



AUSTRALIAN RAILWAY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MELBOURNE BRANCH

Email: <melbournelog@arhsnsw.com.au> Mobile 0412 056 033

## **ARHS Melbourne Luncheon Outing Group, Jacks Magazine Maribyrnong & new Maidstone Tram Depot with lunch at Pancake Parlour Highpoint West Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

- 9:00am Board Werribee train to Footscray
- 9:08am Arrive Footscray walk to Tram Terminus.
- 9:18am Catch Route 82 to Lyric St Tram Stop 55.  
Walk to Jacks Magazine for 10am start of Tour.
- 11:50am Depart Jacks Magazine for 409 Bus Stop Edgewater Boulevard  
& Jacks Way.
- 12:14pm Catch 409 Bus to Highpoint Shopping Centre.
- 1:45pm Depart Pancake Parlour for 215 Bus Stop.
- 1:55 pm Catch 215 Bus to Wattle Rd & Hampstead Rd corner Stop.  
Carefully cross Hampstead Rd and look at new Maidstone  
Tram Depot, including walking down side road behind new  
Ambulance Station to get closer view if possible.  
Walk up Wests Rd to new T Junction and wait at Bus Stop 16  
in Williamsons Rd for a number of buses that travel back to  
Highpoint Shopping Centre, Routes 215, 406 & 408.  
Tour ends here, or you can walk to corner of Aquatic Drive &  
Rosamond Road, to get Tram Replacement Bus back to  
Footscray or to Moonee Ponds (Moonee Ponds not  
recommended due to delays caused by Tramway Bridge  
Works on Raleigh Road).

### **Jacks Magazine**

The impressive, and somewhat concealed, property of Jack's Magazine was opened in 1878 to safely store gunpowder imported into the colony of Victoria.

The site later provided storage for other dangerous materials used in the ammunition factories that linked the building to the area's broader industrial military precinct known as the 'Arsenal of Australia'.

Incorporating a large site on the banks of the Maribyrnong River, the property includes two magazines, a variety of ex-storage and administrative buildings, blast mounds, tunnels, a canal, and an imposing perimeter bluestone wall.

The Victorian Government appointed Working Heritage Incorporated to manage Jack's Magazine in 2015 and since then we have been actively working to revitalise the property and convert it into a vibrant economic and community space that will be consistently accessible to the public.

Jack's Magazine (also known as the Saltwater River Gunpowder Magazine) is located on the Maribyrnong River at Maribyrnong, Victoria.

The complex opened in 1878, to provide safe storage for bonded gunpowder and explosives imported into the colony of Victoria.

The twin bluestone vaulted buildings are concealed behind high earth mound blast walls, and a tall bluestone wall, with a canal connecting it to the river.

It was designed by government architect, William Wardell, Inspector General, Public Works Department and built by contractor George Cornwell.

It is registered by the National Trust, and listed on the Victorian Heritage Register.

The associated Footscray Ammunition Factory was mostly demolished and redeveloped for the Delfin Lend Lease Corporation's Edgewater estate.

Jack's Magazine was proposed to be redeveloped for a commercial use, but following several calls for expressions of interests it was decided that public ownership was the only practical management for the historic site.

Jack's Magazine is now managed by Working Heritage – a committee appointed by the Victorian Government to manage heritage properties on Crown Land.

In an interview on the SBS the local Peter Haffenden asserted that, from Jack's Magazine, "all the bullets, all the .303s bullets used in Gallipoli, in Egypt, in the Somme, in Amiens" were all made by the munition company, whose main factory was based at Jack's Magazine.

## **Maidstone Tram Depot**

Maidstone tram depot is a depot on the Yarra Trams network in Melbourne.

It is under construction on Hampstead Road, Maidstone near the intersection with Williamson Road, on part of the site of the former Student Village (before that the Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel).

The Maidstone depot will be home for the new G-class trams.

The project will involve building a spur pair of tracks on Williamson Road from tram route 82 which will then turn left onto Hampstead Road before they turn right into the new depot.

### **History**

In 2021, the Department of Transport announced that a new depot would be built on part of the former Victoria University site on Hampstead Road, Maidstone as the home depot for the new G-class trams.

Construction of the new depot began in 2023 and will be operational in 2026.

### **Routes**

Trams from the following routes will be stabled and maintained at the Maidstone depot:

57: West Maribyrnong to City (Elizabeth Street)

59: Airport West to City (Elizabeth Street)

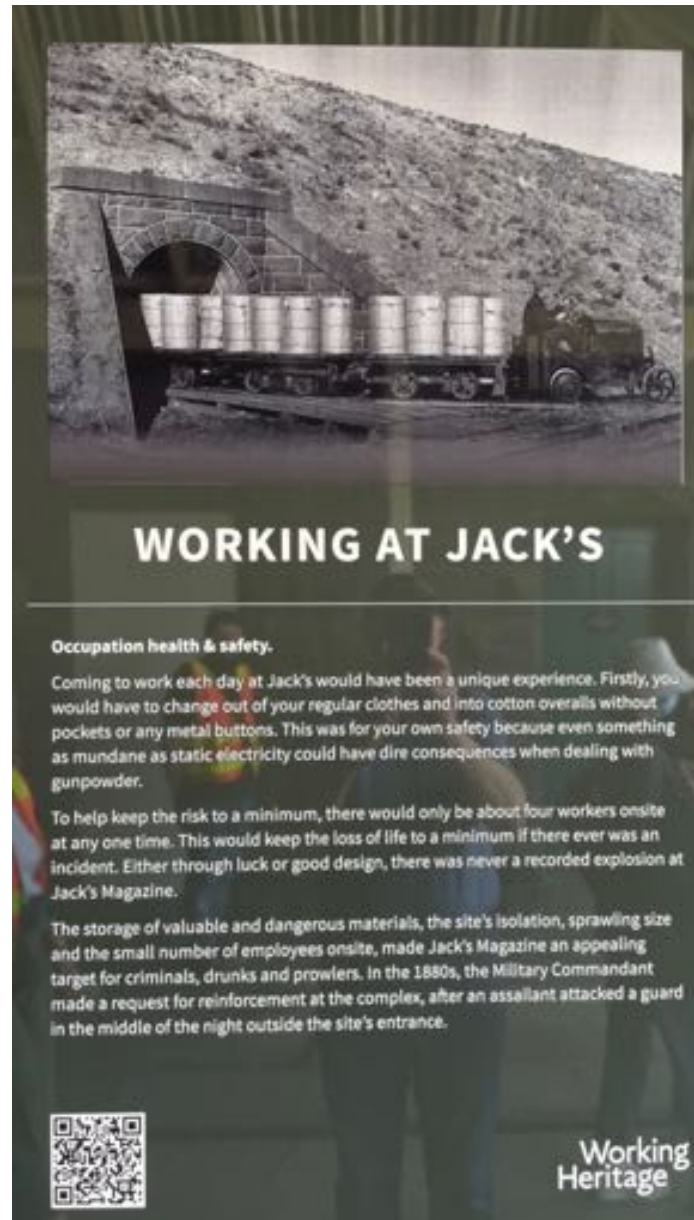
82: Moonee Ponds Junction to Footscray




Trolley in Workroom, adjacent to entrance to Jacks Magazine, now used as a Pottery Studio GWA 20231105



Plaque GWA 20231105



GWA 20231105




## HISTORY RUNS DEEP

The history of Jack's Magazine is only a small blip when you consider the deep Aboriginal history of the area. It is likely that Aboriginal occupation of the Maribyrnong region dates back at least forty thousand years, before the end of the last ice age.

Throughout this time, local Aboriginal groups performed regular cultural burning that enhanced the diversity of species by reducing vegetation density and encouraging new growth. In return, the land and waterway provided an important source of flora and fauna in which they could depend for seasonal food and shelter.

With colonisation came dramatic and often devastating impacts on Australia's First Peoples and landscapes. An example of this can be seen on the ridge at the top of the hill in front of you. This is the only place within Jack's that has not been disturbed. As you look at the hill you are looking at one of the few places in the region that is relatively the same as it was in 1878. This is quite rare along the Maribyrnong River and even in Victoria more broadly. Despite the dramatic impact to the landscape, connection to Victoria's deep history continues with the area's Traditional Owner's, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung.



Working Heritage

GWa 2023I105



## AN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIR

**Gunpowder from across the world!**

Gunpowder played an important role in the colonial expansion of Victoria. It was used for mining gold, propelling bullets and the construction (and deconstruction) of buildings. All this gunpowder needed to be stored somewhere and that's why the Customs Department built Jack's Magazine.

Jack's Magazine had a direct link to the far reaches of the globe as gunpowder was imported from England, Germany and the US. The ships carrying the gunpowder would be berthed in Port Phillip Bay, where the gunpowder would be offloaded onto a smaller ship, transported up the river, and unloaded at the end of the canal onto tramways that dispersed the barrels to the two magazine buildings inside.



Working Heritage

GWa 2023I105



# CLARKAT TUG

GAUGE: 2 FEET 6 INCHES (762MM)

This Clarkat 'B' Aircraft Tug, on railway wheels, was built c.1943 by Clark Tructractor, a division of Clark Equipment Co. USA. It is powered by a four-cylinder Continental petrol engine.

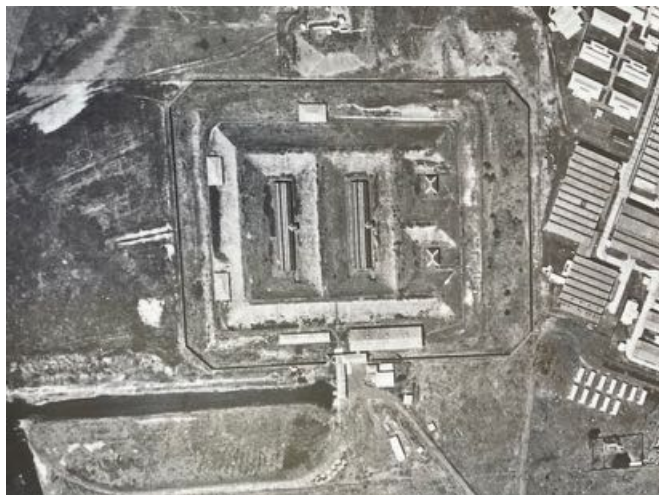
It was used at Jack's Magazine in Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Australia, where it worked hauling explosive materials. After retirement, it went to the Whistle Stop Amusement Park in Frankston.

The Tug was later stored at the Coal Creek Historical Village, Korumburra, where it became known as 'The Coal Creek Tug'. It then passed into private ownership and is on long-term loan to the Museum.



Vic Collections No. 000149

Puffing Billy Railway GWa 20241012



On the left.

Overhead View of Jacks Magazine, Munitions Works on the right of picture before residential development and Canal to the Maribynong River open to the river, at bottom lhs of picture. GWA 2023 | 105



Maidstone Tram Depot form Next generation Tram Project vic.gov.au

**G2 Class - proposed extended five-section tram (option, TBC)**







Maidstone Tram Depot entrance from Hampstead Road GWa 20240919



Tram Unloading Ramp & Entrance Building looking towards Hampstead Road GWa 20240919



Maidstone depot from south looking at Tram Storage Sheds GWa 20240919

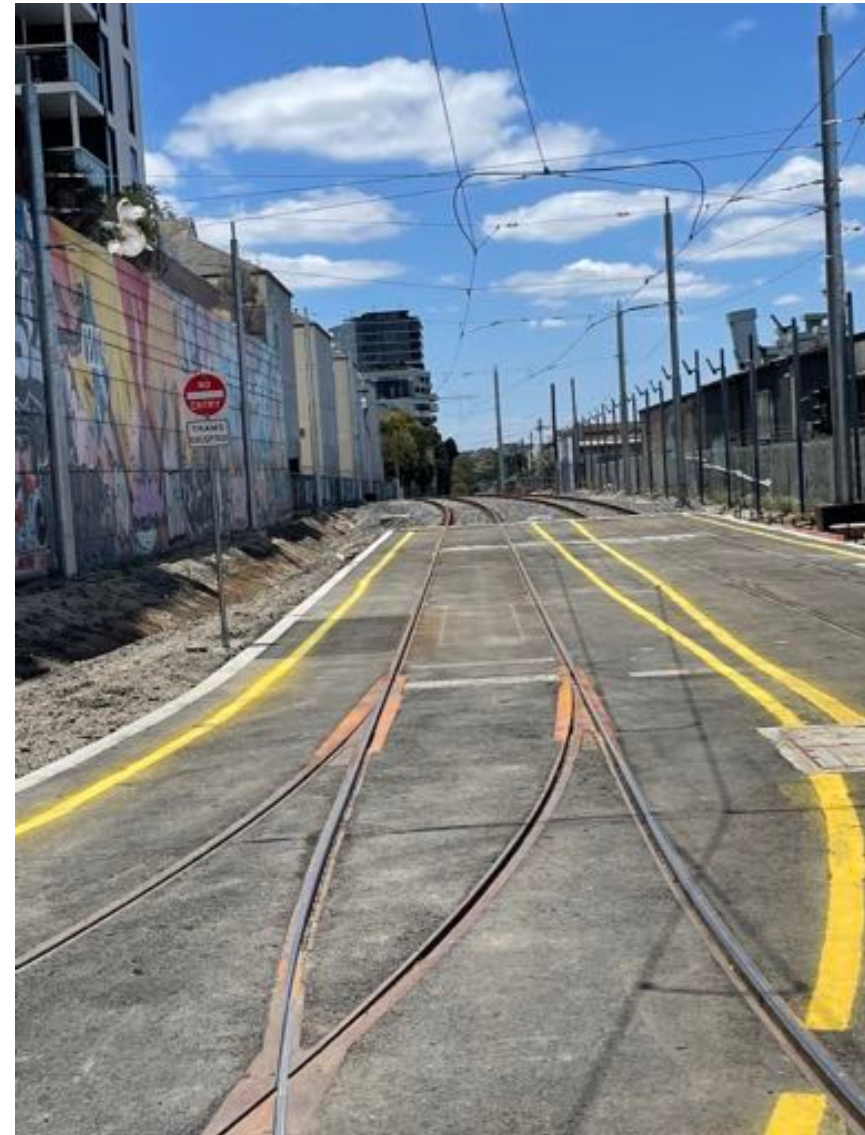


Maidstone depot from Hampstead Road looking to Tram Storage Sheds Gwa 20241004





New track on lhs leading to new Depot GWA 20250130



New track showing slewing of tracks to make it a T Junction, looking towards Wests Road down Tram Reservation, left tracks to new Depot, right tracks to Footscray GWA 20250130

Photos by Geoff Wallace, information from [bigbuild.vic.gov.au](http://bigbuild.vic.gov.au), Working Heritage Incorporated & Wikipedia.

Notes compiled by Geoff Wallace

E&OE