

FARES PLEASE!

December 2011

Celebrating 40 Years

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum



Photo: Peter Bruce

The Year's End – A Time to Relax

Staff from Harcourt's Ballarat enjoy a Hawaiian themed party on Tram 671 before Christmas Dinner at *Pipers by the Lake*.

John Clowes and Neville Hesketh were their crew on Sunday 18 December.



Photo: Peter Winspur 27/11/11

Christmas Tram No 13 on a pleasant Sunday afternoon.

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History

2. FARES PLEASE!

Around the Museum

The Ballarat City Council Parks and Gardens management have removed three elm trees from in front of our Depot as part of an upgrade to the walkway between the Botanic Gardens and the Prisoners of War Memorial. The trees had become quite old and gnarled and the concept is to have a formal walkway of similar trees between these two locations. Three conifer trees were planted to provide for a consistent line of trees on this pathway. The trees took three days to be removed as the tree lopping gang had to work in a restricted area and also were required to work around our overhead span wires and trolley wire.

The Museum co-ordinated with the works in respect of isolating the power and complying with regulations regarding worksites operating in this environment. The removal of the trees has opened up the area allowing a better view of our Depot for visitors walking in from Wendouree Parade.

The implications of operating vehicles approaching one hundred years old has been highlighted in recent months as suddenly we have moved from 100% availability to several trams with various faults. A defective axle bearing was found on No 27 during regular servicing and until (expensive) repairs can be carried out the tram is on limited availability. On Tram No 40 a visual observation led to the discovery of defective wheel bearings on one pony axle and a bent king pin. The tram is out of service until repairs are effected.

Reported out of service in the last *Fares Please!*, Tram No 661 is in the process of being lifted so that an inspection of the bogie frames can be carried out as well as checking the condition of the bearings. The W3 class trams were withdrawn from service in Melbourne due to the issue of cracking of the bogie frames and we have already replaced one some years ago.

There is a tight time frame for the return to service of this tram as it will be required for the Begonia Festival in March.

Tram No 33 is currently undergoing an external repaint and the application of the yellow edge lining has commenced. Member Brian Wood of *Signs of the Times* is doing this work as well as applying the numerals. The professional touch is very evident. It is hoped to have the external work completed in time for the holiday running.

A very welcome addition to our workforce has been Geoff Gardner. He has been enthusiastically prepared to get down and dirty. His availability includes weekdays and he has been invaluable in our efforts to attempt to catch up with some of the backlog in the workshop.

After sixteen years the Museum had finally exhausted its supply of brake blocks. During this time our regular supplier has passed away and his Ballarat foundry closed. A new manufacturer has been found and this also required the manufacture of a new cast. The composition of the blocks is slightly different and we will now be trialling them to see how they perform. The exercise has led to a quite large drain on our finances but will ensure a supply for many years.

A transfer of bogies was made on 1st November when two bogies were delivered from Newport Workshops. They have been made available to our museum by VicTrack. Initially they are to be used as temporary supports for No 661 whilst its bogies are serviced. These will be then kept as spares for our W6 trams and are a worthwhile gain to our spares to satisfy any demand for them in the long term future. To make room for them at the depot, two spare Maximum Traction bogies were transferred to Bungaree for storage.

3. FARES PLEASE!



Left: Rotary Young Ambition publicising the forthcoming 'Tram Pull' event
Photo: Richard Gilbert 28/10/11

Right: Enthusiastic Junior Supporter Benjamin Boehle-Mitchell turned ten on 23/10/11
Photo: Bruce Dixon



Left: Cold weather did not dampen the enthusiasm of the crowd attending 'Springfest' *Photo: Peter Winspur 30/10/11*

New Sales Item

The Museum has just received a delivery of biscuit tins. They are very special as they feature a photo of No 1 Horse Tram operating in Wendouree Parade on Mothers' Day in 2010.

The tins are manufactured by *Macs Shortbread Company* of Kerang and most people would have seen at least one of their large range displayed in the shops or supermarkets.

The photo, by Bruce Dixon, is the superb one seen on last year's membership card.

The tins are available at the Museum and sell for \$10 each.



4. FARES PLEASE!

‘Tram Pull’ & ‘Springfest’

Some months ago Rotary Young Ambition approached the Museum to arrange another ‘Tram Pull’. Previous ones have always been good fun and good publicity for the Museum. The last event had been held in 2005. The date chosen was the morning of 30th October, “Springfest” market day. It was felt that this day would see maximum exposure for the event although it meant a few operational challenges for the Museum.

Two single truck trams are placed alongside each other at the loop and teams of 10-15 attempt to pull them by rope (uphill) along our short section of double track. Even though we cannot guarantee that the two are exactly the same or that resistance of each track is identical, experience has shown that the performance of the teams is more important than any possible difference between the trams.

Prior to the Tram Pull event, WIN Television promoted advance publicity by recording a story for the WIN News. The Organisers were interviewed at the Museum and provided a pseudo pull of the tram. Unfortunately, it could only be a static shot as the power was off to allow for the tree lopping which was taking place at the same time and reported elsewhere.

The day dawned cold and wet, but this did not dampen the enthusiasm of the visitors and a large crowd were present to witness the teams representing local businesses compete for the cup. After many heats and much tugging, the winning team was B&D Technologies.

‘Springfest’ is usually our busiest day when normal fares are charged and with the loop blocked for some time a ‘split’ service was run on each side until the event finished. As usual the Market stalls were spread all around the Lake. The organisers claimed that attendances were higher than in 2010, but this was not reflected in our patronage which was one of the smallest since the event started in 1996.

Assisting Fellow COTMA Museums

Through the Department of Transport there are arrangements for Museums to obtain second hand infrastructure from Melbourne as it becomes available and of no further use to *Yarra Trams*. During early December, the entire yard at Camberwell Depot was rebuilt and surplus track and overhead fittings were made available to COTMA museums.

Another big effort by our small workforce has seen several sets of points and overhead fittings transported to Bungaree for the use of other Museums in the future. On behalf of all the Museums we thank *Yarra Trams* for their assistance and co-operation and Adrian Ponton of the Department for his continuing support.

Bungaree Shed

With the installation of the downpipes and drainage now finished the new building has now been certified by the building inspector and is ready for occupancy.

Three days of working bees by our small and dedicated workforce saw three tracks installed inside the shed and far enough outside to unload trams. Local neighbour, Ron Trigg, loaned his front end loader and this has been used to backfill the area thus eliminating the cost of hiring a backhoe.

Paul Mong has donated sufficient gravel to cover the dirt inside the shed. The area outside will have to wait until further funds are available. The next move is to relocate the trams stored outside.

It was commented by one of our younger members that this was the first time some of them had experienced working in a track laying gang. He is lucky he was not around when we used a large cross cut saw to shorten dozens of sleepers obtained from the Victorian Railways from nine feet to seven feet!

5. FARES PLEASE!

Realising the Objective – Late 1971

Reading the Board minutes and newsletters from late 1971 some forty years later one has the sense that the Board and its members were very much in a new place. It is easy to forget that not only were most of the members very young but that the structure of the organisation had only just been created and processes for actually running the Society needed to be developed. Not only was it necessary to work out how to create an operating museum and to find the money but the burgeoning membership also needed to be dealt with and kept informed and enthused.

Supreme optimism that trial running could be achieved in late 1971 was soon dashed when the SEC refused permission after Council had agreed.

From late September the Board began to meet frequently as the task began of persuading the authorities that the organisation was capable of realising its aims and then actually doing this. Two meetings were even held in the waiting room of Bacchus Marsh station!

Rumours of dissatisfaction among some enthusiasts led to a meeting between representatives of the Society and the Tramway Museum Society on the 23rd of September. The TMSV had only recently begun to establish a museum to represent the history of Victorian tramways at Bylands. A joint statement was issued in December emphasising both the similarities and differences of the aims of the two organisations. The statement emphasised that the BTPS would run a tourist service at weekends and holidays similar to *Puffing Billy* and that “The BTPS will operate its trams in the same condition and manner as they ran until the system closed. Thus, the typical Ballarat tram that has become so well known will be perpetuated in its final condition”.

Neville Gower, the foundation secretary, resigned at the end of September and Richard Gilbert took over. Frank Hanrahan was co-opted to replace Neville. At the meeting on 15th October Hal Cain was appointed the first President of the Society. The position had not been filled at the inaugural meeting. It was decided that the Society should become a Company limited by guarantee.

Deputations met Councillors from the City Tourism Committee, Mr Ivan Pallas, the Ballarat manager of the SEC and Mr Balfour, the Minister for Fuel and Power. Detailed submissions were presented. A submission was sent to the Premier, Sir Henry Bolte and a deputation sought. The Board meeting on the 15th October was held at the SEC offices with Mr Pallas as guest. He made several constructive suggestions. The meeting lasted until the early hours of next day. The Minister for Tourism, Murray Byrne, was approached and he offered support. Council approval was granted to operate between the gate pillars of the Botanical Gardens. The site for the depot was finalised. An agreement had been reached with the Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board concerning the training and qualification of drivers and by October the first class had been planned.

In October an urgent appeal for funds stated that Council had set a deadline of 8th November to commence building. At the meeting on the 14th of November Hal Cain reported on a meeting with Councillors. They “were perturbed with the Society’s finances and insurances”. It was suggested that the Society obtain a Government Guaranteed Loan from the Registrar of Co-operative Societies.

It was then decided that the only suitable means of raising sufficient funds for the project was to set up a Co-operative Loan

6. FARES PLEASE!

Society. The State Savings Bank approved a loan of \$4,000 but the setting up of a separate entity to guarantee and administer the loan was required. A meeting of members on the 19th of December gave approval. It was estimated that the total cost of setting up the Museum would be about \$6,000. The appeal had raised about \$1,700 by December. Council agreed to contribute \$750 towards the housing of their tram, No 14. Volunteer workers insurance was obtained.

By the middle of December quotes were being sought for either the pouring of the

foundations and the supply of materials for the building as well as for its complete construction.

The hope to build a new depot, construct an access track to Wendouree Parade and design and build a power supply in a short period of time gradually faded as the reality dawned of dealing with so many issues and then actually finding enough volunteers to achieve such an ambitious goal.

Support for the project had remained very high as by the end of 1971 there had been 281 applications for membership!

Peter Winspur

Staff System on Horse Tramways

The Museum recently received the following (slightly edited) email from an Edward Slattery. It discusses a form of 'safe working' used on single tracks where vehicles travelled both directions on the same track. For most of the electric tram era in Ballarat a simple system of electric signals operated by contactors on the overhead wires was used. The 'staff' working referred to is the use of an object like a baton which must be carried by the vehicle whilst it passes along the single track. There was always only one for each section.

Hello down there

I've been working for years on a summary of methods of single-track tramway working, and have found the staff system to have been used in at least 21 cities world-wide, from Houston to Paris to Hobart.

The odd thing is that evidence of it is totally lacking for horse tramways, except for electric staff working on track shared with steam trains in Victor Harbour from 1911 to 1915. Brisbane had an electric signal on the single track of its horse car system over the Victoria Bridge, described in articles of the local paper from 1886 & 1887, but the manual staff system used on many electric tramways at least as early as 1901 is lacking

in everything I've been able to dig out of the web and out of hard copies of the "Street Railway Journal" dating back to 1883.

This is particularly surprising since many American cities, as well as Brisbane, used the small "bobtail" cars, lacking a conductor and consequently lacking the rear platform that might have accommodated freeloaders, which had to be reversed on turntables at termini. Because of ordinances and franchise provisions prohibiting the blocking of plank or flagstone crosswalks over mud streets by the car horses. most of them also lacked any step up on to the front platform, with the passengers boarding at the rear and having to walk forward to drop their fares into the box. Although all this must've made reversals after meets between loops very time-consuming, the evidence from many photographs and from a court case in Rochester makes it clear that the dang things totally lacked any rear-end brake handle or lever! Nevertheless, the photographic evidence from Denver and many other cities makes it very clear that they were, like most horsecars, usually connected to the horses only through traces, chains, and a cross-bar, without the shafts or pole that would've allowed the driver to stop them by pulling up on the reins.

7. FARES PLEASE!

With these cars Denver somehow ran a mile-long single-track trunk shared by four routes with a headway of 5 to 10 minutes between cars or convoys, through the visibility problems of a 60-inch annual snowfall! (And no, they weren't replaced by sleighs in winter--that sort of thing was limited to cities with really cold weather, mainly Winnipeg & Montreal)

There's no evidence of fixed signals or register lists being used on horse lines either, except in Brisbane. The only control method I've found to have been at all common was the placement of a small iron block in the flangeway along the switch tongues, which kept wagon wheels from shifting the point and thereby left its position showing the route or direction of the previous car at entrances to double track and junctions in single somewhat reliably. However, court cases, newspaper items and the trade press show the removal of the block by children and "malicious persons" to have caused some collisions, and, with 14-hour workdays, it's hard to believe there wouldn't have been enough "malicious persons" around, in the form of disgruntled ex-employees, to have left the method almost unworkable in the prevention of delays.

I'd be most appreciative if you could let me know whether there is any evidence at all of hand staffs having been used on horse lines in Ballarat or anywhere else, and also whether the route from Victor Harbour's station to the Hindmarsh River either included any street running or was through-routed with the one to Granite Island there. (I've been able to trace the development of the staff system back to 1850, three years earlier than the 1853 date mentioned in some histories, and it so definitely antedated the first street-railway boom of the late 1850's that it would be nice to be able to mention at least some use it on horse-powered street tramways.) Please let me know if any of the info I've collected might be of interest to your museum or its visitors.

Our historian, Alan Bradley replied:

Dear Edward,

I refer to your e-mail of 8 October 2011. The detail was very interesting, and I learned a lot!

Ballarat certainly had a hand staff system to control movement between loops during the early electric tram era. The museum even has some surviving examples of those hand staffs, complete with names of the loops.

I have read the two histories covering the horse tram era in Ballarat: Wal Jack's 1954 Ballarat tramway history; and "Conductor 23" by W.P. James (written by a tramway inspector whose career included service on the Sebastopol horse tramway). Neither included any references to hand staffs during the horse tram era.

I am speculating that hand staffs were not as vital for safety on horse tramways. Speeds were lower, so a "cornfield meet" would have resulted mainly in frustration and bad language. In 1906 (the year after the opening of the Ballarat electric service) there was a bad collision between two electric trams on the curved track in Wendouree Parade that resulted in injuries to passengers. Around that time there was also a serious collision on the Bendigo electric tramways. It may have been those collisions and their aftermath that led to the introduction of hand staffs by the Electric Supply Company of Victoria (the operator of the Ballarat and Bendigo tramways).

I hope this information is helpful.

Regards,

Alan Bradley

COTMA Conference

Hosted by the AETM the next Conference will be held in Adelaide from 16 to 21 August 2012.

The proposed agenda can be viewed at: <http://www.cotma.org.au> and follow the links.

1971 Tramway News: Part 6 By Alan Bradley

November & December 1971:

We continue looking at a few interesting news items from "Modern Tramway" magazine, to see what else was happening in the tramway world in 1971.

Australia:

- The Glenelg tram route in Adelaide is to be retained for the foreseeable future. A refurbishing program for the 42 year old fleet has started.
- Members of the newly-formed Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society plan to mount guard on the trams during the closing ceremonies to deter souvenir hunters. The first closure took place as planned on 22 August. The last tram was 31, which left Sturt and Lydiard Streets for Victoria Street at 22.00 with about 55 passengers (mostly Melbourne railfans) onboard. The last tram to leave Lydiard Street was 33, while the actual last tram to use Drummond Street North was 30 returning to the depot after the last run to Sebastopol.
- No closure date for the Bendigo system has been announced. A group of businessmen whose activities include preservation of a local gold mine have applied to take over part of the Golden Square line, and all of the North Bendigo route.

Austria:

- Wien (Vienna) has placed orders for another 27 trams, and it is hoped to withdraw all wooden-bodied trams by 1974. (In 2011 trams still operate in Wien (Vienna).)

Belgium:

- In Antwerpen route 3 is to be extended to a new supermarket complex. A new depot is to be built, and when this is completed a final batch of PCC trams

is to be ordered to replace the remaining older trams (45 motor trams and 15 trailers). (In 2011 trams still operate in Antwerpen (Antwerp).)

- In Charleroi it is reported that all tram routes (with the possible exception of route 7) are to be converted to bus operation in the near future. (In 2011 four tram lines operate on a mixture of tunnel, overhead alignment in and ground level. Much of the planned track was never built for economic reasons.)
- Route 7 in Bruxelles was to be converted to bus operation in October, provided sufficient new buses had been delivered. The next new major development will be the opening early in 1972 of a one km tram tunnel beneath the Boulevard Auguste Reyers, to be used by routes 23 and 90. (In 2011 trams still operate in Bruxelles (Brussels).)

Bulgaria:

- In Sofia a new 3 km branch from Darvenica came into service in April. The reserved-track tramway includes a flyover across a busy highway, and a long crossing-free section beside a forest road. (In 2011 narrow gauge trams still run in Sofia. Two newer standard gauge lines were opened in 1987 and 1995.)

Canada:

- The proposed phasing out of tramway services in Toronto by 1980 has been dropped. While tramway operating costs were higher than those of buses, both the peak hour capacity and economic life of a tram was twice that of a bus. (In 2011 Toronto has the largest surviving tramway system in the Americas.)
-

9. FARES PLEASE!

France:

- The Laon tramway was still closed in July, a replacement service being provided by small one-man operated buses.

Germany:

- The Rheinbahn in Dusseldorf has ordered 28 eight-axle articulated trams. (In 2011 trams still operate in Dusseldorf)
- In Mannheim the tram subway will be opened at the end of September. 13 eight-axle articulated trams have been ordered from Duwag. (In 2011 trams still operate in Mannheim)
- Route 1, the last independent tramway operation in Neuss, was converted to bus operation on 7 August. (Two tram lines from the Rheinbahn lines in Dusseldorf still serve Neuss.)

Great Britain:

- In Blackpool the Bispham tram depot is now a supermarket. On Fleetwood market days all ten two-car trains and all double-deckers are needed in service. (In 2011 the tramway from Blackpool to Fleetwood is the only remaining first-generation tramway in the UK.)

Hungary:

- In Budapest about 60 eight-axle articulated trams had been delivered by August. There is some weakness in the body structure of these cars, while the panels of almost-new cars bear evidence of hasty repair after collision damage. Freight traffic continues on some tram routes. (In 2011 trams still operate in Budapest, although many routes have closed since the end of the Communist era. In 2006 the Combino Supra Budapest six-module trams entered service, the world's longest passenger trams.)

Mexico:

- There are twelve surviving tram routes in Mexico City, including the two isolated lines to Tlalpan and Xochimilco. These connect with a metro line that runs along a former tramway reservation. There are about 300 PCC trams from Detroit and Minneapolis. (All tram routes in Mexico City had closed by 1979, except for the lines to Tlalpan and Xochimilco which were rebuilt as light rail lines. The Tlalpan line has not operated since 1991, but the line to Xochimilco still operates.)
- Tampico has one long tram route from the central area through the twin city of Ciudad Madero to Playa Beach. The line is double track reserved right of way, except for street loops in Tampico. The rolling stock consists mostly of ex-Kansas City and St Louis PCC trams, with a few ex-Mexico City bogie cars. (Tramway operation in Tampico ceased on 13 December 1974.)
- There are five tramway routes in Vera Cruz, almost all single-track loops. Rolling stock consists of two types of bogie trams, some Birney trams from El Paso, a few Peter De Witt trams from Mexico City and Tampico, and two 1907 Brill open trams. All the trams are rather decrepit, and it is rumoured that operation will soon cease. (Tramway operation in Vera Cruz ceased on 16 August 1981.)

Switzerland:

- In Alslatten the tramway operation between the town and the station is to be retained until at least 1973.
 - In Basel new articulated trams were due for delivery in October. (In 2011 trams still operate in Basel)
-

10. FARES PLEASE!

USA:

- In New consideration is being given to extending the St Charles tramway up Bourbon Street as far as Esplanade, returning along Royal Street to join the present line. This would mean restoration of the inner portion of the Desire tramway, which was closed in 1948. (In 2011 the St Charles Avenue line still operates, the Canal Street line was re-opened in 2004, and the Riverfront line was built in 1998.)
- In Pittsburgh routes 44, 49 and 53 were expected to be closed on 14 November.
- In San Francisco a proposal has been made to divert the California Street cable-car line down Polk Street to the Maritime Museum at Fisherman's Wharf. The present terminus is of little interest to tourists, who tend to crowd the Powell Street line and ignore the California Street line. The estimated cost is \$1.8 million, and strong objections have been raised. (The planned diversion never occurred. Both the California Street and Powell Street cable lines were rebuilt in the early 1980s and remain in service.)

Charles Trethowan AM Former SEC Chairman

The Age of October 27, 2011 published an obituary of Joseph Charles Trethowan who was the Chairman of the State Electricity Commission at the time of the official opening of the Ballarat Tourist Tramway in 1975. He was 86 and had passed away on October 10.

Charles as he was commonly known was born in Ballarat in 1925, joined the SEC at the age of 14 as an Office Boy. One of his jobs was to count the coins that had been received on the trams. He trained with the RAF during World War Two as a navigator

but did not see active service as such. After the war he studied Commerce at Melbourne University. In 1974 he was appointed as the SEC General Manager and Chairman of the then very large and powerful Victorian State Electricity Commission.

On Feb.1st, 1975 he officiated at the official opening of the tram service then known as the Ballarat Vintage Tramway along with the Mayor of Ballarat, the late Sir Arthur Nicholson.

Mr Trethowan retired from the SEC in 1987 and put in many years of work on private company boards and with many community organisations. He was remembered as a strong people person, able to remember employee names and interest in their personal matters.

The *SEC News* for February 1975 reported the opening. An extract follows:

Every person who drives a tram must be trained to strict standards and to this end the M.M.T.B has provided certain facilities to selected Society members to be trained as tram drivers.

The exception to this rule was Mr. Trethowan who drove a tram at the opening ceremony. But maybe Mr. Trethowan had some qualifications as he was born in Ballarat and even worked for the tramways for a period.

Our thanks to Earl Ewers for sourcing the obituary.

Fare Rise

After remaining the same for seven years the Board considered it was no longer possible to avoid an increase in the fares charged on the tram. Reluctantly it agreed that they should rise on 1st December 2011.

Day to day expenses, particularly of electricity have risen considerably since December 2004 when charges were last increased.

11. FARES PLEASE!



Photo: Richard Gilbert 29/10/11

Track laying at Bungaree

It has been many years since the Museum has laid track. Unfortunately, the team were so preoccupied they forgot to bring a camera to mark the event. Some resolution photos taken on Richard's phone are the only record.



Photo: Richard Gilbert 28/10/11

The Museum's overhead proved a challenge during the removal of the elm trees around the depot fan. In recent years Council have embarked on an ambitious program of replacing many life expired trees within the Gardens.



Photo: Allan Snowball 26/11/11

Paul Mong burying the good work.



Photo: Peter Winspur 18/12/11

Almost complete, repainted Tram No 33 should be back in service in time for the January holidays.



Photo: Richard Gilbert 18/12/11

Ready to receive trams. When funds are available the area will be further gravelled.



Photo: Richard Gilbert

Re-arranging the spare parts. The truck driver makes light work of loading the spare bogies for transport to Bungaree.

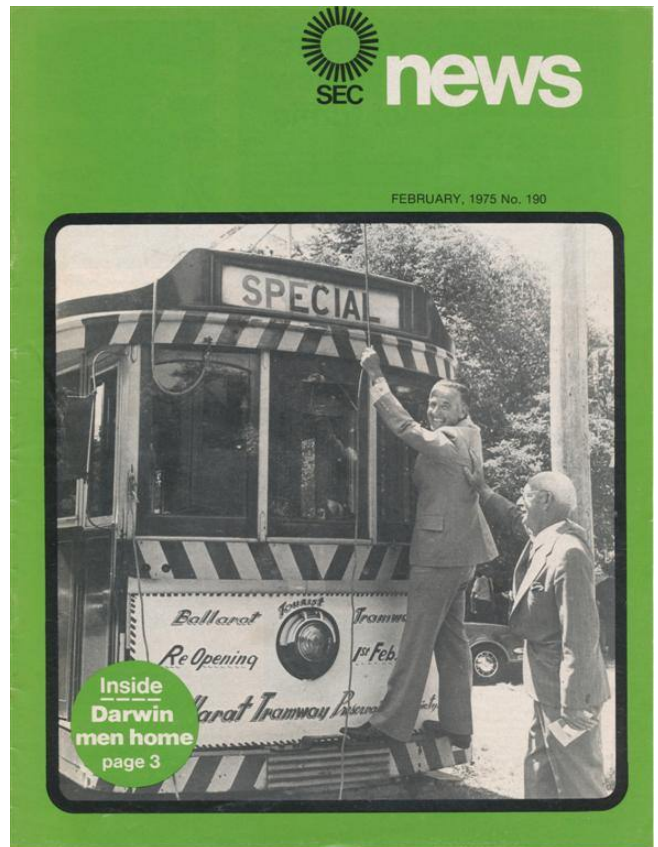
12. FARES PLEASE!



Photo: Bill Kingsley

“Tourist Development Week”

Immediately after the closure of the Ballarat system Tram No 36 spent the week from Monday 20th September 1971 running out of service in Melbourne to promote Ballarat. It has just turned into Domain Rd from St Kilda Road.



BTM Collection

The late Charles Trethowan, supported by the Mayor of Ballarat, Sir Arthur Nicholson poses for the *SEC News* on the Society's opening day.

Late News

On his 76th birthday on 14th December, Bill Kingsley was advised that his cancer is in remission. We wish him well.

Seasons Greetings



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.

For further information regarding the Museum, its activities and publications please contact:
The Secretary, P.O. Box 632, Ballarat, Vic, 3353. Phone / Fax 61 3 5334 1580.

E-mail: info@btm.org.au

Our web page: <http://www.btm.org.au>