

# FARES PLEASE!

August 2021

\$2.50 incl. GST

**News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum**

## Building, running and restoring



*Photo: P. Waugh*



*Photo: S. Boon*



*Photo: A. Reither*



*Photo: P. Mong*





### President's Report

Since the last edition of Fares Please we have celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the famous Royal Mail Hotel with over 60 members attending including 11 foundation members. Our first secretary Clyde Croft was able to speak giving an insight into the challenges the museum had to face in forming and operating a tourist tramway. I would like to thank everyone who was able to attend and also John Whiting and Sam Boon for organising the day which included operating a special tram service for our members after lunch.

2021 is becoming a very challenging year, like 2020, however I am pleased to see the spirit of our volunteers in supporting each other and the enthusiasm shown keeps on delivering a record number of visitors to the museum over the winter months.

I would also like to thank our members who continue to support the museum especially those who have donated to the museum appeal. Work has continued on with the new museum building which is now at lock-up stage.

Painting has begun with the paint donated by Haymes paint. Unfortunately long-time supporter of the museum, David Haymes, passed away recently and I would like to pass on our

condolences to David's family on behalf of the museum.

The other major project the museum is currently undertaking is the track replacement program which has continued on with a detailed survey of our track. We can now start to design the track work before putting it out to tender. Special thanks to the City of Ballarat for undertaking this job. On top of all this great work restoration has also continued on with Tram 12,14 and 1029.

Thanks again to everyone for their ongoing support.

Regards,

Paul

### 2021 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 Sunday 21 November 2021, 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.

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



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 Sunday 31 October 2021.

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.

## Letter

To the volunteers,

I had no idea when I pulled out of the ride tonight that we would be in lockdown again! I am so sorry after all the work you put into this wonderful event and bring so much pleasure to the people of Ballarat and visitors.

It really lights up Ballarat Gardens/Lake and gives heart to the terrible times we are all going through. Keep up the great work, you and your volunteers are building this wonderful archive into a Iconic tourist attraction with many benefits to the people of Ballarat, Victoria and fu-

ther afield. Best wishes to you and your volunteers for the future.

Kind regards

Greer & Doug Rutherford

## New Member

We welcome the following new member:

1024 Tim Hulbert of Soldiers Hill.

## Workshop News

Restoration work on four trams is progressing:

**Tram 1029** has had the exterior work completed and transfers applied. The ceilings have been replaced. Work will continue on the inside with some rewiring and the installation of an inverter which will provide 240v power inside the tram.

**Tram 12:** The canvas has been applied to the roof, and a new trolley pole base has been constructed.

**Tram 14:** While the tram motor bearings are being worked on, the decision was made to repaint the exterior. When the trim covers were removed, several body panels showed a lot of rust, and will be replaced.

**Tram 2** has had the rattan seats installed and is now just having some final paint touchups, ready for its official launch on September 19 at our Tramway Celebration day.

## Tramway Celebration Day September 19

Due to the ever changing uncertainties surrounding the COVID pandemic, negotiations are still in place between the events team and local government, to ensure Tramway Celebration Day can go ahead with as many of the planned features and highlights as possible. Stay tuned to [btm.org.au](http://btm.org.au) for further details.



*The new building, July 2021. Photo: Alastair Reither*



*City of Ballarat surveying the track in preparation for the tenders for relaying the rails. Photo: Alastair Reither*



THE BALLARAT TRAMWAY MUSEUM INVITES YOU TO JOIN US IN CELEBRATING THE

# 50th Anniversary Commemorative Dinner (1971-2021)

Saturday 18th September 2021

"THE GRAND" 203 DANA ST, BALLARAT  
FROM 6PM

**\$60 PER PERSON**

PARTNERS AND FRIENDS WELCOME  
3 COURSE SEATED DINNER  
COMPLIMENTARY DRINK ON ARRIVAL  
LIVE MUSIC  
GUEST SPEAKERS

COMMEMORATING 50 YEARS SINCE CLOSURE OF THE  
BALLARAT STREET TRAMWAY SYSTEM &  
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF B.T.M.

PLEASE BOOK ONLINE VIA TRY-BOOKING BY 31ST AUGUST

<https://www.trybooking.com/BTGES>

or phone 0437 903 381 for more information.



## The Ballarat Tramway Museum Fifty Years On

By Clyde Croft

Today we celebrate the vision, dedication and sheer hard work of many people over the last 50 years – half a century! Without you all – many of whom are here today – the Ballarat tramway system would be just a memory and a collection of photos, films and videos. I hesitate to mention individuals who have contributed so much – as I do not want to leave anyone out – but I would like to mention and acknowledge Richard Gilbert as, I think, the only person who has served on the Board for most, if not all, the last half century. Richard can tell you about early Board meetings on cold nights sitting in 26 or 27 at the Depot and then sleeping in the trams!

I must say though that this fifty year celebration and reflection is a little unnerving to the extent that it does not seem to me all that long ago that we were in 1971 forming what then became the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society – now, of course, the Ballarat Tramway Museum. Indeed my memories of the SEC provincial tramway systems seem quite fresh. I do, however, only just remember Geelong trams – and the colour bar traffic lights at the intersection of

Ryrie and Moorabool Streets. Much fresher are the memories of waiting in a four wheeler at the Lydiard Street North railway gates at night for the Overland to get out of the way and watching the rather fascinating light signaling system at the loops from a Sebastopol line tram. And there was Bendigo, wonderful as well, with memories grinding up the hill out of the city centre on an Eaglehawk tram.



*BTPS trams stored in the old SEC depot.  
Photo: Noel Simons*

The SEC did treat us well with trams and equipment. Perhaps this also flowed from some relief on its part as the SEC was keen to get rid of the loss-making provincial tramways it had inherited from various electric supply companies. For a long time this desire was thwarted while the then Country Party held the balance of power in the Legislative Council. As I said though, the SEC was very supportive of our enterprise and allowed our trams to remain in the then SEC Tram Depot on the north side of Lake Wendouree for a year or so pending the building of the new Depot in the South Gardens and did provide a great deal of equipment and advice. The SEC support was very evident on the opening day of our tramway when the then SEC Chairman Trethowan drove 40 into Wendouree Parade – after a short tutoring from me on how to drive one of “his” trams. He did well and I did not have to grab the controls!



*Clyde Croft, 1970, with a souvenir of a trip to WA.  
Photo: Warren Doubleday*



*Clyde Croft speaking to members about the early days of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society.*

*Photo: Peter Waugh*

The formation of the BTPS was a combined effort between those in Ballarat and Melbourne. As one might expect, it was a process that had its ups and downs – particularly as it involved “outsiders” from Melbourne who, though having energy and some good ideas, may not have been, or perceived to have been, aware of and sensitive to local issues. The Ballarat group formed at a meeting on 18 April 1971 and the Melbourne group in the same month in the iconic Room 11 at the Victorian Railways Institute; in the Flinders Street Station building offices. The two groups came together at a public meeting – reported in the Ballarat Courier on 31 May 1971. This was a very significant achievement in itself, which cannot be fully appreciated without some feeling for the dynamics of the time. As Richard Gilbert recalled:

*The Ballarat group regarded the Melbourne group with a bit of suspicion, maybe we looked like a bunch of rebel university students, as was in vogue at the time and many of our group*

*were indeed at Uni, and the politically controversial Vietnam War was on then. When we arrived, their Chairman, Melton Foo, insisted the proceedings be recorded on a tape recorder and Bill Jessup objected stating that he would not know where the recordings would end up.*

It was all great stuff, and we can laugh about it now, but there were times when it looked as though the whole project could be lost as a result of these sort of “encounters”.

The extent of the achievement also needs to be viewed in light of the then opposition of the Ballarat City Council – and from some particularly virulent opponents who were then members of that Council. To say that the City Council did not like trams was a serious understatement!

There were many other challenges faced and overcome on the road – or track – to tramway operations. The SEC equipment had problems as a result of its ongoing strategy of closing down the provincial tramways and spending as little as possible – though the Wendouree Parade track was, fortunately, in passable condition. A significant issue was the need for a new 600v DC power supply as the converters the SEC used to supply tramway power were unsuitable for future use. So a new power station was required; as was a new tram depot as the SEC depot was not available for operational use.

There were also issues to be resolved in relation to public liability insurance for operations and an operating agreement with the Ballarat City Council. I well remember meetings with insurance brokers and underwriters who struggled with the idea of assessing risk and pricing insurance for an electric tramway running on a public road run by a group of volunteers – “computer says NO”! Eventually the insurers were happy - though that is not quite the right



word – as was the Council for operations between the Gardens pillars. Naturally, Council approval depended on finding a satisfactory public risk insurer and policy – so it was fraught and tricky at times.

Unsurprisingly, one of the issues raised by insurers and the Council was the qualification and licensing of tram drivers. Some of us were then also drivers working for the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board and so that was a good basis – but even M&MTB drivers needed training on and accreditation for two motor trams which were long gone in Melbourne, apart from works trams, scrubbers etc. We had discussions with the M&MTB and I well remember the afternoon when M&MTB Traffic Manager Elliott – I think he was Deputy at the time – rang me to say that they would support us by training and accrediting our tram drivers.

Many most enjoyable Sunday mornings followed in M&MTB works tram number 16 on a fairly deserted St George's Road in Melbourne's north. Some amazing emergency braking – with clouds of sand and the smell of burning brake shoes - took place as we hurtled the thing up and down the road. When we finished the morning we would take 16 back over the hump to Preston Workshops where Jack Fuller, then the head of the M&MTB Driving School, who conducted the training - and a thrill-packed morning – would complete the experience by inviting the trainee drivers to climb onto the roof of a W2 tram and hold the live contact wire. The Tramways Union had banned driver roof climbing to untangle trolley poles etc by that stage as drivers had died – not by electrocution but from heart attacks as a result of climbing the vertical steps which were often very slippery, as was the roof. And you realize the roof of a W2, or any



*BTPS members at Preston for driver training in No. 16  
Photo: from Paul Nicholson*



Opening day, 1974.

Opening Day, 1974. Source: ARHS

other tram for that matter, is quite high when you climb it! In any event not a practice encouraged now – OH and S would go spare – but it was fun to have done it under supervision as was done previously in M&MTB driver training.

These were some memories from the early days and, as they say, the rest is history – but a history only made possible by the vision, dedication and sheer hard work of so many people who were involved in the years which followed. And in terms of hard work I cannot fail to mention and acknowledge the magnificent tramcar restoration and rebuilding work that is a feature of these years. It is really wonderful to see the skills involved being applied and passed on to future generations in and through this work. The beauty of the work done and the ultimate results are a real pleasure to observe and enjoy.

Now in 2021 the Ballarat Tramway Museum goes from strength to strength as more trams are acquired and a new depot extension and museum are under construction. But this is a

continuing story and for another day – and I am sure for one in another 50 years!

Thank you very much for inviting me to speak today and on such an auspicious occasion. It has been a great pleasure revisiting the 1970s and beyond with you all today – and to be able to catch up with so many people I have not seen for far too many years.



From the Ellen Butland Collection at the BTM



*Clyde Croft assisting with the substation installation.  
Photo: BTM Collection*



*Eleven of the original BTPS members at the 50th anniversary lunch:  
Back: Lindsay Rickard, Richard Gilbert, Clyde Croft, Graeme Inglis, Glen Mills, Stan Bolwell, Robert McCutcheon  
Front: Carolyn Cleak, Chris Phillips, Geoff Dean and Paul Nicholson*



## A Great Life of Carrying People

By Greg King



While I'm sure it's not unique, I'm equally sure it's not usual! How many can say they have worked for two tramway systems, a railway system and many bus systems and even internationally?

I guess I have always been a bit of a nomad when it came to work and even where I lived until I met my wife. I started on the old VR as a Cleaner qualified to fire (or officially, "Supernumery Junior engineman qualified to fire") back in 1967 and I guess that's where the moving around started, being sent to several country depots including Wodonga where I would be sub transferred to Cudgewa for two months, the most interesting line to work on the network.

Due to a relationship break up, I left the railways and moved to NSW and worked as a Conductor driver for the then Department of Government Transport based at Pagewood depot. At this time we were in the throes of Army conscription and, in a fit of national pride (stupidity?) I joined up and served for a couple of years.

When I got out, it was home to Melbourne, and I joined the MMTB. I would leave and come



back three times over the years!! I left in 1977 due to a relationship and moved to Perth to try and save it (yeah, like that worked!!) and joined the MTT in Perth and drove buses out of Causeway depot and then Morley depot until I had had enough and headed home again.

On the way, I passed through my home town of Adelaide and put my head in the door of the newly named STA (formerly MTT) to see if there were any jobs, no but, happy to take your details which, I was happy to give them! On arriving home, I got a job with Northern Bus lines. Anyone who has ever worked for a private route bus company, especially back then, would know how cruel their shifts were and how many of them had crap buses like the dreaded Bedford SB's!

Fortunately, a few months in, I got a letter from the STA asking if I was still interested and, if I passed the medical I was in! I think I was back in Adelaide before the door shut behind me! I had to start as a bus driver at Port Adelaide depot (cap #1030) and I put in a transfer straight away for City Depot where my passion lurked! Within a couple of months I was there annoying the poor depot Superintendent (that was what they called depot Masters) until he put me through for tram driver training. I then became a Motorman/Operator (cap #1910) and the roster clerk, knowing how much I loved the trams, rostered me for standby as much as he could, and I



*In the motorman's cabin, Glenelg, South Australia*

got on the Motorman's roster when one went on leave. This truly was the high point in my driving career especially during the Golden Jubilee where I also got to run F1 282, H1 381 and W2 294. I even enjoyed the buses there, Adelaide (in those days) was a tram system run with buses and they were all great fun to drive.

But again, itchy feet took me home and back on the trams and meeting the love of my life (we have now been married 39 years, what a most tolerant woman!!). I did that for many years until the great strike and blockade at which time I joined Australia Post and became a Personnel and Admin manager. I did that for several years until the desire to be back on rails called again and I went back to the trams until I took early retirement in 2005.

I was blessed on the job to have originally joined when it was all W (and at Essendon where I started, got to drive the VR cars and the PC5 equipped 750 and 751) and enjoyed the happiest times then. Along with the many fan trips I operated, sponsored by Ron Sholten and

others, I had a number of incredibly fortunate moments down the years. Having been made a trainer early on, every time I came back it was "you were a trainer, you are again"! But when it became Yarra Trams, it was an applied for pro-



*Hawthorn Training School*

motion, which I was successful at getting (I really enjoy teaching people). I was the first "regular driver" to learn the Z class trams in 1975 where we had to devise a training system. Under YT, it was known at South Bank how much I loved the W's and they became my forte and I did most of the training on them



MUNI, San Francisco



Driving at the Illinois Railway Museum

though, not exclusively as I did train staff on all the other cars as well. When the Olympic torch came through Melbourne in 2004, I was allocated W1 431 to carry all the dignitaries and sports legends carrying the flame.

Unfortunately, by the 2000's, some of the passengers we carried had become rather awful and violent sadly, a situation that has only gotten worse, fuelled by drugs and alcohol. By 2005, I had had enough and, on New Year's Eve 2005, I ran my last service and walked away.

But it was not to be the end of carrying people, I have been driving casually for ROCKLEIGH tours doing charter and V/Line replacement to this day. When I started there, we had three rather so, so coaches, now we have over 20 top class touring coaches.

And to add a bit of international flavour, I was very fortunate in 2002 to get a letter of introduction from YT's training Manager. When I



*Delivering Berlin tram 3007 to Hawthorn*

toured the US and Canada (with my old mate Bill Parkinson) I could look at the way the various tramways and LRT operations did their training and gave a report to Management in a board meeting on my return. In all of these cases, we were offered (and accepted of course) the opportunity to drive trams there. The most amazing being San Francisco where we were allocated a brand-new Breda for the day with two instructors and we covered the system including the Subway. The next day, we ran in service driving a former New Orleans car on the F line with legendary Peter Erlich! And the day after that, another first was a trolley bus tour and again, I was able to run the TB. And in Boston where we joined a class of three trainee drivers and likewise, were allowed to drive all through the tram subways.

But, as an employed driver, my international job was in 2008 when my wife did a teacher exchange for 12 months in Canada in the township of Orillia (about the only claim to fame was, it was where Gordon Lightfoot came from). I got a job driving

buses the second day I was there!! I did that for the year and enjoyed every minute of it.

So, now I am 70, I'm still driving coaches on a casual basis and hope to do that for the rest of this year before I give that away for good. But, I still have a passion for driving trams and love my time at Ballarat, driving the genuine trams on the genuine track and I plan to do this as long as they will let me!!





## Caption Contest

Over the years some very interesting and odd photos have been taken at the Museum. With this issue I have started the Caption Contest. The best caption sent to the editor could be used on our social media accounts such as Facebook, Instagram or Whatsapp, depending if it is suitable for publication. Winners will also receive a small prize which can be collected from the Museum on their next visit.

The editor's family will judge the contest, the winner being the one that they like the most.



For the first contest, here is a photo of Craig King and Paul Mong. I await your response:

[peter.waugh@btm.org.au](mailto:peter.waugh@btm.org.au)



*Ballarat Courier, September 1971*

## From the Archives

With a large section of the tramway track in Wendouree Parade about to be replaced with money from a grant from the State Government, it is interesting to look back to 1934 when tracks were on the agenda.

Interesting to note that the line that lost the most money is the section of track on which the BTM continues to operate trams.

### Reconstruction of Tram Tracks

The State Electricity Commission wrote to the City Council on Monday night in furtherance of the proposed reconstruction of tram tracks in Ballarat. The council's acceptance of the Government's financial proposals it was stated was based on the facilities for street transport detailed by the commission and would not in any way prejudice the council in its further consideration of modifications to the existing facilities considered warranted by the commission. It was asked that the council cooperate with the commission upon such modifications before any decisions were made public.

It was added that the annual losses on the various routes were scheduled as the following - Gardens line £3,844 ; Drummond street north £750; Drummond street south £2,575; Lydiard street north £834; Mount Pleasant; £1,035 and Orphanage £333; Councillor Perkins moved that the tramway system be retained as at present in Drummond street and on the Sebastopol route as far as Rubicon street. Councillor Tre-kardo seconded.

After considerable discussion it was decided to adjourn the discussion to allow Mr Dixon manager of the Electric Supply Company to be present to assist the council in discussions on the matter.

*From the Argus, 20 March 1934, page 3*



Tram 14 repaint. Photo: Alistair Reither



Greg King at the controls of one of Melbourne's heritage tram fleet



**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:

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