

THE TRUTH AT LAST ABOUT RAILWAY TRAMS ?

BLACK ROCK TRAMS Includes notes on the Beaumaris extension
The horse trams, and the Brighton Electric line.

FIRST EDITION - MARCH 2005

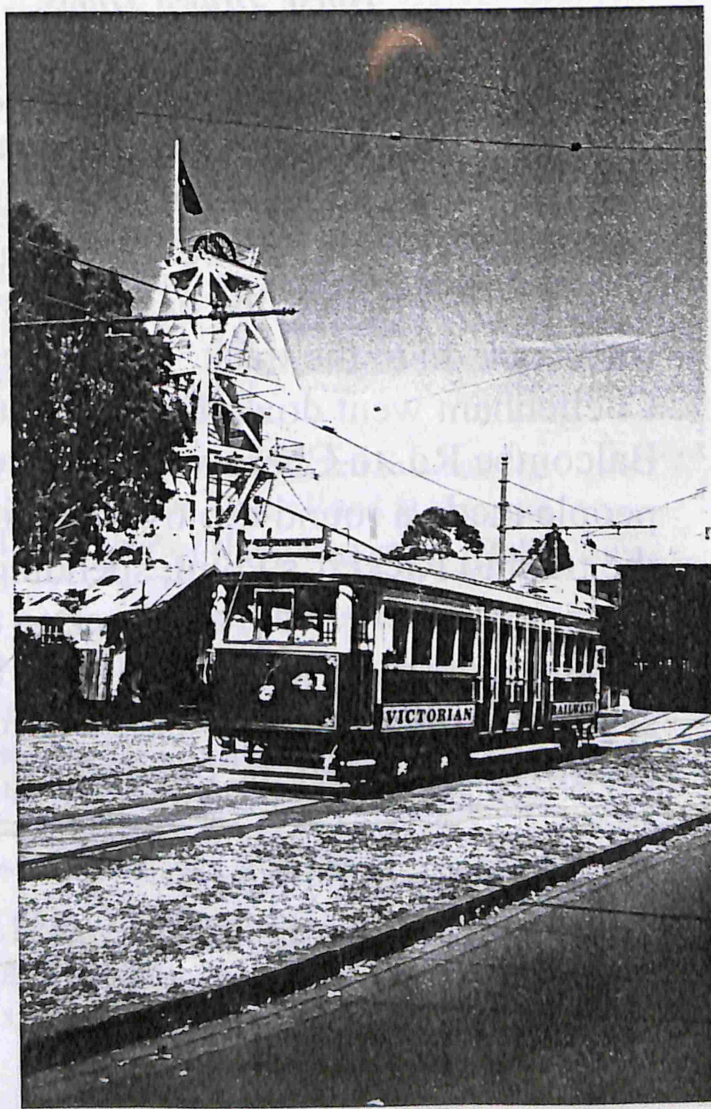
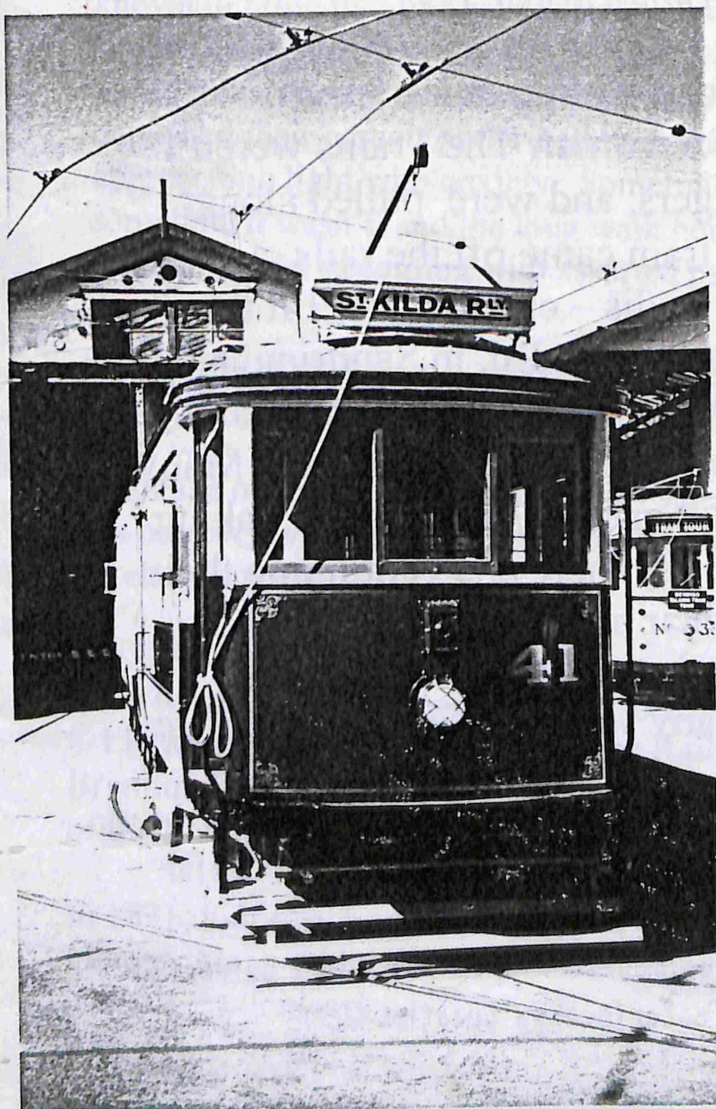
COMPILED BY DAVID FROST

The author was not there in 1906 when the first railway tram left St Kilda Station. This book hopes to be the truth as we know it but we are willing to be corrected.

WHAT IS A RAILWAY TRAM?

We usually mean the trams that were operated by the Victorian Railways that ran from St Kilda Station to Brighton Beach Station, from Sandringham Station to Black Rock and Beaumaris. Tickets on these trams could be bought at railway stations on the St Kilda and Sandringham Lines which carried you to the end of the tram lines. However, Australia's first electric tram ran from Box Hill to Doncaster and tickets on this line could also be purchased at railway stations although it was privately operated. It was a Sunday excursion to travel to Box Hill by train then take the tram to Doncaster and climb a tower which gave a magnificent view of Melbourne.

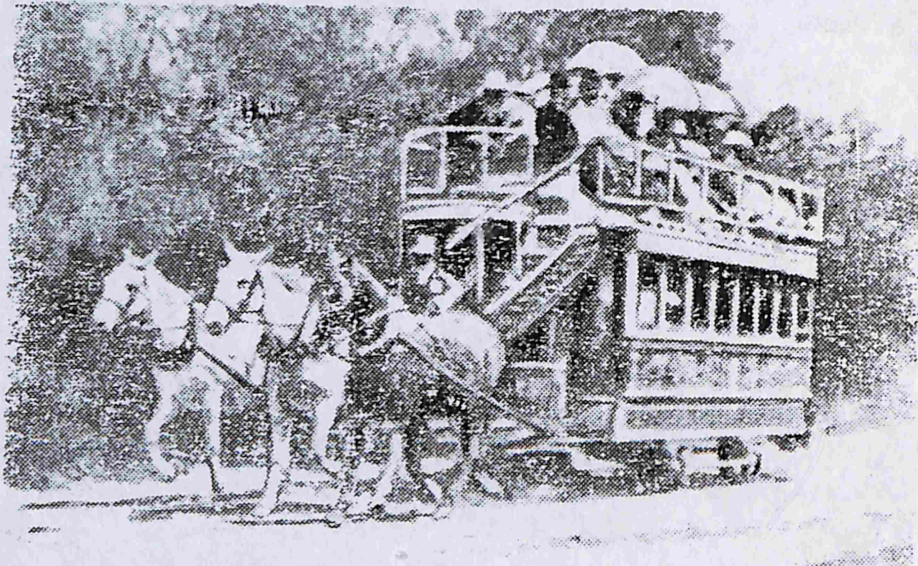
TRAM
RUNS AGAIN
RESTORED RAILWAY
TRAM NO 41 AT
BENDIGO DEPOT (LEFT)
AND THE GOLD MINE.
- 13 March 2005
Photos: Earl Ewers



THE HORSE TRAMS

By Christmas 1888, a horse tram had commenced operation from Sandringham to Black Rock and Beaumaris

It ran along Beach Road to Tramway Parade, BEAUMARIS where it turned up Tramway Parade and met a similar tram from Cheltenham Railway Station. It proved to be uneconomic. The Cheltenham/Beaumaris section was closed in 1912 and the remainder by 1915.



It ran along the Beach Rd to Tramway Par., Beaumaris, and turned into that road, and at the tram depot met the tram from Cheltenham railway station.

BEAUMARIS HORSE TRAM – from an old metal printing Block in possession of David Frost.

Condensation of comments and information taken from Various Tapes Recorded by E.P.T. Historical Groups

Horse Drawn Trams. Recorded March 1982

Stables for the horse were at the corner of Oak St.. and Tramway Parade and also at Love St. and Beach Rd. corner. The Trams weren't large vehicles, carrying about 20 passengers, and were pulled along rails by two horses. However, when the tram came off the rails, a frequent occurrence, the passengers had to dis – embark and lift the tram back on to the track. The route, from Beach Rd. in Sandringham to Cheltenham went down Beach Rd. up Tramway Parade and then along Balcombe Rd. to Charman Rd. and ended at Cheltenham Station. Many people made a round trip by travelling to Sandringham by train, taking the tram to Rickett's Point, spending the day there and continuing their journey to Cheltenham and back to the their home station. In the metropolitan area, privately owned horse trams were used as feeder systems for the cable tram service for many years. Unfortunately a fire destroyed nearly all the old trams.

Comment : Judging from the picture at the top of this page, three horses provided the motive power; I think a car this large would seat as many as 40 pass. Similar cars in Adelaide were said to seat a total of 46.

The frequent derailments experienced would be during the last years, when the state of the track had deteriorated greatly.

An extract from The Argus Sept 15th 1934

This was written during the last years of the horse tram service, which had fallen on bad times,
And were running only to avoid legal problems.

“ Woman residents who wanted to take the next tram would have to camp at Black Rock corner,
Perhaps for a couple hours, reading and sewing to pass the time, for morning tea was not to be had. Indeed the only shop had a stock consisting of a bottle of pickles and a block of sandy –gray chocolate. The proprietor was annoyed if anyone bought either of these, as she said you never knew when the traveller would call again - rather like the trams. Arriving in the city two or three hours after leaving home, we would do our shopping. And other business and then totter for the 5.16 train: it was rumoured that the tram driver always met that particular train, one of the two daily trains he treated seriously. At Hampton station, passengers for Black Rock would gather all their packages, from milliners Boxes to lawnmowers, by way of garnish an occasional crayfish, and be ready to sprint from Sandringham station to Beach Rd. where the tram might be waiting. The driver has been known to bring two passengers for the train & return immediately to the stables. By this time shops closed and no one could find out whether the tram had been and gone or not yet arrived. Some folks, hardier and less trusting than the others, would set off for home on foot, having deposited their parcels at the station overnight; others waited patiently, viewing every approaching light with anxiety. Sometime it was the tram, up to 20 minutes late, sometime it wasn't, and the long walk home in the darkness, shedding tears of tiredness and frustration and struggling with assorted parcels was far from an ideal conclusion to a perfect day.”

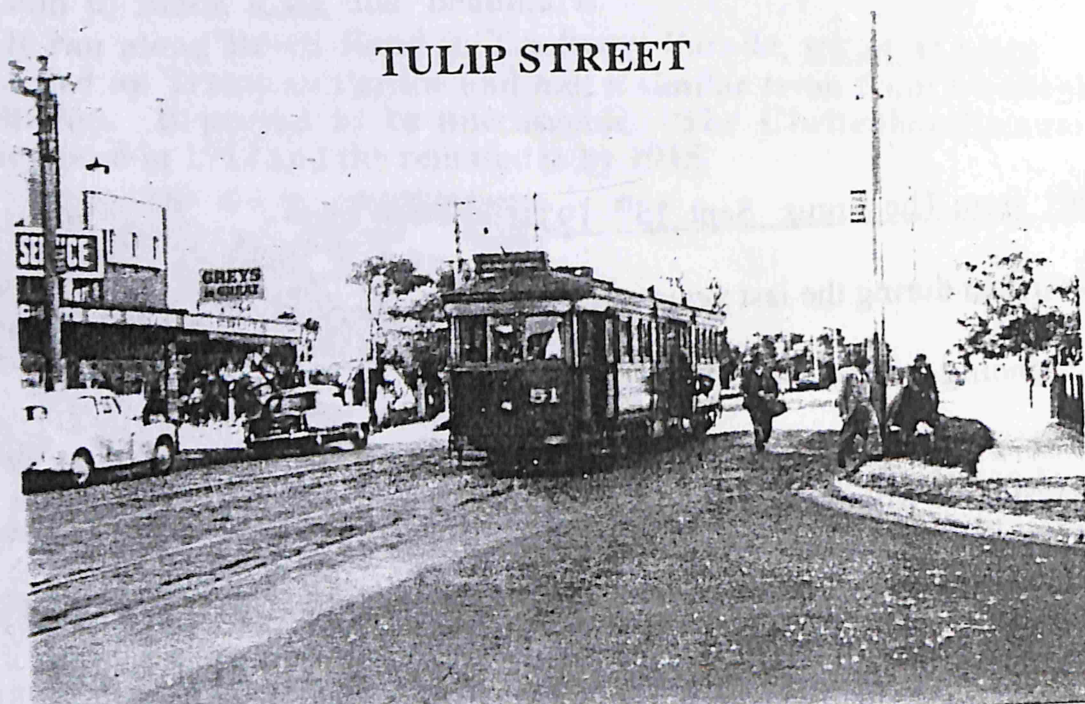
10 MARCH 1919 - THE ELECTRIC TRAMS.

These were run by the Victorian Railways. An inland route was selected this had the advantage of servicing houses on both sides of the line. Also Beach Road at the time was narrow, congested at holiday times, and had a number of sharp curves unsuitable for electric trams.

The service commenced using six motorised cross-bench tram- cars (Nos. 22-27) these were known as “motor cars” also six open cross-bench trailer tram- cars (Nos. 8-13) which were transferred from the Railway's other tramline between St. Kilda and Brighton Beach. These were four wheeled vehicles and the trailers having no motors of their own were pulled by a “motor car”.

In 1921, four new bogie- cars arrived (Nos. 48-51) these had eight wheels and four motors. Along with Nos. 23 and 26 remained in service until the line was closed.

TULIP STREET



The author, with briefcase, alights from Tram No.51 on his way to his job at Flavell's Engineering Works in 1955 — photo by George Scott.

The Beaumaris Extension:-

On the first of September 1926, the tramway was extended from Black Rock to Beaumaris along an inland route because of a guarantee given by the Sandringham City Council to contribute towards any losses on the extension for the first five years of running the service. As the extension operated at a heavy loss, the Council was required to honour its guarantee. In August 1931, The Railways arranged with a private bus operator (Glance's) to run a service between Beaumaris and Black Rock in lieu of the tram.

Along the Beaumaris electric tram route most of the track was laid in an eight foot (2.22m) wide strip of bitumen which was provided by the Railways initially and maintained by them until the track was dismantled. The service on the extension was discontinued from 31 August, 1931, but the track was not dismantled until 1939. Most of the inland streets were just sandy tracks, and for much of the tram route loose sand and scrub bordered each side of the track. Another important reason Glance's bus used Beach Road was an almost complete lack of traffic along the former tram line. The tramway had been built to stimulate development of the district with residential housing etc at a time when automobiles were uncommon. The lack of facilities including water services, the high prices asked for land, and the onset of the Great Depression in the late 1920s brought about the financial failure of the tramway.

Why was the tramway built?? The answer is simple! The tramway was built by the Government in lieu of extending the Melbourne to Sandringham railway to Black Rock and Beaumaris. The local council and the landowners objected to a condition regarding resumption of land for the railway right-of-way; therefore the proposal lapsed.

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

SANDRINGHAM - BLACK ROCK - BEAUMARIS ELECTRIC TRAMWAY 1919 to 1956

List of Stopping Places along the Route

| Down Journey as at 2/11/1942 | | Miles | Chains |
|---|--|-------|--------|
| Sandringham Station | | 0 | 0 |
| ● Staff Box (Bay Rd) | | 0 | 11 |
| Fernhill Rd North (in Bay Rd) | | 0 | 24 |
| Tennyson St (in Fernhill Rd) | | 0 | 39 |
| ● Victoria St (" " ") | | 0 | 52 |
| Norwood St (in Royal Av) | | 0 | 61 |
| Le Fevre St (" " ") | | 0 | 75 |
| ● Bluff Rd (Royal Av cnr)(end of First fare section) | | 1 | 16 |
| [Tulip St (in Bluff Rd ('down' only) | | 1 | 34 |
| [Edward St ('up' direction only) | | | |
| [Fern St ('down' only)(in Bluff Rd) | | 1 | 47 |
| [Potter St ('up' only) | | | |
| Cheltenham Rd (in Bluff Rd) | | 1 | 61 |
| Arkaringa Cres (" " ") | | 1 | 75 |
| [Stanley St ('down' only)(in Bluff Rd) | | 2 | 11 |
| [Gordon Cres ('up' only) | | | |
| ● Black Rock, Balcombe Rd. (end of Second fare section) | | 2 | 29 |

To Beaumaris (1926 - 1931)

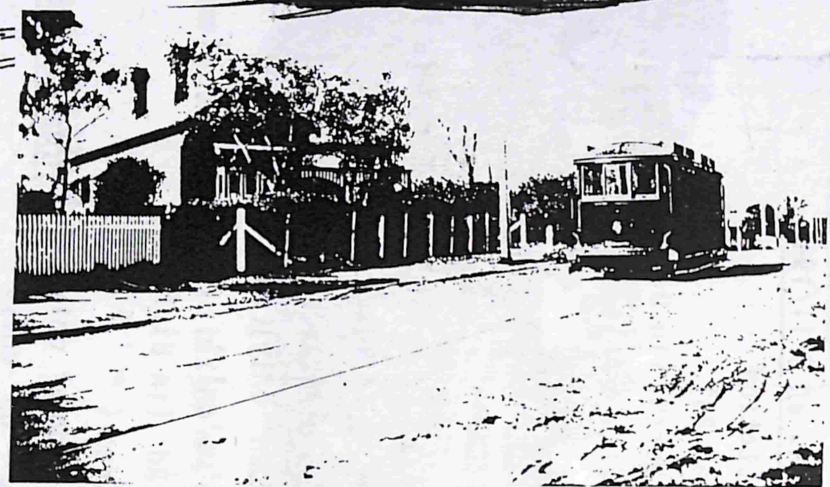
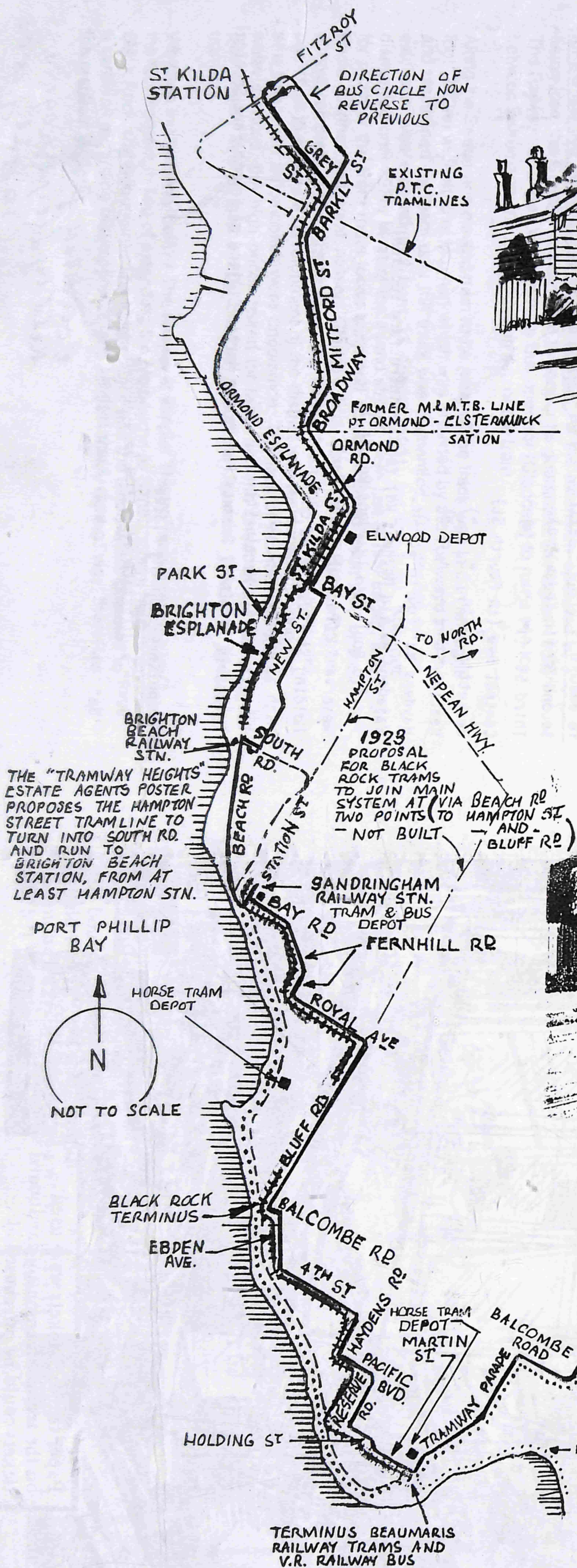
as at 1/5/1929

Second St (in Ebdon Ave)
 Third St (in " " ")
 Central Ave (in Fourth St)
 Beckett's La (in " " ")
 Keating St (in " " ")
 Haydens Rd (Fourth St cnr.)
 Pasadena Av (in Haydens Rd) (end of Third fare section)
 Pacific Boulevard (Haydens Rd cnr.)
 Reserve Rd (Pacific B'vard Cnr)
 Holding St (Reserve Rd cnr)
 High St (in Holding St)
 Dalgetty Rd (in Martin St)
 Beaumaris Terminus, Tramway Parade (in Martin St)(end of Fourth Fare Section)

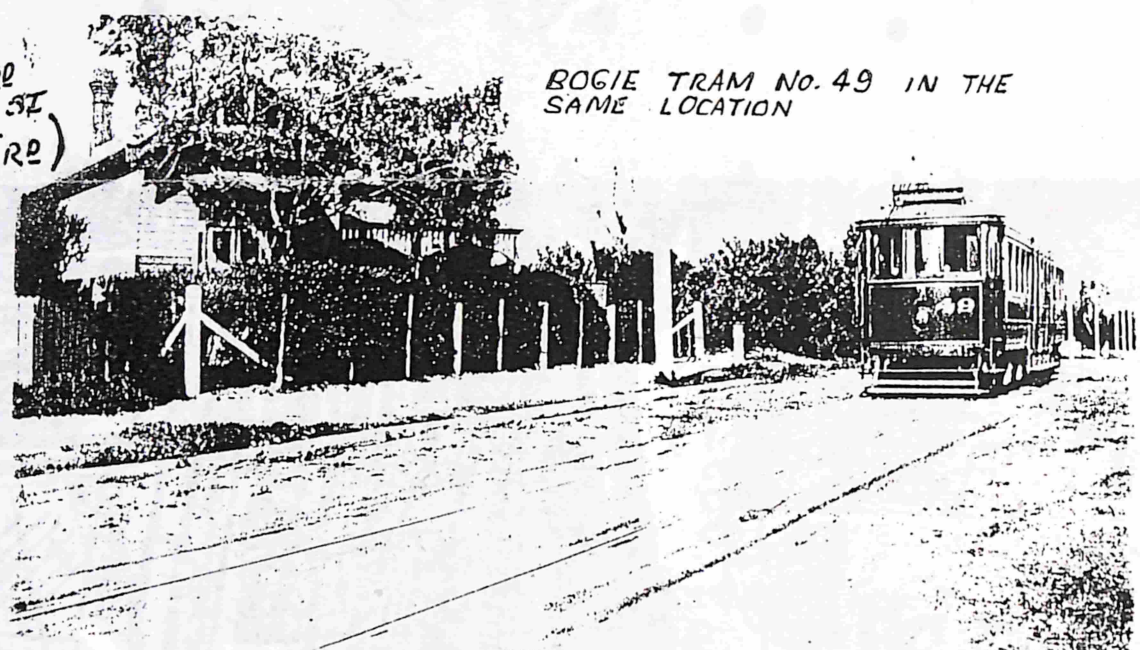
● Compulsory Stopping Places

'Down' = direction away from Sandringham
 'Up' = " towards Sandringham.

Collected from the records
 held by Lloyd Rogers,
 10 July 2003.



NO 22 PASSING NO 19 EBDEN AVE. NEAR BLACK ROCK HOUSE ON THE BEAUMARIS LINE - NO 22 EX-ST.KILDA BRIGHTON LINE OPENED THE SANDRINGHAM BLACK ROCK TRAMWAY ON 10 MARCH 1919.



BOGIE TRAM No. 49 IN THE SAME LOCATION

LEGEND

EXISTING ST KILDA-SOUTHLAND BUS

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS TRAMWAYS

EASTERN SUBURBS OMNIBUS SERVICE MID. BRIGHTON TO ST KILDA AFTER TRAMS WERE CUT BACK TO ELWOOD

V.R. BUS, ORIGINALLY FOLLOWED HORSE-TRAM ROUTE FOLLOWED BEAUMARIS & BLACK ROCK TRAM ROUTES IN LATER YEARS

HORSE TRAM ROUTES

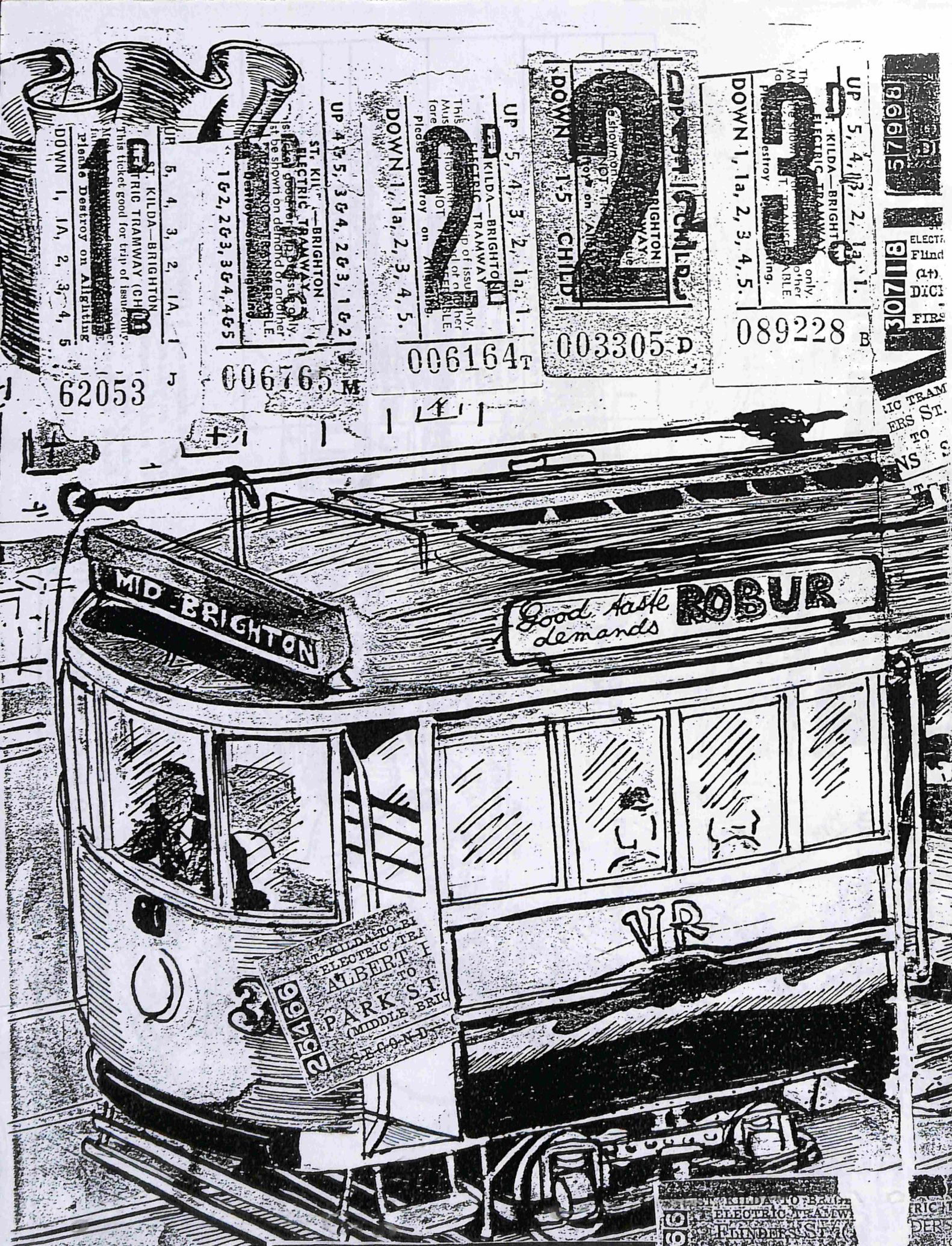
MAIN MELBOURNE TRAM SYSTEM



SANDRINGHAM AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Inc No.A0018151X - ABN 75 395 603 584

2-10 Waltham Street, Sandringham, 3191
P.O. Box 8, Sandringham, 3191
Telephone 9597 0985

Map and drawing - David Frost.
Photos supplied by William Ebdon Methven.
(His middle name because he was the first person born in Ebdon Ave. -and still lives there in House No. 19).



Paper tear-off tickets were used on the trams. Edmonson cardboard tickets could be purchased at railway stations on the line to the end of the tramline



On boarding the tram, then conductor would tear the rail ticket in half. If you had a return ticket, you were not left with much.

The St Kilda- Brighton Line

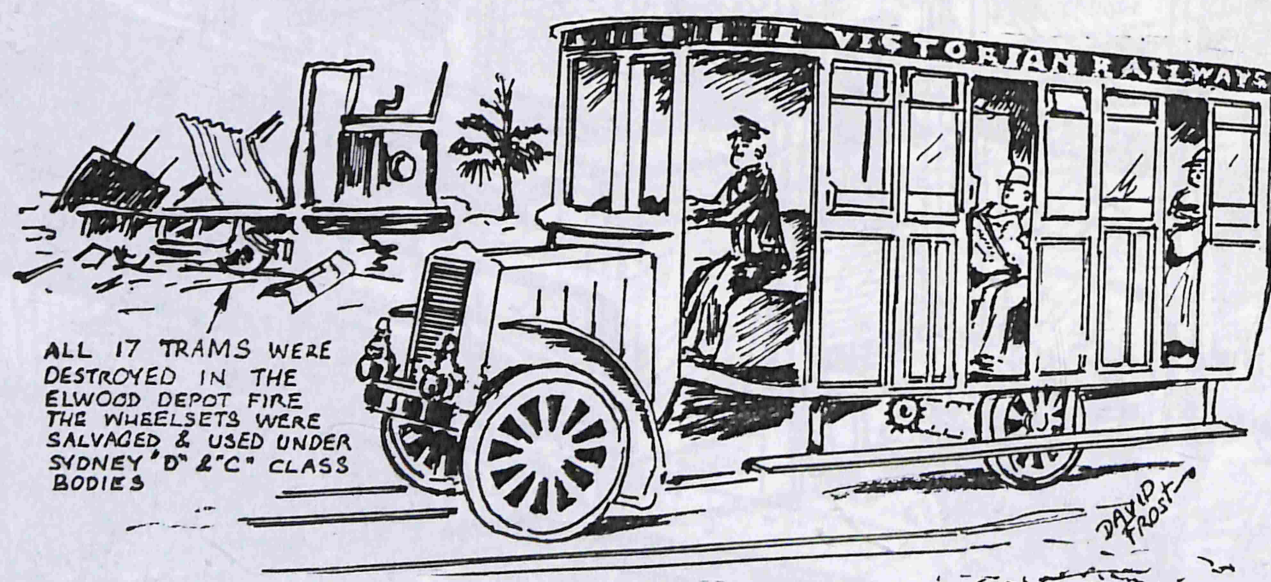
The Black Rock Tramway was considered a "Branch Line" of the St Kilda to Brighton Beach Line. Which had opened earlier on 7 May 1906 as far as Middle Brighton and was extended to Brighton Beach on 2 November 1906 as an alternative to extending the St Kilda train line. Apart from the short lived Box Hill- Doncaster line which ran from 1889-1896 it was Melbourne's First electric tramway. Railway gauge was selected 5'3" (1600mm). From 1913 there was a connection to the railway. Through running to the city as the "Light Rail" now does may have been considered.

"Melbourne" was on the early destination boards, but this was intended for use when a tram connected with a Melbourne train. In my time, they all did.

This original fleet consisted of seven single truck (4 wheel) California combinations (saloon in the middle, and open ends) numbers 1 to 7.

Three single truck cars, numbers 8 to 10 of which No 9 was a trailer and seven open cross-bench trailers, Numbers 11 to 17. Some of the early cars were imported from the USA in various stages of construction and completed at Newport.

The Fleet was destroyed by a fire at Elwood Depot on 7 March 1907, and an emergency was provided.



The Victorian Railways Chelmsford Steam Buses

Six imported chassis were fitted with bodies (as illustrated) at the Newport Railway workshops. They had a kerosene fired boiler a chain transmission. They provided an emergency service on the St Kilda-Brighton tramway from 8 March 1906 after the Elwood Depot fire which destroyed the trams and buildings. As the road was not completely made, the buses ran along the tarmac between the rails. The buses were soon replaced by Second-Hand trams purchased from Sydney which resumed tram service on 17 March, 1906. The buses were then returned to storage. They had previously been in use on a V. R. bus service between December 1905 and June 1906. They were sold in 1911.

The Second Fleet

Nos.1 to 7 were California Combinations similar to the first Nos.1 to 7, but provided with windshields for the driver. Windshields were not fitted to the trams destroyed in the fire. They survived until the end of the line, except for No.2 which had the distinction of being the only railway tram to be scrapped due to a collision which occurred in 1939.

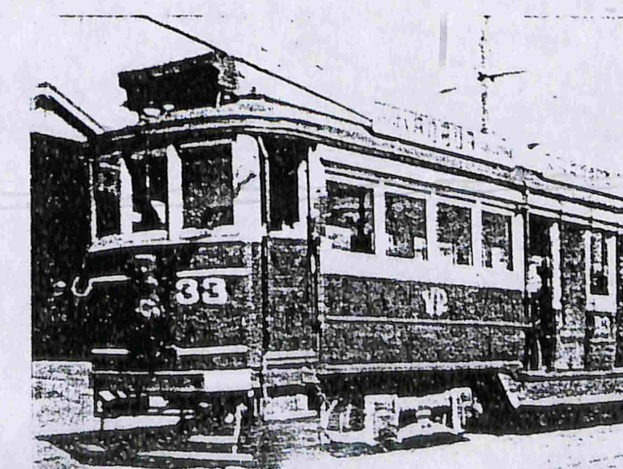
Nos. 8-14 were single truck cross-bench trailers some of which were under construction at Newport prior to the fire.

Immediately after the fire second-hand trams were acquired from Sydney and numbered 15-21 by the Victorian Railways. Their high steps and small carrying capacity made them unpopular. Nos. 19, 20, 21 were withdrawn from service in 1910 and the remaining cars were scrapped by circa 1923. In 1913, a new class of tram was introduced. These were four-wheeled, enclosed, cross-seat motor-cars, numbered 19 to 27 inclusive. They were adapted from a popular Sydney tram design. In Melbourne, they had few virtues and many design faults. The one virtue was low double steps. The lower step was only 11 and a half inches from rail-level; the top step was the same height as the first; the floor of the car was 11 and a quarter inches above the top step. In Sydney, the design that was copied had only one step. The main faults in Melbourne were:- cramped seating for 50 passengers; practically no space for standees; draughty in all weathers; noisy in running, no windows on the sides apart from the sliding doors. The worst fault was that the conductor had to collect fares from the side footboard.

In 1918 the first "Bogie Cars" arrived – these were the first trams to have four motors & were roughly similar to the M & M.T.B (Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board) "L" class. The difference between the VR tram and the "L" class was that the former was designed in 1914/15 and the latter in 1919. The VR tram was the first in Melbourne to be designed to have air-brakes.

These Bogie Cars continued to be built in 1923, they were numbered 28-51. Nos. 44-47 were not completed and the numbers left vacant in the fleet Numbering System. 48-51 were sent to Black Rock, and in the 1930s, 50 & 51 were converted for single person operation. These two were transferred to Elwood when the Black Rock line closed, but were not used in normal service owing to union objection.

In 1942, three more modern trams arrived on the St Kilda line numbered 52-54, based on the M & M.T.B SW. 6 class. They used some fittings intended for 44-47, & some common to the suburban "Tait" trains. The tram crew called them "Blitz Buggies" probably synonymous with WWII. Alternatively they were called "Luxury Class" (or the "New Trams" by the public) When the line closed, 52-54 were sold to the M & M.T.B. 52 & 53 worked for an equal number of years to their VR service. 54 was broken up for spare parts.



Standard Bogie Car No.33
at Elwood Depot...1958

— PHOTO David Frost.

The Surviving Trams

Black Rock Trams No.s 48 & 49

Are in the care of the Canberra tradesmens' - stored off site

There are several survivors of the Brighton line awaiting restoration.

They are Crossbench No 20 - Met Heritage Fleet

Standard Bogie cars 34 & 35 - Tramway Museum Society at Bylands, near Kilmore.

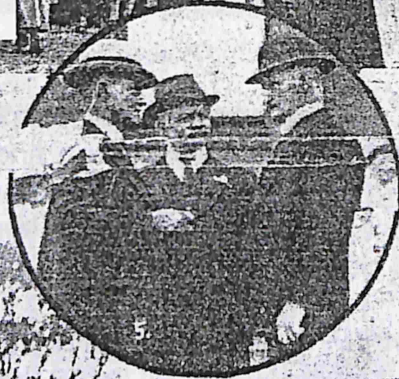
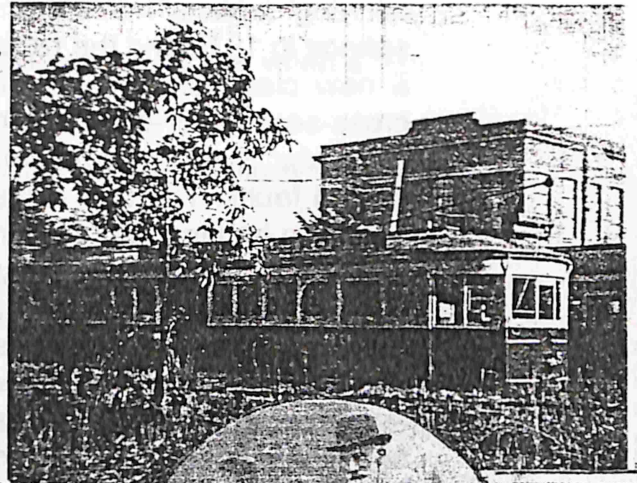
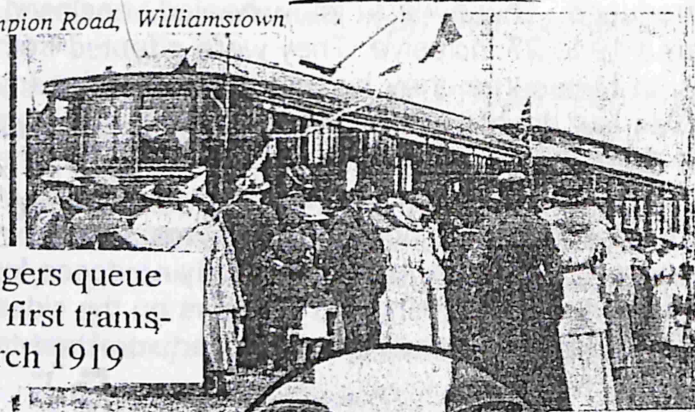
Standard Bogie Car 41 - owned by Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Society

(Haddon) - Currently at Bendigo

"Luxury Class" No 52 -- Bylands

*"Luxury Class" No 53 -- Australian Railways Historical Society Museum,
Champion Road, Williamstown*

Passengers queue
for the first trams-
10 March 1919



The first Black Rock
Electrics were cross- bench
cars from the Brighton line.

Top right: One of the last trams built for Black Rock, No. 50
at Elwood Depot in 1959 after closure.

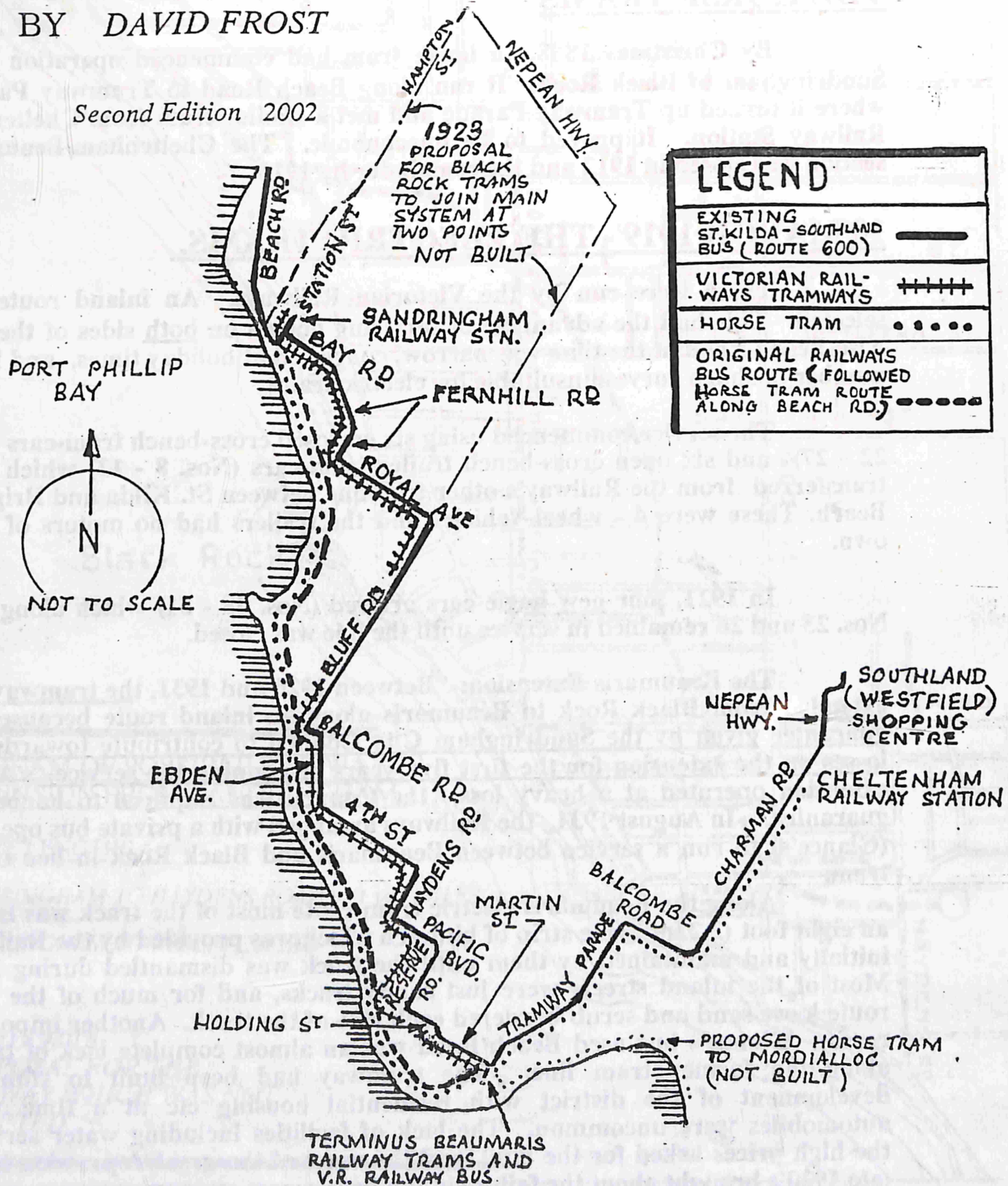
Photo. - David Frost

Other : Scenes of the opening of the Black Rock Electric line
in 1919 Believed to be from "Table Talk" Jan 1919
Donated by J. R.(Bob) Cleworth

BLACK ROCK TRAMS.

BY DAVID FROST

Second Edition 2002



SANDRINGHAM AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Inc. No. A0018151X ABN 75 395 603 584

2-10 Waltham Street, Sandringham, 3191

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THE HORSE TRAMS

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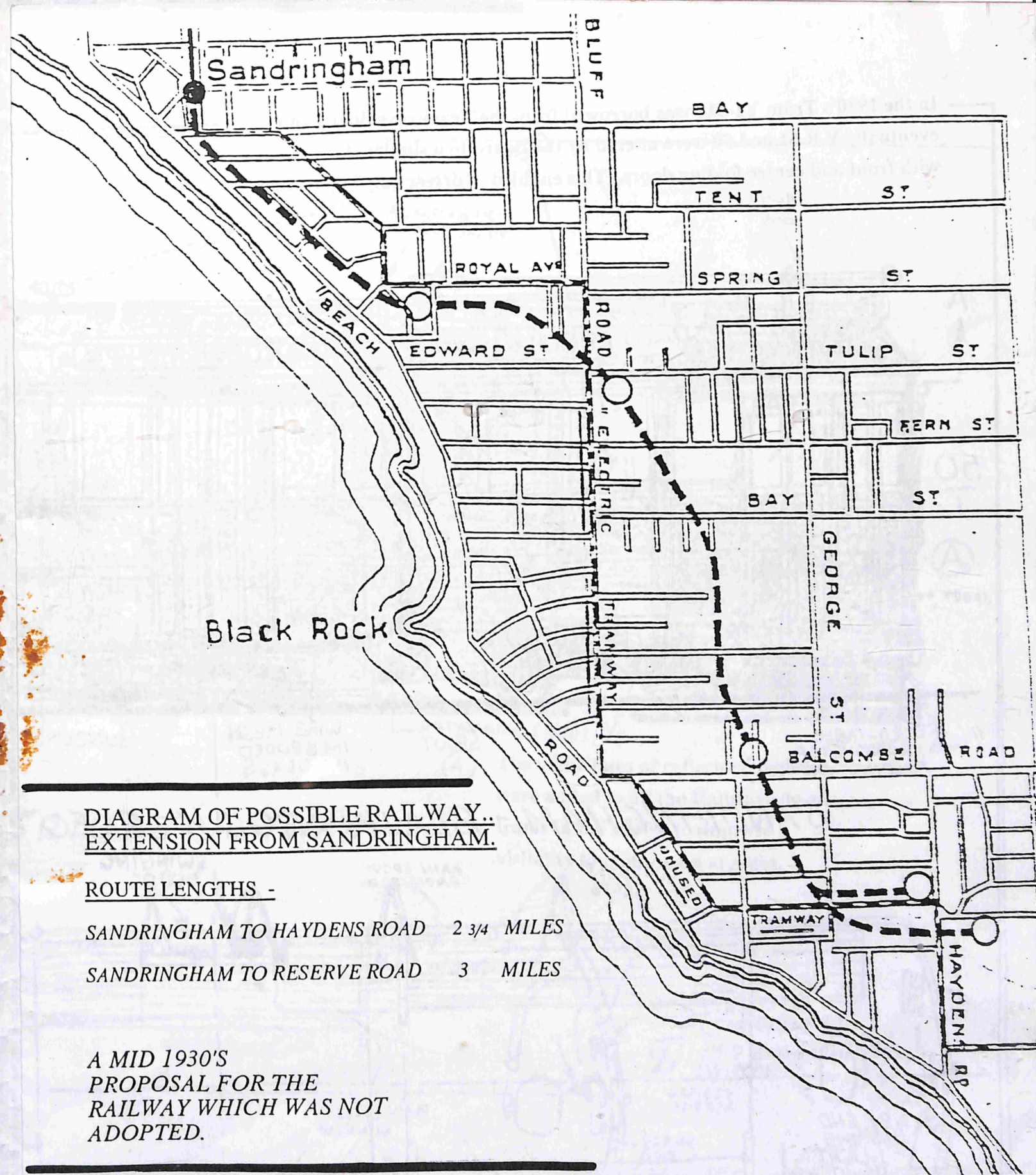
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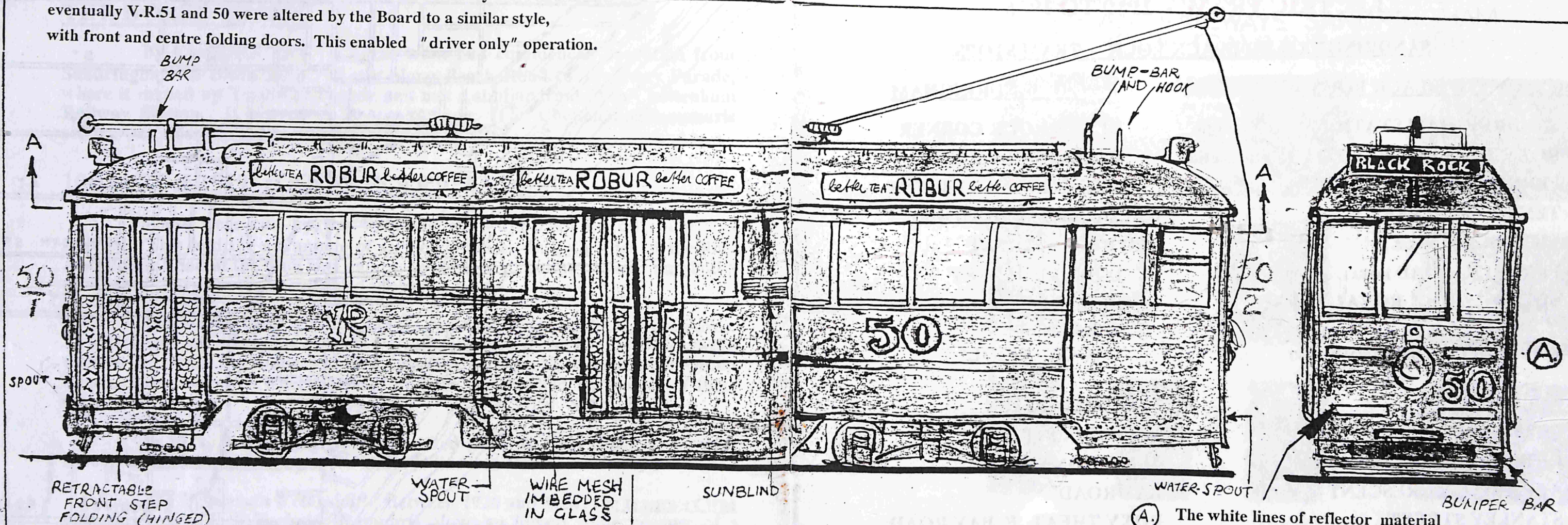
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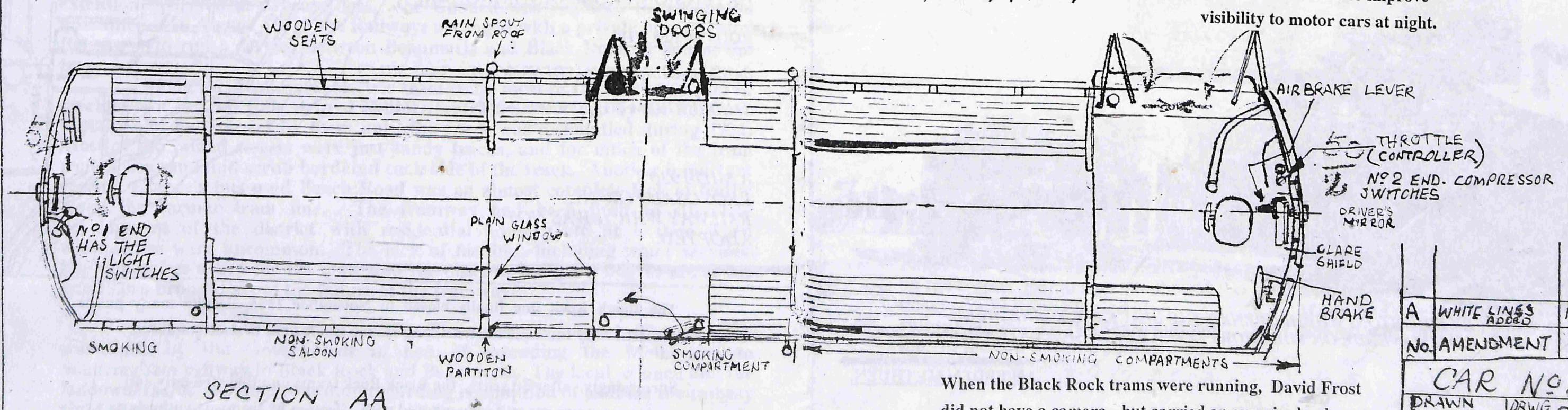
The Black Rock line finally closed in November 1956, despite many public protests. By this time the track and rolling stock were in poor condition.

Surprisingly, after 50 years, the Black Rock trams and their friendly and courteous crews are still remembered with affection by tramway enthusiasts and those barely old enough to have seen them.

In the 1930's Tram Y1-613 was borrowed from the Tramways Board and eventually V.R.51 and 50 were altered by the Board to a similar style, with front and centre folding doors. This enabled "driver only" operation.



SANDRINGHAM - BLACK ROCK ELECTRIC TRAMWAY



- (A) The white lines of reflector material were added to all the Railway's bogie trams in the 1950's to improve visibility to motor cars at night.

When the Black Rock trams were running, David Frost did not have a camera - but carried an exercise book in which he sketched "engineering drawings from life"

| | | |
|------------|-------------------|-------------|
| A | WHITE LINES ADDED | 1-11-55 |
| NO | AMENDMENT | CHANGE MADE |
| CAR NO. 50 | | |
| DRAWN | DRWG | |
| D.H.F. | NO RT3 | |
| DATE | APRIL 1, 1955 | |

ELECTRIC TRAM - 1919 TO 1956

SANDRINGHAM TO BLACK ROCK - TRAM STOPS.

TO BLACK ROCK

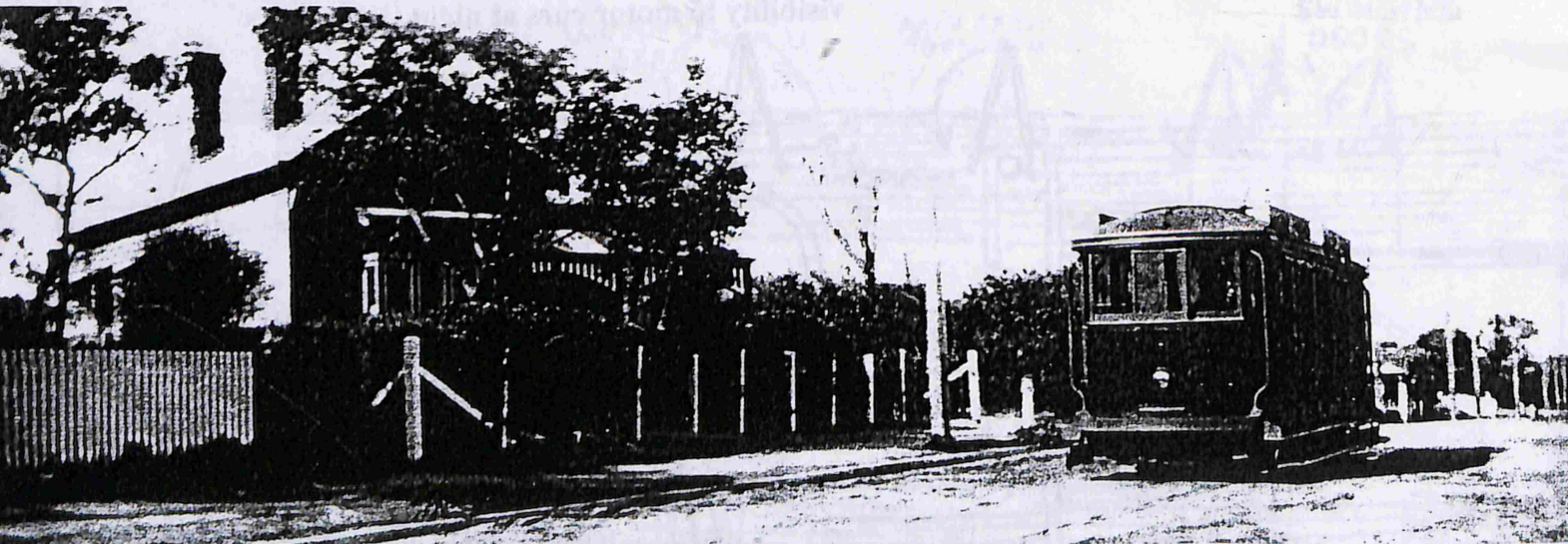
SANDRINGHAM STATION } single
 ROXY THEATRE, BAY ROAD } line section
 FERNHILL ROAD
 TENNYSON STREET
 VICTORIA STREET
 FERNHILL ROAD ROYAL AVENUE CNR.
 "WOOL WOOL" ROYAL AVENUE
 ROYAL AVE. . (BLUFF ROAD CNR)

TULIP STREET
 FERN STREET
 CHELTENHAM ROAD.SEMCO.
 ARKARINGA CRESCENT
 STANLEY STREET
 TERMINUS - BLACK ROCK CORNER
 BLUFF - BALCOMBE ROADS CORNER.

TO SANDRINGHAM

BLACK ROCK CORNER
 GORDON CRESCENT
 ARKARINGA CRESCENT
 CHELTENHAM ROAD SEMCO.
 RED BLUFF STREET
 EDWARD STREET
 BLUFF ROAD. ROYAL AVE
 "WOOL WOOL"

FERNHILL ROAD
 VICTORIA STREET
 TENNYSON STREET
 BAY ROAD
 ROXY THEATRE, BAY ROAD
 SANDRINGHAM STATION



NO. 22 TRAM (EX BRIGHTON) WHICH OPENED THE BLACK ROCK LINE, HERE PASSING No 18 EBDEN AVENUE ON THE SHORT LIVED BEAUMARIS EXTENSION.

AN EBDEN METHUEN.

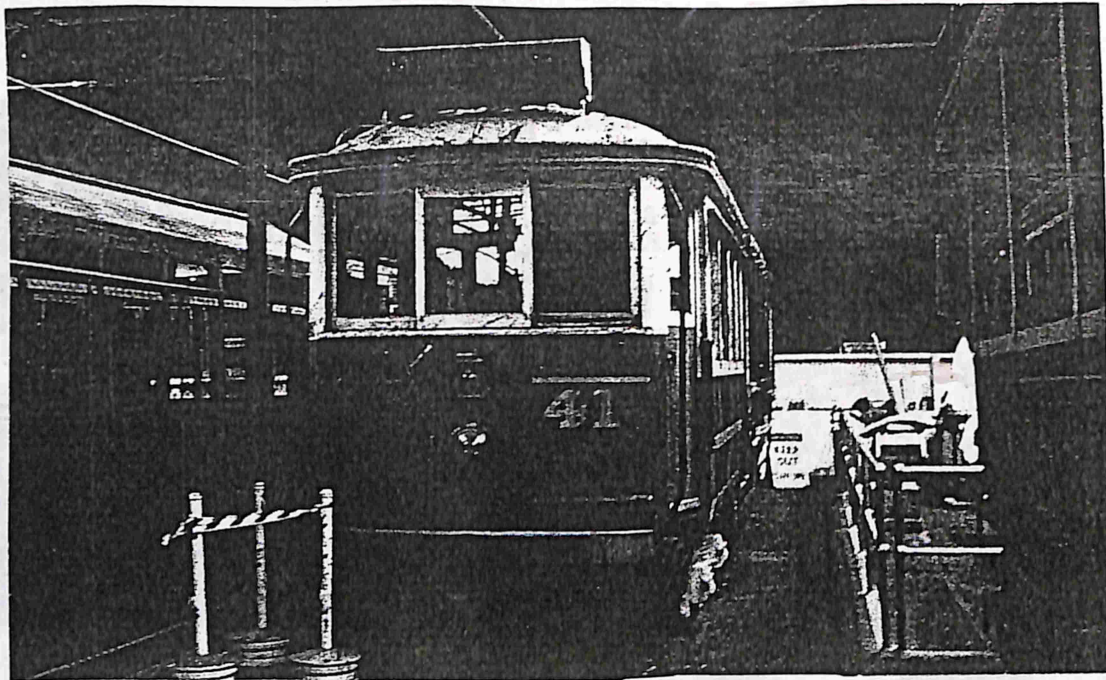
COMBINED TRAIN & TRAM TICKETS VICTORIAN RAILWAYS SANDRINGHAM BLACK ROCK TRAMLINE 1955-1956



Paper tear-off tickets were used on the trams. Edmonson cardboard tickets could be purchased at railway stations on the Sandringham line to the end of the tramline.

On boarding the tram, then conductor would tear the rail ticket in half. If you had a return ticket, you were not left with much.

WILL THE TRAMS RUN AGAIN? -- WE HOPE SO.



RAILWAY TRAM 41 AT BENDIGO TRAMWAY WORKSHOPS IN 2001 -- RESTORATION WORK IS SCHEDULED TO COMMENCE IN 2002.

PHOTO EARL EWERS.

Although it is not known if any of the Black Rock trams still exist there are several survivors of the Brighton line awaiting restoration.

They are Crossbench No 20 - Met Heritage Fleet

Standard Bogie cars 34 & 35 - Tramway Museum Society at Bylands, near Kilmore.

Standard Bogie Car 41 - owned by Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Society (Haddon) - Currently at Bendigo -- see above.

"Luxury Class" No 52 -- Bylands

"Luxury Class" No 53 -- Australian Railways Historical Society Museum, Champion Road, Williamstown.

THE REMAINS OF
TRAILER TRAM
No 13 AT SEMCO
SPORTS OVAL,
BLACK ROCK,
USED AS A SHELTER
No 13 HAD RUN
ON BOTH THE
BRIGHTON AND
BLACK ROCK
LINES

Photo M. TALLARIDA
COLLECTION.

