

## MUSEUM INSPECTION TOUR

### The Programme

3:3

Departure by bus from the C&L offices will be at noon with a lunch stop at McDonalds family restaurant - Campbellfield. This store is decorated on a tramway theme, including simplified scale models constructed by A. Culpeffer-Cooke. The models include:

- A Bendigo birney tram,
- A Brunswick Cable set,
- A Coburg horse tram; and
- A Hobart double-deck electric tram,

all built to 1:24 scale ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch to the foot).

The group will then travel to the horse tramway at Hudson Park, Kilmore. Travel is free for delegates on production of your COTMA name-tag.

After riding the horse tramway the group will retrace its route to the main museum premises on Union Lane Bylands where the facilities can be inspected until 5.30 p.m. Detailed notes about the history and facilities of the Bylands site are attached.

Prompt departure at 5.30 p.m. is necessary. Dinner will be at the Daraweit Guim Restaurant and will be followed by a film presentation by K.S. Kings. These films include scenes of the VR tramways at Sandringham and Elwood, the Footscray routes and other long-since vanished aspects of Melbournes tramways.

### The Museum Properties

The society is in the unusual situation of having two operating sites:

- The main premises was part of the now closed Wallan to Heathcote Railway. We first leased a section of this right-of-way and the station area at Bylands in 1970 and have recently obtained the freehold to the main area. Bylands is the proverbial "sleepy little town" situation just over Pretty Sally Hill in the Great Dividing Range, 33 miles north of Melbourne on the Northern Highway. Our land is 4200 yards east of the highway on Union Lane. This is the major storage location construction site and more recently also the base for initial electric tramway operation.
- The newer, second site, in Hudson Park Kilmore provides an operating site for the horse tramway away from the major construction and storage site and in a location more suited to attracting passing custom.

### Bylands Facilities

The lease from the Victorian Railways, the Bylands Station area (38 miles 11 chains from Spencer St. Melbourne by rail); comprised of 4 acres of cleared property and the right-of-way 15 ft either side of the rail, from the level crossing at the Southern extremity of the station area for one mile northwards to the next level crossing. Included in this lease was the 5ft. 3 inch gauge trackwork (rail, sleepers, fittings etc.) laid on the one mile area, and this track is now the only track remaining of the Heathcote Railway. The trackwork is in good condition, has been rebuilt

to standard gauge and currently requires little maintenance. The ganger in charge of the section before the line closed gained top award for this trackwork. The rail is 22ft. 6ins. lengths of 60 lb/yd 'D' class rail. Beyond the northern extremity there was a quarter of a mile of extra trackage which we dismantled to use for depot roads. Re-laying of the heavier rail has taken place in the station area.

The buildings on the site comprise:

- Former Departmental Residence No. 899, a five room house which is now used by our caretaker;
- A 2 track (15 car) depot constructed by volunteer labor with substantial assistance from the CMF; and
- Several smaller service buildings (sub-station, storage, etc).

The first stage of a second depot (to eventually house a further 20 vehicles on 3 roads) is now under construction.

Electrical plant comprises an SEC-provided step-down transformer, society-owned isolating transformer and silicon diode rectifier and overhead within the museum grounds. Extensions to service the depot area and mainline are planned.

#### Historical Notes

The Railway between Heathcote Junction (33 m. 16 ch.) (on the North Eastern Line) and Kilmore (42 m. 56 ch.) was opened on the 1st October 1888. This line was later extended to Heathcote (1889) connecting with the line from Bendigo. Bylands Station (38 m. 11 ch.) was opened with the first section of the railway with a 200 ft. passenger platform and goods loop. It had a quite career, existing as a staff and ticket station for a short time from 1889 with home signals provided for this purpose, (signals removed 1906).

Passenger services were initially provided by passenger and mixed trains, however, as a matter of economics these were replaced in 1922 by A.E.C. Railmotors (the wellknown "Beetles") operating between Wallan and Heathcote.

In 1949 the "Beetles" were replaced by 153 h.p. Walker Railcars which operated the service until passenger workings were withdrawn on 26th June, 1965. In later years, with the introduction of Railmotors, the platform was shortened to 30 ft. With declining goods traffic, (originally mainly timber - the forests have long been cut out), the goods service was also withdrawn, and the line officially closed with the passing of the Australian Railway Historical Society's Heathcote Special on 9th November, 1968. The Heathcote-Bendigo Section was closed in 1958.

#### Kilmore Facilities

The horse tramway includes a commercially built 2 track depot housing trams 253 and 256 together with a single-track running line along the creek at the perimeter of Hudson park on the far side to the main road. Potential exists for southward extension of the running line.

#### Vehicles

The museum vehicles are detailed in a separate guide-book.

## The Future

Most tramway museums have progressed serially through major stages of site and exhibit acquisition (often in conjunction with the closure of a nearby tramway system), pilot operation using horse, steam or railmotor, establishment of major electric tramway operating facilities and then consolidation. Although the Tramway Museum Society of Victoria has not had to cope with the pressures of closure of its principal tramway system the continued upgrading of the M & MTB system has resulted in a flow of acquisitions (largely unpredictable rate) that has prevented such an orderly development. As this is likely to continue a comprehensive programme of future works cannot be given. However, major engineering tasks envisaged include:

- Completion of the second depot;
- Expansion of electrification;
- Upgrading of visitor facilities; and
- Possible provision of a longer mainline with crossing loops and associated works.