

FARES PLEASE!

December 2007

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum



Seasons Greetings!

The Museum's tram fleet waits in anticipation for a day in the snow. Unfortunately, Tuesday 17 July 2007 was not an operating day.

Photo: Alan Snowball

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History

2. FARES PLEASE!



Left: The view from
Wendouree Parade.
2 December 2007
Photo: Peter Winspur

Our New Pathway

Right: Under construction.
27 November 2007
Photo: BTM Collection



Left: The new path ends at the
Depot doors.
We now need to find the
funding to seal the Depot fan
across to seven road.
Photo: Peter Winspur
2 December 2007

A Pathway to the Museum!

For many, many years we have been acutely aware of the lack of suitable access for pedestrians from Wendouree Parade to the Museum.

In the 1995 Botanic Gardens Masterplan a pathway was planned to run alongside the south side of the depot access track to what was at the time an access roadway past the front of the depot. It was to continue to Gillies Street which runs behind the depot and so provide a pedestrian link into the Gardens. A branch was to run from the roadway up to the front of our building.

Implementation of the Masterplan has been a slow process as it has been dependent on funding becoming available. Visitors over the years would have noticed many improvements to the precinct, particularly in recent years, but the planned pathway was not of a high priority.

One of the observations of the Reaccreditation Panel from Museums

Australia after their visit this year stated in part that:

“The need for a clear pathway into the museum is of utmost importance.”“The Panel is aware that this is part of the Ballarat City Council’s plan but this should be seen as a high priority to all – the risk factor for the public should also be stressed to the BCC”

Following a written submission to Council discussions were held with officers of Council and the construction of a path was approved.

The result has been the construction of a path directly to the Museum along the north side of the access track. Already it is proving very popular with visitors to the Gardens and our Museum.

We thank outgoing Mayor, David Vendy, Councillors and Council Officers for their approval and speedy construction of the new pathway.

Restructure

Implementation of our new Safety System which will enable the Museum to conform with the new Rail Safety Act has led the Board to review the Museum’s management structure.

Although there is already a well documented training program for most positions, both in traffic and maintenance, it has become apparent that future training will be required to conform to more structured programs. With this in mind the position of Training Manager has been created. Greg Rodgers has been appointed.

To ensure that in contact with people outside the organisation the function of the position of Traffic Manager is better understood the title has been altered to Operations Manager.

A vital role is played by Dave Macartney in liaising on a daily basis at the Museum with a varied number of people. He also supervises and coordinates the work of the weekday workers. This task has never been adequately defined. The new position of Depot Services Manager has been created to accommodate this important role.

4. FARES PLEASE!

Fulfilling a Vision

When the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society was in the formative phase of its formation in April 1971, public meetings were held in both Ballarat and Melbourne to garner support. One of the documents which has been recently added to the Museum's collection is a set of duplicated sheets issued for the meeting of 29 April 1971 at the Victorian Railways Institute rooms at Flinders Street Station. It was titled "A Historical Tramway for Ballarat". It had a set of draft resolutions for discussion. But the front page had a vision for a museum. This read:

"Most of the trams still running were built before 1920 and were purchased second-hand, so that they represent a type of street transport long since vanished from other Australia (and World) cities. The tramways are in fact a "working museum" and many trams are earmarked for preservation in Australia, and possibly overseas. This is a good example of a chance preservation taking an historical relic from its own age into another, when it is recognised as worthy of formal preservation.

"Unfortunately, most museums are artificially constructed and do not do full justice to the exhibits. How much better is it to preserve an early building and its contents that to display antique furniture in a modern building? Nothing could be more picturesque than a green and yellow four-wheel tram winding among the coloured tress of Ballarat's Botanic Gardens in Autumn, or passing the swans and boat sheds of Lake Wendouree.

"On the track beside the tram, school-

children cycle in and out of the sunlight, adding to the peaceful "old world" atmosphere. There are many successful examples of preservation in the world, showing that it is now realised that transport is as much part of the "atmosphere" of an age as are its buildings.

The document's authors were: Bill Jessup, Donald Fraser, Paul Nicholson and Frank Stamford.

In the February 2007 issue of *Fares Please!* we announced that the Museum had received a \$5000 grant from Heritage Victoria for a significance assessment of its collection, then already 3,500 items. This number is now approaching 4000. The assessment was prepared for the Museum by Stella Barber, a freelance historian who also researches and writes significance assessments. Stella has Masters qualifications in archives and history and has worked as a corporate historian and as a consultant to a range of clients. The finished document has recently been received. The final paragraph in the document reads:

"What is vital contextually is that the BTM operates as a living museum and is one of a very few that operates in a street environment and is run by volunteers. The BTM is globally significant in that it operates an authentic museum, has a catalogued collection of small items, has formulated and ratified a conservation policy, is an accredited museum, is a museum that meets high standards and tells the story of Ballarat and SEC Provincial tramways.

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The Ballarat Tramway Museum is clearly one of the leaders in Australasia in terms of what it has achieved given its resources. Significantly (!), at time of writing, the BTM will be the first tramway museum to commission a professional significance assessment of its full collection in Australasia. It is not possible to assess this particular fact on world standing, however, if others have commissioned such a report, they would be few in number."

Our job is by no means finished. We have lots of things to do, but the assessment shows that we are on the right tram so to speak in fulfilling this April 1971 vision.

One of the aims of the document's preparation was to assist the Museum in understanding its collection better and to make it better known. An interesting example included in the report showing its significance, albeit in a small way to the overall collection was item No. 67, A Blind Person's Pass. This was donated to the Museum at the time of closure by the SEC.

Stella Barber's comments are:

"This tram pass for blind travellers is of historic, interpretative and educational significance.

"Today such passes are still produced. It is notable that today society does not use the word "blind" in this way, instead people are said to be visually impaired, so in one respect these passes are representative of an era that applied

no longer used vocabulary to people with a disability.

"Today, being legally blind (with vision worse than 20/200 that cannot be improved with corrective lenses) entitles a person to free travel on public transport. Most states have reciprocal arrangements for this. Free travel passes cover travel on all Victorian trains, trams and buses. These are being replaced at present by the Victorian Public Free Travel Pass."

Warren Doubleday

TYE 2-21.
STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION OF VICTORIA
Electricity Supply Department
Provincial Tramways

A 372 BRANCH

Blind Person's Pass

Conductors are hereby authorised to pass the Bearer, with an attendant as guide, on their Tram-cars during the year on payment of one full fare only for the two persons, reporting the name and journeys made each day, on their Total-waybills.

Date / / 195 Manager

This Free Pass is NOT TRANSFERABLE and is granted by the State Electricity Commission of Victoria on Condition that its acceptance by the person in whose favour it is issued is to be taken as evidence of an agreement that the Commission is not to be held liable for any pecuniary or other responsibility to the holder or his representatives for loss of life, personal injury, or delay, or loss of, or damage to property, however caused, that may be sustained by such person while using this Pass.

This Pass is issued also on the condition that the Holder exhibits same to the Conductor on each trip whether requested to do so or not.

This Pass must be returned immediately after the date of expiry. 910/43.

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New Members

The Museum welcomes the following new members and junior supporters. We hope their time with us is long and rewarding.

782 Neville Hesketh of Ballarat
5046 Melanie Bertram of Lara
5047 Matthew Bertram of Lara

Duncan & Fraser

Many of Ballarat's trams were built at the Duncan & Fraser Company works in Adelaide. A history of the company is about to be published and it contains much interesting information concerning their construction.



Your next tram book is here! 10 years in the writing, 280 pages and over 250 photos. Read how Duncan & Fraser brought both the tram & automobile age to South Australia. Find out about their trams, carriage building and motor bodies. Explore an assembly line building Ford cars that was not owned by the Ford Motor Co. Book due for release in June 2008. Order your advance copy now at only \$25 each. Postage \$10.50 within Australia. Contact David Chantrell on (08) 8345 0665 or email gizzmo@adam.com.au for more information.

Around the Depot

Work on a number of projects is proceeding steadily. Volunteer workers learn quite quickly that most projects take much longer than originally anticipated or hoped for.

After a long delay, the newly turned wheels from No 14 arrived back on 31 October. Alan Snowball immediately started to restore them to the overhauled truck frame. The quickest and most appropriate means of replacing the defective motor reported in *June Fares Please* is still being pursued.

No 28 has developed a defective field coil in one motor and awaits the jacks so that it may be lifted to gain access to repair the fault. Meanwhile a compressor from Bungaree has been refurbished to replace the very worn one currently under the car.

Shelving is to be installed along the south wall. To provide a proper floor our weekday workers assisted by Daniel Edwards have moved a mountain of screenings before the area is concreted.

Reconstruction of the display area is continuing when workers are available.

Traffic

On 15 December Gavan Dorian qualified as a driver. Congratulations Gavan. The Museum certainly needs you.

New member Aaron MacDonald recently qualified as a Conductor as a first step to training as a driver. He should commence early next year.

Patronage has remained quiet. The annual "*Springfest*" market day on 18 November was quite busy and was a "W Class" day. 306 people travelled on the day.

Copsnkids”

For many years the Ballarat police, led by Sergeant John Moloney, have been running a four day camp for children with cancer. Since 2001 the Museum has been providing a tram so that the kids can enjoy what is often their first and sometimes their only tram ride. This year some forty children visited. Dave O’Neil reports:

It hardly seems like twelve months since myself with trusty Austin as my conductor fronted up for the annual “Cops for Kids” charter group. Once again Ballarat turned on fantastic weather, and since we have been doing this it has not rained once.

With sirens wailing the convoy of two police cars and one bus load of kids arrived at the playground a bit late as I was told they ate McDonalds out.

We did two trips with these youngsters and on talking to some who came from all over Victoria they had never seen a tram like 671.

The usual photo stops were had and even one of the police women got into the act.

We were also able to persuade the new Ballarat Police Superintendent, Andrew Allen, to ride on the tram for a trip.

The looks on some of these kids on the finish of their ride says it all. This makes it all the better.



“Copsnkids” visit. Superintendent Andrew Allen and some of the youngest children in the group pose for a photo on Monday 19 November 2007.

Photo: Austin Brehaut

8. FARES PLEASE!

Ballarat Gardens in Snow

Stephen Butler was on hand on 3 July 1984.

Our final contribution to the celebration of 150 Years of the Botanic Gardens.



Left: Tram No 661 spent much of its working life at Glenhuntly Depot in Melbourne. We doubt if it often, if ever, enjoyed a day in the snow.

*Photo: Stephen Butler
3 July 1984*

Right: 17 July 2007. After Alan Snowball took the photo featured on the front cover he trudged back to the Depot to capture this dismal view.

One day one of our rostered crews will be faced with the prospect of working on a day such as this.





Ballarat Gardens in Snow

Heavy snowfalls in Ballarat are a rare occurrence. An unknown photographer was on hand to take these two photos. The tram is an unknown ex Hawthorn bogie car. The year is possibly 1948.

Above: Stopping to clear the windscreen. The tram is heading towards St Aidans Drive and appears to be just north of what is now Depot Junction.

Below: Heading north past the location of the current children's playground. Would children be on the swings or throwing snowballs if the playground had been there? *BTM Collection*



10. FARES PLEASE!

Rail retrieved from Geelong

On a visit to Geelong around three months ago, Richard Gilbert noticed the tramline in Malop Street being pulled up as part of road reconstruction. A few phone calls found the Contractor and parties responsible for the removal of the rail and an arrangement was made for our museum to purchase the rail at scrap steel prices.

On Tuesday, 11^h December, a working party of Alan Snowball, Alastair Reither, Simon Green and Richard Gilbert set off in a hired truck to load the rail and take it Ballarat for eventual use in repairing rail joints in Wendouree Parade. Around three tons of rail was rescued from the potential of being melted down into scrap and instead this rail will add valuably to our dwindling stock of grooved tramway rail.

It is also historically interesting in that it is a tangible link with part of the former SEC operated tramway system at Geelong. As the Geelong system closed in 1956 the rail is not worn to any great degree and is quite suitable for use in patching up the mainline track in Wendouree Parade.

Hoare Brothers, Road Contractors of Geelong were very helpful throughout the negotiations and we thank them for this.

This section of track was on the North Geelong/Railway Station route. The North Geelong route closed on Sunday, 4th March, 1956 and the short Railway Station route, which junctioned not far past where our rail was located, closed on Friday, 23rd March, 1956.

Richard Gilbert

More exhumed rail

Whilst on a recent visit to Launceston, in part to discuss the forthcoming COTMA Conference with the hosts for next year, Richard Gilbert found that a section of tramline in High Street, Launceston had been dug up in the process of drains being installed.

Of particular interest is that the rails are 80 pound per yard railway rail with a bolted flange, being the same as that in use on half the length of our tramway in Wendouree Parade.

The Launceston rail is now stored for the Launceston Tramway Museum who are well versed on the history of the rail.

The bolted flange was a product from BHP in the 1920's and 30's for use where railway rail was to be used on tramway construction. This answers a question of ours, where we have wondered if the 80lb rail, with its bolted flange, used on the Ballarat and Bendigo tramway systems, was a product unique to the reconditioning of the tramways by the SEC in the 1930's.

Interestingly the Launceston panels of track have upturned rails welded to the base of the running rail, acting as sleepers. This section of track in High Street was reconstructed from the original in later years, similar to the case with the track in Ballarat and Bendigo.

Richard Gilbert

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Left: Rail being removed from the intersection of Malop and Gheringhap Street, Geelong
Photo: Richard Gilbert

Right: Loading rail at Geelong. Simon Green, Alastair Reither and Alan Snowball.

*Photo: Richard Gilbert
11 December 2007*



Left: The rail from High Street, Launceston. This 80lb rail and its bolted cast groove, is exactly the same style as that on at least half our tramway in Wendouree Parade.

Photo: Richard Gilbert

12. FARES PLEASE!



The morning after. Tuesday 3 July 1984 saw Ballarat covered by the heaviest snowfall for many years. There have been several changes in the last twenty three years. Trees have gone: One Road is no longer connected and 671 is no longer green. As in 2007, it was not an operating day. Stephen Butler was on hand to capture the scene.

*The Museum would like to wish
all its Members and Friends the Compliments of the Season
and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.*



Fares Please! is published by the Ballarat Tramway Museum Inc. (A0031819K) six times a year in alternate months commencing in February. It is distributed to members and friends.

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