

FARES PLEASE!

December 2015

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum



Photo: Peter Winspur

Sunday 13th December saw the Gardens taken over by the very successful Ironman 70.3 Triathlon. Limited operation was possible from about 2.00pm before the roadway reopened at 3.40pm. Few passenger were carried.

On Saturday 12th Santa called by and Peter Waugh captured him waving from the rear door of our 'Santa Tram'. Christopher Boehle-Mitchell was keeping him company.

Season's Greetings

Inside: Overloading the Horse Tram



Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History

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Around the Museum

The past two months have seen the 'Tram Tuesdays' group busy around the workshop and at Bungaree where a massive clean up is in progress.

The major task has been the completion of the refitting of the interior of No 939 and the installation of two new air conditioning units after it was ascertained that the original ones were beyond repair. The Museum has submitted the mountain of paperwork required by Transport Safety Victoria to accredit the tram to carry passengers in Wendouree Parade and this is expected to occur in the very near future. The tram has been reconfigured to be a multi-purpose venue with an ingenious small kitchen and should be available early next year for a variety of uses from serving coffee to small self-catered private functions.

Work on No 12 has stopped temporarily due to our joiner/carpenter, Adam, suffering an injury at another location. He hopes to resume work in the new year.

The crane installed at the rear of the workshop was determined some time ago to be inadequate to lift heavy objects such as motors. The Museum acquired a free standing replacement some time ago and this has finally been assembled. With an increase in the number of workers in the workshop this will enable us to bring No 18's truck and motors back from UGL so that they can be rehabilitated by us rather than contracting out the work.

Earlier in 2015, the new solar panels on the depot roof were connected into the electricity supply and the most recent power bill shows we are on track to be a net generator of electricity - that is we put more back into the electricity grid (though at a very low feed in tariff) than we use. The bulk of the capital cost of the project was met by a legacy left by the late Keith Atkinson and we consider this to be a great win-win for the Museum and the environment.

The Museum has just signed a contract to install a fire warning and monitoring service in the depot building. Following two disastrous fires this year at Newport Railway Workshops and more recently at the Sydney Tramway Museum's storage facility, this cannot come soon enough.

The annual 'Springfest' festival was held on the last Sunday of November and proved to be a great success. At just over 500, our patronage was higher than recent years. In the middle of it all another 'Tram Pull' was held. New entrants, St Patrick's College gave the winners, 'CB Fitness' a run for their money. Always a lot of fun, the event is great publicity for the Museum.

Santa visited and rode the tram on Saturday 12th December accompanied by his elf and a two piece orchestra. He promised to return again the following Saturday to see all the children he may have missed. New talents, recently discovered by the Museum, certainly help to make his visit special.

The tram will be running on Christmas Day again due to the enthusiasm of Geoff Gardner. When staff are available, over January there will be a trial of extended operating hours. On Sunday 24th January No 1 Horse Tram is expected to be running again from 11.00 am until about 4.00pm. The traffic staff roster clerk is seeking extra volunteers to staff the trams and the Museum during the month.

Trolley Wire, produced by the Sydney Tramway Museum, has for many years been a great source of information and history about Australian trams and tramway museums. Over the years, the BTM has collected most issues. Unfortunately, several have been borrowed and not returned. Recently, member Harry Jackson donated a series of bound volumes of the magazine from 1971 until 2013. A great source for research, these volumes will be treasured.

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In the Workshop



Above & Right: Erecting the new gantry.
Photos: Peter Waugh 8/12/15



In the Office

Left: “Springfest” saw an enhanced revenue stream. A happy Treasurer could be spotted in the office.

Photo: Carolyn Cleak by Peter Waugh 29/11/15

On the Road



Hugh McKelvey and May Thomas provided musical support to Santa (aka Roger Salen) whilst Andrew Mitchell drove under the supervision of son Christopher. Santa’s elf (aka Roger Gosney) collected the fares.

Photo: Peter Waugh 12/12/15

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Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held on Sunday 8th November 2015. Neville Britton was elected to the Board and replaced Alastair Reither who has found himself too busy to continue as a Board member and Technical Service Manager. Al has served on the Board since 2003 including a period as Vice President. He had been Technical Services Manager since 2009. He has promised to stay around and help on many of the major projects in the pipeline.

Neville brings to the Museum a wealth of organisational experience and a great enthusiasm to learn new skills. He is also a “retired” local and has already begun to oversee the work of our ‘Tram Tuesdays’ work parties.

After the necessary reports, the President, Greg Rodgers, announced that another three of our regular volunteers had attained twenty five years’ service. They are Paul Mong, Alastair Reither and Len Millar. He then presented badges to Paul and Len who were at the meeting. Both Paul and Al are still in their early thirties which indicates a very early start! Len became enthused when he met our group at the 1990 COTMA conference.

Following the meeting Paul Mong had the pleasure of driving our latest project, the new function tram No 939, out of the depot and introducing it to our members. Unfortunately, the refitting of the tram is not quite complete and accreditation to run has yet to be finalised. The traditional tram ride and afternoon tea followed.

Membership News

The Museum welcomes the following new member and Junior Supporter:

898 Andrew Martin of Ballarat East
5079 Isaac Just of Alfredton

Several members have yet to renew for the 2015-2016 year and we would hope that they are able to soon.

Vale

Long term member, David Frost, passed away on 28th October 2015 aged 79. In recent years he had suffered from very poor health. David had been a regular driver for the Museum for over twenty years. He was also an active member of the Tramway Museum Society of Victoria and later on, the Melbourne Tram Museum at Hawthorn.

In early years David had lived in St Kilda Street Brighton, on the route of the former Victorian Railways St Kilda to Brighton tram line. He studied the VR trams, writing a book on the Black Rock trams in 2001. He originally trained as a fitter and turner, then as a technical draftsman and artist. David prepared a colouring in book for the Museum in the mid 1980's. In 2014, it was updated and reprinted with a colour cover by the Museum. It is available at the Museum. He was known to draw many delightful sketches as well as preparing posters for *Train World*.

David was a very active volunteer with many other organisations including the Sandringham Historical Society, as an announcer with Radio station 88.3 Southern FM and for the local Anglican Op shops. David was an active member of the local Anglican church. Ill health saw David move to a nursing home in Bendigo in 2014 so he could be nearer his family.



David in 2005

Photo: Earl Ewers

Overloading the Horse Tram

“Oh, the poor horses” is a comment often made by visitors looking at our horse tram. Our guides explain that the rails provide a smooth, low friction surface for the wheels, which make it easy for the horses. But watching the teams in the recent Springfest Tram Pull made me wonder about those “poor horses” in the early days of the Ballarat Tramway Company. Concern for the welfare of the horses often came up in the local newspapers. Once the community’s interest was raised about the horses, the authorities took action, and several tram drivers were fined large sums for animal cruelty.

The new horse tram service in Ballarat was very popular, especially during holiday periods such as Christmas and Easter. It was a quick and cheap way to get to the Botanical Gardens, the only other choice being a long, hot walk, or a ride in one of the notorious and expensive horse cabs. The double decker cars built by Duncan and Fraser were designed to hold about 40 people, 20 on each level.

On Christmas Eve, December 1888 a concerned citizen wrote to the Ballarat Star about overloading on the route to the Gardens.

SIR, —The Christmas holidays being so near at hand a small space in your columns could be wisely devoted in drawing the attention of officers of the police and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, to the prevailing custom at all festive seasons of overloading tram cars. The upper part of a tram car will comfortably seat 16 persons, yet the conductor of the 3.15 tram to the Lake via the Convent to day (Sunday) packed 51 persons on top while the steps and platforms at each end, as well as the inside of the car, were packed to their utmost capacity; and I roughly counted 100 persons, as well as a heavy car, being drawn up Sturt street by three horses, and they not in the best of condition.

The three preceding cars were as heavily laden, and yet in neither case did the police attempt to interfere. Cabmen are proceeded against for overloading occasionally, and rightly too, but why should not a tram company be also made to give account of themselves for such cruelty to animals. The horses often cannot pull the car up Sturt street, and in many such oases the drivers use the whip unmercifully. My object in troubling you is to draw the attention of those whose duty it is to stop such overloading, so that during the next few days we need not witness such sights as were to be witnessed this afternoon and last Easter on the conveyances between Ballarat and the lake, for such sights are a disgrace to the owners and a shameful neglect of duty on the part of those who should prevent them.

Yours, W. T. STEVENS.¹

Probably as a result of these and other complaints, two weeks later six drivers faced court with charges of animal cruelty through overloading.

“At the city police court today several of the drivers of the local tram cars were proceeded against for cruelty to animals, by overloading their cars... Four of the offenders were each fined £1, with £1 1s. costs, and the summonses against two other drivers were dismissed. For a long while past complaint has been made regarding the cruelty inflicted on tram horses by overloading with passengers the vehicles drawn by the animals, and the torture appears to be most severe in ascending the Camp hill in Sturt-street.”²

These prosecutions did not seem to have the desired effect, as at the next Christmas period in 1889 the Ballarat Star again reported on overcrowding.

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Above: Grenville Street terminus probably in the early days of operation. The steep hill to Lydiard Street would have tested the horses with such a load of passengers. Note the unsealed nature of the road.

Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia SLSA: B34585

Below: Another posed photo. The tram, hauled by three horses has just entered Lydiard Street North from Sturt Street. The exact date is unknown. This line ran to the gardens via Macarthur Street.

Photo: Harris House of Photography



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“Large crowds of visitors were in Ballarat during Christmas and Boxing Days, and the traffic on the tram-cars, cabs, and ’busses was very heavy. The gardens were a favorite resort, and the steamboats were as a consequence very largely patronized. The tram cars were, as usual at holiday times, overloaded to such an extent as to involve cruelty to animals, two horses on many occasions having to draw over a hundred passengers.”³

Again in 1891, John (or James) Nicholls was in court for overloading on Boxing Day. The Ballarat Star report makes interesting reading as it describes crowds rushing the tram to get to the Gardens.

“A tramcar driver named James Nicholls was proceeded against at the City Police Court yesterday morning on a charge of cruelty to horses, the cruelty consisting in driving two horses when the car was over loaded. Mr. E. P. Wynne appeared on behalf of the Society for the Protection of Animals, and Mr. Salter for the defence. Senior Constable Shorthill gave evidence to the effect that while on duty in Sturt street on Boxing Day last he saw the defendant attempt to drive a car which was very much overloaded. The witness ordered a number of passengers off, as the horses were unable to move the car. A man was endeavoring to keep the passengers from rushing the car, but was unable to do so, and the police even could not keep the people off. In cross examination by Mr. Salter the witness said he had been unable to count the people on the car, although he had tried to do so. Witness would swear that there were more than 44 persons on the tram.”⁴

In another report in the Melbourne Age, Constable Shorthill was quoted:

“...the car was crowded with people, and the horses could not pull the load. He ordered a number of passengers off the car. The passengers were standing all over the car, and there were women inside and

outside with "dozens of children in their arms." Defendant flogged the horses to make them draw their heavy load.”⁵

The Ballarat Star continued:

“The defendant did not drive the horses when overloaded because he was prevented by the police. Defendant had flogged them and tried to get them to move the car. Witness would swear that the car was not empty coming up Camp Hill, and that it had as many passengers as the horses could pull....Henry F. Hutton stated that he had noticed the car, and thought there were fully 100 passengers on it. The horses could not move it. Witness thought it was cruelty to try to make them draw such a load. A number of passengers were ordered off by the police before a start was made.”

“Mr. Salter urged that the Tramway Company had done everything in their power to regulate the traffic during the holidays, and the cars had started from the Bank of Australasia, being brought empty up Camp Hill. It was a frequent thing for one horse to draw 12 loaded trucks in shunting on the railways, and the only strain was at the start. Joseph Hewett, the conductor of the tram, was then called, and deposed that on the trip in question no passengers were brought up Camp Hill. The car was rushed at the corner of Lydiard street, and the passengers could not be kept off. Witness took 44 fares only from passengers. Witness heard the driver ask the police to keep the people off. “

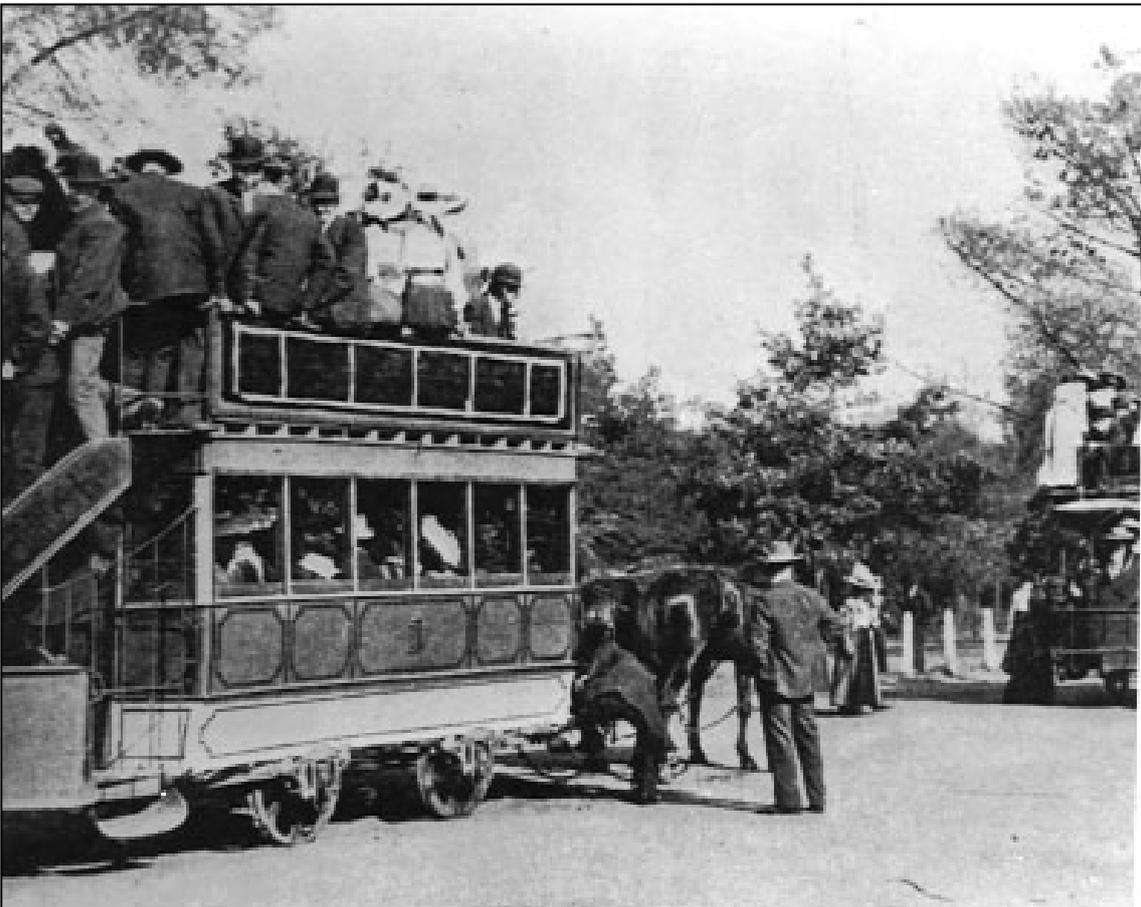
“Mortimer Buckley stated that he had been on special duty to prevent overloading, but found himself powerless to stem the rush. One of the horses was a jibbing one, and if a good horse had been in its place they could have drawn the car easily. Peter Hodgetts, manager for Messrs. Vines and McPhee, deposed that in his opinion it would not amount to cruelty to ask two horses to draw a tram containing 60 or 70 passengers from the corner of Lydiard

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Above: The sharpest copy of this photo in the Museum's possession is showing some rather unfortunate treatment over the years. Another posed photo, it illustrates that the trams ran on the right side of the road. Eighteen trams can be seen. The Wal Jack copy held by the Museum dates it at 1901. *BTM Collection*

Below: Tram No 1, still in service today at the Museum, is seen unloading a large crowd at the Gardens. The exact date is unknown, possibly c1900. The crew appear to be unhitching the horses probably so as the tram can to return to the city via MacArthur Street. *From the collection of the late Ken McCarthy*



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street. Witness had seen a single horse pulling seven trucks in shunting at the Western railway station, and had himself often driven a two-horse coach with 50 passengers on a metal road. The defendant, John Nicholls, stated that he had asked the police to stop the rushing of the car. It was not overloaded when it started. The magistrates thought the case had been proved, and a fine of £2 2s, with £1 8s 6d costs was inflicted. Mortimer Buckley, also a tramway employee, was then charged with knowingly permitting the overloading of the car. As the defendant stated that he was at Grenville street at the time, and Senior Constable Shorthill could not say whether he was present at the time, this case was dismissed.”⁶

Mortimer Buckley was charged again in 1896 for overloading. Once the electric trams started in 1905, Buckley left the tramway and was working as a labourer by 1909. The expert witness, Peter Hodgetts, a former Cobb and Co. later became the horse manager for the Ballarat Tramway Co.

Part of the defence in the 1891 case was that the Council must take some of the blame. The company wanted to have the terminus at the Post Office corner, which would be the main place to pick up passengers. This would mean the horses would not have to pull such a heavy load up the hill. However, the Council had insisted that the terminus remain at Grenville Street.

In 1894, in a letter to the Editor of the Ballarat Star, another suggestion was proposed.

“...I had the ill-luck to be a passenger by the last tram from Bridge street on Saturday night, and consider that a most flagrant piece of brutality was enacted. The tram was heavily laden, and the strength of the two unfortunate horses was totally inadequate to pull the excessive load up the steep Camp street hill. When midway up their strength failed, and the unmerciful

way in which these animals were thrashed was sufficient to arouse feelings of the strongest indignation in the most callous. I have noticed in other cities that an auxiliary horse is provided to assist drawing a heavy load up a steep grade, and surely, Sir, our Tramway Company require only their attention called to this in order to have matters reformed. At the present time, when King Equus is the idol of the hour, I should like to see a little less cruelty to the horses of the Ballarat Tramway Company...”⁷

We know that the Company began using a third horse, and after 1894, complaints about overloading and cruelty disappear from the newspapers columns.

Peter Waugh

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2. 1889 'OVERLOADING TRAM CARS.', The Age, 5 January, p. 9, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article196987825>
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5. 1891 'OVERCROWDING TRAMCARS AT BALLARAT.', The Age, 14 January, p. 5, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article201455778>
6. 1891, The Ballarat Star, 14 January, p. 2, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article204143514>
7. 1894 'WANTED-ANOTHER HORSE.', The Ballarat Star, 13 November, p. 4, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article209221860>

Photos:

From the BTM collection. Selected and captioned by Peter Winspur

For further reading see *The Golden City and its Tramways* by Alan Bradley. It makes reference to the issue of overloading but also gives a fascinating insight into the quite extensive Ballarat Horse Tram system. Copies are available for sale at the Museum.

10. FARES PLEASE!

A wedding a long time ago

Our trams have been used for a number of weddings, either conveying the Bride to the wedding location, conveying the wedding guests for pre-dinner drinks and savouries or to be used in the photo shoot with the happy couple.

The first use of a tram for a wedding, where one of our members was involved, occurred on 17th July, 1971 when Leo Kennedy was married to Cheryl and Richard Gilbert organised the wedding tram. Leo and Richard had been mates for years as they started their railway interest life at the Puffing Billy Railway working on track maintenance in 1965. Leo knew of Richard's close connection with the trams at Ballarat. He wanted to know, first of all if they would still be running by July, 1971 and if one could be hired for the occasion to convey the wedding party.

Richard checked and all was ok for a wedding charter on the date proposed. The tramways office advised that as far as they knew this was the first time a tram had been hired for a wedding. The tram (No.12) picked up the happy couple and wedding party at the former catholic church in Wendouree parade, near the Olympic Monument, and travelled via the Gardens to Bridge Street, where the crew changed ends and the tram then ran to the Lydiard Street stop, where the group alighted and walked to the Civic Hall for the reception.

Leo is now involved with the Goldfields Tourist Railway at Maldon and lives in Castlemaine. Tram No. 12 resides at the Sydney Tramway Museum.

Richard Gilbert

Editor's Note:and Richard is in his 45th year with the Ballarat Tramway Museum!



In the picture Leo Kennedy is at the left and Richard Gilbert is at the right.

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Above: Peter Waugh posted this on the Museum's Facebook page with the comment *"One of our young supporters brought all the prep students from his school to the Museum this morning to meet the 'Tram Fixing Men'. A great time was had by all."* 12/11/15

Right: Peter, Andrew & Paul were waiting for the 'Tram Pull' to commence when Peter Waugh captured this one. He couldn't resist posting it with the comment *"They're going to pull the tram up the street with a rope...you're having me on..."* 29/11/15



Left: An hour or so later CB Fitness were declared the winners.
Photo: Peter Winspur 29/11/15

12. FARES PLEASE!



Museum members who attended the AGM had their first look at No 939 on 8th November. It is intended to 'name' the tram. *Photo: Peter Winspur*



Mal Rowe sent us this wonderful photo of the 'Tram Pull' competition.



Fares Please! is published by the Ballarat Tramway Museum Inc. (A0031819K) six times a year in alternate months commencing in February. It is distributed to members and friends.

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

The Secretary, P.O. Box 632, Ballarat, Vic, 3353

Phone / Fax 61 3 5334 1580.

E-mail: info@btm.org.au

Our web page: <http://www.btm.org.au>