



Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

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News Update – April - May 2007

From the Chairman

I am taking the opportunity, complete with walking stick, to attend the [FEDECRAIL](#) conference in Odense and Copenhagen during late April early May. It will be good to see what other peak organisation rail heritage bodies are discussing at their meetings. I am looking forward to building relationships with other volunteer based rail heritage organisations as well as visiting a number of rail heritage operations. While in Denmark, I will be visiting the Danish Tramway Museum and catching up with Mikael Lund who attended the 2006 COTMA Conference in Melbourne. I am planning to visit the tramway museums in Berlin, Innsbruck and Cologne. It will be very interesting to see what they are doing and what we can learn from them. More in the next *News Update*. Return to Melbourne is planned for 14 May 2007.

Vale Jack Richardson

We recently learnt of the death of Jack Richardson, well known author / publisher of tramway books. Thanks to Paul Nicholson for the following details:

“Jack died in Brisbane on Tuesday 10 April 2007) after a long illness. We will remember Jack as a pioneer transport enthusiast publisher - Traction Publications. I had a close involvement with him when he took over publication Green Over Red from 1969 to 1972. He was involved in other magazines including "*Tram Tracks*", "*Electric Traction*" and "*Railways in Australia*". Jack's tramway titles were legendary - the Destination series especially - and his enthusiastic reporting of publication schedules – in preparation/ready soon/available shortly - became part of enthusiast folklore. Then there was the "Along the Line" series of pictorials. Not brilliant by today's standards but excellent value in their day and always priced with the limited budgets of the keen young enthusiasts in mind. Jack wrote many articles and like many enthusiasts of the era often used a pen name; C S Ley. He had an interesting career - in the Navy - and more recently operating a number of shops. I last saw Jack at a funeral in Brisbane in 2003 and before that at the Chinese shop he and his wife, Yin, operated in Canberra City.”

ATHRA Meeting

The recent Association of Tourist and Heritage Rail Australia ([ATHRA](#)) meeting in Perth on the weekend of 16 to 18th March was very successful. COTMA attendees were; Warren Doubleday, Chairman; Ian Seymour, Australian Museum Liaison Officer; Peter Hyde, BTMS; and Mike Stukely and Lindsay Richardson of PETS. The meeting was held at Whiteman Park. The meeting was extremely productive and, apart from building strong relationships with people from Western Australia, set in motion some key developments for ATHRA. For the sector as a whole, the issues of regulations, rules, training and assessment continue to hold a key focus. COTMA continues to work closely with ATHRA and is providing comment on NTC produced guidelines and other regulatory documents; for example a submission to the NSW draft Rail Safety Act concerning exemption from the potential prosecution of volunteers workers.

Projects coming out of the ATHRA meeting will be the promotion of the United Kingdom *Thief Watch* programme and working together with the Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand ([FRONZ](#)) to expand their *Supplier Guide* for all Australasian rail organisations. A copy of the current guide, maintained by Bruce Shalders of the Canterbury Railway Society (Ferrymead) is appended to the electronic version of this News Update.

There has been one ATHRA Alert issued since the last News Update:

Alert No. 30 – [Derailments - How the Various Factors can Line Up](#)

NTC Draft Guidelines

The draft NTC guideline documents can be downloaded from the NTC web site at <http://www.ntc.gov.au/Default.aspx?page=A02209228301080020>. Submissions on these guidelines close on 6 May 2007. COTMA will be working with ATHRA to provide comments on these documents as necessary.

Openings

The extension to [MOTAT](#) 2 from the Zoo, recently completed by the Western Springs Tramway Auckland will be formally opened by the New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark on Friday 27th April 2007. The [Canterbury Railway Society](#) (Ferrymead Heritage Park, Christchurch) have advised that they will be inaugurating the electric railway at Ferrymead on Saturday June 9 2007. This follows the FRONZ Conference in Dunedin the previous weekend. Congratulations to both organisations for a great achievement.

Wheels for MMTB No. 15 Trucks

One item that was brought up at the recent Melbourne COTMA Conference was the supply of new wheels for MMTB No. 15 trucks. Given that the current condition of the wheels of ex Melbourne trams being made available to COTMA Museums through Victrack are generally very poor, that is nearly worn out, we have made some preliminary enquiries on costs for new wheels. Initial enquiries have been made through EDI Newport Workshops who undertake the truck maintenance work for Yarra Trams. The estimated cost for the supply of a wheel (solid 28" or 711mm) is \$1200 each and about \$3500 to machine and fit to an existing axle. That is, it would cost in the order of \$24,000 to fit an existing bogie tram with new wheels. As always, volume is likely to reduce costs and alternative methods to fit the wheels to axles are likely to be available, with some Members having this capacity to do in-house.

At this time, the COTMA Executive would like to know how many set of wheels (that is 8 wheels per tram) for No. 15 trucks, Members would be interested in obtaining. This information will give us a lead in obtaining a price range for purchasing the solid wheels by themselves at this stage.

POSSIBLE MEMBER ACTION: Would Members please advise the [Chairman](#) by the end of May 2007 of the number of sets of No. 15 truck wheels that they would be interesting in obtaining for their trams. If these wheels would fit or are suitable for other trucks, then these can be included as well, but they should be flagged as such.

COTMA 2008 Conference - Launceston

Planning is well underway for the 2008 conference by the Launceston Tramway Museum. Preliminary details should be able to provided in the next News Update.

Next News Update – June 2007.