

The Bellcord

Journal of the Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot

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Committee Appointments

The committee appointments decided at the Annual General Meeting on Saturday 12 August 2011 were:

- Chairman: Rod Atkins
- Deputy Chairman: Kevin Taig
- Secretary: Warren Doubleday
- Treasurer: Carolyn Cleak
- Member: Mike Ryan
- Member: Russell Jones

If there are any issues members wish to raise with the committee, please talk to one of our committee members on an open day, or write a letter or e-mail to the contact details specified in the blue publishing box on the front page.

If you wish to contact an individual committee member, all personal e-mail addresses of Board members are located in the members' zone of the website.

There will almost always be a committee member present on open days to discuss any member's issues.

Merry Christmas

The committee of Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot wish all members a merry Christmas, and a happy and fruitful New Year.

We look forward to seeing you all in 2012.

Open Days – 2012

| | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|
| 14 January | 28 January | 11 February |
| 25 February | 10 March | 24 March |
| 14 April | 12 May | 9 June |
| 14 July | 11 August | 8 September |
| 13 October | 27 October | 10 November |
| 24 November | 8 December | |

Hawthorn Depot is open the second Saturday of every month, and the fourth Saturday of the month during the daylight saving period except for December. Opening hours are 11 am-5pm.

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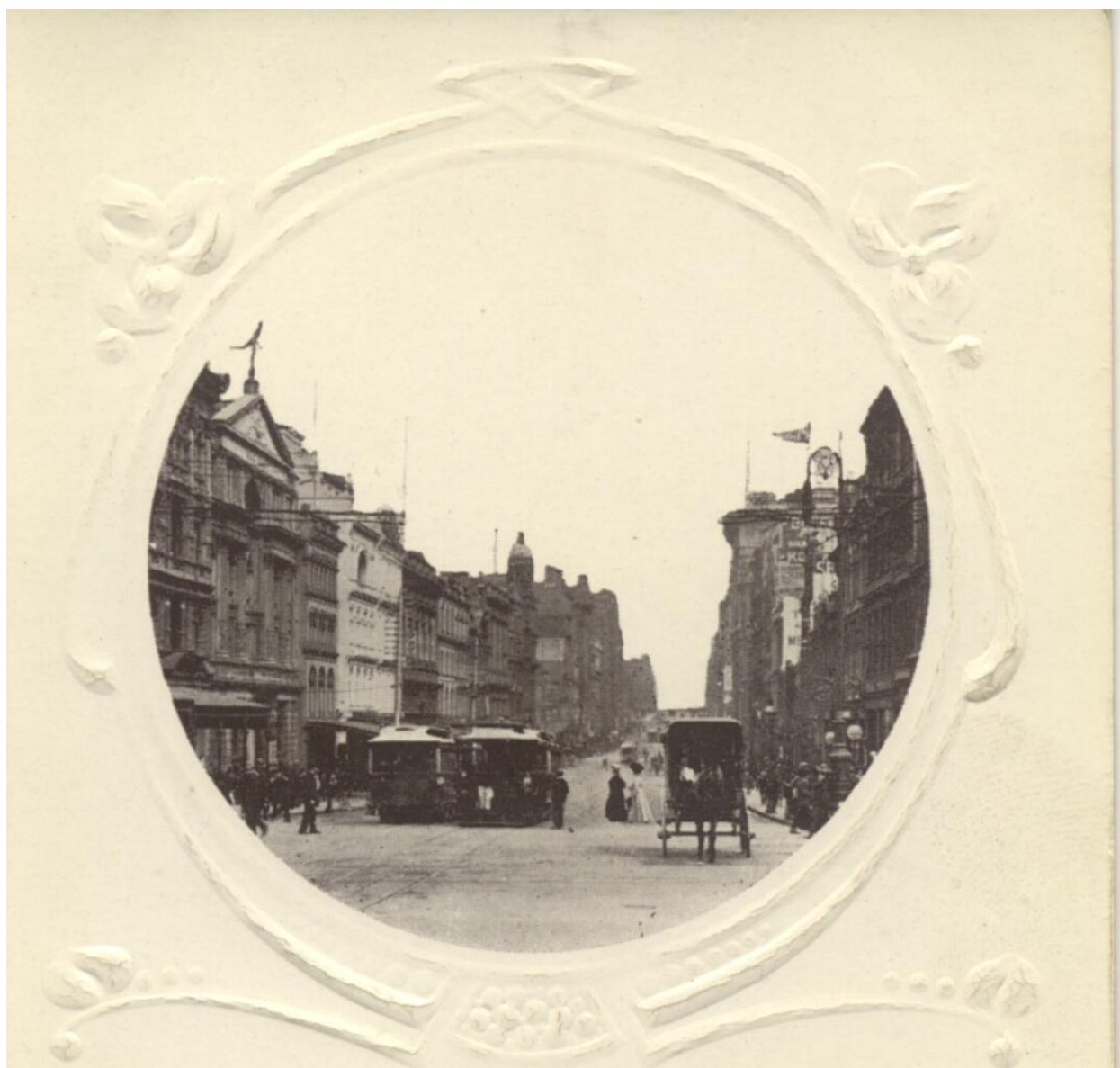
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Collins Street, Melbourne.

A Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year.

—
May all the blessings you can feel
That come from Happiness,
Attend you on this Christmas Day
And all the New Year bless.

Depot News

Development of the museum is slow but steady, concentrating on improving the look and feel for our visitors.

Among the changes have been repairs of the blinds in the front room. One area of focus has been keeping the display cabinets clean.

There have been some ongoing issues with drainage at the south east corner of the depot. This has resulted in buckling and lifting of the wooden block floor at the rear of the depot, particularly after heavy rains. Fortunately, the body corporate has undertaken repairs to the external drainage system, preventing further ingress of water. We will be monitoring drying of the wooden blocks before deciding to undertake any further repairs.

VicTrack has been upgrading the IT infrastructure located at the depot and removing obsolete equipment. As part of this work, upgrading of security of the depot is being examined.

The collection storage room next to the driver training room has been the subject of a clean-up activity, in order to provide extra storage space.

Readers may not know that other groups make use of the main room for meeting on non-open days. Among the organisations using our facilities are:

- Association of Tourist Railways
- Tramway Museum Society of Victoria
- Bus & Coach Society
- Australian Railway Historical Society
- Watermark Body Corporate

Controlling the amount of natural light entering the main room has been something of an issue. Since the installation of a fixed overhead projector, this problem has become of greater concern.

As a result, we are investigating the fitting of blinds to the skylights, to increase the flexibility of this room and its facilities. There are, however, some challenges to be overcome before an effective solution can be found.

Technical Drawings

Kevin Taig is scanning the technical drawings held by FOHTD at Hawthorn Depot, with the objective of

providing electronic copies for reproduction by FOHTD for exhibits and research purposes, as well as providing a valuable service for VicTrack.

This is a key element in our conservation plan for these beautiful pieces of our engineering heritage, safeguarding the originals against damage from handling.

He has just finished scanning the cable tram related drawings in our collection.

Vale Campbell Busch & Bruce McIntosh

It is with sadness we note the recent deaths of FOHTD members Campbell Busch and Bruce McIntosh. Our condolences go out to their families and friends.

Donations

We were recently given a large painting by the estate of the late Ms May Coles. The impressive artwork depicts Melbourne tram W5 785 in Collins St, just outside the former Georges Store.

The artist was Norman Kirkpatrick, who was commissioned to paint this picture by Ms Coles. Unfortunately, we have been unable to uncover any further information regarding the artist, despite searches of the Internet and other sources.

Ms Coles worked for more than twenty five years at the exclusive Collins Street department store of Georges, until she retired in the mid-1980s. She lived close to the West Preston terminus, commuting to work via tram almost every day.

Not long before retirement, Ms Coles decided to capture her memories of her working life by commissioning the painting of an iconic W class tram outside Georges, in this most beautiful section of the central city.

After her death in 2007, her family wished to give the painting a new home, and decided to donate it to the Melbourne Tram Museum @ Hawthorn Depot. We were happy to accept it, and took possession of the artwork during early November 2011. The painting has been installed on the west wall of the entry foyer, well out of the way of direct sunlight. An interpretative label for the work is being prepared.



Citadis under Christmas decorations in a busy tree-lined Collins Street – Photo by Warren Doubleday

Georges was a pillar of the retail establishment in Melbourne, founded in the 1860s, moving to 162 Collins Street in 1884. By the mid-nineteen thirties the department store had become famous for its exclusive clientele and high-quality goods, as well as the stunning art deco interiors.

The company was acquired by David Jones Ltd in 1981. When David Jones and its parent Adelaide

Steamship Company ran into financial trouble in 1995, to the regret of many Melburnians Georges was closed, after one hundred and eleven years of trading at the one location.

The former Georges building at 162 Collins Street has been added the Victorian Heritage Register, and is now occupied by a range of upmarket clothing boutiques and restaurants.

Other recent donations received by FOHTD include:

- A range of Melbourne tram tickets donated by Keith Stodden.
- Tramway uniforms donated by Michael Sainsbury.
- Miscellaneous tramway ephemera donated by Kevin Tierney.

Members are reminded that we actively encourage donations to the FOHTD collection, ensuring preservation of Melbourne's tramway heritage.

Website News

Development of the website continues slowly, despite the distractions encountered by the webmaster from moving back to Melbourne and undertaking new employment.

Recently, all issues of 'The Bellcord' have been moved from the members' zone into the public area of the website. This required republishing every page on the site, due to the need to change the navigation architecture.

'The Bellcord' is now reached via a link on the menu bar at the bottom of every page. However, the link from the members' zone still functions correctly, so you don't have to remember to change your navigation habits.

The 'About' page is also in the process of being refreshed, requiring additional content to be written and checked, as well some minor changes in the website architecture.

The never-ending task of updating the 'Shop' pages also continues, due to the ever-increasing range of stock we now carry.

One area under consideration is the preparation of an audio tour of the museum, for download to iPods and other MP3 players direct from our website. Geoff Brown and Russell Jones have performed some experiments with preparation of individual audio segments for a number of trams, with a view to preparing scripts for the proposed audio tour.

If this initiative progresses, it opens up the possibility of providing iPod rentals for museum visitors, enhancing the visitor experience and potentially increasing our revenue.

We are always looking for assistance in developing new content for the website. If you wish to become involved, contact Russell Jones by e-mail to webmaster@hawthorntramdepot.org.au.

The Shop

A concerted effort has been made to tame the complexities of the cash register. A simplified cheat sheet has been prepared for shop staff to assist them in their use of this key facility.

Now, useful sales reports can be produced at the end of the day, assisting in the process of reconciling sales and cash. There is one rule that must always be followed – do not turn the cash register off at the power point. From bitter experience we have discovered that the battery backup will not last for two weeks, so the programming is lost if we lose power.

It turns out that it takes about four hours to reprogram the cash register from scratch. The next challenge will be solving the intricacies of voiding transactions.

If you require training on the cash register, please contact our webmaster Russell Jones, who should be on site during our January and February open days.

We have new items of stock:

- A few copies of the 2012 Trams Australia calendar remain at \$11.95.
- 'Bondi to the Opera House' by Dale Budd and Randall Wilson at \$35.95.
- 'Pahran & Malvern Tramways Trust' by Ian A. Brady at \$59.95.

Remember, the shop is open on all museum open days, or you can place mail orders by downloading the order form from our website, and sending it in. We accept payment by MasterCard and Visa.

For full details of our stock, view the 'Shop' section of our website.

Visitor Numbers

Over the last few months visitor numbers have been very consistent. Particularly gratifying is the increase in attendances for open days held on the fourth Saturday of the month, which historically has been lower.

Sales of tramway 'stuff' have also been consistently good, and our treasurer Carolyn Cleak has been consistently looking for new stock to tempt both the dedicated gunzel and the general public.

Exhibition Development

The committee has decided to develop a new exhibit for display on the main room, entitled 'Evolution of the W Class'.

The exhibit will consist of four sections:

- Genesis of the W
- A Classic Design
- Trams for Hard Times
- Demand for Comfort

The four sections will describe the inspiration of the drop centre design leading to the W class, followed by the development of the classic standard W2 class design, followed by the impact of the Depression and its impact on creation of the first wide body cars, and ending with the introduction of

the 'luxury' sliding door saloon cars of the SW6, W6 and W7 classes.

A photo montage will be used to illustrate the W class timeline over the top of the exhibit. Interpretive text will tell the story, and particular use will be made of a combination of technical drawings and photographs to draw attention to key points of the story.

Each of the sections will be highlighted by a large scale general arrangement drawing of the key W class types – the initial W class, the standard W2 class, the W5 class and the SW6 class cars.

The text for the exhibit is currently under development, and we look forward to unveiling the completed exhibit some time in 2012.



Painting by Norman Kirkpatrick of SW5 class number 785 in Collins Street outside Georges department store at 162 Collins Street. Donated by the estate of Ms May Coles – Photo by Warren Doubleday