

Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

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News Update – September/October 2007

From the Chairman

In a recent submission prepared jointly with the Association of Tourist and Heritage Rail Australia (ATHRA), to the NSW Rail Safety Regulator commenting on their draft regulations, it was noted:

“The costs in terms of volunteer hours to prepare the necessary documentation can be very large. One operator has advised us that it has already undertaken 1200 hours of work to bring their operation into compliance with the National Accreditation Package. They will have to now spend many additional hours now to bring their SMS into compliance with these Regulations.

The cost impact to the organisation in having their volunteer time diverted from other tasks such as physically carrying out conservation/maintenance work, preparing funding requests or operating trains to earn the necessary funds can be very large in the overall proportion of available volunteer hours. This can make small volunteer organisations no longer viable not only in dollar terms, but in labour availability. Suitable remuneration and labour compensation or through exemption will required to be addressed.”

While the figure of 1200 hours may be a surprise to many, though not to those actually doing the work, it just shows how many hours of work are involved in order to keep up with the ever changing regulatory environment. COTMA along with ATHRA are trying to get the message across to the Regulators just how much work is involved in all of this. Keeping records of the hours of work involved will be of benefit to us.

Any Member wishing to see the ATHRA submission to the NSW Regulator, please contact the Chairman via E-mail – tramwad@alphalink.com.au COTMA provided a supporting letter.

Welcome

Welcome to the Australian Railway Historical Society (Vic Div) as an Affiliate member. The ARHS is the owner of VR53 which was recently restored to operating condition and used on the COTMA Conference 2006 tour. They also own two other VR tram bodies.

Address List

Appended to the electronic version of this News Update is an up to date address list of COTMA Members and Executive Officers, with email addresses etc. Note the change of mailing address for the AETM St Kilda and email address for Western Springs Tramway.

A Nordic COTMA

Howard Clark, COTMA Treasurer, during mid September attended the Nordic (Scandinavian COTMA) Tramway conference in Oslo and was made very welcome by all. This followed an invitation by Mikael Lund, Denmark during Howard's private trip to Sweden which coincided with the Conference. Howard reported that they gave him a half hour slot and he presented an item on COTMA and its activities.

There were at least eight different cities represented at the conference. There were profuse apologies to Howard at the start that the language of the conference was local. He responded by saying that our interest in tramways was a universal language and that he was pleased and

honoured to be there; to applause. In fact he was able to follow the gist of most presentations, and of course with assistance from Mikael, when a joke was made and some technical details..

The commonality is amazing in many ways, as for instance the Helsinki group had restored an old drop centre timber car which had been built into a house on an island near Helsinki about 70 years ago.

The 2008 conference is in Helsinki during mid September.

ATHRA meeting Report

The September ATHRA meeting in Adelaide was well attended by the various State Organisations Associate Members, the Australasian Railway Association (ARA) the SA regulator; and the NSW Regulator representatives for part, although the NSW umbrella organisation was not represented. COTMA was represented by the Chairman. Peter Hyde and Ian Seymour also attended the meeting, as representatives of their state organisations. .

The meeting covered many topics, including Rail Safety, Competency Assessment and training. The ARA, through its Standards making body, the Rail Industry Safety and Standards Board (RISSB), presented an update on its work and the preparation of a "Code of Practice for Boilers on Steam Locomotives" for railway locomotive boilers. ATHRA will be a major stakeholder along with other locomotive operators. All parties will be able to contribute and be involved, as part of the RISSB process. The Code will also provide guidance to boiler inspections as well.

ATHRA's newsletter, *Cinders and Ashes*, currently in production, will have a comprehensive report on the meeting. It can be subscribed to directly by following the links on <http://www.athra.asn.au/newsletter.htm> Past issues can also be viewed or downloaded.

ATHRA is now recognised by the Regulators and Industry as representing the Tourist and Heritage Rail Sector in Australia, The close working relationship between COTMA and AHTRA is showing benefits. The next AHTRA meeting is in Canberra, during mid March 2008. All sector workers are welcome to attend.

Tram Equipment for NZ COTMA Members

COTMA, working with VicTrack, has seen three COTMA NZ members recently acquire equipment for their needs.

Auckland to keep their W's operational and Wanganui to enable their 1912 Boon built tram to be returned to actual operation in the near future. Electrical and mechanical parts were provided to the Tramways Wanganui Trust through the dismantling of a suitable ex Melbourne tram at Bendigo Tramways. The Trust sent to people to Bendigo to assist and to find out how the whole jigsaw goes together again on a tram. Rod Atkins has been arranging the usual container transportation services that are needed to send this equipment to NZ. The Tramways Wanganui Trust have recently launched a web site on this excellent community based project. It can be seen at: <http://tramwayswanganui.org.nz/index.php>

Craig Tooke and Rod Atkins have been busy working on arranging shipping of a surplus tramway power transformer and other equipment from Melbourne to Christchurch for the Tramway Historical Society's heritage power station project. This follows on from last year's shipment of a surplus rotary converter to Christchurch. It is taking a fair bit of work as preparing for shipment an eight tonne object that requires an open top container is not as easy as it sounds.

Heritage Registration of NMETL 13 / MMTB V214

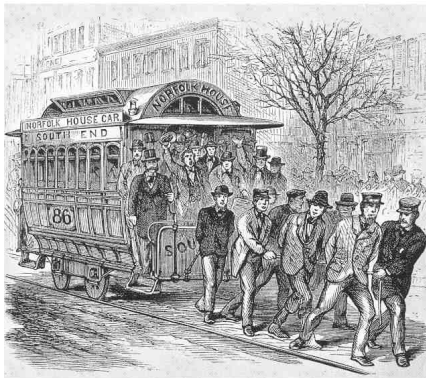
Heritage Victoria has recently advertised the proposal to formally add to the State Heritage Register crossbench single truck tram, The North Melbourne Electric Tramways and Lighting Company No. 13, also known as MMTB V214. The Chairman, along with other COTMA Members have been working with VicTrack (the tram's owner) and Heritage Victoria on the submission

and the structure of the permit exemptions – eg the maintenance and repair of wearing components. This is the first rail heritage vehicle to be considered for formal heritage recognition in Victoria.

Helping each other with information

Got a maintenance problem or restoration query that you can't quite find a solution for, don't forget to ask fellow COTMA members who may know the answer or some good ideas. An email to the Chairman will be referred onto others who may be able to find or offer a solution. This worked well recently when Denmark had a query re gears and Auckland was trying to find dimensional information on motors etc.

Horse Flu



Horse Flu? - well yes it affected one of our Members recently; the Victor Harbor Horse Tram service. They ceased operations for a few days following the outbreak of the equine flu in Australia. Fortunately SA has remained free of this easily transmitted flu. It reminded Peter Hyde, President BTMS during the ATHRA conference in Adelaide of the Great Epizootic of 1872 in which horse tram services were maintained in Boston because of the drivers and conductors offering to pull the horse trams by hand. The US Library of Congress image from page 24, of William D. Middleton, *The Time of Trolley*, Kalmbach Publishing Co, Milwaukee Wisconsin 1967.

How to Lose a Volunteer in 7 Days

What group couldn't do with a bit more help? What group doesn't need more volunteers?

Attached to the email version of the News Update is article on what not do, or how to lose a volunteer in 7 days. It is from the September 2007 Newsletter of Our Community Matters www.ourcommunity.com.au, a well worthwhile web site full of information. The article can also be downloaded from the COTMA web site, www.cotma.org.au, latest news tab.

Executive Meeting

The recent meeting of the COTMA Executive in Melbourne considered a number of matters. These included:

- Finalisation of the COTMA Strategic Plan (can be viewed on the COTMA web site)
- Planning for the Launceston COTMA Conference
- Relationships with VicTrack, ATHRA and FRONZ
- Rail Safety
- Training / Competency standards – TDT work
- Understanding of Street Tramways by the Regulator
- Disposal of redundant equipment – protocols and progress.

The next meeting of the Executive will held in Sydney, at this time proposed for the weekend of 9/10 February 2008.

Melbourne Destination Boxes (Modern Ones – Non W)

Yarra Trams is currently changing over the type of destination boxes on its operating fleet (Z3's and A's) to a bright dot matrix type. This means that a number of older electronic destination type boxes we understand complete with controllers are available to COTMA members. Any Member interested in obtaining any of these, or for further information please contact Rod Atkins (ozrod_au@yahoo.com) by the end of December. Members will be responsible for arranging shipping.

Don't be Complacent

An extract from the recent issue of Sidelines (No. 92) of the UK Heritage Railway Association is an important reminder regarding our responsibilities for learning from incidents, within Australia, New Zealand and overseas. These can be relatively easily found on various web sites of Safety Investigators and Regulators. COTMA has also provided links to these reports where relevant to our sector.

“During recent discussions with RAIB and HMRI it became clear that there are concerns that some railway and tramway undertakings may not be taking their obligations seriously enough. We would encourage all member Railways and Tramways to review ALL of the RAIB Accident reports, including those for the National Network, to see what lessons can be learnt from them (These reports are freely available on the web from: www.raib.gov.uk under the section publications - Investigation Reports) It has been reported that when some railway or tramway operations not directly involved are discussing the recommendations of RAIB reports, a degree of complacency is apparent. Statements such as "Could not happen here", "Why didn't they obey the Rules", "we would never allow that" have been heard. On first hearing this is gratifying, as it shows that most undertakings take their operational obligations seriously. However upon reflection, and an examination of some of the reports which refer to incidents on substantial undertakings, there is just the possibility that this is demonstrating a degree of complacency. We would urge all railway and tramway undertakings to review their systems and procedures as well as their methods of ensuring compliance to those systems and procedures to ensure that they are sufficiently robust for the task.”

COTMA Conference 2008

The 2008 COTMA Conference is being hosted by the Launceston Tramway Museum Society (LTM). It is planned to commence on Friday 22 August and conclude with the Conference General meeting on Tuesday 26 August. The conference will be based at Inveresk Precinct, the site of the former Tasmanian Government Railways workshops and railway yards. It is now the home of the LTM and the Queen Victoria Museum which includes many parts of the former workshops as exhibits in their own rights. While in Launceston, visits to Don River and other transport museums are being planned for.

Following the conference, a post conference tour is being organised, including visits to Wee Georgie Wood, West Coast Wilderness Railway, and the Tasmanian Transport Museum in Hobart. The post conference tour will conclude in Hobart the following weekend, August 30/31.

Don't forget that your entry for the COTMA Achievement Awards will be due by the end of June 2008. More details in the next COTMA News Update.

Groups Tasmania will be handling the bookings and they will be offering accommodation at a range of places and prices from Pubs to four star hotels. Details will shortly be sent to past participants and those who have registered with the LTM. Conference details and links to the booking agency will soon be available on the COTMA web site: A registration of interest can be made by sending an email to the organiser - ltms2008@iprimus.com.au

Call for Conference Papers

A copy of the “Call for Conference” papers is attached to this News Update and the electronic Version.

Appended to Electronic Version of this COTMA News Update

- Revised address list of COTMA Members.
- How to lose a Volunteer in 7 day
- Call for Papers for the 2008 COTMA Conference.

Next News update - December 2007.