

In November 1983 a new fare system was introduced and everyone found it difficult changing from B Zones to 10 Zones, especially at Doncaster Depot. Also in November Conductress Margaret Stevenson and drivers John Asmonas and Lennie Ford from South Melbourne retired. Driver Jeff Christie became scribe writer for the 'Union Record'.



"Save our W class trams" ... campaigning trammies (from top) Glen Leahy, Jenny Turner, Darren Harrison and Geoff Sheldrake.

Fight over plan to derail trams

By PHILIPPA MURRAY

A GROUP of Melbourne tram drivers and conductors is fighting to keep the W-class trams on the rails.

The group, from the Preston and South Melbourne depots, is protesting a state government plan to permanently store at least 50 of the trams in a warehouse, despite a pledge last year that none would be removed from the public transport system.

The Preston group has held two well-attended meetings to discuss the issue and plans to give vigorous support to the campaign to ensure the W-class is maintained at its current level.

A funeral procession is planned for next Sunday down Brunswick St, with a tram to be hired and staff volunteering their labor. A mock coffin will be carried and marchers will wear armbands and T-shirts emblazoned with a picture of the W and the legend "RIP - Death in Brunswick Street".

The Met workers have a real affection for the familiar snub-nosed W-class, which they say has a multitude of advantages over the later pointed-front Z-class model.

"All of us have an affinity with them. I went to school on them, they are just part of my life," said conductor Ms Jenny Turner, 33,

time while you are stuck with the Zs," Mr Sheldrake said. Mr Darren Harrison, 25, was a qualified hairdresser and is now training as a driver after serving two years as a conductor.

Asked about the appeal of a W he said: "It sounds like a tram." W-class drivers and conductors say the riding conditions where icy gusts of wind and rain leaking through a leaky roof are frequent discomfort, pale beside the pleasure of working.

Moving around the tram, rather than selling tickets behind a counter as in the Z-class, can defuse aggressive situations, help with prams and trolleys and alert the driver quickly to any problems.

"There are plenty of older ones at the depot supporting us too but they say it's time for us to fight the war," Ms Turner said.

On Friday, a group of bunches travelled by tram down Collins Street, en route to the Recent Hotel. All were supportive of the retention of all the W-class trams.

"This is only the second time I've been on one," said Key Carlton footballer Earl Spalding.

"I don't believe it costs more to maintain a W. The good thing about Ws is you can always move on. Drivers can fix them a lot of the

time while you are stuck with the Zs," Mr Sheldrake said.

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From 13th March 1984 a free travel pass was issued to retired employees and dependents, with a photo, which costed \$1.00. In February 1984 a Glenhuntly driver, Greg Goodwin died at the early age of 41 on the last day of his holidays. The Depot took up a collection and raised \$1,204 to help his wife and two children. Also in February many attended the 50th birthday party of Inspector Allan Lane from South Melbourne.

In February 1984 Conductor Armand LeFevre from Malvern retired after 17 years service. His picture was in the newspaper, twice in 1974 then 48 years old. He came from France and dispensed humour while working and gave one woman a rubber spider with a ticket. Another woman told him to go back to Brazil where all the nuts come from. He was popular with children including Susan Johnstone, aged seven, she had her picture taken with him showing her tickling Armand on the nose with a rubber spider. A teacher took her school children to Malvern to meet him and he received a lot of fan mail.

In 1984 Chris Jacobson was Union delegate at South Melbourne and a good driver. We received the first issue of the new green uniform. The old uniform was a brown colour.

A Camberwell woman driver struck a car at the Burwood extension. She had a green light and the 'T' light but the car turned against the red arrow and stopped in front of the tram. The Metropolitan Transit Authority defended her in Court but the magistrate ruled against the tram driver saying she should have shown restraints. There were many cases like this when the tram drivers were in the right and car drivers in the wrong. Magistrates were biased against them and wanted the tramways to pay damages. A Brunswick driver entered an intersection to turn on the 'T' light but a car drove into the side of the tram. The Metropolitan Transit Authority had two witnesses and took the case to Court but the Judge ruled against the tram driver and accused the tramways of negligence, another example of the bias against tram drivers.

Nov 1964 1964 1964

Five escape in the PEAK-HOUR CRUSH



JIM STAT

JOHN STATHOPOULOS, 28, was driving his Holden along Swanston St. at 7.30 this morning when the brakes failed.

He had just crossed Bourke St. and the only gap he could see was between a stationary tram and a tram coming the other way.

Jim tried to main the oncoming tram driver but it was too late.

His car, with four passengers on board, "sandwiched" between the two trams.

And Jim of Gore St., Fitzroy, his girlfriend, Anna, his brothers Stan and Bill, and sister Joanna ESCAPED SERIOUS INJURY.

Jim and Anna scrambled through the smashed windscreen.

Camperdown police constable Ray Warren, 21, in a tram passenger, pulled Stathopoulos brothers and sister through the rear window.

His sister was treated at St. Vincent's Hospital for minor cuts.



About 100 trams in Fitzroy St. from 20 o'clock to 10 Victoria St. were held up after the accident.

Tramway maintenance crews freed the car, but it was 20 minutes before the peak period traffic began flowing again.

The mobile objects of both trams lifted from their tracks as the car was crushed.

The driver of the six-ton tram, Mr. Peter Hoban, 29, of E. Killebuck, said he did not know anything about the accident until his tram tilted after the impact.

"The car came up behind me, I don't see him at all," Mr. Hoban said.

December 13th 1968

Gaol over tw tram incident

A MAN was sentenced in Fitzroy Court yesterday to a total of 12 months' gaol on two as charges.

George Griffin, 51, of Langridge St., Collingwood, was charged with having unlawfully assaulted a tram conductor on October 12, and with having assaulted a tram inspector with a tommy knife on November 28.

He pleaded guilty to the first charge and not guilty to the second.

Debra Veronika Range, a tram conductor, of Beatrice St., East Brunswick, told the court that she asked Griffin to leave a tram after he used abusive and obscene language on October 12.

He had boarded a tram in the city, and there had been a dispute about the fare, she said.

"When I turned to go and get the driver, Griffin struck me twice on the head."

"After X-rays at the King and Rex Hospital, I was told I had a slight fracture of the nose," she said.

A tramway inspector, Kevin Greg McLeod, of Finsbury St., Dandenong, said that on November 28, Griffin had used abusive language after a dispute with a conductor.

When the tram stopped, Griffin had left it and walked into the Treasury Gardens, McLeod claimed.

McLeod said he phoned the police, then followed Griffin. He said Griffin had run at him, "brandishing a tommy knife."

M. F. C. JIM, SM, sentenced Griffin to six months' gaol on both charges, and that they be cumulative.

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SHOCK EN CAREER THE TRAI

GORDON GREENSWOOD career as a tram driver las four days.

He gave it away after a tragic which was not his fault, a coroner heard yesterday.

On a drizzling day in Closed St. South Yarra, Mr. Greenwood's tram killed an elderly man who crossed the road in front of it.

Mr. Greenwood, of Edgewood, told the coroner, Mr. C. J. Thompson, SM, that he had not driven a tram since the accident on September 15.

But Mr. Thompson found that he was in the blame for the death of William Halley, 70, of Clarendon St., South Yarra.

Mr. Greenwood said he braked and sounded the gong when he saw Halley approaching about 20 ft ahead, but the old man kept walking and the tram hit him.

Driving instructor Alan Bailey, of Bowman's Place, East Oakleigh, told the court Greenwood was alert and reacted well to the emergency.

Mr. Bailey had warned about the tram crash in High St. St. Kilda, yesterday.

It was a tram parked almost beyond the Tramway Board's deans.

But of course, its route was blocked. An opposing car moved and told the driver to back up, then moved to the junction via Linn Park and the Esplanade.

"The conductor was heard to whisper: 'Well I charge them extra for the scenery!'"

Feb 1973

MAYB checked happy in his court, all bill

A new tram tra up at a while a 1 diesel in

A chee conducto that no without

Then request comman "You in ductor n checker

"We t tell us the the write at ward, I heard"

-M. M. Cite

23-12-71

Daff discovers some jerks on our roads

A research in transport who supervised Mr Daff's study, (Mr Ken Gidren) said yesterday the sole way to improve the current levels would be to replace many of our front end trams, and improve our roads.

Nearly two-thirds of the tram fleet is over 40 years old, and nearly three-quarters of the tram fleet is over 32 years old, he said.

The sideways lurches in a back-and-forward way of Melbourne's public transport system has been put under the microscope by a team of researchers at Monash University.

They have come to the conclusion that Melbourne's new, blue trams give the most lurch-free trip, and then the trams.

The old red trams give a lot of lurches and the public buses are the worst of



In May 1984 a few drivers from Preston Depot went to the workshops to inspect the new 'A Class' tram and were impressed. At this time Union officers did a good job in obtaining for members a retired pass. Drivers and conductors were allowed 15 days sick leave per year.

In 1984, Jeff Clemson, Senior Revenue Clerk at Malvern retired after 47 years service.

In August, Depot Manager, Bruce Johnstone transferred from South Melbourne to Glenhuntly. 'The Tramway Record' Union quarterly magazine has been in existence since at least 1927 said Editor Jim Harper in 1984. The first 'A Class' trams started at Kew in June 1984 but there was no safe place for the conductors to put their tin containing spare tickets.

In 1984 the Union Scribe for Glenhuntly called 'Boomerang' said a member had donated a few books to the depot library and a few weeks later while browsing at a local second hand bookshop, noticed some of the books he had donated, were for sale.

In 1985 the 'A.V.M. Auto Vehicle Monitoring' began at the old conductors school at Gertrude and Nicholson Streets, Fitzroy and began use on Footscray buses.

Driver Percy Wilson retired at Brunswick in 1984. He joined the Tramways Board in 1945 and was a double decker bus driver in Bourke Street. He received 11 days holiday each year plus three good conductor days.

Early in 1985 Glenhuntly Depot was stunned to learn of the sudden death of conductor Peter White aged 45, who came from London. In December 1984, Tommy Kirkup who was Depot Master at South Melbourne during the 1960's, passed away after a heart attack aged 67. I remember him as being good to deal with. He retired in 1977.

During New Years Eve beginning 1985, last trams from the city were damaged. Bell cords were cut and windows broken by drunken youths and police made over 60 arrests.

In February 1985 conductor Rudy Berger transferred from South Melbourne, in 1997 he was a ticket inspector.

In 1985 the Retired Tramways Employees Association had a membership of over 300 and they went on many trips.

The first new articulated "B Class" trams and 22 new 'A Class' trams were now running.

On October 31st the bag change for a conductor was increased from \$6.00 to \$10.00. In August 1985 automatic points were installed at Sturt street and Kingsway, and work began on a safety zone. Driver Stan Tinkler resigned at South Melbourne and former Depot Master Noel Orrocks, retired.

Early in 1986 Kew conductor, Francis Tracy was killed at work, struck by an out of control car, while walking to his pick up point.

In 1986 the new passenger interchange at St. Kilda Road, near Domain Road, was completed.

Youths broke a tram window at Caulfield station. Drive Ann Kuto from South Melbourne retired after 36 years service. She came from Yugoslavia after World War II. In 1975, after 40 years, she returned there for a holiday and sent me a postcard from Belgrade where she was born.

1-6-95
Sydney Telegraph
Bea Miles,
legendary
lady of
the streets



Bea Miles at the time she was known as the Terror of the Taxis

OUT beyond the last line of breakers there was a young woman swimming strongly. She swam in catching the waves as she headed for the beach. The people on the sand were somewhat surprised when she emerged from the water, as they saw a large sheath knife hanging on a belt around her slim waist. She calmly told anyone who asked her that it was to protect her from sharks.

The same young lady could be seen frequently racing around Sydney on a bicycle, dressed in a shirt and skimpily shorts - rather startling in the late 20s and early 30s. However, Sydney's best remember her as an elderly, dumpy figure dressed in an old overcoat and a battered eye shade with a penchant for taking possession of unsuspecting taxis. This was Beatrice (Bea) Miles.

She was born in 1902 and lived in Wahroonga, on Sydney's affluent north shore. Her father was a prominent Sydney businessman and sent his daughter to the exclusive girls school, Abbotsleigh. She passed her well-learned skills with honours at the age of 17 and went on to Sydney University, where she studied medicine for one year before switching to arts.

Bea stayed at university for two years, finally quitting and working as an unpaid helper in the casualty ward of Sydney Hospital. This was brought to an end when she was forced to quit because of opposition from the Nurses Association.

The strictures of both these life-styles irked Bea so much that she left home in 1926 to follow a free bohemian life. Her father gave her an ample allowance so she was free to do as she wished. She rented a series of flats in the Woolloomooloo, Darlinghurst and Kings Cross areas where she roomed at will.

She fell into public notice by jumping on to moving trams and riding on the step near the driver's cabin or on the front bumper. It wasn't long before she was known as the "Terror of the Trams".

This name was to persist until age caught up with her and she transferred her attention to inattentive or unsuspecting taxis.

It was in the early '30s that Bea

started her court appearances. They were usually related to her transport activities, such as stopping a train at Glen Innes and demanding that the driver give her a lift, free loading on trams and taxis to smoking a cigarette on the steps of the Cenotaph.

The police couldn't charge her with vagrancy - having no visible means of support - because of the allowance from her family. They even tried to have her committed as insane but Bea passed the required psychological examination.

She said, "I am what the average man calls mad, and that admission proves me right. I cannot be insane at all because no insane person will admit insanity."

Bea was a creature of impulse and she gave into them much to the amusement of some and the annoyance of others. Taxi drivers often physically and verbally abused her. Bea often reacted by kind by assisting the driver or helping the daylight out of the cab.

However, these often brought her into conflict with the police. She usually could have avoided staying out at Long Bay Jail by simply paying the fines, but Bea obstinately refused and explained it. "I'd rather go to jail for 10 days for what they're doing to me."

"You don't know the things they say. One once threatened to take me

on this charge as if I were an immoral woman of the streets."

She strongly denied her use of the indecent language that police frequently alleged she used. She explained to the magistrate on these occasions that: "I am a fairly well educated woman. I object to having those adjectives ascribed to me. I don't swear in terms of reproachable acts."

Bea gave up living in rented accommodation in the early '40s and lived like a bag lady. However, she always had a bath every day, at the public bath house that operated in

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copper is getting low on his quota of arrests he goes looking for a drunk or deadbeat, a streetwoman - or Bea Miles who is none of these things. Bea Miles was passionately fond of wildflowers and nature. She even paid a taxi driver to take her to Perth and back just to collect wild flowers. "The money came from what she had saved out of her regular allowance by living tough. She would often take off to the bush just to enjoy the peace and to be at one with nature."

She was once asked what was the secret of her happiness. Bea replied: "Briefly my formula is to avoid covetousness, envy, greed, jealousy, lying, malice, and vindictiveness. Be content with what you've got. Financially, socially and materially. Be discontented with what you are morally and intellectually."

For some time she lived beside the stormwater channel in Rushcutters Bay Park with some side trips to such spots as Nisaea Park. She always had her swag with her and slept wherever she felt. Bea took to offering recitals of Shakespeare and poetry to anyone who would pay her the price stated on the small placard she carried.

However, she would only recite Australian verse, considering that English verse wasn't for Australian audiences. She could be seen frequenting the steps outside the Mitchell Library at regular intervals, looking for a paying audience. After a stay in Long Bay Jail she made a trip to Urralla to place a wreath on the grave of a Salvation Army Officer Brigadier Pearl Mason. The money for the wreath was contributed by the female inmates at Long Bay and Bea was elected to take the journey.

She had accumulated enough money during her State paid "hot days" that she had no compunction about doing the trip by taxi. The hard life and age finally caught up with Bea in the early '50s. Her favourite camping spot was the porch of Christ Church St Lawrence in George St, near Central Railway. However, in May 1964 she was taken in by the Little Sisters of the Poor at Randwick.

Bea still managed the occasional taxi ride around the city but most of her time was spent reading, playing cards and stirring the other taxi cabs. She still could be seen in the grounds with the favoured eye shade and ever present cigarette.

The irrepressible Bea Miles died on December 3, 1973. She still had the final word and showed her individuality. Her will required that a band played all Australian songs, including Waltzing Matilda and The Mc Kangaroo Down.

Also her final sentiments were expressed on the ribbon that was draped over her coffin: "One who loved Australia."

I am a shabby woman but I am clean

in the car wash and have no hosed down."

Once she tried to explain her stance to a magistrate as: "When constituted authority comes in conflict with the unauthorised person you should always believe the unauthorised person."

And 99 times out of a hundred you will be right. In other words, the police are practised liars. I am not."

During her many court appearances Bea always took it as a fortuitous chance to criticise the police.

On another occasion she was charged with offensive behaviour - a charge usually applied to street walkers - she objected most strongly. "It is very objectionable to be put



Bea after a sojourn at hospital



and as a young undergraduate

In May 1986 Jim Harper was Union Secretary, Chris Jacobson the delegate at South Melbourne and Jeff Christie was scribe for the Union Record. In early 1986 tram drivers had to punch around 90 time clocks and about 20 were repaired each week due to vandalism by 6 employees based at North Fitzroy Depot. In early 1986 it was estimated that extending the automatic vehicle monitoring system to all Metropolitan buses and trams would cost \$10 million.

In early 1986 there were 237 employees of the Civil Branch at South Melbourne including 37 on full time cleaning duties, others on track construction, two scrubber-cleaning the track at night. and others installing car safety zones and maintaining 600 shelters around the network. They also repaired faulty trams in service and derailed trams. Tram safety zones had their beginning in the 1930's when the City Council rolled out portable posts and signs in the morning and afternoon peak hours. These were only put at the City stops and were put back into storage at night. It was not until 1954 that the prototype zone was installed at selected sites in the city centre. This consisted of a yellow concrete block and resembled the bow of a ship. Then came tubular steel railings to protect passengers. In 1983 a new fence was introduced for the barrier and twelve new zones were built each year from 1986, each costing \$7,000.

The 1972 'Running Journal' magazine stated that the first tramway manufactured by the Tramways Board was the 'S Class' No. 166 at Coburg Depot. The old Thornbury Depot, corner of St Georges Road and Miller Street, was the depot for the Fitzroy, Northcote and Preston Tramways Trust. Once, during the 1960's I was working on a public holiday and spent my meal break there.

Many years ago, probably during the 1960's, two conductresses from Brunswick Depot completed the first half of a broken ship and boarded a tram to go shopping at Myers. Halfway to town an Inspector boarded the tram and in a loud booming voice said to them "Are you aware that crew members are not to remain seated while paying passengers stand?" Quick as a wink one conductress hailed the conductor and said "Two for the city Peter" and paid for the fares. Frozen, confused and silent, the Braid left the tram at the next stop and hailed the Board car that was cruising between stops. They heard nothing further about it except that every rule in the book had been scanned. That story was by Nancy Scot and published in 'Met Lines' magazine in 1986.

As a way of protesting against the possible closing of the 77 route, Prahran members from Glenhuntly reported for work in civilian clothes in 1986, one of them wore a sleeveless Richmond Guernsey and a cowboy hat. Also in 1986 there was a two tram head on collision on the curving single track in Troganning Road, Carnegie. There were 30,000 households on the public housing list and the unemployment rate was 6.2 in 1981-82 and 7.9 in 1986.

Conductress Pat Gaffey from Glenhuntly suffered a haemorrhage died alone at the early age of 55. She had 20 years service and suffered from painful arthritis in both hands and was forced to leave work 18 months before 1986. A large crowd of friends and colleagues attended the Bambray Road funeral parlour as a tribute to her popularity.

A Doncaster driver worked a late shift and was astonished by the bad behaviour of youths terrorising good passengers on the 11.40 pm to Newmans Road.

The Herald, Tues., Nov. 1, 1977 — 1.3

... AND GLASS

November 1st

Cup or
Holiday



German air hostess Jane von Sponeck is in town for her first Melbourne Cup. And she started her day in traditional Melbourne style by catching a tram and enjoying a breakfast of champagne and Danish pastries en route to Flemington. Jane's face, you'll remember, is usually seen on advertisements for Lufthansa Airlines.

In September 1986 the Union magazine scribe was driver Phil MacDowall for South Melbourne. At Doncaster articulated buses began running. A letter in the Union Record by Union Secretary Des Shooter in December 1986, tendering his resignation said that he had gone onto an army services pension. He said that when he was at Footscray in 1952 there was central heating. This was big, cast iron, pot bellied stove in the centre of the mess room and in the yard was an old disused brick tower wagon shed that the Board often filled with a truck load of wood blocks. In winter it was the duty of the standby driver to chop the wood, light the stove and keep it going day and night. If the standby was out on the road it was a cold mess room.

The 77 Prahran to Prices Bridge stopped running late in 1986 because the board considered there were not enough tram passengers.

The new Domain Road and St. Kilda Road interchange came into use on 11th November 1986 and in the same month conductors were eliminated from the Bulleen to Garden City bus route so all buses were now one person operations. On Christmas Eve an Inspector took a driver from Doncaster Depot off his bus, before the end of his trip, to prevent him being assaulted by youths on the bus. The Inspector had been driving behind the bus and seen the rear window being broken and seats torn out and thrown through the broken window. The youths then threw rocks at it. The same week youths fired shots at buses from North Fitzroy Depot.

In February 1987, 146 members of the Retired Tramway Employees Association enjoyed a luncheon at the Middle Park Bowling Club and in January, over 100 went to Albury.

At South Melbourne Union delegate was Denise Stephens and Union secretary was Jim Harper.

Driver Bill Budd retired at Essendon in 1987. He said that in 1957 an Inspector was remonstrating with him for showing an incorrect destination at the rear of the tram. Bill replied "If they're looking at the rear end it means they have missed the tram". In 1951 Jim Dowell began his public transport career as a tram conductor and became an Inspector in the late 50's and by 1991 he was based at South Melbourne. The new tram line extension at Bundoora opened on 23rd April 1987. In August 1987 a conductor, while waiting to pick up his tram in Abbotsford Street, was bashed by a passenger. A tram driver held back the assailant but an inspector who was standing in the safety zone told him not to and refused to help. Police arrived and the conductor was taken to hospital. Both the Inspector and Conductor were from Essendon Depot. A meeting was held and members imposed a six-month ban on the inspector. He was not allowed to work at the depot or even to enter it. Officers from the Inspectors Union, The M.O.A., placed two bans on Essendon, no short shunts when late and no AVM radio for emergency calls. Later they imposed further bans, no shift changers and no pay. About 300 members attended a meeting with Union Secretary Jim Harper and Assistant Secretary Norm Maddock at Essendon. They demanded their pay at 1.25 pm and at 5pm received cheques and cash payments on Thursday. A member from the Transport Ministers Office and Director General of the M.T.A., Mr Ingersoll, attended the Depot to conduct an enquiry. An agreement was reached for greater cooperation between members and inspectors and the dispute ended.

In



TA REFERENCE

Compiled by Ross Willson

MELBOURNE ELECTRIC TRAM DEPOTS

Constructed by the Victorian Railways

Elwood Head Street and St Kilda Street, Elwood
Opened 7 May 1906
Closed 28 February 1959

Sandringham Station yard, Sandringham
Opened 10 March 1919
Closed 5 November 1956

Constructed by the North Melbourne Electric Tramways and Lighting Co Ltd

Essendon Mount Alexander Road, Ascot Vale
Opened 11 October 1906

Constructed by the Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust

Malvern Coldblo Road, Malvern
Opened 30 May 1910

Kew Barkers Road and High Street, Kew
Opened 10 April 1916 (previously in use as storage depot)

Constructed by the Hawthorn Tramways Trust

Hawthorn Wallen Road, Hawthorn
Opened 6 April 1916
Closed as traffic depot 14 February 1965, still in use for storage

Constructed by the Melbourne Brunswick and Coburg Tramways Trust

Coburg Nicholson Street and Moreland Road, East Brunswick
Opened 27 April 1916
Closed 11 October 1952

Constructed by the Fitzroy Northcote and Preston Tramways Trust

Preston Miller Street, Thornbury
Opened 1 April 1920
Closed as traffic depot 26 June 1955, still in use for storage (sometimes referred to as Thornbury depot)

Constructed by the Footscray Tramways Trust

Footscray Buckley Street, Footscray
Opened 6 September 1921
Closed 10 March 1962

Constructed by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board

Glenhuntly Glenhuntly Road, Glenhuntly
Opened 23 August 1923

Hanna Street Hanna Street (now Kingsway), South Melbourne
Opened 31 October 1925
Renamed South Melbourne 19 September 1960
Closed as running depot 9 February 1997

Camberwell Riversdale Road, Hawthorn
Opened 8 December 1929

Malvern (No.2) Coldblo Road, Malvern
Opened 26 October 1930

Brunswick Sydney Road, Brunswick (tram entrance off Cameron Street)
Opened 26 April 1936

East Preston Plenty Road and Bell Street, Preston
Opened 26 June 1955

North Fitzroy Nicholson Street, North Fitzroy
Opened 8 April 1956
Closed as traffic depot 18 December 1993 (but occasionally used since for overnight stabling during track works, etc)

Constructed by the Public Transport Corporation

Southbank Opened 9 February 1997

ABOVE: South Melbourne Depot just before the movement of the last W class trams to Malvern Depot, at 9.40am on 9 February 1997. All bore the route 72 designation to signify 72 years of operation of South Melbourne Depot. From left the trams are SW6-881, W6-981, SW6-954 and 933, W7-1005 and City Circle SW5-842. 842 was the second last tram to enter service from South Melbourne. - Hugh Waldron

OPPOSITE TOP: The relaying of pointwork at the entrance to Southbank Depot, 10.00pm Saturday 25 January 1997. - Hugh Waldron

OPPOSITE CENTRE: Southbank Depot will be one of two depots in Melbourne to operate W class trams for the foreseeable future. 1930s tram technology amidst 1990s servicing technology; car 946 at Southbank Depot on 9 February. - Dale Budd

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: The last scheduled tram to leave South Melbourne Depot; SW5-843 makes its exit in mid-afternoon on 9 February for a route 8 working. Trams are continuing to visit the former depot, as described in the text. - Dale Budd

Continued from p. 85

City Circle ran in to Southbank Depot at the end of their shifts. For routes 12 and 16 most trams (except those allocated to the new Southbank Depot) ran back to South Melbourne Depot. During Saturday all trams that were not required for service were driven across to Southbank Depot with the exception of trams required to go to Preston Workshops, defective trams and those required for the wheel grinder.

The last scheduled trams to run in to South Melbourne Depot were 881 at 12.57 and 964 at 1.13am on 9 February. A few tram fans had decided to travel on 992, the last tram on route 16, which was timetabled to run in at 1.14am. However as this tram had been allocated to Southbank Depot it ran in there, disappointing the enthusiasts

86 TRANSIT AUSTRALIA APRIL 1997

1987 I worked on the opening day of the new light rail to St. Kilda, giving souvenir tickets and free travel for passengers.

In November 1987 conductress Helen Plaiche was forced to leave the job as medically unfit from Glenhuntly. She had been badly hurt about three years before when her tram was struck from behind by another tram following.

In the December 1987 'Tramway Record', Union Assistant Secretary Norm Maddock, wrote six pages about an extract from the M. & M.T.B. 'Instructions to Motormen in Electric Car Driving November 1920'. This is what every driver and conductor should read. It includes questions "What does an electric tram car equipment consist of?; What are the names of the two groups of notches on the controller?; What would you do if the trolley wire broke and fell on the track?. There are 75 questions and answers about instructions to tram drivers.

In December 1987, conductor Albie Pryer was the longest serving employee at Malvern Depot with 35 years service and conductress Jan Aird next with 33 years.

On December 20th 1987, the Port Melbourne tram line opened with trams from South Melbourne Depot and whose time tables increased from 80 to 122 and new employees increased by one third.

In September 1987 conductress Tessie Langan retired from South Melbourne after 39 years service. She had great skill and was equal to the best conductor I ever say.

An anonymous R.S. tram buff wrote in December that, in 1923 25 'W-2 Class' trams were build at the Holden Street, Fitzroy Street workshops and by James Moore in City Road, South Melbourne and by Holden Body Builders in South Australia.

219 started for drivers training and 220 commenced service in September 1923 on many routes. It finished its working life at Malvern Depot and then to Bylands Tram Museum. In 1927 tram 364 was built with an open centre section with outward facing back to back seats. 20 were built, Nos. 419 to 438 and 364 renumbered 422. In 1927 Nos. 439 to 458 were built. In 1928 to 1930 Nos. 480 to 609 were built, 100 at Preston. In 1929 433 became the first tram painted in green and cream in lieu of the chocolate and cream. The last W2 built was 653 in 1931. In 1959 No. 313 caught fire at Balaclava Junction and was scrapped. Tram 325 was burnt out after a collision in November 1959.

An anonymous R.S. wrote in a tram magazine in February 1988, bus driver Wally Wawrowski from North Fitzroy died at a young age. He was viciously assaulted while driving a bus about 18 months previously and, although he recovered from his physical injuries the mental trauma plagued him until his death. Also in February ex-driver Gorrington from Glenhuntly, died aged 71. During World War II he served in the army and won the Military Medal for Bravery in Action. When I started at South Melbourne I didn't know that many of the drivers and conductors had served in World War II. One was driver Jim Hyland who told me he was at Crete in 1941 firing at German parachutes. Bill Duncan was at Dunkirk in 1940.

At Glenhuntly in 1986 a conductress was due to start work at 5.16 pm but came in to start work at 5.16 am.

In early 1988 Joan Elkington resigned as a Doncaster bus driver, she had been a conductor before that.

At South Melbourne I thought that the best writer for the Union Record during the 1980's was the Glenhantly Scribe called 'Boomerang', he knew more about retired members than anyone. In June 1988 he reported the death of ex-driver Henry Wilkins who died from injuries after being struck by a car while crossing the street. Henry came from Germany and was a driver at South Melbourne before transferring to Glenhantly and retired in 1986.

The Sydney Morning Herald - February 5, 1993

Sadness as 'connies' are costed out

By JULIE LEWIS

MELBOURNE: The tram would bulge with commuters. Sweat would pour down Raymond Roberts's face as he collected fares, droplets running from under the smart black cap he had to wear even on scorching summer days.

It was the 1960s, and conductors were hard-pushed to collect fares from all the passengers leaping on and off the trams. But today only 15 per cent of Victorians use public transport and it is the end of the line for the tram conductors.

In 1950, the militant tramways' union struck for six weeks to preserve the conductors' jobs, blocking Melbourne's streets with abandoned trams and inflicting severe political damage on the Labor Government.

Now the tramways union has struck a deal with the Kennett Government by which conductors will be phased out after three years. Members endorsed the deal yesterday, and the Government will replace the "connies" with automatic ticketing machines.

Other unions, however, will continue to fight against Kennett reforms. Victorian unions voted yesterday for a mass rally and strike action on March 1, the day the Government's industrial relations legislation comes fully into force.

Mr Roberts, who has been a conductor for 31 years, has seen the number of tram users dwindle and will be among the last of the



Ray Roberts, soon to be phased out . . . "a city icon".

900 conductors to work the trams. He will retire within two years. Hundreds of other conductors will take redundancy packages. Those who remain will be given priority in other jobs, including

new customer service officers. The secretary of the tram union, Mr Lou Di Gregorio, said that the agreement had saved 1,200 tramway jobs that would have been lost by the Government

replacing trams with buses on many routes. While the conductors remained, the driver-only buses were cheaper to run than the trams staffed by two people.

According to Mr Roberts, tourists will miss the tram conductors.

"They ask a lot of questions, especially around the 'Coca-Cola area,'" he said. "There are a lot of backpackers and visitors here."

His colleague, Mr Roberto D'Andrea, 31, said the conductors themselves attract tourists - "We're the icon of the city."

The connies stopped fare-evasion, violence on trams and vandalism, and the Government would have to pay for increased costs in these areas.

"I'm saddened for society," he said. "Historically, this city has always made a decision to keep conductors . . . it's a human-to-human service."

But Mr Roberts said: "There used to be double, triple the numbers than now. We used to have assistant conductors to do short trips to help conductors."

He was paid about \$50 a week and discipline was strict. Conductors late for work were sternly counselled. Those with dirty shoes or ties were sent home.

Nowadays, younger conductors may carry the traditional leather ticket satchel worn by conductors since the 1930s, but they often also wear Doc Martens shoes and have dyed hair, and several earrings are common, too.

Union Assistant Secretary, Norm Maddock, retired in March 1988 and had a great record, he was track delegate at South Melbourne Civil Branch, looking after track gangs and later all members. His father had been a driver at Glenhantly.

In April 1988 a lout boarded a Footscray bus, removed the fire extinguisher and sprayed the chemical contents in the drivers face, he needed urgent hospital treatment. The lout was caught and in Court received only a \$900 fine, there was no compensation to the driver. This showed how weak the justice system had become since the 1960's.

At South Melbourne the new Union Record Scribe was conductor, Lindsay Bounds and he wrote in August 1988 that driver Vin Hocking resigned after 36 years service and conductor Charles Farago also after 36 years service.

In August 1988 former Tram Union Secretary Clarence O'Shea died. He was secretary from 1947 to 1970 and was a great Union Leader. Born in Tasmania, died at age 83. On 25th August 1988 tram driver Allan Quayle died before retiring age. He was at South Melbourne before transferring to Brunswick and was a keen follower of rugby football.



1994
October 8 19
From Letter
Dept Manager
Russel Nathan
Director of TCo
Ray Roberts 33 years ⁹retired.
Jeff Sheel
union delegate
Sam Bronitak
industrial offi

AT South Melbourne Tram Depot

With a state election coming up, opposition Liberal Leader, Mr Kennet said he would try to abolish penalty rates in the retail and hospitality industries. Opposition Transport Minister Mr Brown said that if a dispute occurs employees will be locked out and only return on his terms. When questioned about people starving he said that they could go to the Salvation Army for help.

The old St. Kilda Station was built in 1857 and modernised in 1910.

Albert Park upside was built 1914 and downside in 1887. Middle Park was built in the early 1900's, South Melbourne upside in 1887 and downside in 1899. Lindsay Bounds wrote that, he was from South Melbourne and finished work as a railway conductor. Port Melbourne was built in 1897.

On 4th October 1988 there was a head on collision between two trams on the 500 metres of curving single track in Truganine Road Carnegie both drivers were injured, one with a broken foot and the other with a fractured pelvis and chest injuries. It was hoped that work on a double track would begin in 1989. It should have been built when Glenhuntly opened in 1927.

In November 1988 driver Neville Evans from South Melbourne passed away after a long illness. Along with many others I attended his funeral service. His wife Eve was a conductress during the 60's. Neville was a policeman in country NSW during the 1950's and came to Melbourne in the 60's. Ken Turner from South Melbourne was only in his 30's when killed in a road accident on 29th August 1988 on his way to work.

In 1959 the first W2 tram was withdrawn from service and the last No. 646 was the last to run in regular service on 11th December 1987 on route 70 to West Preston. It was built in 1931 at Preston workshops.

In 1982 five schoolgirls found \$48,000 after it fell off the back of an Armaguard van. The money was the payroll for the East Preston Tram Depot. A spokesman for Mayne Nickless said the girls would receive a reward of at least \$500 each.

In August 1989 a new zone fare system was introduced from ten neighbourhoods to 3 zones including the '60 plus' ticket.

The city Met-Shop had opened at 103 Elizabeth Street in August 1988. The 'Met' now had 15 train lines and 206 stations on 940 km of track.

In September 1989 driver Helen Gough from South Melbourne resigned to take up a position in protective services guarding the Supreme Court.

South Melbourne driver Jeff Christie resigned to live near Warrnambool.

On 20th January 1990 there was a savage attack by 30 drunken youths on a transit police officer at Cheltenham.

On 12th February seven youths assaulted two Chinese men at Rushall Station, robbing them of \$200 and stabbing one in the back, and seriously injuring the other. Assaults on trains and platforms jumped from 132 in 1987 to 438 in 1989.

In April 1990, South Melbourne conductor Lindsay Bounds left to become a V-Line train conductor on country trips. He wrote for the Union Record for the last time.

March 1990 marked the 53rd anniversary of the conversion of the South Melbourne cable tram line to electric trams in 1937. The Port Melbourne cable tram line closed at the same time but was replaced by buses and electric trams starting in Bourke Street in 1955.

In May 1988 former South Melbourne Union Conductor Jack Cregan became secretary of the Retired Tramways Employees Association.

In September 1990 former South Melbourne Revenue Clerk, Werner Hubsh died suddenly at 50 years of age. He was very popular at South Melbourne from the 1960's to the 80's and became manager of the Met Shop. He came from Germany and left a wife and two children. In August 1990, South Melbourne driver Phil MacDowell left to become a bus driver at Footscray Depot. South Melbourne conductor John Colten left because of illness and driver Dave Eborall left to passenger relations. Former inspector Allan Lane returned to South Melbourne as a driver. He had previously resigned to live in N.S.W. Glen Curry and Chris Day also returned as drivers. Stewart McQuade became the new 'Union Record' scribe. In September 1990 the 'Sun' newspaper said that trams and buses were involved in almost 5,000 accidents in 1989. State Opposition Transport Spokesman Robin Cooper released the report.

In late 1990 the scribe for the Union Record for Glenhuntly, Dennis Hearne known as Boomerang, retired. He started work in 1951 and did a great job writing about many things that happened including those who had retired.

In the Union Record an Elwood bus driver defines an early shift as 'any shift that has less than 61 minutes for a meal break and signs on before 9.00 am. A broken shift, as any shift that has more than 120 minutes for a meal break and generally signs on after early shifts. A middle shift was any shift that has less than 61 minutes for a meal break and generally signs on after broken shifts, before 12.30 pm. A late shift was any shift that has less than 61 minutes for a meal break and signs on after 12.29 pm.'

On New Years Eve 1990 young males threw eggs at Footscray buses and drivers. Two had to go home because of eggs on their uniform. Youths also threw rocks, breaking windows. The Seniors Card was introduced in March 1991 for Victorians aged 60 and over who did not work full time, entitling the holder to concession tickets. It had no expiry date and cost \$1.30 for a daily 3 zones ticket.

On April 11th 1991 a warrant was issued for the arrest of a 21 year old man from Thornbury who had been charged with assault on former tram Union Secretary Jim Harper on July 5th 1990.

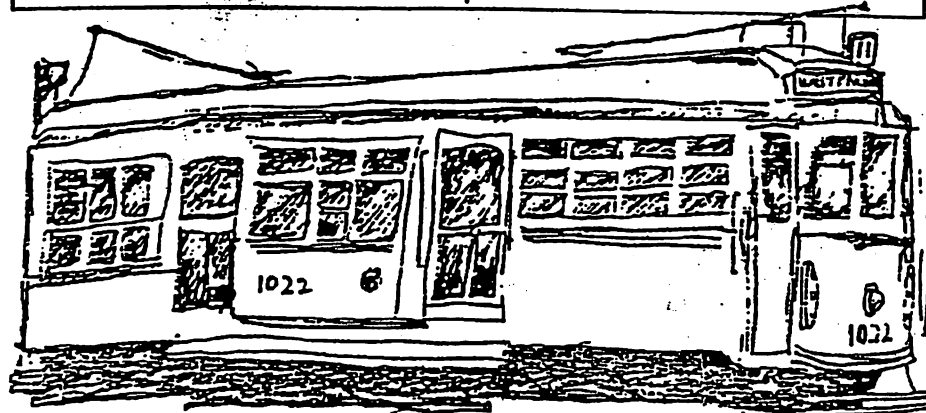
In 1991 a youth from South Yarra punched a woman tram driver on the forehead causing her pain and kicked the tram's side door. Police caught him and he was fined \$500. August 1991 was a sad time for South Melbourne Depot when three young men passed away. They were drivers Tony Bovenkemo and Chris Jacobson, former Union delegate and conductor John Colton. All were struck down with long term illnesses. Driver Tommy McIntosh retired after 37 years service. Conductress Rae Lloyd transferred to Camberwell. A new conductress was Lenore Matenga from New Zealand who became a driver in 1994.

In April 1934 a cable car conductor stepped onto the road to assist a blind man to the footpath in Lygon Street, Carlton. He was struck by a car being driven by Henry Halkerston, a market grocer of Station Street North Carlton and thrown 35 feet. The driver was fined £10 and his licence was suspended for six months for driving past a stationary tram.

In 1910-11 the number of passengers riding on trams was 84 million. This rose to 284 million in 1944-45 but in 1989-90 the number was down to 95½ million and by 1990-91 was 105.8 million.

Find your tram's number below to see when it was built.

V Class		877 - 880	1942
214	1906	881 - 889	1943
L Class		890 - 895	1944
104, 106	1921	896 - 909	1945
Y Class		910 - 925	1946
469	1927	926 - 936	1947
610 - 613	1930	937 - 939	1948
X2 Class		940 - 949	1949
676	1930	950 - 966	1950
W Class		967 - 973	1951
380	1925	974 - 977	1952
431, 442 (W1)	1927	978 - 1000	1955
504, 510, 547 (W2)	1928	1001 - 1017 (SW7)	1955
600, 646	1930	1018 - 1040	1956
681 - 685 (CW5)	1934	Z Class (seated conductor)	
720 - 789 (W5)	1936	1 - 115 (Z1, Z2)	1974-1976
790 - 820	1937	116 - 230 (Z3)	1980
821 - 839	1938	A Class	
840 - 850 (SW5)	1939	231 - 300	1985
851 - 865 (SW6)	1940	B Class (articulated)	
866 - 876	1941	2000 Series	1986



Tram-Spotter Quiz

- 1 If you went for a ride on number 442, what would be the fare?
- 2 What claim to fame has tram number 504?
- 3 What Class of Melbourne tram now runs more in the USA than in Melbourne?

In 1991 Inspector Jim Dowell transferred from South Melbourne to Elwood Bus Depot. In 1992 the service most effected by crime was route 86 to Bundoora and route 203 to Bulleen was the worst bus route. There were 754 car thefts at rail stations in 1990.

Answers: 1. Sealed, steaks, salads, sweats - 442 is Melbourne's Trancer Restaurant. 2. It was the very first 'Pop-Art' tram decorated by an Australian artist, in the instance of late Clifton Pugh. 3. W2s. Only five remain in operation here, while many cities including San Francisco, Dallas, New Orleans, Seattle and San Jose have tried to attract them to their towns.

When the new State Liberal Government was elected in 1992 the first thing they did was to increase tram and train fares, slash the three hour ticket to two hours and reduce timetables from 1st January 1993.

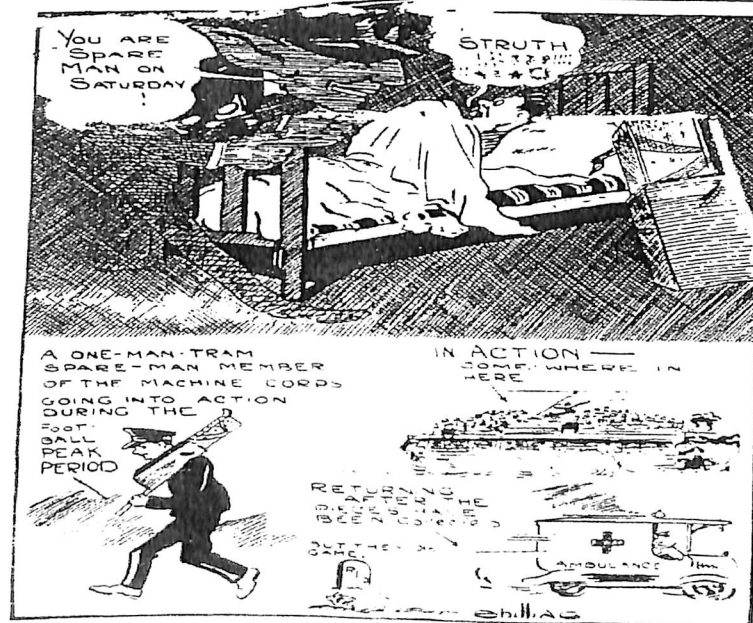
In July 1992 South Melbourne Depot received 250 full length lockers. Footscray had them in 1983 because the old ones were too small.

In January 1987 I was working on 10 route from Fitzroy Street to west Preston on Saturday morning, when we stopped at the first stop in Collins Street my driver, named Wally aged about 28 years, left the cabin and asked me if I wanted a cup of coffee. I said no and he jumped from the front door towards a shop without looking and was struck by a car. He flew high in the air and then just lay on the road. I ran to the track phone to call for help from the radio centre. A woman car driver of an expensive English car managed not to run over him through great braking and Wally was not hurt. The Police car arrived first and then the Ambulance took him to hospital for a check. I was amazed to see how fast another tram driver was sent from North Fitzroy. When I returned to the Depot I was surprised to see Wally fully recovered!

On 14th July 1943 tram No. 459 collided with an Army Tank and was sent to Preston Workshops for repairs. In 1944-45 there were 740 trams and 318 buses. In 1938-39 over 20,826,544 passengers were carried by cable trams and 161 million by electric trams. There were 98 cable trams, 670 electric trams and 113 tramway buses.

Mr Risson became Chairman of the M. and M.T.B. in October 1949. Before that he was assistant manager of the Brisbane City council Tramways. Bourke Street bus routes were converted to electric trams in 1955-56 and all night trams ran their last service on 16th February 1957 when buses took over. For four years I caught an all night bus for early shifts at 4.22 am. in Orrong Road near Malvern Road Toorak. Four times I missed it by 100 yards and had to walk. A South Melbourne tram driver Jim Moulton used to drive the bus when they were short of staff. The first sign on time was 5.7 am.

Page 6, TRAMWAY RECORD, September, 1982.



THE SATURDAY SPARE MAN RECORD 1971
The One-Man-Train has become a nightmare to the Footscray Trammies.

June 1951 saw the introduction of street collection of fares by conductors with ticket machines at four stops in the City area. Z Class trams began running in Elizabeth Street on the North Coburg route on 14th January 1980. On 19th July 1978 the 3.4 km extension to East Burwood opened. In 1970 I thought I might get a better paid job so I went to Russell Street Police Headquarters for an interview to join the Police Force. There was only one man asking me questions and then said that if I joined at my age I would stay at the same pay rate and always be a constable. I decided to stay with the tramways.

In 1961 while in Vimy House Hospital in Queens Road for an ingrowing toenail operation, all the beds were in one room and about 2.00 pm I was woken by the sound of a man screaming. He was a driver from Kew Depot and had bad experiences during and after World War II in Britain. The nurse, who came from New Zealand calmed him down.

During the 1970's I went to Court three times because tram drivers were involved in collisions with cars. In each case the car driver failed to give way to the tram on his right. In two cases the Magistrate ordered that the Tramways Board pay all damages and in the other case pay 50% of the damage.

In the 1980's I read in the newspaper that a driver from Malvern Depot finished his shift at the corner of Malvern Road and Glenferrie Road and another driver was there to drive the tram on. One of them said something the other did not like and he threw a punch. Before long they were slogging it out when a Police car came along and took them to the nearby Malvern Police Station.

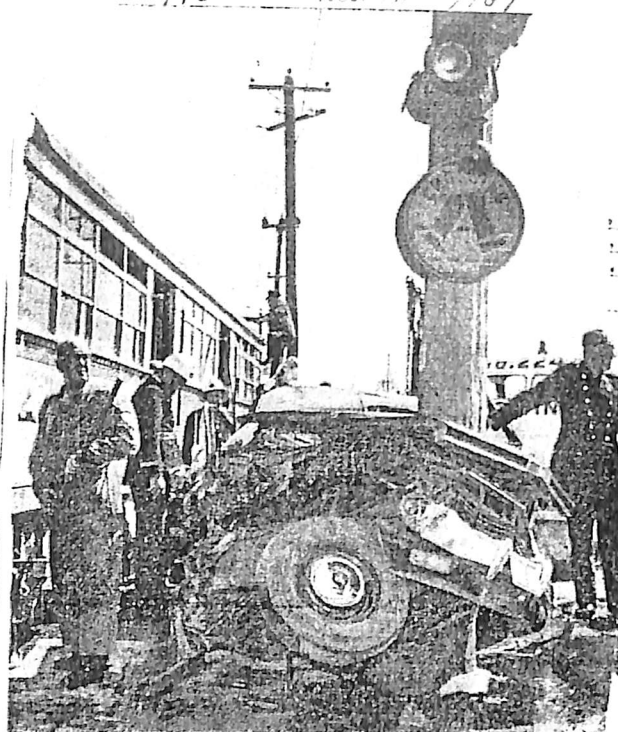
In April 1987 the East Preston line was extended to Bundoora, making at 18.5 km long from the city. The extension was 2.9 km and drivers used two way radios.

During the 1970's a young English woman came to live in Sydney, became ill before she could find a job and was without money after paying her rent. She was on a bus when the conductress who asked for her fare noticed that she was very weak. She took up a collection at her bus depot and helped her by buying food the woman could not afford after spending her money on hospital fees and bills. She recovered because of the help she received from the bus depot.

On October 1994 I retired after being a conductor at South Melbourne Depot for 33 years.

In September 1997 the depot was sold to a Malaysian backed company that planned to build about 300 apartments. The State Liberal Government sold the 2.8 ha site for \$18.8 million. The company was Renak Holdings. The depot was bordered by Kingsway, Bank, Wells and Dorcas Street. A new depot was built at Southbank costing \$12 million and the old depot demolished in 1997.

During the 1970's driver Joe Horner had served in the Army in Vietnam, he came from the Seychelles. In 1961 the popular song was 'Tie Me Kangaroo Sport'.



Four people were slightly hurt when this bus and tram collided today. The collision was in Holden St., North Fitzroy. The four people were treated at St Vincent's Hospital. There were no serious injuries. The tram had 11 passengers. It was going to Preston workshops.

Man dies in smash — crushed

A young man was killed when his car was sandwiched between a city-bound tram and a wooden power pole at the corner of St. Georges Rd. and Beaver's Rd., Northcote, this morning.

The car whirled around the pole as the man's body was trapped for an hour until firemen cut through the wreckage with oxy-acetylene equipment.

The tram was not damaged in the crash but had to be lifted off the rails in 100 minutes. Firemen could pull the car away. The car began to roll in pieces when it was pulled away.

Police said the man, aged about 24, was alone in the car, travelling west, in Beaver's Rd. Two young women passengers in the tram were treated for shock.

There were 11 passengers on the tram.

BLIND
Supper was served to three blind men at the tram stop at the corner when the crash occurred.

Mr. J. G. Brown, who runs a deli at the corner, and Mr. J. Linton, who runs a deli at the corner, said they believed a 24 to 26-year-old man who was travelling west from the tram stop, and a woman, were travelling in the car.

North and south tram tracks run together on the eastern side of St. Georges Rd.

— then crash

September 29, 1969

1969—
The driver of this tram jumped for his life seconds before it crashed into the side of an empty petrol tanker in North Fitzroy today.

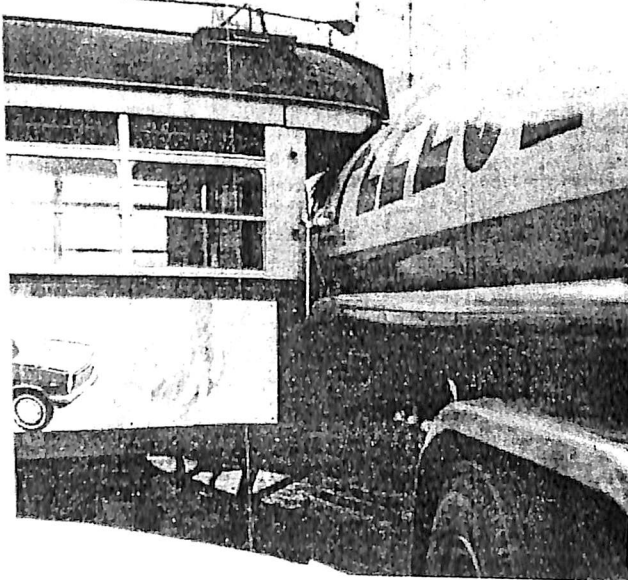
The tram cabin was squashed against the Golden Fleece tanker.

Tram driver Arthur Small, 40, was taken to hospital with cuts and bruises.

The driver of the tanker, Alfred Parr, 29, of Brunswick, was not injured in the collision at the corner of Alexander Rd. and Smith St.

The only passenger on the East Preston tram was a woman, who was taken to hospital with shock.

Police held back the crowd as the two vehicles were pulled apart and 15 delayed trams resumed their journey.



6 hurt as trams hit

SIX PEOPLE were injured when two trams collided at the corner of Holden St. and St. Georges Rd. today. There were a total of 10 trams and a total of 12 passengers on board at the accident.

Both trams were damaged.

TRA gave SUS

A tram car broke a window City-bound tram bury, today.

The tram driver of the tram was suspended by a T. Board Inspector 4 weeks on the spot.

The tram driver of the tram was suspended by a T. Board Inspector 4 weeks on the spot.

The Tramway Board chairman, A. Kirby, said the 4 men would appear before the Board at the City headquarter tomorrow.

Mr. Kirby said he did not disclose their names.

PEAK-HO
The driver was suspended for 4 weeks. He was allowed to travel to work on a tram stop. Mr. Kirby said the driver was suspended for 4 weeks.

SPLIT POINTZ

In 1966 the unemployment rate was 1.3%. On 25th January 1994 two Policemen were attacked by four men in the city area. A gang of track maintenance men from South Melbourne Civil Branch were working on the City Circle line and saw the attack and held the men until more police arrived. Later the nine workers were presented with pewter mugs at the depot. Two of the men were fined \$700 each for assaulting police officers.

In 1955 Preston Workshops fitted specially designed poles to trams for carrying flags. Among the first of this form of promotion was 'Operation Gratitude', an RSL fund raising campaign. Flags were flown on W Class trams for a fee of \$300. In 1986 there were over 300 W Class trams and there were flags to help the Spastic Society.

The Tramways Head Office was built at 616 Little Collins Street in 1891. In 1928 saw the commencement of route numbers on trams. On June 2nd 1958 pensioner's tickets at approximately half fare, were introduced. On 20th September 1960 the tram destination 'Hanna Street Depot' was changed to South Melbourne Depot. In July 1994 there were 16 historic old tram passenger shelters being restored.



Kaye Angel, who lives and works at the Federal Pacific Hotel, is given a rally pamphlet by conductor John Cregan.

Passengers were fare game for action group

Hundreds of people got free tram rides along Swanston Street yesterday.

Tram conductor John Cregan discarded his money bag and spent the day giving colored balloons to passengers.

Mr. Cregan reckoned it was his busiest day in 31 years on the tram — and driver Wally Thompson said passengers hadn't been so happy for a long time.

They've been really smacky since the fares went up last August, but this has them smiling again," said Mr. Thompson.

Uprise and studies were the usual reaction when Mr. Cregan told passengers to put their money away.

One businessman did look slightly bemused and wondered if the Tram-

By STEPHEN MISSET

ways Board knew what was happening. But it wasn't a trammer's revolt. Action for Public Transport hired the tram for the day for \$350 to publicise a rally in the City Square at 4 p.m. today. Rally organiser Mr. Rus Littleton said Action for Public Transport — which has strong union backing sought lower fares with free public transport being the ultimate aim. Many who rode free yesterday had their doubts. "Someone has to pay for the service. Why leave it all to the taxpayer?" said Mr. Harry Tatchell of Avondale Heights. Mr. Anne Powell of Crofton said: "It's all in favor of keeping fares low — but not free. I'd prefer to have paid something."

Tram rides free: True!

SOME lucky tram travellers got a free ride yesterday and just couldn't believe it.

What's the gimmick? some asked. "How come?" it makes a nice change. "This has never happened before," and "Why?" were other inevitable questions.

The special Swanston St. tram ran between University and Melbourne University to publicise a national public transport day rally today at 4 p.m. in the City Square.

Conductor Rudy Berger greeted travellers with a smile and the comment "no charge" as they produced their fare.

Almost everyone had their fare ready despite the "Free Ride" sign on the front of the tram.

Rudy explained as he handed out pamphlets that it was all part of a series of forums of all kinds in the name of the environment.

Those who took advantage of the free ride saved up to 40c on the one-way journey.



CONDUCTOR Rudy Berger hands a balloon to Sue Roche, 22, of Vermont, on the special tram yesterday.

Humble trams are Toorak's darlings

COULD the humble tram be replacing the Rolls-Royces of Toorak? Is it becoming the "in" way to travel to work or the shops?

There's a quiet green and gold revolution taking place along Toorak Rd. as more and more South Yarra and Toorak residents take to tram.

Passengers on the line have been increasing since 1970, and it is now one of the most successful tram routes in Melbourne.

The Tramways Board chairman, Mr. F. D. Snell said yesterday he believed trams were quicker than cars along Toorak Rd — and possibly quicker to the city when car-parking was considered. "I don't know whether we're pushing Rolls-Royces, but it is a very successful route and we are getting a return from it," Mr. Snell said yesterday.

By REX GARDNER

get reduction in the past year was a "direct result" of fare rises in August, he said.

The Tramways Board lost about \$24 million in the year ended June 30 compared with a \$20.5 million loss the previous year.

But the expected \$77 million deficit was offset by the August fare rises.

Mr. Snell did not think any public transport system in the world providing a full day's service was running at a profit.

HAVE RECORD \$24m July 21/76 LOSS 1976

By STEPHEN MISSET

Melbourne Tramways Board has just about \$24 million in this year ended June 30 — a record deficit.

Passenger numbers dropped about 8 per cent to their second-lowest level since World War II.

It was the first drop in patronage for three years. But the new orange trams seem to have gone against the downward trend.

The Tramways Board's new chairman, Mr. F. D. Snell said yesterday ticket sales had risen between 25 and 30 per cent on routes now served by orange trams.

Mr. Snell said this showed the popularity of these trams. Another explanation of the rise was that the orange trams eliminated late-dodging.

He said previous board surveys indicated that 10 or 11 per cent of tram travellers failed to pay their fares.

Failure to pay was not always deliberate, he said.

On crowded green trams it was sometimes impossible for the conductor to reach everyone, particularly those travelling short distances.

But the legal onus was on the passenger to pay. The deficit of about \$24 million in 1975-76 compares with a \$20.5 million loss the previous year.

Mr. Snell said fare increases last August had been a main cause of the fall in patronage.

But first indications were that the fare rises early this month had not caused a further drop in passenger numbers.

On Thursday 17th February 1972, I was working on the tram along Lygon Street, Carlton with driver Peter Bruce when it rained so hard we had to stop just before Brunswick Road for a long time. Three inches of rain fell in one hour, the heaviest rainfall ever recorded in Melbourne and the temperature was 77°F (approx 10°C). Tram and train services were disrupted for several hours, Elizabeth Street was flooded and people walked along rail lines. The Sun newspaper cost 6c.

It was a shock when Jim Harper the ex-secretary of the Tramways Union passed away on August 18th 1994. He had been a driver at East Presto Depot during the 60's and 70's and wrote very well for the Union Record for many years.

In 1992 youths hid among the trees at night near the Port Melbourne Tram Terminus and threw rocks at two large 'B' Class trams and most of the windows were broken.

On June 27th 1998 a reunion of about 12 people who had worked at South Melbourne Depot was held at Bells Hotel in South Melbourne. A few of the people who attended were; Ian Whally, Lois Harwood, former Depot Starter Frank Reardon, Joan Elkington, Peter Bruce, Margaret Cushion and myself. On 3rd October 1999 driver John Stewart organised a large reunion of at least 55 people at Southbank Depot and two 'W Class' trams took many others and myself to Fitzroy Street, St. Kilda. Lucy Takaha from Southbank organised tea and cakes. Former conductors Jack Gregan and Rudy Berger were there and driver Bill Duncan.

Early in 1995 the State Liberal Government forced the PTA to make about 2000,000 Victorian Tertiary Students pay a concession card levy of \$105 before they were eligible to travel at the concession rate on the trams and trains. No other State charges such a fee.

It was a great shock to all when South Melbourne Union delegate and driver Geoffrey Sheldrake died on 15th January 1996, he was only about 39 years of age.

On 28th December 1890 a young man named John Neville was charged at South Melbourne Court with being drunk and assaulting tram cable car conductor William Lynch. He boarded a Port Melbourne tram and was put off but he scrambled onto the dummy. The conductor told him he had made a mistake and Neville struck him a violent blow on the face. Neville said he was so drunk he did not know what he was doing but was fined £3.5s, or 16 days imprisonment. That was printed in the Age newspaper.

In December 1968 the Board of Works opened the St. Kilda Junction project. It had been a bad bottleneck for traffic. The Board of Works began buying houses three years before and in 1968 156 houses, 52 businesses, 42 shops, 3 service stations and 3 hotels were demolished. Queensway would now pass under St. Kilda Road and much work was needed for trams to be rerouted. The little green signal box close to the junction was due to finish about September 1968 and the signalman Leo Allender aged 64, had been operating it for eight years. It was built to guide trams through the junction. The old Junction Hotel was demolished in 1973. In 1988 the \$2 note was scrapped and replaced by a coin. The note only lasted four to six months but the coin will last for 40 years.

I was born in the small town of Reefton in New Zealand. It was the first town in the southern hemisphere to have electricity put in, in 1888. My father owned a farm three miles away but the weather was so bad I went to live 150 miles away in Christchurch and worked for three years as a post office telephone operator. It was the best job ever and I made a bad mistake when I left to work for a monumental mason in cemeteries. For two years the pay was only £7 10s per week for hard work so I left to work on sewerage construction for £14. It was hard work and after nine months the contract finished. I worked on other temporary jobs including a pickle factory, builders labourer, in a plasterboard factory, painting houses for six weeks, in a timber yard and on a sewerage construction plant as a labourer as they did not want permanent workers.