

Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

www.cotma.org.au

News Update April 2018



Perth 63 in 1952 – Courtesy of Noel Reed

From the Chairman

Welcome to the second COTMA News Update for 2018.

By way of introduction, from my home perspective it has been great to see a number of overseas visitors in Christchurch over recent weeks. So far this year we have welcomed Peter Hyde (passing through on a one week South Island motor cycle trip), Lindsay Richardson (spending a part day in the city while on a cruise from Fremantle) Colin Seymour on his first ever NZ visit, Howard Clark in town for a catch up with CTL and HTT/THS *and* to experience R class '1888' hard at work carrying full loads around the city, and from the UK David Hanchett, from the Sandtoft Trolley bus museum.

In this issue we have more information about the upcoming Perth COTMA Conference. Together with Mal Rowe and Peter Hyde I had a few days in Perth last month ahead of our Melbourne Executive meeting and caught up with Bob Pearce and his conference team. Plans are well advanced for September and the selected conference venues both in town and at Whiteman Park look to be good choices. So with dates firmed up, the accommodation offer in place, and the programme details emerging it's time to start sorting transport options – watch out for airline specials etc. and make your bookings. In just over 5 months the conference will be under way. I am quite excited about the post conference tour as well - we are looking forward to seeing and experiencing some great places for the first time. See below for further details and also shortly to be on the COTMA web site: <https://www.cotma.org.au/conference.html>

There's a report from the Wellington Tramway museum about the surplus overhead components from the Wellington Trolley Bus System that they have purchased, for on sale to tram and trolley bus interests, mostly brand new/never used. This together with an update from Mal Rowe on the Newport Trams "Repurposing" Project contains important messages for groups needing parts and equipment for their heritage operations.

The COTMA Executive met in Melbourne in early March and key discussion points and decisions are summarised below, including welcoming three new affiliate Members to COTMA.

Also included is a warning about the life expectancy of video and audio tapes with a practical solution demonstrated, an update on the (Australian) definition of "level crossing" as it relates to tram/light rail operations and finally a brief commentary on tramway / light rail progress on both sides of the Tasman.

Dave Hinman

COTMA Conference 2018 – booking 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 for two dinners and the Motor Museum at Whiteman Park for daytime sessions. Bus transfers between the hotel and Whiteman Park will be provided. A special accommodation rate at Seasons Hotel is available for conference participants: \$120 per night for a studio room or \$145 for a mini apartment. Use the booking code TRAM to get the special rate.

A partners tour has been planned and full details on the booking forms.

Sessions discussed as possibilities include:

- VicTrack on retired trams strategy and future parts management
- Taiwan visitor on Asian tram museums / Taiwan
- Parts Management session including workshops at tables
- A Perth / WA tram history overview

Follow these links for:

[Conference Program](http://cotma.org.au/documents/Perth_2018/COTMA_2018_program.pdf) - http://cotma.org.au/documents/Perth_2018/COTMA_2018_program.pdf

[Partners Tour Program](http://cotma.org.au/documents/Perth_2018/COTMA_2018_partners_program.pdf) - http://cotma.org.au/documents/Perth_2018/COTMA_2018_partners_program.pdf

Booking Forms –

[Word Version](http://cotma.org.au/documents/Perth_2018/COTMA_2018_booking_form.docx) – for emailing to the organisers. Please put your name into the document file name to assist identification - http://cotma.org.au/documents/Perth_2018/COTMA_2018_booking_form.docx

[PDF version](http://cotma.org.au/documents/Perth_2018/COTMA_2018_booking_form.pdf) – to be hand written and return by either scanning and email or by post. - http://cotma.org.au/documents/Perth_2018/COTMA_2018_booking_form.pdf

The Post Conference Tour Program is not quite ready at the time of publication of the News Update, but will be added as soon as possible. It will be placed on the COTMA Website as soon as it is available.



Perth 66 enjoys the sunshine
– Photo Michael Stukely.

Post Conference Tour

A post Conference Tour will depart Perth Wednesday 19, and return to Perth on Sunday 23 September including two nights at Albany, various rail history visits and finally a day at Dwellingup for the Hotham Valley Railway Steam Ranger on Sunday 23rd. The schedule also allows for those wishing to travel back from Perth on the Indian Pacific train (Sunday morning departure) to catch a train back to Perth on the Saturday afternoon.

COTMA Awards

It's time to start to think about what your tramway will be submitting for your COTMA Achievement Award nomination. The closing date is 3 July 2018. See <http://cotma.org.au/awards.html> for details of the award and judging criteria.

Remember also that each museum has the opportunity to recognise up to two volunteers for significant contributions. The process and contact details are on the same web page.

Conference Museum Updates – theme – “Challenges encountered and how they were overcome”

This is the session where each member can update other members on their activities and plans for the future that they have done since the last conference. It would be great if you could present your report following the theme of “Challenges encountered and how they were overcome”.

Updates are to be no-longer than 10 mins in duration and can take the format of either a DVD or a PowerPoint presentation. If you are doing a DVD, can you please make it available for uploading on YouTube as they can be quite large in size and also get the OK of the production crew to use on YouTube. The Museum presentations are made available through our website.

COTMA rules

As we have applied the new rules agreed at the last CGM, we have become aware of some ‘tweaks’ needed to clarify some definitions. There will be a new version of the rules circulated soon with these minor amendments and we expect to consider and vote on them at the Perth Conference CGM.

Surplus Overhead Components Ex Wellington Trolley Bus System

Following the decision to cease trolley operations in Wellington City, the Wellington Tramway Museum (WTM) has purchased all the inventory of overhead parts suitable for both trolley bus and tram operations from the Wellington Cable Car Company Ltd. (WCCL). This decision was made as WCCL had indicated that they were not interested in dealing with individual organisations and WTM therefore agreed to purchase on behalf of Heritage groups with the intention of on-selling most of it. It should be noted that no contact wire was included in the purchase.

Many parts are new while some have been recovered from earlier use. In some instances, the recovered items have been refurbished. All were stock items held in the WCCL overhead store but does not include any recovered items from street removals currently under way which is under separate contract arrangements. All recovered items in the latter category are being sent for scrap so the stock items WTM has purchased are likely to be the only ones available. Manufactured items include K & M, Phoenix and Ohio Brass components.

The Tramway Museum also has surplus overhead equipment which is also being made available for sale including old OB and BICC components (some in unused condition)

WTM are currently transferring items purchased from WCCL to their premises and are compiling an inventory of those that should be available for purchase. It is hoped that this inventory will be available in April or early May. It will then be circulated amongst all interested Heritage organisations.

It is intended that expressions of interest will be called once we have completed transferring the items back to WTM and compiled the inventory lists which will also include a discounted list of prices. All transport arrangements and costs for any purchased components will be the responsibility of the purchaser.

Any enquiries should be addressed to Henry Brittain at henry.brittain@outlook.co.nz and Allan Neilson at allanecneilson@gmail.com

Trams at Newport – progress and process

The consultation process regarding the future of the 200+ Melbourne trams (plus one Sydney tram!) stored at Newport has completed and a proposal for a structured ‘re-purposing’ process has gone to the Victorian Minister of Transport. Some members of the COTMA executive committee met with Colin Campbell, the VicTrack Senior Project Manager responsible for the project on March 7th for a confidential briefing. Colin thanked COTMA for our support of the work of the group and the exec indicated that the process as planned is something we see as appropriate and which will enable heritage groups to continue the work. Details will be available once the minister has approved the process and announced it.

Do you ‘have a point there?’

Sydney Tram Museum is making changes to their track layout and need a left-hand point set. Does your museum have a spare set that you could offer to Sydney?

VHS and Audio Archives recording Tape conversion

Do you have a collection of archive or personal, non-commercial VHS tapes? Their life span is nearing its end both in terms of the magnetic medium and the means to play them. The same applies to audio tapes. Part of the problem is also the equipment to use it on is breaking down or getting worn out. See <https://www.nfsa.gov.au/corporate-information/publications/deadline-2025>

Mal Rowe recently ‘fired up’ his old reel-to-reel tape recorder to digitise a recording of a speech by MMTB Chairman Bob Risson, given at a dinner to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the MMTB in 1969. You can copy it, or hear it here:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/td23jd6pglek1xz/Risson_speech.wma?dl=0

Community Relations

Recently a tourist railway commenced a new evening service and as a result have received a number of complaints about noise. They are working closely with local council to address the issues. Good relationships with Council, residents and other stakeholders is important, especially when introducing or changing operations.

Executive Meeting

A meeting of the Executive was held in Melbourne on Tuesday 6th March 2018 following some members of the Executive travelling to Perth to discuss conference arrangements with the hosts, the Perth Electric Tramway Society.

Outcomes of interest were:

- A discussion with Steve Strangward, Chairman of the Association of Tourist Railways of Victoria and board member of the Association of Tourist and Heritage Rail Australia (ATHRA) about COTMA and ATHRA working together and a possible Memorandum of Understanding.
- Changes to the National Medical Standards to require sleep apnoea testing is under consideration by the NTC. This would add significantly to expense for members if found necessary. Peter Hyde has made a submission questioning the need. Details can be found on the National Transport Commission website. We understand that the move is not viewed positively by most operators.
- The date of a formal COTMA Annual General Meeting to approve the accounts and submission to the Victorian Associations Incorporation Office is likely to be held in Melbourne during late July or early August.
- Discussion took place on the actions of the Wellington Tramway Museum (WTM) of obtaining and making available to other COTMA Museums. The WTM is to be congratulated on their proactive involvement.
- PC5 components - COTMA has a stock of PC5 components in Adelaide. This is a valuable, but limited resource. Over the last few years there has been some discussion at the Exec Committee level and with individual museums about how to allocate these. This topic will be workshopped in the 'Parts Management' session at the COTMA Conference in Perth.

New COTMA affiliates

Three new COTMA affiliates were welcomed at the recent Exec Committee meeting.

Auckland Electric Tramways Trust is closely associated with existing member but is (for now) a separate entity.

T – Mate transport museum is a small group who have a couple of Brisbane trams and some Melbourne Z1s. They are low key, but want to be in contact with other groups.

Walhalla Goldfields Railway is about to become an accidental tram operator – having purchased two X1 trams from Melbourne with plans to convert them to bogie railcars on 760mm gauge using ex Z class tram trucks! The trams will be fitted with former H class tip-over seats from COTMA. With all this tram material they saw it as valuable to be part of COTMA.

Tramway Level Crossings in Australian Rail Safety Law

In the December 2015 issue of the News Update, we reported on the issue of level crossings, tramways and the problems of definitions in the Australian Rail Safety Law and an Office of the

National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR) proposed policy that would resist any new level crossings on Australian railways (and by definition – tramways).

This problem is now being reviewed. Tramway operators are seeking to exclude light rail and trams from the definition of a level crossing unless it has a level crossing sign as such. This would also be applicable to pedestrian crossings where they are independent of a road. New Zealand has appropriately excluded tramways or light rail in its legislation as does Victoria. COTMA will be supporting the recommendation made by the Rail Safety Director of the Gold Coast Light Rail.



Melbourne does have at least one signed tramway level crossing – at a small road crossing in Victoria Parade, opposite St Vincents Hospital – Photo Mal Rowe 15-3-2016.

Auckland Dockline – keep the trams running Petition

There is currently frustration building in Auckland about the extraordinarily long time it is taking Auckland Transport to complete the road redevelopment at the southern end of Wynyard Quarter. This has dragged on for 3+ years now, preventing the Dockline Tram from fulfilling its purpose as a "people-mover" circulating people around the Quarter, and confining the tram to just half of its 1.5km loop. At this stage it will still be the end of 2019 before the full circuit can be restored and there are concerns that some vested interests will attempt to delay it further or try to force full closure. There is a great opportunity for the tramway to have a significant role when the America's cup village comes to this part of the Auckland waterfront for the next regatta in 2021.

A private individual has now organised an on-line petition in support of the tramway and signatures are now being urgently sought for it. Locals in support agree that it is a matter of interest and concern to a much wider community than just Auckland.

Please see the link below, and after reading its text, if you feel able, please add your name electronically to this petition, as soon as possible. If you know of friends who might be happy to support this, please forward the link to them.

<https://www.change.org/p/auckland-transport-keep-the-auckland-dockline-tram-running>

LIGHT RAIL

Finally on the modern light rail scene, Australia gets a “Special Focus” in the April 2018 edition of Tramways & Urban Transit, commencing with the front cover headline and photo, followed by articles on each of the new or extended tram/light rail systems



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It looks like 2019 will be a good time for another visit to the eastern states - new systems and/or extensions should be running in the Gold Coast, Newcastle, Sydney and Canberra. Meanwhile, in Adelaide, recent election results may have some negative impact on further light rail expansion for the time being, but across the Tasman there are encouraging signs with the new Government starting to implement its pro-public transport policies. Light rail is on their agenda for both Auckland and Wellington, though funding public transport and road safety improvements through petrol taxes has created a media led political storm, particularly in Auckland. The possibility of “commuter” rail for Christchurch is also in the mix, but at this stage any light rail/tramway discussion appears to be locally focussed on further progressing the partially completed city heritage tramway extension.

Next Update June



Sign on Kalgoorlie Electric Tramways Tram No. 25 – in the days before pictograms.

Photo Mal Rowe March 2018