

# FARES PLEASE!

June 2010

*News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum*

## Ballarat Heritage Weekend



*Photo: Peter Winspur 8 May 2010*



*Photo: Bruce Dixon 9 May 2010*

***Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History***

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### Scenes from the 2010 Heritage Weekend

*Above & below: Peter Winspur 8/5/10*

*Right: Bruce Dixon 9/5/10*



## W Class Trams

Since the privatization of the operation of the Melbourne tramway system in 1999, VicTrack has been the custodian of any tram which was not included in the franchise agreements between the Victorian government and the franchisees. These included the “ready reserve” fleet set aside by the previous government.

Some time ago the government determined that these trams would no longer be required and custodianship of some of these has been offered to the Australasian Museums. Some have found their way overseas under varying circumstances and conditions.

It is intended to redevelop the Preston Workshops in the near future into a state of the art maintenance facility and tram depot. Consequently, VicTrack are required to remove the remaining trams in the near future.

With this in mind and as these trams are essentially still in operational condition the Board of the Museum resolved to apply for four trams. With the support of COTMA, approval was granted for the BTM to take over the custodianship of trams 865, 924, 861 and 969.

On 16 and 17 June trams 865 and 924 were transported by VicTrack using L. Arthur Transport. As an interim measure trams 861 and 969 will go to Newport Workshops to join the other trams stored there.

Our thanks go to Mike Ryan, Business Manager Heritage at VicTrack for his support and assistance.

## Heritage Weekend

The Ballarat Heritage Weekend held over the weekend of 8 and 9 May has now become an annual event. This year the theme was travel and tourism. The Sunday was Mothers’ Day.

Financial support by Council ensured that events remained free and the Museum received generous support to ensure that No 1 Horse Tram could operate.

Lyle Drayton was again available to provide the horses and *D’Arcy* and *Princess* gave sterling service on both days from 11:00 am.

With quite good weather prevailing the weekend proved to be an outstanding success for the Museum with 2,500 passengers riding over the two days. Just over 1,000 of these were able to squeeze on No 1. This was an average of over 40 per trip!

Several of the other events were fully booked, but the Museum managed to cater for all who wished to sample 19<sup>th</sup> Century travel. On the Sunday afternoon some needed to wait for a following trip.

For most of the weekend Tram No 26 provided the electric service from Gardens Loop to Carlton Street while No 1 operated from the Loop to St Aidans Drive. No 26 looked superb in the autumn and, like No 1, allowed our passengers to experience travel in fresh air-conditioned comfort.

The Museum would like to thank Council and particularly Jeff Johnson of Events Ballarat for their continuing support.

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### The Ballarat Tramway “Jelbart” Roller

*Colin Holmes has been a friend of the Museum for several years and recently joined as a member. He has spent many hours in the Public Records Office in Ballarat and over the years has found many fascinating items relating to the Ballarat Tramways. In 2009 to celebrate the centenary of the company Colin published “Jelbart engines : a collection of old documents, historic photos, old advertisements, rally scenes”. He recently provided the following information.*

In 1934 the State Electricity Commission purchased new a large road roller. It had been built locally at the site of Beaurepaire Tyres in Mair Street. The roller served well until the system closed in 1971.

On closure the SEC offered the roller to the Ballarat Engine & Machinery Preservation Society but as they already had one Jelbart Roller, a three wheeler from the Ballarat City Council, the offer was declined. It was later donated to the Tramway Museum Society at Bylands and has since been restored. The vehicle is a 25hp tandem and has one wide roller at the rear rather than the more common two wheels. Only one other survivor is known.

Colin remembers:

*I recall travelling to school on trams from Darling Street to the new cemetery. Fare twopence (2d) to the CBD and 2d to cemetery. A pie was 8d so lunch and fares total one shilling and four pence(1/4d) for a day.*

*Travelling along, we would stop whilst the slow moving roller would bang its way off tracks from rolling the tar in. The tram would be crammed so full of schoolkids*

*that the conductor would not move to get fares. The roller driver would twiddle with the fuel mixture screw to cause an ear splitting backfire, causing the girls to scream in unison.*

*We boys had to get out and push the tram up a hill once in Drummond Street near South Street when fools put sump oil on tracks. It was cold and wet and the tram windows were foggy. The girls remained on board and on the back window fog they wrote messages urging us on, some unprintable. One clever girl wrote backwards to be more readily readable from outside, her language was a step backward for ladylike.*

*At school we had clay modelling with brown clay. We would press a penny imprint coin both sides and leave it to dry. Then on a crowded peak time tram, pass the fake penny off under a good one. After a few weeks, our headmaster lectured us re a criminal offence of counterfeit money and that ceased. Maybe we were not the full penny, but didn't get caught.*

Colin has the Jelbart Company ledger books which record that the M&MTB purchased three similar rollers between 1923 and 1930.

Jelbart built stationary engines from 1909 to 1930 and tractors from 1914 to 1930. The Jelbart order books show that orders for rollers slowed during the 1920s and ceased around 1930, probably because of a rural downturn and the Great Depression. Then on 1 July 1934 there was an order for "road rollers" totalling 2,178 pounds and 10 shillings. There were no details on how many or to whom the rollers went.

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A *Ballarat Courier* reference<sup>1</sup> on 25/8/1934 states that an order had been placed on the Jelbart Co. for two oil rollers, one for Ballarat and one for Bendigo. As there was no other order for rollers around this time, it can be safely assumed that the 1 July 1934 order was for the Ballarat and Bendigo tramways.

Rollers came from footpath size 30 cwt to 10 tons. About six rollers have survived from about 100 made. The total engine production by the company was about 1750.

The company was fiercely patriotic to Ballarat with about 99% of the parts built there. Only the magneto, spark plug and lead and springs for the throttle and air valve were made outside. They were an unusual design, two stroke with manual bearing requiring oiling every four hours via bungs with a drip to the cylinder. The rollers ran on straight petrol, kerosene or crude oil. The company closed in December 1965.

Colin recalls:

*Doug Wiseman, the relief driver, told me of one day, the roller refused to start despite much muscle power applied to swinging the flywheels around. The magneto is behind the L.H.S. flywheel. Being spoked, the assistant put his head through the spokes to check the points opening.*

*It is fitted with a trip start. Well he moved the flywheel 2" with head through and bingo. Despite stubbornly refusing to fire, it clicked the trip and started up with his hapless head in the spokes.*

*He cart wheeled off to a heap on the ground and had two weeks off work. A similar event happened years ago to the Ballarat City Council roller, nowadays housed at lake Goldsmith.*

*He almost went off his head, or head off.*

*Motto, whenever placing arm, or head through any engine with a spoked flywheel, always remove the spark plug lead.*

<sup>1</sup>. "Courier" reference courtesy of Alan Bradley

**Left:**  
Sturt & Lydiard Sts corner.  
25/8/1966

*Photo published in  
"The Courier" 26/8/1966*



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### Trams

The body of M&MTB Tram No 121 was donated to the Museum in 1978. In recent years it has been stored under cover at member Len Millar's residence at Newstead. Since that time the museum has acquired further Ballarat trams and with no reasonable prospect of the tram being restored the Museum accepted an offer by Neil McDonald of Gisborne to take the tram.

The tram left Newstead on 27 April 2010 and will be housed under a roof. Neil intends to respect the integrity of the tram and use it to house and display his telephone collection. The spare 22E trucks on which the tram was sitting are now at the depot and are being cleaned.

Since the arrival of No 22 last year space at the depot has been at a premium and consequently Newstead Tramcars' Tram No 466 left Ballarat on 13 May 2010 to return to Bendigo. The tram has been very popular whilst at Ballarat.

Repainting of tram No 27 continues. Most of the interior is now complete and the saloon windows have been refitted. With the return of Deepthi to India, Jacob has taken over the task of finalising the job.

### COTMA Conference

Pre and post Conference Tour details are now on the COTMA website. The pre-conference tour visits the THS at Ferrymead and travels on the Tranzcoastal train. The post conference tour visits Foxton, Wanganui, New Plymouth and Auckland. Details are at:

<http://www.cotma.org.au/conference>

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### Display Area Upgrade

This project is continuing slowly. The new flooring was installed on 26 May and as well as being far more practical than the previous carpet it looks superb.

Last month the Museum launched an appeal for funds to finalise the project by completing the flooring in the 'older running shed' and lining the walls. This section of the building is regarded as the public area where our trams are displayed and has long needed investment.

In addition to displaying our trams the area is where group visits gather to be welcomed and informed about the history of the tramways and our museum. It is also used for functions such as our Annual General Meeting, barbecues and afternoon teas.

Sufficient funds were raised by the appeal to complete the project and we thank those who donated for their generosity.

### Lake Wendouree

With funding from Ballarat Council and the Victorian Government through the Regional Development Fund a pipeline is to be installed from the Redan Wetlands as the next phase of its stormwater harvesting project.

This month the state government committed funding to pipe water from a bore in Ballarat west directly to Lake Wendouree. This project should accelerate the filling of the lake which has so far been painfully slow. It is hoped that the lake will be sufficiently full to allow boating by the middle of 2011.

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**Right:** Turning the horses  
Sunday 9 May 2010  
*Photo: Peter Winspur*



**Below:** New floor covering for the display area  
*Photo: Depot staff*  
26/5/10



**Below:** Jacob Paul repainting No 27  
*Photo: Depot staff* 24/5/10



**Above:** Jacob Paul replaces a panel on No 27  
*Photo: Depot staff* 26/4/10

**Below:** Tram No 466 departs on 13 May 2010  
*Photo: Neil Lardner*



# 8. FARES PLEASE!



Photo: Peter Winspur 9 May 2010

## New Member

The Museum welcomes the following new member. We hope his time with the Museum will be long and rewarding.

810 Adam Francis of Noble Park.

## Donation Receipts

If you have made a donation to the Museum during the past year your tax receipt should be enclosed. Treasurer Carolyn Cleak can answer any queries. She can be contacted on (03) 9877 4130.



The A40 Car Club visited on Anzac Day

Photo: Stephen Butler



**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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