

FARES PLEASE!

APRIL 2023

\$2.50 incl. GST

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum

AN ARTIST RETURNS



Ballarat artist Sandy Anderson with one of the leadlight panels she created for Tram 26 over 40 years ago. Photo: Peter Waugh



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The Museum welcomes the following new members:

- 1070 Mr Wayne Elliott, Wendouree
- 1071 Mr James Sediakin, Revesby, NSW
- 1072 Mr Jacob Macklin, Blackett NSW
- 1073 Mr Peter Fon, Warrnambool
- 1074 Mr Michael Hinch, Delahey



Peter Winspur presents David Fennell with his Driver's Certificate. Photo: Peter Waugh

BEGONIA FESTIVAL 2023

The Ballarat Begonia Festival was held over the March long weekend with over 65,000 visitors. At the eleventh hour we were given a subsidy by the City Council, which allowed us to operate the trams and the Museum for all visitors at the normal Child Fare of \$5.00. Sam Boon, Peter Waugh, and Peter Winspur put all the operations together with limited

notice. The operation included running trams to the Museum which was the first time we have done that during the festival. Tickets were sold by roaming ticket sellers with the POS machines, conductors taking cash fares, QR code online bookings and the Museum shop. We issued wrist bands which made it easy to see who had paid for a ride and Museum entry. With traffic control at the Gardens Loop, Pattie on point duty at Depot Junction, and the new overhead wiring arrangement we were able to run an efficient service. Thanks to the crews and Museum staff for being willing to try something different.

WORKSHOP NEWS

Both overhead trolley wires have been replaced from Depot Junction to the Pipers section insulator and the road wire from this insulator to north of the loop insulator. New wiring has been installed at Depot Junction meaning the trams trolley poles do not need to be manually changed. Tram 13 was sent to the Preston workshops in February to get its wheels turned on the lathe. The wheels have come up very well, and the tram is riding smoothly on the new track.

Detailed inspections of Tram 34 have shown the wheels will require turning and rusty body panels replaced. The body will require a bit of attention before a full repaint. The light circuit needs upgrading and some mechanical parts replaced.



Tram 13 at Preston. Photo: Yarra Trams

The Ballarat Tramway Museum acknowledges the Wadawurrung as the Traditional Owners of this land



*Karl and Simon at work on the overhead.
Photo: Paul Mong*



Trams from Newport being moved into storage.

NEWPORT TRAMS

Trams from Victrack's historic collection at Newport have been moved to our Bungaree site. The trams are safely stored in the new secure shed. There was considerable community interest in the movement of trams along the Western Freeway.

VISITORS

Artist Sandy Anderson who created the leadlight windows for No. 26 over 40 years ago, brought her family to see the tram. She was very relieved that the windows have survived the shaking and movement of the tram during that time. Many of our visitors comment on the windows.

Another visit was from the family of Bert Bald. Bert lives in Cooloola Cove, Queensland, and at the age of 89 is still making wooden scale models. The family brought in his incredible wooden replica of our tram, No. 26, to show the Museum crew. The attention to detail in the model was amazing. Naturally we had to take a photo in front of the real tram which is included in this issue of "Fares Please".



*No. 13 on the wheel lathe at Preston.
Photo: Paul Mong*

GEELONG DAY

In March we remembered the 67th Anniversary of the closure of the Geelong tramway. We operated our Geelong trams No. 2 and No. 13.

Mal Rowe gave a presentation on Geelong's tram history, and Warrington Cameron spoke about the history and restoration of Geelong No. 2.



BALLARAT BEGONIA FESTIVAL 2023



*Peter Winspur selling tram tickets.
Photo Sam Boon*



*Above: Begonia Festival action
Photos: Benjamin Boehle-Mitchell*



*Some of the Begonia Festival crew.
Photo: Sam Boon*



*No. 407 at St. Aidans Terminus
Photo: Paul Nicholson*



91 YEARS AGO: 1932

BY ALAN BRADLEY

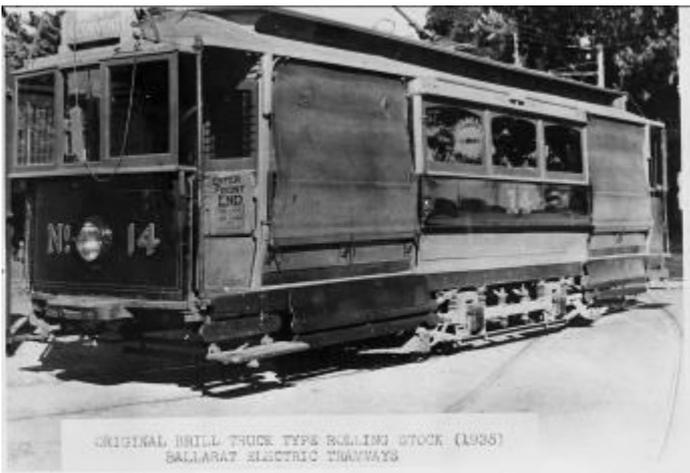
PREAMBLE

The Great Depression began with the Wall Street stock market crash of October 1929. During 1931 unemployment rose sharply, and those who still had jobs had their wages cut by 10%. By 1932 unemployment throughout Australia had risen more sharply.

I wrote about the Ballarat tramways in 1932-33 in the October 2020 "Fares Please". Since then further documents have become available in a scrapbook containing handwritten copies of documents (most likely handwritten by Bob Prentice). This article focuses on events for the year 1932, 91 years ago. At the time the Electric Supply Company of Victoria (ESCo) was still operating the Ballarat and Bendigo tramways but was due to hand over management to State Electricity Commission (SEC) from 1 July 1934.

THE BALLARAT TRAMWAYS in 1932

The ESCo had operated the Ballarat electric



ESCo No. 14 in 1935. Photo: Scienceworks

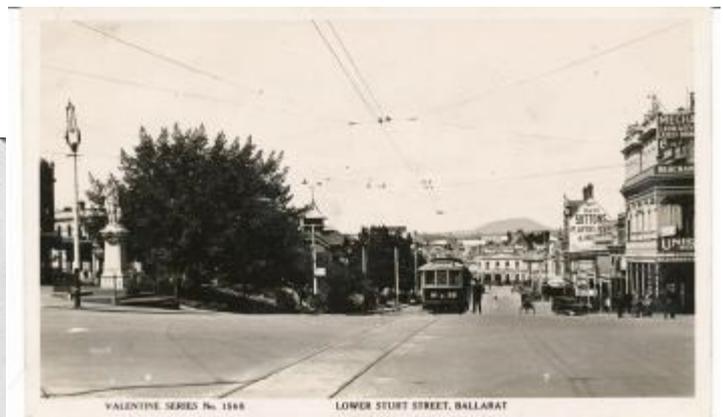
tramway system since 1905. Its original rolling stock consisted of 18 lightly-built combination cars rebuilt from the bodies of second-hand-Sydney trams, two "summer trams", and three more substantially built crossbench trams. These trams all were hand-braked and had no air brakes. By the early 1930s the track, trams and overhead wire

(both in Ballarat and Bendigo) were in very poor condition.

During 1930 and 1931 the ESCo received 10 single-truck cars, all fitted with air brakes (including our Museum cars 18, 26, 27 and 28) from Melbourne, and this allowed a similar number of the older cars to be scrapped. But several of the original trams were still in service.

POINT BOYS

Since 1913 when one-man operation commenced electric tram drivers drove westwards from the Grenville Street city terminus along Sturt Street, up the hill to the points at the Lydiard corner. At the time all lines terminated at Grenville Street, so trams either turned into Lydiard Street North or continued on the straight to other lines. Young "point boys" would turn the points if required, then catch a tram down the hill to Grenville Street to take the next tram uphill.



No. 26 on the Sturt Street hill at the Lydiard Street corner. Photo: BTM archives

Early in 1932 the ESCo decided to reduce the number of point boys to save money. Only one point boy worked from 11 am to 7 pm. Before and after those times the drivers had to turn their own points on the grade at the Lydiard Street corner, and the tramways union believed that this compromised safety. But the ESCo was unconvinced:

"There appears to be no difficulties with safety. The drivers have received instructions that before they leave the car on a downgrade, that they apply the emergency brake, so that if the air or hand brake should fail the emergency

6 FARES PLEASE!



brake will hold the car. The system is working satisfactorily with one point boy during the busy period.”⁽¹⁾



Ex-Melbourne tram operating in Sturt Street, 1932.

TRAMS OR TROLLEY BUSES

The Ballarat and Bendigo tramways were in very poor condition. The alternatives were:

1.Continuation of fixed tramway system in both cities, on the basis of the Geelong standard.

2.Substitution of trolleybus system for fixed tramway system in both cities.

3.The replacement of fixed system with trolleybuses in Ballarat, utilizing scrapped material in Bendigo where present system would be retained.

4.Substitution of tramways by petrol-driven buses in Ballarat and (as in 3) utilizing scrapped material in Bendigo.

In regard to trolleybuses it was taken for granted that alternative 3 was preferable to alternative 2, mainly because Bendigo was in better condition, both as to routing and its physical condition, and because of the possibility of using scrapped material from Ballarat in Bendigo.⁽²⁾

The SEC expected to be advised by a recommendation covering the following:

1.Estimated capital cost of installation of trolleybus system in Ballarat (together with cost of removing existing tramway assets and restoration of road surfaces to existing City standard).

2.Estimated operating costs of trolleybus as



ESCo Tram 27 in Lydiard Street, 1931. Source: Postcard from the Wal Jack Collection



compared with fixed tramway system.

3. Re-routing of the Ballarat tramway system under proposed new conditions.
4. Weight of vehicles related to existing road surfaces at Ballarat.
5. Relation of traffic requirements to carrying capacity and weight of various sizes of vehicles.
6. Proportion of new work in both cities suitable for use of moneys from Government unemployment funds and estimate of amount required in addition for stores and materials.
7. Question of local manufacture of whole or part of cars and other assets necessary to equip trolleybus systems.

Inspection of a trolley bus system in actual operation was recommended, the nearest being at Christchurch, New Zealand.



*A 1931 Christchurch trolley bus, now preserved at Ferrymead Heritage Park, New Zealand.
Photo: Bernard Spragg, 2012*

PRUNING

Consideration was given to achieving savings by cutting out parts of certain routes:

1. Mt Pleasant: Delete existing track from the intersection of Main Road and Victoria Street, along Main Road to intersection Barkly, Peel and Grant Streets. Add new track from intersection Main Road and Victoria Street to intersection Barkly, Peel and Grant Streets.

2. Sebastopol: Delete section from Bridge Street, Sebastopol to terminus.

3. Gardens via Ripon Street: Delete section from Sturt Street to the intersection of Wendouree Parade and Macarthur Street.

4. Wendouree Parade: Delete section from Forest Street to Gardens.

The total track saving would have been 2 miles 12 chains. An extra reduction of track from Rubicon Street to Bridge Street, Sebastopol would have meant a saving of 3 miles 21 chains (4.8 kilometres).⁽³⁾

Not surprisingly those proposals caused plenty of debate amongst ESCo officials. However, all seemed to agree on closure of the Mt Pleasant line and replacement by buses. The re-routing of the Mt Pleasant line via Peel Street involved the heaviest expenditure on their poorest route, so why not close it altogether? ⁽⁴⁾

Other proposals caused more debate. The abolition of the section in Wendouree Parade, from Forest St to Gardens, would have involved running to the Gardens only via Sturt Street West. This would affect the running of services to the Gardens during the summer months, "and would be bitterly resented both by the Council and the community".⁽⁵⁾

One official had strong views about proposals for abolition of the line from Sturt St to Macarthur St via Ripon Street, as View Point was "destined before long to become a much greater attraction than it is at present". A boat house with a large dance hall was being completed, and the Council was considering proposals for a bathing area with proper dressing rooms and a playground for children. "In my opinion this part of the lake is likely to become on a small scale similar to the Eastern Beach at Geelong, and I consider that it would be a most retrograde step to cut out this part of the lake route".⁽⁶⁾ An alternative proposal was made to retain this line, but instead close the section along Drummond Street North and Macarthur Street.

With regard to the suggestions for Rubicon Street to Sebastopol terminus, it was proposed to serve that section by private buses, which could complete the journey by

8 FARES PLEASE!



running along Skipton Street and Armstrong Street to the City.⁽⁷⁾



*Bendigo ESCo Tram No. 1 at Eaglehawk, 1941.
Photo: Wal Jack*

POSTSCRIPT

Even before the takeover from 1 July 1934, the SEC was heavily involved in the tramway proposals. During 1933 the SEC's review concluded that reconditioning the Ballarat and Bendigo tramways would be a better option than replacing them with trolleybuses or private buses. The SEC announced its proposals to close lines or sections of lines, but political lobbying and additional funding ensured that the existing lines were retained.

Reconditioning of the track and overhead wire commenced in 1934. In 1934 crossbench car no. 23 was converted to a track cleaner and scrubber, and during 1936 the remaining hand-braked trams were scrapped. In 1937 through-routing of lines commenced, and west-bound trams no longer turned into Lydiard Street North. Point boys were no longer needed. In 1937 Ballarat even secured an extension of the Lydiard Street North line to the New Cemetery.

The Gardens via Ripon Street line was rerouted via Drummond Street North, and a short-working to "View Point" operated only on weekdays. Hopes that the View Point area of the lake could become as popular as Eastern Beach at Geelong remained unfulfilled.

It is interesting that the Bendigo system was regarded as being in better condition than the Bal-

larat system, and several of the original cars remained operating. Seven Bendigo cars were finally withdrawn in 1947-48. In 1953 crossbench car No. 17 was converted to a track cleaner – almost 20 years after the similar conversion of Ballarat No. 23.

91 years on the Ballarat tramway service is long gone, but the museum service continues in the Gardens.

REFERENCES

1. D.F. Maxwell (Ballarat) to G.F. Cole (Bendigo) 15/03/1932.
2. R. Liddelow (SEC General Manager) to G.F. Cole (ESCO Chief Engineer & General Manager) 03/09/1932
3. One chain (part of the imperial measurements) is 22 yards (the length of a cricket pitch), or 20.1168 metres. 80 chains make a mile.
4. A.V. Mawby (Superintendent) 15/10/1932
5. Ibid
6. C.F. Coles 11/11/1932
7. Ibid



Bendigo ESCo summer car No. 18 at Charing Cross, 1941. Photo: Wal Jack



BALLARAT GIVES SYDNEY A HAND



In January this year, Ballarat Motorman, trainer and Quartermaster, Greg King, did one of his annual “sabbaticals” to the Sydney Tramway Museum. On the Wednesday and Saturday, he helps out where needed around the place and drives on the Sunday.

The museum has always had a concreted “roadway” in front of the former Railway Square waiting shed but the concrete only came to the bottom of the rail head, this was a tripping hazard and a nightmare for using the forklift in the area.

The Thursday of the week Greg was there, they had the whole area laid with bitumen giving a perfect road surface. The contractors did a great job of keeping the track directly in front of the shed clean but, as the other track was partly dismantled being relayed closer to the main gate, they were not so careful, covering the rails with bitumen which in some places was quite thick.

This would have made using the Scrubber car (ex-Melbourne #10 and ex-Sydney before that) difficult to get through the bitumen and large chunks would have gone flying everywhere. So Greg attacked it with a shovel first and got most of the bitumen off. It was raining on and off but eventually it was removed. Bill Parkinson was able to run the scrubber successfully over it and it was ready for the next day’s operations.



*Greg cleaning bitumen off the rails.
All photos: From Greg King.*



Former Melbourne scrubber car and Bill Parkinson



Ready for the day’s action



TRAM 39

BY LEN MILLAR

Our tram No. 39 was built in Adelaide, ran in Melbourne's streets from 1912 until 1951, then in Ballarat for the next 20 years. After the closure of the State Electricity Commission's Ballarat tramways in 1971, No. 39 was allocated to the Lismore Lions Club in the Western district and was placed in the town's recreation reserve. But in 1976 the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society acquired the tram – without motors in the bogies and the body in poor condition. The tram was picked up on the weekend of 8 and 9 May 1976 and brought to Ballarat.



*No. 39 on display in Lismore in 1973.
Photo: John Theodore*

We stored No. 39 off-site under cover in a shed in Victoria St, near the Caledonian overpass for a few years, and then upon arrival at our depot on 2 February 1982 it was placed on un-motored Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board No. 1 trucks. Two years later it was lifted and then placed on two Melbourne cable trailer bogies swapped with the Haddon Tramways Workshop for the "W1" trucks.

In 1986 we decided to create a Museum display asset, with a plan in the January 1986 edition of "Fares Please" showing significant changes to the tram's body and its location on the alignment of the old No. 1 road in the



*No. 39 at the Lydiard Street railway gates,
1969.*

depot in front of the newly-constructed office and meal room.

On 15 March 1986, No. 671 was used to shunt all the trams in the depot, with No. 39 being re-located to just inside the doorway of No. 1 road. Some seven metres of the former No. 1 road had been earlier removed and steel channeling installed. When in place the front of the tram was lifted high enough for the cable tram bogies to be removed and a spare maximum traction moved into position at the front of the tram. The rear of the tram was placed on a steel supporting frame, adjoining the new office.

November 7, 1992, was a very special day for us. Noted historian, Professor Weston Bate, performed two important functions – the opening of No. 39 as our new museum and display asset, and the re-commissioning of our newly-restored Horse Tram No. 1. Weston spoke of his relationship to Ballarat, the importance of such information centres and the wonderful assistance from the Ministry for the Arts. The new "Museum Entry" sign was then placed in front of the tram and those in attendance were invited to "step aboard" and view interior. Chairman Richard Gilbert also acknowledged the assistance of the Ministry, the fine workmanship of our daytime staff in constructing this unusual and practical museum area, and the work of our volunteers in fitting out the area. The first of the display boards had been installed and the remainder put in place in the ensuing years.



Busy scene at the Royal Mail Hotel, 1971. Photo: Graham Parry

Improvements to the displays took place through until 2020, and No. 39 (for 37 years) effectively introduced our visitors to Ballarat's tramways, its trams and our preservation efforts – by way of themed text and photo displays. A significant contextual feature was a five minute introduction by way of a video. It was located in the intact front saloon, and our visitors were encouraged to sit down on the original wooden longitudinal seat and learn about the history and preservation of Ballarat's trams. We received two State Ministry for the Arts grants to effect the substantial changes to No. 39 – which were greatly appreciated!

As you may be well aware, our magnificent brand-new display building was opened last year, complete with extensive display signs in front of each tram, as well as samples of the destination curtains hanging from the walls and a very long photo mural in the entrance hallway of Ballarat's horse and electric trams at work in the streets. So No. 39 was stripped of most of its displays which were re-located into the display building. It now sits in its long-term location in the original depot.

Under cover! Its future has not yet been determined.

Now for some details of its working life! It was built in Adelaide by Duncan and Fraser Limited in 1912, for the Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust. It was given the Trust's chocolate and cream livery, with twin numbers on aprons at each end, and "Municipal Tramways" on the lower side panels. In 1920 the newly-constituted Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board took over the four Tramways Trusts. It became the Board's "E" class No. 42. In March 1928 it was at Kew Depot, Camberwell in 1934 and 1938, and on 11 September 1928 it was shown on the Board's tram allocation lists as being stored at Brunswick Depot. It amassed a paltry 1,362,528 kilometres (840,548 miles) carrying passengers along Melbourne's streets.

Between 1945 and 1951 the State Electricity Commission bought a significant number of surplus maximum traction trams from the M&MTB for Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong. No. 39 arrived at the SEC's Ballarat Depot before lunch on 25 May 1951 on board a Yellow Express semi-trailer. The tram received the SEC's

12 FARES PLEASE!



modifications to the body and was painted in the Commission's Bristol Green and Ivory livery. No. 39 commenced running in service on 21 December 1951. The tram "came to grief" on 4 February 1959 when running the 4:50pm service out to Mount Pleasant when it derailed at the intersection of Bridge and Main Streets. It was re-railed promptly and was back in service again at 5:30 pm.

No. 39 was given a "Colourflek" painted finish in 1961 – to avoid the costly rejuvenation of the original varnished ceilings. Not done with jumping off the rails, No. 39 again derailed at Stone's corner on 24 March, 1966. A photo appeared in the local paper, the "Courier" to prove it.

Our No. 39 ran for approximately 105,000 kilometres in Ballarat. So its total distance in operation was in the order of 1,400,000 kilometres. The tram is defined as a "maximum traction bogie car with drop ends and centre combination". It is 13.5 metres long, 2.62

metres wide and 3.1 metres high. As modified by the SEC, the tram weighed in at 15.71 tonnes, and had Brill 22E maximum traction type bogies, two General Electric 201G 49kW motors and GE B23D controllers.

No. 39 was the last tram to depart from the Mount Pleasant terminus on 5 September 1971. A police car led a funeral like procession back to the City and out to the Depot.

Then on Sunday, 19 September, a convoy comprising Nos. 40, 39, and 35, left the City for the last tram service to Sebastopol. No. 35 headed back to the City, shunted up in Lydiard Street North and formed the last tram from the City. Nos. 39 and 40 set sail from Sebastopol to run in convoy back to the Depot – to end Ballarat's tram services that started in 1887.

The last electric tram into the Depot, No. 40, lives on - available for active service, while No. 39 sits in our original Depot building awaiting its next role.



Derailed at the Stones Corner, April 1966. Photo: Ballarat Courier



No. 39 in Lydiard Street. Photo: From Doug Colquhoun, may be a Wal Jack photo.

REFERENCES

- Our excellent Collections Manager, Warren Doubleday;
- “The Golden City and its Tramways – Ballarat’s tramway era” by Alan Bradley.
- “Destination Eaglehawk” by the late Keith Kings.
- Notes by the late Wal Jack about No 39 in Melbourne and Ballarat.
- The BTM’s archives (including editions of “Fares Please”).



Above: No.39 as the Museum’s display area. Photo: Peter Waugh



Left: The “Colourfleck” interior. Photo: Travis Jeffrey



FEBRUARY and MARCH 2023



Tram 13 at Preston. Photo: Paul Mong



Bert Bald's Tram 26 model. Photo: Peter Waugh



Neville Britton and visitors on Geelong No. 2. Photo: Peter



LEN MILLAR

STORY AND PHOTO BY PAUL NICHOLSON

Len Millar has several “tramway” claims to fame – among them he’s the museum’s oldest accredited driver and at last year’s Annual General Meeting was recognised with the award of life membership. Len has been actively involved in tramcar preservation for 60 years and has been an active, dedicated and committed member of the Ballarat Tram Museum for more than 30 years.

Len’s happy and smiling presence is instantly recognised around the museum. He enjoys very good health in his senior years but accepts that one day it will be time to “hand in his handles”. Len says living in the country air at Newstead since 1995 has been good for his health and his positive presence.

Len worked as a property valuer from 1961 to 2014. He attended the Longerenong Agricultural College (near Horsham) and graduated with a Diploma of Agriculture. Further studies resulted in the award of a Diploma of Valuation from RMIT. Len took “early retirement” several times between 1995 and 2005, but the phone kept ringing. “Come back! We short of rural valuers!” The Australian Valuation Office closed in 2014, but he continued on as an Approved Valuer (for trams, trains and ephemera) under the federal government’s Cultural Bequests Program.

He has valued quite a few trams, as well as half of the National Railway Museum’s Port Dock museum (in South Australia) collection of engines, carriages and goods wagons. Len’s work as a rural property valuer took him to all parts of Victoria and on several occasions was seconded interstate. Len says, as a single man, he had the flexibility to travel far and wide often for extended periods. Trams have always been “in his blood” and one of his favourite assignments was in the Ballarat area where he often based himself in room 4 of the Provincial Hotel opposite Ballarat station’s level crossing – “with trams (and trains!) passing by”. Len says he fondly remembers working in Tasmania for several months in 1968, and then several more stints in South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland.



Away from tramways, Len is a devoted fan of classical music and everyone in the department knew when a government car had been used by Len: the radio dial was stuck on ABC Classic FM: the station that continues to provide his listening enjoyment today.

Len was born in Kew and grew up in the Camberwell area. Through family church connections he crossed paths with the late Keith Kings who introduced him to organised tram enthusiast activities. Len is one of the handful of current BTM members who’ve ridden the VR electric street railway from St Kilda to Brighton Beach.

When asked about what few people would know about Len Millar, his response was a 10 year stint as a singer in the Melbourne Choral and that he was a boundary umpire at agricultural college football matches and then with the old VFA.

Len says he’s often asked about the spelling of his surname; with an “a” instead of the more common “e”. Family history confirms the spelling was changed some time after his ancestors came to Australia but when and why remains an unsolved mystery.

Len’s commitment to a single lifestyle has worked well for him but he maintains strong connections with the families of his late elder brother and his sister-in-law and their three children and umpteen grandchildren.

Len Millar’s positive outlook to the museum and to life generally is an asset to the museum and he aims to be a strong and visible presence for as long as he can.



TRAM 39 IN SERVICE



*Above: Tram 39 at the Grenville and Sturt Street Terminus. Photo: Ben Parle, 1954
Below: Tram 39 in Victoria Street. Photo: Chris Phillips, 1971*



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.

Editor: Peter Waugh peter.waugh@btm.org.au

For further information regarding the Museum, its activities and publications please contact:

The Secretary, P.O. Box 632, Ballarat, Vic, 3353 Phone 61 3 5334 1580

E-mail: info@btm.org.au Web page: www.btm.org.au Facebook: www.facebook.com/btm.org.au