

Copy of paper as initially drafted being 20 pages long, it would have taken nearly two hours to deliver. It was edited/trimmed, precisely & chopped to 2 pages (issued to public) & 8 1/2 pages (as delivered/spoken to public).

ATION OF MELBOURNE'S
LIC TRANSPORT -

HAS THE WHEEL TURNED FULL CIRCLE?

Address by Keith Kings

Second annual RMIT Sir Robert Risson Memorial Lecture
to be held in Storey Hall, 342 Swanston Street, Melbourne.
Tuesday, 30th April, 2002, commencing at 5.30 pm.

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I have been entrusted with the preparation and presentation of the second Sir Robert Risson Memorial Lecture in what is becoming an ongoing annual series. The title is "The Privatisation of Melbourne's Public Transport - Has the wheel turned full circle?" Together, we will try to ascertain the answer.

We will research the past, note the present, and I feel we should also ponder the future. I can but give a brief overview of the history of this detailed and complex subject, and will undoubtedly miss the proverbial ninety nine per cent of the total story. But the maximum time available for this Paper is barely one hour, with many aspects to be discussed. Consequently, I will surely leave many historical points of interest unmentioned, and others, at the best, only partly treated, due to the detail being far too lengthy to be squeezed into this text.

Let us board our first vehicle, start our journey, endeavour to find out where we are and how we got there, and, hopefully, where we might be going.

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We will need to go back in time some 150 years, into the very early days of our City. John Batman had explored the Port Phillip area in 1835, resulting in a small settlement slowly growing in the area on the north bank of the Yarra River. The colony of Victoria was created on 1/7/1851, with self-government. Gold was discovered very shortly afterwards, and hectic times followed. Melbourne and country areas expanded rapidly, and towns sprang up around gold discoveries, and faded as quickly when the source ran out. The population expanded rapidly from a rush of immigration, and there was a period of very rapid growth.

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RAILWAYS.

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Almost immediately there was a rash of proposals to build railways - eight were tabled but only three were approved by the Government in 1853, namely: (1) Hobson's Bay Railway, (2) Geelong and Melbourne Railway, (3) Melbourne, Mt. Alexander & Murray River Railway.

The Melbourne & Hobson's Bay Railway Company constructed a line from Flinders Street station to Sandridge - later renamed Port Melbourne - and this became the first steam operated railway in Australia. A locomotive was improvised from a pile driver and used to ballast the track - presumably our first improvisation in mechanical rail transport! The locomotives ordered from the United Kingdom were months away from delivery when the line was ready, so an engine was hastily built locally in ten weeks! Another "do it yourself" effort! The line was officially opened on 12/9/1854, but the local engine suffered occasional breakdowns and the ballasting engine was substituted during repairs. Services were suspended on 1/12/1854 when the engine suffered a major breakdown, but were restored on 25/12/1854 using the first of the imported engines. Quite a hectic three months. A branch line to St.Kilda was opened on 13/5/1857.

The Mt.Alexander Railway Company had made no progress with building their line by March, 1856. The Government had been given power by Parliament to buy and build country lines, and bought the Mt. Alexander Co. on 23rd. May - thus the Victorian Railways came into being, as did Government involvement in Victoria's public transport.

The Railway from Geelong was opened to Duck Ponds - now Lara - on 14/10/1856 and to Greenwich - near Newport - on 25/6/1857, making a connection with the Mt. Alexander railway line from Williamstown, over which the Geelong Railway Company was given running rights to Spencer Street station. As an aside, it is interesting to note that, since the recent Australia wide railway privatisations, running rights over railway tracks has mushroomed and become quite a complex matter. This point looks like being the first that is relevant to an answer to the question posed in the sub-title of this Lecture. Reverting to the Newport area railways, initially passengers from Geelong reached Melbourne by ferry via the Yarra River, from a nearby pier, and later by ferry from Williamstown to Sandridge and thence by the Hobson's Bay railway. From 17/1/1859, the direct railway connection opened to Spencer Street station, but, on 3/9/1860, the Geelong Railway Company sold out to the Victorian Railways.

The St.Kilda and Brighton Railway Company opened their line on 19/12/1859. Their trains headed north from St.Kilda station and curved eastwards along 400 yards of wooden viaduct over a swamp, across a 34 yard long timber bridge over St.Kilda Road, which was located some 550 yards north of St.Kilda junction, and thence curving south east to Windsor station, subsequently running along the present route to Bay Street, now North Brighton station. Initially their trains were run by the Hobson/s Bay Company until they bought their own locomotives and carriages. They extended their line to Brighton Beach on 21/12/1861 and built the pier and connected it to the station by a tunnel, the portal of which can still be seen.

An arrangement was made with the Brighton and Melbourne Railway Company on 1/5/1862, for five years, to pool their resources and run direct to Princes Bridge station. The St.Kilda loop line was not used and was removed in August, 1867. Financial problems arose and eventually the Hobson's Bay Company purchased it on 1/9/1865.

The Melbourne and Suburban Railway Company commenced running from Princes Bridge station to Punt Road on 5/2/1859, with extensions to Cremorne and Hawthorn by 13/4/1861. They also suffered financial problems and on 31/3/1862 sold out to The Melbourne Railway Company.

The Melbourne and Hobsons Bay United Railway Company emerged from amalgamations on 1/9/1865, and thus operated lines to Sandridge, St.Kilda, Brighton Beach and Hawthorn, a total of 16 1/2 route miles. Two culverts were excavated under Swanston Street and opened on 16/12/1865 to link Flinders Street and Princes Bridge stations, resulting in all passenger trains operating from the former from 1/10/1866 after alterations and additions. The Government announced in 1872 its intention to build a railway from Melbourne to Sale, so the Company considered selling to the State, and this took place on 1/7/1878.

The Melbourne & Essendon Railway Company was formed in 1858 to build this line from Essendon Junction (now North Melbourne Junction) on the Government line, to Sandhurst (i.e. Bendigo). They opened the line to Essendon on 22/10/1860 with locomotives and carriages hired from the Victorian Railways. A branch line to Flemington Race Course was used from 28/2/1861. The financial results were poor and the Company offered to sell to the Government early in 1864, but this was declined, and the line closed on 1/7/1864. The sale was made on 27/8/1867, and the Race Course branch urgently repaired for use at the Melbourne Cup meeting in November. The Newmarket to Essendon section reopened on 9/1/1871.

Some other railways were built in the outer suburbs or the adjacent countryside, but saw little use - on one, the official opening train was also the last! Main line railways slowly spread to Bendigo, Echuca and Ballarat, and then steadily along other routes. Branch lines soon spread rapidly and filled the gaps in between the main lines.

The basis for Melbourne's subsequent suburban railway system had been laid by the late 1800's. Some extensions and new trackage were built later, and steam locomotion was progressively replaced by electric traction, and this will be mentioned shortly.

The Victorian Railways operated buses and trams mainly as feeders to their railway stations. Steam powered buses ran from Prahran station to Malvern Town Hall from 1/12/1905 to June, 1906, while electric trams, using the railway gauge of 5' 3", fed St.Kilda station, from Middle Brighton, from 7/5/1906 - the first permanent electric tramway in Melbourne. Their Depot, at Elwood, was destroyed by fire on 7/3/1907, and the previously mentioned steam buses were hastily brought out of storage to commence a temporary service the next day. Seven surplus trams were purchased from Sydney and the service restarted later in the month.

On 10/3/1919, the Railways opened an electric tramway from Sandringham station to Black Rock. The track gauge chosen was 4' 8 1/2" - the so-called "standard gauge".

Can we claim this to be the first gauge standardisation in Victoria? An extension operated to Beaumaris from 1/9/1926 to 31/8/1931, under Municipal Guarantee from the Sandringham Council. Railway buses ran from Sandringham to Beaumaris from 15/12/1938, via Beach Road, until the petrol shortage caused their withdrawal on 2/1/1942, but they recommenced on 13/5/1946. The trams ceased on 5/11/1956 with the Beaumaris bus route being diverted via the ex-tram route.

The Victorian Railways ran country buses from 30/11/1925 from Melbourne to Geelong. Later routes were to Queenscliff, Belgrave, Monbulk, Warburton and Portsea, mainly due to private operators competing with passenger trains. In 1941, their routes either closed or were transferred to local private operators, to save fuel. The Railways also used buses to replace suburban trains on two short branch lines from East Camberwell to East Kew and Hawthorn to Kew, when passenger trains ceased.

Electrification of the suburban railways was first proposed in 1896. Parliament became interested and held a Select Committee of Inquiry by the Legislative Council in 1898, which recommended electrification of some suburban lines. Another Parliamentary Committee in 1901 recommended that an expert be appointed to examine the matter. Mr C. H. Merz was appointed and recommended the conversion of 124 route miles, with completion in 1912. The Government established a Metropolitan Traffic Commission in 1910 to report on city and suburban transport. It recommended that the suburban railways be converted to electric operation.

The Parliamentary Committee on Railways supported this, but the Railways Commissioners did not. The Government asked Mr. Merz to update his earlier plan, and he did this in late 1912. The Commissioners were happy with this Report, as were the Parliamentary Select Committee. In December, 1912, the Government gave its approval at a cost of just under \$8,000,000. Mr. Merz was appointed to supervise the work and subsequently let the contracts. Construction started in December, 1913, on the power station in Yarraville. Alterations to existing carriages started in 1914, together with construction of new rolling stock. The plan was for the Sandringham to Broadmeadows line (22 miles) to open in 1915, with the whole scheme to be completed in 1917. World War 1 limited progress and almost doubled the cost. The power station generated electricity from 20/6/1918 and the first electric train ran on 6/10/1918 on trial trips on the Newmarket to Flemington Race Course line, a distance of 1 1/4 miles. The opening ceremony was held at Essendon station on 28/5/1919. Other lines opened progressively, with the plan being completed on 15/4/1923. Electric trains have been extended along country lines as the suburbs expanded, and one new line was built, but little additional work was carried out after 1930 until well into the post World War 2 period.

The original rolling stock consisted of fairly new and new carriages with sliding doors, transverse back to back fixed seating with an off-centre aisle; they continued to be built until 1950 as additional traffic necessitated. Shortly after the opening, older suburban compartment carriages, with outward opening doors, heavily rebuilt, lengthened and fitted with electrical equipment, were commissioned. From 1956 to 1970, a new design evolved with saloon cars being built. An improved design appeared in 1972, being of stainless steel construction, with Driver-operated doors. The next variation was air-conditioned, and entered service from 1982.

Initially in 1919, six carriages were coupled together to form a train - three had motors in their bogies and three were trailer cars. After a few years, a seventh car was added, being a trailer car. This composition continued to operate until the 1972 carriages arrived. The new vehicles were six longer cars for a full train, being two groups of three carriages, each comprising two motored carriages and one trailer carriage. A prototype four car double deck train was introduced in 1992 for evaluation, consisting of two motored and two trailer carriages.

Various improvements to track and signalling have taken place since the late 1940's, with duplication of single tracks, third tracks built and signalled for bi-directional use, more automatic signals to replace old manual installations, automatic boom barriers to replace old manually operated gates at level crossings, elimination of some level crossings by over or under passes, construction of the Richmond flyovers, building the four city underground rail tunnels and their stations, and some extensions to outer ends of lines.

The suburban electric railways were combined with the tramways to form the MET in 1983, and the P. T. C. in 1989, and more about this will be mentioned in the next section on Change. The State Government Corporatised the P.T.C. in 1997 and privatised the divisions in 1999. The two halves of the suburban railways initially operated as Bayside Trains and Hillside Trains, now named M>Train and Connex respectively. Both of the companies are now most of the way through a program to refurbish all their 1980's trains, and have ordered new trains to replace most of the 1970's carriages. M>Train have 31 trains on order from Siemens, with the first due to arrive for testing in mid-year. Connex have 29 trains on order from Alstom, with the first due

BUSES.

In 1854, Freeman Wills Cobb, an American, founded the famous coaching firm of Cobb & Co. As settlement spread, he soon had his coach routes running all over Victoria. Later, as the trunk railways were built, his coaches became "feeders" to railway stations. As branch railway lines were built, his coach routes steadily declined and eventually ceased to operate.

From 17/1/1859 a privately operated horsebus ran from Spencer Street railway station to Swanston Street via Collins, Elizabeth and Bourke Streets with a fare of four pence. To the late 1860's, Melbourne's horse buses were mainly individually owned.

The year 1869 saw the first real fleet operation begin, when U. S. born, and Melbourne businessman, Francis Broadman Clapp, together with William McCulloch and Henry Hoyt, established the Melbourne Omnibus Company. They operated eleven omnibuses from the City via Bourke Street to Fitzroy's Birmingham Hotel for a fare of three pence. Soon their buses were also running to Richmond, Carlton and North Melbourne.

By 1881, the company had many Depots, horses, routes and a fleet of 158 buses, operating within three miles of the City. Some longer routes ran to Moonee Ponds, Prahran and Brunswick. Mr. Clapp had wanted to run horse trams, but permission had

been refused. By the early 1880's, the situation was changing, and the Company re-organised itself as the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company, the outcome of which will be dealt with in the next section on tramways.

About 1910, a private company operated double deck, open top, motor buses along Swanston Street, and, presumably down St.Kilda Road. After World War 1, in the early 1920's, some ex-serviceman used their funds to buy a light motor vehicle chassis and have a small, elementary body built on it, to enable them to start running a service along tram lines, often competing against other small buses. Whilst individuals used these small vehicles, some of the companies operated quite substantial buses, with good bodies on heavy duty chassis.

The main operators of these motor buses introduced a route system, as their businesses "boomed". By 1924, the tramways were concerned at lost patronage, and introduced buses from Swanston Street to Elsternwick on 3/1/1925. A report in that year states that 58 heavy buses, carrying over 2,000 passengers, ran down Swanston Street in the late afternoon peak hour on 15 routes. Of those 58 buses, 51 were privately operated with seven from the tramways. Routes also operated in the suburbs, and more new buses were being built all the time.

The competition grew, as did the rivalry between tram and tramway bus crews on the one hand and private operators, and also between competing private bus crews. Various incidents, some said to be nasty, took place, and the Motor Bus Acts of 1924-25 introduced a form of regulation, seat taxes and licence fees. Soon, many companies and private operators were in financial trouble, resulting in operators and routes ceasing and some buses journeying to Sydney, where there was no regulation. Some of the smaller private operators found routes they could manage successfully.

The bus era of the 1920's opened with conventional bonneted buses being produced. The driver was often fully exposed to the weather until the middle and late 1920's, when given a windscreen and even a cabin. The bonneted bus prevailed until a few full-front vehicles appeared in the late 1930's. Some were remarkably streamlined, with accentuated swallow tails at their rear ends. There were even one or two of this type which had engines at the rear.

Chassis names of the 20's and 30's included Tilling Stevens, Thornycroft, Bean, Foden, Reo, Leyland, Albion, AEC, ADC, Dennis, Garford, Diamond T, Daimler, Brockway, Derby, White, Stewart, Studebaker, Dodge, Fargo, Ford, Chevrolet, Ruggles and Fageol, some of which survived for many years.

The post WW2 years were notable for shortages of everything but problems. But change was soon in plentiful supply.

Onto this 1946 scene burst quite a surprise - the Fishermans Bend Bedford bus. An alliance between Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation and General Motors Holden saw the latter import and assemble the chassis and the former build the bodies. These bodies were full front, forward control, metal framed and clad, very modern and stylish in appearance and had mostly transverse seating with a centre aisle. At that time, most of Melbourne's suburban buses were fitted with longitudinal seats.

By 1950, 932 had been built, almost one per working day. Subsequently, improvements and variations to chassis and bodies were made and when production finally ceased in 1973, C.A.C. had built nearly 4,000 bodies and had had quite an influence on bus operations, particularly in Melbourne and Victoria. The construction of bonneted buses virtually ceased in the early 1950's.

From the end of the 1940's, several small suburban bus routes ceased to operate as costs rose, petrol rationing ceased, more private motor vehicles were purchased, television arrived and the local suburban cinema closed.

Large and medium sized operators – for that period - acquired routes from smaller businesses; indeed, this process continues to this day. The number of companies operating routes is now relatively small compared to 50 years ago but there does seem to have been considerable rise in the number of tour and charter companies.

During the subsequent fifty years, a considerable number of chassis and body builders have provided the buses which have transported our growing population. Varying door and seating layouts, engine positions, body styles, window types/shapes/sizes, ventilation, upholstery, and lesser items have been used. The floor level of past years had remained virtually constant, by being on top of the chassis rails. The last decade has seen the introduction of low floor buses, and their numbers are steadily increasing in compliance with the Federal Disability and Discrimination Act. However, these low floor buses are an advantage to the elderly, as it enables them to board and alight more easily and more quickly. This factor reduces standing time at stops, as does the kneeling ability of these buses. Another modern advance is air-conditioning, which is being built into new buses.

Some of the proprietors, operators and drivers could be described as colourful men, and they were a typical cross-section of society. Many showed an extraordinary determination to succeed in a new segment of the world's development and helped turn an "infant" into an "adult", which is still growing. Let us look at some of these men as a means of understanding the development of the private bus system.

VENTURA. Harry Cornwall purchased a 14 seat Reo in 1924 and ran it on the Box Hill to Spencer Street route, which was operated with some other men on a multiple operator basis - a feature of Melbourne bus routes in that era. In 1925, the route was shortened from Box Hill to Hawthorn Bridge, and then in 1933 cut in two. Harry took the Box Hill to Canterbury section, but soon sold it, while the other operators ran the remainder. Harry preferred to concentrate on the Box Hill to Mentone route, which he had started in 1930.

He struggled for a while, but the mid-1940's and post World War 2 period saw it "boom". Regretably, Harry died in late 1952, and was succeeded by son Ken. A periodic series of acquisitions, new Depots, new types of vehicles, new routes, and even buying 25 good quality second hand buses and rebuilding them to keep costs down in a difficult period, have seen Ventura grow to now operate a fleet of 179 buses and 17 coaches.

LEWIS PAGE. Mr. Page purchased the bus route from Swanston Street to Middle Brighton from the Melbourne Suburban Bus Co. in 1927. Other operators started

running buses over this route and it became another multiple operator service; likewise the Swanston Street route to Gardenvale route was shared by several operators. In the early 1950's, he foresaw action by the Authorities against multiple operator routes because there was rivalry between operators concerning timetables, patronage and revenue. He was the driving force in welding the several operators on these two routes into Melbourne Brighton Bus Lines, which developed into a modern and progressive operation, and later included the St.Kilda railway station to Brighton railway tram replacement bus service. A inter-union dispute caused much trouble during 1984 and the Company handed over its assets and licences to the Metropolitan Transit Authority in April 1985.

H. SPENCER. Horrie Spencer traded as Eastern Suburbs Omnibus Service and Spencer's Bus Line. He entered the industry in 1930 and operated several routes in the McKinnon area. He ran a couple of routes nearer to the City, and subsequently the railway trams initial replacement bus service. His early death at 61 and the advance of the motor car saw routes sold off and operations contract until the final sale in 1972.

DRIVER BUS LINES. Eric and Reg. Driver began operating the Glen Iris to Camberwell Junction route in 1931 as a cab licence that was granted in addition to an existing licence. Five other cab licences were subsequently granted, this being not unusual for a route at that time. Eric applied for a bus licence, which was granted. He informed the other operators and they left the route, presumably not knowing that they, too, could have got bus licences!

Driver's first Federal bus arrived in December, 1935, and more followed to 1941. They maintained the service until the late 1940's. There was a ten minute service throughout the day except during wartime petrol restrictions when it was 15 minutes but ten minutes in the peak periods. This speaker is quite happy to confess some sort of personal interest in Driver's 1937 to 1958 era, having been a local resident who travelled to school and work on both Federals and Bedfords, and knew Eric and Reg, both of whom drove at least most weekdays. One delightful recollection from the 1940's is the Federals coming straight down Camberwell Road to Camberwell Junction, depositing the passengers just before Burke Road, doing a U turn in the Riversdale Road area, and coming back up Camberwell Road about 50 yards - or should I say metres - to load passengers for the next journey. Such was the small number of motor cars about in that era!

Driver's were quick to purchase Bedfords from C. A. C. in the late 1940's, but it was the opening of Chadstone Shopping Centre in 1960 which started their route and vehicle expansion. They purchased their last Bedford chassis in 1979, and it was their last Bedford to be sold in 1993. Eric's sons, Daryl and Gary, entered the business, and they were involved with the State Government and the Metropolitan Transit Authority in a legal battle in 1988. Route licences had been put out to tender and Driver's lost heavily, including their original one. They appealed to the Supreme Court, and eventually won. Subsequently, Melbourne route operators were given seven year licences in November, 1990. Driver's fleet has now grown to 33 route buses and 34 coaches.

GREYDA FAMILY. Mr. & Mrs. George Greyda purchased four bus routes centred on Dandenong in October, 1945. The outer south eastern sector from Oakleigh to

Dandenong, and adjoining areas, rapidly expanded with housing and factories in the next few years. There were new bus routes and acquisitions, and a new Depot was built at Dandenong. George died in 1961 and was succeeded by his children in the Company. More expansion and diversification took place in the 1970's and 1980's, and presently the family controls Grenda's Bus Service, Peninsula Bus Lines, Portsea Passenger Service, Moorabbin Transit and Cardinia Transit. The total fleet is now 237 buses and 92 coaches.

INVICTA. Clem Usher bought Wilson's Croydon Bus Service in 1947, when the area was still semi-rural. Son John helped in his schooldays, tried teaching for a while, but started in the Company in 1964. Clem's services and buses had grown by the time he died in 1968, and John continued to expand the Company, including the purchase of Geoff Mountjoy's Belgrave based route services.

This proved a mixed blessing, and they were sold back to U. S. Bus Lines after about two years. John obtained a Churchill Fellowship to travel overseas for studies in connection with public transport. He became very impressed with demand-response services and services contracted to private operators. He instituted the former with his Telebus operation in the Chirnside Park area. This has been modified from experience gained and has spread to other similar areas in Melbourne's outer eastern suburbs.

John's interests also spread to Tasmania where his companies still operate. John recently placed the future of Invicta in the hands of his wife, Pam, General Manager Frank Mercuri and Accountant Kumar Vasantha, and is not now directly connected with the operation of Invicta buses. The present fleet consists of 84 buses.

RYAN BROS. Pat, Jack and Gerald Ryan knew the Lane family, who ran the Moonee Ponds to Footscray bus route. Maurie Lane's advice was "Buy a bus company. You won't make a fortune, but you will always have a job." This seemed like very good advice to three depression lads. But 1947 was before the massive increase in car ownership, introduction of television and all the other social changes that were to contribute to the decline in the use of public transport. Their first route, Moonee Ponds to Aberfeldie, was purchased from Peter Callaghan in 1947, and had been started by the Pout's in the early 1920's. The Essendon to West Essendon route was purchased from the Hill brothers in 1970, while the Essendon Station to Highpoint Shopping Centre was started by them, failed, and re-started with Government approval in the mid-1980's. It is an interesting point that the same livery is still maintained - blue body, cream roof, black band and red wheels. The present fleet is 19 route buses and 4 charter vehicles.

SITCH FAMILY. Joseph Sitch started running a seven passenger cab in 1924 or 1925 in Northcote, then along Bell Street, and finally operated from Footscray to Moonee Ponds. He turned his attention to the Footscray to Yarraville run, and eventually got a bus licence in 1942. His operation steadily widened and son Charles became Manager in 1951, with Joseph dying at 80 in 1964. Charles continued to expand operations to Sunshine, St. Albans, Altona, Brooklyn, Laverton, Maidstone and Highpoint Shopping Centre. In 1988, the long-term trucking family, the Keffords, bought Sitch's 65 buses and three Depots.

DYSON'S BUS SERVICE. Teenager Laurie Dyson arrived in 1920 from Yorkshire and settled in the then farming countryside of Bundoora. He was soon carting milk from the farms in a model T Ford, but World War 2 found him enlisting in the A.I.F. and he saw overseas service in a transport section. Back home, he became a bus driver, then a petrol station proprietor, before his former bus company employer died and Laurie bought the business. He started with four buses and no depot. The locality started to grow with the post war sprawl, and the Nathalia to Melbourne run was bought in 1957 because he could rent its Plenty Road Depot. In 1959, the railways closed the Whittlesea line and its passenger service, and Dyson's were granted the replacement bus service. The 1960's and 1970's saw continuing suburban bus route expansion as well as acquisition of more long distance routes. The old depot was demolished and a new Depot built in 1969, and LaTrobe University opened in 1976 at Bundoora. The whole area was rapidly becoming suburbia and thus needed more buses to serve it, so a second, larger, Depot was opened in 1982 at Bundoora. A joint venture with Reservoir Bus Co. in 1980 saw the East-West Bus Co. created to rationalise some services, while the purchase of Sapphire Coaches in 1980 meant expansion up the coast of N. S. W. Further rail replacement services have been granted and Dyson's have had a very good working relationship with V/Line. Laurie Dyson died in 1984, and the business he founded has been carried on very well by many members of the family. Present fleet size is 74 buses and 67 coaches.

These are but a few of the men who, with their wives and children, and their children, have fashioned and provided some of Melbourne's privately operated motor bus transport in the last 80 years. There are obviously many others, but time decrees that we are unable to dwell on this human aspect of the provision of our public transport.

TRAMWAYS AND TRAMWAY BUSES.

Many people will be surprised to learn that the first tram to run in Melbourne was not the cable tram to Richmond. It was four miles - some six kilometres - away in the then outer suburb of Fairfield, where a huge land sale was in progress. It was single track, with one tramcar, which was hauled by horses, and commenced running on 20/12/1884, from near the Fairfield station site, for a mile northwards. Operation was occasional, and it was possibly not used after November, 1885, as most of the land had been sold.

As mentioned in the previous section, the Melbourne Omnibus Company became a very successful horse bus operator, and in 1883 reorganised itself as the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company. Attitudes were changing towards street tramways in Melbourne, and Parliament set up the Melbourne Tramways Trust, which consisted of representatives of Councils from the now inner suburban area. The Trust was empowered to build the tracks and power houses for the cable tram system and the tracks for some horse tram lines. These would then be leased, with the operator providing the tramcars, Depots and staff. Some of the designated horse tram lines were changed to cable tram operation, but two horse tram routes were built from cable tram termini to Hawthorn and Kew, and another from Royal Parade, Parkville to the Zoo gates. The latter came to a sudden end in November, 1923, when vandals destroyed the Depot and its four trams by arson during the police strike.

The Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company was granted a 32 year lease which was due to expire on 30/6/1916. The first cable tram route, from Spencer Street, at Bourke Street, via Flinders Street and Bridge Road, to a terminus at the Yarra River, in Richmond, was opened on 11/11/1885, and the system was completed on 27/10/1891. The power houses contained steam engines which drove an endless, multi-wired, cable, also called the rope. This cable ran continuously in a tunnel underneath the centre line of each track, and was supported by pulleys at frequent intervals. The tram driver, known as a Gripman, stood in an open vehicle and manipulated three levers - one for grasping the rope and two for braking. The cable ran through two jaws at the bottom of one lever. One jaw was fixed and the other moved. When the moveable jaw clamped onto the rope, the tram moved forward. To stop, the Gripman opened the moveable jaw, released the rope, and thus the tram lost its propulsion. He then applied the service brake. The other lever operated the emergency brake. The powering car towed a trailer, which was a fully enclosed saloon with a door at each end which opened onto a loading and exit platform. At each terminus, these two cars had to be shunted to allow the open grip car to lead.

The cable tram system was a complex engineering masterpiece of the late 19th century. Melbourne's system was built by Mr. George Duncan, who had just successfully installed a system at Dunedin, New Zealand. The high standard of design and construction was proven by the last routes running until late 1940, and thus withstanding the rigors of over fifty years of daily use by the trams, plus motorised road traffic that could not have been dreamt of in the 1880's.

There were also privately owned horse tram routes from Brunswick to Coburg, Elsternwick to Caulfield and Glenhuntly, and Sandringham to Cheltenham via Beaumaris, plus a privately owned cable tram from suburban Clifton Hill to Northcote. Melbourne also had the first electric tramway in the southern hemisphere, from Box Hill to Doncaster, then rural areas. It grew out of demonstration equipment at the Centennial Exhibition of 1888-89, and operated from 14/10/1889 to 6/1/1896. Other electric tramways in Melbourne were:

Victorian Railways - already mentioned in a previous section.

North Melbourne Electric Tramway and Lighting Company - built the lines to North Essendon and Maribyrnong River, plus their power house at Ascot Vale. The opening was on 11/10/1906 – the second permanent electric tramway in Melbourne. The Government formed the State Electricity Commission of Victoria to build a state-wide electricity generation and supply system, and the Commission negotiated to take over the Company. They obviously did not want the tramway portion, and this was passed to the then newly formed M. & M. T. B. on 1/8/1922.

Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust - started by these two Councils on 30/5/1910 and grew rapidly throughout the eastern suburbs. In less than nine years, it built most of the present tram lines in this area, and had 98 trams operating over nearly 36 route miles, which was nearly 60% of the electric tram routes operating in Melbourne in 1919.

Hawthorn Tramways Trust - Built the lines to Burwood and Wattle Park from Batman Avenue, City, commencing operations on 6/4/1916.

Melbourne, Brunswick & Coburg Tramways Trust - built the North and East Coburg lines, the suburban sections opening on 27/4/1916, and subsequently reaching the northern end of the City in Swanston Street North, at Queensberry Street.

Fitzroy, Northcote and Preston Tramways Trust - built the lines to East & West Preston from the North Fitzroy cable tram terminus, but it was not opened for traffic until 1/4/1920 by the M. & M.T.B.

Footscray Tramways Trust - built three local lines radiating from Footscray railway station, but found considerable difficulty in obtaining a power supply. The M. & M.T.B. eventually opened the routes on 6/9/1921.

The 1910 Traffic Commission, previously mentioned in regard to the suburban railways, also recommended that all the cable tram routes be converted to electric operation, and that all tramways - cable, electric, private and municipal - be vested in one all embracing Tramways Trust. The cable tram system had operated faithfully and efficiently but without any route extensions, although with additional rolling stock. Some of the vehicles were longer versions of the standard four wheel trailer cars, but riding on two bogies. They were only used on the Brunswick route, along Elizabeth Street and Sydney Road, because it had only one slight curve. The 90 degree curves on all the other routes were concentric and designed for the four wheel cars, and thus unsuitable for the longer bogie cars. When the Company's lease expired on 30/6/1916, the Government placed the whole undertaking in the control of the interim Melbourne Tramways Board. After an enquiry, the Government formed the Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board from 2/7/1919, and the main cable tram system was operated by it from 1/11/1919. The several electric tramway Trusts and the cable tramway at Northcote were acquired from 2/2/1920.

Melbourne was expanding after World War 1 as the population grew, and both the interim M.T.B. and M. & M.T.B. had to build more cable trams, and the latter also hurriedly built more electric trams to an existing design while they produced a design for large new cars. The first of the new trams appeared in December, 1923, and 410 were built to 1931, with some variations to body details. Most were built in the M. & M.T.B.'s own Workshops, and the others by contractors.

The Board was instructed to prepare a "General Scheme for Tramway Development". Many submissions were received from suburban councils, progress associations, etc., and the resulting map of greater Melbourne was awash with lines. Whilst some of these suburban thoroughfares were already served by private buses, most would have been within a generation, but not too many subsequently received tram lines or even a tramway bus.

The first task confirmed was the conversion of the cable tram routes to electric trams. The Board decided to buy a fleet of motor buses for two reasons, firstly, to combat private operators on tram routes, and secondly, to carry passengers during conversion of cable tram routes to electric trams. Their buses began operating down Swanston Street and St.Kilda Road to Elsternwick on 3/1/1925. Mention was made in the previous section of the rivalry between private buses and M. & M.T.B. trams and buses.

The first cable tram conversion took place on 10/2/1924, in Swanston Street, from Lonsdale Street to Queensberry Street, with electric trams operating from 13/4/1924. The conversion of Swanston Street, between Lonsdale Street and the south side of Princes Bridge, commenced on 26/12/1925, and electric trams ran four weeks later. St.Kilda Road had been fitted with temporary tracks alongside the western plantation,

and electric trams ran in from the southern suburbs. The permanent tracks were laid along St.Kilda Road and the Toorak Road and Chapel Street branches over the ensuing months. Cable tram car building had ceased a couple of years previously, and withdrawal of rolling stock commenced. The conversions of the Flinders Street and Collins Street routes took place in 1927 and 1929-30, with the Elizabeth Street routes being delayed by the depression until 1935. Other routes were converted to buses in the late 1930's with the Bourke Street routes being the last on 26/10/1940.

From 1935, the M. & M.T.B. started to expand its motor buses, and obtained licences in middle and outer suburbs, as well as cable tram conversions to buses rather than trams. For the West Melbourne cable tram conversion in July, 1935, two diesel engined buses were commissioned. Would they have been the first diesel buses in Melbourne? I do not know, but I would be interested to find out. Possibly some private operators may have had a diesel or two that I have not heard about. From 1936-37, the Tramways Board commissioned only diesel buses except for the wartime emergency buses and some purchases from private operators in that period. One Daimler chassied bus, with fluid flywheel and self changing gear box, entered service in December, 1936 - would this be Melbourne's first "automatic" bus? The Board's Annual Report for 1939 stated that: "An order has been placed for one chassis with a "pancake" underfloor engine....". No more has been traced on this matter. Presumably it became lost in the problems of the early 1940's. It was to be the middle 1950's before underfloor engine buses appeared in Melbourne.

Our colleagues from Yarra Trams will doubtless smile wryly to learn that the M. & M.T.B's Annual Report dated 30/6/1937 stated: "At the request of the Box Hill Council, application was made for an Order-in-Council to extend the Whitehorse Road Tramway from Union Road to Elgar Road. The Order has not so far received approval of the Governor-in-Council." The outcome was not mentioned subsequently, but Yarra Trams is now constructing this work, and continuing the line from Elgar Road to Box Hill shopping centre - 65 years later!

Sunday morning services were introduced on 4/10/1936 on all cable and electric tram routes and two bus routes. "All Night" trams commenced on 14/2/1937 on five routes and covered almost all the tram system by early in World War 11. There were also some "All Night" bus routes run by private operators at this time. Patronage contracted in the 1950's, and the service was changed to motor buses after 16/2/1957, running a modified coverage of routes, until they also ceased, on 16/11/68. "All Night" services re-appeared in 5/1993 on nine new, quite different routes, on Friday and Saturday nights only, and run by private operators.

M. & M. T. B. Chairman H. H. Bell, Snr., was sent overseas in 1938 to study the latest in street transport. He became very impressed with the newest types of diesel buses and recommended that they be used for the final cable tram conversion on the two Bourke Street routes. Fortyfive double deck and twentyfive single deck buses were ordered, and were expected to go into service in March, 1940. Due to the war, and resulting fuel restrictions, they did not replace the cable trams until 26/10/1940.

Another outcome of the Chairman's trip was the upgrading of tramcar design. Continuing to use the existing bodyframe, mechanical and electrical equipment, body features were improved by better seating, exterior and interior lighting, a public

address system, deleting canvas weather blinds and fitting driver-operated sliding doors. The first cars entered service in 1939, but it was some forty years before the last canvas weather blind trams were withdrawn from daily use.

The outbreak of war on 3/9/1939 brought changes and problems to all public transport operators. Enlistments in the armed forces brought many women into the industry, particularly as railway station staff and bus conductresses. Increased employment plus higher petrol prices, and then rationing, aggravated "peak hour" travelling conditions. A conference about staggering working hours was held which resulted in Government Departments, some semi-Government bodies and various schools altering their starting and finishing times, giving noticeable relief to the time areas around 9.00 am and 5.00 pm.

Air raid precautions, building blackout work, and shaded interior and exterior vehicle lighting were implemented. These matters had attention from railways, tramways, private buses, motor trucks, private motorists and the population as a whole.

The post war period saw slow progress with the building of the LaTrobe Street tram line, but the early 1950's achieved a quicker job in converting the two Bourke Street bus routes to electric trams. The trams built for this job were further improved by fitting resilient wheels, carbon insert current collectors, sound deadening of body panels and floors, and resilient mountings for the trolley bases. New tram construction ceased in 1956, and the bus fleet had been renewed by the 1960's. The Doncaster/Warrandyte area private bus routes were purchased on 1/7/1961, and there were continual problems getting enough buses into the rapidly expanding area to cope with the growth in passengers.

A prototype for a new tram was built in 1973 and a contract let for a new fleet, the first of which entered service in 1975. A total of 432 new trams were commissioned by 1994 to four successive designs, by four contracts. The first 230 trams had seated Conductors operating on the "Pay As You Pass" system, but the remainder reverted to roving conductors.

CHANGE - PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS.

On 1/7/1983, the M. & M.T.B., Suburban Railways, and the Underground Loop Authority were superceded by the Metropolitan Transit Authority.. The Met, in June, 1988, commissioned the first of 100 new buses which were fitted with air-conditioning. Their first air-conditioned tramcar came three months later, being of the articulated type.

The Met (and V-Line Passenger and Freight divisions) were included in the new Public Transport Corporation from 1/7/1989. The ticketing system suffered problems in the late 1980's and early 1990's as new arrangements and systems were brought into use, resulting in a worrying drop in patronage and revenue, particularly on trams and tramway buses. Graffiti was also a major cause for concern on both vehicles and property.

A change of Government saw the introduction of many changes and reforms. At the end of 1993, all Tramway bus routes were put to public tender, and most were won by

a private bidder. The remainder were won by the P.T.C. and became known as Metbus, but this was also later sold by tender to another private operator in April, 1998. One-person operation of trams, by removal of Conductors, took place during 1994-1996. After the positioning of cameras and screens at appropriate stations, Guards were progressively removed from suburban electric trains during 1995-1996, and they were operated by Drivers only. The installation of automatic ticket issuing machines at railway stations, in trams and on metropolitan buses took place between November, 1997 and June, 1998. The extensive suburban train stabling yards east of Flinders Street station were closed in March, 1998 and replaced by several smaller facilities in the suburbs.

From 1/10/1997, another major decision by the Government started the dismantling of the P.T.C. It was divided into five "Corporatised" business units - two for suburban trains, two for the tram network and V/Line Passenger for country passenger trains and contract coach services. V/Line Freight had already been sold by tender. Tenders were called for the sale of these five business units, and the successful bidders duly announced. The change-over took place at the interesting time of 3.00 am on Sunday, 29/8/1999. Thus direct Government involvement in Victoria's and Melbourne's public transport ceased after some 143 1/4 years, and total private ownership began, as it had been for the first 1 3/4 years.

The two Corporatised tram units had been named Swanston Trams and Yarra Trams, the former subsequently being renamed M>Tram, while Yarra Trams' purchaser decided to retain their name. Both companies have started refurbishing their fleets, and have ordered new low-floor articulated trams. Yarra Trams have received most of their 36 "Citadis" three-section articulated trams from Alstom, while M>Tram have 38 three-section and 21 five-section articulated "Combino" trams on order from Siemens Uerdingen, with the first of the former on hand.

The two Corporatised portions of the suburban railways initially operated as Bayside Trains and Hillside Trains, but have been renamed M>Train and Connex respectively by their purchasers. Both companies are now most of the way through a program to refurbish all their 1980's trains, and have ordered new trains to replace most of their 1970's carriages. M>Train have 31 trains on order from Siemens, with the first due to arrive for testing in mid-year. Connex have 29 trains on order from Alstom, with the first due

TODAY TOMORROW.

What now? Having traversed some 150 years of our three main forms of public transport in Melbourne, and ascertained where we are and how and why we reached this point, it would seem sensible to look at where we might go from here and by what means. When asked this question, my crystal ball instantly went blank, and left me on my own. Maybe it knew something! However, I have to try, so

Firstly, let us assess what we have got:

* Victoria has some 4.6 million people with some 3.4 million in Melbourne.

* A suburban electric train system of 372 route kilometres, with 151 trains, carrying over 114 million passengers per annum.

* Trams covering 343 route kilometres, with 476 trams, carrying over 116 million passengers per annum.

* Buses covering 257 routes, with over 1400 buses, carrying over 92 million passengers per annum.

* The tram network is claimed to be the fourth largest in the world and the largest outside Europe.

* Statistics indicate that 74% of Melburnians travel by car, 18% walk or cycle, and only 7% use public transport.

The time spent on the main transport mode, i.e. either train, tram or bus, is 40.3%, 41.3% and 40.8% respectively of the total journey time. That means the time spent on walking to and waiting for a feeder service, walking and waiting at interchange points, waiting for a final feeder service to or walking to the destination, is almost 60% of the total journey time. Does this mean that our urban sprawl is out of hand and has become a menace to our standard of living? Should our Urban Planners take a good hard think about the situation? Must Developers be curtailed?

The speed of our suburban trains has changed little since 1919, and now averages about 33 kilometres per hour. Peak hour expresses have been operated for many years and are popular with passengers, attracting approximately 19% more people than "stopping all stations" trains. Trams used to be scheduled at about 19 k.p.h., but this now varies considerably due to traffic congestion, and varies from a small decrease down to about k.p.h., a % decrease.

There are quite a few very important basic points that need to be kept in mind when providing public transport services. Some of these points are:

The overall system, as well as each individual route, must take people where they want to go when they want to travel. In earlier decades, when cities and towns were much smaller, most journeys were on one vehicle for short to moderate distances. There was some inter-change where routes crossed, but what is now referred to as "linked" travel was not widespread. As the populated area spread, this type of travel grew, but the name has only been applied relatively recently. Of late, the motor car has come into dominance by being so good at serving this travel aspect. Presently, the young and the old, plus the carless between these two groups, comprise this clientele. They are being served, to varying degrees, much of the week, but not fully. It will take a lot of effort, and some risk, to provide these extra services, that will need to be well marketed, so as to change the populations thinking and attract their patronage, plus getting some people out of their cars.

Passengers expect the service to be reliable, punctual, economical, frequent, safe, efficient and clean. On the question of cleanliness, your speaker has been aware for some decades that this problem is caused by a not insignificant percentage of our passengers, and not by the vehicles littering themselves, as some "Letters to the

Editor" writers seem to think! The more recent problem of graffiti is definitely a damning indictment of our populations social attitude. Unfortunately, these factors have become one of a number of "occupational hazards" with which transport operators have to cope.

Present day passengers seem to be expecting a higher standard of vehicle, probably due to the standards of motor cars rising all the time, and being presented to the public in lavish media advertising. Thus the wooden or poorly upholstered seats and dull interior and exterior colours of the early to mid-20th century have been largely replaced by good upholstery and light coloured internal and external colours, as well as the recent move to low floor and wheel chair accessible buses and trams, and air-conditioning throughout all modes.

In today's road traffic conditions, preference for trams and buses over masses of vehicles is obviously a major advantage for both operators and passengers. We have several instances of this in Melbourne for both types of vehicles. The "Fairway" system for trams is very good in theory, but is well and truly "honoured in the breach" in practise by road traffic, the causes mainly being illegal parking at "Clearway" times, double parking and turning vehicles at most hours. Bus only lanes seem to have a better run, while bus loading zones, away from the kerb, allow buses to go ahead or turn right without having to battle across other road traffic which needs to keep left or turn left.

There are quite a few locations where traffic engineers have been able to help our vehicles, but there are doubtless many others where this could take place. Drivers and operations supervisors should be able to amass quite an impressive list or two!

A comment needs to be made about the current efforts of Yarra Trams to turn their Port Melbourne to Mont Albert - and shortly Box Hill - route, no. 109, into an upgraded service. Some of their new low-floor trams are already in service, improved safety zones and passengers facilities have been installed along Collins Street, with others to follow in the suburbs, all DDA compliant. The rails for the new track will be encased in rubber to absorb vibrations and reduce noise levels, and as much as possible will be of off-road construction. Other traffic improvements are being negotiated with local Councils. Hopefully we will soon see the fruits of two years planning and negotiating that will set a new standard for our City.

The latter part of the 20th century has seen some interesting and progressive moves in making public transport vehicles better able to do what they are supposed to do – move people. The railed sectors have seen the arrival of solid state technology, which has been beneficial in their electrical sub-stations as well as in-vehicle control systems. Whilst the transmission of high voltage alternating current has been in use for decades, its application in traction work has been a major problem. Hence the use of 1500 volts direct current for the Melbourne and Sydney suburban electrification projects of the 1910s and 1920s. The Brisbane and Perth suburban electrifications of the 1980s and 1990s were able to use 25,000 volts alternating current due to advances in technology.

Micro-processor controls are being fitted to the d.c. panels in tramway sub-stations, and new style light weight catenary type overhead wiring will be erected on the

Mont Albert to Box Hill extension. Both the new Citadis and Combino trams have three phase a.c. inverter controlled motors. Even the humble fluorescent tube has been an important factor in improving the interior lighting in public transport vehicles, whereby their attractiveness to passengers has been enhanced.

The bus industry has been progressively active in the field of alternative fuels in regard to reducing atmospheric pollution. The Met tried LPG in ten buses in the early 1990s, but the trial only lasted about a year. Liquid Natural Gas has been used for several years by part of the fleet of the Bell Street Bus Co., and likewise by Benders at Geelong.

Ventura commissioned their first bus with a diesel engine to Euro 2 standard for exhaust emissions about three years ago, and subsequent new buses followed suit. Other operators also received these improved engines in their new buses. At Lilydale, Invicta Buses commissioned their first bus with a Euro 3 standard engine about two years ago, and have added several more. The Euro 3 engine emits the cleanest exhaust gases in the world for a diesel engine, but needs additional refining to its fuel for best results. Eighteen months ago, Ventura launched the first of three buses powered by Ethanol – a product of sugar cane – and therefore a renewable source of energy. Invicta now have in service seven buses using Canola oil, which is also a renewable source of energy. Perth has recently ordered three hydrogen powered fuel cell buses from Mercedes Benz – at a cost of over \$1,000,000 each! This is nearly three times the cost of a normal present day suburban route bus, and I feel that their advantages will need to be considerable if they are to be a viable alternative. We should watch all these trials carefully.

While we have many locations with tram and bus priority at traffic lights, there are doubtless other intersections that could be treated. Some traffic lights seem to be phased for a long stream of cars, while trams and buses sit and wait. Presumably this favours the volume of vehicles rather than their respective passenger carrying capacity, and overall environmental and community benefits. I recall the slogan on a pamphlet from the U. K. some 50 years ago which said "Move people, not vehicles"!

Another aspect that could be of concern to our new franchisees is their relationship with the Government via their Contracts. The Government, through the Department of Infrastructure and the Minister for Transport, have both responsibilities to and expectations from the Companies. The Companies need to balance decisions received from the D.O.I. and the Government, the conditions of their Contracts, and the expectations of their parent companies.

New projects will need to be negotiated between Government, D.O.I., VicRoads, Municipal Councils, and the Companies, and, judging by the aforementioned Route 109, and M-Trains St.Albans to Watergardens railway electrification project, the physical results and benefits to the public seem to be good. Hopefully, relationships, system expansion and improvements will follow suit.

The 1980s and 1990s saw the big local operators become larger. The middle 1990s saw the subsidiary of a very large Sydney bus company acquire most of the Tramway buses. The late 1990s saw the big disposal take place, and the consortiums arrive. Our "local" National Bus Company joined its namesake from the U.K. We now have,

for the first time, multi-national, multi-modal, operating giants heavily involved in our local transport.

The Melbourne scene has changed considerably in the last few years, and I expect it will continue to do so. We had decades of stability which gave a steady but slow progress. The situation started to change when the Met arrived in 1983, and, since then, change has gathered momentum, and is now moving rapidly.

Hold tight for the future !

The future? I really do not know. But one thing I do know is that you people gathered here today ARE the future! Whether you are a tiny part of the future or a major part obviously depends on who you are and what role you play in life. A passenger may have only a tiny influence, but, lots of passengers can have a collective influence of substantial note. In more blunt language, the "bums on seats" factor. At the other end of the ladder of life is the Manager or Politician who make the big decisions. If they make the wrong decisions, there will be insufficient "bums on seats"! And that means a doubtful or even bleak future for our industry, in particular, and our community, in general.

Many of you are involved in our industry directly or indirectly as employees, customers or suppliers. This means that you have a personal - or vested - interest in the passenger transport industry being of a good, if not the highest standard. Further, that transport survives and continues to serve its purpose, both for the benefit of each and every individual commuter as well as the general population.

As you know, the title of today's lecture is: "The Privatisation of Melbourne's Public Transport - Has the wheel turned full circle?" If a specific answer is expected from me, I feel it must be a definite "Yes".

If you ask me if it will turn again or keep on turning, I can but recommend that you keep on living and watch carefully.

I have endeavoured to very briefly give an overview of the long and involved history of Melbourne's public transport since about 1850 or so. At that point in time we commenced with probably nothing, then privately owned railway companies which were followed by individual citizens operating horse-drawn cabs and omnibuses.

The railways of that time suffered the problems of under-capitalisation and over-optimism and, subsequently the State Government soon found itself becoming involved as an early-day "white knight". The horse buses were successful and they consolidated, and then converted themselves into a very successful cable tram operator. Later, local Councils became electric tram operators. The overall result was a series of uncoordinated "territories" which produced inter-travel problems. The solution by the Government of the day was the formation of the Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board for street tramway transport, but this left the suburban railways - by then being electrified - and their two electric tramways, as a separate entity. The 1920's then saw the spread of the privately operated motor bus create a third sector. It was not until the 1980's that the metropolitan-wide fare system solved this problem - but, ironically, it subsequently produced problems of its own!

The late 1990's saw all the Government buses, trams and suburban railways privatised. With none of Melbourne's public transport now Government operated, and, as that was the situation 150 years ago, I feel that the answer has to be "yes". However, I need hardly remind transport industry people that a wheel is round, and designed for turning. It has gone around once. Will it go around again? Time will tell. And you will directly help decide what it will do. Please be sure that you think clearly, ponder carefully, and judge soundly. Because, as I said a few moments ago - YOU are the people who are responsible for the future of Melbourne's public transport.

I thank you for your attention.

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