

Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

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News Update March 2019



COTMA on Australia's newest heritage tram ... with thanks to Matthew Geier and STM

From the President

Welcome to our 1st Update for 2019 and hello from disaster-weary Christchurch at the end of a week of roller coaster emotions ranging from the shock, disbelief, fear and anger following the brutal terrorist attack and horrific slayings at two Christchurch mosques, to the upsurge of strong political, community and individual demonstrations of unity, love and support for those affected, and nonstop media saturation not yet abated. Also disturbing has been the news of the killings in the Netherlands, on board an Utrecht tram, three days after the NZ event. I commenced writing this after attending a 20,000 strong and very moving memorial service in Hagley Park on Friday afternoon. With similar gatherings being held all over the country and beyond, and set to continue over the weekend, NZ has reaffirmed to the world its intentions to remain and foster a community identity that is inclusive, multi-cultural and peace-loving.

This was just three weeks after the 8th anniversary of the devastating 22 February 2011 earthquake, and three weeks before that, for the wider THS family, the sadness of the unexpected passing of loved and respected founder John Shanks.

I am also heading into the uncharted waters of retirement at the end of the month, after 50 years working in local government in Christchurch. I seem to have been busier than ever over recent weeks trying to complete some unfinished business, having a massive tidy up/clean out and endeavouring to pass on information and knowledge and in the case of the city tramway, encouraging interest and enthusiasm amongst younger colleagues. Incidentally this will mean my contact email address will be d.hinman@kinect.co.nz as my work address, dave.hinman@ccc.govt.nz will cease to exist.

Quite a wide variety of information, news and updates in this issue, and my thanks to Mal Rowe, Richard Clarke, Warren Doubleday, Howard Clark, Tony Smith, and any others I may have missed for their contributions, work and support for COTMA and our Members.

Some late *good* news from New Zealand - as reported in the March issue of "The Controller", after a decision in late November by the Auckland Council not to abandon the Dockline tramway, track is being re-laid in Daldy Street and there are goals for the ½ loop to be completed and back in operation by August 2019 and the full line operating in January 2020.

And finally, it is great to record some modern tramway milestones with the opening of the wireless Newcastle Light rail, the test running of the new Canberra "Metro" with the trams now due to enter commercial service at Easter, and continuing progress including some test running in Sydney. This is future history in the making, with the modern era now being ably represented by Variotram 2017, the first operable modern low floor tram in a museum environment. Well done Sydney Tramway Museum. I am looking forward to seeing some of this progress when in Australia in April.

Dave Hinman

Passing of John Shanks



John Shanks as brakeman on the Christchurch horse tram at Papanui in September 1964.

Photo: D. L. A. Turner.

Stephen Taylor, President of the Tramway Historical Society, wrote in their journal "Ferryhead Tram Tracts":

"John Shanks passed away on Friday, the 1st of February. Each of us who have met John and experienced his enthusiasm for our hobby will have their own memories of him, and I think I echo the rest of the Tramway world in expressing our sadness at his passing."

John Shanks was founder member and "Father" of the Tramway Historical Society, a pioneer of the tramway preservation movement, a dear and respected friend to many and above all a devoted and loved family man. John's life was celebrated at his memorial service, at the Cashmere Presbyterian Church, MacMillan Avenue, in Christchurch on Thursday 7 February.

His legacy is one of the most outstanding instances of tramway preservation in the world, combining outstanding restoration work, careful attention to history and a successful commercial partnership with the Christchurch city tramway.

Vale

Bob Vanselow

COTMA sadly records the death of Bob Vanselow, on 18-2-2019 in Cobden. Bob was a Puffing Billy worker, a Track Engineer firstly for the MMTB and then Hamersley Iron; and had assisted the sector in Victoria and Tasmania a number of times recently. Bob was a member of the Rail Industry Safety and Standards Board sub-committee for rail track and the wheel rail interface.

Peter Ford

- on 19-2-2019 – Train driver, mechanical equipment specialist and President of the Association of Tourist Railways of Queensland. Peter was a member of the Rail Industry Safety and Standards Board sub-committee who prepared the boiler code and was working on a brake equipment guideline for heritage railways as well.

Both will be missed.

Asia Pacific Heritage and Tourist rail Organisation – Jordan 2019

The next conference of APHTRO is being held in Amman Jordan 8 Oct. to 11 Oct. 2019. Full details can be found at <http://www.aphtro.info/news/?cat=4> Conference fee excluding accommodation is US\$300. Hotel details and some travel information are provided on the conference pages, along with a great YouTube Video of a steam hauled train passing through an open level crossing. Worth watching. Bookings are now open.

Membership Renewals

The Treasurer has recently sent out membership renewals. Your early renewals would be appreciated. Arrangements have been made for NZ renewals in local currency.

Use of our new mailing software

When our Communications Manager sent out the last issue of the COTMA News Update, we had a lot of bounces detecting it was SPAM, particularly in New Zealand - which turned out to be a NZ issue.

The use of the MailChimp software, allows us to manage lists better. All that is stored on the software database is the person's name and email address. If you know someone who like to be added to list, please send us an email – cotma@cotma.org.au

Sydney Tram Museum takes delivery of 2107 – the world's only operable heritage low floor tram



2107 at Loftus, for STM's members' day and Transport Heritage NSW 'sector volunteers Christmas party'.

Photo by Matthew Geier

Sydney Tram Museum took delivery of Variogram 2107 in November 2018. The car is on loan from Transport Heritage NSW. In early December 2107 was bought out and shown to the volunteers present. STM members have spent several weeks cleaning off the graffiti the tram acquired when stored at Penrith and generally getting the tram into a presentable condition.

2107 is not the only preserved low floor tram; two German museums have low floor prototypes, but neither are operable. 2107 came down to the park for display under its own power.

It will be some time before 2107 becomes part of the regular running fleet - STM have a lot of repairs and touch-ups to do - and infrastructure upgrades to support its pantograph.

What is amazing is not that the tram has things wrong and broken, it's the number of things that still work after its 3½ years sitting in a trucking yard being a home to spiders.

Launceston and Swindon UK looking for parts

Tram part application to COTMA from LTMS

The role of the Launceston Tramway Museum Society Incorporated is the restoration and operation of former Launceston trams at the Launceston Tramway Museum in Invermay, Launceston. A bogie drop centre tram with two motors (No 29) is already operating powered by a rail mounted generator set, and a single truck California combination tram (No 1) is close to operating condition, only requiring controllers, cabling, and installation of suitable braking. Another single truck California combination tram (No 8) has been restored but still requires a truck, controllers, cabling, and installation of suitable braking. The track gauge is 3 ft 6 in (1067 mm).

The tram parts of interest are four GE K35JJ controllers similar to the two currently installed in tram No 29. If this model is not available then the preference is for direct controllers without braking notches, a latch requiring the operator notch back to stop before notching up again and the ability to isolate one motor while operating with the other. We would also like 16 brake blocks suitable for 660 mm (26 in) diameter wheels, one trolley pole and four cab manual handbrake assemblies.

The tram parts would be used to commission tram No 1 in the near future and tram No 8 over two to three years. We would like two controllers and eight brake blocks within the next three months and the remainder after two years.

Swindon – COTMA recently received an e-mail from the Swindon 13 Tram Trust of the UK. They are looking for English Electric / Dick Kerr controllers, type DB1. If anyone can assist, please let us know.

Newport tram re-purposing – update

Groups who have been successful in their request for the trams from Newport are being offered the opportunity to inspect the tram allocated to them. So far, other than some privately owned trams not part of the EOI process, only one tram has left Newport – 907, which went to Channel 10 to be used as part of the set for the “Neighbours” TV program.

Tony Smith and Mal Rowe have prepared work instructions for stripping some key parts from trams not intended for operational use (most of them!). These have gone to the VicTrack contractor. The procedure for managing these stripped parts is still to be decided by VicTrack, and COTMA is preparing proposals for discussion (see below).

Parts Management – update

Issues and directions – Mal Rowe have prepared a draft document on the management of tram parts coming out of Newport into the future. The Tram Parts working group has seen an early draft and the topic will be discussed by the COTMA committee in April. The intention is to have a general policy that will also be the basis of management of other COTMA owned parts.

Some COTMA owned parts were recently accidentally transferred between two member museums without realising that they were COTMA parts. After we became aware of this the parts were ‘quarantined’ until such time as allocation is formally decided. The Committee is very grateful for the cooperative attitude of all involved. It is a good reminder of the need to get proper processes in place.

Future Australian Tramway or Light Rail Standards

The Rail Industry Safety and Standards Board held a workshop in Sydney during mid-December to assess the possibility of preparing Standards/Codes/guidelines for the growing Australian Light Rail (or tramway) industry. Richard Clarke of the Sydney Tramway Museum attended the meeting. The first document likely to be prepared is a “Light Rail Urban Design Safety Guideline”. There are similar guidelines for the UK, Europe and the USA. COTMA will maintain a watch on these documents to address any possible negative aspects on our Museum operations.

Tram (Light Rail) Level Crossings

COTMA as reported to members in previous issues of News Updates has taken an active interest in the definition of Level Crossings on tram (light rail) in the National Rail Safety Legislation. Proposed changes to the Act were introduced during Feb. 2019 by the South Australian Government who are responsible for managing the National Act. The change addresses the issue that every time a tramway crossed a road, it was defined as a level crossing under the National Rail Safety Act. It also defines pedestrian crossings on tramways.

Operating Heritage Workshops

Richard Clarke has been representing COTMA in an Operating Heritage Group forum formed last year to bring together for discussion those groups and collecting organisations of transport, farm and machinery equipment. It is considering the issues associated with declining numbers of trades people with the necessary skills to maintain and repair equipment, issues with compliance from accreditation bodies, insurance, production of new parts that meet current standards and attracting the next generation of custodians.

Another area of interest is the Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act, its implications and application to heritage equipment in Australia to overcome issues of illegal export of items.

If any member would like further information on this forum and its activities, please contact us at cotma@cotma.org.au

Warning Devices on Trams

A recent Rail Accident Branch (UK) Safety Advice into a death in Edinburgh during September 2018 after being struck by a tram found that the warning horn did not provide a sound pressure in line with current industry guidance. The report also considered the appropriateness of the warning devices on the higher speed sections of the track which are reserved for trams only.

See: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/778369/190214_USA_012019.pdf

Dunedin progress



Roslyn Cable 95 inside the new depot building, while Mornington Trailer 111 is outside on show. Photo Warren Doubleday 11/2/19

Our Communications Officer, Warren Doubleday called past the Mornington Cable Car Museum and depot during Mid Feb while travelling in the South Island of NZ. The new depot nearby the former terminus is located alongside the former cable tram terminus and very near the original depot building. The Dunedin Heritage Light Rail Trust has built a small depot currently housing two cars with a further being rebuilt at the Ferrymead Tramway Workshop in Christchurch. The Museum is well presented with many photographs and objects. Opening times from their website is 10am to 1pm.

See: <http://www.dunedincablecars.co.nz/volunteer.html>

“Room with a View”

This double bed has been squeezed into the former “Bach” tram 194 of Christchurch.

The cottage fitout and furnishings installed in the tram when it was used as a holiday cottage have been retained and a photo exhibition interprets the story as a “tram in waiting” to Ferrymead visitors, rather than being stuck in a “crock” shed.

Photo Warren Doubleday 17-2-2019.

