

FARES PLEASE!

March 2004

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History

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Museum Accreditation Program
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The tired and hard-working traffic team take a quick break to pose for the camera. Standing from left: Simon Green, Alastair Reither, John Shaw, Len Millar, Carolyn Dean, Andrew Mitchell, Peter Winspur, Stephen Butler, Sam Boon. Standing in tram: Roger Salen. Kneeling: John Phillips. Monday 8/3/04. CAROLYN DEAN COLLECTION

2004 Begonia Festival

A new era in the Museum's involvement with the Ballarat Begonia Festival began on Tuesday 2 March when Tram No. 671 newly adorned with our signage promoting Alstom our sponsor was used as the venue for *Shave for a Cure*. Tram No. 671 departed the depot with about 7 'volunteer' shavers from the Alstom factory on board.

A makeshift hairdressing salon was established at the old floral carpet stop where these 'volunteers' had their hair shaved off into various styles from a coloured Mohawk to totally bald. Those not so adventurous had coloured hair spray adorn their locks. This created much interest from pedestrians to passing road traffic. Some extra donations for Shave for a Cure were also accepted during this event.

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Ballarat Tramways News

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2004 Begonia Festival

Continued from front page

The actual Festival began on Thursday 4th March and five days later the tramway had carried 10,248 passengers! Our trams had traveled 716 kilometres and our volunteers had worked a total of 600 hours. On the Sunday 3234 people rode surpassing our previous best by 1516! This was by far the most amazing achievement of our traffic staff ever. Some were present for the whole five days while others could only spare a few hours to ensure that there were four trams operating and to give other staff assistance or a break. Everyone gave 110% and we can be very proud of our achievement.

Our sponsor, Alstom, provided sufficient polo tops and caps for the crews to wear a distinctive blue uniform for the event. The uniform looked very smart, particularly for crews working on Tram No. 671 which is also blue. Some wag suggested it should be adopted permanently!

The Festival was entirely concentrated within the formal garden area this year and our crews proved to be the Festival's main ambassadors within the rest of the gardens as they answered hundreds of questions from visitors.

Our trams' primary role was to carry visitors from the South Gardens car park to the entrance near the pedestrian crossing and return but with the new Ex Prisoners of War Memorial attracting thousands of visitors many also traveled from the Festival to the Memorial.

Our thanks go to all those who assisted with a special thank you going to John Shaw who traveled all the way from Perth to conduct for three days. He was determined to again be part of the real action and more than pulled his weight. Another Member and regular interstate visitor, Bruce Worthington, also attended the museum during the festival this year.

We extend special thanks to Barbara Chalkley, the Director of the Begonia Festival, who had the vision to directly involve the tramway in the Festival and to Alstom our sponsor who enabled the free rides to be a reality. We believe that our role in enabling visitors to travel freely through the gardens greatly increased the attraction of the event.

A very successful and well attended barbecue was held on the Saturday night. Warren again found some wonderful historical slides to show. Thanks to John and Merle Clowes for their generous hospitality.

Traffic

PATRONAGE

A mild January led to a slight increase in patronage compared with the previous year and February saw a healthy increase. The new Ex Prisoners of War Memorial at Carlton Street has become a major new tourist attraction and has led to increased patronage for the tramway.

NEW CONDUCTRESS

Driver John Clowes finally persuaded his wife Merle to join our traffic staff and she has experienced a real baptism by working for four days during the Begonia Festival. Thanks Merle and we hope you enjoy the quieter times we experience during most of the year.

The Museum would like to welcome the following new members:

New Members and Membership Renewals

Junior Supporter coming of age!

754 Daniel Edwards of Haddon

New member:

755 Peter Percy of Ballarat

A Shocking Experience

During January the No. 2 end controller on No. 13 started giving tingles to unsuspecting motormen from time to time. This was traced back to a faulty earth wire, which was duly repaired.

Reference was made to the *International Correspondence Schools Manual* No. 139 of 1906, which had been the property of Mr. H.R. Foy, who had worked on maintenance from the earliest ESCo days. His books were donated to the Museum by his grandson some years ago, and continue to be a valuable source of information on tramcar repairs to the present day.

After a learned discussion on the causes and cures of charged controllers, the instruction concludes with the following paragraph;

“On a dry day, the motorman will have no serious trouble in avoiding shocks if he confines his hand to the wooden knob of the power handle, keeps his feet off iron bolts running through the cab floor, and as far as possible, avoids holding the brake and power handles at the same time. On a wet day, gloves are necessary; if the conductor’s gloves are not available for changing, the motorman should use his own gloves, one at a time, on the controller hand, the other glove being kept dry. Some motormen use the lower part of their rubber coats as a protection for the controller hand.”

The instruction was shown to Roger Salen, a previous victim of No. 13, who replied, “I use my raincoat in connection with a different kind of flash.”

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Above: Thirty-five years ago No. 21 is seen on Wendouree Parade painted in a special 1969 Begonia Festival theme. **BRIAN WEEDON PHOTOGRAPH, BTM COLLECTION**

Below: No. 29, a former Melbourne "R" class at the Depot, 14/3/49. This tram was scrapped in 1950. **KEITH KINGS PHOTOGRAPH, BTM COLLECTION**



A Further Lease Of Life By Alan Bradley

The SEC commenced an extensive rehabilitation program for its Ballarat and Bendigo tramway systems in 1934. This was designed to provide another 15 years of service, which would expire in the late 1940s. Early in 1948 A. V. Mawby, the Ballarat Tramways Superintendent wrote the following memo explaining what would be required to allow an extended period of operation for the Ballarat tramways. The memo is an interesting guide to the logistics of continued operation of a small tramway system. It is worth noting that within the next decade all of the non-capital city tram systems in Australia (apart from Ballarat and Bendigo) would close.¹

**“To MANAGER, BALLARAT
BRANCH
From BRANCH TRAMWAYS.
SUPERINTENDENT, 7 MAY 1948**

**PROVINCIAL TRAMWAYS -
EXTENDED PERIOD OF
OPERATION**

**Reference enquiry from Engineer &
Manager dated 24th February, 1948.**

Rolling Stock:

(a) Would the present rolling stock meet the requirements of this City?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the negative, please give details of estimated requirements, indicating improvements considered desirable.

The present rolling stock comprises 25 trams (21 single truck type of 6'6" - 7'6" - 9'0" wheelbase, and four maximum traction bogie trams. To meet present day requirements as to routes and services, this number is considered to be numerically sufficient. Although maintenance costs will inevitably tend to rise as the age of the vehicles increases, a further term of 15 years should be quite practicable. The principal requirements would be the re-machining of the motor case armature and suspension bearing housings, the provision of at least three more spare armatures for the W.H.225 motors, to meet requirements of re-winding and present inadequate spares, and the replacement of all tram axles, which it is noted are now approaching half a million miles of service in this Branch alone. There are two odd type trams, which it is suggested should be replaced by the more suitable maximum traction bogie type. These comprise No. 23 (purchased ex Adelaide, a two-man open-end type, which would be a costly conversion to our combination type. Also, this is the only tram equipped with W.H.204 33 h.p. motors. Use of this tram is principally confined to summer only.), and No. 29, also a two-man open-end type, but a straight sill body with very high steps. This body could not be converted to combination type. It is equipped with G.E.201 65 h.p. motors,² and if replaced, these motors could be transferred to the scrubber tram, thus eliminating the sole remaining G.E .67 motor equipment. The G.E.201 motors are standard equipment on the bogie type trams.

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(c) Are there routes it is considered should be substituted by trackless trolleys or motor buses?

There are no tramway routes in this city in which the substitution of trolley buses or motor buses is considered desirable by the Commission. It is still considered desirable that the Mt. Pleasant route be deviated through Peel Street, and thus make practicable the extension from the terminus at Cobden Street to Morton Street.³

(d) What building alterations and/or additions would be required?

The renovations carried out on the tram depot building some years ago were satisfactory, and structurally this should be good for a further period of fifteen years. The additional rolling stock acquired of recent years is, however, beyond the capacity of the depot building, and an extension to provide storage space for at least two trams is recommended. At the present moment, a revision of the truck removal and overhaul section is under consideration, and under the terms of the present enquiry the required space would be available and maintenance conditions improved by the enlargement of the annexe at the northern end of the main building. The extension of this annexe to the north to provide sufficient length for a bogie tram (present 45 ft. to, say, 60ft.) and the extension of same, both east and west, to the full width of the main building, would house both the carpenter's shop and the paint shop. The additional car storage space in the main building would thus be secured. Provision is also suggested for the replacement or complete overhaul of the wheel turning lathe, which is a very old machine, and in poor condition.

reconstructed, a more detailed inspection is required. It is also necessary to apply the experience of other cities in estimating the years of service of such items as track sleepers. As regards the latter, it is suggested that, after a further period of from five to ten years, the complete removal of sleepers will be necessitated, and the requirements for such comprehensive renewal would probably aggregate some 34,150 sleepers. Measurements have been taken of rail groove depth, in order to determine the estimated wear yet available. With the exception of short lengths of rail on curves, and odd locations, the rails generally should be good for a further period of use of 15 years, so long as the present practice of machining and grinding the tram wheels to a flat running surface is maintained. After the reconstruction work, old rails had a pronounced ball slope of probably 1 in 15. By keeping wheels reasonably flat, the area of wear on the rails for the past years has been confined to the outer surface only, and at the present stage, wear is principally confined to the outer half of the rail surface. During reconstruction, some of the points and special work from the old Company were reconditioned and retained for further use, and other special work was purchased from the M.M.T.B. Practically all of the latter are still in good order, but most of the old original castings from the Company have deteriorated badly, and replacement must be contemplated. Some of the old castings, especially the track crossings at Lydiard Street and Drummond Street, have already been replaced by fabricated layouts, due to rapid deterioration of the original."

¹ The tram system in Newcastle closed in 1950; the Kalgoorlie, Fremantle and Launceston systems closed in 1952; the Geelong system closed in 1956.

² According to "Destination City" and "Destination Eaglehawk", Melbourne R class cars like No. 29 had G.E.203 50 h.p. motors, and not G.E.201 motors as stated here.

³ This idea had been considered but rejected in the 1930s.

To be continued.

In the Workshop

Steady progress has continued in the last couple of months on most current workshop projects despite the demands created by the revamped Begonia Festival and the time commitment that was required by some of our regular members.

Work on repainting of scrubber No. 8 has advanced rapidly with both cabs nearing completion of the external paintwork. Once completed the tedious and fiddly work of repainting the central section which contains the tank and associated equipment will commence. Progress is also being made on the reconditioning of the No. 2 end motor for No. 40, at present the armature is with the contractors in Melbourne and is completed except for the fitting of the bearings which are being white metallised by a Ballarat engineering company.

A number of the field coils have been removed and reinsulated by Alan Snowball who has made a very professional job of this task, replacement of the motor leads and internal wiring will be completed shortly and by then the armature will hopefully be back on site ready for reassembly.

You may recall that late last year the museum purchased a metal working lathe with the assistance of a grant from the City of Ballarat. Work has finally begun on making suitable accommodations for installing and commissioning the lathe with the stairs that lead to our upstairs storage area and archives room being redesigned during February to provide a suitable rectangular area for what will become our metalworking shop. Various benches and cupboards have been removed or repositioned in preparation for mounting the lathe on a sturdy bench ready for use, it should perhaps be pointed out that the lathe weighs nearly 300kg and is not something we will want to move around regularly.

As the cold winter months approach and the hectic days of school holiday and Begonia Festival running pass into memory for another year we can confidently report that our tram fleet is in good shape and fit for many more years service under the capable care of the Museum maintenance staff.

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Left: Visiting P.E.T.S. and B.T.M. member John Shaw lends his valuable and generous assistance during the Begonia Festival. Monday 8/3/04.

Below: The façade on Scrubber tram No. 8 is ever-changing as it is slowly reverted back to its M.M.T.B. green and cream colour scheme. Monday 8/3/04.

CAROLYN DEAN PHOTOGRAPHS



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