while the conductor swung the pole. I like to pause along the way to have a chat with some of the passengers, and quite often answer questions from children. In this case it was a little girl who asked me what the leather cord hanging down above her was for. Children like to 'ding' the bell, so I told her to give it a sharp pull to find out what happens. Just as she gave it a tug the lights, which had been out, flickered on, then off, then on again and at the same time the compressor under her seat started, stopped, then started again. I have never seen such a shocked look on the face of any passenger before. I don't think she even noticed the bell ring. Of course I commented to the conductor on his bad aim that had made him bounce the trolley wheel off the side of the wire before he finally made proper contact. It was a good thing that the girl wanted to get off at Depot Junction as this is a compulsory stop, I don't think she could have rung the bell again!

From your correspondent at the front,  
ATD.

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# 4.. Fares Please!



Above: No. 12 outside the ESCo Depot in Wendouree Parade. The tram has been converted for one-man operation, with longer footboards. Weather blinds to protect passengers from the merciless Ballarat weather have been rolled up. Circa 1912. **BTM COLLECTION**

Below: This property in Nerrina had to be demolished to make way for the Ballarat By-pass Freeway. As a result No. 12, which had been used as a house extension since 1935, was removed by the BTM to add to our collection for preservation. Monday 5/11/90. **BILL SCOTT**



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Above: The very successful “tram pull” took place on Sunday 25/5/03. Nos. 33 (left) and 14 were selected for the task of being dragged along Gardens Loop by several teams to raise money for charity.

**CAROLYN DEAN**

Right: One of the more tedious but important jobs involved with re-opening the north end of our tram line was manually cleaning out the railheads and grooves. Alan Snowball and Ben Shields carry out this task. Scrubber No. 8 then followed up with a final clean. **ROGER SALEN**



# G. Fares Please!

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## The Electric Supply Company Saloon Cars By Alan Bradley

*The final installment of this three-part series continued from Fares Please! May 2003.*

### Disposal

In 1930 the ESCo purchased several single truck trams from the Melbourne system to replace the more worn out cars in Ballarat and Bendigo. Several more were delivered over the next few years. By the end of 1935 the last of the eighteen Ballarat saloon cars had been scrapped and replaced by eighteen ex-Melbourne single truck cars. In Bendigo some of the original ESCo cars lasted until 1947, with the bodies heavily braced to keep them straight. It was only Union action that prevented further upgrading of those cars.

The SEC took over the Ballarat and Bendigo systems from the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1934, and soon afterwards the rehabilitation of both systems commenced. The ex-Melbourne cars were converted to a new one-man format, and painted green. On the 12<sup>th</sup> September 1935 the Mayor of Ballarat launched the first of the “new” cars. It was just over thirty years since another Mayor had driven saloon car No. 1 to launch the electric service. Old No. 1 was then still in service. The Ballarat *Courier* noted the passing of the old saloon cars:

“Love of old things, and surely our trams are old things, is a commendable trait that has manifested itself in Ballarat’s antique exhibitions from time to time. Residents of Lydiard Street North never feel in need of a sea trip nowadays, and musical folk of Sebastopol have come to love the violin-like vibrations that accompany the twisting of loose joints which marks the meanderings of trams along that route.

Drummond Street North residents of an older generation, with Wendouree Parade passengers combine to praise the frolicking of the pole. New trams will stop all that. Yet there is hope, still, for those who fear the worst. They may not be new trams. Close scrutiny may prove that we are about to don the discarded habits of Melbourne’s suburbia. Antiquarians and experts nevertheless believe they will soon be at home and wear well on our venerable tracks.”<sup>12</sup>

### Rebuilding of No. 12

After the ESCo scrapped its original cars some of the bodies were sold. The body of No. 12 was bought in 1935 and placed on a property in Nerrina, on the north-east outskirts of Ballarat. The house itself was historic, with a section built in 1854, and other sections added later. The tram body was built into the side of the house and used as a bathroom. The property was acquired by VicRoads for the building of the Ballarat by-pass, and the house was demolished. On the 5th November 1990 the body of No. 12 was carefully lifted from its resting place of 55 years taken to the BTM depot in Wendouree Parade.

The BTM was then completing the rebuilding of horse tram No. 1. It was intended to return No. 12 to operating condition, so that the BTM could have an operating car from each of the three Ballarat tramway operators.

Only one side and end of No. 12 had been exposed to the weather, and the rest of the car had been protected. On the protected side the colour scheme, number and lining were well preserved.

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Inside were the number and some original instructions to passengers. There was one light globe in each end section, and a cluster of three globes in the centre of the saloon.

Stripping of the body of No. 12 revealed some of its history. The number 18 was found above the bulkhead doorway. No.12 was originally North Sydney cable trailer No. 18, built by Benjamin Carne in 1892. Examination has shown the main colour of Columbia red and white, lining and BALLARAT TRAMWAYS lettering used by the ESCo.

The body also shows the construction techniques used on the saloon cars. To give one example, the roof was in five sections, rather than having continuous roof slats. No wonder the roof sagged under the weight of the trolley pole and base.

The first major work was the strengthening of the underframe with steel. Then came the repair or rebuilding of the corner pillars and side framing. Currently work is underway on the roof. This has been a slow and painstaking task, as each separate piece is being treated.

Meanwhile a grant application to obtain funding for construction of a truck was unsuccessful. Provision of a truck and electrical equipment is the main barrier to No. 12 being restored to operating condition.

## Reflection

The Ballarat saloon cars were the last electric car rebuilds from an earlier form of street tramway vehicle to enter service in Australia. They were not however the last in the world. For example, when the cable

electrified in the early 1920's the first electric cars were converted from double-decker cable cars. But by then this type of rebuild was rare.

The saloon cars were too lightly built to cope with the demands placed upon them. But they provided an important service to the public of Ballarat. They carried many full loads, at a time when dependence on public transport was higher than it is now.

Various Ballarat saloon car bodies remained intact for many years in various parts of Victoria. But No. 12 is now the only car of this type known to exist.

Several ESCo cars other than No. 12 have been preserved. Ballarat crossbench car No.23 is preserved by the Tramway Museum Society Of Victoria (TMSV) in its later form as a Ballarat Scrubber. The BTM has the body of sister crossbench car No. 21. Bendigo crossbench car No. 17 became a scrubber, and was restored by the Bendigo Trust back to its crossbench format. The Bendigo Trust has rebuilt the saloon and one end of Bendigo No. 7 for static display. Not included in this list are the ex-SEC cars preserved in Ballarat and Bendigo that were operated for a few years by the ESCo.

Several horse and cable car conversions to electric trams have been preserved in the USA.<sup>15</sup> Despite its shortcomings No. 12 is a rare type of tram. It represents the transition between the earlier forms of traction and electric trams, and is worth the effort.

<sup>15</sup> Refer to Dave Macartney's article on No. 12 in the September 1993 edition of *Fares Please!*, and in the November 1993 edition of *Trolleywire*.

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# 8. Fares Please!

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## Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Ballarat Tramway Museum Inc. (Association No. A0031819K) will be held at the Ballarat Tram Depot, South Gardens Reserve on Sunday 19th October 2003, 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. At the time of nomination, the nominee, proposer and seconder must be financial, for the nominee to be entitled to be a candidate for election to the Association.

Any nomination must be in accordance with the 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 5<sup>th</sup> October 2003.

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 not apply.

## Vale

The Museum has been advised that John Redman passed away in May. He had been a member since 1972. Our sympathy goes out to son Graeme. Many would know them through their regular attendance at Annual General Meetings.

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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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