

FARES PLEASE!

APRIL 2026

\$2.50 inc. GST

News from the Ballarat Tramway Museum



BTM celebrated 70 years since the Geelong tramway system closing by running Geelong No. 2 and Ballarat No's. 13 and 14 which operated in Geelong in the early 1930's. James Proctor is having his turn at driving No. 2 under Neville's guidance.

Photo: Chris Phillips 22 March 2026.



GEELONG DAY



In the early 1930's these three trams would have shared the Geelong Tramway Depot in Corio Terrace, Geelong. Photo: Ben Boehle-Mitchell



'Beauty and the Beast' at St Aidan's Drive. Photo: Ben Boehle-Mitchell



NEW MEMBERS

- 1170 Bradley Beitzel of Black Hill
- 1171 Phillip Milbourne of Traralgon
- 1172 Rowena Milbourne of Traralgon
- 1173 Belinda Penrose of Creswick
- 1174 Reid Penrose of Creswick
- 1175 Lilyana Penrose of Creswick
- 1176 Adam Stephenson
- 1177 Tyler Salter of Winter Valley

VALE FRANK HANRAHAN

Foundation member, and former President, Francis (Frank) Hanrahan passed away on Thursday 19th March, aged 89. Frank was instrumental in designing and building the Museum's original substation, largely out of second hand parts. It was not replaced for thirty years and only then because of a lightning strike.

Frank served on the Board of the BTPS for seventeen years from 1971 until 1989. He was Vice President from 1973 until 1975 before taking on the role of President until he retired in 1989. This was the time when we would meet once a month at 8:00pm on a Friday night in the living room of the original Bungaree House, often in front of a roaring fire. Frank guided the Society through the years of consolidation when we proved, with few resources, that a group of relatively young enthusiasts could develop and run a viable tourist attraction at same time as it preserved an important part of Ballarat's history.

Frank was one of the first members we trained and as a tram driver and he

qualified in January 1975. He was a regular driver for many years.

I last saw Frank and Kathy when they attended the 2023 Annual General Meeting and it was great to catch up. Five Presidents were there and we managed to capture the occasion.

Our condolences to Kathy and Frank's very large extended family.

Peter Winspur



*The five presidents:
Paul Mong, Greg Rogers, Stephen Butler,
Richard Gilbert and Frank Hanrahan*

Frank Hanrahan:

- Joined 30 May 1971 as Foundation Member No 34
- Board member 1972- 1989
- Vice President 1973-1975
- President 1975-1989
- Driver – 19 January 1975



Newspaper clipping from The Courier, 25/11/1971, titled "Agreement signed for Tourist Tram Depot" of the signing of the agreement between the City of Ballarat and the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society the previous day. Included in the photo are the Mayor Cr. Jack Chisholm, city solicitor Hugh Morrow, President of the BTPS Hal Cain, Frank Hanrahan and Secretary Richard Gilbert. Notes various aspects of the agreement, tramcar 14 and the location of the depot building.

VALE GLENN ROOFTHOFT

For a number of years from the early 1970s there was a strong connection between the BTPS and Camberwell Tram Depot. A number of our active members spent time working there. In about 1974 four young "Ten Pound Poms" appeared. One was Glenn Roofthoof. It was soon obvious that he was an enthusiast and when it came time to start training our own drivers, Glenn became one of our early trainers. He finally returned to London in 1989 to help care for his parents, but he maintained his membership of the museum. Glenn was last at Ballarat on 7th December 2014, the 40th anniversary of the BTPS first running in Wendouree Parade. We gave him a drive. He had not lost his touch. Glenn died on 18th March. I was fortunate to visit him at home only last September. One of nature's gentlemen, he will be missed.

Peter Winspur



Frank Hanrahan working on the original transformer. Photo: BTM archives



*Glenn negotiating Depot Junction
Photo: Peter Winspur*



MUSEUM NEWS

NEW DRIVER

Congratulations to Reg De Leon who completed his training and qualified on 9 March 2026.



BTM MICROSOFT SYSTEMS SUPPORT ROLE

Do you have interest, and current knowledge, to assist with maintaining our Windows PCs, our Microsoft accounts, and other user compute devices, that we use at the Ballarat Tramway Museum?

I am looking for support to ensure our small collection of PCs, laptops, tablets, touch screen (kiosk), smart TVs, and printers, as well as our Microsoft accounts and Microsoft Office (and other) licenced applications, are maintained, that we do regular software and security updates, and that we periodically check for and assist with any virus, malware type incidents.

Current experience with Windows 10 and Windows 11 system administration, as well as Microsoft product licencing including use of Microsoft 365 admin centre, and Entra, and remote PC support tools, would be an advantage.

Do reach out to me on 0437 363 961 if you'd like to know more, and or would like to express interest to help me with maintaining our growing number of PC's and other devices.

Neil Blanchard

WORKS REPORT - TRAMS

By Tony Smith and Paul Mong

No. 12 work has continued with the sanding back of the internal saloon and doors being mounted.

No. 18 is coming along with the new floor being installed. Karl is currently rebuilding the DH 10 compressor for use on No 18. This has involved the fitting of a new armature bearing, the field coils reinsulated and the armature baked and the commutator turned and undercut and work has been completed on overhauling the compressor.



No.18 The floor has been replaced in the drop ends and saloon. Photo: Paul Mong

Geelong No. 28 steps have been repaired along with a number of small jobs to get it ready to be relocated to the museum.

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No. 407 – In late March, the compressor cylinder head was removed from this tram due to a noisy valve. The head was thoroughly cleaned and the valves examined for damage, which fortunately had not occurred. After the cylinder head was refitted, the compressor was tested with the problem resolved.



*Karl testing the compressor for No. 671
Photo: Tony Smith*

No. 671 – In early April whilst servicing this car, it was found that the air compressor had serious issues with worn piston rings and other electrical issues. As this tram was needed for the upcoming Begonia Festive long weekend plus charters, the changeover of the compressor was deemed urgent. Whilst we do not have a “ready to go” DH 16 compressor in stock at present, we were able to locate a good condition secondhand unit at Bungaree. This compressor was brought back to the depot after which it was cleaned, fully serviced, and tested. No. 671 was then placed over the pit, the old compressor removed and the new unit fitted. This whole process took just seven days from the time we found the fault till the new compressor was fitted!.

No. 939 The brake rigging has been replaced after it was found to be very worn and not working efficiently.

Tram air compressor intake air strainers – We have started a program to clean and repack these air strainers with a modern filter material in lieu of the old contaminated horse hair. So far cars, 13, 33, 407 and 671 have been attended to. This project has been undertaken by Dave.

ML Compressor Governor Overhaul

– Karl has been busy overhauling and calibrating a number of these units for use as changeovers on trams that have governors that are in need of replacement.

In addition to the above, the workshop team of Karl, Mick, Geoff, Tony and Dave have also continued with the regular servicing of our trams and attending to the day to day repairs as required.



Karl and Adam installing the S.E.C social club honour board in the Museum.

Photo: Tony Smith



BUSY BUSY BUSY

March is frequently a busy month at the Museum. We have the Begonia Festival operations which see our largest contingent of volunteers and trams working. This year we have had twelve group bookings as well as our normal operational days. The group bookings have included: two school charters, two high tea operations, four Probus club charters, visits by two car clubs, one men's shed, one birthday party and finally a very special wedding (see page 10).

The museum also had a display and stall at Steamrail's Open Day during the long weekend, which was very successful. So many sales were made on the first day an urgent consignment of books and souvenirs had to be dispatched for the second day.



Top: Our display at Steamrail's open days with Gary Davey looking after sales.

Bottom: A coal shuffle Renault and No. 26 outside Pipers during the Veteran Car Club's rally on 15 March.

Both photos: Gary Davey





WORK CONTINUES ON NO. 34

No. 34 is now located in the paint booth at Bendigo while work has continued on the bogies and wheelsets in Ballarat.



One of No. 34's wheels in the lathe in Ballarat. Photo: Paul Mong.



One of the Brill 22E bogie frames being reassembled after significant maintenance. Photo: Paul Mong



No. 34 in regular service passing No. 35 at the Grey Street Loop. Photo: Andrew Cooke



No. 34 in the paint booth at Bendigo Tram workshops on 30 March 2026. Photo: Warren Doubleday

In the future we look forward to No. 34 passing a bogie car at Gardens Loop.



REMEMBERING THE GEELONG TRAMWAYS OF 70 YEARS AGO.

By Richard Gilbert

On Sunday, 22 March, the tram operation for the day was centered around recalling the closure of the Geelong Tramways 70 years earlier. Two of our trams that formerly operated in Geelong were incorporated into running the museum service that day. Our fantastically restored Butterbox tram No. 2 was in service and is a great attraction, along with tram No. 12.

A specially produced documentary of interviews with four former Geelong Trammies was screened during the day. This was made up of video footage taken in 2003 and it proved quite interesting to our audiences.

Consideration is being given to incorporating it into our regular 'endless' program which is screened in our refreshment room area.

A legacy of the Geelong closure was the transfer of eight maximum traction trams to Bendigo and Ballarat.

Bendigo received four ex MMTB P class cars and one C class car, where they were numbered 1 to 5.

Meanwhile Ballarat received three ex MMTB E class trams which were numbered 41 to 43.

In 1960 after the destruction of the original Ballarat No. 37, Bendigo No. 1 was transferred to Ballarat in exchange for two single truck cars No's 19 and 25. By 1961 both systems had ten bogie trams each.



After being serviced Geelong No. 2 is stored in the depot awaiting the next day's operations. Photo: Simon Green



No. 43, an ex Geelong tram transferred to Ballarat in 1956 in time for the Olympic games. Photo: Chris Phillips



RYAN'S WEDDING

On Saturday 28 March, BTM played host to a wedding charter with a difference, when our very own Operations Manager, Ryan van der Zweep, married his partner Cyrian inside the Museum Display Hall. While many brides or grooms may choose to arrive by classic car, Ryan instead chose to arrive at the Museum doors by vintage tram - single truck California combination tram No. 26, specially decorated with white ribbons across the front aprons! The stunning trams on display in the Museum provided a beautiful backdrop to the proceedings and was an ideal venue in the face of the cool and windy late autumn weather on the day.



Photos : Andrew Strachan.



LEGO TRAM

Keep an eye out on the YouTube channel for this stop motion video, made by Junior Member Sam Groszek (age 11) in the booth at the Museum. The tram is his own design and a working replica of the W-Class "Cuthbert's" restaurant tram.

Photo: Chris Groszek.

CHRISTCHURCH RESTAURANT TRAM

Mal Rowe has sent in a photo of the two W2 class trams operating in Christchurch. The Christchurch Restaurant tram in W2 411. Which was an interesting history. In 1986 it was purchased by the Maroubra Junction Hotel in Sydney. It was installed in the hotel, but part of the conversion the rear cab was cut off.

In 1996, it was dismantled inside the hotel and in a delicate operation, the bogies, underframe and the roof were removed and sent to the Sydney Tramway

Museum where it was rebuilt using some parts from W2 582. The work was completed in 1999 and was transported to Christchurch where it entered service in 2000. [For the full story see the February 2000 edition of Trolley Wire.]

In Mal's photo W2 511 follows W2 244, withdrawn in 1983, sent to Maitland for a proposed museum, fell into disrepair and then rescued by the STM and restored and then sent to Christchurch.





EX WEST PRESTON TRAVERSER

By Neville Britton

Our large storage shed at Bungaree presently holds 24 trams on 5 roads. Trams were previously placed on the Roads by positioning the truck transporting the tram to the appropriate Road and rolling the tram inside the shed. Once inside there was no ability to relocate or shuffle the trams. This problem is about to be resolved with the installation of a traverser which allows a tram to be moved sideways across the front of the shed.

On 2 June 2022, BTM took delivery of surplus traverser from the Yarra Trams West Preston Workshop. In a tricky operation working beneath the overhead trolley wires, the traverser was loaded by Membreys Transport and delivered to Bungaree for storage.

Planning commenced in mid-2025 to install the traverser with Central Victoria Civic commencing work in December. The five individual Roads in front of the shed were removed and the area excavated. 102 concrete support piers were poured, and six lengths of rail each 30 metres long placed to support the traverser. Planning commenced with Advanced Cranes of Ballarat to lift the traverser onto its rails. Weighing 23 tonnes, it was critical that the traverser was lifted without any twisting otherwise the welded construction may be damaged. On 20 March using a 130 tonnes capacity crane the traverser was placed into position. Our special thanks to Advanced Cranes for their professionalism.

Over the next month's substantial work is needed. The traverser will be checked and serviced, and tow points attached. Additional Roads will be constructed

along side the shed to allow trams to be shuffled. Later options include the installation of a generator to provide 600 volts to electrically power to the traverser.



Top: Loading traverser at Preston on 2 June 2022.

Middle: The delicate process of lifting the traverser by Advanced Cranes

*Bottom: On the tracks at last.
Photos : Neville Britton*



INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

On Tuesday 3 February, we had a visit from Christoph-Lucas Hutter who is a film maker from Berlin who posts his films on YouTube under the title 'Tramagic'. During the day Chris, Neville, Jess and Greg crewed No's 14, 26, 40, 671, 939 and 1029 for Lucas to film in various locations around the lake and the museum fan. We look forward to seeing his production later in the year.

A Norwegian tram enthusiast, Roy Budmiger visited on Tuesday 3 March. He is an engineer from the Oslo Tramways and now an active volunteer at their museum. He spent the morning filming and visiting our workshop and, in the afternoon, spent time with the archives team. Oslo has about 150 trams in their collection, but most are derelict and they only have one operational tram which can run on the Oslo network. He was impressed with the number of serviceable trams we have and was blown away by the restoration work being carried out on No's 12 and 18 and our workshop facilities.

During the Begonia Festival, a tram enthusiast from Munich was filming our operations. Perhaps Paul Nicholson's presentation at the Conference in Turin has lifted our profile as a museum worth visiting.

In March we were visited by Hershhal Byrd, a colourful character from the US. Hershhal had served in Vietnam as a marine in the 11th Battalion of the US Marines and was wearing a baseball cap

with the battalion's logo. Imagine his surprise and delight to discover that his battalion was featured in our display on World War II. The 11th Battalion was camped in nearby Victoria Park during 1943.

Hershhal entertained us with his stories of action in the Vietnam War, where he was badly wounded. Later he became a policeman and worked as a homicide detective for many years. A trained pilot, in his sixties he took up acrobatic flying. During his visit he told us that he had flown up from Lethbridge the day before to get an aerial view of Ballarat and the tramway.



Hershhal checking out our WW2 display featuring his old battalion.

Photo: Peter Waugh



WEDDING TRAM YARNS

By Richard Gilbert and Chris Phillips

Tram W4 671 is especially decorated and fitted out for these occasions. There is a certain degree of conduct and reverence displayed by our crews to the wedding party and other guests to match the formality of the occasion, but when an unexpected situation occurs it draws on the ability of our crew to keep the event happening with dignity.

RICHARD'S YARNS

On one occasion, with the wedding party aboard, the tram departed the boarding point at Gardens Loop when the driver's door popped open with me on the driver's seat being flung into the passenger saloon. The bride shrieked with shock at my sudden appearance and with a quick apology I moved fully back into the cab making sure the door was properly in position with the door lock fully and firmly closed.

On another occasion we arrived at the St. Aidan's Drive terminus where the wedding party alighted, and my attention was drawn to a shriek from a bridesmaid who was lying on the grass. She had slipped on the running board due to the cumbersome wedding apparel getting under her foot. Luckily the ground was dry and there were no mud stains apparent to disfigure the clothing.

CHRIS'S TALES

My most amusing experience was a few years ago when we had a very creative photographer who wanted to make a video of the tram moving slowly whilst he ran beside it filming the action. So off we

went and all was going well with him filming except he couldn't watch where he was running and he ran into the oak tree next to Monastery drain. Which was probably better than falling into Monastery Drain.

My nephew was a groomsman, on the tram and at St Aidan's all the men were ordered off the tram whilst the bride breast fed her six week old baby. If it had been a fine afternoon, it would have been pleasant, but it was drizzling.

Normally, Wendouree Parade is quiet on an early Saturday evening with little traffic to worry the crew. With 400 metres from the restaurant a Ford Fairlane was parked on the tram tracks. The bride had shoes on, which did not make walking easy. So the tram crew and the groomsmen set out to find the driver. After minutes of fruitless searching, the bridal party were planning to walk to Pipers and tram crew were wondering if it was going to be a long Saturday night. Finally a bird watcher emerged from the bushes and sauntered down the road. When asked why he parked on the tram tracks rather than near the gutter he replied, 'He didn't think the trams ran in the evening!' One of the groomsmen then pointed out to him that he had driven past the tram at the St Aidan's Drive!



AUTUMN WEDDINGS



Top: Peter Kerverac was photographing birds when he couldn't help photographing the happy couple. Bottom: Ryan and Cyrian chose No. 26 for their wedding tram. Photo Andrew Strachan. Left: The groomsmen being photographed in the rain. Photographer unknown.

BEGONIA FESTIVAL 2026



Photos: Reg de Leon, James Sedakin, C K Tang and Glenda Phillips.



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