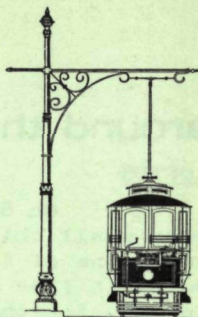


TROLLEY WIRE

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



DECEMBER 1969



around the depot....

LOFTUS

On Saturday, 6th September, it was found that some small children had managed to gain entry to the depot under one of the depot doors and had smashed the light bulbs in 134s and 295. Some bulbs had also been smashed in 154, together with one light shade. A box of globes, left on a seat in 728, was found on the ground with many of the globes broken. It was deduced that the entry had been effected during the late afternoon or at dusk as only trams on the western side of the depot, where there is no roof, had been damaged.

The R-class car 1740, one of our traffic stalwarts, was withdrawn from traffic on Sunday, 12th October after the crew reported odd noises coming from the bogie. A preliminary check found that one motor bearing -- the number 2 motor at the number 1 end -- was turning. The offending parts were removed and our maintenance staff were surprised to find that the motor had apparently been fitted with a brass of the wrong size. It is thought that the bearing may have been replaced by depot staff during the tram's last years of service. On 26th October, the bogie was removed and the car is temporarily sitting on our spare P truck at the rear of No.1 road while repairs and a bogie overhaul are being carried out.

A run of wet weekends is seriously delaying work on the depot roof. However, the wet spell has meant that more indoor work could be carried out and 180 has benefited from this. In recent weeks the paint stripping has uncovered the original interior varnish and lettering above the windows. Apparently Brisbane allowed "smoking only in the rear six seats" before the "smoking only at the rear of (black centre) line" became law.

ST. KILDA

The month of August saw the completion of track-work into the new fifth bay of the shed with the C-class car and the overhead tower wagon taking up residence within. A short inspection pit has also been constructed on this road. Work is still progressing on the construction of the extension which will form the Museum's workshop area and, unlike the rest of the depot, will not be open to the visiting public. The existing north wall will be left to divide the two areas.

COVER PHOTO: The Victorian grandeur of Melbourne's Princess Theatre forms an impressive backdrop for W7 1003 as it travels along Nicholson St. outward bound for East Brunswick. 1003 has rolled the rails for fifteen years, but the Princess has been a part of the Melbourne scene since 1886.

TROLLEY WIRE

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\$2.00 per annum, post paid.

NEW MEMBERS

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

Geoffrey Munn	219
Philip Hodges	220
Barry Neilsen	221
Barry Wentworth-Jackson	222
Robert Prentice	223
Robert Taafe	224

NEW AETM MEMBERS

As this is the first opportunity we have had for a while to print the names of our new members, we extend a welcome, belated in some cases, to:-

Mark Skinner	Tom Wilson	P.G. Bigg
Tim Bell	Dick Jones	Bill Parkinson
Dennis O'Brien	Chris Andrews	John Couper
	Peter Keynes	

Although the AETM is still short of working members, the volume of new members has been quite encouraging in the last two or three years. The steady increase in membership undoubtedly reflects the more visible progress that has been made at St. Kilda since 1964.

SPER - NOTICE OF MEETINGS

General Meetings of the Society will be held on the last Friday in February*, June, and October, 1970 and will be held at the Railway Institute, Devonshire Street, Sydney.

*The February meeting will be called as an ExtraOrdinary General Meeting at which certain amendments to the Society Rules will be considered.

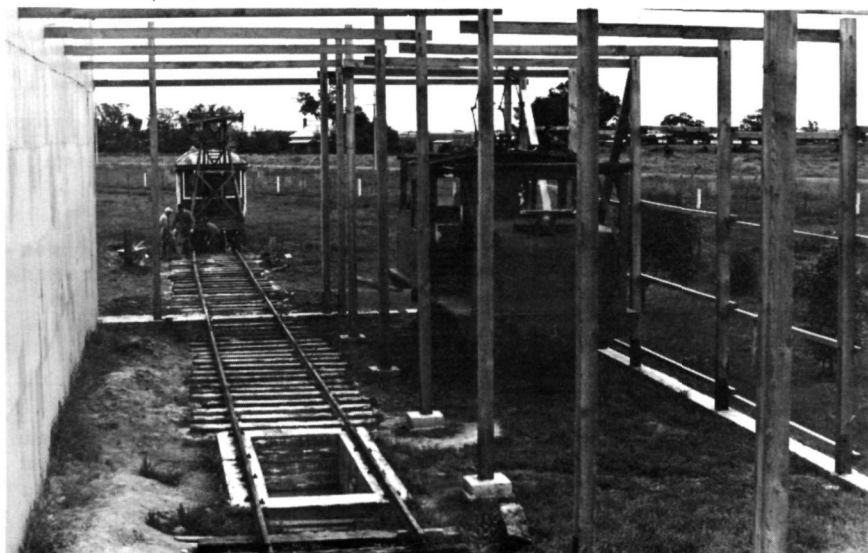
THE AETM IN ADELAIDE..... HOW TO GET THERE

Many interstate visitors to Adelaide who are tramway enthusiasts write to the AETM asking for details of the Museum's location and proximity to public transport. The following directions should answer all questions of this nature for intending visitors.

The site at St. Kilda is approximately 17 miles north of Adelaide city. Normal visiting hours are between 2 and 5 pm on Sundays and Public Holidays. No public transport at all, besides taxis, is available. The nearest railway station is Salisbury, some six miles from the Museum.

To travel privately by road, proceed along King William Street, continuing through North Adelaide along O'Connell Street. At the Caledonian Hotel, veer half-right, and follow the Main North Road to Gepps Cross.... approximately five miles. At Gepps Cross continue straight ahead on Highway One (Port Wakefield Road) for some eight miles. At "Waterloo Corner", about one mile past a 'BP' service station turn left as directed by a Museum signpost. The Museum is located two miles down this road on the left.

Visitors without their own transport should contact the Secretary, the Rev. Graeme D.P. Kaines, 34 Clifton Street, Hawthorn, S.A., 5062 -- telephone 71 9620. It should be understood in all fairness that we cannot promise to arrange transport for people invariably.



The progress at St. Kilda can be seen in this photo by J. Hoffman.

A "NEW" TRAMCAR FROM CLYDE

On Tuesday, 21st October, 1969, an event, which did not seem possible for Sydney, made news in the press and on TV; the N.S.W. Railways' Wagon Works at Clyde delivered a tramcar! The vehicle outshopped was a cable grip car for the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences' collection.

During the late 1950's and the early 1960's, when the current preserved tramcar collections at Loftus and Parramatta Park were being assembled, it seemed that while Sydney's former steam and electric tram fleets would be adequately represented, little hope could be held for the possibility of seeing examples of Sydney cable traction which last operated in 1905. Two events of some seven years ago, however, helped to solve this situation.

One success came in 1962 when the South Pacific Electric Railway informed the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (M.A.A.S.) that a former Sydney King Street saloon cable trailer, used for many years as a house verandah at Cronulla, would soon be available due to impending house demolition. After protracted negotiations the MAAS were successful in obtaining the four wheel vehicle in June, 1962 and were able to store it with their other rail exhibits pending restoration. The other key action to this



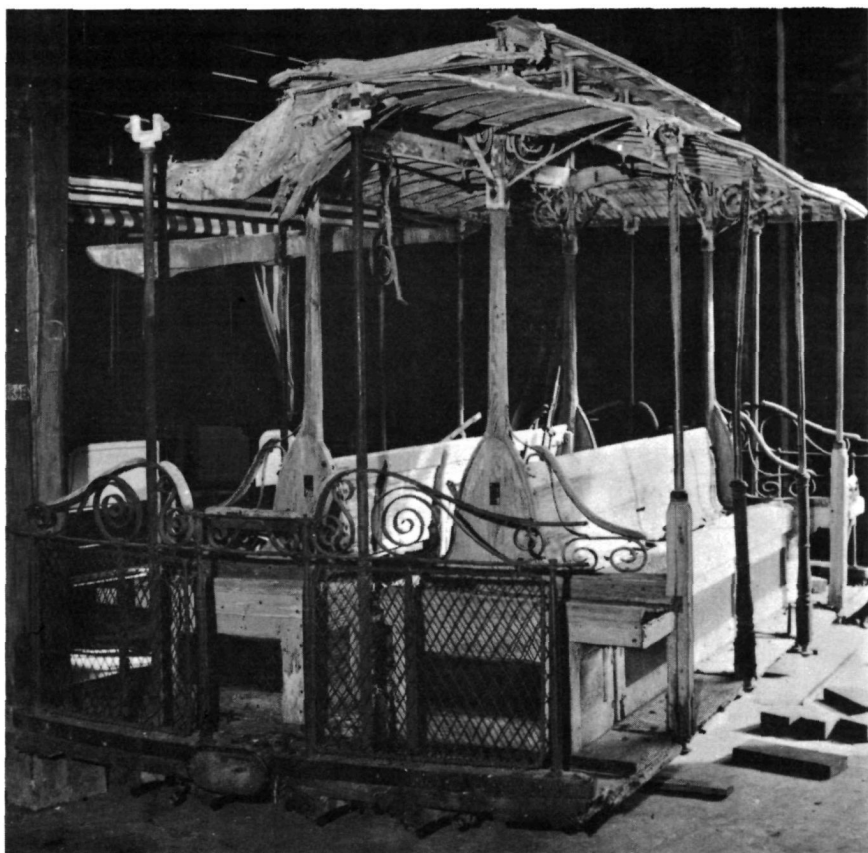
The restored grip car being admired by apprentices at the Clyde Wagon Works prior to being handed over to the Director of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Mr. Willis on 21st October, 1969.

Photo courtesy "Daily Telegraph"

story came on 17th December, 1962 when the MAAS obtained a very decrepit grip car from the grounds of what is now Monash University in Melbourne; this was car 448 of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board cable fleet, where the last tram of this type operated in October, 1940.

Preservationists have been fortunate in that most of the Melbourne and Sydney cable stock was sold complete with wheels and hardware, which has considerably assisted in the task of restoration.

The first year trade apprentices at the Clyde Wagon Works, under the direction of Mr. L. Dunkley, the works manager, spent two years on the reconstruction of 448. Thus Tuesday October 21st was a proud day for the apprentices as the grip car rolled out into the sunlight



The Melbourne grip car in the M.A.A.S. store after its arrival in Sydney on 18th December, 1962.

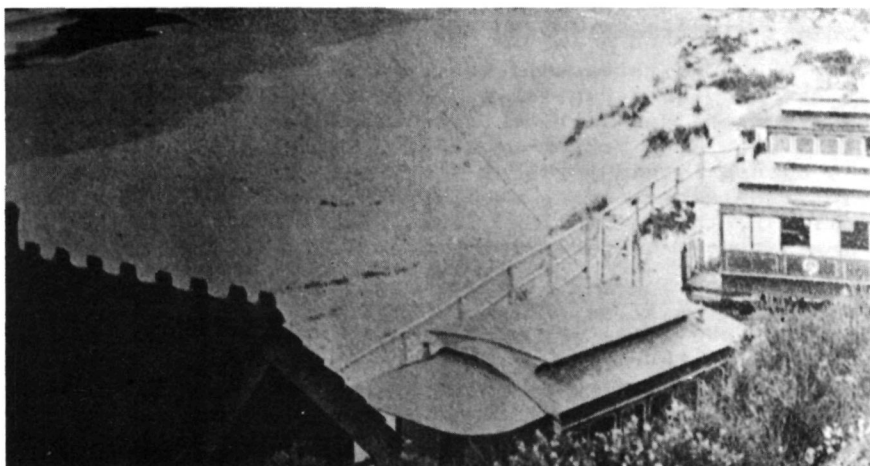
Photo courtesy "Daily Telegraph"

fully restored and ready to return to the care of the MAAS who immediately placed the tram on public display. The grip cars place in the works was immediately occupied by the old cronulla trailer car and it is hoped that it, too, will reappear in the not too distant future in the same resplendent condition as the grip car.

During September, 1968, yet another King Street saloon trailer was retrieved for preservation. This vehicle, in more decrepit condition than the MAAS tram, was found at Lilli Pilli, also in the Cronulla area, by the Steam Tram and Railway Preservation Society. With the closure of the King Street cable line and the disposal of the trailer stock, many of these cars were used as beachside huts in the then weekend holiday area of Cronulla, so this then was the intermediate use to which these two saloon trams were placed during their 50 year period off the rails.

Most readers are aware that the counterweight dummy used on the Darling Street Wharf hill at Balmain between 1903 and 1955 is in the SPER collection. This interesting item was built on the axle box and wheel components identical with the Sydney cable trailers.

So the members of the Parramatta and Loftus Museums and the officials of the MAAS can be excused if they sometimes sit back with the feeling of self satisfaction they have achieved what seemed an impossible task and have managed to save for posterity the majority of car types once used on the Sydney Cable, steam, horse and electric tramway systems.



Sydney cable trail cars in use as pavilions at Cronulla Beach in 1905.

Circular Quay via George St.

On Thursday, 7th December, 1899, Sydneysiders were introduced to a new, modern form of transportation in their city streets. On that day, seventy years ago, 41 electric trams sparked their way back and forth from the balloon loop at Circular Quay East to a triangle at John Street, Pyrmont, thus opening the first electric tramway in the city area of Sydney, using power fed from overhead wires.

Electric trams had been experimented with as early as June, 1888 when a single truck, double deck accumulator car was briefly tried on the Botany line but its promoters had no success in Sydney; or for that matter, in Melbourne, Ballarat and Adelaide where they also hawked their battery car ideas.

Three imported single truck saloon cars commenced operation between Randwick Workshops and Waverley terminus on 5th November, 1890 using the overhead electric system. This experimental electric service lasted until 20th April, 1892 when regular steam worked services were reintroduced to replace the somewhat less dependable electric cars.

Repeated requests for tramway extensions on the North Shore of Sydney resulted in the extension of the cable tramway from Ridge Street to Crows Nest in 1893 but cable line extensions were proving to be very expensive. The tramway department decided to work the next extension in the North Sydney area, from Ridge Street to Spit Road, Mosman, electrically with the retired Waverley cars.

The three cars were fitted with more powerful motors and were transferred to Ridge Street Depot in readiness for the new service. The new line was opened to traffic on 20th September, 1893. The Military Road tramway naturally had teething troubles, but developments in electrical engineering could by then overcome these problems. By the end of 1896 four locally built "C" class, single truck saloon cars had been added to the fleet.

During 1893 the possibility that electric traction could still be provided without the expense of erecting overhead wires enticed the NSW Government to experiment with yet another battery car. A steam tram enclosed cross bench trailer was built at Randwick Workshops in December, 1893 and was fitted out as an accumulator car.

On 2nd May, 1894, the accumulator car made a successful trip to Coogee. Showing some promise, the car took up operation on the Waverley Extension line which had been the stamping ground of the experimental cars only a

short time previously. There is also evidence of this car working on the Bridge Street to Railway Gates service but the short duration of the charge made it more economical to limit operations close to the charging point at Randwick Workshops. As with all battery vehicles of the last century the ratio between battery output and weight was inefficient, so during October, 1895 the tram was converted to a standard steam trailer.

During March, 1897, electric trams ventured down the grades from Spit Road to Mosman Wharf on the North Sydney tramway and in April, 1898 another extension was made from the North Sydney cable terminus north to Willoughby.

On 4th October, 1898, a "C" class car left Ocean Street terminus of the King Street cable line for Rose Bay Wharf, thus launching the first permanent electric line on the main Sydney tramway system. Although the line negotiated a tortuous route with 1 in 12 grades, it proved a success from the beginning.

Plans had been well advanced for a cable tramway to run through the main Sydney city area via Pitt and George Streets to the near city suburb of Pyrmont, but the successful operation of the Military Road (North Shore) tramway caused this plan to be amended to provide for a less costly and more flexible electric tramway. During 1898 and early 1899 city and suburban streets were torn up as the work of setting down rails for a complete electric system pushed ahead. Tenders were accepted from local and American builders for the delivery of additional single truck saloon cars and a variety of bogie combination electric cars.

The opening of the George Street electric tramway had been planned for September, 1899 but innumerable delays occurred causing much comment in State Parliament.



C class trams in George Street outside the G.P.O. during the first years of electric service.

A tramcar made the first trial over the new line on 22nd November and on Monday, 27th November, Members of Parliament were given a special ride, but trouble from the overhead frogs on complicated junctions still prevented the line from being opened to the public.

The great day soon arrived however, and on 7th December, 1899 passengers were allowed to travel free -- at their own risk! At 5.20 am the following morning the first regular electric tram left Pyrmont for the Quay via George Street, passengers now being required to part with one penny for half the journey and twopence for the full distance. Only a two minute headway service was provided until 8.15 am then one minute to 10.30 am, two minute headway to 4.00 pm, one minute to 7.00 pm. Finally, until close of service at 11.40 pm. the service deteriorated to a ten minute frequency.

40,000 passengers were carried on the opening day. The critics stated that this figure would soon drop away, but, by the end of the month, daily patronage had reached almost 55,000. Many short journeys were wooed away from the cramped horse buses, which were to facing bankruptcy within a year of the opening of the electric line. No trailers were hauled along the line until the track became "worn in" and the drivers became more proficient with the new trams. This caused criticism from smokers as they were forced to crowd around the driver or hang on the rear platform, because accommodation for smoking was provided only on the trailer cars.

So the period of worry and experimentation was over. Swift electric trams rapidly became part of the regular Sydney scene.



A "C" class car approaches King Street during what appears to be an early morning test run.

THIRTY YEARS SINCE.....

part two

Although new tramcars continued to be built during the post war period, the closures of North Sydney, Sydney and Hobart took place in 1958, 1961 and 1960 respectively. Newcastle trams were withdrawn in June 1950, Kalgoorlie followed in March 1952 and Perth in 1958. Although trolley buses were planned to be the replacement mode in Hobart, the last sections of the tramway system received motor buses. The Kalgoorlie conversion was brought about due to the worn out state of the equipment but Fremantle, where tramway operation was expected to continue, virtually closed overnight in November 1952 when the Municipal oper-



The northern terminus of the Victorian Railways 5'3" gauge tramway was St. Kilda Station. As the crew of car 36 prepare for the return journey, car 29 arrives and an MMTB W2 class crosses the VR line behind it.

ators discovered that the electricity costs had climbed considerably since they were forced to hand over their generation plant to the statewide authority.

The closure of the outer suburban Enfield tramway in Sydney and the Sandringham line in Melbourne was expected as these conversions had been discussed in the late 1930's and although Enfield was an early casualty of 1948, the Sandringham argument lingered on until 1956.

Adelaide planned, and stockpiled parts, for an initial post war tramcar building programme of some 40 vehicles but only one of these was completed when the decision was reached, by a reconstituted Tramways Trust in 1953, to cancel the remaining vehicles of the order and to progressively close the tramway and trolley bus operation, with the



Geelong No. 8 at Chilwell in January, 1954. No. 8 was converted for one man operation in 1932.

exception of the single interurban line to Glenelg. "F"-type car 269 closed the last street line, that to Cheltenham, on 22nd November, 1958, marking an acceleration of the scrapping plans initiated by the Trust in principle in 1953.

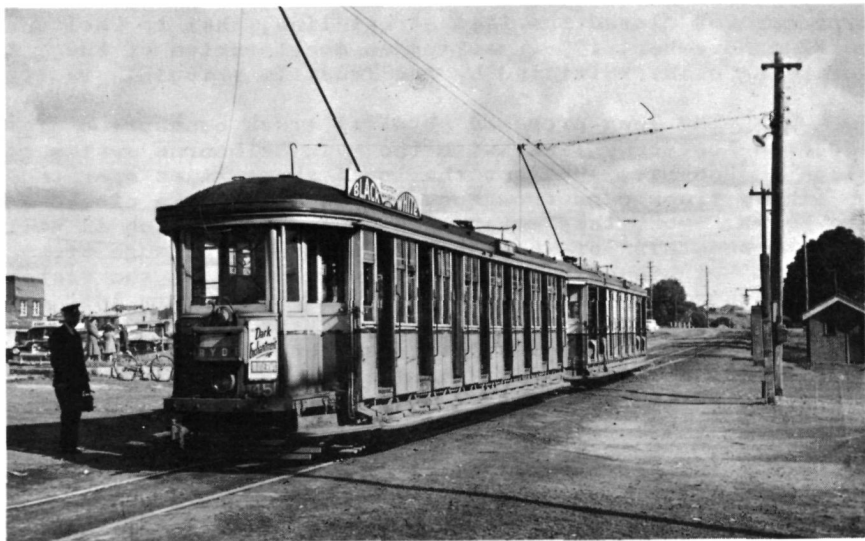
The long proposed physical track connection of the isolated Footscray lines with the main Melbourne system took place on 2nd May, 1954 but the local short lines operated by single truck cars from Footscray station were closed on 3rd March, 1962, thus making the connection, which is still in use, something of an anticlimax. The 5'3" gauge St. Kilda to Brighton line operated in Melbourne by the Victorian Railways was closed in stages between January 1957 and February 1959, while the Rockdale to Brighton-Le-Sands tramway in Sydney closed with three days' notice in September, 1949, being replaced by a diesel bus service although an extension of the adjacent Kogarah trolley bus network was once considered as a possible substitute.

The State Electricity Commission of Victoria purchased batches of retired bogie tramcars from Melbourne between 1945 and 1951 to strengthen their Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong workings, but the Geelong lines closed progressively between January 1956 and March 1956 and it was thought possible that the Ballarat and Bendigo systems would soon follow, but even though their closure proposals have been so far advanced on two occasions as to be present-



Fremantle Municipal Tramways No. 31 at South Beach in May, 1949.

Photo: the late Wal. Jack



Sydney O/P-class car 1451 and O 1443 at Ryde in December, 1949.

Photo: Ben Parle



Launceston tram No. 24 in tree-lined Elphin Road.

ed to the Victorian State Parliament, these two undertakings are still operating, albeit on borrowed time.

The expected Launceston conversion to trolley bus working reached a stage where the last tram route closed on 13th December, 1952 by car number 1, resurrected from the scrap pile for that occasion as it had been out of service for some time.

The last two closures to be mentioned were certainly unjustified and illustrate disinterested operating authorities at their best! The Victor Harbour to Granite Island horse worked tourist line, owned by the South Australian Railways but operated by a contractor, was temporarily closed in 1955 due to repairs being carried out along the jetty and causeway on which the services operated. This closure proved to be permanent, and although the "tram" still runs it is nothing more than a rubber tyre tractor affair. At least one of the Victor Harbour double deck horse cars is in existence on display at a South Australian petrol station, while the body of an earlier car has been discovered in N.S.W., but these two relics are poor compensation for what could have continued as a lucrative tourist venture. The other undertaking in this group is the Brisbane Tramways, which continued to construct new tramcars as late as 1964 and established the last new track extension in 1961, but this network, which still carried the bulk of Brisbane commuters as late as 18 months ago is now no more.

So, after 30 years, Australia is left with four conventional tramway operations, in Melbourne, Ballarat, Bendigo and Adelaide; two operating museums; at Loftus, N.S.W. (electric) and Parramatta, N.S.W. (steam), and the last few chains of the once vast Sydney system, in Randwick Workshops, where "R1"-class car 1979 still occasionally shunts around the works area. Until the mid 1950's the critics of these conversions from rail to road operation stated that buses would be unable to handle the crowds; this was perhaps correct, but the the crowds of the 1950's have ceased to exist, as the commuters changed to their own private transport as the conversion programmes progressed. Like the "chicken and the egg" it is difficult to say which came first, whether the conversions took place because of a fall in patronage, or whether the fall in patronage was due to the conversions.... perhaps the sorry state of public transport is due to both considerations, but like old soldiers, 75% of the trams in operation in 1939 have now "faded away".

BACK PAGE: Tour car PCC 980 poses beside SW6 916 at Essendon Aerodrome on 4th October, 1969 during an evening tour by members of the SPER.

