

Special Events at Summerlee 1997 Heritage Park

The Big Egg Weekend

Sat 29th, Easter Sun 30th and Easter Mon 31st March 10am-5pm

Competitions, (win the big egg!!)

Puppet shows, face painting badge making and mask making, fun for all the family.

Admission FREE

Spring Fling

Sun 25th, Mon 26th May 10am-5pm

A Festival for Kids including magic shows, puppet shows, clowns, face painting and mask making.

Admission FREE

Historic Vehicle Festival and Auto Jumble*

Sun. 22nd June 10am-5pm

An exciting show of beautifully preserved classic and vintage cars, motor cycles and trucks.

Admission FREE

Summer Holiday Week

Mon 30th June-Fri 4th July 10am-5pm

Activities, shows and events for all the family.

Admission FREE

Steam and Model Fair*

Sat 16th, Sun 17th August 10am-5pm

The museum grounds will be filled with soot and smoke, and echo to the hiss and whistle of historic steam engines at Central Scotland's biggest annual steam gathering. Also on show will be superbly crafted working model trains, boats, planes, cars and trams. For children of all ages.

Admission FREE

North Lanarkshire Festival

Mon 13th-Fri 17th October

A week long extravaganza of things to see and do.

Admission FREE

*If you wish to exhibit your historic vehicle, model or steam engine please call Summerlee on: (01236) 431261 for entry details.

Summerlee Heritage Park, Heritage Way, Coatbridge. ML5 1QD Tel: 01236 431261

TROLLEY

Newsletter of the Summerlee Transport Group

ISSUE No. 19

JUNE 1997



150 - 23 years ago

Photo - Keith Terry



SUMMERLEE TRANSPORT GROUP

The Committee 1997

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Secretary	Mr P. RAMSAY
Treasurer	Mr R. N. SUTHERLAND
Sales Officer	Mr J. WILSON
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Members)	Mr R. LOUDON
Modelling Officer	Mr R. MacLEAN
External Liason Officer	Mr M. CHALTON

The Summerlee Transport Group is a voluntary group and is registered as a charity.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Transport Group or Summerlee Museum.

**OPERATING SCOTLAND'S
ONLY WORKING TRAMWAY**

Trolley No. 20

If you have any articles or new ideas for "Trolley No. 20" please send them to the Editor, Mr Duncan White, Summerlee Transport Group, Summerlee Heritage Park, Heritage Way, Coatbridge ML5 1QD.

NEWS

The admission charges to the museum have now been dropped, the charge for the tram is now 55p for adults and 30p for children. Members should always bring their membership cards with them when visiting the museum.

9062 has provided the service all through the winter, only been taken out of service for running repairs (new brake shoes and new brushes). It is really due a complete overhaul and service to keep it in top condition.

53 entered service again at Easter and ran well although brake shoes are also required for this car. This matter is in hand.

225 The magnetic brake which has caused the trouble with this car is now in hand, a firm in Falkirk is tackling this so hope-fully she will be back on the road soon.

1017 The Brussel's truck has now been removed from under the body and the compressor and motors have been removed as a replacement for 9062. 1017's truck is now at an engineering firm in Grangemouth being overhauled and regauged and by the time you read this it should be back at Summerlee. Work by our team continues on the body and undercoating has now commenced.

1245 Negotiations are still taking place to have this car at Summerlee and it is hoped to have it brought up in the Autumn.

Depot New pit covers are being made by Summerlee workshop so this should lighten the heavy squad's work.

The depot has also been tidied up.

The Committee have agreed to purchase a Williamson Ticket Punch (This is similar to a Bell Punch) for use on 53. It was stressed that members using this punch should take great care of it as it is a valuable item.

BEAMISH 1997

By Ronnie Maclean

ON A bright sunny Saturday in early March, five members of our Group plus Jimmy the dog, visited Beamish Museum.

On arrival we were met at the Visitor Centre by a representative of the Beamish Tramway Group and each given a seven page booklet with details and photographs of their trams. (We will be featuring some of those in future "Trolleys"). The front page welcomed the visitors from Summerlee, a nice personal touch.

We proceeded to the depot and tramway office where we met the manager and signed the necessary paperwork stating that we were not drug users, alcoholics, etc. - we were high but only with anticipation of driving their trams.

After this we met our two mentors for the day, Andy the senior tram driver, who would be with us on the platform and Keith Terry who we already knew.

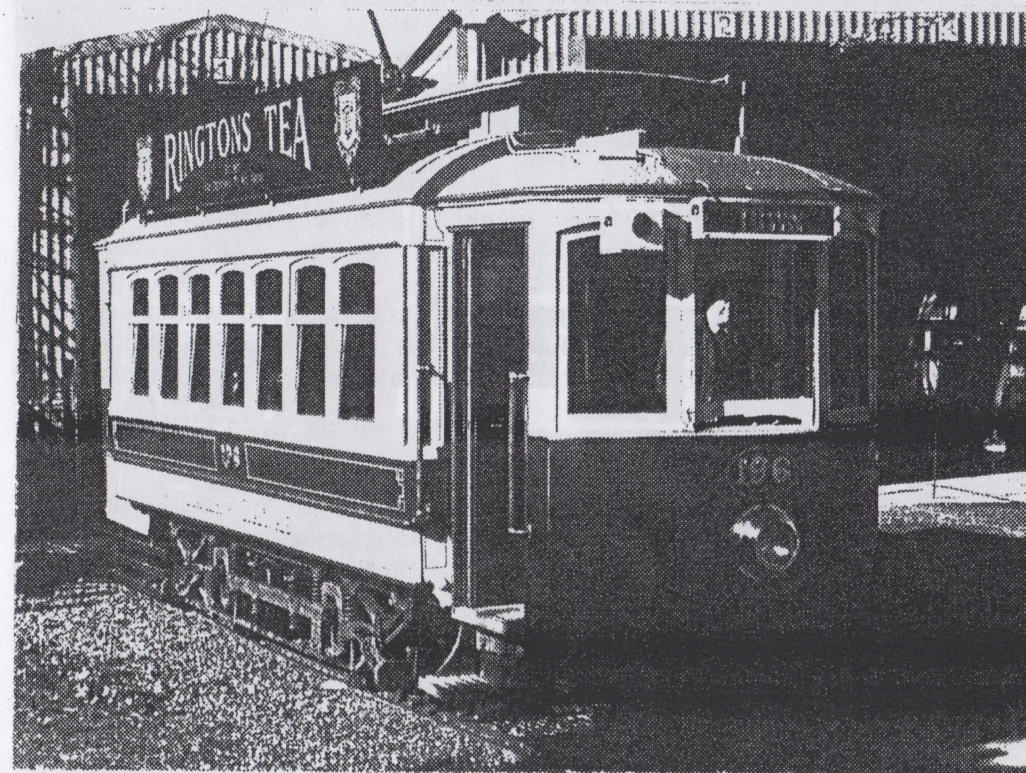
Keith, who is the external examiner, acted as guard and our host during the day.

Trolley Turning Causes Amusement

The morning was spent with Sheffield 264, an open balcony double-decker dating from 1907. This 4-wheeler had a hand-brake acting on all wheels, an electric brake for emergency use and a hand-wheel operated track brake. The controllers were BTH B510's. Naturally being Sheffield it had a trolley which had to be turned by means of a long bamboo cane with a hook at the end of it. Being new to it caused some amusement trying to attach it to the trolley with the sun in your eyes and over 100 visitors watching you.

We all took 264 in turns from the Main Gate down to the Town and back up and marvelled at the smooth track, very responsive hand-brake, which required little effort and the smooth controller - sheer bliss. All too quickly the morning passed, driving the car, operating the token system, turning the trolley, acting as guard and falling over Jimmy the dog (sorry Bill).

After lunch we returned to the tram depot and having taken the usual photographs with each of us behind the controls,



Beamish 196, a small 4-wheeler single decker

took over Beamish 196 for the afternoon. This is very similar to our "150" but with one very subtle difference - it works! 196 is of course from Oporto, is a single deck 4-wheeler and dates from 1935. It has B54E controllers. The braking systems include air-brake, emergency brake and a hand-brake operated by distinctive vertical hand wheels to the right of the driver position.

This time we took the car from the entrance down the extension track to the town and back. The trackwork here is really good and the tram just glides along. It was a warm afternoon so we drove with the motorman's window down. You just had to touch the air brake and it responded to you. Turning the trolley on the car was a little easier and you did not mind all the visitors watching you.

As in the morning time just flew past and we reluctantly returned 196 to its depot. We then bade farewell to Andy who

finished at 4 p.m. and were given a depot tour by the three volunteers who work there.

Sheffield 513 (Roberts Car) was in lye 3 jacked up off its truck awaiting body repairs etc. The truck was in the main workshop receiving attention whilst the two Metrovick motors had just returned from being re-wound and were painted Ranger's blue.

The Newcastle trolley bus was receiving a lot of attention and it is hoped to have it ready to run for its 50th birthday next year.

The other trams in the depot were Gateshead 10 which has been in service that day, Blackpool 31, Newcastle 114 and of course Sheffield 264 (in service in the afternoon) and Beamish 196.

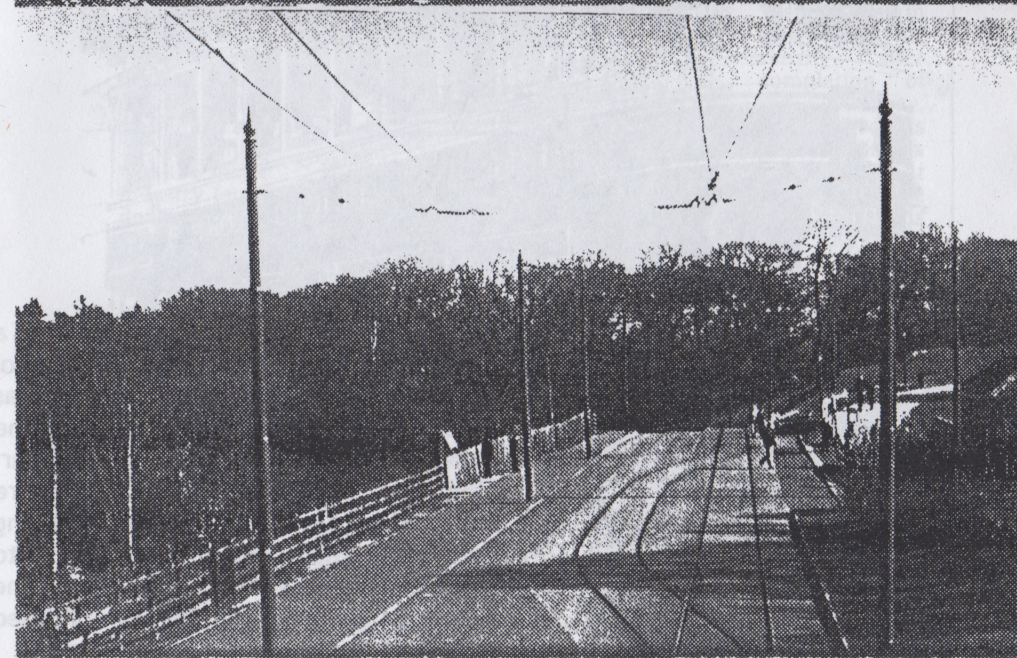
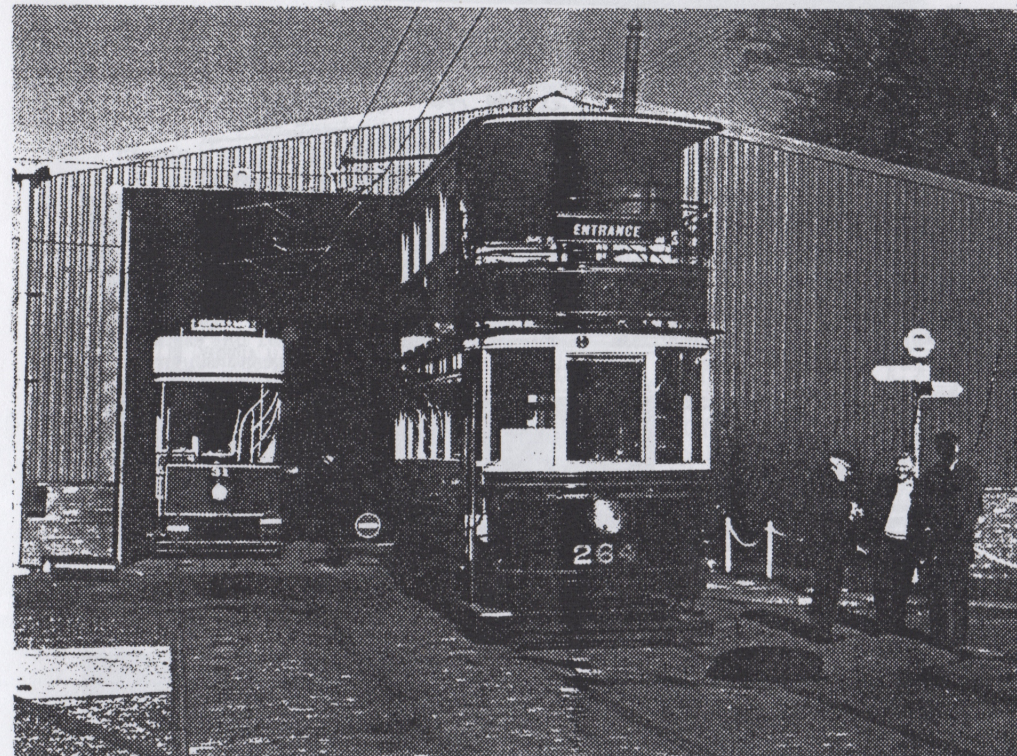
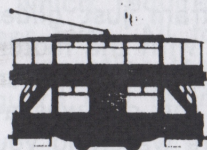
1,000,000 Passengers

We were given a tour of the power house, stores, telephone exchange and other parts of the workshops. Very impressive! At around 5 p.m. we took our leave of Beamish in what had been a most pleasant and memorable day.

All the motormen at Beamish are paid staff, except for two volunteers who are only called on for the odd Bank Holiday duty, so we were very privileged. Last year the trams carried 1,000,000 passengers

The week-end was not over for us as on Sunday we visited and rode on the Tanfield Railway, just a few miles from Beamish. It has three miles of track and claims to be the world's oldest existing railway dating back to 1725. It is steam operated and is worth visiting if only to see the yard with 50 engines in various states of repair plus dozens of trucks and carriages.

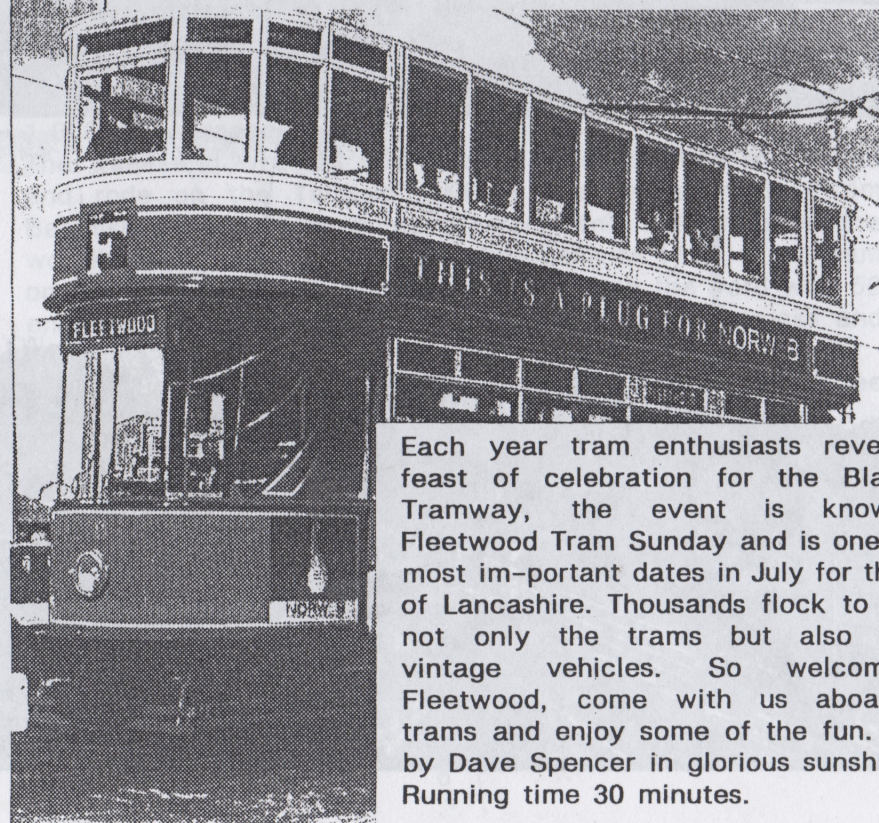
Seeing Beamish again makes me think of what Summerlee could become - but when?



VIDEOVIEW



TRAM SUNDAY, FLEETWOOD



Each year tram enthusiasts revel in a feast of celebration for the Blackpool Tramway, the event is known as Fleetwood Tram Sunday and is one of the most important dates in July for this part of Lancashire. Thousands flock to admire not only the trams but also visiting vintage vehicles. So welcome to Fleetwood, come with us aboard the trams and enjoy some of the fun. Filmed by Dave Spencer in glorious sunshine. Running time 30 minutes.

PERFECT TRAMS

D. Gibson

THIS month marks the 90th anniversary of a unique piece of private enterprise, which was to have a profound and long-lasting effect upon the residents of industrial Fife — the Wemyss Tramway.

The brainchild of Captain Randolph Erskine Wemyss, of Wemyss and Torrie, it was to provide a regular service from Leven to Kirkcaldy, and was the last of his many great projects, its planning and construction occupying the final years of his life. Under his supervision, the work was completed, and the line opened on 23rd August 1906, when the first tram left Leven on its maiden journey down the coastal route.

Wemyss was obsessive in his attention to detail, from deciding the route of the track, linking all the mining hamlets and villages in the area, to the design and colour of the staff uniforms.

Coal mining was the major industry found down the Fife coast, and the Wemyss family owned and ran the many pits, providing employment for generations of miners. By 1906 they were exporting around three million tons a year through Methil dock, making it the greatest coal shipping port in Scotland.

It was therefore understandable that Randolph decided to run the first trams at 4 a.m. to enable miners to ride in comfort for the start of the early shift. Previously they had to cycle or walk, sometimes miles, in all

weathers, to reach work in time. The first public service began at 6.30 a.m., running until midnight, and was an invaluable link with Kirkcaldy for the parishioners.

Randolph Wemyss' dedication to perfection was such that he employed a team of workers to check daily the trams' mechanical components, and valet and polish inside and out, before the first service of the following day.

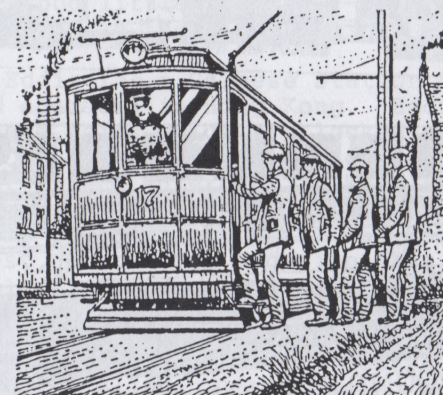
He insisted that all staff were trained to be polite and courteous to the public, and an extract from *The Wemyss Magazine* of May 1910 claims that the inspectors' duty was "to see that the rules and instructions

issued by the company for the comfort and convenience of the patrons are being strictly and cheerfully carried out."

Randolph Wemyss died in July 1908, shortly after completion of the tramway, and before his plans for a hospital at Denbeath were fulfilled. His wife, Lady Eva, continued and funded this

project, and in August 1909 the Randolph Wemyss Memorial Hospital was opened, a fitting tribute to his memory.

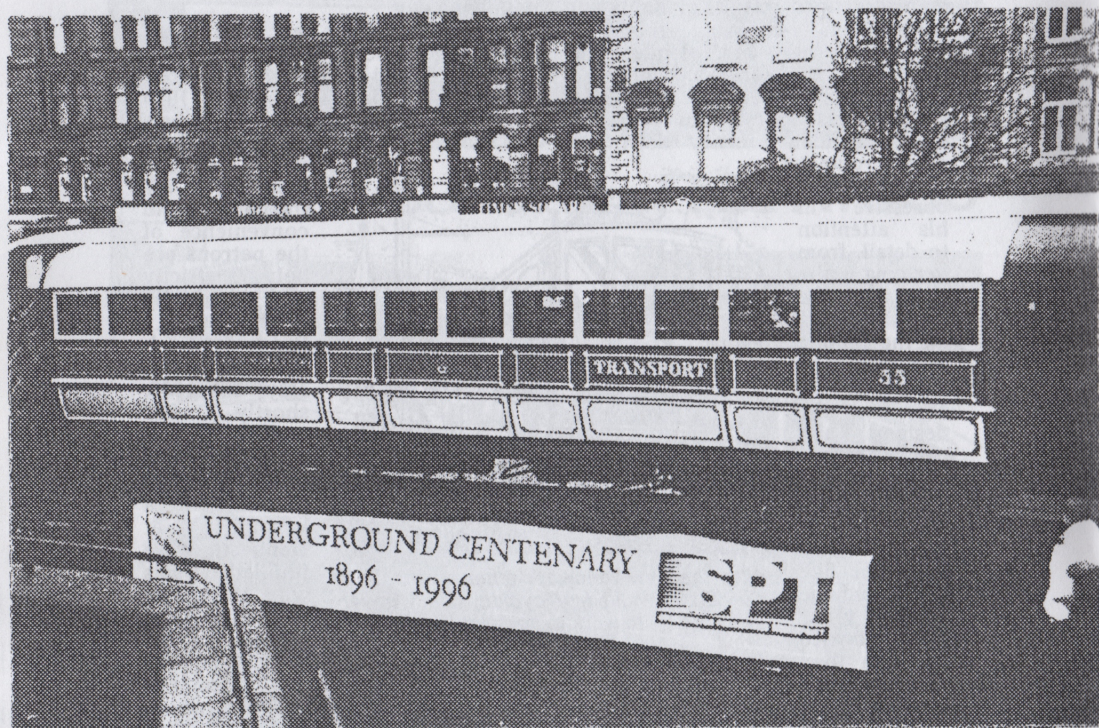
The Wemyss family has a unique history of some 800 years' unbroken residency in The Kingdom. Captain Randolph and Lady Eva tirelessly pursued the family policy of constant progress, particularly in their efforts to upgrade the area for the benefit of the community, a tradition continued by the family to this day.



With the new tramway, miners, who had previously walked or cycled, could travel to work in comfort.

Reprinted by kind permission of Mr Dave Gibson, Angus DD11

100 Years of Glasgow's Underground



MOLES – EYE – VIEW By Jim Wilson

Mole's is a nickname given by the staff who work upstairs even the club run by the staff of the subway is called after this creature.

I joined the moles in 20 February 1974 and was to stay with them for 12 long and happy years. I started working on the 'wee red trains' lovingly known as the subway.

Bill Rodgers the man who gave me a start had one of the most undesirable hobs in the underground as Operating Superintendent. Bill was based at Govan Cross and was the man who organised the complex shift system for the 'Green staff' A total of 326 staff in all, at its height. It's more than likely going to work in the morning you would be given your ticket from a friendly and well mannered Glaswegian, be usured along the platform by a Polish Station Master, have your ticket punched by and ex-Ghanaian boxer and be speed to your office by a Pakistani driver. From all part of the world the underground family coming from the foremost parts of the globe. Arriving every year to learn the noble art of how to searve of this proud little railway. No fewer than 18 nationalities worked in the old subway at one time.

Character like Eddie Lee a Chinese Station Master at Cessnock. He was born and educated in Hong Kong. Eddie is a collector of ancient Chinese coins which are locked away in the volts of a Glasgow bank, he is also an authortory on world religions and as you might expect an expert in Kung Fu.

Among the Moslems of the green staff was Mohammed Moulvi. I remember him best, on the one occasion that he was my Conductor. Moslems of course believe in regular daily prayer. One day at St Enoch's Station having a few minutes to spare I left the train for a cup of tea (hand brake on of course!). I returned to find him kneeling on the centre seats, hands outstretched praying to Allah. Often during his break period at Govan Cross he was to be found in private prayers and meditation. At one time Mohammed owned his own fish and chip shop in Fort William and unlike myself could speak fluent Gaelic.

Mohammed Khan a driver on the underground who originally came from Pakistan. Passengers used to listen to the strains of 'I Belong To Glasgow' and 'The Bonnie Bank Of Loch Lomond' emanating from his drivers cab, little wonder his Conductor had to offer a full explanation to some of the public. Settling in Glasgow, Mohammed once a body-guard to Viceroy of India had taken the city to heart and on his days off, often used to put on his MacGregor tartan kilt and take to the hills. He was affectionately known to us as "MacGregor".

Vincent Okine a Conductor was once an ex-heavy weight champion of Ghana and West Africa.

Chanan Singh Gill and Indian relief Station Master. Before moving to Glasgow he was a bus driver in Bradford. On one of the buses he was driving an elderly woman slipped on the stairs of the bus while leaving and after helping her get back to her feet and safely on to the pavement, she glanced up to his Turban and exclaimed "Thanks sonnie, and here's hopen your head's better in the mornin".

Victor Pawlowski, Station Master at Hillhead Station, from Central Poland in a small village called Sandomierz. In 1941 just 15 years of age he was taken to a forced labour camp to work on German railways, repairing bridges bombed by the Allies. Victor volunteered with 41 other s and was sent to France. The French freedom fighters arranged for his escape and later Victor returned to blow up some of the bridges he had helped to repair only months before. Victor also worked as a miner in Stirling and was involved in the blasting operations with the North of Scotland Hydro-electric board.

Also husband and wife teams like Gerald and Ellen Israel were very common in the subway.

Not forgetting my own Conductor for nearly 2 years his nickname 'The Wooden Indian'. I can still remember hearing him in the morning around 5.30am, shouting at me "hey Jimmy how-you-doin". So many characters and stories they would tell me, I tried to write them down at the end of a shift for they said it would make a good book some day.

Like on the 24 February 1971 when the Wild West came to the Underground, when armed bank robbers choose to make the underground their get-away. The Clydesdale bank at George's Cross their target. They jumped on the outer circle train at George Cross station, the train driver Malcolm MacGregor remembers them shouting "Hold it" by at Cowcaddens Station a Policeman and two detectives came running down the stairs and asked Malcolm to point out the 3 men. The men were all subsequently sentenced to 10 years in prison each.

On March 1975 at Copland Road Station there was an attempted armed hold-up on the ticket office. Margaret Campbell who worked in the ticket office remembered that 2 men approached the box and produced what looked like a gun and demanded money. Her reply to this demand was "I'm sorry sonnie the door to the office is locked from the outside and I'm not able to get out to give you any money" at this point passengers arrived and the raiders fled empty handed.

Driver David McQueen told of how a small boy opened the back door of the trail end car while in motion. A lone passenger saw the boy fall out and shouted to David. Quickly realising that he had only 3 minutes before the next train arrived in which to rescue the lad, sprinted up the tunnel only to be met by the small boys cry "please Mister I've lost my ticket".

Everyone had a story and not to be undone so have I. One Saturday in late October driving a train from Bridge Street Station to St Enoch's Station about 500 to 600 yards short of St Enoch's I saw what I thought to be a signal line-man walking back to the Station platform. I didn't give much thought but gave the train an extra check anyway, on the platform itself the passengers where waving at me frantically. I looked at the track ahead and could see nothing except what looked like a black bag on the live rail. Slowing the train again I just caught a glimpse of a mans body in a black anorak, stopping just at the head wall at St Enoch's. I shouted to the Station Master, Nicki Coranna, who put the power off, pulled the passenger clear and gave him the kiss of life. A friend of the man tried to help him, with 600 DC of current running through the mans body it was lucky his friend didn't touch him.

The job that was most dangerous in the subway was 'The pump fitters' and the Clyde manhole between Govan Cross and Merkland Street, was one of the most awkward place to get into to work in. On one occasion two pump fitters were sent down to inspect the machine house in the manhole between the inner and outer circles. They left through the front door of the train just short of the entrance, telling the driver "collect us on your next journey round". To allow the train to pass they had to stand in the opening of the wall with their backs to the pump house door. Then when the train had passed they turned to go in and found the door jammed shut and despite their frantic efforts they could not get it to open. There was just enough room to let the train pass but even travelling at a 5 mile per hour speed restriction the edge of the train brushed against them. Terrified, all they could do was sit crouched waiting for another nine trains to pass them by, down the hill before their car came round and stopped.

The best known Pumpmens story is from 1954. The new Govan Cross exit was being built by Glasgow Corporation Building Department. The work had hardly start before, the heavens opened. The pumps simply unable to cope and the underground was closed down immegietly. In a desperate bid to get the trains running again officials raced to Hunganfield Loch to get the use of a boat. Lowering onto the track the pumpmen rode back and forth tot he pump house until the job was done and the trains were running. Heavy rain was always the biggest problems for the pumpmen and one of the biggest problem areas was Kelvin Bridge with the River Kelvin flowing above it. In August 1972 heavy rain swept a very lost 18 inch Eel and it ended up swimming about in the tunnel. It was found by the nightshift pumpman.

Many a spine chilling tale is told by the night shift with 13 miles of dark eery track there are those who say the tunnels are haunted and more then one man has drop tools turned and fled. Reports seem to point to one regular visitor. But the tales I have been told suggest 2 ghosts making their rounds in the early hours of the morning.

Sam Docharty recalled to me, working in the night shifts in the sheds, distinctly seeing someone standing in the drivers cab, on more than one occasion. But when he reached the trains there was no-one there just a "stiff chill in the air, like a refrigerator room".

George Anderson remembered that one night being one of a four man squad they were sent to Copland Road to board the last train and work back to the last train, cleaning them as they went. On arrival he found a colleague, Bertie Buchanan talking to a passenger who must have fallen asleep after the last journey. Both Bertie and himself spoke to the man for some time, he was a middle aged man wearing a light rain coat and a flat cap. George remembers asking the man to follow him through the line of carriages so he could be shown the way up to the street. George looked back frequently and the man was behind him by about 25 yards each time. When George reached the pit he turned and waited for the man to join him seconds then minutes passed, no sign of him. George ran back up the train only to be met by Bertie to be told the man had not come passed him, all the side doors were secured and there was no other way out. He was gone but certainly not forgotten.

Another well haunted part of the system is Kelvin Bridge and Hillhead twice 'berrie-pickers' cleaners employed by the Underground to collect litter along the track. One of these cleaners heard a woman singing in the tunnel the song sounded like a nursery rhyme. The best known sighting of this ghost is at Shield Road the name she had been given was 'The grey lady'. Underground workers believe that this ghost may have a connection with a tragic accident which happened at this station one Saturday 22 in 1922 on a deserted platform except for the station master. The station master's back was turned to the stairway and hearing a scream coming from the track quickly turned to see a woman and young child fall onto the line. Without thinking the station master jumped onto the rail in a courageous attempt to pull them clear, just as the train was entering the station. The woman holding out the little girl which he succeeded in saving, unfortunately the woman, her mother was killed and she is still believed to be looking for her daughter today.

The most unusual sighting that was seen in the Underground was of a 'Ghost Train' which appeared at Cowcaddens Station and West Street Station. The last known sighting of it was in 1973, a stiff breeze swept through the station, the signal changing, passengers complaining of the train running through the station. Several of the 'green staff' said they could clearly see the motorman. I myself was stopped at Kelvin Bridge by the Inspector who told me that the driver in front of me had knocked down the pumpman. The Inspector and I travelled though the section searching for the man's body, the only thing we saw was a light coming from a manhole. But on arrival at the manhole the light disappeared! I do not know to this day who or what it was.

Some said it was a boring job but not so, trains seemed to have a mind of their own. Each with its own uniqueness, some even sounded like trams going up Argyle Street. Passengers, some coming on drunk and walking off sober 4 hours later. One passenger who was on for most of my shift when he eventually got off asked me "driver when do we get to Central Station". Supporters of football teams singing and dancing on the platform and on the track at Ibrox Station, when they were leaving the train sometimes gave you tickets, 10p's and cigarette coupons.

There was always 2 kettles on the boil at St Enoch's and no lack of tea at all the stations. On just one night alone, there was a murder at Kelvin Bridge, a train on fire at Cessnock Station, two trains on the Inner Circle at Shields Road at the same time and a lady on my train who did not like confined spaces. You had to be on the ball at all times but it was fun.

So the end of the Old Subway approached on the horizon and the dawn of a new era with new trains and stations. The last week of the subway was to be the equal of the last tram ceremony in 1962, with special commemorative tickets to be issued. But cracks in the roof of Govan Cross Station were to put a stop to this and close the Underground early. Staff had their own unofficial parties all through the system. Many a tear and good-bye were said to friends and colleagues, some of them knowing each other from 'the tramway days'. I did not know it at the time but I was to drive the last passenger service train the day before it was closed. And being a none drinker was asked to be the Taxi for the subway staff, also picking up old subway parts for the museum, in one of the wee red trains. Like the rolling stock the staff was to be broke up. Some for new jobs, bus driving, conducting, cleaning or retirement. But 12 were to be kept on for training on the new system. I was lucky enough to be one of those chosen. The crack on the roof at Govan Cross meant that contractors were brought in to try and demolish it, but they were unsuccessful trying for nearly 2 weeks. Finally experts in explosives were brought in to demolish this, the experts being the 'Army'. SOME CRACK!

For a year we were to do security work, looking after stations, like Cessnock. During this time we were asked if we would work with the contractors, driving the new battery operated locomotives. Contractors like 'Taylor Woodrow and M&L Electrical Contractors, Robertsons Wiring Co and the tunnel cleaners.

But the subway living up to its reputation for stories did not let us have many quite moments like. One night while I was working with the tunnel cleaners, between Cowcaddens Station and Buchanan Street Station, we decided to take a break. We went upstairs at Buchanan Street and it was roughly 2am or 3am in the morning just as all the disco's were coming out. The cleaners who wore one piece waterproof clothing and face masks were stood outside 'The Chippie' and next to a bank. Someone phoned the police thing they were going to rade the bank, the next thing we new there were police cars and policemen everywhere.

During the modernisation the stations looked more like a bomb had hit them more thana new subway and St Enoch's the most spectacular of all. The building was sitting on a concrette raft with nothing in front or back of it but a large hole. The view from the track going through the station was amazing.

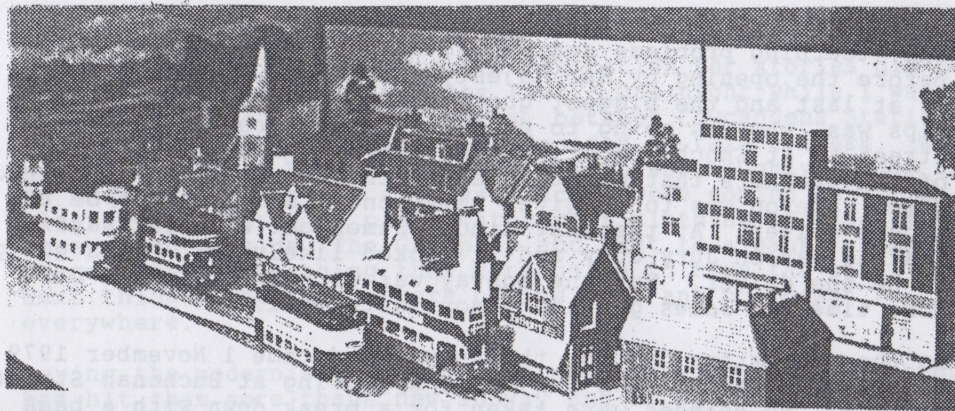
One of the main contactors we worked with was Taylor Woodrow and they had based themselves at Kelvin Bridge Station. I had never worked on a building site before, like Kelvin Bridge was then. It could be dangerous and the entrance to the work was down the old stair case with rubble and wood everywhere and the further you travelled down the darker it became with only the occasional small light. When you eventually got onto the platform all that was there was a battery locomotive and 2 cement wagons. I had to start at the same time as the building squad at 7.00 am in the morning, stop when they stopped to have tea and work on till 9.00pm or 10.00pm. The concert squad as they were known had 16 men and 1 look-out. The concert was loaded from a pipe through the roof of the tunnel which went up to street level. Most contractors did get on with each other but they did not always help each other out and it was not just one time were I had to move the compressor and scaffolding out of the way of an on coming locomotive. Taylor Woodrow had been put in charge of the maintenance of the batter locomotive had constant check on. It was a long day dirty and often cold and wet but eventually it was finished.

So the new staff for the subway start to come down (mostly from the buses). All had been hand picked by Bill Rodgers for training on the new orange trains doubted the by the press the "Clock work Oranges". But even this first class started to get nicknames from a very early stage. Like 'Rompar-suit one' and 'Rompar-suit two' paired up in one loc and on the other loco 'Noddy and big Ears'. Other like 'Bomberfloan' and 'Big T' all from the first training class. We were all learning including Metro Campbell who built the trains. The biggest and most common used word by Michael Nickel who was incharge of training was "Saf-a-ty". It must be the longest class for training ever at almost a year long.

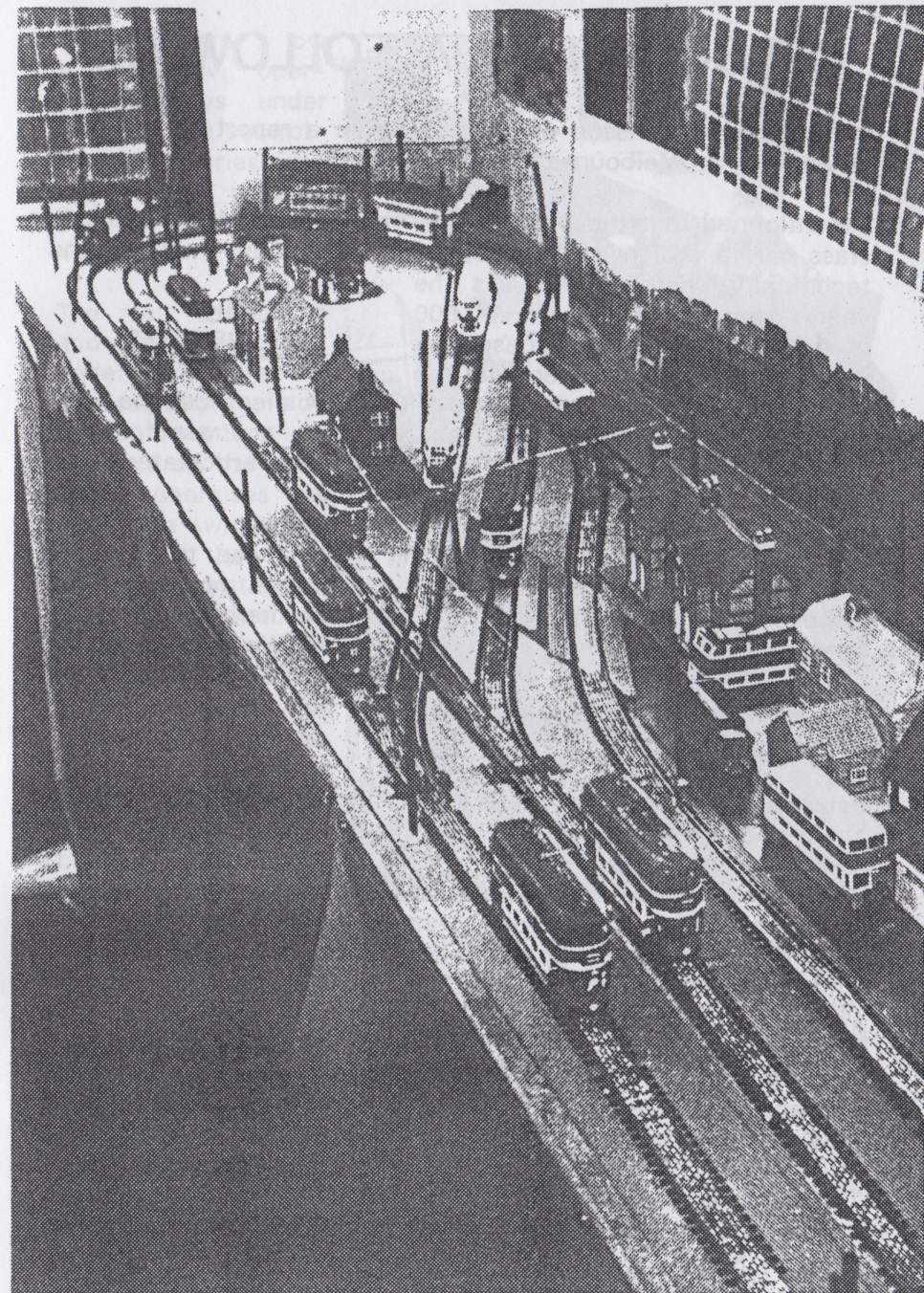
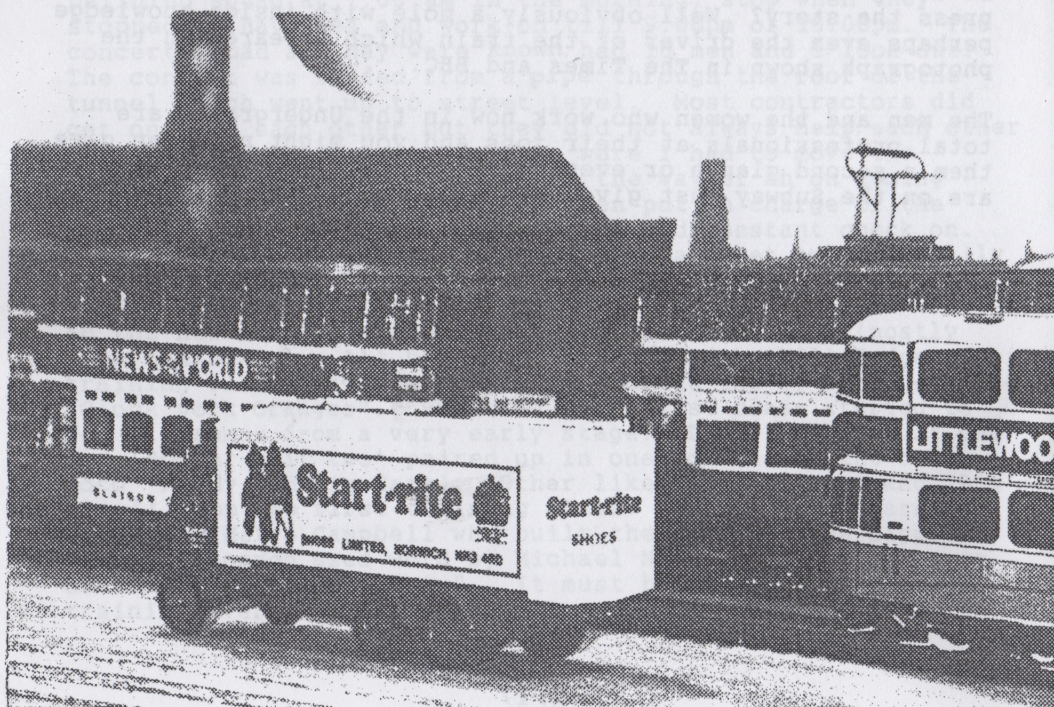
Many teething problems and many a long night were to pass before the opening by Her Majesty the Queen. But it was upon us at last and the biggest question that was on everyone's lips was, who was going to drive the Queen from Buchanan Street to St Enoch's Station. We new it was going to be one of the trainers that meant I was in the running, but my friend James Cameron was to be given this honour and I was to be the second driver. At the last minute James got a letter saying that he was on Jury duty and it looked likely that I was going to be the driver. But the subway was to work its magic one more time and James got the honour after all.

So the red letter day for the subway had came 1 November 1979 and cars number 132 and 133 where sparkling at Buchanan Street Station. No chances were taken for a break down with a back up at Cowcaddens Station and George Cross Station and a locomotive at Kelvin Bridge Station. Security people were everywhere in plain clothes, even walking through the tunnel before the train and checking everyone including my flask. But with just an hour to go we lost power and the signals went down, the gremlins were back. At the last moment everything became right. Unfortunately just like the old subway closed one day after it opened. Training could finally commence and ghost running (were no passengers are aboard the train) could start. The Underground still had a trick or two still to play 'The Times and the BBC both carried the same story of trains having square wheels, the tunnel leaked like sieves and even St George's Cross Station was still not ready. Who gave the press the story? Well obviously a mole with inside knowledge perhaps even the driver of the train which appeared in the photograph shown in The Times and BBC.

The men and the women who work now in the Underground are total professionals at their jobs and you might not even give them a second glance or even think of them. But next time you are on the Subway just give them a nod and a smile.



**The Modelling Group
meets Regularly on
Wednesday evenings 7.30pm**



MELBOURNE – A FOLLOW UP

IN the December issue of Trolley I gave a report on my tram driving day in Melbourne.

I mentiopned that the backbone of the fleet used to be the W class car, a design dating back to the 1920s but modified and technically improved over the years. There used to be over 800 of them. The number of these cars is now very much reduced with the introduction of the Z class cars with ASEA electrics, the later ones by Siemens/AEG. This began in 1975, and was followed by the A class cars in 1983, then the B class articulated cars, both designed by Siemens/AEG and Duwag.

By
PAUL GEISSLER

However, back to the W class. In 1990 these trams were declared national heritage vehicles and can no longer be disposed of either interstate or overseas, so there won't be one operating in Summerlee. As a result of this National Trust (of Australia) designation something like 200 of them are withdrawn and sitting in store, and no one know what to do with them.

Interest

Perhaps it would be of interest to readers to know a little about the technicalities, the controls and the actual driving of these cars.

The cabs are totally enclosed, entered either from side doors or from the passenger compartment, the door to which is fitted with a tip-up seat for the driver. Main and air compressor switches are on the bulkhead of No. 1 end. The control keys are normally stored behind the flap to the destination screen. When a car is brought into the depot this will be at the inner end and when the car has been checked by maintenance staff they transfer the keys to the outer end.

The cars have motor bogies, the trucks being designed and built at the Preston Works. Each bogie has two 40hp motors, in series 1 & 3, 2 & 4.

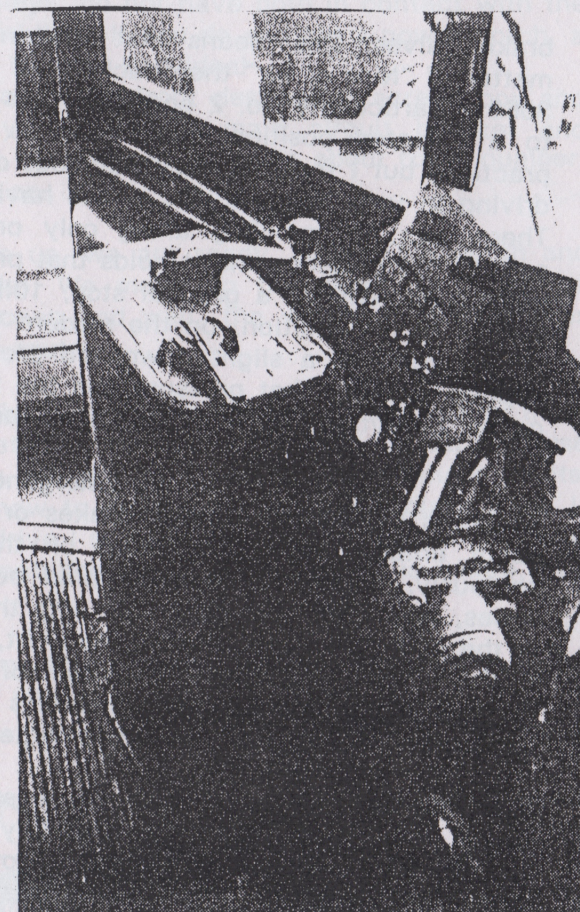
The controllers, constructed at the MET System's Preston

Works, are low tension 12v, operating relays under the car. The controller has 7 series, and 7 paralell notches but has no rheostatic notches.

The main contactors and the resistors are under the cars for accessibility and easy maintenance. Notch 1 on the controller energises the main line switch and engages the full series resistances. Notching beyond this opens further relays, cutting out first, the series, then the parallel resis-tances, up to full parallel when there are no running resis- tances being used. Any rearward move-ment of the controller, from any running position opens the line switch so overcoming arcing problems of power cut off.

Resuming power requires the controller to be brought back to the OFF position, and them opened up through the series, and then parallel positions. It is very straight forward and works well.

The brakes are air operated Westinghouse with self lapping



Melbourne W class tram cab showing controller, air brake, control panel with direction indicator and in the foreground the hand brake. Also visible is the windscreen wiper.

brake valves. This means that applying the brake is not a matter of "Nips of Air" then backing off to a lap position as on 9062 - particularly No. 2 end. One puts the brake handle over to a selected position. How much is required comes from practice, but I found it very easy out on the road, and I was driving in very dense traffic - and having to keep up with it. There was no trundling along only on series notches! One selects the pressure and it holds that pressure. Usually 5lbs. is quite sufficient for a gradual stop, 10lbs. for a smarter stop, and so on. In addition, on the modern W class cars the brake handle requires a slight downward pressure to be constantly applied. Release that pressure and the full emergency brakes go on. Everything is well thought out and well designed.

The 4th Emergency

The cars have no rheostatic brakes or track brakes, so what about emergencies? One relies on the excellent air brakes obviously, copious sand if required but if a real emergency arises, then close the controller with the left hand and hold it in the OFF position and, with the right, pull the controller key to the REVERSE position. The effect of this is that the motors are working as unbalanced generators and bring the car to a rapid stop. It is termed the 4th emergency.

The equivalent on the British car was to knock off the main circuit breaker, put the controller key into REVERSE position and the controller to any parallel notch. How many of you knew that method? This was the standard, but advanced teaching in the old days.

The hand brake is used for parking when stopped for long periods out on the road - but NOT in the depots.

So, we now come to take a tram out of the depot. We have reported to the shed master and been allocated a car.

Check the trolley is correctly trailing to come out of the depot. This indicates that the car has been checked by the depot maintenance staff (remember an incoming car is left with its operational trolley at the outward end, and the hand brake is left OFF in the depot, when parking).

One point about trolleys, do not have both in contact with the overhead at the same time. If you do and cut a power notch, a section short circuit occurs. Bad idea!

We check the car, open the front destination screen box and get the control keys, switch on main circuit breaker and compressor, contact control base by radio about route number, car number, and so on.

OK, the air pressure up. We are ready. Gong. One notch and release the air brake. We move up the depot. Gong as we come out into the open and well, the whole of Melbourne is waiting - 235km. of route.

One last point, overhead section breakers are marked by three studs on the road between the tracks. It would not do to cause great flash overs by not closing the controller at these points. So now you know how to drive a Melbourne W class tram. If you really want to drive I suggest you get permission first but, if not, be warned Pentridge Prison in Melbourne is where they hanged Ned Kelly.

By the way, Pentridge Prison is on the tram route 19 to North Coburg, I'll wave to you as I pass!

