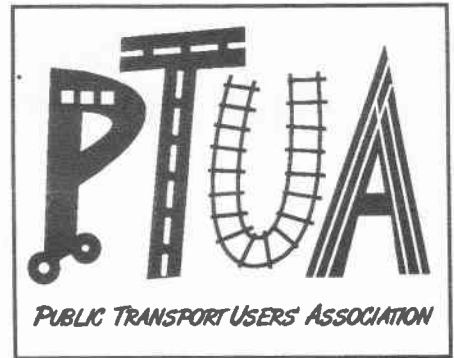


# TRANSIT

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## NEWS & VIEWS



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## PTC kills Melbourne's last coordinated rail-bus link

The Sandringham to Beaumaris "Railway bus", the only bus in Melbourne to regularly meet the train, was scrapped at the end of last year.

Passengers arriving at Sandringham Station on 28 December were told that the "railway bus" which had connected Sandringham with Black Rock and Beaumaris for 70 years (as a tram until the mid-1950s) had been replaced by a "new service".

Features of the "new service" include:

- service cuts ensure there is no longer a bus to meet every train;
- times have been changed so that many services are not timetabled to connect;
- buses no longer wait for passengers at Sandringham Station because the bus service now starts from St Kilda;



- timetables no longer show the rail-bus connections.

The Sandringham to Beaumaris "railway bus" was for many years the only one of Melbourne's 200-plus bus routes which had operated a co-ordinated timetable with the local train service.

The service had been so successful that some trains needed two or three buses. The route carried five times as many passengers as a parallel bus route to Beaumaris that

was not co-ordinated with the train (this route was scrapped by the PTC in 1991).

The "new service" is being run by the PTC bus division, not Sandringham Station.

The changes have also cut the service on the St Kilda to Brighton bus service (with which the Sandringham service has now been combined) by a third. Services during the day now run every half hour instead of every 20 minutes, and every 40 minutes in the evening instead of every 30.

The world's best transport systems, from Perth to Zurich, are moving to closely integrate all modes of public transport. Yet again, Melbourne is moving in the opposite direction.

Local PTUA members, led by Rod Bryant, are campaigning for restoration of the link. If you can help, please contact the PTUA office on 650 7898.

### STOP PRESS . . .

Several hundred attended a public rally in Bairnsdale on 19 February organised by the "Save Our Train" Community Action Group.

The group reported on the dramatic drop in patronage on the bus (which replaced the train) between Sale and Bairnsdale.

The president of the Chamber of Commerce, Lyn Roder, told the

audience that Bairnsdale businesses were losing out as people now drive to Sale Station instead of catching the bus and do their shopping while there.

Present were David Treasure MLA for Gippsland East, Don Gibson and Gary McDonald of WestCoast Railway, and Patrick O'Connor, PTUA.

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## New Members

We welcome the following people who have recently joined.

Jean Whiela  
City of Collingwood  
Oz Kayak  
Joan Kearsey  
Fred Cross  
Emmanuel Natalizio  
Lee McEwan  
Mary Lyden  
Rev. Eunice Smith  
Simon Fraser  
Mary Nicholls  
Rita Parker  
Justin Moore  
Mary Jamieson  
Agnes Harrison  
Jean Carew  
Jeffrey Bainbridge  
Betty Parsons  
Kiernan O'Loughlin  
Jane Sanderson  
Peter Dann  
Emma Rush

## Join the Friends of the Earth Transport Campaign

FOE needs organisers to help form the campaign collective to promote environmentally-friendly transport methods.  
FOE needs people to lobby and write letters.

**Contact: Justin Moore**  
**PH: +61 3 9411 1111 or FOE**  
**419 8700 (312 Smith**  
**St. Collingwood,**  
**3066)**

## You can help stop the Eastern Freeway Extension!

Come to a meeting  
being held by the  
**Koonung Mullum**  
**Forestway Association**

**8pm. Wednesday**  
**16 March**  
**at Nunawading**  
**Arts Centre**  
**379 Whitehorse Rd.**  
**Nunawading.**

## Getting in touch

PTUA Office, Ground Floor,  
247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne.3000

PLEASE NOTE:

WE NO LONGER USE THE POST BOX  
Telephone: 650 7898

### Membership

Graeme Gibson: 650 7898

### Council

Paul Mees	<i>President</i>
Lorna Rolfe	<i>Vice President</i>
Tim Grant	<i>Secretary</i>
John McPherson	<i>Assistant Secretary</i>
Leslie Chandra	<i>Treasurer</i>
Patrick O'Connor	<i>Media Liason</i>
Neva Finch	Alan Hardie
Josephine Connellan	Tim Hoffmann
Christine Hooper	Gerry Warren

## Thank you and welcome to the new year

Thank you to everyone who attended the workshop with Dennis Howlett. We now have a strategic plan which focuses on coalition building, lobbying, public education and membership development. Thank you also to all who have worked in the office in a voluntary capacity. **If anyone would still like to help out please phone Tim Grant on 650 7898.**

### PTUA Office

The office is staffed by volunteers. When it is unattended, please leave a message on the answering machine. If you would like to volunteer, please write to us or ring the office number: 650 7898.

### Committee Meetings

Committee Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at 6pm. at Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane Melbourne 3000. All members welcome!

# News in Brief...

## Calcutta seeks PTUA help.

Dr Debasish Bhattacharyya, a scientist at the Indian Institute of Chemical Biology, Calcutta, has asked the PTUA to help in the campaign to save Calcutta's trams which are threatened with closure.

Concerns about the city's high pollution rate and the fact that more than 50 per cent of the city's pollution come from cars has mobilised Calcuttans, a wealthy Danish businessman and world environmentalists to put pressure on the West Bengal Government not to scrap the trams which have been running for over 80 years.

The PTUA is planning to write letters to Calcutta's newspapers urging the city's transport planners to keep the trams. Dr Bhatta charhyya was told about the PTUA's past campaigns to save Melbourne's trams from Dr John Whitelegg, Head of the Geography Department at Lancaster University. In 1989, Dr Whitelegg addressed the PTUA's "Public Transport in Crisis" conference during the Met ticket dispute.

## National Bus Company

The National Bus Company, which earlier this year took over many routes previously run by the Met, has sought the PTUA's advice on how to attract more passengers. At a meeting on 8 February, Paul Mees and John McPherson explained the importance of a frequent, safe and reliable service that connects with train times. We will be forming a

small group of members who use the company's services to provide feedback and suggestions..

## Perth's trains a hit

Perth's new rail system is currently recovering almost all its operating costs. At home, Transport Minister Alan Brown's *reform* package aims to lift Melbourne's recovery cost to 50 per cent. Perth has been so successful because passengers are offered frequent, safe and reliable trains which are met by buses for people who do not live close to a station.

## Who will arrive first: the bike or you?

Since the removal of luggage vans from all V/Line services, each train will now carry only two bicycles per service. Alan Brown informed a member that if a group wants to travel with their bikes, road transport (trucks) can be arranged for the bikes with the cyclists travelling by V/line train

## Quote of the month?

"Of particular importance was the farcical attempt by the then Government to remove conductors from Melbourne's trams. The initiative was poorly thought-out and relied on scratch ticket sales to substitute for conductors. The proposal was ridiculed by the public and press alike, and in the subsequent showdown with the tramways union, which saw trams abandoned in the city streets, public sympathy was very much with the union."

- from *Economic and Financial*

*Management of Victoria Under Labor*, by ALP MP Theo Theophanous, February 1994.

## Shop at South Yarra, but not on Saturdays

Most Frankston line trains now stop at South Yarra Station. The PTUA has over the years recommended that the the trains stop at such a busy station for workers and shoppers and the Met has finally acquiesced. But there's one catch: trains don't stop on Saturdays, the busiest shopping day!

## Support for country services

During the holiday period the PTUA was actively supporting country groups in Mildura, Bairnsdale and the Wimmera in their fight to have trains reinstated. Meanwhile, the PTC, in a clear admission of defeat, has launched an advertising campaign to stem the large patronage losses on lines where trains were replaced with buses.

**Wodonga  
Save the Trains  
Group**  
Dedicated to  
supporting  
quality train travel.

**JOIN NOW!**

**Annual Subscription \$2.00**

**Contact : Jean Whiela ,  
Secretary, [redacted]  
Wodonga, 3690.**



# CROSSING THE SUBURBS

The Greening Melbourne solution

The first in a regular series by Paul Mees, discussing the PTUA's policy document.

## The problem.

We've all heard the complaint a thousand times; many of us have experienced the problem ourselves. While public transport serving Melbourne's central city is becoming worse, people trying to travel across the suburbs have virtually no service at all.

Most tram and train lines are radial, and suburban buses are worse than useless, with poor frequencies, slow and indirect routes, and hardly any service in the evening or on weekends. Often, buses don't even go where patrons want (the bus from Ivanhoe to Camberwell stops two kilometres short of Camberwell's railway station and shops).

## False leads

Most long journeys in Melbourne follow radial rail and tram corridors, with only a small share being "cross-country". The cross-country journeys are also very diverse (people from Glen Waverley are as likely to want to travel to Box Hill as to Nunawading or Ringwood). The result is lots of little travel "corridors" with low demand, making it difficult to support a public transport service.

The response of traditional

transport planners is to either give up or propose radio-controlled mini-buses operating like taxis. These "flexible" services will cater for the diffuse suburban travel needs (and fit comfortably with ideological agendas emphasising deregulation and competition).

The problem is that this kind of service is actually inflexible from a passenger point of view. Who wants to phone for a bus which arrives 15, 20 or 30 minutes later and plan one's activities around this delay?

What people want is short, predictable waiting times (you don't have to wait for your car!). Services will often take a passenger miles out of their way to drop off other patrons, and the lack of clear routes makes the network difficult for new patrons to understand. This is why the dial-a-bus experiment has been largely abandoned in Europe and North America, except for special services for elderly or disabled passengers.

## What successful public transport systems do

Visitors to Paris marvel at the efficiency of the Metro, which caters for precisely the sort of multi-directional travel we find so hard to serve in Melbourne. The City of Paris does not have a single central focus; people travel in all directions, by changing trains at *correspondence* stations. Parisians are

happy to do this because the train service is excellent and changing trains is so easy: no extra fare is charged, the walk is short, and waiting times are minimal because trains run every few minutes.

The Paris Metro relies on high population densities, but what is rarely realised is that most successful public transport systems take the same basic approach, even where densities are much lower. The model applies throughout Switzerland (and is being applied in Austria), with interchange made easy by co-ordinated timetables, rather than very frequent services.

Across Switzerland, there are a series of interchange stations, into which trains operate on a *taktfahrplan*, or "pulse-timetable". Trains converge from different directions once an hour and depart a few minutes later, giving time to change vehicles. The system gives patrons the flexibility to travel anywhere in the country: they need only have a map and a timetable for their local train service.

The same principle governs Zurich's suburban train and bus system, with higher frequencies (15 or 30 minutes), and the all-bus system in Edmonton, Canada. Toronto also uses the interchange model, relying on frequent services, rather than pulse-timetables, to ensure easy connections between trains and buses. The rail system is basically radial, and virtually all Toronto's bus routes run directly to rail sta-

# Comparison of outer suburban bus services

## SERVICE STANDARDS

	Toronto – Route 39 Finch east	Melbourne – Route 703 Blackburn Rd*
Route length (km.):	15 km	14 km
Average distance from CBD:	20 km	20 km
Peak service, every..	3 minutes	15 minutes
Daytime off-peak	6 minutes	20 minutes
Early evening	7-8 minutes	60 minutes
Late evening (after 10 pm)	7-8 minutes	no service
Midnight to dawn	15-30 minutes	no service
Saturdays	7 minutes	45 minutes
Sundays	10 minutes	no service
Daily passengers	40,000	2,000

\* Clayton-Blackburn portion only.

tions (the city has a grid network of main roads, like Melbourne), where patrons can change modes with a minimum of fuss.

The bus system serves travellers bound for the inner city and destinations along rail corridors (who change to trains), but also provides a comprehensive grid network for cross-suburban travellers. These bus services are everything their Melbourne counterparts are not: frequent, direct, and comprehensive. The absolute minimum standard for Toronto Transit Commission services – even midnight-to-dawn routes – is a 30-minute service, but most of the time things are better:

The trade-off is that passengers often have to change vehicles to complete their journeys, but, as with the Paris Metro, patrons seem to be willing to accept this inconvenience in return for better train and bus services. Cross-suburban patrons get a much better service by “sharing” routes with patrons heading to rail stations.

Even in Toronto, there are not enough cross-country passengers

to support excellent bus service, but multi-purpose routes produce the concentrated flows of patrons necessary to support a high level of service, and minimise wasteful duplication.

The system is also easy to understand for new patrons. The latest city to apply this lesson is Perth, where the recently-opened Northern Suburbs Rail line is integrated with local buses, giving both rail and bus patrons a first rate service, while producing good financial results.

## The lessons for Melbourne.

It is not practical to build cross-suburban rail lines in Melbourne, because patronage is sparse and multi-directional, but it is possible to provide first rate bus services. This can be done by combining the rail-feeder and cross-suburban role through first-rate interchange facilities and full timetable integration (the best of these routes may ultimately have the potential to be upgraded to light rail).

The opportunities are even greater than in Toronto and Perth, because we have many more rail stations to provide interchange opportunities, and because more stations are located at suburban activity centres (like Footscray, Box Hill and Dandenong), which provide “natural” interchange locations.

According to the Toronto Transit Commission’s chief planner Juri Pill, the TTC’s biggest problem is the small size of the rail system, which means that many patrons have to travel long distances by bus to reach the rail system, and that some bus routes are carrying patronage levels that trains could serve more economically. That’s why Toronto is extending its rail system, though new lines cost \$200 million per kilometre. Melbourne, with five times as much urban rail, should be leading, not lagging behind!

### Next issue:

Is Melbourne’s population density too low for good public transport?

# An engineer's vision for public transport

Engineers need to become more responsive to Melbourne's public transport needs, writes Emmanuel Natalizio, an engineering student at RMIT.

**"You are the new generation of engineers. What are the changes and contributions you want to make to a world that is rapidly changing?"**

I want to use civil engineering to change the social behaviour of Australia. I want to create an Australia that is not a replica of America. Australians have a tremendous community spirit which is reflected in their love of the great outdoors. I want to design a total transport system which satisfies the needs of its people.

Melbourne's public transport

system is unique in the world. The way Melburnians identify with their system is special: W-class trams are part of the city's psyche. My idea is to listen to the community and their needs.

Firstly public transport terminals can become more than a means of getting from one place to another. Train stations, tram terminuses and bus stops can become

community centres and cultural places. They will be buzzing with people and people will feel safe.

Cars will become less socially acceptable; just like smoking has become today. The acceptance of cars as the dominant form of transport highlights the current problem with the engineers: they have addressed only the needs of some.

Transportation gives power to everyone; the freedom to move. The present system segregates the rich and the poor to private and public transport systems. My vision is to unite the people of Melbourne into a system which meets the needs of all people.

As I sit and gather my thoughts on a train journey to RMIT, I see the tremendous community spirit that public transport generates. You notice people from all walks of life. Community life and spirit depend ultimately on public transport.

## The documents they're all quoting!

While Mr. Brown, his bureaucrats and right-wing think-tanks have little sympathy for the PTUA's aims and policies, they are finding us hard to ignore.

The Ministry of Transport's submission to the Industry Commission's Urban Transport inquiry devoted space to attacking "Greening Melbourne With Public Transport" and the Commission's draft report cites "Public Transport's Financial Crisis" in a number of places. The Institute of Public Affairs and Tasman Institute recently released a "reform strategy" which also extensively cites "Financial Crisis".

We may not yet have achieved victory, but at least nobody can afford to ignore us.

### Get your copy.

The PTUA is now offering members a special price reduction:

"Greening Melbourne" for only \$5.00 per copy (normally \$8.95); "Financial Crisis" \$4.00 (was \$5.00); postage \$ 1.00 per order. Just send your name, address and cheque to "Publications offer", PTUA, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, 3000 (please indicate which publication(s) you are ordering). Can you afford not to have a copy of these vital reports?

### Greening Adelaide with public transport

Our sibling organisation in South Australia, People for Public Transport, has teamed up with the local branch of the Australian Conservation Foundation to produce a plan for reviving public transport in Adelaide. As the title suggests, the document was inspired by the PTUA's own "Greening Melbourne" report.

Copies of "Greening Adelaide" can be obtained for \$ 7.95 including postage from ACF, 120 Wakefield Street, Adelaide, 5000 (enquiries: 08 - 232 - 2566).

# Monash University scores improved bus services



Monash University's Clayton Campus, which is renowned for its poor public transport, has gained improved bus services recently.

The Monash Students Association's two casual transport officers have successfully lobbied the university and the PTC since 1991 for improved safety at bus-stops and for more extensive bus services.

## Improvements to safety and facilities include:

- Every bus stop at the bus loop has at least one shelter, two seats, sign, timetable, map and lighting.
- A public transport map and Night-Rider service summary are located at the bus loop.
- A drinking fountain can now be found at the bus-loop
- At the rear of the University there are signs, timetables, lights and shelters.

## Improvements to service availability include:

- New services to Glen Waverley and Mitcham (631), Southland (631), Rowville and Lilydale (634), Glen Waverley and Ringwood (742).
- The old 702 (Chadstone to Box Hill) has been replaced with the 742 which operates from 8am to 6pm and comes right into the University.
- The 693 (Chadstone to Monbulk) has return trips in the evening peak.
- The 733 (Box Hill to Oakleigh) now runs to the University 7 days a week.
- The 630 (to Huntingdale Station) has a more frequent service and now connects with trains throughout the day (except between 11.30am and 1.30pm).
- The 703 now has a proper service on Saturday afternoons, and the

Middle Brighton section runs on Sundays

Previously, there were inadequate or non-existent services to important locations such as Glen Waverley and Jells Park, Malvern-Caulfield-Camberwell-Hawthorn-Kew. Many services did not run at the week-end and others bypassed the university by one kilometre. The busiest service to Huntingdale Station was overcrowded and did not connect with the train.

The Monash transport officers succeeded by concentrating on the achievable and through hard work.

However, the transport officers were unable to persuade the PTC of the need for a service to Kew, despite strong lobbying from staff and students in the area.

1994 will mean more challenges for the transport officers. The University has shown itself willing to support improved public transport, but the PTC has often proved recalcitrant.

## National Public Transport Action Week

A large coalition of environment and social justice groups will focus the community's attention on the need for better public transport during 1 - 7 May.

The aim of the week is to highlight the car's damaging health effects on people and to put pressure on politicians to increase their commitment to public transport.

During National Public Transport Week various activities will be staged around Victoria. Watch for details in the media next month.

## Stalls Workshop



The PTUA is embarking on a campaign to raise our public profile, sell our public transport message and increase our membership. A program of stalls in strategic locations will be able to provide information, sell our publications and membership and provided feedback to the organisation.

People who are interested in helping to run stalls are invited to a stalls workshop. This will help to familiarise people with the display material, PTUA policies

and the general mechanics of holding a stall. Any members who have particular skills in preparing displays and would like to help please call Tim Grant at the office (Fridays) on 650 7898.

**2pm Saturday  
9 April 1994  
at: Ross House,  
Ground Flr,  
247 Flinders lane.**

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**PTUA Members'  
Meeting**

**7.30pm. Wednesday 23 March.**  
Mezzanine level  
Ross House 247 Flinders Lane.

**Video & discussion:**  
**Rail Revival in North America**  
**– the lessons for Melbourne**

**Copy deadline for the  
May Edition of Transit  
News & Views is Monday  
18 April. Contributions  
are most welcome.**

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Neva Finch, Erica Cervini &  
Tony Fuery