

# TRAMLINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM INC.

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## SPECIAL ISSUE

**To wish all members and supporters a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year**

**And to thank everyone who contributed to our  
40<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary celebrations on Saturday December 17<sup>th</sup>. 2005**

**And to remind and invite all members to the  
Summer Barbeque at the back of the Barn on Sunday January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006**

**And to say good luck to all rostered crews over our peak summer traffic season.**

### **OUR 40<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS – 17 December 2005**

Not all that many New Zealand electric tramways ever chalked up forty years of service. The municipal systems in New Plymouth, Gisborne, Invercargill and Napier all began, waxed, waned and closed within four decades. Wanganui staggered on to achieve 42 years – and in the 4 main cities the tramways lasted between 49 and 59 years. So for our Kapiti Coast Electric Tramway – opened as the QEPT (Queen Elizabeth Park Tramway) on Saturday December 19<sup>th</sup> 1965 – to celebrate 40 years of service has some historical and statistical significance – as well as being a good reason to enjoy the occasion and to thank all those members, supporting organizations and other volunteers who have made it all possible.

The warm summer Saturday of December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2005 was a most enjoyable success. I counted 60-70 people at the re-enactment ceremony, and about 45 at the Dinner that

evening at Southwards Motor Museum restaurant. Our special guests Alan Milne (Mayor of Kapiti Coast District) and Chris Turver (Greater Wellington Regional Council) spoke very warmly of the Tramway Museum and its now well-established “iconic” place in the Park and in the district. Chris noted in his speech that the Regional Council will look favourably on proposals to extend tram routes further through the Park.

The other guest speaker was Ian Little, President at the time of our opening in 1965, who recalled the efforts of those early years and congratulated current President, Henry Brittain, on what has now been achieved.

It was great to see many old friends and leading figures from the tramway heritage interest there – thank you for your interest and support. Among the crowd were our patron, Margaret Shields; former Treasurer Gary Riggs (up from Picton), former Vice-President Evan Collett; Emmanuel Makarios the Director of the Wellington Cable Car Museum (whose superb new extension with restored Grip Car #3 opened on 5 December); Kerry Turner, Traffic Manager at The Western Springs Tramway, MoTaT; and Euan McQueen, Chairman of the Rail Heritage Trust. Special thanks to:

- Keith McGavin, who master-minded the day’s programme
- The City of Wellington Highland Pipe band who led 239 on her triumphal repeat of that first passenger trip of 1965
- Allan Neilson, Tram Despatcher for the day
- All the ladies who organised the afternoon tea in the Barn after the ceremony.

Photos in this issue show (i) 2005 President Henry Brittain and 1965 President Ian Little on the rostrum during the re-enactment ceremony, just before Cr. Turver (right) drives 239 through the ribbon.



Above: Wellington Tramway Museum President Henry Brittain shakes the hand of Ian Little who was President of the Museum forty years ago when it originally opened in 1965. Kapiti Mayor Alan Milne (seated left) and Cr Chris Turver of Greater Wellington Regional Council look on. Cr Turver later carried out a re-enactment of the tram cutting the ribbon as it did forty years ago and declared the tramway re-opened for another forty years!. In the background is the old stables building – to be restored by Transit NZ.

*Photo Graham Stewart*



Wellington Fiducia tram No.239 breaks the ribbon on Saturday during the re-enactment of the original opening of the Museum Tramway at Queen Elizabeth Park 40 years ago.

*Photo: Graham Stewart*



.....and, preceded by the City of Wellington Highland Pipe band proceeds to the Marines Memorial. *Photo: Graham Stewart*

Meanwhile, regular work goes on – our fourth photo, below, shows Andrew James gauging track between the loop and the start of the hill, with Charlie Gibson (right) and Mike Vash, during the annual track inspection on Sunday 12 November.



Photo: Allan Neilson

### **Tram 239**

Fiducia 239 was returned to service after its repaint on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December, in time for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. There is still some minor tidying up to complete and, true to form, we were still carrying out touch-ups up until lunch-time on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

From a distance the tram looks very much like it did before the work – as it should – but a closer inspection reveals that the cracks and peeling have all but disappeared. It was a timely job – the previous repaint was 1991. The new coats of paint should last quite a few years.

The repaint of tram 239 was a brilliant effort by many members who gave up valuable pre-Christmas weekend time to make sure the job was done. The Museum would like to thank the following members who worked on it (and apologies if anyone has been omitted) over November and December 2005:

Trevor Bettany Michael Boyton Henry Brittain Bob Cornish  
Mike Flinn Peter Hawke Keith McGavin Graeme Moffatt

Denys Peck Don Rudd Mike Secker Alan Smith  
Bob Stott Andrew Surgenor Guy Vincent Denis White

### **Other News.....**

Brisbane 133 began its world exposure on 14 December with the release of “King Kong”. A review of its performance, and of how the Fiducia sounds fared in the audio, would be appreciated by the Editor from a movie-going reader! 133, still in its Broadway Streetcar guise from filming, is now being promoted as a “must-see” attraction at KCET.

On the small screen - have you seen the new advertisement for Pam’s Ice Cream? I first saw it on TV 1 the day after our 40<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary celebrations. Our hero walks into the sunset towards Kapiti Island with the rails and overhead of the “Tiki Straight” in full focus.

While poetry lovers may wish to buy their own copy of JAAM (Just Another Art Movement) issue #23 published with the assistance of a Creative New Zealand grant in August 2005. The cover photo features a posed band of five distinctive folks squatting on the grooved track at the start of the Tiki straight leading up to the loop. Inspirational stuff!

### **Some notes from Russell Grigg for all crew – from December’s Refresher Course for motormen.**

While all drivers answered the theory questions well, uncertainty was shown by some with three questions not covered by the Manual.

1. If, during the operation of a tramcar, you located a broken rail, what would you do? All drivers said that they would stop, advise the passengers and Duty Supervisor. But – if the rail break was unseen and the first indication was a bang under the car, what would you do? During a group discussion, it was generally agreed that the tram should be stopped, the Supervisor notified and arrangements made to have the passengers transshipped to another tram to return to the terminus. The passengers should be advised of the expected delay period. Great care must be taken when the transshipment is carried out, to ensure everyone’s safety. If the tram has crossed the broken rail, no attempt should be made to reverse it back while passengers are on board. All persons in the immediate vicinity should be advised not to touch the track.
2. Are pets permitted on operating trams? About half the answers were “yes”. Seeing-eye dogs are permitted on most public transport vehicles and I don’t think that these dogs would pose a problem on a tram. But any other dog could be a risk to the owner or other passengers when unfamiliar surroundings and sounds are

experienced. So personally I would not have them on board. Remember Rule #1 – the safety of the traveling public and staff applies here.

3. State 2 precautions to be observed when carrying “Special Needs” passengers – Drivers are certainly well aware of the extra care needed here. Perhaps the most important precaution is to ask the person or caregiver how you can assist – that may make it a lot easier to deal with. What about wheelchairs? Our trams were not designed to carry wheelchair-bound passengers – you may endanger both them and others if you somehow get them on board and then find that there is no suitable way to anchor the chair. And don’t forget that you may do yourself an injury (back especially) lifting the chair. So I think that, if a driver fully explains the situation to a potential passenger, they would agree. Incidentally, I was shown a healing scar from an injury recently sustained when a tram driver was in the process of getting a wheelchair on to a tram.

When the Tram Drivers’ Manual is next updated, I would expect these matters to be addressed. Meanwhile, keep observing Rule #1 at all times, and act accordingly.

The identification of trackside and other hazards was very well done, with one group (unnamed) listing in excess of 50- the runner-up had 35. This shows a high standard of hazard awareness by tram crews, but it is disappointing that the number of hazards has increased, and that many of these are man-made over the past 2 years.

I would also like to remind tram drivers of the necessity to be very, very careful when leaving the departure platform and proceeding over the newly-installed vehicle and foot access ways to the Mandy’s horse operation nearby. Make sure that persons, animals and vehicles are well clear of the track, and that the rail grooves are clean – and that you can stop within half the clear distance in front of you if necessary.

Safe Driving!

Russell Grigg, Examiner.

### ***Tramlines***

*An occasional newsletter for members of the Wellington Tramway Museum Inc. Its aim is to keep members in touch with practical notices and the details of current developments – it is deliberately kept modest in style and does not aim at all to compete with Tramway Topics, our official journal of record. Contributions and notes always welcomed. Compiled by Alan Smith [Alanesmith@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Alanesmith@xtra.co.nz). 19/12/05*