

The TROLLEY WIRE

N.S.W. BRANCH BULLETIN --- AUSTRALIAN ELECTRIC TRACTION ASSOCIATION

Vol. 4. No. 7.

Issue No. 42

21st July 1955.

BOURKE ST. TRAMWAY GREAT SUCCESS – EVEN THE PRESS SAID SO !!

The 6.1 miles of the 9.65 mile Bourke Street group of lines, Melbourne, was officially opened from Spencer St. to Northcote and east Preston via the former cable route, on Friday June 24th.

On Saturday 25th June, the day before the opening of regular service, the Melbourne branch held a tour over the new line in P.C.C. 980. As all cars for the new route are fitted with silent rubber insert wheels and carbon insert trolley shoes P.C.C. 980 could only be used on the new route, so between Malvern Depot and East Preston and East Preston and Preston Workshops the A.E.T.A. party of 110 persons travelled on cars 887 and 888, P.C.C. 980 carried the party from East Preston to Bourke St. and back.

After the tour the party comprising of A.E.T.A. members from all states inspected the Preston Workshops and were shown films of the former Bourke St. cable tramway closed 1940.

On Sunday 26th June the first regular car SW6c 1008 left East Preston for Bourke St. at 8-00am leaving Bourke St. on the outward trip at 8-40 am. The Board intended to operate the standard Melbourne half hour Sunday morning frequency, but before mid afternoon loading was so heavy that a five minute service was required.

Traffic on Monday 27th June at the peak periods was so heavy that 14 extra cars above the 46 intended for use, were needed and this continued, meaning that the trams have attracted a 20% business increase over the past bus service.

The press enlarged on the teething trouble of the first two weekdays caused by underestimation of loading and heavy parking in Smith St. Collingwood but by Wednesday 29th June the service was functioning smoothly, cutting the former bus time considerably and the newspaper "Argus" had to reluctantly announce that the initial stage of the Bourke St, tramway was a success.

See next page please.

Melbourne News (Continued.)

To work the new Bourke St. line a new 11 road depot has been opened at East Preston (Cars carry "EP" as a depot symbol) and can accommodate 110 cars, cars from Thornbury Depot have been transferred to the new depot to make way for extensions to the Preston Workshops. The new east Preston depot is situated on the West side of Plenty Rd., 1/2 mile north of Northcote terminus.

The other line to be opened on the Bourke St. network is that to East Brunswick, 0.9 miles past the former Nicholson St. cable terminus, this line will leave the new above line at Exhibition and continue 3.55 miles north. Work is well advanced on this new route and it was intended to open the line by next Xmas, but owing to the increase in traffic on the East Preston line it is unlikely that enough new cars will be available for this new route until March 1956.

A depot for this new line is being prepared in the present Nicholson bus garage which will operate for some time as a bus tram garage/depot and finally the buses will disappear.

FOOTSCRAY LINES NOT TO BE BUSTITUTED.

The Melbourne Tramways Board has decided after much investigation that it would be too costly to replace the Footscray local tram routes (see T.W. Feb 1954) by buses, not only would the present tram depot have to be used as a garage but other land would have to be resumed to house the extra buses needed. The short branch beyond the Moonee Ponds junction, to Ballarat Rd. maybe discontinued but nothing final is to hand.

UPPER FERNTREE GULLEY – BELGRAVE LINE RUNNING.

The former Ferntree Gulley to Gembrook 2ft. 6in. gauge railway has been re-opened from the Gulley to Belgrave for a three months trial period as a tourist attraction, after thus time a society known as "Puffing Billy" Society has agreed to either take over the line or guarantee loses, should the V.R. not continue the service.

OLYMPIC GAMES AND THE M. & M.T.B.

Special extensive terminal facilities for the trams are to be install at the site of the Olympic Game fixtures in Melbourne for next year's games.

SYDNEY NEWS.FIVEDOCK CLOSURE.

The present tram service to Fivedock will become a peak hour service only after Sunday July 12th, if enough buses are available at that date. Like the procedure adopted on the Spit-Manly line in 1939 this move can be taken as the death knell for the service.

BONDI JUNCTION.

Relaying of this junction is well in hand and ahead of schedule. This means that the Bronte line will not be closed in the near future as believed in the past.

RANDWICK EXTENSION LINE.

We believe that the school situated beside the former reserved stretch on this line is interested in reclaiming the site for playground extensions.

ULTIMO DEPOT.

In spite of rumours it is official that Ultimo Depot has not been sold and is still required for departmental (tramway) use.

QUAY ST. JUNCTION.

Disused for two years, the Quay St / George St junction was finally removed during the last week in June and the first week in July.

STORED CARS TO RANDWICK.

On July 7th one of the new scrubbers was noticed in Harris St Ultimo prior to the latest move of "O" cars to Randwick. Whether these cars will be scrapped is uncertain as the Commissioner officially stated last month that many cars to be scrapped will be overhauled and returned to service.

"R1" BOGIES.

The stored R1 bogies at Wolli Creek are fast disappearing, being used as replacements under the "R" cars.

"E" CARS.

"E" 529/530 the last set in service of a class of 202 cars, were transferred from North Sydney to Dowling St. on 23rd June last, after 55 years of service. ONLY "K" 1296 and "R1" 2029 are available for the Neutral Bay line working. NEW BREAKDOWN CAR. "O" car 822 has been converted to a bogie breakdown car 140S at Randwick Workshops. Details will appear later. As yet it has not been assigned to any depot.

FUTURE ABANDONMENTS.

With the exception of Fivedock and possibly one other line no other tramway abandonments will take place in the near future owing to shortage of buses, shortage of loan funds, losses and other deficiencies associated with buses. The line through Victoria Rd. Rozelle (relaid in 1950) may go as widening of this thoroughfare will cause the line to cut across traffic at curves.

NEW PEAK HOUR TRAM SERVICE.

Owing to the incapacities of the buses on the Gladstone Park-Canterbury service, peak hour trams have been re-introduced between Leichhardt Town Hall and Darling St. Wharf. Another new all day service is the one between Quay and Sth. Annandale worked by coupled sets.

ASSOCIATION NEWS.BOURKE ST. TOURS & CONVENTION.

The N.S.W. members who were able to attend the convention and Bourke St. opening last month wish to thank the Headquarters and the M. & M.T.B. for making their weekend such an enjoyable and interesting one. We only hope that one day the N.S.W. branch will be able to return this hospitality with a similarly important occasion.

THEATRE NIGHT.

A theatre night is planned for August/September those members interested should contact the Secretary Mr. I. Brady JF 1837 with numbers wishing to attend.

ELECTIONS.

Annual election of officers will take place at the SEPTEMBER MEETING (Sept 15th). Nominations will open at the August meeting.

AUGUST MEETING.

Unless other important business is available a lecture will be given at this meeting on "P.C.C. Cars Workings". An historical lecture will follow later. The August meeting will be held in Thursday 18th August at 8pm, Devonshire St. Railway Institute.

MUSEUM NEWS.

Members and friends interested in setting up an operating museum with the Associations four tramcars are asked to attend the August general meeting for full details in the proposed setting up and operation of same.

PARRAMATTA TRAMWAY.

We believe that the N.S.W. Steam Tram and Locomotive Preservation Society (N.S.W.S.T. & R.P.A.) has set up 100 ft. of track in Parramatta Park and the steam motor 103A and a trailer car should be on the site by the time these lines appear. The line will not be opened until approx. 300 yds. of track and another trailer car is available.

ELECTRIC TRACTION.

The June issue of the official magazine of the A.E.T.A. is now in circulation and the July issue will be available by the time these lines appear. For interesting reading on both Australian and overseas transport matters tram fans should subscribe to this printed 8/12 page magazine.

Enquiries re subscriptions can be made through box 2266 G.P.O. SYDNEY or the Managing Editor 29 Seymour Grove BRIGHTON BEACH S5 Victoria.

Trolley Wire is printed for and on behalf of the council of the N.S.W branch of the Australian electric traction Association by the publishing staff of the A.E.T.A. N.S.W. branch, 13 Inelgah Rd. COMO WEST N.S.W.