

Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

www.cotma.org.au

News Update

March 2023



COTMA parts container leaving Newport

Photo: Amir Tila

**UPDATE IS FOR ALL OF YOUR MEMBERS.
PLEASE FORWARD IT TO ALL ON YOUR E-MAIL LISTS**

From the President

In mid February, Members of the Executive, Henry Brittain, Mal Rowe, Peter Hyde and David Hinman, visited MOTAT to discuss with them some preliminary arrangements for this year's Conference to be held in Auckland.

Our timing could have been better as Cyclone Gabrielle landed in New Zealand at the same time and disrupted some of our plans. As a consequence, our meeting with MOTAT Management had to be held via Zoom as MOTAT was closed down because of the weather. To compound this, we all experienced disruptions to our travel plans and spent extra unplanned time in Auckland.

Despite this, we were able to visit and experience the Dockline and Western Springs Tramways. A BBQ at the Dockline tram shed and a convivial dinner at a MOTAT member's home the next evening made for an enjoyable visit.

MOTAT have prepared a draft programme and details of this are contained elsewhere in this newsletter.

More recently, on the morning of Friday 24 February, Tram staff at MOTAT were dismayed to discover that thieves had attacked their overhead during the night and caused considerable damage to the infrastructure. This meant that tram services had to be curtailed until the damage could be repaired.

All of our Tramways are susceptible to this sort of unwanted and irresponsible action and I urge all members to review their security to ensure that they do not become a victim of thieves looking for copper and brass to steal. They do not care what damage they cause and the effects of such action can have a devastating effect on our members.

Henry Brittain,

President.

Your To-Do List

- ✓ Put the COTMA conference dates in your diary and start thinking about what activities you might add before or after the conference.
- ✓ Send details of your members who have passed on to Mal Rowe by September 8th
- ✓ Start to write up your achievements over the last couple of years for submission to the COTMA achievement awards.
- ✓ Plan and prepare your Museum Report to share with other COTMA members.
- ✓ Check your Section Insulators for signs of damage which could expose friable asbestos.



Conference plans – dates and draft program

The 2023 COTMA conference will be held in Auckland in October 2023, hosted by The Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT) and the Western Springs Tramway. The main venue will be the New Zealand Maritime Museum and the program will include visits to MOTAT and other places of interest.

The current draft programs is:

- Thur 5th October Registration, drinks and canapes
- Fri 6th October Welcome, keynote and other presentations, drinks and dinner
- Sat 7th October Presentations then excursion to Glenbrook
Dinner at Cosmopolitan Club
- Sun 8th October Excursion to MOTAT – trams etc
Conference Dinner
- Mon 9th October Conference sessions, Conference General Meeting

Prices and booking arrangements to come ... and the program is sure to be 'tweaked'.

Note that there will be no organised pre and post conference tours, but information will be provided to allow individuals or groups to make their own arrangements.

Partners' activities will be mostly self arranged and could include: -Auckland War Memorial and Museum, Auckland Art Gallery, Day trip to Waiheke, Ferry trips to Davenport/Birkenhead, New Zealand Navy Museum, Davenport, Auckland Zoo. We have suggested that 'local partners' would be welcome to join visiting partners and could provide valuable local knowledge.

One of the sad but important things that we do at each conference is note the passing of members. Please send Mal a list of those who you would like remembered by 8th of September.

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 will be advised in the next Newsletter, likely to be in late July 2023. For details of the award see <http://cotma.org.au/awards.html> for details of the award and judging criteria.

Newport parts

Tram parts harvested from the Newport (VIC) trams have been collected in shipping containers. Recently, 3 40' containers and 1 20' container were transferred to the Ballarat Tramway Museum off site storage at Bungaree.

The contents are mainly underfloor equipment and controllers. Two more 40' containers mainly hold cab and other interior components.

They remain at Newport because they still have room for more parts.

Photo: _Mal Rowe



Sharing parts

Bendigo Tramways and Wellington Tramway Museum have shared parts from a pair of trucks made available from Newport, Bendigo mostly wanted wheels and truck components and Wellington wanted GE 247 motors. Bendigo sent 4 motors to Wellington and kept the trucks.

The photo at right from Henry Brittain shows these unusually clean motors in Wellington.



The photo at left, from Mal Rowe, shows Bendigo 880 getting a major overhaul in January – including a pair of trucks from Newport that were in good enough condition to go straight under the car,

Launceston 14 visiting Ballarat



Launceston 14 belongs to the Sydney Tram Museum and for the last few years it has been undergoing restoration by a group in Launceston. They have now completed their work and, while 14 awaits installation of mechanical and electrical components it is on display at the Ballarat Tramway Museum – where it has been greatly admired by visitors.

Photo: Mal Rowe

Asbestos safety alert

We have received advice from the Tramway Museum Society in the UK that:

“During a planned routine inspection of the OLE at the NTM Crich a running strip on BICC Section Insulator was found to be breaking up and following specialist analysis was found to contain asbestos in the form of chrysotile. All Section Isolator running strips should be changed for material that does not contain asbestos. The running strips should be disposed of using a licenced asbestos disposal agency.”

Even if your SIs are not of this type, it is likely that old SIs will contain asbestos.

Photo: courtesy of NTM.



Any News?

Museum News in COTMA News update is always of interest. If you have something to tell us, then we would be delighted to hear at cotma@cotma.org.au

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May 2023



Bendigo's 610 in a promotional livery in January 2023

Photo: Mal Rowe

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Your To-Do List

- ✓ *Put the COTMA conference dates in your diary and start thinking about what activities you might add before or after the conference.*
- ✓ *Book your attendance when booking open.*
- ✓ *Write up your achievements over the last couple of years for submission for the COTMA achievement awards and prepare your Museum Report to share with other COTMA members before August 24th*
- ✓ *Check out the post conference tour and talk to others about doing the mini tour that it involves.*
- ✓ *Send details of your members who have passed on to Mal Rowe by September 8th*

From the President

As those of us in the South move into winter and the effects of colder weather on our operations, it will be a good time to undertake all those routine and non-routine maintenance jobs that need doing during what can be a quieter time. This should ensure that when patronage starts picking up, our tramcar fleets are fit for purpose and will not experience any unexpected mechanical or electrical faults that could occur from lack of surveillance.

With our aging trams and aging traffic staff, we must ensure that we all maintain a safe operating environment not only for ourselves but those members of the public who visit and ride on our trams.

This means that our trams must be safe to run, and that tram staff meet the medical standards required of them.

Accidents can happen and sometimes in the most unexpected way. Modern communication practices often swing into play and bystanders will be showing the event on twitter, face book or any of the numerous portals that exist. Often things are sensationalised leading to unwanted and unwarranted pressure being placed on Tramway groups.

COTMA is tasked with ensuring that its members operate their tramway systems in a safe and responsible manner and although COTMA has no direct responsibility for day-to-day activities, we owe it to one another to uphold the image that we have created of offering a safe and enjoyable Heritage experience to the public.

I look forward to meeting up with you all at Auckland in October, 5 years between face-to-face conferences is too long.

Henry Brittain, President.



Conference plans – latest details and draft program

The 2023 COTMA conference will be held in Auckland in October 2023, hosted by The Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT) and the Western Springs Tramway. The main venue will be the New Zealand Maritime Museum and the program will include visits to MOTAT and other places of interest.

The current draft programs is:

- Thursday, 5th October – Registration, drinks and canapes
- Friday, 6th October – Conference sessions/Presentations, drinks and dinner
- Saturday, 7th October – MOTAT: Storage excursion; Conference sessions/Presentations
- Sunday, 8th October – MOTAT Excursion; Conference Dinner
- Monday, 9th October – Conference sessions, General meeting and closure.
- Prices and further details will be posted on the COTMA website soon.
- **The closing date for registration will be August 24th, 2023.**

Partner Tour

MOTAT will provide information on various activities for partners around Auckland and it is likely that local partners will be involved to support partners in planning each day and finding the way.

COTMA Awards

It's time to start to think about what your tramway will be submitting for your COTMA Achievement Award nomination and any of your volunteers who you think should be recognised by COTMA for individual volunteer work at a level superior to that which is recognised at a local museum. **The closing date is August 24th, 2023.** For details of the awards see <http://cotma.org.au/awards.html> for details of the award and judging criteria.

Post Conference Tour

Richard Gilbert is finalising the details for a post conference tour in New Zealand, commencing the day after the conference on Tuesday 10th of October. Participants will need to stay on in Auckland on the night of Monday 9th and the tour will conclude in Christchurch on the evening of Tuesday 17th of October.

- Tuesday, 10th October – 9.35am train to Hamilton then Charter bus to Rotorua.
- Wednesday, 11th October – Touring in Rotorua.
- Thursday, 12th October - Charter bus to Hamilton, then train to Wellington.
- Friday, 13th October Day in Wellington. Visit Cable Car, optional morning train run to Masterton.
- Saturday, 14th October - Train and bus to Wellington Tramway Museum.
- Sunday 15th October - ferry to Picton arrive then train to Christchurch.
- Monday, 16th October - Visit City Tramway. Evening tram restaurant (own expense)

- Tuesday, 17th October - Visit Ferrymead, evening Gondola Restaurant (own expense)

Bookings are being managed by Stefany Knight of Wellington Tram Museum. Thanks Stefany!

More details, bookings arrangements (through Stefany) and the price will be on the COTMA website as soon as we finalise them.

Interactive map of Adelaide tramways

The Adelaide Tram Museum has produced an amazing interactive map of the former Adelaide tram system showing the location of every stop and linking to photographs at many of these stops. It is well worth a look and can be found at: <https://www.trammuseumadelaide.com/interactive-map>

Ballarat Tramways Museum work for VicTrack

Ballarat Tramway Museum have completed the re-alignment of some track at Newport East Block to allow some more trams to be moved out to storage at Bungaree. The work is a great example of the good level of cooperation between BTM and VicTrack.

More safety alerts

Wellington Tram Museum has been receiving safety reports originating from the Tramway Museum Society in the UK. They are following up options to share relevant safety information between the UK and COTMA as there are often common issues with heritage equipment.

Two recent reports were about brake failure, in one instance caused by damage to a quick release valve and in the other by excessive wear on a brake adjusting nut resulting in loss of force when the adjuster slipped after a brake application.



Photo: TMS Urgent Safety Advice Notice

Brake adjuster nut with worn thread

MOTAT accident

On April 16th MOTAT Tram 257 failed to stop in time and hit Tram 11 causing the tram to jolt forward and hit double decker tram 47. One minor injury was sustained, to a 6-year-old girl on 257. MOTAT team members spoke to the tram conductor who does not believe that driver was using excessive speed.

NZTA have advised that they will not investigate. MOTAT will conduct their own enquiry and identify any improvements to their maintenance and safety systems.

Damage to the trams is reported to be minor, but they will be thoroughly inspected.

Ferny Grove Robbery: Considerations of Security

Peter Hyde writes: Just after closing time on Sunday 30th April this year, a person armed with a sharp bladed kitchen knife attempted to steal the cash takings from the Shop/Ticket Office at the Museum in Ferny Grove.

In the ensuing struggle, the shop attendant received a stab wound to the face which thankfully missed his eye but required several stiches in hospital. The offender managed to get hold of the attendant's car keys and succeeded in locking himself in the car which was parked in the grounds behind the Shop, before speeding off and crashing through the closed gates of the Museum.

It was discovered later that the person had earlier entered the lunchroom and stolen the keys to the motorcycle of the day's tram driver and placed his helmet adjacent to the bike. It seems that this vehicle was the thief's originally intended getaway means. Video footage from Ferny Grove Railway Station showed the suspect arriving by train earlier in the afternoon.

No cash was actually lost as the till had just been emptied for the day and the takings placed in a box (with a convenient carry-handle!) for transfer to the safe. This was sitting on the counter unbeknown to the thief throughout the robbery attempt.

Needless to say, certain changes to operating practices have been instituted and the installation of various security devices is in progress.

Previously at Ferny Grove the lunchroom was left closed but unlocked, as that was the location of the First Aid kit, the Defibrillator, and the switch to shut off traction power if required.

This a warning to all – perhaps even to Museums where conductors collect cash fares onboard trams – that the world is now a different place and serious attention needs to be paid to personal as well as physical security.

Police have apprehended the suspect and recovered the stolen car.

Any News?

Museum News in COTMA News update is always of interest. If you have something to tell us, then we would be delighted to hear at cotma@cotma.org.au

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News Update

July 2023



Delegates at the last COTMA conference at Perth, September 2018

Photo: Mal Rowe

**UPDATE IS FOR ALL OF YOUR MEMBERS.
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Your To-Do List

- ✓ **Let the COTMA organisers know if you have a paper / presentation for the Conference – by Friday 14th of July!**
- ✓ *Make bookings for the COTMA conference and activities you might add before or after the conference.*
- ✓ *Write up your achievements over the last couple of years for submission for the COTMA achievement awards and prepare your Museum Report to share with other COTMA members before August 24th*
- ✓ *Let the organisers know about any presentation you might like to make – in person or via a poster / screen display at the conference*
- ✓ *Send details of your members who have passed on to Mal Rowe by September 8th*

From the President – Henry Brittain

WELCOME TO NEW ZEALAND AND COTMA 2023.

Five years between COTMA Conferences is a long time and I look forward to welcoming you all to this year's conference to be held in Auckland in early October. It will be great to be able to renew old acquaintances, meet new people and share the friendship and common interest we all enjoy.

MOTAT have created a very interesting and comprehensive Conference programme and this will allow all of us to experience the many varieties of trams, both electric and steam, that they have in Auckland at the Western Springs and the Dockline tramways. Various experts will also be presenting and sharing their expertise in Conference sessions including modern standards and how they relate to Heritage items.

Enrolment details for the Conference are enclosed elsewhere in this newsletter and I encourage all Tramway enthusiasts to follow the link and submit their form now.

COTMA 2023 will be an exciting event and one not to be missed.

Conference plans – latest details

The 2023 COTMA conference will be held in Auckland from 5th to 9th of October 2023, hosted by The Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT) and the Western Springs Tramway. The main venue will be the New Zealand Maritime Museum and the program will include visits to MOTAT and other places of interest.

The program, booking form and a call for papers are online at:

<https://www.cotma.org.au/conference.html>

Photo: Mal Rowe



The organisers have been able to keep the fee at the same level as in 2018 (a bit less if you take account of currency exchange rates).

Final program details will be updated on that site as they are finalised

If you are planning to attend the advice is to **book now** for travel and accommodation.

Dockline Tramway

The Dockline Tramway in Auckland has been given yet another life extension and will still be operating during the COTMA Conference. This may be your last opportunity to have a ride – or perhaps your first opportunity to ride an ‘improved Birney’ - ex-Melbourne X1 number 466.

Photo: Mal Rowe



Partner Tour

MOTAT will not run a full partner tour but will provide information on various activities for partners around Auckland. The registration fee for partners, which allows them to attend most conference activities, is only \$NZ250.

Make a presentation (... be quick):

One of the aspects the conference that is always appreciated is the opportunity to learn from others. The conference organisers have issued a call for papers which ‘Tell the Story - Kōrerotia te pūrakau’ of some aspect of tramway connected matters. They might cover any items of technical, safety, conservation, preservation philosophy etc. If you have something to share – techniques / resources / skills – then please submit to: COTMA2023@motat.org.nz with ‘Papers presentation’ in subject line **by Friday 14th of July**. More details are on the COTMA conference web page.

COTMA Awards

It's time to start to think about what your tramway will be submitting for your COTMA Achievement Award nomination and any of your volunteers who you think should be recognised by COTMA for individual volunteer work at a level superior to that which is recognised at a local museum. **The closing date is August 24th, 2023.** For details of the awards see <http://cotma.org.au/awards.html> for details of the award and judging criteria.

Post Conference Tour

Richard Gilbert is again running one of his famous post conference tours in New Zealand, commencing the day after the conference on Tuesday 10th of October. Participants will need to stay on in Auckland on the night of Monday 9th and the tour will conclude in Christchurch on the evening of Tuesday 17th of October.

Details are included in the Detailed program available on the COTMA Conference web page.

Price is currently being finalised and bookings are being managed by Stefany Knight of Wellington Tram Museum. Check the website for details at: <https://www.cotma.org.au/conference.html>

Annual General Meeting

We are required to run our AGM within 6 months of the close of our financial year (which ends at the end of March). This year's AGM will be held at Melbourne Tram Museum on Saturday 12th of August, commencing at 4pm. It will basically be a formality to receive the Financial Report for year ending 31 March 2023. A formal notice of the meeting details will be sent to all members. Major reports covering the last couple of years will be presented at the Conference General Meeting in Auckland.

COTMA committee members

The Conference General Meeting is when the committee to run COTMA for the next two years are elected. New members are more than welcome – chat to any current committee member or your museum leadership about it.

Parts Management

Work continues to retrieve, store and catalogue the growing collection of tram parts held in trust by COTMA for member museums. So far, 24 pairs of trucks have been acquired from Newport in Victoria and 21 of those have been sent to museums. More are to come.

We are in the planning stages on management and storage strategies for smaller parts – up to compressor size.



Any News?

Museum News in COTMA News update is always of interest. If you have something to tell us, then we would be delighted to hear at cotma@cotma.org.au

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News Update December 2023



Delegates at the COTMA conference in Auckland

Photo: Mal Rowe

UPDATE IS FOR ALL OF YOUR MEMBERS.
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Your To-Do List

- ✓ Look out for the COTMA membership renewal notice over the next few weeks
- ✓ Mark June and July 2025 in your diary as dates to keep free for the next COTMA conference.

From the President

Conference 2023 is now over and everybody has returned home. It was a most successful event and thoroughly enjoyed by everybody. MOTAT was an ideal host, made everybody welcome and presented a very good all round and thought-provoking agenda including field trips where riding on a great variety of trams was available. I have separately written to the Chief Executive of MOTAT thanking them for hosting the Conference and making it a very successful occasion.

After a gap of five years since our last face to face Conference, it was fulfilling to be able to meet up with other like-minded people and enjoy their friendship and share knowledge and experiences. It was sobering to note the absence of some familiar faces from previous conferences which reflects our aging membership.

The Brisbane Tramway Museum have agreed to host our next Conference in 2025 which will be a milestone as we will be celebrating our 50 year anniversary.

As the festive season approaches, on behalf of the COTMA Executive, I would like to wish everybody a happy and prosperous Christmas and New Year and that your tramway operations over this busy time, are uneventful but with lots of passengers.

Henry Brittain, President, 21 November 2023

The COTMA conference in summary

The Auckland conference was agreed to be a great success. 57 museum members and partners attended a conference at the Maritime Museum and MOTAT and shared their knowledge and ideas over a period of 5

days in early October. Papers and reports from the conference are on the COTMA website at:

<https://www.cotma.org.au/proceedings.html>

Two international guests attended COTMA2023: Mr Kyoichi Oda from Japan represented the Asia Pacific Heritage and Tourist Rail Organisation and Mr Mikael Lund from Denmark represented The Danish Tramway Museum.

COTMA Awards

Several significant awards were made at the Conference Dinner:

The judges were not able to separate two candidates for the **Bill Kinglsey Award** for Outstanding Achievement.

- Ballarat Tramway Museum received the award for building a new Museum Interpretative Centre.
- The Tramway Historical Society received the award for the Restoration and renewal of 1881 Kitson Steam Tram No 7.



Presidents Awards for an outstanding contribution by an individual over an extended period were made to:

- Graham Stewart in recognition of his lifetime commitment to recording and photographing tramway systems in New Zealand since the late 1940's.
- Dr John Radcliffe in recognition of his service to COTMA as the inaugural President from 1975 to 1986 and ongoing contributions to COTMA and the recording of tramway history.

A **Certificate of Appreciation** was given to Warren Doubleday in recognition of his long and ongoing commitment to COTMA including holding the position of President from 2002 to 2012.

Volunteer Awards, made on the recommendation of museums, were made to Virginia Fenelon and Pamela Waugh of Ballarat Tramway Museum and to Noel Blackmore, Nick Tsiaglis, Trevor Dennhardt, Terry Young and Stuart Darbyshire of Perth Electric Tramway Society.

COTMA committee members

The Conference General Meeting elects the committee to run COTMA for the next two years. The committee members and roles for the next two years are:

- President – Henry Brittain
- Deputy President – Rod Atkins
- Secretary – Mal Rowe

- Deputy Secretary – Roy Winslow
- Treasurer – Tony Weston
- Australian Museum Liaison Officer – Peter Hyde
- New Zealand Museum Liaison Officer – Vincent Chan
- Ordinary Board Member – Warren Doubleday.

The meeting also re-elected Hugh Ballment as our honorary auditor

Thanks!

Two long-standing members of the COTMA committee stepped down at the conference.

- **Howard Clarke** is a very long-standing member of the Sydney Tramway Museum and has served as the COTMA Treasurer for many years and steered us towards a modest but useful financial reserve. We thank him for his work and wise advice over the years.
- **Dave Hinman** finished his term as the immediate past president at this CGM. Dave has made an immense contribution to tram preservation in Christchurch including being a key driver in the establishment of the Christchurch City Tramway. He has also provided wise and strong leadership to COTMA as Chairman then President over the last decade.

The picture shows Dave Hinman and Graham Stewart in front of 'Streamliner' 253 which is in the care of MOTAT. It is a very special tram to both of them – being the first Auckland tram preserved under the leadership of Graham and being the wedding transport for Dave and Dot Hinman on their wedding day.



Post Conference Tour

Richard Gilbert once again put together a great post conference tour, with the support of the Wellington Tramway Museum, and including visits to the Wellington Tramway Museum, Ferrymead and the City Tramway in Christchurch. The tour concluded with a wonderful dinner aboard the Christchurch Tramcar Restaurant.



Ballarat launches W7 1029



Melbourne W7 1029 was allocated to Ballarat Tramway Museum under the Victorian Government program to re-purpose stored W class trams. It has been restored to near new condition, but with some changes and improvements to reflect modern safety and to provide access to passengers with limited mobility in conjunction with a loading ramp in the depot yard.

Clinton Pearce of Auckland has provided his skilled support in the project.

Brisbane substation failure

Brisbane Tramway Museum is not running trams due to part of their sub-station equipment failing a safety inspection. They are looking at options to get moving again – none of which come cheap! The museum is still open to the public at a reduced entry charge.

COTMA subscriptions

At the 2021 COTMA Conference General Meeting we agreed to change the subscription calendar to make COTMA membership fees payable at the beginning of the subscription year rather than the end. A renewal notice will be issued soon to make that change and covering the year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Good news for NZ members is that the recent CGM agreed that NZ members should not be charged for (Australian) GST – which will mean a small reduction in the membership fee.

Any News?

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