Fares Please!

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum

Geelong No. 2 launched

Paul Mong, Mayor of Ballarat Daniel Moloney, Warrington Cameron, Mayor of Geelong Trent Sullivan, and members of the Cameron family. Photo: Paul Nicholson

Inside

The Geelong Tramways: the Ballarat Connection (Third and final part)

Geelong No. 2 launch

After COVID foiled several attempts to hold this event, the tram was launched on Sunday 6 February. A large group of VIPs, members and the public were there for this historic event.

President Paul Mong welcomed everyone including the Mayor of Ballarat Daniel Moloney, Councillor Samantha McIntosh, Councillor Ben Taylor, the Mayor of Geelong Trent Sullivan, MLA for Wendouree Juliana Addison. COTMA Executives Rod Atkins and Mal Rowe, the Shoppee Family Beth, Phillip and John, and also the many guests that travelled from other tram museums in Victoria, NSW and SA.

Paul's address:

We are very fortunate to be in the position today of launching this very historic tram. I would like to thank our member Warrington Cameron and his family, for their dedication and commitment in the restoration of this tram. I would like to thank Neville Britton in organising this day, after many attempts we have finally got here.

This tram built in Adelaide and operated in Geelong, then used a grain store on the Bellarine Peninsula, moved to Canberra for restoration, then to Bendigo and has finally arrrived in Ballarat.

When the museum adds a tram to our collection, we look at its significance and its relevance, and then it is judged by a point system.

Tram 2 was interesting considering it did not operate in Ballarat. However, the following points got it over the line:

- The historic value of the tram.

- The link that Geelong had to Ballarat during the SEC operations

- The detailed level of restoration done by Warrington

- And the final point, after spending nearly 30 years in Canberra we believe the tram is now climatised to operate in Ballarat!

Warrington Cameron thanked the many people and organisations who had assisted him with the restoration of the tram including:

- Keith Kings and Dale Budd for their phone calls (about the tram at the Shoppee's farm, and four trucks coming to STM from Belgium respectively)

- Howard Clark for spotting the trucks in the first place and arranging for their transport

- Kym Smith for his work on the truck while he was Workshop Manager at Bendigo Tramways (BT)

- The BT team who made the tram run, represented by Will Adams

- Neville Britton and the BTM team for organising and managing the launch

- Tony Smith (MTPA) for providing two essential parts

Warrington spoke about the seats in the tram's saloon as an example of the variety of sources of materials and people who helped:

- Metal bases - TMSV (Keith Kings and Graham Jordan), Newstead Tramcars (Len Millar and Darren Hutchesson)

- Cushions - TMSV (Graham Jordan)

- Rattan - via the Seashore Trolley Museum, Maine

- Brass - handles and top strips cast by members of the AETM, Adelaide - Kym Smith and John Radcliffe respectively

- Fitting in Ballarat - Paul Mong and Alastair Reither

And finally he thanked his wife for her patience and understanding during the years of restoration.

New Members

The Museum would like to welcome the following new members:

1027　Mr Christopher Boele-Mitchell, Dela combe　(from Junior Supporter)

1028　Ms Susan Edmondson, Wendouree

1029　Mr Mal Rowe, Essendon

1030　Mr Timothy Sandhu, Kensington, NSW

1031　Mr William Hausler, Casterton

1032　Mr Glenn Corbett of Parkdale

Operations

We have had a number of issues maintaining our ideal operating model and patronage due to the recent outbreak of the OMICRON variant of COVID-19. This has caused volunteer shortages, and visitors staying at home to protect themselves from the continuing pandemic. The museum display in the old depot has been moved into the new building which has meant there is currently not much to see for visitors. We were able to carry fantastic numbers running every day between Boxing Day and New Years Day. Trams also operated for the first

two weeks of January (running everyday) but as the new variant began to show its head it restricted our services. We weren't able to restart operations until the weekend of 22nd and 23rd with slightly lower than expected patronage – again due to less people being out and about and the usual quietness of the end of January.

New track

In November Senator Sarah Henderson and Ballarat CEO Evan King visited the Museum to announce that the City had been successful in receiving a Federal Government grant of $1.2 million to match the earlier State Government grant. This will allow for the completion of the track renewal in Wendouree Parade. Tenders have been called for the work which is hoped to commence in April and take approx. eight weeks. More details in the next edition!

New building to open in April

We hope the new building will be ready to open to the public in April. Details will be on our website soon,

Peter Waugh
Editor, "Fares Please".

Launching Tram 2, Warrington Cameron, Nick Benn (Tramway Museum St. Kilda, S.A.), Will Adams (Bendigo Tramways), the Mayors and Paul Mong. Photos: Peter Waugh

Len Millar (Newstead Tramcars)

Mayor Daniel Moloney, Juliana Addison MLA

Tony Smith, MTPA

The Geelong Tramways:
The Ballarat Connection

By Alan Bradley

Part 3 (Final)

The War comes to Geelong

During wartime Australian cities were seen as vulnerable to possible enemy attack – especially Geelong which was a large port and a potential target. Geelong was selected as the first Victorian city to experience a complete "black-out" test, as it had tram, train, street, and private lighting for a thorough dimming test.[1] The test took place on 25 May 1941, and was inspected by observers from all over Australia.   A signal for the first dimming of lights was given by flare from an aeroplane, and suddenly all street lights in the centre of the city went off. Shop lights disappeared and a complete blanket of dark fell over buildings and streets. Throughout Geelong 65 "incidents" were staged to test emergency responses. For one incident a tram was deliberately pushed off the rails.[2] The test was successful, and observers from the air noted the restricted lighting on trams.

Boys dealing with an incendiary during a drill at Geelong Grammar School, c. 1942

Photo: State Library of Victoria

The Pacific War began in December 1941, and Australia feared a Japanese attack. Blackouts were enforced for coastal cities (including Geelong), and less stringent "brownouts" within 100 miles of the coast (including Ballarat). In both cities shades were placed on tram headlights to direct the lights downwards, funnels placed on interior globes to prevent the spread of light, and bumper bars painted white to make trams easier to see in the gloom.

Air raid fire drill in Geelong, c. 1942
Photo: State Library of Victoria

Geelong Football Club's home ground at Corio Oval was taken over by the Army in 1941, so home matches were switched to Kardinia Park (on the Belmont line). But Geelong had to withdraw from the VFL in 1942 due to travel restrictions. Petrol rationing forced many people to leave their cars at home, and the Geelong tramways were

Tram 18 at the Geelong Railway Station
Photo: BTM Collection

busier than ever. The Geelong tramways annual patronage rose from 3,690,416 in 1939 to 6,875,634 in 1945.

With increasing numbers of men (including tramway employees) enlisting, the SEC proposed recruitment of conductresses to maintain services. The Geelong Branch of the Tramways Union opposed the move to employ conductresses. "It is considered that owing to the single tracks, and the numerous loops and curves, women would find it difficult to keep their balance".[3] But the union executive was not opposed to the employment of conductresses, as long as the rates of pay were the same as for men, as their employment had been important in Melbourne.

Eventually 28 conductresses were employed in Geelong - and as in Ballarat and Bendigo, they played a vital role at a time when the trams were more crowded than ever. They were paid the equivalent of male rates, at a time when women were paid as little as 54% of the male wage for equivalent work.

Post-war

Geelong grew at a remarkable rate after World War 2, with a population growth from 45,000 in 1947 to 73,000 in 1954 - the latter figure being almost double the 1933 population. The suburbs spread around the shores of Corio Bay and for some distance inland – well beyond the reach of the tramway system. In comparison Ballarat grew from 40,000 people in 1947 to 48,000 in 1954.

During the early 1930's the Geelong system was in a far better condition than the Ballarat and Bendigo systems. All three tramways battled with heavy loading and deferred maintenance during the War, and now the Geelong system was in the poorest state. Rehabilitation of the original track was badly needed, as well as extensions to serve new Geelong suburbs. But the SEC was no longer interested in further expenditure on its tramways.

In late 1945 Ballarat and Bendigo both received maximum traction bogie cars from the MMTB. Geelong was now the last city in Australia with all

-single truck operation. In 1946 the Union asked that the trellis gates on the Bendigo and Geelong single truckers be replaced with doors similar to those in Ballarat. "The present arrangement results in exposure to weather, particularly cold winds, and creates considerable discomfort passengers as well as to the crew".[4] But the trellis gates remained on about half of the "Butterbox" and Meadowbank cars in Geelong after 1950. (The four one-man Pengelley cars received doors as part of their conversion in 1939).

During 1947-49 Geelong received its first six bogie cars, replacing the six Birney cars that were sent to Bendigo. Another four bogie cars arrived in 1951; the bogie cars were numbered 31 to 40.[5]

The Bell report

The 1930s rehabilitation of the Ballarat and Bendigo tramways was said to be good for around 15 years – until approximately 1950. By the late 1940s the SEC hoped to be relieved of its responsibilities as a tramway operator. Mr. H. H. Bell Jnr., the son of the Chairman of the M&MTB, was asked to report on the transport needs of Ballarat and Geelong for the immediate post war period.

The Geelong report was released late in 1948 and made three main recommendations:

- The replacement of the trams with diesel buses;

- The development of a suburban train service between North and South Geelong;

- If the SEC did not want to operate the replacement services, the task should be transferred to another authority.

Significantly the Geelong Council voted to support replacement of the trams by buses. Later the Victorian Premier (and local Ballarat member),

Tram 40 at the Railway Bridge, near Kardinia Park, South Geelong. Photo: BTM Collection

Thomas Hollway said that Ballarat was better suited to tramway operation than Geelong because it had better rolling stock and wider streets. Late in 1949 Bell's Ballarat report recommended replacement of the trams with trolleybuses. But nothing happened in either city as a result of the Bell report recommendations.

The 1950 SEC Annual Report stated that Victorians would pay less for electricity if its three tramway systems were replaced by buses. The report said the SEC had lost £250,000 in the last two years on its three tramway systems (of which Geelong's loss was around £90,000). In fact the Geelong tramways had never run at a profit for the SEC, even in 1943 and 1946 when the Ballarat system ran at a profit. A loss-making tramway requiring rebuilding and faced with a hostile local Council had a limited future. It was not until 1969 that the Ballarat Council asked the SEC to close its tramways.

In 1949 6,818,780 passengers were carried in Geelong, not far off the 1945 record, due to continued petrol rationing. In 1950 petrol rationing ceased, and with more cars on the road and fewer people riding the trams patronage gradually declined. In 1952 the SEC converted one of its bogie cars in each system to one-man operation (it was No. 39 in Geelong). The intention was to convert all of the Geelong bogie cars to one-man operation, and to dispose of the Meadowbank cars. But the ATMOEA refused to allow one-man operation of bogie cars, so no further bogie cars were converted and the Meadowbank cars were retained as spares.

Operation and maintenance Geelong style

Until the early 1950s the arrangement of Geelong tram routes was as follows:

- Newtown to Railway/Beach (formerly Wharf);
- West to Railway/Beach;
- Belmont to North;
- East to Chilwell;
- Eastern Park to City.

In 1952 the through route pattern was altered to:

- East to West;
- North to Belmont;
- Eastern Park to Newtown;
- Chilwell to Railway/Beach.

The tram depot in Geelong was built adjacent to the powerhouse, and was close to the city centre. In contrast Ballarat's lakeside depot was a long distance from the city, and on the opposite side of the lake to the powerhouse. This led to considerable dead mileage in transferring trams to and from the city, a problem not present in Geelong.

The Geelong depot traverser was built for single truck trams.[6] The arrival of bogie trams led to problems transferring them into the paint shop. The leading truck was driven onto the traverser, then the traverser aligned for the paint shop, and the rear bogie then driven onto the traverser, and then finally the tram into the paint shop. Ballarat depot did not have a traverser.

The three SEC Tramway systems were, in theory, operated in the same way, but the meeting minutes of their Tramcar Maintenance Conferences meetings from 1951 to 1954 show differences in practice between the cities.[7] Some of these were:

- Ballarat painted window sashes green. Geelong used a lighter green than Ballarat and painted window sashes cream. Geelong considered that the salt-laden atmosphere affected the colour.
- Geelong painted the ceilings in the Birney cars white, requiring an occasional washing only. Ballarat preferred to keep the "beautiful veneered timber" in their ceilings.
- Geelong fitted a centre panel to one of the bogie cars and painted it white. Ballarat later did the same to one of their bogie cars, and eventu-

ally used the white panel for all of their bogie trams.

- In the late 1940s the number of passengers in Geelong was increasing and the Birney cars were too small for certain routes. After transfer to Bendigo the Birneys were rarely used "due to some prejudice", but after further use they were well received by the public.

- Ballarat and Bendigo used brake shoes from Harding's Foundry, Ballarat, and Geelong from Central Foundry, Geelong.

- Ballarat and Geelong both used two types of brake shoes: No. 1 Pattern for single truck and bogie trams, plus Pony Pattern for bogie pony wheels. Geelong also used a third type, No. 2 Pattern for the Brill Radiax trucks on the Pengelleys. No. 1 brake shoes were successfully trialled on Pengelley Nos. 16 and 17, and from then on only No. 1 and Pony Pattern shoes were used in Geelong.

- Ballarat trialled plastic weather blinds in place of canvas blinds, as "it was considered that climatic conditions were more severe than in the other two branches".

- Ballarat allowed smoking in rear saloons of bogie trams, but Geelong did not.

The 1954 meeting discussed a shortage of spare parts for bogie trams. Ballarat needed a replacement for car No. 37 which was badly damaged in an accident. Geelong suggested that one or more additional maximum traction tramcars should be purchased from the MMTB and wrecked for spare parts. The only car available was the Melbourne "dog car". "In view of the uncertainty of the future of the tramway system in Geelong, it was considered inadvisable to go to the expense of purchasing this car".[8]

Closure

At the time of the 1954 meeting, the Transport Regulation Board (TRB) was considering the future of public transport in Geelong. In late 1954 the TRB announced its findings, which were that the trams should be replaced by motor buses and

The last night of the Geelong Tramway, 26 March 1956. Photo: BTM Collection

not trolleybuses, and that they should be operated by a public authority other than the SEC.

John Cain Senior's Labor Government was then in power, but Henry Bolte's Liberals took power in May 1955. In July 1955 the new Transport Minister Arthur Warner announced that Geelong's trams would be scrapped and replaced by private bus operators, not a public authority. He said there were no plans for scrapping trams in Ballarat and Bendigo.[9]

Around the same time there were increasing collisions at night on the State highways (the Victoria Street line in Ballarat, and the North line in Geelong). The SEC began installing "zebra stripes" on its Geelong cars. Yellow and black stripes were painted on each end and dash canopy lighting installed. Seven trams were fully equipped when the program ended later that year after details for the closure of the Geelong system were announced.[10] It was another five years before trams in Ballarat and Bendigo were fitted with dash canopy lighting.

The TRB announced that the tramway replacement would take place in four stages:

- Sunday 8 January 1956: East-West, Chilwell to Beach and Railway Station;

- Sunday 22 January 1956, Newtown to Eastern Park;

- Sunday 4 March 1956, City to North Geelong;

- Sunday 25 March 1956, City to Belmont.

Three existing bus operators - Benders Busways, Corio Buslines and Trans Otway - were successful in negotiating for the tramway replacement franchises. (Fifteen years later the TRB awarded a single operator the tramway replacement services in Ballarat.) Benders took over the North Geelong, Newtown and Chilwell services, the Belmont Service went to Corio Buslines, whilst Trans Otway took over the services to East Geelong, West Geelong and Eastern Park. Each of these

lines were extended beyond the former tram termini, but the service to Eastern Beach was not replaced by buses.

As in other cities, the last night of tramway services on 25 March saw a large public attendance to farewell their trams. Tram No. 4, which was the first tramcar to run tests in 1912, was the official last tram from Belmont to the depot, accompanied by bogie cars Nos. 31, 33 and 38.

The aftermath

Bogie cars 31 and 38 were scrapped along with the single truck cars. Bogie cars Nos. 37, 39 and 40 became Ballarat cars 41 to 43, and came just in time for service in the Olympic Games rowing later that year. The other five bogie cars went to Bendigo.

Geelong No. 39, and later Ballarat No. 41, in a motel at Horsham, Victoria. Photo: Peter Waugh, 2019

Early in March 1956, a few weeks before the final Geelong closure, a by-election was held for the State Upper House seat of Ballarat Province. Premier Bolte denied claims by the Labor candidate that the Government would close the Ballarat system next. The Ballarat and Sebastopol Councils still supported retention of the trams. The SEC in its annual reports argued that since it had closed the Geelong system it should be allowed to close both the Ballarat and Bendigo Ballarat systems as well - but the political situation did not allow this.

The bogie trams and spare parts from Geelong allowed trams in poor condition in Ballarat and Bendigo to be scrapped.[11] Both systems gained a boost and were able to run for another 15 years.

In October 1960 Ballarat single truck trams Nos. 19 and 25 were swapped for bogie tram No. 1 from Bendigo. No. 1 had run in Melbourne, Geelong and Bendigo, and then became Ballarat (2nd) No. 37. It was the most travelled tram in Australia – and the last addition to Ballarat's tram fleet.[12]

All of Ballarat's former Geelong cars - Meadowbank cars Nos. 11 to 14, and bogie cars Nos. (2nd) 37, and 41 to 43 - operated until the end of tramway operation in 1971. No. 42 was the last tram from Lydiard Street North on the final night of service. In contrast, four of Bendigo's former Geelong cars were either scrapped or out of service due to accident damage at time of closure in 1972.

When the Ballarat trams closed in 1971 Ballarat's population had increased to 58,620, and Geelong's was almost double at 122,080. Portions of the track were saved for operating museums in both Ballarat and Bendigo, whereas in 1956 there were no such moves made in Geelong.

2020s

65 years after the closure of the Geelong tramways the only obvious relic of the tramways is the entrance to the depot, displaying the name of the Melbourne Electric Supply Company Limited.

*Entry to the former Geelong Tram Depot.
Photo: Peter Waugh, 2012*

Most of the former Geelong trams sent to Ballarat or Bendigo are held by museums. Ballarat cars Nos. 13 and 14 are in the BTM fleet and No. 11 stored at Bungaree. No. 12 and (2nd) No. 37 are held by the Sydney Tramway Museum. No. 43 is held by the TMSV in Bylands. No. 42 was at one time at Bylands, but is now held privately. No. 41 is part of a restaurant in Horsham.

Bendigo's former Geelong Birney and bogie cars are all held by the Bendigo Trust, except for one of the Birneys in the collection of the AETM in Adelaide.

The body of Pengelley No. 22 was retrieved from Bayswater and held for restoration by the TMSV at Bylands. The bodies of "Butterbox" cars Nos. 2 and 9 were located at a property on the Bellarine Peninsula. No. 9 is now held by the TMSV. BTM member Warrington Cameron has restored No. 2 back to its 1912 California combination style in MESCo colours. It is currently in the BTM depot. He has also partially restored Meadowbank car No. 28 (previously No. 25) to its 1956 condition. It is currently stored at Bungaree, and may eventually be displayed in the new museum building.

Notes

1. Argus 23/1/1941

2. Argus 26/5/1941

3. Geelong Secretary to General Secretary ATMOEA 6/4/1942

4. From conference between ATMOEA and SEC 9/4/1946

5. Nos. 31 to 35 were ex-HTT bogie cars with four centre entrances. Nos. 36 to 30 were former PMTT bogie cars with three centre entrances.

6. A traverser consists of a sideways-moving platform for transferring a railway or tramway vehicle from one set of rails to another parallel set. Usually seen in workshops.

7. See the minutes of those meetings: https://btm.org.au/sec-reports.html

8. The "dog car" was ex-PMTT "C" class bogie car No. 30 which was modified to one door way per side and used to transport greyhounds and their owners to and from dog races at the Melbourne Showgrounds. It was scrapped in 1955. According to Bob Lilburn, on the way to its final resting place at the Fyansford Quarries in Geelong it startled the driver of a bogie tram on the North route as it passed by on the back of a truck.

9. Argus 7/7/1955

10. Nos. 4, 31 to 35 and 37 were fully equipped. No. 5 received yellow and black stripes only with no lighting.

11. Two single truck trams in Ballarat, and five in Bendigo, were withdrawn from service during 1956 and 1957 after the Geelong trams arrived.

12. This tram had operated as HTT No. 13, MMTB No. 119, Geelong No. 35, Bendigo No. 1 and Ballarat No. 37.

Abbreviations

ATMOEA: Australian Tramways and Motor Omnibus Employees' Association (now called the Rail Tram & Bus Union)

ESCo: Electric Supply Company of Victoria

HTT: Hawthorn Tramways Trust

M&MTB: Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board

MESCo: Melbourne Electric Supply Company Limited

P&MTT: Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust

SEC: State Electricity Commission of Victoria

TRB: Transport Regulation Board

VFL: Victorian Football League, the predecessor to the Australian Football League (AFL)

References

Articles on the Geelong tramways in Trolleywire:

- The Geelong tramways, by Keith Kings (April 1976);

- Twenty-five years ago...the closure of the Geelong tramways, by Ken McCarthy (April 1981);

- Geelong's tramways, by HP James & JM Moore (February 1999).

- Contact Magazine and SEC Magazine.

- The tale of a city: Geelong 1850-1950 (1950).

- The life of our years: a chronological history of Geelong, by CP Billot (1969).

- Victoria, a history, by Don Garden (1984).

- Last tram at 11, by William F. Scott (2008).

Other Geelong trams

Warrington Cameron's next project, Geelong Tram No. 28
Photo: Greg King

Geelong Tram No. 4, with the "zebra stripes" in storage in 1975.
Current whereabouts unknown but believed to be scrapped. Photo: Paul Nicholson

A busy day in Sturt Street

By Greg King

Sturt and Drummond Streets, Ballarat. Photo: Ian Saxon Collection

This scene is in Sturt Street, Ballarat with four trams in this busy picture! This photo looking east from outside the Ballarat Base Hospital, shows the corner of Drummond Street North (left) and Drummond Street South (right). Cars from Mt. Pleasant would turn out of Sturt Street (where you can make out the tram just to the left of the front of No. 34) and head off to circle Lake Wendouree (the car on the left is heading that way). After circling the lake it would eventually be where No. 34 is in this picture and keep going straight. Trams going through to Victoria Street, would not turn but go ahead completing the same course in a clockwise direction, trams passing at passing loops along the line.

There was also a branch line part way around the lake that re-joined the Sturt street line about two

blocks behind the photographer. This was the View Point line and only had limited runs each week day. I suspect that No. 12 is on one of those short workings as its destination is "City" which was the other end of the View Point service.

The tram just to the left front of No. 34 would most likely be going to Sebastopol which means it will make a left turn into Drummond Street South for the long run out to Sebastopol. Coming back, it will turn into Sturt Street and follow No.12. It would later turn off at Lydiard Street North in the city, go past the railway station and out to the Norman Street terminus. There were also tracks straight across for depot run-ins and run-outs for the Sebastopol line. So, this could be quite the busy intersection!

A traverser

In our article in this issue there is a mention of a traverser at the Geelong depot. Ballarat did not have one, so let's look at them and how they work. "Traverse" is a word meaning to travel or move through an area.

A traverser at the Everleigh Carriage Workshops, NSW. Photo: WikiWookie

In tram and train usage, a traverser is a platform that can hold a tram, engine or carriage and can move sideways. It is like a turntable, so it allows a tram to be lined up with different tracks. A turntable turns in a circle, but a traverser moves sideways. They are also known as transfer tables.

If we had a traverser in Ballarat, we would only need one track connecting the trams to the street. It would operate in front of the depot. Trams coming out of the shed would drive onto the traverser. It would then move sideways to connect the tram to access track. We would not need to have points to change tracks. The drawback would be that we would have a large pit across the front of the sheds with the track for the traverser to operate on.

A traverser on the old Sydney Monorail. Photo: Anbanmba

Traversers are used at the Preston tram depot in Melbourne, the Sydney Tramway Museum, and the Launceston Tram Museum.

They are also used in some sporting stadiums. The grass is grown on a large platform which can be moved around inside the stadium on a traverser. This means the grass growing on the platform can be moved into the sun or shade as needed to keep it growing properly.

A traverser at Didcot, England. Photo: Gaius Cornelius

Above: The No. 1 Horse Tram on the way to the new building.

Below: Chris Phillips next to his 1971 photograph featured in the new Museum.
Photos: Peter Waugh