

TRAMS AND TOURISM

The foundation of the present Melbourne tramway network was laid down between 1885 and 1891 with the construction of cable tramways in the streets of the city and inner suburbs. Although at first the cable trams were well patronised, the effects of the depression of the 1890s was soon felt by the Melbourne Tramway Omnibus Company, which operated the services. In 1893 the company chairman lamented to shareholders that the "unexampled depression in all branches of business in the metropolis" had resulted in an annual reduction in receipts of almost one million and four thousand pounds, and that the directors were working continuously to effect economies in working and in reducing expenses.¹

In an attempt to encourage the public to use the trams for pleasure as well as for daily travel, the tramway company began issuing special "Bath Tickets", which included travel on the trams as well as admission to any "ladies' or gentlemen's bath at St Kilda or South Melbourne"² (Fig 1). The tickets were valid on all routes south of the Yarra, except the Port Melbourne line, at a charge of ninepence. They came into use on 27 November 1891 and were available on all days during the season. They were obviously popular because they remained on sale until 30 March 1912³.

Another strategy employed by the tramway company to encourage tourism and patronage of its trams was the issue of a special tramway guide booklet late in 1894.⁴ As well as providing details of routes, fares and regulations, this quaint pocket-sized booklet, which was sold by conductors for three pence, contained lists of places of interest along the lines, and more detailed "Rambles from the routes".⁵

The guide book described that a "rural lane, hedged...and redolent of sweet briar", off Moreland Grove at the terminus of the Brunswick line, led to a "good picnicing spot", and that more rustic walks were possible from the Toorak and Prahran routes. Although the Nicholson Street line terminated at the quarries, brick works and fenced paddocks, the guide advised that "agreeable walks" were possible beyond the terminus.

-
- 1 Twentieth report of the directors of the Melbourne Tramway Omnibus Co. Ltd, presented 10 August 1893
 - 2 Ticket from A Jungwirth collection
 - 3 *The cable trams of Melbourne*, C N Govett and A E Twentiman unpub.ms., Brisbane, 1973
 - 4 *The Argus*, 12 December 1894
 - 5 *Tramway guide to Melbourne and suburbs*, The Melbourne Tramway & Omnibus Co. Ltd, nd.

Soon after publishing its tourist guide booklet, the tramway company began issuing special "Beach Tickets"(Fig 2). These return tickets were sold on all lines north of the Yarra at a cost of ninepence for adults and fourpence halfpenny for children under twelve⁶. The back of the large four-part cardboard ticket carried the message - "How to enjoy yourself! Try a visit to St Kilda or South Melbourne Beach with your family. Especially refreshing after a hot day". It also advised that the Tramway Employees Military Band played every Tuesday and Thursday evening at South Melbourne terminus, and every Wednesday evening and Sunday afternoon at St Kilda Esplanade during the summer months, weather permitting⁷. The Beach Tickets came into use on 1 February 1895⁸.

About this time, the tramway company also issued a combined ticket for a return trip from Melbourne to Williamstown via the Port Melbourne cable trams and the paddle steamer *Gem*⁹. For many years, *Gem* plied across Hobsons Bay, from the Port Melbourne Town Pier to the Gem Pier at Williamstown.

While the operation of the cable lines provided the tramway company with its main source of revenue, it also ran a horse drawn tramway, purely as a tourist venture. This line, from the Sydney Road cable tramway, through Royal Park to the gates of the Zoological Gardens, opened in March 1890. Had the trams and their shed not been destroyed by arson during the police strike in 1923, the Royal Park horse tramway may still have been operating as a tourist attraction

Another horse drawn tramway which derived most of its income from tourist traffic, was that operated by the Beaumaris Tramway Company. The Beaumaris line began near the Sandringham station, and followed Beach Road as far as Beaumaris, before turning inland to terminate at the Cheltenham station, on the Frankston railway line. Double deck trams were used to carry the large numbers of summer tourists bound for Black Rock, Ricketts Point and Beaumaris. From 1889 until the line closed in 1914, the company, in conjunction with the Victorian Railways, offered special circular tickets. These enabled patrons to travel from the city by train along one railway line, ride the tram, then return to Melbourne by the other railway line. The price of a First Class adult daily circular ticket was two shillings¹⁰. During the last half of 1890, nearly 17,000 circular tickets were issued¹¹.

6 Govett & Twentyman, *ibid*

7 Ticket from A Jungwirth collection

8 Govett & Twentyman, *ibid*

9 Ticket from A Jungwirth collection

10 Beaumaris Tramway Company Ltd half yearly report,
18 February 1890

11 Beaumaris Tramway Company Ltd half yearly report
30 January 1891

Combined railway/tramway tickets were also used to promote tourism on the Box Hill to Doncaster electric tramway. One October 1889, this line was the first electric tramway in Australia. Although it was built mainly as an inducement to purchasers of land being subdivided along the route, the line also provided access from the Box Hill railway station to the surrounding orchards, and a 285 feet high observation tower on the hill at Doncaster.

From 24 February 1890, tourists were able to purchase a combined daily First Class railway/tramway ticket from Melbourne to Doncaster for one shilling and sixpence¹². Posters advertising the line praised the magnificent view from the tower, and stated that a trip to the Doncaster Tower was "one of the most pleasant, novel and withal cheapest of outings"¹³. Unfortunately the pioneer Doncaster electric tramway was unable to survive the 1890s depression, and the line was forced to close in January 1896.

Until the coming of electric tramways during the first two decades of this century, the horse trams at Royal Park and Beaumaris provided the only real tourist tramway service. In early 1915 an expanding network of electric tramways, but operated by the municipally controlled Prahran & Malvern Tram Trust, had junctioned with the central cable tramway system at Kilda Esplanade and Victoria Bridge. The cable tramway operated and the trust therefore decided to promote a round trip route through Melbourne and the south eastern suburbs at a moderate fare (Fig 3).

From 15 September 1915 Round Trip Tickets were issued, covering 16 miles, for an adult fare of nine pence and a child's rate of five pence¹⁴. Passengers boarding at the Melbourne Town Hall travelled by cable tram to St Kilda Esplanade, changed to an electric car opposite Luna Park, and proceeded to Victoria Bridge via Balaclava, Glenferrie and Cotham Roads, High Street and Barkers Road. At Victoria Bridge they changed to the Victoria Street cable tram, to complete their journey back to the Town Hall via Collins Street. Tourists could commence their trip at any point, travel in one direction only, and break their journey at the three change points.

The round trip was well received, and during the first year of operation nearly 80,000 round trip tickets were sold¹⁵. With the opening of the trust's Malvern and Burke Road line in 1916 the round trip ticket arrangement was extended to include an alternative loop along Malvern, Burke and Cotham Roads, and

12 *The first electric road*, R Green, Melbourne 1989, p.4

13 *ibid* p.62

14 *The Argus*, 15 Sept 1915

15 Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust report and statement of accounts for twelve months ending 30 September 1916

additional fare of twopence¹⁶. After the First World War both the cable and electric tramways were taken over by the Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board (M&MTB), and in March 1921 the price of the round trip tickets was increased to one shilling for adults, and sixpence for children¹⁷ (Fig 4).

During the 1920s the cable tram sections of the round trip route were electrified as part of the M&MTB's cable tram conversion programme. Issue of the round trip tickets ceased sometime between 1947 and 1949.

Soon after opening its Chalet and constructing sporting facilities at Wattle Park during the late 1920s, the M&MTB encouraged the public to use these new recreation facilities by issuing Family Concession Tickets on the Princes Bridge to Wattle Park route. These tickets, which covered a return journey to Wattle Park for a fare of two shillings and sixpence were authorised for issue on 1 December 1931¹⁸. After 19 October 1936 the Family Concession Tickets were extended to include a return journey to the "beach lines" for the same fare¹⁹. A family was defined as two adults and up to four children under fourteen years of age, or one adult and up to five children. The Family Concession Tickets were phased out sometime between 1947 and 1949.

In addition to issuing tourist concession tickets and round trip tickets, the M&MTB inaugurated a special tourist tram service in the spring of 1927, using a newly constructed observation car (Fig 5). The service comprised a round trip of 24 miles through the south-east suburbs. Two trips were made each weekday, commencing at 10.30am and 2.15pm from the Batman Avenue terminus at Princes Bridge. The special tram travelled to St Kilda beach via Batman Avenue, Swan, Chapel and Carlisle Streets, then proceeded to Kew by way of Fitzroy Street, Dandenong, Glenferrie and Cotham Roads, and returned to its starting point via Burke, Malvern and St Kilda Roads²⁰.

The tour occupied about two hours, and the fare charged was one shilling. A tramway official accompanying the tour provided a commentary. The first trip was made on 16 September 1927, and the car ran continuously until the service was suspended for the winter on 26 June 1928. Over 24,000 passengers were carried during the inaugural season. It was estimated that half the passengers were locals and half were overseas and interstate

16 Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust report to councils, quarter ending 30 September 1918

17 M&MTB By-law No.4

18 Victoria Government Gazette, 9 December 1931

19 Victoria Government Gazette, 21 October 1936

20 Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board report and statement of accounts for the year ended 30 June 1928

visitors²¹. The service was so successful that sometimes an additional car was necessary.

The original tourist tram, Y Class No.469, designed and built at the Preston tramway workshops, was the first of its type in Australia. It comprised a single open saloon mounted on four bogies, and had front and centre entrances, fitted with four doors. Pairs of wooden seats with reversible tip-over backs flanking a centre aisle, made it ideal for tourist purposes.

A second season of tours operated from 17 September 1928 to 27 June 1929, during which time some 18,000 passengers were carried²². Although the service was successful, with an average load of forty nine passengers on the fifty four seat vehicle, the tram was no longer used for tourist purposes. Instead, a new twenty five seat motor bus was substituted in July 1929, and a more varied and expanded tourist service to be provided. The tourist bus service lasted until the early 1950s.

The post war years were difficult years for tramways around the world. The rise of the private motor car and the motor bus spelled the end for most tramways. The late 1950s and the 1960s witnessed the death of the tramcar and the trolley bus in Australian capital cities, although Melbourne kept its extensive tram network for which it has continued to show affection. The Perth and Adelaide tramway systems were abandoned in 1958, followed by Tasmania in 1960, Sydney in 1961 and Brisbane during 1969. The Melbourne tramways were also in the doldrums, and between the Second World War and the 1970s no special tourist tramway services were provided. However, by the late 1970s the Melbourne tramways experienced a resurgence. New trams were built and extensions to the system were constructed.

Following the success of a *Cavalcade of Transport*, held in January 1978 in conjunction with the unveiling of the *Hisory Transportation Mural* at Spencer Street station, the M&MTB decided to restore and operate some of its early trams as tourist attractions. Tram No.V-214, built in 1906 for the North Melbourne Electric Tramway & Lighting Company, together with Class No.676, a "one-man" tram built in 1930, were the first trams to be dealt with. Both were unveiled by the Premier at the *Melbourne Pageant-Salute to Australia* function, held on Australia Day 1979.

Commencing on 4 February 1979, tram No. V-214, an open vehicle having transverse seating, began a regular tourist tram service between Princes Bridge and the Hawthorn tram depot²⁴. The service operated on a forty minute headway, and the adult fare

21 *The Argus*, 25 June 1928

22 *The Argus*, 25 June 1929

23 Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board report and statement of accounts for the year ended 30 June 1929

24 *Trolley Wire*, February 1979

for a single journey was forty cents. During inclement weather the enclosed X2 Class car was used.

In late 1981 the Government decided to offer free travel on Sundays for a two month trial period. As part of this initiative to promote public transport, the M&MTB also put into regular service two restored L Class trams dating from 1921. These trams provided a service between Elizabeth Street and the Zoological Gardens, in addition to the tourist tram service already operating to Hawthorn depot²⁵. For years now the restored L Class tramcars have provided a Sunday service to the Zoo.

Further use of tourist trams began in the summer of 1987-88, with the operation of one of the L Class cars and one of four Y1 Class "one-two man" cars on a daily service (except Tuesday), between Victoria Street in the city, and Acland Street St Kilda²⁶. From 18 November 1990, this service was provided by a variety of older cars specially restored as a "heritage" fleet. "You'll be amazed as you travel back in time on Melbourne's lovingly renovated and restored vintage trams" enthused the publicity posters (Fig 6). Over the ensuing summer months, the trams ran on the City-St Kilda Beach, City-Zoo and the Kew-St Kilda Beach routes every Sunday²⁷.

Realising that the older cars were an important tourism asset, the Public Transport Corporation, announced in June 1992, that special tram tours of Melbourne, designed specifically to meet the needs of tourists would start in September²⁸. Two tours were planned, both starting from Batman Avenue. The morning tour occupying more than two hours, was to include Swanston Walk, South Melbourne, St Kilda Road, Chapel Street, and the St Kilda Esplanade, with stops at the MCG and Victoria Market. The one-hour afternoon tour was to include the central city, the Exhibition Building and Parliament House. Although tram No.469, which had begun the first tourist service in 1927, and Y1 Class No.613, were lavishly renovated for the proposed service, and newspaper advertisements in September 1992 advised that "Seeing the sights of Melbourne will soon be a very moving experience"²⁹, neither tram ever carried a tourist.

Robert Green
25 April 1994

- 25 *Trolley Wire*, February 1982
- 26 *Trolley Wire*, February 1988
- 27 *Trolley Wire*, February 1991
- 28 *Changing Times*, 18 June 1992
- 29 *Herald-Sun*, 29 September 1992

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| TRAMWAY BATH RETURN GOOD FOR ONE RIDE ON SOUTH MELBOURNE, ST. KILDA ESPLANADE, BRIGHTON ROAD, PRAHRAN, TAK, OR WINDS LINE UNTIL PUNCHED | M. T. & O. Co. BATH TICKET. GOOD FOR ONE SEA BATH. SEE OTHER SIDE | TRAMWAY BATH RETURN GOOD FOR ONE RIDE ON SOUTH MELBOURNE, ST. KILDA ESPLANADE, BRIGHTON ROAD, PRAHRAN, TAK, OR WINDS LINE UNTIL PUNCHED |
|---|--|---|

FIG 1.

| | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------|
| THE CONDUCTOR MUST CANCEL THIS TICKET BY TEARING OFF THIS END. | CHILDREN 4½d. UNDER 12. Beach Return Ticket. PART 1—GOOD ON ANY LINE except Prahran, Esplanade, Brighton Road, Windsor, South or Port Melbourne, for one journey towards Melbourne on date nipped in margin, without right of transfer. Issued according to Regulations of Company. <i>W. G. SPRIGG, Secy. M.T.O. Co. Ltd.</i> NOT GOOD AFTER END IS REMOVED. | March or September |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 | 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 | 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 | 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 | 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 | 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |

FIG 2.

Round Trip

Through
Melbourne & Suburbs
 —BY—
CABLE & ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS

16 Miles for 9d.

CHILDREN under 12 Years, 5d



— **ROUTE.** —

Melbourne Town Hall and St. Kilda Esplanade,
 Via Swanston-street, St. Kilda Road, Fitzroy-street, and The Esplanade.

St. Kilda Esplanade and Victoria Street Bridge,
 Via Carlisle-street, Balaclava-road, Hawthorn-road, Glenferrie-road, Cotham-road, High-st., and Barkers-road.

Victoria Street Bridge & Melbourne Town Hall,
 Via Victoria-st., Victoria Parade, Gisborne-street, and Collins-street.

Changing Points.
 (See Plan.)

Melbourne Town Hall—
 Cable Cars—Collins-street and Swanston-street.

St. Kilda Esplanade—
 Cable Car—Esplanade and Electric Car—Carlisle st.

Cotham Road—
 Electric Cars—Glenferrie road and Cotham-road

Victoria-street Bridge—
 Electric Car—Barkers road and Cable Car—Victoria-street.

.....

Passengers may board Cars at any point on the Route, and travel in either direction back to starting Point.

Tickets are also available by Electric Car on Malvern Road or High-street Routes.

FIG 3.



FIG 4

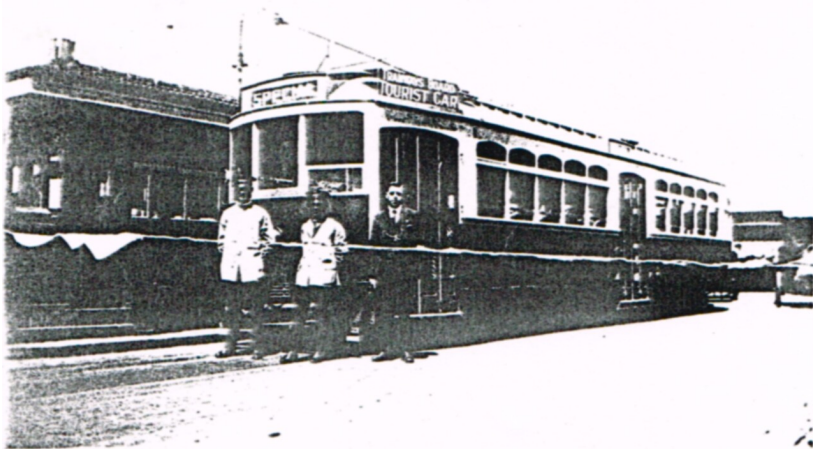
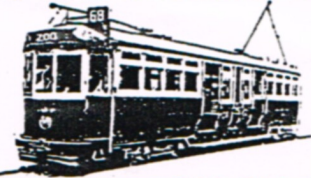


FIG 5

YOU'LL BE AMAZED AS YOU

TRAVEL
BACK IN TIME
 ON MELBOURNE'S LOVINGLY
 RENOVATED AND RESTORED
VINTAGE
TRAMS.



TAKE THE WHOLE FAMILY
 TO SEE SOME OF MELBOURNE'S
 FAMOUS ATTRACTIONS -
THE ZOO - MUSEUM
NATIONAL GALLERY
SHRINE
BOTANICAL GARDENS
ST. KILDA BEACH
- AND MANY MORE!

ROUTE 18. CITY - SWANSTON STREET - ST KILDA BEACH.
 ROUTE 69. KEW - COTHAM ROAD - ST KILDA BEACH.
 ROUTE 88. CITY - ELIZABETH STREET - ZOO.

EVERY SUNDAY
NOVEMBER TO MARCH
 TELEPHONE 617 0900 FOR MORE DETAILS.


The Met.
 Public Transport Corporation

FIG 6