



# Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

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

## News Update – March 2011

### From the Chairman

The devastating news of Christchurch's February earthquake was a frequent discussion point at the recent Sydney Vintage Tramway Festival. Our thoughts remain with the Members, volunteers and staff of both the Tramway Historical Society at Ferrymead and the Christchurch Tramway in the city itself. Many have lost their homes or they have been substantially damaged as well. The damage to the city has been immense, not only in structural damage but to the very essence of the city. It will take many years for it to physically recover. I plan to visit Ferrymead during early May and catch up with the workers there.

In the meantime, the Sydney Vintage Tramway Festival, timed with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the closure of the Sydney tramway system was very well attended by COTMA members from around Australia and New Zealand, many who assisted the Sydney Tramway Museum on the day. Congratulations to all who were involved.

The Ballarat Tramway Museum is celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its formation at the end of May 2011. Further details will soon be available from the BTM web site; [www.btm.org.au](http://www.btm.org.au) All these events are good opportunities for COTMA members to renew friendships and assist in the ongoing management of our own organisations.

### 2012 COTMA Conference

The 2012 COTMA Conference, hosted by the St Kilda Tramway Museum Adelaide (AETM) is planned to be held during August 2012. As soon as the proposed dates are known, an E-mail will be sent to all Members and friends and the web site updated. Post Conference and Partners are being organised by Richard Gilbert and Simon Green respectively.

### COTMA Technical Library

The COTMA Technical Library has been well received by users. However further contributions are always welcome. If you have any tramway related technical document, that is not already in our library such as those in your Museum collection, personal collections included, and you would like to make it available to the wider tramway museum community, please contact the Chairman. Arrangements can then be made to make it happen.

ATHRA is considering an equivalent railway based service as well. The cost of storing files on a web site server and downloading costs have dropped dramatically in recent years, therefore we are taking advantage of this situation as well.

### ATHRA News

Many of our members will have seen the March 2011 ATHRA newsletter issued via ATHRA to its members; it can be accessed via the ATHRA web site.

Comments received on the ATHRA Training documents are currently being incorporated within the document and following completion should be made available to members for customisation for their own situation. It is considered that many of our Members will have current documents that will incorporate the Skill Council Competency Standard requirements, but when you revise your documents, the layout concepts provided in the ATHRA materials may be of benefit in taking your training document formats into a more comprehensive set that includes information for Mentors.

Another outcome of the ATHRA meeting is the proposal of the development group who developed the Rail Industry Safety and Standards (RISSB) Boiler Code for Steam Locomotives (soon to be published) is the proposal to prepare Guideline documents that can be used in the maintenance of railway locomotives and rollingstock. Ian Seymour has expressed interest in forming a group of people to prepare a similar tramcar maintenance document through RISSB.

### **Theft of Copper and other Materials**

Theft of copper from tramcars – some years ago, the Sydney Tramway Museum lost copper tramcar wiring on stored tramcars. A similar cautionary event from Europe courtesy of the March 2011 FEDECRAIL newsletter:

“Some members may have heard of the recent theft at the Electric Museum Tram of Amsterdam. Copper thieves had a free play during one or more nights and stripped several historic trams, up to a worth of say €200. However, the damage was estimated at maybe as much as €100,000. This is typical for the kind of relation between stolen (copper) material and the situation left behind.

Several members will have installed burglar and fire alarms. In the past I used to think that a burglar may “just” be taking away a valuable item with the “good” intention to sell the same, so a burglar alarm would be less needed than a fire alarm. Fires destroy; they do not offer anything back to the market. But given the amount of damage and the negative intentions of copper thieves towards the historic and cultural values, I think that both alarms are equally relevant. Furthermore you may want to inspect your premises also in their remote corners on a very regular basis so as to spot thefts at an early stage.”

### **Forthcoming Conferences of Interest**

#### **2011 IATM Conference**

John Radcliffe advises that the 2011 International Association of Transport Museum Conference will be hosted by Dr Sam Mullins, Director of the London Transport Museum, Covent Gardens, London, from June 26 to July 1 2011. The Conference brochure can be downloaded from the COTMA Web site (under the Newsletters Tab – along with the suggested hotels and booking form). Early Bird Registrations close 15/4/2011. COTMA is a member of the IATM.

#### **2011 – Nordic Tramway Museums**

The Museum Tramway Associations of Norway are planning to host the Nordic Tramway Conference 2011 in Bergen Norway Sept. 16 to 18, 2011. Bergen has recently opened a new tramway network. Further details from the Chairman ([cotma@cotma.org.au](mailto:cotma@cotma.org.au)) if you are interested.

#### **International Rail Safety Conference – Melbourne**

The International Rail Safety Conference is scheduled to be held in Melbourne between Sunday Oct 16, 2011 and Friday 21, 2011. For the first time, the conference will include Tourist and Heritage rail operations and Light Rail. Field visits are planned to Puffing Billy and Bendigo (trams). Further information from [www.irsc2011.org](http://www.irsc2011.org) The ATHRA AGM and Meetings will be held on Sat Oct 15 and Sun. Oct 16 in Melbourne prior to the IRSC Conference.

#### **WATTRAIN Conference – 2012**

The World Association of Tourist Trams and Trains (WATTRAIN) is planning to hold a conference in York England from Wed. Oct 3 to Friday Oct 6. A preconference visit to the National Tramway Museum at Crich is planned as well. See <http://www.wattrain.vintagecarriagetrust.org/news.htm> for further information.

**Next News Update – May 2011.**