

# FARES PLEASE!

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**April 2009**

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*News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum*

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## **Begonia Weekend 2009**



Tram No 671, "The City of Ballarat", approaches Depot Junction on Sunday 8 March 2009.

*Photo: Peter Winspur*

In very pleasant weather, the Begonia Festival was celebrated this year as the Ballarat Begonia Weekend. Despite the continuing lack of water in the lake and the almost complete absence of flowers in the Gardens a good crowd attended over the three day holiday weekend.

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***Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History***

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# 2. FARES PLEASE!



[www.bellaratbegoniaweekend.com](http://www.bellaratbegoniaweekend.com)

### Tramways Museum


Trams were a popular mode of transport around Lake Wendouree for more than a century. Double decker horse drawn trams, carrying up to 44 passengers, began service to the Ballarat Botanical Gardens in 1887, however horse power was superseded by electric trams in 1905.

Ownership of the entire tramway system was transferred to the State Electricity Commission of Victoria in 1934. However, in only two of the 37 years of S.E.C. management did the operation make a profit. Not surprisingly, the S.E.C. announced its intention to close down the tramways in 1962 but in the face of substantial local opposition the closure did not take place until 1971.

The night of the very last journey - the last right tip from Sebastopol to the depot - saw Tramcar number 40 fully loaded with 200 passengers and a crowd of 5,000 people, a brass band, and a local radio station gathered to witness the moment. As the depot doors closed for the last time, a large sign reading "THE END" was revealed.

The Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society Ltd (renamed Ballarat Tramway Museum Inc in 1995) was formed shortly before the closure of the tramways to ensure the history and heritage assets were not lost.

The tram depot, constructed for the 50 horses and their trams, today houses the Tramway Museum, which offers a display of photographs and tramway memorabilia. Also on show is the rolling stock, which includes Ballarat Horse Tram No. 1 and ten tramcars which initially were used in Melbourne between 1913 and 1951 - two acquired from Melbourne by the Museum in 1976.



Scenes from the  
2009 Begonia Weekend



## The Begonia Weekend

The Begonia Festival this year again contracted the Museum to provide a free tram service through the Gardens so that visitors could easily park some distance away and also move more freely about.

Operations were similar to the past few years with the two W class workhorses maintaining a through service and two single truck trams providing a shuttle from Gardens Loop to Carlton Street. This arrangement means that there is always a tram waiting at the loop and helps to increase the Museum's profile in the Gardens.

Patronage was very good on all three days and a total of 6311 people were carried over the three days. This was almost 1,000 more than in 2008.

A free bus service every half an hour was provided this year between the City/Railway Station and the Gardens and this was well patronised. Unfortunately, traffic congestion was heavy at times as many people tried to park as closely as possible to the event.

As water is at a premium, the Festival enlisted primary school students to create painted flower displays alongside the pathways leading to the Conservatorium.

Another initiative was to provide descriptive signage through the Gardens and a storyboard about trams in Ballarat and the Museum was placed at the beginning of the pathway to the Depot. The sign encouraged many people to visit the Museum. Unfortunately it was not entirely accurate as Ballarat people insist on calling us the "Tramways" Museum.

Some twenty five of our members worked over the weekend, some for the whole three days. We are so often the first point of contact for many visitors to the Festival and as usual our crews enthusiastically provided a great service to them. The weekend went off without a hitch.

Saturday and Sunday nights were enjoyed at the Gordon and Atlantic Hotels respectively with a good meal, a few drinks and pleasant company.

## Ballarat Heritage Weekend

At quite short notice, the Museum was invited to participate in the 2009 Ballarat Heritage Weekend which is to be held, as it was last year, over the Mothers' Day weekend, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10th May.

There was insufficient notice to arrange the horse tram and two electric trams will operate during each afternoon.

As the event is principally a free one, Events Ballarat have offered to cover the

Museum's costs and so rides will be free over the weekend. The Museum will be open and trams will run from 10:00am to 5:00pm.

Further details of the weekend can be found at [www.ballaratheritageweekend.com](http://www.ballaratheritageweekend.com).

Our thanks go to Gail Smaniotto of Events Ballarat for her assistance in arranging our participation.

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## 4. FARES PLEASE!

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### Rail Safety Accreditation

The formal compliance audit by Public Transport Safety Victoria of the Museum's revamped Safety Management System was undertaken over two days in late March. All heritage rail operators in Victoria must be re-accredited by 1 July 2009 or they will not be able to operate. Over two years work, particularly by Warren Doubleday, paid off as only a very few minor matters need to be addressed. Over 450 hours have been spent on rewriting our SMS.

The Board agreed that our approach should be to develop a Management System, rather than Safety Management System as this would embrace the management of the whole Museum. In addition to safety, it covers areas such as governance, collection management and operational management. If we were all hit by the proverbial bus, theoretically others would be able to continue to manage the Museum.

The decision to have only one hard copy (held at the Depot) of the system has saved a few forests as when it was printed for the first time in March over a ream of paper was required and most is printed double sided! "Soft" copies are held on the Depot computer and by the Secretary. They are available to members on request.

Some of our members have felt rather overwhelmed where in actual fact little has changed in the operation of the Museum. The main area is ensuring that work in the area of maintenance is recorded and that any incident is documented. The Safety System in place for the past nine years has essentially required this and good management practice should require it as well. Our memories are particularly fickle

especially with advancing age. And that bus can always come around the corner!

The new Rail Safety Act is particularly concerned with three areas. They are managing risk, training and communication and consultation by management with workers. All are vital in ensuring a safe environment for both the workers (be they volunteer or paid) and the public.

In the February edition of "Fares Please" we flagged the decision to take advantage of the large numbers of workers on site during the Begonia Festival to talk to them and see just how much they actually knew about what they should do in a "what if" situation. They all knew much more than they probably thought they did. The previous circulation of the draft Emergency Response Plan saw several constructive suggestions from members.

The one area where a procedure had not been developed was entry to the substation. This had been picked up at the Safety Committee meeting a few days before the audit. Before the fire of 2004 all staff trained to activate the 600 volt power had been required to enter the substation. The revamped substation is designed so that power can be turned on from outside. Procedures were developed for this and a list of qualified people was displayed on the wall. Unfortunately, by definition, no one was allowed to enter the substation! A new procedure has been developed and is in the process of being implemented.

The second area noted was that the horse tram should not be operated with people on the top deck when the trolley is alive because even though they cannot touch

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the live wires they can be within the two metres clearance required under the Victorian Electrical Safety Regulations.

Before Horse Tram No 1 was run in Melbourne in 2002 procedures were developed to ensure its safe operation, particularly for passengers on the top deck. We are now in the process of rewriting

these to ensure that we comply with the Regulations when it is in operation.

As of writing the Museum has yet to receive a formal written report of the audit from Public Transport Safety, but we have no reason to believe that accreditation will not be granted by the due date.

*Peter Winspur*

## Around the Depot

Routine work at the depot continues on No. 14, the long running saga of its restoration surely nearing an end. The motors have been tested for continuity and the wiring completed. The main jobs outstanding now are the completion of the armature bearings and the drilling of the appropriate holes in the new motor support beam.

The cream paintwork on No. 38 was renewed between January and March, while the opportunity was taken while the body was on blocks to completely clean down the underside and apply a sealing coat of paint. The armature from this car has been over to Bendigo to be baked and dipped.

A replacement gong has been fitted to the No. 1 end of Scrubber 8, replacing one which had become somewhat erratic in its behaviour. Work is in hand with this car to modify the floor area to allow greater access to the motors and the various oiling points.

Some re-tensioning of the overhead at the Carlton Street end and around the depot fan was carried out during early March. A replacement insulator was installed at the bottom of the access track and three successive bracket arms in the street were painted in the traditional burnt orange

colour. The specialist paint involved costs some \$67 per litre, but the result, particularly of the bracket arm with a full set of scrollwork, is extremely spectacular.

Hazards are being addressed as they are identified. One was around the rails in front of No 1 and the floor surface was ramped on each side. Another was the small entrance door at the front of the building. Until it is enlarged the low clearance has been highlighted in yellow.

After over a month of continuous running over summer without one changeover for defect, No33 managed to disgrace itself on 22nd February. After performing rather strangely on a trip heading north, at St. Aidans Drive it steadfastly refused to move in the other direction even when driven from the wrong end. Of course it had to be one of those only one driver available days.

In the end the tram had to be tied up while the driver walked back to the Depot. It was towed in when the maintenance crew became available later in the afternoon. No 33 has done some strange things in recent years and the cause was traced the same day by Alan Snowball to a difficult to see intermittent fault in one of the motor leads. It was easy to fix.

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## 6. FARES PLEASE!

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### **COTMA Conference – 2010**

To be held in Wellington New Zealand, it is planned that the conference commence on Thursday evening 16 September 2010. From Friday conference sessions and activities will include a visit to the Wellington Tramway Museum with dinner nearby, a Trolleybus Tour and the regular Conference General Meeting.

A pre-conference visit to Christchurch (largely self arranged) will be organised as will a post conference tour that finishes in Auckland the following weekend. Accommodation will be in Wellington city area. The organisation is being led by Bryce Pender of the Wellington Tramway Museum.

The conference is timed for the last weeks of the school term so it is hoped that those with young and school aged children can be encouraged to attend. For further information or to register an expression of interest please email Bryce on [cotma2010@paradise.net.nz](mailto:cotma2010@paradise.net.nz)

The following conferences will be Sydney 2012 and Adelaide 2014.

### **The Victorian Fires**

In the February edition of "Fares Please" we reported on the disastrous effect that the February fires had on the Yarra Valley Tourist Railway and the Daylesford Spa Country Railway. Operations at Daylesford have been seriously curtailed whilst the track is repaired. YVTR President, Steve Huntly, had been concerned for long time member Arthur Payne. The great news was that he was found to be safe as was his priceless collection of film and photos.

### **New Appointment**

Board member Paul Mong recently took the initiative of placing an appeal for volunteers in the Community Notice Board section of the "Ballarat News". Little was expected of this, but the response that came was from a most unexpected quarter.

Deepthi Poulouse is a twenty year old lass from southern India, in Ballarat on an extended visit. Seeking some community involvement, she scanned the pages of the "News" and, being a sensible person of impeccable taste, she naturally arranged to join our ranks. With her command of the English language still a little shaky, she was assigned to assist the workshop staff rather than face the hazards of the Traffic Branch.

Promotion in the workshop area either comes swiftly or not at all, so within one day of her arrival she was appointed as our new Car Cleaner, a job which has languished unfilled since Jacqui's departure some two years ago. Deepthi's first assigned job was to clean the cars after Begonia Monday - four extremely dusty and travel stained trams - a daunting task for anybody!

Since then she has attended to the cleaning each Monday afternoon, and the cars are starting to return to the standards of cleanliness we like to see. It is hoped to broaden her range of skills in the future as we start to prepare a couple of trams for the paint shop later in the year.

Deepthi is an absolute delight, a mixture of youthful enthusiasm and quiet charm, qualities which, unfortunately, are sadly lacking in the rest of the workshop team.

# FARES PLEASE! 7.



**Left:**

Deepthi takes a break from the arduous task of cleaning the trams.

*Photo: Dave Macartney 16/3/09*

**Below:**

Simon Jenkins and Alastair Reither re-tension the trolley at Carlton Street terminus on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

*Photo: Warren Doubleday*



**Below:**

On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April, a group from the Napoleons Historical Society spent a pleasant hour or so visiting the Museum.

*Photo: Warren Doubleday*



## New Members

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

- 793 Ms Deepthi Poulouse of Ballarat
- 794 Mr Warwick Read of Crossroads
- 795 Mrs Megan Read of Crossroads
- 796 Mr Dawn Poulouse of Ballarat
- 5050 Master James Read of Crossroads
- 5051 Master Charlie Ryder of Anglesea

Museum membership is now the highest it has been for nearly twenty years.

## Rockhampton Celebrations

On the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2009 the Archer Park Station and Steam Tram Museum, Rockhampton, are celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Purrey Steam Trams running in the streets of Rockhampton. They will be having a wine and cheese night on Friday the 5<sup>th</sup> June followed by a Carriage Shade Capers Day on the Sunday. They are asking that everyone come in period costumes of the early 1900's. The Purreys ceased on the 24<sup>th</sup> June 1939. The Museum's newsletter "Tram Tracks" can be download from the COTMA Website <http://www.cotma.org.au> . Click on "Latest News"

## ESCo Tram No 22

As part of the Museum's aim to develop a representative collection of trams which operated in Ballarat it has always been keen to acquire ESCo Tram No 22 the exterior of which is the most unaltered of the three cars built in 1913. Recently, Brett Hayes, the current owner donated the tram to the Museum. It is expected to arrive at the Depot during May.

Our workshops crew have constructed a simple truck on which to place the tram so that it can be mobile. Photos and an article about the tram will be published in the next "Fares Please".



Dave Macartney and Alan Snowball on 18/4/09

*Photo: Warren Doubleday*



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**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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