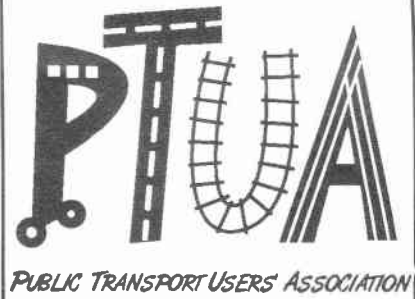


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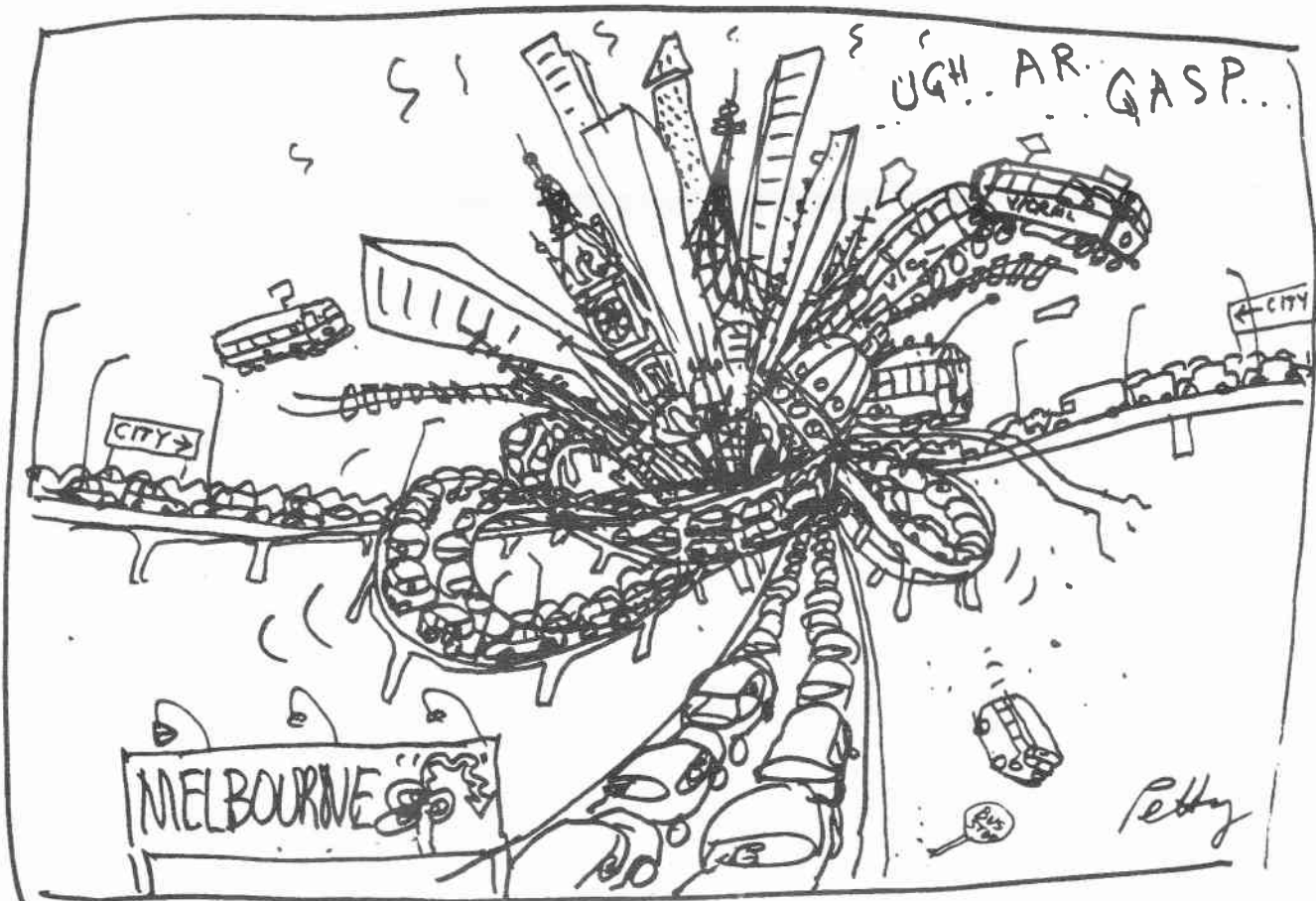
NEWS & VIEWS



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STOP PRESS

The PTC has reintroduced a coordinated train and bus service at Sandringham station. The changes affect bus No.600 which runs between Southland and St. Kilda. PTC chief executive, Ian Dobbs, admits that community pressure caused the PTC to reinstate the service. In the March issue of Transit News and Views it was reported that local PTUA members, including Rod Bryant, were busy organising community support for the coordinated service at Sandringham.

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A Tribute To Our Founder

We regret the passing of Frank Casey who died peacefully at his home on 13 March, aged 78.

Frank while an advertising executive with the Herald & Weekly Times founded our association in 1976. Known then as the Train Travellers Association, the first meeting took place in the Flinders Street Railways Building on the 13 April 1976.

As an indication of the need for the association and the work Frank put into its organisation, the first meeting was so well attended that the crowd spilled out into the corridor outside the meeting room.

A few years ago Frank donated to our office two large scrap books of press cuttings and memorabilia. They reveal the value of his work in articulating the issues and fighting the

campaigns that were as urgent then as they are today.

Frank and Mrs Casey were VIPs at our big *Transport in Crisis* Conference in November 1989. He was so pleased at the high profile the association had achieved, that he made a substantial financial donation to our work.

He featured in the *Herald-Sun* week of articles *Public Transport 2001* which were based on the PTUA document *Public Transport Financial Crisis*.

Only a short while ago Frank rang our office concerned at plans to put a car park on railway land beside the National Tennis Centre arguing that there should be a rail platform.

To his wife and family we offer our sincere condolences.

Patrick O'Connor

Getting in touch

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

Telephone: 650 7898

Membership

Graeme Gibson: 650 7898

Committee

Paul Mees	<i>President</i>
Lorna Pitt	<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 Liaison</i>
Neva Finch	
Alan Hardie	
Josephine Connellan	
Tim Hoffmann	
Christine Hooper	
Gerry Warren	

Committee Meetings

Committee Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month at 6pm at Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne.

PTUA Office

The office is staffed by volunteers. When it is unattended, please leave a message on the answering machine.

Thank you

Once again, thank you to all PTUA volunteers who have given so generously of their time over the past two months. It is much appreciated.

From the President

The farcical mess that accompanied the opening of the City tram loop on 28 April would have come as no surprise to most regular patrons of public transport. It was simply another example of the sort of thing they have to deal with every day of the week.

The politicians present, however, may have a lesson to learn: if the public transport bureaucracy is incapable of organising such a small task successfully, what are the chances of it running Victoria's public transport network efficiently?

Amid all the gloom over the Federal Government teaming up with the Victorian administration to find ways of building new freeways to undermine public transport and wreck the environment, the PTUA continues to fight the good fight.

Media work has continued and the Association

has maintained a high profile over issues such as the contribution public transport can make to fighting smog and the dangers of unstaffed stations. Our information stalls campaign has kicked off, and is helping spread the PTUA's message around the city (see article elsewhere in this issue). We have reopened informal communications with the Ministry of Transport and hope to make at least a small difference to the PTC's services this way.

I am also pleased to report that our membership has reached its highest level since 1981 and that a public transport club is being established at Melbourne University in association with the PTUA (more details next issue). This low-key, non-spectacular work is the key to turning the transport debate around in the long term. Please get involved if you can.

Paul Mees.

News in Brief...

Hot Off the press

The new, fully revised edition of the PTUA's popular policy paper, *Public Transport in Crisis* has now been printed and you can order your copy for only \$ 5, including postage. *Greening Melbourne with Public Transport* is also \$ 5, including postage. Send your name, address and cheque to "PTUA Publications", PTUA, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, 3000.

Transport for livable cities conference

The School of Environmental Planning at Melbourne University is holding a conference on this theme on 15th and 16th June, featuring Vukan Vuchic, from the University of Pennsylvania. Professor Vuchic is the world's foremost authority on public transport and was the key figure behind the building of

Perth's successful Northern Suburbs Transit System. Call 344 6417 for details.

Membership Drive

Can you help in our current recruiting drive? We want to make PTUA membership leaflets available at suburban libraries and other places where people gather, right across Melbourne. If you can help, call the PTUA office (650 7898) and we will send you a batch of leaflets.

ACTION on costs

ACTION, the public bus operator in Canberra, recently reviewed rosters for its Saturday bus services. The corporation found that eliminating "dead running" and wasted time reduced the cost of providing the service by half, with no reduction in service. The PTUA has claimed for many years that

savings of this sort can be achieved in Melbourne, and would allow a massive expansion in service at no additional cost (see *Public Transport in Crisis*). It's nice to be proven right!

Eastern suburban residents rally against freeway

A crowd of 500 filled the Nunawading Arts Centre on 16 March for a meeting called by the Koonung Mullum Forestway Association to protest the State Government's decision to begin work on the Eastern Freeway extension. Speakers included PTUA President Paul Mees. The KMFA's campaign against the freeway has gained added momentum from the threat, posed by the mooted Outer Ring Road, to homes and bushland in Warrandyte and Eltham.

A Question of Density

The second in our series on public transport issues

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

Melbourne has the English-speaking world's largest tram system, and one of the largest urban rail networks in the world (50% larger than the Paris Metro, for example). Why, then, is public transport service so poor and patronage so low?

A frequently heard answer is given by *The Age's* Claude Forell: "True, there has been a revival of public transport [overseas]. The virtually irreversible problem [in Melbourne] is the post-war sprawl of low-density suburban housing...". Melbourne's population density is just too low for successful public transport, we are told.

Fishy figures

Some remarkable figures have been dredged up in support of this contention.

The VicRoads 'Traffic in Melbourne' study claimed that Melbourne's population density was only three-quarters that of Los Angeles. A year later, a Victorian Planning Department publication 'upped the ante', asserting that we had only half the density of LA.

Shortly afterwards, the anti-rail bureaucrats at the Commonwealth Bureau of Transport and Communications Economics 'calculated' that Melbourne's

density is only one-fifth that of Los Angeles!

Two questions arise from all of this. Firstly, which of the figures can be believed? Secondly, why are so many commentators anxious to portray Melbourne as such a low-density city?

The answer to the second question is clear enough. It is in the interests of opponents of public transport to discourage the public from believing that things can improve. Rather than attempt the difficult task of convincing us that better public transport is *undesirable*, they try to prove that it is *impossible*.

This is an old tactic — the Chicago Area Transportation Study 1956, the great-granddaddy of freeway plans, rejected public transport as a solution to Chicago's traffic problems, using low population densities as a rationale.

Making a fair comparison

So how does Melbourne's population density compare with that of other cities?

It all depends how one measures density. Most of the comparisons that make Melbourne look bad have compared Melbourne's *gross* density (counting parkland, factories and farms within the 'urban area') with the *net* density (including houses, local open space and small non-residential areas only) of other cities. When like is compared

with like, Melbourne doesn't look so bad after all —

City	Net density* (per hectare)
Melbourne	27
Perth	17
Toronto	33
Los Angeles	c.20

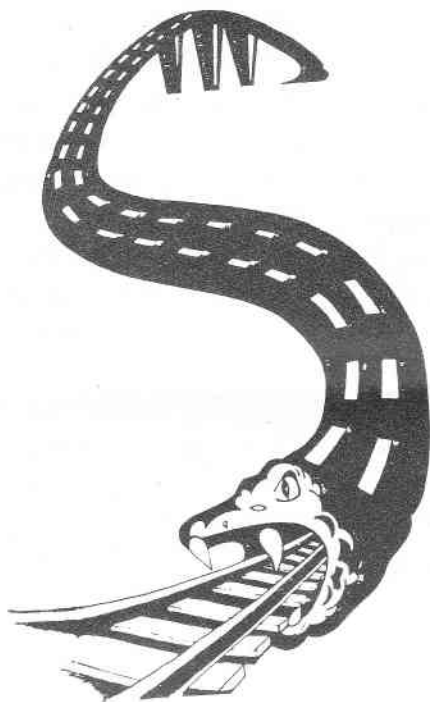
* land-use planners call this 'gross residential density'

Of course, average figures can conceal large differences. For example, while Toronto's overall density is similar to Melbourne's its inner urban density is about double Melbourne's, while the density of Toronto's outermost suburbs is actually slightly lower than equivalent areas in Melbourne. But, oddly enough, it is in the middle and outer suburbs where Toronto's public transport system outperforms Melbourne's by the greatest margins.

Melbourne's 'density gradient'

Melbourne has what demographers call a 'flat density gradient', meaning that, outside the inner suburbs, *net* population densities do not change much as one moves further from the City. Most of Camberwell, for example, has a lower density than Waverley or Nunawading (see the density map in the 1986 Melbourne *Atlas of the Austral-*

Freeways Exhausting Our Cities



The Future of the Western Bypass

Saturday 28 May, 2 – 4 pm.
Brunswick Town Hall
Sydney Road/Dawson Street.

Speakers:

Jo Connellan, Brunswick Council

John McPherson, PTUA

**John Andrews, Former Public Transport
Union Policy Official**

Childcare and refreshments available.

How to get there: Upfield line to Brunswick Station or No. 19 tram (Sydney Rd.) to Town Hall.

Futher information contact: Beth 354 4073 or Gerry 380 6561

ian People, available at the PTUA Office and major libraries). This is not really surprising, when one recalls that most subdivisions in Melbourne since 1880 have been based on blocks of around one-sixth of an acre.

Why does the patronage of public transport fall away so dramatically from inner to outer areas? Density is not the major reason, as can be seen by comparing Balwyn, with 25 persons per 'net' hectare, with Keysborough, which has 37 per hectare. Residents of Balwyn make about 200 public transport trips per year on average; residents of Keysborough only about 40. The difference seems to have more

to do with better service than density: Balwyn is served by the Mont Albert (No. 42) tram, one of the 'best' routes in Melbourne; Keysborough by a series of atrocious bus routes which operate once an hour even in peak period and provide no service at all after 6 pm or on Sundays. Interestingly, the only public transport route in Balwyn to offer a service as miserable as Keysborough receives (the Balwyn Road bus, No. 731), is as poorly patronised as its counterparts in Keysborough.

Conclusion

There is undoubtedly a population density figure below which

it is impossible to provide high quality public transport, but most of Melbourne is well above this figure. While 'urban consolidation' will increase the potential for better public transport, that potential is already present. The problem is that too few decision-makers realise the fact and are prepared to act on it.

More information can be found in *Greening Melbourne With Public Transport* and *Public Transport in Crisis*, available from the PTUA office.

**Next: What is an adequate
service frequency?**

PTUA Member Honoured

Congratulations to Pat Grainger who has been named Port Melbourne "Citizen of the Year" for 1994.

Pat is a long time member who has given her time and skill to the association on many occasions, and among other work, is responsible for the design and layout of our publications *Greening Melbourne with Public Transport* and *Public Transport in Crisis*.

Pat was also a prime mover in the National Trust classification of the W-class trams.

A Recent Letter about N0. 96

Inspired by an optimistic story in "The Age" on reforms to the number 96 trams. I decided to take this tram into the city to do some shopping.

Recently, I've been doing this less because the service is so bad.

I arrived at the stop just before 11 am on a Saturday and missed a tram. The timetable told me that the next tram wasn't due for 15 minutes, so I drove to a local store. Instead of strolling around city stores, I shopped locally. Coming back at 11.17am, I saw the same people still waiting at the stop.

I've also noticed that many

trams do not use destination signs. These have been systematically left to rot and replaced by pieces of cardboard in the windscreen!

So far the Kennett Government has done for public transport what it has done for schools, kindergartens and hospitals: destroy.

If it is serious about tourism and the vitality of the city, it should repair stop numbers, fix signs, and increase frequency during shopping hours.

All this would cost less than a metre of the proposed Domain Tunnel.

Charles Sowerine
Fitzroy.

New Members

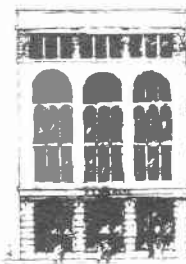
We welcome the following people who have recently joined the PTUA.

Campaign for National Transportation Priorities, USA

Sylvia Smith	Bill Millard	Jacqueline James
Joyce Cowie	Miles Bennett	Task Share & Care
Lola Cowie	Ivan Inderbitzen	Jodie Crowie
Janine Cowie	Val Blyth	Dorothy Cook
Robin Inglis	Christine Gray	Matthew Burke
Jean Couch	Lachlan McDonald	Michael Watkins
Henty Family	Stephan Dixon	Deasey Ayala
Donald Reid	Warik Lawrance	Calvin Hall
H. Corlett	Train Action	Barry Neilson
Lisa Pilbeam	Meredith Jones	Annette Rubin
N Davison	Philippa Ray	Barry Milburn
Jack Roberts	Jenni McMahon	Pat Byrne
John Young	Carolyn Hirsh	C & G Roninson
Ben Stranieri	Rae Balle	Wilma Byrne
Vida Roberts	Irene Miller	Sally Westwood
Chris Goodwin	Catherine Waterhouse	
Ella Massey	South Port Transport	

ROSS HOUSE

Victoria's Resource Centre for Self
Help and Community Groups



**CAN'T AFFORD
TO LIVE IN THE CITY?**

**RENT AN OFFICE
AT ROSS HOUSE INSTEAD!**

Located in the central city close to public transport, Ross House provides a cooperative and supportive office environment in which community groups can share resources and provide services to the Victorian community. Accommodation is also available for for-profit organisations supporting our philosophy of equity and social justice.

**Enquiries: Maria Bennett
247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000
Phone 650 1599 Fax 650 3689**

The Future of Heavy Transport



by Felix Laube

The people of Switzerland have given their Government the green light to ban transalpine trucking.

In a referendum on 20 February, Swiss Cantons, some with a vote as high as 87 per cent, voted to ban trucks from using Swiss roads to travel across the alps from the northern to the southern border of the country. The vote also makes any additional transalpine road capacity across the alps unconstitutional.

Transalpine traffic threatens to make large portions of some Cantons uninhabitable. Exhaust fumes have weakened the forests protecting settlements to the extent that many people are evacuated each winter because of avalanche danger. People's

daily lives are constantly disrupted by truck noise from the freeway that is unable to escape from the narrow valleys.

The Canton of Uri and its Governor danced in the streets when they heard the referendum result.

Six months before the referendum, the Swiss Government promised to build two high-speed transalpine railway lines that would carry trucks on piggy-back-type trains. The rail links, which will cost \$15 billion, will involve building a 30 and a 50 kilometre transalpine tunnel.

The people of Switzerland also voted in the referendum to give the Government the go-ahead to introduce a tax on heavy vehicles. Despite intense lobbying from the road transport industry, the Swiss voted to stop the subsidisation of trucks.

In the past, the Swiss Government has acknowledged that road transport imposes heavy, unrecovered costs onto the community.

Switzerland is following countries like Sweden and New Zealand who already charge heavy vehicles for their external costs.

The Swiss have had enough of large trucks. They strongly believe that rail can do the job better. Meanwhile trucks in Australia are heavily subsidised. They are responsible for most of the road maintenance costs but contribute only a small fraction to the road-related tax revenue.

Is it really necessary to have interstate freight on the roads when there is a rail-link? Perhaps the Swiss model is the future for heavy trucking in all modern economies.

Bouquets

(few though they may be) to the Met. New timetables show Frankston line trains are speeded up by five minutes. We hope other lines will gain faster services in the near future. Unfortunately, passengers now pay for the new timetables to read the good news.



Help Wanted for Stalls



The stalls campaign aims to take our message to the people and to recruit new members. Successful stalls have already been held at St Kilda and Brunswick Festivals and at Melbourne

Central. A small group met on Saturday 9 April and discussed a strategy for the stalls campaign. People are needed to attend stalls, organise display material and to initiate stalls. People wishing to help should contact the office on **650 7898**.

TRANSIT NEWS AND VIEWS

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