

**PROCEEDINGS OF  
THE ELEVENTH CONFERENCE  
OF  
AUSTRALASIAN  
TRAMWAY MUSEUMS**

**WHITEMAN PARK  
PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**29 May — 4 June, 1992**

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE OF AUSTRALASIAN TRAMWAY MUSEUMS

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Conference delegates assembled in front of newly restored Fremantle bogie saloon car 29 at Whiteman Park, 2 June, 1992.





# CONTENTS

<b>Acknowledgments</b>		6
<b>Participants</b>		7
<b>Conference Programme</b>		9
<b>Keynote Address</b>		
<i>Urban Transport: What Does the Past Tell Us About the Future?</i>		14
	Stuart Hicks	
<b>Papers</b>		
<i>W Class Status Report</i>	Les Jean	20
<i>The Place of Tram Museums in the International and Australian Museum Movement</i>		23
	John Radcliffe	
<i>Our Cultural Heritage</i>	Richard Gilbert	26
<i>Management of Rolling Stock</i>	Christopher Steele	29
<i>Driver Training at Bendigo Tramways</i>	Harold McCarthy	31
<i>"Trolley Wire"</i>	Robert Merchant	33
<i>Collection Policies</i>	Richard Gilbert	34
<i>Occupational Health &amp; Safety</i>	Craig Tooke	40
<i>Relationships with Local Government</i>	Christopher Andrews	44
<i>Corrosion - Electrolysis</i>	John Lambert	46
<i>Promotion</i>	Graeme Vellacott	49
<i>Accreditation and Its Effect On Tramway Museums in NSW</i>	David Rawlings, Bill Denham	50
<b>Workshops</b>		
<i>COTMA — What is Needed?</i>	John Radcliffe	54
<i>Membership for the Young</i>	Bill Kingsley	55
<i>Archives</i>	Barrie King	56
<i>Conservation Management Review</i>	John Radcliffe	58
<i>COTMA Electrical Operations Rules</i>	Craig Tooke	59
<b>Visits and Tours</b>		
<i>Perth Electric Rail System:</i>	Robert Pearce	60
<i>Northern Suburbs Railway</i>		
<i>Armadale Line</i>		
<i>EMU Depot</i>		
<i>Westrail Control Room</i>		
<i>"The Prospector" Railcar Tour</i>	Robert Pearce	63
<b>Reports</b>		
<i>"Trolley Wire"</i>	Robert Merchant	64
<i>"Tramway Topics"</i>	Alan Smith	66
<i>Electrical Operations Rules Committee</i>	Craig Tooke	67
<i>COTMA Chairman</i>	John Radcliffe	68
<i>COTMA Operations Group</i>	Bill Kingsley	72
<i>Spare Parts &amp; Uniforms</i>	Keith Kings	72
<i>Executive Officer</i>	Bill Kingsley	73
<i>Treasurer</i>	Carolyn Dean	76
<i>Audited Statements</i>		77
<b>Minutes</b>		
<i>Tenth Conference General Meeting</i>		81
<b>Museum Directory</b>		86

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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I am grateful to all those persons who gave their time to present a paper or lead a workshop session: to the members of the various tramway museums, and also especially to the following:

Gavan Troy, M. L. A.  
 Stuart Hicks, Director-General of Transport, WA  
 Les Jean, Manager Fleet, PTC, Victoria  
 Ken Gow, Willis Engineering  
 Noel Zeplin, Australian Railway Historical Society  
 Graeme Vellacott, Hotham Valley Tourist Railway  
 Alan Cotton, General Manager, Urban Rail, WA

The generosity of the following sponsors assisted in various ways with the organisation and running of the Conference:

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 Visionhire  
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 Hiline Constructions

Thanks are also due to the Western Australian Light Railway Preservation Association for organising a ride on their loop line in Whiteman Park, and to the Australian Railway Historical Society for the tour of their Museum at Bassendean.

Special thanks are due to Bill Kingsley (COTMA Executive Officer) for his valued support and guidance; to the members of the Conference Committee — Robert Pearce, Michael Stukely, Kevin Clarke, Lindsay Richardson, David Brown, John Shaw; and to all those who assisted behind the scenes to make the Conference and its associated activities run smoothly.

Barrie King  
 Chairman  
 Organising Committee  
 Eleventh COTMA Conference

## CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

Australian Electric Transport Museum	Christopher John Christopher	ANDREWS RADCLIFFE STEELE
Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society	Phillip Carolyn Richard Len John	BERTRAM DEAN GILBERT MILLAR PHILLIPS
Bendigo Trust	Dennis Michael Bill Harold Dennis	BELL BOYD KINGSLEY MCCARTHY O'HOY
Brisbane Tramway Museum Society	Peter John Robert	HYDE LAMBERT THOMSON
Maitland Tramway Museum and Park	Lewis	NYMAN
Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association	Noel Craig John	GIPPS TOOKE WITHERS
Perth Electric Tramway Society	Noel Ray David Arthur Kevin Trevor Paul Martin Barrie Brent Duncan Brian Kevin Robert Lindsay John Michael Terry	BLACKMORE BLACKMORE BROWN CHADWICK CLARKE DENNHARDT EDWARDS GRANT KING LUSCOMBE MCVICAR MORRELL PARKER PEARCE RICHARDSON SHAW STUKELY VERNEY
South Pacific Electric Railway Cooperative Society	Don Howard Anthony David John Chris Richard Stuart Robert Bill Bruce	CAMPBELL CLARK CODY CRITCHLEY HORNE JACOBS JONES KEENAN MERCHANT TUFFNELL WORTHINGTON

Tramway Historical Society, Christchurch

Bill  
Bruce  
Barrie  
JohnCOX  
DALE  
SHAKES  
SHANKS

Tramway Museum Society of Victoria

Dean  
Keith  
Bob  
KeithFILGATE  
KINGS  
SERLE  
STODDEN

Wellington Tramway Museum

Morris  
Barry  
BryceMOLLER  
OLLERENSHAW  
PENDER

The Met., Victoria

Les

JEAN



## CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

### Friday 29 May:

#### WELCOME FUNCTION (ROSE & CROWN HOTEL)

6.00 pm	Registration
8.00 pm	Informal Gathering
9.00 pm	Official Welcome and Announcements
11.00 pm	Close

### Saturday 30 May:

#### PRE-CONFERENCE TOURS

9.00 am	Depart Rose & Crown Hotel (bus)
10.00 am	Arrive Burns.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tour and inspection of Northern Suburbs Rail Project</li> </ul>
12.15 pm	Arrive Perth Station
12.30 pm	Lunch at Perth Station (Upper Concourse — Sinatra's)
1.45 pm	Depart restaurant for special train — Platform 4
1.59 pm	Depart Perth Station (train)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tour to Armadale and return by chartered EMU</li> </ul>
3.15 pm	Arrive Claisebrook
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tours of EMU depot and Westrail Control Room</li> </ul>
5.40 pm	Depart Claisebrook/East Perth (train or bus)
6.00 pm	Arrive Guildford
7.00 pm	Dinner at Rose & Crown
8.30 pm	Evening entertainment:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>History of the Inglewood Tram Route</i> — N. Zeplin</li> </ul>
9.30	Close

**Sunday 31 May:**

**CONFERENCE SESSIONS (ROSE & CROWN HOTEL);  
INSPECTION OF WHITEMAN PARK AND TRAMWAY MUSEUM**

- 8.45 am Late Registrations, Welcome, Announcements
- 9.00 am **Conference Opening**
- *Official Opening* – Gavan Troy, M. L. A.
  - *Keynote Address* – Stuart Hicks (Director-General of Transport, W. A.)
- 10.00 am Morning Tea
- 10.30 am **Conference Session 1**
- *W-Class Tram Status Review*  
– Les Jean (Manager Fleet, PTC, Victoria – Conference Guest)
  - *The Place of Tram Museums in the International and Australian Museum Movement*  
– John Radcliffe
  - *Our Cultural Heritage*  
– Richard Gilbert
- 12.30 pm Lunch
- 2.00 pm **Conference Session 2**
- *Management of Rolling Stock*  
– Chris Steele
  - *Workshop: Spare Parts – Manufacturing Policy*  
– Ric Francis
  - *"Trolley Wire" and "Tramway Topics"*  
– Bob Merchant, Bryce Pender
  - *Workshop: Driver Training*  
– Harold McCarthy
- 3.30 pm Afternoon Tea
- 4.00 pm Depart Rose & Crown (bus)
- 4.15 pm Arrive Whiteman Park
- Inspection of facilities at PETS Car barn and Workshops.
- 5.00 pm Depart Car barn (service tram)
- Travel from Car barn to Whiteman Village Junction (tram)
- 5.15 pm Arrive Whiteman Village Junction
- 5.20 pm Depart Whiteman Village Junction (WALRPA steam train, NG 15 123)
- Travel on WALRPA loop line.
- 6.00 pm Arrive Mussel Pool
- 6.15 pm Depart Mussel Pool
- Travel on newly restored tram FMT 29
- 6.30 pm Arrive Village
- Dinner at Country Kitchen
- 8.00 pm Return to Car barn
- Night rides on trams; Wight Nalk.
- 9.00 pm Return to Rose & Crown (bus)
- or 10.00 pm

**Monday 1 June:****CONFERENCE SESSIONS (ROSE & CROWN HOTEL)****9.00 am                      Conference Session 3**

- *Workshop: Manufacturing Wheel Sets, Truck Frames and Bogies*  
– Ken Gow (Willis Engineering - Guest Speaker)
- *Workshop: Where Are We Going?*  
– John Radcliffe
- *Collection Policies*  
– Richard Gilbert
- *Workshop: Security Systems*

**10.30 am                      Morning Tea****11.00 am                      Conference Session 4**

- *Occupational Health and Safety*  
– Craig S. Tooke
- *Workshop: Membership for the Young*  
– Bill Kingsley
- *Relationships with Local Government*  
– Chris Andrews
- *Workshop: Archives*  
– Barrie King

**12.30 pm                      Lunch****2.00 pm                      Conference Session 5**

- *Corrosion – Electrolysis*  
– John Lambert
- *Workshop: Conservation Management Review*  
– John Radcliffe
- *Sales and Souvenirs*  
– Dennis Bell
- *Workshop: Electrical Rules*  
– Craig Tooke

**3.30 pm                      Afternoon Tea****4.00 pm                      Conference Session 6**

- *Promotion*  
– Graeme Vellacott (Hotham Valley Tourist Railway (WA) – Guest)

**5.00 pm                      End of Session****5.45 pm                      Dinner at Rose & Crown (smorgasbord)****7.30 pm                      Museum Progress Reports****11.30 pm                      Close**

**Tuesday 2 June:****CONFERENCE GENERAL MEETING (WHITEMAN PARK);  
TOUR OF ARHS RAIL TRANSPORT MUSEUM**

8.00 am	Depart Rose & Crown (bus)
8.15 am	Arrive Whiteman Park — Shooting Complex
8.30 am	<b>Conference General Meeting</b>
10.30 am	Morning Tea
11.00 am	<b>Conference General Meeting</b>
12.55 pm	Arrive Whiteman Park Village
1.00 pm	<b>Conference Photograph</b>
1.05 pm	Lunch at Country Kitchen
3.00 pm	Depart Whiteman Park (bus)
3.20 pm	Arrive Bassendean
	• Tour of ARHS Rail Transport Museum
4.45 pm	Depart Bassendean (bus)
5.00 pm	Arrive Rose & Crown
6.00 pm	Conference Dinner
8.00 pm	After-Dinner Speaker
	• – Allan Cotton, General Manager, Urban Rail: <i>Rail Electrification Project</i>
9.00 pm	Coffee



**Wednesday 3 June:****TRAM OPERATIONS (WHITEMAN PARK);  
POST-CONFERENCE TOUR**

8.45 am Depart Rose & Crown (bus)

9.00 am Arrive Whiteman Park

- Tram driving and rides

12.00 noon Tram operations finish

12.30 pm Depart Whiteman Park (bus)

12.55 pm Arrive Midland Station

1.15 pm Depart Midland Station

- Tour in *The Prospector* Diesel Rail Car: Moondyne/Leighton/Fremantle.

3.30 pm Arrive Fremantle Esplanade – free time

6.00 pm Dinner

(Time Open) Depart Fremantle

- EMU to Guildford

**Thursday 4 June:****FREE DAY: TRAM OPERATIONS AT WHITEMAN PARK**

Trams to run if required, from 9.30 am until 12.30 pm

Historical display on W. A. Tramcars

# URBAN TRANSPORT: WHAT DOES THE PAST TELL US ABOUT THE FUTURE?

Stuart Hicks

Director General of Transport, Western Australia\*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Appreciation

Thank you to COTMA for inviting me to speak to you today. I am greatly honoured.

And a special welcome to our visitors to Western Australia from around Australia and New Zealand.

### 1.2 Reason for my topic/ What I am planning to talk about

A friend was telling me how he is saving on records with his 16 year old son. He takes out his old Beatles and Credence Clearwater records, a couple at a time, and presents them to his son. To his amazement there is a wave of nostalgia in this generation which makes the kids more interested in the music of the sixties than the music of the nineties.

I went to a convention a couple of weeks ago where some fairly erudite speakers talked on the subject: Is there a role for 1950s values in the 1990s?

The social analysts are calling this the X-generation because, they say, it is a generation which is uncertain of its own identity.

These examples and many others show how powerfully we tend to be looking back to our past for some of the answers to questions which puzzle us today. Often I think this backward-looking approach is little more than self-indulgent sentimentalism. But not always.

Whatever the causes of today's focus on the apparent "certainties" of the past, there are things we can learn from the past, and I thought it might be of interest to the Council of Tramway Museum Associations if I were to speak from the vantage point of somebody who shares your love of transport things past and who also carries some responsibility for transport things present and future.

## 2. PERSONAL HISTORY

For you to understand the source of my love for transport things past, you need to know a little of my own past.

My family came to Western Australia in 1853. I am the seventh generation of my family to live in Australia. Each of those generations has been employed in some form of transport.

For reasons which some of us might wonder about, they later moved to Victoria, and as a result, I was born a Victorian, as were the two generations preceding mine.

When I came to live in Western Australia in 1977, I started researching my family's history as it paralleled the history of transport in this country. A lot of this is today contained in a large manuscript I have written and will continue to write. When I started this hobby of mine I had no idea I was in the process of becoming a transport social historian!

## 3. OLD AND NEW

So I have often been struck by the contrast between what I have been doing professionally, particularly when I was chief executive of Transperth, our State's public transport system, and what I have been finding out in my spare time at weekends.

Here is one piece I was reading recently—

FIRST ELECTRIC TRAM RAN ALONG HAY STREET IN SEPTEMBER 1899 from car barn in East Perth to Colin & Thomas Streets. This followed an agreement reached on April 17, 1897 when Mr. Charles Preston Perkins entered into an agreement with the Perth Road Board to lay down 17¼ miles of tramway tracks. The inaugural Perth service was run with a 9-car fleet (each car costing £600) with 28 passengers per car. The operators were the Perth Electric Tramways Ltd.

Contrast today: The Transperth fleet now has 900 buses costing approximately \$250 000 each with 60-70 passenger capacity.

### TRAM SERVICE EXPANDS

- 1905 Tramway to Victoria Park across the Causeway
- October 1905 service in Fremantle
- December 1906 Perth to North Perth
- 1914 track opened to Crawley Baths.

### TRAM DEVELOPMENT

- Tramway operations came under Government control (Commissioner of Railways) July 1, 1913 when there were 50.6 km of single track on which 63 cars operated.
- 1915-16 trams carried 11.2m passengers
- At peak of trams in 1933, Government was running 53 small trams and 68 bogie trams over almost 66 route kilometres. In that year, more than 35 million passengers were carried over 5.6 million kilometres.

Contrast today: Transperth operates 917 buses over 1876 unduplicated route kilometres. In 1990/91, there were 53.7 million bus passenger boardings and the



buses operated a total 48.2 million kilometres.

#### LAST TRAMS

- Fremantle abolished its services in 1952 and the last tram in Perth made its run to Inglewood on July 19, 1958.

The passing of trams has meant that many people are not aware how important they have been. Only a small portion of the community is conscious of those heady days when trams did the lion's share of the metro transit task in Australia, when electric trams carried over a billion passengers in one year!

Chart One: Australia's Metropolitan Public Transport Patronage 1865-1980 (Page 18)

Chart Two: Motor Cars Registered in Australia 1920-1985 (Page 19)

#### 4. SOME THINGS WE CAN LEARN.

As thought starters I wanted to highlight six lessons we might usefully learn (or, more accurately, re-learn) from our past. An interest in things past, I hope you agree, is not a simple exercise in nostalgia.

By the year 2020 a city like Perth will be twice as big as it is today. There is absolutely no way that our city can maintain its single-minded reliance on the car into the future. If we try, it will end in calamity, and some future generation of my family will have to add another chapter about how misguided we transport people were back in the 1990s!

Here are my six thought starters.

##### 4.1 People will use public transport in their droves — when they have no alternative!

Probably the main cause of the enormous public transport patronage of earlier decades was the absence of alternatives to public transport.

##### 4.2 The *Great Investment* can work.

Trams were an important part of my life. My grandfather was one of the prime contractors for much of Melbourne's tram building years.

In 1924, the enormous job of converting from cable trams to electric trams started in Melbourne. This was the biggest traction conversion task ever to be undertaken in that city. My grandfather contracted for the transport aspects of the job, and progressively he won most of the contracts, one by one, for pulling apart the road and setting in place the new traction mode.

My family still have the contract documents for MMTB Contract No 505, for the conversion of the Spencer Street, Flinders Street, Wellington Parade, and Bridge Road routes. The tender was for £79,013.19.4d.

[Exhibits:]

(1) These first documents are my grandfather's apparently successful quotes for two jobs in 1937. (I have to note that my grandfather must have been fairly confident when he quoted 5/6d in August and only 3/9d in February; maybe he was travelling longer distances.)

(2) This second document is precious to me. This is when my family moved from freight into serious passenger transport! In 1936, apparently all the men who were working on the tramway were having difficulty getting home from the Glenhuntly Road job at night. They petitioned my grandfather to give them a lift in the back of his trucks into the city where they could catch their trains and trams. My grandfather agreed, subject to them signing a legal indemnity.

I remember the tar-coated woodblocks, roughly the size of a large brick, which, having been dug up from the road surface, often ended up as firewood.

Sixty years later, I became chairman of the group which undertook the biggest change in traction ever undertaken in Perth. It built up to become the biggest single Government works project in the State. I hope you liked what you saw yesterday when you inspected the rail electrification project and rode in our new trains!

Two people who share my great pride in this project are Gavan Troy, who was the Minister for Transport who obtained the green light for the project (and who appointed me to chair the project), and Tony Middleton, who was the project coordinator, and later succeeded me to become chief executive at Transperth. Both those men are with us this morning.

I would not like to give you the impression that any large expenditure on public transport would rate, in my eyes, as a "Great Investment". It is astoundingly easy to spend a very large amount of money for no social reward.

A "Great Investment" must return social benefits which exceed its social costs. Unfortunately, in the world of public transport, this seldom seems to mean that there will also be a financial profit on the investment!

On the electrification project we knew from the outset that the investment would not "cover its costs" in a financial sense. That did not remove from us the sacred duty to spend roundly a half-billion dollars wisely and without waste. Our accountability in this regard is to future generations as well as to today's.

##### 4.3 Personal Service can help.

We tend nowadays to think of service as something like a vintage tram: you have to travel a long distance to find it.



Perth is famous for the bus drivers who put the pram on hooks on the back of the bus. I trust that any of our visitors who take a bus will also see the courtesy and quality of our bus operators.

Technology is an important adjunct in achieving modern efficient public transport, but we have to be conscious that public transport devoid of human contact is dreadfully barren. Just as in those bygone days we need to have employees on the system who have time to talk and be helpful.

I believe Transperth was the first operator to appoint a full-time quality manager. Today, special emphasis is placed on personnel selection and training. On the trains you will find people whose job it is to help rather than to police passengers.

**4.4 Making decisions on where we live and work, where we send the kids to school etc, will need to take transport arrangements more into account than they seem to these days.**

In the 1930s my grandfather and grandmother moved to Caulfield, to a little street within a stone's throw of Balaclava Road — and the Number 69. Three of the main reasons for their choice were their sons, who travelled to and from school on the Number 69.

A quarter of a century later, I used to catch the same tram (I mean it was probably literally the same tram!) between the same school and the same house, where I would stay with my grandparents until my father came past in his car and picked me up to take me home.

If I go back 100 years I go back to my great great grandfather's decision to leave the bush and move down to South Melbourne.

South Melbourne then was a flat and dismal working class area. It had tanneries, boot factories, wool scourers, and later metal and engineering establishments, along the edge of the very dirty Yarra River, around the wharves.

It was a dreadful place to live. But that's where my great great grandfather settled when the boom went bust in the 1890s. He lived there, like a lot of people, because that was where the work was. If he didn't live there he had no way to get to work, apart from one or two expensive bone-crunching horse-drawn trams.

Meantime something called the Octopus Act was pushing new railways in all directions, without anybody worrying too much about the economic sense of it all. Ultimately some 1200 miles of suburban railways were built in Melbourne at the time, costing some £5 million.

Railways were being used to create dormitory suburbs.

The Railways Commissioner of the time saw rail as the great fulfiller of the already lively Australian dream of owning a home away from the inner city drudgery—

The tendency of Melbourne is to reside outside the city, and the greater the opportunity you afford for getting to and fro the more rapid will be the development and expansion of the suburbs.

It appeared to the Commissioner that "the proper principle to adopt was to make railways precede population and not population railways."

This, I must say, seemed to us a wholly sensible notion in the 1980s in Perth as we struggled with the problem of piercing into the well established northern suburbs with a new railway line. Our choice, to go up the middle of the Mitchell Freeway, was ultimately the only socially or economically feasible route we could follow.

It is an irony that modern-day Perth's suburban growth had been driven not by railways (which were struggling, it seemed, to find a role at all) but by freeways.

#### 4.5 Aesthetics matter.

Every morning I pass a W-class tram painted (if not exactly, then pretty much) in the colours of the MMTB. It protrudes rather incongruously from a hotel bar out into the street.

I'm much happier seeing the poor old girl in this role than left to rot somewhere. But I still ponder sometimes why she sits with her backside in a pub on the other side of the continent to her birthplace.

The reason, of course, is that she has what we usually call "atmosphere". She is there to act as a magnet to attract people to the pub. When I remember this, I remember another lesson from the past:

Will we ever have transport vehicles as beautiful as the old ones?

Our rolling stock must display a sense of function, combined with detail and beauty; human scale etc.

I am looking forward to seeing the wonderful old Fremantle Number 29 running again this afternoon at Whiteman Park.

I think Fremantle was one of the pioneers of this practice of dressing up a bus to make it look like a tram. Visitors who go to Fremantle will see little four wheelers built like trams and called "Fremantle trams". You may well see a more elaborate rubber-tyred replica running up and down St Georges Terrace in the city.

All our mock trams are actually custom built, I should say. I don't think you will find that my colleague,



Tony Middleton, has yet been reduced to what I understand is going to happen in NSW where we are told that buses with the outlines of trams painted on their sides are the precursors to bringing trams back to Sydney!

#### 4.6 Money matters

A few months before I was born, Australia's first mass produced car, the Holden, was launched by Prime Minister Chifley. It cost £760, which put it out of the range of most Australians. By comparison a sixpenny return fare to Nedlands included admission to Nedlands Baths as a special Sunday attraction.

People always have been, and always will be, influenced by pressures on the hip-pocket. Yet, in our car-oriented society, many people, even those with very meagre incomes, ask themselves: "Can I afford not to have a car?"

Today Perth public transport fares are still among the cheapest in Australia. Nedlands falls within Zone One on the current fare schedule and can be travelled to for just \$1.20, although you won't find baths at the end of the jetty any more.

Public transporters need to consider innovative fares if they wish to encourage additional patrons. People have the strange ability to find very large amounts of money to fund their car habits while at the same time criticising public transport for fare levels which frankly are among the last great bargains of the twentieth century.

In the early 1900s Perth workers who used the trams before 8 am or after 4 pm could go from one terminus to another (including a change in the City) for just twopence when the standard fare was threepence. Off-peak pricing is no new idea!

Today Perth commuters can take advantage of the Multi Rider ticket providing discounts of up to 15% — reducing the Nedlands example to \$1.04.

When I was at Transperth we introduced the scheme whereby people who travel around the Perth central city can take advantage of a Free Transit Zone, where all public transport is free. Part of the idea of this scheme is to attract people to have another go at public transport, so that they can find out how different it is to the rattlers they last used in their

schooldays. If the FTZ attracts them to try the service once, then maybe they will regain the old habit.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

When one considers the influence of the past on the future a key question which remains is this—

Will the tram, or LRT, come back into its own?

I am very optimistic. Experience in more than 100 overseas cities serves to confirm my optimism.

Recently Tony Middleton and I have been involved in evaluating alternative forms of transit for Perth's south western corridor and the early results have confirmed that there may be sense in the application of modern LRT technology. The answer to this particular question will be forthcoming later in the year.

Thanks principally to COTMA, future generations will be able to see and ride living trams from our past. But quite possibly the tram is anything but an outdated artefact.

Another golden age may be coming. Whether it comes or not, Australia's trams have already had a profound and permanent effect on the way we move ourselves through the city.

We must never let the lessons we can learn from them be forgotten.

Thank you.

---

Stuart Hicks has been Director General of Transport in Western Australia since 1990. Since January 1992 he has also been Executive Director of the Department of Marine and Harbours. Prior to these appointments he was Chairman and Chief Executive of Transperth, operator of Perth's rail, bus and ferry services. He studied economics and politics at Monash University, and transport at the University of New South Wales. Born and raised in Melbourne, he has held positions in transport and transport policy in a number of Australian States. Stuart is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Transport, of which he is Immediate Past Chairman in Western Australia. He is a member of the Traffic Board and the Metropolitan Planning Council. He has chaired the Perth rail electrification project since its inception.

## Australia's Metropolitan Public Transport Patronage 1865-1980

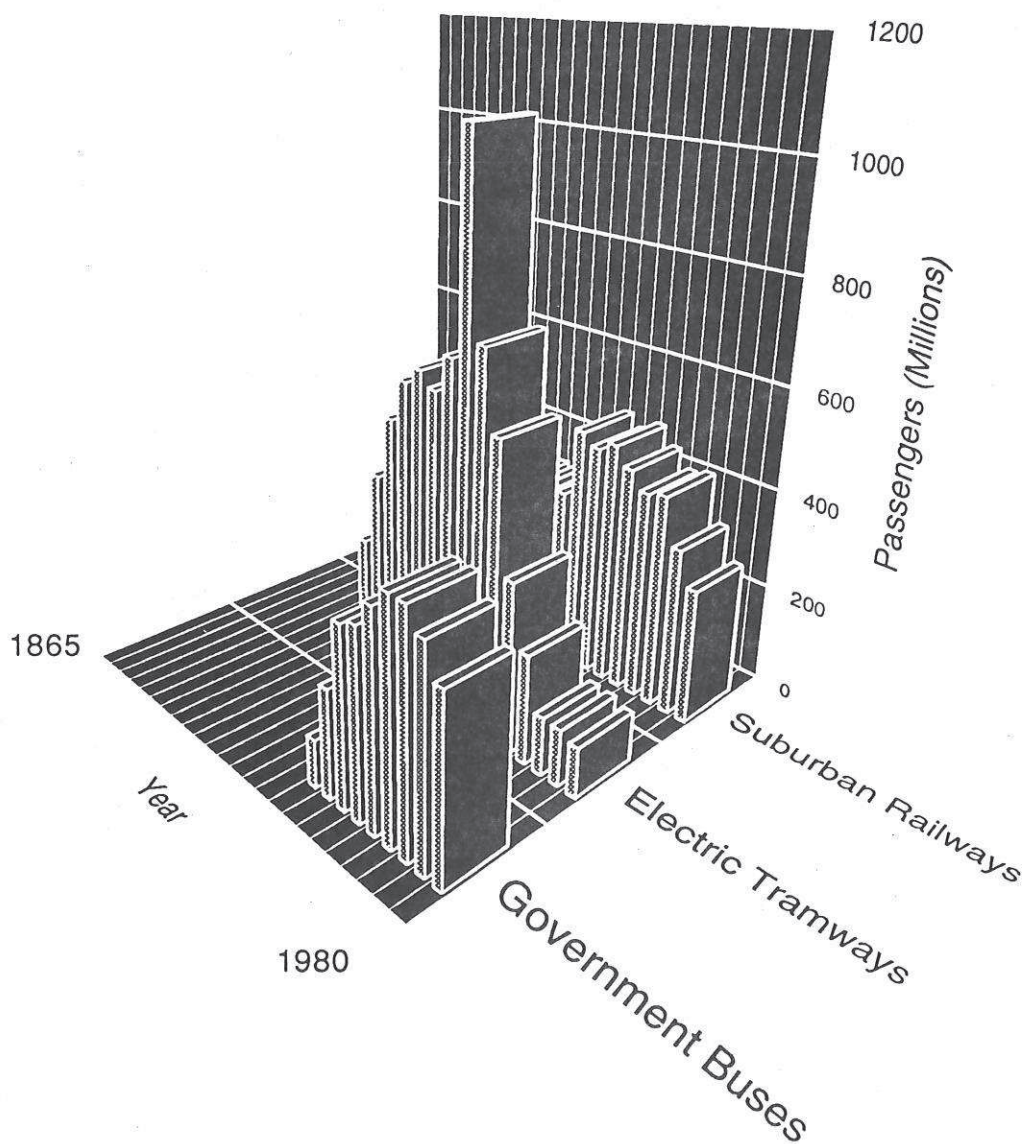
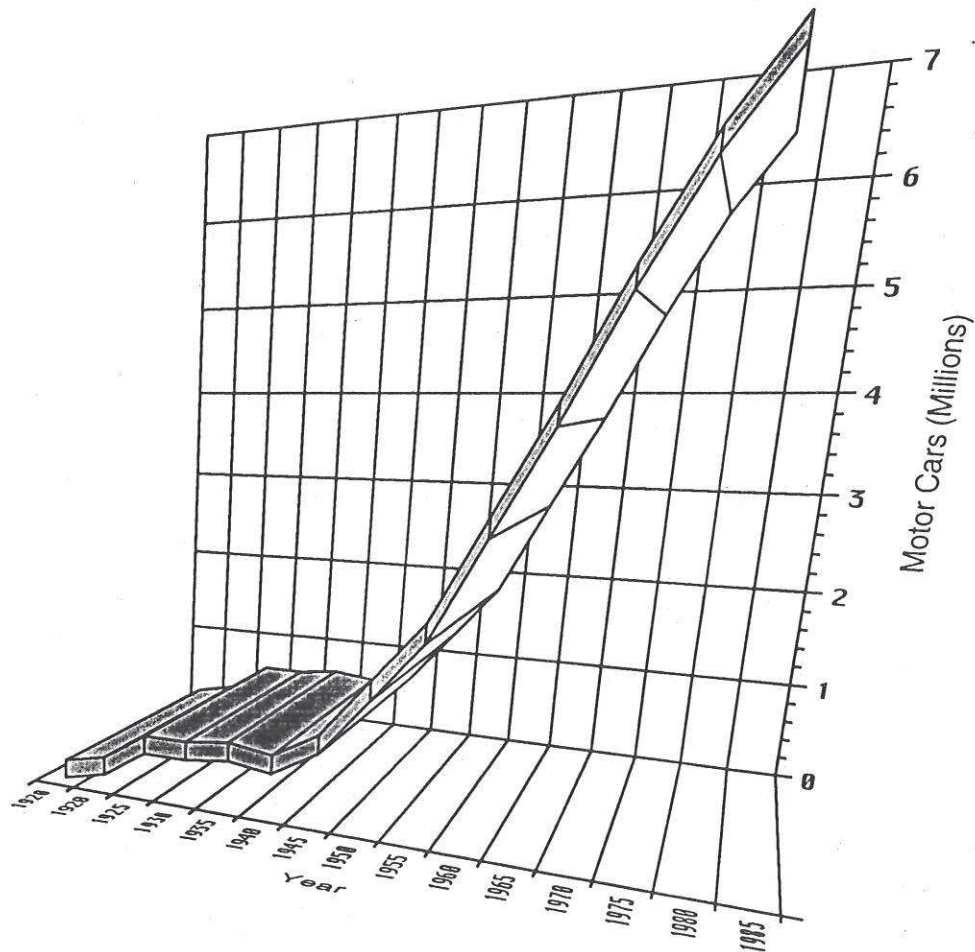


Chart 1

Adapted by Stuart Hicks from data in *Australians: Historical Statistics* (1987), TC 10-13, p168.





Motor Cars Registered in Australia  
1920-1985

Chart 2