

Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

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News Update September 2017



Cross promotion by the Victorian SEC

From the Chairman

Welcome to our fourth COTMA News Update for 2017.

In this issue we report on possible progress on the future of the trams at Newport, summarise the feedback from a recent questionnaire sent to attendees at last year's COTMA conference in Christchurch, provide some news about next year's conference in Perth and report back on the COTMA AGM and Executive meeting held in Melbourne in August and a update on Museums Aotearoa Working Objects Guidelines.

As the years roll on, more of our member museums will reach a significant milestone - 50 years of operation, which in some cases exceeds that of their local tram system. In Auckland the Western Springs Tramway, MOTAT commenced operations on Saturday 16 December 1967, with just two trams (Auckland "Streamliner" No. 253 and Wellington Fiduccia No. 257) and this will be recognised and celebrated 50 years on over the weekend of 16-17 December 2017. Meanwhile in Christchurch, on Saturday 6 January 2018 it will be exactly 50 years since the start of steam tram operation on the then short completed section of the Ferrymead tramway on 6 Jan 1968, and this will be re-enacted on the day with an evening gathering to follow. Sixty years ago, the Adelaide based Australian Electric Traction Museum was formed and during August 1958, trams were first taken to the St Kilda site. The Museum is celebrating this event during the first weekend of October.

Congratulations to all involved and well done those who were there 50 or 60 years ago and are still active with their group.

Once again it is exciting to note the on-going progress with the new light rail/ tram systems and extensions proceeding apace in Australia and as I write this the very closely fought New Zealand General Election campaign is reaching its climax. One of the hotly debated issues is about public transport and rail v road spending and some of the parties are actively promoting/promising light rail for Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch! Watch this space!

The latest issue of the FRONZ Journal has news on the re-opening of the Auckland Dockline tram, relocation of ex Sydney 1808 from Auckland to Christchurch and the Dunedin Heritage Light Rail Trust. For the journal: https://www.fronz.org.nz/magazines/FRONZ_Journal_169_Sep_2017.pdf

Dave Hinman

Trams at Newport – next steps

Over a period of a couple of decades, very few Melbourne trams have been scrapped – they have either been presented to tramway museums or similar bodies or stored in the former Victorian Railways workshops in Newport. Newport also holds a small number of recognised heritage trams

either owned by VicTrack or tramway museum groups. There are now over 200 trams at Newport in various states of repair ranging from rusty, rotten shells to complete trams not far away from being operational.

The Transport Ministry, through its property owner agency VicTrack, want to work out a process to deal with these trams and is setting up a review group to make recommendations to the Minister. COTMA has been asked to nominate a representative to the group to provide some advice on historical significance of particular vehicles and to serve as a conduit for requests for vehicles or parts thereof for heritage operators. The COTMA executive committee has nominated Mal Rowe for this role. At the time of writing no formal invitation to participate has been sent to COTMA or Mal Rowe, but this is expected soon.

As a preliminary exercise, Mal visited Newport in early September with former VicTrack heritage officer Mike Ryan and inspected the scene.

Most of the 200 trams are SW5, SW6, W6 and W7 classes, but there are also two W2s, a Sydney R class, a Victorian Railways crossbench tram, a bogie cable tram trailer (owned by TMSV) and a pair of broad gauge Brill 77E trucks (owned by STM). There are also three trams belonging to the Tramcar 568 group and 15 trams from the 1990s “Art Trams” series. While most are stored under cover in the former East Block of the workshops, the recent arrivals have been “plonked” in the open dotted around the Workshop.

The terms of reference of the review group are not yet known, but it is expected that some trams will be retained at Newport or elsewhere and many will be available for museums or other groups either complete or as sources of parts for heritage trams already held.

This could be your last chance to obtain important parts – or perhaps even additional trams. Mal will keep COTMA member informed as the process develops. Please start to think about what your needs might be NOW, and appoint a contact / liaison person who is able to respond promptly to COTMA about any opportunities

The 2016 COTMA conference – your feedback

The 48 participants in the 2016 COTMA conference in Christchurch who provided email addresses were invited to complete a survey with regard to the conference. 21 responses have been received and the response is overwhelmingly positive.

The results so far, are available on both the COTMA website and accompany this edition of News Update in the original E-mail sent out to those who are on our contact list.

In summary, there was a very positive response to all aspects of the conference with approval ratings between 90% and 70%. Clear favourites were presentations on museum practicalities ranging from marketing and development to painting techniques and safety management. In a question on cost, most participants were prepared to accept current costs rather than drop the quality in an attempt to reduce costs.

The survey is still open if others who attended in Christchurch want to express their views – just go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7Q8T8RV>

A paper copy of the questionnaire is available – just send your mailing address to COTMA at: **Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia, PO Box 6172, HAWTHORN WEST VIC 3122, Australia**

COTMA Conference 2018 – more information

Planning is going well for the 2018 Conference to be held in Perth from Thursday 13 September to Tuesday 18 September. Events planned so far are:

- Thursday 13 - Registrations and opening function
- Sunday 16 – formal dinner with Achievement Awards
- Monday 17 – visit to Whitman Park
- Tuesday 18 – Conference General Meeting.

Included in the current planning is a possible visit to the new Forreestfield Railway Works.

Post Conference Tour:

Depart Perth Wednesday 19, now planned to return to Perth on Sunday 23 September instead of the Monday. The revised plan includes a day at Dwellingup for the Hotham Valley Railway Steam-fest on Sunday 23rd.

COTMA AGM – 25 July 2017

The COTMA AGM was held as scheduled on the 25th of July. The Annual Financial Report was accepted by the meeting. The possibility of NZ members to paying their fees into an NZ based account based on a nominated NZ dollar amount was raised. This will be further discussed at the 2018 COTMA Conference General meeting.

COTMA Executive Meeting July 2017

An Executive meeting followed the AGM and was completed the following day with those Executive Members who able to attend. Outcomes were:

- As an interim arrangement, Warren Doubleday, our Communications Manager has filled the temporary vacant position of Assistant Executive Officer.
- Melbourne Tram Museum (Hawthorn) was accepted as an Affiliate Member.
- Walhalla Goldfields Railway have indicated an interest in joining COTMA. They are currently converting an ex Melbourne X1 to a narrow gauge “tram”.
- Discussed the matter of PC5 controllers and spare parts for these controllers. The Executive Committee agreed that:
 - The priority in allocation of PC5 components and controllers should be to restore additional identified trams, not as a bank of spare parts for the H type trams.
 - H type tram maintenance should be based on repair and rehabilitation of existing components. It is suggested that a museum may wish to take this on as an enterprise – maintaining a pool of spares based on a trade-in and refurbish model.
 - The summary document needs more work – including a better stocktake of what is in store at AETM. Peter Hyde & Mal Rowe will look into this in connection with a visit to Adelaide related to H type seats for WGR.
- Sale of Adelaide H class seats to the Walhalla Goldfields Railway endorsed.
- Monitoring of component availability for our members.
- Decided not to renew our membership of the International Association of Transport Museums.
- The proposal of the Association of Tourist and Heritage Railways Australia (ATHRA) to move from a “federal” system of state based organisation being members to an individual organisation membership was noted.
- Updating of the Conference Guidelines
- Next meeting will be in March 2018 in either Melbourne or Sydney.

Museums Aotearoa – Working Objects Guideline

At the time of writing it would appear that we have further work to do with Museums Aotearoa (NZ) in understanding our concerns with their Working Objects Guideline, despite having our concerns expressed during the recent FRONZ conference in Dunedin in June 2017. An article in the September edition of Museums Aotearoa Quarterly, which included some MOTAT tram images, seems to suggest no change from the draft Guidelines as published last year. COTMA will continue to work with FRONZ to express our problems with this document.

Disposal of Z1 trams - correction

In the last edition of COTMA update it was implied that Z1 78 (in the picture below) was going to scrap. In fact it seems that the car has gone to the Melbourne Fire Brigade – as a training aid in firefighting/motor vehicle incidents with trams.



New Member

The Executive welcomes on-board the Melbourne Tram Museum Inc. This Museum is based at the former Hawthorn Tram Depot and was previously known as the Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot Inc. The organisation has been renamed after a new set of rules were adopted last year. The reorganisation has changed the way that VicTrack representatives were involved in the management of the organisation. The Museum is entering into a Community Lease with VicTrack who will continue to be involved in the maintenance of the building.

The Museum advised that it has recently arranged with VicTrack for Z101 to be stored under cover at Newport Workshops.

Late News – Fatal Tram Accident Croydon UK.

Members and readers will be aware of the 9 November 2016 fatal accident that occurred at Croydon London. The Rail Accident Investigation Branch has just released an update into this event which seven people suffered fatal injuries. This update provides the key recommendations likely to be addressed by UK tram operators. The update can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fatal-tram-accident-in-croydon>