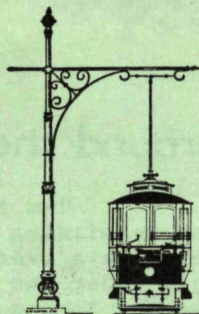


# TROLLEY WIRE

Magazine of the  
SOUTH PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY  
and  
AUSTRALIAN ELECTRIC TRANSPORT  
MUSEUM

Registered at the G.P.O., Sydney, for  
transmission by post as a periodical.

THIRTY CENTS



JUNE 1969



## around the depot....


The last weeks of May saw some real progress in the rebuilding of the depot with the reroofing of the first three bays over roads 1 and 2. The new construction has been under the control of Bob Cowing and we have been pleased to see an occasional new face among the Museum's regular workers putting in time on the many tasks connected with the building improvements.

A truckload of timber purchased from the demolishers of the old Flemington saleyards is being put to good use in the reconstruction while the new gable, of vertical T & G boarding, once saw service as the living room floor in Dick Clarke's home. (Dick Clarke's home now has a new floor!) All beams and purlins in the old roof are being reused, together with additional timber acquired from various sources.

The new bookshop, although small, will be of the walk-in-and-browse type which we have found to be successful. A suitable roller shutter door has to be purchased before work can be completed on this job.

We are now in urgent need of materials to continue this project. Our construction crew can complete one bay every week end if the materials are on hand. We urgently require lengths of 9"x2" hardwood and corrugated iron or galvanised metal pan roofing ("Klip-Lok" for example) - we would prefer aluminium sheeting if it could be obtained cheaply enough - in 26'0" lengths, but we can use lengths of nine foot or more. If you think you may be able to help, please contact Bill Denham, Bob Cowing or any Board member as soon as possible.

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### WELCOME ABOARD!

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome members of the Australian Electric Transport Museum (S.A.) Inc. as regular readers of "Trolley Wire". The progress made by the AETM at St. Kilda will be receiving regular coverage in these pages together with details of their new acquisitions as they are obtained. We trust they will find interesting reading in "Trolley Wire".

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COVER PHOTO: 548 waits at St. Paul's Terrace before returning to Ipswich Road Depot on 11th April, 1969. This run was to be the last time 548 would operate through the streets of Brisbane.

# TROLLEY WIRE

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## NEW MEMBERS

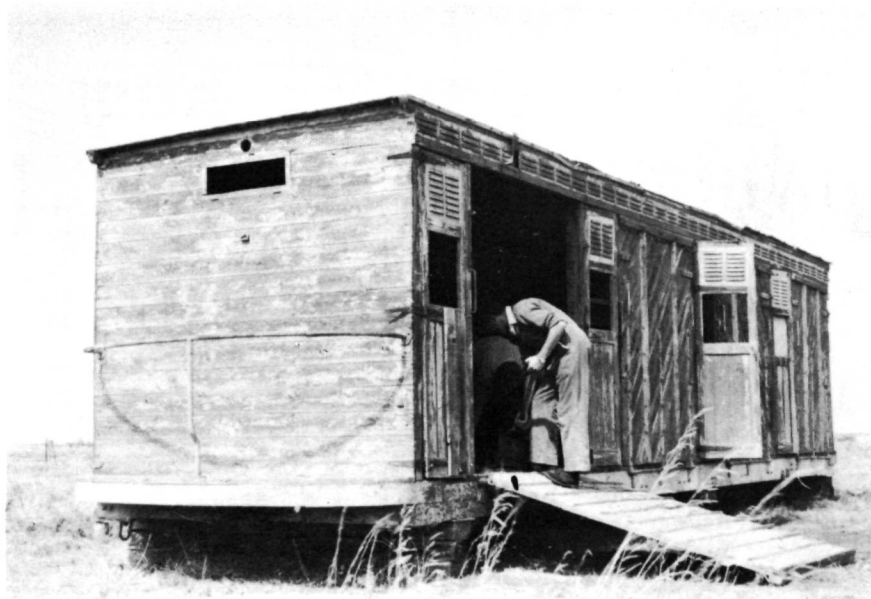
The Board and Shareholders welcome the following members to the Museum:-

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Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs.



Bob Cowing, Mike Giddey and Dick Jones screw down roofing while Bill Denham, partly hidden by the floorboards stacked on the tower wagon, nails the vertical boarding to the gable.



#### AETM ACQUIRES UNIQUE TRAMWAY VEHICLE

In a period of the most rapid succession of acquisitions in its history, the Museum recently added to its collection one of the tramway horse boxes that were used to transport race horses to Morphettville Race Course on the Glenelg line. It is thought that these vehicles were unique, at least in Australia.

This special service began in May 1930, and among the first horses to patronise the cars was the famous Phar Lap. However, after only six years the service was abandoned, apparently for economic reasons. When in traffic, the boxes were towed by dropcentre trams, Fl's 274 and 275 being fitted with the necessary connections. Each trailer could hold up to eight horses in four compartments, and another four compartments were reserved for the grooms. There were doors on one side only.

After being withdrawn from traffic, the trailers were used as storerooms for many years. In recent times, one has been rediscovered as a stable near Hackney Depot, while the other came to light only a matter of months ago in a used truck allotment, and it is this one which has been donated to the Museum. Happily, its condition is still quite reasonable, so that it should not be too difficult to restore it to an interesting static exhibit.

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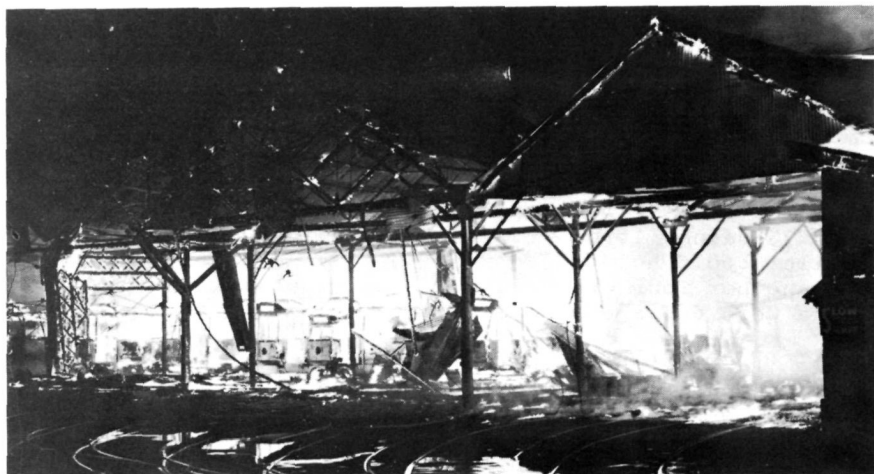
THE BRISBANE "PHOENIX" TRAMCARS

On Friday evening, 28th September, 1962, a spectacular fire destroyed one of Brisbane's three tram depots, the depot at Paddington and only three of the 65 trams in the building at the time could be driven to safety. Thus, at one blow, Brisbane lost one sixth of its tramcar fleet.

The fire resulted in at least three noteworthy occurrences. The first was the reintroduction into service of a number of centre-aisle cars which had been stored for use at Show time. The second, and most obvious, for a city where the civic fathers had begun to show a marked distaste for their tramway system, was the curtailment and subsequent closing of the Toowong, Rainworth, Kalinga and Bulimba Ferry tram routes. The third occurrence was the remarkable decision to build more trams to replace at least some of the six centre-aisle, 47 dropcentre and twelve four-motor cars destroyed.

The Milton Workshops of the Brisbane City Council Transport Department resurrected the underframe of a car (possibly two were involved) which had lain uncompleted since the post war tram building had finally ground to a halt in 1959, and recommenced construction of a standard four motor car. Ultimately eight new trams had been completed before a final halt in tram building was called.

The first of the new cars, 547, was driven out of the Workshops by the Lord Mayor, (Ald. C. Jones) on 16th



Paddington Depot at the height of the blaze and shortly before the facade and roof collapsed. The shells of dropcentre cars can be seen silhouetted against the flames.

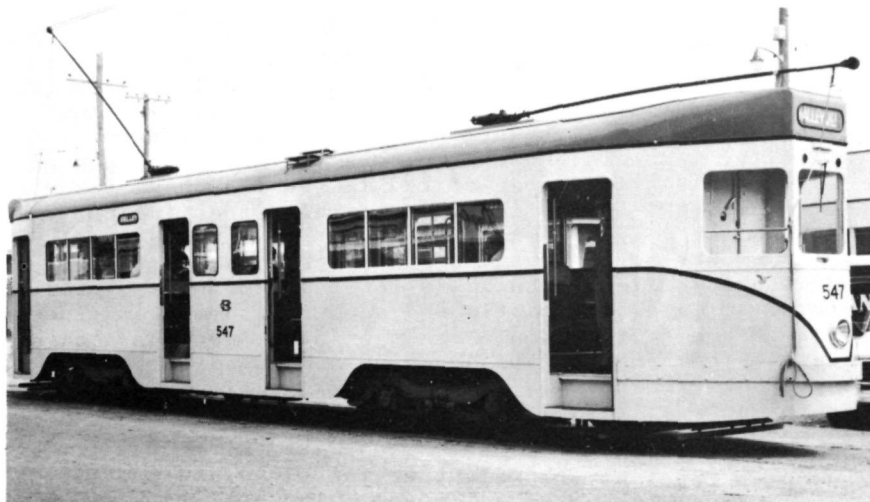
Photo by courtesy "Courier Mail"

September, 1963 and entered traffic eight days later. 548 followed 547 into traffic on 25th October. 549 entered service on 13th November, 550 on 6th December and 551 only two days before Christmas. The new year saw 552 in service on 24th January with 553 and 554 following on 21st February and 20th March respectively.

The new trams displayed a somewhat imaginative colour scheme (for an Australian Tramway) of "River Blue", a light pastel shade, and Satin Grey, divided by a narrow royal blue band as distinct from earlier cars then being painted dull grey all over. Internally they had padded seating, fluorescent lighting and sliding doors, all features built into or added to some of the earlier cars. The timber panelling used in earlier cars' interiors had been replaced by laminated plastic sheeting with aluminium being used for the ceiling.

But the feature which first puzzled members of the public was a small insignia fixed at each end below the motorman's window - a Phoenix. Phoenix was a legendary Egyptian bird which burnt itself to death in the flames of a fire of wood after living for 500 years. A new Phoenix then arose from the ashes.

It was later disclosed that certain components of the burnt out cars such as truck frames and bolsters had been salvaged and used in the construction of the new cars. They had in fact arisen, almost, from the ashes of the Paddington fire. Hence the insignia and the name.



Brand spanking new, 547, the first of the "Phoenix" cars.  
Photo by courtesy B.C.C.



Of the eight cars 554 is to be retained in Brisbane by the BTMS; 552 and 553 went to a children's home at Bribie Island where they were wrecked by vandals within days of being delivered; 550 was shipped to Sydney free of charge on the Eastern and Australian Steamship "Arakara" for the Lion's Club of French's Forest who have placed it at the Sunnyfield Home for Children at Allambie Heights. 547 has gone to the Callide Valley Lion's Club while 548 is being purchased by the SPER. At the time of writing 549 and 551 had still to be disposed of, but were expected to be donated to children's homes in Queensland.



### TROLLEYBUS BLINDS

The Tasmanian Transport Museum Society has available for disposal a limited number of destination blinds from Launceston and Hobart trolleybuses.

The Society is asking for donations of \$3.00 each for a front Launceston blind, 50cents for a rear Launceston blind (surely one of the shortest in Australia!) and \$2.00 for a side Hobart blind. Unfortunately there are no front Hobart blinds available.

All prices include postage within Australia and orders should be addressed to the Society at Box 876J, GPO, Hobart 7001. Remember, first in - first served!

### WHAT'S SO FUNNY ABOUT HONEST LABOUR?

It was brought to our notice recently that a preservation group in a southern state is undergoing a financial crisis, a not unusual occurrence amongst the preservation fraternity. Appeals sent to members did not raise enough dollars to clear the books of red ink so they have taken on painting member's homes in order to raise the finance.

This action has apparently created great mirth among the so-called enthusiasts in other Societies, plus a spate of spiteful, sarcastic and sneering comments. Those who laugh and decry, should ask themselves who would have preserved the vehicles this group has managed to save and are gradually restoring, if their organisation had never been formed? At least they are not crying over their predicament or yelling for financial aid from you or us every second week. They are taking steps to raise the needed money by their own labours and encouragement should be given them in their efforts.

After all, what is so funny about honest labour?

# OPERATION 'PHOENIX'



It was during the Society's visit to Brisbane last October that the number 548 was to gain significance to SPER members. On Saturday, 6th October, at a rather late hour, a small band of "Speranians" arrived at Ipswich Road Depot and proceeded to carefully inspect the "Phoenix" trams within. After some discussion it was decided to recommend to the Museum's Board of Directors that the Society apply for tramcar 548 to represent the last design of Brisbane tram in the Museum's collection.

The Board subsequently approved the recommendation to obtain 548, together with spare parts and a long list of other equipment; and an application was forwarded to the Brisbane City Council. In February, two members returned from their vacation in Brisbane and reported that our letter had not been received by the Council. Assuming that the letter had fallen victim to the infamous Mail Exchange sorting machine, a second application was immediately sent - by registered mail, this time! On 3rd April, the council replied and advised that 548 would cost us \$500 and the spares and other equipment a staggering \$1578!!

It was obvious that we couldn't raise enough funds in the few weeks remaining before the tramway closure to cover the cost of all we desired, so the Board drastically slashed the list down to an essential \$400 worth. Our Treasurer immediately launched an appeal to raise the finance required to cover the purchase and transportation. Meanwhile, the Board notified the BCC of the Society's accept-



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ance of the tram and the revised list of parts. Our surprise can be imagined when the Council, thanking us for our acceptance, advised that a considerable rise had occurred in the scrap metal prices being obtained by their Transport Department, particularly with respect to tramcar trucks complete with motors. The cost of the tramcar had increased by \$160 and a resilient wheel truck with motors - a spare for 548 - had risen from \$220 to \$300! At our request the Council supplied the prices of the truck's various components and we reluctantly had to advise them we would have to accept the bogie minus the two motors.

Arranging transport was the next item on our list as we did not want any delays in moving the tram from Council property. Aitkins Transport, who had moved all the BTMS trams to Ferny Grove, was given the job of loading and moving 548 and all our other equipment to Sydney.

Storage was also a major problem as the tram could not be accommodated immediately at Loftus. We approached the Department of Railways who readily and quickly gave us permission to store the car at Petersham with the rolling stock preserved by the Rail Transport Museum.

On 20th May, an urgent telegram advised that everything was ready and could we collect on the 22nd? We



Dave Rawlings and Mal McAulay prepare to sling 548. The bogies have already been unloaded and are in position on the track.



Many hands make light work of moving the tram down the yard. Unexpected assistance from three bystanders was welcomed.

contacted the Council and told them who was handling the move for us. Aitkins said that they would ring us when the tram was ready to leave Brisbane so that unloading arrangements at Petersham could be finalised. At the last minute Aitkins decided that they couldn't handle it that week; or the next, as time soon proved. Industrial strikes and heavy rains were offered as excuses.

Eventually 548 was loaded late on Friday, 6th June onto subcontractor's semi-trailers and the two vehicles left Brisbane for Sydney the following morning. Our tram travelled via Gunnedah and Moree, and only just squeezed under the railway bridges at Goondiwindi and Singleton. It did, however, foul a private telephone line north of Moree which sliced through the trolley rope and snapped the hook off before itself breaking. The two trucks arrived in Sydney on Sunday evening.

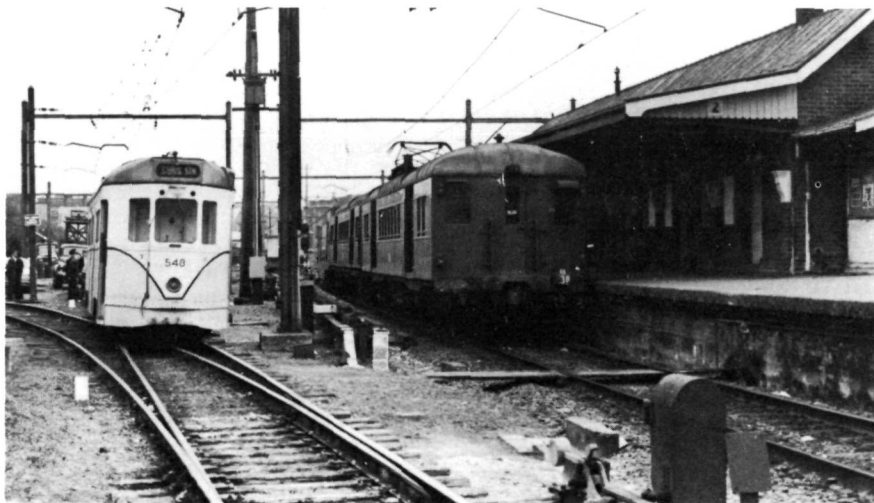
On Monday morning a small group of members gathered in Petersham goods yard to assist in placing 548 on rails again. Shortly after the local pickup goods had departed, our crane arrived and the spare bogie was quickly unloaded. It was pushed over the railway pointwork to check if any problems existed with the narrower tramway wheels and smaller flanges negotiating the point frogs. 548 was then lifted and lowered onto its trucks; the whole operation being watched by interested station staff, passengers and goods yard personnel. The handbrakes were then reconnected to provide braking power for the next stage of the operation.

After offloading all equipment from the semi-trailers, our "Phoenix" car was pushed by hand along the yard towards the station where three young rail passengers, never having witnessed such a sight before and unable to contain themselves any longer, joined in to help. Watched by an interested crowd, 548 was photographed alongside a suburban electric train before being shunted into the correct siding. Once the pointwork had been negotiated, the tram rolled down the slight grade and was brought to a stand within the Rail Transport Museum's area. Stage One of Operation "Phoenix" had been completed.

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During the last two weeks of tramway operation in Brisbane, 548 saw service on five days. On Tuesday, 1st April, 548 worked the long Salisbury to Clayfield route and ran on route 77 (West End - New Farm Park) on Thursday 3rd. Museum members Laurie Gordon and Bill Denham hired the car for a photographic excursion on Monday, 7th April. While negotiating the West End line, the pole derailed, caught a span wire and snapped. The trolley wheel - as we found at Petersham - punched a neat hole in the roof. 548 was returned to the depot where a replacement pole was fitted.

Three days later, 548 was again in traffic, this time on the St. Paul's Terrace to South Brisbane Station



Electric rail transport at Petersham. The driver of the suburban four car set was most surprised to see the tram, and on the railway line, too!

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**WARNING!** - Petersham Goods Yard is NOT an area open to the public. Members and others are warned that unauthorised entry could lead to prosecution.

and Moorooka service. A special excursion for Museum members was organised on 11th April by Dick Jones and later that day, although not rostered for traffic, 548 was pressed into service for the evening paek when it was found there was a shortage of cleaned cars at the depot. Motorman Ron Horne left the depot at 4.34 pm on run 121, a St. Paul's Tce - Sth. Brisbane Station shuttle service, and returned 548 to depot track 14 at 6.24 pm. Apart from being shunted from road 14 to road 13, our tram did not run again.

### 548 - FACTS AND FIGURES

Date in service - 25th October, 1963.  
 Length...: 49 feet Weight...: 15.75 tons  
 Capacity.: officially 64 seated, actually 60.  
             Full load 110.  
 Trucks...: Based on Melbourne No 15 trucks, fitted with  
             resilient wheels and Timken roller bearing  
             axleboxes.  
 Motors...: 4 x 40 hp AGE 247, gearing - double helical,  
             cut 30°.



Members Laurie Gordon and Bill Denham hired 548 for a run on 7th April. A dewirement on the West End line resulted in a broken pole. Our photo shows the car with its front pole on the wire and its broken rear pole pointing skywards as it passes 523 waiting to descend the single track to the terminus.



An early photo of the Great Lithgow Zig-Zag showing the two viaducts and tunnel on the middle road along which rails once again may be laid.

Photo: Kerry and Co

#### A STEAM "TRAMWAY" ON THE ZIG-ZAG?

Moves are afoot to establish a steam operated 3' 6" gauge tourist line over part of the former Lithgow zig-zag railway formation. A steering committee was elected during December and a meeting to form a Society will be called when incorporation has been completed.

The plans call for the construction of a line along the middle road of the Zig-Zag to the top wing, a distance of some 8,000 feet, and this line will be extended towards Newnes Junction as circumstances allow.

The Queensland Railways have offered a DD17 class tank engine and the South Australian Railways have been asked if a number of narrow gauge cars could be made available when no longer required.

The Great Lithgow Zig-Zag was opened for traffic in 1869 and abandoned with the opening of Dargan's deviation from Newnes Junction in 1910. The centre road has a grade of 1 in 42, a 225 foot tunnel and two stone viaducts, one having nine 30 foot and two 15 foot arches and the other having eight 30 foot arches.

To build an operating steam line from scratch is a project of considerable magnitude and we wish the organisers every success with the venture.



OBITUARY

"LADY SCOTT" 1914-1969

On 27th March, 1969 the Sydney Harbour Ferries Ltd. ferry "Lady Scott" left Circular Quay on the 2.25 pm run to Mosman. During berthing procedures at Mosman wharf the ferry went astern and broke a big end. The "Lady Scott" limped back to the Quay to complete her run before heading to Balmain depot where, later, the decision was made not to repair her.

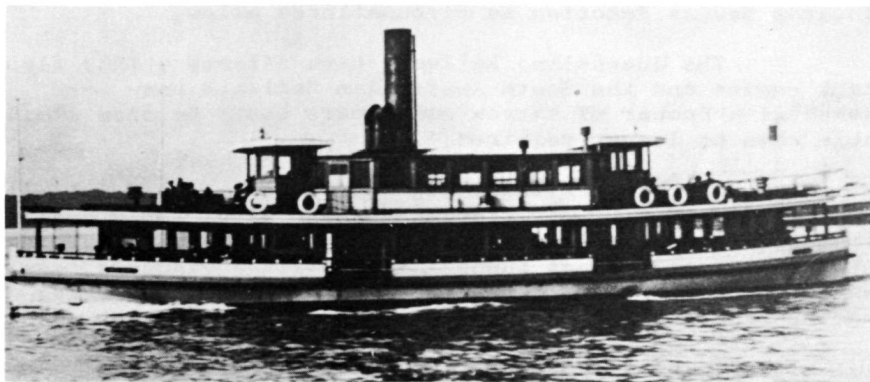
"Lady Scott" was built by Joseph Dent from designs by Walter Ricks of Sydney and was launched on Saturday, 4th November, 1913 at Huskisson on Jervis Bay. The christening ceremony was performed by Miss Roderick, daughter of one of the Directors of the Balmain New Ferry Co. The Company designed the "Lady" boats for the Lane Cove River services to replace the single-ended vessels then in service.

The vessel was towed to Sydney to receive her machinery, a set of compound engines by McKie and Baxter of Govan, Glasgow; and to have other finishing work carried out. The "Lady Scott" was the fourth of her type built.

Sydney Ferries Ltd. acquired the ferry when they took over the Balmain New Ferry Co. on 1st March, 1918.

The "Lady Scott" ended her career as a steam vessel in 1937 when she re-entered service on 17th December fitted with a six cylinder Gardiner diesel engine.

The five "Lady" class ferries, "Scott", "Ferguson", "Edeline", "Denman" and "Chelmsford", operated the Lane Cove River services to Fig Tree until 12th November, 1931 when the weekday services were withdrawn. The ferries were seen



The "Lady Scott" as she appeared in 1914.

Photo: Dufty Collection



The "Lady Scott" at Valencia Street wharf on 30th November, 1968.

on the lower Lane Cove River services and still ran to Fig Tree at weekends until 2nd September, 1945 when all service was deleted from the timetable. The "Ladies" saw service on the Parramatta River after the lower Lane Cove River services were discontinued on 10th November, 1950 and later were pooled for general harbour availability. The "Lady Scott" was the hardest worked of the "Lady" boats and was regarded as the best of the five to handle.

#### Vital Statistics

Length 110' 4", Breadth 24' 4", Depth 9' 0"  
Gross tonnage 95.

Steam (1914-1937) 486 passengers  
Compound 2-cylinder (12" and 24" x 18") McKie and Baxter,  
Glasgow. 24 hp (nominal), 160 hp (indicated), one boiler,  
120 lb pressure, 7 tons bunker capacity.  
Single screw, 11½ knots maximum speed.

Oil (1937-1969) 572 passengers  
6 cylinder Gardiner diesel,  
65.34 hp (nominal).  
Single screw, 9 knots maximum speed.

BACK PAGE: Open cars in operation at the Connecticut Electric Railway Association's Museum at Warehouse Point, Connecticut. At left is former Rio de Janeiro open car 1850 passing Connecticut Company open car 840 on one of its first passenger runs at Warehouse Point. 1850 is one of three Rio cars purchased by C.E.R.A. in 1965.

Photo: Fred Bennett



## A WORD FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

It is indeed an honour for me to have been selected as the Society's Managing Director. I know that conditions have changed since the inception of the Museum and, of course, conditions will change in the future. The demands on a managing director have altered, but I am determined to try as best I can to live up to those demands, whatever they may be.

We have completed the full circle, depot building-wise, as it is almost 13 years ago that the present building was commenced. However, hand tools have given way to power equipment and mechanisation, thus making it possible to achieve more in a given time.

Speaking of time, next year is Australia's 200th anniversary, a fact the majority of Australians know. It is also the S.P.E.R.S 14th anniversary, a fact the majority of Australians don't know! Only a minority of the crowds that will be in Sydney next April will even remember Sydney had trams. To ensure the visitors will not only be able to know we had trams, but to ride on them as well, the tramway will be open from 9am to 9 pm during the days, and evenings during the main festivities, in April, 1970.

This means a lot of work has to be done between now and then and if you haven't been to Loftus recently you may not know that work is well in hand on the Depot rebuilding programme. Unfortunately, with our limited work force (five to fifteen members) it would be a feat if we finish just four bays, let alone roof the annex and the rest of the area. Add to this work point relaying, sub-station reorganisation, tramcar maintenance and overhaul, repainting, etc., and it can be apprec-

lated that we have an even greater task to perform in the next nine months.

To be able to take full advantage of the extra crowds that will be in the Sutherland - Cronulla area we must have enough offering to keep the people interested.

So the Board of Directors is asking for help again, this time in the form of manpower. If you have come along before and ended up digging drains, post holes, etc., don't be put off. Whilst drains and post holes are important, there is a wide selection of different jobs and the more you attend, the more you will be able to participate in a wider variety of jobs. (You might even see Board members digging the holes!)

For your convenience there is a well-stocked soft drink machine, an electric stove, and a hot water urn. Septic toilets are on the way (you can even help build them!) and showers will be installed before the building is completed.

Every year the Museum has become bigger and better and I feel it is our duty as members to improve our Museum as much as possible in the future, especially by next April.

Can we befit a celebration like the one planned for next April? Only time will tell--nine months to be exact.....

So let's get cracking and help the Museum celebrate Captain Cook's discovery, by showing that the spirit of the pioneers is still present today.

DAVID RAWLINGS

• Managing Director