



The Bellcord

Journal of the Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot



Birney X 217 en route from Point Ormond to Elsternwick Railway Station crosses the VR Tramway at the intersection of Glenhuntly Rd, Broadway and Ormond Rd (Summer 1953). X 217 is now on display in the museum on loan from TMSV.

Photo: Noel Reed, courtesy Trams Down Under collection

POINT ORMOND TRAMWAY

The Point Ormond tramway (1915-1960) was built primarily for recreational passengers. In latter years it was operated as a shuttle service to Elsternwick Railway Station using one-man single truck cars as shown above.

The MMTB street sign (right) was recently donated by John Brady, Puffing Billy's mechanical engineer. John was a member of Caulfield Grammar's Railway Club when the Point Ormond line closed. The club wrote to the MMTB asking if they could acquire this sign. To their surprise the Board donated it to the club and it was hung on the clubroom wall.

When the club closed many years later, as a past president John was asked to sort through and dispose of its books and memorabilia. As no-one wanted the sign, he has been its custodian ever since. He contacted us in the hope of it finding a good home. We were very pleased to assist. It is planned to hang this sign on one of the walls of the Training Room, along with a mounted photo of B 2001 donated by Hugh Waldron. *Warren Doubleday*

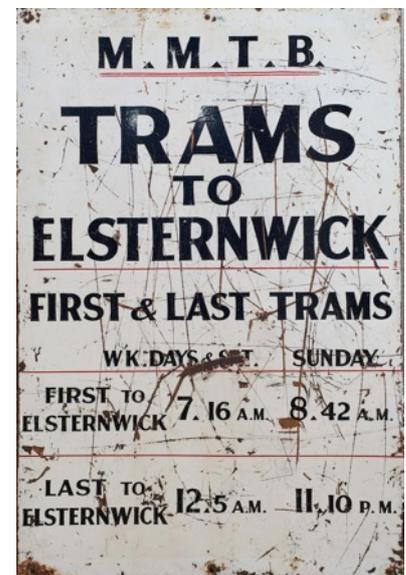


Photo: Alexander Stoeckel

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Museum shop



Diecast models from Cooe Classics are back in stock. In OO 1:76 scale, the models are just \$109.95 each. Choose between W6 class No 965 in MMTB green livery or W6 class No 888 in City Circle livery. W6 965 is also available as an electric model, but only via pre-order (\$240). Contact sales@hawthorntramdepot.org.au for further details or call in at the shop on any open day.

Also in stock is a reprint of Keith S. Kings' *A Short History of The North Melbourne Electric Tramways & Lighting Company Limited* (\$10), and *Ryle'wy: How the horse buses transformed Sydney* (\$59.95).

Manufactured in Melbourne and mounted on hand-dyed silk ribbon, sterling silver tram charms are a tiny memento of our transport heritage. Available in two styles – W class (\$20) or cable tram (\$12).

Note that all proceeds from the shop go towards supporting the museum.

Business name change

Readers will notice that our business name remains Friends of the Hawthorn Tram Depot. Final regulatory approval for the change is still pending.

New cash register software

The shop team have completed the migration of the cash register to new point-of-sale software. This free 'app' enables us to print more detailed receipts, use a barcode scanner and streamlines the sale process. It also has capacity for better inventory and stock management.

New scanner

After seeing and using a new overhead scanner at the Public Records Office in North Melbourne, Kevin Taig and Warren Doubleday recommended purchasing a Fujitsu ScanSnap SV600 for the Depot. While not cheap at \$920, it has been busy since just before Christmas.

Documents up to A3 size can be scanned without placing them on a flat-bed scanner with a lid – which can result in damage to the originals. It also has page straightening attributes.

The scanner resembles a desktop lamp and is very fast – turn the page, press the button, wait a few seconds while it scans and repeat the process. One very helpful feature is word recognition which makes searching for a particular word in a document very easy.

Upcoming Open Days - 2017

11 March	25 March	8 April
22 April	13 May	27 May
10 June	24 June	8 July
22 July	29 & 30 July (Open House Melb)	

The Melbourne Tram Museum @ Hawthorn Depot is open on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month (except 4th Saturday of December) and during Open House Melbourne.

Opening hours are 11am–5pm. (Open House Melbourne 10am – 4pm)

Museum: 8 Wallen Road
Hawthorn
Victoria 3122

Postal Address: PO Box 6172
Hawthorn West
Victoria 3122

E-mail: info@trammuseum.org.au.

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

Phone (open days only): (03) 9819 9522.

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Editor: Geoff Brown

FROM RON'S COLLECTION



Swanston St (1926) Photo: Ron Scholten collection

ABOUT THIS PHOTO: Swanston St on a busy summer's day in early 1926, showing the recently installed electric tramway. Tram S 164 has just dropped passengers at a safety zone and crosses Collins St on its journey from West Preston (via Holden and Lygon Sts) to St. Kilda Beach (via South Melbourne and Middle Park). It appears the crew forgot to change the destination blind at the West Preston terminus. The new W 372 passes a policeman on traffic duty at Collins Street en route to Coburg Cemetery (today East Coburg). An MMTB bus, either a 1925 Tilling Stevens or Thornycroft J with James Motors bodywork, is heading south bound for Elsternwick Railway Station. To its left under the veranda is the former cable tram signal that will remain in operation until the installation of traffic lights in 1929.

Rod Atkins

RECENT DONATION

Oscar Turner began as a cable tram conductor in February 1908 and retired from Camberwell Depot in 1953, aged 65. Here he is pictured in his Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company uniform, showing the pins used to hold the tram ticket strips.

Recently, Oscar's daughter donated a number of photos of her father as well as a 1930 Sections and Fares Book for the Cable and Electric Tramways (the earliest we have seen) and the MMTB 1942 "Air Raid Precautions" in case of air raids.

Warren Doubleday



SHORT QUIZ

Do you know what is meant by the following tramway terms? (Suggested answers are at the bottom of the next page.)

- Bang Road
- Marmalade
- Tango

WHERE PAST AND PRESENT CO-EXIST

I think we are all guilty of not noticing the gradual and small signs that mark the passing of time. Perhaps it's denial on our part, an inbuilt safety mechanism that prevents us from worrying about our own ageing or the ageing of those around us.

But sometimes we see something out of the corner of our eye, sneaking into our consciousness, that causes us to pause and contemplate. We are struck by the changes to the objects in our daily lives, objects that we usually take for granted. It's at these moments we truly grasp both what came before us and what we are currently experiencing.

Sitting in an old tramcar, on seats that have been sat on by countless people, puts our trips and daily preoccupations into some kind of perspective. These people were like us – on their way to work or returning home after a long day, fans travelling to the football or shoppers laden with bags. They also travelled on cold Melbourne days when the wind cuts you in two, on stifling hot days when you stick to the seat and dream of cooler times, and those crisp autumn days that Melbourne occasionally enjoys.

We like to think we are the first to do anything, but we are only the custodians of the present day. It can be reassuring to find that passengers of the past also complained about the service, the cost of the fare, the rudeness of the conductor and the roughness of the driver. They complained about the uncaring fellow traveller, the noisy school children, the heat and the cold.

Empathy for those before us

Weaving in between the exhibits in the museum, being able to climb aboard and sit on the seats, to inhale the smell of old leather and grease, allows an understanding of history and an empathy for those who rode these trams before us.

We find it hard to put ourselves in the shoes of a person from another time where social norms and "the done thing" were so different to what we experience today. Joyce Barry drove her tram at a time when the current thinking in Melbourne was that women were not physically able to do such a job, and yet she did. Today we board a Z class tram without air-conditioning and feel hard done by, even though in the early 1970s these trams were considered the height of modernity. Our expectations change subtly and gradually. Today's luxuries are tomorrow's necessities.



Two of the museum's trams, on loan from TMSV, that feature in photos on pages 1 and 3.

Photos: Ed

The fascination of the old trams for me is their combination of practicality and functionality coupled with the evidence they provide that Melbourne was a very different place not that long ago – proof that they too are products of changing and vibrant days. Visiting the museum gives us an opportunity to sit quietly, if not too many children are about ringing the bells, and enjoy the fruits of a vast variety of diverse individual choices, passions, skills and time.

We should thank all those who have made the museum possible. I am grateful to them for allowing me the opportunity to imagine myself back in time. Good public transport should be invisible, taken for granted, a given. The historic fleet brings it home that we are lucky recipients of a broad and functioning yet far from perfect system, which is continually being upgraded, improved and modified. It's all part of the same story and it is one that needs to be continually told.

So thank you to all who share their knowledge of these special exhibits, week in and week out. You are custodians of a very important aspect of Melbourne's history and, judging by the smiles I see on the faces of all the visitors to the museum, your efforts are not in vain.

Raelene Boag, museum guide

QUIZ ANSWERS (from page 3)

Bang Road: Travelling the wrong way along a tram line. Also, a designated entry or exit track to or from a depot.

Marmalade: A newly qualified driver who can be rostered to work as a driver or a conductor.

Tango: Short-trip off-peak service along Moreland Rd between Brunswick Depot and Holmes St, East Brunswick.

IN THE DRIVER'S CABIN



LEFT: Driver Greg Robinson at the controls of Adelaide's H 369 — not in King William St, Adelaide but in Pall Mall, Bendigo (2016).

BELOW: Greg preparing to depart the Central Deborah Mine (2016).

Photos: Ed

What is it about heritage trams that attracts the level of dedication required to drive them? The weeks of training and testing, the medical examinations and the arrangement of your life around the traffic roster are significant demands. Greg Robinson, a volunteer driver with both Bendigo and Ballarat tramways, shares some of his reflections on the topic.

I had always wanted to be a tram driver but my parents said it was not a suitable job for a young gentleman. So I was sent to university and became an industrial chemist.

My first experience of trams was in Perth in 1950 as the system was being shut down. In Claremont, the trolley buses were taking over, using the single tram overhead for power and a skate that bumped and sparked along the tram rail as the earth. This image influenced me when we moved to Black Rock in the following year. I played trams by wandering the unmade streets of Beaumaris following the sleepers and dog spikes protruding through the surface.

When my family moved to South Yarra then Caulfield, I had ample opportunity to watch and ride a variety of tramcars and observe the relaying of various track, including the installation of the track in Bourke St. At this time, I had my first "sly drive" on an all-night tram (a Q class) down Toorak Rd. In the mid 1960s my interest in trams was given a big boost as I worked as a head office conductor at Malvern Depot during my summer vacations.

Satisfaction of driving

It's not easy to put into words why I enjoy driving old trams. I suppose it is a combination of factors. My childhood fascination with trams and my student employment certainly played a big part. After that I spent some time on a farm where generations of a farming family had preserved old machinery and motor vehicles that still worked. Twenty years ago I helped establish the Limestone Coast Railway from Mt Gambier to two destinations: Millicent and Penola/Coonawarra, where I drove a retired Adelaide railcar known as a "Red Hen".

Machinery from years ago just won't drive itself. It requires a driver who can work in harmony with it. I find enjoyment from operating machines built by previous generations and understanding their particular characteristics.

cont'd page 6



cont'd from page 5

One of the lessons I learned years ago was that you have to be aware of what is going on well ahead of you and around you when driving. To gain my car licence as a young fellow, my mother paid for defensive driving lessons. At this time I learned to look at the traffic well ahead and act accordingly. This lesson was vital when driving for a tourist railway with multiple level crossings and a train full of tourists. It was also great practice for driving trams. I still enjoy applying that skill.

One maximum traction car at Bendigo has a distinctive noise from its spur gears when coasting. A prominent enthusiast years ago described it as "grongling". It is part of the character of this grand old car.

The single truck Californian combination cars can develop a real sway at speed. I am aware that this may unseat very young children sitting in the open drop ends. So I mostly restrict the speed to full series to reduce this risk. All tram drivers learn how to handle each class of tram.

Camaraderie

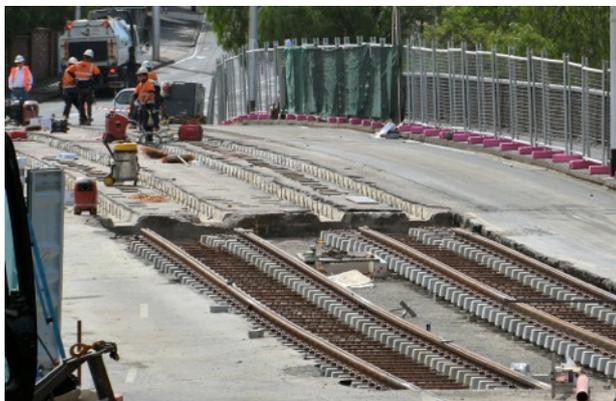
While working as a conductor at Malvern Depot back in the 1960s, I found some old trams stored at the back of the shed. They were under the control of the TMSV and the guidance of Bob Prentice. I joined this organisation and established many friendships which I have continued to this day.

As my involvement broadened through the Limestone Coast Railway, the Portland Cable Tram Project and then COTMA, I saw the same faces popping up in various locations. It seemed we all enjoyed the same interests. In retirement I decided to move to Maldon and, under the influence of some old friends, I became a guard with the Victorian Goldfields Railway and a driver at Bendigo and Ballarat tramways.

It seems that some of my motivation to drive trams is also the group of enthusiasts I mix with. I'd recommend it to those who share these interests.

Greg Robinson

WALLEN ROAD BRIDGE WORKS



Wallen Road Bridge works looking east towards the museum (January 2017). Photo: Mal Rowe

Yarra Trams and their contractors undertook major repairs to the tram track over the Wallen Road Bridge between 3 and 9 January this year. The project was part of the bridge refurbishment undertaken by VicRoads to improve the capacity of the bridge from 22 to 44 tonnes.

On the bridge where the old rail had been bolted to the concrete deck, it was cut out, the channel cleaned and new bolts drilled and glued into the deck. New rail was then laid onto base plates fitted with Pandrol clips and the whole lot encased once again.

On the western approach, both the track and concrete sleepers were renewed. To allow for bridge movement, in the centre of the bridge each of the tram rails is separated by a 2cm diagonal gap.

Route 70a trams terminated at Yarra Boulevard using a portable crossover. Passengers walked over the river and past the museum to pick up the service at Riversdale Junction. Yarra Trams customer service staff used the museum tea-room for meal breaks and rest periods out of the summer heat. We hope this raised awareness of the museum among employees who provide an important tourist information role.

A short history of the bridge can be found in Bellcord, Issue 25 (Dec 2014) on our website.

Adam Chandler & Warren Doubleday



Diagonal gap separating each rail in the centre of the bridge. Photo: Ed

DOMAIN ROAD TRAMWAY

In coming months, the tramway along Domain Rd and Park St, South Yarra will close for at least five years and be replaced by new track along Toorak Rd West. This is to permit the construction of the new metro underground Domain Station. Public Transport Victoria are yet to decide if the original route will reopen.

The Domain Rd-Park St route can be traced back to Melbourne’s early years. By the late 1850s, a horse cab service ran from the City via St Kilda Rd to Prahran and may have operated along Domain Rd some of the time.

In April 1877, George Gunn began a City to Prahran omnibus service via Domain Rd and Park St. On his deathbed a year later, he sold the enterprise to the Melbourne Tram & Omnibus Company (MTOC) that operated it until their cable tram service to Prahran began in 1888. The omnibus may have looked like the one pictured below.

The route is described in the 1881 Victorian Municipal Directory as travelling from the Royal Arcade in Bourke St via Domain Rd, Park St and Toorak Rd to Chapel St and High St corner.

Cable Tramway

As planning for the MTOC tramway began, the October 1883 Act (#765) authorising construction specified a route via Domain Rd, Park St and Toorak Rd – which was the omnibus route.

However a year later, the *Additional Branches & Amendment Act 1884 (#815)* varied this route by authorising: “A branch of the length of three furlongs six chains commencing at or near the junction of the St. Kilda and Toorak roads [sic] proceeding along the Toorak-road [sic] to the junction of Park-street [sic] in the city of Melbourne and parish of South Melbourne.”



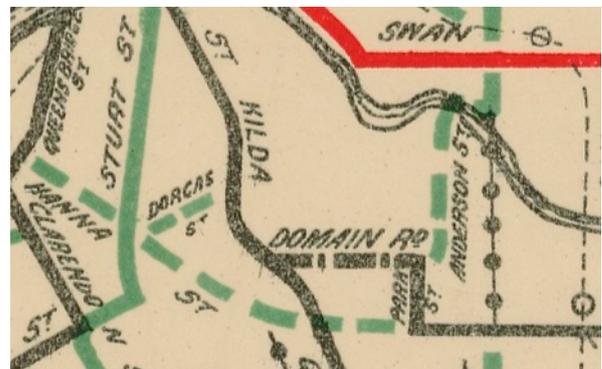
Flemington & Moonee Ponds omnibus.
 Photo: Essendon Historical Society

So this raises the question: why was the Prahran cable tramway built along Domain Rd?

The answer is likely a pragmatic decision to stick with the established omnibus route and its passenger travel patterns. This route did serve the gates of the Botanic Gardens and the homes of some prominent citizens, including Francis Clapp’s family – but established travel patterns were likely the primary motivation.

MMTB General Scheme

In 1923 the General Scheme proposed the abandonment of the Domain Rd cable track and the construction of an electric tramway in Toorak Rd West to Hanna St. It also proposed the conversion of the Park St track to electric tramway as part of a northern extension over the Yarra River to Hoddle St.



A segment of the General Scheme Map (1923). The black dot-dash line indicates tramway to be abandoned; the green dashed line indicates proposed tramway. Courtesy State Library Victoria

The photos on the following page show the disconnection of the Domain Rd cable tracks from St Kilda Rd during the conversion work of early 1926. The isolated cable tramways to Prahran and Toorak continued in use for some months until they too were converted for electric traction.

In early 1927 when these services were reconnected to St Kilda Rd, it was via the original route of Domain Rd and Park St, not along Toorak Rd West. No doubt, established travel patterns and road access were influential factors in this decision.

Now in 2017 when the tracks in Domain Rd are severed again, trams will finally be redirected to Toorak Rd West, as first authorised in 1884.

Editor

Thanks to Brian Weedon for his assistance with the omnibus information. Ed

Domain Junction 1926



St Kilda Rd & Park St looking south (1926) Photo: State Library Victoria, handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/336759



Fifty metres further south, showing the disconnected Domain Rd cable track (1926) Photo: State Library Victoria handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/336820



Looking north showing disconnected Domain Rd track (front right) and W class tram in Park St, South Melbourne (left) using diversionary route to Swanston St. Photo: SLV, handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/336839

NOTE: These photos are available online and appear to have been commissioned by the tramway contractor, Foundation Co. Ltd. If readers wish to view these photos in more detail, type the full "handle..." address provided for each photo into a web browser and download the high resolution TIFF file to a computer. Ed