



MELBOURNE
TRAM MUSEUM

The Bellcord

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Front cover

Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board W2 class no 606 at Balaclava Junction, October 1969. The driver is watching his mirror as he turns into Hawthorn Road. Photograph by Mal Rowe.

In this issue

In recognition of the centenary of Glen Huntly Depot, this issue of *The Bellcord* focuses on the story of the Depot. Noelle Jones and Mal Rowe outline its origin and construction, its tramcars and routes, touching on just a small part of its rich history over the past hundred years.

While the hugely successful W class design became the iconic symbol of Melbourne tramways, there were a number of earlier tram designs – some of which fell short of the expectations for good tramcars. Mal Rowe investigates two of these dud designs.

And finally, we were saddened to hear of the passing of Keith Stodden, noted tramway enthusiast and long-time museum member.

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Visitors from the American Public Transportation Association at the Melbourne Tram Museum, 6 August 2023. Photograph courtesy of Adam Chandler.

It's been a hectic few months at the museum! Between preparations for the Open House Melbourne and hosting a number of special visitors and events our museum volunteers have been busier than ever.

#APTADownUnder visit to Melbourne Tram Museum

From the earliest days of Melbourne's cable trams in the 1880s – pioneered by Massachusetts-born [Francis Boardman Clapp](#) – American practices and designs have influenced and shaped our network. Melbourne's tramway operators of old often looked to the United States for new ideas and innovations, through study tours, visits, and even technology transfer.

On Sunday 6 August, the museum was able to reciprocate by hosting the #APTADownUnder delegation of the American Public Transportation Association on its 2023 Study Mission with the Public Transport Association Australia New Zealand (PTAANZ).

APTA is the peak representative body for public transportation in North America (essentially a successor to the former President's Conference Committee), while PTAANZ is now the peak body in Australia.

The Study Mission comprised a high-level APTA delegation of more than 30 public transit agency executives and transit business leaders. The Mission was led by APTA Chair Dorval R. Carter, Jr., President, Chicago Transit Authority, and APTA President and CEO Paul P. Skoutelas, who was also part of the visiting group to the museum.

At Hawthorn the group inspected our standard Melbourne cable tram (based on a design from San Francisco's Sutter Street Railway), several of our electric trams, including the iconic W Class, and Spike from Yarra Trams' "Beware the Rhino" safety campaign.

Particular highlights included Melbourne tramways' past use of American technologies and equipment such as the Brill range of truck designs, GE controllers, and Westinghouse air compressors; and in later years the 'Peter Witt' and PCC type vehicles which influenced the design of our city's current Z, A, and B class fleets.

Some of the APTA representatives are also flying the flag for Melbourne by operating our iconic W class trams on their networks!

The special opening at Hawthorn helped to set a positive context for the following days in Melbourne. The delegation met with executives from the Department of Transport and Planning, Yarra Trams, and other public transport organisations to discuss public transportation priorities, major projects, key successes, lessons learned – and reportedly their great experience at the museum.

Special thanks to Kevin Taig, Rod Atkins, Shána De La Rue, Alan Scott, and Frank McCullough for the special opening; and to Sophia Dickinson (PTAANZ Communications) and Adam Chandler (DTP Communications and museum member) for helping to connect and host the visit.

Yarra Trams maintenance team

After being impressed by a visit to the museum, the manager of Yarra Tram's maintenance team arranged to bring the team – normally based at various locations around the system at Preston and local depots – to view our collection.

Over around an hour and a half the team explored the history of tram development in Melbourne, from the grip car – Melbourne's original low floor tram – to the Z1 "Karachi W11" tram. One of the team was even able to read the Urdu script on the side of Karachi W11 – confirming that the Urdu and English texts are the same.

All involved enjoyed the conversation and we have established good links with the people who maintain Melbourne's current fleet.



Yarra Trams maintenance team at the Melbourne Tram Museum, 16 August 2023. Photograph by Mal Rowe.



Museum volunteer Stephanie Sheehan leading a guided tour during the Open House Melbourne weekend, July 2023. Photograph by Mike Ryan.

Open House Melbourne 2023

Many thanks to our volunteers who made the Open House Melbourne weekend a great success. With more than 1100 visitors over the two days, the museum was yet again one of the most popular venues participating in the weekend.

Lights! Camera! Action!

Watch out for an upcoming segment of the travel and lifestyle television show Postcards, which will feature the museum. This segment is currently scheduled for broadcast on the Nine Network on Sunday 24 September. Filming took place on 10 August, with museum members Mal Rowe and Shána De La Rue guiding the production team.

Annual General Meeting 2023

The Melbourne Tram Museum 2023 AGM will be held on 23 September 2023. Details have been emailed to museum members.



Museum member Mal Rowe with Postcards presenter Brodie Harper during filming at the Melbourne Tram Museum, 10 August 2023. Photograph by Mike Ryan.



Centenary of Glen Huntly Depot

It was a festive atmosphere at Glen Huntly Depot’s centenary celebrations. With a focus on staff and their families, it was great day for all, culminating in a party tram trip to Caulfield Junction.

Guests were fascinated by a display of uniforms from the Melbourne Tram Museum’s collection. Museum member Mal Rowe also gave a short talk on the history of the Depot.

Many thanks to Brooke Marshall and her team for inviting the museum to participate in such an enjoyable event.

Above: Glen Huntly Depot, May 2023. Photograph by Mal Rowe.



Cutting the cake at the Glen Huntly Depot centenary celebrations, 26 August 2023. Photograph by Noelle Jones.



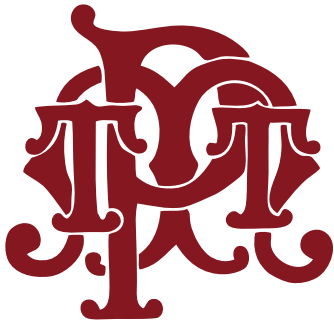
Glen Huntly Depot: 100 years old

In response to a query from Yarra Trams' Brooke Marshall, Line Manager, Glen Huntly Depot, the museum's research team have been exploring the history of Glen Huntly Depot, which is celebrating its centenary this year.

The Prahan and Malvern Tramways Trust (PMTT) had identified a big problem. The largest of Melbourne's municipal tramway trusts, by 1918 it was running 16 routes across the eastern and southeastern suburbs, served by Malvern and Kew Depots. As the PMTT's traffic increased, more tramcars were needed. And more tramcars also meant that the PMTT needed more space to house them.

Above: M&MTB X2 class No 676 at Glen Huntly Depot, in the 1950s. This tram can be seen at the Melbourne Tram Museum. Photograph from the collection of Ron Scholten, Melbourne Tram Museum.

For several years the PMTT had been planning potential new lines and extensions, however due to conditions during World War I expansion of its network had slowed. Once the war was over, the PMTT's future development plans for south-eastern Melbourne would have a strong influence on the choice of a new depot site.



PMTT monogram. From the collection of the Melbourne Tram Museum.

What criteria were considered when choosing a site for a new depot? The land should be flat, well-drained and above the water table, to avoid flooding and the maintenance pits filling with water. A depot generally serves several routes, so ideally it should be located close to the junction of those routes, as well as being mid-way along the routes, in order to minimise 'dead running' – namely running the tramcars in and out of the depot without carrying passengers. And, in the days before ubiquitous car ownership, there should be reasonable levels of housing in proximity to the site, to ensure ease of access by staff undertaking shiftwork, who would most likely be travelling to work by foot or bicycle.

Glen Huntly Road in Caulfield ticked all the right boxes.

In January 1920 the PMTT gave residents notice of compulsory acquisition of a four-acre property just west of Glen Huntly railway station, at the corner of Glen Huntly Road and Laura Street. This was the site of the National Rose Nursery, a well-known commercial rose grower founded in the late 1890s, and with customers across Australia and internationally.

After receiving protests against the 'car barn' from 200 local ratepayers as well as from the Caulfield Council, the PMTT decided to seek an alternative site.

Then on 2 February 1920, the PMTT, together with other municipal tramway trusts, was taken over by the [Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramway Board](#) (M&MTB) which had been established three months earlier, on 1 November 1919. This brought Melbourne's cable trams and municipal tramway trusts under the control of a single organisation.

[Alex Cameron](#) (1864-1940), Chairman of the PMTT, was appointed Chairman of the M&MTB and several other PMTT officers assumed senior positions in the larger organisation. This led to many of the PMTT's engineering and management practices, together with its plans for future development, being adopted by the M&MTB.

After an investigation informed by the PMTT's earlier work, the M&MTB targeted an alternative site for acquisition, part of a property known as Chloris Park.

The new site, to the west of the original proposed site, was also in Glen Huntly Road, on the other side of Bambra Road and closer to South Caulfield junction. The rectangular site – 440 feet by 550 feet (134 metres by 168 metres) – covered five acres, two roods and twelve perches (2.25 hectares).

Chloris Park

Chloris Park was the property of William 'Billy' Lang, a prominent figure in racing circles, as a jockey, horse trainer and owner. He was one of Melbourne's earliest settlers, being just a young boy when he arrived in 1837 from Tasmania.

William Lang, owner of Chloris Park, photographed in 1872. From Samuel Griffiths, [Turf and Heath](#) (1906), in the collection of State Library Victoria.



Lang's connections with horse racing spanned a 60-year period, from the very first race meeting in Melbourne, held in 1838 at Batman's Hill. Described as small, wiry and tough, as well as being a hard taskmaster, he was considered one of the best riders in the 1850s. Lang was involved with many successful horses over his long career; one of the most well-known was Nimblefoot, which he trained to win the 1870 Melbourne Cup.

The year after his Melbourne Cup win, Nimblefoot was to run in the Australian Cup, but over the two weeks before the race Lang lost trust in the jockey. He told the owner that an unnamed 'amateur' was willing to ride the horse. The owner only found out on the race day that the rider was Lang himself. Then aged in his mid-40s, Lang made the correct weight and rode Nimblefoot to win the race.

At that time, Lang was based at his property in Epsom Road, Flemington, which also included the Grand National Tower Hotel on the corner of Epsom and Langs Roads – the latter being named after him. The hotel was demolished in the 1920s after being purchased by the Royal Agricultural Society to expand its showgrounds.

Around 1880, Lang moved to Chloris Park in Caulfield South where he continued to train horses. On the corner of Glen Huntly and Bambra Roads, Chloris Park covered ten acres (four hectares) and included a five-room villa as well as eight loose boxes (these are stalls in stables that are large enough for horses to move around unrestrained – that is, 'loose').

Lang was a wealthy man – in addition to Chloris Park, he owned property in Prahran and Fitzroy, the Grand National Tower Hotel, the United Service Club Hotel on the corner of Gertrude and Young Streets, Fitzroy, and 493 acres (200 hectares) of land at Corop, in the Goulburn Valley. He also owned seven horses, including the mare Rosella, winner of the Hobart Cup in 1898.



Nimblefoot, winner of the 1870 Melbourne Cup. Wood engraving by Samuel Calvert, originally published in The Illustrated Australian News, 5 December 1870, courtesy of State Library Victoria.

Lang died suddenly in 1899, aged 72, at the blacksmith's forge, having walked Rosella there to be shod. Under the terms of Lang's will, his widow, Ann, continued to live at Chloris Park until she passed away in 1907. Also living at the property were their daughter Harriett and her husband, Harry Benbow, who was a horse trainer like his father-in-law. The couple remained at Chloris Park for several years after Ann's death.

The property also hosted local recreational activities, being the venue of the annual sports meeting of the Camden Town Sports Club over the period from 1907 to 1912.

By 1915 the Benbow family had moved out of Chloris Park, with the property being leased to a succession of other trainers.

Acquisition of the new site

Under section 100 of the Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Act 1918, the M&MTB had the power to purchase land either by agreement or by compulsory acquisition. In the case of the latter, consent was required from the Governor in Council, and the M&MTB was required to issue notices in the Government Gazette as well as in two newspaper issues, describing the purpose of the acquisition together with the particulars of the land. Notice was also required to be given to the owners of the land.

The M&MTB determined that the portion of the Chloris Park property would require a compulsory acquisition. After some negotiations with the executors of the Lang estate, the agreed purchase price was £4,500 – towards the upper end of the valuations received by the M&MTB – subject to the existing lease. The lease holder, trainer Harry W. Torr, agreed to the lease being cancelled, with a payment of £25, and his tenancy was to continue at 10 shillings per week with a notice period of three weeks.

Title of the property was transferred to the M&MTB on 29 December 1921.

The remaining portion of Chloris Park, on the corner of Glen Huntly and Bamba Roads, was subdivided and advertised for sale in 1923.

Duplication of the tram track at the corner of Glen Huntly and Bamba Roads, February 1923. The tram in the background is an early PMTT California combination car. Photograph from a real estate poster targeting tramway employees, from the collection of Len Millar.



Building a new depot

According to the *Railway and Tramway Record* of 19 June 1923, the new Glen Huntly Depot started operations on 12 May 1923 – before any permanent buildings had been completed. There were around 50 staff, of which almost all had transferred from Malvern Depot

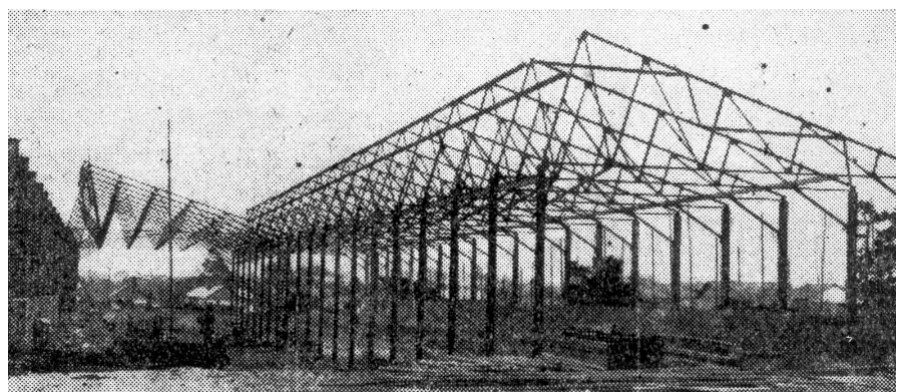
Lisle 'Lou' Cooper, a driver who transferred to Glen Huntly in 1923, recalled that the Depot was initially just a paddock where trams were parked, with staff having only a small tin shed to use as a rest and meal room.

The car shed and traffic office were constructed to the designs of the architect for the M&MTB, [Alan G. Monsborough](#) (1888-1938). Glen Huntly Depot was one of his earliest designs for the M&MTB, where he worked from the 1920s until his sudden death in 1938. He was responsible for the design of all of the M&MTB's buildings over this period, encompassing depots, substations and tram shelters, as well as the Wattle Park Chalet and the M&MTB Head Office at 616 Little Collins Street.

The sawtooth roof of the car shed has a slope on the south-facing window panels, similar to those of the Hawthorn and Hanna Street (South Melbourne) Depots, although the latter had a much greater span. Car sheds built later in the 1930s had vertical window panels.

The new Depot was erected by master builders Massey & Sons of South Melbourne, who undertook several other projects for the M&MTB during the 1920s, including the Carlton substation, Preston Workshops and South Melbourne Depot. The firm was also responsible for rebuilding the Melbourne Town Hall after it was severely damaged by fire in 1925 and constructed many notable buildings around Melbourne. Building materials for Glen Huntly Depot included 350,000 bricks purchased from the Northcote Brick Company and 76 tons (77 tonnes) of steelwork – stanchions, trusses and girders – supplied by the Melbourne-based structural engineering firm of Edward Campbell & Son.

According to the M&MTB's 1924 annual report, the car shed was not completed until August 1924. It covered an area of 33,000 square feet (3,066 square metres), with space for 48 tramcars and provision for future expansion to 100 tramcars.



Glen Huntly tram shed under construction. Photograph from *The Argus*, 20 March 1923, David Featherstone collection, Melbourne Tram Museum.

The two-storey Traffic Office, facing Glen Huntly Road, was also completed in 1924. The building was equipped with an automatic sprinkler system, supplied by Wormald Bros. A water tower also formed part of the firefighting system.

Originally there was just a single track into the Depot, the entrance being duplicated four years later, in October 1927.

In 1936 the south-west corner of the Depot land was subdivided, with a newly created McGrath Street, connecting Glen Huntly Road to Pyne Street. These eight housing blocks were auctioned on 14 November 1936.

Written memories of a local resident – A. Smith, from the collection of the Glen Eira Historical Society – describe using the extensive land and gardens of the Depot as a playground during the 1940s. There were also tennis courts for use by tramway employees – now the location of the Depot car park. During the war years, trenches had been dug around the tramshed, offering even more play opportunities for local children.

The early 1940s also saw many of the M&MTB properties – including Glen Huntly Depot – being modified to provide accommodation for [conductresses](#), employed in 1941 to alleviate the manpower shortages experienced during World War II. Prior to this, all conductors were male (the first female drivers were not appointed until 1975).

Subsequently, Glen Huntly Depot has undergone several further alterations:

- 1955 – the running shed offices, working facilities and staff accommodation were upgraded, which included the addition of hot and cold showers.
- 1957 – tramcar washing platforms and a canteen for employees were installed.
- 1983 – a major upgrade to the depot resulted in new offices, mess room and canteen.
- 2007 – the depot fan was reconstructed.

Newly erected tram shed, Glen Huntly Depot, c1925. Photograph from the Peter Duckett collection, Melbourne Tram Museum.



Rolling stock

As noted above, Glen Huntly Depot was housing trams as soon as tracks were laid. Early photographs show parts of the depot in use while construction was still in progress.

The earliest depot allocation sheet available dates from 1927. At that time the depot had 31 single truck California combination cars, eight crossbench 'summer cars', 14 straight sill single truck cars, six maximum traction bogie cars, 20 W class bogie cars and three X1 class single truckers – the latter probably mostly used on the Point Ormond shuttle service along Glen Huntly Road to Elsternwick station.

By 1928 five of the six L class bogie cars had been allocated to Glen Huntly, with the sixth car relocating there from Hanna Street Depot shortly thereafter. Drivers from Glen Huntly loved the L class trams, referring to them as 'barrels' due to their curved sides. The six L class cars remained at Glen Huntly until 1972 when they were withdrawn from regular service and distributed around various depots as 'spare cars'. No 105 remained at Glen Huntly as its 'spare car' and was often taken out into traffic by drivers who enjoyed driving it.

Glen Huntly has often been 'late to the party' in acquiring new trams, with Z class trams not arriving until 1992 – 17 years after they were first introduced. As at August 2023 there were still no low floor trams allocated to the depot.

Inside the car shed at Glen Huntly Depot, mid 1920s. Note that tram no 224 (second from the right) has an early version of the M&MTB monogram. Official M&MTB photograph, from the collection of Ray Pearson.



M&MTB L class no 104 at Carnegie terminus, 23 May 1941. Photograph by Wal Jack, in the collection of the Melbourne Tram Museum.



Routes

When Glen Huntly Depot opened in 1923, it supported two routes, both of which were originally PMTT routes that had been transferred from Malvern Depot:

- Point Ormond to Darling Road
- Elsterwick to Grange Road

The routes served by Glen Huntly evolved over time, as the tramway network expanded and transport needs changed. Special services ran to Caulfield Racecourse on race days. The Point Ormond service closed in 1960.

Glen Huntly Depot currently supports the following routes:

- Route 3 from Melbourne University to East Malvern, originally route 4D
- Route 3a, on weekends only, from Melbourne University to East Malvern via St Kilda
- Route 64 from Melbourne University to East Brighton, originally running from North Road to St Kilda
- Route 67 from Melbourne University to Carnegie, previously Route 4.

M&MTB W3 class no 666 at Glen Huntly Depot, January 1969. Note the Depot's water tower in the background. Photograph by Mal Rowe.



Glen Huntly Depot 1965 Victorian Tramway Football Association Premiers. This was the first time Glen Huntly had won the Grand Final since joining the VTFA in 1927. From M&MTB News, August/September 1965, in the collection of the Melbourne Tram Museum.

Over the years, Glen Huntly was active in various inter-depot tramway sporting competitions. Its cricket team first played in the 1924-5 season and won several premierships, including in 1947-8 and 1981-2. The Depot was also successful in golf and table tennis competitions.



Glen Huntly people

Over the past one hundred years, many people have worked at Glen Huntly Depot – traffic staff, maintenance staff and office staff.

With various waves of post-World War II migration, Melbourne’s tramway employees are of many different nationalities and cultural backgrounds. Glen Huntly Depot certainly reflects that rich diversity amongst its staff.

Every one of those people would have their own tale to tell. Below are the stories of two remarkable individuals who have been part of the history of Glen Huntly Depot.

Lieutenant Reg Saunders, on his graduation from the Officer’s Cadet Training Unit at Seymour, Victoria, 25 November 1944. Photograph courtesy of the Australian War Memorial.



Reg Saunders: a notable Australian

For a very brief period after World War II one of Australia’s most distinguished military veterans worked as a conductor at Glen Huntly.

Reginald ‘Reg’ Walter Saunders MBE (1920-1990) was the first indigenous Australian to become a commissioned officer in the Australian Army. Born in Purnim, Western Victoria, he enlisted as a soldier in 1940, serving in North Africa and Greece, before spending nearly a year behind enemy lines in occupied Crete. He was subsequently rescued with other Allied servicemen and returned to Australia. In 1943 Saunders rejoined his unit in New Guinea and then in 1945 he was commissioned as a lieutenant.

Returning to Melbourne after the end of the war, in 1946 he became a tram conductor, based at Glen Huntly Depot. Saunders said that he had good relations with his colleagues – he also played centre half-forward on the Glen Huntly Depot football team.

However Saunders did experience racial abuse from the travelling public. He clearly did not tolerate any nonsense and on more than one occasion ejected passengers from the tram for bad behaviour.



*His Excellency Sr Abel Guterres.
Photograph courtesy of WithOneSeed.*

Saunders spent nine months with the tramways before resigning to gain trade skills. With the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, he rejoined the Army and was promoted to captain. Saunders was described by those that knew him as an outstanding platoon commander, leading by example and beloved by the men who served under him.

He left Korea in 1952 and resigned from the regular army in 1954.

Appointed in 1969 as one of the first Aboriginal Liaison Officers with the Office of Aboriginal Affairs (later the Department of Aboriginal Affairs), Saunders was awarded an MBE in 1971 for long and dedicated service to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island community. He passed away in 1990.

Abel Guterres: from tram driver to ambassador

Abel Guterres was just 19 years old, with no money or possessions, when he arrived in Australia from East Timor (now Timor-Leste). At that time, civil war had broken out after the withdrawal of the Portuguese in 1974. Then in 1975 East Timor was invaded by the Indonesian military, seeking to annex the territory, which sparked a long and bloody occupation.

Settling in Melbourne, and after gaining English skills, Guterres joined the tramways, firstly as a conductor and then as a driver, based at Glen Huntly Depot. In *Tramway Record* (the official organ of the Victorian branch of the Australian Tramway & Motor Omnibus Employees' Association) he was described as a good workmate and was well-respected by his colleagues. Guterres transferred from Glen Huntly to North Fitzroy buses in 1982.

He did not discover until some six or seven years after the event that his father and 13 of his 14 siblings had been killed in the Indonesian invasion.

Guterres was an active supporter of the East Timorese community in Australia. He was instrumental in the successful campaign to grant the refugees permanent residency in 1977, and also donated a large part of his earnings to the campaign for independence. He became the Australian spokesman for the National Council for Timorese Resistance.

After 24 years in Australia, Guterres returned to East Timor to vote in the 1999 referendum for independence. Guterres was awarded a British Council fellowship to study international law and politics at Oxford University. After the referendum, United Nations peacekeeping troops oversaw the transition to independence, which formally took place on 20 May 2002.

In 2002 Guterres was appointed as Consul-General for Timor-Leste to Australia. Subsequently he became the country's Ambassador to Australia over the period 2010-20. Guterres is currently the Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam.

Noelle Jones and Mal Rowe

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Warren Doubleday, Russell Jones and Hugh Waldron for their assistance with our research. We are also grateful for the resources of the Melbourne Tram Museum as well as the Australian Dictionary of Biography, Australian War Memorial, BBC World Service, Glen Eira Historical Society, National Library of Australia, Public Record Office Victoria and State Library Victoria.



DUDS: designs that failed the Melbourne tramways

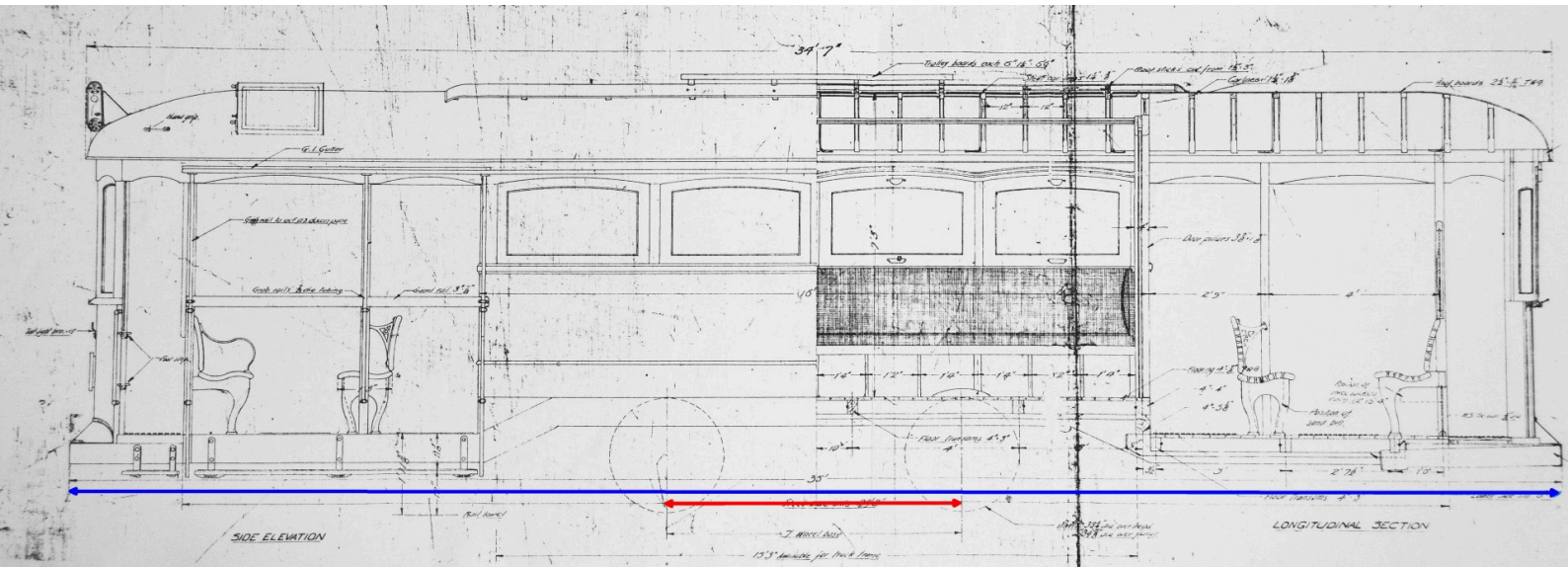
Melbourne's trams have been running for just under 140 years, so it's no surprise that now and again tram design has been less than optimal. In fact one could argue that the cable trams were an unfortunate choice. Melbourne was probably the last large cable system built in the world – trams were going electric – and Melbourne was stuck with old technology. However, they were far from being 'duds' – performing magnificently for 55 years.

Dud number 1: MBCTT California combination car

First nomination for a dud design is the original [Melbourne Brunswick & Coburg Tramways Trust \(MBCTT\) California combination car](#) – later classified as the S class and then the "Coburg A" class. Twelve of these were built by Duncan & Fraser of Adelaide in 1916.

These trams were extremely long – 35 feet (10.67 metres). However, they were placed on a truck with a wheelbase of only 7 feet (2.13 metres). The overhang at each end was twice the wheelbase!

Above: No 176 is one of the straight sill trams built to the PMTT design for the FNPTT (dud number 2). It is seen at Hanna Street Depot arranged as an 'All-Night' tram. Photograph from the Peter Duckett collection, Melbourne Tram Museum.

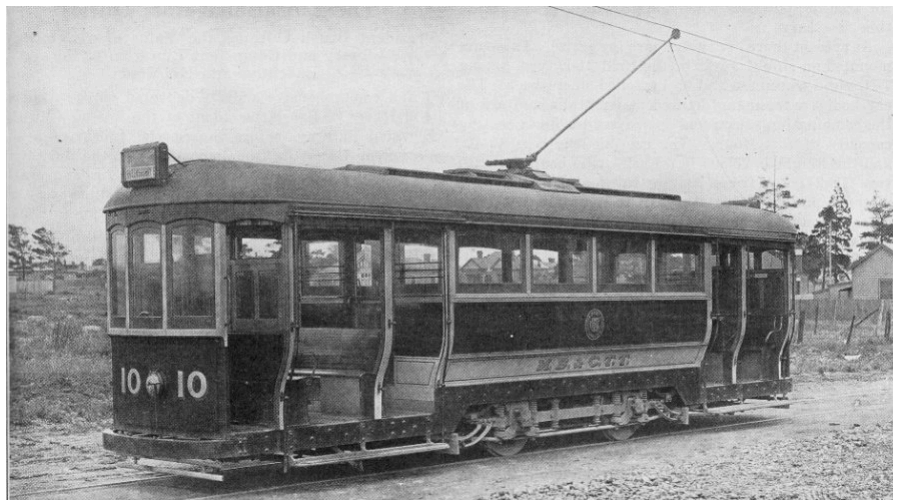


Original MBCTT general arrangement drawing of a California combination car. Note the overhang beyond the wheelbase. From the archives of the TMSV.

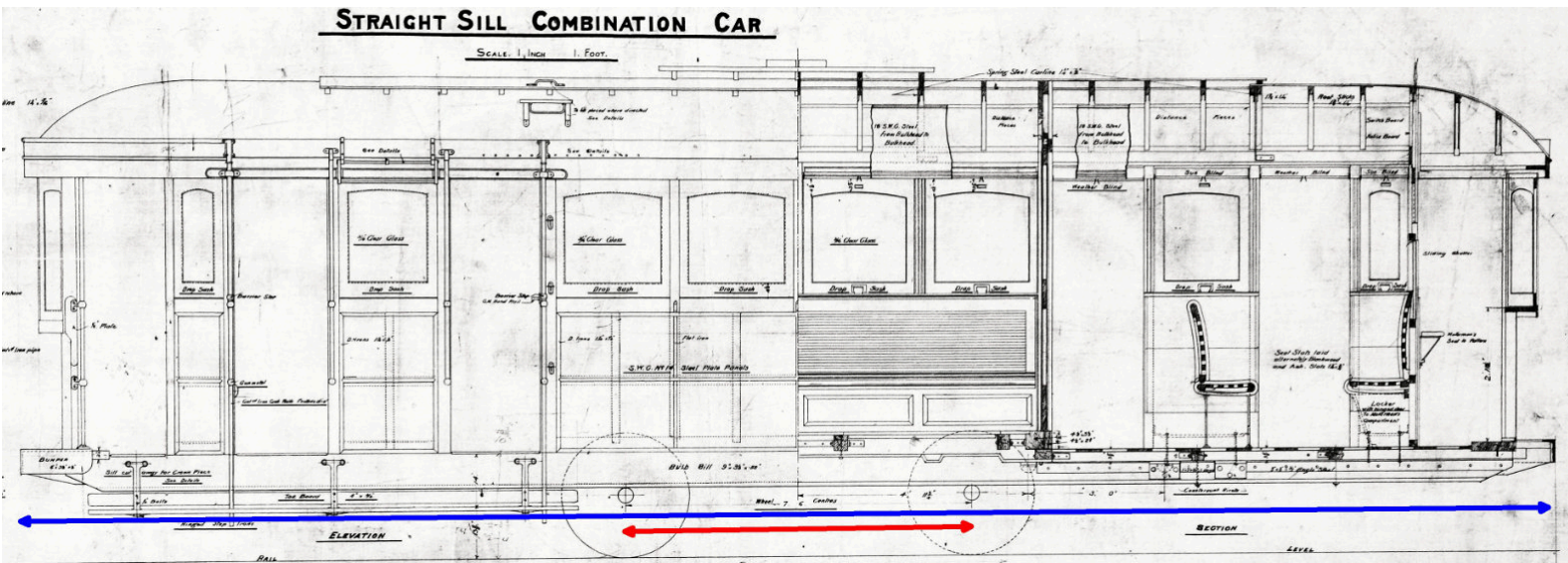
It is no surprise that they were unstable and rough on the track. The MBCTT engineer, Struan Robertson wrote to the (American) Electric Railway Journal in April 1917 asking for advice on why the wheels on these trams had uneven wear. He seems not to have considered that the trams' pitching and yawing – like an ocean-going yacht – might be a factor!

At some stage shortly after, the trucks were extended as far as they could be under the centre saloon to a new wheelbase of 9 feet (2.74 metres). S class No 164 at the Melbourne Tram Museum has that modification. The trams were still unstable and most of them spent many years in storage until World War II when they were dragged out to cope with the heavy traffic of the war years. Most were converted for one-man operation, but S 164 was never altered.

When engineer Robertson placed his next order of trams, he made sure they would not have the same problem. He extended the saloon and fitted a truck with a wheelbase of 12 feet (3.66 metres). T class No 180 at Melbourne Tram Museum represents that type.



Melbourne, Brunswick & Coburg Tramways Trust California combination car No 10, later classified as S class. Photograph from the Electric Railway Journal, 7 July 1917.



Original M&MTB general arrangement drawing of a straight sill combination car. This is a later plan than the original PMTT drawing, but has only minor differences. From the archives of the TMSV.

Dud number 2: PMTT straight sill single truck combination car

Towards the end of its tenure, the Prahran & Malvern Tramways Trust (PMTT) needed more trams of higher capacity, but it seems to have been reluctant to build more maximum traction cars – probably because of cost. It ordered nine straight sill single truck combination cars from James Moore and Company, built over the two years 1919 and 1920. These trams were also rather long – 32 feet (9.75 metres), and were placed on a truck with a wheelbase of only 6 feet 6 inches (2.0 metres). In addition, they had straight sills, not the drop ends as on the Coburg cars. They rode atrociously (again) and the high step height made them unpopular with passengers.

The Fitzroy, Northcote and Preston Tramways Trust (FNPTT) respected the engineering expertise of the PMTT and ordered a further eight cars.

This design was so unpopular that most were either scrapped, converted to works trams or placed in storage during the 1930s as W class trams came into service. In the late 1930s many re-entered service as “All Night” trams modified for one man operation. The last of them were withdrawn at the end of the all-night tram service in 1957. Three of these were converted to works trams with two held by the TMSV at Bylands and one serving as Bendigo’s scrubber tram.

Postscript

Despite the shortcomings of these two designs, when the M&MTB was formed in 1919-20 it faced a severe tram shortage. Over the period 1920 to 1923 it built six more trams of the MBCTT design and 24 trams of the PMTT design, while developing the W design.

In 1936, two of the straight sill cars were sold to the State Electricity Commission (SEC), with one going to Ballarat and one to Bendigo. The SEC didn’t order any more!

Vale Keith Stodden

29.8.1931 – 14.6.2023

Those museum members who knew Keith were saddened to learn of his death. Keith was a museum member, an active worker for the TMSV in his younger days and an attendee at many Conferences of the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia (COTMA).

Born in Camberwell, he worked for the Immigration Department from 1949 for over 50 years. He spoke several languages which enabled him to look after immigrants when they arrived on our shores, at Station Pier and Bonegilla Migrant Camp.

A volunteer with many organisations and a strong advocate for the rights of others, Keith undertook extensive social and charity work.

A collector of tramway items and ephemera, a few years ago the Museum received many boxes from his collection which took quite some time to sort through. For example in his collection were a large number of tram tickets including a group of about 60 tickets with schoolboy howlers on the rear.

Thanks, Keith, for your work.

Warren Doubleday

Photograph taken at the COTMA 2000 Conference, November 2000, at Ballarat Tramway Museum. Keith Stodden is at the far right, with horse tram number 1 behind the group. Photograph by John Phillips from the collection of the Ballarat Tram Museum.

