

# TRAM LINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM INC.

No. 2017 /3

JUNE 2017



Fiducia tram No.239, the “workhorse”, nearing the summit of the hill from the Beach on a bright sunny day. The motorman is Robert Vale and the day was 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

*Photo by Allan Neilson*

## **FROM THE CAMERA OF JAMES PATERSON, U.S.A.**

Here is the second in our series of photos by James Paterson, now of the U.S.A.

We shall continue to publish from his collection of photographs of Wellington trams in the late 1950's in Tramlines, as space permits.



Above: Fiducia No.256 followed by No.252 (destined, in 1964, to be “the last tram”) both heading north along Customhouse Quay and both bearing the destination “Railway Station”. No.256 is showing route 1 (probably from Island Bay or possibly Newtown Depot) while No.252 is route 3 (Constable Street, probably from Lyall Bay, Seatoun, or Kilbirnie Depot).

From here the trams would usually turn left into Whitmore Street and then right into Featherston Street and on to the Featherston Street terminus on the western side of the Railway Station. An alternative would be to continue on from Customhouse Quay directly into Waterloo Quay and then turn left into Bunny Street at the Hotel Waterloo corner, terminating in Bunny Street in front of the Railway Station. (School trams used this latter route in the early 1960's.)

Route 1 and route 3 trams typically ran via Lambton Quay – part of the “Golden Mile” route – rather than via Customhouse Quay. It is possible these were diverted from Lambton Quay due to roadworks or for some other reason such as a breakdown.



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Above: Two small but interesting photographs gleaned by Alan Smith from the NZ Railway & Locomotive Society archives. They show (left) overhead work underway with the old Daimler tower wagon, and (right) a very dark and apparently wet scene at the entrance to the depot area – showing, in the skyline, a short-lived overhead boom switch. Both photos are by the late Doug Wilkinson and date from about 1966.

## From Steve Porter's workbench

9 June 2017

*The work that has occurred since my last report amazes me.*

*The replacement of eighteen traction poles, the installation of many ground anchors and the construction and installation of two beams over Roads Five and Six are precursors to the imminent refurbishment of our aged overhead power supply.*

*By the time you read this the work may even be complete.*

*The need to have the south end of Workshop Road Six and Road Two of the Rear Storage Building clear for the use of the contractor's vehicles and/or components has seen quite some time spent re-stowing or scrapping items previously stored therein.*

*Work on the many overhead components which have been found, cleaned, painted, etc has occupied the time of many members. I would like to thank members for their co-operative efforts toward this massive project.*

*The construction of the wooden tram end by Murray, with assistance from others as requested, continues and I am assured it will soon rise to its eventual height.*

*Tram 260 is now very close to being notified to NZTA as another operable rail vehicle. I am hoping that we can open the refurbished overhead with her.*

*159 is also very close to ready for service after the paint and panel work recently undertaken on the "A" end.*

*The top section of the storage module in the workshop has been removed to achieve compliance with rules for sprinkler protection of buildings. The module was too tall and was too close to the sprinkler heads. When time is available it will be re-erected in the rear storage building.*

*The preparation of scrap tram rail for sale and the loading of it from the stack near the crossing loop has now been completed.*

*At Queen's Birthday Weekend three of our members attended the annual FRONZ conference in Dunedin. During the Awards evening, I was honoured to accept on the tramway's behalf, the Kiwirail Infrastructure Improvement Award. This award consists of a framed certificate, a wooden trophy (held for one year), a cash award of \$2,000 and recognises the massive effort by members to reinstate and improve our power supply.*

*Operations have continued at a steady pace. We have a driver trainee coming through but we do need more staff (drivers, conductors and sales staff). Please, where you can, enthuse others about our hobby. Remember that heritage artefacts once lost are probably lost forever.*

*Steve Porter.*

### **Stop Press 19<sup>th</sup> June**

Rewiring of the overhead commenced 12<sup>th</sup> June and depending on weather and other factors will probably take until the end of July. Trams of course will not operate over this period. Check website for updates.

## Federation of Rail Organisations Conference Steve Porter

This Conference, which is held annually, took place in Dunedin over Queens Birthday weekend from Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June to Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June. Wellington Tramway Museum Inc. was represented by delegates Steve Porter and Barry Ollerenshaw and observer Henry Brittain.

*The highlight for WTM was winning the annual KiwiRail sponsored Infrastructure Improvement Award for the installation of our renovated and upgraded tram power supply. Please see the separate article on this.*

The Conference programme began on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June with an enjoyable journey on Dunedin Railways Taieri Gorge train to Pukerangi and return. On return to Dunedin in the late afternoon attendees went to the Southern Cross Scenic Hotel to register and meet again over a drink or two.

Saturday commenced with a welcome by the Chairman of FRONZ (Grant Craig) which included a moment's silence for those members of FRONZ and member groups who have passed on, an address by Dave Cull (Mayor of Dunedin), and a welcome by the Otago Excursion Train Trust (OETT) who were hosts of the Conference.

We were then treated to a session by Greg Lang (The Wheelwright Shop) on the subject of "Restoring Heritage Railway Artifacts". Greg showed many slides of our tram #17 during his very interesting presentation.

After a break we were addressed by Rob Gould of the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA). He gave the NZTA's expectation as to what, when and how we, a rail participant and they, NZTA, should interact with each other. The next session was a KiwiRail update by David Gordon. This was followed by the second session from NZTA (Chris Ballantyne) who outlined how it is intended to make Safety Cases more useful to operators. He also discussed when variations and notifications to Safety Cases are required. It seems many groups have been seeking variations to their Safety Case when a simple notification would suffice. (The test is that a variation is required only where one or more new hazards are presented or the risk profile is increased.) After lunch we listened to Megan Drayton of Tracksafe NZ. (Tracksafe is a charitable trust governed by a Board of Directors and aims to raise awareness about rail safety in New Zealand and educate the public on how to keep

themselves safe around tracks and trains.) The next session, the third by NZTA, was a discussion with Rob Gould and Chris Ballantyne about when variations to Safety Cases are required and sought feedback on how Safety Cases and Safety Case Variations could be improved.

Stephen Fox (Museums Aotearoa) spoke on the subject of "Preservation of Moving Objects". Our Trevor Burling then spoke on the subject of "Care of Moving Objects". Then Dave Hinman (FRONZ Tramway Matters Representative) gave his slide show of tramway activities around NZ. Leyton Chan (MOTAT Tramway) and I were asked to talk about activities in our respective areas.

The meeting then broke up into three groups: one was for Network Heritage Operators, the second was the usual annual Tramway Operators (which Barry, Henry and I attended) – and the last was held in the bar for those who were too thirsty to attend either of the first two!

Sunday morning saw the AGM held. The election resulted in Grant Craig being re-elected as Chairman, Jeff Tolan becoming Secretary and Hugh McCracken Treasurer. Scott Osmond, David Maciulaitis, Nigel Hogg, are the additional elected members of the executive. Convenors were all reappointed except that Reid McNaught, the Awards Convenor, has been replaced by David Turner and David Maciulaitis. At the conclusion of the AGM Brian Wheatley spoke about progress at the National Rail Museum in Christchurch. The next session by Murray King of the Rail Heritage Trust brought delegates up to date with that Trust's activities.

An afternoon of field trips then followed - to the Dunedin Gasworks Museum, the Ocean Beach Railway and to The Otago Settlers Museum. The Awards dinner on Sunday evening was held in a dining room at the Southern Cross Hotel. The usual slide show of member groups' activities was followed by the awards which, as mentioned, saw WTM win the Infrastructure Improvement Award.

Finally, on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June a Silver Fern railcar trip from Dunedin to Oamaru and return. While in Oamaru delegates were taken by diesel shunter hauled train out to the end of Oamaru's line and back. Lunch was then taken.

Overall a very useful weekend with many useful insights both from the formal sessions and from the networking with other people involved in our movement.

## AWARD FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT



### MUSEUM WINS AWARD FROM FEDERATION OF RAIL ORGANISATIONS OF NZ

#### Award sponsored by KiwiRail

The 2017 Kiwi Rail Infrastructure Improvement Award was made to the Wellington Tramway Museum for the refurbishment and reinstatement of our high voltage power supply. The award included an award of \$2000, a certificate, plus a plaque that we hold for a year.

In accepting the award on behalf of the Museum at the recent Conference, President Steve Porter acknowledged the dedication and effort that members had contributed to the successful outcome of a major event in our operations.

Above: The Award Certificate. It was presented to President Steve Porter for the Museum on 4<sup>th</sup> June at the FRONZ Conference in Dunedin.



Above: Two photos that show some of the extensive work carried out last year on our tram power supply. On the left the new 11kV breaker with, to the rear, the green cabinet housing the mercury arc bulbs. On the right the new shelter housing the 11kV transformer.

*Photos: Keith McGavin*



## MEMBERSHIP

**Membership Secretary Robert Hatten**

Just one new member to welcome this issue:

*Sir Roderick Deane*

In a note to WTM Sir Roderick says "I loved the Wellington trams and am still sad that they do not operate today. But it is great that you are preserving some of them and maintaining the link to our history."

Welcome to the Wellington Tramway Museum Sir Roderick, and we hope you enjoy your membership of the Museum.

## TRAM STATISTICS

**Keith McGavin**

**Daily figures collated by Mike Vash**

April and May 2017

During April the trams operated on no fewer than 21 of the 30 days – a result of the combination of school holidays, Easter, and the long weekend for Anzac Day. There was a reasonable result, with 1,722 passenger journeys recorded during the month – more than in some years but well short of our record April total of over 2,000.

May saw a return to the dull and even bleak weather that has been a constant during this Autumn. (Wellington sunshine hours are said to be down by over 20% this year.) Trams operated for passengers on only the four weekends (that is, eight days) and only 337 passenger journeys were recorded, one of our lowest Mays on record.

Over the two months, April and May, just two trams (151 and 239) were used and together they travelled 909 kms.

### **Busy Days - opinion**

*Considering Wellington's population it seems reasonable that on a good fine Sunday we should be able to attract 100 or more visitors to the Museum. Aside from Specials this has happened since we resumed operations last year on only three occasions so far - Boxing Day 26<sup>th</sup> December, Sat 7<sup>th</sup> January, and Easter Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April. Sure we have been dogged this year by bad weather – in fact on New Year's Day, traditionally one of our busiest days – we did not even turn a wheel (well in fact the morning test trip was done but nothing after that)! However this lack of really busy days demonstrates that there is certainly scope to attract more people to the Park, to ride the heritage trams and inspect the Museum.*

*Keith McGavin*

## RECENT EVENT – MAY DINNER

About 30 members, spouses and friends enjoyed our traditional May or mid-season dinner which was, this year, held at the 1841 Bar / Restaurant at Johnsonville. A notable attendee was a member from our early years, Len Gunther, who was visiting from Australia. Len attended along with his brother, Gary, of Wellington who has recently joined the Museum as a member.

## FROM THE MARKETING AND OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

**Russell Jenkins**

May was a very quiet month for passengers, mainly brought about by the mediocre weekend weather in Kapiti and Wellington. (We cannot control the weather!) Things picked up in June, with good numbers of visitors during Queens Birthday weekend and also the following weekend (10 & 11 June).

However, as you will all be aware, we have now ceased tram operations while our major overhead renewal programme gets underway. As per the information on our Website and Facebook Page, we are not operating for the remaining two weekends of June. Latest news is it is unlikely the trams will be operating during July. To ensure that you are keep up to date, please check either the Website ([www.wellingtontrams.org.nz](http://www.wellingtontrams.org.nz)) or the Tramway Museum Facebook page. Both will be updated frequently.

If you are on the Roster and the trams are not operational, I encourage you to still come up to the museum on your rostered day, as there are always jobs to do and we always welcome members who come and give a hand.

Last month saw the arrival of a new "neighbour" in the form of a restored Army Hut that has been erected in an area adjacent to the Marines Memorial.



**Restored US Marines Hut at the Marines Memorial – exterior and interior.**  
*Photos: Russell Jenkins*

The restoration was undertaken by the Waikanae Menz Shed and a superb job they have done. It is planned to restore a number of huts in the future so that park visitors can get an idea of what camp life was like for the American Marines.

The Museum was also involved with other events associated with American Memorial Day.

On the Sunday preceding American Memorial Day the Kapiti Harriers and Joggers used the Fiducia Centre as a base for the Annual Marines Run. Competitors were feed lovely hot homemade soup and so did the museum members on site that day (Another benefit of coming to the museum!).

A tram was also in service on Memorial Day May 29 so that children taking part in the service could wait out of the weather until they were required. As it turned out the weather was dry and the tram's only role was to provide a backdrop to the proceedings.



**Above: Marines Memorial Day Service (May 29<sup>th</sup>)**

*Photo: Russell Jenkins*



**A Reminder for Operational Staff**

**The combination lock on the “Clock Box” has been replaced with a conventional lock that uses the No. 3 key on the bunch of keys kept in the cash box. Please make sure that the “Clock Box” is locked when operations have finished for the day.**

PS Thanks to all members who have volunteered to be on the operating roster. Operations are a very important part of the Museum because without operating trams, visitors would probably not visit us.

Please give some thought to giving us a hand, either as a member of the Tram Crew, helping in the shop or just talking to visitors. If you want to offer yourself to the operational team, please let me know and I will get Robert Vale to include you on the next roster.

And while on the subject of the Operating Roster, a big thanks goes to Robert Vale who sorts out who does what every three months. Robert, your efforts are really appreciated.

*Russell Jenkins*  
Vice President, Marketing & Operations  
[rjenkins@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rjenkins@xtra.co.nz)  
04 239 9482

**AROUND THE SITE AND DOWN THE LINE – Activities of the Maintenance and Engineering Department**  
**Allan Neilson**

As most of you will know the overhead refurbishment project has taken up a significant amount of members' time recently, and the narrative below further explains the lead-up to date. The tramway traction power supply was isolated off on the 12<sup>th</sup> June to allow site works to commence in earnest.

Overhead Lines Upgrade:

As most members are aware an opportunity to upgrade the Tramway overhead lines became available with assistance provided by Wellington Cable Car Ltd (WCCL) and their overhead lines contractor Broadspectrum (formerly Transfield Services). This upgrade would require the Museum members to do a lot of preparatory work and assist where required with the lines upgrade. It is in fact one of the largest expansion or upgrade works undertaken by the Museum's members and this article is the first instalment outlining the work needed and the members' contribution of time and work provided up to Queens Birthday Weekend in early June.

The first stage was a survey of the whole line and an agreement between the parties as to the details of the work needed. On behalf of the Museum Allan Neilson and Steve Porter negotiated the scope of the work with WCCL staff which included the replacement of some older poles and the replacement of span wires and running wires. Once the necessary agreements were reached Museum members started to organise for the preliminary works to be done. Initially overhead parts were located and checked for suitability and drums were bought and welded together for poles to be fitted and pipe was bought for brackets, cut to length and one end bent over.

***Around the Site and Down the Line, cont.***

Colin Dash organised a contractor to come on 18 April, after Easter, and auger holes for poles and anchor points. Overall 17 holes were drilled, 4 anchors (one metre deep), twelve 2 metre deep holes and one 3 metre deep hole for the terminal pole No 71. Once each hole was drilled a drum was put into the ground and a cap screwed on for safety reasons. Starting from the end of the line and coming back to the depot, this was well achieved soon after noon.

In the afternoon checks were made to ensure that any spaces around the drums were filled and packed to prevent movement.



**Above: Auguring one of 17 holes 18<sup>th</sup> April. Colin Dash in background with the "hole depth measuring device".**  
***Photo: Mike Flinn***

The next day Colin arranged for a concrete mixer to be hired and a number of anchor drums were



**Above: An anchor for pole 42 had to be concreted in part-way up a bank, 19<sup>th</sup> April. Members in this photo are, from left, Murray Gibson, Allan Neilson, Phillip Austin and Colin Dash.**  
***Photo: Mike Flinn***

filled with concrete and pull off rings were fixed within the concrete. While the two anchors at Pole 71 were easily accessed the anchor at Pole 42 was partly up a bank and the anchor at Pole 20 was over a fence and buckets were needed to pass concrete over to these drums. Packing around the pole drums was continued and displaced earth had to be cleared or tidied before the next phase, the pole planting, could start.



***Around the Site and Down the Line, cont.***



**Above: Planting a replacement pole in the depot area, 3<sup>rd</sup> May.**

***Photo: Mike Flinn***

As well as the 12 new pole holes there were 5 holes already dug with drums planted during 2015 which had not progressed further due to the power failure during most of 2016. This meant that there were 18 poles to be fitted. At the Museum ten 10 metre poles were pulled out and caps were fitted as required and a further 4 poles stacked next to the workshop of 8 metre length had fittings removed from them and caps were fitted. Several tall poles were made available from WCCL stocks. Colin had made a

mould for a concrete base to go down into each drum with a hole in the middle for the pole to be fitted and all these concrete bases were gathered together.

In the meantime the parts were sorted and a programme of checking, cleaning and painting of the parts began and even with several members working on them there was

several weeks work up to Queens Birthday Weekend before they were all ready.



**Above: Ted Kendal (left) and Allan Neilson in the workshop with refurbished overhead parts, 17<sup>th</sup> May.**

***Photo: Keith McGavin***

Between 1 May and 3 May WCCL and Broadspectrum staff with help from members, planted all the poles and put suitable fill between the poles and drums to set them up with suitable rakes to offset the tension from the wiring. In addition several anchors were manually screwed into the ground to add support to some poles on corners. Despite the high water table affecting the 4 poles planted in the depot area the work proceeded very well. Further work needed before wiring started was to



### ***Around the Site and Down the Line, cont.***

concrete around the pole bases to form mowing strips and tidy earth around several poles to allow the mowing contractor access.

To provide more strength for wiring entering the workshop two steel bars have been manufactured and fitted above the doors to roads 5 and 6.

Broadspectrum lines staff commenced site works on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June and as at the 20<sup>th</sup> June the following has been achieved;

- All cantilevers on poles 2 and 35 inclusive either renewed or upgraded, including the installation of new cantilevers on new poles
- New span wires at loop run
- All overhead wires in depot area have been removed.



**Above: Broadspectrum staff and equipment at work, Pole 13, June 2017.**

***Photo Allan Neilson***

Since the work programme started at least 14 members have contributed time towards this upgrade and further time will be needed to provide assistance for the wiring work. The wide range of contributions by members so far has included welding drums, preparing poles, brackets and the concrete bases, sorting, preparing and painting parts, welding and preparing the reinforcing bars in the workshop, assisting with putting drums into the ground and concreting the anchor drums as well as assisting to plant the poles and tidy up afterwards.

The overall aim is to take this opportunity to improve the overhead lines so that members' time needed for maintenance work is minimised for at least 10 years.

***Around the Site and Down the Line, cont.***



**Above: The depot overhead as you have never seen it before. 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017. In case you are wondering the whole of the depot overhead running wire and span wire is being replaced.**

***Photo: Allan Neilson***



**Above: Broad Spectrum staff working on the loop overhead.**

***Photo: Allan Neilson***



### ***Around the Site and Down the Line, cont.***

Other work around the place has been taking place also, with some examples as follows;

- Ted Kendall with assistance from Bernhard Riddering has now virtually completed the front apron painting on tram 159, the headlight and taillight have been re-installed and the numbers applied
- Murray Gibson, with help from others, has made good progress on the portable tram front mock-up
- Mike Vash has been working on some minor overhead line modifications to the Barn overhead wiring so that they are completed in conjunction with the overhead refurbishment project. He has also been making up two “bolting on” modified bolster units to fit Sammy trucks to go under tram 185.
- Mike Flinn has been busy weed-eating around the property
- Barry Ollerenshaw has been quietly carrying out tramcar maintenance tasks
- Steve Green has continued with tram cleaning and polishing.

Here is a selection of photographs showing recent work in progress.



**Above: Mock tram front under construction for display purposes, 31<sup>st</sup> May.**

*Photo: Russell Jenkins*



**Above: Mike Vash and Henry Brittain examine a pile of old and twisted surplus rails, 10<sup>th</sup> May.**

*Photo: Keith McGavin*



**Above: Sammy truck being fitted with modifications – to go under tram 185 in the rear storage building.**

*Photo: Keith McGavin*



**Above: Some of the same rails, cut into short lengths, being loaded to be trucked away for re-sale, 31<sup>st</sup> May.**

*Photo: Russell Jenkins*



***Around the Site and Down the Line, cont.***



Above: New tram 17 posters attached to the side of the cable-car trailer in the display area at the front of Barn Road 3. *Photo: Keith McGavin*



Above: The area behind the sub-station after Mike Flinn had been through with the weed-eater, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017. *Photo: Keith McGavin*



Above: Colin Dash removing the outer casing from a magnetic brake unit that will be rewound and renovated for use on tram 17, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2017. *Photo: Keith McGavin*



Above: Various tram truck parts, marked with blue paint, set aside for use in the reconstructed trucks for tram 17. *Photo: Keith McGavin*



Above: Tram 159 in the workshop: The "A" end and apron repainted and with taillight and headlight refitted, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2017. *Photo: Russell Jenkins*



## CONSERVATION OF WELLINGTON TRAM NO.17

Keith McGavin, Chairman, Tram 17 Sub-committee

Work on this tram at the Wheelwright Shop, Gladstone, is advancing all the time, the plan being to have it returned to the Tramway Museum in early December for finishing work and display. *Here are photographs of recent (May/June 2017) work.*



**Above: New pieces being welded into the chassis to replace corroded areas**



**Above: Sandblasting of steel chassis**



**Above: Painting of the saloon frame progressing**



**Above: Preparation and painting of timber chassis components**

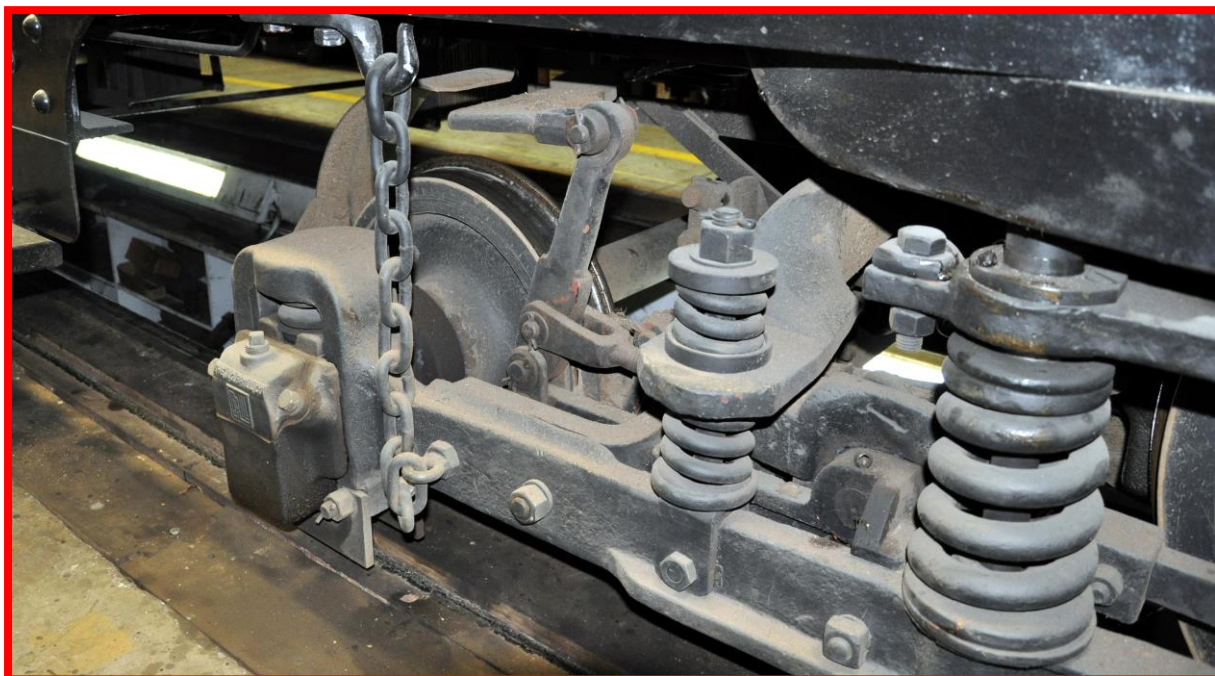
*All photos this page courtesy Greg Lang, The Wheelwright Shop*

## ***Conservation of Tram 17, continued***

### **Reconstruction of the Brill 22E Trucks**

Tenders close with the Wellington Tramway Museum on 20<sup>th</sup> July for the supply of two Brill 22E trucks for tram No.17, reconstructed from parts supplied by the Museum and from new parts. The Museum will be supplying the successful tenderer with two motors (which are GE247's ex Melbourne), original Wellington style driving wheels, pony wheel and axle sets, axle boxes, magnetic brake units, some springs, plus some components ex Ballarat, Victoria, which are common to the Wellington Brill 22E's. However a number of new castings have to be manufactured including the four side frames. To aid with some of the castings the Museum will where possible be providing the successful contractor with the original wood patterns, though we do not have them for the side frames.

In addition to this contract work the project will include the refurbishment of the two electric motors as a separate job. And members will be undertaking the rewinding and refurbishment of four magnetic brake units as we did for tram 260.



**Above: One of the Brill 22E trucks on ex Wellington double-decker tram No.47 at MOTAT. The two on this tram are the only Wellington style ones currently in existence.** *Photo: Leyton Chan*

Provided a satisfactory tender is received application will be made in August to the Lottery Environment and Heritage Committee (the Committee) for two-thirds of the estimated total project cost including contract supervision, the electric motor and magnetic brake refurbishments as well as the main contract. (The Committee's policies include granting no more than two-thirds of the total project cost.) Success or otherwise will be known in November.

The remaining one-third is termed partnership funding and needs to be guaranteed by the Museum. Once the actual financial requirement is known a major effort will be made, between August and November, to raise this amount from various Charitable Trusts, Gaming Organisations, other organisations, and from members.



### ***Conservation of Tram 17 continued***

Our efforts to restore Wellington Tram 17 are bearing fruit but it is still going to require a major effort over the next few months to get the trucks' reconstruction underway. The successful conservation of Tram 17 in accordance with the late Colin Perfect's 2007 Conservation Plan will mean:

- The preservation for current and future generations of the only survivor of Wellington's first (1904) electric trams. It was this tram, and those like it, which provided the rapid and convenient travel needed to allow city suburbs beyond and further from the City Centre than Newtown to be developed;
- That an important memento of life in First World War Wellington will have been saved;
- That the very tram that brought about (via an Act of Parliament in 1913) nationwide tram body rebuilding to provide a central aisle through all trams for the safety of conductors will have been preserved;
- The ability to run the tram on the Kapiti Coast Electric Tramway so that visitors can experience a ride in one of the very first Wellington electric trams.

This is what the Wellington Tramway Museum is all about.

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### ***Meanwhile, back at the Tramway.....***



Above: Fiducia 260 returning from the Beach and rounding Collett's Corner on a test run on a very grey 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017. It is about to pass pole No.13 in the foreground, one of many which has now been replaced. Allan Neilson (left) and Steve Porter are working on the new pole hole – this one had to be dug by hand.

*Photo: Mike Flinn*

## HISTORICAL CORNER

**Henry Brittain**

Running a fleet of tramcars in Wellington's narrow City streets meant that the trams often came into contact with road vehicles including other trams. While trams had right of way in most traffic conditions, there were frequent collisions with motor vehicles and the workshops had a constant supply of trams to repair.

Trams running into one another were not uncommon. However one instance occurred on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1935 that was different from many others.



**Above: Tram 109 after Hataitai tunnel accident, 4<sup>th</sup> February 1935.**

Karori bound tram 109 was approximately 100 yards inside the Hataitai tunnel on the Hataitai side when the motorman suddenly saw two young children on the line ahead of him. He immediately came to an emergency stop. However a following tram, number

168 bound for the Railway Station was following too close and despite the motorman applying his magnetic brakes the tram slid into the back of 109.

Both trams suffered extensive damage, the only casualty was the motorman of 168, who suffered cuts to his face and hands from flying glass.



**Above: Tram 168 after Hataitai tunnel accident, 4<sup>th</sup> February 1935.**

Despite the damage to both trams and the confined space in the tunnel, they could be separated and driven out of the tunnel under their own power using the undamaged ends and taken back to the workshops where the photos were taken. The Tramways would have held an inquiry into the accident. However I have been unable to establish what its findings were. No mention was made in the information I have as to what happened to the children but I think it is safe to assume they did not suffer any injuries.



### Historical Corner, continued

Where a road vehicle was involved in an incident with a tram, the usual custom was for the Tramways to send an account to the motorist for the cost of any repairs to the tram.

TELEPHONE 41-076  
P.O. Box - 390

Head Office: Harris Street,  
Wellington, 6<sup>th</sup> Dec 1935

copy  
M. S. W. G. Nelson  
Dr. to 122 Brougham St  
The Wellington Corporation Tramways

Account No. 327  
Cr. No. 31  
Account payable to W. & T. LTD. T1721

To Account Rendered		...	....	...
1933	Aug 22	Lo cost of repairs to tram 100 damaged in collision with your motor car in Manners St. on 15.8.33		
				15

An example of this is shown in the attached account for damage to tram 100 involved in an incident in Manners Street.

#### New Members:

If you are reading this and not already a member would you like to support us by joining?

Or, if you are a member do you know of anyone who could be interested in supporting the Wellington Tramway Museum by becoming a member, either in the wider Wellington area or beyond.

We are constantly on the lookout for supporters. The membership rate is a modest \$60 p.a. (\$30 for junior members and age beneficiaries). Please email [info@wellingtontrams.org.nz](mailto:info@wellingtontrams.org.nz) or write to the Museum at P.O.Box 2612, Wellington 6140, N.Z. for any further details or information.

**"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 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.**