

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