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MET LINES



Santa School

Competition for kids
See page 2

Announcing our 'Second Time Lucky' winner

After much brow scratching and discussion the judges of the 'Second Time Lucky' competition (October Met Lines) have made their decision!

Met Lines readers were asked to provide an answer to a curly question — why did that Melbourne Tramway & Omnibus Co Ltd employee need all those safety pins?

The standard of the entries received was high and the judges' task was not easy. The winner is Raymond Marsh who is a Traffic Inspector from the North Fitzroy Depot. Ray's answer is not strictly correct but his poetic effort (see right) does show flair and imagination. He will receive vouchers from Myer to the value of \$70.00.

The photographic portrait is, in fact, of a conductor who worked for the Melbourne Tramway & Omnibus Co. Note that his collar badge bears the initials 'MTOC'. The conductor didn't issue tickets but punched a number on a slip to record the number of fares taken. The reason for the safety pins — the conductor would pin the 'trip slips' on to them!!



The prepared conductor

On the odd occasions, when passengers they're many,
I have that age old problem of far too many pennies,
So when employed by the old M.T. & O.,
There are some things young men should know,
Like an extra pin or two in places,
Placed to help the old worn braces,
Will save the day when the bag overflows,
For into me pockets the pennies goes.
Just by the sad look on me face,
You'll see life is at a hectic pace,
When employed on the old M.T. & O.,
Even though our trams, they're, oh, so slow,
Well I'd have never thought with these changin' times,
That you'd find me picture in new Met Lines.

Award for Met poster

The Met's Marketing Department recently received some public praise when the billboard poster it organised, was judged 'Ad of the Month' by Australian Posters.

Targeted towards off-peak use of the Met by casual public transport users, the ad combines a clever slogan with an eye-catching giant replica of a parking ticket.

Basically, the message for shoppers is to leave the car at home

and catch the Met. This will ensure a quick, cheap and comfortable journey to and from the city without the hassle of trying to find a parking space, or, on your return, finding one of those irritating 'pinkies' flapping in the breeze.

The giant posters have been erected at several locations around Melbourne and are guaranteed to attract a great deal of attention. Art Director Rodney Attenborough

and Copywriter Julie Cuming, combined their talents to achieve the unique effect of the poster. At a special function, Ian Carew-Reid, Group Manager Marketing Services for the Met, accepted the award and an attractive plaque in recognition of the Met's achievement.

The Award winner. The Met's poster which was voted 'Ad of the Month' by Australian Posters.



Keeping tram lines clean

As we have seen in recent issues of Metlines, the Met covers a wide range of services and activities. Particularly pleasing is that many of you are now getting involved in Metlines by telling your own story — whether it be about work or social activities.

This enables us to understand how the differing sections of the Met works and how each activity forms part of the team effort required to provide the excellent public transport system Melbourne has.

Frank Reale-Key is one of the many 'back room' workers whose job is crucial to the viability of the network. Frank joined the M & MTB in 1975 as a conductor operating out of the Brunswick Depot. Later, he became a driver for both Brunswick and Essendon Depots.

In 1979, Frank joined the Civil Engineering Branch as a Scrubber Car Operator. Although the operation of this section of the Met is not immediately obvious to commuters, it is nevertheless vital to the efficient running of the system as Frank explains in the following story:

Scrubber cars

It is midnight. The last trams in service are on their way to the depots and the depot starters are giving the last check to the despatch sheets for the following morning. Around the same time two odd looking trams are coming out of the South Melbourne Depot and start their runs till the morning. They are the track cleaners or, as better known, Scrubber Cars.

They are operated by the Civil Engineering Branch and they are two motors single truck, 33inc. wheel trams.

A close inspection of any length of rail will show pitting as well as dirt and sand. The Scrubber Cars have provision for scrubbing and flushing the track they travel on and they do so at an average speed of 20kph.

Five crews, each comprising an operator and an offsider, are rostered from Sunday night to Friday evening, to provide a twenty four hour, five day service.

Two Scrubber Cars operate during the night and two during the day while one operates in the afternoon.

Scrubber Cars are also used to clean concrete on newly laid track and to remove leaves and tar which are mainly the cause of skidding. During the autumn season when falling leaves create a greater problem, Scrubber Cars operate on weekends and public holidays.

Four Scrubber Cars are in service and are numbered 8W, 9W, 10W and 11W. Built at Preston Tramway Workshops in 1934, 8W was completely overhauled last in 1984, while 9W is a converted 'Q' class passenger tram (old No. 197). Both 10W and 11W are converted Sydney 'K' class passenger trams. Conversion was done at Randwick Tramway Workshops in 1952.

In 1959, they were purchased by the M & MTB, modified and put into service in Melbourne.

Each Scrubber Car has a compressed air operated assembly which holds six carborundum brick-shaped blocks on each side of the

car and pushes these blocks onto the rail at pressures between 20 and 40psi. The operator adjusts the pressure according to the gradient and type of scrubbing done. The blocks are lifted when travelling over shunts or crossing to avoid damage to them.

All cars have tanks to hold water and the volume carried varies from 1040 gallons on 8W to 330 gallons on 10W and 11W.

The operators are required to have a thorough knowledge of the entire tramways network as well as being able to drive between any two points by the shortest track route. They also hold a four motors electric tram driver's certificate.

From the records available, the first Scrubber Car in Melbourne was built in 1917 by the then Melbourne, Brunswick and Coburg Tramways Trust, probably at their Coburg Depot and it saw service as car No.5 with the M & MTB (1919) until 1959.



Operator Frank Reale-Key poses with Scrubber car 8W



Old Sydney 'K' Class Scrubber Car No. 11.