

# RUNNING JOURNAL



The  
Tramway  
Museum  
Society  
of Victoria  
*Incorporated*

*New Series No.167*

*April 2004*

## Change of Address

For many years, the Society has used a post office box as its delivery address for Society mail. Although the cost of such a facility is minimal, it requires to be cleared on a very regular basis so that nothing is left to chance. Since 1987 the Society's mailing address has been based at Malvern, and has been usually cleared on a weekly basis by the Secretary/Treasurer since that time. The cost of the post office box is one thing, but the costs involved in servicing it is another. The average annual cost to the Secretary to service the post box works out at around 1000% more than the cost of the box., not to mention the time factor involved. This individual has absorbed this over many years, at no cost to the Society.

However times and financial constraints change, and as a result, a recommendation was made to the Board to relinquish the post office box in favour for the redirection of all Society mail to the Society's Registered Office address. In future the mailing address for this Society will now be 38 Piccadilly Crescent, Keysborough 3173. All mail should now be forwarded to this address. The post office box at Malvern will be retained for a short time, until all notifications and changes to Society literature is completed.

Whilst on the topic of address changes, Society Chairman Keith Kings recently moved house after 47 years living on Through Road, Camberwell. Keith also now has a new telephone number, which is listed elsewhere in this newsletter.

## Museum Work

Work around the museum continues at a steady pace, mainly as a result of the continued dedication of a small band of volunteers. A number of tasks are on the go at any one time, but this is dependent on priorities. Effort is also being placed on the maintenance and presentation of a number of exhibits. The repainting of Ballarat No 17 into its 1950's appearance continues with the whole south end cabin area now in undercoat. Remedial work has commenced on the cabin area at the north end of the car, in preparation for repainting, which will be undertaken following the completion of the south end.

Stripping of old and flaking paint on tank car 7W continues, with some areas already treated with primer. John Walker continues to repair and restore the wooden controller covers from various trams to their original varnished appearances. Adjustments have also been made to the pinstriping on W3 667. Mark VI bus No 759 is now ready for repainting. All new panels have been primed, and all external fittings such as lights and vents have now been refitted. All other external surfaces have been rubbed back in readiness for undercoating

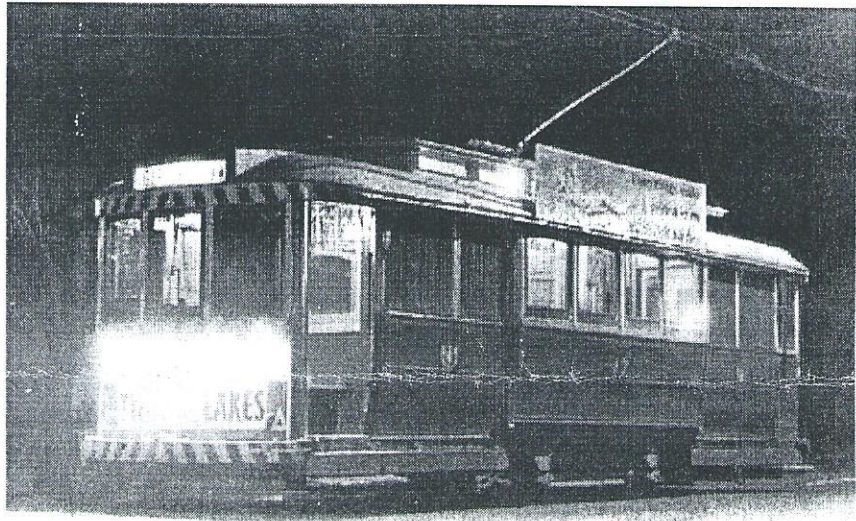
Changes have been made in the kiosk. The member's table has now been relocated into the area immediately behind the current kiosk. This area is now called the "Members' Lounge" where members can congregate during the day and at meal times. A fridge has been placed in this area for member's use only, thereby keeping the kiosk fridge free. The last piece of roof capping has finally been installed on the kiosk roof, which has now made the whole area waterproof. Unfortunately there was no original pieces of capping available, so it was necessary to "manufacture" a replacement from a suitable piece of material. The picnic tables near the flagpole have been repaired and straightened and are now in a much more useable condition. These tables are quite popular with visitors in the warmer months of the year.

The construction of the trackwork for the Vehicle Maintenance Building is now complete, but still awaits some welding of several joints and electrical bonds. Lifting and packing is currently underway, but we will require more ballast to be purchased to complete this task. The rail trolley T2 was the first rail vehicle to travel around the new reverse curve into the Vehicle Maintenance Shed and over the pit. The bogies from W2 457 were later pushed around the curve for storage undercover in the Shed.

The clean-up around the site continues between other tasks, with a quantity of old timber being consigned to the firewood pile. The former B van has also been cleared of material. The bus parts and motor in the old carport have been removed, sorted and restacked undercover elsewhere. It has also been necessary to adjust some of the visual displays in the Exhibition Shed, and relocate or add to some other display items. Filling of potholes in the various roadways around the site continues and several of the dangerous cypress trees around the house have been cut down, with more to follow.

*During the final decade of the operation of the provincial tramways in Ballarat and Bendigo, all cars were fitted with additional illumination to make them more visible at night. Seen here is Ballarat No 17 sitting at the Victoria Street terminus awaiting departure time bound for the "Gardens via Sturt Street West". The dash canopy lighting, zebra stripes, white dash and Twin Lakes advertisement on this car are now a thing of the past.*

**Photo:** TMSV Archives.



## **"What do we have to do to get your attention".**

In the last newsletter we sent out an important and urgent plea to the membership for assistance. We also indicated that we must rely on our member's support to maintain the viability of the Society and the museum, and if that is not forthcoming, what our alternatives may be. It seems that our attempt has once again failed to get peoples attention, the only responses received are from the few regulars indicating that the message is not getting through. So we will try again.

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. Our Roster Officer Keith Kings would appreciate more offers of assistance to fill the Traffic Roster. If you can help contact Keith on his new telephone number which is (03) 9808 0971

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, or cover major expenditure items. Because of our small limited workforce, and the ever-increasing jobs around the place, it is becoming necessary to employ contractors to undertake some works. Our operating costs are also increasing, for instance, our current Public liability Insurance premium for 2004 is \$5,505.50 and our Council rates for 2003/2004 are \$1,107.45, with further increases expected next year. This unfortunately costs money, which is increasingly more difficult to find. All donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible. If you can assist contact Graham Jordan on (03) 9798 6035 after 7.00pm. The Society is most grateful to long-time member Ron Scholten, who sets a fine example to others, making a regular financial donation to Society funds.

**Remember, this is your Society and Museum too, don't just expect to rely on a few others for its survival.**

## **Working Bees at Bylands**

As advised in the last two issues of Running Journal, Saturday working bees have been scheduled for 2004. We welcome all possible assistance from members on these days, and would appreciate seeing many extra faces to supplement the same few "regulars" that we see week in, week out. Works undertaken on these days (weather permitting) are those that cannot or are not usually possible to be undertaken on a normal operating day (Sunday). Never fear that regardless of the weather conditions, there will always be something to do, so do not be deterred. The working bees will be held on the following Saturday's in 2004 – 15th May, 14<sup>th</sup> August and the 13<sup>th</sup> November. Please mark these dates in your diary now, your assistance on these days would be appreciated.

There was an extremely poor attendance at the last Saturday working bee on February 21<sup>st</sup>. However we must appreciate the efforts of interstate member Warrington Cameron, who set an excellent example to others, travelling from Canberra (via Geelong) to assist on the day. Thank-you Warrington.

## Acquisitions

Several important items have recently been acquired by the Society. Firstly the Society was approached by Monash University indicating that they had a mercury-arc rectifier, similar to, but a smaller and more compact version to those as used in tramway sub-stations. The unit also came complete with two new unused glass bulbs still in their original packing cases. The opportunity was too good to refuse, especially when the University also offered to contribute to the transport costs to Bylands. Arrangements were made to transport the unit and spare bulbs to Bylands on the 11<sup>th</sup> March. Society Secretary Graham Jordan was on hand at Monash University to carefully pack and support the glass bulb in the rectifier unit and to supervise loading. On arrival at Bylands the unit and spare bulbs were unloaded in the selected position in the Exhibition Shed under the supervision of our caretaker Corey Robertson. It is hoped that this unit can be made operational, not only as an exhibit to show what glorious pieces of equipment they are, but also to provide DC power for vehicles in the Exhibition Shed.

Long time supporter Ken Painter has for many years had stored at his home a small number of concrete tramway sleepers which were originally installed at Caulfield by the Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust as an experiment (see story on page 6). Because of the size and bulk of these items we have been unable to easily "pick them up" for transport to Bylands. Due to the need to utilise a crane truck to move the mercury-arc rectifier previously mentioned, it was an ideal opportunity not to be missed. Keith Kings was on hand to supervise the loading of the sleepers at Ken's house, after which the truck travelled to Monash to load the rectifier, and then onto Bylands. The sleepers will be used to construct a small panel of display track, using tramway grooved rail.

Through the generosity of Gary Davey of the Victorian Bus Museum at Drouin., the Society was recently donated a large quantity of bus parts and equipment, including a complete fully overhauled MK VI motor, all of which are suitable for the Society's ex-Government AEC buses. It was necessary to hire a suitable truck to collect this equipment, which was picked up by Keith Kings, Graham Jordan and Corey Robertson on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April and transported to Bylands. To unload the larger items including the motor, use was made of the tram lifting jacks, which although took longer, saved considerable expense. We wish to also thank David Frost, Peter Carwardine, Daniel Berry and Brooke Tolliday for their extra assistance in the unloading and to the Victorian Bus Museum for their grateful donation.

Several new directional or interruptive display signs have also appeared around the site and as mentioned earlier a second-hand fridge has been made available for the Member's Lounge.

## New Members

We would like to welcome the following new member who has recently joined the Society.

No. 604                      Mr Stephen Rooke                      -                      Bendigo.

## Car Club Visit

On Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2004, the Central Highlands Charter of the MG Car Club visited Bylands for their monthly outing. This group which comprised of around 30 cars, arrived mid morning and spent several hours at Bylands. A guided tour of our facilities and exhibits was included with the customary tram rides. Although most of the group provided their own picnic lunches, the Society BBQ was made available for those that need "something a little warmer". The sight of these beautifully restored and maintained vehicles next to the trams was a sight to behold. The group was so impressed with the service, courtesy and professionalism shown to them, they have vowed to return as well as telling other kindred groups about their wonderful day in the country.

## Visitors

We have also welcomed several members of other tramway groups who have recently visited Bylands in recent months. In late January Ian Seymour, General Manager of the Adelaide Tramway Museum (AETM) spent virtually two days assisting and discussing with us different aspects of museum operations and COTMA issues. Ian had not been to Bylands for many years and commented on a number of the changes that has happened over that time.

On the last Sunday in February Sam Boon and Simon Jenkins from the Ballarat Tramway Museum arrived courtesy of Len Millar, who was the rostered OIC on the day. They spent the day looking into, at, around and under almost everything they could including acquainting themselves with their four former local cars from Ballarat. Both were impressed with our unique collection of trams including the Z class. At the end of the day they helped create TMSV history when they assisted in pushing the trolley and later ex W2 457's bogies into the pit shed and over the pit.

## The St Kilda Junction Signal Box – Historical Highlights

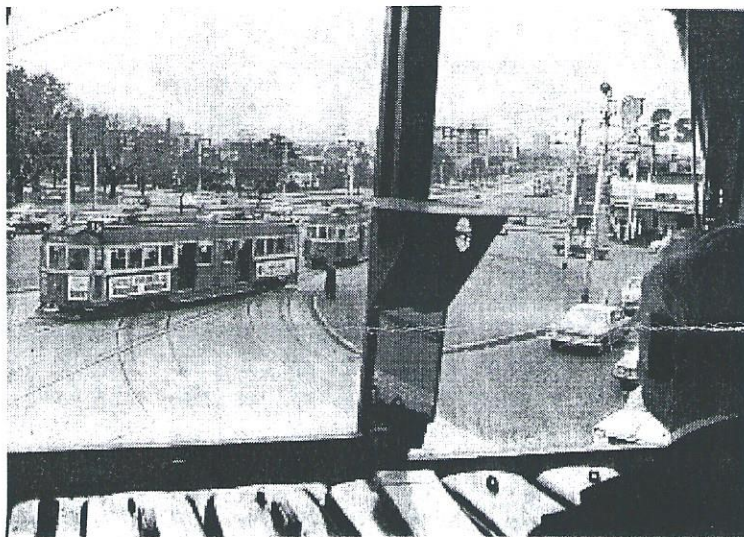
How many people ever paid attention to the many tramway signal boxes that once existed on most major tramway systems in Australia. These important but mostly unrecognised icons, helped the flow of traffic and facilitate the movement of trams across traffic chocked intersections. A classic example is the one originally placed at St Kilda Junction, which served the southern lines of Melbourne's tramway system. So lets see what did happen.

The cabin was located high above the Junction on the south east corner bordered by Wellington Street to the east and High Street to the south. When a tram arrived at the junction, the driver brought his tram to a halt, sees the points move to make whatever track he is to take, gets the "All Clear" from the signal lights and the starting signal from his conductor, and moves the tram away. Sounded simple didn't it. But there was quite a lot of activity behind the scenes.

The equipment used by the signalman to operate the points and signals consisted of five machines known as Table Interlockers. These were numbered and labelled as follows:- 1 & 2 controlled St Kilda Road - **DOWN**, 3 controlled Wellington Street - **UP**, 4 controlled High Street - **UP** and 5 controlled Fitzroy Street - **UP**.

The interlockers were made for the MMTB in the United States by the General Railway Signal Company of Rochester, New York and were installed at the junction early in 1929. When the equipment arrived in Melbourne, it was taken to Malvern Depot where it was assembled ready for use, and then transported to the junction being raised up, installed and connected to the power source. The interlockers were worked with 12 volts D.C, which also energised the relays that worked the signals and points. The signal lights were powered with 110 volt D.C. connected in series with small lights in the interlockers that corresponded with the light indicators at the junction.

The globes used in the signal lights were of 60-watt traction type as used in tramcars, the motors which operated the points were operated by 600 volt D.C. each one of the table Interlockers was interlocked with the others both electrically and mechanically by means of a system of rods, thus preventing the signalman from making opposing moves, like sending a tram to St Kilda Beach at the same time as giving the "All Clear" to an UP tram in High Street. The machines themselves were a compact unit, and took up little room in the signal box. Each interlocker is fitted with colour lights corresponding with the appropriate signal indication as shown to the tram driver at the junction. The order of the light appearances in the interlockers were as follows:- No 1 from St Kilda Road – **Red, White**, No 2 from St Kilda Road – **Red, Orange, Green**, No 3 from Wellington Street – **Red, Green, White**, No 4 from High Street – **Red, Green**, No 5 from Fitzroy Street – **Red, Orange, Green**.



*A birds-eye view as seen from the St Kilda Junction signal box. The signalman watches as W5 773 turns into Fitzroy Street bound for St Kilda Beach (route 15). A W2 tram bound for East Malvern (then route 4D) waits for the signalman to reset the road. The five interlockers can be seen immediately in front of the signalman as can one of the two mirrors used by the signalman to monitor movements in High Street and Wellington Street. The former Wellington Street line can be seen turning to the right immediately in front of the cabin.*

**Photo:**

**G Bowen**

As well as the colour lights there also appeared small semaphores or banners in the interlockers with the name of the road set printed on them. For example, signalling a tram from Wellington Street to the City, a white light would appear together with a small banner with the words "Wellington Street" printed on it. This then returned to blank and the light to Red when the signal returned to danger.

To work the signals and points, a small lever was provided on each interlocker and was operated in conjunction with a button, which was pressed to obtain the correct signal indication and point setting. There were 3 main lever positions on the machines, Left, Centre and Right, marked L, C, R and these levers were moved to correspond with the direction the tram was to travel, So that if a tram arrived at the junction bound for East Brighton or Malvern, the signalman moved the

levers on interlockers 1 and 2 both to the left, pressed the buttons, and this then set the points for the left curve and gave the Orange light appropriate for that road.

Similarly, if a St Kilda Beach tram arrived, the signalman moved the levers on 1 and 2 to the right, pressed the buttons and the sets of points for the right curve, which registered the White light. But for DOWN trams to High Street, the No 1 was moved to the left and the No 2 lever to the right and the buttons were pressed to give the straight line and the Green light. For an UP tram in High street, one need only to move the lever on No 4 machine to the right to obtain the correct signal, and for an UP Wellington Street, the lever on No 3 was moved to the right. For an UP tram in Fitzroy Street the No 5 lever was moved to the left and as the points for this line were normally set for the curve, there was no need to press the buttons. However for cross-junction movements east and west, it was necessary to press the buttons to change the points.

Although the signal box used power supplied by the St Kilda sub-station, power could also be switched in from the SEC mains in case of a power failure. The big spotlights that illuminated the junction at night were also operated from the signal box. From casual observations, one may think that the signalman's job was fairly uncomplicated. Not so. At peak times there were more than 100trams an hour through the junction. In the PM peaks the signalman on duty had to keep a careful watch of the signals being given to homegoing traffic, as the junction did not have traffic lights and was under the direction of traffic police on duty.

In 1966 about 1048 trams travelled through the junction every weekday, not counting specials, scrubbers or other unscheduled cars. With the reconstruction of St Kilda Junction commencing in 1967, the end of the line was rapidly approaching for the signal box at this location. The new tramway junction saw the tram tracks placed in their own reservations, the Wellington Street line closed, replaced with a new divided road slightly to the north, separated by a new line in the centre reservation between Chapel Street and the junction. The east/west connection from Fitzroy Street was removed, and a new alignment was made for trams between High Street and the junction.

With the re-routing of the Wellington Street trams onto the new line, the signal box became redundant. It was removed from its elevated position in December 1968. A future article will cover the redevelopment of St Kilda Junction.

*In 1967 work commenced on the redevelopment of St Kilda Junction. In order to keep the southern part of Melbourne's tramway system operating, it was necessary to build temporary connections or bridges over the ongoing construction works. In the foreground the new temporary double track is being constructed. The St Kilda Junction signal box can be seen just above an East Brighton bound (route 64) W3 tram turning into Wellington Street.*

**Photo:** G Jordan Collection



## Restorations at North Fitzroy

During the early half of 2001, the Society obtained funding from the Minister for Transport for the material cost for the restoration of former works tram No 19W to its original passenger configuration as NME&TCO No 4, (MMTB U Class No 205). The society then entered into a project agreement with Bayside Employment and Skills Training (BEST), who at that time were also undertaking a project at Malvern restoring a cable tram set. BEST, as a provider of employment and training for the unemployed and/or unskilled, arranged separate funding to cover all costings of employment and training. The U Class restoration was a six month based program, and was based at the former North Fitzroy tram depot.

The project commenced in July 2001, and quickly prospered, which resulted in a second tram No 16W being delivered to North Fitzroy for restoration. However at the end of the six-month period, both trams remained unfinished, mainly due to the fact that BEST had not managed the project in the manner that had been expected. A similar situation also existed with the Malvern project, which eventually dragged on for three years from the original date of commencement for what was supposed to be a similar six-month project.

As a result no further work has been done to the vehicles at North Fitzroy. Up to the cessation of work, the Society had spent almost two-thirds of the funding it had obtained on the material costs incurred, with almost all materials required to finish the project on hand. The remaining unspent funding is presently held in trust, and cannot (and has not) be used for any other purposes than that agreed without approval from the Minister.

The current Society Board realises that whilst this project remains unfinished, it does cause some embarrassment to us. As a result the Board is investigating as to what alternatives may be available to us, and as a result several proposals are currently being put together for a submission to the Minister, in order to have the project completed. Under the terms of our Agreement with the Minister, when the project is complete the vehicles are to be made available to the Government on loan as part of the Heritage Fleet for a prescribed period of time.

## Tramway Meeting

Based on an initiative from Kym Smith of the Bendigo Tramways, a meeting of representatives from all the Victorian tramway groups (Bendigo, Ballarat, TMSV, Portland and Haddon), was held at the Bendigo tram depot on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2004. All the tramway groups in this State are members of the Association of Tourist Railways, which is the peak body for the Heritage Rail Industry within the State of Victoria. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss topics, which relate specifically to these tramway groups, the expectations of these groups of membership of the ATR, and the relationship of the tram groups to the ATR and COTMA. The Society was represented by Keith Kings and Graham Jordan, with John Frost, Secretary of the ATR and Shane Moore from 568 Operations Inc being observers to the meeting. It was unfortunate that no representative from COTMA was present at this meeting.

Other areas such as the possibilities of joint rules for tram groups and the methods of contact between the tram groups on ATR matters were discussed. There were some positive outcomes from the discussions, which will ultimately benefit all groups in the future. The Bendigo Tramways must be congratulated for their initiative in calling such a meeting, and for the hospitality shown to the visitors by the staff of the Bendigo Tramways.

## COTMA

As advised in the last RJ, the COTMA Executive was to meet in Sydney on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2004. Discussions regarding the TMSV's position, concerns or rejoining COTMA was to be presented on our behalf. During April we received an official acknowledgment from COTMA, the contents of which will now require further discussion by the Society Board.

## In retrospect

**37 years ago:-** **Experimental concrete sleepers stand the test of time.** In May 1914 the Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust laid 59 experimental concrete sleepers in a section of the outbound track in Railway Avenue, Caulfield. They weighed 3 cwts each and the only reinforcement was bird wire.

The rails were secured to sleepers with 5/8" holding down bolts, the nuts of which were screwed down on to the clips bearing on the rail flanges. To allow some movement these bolts were passed through G.W.I. pipes cast into the sleepers. An inspection was made in 1927 and all the sleepers were found to be sound, but had sunk and had to be repacked with road metal to bring them to the correct level.

Another inspection was made in November 1961 and all sleepers except two were found to be still sound. This is a remarkably good result considering the crude methods used in making the sleepers, and although this section of the line is subject to only light traffic, suggests that modern PSC sleepers would give almost indefinite service.

*(From Hume News – Monthly Journal of Humes Limited November 1967) Courtesy Ken Painter.*

**Note:-** The sleepers were removed in May 1984, 70 years after they were originally installed. Six of these sleepers have now been donated to the Society by Mr Ken Painter, who had the foresight to retrieve them for future preservation.

**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/- 38 Piccadilly Crescent, Keysborough 3173 or by e-mail to [graleen@hotmail.net.au](mailto:graleen@hotmail.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 contact The Secretary, 38 Piccadilly Crescent, Keysborough 3173. Phone/fax (03) 9798 6035 or Website at [www.tmsv.org.au](http://www.tmsv.org.au). The Tramway Museum Society of Victoria Inc., is registered under the Associations Incorporations Act (1981). Registration No A 1864 E and Australian Business Number (ABN) 12 739 015 600.