



# The Bellcord

Journal of the Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot

## In This Issue

Social Evening – Talk by Robert Green	1
Donations to the Friends	1
Planning for Hawthorn's Future	1
Victrack 2009 Calendar	2
Visitor Surveys	2
What's been happening	2
New Sales Items	2
Web Site News	3

## Social Evening – Talk by Robert Green

Our first social evening was very successful with over 20 members and friends attending. The evening featured a presentation on Melbourne's Cable Trams by well known tram historian and Heritage Victoria Senior Architect, Robert Green. Melbourne had one of the most advanced systems in the world of its time and it served Melbourne right to its closure in 1940, after opening in 1885.

Although it may appear that Melbourne's cable tram heritage is fading in memory, the Cable Tram in the depot is a popular exhibit and the DVD *Mind the Curve* sells well on our Open Days, not only for

its cable tram but for the views of Melbourne as well.

We are planning a further two or three evenings during the year as well, hopefully featuring guest speakers to talk about Melbourne and its tramway heritage or current events.

Thanks again to Robert for his talk that brought our tramway heritage to the fore.

## Donations to the Friends

Donations over \$2 to FOHTD are now tax deductible to Australian Residents. Help support tramway preservation and reduce your income tax by sending donations to PO Box 178, Hawthorn Vic. 3122.

## Planning for Hawthorn's Future

The Committee has been considering a number of projects that will improve the presentation and interpretation of the depot and its trams. Some of these are:

1. Connecting power to the chassis tram in the Driver Training Room and make it operable for demonstration purposes and work to enable remote control of the traction power to the depot. This includes development of a project list of work to make the tram physically operable, electrically safe, presentable and we are developing procedures to enable its demonstration during Open Days.
2. Developing an exhibition brief in order to employ an exhibition designer, to develop displays for the Main Room and the foyer. These would interpret the trams, its operators and the depot in the context of its personalities, its relationship to the Melbourne community and social history.
3. Providing a data projector and related sound system to the main function room.

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Museum: 8 Wallen Road, Hawthorn Victoria 3122

Website: <http://www.hawthorntramdepot.org.au>

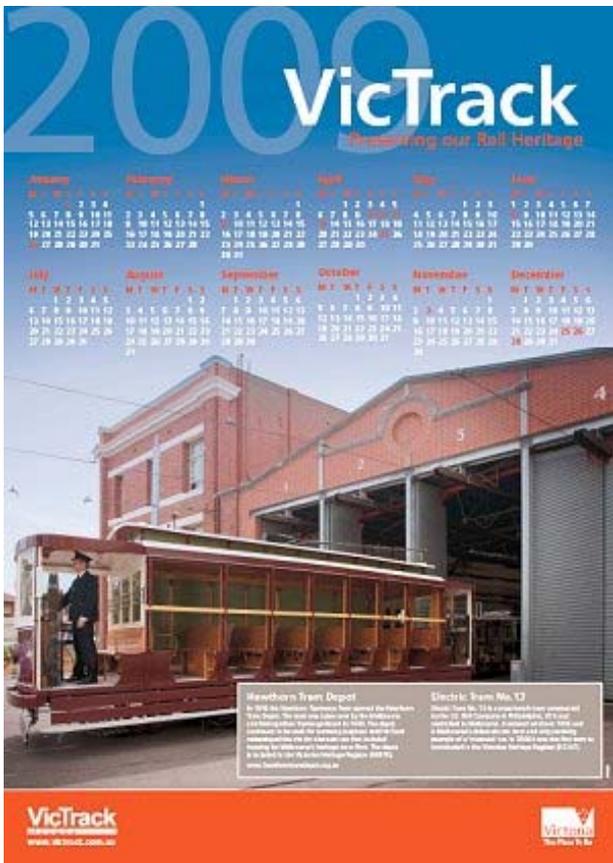
Editor: Warren Doubleday

Design: Russell Jones

4. Providing more facilities in the kitchen to enable small functions and improve volunteer facilities.
5. Scanning of the drawings from Preston Workshops into the VicTrack Document Management System and conserving them.
6. Providing more display cases for sales and small memorabilia and credit card facilities.
7. Undertaking a comprehensive condition report for each tram.
8. Providing new interpretation panels alongside the trams and a handout brochure to visitors.
9. Improving the reception area for visitors and sales and signage.

**Victrack 2009 Calendar**

Free copies of the 2009 VicTrack Calendar featuring NMETL 13 and the Hawthorn depot are available from the depot, on any Open Day while stocks last. The photography was done on Wed. 19 Nov.



**Visitor Surveys**

A number of visitor surveys have been undertaken over the last two years: The results so far are:

- The most popular way of finding us is via the web, with word of mouth being the next.
- Many have been twice.
- For every child, we have about 3 adults
- Visitors mainly from Victoria, but from around Australia and overseas.
- What people like the most were the number of trams, the ability to sit inside them, the depot being a genuine place, the cable tram and the informative staff.
- People would like to see a handout brochure, larger sign, small items displays, maps, interactives and of course, the ability to operate the trams.

**What's been happening**

Over the last couple of months, we have continued to: keep the place in a reasonable order, (given the pigeon problem), make a start on tram cleaning, develop badges for our volunteers, have undertaken a preliminary assessment of the work needed to bring the chassis tram back to life as well as providing tours, welcoming visitors and providing information about Melbourne's trams.

The December Open day was relatively quiet, but November and January were busy with many sales of books, DVDs and souvenirs.

**New Sales Items**

Over the last couple of months we have added a number of new books, models and items to our sales cabinet. The full list can be seen on our web site, under the "Shop" tab or section. These are available by mail order as well and payment can be made by credit card.

Some of the new items are:

*Hobart's Tram Trilogy* by David Kirby – \$60.00. A new comprehensive history of Hobart's tramways – the southernmost in Australia.

*Last Tram at 11* by William F. Scott – \$59.95. The history of the regional Victorian tramways of Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo.

*Legacies Left Untold* by David Chantrell – \$39.95. The fascinating story of Adelaide's Duncan & Fraser Limited – motor body and tramcar builder extraordinaire.

*Trams and Streetscapes – Metropolitan Melbourne 1950s-1960s* – Two volumes. A photographic profile by Lindsay Crow, Colin Pike and John Sargent – \$40.00. Two books containing high quality large format colour photographs of Melbourne's trams in the 1950s and 1960s.

*Destination Subiaco* by Ric Francis – \$30.00. A pictorial review of the Perth electric tramway system, along with *Destination Point Walter* (Fremantle) \$25, *Destination Golden Gate* (Kalgoorlie) \$25 and *Destination West Leederville* (Perth Trolleybuses) \$30.

*1908 Melbourne Tramways Map* – \$49.00. A [reproduction map](#), on high quality paper suitable for framing, showing Melbourne's horse, cable and electric tramways and steam railways in 1908, packaged in a cardboard mailing tube.

### Web Site News

Since the launch of our web site, the site itself has gone from strength to strength. The number of visitors is growing as well. The number of individual visitor hits has grown to over 570 in January. We keep a tab on which pages are looked at in order to develop the site and make it more responsive to our visitors.

Some of the new Articles added since the launch are:

*Alex Cameron: father of Melbourne's electric trams.* "If there is one person who should be awarded the credit for the creation and development of Melbourne's electric tramway system – the largest such tramway in the English speaking world – that honour should go to Alexander (Alex) Cameron." Cameron was one of the founders and was Chairman of the Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust, a driving force behind the eventual establishment of the MMTB.

*In the blood: driving trams in the 1980s and 90s.* "I always have had a passion for old trams and trains, especially those dating from the first half of the 20th century. There is something about them which makes me marvel at the craftsmanship in these vehicles." Written by our Treasurer Carolyn Cleak, it is one of our most popular articles looking at the her career starting with the MMTB in 1980 as a conductress and then later on as a driver. Well worth reading.

Work to develop the Member's area is continuing. Planning is for a Historic Photographic Archive and the reproduction of original tramway documents, as well as organisational documents. This area is password protected.

Further articles are in preparation. Anyone is welcome to contribute to the web site. The Committee has developed an editorial policy for such work.

### Thanks

Thanks to all those who have assisted over the last couple of months and especially those who assisted with the photography for the VicTrack Calendar.

### Open Days – 2009

14 February 2009  
 14 March 2009  
 11 April 2009  
 9 May 2009  
 13 June 2009  
 11 July 2009  
 8 August 2009  
 12 September 2009  
 10 October 2009  
 14 November 2009  
 12 December 2009

Hawthorn Depot is open the second Saturday of every month. Opening hours are 1pm-5pm (Apr-Sep) or 11am-5pm (Oct-Mar)