

Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

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News Update January 2018



Trams have always enhanced property value

From the Chairman

Welcome to our first COTMA News Update for 2018.

In this issue you will find a detailed update on this year's COTMA conference to be held in Perth – and now less than eight months away – time to commit to and make plans for attending and enjoying some time and hospitality in the far west! Mal Rowe also updates progress and process on the Newport trams disposal project – those interested in obtaining trams or parts should already be in direct contact with him.

In our previous Update (September 2017) I noted some upcoming anniversaries and these events are reported on with photos later in this Update. The first was the 60th Anniversary of the formation of the AETM, Adelaide, celebrated at St Kilda in October. Then in Auckland in December, MOTAT celebrated 50 years of operating the Western Springs Tramway and in January it was Christchurch's turn with the Ferrymead Tramway 50 – marking 50 years since the Kitson steam tram and trailers began operating at Ferrymead on a short section of track.

This issue also notes the refurbishment at Ferrymead of Sydney R car 1808 and its transfer to the city tramway, somewhat changed in appearance from its previous stint at MOTAT. This is another example of co-operation among COTMA members, this time involving the Sydney Tramway Museum (owner), Ferrymead (refurbisher) and Christchurch Tramway (operator).

It is great to acknowledge some new COTMA affiliates from both sides of the Tasman – welcome aboard! But on a sad note we mark the controversial closure of Australasia's last city trolley bus system in Wellington at the end of October. Advice on the possible availability of parts and equipment was sent out to COTMA members on 24 November and those who have expressed interest should be in direct contact with the Wellington Tramway Museum (Allan Neilson allanecneilson@gmail.com or Henry Brittain henry.brittain@outlook.co.nz

And finally the excitement (and debate) continues in the modern tramway/light rail world with the Gold Coast Light Rail extension complete and open in plenty of time for the coming Commonwealth Games, progress on Newcastle's light rail, and track laying progressing in Sydney, Canberra and Adelaide, and new trams already arrived. With the somewhat unexpected change of government in NZ, the chance of light rail for Auckland now looks promising and interest is also growing for more rail based transport solutions in both Wellington and Christchurch.

Dave Hinman

COTMA Conference 2018 – latest information

The 2018 COTMA Conference to be held in Perth with registration on the evening of Thursday 13 September and concluding on the afternoon of Tuesday 18 September.

The conference venue will be Seasons hotel in Pier St., Perth and a special accommodation rate is available for conference participants: \$120 per night for a studio room or \$165 for a mini apartment. Breakfast is not included in this rate, but a special deal has been arranged for \$15 per person for a full buffet breakfast. The booking links and code will be advised on the booking form.

The Partner program has developed and partners are most welcome to join us and do some non-tramway things while in Perth.

Event details, timings, costings will be available on the booking form planned to be available late March early April. As soon as the booking form and details are available, all members and friends on the COTMA E-mail list will be advised.

The organisers have arranged for the WA State Manager of the National Rail Safety Regulator to speak to update us on Rail Safety. As part of the excursions, a tour of the railcar workshops at Nowergup Depot has been arranged. These workshops were built as part of the extension of the line from Joondalup – Currabine to Clarkson, to bring the railcars closer to their daily start point, and also to relieve the lack of space at Claisebrook railcar depot. Since the workshops opened, the line was extended to Butler, and now plans are underway to extend the line to Yanchep. It is hoped that a set of cars will be raised on the jacks so that an inspection of the underside of the train can be made. The Perth suburban system has grown extensively since the last Perth Conference in 1992

A post Conference Tour will depart Perth Wednesday 19, and return to Perth on Sunday 23 September including a day at Dwellingup for the Hotham Valley Railway Steam-fest on Sunday 23rd. The planning of the tour will allow participants to travel on The Australind train ex Bunbury at 2.45pm on Saturday 22, stay overnight in Perth and then catch the east bound Indian Pacific from Perth on Sunday 23 Sept.

APHTRO – Conference – China – 15 to 19 October 2018

The Asia Pacific Heritage and Tourist Rail Organisation is holding its next conference in Qianwei Sichuan, China, Full details can be found on their website: - <http://www.aphtro.org/news/?cat=4>

Trams at Newport – progress and process

Mal Rowe has joined the “Retired Trams Stakeholder Reference Group” aimed at dealing with the 200+ trams stored at Melbourne’s Newport Workshops, having been invited by the Victorian Minister of Transport. That group has met regularly and will make a recommendation to the Minister in late March, 2018. All details are confidential until that report is made to, and hopefully approved by, the Minister.

However, a Melbourne TV report gives some insight into the process. It is available on-line at: https://www.facebook.com/9NewsMelbourne/videos/1925559667707685/?hc_location=ufi
Another report from Fairfax gives information about the Art Trams in particular: <https://tinyurl.com/y7d9mr9>

Mal Rowe is very pleased with the process to date and believes that heritage requests will be dealt with fairly and sympathetically. Mal is grateful to various COTMA members who have submitted

advice on potential requests for whole trams and various tram components, and others who have assisted with technical and historical advice, especially Kym Smith and Tony Smith.

The next step will be for Mal to circulate to those who have already expressed interest in tram parts a rather large list of the various types of components that are wanted and for groups to 'fill in their shopping list'. If your group has not yet contacted Mal, there is still time. It will also be possible to make a late application once the actual re-purposing process starts. The information Mal is gathering now is for planning purposes.

Note that once the actual process starts, Mal will not be able to provide any advice to groups nor participate in any way in an application. This is due to strict probity guidelines being implemented in the process.

In considering your wish list, one important factor will be timing. Once you request trams or parts, you will need to be prepared to take them away promptly when asked. Actual timing is not clear – largely because the trams need to be removed in order of their location at Newport.

1888 in service at Christchurch

On Tuesday 5 December the latest addition to the city fleet emerged from the Ferrymead tramway paint shop, under power for the first time in Christchurch and resplendent in its new blue, cream and black paint and with a different fleet no. – 1888. Howard Clark from the Sydney Tramway museum was present and enjoyed a couple of trial runs (and a drive!) at Ferrymead prior to its early departure for the city the following morning.



The two photos by Dave Hinman - show Howard together with the HTT and CTL teams who were involved in getting the tram ready and the Dunedin style folding gates.



It was a very early start on Wednesday 6 December for the CTL team and the tram transporter, and by 0615 No. 1888 had arrived in Cathedral Square. By 0630, thanks to the efficiency of the two large fork lifts in attendance it was on the ground and around 7am it was in the town tram shed for finishing touches to be completed by CTL staff over the next fortnight. On 21 December it emerged for test runs around the full tram circuit, checking for clearances and trolley pole performance on the curves. It passed with flying colours, and so driver training began. This was completed on Christmas Eve with revenue service commencing without fuss or ceremony on Christmas day.

1888 is now in regular daily service and is proving a hit with passengers and tram crews alike. One of the changes made from its Sydney configuration that is working well has been the replacement of the solid concertina doors in the centre section with Dunedin style folding gates, on loan from Ferrymead. This gives both a light and airy feel plus much better viewing for passengers.

So why the fleet number change from 1808 to 1888? This was at the request of CTL/Christchurch Attractions management for marketing reasons - eight is a lucky number for the Chinese and the more 8's the better! This is not entirely unauthentic for this tram as there actually was a Sydney R class tram No. 1888. And this commercial decision has already proved itself with the tram in hot demand to lead a Chinese New Year parade coming up in March.

Theft of tram motor parts in Christchurch – security alert

THS have advised that during October there was an early morning break-in to Tram Barn 1 (during which the alarm system was activated) as well as some apparent audacious daylight thefts or attempts when HTT staff and members were present. In particular, they lost some motor parts (motor end caps and suspension bearing caps) from one of the GE 247A motors being overhauled as part of the P class truck fabrication work being undertaken by HTT for the Sydney Tramway Museum, and also a suspension bearing cap and part of a slack adjuster from a tram motor off one of their Brisbane drop centre trucks. The police have so far not managed to find the culprits, and a big thanks to MOTAT for supplying a surplus GE247A motor case. Brisbane are also helping but so far no luck finding a suspension bearing cap to fit a GE 275B motor case. While the scrap value of the items stolen is not great, having to make new patterns and cast new parts would be a very expensive exercise. Discussions continue with the Society's insurers, and in the meantime audible sensors have been fitted at the entrance doors, which are also being kept locked when there is no one working in the immediate vicinity.

MMTB No. 9 Truck Patterns

The patterns for the MMTB No. 9 trucks were transferred to COTMA when they were disposed of during the early 1980's by the MMTB. They are currently stored in the COTMA Shed at Bungaree. Recently when THS were seeking some motor nose mounting castings for some of their truck manufacturing work, amazingly the appropriate pattern was relatively quickly spotted and able to be shipped to Christchurch.

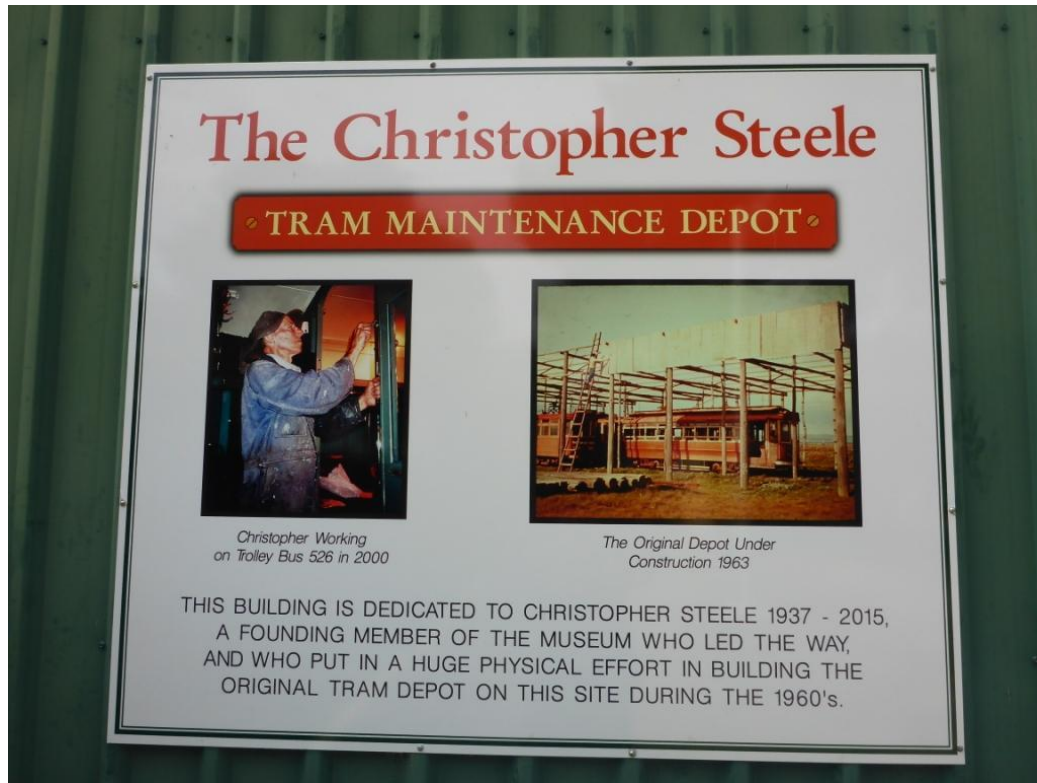


AETM turns 60

The Tramway Museum, St Kilda Adelaide operated by the Australian Electric Transport Museum celebrated its 60th anniversary over the Labour Day long weekend of 1 – 2 Oct. 2017. The two most important events were:

- Official naming of the Christopher Steele Tram Maintenance depot in memory of Christopher being a founding member of the Museum. He put in a huge effort in building the original depot, oversaw the construction of the tram line to St Kilda in 1973, and was the Museum's archivist and a transport book author. He attended many COTMA Conferences, but sadly passed away in 2015.

- The re-launch of H1 tram No. 381. Originally built in 1952, it only saw service of 5 years before it was withdrawn as the Adelaide tram system was closed down in stages during that period. Recent re-profiling of the wheels allowed the tram to be re-commissioned again after an absence of 15 years.



Above: - the dedication sign on the workshop – photo by Colin Seymour.

Below – Car 381 leaving the Museum 1-10-17 – photo – Andrew Gilbertson



COTMA congratulates the AETM on reaching its 60th anniversary and may there be many more. In 2018, the AETM will celebrate 60 years at the St Kilda site.

50 years of trams operating at MOTAT and Ferrymead

Dave Hinman reports on both these events. The MOTAT event was of special significance as he and Dot had met there in 1970 and the following year they celebrated their wedding there with many of the then MOTAT tram team in attendance. They were delighted to be able to be present to join in the 50th anniversary celebrations.

The first short section of the internal line of the Western Springs Tramway was officially opened with due ceremony of Saturday December 16, 1967.

Exactly 50 years later, on Saturday 16 December 2017, current and surviving past members gathered in the same location to celebrate half a century of museum operations. The key speaker and ribbon cutter was Ian Mison, one of the 1967 MOTAT originals. After photos were taken, a parade followed, starting on the original line and led by Auckland streamliner 248 (representing the original parade leader, “Queen Mary” 253, currently in offsite storage, and Wellington Fiducia 257, the only other passenger tram that had been in service 50 years ago.

Out on the tramway, all of the current (NZ) operating fleet, which included ex Sydney/ex Wanganui Baldwin Steam tram no. 100, were pressed into public service, and sometimes as training trams for those guests keen to have a turn at motorman duties.

Right: Ian Mison cuts the ribbon held by Alan Curtis and Collin Zeff. Photo Albert Chan.



Below: WST Anniversary Parade – Photo Albert Chan.



A great day, which concluded with about 20 of us, many being out of towners, gathering at the home of Leyton and Vincent Chan in Epsom (the “Chan barn”) for some excellent food, refreshment, chatter and some tram related picture shows. Then on Sunday a chance for more tram riding, both at MOTAT and also at the currently truncated Dockline tram on restored and red painted Melbourne SW6 881. Then in the evening over 80 of us assembled at Stardome in One Tree Hill domain to enjoy a dinner, great conversations, some star gazing, and a brilliant keynote address by MOTAT founder member and tram historian Graham Stewart, describing the early days and the great volunteer effort that went into building the Western Springs Tramway. More details and photos of this great weekend can be found in the December 2017 issue of the WST Newsletter, the Controller, No. 59.



John Wolf and Graham Stewart share stories and a drink – Photo Vincent Chan

Meanwhile in Christchurch preparations were being finalised for the Ferrymead Tramway 50th, and on Saturday 6 January 2018, 50 years to the day since Kitson 7, “Ballantynes” double decker 10 and “Duckhouse” trailer 115 began carrying passengers, the same three trams were lined up inside Tram Barn No. 1 for the re-enactment ceremony outside. There were speeches by THS founder John Shanks, Max Taylor, former CTB engineer and later successor to General Manager John Fardell who had officiated at the original opening. Don Spicer, who had restored and driven and maintained the steam tram in its early years was also present, and again “driving” the steam tram, but unfortunately last year the boiler had failed its ten year survey and was no longer usable. No one minded however that at the rear of the tram set was Dunedin electric tram no. 22, quietly assisting the re-enactment by acting as the pusher (and puller)! A couple of trips to and from the original terminus, including stops for photos and then it was afternoon tea in the tram barn, as per 50 years earlier and with the rest of the afternoon available for tram and trolley bus riding, with our oldest (restored) Christchurch electric trams, Nos. 1 and 26, doing the honours. Some of our former motormen were seen having another turn at the handles.



Max Taylor cutting the ribbon - Photo Dave Hinman

A great social evening, including spit roast dinner followed and like Auckland there was lots of chat, some great reminiscing, led by early members John Shanks, Don Spicer, and Michael Kerr, and some slides and movies featuring the early days of the Ferrymead tramway.



The original 1968 tram set re-enactment. Not in the photo is Dunedin 22 pushing! Even the cloud lined up to give smoke coming from No. 7' Photo Alastair Cross.

Sunday began with a visit to the city tramway and a ride around the full circuit in ChCh Boon 152, originally restored by THS volunteers in the late 1970s, and then back to Ferrymead for “steam Sunday” which turned out to be very busy with more than 1200 people through the gates. No 1 with DD trailer 74 and DD tram 26 were busy all day. Again an enjoyable event with many asking about when the next anniversary/reunion might be - 9 May 2020 is a definite possibility – that will be 50 years since the Ferrymead electric tramway was officially opened!



THS Members and Friends line up in front of Boon 152 while touring the Christchurch City Tramway – 7 Jan. 2018. Photo Dave Hinman.

New COTMA affiliates

COTMA welcomes the following new members:

- Melbourne Tram Museum – Hawthorn Tram Depot
- Auckland Electric Tramways Trust – Auckland.

Membership Renewals

The Treasurer will be shortly sending out membership renewals. Your early renewal will be appreciated.

Australian Charity Financial Accounting Proposals

Most Australian COTMA Members are recognised charities and subject to financial reporting systems that vary in each state and the one required by the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC). Two recent reports into financial reporting by charities may be of interest to those who are accountants or managing Museum finances. These are:

Australian Accounting Standards Board – Research Report No. 5 – Financial Reporting Requirements Applicable to Charities – Oct. 2017 -

http://www.aasb.gov.au/admin/file/content102/c3/AASB_RR_05_10-17.pdf

and

Withdrawal of prototype articulated trams

The two Melbourne B1 class were prototypes for the fleet of articulated light rail vehicles in Melbourne. They were officially withdrawn at the end of the previous Yarra Trams franchise at the end of October, but 2001 had a last day out for a tour on November 2nd. The pic shows 2001 at the Acland St terminus in St Kilda.



There are no clear plans for preservation of one of these trams, but Mal Rowe has suggested to VicTrack that 2001 should be set aside for preservation.

Seeking Photos of Lima Peru

COTMA recent had a query from Alessandro Albe of Italy who is preparing a book on Italian tramcars built for export. A fleet of tramcars were built for Lima by the Italian firm Breda. His is looking for photographs of these tramcars operating in the city, but appear to be relatively few. The system closed in 1965 and he is hoping that some Australian enthusiast visited the city. If anyone can help, please let us know and we will pass the details on.

Alessandro also advised that a book on Ansaldo Trolley Buses which includes a chapter on Wellington is about to be published.

