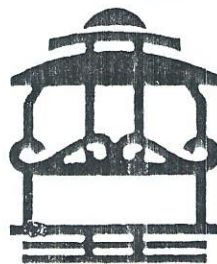


RUNNING JOURNAL



The
Tramway
Museum
Society
of Victoria
Incorporated

New Series No. 162

April 2003

Box Hill Extension Opens.

This newest extension to Melbourne's electric tram system was officially opened on Friday 2nd May 2003. The line runs along Whitehorse Road, from the former Mont Albert terminus at Union Road, to a new terminus just short of Station Street in Box Hill.

As part of the opening celebrations, the Society was approached in late April by Yarra Trams for the loan and use of our Horse Tram No 253. The Society readily agreed to the request and wasted no time in repositioning the car within the Exhibition Shed to allow easy loading on the required day. The tram was then thoroughly cleaned, and the horse draw-bars refitted.

The tram was loaded onto a low-bed tilt tray truck at 7.00am on the Friday morning and off-loaded onto the outbound track adjacent to the Nelson Road intersection. Two specially trained horses were then attached, and the tram set forth up the hill to the new terminus, where the horses were then transferred to the other end of the car. At 11.00 a Citadis tram carrying the Premier Steve Bracks and the Transport Minister Peter Batchelor approached the terminus, at which time the horse tram set off towards the city, passing the Citadis on the double track. The scene was simulated to show the history of the old (horse tram) passing the new (Citadis).

The horses then pulled the tram back to Nelson Road, where the horses were unhitched, and the tram then reloaded onto the truck for return to Bylands later in the day. The Society received considerable publicity for its involvement and appreciated the opportunity to have been part of this event. We would like to thank Yarra Trams, especially Julie Roberts and Rod Beet, for their support and for making it possible.

TMSV 40th Anniversary Tour.

This event took place on the 12th April and coincided with the 100th anniversary celebrations of electrification of the Bendigo tramways. Our comfortable coach, driven by Society member Michael Fedor, arrived in Bendigo in time for us to join with other enthusiasts and invited guests to witness several special ceremonies. The first was to unveil a plaque in appreciation of the work performed on the battery tram restoration project, the second was to unveil a plaque to commemorate the 100 years of electrification, and the third was to officially relaunch into service restored X1 tram No 466.

When the tour was originally planned, it was intended to have a "special surprise". A request was made to the Minister for Transport, the Hon Peter Batchelor to have Society tram Hawthorn Tramways Trust (M class) No 8 taken to Bendigo for the joint celebrations. No 8 ran in Bendigo as SEC tram No 3 between 1928 and 1956, when it was donated to the AETA and returned to Melbourne. In addition the Bendigo Tramways also asked the Minister and the Society for the loan of Birney tram No 217, as part of the congregation of all surviving Australian Birney trams in Bendigo. This was readily agreed to, therefore this created a joint surprise. It was most enjoyable to see all the Birney trams, including No 303 from Adelaide and No 30 presently on loan to Sydney, all together at one time, and HTT No 8 back in more familiar surroundings.

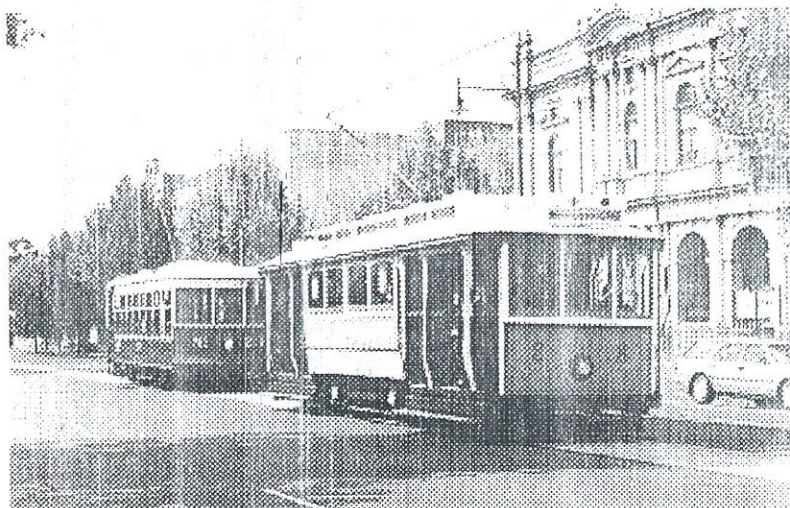
The biggest surprises for some were yet to come. Both No 8 and No 217 were to be driven by Society personal, qualified in Bendigo. Life Members Len Millar and Keith Kings were selected to drive the Birney and HTT No 8 respectively. It was appropriate for Keith to drive No 8, as he was involved in its acquisition by the AETA way back in 1956. We still have not got the smile off Keith's face!!

After the formalities and an inspection of the depot, those on the tour joined the Birney and No 8 for a tour over the system, with plenty of photostops along the way. By sheer coincidence the two service cars of the day were former Hawthorn Tramways Trust bogie cars being MMTB No 122 and Bendigo No 25. No 122 originally ran in SEC service

as Geelong No 32 being transferred to Bendigo in 1956 to become their No 3, replacing our car when it was retired. Ironically the two Bendigo No 3's passed themselves on several occasions.

On returning to the depot we again joined our road motor vehicle, and after a quick look at the Bendigo Gasworks depot, we headed back to Melbourne via Bylands. After an inspection of Bylands and several tram rides, we again rejoined our coach and headed for the big smoke.

Those who took part on the tour were extremely complimentary and congratulated the organisers on a job well done. The down side was that although we just covered the costs of the tour, it was very poorly patronised by TMSV members, a very disappointing situation. A lot of time, effort, organisation and money were invested in this exercise, and had it not been advertised widely elsewhere, it may have struggled to occur. Be aware that due to the poor response from within this organisation, it may restrict similar events in the future.



*We seem to have been here before?
Society trams IHT No 8 and Birney
No 217 pass the Bendigo Institute of
Technology in Pall Mall, headed for
Charing Cross, during the Society
tour. Both trams have been in
Bendigo before, No 8 as SEC No 3
between 1928 and 1956, and the
Birney in December 1994 for another
event.*

Photo:

Graham Jordan

Cable Trams at Malvern.

Members will recall that several years ago the Society supplied a cable tram set for restoration, at no cost to the Society, utilising funding via an employment scheme. It was initially envisaged that the project would be completed within six months, and that the cars would be cosmetically restored. Trailer car No 256 and grip car No 28 were transported to Malvern and placed in a compound adjacent to Norm Maddock's museum in Stanhope Street. However due to a number of issues, time constraints and the shortage of funding and participants, the project slowed down and began to draw out. Also the work undertaken went beyond that originally estimated or agreed to be done.

After several frustrating attempts to get a finalisation to the project, the Board made a decision that the trams must be finished and that they were to be removed from the compound at Malvern. Following discussions with the Department of Infrastructure and agreement was made whereby the vehicles would be transferred to Hawthorn depot to join other vehicles in the Heritage Fleet there. On Tuesday 8th April 2003 Society members Andrew Blume, Daniel Berry, Aileen Jordan, Graham Jordan, Keith Kings and Brooke Mitchell were at Malvern and with some difficulty due to their location, carefully extracted the grip car and the trailer car from the compound, and placed it on a long bed tilt trailer for transport to Hawthorn. At Hawthorn, Mike Ryan from the DOI was on hand to open the depot and assist unloading the vehicles.

The two cars have been beautifully restored and are a credit to the people who worked on them. The Society appreciates the efforts of Graeme Aitken from BEST, and Society member Doug Prosser for their work undertaken on both vehicles.

Museum Works

Work has continued at a hectic pace at Bylands. The special working-bee day on Saturday 22nd March saw a long-standing problem addressed. The roadside drain at the main entrance gate has for many years been of major concern as over the years with heavy rains it gets washed away creating a deep depression which makes vehicular crossing hazardous. The drain was excavated, followed by the installation of several large steel pipes. Crushed rock was then compacted around the pipes then levelled with the surrounding road and driveway. A marked improvement. It was also

planned to erect two new gate posts at this entrance, utilising sections of former steel tramway poles, but this was deferred until a post-hole digger can be sought.

The clean-up around the house and the former tram farm behind the toilet block is almost complete. The caretaker Corey Robertson arranged to have on-site two large waste bins. A large volume of rubbish and other waste was collected and consigned into these. The former Domain Road Inspectors' cabin has been relocated to the area south of the Stores Shed and adjacent to the Depot Junction. It will be restored and re-erected at this location. The remains of the G class tram have been consolidated for final disposal and the H class is presently being prepared for the same fate. With the sale and removal of Ballarat No 42 several months ago, this area is now virtually clear. The area adjacent to the substation has also been cleared of surplus poles and overhead fittings. A number of concrete barrier edges that were stockpiled in the carpark area have now been properly set out and a number of unserviceable sleepers have been used to form a roadside edge along the incoming main driveway.

On Monday 7th April, a crane was on-site to move or reposition a number of bulky items. The tram maintenance bug-hut was moved from its former position adjacent to the house to a new location near the Vehicle Maintenance Shed. The former Tonka truck tool box was then placed at the same location. The crane then moved the H class body to the middle of the north east paddock along with the underframes of the B class and the G class. The crane then repositioned cable trailer No 462 from the east to the west track in the cable tram shed, and relocated cable trailer No 586 from the cable tram shed to the Exhibition Shed. The last job for the day saw several lengths of Geelong rail extracted from the rail stack and positioned ready for re-use.

Several exhibits in the Exhibition Building have been repositioned. With the need to move the horse tram for its trip to Box Hill, it allowed the cable drum wagon to be placed at the south end of the shed. It was then decided that for display purposes that the Twentymen cable car set should face the other way. Subsequently trailer car No 290 was turned 180 degrees and placed at the south end of the grip car. On its return from Box Hill, the horse car is now at the north end of the shed. New permanent display boards have been erected along the west wall adjacent to the cable car display.

Trackwork for the Vehicle Maintenance Building continues as time and other commitments allow. Tramcar maintenance continues and we now have 11 trams available for traffic. W1 427 has had replacement, correct length trolley poles fitted, but instead of skid mounted poles, these are fitted with wheels. For trial purposes only, not any wheel mounted poles, but from our stores, Brisbane wheel mounted poles!

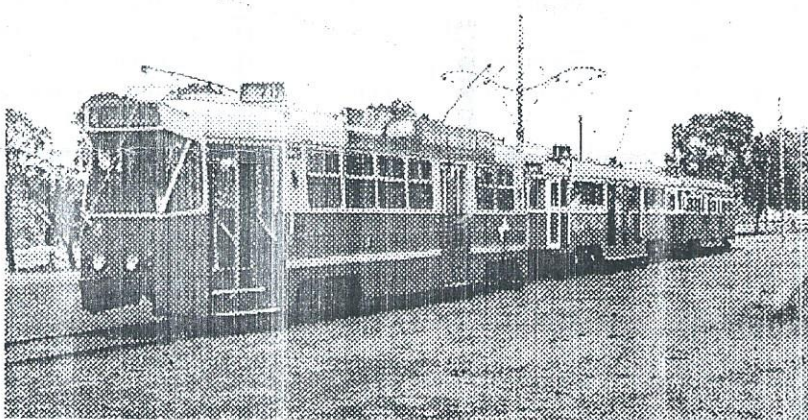
Minor work has been undertaken on Z class No 5. All external advertising boards have been removed and the interior has been cleaned out. Minor repairs have been made to the roof to seal the hole where the main operating cable for the pantograph passed through. Two conductor's consoles have been retrieved from storage and await repair for re-installation.

The ever changing scene at Bylands.

Recently acquired tram Z, No 5 enjoys a brief encounter on the main-line in the company of W3 667 and W6 902.

Of note is that No 5 has been refitted with trolley poles. The external roof advertising has since been removed.

Photo: Graham Jordan



Check out our Web Site

We now have our very own web site. Member Russell Jones has with the valuable assistance of his sister, spent a lot of time and effort to produce a very impressive detailed and informative web site that will certainly rank amongst some of the best. The site has been registered and can be found at www.tmsv.org.au. The site will be regularly maintained and upgraded. We still also have our other general listing. To find us key in www.ozvisits.com.au and once online click into Victoria then key in Tram Museum in the venue name box. Press on the "more Info" box to see the site.

Working Bees at Bylands

The following dates have been designated as working bees:- Saturday 24th May 2003, Saturday 23rd August 2003 and Saturday 22nd November 2003. We would welcome all possible assistance from members on these days. Works to be undertaken on these days are those that cannot or are not usually possible to be undertaken on a normal public operating day (Sunday).

To assist with catering on the days listed, please register your assistance with Keith Kings on 9836 4932 or Graham Jordan 9798 6035.

Please mark these dates in your diary. Your assistance will help us to maintain our viability. Many hands will make the work just that little easier for us all.

Coin Dispensers For Sale

The Society has available for sale a small number of metallic coin dispensers which were used by the seated conductors on the Z class trams when they were first introduced in 1975. They are in the form of a chute type canister and were designed for all coins from 1 cent to 50 cent. Coins are loaded from the top and dispensed at the bottom by a push-down lever. They are available from the kiosk at Bylands for \$20.00 for members, or \$25.00 for non-members. They can also be purchased by mail-order by adding an extra \$10.00 for postage and handling. Contact the Secretary Graham Jordan C/- PO Box 27, Malvern 3144 or phone on (03) 9798 6035 for more details.

Citadis versus Combino – the passenger experience

By Russell Jones

This article reflects the opinions and prejudices of the author, and the Tramway Museum Society of Victoria does not endorse or support these opinions.

Melbourne tram travellers are now in a reasonably unique position in the world of light rail transportation, in that they can now sample two of the most modern low-floor light rail vehicles on the market, in the form of the Alstom Citadis of Yarra Trams and the Siemens Combino of M>Tram. This article endeavours to provide a comparison of the two from the perspective of the tram commuter.

Aesthetics

The Citadis is undoubtedly the better looking vehicle from both an interior and exterior view. The exterior is smooth and uncluttered, as is the interior which has quite an airy feel. The use of green for passenger grab stanchions and strap hangers does not offend the eye, and the blue seat covers merge in quite well.

The Combino reflects its German origins – the interior is heavy, cluttered and clunky and provides a quite oppressive feel to the passenger. The use of yellow for the grab rails and strap hangers is harsh on the eye, and the dull green upholstery adds to the drabness of the interior. This is an interior that will date very quickly – if it hasn't already. The exterior styling reflects the interior, and is very clumsy in comparison to the Citadis.

The Citadis is clearly the winner in the aesthetics department, as to be perfectly frank the Combino is just plain ugly.

Ticket Machines

The location of the ticket machine in the Combino adjacent to the articulation turntable is a serious design flaw. There is an icon painted on the floor suggesting where passengers should place their feet in order not to experience the disconcerting effect of the tram floor moving under them – but this is clearly the work of someone who has never experienced the difficulty of using a ticket vending machine under full acceleration or deceleration.

The positioning of the ticket machine between the centre doors in the Citadis is far superior, and it is the clear winner in this area.

Ride Quality

The ride quality of the Combino is significantly smoother than that of the Citadis, although it has a tendency to hunt even on straight track. If a curve is taken too quickly, the Combino hunts quite alarmingly. I cannot comment on the curve taking ability of the Citadis, as I've only travelled up and down Collins Street in it.

The Citadis does not handle track well that is less than perfect, and is at times quite a rough rider.

However, the ride of both vehicles reflect their design philosophy, and is inferior to conventional high floor double or triple bogie tramcars. This is a flaw in the fixed wheel axle-less design required to provide low floor passenger access.

If I had to pick a winner here I would choose the Combino due to the smoothness of the ride.

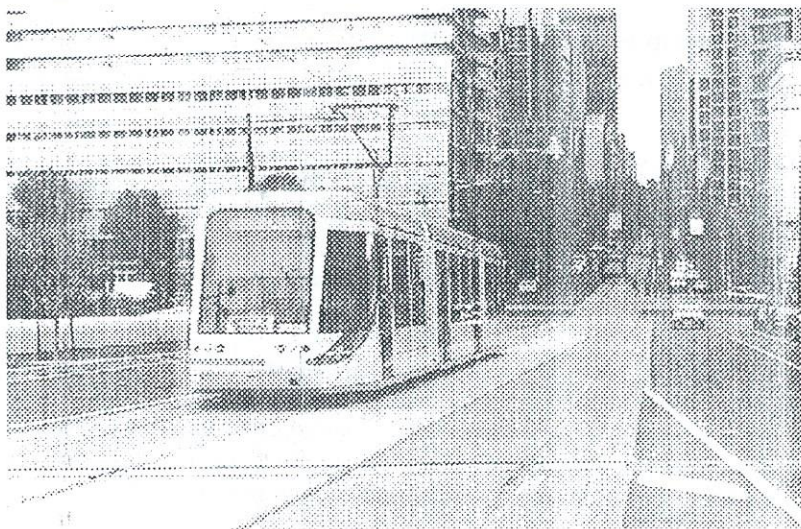
Passenger Seating

Speaking as a reasonably large person, I find the seating in the Combino more comfortable than the Citadis, as there is just that little bit more room, and the lumbar support is more effective. However, this is a very subjective area, and I will leave it to individuals as to which they prefer.

The seating arrangements required by the low floor design does restrict the number of seats available, which is less than that of the Z tramcars they are replacing (or at least before they had ticket machines installed). Although I have not counted the number of seats available in each, the Combino gives an impression of having a couple more seats available – despite the more limited seating in the end saloons.

The positioning of the window frames in the end saloons in both vehicles blocks out a substantial amount of the view for seated passengers – which obviates the intent of the large glassed area.

Overall, I would judge neither tramcar as satisfactory in this area, but I would give the Combino a slight edge over the Citadis.



A new tram on a new tramway. Citadis tram No 3020 on driver training and familiarisation duties, crosses over the recently completed new Collins Street Extension bridge. Collins Street along with Latrobe Street has been extended over Spencer Street Station and the adjoining railyards into the Docklands area. Tram services have also been extended along Flinders Street Extension, as part of a new circular network to serve the Docklands.

Photo:

Mike Fenton

Standing Passengers

The Combino is the clear winner in this area, as it has far more grab rails, stanchions and straphangers than the Citadis, which is positively sparse in comparison. In fact, I would class the Citadis as having a serious design flaw in this area, particularly for shorter passengers.

The design of the Citadis straphangers is clearly the work of an industrial designer that has never stood in a tram, as they provide little support due to their inverted 'T' design. I will admit that they are aesthetically very attractive, but in this matter function is more important than form.

The hip high 'bum rests' in the Citadis' centre saloon are aesthetically attractive, but are not particularly practical or comfortable. They are clearly intended to provide space for wheelchair passengers – however, the Alstom designers would have been better off taking the route of the Combino in providing fold-down longitudinal seats in this position. This would have been a much more practical solution.

Call Buttons

Both the Combino and Citadis are seriously deficient in terms of the number of call buttons. This is a severe disadvantage when the vehicles are crowded, as it can be impossible to reach one to request a stop. Even when a tram is almost empty, passengers have to look around to find a call button.

The use of communication cords is far preferable to the limited number of call buttons, and I would strongly suggest that both types of vehicle be modified to include this feature.

Neither vehicle is satisfactory in this area.

Air Conditioning

Having sampled both LRV's in the heat of a Melbourne summer, the air conditioning of the Combino is able to keep the heat at bay just a little better than that of the Citadis. This is an area of particular concern, due to the large glassed areas of both trams. We will have to wait for winter to check out the heating – but I suspect that it will be more than adequate in both cases.

Overall

Both tramcars have insufficient seating, particularly for the long haul routes on the Melbourne system – I suspect that this is an influence of their European design for systems with shorter routes than Melbourne. The Combino is a much more practical vehicle than the Citadis for its provision for standing passengers, but the location of the ticket machine is a serious downfall, and I think it needs to be moved to a position between the doors for passenger safety.

My preference? Well, I'd like to have a Citadis with fold down seats instead of a 'bum rest', the ride quality (but not the hunting), nuclear powered air conditioning and the seats of a Combino, and with a lot more grab rails, stanchions and sensible strapangers. And don't forget the communication cords in addition to more call buttons.

But neither type of LRV can beat the passenger carrying capacity of the Melbourne B2 class.

Wanted – Don' just sit there?

As you may have noticed, there has been a recent increase and enthusiasm in the amount of works being carried out around the museum at Bylands. Although these changes are welcome, many have been long overdue. But this does not mean there is a need to get complacent. We have, and continue to have an urgent need for assistance for both works around the museum and traffic roster duties at Bylands. Why not be part of the experience that is your museum, come and enjoy a relaxing day in the country with your fellow members.

If you are unable to physically assist, why not help by making a financial donation. This would be of considerable benefit by helping the museum continue with its works programs. Because of our small limited workforce, and the time required to do the many jobs around the place, it is now becoming necessary to employ contractors to undertake works for us that previously we could, or would have done ourselves. This unfortunately costs money. All donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible. If you can assist contact Graham Jordan on (03) 9798 6035 after 7.00pm most nights.

Remember, this is your Society and Museum too, don' just rely on any other person, one day they just might not be there?

Dog-gone

Many members, especially those who are, or have been regulars to Bylands over the last decade, will be familiar with a small four-legged friend, a chihuahua called Yogi Bear. Yogi's owners being Society members Graham and Aileen Jordan. His exploits apart from being the "unofficial mascot", included chasing the sheep, riding the tram and generally being friendly to anyone who showed an interest. Unfortunately, Yogi passed away at home recently on the 7th May 2003 after a short illness. His last "official" outing was on the 40th Anniversary tour to Bendigo. His last visit to Bylands was the Sunday prior to his death. His presence and friendly nature has already been missed.

Running Journal is your newsletter. Why not be part of it? We welcome your articles for inclusion. Articles can be sent to the Secretary C/- PO Box 27, Malvern 3144, or by e-mail to graleen@hotkey.net.au preferably in Microsoft Word format. Typed or neat handwritten format is also acceptable.

Running Journal is published by the Tramway Museum Society of Victoria Inc. For further information regarding the Society or museum activities contact The Secretary, PO Box 27, Malvern 3144, Phone/fax (03) 9798 6035. The Tramway Museum Society of Victoria Incorporated is registered under the Associations Incorporations Act (1981). Registration Number A 1864 E and Australian Business Number (ABN) 12 739 015 600