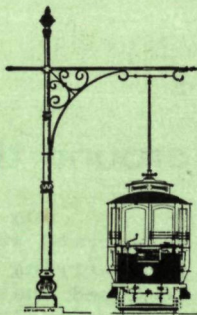


TROLLEY WIRE

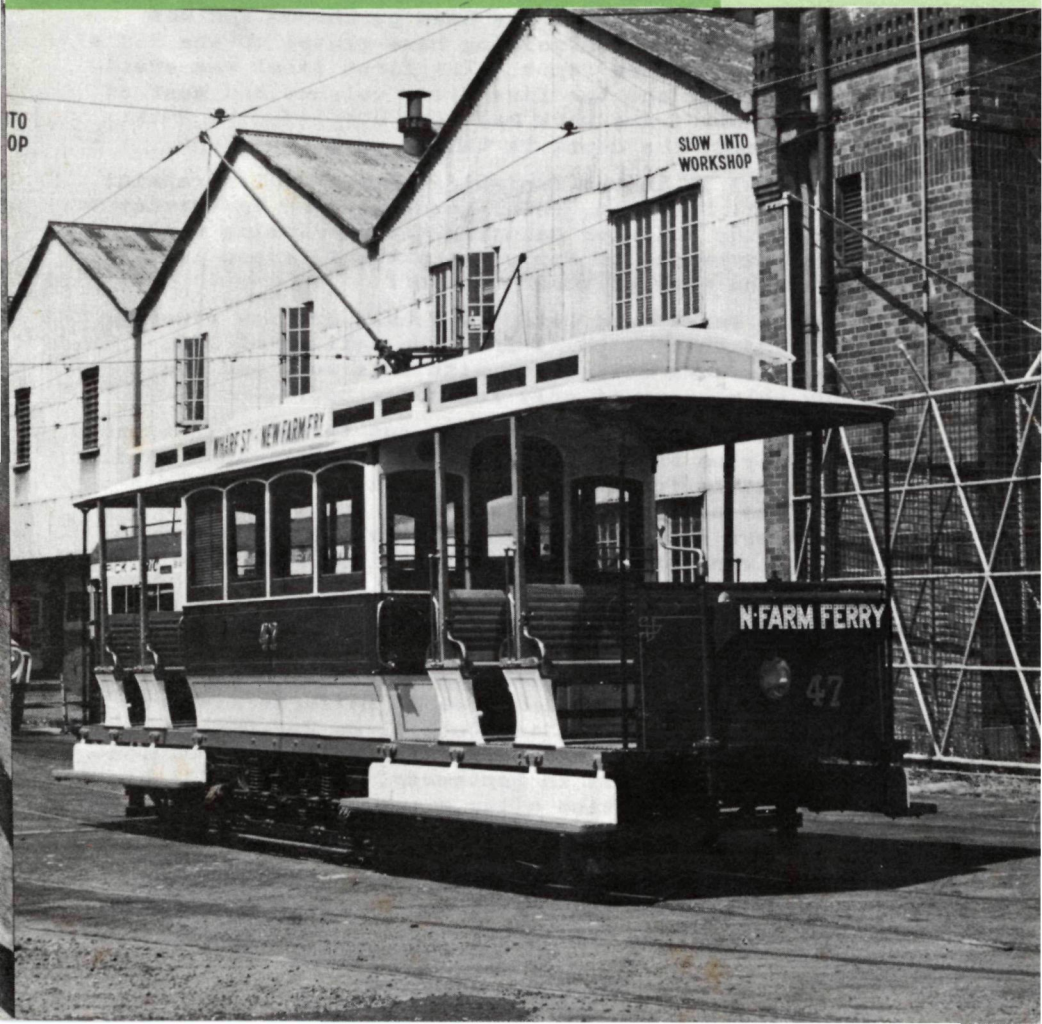
Magazine of the
SOUTH PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY

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transmission by post as a periodical.

TWENTY FIVE CENTS



DECEMBER 1968



around the depot....

On 28th September our railmotor was transferred to private storage to allow extra room for housing 295. A car carrying trailer was used to take the vehicle away. It is hoped that an overhaul and repairs to the bodywork can be done during its enforced absence from Loftus.

The following day saw our mezzanine mealroom demolished and most of the fittings and furniture were transferred to the PR1 which is acting as a temporary mealroom. The Museum's "pet" possum didn't take long to find where her regular source of free meals had moved to!

An electric welder has been purchased and was immediately put to work on welding base plates on the RSJ's for the front of the new depot. The first steel was erected on 16th November and the five front columns and most of the facade's timber frame work had been completed by 24th November. Already the depot is taking on a new shape.

P 1497 is in the finishing stages of its repaint. Norm Chinn, Neil Sorensen, Peter Macdonald and Ted Davies assisted with the interior painting and varnishing while Norm and Neil arranged to apply the external green and cream during the week on their days off.

Phil Parker and Peter Macdonald are now removing all the old and flaking paint from the ceiling of 180. They would like some assistance with this work and would welcome any help, even if only for a few hours.

About a dozen members went out to help fight bushfires at Audley on Friday evening 25th October, 1968 until 4 am and again the following Monday evening the Museum's fire tender was called upon to assist. Our thanks are due to those members who have enough interest in their Museum to call in or ring and check when bushfires have been reported in the area.

THOSE PROVINCIAL TRAMWAYS - A REPRIEVE!

The State Electricity Commission's notice of abandonment of the tramway services in Ballarat and Bendigo was defeated in the Legislative Council on 2nd October, 1968. The Legislative Assembly had passed the notice of abandonment during the last week in September. The SEC will be able to submit a new notice after a period of twelve months.

COVER PHOTO: Beautifully restored California combination car 47 saw daylight for the first time when it was driven out for our inspection during our visit on 7th October, 1968.

Photo: Bill Denham

TROLLEY WIRE

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NEW MEMBERS

The Board and Shareholders welcome the following member to the Museum:-

Glenn Buckman

198



Kindness is the only thing we cannot give away, it always comes back.



Our fire tender is silhouetted against a wall of flames during firefighting operations in the early hours of Saturday 21st September, 1968.



Suburban tank 3046 returns from Dungog with our tour train.
Photo: Russell Willis

GOULBURN AND DUNGOG THE SECOND TIME

At 7.42 am on Saturday, 25th August, two steam-hauled passenger trains threaded their parallel ways through the intricate maze of Sydney yard and onto the suburban and main lines to Strathfield. Our second Goulburn tour commenced with a difference; parallel running from Sydney to Strathfield. The two trains then parted and ran to Campbelltown to amalgamate; one going via Chullora Junction, and the other via Granville.

From Campbelltown a variety of doubleheaded steampower was used to haul our 14 car train. A 32 and 36 were used to Picton, 36 and 60-class Garratt to Moss Vale and two 36-class tenwheelers for the run into Goulburn. Our return journey had the everpopular 38-class Pacific doubling with a 36 to Moss Vale and with a Garratt for the remainder of the tour to Sydney.

For our second tour to Dungog on 12th October we gave the big trains away and settled for set 33B, a three-car open platform suburban set which includes the former railmotor No. 2, "Kathleen", in its consist, together with the sole remaining "Second Class Express Lavatory", LFX 1776, and an HCX. All the cars were more than fifty years old.

3654 was the motive power used for the run to Broadmeadow where suburban tank locomotive 3046 was attached to haul our train along the single tracked North Coast line to Dungog. The small train meant restricting the number of passengers, a point that was appreciated when photo runs were held, and it is quite likely that the Society will be planning more tours using small trains of this nature.



Railmotor CPH 17 arrives at the Museum on 15th September, 1968. The Newcastle Branch of the Australian Railway Historical Society made the run from Newcastle to inspect and ride in our trams and enjoy a picnic lunch among the trees.

MUSEUM EXPANDS IN ADELAIDE

The Executive Committee of the Australian Electric Transport Museum recently announced plans to expand their depot at St. Kilda. The existing four-track depot is to be enlarged by the addition of a two bay workshop on the northern side. The new workshop will be closed to the public, being walled off by the existing north wall. As at present, the remainder of the depot will be open to visitors so that the vehicles can be inspected. In addition, the small workshop annexe on the southern side of the present structure will be converted into a display area for photographs. The new workshop is to include a pit which will be constructed before the shed building is commenced.

During the past year, the St. Kilda site has been greatly improved by the erection of a six foot chain mesh fence along the St. Kilda Road frontage. The other boundary fences and the car park fence have been reconstructed with new concrete posts and sheep netting. Several hundred trees have been planted on the St. Kilda Road frontage. Most of this work has been carried out by officers of the Engineering and Water Supply Department from whom the land is leased.

The inspector's cabin from the old Victoria Square terminus of the Glenelg line has recently been placed on display at St. Kilda and is used for selling tickets to visitors. Other recent donations from the Municipal Tramways Trust include two dollies from the bogie shop at Hackney and an adjustable height four wheel tower wagon which was used in the original construction of the Glenelg line. These items have been in store at the Maylands depot since the street tramways closed in 1958.

Another recent donation has been the body of "C" class tram 173, one of the famed "Desert Golds". This body has been used as a holiday home on the St. Kilda foreshore since it was scrapped in 1954 and is in surprisingly good condition. It is to be initially mounted on the two shop dollies. The Museum has in store at Reynella most of the body parts of "A" class 89 which it scrapped in 1958 and the use of these parts will allow complete restoration of the body with relatively little difficulty.

The "C" class cars were among the last single-truck combination cars to be constructed in Australia, being built by Duncan and Frazer in 1918 and 1919. They were notable for a graceful domed roof in place of the clerestory roof style used on earlier cars. Although only twenty C-class cars were built, Museum members have been surprised by the large number of enquiries which have been received from visitors about them. Consequently the Museum has been fortunate to secure an example for its collection.



An impression of the proposed extension to the St. Kilda depot. The Victoria Square inspector's cabin is in the foreground.

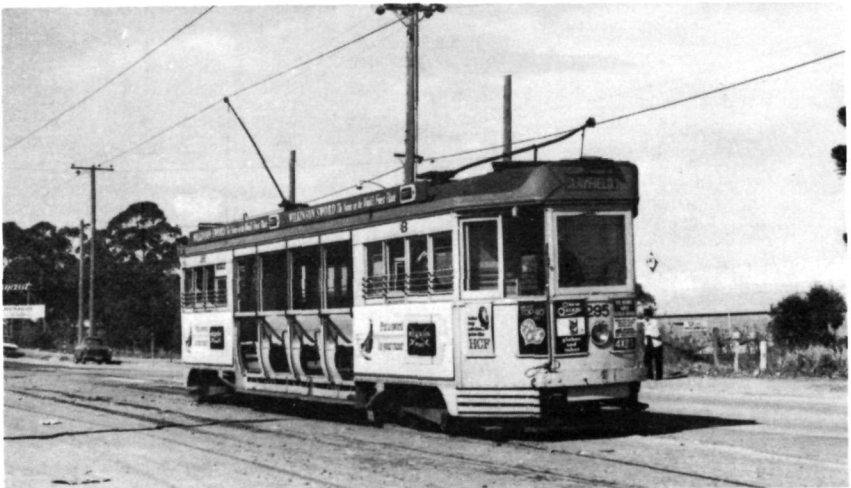
OUR 'ABDC' ARRIVES

What you may ask is an ABDC? It is the official abbreviation for "airbraked dropcentre" - in this instance car 295 from Brisbane and our newest car. 295 is two years younger than our Sydney R class car 1740!

The SPER became seriously interested in acquiring a Brisbane dropcentre car for preservation early in July, 1967 when the BCC commenced a programme of burning surplus handbraked cars. The Society wrote to the BCC on 11th July advising that we were interested in preserving car 231 when it was no longer required for service. The NSW Tramways' workshops at Randwick built the underframe of class leader 231 in conjunction with the NSW Railways, who did much of the design work for the then Brisbane Tramways Trust, as visually evidenced by the typical Sydney 'P' type external appearance of the Brisbane dropcentre motorman's cabs.

On 2nd August the Council replied that 231 was not available and offered us any other car in its place. It was later found that 231 had been listed for burning very early in the disposal programme and only quick action by local enthusiasts in drawing the Transport Department's attention to the historic significance of the car saved it from a fiery end. As a result, the car joined other historic cars retained by the Council for special charter service.

The Museum Board decided the car to be obtained should have the earlier 'Meadowbank' style body like 231



295 at Salisbury Terminus.

Photo: Dick Jones

and, if possible, should be an airbrake fitted car. Various members visiting Brisbane reported that car 295 seemed to fit the bill and details were later checked out at Milton Workshops. Roof, interior and external paint, and bodywork were listed as 'good', the only remaining early style car so listed. Wheel tyres had plenty of 'meat' on them and new trolley wheels and ropes had been recently fitted. On 23rd March, 1968 we accepted the Brisbane City Council's offer and asked for 295.

A month later we were advised that our request was being considered and that an assurance from us to move the car quickly would assist the Council's decision. We guaranteed to move the car by the end of June. However, June came and went with no definite reply from the Council. More months went by and still no word was received. Finally we enquired into the situation and a reply was sent on 20th September. Council had donated 295 to the Society and it was available immediately.

Since many members would be travelling to Brisbane less than two weeks later to participate in our holiday week end tours, we rang the Transport Department to see if it would be possible to use 295 during our visit. But no; it would be appreciated if the tram could be moved before then and if it could, the Department would have the parts from Scrubber 16 ready to ship at the same time. We pressed the panic button!



Allan Miles snapped 295 on its last journey on his way to work on 26th September. The car is in Roma Street en route from Ipswich Road Depot to Milton Workshops.



Unloading 295 at the Museum on Tuesday, 8th October, 1968.

If there must be panic, let it be organised! As mentioned elsewhere, the railmotor was moved out and our mealroom demolished over the weekend 28-29th September. This, together with a reshuffle of cars in the depot would provide immediate covered housing for the new arrival within the shed. Everything was ready at Loftus but transport was proving very difficult to arrange. Trucks always seem to be available at a moments notice when there is plenty of time but never when we want them in a hurry.

295 would arrive in Sydney on Tuesday. No, Wednesday. Our hopes of having the car at Loftus before we left for Brisbane were not to be fulfilled. 295's body finally left Milton about 11 am on Thursday, 3rd October and had to sit in Sydney over the weekend while its bogies and parts from Scrubber 16 did not leave until we were photographing No. 47 at Milton on Monday morning! However, the truckdriver thought he would be able to reach Loftus in time for us to unload 295 the next day.

The arrival of the Brisbane Limited in Sydney on Tuesday morning saw those members who had managed to wangle a day off work rush home to dump baggage and head for the Museum. At Loftus, cranes were busy moving the counter-weight dummy into the storage yard to provide a few extra feet of track space for the expected new arrival.

At 10.30 am Bramble's truck backed through the

Museum gate while Murphy's cranes moved into position for unloading. The bogies were not expected to arrive until late afternoon so the body was lowered onto our workshop trestles in the depot yard. As soon as the truck left, our work gang took advantage of the unimpeded clearance under the car to replace the air tanks, compressor and resistance grids which had been removed to prevent fouling on the truck.

The bogies arrived at 3.30 pm and one very tired truckdriver was given tea and toast while 295's bogies were off-loaded. The Brill 21E truck from Scrubber 16 went into the storage yard while a spare bogie for 295 was placed on top of the spare 'O' bogie on "A" road. The dropcentre was then lowered into place on its bogies and power leads connected. The car was given a quick test under power before being driven into its new home.

An early start was made on the following Sunday to remove all the 'goodies' which had been shipped from Brisbane inside the car. Controllers, life gear and small parts from 16, handbrake gear, a compressor, brake valves and a box of handrails for 71 were among the items removed. The car then received a thorough washing inside and out and underwent brake testing and adjustment. The last run of the day, at 5.30 pm, was 295's first revenue operation.

For safety reasons the airbrake valves have been altered to conform with the rest of the Museum fleet - standard Sydney practice of left to apply and right to release. Members who have driven this car have all praised the brakes, both hand and air, and the general condition of the car, reflecting on the normal high standard of maintenance set by the Workshops at Milton.

295 was constructed by the Brisbane City Council and entered service as a handbraked car on 15th April, 1935. It is 45' 6" long and weighs 15 tons. It has 5' 5" wheelbase reversed maximum traction plate frame trucks fitted with 2x60 hp GE275 roller bearing motors. 295 was converted to air braking on 22nd December, 1961 and was last painted on 7th June, 1966.

295 is proving very popular with members and our visitors and our thanks are due to the Brisbane City Council for their generous donation of the car to the Society.

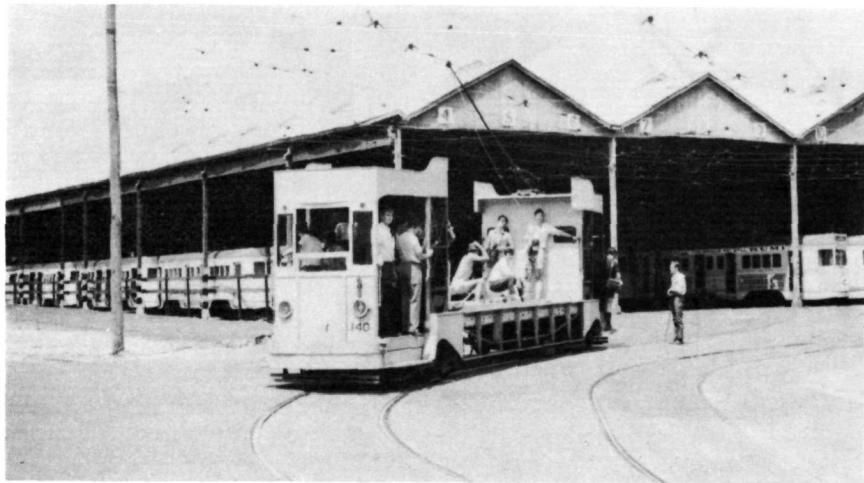


BRISBANE.... A FAREWELL

On the Labour Day weekend, the Society made its third, and last, three-day visit to Brisbane, following similar tours in 1965 and 1967. With the demise of the tramways fast approaching, efforts were made to cover the maximum amount of trackage using the greatest possible variety of cars. Where possible, the cars used were those listed for preservation by the Brisbane Tramway Museum Society, to give the visitors a chance to photograph these cars before their transfer to Museum service. Rather than recount the activities of a pleasantly hectic weekend in detail, our reporter describes on the following pages its highlights, and an impression of the Brisbane Tramways as they approached their abandonment.....

Arriving in Brisbane on 5th October, the most noticeable evidence of the run-down of the system was the appearance of the cars. Patches of red undercoat showing through a worn coat of grey, testified to a depressing lack of body maintenance. And at Ipswich Road for the first tour, the demolition of three roads to make room for buses added to the effect, although the subsequent sight of Light Street reduced to 9 shortened roads from the original 14 was even more disheartening.

The operation of the tours themselves took place with the usual Brisbane efficiency. We covered every line



140 entering Ipswich Road depot past the site of the now demolished first three roads.

with the exception of College Road, perhaps better known as Gregory Terrace. This year we were allowed to run on several little used sections, notably the Ann Street single line, where our previous tours were prohibited. "I've never been around here before," muttered one driver as he swung his car from George Street into Queen Street past a "No Right Turn" sign. Before the day was over, he and his conductor were to have their knowledge of their own tramway system considerably broadened.

For the record, the tours used a total of 13 cars. In order of appearance, they were 386, 519, 293, 400, 341, 300, 494, 140, 554, 136, 231, 65 and 99. Of these the only car not destined for preservation was 293 which was substituting for 277, unavailable while it waited the refitting of short-wheelbase trucks. Advertising flatcar 140 proved particularly popular with travellers keen on fresh air and sunshine.

Photo stops came with considerable frequency: the most remarkable was on the Salisbury line, when the car ran so far past the photo line that the crew had to change ends and return wrong road to pick up the passengers. "Cornfield meets" occurred on two occasions - once on the West End line and again, less than two hours later, at Bardon terminus. Sunday morning headways are so long that drivers seem to operate by remembering the timetable and not always observing the single track signals.

Sunday night provided a pleasant break when our former host at Sydney meetings, John Green, invited us to



Our tour cars 65 and 99 line up with 47 at the gate to Milton Workshops on 7th October.



65 and 99 line up at West End terminus with 507 on Monday, 7th October.

his new home at Hendra where we operated model trams and trains on his impressive HO gauge system.

Monday was perhaps the most interesting day of the tour. Early in the morning a few photographers gathered on the railway embankment at Milton to see No. 16 formerly Sydney D car 119, meet a fiery end, alongside dropcentre 315. Formerly Australia's oldest car in regular service, this distinction now passes to No. 21 at Ballarat. But Monday's activities took on a much more cheerful note later in the morning when car 47 was brought out for photographs at Milton Workshops. The magnificent vehicle posed between 65 and 99 before being driven back inside, whereupon those nearby seized the chance for a ride, if only for a few feet.

At Milton again, later in the day, members of the party spent a profitable hour or so on a treasure hunt. They left the premises with signs, straps, handles, destination rolls and even uniforms, all sold at very generous prices.

For many it was a last look at Brisbane's trams. With the new Victoria Bridge rapidly overshadowing its venerable predecessor, dropcentres being burnt at the rate of eight per week, depots already under demolition and two lines already closed, the scene is hardly an attractive one. The only consolation is the massive support given by the BCC Transport Department to the BTMS, which, with equal backing from its members should ensure that not only will Brisbane's trams be not forgotten, but an impressive selection will remain in museum service.

VALE ADELAIDE STREET

The last tram services using Adelaide Street, those to Chermside, Stafford, Enoggera and Bardon, were converted to diesel bus operation on Monday, 2nd December, the conversion having been delayed a fortnight. The cessation of these tram services marked the end of Light Street as a tram depot and the end of regular use of dropcentre cars.

The site of the remaining nine roads of the Light Street tram depot was required for bus parking space so arrangements were made for the rapid disposal of most of its complement of dropcentre cars. Twelve cars were taken to Milton Workshops after the morning peak on Friday, 29th November. 332 and 302 were prepared for burning while the others were lifted from their bogies and stored in the open for possible sale. After the evening peak, a further 14 or 15 dropcentres went to Milton for storage, leaving about twenty at Light Street and Ipswich Road depots.

Most runs starting from Light Street were operated by dropcentre cars on the Saturday, for 28 fourmotor cars were being transferred to Ipswich Road in the afternoon. Local enthusiasts hired 550, 551 and 553 for a short tour through the city to Exhibition while Sydney fans used 231 and 136, and a Boy Scout troop hired 65. There was also an evening tour to Exhibition using car 548. By midnight on Saturday, Ipswich Road was almost full of trams while Light Street had 65, 136, fifteen dropcentres and only six 400's.

Seven dropcentres provided all services on the four doomed lines on Sunday, 1st December, while a BTMS tour using cars 319 and 519 covered all trackage to be closed. Most trips were crowded with local residents, and many were seen armed with cameras to record the last day of trams in their area. The first three dropcentres to return to Light Street were 328, 368 and 385, followed by 374, the last car from Stafford, 378 from Chermside, 313 from Enoggera and finally 370 from Bardon. The Bardon car was delayed while the Bardon Rotary Club made a presentation to the crew and passengers took photographs. Car 378 was pelted with eggs by a carload of youths as it passed through Lutwyche and all trams suffered at the hands of "souvenir hunters".

On Monday morning the bodies of cars at Milton were removed to open storage to make way for the remaining "droppies" at Light Street. It is reported that two of the cars used Adelaide Street to reach the Workshops instead of Queen Street. Light Street Depot was officially closed on 4th December.

No dates have been set for the closure of Queen

Street lines but it is expected that the longer lines will be the first to go, all lines being closed by 31st March, 1969.

EXIT ALL TROLLEYBUSES

All Australian trolleybus systems will have closed by the end of May, 1969.

In a surprise announcement on 28th October, the Brisbane City Council advised that the Gardens-Gregory Terrace route had ceased operations on 25th October. Route 24 (Prospect Terrace-Stanley Bridge) is slated for dieselisation in January with the remaining routes closing in May, 1969, some two months after the expected closure of the tramway system.

Launceston's last trolleybus ran on 26th July, 1968, the last 'bus being 321 from Newnham Park to the depot. All the 'buses have been sold and overhead wiring removed.

The Perth system is expected to cease operation in December, 1968.

With the changeover to diesel buses taking place in Hobart, the Tasmanian Transport Museum Society is attempting to preserve Hobart BUT trolleybus 235, built in March, 1935 and the last trolleybus to be painted in Hobart. Due to the demand for these vehicles the TTMS has been forced to commit itself to purchase the trolleybus (complete) for \$150 and would appreciate donations to help save the vehicle. Donations, which are tax deductible, should be sent to the Society at Box 867J, G.P.O., Hobart. 7001.

BRISBANE MUSEUM NEWS

The BTMS has applied to the State Land Administration Commission for the closure, permanently, of Lanita Street, Ferny Grove. Lanita Street is the official name for the one-and-a-half miles of former railway right-of-way extending in a roughly northerly direction from the present terminus of the Ferny Grove branch line. The proposed museum line will run through mainly timbered country on a gradual rising grade and eventually will cross three water courses over which the original railway timber trestles have been removed.

The Brisbane group has adopted as its emblem the Phoenix insignia as applied beneath the motorman's windows on cars 547-554.

BACK PAGE: Newcastle L/P class car 321 turns from Union Street into Glebe Road, bound for Glebe on the last day of operation of this line, 25th February, 1950.

Photo: Ben Parle

