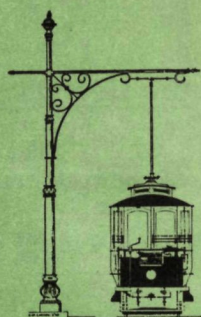


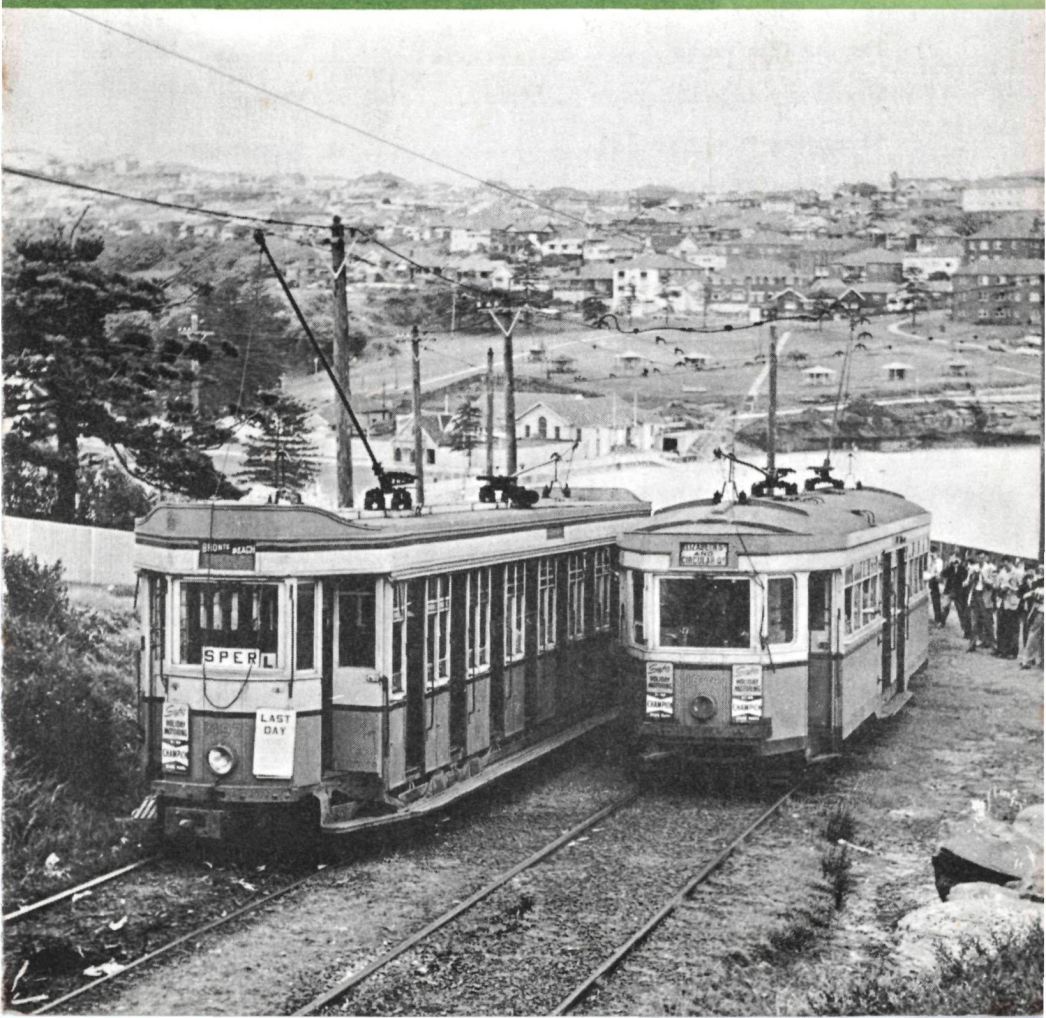
# TROLLEY WIRE

Magazine of the  
SOUTH PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY

ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE



AUGUST 1964



NEW MEMBERS

The Board and Shareholders welcome the following new members to the museum:-

Keith Seckold 110                      Hayden Holmes 111

   Allan Watson 112

FROM THE JULY BOARD MEETING

The Directors of the new 1963-64 Board now occupy the following positions:

Chairman of the Board ..... K. McCarthy

Deputy Chairman ..... R. Murray

Honorary Life Director ..... N. Chinn

Managing Director ..... R. Merchant

Secretary Director ..... V. Solomons

Minutes & Share Director..... R. Clarke

Financial Director..... L. Gordon

Assistant Financial Director..... B. Parle

Owing to the expanding activities of the Museum the re-building plans for the depot have had to be somewhat amended. Money and materials are now in hand for the first stages of this scheme and the directors hope to have the altered plans available at the next general meeting for members' discussion.

At the July Board Meeting the directors unanimously thanked Mr. Dale Budd for the successful launching of "Trolley Wire" in its new form, and for the organisation of the triumphal speed record rail tour to Newcastle held on 28th June. Special mention was also made of the assistance given by Messrs. L. Gordon and R. Merchant in aiding the financial arrangements and booking details connected with this tour.

**COVER PHOTO:** The last day of service to Bondi, Bronte and Circular Quay, 28th February 1960. R car 1804 climbs away from Bronte while P 1497, on tour for the SPER and AETA, waits for a photo on the down line.

# TROLLEY WIRE

New Series Vol. 5 No. 5  
Issue No. 93

AUGUST 1964

---

**TROLLEY WIRE** is published bi-monthly by the **South Pacific Electric Railway Co-operative Society Limited**, Box 103, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W.

The Society is building an operating electric tramway in the Royal National Park, N.S.W. Visitors to the depot, in Lady Rawson Avenue, are welcome on the first Sunday of each month. Membership enquiries are also invited; the current fees are £3 per annum or £1.10.0 for students. Write to the Secretary at the above address.

*General Manager:* R. I. MERCHANT.

*Secretary:* V. SOLOMONS.

---

TROLLEY WIRE subscription rate  
(for non-members)  
10/- per annum, post paid.

## FIRST NOTCH

The attainment of electric tramcar operation on 19th July is the Society's greatest achievement to date. All the efforts of all those associated with the project since 1949 have been directed towards this goal, and it is with a great sense of satisfaction that we see it reached. The obstacles in our path have been many and varied, not the least being the scepticism of those who claimed that our plans could never be put into effect. Now we know that we were right, and that we do have the resources and ability to build and run an operating electric tramway.

Nevertheless it must not be forgotten that much hard work lies ahead. The present conditions of operation, while immensely satisfying to members, fall far short of the standards required for the general public. In every branch of our activities there is a great deal of consolidation to be carried out before we can offer a reliable service with several cars. The sooner this can be achieved, the sooner the Society will be on a sounder financial basis and our progress will accelerate. Therefore let us all strive to overcome this next hurdle, for after it the going will be easier.

---

## ANNUAL MEETING

Fifty four members attended the Fifth Annual General Meeting held at Enmore on Friday 26th June when two of the retiring directors, K. McCarthy and L. Gordon were re-elected for a further two year term and candidate R. Clarke, our capable Mechanical Engineer, was elected as a new director. We take this opportunity to place on record our thanks to our former Minutes and Share Secretary, who was not re-elected to the board, for his labours over the last five years. Bill Tuffnell had occupied this position since the incorporation of the Society and was respected by the rest of the Board for his fair and unprejudiced approach to involved problems which often face the Museum and for the efficient way in which he conducted his secretarial duties.

The Annual Report prepared by the Chairman of Directors outlined the activities of the last twelve months paying particular attention to track extensions, span pole erection, rail lifting at Randwick Workshops, operation of the rail motor in regular service, the successful rail tour to Yass and the construction of a motor generator set to supply D.C. power.

The Financial Director's report revealed a large turnover of £7,109, and all in all the Society's 1963-64 year proved to be a successful one.

The Annual Meeting concluded with the screening of a selection of slides from eight tramway museums, as well as views of Australian, New Zealand, U.S.A., English, Canadian and European tramways past and present.

The next general meeting will be held at 8. pm. on Friday September 4th, 1964 at St. Luke's Church Hall, Stanmore Road, Enmore.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE N. S. W. RAIL TRANSPORT MUSEUM

We offer our sincere congratulations to the N. S. W. R. T. M. who have now received official ministerial recognition for their plans of preserving railway motive power and rolling stock. Much has still to be done before their first item is moved into its permanent home in the Enfield loco roundhouse, but we are sure that the Government press release of some weeks ago about this venture means that our sister society is now heading along the home stretch, and their goals are well in sight.

## SYDNEY TRAM RUNS AGAIN



At 4.27 pm, Sunday 19th July 1964, after many years of preparation and toil, "L/P" 154 was driven along the track in the depot yard under its own power.

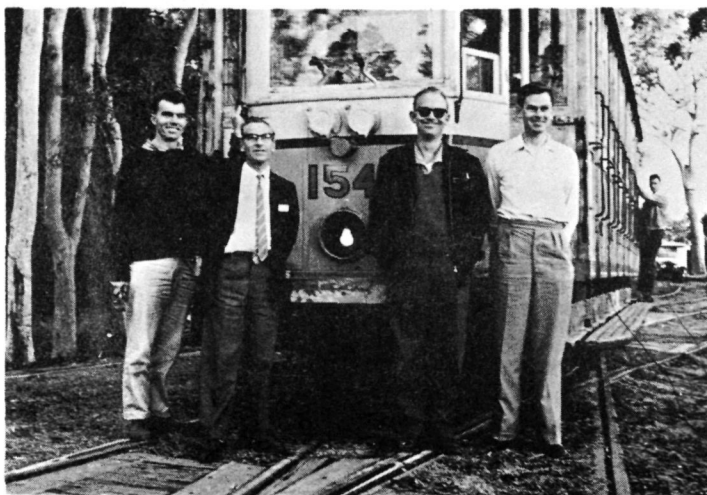
Final preparations for this trial were pushed ahead during that weekend; feeder arms were erected to carry the cables between the substation and the depot yard, adjustments made to the motor generator set, and insulation tests carried out on car 154. These last named tests revealed that the car is in excellent electrical condition, even though it is some eight years since electricity has pulsed through its wiring.

The car was connected to the power by means of temporary cables, and after lighting and compressor tests, Richard





3rd September 1949: Last day of the Rockdale lines. Among this crowd around L/P 154 are four foundation members of the SPER.  
Photo, the Sydney Morning Herald



Fifteen years later, 19th July 1964: the same four foundation members stand once again in front of L/P 154. Older and wiser men, they are, left to right, Ken McCarthy, Ron Murray, Norm Chinn and Ben Parle.

Clarke, our Mechanical Engineer, announced that all was ready for a road test with one motor. Foundation member Norman Chinn threw the controller handle but except for a slight bucking of the motor nothing happened. The second motor of this two motor car was then connected and at 4.27 pm as the controller was again moved into the first notch, L/P 154 glided forward as other cars of this class had done over the years in Sydney, Rockdale and Newcastle..without any fuss, fumes, or fumbling.

Amid the cheers of the 18 members present on this, the Society's most historic occasion, the controller was notched further around on the first electric car preserved in Australia ... thus our goal was reached.

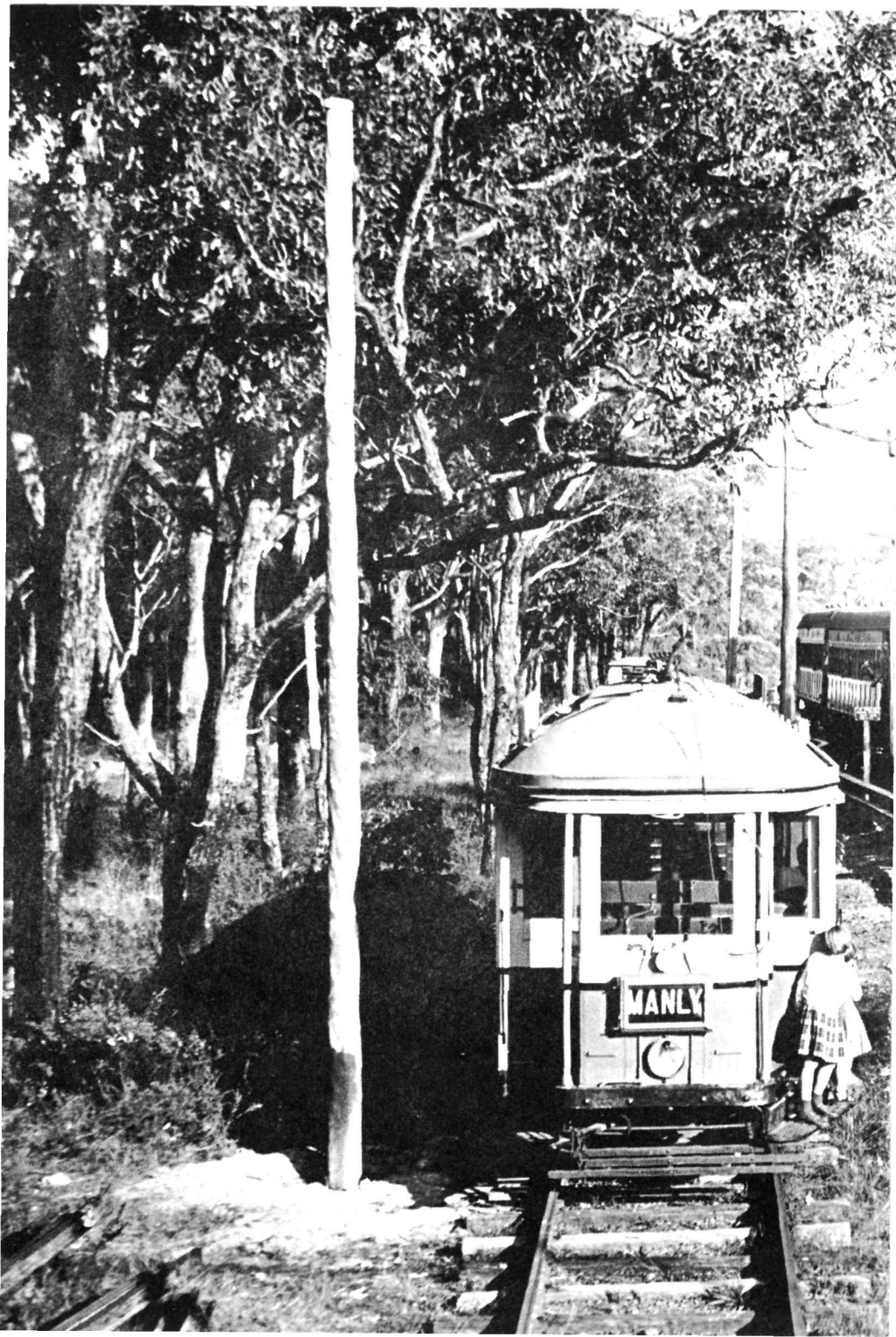
Operation over 60 yards of track continued for forty minutes until the descending darkness forced the car to return to the depot. A photograph of the car and those members present appears at the head of this article.

Much still remains to be done before regular electrical operation commences but we can look forward with confidence to regular passenger trips during the coming summer season. In the meantime overhead must be erected along the entire 300 yards of main line, repainting of L/P 154 and other cars must be completed, the depot area made ready for public inspection and a bank of batteries set up to supplement the small motor generator set.

Success is within our reach: the larger our work force can be the sooner regular electric operation will commence. How about working for a few hours at the depot in the near future?

A footnote to our first day of electric operation was created by a surprised visitor around 4-30 pm. Caught in a traffic jam on the highway near our museum a motorist caught a glimpse of L/P 154 moving through the trees. He hastily drove into the depot yard, rushed from his car, halted and could only utter, "Who would believe it?" After convincing himself, his wife and family that a Sydney tram was again in operation, he departed again into the Sunday traffic jam promising to put in an afternoon of riding when regular operation commences.

CENTRE PAGES: The ARE special, hauled by engine 1307, steams past "O" car 1111 on 27th June.







# NEW ZEALAND TRAMS BOW OUT

## Last Wellington line closes

Over the years we have only received sketchy news from tramway museums in our sister dominion, although rumours did indicate that interest in the traction preservation field was growing steadily. Recently we received news from the TRAMWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY of Wellington and the TRAMWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY of Christchurch, and further details are promised of kindred groups in Auckland. We are indebted to the TPS and in particular to Messrs. Alan Smith, Keith McGavin and Gary Riggs, for the "last day" details and museum news printed below.

The last route was that from Thorndon, through the city to Newtown (Park and Zoo). This was normally route No. 11. At peak hours on weekdays an alternative route through to Newtown (route 4) was used and during these times route 11 trams were terminated at two intermediate points between Thorndon and Newtown (Railway Station and Wallace Street). Thus, right to the end of the system the tram service to the city was doubled at peak hours, 16 trams being required in service each day.

The last tram on the No. 4 route to Newtown was "Fiducia" type No. 257 on the 5.55 pm Thorndon - Newtown service on Friday, 1st May. This was the normal service and except for about 20 fans on board the trip went practically unannounced. All day on the 1st May (the second to last day) special, cheap souvenir tickets were issued (a pair enclosed).

On Saturday 2nd May, the last day, free rides were the story. 12 trams, practically the total mobile fleet, were in use to provide, theoretically, a five minute service between the Railway Station and Newtown until 10 am. The last trams were Nos. 250, (3rd to last), 251 (2nd) and 252 - the last tram. No. 252 was run empty from Newtown tram barns to the Railway Station - preceded by regular car 236 - where it was boarded by the official party for the short run to Thorndon. At Thorndon, after a brief ceremony the three decorated trams set out on their final journey. The last tram, crowded with over 100 people on board (seating for 31) was preceded by the Onslow Silver Band (formerly the Tramways Band) to the Cenotaph, just beyond the Railway Station, and thereafter to Newtown was driven at near to normal speeds. It was



TPS "Double saloon" car 151 being lifted off its bogies at Newtown depot on 20th June 1964, prior to being moved into temporary storage at Seaview.

driven the full distance by the mayor, Mr. F.J. Kitts. There was a crowd of about 500 at the official ceremony at Thorndon, several thousands waved the last tram goodbye along the route and a crowd of well over 1000 people were waiting when it arrived at the Newtown Barns. The 3rd and 2nd to last trams were decorated with red, white and blue and the last with Wellington's black and gold embellished fore and aft with an arc of flags.

252 reached Newtown Depot at about 11.30 am. However about ten minutes later it emerged again for a "mock" last run down to the gates and back, for the benefit of a TV cameraman who had lost some of his film of the event in a mishap. After the depot doors had been ceremoniously closed, the public were invited inside the tramsheds where refreshments and an opportunity to look around were provided. (What a contrast to the final closure in Sydney - Ed). The movement of trams around the depot area continued for a few weeks, the last car to move under power being one of the TPS cars, No. 151, on 22nd May.

The passing of the trams in Wellington has been received with mixed feelings by the public. The mayor stated at the ceremony that he thought the doing away with the trams was a retrograde step - he had always been in favour of their retention - and Wellington's "Evening Post" in an editorial on the 2nd May had this to say :

"No more will the streets vibrate to the might of the dependable trams. So far as New Zealand is concerned, they have



Last day scene at Lambton, Wellington. At left is car 250, followed by 251, both decorated for their role in the final parade. Also shown are cars 236 and, at right, 244.

N. Z. photos, A. E. Smith

no place in a modern, congested city. Could it be that their proven ability to get to their stops on time embarrassed the buses to such an extent as to hasten their extinction?

It was in June 1960 that Cr. M.N. Manthel said the trams caused difficulties in traffic and pedestrian control. Convinced, the City Council went ahead with its conversion to buses. There are still 'difficulties in traffic and pedestrian control', but the confusion now is at least in line with the most modern pattern."

Trams now owned by the Tramway Preservation Society of Wellington are :-

Double saloon cars (drop centre) 151, 159, and 207

Fiducia saloon (modern end loading cars) 235, 238, 239 and 260.

Work has already commenced on the Society's line in Queen Elizabeth Park, Paekakariki, and the system will be known as the "Queen Elizabeth Park Tramway". Initial plans envisage the completion of a depot building and the breaking up of an additional car, number 250, for spare parts. The Society has been fortunate in being able to obtain parts' patterns, per way tools, hand trolleys and various donations, both in cash and kind from local industries and lotteries.

In addition to the above cars, trams 135, 244, 252 and 257 with rail grinder 301 are being preserved by the Auckland Museum of Transport and Technology, so a fair representation of the Wellington 4ft gauge system is being set aside for posterity.

Between August 29th and September 4th the Tramway Historical Society will man an old Christchurch horse tram which will operate along a stretch of track in Papanui Road together with two restored "F" class railway locomotives. The old tram, preserved by the Christchurch City Council when tramway operation ceased some years ago is being restored by the society and should emerge in excellent condition for this interesting spring event.

#### MOTOR GENERATOR SET DONATED TO MUSEUM

With the proved successful operation of the motor generator set, member Richard Clarke generously handed over the apparatus to the museum. We are grateful for this kind gesture as much time, money and work has been expended on the machine to make it a practical success.



THAT WAS THE WEEKEND THAT WAS

The weekend of 27th - 28th June will surely go down as one of the most hectic in the Society's history. Following a remarkable interest in Melbourne in the SPER tour to Newcastle on 28th June, the Association of Railway Enthusiasts, a Victorian rail-fan society, proposed the running of a special steam train from Sydney to the Royal National Park on the day before the speed run, hauled by engine 1301. The co-axial cable to Melbourne ran hot as details were finalised, and so it came to pass that on 27th June, 230 passengers crowded aboard four car VUB set 76 for a ride to "The Park" behind steam.

Instead of 1301, unexpectedly absent at Yass, the train was hauled by 1307, rescued from the ranks of the doomed engines at Enfield for just one day's service. Leaving Sydney at 1.07 pm, it was soon evident that the loco was in quite good condition, for the Como bank presented no problem, and the train pulled into the platform alongside the depot just after 2.00 pm. SPER work force members had spent a hard morning bringing trams out for display, and their efforts were much appreciated by the many visitors, who inspected the site while 1307 was watered by means of the Society's fire hydrant and hose. Perhaps the star attraction was the "D" car, which was temporarily connected to the motor generator set and had its lights on and compressor running.

After some 20 minutes the train went on to the terminus, and then returned to Sutherland. The photographers satisfied, members and visitors joined in returning the cars to the depot, after which the Cadillac resumed its roaring trade, shuttling between the depot and the end of the line. The working timetable was suspended for the day and services were laid down in the SPER's Special Tram Notice No. 1.

After returning from Sutherland to the Royal National Park, and thence to the museum platform, the train engine was again watered, and efficient programming of tram and train movements enabled most work force members to travel on the train back to Sydney, which was reached shortly before 5.00 pm. The response to this trip was particularly pleasing, since only about a week's notice was given, and both SPER and the ARE were well satisfied with their first joint venture. We hope it will not be the last.

Like the previous day, Sunday was fine and clear and the early morning saw passengers making their way to platform 4

at Sydney station to join the SPER speed record special to Newcastle. Space does not permit a detailed account of the running here, but suffice it to say that 3801 set a new record on the down of 2 hours  $1\frac{3}{4}$  minutes,  $8\frac{1}{4}$  minutes better than the old record. This was achieved not by excessive speed at a few points but by sustained high speed running, for mile after mile in the seventies, with a maximum of only 80 mph.

At Newcastle, after a pause to photograph 3801 and her crew following their magnificent effort, passengers changed to a LUB set for a run to Belmont and Sandgate Cemetery behind 5901. This short run took place without incident, and 3.30 pm saw everything in readiness for a new assault on the record on the up journey. Once again the running was truly outstanding, and but for a slight delay in Sydney yard the record would have been broken twice in one day. Time for the up journey was 2 hours  $2\frac{1}{2}$  minutes.

This train carried a record complement of 480 passengers, including 30 standees, so great was the interest in the tour. The most impressive feature was the sincere support and interest of the Department of Railways, whose officers went to extreme lengths to ensure a successful day. Letters of appreciation have been sent to the appropriate quarters.

So ended a very satisfactory weekend. News items about the Newcastle tour appeared in Sydney and Melbourne during the preceding week: TV and press coverage after the event was Australia-wide. In addition to this publicity, which was extremely pleasing, the Society benefitted financially from both tours. We look forward to similarly successful outings in the future.

#### SYDNEY NEWS: VOL. 1, NO. 2, MARCH 1952

(continued from last issue)

Trams Scrapped Trams scrapped so far this month are:-  
 "L/P" 359, 366 (3-3-1952); 237, 253 (4-3-1952); 164, 222  
 (6-3-1952); 202, 248, 328, 233, 339, 210, 214, 349, 281, 213  
 (7-3-1952).

#### Cars Transferred

Newtown Depot to Dowling Street:- 814, 888, 810, 963, 808, 1268, 805, 811, 1097, 1241

Newtown to Tempe:- 1443

Waverley to Ultimo:- 809, 1123

Waverley to Dowling Street:- 1151.



Nearing the end of its record-breaking run, 3801 climbs towards Tickhole tunnel on the Newcastle tour on 28th June.

Photo, Ray Love



5901 working hard at a photo stop on the Belmont branch.

Photo, Ken McCarthy