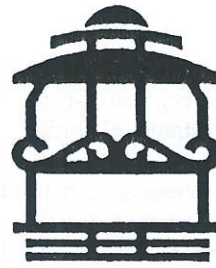


RUNNING JOURNAL



The
Tramway
Museum
Society
of Victoria
Incorporated

New Series No.170

October 2004

New Acquisition

Recently the Society became aware that the Victorian Department of Infrastructure had a need to clear surplus trams from areas within Preston Workshops and the nearby former Thornbury depot. As a result the DOI requested that museum groups, through COTMA, indicate requirements for any vehicles being displaced from those locations in an attempt to reduce the need to relocate to another storage site.

As a result, the DOI received a number requests from several museum groups, some being from interstate for cars to add to their respective collections. An urgent meeting of the Society's Tramcar Committee was convened and as a result one of the recommendations made was that we apply for W2 tram No 646. This car is currently part of the Heritage Reserve Fleet based at Preston. The DOI has acknowledged our request, and has indicated that the car is available to the Society. Details as to any terms or conditions have yet to be finalised, however it is anticipated that No 646 will be transferred to Bylands before the end of the year.

What is the Society's interest in this car. W2 646 was the last W2 in regular service in Melbourne being withdrawn on the 11th December 1987. It was based at Preston Depot, however upon withdrawal it was placed in storage to be retained as part of the Heritage Fleet. In 1989 it was repainted and returned to limited traffic at South Melbourne depot, mainly for use on Route 12 during weekdays. After several years it was again placed in storage along with W2 600.

It must be noted that the W2 class tram is a very robust and reliable vehicle. This is clearly demonstrated by the number of similar vehicles preserved in operating condition at kindred museum groups around Australasia and overseas. Not only are they fairly easy to maintain, the availability of replacement parts is greater due to the numbers still in operation. This was also a consideration in the Society's Tramcar Committee recommendations.

When No 646 finally arrives at Bylands, it will be in good company of its sister cars being 220, 427, 509, 643 and 644. (All we now need to do is find car No 645? – Ed).

Victorian Railways 150th Anniversary.

This was celebrated on Sunday the 12th September 2004. In conjunction with other member groups of the Association of Tourist Railways, and in recognition of Bylands former railway heritage, a special trip was organised to run at 12.20pm, the actual time of the first train from Flinders Street to Sandridge (Port Melbourne) 150 years before.

A small group of members and visitors assembled around W3 No 667 which was adorned with suitable signage to signify the event, and after being photographed by the local newspaper the Kilmore Free Press, set forth at the allocated time for a run to the northern terminus. The crew for this event being Society Secretary Graham Jordan as Motorman and Charles Huggard as Conductor. These two members were chosen as they are our "oldest" (longest serving) active regular crew members.

The day did attract some interest from the public and a wonderful front page story complete with two full colour photographs appeared the following week in the local Kilmore newspaper.

Car Club Visit.

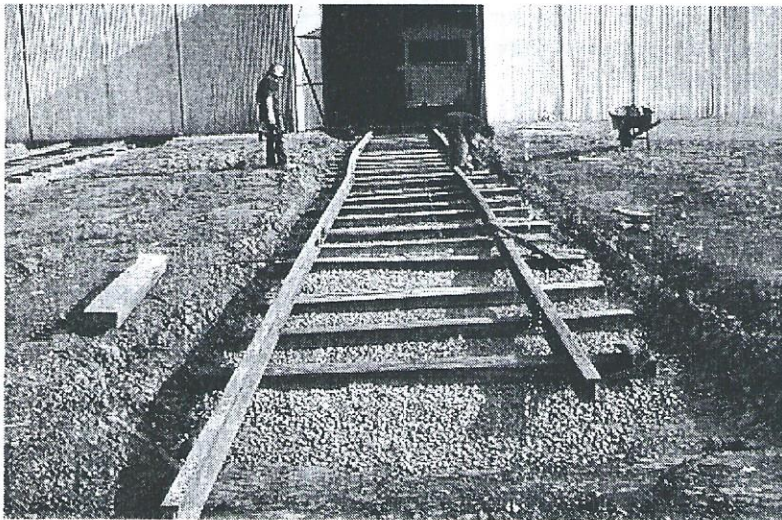
On Sunday 17th October 2004, the Humber Car Club arranged to call in at Bylands on one of their regular outings. It was pleasing to see the many and varied types of vehicles that are the pride and joy of these enthusiasts. A good roll-up of participants thoroughly enjoyed our hospitality, and many valued comments were received from the visitors.

Museum Works

Bylands continues to be a very busy place. There is never any shortage of work to be done around the place, and the face of the landscape is constantly changing.

Trackwork has continued to consume many hours in recent months. Lifting and packing of the track into the Vehicle Maintenance Shed has now been completed, and after the purchase of several more truckloads of ballast, final surfacing and levelling to top of sleeper height, including the outside shoulders is now almost finished. Our Chairman Russell Jones has spent many hours sweating over a hot shovel distributing the ballast, most of which was previously carefully placed in strategic locations by our earthmoving contractor. It is anticipated to do the final welding of some rail joints and bonding on the working bee day on the 13th November, and once this is complete the track will be available for use. It is hoped to relocate tank car 7W and the ballast trailer 24W into this building to make room for W2 646.

There has also been a lot of activity on trackwork outside the Exhibition Shed. It was necessary to purchase a quantity of railway sleepers for this task, and suitable secondhand units were delivered early September. Over three weekends the track suddenly appeared outside the two eastern roads (C and D roads). This was greatly assisted by the preparation work carried out in advance. There is now two straight tracks of approximately 25 metres in length outside the northern end of this building. This track is permanent and will initially be used to unload vehicles soon to arrive at Bylands from Melbourne. It has been custom that when the word "trackwork" is mentioned, there is a rapid exodus of willing participants. However we are grateful to those who assisted on this project so far being, Graham Jordan (Project Manager), Russell Jones, Michael Fedor, William Fedor, Matthew Parker and Becky Edwards. Construction of tracks outside roads A and B and the connecting pointwork is planned in the "not-to-distant" future.



Work progresses on laying the track outside road C at the northern end of the Exhibition Shed. With the rails and sleepers laid out members William Fedor (left) and Graham Jordan (right) make adjustments in readiness to gauging, drilling and spiking of the rails to the sleepers. To the left of the photo, can be seen part of road D as initially laid out. Just inside the shed door MK VI Bus 759 complete with a new rear panel is undergoing repair.

Photo:

John Walker.

The removal of the dangerous Cypress trees adjacent to the house continues, mainly due to the ongoing efforts of Caretaker Corey Robertson, assisted by Daniel Berry and Brooke Tolliday. The destruction of the tree remains is limited due to seasonal and other weather related conditions. However inroads are being made in conjunction with the regulations currently in force.

Tram maintenance and restoration continues between other tasks. The annual servicing of our running fleet continues on a rotating basis. Ballarat No 36 has been returned to traffic following its internal detailing, courtesy John Walker. The completed job is very pleasing on the eye. Work on painting 7W by Michael Fedor continues. It has been decided that due to its condition, that a cosmetic restoration would not be satisfactory, so work has now seen the stripping of some body panels back to bare metal or wood. To make 7W operational again, Graham Jordan and Corey Robertson have installed new trolley base mounting timbers to the previously installed new longitudinal planks, followed by refitting of the trolley bases and poles. In true recycling fashion the new longitudinal planks and base mounting timbers have been made from some of the timber originally used for the walkways alongside the pits at the former South Melbourne depot. The coil, lightning arrester, associated cabling and wiring has also been refitted in their original locations. It is pleasing to see 7W "complete" again after many years.

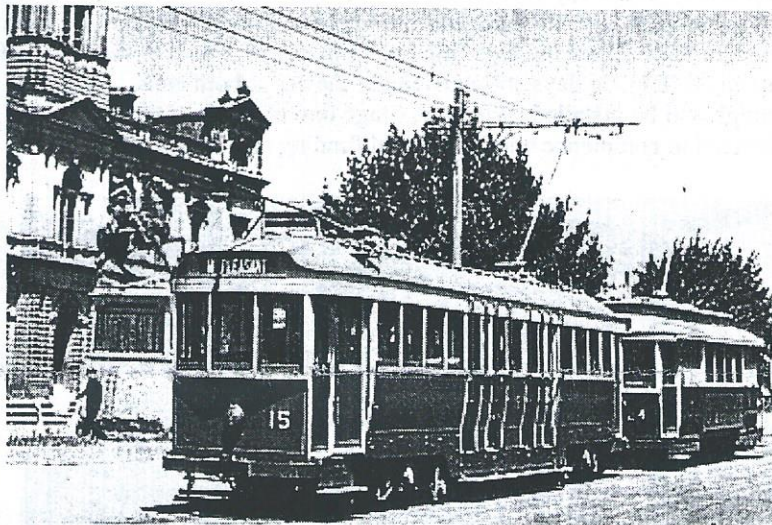
Work on the repainting of Ballarat No 17 by Graham Jordan continues, with the cream colour being applied to the south end of the car. Once the car is completed it will look rather striking in its early 1950's livery. With the knowledge gained on 7W, work will soon commence on the necessary repairs required to the trolley bridge of X1 467. Body repairs and repainting of AEC MK VI Bus No 759 is also continuing as time permits.

An assessment has been made on several tramcars, which currently are not available for traffic, or require "work" as to what is required to return them to operation. Once the Vehicle Maintenance Building and pit are up and running, these tasks will be attended to promptly, giving us a good supply of useful operating exhibits.

As we have already said, Bylands continues to be a busy place. Why not be part of the changing landscape and come along and contribute and help share the load.

Talking of changing landscapes, this excellent view was taken in Sturt Street, Ballarat in the early 1950's. Although the trams have long since disappeared from this area, the general surrounding background still remains unchanged to this day. Of the trams shown, Ballarat No 15 was renumbered in 1953 and became No 36, now at Bylands. No 24 met with an unfortunate accident and was scrapped in 1957. The SEC livery shows the cream colour as used around the lower edges of the door frames. Our car No 17 is being repainted to represent that as shown on No 24.

Photo: State Electricity Commission



Working Bees at Bylands

The next working bee at Bylands have been scheduled for Saturday 13th November 2004. 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). Never fear that regardless of the weather conditions, there will always be something to do, so do not be deterred.

To assist with catering on the days listed, please register your assistance with Keith Kings on 9809 0971 or Graham Jordan 9798 6035.

Please mark these dates in your diary. Many hands will make the work just that little easier for us all.

Restoration at Bendigo

As reported in the last Running Journal, the Society has entered into an agreement with the Bendigo Tramways to undertake and complete the full restoration of former works car 19W to its former glory as NMETLCo No4. An amount of work was originally undertaken on this car under a work scheme at North Fitzroy depot several years ago but remained unfinished at the completion of the scheme. The scope of the works at that time would have seen the car restored cosmetically, with minor structural alteration and repair as required.

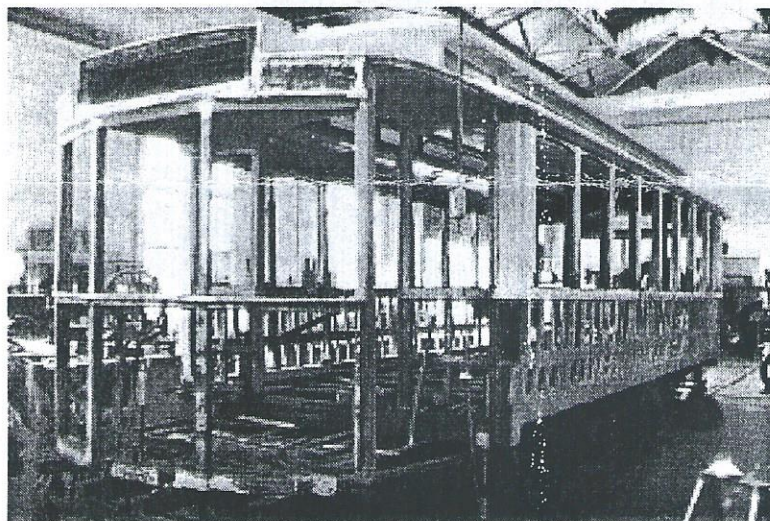
With the need to get the car completed for the upcoming Centenary of Electric Tramways in Melbourne during 2006, there was an necessity to take the initiative to see that the job was completed and to the appropriate Accreditation standards and current operating requirements.

Thursday 9th September saw much tramway activity at North Fitzroy depot. Although all the overhead is still in position at this depot, there is no traction power available in the depot area. Our Q class No 199 (formerly 16W) was manually shunted from No 1 to No 2 road to allow No 4 to be brought from the rear of the shed to the fan so that it could be lifted for transport to Bendigo. After several hours No 4 was safely loaded and tied down, and was soon heading north to its new but temporary home.

On arrival at Bendigo it was initially placed in the main depot, prior to transfer to the workshop so that work could commence. As part of the scope of works approved to be undertaken in Bendigo, would see some of the work undertaken at North Fitzroy reworked to address several problems, which were incomplete or unsatisfactory. This does not mean that the work undertaken at North Fitzroy was suspect, however the opportunity was now available to undertake more detailed and remedial work than what was originally envisaged under the initial cosmetic restoration.

Soon after work commenced, it became apparent that we had made the correct decision to send the car to Bendigo. During the dismantling process, a number of areas of major deterioration appeared, many in places, which were not subject to the works undertaken at North Fitzroy. It has therefore become necessary to dismantle the car back to its frame, and the replacement of some major structural sections, including the straightening of the whole frame to eliminate a rather noticeable bow. This work will certainly ensure the car should survive another 100 years.

Works also underway include the overhaul of the controllers and circuit breakers, brake and air systems, strengthening of the bumpers and summers and the total rewiring of the tram for both traction and lighting. This tram has never had standard MMTB towing lugs fitted to its bumpers, however the fittings for the original towing hooks used for the trailer cars in NMETLCo days still exist under the car at both ends. As part of the works in Bendigo the standard type MMTB fittings will be installed. Work on Stage one of this project is expected to take 26 weeks, with work on Stage Two not expected to commence until additional funding can be sourced.



The staff in the workshop at Bendigo wasted no time commencing the task of rebuilding NMETLCo Car No 4. Seen here is the car after it was stripped back to its frame so that the necessary repairs to the structural timbers could be undertaken. This also allowed for the frame to be straightened to remove the rather noticeable bow that the body had developed over its life.

Photo:

Bendigo Tramways

Spring Time

Its that time of year again when the sun shines the trees green and the grass "grows". And grow it does at Bylands. There has been a recent flurry of the green stuff so much so that the 0-4-0 grass munchers (sheep) cannot keep up. It is therefore necessary to assist our woolly friends keep the undergrowth in check.

But this can be difficult without the necessary equipment or labour. Not only do we require human assistance in keeping the vegetation under control, we also have a need to replace our mower which is no longer operational and uneconomical to repair. We are therefore make an appeal to anyone who may have a motor mower in reasonable operating condition, with or without a catcher, which they no longer require and can make it available for use at Bylands. Ideally we would like to aquire a ride-on mower, but this may not be possible unless we can obtain one at a low reasonable cost or by donation. If you can assist us or know of anyone we can approach in this regard, please let us know.

Whilst on the subject of obtaining useful equipment, we are also on the lookout for a replacement cash register for the kiosk at Bylands. The current unit is an old style "Coles Variety Stores" type, complete with supervisor's bell, which dates back to decimal currency conversion time of 1966. It is in the right place as it is truly a "museum piece". If anyone can assist us to obtain a more update or more recent electronic machine, this would be greatly appreciated. Contact the Secretary Graham Jordan if you can help on any of the required items.

The Preston Tramways - Historical Highlights

The following article written by Keith Kings, first appeared in the April 1970 issue of Running Journal.

Electric tramways to East and West Preston were constructed by the Fitzroy, Northcote and Preston Tramways Trust, (FNPTT). This body had been created for the purpose by the municipalities concerned at the time when Melbourne's northern suburbs were spreading further out from the centre of the city and getting further away from existing tram and railway lines. The area was served by the suburban service on the Whittlesea railway line, the Northcote cable tram line, which barely touched the southern boundary of Northcote and was of very limited use in the area.

The East Coburg route of the Melbourne, Brunswick and Coburg Tramways Trust (MBCTT), opened in 1916 was of little use due to the lack of bridges across the valley of the Merri Creek and its distance from the area.

The route decided upon commenced in St Georges Road, north Fitzroy, at the cable tram terminus at Barkly Street, and ran north across the Merri Creek bridge, continuing along St Georges Road to the corner of Miller Street, the southern boundary of Preston. A small depot and offices were constructed on the north-west corner of the Miller Street- St Georges Road intersection. The line to West Preston turned left at this intersection, while the line to East Preston turned right. The West Preston track ran along Miller Street and turned north into Gilbert Road to terminate at Regent Street, some three and a half miles from Barkly Street. The East Preston route ran east along Miller Street and over the Whittlesea railway line then turned north east into Plenty Road, terminating at Tyler Street about three and five eighths miles from Barkly Street. The track was double from Barkly Street to the depot, and then single to each terminus with passing loops located at Bell Street and Murray Road on each branch.

The Trust was absorbed into the Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board on the 2nd February 1920 before it could complete its task of building the lines and opening them for public service. This event took place two months later on 1st April. There is still some doubt as to the early rolling stock events on the line, but as far as is known possibly 7 of 8 cars ordered for the routes were available for service on the opening day. They were single truck closed combination cars which closely resembled the 9 cars (Nos 92 – 100) built for the Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust by the same builder, James Moore and Sons. Subsequently three of the cars received M&MTB fleet numbers 151 – 153 in the "Eastern System" series, while the other five became Nos 172 – 176 in the "Northern" group. It is not known whether this was done respectively or at random.

In the early 1920's several "foreign" cars were placed at Preston Depot including ex- P&MTT cars in the Nos 1 – 20 group and ex- MBCTT cars in the Nos 154 – 171 group. This rolling stock movement was of a bi-directional nature as at least most of the "Preston" cars went to other depots.

Traffic was growing steadily and the interchange with the North Fitzroy cable trams was eliminated by the construction of a double track electric tramway along Barkly Street, south at Pilkington Street, then west along Holden Street and Brunswick Road East, to connect with the tracks from North and East Coburg to the city via Lygon Street. The through service to the City commenced on 24th March 1925 and continued until the North Fitzroy cable trams were converted to electric trams on the 26th October 1930. The Preston cars were then re-routed via Brunswick Street and into Collins Street, while the Holden Street line became a shuttle service from Lygon Street to St Georges Road.

As traffic increased a second shed was erected at the depot and bogie trams of the "W" class took over the service. Track duplications also became necessary and in 1927-28 on the West Preston and 1926 and 1934 on the East Preston. The last quarter mile of single track on the West Preston line lingered until November 1952. On 3rd July 1953 a very short extension occurred when the terminus was moved a few yards north of Regent Street to clear the intersection.

The Board was badly in need of a new and modern centralised tramway workshop for maintenance and construction purposes and in the early 1920's purchased a 17-acre site on the east side of St Georges Road opposite Preston Depot. The buildings comprised phase one of the ultimate plan of development and were constructed during 1925-26. Additions were made in 1945, with a further three additional annexes built about 1951. The old Preston Depot was closed on the 25th June 1955 and operations were incorporated into the new East Preston Depot from the following day as part of the Bourke Street electrification work.

East Preston cars originally routed via St Georges Road and Collins Street to South Melbourne Beach were diverted via High Street and Bourke Streets, while West Preston cars altered to run to South Melbourne and St Kilda Beach instead of South Melbourne Beach. The Holden Street shuttle service has seen experiments in the use of Bow Collectors "U" class cars during the 1930's while the track was singled on the 25th October 1939 and the rails used on war-time extensions.

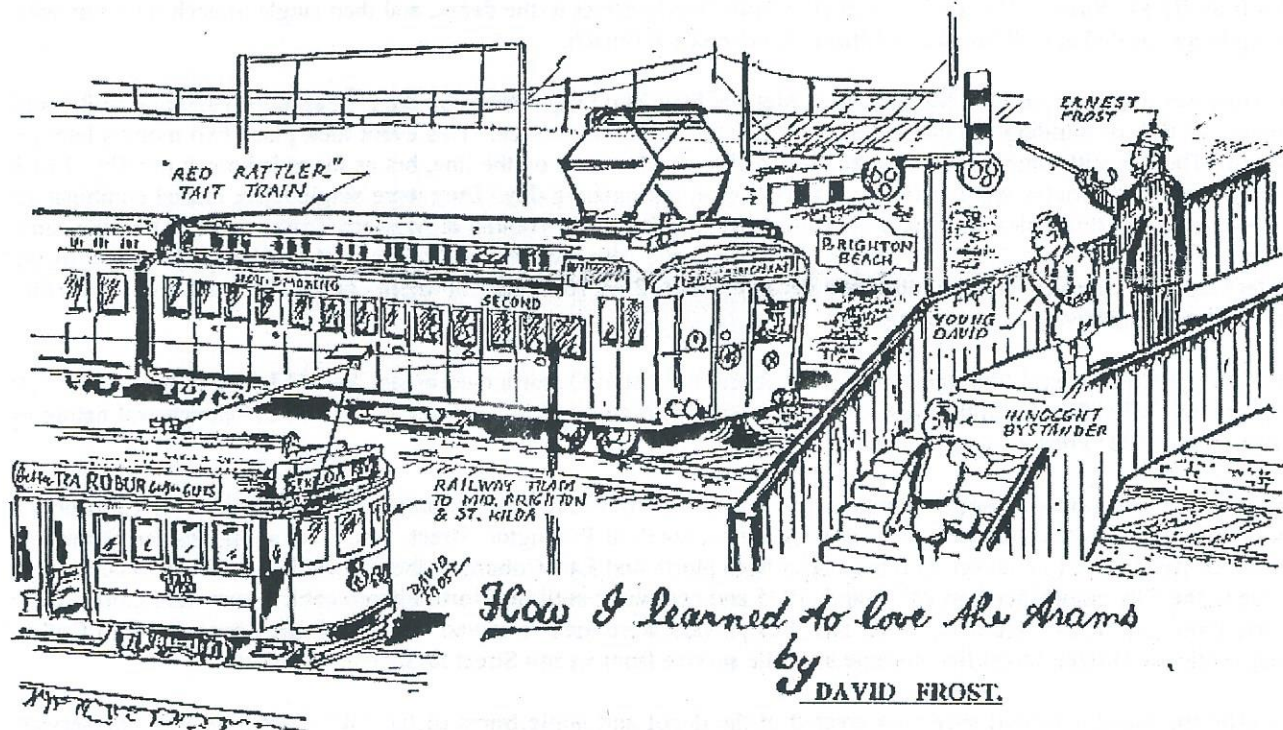
The tram along Holden Street was replaced by a bus on this date, but to conserve fuel and tyres, the tram returned on the 20th July 1941. A bus took over again on the 3rd September 1950 and the shuttle service ceased on the 8th April 1956, part of this route being absorbed into the new West Heidelberg bus service. The single track was retained for special cars or miscellaneous workings.

New Members

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

In Retrospect

Society member and tram driver at Bylands David Frost was recently asked by the Sandringham & District Historical Society when he was going to write something "interesting" in their newsletter. David came up with an idea which was to have become a challenge to other members of the Historical Society, to do likewise. Unfortunately the response was somewhat disappointing (a familiar problem that we know all too well – Ed). However David led the charge and produced the following short script, which appeared in the S&DHS newsletter in June 2003. David has made this interesting insight into his life available for reproduction in Running Journal. It is reprinted with the kind permission of the Sandringham & District Historical Society.



How I learned to love the trams
by
DAVID FROST.

One of my favourite childhood outings was when Grandpa Frost would take me for a walk along the foreshore to Brighton beach. We would have an ice cream at the "Ozone" tea rooms and then travel home on the Railways tram (Naturally).

While at Brighton Beach we would stand on the railway bridge, and Grandpa would show me how the signals came up...as a train approached. I was old enough to read and saw the destination sign on the trains – **SANDRINGHAM** and thought to myself, "that sounds like a wonderful and romantic place. One day when I grow up, I'm going to go there".

Well, I grew up...and came to Sandringham 5 days a week for 25 years when I was lucky enough to obtain an apprenticeship with FLAVELL Pty Ltd, of Tulip Street. This entailed taking the tram to Brighton Beach, train to Sandringham and then the Black Rock tram to Tulip Street. **FOUR RAILWAY TRAM RIDES A DAY.** Pure heaven.

Editors Comment. Thank-you David for this enlightening insight into your life. There is now a challenge to any Society member who would like to do the same and share their life experiences in print with us in Running Journal.

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@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 contact The Secretary, 38 Piccadilly Crescent, Keysborough 3173. Phone/fax (03) 9798 6035, or Website at www.tmsv.org.au. The Tramway Museum Society of Victoria Inc., is registered under the Associations Incorporations Act (1981). Registration Number A 1864 E and Australian Business Number (ABN) 12 739 015 600