

FARES PLEASE!

December 2005

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum

Another Visiting Tram!

Some months ago the Museum was approached by Len Millar and Darren Hutchesson of Newstead Tramcars with a request for us to house their recently restored Melbourne X1 Class tramcar No 466. With recent acquisitions from Melbourne, room at the Bendigo Tramways where it was restored was at a premium. The tram is for sale and Len and Darren desired a location where it could be demonstrated to potential buyers.

It was agreed that after Bendigo No 17 returned to Bendigo there would be room for the tram at Ballarat and it was exchanged for No 17 on Friday 4 November 2005. The Museum has agreed that it can operate in service on occasion

provided that it is driven by Len or Darren.

In 1962 the Footscray section of the Melbourne tramways was closed and the X1 and X2 Class trams which operated it were disposed of before proper discussion took place of their possible future roles. The ten fully enclosed steel X1 Class cars would have been a superb acquisition for Ballarat. With doors on both sides they would have suited the offside loading which occurred only in Ballarat.

The presence of No 466 in Ballarat can be seen to represent what might have been. Of course if the ten trams had arrived, the Museum would not have such a wonderful fleet of California Combination cars today.



No 466 at Ballarat 4 December 2005 Photo: Peter Winspur

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History

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Tram No 17 and its crew pose for photos at St Aidans Drive on Sunday 23 October 2005.
Photo: Peter Winspur

Until the complete track relay this year in Bourke Street, Melbourne, this was also the solution there to broken rail joints.

Alan Snowball is about to insert a short section of rail on 4 November 2005.

Photo: BTM Archives



Tram No 466 ventures into Wendouree Parade on Sunday 11 December 2005.
Photo: BTM Archives

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Tram Depot on Sunday 23 October 2005. Twenty nine members attended. There was no change to the composition of the Board for the coming year and at a subsequent meeting the Board confirmed all the current appointments.

After the formalities the members present were given their last chance to ride on Bendigo Tram No 17 before it returned to Bendigo. The usual opportunity to chat over afternoon tea followed.

Twelve Months On

Tuesday 19 October 2004 was a dark day for the Museum when the substation was severely damaged by fire. With wonderful support from Members and friends and hours of work by a small band of workers the Museum met the challenge and was up and running by Boxing Day. Since then operations have settled down again and patronage has returned to normal in spite of the fare rise which was seen as essential for the Museum's survival.

Paul Mong has continued throughout the year to lead the team which has been upgrading the electrical system throughout the depot. The most recent evidence of this was the commissioning of new circuit breakers which after thirty one years have ended the need for the operations staff to enter the substation. From a safety viewpoint this was long overdue. It is now possible to sit at the meal room table and monitor tram movement by watching the ammeter! Well done Paul.

Bendigo Tram No 17

After successfully assisting to celebrate Ballarat's centenary of electric tramcar operation, No 17 returned to Bendigo on Friday 4 November 2005.

When the appropriate sign writing is complete No 17 will re enter service there. We can only thank again all the Bendigo staff and Kym Smith in particular for making the tram ready in time and for assisting in the transport and operation of the tram.

“The Ballarat Tramways” by Keith Kings

The Museum was recently donated a copy of Keith Kings' book “The Ballarat Tramways – An Illustrated History”. It is in excellent condition. Written in 1971, it has long been out of print and has become a collector's item.

As the Museum already has four copies of the book in its collection the Board determined that it should be offered for sale on a “best offer” basis. The donor is happy for this to occur. The proceeds of the sale will be used to acquire further archival quality storage materials for the long term storage of the Museum's collection.

If you are interested in acquiring this item please submit an offer in writing to the Secretary at P O Box 632, Ballarat, Victoria, 3353.

The closing date is 31 January 2006 and the successful bidder will be announced in the February edition of “Fares Please”.

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Why Ride on a Tram When You Aren't Going Anywhere?

There are many reasons that visitors have for riding on our trams. One is nostalgia for earlier days when life moved at a gentler pace, and we were all young. I find it delightful, as a crew member, to see an elderly couple sitting there holding hands and reminiscing about courting on a Ballarat tram. Sometimes our passengers are lovers of old vehicles and, naturally, old tram drivers and conductors. It always surprises me to find parents from Melbourne taking their children for their first tram ride on one of ours. Most of our passengers admire the feeling of craftsmanship in the woodwork in both the original construction, when manufacturers took a pride in their work, and the present-day staff who take such care in keeping the bodywork of the trams in such good condition. (Perhaps I had better not comment on the condition of the bodywork of the drivers and conductors!)

Austin and I saw one of the less common reason for taking a tram ride a few weeks ago. A young woman was waiting at the stop with her young (about 3 years old) son. So far not very uncommon. As I brought the single truck tram to a smooth halt with the door exactly in line with the stop, I gave my usual delightful smile and friendly "Welcome aboard. No, don't worry about the money, the conductor will deal with that when you are comfortably seated." At this point the son began to show a marked reluctance to get aboard. Still nothing out of the ordinary, after all a tram can be a bit fearsome when seen close up for the first time. Usually a little persuasion from Mum does the trick, but not this time, it merely produced a loud

outcry and a limpet-like hold on the handrail. Encouragement from the two bearded elderly ...er....um... gentlemen in the green uniforms only exacerbated the situation. In spite of all the resistance, Mum managed to finally force the child aboard and hold him on the seat as we continued our trip. Why was she so persistent? She intended taking the lad on his first train journey in the near future and was not sure how he would react, so a short tram ride seemed like a good test run. At this point I imagined that the train trip was off. How wrong can you be? After a few minutes junior was all smiles, deciding that rail travel was O.K. after all. Not only that but they stayed aboard for three trips, and Mum had nearly as hard a job getting him off the tram as she had had getting him on. I hope that he was not disappointed on the train, as they are not all driven as smoothly as our trams are.

Until next time, this your man at the front, A.T.D.



The future of tramway preservation will be in
safe hands

Andrew & Kathryn Hutchesson 25/9/05

Photo: Peter Winspur

Tram No 40

Dave Macartney reports:

Bob Lilburn has delved into his notes to provide additional detail on No. 40, among other matters.

No 40 originally arrived in Ballarat minus headlights, removed in MMTB days during storage at Brunswick. The headlights it carries now differ from one another in a number of ways. One of them was from the odd car, No.29. The brake valves currently fitted were previously carried by No. 16, now on a property at Allendale. The No. 2 end cab ceiling of No 40 is painted over in green, while the other end is still in the original varnish. This was a short cut carried out in the latter days of the system. No. 41 had both ends painted.

During 1936 No. 40 (then MMTB 35) was selected to run trials on Route 19, along with Nos. 25, 682 and 182, to see if any of them could keep to the W5 timetable. Only No. 182 was able, so the trial was regarded as a failure, and the W5s ruled for the next 40 years. It had been suggested that 681 - 685 might be transferred from Camberwell to Brunswick, but following their poor showing they went to Malvern to run the Balaclava Junction to St. Kilda service for the rest of their days.

Incidentally, a strip of timber moulding recently removed from No. 40 for refurbishment carried the number 34 stamped on the back, a relic of one of the five maximum traction cars withdrawn as far back as 1935 to provide trucks and equipment for the CW5s. For the record, the five CW5s on arrival at Malvern displaced cars 222, 273, 325 348 and 342.

In 1916 P&MTT No. 35 was loaned to the Hawthorn Tramways Trust for three months to evaluate bogie cars. Due to the absence of a physical connection, it was derailed and jacked around on to Hawthorn rails at the Glenferrie/Riversdale Road intersection. One foggy night 35 entered a crossing loop in Burwood Road at excessive speed and capsized, ending up on its side in the gutter. Hawthorn had to make good the damage, but over tightened the body, which has a noticeable bow to this day. Efforts are being made during the current overhaul to correct this, but only time will tell if the efforts are successful.

The Golden City and its Tramways

Alan Bradley's book continues to receive a great reception. Local State parliamentarian, Ms Dianne Hadden MLC, praised the book in the Legislative Council on 6 October. Ian Hammond, editor of "Transit Australia" has given it a glowing review in the December edition. He describes it as "professionally produced", a "pleasant surprise" and "highly recommended as a worthy addition to any bookshelf".

Members can still obtain a discounted copy for \$35.20 each. Postage and handling is \$9.95 per copy. Orders can be lodged by mail, by the depot phone, by fax (both (03) 5334 1580) or by email at secretary@btm.org.au. The Museum accepts Bankcard, Visa or Mastercard or cheque. The recommended retail price is \$43.95.

G..Fares Please!

In the Workshops

While you may have noticed an absence of workshops news from the past couple of issues of "Fares Please" this is mostly because of changes in the production schedule of "Fares Please" and not due to any lack of work going on in the workshop. In fact the team have been busy completing a number of important items over the last few months.

The repainting of No 40 has progressed to top coat stage with the first coats of both green and cream being applied to the body. Internally all of the woodwork has been scraped and sanded with staining and revarnishing well under way. After many delays the No 2 end motor which had been reconditioned almost a year ago has finally been tested and work is now proceeding on reuniting the tram with its wheels and motors to allow it to become mobile again and this will give the painters better access to complete the final top coats, lining and lettering. All going well No 40 will be back in operation during the first few months of 2006.

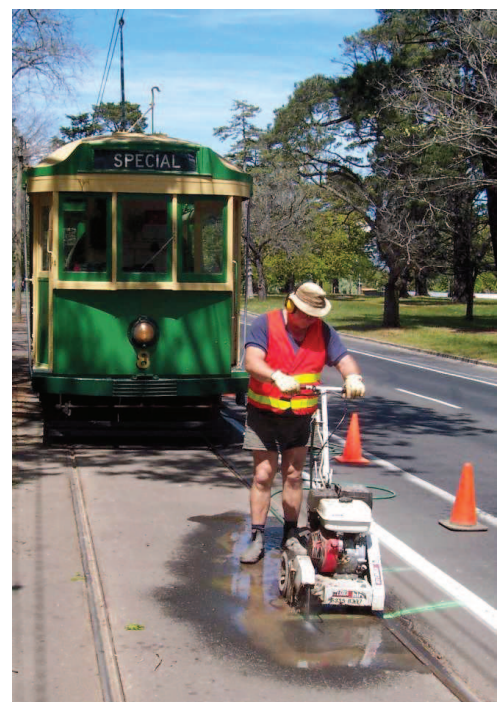
In the meantime the electrical team lead by Paul Mong have been busy completing the installation and commissioning of the new electronic overload devices (circuit breakers) in the substation. This work along with the installation of a new main feeder cable for Wendouree Parade and new negative feed for the rails will bring this long and very intensive project to an end by about January next year. The high quality result of all the electrical work that has been undertaken since the events of 2004 is a credit to all those involved

and should serve the museum well for many years to come.

During November, Alan Snowball undertook the task of repairing numerous rail joints in Wendouree Parade which has improved the quality of the tram trip substantially. Along with the various tram moves which have been reported elsewhere plus replacements of poles supporting our overhead and regular tram maintenance, everyone has been very busy and is looking forward to some time off over Christmas.

As the end of the year is rapidly approaching it is appropriate to once again thank everyone who has contributed during the year to the long list of tasks that have been completed and we look forward to seeing everyone back again in 2006.

Garry Wood



Alan Snowball begins the task of repairing another rail joint. 18/10/05

Photo: BTM Archives

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Pole and bracket arm replacement
with the assistance of Powercor.
16 August 2005.

Photo: Peter Winspur



Tram No 19 (currently Bendigo No 7) leaving Gardens Loop in 1950.
Will we see this again Mr Young? *Photo: BTM Archive from the Ellis Collection*

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“CopsnKids”

Each year in mid November the Ballarat Police arrange a four day camp for children with cancer. Since 2001 the Museum has supported the event by providing free tram rides. Dave O’Neil has always been the driver. This is his account.

Monday the 21st November arrived and for the fifth year in succession the weather was perfect. Last year we could not run the tram because of the defective substation. Myself, Austin and Tram No 671 awaited the arrival of sixty four kids aged between four and ten years. At about 1:20pm sirens could be heard and a divvy wagon with lights and sirens approached. In the back were eight four to six year olds all dressed in miniature police uniforms. At this time there was quite a crowd walking through the Gardens and they must have been wondering what was happening with four police vehicles and one police bus arriving at the playground.

Over the next 45 minutes we made three trips with the usual photo stops. A lot of the kids has never seen a tram before and the looks on their faces was a delight

to see. A couple of the kids were also there last year and were pleased that this year they got to have their ride. To see these kids having a good time with ice cream all over their faces was worth the trip up from Geelong by bus. My car is off the road for a few weeks. As I put the tram away I thought: “We are very lucky”.

New Members

The Board and Museum welcomes the following new members and hope they will find enjoyment in being part of our wonderful team of volunteers and supporters:

- 764 Tony Cowie of the United Kingdom
765 David Weate of Carlton

***The Board, Staff and
Volunteers of the Ballarat
Tramway Museum wish
you all a Merry Christmas
and a
Prosperous New Year***



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For further information regarding the Museum, its activities and publications please contact:

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