

# METRA NEWS

The news vehicle for MMTB employees

## Board to play major role in Melbourne Pageant.

The Melbourne pageant is people, displays, tradition, color and human involvement . . . a week of free entertainment in Melbourne's wonderful parks . . . with some very important plus factors.

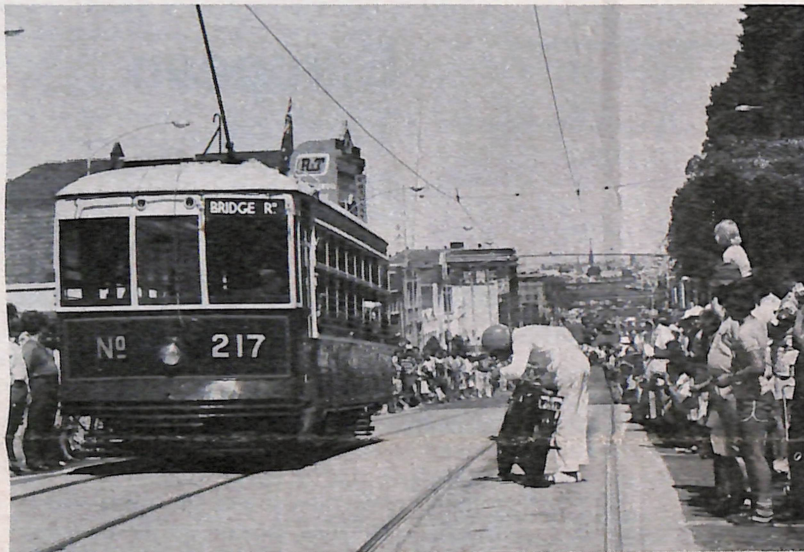
The purpose of the pageant is to present a 'slice of life', to portray and express the heritage, history and spirit of Australia, its color and unique character.

The pageant will begin on Monday January 19 and will climax the following Monday — appropriately, Australia Day (January 26) — with a grand street parade and a great day of free entertainment in the Fitzroy and Treasury Gardens.

The MMTB is providing considerable input in terms of co-ordination, planning timetables, providing supervision and emergency services on stand-by, plus crews for three vintage trams.

Among the "star" performers on Australia Day will be the Board's two famous vintage trams, well known for their weekend operations in Batman Avenue: number 676, a closed electric tram with seating for 32 passengers, and 214 with "toast rack" seating configuration which provides for 50 seated passengers with the conductor operating on the running board. These trams will run from Simpson St, East Melbourne via Wellington St, Flinders St, and Spencer St to Lonsdale St.

As well as the Board's trams, there will also be another three trams operating on this route. They are the Tramway Museum Society of Victoria's Number 164 which seats 36 passengers, the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society Ltd's Number



Here's a scene from the 1980 Australia Day Pageant Parade.

27 which seats 30 passengers and the Bendigo Trust's tram which also seats 30.

Trams are a very real part of the early life and times of Victoria and the sight of the trams of yester-year will conjure up many nostalgic thoughts.

Quite apart from their historic significance the old trams have a special kind of magic for the young-

sters. Consequently it is expected the vintage trams will be a major drawcard on Australia Day and that many thousands of passengers will keep the trams "flat out".

Other trams of historic interest will be two horse drawn trams which will run in Simpson St, and of special interest at Simpston St will be the display of a vintage tram replica of the original electric tram which once ran from Doncaster (near what is now Doncaster Shoppingtown) to the Box Hill Station. This was Australia's first electric tram and the one after which Tram Rd Doncaster gets its name.

## The "good old days" of public transport?

Surprising as it may seem, the relative cost of Public Transport for the average commuter has not increased over the years.

In fact, as the table shows, when a comparison is made between the number of rides obtainable using fitter rates of pay, the present day commuter is far better off.

Coupled to this is the great range of concession cards and bulk purchase tickets available to today's cost conscious commuter to further cut expenses. These are the various Metro Cards, the very popular Day Tripper, the City Section and City plus One concession cards, as well as the Monthly and Pre-paid tickets.

In addition to all this, in 1940 children had to be under three years

of age to be carried free of charge and only one child could be carried with each adult. Today, children under four years of age are carried free and there is no limit to the number that can accompany an adult.

Further up the age scale the same sort of situation exists. In 1940, when a child reached the age of 12 he had to pay an adult fare whereas now this does not apply until the age of 15 years.

So it appears that Public Transport is cheaper now than it was in the "Good Old Days".

## A comprehensive program

During the week preceding Australia Day a most comprehensive program of Free Entertainment in the Parks is offered, but the real highlight of the week is the final day of the program — Australia Day with the Pageant Parade. The Parade will commence at 12.30 p.m. at Degraives Street and is scheduled to arrive at the Fitzroy Gardens at about 12.50.

The concept of the parade is to feature groups in order of their arrival in Australia as migrants. Australia has one of the world's most diverse populations so the parade will certainly be a great form of expression for people of many national origins.

The theme will be continued that afternoon when a special festive area will be set aside in the Fitzroy Gardens where the public will be involved in folk singing and dancing.

## FILM ON APPRENTICES

What it's like to be an apprentice with the MMTB will soon be shown on film screens throughout Australia.

Film Australia is currently producing a film on "Apprentices" which will be shown to school leavers to introduce them to the various trades available to them as apprentices.

Although Film Australia is Sydney based and most of the filming was done in Sydney, Film Australia approached the Board to film some of our apprentices at work to give the film a little more of a "National" appeal as well as showing a greater diversification of trades available.

The two apprentices selected for filming were Greg Goodwin, 4th year apprentice painter, and Tony Weir, 3rd year apprentice painter. The two apprentices were filmed working on the repair and re-commissioning of W class trams as well as being interviewed on camera about their particular trade, why they chose the trade and so on.

Film Australia anticipates that the film will be widely shown throughout Australia at schools, vocational guidance interviews and recruiting publicity nights.



Tony Weir (left) and Greg Goodwin being briefed by Film Australia's Pamela Williams.

Also in the gardens will be a great display of antique cars, steam engines and other examples of life in the "old days".

Other features of the pageant include a special display of railways items at Spencer Street station, store window displays, film screenings at the State Film Centre, and displays at the National Museum, the National Gallery, the Science Museum and the Meat Market Craft Centre.

The Pageant Committee is chaired by Mr. Bob Crawford, the man who

launched the highly successful "Free Entertainment in the Parks". Senior personnel represent the Board on the Pageant Committee and considerable time and effort has been devoted to the pageant.

The 1980 pageant attracted a huge crowd on the final day, and this pageant is likely to draw even more people as greater efforts are being made to widen its scope and encourage an increased involvement from ethnic and other groups.

As Mr. Crawford says, "The pageant, a special project of the Department of the Premier, has captured the interest and imagination of an increasingly large number of Victorians.

"The pageant is growing every year and we particularly welcome the involvement of as many groups as possible. We want individuals and groups to participate directly. For example, youngsters, their parents and grandparents for that matter, are invited to dress up in colonial gear and join our Australia Day Parade."

So, if you want to see some wonderful old cars, farm machinery, steam driven vehicles, ethnic dancing, parades and other highlights (all free) then the pageant is just what you have been waiting for.



One of the trams to be featured at this year's pageant.

Year	Fitters Wage	Fare for 5 Sections	Number of Rides
1923	£5. 6.6	5½d	232
1940	£5.12.0	6 d	224
1981	\$182.00	60c	303

(The average commuter travels 5 sections per journey)



# ANY PORT IN A STORM?

Next time you get soaked in a downpour waiting for your bus or tram, here is something to take your mind off your wet socks. It won't stop the rain running down the back of your neck, but it may make you a little more aware of the value of passenger facilities, why we have them — or don't have them — and what we are doing about it.

One of the fundamentals of any public transport system is the provision of a number of locations where passengers can join or leave the system.

This requirement is met in many different ways world wide, from the likes of Grand Central Station, New York, where enormous numbers of people swarm on and off the trains daily, to the Tokyo subway stations, where special attendants are employed to cram passengers into the cars so the doors will close — and to tidy up the odd limb or two that still protrudes when they don't. Then there is the Moscow Metro, where passengers wait surrounded by marble and mosaic splendour more like a palace than a railway station.

At the other end of the scale is the lone commuter, waiting at the end of his street for his bus or tram, often at the mercy of the elements. The principle is the same — a place to get on or off the system, but how elaborate that place is depends largely on the numbers using it.

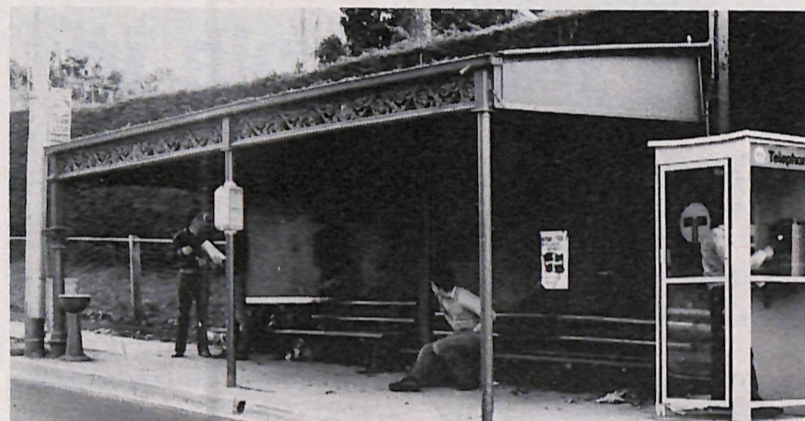
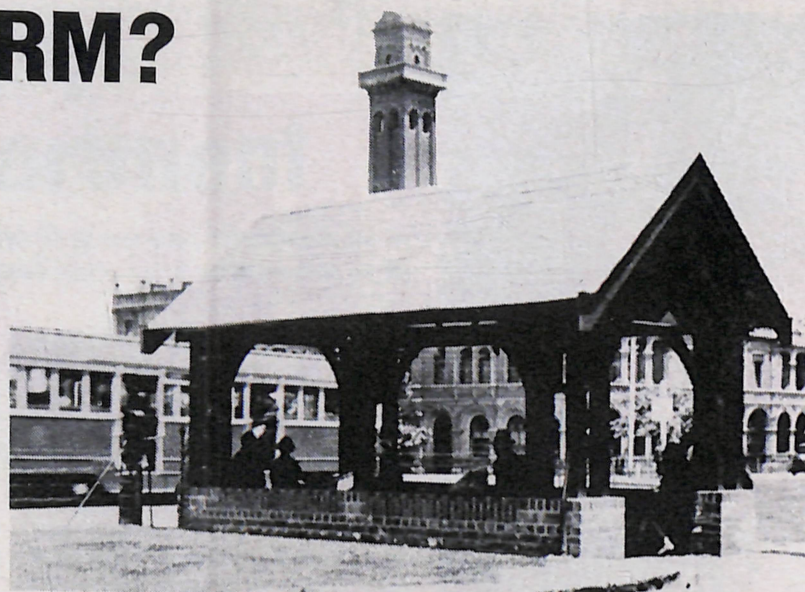
In order to make our commuter's wait a little less unpleasant during inclement weather, the passenger shelter developed as a logical solution to an obvious problem. The humble shelter has taken many forms over the years in various parts of the world, and Melbourne is no exception.



The photos show the changing appearance of the Board's shelters from the earliest wooden type in vogue late last century — and these probably left a little to be desired in heavy weather — through the ornate structures favoured in the twenties, to the steel refuges of the forties and finally to the sleek, clean lines of today's compact glazed modular type.

Passenger shelters on Board routes are manufactured at our Preston Workshops, and are installed by the Civil Branch, South Melbourne. Installations are part of an ongoing program to improve passenger safety and facilities, and will remain an integral part of Civil Branch activity for some years to come.

Now, about those wet socks . . .



## RESILIENT TRACK WORK

In 1954 the Board introduced the present method of track construction whereby the rails are held rigid in concrete. Since then a number of modifications to this technique have been made, possibly the most important being the introduction of resilient track which, because of the additional costs involved, has been restricted to special applications.

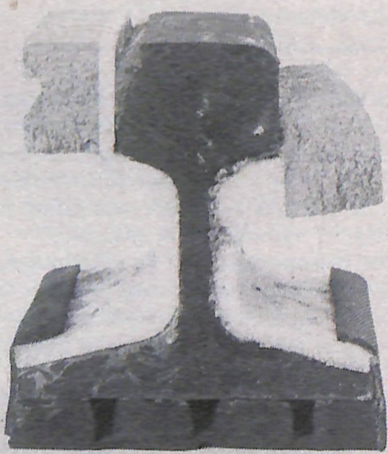
Resilient track has been introduced with the aim of reducing vibration, track maintenance, and noise levels.

The first attempt at constructing resilient track was in 1968 during the reconstruction of St Kilda Junction. The new track over Queensway was encased in resilient material to reduce the vibration imparted to the bridge by trams in order to keep the total noise level under the bridge to an acceptable level. For similar reasons, the City Road overpass in St Kilda

thick closed cell polyethylene strip and the rail head is glued to a 6mm thick closed cell neoprene strip, which in turn is glued to 37mm thick cork expansion joint material.

To achieve resilience the concrete slab must not contact the rail. This method allows for a rail deflection of approximately 1mm under the wheel load of a tram.

The reduction in noise on city crossings has been found to be about 6dB for "W" class trams and 7dB for



Road was constructed in 1971 without any design change.

The design of resilient track work was changed in 1974 to increase the resilience. Experimentation concluded in 1976 when the Board, with the assistance of members of the Monash University's Mechanical Engineering Department, installed and tested three sample crossings in the test track at Preston Workshops.

The design now adopted has the rail completely encased in rubber (except for the rail head) then cast into a concrete slab. For the technically minded it is achieved this way: the foot of the rail sits on an 18mm thick rubber pad, the rail web by a 6mm

the "Z" class trams traversing crossings at normal speed ranges when compared with similar rigid crossings. This noise reduction may not seem significant but at street level a pedestrian would hear only half the noise level at a resilient crossing when compared to a rigid crossing.

There are at present three resilient city crossings in service, at Swanston/Flinders, Swanston/Bourke, Swanston/Collins and a fourth will be installed at Flinders Street and Market Street soon. Resilient track has also been laid in La Trobe Street over Museum and Flagstaff Stations, and in Spencer Street over the pedestrian underpass.

## TRANSIT OVERSEAS



## European Trolley Buses

In our last edition we promised to write something in this edition about the European scene.

Trolley bus technology developed in Europe at about the same time as it did in the USA, and the first installations took place just after the turn of the century. Numerous systems were in operation by 1910 and in Italy trolley buses were even operating in 1902. England installed 18 systems during the 1920s and all but four lasted until the 1950s. There were systems operating in Germany, Austria, Norway, France, Switzerland and Hungary.

After World War II, over 40 new trolley bus systems commenced operation in Germany, some replacing tram lines that were destroyed during the War.

In the 1950s and the 1960s the systems declined rapidly and when the Bradford system closed in 1972, there were no longer any trolley buses in the British Isles.

Of the total of 70 systems operating in Germany at one time, only six remained by 1977, three in West Germany and three in East Germany. A number of systems remained in Italy but they were almost all small and had not been upgraded. Switzerland kept all its trolley bus operations and new ones have been purchased to upgrade the fleets.

Small numbers of trolley buses are operated in other West European countries, such as Austria, France, Greece, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and Spain. East Germany is still withdrawing its trolley bus services, whereas the USSR has installed new systems and greatly expanded theirs to the point where approximately 20,000 trolley buses now operate in Russia.

Austria has trolley buses in Kapfenberg and Salzburg. The vehicles were made by Graf and Stift. Linz will withdraw its trolley buses for economic reasons. Skoda built 140 new trolley buses in 1979 and this represents about 15-20 per cent of the Czech fleet.

In France there are now five operators, amongst them the cities of Grenoble, Lyon, St Etienne and Marseille. The three former cities

ordered 185 trolley coaches from Berliet and Marseille ordered 50 of the same.

Athens has recently taken delivery of 124 Russian trolley buses as replacements and for route extensions, and in Hungary the Budapest system is operating Russian two axle trolley buses and Ikarus articulated trolley buses. Rimini is the only city in Italy to recently purchase new trolley buses.

In the Netherlands, the only system in Arnhem has been extended and has new vehicles. Norway is still up-



An articulated trolley bus operating in Esslingen, West Germany.

## New tram system for Genoa

Recently the Italian magazine "Omnibus" carried a description of the tram system that will be introduced to Genoa.

Trams ran in that City from 1893 until 1966, but the new system will be a far cry from the street transport tram system, which served this City (of 800,000 persons) in the past, because the new tram system will operate mainly in tunnels.

The tunnels have been chosen for higher operating speeds to ensure no interference from other road traffic. An AVM system will be installed in the articulated tram, which will have a capacity of 200 passengers and a top speed of 70 km per hour.

grading its system initially with new vehicles from Skoda but now with new trolley buses manufactured by Volvo/Hess/Secheron. The Swiss have introduced chopper control and improved overhead wiring, whereas the West Germans are rebuilding their fleet but no large expansion is imminent. Esslingen has an experimental project and the largest operator of trolley buses is the city of Solingen.

And so it is obvious that after a 20 year period when the trolley bus was considered obsolete, there is a definite revival in interest and even expansion of existing systems is contemplated.

Environmental issues have played a large part in the new interest but the future of trolley buses is likely to depend to a large extent on the value placed on the use of energy sources other than oil.



# OUR 1981 APPRENTICES

Apprenticeship vacancies for 1981 throughout the Board's operations totalled 22 and in excess of 800 applications were received from people wishing to be considered for the positions available.

Following extensive selection procedures, employment opportunities were offered in various trades. Some of the successful applicants are listed below:

## Preston Workshops

**Bodymakers:** Peter Dove, Michael Martin, David Nankervis, Craig Lawson.

**Electrical Fitters:** Trevor Lovelock, Craig Tooke, Phillip Davey, Stewart Coff.

**Tradesman Painters:** Robert Watson, David Harris.

**Fitter & Turners:** Daryl Borthwick, Francis Molloy, Ross Chapman.

## Bus Branch — North Fitzroy

**Motor Mechanics:** Neville Jennings, John Orford, Thomas Glasl, Anthony Tucek.

## Electrical Branch — Coburg

**Electrical Mechanics:** Paul Preston, Michael Colvin.

## Services Branch — South Melbourne

**Carpenter:** David Collins.

By being part of the 1981 apprentice intake, these young men will have the common interest of commencing their career with the Board.

Of significant interest also is that Craig Lawson, David Harris, Francis Molloy, John Orford and Michael Colvin will be perpetuating a frequently practiced tradition of joining relatives who are already employees of the Board.

For Craig, David and John they will join their brothers Mark, Glenn and Edward respectively as fellow apprentices. Michael's mother, Tess Colvin, is a cleaner at Head Office.

In the case of Francis it becomes a real Tramway affair, as his mother and father, Elizabeth and Frank are both employed in the Traffic Department.

For Phillip Davey, the decision to accept employment with the Board also means taking residence in Mel-



Above: David (left) and Glen Harris. Below: Mark and Craig Lawson.



bourne. Phillip lives at Kerang and has been attending Kerang Technical School.

The Board employs several tradesmen with service stretching over many years. A significant proportion of these employees also commenced their apprenticeship with the Board.

Over the years the quality of practical training and skills development relating to apprentices has been clearly demonstrated by the numerous instances of apprentices receiving awards of merit throughout their apprenticeship training, and it is hoped that this pattern will continue.

The Board wishes each individual well in the career he has chosen.



## PEOPLE

### Staff Recruitment and Development

Throughout the current year numerous job vacancies were advertised internally and externally to provide replacement for vacancies created through staff separations and promotions.

Notices and advertisements drew employees' attention to a large range of vacant positions — a few of which were Car Cleaner/Trainee Pitman, Junior Clerk and Planning Officer.

All employees are reminded that future vacancies and details of promotional opportunities will be advertised on local notice boards throughout the coming year.

Employees could benefit by regularly checking their notice boards and responding to opportunities as they occur.

### A real MMTB family



Frank Molloy, his wife Elizabeth and twin sons Francis and David arrived in Melbourne from their former home, Dublin, Ireland in December 1974. Frank immediately joined the Board as a Conductor and later, in 1976, Elizabeth also joined the Board. Apart from a brief period they have both remained with the Board since arriving in Australia.

Both Francis and David applied for apprenticeships with the Board for this year. Francis was fortunate enough to win a position as apprentice Fitter and Turner while David, who applied for Coach-building was not so fortunate. However David will continue his studies this year and hopes to be one of the successful applicants in next year's intake of apprentices.

### What does a Tram Driver do?



The answer to this question can be found in a book that is being produced by the Women's Movement Children's Literature Cooperative.

The Co-operative has written several books for children outlining what people in various occupations do in their day to day work activities with the aim of both educating and giving a realistic picture of what the job entails.

Books already produced in the series include The Interpreter, The Factory Worker, The Carpenter, Shopkeepers and several others.

Recently the Co-operative approached the Board for assistance in the production of another booklet, The Tram Driver. Driver Sue Cosloto, of East Preston Depot, was

selected as the tram driver around which the storyline was written and all photographs were taken by Michael McLeod, the Board's photographer. The finished book is due for release early this year and will be available for purchase at most of the larger bookshops.

Sue came to Australia from Yugoslavia in 1974 and worked in her own business until she joined the Tramways Board in 1977. She worked as a Conductress and a Tram Driver at East Preston Depot, where her husband also works as a Tram Driver, until she recently began training as a Ticket Examiner Relief Depot Starter. Although a qualified Building Technician, Sue intends to make a career with the Board.

### APPOINTMENTS

**Ralph Burgmeier** joined the Board as a Trainer Pitman at Glenhuntly Depot. Formerly employed by the Railways of New South Wales, he recently returned to his home State of Victoria. A keen hunter and fisherman, Ralph spends as much of his spare time as he can pursuing these activities.

**Judy Wilks**, who has a Bachelor of Town and Regional Planning (Melbourne University), joined the Board on October 6, 1980 as a Planning Officer. She is presently studying for a Graduate Diploma in Urban Sociology. Judy, who was married on December 20, 1980, is keen on swimming and jogging and is presently researching, in her spare time, the history of the Maribyrnong River.



J. Wilks



M. Mills

**Rohan Colson** joined the Board on November 24, 1980 as a Junior Clerk, Revenue Accounts, having previously worked as a storeman in a clothing store. Rohan is an avid motor cyclist and plays competitive tennis for St

Andrews Church in Essendon.

**Margaret Mills** recently started with the Board as a Conductress at Essendon Depot. Originally from Scotland, Margaret, her husband and two teenage sons have now settled in Australia and are living in Parkville. Before joining the Board she was the manageress of two delicatessen shops. Between work and looking after her family, Margaret's spare time is spent either practising yoga or playing squash.

**Richard Petch** is a new Conductor at Essendon Depot. Married, with two young daughters, Richard and his family live at Kensington. Prior to joining the Board he was a supervisor at a plastics factory. As far as hobbies are concerned, Richard's main interests lie in the field of model railways, not so much as a collector of any particular gauge but as an enthusiast of all gauges in general.

**Lorraine Colgan** has joined the Board as a Conductress at Malvern Depot which is very close to her home at Glen Iris. Formerly an accounts clerk with a finance company, Lorraine preferred a job with more public contact. A self described one-eyed Collingwood supporter, she devotes the rest of her spare time to pursuing her favourite sport, softball.

**Bernarda Padilla** recently joined the Board as a Conductress at Malvern Depot, where her husband also works as a tram driver. Before joining the Board she was employed as a key punch operator. The mother of a young daughter and baby son, Bernarda's main interests are swimming and reading.

**John Portlock**, who is formerly from South Australia where he worked for Telecom, joined the Board in November as a Conductor at Brunswick. John is a true railway enthusiast. He is presently building a model railway set based on South Australian Rail Road rolling stock and was formerly involved in the reconstruction of the famous Pichi Richi Railroad in the Flinders Ranges, all of which was done on a voluntary basis. He is still a member of the Pichi Richi Railroad Society and still maintains an interest in the work of the group.

### STAFF MOVEMENTS

**Yvonne Thornburn** has recently trained and been promoted to the position of Ticket Examiner, Relief Depot Starter. She joined the Board in 1974 and worked at Brunswick Depot as a Conductress, then Tram Driver and Trainer Driver. Away from work, Yvonne's spare time is spent instructing students on the finer points of judo and karate.



P. Butler



G. Carkeek

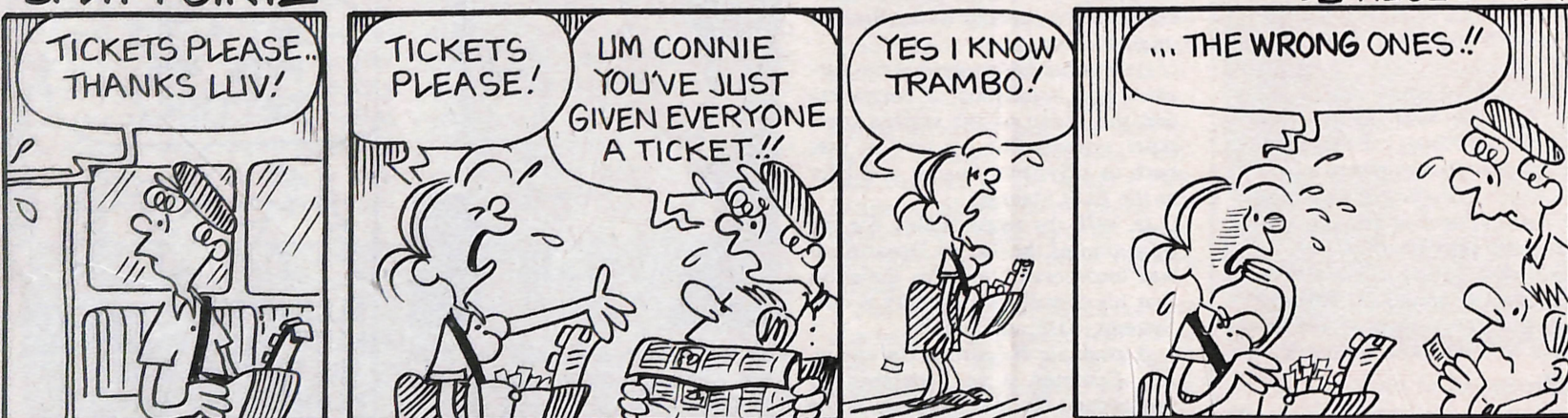
**Paul Butler**, Electrical Design Engineer, and **Geoff Carkeek**, Planning Engineer, returned in October from a very intense series of visits to overseas transit operators.

Paul spent time with AEG and looked closely into the technical aspects of Automatic Vehicle Monitoring systems now coming into common use overseas.

Geoff kept an eye on the same subjects but spent more time on fare collection systems, ticketing and other operational aspects of tram and bus operations.

Both Paul and Geoff visited the U.S.A. and Europe. Systems and operations were studied in a number of cities, among which were Toronto, Zurich and Hamburg.

### SPLIT POINTZ





# Introducing ... The Supply and Systems Department

Each one of us is affected by the work of the Supply and Systems Department, whether it be in the form of pay, the issue of a uniform or protective clothing, spart parts for a tram or bus or as the purchaser of old sleepers and red gum blocks.

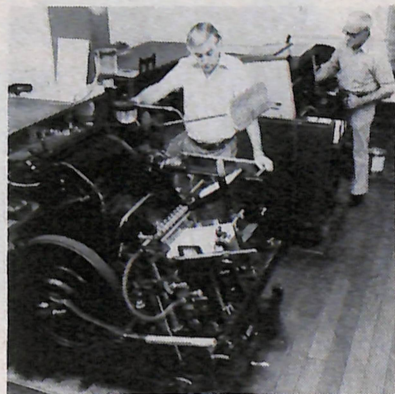
The Supply and Systems Department employs approximately 90 people who work in the different sections which are located at various depots and centres around Melbourne.

## EDP Section

The Electronic Data Processing Section is manned by 20 staff members and is located at Head Office. It provides all the data processing systems to meet the Board's needs and at present has 35 different processing systems in operation.

The best known system to all of us is naturally enough, the payroll, but some of the equally important and lesser known systems are Revenue Accounting, Labour Costing, Stores Inventory and Accounting Control and Uniform Issue. The computerisation of the Uniform Issue is one system where the effects can readily be seen by a vast improvement in the issue of uniforms to traffic staff.

All processing of data is done on an ICL Computer, and it is worthy of note that this technique of processing of data is not new to the Board. In fact, the Board has been involved in automatic data processing for almost



The Printing Works located at Preston.

30 years. The current computer systems have been developed as a continuing evolution over this period.

## Contract Administration and Purchasing

This section is located in the Head Office Annexe and is staffed by fifteen people. It is the section that acts as the interface between the Board and all the commercial companies that the Board deals with.

Its main function is the supervision of the bi-annual contracts for all the

stock items held by the stores, around 12,000 different items. As well as supervising contracts with suppliers, the section is also responsible for identifying new products which may be used within the Board.

Another role that is served by the section is that of disposal of obsolete and surplus items and stock. This involves such items as old tram bodies, buses and of course old sleepers.

## Head Office Stationery Store

The stationery store provides all the stationery that is used throughout the service.

Every item of paper used to administer the Tramways system emanates from the store, whether it be a note pad, a conductor's journal, revenue clerks statement form or tram ticket. The store administers the purchase of all tickets from the manufacturer and holds them in store until they are required.

The store is manned by two staff members and is located in the basement at Head Office.

## Preston Store

The Preston store which is located at the Workshops is the largest store and employs 20 people. It is essentially the "tram" store and not only has a large stock of spare parts for all types of trams but also holds electrical components such as overhead wire, frogs and insulators for the Electrical Branch.

The spare parts for all running sheds are held by the store which operates a daily delivery truck service to all Depots.

An interesting feature of the store is that it actually orders and buys spare parts from the Workshops, which manufactures them. Also quite a large supply of timber is held by the store, the timber being used for the repair of W Class tram bodies.

## Printing Works

All the Tramways Board's stationery and forms, with the exception of tickets, are printed at the Printing Works, located at Preston Workshops.

The normal day to day operations of the Board keep the two staff members gainfully employed, but the pressure is really put on them each time there is a fare increase, for there is a rush to produce all the notices regarding the new fares and sections, conductors journals and the like.

## North Fitzroy Store

The "bus" store, located at North Fitzroy employs 12 people and holds 5,000 separate spare part items for



A shot of the staff at the Preston Store.

other motor vehicles. It is also responsible for the purchase and control of all petrol and distillate used by the three Bus Depots.

Because of the problems associated with the availability of spare parts from the various manufacturers, the store maintains a close watch on stock so that there will always be sufficient stock on hand to keep the bus fleet on the road without having an over-supply of spare parts.



Garment manufacture at the Hawthorn Clothing Workroom.

## South Melbourne Store

The main function of the store-keeper at South Melbourne is to ensure that the appropriate materials are delivered direct to on-site as and when required by the Civil Branch. This involves the co-ordination of several contractors in the sand and cement delivery business as well as the delivery of new rail from South Melbourne to the site.

Another function of the store-keeper is to arrange the sale of used sleepers and wooden blocks recovered from the various work-sites.

## Hawthorn Store

The two storemen at Hawthorn are responsible for the issue of all uniforms to traffic staff, both for new employees and for replacements, as well as overalls and protective clothing to other staff.

Complaints over the issue of clothing are few and far between. Due to the diligence and effort of the store staff together with the com-

puterised uniform issue system, the correct uniform is sent to the correct place at the correct time.

## Hawthorn Clothing Workroom

The workroom manufactures all the tunics, coats, overcoats, trousers, skirts and slacks for traffic staff employees. A team of 12 produce the garments which are of a high quality and compare very favourably with any others available, irrespective of price.

Both the staff of the Clothing Workroom and the Store are supported by a staff of two administrators who control the office systems and procedures necessary to ensure a smooth flow of raw materials and finished products.

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## TRAMWAY TRAFFIC OFFICERS SOCIAL CLUB

Twice a year the Club holds a Social night at which presentations are made to retiring members.

This also provides an opportunity for serving and retired members to renew acquaintances and talk about the "Good Old Days".

On the last occasion at least four of the Old Boys were in their eighties, so there was much to recall.

The date for the next night will be arranged for late March or early April.

Any officer who is not a member and wishes to attend should contact: R. Bradshaw, Hawthorn Training Centre.

## Wilbur's Corner

Wilbur was there early again. I resisted the temptation to pass some comment on that and instead sat down with a sigh.

"Sounds as though you would not help our P.R. image today", said Wilbur sipping slowly. "We certainly need it at times but it is so hard to cope with the bad apple in the barrel. No one remembers the feast but only the worm in the one they found", said Wilbur slowly.

"I suppose you know that the MMTB consultants carried out a public relations survey on our image", said Wilbur. "No I didn't", I replied. "What happened?"

"Well, the end result was that we decided to increase awareness of the damage done by poor relations with the public. You would hardly believe what has happened to some passengers but then again, perhaps you would", he said reflectively. "Our traffic staff are the organisation's sales staff. They are not the only ones involved with customers but they are the front line troops in the sales area. Without them, our image is zero, and the mistakes and behaviour of one person can badly reflect on so many others".

"You know", said Wilbur, "you have heard it at home from friends, what they think is wrong with the MMTB and you knew that it was only that one idiot that caused the trouble and everybody else was trying just like we do in our own jobs".

I decided to persist with Wilbur, although he doesn't like being pushed to talk. "What were the findings, Wilbur?", I said as gently as possible, and surprisingly he replied immediately. "I guess consultants and statistics can prove anything. Hardest part of any survey is to make sure that the sample of the production is large enough to be representative and that the questions are not biased because otherwise the answer will in turn be biased," he replied.

"One report in 1980 was prepared by the Roy Morgan Research Centre. Only 6.4 per cent of the people asked why they did not use a tram in the last month said that the staff were unfriendly. Their major complaint was the fare levels but they would have as readily agreed that the cost of motoring was much more expensive, if registration, depreciation etc. were taken into account.

"Clearly, from local and overseas studies, service reliability is one of the major factors affecting whether people stay with public transport or not. If they fail to be picked up they will put up with it once or twice but then go back to using the car. Once in the car again it seems very difficult to leave it because of that well established convenience factor".

Wilbur paused again and almost disappeared into his own thoughts. "Well since you ask and it is not a subject that I talk about much, let me tell you", said Wilbur eventually focusing on his cup of coffee again, "that the MMTB receives an average of about 25 letters a month complaining about something or other. Public transport attracts crank letters. You know how many transport freaks there are anyway", he said with a grim smile.

"More indicative, however, is the fact that we receive about 350 complaints by telephone each month. They highlight the need for everyone to understand that the actions of individuals can attract or repel our passengers and that the wrong individual or group action can slowly destroy the whole MMTB system by grinding down all the attempts to keep an image of clean, friendly, punctual and safe service, which the public is also happy to support through taxation.

"It is an area of delight for the media", said Wilbur. "It is an area in which we should not give an opportunity to hound us. How do you get that across to those who don't care?", he asked, slowly rising. "I suppose you just keep trying and we have to be optimistic," he said, disappearing through the door.

## Supply and Systems Manager Mr. Jerry Compton

Mr. Compton joined the Board in 1963 as a Clerk working in the accounting area. It was through this involvement with accounting systems that he was included as a member of the team involved in the feasibility study for the purchase of the Board's original computer.

He was heavily involved in the purchase and installation of computers and the design of the various computer systems that are now in use, both as a Systems Analyst and later as the EDP Manager.

In 1978 the responsibility for the operation of the Supply Department was incorporated into his duties so that his overall responsibility is now Systems, EDP and Supply.

A graduate of Latrobe University, Mr. Compton is an Economist by profession. He maintains an active

## PROFILE



interest in both economics and EDP and is associated with a number of professional bodies in these fields.

