

# TRAMLINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM INC

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## COMING EVENTS

**Fish & Chip and Film Evening – Saturday June 18<sup>th</sup> –**  
***to mark the shortest day of the year – or close to it!***

**The place:** The Tramway Museum, MacKay's Crossing

**The time:** 6 pm – 9 pm approx.

**The food:** Fish & Chips / Tea / coffee – will be provided.

**The cost:** \$5 per person to cover these food and other costs.

**Please bring your own cold drinks**

**Tram 239 will be turned into a theatrette for the occasion – with heating!**

**The films will include:**

- ☛ **“Around Port Nicholson in the 1950's”** (with lots of Wellington tram scenes),
- ☛ **“Hurry Hurry”** – a famous W C Fields comedy: and then, as the main feature,
- ☛ **“Malcolm”** – the story of a Melbourne tramway employee who gets sacked and decides to build his own tram and use it on the Melbourne tram system.

***For catering purposes please let Richard Gray know (by Weds. June 15<sup>th</sup>) that you will be there. Contact [rmgray@paradise.net.nz](mailto:rmgray@paradise.net.nz), phone 236-6693.***

**AN EVENING TO REMEMBER!**

## SUCCESSFUL ANNIVERSARY DINNER HELD:

Around 30 members and friends gathered at Porirua's Mungavin Blues restaurant on Saturday evening 7 May to mark our regular anniversary – 41

years since the May 2 1964 final closure of the Wellington system, and 40 years on from May 2 1965 which saw our first really public running under power at the Museum. Special thanks to Keith McGavin for his fine speech recalling that day in 1965 and the behind-the-scenes circumstances all too easily forgotten! (see later in this *Tramlines* a reprint from *Tramway Topics* June 1965 about that day)

### TRAM STATISTICS

Running sheets to gather these statistics began on 26/12/03. Each *Tramlines* updates the statistics from the previous issue; as time goes on this will give some very useful comparative and trend data.

Here are the tram operating statistics for April and May 2005. Tram 239 continues as the “workhorse” doing about five times the kilometres of the other trams combined in April and May. During this time of the year the weather conditions certainly make the *Fiducia* a more attractive tram on most days for the passengers – so roll on 260’s restoration! (see note below).

	DAYS USED			
	Tram 151	Tram 159	Tram 238	Tram 239
YEAR to 24/12/04	19	52	3	115
26/12/04 – Mar 05	1	26	0	48
Apr 05	1	0	0	12
May 05	1	3	0	10
<b>Total days in use (17 months)</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>185</b>

	KILOMETRES TRAVELLED*				Total
	Tram 151	Tram 159	Tram 238	Tram 239	
YEAR to 24/12/04	364	945	12	2,817	4,138
26/12/04 – Mar 05	8	450	0	1,242	1,700
Apr 05	15	0	0	251	266
May 05	8	71	0	201	280
<b>Total kilometres travelled* (17 months)</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>1,466</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4,511</b>	<b>6,384</b>

\*Distance travelled excludes around depot area.

### RESTORATION – 260

Good progress continues to be made on this long-running job. The target is still to reach a significant milestone by this coming December – 53 years since she first rolled out into service from Kilbirnie workshops. Trevor Burling is heading this project and welcomes new hands to this team – phone 234-7199.

### RESTORATION - Grip Car 3

“A good day out” was the visit on a fine Saturday April 23<sup>rd</sup>. by around 40 members and friends to Gladstone, east of Carterton, to have a look at the restoration of Kelburn Cable Car Grip #3.

The Wellington Museums Trust has contracted The Wheelwright Shop at Gladstone to restore this car, last used in regular service in 1975 and latterly stored with The Omnibus Society collection at Karori Bus Depot, to near-original condition. The car has been completely stripped down so that what we saw was a very bare chassis surrounded by the carefully-disassembled coachwork pieces, wheels and grip gear. The Wheelwright Shop specialise in using older rural technologies for their work, which up till now has been mostly restoring horse-drawn carriages and the like. It was utterly fascinating hearing about how carefully the restoration was being undertaken using the maximum amount of surviving Edwardian materials. WTM member Colin Perfect, who had been commissioned by the Museums Trust to draw up the conservation plan for this unique Cable Car (quite unlike Kelburn Nos. 1 or 2), gave an absorbing and comprehensive account of the background to the project.

Work has now begun at Kelburn on the extension to the Cable Car museum, utilizing the site next to the winding house formerly occupied by the steam boiler and plant. This is expected to open later this year or early 2006 (dates t.b.c.)

### **RESTORATION – THAT ICONIC CHRISTCHURCH CITY TRAMWAY**

Have you noticed the “back-of-bus” ad. on Stagecoach Wellington #624, featuring Christchurch’s W2 in brown and cream livery, promoting tourism to that City? The advertisement also appears on static panels around town, including in the subway linking the Railway Station with Lambton Interchange. Great stuff!

### **THAT FORTHCOMING KING KONG MOVIE STARRING OUR VERY OWN 133**

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May saw sound crews up at the Park recording authentic tram sounds to go with the footage of 133 rolling through downtown 1930’s Manhattan. Fiducia 239 was wired up with strategically-placed microphones and spent several hours out along the line giving a full range of sound effects.

### **YOUR OWN MOVIE FOOTAGE WANTED.....**

Graeme Moffatt is making a 10 minute video for regular showing in the Brisbane tram, to complement the continuous replay of our DVD “Back in Business” for our visitors in the Barn display area. Graeme needs clean film footage of trams running from Courtenay Place to the Railway Station. Second generation copies done on VHS tapes will not be of a high enough quality; he is interested in using the film originals. Contact Graeme at [Graeme@digitalexpo.co.nz](mailto:Graeme@digitalexpo.co.nz)

## **MUSEUM SHOP NOW ACCEPTS Visa & Mastercard:**

It is increasingly common in this cashless society for our intending patrons to arrive at the shop with no cash. As well, the shop now stocks higher value items – e.g. the Museum DVD - and people are sometimes prevented from purchasing because they are not carrying cash or a cheque-book. We therefore have made arrangements to accept Visa and Mastercard credit cards (not eft-pos – prohibitively expensive for our number of transactions) and this is now available in the Museum shop.

The zip-zap machine and stationery, together with instructions, are under the shop counter. You treat the purchase voucher just like a cheque, ring up the sale on the cash-register, and include the vouchers with the takings at the close of day. We are encouraging a minimum purchase on credit card of \$10, though at the discretion of the operating crew smaller purchases may be charged (e.g. if the person has absolutely no cash!)

## **QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN 2005**

*- contribution from Keith McGavin*

The Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW) has released the draft plan for public consultation and submissions until 31<sup>st</sup> July. The Plan will be finalised later this year and will establish the Council's objectives and management guidelines for the Park for the next five years.

The draft plan – 52 pages + appendices – can be downloaded from GW's website ([www.gw.govt.nz](http://www.gw.govt.nz)) or had from Regional Council offices on request.

Cllr. Chris Laidlaw who chairs GW's Landcare Committee says that the draft plan takes into account the current (1993) management plan, public submissions, and discussions with interested parties, local iwi, relevant agencies and Councils.

Over 300 public submissions were received in the initial consultation phase. One of these was from the Museum. Our submission stressed that a faster rate of development of recreational and family based activities that would complement the tramway operations is needed. We also promoted the provision of a rail passenger platform at MacKay's Crossing, and continuation of the provision in the plan for a tram line link with the south end of the Park and/or Paekakariki.

First impression of the draft plan is that it is somewhat disappointing. While the draft plan continues to "allow" people to come into the Park it appears to do so in a mainly passive way. I fail to see any specific new recreational opportunities or activities or expansion of existing ones. They are "allowed", but there are no specifics. I also fail to see any objective for growth in the number of Park visitors (currently estimated at 415,000 per year) over the next five years.

This is to be the Plan for the next five years. Over that period the population growth in the Region will demand more facilities – and as a Recreation Reserve Queen Elizabeth Park should be managed to meet this demand. There is appropriate emphasis in the draft plan on conserving the environment but the section on “Sustaining opportunities and use” focuses far too much on what is “allowed” when, in my view, it should be putting forward proposals as to the strategic objectives the Council intends to achieve over the period.

I would like to see specific initiatives detailed in the Plan that would attract more people into the Park. For example:

- Regional Council supported events and carnivals at Whareroa and Wainui (ie MacKay’s Crossing and Paekakariki)
- Promotion of these areas in the corporate community for organised picnics
- Facilities for appropriate sporting events such as mini-golf, petanque, and restoration of a children’s playground at Whareroa
- Support of the Tramway Museum’s infrastructure including a line extension linking the Paekakariki end of the Park.

There are few references to the Tramway Museum in the draft; but I note –

Under “Policies”, 1.16:

*“To advocate for and encourage greater access to the park by public transport and for non-vehicular access (e.g. walkers, mountain bikers, horse riders)”*

Under “Protecting Cultural Heritage”

*“Another point of cultural significance is the Tramway Museum in QEP which commemorates the importance of this type of transportation to the region.”* The Tramway Museum is included in a list of key sites of cultural heritage significance

Under “Sustaining opportunities and Use”

*“MacKay’s Crossing has developed as a formal recreation node with concession holders providing opportunities such as equestrian riding and events, tram rides, historic sites and passive recreation opportunities surrounding the wetlands.....”*

It isn’t clear whether the tramline extension to the Paekakariki end of the Park remains – it is in the current Plan. It is not in the text but it could be on maps that are part of the Plan but not available on-line. I will be checking up on this.

I recommend all members have a look at the draft plan for themselves and consider whether to make a submission. Submission forms are available on the website. If you do make a submission I suggest that it advocate:

- A pro-active mission by Council to develop more recreational activities at MacKay’s Crossing and Whareroa
- ...which would be supported by a railway platform at MacKay’s Crossing
- Council support for linking Paekakariki and MacKay’s Crossing by tramline.

**40 years ago, the Queen Elizabeth Park Domain Board (Manager of Queen Elizabeth Park prior to the Regional Council) was a bit more positive!**  
*(reprint from TRAMWAY TOPICS Vol.4 No. 3 JUNE 1965 p.3.)*

### **ONE YEAR ON**

May 2nd, 1964, will remain a significant date in the history of Wellington, but May 2, 1965, will be a far pleasanter memory for Tramway enthusiasts. In 1964, 10.30 a.m. at Thorndon had seen the ceremony which closed Wellington's last tram route, and at 10.30 a.m. on Sunday May 2 1965 anniversary celebrations took place with a Fiducia tram carrying passengers again.

The day was slightly overcast but mild at the Wellington Tramway Museum Site near MacKay's Crossing, Queen Elizabeth Park, Paekakariki. The Generator Bus 247 was stationed near the barn, with power supply connected up early in the piece. By 10.30 a.m. well over 100 people were on site and President Ian Little mounted a handy rostrum (a pile of sleepers) to welcome everyone. Cr. M.N. Manthel, representing the City Council, then spoke, commending the work of volunteers which had enabled this rapid development of the Museum. Cr. Mrs. Campbell spoke on behalf of the Queen Elizabeth Park Domain Board and recalled how it was only a year or so ago that the Tramway Preservation Society had presented its proposals before the Board, and noted what a splendid asset the completed Tramway would be; bringing many more people to the beaches and amenities of the Park. Mr. Frank Hargreaves then spoke on behalf of Tramwaymen, retired and active, present. Then the Generator was started, and the Crane Truck moved out to bring in a nearby piece of rail. Graeme Dorset demonstrated one of our welders by driving two tie-bar holes through the said rail, and was followed by Frank Clark demonstrating a rail-grinder, similarly driven by the powerbus, on the track. Then the main event: the presentation by Ian of 235's handles to Fred Puklowski, motorman of the last regular tram (No.237) between Thorndon and Newtown that previous year. Fred reversed 235 down the line a few yards to enable the trolley pole to be swung up to the overhead, and then driving from the 'A' (west) end controls, moved the car, loaded to the platforms with excited passengers, down the track.

Many further runs were made during the day, and the numerous motormen included Mr. Len Robinson, Tramways Transport Supt. until 1960, Gordon Charteris (the oldest motorman when the City service ceased), Dan King, recently-retired WCCT Asst.Transport Supt., the one with probably the deftest touch at the controls being the man who had held Frank Hargreaves' position of Chief Tram Driving Instructor prior to Frank himself — Mr Harry Sawyers. The genial conductress throughout the day was of course Mrs. Thelma Clark, complete with Tramways uniform and fare bag, in which almost £4 of donations was collected.

After the first series of runs, morning tea was served to all in the Barn, whilst the Bedford Bus made several trips down to the Beach to show visitors the course of

the line. Over the course of the day a good three hundred people called in, many enticed by the bevy of “tram” signs at MacKay’s Crossing, and car parking was truly at a premium. A most enjoyable and, in terms of publicity, valuable day.

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### **Tramlines**

A newsletter for members of the Wellington Tramway Museum Inc. Compiled by Alan Smith [Alanesmith@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Alanesmith@xtra.co.nz)