

FARES PLEASE!

February 2017

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum



*Photo:
Andrew Martin
22/1/2017*

Ballarat Trams are Ballarat History

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Around the Museum

Operations

Mild weather just after Christmas kept holidaymakers away from the beaches and many took the opportunity to visit Ballarat and ride on the trams. The Museum experienced some of its busiest days for some time. A tiny workforce managed to continue last year's experiment of an earlier starting time until the middle of January and this again proved very worthwhile. Unfortunately, the call for extra help (conductors/depot guides) went largely unheeded.

Over summer, the Museum building was open every day and with our new signage guiding people towards it visitation was very rewarding. Horse Tram No 1 ventured out on Sunday 22nd January. Great weather and effective social media publicity saw just over 500 travel on the day, the largest number for some time. No 26, our only true California Combination Car ran the connecting service and was also very popular. The suggestion to place *Cuthberts 939* in the loop as a crew meal room worked very well. The tram proved a major point of interest and Virginia Fenelon spent the day giving guided tours. Hopefully, several bookings will eventuate.

Ballarat Council have painted a yellow No Standing line west from St. Aidan's Drive to better regulate the motor traffic. We occasionally strike a situation where a motor car has parked foul of the tram line – including one that held up the Santa Tram on 10th December for 20 minutes. The photo of the vehicle and the tram went viral on our Facebook page.

The annual Begonia Festival will take place from 11th to 13th March. Council have again agreed to sponsor free tram rides which should lead to another very busy three days. Response to calls by the roster clerk for assistance has been very good, but if you have some free time further pairs of hands would be welcome.

John Whiting has completed his familiarisation course and is a welcome addition to our list of drivers.

Another Sunday Road Closure!

Sunday 19th February saw the annual *Reach 4 Research | Ballarat Cycle Classic* close Wendouree Parade almost all day. The event raises money for the Fiona Elsey Cancer Research Institute. Compounded by wet weather, by the time trams were able to run the gardens were almost empty and very few were carried.

In the workshop

Tram No 28 returned to service decorated as the Museum's Christmas and Santa Tram. Soon after whilst being shunted in the depot an electrical fault was detected again grounding the tram. Initially feared to be a defective motor (major expense!) Paul Mong found a wiring issue which was quickly rectified and the tram was soon back in service. Such are the joys of working with century old vehicles.

No. 18 continues to languish under repair, as further remedial work keeps appearing. Although the motors have been received back from the local repairers, the wheels have been sent to a company in Melbourne to get the axle bearing surfaces rebuilt to give an even surface by metal spraying.

In order to make more room to reassemble the truck, after it was received back from off-site repairs, it was found necessary to move the body back a little. This involved temporarily putting the truck back together, lowering the body on to it, pushing it back two metres, then jacking the body back up again to release the truck for further work. Very time consuming.

After some forty plus years of raiding the spare parts bin the Museum is finally running out of parts for our single truck tram controllers with the result that our Tuesday workers are now beginning the process of manufacturing new copper contactors.

Neville Britton is continuing to experiment with different ways to prevent the ever present possums running along the overhead troughing. Not only do they leave a mess on the roofs of the trams, they frequently activate the alarm system in the middle of the night.

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Above: Setting up the group photo 22/1/2017

Photo: Alan Bradley



Left:

On Sunday 22/1/17 Virginia Fenelon was happy to give guided tours of *Cuthberts 939* whilst it served as a mobile canteen for the crews at the loop.

Photo: Alan Bradley

Right:

Mick Duncan and Alan Snowball at work on one of No 18's motors.

Photo: Neville Britton (January 2017)



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Further Security

Two additional cameras have been added to the security system, giving an even more comprehensive view of what is going on around the shed, including a hair pulling fistfight between three school girls outside the back door! The quality of the images, both day and night, is superb and with the ability to capture excellent still images from file footage, the system is proving well worth the investment.

New Display Panels

At the depot two new display boards, titled "The Power Behind the Switch" have been installed on the 3 road wall, explaining the history of the power supplies to Ballarat, including photographs of Ballarat A and B Power Stations, the latter built by the State Electricity Commission in the early 1950's. The panel also looks at the development of the power supplies for tramway systems in the 1890's and how these have evolved for new tramway systems around the world. In the final part of the panel, mention is made of a new backup battery system being installed by Powercor to service Buninyong and the Museum's solar panels.

These panels follow the installation of two new displays in mid 2016 detailing the history and reconstruction of Ballarat Tramway Company horse tram No. 1. One includes a photo screen which presents photos of the reconstruction and operation of the tram. They are a vast improvement on the original display panel they replace.

Funding for these four panels were provided through the Local History Grants Program facilitated by the Public Records Office of Victoria and supported by the Victorian State Government.

A large donated flat screen has been installed on the wall alongside 3 road. When the trams are moved out this screen is being used to show various short programs of tramway and local historical interest.

Solar Panels

The Museum congratulates Bendigo Tramways in installing its depot roof top solar panels, joining us in becoming another solar powered tramway. The Museum installed some 72 panels in December 2014 and was the first in Australia, and either 2nd or 3rd in the World. The first we know of was the small tramway system in Bad Schandau, Germany. (*See June 2014 Fares Please!*)

It is understood that for Bendigo, a 50kW system has been installed. The Community Foundation for Central Victoria bought the system and will sell the electricity to Bendigo Tramways as part of a 10-year power purchase agreement, after which the system will become the property of the tramways.

At this time, in Ballarat, the Museum has only installed 72 panels on the roof over 4 and 5 roads, but has the space for a further 36 panels on this roof. Heritage considerations limit the installation of further panels on the roof over 1 and 2 roads next to the fish hatchery. The fish hatchery would like to install panels as well, but heritage restrictions so far has limited this. They use more power to run their pumps than we do to run the trams and the depot.

The State Government recently announced that it would run a tender to build 75MW of new large scale solar farms by the end of 2018. Some 35MW of this power would be linked to the Melbourne tram network. In the future it will be good to see Yarra Trams joining us in being another solar power tramway.

The Museum monitors its electricity use and so far remains a net generator of power; that is we feed more back into the system than we draw from the grid. Prior to the installation of the panels we were averaging over 4200kW of power use per quarter; this has now dropped to 1500kW.

The Ballarat Tramway Museum received a COTMA Achievement Award for our solar panels and the certificate has been placed alongside the new display panels describing Ballarat's tramway power supply.

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Recent Donations

Over the last few months, the Museum has received some interesting donations to add to our ever expanding collection.

- Donated by the Viccars family, a great colour print has been received of Conductor Archie Viccars during 1950 standing in the doorway of a bogie tram. Archie worked as a trammie until the 1960's when he transferred to the Rippon St offices.
- Through one of the volunteer guides at the Melbourne Tram Museum, a set of posters issued by the Transport Regulation Board advising public transport passengers of the replacement bus services of each of the SEC Provincial systems. The Bendigo poster is being forwarded to the Bendigo Tramways along with a copy of the fare map of the system. Digital scans of these and some other related posters can be viewed on a new web page: www.btm.org.au/posters.html
- From a local resident, a set of newspaper cuttings and other documents relating to the closure of the tramway. Many of the newspaper cuttings were not in the Museum's collection.
- From the estate of the late Charles Craig, a very well known rail fan, are many black and white photographs of the Ballarat tramway from the late 1950's until the time of its closure. These are currently being catalogued. Included were many great night time photos.



No. 39, waits at the Mt Pleasant terminus, c1971.

Photo Charles Craig

Membership News

Long-time member Trevor Kruger passed away suddenly on 18th December 2016. Trevor was always a generous supporter of the Museum when every year two \$50 notes would appear in the mail with his renewal form. He was only sixty-three.

At the end of January I visited my doctor with mild chest pains. A little more than twenty-four hours later I emerged from surgery having undergone a quadruple bypass! Not to be outdone, Roger Gosney experienced severe chest pains ten days later. A call to Triple O resulted in an ambulance trip to Ballarat Base Hospital and a stent being inserted in one of his arteries. Both of us are now doing well. In each case prompt intervention prevented a heart attack or stroke.

The Museum welcomes the following new members:

- 919 Glenda Phillips of Ballarat
- 920 Joan Brown of Sunbury
- 921 Margaret Allan of Snake Valley
- 922 Darrell Baker of Canadian
- 923 Leslie Williams of Wendouree

Peter Winspur

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Ballarat's New Bus Service

On 29th January 2017, Public Transport Victoria introduced a new bus service to Ballarat, with many of the routes altered and all routes now running via the Ballarat Railway Station. As always there are winners and losers.

The new bus route map now has little resemblance to the one at the time the tramway closed. The bus route (No. 16) which serviced the Museum, Wendouree via Sturt St West, is no more. It is now route 10, which leaves the station, travels by the shopping centre at Little Bridge St, then to the Wendouree shopping centre via Howitt, then along Gillies St to Alfredton. It takes about 30 minutes now to travel from the station to the back door of the depot rather than 15 mins previously. Unfortunately for those depot workers on Sunday, the last bus back to the station leaves nearly an hour earlier.

As a result of the service changes, we have revised our web page on how to get to the Museum by public transport. The easiest is probably to take the train to Wendouree Station and then walk to the Gardens, or bus route 26 which still runs along Sturt St and Sturt St west to and from the station, though via the Little Bridge St shopping centre. If you would like to understand the system, visit our webpage www.btm.org.au/location.html, it has the links to the various services for the depot and maps.

One of the interesting services operated by CDC Victoria under contract to the PTV is the Sebastopol service. After leaving the station, it runs via Little Bridge St, then Sturt St, Doveton St (not via Drummond St south), Albert St then via Whitehorse Road to Federation University. The section via Doveton St is part of the original horse tram network.

For the bus routes at the time of closure and other Ballarat transport maps visit our new page: www.btm.org.au/posters.html

National Trust Heritage Festival

This year the Museum's contribution is entitled "Saving the trams" The event will be on the evening of Saturday 20 May 2017 and will tell the story of how a group of enthusiastic volunteers saved part of the Ballarat Tramway, and turned it into a major tourist attraction. An illustrated talk will be followed by a ride on one of the preserved trams.

Douglas Horse Tramway

As previously reported in *Fares Please!* in recent years, the unique horse drawn tramway along the promenade in Douglas on the Isle of Man has been under threat of relocation, shortening and even closure. In the recent *British Trams Online* annual awards, it was voted British Tramway of the Year 2016 and also won the Event of the Year award. The Event of the Year was awarded as a result of the 140th Anniversary celebrations.

In January, Tynwald, the Isle of Man legislature, voted to retain the tramway along the whole length of Douglas Promenade, with double track between Summerhill and Broadway, and single track along Loch Promenade. This is a major win for the preservation of the island's transport history. See: <http://www.friendsofdbh.org/>



No. 43 on its way to the Gardens pauses at the Alfred St stop in Sturt St West, just before closure of the SEC operated system. The replacement bus stop sign has been positioned.

Photo Charles Craig

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Above: No, it is not Ballarat No 26 in some foreign location! Nambour, north of Brisbane, has the remains of a narrow gauge sugar cane tramway running through the main street. Money has been raised to initially develop a tram service for about one kilometre along the disused tracks. The tram in the artist's impression is numbered 25.

See: www.facebook.com/NambourTram/



Above: The late Charles Craig.



Above: A superb framed photo of Archie Viccars during 1950 donated by his family.

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Above: Ballarat No 37 on the Royal Park line at the Sydney Tramway Museum. BTM members Clayton Giles, Bernard Starr and Bruce Dixon and friends hired the recently (and beautifully) restored tram on a visit on Sunday 22nd January. Bill Parkinson and Scott Curnow were the obliging crew.

Photo: Bruce Dixon

Right:

Recently nominated a 'passenger of the month' on our Facebook page this little tacker's mum made sure he would not miss out when riding in No 1.

Photo: BTM collection 22/1/17



Left:

No 26 passes our 'mobile canteen' on Sunday 22nd January.

Photo: Alan Bradley

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.

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