

NOTES ON M&MTB Y & Y1 CLASS TRAMCARS .

Y Class No 469.

Built during 1927 at Preston Workshops to M&MTB plans adapted from a 1910 New York (USA) design of Peter De Witt & Co. 469 was built with many features of the then building single truck X1 "safety cars" Nos 459 to 468. Some second hand materials were used in these cars, seats, brake valves, etc.

469 was built as a tourist car and did not go into regular traffic at first. It was used to carry special passengers from Batman Avenue to Wattle Park & a Devonshire tea at The Chalet via several varying routes. 469 had a public address system for Driver communication with its passengers. 469 also ran a circular tour from the Melbourne Town Hall via Victoria St Glenferrie Rd, Luna Park, Fitzroy St, StKilda Rd back to the Town Hall for 9d.

In 1940, 469 ran in regular day & night traffic for the first time. Due to the Great War, many out of use trams were put into running to overcome the automobile shortage. 469 was one of these cars. After the war many old cars were pensioned off but 469 continued to be used in peak hour traffic & as a one-man tram in all-night service. From 1953 onwards following heavy overhaul 469 was treated like any other tram in Camberwell depot, its fleet working the Burwood & Wattle Park runs any day or night. It was stored during 1960-62 for 12 months, when it received an O.1 & modernisation. 469 was kept at Camberwell depot all its life until Feb 1965 when on the closing of Hawthorn depot it was transferred to Glenhuntly thence in April, 65 to Storage Preston Workshops.

OF INTEREST. 469 was relegated from its tourist traffic to store in 1938 when the first SW6 car No 850 Arrived at Camberwell also fitted with a P.A. system, and briefly became tourist car.

Y1 Class cars Nos 610 - 613

In 1929 there was 360 trams of the W -W2 trams design, the fleet numbers being to 600. A modern all steel safety car, an improved version of 469 was planned. The initial order was for 24 trams 610 to 633. Many difficulties were encountered with the 1st 4 cars building. Collins St Cable Trams were being converted to electric traction & new trams were needed quickly. The last 10 trams Y1 class were cancelled and cars 614 to 623 were postponed parts of these cars being already built. W2 cars 624 - 653 were built then the W3 Cars, then the the W4 cars, Y1 614 -623 being abandoned the number block still being blank. The windshields seats & certain body sections were used to build X2 cars 675 to 680, single truck safety cars.

610 went into traffic in 1930 at the old Preston depot 611 to 613 went to South Melbourne. 610 was used for tests by workshops staff & ran for a brief period with route number boxes. The Y1s were used in regular day & night traffic from the start. In 1933 the 4 of them were transferred to Camberwell to work the Burwood & Wattle Park routes. In March 1933 No 613 made tramway history when it was loaned to a foreign operator. For 3 months, 613 ran on the Victorian Railways 4'8½" gauge Sandringham to Black Rock line to test one man operation on that line. Due to the success of 613, a standard drop-centre combination car of the Victorian Railways (similar to the W2 type) was converted and lengthened to include as many features of 613 as possible.

car No 51 was altered at Preston Workshops in 1934. A
nd car No 50 was altered at Preston in 1938. These two trams
of the VR ran on MMTB rails on test but never in traffic.

The Y1 cars ran in normal traffic through the war although they sometimes ran daytime one man shuttle duties between StKilda Rd-Commercial Road Corner & Camberwell Junction via Burke Rd. Some single truck cars ran this operation also. It operated during 1940 to 1945. Between 1945 & 1955 the Y1,s ran on all-night duties as one man cars. It was not uncommon for a Y1 to run out at 3.30pm & remain in continuous service until 10.00am next morning. In 1947 No 613 was involved in a serious collision in Riversdale Road resulting in the death of several people. As a result of this accident the Y & Y1 cars received major alterations to their brake system. Brake valves were converted to self lapping and new air lines installed. The single truck X1 & X2 cars plus a few 2 motor maximum traction truck cars (now at Ballarat) were also altered at the same time.

Although never completely popular with crews or passengers the Y1s remained in daily use at Camberwell depot until transfer of 610 to 612 to Glenhuntly from Feb to March 1965 thence to store. 613 was under overhaul when the T.E.A. "banned" the Y1 cars. 613 went into storage in brand new paint condition.

469 & 610 are available for charter hiring and see some use in this role.

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