

FARES PLEASE!

June 2020

\$2.50 incl. GST

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum

Zoom go the trams!



The BTM Board has been using ZOOM to hold regular meetings during the COVID 19 closure.



New patterns, straightened poles, and pushed trams. Photos: Paul Mong, Peter Waugh and Alastair Reither



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From the President

Like most organisations it has been a particularly challenging couple of months, and I am very proud of the way we have been able to manage it so far. Although the trams and museum display are not operating it has also given us the opportunity to undertake some general maintenance on our track, overhead and trams. In late April with help from contractors we were able to straighten six poles in our depot fan and replace some span wires at depot junction.

Work has also started on restoring Tram 1029 which has seen the bogies reconditioned and windows being removed. Tram 33's truck and compressor are complete, and we are about to start the commissioning process of getting the tram operating again. Tram 12 restoration is also coming along nicely, with the side frame patterns complete. These are now being cast. We are working on engineering drawings for the modified 21e truck that will go under 12. Behind the scenes we are working on our Safety Management System, and planning for the Tram 504 restoration project. We have been working with the council to amend our planning permit for the museum extension.

As you would be aware the loss of income has placed a real financial strain on our museum. This will restrict our ability to continue key restoration work without your support.

I am also concerned about our volunteers physical and mental health during this crisis and it is

important that we all look out for each other and keep in touch.

As I write this report there is some further positive news with the easing of restrictions in Victoria. We have started the process of working towards a limited reopening, possibly in July. Thank you again for your ongoing support and I look forward in seeing you all again soon; until then stay safe.

Regards Paul



Tram 8 has been cleaning the tracks during shutdown.

Photo: Neville Britton

Tram 661

The tram which was damaged last year has now been sent to Bendigo Tramway for repairs.

The Ballarat Tramway Museum acknowledges the Wadawurrung as the Traditional Owners of this land and pays our respect to their Elders, past, present, and emerging.

Fifty year anniversary

Planning is underway to mark both the 50th anniversary of the closure of the Ballarat tramway and the formation of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society (now the Ballarat Tramway Museum).

The goals are:

- To acknowledge the fiftieth anniversary of closure of Ballarat's tramway network
- To acknowledge the pioneering efforts of the volunteers in establishing the Museum
- To celebrate the achievements of the Museum in preserving Ballarat's tramway heritage over the last 50 years
- To represent as much as possible other preservation groups, who have in their collections former Ballarat trams
- To acknowledge the achievements of the tramway preservation movement in Australia as a whole
- To acknowledge the evolution of public transportation technology, both locally and nationally
- To recognise other historical events that occurred in 1971.

Several major events are being considered, as well as the publication of an ebook covering the first 50 years of the Museum.

Your involvement would be greatly appreciated to make 2021 a memorable year. If you have any ideas of how we should mark the occasion, please contact us. If you have photos, stories or other memorabilia we would love to hear about them. Board member John Whiting is coordinating the events, so send him an email at john.whiting@btm.org.au, or call in and talk to us at the depot after reopening.



Next year will be 50 years since the closure of the Ballarat tramway and the formation of the Museum

Other news

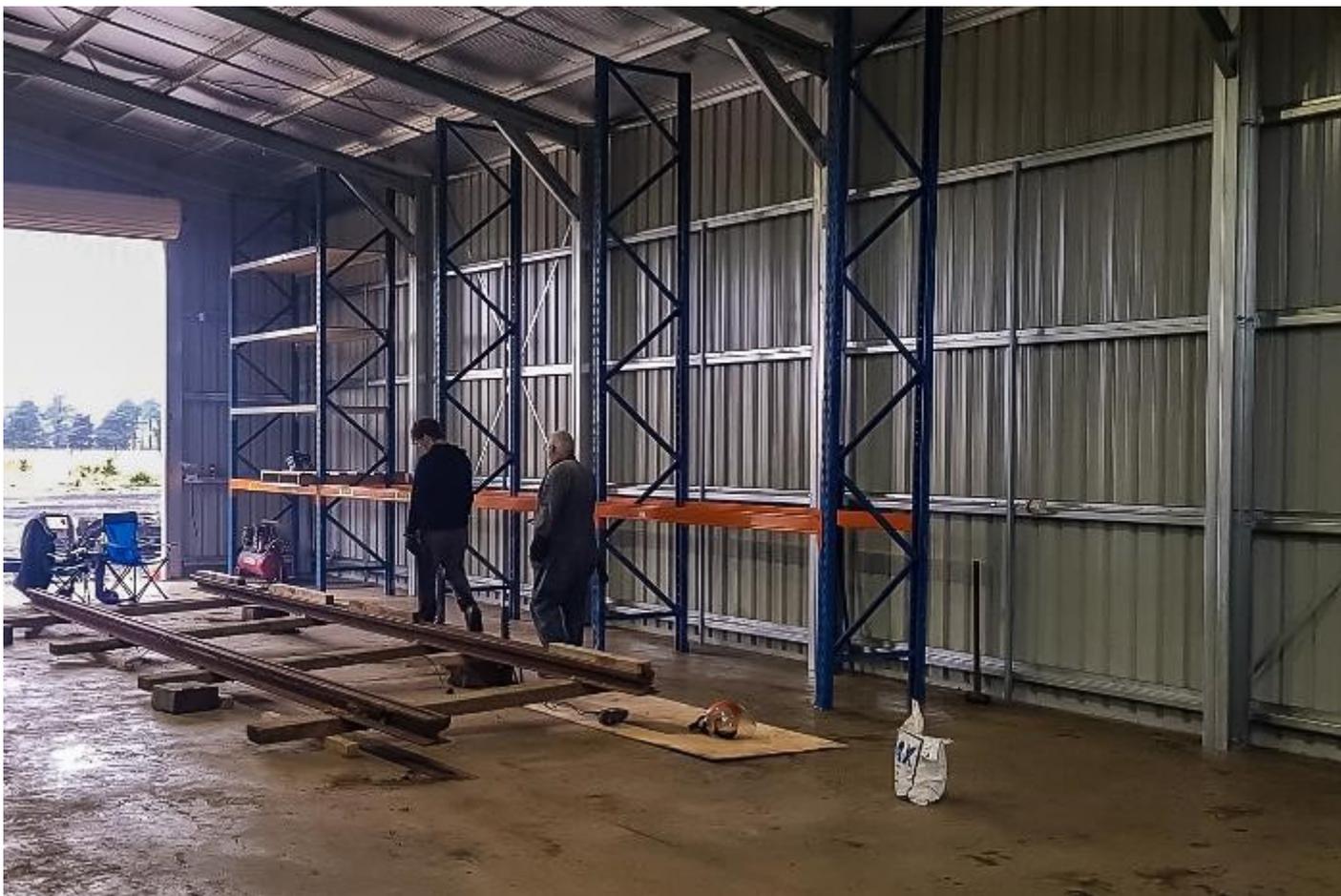
Tram 33 has been reunited with its truck and will be ready for testing after a long restoration project.

We are currently working through all the planning documentation for eventual reopening. This includes risk assessments, policies and procedures for dealing with COVID 19. It is not just a matter of simply reopening the doors. We will contact all members when we have a starting date.

Just as I was finishing this edition, we have found out that our Building Planning Permit for the new display building has been granted. In the next edition of Fares Please we hope to be able to bring you the details of this exciting project.

Other late news included the destruction of Ballarat's heritage railway gates at Lydiard Street on Saturday night, 30 May 2020. Details are not available at this time, but a V/Line train crashed through the gates which have been destroyed. One person was injured in the crash.

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Sam Boon and Alan Snowball erecting pallet racks in the new Bungaree shed. Photo: Alastair Reither



Placing new bogies under 924. Photo: Alastair Reither

My Uncle Bill

The Life and Times of a Melbourne Tramway Family.

By Richard Gilbert

I have been a member of the Ballarat Tramway Museum for 49 years, being interested in the provincial tramways, but I had never delved fully into my family tree to research those others who were employed by the tramway authorities in Melbourne.



Uncle Bill

My 'Uncle Bill', my Grandmother's brother, really my great uncle, was a tramway man, and he was a keen photographer. He was interested in electrics (today we would say electronics) and was a party time musician with a banjo and mouthorgan. When I was a child he would provide entertainment at various family functions. There was a story to research and I discovered more than expected. I took notes whilst talking with my grandmother and Uncle Bill, himself, over 25 years ago and these have lain around with the intention of preparing this history. I have done further research and found quite an involvement in the tramways by my extended family.

Uncle Bill took many photographs whilst overseas during the First World War and subse-

quently during his tramway employment. Some of these original family photographs are used in this article, and add to the growing collection of early tramway photographic records in the public domain. I am indebted to Uncle Bill's son, Laurie Simpson, who passed the photographs and certificates on to me when clearing up Bill's estate.

I am also indebted to Laurie for reviewing this article and correcting dates, names and places along with adding information from his personal knowledge of the family. Members of the Simpson family were employed on the cable trams and electric trams and other extended family members had connections with the tramway industry from 1902 to the 1980s.

Arrival in Australia

Uncle Bill's father, Stephen Charles Robert Simpson, was born on 4 August 1867, in Surrey, England, to Stephen Simpson, a merchant clerk, and Littella Simpson, (nee) Blake of Myatta Road, Kennington, Surrey.

He sailed from London on the Orient Steam Navigation Co.'s steamer *Chimborazo* in November, 1882, arriving in Melbourne on 21 December.



The Chimborazo

His first job was at the Exchange Hotel, Port Melbourne, where he met Eleanor Mary Clifford, who was a boarder at the hotel. She was born in Thurles, Tipperary, Ireland, and had migrated with a sister. The sisters worked as barmaids at the hotel. Stephen married Eleanor

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at St. Ignatius Church, Richmond, Victoria on 15 January 1896.

Stephen became a Porter at Spencer Street Station. At this time they were living at Westbank Terrace, Richmond. Their next door neighbour was a Tramway Inspector, Jack Hobbs.

The Cable Trams

Stephen left the Victorian Railways and joined the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company in 1905.



Stephen Simpson

He was employed as a Conductor, as he was considered “not heavy enough” for the job of Gripman. Eventually he was asked to be an Inspector, but declined, as he wasn’t prepared to accept a ‘responsible’ position which could involve working indoors. The family in England had a history

of tuberculosis and Stephen always wanted to work in the open air.

Stephen and Eleanor started a family. Their first child died in infancy (Mabel Alice Mary in 1897). Their son, Stephen William was born on 16 May 1898 in Hawthorn, Victoria. Their daughter, Maude Elizabeth Eileen, was born on 29th September 1901 also in Hawthorn, Victoria. The family moved to Randolph Street, Hawthorn and later moved to College Street, Hawthorn. Stephen William became known as “William, Willy, Will or Bill”. Maude Elizabeth Eileen was known as “Eileen”.

Stephen continued to work for the tramways while the children grew older and became good students. His son, Bill, wanted to become a chemist and started his apprenticeship with a chemist in Kew when he was aged 15. A year

later, in August 1914, the Great War broke out in Europe and the Middle East, and many young men his age, being sixteen, felt it was their duty to enlist. He entered the army medical service and served in many parts of the world.



Cable tram staff at Richmond.

Stephen Simpson, 3rd from left, standing.

On the Home Front

Bill’s sister Eileen stayed at home with her parents. Stephen Simpson, helped plan the Tearooms for a Miss Launders, which opened around 1915. The tearooms were located in Bridge Road immediately between the Richmond Cable Tram Depot and the bridge over the Yarra River. Tram crews called in to obtain meals, pies, lollies, stationary, etc. She had a big Union Jack flag in the window plus other patriotic flags, as the war was on. She had good sales of Union Jack flags. Eileen went to work there in 1918. She would take a meal to her father at the Depot and would sit with him on the grip cars whilst he ate his meal. There were no meal rooms. She would bring along tea in a lemonade bottle. In those times tea was made hot, then placed in the bottle. The horse tram to Hawthorn had ceased to run, but the Victoria Bridge to Kew horse tram was still running. Eileen remembered the horse bus service from Hawthorn Bridge to Camberwell along Riversdale Road. She travelled on it when she was about 12 years old, riding on the top deck. She

also enjoyed riding on Saturday nights, visiting Mr. Hobbs, Tramway Inspector, living in Westbank Terrace, Richmond. The Simpsons by now were living at 6 College Street, Hawthorn.

Eileen also remembers travelling on the horse tram that ran from Victoria Bridge to Kew Cemetery. She would walk to Church Street to catch the tram at the Beehive Hotel.



Richmond Depot, Revenue Clerk

At the Richmond Cable Depot there were: Mr. Watson, Depot Manager, who eventually transferred to Malvern Depot, Mr. Stephens who worked at the Cash Counter. Mr. Fargher who was a Shunter and the men pushed the trams in and out of the shed. Her father was paid £2/8/- per week. It was paid as two gold sovereigns and four shilling pieces. Out of his wages he had to pay eleven shillings (11/-) a week rent. At that time a house could be bought for £200. As a Conductor he had to supply one pound in change himself.

Eileen left the Tearooms and commenced working at Duband's Clothing Company in Flinders Street, where the former Herald Sun building now stands.

On 1 June 1918 her father strained his heart lifting a box of bell punches and was 'off work' for a month. It was agreed he could go back as a Conductor. He was due to recommence on the Monday and spent the Sunday pressing his uniform and cleaning the buttons with Brasso. He died of a massive heart attack in the back yard

of his home after getting up on the Monday morning of 15 July 1918. His death was a great shock to his wife, daughter and friends. Of interest is that the kitchen clock stopped at 11:30am, as did his watch, whilst the funeral party arrived at the Booroondarra Cemetery, Kew, at 11:30am. A procession of cable tram crews accompanied the funeral procession from 6 College Street, Hawthorn to the cemetery.

With the Tramways Board



Bill Simpson

Bill returned from the war to his widowed mother, Nellie, and sister, Eileen, and became the breadwinner for their small family. When he was discharged from the army they moved to 45 Barry Street, South Yarra, and after many varied attempts to find work that would appeal to him and support his family, he approached old friends of his late father, and was subsequently employed by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board in 1921.

He commenced work at Kew depot as a Conductor. He trained for the job in his own time, as there was no pay provided for trainees and he wore his own clothing, as the uniform was not provided until the prospective employee had passed the entrance examination and was

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Trammies at the Kew Depot, 1924.

Bill Simpson in front row, 5th from left.

fully employed. However, a tramway cap was issued to allow the prospective employee free travel on the trams.



Motormen and conductors, Kew Depot.

Photos: Bill Simpson

The Tramways Board urgently required drivers at the time and 48 hours training was provided in the employees own time. This was usually taken up by operating one trip after a days' work of conducting, over a succession of days. Bill recalled learning to drive trams at the Hawthorn Depot Driving School, and said "A Mr. Barker taught us to drive the little Meadowbank trams". Other trams were referred to as 'jumping ginnies' and 'pony wheelers'.

Bill was working at Kew at the time of the level crossing accident on 4 August 1923, at 11:30pm, when tram No. 65 was struck by locomotive F187, which was hauling the

Deepdene train on the Outer Circle railway, at the Whitehorse Road crossing. He recalled the tram driver was Frank Wessell and the conductor was George Cartwright. It was an open level crossing and the regulations stated the tram conductor flagged the tram across the railway when all was clear. The damaged tram was taken to the Malvern Depot Workshops, which was at the rear of where the new section of the Malvern Depot now is. The De La Salle College, at the front of the workshops was eventually demolished, as was the workshops, to allow the new Malvern Depot to be built.



No. 65 at Kew after the collision in 1923. The tram was repaired and sold to Geelong in 1928. Relocated to Ballarat in 1935 as No. 11. Now owned by the BTM the tram is in storage for future restoration.

Photo: Bill Simpson

Bill Simpson was transferred to Malvern Depot on 16 May 1926, and said "I commenced there the day the electric trams started running in St. Kilda Road". He enjoyed long walks and if he was due to start his roster before the tram service commenced, he would walk to work from Barry Street, South Yarra to Kew Depot, a distance of around six kilometres, and later the lesser distance of around five kilometres to Malvern Depot.

In the first of the early shifts he would arise at 2:00am and his mother would also rise to get his breakfast.

Around this time, Eileen changed jobs and left



Eileen Simpson (Richard Gilbert's grandmother).

Duband's Clothing Company in Flinders Street and commenced with another tailoring business, located in Brunswick, near where the Sarah Sands Hotel stands. She travelled by cable tram to the city then the Brunswick cable tram to complete the journey. She was well known by the cable tram crews on the Chapel Street route and many of them rang bells when passing Barry Street if Eileen was at the front of the house.



Conductor Bill Simpson, Mont Albert terminus, 1922

At this time, his sister Eileen met William Rawson Duthie, who lived in the South Yarra area. Of interest is that his father, William Nicholson Duthie, was employed in a supervisory position at the Toorak Cable Winding House in the early part of the twentieth century. The Duthie family entered the hotel trade, and therein is another story.

Eileen subsequently married William Rawson Duthie circa 1923 and they had two daughters, June Edith Duthie and Gloria Mancell Duthie. June Duthie eventually married Richard Alfred Gilbert and had a son and a daughter. The author of this article, Richard Gilbert, is the son of June Duthie. Gloria Duthie married an American Serviceman, Ed Portillo and has lived in the U.S.A since 1946.



"Squizzy" Taylor

Bill had an interesting experience in the 1920s whilst walking home after the last tram had run for the night, when a big black car pulled up and the driver said "do you work up at the Depot". Bill replied "yes" and the driver said "get in. I'll give you a lift home".

During the journey the smartly dressed small man said "do you know my brother, Stan, he works there. Stan Taylor". "Yes", said Bill, "then you are Squizzy Taylor?" Squizzy Taylor was a 'gangster', albeit Australian style unlike some of the famous American folk heroes, and he was gunned down in a house at Carlton in 1927.

The Duthie family at the time had the Market Hotel at Prahran and 'Squizzy' was a good customer there. He would turn up well dressed with a fur

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collar and a little hat and was a real gentleman. Arthur Alexander was ‘Squizzy’s’ friend and accompanied him to the hotel.

In 1926 Bill met his future wife who worked in the city of Melbourne and travelled to work by tram. She was a milliner and worked at a very fashionable shop in Bourke Street. Later that year, they were married at St. Aloysius’ Church, Caulfield. She was Phoebe Elizabeth Turnbull and she was born at White Hills, a suburb of Bendigo, in 1902.

Bill and Phoebe had three children: William Charles Robert (Bob), 1928, Stephen Laurence (Laurie), 1929. and Phoebe Eileen (Eileen), 1935.

In the early 1930s Bill became eligible to buy a home through the War Service Commission. He decided that, as he was stationed at the Malvern Depot, it would make life easier to move to that area. He purchased a house at 7 Childers Road, Malvern for £400, with a loan from the War Service Commission. During the great depression he managed to accommodate his mother, his wife and three children, as well as his sister Eileen with her husband and two daughters. Bill, being on a government job, never missed a days’ work and he provided the necessities for the large family group living there. His mother, Nelly, lived with him until her death in 1956.

During the war years the tram lighting was subdued and most street lighting was blacked out. In Bill’s words, “the trams had the internal light bulbs painted in dark paint and there were no headlights. The conductors struggled with their duties as did the drivers.” Around this time the shiftwork and strain of life from both wars, and life through the depression, took its toll and the medical section of the tramways agreed with Bill that light duties were a better option in consideration of his health.

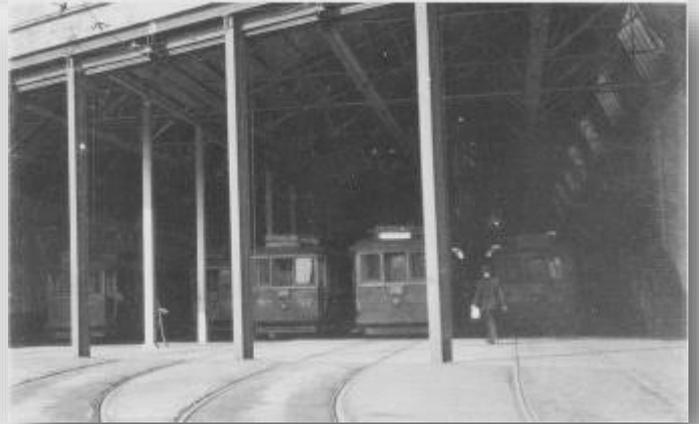
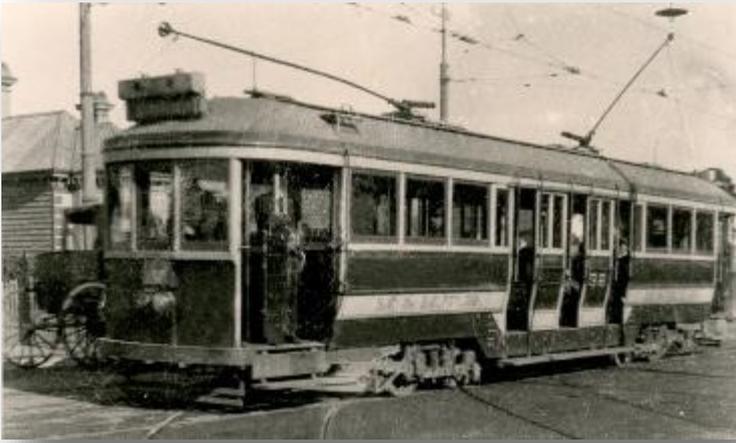
Bill left Malvern depot in 1944 and worked his final years of employment at the Preston Tramway Workshops. He was employed in the electrical workshop, as this type of work interested him. He had, in early years, made crystal sets to allow him and the family to listen to the new form of home entertainment – radio broadcasts.



*Bill Simpson in the Electrical Workshop
at the Preston Depot.*

During his 15 years at the workshops, one particular project saw his involvement in making the ‘buzzers’ for the W class trams and tramway buses. He retired from the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board on 3rd April 1959 and had a great and happy retirement. Bill’s wife, Phoebe, predeceased him by 9 months in July 1984, aged 82 years. Bill Simpson passed away on 30 April 1985 aged 87 years.

My “Uncle Bill” had a great life and was enjoyable to mix with whenever I visited him and Phoebe. His whimsical humour, musical entertainments and interest in his job was a product of the times when life was simpler. He would always enthrall me with his stories.



Photos by Bill Simpson, of trams and crews from the Kew Depot, 1922—1924.

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FROM THE ARCHIVES- Warren Doubleday

Grey vs Gray



Tram 17 at Gray Street, 1971.

Photo: Eldon Hogan

No, this is not some High Court legal case, but about the State Electricity Commission Tram destination of Grey Street, when it was actually at Gray Street.

From the City of Ballarat's "Roads and Open Spaces Historical Index", the street is named after Cr. Thomas Gray JP, a local Mayor and grocer. But the SEC spelt it with the "e" not only on the destination rolls, but also in their rosters, public timetables, correspondence and in the Tramway Centre shelter in Sturt St.



Grey St as a destination, at Gray Street, Sebastopol.

Photo: Eldon Hogan, 1971

However, when Davis Buses took over the public transport network, they spelt it correctly in their timetable.

So why did the SEC not correct it? The destination blinds – were they too expensive to replace? But they were all replaced in the mid 1960's when they changed style. Changing the paperwork, could have been done when the next timetable was issued, but no, they persisted to the end in 1971. Perhaps the SEC was being dogmatic as large Government departments tend to be and refused to change. Any other reasons welcome.

The timetable board in the shelter at Sturt and Lydiard St shows the trams that ran only as far as the Grey St loop.



Timetable board, Lydiard Street.

Photo Ray Jackson 1971.

Thomas Gray was the Mayor of the Borough of Sebastopol in the 1880s, and the manager of the St. George and Band of Hope Gold Mining Company. He was also active in local sport including football and polo. In August 1870 he was horse whipped in the street by a local publican who alleged that Gray had defamed him.

From Dave Macartney's Collection



Tram 661, Carnegie, 1960s



Tram 671, Preston, 1960s



W class trams

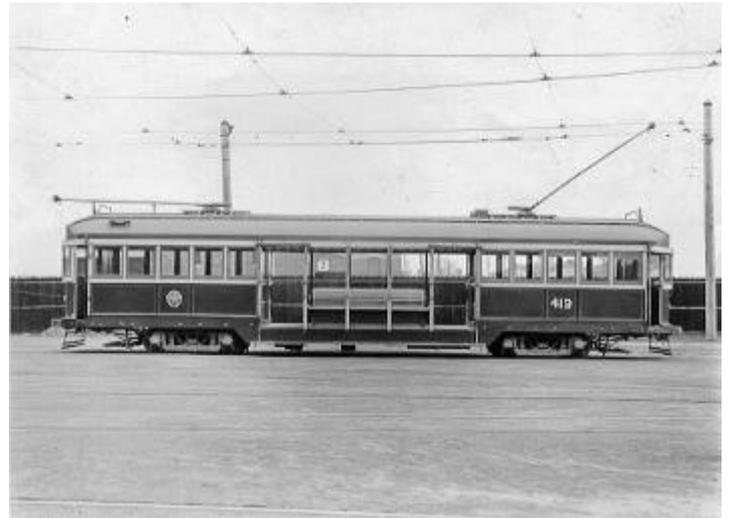
There are quite a few photographs in this issue of Fares Please which feature our W class trams. There were over 750 W-class trams made for the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board (MMTB) fleet.

Most of Ballarat's trams were bought second hand from Melbourne. If the tramway had not closed in 1971, would second-hand W class trams been used to update the Ballarat fleet?

The Museum has several W class trams which help with our tram operations. Here is a guide to the W class and its variations.

When the MMTB took over Melbourne's trams, there were 216 trams made in 21 different designs. The MMTB's Chief Engineer, Tom Strickland, wanted new trams that were larger, and could be built to the same design. This would make it cheaper to build and maintain the fleet. Strickland liked the L class trams, and he designed an easier to build tram of the same style. This was an open drop centre tram, with saloons at each end, and three doorways on each side.

There were 200 W class trams built in the first batch from 1923-1926. The seats in the drop centre were long bench seats. It took too long for people to get on and off the tram, and the tram design was changed, which became W1.



*W1 No. 419, South Melbourne Depot, 1926
Photo: Sutcliffe Pty. Ltd.*

W1 trams were open in the centre, with only canvas blinds to protect people from the weather. Between 1925-1928 there were 30 W1 trams were built, but people did not like them in wet weather, so a new design, W2, was built which had the drop centre closed in with doorways again.



*W2 No. 504 being delivered to Ballarat, June 2015
Photo: Peter Waugh*

The W2 had the middle seats in four pairs of cross seats, the middle door was made narrower, and the other two doors made wider. All the

W and W1 trams were changed to the new W2 design. Some of the trams had sliding doors added, and they were known as SW2. The Museum has a W2, No. 504, in storage awaiting restoration, and the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association has loaned us their W2, No. 407, for use in Ballarat.

Between 1930 and 1934, 16 new trams were built with bigger wheels, to give a quieter and more comfortable ride. They also had a steel frame. These were called W3 class. Our tram 661 is a W3. The bigger wheels meant the tram was higher and harder for people to get in and out.



W7 1029 in South Melbourne, c.1980

Photo: Greg Fitzgerald

A new design, W4, was made lower. The wheel arch is in the saloon, but with a seat placed over it. These trams were also made wider. Only five trams were made, including our tram 671. The W3 and W4 trams were made using parts left over from other tram classes.

The next design, called CW5, also used left over parts, in this case bogies from scrapped C class trams. These had maximum traction bogies. Our tram 40 is a C class tram and our scrubber tram, No. 8, was made from scrapped C class trams.

From 1935 the W5 body design was used to make 120 new trams with equal wheel bogies. Some of



W6 No. 992 in Melbourne, 2006

Photo: © [Dysprosia](#) (from Wikimedia Commons)

the last ones made in 1939 had sliding doors, and were called SW5.

From 1939-1951 the design was improved and 120 trams were built with sliding doors, becoming SW6. Our special function tram, Cuthberts 939, was an SW6. From 1951-1955 another 30 were made as W6.

When the MMTB decided to replace buses in Bourke Street in 1955 with new trams, another 40 were built. All the seats in the new trams were upholstered, not wooden. These were called W7. We are currently restoring W7 1029 for use in Ballarat.

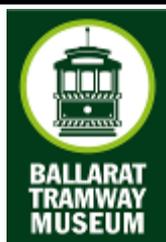
From 2012, some of the older W class trams were upgraded. The motors, suspension and braking systems were improved. The tram bodies were strengthened to protect passengers in case of an accident. LED lighting was installed. These have been re-classed as W8.

If you want to see these different W class trams, then you should plan to visit the collections of the Ballarat Tramway Museum, the Hawthorn Tram Museum, the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association, the Tramway Museum Society of Victoria and ride a W8 on the City Circle in Melbourne.

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No. 661 passes the Kangaroo Hotel at Maldon, and then safely delivered to Bendigo, May 2020. Photos: Alastair



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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