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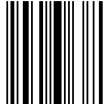


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TROLLEY WIRE

AUSTRALIA'S TRAMWAY MUSEUM
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*Firemen pour water onto the burning remains of a
dropcentre car on road 13 of the Paddington depot
during the fire of 28 September 1962.*

R.I. Merchant collection

Congratulations, Colin!

This issue of *Trolley Wire* marks 50 years that
Colin Seymour has been the magazine's
correspondent for the Australian Electric
Transport Museum. Nobody else is likely to reach
this milestone.

Colin's contributions are always on time, and
even early if he knows that he will be away when
the call for contributions is sent out.

Well done, and thank you, Colin!

Front Cover:

The Sydney Tramway Museum again ran a free transport service for Sutherland Shire Council on 28 October 2012. The Council sponsors 'Breakfast Torque', an event for motor cycle enthusiasts at Loftus oval, where parking is severely restricted near the oval and along the highway. The recommended parking spot is the TAFE car park. The service used two trams, R1 cars 1979 and 2001, and ran every 10 minutes from 7:00am from the TAFE level crossing on the Sutherland line – where R1 1979 waits for passengers – to Loftus oval on the National Park line. The service is restricted by the Princes Highway level crossing which has a time restriction of five minutes between tram crossings.

Richard Jones

INGREDIENTS FOR A DISASTER

THE PADDINGTON DEPOT FIRE AND ITS AFTER EFFECTS

By Howard R. Clark

The Brisbane tram depot at Paddington was, it would appear from the outset, a recipe for a disaster waiting to happen. Unlike contemporary tram depots built in other cities, and in the days before strict fire regulations and the risk assessment era of the late 20th century, Paddington was different.

First, the depot building, eventually to house up to 100 trams, was built on the side of a steep hill. Second, it was built using timber poles and corrugated iron, with the tracks at the rear standing some 15 metres above ground level, overshadowing all other structures in the vicinity. Third, after some 50 years since erection, the timber would have been brittle and dry, except for a cocktail of oil and grease lurking in the pit board timbers under the trams. Fourth, there were no fire protection measures of any consequence, such as sprinklers, installed in the building. With limited staff on duty after hours, there would have been little opportunity for them to do much in the event of a fire except to watch helplessly. Yet the warning signal had already been given some 30 years before when a fire was contained to just one car in the depot. When the fateful day came in 1962, it took less than an hour for 65 trams and the entire structure to be destroyed.

A commemoration was arranged exactly fifty years later for interested parties to get together to lament, that event. The date: 28 September 2012, 7:30pm. The location: Il Posto Restaurant, Latrobe Terrace and Warmington Street, Paddington, Brisbane. On duty: some 50 members and friends (including at least three from interstate) of the Brisbane Tramway Museum Society, with menu selected by 'Depot Master', Peter

Hyde. Purpose: to lament the passing of Paddington depot fifty years before. The restaurant is located in a modern shopping complex, approximately where roads 10 to 13 of the Paddington depot once stood. Unusually, perhaps a remnant inherited from Company days, roads were numbered from right to left, which placed them on the extreme left of the site where the restaurant is situated. The other two depots in Brisbane, at Light Street and Ipswich Road, were both numbered in the traditional manner from left to right.

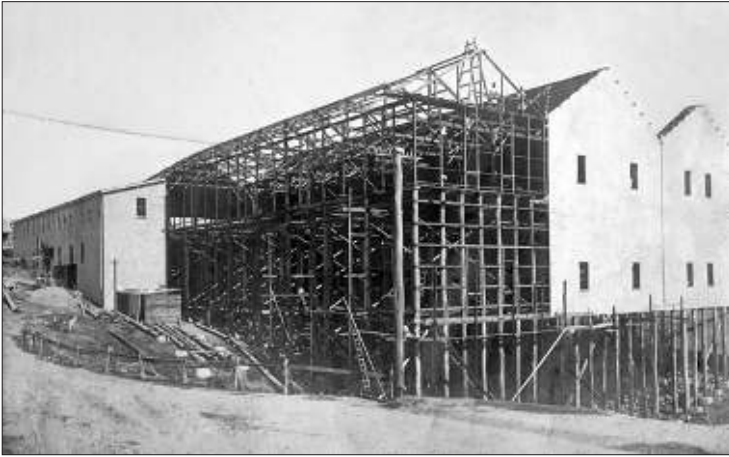
Exactly 50 years before to the day, on Friday, 28 September 1962 at 7:30 pm., a resident of Warmington Street noticed sparks falling from the depot flooring in the vicinity of the oil room. The Depot Master was immediately notified and a fire engine was soon despatched from the nearby Ithaca Fire Station. That evening three persons were on duty: Depot Masters H. Cook and A. Drew, and Dispatcher W. Sweet. Messrs Cook and Sweet managed to drive three trams out (likely to have been dropcentre cars stabled near the front of the shed), whilst Drew collected four cash boxes and bags of money and took them to safety nearby before power was cut as the fire intensified, and nothing further could be done to save any more of the 65 trams lost that night.

With a growing fleet of trams and expansion of lines by 1913 the General Manager of the Brisbane Tramways Company, Mr Joseph 'Boss' Badger, announced on 30 June of that year that land had been purchased at Paddington as the site for a new depot. No doubt with a mind to gaining favour with staff following the General Strike in 1912, Badger made the

Paddington depot under construction in 1914. Piles of timber poles lie in Warmington Street beside the new construction work.

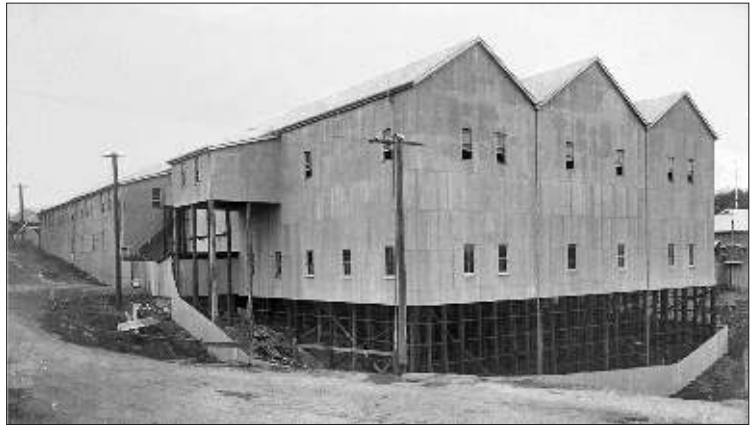
BTMS Archives





Construction of the new depot is well advanced in this late 1914 view from Warmington Street.

BTMS Archives



The rear of the completed depot in 1915.

BTMS Archives

point that the depot would be provided with generous facilities for employees, including a billiard room 70ft by 19ft, a reading room 18ft by 19ft and a dining room 24ft by 19ft.

The site was not ideally suited for a tram depot as the land fell away steeply from Latrobe Terrace. With timber plentiful, and no doubt cheaper than alternative

materials for an awkward site, the depot structure was built entirely using hardwood piling with corrugated iron walls and roof. Track level at the rear of the depot was around 15 metres above ground level. Unlike tram depots built in Sydney and Adelaide many years earlier, which were equipped with a sprinkler fire protection system from the outset, Paddington depot was not so equipped. The depot was constructed in



The Latrobe Terrace frontage of the newly completed depot in early 1915. Its three sections contained three, four and three tracks respectively and the ten roads were numbered from the right.

BTMS Archives

The front of the depot from Latrobe Terrace on 7 May 1957 showing the additional three roads numbered 11 to 13 added to the northern side in the late 1920s.

D.R. Keenan



1914 and 1915 and was officially opened on 15 April 1915 with the transfer of cars from Countess Street that evening. At its opening the building housed 10 tracks each 81 metres long, providing accommodation for seventy trams.

On 1 January 1923 the Brisbane Tramway Trust took over a very run down system and fleet from the Company; the Trust in turn was absorbed by the Brisbane City Council on 1 December 1925. The building of new cars and extensions of lines gave rise to serious overcrowding of depots, necessitating the storage of some cars in the adjacent streets overnight.

A new depot at Ipswich Road was opened on 4 May 1927, resulting in the closure of both the Logan Road and Lang Street (Dutton Park) depots. The Lang Street depot had been built in similar fashion to Paddington depot, and material recovered from the demolition

was re-cycled to extend Paddington depot by three tracks, numbered 11 to 13, along with staff accommodation, at a cost of £5,086. The capacity was thus increased to 91 cars (13 tracks each of 7 cars). The smart new depot at Ipswich Road was equipped with a fire sprinkler safety system, with the water tower neatly disguised in an imposing brick tower at the front of the building. It seems that no thought was given towards fitting a similar system at Paddington when the extensions were carried out. Similarly, when Light Street depot was built during the depression era, no sprinkler system was installed there due to cost saving measures.

Paddington was the home of one-man cars introduced during the Depression, and also housed the five Baby Centre Aisle cars built in 1936 and 1943 and used on the steep Edward Street line. These little cars had long gone from Paddington by 1962. It is said however that

Paddington depot on an April 1950 night. A lone Dreadnought centre aisle car can be glimpsed at left.

R.I. Merchant collection





The steepness of the depot site is emphasised in this view of the rear of the depot from Morris Street.

K.S. Kings, D.R. Keenan collection



Three dropcentre cars headed by car 353 line up in Latrobe Terrace outside the depot on 28 March 1959. D.R. Keenan



Single truck ten-bench car 65 was housed at Paddington depot and was used on a tour commencing from that depot on 28 March 1959.

D.R. Keenan

FM car 509 leaves the depot to take up service.

BTMS Archives



the unique paint scheme used on the one-man Dreadnought cars was revealed on the charred aprons of a couple of them, along with notices on the steps of the cars, 'Please have exact fare ready'.

With larger bogie cars on the horizon, the depot was extended again in 1937-38 for the last time. Roads 1 to 10 were each extended by 44.2 metres, increasing the capacity by a further 30 of the largest cars, at a cost of £16,352. Four-motor (FM) 401, the first production FM car, was allocated to Paddington depot in 1938, with generally every third new car after that sent there. The depot fan siding was extended to connect with the inbound track at the Bardon end on 16 September 1937 and a facing crossover was installed on 14 August 1939 to provide a direct run in from the city end. An air raid shelter was built on the Warmington Street side of the depot. On 15 November 1950 the signal box from Adelaide and George Streets was moved to the depot to control the facing crossover entry to the depot.

Paddington depot at the time of the fire, with 100 cars allocated, provided trams for all the north side lines which operated along Adelaide Street as follows:
 Route 72 Enoggera – Chermiside
 Route 73 Rainworth – Kalinga
 Route 74 Bardon – Stafford
 Route 75 Toowong – Grange
 Route 76 Ashgrove – Bulimba Ferry.

Ashgrove cars returning to the depot via Enoggera Terrace displayed 'Red Hill' on the front destination roll and 'Padd Dep' on the rear roll as they departed Ashgrove and after shunting at Red Hill crossover 'Padd Dep' was then at the front. Passengers were carried on all depot runs in Brisbane.

Fire fighters who first reached the scene were hampered by the building construction and an inability to reach the seat of the fire. Low water pressure further hampered efforts to control the fire which suddenly flared up and quickly spread along the

The interior of the depot is well alight on the night of 28 September 1962.

R.I. Merchant collection





The roof has collapsed bringing down the depot and overhead wiring, blocking Latrobe Terrace, 28 September 1962.

R.I. Merchant collection



The shell of an FM car lies upside down in the remains of the depot on 29 September 1962.

R.I. Merchant collection



The scene viewed from a house in Morris Street. The shells of six FM cars which remained upright at the rear of roads 1 and 2 were pulled down in the week following the fire.

BTMS Archives

An aerial view of the depot site taken on 29 September 1962. Warmington Street is at the top of the picture. A number of houses in Morris Street were lucky to have escaped destruction.

R.I. Merchant collection



inspection pits. City Council turncocks were utilised to divert water from mains in surrounding suburbs into the mains near the depot. Back-up fire units from Headquarters, South Brisbane and Toowong stations were soon on the scene, along with the Fire Chief, Mr G. Healy who took charge of operations. A total of six fire engines and five powerful pumps were used to fight the blaze. The pumps each forced water through ten hoses at the rate of 750 gallons (3410 litres) a minute. The flames were given momentum by the build-up of accumulated oil and grease embedded in the timber decking under the pits.

The fire was reported to be seen for miles around. As the burning structure weakened, trams periodically crashed to the ground below. It was soon realised that nothing could be done to save any part of the depot, so attention was concentrated on preventing the fire from spreading to nearby properties. This was achieved,

although the intense heat blistered paint and cracked windows in nearby premises. The collapse of the depot building and facade resulted in the overhead in the immediate vicinity being brought down, leaving trams on the Bardon line stranded. They were later towed away by the Scammell breakdown truck, and a temporary bus service was introduced for the remainder of the evening.

At the time of the fire, 25 trams (thought to be all FM cars) were still in service or returning to the depot, three were rescued, whilst seven were at the workshops for various reasons. This left a total of 65 cars consumed by the flames in barely more than an hour! The timber depot structure was undoubtedly a fire hazard. However one could speculate that had a sprinkler system been installed at the depot, the fire may have been contained in a smaller area of the building without causing so much devastation and

The supporting piles under roads 1 to 3 at the rear of the depot did not give way. The shell of an FM car is seen on 8 October 1962 through the still standing piles, with the houses in Morris Street in the background.

D.R. Keenan





The remains of two dropcentre cars have yet to be removed, 7 October 1962. D.R. Keenan

On 8 October 1962, the Brisbane City Council's Transport Department Scammell breakdown vehicle was being used to haul the shells of destroyed trams towards Latrobe Terrace from where they could be safely loaded and taken away.

D.R. Keenan



The rear of the depot site viewed from Morris Street. Compare this view with the one on the top of page 6. D.R. Keenan

ultimately a catalyst for the demise of the entire Brisbane tramway system less than seven years later. As noted previously, an earlier fire which occurred on 22 October 1931, when combination car 11 was found ablaze at 1:30am, was restricted to this car only.

All four types of tram, centre aisle (Dreadnought), hand brake dropcentre, air brake dropcentre and Four-

Motor (FM) cars were located at the depot. The cars lost were six Dreadnoughts, (Nos.137, 141, 147, 175, 177 and 178), thirty hand brake dropcentre cars (Nos.202, 203, 204, 205, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 220, 221, 237, 240, 244, 250, 253, 254, 255, 257, 258, 261, 265, 268, 269, 274, 275, 278, 279, 286 and 291), seventeen air brake dropcentre cars (Nos. 303, 305, 306, 330, 338, 339, 343, 344, 346, 348, 349, 350, 351,

By 8 October 1962, the tram bodies and other wreckage had been removed from the roads 1 to 3 track level, although a number of FM shells still remain to be removed from where they fell.

D.R. Keenan



Burnt timbers, twisted rail and bent sheets of corrugated iron surround the remaining FM body shells on 7 October 1962.

D.R. Keenan

The twisted remains of FM car 449 stand upright amid the devastation on 14 April 1963.

H.R. Clark



352, 354, 369 and 373) and twelve FM cars (Nos. 449, 455, 467, 473, 478, 491, 506, 524, 527, 536, 539 and 542). Fortunately, the replica of the horse tram, normally stored under the building had been removed a few days beforehand in preparation for the Warana Festival Procession the day after the fire, although it did not subsequently appear. Paddington car 287 was spared the flames, as at the time it was at Milton

Workshops undergoing conversion to air brakes, along with another car, 288, both of which returned to service by December 1962. Other cars allocated to the depot which survived were dropcentre cars 294, 304, 307, 345, 347 and 353, and FM cars 428, 431, 434, 437, 440, 443, 446, 452, 456, 461, 464, 470, 475, 476, 479, 482, 485, 488, 494, 497, 500, 503, 509, 512, 515, 518, 521 and 533.



Six months after the fire the depot site remains untouched, with burnt timber, poles, rails, corrugated iron, and the remains of trams left to rust away.
H.R. Clark



The remains of two dropcentre cars hang precariously amid the rubble on 14 April 1963.
H.R. Clark



A dropcentre plate frame bogie hangs from its underframe on 14 April 1963.
H.R. Clark

The shells of six FM cars remained perched upright at the rear of roads 1 and 2, where the supporting piles had not given way. These were pulled down the following week, cut in halves and taken away, no doubt for salvage of re-usable parts.

The most remarkable thing in the immediate aftermath of the fire was the swift attention BCC transport officers gave to restoring normal public services to the city. The Milton workshops yard was converted to a temporary depot, and of the 25 cars in service that evening, 14 were despatched there at the conclusion of services, with the remaining 11 stored overnight in Enoggera Terrace, Red Hill.

Tram services were restored to the Bardon line on the morning after the fire and normal weekend services were maintained throughout the system. The 300 employees attached to Paddington were requested to report for duty at Light Street depot. The new amenities block in the adjoining bus depot was used as a temporary traffic depot for the displaced staff.

With swift interaction with their counterparts in Sydney, arrangements were hastily arranged for 30 Brisbane bus drivers to fly to Sydney on the Saturday afternoon. They reported to Randwick bus depot the next morning to drive 15 most recently overhauled ten-year-old and underutilised 31-seat single deck AEC buses to Brisbane via the New England Highway. These were assembled from three depots: Ryde, Nos. 2539 (previously on hire to Hunters Hill Bus Co), 2567 and 2871; Pagewood, 2529, 2545, 2867 and 2879; and Randwick, 2550, 2561, 2562, 2572, 2574, 2575, 2577 and 2873. Five of these were to return to Sydney by mid-1963 (2529, 2545, 2550, 2561 and 2567), whilst the remainder were registered in Queensland, and although offered for sale to the BCC, were also returned to Sydney during September and October 1965.

It could be said that history in a sense was repeating itself with the transfer of these buses from Sydney. The Elwood depot fire in Melbourne in March 1907 resulted in seven obsolete four-wheel trams (four



Dreadnought car 132 is running a service to Bardon whilst the two Sydney AEC buses are on Ashgrove services in Adelaide Street near Wharf Street in October 1962. D.R. Keenan



Dropcentre 222 and Sydney AEC 31-seater bus 2867 are seen in Adelaide Street near Wharf Street on 8 October 1962. D.R. Keenan

C type enclosed saloon and three D type California combination) being removed from their trucks, and the bodies in this instance sold and transferred by rail for fitting to the broad gauge trucks rescued from the fire. The trucks were re-used in Sydney to be fitted under a new batch of J type 50-seat cross bench cars.

The buses were serviced at Randwick and left for Brisbane from Moore Park at 8:40am on the Sunday, with a police escort as far as Parramatta, and a departmental officer as far as Windsor, on the outskirts of Sydney. The buses were hired at £20 a week, and after overnighting in Tamworth, arrived in Brisbane at 10:30pm on Monday. After servicing they commenced service in Brisbane on Wednesday, 3 October 1963. By 7 October, DGT timetables officer and tramway author and enthusiast, David Keenan, had taken leave and was in Brisbane to observe operations there.

By the end of the weekend of the fire, it was determined that a.m. peak tram services could be maintained by deferring all but essential maintenance and by using the 22 Dreadnought cars kept in reserve at Light Street and Ipswich Road depots for show services in August each year. These cars were 121-127, 129-134, 136, 138, 139, 143, 144, 146, 150, 176 and 179. Immediately after the fire Milton Workshops began repainting some of these cars, Nos. 143, 144, 133, 138, 136 and 131. However after 23 October no further cars were so treated.

The evening peak requirements necessitated the use of 296 trams (out of a now maximum fleet of 310 cars), so a number of evening peak services were replaced by one-man buses. A total of 19 journeys operated on the following tram routes between 16:00 and 18:00 on weekdays: Mt Gravatt (2 trips), Salisbury (1), Belmont (1), Balmoral (2), Chermiside (2), Stafford

(1), Bardon (1), Ashgrove (3), Enoggera (3), Clayfield (1), and West End (2). The buses stopped at tram stops, except in the city where they used kerb side stops instead of tramway safety zones.

It was announced on 10 October by the Lord Mayor, Alderman Clem Jones, that the total insurance cover on the depot and trams was £116,825. Dreadnoughts were insured for £50 each, dropcentres at £1,000 each, older 400 FM cars £2,000 each and newer cars £3,500 each. Opposition aldermen claimed that the trams were under-insured. However this was dismissed as due to depreciation and a general revaluation. The fleet had shrunk from a total of 414 in 1959-60, then insured for £941,700, to a total of 375 trams before the fire at an insured value of £584,900 in 1962-63. As the fleet would have been reduced in the meantime by the disposal of older cars of little value, there would seem to be some legitimacy to this claim.

Lessons learned from the fire caused Council to act quickly and tenders were invited on 16 October for the supply and installation of an automatic fire sprinkler system at Light Street depot. On 11 December the contract was awarded to Wormald Bros (Qld) Pty Ltd, for the sum of £16,900. The funds came from the insurance recovered from the Paddington fire.

A report on the future of trams had been commissioned in May 1962, and BCC transport officers were requested to speed up their report by the end of October. A decision had already been made against rebuilding a new tram or bus depot on the Paddington site, and the Lord Mayor stated that funds from the sale of the site would be used to build a new bus depot, as we 'simply need a new bus depot'. This did not mean he was in favour of 'more buses and fewer trams'. It goes without saying that an opportunity was nonetheless in the wind.

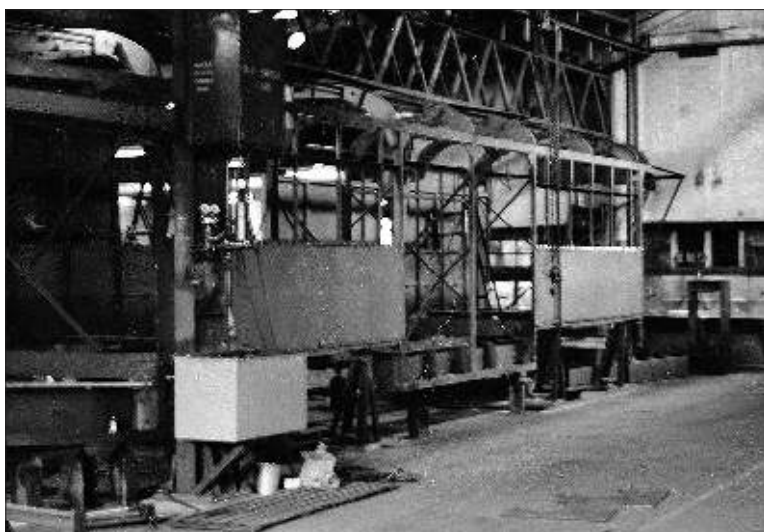


Dreadnoughts 131 and 130 running morning peak services in Queen Street near George Street North on 8 October 1962.

D.R. Keenan

A Phoenix car body under construction at Milton tramway workshops on 16 April 1963.

H.R. Clark



The directories at the tram stops in Queen Street had details of the closed lines to Bulimba, Kalinga, Rainworth and Toowong painted out and the lines to Bardon, Chermside and Grange stickered for bus service.

H.R. Clark



From an operational point of view, using obsolete Dreadnought cars in everyday service, supplemented by the small capacity Sydney buses, was far from satisfactory. Consequently, it was announced that four tram routes, to Bulimba, Kalinga, Rainworth and Toowong (all low density routes), would be replaced by diesel buses from Christmas Day 1962. This was said to be for a trial period of three months. However it was generally conceded that the replacement would be permanent. This was not a particularly popular move, as services which originally were through

routed were replaced by buses operating effectively a shuttle service, with passengers being required to change transport modes. Later alterations to services were made in an effort to recognise these failings. The replacement became permanent from 2 July 1963, when Council voted 14-12 in favour of the decision.

Minor improvements to trams continued in early 1963 with at least eight FM cars from 544 downward being fitted with fluorescent lights, and dropcentre cars 282 to 285 being fitted with air brakes. However new buses were being delivered as well.

At Easter 1963, the Australian Electric Traction Association (AETA) held its ninth annual convention in Brisbane. Easter Saturday morning, 13 April, was free time. This presented an opportunity for some, including me, to visit Paddington and inspect what remained. Remarkably, there was still a great deal of the depot ruins there, along with the remains of FM, dropcentre and Dreadnought cars in various positions amongst the residue of timber piling and corrugated iron.

By today's standards, the whole site would have been fenced off and protected from intruders. Not so then, and one happily (and in hindsight perhaps foolishly) spent time as a fearless 20-year-old climbing in and around the remnants, taking photos. The place seemed safe enough so long as one was careful. There was no evidence of creaking timbers, movement of tram bodies or the like. FM 449, along with twisted and rusted metal from drop-centre cars and a Dreadnought car, were still in evidence amongst the ruins. I came away with a camera bag supplemented by car builders plates. A quantity of rather singed 'motorman' and 'conductor' hat badges, numerous uniform numbers



The AETA 1963 convention tour covered the closed lines on 14 April 1963 and dropcentre 292 was the last tram to use the Red Hill line. Here it is passing Ithaca Fire Station, only a few hundred yards from Paddington depot. The station's appliances were the first to attend the depot fire. Today the fire station is occupied by a photography business. D.R. Keenan

and just three of the later coloured enamel motorman's badges, with small pieces of enamel still adhering to them were also collected. These were found by sifting through the dirt and ash on the ground and, although then somewhat dirty after this experience, it was worth it! I still possess most of these artefacts today.

Two elements of the convention also related to the Paddington fire. First, David Keenan had arranged with Robert Thomson for him to visit BCC transport head office in advance of the ending of the March trial period, and to request on behalf of the AETA the possibility of a tour during the Easter convention over the four lines closed since the previous December. This request was duly approved by a full Council meeting after the completion of the 'trial' period, just two weeks before Easter. Car 546, then the newest in Australia, ran from Light Street depot on Sunday

14 April for a tour including all four of the closed lines, and had the distinction of being the last tram to operate over them. Later the same day dropcentre car 292 was joined for a trip to Bardon past the remains of Paddington depot, where a stop was made to allow passengers a brief glimpse of the remains. Returning from Bardon, 292 turned onto the Red Hill line, disused since the Paddington fire, to become almost certainly the last car to traverse this section of track. On the steep grade the wheels began to slip on the unused rails. Passengers willingly alighted and assisted by helping to push the car, whilst the motorman (actually an inspector) skilfully applied liberal amounts of sand and we were soon under way.

The other element was the news that it was expected the first of eight Phoenix cars, 547, to be built by Milton Workshops using recovered components from



The AETA Convention at Easter 1966 included a tour using Phoenix car 554, the last car built for Brisbane and only two years old at the time. H.R. Clark collection

The Phoenix cars entered service on the following dates:

Car number	Entered service	Car number	Entered service
547	24 Sep 1963	551	23 Dec 1963
548	25 Oct 1963	552	24 Jan 1964
549	13 Nov 1963	553	25 Feb 1964
550	6 Dec 1963	554	20 Mar 1964

All of the above cars were available for service on the last day of Brisbane tramways, 13 April 1969, with 554 being the designated official last car. Car 547 had the distinction of carrying the 'Last Tram Mail'.

On the following day, 14 April 1969, 554 was delivered to the fledgling Brisbane Tramway Museum's temporary site at Ferny Grove after a service life of less than five years.

Car 548 was allocated to the Sydney Tramway Museum (STM) and was despatched to Sydney on 6 June 1969.

No. 550 was originally requested by Wellington Tramway Museum. However this was not destined to be, and the body found its way to a children's home in Frenchs Forest, Sydney, then to the Newcastle Tramway Museum. Upon liquidation, the assets of that museum were purchased by STM, where the body was restored for exchange with Perth Electric Tramway Society for the body of 1903 Kalgoorlie Brill 22.

With a service life of less than six years, the Phoenix cars had the distinction of replacing Sydney's post-war R1 cars as the shortest-lived trams in Australia.

the Paddington fire, was likely to enter service in September 1963. Further information on the Phoenix cars is given in the adjacent box.

Following the closure of the four tram routes, the future of the remainder of the tramway system remained under a cloud of politics and secrecy for some time. Reductions in frequencies on weekends, and the introduction of express peak hour bus services on certain tram routes in 1966 and 1967 rendered 54 hand-braked dropcentre cars redundant and these were scrapped, following the Paddington example, by burning them a little less spontaneously, usually two at a time, in the Milton Workshops yard. An order for 204 diesel buses was increased to 340 in July 1967, and the death knell for trams in Brisbane loomed large.

Finally on 21 June 1968, the Lord Mayor, Alderman Clem Jones came out from the cloud of secrecy and announced the conversion of all tramway and trolley bus routes to diesel bus operation in the 1968-69 financial year. This was despite Brisbane having an extensive investment in tramway infrastructure, including a very high proportion of street track set in concrete and a fleet of relatively modern and efficient trams.

All the remaining Adelaide Street tram routes were gone by 1 December 1968, and the need for dropcentre cars was no more. All trolleybuses had gone by 13 March 1969, followed by the last day of operation on the remainder of the system on 13 April 1969. The Lord Mayor proudly took the controls of the official last car, fittingly Phoenix car 554, for the trip to Milton Workshops, which followed FM 534 along Queen Street. No. 534 continued to Ipswich Road depot and entered the depot just behind Phoenix car 547 shortly before midnight, whilst around the same time at Milton 554 was officially handed over to the

Dropcentre cars 232 and 238 being burnt in the yard at Milton workshops in 1967.

D.R. Keenan



President of the Brisbane Tramway Museum Society, Mr Bill Daniels by the Lord Mayor, before refreshments were partaken.

Most of those present at the dinner on 28 September 2012, had memories of the Paddington depot fire, its aftermath and the demise of the once proud Brisbane tramway system, and discussion at the tables was lively. By sweets and coffee, with a well selected menu and beverages, a consensus appeared to agree that the devastating fire on the site 50 years before created the political will and opportunity for the destruction of the whole Brisbane tramway system. There were of course, also a few conspiracy theories expressed on the evening about the causes of the fire.

There was never a formal inquiry into the causes of the fire, or reasons advanced as to how it started. It seemed a general consensus was the state of the building and the accumulation of almost 50 years of grease and oil embedded in the timbers within that provided fuel for an unstoppable inferno. Mr Clem Jones is quoted as saying shortly before his death that one of his greatest achievements as Lord Mayor was ridding Brisbane of its trams.

Of course over the years there have been many disastrous tram depot fires around the world. However

the loss of 65 trams at Paddington places it on a grand scale compared with other depot fires. A couple of instances of note were a fire in Trondheim, Norway in October 1956 when 26 cars and 16 trailers were destroyed, in Poland in September 1993 when 11 cars were destroyed, the Green Lane depot, Liverpool on 7 November 1947 with 66 cars including two snowploughs lost, and Dalmarnock, Glasgow on 22 March 1961 with the loss of 51 cars. Museum collections have also been destroyed in the last 20 years with the Parramatta Park fire on 7 June 1993 and the National Capital Trolley Museum at Wheaton, Maryland in the USA on 23 September 2003.

Acknowledgments:

D.R. Keenan article, *Electric Traction*, November 1962

BTMS Dreadnought article by Peter Burden and Robert Thomson

Brisbane Tramways, The Last Decade, Howard R Clark and David R Keenan

City to Suburb, Greg Travers

Restaurant Menu, Peter Hyde

Tramway Topics

Electric Traction, various issues, December 1962 to 1963

Robert Thomson, Peter Hyde and Vic Solomons

Ipswich Road depot in 1968. When constructed in 1927 it was the only Brisbane depot with a sprinkler system. Its distinctive tower housed the sprinkler water tank.

H.R. Clark



The Paddington depot site is today occupied by a brightly painted shopping centre, the roof line of which follows that of the former tram depot. Peter Hyde

HERE AND THERE

AUSTRALIAN AND OVERSEAS NEWS

Adelaide tram news

H tram 361 was transferred on 14 December 2012 from storage at the Tramway Museum, St. Kilda, SA to a site near the Patawalonga Lake at Glenelg next to the *Buffalo*, a replica of the sailing ship which brought the first white settlers to Adelaide on 28 December 1836. Coincidentally the Glenelg tram line opened on 14 December 1929, 83 years to the day before 361's move.

The tram was donated by the State Government to the City of Holdfast Bay in 2006 and arrived at St Kilda for undercover storage on 17 May 2007. The Holdfast Bay Council intends to build a shelter over the tram.

Car 361 was originally numbered 363 and exchanged numbers with the original 361 in 1971 to enable coupling of refurbished car 363 (ex 361) with car 364. Car 361 left City Depot as a silver tram to be refurbished at the then State Transport Authority's Regency Park Workshops (now a Cooper's Brewery!) before being delivered to the new Glengowrie tram depot in 1987. It was refurbished as a prototype for the ten '1980s style' renovated H trams (see *Trolley Wire*, August 1987).



H 361 being readied at St Kilda for lifting onto a truck for its journey to Glenelg on 14 December 2012.

Robert Lench



The tram leaves St Kilda after a stay of over five years.

Robert Lench



H 361 in place on a purpose-built concrete pad at Wigley Reserve, Glenelg on 17 December 2012.

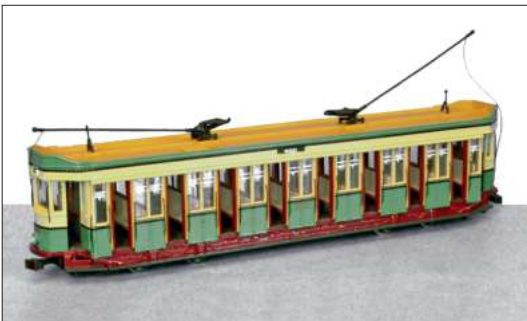
Colin Seymour

The car sits in front of the replica sailing ship, the Buffalo, at the Patawalonga Lake, Glenelg.

Colin Seymour



The newest O gauge Australian tram model produced by St Petersburg Tram Collection is the Sydney P class. Readers interested in obtaining one of these models should contact SPTC's Australian agent, Greg King at transitclassics@netSPACE.net.au.



Removing the monorail

The last day of operation of Sydney's monorail will be Sunday, 30 June 2013. The system will then be decommissioned. The train sets will be removed from the track at the maintenance facility on Darling Drive. Work will then begin to dismantle and remove the infrastructure including:

- 3.6km of steel track
- Convention, Galleries Victoria, City Centre and Paddy's Market stations
- the columns that support the track and station structures
- the maintenance facility on Darling Drive

- the concrete bases of the columns
- redundant electrical and other servicing infrastructure such as wiring and substations
- ticketing, signage and other equipment associated with the stations and monorail network
- transporting all materials removed to appropriate facilities for re-use, recycling and/or disposal.

Once the monorail has been dismantled and removed, Transport for NSW will repair and make safe, as needed, any public or private assets such as building facades and footpaths. Monorail removal is expected to be completed by mid-2014.

Trams to return to the Sydney CBD and Randwick

A major expansion of Sydney's light rail network was announced by the NSW Government in December. Trams are return to George Street, and will run from Central Railway to Randwick and Kingsford, a total route length of about 12 kilometres.

The announcement marked a decision in favour of light rail rather than the alternative, proposed by Infrastructure NSW, of an underground bus tunnel in the city.

The new tracks will run from Circular Quay via George Street to Eddy Avenue, and will then use Devonshire Street, rather than the former route along Cleveland Street, to reach the Moore Park area. From the corner of Devonshire and Bourke Streets in Surry Hills, property acquisition will be needed to create a right of way to South Dowling Street which will be crossed on a bridge.

The service frequency will be every two to three minutes in peak times. George Street from Bathurst Street to Hunter Street will be restricted to pedestrians and trams.

With the exception of Devonshire Street, the new lines largely follow tram routes of the past, and will



Computer-generated images of the Sydney light rail extension through the city. The image at left shows the World Square station in George Street looking south from Liverpool Street.

Transport for NSW



The stop at Chalmers Street next to Central Station.

Transport for NSW



Trams in George Street looking north with Martin Place at right.
Transport for NSW

The proposed route of the Sydney light rail extensions north to Circular Quay and south to Randwick and Kingsford.

Transport for NSW



presumably make use of former tramway rights of way in the Moore Park area. The clock will be turned back, since the line to Randwick was the first extension of the original Elizabeth Street steam tram line and George Street was the first city street to have electric trams.

Subject to planning approvals, work is expected to start in 2014. The government has stated that both new lines will open at the same time.

More information can be found at
<http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/lightrail-program>

Canberra light rail – a step closer

The return of the minority Labor Government following the election held on 20 October 2012 brings light rail a step closer to reality in Canberra.

During the election campaign both Labor and its coalition partner, the ACT Greens, announced light rail initiatives. Labor committed itself to spending \$30 million for a series of light rail planning and design studies. In the post-election agreement between Labor and the Greens, the two parties agreed to 'progress a light rail network for Canberra by:

- Establishing a statutory independent authority to implement the light rail project and associated development in the corridor
- Undertaking the necessary design studies, preparatory work, financing, procurement and tendering arrangements, with a target date for the laying of tracks for the first route commencing in 2016, and
- Creating a Canberra-wide light rail network master plan.

Although light rail for Canberra has been the subject of numerous studies in past years, this is the first real commitment to move towards construction and operation.

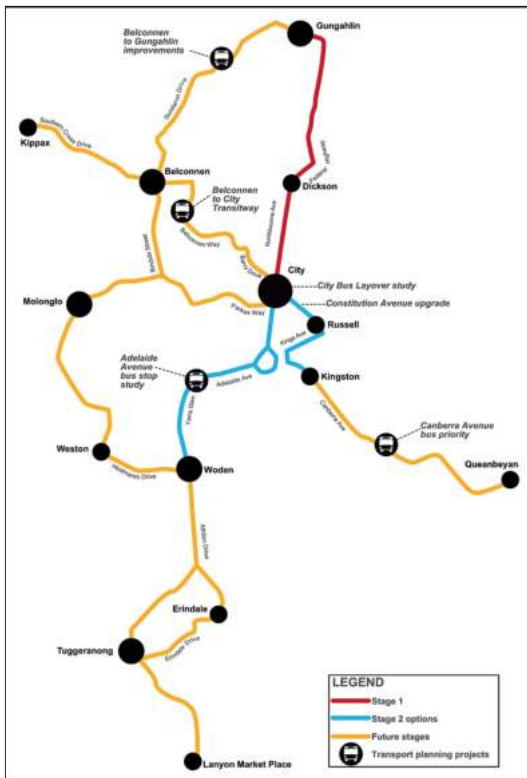


Computer-generated images of light rail in Canberra: on-street running in Gungahlin town centre (left) and at the city terminus in Northbourne Avenue (below). ACT Government



The possible long-term extent of light rail in Canberra: Stage 1 would be Civic to Gungahlin town centre to the north of the city. Stage 2 and later stages would involve extensions to the east and south.

ACT Government



The ACT Government favours a private-public partnership model for building and operating the light rail system, which would be called Capital Metro. The first section to be built would be from Civic, the city's central business district, to Gungahlin in Canberra's north. The aim is to open this line in 2018.

As a first step towards implementation of the plan, in December the ACT Government initiated a 'light rail integration study' which will investigate the capacity and operational requirements of intermodal stations and stops in the light rail corridor. The closing date for bids for the study was 17 January 2013.

The 13km line would occupy part of the broad median strip of Northbourne Avenue between the city and Dickson. Trams would then run along a median strip in Flemington Road to reach Gungahlin town centre. Major stations would exist at Gungahlin town centre and at Dickson with stops 750m to 1.5km apart along Northbourne Avenue and Flemington Road. Each tram would be capable of carrying up to 200 passengers. It is suggested that light rail could improve travel times by up to 30 per cent along the corridor, reducing them from around 16 minutes to about 10 minutes.

The first stage of the light rail network is estimated to cost \$614 million. This amount includes feasibility,

design and construction of the new line, the purchase of trams and the acquisition of land for a depot. Prior to the election the previous minority Labor government held meetings with large international companies experienced in running transit networks. These preliminary talks were exploratory and focused on issues concerning the building and operation of a light rail network.

Canberra is the only Australian capital city that has relied exclusively on buses for public transport despite

tram services being envisaged by the city's early planners. However attitudes in government and in the wider community are now changing as a result of increasing traffic congestion and a growing shortage of car parking space particularly in locations that are central to retailing, business and government. With these problems bound to continue, the ACT Government's plans for light rail are a welcome initiative that could see trams becoming the centrepiece in Canberra's future public transport system.

FERNY GROVE

BRISBANE TRAMWAY MUSEUM SOCIETY

PO Box 94, Ferny Hills, Queensland 4055

www.brisbanetramwaymuseum.org

From Peter Hyde

Fire at Ferny Grove

At approximately 3:30pm on the afternoon of Wednesday 24 October 2012 a fire broke out in the bushland on the southern side of the museum. Members living nearby were notified and arrived to find a very worrying situation. The fire brigade attended and hosed down the main burning area but some smoldering areas still remained. Ken Howard and Peter Hyde decided to remain on site. Sometime after the fire brigade had departed, the fire flared up and moved down the slope towards the museum and

also down in the very steeply sloping bush between the museum and Cedar Creek. Once the fire got into the creek bank area it increased in intensity with flames as high as the Energex 11KV overhead power lines. The fire entered the museum grounds through the south fence on the southern side of Tram Shed 1.

Fearing that electricity supply may be lost, Peter and Ken drove all operable trams out of No. 1 tram shed and parked them well spaced apart in other areas of



The flames rise high behind Depot No. 1 from which all driveable cars have been removed, on 24 October 2012.

All photos by Peter Hyde

the museum away from the flames. They then fought the fire with the museum's own firefighting equipment. They also ensured that the area around the tram sheds was wet down with a heavy application of water to prevent embers from starting another fire near the sheds. At approximately 9:15pm it appeared that the fire was out so they put the trams away, packed up and went home for the night.

Sometime during the night, the fire restarted and entered the museum through the west fence near the body of open advertising car 140. As a result this was damaged by fire and the ex-BCC Transport Department tool trailer was completely destroyed.



The fire on the fence line of the museum

Other flammable (timber) materials stored in the area were also lost. The fire brigade returned to the museum and again extinguished the fire, having entered by cutting the chain on the main vehicle entry gate to the museum.

At about 10:00am the following day (Thursday), the Brisbane City Council's Parks Department fire officers came to the museum and spent a couple of hours down the creek bank completely extinguishing some still smoldering remains and thoroughly wetting down the area with copious amounts of water. It is somewhat ironic that on Monday of that week, 22 October, there had been an on-site meeting at the museum with staff from the Brisbane City Council, and one of the subjects raised was the possibility of a project to remove some of the bushfire fuel load from the creek bank and bushland behind the museum.

Our local State Member, the Hon Dale Shuttleworth visited the museum to inspect the fire damage and to ascertain what he can do to assist with removal of the excessive bushfire fuel load still remaining on the creek bank on the western side of the museum.

The damage to museum assets is limited to items that were stored in the hardstand area near the western fence. There is no damage to any of the operational tram fleet or any of the buildings. We have been very lucky to have suffered only relatively minor damage. The outcome of this bushfire could have been a lot more devastating had it not been for the quick actions of our volunteers.

Community heritage grants scheme

The Museum was successful in obtaining a grant of \$3,000 under this scheme which is administered by the National Library of Australia. The application was for the provision of archival storage units which arrived at Ferny Grove just before Christmas.



The remains of burnt-out advertising car 140.



The ex-BCC perway tool trailer was completely destroyed.

Restoration of FM 400

Work continues on this project which is well on the way to completion. The interior lights are now complete with reflectors and lampshades in place, and the double safety bars on the passenger windows have been installed. Polished stainless steel has been used for these. They were originally chromed steel but were prone to rusting. Destination boxes have been completed and installation of the double vertical canvas 'doors' in the end doorways is under way, with several parts missing from the original mechanisms having to be fabricated.

Concrete track cleaning

One disadvantage of having tracks laid in mass concrete in a sub-tropical climate is the growth of algae on the surface. The black discolouration not only looks unsightly but in places becomes slippery when damp. A water pressure cleaner was used recently to clean the area where visitors cross the track on entering the museum grounds. Having one area newly cleaned made the rest of the track look doubly unattractive. The upshot was that many days of effort later, the entire track *and* all of the paths *and* the picnic table pads were once again looking like newly laid concrete.



Pat Bourke and Ian Brandt complete fitting reflectors and lamp shades inside car 400.

Ten-bench car No. 65 awaits passengers (and crew!) on the newly cleaned concrete track at the lower terminus



LOFTUS

SOUTH PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY CO-OP SOCIETY

PO Box 103, Sutherland, NSW 1499

www.sydneytramwaymuseum.com.au

From SPER News and contributors

Members win volunteer awards

We are very pleased that five museum members were recognised in the annual NSW Volunteer Awards during October and November 2012.

Trolley Wire editor Robert Merchant received the award of Highly Commended Senior Volunteer of the

Year for the Sydney mid-west region. (The awards are based on the recipient's place of residence, rather than the location of their organisation.) Bob received his award from Ms Tania Mihailuk MP, Shadow Minister for Volunteering and Member for Bankstown, in a ceremony at Penrith on 9 November.

Bob's citation read as follows:



Trolley Wire editor Robert Merchant with Tania Mihailuk, Shadow Minister for Volunteering and Member for Bankstown, after receiving his framed volunteer award certificate on 9 November 2012.

Dale Budd

For almost 35 years Robert Merchant has acted as the editor of *Trolley Wire*, a quarterly magazine produced for the benefit of members and friends of the Sydney Tramway Museum, and for kindred museums around Australia and New Zealand. Robert has been membership secretary for eleven years and assistant treasurer for eight. In his role as editor Robert maintains communication with various people around Australia and New Zealand to source current news, historical articles and photographs for publication. He has overseen a great enhancement in the quality of content, due largely to his great historical knowledge and editing skills. Through his work he has assisted in bringing the tramway museums together, to the benefit of the Sydney Tramway Museum and its members.

Previously, Andrew MacDonald, Eva and Ted Gay, and Ian MacCowan received awards as the museum's gardening team at a ceremony at Sutherland on 11 October.

We congratulate Bob, Andy, Eva, Ted and Ian on receiving these awards for their dedicated efforts.

Cable grip car 322

The Wednesday crew, Warren, Terry, Rainer and Bob, have continued fabricating three cable tram grip mechanisms to the original detailed MMTB drawings. Some of the parts such as the harps were laser cut by outside contractors. John Jenkin, Terry Boardman, and US visitor Chris Trunk (a Zig Zag member), went to Zig Zag Railway on 26 November and picked up redundant levers from a railway signal frame.

Three of these have been modified and used in the grip mechanisms. One has been trial fitted to grip car 322. These grips are non-operational as they finish just above rail level so the car can be moved over our tracks when necessary. The below-street components have not been replicated.

Electric car news

Melbourne scrubber 11W (formerly Sydney 139s) and a pair of motored No. 1 Melbourne trucks originally fitted to R 1808 were collected from Preston Workshops by Australian Train Movers on 24 January for outside storage, to help make way for new depot construction works at Preston.

Agreement has been reached with the Powerhouse Museum for O car 805 to remain at Loftus for a further year, to January 2014. The car made a special run to the Royal National Park on 17 October for visitors from the Powerhouse Museum.

Rod Burland has completed the installation of new floor slats in C 37, has mounted a trolley base on the roof and applied two additional coats of navy dressing to the clerestory section of the roof. Rod has been

preparing the external surfaces around the clerestory windows ready for undercoating.

Frank Cuddy has prepared circuit breakers and controllers for C 37, Ballarat 37, freight car 24s, switch groups and reversers for O 957 and OP 1089, and a pair of Westinghouse controllers for P 1729. He is currently refurbishing the PC5 auto acceleration unit for 1729 that once resided in the Ultimo Depot driver training school.



Warren Howlett prepares to install the dummy grip in car 322 with the aid of the overhead crane on 7 November. Mick Duncan



Three O cars at National Park on Members' Day, 8 December. O 805 operated as a single car whilst O breakdown 141s and 1111 ran coupled. Tim Boxsell

Vic Solomons uses a heat gun to remove paint from P 1729. He is being assisted by a CSO worker on 13 January.

Martin Pinches



The old roof canvas of P 1729 has been stripped and replaced by Geoff Spaulding with assistance from Howard Clark, Vic Solomons and a CSO worker. Geoff finished repairing a few damaged roof boards, plugging all the sprinkler head and cable duct holes that date from time at the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club. They also sanded the roof prior to its re-canvassing.

The P car roof is unusual in a number of ways. The roofs of these cars are almost flat with an underlay of strips of canvas being placed along the edges of the gutter rails and in the centre of the car where cable ducts are located. Geoff has cut the canvas into narrow strips, and applied navy dressing underneath, before fixing these strips. Unusually (and presumably for other P cars, except 1497 which has a fibreglass roof), the car then had an underlay of hessian (other Sydney

cars have used a finer muslin), before fitting canvas overall in between coats of dressing. Rod decanted one of the drums of navy dressing purchased from Pichi Richi Railway last year, added extra quantities of linseed oil and mixed it using an electric 'egg beater' contraption, making it easily spreadable. Due to the heat encountered when working on the roof, further canvassing has been deferred until cooler weather.

Ian Hanson painted the roof of Ballarat 37 along with poles and bases ready for re-installation while Mick Duncan has overhauled the brake system. New cables have been purchased to re-wire Ballarat 37 and P 1729.

External re-painting and lining of C 29 by Joe Spinella, Ian Hanson and Peter Butler continues.



Geoff Spaulding tacks down canvas strips along the central cable duct on the roof of P 1729 on 5 January. Martin Pinches



Progress on the relaying of the eastern track north of Pitt Street on 4 November. The new cross box and cover are in place and steel angle iron sleepers are being installed in preparation for concreting. Martin Pinches

Trackwork

Readers may recall that a pair of ex-Melbourne cast blade units that had been prepared for the eastern of the new trailing crossover north of Pitt Street were stolen by scrap thieves. A replacement pair were placed near Depot Junction, thoroughly cleaned and refurbished. A new cross box and cover were made and fitted by Mike Giddey as well as a point bar socket made by Warren Howlett. On 3 November the box was placed in position and welded into its place.

Rails recovered from the curve on the eastern track were placed, joints welded and track laid from the new points back towards the Pitt Street gates. The remaining two lengths of rail on the eastern track north of Pitt Street were welded, the last of the timber sleepers removed and steel angle-iron 'sleepers' were welded in place. CSO workers have been recovering

ballast from this location and distributing it around the first curve on the Sutherland line.

Concurrently, sleeper replacement on the Sutherland line between the TAFE level crossing and Army Depot crossing resumed with 53 sleepers being replaced between 17 October and 8 December. This effort, along with some previous replacements, was sufficient for the line to be reopened for passenger traffic as far as the Army crossing. Removal of sleepers then commenced on Army Hill. It soon became apparent that almost all 208 would need to be replaced. We now have only about 100 new treated sleepers left. It is planned to keep the remaining treated sleepers for further spot replacements along the line and to consider a relay on Army Hill using concrete strip footings under the rails to minimise future maintenance.



CSO workers removing rotted sleepers from the track up Army Hill from the army depot level crossing to the northern terminus on 10 November. Martin Pinches

The newly constructed point cover is lifted into position on 16 January by Terry Thomas and Rainer Nickel.

Martin Pinches



Sydney R1 1979 passes Brisbane dropcentre 295 at the Railway Square waiting shed on Members' Day, 8 December. Liam Brundle



Overhead work

A number of timber span poles on both the Sutherland and National Park lines are severely termite affected. On 17 December a contractor was organised to supply and replace two poles on the National Park line, a pole at Depot Junction and to erect an ornamental steel pole at the eastern end of Cross Street to lift and support the sagging overhead at this location. Further pole replacements will soon be necessary and will be undertaken when funds are available.

Other news

A one tonne bag of cold mix tar was laid to complete the edge in front of the Miranda waiting shed and part of the strip at the Railway Square waiting shed, making a big improvement to the appearance of these areas.

Scott Aston has set up two steel door frames on the second floor, south end of the YMCA building and bricked up the surrounding walls to enclose the fire stairs and a future toilet.

Recycled hardwood planks have been purchased to renew the point covers on the scissors crossover and Cross Street turnout. This retains the authentic Sydney style in our street area, albeit at greater expense than replacing the covers with steel as used in the yard area. The first of the new timber covers was installed on the north-west portion of the scissors crossover on 16 January.

John Dunn

Museum members, and many throughout the railway fraternity, were saddened to hear of the death of John Dunn on 30 December 2012 after a long battle with motor neurone disease.

John was formerly the senior concept engineer in rolling stock design at Comeng, and more recently an independent consultant. He is the author of the history of the company – *Comeng – A History of Commonwealth Engineering* – the first volume of which was launched by Tim Fischer at Loftus in September 2006, with two Comeng-built trams, and a Waddington-bodied bus, in attendance.

As a consultant John had software enabling him to quickly check clearance issues for any design of tramcar. In 2001 he applied this to confirm that a Sydney R car would not have clearance problems on the Melbourne tramway network – see the May 2001 issue of *Trolley Wire*. John later provided this service for other museum groups in similar situations.

John was able to complete the history of Comeng before he died. Three volumes have been published; the fourth will appear shortly with the fifth and final volume to follow.

BENDIGO

BENDIGO TRAMWAYS

1 Tramways Avenue, Bendigo, Victoria 3550

www.bendigotramways.com

From Len Millar

We turn forty

Sunday, 9 December was our day of celebration. We'd turned 40! The Bendigo Trust has been operating trams in Bendigo streets for longer than the Sandhurst & Eaglehawk Electric Tramway Co. Ltd., or the Electricity Supply Company of Victoria and even the State Electricity Commission. Planning for our special event took a lot of time and effort, roster juggling, advance publicity, preparatory tram servicing, change float and ticket kitting and so on.

A bright sunny Bendigo day saw 11 drivers and 8 conductors arrive and sign on as rostered. They were joined by a team of depot guides, shop attendants and other helpers. Depot Starter Anita Bagley and Driver Examiner Michael MacGowan had organised for a 15-minute service, which required five trams. Timing was tight, given that our track has limited crossing facilities, and our drivers were on their toes to keep to the timetable.

Trams passed each other at the Bridge Street and Lake View loops, and at the end of the double track in Pall Mall. As one car arrived at the Central Deborah Mine terminus, another car departed from the other track. The crews enjoyed the 15-minute lay-up at the Mine terminus.

No fares were charged, and the Talking Tram Tour commentary was operated as usual. Single truck cars 19, 21 and 84, and maximum traction cars 25 and 44 were used on the day. We were pleased that 19 and 25, two of the three cars that inaugurated the Talking Tram Tour on 9 December 1972, were used in service. Birney 28, the third car of our first fleet, is currently out of service, although the guided tour of the depot now features a walk under and through the car. No. 28 is currently housed in a building that will be 110 years old this year.

Mid-way through the afternoon, No.19 had a minor altercation with a car in Pall Mall, and some hasty reshuffling of the other service cars had to be made. SW6 880 replaced 19 for the rest of the afternoon.

There were over 1,600 journeys on the day, our best number ever. We also enjoyed television coverage on that night's ABC television news throughout Victoria and again on Monday night with the regional WIN-TV news bulletin. The *Bendigo Advertiser* gave us some column inches, as well as a photo of the minor accident involving No. 19. Our fortieth anniversary was also covered by *The Bendigo Weekly*, Vision Vic Radio and on radio stations FreshFM and KLFM.



Bendigo 21 rolls along McCrae Street past the open gates of St Killen's on 9 December 2012.

Mal Rowe



Right: Acting depot Master Michael Lowther prepares to break a bottle of Shiraz over the bumper of No. 8 to mark the completion of its restoration on 9 December 2012. Above: A TV cameraman is ready to capture the action.

Right: Tynille Thurlow, above: Steven Altham



Celebrating the return of EScO No. 8

At 2:00pm on 9 December, Electricity Supply Company No. 8, now almost 110 years of age and resplendent in its new black, red and white livery, was driven slowly out of No. 3 Road of the depot by Michael Lowther, to the acclamation of those gathered around. No. 8 was the Trust's first acquisition, although its restoration was long delayed. In the weeks before the big day, our workers put in a special effort to complete the job in time. Just two days before the

launch, the car's step-boards were attached and the local signwriters were fixing the adhesive-backed vinyl signs and scrolls. The generous and long-term financial help of the Frances and Harold Abbott Foundation, Lloyd Rogers and other benefactors in getting No. 8 back into operation was gratefully acknowledged during the ceremony.

We stood back and admired the gleaming paint and the shiny varnished seats. A few adjustments and trial runs will be needed before it can be accredited to carry passengers, but we were delighted that No. 8 was



Bendigo Tramways No. 8 poses for its photo on the depot approach road on 9 December.
Tynille Thurlow



This plaque was displayed on the side of No. 8 and will be affixed to an internal bulkhead once the tram is ready for accreditation.

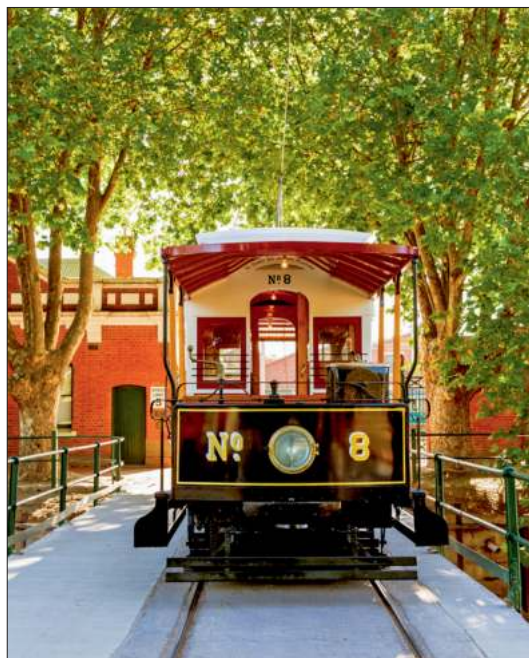
Steven Altham

finished in time, and that it has had its moment in the sun. At the end of the day, a few privileged and smiling crew members had a short ride out to the McCrae Street triangle. The low apron height and total lack of glass in front of the driver took a bit of getting used to, but not for long.

Other news

In mid-November, former Hawthorn Tramways Trust No. 32 (later MMTB No. 138, then SECV No. 24), returned to Bendigo at short notice. The reason for the move was that Preston Workshops in Melbourne was being cleared of surplus trams in readiness for its redevelopment as a new depot and maintenance facility.

The Bendigo Trust had restored SECV No. 24 to its 1940s MMTB livery (as No. 138) and loaned the car in 1991 to the Melbourne Heritage Fleet in exchange for SW5 808. Five years later it returned to Bendigo and



No. 8 on the depot approach road over the stormwater channel.

Tynille Thurlow



The pipe band leads No. 8 onto Tramways Avenue for a short run to the McCrae Street triangle.

Mal Rowe

was repainted in the Hawthorn Tramways Trust livery with its original number, 32. It then returned to storage in Melbourne.

At about the same time, single truck car 21 visited Melbourne for re-profiling of its wheels at Preston Workshops. Its return to traffic a few days later was accompanied by instructions to our drivers to exercise care with braking, to allow the brake shoes to bed in. For several days it had the disconcerting knock of skidding just as it came to a stop.

Santa tram

Birney 15 did the honours this year, with twice daily trips to the Gold Mine from 15 to 24 December. Attractively decorated, the little red car would pick up a group of very excited young fry and their parents at the Mine terminus, with the aim of finding Santa Claus. Tension and excitement rose as No. 15 and its passengers approached the depot! Our drivers were issued with ear plugs, on Occupational Health and Safety grounds, of course!

From 15 to 24 December the honour of being Santa Tram fell on Birney 15. It was suitably decorated and ran two trips daily to and from the Gold Mine.

Tynille Thurlow



BALLARAT

BALLARAT TRAMWAY MUSEUM

PO Box 632, Ballarat, Victoria 3353

www.btm.org.au

From Dave Macartney and Peter Winspur

The Museum's Annual General Meeting was held on 28 October 2012. Board members Stephen Butler and Andrew Mitchell decided to stand down. As no nominations were received to replace Stephen and Andrew, the Board will consist of nine members this year.

Stephen first joined the board in 1981 when he was still a teenager. He served as secretary in 1987. He returned to the board as Ballarat Resident Vice President in 1991 and succeeded Richard Gilbert as President in 2004. In 2010 he stepped down to again become an ordinary board member. After 21 continuous

years, Stephen's work and personal life have left him little time to contribute to the management of the Museum.

During the last three months the amount of work achieved by our tiny team led by Alastair Reither has been little short of heroic. Most of the effort was concentrated hundreds of kilometres away at Bowser, just north of Wangaratta. Public Transport Victoria through the efforts of Hughie Gaynor had offered the Museum four kilometres of railway rail through a program where heritage rail operators are offered surplus materials. The rail was piled alongside the

main Albury railway line and was in 100-metre lengths. Before it could be transported it needed to be cut into 13 metre lengths to fit on a semi-trailer. The job proved to be the biggest ever undertaken by the Museum and was undertaken over four days from 19 November.

Once loaded, five semi-trailers left for Ballarat in convoy and three and a half hours later Paul Mong, assisted by Alan Snowball and Geoff Gardner, was confronted with the task of unloading the rails by forklift and stacking them neatly. Forklifts with six and half metres of rail sticking out either side are rather hard to drive on uneven ground and keep balanced. It was dark before the job was completed.

The exercise was also one of the most expensive ever undertaken. Not only was there equipment and truck hire, but our workforce is not large enough to enable us to do such tasks without assistance. This must come at a price. The upside was that the team of paid workers led by John Shaw of Puffing Billy worked extremely well alongside our volunteers.

The Museum now has sufficient rail to replace all the rails not renewed by the SEC in the 1930s and to provide for a considerable extension when the time comes. The initial job will be to replace a section of the access track.

Tram No. 13 was jacked up slightly on 31 October to enable the leaf springs on the ends of the truck to be removed and replaced with new ones recently obtained. A little adjustment was required to suit the installation and the body was reunited with the truck on

18 December. This enabled work on the preparation for painting to resume.

In addition to the rail retrieval, on 15 November our workers found time to concrete an extensive section of the area around the rear of 5 Road in the maintenance area. This is for the large new mobile crane which has been obtained with grant money obtained through the City of Ballarat Community Impact Grant scheme.

The annual 'Springfest' market was held on 4 November in perfect weather. The number of people visiting the stalls, which are to be found all the way around the lake, was the greatest for many years. The tramway did brisk business and carried 649 passengers, more than twice the 2011 figure. This is now the only major day in our calendar when our conductors feel they are 'real' conductors as they sell a variety of tickets as people board and alight along the line.

In the middle of this, another 'Tram Pull' was held at Gardens Loop. Run by Rotary, this year's was the biggest and best yet. This year ten teams from local Ballarat businesses participated in heats to see who could be the first to pull their tram over the finish line. Trams 26 and 28 were utilised.

Tram No. 18 was nominated as the Christmas tram this year, and received an excellent set of decorations. Following the re-profiling of its wheels, this tram can once again be used in normal services.

Now that there is water in Lake Wendouree the *Begonia Princess* is sailing again and we are finally able to enter into joint arrangements for groups



Richard Gilbert holds the rail steady whilst Alastair Reither cuts another 13-metre length on 22 November. This was done for almost four kilometres of rail.

Alastair Reither collection

The 'Tram Pull' on 4 November.
Andrew Mitchell



visiting Ballarat. The second of these occurred on 8 December when the Rail Tourist Association travelled by train to Wendouree. They then braved the waves (it was very windy that day) on the lake. Lunch was served on board. A slight technical hitch saw the boat disabled not long before disembarkation. The wind then came in handy as it placed it in an ideal location to offload the party by plank! The group were then met by tram No. 38 at Carlton Street to enjoy a couple of trips in it and No. 26 before afternoon tea and an inspection of the museum.

Boxing Day 2012 was the 125th anniversary of the commencement of tramway services in Ballarat. Significantly, Horse Tram No. 1 was available. It had been one of the trams to inaugurate the tram services in 1887. To celebrate the event it operated between the Loop and St Aidan's Drive. Tram No. 26 capably

handled the electric service on to Carlton Street. Patronage was steady, with 272 people availing themselves of the historic occasion. Good television and press coverage was obtained before and after the event.

The Cycling Australia's Road National Championships greatly restricted the Museum's operations on Tuesday and Wednesday, 8 and 9 January with a total closure of Wendouree Parade. Setting up for the event took the whole of Tuesday. Trams were unable to operate on either day during what is often one of our busiest times. Road closures also prevented visitors from accessing the Gardens and the Museum. A tour group of intellectually disabled people visited from Sydney on the Tuesday and, unfortunately, the Museum could only offer rides on the access track.



125th Anniversary: Neville Hesketh handles ticketing whilst Neil Lardner sees to passengers on the top deck on 26 December. Austin Brehaut

ST KILDA

AUSTRALIAN ELECTRIC TRANSPORT MUSEUM (SA) INC

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www.trammuseumadelaide.com.au

From Colin Seymour and Kym Smith

New shed

Concreting of sills and the set up of the workshop continues. Road 4 has been excavated ready for concreting the track, followed by concreting the walkway between the shed wall and the rails alongside Road 4. A new isolating switchboard has been installed coupled with lightning protection to isolate the overhead from the substation.

We were recently advised that we have been successful in obtaining a grant of \$7,800 from the security and fire protection of the New Shed from the History Trust of SA. Their staff were very pleased with how the Trolley Bus Pavilion finished up and the acquittal report we provided, and this no doubt left us in good stead for this year's funding round.

Even with the grant, we still need substantial funding to complete the concreting of Roads 5 and 6 including the construction of a pit, and for the construction and installation of trolley troughing, before the shed project can be said to have been completed.

Pole replacements

During November four poles were erected; three to replace existing poles. On the fan, a pole was erected



Road 4 in the new shed and the walkway to the left being prepared for concreting on 1 December 2012.

Kym Smith



Mark Jordan, Michael Crabb, Jack Pennack, Ian Seymour and Kevin Collins concreting the front half of Road 4 on 21 December 2012.

Peter Vawser.

to replace the light pole outside the Entrance Gallery, and a new pole erected to the north of Road 2 to support the overhead over the former workshop track to the Bodyshop. Additional work will see at least one other span installed between the Lathe Shed and the New Shed to support the wire.

A storm in late October resulted in two poles collapsing along the lake. These were replaced with full depth poles concreted in, rather than welding to the stub of the old poles.

H1 381

Bruce Lock and Charlie Rodgers have continued their work on 381, with the interior almost completed.

Right: A new isolating switchboard has been installed next to the Road 6 door of the new shed. Kym Smith

The refurbished interior of H1 381 on 1 December 2012. The work has been carried out on the tram on Road 9 in the Northern Depot because of the unavailability of the normal restoration facilities as a result of the establishment of the new shed.

Kym Smith



St Kilda Adventure Playground 30th anniversary of opening

Salisbury Council celebrated the 30th anniversary of St Kilda Adventure Playground opening on Sunday 11 November 2012 with a range of stalls and activities in the playground picnic area.

The Museum was asked to provide free tram rides for the occasion which we were happy to agree to, given the financial assistance provided to the Museum on an annual basis.

The celebration was advertised to commence at 11:00am and finish at 3:00pm.

The day formally commenced with a Remembrance Day ceremony at 11:00am. To cater for the expected crowds, a 15 minute service commenced just after 11:00am with trams passing at Mangrove Loop. No trams were run during the Remembrance ceremony. One tram had previously been despatched to return to the museum before 11:00am.

To keep the busy operations simple, only three larger trams were used on the day – F1 282, H 360 and R1 1971.

Celebrating the 30th anniversary of the St Kilda Adventure Playground on 11 November 2012: stalls in the picnic area are visible in the distance beyond drop-centre tram 282.

John Radcliffe



Some of the many passengers boarding and alighting from car 282 on 11 November.

John Radcliffe

Rebecca Gray photographs the wedding party photo shoot models on 1 December 2012. Kym Smith

The crowds increased during the early afternoon, reaching a peak from 2:00pm when a 12 minute frequency was introduced.

Crowds began to drop off after the advertised closure of stalls and activities after 3:00pm, and the service was adjusted accordingly.

A wedding?

No, not quite, just a photo shoot. An aspiring photographer, Rebecca Gray, approached the Museum to use the trams as a backdrop to a wedding models photo shoot as part of building her portfolio.

As a win-win for both the Museum and Rebecca, it was agreed that Rebecca will do some photography for the Museum for use in its promotions as a contra deal for the photo shoot.



LAUNCESTON

LAUNCESTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM SOCIETY
PO Box 889, Launceston, Tasmania 7250 www.ltms.org.au

From Robert Quinn

Launceston's LMT No. 1 made a brief return to Civic Square in the city on 13 December 2012. It marked 60 years to the day that No. 1 was the last tram to run in Launceston.

The display on the day introduced a proposal to run a tourist tram from the Launceston Tramway Museum into the city.



Motorman Terry Bramich with Conductor Mike Lesley in uniform. Mike began driving trolleybuses for the LMT in 1964.

Left: A group of happy passengers on board for the run to nowhere. All photos by Bob Quinn



LMT No. 1 returned to Launceston from Bendigo via the Spirit of Tasmania on 8 February 2008. In exchange, LMT No. 14 made the return journey the same evening. On Thursday afternoon 18 August 2011, No. 1 made a visit to the Brisbane Street Mall to celebrate her 100 years. No. 1 was the first tram away on 16 August 1911 to open Launceston's new tramway, and made the last run on 13 December 1952 to close the system.



Car No. 1 in Civic Square on a damp and dreary 13 December, beside the Town Hall with the Post Office and Clock Tower in the background.

WHITEMAN PARK

PERTH ELECTRIC TRAMWAY SOCIETY (INC)

PO Box 257, Mount Lawley, Western Australia 6929

www.pets.org.au

From Michael Stukely

Traffic operations and service cars

Patronage in spring was generally good, boosted as usual by the October school holidays. Melbourne SW2 426 was the main service car in October and November, with Fremantle 29 running regularly for Carbn tours and making occasional appearances on other days.

Resources at this time were focused on returning W7 1017 to service in time for the summer school holiday period with its seven days per week operations. This car had been withdrawn from regular service in 2009 due to severe roof leaks, which required major repairs to be undertaken. Initially, the roof had been stripped and all rotted timber removed by Tony and Allan Kelly. It was subsequently re-timbered and re-canvassed by John Davies and Graham Bedells. The trolley-bases had to be re-secured due to badly rusted bolts, which necessitated the removal of the saloon ceilings. Any necessary re-wiring was done at this stage by Noel Blackmore and the electrical team. The ceilings were refitted and repainted by Graham, with assistance as required. Frank Edwards and Brian

Hossack removed the seat squabs, which together with the seat backs were thoroughly cleaned by Graham and re-installed. Eight damaged squabs were replaced with spares obtained from car 1018 which had been stripped for parts for us in Bendigo. In November, the floors in both saloons and the drop-centre were fully cleaned and repainted by John Davies and Graham Bedells. Touch-up painting of the exterior of both cab ends was done by John. No. 1017 resumed regular service early in December as the main service car.

Tram restoration

Minor under-floor and electrical items remain to be tidied up before the commissioning process for WAGT E class 66 can be completed. This work was postponed in the later months of 2012 due to the urgent need to return W7 1017 to service. It is anticipated that early in 2013 we will be able to submit the necessary paperwork to obtain approval from the Rail Safety Regulator for No. 66 to be available for passenger traffic.

W7 1017 passes the playgrounds as it returns to the Village from Mussel Pool on 13 January. Mild, overcast conditions were a welcome relief from the recent heat, and it was a busy day.

Michael Stukely



General works

Three overhead pull-offs were transferred to one of the two new steel traction poles on the curve near the Bennett Brook South road crossing by Duncan McVicar and John Azzaro, enabling the rotten timber pole to be removed.

The bracket arm obtained from Kalgoorlie has been sand-blasted ready for installation on the new overhead for the track approaching the pit road in the engineering shed. Planning for this is well advanced, with a section insulator available, and the isolation switch will be located in the engineering shed near the front doors. An overhead safety wire for the safety of members working on tram roofs has been installed over the pit road. New narrower-profile spacer blocks needed for check rail installation on the main line were fabricated after the manufacture of a new pattern, and have been received.

The motor vehicles team led by Pat Ward have fitted new tyres to the ex-WAGT Chevrolet pole truck that was donated to the Society in 2011.



W2 368, protected by tarpaulins, is now located on the completed western extension of the pit road alongside the W P Pennenburg Workshop, as seen here on 3 October. This was formerly the truck storage road.

Lindsay Richardson



W7 1017 passes the rotunda in the Village as it approaches the tram stop after a trip to Mussel Pool and Village Junction Station on 13 January. Michael Stukely



W7 1017 waiting at the Village tram stop on 13 January. This car rejoined the roster in December after extensive repairs to its roof.

Michael Stukely

Duncan McVicar (right) and Brian Hossack fitting the extension of the overhead trolleying above the pit road in the engineering shed on 3 October. Lindsay Richardson



Duncan McVicar and Brian Hossack in the cherry-picker (mounted on the Albion truck which is on long-term loan from Duncan) repairing door hinges on the pit road entry on 10 October.

Lindsay Richardson



Conductor Ric Edwards assists passengers alighting from W7 1017 in the Village on 13 January.

Michael Stukely



HADDON

MELBOURNE TRAMCAR PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION
 324 Sago Hill Road, Haddon, Victoria 3351 www.mtpa.com.au

From Kym Smith and Anthony Smith

Looking back: Victorian Railways tramcar bodies

The last quarter of 2012 was a relatively quiet time at Haddon, with the majority of work undertaken being general site maintenance activities. As such, for this issue of *Trolley Wire* we thought we would bring you some more images relating to the history of the then Haddon Tramway Workshops (HTW) and subsequently the Melbourne Tramway Preservation Association.

When the body of VR 41 was acquired in 1977 an immediate search for the remaining bodies was undertaken with the view to researching the trams to determine restoration details, and obtaining any parts

or fittings that could be used in the eventual restoration of VR 41. The images following are from colour slides taken in the period 1977 to 1978. Trams 28, 31, 33, 36, 37, 39, 40 and 48 were inspected, with parts being obtained from the following:

- VR 28 – body fittings such as seats, interior trim timbers, cabin doors and hand rails
- VR 37 – one complete driver's bulkhead along many body fittings such as seat frames, saloon windows and louvers, doors, enamel signs, light fittings and shades along with pillar facing trim timbers and many other small fittings, and
- VR 39 – the brake rigging and brackets along with the 3 resistance boxes. The fledgling HTW approached the owner about acquiring this body for preservation and would have dismantled VR 41 instead but the family did not want to part with it under any circumstances.

Tram 39 was one of four bodies acquired by machinery dealer, Upton Engineering of Corowa. It was from Upton's that the HTW acquired three broad gauge Brill 77E trucks along with three destination boxes and a number of enamel signs, kerosene windshield lights and a pair of the unique brake valve mounted sanding valves. Upton Engineering acquired trams 29, 33, 37 and 39 complete from the VR on closure of the Elwood to St Kilda section in 1959.



The body of VR 37 which was located near Wangaratta. The remains were destroyed by the property owner to retrieve the chassis steel.

All photos by Anthony Smith

The body of class leader VR 28 which was situated at Belgrave Heights. It was destroyed in the Ash Wednesday fires of February 1983.





VR 40 and VR 48 when in use as cabins at the Campbellfield Caravan Park. Both of these bodies were acquired by the Canberra Tradesmen's Union Club, eventually being passed to the Glenreagh Mountain Railway and Sydney Tramway Museum. VR 40 went to Glenreagh whilst 48 is still at the Bendigo gas works.



External view of the cut off saloon section of VR 33 which was located at Eldorado, near Wangaratta.



Interior view of the saloon section of VR 33 at Eldorado. It is believed to have been destroyed by fire many years ago.

The well kept body of VR 39 located on a farm property at Savernake, near Oaklands, NSW. This body was remarkably complete and in very good condition due to the fitted tin roof and the dry nature of the area. The present status of this body is unknown.



VR 31 at the Lord Mayor's Camp at Portsea.

VR 36 at San Merino, Phillip Island. The body was eventually relocated to Talbot but was destroyed by fire in 1985.





Ballarat Tramway Museum cars 33 and 38 cross at Gardens Loop on 29 October after the Museum's annual general meeting was held.

Bruce Dixon



Magnificently restored Bendigo Tramways No. 8 made a run along Tramways Avenue to the McCrae Street junction after its launch on 9 December 2012.

Mal Rowe