Fares Please!

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum

Moving the trams

Moving the trams into the new building. Photos: Peter Waugh

Moving trams

We have been busy with some tram moves over the last month, bringing Tram 28 back from storage, relocating trams for the new museum display and rescuing a W-class tram No. 883 from a local primary school:

Dear Paul,

On behalf of the Mount Clear Primary School Council and Community, I would like to thank you and your volunteers for removing the tram from our school grounds on Saturday 6th November 2021. Thank you for taking ownership of our neglected tram and it is lovely to think that its parts can be used for other re-builds at your museum. I look forward to seeing the outcome of the tram you are rebuilding, and I also look forward to working with the Ballarat Tramway Museum Education programs in 2022. I would like to commend you on the professional way you have approached the removal of the tram and the planning and communication with the school allowed for a perfect removal.
Kind Regards,
Cameron Landry, Principal, MCPS

Wendouree Parade after the storm.
Photo: Alastair Reither

Storm damage

With the COVID-19 restrictions eased, we were preparing for a busy Melbourne Cup weekend, expecting lots of visitors to take advantage of a long weekend and a chance to visit Ballarat. But on Friday 29 October, a severe storm struck Ballarat, causing widespread damage and power blackouts. In the Botanical Gardens several large trees were uprooted, or lost heavy branches. One tree fell over Wendouree Parade, blocking the road and bringing down our overhead wires. Branches also damaged the overhead on the depot fan. The gardens were closed for two weeks while the damage was cleaned up, and the safety of other trees was assessed. Our crews put in hours to repair the damage to the overhead and make it safe. The large tree on the depot fan was assessed as dangerous and had to be removed. Thanks to everyone who put in extra effort to get us back on track.

Tram 26 during relocation.
Photo: Paul Mong

A busy couple of months

Clockwise: Bringing 28 back at dawn, laying new sleepers at Bungaree, the AGM cooks, raising the new shed at Bungaree, and new ballast for the access track and depot fan.
Photos by Alastair Reither, Paul Mong, Neville Britton, and Peter Waugh

A letter from Valley Heights

We're pleased to see your article in the October edition of Fares Please. I am pleased that you used one of my photos.

After being closed since June, we re-open Sunday 7th, with further open days on 14 and 28 November. In December we have Santa visiting by Steam on Sat & Sun of the first two weekends. We normally alternate operating sessions with Tram 103A one week, followed by the Valley Heights Mixed a fortnight later. At present the 0-6-0 Stephenson loco is under maintenance so we expect our 130 year old tram to do the honours this month at least!

Cheers
Grant Robinson
Secretary
Steam Tram and Railway Preservation Society

Awards

Mal Rowe , with Paul Mong, and Warrington Cameron. Photo: Peter Waugh

Several awards were presented at our Annual General Meeting in November. Warrington Cameron was granted a special COTMA Chairman's Award for his restoration of Geelong No. 2. Warrington said it had not been his original intention to restore the tram to an operating condition, but to have a unique cubby house for the children. The BTM was presented with a COTMA Award for our community support which has resulted in over two million dollars being spent to restore our old tracks. Simon Jenkins was presented with his 25 years of volunteer service badge.

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting was held in the new museum building on Sunday 21 November. Members listened to various reports from the Board members, and the presentation of awards. An election was not required this year, and the 2022 Board remains the same as last year, with the addition of Ryan Vanderzweep who has been co-opted as an extra member.

President: Paul Mong

Secretary: Peter Winspur

Treasurer: Carolyn Cleak

Vice-President: Greg Rogers

Members: Greg King, Peter Waugh, Richard Gilbert, John Whiting, Neville Britton, Sam Boon and Ryan Vanderzweep.

Following the meeting, members took the opportunity of a tour of the new building, and a ride on W-Class 407 and Geelong No. 2.

Afternoon tea was a special event, with recipes taken from one of the old 1960s SEC cookbooks. Thanks to Pamela Waugh and her team who cooked in our new kitchen: Chris, Cathy, Arthur, Taylah, Matt and Peter (official taste tester).

A new shed

The BTM is working with Victrack to build a new storage shed on our site at Bungaree. The building is designed to hold 20 historic trams belonging to Victrack and the Melbourne Tram Museum, as well as 10 trams belonging to the BTM.

Our volunteers have been busy preparing the sleepers and tracks for the inside of the shed. The rails inside the new shed (and in our new museum building) were from the main Melbourne to Sydney railway. BTM members recovered over one kilometre of track from Bowser, north of Wangaratta in November 2012.

Tram 32
Len Millar

One of our trams is stored under cover at our Bungaree property. It is former State Electricity Commission No. 32. When the system closed in 1971, it was gifted to the Maryborough Historical and Wildlife Cooperative. The tram sat in the SEC's storage yard in Norman Street awaiting collection and was eventually moved to Maryborough in 1973. The proposed Wildlife Cooperative didn't "happen" so No. 32 came into our collection in 1986 – principally for its mechanical components.

It was built by Duncan and Fraser in Adelaide in 1917 for the Hawthorn Tramways Trust and delivered to Hawthorn Depot in 1918 and was going to become its No. 36. However, mechanical and electrical components were in very short supply during World War I and it was acquired by the Footscray Tramways Trust in 1919. It is understood that the Hawthorn Tramways Trust was short of funds at that time due to its track repair costs. Then the newly-formed Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board came into existence in 1920, taking over the various Trusts.

Our No. 32, after being stored back at Hawthorn Depot, commenced running in service on September 3, 1920 as the M&MTB's "Eastern Region" No. 36, only to be soon re-numbered as the Board's "M" class tram No. 186. As far as can be

Car is held up outside Hanna St. Depot (after severe thunderstorm which flooded the track) while pointsmen search for the points.

Our Tram 32, in South Melbourne as MMTB 186. Photo: BTM collection

Opening the Lydiard Street extension. Photo: George Netherway, 1937

determined, the tram was initially allocated to Hawthorn Depot, but was a Hanna Street Depot car in the Board's Depot Allocation list as at March 24, 1928, having just been re-painted in the M&MTB livery of green and cream. Records then show that it was stored at Camberwell Depot on June 9, 1934.

During its active life carrying passengers around Melbourne and its suburbs it clocked up 273,843 kilometres (170,158 miles). The M&MTB records for the tram show that it received sundry minor repairs and replacements. But changes were afoot! In February 1935 it was purchased by the State Electricity Commission and transported to Ballarat, being unloaded at Ballarat railway station on 12 August 1935.

The "new" Ballarat No. 32 was immediately converted from the original "California combination car with open drop-ends into the Ballarat single trucker's final form with waist level panels in the drop ends and with closeable doors at

each corner of the tram. These conversion works (including being re-painted into a dark green and cream livery) were completed by November 23, and the tram went into service around Ballarat. No. 32 had its moment of fame when, on August 30, 1937 it became the car that opened the 915 metre extension of the Lydiard Street North line from Gregory Street up to the Ballarat Cemetery at Norman Street. The accompanying photograph was taken by one of our foundation members, George Netherway, and shows the City of Ballarat Mayor J. Pryor leaning out of the driver's cabin centre window cutting the ceremonial ribbon.

No. 32 was involved in a collision with a motor truck in April 1945, and it was repaired and re-painted. Then after World War 2 ended No. 32 was given a new colour scheme – "Mid"-Bristol green and cream – in August 1947. Then No. 32 became the subject of a trial of the use of white reflective "Scotch-lite" adhesive

tape on the aprons of the tram. The "Scotch-lite" was stuck on in vertical strips for some distance up from the bottom of the aprons, and two triangles of the tape appeared in the bottom corners of the aprons. The project was topped off with two horizontal strips of the tape at the outer ends of the bumper bars and the outer ends of the four foot-boards. With the street lighting as it was in those days, Ballarat's trams fitted with these reflective tapes would have been seen earlier at night by motor vehicles. Oddly, the trial was not considered a success, and the tram did not run in service with the tapes. In 1952, with more and more traffic accidents occurring at night, battery-operated red lights were installed in the bottom outer corners of the tram fleet's aprons. The white strips and triangles of reflective tape were applied four years later!

*Experimenting with the reflective tape.
Photo: Wal Jack*

On March 30, 1959, local tram aficionado, the late Wally Jack, took a photo of Sebastopol-bound No.32 entering the double track in Lydiard Street south of the railway station – while No. 12 patiently waits to proceed north on the single track up to the Cemetery.

Traffic accidents - especially at night – were still on the increase, so in 1960/1961 the SEC painted yellow zebra stripes on the bumper bars

Lydiard Street, 1959. Photo: Wal Jack

and above and below the drivers' cab windows. Further, all the trams were fitted with dash canopy lighting. These assemblies comprised four white and two red lights located behind a strip of metal below the drivers' cab windows. A switch above the driver's head controlled which lights were showing at each end – four white lights at the front of the tram and two red ones at the rear. The SEC was nine years ahead of the M&MTB for running trams clearly visible at night. Auxiliary lighting didn't "happen" on Melbourne's trams until 1970.

On December 23, 1967 our long-term member, Dave Macartney, snapped No, 32 in Wendouree Parade - painted up as the new Myer "Santa Tram". No. 32 ran through until closure of the SEC's Ballarat tramways in 1971, and two years later was transferred to Maryborough, where it is believed to have sat under an awning on the site of the proposed Wildlife Park.

Then in 1986, No. 32 came in to our possession, and placed on the Depot's Road 7. It was acquired principally for its mechanical components – but who knows? One day "down the track", No. 32 might have the preservationists' "magic wand" waved over it and it may be restored to its original Melbourne form as an open end "California combination" car. Given the popularity (on warm, sunny Ballarat days)

No. 32, Wendouree Parade.
Photo: Dave Macartney 1967

of our existing open end single trucker, No. 26 - it could be a "winner"!

Like our much-used "Trojan horse" No. 33, 32 has different electrical equipment to earlier "M" class trams – AND it's 0.305 metres (1'0") longer. Back in 1986 the body of No. 32 was accepted by another tramway museum if and when they could house it. We removed mechanical equipment, but that move didn't happen, so on February 2, 2001, No. 32 was shunted on to 5 Road, pending removal to our Bungaree property two weeks later.

On site in Maryborough, 1986. Photo: BTM Collection

For the technically-minded, No. 32 is 10.01 metres (32'10" long, 3.25 metres (10'8") high and 2.72 metres (8'11") wide. During its operating life it weighed in at 12.2 tonnes (12 tons) and was equipped with a Brill 21E 2.286 metre (7'6") wheelbase and two General Electric 37kW (50hp)

motors originally "controlled" by Westinghouse T1C controllers. The tram later received Westinghouse K36J controllers, just like sister car – Ballarat No. 33. During its 36 year operating life in Ballarat, 32 covered 1,536,806 kilometres (954,953 miles)!

Our 2010 Conservation Plan for 32 was to restore it back to its original as-built form (like our No. 26). Do we paint it in Hawthorn Tramways Trust grey and blue, M&MTB chocolate and cream OR the later green and cream OR the SEC's dark green and cream? Decisions! Decisions!

In October 2021, the BTM made the decision to place Tram 32 into the new display building, as an example of an unrestored tramcar. Tram 32, you are under secure cover in Ballarat. May be, one day, you may live to operate again!

Acknowledgements:

Sturt Street, 1969. Photo: John Ward

From Dave Macartney's Collection

Preston Depot, May 1976. Now 45 years later, No. 671 and No. 407 are together again in Ballarat

No. 32 as the Myer Santa Tram, 1967

The Geelong Tramways: the Ballarat Connection.

By Alan Bradley.

Part 2

Council visits

In the early days tramway operators in Ballarat dealt with three Councils (City of Ballaarat, Town of Ballarat East and Borough of Sebastopol). In Geelong there were five Councils where trams eventually ran (City of Geelong, Town of West Geelong, Town of Newtown and Chilwell, Shire of South Barwon, and Shire of Corio).

For many years Ballarat, Ballarat East and Geelong councillors visited their cities each year and were hosted by their respective councillors. In 1907 the Geelong councillors arrived by train and were taken around the city in "a special car" - tram No. 7, which had carpet placed on the saloon floor and cushions placed on the seats", and was driven by a motorman wearing white gloves. The Councillors went by tram to the Gardens for refreshments, a cricket match, and lunch in the pavilion. After lunch they went by tram to Dunn's Gardens in Ballarat East for bowling, and then to the Orphanage. Eventually the Geelong councillors returned for the train ride home.[1]

In 1913 Geelong at last had a tram system to show off to their Ballarat guests. But the tram trip did not proceed as hoped. "They started on a tram trip to Newtown, but the heavy rain was responsible for filling the grooves of the tram rails with washings from the roads and rendering the points at the Pakington Street junction unworkable, consequently the party could not proceed any further and returned to the City". [2]

When Ballarat councillors visited Geelong in 1914, a tram conveyed the party from the Railway Station to the Prince of Wales Hotel for breakfast. After breakfast the tram conveyed the party to the Barwon River for a trip by motor paddle boat to Queen's Park for a cricket match. Afterwards came the return trip by boat and tram to the city, then a tour by horse-drawn drag around Geelong. [3]

The Barwon River at Queen's Park, 1910. Photo: State Library of Victoria

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MOORABOOL STREET, GEELONG, VIC.

After 1915 the council visits were postponed for the duration of the war. When visits resumed after the War, visiting councillors were shown around the host city by car rather than by tram.

The 1920s

In 1914 the Darling Downs Gazette in distant Queensland) noted: "Without a tramway system Geelong was known as 'Sleepy Hollow'. Now it has awakened to life, despite those that mourned that the place had no future".[4] Between 1901 and 1921 Geelong's population grew from 29,000 to 36,000 – and there was more growth to come during the 1920s. Meanwhile Ballarat's population declined from 49,000 to 39,000 during the same period mainly due to the end of the gold industry.

During the "Roaring 20s" several new lines and extensions were built:

- 1922-23: East Geelong;

- 1927: Chilwell; extension from South Geelong to Belmont;

- 1928-29: North Geelong;

- 1930, Eastern Park.

The North Geelong line terminated next to the Federal Woollen Mills. But the new Ford plant (opened in 1925) was located further north at Norlane, well past the tram terminus. Many other new industrial facilities in the coming years in Norlane and Corio would also be located past the reach of the trams.

Geelong's VFL team[5] also won its first three VFL premierships in 1925, 1931 and 1937 when it was still playing at Corio Oval in Eastern Park. Football fans from Melbourne initially travelled from Geelong Station by tram to Garden Street on the East Geelong line, until the new line to Eastern Park was built close to Corio Oval. [6]

With new tram lines came new trams. In 1924 the MESCo imported two 'Birney' type tramcars from the J. G. Brill Company of Philadelphia, U.S.A. (around the same time that two similar cars were ordered for Melbourne and
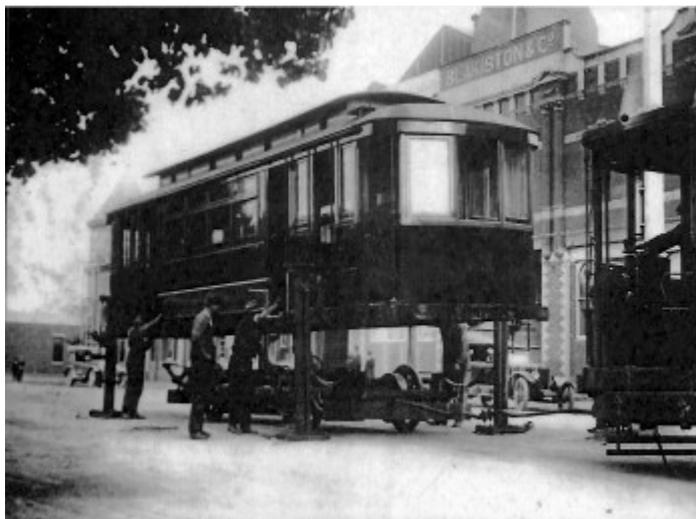
four for Adelaide). They were an enclosed saloon of steel construction, light weight design, with only one doorway on each side. These became Nos. 14 and 15. It was Geelong's first experience of one–man operated trams, a decade after Ballarat's. The Company also purchased a crossbench trailer (formerly from the privately-run Essendon tramways) and converted it into a track cleaner, commissioned in 1926.

The next order during 1924 was for eight cars from the Adelaide firm of Pengelley and Company. These were totally different to the Birney cars being large, heavy, wooden combination cars with clerestory roofs, riding on Brill Radiax trucks, with large heavy motors providing power. They were numbered 16 to 23.

In 1928 the MESCo obtained seven second-hand single-truck trams from Melbourne, which became Nos. 24 to 30. They ran in original condition, as

Tram being delivered from Geelong Railway Station to the Geelong Tram Depot.
Photo: Keith Kings collection

our own No. 26 does now. This was two years before the ESCo bought similar surplus Melbourne cars for Ballarat and Bendigo. The two open cars, Nos 11 and 12, and the remaining two trailers were scrapped.

As well as buying new rolling stock, MESCo began replacing the original concrete stringer track foundations with wooden sleepers. The Company

Putting the truck back under the tram after delivery
Photo: Keith Kings collection.

carried out maintenance at a satisfactory level. In contrast the ESCo merely patched up the concrete stringer track, and its lightly-built trams and overhead wire were in poor condition. The Ballarat tramways were now an embarrassment to the city.

At this point the State Electricity Commission of Victoria (SEC) entered the picture. The SEC was formed in 1921 to create a State-wide electricity supply, using the vast brown coal deposits in the LaTrobe Valley. In 1929 agreements were made for SEC takeover of the MESCo in Geelong in 1930, and the ESCo in Ballarat and Bendigo in 1934. The SEC reluctantly agreed to take over tramway operation in each city - mainly because there was no-one else to do so.

The Great Depression

On 1 September 1930 the SEC took over operation of the Geelong power supply and tramways. Geelong had over half of its tracks newly laid in the last decade, and a tram fleet in good condition. In contrast the track, overhead and trams in Ballarat and Bendigo were in very poor condition. The effects of the Great Depression began to bite during 1930 and 1931, with high unemployment and a 10% reduction in wages for those who still had a job.

Less money in the community meant fewer passengers. In January 1932 the SEC announced that all trams in Geelong would be gradually converted to one-man trams as an economy move. This would involve the dismissal of sixteen employees; six conductors had already received notice that their employment would be terminated next week.[7] The ESCo had dispensed with some conductors in 1913 and 1915 when one-man operation was introduced into Ballarat - and now it was Geelong's turn, right in the middle of the Great Depression. The secretary of the Geelong Trades Hall Council said that one-man trams had been a failure in Ballarat, and would be in Geelong.[8]

The initial design for one-man operation involved fitting panels on the end platforms, with one doorway on the front left-hand side for passengers to enter and exit, and re-arranging the seats. But one doorway per side was unsatisfactory, as loading was slow during peak periods. An extra entrance was provided at the rear end, to allow quicker loading and unloading when a conductor was employed. This new style of one-man operation (known as the "Geelong" style) was used on all of the single truck cars, except the Pengelleys and Birneys, and was also used in Bendigo. With the extra panelling Nos. 1 to 10 looked even more like square boxes - was this where they earned their "Butterbox" nickname? [9]

The 1933 census showed that Geelong with 39,000 people had overtaken Ballarat (37,000) to become Victoria's second city. In the same year it was decided to recondition the Ballarat and Bendigo tramway systems to the standard of Geelong, as an unemployment relief project. Over the next few years the track and overhead wire was renewed in both cities, and second-hand ex-Melbourne cars purchased to replace the worn-out ESCo cars.

Tram 8 , as a "Butterbox"
Photo: Ian Saxon Collection

On 30 June 1934 the SEC took over the ESCo's operations in Ballarat and Bendigo, and now operated three tramway systems. From 1936 to 1950 Tilbury Thomas, the Superintendent in Geelong, became Tramway Superintendent of the Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong tramways. As Geelong was then a sounder tramway operation, its practices must have impacted on Ballarat.

In September 1935 the Tramways Union noted that the SEC had begun to put part of the Geelong system into operation in Ballarat. On the newly-relaid Drummond St North line they had placed into service the new "Ballarat" style of one-man tram, with doors in each corner. The old ESCo fare box system had been abolished, and the Geelong ticket system substituted.[10]

In 1936 four Birneys from the recently-closed Port Adelaide system were sent to Geelong (probably because they had two Birneys already and, as they were unique cars in the SEC fleet, it was logical to keep them together). As they had only one door per side Birneys were unsuitable for Ballarat's side-of-the-road operation. Four of Geelong's ex-Melbourne Meadowbank cars (Nos. 27 to 30) were transferred to Balla-

rat. The SEC could, and did over the years, swap trams between its three tramway systems – and this was the first example of that. The four Birneys became Geelong Nos. 27 to 30. The Meadowbank cars, along with three from Adelaide and one from Melbourne replaced the last of the ESCo cars. They became Nos. 11 to 14 and were converted to the "Ballarat" one-man type.

In 1938 both Ballarat and Geelong marked the centenary of European settlement. In March Ballarat ran a decorated and illuminated tram. Not to be outdone, in October a Pengelley tram was decorated and illuminated, and as in Ballarat, paper flowers and light globes were used to decorate the tram.

During 1939 the tramway centre poles in Moorabool Street were removed (just as they had been in Lydiard Street North in Ballarat a few years before). Suspension wires held up the tramway overhead instead. The Geelong Advertiser stated that the centre poles would not be missed, although "certain timid pedestrians may miss them as a convenient shield behind which to pause during peak traffic periods". [11]

In 1939 Pengelley cars Nos. 16 to 19 were converted to one-man operation in the "Geelong" style. These were the last such conversions made by the SEC on any of its trams prior to World War 2. All of the Pengelley cars were to be converted in this way, but Nos. 20 to 23 remained in original condition. [12]

Further extensions?

In 1938 the steamer service from Melbourne to the Geelong Wharf ceased. The tram service to the Wharf ceased in 1939, and the track was torn up and re-laid along Corio Terrace, past the depot. The new line to Eastern Beach was opened in October 1940.

World War 2 was now underway, and petrol rationing was introduced in 1940. Tram extensions were needed to serve a growing city, especially with fewer cars on the road. In May 1940 the South Barwon shire council asked the SEC to extend the Belmont line to new residential areas near the Colac Road. [13]

In 1942 the Commonwealth Government funded the extension of Bendigo's Lake Weeroona line to North Bendigo, as it served a munitions factory. Geelong lobbied for £60,000 in Commonwealth funding to extend the North Geelong line. This extension would serve industries in North Geelong and North Shore particularly for those engaged in munitions and war production. But the Commonwealth funding was denied. The extensions to Belmont and North Geelong were destined never to be built – and the minor extension to Eastern Beach would be the last new line in Geelong.

References and notes

1. H. P. James, Conductor 23, Pg 8; Ballarat Star 9/3/1907

2. Age 6/3/1913

3. Evening Echo 11/3/1914

4. Darling Downs Gazette 30/1/1914

5. Geelong played then in the Victorian Football League (VFL), the predecessor of the Australian Football League (AFL).

6. The Geelong Football Club transferred its home games from Corio Oval to Kardinia Park in 1941.

7. Herald 15/1/1932.

8. Herald 27/1/1932

9. A butter box was a wooden box that butter was transported in, before manufacturers used smaller individual packets. The origin of the nickname "Butterbox" for those trams is obscure, but it first appeared in a "tramway" publication in *Destination Eaglehawk* (1965). The terms "Birney", "Pengelly", "Meadowbank" were used in SEC papers during the 1950s but rather than "Butterbox" and "Bogie", they used the descriptors "Duncan & Fraser" for cars 1-10 and "Maximum traction" for the bogie cars.

10. Ballarat Secretary to State Secretary ATMOEA 23/9/1935

11. SEC Magazine July 1939

12. ibid

13. Age 23/5/1940

To be continued in the February edition

CLUB 40

World's steepest railway

This funicular railway is in Katoomba, NSW. The carriages are lowered and pulled up again by cables, the word coming from the Latin word for rope, "funiculus". It was originally built as a tramway to transport coal from a mine at the bottom of a steep cliff.

In 1945 it was developed as a tourist scenic railway. It is 315 metres long, includes a tunnel, and the incline is 52°. In 2013 the funicular was redeveloped as a part of Scenic World, with new carriages and other attractions including a steep aerial cable car. An interesting place to visit on your next holiday.
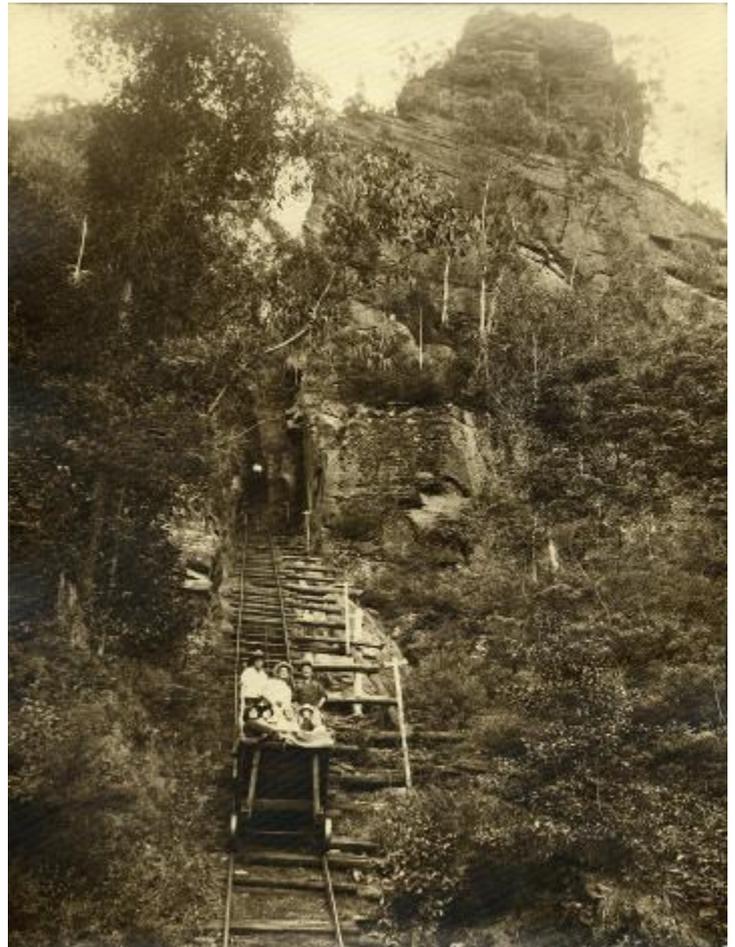
The railway in 1915, from the Harry Phillips album
Blue Mountains City Library

The Caption Contest

This edition we have another photo (left) for you to add your own caption, John Reynen meeting young visitors at the museum entrance.

The winner for October (below) is K. Brookman of Wendouree with the caption:

"Now I know there is a compressor here some-where!"

An honorable mention for Dave Macartney who suggested:

"They'll never think of looking for me here."

Storm damage on the access track, October 2021. Photo: Paul Mong

Santa Tram, 2021. Photo: Cathy Thomas

Depot fan. Photo: Peter Waugh