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February 14 2020 - 11:16AM

## Ballarat Tramways Museum loans tram from Haddon for Begonia Festival weeke

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**Greg Gliddon**

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The tram is lowered onto the track at Lake Wendouree on Friday morning. Picture: Lachlan Bence

THERE was movement at the lake, for the word had passed around that a vintage W class tram was arriving in town.

The tram, which has sat at the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association (MTPA) in Haddon for 37 years, has been placed at Lake Wendouree just in time for the Begonia Festival weekend.

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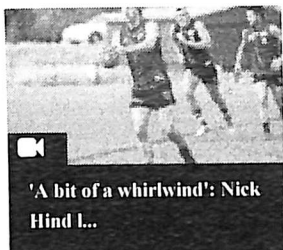
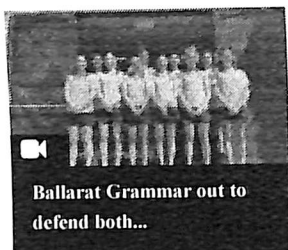
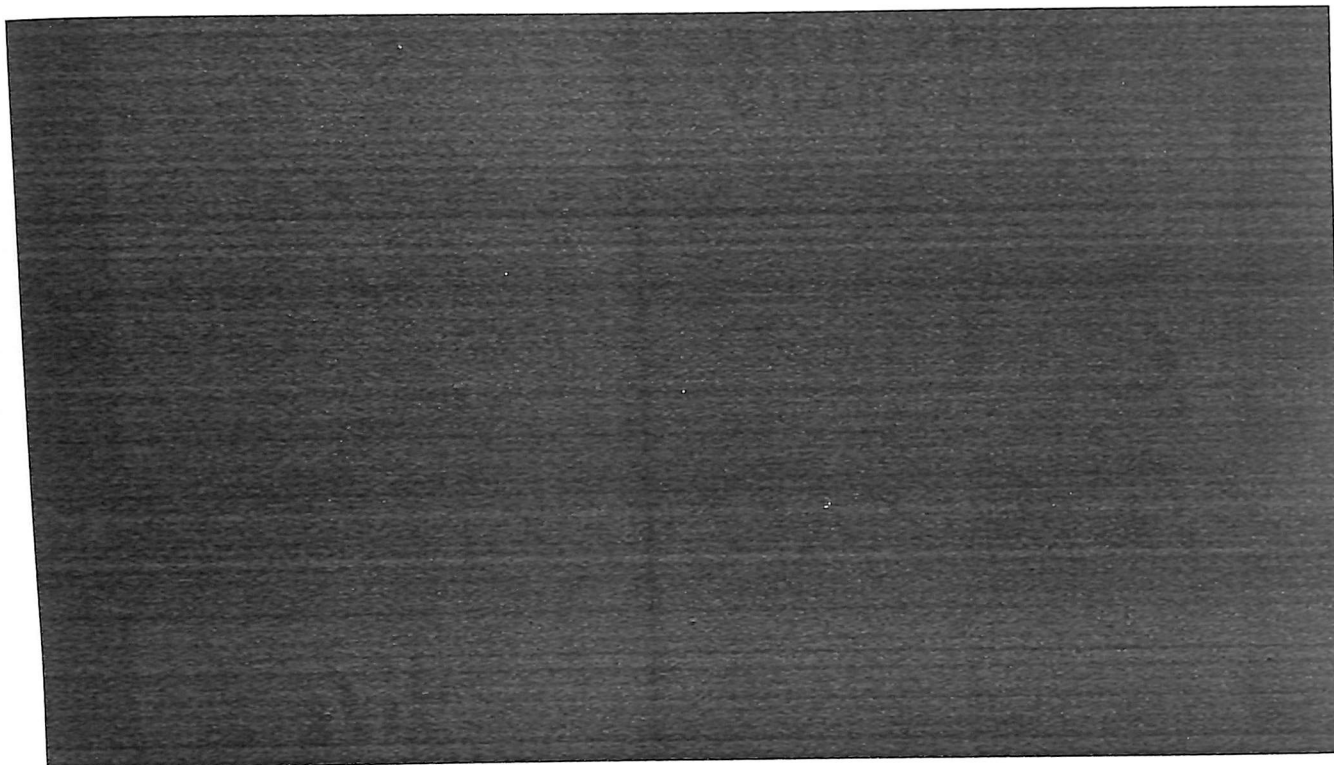
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It has been loaned to the Ballarat Tramways Museum as a replacement tram for the floral tram which was damaged at the event last year.

The tram has been lovingly restored to its original quality and was delicately moved into place by a team of workers who rolled it off a specially designed truck - brought in from New South Wales - and into place at Lake Wendouree on Friday morning.

### WATCH THE TRAM ROLL INTO PLACE HERE



Secretary of the MTPA Tony Smith said it was with pride and sadness he handed over the tram on the two-year loan.


"It's good to see and be able to help out the museum here who have helped me out a lot over the years," Mr Smith said.

"We got the tram in 1983 from Melbourne and it's one of 412 cars that were built between 1925 and 1933 which helped convert Melbourne from cable to electric.

"When it arrived, we had to replace most of the metal gutting up on the top, a number of panels, and electrically it had one defective motor which we swapped out, but generally the car was in good order.

"We've got eight trams, of which six are fully operational."



 The floral tram which was damaged at last year's Begonia Festival

Mr Smith said the restoration itself took between three and four years.

"It was a bit of a sad moment when the wheels left its place at Haddon for the first time since 1983 but it's for a good cause and I'm thrilled to see it sitting here," he said.

Logistics manager Alastair Reither, who oversaw the delicate operations said the tram would operate in Ballarat until the other tram was fixed, which could take up to 13 months.

"We loaded at Haddon this morning, rather than using cranes, we're using a ramp which takes about 30 minutes to set up.

"It's quite tricky to manoeuvre into position, particularly coming up in the morning with all the traffic around Dyson Drive, it's a bit of a process.

"It rolls down gradually, the truck will tilt on the winch will roll it down at a very slow walking pace."

The tram will be given a final service before it is put into operation in time for the Begonia Festival on March 7-9.

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