

TROLLEY WIRE

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SOUTH PACIFIC
ELECTRIC RAILWAY

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NEXT GENERAL MEETING

Members are asked to note that the next general meeting will be held at a NEW location in the church hall at St. Luke's Church of England, Stanmore Rd Enmore, at 8 pm on Friday 6th March. This hall has been made available through the good offices of our member the Rev. John Green, and this venue will certainly prove much quieter and more comfortable than the former meeting place at Devonshire Street City.

How to get there

Gregory's Map Ref: Map 28, G.10
Robinson's Map Ref: Map 10, L.9

Nearest railway station: Stanmore, 15 mins walk.

Nearest bus route: 426 or 448, alight at Enmore Hotel, then 5 mins walk.

Notice of Motion motion:

Members present will be asked to vote on the following

“That the rules of the Society be amended to provide for the appointment of Honorary Directors as the Society should see fit”.

A recent discussion with the Registrar of Co-Operative Societies revealed that such appointments can be made providing the necessary amendments to the rules of the Society are carried out. Other than this, the most important business of the evening will no doubt be further discussion of our proposed electric operation in the near future.

NEW MEMBERS

The Board and Shareholders welcome the following new members to the museum:

Reginald Francis	99	Peter MacDonald	103
John Davenport	100	Graeme Beller	104
Graham Ball	101	Michael Cavanagh	105
Gregory Hyde	102	Thomas Murray	106

We especially welcome Tom Murray, who is prominent in Railfan affairs in Victoria, being secretary of the Australian Railway Exploration Association, and also in charge of the Schools' work section of the Puffing Billy Preservation Society.

SECRETARY RESIGNS FROM THE BOARD

As most members are aware, our very efficient Secretary, Clyde Woodside, was involved in a serious accident during December. Clyde is now well along the road to recovery, but it will be some time before he can again take an active interest in museum activities. At the February board meeting your directors accepted Clyde's resignation from the post of Secretary with regret, and at the same time recorded in the minutes their appreciation of the able way in which the duty of secretary has been carried out over the last few years.

Owing to his resignation, members willing to undertake the job of Secretary-Director are invited to submit their names to the Board, at Box 103, GPO, Sydney, by Wednesday 18th March 1964. Such members should be financial members of the Society, have access to a typewriter and be over 21 years of age. The member appointed to this position will occupy the post of Secretary-Director until June 1965 and will then fall due for re-election.

RAIL TOUR

We hope to announce soon concrete plans for the Newcastle rail tour expected to take place during June 1964. Tentative plans provide for an attempt on the Sydney-Newcastle speed record followed by a ferry tour around Port Hunter and a rail excursion along the Belmont branch.

BATTERY TRIALS

Further to the report read to the general meeting on Friday 13th December 1963 concerning the possibility of electric operation at our museum in the near future by the use of batteries, Noel Reed has carried out further investigations and experiments at the direction of the Board.

As a direct result of Noel's efforts, members will be circularised in the near future about details of battery trials which will take place at Loftus. These trials will be carried out free of charge by a leading battery manufacturer. The only cost to the Society being that of cartage to and from the factory. During the last few weeks, exacting data has been obtained from the operation of 42u, the ex-tramcar operated by the Railway Department for the maintenance of the overhead wiring on the City railway. This vehicle, now numbered L.707 and nicknamed "Gentle Annie", is powered by a 120 volt bank of batteries. Several members have travelled on the car during its nocturnal excursions to assist Noel, and information gathered has revealed that our tramway could be operated quite efficiently by batteries of 300 volt potential, charged during off peak periods.

In order that this trial should be effectively carried out, "L/P" 154 is being thoroughly overhauled and will be the first tram to operate electrically along the line. Work on repainting the car externally are well advanced while recent air testing has shown that only minor adjustments will be required in order to have the air brake system operating efficiently again. A low voltage electrical test of the car's wiring will be carried out prior to the 300 volt road trial.

As the use of batteries represents a major change of policy, a pamphlet is being prepared explaining clearly the reasons behind this move. This will be distributed to all members when the date of the trial run is announced.

OVERHEAD CONSTRUCTION AND TRACK BONDING

So that all our external trackage will be available for the battery trial the overhead and track bonding gangs have been hard at work during recent weeks. On Saturday 15th February a hired post hole digger made short work of digging five 6 foot holes and erecting our new 30 foot poles along the entire length of our trackage. This job, which would have taken many weeks by manual labour was completed in just under five hours. The next day the poles were set at the correct alignment and the work of cementing them into position commenced.

During this period most of our overhead has been dismantled and work is now well advanced on its re-erection in a more substantial manner which will ensure an average working height of 17 feet along our main line.

Work is also well advanced on track bonding. Our bonding crew has devised two relatively inexpensive methods of effectively carrying out this job, the "plug" type and a more conventional welded type. Both of these have so far proved "thief proof".

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

In addition to the large fire extinguisher located at the rear of the depot a smaller dry chemical type is now provided on the rail motor and is suitable for any type of fire. A number of pressure pack "Flame Out" extinguishers will be purchased and progressively distributed to convenient locations within the depot building.

The attention of all members is drawn to the rule that smoking is not allowed on the depot premises. A carelessly discarded cigarette could ruin in minutes the years of hard work which has been put into the construction of our museum.

RANDWICK RAIL REMOVAL

At the time of writing this project was still a long way from completion and members are urged to put in an appearance at Randwick to help finish the job. We have been given the whole of the rail in the former repair shop, which amounts to over half a mile of useable track, plus a useful quantity of scrap lengths. This is not junk rail but first class rail, 80 lb, in as new condition. Your attendance is requested from 6.30 am on Saturday 7th March, and especially on Sunday 8th March. There is plenty for everyone to do, and we have to remove the rail as soon as possible as the contractors are already renovating the building. So how about coming along, if only for a few hours? Enter by the back door, from Govett Street, off Darley Road and about 3 minutes from the Clovelly bus.

WATSONS BAY LINE REMOVAL

January 9th 1964 saw the start of the removal of one of the last remaining sections of tram track in Sydney – the well known Watson’s Bay reservation. This section ran on its own right of way, and was renowned for its severe curves, extensive earthworks and spectacular rock cuttings. The reserved track section included two passing loops, Park and Gap loops, which were protected by staff and ticket working.

With the re-introduction of the tramway service after the first closure in 1949, several sections of track in the reservation were relaid, this operation involving “U” cars running over the disused section from Dover Road, and remained in generally good condition until the closure of the line on 10th July 1960. Since that date, the trackwork has remained virtually intact, complete even to the ball levers at the passing loops. Several local organisations have put forward suggestions for the development of the land, but as yet no definite plans have eventuated.

REPAINTING OF CARS

Work has progressed favourably on the repainting or preparation for repainting of the following cars:

“K” 1296 – Much of the old coats have been rubbed back, metal has been primed and timber panels undercoated.

“P” 1497 – A start as been made on the rubbing back of the paintwork.

“N” 728 – The application of the second last coat is nearing completion.

“L/P” 154 – Rusted metalwork has been replaced, all broken glass has been replaced by new panes and faulty paintwork is being rubbed back and primed.

Car painting is now being generally carried out on the “adoption” system whereby a group of members select a car, obtain the paint and then carryout the job exclusively. To help keep up this good work, donations of wood primer, metal primer and white undercoat would be greatly appreciated.

TRAMWAY STORES PURCHASED

Recently the Department of Government Transport called tenders for the purchase of a quantity of miscellaneous items which represented the last remnants of the tramway stores at Randwick. Two of our members, Laurie Gordon and Vic Solomons, submitted quotes and between them purchased about 70% of the items sold. The museum is thus possessed of a large number of panes of glass, as well as about 50 more destination rolls and a variety of oils and greases in ample quantities. Being the D.G.T.’s “last ditch” attempt to get rid of these items they were obtained at very reasonable prices.

CEBS CAMP – RAIL MOTOR IN SERVICE

During mid January our Cadillac rail motor was actively employed carrying visitors and members of the Church of England Boy's Society, who were in camp for ten days in the area adjacent to our museum. About 1500 boys were in camp, some of whom arrived by a special train from Melbourne which terminated at the platform near our depot. The basic rail motor service was a half hourly one with two extra trips during mid-afternoon, and on most trips all seating space was occupied. Railway type card tickets, printed by Geoff Dean of Melbourne who is well known for his work in this field, are now available for this service, the cost of the printing being donated by Bob Merchant.

Some human interest notes associated with this operation are worth noting on these pages. The most common question was "How is it steered?" followed by "I've never seen an old bus like this". It was rewarding to see some of the young boys who now only have dim recollections of the Sydney tramways buying half a dozen tickets on their arrival at the museum to ensure rides for the whole of the afternoon.

All in all the rail motor is proving a popular working exhibit on our open days and is generating much good will for us amongst our visitors.

INTERESTING FILMS AT THE DECEMBER MEETING

Following the general meeting held on 13th December, members were entertained with the screening of very interesting movies. Included in the program were 15mm films showing the last day of steam trams and opening of the trolley bus system at Kogarah in July 1937, together with a reel tracing the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The 8mm reels featured the last day of the 3' 6" gauge tramway in Los Angeles taken during March 1963, and views of the Perris tramway museum in California.

TRAFFIC SUPERINTENDENT

The Board was sorry to receive the resignation of Doug Greenwald from the position of Traffic Superintendent during January. Owing to the pressure of private commitments Doug has found it impossible to give as much time as he would have liked to this position. Accordingly David Fairless has been appointed to the Traffic Superintendent position while David Rawlings now occupies the post of overhead construction supervisor vacated by David Fairless.

IDENTIFICATION BADGES

The first batch of identification badges has now been distributed to members on the regular work force. Members are requested to display these badges as much as possible when working in the museum area, especially on open days.

MANLY LANDMARK GOES

In mid February the water tower and tank at the former Manly tram depot was demolished, thereby further reducing the remaining signs of this once prosperous system. Manly depot during its lifetime has been a tram depot, a combined tram-and-bus depot, a bus depot, a service station and has even played host to trolley buses, several of which were cut up there in 1959, in the course of abortive attempts to separate the two decks and put the two portions to further use as road vehicles. About the only reminder of the Manly trams is now the short lengths of track at Manly terminus, and it is rumoured that these must remain in place or the D.G.T. will lose its right to the area, which is still used as a bus terminal.