



The Bellcord

Journal of the Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot



VR 53 being unloaded on the fan at the Melbourne Tram Museum @ Hawthorn Depot under grey skies on 22 April 2015. Photo by Adam Chandler.

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VR 53 Finally Arrives at the Museum

After a long wait of seven years, on 22 April 2015 [Victorian Railways 'luxury' tram No 53](#) finally arrived at Hawthorn Depot for display in the Melbourne Tram Museum. This tram was scheduled for loan to our museum by the Australian Railway Historical Society in 2008, but has been in store at Preston Workshops since then.

Rather than coming to the museum via the tracks from Preston, VR 53 arrived on the back of a truck supplied by L. Arthur Transport Services, and was unloaded on the depot fan.

This historically important tram is one of the few remaining relics of the two tram routes run by the Victorian Railways in the south-eastern bayside

suburbs of Melbourne between 1906 and 1959. It is an invaluable addition to the collection of trams at the museum, telling a largely unknown story in the development of tramways in our city.

FOHTD committee members Kevin Taig and Mike Ryan have been working tirelessly over the last few months to overcome the obstacles to VR 53 becoming a true part of the museum collection.

VR 53 is now sitting at the head of 3 road, an important part of Melbourne's tramway history proudly on public display in our museum. The only thing left to be done is to complete the display signage for this historic tramcar.

Open Days - 2015

13 June	27 June	11 July
25 July	26 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.

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Open House symbol for Melbourne Tram Museum @ Hawthorn Depot. Image courtesy of Open House Melbourne.

Open House Melbourne 2015

For the third year running, the Melbourne Tram Museum is participating in [Open House Melbourne](#). It will be open to all comers over the weekend of the 25th and 26th July 2015, between the hours of 10am and 4pm. As in previous years, entry to the museum will be free on these two days.

From our participation over the last two years in the Open House Melbourne program, we can expect to receive over one thousand visitors over the weekend. This opportunity provides us with the ability to showcase our museum to a much broader audience than our usual visitors. As part of our desire to continually improve the experience, the Tramway Anzacs exhibition will provide a richer experience for Open House this year.

We are asking for volunteers to act as guides over the two days. Those members who have been part of the team on previous Open House weekends can relate how rewarding participation can be.

If members are able to help on either or both days, please contact Carolyn on (03) 9877 4130, or send an e-mail to info@trammuseum.org.au. More information on Open House Melbourne can be found at <http://www.openhousemelbourne.org>.



Committee member Rod Atkins with museum tram W1 431 at Kew Depot on Sunday 3 May 2015, celebrating the centenary of the opening of the depot. 431 was taken by road transport to the depot on the previous Thursday. Photograph courtesy of David Kemp.

Kew Depot Centenary

Yarra Trams celebrated the centenary of the opening of Kew Depot, on Sunday 3 May 2015, by hosting a family day. FOHTD was pleased to be a part of this landmark.

One of our trams – [W1 431](#) – formed part of the display at Kew Depot. Unfortunately, Yarra Trams' plans to operate one of our trams from Kew Depot fell through. Instead, this role was fulfilled by W8 946, which ran shuttle trips from the Depot to the Victoria Gardens terminus. Most of the trips were standing room only.

The museum had one table in the giant marquee that also hosted the art prizes, centenary cake, historical photo displays, and photo booth. The presence of our "teardrop" flag placed outside the marquee definitely helped to bind all of the other displays together.

We took the Tramway Anzacs iPad as a key part of our display, which was well used by many of the visitors to the celebrations. Many of our new DL-sized flyers advertising both the museum and the Tramway Anzacs exhibition were handed out as well.

Many thanks must go to Geoff Brown, Frank McCullough, Adam Chandler and Rod Atkins for staffing our stall, answering questions on 431, and handing out our new museum brochures.

By all accounts, the day was a big success.

Tramway Anzacs Opening

The Tramway Anzacs exhibition was formally opened on 11 April 2015, in a solemn ceremony at the museum.

Conceived to commemorate the centenary of the landing at Anzac Cove, the exhibition is focused on the impact of the First World War on Australian



Guests, members and volunteers mingling after the official opening of the Tramway Anzacs exhibition on 11 April 1915. Photograph courtesy of Adam Chandler.

society, and on the lives of the tramway men who served in the Australian Imperial Force – both those who died, and those who returned.

The exhibition has been mounted in the main museum gallery, and consists of multimedia displays, posters and contemporary artefacts related to Australian participation in the First World War.

Funding to mount this exhibition was provided by our primary sponsors, VicTrack and Yarra Trams.

We were pleased to host the following dignitaries at the opening:

- The Hon. Ted Baillieu - Chair Victorian ANZAC Centenary Committee
- John Pesutto MP, State Member for Hawthorn, Shadow Attorney-General
- Ms Mary Urquhart - Chair, Victorian Heritage Council
- Ms Katrina Nicolson - Shine of Remembrance
- Mr Steve Hurd - Councillor Boroondara City Council
- Mr Neil Roberts - Director ICT, Yarra Trams

- Ms Nicola Holland - Senior Communications and Government Advisor, VicTrack
- Norm Maddock, OAM.

Our Chairman, Kevin Taig, opened proceedings and greeted our guests, introducing member Russell Jones, who wrote and delivered the keynote address.

John Pesutto MP responded to the keynote address with a warm and appreciative speech, before our guests enjoyed light refreshments, and viewed the exhibits.

Feedback from visitors has been very positive, especially regarding the professional quality of the displays. We commend the exhibition to our members, and hope all those who have not yet seen it take the time to come and visit.

If you can't visit the museum yourself, try out the virtual exhibition on the Tramway Anzacs microsite at <http://anzacs.trammuseum.org.au>.

Tramway Anzacs will be accessible until our last open day of 2015, on Saturday 12 December.

Tramway Anzacs Keynote Address

The First World War left an indelible mark on Australia. Every town and city has a war memorial, recording the names of those who served, and those who never returned. The names of far-off places appear on street signs in our suburbs – *Fromelles Avenue, Bullecourt Road, and Passchendaele Street*. People go to the RSL for a quiet drink, or a flutter on the pokies. Thousands of students attend lectures and tutorials at Monash University – named after the commander of Australian forces in France in 1918 – while almost every Australian at some time in their life will attend a dawn service or watch a march on Anzac Day.

All these things are part of the backdrop of Australian life, originating from a time before Australian citizenship, when to be Australian was to be a loyal subject of the British Empire.

One hundred years ago today, on the eleventh of April 1915, the men of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps were yet to be committed to action. They were waiting on transports anchored off the Greek islands of Mudros and Lemnos, two weeks away from landing on a beach on the Gallipoli

Peninsula, on a place that became known as Anzac Cove.

Who were these men, these soldiers of the Australian Imperial Force?

Those who had held jobs on the Melbourne tramways were a little older than the general run of soldiers, ranging from their twenties to early forties. They were men with established careers, responsible men who had good civilian jobs. Many of these occupations – gripmen, clerks, motormen and tram conductors – no longer exist today, or their duties and titles have been changed almost beyond recognition.

The Tramway Anzacs were Australian-born, and immigrants from the British Isles. They were single men, and husbands, and fathers. During the course of the war, five hundred and thirty-eight Melbourne tramway employees enlisted, joining over three hundred and thirty thousand Australian volunteers who served overseas. The Tramway Anzacs represent a snapshot in time, a true microcosm of their society, of what it meant to be an adult male of European descent serving in the Australian Imperial Force during the Great War of 1914-18. They enlisted for



Detail from one of the displays for the Tramway Anzacs Exhibition. Photograph courtesy of Adam Chandler.

many different reasons – from a sense of duty, for the adventure, or for escape from an unhappy life.

Before landing at Gallipoli, we imagine that some of the Anzacs were excited, some were apprehensive, and some were afraid. None of them could have had any real conception of what they were to encounter.

Over the next three and a half years, they were to experience a true hell on earth, on the battlefields of Gallipoli, in the deserts of Sinai and Palestine, and most brutally in the trenches of France and Belgium, on the Western Front – the place that soldiers gruesomely called *the sausage machine*, a relentless industry that processed millions of strong young men into rotting corpses.

One in five Australian soldiers were killed. Two in every five were wounded, by gunshot, shrapnel, high explosive and, worst of all, by gas. The Tramway Anzacs were no different. Eighty-six of them were killed in action, were posted missing, or died of wounds. Many of them still have no known resting place.

Today, we cannot truly conceive of the scale of loss. Every family, every town, and every workplace was affected by the loss of sons, brothers, husbands, friends and workmates in the war. A generation of Australian women did not marry, for a generation of men had lost their lives on faraway battlefields. Children grew to adulthood without knowing their fathers. Many rural villages suffered a long slow death, as the distant war took their future away.

A common thread in many service records of the dead were requests from families to see a photograph of the grave, seeking reassurance that their bodies were laid to rest in a Christian manner, or pleas for details of how a loved one died, trying to make sense of their grief.

The loss was not restricted to the men who did not return. Over the following decades, the maimed and crippled from the war were a common sight in Australian cities and towns. Men who were missing arms, legs, or faces were an accepted part of life. Then there were those who did not carry visible scars. Today they would be diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, but post-war the veterans were expected to suffer in silence, without support or treatment. Many became alcoholics, or became emotionally unavailable, in their pain retreating from

friends and family. Others, their health ruined by the stress of active service, died before their time.

These men did not talk of what they endured, and denied that they were heroes – although most of them would say they knew a couple of blokes who were. However, for all of them, their service in the First World War was the time that more than any other, defined their lives.

Did their achievements outweigh the terrible cost?

For many years, the legend of Gallipoli and Anzac Cove has grown, and many proclaim it was the true birthplace of Australian nationhood. But the campaign was a fiasco, a long, slow and bloody defeat created by ambitious politicians and incompetent generalship.

The bloodbaths in France and Belgium in 1916 and 1917 were no better, when thousands of lives were spent for meaningless gains of a few hundred metres. Few of us know of the pivotal role the Australian Corps played in 1918 in defeating the German Army on the Western Front, in an unparalleled series of victories from Villers-Bretonneux to Montbrehain. Fewer still have heard of the part the Australian Light Horse played in capturing Jerusalem, Damascus and Aleppo from the Turks.

Although they have all now passed, we honour the men of the AIF – for their courage, for their endurance, and for their role in gaining victory, and ending one of the bloodiest and most senseless wars in history. Even more, we sorrow for the price that was paid for that victory. Above all, we will remember them.

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.
Lest we forget.*

Remembrance Poppies

When setting up the display cabinets for Tramway Anzacs, we had a lack of material consistent with the exhibition narrative for one of the bottom shelves. Not wanting to have an empty space, we racked our brains for options, and came up with the concept of having a carpet of remembrance poppies to fill the shelf, and lift the appearance of the display.



The Common or Flanders Poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*) grows abundantly in Flanders and Northern France, especially in the disturbed ground of the First World War battlefields. They were popularised through the patriotic poem *In Flanders Fields*, written in 1915 by Lt-Colonel John McCrae, a Canadian physician. Since the end of the First World War, the poppy has been used across the Commonwealth as a symbol of remembrance for the fallen.

In Flanders Fields

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

Artificial poppies have been made ever since, their scarlet colour signifying the blood spent in defence of our country. Every 11 November, the RSL sells artificial poppies to support their charitable activities in favour of ex-servicemen and women.

The Australian War Memorial's education program has a simple yet effective [pattern](#) for making poppies from red and black crepe paper and green florist's wire – about two hundred were made for Tramway Anzacs, as background for the display cabinet.

Three people laboured for around six hours on producing the flowers. The result in the display cabinet is quite effective, making it difficult to believe the materials only cost \$15.

We also had a few poppies left over, which have been used as visual accents in the shop.

Making the Map

A major objective of the Tramway Anzacs exhibition was to illustrate the social impact of the First World War on life in Melbourne. One way this was achieved was by displaying the extent of the tram system between 1914 and 1918.

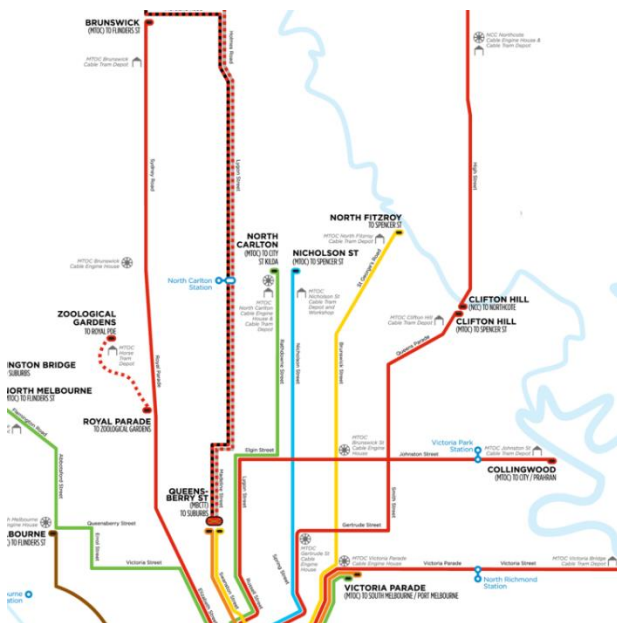


In short, we needed a map.

There were a number of different tramway operators in Melbourne during the First World War: the cable tramway system in the inner parts of the city, and the various electric tramways run by a mix of municipal trusts and private companies, while the government-owned Victorian Railways operated the 'electric street railway' between St Kilda and Brighton Beach.

Unfortunately, there were no contemporary maps available that displayed the routes of all operators in a format suitable for exhibition display. What we

needed was a new historically accurate map, a map that would be immediately familiar to museum visitors, and still display the different travelling patterns that existed in the period of the First World War, from 1914 to 1918.



Several reference books on the history of cable and electric tram operators have included track maps, complemented by the Mullens and the Sands & McDougall maps. But these only showed the streets and roads along which tram tracks were laid, not the specific routes that operated on those tracks. Original research was required.

Adam Chandler was given the job of doing the research, as well as designing the map.

Drawing inspiration from the current Public Transport Victoria/Yarra Trams map symbology for the Melbourne Tram Network, and using the Mullens map of the era as a base, he plotted out each route using a geographically accurate projection. Unlike the current Yarra Trams route map, he did not choose a 'diagrammatic' style, as this type of public transit map championed by George Dow and Harry Beck did not become popular until the 1930s.

Finding out where the specific routes ran and their numbers/identifiers was quite a challenge; as the reference materials did not have the necessary detail. Finding the routes of the Prahran and Malvern Tramways Trust in the south-eastern suburbs was a particular challenge. In a cruel twist, once Adam completed the first substantive version of the map for editing, he uncovered a copy of the Osboldstone pocket rail and tram map (c. 1916) in the Peter

Watson Duckett collection. It listed each of the routes and the streets the tram routes followed travelled in. Luckily all of the prior detective work turned out to be correct.

When the cable tram system was first built in the 1880s a large part of the population was illiterate, so they could not read destination signs. To address this problem the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company (MTOC) permanently assigned their cable trams to individual routes, painting them particular colours for each route. At night the cable trams displayed a lamp of the same colour.

Adam illustrated the cable tram routes using the colour assigned to the trams on each route.

The different electric tram operators used a variety of methods to indicate route – route symbols, route numbers and letters, text destination signs and coloured lights. At night, both the Hawthorn Tramways Trust (HTT) and the Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust (PMTT) used coloured light combinations with two lamps on their trams to designate tram routes. These colour combinations were used to denote each tram route.

The Melbourne, Brunswick and Coburg Tramways Trust (MBCTT) used Sydney-style destination blinds with coloured shapes and destination text. The shape colours were used on the map to mark the MBCTT line along Lygon Street to East and North Coburg.

This may very well be the first time all of the tram routes that operated in First World War-era Melbourne have been plotted together on the same map!

During the research process, Adam made some interesting observations.

- PMTT services used Glenferrie Road Malvern as a key corridor. This section of line was the core of their network, enabling the expansion of the PMTT into the outer suburbs.
- Research showed St Kilda was a popular destination, especially on Sundays, as demonstrated by the number of services to the Esplanade from the suburbs.
- There was extensive through-routing of cable services through Swanston Street and Lonsdale Streets.



VR 53 resting quietly in its new home on 3 road at the Melbourne Tram Museum. Milan Peter Witt car 1692 is lurking behind FOHTD Chairman Kevin Taig on 4 road. Photograph courtesy of Adam Chandler.

- HTT made extensive use of short workings from the city terminus at Princes Bridge, along Swan Street and Riversdale Road. The HTT was the only electric tram operator with direct access to the city, as all other access to the CBD was effectively blocked by the MTOC cable tram lines.
- The importance of the interchanges between the central cable tram system and the outlying electric tram operators in setting the traffic patterns for the municipal and private tramways in the outer suburbs.
- How the central core of the Melbourne tramway system was essentially established by the end of 1918.

Printed copies of the First World War Melbourne tramway system map are currently available for sale in A2 poster size from our shop.

Researching the Stories

The task of researching 538 individual stories of the tramway employees who volunteered for service in the First World War is ambitious by any measure. So where did we start?

To determine exactly how many tramway employees volunteered and served in the armed forces, we began with photographs of tramway honour boards from the First World War. The soldiers who died on active service were the easiest to investigate – the [Commonwealth War Graves Commission](#) website was the first port of call. This valuable website would produce service number, regiment, date of death, and the place of burial (where known). From that point, it was relatively easy to find service records in the [National Archives of Australia](#), as well as embarkation records and the Red Cross files at the Australian War Memorial.

The [Public Records Office of Victoria](#) was also an excellent starting point – as there was a ledger detailing the names and occupations of volunteers from the Melbourne Tramways Board.

But this was still the beginning – there was no single list of *Tramway Anzacs*, as records were incomplete, and the various tramway authorities in Melbourne (there were seven of them) had differing levels of record keeping.

The [Trove](#) digital archive of Australian newspapers on the [National Library of Australia](#) website was



Yarra Trams W8 946 running into Kew Depot on centenary celebration duties on 3 May 2015. Photograph courtesy of David Kemp.

invaluable, allowing us to scan family notices for volunteers with a tramway connection.

We dreaded trying to find details of *Smiths* and *Joneses*, *Greens* and *Browns*.

The research was a slog that required a combination of patience, dedication and sheer bloody-minded stubbornness. We trust the result is of interest.

Visit to Telstra Museum

The [Telstra Museum](#) is located at the Hawthorn Telephone Exchange at 375 Burwood Road, and is open for visitors by arrangement. During the research process for the Tramway Anzacs, the Telstra museum provided valuable assistance in preparing the multimedia displays. As a result of these contacts, the Telstra Museum has extended an invitation to FOHTD members for a group visit on a date to be agreed.

However, prior to arranging such a visit, we need to determine the number of our members who would be interested in visiting the Telstra Museum. Members

wishing to be part of this visit should contact us by e-mail on info@trammuseum.org.au, or by calling Carolyn on (03) 9877 4130.

Volunteering

Our experience with the Tramway Anzacs exhibition to date has convinced us that there is public demand for our museum to be open every Saturday.

Extension of our opening hours has been a key objective of our museum development plan for a number of years. However, to achieve this objective, we need to increase the depth and numbers of our volunteer workforce – as guides, shop attendants, researchers, tram cleaners and maintenance personnel. In short, we need more of our members to become active volunteers, even if it is only one day a month.

If you want to become part of a close-knit team dedicated to presenting our tramway history to the people of Melbourne, please contact us.



Milan Peter Witt tram number 1692 loaded for transport on the Hawthorn Depot fan, headed for points north, 25 May 2015. Photograph courtesy of Kevin Taig.

Gone But Not Forgotten

On Monday 25 May 2015, two long-term visitors to the Melbourne Tram Museum @ Hawthorn Depot left for their future home at Sydney Tramway Museum, via Bendigo.

Berlin 3007 and Milan 1692 have been on display at Hawthorn since 2003, residing in the front two positions of 4 road.

Originally brought to Melbourne for operation during a number of special occasions, they landed at Hawthorn as unexpected guests. While Berlin 3007 is very different to any tram that ever ran in Melbourne, one of the features of Milan 1692 is the similarity of control systems to standard Melbourne W class trams.

Perhaps this last fact is not so surprising, as the design and construction of this class of Milan Peter Witt tramcars was contemporary with the Melbourne W2 class, using many common components from the

General Electric parts catalogue. Number 1692 was the eightieth Peter Witt car built by Societa Italiana Ernesto Breda of Milan, first entering service in late 1929 or early 1930.

A single-ended car, it was modified for double-end operation for Australian museum service by Nuova Ralfo of Olginate in Italy, with completion to operating condition undertaken by Bendigo Tramways after its arrival in Australia in 2001. Parts from sister car 1815 were used in the conversion.

Berlin TZ69 class tram number 3007 was built by Reichsbahnausbesserungs-werke Schöneeweide in East Germany, entering service on 10 November 1969. Originally numbered 5132, it is equipped with two 80 horsepower motors. This class of trams was usually operated in coupled sets, often with an unpowered trailer car of class BZ69. The rather prominent Scharfenburg couplers at each end of the tram simplified the process of coupling them in multiple unit sets, a common mode of operation of small cars on European tramway systems.



Berlin BZ69 class tram 3007 leaving the Melbourne Tram Museum @ Hawthorn Depot for its future home in Sydney late on the afternoon of 25 May 2015.

Photo courtesy of Kevin Taig

One of the notable things about the Berlin car were the design adaptations for freezing Northern European winters, including the prominent driver's windscreen electric demister wires. However, as a result the flow of fresh air into the interior is less than optimal, making the summer operation of this car under the Australian sun a rather daunting proposition.

It was officially withdrawn from service in June 1996, and was transported to Australia for display and operation at the Sydney Tramway Museum, arriving at Loftus on 21 October 1996 – well before it migrated south to Melbourne.

However, for some time it has been clear that the presence of the two foreign trams was incompatible with the *raison d'être* of our museum, as our mission is to present the history of Melbourne trams, in particular illustrating the social contribution trams have made to the development of our city. Regrettably, the two European trams had no part to play in telling this story, and occupied valuable space that has been targeted for display of historic Melbourne trams.

In order to allow for the display of additional Melbourne tramcars, these two vehicles had to leave Hawthorn Depot.

Over a lengthy period, Mike Ryan and Kevin Taig developed and implemented a plan to move the two

trams out. A number of difficulties were encountered on the way, which were skilfully resolved by these two members.

Based on our experience with moving VR 53 into the museum, the two foreign trams were lifted on to trucks on the depot fan. To provide the lifting clearance under the depot overhead, it was necessary to remove the pantographs from the trams the previous week.

It is with a little sadness that we see these two trams return to Sydney Tramway Museum, but this is far overshadowed by our excitement regarding what will replace them – which news we hope to tell our readers in the next issue of *The Bellcord*.

This car transfer has allowed the reshuffling of some trams within the depot to enable better display of the vehicles, as well as allowing the replacement of the light globes in the main shed, which are over a decade old, and no longer shine with quite the same brightness.

FOHTD acknowledges the assistance received from VicTrack in facilitating the transfer of these trams back to Sydney. We trust that Berlin 3007 and Milan 1692 will be well received in their permanent home in the Sydney Tramway Museum at Loftus.