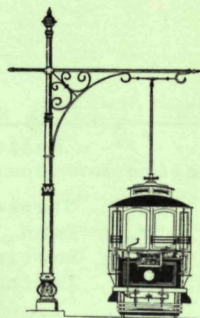


# TROLLEY WIRE

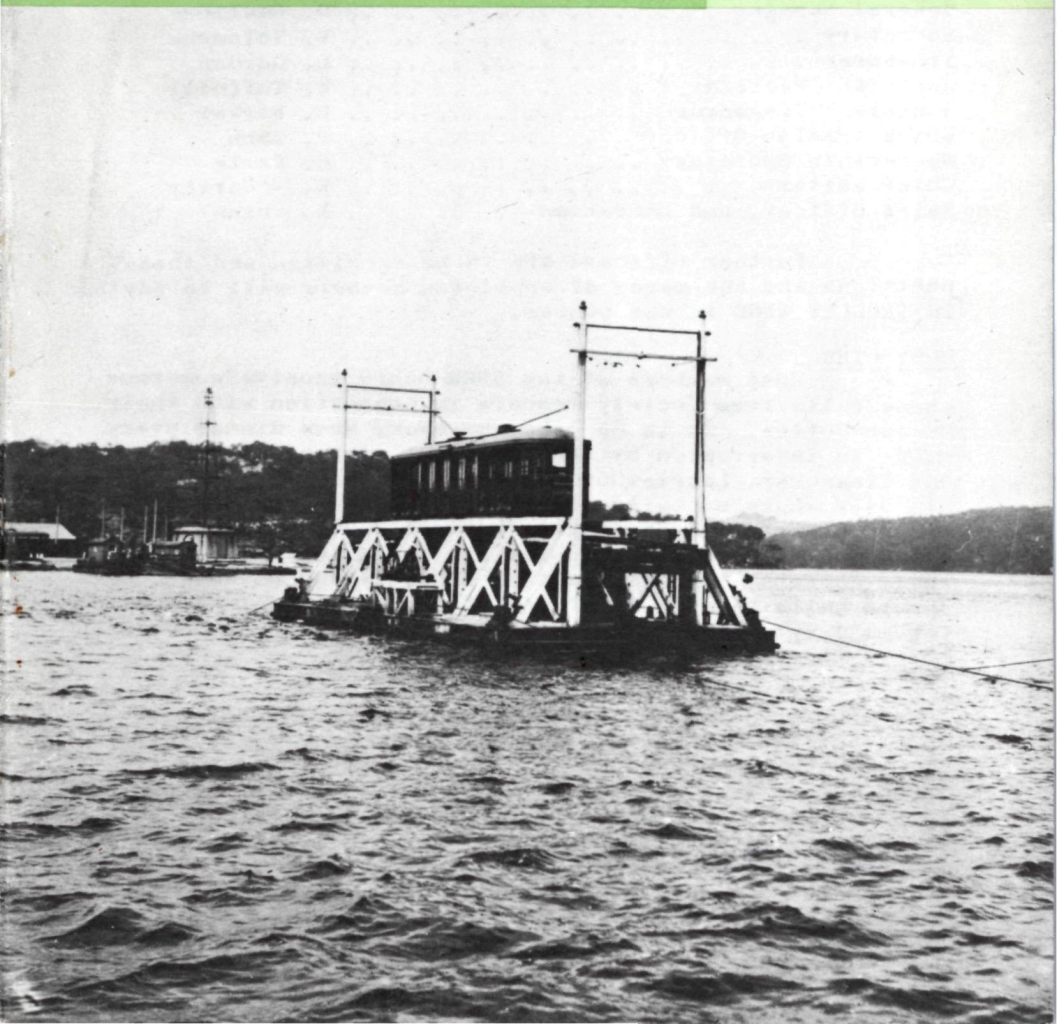
Magazine of the  
**SOUTH PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY**  
and  
**AUSTRALIAN ELECTRIC TRANSPORT  
MUSEUM**

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

**THIRTY CENTS**



**AUGUST 1969**



JUNE ELECTION RESULTS

Following the June elections the Board of Directors now consists of the following members:-

R.C. Clarke,	I.P. Gordon,
P.C. Kahn,	P.T. Parker,
D.H. Rawlings,	V.C. Solomons, and
W.A. Tuffnell	

together with Honorary Life Directors:

N.L. Chinn and K.A. McCarthy.

In connection with a major administration re-organisation the following Officers have been appointed:-

Chairman . . . . .	R. Clarke
General Manager . . . . .	D. Rawlings
Secretary . . . . .	V. Solomons
Treasurer . . . . .	L. Gordon
Assistant Secretary . . . . .	W. Tuffnell
Assistant Treasurer . . . . .	P. Parker
Chief Traffic Officer . . . . .	P. Kahn
Membership Secretary . . . . .	B. Parle
Chief Editor . . . . .	K. McCarthy
Sales Officer, and Librarian . . . . .	N. Chinn

Further Officers are to be appointed and these positions and the names of appointed members will be advised in TROLLEY WIRE in due course.

BUSY LINE

Most members of the SPER Board receive numerous phone calls from Society members in connection with their Museum duties. It is no joke, however, when dinner every night is interrupted by the incessant ringing of the phone. Our Treasurer, Laurie Gordon, seems to receive more than his fair share of calls and he requests members to limit their calls to Tuesday nights between 7.30 pm and 9.30 pm. All Board members would appreciate if callers would keep their conversations as short as possible and on no account should calls be made to places of employment unless the matter is very urgent or prior arrangements to do so have been made.

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COVER PHOTO: Just on thirty years ago, on 1st October, 1939, the last trams ran in Manly to end thirtysix years of horse, steam and electric tramway service on this isolated Sydney system. The early trams were taken by punt to Manly and unloaded at the wharf. Following the opening of the electrified extension to the Spit in January, 1911 trams were ferried across Middle Harbour from the North Sydney system on a unique tramcar ferry. Our photo shows O-class car 978 being transferred from North Sydney to Manly in 1922.

# TROLLEY WIRE

New Series Vol. 10 No. 5

Issue No. 123

**AUGUST 1969**

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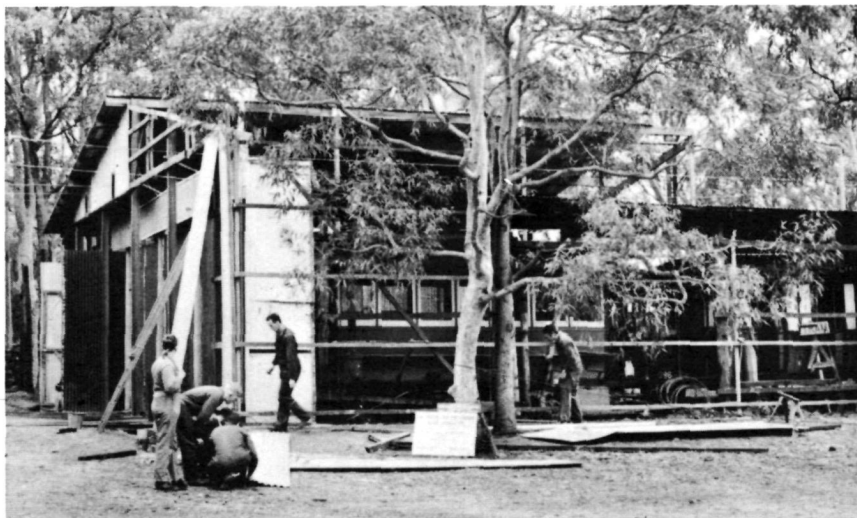
## NEW MEMBERS

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

Kenneth Eastman	211
Leigh Stone	212
Michael Ward	213
Geoffrey Manning	214

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The growth of wisdom may be gauged accurately by the decline in ill temper.



The depot as it appeared on 16th June. Four bays of the eastern wall were re-erected on new concrete footings before nightfall.

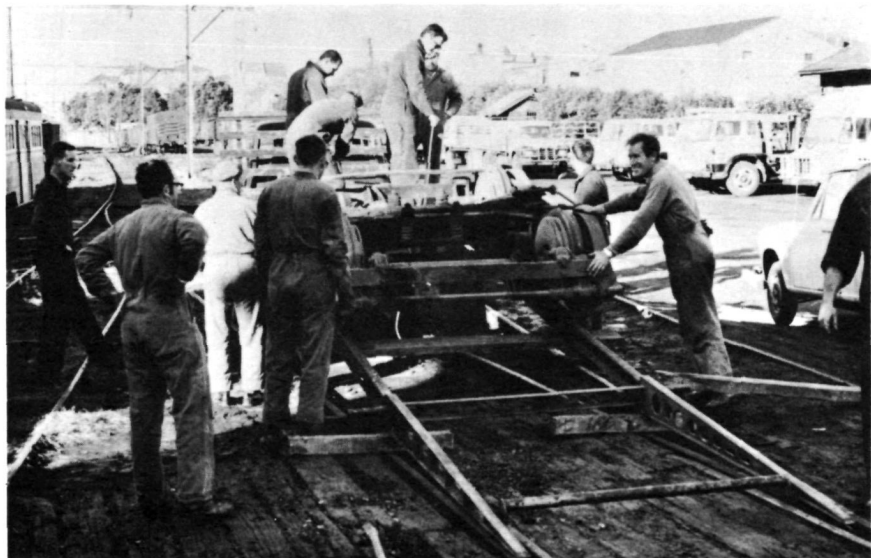
## around the depot....

Progress on the depot rebuilding is forging slowly but steadily ahead. On 16th June, four bays of the eastern wall were moved and bolted to the new footings and the new roof has since been extended to cover the first bay of tracks 3 and 4.

Two of the old timber poles which supported the old wall on the western side of the shed have been removed by jacking them out of the ground.

The Museum has been the recipient of further good used building materials. Steel beams, timber for purlins and both galvanised steel and some aluminium "Klip-Lok" have been delivered. This will enable the roofing of several more bays of the depot.

The spare bogie for car 548 was removed from Petersham on 5th July, and is now stored in Bob Harvey's garage where it will eventually be overhauled and cleaned. The movement was accomplished without cranes and utilised one Muston truck, two lengths of rail, a couple of boards fitted with clamps, our traverser ramp, sundry blocks of wood, sleepers, lengths of rope and a block and tackle. The watching RTM work party doubted whether we could manage it but the bogie was loaded quickly and without incident. Unloading at Bob's place took a little longer but was com-



Nearly there! The spare bogie is loaded onto a truck at Petersham on 5th July.

pleted before darkness fell. The last members left about 11.45 pm after an impromptu sing-a-long around Bob's pianola. The singing was rather enthusiastic but very out of tune!!

Bob is also giving our Wallsend tramway signal a complete overhaul. The mast has been dismantled, cleaned of rust and primed and a new signal arm (of wood like the original) has been made and painted. The rodding and spectacle frames are now receiving attention,

We would like to take this, very belated, opportunity to thank member Joe Gill for his kind donation of a set of very neatly made conductor's bell cords complete with leather straps which have been fitted to N 728, and extend to Joe our apologies for having previously omitted to mention this fine gesture.

A new switch panel was brought into use in the substation on 13th July. It is positioned on the right side of the building in the position formerly occupied by the spare rotary converter panels and adjacent to the new location to which the motor generators are to be moved. The installation of the switch panel has enabled a start to be made in removing some of the miscellaneous bits and pieces which at present festoon the wall over the MG sets. Bill Parkinson, who was responsible for this work, has also constructed and supplied a silicon diode rectifier in anticipation of improved power supplies to the Museum area, and full details of this unit will be reported later.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service has placed a chain barricade across Lady Rawson Drive in line with the bank of the Main Roads Dept. drainage channel. This barricade is secured by a lock but the Society has been supplied with a key. This is located just inside the back door of the depot. Members are requested to keep the chain in position on weekdays and Saturdays. Barricades of this type have been erected at many points around the Park, mainly across fire trails, to deter vandals, careless picnickers, rubbish dumpers, etc. from misusing the lesser supervised areas of the the Park. In our case it also provides additional protection for the Museum area.

The Museum's "pet" possum is a mother again. She gave birth to a "wee bairn" in early August and the youngster appears to be doing well. Mum still enjoys the odd apple core or carrot but junior is making sure he's not left out of any free handout!

Australian Iron and Steel at Port Kembla have donated some surplus huts to the Society. Final details have yet to come to hand but we expect to be able to begin demolition early in September. The buildings will yield further materials urgently required in our depot rebuilding programme.

Kevin Cronin has delivered two front aprons from K-class cars 751 and 756 which were donated to the Museum by Mrs. Green of Moorebank. Mrs. Green purchased the two trams in May, 1939 and they only cost £2/10/- (\$5) each to move from Randwick!! Trucking charges have certainly risen during the intervening thirty years! The two aprons will be used as patterns for new ones to be fitted to our two E-class cars.

Our Chev. truck, number 3 on the motor vehicle roster, has been cut up for scrap and the underframe and rear wheels converted into a trailer (of sorts) for moving junk around the Museum's area. No.3 gave remarkable service considering its condition. It was renowned for its traction when called upon to tow trams - the wheels just spun round inside the tyres!! No.3 even caught fire on two occasions. However, it is being replaced by motor vehicle No.6, a Chevrolet 'Blitz' bought by Vic Solomons, Dave Fox and Kevin Cronin, and No.6 will be fitted with the tray from No.3. The 'Blitz' needs minor attention and will be registered when repairs have been completed.

Recent visitors from overseas were three members of the Museum of Transport and Technology in Auckland, Dave Reddick, Brian White and Ross Senny. They visited Brisbane to cover the last weeks of the system before returning to New Zealand. Stephen Michael, a member of the Illinois Railway Museum on 'R and R' from Saigon, called in to see us on 30th August. Steve also joined us on our trip to Oberon the following day.



Locomotive 48122 hauls a six-wheeled water tank, two MH-class hoppers and tram 548 up Petersham goods yard on 30th August.



548 was moved to a new location at Petersham on 30th August. The move was accomplished with the assistance of locomotive 48122 which towed 548 up the yard with a tail rope. The car is now parked behind the Railway's special service vans. The move took place to enable some of the Rail Transport Museum's vehicles to be remarshalled prior to their removal to Enfield No. 3 roundhouse. 548 suffered slight damage to one headlight when a wagon drawhook struck it during a shunting movement about 7th August. One wagon was derailed over the stop block protecting the Museum vehicles and struck the line of wagons which moved back onto the tram. The dent in 548's apron is slight and repairs can easily be effected.



From 7 pm Saturday until the close of traffic on Sunday, 18th May, 1969 and again a fortnight later, all trams using St. Kilda Road were diverted via Sturt Street and Kingsway while a new junction was laid in at the corner of Nolan Street and St. Kilda Road. This new junction will replace the present junction used by South Melbourne trams at the corner of Sturt Street and St. Kilda Road. The new work is being done in conjunction with a proposed city ring road which will require an underpass beneath St. Kilda Road at Sturt Street.

## A TRAMCAR RIDE IN THE CITY OF DIAMONDS

During September, 1968, member Clyde Shoebridge visited Kimberley, South Africa and sent us this report on the area's surviving tramway.

### HISTORICAL NOTES

North east of Cape Town, 649 miles along the main railway to Johannesburg, lies Kimberley - City of Diamonds. In its heyday Kimberley boasted an electric city tramway, a steam and electrical industrial railway, a steam narrow gauge line with dual gauge operation, an electric interurban, level crossings with the South African Railways main line -- it was a rail enthusiasts' delight!

Kimberley was founded in 1871 and its first transport was provided by stagecoaches operated by various companies to distant Cape Town. With the arrival of the railway in November, 1885 the coach service to the south ceased but still continued to run to Johannesburg which was still without rail service.

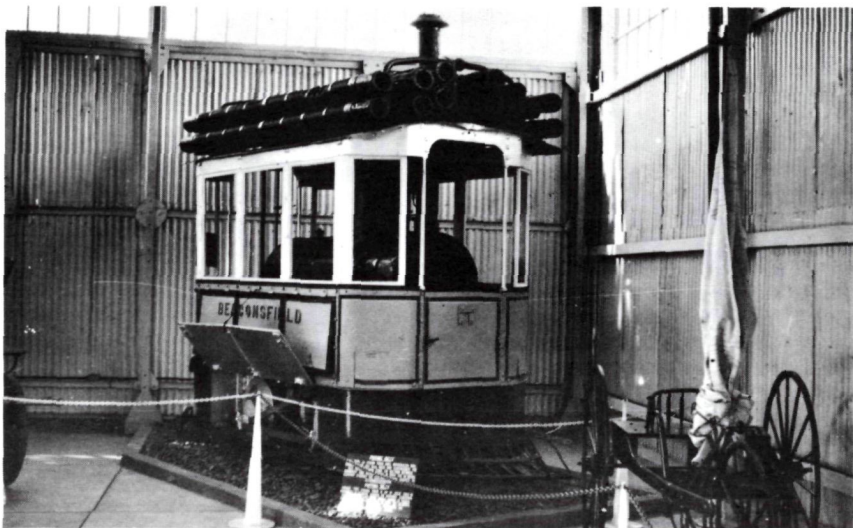
The first town transport was a mule drawn omnibus service introduced by the Gibson Brothers. Following the formation of the De Beers Company, diamond mining became organised and the town prospered. In 1885, the Gibson Bros., using considerable De Beers finance, formed the Victoria Tramways Company and opened a horse tramway between Kimberley and Beaconsfield, 2½ miles distant. Ten four wheeled cars of two types - open crossbench and double deck - were run on the 3'6" gauge line. The horses, however, proved unsuitable due to the climate and were replaced by mules.

In 1889 a four wheeled battery car was ordered, but did not last long in traffic; the frequent charging of the accumulators being one of the many drawbacks. The car appears to have been similar to the double deck battery cars experimented with in Australian cities.

During 1895, the De Beers Co., troubled by people taking short cuts across its property from Kenilworth to Kimberley, came to an agreement with the Victoria Tramways Co. for the provision of a tramway service to Kenilworth. This route was opened for traffic on 1st February, 1896 and was subsidised by the De Beers Co.

A number of small 0-4-0 steam tram engines were bought from an English manufacturer in June, 1900 and these were placed in service on the Beaconsfield line hauling up





Steam tram locomotive "Beaconsfield" was one of a number of four-coupled engines introduced in 1900 to replace the horse operated services of the Victoria Tramway Co. "Beaconsfield" was rescued from a scrapheap in 1950 and is now preserved in the Kimberley Mining Museum.

to three horsecar trailers. Although an improvement over the mules the engines proved expensive to operate.

A new company, the Kimberley and Beaconsfield Electric Tramways Company - still mainly a Gibson Brothers venture - was formed in 1903, and, after the necessary work had been completed, introduced electric traction on the Beaconsfield route on 1st September, 1906. The Company's tramcars followed British practice and comprised three main types: single truck open cars with footboards and a centre aisle; single truck saloon cars with cross seating and a few maximum traction bogie cars with open top decks.

The Beaconsfield line was not Kimberley's first electric line. Two years earlier the De Beers Company had constructed a four mile tramway of American pattern to serve a recreation club/hotel with extensive gardens and sporting facilities which the company constructed for its employees at Alexandersfontein, south of Kimberley. The line terminated in a loop 280 feet in diameter which was built on an embankment reaching a height of 10 feet in some places. Service was provided by typical American trams of single truck and bogie open crossbench designs built by the Brill Company. Also on the roster was one lone saloon car supplied by Stephenson of New York.



Stephenson of New York built tramcar No.2 of the Kimberley and Alexandersfontein Electric Railway. It was the only car of its type to operate in Kimberley and is preserved in the Kimberley Mining Museum

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Early in 1914 the town council purchased the assets of the Kimberley and Beaconsfield Tramways when the Company found it could not keep pace with the rising costs of tramway operation. The council offered them to De Beers who were not prepared to purchase outright but eventually agreed to operate the system on the Council's behalf. This commenced on 1st July, 1914 under a 25 year lease, the Amalgamated undertaking being known as the Kimberley Tramways.

Various projects completed under the new management included the extension of the Beaconsfield route to join the Alexandersfontein line; electrification of the Kenilworth route; opening of three new lightly trafficked routes and the construction of a new depot and central workshops.

The extensive De Beers electric industrial network was built during 1919 and was connected to the town system at the workshops on the Kenilworth line and by a short extension of the Beaconsfield route and was opened for traffic in September of the same year. It connected with the S.A.R. at Kimberley station and Beaconsfield station.

Little development took place between 1920 and 1935. The older rolling stock was replaced by De Beers standard open cars while much of the British rolling stock of the K. & B. was converted to work vehicles. Steam oper-

ation on the industrial belt line ceased in 1925 when it was fully electrified.

As was to be expected, De Beers found the operation of the tramway a heavy financial burden, mainly because the system was committed to very low fares and extensive non revenue earning workmen's and school services. De Beers declined to extend the lease when it expired in 1939 and public transport was given over to a private bus operator. Track lifting commenced immediately but the Kenilworth route was left for workmen's services which continued until 1947.

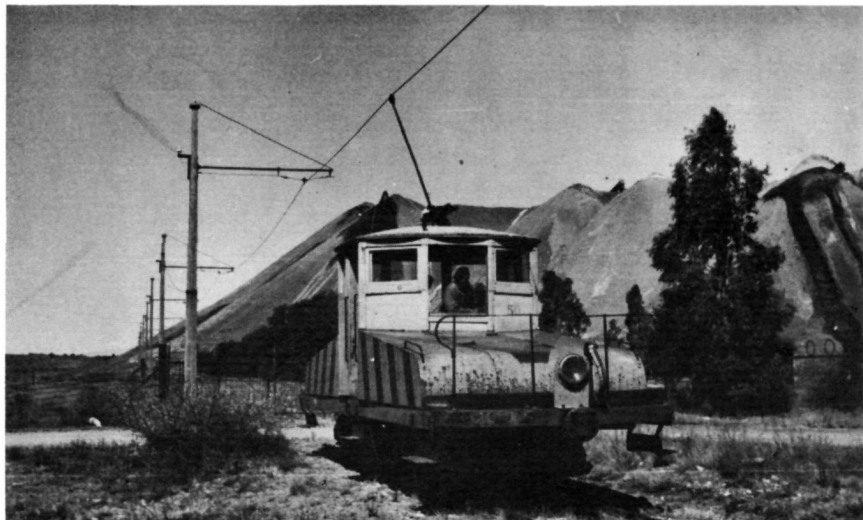
The trams continued in operation as a workmen's service over the industrial section of the system but this has now ceased and in recent years the trams have run only to cater for parties of visitors inspecting the mines.

### I RIDE THE KIMBERLEY ELECTRIC

...by Clyde Shoebridge

After arriving in Kimberley, I visited the offices of the De Beer Consolidated Diamond Mines Ltd. and completed negotiations to spend a day inspecting and riding the electric tramway.

Some time was spent locating the driver and locomotive, and eventually I was left in his charge at the



Locomotive 50 stands at the gate to the powder magazine siding. It is one of four locomotives and a tool car rebuilt from Brill bogie cars by the Kimberley Engineering Works about 1952.

workshops where he was finishing morning tea. We collected the "pole boy", whose job is to look after the trolley pole, and set out for the exchange sidings at Beaconsfield station. En route, quite a number of manproof gates had to be opened and locked again behind us. After shunting two railway freight wagons, we coupled to some trucks of timber poles and set out for the powerhouse. The powerhouse is no longer generating; the tramway is connected to a grid for its power requirements. However, the sidings are used for the storage of poles. Another siding, leading to the powder magazines, is regularly used as the explosives are still transported by rail.

We took lunch at the Workshops where three similar locomotives stood. Like No.50 which I had been riding, they started life as bogie open Brill cars and were converted for their present duties about sixteen years ago.

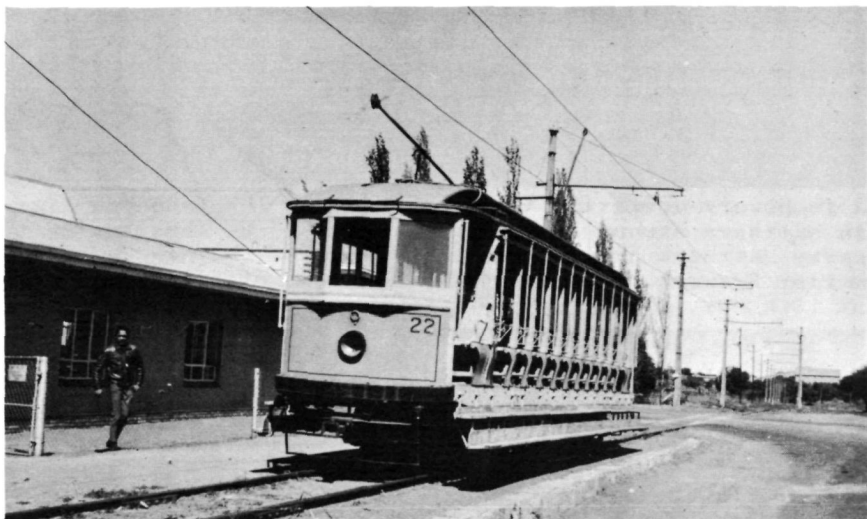
After lunch we returned to where a number of old trams stood on now disused sidings. A long green freight car and a number of flat cars converted from former single truck and bogie cars were standing with tool car 53 and abandoned passenger cars 1,2 and 4. Overhead line car, No.3, was still available for use but had seen better days, it is literally falling to pieces. Bogie car 22, however, seemed the most complete and the pole on this car was raised to the wire for the first time in three months. I climbed aboard and the driver notched up. 22 moved - under protest! The motors squeaked and made grinding noises; the



Overhead line car No.3 was converted from a single truck Brill open car. Officially still available for service, the tram is gradually falling to pieces in the hot South African sun.

floor heaved and the pole dewired during the half mile ride to the Mine Gates. However, we completed the trip back to the siding without any major troubles occurring and left the car with the smell of hot grease in our nostrils.

The future is not bright. The Company appears to be waiting for the system to just stop running and has no plans for operating the trams. It is likely, however, that car 22 will end her days on display in the Kimberley Mining Museum, the last operating electric passenger tram in South Africa.



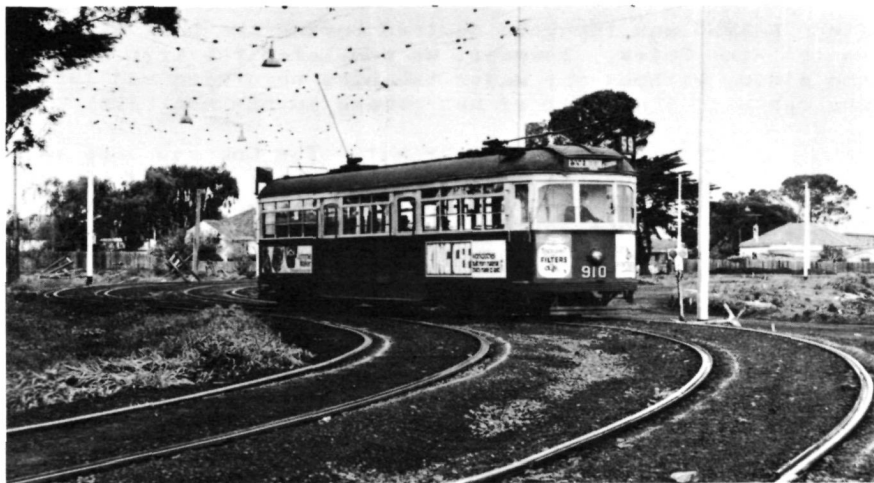
Brill bogie open car 22 at the Beaconsfield Mine Gate on 3rd September, 1968, the last and only passenger electric tram operating in South Africa.

#### FOR SALE

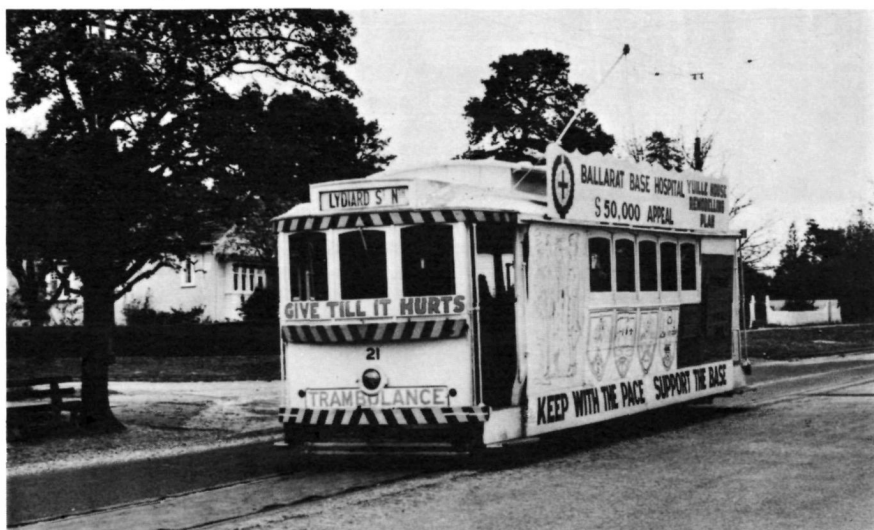
The following items of genuine tramway artifacts have been released by the SPER for general sale:-

- ...Brand new Eastern Suburbs (Sydney) front coloured symbol tram destination rolls... .. \$10 each.
- ...Genuine, used cast depot plates ---"D" and "W" symbols,  
... .. \$1 each.
- ...Identification plates ---"1-L-2" and "2-R-1" . \$1 pair.

— *CG* —



A temporary deviation has been built on the Essendon line in Matthews Avenue to enable a bridge to be constructed to carry Matthews Avenue and the trams over the new Tullamarine Freeway. SW6 car 910 is seen negotiating the 'kink' on 10th May, 1969.



The SEC made the most of their decorated tram in Ballarat early this year. Car 21 was "Santa's Showboat" for the Christmas season, and was repainted - retaining its showboat guise - for the Ballarat Begonia Festival in February - March. 21 took the stage again in April and May as a "Trambulance" in aid of an appeal for the Ballarat Base Hospital and is seen above in Lydiard Street on 10th May, 1969.



A TRIBUTE

At this year's Annual General Meeting of the SPER it was my honour to move a vote of thanks for services rendered on the occasion of the retirement of Bob Merchant from the post of General Manager. After a term as Assistant Manager in the early 1960's, Bob was nominated by the Board to the role of General Manager on the retirement of Norm Chinn in 1963. As Norm is recognised as the initial G.M. and the person whose personality and drive established the Museum and brought it to the stage where it was opened to the public as a static exhibit, Bob will be remembered as the General Manager who built on the original sound foundations and reigned and organised through the period when the Museum achieved operating status.

During his term of office Bob not only found time to be present at the Museum on work days, but many week nights each month found him at kindred enthusiast society meetings and associated organisational gatherings. Although Bob is interested in these other activities of kindred associations, the reason behind his regular attendances was mainly to further the work of the Society. Bob has also been responsible for the good relationship that our organisation has built with interstate museums and transport operators.... just recently he made a return train trip of some 1,000 miles just to successfully finalise some publishing negotiations.

Bob has arrived at a stage now where he finds he is unable to devote the time necessary for the General Manager's task, so earlier this year he made the sensible decision to retire from that position from the end of last June. Bob is not retiring from active participation in the Society's work, however, for he can now devote more time to his major interest, the editorship of this magazine "TROLLEY WIRE".

On behalf of all members I thank Bob for his labours over the last six years as Manager, and I am glad that it was my good fortune to have him as General Manager during my period as Chairman.

---Ken McCarthy.

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BACK PAGE: Melbourne's largest tramway project since the opening of the Bourke Street lines in 1955-56 was the recent work carried out at St. Kilda Junction. A complicated system of temporary tracks was needed to maintain regular services. In this scene taken last November, W5-class car 794 is heading towards the city while W2 554 in the distance, is outbound on route 4 to Carnegie.

Photo: Shane McCarthy

