

# TRAM LINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM INC

No. 2020/6

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2020

In this issue:

WTM's Submission on Council's Parks Plan

Maker's Plate for No.17 ex Tram No.31

Airfield Level Crossing – Track Upgrade

Disposal of the Last Wellington Trams



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**COVER PHOTO:** Motorman Russell Jenkins brings tram 159 down the hill and is about to cross the aero-modellers level crossing. It's 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and members have completed relaying the track at this spot, including new formation, sleepers, ballasting and tie-rods, and also including a new transition joint between railway and tramway profile track. The newly-made timber crossing replaces the previous dirt crossing. See article commencing page 19  
*Photo: Mike Flinn*

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Assembled by the WTM production team:  
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Published bi-monthly  
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WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM INCORPORATED – N.Z. Registered Charity No.CC38985

Owner and operator of the KĀPITI COAST ELECTRIC TRAMWAY

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### HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS:

Messrs  
*Michael Boyton*  
*Henry Brittain*  
*Michael Flinn*  
*Keith McGavin*  
*Allan Neilson*  
*Barry Ollerenshaw*  
*Ray Shand*

Shortly we will enter the next year of the Tramway's existence. There is plenty to think about. Our Annual General Meeting has just been held and because some members were unable to attend I will comment on some of the proceedings.

Those who attended the AGM already know that the entire Board was re-elected to their roles. The only new face, and a welcome one, is Trevor Weaver. Trevor had agreed at the beginning of the 2020 year to being co-opted. His decision to accept and the Board's to co-opt him were confirmed by his formal election at the AGM.

I do not intend to reiterate my report here but rather to amplify some of its content. The year has been a difficult one with Covid-19 affecting both the Tramway's operations and the community at large. The Marketing and Operations report confirmed that the loss of operating days and also of the Grand Pacific Tours visits have affected our income. On the plus side the GPT visits up until lockdown had helped with our income. The Maintenance and Engineering report set out a very full programme of works over the subject period. Our Treasurer provided a set of accounts that I believe show great management of the Society's funds.

The recent financial help distributed by Te Papa on behalf of the Government will help mitigate the financial effects of Covid 19 on our Society. The \$11,000 hardship grant to be received will help ensure that the financial effects of Covid are less severe for the Tramway. The news of a \$100,000 grant from Lotto for Tram 207's restoration was warmly received by the meeting. Planning is already underway to get 207 to Auckland where the roof bows, roof and the various faulty frame studs will be replaced/repared. *(See pages 7 & 8 for more details of these two grants. – Ed.)*

The completion of two level crossing upgrades (one in the year under review and one since) was unscheduled work and the way in which members helped complete these unexpected

but necessary tasks showed yet again how much we are able to rely on the goodwill of our members. The enthusiasm members show for tasks which we ask them to perform but which are not what attracted them to the hobby is very gratifying. The official opening of the Chief Ranger's crossing by Daran Ponter (Chairperson of GWRC) was a very special occasion and many members have confirmed to me that they think celebration of our milestones is very worthwhile.

The proposed replacement Palace and archives building is becoming the priority infrastructure project and providing we do not get diverted onto track or traction a start will probably be made in 2021.

As tram parts continue to be removed from the White Store, and located elsewhere, the question "What if anything should replace that building?" arises.

There are many members who in various ways step up to carry out various tasks that help with the running of our tramway. In the year under review one of the new helpers in this category is Spencer Naith. I am sure that when Spencer joined us to drive trams he had no desire to be a membership secretary. Your efforts are appreciated.

During November members again manned a stand at the annual Railex exhibition for the Tramway. This is an example once again of members going above and beyond to support our tramway.

As I write this I have thought about how great it is that Tram 17 was set up today to show she was heading for Hataitai via route 4! *(i.e. – at the AGM on 7<sup>th</sup> November – Ed.)* Roll on the day when she sets off for Whareroa Beach and back to the barn.

I wish all members and their families the Best of the Season and a Happy New Year.

*Steve Porter*  
President  
11<sup>th</sup> November 2020



## **Members Evening from 4.00pm Saturday 12 December**



## MUSEUM PEOPLE

### NEW MEMBERS

A very warm welcome is extended new Society members:

- Jim Butler of Waikanae Beach
- Justin Peat of Raumati
- Frank Kelly of Kaiwaka, Northland

Robert Hatten is currently in hospital recuperating from a small operation. We wish him a speedy recovery.

### MEMBERS' EVENING, DECEMBER 12th:

Please see advertisement on previous page for details of this event.

Take note of the time and date – any enquiries to Russell Jenkins please: email- [rjenkins@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rjenkins@xtra.co.nz) or phone- 0274 471 744

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORT

The Museum held its Annual General Meeting in the Fiducia Centre on Saturday 7 November with 23 members attending.

It was rewarding to see the confidence members had in the outgoing Board and in support re-elected each member to the position they had previously held. The members passed a resolution expressing their appreciation to our Treasurer, Michael Boyton for his efforts in his adroit stewardship of our Finances during lock down.

The meeting was given an update on our progress with the renewal of our lease with the Greater Wellington Regional Council and the negotiations which are currently being held. There are no substantial points of difference and we anticipate that it will be signed early next year; however it could be delayed until the bigger Parks Review which is also underway has been

concluded. (See article commencing on page 10).

The outgoing Board had recommended that subscriptions for 2021 be left unchanged and this was approved by the meeting. Next year's subscription form is enclosed with this edition of Tramlines.

The Wellington Tramway Museum Board through until the 2021 Annual General Meeting is:

President:	Steve Porter
Vice-President, Maintenance & Engineering:	Allan Neilson
Vice President, Marketing & Operations:	Russell Jenkins
Secretary:	Henry Brittain
Treasurer:	Michael Boyton
Board Members:	Colin Dash Mike Flinn Trevor Weaver

### RAIL-EX MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION – TAITA, 15 – 16 NOVEMBER



Above: Many thanks to members who once again helped with our stand at the Annual Rail-Ex model railway show at Taita, Lower Hutt, held over the weekend of 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> of November. The above photo shows the WTM stand with Russell Jenkins in attendance.

Photo: Jenny Jenkins

## HIMATANGI “TRAM”

Sadly, the potentially exciting find of the saloon portion of one of the original Wellington four-wheeled double-deckers, described in our July-August issue on page 20, has been determined to be the body of an early pre-war bus, albeit with a very similar side window arrangement and dimensions as existed on Wellington double-deckers Nos. 34 to 36.

Henry Brittain, Mike Flinn and Steve Porter visited the site at Himatangi Beach settlement on 15<sup>th</sup> October and with further investigation, removal of some panels and digging were able to establish the type of vehicle.



**Above: The uncovered back end of the Himatangi Beach bus.**

*Photo: Mike Flinn, 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020*

## WANGANUI TRAMWAYS TRUST

On Thursday 12 November, Russell Jenkins and Henry Brittain visited the Wanganui Tramway Trust so that they could assess four of their trainee tram drivers for the granting of their Tram Drivers certificate. The Wellington Tramway Museum are the external examiners for Wanganui and prior to their final assessment, the trainees had visited Queen Elizabeth Park and experienced tram driving on a bigger system.

It was good to be able to support our smaller neighbour and assist them with

putting their members through their final assessment.

Below is a photo that Russell took of Wanganui 12 returning from one of the assessment trips.



## MUSEUM HARDSHIP FUND

This fund is part of the “Regenerating Arts, Culture and Heritage” supported by Manatū Taonga, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. The Government intends that grants from the Museum Hardship Fund will support the protection of collections, enable ongoing access to those collections, contribute to the protection of jobs, and contribute to the continued viability of museums, galleries, and iwi, hapū, and whānau groups caring for taonga. The fund is particularly directed at small and medium size community run and volunteer museums and galleries.

Wellington Tramway Museum applied for a grant on the basis of loss of income (net of expense savings) over the Covid-19 lockdown period and it is pleasing to advise that a grant of the amount applied for, \$11,000, has been approved.

This puts the Museum back financially to where it expects it would have been had Covid-19 lock-down not occurred, though of course various projects have been delayed.

We are thankful to the Government for establishing a scheme such as this to help the smaller Museums such as ourselves to weather the Covid storm!

## TRAM 207 BODY RECONSTRUCTION – LOTTERY GRANT SUCCESS

This project has received a massive boost with the recent news that our application to Lottery Environment & Heritage for a \$100,000 grant has been successful.

In its advice to the Museum the Lottery Environment & Heritage Committee said that “it was noted that the request aligned with Lottery Grants Board outcomes and this Committee’s Lottery Environment and Heritage priorities and funding criteria”. The Committee offered its congratulations and advised that a grant of \$100,000 was being offered. The offer, which comes with an agreement setting out accountability requirements, has been accepted by the Museum.



Above: Late 1973 – Tram No.207 at the loop on the Queen Elizabeth Park Tramway (as the Kāpiti Coast Electric Tramway was then known). This was shortly prior to the tram being withdrawn from service due to damp and faulty wiring. *Photo: Keith McGavin*

Total estimated cost of this part of the project is \$150,000 and up until now, prior to the grant, just over \$26,000 has been raised for the project – mainly members’ donations. Thus our urgent and important target is to raise a further \$24,000 to reach the \$150,000 target.

## MARKETING AND OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT Russell Jenkins

It has been business as usual in the last two months although the weather has not been the kindest on some days with very few visitors to the Tramway. Here is hoping that from now on the weather will become “summerier” and visitors flock to Queen Elizabeth Park

There was a brief partial curtailment of operations to the beach while faulty track was replaced, and an upgraded vehicle crossing built at the Airfield Crossing.

There is currently a speed restriction over the new section of track until it settles down.

A small tour group from a Rotorua based tour company visited the Museum on 21 October and enjoyed a tram ride to the beach and a look around the Museum. With the borders closed to international visitors, groups like this are likely to visit more often and this will help to spread the word about what we have to offer and bring in valuable revenue.

On the Kapiti Coast a group of local visitor related organisations and businesses are working towards having more visitors to the district and any developments could be beneficial to the Tramway.

### Covid-19

With the Covid-19 Alert Level now at Level 1, the Tramway is in full operation. Members and visitors are however encouraged to scan the Covid-19 QR Code poster. These are located at the Kiosk and the Tram Barn. There is also a Covid poster in the Palace.



**Above: First tram over the re-laid permanent way at aero-modellers vehicle crossing. Tram No.260 with motorman Robert Vale. 4<sup>th</sup> October 2020, 11.39am. Photo: Allan Neilson**

### **Tram Driver Training**

I am pleased to advise that one of our trainee drivers has “graduated” and is now part of the driving team. Congratulations Terry Knight, and welcome to the Operations Roster.

The Driver Training Programme continues and hopefully by early next year we will have more “graduates”.

### **Members’ Day**

A Members’ Day is planned for Saturday 12 December from 4pm until 7pm. This is a chance for all members to come and see what has been achieved and what is planned. It replaces the Christmas Dinner and will feature a Barbecue from around 5pm. Please mark it in your calendar and come along.

### **Twilight Trams**

With Queen Elizabeth Park open until later in the evenings during summer, we are planning something different. On 12 December we plan to run Twilight Trams for the public from 5pm until 7pm. Fares will be a Gold Coin Donation per person per ride. Tramway Members will

ride free, but families will pay a Gold Coin. The event will be advertised in local media and on Facebook. If it is successful, we may look at another one later in summer.

### **Summer Operations**

As is usual, the Tramway plans to operate daily from Boxing Day 26 December through to the Monday of Wellington Anniversary Weekend. This period of operating provides the bulk of our operating revenue and so I ask that ALL members give serious consideration to lending a hand for a day or two over this period.

We need not only a driver each day but also someone to assist in the Kiosk, selling tickets other “goodies” from the shop. Please give some thought to giving a hand this summer.

Remember to keep up to date with the Tramway on either our webpage [www.wellingtontrams.org.nz](http://www.wellingtontrams.org.nz) Or the

Tramway Facebook page 

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON REGIONAL COUNCIL PARKS

As reported on Tramlines last issue Greater Wellington Regional Council has been running its public consultation on the *Draft Toitu te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-2030*. This process is still continuing with Public Hearings in late November. The new draft Plan “sets directions for management of the regional parks network over the next ten years”.

**Wellington Tramway Museum has made its written submission and this is reproduced in full below.**

### Wellington Tramway Museum’s submission on GWRC’s draft Toitu te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-2030, as submitted.

“The Wellington Tramway Museum (WTM) has enjoyed being part of the Queen Elizabeth Park (QEP) scene since 1965 and has made a major contribution to QEP’s success. The Draft Parks Network Plan (PNP) offers an interesting future for our area and WTM looks forward to contributing to this in association with our fellow concessionaires, with all interest groups and with the wider community.

These notes confine themselves to those points in the PNP which directly affect WTM. We do not attempt to comment on every facet which is raised in the PNP.

#### 1. p.25: Fire threat needs to be actively managed. Development of a fire "tactical response plan" is proposed for all parks.

1.1 WTM strongly urges that this be elevated in priority and importance. Recent open space and bush fires near Lakes Ohau and Tekapo - and within recent months in Victoria (Australia) and California (USA) - are dramatic evidence of how climate change and warmer summers are increasing the risk of sudden and fast-moving fires breaking out in areas which are comparable to QEP.

1.2 WTM operates fire protection systems in its buildings and on its vehicles; but the risk being commented on here is from wind-fanned fires in wooded areas such as those around Mackays

Crossing or in regenerating land formerly farmed or grazed.

1.3 There is some inevitable tension here between “natural” vegetation cover and the management of very fire-prone materials, but that tension has to be faced head-on by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW). The QEP area has a long history of slow-burning peat fires and the risks from any re-emergence of these under today’s actual evidence-based climate change extremes will demand new levels of attention.

#### 2. p.160: Ideas for redevelopment of Mackays Crossing entry area.

##### 2.1 Signage:

WTM, like all other QEP stakeholders, looks forward to the completion next year of TMG and of the associated clearer public access into QEP through Mackays Crossing. We want to be assured that every possible synergy is being achieved by GW in actively working for clear signage and access to and through the new QEP entrance way. In particular, to achieve the improved accessibility by the general community sought throughout the PNP, there is a need for GW to work with the overall TMG sector (contractors, NZTA, KCDC and relevant other parties) to ensure clear signage on SH1 in both

WTM's submission on Draft Parks Network Plan, cont.

directions: not just signage for QEP, but also including specifically the key heritage attractions within the Park such as WTM and the U.S. Marines Memorial. This need for GW action applies also to directional signage to QEP on the old SH1 via Paekakariki from the south - with at least one of the draft TMG plans at the moment it is not until you are on the northbound exit road to Mackays Crossing that you come to a sign specifying QEP and its heritage and other features.

2.2 Public Transport Access

2.2.1 The PNP is very disappointing in the way in which public transport access to QEP - through a train station at Mackays - is dismissed on p.165 (#A349) as a just a remote possibility to "investigate", despite the assertion on p.45 of prioritising connection to public transport. The PNP is the opportunity to escalate this and for GW - which is responsible for both regional parks and for public passenger transport - to really prove that it means what it says on the PNP cover about "everything is connected - e tuhonohono ana nga mea kata". In the PNP, this seems to be more of a trendy mantra than a real driver for sustainable parks development. It is not just drawing a long bow to assert that enabling public access to QEP from a train station would be a meaningful contribution to emissions reduction. It would also fit in well with the Akatarawa Traverse proposal on P.78 linking QEP and Akatarawa Regional Park; as we understand it, much of this

route already exists and it is disappointing to see it listed as just a long-term (7-8 yrs.) low priority.

2.2.2 The Key Recreation Opportunity noted on p.15 *"To be able to optimise full health and wellbeing benefits for people from investment in parks, good access to and within them and an equitable distribution of facilities appropriate to the place are required. Equity of access is identified as a core value for parks in this Plan. This means providing opportunities for everyone regardless of abilities, gender or ethnicity."*

2.2.3 The map of potential improvements for QEP on p.170 shows neither a Metlink train station at Mackays nor the Akatarawa Traverse passing through Mackays. WTM recommends that one outcome of this consultation be that both the Akatarawa Traverse and the Mackays public transport access be raised in priority in the interests of improving real public accessibility and of GW's emissions reduction goals.

**3. Future Consultations / Collaborations**

p.168 Actions - short term 1-3 yrs: establishment of a community reference / collaboration group for the park to support master planning processes and day-to-day operations, work on shared goals and community health and well-being and p.161 - "New QEP collaboration group":

WTM looks forward to being a positive participant in the planned Master Planning exercise noted on p.44 and elsewhere in the PNP; but it is essential that this really does take in the diversity

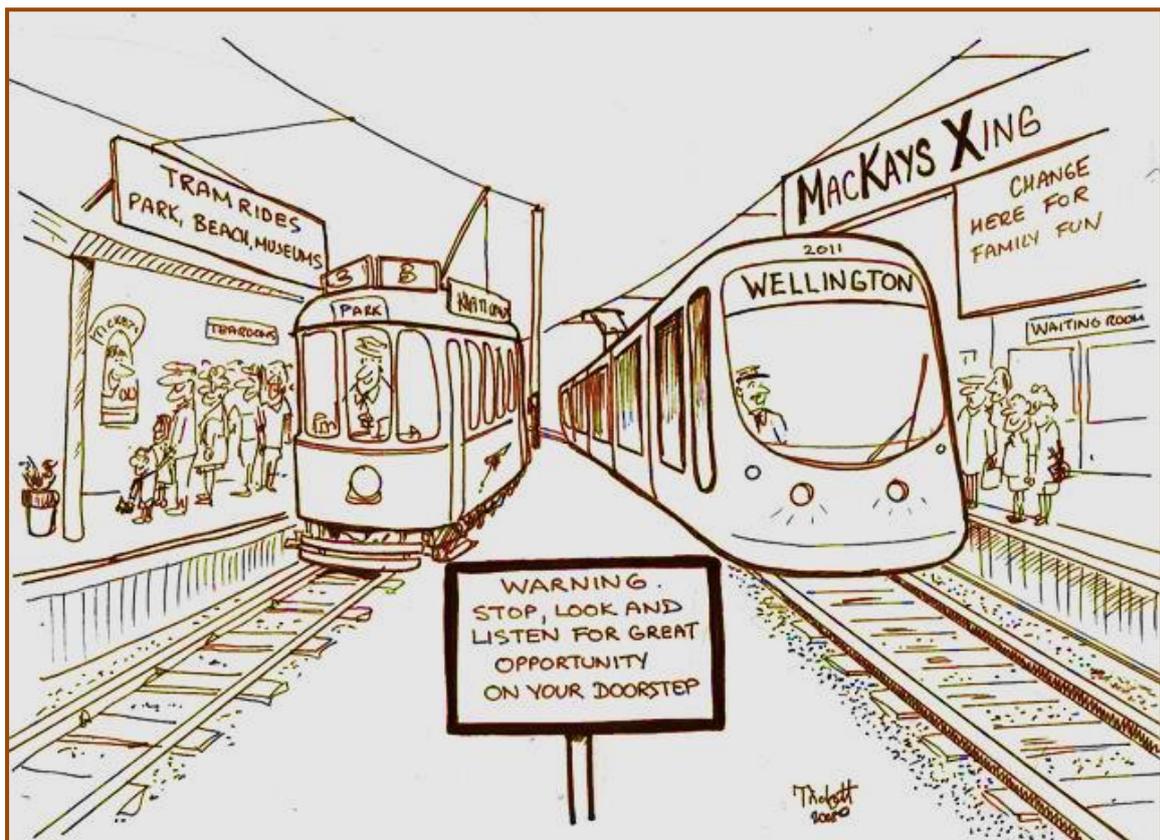
WTM's submission on Draft Parks Network Plan, cont.

of ideas and views which will be expressed. Experience shows that it is all too easy for these well-intentioned strategies to turn into top-down exercises with "community reference groups" becoming little more than tokenistic fig-leaves. The guiding principle should be reinforced as set out on p.27: "supporting, recognising and rewarding the efforts of volunteers ... is critical to GW's success".

As the PNP says on p.35, "good partnerships involve goodwill, consideration, time and work and are highly rewarding for all". This includes letting concessionaires show initiative and get on with their distinctive contributions to overall park well-being

by building on the excellent positive working relationships we value with the rangers on the ground and with our fellow concessionary groups; there is always the risk of the various QEP interests working in silos with less than desirable interaction. One specific target of the QEP Master Plan should be to flesh out the note on p.164 (#A344e) about the "Mackays heritage hub".

4. WTM is happy to discuss this further with you. We look forward to a positive outcome for the PNP in really optimising the opportunities for emissions reduction, for adapting to climate change, and for growing public appreciation for these magnificent open spaces which are so vital for the economic and social sustainability of our region."



Above: A newspaper's somewhat fanciful interpretation of how a future train / tram interchange at Mackays Crossing might appear. From the 'Kāpiti Observer' of 28<sup>th</sup> July, 2008.

***Our submission recommends that Mackays Crossing public transport access be raised in priority in the interests of improving real public accessibility and of the Regional Council's emissions reduction goals.***

## TRANSMISSION GULLY - Upcoming traffic changes

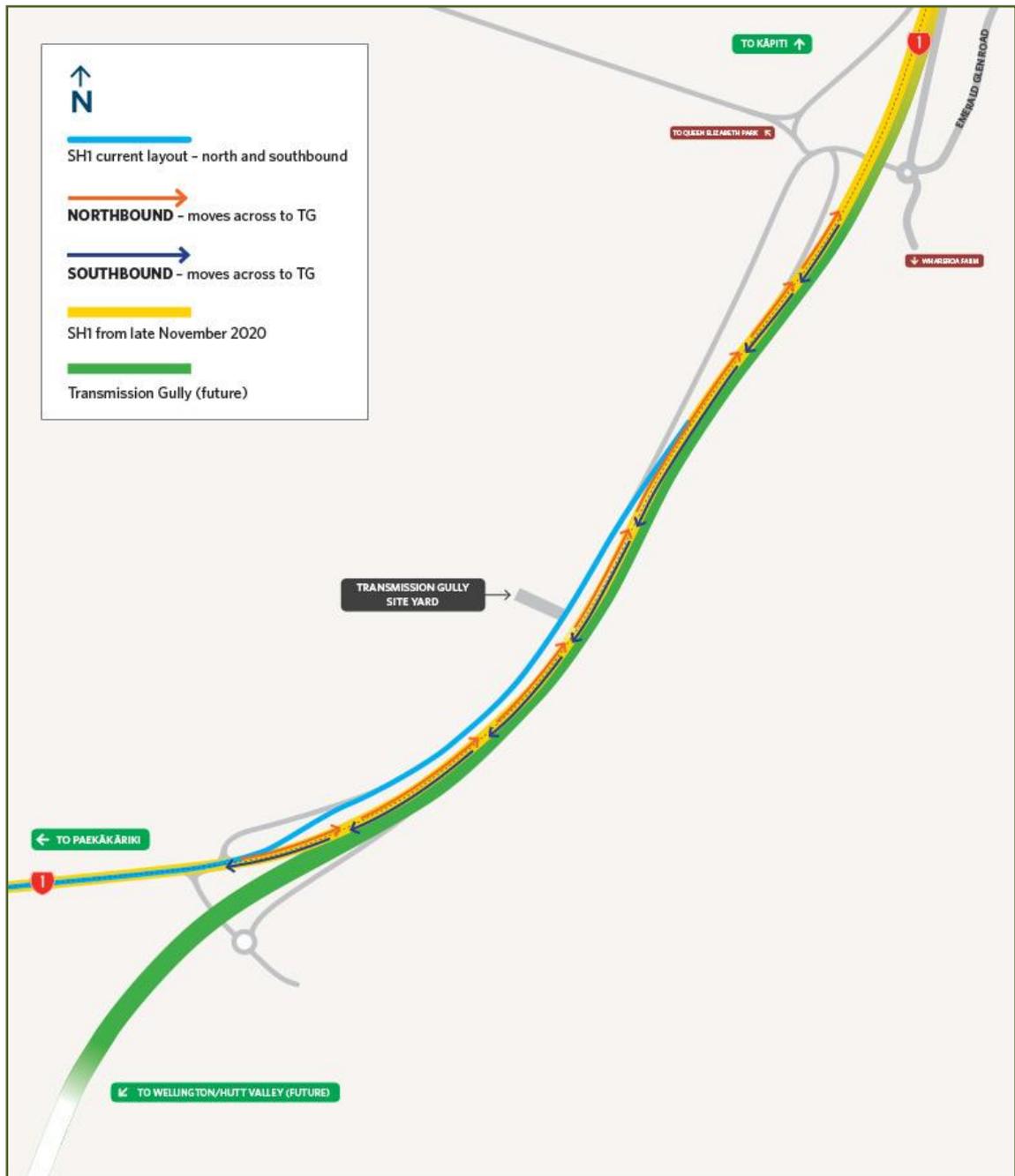
The following information and maps have been uplifted from the Transmission Gully Project's October – November Newsletter:

### Paekākāriki to Mackays Crossing

State Highway One (SH1) traffic will be shifted onto a 1.3 kilometre portion of Transmission Gully motorway at Paekākāriki in late November. This is to allow work to be completed on local road connections to the coastal route (the current SH1). You may notice roadworks and temporary traffic management over the next four weeks.

#### *How the switch will work*

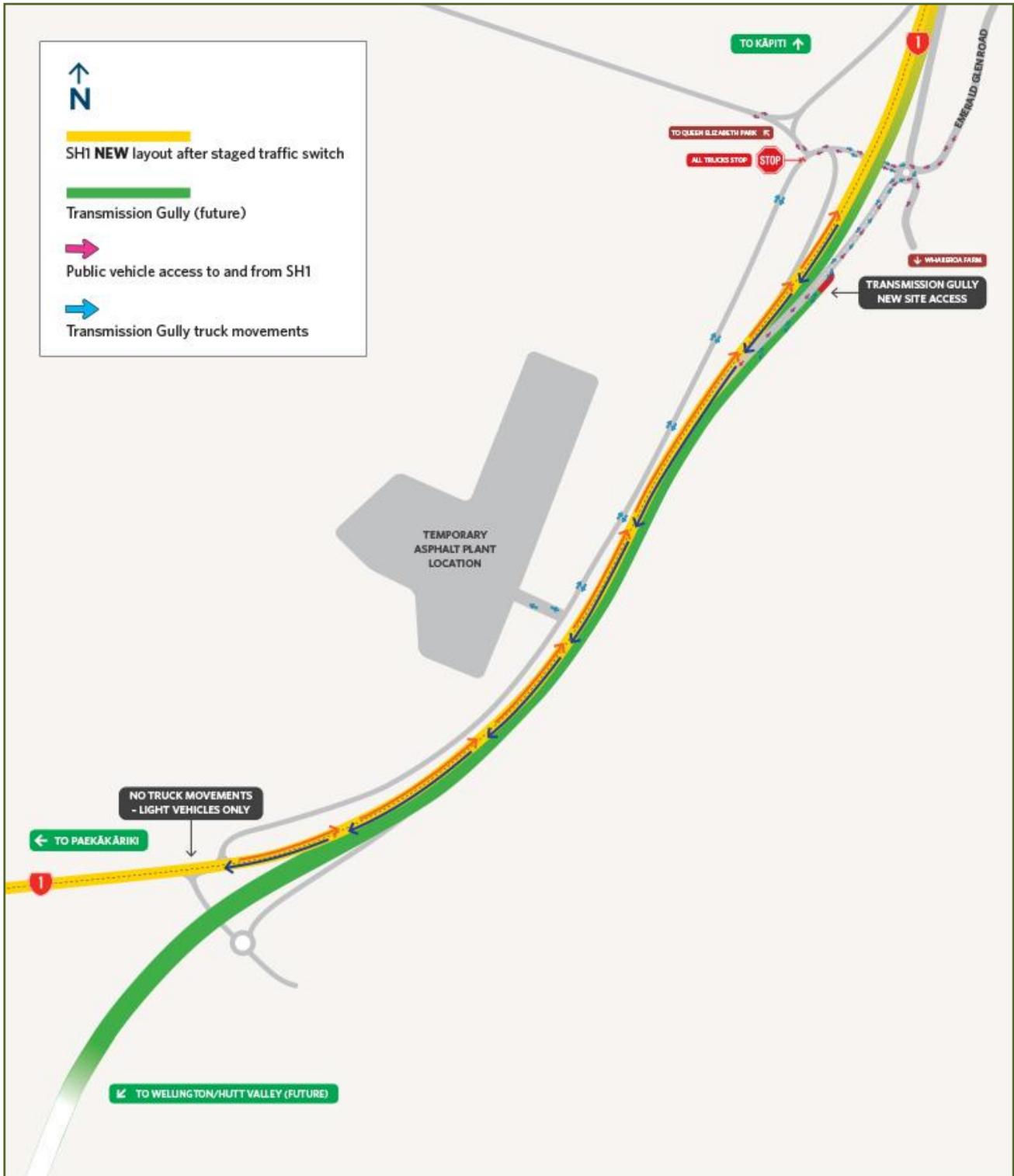
Initially, northbound and southbound traffic will be moved onto this section of Transmission Gully at night only, to allow for the safe bedding in of chipseal on the road. This will happen between 8.30pm and 3.30am under temporary traffic management in mid-late November. Once it's deemed safe to do so, the switch will extend to all traffic 24 hours a day. We expect this to be approximately five days following the commencement of the night-time switch.



Transmission Gully – Upcoming Traffic Changes, cont.

**Asphalt plant and proposed Commercial Vehicle Safety Centre (CVSC) site**

Switching SH1 traffic onto the section of Transmission Gully between Mackays Crossing and Paekākāriki, will also support the safe operation of a temporary asphalt plant supplying asphalt to the paving crews working in the north of the project. With a very busy six months ahead in our paving season, there will be a lot of trucks travelling to and from the asphalt plant. We've got a plan to keep these trucks separate from vehicles travelling on the state highway. The graphics below and on the following page illustrate how we're proposing trucks will travel between the asphalt plant and Transmission Gully; and show public vehicle access to and from SH1.





**Proposed Commercial Vehicle Safety Centre (CVSC) site**

Once we’ve finished paving, the temporary asphalt plant will be removed, and closer to opening, the Mackays site will no longer be required for the project. This Mackays Crossing site is now being proposed as the future location for a Commercial Vehicle Safety Centre (CVSC) – previously known as weigh stations.

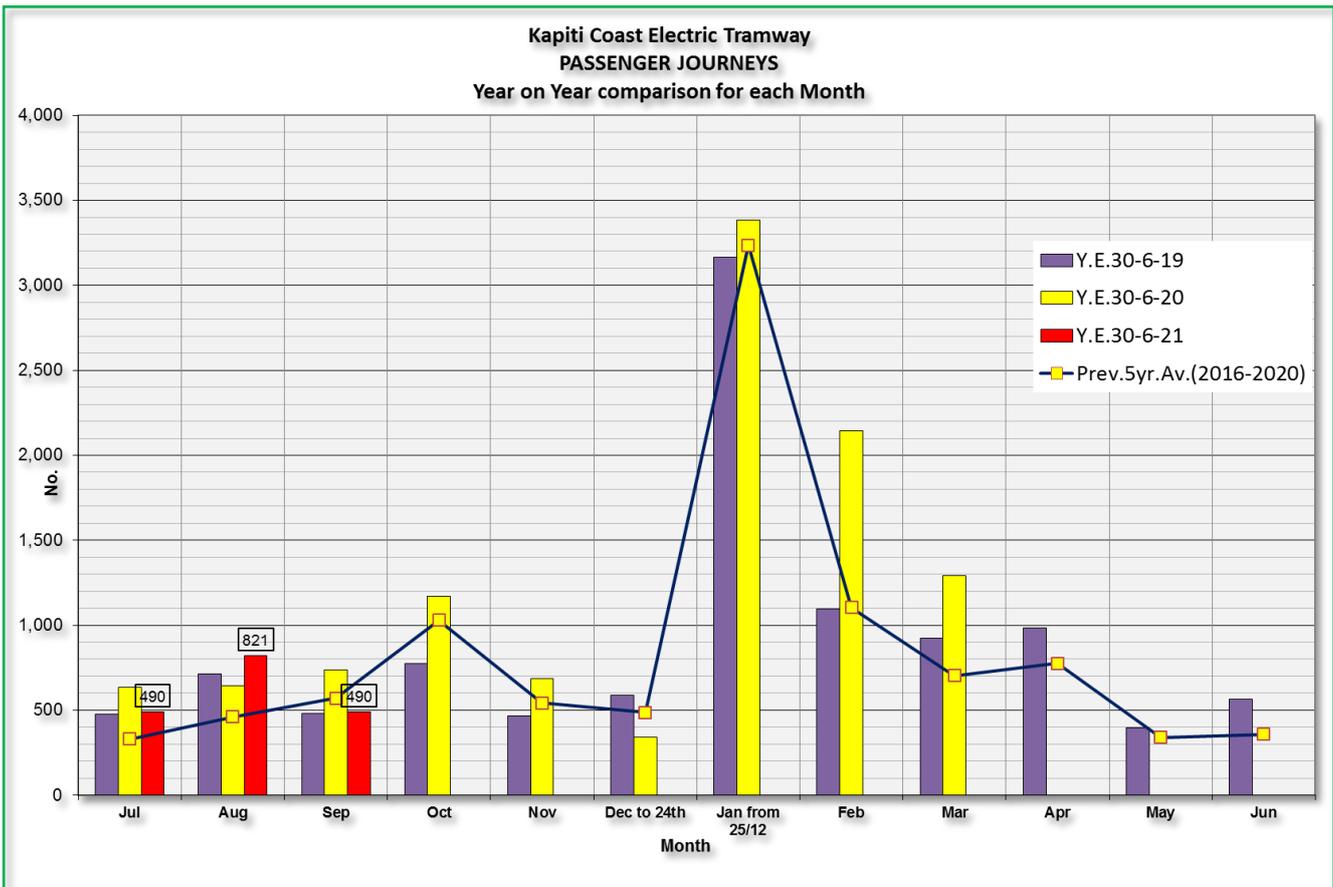
Transmission Gully – Upcoming Traffic Changes, cont.

Once Transmission Gully opens, a new CVSC is required to serve the greater Wellington region. Waka Kotahi (NZ Transport Agency) is currently consulting with the community on a proposed CVSC at Mackays Crossing. The CVSC will use roadside technology and intelligent software to screen heavy vehicles and direct potentially overweight vehicles to the site for further inspection. Targeting potentially overweight non-compliant vehicles can enable compliant heavy vehicles to continue their journey without interruption and makes for a better use of resources and time. The Mackays Crossing site, known locally as ‘the sand pit’ has been proposed because of its safety and environmental factors, solid ground conditions, and ease of access.

**TRAM STATISTICS UPDATE**  
**Keith McGavin**

It was the March-April issue of Tramlines earlier this year in which this feature last appeared. At that point passenger journeys and tram kilometres up to 29<sup>th</sup> February – eight months of the financial year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June – were published.

Just to recap, at that point after eight months our passenger numbers at 9,740 journeys, were up by 25% on the previous year, while tram kms had remained almost constant at 3,017. This very satisfactory state of affairs had been brought about by the combined effects of the GPT tours, operating over that season for the first time, and the Xterra Sports Day on 1<sup>st</sup> February which produced about 900 more passenger journeys than a normal day.



The above chart shows passenger journey numbers month by month for Y.E.30<sup>th</sup> June 2019 (purple columns), for Y.E. 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 (yellow columns) and for the first three months of the current year (red columns). Note that the yellow columns cease after March 2020 denoting no passenger tram operation for April, May and June 2020 (due to the Covid-19 lockdown).

Tram Statistics Update, cont.

### **Results for Year Ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

Since February it has been a “bumpy ride”. The last passenger tram operation during the financial year before the Covid-19 Level 4 lockdown was on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March and trams did not resume operation until July. Nevertheless, such was the increase in passenger numbers up to that March date, we ended the financial year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 with 11,032 passenger journeys which was 397 (3.7%) above the full 12 months of the previous year despite not carrying passengers (or running) for the final three months of the financial year to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Tram kms for the year to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 were 3,286 which can be compared

with 4,320 the previous year, a reduction of 1,034 (23.9%)

### **The Current Financial Year**

Resumption of operations following the Covid-19 lockdown period was delayed slightly due to the re-laying of the Rangers’ Entrance road crossing and the first few passengers were not carried until Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> July.

For the first quarter July to September 2020 passenger journeys were down 11% on last year: 1,801 compared with 2,014 last year. However tram kms at 762 kms are just slightly down on last year’s 773 kms.

### **MAKERS PLATE FOR NUMBER 17 EX TRAM NO.31 HENRY BRITAIN**

Circa 1976 Museum members dismantled Wellington Combination tram number 31. The tram had been written off in October 1950 and sold for the sum of ten pounds (\$20) to some duck shooters for use as a maimai at Pirinoa in the southern Wairarapa.

Our current Treasurer, Michael Boyton, was one of the dismantling team and he came across a brass maker’s plate still attached to the tram denoting that it was made by Macartney McElroy and Company in London. Michael kept the plate and put it aside for preservation.

When 17 was procured Mike decided that if it was ever restored, the maker’s plate could be mounted in 17 to recognise its origins as it had been ordered at the same time as No.31 for the Wellington Corporation Tramways by Macartney McElroy and, as with No.31, constructed by one of their subcontractors, the British Electric Car Company.

Fast forward to 2020 and Michael returned the makers plate to the Tramway and in

early November Colin Dash mounted it above the door in the saloon where one would have been originally mounted, when 17 was constructed.



**Above: Tram 31 at Pirinoa, 1970's.**

*Photo: Michael Boyton*

Makers Plate for No.17 cont.



Above: The Maker's Plate, now mounted in Tram 17.

Photo: Henry Brittain



Above: Close up of the McCartney McElroy & Coy. Ltd. maker's plate. Photo: Keith McGavin

It might be noted that the McCartney McElroy plate is not the only maker's plate on Tram No.17. When the Brill 22E trucks for Tram 17 were produced by A & G Price Ltd. – a Company established way back in 1868 and well versed in the maker's plate tradition for rail products – fitted maker's plates to each of the trucks. See photo on right.

Another item retrieved from Tram 31 when it was demolished was the inside number and end identifier that fits under the motorman's windscreen and behind the

Controller and was saved when the car was demolished. Photo below.



Above: Number "identifier" for Tram No.31 – see text. Henry Brittain collection



Above: A & G Price Maker's plate on one of Tram 17's Brill 22E type trucks. There is a plate on each truck. Photo: Delia McGavin

*Makers Plate for No.17 cont.*



**Above: Tram No.31 in Molesworth Street, heading across town to Newtown. Tram 31 has provided a legitimate maker's plate for tram 17. Henry Brittain collection**

## **AIRFIELD LEVEL CROSSING, TRACK UPGRADE**

**Mike Flinn**

As reported in the last issue of "Tramlines", top priority was given to the upgrade of track at the Airfield Level Crossing. A suitable rail had been selected from rails near the point stack at the Loop and this was cleaned down to replace the defective rail at the crossing. Over eighty screw spikes and plates were cleaned down and fishplates were selected for use. The final item in preparation for the upgrade was the specialised welding of a new transition joint for the left side rail (roadside). (see photo, P.23.)

A temporary replacement car crossing made of sleepers was built near the existing crossing for aero-modeller users during the construction period.

Construction work was intended to start on Monday September 28 September but a poor weather forecast delayed that to Wednesday 30 September although Steve Porter chanced the weather on the Monday and started by undoing fishplate bolts and extracting spikes.



**Above: The temporary car crossing made of sleepers installed so that cars could continue to access the aero modellers' site while the permanent crossing was worked on.**

*Photo: Mike Flinn, 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020*

Airfield level-crossing upgrade, cont.



Above: "Digging out" – on Wed. 30<sup>th</sup> September  
Photo: Russell Jenkins

On Wednesday, a full team was available and sunny weather allowed good progress. By the end of the day all the rails were removed, the left side to be reused and the right side to be replaced, the old spikes, old fittings and sleepers put aside and the digger had excavated the track bed. This resulted in several trailer loads of sand, earth and stones being tipped nearby for subsequent landscaping. By the end of the day the major part of the excavation was completed.



Above: The digging team (part of it) continuing on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October. From left, Grant Johnson, Colin Dash and Mike Flinn.  
Photo: Steve Porter

Both photos above show progress being made on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October. Photos: Mike Flinn  
On Friday morning 2<sup>nd</sup> October, with cooler temperatures, it was possible to complete the joining of the left side rails which was followed by the lining up of sleepers and spiking of the right side rails to the sleepers. Following this the left side rails were correctly gauged and spiked to the sleepers.

Airfield level-crossing upgrade, cont.

Then about seven trailer loads of ballast were brought from the depot and after tipping from the trailer were hand shovelled around the sleepers and partly shovel packed under the sleepers.



**Above: Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October – ballast being delivered to the site. Photo: Mike Flinn**



**Above: Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October – track bonding and fishplate adjustment in progress. Photo: Mike Flinn**

On Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October a further one and a half trailer loads of ballast were brought from the depot followed by a full session by Grant Johnson with the Kango hammer to pack ballast under the sleepers, allowing levelling of the ballast with the top of the sleepers. Then it was time for the bonds to be installed and connected up to ensure a good negative return through the rails for the whole line.

Finally, adjustment was needed to some fishplates to properly line up adjacent rails at the joints. An additional tie bar was fitted on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October and a trial run by a tram over the new work was completed before normal tram service to the beach could resume. (See photo, page 9.)

On Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October the next step was taken by Steve Porter, Colin Dash and Grant Johnson when the timber base and decking of the new crossing was fully laid during the day using timber, mostly provided by GWRC, to complete the new crossing deck. On Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October the approaches to the new decking were prepared with ballast and gravel and although this was curtailed by wet weather it was completed the next day to allow normal car use of the new crossing to start. The sleepers used for the temporary access were taken back to the depot and gravel used for the approaches was removed.



**The crossing on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October. Photo: Mike Flinn**

As can be seen from the above summary a lot of time and energy was needed to plan, prepare and implement this upgrade with several members being involved for three or four successive days. All the work, except the specialised welding, was done by Museum members.

**PLEASE SEE ALSO THE TRAMLINES COVER PHOTO SHOWING THE NEW CROSSING IN USE.**

## AROUND THE SITE AND DOWN THE LINE

Keith McGavin

Much of the period since the September – October issue of *Tramlines* has been taken up with the urgent task of renewing and improving the aero-modellers' road crossing – the subject of a separate article by Mike Flinn. However other tasks and projects have also been progressed in the past eight – nine weeks and these include Tram 17, Tram 207, Track – new tie-rod (pipe type) manufacture, and renovation of the three-way points, plus sorting and storing of parts including the transfer of tram parts from the old white store to new locations.

### Tram 17:

Wiring has continued as time has permitted; also work on the destination sign boxes and mechanisms etc.



Above: The "A" end of Tram 17 showing the destination blind in position. Neville Webley is working on the route number box.

*Photo: Russell Jenkins*

On 7<sup>th</sup> October the newly manufactured handbrake assemblies were received from Tunley Engineering of Paraparaumu.



Above: The two handbrake assemblies for Tram 17 on arrival from Tunley Engineering Ltd.

*Photo: Keith McGavin*



Above: A handbrake temporarily installed in "A" end cab, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

*Photo: Russell Jenkins*

Around the Site & Down the Line, cont.

Tram 17 cont.

Because of the particularly small dimensions of the “A” end cab of Tram 17, and the necessary placement of the controller, we have had one of our controller handles shortened so that motorman’s knuckles do not hit the tram window or window frame.



Above: The photo shows the shortened controller handle for the “A” end of tram 17 in position, with a standard length controller handle placed on top of it for comparison.

*Photo: Keith McGavin*

Track:

Preparation for the aero-modellers’ crossing relay:



Above: A specialist welding contractor welding the railway profile to tramway profile rail to form a transition joint ready for the aero-modellers’ crossing relay project, 19<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

*Photo: Steve Porter*

Sorting of Track Components:



Above: from left – John Tier, Phillip Austin and Mike Flinn beside a large sorted pile of track components; 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

*Photo: Keith McGavin*

Three-way Points:

Considerable work has gone into renovating the two three way points which, as reported last issue, have been brought down to the depot area.



Above: 7<sup>th</sup> October: The three-way points being worked on. From left, Steve Porter, Keith McGavin and John Tier.

*Photo: Mike Flinn*



Above: Success – the blades are removed from one of the three-way points. Everyone has come to see! From left: Henry Brittain, Grant Johnson, Mike Flinn (holding the far end of a blade), John Tier, Barry Ollerenshaw and (half obscured) Steve Porter.

*Photo: Keith McGavin, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020*

Around the Site & Down the Line, cont.  
Overhead and Electrical

On 16<sup>th</sup> September a consignment of tram and trolleybus overhead components, along with one TBOP box, departed the Museum bound for the Perth Electric Tramway Society at Whiteman's Park, Perth, Western Australia.



**Above: Bound for Perth the TBOP plus a wooden crate filled with overhead parts are loaded on to a truck at the Museum, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020.**

**Photos: Top-Steve Porter, Lower-Keith McGavin Storage**

A programme is being carried out of moving all the tram parts currently in the old white store to other locations, cleaning and sorting them as we go. The white store, which is gradually disintegrating, will be demolished.



**Above: Shelving newly added to Container #2 (above) and to Container #4 (below)**

**Photos: Keith McGavin, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020**



On 21<sup>st</sup> October a major shift of tram windows and doors plus various wooden components was made. These parts were mainly ex tram bodies dismantled by members in the 1970's.

Around the Site & Down the Line, cont.  
Storage, cont.



Above: John Tier (inside the container) and Brian Dawson moving parts from the White Store into Container #2,

Below: Part of the interior of Container No.2, showing mainly doors and windows.

*Photos: Keith McGavin, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020*



Above: On 11<sup>th</sup> November various parts, some belonging to tram 207, were removed from non-operative tram 235, sorted and documented. Here they are shown on the floor of the tram barn. *Photo: Mike Flinn*



Above: Also on 11<sup>th</sup> November this pile of mechanical parts ex dismantled trams was removed from the white store and will be stored elsewhere. *Photo: Mike Flinn*



Above: A portion of the White Store interior following removal of many parts on 11<sup>th</sup> November. *Photo: Keith McGavin*

## HISTORIC CORNER

### Disposal of the last trams

HENRY BRITAIN

In the last edition of *Tramlines* I covered the period up until Kilbirnie depot and workshop was closed in March 1961. After this all Tramway operations were focussed at Newtown depot until closure in 1964.

After Hataitai (Nov 1962) and Island Bay (May 1963) closed, Double Saloons were progressively withdrawn and stored at Newtown. Again Stevens was the preferred scrap dealer but it was not until late 1963 that they started removing trams that had been withdrawn after Island Bay closed.

By that time the Stevens yard at Rongotai had closed and a new yard had been established near Owhiro Bay. The trams were transported there and

although they were advertised for sale, there was little uptake and most of them were burnt on site and the scrap metal recovered.

As in the earlier disposals, running gear was exported as scrap.

Of the last few trams withdrawn, apart from the three that went to MOTAT (252/244/257) and those obtained by ourselves (207/235/238/239/250/260) only five trams survived being broken up. 227 and 228 were acquired by the Porirua City Council, 241 was gifted to the Presbyterian Childs Home, 243 to the Home of Compassion and 253 to the Salvation Army. All were placed in children's playgrounds.

The following photographs show the disposition of the few trams that initially survived scrapping.



Above: 241 at the Prebyterian Children's Home in Berhampore

*Grant Taylor collection*

*Historic Corner, cont.*



Above: 227 in a park at Titahi Bay.

*Photo: Graeme Bennett*



Above: 243 at Home of Compassion, Island Bay.

*Grant Taylor collection*



Above: 253 at the Salvation Army, Newtown.

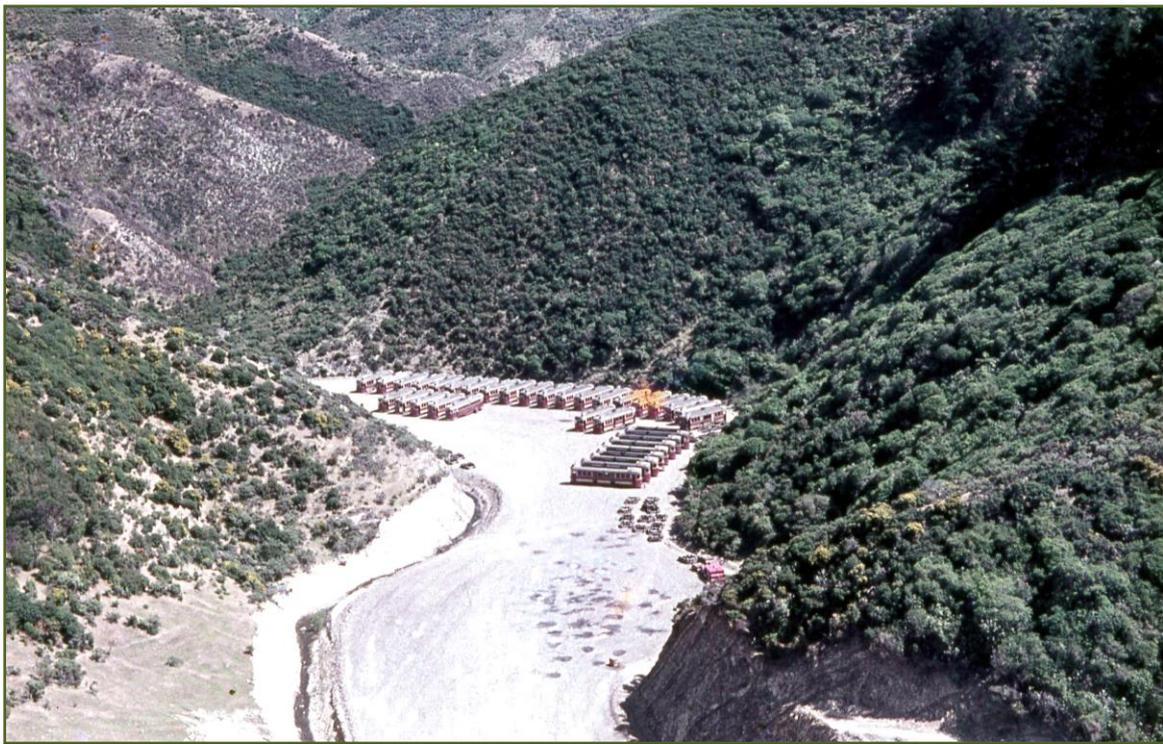
*Photo: Graeme Bennett*

*Historic Corner, cont.*



Withdrawn trams in Newtown Depot, August 1963.

*Photo: Graham Stewart*



Above: This photo shows Steven's "new" yard in 1964, showing rows of trams that have been brought from Newtown for scrapping. The yard was located in the area which now includes Landfill Road – the road to Wellington City Council's Southern Landfill and many industrial businesses.

*Photo: Keith McGavin*

*"Tramlines" is the bi-monthly 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 and it also includes articles on matters of historic tramway interest, especially Wellington. Please also see our website and Facebook page which are our instantly-updated Museum fact resource and notice to the wider world. Contributions and notes welcomed. Contact details are on page 3.*