

FARES PLEASE!

APRIL 2024

\$2.50 incl. GST

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum

NEW MUSEUM TWO YEARS ON



Trams at the front of the new building. Photo: Peter Waugh





MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The Museum welcomes the following new members:

- 1127 Matthew Geier of Carlton NSW
- 1128 Luke Borg of Redan
- 1129 Choong Tang of Docklands
- 1130 Bree McKay of Alfredton
- 1131 Rubie Teven of Alfredton

New Junior Supporters

- 5116 Emily Teven of Alfredton
- 5117 Finnlay McKay of Alfredton

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

From Tim and Deb Muffett:

“We visited the Museum in February, looked around and took a couple of tram rides. Our driver, Peter, was most hospitable and encouraged us to join as members, which we both did. Cheers, Tim and Deb Muffett.

THE BUSY SEASON

BEGONIA FESTIVAL

The BTM was open over the Labor Day Weekend in March for the Ballarat Begonia Festival. The weekend was very hot, and crowds for the Festival were well down on previous years. Unlike previous years, the Festival did not provide a grant to cover the operating costs, so the BTM offered a discounted ticket price of just \$5.00 per person. Our crews were kept busy in the hot weather.



Peter Fitzgerald. Photo: Tim and Deb Muffett.

Passengers:

Saturday	938
Sunday	1028
Monday	721
TOTAL	2687

EASTER: 1067 Museum visitors

HORSE TRAM: 337 passengers.

Thanks to our hard working team of volunteers who happily gave up their time to keep the Museum open and the trams running.

If you want to join the team please contact us at volunteer@btm.org.au

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



MARCH and APRIL



Arthur at the Newport Open Day. Photo: Jodi Swinn



Ken and Wayne. Photo: Peter Waugh



Don replacing the floor in No. 14. Photo: Tony Smith



Cathy at the Begonia Festival. Photos: Peter Waugh



Wayne cleaning No. 14's truck.
Photo: Tony Smith



Karl repairing No. 14's lifeguard.
Photo: Tony Smith

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BRAKE VALVES



Greg King with the new brake valve.

Tram 38's brake valves needed to be replaced after years of service. Unfortunately the BTM did not have spares, and neither did any other Australian tramway. Greg King was adamant that the tram needed to retain the original type of PV3 valve. He contacted the Nagasaki Tramways in Japan as he knew they operated similar equipment. They kindly donated reconditioned PV3 valves. Greg and the Workshop crew fitted new valves to No. 38 in March. There is nothing different about the operation of these (apart from them being a bit more responsive).

BALLARAT CYCLE CLASSIC

The Tramway is closed each year in February when the Ballarat Cycle Classic takes over the streets and use our meeting room on the day

“On behalf of the Fiona Elsey Cancer Research Institute and Ballarat Cycle Classic committee, I would like to extend a sincere thank you

for your commitment to making the 2024 Bal-larat Cycle Classic a great success.

This year's event raised an impressive \$310,000 for the Institute which will go directly to our cancer research projects. Your generous contribution helps make our vision a reality. We are thrilled to have been able to host the 17th Ballarat Cycle Classic for the community again this year and appreciate your continued support.

The money raised helps to ensure the momentum of our research program is continued.

The Institute currently has two PhD students and 19 staff. Our research is focused on the role of the immune system and how it relates and can be used to treat cancer. It is hoped that by identifying these proteins on the surface of cancer cells, druggable targets can be developed to allow the immune system to attack the cancer, without chemotherapy and radiation.

The Institute relies on the generous support of the community. With this ongoing assistance, our research into more effective ways to diagnose and treat cancer can continue, creating better outcomes for patients. We invite you, your staff and family to visit the Institute and take a tour of the facilities. Please contact our office on the below number to arrange a time.

Once again, on behalf of the Board and staff of the Fiona Elsey Cancer Research Institute, I thank you for this fantastic achievement and I look forward to your support again in the future.

Kind regards,

Professor George Kannourakis



THE BALLARAT WAR HERO, THE WHITE FEATHER AND THE TRAM

By **CHRISTOPHER DONALD**

It seems so bizarre: Ballarat Victoria Cross winner William Dunstan being given another unofficial 'award', the white feather of cowardice, on a tram. But the account is a historical fact, verified by his family.

"At the height of the fury over the conscription referendum, [William] Dunstan was in civilian clothes travelling on a St Kilda Road tram. A lady handed him a white feather, the symbol for anyone who is a coward,"⁽¹⁾ wrote his son Keith Dunstan (3 February 1925 – 11 September 2013), who was a well-known journalist and author.

Riding on a tram, including the early electric trams run by the Electric Supply Company of Victoria, would not have been an unusual thing for William, being East Ballarat born and doing his early education at Golden Point State School. At 15-years-old, William Dunstan left school to join the staff at Snow's the drapers in Ballarat.

The Victoria Cross has only been awarded to 101 Australians throughout its history, with 63 of them awarded during the First World War, making it an elite military honour.

The following is the description of its criteria: "The Victoria Cross for Australia is the pre-eminent award for acts of bravery in wartime and Australia's highest military honour. It is awarded to persons who, in the presence of the enemy, display the most conspicuous gallantry; a daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice; or extreme devotion to duty."⁽²⁾

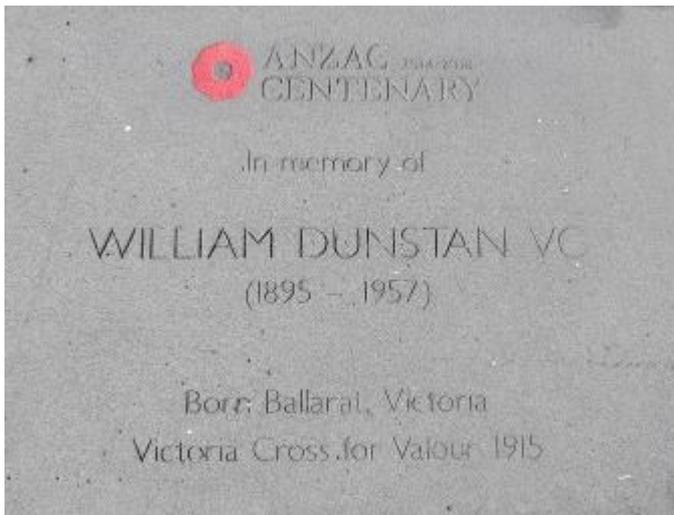
One of the recipients is Ballarat born and raised William Dunstan (2 March 1895 – 8



*William Dunstan, VC
Photo: Australian War Memorial*

March 1957), who received the award on 10 June 1916.

The description of his actions on 9 August 1915 at Lone Pine, Gallipoli, Turkey, that led to his Victoria Cross are as follows: "Lieutenant Tubb, with Dunstan and Burton, continued to hold the trench alone until all but a foot of the barricade was demolished by a larger, more violent explosion. As Tubb valiantly attempted to drive the Turks back, Dunstan and Burton struggled to rebuild the barricade. After repelling the enemy and rebuilding the barricade a further two times, a well lobbed bomb landed between Dunstan and Burton. The subsequent explosion killed Burton and left Dunstan with injuries including temporary blindness which lasted almost a full year."⁽³⁾



Paving stone at the Dunstan memorial in Sturt Street Ballarat.

Photo: Australian War Memorial

“Dunstan had a few weeks in hospital in Egypt with shrapnel in his head and body. By September 1915 Dunstan was invalided back home to Australia on HMAT A38 Ulysses. Dunstan was discharged on 1 February 1916,”⁽⁴⁾ the website continued.

A description of the ceremony where he was presented with the Victoria Cross by Governor-General Ferguson on 10 June 1916 is as follows: “William stood upright and still in his uniform with polished leggings and boots. Crowds had gathered and waited for hours to see the hero who had only three months earlier turned 21.”⁽⁵⁾

So we have established our protagonist as a bona fide war hero, the antithesis of a coward, a man who displayed “the most conspicuous gallantry; [with] a daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice.”⁽⁶⁾

Now, let us go on to the matter of the white feather and what it symbolised during the heady days of the First World War.

Oxford English Dictionary gives its meaning: “A white feather as a symbol of cowardice... With allusion to the fact that a white feather in a game bird's tail was considered a mark

of inferior breeding. During the First World War (1914–18) women presented unenlisted men with white feathers in order to reproach them for not fighting.”⁽⁷⁾

A further description of this practice is: “The women of the White Feather Campaign were militant in more ways than one: with passive aggression, they tried to shame men into signing up and fighting in the war, believing that military involvement was necessary and right.”⁽⁸⁾

Another writer comments on women handing out white feathers: “There was backlash against this practice because it was done indiscriminately: Since any man seen in public in civilian clothing was suspected of shirking his civic duty, veterans who had been honourably discharged were frequently targeted. Thus in the later stages of the war, the white feather campaign increasingly was seen as an outrageous disruption of public order rather than as an even marginally legitimate means of coaxing or cajoling men to the colors.”⁽⁹⁾

So, perhaps the antagonist in this story acted ‘indiscriminately’ in ‘an outrageous disruption of public order’. Dear reader, you be the judge.

What seems to be the case is that William Dunstan acted towards the woman in the way that a gentleman of that era would be expected to: he did nothing.

William Dunstan’s descendants have perhaps inherited his chivalry, as seen in the following quote: “They didn’t know he had served,” [his grandson] David Dunstan says. “This is what they used to do. They thought the men should have been fighting for their empire and their king.”⁽¹⁰⁾

What is ironic about this story is that both William Dunstan and the unnamed woman



were hoping to achieve the same aims, which was to get more men on the frontlines, as it is noted: “During this time he was active in the pro-conscription movement attending public rallies to show his support.”⁽¹¹⁾

Australian Dictionary of Biography adds to our knowledge of William Dunstan’s life: “On 9 November 1918 he married a Ballarat girl, Marjorie Lillian Stewart Carnell, at St. Paul’s Church of England, Ballarat East. Two sons and a daughter, all of whom served in World War II, were born of this marriage...Survived by his wife and children, Dunstan died suddenly of coronary vascular disease on 2 March 1957 and was cremated after a funeral service at Christ Church, South Yarra, attended by over 800 people including seven V.C. winners.”⁽¹²⁾

His son Keith wrote: “I spent three years in the RAAF, did pilot training, including a year in Borneo. But this was nothing. The real war took place in 1914-18. This was the time of real gallantry, of real suffering, when the pages of the papers were filled with column after column of casualties.”⁽¹³⁾

William Dunstan had worked for years at the Herald and Weekly Times as an accountant and later as general manager, but the thing that defined him was his Victoria Cross.

To honour William Dunstan’s memory, a memorial was erected to mark the 100th anniversary of the First World War in the median strip of Sturt Street near the corner of Doveton Street, and an Aleppo pine tree was planted at Golden Point State School.

I will leave the last word about William Dunstan to his son Keith.

“I kick myself now that I never asked him to talk about his experience; nor did my brother and sister. It seemed a subject that was off



*The Dunstan Memorial, Sturt Street.
Photo: Australian War Memorial*

limits. When he came back from the war, in October 1915, he caught a train to Ballarat. There was a welcoming band waiting for him on arrival, and a civic reception. Reporters asked him to talk about Gallipoli. The Sydney Morning Herald reported that he refused to say anything. He did not vary from this. I have talked to many relatives of VC winners. The story is the same. It seems clear that what they witnessed and what they suffered was so appalling they don’t want to remember it or talk about it.”⁽¹⁴⁾

Footnotes

1. Dunstan, Keith, 25 April 2011, ‘We fought but it was nothing – the VC hovered over us all’, <https://www.smh.com.au/>

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[national/we-fought-but-it-was-nothing-that-vc-hovered-over-us-all-20110424-1dt5l.html](https://www.pmc.gov.au/honours-and-symbols/list-australian-honours/victoria-cross-australia), accessed 28 February 2024.

2. <https://www.pmc.gov.au/honours-and-symbols/list-australian-honours/victoria-cross-australia> , accessed 28 February 2024.

3. McGregor, Jason, 2013, 'William Dunstan VC – The Ballarat Victoria Cross', <https://www.mhhv.org.au/william-dunstan-vc-the-ballarat-victoria-cross/>, accessed 28 February 2024.

4 <https://www.mhhv.org.au/william-dunstan-vc-the-ballarat-victoria-cross/> McGregor, Jason, 2013, 'William Dunstan VC – The Ballarat Victoria Cross', accessed 28 February 2024.

5 <https://www.mhhv.org.au/william-dunstan-vc-the-ballarat-victoria-cross/> McGregor, Jason, 2013, 'William Dunstan VC – The Ballarat Victoria Cross', accessed 28 February 2024.

6 <https://www.pmc.gov.au/honours-and-symbols/list-australian-honours/victoria-cross-australia> , accessed 28 February 2024.

7 https://www.oed.com/dictionary/white-feather_n?tl=true (Oxford English Dictionary) accessed 28 February 2024.

8 <https://peacemuseum.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/2022/04/30/the-weight-of-a-white-feather/> , accessed 28 February 2024.

9 Baxter, Kimberley, 'Humiliation or Death: The White Feather Campaign', <https://www.libraryofsocialscience.com/newsletter/posts/2016/2016-08-15-Baxter.html> accessed 28 February 2024.

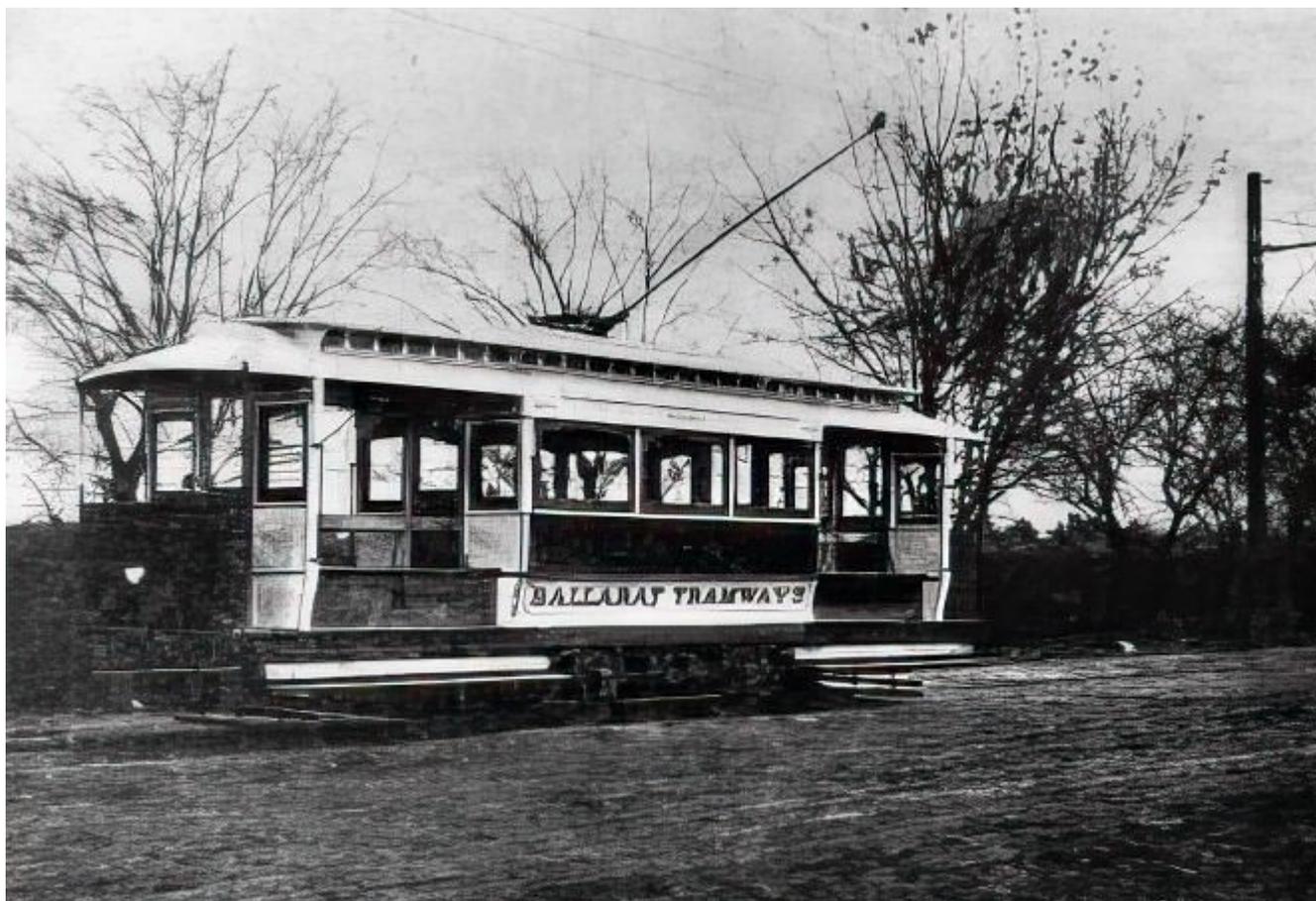
10 <https://www.9news.com.au/national/dunstan-an-anzac-hero-after-only-a-week/13aed4f6-1c8c-4803-8f94-35fcf3398d60> 'Dunstan an ANZAC hero after only a week', accessed 28 February 2024.

11 <https://www.mhhv.org.au/william-dunstan-vc-the-ballarat-victoria-cross/> McGregor, Jason, 2013, 'William Dunstan VC – The Ballarat Victoria Cross', accessed 28 February 2024.

12 <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/dunstan-william-6059> , (Australian Dictionary of Biography), R.P. Serle, 'William Dunstan (1895-1957)', accessed 28 February 2024.

13 <https://www.smh.com.au/national/we-fought-but-it-was-nothing-that-vc-hovered-over-us-all-20110424-1dt5l.html> , Dunstan, Keith, 25 April 2011, 'We fought but it was nothing – the VC hovered over us all', accessed 28 February 2024.

14 <https://www.smh.com.au/national/we-fought-but-it-was-nothing-that-vc-hovered-over-us-all-20110424-1dt5l.html> , Dunstan, Keith, 25 April 2011, 'We fought but it was nothing – the VC hovered over us all', accessed 28 February 2024.



*William Dunstan, as a young man, would have used the ESCo trams in Ballarat.
Photo: State Library of Victoria, c.1905*



BOB AND JACK

BOB AND JACK, TWO “RETURNED MEN”

BY DAVE MACARTNEY

Most of the active members in the early days of the Museum were in their twenties or thirties, but two of the older gentlemen were Bob Prentice and Jack Chadwick, who had actually served during World War Two.

Bob had enlisted with the Army Medical Corps as an orderly but had suffered a severe lung infection while in the tropics. Consequently, he was invalided out as a totally and permanently incapacitated pensioner, and heavy physical work was not a possibility.

He eventually became something of a pioneer in tram preservation, when in 1959 he acquired Breakdown Tram No. 20 of the recently closed St. Kilda to Brighton tramway. This was squeezed up the driveway at the Prentice residence at No. 13 High Street Prahran, where Bob could work on it as required.



Doug Wiseman and Bob Prentice preparing No. 36. The tram was being sent to Melbourne for a week, advertising the Begonia Festival, Sovereign Hill and the Royal South St. Society.

Photo: Ballarat Courier, 15 September 1971

Internally No. 20 was an empty shell, but tram No. 26 from the closed Sandringham to Black Rock line was located in a scrap yard in Footscray. It still had the internal bulkhead complete, so these had to be retrieved in one piece. The removal entailed smashing the roof slats on either side of the bulkhead and sliding the whole unit out sideways.

Bob became President of the Australian Electric Traction Association in 1962 and became custodian of their four preserved trams stored at Malvern Depot. Sunday afternoon work parties became a regular occasion.

Much time went into returning Birney No. 217 back to its original condition, as delivered from J. G. Brill and Company. Bob insisted on doing all the point work himself and the tram, currently on display at Hawthorn is a credit to him.

Bob’s father was an optician and apparently a very successful one, as the family car was a very stylish Daimler. Bob went to Queensland in it with Rodney Hudson to track down some exotic two-foot gauge locomotives working in



A glimpse of Birney No. 217 at the Melbourne Tram Museum.

Photo: Bob Wilson 2017

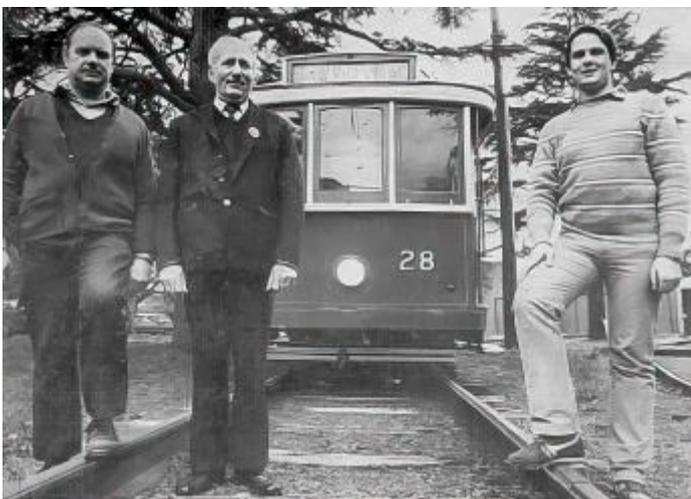
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the sugar mills. Somewhere in deepest darkest Queensland a passing truck threw up a rock and smashed the Daimler's windscreen. The nearest replacement was in Melbourne, so it was a long draughty trip back home.

Bob took 16 mm films from the front of chartered trams during the early 1960s. His Ballarat footage is incorporated into the Ballarat Tramway DVD production. In Melbourne he would charter X2 class No. 677 and photographed much of the system as it was then. After the Footscray system closed in 1862, his beloved No. 677 was sold off and ended up as the tuckshop at Brighton Grammar School.

Jack Chadwick's war was quite different to Bob's. He enlisted in the navy, and after his basic training was allocated to H.M.A.S. Hobart. The Hobart had a fairly eventful war, but initially Jack was disappointed because most of his training cohort were assigned to H.M.A.S. Sydney. Their war would end abruptly in late 1941 off the Western Australian coast.



*Gavin Young, Jack Chadwick and Stephen Butler with tram No. 28 at the Museum in 1984.
Photo: Ballarat Courier*

In post war years Jack worked at a gent's outfitters in Elsternwick. Bob and Jack were regular volunteers on the traffic side in Ballarat throughout the 1980s, usually working together. Bob, a fairly private person, preferred to drive, while Jack liked to be back talking to the passengers, particularly the attractive lady passengers. He was a navy man, after all!

They enjoyed the pleasures of railway travel as well. Looking for a suitable out and back in a day trip, they once decided to go to Tocumwal. Travel to Seymour was on the morning combined Albury and Tocumwal train. Here the front of the train continued to Albury while the rear section headed up the Goulburn Valley. Bob and Jack watched the T class loco being attached, while the station staff watched them closely. Two middle aged gents, well dressed, and with Bob wearing his inevitable hat, taking an interest in what was going on.

The wires were soon running hot up the Goulburn Valley that there were two Head Office spies on board. At every station up the Valley the Stationmasters were immaculately turned out, tunics buttoned, caps on straight and everything being done according to the book. Their suspicions were confirmed when the same two blokes headed back towards Melbourne on the same train. The staff of the whole line seared rigid by an invalid pensioner and a gent's outfitter. Bob really enjoyed that tale.

Bob and Jack died within a few weeks of each other in the early 1990s. Bob's V.R. tram No. 20 is currently stored at Bungee.



LOOKING BACK TO 1973

BY GARY DAVEY

I am currently working through the task of scanning and cataloging my photo collection. Recently, I processed a film of a road trip I undertook with the late Colin Hirst (whom many readers of Fares Please will remember) and Russell Pryor, an old Uni mate, during Uni semester break in August 1973. Aboard my 1948 Austin A40 Devon we left Melbourne

The Ballarat tramways had been closed for nearly two years so we planned looking at what remains of the former system we could find and checking on the progress of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society in which both Colin and I were very active at the time.

Our first stop was to visit Ballarat 18 which was preserved by the Borough of Sebastopol in a covered enclosure in Victory Park. The



Tram 18 at Sebastopol, 1973. Photo L Gary Davey

on 30 August and drove during the day and most of the night, finally setting up camp on a golf course near Adelaide airport in the early hours of the morning. On the way we made photography stops at Ballarat, Beaufort and Ararat. The Ballarat photos are the subject of this article.

significance of Number 18's preservation in Sebastopol was that its journey was the last time a tram travelled on Ballarat Streets under SEC ownership. The Borough had done a thorough job of the enclosure and Number 18 itself was in good condition and safely preserved. Today that tram is currently in service at the BTM.



*No. 42 in Sebastopol, 1973.
Photo: Gary Davey*

We then visited the Zion Congregational Church, also in Sebastopol, to inspect the body of car number 42 which was in use as a kindergarten at the time. It is currently in store in a semi open shed at Bylands, sadly, in an advanced state of decay.

We stopped at Urquhart Street Loop in Drummond Street which was still intact. My A40 is the black car visible in the background of the accompanying picture.



Urquhart Street Loop, 1973. Photo: Gary Davey



The Depot, 1973. Photo: Gary Davey

We then visited the Gardens and viewed the progress made by the BTPS. The depot was complete, two and three roads were laid, as were the points for one road. The access track across the Gardens was laid but not yet connected to Wendouree Parade. We were



Access track 1973. Photo: Gary Davey



MARCH and APRIL 2024



Easter Saturday the Zephyr and Zodiac Owners Club held their 50th Anniversay at the Museum. BTM member Wayne Elliot joined in bringing along his classic 1967 Mustang. Photo: Peter Fitzgerald



The No. 1 Horse Tram operated along Wendouree Parade on April 7. Photo: Rowan McMaster



CREATING AN ENGAGING MUSEUM

THE TRAM FLEET SIGNS

BY PETER WAUGH

When our new display building first opened in April 2022, we had six small interpretive signs made for the trams that were placed on display. These replaced the old wooden signs. With the grant from the State Government we have now completed the signs for most of the trams in our fleet.



The original wooden signs. Photo: Peter Waugh

The original signs were A4 size information sheets attached to a wooden frame which could be easily removed when the tram went into service. There were also photocopied sheets stuck on some of the inside windows. The information gave some very basic facts about the trams. Members have told me these signs were useful “cheat sheets”, and an aid to their memory, when showing visitors around the depot.

Our new signage was designed to have a low profile and be slightly angled so that you can look over the top to see the tram. The design had to be robust so they could not be

knocked over. The signs needed to be portable so they could be moved when the display trams were moved or changed over. The dark grey color design gives the signs less visual weight in the display space. John Challis (Challis Designs) recommended keeping the text brief, maximum 100 words, and including a couple of photos.

Warren Doubleday and I decided that each sign needed to tell part of the tramway story, and not be simply a list of basic tram facts. Each tram sign tells a different part of the story. For example the story for No. 27 is about the distances the trams travelled over the years (worth reading because it might surprise you!)

Photographs complement the stories chosen for each tram. A QR code has been placed on each sign allowing visitors to use their phones to access full tram details from our website. We created signs for the tower truck, the display bogie, and the display compressor.

Limiting the text to 100 words proved to be a real challenge – every word had to be important. The stories had to be interesting for a general audience and the photographs had to be relevant to the story.



One of our new signs. Photo: Peter Waugh

**FROM THE NEWSPAPERS****UNFAIR DISMISSAL****BY CHRISTOPHER DONALD**

To a modern audience, unfair dismissal laws in Australia are well-established.

However, this was not always the case.

Because of their concern about the sacking of a young colleague, 15 tram drivers in Ballarat stopped work for two hours from lunchtime in April 1954.

According to *The Argus*: "It is understood that the trainee [motorman] was dismissed on the

grounds of inefficiency, but tramwaymen protested that the man's wife was ill and in hospital. Because of this he could not devote full attention to training on days off."

The man's workmates returned to driving the trams after it was announced that the dismissal notice would be put on hold.

It is to be hoped that the man's wife made a full recovery, although it is not indicated in the article.

This story was adapted from an article in The Argus, which was a Melbourne newspaper that ran between 1848 and 1957, from its Wednesday, 14 April 1954 edition on page 7.



The SEC Motormen at the stopwork meeting being addressed by Tom Carter. The Union was not able to hold the meeting on site, so they went over to the foreshore of Lake Wendouree opposite the depot.

This is believed to be the only time the SEC motormen took strike action.

Photographer unknown, the photo was donated to the BTM by Mrs. Glenice Kellett,



No. 37 STILL IN SERVICE



At the Vintage Tramway Festival, Sydney Tramway Museum, February, 2024 Photo: James Sediakin



In Sturt Street, August 1961. Photo: Wal Jack



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