

FARES PLEASE!

August 2016

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum

Sturt Street 1971



Forty five years ago this month, Peter Moses captured the scene at Grenville Street. Two ladies are heading up Sturt Street to destinations unknown. A few weeks later, on another journey, they would have been looking for the new stop for the replacement bus service.

Sadly, Peter died recently, but the donation of his photo collection to the Museum, ensures that his name lives on. The Museum's extensive collection is a superb resource, not only recording Ballarat's tramway history, but life in the city's ever changing streetscapes.

**Inside: The Ballarat Shell House
Bernie Briquette burns out**

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History

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Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Ballarat Tramway Museum Inc. (Association No. A0031819K) will be held at the Ballarat Tram Depot, South Gardens Reserve, on Saturday 5 November 2016, commencing at 2.00pm.

Nominations are called for the following positions on the Museum's Board of Management which fall vacant on that date:

- President
- Vice President
- Honorary Secretary
- Honorary Treasurer
- Ordinary Board Members (six positions)

Any financial member aged 18 or over and who is entitled to vote at a general meeting may nominate himself or herself; or with the member's consent, be nominated by another financial member.

Any nomination must be in accordance with the Rules of Association. All nominations are to be sent in writing to the Returning Officer, to reach him/her not later than 5:00pm on Saturday 22 October 2016.

Nominations may be sent to:

The Returning Officer
Ballarat Tramway Museum Inc.
P.O. Box 632
BALLARAT VIC 3353

Alternatively, nominations may be placed in the Ballot Box at the tram depot. Envelopes forwarded by mail should be endorsed *Ballot Material* on the back of the envelope. Any nomination must be consented to in writing by the candidate. Nominations may be accompanied by a statement (of not more than five hundred words) setting out the candidate's policies and record of service.

A member may be nominated as a candidate for more than one position on the Board, provided that upon election to any position on the Board, the member's nomination for any other position shall not apply.

The traditional tram ride for members and friends and afternoon tea will follow the conclusion of the meeting.



Above: On the 19th September 1971 the Borough of Sebastopol piped the last tram over the town boundary into the City of Ballarat thus giving No 40 a fitting send off. No 40 is expecting another night run 45 years later on Monday 19th September. The photo was collected by Ruby "Lil" Butler and donated to the Museum by Karelyn Satter earlier this year.

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Around the Museum

Night Tram – 19 September 2016

Monday 19th September 2016 marks the 45th anniversary of the closure of the SEC tramway. It has been considered fitting to commemorate that last run in the dark from Sebastopol by taking No 40 out during the evening. The first trip will be at 7:30pm. Normal fares will apply. Further details can be found on our web and Facebook pages.

An Invitation to Afternoon Tea

You are invited to join us for afternoon tea on *Cuthberts 939* on Saturday 17th September at 2:30pm. This will be a unique opportunity for members and friends to both remember the 45th anniversary of the closure of the Ballarat tramways, and to experience the elegance of *Cuthberts 939*. Seats are strictly limited. Booking is only through Trybooking at www.trybooking.com/225024. Bookings close on Tuesday 13th September. There will be a waiting list if the event sells out.

Operations

As it would be expected, visitation to the Gardens has been quiet for the last few months as Ballarat experienced a fairly cold and wet winter. The people who have ventured out for a ride have found warm rugs and friendly staff on all our trams.

Staffing, or the lack of it, is proving to be a serious issue, particularly in regard to covering the drivers shifts. The Museum has always relied on a very small core of volunteers to keep operating. These have been supported by a larger number of people who are available less regularly. In the last few years, the number of less regular drivers volunteering to help has dropped significantly. There is now a serious possibility that we will not be able to adequately cover January or the 2017 Begonia Festival.

One major change, which is one of the reasons the Museum is still managing to operate on all the advertised days and still run a large number of specials is that the core of our regular drivers now live in or near Ballarat and are available on many weekdays. This was not the case only a few years ago.

On Sunday 7th August, Hugh McKelvey, another local volunteer, passed his driver's examination to become the 58th driver trained by the Museum. Congratulations Hugh. Two more conductors should commence driver training shortly.

Cuthberts 939

Since the last issue of *Fares Please!* *Cuthberts 939* has been out seven times on a variety of functions, including two after dark. The feedback we have received from the guests has been very rewarding.

'*sparkaruss*' from the Gold Coast posted the following on TripAdvisor:

Fantastic fun on board this elegant old tram. My mum had her birthday party on board, and everyone had a wonderful time. Friendly, fun and efficient volunteer staff, serving hot and cold drinks with a wealth of local knowledge of trams, and everything else. Most importantly the heater works great and made us all very cosy. Will definitely be back.

Currently, several members are being trained in the finer details of working on board.

Security

The new security system is now fully operational and if you have a door key, but have yet to be trained in its use there is a danger that on entry you will set off the alarm. The system has features we could only dream of only a few years ago. High quality cameras view and record constantly and it is possible to obtain excellent stills of any event around and in the building. A more fascinating feature is that the Museum's two nominated contacts can actually view what is occurring on their mobile phones!

This project and the associated early warning system came in well under budget and they are possibly one of the most valuable additions to the Museum in many years.

Reconstruction of No. 12

Adam Stephenson has done a wonderful job in replicating one of the internal doors to replace the one which was beyond restoration. Reconstruction of the tram's body is slowly reaching completion.

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A crew member waiting in the winter cold for a tram.



Cuthberts 939 is the ideal place to enjoy that intimate birthday party. (See: www.cuthberts939.com.au for details)



A new door for No 12.



'High tea' will be served shortly.



Botanikids visit the depot along with some friends.
9/8/2016

Photos: Roger Gosney & Peter Waugh



Elbow grease essential



In early August a crew from Deakin University spent a day at the museum filming a short film.



Preparing for 'Tram Tuesday'

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The Ballarat Shell House

By John Smith, Ballarat Historical Society

For nearly 30 years leafy Lindisfarne Crescent in Ballarat was the location of a magnificent and unique example of shell ornamentation. This was the famous Ballarat Shell House and the man behind it all, the creator of this fascinating display of folk art was Arthur Pickford. The house was a short walk from the tram stop at St. Aidan's Drive.

The story of the Pickford family goes back to the gold rush days when Somerset family farmer members, John and Sarah Pickford, arrived from England and, via a short experience on a sheep property near Horsham, arrived in Clunes and set up a hardware shop to service the needs of that bustling mining community.

But farming was in their blood and they, and eventually their children and grandchildren, settled the Yeovil Estate in the Clunes district and became a very successful farming family. Two of these grandchildren were Arthur Pickford and his younger brother, Horace.

Both worked on the family farm and regularly attended Salvation Army meetings in Clunes. Horace was a deeply religious young fellow who, besides his Salvation Army connections, engaged in local preaching activities with the Clunes Methodist Church.

Upon the outbreak of World War One, both Arthur and Horace enlisted at Clunes for active service. For them both, only weeks before embarking to go off to fight, they had married; Horace to Ida Harvey and Arthur to Phoebe Cliff.

Arthur was assigned to the 4th Australian Light Horse Brigade in Palestine and Horace went to the Western Front with the 58th Battalion.

Of the remaining personal effects of Arthur and Horace, are Arthur's Light Horse Brigade hat which is still on display at the Clunes RSL, the Bible which Horace took with him into battle, and the Distinguished Conduct Medal awarded to Corporal Horace Pickford for gallantry and conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty on the front line in 1916. Horace was later killed in action in Belgium in 1917.

Arthur Pickford returned from the Middle East and following discharge settled back into his farming pursuits. This is the house that Arthur and his family built at Tourello near Clunes and named it El Ramleh (EL RAMLEE) which was one of the locations in Palestine near to where the charge of the Light Brigade took place at Beersheeba. in 1917. El Ramleh still stands today and it has, incidentally, but not surprisingly, a shell-ornamented front fence to the property!



Horace and Arthur Pickford

Local histories describe Arthur Pickford as a very talented, active, energetic and progressive farmer. He is remembered for his experimental growing of tobacco at Mt. Beckwith, and as the originator of a strain of rye grass that became famously known as the Clunes Perennial Ryegrass. Some of the machinery used by Arthur Pickford and his family can still be seen

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at the Tourello property.

By 1952 Arthur had retired from farming and moved to Wendouree where he was well-known as a long standing councillor for the Shire of Ballarat. During the time he was building his home in Lindisfarne Crescent, Arthur, with his wife and family, on holiday at Queenscliffe, began collecting sea shells to make a garden decoration for their garden in Ballarat.

First it was an ornamental garden seat, then the garden beds came in for treatment, and little by little with shells, stones, broken bottles and crockery scavenged and cajoled from family and friends, Arthur continued to create his shell garden. A pair of giant clam shells from Nauru adorned the ledge on the front verandah of the Shell House.

Gradually he wove into the garden walls, his front fence and any accessible surface, the symbols of his life and times. Centre pieces were the magnificent crown to mark the visit to Ballarat in 1954 of Queen Elizabeth and the war memorial mosaic into which he embedded his stirrups, spurs and rum bottle as a tribute to the Australian Light Horsemen.

Arthur's philosophical outlook was reflected in the ornamentation of the gateposts, and even the flag pole at the Shell House did not escape

ornamental decoration! His boyhood association with his brother Horace, with the Salvos, his war service days and his lifetime of contacts with the people of the Army had to be reflected in the Shell House display.

In just a little over ten years Arthur Pickford, the legendary farmer from Tourello had become a Master of Mosaics. The famous Town Hall hotel, in Armstrong Street, (*picture p.10*) which Arthur owned, was also lavishly decorated with his mosaic work. Across the Ballarat community, and as far as Hobart and Queensland his work was seen. The mosaic for the Wendouree Rowing Club to mark the staging of the 1956 Olympic rowing in Ballarat is still there, as is the badge at the front of the Clunes RSL Club rooms. Numbers of Arthur's neighbours in Lindisfarne Crescent had their house numbers designed by the energetic and creative man next door. Arthur's skill, energy, generosity and community spirit seemed to be without bounds.

Shell House became a tourist attraction. Busloads of visitors and dignitaries of all persuasions came to see the mosaic art of Arthur Pickford and the huge shelf-decorated collection box in the garden gathered thousands of donation dollars that were, in turn, presented to a grateful Salvation Army.



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For many years Arthur used to attend the annual Anzac night service, singalong and supper here at the Army's citadel in Albert Street Ballarat. Arthur persuaded his family that his brother Horace's Distinguished Conduct Medal from World War One should be somehow incorporated into his mosaic work and the memory of his sacrifice perpetuated. The medal was embedded into the design, and on Anzac Day 1960 it was handed over to Major William Jewell for permanent display in the William Booth Memorial Citadel.

The Memorial Urn

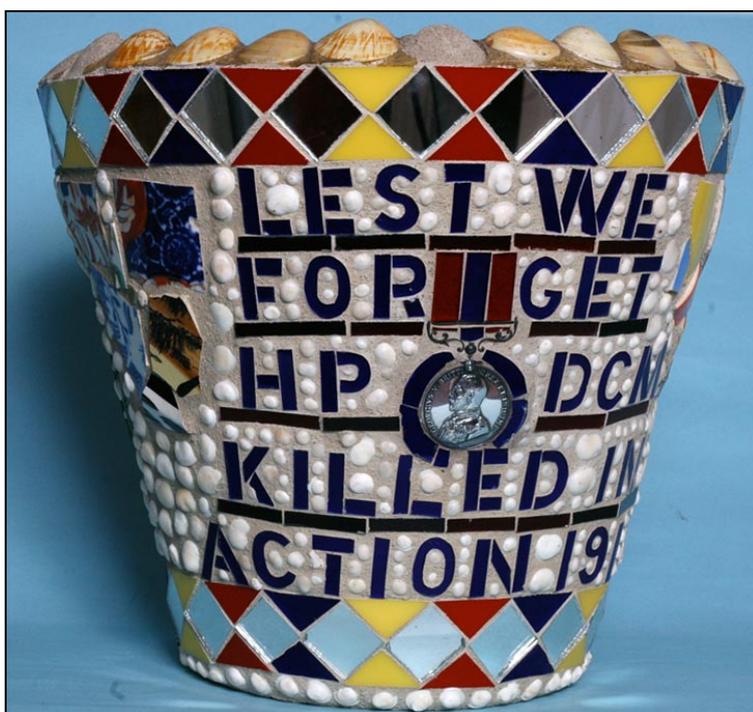
When Arthur Pickford died in 1962 he left the Shell House property to the Salvation Army and for a further 20 years a succession of Army caretakers hosted visitors to the Shell House, and Arthur's legacy of support for the Army continued. The degeneration of display and a shift in the tourist emphasis in Ballarat brought to a close the colourful story of the Shell House, but the legend lives on.

The Salvation Army acknowledges the friendship and the goodwill of the Pickford

family by rightly returning the Arthur Pickford Memorial Urn with Horace's Distinguished Conduct medal to the safe keeping of the family.

A visit to the site of the Shell House features in the Ballarat Tramway Museum's regular "Lost Landscapes" tours.

(Reprinted with permission)



Bernie Briquette burns out

By Richard Gilbert

After 92 years another part of the former SEC takes its place in history. The time of the brown coal briquette, known by its marketing name of “Bernie Briquette”, has come to an end. Briquettes were produced by drying the brown coal of the Latrobe Valley and compressing it under great pressure to form bricks of coal, known as briquettes. This fuel was essential to enable the furnaces of the Yallourn “A” power station to be fired.

The technology was developed in Germany around the time of the First World War. Brown coal is not as combustible as black coal, being much younger, and the drying and compressing process allowed for a suitable way for the fuel to be burnt under industrial conditions.

Sir John Monash, the first Chairman of the SEC, had a brilliant military career leading Australian troops and planning campaign tactics for the allied forces and at the conclusion of the war he stayed on in Germany to study briquette technology.

On his return to Australia and his appointment as Chairman of the SEC, he got busy with the new State power scheme proposed for the Latrobe Valley. Yallourn ‘A’ station commenced supplying power in 1928 and used briquettes made at the adjacent briquette factory. This factory commenced operation in 1924, producing 410 tons per day, and was shortly after expanded and produced 1,200 tons per day by 1931.

As a marketing exercise to increase revenue to the SEC, briquettes were sold as a fuel for factories, hospitals and domestic use. The Victorian Railways built a branch line to the township of Yallourn and its briquette factory and the transport of the fuel became a ‘big ticket’ item for the railways.

Another briquette factory was opened at Morwell in 1959 as four more power stations in the Yallourn and Hazelwood area were commissioned along with the Lurgi Gasification plant at Morwell. This plant supplied town gas for Melbourne using

German technology and equipment, hence the name. It was quite a development to be able to extract gas from brown coal, whereas all of Melbourne gas supplies had been made around Melbourne at the many gas works which extracted gas from black coal, all of which had to be transported from New South Wales. The switch to natural gas from Bass Strait saw the end to all these town gas works, including the Lurgi plant.

As a result of the switch over the natural gas to Yallourn briquette factory was closed in 1970. The remaining demand for briquettes was easily met by the Morwell factory. The Victorian Railways built a branch line from Morwell into the briquette factory and it was a major operation demanding its own Stationmaster and clerical staff to manage the traffic.

The newer power stations were designed to operate on pulverized brown coal being delivered directly to the boilers and the demand for briquettes fell away. The change over by most industry and hospitals to gas fired boilers saw even less use of briquettes.

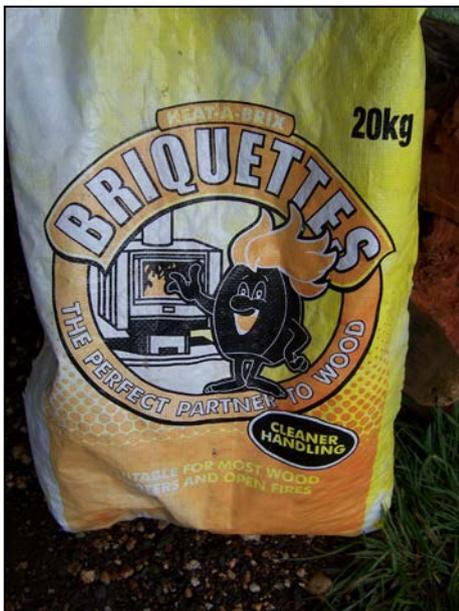
The privatisation of the SEC saw the briquette plant come under the ownership of Energy Brix Australia in 1993. At the time there were 370 employees and 80,000 tons of briquettes were exported annually to Germany, Slovenia, Korea, Japan, New Zealand and Cyprus as well as being sold domestically.

In July 2014 it was announced that the plant would shut the next month, as it did, and the stockpile of briquettes has taken until this year to run out.

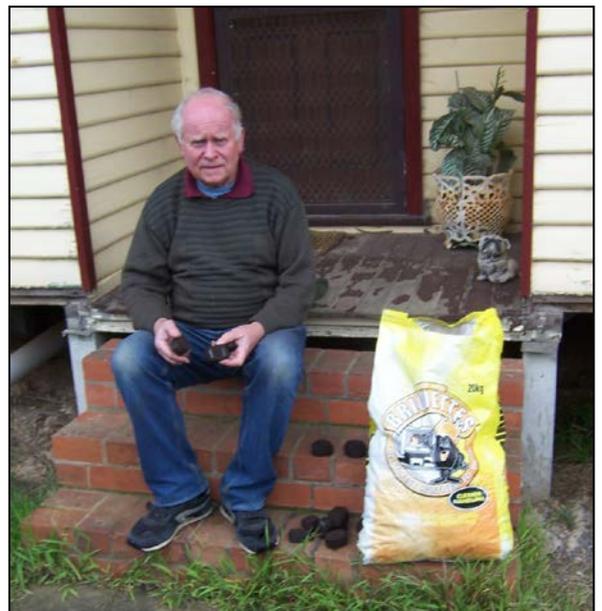
Our trams carried SEC advertising when spare space was available, and along with promoting electric kitchens and appliances the ‘Bernie Briquette’ was seen by many.

In a quirky turn, domestic supplies of German brown coal briquettes are being imported to fill the void and are available at a major national hardware store chain (in a big green building).

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Briquettes
 “The perfect partner
 to wood”



Above: Anthony Smith captured Nos 26 & 27 passing in Skipton Street at Bell Street in 1971



Ebony Burns / **Benjamin Johnson**
 December 31, 2015



Weddings

The Museum offers a variety of possibilities for weddings from delivering the bride to the ceremony, photo opportunities or pre-wedding breakfast drinks and nibbles on a tram for the guests.

A full page feature can be found in The Courier's *Ballarat Bride* 2016.

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The Town Hall Hotel was on the west side of Armstrong Street South. It was demolished in July 1988 to make way for the Central Square shopping centre.

Note the mosaic decoration on the ground floor exterior.

*Photo: J.T. Collins collection,
La Trobe Picture Collection,
State Library of Victoria.
1 January 1969*



Further News

Retirement

Adrian Ponton, the Registrar, Tourist & Heritage Railways, has retired. We thank him for all the assistance he has given to the Museum in recent years and fully expect he will continue to contribute to the sector in his retirement.

Sydney Tramway Museum

The all Victoria Tram Day and launch of restored Ballarat tram No 37, originally scheduled for 4th June has been rescheduled for Sunday 18th of September 2016. It is intended to run all the museum's operable Victorian trams. These include Ballarat Nos 12 & 37.

Ballarat DVD

The new DVD, *The City of Ballarat – Trams, Gardens & Gold* by Roger Greenwood is now available from the Museum. Reviews have been very positive. Recommended retail price \$39.95.

Membership News

The Museum welcomes the following new members and Junior Supporters:

- 913 Ms Kym Carter of Sebastopol
- 914 Mr Kim Fletcher
- 915 Mrs Rebekah Fletcher
- 5084 Miss Zoe Fletcher
- 5085 Master Nathan Fletcher
(all of Sebastopol)

We were saddened to learn of the recent passing of Peter Moses, for many years from Launceston and more recently from Canberra. Peter had been a member since 1971.

Renewal notices were sent out at the start of July. If you did not receive one or have mislaid it please let the Membership Officer know at secretary@btm.org.au or on 0408 347 224.

11. FARES PLEASE!

Wendouree Parade in the North Gardens

The completion of the new kerbing to St Aidans Drive provides the opportunity to look at the changes over the past 75 years.

The museum has been fortunate to be allowed to scan the wonderful Wal Jack collection of prints.



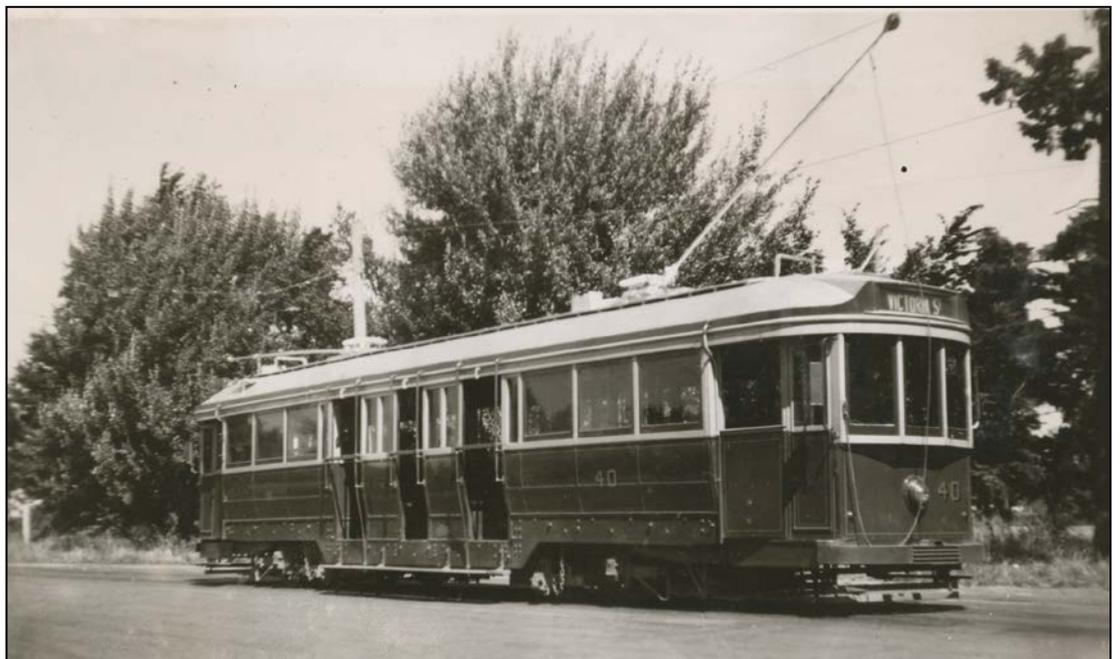
Above:
No 26 northbound on 14th
February 1941.



Left:
No 28 also northbound in
August 1941.

The photo of No 27 on
page 12 is the Museum's
replication of the colour
schemes of the time.

Below:
No 40 on 1st February 1953



*All photos from
the Wal Jack
Collection*

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Wendouree Parade in the North Gardens

Left:

A wider road, kerbing, white lines, Once semi rural Wendouree Parade is now a casualty of progress.

9/7/2016

Below:

The most severe flooding occurred in November 1975. The late Bill Jessup contemplates the water.

Photos: Peter Winspur



Left:

Hugh McKelvey's first driving shift was to take out a group of young children celebrating a birthday.

Multi-skilled, Hugh took along his plastic trombone to play Happy Birthday.

*Photo: Warren Doubleday
20/8/2016*

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

Web page: www.btm.org.au

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