

SPER NEWS

Published by South Pacific Electric Railway

PO Box 103 Sutherland 2232

Editor David Cooke

50th Anniversary

The deadline of 18 February has been set for members who wish to contribute ideas as to how we can celebrate this important milestone of the Museum. All suggestions must be in writing and should be submitted to John Matts. This deadline is necessary to allow planning to take place.

Archives

Tony Cody is now cataloguing the archives. Members who have Museum archival material, or who wish to donate material, are requested to contact Tony on a Saturday at the Museum. All new and catalogued material is stored in secure premises.

Works

On Saturday 18 December a rather large concrete pour was carried out on 8 road. The centre section between the tracks has been fitted with a cable slot. From recent observations of other associated museums, ours is the first to have such a facility. The three New Zealand museums with preserved cable cars, viz. Ferrymead, Wellington and the Dunedin Old Time Settlers Museum merely have the trams on lengths of ordinary running rail. Thus the concept of what a cable tram is, is lost.

Concrete was also laid inside at the rear roller shutter and once this was set parts of the former Powerhouse Museum waiting shed were erected. This shed had been previously donated to us. The rear entrance to the shed will eventually form the main visitors entrance to the Museum for bus parties etc.

At the same time a concrete roof was provided on the fire sprinkler room at the rear of 1 road.

For the first time concrete was pumped into position, saving much back breaking work. A helicopter was used to provide a smooth finish. Despite all these modern conveniences, it still took the best part of the day to accomplish this work.

Two more major pours are planned for the area. The section between 7 & 8 roads will be carried out next along with the section between 8 road and the wall. This will be followed by the remaining sections at the back, including the part surrounding the wheel lathe.

A new solid fence has been erected at the end of 1 road. This fence is necessary to provide a free path for fire safety reasons across the back of the shed. It will lead to a new fire escape exit in the side wall of the shed.

All the above works have necessitated the movement of cars within the main building. These moves are temporary only until all works are complete. Any crowding on roads 1, 2 and 3 is unavoidable at this stage, but when the work is complete more room will become available in both the running shed and the display area.

Saturday 22 January saw Canini's excavate the dirt in Cross Street and the placing of roadbase in the excavated area. This work is preparatory to the sealing of Cross Street and removes yet another dirt road which became rather boggy during wet weather.

Tidying up of the site continues. The portable building at the rear of the workshop has been sold and removed. The remains of one of the Port Kembla W2 cars, which

was demolished at Loftus, has been removed.

Members are reminded **NOT** to bring old material to site without first checking to see if it will be useful. It only costs us valuable money to dispose of it, money that could be better spent in restoring trams.

New Members and Friends

We welcome the following new members and friends to the Museum. Robert Boyd, Jaqueline Dixon, Michael Irrgang, Nathan Lyons, Colin Pascoe, Gail Pascoe and Zoie Pascoe. We trust you will join us in our activities.

W2 411

The workshop team burned the midnight oil to have 411 in reasonable shape for delivery to Glebe Island container terminal on 8 December. Here it was loaded onto the "Wellington Express" for Christchurch on 10 December.

The trip was not without its mishaps. Firstly a low slung cable TV wire removed one of the roof mounted air conditioning units near the Gympie Trade Union Club. The ship, which had to call in at Melbourne on the way, proceeded to Christchurch via the Southern Ocean, passing south of New Zealand. Severe storms were encountered causing the tarpaulins covering the tram to damage the paintwork. This necessitated a repaint on its arrival in Christchurch.

The team at Christchurch worked around the clock throughout the Christmas-New Year period to ensure the tram was ready for its first commercial outing on 7 January 2000. The tram was towed around the tramway resulting in some modifications being necessary. The water tank was too close to the ground as was the inverter. These items were quickly rectified. A hot box was also remedied. A perennial problem in all toilets used by the public, female sanitary towels, soon raised its head, causing a blockage. This was also rectified.

As it was not possible to test the tram prior to its departure, some minor electrical problems also became apparent, but were quickly resolved.

The first commercial service was a breakfast charter on 7 January, with a full dinner service that evening. All reports since are that the car is enjoying good patronage for breakfast bookings, casual lunch trips and busy dinner sittings. A full report on the reconstruction of this tram will appear in the May Trolley Wire.

A special thanks to all who participated in this project, but especially to Dad's Army who were on hand all the time to carry out the intricate and time consuming work. Without their input this project could not have been carried out.

Now the tram is safely in New Zealand it will soon be earning the Society revenue. Some members have queried why our Museum is involved in doing "outside" projects such as this. The simple answer is it provides us with an additional and steady stream of income supplementing the gate takings. Our expertise in restoring such vehicles is becoming well known, as is the quality and standard of our workmanship. This in turn could lead to other projects which will also enable further additional income to be earned. This will then be ploughed back into

the Museum. So while there maybe some short term delays in our own favourite projects, the benefits, both monetary and otherwise are enormous and will in the longer term assist the Museum achieve its aims.

Special Charters

While on the topic of revenue sources, it is probably not all that well known that our weekday charters contribute a fair amount of funds to the Museum. This is due to the untiring efforts of Ron Ham. Forward charters have been booked to May this year and that is a very encouraging sign.

Scheduled visits for January and February this year include the Powerhouse Museum, Chester Hill Seniors, Campsie-Kingsgrove Probus, one private function, Lane Cove Community Aid, Ramsgate Seniors and Auburn Probus.

In December 1999 the Museum played host to the Matts family, The Australian Model Railway Association, an L.J. Hooker franchise and 3801 Ltd. All these groups were celebrating their Christmas functions.

Manly Starters Shed

Apart from painting work on this shed is now complete. The rebuilding was commenced by one CSO worker, but he had no enthusiasm for the task. It was taken over by Dad's Army and now looks resplendent. A special thanks is due to Gordon Fogarty of Fogartys Glass who donated the glazing for the windows.

Car News

With the dispatch of W2 411 to New Zealand, R car 1740, has been moved into the workshop for minor repairs to the gutter area. In the meantime L/P 154 has been moved back over the pit to allow the rewiring and mechanical work to be carried out. Bodywork will also be done and the car repainted for the 50th anniversary celebrations.

During February 2000 the cars owned by the Waverley Council will be moved, two going to storage at Cessnock and the third, an R car, will come to Loftus.

Brief History of Montevideo Tramways, Uruguay

The first horse tramline in the city was inaugurated on May 25, 1868 but regular services did not begin until June first. Electric trams commenced operating on November 19, 1906 by S.C. de M. (Sociedad Comercial de Montevideo - Montevideo United Tramways) and on June 2, 1907 by the German company "La Transatlántica". The last horse line, which was state owned from 1915 (Tranvía del Norte, Ferrocarriles y Tranvías del Estado after 1920), ceased running on December 31, 1925.

It was intended to form a state electric tram network but "La Transatlántica" was sold to S.C. de M. in 1928, and both merged into one organisation in 1933. On December 28, 1947 the S.C. de M. was sold to the state, which formed the Municipal Transport Board (Administración Municipal de Transportes Colectivos de Montevideo, known as AM de T). The AM de T was charged with the responsibility of withdrawing all tram services and replacing them with trolleybuses, buses and minibuses. Abandonments commenced on April 1, 1948 when the first city centre lines closed. The last seven surviving urban tramlines ran on November 17, 1956. The last line, interurban to La Barra de Santa Lucia, 16km of which was closed in 1956, ceased at 1:00am on April 14, 1957. The A.M.de T. ceased in February 1, 1976 and

with it the majority of the trolleybuses lines. A tourist tram service ran between October 15, 1967 and April 28, 1974 on eight blocks of Isla de Flores Street.

Six electric cars, 159 (last tram), 200, 370, 595, 599, 881 and a horse car 72, (mistakenly numbered 94) were stored outdoors at the Fernando Garcia Park in 1959. Unfortunately these cars were badly damaged by vandalism and the weather. Horse car 72 and electric 595 were saved, the former because it was moved from the park and exhibited at another place, the latter for running on the heritage line. Between 1982 and 1990 both were kept at the old Central tram depot, which was and still is a municipal garage. On 1980 the five Fernando Garcia park cars remaining were transported to the old Goes tram depot and broken up, (by the same mayor who closed the tourist line), on March 24, 1982.

Another car, number 46, built by Dick Kerr in 1906 for S.C. de M., (and supposedly the first electric car running in the city), was preserved by the company and used from 1932 as instruction car at Agraciada Depot. After tramway closures it was moved from depot to depot until it was given to Uruguayan Railfan Association (A.U.A.R.) in 1982 in a very damaged condition. As A.U.A.R. hadn't a place to keep it, it was stored in several places where it was further damaged. In October 1984 it joined 72 and 595 at the Central depot. On May 8, 1990 the electric cars were transported to the future site of the A.U.A.R. Transport Museum.

Car 72 was donated by the municipality on November 1990 and was adapted to run with rubber tyres (but keeping its steel wheels). It ran on a tourist service between Plaza Independencia and the Town Hall on weekends between January 13 and March 23, 1991 but was withdrawn because of a lack of sponsors. It now runs on special occasions (Children's Day, historical celebrations, etc) and it is displayed by A.U.A.R. at other venues.

Car 595 is being restored by Uruguayan Railfan Association and a former "La Transatlántica" trailer (382) is exhibited in front of the Montevideo Town Hall.

New Tram Proposals

In 1996 a network comprising seven main routes was submitted to the Montevideo mayor, Mariano Arana, by the commission created on May 1995 to study the city public transport improvements. On these base routes reserved bus lanes will be created which later will be converted to tram operation. The network will be completed by district routes to complement the main lines.

Also included in the report was the addition of two suburban lines. The existing railway line between Montevideo and Progreso will be electrified and served by Karlsruhe type LRT's. A light metro line is being planned by the State Railways between Montevideo and Atlántida (46 km).

In 1994 the privately owned "Metro Montevideo" was studying the construction of a metro line for Montevideo. Its route will run under the historic road that was the first served with horse tramways in 1868 (18 de Julio Avenue and 8 de Octubre Avenue) between the Old Town and Union. A tram line from the Town Hall to the Stadium, connecting in both termini with the Metro line and operating via two shopping areas in the Pocitos district was also considered.

Other tramlines are planned. One will run from Tres Cruces Metro station to Carrasco Airport. This line could be joined with the "Tren de la Costa" light rail planned by AFE.

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50th Anniversary

This year will see the 50th anniversary of the Museum. While final plans have not yet been approved by the Board, it is proposed that events will be limited to one day. It is hoped that the Premier will be able to attend. Further details will be announced as they are approved.

Heritage Week

The tramways festival, held in conjunction with Heritage Week will occur on Saturday 8 April. Stalls will be operating in Eton Street, (which will be closed to traffic for the day) and Tramway Avenue (in the Museum grounds).

A shuttle bus service between the Museum and Sutherland will be operated using Leyland half cab 1275. This will be a free service. Reduced fees will be provided for entry to the Museum and tram rides. There will be entertainment provided at Sutherland and the Sutherland Shire Silver band will provide music at the Museum.

Archives

More storage space has been obtained thanks to Peter Kahn. Three heavy duty filing cabinets were delivered on Thursday 30 March and these are now in place.

Once again we ask that members who have Society material at their premises to please return it to the Museum for cataloguing and safe storage.

Works

John Matts has almost completed a repaint of the Railway Square Waiting Shed. Most of this work was carried out during the heat of February.

More work is being carried out in preparation for concreting between 7 & 8 roads and between 8 road and the external wall on the eastern side. It is expected that concrete will be poured during May.

Additional storage shelving has been acquired, thanks to the efforts of Bob McKeever.

Our *work for the dole* people have been active in grounds maintenance. The site is looking a great deal tidier and new planting are taking place along the Pitt Street boundary fence. This will soften the buildings and make the area more attractive for visitors.

Work is scheduled to be commenced during the cooler months on sleeper replacement.

Disabled Facilities

The *work for the dole* people have commenced the footings for the new disabled people's platform. This structure will be located behind the park garden on the depot main line. It is proposed that a tram be specially altered for wheelchair bound passengers. These facilities are now necessary as an increasing number of disabled people wish to visit the Museum, especially on special charter trips.

Traffic News

The next raining session for conductors will be held at

the Museum on Saturday 22 July. Any members or friends who wish to undertake training should first contact Hayden Holmes, 9379-4226 (work), or 9873 1562 (evenings 7-9pm). Applications will be forwarded for completion and return. Further details will be provided by Hayden to those who apply.

Car News

L/P 154 has been receiving workshop attention in preparation for its 50th birthday with the Museum. Chris Olsen and Glen Killham have been slowly working on the electrics, whilst Mal MacAuley and Bill Parkinson have been attending to the bogies. Our *work for the dole* people have also been co-opted to assist and they have been cleaning the underframe of years of accumulated dirt and grime.

But perhaps the most important event is the car has been repainted into the green and cream colour scheme, and what a picture it presents. Instead of a rather dowdy and drab looking car it now sparkles in its new colours, which suit this car. The repainting was carried out by Dad's Army. The more intricate bits were painted by John Burgess who forsook traffic and while still in his traffic uniform picked up a paintbrush to help out. John trained as a painter at Randwick before transferring to traffic staff. Forty odd years later he returned to his trade. His advice was invaluable and he was responsible for all the black lining and handrails. The tricks of the trade as they applied at Randwick have been applied to this car.

F 393 is now in workshops having some repair work carried out. Damage to the throwover seats in the open sections is being repaired and other necessary work is being carried out.

Prior to the F car coming into shops, R1 1979 received some attention to its roof drainage. One of the drainage pipes was so corroded that it was causing water ingress into the car. The offending fitting has been replaced with plastic sections.

Members Social Bar-b-que

A members bar-b-que will be held on Saturday 15 April, commencing at 4.30 pm.

Personnel

John Matts suffered a heart attack at work recently, but thanks to almost instant medical attention, (he works in a hospital), he is now on the road to recovery.

Bob Cowing recently celebrated his 55th birthday. Congratulations Bob, you can now retire if you want.

Important Dates

One member has suggested that SPER News should publish important dates of events that happened on the tramways. But what defines an important date?

One suggestion is that closing dates of various lines were important and using this information certain traffic days could be set aside to "**celebrate**" the closings. But would anyone, apart from a few diehard enthusiasts, really

care about this? Your views are welcome. Please write to me at the above postal address. If no responses are received then it can be assumed the issue is not important to the majority of members.

Montevideo Tramways

The short article on Montevideo stirred some people into action, mostly positive. One member passed on information that a number of the Montevideo tramcars had appeared on postage stamps. He indeed appreciated the information.

As very little out of the ordinary has occurred in the past two months, the rest of this issue of SPER News contains information about a little known Cuban operation. If you are interested continue to read.

Cuba - The Cárdenas Street Railway The Cárdenas Electric Tramway, 1914 - 1929

Between 1914 and 1929, Cárdenas had an electric street railway system called the "Tranvía Eléctrico de Cárdenas." It connected and served each of the city's important neighborhoods or "barrios." The trams were powered by large batteries and did not require the use of unsightly overhead wiring nor the trolley poles that connect regular electric trams to the overhead wires.

It was the third such system to be built in Cuba, closely following Cienfuegos in 1912, and Havana in 1913. Only 5 battery-powered tramways had been built in all of Latin America prior to the Cárdenas system, including the ones built in Cienfuegos and Havana, and just 4 more Latin American systems were built after the Tranvía de Cárdenas, including a battery-powered system built in Matanzas, Cuba, in 1916.

The cars are said to have offered comfortable seating as well as a very smooth ride, due to their sophisticated suspension system. They were built by the St. Louis Car Company in St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A. It is suspected that the first three cars used by the Tranvía de Cárdenas were borrowed or bought from either Cienfuegos or Havana, because the first order on record for the Cárdenas company was delivered by the St.L.C.C. in 1915. Battery-powered trams were uniquely suited to Cárdenas, due to the city's perfectly flat terrain, and the cars never experienced any significant operating difficulties in Cárdenas, although this was not always true on hilly terrain like that of Havana.

The "Tranvía Eléctrico de Cárdenas, S.A." company was formed in 1913, and all work on the mechanical and carpentry shops, as well as the rail lines, was completed on schedule for its Cuban Independence Day opening on May 20, 1914. The facilities, including the electrical plant used to charge the cars' batteries, were located on Carrillo Avenue, between Calzada and Velazquez streets.

Lore has it that the two principal investors, whose businesses were located on busy commercial Pinillos Street, built homes in the wealthy suburb of Mijala and wanted to ride the tranvía to their businesses. In order to do that, they had a line constructed that went directly from Pinillos to their homes in Mijala, along with all the other lines, which crisscrossed the city's four major neighborhoods: Marina, Fundición, Pueblo Nuevo and Versalles.

Among the technicians who took part in the construction of the electrical plant, were Eugenio A. Hernandez Masdeu, an electrical engineer by profession, and Genaro Sabater, an expert in the design and construction of electric batteries.

A 1918 survey conducted by the U.S. government shows that the Tranvía Eléctrico de Cárdenas had 12 cars and 7 miles of route at the time. Usually, only four cars would circulate about the city at the same time, while four more were in line waiting to be put in service after having their batteries recharged or going through other routine maintenance. The remaining four were kept in reserve as part of normal operating procedure, or may have been undergoing more extensive maintenance or repairs.

The lines were laid out around the city in such a way as to serve the greatest number possible of the city's population of the time. Switches were placed anywhere the lines intersected so that the cars could run different routes, as well take the shortest route possible back to the shop when the batteries would start to run out of power.

An undated fare ticket for the Tranvía de Cárdenas: Ten 5-cent fares entitled a rider to the eleventh fare for free.

When a tram left the shop to go into service, it would travel up a one-block stretch on Carrillo Avenue to Calzada, where it could only turn right, due to the curve in the line. If the intent was to continue on toward Calle Real, the tram just kept going, but if it was to go the opposite way, it would make the obligatory right turn onto Calzada, but then it would make a switch, change its direction, and head out toward the northwestern edge of the city and the vicinity of the San Antonio Catholic Church. Alternatively, it would turn right (northwest) on Saez Street and thereafter run southeast along lines laid out on Pinillos Avenue, then San Juan de Dios, Vives, Obispo or Calle Real. It would, of course, make a stop at the Cárdenas Train Station located on Pinillos and Concha.

In 1918 the company's officers included many prominent members of the Cárdenas business community, including José Maria Verdeja, Ernesto & W. R. Castro, Frank & Jorge Larrieu, Leandro Ruiz, Ed. Elgarresta, Luis E. García & M. G. Sabater.

By 1929, the Tranvía had begun to experience a lot of competition from the bus service initiated in the city by Mr. Picón, who offered service not only in the developed areas of the city, but also to the newer growth areas not reached by the less-flexible rail system. In his 1928 "Historia de Cárdenas," Cuban historian and Cárdenas native, Herminio Portell-Vilá points out that the enterprise was never properly funded and that this problem became more acute in its later years. The death knell of the Tranvía Eléctrico de Cárdenas was the stock market crash of 1929 and the ensuing great depression, which made it impossible to obtain spare parts for the system. The system ceased operations in mid-1929 and the cars were eventually sold to an unknown Latin American country.

There remains very little physical evidence of the tranvía system ever having existed in Cárdenas, although 40 years ago one could still see some of tracks along Vives Street. Perhaps some of those tracks are still there? Will someone please tell us!

This article was downloaded from a web site maintained by Allen Morrison. It is dedicated to Latin American electric rail transportation. The site address is: <http://members.aol.com/almo1435/etla.html>, or <http://members.aol.com/almo1435/eti.html>

Assistance in preparing this article was obtained from Mr. Eugenio Hernandez Alvarez of New Orleans, LA, whose father was an engineer with the Tranvía Eléctrico de Cárdenas.

SPER NEWS

(Incorporating the Lyle's Tram and Tramway Gazette)

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Editor David Cooke

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on Saturday 26 August 2000. Three directors, viz John Matts, Greg Sutherland and Bob Cowing will be retiring according to the rules of the Society. Due to his recent ill health John Matts has signified that he will not be seeking re-election. Members are advised that a directors nomination form is enclosed with this mailout.

Personnel

David Rawlings recently suffered a mild stroke but has now generally recovered from this serious illness. Many members visited David whilst in hospital and others expressed their concern and hoped for his speedy recovery. After a period of enforced idleness David first resumed part time work a few weeks ago and is now back full time. David thanks all those who were concerned about his health. He reckons he is good for a few more years yet.

Our chief engineer Richard Clarke recently took a package and has now become a gentleman of leisure. Richard celebrates his 60th birthday soon.

New Members

We welcome the following new members and friends to the Museum, Mark and Wendyann Black, Bill Casley, Geoff Hartley, Greg King, and Andrew Macdonald. We hope you will join in our activities.

Members Social

A members social will be held on Saturday 15 July 2000. In order to do something just a bit different, a number of trams will be strategically positioned in order that people will be able to take some night photos. A bar-b-que will also be provided. Bring your own food and drink. Commencement time is expected to be about 5.00 pm with trams being returned to the depot by about 8.00 pm.

50th Anniversary

A dinner celebrating the Museum's 50th anniversary will be held on Friday 18 August 2000. A separate notice giving more details will be forwarded shortly.

On the following day, Saturday 19 August, a time capsule will be buried in the Museum grounds.

Archives

Tony Cody has been working hard sorting and storing the Society's archives. His work load increased dramatically a few weeks ago when the late Ron Murray's material was delivered. At the same time Bob Merchant forwarded a considerable amount of material for the collection.

Once again we ask that members who have Society material at their premises to please return it to the Museum for cataloguing and safe storage.

Works

A major pour of concrete occurred in early May when the area between 7 and 8 roads and two smaller sections between 8 road and the external wall were poured; a total of about 29 cubic metres in all. Only two relatively small sections in this area now need to be poured and this will complete the back half of the shed, enabling the area to

be turned over for display purposes.

Our *Work for the Dole* people have been busy with the disabled persons platform. They mixed their own concrete for the platform facing, but the platform top was obtained from Concrete. Two further batches of concrete were subsequently donated by Concrete with some being used for the platform ramp and the rest being poured into the traverser pit.

The *Work for the Dole* people have dug trenches for the traverser's side bearing rails and further excavation has been carried out at the intersection of Cross Street and the depot entrance. It has been decided to incorporate a "silent cop" into the roadway at this point.

Tom Trambly and Greg Sutherland have commenced replacing sleepers on the main line.

Traffic News

All traffic staff please note that the door by-pass switch in the control cabinet at the no.1 end of the PCC car is not to be tampered with. **It is to be left in the OFF position at all times.** The only time it is to be used is if a door fails.

Applications are invited for those who wish to be trained in the operation of the PCC car. Applications should be forwarded to the secretary of the Safety and Training Committee as soon as possible.

Car News

F 393 has had remedial work carried out by Dad's Army. The seats were repaired and new handrails and leather straps installed in the saloon and both open ends. New blue glass is being purchased for the crown lights. An examination of early photographs has shown that the external wire bell cord communication and leather straps were an obvious later addition, probably installed when the car was converted for driver training duties. These have now been removed. The car has now been placed on eight road where repainting is being carried out under the skilful direction of John Burgess.

The F car's place in the workshop was taken by Berlin car 3007. This car was scheduled to receive a tone up before the Olympic Games. On closer examination Joe Kirkberger realised that it would be quicker and cheaper to replace the steel sheeting on the sides rather than try to repair it. Removal of the exterior panelling has revealed the construction methods used on this tram. Rather heavy C section channels form the underframe with a combination of timber and steel being used for the superstructure. Considerable rust was discovered on some of these lighter sections.

Obituary

We regret to notify members of the passing of Graham Charles Maynard. Graham died on 4th May at the age of 62. He had been suffering from a serious and debilitating illness.

Graham was perhaps best known for his S gauge model tramway layout, which he exhibited at model railway exhibitions over the years. Those who saw it could only marvel at the exquisite attention to detail, both in

rollingstock and infrastructure.

In latter years Graham utilising his skills acquired as a Telstra technician, together with his good mate Dick Hall, installed and maintained the Museum's internal and external telephone systems.

His funeral was held at Northern Suburbs Crematorium on 9 May and was well attended by all traction groups. The Museum was represented by Barry Cox, Ted Davies, Bryan Gawthorp, Dick Hall, Bob Henderson, Chris Jacobs, Peter Kahn, Ben and Megan Parle, Arthur, Norma and John Perry and Clyde Shoebridge.

Graham will be sorely missed by all who knew him and we extend our condolences to his wife Kath and children, Ann and David. *(BJP and AWP)*

Editor's note. *It was Graham who had the forethought to obtain paint samples of the Brisbane trams for his models that enabled us to accurately identify the exact shades of blue required for Phoenix car 548. Without his able assistance and willingness to loan these samples to us the colours of this tram would not be correct.*

Important Dates

In the last issue of SPER News comment was invited about the issue of publishing/celebrating important dates. A number of responses have been received with a very lengthy letter from John McFadden. This letter will, with John's permission, be reproduced in the next SPER News as he has raised a number of other issues. I believe that they are of concern to the members and need to be given a proper forum for discussion.

Other responses received stated that we should always celebrate the closure of tramways in Sydney. (Why? As trams are again operating in Sydney, perhaps we should be celebrating the reopening instead!)

Vic Solomons feels that SPER News should concentrate on informing members of what is happening around the Museum. He stated that celebrating events and relating them to a traffic day would have minimal effect on attendances. Such events require a lot of costly advertising and past experience shows that the financial outlay for them is rarely successful in attracting additional patronage.

Tris Tottenham thought that the publication of dates was necessary as many centenaries of line electrifications and openings are about to fall due. But he also raised the important questions of (a) who would do the research and (b) what defines an important date.

Hugh Ballment would like to see more information provided on the opening times of kindred Museums and a list of non Museum tram locations. *(I agree and this could appear say once per year, provided the information can be obtained).* Hugh also felt that important dates should not appear in SPER News as they had been published only a few years ago in **Transit Australia**.

He further suggested that we give details of Asian Museums and where to see the two Bangkok trams. *(Hugh, put me out of my misery, where are they?),* then we could progress to European Museums etc. This list he felt could go on for years. *(indeed it could!).*

Fortunately he did not suggest the American Museums - their information is available in a book by Andrew Young entitled **Veteran Vintage Transit**. Copies were available in the SPER bookshop.

So there is no real consensus on the topic. If someone can provide a good reason why dates need to be provided, and will supply them to me on a disk with a

short article about one column in length on the significance of each date, then I shall consider publishing them, space permitting.

In response to Hugh's comment about overseas museum's, I hope in the next issue to provide some information about the Buenos Aires Tramway Museum. And after that perhaps a short article of the tramways of Mandalay!

Heritage Festival 2000

Formerly known as Heritage Week, the National Trust Heritage Festival this year revolved around sport, with the theme being "Our sporting Heritage".

The Museum's participation logically revolved around the area of "Transporting the Sporting Crowds" but without the coupled sets of trams.

The activities away from the Museum centred around bus operations. Leyland Tiger 1275 was in the vintage bus operations at Ryde and was driven by Dennis O'Brien on 1 April.

The following Saturday 1275 was driven by Bill Parkinson and provided a shuttle service between the Museum and Eton Street. The Sutherland Rotary Club and the Chamber of Commerce helped with the organisation of the days events.

STOP PRESS

Two out and One in

R 1808 (from Waverley Council) and R1 1951 have been sent to Bendigo. Howard Clark advises that arrangements have been agreed with the Bendigo Tramways for that organisation to carry out the installation of electrical and mechanical equipment so both cars will be returned to Sydney in operating condition. This work will form part of the \$ for \$ grant under the NSW Heritage Office 2001 program of which members were advised some time ago. The work is expected to be completed in a few months time. The cars arrived in Bendigo on 14 June, having left Loftus on the previous day.

As part of the above arrangements the Bendigo Tramways have generously agreed to loan Birney car no. 30 to the Museum for a period of two years ending on 30 June 2002. The Birney left Bendigo on 14 June and arrived at the Museum on 15 June.

Both of these activities are excellent news for the tramway restoration movement and open a new chapter in inter-museum co-operation for mutual benefit.

Tramway Avenue

Members and friends will be pleased to learn that the Museum has acquired the stone facade of the old YMCA building in Bathurst Street. We signalled our interest in this to the City Council some two years ago when the conditions of the site development were announced. Under the arrangements the developers, with the supervision of consulting heritage architects and a stonemason, are required at their expense to remove the facade stone by stone and re-erect it at Loftus. Fortunately provision for a facade had been allowed for in the engineering drawings recently completed for us. This is a truly exciting development and will provide the entry vista with a more finished appearance. Work will commence shortly at the Bathurst Street site and the stone will be stored off site. We can expect some activity to commence on site with the re-erection in the next few months.

The museum will still incur some costs of its own relative to design etc., so donations to the Tramway Museum fund would be most welcome for this project. *(HRC)*

SPER NEWS

(Incorporating the Light Rail and Tramway Gazette)

Published by South Pacific Electric Railway

PO Box 103 Sutherland 1499

Editor David Cooke

we are turning

50

so let's celebrate

Saturday 19 August 2000

12.00 noon

Barbecue/Sausage Sizzle (free snags, no GST)

2.00 pm

Burying a time capsule

2.45 pm

"Blessing of the Fleet"

3.15 pm

Re-entry of L/P 154 into service

Then trams rides until 5.00pm



Toronto Peter Witt car 2766 in its home city. Several of these cars are preserved at the Halton County Radial Railroad near Toronto, Ontario.

Other 50th Anniversary Activities

The member's annual dinner, normally held in September, has been deferred because of the Olympic Games. It will now be held on Saturday 11 November 2000. Please mark this date in your diary now. The dinner will be a combined 50th anniversary celebration, early Christmas function and members night. Further details will be provided shortly.

Personal

Our welder, Joe Kirchberger, was severely injured recently. We wish Joe a speedy recovery and trust that he will be back with us again soon.

It is with regret we note the passing of Harry Mackay on the weekend of 15-16 July.

Social Evening

A members barbecue and social was held on July 15. A number of new faces were present and it was pleasing to see them joining in. We hope they will continue to come and enjoy our company.

A feature of the evening was the opportunity to take night photographs. Two Sydney cars were used along with the PCC and Birney car. The vehicles were photographed outside the Railway Square waiting Shed.

The evening was judged a success and others are planned.

Traffic News

A new ball lever point mechanism has been installed for the points leading to 12 road from the yard throat. At present the points are still clipped for the yard entry.

Olympic News

The Olympic Torch will be at the Museum on 11 September 2000. At about 4.30 pm it will be presented to the torchbearer who will be on C 290. The tram will then depart for the Army Crossing where it will arrive about 5pm.

A change of torchbearers will then take place. It is hoped that this event will expose the Museum to a world wide audience.

L/P 154

This car is now back on its bogies. Chris Olsen has been doing a sterling job rewiring the car. Thanks are expressed to Chris for his efforts, Dad's Army for the body work and to John Burgess for the paint job.

P 1497

The bogies were removed from under this car on Saturday 8 July for overhaul and repair. The car is now temporarily mounted on spare bogies and is back in the display hall.

Berlin 3007

The side panels of this car have now been removed by Joe Kirchberger. The rusted sections have been cleaned by Joe, Dad's Army and a CSO worker. All steelwork has been primed and is ready for the new panelling. The interior has been repaired by Brian, Jimmy and the rest of the gang.

Work for the Dole

Thanks are expressed to our Work for the Dole people who have largely constructed the disabled persons platform. They have also been busy in Cross Street leveling the area, compacting the sub grade and completing the gutter.

Work has also been carried out for the footings of the retaining wall between 14 and 15 roads .

Other News

Geoff Olsen has been busy installing conduits for the remaining area of 8 road. Bob Cowing has been plodding away at this area also in preparation for it being concreted.

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The Olympics

The Olympics have come and gone. The role the STM played was small, a short run in the torch relay. Despite being promised huge media coverage of our part of the torch relay, the only reports that appeared were in the Leader and the Sydney Morning Herald. Both had very good photos of Glenn Killham driving C 290 (displaying a BONDI sign) with the official torch bearer on the front platform beside him.

The Bondi symbol, red circle on white background, is also the Japanese flag. The Japanese media representative was most intrigued by it. Attempts were made to explain it, but whether he fully comprehended or not is unknown. This camera crew was also intrigued and impressed by the Nagasaki car. Hopefully this vehicle will have received some coverage on Japanese television.

In the few weeks following torch run quite a number of extra phone calls were received from people interested in visiting.

Probably the most positive aspect, public relations wise was the increased public awareness in the local Loftus/Sutherland community.

Many thanks must go to those who assisted on the day, the tram crews; Dad's army who worked non stop throughout the previous weeks to ensure that the three trams used in the procession were ready and looking the part for the day and to Bob Cowing whose organisation on the day ensured that all was in readiness and that no hiccups occurred. A big moment for the Museum, but a small blip in the Olympics.

A sidelight was the SOCOG banners. These were flown as instructed but the temptation was too great for some and two were stolen. The remaining ones have now been securely stored in our archives.

50th Anniversary Members Dinner

The member's dinner will be held on Saturday evening 11 November at the Sutherland Sports and Bowling Club. Cost is \$30.00 per head. Please contact Peter Kahn on 9498 3820 for further details.

50th Anniversary Members Day

This was held on Saturday August 19. To kick off the events a sausage sizzle was held at lunchtime. Thanks are given to Val Olsen for manning this important stand. Talk about ravenous hordes! But there was enough for all. Three functions were planned, viz., the burial of a time capsule, the blessing of the fleet and the re-entry into service of L/P 154.

The first event went off without a hitch. Then it was the turn of Father Lou Nyman to bless the fleet. This he did with all necessary aplomb although through a

combination of traffic noise and a poor public address system, much of what he had to say was not heard by the masses. Following this the re-entry of L/P 154. Mike Giddey had been selected to drive the tram. Mike is one of those tireless workers who always seems to be left in the background when it comes to events such as this. He had accepted the invitation to drive but on the day chose, in a most unselfish act, to accord the honour of driving the car into service to Chris Olsen. Chris had almost single handedly rewired the car and Mike felt that this was more important. Thank you Mike, there are not many who have done what you did.

L/P 154 looked resplendent in its green and cream and only a few dissenters thought otherwise.

WEB Site – Internet

The museum is considering setting up its own web site, as many other similar organisations have done. A meeting to discuss the hows and wherefores will be held on Saturday 28 October at 3.00pm. We will need to appoint a webmaster to co-ordinate the efforts. IF you are interested in contributing to this project please ring Bob Cowing on 9750 0876.

Concrete, Concrete and more Concrete

Thanks to the management and drivers of the Concrete Kirrawee plant, the Museum has been the recipient of a fair amount of additional concrete in the past few months. This has enabled the footings for the retaining wall between 14 and 15 road to be poured. This work is now almost complete. In fact one driver apologised for not having enough concrete on board to enable the job to be completed. Other areas where this concrete has been used is traverser pit and at the intersection of Cross Street and the yard. A safe footpath has now been provided for those who need to use the disabled persons platform.

New Members.

We welcome the following new members to our ranks. - Peter Cook, John Hodgson, Gail Hodgson, Matthew Hodgson, Keith Hughes, Joan Pye and Robert Stynes. - We trust that you will join in our activities.

Works

Work is continuing at the end of 8 road. Thanks to Geoff Olsen all conduits are now in place. Bob Cowing has constructed the cable grip pit at the end of the length of cable track. It is a pity that those who complain about a lack of progress in this area do not come along and do something to assist.

Dad's Army, mainly Jim Jowett, Les Coghill and Chris Jacobs have rebuilt the inspectors cabin that

formerly resided on the western side of the line at Rockdale. During its rebuilding it was noted that the base colour on the structural members was red. Sections of one upright that had to be replaced were retrieved and are now in the archives. It is thought that the red may have originated pre-war when the double deck buses were painted red and cream. As this shed was used by bus inspectors, it may have been painted to match the buses.

Other more mundane work, maintenance, has been carried out. Rail joints have been welded, track repairs carried out and the drain near the Railway Square Waiting Shed has been rebuilt. Thanks to the Work for the Dole people much scrub bashing has been completed, especially around the no.2 sub station area.

Elections

The AGM was held on Saturday August 26. It was a generally uneventful meeting with no contentious items being raised. The election for the Board provided the high point of the meeting. Six candidates offered themselves for election. The voting was John McFadden – 45, Bob Cowing – 41, Greg Sutherland – 24, David Cooke – 22, Paul MacDonald – 14, Francis Peter McQuade – 12. Accordingly the first three mentioned were elected to the Board.

As soon as the Board has decided on the non elected officers for the year, and the positions each of the Board shall hold, members will be notified.

Conductor Training

The next training session for the position of conductor will be held at the Museum on Saturday 28 October. Any members or friends who wish to

undertake conductor training should first contact Hayden Holmes, 0416 069 161 (daytime) or 9873 1562 (evenings 7 – 9 pm). An application form will then be forwarded for you to complete. Further details will be provided to those who apply.

Bookshop Operators Please Note

Over the past few weeks there have been instances of bookshop operators failing to process credit card sales correctly.

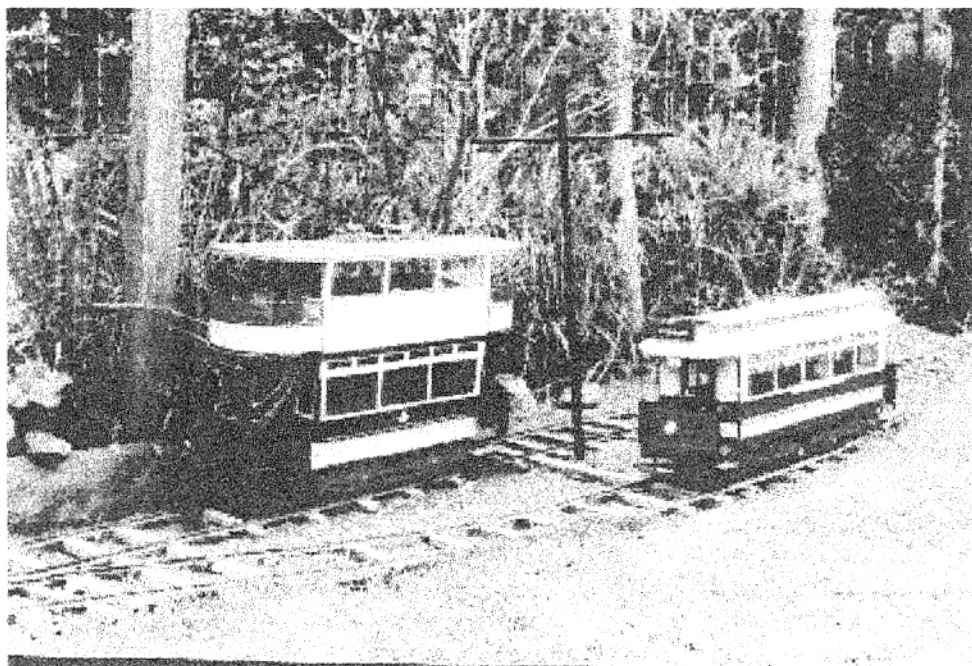
The top carbon on Bankcard, Mastercard, Visa Card and Diners' Club sales vouchers **MUST NOT** be removed until **AFTER** the voucher has been run through the imprinter, otherwise the original copy, which goes to the credit provider, will come out blank. Instructions are printed on the top carbon.

On a recent Sunday an AMEX card was presented and the transaction processed on the wrong stationery. This resulted in the sales voucher being dishonoured. It is essential that the correct stationery is used. The result of this mistake is the Museum lost revenue.

All relevant information is contained in the red ring binder in the bookshop. Please check if you are not sure.

Padlocks

There have been several instances recently where padlocks have been left open on doors and gates after the doors/gates have been unlocked. It is essential that padlocks be snapped shut immediately after use to prevent loss or theft. To rekey the Museum would be an expensive and unnecessary task.



Recently complete Barking double decker no. 7, mounted on a Peckham truck, passes LCC F class 564, mounted on M&G Maximum traction trucks. The models have been constructed by English enthusiast John Buckle to a 1:16 scale.