

TRAMLINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM INC.

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COMING EVENTS

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Wednesday October 19th.

A good turn-out of members is requested for this regular event – to review both the year past and future challenges. Please also consider: would you like to put your nomination forward for a place on the Museum Board.

AGM papers will be sent out nearer the date. Meanwhile, mark your diaries now!

The place: Turnbull House, Bowen St. – opposite the Beehive.

The time: 7.30pm start

Business will include the formal adoption of the constitution with the various amendments as adopted in the previous few years, and consideration and consultation on a long-term plan and development programme for the Museum

The AGM will be followed by the screening of a video on Calcutta trams, courtesy Richard Gray

Saturday 3rd – Sunday 4th December 2005 Early warning for a programme of major Training Days before the start of the peak summer season. Please note that to re-validate your tram driving licence attendance by all motormen at one of these two training days is required – so please reserve one of these days in your calendar now.

Saturday December 17th 2005 Dinner at Southwards Car Museum, Otaihangā. Celebrating a special occasion – the 40th anniversary of our own public opening on 19 December 1965. More details soon on other anniversary plans at the Park.

2006, starting 18 November – no, it's still not too early to psych up for the 2006 COTMA conference, in Melbourne. A most exciting time to look forward to, full of tramway experiences, not only in Melbourne, but Bendigo, Ballarat, and the other Victorian tramway museums.

LAST MEETING: Brent Efford's presentation on his 2002 Churchill Fellowship travels to the US to study urban light rail, and street-based "vintage trolley" lines, was an excellent evening on August 13th. at Turnbull House. The possibilities of modern light rail south of the present Wellington Railway Station, and/or heritage trams along the Wellington Waterfront, seem to always lie just below the surface in city planning circles. Brent's role on the Regional Land Transport Committee puts him close to this potential and it was fascinating to learn of the US experiences including in places of comparable inner-city traffic and population patterns. Thanks Brent!

TRAM STATISTICS

Running sheets to gather these statistics began on 26/12/03. Each *Tramlines* updates the statistics from the previous issue; giving some increasingly useful comparative and trend data. Here are tram operating statistics up to the end of August 2005, now covering 20 months. As can be seen, 239 continues as the main service tram, regularly running between 200-300 kilometres each month, with the associated servicing and maintenance work as well as fares revenue.

	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 – Jun 05	2	5	0	32
July 05	2	4	1	8
August 05	0	2	0	9
Total days in use (20 months)	24	89	4	212

	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 – Jun 05	23	90	0	646	759
July 05	38	65	4	209	316
August 05	0	11	0	255	266
Total kilometres travelled* (20 months)	433	1,561	16	5,169	7,179

*Distance travelled excludes around depot area.

WHAT'S GOING ON

Track:

Regional Council work for the Horse Stables area (between our Barn and the Park Ranger's house) and for the environmental wetlands (between the road opposite our departure station and the railway) has involved installing a new large-diameter culvert under the road and tram line before the first corner and the installation of a new roadway entrance into the stables area. We are taking this chance to also replace some of the older sleepers in this stretch. The contractors' work also means more mud and stones in our grooved rails – so we need to keep an eye out for these on operating days, and especially ensuring that the track is checked and cleaned here before the start of service each day.

260:

New sides are now being painted, and end panels positioned. Our newest car–53 years old! Brill trucks ex 235 are also under preparation for 260.

Overhead:

Two replacement poles are being installed, at Pole 4 (this will replace both the present 4 +4a near the equestrian barn) and Pole 13 (near the Marines' Memorial – this will enable the span wire across the road at that point to be removed).

Parts:

All patterns, and timber formerly stored in the rear shelter building, have now been relocated into the new container in the rear compound – a greatly improved environment.

Traffic:

Saturday September 3rd 2005 was up there with our best summer days in terms of visitor numbers to the Museum. It was the first "Kapiti Classic Day" - a festival day for the whole of Kapiti - and the Tramway Museum's contribution was to arrange for a visit by the Vintage Military Vehicles Collectors Association. A large contingent (is that the right collective noun?) of jeeps, army trucks and various other military vehicles of all shapes and sizes put in an appearance and gathered alongside the U.S. Marines Exhibition.

We had two trams (159 and 239) offering a 15 minute service (passing in the loop) from 11 am until 4.30 pm and this frequent service was appreciated by the many passengers. An innovation was stopping at the Military Vehicles display for passengers to get on or off on many of the trips. Another innovation was the cups of tea and coffee with biscuits on sale on the platform during the day.

Crews during this busy day were Bob Cornish, Noel Donaldson, Keith McGavin, Graeme

Moffatt and Bob Stott, plus during the afternoon by Andrew Moseley (who is off to Auckland shortly.) The gross takings for the day were c.\$412.

Controllers:

A note from Barry Ollerenshaw to all motormen: do NOT use mag brakes on the hill when descending between Poles 52 and 59. Servicing 239 has shown blisters in the controller on the magnetic brake side of the fingertips – caused by not stopping the car in the manner prescribed in the Tram Drivers' Manual.

The Palace:

The “human centre” for volunteers – but please treat those towels and tea towels with the respect you'd expect at home: they are not interchangeable!

Wednesday work days:

Other members are warmly invited to join the mid-week group (Wednesdays between about 9am and 4.30pm) who work on a variety of tasks while the overhead is off and there is no passenger service. In recent weeks these have included: resleepering at McGavin's Corner, re-furbishing the departure station and shop, priming paint on 260, needle-gun cleaning of 235's bogies, repairs to the water system, preparing for the repoling, and general maintenance.

SOME THOUGHTS FROM FELLOW MUSEUMS:

The journals from other tram and rail museums we receive in exchange for *Tramway Topics* are kept at the Palace for browsing. They always make fascinating reading – from time to time extracts will be reprinted here. These are not intended to be exhaustive, but they do help show the similarities – and unique points – within our fraternity of transport museums.

The 2004 Annual Report of the Tramway Museum Society (UK) notes that recorded volunteer contributions amounted to the equivalent of 32 full-time equivalent employees. And that DOESN'T include the “non-recorded” work of members on Museum work from their own homes or in other informal ways.

As we move closer to our 40th anniversary, these thoughts from the TMS's 2004 Annual Report are also worth thinking about:

“Developing the Museum and maintaining its independence has always been hard. Forty years ago it was just as challenging as today, but the financial equation, at least, was simple. Success depended on earning money, controlling costs and the efforts of volunteers. Visitor numbers kept rising, outside regulation was lighter and the expectations of both visitors and ourselves more modest. During the 1980s, adverse pressures became greater, ranging from greatly increased competition for visitors to a steady rise in the cost base. The 1990s provided even greater cause for concern, so the squeeze on the Museum's financial viability continued. So, the percentage of visitors needed to break-even before cash was available for capital expenditure steadily increased, and by 1990 was greater (104%) than the actual visitors.”

PERSONAL NOTES:

Our thoughts are with Morris Moller, whose mother is experiencing poor health.

I would really like to hear (address below) of important events in the lives of members – things like births, deaths, family events and so on. This is so that appropriate mention can be made in *Tramlines*, to help us appreciate even more the great bunch of people we have among our membership.

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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 8/9/05