

FARES PLEASE!

February 2026

\$2.50 inc. GST

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum



No. 14 approaching the Museum as work commences on upgrading the welds on the depot fan on the 9th December 2025.

Photo: Peter Waugh



WORKSHOP TEAM AT WORK



Left: Mick Duncan and Karl Penrose dismantling No 18's compressor for overhaul.



Right: Dave McKinnon and Karl steam cleaning the body of No 18's compressor to remove all the built-up grease and oil.



Left: Karl and Dave tightening the bolts on the new compressor fitted to No 13.



Right: Karl and his daughter Lilley dismantling G.E. ML compressor governors for overhaul.

All photos: Tony Smith



NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome our new members:

1168 Rhonda Chestnut of Sulky

1169 Eoghan Clwyde of Delacombe

AROUND THE MUSEUM

WORKSHOP REPORT

No 13 – We have swapped out the DH 10 compressor on this car with one that had been recently rebuilt. This was due to excessive bearing play on 13's original. The change over took two hours, and the tram is now back in service with the new compressor working perfectly.

No 18 –The two new crown planks have been fitted by our contact coach-builder and the seats, sand boxes and other fittings have been removed from both ends of this tram. This will allow us to remove the floors in both drop ends and saloon for replacement. This work was performed by Dave McKinnon. The compressor previously removed from No. 18 has now been fully dismantled for overhaul, which has now commenced.

Overhaul of Compressor Governors – whilst changing over the compressor on No 13, it was found that the Westinghouse “beetleback” governor was in poor condition and will need replacement shortly. The decision was made to commence a compressor governor overhaul program utilizing replacement G.E. ML type governors as they are easier to service and adjust. We

are currently working on three units, which also give us two spare units in case they are needed as changeover units.

No. 34 body work is nearing completion at Bendigo and the tram is waiting its turn in the paint shop.

MUSEUM REPORT

The Museum was open and the trams operated for 13 days from Christmas Day to 6 January 2026. A special thanks to the small team of volunteers who kept the doors open during this busy time.

UPDATE 30 JANUARY

Our contact coachbuilder is back and has commenced work on renewing the floors in No 18. He is currently working on the saloon floor and has renewed a few structural timbers and in the process of installing the new tongue and groove floorboards. Photo: Tony Smith.





BTM FEATURED ON WORLD STAGE

By Paul Nicholson

In December 2025, I was honoured, as a foundation member of the Ballarat Tramway Museum, to give a presentation at an international tramway conference in Torino, Italy. The conference, 'Trams From Past To Future (best practices from worldwide museums and societies)', was organised by the local tramway society, ATTS, Associazione Torinese Tram Storici ETS, under the general theme of "best practices from worldwide museums and societies". The conference proper was on the Saturday while, on the Sunday, there was a wonderful tram parade through the streets of Tornio featuring a variety of heritage trams. My partner, Robyn, and I had travelled the furthest distance. Other speakers were from Canada, Isle of Man, New Zealand (via Zoom), USA (via Zoom) and several European countries. Each of the 20 or so speakers had a strict time limit of 15 minutes. I was the first "live" speaker after two Zoom presentations. My presentation focussed on succession planning and reaching out to younger people. Our wonderful museum was the basis of my contribution and there was considerable interest on what we had achieved. It was good that I had been selected to present early in the conference as I felt I'd set the scene for several later speakers who developed and expanded themes on how their museums had gone well outside the square to ensure their ongoing viability. Like us at Ballarat, the initial efforts, so long ago, were largely enthusiast based but the museums had developed over the years into highly regarded community resources and tourist attractions. I must acknowledge the wonderful assistance I

received from Arthur, Peter and Ryan. I am satisfied the conference organisers delegates were most impressed with our achievements. I assured the audience of a warm welcome if ever they made it to Ballarat!

A highlight for me was a quote by one of the speakers about what a tram museum must aspire NOT to be!

"A group of elderly men standing in a tight knit circle facing inwards"!

The conference was supported by a lunch on the restaurant tram, an evening trip on the third rail rack tramway on the outskirts of Torino. Plus a visit to the association's new museum site (in a preserved double decker bus) and a tour of parts of the system in a heritage tram.

Torino is a lovely city, and the tram system is wonderful; a spider's web network but lots of narrow streets and junctions. At one location, there's a circle that forms both a "grand union" and balloon loops from each of the four directions. Amazing. Our tour tram did the circle twice (while most of the patrons took photos). Robyn enjoyed her "double spin" around the circle. Torino would be hard to beat as a destination for both tram enthusiasts and general tourists. It's not far from Milan and its wonderful "Peter Witt" trams dating from the late 1920s. Spring and autumn are the best times to visit.

The ATTS operates a heritage tram (route 7) on Sundays and public holidays, partly over trackage not used by regular services. Normal fares are charged.

There are several easy to find YouTube videos on the tram parade. They're well worth a look.



Other Australian smaller systems are covered Sono rappresentati anche altri sistemi australiani minori



- Whilst Ballarat trams are the focus of the Museum, it now covers other Australian provincial and smaller systems
Sebbene i tram di Ballarat siano il fulcro del Museo, attualmente esso comprende anche vetture di altri sistemi tranviari australiani "della provincia" e di sistemi minori
- Tram 2 represents those that opened the Geelong system in 1912. Geelong was one of Victoria's three "provincial" tramway systems
Il tram n° 2 fa parte dei tram che hanno inaugurato il sistema Geelong nel 1912. Geelong era uno dei tre sistemi tranviari "della provincia" di Victoria
- The photo shows tram 2 on the access track from the museum. Notice the Museum building in the background
La foto mostra il tram n° 2 sul binario di accesso al museo. Si noti l'edificio del museo sullo sfondo

TRAMS FROM PAST TO FUTURE | BEST PRACTICES FROM WORLDWIDE MUSEUMS AND SOCIETIES | 5-7 DECEMBER 2025



Tram crews (1)

- Today's Ballarat Tramway Museum volunteers bring a wide range of skills and experience. All are required to have current "Working With Children" endorsement. But not everyone wants to be a tram driver. First there is a compulsory medical examination then long training processes under the rules of accreditation and safety

Gli attuali volontari del Ballarat Tramway Museum vantano un'ampia gamma di competenze ed esperienze. Tutti devono essere in possesso di un'autorizzazione valida per "Lavorare con i bambini". Non tutti, però, vogliono diventare manovratori di tram.

L'iter è molto lungo. Inizia con una visita medica obbligatoria, a cui segue un lungo percorso di formazione secondo le norme di certificazione e sicurezza in essere

Volontari di bordo



TRAMS FROM PAST TO FUTURE | BEST PRACTICES FROM WORLDWIDE MUSEUMS AND SOCIETIES | 5-7 DECEMBER 2025



Two examples of Paul's bilingual Torino PowerPoint presentation.



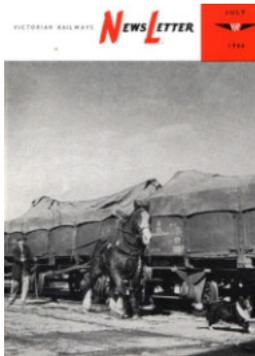
SHUNTING HORSE UPDATE

By Thomas Jones

The article in last October's issue of 'Fares Please' about the railway shunting horses at the Ballarat railway goods shed brings back many memories and I would like to expand on the article from my local personal knowledge of the era.

The July 1966 'Victorian Railways Magazine' carried an excellent article on Prince's retirement and that of his handler, Mr. Nick Purcell during the previous month. Please note that the date of their retirement as quoted in our October's magazine, 1971 is incorrect. The actual date was the 7th. June 1966.

There were two horses that were used at the goods shed. Prince as mentioned, and Madam. Oh, and not forgetting the lady dog, Lassie. The horses each worked week-about, weekdays only. There was also at some time another dog called Lady.



Sadly, Madam did not see her retirement and comfortable old age out to pasture. She succumbed only weeks before her due retirement with fatal leg injuries through a fall she received in suspicious circumstances. Although not explicit in

the 'Courier' article it was always thought to have been the result of a revellers' midnight prank gone horribly wrong.

One of anecdotes about the horses was their drinking ability and I'm not referring to water. Every second Friday afternoon after payday as be-fitting of hard-working railway employees engaged in heavy manual labour it was customary for the shunters to adjourn to the North Star Hotel just up Lydiard Street North from the goods yard for the few convivial ales. As the 'Courier' article mentions the horses were not forgotten either - each being treated to a bucket of the best Ballarat Invalid Stout, equivalent to about a dozen 750 ml. bottles.

For about a year before that I was studying in Melbourne, commuting a couple of time a week and I would park in the street over behind the goods shed, walk around the back of the goods shed, past the horse stall and over to the station building as there was then very little long-term public parking in the immediate station area.

If you surreptitiously parked within the goods yard area you almost invariable came back at night to find a little pink slip from the RIO's stuck under your windscreen wiper for the princely sum of, what was 10/- . I think (pre-decimal currency - about \$1 AUD to-day) for illegally parking. So, I would be around the station at about 6:40 A.M. each day to catch the 6.58 A.M. 'Up' 'Overland'.

Given my 1950's rural agricultural upbringing and farm animal husbandry interests I would regularly see and talk to Mr. Purcell at the start of the 'horse shift' at 7.00 A.M. Often with a couple of sugar cubes or an apple with me for the horses.



Here's a photo of what I believe is Madam. I've had a very close look at several enlargements of the two horses' photos, and they are not the same horse. Like most Clydesdales, they were Bald Face and the white blaze is quite different on each, particularly around the nostrils, eyes and cheek bones. The bridle cheek-pieces are also different as most probably once fitted and adjusted; each horse would always have its own tack.

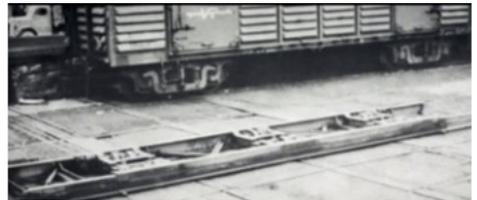
Just for interest, here's a little more on the traverser. I'm unsure when the traverser finally ceased operating, probably the late 1970's. This is most probably where the dates' confusion has risen in our previous article.

Eight years ago, when all of the protracted machinations were going on about the sell-off of the goods yard and private development with the possible loss of various heritage listed items therein I was involved with a local group in providing historical substantiating evidence for the retention and preservation of the traverser or rather, what was left of it, to be included in the site re-development. But regrettably, to no avail; the traverser carriage itself (un-identified photo previous column ex. 'Facebook') was long gone and what remained of the in-ground track work had been sheeted over with crushed rock and toppings.

However, the developer did finally acquiesce to the heritage concerns expressed and installed sections of rail

panels in the goods shed frontage to placate and cosmetically replicate what would have been where the traverser was and through the floor of the goods shed (see photo below). However, for the purists two of these faux rail panels as installed are at correct 1600mm. (5' 3") gauge. The third panel is only 1200 mm. (4') gauge – obviously laid by a non-rail contract brickie!!!!

It's always been suggested that Prince finished his latter retirement days at Sovereign Hill Historical Park, but the dates often quoted are wildly inconsistent so I'm unable to make any informed comment. Sovereign Hill did not commence full operations until November 1970, five years after Prince's retirement. I had some involvement with Sovereign Hill about that time, and I don't remember any reference to Prince ultimately going there.



Photos from Ballarat Courier 8 June 1966,



ABSCONDED TRAM CONDUCTOR SENTENCED TO SIX MONTHS.

"BALLARAT, Tuesday, 22 September 1908.

At the city court to-day, Arthur Dennis, a youth (aged 18 years), was charged with stealing a number of tram tickets, one steel punch and 10/ in money, the property of the Electric Supply Co., at Ballarat on 7th October 1907. Sub-Inspector Ryan prosecuted.

James E. Jinks, traffic superintendent, said that on 7th October accused received the usual outfit of tickets, etc., at the powerhouse, and went on his car about 6 p.m., but failed to pay any money in or return the punch or tickets. So far as witness knew none of the property was recovered. The face value of the tickets was £6/ 5/4, the punch was valued at 3/-. Accused had also been given 10/- worth of silver.

The prisoner was arrested in Melbourne by Detective Clugston. After an appeal for leniency by Mr. Lazarus the bench sentenced Dennis to six months' imprisonment, to be concurrent with a sentence he is at present serving in Melbourne for endeavoring to illegally dispose of the horse of a farmer by whom he had been employed."

The Age, 23 September 1908, pg. 7



This might seem like a harsh penalty, but young Arthur had form. In 1905 he was fined for stealing a bag of charcoal, and in 1906 he was fined for stealing a bicycle on Mair Street and riding it to Geelong where he sold it to buy food and clothes. The roads in 1906 would not have made it an easy trip. He was sent to the Salvation Army hostel in Bayswater to be taught a trade, but was back in Ballarat the next year and employed by the Electric Supply Company as a conductor. When finally arrested for stealing from the tramway, he was already serving a sentence for stealing a chestnut mare from August Scheilsing of Springvale.

James E. Jinks, a Bendigo tramways motorman, became Ballarat's traffic superintendent. He returned to Bendigo in 1909 as traffic superintendent, and in January 1911 became the traffic superintendent of the new Launceston tramway.

Research and collage by Peter Waugh



*New Years Day 2026 decorated No. 1029 shares the road with a veteran car.
Photo: Benjamin Boehle-Mitchell*



© Benjamin Boehle-Mitchell Photography

CHRISTMAS DAY OPERATIONS (AGAIN)

Richard Gilbert

Our trams ran on Christmas Day in line with our policy of operating if enough members volunteer their time. We have operated a number of Christmas Days over the years and it was pleasing to be involved again. In making a bold statement, but I'm yet to be proven wrong, our museum is the only tramway/railway museum operating on Christmas Day in Australasia.

Readers of this article may well ask who would travel on this day, and this can easily be answered by stating 120 people travelled. Ballarat is a focal point for travellers from around Australia and

of course overseas. In their travels around Australia and in visiting Ballarat, it does happen that they find themselves in Ballarat on Christmas Day and nothing is open to offer them a tourist visitation experience. Combined with that, public transport was free for the day and quite a number of our visitors travelled to Ballarat by train. Not to be overlooked is the fact that being a multicultural nation not everyone follows Christmas Day and this section of the community also appreciates our attraction being open and the trams running.

Then follows the museum volunteers who made this a successful and pleasant day for the visitors and themselves of course, where there was a warm feeling of 'Christmas Giving' and goodwill amongst us all.



A DIFFERENT CHRISTMAS CARD

Each year Gary Davey receives a Christmas Card from a former colleague, Trevor Penn, who worked at Camberwell Depot. This is his Christmas card.

The year is 1948, petrol rationing is in full swing and the first Holden car has just come off the production line. The patronage of the M&MTB tramway system is 255 million passengers, slightly down from the 1945 peak of 284 million. W2 class car No. 244 has just arrived at Batman Avenue Terminus during the evening peak for its departure on route 74 to Burwood. The driver is still in his cab, and he has exactly two minutes to put the pole up, change ends and depart. The crowds of intending passengers completely block Batman

Avenue as they battle to board the car. The Signaller is already announcing the impending departure of 244 and has already set the road on the scissors crossover.

No. 244 was built at the M&MTB's Holden Street workshop and entered service in 1925 as a W class car subsequently converted to a W2. In 1948 it was allocated to Camberwell depot and remained there until 1977 when it was replaced by Z class cars for the opening of the East Burwood extension. She was withdrawn from service five years later from East Preston Depot and scrapped in 1983. She gave nearly 60 years of sterling service to the M&MTB and the people of Melbourne. I drove or connied her, in service many times between 1973 and 1977.





SANTA TERESA TRAMS

On Page 12 is an article by Christopher Donald on the Santa Teresa trams that

operate in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The photos below are derived from The Rail South America site on the Internet.



Passengers board the Santa Teresa Tram at a local stop, a reminder that the Bondinho remains part of everyday life in Rio de Janeiro.

The Santa Teresa Tram crossing the Arcos da Lapa aqueduct, one of Rio de Janeiro's most iconic historic landmarks.





THE SANTA TERESA TRAM

By the late Christopher Donald

The Santa Teresa tram of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, known locally in Portuguese as Os Bondes de Santa Teresa, has a long and colourful history dating back to 1877. In Brazilian Portuguese, a bonde is a tram.

Ian Dunn wrote: "Everything happened here first: the first animal-powered tramway, the first steam tramway, the first electric tramway...Rio was the centre of railway and tramway experiments for Brazil and had more tramway companies, trams, types of trams, tram gauges and kilometres of tram track than any other city."¹

Wikipedia notes: "Having run continuously since its opening in 1877 (except for a 2011–15 suspension), it is one of the oldest street railway lines in the world. It has been electrically powered since 1896, being the oldest electric railway in all of Latin America."² The suspension from 2011 to 2015 was due to a tragic multiple fatality accident on 27 August 2011. It was up and running again in time for the 2016 Olympic Games.

Local publication Rio On Watch reported: "On August 27, 2011, there was a terrible accident on the Santa Teresa tram, or bonde, in the hilltop neighbourhood in Central Rio which resulted in serious injuries and several deaths. Among those who died was tram conductor Nelson who had worked for decades on the trams and was well loved by residents."³ The BBC described the accident: "Rescue workers say five people were killed and at least 27 injured when a tram derailed in the Brazilian city

of Rio de Janeiro. After coming off the rails, the tram skidded down a Rio street for 50 metres before crashing into a lamp post."⁴ The ABC quoted a local at the time of the accident: "Sooner or later, a tragedy like this was bound to happen. Santa Teresa has not seen any investment funds," the president of the local residents' association, Elzbieta Mitkiewicz, said.⁵

Writer Ian Dunn noted in 2008, before the accident: "There seems to be an abundance of labour and little sense of urgency [toward maintenance]. The trackwork varies from newly relaid...to sections which are obviously in dire need of repair."⁶

Part of the tram line, from Carioca in the downtown, travels across a former aqueduct that was built in 1723 and adapted for tramway use in 1896.⁷ Ian Dunn described the odd forward motion of the bonde: "With long bodies on a relatively short, four-wheel truck, forward progress takes on the gait of a duck, somewhat alarmingly when waddling high above the ground..."⁸

On 15 November 2014, singer songwriter Diana May Clark released her song 'Batuçada Bonde (Tram Song)', which was motivated by riding the Santa Teresa tram on her honeymoon in 2009.

She wrote that she was, "Motivated by my last visit to Rio in 2013 as I discovered that sadly, the Bonde was no longer running due to an accident with fatalities; I had to release it in acknowledgement of the uplifting times we'd had travelling to Santa Teresa over the years. We made a cute Tram film clip in Ballarat, to go with it."⁹



Some of the lyrics of Batucada Bonde are:

*"We'll ride the tram the people call Bonde
Like a sardine can playing ping-pongee
African beats rise from Portuguese streets
Cool as Johnny Depp,
The boys all hitch on the side step."*¹⁰

The notes for the YouTube video of the song state: "The clip was shot in No. 671 at Ballarat Tramway Museum and serves as a lament for Melburnians who miss the connies - conductors who used to link the commuters - getting to know the regulars, selling tickets and keeping the vibe good. 'Vale to the connies and the batucada bonde - bring them both back!'"¹⁰

At least her wish for the return of the Santa Teresa tram was granted.

Footnotes

¹ Dunn, Ian A., 2008, 'Carioca Capers', Trolley Wire No. 313, May 2008, page 3.

² 'Santa Teresa Tram', https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santa_Teresa_Tram, accessed 2 April 2024.

³ 'The Sahara Tram: The Soul of Santa Teresa under Attack', By Maristela Grynberg, Translation by Felicity Clarke, August 16, 2016, Rio On Watch, <https://riononwatch.org/?p=31881>, accessed 2 April 2024.

⁴ 'Five die in Rio de Janeiro tram derailment', 28 August 2011, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-14696927>, accessed 2 April 2024.

⁵ 'Rio in mourning after worst tram accident', 29 August 2011, <https://www.abc.net.au/2011-08-29/rio-in-mourning-after-worst-ever-tram-accident/2859524>, accessed 2 April 2024.

⁶ Dunn, Ian A., 2008, 'Carioca Capers', Trolley Wire No. 313, May 2008, page 10-11.

⁷ Dunn, Ian A., 2008, 'Carioca Capers', Trolley Wire No. 313, May 2008, page 6.

⁸ Dunn, Ian A., 2008, 'Carioca Capers', Trolley Wire No. 313, May 2008, page 11.

⁹ Clark, Diana May, 2014, 'Batucada Bonde (Tram Song)', <https://dianamayclark.bandcamp.com/batucanda-bonde-tram-song-2>, accessed 2 April 2024.

¹⁰ Clark, Diana May, 2014, 'Batucada Bonde (Tram Song)', <https://dianamayclark.bandcamp.com/batucanda-bonde-tram-song-2>, accessed 2 April 2024.

The screenshot below is part of the film clip mentioned in Chris's article, filmed on No.671 and available on YouTube.





DEPOT FAN MAINTENANCE

In December 2025, contractors renewed the track welds on the depot fan using MIG welding equipment to fix the many broken rail joints. This involved using machinery to expose the joints, then weld them and in places replace the bitumen where it had been removed. Photos: Karl Penrose.



Simon Innes is not only a conductor, but also a talented cartoonist and he has depicted our two hardest working trams that provided the majority of the trips this summer; Nos 14 and 1029. Simon has also produced some colouring in sheets for our younger visitors to enjoy in the theatre.

Note the hard working cat. Our younger visitors have spent a lot of time over the past few weeks trying to find him!



TURINO'S CONFERENCE TRAMS



Luncheon on restaurant tram 2841 was part of the convention program on 6 December 2025. 2841 is parked on the loop at Piazza Carlo Emanuele II opposite the conference hotel Paul and Robyn stayed. Similar trams still operate in Torino but they're fast disappearing.

Single truck tram 502 dating from 1924 was part of the big tram parade on 7 December 2025. Most of the enthusiasts took positions along the parade route to get the coverage but Robyn and I chose to ride in 502 as we felt it might have been our only opportunity to ever ride in a such a parade. Photos Paul Nicholson.



TRAMS ON JACKS



For the first time in the Museum's history we have two trams undergoing major restoration simultaneously.

Top: No.34's body work was nearing completion when photographed by Benjamin Boehle Mitchell in December 2025.

Left: Work continues on No.18 with both mechanical work and body work being addressed at the time of publication, January 2026.

Photo: Chris Phillips



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Editors:

Chris Phillips christram26@gmail.com Peter Waugh peter.waugh@btm.org.au

For further information regarding the Museum, its activities and publications please contact:

The Secretary, 100 Gillies St. N, Lake Gardens, Vic, 3350 Phone 61 3 5334 1580

E-mail: info@btm.org.au Web page: www.btm.org.au Facebook: www.facebook.com/btm.org.au