

# Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

[www.cotma.org.au](http://www.cotma.org.au)

## News Update October 2018



COTMA conference participants in Perth

### From the President

Welcome to our 4<sup>th</sup> Update for 2018. I have yet to get used to the “upgrade” (?) in title from Chairman to President as bestowed upon us by the new Constitution and its standardized rules as provided by the (Victorian) legislation under which we are incorporated (see p.4). In this issue we report on the recent COTMA conference and post conference activities, together with an update on operational safety news and a report on some European tramway museums following Warren Doubleday’s recent overseas adventures.

For those of us fortunate enough to get over to Perth in September for the 24<sup>th</sup> conference of COTMA, it was great to experience the hospitality of the West Australians and to enjoy an interesting programme involving both formal sessions and field trips. To me the highlights included firstly having many of the conference sessions at Whiteman Park, where we were also able to enjoy visiting its comprehensive range of transport and other museum groups and attractions and their variety of well-presented offerings. We experienced riding (and driving) on their tramway and seeing their extensive workshop and car barns complex and were there for the formal opening and naming of their latest building, the large and impressive “Don & Laurie Tyler Carbarn”. Another highlight was the support given to the conference by the Public Transport Authority of Western Australia and which featured a visit (by special train) to the Nowergup Railcar depot and maintenance facility, followed by a fast non-stop trip back through central Perth and south to Mandurah, as well as interesting presentations by the TransPerth management team.

Following the conference a bus load of us enjoyed exploring some of the heritage rail sites along with other historic and natural heritage features of the South West during a five day trip which took us as far as Albany and then back to Perth via Denmark (WA!), Pemberton, Busselton and Pinjarra.

All in all a great conference and only a couple of things which disappointed me – firstly the low attendance or no show from some member groups, perhaps due in part to the distance/ cost of travelling to the far west, and secondly the small number of nominations (just two) for achievement awards, particularly when some of the museum presentations revealed several other worthy candidates, plus only three COTMA groups participating in the individual volunteer awards category. Let’s get some more next time!

Our grateful thanks to the PETS team for putting together a very successful and enjoyable conference and post conference tour. We look forward to meeting again in Bendigo in 2020.

Dave Hinman

## COTMA Conference 2018

The biennial COTMA conference was held in Perth in September. Over 60 attendees participated over 5 days. We heard from rail and tram professionals and one another. New Zealand was well represented, and we also had participants from Denmark, Japan and Taiwan.

Mark Burgess, MD of Perth Public Transport Authority and Dave Hinman present mementos to our guests Kyoichi Oda, Asia Pacific Heritage and Tourist Rail Organisation, Noi, Railway Cultural Society Taiwan and Mikael Lund, The Danish Tramway Museum



## Awards at COTMA 2018

### Bill Kingsley Award

This award is for outstanding achievement and the judges (Graham Stewart, Dr John Radcliffe and Carolyn Cleak) gave the award to Perth Electric Tramway Society for the restoration of E class Perth Tramcar No. 66. They said, in part: "The final restoration has been achieved with high standard, using as much as possible for parts from E type cars. It has resulted in PETS having for the first time a true Perth car that can be used by the visiting public at the museum's operation at Whiteman Park." The full statement will appear on the COTMA website.



Photo: Mal Rowe

The E class trams were built for the Western Australian Government Tramways at Midland Junction Workshops in 1917. They were based on a standard Brill design but, in keeping with their time, they were fitted with a plain arch roof. Tram No. 66 was the last tram to run in Perth, and was used to shunt other trams for disposal after the system closed. It was placed on display at Perth Zoo and later came into the collection of PETS.

## Achievement Award

The judges also made an Achievement Award for the cooperative work across many years enabling the continued commercial Service of Sydney R class tram 1808, now running as Christchurch 1888. The award was shared between the volunteer-based organisations of Sydney Tramway Museum as owner of the car, Western Springs Tramway Auckland and Tramway Historical Society (Christchurch) on behalf of the Heritage Tramways Trust and Christchurch Tramway Ltd in developing a continued use for the car.



## Volunteer Achievement Awards

COTMA marks notable volunteer efforts based on the recommendations of member groups. In 2018, we celebrated the following:

- Tramway Historical Society (Christchurch) – Phyllis and Graeme Belworthy and Barry Marchant
- Ballarat Tramway Museum – Barry Richardson and Les Williams
- Melbourne Tram Museum – Carolyn Cleak and Noelle Jones.

## COTMA Chairman's Award

Wellington Tramway Museum was presented with the occasional "Chairman's Award" for their commitment to purchasing at considerable expense, all of the available overhead fittings and parts arising from the closure of the Wellington trolley bus system. These are available for distribution across the world to museum tramway and trolley bus organisations.

James Duncan (Auckland) was also given an award, deserving "high commendation for the often heroic effort he has put in attempting to keep the struggling Dockline Tramline operating and for his ability to rally others to the cause".

## Conference Papers and Reports

Conference papers included a presentation and discussion on barriers to the use of heritage trams in city street operations in the USA by Tim Borchers and as a comparison in New Zealand from Dave Hinman, a report on the 'Retired Trams' program in Melbourne, discussion of options and processes for spare parts sharing and management, processes and changes made by the Sydney Tram Museum following the runaway over two years ago and a presentation by the WA based Manager of the Office of National Rail Safety Regulator.

Museums presentations outlining their work over the last two years were well received.

Over the next couple of months, the various papers and reports from Members will be placed on the COTMA web site along with details of the Conference Achievement and Volunteer Awards.

Check out [www.cotma.org.au](http://www.cotma.org.au) This will include a larger version of the conference participant photograph at the top of this edition of Update.

## Conference General Meeting

### Election of the 2018-2020 Committee of COTMA

New and existing office bearers in the COTMA Committee (formerly Executive\*) were elected or re-elected unopposed as follows:

**President** (formerly Chairman) – Dave Hinman

**Vice President** (formerly Deputy Chairman) – Rod Atkins

**Secretary** (formerly Executive Officer) – Mal Rowe

**Treasurer** – Howard Clark

**Australian Museum Liaison Officer** – Peter Hyde

**New Zealand Museum Liaison Officer** – Henry Brittain

**Ordinary Committee Member** – Warren Doubleday

The meeting also re-elected Hugh Ballment as auditor.

*\* This and other titles following changed to align with new constitution (Rules of Association)*

### Other Conference meeting decisions:

- Approved the Revised Rules of Association to align with Victoria's "Model Rules". These have since been lodged with Consumer Affairs Victoria and accepted.
- Upgraded Melbourne Tram Museum to full member status.
- Suggested that museums read papers on Working Objects Guidelines, as these may impact on our future operations, including funding applications. (Look for links to these papers soon in the documents section of the COTMA website.)
- Agreed to continue discussions with the re-organised ATHRA about models for cooperation.
- Set up a spare parts management working group (see below)
- Agreed to send a letter to member groups responding to some comments about COTMA and some COTMA membership in the September edition of the TMSV "Running Journal".

## Parts Management

The COTMA conference re-established a Parts Management Group which will work on projects including logging current parts held by COTMA, developing suggestions on how we share those parts and maintain parts availability for the long term, and liaison with VicTrack over the parts expected to be retained as the trams at Newport are dispersed. Members include Roy Winslow from Perth, Steve Lea from Christchurch and Tony Smith from Haddon. Mal Rowe will support the group as COTMA secretary.

If you have a person in your museum who has responsibility for Parts Management, then please advise Mal their contact details so we can get in touch with them directly.

## Post Conference Tour

Over 30 people toured the south west corner of Western Australia after the COTMA conference. Highlights included historic Albany, featuring its still intact whaling station (closed in 1978 but now a well presented visitor attraction), together with the impressive ANZAC memorial commemorating Australian and New Zealand soldiers departure point for Gallipoli in 1914), a tree top walk in a Tingle tree forest, the 1.7km



restored jetty at Busselton with its rail connection to an undersea aquarium and its restored railway station, riding the Hotham Valley Railway by night and by day and even dinner in a former Kalgoorlie and Perth tram!

Bob Pearce presented the owners of the Hidden River Estate winery / restaurant with watercolour paintings by well known 'tram painter' Graham Lees showing their tram in service in Perth.



## Operational Safety News

Since our last newsletter there have been a number of events and news pieces concerning operational rail safety.

1 – Transport Safety Victoria in its June 2018 news reported on a number of Light Rail and heritage rail incidents that have occurred in the UK, Ireland and Belgium. It is recommended that managers and workers responsible for railway safety review these. See <https://transportsafety.vic.gov.au/rail-safety/newsroom/recent-incident-reports> The newsletter itself can be accessed through <https://transportsafety.vic.gov.au/rail-safety/newsroom> It has a number of documents that should be reviewed as well on the use of standards, asset management, governance, risk basements and electrical safety.

2 – Tram Over speed on curve in Sheffield – in a Rail Accident Investigation Branch Report published on 28/9/18, a tram on the Sheffield system entered a curve at 37kmph (23mph) against the permitted speed of 16kmph (10mph). The driver applied the emergency brake which resulted in an injury to a passenger. The report can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safety-digest-102018-middlewood-road/tram-overspeeding-on-a-curve-sheffield-19-july-2018>

The incident demonstrated the importance of situational awareness by the drivers taking care at high risk locations, need of operators to ensure that appropriate mitigations are in place and the risk of passengers being thrown against the interior or even out of the tram in such a situation.

3. The New Zealand Regulator (NZTA) has just announced a funding review which is likely to have an impact on the rail safety administration costs for all NZ rail operators, including tramways. COTMA together with FRONZ will be supporting member groups in a submission process now underway -closing date 21 November.

## International News

### Belgium Tram Museums

In Belgium there are some eight Museum tram operations including major museums in two of the cities operating trams. An excellent range of electric, steam and diesel powered trams. Belgium once had a

wealth of small metre gauge lines and many of the tramcars and some lines have been preserved. We recently received a brochure giving their locations, operating hours and websites. Our Communications Manager has visited a number of them and they are well recommended to consider if you are planning a visit to Belgium. For the web link see: <http://cotma.org.au/news/Belgium-Tram-Museums-2018.pdf>

### Amsterdam Tram Museum

In an email received late June, we read that the Amsterdam tram museum depot which operates along a semi-rural line in the outskirts of Amsterdam was under threat. The depot is in an area that has been earmarked for housing development. The news link on their website gives details of their current status. See <https://museumtramlijn.org/EN/news.php> They are running a much-shortened line since a visit by the Communications Manager during May 2017.

### Finnish Tram Museum Helsinki and De-accessioning

In late June, COTMA became aware of the downsizing of the Helsinki Tram Museum at a former tram depot and that some trams were being disposed of. For the background see: <http://railpage.com.au/news/s/helsinki-giving-away-trams-to-collectors>

The Museum, part of the Helsinki City Museum network did not seem to mention anything on their website as such. After a bit of searching, an English language document, 2016, on downsizing a number of collections in Finland including the city trams was located. See: [https://issuu.com/suomen\\_museot/docs/deaccessioning\\_sharing\\_experiences](https://issuu.com/suomen_museot/docs/deaccessioning_sharing_experiences)

The two most relevant pages are numbers 44 and 46. The criteria listed on page 44 in the white box is detailed, though gives a wide scope of application.

### Milan – stored trams

During the COTMA Conference we received an email from an interested person in the USA about the large number of stored trams in a Milan depot. At this time there is no further advice as what may happen to them, but reading the message, reminded us of the situation of Newport Workshops, though only about a quarter of the number of trams.

### Seaton Tramway

It's not all doom and gloom in Tram Museums. The English 838mm gauge Seaton Tramway, <https://www.tram.co.uk> opened its new station building at Seaton on Saturday August 11. After weeks of hot sunshine it turned to rain! Question: What is their most popular tramcar? See page 8.

### Wanted – GE57 600V Motor

COTMA Received a request late August from the NSW Dept of Finance, Services and Innovation seeking a GE57, 600V Traction motor to give them a spare for the Pyrmont Bridge in Sydney. If you just happen to know of one lying around, even if in poor condition and a need of a rebuild, let us know and we will put you into contact with the relevant person in Sydney. The bridge has a great set of tramway looking controllers to operate it.

### Coming Soon – Australasian Tramway Atlas

Soon to be published is an Illustrated Tramway Atlas of Australia and New Zealand. Very comprehensive and will be current in terms of the new Australian Tramways as planned at the time of publication. It has been prepared by Hugh Ballment and Carl Segnit.

## New Australian Railway and Tramway Website

Recently launched is a new website, <https://www.railtram.com.au/> exploring the major facets of Australian Railways and Tramways. Presents lots of interesting facts with many links to the various heritage operators. It is well worth checking out, a lot of work in compiling it has gone into it. Can we suggest you check your Museum entry too.

## Forthcoming Conferences and Events

**FRONZ** - The next Federation of Rail Organisations - <https://www.fronz.org.nz/> - of NZ conference will be held in Timaru from Friday 31 May to Monday 3 June 2019 and hosted by the Pleasant Point Railway.

**COTMA** – the next COTMA Conference will be hosted by Bendigo Heritage Attractions in 2020.

**SteamFest – Tasmania** – the annual Great Rail Experience tour of Tasmania including the Tasmanian Transport Museum in Hobart, the Launceston Tramway Museum and Famous SteamFest at Sheffield takes place from Sat 9 March to Sat 16 March. Details can be found at <http://www.tours.greatrailexperiencetasmania.com.au/>

## News from the Members

### Track upgrade grant for Ballarat

The Ballarat Tramway Museum was recently granted \$200,000 from a Victorian Government *Pick My Project* community-based voting funding scheme. Along with matching funding from the City of Ballarat this will enable the commencement of the reconstruction of the Wendouree Parade Tram track. For my details see: <https://pickmyproject.vic.gov.au/>

### Variotram arrives at Loftus

The Sydney Tramway Museum took delivery of the 1997 Sydney Variotram 2107 on the night of the 10/11 October. The tram remains the property of the NSW State Government with the Museum “caring” for the tram. It took some three years and a lot of paperwork to achieve this outcome. It is the Museum’s largest exhibit. For more details see: <http://www.sydneytramwaymuseum.com.au/tramfans/sydney-variortram-2107-arrives-at-loftus/>



Variortram 2107 in service in 2005 – Photo by Mal Rowe



## ATHRA News

The latest news from the Association of Tourist & Heritage Rail Australia (ATHRA) can be seen on a blog page at: <https://athranews.wordpress.com/> You can sign up to receive these blogs by email if you wish or place a bookmark in your browser.

## Vale Robert Paroissien

COTMA's financial Auditor for many years, Robert Paroissien recently passed away, aged 75. Robert undertook the work pro bono. Our condolences to his family.

And Seaton's most popular tram is:



The "Pink One" – Photo by Warren Doubleday at Seaton – 19-5-2017.



PET's Fremantle No. 29 outside the Whiteman Park Café. Photo Warren Doubleday 17-9-2018.