

FARES PLEASE!

April 2010

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum

Begonia Festival 2010



Photo: Peter Winspur

It is 2:45 pm on Saturday 6 March 2010. Tram No 671 is arriving at Gardens Loop in wet conditions. A thunderstorm has passed through Ballarat on its way east. The storm later caused major flooding and damage in and around Melbourne.

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History

2. FARES PLEASE!



Our Crews at Work

Begonia Festival 2010

Clockwise from left:

Len Millar & Neil Lardner

Photo: Peter Winspur 8/3/10

Lindsay Richardson booking up

Photo: Austin Brehaut 6/3/10

Peter Bruce watching the Procession

Photo: Austin Brehaut 8/3/10

Len Millar in pouring rain

Photo: Peter Winspur 6/3/10

Bill Kingsley waiting for the Procession to pass

Photo: Austin Brehaut 8/3/10



Strategic Planning and Information Workshop

The Museum has undertaken in recent years to hold a strategic planning day about every three years so that working members, in particular, can assist in ensuring that the Museum maintains direction. This year seventeen members met at the Bungaree Historical Society premises on Saturday 20 March.

Fourteen projects were identified and teams were nominated to advance these. The projects ranged from the usual one of track extension, to track replacement, depot extension, the future of Bungaree and improving income, marketing and branding.

Particular thanks go to Paul Mong who put a lot of thought into the structure of the meeting and took on the role of facilitator.

He did a wonderful job in ensuring that the day remained on course and that what came out of it provides an ongoing basis for improvement. It is great to see members of the next generation taking a leading role.

Our thanks go to Denis Spielvogel and the Bungaree and District Historical Society for making available their premises and providing an enormous lunch. Just near the railway crossing this wonderful building is of bluestone

and was the former Bungaree school. Nearby is a tiny beautifully restored timber building which has been relocated from further along the highway. It was originally the “London Bank of Australasia”. Recently a wall has been established for plaques remembering the families of the district.



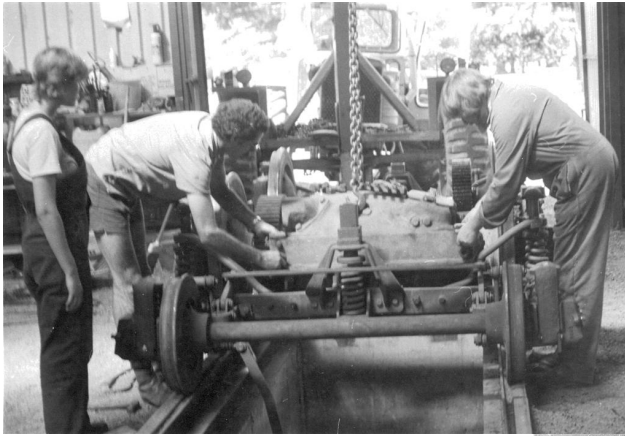
Above: Group photo at Bungaree 20 March 2010

Photo: Denis Spielvogel



Above: Earnest discussions over lunch. Richard, Alastair & Paul.
Photo: Austin Brehaut

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**Twenty Five Years
of
Paid Staff**

Above: Jacqui Edwards, Warren Doubleday & Ken Walker installing 40's motor, Feb 1985.

Right: Jacqui Edwards & Garry Wood cleaning up the Horse Tram, 1986.

Both photos: Dave Macartney



Below: Alan Snowball takes a break while new recruit Jacob Paul excavates the road to enable a section of rail to be replaced.

Photo: Richard Gilbert 15 April 2010



Twenty Five Years of Paid Staff

When the Society took up running the ex S.E.C. system in 1974 it was felt that the fleet, which then comprised only six trams, could be comfortably maintained by the volunteers working only on weekends, and for some years this was the case. Twenty five years ago, in 1985, the opportunity arose to participate in a Commonwealth Employment Program, which was designed to give long term unemployed people some experience in the workplace.

Warren Doubleday organised the scheme with his customary energy, and we moved from being a bunch of amateur enthusiasts to being a genuine professional workplace. Our paid staff were small in number, usually three or four at a time, for the seven month duration of the project, as people came and went for a variety of reasons. For the record, Dave Macartney supervised at one time or another Steve Tomaska, Ken Walker, Jacqui Edwards, Andrew Cameron and Rod Warwick.

It was found that a dedicated team working a five day week could accomplish a surprising amount of work. Car 27 was overhauled and fully repainted in just 22 weeks, and the team moved on to the conversion of 26 to its original configuration, which was about half finished when the scheme finally reached its conclusion.

Warren was keen to keep the momentum going, and approached Dave to keep on with the project as a paid employee into the future. Dave's only condition was that Jacqui was offered at least one day a week as well. A refund from the C.E.P. people for bringing in the project under budget

saw Jacqui getting another six weeks of full time work.

By the end of 1985 the remains of the horse tram had been obtained, and it was clear that if the restoration work was to proceed at any sort of pace then the paid staff were going to become a permanent feature of the museum.

The conditions under which people were to be paid was that they were not in full employment elsewhere, and had a genuine need to be reimbursed for the hours they were expected to put in. As well, a number of unpaid volunteers have worked on the weekday team from time to time without requesting payment. Staff wages generally have comprised about 10% of the annual budget, a ratio that real businesses can only dream about.

Over the quarter century the staff involved and years of service have been:- Dave Macartney (25), Jacqui Edwards (21), Garry Wood (11), Alan Snowball (10), Barry McCandlish (5), Darren Hutchesson (3), Jim Parker (2), and one year each to David Puls, Dawn Poulouse and Deepthi Poulouse.

The number of hours worked is a staggering 43 700. If the founders of the museum had been told that it would take that much effort to keep these ancient trams running they may well have walked away and taken up stamp collecting.

Dave Macartney

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Deepthi departs....

After exactly twelve months on the weekday workforce, Deepthi Poulouse has returned to India to further her studies. Already holding a Bachelor of Computer Sciences degree, she is undertaking a three year course to obtain her Master's degree.

Initially employed here as the car cleaner, she soon moved into general maintenance and restoration work, latterly on the cleanout of ESCo 22 ready for its overhaul, and on the preparation of 27 for its repaint.

Different cultural issues would emerge; even moving from one part of the shed to another could pose problems:

“Come on, Deepthi, off you go, ladies first.”

“Oh no Dave, you must go first because you are so old.”

Thanks pal, thanks a million! The concept of the unpaid volunteer was also something she could never quite understand.

In India it is so competitive that you can't

take your mind off your chosen career for an instant or you will be left behind. This would explain the almost total lack of volunteer projects such as ours in the sub-continent.

From first to last, Deepthi was an absolute joy to work with, and we will particularly miss that lovely smile.

...and Jacob arrives

Having left at such short notice, Deepthi was considerate enough to nominate a replacement on the team to carry out those projects which she had begun. Jacob Paul is a fellow Indian who has been putting in some excellent work on Mondays, principally on No. 27. He has worked on diesel engines in Saudi Arabia previously, so should be able to keep up with the quirky behaviour of our ageing fleet, not to mention our ageing members. Jacob is aged 37, and puts in a solid days work. The rest of us may have to lift our game.

Dave Macartney



Above: Dave Macartney and Deepthi Poulouse take a break

Photo: BTM collection 10 March 2010

Twenty Five Years as a Volunteer

Recently, Dave O'Neil announced that he intended to give up driving when his medical certificate ran out. The final day occurred on Sunday 28 March 2010 when Dave ran in just before 5:00 pm. Richard Gilbert was on hand to arrange suitable streamers and a celebratory cake. During the day Dave had been assisted by the Museum's newest recruit on his first day of training, Ryan Vanderzweep.

Dave's tramway experience stretched back over forty years from the time he moved from Geelong to Melbourne in search of work and obtained a job on the trams. After a suitable stint as a conductor he graduated to driver and worked at Hawthorn Depot until its closure in 1965 when he transferred to Glenhuntly. (During the 1960s three other Museum drivers could be found driving trams for the M&MTB – the late Frank Puls, Peter Bruce and Peter Winspur). A move to

Essendon proved to be a bad career decision and Dave returned to Geelong. He later spent three months as a conductor in Ballarat before returning home. For the remainder of his working life Dave could be found driving urban buses in Geelong.

In 1984, Dave had a ride on one of our trams and came to the conclusion that he would love to try driving SEC trams. He joined soon after and became a conductor again in Ballarat in February 1985. By February 1986 Dave was a fully fledged tram driver again.

Dave has always been passionate about Geelong trams and in 1994 he self published *History of the Geelong Electric Tramways 1912-1956*. He had sought out many former employees and they were able to relate some great stories about the tramway era. It was no accident that the tram Dave chose to drive on his last day in

Ballarat was No 14. In a former life it had been the first Geelong No 29 (1928-1936). Since 1986, Dave has been one of the Museum's most regular drivers. After his retirement from work Dave could be found for up to four days in a row driving during the school holidays. The Roster Clerk will sorely miss him. Dave has promised to continue to make himself available as a Depot Guide on a regular basis. Thank you Dave for your contribution.

Peter Winspur



Above: At the 2009 AGM Stephen Butler presented Dave O'Neil with a "25 Years of Service" badge
Photo: Warren Doubleday 8/11/09

Operations

Passenger figures for the December/January holiday period were below average, and only just exceeded the all time low figure of two years ago. The hot weather had started in November, earlier than usual, and, as predicted by an expert at the Weather Bureau, also finished earlier. Accordingly, February was milder than usual, but by then the daily operation of January had finished. For the first time in three years the lake did not entirely dry out over summer, and some good rain during February saw a bit of a recovery here. A supply of recycled water saw flowers in the flower beds in the gardens in place of the dirt seen in previous years.

Unfortunately, the wettest period turned out to be the first weekend of March, exactly coinciding with the Begonia celebrations. The format changed this year, with all the attractions located within the Botanical Gardens proper, to the west of Wendouree Parade. There was, accordingly, a marked reduction in the number of pedestrians wandering back and forth across the Parade compared to recent years. As well, the street parade returned to the Gardens after a number of years, and was held at 3 p.m. on the Monday, as the rain continued to fall. The Operations Manager has never seen a crowd arrive and disperse so quickly in all his experience in Ballarat or in Melbourne.

Not surprisingly, the three day total of 4378 passengers was the lowest since the commencement of the sponsorship agreement with the Begonia Festival in 2004. The previous low had been 4752 during the weekend in 2006.

Fortunately, as all travel for the weekend

was free, there was no loss in revenue involved. Trams 661 and 671 maintained the base service as usual whilst 14, 28 and 466 joined them to battle the elements at various times throughout the weekend. The trams operated faultlessly and our crews were as enthusiastic as ever.

This year twenty nine members invested 456 hours of their time over the three days. This was the best turnout for many years. Special thanks go to those who made themselves available for all three days. They included Lindsay Richardson and John Shaw who had travelled all the way from Perth. It was also great to see Sydney member Bruce Worthington who has been very ill recently. Two very pleasant evenings were also spent at two of the local hostleries.

Easter figures, in much better weather conditions, were more encouraging, with 505 passengers carried, above average for recent years. Peter Bruce, returning after an absence of many years, learned the delights of issuing well over 100 tickets and dealing with souvenir sales whilst also driving the tram.

Tram No 466 had its official last run in Ballarat on Saturday 27 March before its imminent return to Bendigo. Brought to Ballarat at a time when lack of space precluded it remaining in Bendigo, the tram has proved very popular every time it has operated, particularly in inclement weather. Unfortunately, since the arrival of No 22 last year, space has been so limited that the trams can only be housed in a certain order and there is insufficient room to reconstruct No 38's bogies.

Around the Museum

In the workshop the repaint of No. 27 has commenced, with the saloon and motorman's windows already revarnished and stored as work proceeds of the preparation of the body. One damaged side panel, carrying a dent from S.E.C. days, has finally been removed for replacement.

The armature for No 38 has returned from Bendigo, where it was receiving some attention to its insulation, while the re-profile of the wheels has been completed in Adelaide, and they can be returned as soon as No. 466 departs. The painting of the underside of No. 38. has been completed, a messy job which has gone on for too long, but has used up quite a bit of redundant paint.

After the April school holidays some trackwork was carried out in Wendouree Parade and three troublesome rail joints were replaced. The Museum is like any other body which needs to dig up a public

street. Council must be advised in advance and a formal traffic management plan must be drawn up. OH&S considerations require that a Job Safety Analysis be undertaken.

Our thanks to the team who assisted Richard Gilbert and Alan Snowball. They included Alastair Reither, Jacob Paul, Neil Lardner, John Shaw, Simon Green, Eddy Radics, Gavin Young and Neville Hesketh.

The Museum has invested in a specialist rail saw which has greatly improved our ability to perform this type of work accurately and far more quickly.

Last year one of the A frame tram ride signs was stolen from Wendouree Parade while the tramway was operating, an annoying loss. However, a Wendouree resident recently advised that it was in his neighbour's backyard. Arrangements were made for the police to attend and the sign was soon returned to its rightful owners, as were several other items belonging to other people which the miscreants could not explain having in their possession.



Left: A replacement section of rail has been welded into place and awaits the fishplates.

Photo:
Richard Gilbert
15 April 2010

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Victorian Heritage Rail Workshop

Since the imminent advent of the Rail Safety Act (2006) the Victorian Department of Transport has been very supportive of the Tourist and Heritage Rail groups. There was a recognition that assistance would be needed to ensure that the groups met the accreditation deadline of 30 June 2009 and assistance was provided by way of a specialist company *Safety Action Pty Ltd.*

The Department also identified that the arrangements entered into over forty or more years in relation to tenancy of land and ownership of assets had become very unclear. Parliament has recently approved legislation which will bring together all transport in Victoria by means of the Transport Integration Act. This is therefore an ideal time to look at the issues facing the heritage rail sector.

It is proposed to introduce a Tourist and Heritage Rail Bill into parliament later this year. The proposal is to:

1. Establish an asset register
2. Consolidate land and asset tenure arrangements for those on crown

land vested in VicTrack or under Order in Council

3. Establish a voluntary registration scheme
4. Consider Government involvement in insurance
5. Establish the administrative office of Registrar
6. Give the Director of Public Transport power to establish an advisory board.

On 15 and 17 April 2010 the Department engaged *Safety Action* to run two consultative workshops to discuss the proposals in detail and obtain feedback from the sector. The process included allowing those present to break up into teams to enable issues to be raised, considered and debated so that they may be resolved prior to the legislation being drafted.

The workshops were very successful and there was generally a good level of support for the proposal. The Department needs to be congratulated for its ongoing support of the sector.



Above: Gardens Loop Sunday 7 March 2010

Photo: Peter Winspur

A Single Regulator

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in December 2010 determined to establish a single Rail Safety Regulator to be established by 2013. The National Regulators Panel are working in the meantime, on strengthening the harmonisation between the states.

The Act will enable a Single Rail Safety Regulator to be based in South Australia. Head office will be in SA with offices in each state. The various states will have an Act that points to the SA Act – using the applied template law model. ATHRA will be following the establishment of this regulator closely and is likely to be represented on consultative panels in conjunction with the Australasian Railway Association.

ATHRA members help and assistance in commenting on documents will be sought.

One area to be reviewed as part of the setting up of the Single Regulator will be the National Model Act. ATHRA's current areas of concern are:

- Section 68 – Competency Assessment
- The definitions of a railway/tramway and the Regulator Reach
- Inclusion of a definition of a heritage rail operator
- Rail Safety Worker definition
- The impact of the system on the heritage micro operators – the excessive paperwork given their size and whether alternative provisions can be incorporated within the Act and Regulations for them.

(From a Rail Safety Report to the Association of Tourist & Heritage Rail Australia members February 2010)



New Recruits

Above: Eddy Radics with Peter Winspur
Photo: Len Millar 8 April 2010

Below: Ryan Vanderzweep
Photo: Austin Brehaut 28 March 2010



12. FARES PLEASE!



Above: Tram No 14 in Begonia service on Sunday 7 March.

Photo: Peter Winspur

New Members

The Museum welcomes the following new members and Junior Supporter. We thank them for joining.

- 807 Colin Holmes of Ballarat
- 808 Jacob Paul of Ballarat
- 809 Greg Fitzgerald of Bealiba
- 5054 Rowan Moore of Ballarat

Heritage Weekend

The Ballarat Heritage Weekend will be held over the Mothers' Day weekend (8-9 May). No 1 Horse Tram will operate on both days from about 11:30 am. Electric trams will also run. The event will be free due to the continuing generous support of the City of Ballarat.

For further information visit:

www.ballaratheritageweekend.com



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