



Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

www.cotma.net.au

News Update April 2014

Sorry its been quite a while since the last issue. We have been waiting for more information about the Sydney Conference, and that has now arrived (see details below).

Here is the news!

From the Deputy Chairman (Dave Hinman)

First up for those who haven't heard, we advise with regret that on 5 March we received a brief email from Ian Seymour advising of his resignation from the Chairmanship of COTMA, as well as from his home museum, AETM. This came as a shock to us all, as just three weeks earlier he had chaired the COTMA Executive team meeting in Sydney on 15 February. Ian has given long and faithful service to the Australasian tram movement and will leave a big gap in our ranks. He worked long and hard for AETM and COTMA, as well as other related organisations, one example being the many hours of organising he put into the 2012 COTMA Conference in Adelaide. Perhaps it is not too much hope that after some time out we may yet see him again somewhere on the tramway scene?

Our thanks to Immediate Past Chairman Warren Doubleday who continues to publish this news update for us - even from long distance (he is currently in Europe visiting the coastal tramway in Oostende!), though he is having a technical issue with the website. Can you please use our alternative website cotma.net.au rather than cotma.org.au for the time being.

In this Update, and soon also to be found on the COTMA website at <http://www.cotma.net.au/conference.html> are the details of our 2014 Conference to be held in Sydney, together with pre and post conference tours. Please promote this around your museum - it is important that we get a good attendance from the tram fraternity of Australia and New Zealand at a time when there are issues and challenges facing all of us and there are also positive signs (at least in Australia) that the world resurgence of tramways (light rail) is also happening "Down Under". At our February COTMA Executive meeting we met with Sydney reps. and also Richard Gilbert who is organising the post conference tour and helping Peter Hyde with the pre-conference visit to Brisbane and the Gold Coast, and we are confident that once again we will experience a well-organised, interesting, relevant and enjoyable time next October.

2014 Conference – Sydney October 2014

The next Conference of the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia (COTMA) will be held in Sydney between Thursday, 9 October - Tuesday, 14 October. The Conference is being jointly hosted by the Sydney Tramway Museum and the Valley Heights Steam Tramway.

An exciting program of activities has been developed and will be launched over the coming autumn.

Program outline:

- Thu. 9 October— Evening Registration and Welcome Function at the Rendezvous Hotel.
- Fri. 10 October— Conference activities and papers
- Sat. 11 October— Full day at the Sydney Tramway Museum, Loftus.
- Sun. 12 October— Valley Heights Steam Tramway and the glorious Blue Mountains.
- Monday 13 October— Sydney Light Railway, Conference papers and Sydney Harbour Cruise using a heritage ferry.
- Tuesday 14 October— COTMA AGM.

Further conference details and booking forms including the partners program will be available on the COTMA website under the conference tab as soon as they become available from the Sydney Tramway Museum.

Contact and Enquiries: David Critchley— eclass436@gmail.com

Pre and Post Conference Tours

Richard Gilbert our well known and experienced tour organiser is planning for:

A Pre-Conference tour that will commence in Brisbane on the afternoon of Monday 6th October with a visit to the Ferny Grove Museum. On Tuesday, a visit to the Ipswich Railway Workshop Museum is planned, then to the Gold Coast in the evening. Wednesday will be all day in the Gold Coast, visiting the new tramway. On Thursday 9th October, fly from Coolangatta airport to Sydney at convenient times (flight not included in the tour).

The Post Conference Tour is planned to commence on Wednesday 15th taking in Canberra, Cooma, Junee Roundhouse and Wagga Wagga. Travel by 3801 Limited's heritage diesel train from Sydney to Moss Vale, Explorer train to Canberra. A Road Coach will be used between Canberra and Wagga. The tour arrives in Wagga on Sunday 19th and departs for Melbourne/Sydney by XPT train on the Monday, arriving in Melbourne/Sydney on the Monday evening(20th).

Further details and booking forms will be available on the web site as soon as they are available from the Conference Organisers.

Non web users

If you are not connected to the web, please send us a note with your contact details to our mailbox – PO Box 61, CARLTON SOUTH VIC 3053.

From the Executive Officers (*Rod Atkins, Mal Rowe*)

At the 15 Feb. 2014 Meeting of the Executive, the following matters were discussed.

- H class parts stored by the AETM
- PC5 Equipment distribution

- Membership of the Auckland Electric Tramway Co. – subject to further information
- Membership of the Whangarei Steam and Model Club – who have acquired the former Lisbon trams Heritage Trams Henderson
- Disposal of ARHS Vic Div. ex VR trams 35 and 49 – no interest from Members
- Changes in the Regulatory Environment within Australia – Qld, Vic and WA still to enact Single rail safety legislation. In Vic, trams will remain under the state regulator.
- Revision of COTMA Rules to bring them into line with new Victorian Legislation.
- Achievement awards – volunteer awards – more detail in the next Newsletter.
- Renaming the EAR Award to the Bill Kingsley Award, having both a physical trophy and an amount of cash.
- Future Conferences.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TRANSPORT MUSEUMS CONFERENCE – JUNE 2014 - SWEDEN

COTMA has been advised of details of the 2014 Conference of the International Association of Transport Museums, of which COTMA has been a member for some years. The Conference is being held in Sweden, in Stockholm and Gävle, from Sunday 15 June 2014 to Wednesday 18 June 2014. Visits and sessions will be held **SUNDAY** in the Royal Armoury (royal coaches); **MONDAY** at the Postmuseum; Stockholm Transport Museum (transfer by vintage bus) with dinner on a steam ship touring the Stockholm Archipelago; **TUESDAY** at the Stockholm Museum of Science and Technology; followed by vintage bus transfer to Stockholm Central Station for vintage train to Gävle (lunch in dining car); Gävle City Hall Auditorium; rail bus transfer to Swedish Railway Museum, Swedish Midsummer dinner in the Museum Park; **WEDNESDAY** Steam Train to Swedish Railway Museum Store, with final transfer to Gävle Central Station for train back to Arlanda Airport (takes one hour). Full details are available at <http://www.iatm.museum/conferences/> . The registration cost for the conference itself is €195.

FEDERATION OF RAIL ORGANISATIONS OF NZ (FRONZ) ANNUAL CONFERENCE - WANGANUI FRIDAY 30 MAY TO MONDAY 02 JUNE

Coach departs from Wellington Airport at 10:00 am on Friday, via Mainline Steam, Plimmerton, Steam Inc. Paekakariki, and lunch at Wellington Tramway Museum, McKays Crossing. Host Museum is SteamRail Wanganui and features of the conference will include a cruise on the paddle steamer Waimarie and “also a look at some planned exciting progress with the new Wanganui Tramway”. Full details are available at <https://www.fronz.org.nz/conference.php> Attendance cost for full conference (including bus from Wellington but excluding accommodation) is \$NZ180.

Some Recent Tramway Milestones

- 19 November 2013 - Official Partial re-opening of Christchurch Tramway, post earthquake
- February 2014 Sydney - 3 consortia shortlisted to build and operate the [CBD and South East Light Rail](#) line. The contract will be awarded in late 2014.
- 27 March 2014 – Sydney – Dulwich Hill Extensions of SLR opened.
- June ? 2014 - projected opening of Gold Coast Light Rail (tram testing began October 2013).

Next News Update – June 2014



Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

www.cotma.org.au

News Update June 2014

From the Deputy/Acting Chairman (*Dave Hinman*)

2014 is galloping on and we are half way through the year already. With plenty happening and more pending it's time for another COTMA News Update, and once again my thanks to Warren, now back home after a recent European visit, for undertaking its production and distribution.

With the 2014 COTMA conference now just over three months away, it's time to get your bookings under way and your museum's presentations sorted - see details below. For interstate and overseas travel there are cheap options available which may not last and some of us have already started purchasing these.

Peter Hyde and I were among the 104 participants at the annual conference of the Federation of Rail Organisations of NZ (FRONZ) held at Wanganui over NZ's Queen's Birthday Weekend. Tramway groups were well represented but were of course outnumbered by our many heritage and tourist railway colleagues as well as national rail operator, Kiwi Rail and the NZ regulator, the NZ Transport Agency, Rail Safety Team. Both of these organisations were major presenters, as well as being conference sponsors. In addition to the formal conference presentations, some of the highlights included lunch and tram rides at the Wellington Tramway museum for those of us travelling via Wellington, a tramway groups' discussion meeting (7 organisations represented) and the FRONZ Awards evening where the annual Tramways Award went to Mornington (Dunedin) cable trailer no. 111 submitted by the Tramway Historical Society (Ferrymead). Most memorable (and significant) however had to be the opportunity for first rides on the newly completed Wanganui Tramway, after a great afternoon Wanganui River trip on the wonderfully restored P.S. Waimarie. It began with some impromptu but well orchestrated street theatre in the form of a tram re-railing demonstration, (inadvertently) arranged for us while we were out on the water and with actors including some of us from other tram groups. Then, as daylight faded it was a brief return to the atmosphere of the early 20th century as tram no. 12 (nicknamed "Mable") slowly trundled along the 180 metres of new line from the tram shed to the Waimarie wharf and return. This was on the Sunday afternoon/evening and the official opening was to follow on the Monday morning. That day showed Wanganui's great support for the tram project, with crowds of people, vintage cars, buses and a traction engine in attendance, a fly past by the local aero club and the Waimarie steaming past with whistle blowing as the ribbon was cut and the first official run commenced. Some 1200 paying passengers were carried on that first day! Our congratulations to the Tramways Wanganui Trust and its supporters for reaching this great milestone.

Finally, congratulations to Jeremy Kays and his team with the formation and formal incorporation of the Hobart Tram Restoration & Museum Society Inc, plus the welcome news from Christchurch this week of the re-instatement of funding by the cash-strapped City Council for completing a first stage of the long awaited tram extension.

2014 Conference – Sydney October 2014

Details of the COTMA Conference are now available on the COTMA Website including the detailed conference program, the Partners Program and the Booking form – see <http://cotma.org.au/conference.html> or the Sydney Tramway Museum conference page - <http://www.sydneytramwaymuseum.com.au/cotma/> for more details on the program and the booking forms as well.

If you would prefer, it is possible to scan and email the form back to David Critchley directly rather than posting.

For any questions regarding the conference arrangements and bookings, please E-mail: David Critchley— eclass436@gmail.com

Pre and Post Conference Tours

Richard Gilbert and Peter Hyde are busy finishing off the Pre and Post conference tour arrangements and the booking form for these should be available by mid-July. The approximate cost for the post conference tour will be \$550 to \$600 and about \$280 for the pre-conference tour. The method of booking is currently being sorted out and will be advised in the tour program. As soon as these are available they will be made available on the COTMA and STM websites. Please keep checking in.

See the COTMA or the STM website for the outline details of these tours.

2014 COTMA Awards

Once again the awards will be presented at Sydney COTMA conference in October on the night of the formal Dinner. Many Museums have completed excellent projects in the last two years which would qualify to be nominated for these awards. Please remember these projects don't have to just tramcar restorations and the like to qualify to be nominated. Book productions and Conservation Reports have won the major award on previous occasions.

This year will be the inaugural "Bill Kingsley Award" for the top winner. This will replace the previous "EAR" Excellence and Recognition Award in previous years. The cut off for submissions will be end of August so that the judges have time to assess all the submissions. It is important that if you are preparing a submission you advise the Executive Officer so we can register the fact you are doing one, and chase you up if your running down to the wire to complete it on time. There is a cash payment prize for the winner together with a new trophy.

So start preparing and lets us know how you are going. As everyone has indicated at past conferences, the awards presentation is one of the anticipated highlights of the COTMA conference each time around.

Call for Papers

The theme of this year's Conference is **'Your Tramway Museum in 2024 – A ten year plan'**.

The Conference organising team is asking every Museum group to present a paper on this theme.

Where will your Museum be in 10 years' time? How are you going to achieve your aims and goals? Do you have a succession plan? What are the road-blocks that you might have to address? How are you going to meet the challenges and road-blocks? Do you have a future plan and is it freely available for everyone to see and follow?

Your Museum's presentation should be around 20 minutes, with 10 minutes for questions after the presentation. It must include a brief review of what has happened at your Museum since the last COTMA Conference (ie your brag session) and genuine discussion of where you want your Museum to be in 10 years' time and how you are planning to achieve this. Presentations may include PowerPoint, Prezi or other electronic elements.

Preliminary presentation details (including the author/s, proposed AV equipment required) must be notified to the Conference organizers no later than 1 August 2014. Full details of your presentation, including presenters and AV equipment required and a transcript or copy of the presentation should be submitted to the Conference organisers no less than 14 days prior to the start of the Conference.

AGM

The Annual General Meeting of COTMA will be held on Thursday 17th July at Hawthorn Tram Depot 8 Wallen Road Hawthorn at 10.00 A.M. The primary reason for the meeting is to receive and accept the financial report for the period 2013/14. We know that many of you will not be able to attend, therefore please advise the Executive Officer of your apologies prior to the meeting, otherwise we look forward to seeing you on the day.

Some Recent Tramway Milestones

02 May - 50th anniversary of closure of NZ's last tramway system (Wellington)

19 May - Vic. State Government's 40-year urban blueprint - "Plan Melbourne" announced.

Proposes that most tram routes be separated from other vehicles by 2050.

28 May – Yarra tram announces plans to transform Preston depot to a facility to service the E class trams and to provide more depot space. For information on the planned layout visit

<http://www.yarratrams.com.au/media-centre/news/articles/2014/historic-depot-redevelopment-to-drive-a-brighter-tram-future/>

2 June - Official opening of first stage of heritage tramway at Wanganui

3 June - Canberra Light Rail announcement. Expressions of interest to be sought from tenderers for construction & operation from Civic to Gungahlin in first half of 2015.

11 June - Memphis Area Transit Authority [MATA] halted all of its heritage streetcar services indefinitely, to evaluate the future of the system in light of two fires that destroyed a pair of ex-Melbourne W2 class trams

16 June - Incorporation of Hobart Tram Restoration & Museum Society Inc.

18 June - Western Sydney (Parramatta) Light rail announcement - extension to go ahead.

25 June - Christchurch City council approved \$1.69M to allow completion of stage 1A of tram extension as far as High/Manchester Streets

26 June - Wellington Regional Council signed off on plan to scrap trolley buses in 2017

?? June 2014 - projected opening of GCLR, but appears to have been delayed due to a number of issues.

24 June – Yarra trams announce revised timetable for route 112 – to be split into two routes 11 and 12. This is to increase the number of trams running in Collins St. A number of part time short routes will be discontinued.

And as a page filler, the Editor indulges in a photograph from his recent EU trip.



Bad Schandau – a side of the road running four wheeler motor car and two trailers make their way from the upper terminus of the Kirnitzschatal Tramway in southern Saxony near the Czech border to the town terminus, May 2014. For more information see:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kirnitzschtal_Tramway



Just in case you were concerned – a common case of mixing up the two countries.

Next News Update – August 2014



Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

www.cotma.org.au

News Update September 2014

From the Chairman (*Dave Hinman*)

Hi everyone.

It is September already and the 2014 COTMA Conference in Sydney is coming up fast - now just over a month away. The Sydney Tramway Museum team, led by David Critchley, has invested a huge amount of effort into putting together what is going to be a very interesting and very relevant conference for the benefit of the tramway museums of Australia and New Zealand, and the long term future of our tramway heritage. In addition to the great programme of events and visits planned for Sydney, there's a pre-conference tour in Brisbane and the Gold Coast, with the highlight being experiencing the new Gold Coast Light Rail system, officially opened on 20 July this year.

And yet there's more.

After the conference and led once again by tour organiser extraordinaire Richard Gilbert, a post conference tour featuring quite a bit of rail travel, a good look around Australia's national Capital, Canberra and also visits to rail museums in the rural countryside of New South Wales, the choice of staying in country pubs and then finishing with a trip on the XPT to either Sydney or Melbourne.

Sounds great, and Dot and I are really looking forward to being back in Australia once more and being part of all these activities. There's 11 of us, including partners, coming over from Christchurch. Bodes well for a lively and well attended gathering!

But... its been rather a shock and a real disappointment to discover that other museums and cities have not so far been nearly as supportive, with the total number registered so far not quite reaching 40 people!. At the last conference in Adelaide there were 60 registrants, plus partners, with 30 attending the post conference tour.

So what's to be done?

This Update focuses on the conference and we really urge all groups to get back to their members and encourage some more last minute support. The late registration surcharge has been waived, we have given a little more time for preparing reports and lodging award submissions, and the organisers are prepared to consider partial registrations for those unable to attend all 5 days of the conference. Hunt around - you may still find there are cheap deals to be had for both transport and accommodation.

2014 Conference – Sydney 9-14 October 2014 - It's not too late to book

Details of the COTMA Conference, including the detailed conference program, the Partners Program and the Booking forms are still available on either the COTMA Website– see <http://cotma.org.au/conference.html> or the Sydney Tramway Museum conference page - <http://www.sydneysteamwaymuseum.com.au/cotma/> .

For any questions regarding the conference arrangements and bookings, please contact: David Critchley— eclass436@gmail.com

Please note, in order to encourage more participants, it has been agreed that the late registration fee be waived, but don't leave it too much longer as final numbers will be needed for catering and other logistical purposes.

Pre and Post Conference Tours - Final Call

Details about these great tours, and booking forms are also available on the COTMA and Sydney Tramway Museum websites. Go to <http://cotma.org.au/conference.html> or <http://www.sydneytramwaymuseum.com.au/cotma/activities.shtml>

Call for Conference Papers - Final Call

A reminder that the theme of this year's Conference is '**Your Tramway Museum in 2024 – A ten year plan**', and that the Conference organizing team is asking every Museum group to present a paper on this theme.

Where will your Museum be in 10 years' time? How are you going to achieve your aims and goals? Do you have a succession plan? What are the road-blocks that you might have to address? How are you going to meet the challenges and road-blocks? Do you have a future plan and is it freely available for everyone to see and follow?

Your Museum's presentation should be around 20 minutes, with 10 minutes for questions after the presentation. It must include a brief review of what has happened at your Museum since the last COTMA Conference (ie your brag session) and genuine discussion of where you want your Museum to be in 10 years' time and how you are planning to achieve this. Presentations may include PowerPoint, Prezi or other electronic elements.

Preliminary presentation details (including the author/s, proposed AV equipment required) must be notified to the Conference organizers, if not already done, as soon as possible and no later than 14 September. Full details of your presentation, including presenters and AV equipment required and a transcript or copy of the presentation should be submitted to the Conference organizers no less than 14 day prior to the start of the Conference.

COTMA Awards - Final Call

There is still time to get your awards applications in but you need to get moving. We have extended the deadline to **Sunday September 21**, and have added a new volunteer award, as discussed at the last CGM. Details further below.

For the **COTMA Achievement awards** it's about describing a project you have completed in the past 2 years, and we know that many of you have done some excellent work over this time. The top winner will receive the inaugural "**Bill Kingsley Award**" - the new name for the EAR (Excellence and Recognition) award which acknowledges Bill's outstanding service to the tramway museum cause including his work on the establishment and development of COTMA. The criteria for judging this supreme award include the following: Degree of difficulty, Quality of outcome, Value to community, Historical accuracy and the award carries a trophy and a cash prize of \$500.

Submissions are to be sent to COTMA PO Box 61, Carlton South Vic. 3053 and/or by email

to cotma@cotma.org.au giving details of the achievement in no more than three A4 pages, with photographs etc, and attaching any supporting documents that you feel are relevant.

1. The new deadline for submission is **Sunday 21 September**. If you are intending to put in for an award can you please *immediately* advise the Executive Officer, Rod Atkins email ozrod_au@yahoo.com , or ph. (61) 0407 537 980
2. Also, this year, as agreed by the 2012 Conference General Meeting, we are introducing a new category of award, the **Volunteer Achievement Awards**. These will be given on the recommendation and advice from any member group as we see individual recognition is best handled at local group level. Please send your nomination(s) for outstanding contributions by your most valued volunteer(s). No more than two nominations per museum group please. Nominations for Volunteer Achievement Awards are to be sent to the Assistant Executive Officer, Mal Rowe at email mal.rowe@gmail.com , should be on no more than one A4 page and should describe in some detail the contribution your nominated volunteer(s) has/have made to your group. Closing date is **Friday 26 September**.

Conference CGM

Notice of 21st Conference General Meeting

Tuesday 14th October 2014

The 21st Conference General Meeting of the Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia will be held at the Rendezvous Hotel Cnr. George and Quay Streets Sydney N.S.W on Tuesday 14th October 2014 at 11.00 am.

The following business will be transacted during this meeting:

1. Confirm the Minutes of the previous Conference General Meeting.
2. Receive and adopt the Executives Committee Reports of the proceedings of the Council since the previous General Meeting.
3. Elect the Executive and the Auditor until the next CGM.
4. General Business
5. Make arrangements for future Conferences of the Council.

If you have items of General Business, please advise them in advance to the Executive Officer.

Rod. Atkins
Executive Officer
6th September 2014
P.O. Box 61
Carlton South Victoria 3053
A0030417B
Email: ozrod_au@yahoo.com

Next Update - November 2014



Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

www.cotma.org.au

News Update December 2014



From the Chairman

Hi everyone.

2014 is just about all over and it has been a busy and eventful year for the tramways of Australia and New Zealand. A highlight was the COTMA conference hosted by the Sydney Tramway Museum and the Steam Tram and Railway Preservation Society (Valley Heights). A big thank you to David Critchley and his organising team, plus the pre and post conference organisers (Peter Hyde and Richard Gilbert) for what turned out to be a most interesting, informative and enjoyable experience. I hope that those attended will take back to their groups many of the learnings that were shared, noting in particular the discussions and remarkably consistent findings about the challenges ahead as we responded to the conference theme - '**Your Tramway Museum in 2024 – A ten year plan**'. For those groups/individuals who were not able to be present, the various museum and other presentations can be found on the COTMA Website – see <http://cotma.org.au/conference.html>.

At the Conference General Meeting, with no other volunteers in sight, I was elected to the role of COTMA Chairman for the next two years. There will be on-going challenges, but we have a great Executive team and with good support from others as well we should be able to make progress and continue to represent the interests of all COTMA Member groups. Thank you for your confidence in me and our team. Particular thanks to Warren Doubleday, whose role as Immediate Past Chairman has now concluded, but who has graciously agreed to continue undertaking the important tasks of website and news update publisher. As you will see from the full list of Executive Members, there is currently one vacancy (Assistant Executive Officer), previously occupied by Mal Rowe, now Deputy Chairman. If there is a volunteer out there prepared to take on the role, we would love to hear from you.

Best wishes to all for the coming festive season.

Dave Hinman

CHAIRMAN

COTMA Executive (as elected at Conference General Meeting, 14 October 2014).

Chairman - Dave Hinman
Deputy Chairman - Mal Rowe
Executive Officer - Rod Atkins
Assistant Executive Officer - *Vacant*
Treasurer - Howard Clark
Australian Museums Liaison Officer - Peter Hyde
New Zealand Museums Liaison Officer - Clinton Pearce

COTMA Achievement Award 2014 (presented at Conference Dinner 10 Oct 2014)

Bill Kingsley Award - Tramway Historical Society, Christchurch, for restoration of Invercargill Birney tram No. 15.

Volunteer Achievement Awards - Roger Salen and Gavin Young of the Ballarat Tramway Museum.

Further details and photographs can be seen at: <http://cotma.org.au/awards.html>

Next Conference

To be held in CHRISTCHURCH in October 2016, hosted by the Tramway Historical Society and Christchurch Tramway Ltd.

New Collection Guideline

The Australian Ministry for the Arts recently published the *Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material* outlining principles and standards to assist Australia's public collecting institutions when acquiring cultural material by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange. The guide outlines ethical considerations and legal obligations that apply to collecting institutions and provides guidance on transparency and accountability measures. Sections of the guide may also apply to cultural material being considered for inward loan. For either an MSWord or a .pdf version see <http://arts.gov.au/collections/best-practice>

Recent Tramway Milestones/ Events

30 October - Canberra - Expressions of interest called for building light rail line from Gungahlin to the city centre, following ACT Govt release of business case. Estimated cost - \$783M

11 November - Christchurch - post-earthquake resumption of full City Loop

23 November - Auckland - Dockline Tramway resumption of operations.

7 December - Bendigo - celebration of 42 years since re-opening as the Vintage "Talking" Tram Tour.

7 December - Ballarat - celebration of 40 years since the running of the first (commissioning) tram in Wendouree Parade. Also undertook a ceremonial "switch on" of the 18.5kW solar panels on the depot roof.

10 December - Christchurch - Tramway Restaurant resumed post-earthquake public operation

13 December – Perth - large fire in Whiteman Park – no damage to PETS's infrastructure.

17 December - Sydney - \$2.1B contract signed for light rail extensions from Circular Quay to Eastern suburbs. Work due to start in April 2015 and "likely to open for services in early 2019".

18 December - Gold Coast - re-opening of 25 year old monorail - links GCLR to Casino

26 December – Ballarat - 40 years since Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society commenced public operations.

Tasmanian Tour – March 2014

Great Rail Experiences Tasmania is running an excellent tour during March 2015 – visiting all heritage rail locations including COTMA Members the Tasmanian Transport Museum in Hobart and the Launceston Tramway museum. Further details from:

<http://www.greatrailexperiences Tasmania.com.au/great-rail-experiences-tasmania-tour-2015/>

Well worth considering.

Next Update - March 2015