

TRAMLINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM INC.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

This issue of TRAMLINES is going out to all 2005 members including those who haven't yet renewed your subscriptions. In this issue we review a most successful summer's traffic on the Kapiti Coast Electric Tramway, and record some of the many projects which we will be working on in 2006. So, get those renewals in now – your Museum values your membership!

If you are on e-mail, please be sure to show this on your renewal. Gus Weir reports that a high percentage of members now receive TRAMLINES by e-mail, which is a saving for the Museum. BUT, if you prefer paper, we will keep sending that!

TRAM STATISTICS

We are now in our 5th decade of passenger operation. Building on data in the November 2005 issue, here are the figures to 24/12/05 and for the peak Christmas/January operation. Tram kilometres have increased in each of the last three quarters (759 kms in the April-June quarter, 879 in July-September, and 938 in the foreshortened December quarter ending on 24/12). The December 2005 quarter included more specials run near year-end 2005 plus the motormen's refresher course and the re-enactment celebrations on the 17th.

Some interesting facts are emerging now that we have 2 years of statistics. These include:

- Tram distances run in YE 24/12/05 (at 4,276 kms) are 3.3% up on the previous year.
- Tram usage is very consistent. Of the 3 cars used regularly for passengers, 239 was used on 120 days in YE 24/12/05 compared with 115 days the previous year. 159 was used on 52 days in each year, and the least used tram, 151, was used on 23 occasions in YE 24/12/05 compared with 19 days the previous year.
- Tram 239 – the most utilised tram – has travelled 8,414 kms over the two years, over nine and a half times the 882 kms that tram 151 has travelled.

Christmas 2005 – January 2006 Figures

Although the number of days trams were used was only up by 4% this year compared to 2004/5, they did many more trips – total kms. travelled, at 1,324, were up 30%. As well, in the Christmas season just ended, the two Double Saloons, 151 and 159, collectively just exceeded the total kilometres run by Fiducia 239. The Double Saloons recorded 668 kilometres and No.239, 648 kilometres. This is totally different from 2004/2005 when 151 was not used at all and 159 ran just 232 kilometres compared with 615 this year.

Passenger numbers are now being recorded by tram crews. From Boxing Day 2005 these are being accumulated; the first set shows in Table 4. It is pleasing to note that passenger numbers were recorded every day over the recent Christmas / January operating period.

Table 1 No. of days each tram has been in use in the periods shown

PERIOD	DAYS USED				
	Tram 151	Tram 159	Tram 238	Tram 239	Total
YEAR to 24/12/04	19	52	3	115	189
YEAR to 24/12/05	23	52	1	120	196
Total days in use (2 years)	42	104	4	235	385
26/12/05 - 31/1/06	2	19	2	26	49
TOTAL days use, 26/12/03 – 31/1/06	44	123	6	261	434

Table 2 :No. of kilometres travelled (excluding around the depot area)

PERIOD	KILOMETRES TRAVELLED				Total
	Tram 151	Tram 159	Tram 238	Tram 239	
YEAR to 24/12/04	364	945	12	2,817	4,138
YEAR to 24/12/05	518	886	4	2,868	4,276
Total kilometres (24 months)	882	1,831	16	5,685	8,414
26/12/05 - 31/1/06	53	615	8	648	1,324
TOTAL kilometres, 26/12/03 – 31/1/06	935	2,446	24	6,333	9,738

Table 3 :Christmas/January 2005/2006 compared with 04/05 and 03/04.

CHRISTMAS / JANUARY	CHRISTMAS – JANUARY COMPARED 2005/2006 compared with 2004/2005				Total
	Tram 151	Tram 159	Tram 238	Tram 239	
DAYS USED					
2005/06	2	19	2	26	49
2004/05	0	17	0	30	47
2003/04	7	1	0	30	38
Difference This Yr./Last Yr	+2	+2	+2	-4	+2
Difference %	..	+12%	..	-13%	+4%
KILOMETRES TRAVELLED					
2005/06					
2004/05	53	615	8	648	1,324
2003/04	0	232	0	790	1,022
Difference This Yr./Last Yr	141	23	0	840	1,004
Difference %	+53	+383	+8	-142	+302
	..	+165%	..	-18%	+30%

Table 4 :Passenger numbers as recorded by tram crews, from Boxing Day 2005

PASSENGER NUMBERS	PASSENGER NUMBERS (from tram crew records)				Total
	Tram 151	Tram 159	Tram 238	Tram 239	
26/12/05 – 31/1/06					
to Beach	65	879	NA	954	1,898
from Beach	96	850	NA	959	1,905
TOTAL	161	1,729	NA	1,913	3,803

Note 1 – Passenger numbers – keeping of complete records commenced 26/12/05

Note 2 – Tram 238 - NA = not applicable (does not run in passenger service)

Now you can look at this in another context. Graham Stewart (the ultimate reference point) has recorded that New Zealand’s electric street tramways, taking all 9 systems together, totalled 170.5 “street track miles” in 1926. That’s 274km of street lines at the time of maximum extent (before closures at Napier, Gisborne and Maori Hill and the opening of final extensions on the other systems). So, you can see that our trams do work hard, and that over this past summer both 159 and 239 have completed the equivalent of many traverses over the entire NZ street tramway sector at its peak track length!

TRAM CREWS

The next section covers notices and items of special interest to tram crews.

HANDBRAKE CHAINS: - a reminder from Barry Ollerenshaw.

It is essential that these do not hang so low as to snag the lifeguards or get caught up on any lineside obstruction. The photographs below from Allan Neilson show the minimum amount of slack which should be in the handbrake chain at each end. Tram drivers – please note and file this in your manual for future reference.





MAGNETIC BRAKES:

All drivers are to stop using mag. brakes when coming downhill. The Tram Drivers' manual has the appropriate procedures – please follow them. Allan Neilson describes the situation: The magnetic brakes when working in brake action mode clamp themselves to the rail. The rubbing surface area between the magnetic brake shoe and the rail is small compared to the brake block shoe against a tram wheel tyre. Therefore the magnetic brake can not be guaranteed to apply as good a braking force as obtained by air brake operation under a range of rail and operating conditions.

The magnetic brake relies on the tram motors acting as a generator, so they become less effective as the car slows down. As soon as the car comes to rest on a grade, all braking force is lost, and the air brake or handbrake must be applied to ensure the tramcar remains under effective braking.

Use of the magnetic brake does cause some stress on the tramcar electrical systems, and in some cases can cause unnecessary damage to the magnetic brake assembly under some track and usage conditions.

Therefore for the above reasons, the magnetic brake is designated for emergency use only in addition to test use in designated areas on the first run for any operating day.

SAND:

When driving a Fiducia, do not drop sand when braking over points. If you do drop sand – remove it afterwards; don't leave it for someone else to do!

CREW UNIFORM:

A reminder that YOU can buy the new crew uniform – Polo Shirt \$10, and Sweat Shirt \$15 – prepare now for winter! Available from Denys Peck – Phone 04 905 6567.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

A sincere welcome to our Museum Society to the following new members:

Doug and Julie Rolston of Wanganui
Simon Cross of Miramar (Junior)
Neil McDonald of Paraparaumu
Jade O'Connor of Paekakariki (Junior)

We hope you get many years of enjoyment and satisfaction from your membership and the hobby.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SATURDAY MAY 6th - our Annual Dinner – this time it is likely to be in Wellington City – providing some relief for those of us almost getting used to the wilds of Porirua or Kapiti. More information later.

SATURDAY JUNE 24th – just after the mid-winter solstice - our fish & chip and film evening at the Park – enjoy viewing films in the heated luxury of tram (probably) 239 in the workshop. More details to come.

Short-workings – Barn to Loop only:

Operations came to a sudden halt on 17th February when tram 151 disgraced itself by dewiring in spectacular fashion resulting in damage to a considerable stretch of overhead including (can you believe it!) the collapse of one overhead pole (pole 40) and damage to several brackets and ears. Repairs are well underway but are extensive and in the meantime we have been operating a restricted service from MacKay's Crossing to the loop.

These sorts of occurrences are fortunately rare but can happen on any system - many readers will know of not infrequent major overhead disruptions on the Wellington trolley-bus network and before that on the trams.

Works in Progress:

The Maintenance & Engineering Committee records a busy schedule of activities, including:

- The Sleeper pile is now almost depleted, after a programme of renewals along the line;
- All 10 points sets on the KCET have been cleaned out;
- 4 points sets from the stockpile have been cleaned up and sold to MoTaT for their extension; they left the Park on March 15th.
- Renewal of poles, and fitting of metal caps to poles;
- Independent electrical inspection made of substation and transformer;
- 260 now sports a Butynol roof – gutter strips are about to be re-assembled;
- 151 – an assessment of exterior refurbishment tasks made. This car is now on Track 6 for work to go ahead, without detracting from work on 260;
- Improvements to the shop interior. The word TRAM has been painted on the roof of the shop, facing the entrance road.

Traffic and Marketing

A new “folded A4” brochure is now available, bringing the Museum story up-to-date with December’s 40th anniversary celebrations. Other innovations over the Christmas / January operating period included:

- The refurbished and restocked shop
- A permanent despatcher and shop attendant from Boxing Day to 8th January (thank you Barry and Keren)
- New signs at the shop, and at the end of the line
- Special “40th anniversary” tram tickets
- Ticket selling conductor on trams on some busy days
- Improvements to the Park itself (the horse area next door, new Wetlands etc.)
- Crew uniform polo-shirts and sweat shirts – smart as well as practical.
- New DVD presentation of a tram ride through Wellington, screened in King Kong 133
- Newly repainted tram 239

The Marketing & Operations Committee is of the view that crew morale increased as well, as a result of being busier. A questionnaire on our operations, along with a letter of thanks to operating crews, has been sent out to all participants.

The result, helped by good weather, was record gross takings over the period at \$8,096 - over double the previous season! A preliminary target of \$12,000 gross - a 50% increase on this latest record year - has been set for 2006/2007.

From the Shop – notes from Denys Peck:

The Shop has for sale some pre-2005 back issues of *Tramway Topics* - \$2.50 each – and “Tram” ballpoint pens, normally selling to the public for \$1.20 – members’ special price 90c. Special members’ prices are also being introduced for other souvenirs.

A Shop Operator’s Manual has been put together by Denys and is held at the sales counter. This includes prices, members’ price specials, crew roster contact details, cash register and credit card instructions and other details pertaining to our shop – a high-profile point of public contact for visitors. This will avoid the proliferation of notices on walls – please look in the manual instead.

From the Board meeting of 23 February 2006:

- Financial allocations for the 2006 calendar year were approved. \$10,000 was allocated to the Maintenance & Engineering Committee and \$3,000 to the Marketing & Operations Committee. Both will now work out their programmes for the year.
- It was noted with pleasure that Denys Peck and Graeme Moffatt had both completed requirements to become qualified motormen on the Museum's tramway.
- Quite a few motormen missed the refresher courses on 3/4 December. This course is an essential requirement for remaining a qualified driver. Please make arrangements with Barry Ollerenshaw on 388-8197 to carry out the necessary training.
- The Building Development Sub-committee reported that arrangements are in hand for the drawing up of plans and specifications for a workshop extension to the north.
- A feasibility study is being made into a track extension from MacKay's Crossing to the south (motor-camp) end of Queen Elizabeth Park. This would be about 2km. and the study will look at costs, likely returns, the route, technical considerations, funding possibilities and other aspects. This follows the Regional Council's decision, referred to in the December "Tramlines", to include designations for tram line routes to both the north and the south of MacKay's Crossing in the five year management plan for the Park. The feasibility study is managed by the Building Development Sub-Committee, now redesignated as the "Development Sub-Committee".chaired by Keith McGavin. Graeme Moffatt is leading the work on the feasibility study.

The Board also approved a proposal from the Marketing & Operations Committee to investigate the body refurbishment of tram 151 together with the funding of this project, and that should funding and resources be procured that this project proceed.

COTMA Conference, Melbourne, November 2006

The COTMA Conference in November 2006 will celebrate 100 years of electric trams in Melbourne. But while we do this, behind the scenes, our Tramway Museums may be facing their greatest challenging period. We are collectively facing new Rail Safety Acts and Regulations, ageing memberships and volunteers, training issues and ageing equipment. Will we still be around in 100 years?

To enable early conference planning, the organisers would like to know by the 30 March 2006 whether you would like to present a paper to the conference itself, or suggest a discussion topic that you may wish to lead. To enable early publication of the proceedings on the COTMA Website, we would need to have the paper formally prepared to an agreed Word or pdf document format prior to presentation.

The following deadline dates are proposed:

- **Receipt of Abstracts/Synopsis 31 March 2006;**

- **Notification of Acceptance 30 April 2006;**
- **Submission of full papers 31 October 2006**

Intending authors are asked to submit a short abstract outlining the aims, contents and conclusions of their paper. It should be no more than one sheet of paper. Either email your paper abstract to the Chairman at tramwad@alphalink.com.au or mail to the COTMA PO Box 61 Carlton South Vic. 3053, Australia.

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. 16/3/06