



The Bellcord

Journal of the Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot



Z 16 outward bound on Burwood Highway on its way to the East Burwood terminus at Middleborough Road shortly after opening of the route 75 extension in 1978. This tram was one of those partially funded by the Whitlam Federal Government's Urban Public Transport Assistance Scheme. Official M&MTB photograph

In This Issue

<i>In This Issue</i>	1
<i>Vale Gough Whitlam</i>	1
<i>Wallen Road Bridge Saved from 1934 Flood</i>	2
<i>L.J. Flanagan – Tramway Trust Architect</i>	2
<i>New Displays</i>	3
<i>Website News</i>	4
<i>Centenary Celebrations</i>	4
<i>Season's Greetings</i>	6
<i>Member Discounts</i>	6

Vale Gough Whitlam

It is sadness that we note the passing of Edward Gough Whitlam, Prime Minister of Australia for three tumultuous years between 1972 and 1975, on 21 October 2014.

Melbourne owes his Labor Government a debt of gratitude for initially funding two-thirds of the Z class tram construction project, flagging the 1970s renewal of our tramway system. Other cities used funding from the same federal program for purchasing new buses, which had on average service lives of no more than twenty years, while thirty of

the original Z class trams are now approaching forty years in continuous service.

Following the fall of the Whitlam Government, the Fraser Government cut the funding for the Z class trams. This meant that the delivery rate was reduced from the planned fifty trams per year to under twenty trams per year from Z 39 onwards, as the Hamer State Government continued to fund the Z class program at its committed rate.

However, without the original federal funding, it is unlikely that the Z class construction program would ever have been undertaken.

Wallen Road Bridge Saved from 1934 Flood

One of the most devastating floods experienced in Melbourne occurred eighty years ago, in 1934. Over the first two days of December, 350 mm of rain fell in 48 hours over the Yarra catchment, with 140 mm falling over metropolitan areas. The deluge killed eighteen people and left over 6000 homeless.

The Yarra River broke its banks, with massive amounts of debris swept downstream along with the floodwaters. The Wallen Road Bridge at Hawthorn created a bottleneck for the floodwaters on their way to the sea.

This bridge was built in 1881 to a utilitarian design in a combination of cast and wrought iron, connecting Hawthorn with Richmond. It was widened and strengthened in 1916 to carry the double track tramway of the Hawthorn Tramways Trust across the Yarra River. Now, it was under severe threat of collapse, from the battering the bridge piers received from the flood and its debris.



Damage to the road surface on the Richmond side of the Wallen Road Bridge - 3 December 1934. Photo from The Age newspaper.

But this was not the worst danger to the bridge. Late in the evening of 2 December, the swirling floodwaters were scouring out the western

abutment, opening up crevices in the road surface on the Richmond side of the bridge. By 3am the northern side of the road had sunk by at least 30 cm, leading the Richmond city engineer to believe that the collapse of the bridge was inevitable. The tram rails and overhead wire were cut to limit the expected damage to the road and tramway if the bridge was swept away.

However, the water levels were receding, falling two metres by 7am. Officials from the M&MTB – the Chief Architect, [A.G. Monsborough](#), and the Permanent Way Superintendent, M.J. Cass – thought the bridge could be saved. Tramways work crews shored up the western abutment with over a thousand sandbags and many old tram rails, gradually stabilising the flood damage.

In the early afternoon, it was clear that the immediate danger to the bridge had receded. Attention shifted to removing a large tree jammed against the bridge piers. A charge of gelignite was lowered into the tree and detonated. A few minutes later the debris was carried rapidly downstream.

After an inspection, it was determined that the structure of the bridge was sound, although it would remain closed until the western abutment was repaired.

The Wallen Road Bridge was further strengthened over 1936-38, with an additional span being added on the western bank to carry the roadway and tramway over the new Boulevard. The western abutment was relocated a further thirty feet away from the river bank.

L.J. Flannagan – Tramway Trust Architect

Much of the character of Melbourne's tramway infrastructure was shaped by two architects. During the expansion of the Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramway Board (M&MTB) over the 1920s and 1930s the built environment was the responsibility of A.G. Monsborough. In the decade prior to the creation of the M&MTB in 1919, the pre-eminent tramway architect was L.J. Flannagan.

Unlike Monsborough, who was a full-time employee of the M&MTB, Flannagan ran his own practice. Over a relatively brief period he was engaged to undertake a number of commissions by both the Prahran & Malvern Tramway Trust (PMTT) and the Hawthorn Tramway Trust (HTT). In fact, tramway

commissions comprised only a small part of Flannagan's output, yet these works are possibly some of his best-known buildings.



Leonard John Flannagan (1864-1945). Architect for the Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust and the Hawthorn Tramways Trust. Photo courtesy of the University of Melbourne.

Leonard John Flannagan was born in Richmond in 1864, the son of noted early Melbourne architect John Flannagan. Educated at St James Grammar School, Flannagan was articled at his father's firm over the period 1880-85.

Over a career of more than 50 years, Leonard Flannagan's architectural designs encompassed a wide range of styles that represented the leading edge fashions of the day – progressing from Gothic, to 1880s Italianate, then Queen Anne and finally "picturesque" and the "informality" of Californian bungalows. While much of Flannagan's prolific work was residential, his output also included a wide range of commercial and other commissions, including shops, offices, warehouses, farm buildings, schools and churches.

Flannagan's first tramway commission was the Malvern Depot building in Coldblo Road, Malvern for the PMTT in 1909-10. The Edwardian style used was popular at the time for commercial buildings.

He was also responsible for a workshop (now demolished) and office building at the same site in 1911-12, and further extensions in 1913, and designed the first freestanding electrical substation of the PMTT in Rusden Street, Elsternwick, which was built in 1914.

His next major tramway commission was the 1915 PMTT Kew Depot building, in High Street, Kew, and later in the same year, Flannagan's Hawthorn Depot building for the HTT was completed. These two depots share a number of similar features – most notably large arched windows – with Kew representing a transitional phase between Malvern's older Edwardian style and Hawthorn's American Romanesque design.

Flannagan also designed a variety of tram shelters for both the PMTT and the HTT, over the period from 1912 to 1917, in both rustic and verandah forms. However, his focus shifted from Melbourne to Mornington over this period, with increasing involvement in local affairs in the seaside holiday resort. He was elected as Mornington Shire President in 1918, remaining active in local government for many years. Flannagan finally retired from his architecture practice in 1936.

He died in Mornington on 2 November 1945. Flannagan's tramway buildings remain much-loved examples of early 20th century Melbourne architecture – especially Hawthorn Depot, which now houses the Melbourne Tram Museum.

New Displays

Our content development team has been busy producing more placards for our Rogues Gallery, for display on the depot walls. The new placards cover:

- Thomas Bent – Bent by Name, Bent by Nature.
- T.P. Strickland – Designer of the W
- The Hiltons and the Bob-a-week Tramway
- F.B. Clapp – Tramway Entrepreneur
- G.S. Duncan – Tramway Engineer

More placards are in the design pipeline, including a planned series commemorating the involvement of Melbourne's tramways in the First World War, which is planned to be ready for the centenary of Anzac Day, on 25 April 2015.

We have also added to the displays in the depot by hanging a large blackboard formerly used to educate trainee tram drivers in the key components of W class tramcars. This blackboard was stored in the driver training room for several years.

Yarra Trams have donated some wall hangings that were used to publicise the centenary of Essendon Depot and electric trams in Melbourne, together with a pair of hangings covering the Route 109 program. These have been used to refresh the look of the main meeting room, providing a welcome lift to its appearance.

Website News

As previously promised, the website article on [Tom Percival Strickland](#), the designer of the W class, has now been published.

The next article will be on L.J. Flanagan, the architect responsible for the design of Malvern, Kew and Hawthorn Depots, along with the Rusden Street substation and numerous tram shelters still in use today. While an abridged version of this article appears in this issue of 'The Bellcord', the complete article will include a significant number of photos of Flanagan's work as well as more in depth treatment of his life and career. The author of both articles is Noelle Jones.

FOHTD will be rebranding our website, so the heading on every page will say 'Melbourne Tram Museum @ Hawthorn Depot' rather than 'Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot'.

This change is in line with our trading name, and delivers a clearer message to any potential visitors regarding our activities. The overall design of the website will not change, although the front page will be refreshed, reflecting our desired focus on museum activities and the visitor experience.

Centenary Celebrations

In 2016, it will be one hundred years since museum trams Hawthorn number 8 and S class number 164 entered traffic, and one hundred years since the Hawthorn Tramways Trust and Melbourne, Brunswick & Coburg Tramways Trust started operations.

It will also be the centenary of Hawthorn Depot. The FOHTD Committee will be holding a meeting at Hawthorn Depot on 14 February 2015 at 9:30am

Open Days - 2014

13 December

Open Days - 2015

10 January	24 January	14 February
28 February	14 March	28 March
11 April	25 April	9 May
23 May	13 June	27 June
11 July	25 July	8 August
22 August	12 September	26 September
10 October	24 October	14 November
28 November	12 December	

The Melbourne Tram Museum @ Hawthorn Depot is open on the second and fourth Saturdays from January to November, and the second Saturday of December.

Opening hours are 11am–5pm.

The Bellcord is published by the Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot, registered under the Associations Incorporations Act (1981) No A00467102 & ABN 11 293 508 607.

Copyright © Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot Incorporated 2014

E-mail: info@hawthorntramdepot.org.au.

Postal Address: PO Box 6172
Hawthorn West
Victoria 3122

Museum: 8 Wallen Road,
Hawthorn
Victoria 3122

Website: <http://www.hawthorntramdepot.org.au>

Phone (open days only): (03) 9819 9522.

Editing & design: Russell Jones

to discuss options for celebrating these important tramway events.

Members are invited to attend this meeting, in order to contribute their ideas to mark the centenary of Hawthorn Depot. Morning tea and biscuits will be provided to those attending. Please note that the meeting will close at 11:00am, when the museum will open for its normal hours of operation.



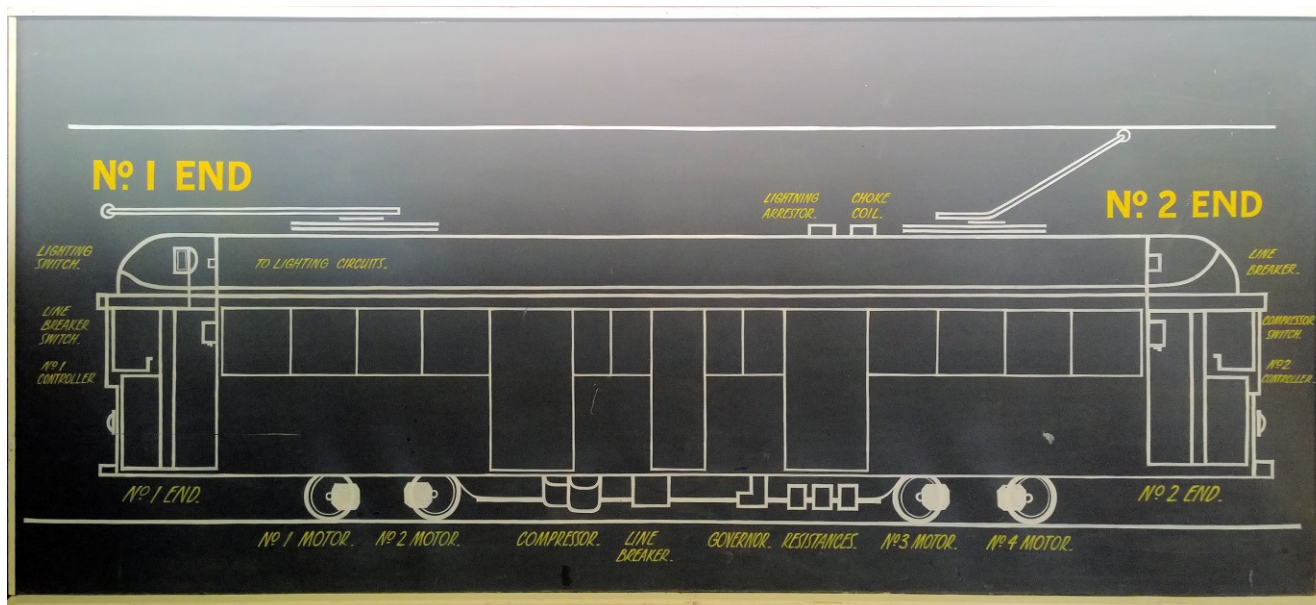
Wall hangings celebrating the centenary of Essendon Depot and electric trams in Melbourne in 2006, donated by Yarra Trams, now hanging in one of the alcoves in the main display room at the museum. Photo by Russell Jones.



Wall hangings promoting the development of the Tram 109 project, donated by Yarra Trams, now hanging in one of the alcoves in the main display room at the museum. Photo by Russell Jones.



The display of W class destination boxes at the rear of the depot. A gap in the display of fifteen boxes was filled with the sixteenth destination box on 22 November 2014. Photo by Russell Jones.



Formerly stored in the driver training room, this blackboard has now been mounted on the depot wall outside the substation. It displays the location of key traction components on a W2 class tram. Photo by Russell Jones.

Season's Greetings

The Committee of Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot wishes all its members and friends a happy and healthy holiday season, and best wishes for a successful new year.

We would also like to thank our loyal volunteers for the unstinting effort they committed to the museum this year, without which we could not remain open.

Member Discounts

FOHTD is pleased to offer our members a 10% discount on the purchase of new books from our museum shop.

Note that the discount is only open to financial members. It does not apply to the purchase of second-hand books or any other items from the shop, and does not apply to postage and packaging for mail order purchases.