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# TROLLEY WIRE

AUSTRALIA'S TRAMWAY MUSEUM  
MAGAZINE

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Front Cover:

*The Sydney Tramway Museum's 'Trams after Dark' event on 19 June 2021 featured the museum's Victorian trams. Here Melbourne Z2 111 and Ballarat 37 await their turn of duty at the Railway Square Waiting Shed.*

Michael Hatton

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# SOME MELBOURNE MYSTERIES

## examining questions from 60 years ago

By Dale Budd

I start by acknowledging and thanking Warren Doubleday for his time-consuming research, particularly of the minutes of MMTB board meetings, which has made this article possible.

This is an unusual article. It contains some facts but it also raises questions and speculates about the reasons for actions by the MMTB some 60 years ago.

The original purposes were to investigate three issues: what were the circumstances of the cancellation of the 30 W7 cars which were planned to follow No. 1040; were Sydney corridor trams which were available in the 1950s, offered to or considered by the MMTB; and what were the reasons for the MMTB investigating the purchase of second-hand PCC trucks from the USA in 1960.

### Information from MMTB board minutes

It seemed that answers to these questions would be found in the minutes of MMTB board meetings, which are held by the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV). Warren undertook diligent research into the minutes of meetings over the period from 1955 to 1963. The minutes were handwritten and are in leather-bound volumes. The only practical way to copy them is to photograph each foolscap page – a challenging task.

In the main, the minutes did not provide the hoped-for clear answers about all the matters of interest; but they did reveal a great deal of interesting and sometimes surprising information which could provide the basis for many articles. In this category was the fact that in 1959 the MMTB set up a committee to consider the replacement of Melbourne's trams by buses.

This article deals with the main issues, drawing on the minutes, and it also examines a report in 1961 proposing that the MMTB acquire 360 modern trams for base service to replace the W2 cars. These topics are dealt with in chronological order. A number of lesser but interesting items from the board's minutes are then reported on.

### Cancellation of the 30 W7 cars, Nos 1041 to 1070

It is often asserted that the advent of the Bolte government, which came to power on 7 June 1955, led directly to the cancellation of the order for these trams. What do the minutes of the MMTB's board

meetings, held weekly, reveal about the contract for these cars and its termination?

Following is a timeline of relevant board discussions and decisions. It should first be noted that the construction of new trams was authorised in lots of ten, often within the framework of larger plans.

On 7 April 1955 the board approved the issue of a Works Order covering the construction of SW6 cars 1021 to 1030 at a cost of £126,000. (Classification of these trams as W7s would come later.)

On 28 July 1955 the board considered a recommendation from the Chief Engineer that in addition to the construction of 30 tramcars at Preston Workshops during the financial year 1956/57, tenders should be called by 1 October of that year for the construction of 50 complete tramcars "generally to W7 class". A decision was deferred, with the Deputy Chairman to supply a forecast of tramcar requirements.

On 11 August 1955 the issue of a Works Order was approved for the construction of SW6 cars 1031 to 1040, at a cost of £134,000. Three of the cars were required for Bourke Street routes and seven for additions to the fleet. It should be recalled that the new line from the city via Bourke Street to East Preston had been opened on 26 June that year, with the East Brunswick line to follow.

On 25 August 1955 the board received the first sign of the funding shortage which was to come. It noted advice that the Loan Council at its recent meeting had decided that "in view of the existing conditions" the proposed borrowings of Semi-Government and Local Authorities should be reduced. Approval had been given for the board to borrow £1,000,000 during the financial year ending 30 June 1956 which was apparently less than the amount which had been sought. This was a period when state governments went 'cap in hand' to the Federal Government, via the Loan Council, seeking funds. The competition for loan funds would have been high around Australia, and within Victoria the tramways board was competing with the railways, the State Electricity Commission, the Country Roads Board, the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works and State Rivers, all entities with large spending plans. As reported later in this article, the scarcity of loan funds remained an issue for at least ten years after 1955.

*W7 1040 has just left the Spencer Street terminus in Bourke Street bound for Northcote-Dundas Street in August 1968.* Richard Jones



*The steel frame of a W6 class car, under construction at Preston Workshops. Thirty such frames were ordered from Commonwealth Engineering late in 1955.* Bill Kingsley



On 22 September 1955 the Chief Engineer placed on record decisions reached by the board on its visit to Preston Workshops two days previously, including the completion of 30 W7 class tramcars in the financial year 1956/57. (Other decisions made on that day

related to buses.) As a matter of interest, the newest tram in service at that date was 1017 which had been commissioned in June; there was then a gap in deliveries until 1018 and eight other trams joined the fleet in December 1955.

On 29 September 1955 the Chief Engineer was given authority to invite tenders for the supply of 30 frames for class W7 tramcars, in accordance with the previous decision. The term ‘car frame’ referred to the underframe; side frames, pillars and side panels; roof ribs; and framing for the motorman’s cabs. It comprised virtually all the steel structure of the tram.

On 10 November 1955 the board received a report from the Controller of Stores stating that six tenders had been received for the 30 frames and recommending acceptance of the lowest offer, from Commonwealth Engineering (Vic) Pty Ltd. Consideration of this recommendation was deferred.

On 17 November 1955 the board discussed the financial situation including the restricted loan funds available; there was reluctant acceptance that the organisation would need to have an overdraft of £368,000 at 30 June 1956; expenditure would be closely watched.

On 7 December 1955 the board approved the acceptance of tenders for frames and related components for “the 30 tram programme”. For the frames, the tender of Commonwealth Engineering was

*The last W7: No. 1040 turns from Spring Street into Bourke Street with Parliament House as a backdrop in the late 1960s.*

Keith Caldwell



approved, at £852.18.8 each, making a total contract price of £25,588.0.0. The other components included resilient wheels and tires, double helical gears and pinions, and air brake equipment. Adjusting for the increase in the Consumer Price Index since 1955, the price was roughly equivalent to \$30,000 per frame in 2020 dollars, or \$900,000 for the total contract, noting that the CPI increase would not accurately reflect increases in manufacturing costs.

On 15 December 1955 the board considered motors for the new trams. It was agreed to accept a tender from Australian Electrical Industries Pty Ltd for the supply of 88 motors at £712 each, total £62,656.0.0, delivery to commence in July 1957. An offer had been received from the Municipal Tramways Trust, Adelaide for English Electric 308 motors, but these were not suitable for use with 28" diameter wheels. The minutes noted the provision of eight second-hand MV101A motors from the NSW Government Transport Department; it appears that they were accepted, even though this would not allow reduction of the order for 88 new motors "as GE247 motors are needed for maintenance from time to time".

The financial storm clouds continued to gather. On 28 March 1956 the board noted the need to reduce expenditure by £380,000 in the remainder of the financial year to 30 June. The most drastic action was an option for the retrenchment of approximately 220 Engineering and Stores Department personnel. After discussion it was decided that this would be further reviewed, and that at this stage no more than 100 men would be retrenched. Seven further avenues to reduce expenditure were put forward and agreed to, including cancellation of purchases for which no works orders had yet been issued. In addition, the contracts for supply of components for the 30 trams were to be reviewed, and the Deputy Chairman would report back

on the possibility of cancellation of these contracts. At the same meeting, which must have been long and difficult, the board resolved that seven tramcars, partially constructed, would be completed; and that work on the further 30 cars would be suspended. (The last of the seven cars, No. 1040 would in due course enter service on 1 August 1956.)

On 24 May 1956 the board received a report on conditions submitted by Commonwealth Engineering under which it would agree to deferment of its contract. The total amount for which payment would be deferred was £19,052.0.0. The board approved that further work on the contract be deferred "until such time as the board desires it to proceed" and that the Company's conditions be accepted.

The decision to cancel the contract, rather than defer it, came just over a year later, on 20 June 1957. On that date the board considered a report from the Controller of Stores, referring to the contract for 30 tramcar frames "deliveries under which were deferred in April 1956 owing to shortage of loan funds".

The report stated that "the question of whether any further tram cars will be required in, say, the next two/three years is submitted for consideration and should the answer be in the negative, the Controller of Stores recommended (a) that negotiations with Commonwealth Engineering (Vic) with a view to having the contract determined [in other words, terminated]. Should it be decided that further tramcars will be required in the near future, the Controller of Stores recommended that (b) the contractor be asked to allow the contract to remain deferred until such time as the frames will be required; or alternatively if the contractor does not agree to (b), then (c) endeavour to locate a suitable storage area for the frames and allow the contractor to complete the contract".

Fitted with multiple head and tail lights in 1970, No. 1040 and sister car 1035 await their next duties at North Fitzroy Depot in 1975. Dale Budd



The board's decision on these options was to resolve that negotiations be opened with a view to terminating the contract on the best possible terms, the Controller of Stores to report back in due course.

The negotiations with Commonwealth Engineering about the termination of the contract and the amount to be paid to the company were the subject of discussion at four meetings between 1 August and 21 November 1957. On 12 August the MMTB wrote to the company offering £1,930.6.7, covering "the total expenditure on the contract and the profit margin thereon", and this was reluctantly agreed to, the company stating that it was "more concerned with an amicable settlement with a valued customer". The Controller of Stores reported that after allowing for the sale of certain

items to the contractor, credits for material which can be used in the service within reasonable time and for material of no immediate use to the board for which it is proposed to invite offers for purchase, the net loss to the board as a result of termination of the contract would be £7,857.0.0. The board resolved that the Controller of Stores be congratulated on the highly satisfactory settlement effected. The consequences of termination of the contract dragged on: as late as 23 October 1958 the board approved the cancellation of contracts for traction motors and strip resistance units which had been ordered for the new cars.

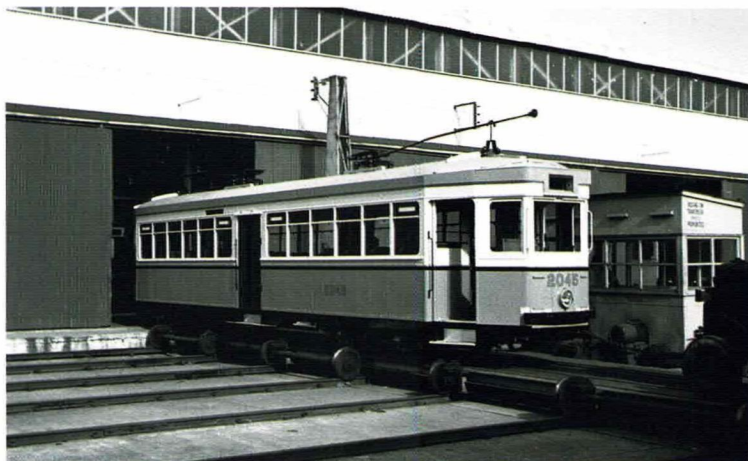
As reported in Volume 3 of *Comeng - A History of Commonwealth Engineering* by John Dunn, work was "well on the way" when the contract was terminated.



No. 1040 today: an important exhibit at the Melbourne Tram Museum at Hawthorn.

Mal Rowe

*Ready for delivery, new R1 car 2045 is rolled onto the traverser at The Commonwealth Engineering Co's factory at Granville in August 1952. These trams were destined to have a service life of less than ten years.* Noel Reed



The MMTB used components from the partly-built trams for accident repairs. Some surplus items such as roof ribs were made available for purchase by MMTB employees.

It can be concluded that the additional 30 W7s were not cancelled as a result of the 1955 change of government. Construction of cars 1031 to 1040 was authorised two months after the Bolte government came into office, and the contract for 30 further tram frames was let fully six months after the change of government. The history of the contract indicates that its termination was not a political decision but was caused by, as briefly recorded in June 1957, a shortage of loan funds.

**Trams from Sydney: a grinder and two scrubbers, but no passenger cars**

It has been suggested that Sydney's R and R1 class corridor trams were offered to Melbourne, but rejected, when the Sydney system was closing down. The MMTB board minutes show no evidence that such a proposal was ever put forward. It is theoretically possible that an offer was made at a lower level and not brought to the board's attention, but given the level of detail of the board's discussions,

this is highly unlikely. A proposition such as this would certainly have been minuted, but there is no sign of it.

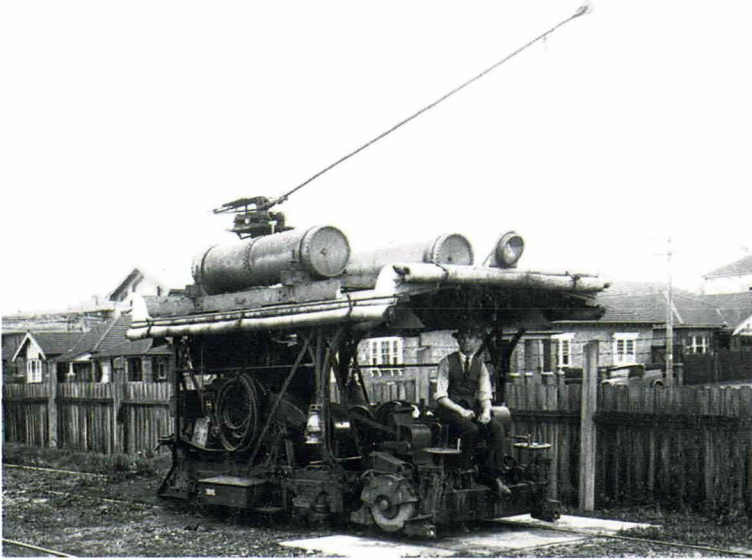
Documents from NSW State Archives & Records reveal that the possibility of disposing of R – and surprisingly, P/R1 type – cars to Melbourne was raised internally in Sydney as early as November 1955, although there is no indication that the proposal was actually put forward. In November 1958 a submission to the Minister reported that “efforts have been made to dispose of the surplus cars as operating units in other states and in overseas countries where it was thought there may be a market for such cars, but without success”.

It may be remarked that the board would have been well aware that the technology of the Sydney cars, as well as the Melbourne W series trams, was obsolescent. The board had held Australian PCC patents; it had a PCC car, 980; and it knew that European countries had taken tram technology to a further level. The Sydney corridor trams were newer than W2s but only marginally more technologically advanced. Their acquisition would barely have been a forward step.



*R1 cars on the scrap roads at Randwick Workshops, awaiting disposal after final closure of the Sydney system in 1961.*

Dale Budd



*Sydney grinder No. 2, later Melbourne No. 3, at Randwick Workshops. The driver's seating position and lack of protection from the weather or other hazards were a far cry from today's workplace health and safety standards. After purchase by the MMTB the vehicle was fitted with an enclosed driver's cab.*

Scott Curnow collection

The minutes do provide details of other purchases from Sydney: a grinder, two scrubber cars, six tower wagons, and spare parts including GE247 motor armatures.

On 30 October 1958 the board was informed that the NSW Department of Government Transport had advised in May 1958 that "the Department had two rail grinding machines surplus to requirements as follows.

- No. 1 machine purchased new at a cost of £1580 and placed in service during 1927,
- No. 2 machine purchased new at a cost of £1563 and placed in service during 1929.

"The machines are in good mechanical order and are offered for sale to the Board at the following prices:

- No. 1 machine - £400
- No. 2 machine - £450"

The Controller of Stores had reported that the Commonwealth Department of Supply (Stores and Transport Section) had quoted £75 to transport one of these machines by road from Randwick Workshops to Preston Workshops as against £92 for rail freight plus £65 for cartage from Randwick Workshops to railhead and from Melbourne railhead to the board's workshops.

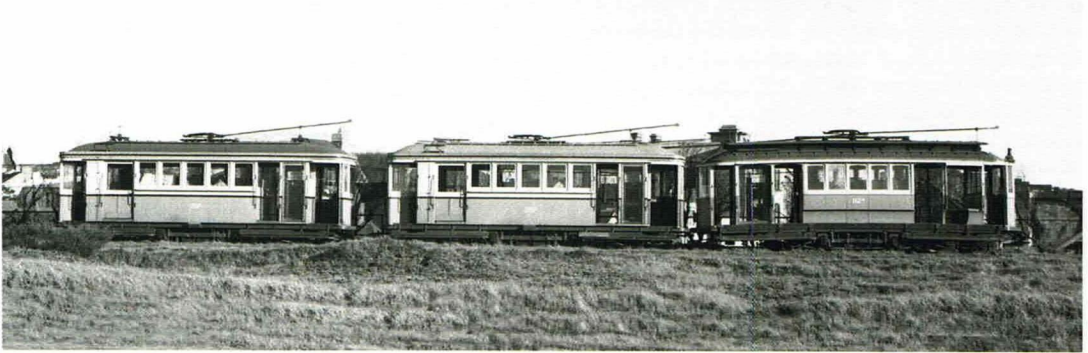
The Chief Engineer recommended that No. 2 machine be purchased as a spare machine to allow the grinding crews to continue grinding during the repair of any grinder.

The purchase of No. 2 machine was approved, with delivery to be arranged with the Department of Supply. In Melbourne this vehicle became grinder No. 3.

In relation to scrubber cars, it is necessary to go back to a decision made by the board on 9 April 1959 "to convert a single truck tramcar into an additional scrubber car at as cost of £2,150". This followed a calculation by the Chief Engineer that "at least three full scrubber car shifts daily are required to counteract the development of rail corrugations and for cleaning of rails, particularly after top dressing." Top dressing was bitumen spray with crushed rock which had a habit of getting onto rails and making operations difficult. This issue was mentioned a number of times in the board's minutes.

Only six weeks later there was a change of plan. On 14 May 1959 the board received "a joint report by the Manager - Preston Workshops and the Deputy Civil Engineer on their visit to Sydney to inspect two scrubber cars which are available for disposal from the Department of Government Transport, New South Wales. The report states that the two vehicles Nos 138s and 139s are suitable for the board's work and could be obtained for a cost of £275.0.0 each ex Randwick. Additional costs for transport and minor repairs would make the total cost of obtaining and placing the vehicles into service approximately £750.0.0 each. Three spare motors could also be purchased from the same Department at a cost of £40 each. The total outlay of £1,620 would render unnecessary the proposed conversion (estimated to cost £2,150) of tramcar No. 198 and enable scrubber car No. 8 to be withdrawn from service and held in reserve."





*Scrubbers 139s (later Melbourne 11), 138s (Melbourne 10) and 112s in the yard at Randwick Workshops. All three cars are preserved; 112s is currently being restored by the Sydney Tramway Museum as D class passenger car 117.*

John Burgess

The board accepted the recommendation to take no further action to convert No. 198 to a scrubber; to retain No. 8 as a spare scrubber and flusher; and to obtain the two Sydney cars with three spare motors. Scrubber 138s became No. 10, later 10W, in the service stock series while car 139s became No. 11, later 11W. (No. 198 undertook other service stock roles, becoming No. 15, later 15W.)

The board noted that “the above recommendation arose from a suggestion made by Mr H. N. Serman, (Driver - Malvern Depot and President, Australian Electric Traction Association) to the Chairman by letter dated 14 February 1959”. It was resolved that a donation of £10.10.0 be made to the funds of the Association as a mark of appreciation of the suggestion made by Mr. Serman.

At its meeting on 9 July 1959 the board considered a report on the comparative costs of bringing the scrubber cars to Melbourne by road or by rail. On this occasion there was no mention of the use of the Department of Supply. The rail freight cost would depend on whether cars were classed as tramcars by the NSW Railways or as machinery. The Controller of Stores considered that the cars could be classed as rail scrubbing machinery, and thus be eligible for a lower rate. However, although the estimated cost of road transport (£590 - £635) would be slightly cheaper than the lower rail rate inclusive of transport to and from railheads (£638), the board decided that the transfer would be made by rail.

There is no doubt that these cars were a bargain for the MMTB, considering the anticipated cost of converting No. 198. It is also noteworthy that the sale price of the scrubbers, £275 each, was much less than the £450 price of grinder No. 2.

While not buying passenger trams from Sydney, the board did buy some redundant parts. On 28 May 1959 the purchase of 25 GE247 near-new motor armatures was approved (their price of £12 each was much less than the £80 cost of rewinding a burnt-out armature); and on 11 February 1960 the purchase of a further 75 armatures was approved, at a cost of £12.6.0 each with deliveries spread over the period to December 1960.

On 25 October 1962 the board discussed a recommendation from the Chief Engineer that three tower wagons be purchased from Sydney. The Distribution Engineer had reported that nine tower wagons were available for purchase at a price understood to be between £200 and £300 each.

The board resolved that six tower wagons should be purchased from Sydney, in substitution for two replacements and two additional wagons provided for in the Capital Expenditure Budget for 1962/63.

### Consideration of conversion to buses

On 20 August 1959 the MMTB board considered an item identified in the minutes as Future Policy – Committee of Investigation. The purpose of this committee was, in brief, to consider whether Melbourne’s trams should be replaced by buses.

What follows is the record from the minutes, complete with underlining.

The board considered a report from the Deputy Chairman dated 17 August. It stated “that he considers that the board will soon have to express an opinion on the future of the fixed form of transport in the streets of the metropolitan area and that, in order that it may be fully informed on the subject a full scale investigation should be commenced.

He recommends a committee of three officers - Mr J. R. Russell, Treasurer and Accountant; Mr H. S. McComb, Chief Surveyor; and Mr R. C. Drummond, Divisional Traffic Superintendent ‘A’ - be appointed forthwith to

devote their whole time and attention to bringing down a comprehensive report on the “economics surrounding the remaining life of trams and also the economics involved in the conversion to any form of operation.” The Officers so appointed be empowered to co-opt the services, through Departmental Heads, of Officers as required to assist in providing information.

Without limiting the scope of the investigation the following terms of reference are suggested:

- (a) Whether it would be more efficient and an economic advantage to the board to convert to bus operation immediately;
- (b) If the answer to (a) is in the negative, would it be efficient and economic for the board to convert to bus operation at any time in the future?
- (c) If the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, when should such conversion commence, where and on what route?
- (d) Any further advantages, economic or otherwise that may assist the board in determining future policy.”

The board then considered a report from the Chairman dated 20 August and identified as R1045, submitting draft terms of reference for the proposed committee. [This document has not been found.]

The Deputy Chairman moved that his proposal dated 17 August be adopted.

An amendment proposed by the Chairman “that the Chief Engineer replace Mr McComb on the committee to be formed and that the draft terms of reference submitted by the Chairman be adopted” was lost and after discussion it was resolved (the Chairman dissenting) that the composition of the Committee be as suggested by the Deputy Chairman.

The Chairman then moved that further consideration be deferred pending consideration of the draft terms of reference detailed in his R1045.

This motion was defeated and the board resolved (the Chairman dissenting) that the proposal of the Deputy Chairman be adopted.

.....



*At the time the MMTB established a committee to consider conversion to buses in 1959, Melbourne’s tramways were a study in contrasts. New lines had opened to East Preston and East Brunswick, with new rolling stock, only a few years previously; while single-truck trams operated Footscray local services.*



*Above, W6 car 1000 in Bourke Street terminus on the opening day of the East Preston line in June 1955.*

*Below, T and X2 cars at Footscray Depot, with an X1 just visible inside.*

Both: Noel Reed

It must have been a bitter pill for the Chairman to be outvoted, repeatedly, by the other members of the board. He could not achieve a change in the strange composition of the committee, which does not appear suited to its task. One wonders what contribution the Chief Surveyor would make. He had been with the MMTB since 1922, knew the history, was a historian and may have been an ally of Mr Wraith.

It is appropriate to note the composition of the board at this time. There were only three members. The Chairman was Mr R J H Risson; the Deputy Chairman was Mr G F Wraith, and the third participant, who was referred to simply as the Member, was Mr K J J Brennan. Membership of the board was a full-time job. Mr Wraith had been an officer of the MMTB since its inception and Deputy Chairman since 1 July 1954. It may be mentioned that in October 1958 he had dissented from a decision to purchase new supervisory control equipment, saying it "may not be warranted in view of the possible short remaining life of the tramway system".

It seems that fate intervened to derail the work of the committee. Mr Wraith died on 24 February 1960, six months after the meeting which set it up. Mr Eakins who was the Chief Engineer became the Deputy Chairman and Mr F Kirby replaced him as Chief Engineer. Mr Brennan continued as the Member.

It can be surmised, from lack of further mention in the minutes, that the passing of Mr Wraith resulted in the Committee's work being abandoned.

Two years later at its meeting on 15 February 1962 the board resolved that the Chief Engineer, the Traffic Manager and the Secretary be appointed as a committee to review the existing tram and bus services operated by the Board and to submit recommendations for the future development of these

services to meet the transport requirements of the residents of the metropolitan area. It was suggested that recommendations might be on three bases: those for action immediately or almost immediately; or for action within five, or twenty years. This review was much more limited than that proposed earlier. It did not suggest consideration of the replacement of trams by buses, although it did result in the closure of the Footscray lines as well as cuts to off-peak services.

### An enquiry for second-hand PCC trucks

For this section I am indebted to Andrew Young, who put the basic facts on the TramsDownUnder chat site in March 2003. As he explained in his first posting on this topic, he was then a researcher who acted as a contract archivist to St Louis County Parks Department at the St Louis Museum of Transportation in the USA. Andrew Young was the author or co-author of several books on St Louis and its streetcars, and of guides to US trolley museums.

Andrew Young had visited Australia in about 2001. He rode on PCC car 1014 at Loftus, and later described the car's B3 trucks as giving a ride that was "authentic"

In 2003 Andrew had recently come across correspondence about disposals of PCCs from St Louis Public Service Company. St Louis had 300 such cars and no less than 154 of them were sold second-hand. But according to Andrew Young it was the sales prospects which ultimately did not buy cars that were of the most interest. Among these was the MMTB.

At the time the enquiry came from Melbourne about 140 cars had already been sold from St Louis and 160 were still on the property, not all in running order though certainly capable of being restored to serviceable condition.

*An example of a St Louis Public Service Company PCC. Seen on Hodiadmont Avenue in 1961, car 1659 had been built in 1941. If events had taken a different turn, the bogies from cars such as this would have had a second career beneath trams in Melbourne.*

Joseph Testagrose,  
courtesy of Transit Toronto



It may be noted that all the St Louis PCCs were all-electric, with B2 trucks. Melbourne's PCC 980 which had been in service since 1950 did not have air brakes although it had air-operated doors and windscreen wipers. It had B3 trucks designed for use on track of lesser quality.

The letter was on MMTB letterhead, from 616 Little Collins Street. It read as follows:

Ref. E60/9024 18th November 1960

AIR MAIL

Mr. John W. Dameron,  
Vice President and Operating Manager  
St. Louis Public Service Company  
St. Louis 10, Missouri U. S. A.

Dear Mr. Dameron

My Board understands that you are interested in the sale of some 125 P. C. C. tramcars which will not be needed for future operations. Its Chief Engineer, Mr. F. R. Kirby B.E.E., A.M.I.E. Aust., was told of this by the General Secretary of the International Union of Public Transport Mr. A. J. Jacobs, when calling on him recently Mr. Jacobs showed him your letter of October 3, 1960.

It is expected that Mr. Kirby, in the course of his overseas tour, will be calling on you in St. Louis early in December to learn something of your undertaking, which is noted for its high standing in passenger transport.

The Board desires to improve its rolling stock and I am directed to request that you will be good enough to grant Mr. Kirby every facility for pursuing his investigation of the desirability of purchasing the second-hand trucks from 125 PCC tramcars.

Yours sincerely,

H. A. Warner  
Secretary.

*A PCC B2 truck, similar to those on offer from St. Louis Public Service Company in 1960.*

Russell E. Jackson collection;  
from:  
*PCC - the car that fought back,*  
Interurban Press 1980

St Louis Public Service met with Mr Kirby and made a note of the quote they gave him. At some point the number of sets of trucks being sought was increased from 125 to 130. The St Louis track gauge was 4'10", so the trucks would require re-gauging. The quote, in US dollars, was as follows:

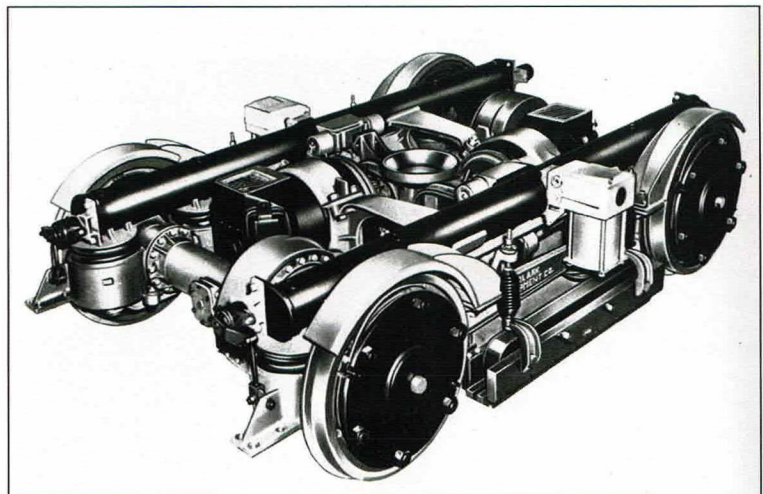
**Price for PCC trucks and cost of wheel gauge change**

Trucks (2 trucks per car)	\$2,000
Change wheel gauge per set (2 trucks)	\$ 500
Tires \$100.00 each, mounted (8 per set)	\$ 800
Amount per car @ \$3,300	<u>\$3,300</u>
130 cars @ \$3,300	<u>\$429,000</u>

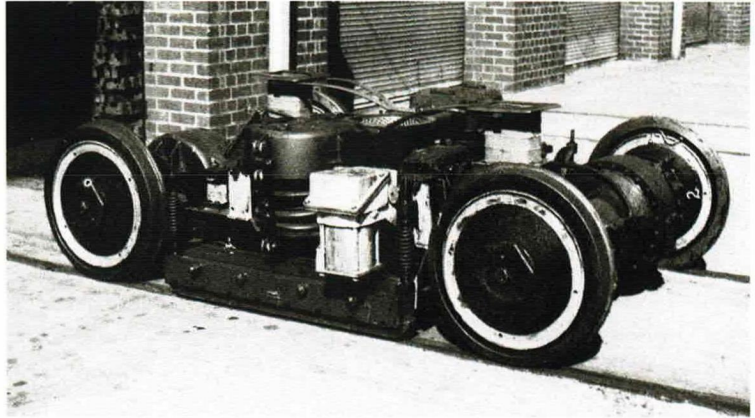
FOB St Louis, Missouri  
(to which was appended a hand-written note "Above price given to Mr. Kirby of Melbourne Australia December 7th, 1960")

On top of this price would have been duty; and possibly there would have been a need to obtain import permission.

.....  
Based on the increase in the CPI since 1960, the figure of US\$429,000 would be approximately US\$3.8 million today. (As noted previously, a conversion based on CPI may not reflect increases in the cost of manufactured items.)



*One of the B3 trucks imported from the USA for car 980, and later used under 1041. Compared with the B2, the B3 truck provided a steadier vertical ride on irregular track. It came to be the most common PCC truck.* Keith S. Kings



### The background to the enquiry

The MMTB did not buy the trucks from St Louis, and no other documentation of this matter has been found. There is no mention in the board minutes of this enquiry, which could have led to an expensive purchase. There was also no mention in Mr Kirby's report 'The All-Electric Tramcar', prepared following his overseas trip which had included the visit to St Louis, of the possibility of buying second-hand equipment.

The question is, what were the reasons behind the enquiry? In the absence of documents, and with those who might remember decisions of that era no longer with us, what follows is speculation.

Any proposition that the trucks were for the construction of new trams seems extremely unlikely. Mr Kirby's report was focussed on new all-electric trams, although it may be noted that he visited Europe, and was very impressed by its latest trams, after North America. The only alternative is that they were for the upgrading of existing cars. The initial enquiry to St Louis stated that "the Board desires to improve its rolling stock". Was it intended to equip 125 or 130 trams to be similar to 980? Which cars?

It seems likely that rather than rebuilding cars only a few years old - the W6s and W7s - the intention would have been to upgrade older vehicles. The most likely candidates would have been the W5s, and as if to confirm this theory the quantity of trucks sought, 125 or 130, coincided with the number of cars in this class (125 plus 5 sets as spares).

It is evident that W5s remained 'front of mind' for the MMTB as candidates for upgrading. In 1969 they started to be rebuilt with two central doors rather than the existing three on each side. And with 785 and 787 as examples dating from 1956, a substantial program to upgrade them to SW5 standard began in 1983. This last activity to improve W series cars began while Z3s were

being delivered, and when the last SW5 conversion was done in 1986, A2s were being delivered. One might say that fortune smiled on the W5s.

### Issues in upgrading W series trams with PCC equipment

Another part of the puzzle about the enquiry to St Louis is that upgrading a W series car to a form of PCC, perhaps similar to 980, involved much more than replacing its trucks. The actual fitting of the trucks would not have been difficult. For 980, Preston Workshops had cast the truck king pins which were bolted to the underframe.

However, as PCC motors are force-ventilated, the tramcar underframes would have to be fitted with ducting to each motor, and a blower fitted. On a PCC the forced ventilation is part of the motor-generator set.

The motors could be controlled directly but as they were 55hp (41kW) each, a current limiter would have to be included in the power circuit to avoid wheel slip on starting. A PCC is set up with acceleration and braking monitored by a special control relay.

If the plan was to upgrade the W5s a fair amount of underframe surgery would have been required to accommodate the ducting and extra control equipment as was the case with 980.

In short, PCC trucks would only have been part of what was required for an upgrade. It raises the questions, why were control equipment, and other parts, such as motor-generator sets, not included in the MMTB's enquiry to St Louis? If the MMTB was prepared to purchase a large number of trucks, the electrical equipment could have been included for an additional fee. The MMTB had experience of car 980 and so was fully aware of what was required.



*Newly converted to an SW5 car in 1983, No. 758 displays the colours of the new Metropolitan Transit Authority. Perhaps this tram would have been equipped with PCC trucks if the purchase from St Louis had gone ahead in 1960.* MTA

### What became of the St Louis Public Service PCCs?

As reported by Andrew Young, St Louis Public Service Company had 300 PCC cars, of which 154 were sold second-hand. Where did they go?

The book *PCC Cars of North America* indicates that 70 of them were acquired by San Francisco, initially by way of a lease and later by purchase, in 1957 (66 cars) and 1962 (4 cars). Before leaving St Louis they were refurbished, re-gauged and painted in San Francisco colours, and back-up equipment installed. These cars with other PCCs ran in San Francisco until 1982 or 1983. Eight have been retained by Muni but are very unlikely to run again. When PCC operations began to be revived in the 1990s, Muni preferred to acquire cars in better condition from Philadelphia or Newark.

Other cars sold by St Louis Public Service Company went to Philadelphia (50 cars), Shaker Heights (10 cars), and Tampico, Mexico (24 cars).

### The All-Electric Tramcar

In 1961 the MMTB's Chief Engineer, Mr F R Kirby, submitted a report entitled 'The All-Electric Tramcar'. Preparation of this detailed report, which consisted of 79 pages together with numerous appendices, followed his overseas visit undertaken in late 1960 and early 1961 but it was much more than a review of what had been learned overseas.

By way of very brief explanation, an all-electric tram does not use the formerly traditional technology of compressed air for braking. Instead, it relies on regenerative braking, friction drum brakes and magnetic track brakes. This braking system was first adopted on PCC cars in 1940/1941.

It is not possible to condense Mr Kirby's very informative report to a few paragraphs, but the following is a summary of some key points.

The report first reviewed trends in North America, where the operation of PCC trams was studied in Toronto, Philadelphia and St Louis. The report concluded that the PCCs had been overtaken by developments in Europe, but in the three North American cities valuable information was obtained on maintenance practices, and maintenance effort in terms of man hours, for all-electric cars.

In St Louis the distance between truck overhauls was three and a half times that applying in Melbourne. Overall, maintenance man-hours for all-electric trams were approximately half those required for other trams.

The report examined Swedish, Belgian and Italian trams, and concluded that the Swedish tram "is undoubtedly the best tramcar seen anywhere in the world." (The then Chief Engineer D. H Eakins had travelled overseas in 1957 and was similarly impressed by European trams. In his report on his overseas trip, which extended to seven volumes, he stated "probably the best trams are those being manufactured in Milan for Rome. This tram is an all-electric type based on the PCC design." Mr Eakins' report recommended the purchase of 50 Italian trams of the latest design for Rome, suitably modified for Melbourne. This was neither the first nor the last such recommendation which failed to be implemented. In 1939 the board had proposed to import a single PCC car from USA to be built by the St Louis Car Company.)



*Freshly overhauled W2 327 in Spencer Street in 1965, about to depart for Hawthorn. The high maintenance costs of these trams were detailed in 'The All-Electric Tramcar'. Dale Budd*

Kirby's report included very detailed analysis of maintenance practices and costs in Melbourne for the various types of tram in the fleet. W2 class cars incurred much higher maintenance costs than other trams.

The information in the report included the following, as an example:

The operation of trams equipped with air brakes necessitates the use of much equipment which is prone to defects in service, compressors, governors, brake valves, air-lines, brake rigging, brake shoes — all these, with the assistance of the air-brake's close associate, the flat wheel, accounted for almost 30% of the causes of mechanical or electrical defects which developed in Melbourne's tramcar fleet during the last three financial years. (It will here be appropriate to mention also that, during those three years, an annual average of 5,754 trams were subjected to wheel grinding for the removal of flats on wheels, i.e. with an operating strength of some 750 vehicles, wheel grinding activities were equivalent to each and every tram in the fleet being subjected to grinding for flat removal (as distinct from grinding for wheel truing) approximately 8 times per annum.)

Of trams removed from service for mechanical or electrical defect, almost one-third suffered defects directly attributable to pneumatic equipment.

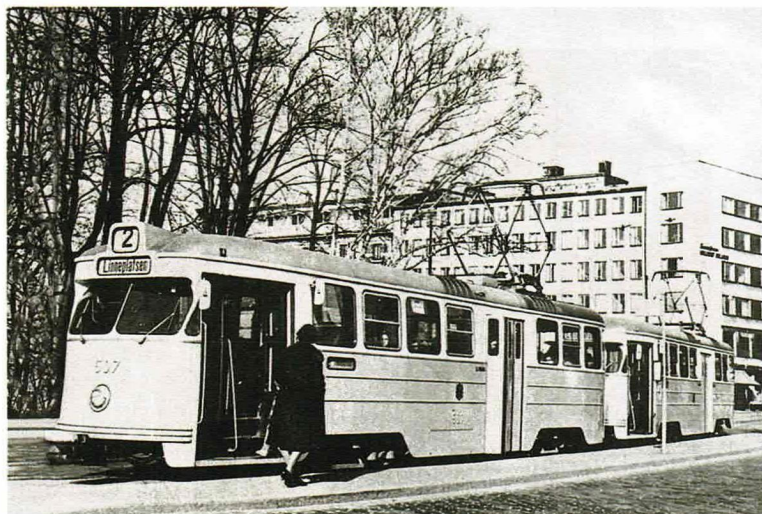
The report concluded that all-electric trams would require 1,300 maintenance man-hours per annum compared with 2,800 required by a W2 class tram.

There would be a minimum reduction in operating costs of £800 per tram per annum.

The report estimated the costs of acquiring all-electric trams for Melbourne. They could either be manufactured under licence, or fully imported. Prices for new trams were obtained from Sweden, Belgium and Italy. It was concluded that new trams could be obtained for £23,000 each. Against this was offset a saving from not upgrading W2 cars with sliding doors, upholstered seats and fluorescent lighting. Presumably such upgrading was under consideration. The saving was estimated at £1,300 per tram, bringing the net cost of a new all-electric car to £21,700.

The main conclusion of the report - not presented as a recommendation although the message was very clear - was that the MMTB should acquire 360 all-electric trams which would be sufficient to provide base service and replace all W2s. These trams would be supplemented by W6 and W7 cars (and presumably W5s) at peak hours.

The report was received by the board at its meeting on 21 December 1961, and Mr Kirby was commended on his very comprehensive submission. Consideration of the report was deferred to the meeting held on 1 February 1962; at that meeting the board was presented with a recommendation from the Deputy Chairman, D H Eakins, that it consider, "as an economic order" the purchase of 100 all-electric tramcars at an approximate cost of £2,300,000 to provide a base fleet for two depots. It was resolved that the Treasurer and Accountant be requested to examine the cost sections of the Chief Engineer's report and report to the board thereon.



*A pair of M25 trams in Gothenburg, Sweden. This picture was one of several illustration of these cars included in Chief Engineer Kirby's report 'The All-Electric Tramcar'.*

*PCC 1041, the prototype for the future Z series cars, displays its resemblance to the Gothenburg trams which had impressed Mr Kirby on his overseas trip.*

PROV



There was no further mention of this proposal in the board's minutes, and no decision at that time to buy new trams. Transport Minister Meagher announced in October 1965 – within the term of the Bolte government – that 100 new “silent” trams would be ordered for Melbourne, expected to be in service in 1967. Seven months later, in May 1966, the Minister announced that the new trams might have to be delayed, dependent on how much loan money the Federal Government allowed Victoria. Again, the competition for limited funds prevented the purchase of new trams.

It was not until 1973 that all-electric prototype 1041 entered service; Mr Kirby had by then become Chairman of the board, a post which he held from 1970 to 1976. It is not surprising that the design of 1041 drew heavily on Swedish practice, which had been admired by Mr Kirby more than a decade earlier.

After holding out against the Australia-wide

replacement of trams by buses during the 1950s and 1960s, Melbourne would at last enter the era of modern tram design.

#### **Other items from board minutes**

Following are five interesting but less significant items from the board minutes.

#### **Plan to convert CW5 cars to SW6 class**

On 23 June 1955 the board approved a request from the Chief Engineer for the issue of a Works Order to convert the five CW5 class trams to SW6 class, at a total cost of £23,000. The maximum traction trucks were to be replaced by No. 15 trucks, complete with resilient wheels and the bodies were to be sound proofed and fitted with sliding doors.

In the event the CW5s were modified to become W5s,



*W2 cars in Swanston Street at Flinders Street on a winter morning in 1969. These trams would have vanished from Melbourne's streets by this time if Chief Engineer Kirby's proposals had been accepted in 1961.*  
 Dale Budd



without the further upgrade to SW6s. There are no further mentions of this project in the minutes other than a reference to the purchase of side frames for the new bogies. The converted cars re-entered service between September and November 1956. Thus, the work was carried out in the period when the additional 30 W7s were being deferred. Presumably the financial problems affecting the W7s were the cause of the CW5 conversion project being reduced in scope.

**Training track for electric tram drivers in Wattle Park**

On 18 August 1955 the board considered a report from the Chief Engineer stating that in accordance with the board's instruction he had investigated the proposal "to construct a tramway track in Wattle Park or other location which may be considered suitable, and as a result, this had failed to reveal any place more suitable than at Wattle Park".

Accordingly, the Chief Engineer submitted an application for the Order-in-Council "to construct a tramway siding at Wattle Park within the municipality of Box Hill, together with a draft covering letter to the Honourable the Minister of Transport". This was approved by the board; but nothing came of the proposal which received no further mention in later minutes. Presumably the proposal was accompanied by a map or diagram, but this was not included in the minutes.

**PCC patents**

On 2 February 1956 the board received a report from the Rolling Stock Engineer in relation to the six Australian PCC patents which had been held by the

board since dates ranging from 1947 to 1951. The opinion was expressed that the board was unlikely to make any use of them; it was decided that the patents would not be renewed.

**Opening date for the East Brunswick line**

On 16 February 1956 the board set the date for the opening of the new East Brunswick tramway. What is curious is that this decision was prompted by a request, documented in the board's minutes, from the AETA for a tour over the line prior to its opening. The board set the dates of 6 April 1956 for the official opening, 7 April for the tour for members of the AETA and 8 April for the opening of the line for passenger service.

**Proposal for open ballast track in Batman Avenue**

On 4 September 1958 the board received drawing No. P12979 from the Deputy Civil Engineer, showing the proposed track design for the reconstruction of a section of open ballast track near the Swan Street bridge. The board was informed that "the alteration to the alignment required to provide space for the proposed plantation prevents the track from being constructed on the existing concrete slab and provision has been made for the removal of the slab and the construction of normal open ballast track." The proposed track design was approved.

On 30 October the board was told that the Victorian Traffic Commission and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works both preferred the tracks to be fully paved. Despite this the board decided to continue to press for open ballast construction. It was suggested that an approach be made to the Trustees of



CW5 car 685 in Fitzroy Street, St. Kilda. According to a decision made in June 1955 this tram was to have been upgraded to an SW6 rather than a W5. Ross Baird



Instead, the CW5s became standard W5s; No.681 is seen in Elizabeth Street at Bourke Street.

Ron Scholten collection



The expanse of Wattle Park is at right in this 1970 scene of inbound W2 439 climbing towards Warrigal Road. If a 1955 plan had gone ahead, the park would have been home to a training track for tram drivers.

Richard Jones



*Regular services to East Brunswick commenced on 8 April 1956, and the AETA's tour ran on the previous day. The then newest tram in service, W7 1033 prepares to leave North Fitzroy Depot.*

Geoff Grant,  
Melbourne Tram Museum colln

the Olympic Swimming Stadium in an endeavour to gain their support for the board's proposal.

On 6 November 1958 the board was told that Melbourne City Council had stated that no approval could be given to the proposal to alter the line of the tram tracks, street kerbs or channelization at the intersection of Batman Avenue and Swan Street. The board reaffirmed its desire for open ballast construction in the vicinity of the Olympic Pool; if not approved it desired the provision of prow-type safety zones for the safe loading and unloading of passengers.

On 22 January 1959 the board gave in. It was told that the Board of Works' requirements for the area had not been determined and that therefore it could not give acceptance or rejection of the scheme. "The Chief Engineer considers it unlikely that the board will obtain acceptance of its proposal". The board decided that reconstruction would proceed on the basis of paved track.

### Conclusion

This article has reported and commented on some decisions and actions taken by the MMTB between 1955 and 1962. There are many more topics from this period which could be the subject of articles, including the closure of the Point Ormond line and the Footscray local network. The operation of one-man buses was a matter which occupied much of the board's attention, among many industrial issues. Further research of the minutes from later years would reveal details of the decision to build No. 1041 and later to introduce the Z class. The minutes of the board are an unparalleled resource for historians.

### Acknowledgements

In addition to Warren Doubleday, my thanks are extended to Graham Jones, Bill Parkinson, Mal Rowe, Ian Saxon, Ron Scholten, Vic Solomons and Randall Wilson, whose input, together with that of Andrew Young, has made this article possible. Thanks also to those who contributed photos and who are acknowledged in the related captions.



*With destination sign set for its next outbound trip, an SW6 car rounds the curve from Swan Street into Batman Avenue in 1965. If the MMTB had had its way in 1958, the track in this vicinity would have been relaid in open ballast.* Dale Budd

Following prototype 1041, a new era began for Melbourne's tramways with an initial order for 100 Z series trams. Z1 cars 4 and 1 are seen at the Bourke Street terminus at Spencer Street, brand new in July 1975.

Randall Wilson



The MMTB had a long interest in PCCs, from before the Second World War. It sought a tariff by-law in July 1939 to import a single PCC; the application was refused in September of the same year and the proposal did not proceed. If successful, this would likely have been the first-ever double-ended PCC. This publicity photo of a Philadelphia PCC, new in 1938, shows what the tram might have looked like – but with doors positioned for left-hand running.

Philadelphia Rapid Transit

After the war the MMTB settled for the importation of a set of trucks and equipment for the construction of car No. 980. Although successful it did not lead to the construction or import of more PCCs at that time. Here the car arrives at Preston Workshops at the end of its career.

Ron Scholten



Originally published in the *Sunday Mirror*, 23 October 1960, page 23.

## Ghosts Troop From Sydney's Past TRAM RIDE INTO HISTORY

By Frank O'Neill

To the accompaniment of death rattles, the trams of Botany and Coogee early today rolled into history. The moribund La Perouse-Maroubra line will pass out of existence next February. And Sydney, for the first time in 99 years and 10 months, will be without trams.

The Australian Electric Traction Association, a group devoted to the study of trams, did not attend the double funeral early today. Instead, they went to the service. In fact, they arranged it. They hired a tram yesterday afternoon and, with due dignity and solemnity, travelled both lines.

Said Mr N.L. Chinn, an association member and an eminent tramway historian: "We keep well away from last trams. There are too many galahs on them." Mr Chinn added that more than 300 mile of tram tracks had gone from Sydney. "But we believe they will regret the day they closed the tramway facilities," he said.

Now if you'll just hand me my old straw hat and button-up boots, I'll take you on a sentimental tram journey along the two dead lines. We'll travel down the years to World War I and watch the Coogee trams carrying the wounded to and into the Prince of Wales Hospital, Randwick.

We'll leave the electric trams which began running to Coogee in 1902 and go back into the last century. The fare is 6d and the running time 50 minutes, compared with 1/6 and 34 minutes at the end of the line early today.

The conductor is clanging away at the bell on his bag so the passengers may note that he is registering their fares.

### In 1883

Now we are back at January 25, 1883, the day on which the Coogee line opened as an extension of the Randwick service.

Anniversary Day is coming up and the STC is offering a purse of 100 sovereigns for the Flying Handicap.

A city hotel with a large trade is being offered for £880.

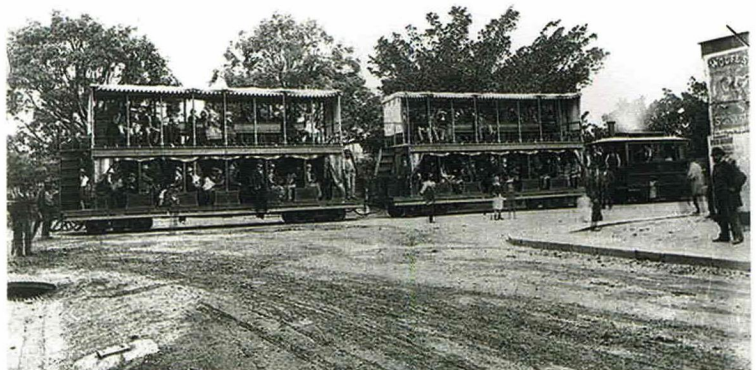
The latest intelligence from the electric telegraph tells us that the ex-Empress Eugenie and the Bonapartist Princesses Clothilde and Mathilde are in Paris, defying authorities to expel them. The French Cabinet is threatening to resign over the issue and, in fact, it does resign.

### Coogee

The Coogee Bay Grand Hotel is advertising trams to the door. Crowds swarm to Coogee on Anniversary Day, but all is well.

A correspondent of the day reports: "... On the Coogee section, the gradients of which were very difficult, the motors were equal to the task of drawing the heavily-laden cars up the hill."

*The type of steam tram first used on the Botany and Coogee lines. This photograph, taken at the corner of Market and Elizabeth Streets, shows a steam engine and double-decker cars imported from the United States.*



The Coogee trams had begun opening up the district. The trams of Botany were well ahead.

Now we'll look down the Botany line and turn over a page of 1912 working orders for drivers. *In bad weather, drivers must keep a sharp lookout for sand drifts.* Drivers in those days had to carry shovels to clear the lines of sand.

At the turn of the century, we find tram crews lighting street lamps at waiting sheds at dusk and extinguishing them at dawn.

### Steam

Hang on, we're back to May 17, 1882, and the first Botany tram is pulling away in a burst of steam.

There's not a hydrogen bomb, a Summit conference or a towaway truck in sight.

Our latest intelligence from the electric telegraph is that Parnell is in gaol. In the House of Commons Mr. Gladstone has introduced a bill dealing with the rent arrears of Irish tenantry. It provides for the tenants to pay one year's arrears, the State to pay another and landlords to forgo the remainder. The news disturbs our Irish nationalism, but we put it aside because we're off to the pleasure grounds of Botany Bay.

### Fantastic

"Have you seen the Italian Opera Company at the Gaiety?" asks a character in a cabbage-tree hat who is trying to upstage us. "No," we reply, "but have you seen the show in Exhibition Park over there? It has Merita the Astrologer, circus acts, the Man in the Stocks and even a horse-collar grinning contest." The character retreats behind his cabbage-tree hat and a young girl in high boots tells her companion "They say the show out at Botany is simply fantastic."

We take a quick look at the program arranged for our "Amusement and Enjoyment" at the Sir Joseph Banks pavilion to see what may be intriguing the young ladies. Perhaps it's "the Perman Family of 3 in their Statue Clog Dance and double Irish jig." Or it might be the negro minstrels or even Professor Sauerbier at the piano. We notice from the program: "The Spacious Pavilion will be entirely devoted to the Disciples of Terpsichore.

"Ladies not allowed to dance together. Gentleman not allowed to dance together."

The tram is rapidly filling up and somebody in clogs is dancing a double Irish jig on my toes.

A gentleman wearing a stove pipe hat and reading a paper is speaking to a companion. "Says here, sir, that these new tram lines only last 12 months. It says the way they are being put down and pulled up is dangerous and inconvenient." He reads from a newspaper: "That is more than the citizens of Sydney bargained for when they were so anxious for a better means to communicate than the slow and cumbrous omnibuses." "You can't stop progress," says his companion with a devilish laugh before vanishing in a puff of pipe smoke.

The tram is full even before we reach Waterloo.

### Dangerous

A man who looks like a newspaper reporter is writing in a notebook: "Dangerous packing." He writes on: "If it was not known at the centre of authority that there were far too many people for the accommodation provide it should have been."

People are waving to the tram to stop but it chugs on past them. You can tell by their furious and envious looks on their faces that they wanted to go to Botany, too.

That's how we made that historic journey to pre-aromatic Botany.

### Hooting

The return trip was even worse. We broke down on the hill at Redfern and I saw the reporter noting: "The train was backed, sand applied and more steam generated, but all to no purpose. Three futile attempts were made ... crowds of persons watched the manoeuvres."

Watched? You've never heard more hooting and howling. The Redfern mob was nearly killing itself.

Finally, another engine was attached and over the hill we went.

The last Botany tram early today got back to the depot under its own steam, which says something for progress, anyway.

# HERE AND THERE

## AUSTRALIAN AND OVERSEAS NEWS

### Missing link in Sydney's light rail back on track

The second stage of the Parramatta light rail has been revived after months of speculation over its future, with the NSW government set to allocate \$50 million to the project in the 22 June state budget. The second stage will link Camellia and Sydney Olympic Park via Wentworth Point.

Stage one of the Parramatta light rail is set to open in 2023 at a cost of \$2.4billion.

NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet said the new money would be spent on stage two planning, geotechnical work and an environmental impact statement.

Transport Minister Andrew Constance said the tender process for the next stage would begin ahead of the opening of stage one, and estimated the price would reach into the billions. "We will want to keep rolling into the next stage, absolutely. It's a project in the billions, not the tens or hundreds of millions," Mr Constance said. "It was important that Wentworth Point was serviced by a dedicated transport service, given the high-density apartment living of the area. Again, here we have to retrofit transport for bad planning decisions," he said.

Tom Rabe  
*The Sydney Morning Herald*  
14- June 2021

*Camellia Junction looking north on 20 June 2021. The light rail from Parramatta is coming from the left-hand side and the line to Carlingford follows the former railway right-of-way heading north. The line to the right-hand side will continue to the light rail depot and eventually to the Olympic Park precinct.*

Steven Pracy



### Melbourne – Tram upgrades to cause delays

The *Sunday Herald* reported on 23 May 2021 that motorists and rail commuters can expect travel delays as Melbourne's tram network undergoes a series of upgrades from June 2021.

A new tram stop would be built on Toorak Road outside the South Yarra railway station, to comprise level-access platforms and shelters. Associated works include a bike lane and improved paths for pedestrians.

The works will prepare Route 58, which runs from Toorak to West Coburg and is one of the city's busiest, for higher capacity E class trams. These trams will commence running on route 58 in October.

Toorak Road will be closed between Punt Road and Chapel Street from June 11-19 with buses replacing trams on Route 58 between the intersection of Toorak Road and St Kilda Road and Toorak terminus.

In other news, the tram stop at Flinders Street Station stop was upgraded between 27 June and 12 July. With 365,000 passengers using it each week, new access ramps were provided, and the platform was expanded to help ease overcrowding. Related work involved replacing almost 600m of track along Swanston Street and St Kilda Road.

# COTMA

## COUNCIL OF TRAMWAY MUSEUMS OF AUSTRALASIA

PO Box 61, Carlton South, Victoria 3053

[www.cotma.org.au](http://www.cotma.org.au)

### Warren Doubleday

#### Proposed COTMA Conference - September 2021

All subject to there being no COVID-19 restrictions

#### Accommodation

At least three options available, all near the Railway Station. Mid City Motel, Seymour's on Lydiard, Quest Ballarat, and George Hotel.

Delegates book their own accommodation

#### Transport to Ballarat

Train services to Ballarat are now every 40 mins on weekdays and hourly Saturday and Sunday. There is also a direct airport bus.

#### Wednesday 15th September

- Delegates arrive
- Social evening at North Star Hotel – Meet & greet

#### Thursday 16th

- COTMA - Conference Opening at the Victorian Railways Institute and formal sessions
- Lunch at Wallace hotel and then visit the Museum's Bungaree offsite store
- Social night / evening meal at VRI Hall

#### Friday 17th

- Morning Speaker, Conference CGM with spare parts discussion – VRI Hall
- Lunch at VRI Hall
- After lunch visit to Museum's tram depot
- Conference Dinner and Awards at the George Hotel, Lydiard St

#### Saturday 18th

- Visit Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association at Haddon
- Lunch at Haddon
- Self-guided visit CBD Ballarat
- BTM 50th anniversary Dinner at "The Grand", Dana St.

#### Sunday 19th

- BTM day of celebrations – Vintage Transport Day

#### Monday 20th

- Social Day – Train trip Ballarat to Beaufort
- Visit Lake Goldsmith machinery display Beaufort railway goods shed
- Bus to Waterloo, terminus of 5ft 3in gauge tramway branch line, closed 1912 formerly used to carry mining rubble for ballast on main line railways
- Lunch at Maryborough Highland Society (Bowls Club)
- View magnificent Maryborough Railway Station. Train to Ballarat

#### Partners Programme

#### Thursday 16th

- Walking tour of city area. Will include Art Gallery and Mechanics Institute. Lunch included.

#### Friday 17th

- Bus tour to Creswick Woollen Mill, Lambley Plant Nursery (between Creswick and Clunes)
- Sandwich lunch at Clunes
- Visit historic Talbot, with afternoon tea locally

#### Saturday 18th

- Visit to Sovereign Hill - admission included, lunch own arrangements.

The booking form for the conference may be found at <https://www.cotma.org.au/conference.html>

Hosted by





# BALLARAT

## BALLARAT TRAMWAY MUSEUM

PO Box 632, Ballarat, Victoria 3353

[www.btm.org.au](http://www.btm.org.au)

Dave Macartney and Warren Doubleday

### Illuminated tram

As part of the City of Ballarat's Heritage Festival in May, we decided to operate an illuminated tram during Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings. Tram No. 18 was selected, with Sugar Republic supplying the LED lighting cables as well as a large pink neon light saying, 'Visit Ballarat'. All this was powered by a 12 volt battery. Setting it up proved to be particularly challenging, as the components appear to have a mind of their own. After the first weekend, the system was dismantled and re-fitted which gave a much more satisfactory result.

Travel was free, but passengers were required to book in advance. Six trips per night were run at half hourly intervals. Once the word had got around, trips were fully booked for the rest of the month. Unfortunately, the final week had to be cancelled due to yet another COVID 19 lockdown. Plans have been made to run again during the Ballarat Winter Festival in August.

### Victorian Government grant

During May, the Victorian Government's Regional Infrastructure fund allocated \$1.2m to the Museum for track renewal work in Wendouree Parade. This funding will enable the last of the original 1905 rail to be removed and will connect with the section renewed during September 2019. The curve north of the loop will also get some much-needed attention. In all, some 600m of track will be involved. A vast amount of documentation to obtain the grant was done by Paul Mong and Virginia Fenelon, and the Museum thanks them for their work which continues from the great

*Ballarat illuminated tram 18 at the depot entrance in May 2021.*

Ballarat Tramway Museum



The first version of the Night Tram - 7 May 2021.

Peter Waugh



community support we received for the ‘Pick My Project’ grant of October 2018.

The official announcement was made in Wendouree Parade by Juliana Addison, MP, Member for Wendouree on 19 May.

Ballarat’s newspaper *The Courier* reported on the announcement next day. It stated that museum president Paul Mong had said the organisation has had to increase its workforce because of the additional maintenance needed on the trams. “As they get older, their bodies start to move; they start to deteriorate, and there are many more mechanical problems. At the moment, we have two trams out of action because of the condition of the track,” he said. “I’ve been a volunteer here for 30 years now, and over the last 10 years the track had really deteriorated to the point

where we’re actually cutting out sections of track rather than welding them up. The track condition is that poor, if we don’t do something in the next twelve months, we will not be able to operate.”

Mr Mong said the museum had been advocating for a decade to get the track replaced. “It would be great to see our track replaced, then we can start to talk about extending it.”

According to *The Courier*, it is hoped that the new track will be laid by the end of 2021.

**New building – cab of 826**

Work on the Museum’s extension is going well, despite some cold and miserable weather. By the end of the first week of July, track had been laid, the floor



Ballarat Tramway Museum president Paul Mong and Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison with tram 33.

Ballarat Tramway Museum



*Cab from W5 826 being loaded onto a tilt tray on 4 June 2021 after being sawn off the end of the original tram behind. Left to Right is Tony Smith, Alastair Reither and Paul Mong.*

Sam Boon.

concreted, internal walls framed with plastering commenced, the roof was on, wall cladding

and brickwork under way and services being roughed in. Planning for the methods of operation is proceeding.

*Cladding is underway along with brickwork on 6 July 2021.*  
Warren Doubleday

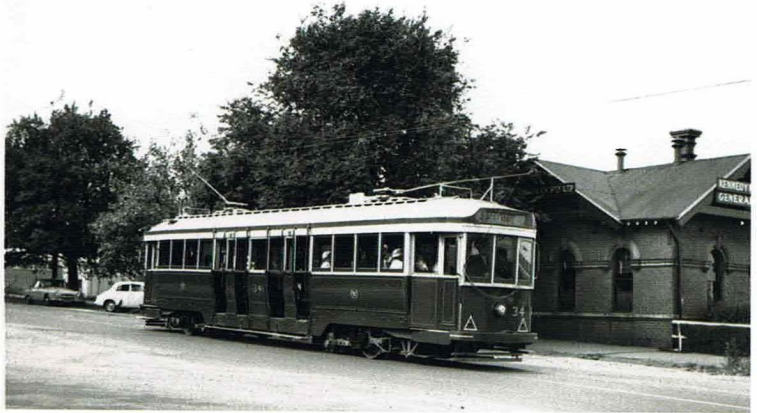


*View on 22 June 2021 looking at the future Exhibition Room, kitchen and store on the ground floor and the Collection / Archives store and offices on the second floor.*

Warren Doubleday

*Ballarat 34, inbound in Lydiard Street North, just before the railway level crossing on 23 March 1959.*

Doug Colquhoun



Part of the visitor entry area will be a kiosk with a tram front that will allow people to enter and have their photo taken. To enable this, the cab of one end of former W5 826 was obtained from the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association. They had dismantled this tram to obtain parts for the reconstruction of their W5, No. 792. After being sawn off, it was moved on a tilt tray to inside the new building on 4 June.

#### **Tram 34**

The AETM in Adelaide is about to acquire two further H class cars and, accordingly, has offered Ballarat 34 to the BTM to free up some depot space. Needless to say, the Museum was quick to take up this offer as a former Hawthorn Tramways Trust bogie has always been a missing example of the Ballarat fleet. No. 34 will initially come to us via Haddon so that some restoration and refurbishing work can be carried out.

Once the Depot extension work is complete in a few months' time, there will be room for No. 34 to join the active fleet.

#### **Tram 40**

Urgent repairs have had to be carried out to Tram 40. This followed an altercation with a motor car backing out of a car park, resulting in minor damage to panels. At the same time, the opportunity was taken to renew some of the window sills in the tram as well as glazing and the end panels that cover the former end doorways. The tram's exterior has been repainted to match the existing paintwork and resealing work has been undertaken on the roof. No. 40 returned to service in early July.

#### **Tram 1029**

After completing work on the roof of 1029, attention has switched from exterior to the interior. Cab windows have been re-installed after finding, of course, that the screws that held the windows in position no longer fitted in the same holes. Interior brass fittings have been repolished and lacquered. New ceiling panels have been made to replace the ones that had been peppered with holes, and these were painted and re-installed during July.



*No. 40 after the completion of the painting along with tram 38 on 9 July 2021. Alastair Reither*

# FERNY GROVE

BRISBANE TRAMWAY MUSEUM SOCIETY

PO Box 94, Ferny Hills, Queensland 4055

[www.brisbanetramwaymuseum.org](http://www.brisbanetramwaymuseum.org)

Peter Hyde



*On 4 June the floor of another bay of the store shed was concreted. In the background and foreground can be seen what happens when you have to clear a large area. Peter Hyde*



*While the concreting of the store shed was under way, the opportunity was taken for some repair work in tram shed No 1 where a section of the floor had begun to crumble badly.*

Peter Hyde

**Wearing a face mask is strongly recommended on public transport**



# HADDON

**MELBOURNE TRAMCAR PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION**

324 Sago Hill Road, Haddon, Victoria 3351

[www.mtpa.com.au](http://www.mtpa.com.au)

Anthony Smith

## Restoration of 792

The application of the first coat of clear lacquer to the ceiling timbers has now been completed. This also includes the restored drivers cab roof area as well. Once the restoration is further advanced, additional coats will be applied. The dropcentre quarter panels have now been fitted with safety glass along with new retaining cover strips.

In May, our contract joinery manufactured new cable duct timbers for the roof of 792. These have now been primed and await fitting, which will occur shortly once the roof wiring loom has been made up



*The No 2 cab ceiling of 792 receiving its first coat of clear lacquer.*  
Jacqui Smith



*Replacement internal cab door for 792 undergoing restoration work.*  
Daniel Edwards

and installed. This will then allow us to fit all the roof mounted hardware such as trolley base platforms, lightning arrestor and pole hooks. Also, during May, two internal drivers cab doors and side pillar cover strips were selected from our spare stock for use on 792. The doors were first trial fitted which identified that whilst they were suitable, minor adjustment to their size was required to ensure correct fit. This has now been attended to and both the doors and cover strips have had the old paint and varnish removed and have been restored. They are currently in store and will be fitted to the tram at a later date.

**Carbarn trackwork**

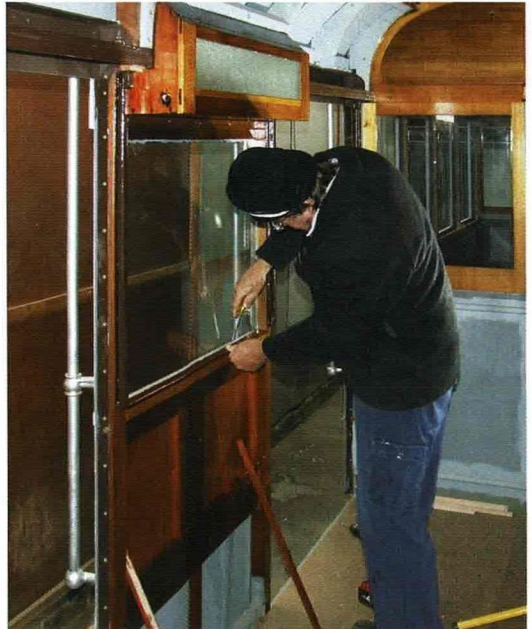
The section of track at the bottom of No 3 road along with the walkway between No 4 and No 5 roads have now been concreted. There is now only one small section of track in the middle of No 3 road that requires sleeper removal to complete this stage of the project. With over half the trackwork inside this building now in mass concrete, the remaining sleepers will be removed on an as needed basis over the next few years.

**Lower Terminus shed**

As part of our plan to use this building for all future tram overhauls and repainting work, a number of tool and paint storage lockers have been relocated from the No 1 Road lifting bay in the main workshop building. At the same time, all the hydraulic lifting equipment that had been stored in this building was transferred to the lifting bay.

**Dismantling of 826**

In May as part of the dismantling process, the dropcentre quarter panel frames were removed and placed into storage as spares for possible use in other restoration projects. Earlier this year, the association received an enquiry from the Ballarat Tramway Museum about the possibility of obtaining both complete cabs off this tram to incorporate into their new display building that was already under construction. It was agreed that as they were surplus to our requirements, they could be made available.



*Glass and cover strips being fitted to a quarter panel on 792.*  
Daniel Edwards

*Driver's internal door being trial fitted into 792.*  
Daniel Edwards

In May, the No 1 end cab was separated from the body and transported to Ballarat. As part of the preparation work, it was necessary to remove a large section of the floor in the saloon area immediately behind the driver's bulkhead to gain access to the side frames and floor bearers for cutting purposes. This work was undertaken in advance of the main work party by Daniel Edwards. As per agreement, the Ballarat Tramway Museum provided the bulk of the manpower required to detach the cab utilising our forklift. Removal of the other cab will occur shortly after which the remaining body structure will be dismantled.

**Site works**

In early June, heavy duty rubber matting was laid on the floor of our tram servicing pit. The provision of this matting will make working conditions within the pit more tolerable by removing the need to be standing or kneeling on cold and damp concrete. During this work, the opportunity was taken to clean out the sump pit and service the submersible pump.

During May as part of our ongoing drainage system maintenance program, the stormwater outlet pipes on the south side of the lower terminus shed were extended further down the gully towards the creek. This has now allowed us to spread the large quantity of soil and stone that had been accumulating on site from the carbarn sleeper removal project in this area.

In early June, work was started on dismantling the spare No 9 truck. After the truck was placed over the pit, all the brake rigging components were removed

along with the gear cases and thrust collars. The suspension bearing cap bolts were then loosened and the rear mount stirrup irons detached. The truck was then towed outside on the depot fan to facilitate the removal of the traction motors utilising our forklift. All the brake components have now been placed in store and the traction motors temporarily stored on pallets in the lower terminus shed pending their placement into the compressor/traction motor storage container.



*View showing the cab section being removed from 826.*  
 Anthony Smith

*A traction motor being removed from the spare No 9 truck.*  
 Jacqui Smith



# LOFTUS

## SOUTH PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY CO-OP SOCIETY

PO Box 103, Sutherland, NSW 1499

[www.sydneytramwaymuseum.com.au](http://www.sydneytramwaymuseum.com.au)

### From SPER News

#### Trams After Dark – 19 June

Our popular ‘Trams After Dark’ event returned in 2021 on the Saturday closest to the winter solstice. This year we highlighted our trams from Victoria and the evening featured Melbourne W2 249 and Z2 111 along with Ballarat 37. We were particularly proud to use No. 37 as our friends at the Ballarat Tramway Museum had had to cancel their own ‘after dark’ event due to a COVID-19 outbreak just a couple of weeks before our event.

Although visitor numbers were down on previous years, mainly due to the ongoing COVID pandemic

*Sydney R1 1979 is passing Leyland Tiger 3131 on 17 April 2021.*  
Scott Curnow

and some wet weather during the day, still some 250 visitors, including a couple of Melbourne visitors, came along to enjoy the spectacle of the warmly lit tramcars on a cold winters evening. Not only did we have our Victorian trams running but we also included some typically Victorian winter weather for free!

Adding to the Melbourne theme this year were two special visitors. The Sydney Bus Museum sent along their ex-Melbourne 1952 AEC half cab bus No. 352 for display in Tramway Avenue. It made a fine sight, complementing the operating trams. The bus was transported overnight and returned to Leichhardt immediately following the event. We are grateful



*The Sydney Bus Museum's Melbourne 1952 AEC half-cab 152 is ready transfer to Loftus for display at the 'Trams After Dark' event.* Craig Parkinson



*Grinder 3 and Scrubber 11 on display in Cross Street on 19 June 2021. David Critchley*

*Melbourne W2 249 at Railway Square waiting shed on 19 June 2021. Geoff Lloyd*

to the Sydney Bus Museum for making this historic bus available to us. Additionally, KST Transport of Banksmeadow made available their ex-Melbourne PT-V (and Ventura Bus Lines) 2002 MAN bus for display at Loftus. This bus would have operated alongside the Z classes in their final years. Many thanks to KST's owner, George, and driver, Mitchell, for allowing this bus to visit for the evening.

Our visitors were also treated to a couple of surprises during the evening, especially when former Melbourne Essanee grinder No. 3 came sparking out of Cross Street. This tram, which began its career as Sydney grinder No. 2, was not often seen in daylight hours and looked very much at home in the darkness. Also on display was Melbourne scrubber car No. 11, now



*Ballarat 37 and Melbourne Z2 111 await their turn of duty at Railway Square waiting shed. Michael Hatton*

*Ed Slee and Bill Parkinson ready to repair a compressor on 24 May 2021. Michael Hatton*



*Peter Mudie testing the H car inverter on 1 May 2021.*

Michael Hatton



sporting orange flashing lights at each corner of its roof line. Altogether it was another successful night for the museum and we look forward to 2022 when we can again bring out trams after dark.

### Workshop and maintenance

Work has continued on **Melbourne cable trailer 589**. To facilitate work on the clerestory windows and the area under the roof overhang, some of the roof boards on both sides of the car were temporarily removed. The many small windows have been prepared on a bench and small brass parts buffed on the bench grinder. A saloon door has been painted and the sun shutters attended to.

**Sydney D 117** has had work done on its aprons, and the two hand brake staffs have been fitted. New turned seat legs, saloon seats and the saloon window sashes have been installed. All saloon timber has been stained and finished. The side rubbing timbers, designed to protect the bodywork from scraping by wayward horse drawn vehicles, have been fitted. The roof has been painted and the footboard brackets are being fitted. Timber for the footboards and kick boards has been delivered.

**Milan 1692** has had its compressor removed again, this time it was to correct an oil leak into the compressor motor. On 12 June, 1692 did a test run on the depot access track with all systems checking out.

Later that day **San Francisco PCC 1014** entered the workshop for attention to its off-side doors which were taken out of use when San Francisco changed it to a single-ended car. A set of door motors were amongst the items received from Muni; these are being fitted and the missing metal arms for each of the off-side doors are being made up.

The Adelaide H car inverter has passed its bench testing and tooling up is under way for on-the-road tests using the test terminals that were allowed for in the refurbishment of 11W.

### Track and associated work

The north-western points of the scissors crossover had a thorough refurbishment involving the removal of the covers, point blades, mechanism and rods. All steelwork was descaled, treated with rust converter



*Milan 1642 on the traverser on 19 May 2021. Richard Jones*



*John and Liam working on the clerestory windows for Sydney D 117. Michael Hatton*



*Concreting the last of the western track in Tramway Avenue on 26 May 2021. Martin Pinches*

*School group visits are again a weekly feature and Sydney P 1497 demonstrated its crowd eating ability on 28 April 2021.*

Richard Jones



and painted for ongoing protection. The timber point cover received some new timber. The blades were shimmed to correct bad wear and were reinstalled. A new treadplate cover for the adjacent drainage pit was sourced to replace the life-expired timber cover and two smaller plates to cover the negative feeder connections. Attention then turned to the south western points with the cover being lifted. This set was in far better condition and required less work. The covers were put back for the 'Trams After Dark' event with both tracks in use. To complete the concreting of the last part of side strip near the points, the tar was saw cut and formwork was installed.

On 29 May a new tram stop post was installed in the footpath near where the old letter box post had been removed.

### Electrical

Conduits and pits are being laid for underground power to be extended to the South Shed in trenches dug by CSO workers.

### Miscellaneous

John McFadden took over the role of Acting Treasurer on 1 April which has greatly increased his workload at the museum.

To lighten John's workload, Laura Huang agreed to replace him as Health Assessment Manager. She took up her new duties on 1 July 2021. We wish her well in her new role.

Lantana eradication has recommenced as weather and time permits, and already the growth at the highway crossing on the Royal National Park side has died back. Unfortunately, the weed spraying tram, which is very effective, does not cover far enough beyond the track, so manual spraying is still necessary.

Richard Jones has been making Christchurch symbol destination rolls for when we receive Christchurch No. 12. It will operate as a Christchurch car when it arrives, rather than being masquerading as a Sydney G car. We were fortunate that Dave Hinman in Christchurch supplied the roll details; apparently the symbol rolls only lasted about 10 years as the locals complained that they could not read them. This was different from Sydney where they were used up until the last day.



*Portion of a Christchurch tram destination roll produced for when the museum receives Christchurch No 12.*

Richard Jones

# ST KILDA

AUSTRALIAN ELECTRIC TRANSPORT MUSEUM (SA) INC

PO Box 213, Salisbury, South Australia 5108

www.trammuseumadelaide.com.au

Colin Seymour

### Return of tram rides to St Kilda

It's been a long time coming. On 2 May 2021 new driver Nic Benn drove the first passenger tram to the Playground since October 2018 – W7 1013. Nic was in the final stage of his training which required driving

in operations while being monitored by an accredited driver, in this case, Kym Smith.



*Paul Shillabeer sweeps the Trolleybus Shed for visitors on the Cleaning Day on 24 April 2021. Sunbeam 525 and Canton 488 are displayed.*

John Radcliffe



*New AETM President, Nic Benn in the final stage of driver accreditation with W7 1013, the first passenger tram to the Playground since October 2018 on Rejuvenation Day 2 May 2021. Josh Driscoll*

*H 365 in Shell Street, St. Kilda after the crew opened the Playground track gate on a pre-operations test run on Rejuvenation Day – 2 May 2021.*

Nic Benn



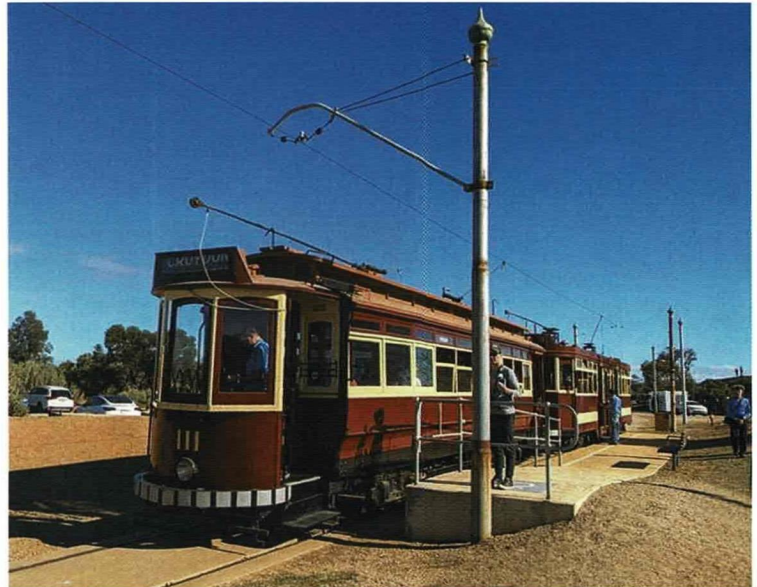
It soon became apparent when E1 111 did the following trip that an additional tram would be required to run. The next trip was made by H1 381 and F1 282. Trams ran in convoys of two for most of the day. In anticipation of a good crowd two crews had been rostered. The day was very successful and it was great to see much needed revenue coming in.

The initial excitement has settled down, but healthy numbers continue as we get back into the swing of running trams to the Playground again.

To comply with COVID Safe requirements the Museum is only using larger capacity trams during our initial months of tram operations. Trams selected for use are 111, 282, 365, 381 and W7 1013. Each tram has QR code signs and seating capacity signs. The Museum entrance gallery and sales building also has our QR code signs and COVID safety signs.

Much work was required during April to get the Museum ready again for public operations. This included a training day and a cleaning day.

*E1 111 and F1 282 running in convoy at the Playground Stop to cope with passenger loadings on Recommencement Day 2 May 2021. Nic Benn*



*Passengers board E1 tram 111 at the Playground Stop on 2 May 2021 Recommencement Day Nic Benn*



W7 1013 alongside the Museum ramp on the Training Day, 17 April 2021. Colin Seymour

Cars 282, 111 and 381 near Mangrove Street on the Training Day, 17 April 2021. Colin Seymour



**Recommencement training day and cleaning day**

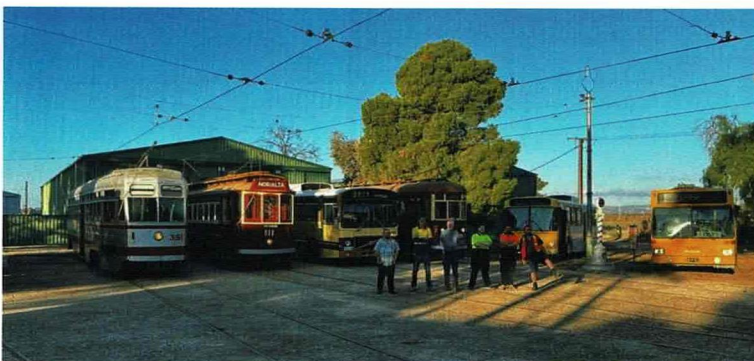
As reported in the May issue of *Trolley Wire*, a Re commencement of Operations training day was held on Saturday 17 April. After theory sessions in the morning, drivers and conductors were required after lunch to complete refresher training on all of our COVID Safe approved trams.

Operations staff were also encouraged to complete the SA Health COVID Marshal training. It is a

requirement that we must have a COVID Marshal on duty on each operating day.

A cleaning day was held on 24 April to ensure that the museum site, displays and trams were cleaned ready for the recommencement of public operations. The day was well attended and it was good to see a number of old faces as well as some newer ones.

In addition to the cleaning day arrangements were made for the display gallery gutters and surrounding yard to be cleaned up by a contractor.



AETM and Bus Preservation Assoc. of SA members with 381, 111, Volvo 1466, 365 and MAN 199 on the Cleaning Day on 24 April 2021. Kym Smith



*'Bib & Bub' 14 & 15 in Shell Street, St. Kilda on a Members night run after the AGM on 29 May 2021.*  
Nic Benn



### Annual General Meeting

The 63rd Annual General Meeting of the AETM was held at the museum site on Saturday 29 May 2021.

The new Executive Committee is:

President – Nic Benn  
Vice President – Chris Bennett  
Secretary – Mark Jordan  
Treasurer – Kym Smith  
Operations Manager – Maureen Parker  
Rollingstock Manager – John Pennack

In accordance with the constitution the committee will appoint persons to fill the Site and Safety Manager and Track and Overhead Manager positions at its first meeting following the AGM. Some deputies will be appointed.

In a rare occurrence for the AETM a ballot was required at the AGM. The position of President was contested by Geoff Grantham and Nic Benn and was won by Nic. We thank Geoff for his contributions to the role over the past two years during a difficult time

for the AETM. Nic was the previous Vice President and Rail Safety Officer.

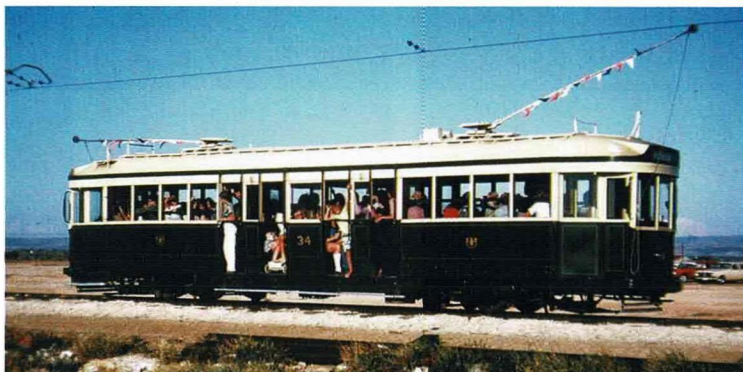
The usual barbeque took place after the AGM, and members were treated to night runs on Bib & Bub 14 & 15 and drop-centre 282.

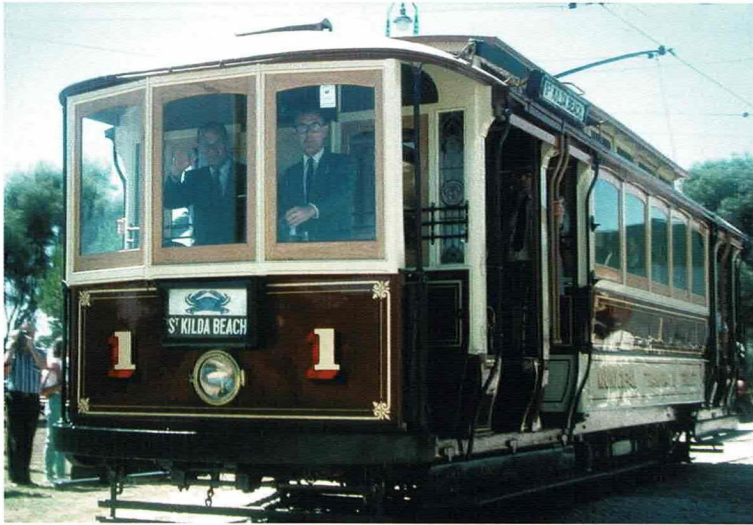
### Ballarat 34

At the AGM the members approved an amendment to the constitution changing the classification of Ballarat tram 34 from a category A asset to a category B asset, allowing it to be transferred to the Ballarat Tramway Museum under a proposed three-stage transfer arrangement (ownership by the BTM being fully completed upon restoration).

Ballarat car 34 was donated to the AETM in 1971 by the State Electricity Commission of Victoria following the closure of the Ballarat tramway system, and arrived at St Kilda in September 1971, a week after the closure of the Ballarat tramways.

*Ballarat 34 carries a full load on Museum Opening Day, 23 March 1974.*  
Len Millar





*The Duke of Edinburgh waves to the crowd of visitors as President, Paul Shillabeer drives Tram No. 1 from the Museum yard on 11 March 1986.*  
John Radcliffe

No. 34 was given a minor refurbishment by the AETM to return it to circa 1950s condition and was then one of the first five trams in service at the museum. During the mid to late 1970s it was used as a works tram until the arrival of Melbourne W2 354. It was last used regularly prior to 2000.

Another factor prompting the transfer of Ballarat 34 is the recent donation to the AETM of the last H trams used in Adelaide, trams 351 and 352 (ex 367) and the need to find space for these two cars when they are transferred to Kilda.

#### **Additional storage tracks**

To facilitate the movement of car 34 and the two additional H cars, it has become necessary to remove the many spare trucks located at the rear of the

Christopher Steele tram maintenance building and the bodyshop.

To provide storage space for these items three additional tracks have been built at the rear of the bodyshop. It is intended that future tram loading and unloading will be carried out from the existing track extension behind the bodyshop.

#### **Remembering the Duke of Edinburgh's visit in 1986**

With the recent passing of His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, we reflected back to when he visited the museum on 11 March 1986 and drove tram No. 1 on his way to the Kilda Mangrove Boardwalk in his capacity as President of the World Wildlife Fund.



*Tom Wilson in the former Hackney Depot Rolling Stock Office during his guided tour of the Goodman Building on Friday, 14 May 2021.*

John Radcliffe

**Goodman Building Tours**

As part of History Month in May Tom Wilson (a retired Adelaide Public Transport Traffic Planner and long-time AETM conductor) was invited by the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium to conduct two night-time tours of the Goodman Building at

the former Hackney Depot on Friday 14 May. The building is now the headquarters of the Botanic Gardens. The building was the Administration Office of the MTT (Municipal Tramways Trust) until the mid 1970s and is named after Sir William Goodman, the General Manager of the MTT from 1908 until 1950.

# WHITEMAN PARK

**PERTH ELECTRIC TRAMWAY SOCIETY (INC)**

PO Box 257, Mount Lawley, Western Australia 6929

[www.pets.org.au](http://www.pets.org.au)

**Michael Stukely**

**Traffic operations and service cars**

Easter provided very pleasant weather in Perth and patronage on the trams was excellent, with two cars in service each day, running on a 15-minute headway. Good patronage levels continued with the usual seven days per week operation through most of the April school holidays, and on through May.

However, services were interrupted due to a four-day COVID-19 lockdown in Perth covering the usually busy Anzac Day long weekend (Friday 23 to Monday 26 April), and with restrictions resulting in no services also for the week following. There were again no tram services when precautionary Total Fire Ban restrictions were imposed by the authorities over the full weekend of Saturday 10 to Monday 12 April

as Cyclone Seroja passed through WA. At this time, there was a potential for multiple emergencies placing



*Ray Blackmore hard at it, on 24 March, grinding back a recent weld during his renovation work on the Road 1-2 points on the Oketon Geddes Carbarn fan.* Lindsay Richardson

*PETS Works Tram (formerly Melbourne W7 class tram) 1023 returning from Stockmans Triangle to the Carbarn after some track maintenance work on 14 April. A generator (for operating power tools) is mounted on one end of the tram, which is equipped for both overhead and track maintenance purpose*

Michael Stukely



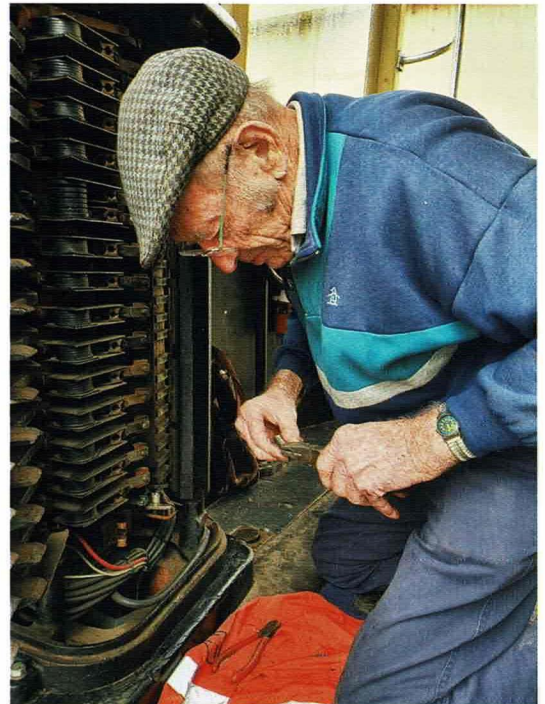
*SW6 891, driven by Noel Blackmore, returns on the first test run through the new section of concreted track in the Village Mall, on 8 May.*

Michael Stukely

unusually heavy demands on the emergency services, leading to the ban. Indeed, several communities further north of Perth, including Kalbarri, suffered severe damage.

Service cars in March-May were Melbourne SW6 891 and W7 1017, and WAGT (Perth) E class 66.

Passenger services have continued in compliance with the current official COVID-19 guidelines for Western



*Noel Blackmore carries out repairs to the controller of Perth E class 66 on 15 June.*

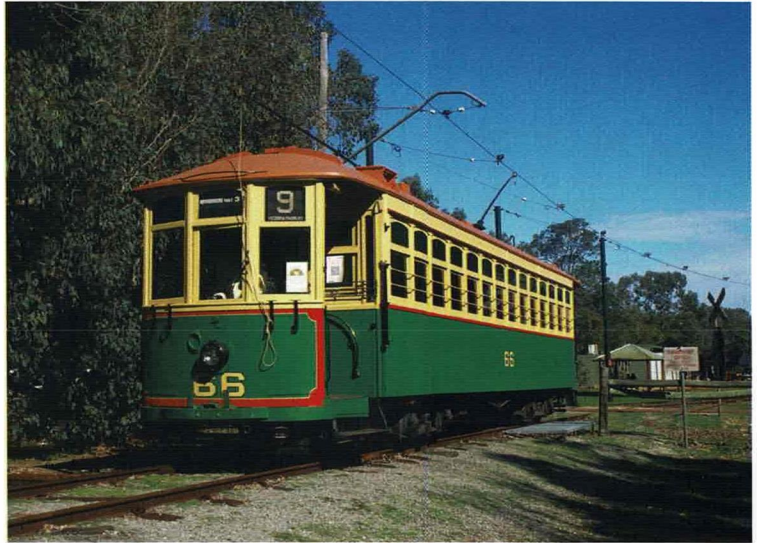
Michael Stukely



*The three right-hand tramway turnouts for the new Don and Laurie Tyler Car barn fan are being laid out by Brian Rourke inside the car barn, as seen on 6 June.*

Michael Stukely

*Perth E class 66 passes through the Horse Swamp Cattle Grid after departing the Pia's Place stop for Village Junction Station terminus and the Village on 12 June.* Michael Stukely



*Len Pearce has designed and built a new spring lock-up fitting for use with Melbourne No. 15 trucks, to enable more efficient and safe handling on removals. Here Len and Ray White are demonstrating the fitting, on 24 March.*

Lindsay Richardson

*A full close-up view of the newly-built spring lock-up fitting for No. 15 trucks.*

Lindsay Richardson

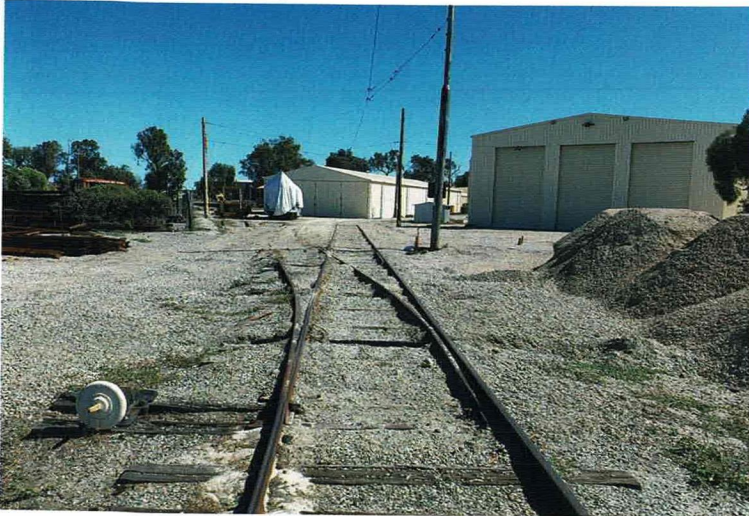
Australia. Passengers must register when boarding the tram, either by using the SafeWA phone app to scan the society's QR-code displayed at the entrances of each tram, or on paper. Cash fares are collected as usual. Sanitising of designated surfaces in the tram is carried out at prescribed intervals, which has led to a small loss of traffic time.

**Maintenance of trams and infrastructure**

The staged upgrade of the Village Mall track began in July-August 2019 with the renewal of a 65-metre section from the small service road crossing beyond the Village and through most of Camel Curve into the Mall. Full replacement of sleepers, rail and fittings was carried out, with welding of rail joints, and re-setting of the check-rail on the curve to our standards, followed by mass concreting (see *Trolley Wire* November 2019).



Work on Stage Two of the upgrade was commenced by the contractor on 19 April 2021. This stage involved the replacement and concreting the next approximately 35 metres of track in the Village Mall, through the



*Looking west along the main line towards the Carbarns, following preparatory work by our contractor, Allworks, for the installation of the new fan for the Don and Laurie Tyler Carbarn (at right). Part of the access track from the left turnout (foreground) to the Lindsay Richardson Carbarn has been removed. This set of railway-type points will be replaced by tramway points, which will be relocated further east on the mainline (behind the camera), and clear of the new fan. Michael Stukely*

remainder of Camel Curve and into the straight section. It was re-opened for services on 8 May, with full services resuming to the Village Junction Station terminus. This program is being funded by Whiteman Park management to cover the full Village Mall, progressively over the next several years.

Our contractor, Allworks, has been working on the PETS mainline track, from the Oketon Geddes Carbarn fan to a position past the Tyler Carbarn, in preparation for the installation and connection of the fan of the new carbarn. This work involves replacing sleepers as necessary, and ultimately adjusting the gradients and levels of the track.

Work has started on refurbishing trucks to enable the return to service of Melbourne W2 class 393,

which has been out of use for several years due to the unavailability of serviceable wheels. Our thanks go again to our midweek teams for this work, as well as for the ongoing maintenance of the regular service trams.

Maintenance work continues on the overhead at Stockmans Triangle with the replacement of deteriorating span-wires.

On the track workdays on 6 March, 17 April and 8 May, 15 old timber sleepers were replaced with steel between the Workshops Road level crossing and Bennett Brook Culvert. On 12 June, four steels were installed between the Horse Swamp Cattle Grid and Stockmans Triangle. Further repairs were carried out at the Triangle West points, and general maintenance continued at other locations.



*Stage Two of the Village Mall track upgrade is well under way on 23 April, with Allworks workers adjusting the alignment of the new track ready for concreting. Michael Stukely*

*Melbourne W7 1017 waits at Mussel Pool tram stop for members attending the Easter Barbecue on 4 April to board for the dusk tram ride.*

Shane Parsons



Special steel sleepers of extra length have been purchased from the manufacturer for use on the points on the mainline, for the replacement of life-expired timber sleepers.

Brian Rourke has continued laying out the tramway points to be installed in the mainline for the new Don and Laurie Tyler Carbarn fan.

**General**

There was a good crowd of members at Mussel Pool on Sunday 4 April for our traditional Easter Barbecue. As well as food there were dusk and night tram rides, this time on W7 1017. Often in previous years we have been able to host our visiting Eastern States members at these events, and we hope that we will be able to welcome you back in future years.

The David Secker Memorial Award presentations were made at the Easter Barbecue, and this year two awards were made, to Maree Cowley and Terry Young — congratulations to both.

*This left-hand tramway turnout was assembled and welded up off-site by Allworks, and will be installed on the mainline for access to the Lindsay Richardson Carbarn, replacing the existing railway-type points. 17 April 2021.*

*Melbourne SW6 891 pauses at the Triangle West points at the conclusion of service on 25 June, as the resident cattle continue their feed of fresh hay.*

Michael Stukely





*The Australian Electric Transport Museum's Recommencement of Operations fleet is seen on the Training Day, 17 April 2021. The trams are W7 1013, H1 381, E1 111, H 365 and F1 282.*

Colin Seymour



*As part of the City of Ballarat's Heritage Festival it was decided to operate an illuminated tram during Friday, Saturday and Sunday evening and single truck car 18 was selected. The Night Tram is seen at Depot Junction in May 2021.*

City of Ballarat