

FERRYMEAD

Tram Tracts



The Journal of the Tramway Historical Society

Issue 23—April 2018



On the Level

Christchurch's tram-train crossings from a railway perspective

Out and About on the Buses

Two months—two very different bus trips

Christchurch Tramway—To Be Extended?

The Council's considering it—let's get behind and make it happen!

President's Piece—Graeme Belworthy



Hi All,

Due to other commitments including work I haven't been at the Tram Barn on Saturdays since I wrote my last article for *Tracts*, so most of my information is from those who have been there.

On the second Night Market held on 3rd March in the village there was a much larger crowd. We ran No. 26 again and did very well with our gold coin donation for rides.

The Park has decided they will run indefinitely, and is looking at changing the hours after April. The Society will continue to support it by running No. 26, but needs crews to do this, at least three to enable each member to have a break. The April market should be on the 7th.

We held our March General Meeting on Wednesday 21st attended by about 12 members. The night started with some very interesting photos from the David Jones Collection about trolley buses from all around the world. Some of the photos showed the various methods of

collecting the power supply before the current system of poles we have today became universally used. This was followed by a presentation by Dave Hinman and Jonathan Day on the condition of our own system and what is needed to overhaul it for continued operation. More on this subject elsewhere in *Tracts*.

Progress has been made with the Resource Consent for the Bus Barn and Project Leader Clarrie Pearce has asked for a meeting with some of the Management Committee to clarify some issues and get matters underway.

Work on Hills Car 24 and Grip Car 103 continues with more on the restoration of these vehicles elsewhere in *Tracts*. Dunedin trolleybus 79 has been moved to the paint booth to free up room for Brill 178 which has been returned from the city for repair work to be done on it. A funding application has been made to allow the purchase of materials for Kitson boiler repairs. The normal repairs and maintenance of the infrastructure and vehicles continues to allow the Society to operate.

That's all I have at this point.

Cheers,

Graeme

Alastair's Angle—Alastair Cross



Welcome to another issue of *Tracts*. Much like Graeme, I haven't had much time to come down to Ferrymead, so I'm indebted to those who have kindly kept me 'in the loop' as it were on recent happenings.

While we're yet to hear any news on the restoration and upgrading of the trolleybus overhead at Ferrymead, Dunedin trolleybus 79 is on the

move once again—this time into the paint booth to make space for Christchurch 'Brill' 178, which has come home for some TLC. Work is also quietly continuing, as Graeme notes, on our two restoration projects ('Hills' car 24 and Mornington 103).

Elsewhere, the Christchurch City Council is considering whether to extend the City Tramway down lower High Street in concert with the reconstruction works due to take place in this area. It would reduce the impact of said work considerably, and the question of the provision of a return loop, made more difficult by post earthquake roading changes, is part of the discussion. Submissions to the plan close on **13 April**, so please consider making a submission to the Council in support of this work before

the due date. The more people who throw their support behind the tramway extension, the more likely it is to become a reality!

And slightly further afield, the Dunedin Light Rail Trust's 'mini-museum' has had its floor slab poured with the building shortly to go up and its new residents (two Roslyn grip trams and the restored Mornington trailer 111) shortly to come down from Ferrymead.

This month also features a postscript to the Riccarton Road level crossing story, courtesy of Alister McKenzie. While reading through back issues of the *New Zealand Railway Observer*, he found a short piece on the four remaining tram-train level crossings in Christchurch. I say 'four' because these were the major crossings, under the control of either crossing-keepers' huts or, in two cases, main-line signal boxes. Remembering the interest in the recovered remains, Alister kindly forwarded a copy to Dave Hinman, who in turn forwarded it to me last month for publication. I hope you'll forgive me the publication delay!

Well, that's it from me this month. 'Till next time!

Cheers,

Alastair

Notices

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

FRONZ - The Annual conference of the Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand this year is in Wellington, over Queen's Birthday Weekend (1-4 June), hosted by Steam Incorporated with the support of other local heritage groups. It will include a trip to the Wheelwright Shop in Gladstone, where Wellington 'combination' tram No. 17 is currently being restored. Bookings are now open and for full details please see <https://www.fronz.org.nz/conferences>

COTMA - Following on from the 2016 event in Christchurch, the 2018 biennial COTMA Conference is to be held in Perth, Western Australia, with registration on the evening of Thursday 13 September and concluding on the afternoon of Tuesday 18 September. It is being hosted by the Perth Electric Tramway Society (PETS), with many of the museum sessions to be held at Whiteman Park, where their operating tramway museum is located. PETS have developed a very interesting programme and are also planning a post conference tour which is arranged to allow an earlier

finish for those wish to travel back East on the weekly *Indian Pacific* train, departing on Sunday 23 September. Booking details are due out very shortly and details will be available at <https://www.cotma.org.au/conference.html>

GENERAL MEETING

The next General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 18 April at 7:30PM in the Lions Building at Ferrymead Heritage Park. The guest speaker for the evening will be Ken Henderson, who will be speaking about his recent cruise on the *Queen Mary II* from Sydney to Tauranga. The second part of the evening will be the Society's annual Goals and Projects discussion, chaired by Stephen Taylor. As is usual, supper will be provided at a cost of \$2.00 per head.

MONTHLY WORK DAY

The Society's next Work Day will be held on Saturday 21 April. We encourage all members who are able to do so to come along and lend a hand, even if for only part of the day. Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea provided



LEFT: No prizes for guessing where this photo was taken! Shot from the platform at the Flinders Street-Spencer Street tram stop, W8-class 981 waits its turn to cross the intersection westbound while E-class 6036 hides under the railway viaduct on a inbound Route 96 working. Above all this in the background, X'trapolis EMU driving car 852M leads a unidentified commuter service across the viaduct and on towards Flinders Street Station.

Photo: Alastair Cross

Tram Driving Tips with David Jones

It is essential that the motorman's seat installed on each tramcar is left on the tram at all times. They must not be removed from the tramcar. If not in use, the motorman's seat may be carefully stowed on an end platform in a situation where it cannot be a trip hazard or cause harm or injury to crew or passengers. It is also recommended that if you are not familiar with driving sitting down – give it a go! On a busy day, a seat at one end of the tram provides welcome relief to tired legs.

Recent Events

BUS NEWS WITH ALAN ROI

On the 18th of March we were able to borrow Dunedin bus 180, which had been at Ferrymead for an overhaul, for a jaunt along the two former Christchurch trolleybus routes. Dunedin 180, the prototype Hess-bodied Leyland Leopard and first of an eventual twenty-seven used in Dunedin from 1980 onward, is owned by the Otago Heritage Bus Society, and was due to head back to Dunedin on the following Friday. Alan Roi acted as driver for this trip, which had been organised at short notice; consequently, only about 15 members took part. Those who did were joined for the trip by Sandtoft Trolleybus Museum director David Hanchett and his wife Joanne from the United Kingdom.

After travelling into town via Ferry Road we made our way to Cathedral Square and stopped as close to the original bus stop outside the former BNZ site. Due to the changes in the city we had to detour round the first part of the trolleybus route and then followed the former line from Madras Street right out to North Beach and along to New Brighton. At New Brighton a stop was made for an ice cream. We then retraced our steps to the corner of New Brighton Road and North Parade and imagined ourselves changing our poles onto the Richmond route. This was traced as far as Worcester St and Fitzgerald Ave where road alterations prevented us from returning to the Square. During the course of the trip Dave Hinman and others were able to provide a lot of background to the two former routes. The trip was judged a success by all who participated.

Following the trip David and Joanne were shown our

other buses and David was able to have a drive of our RT double-decker. The next morning Alan Roi, Jonathan Day and Michaela Lewin entertained the Hanchetts at the trolleybus shed and Wellington 103 was brought out for them. Due to the condition of the overhead, as noted in last month's *Tracts*, we were only able to circle the shed.

HILLS CAR 24 PROGRESS

Unfortunately, we have not yet been able to progress the work on the two motorman's platforms yet was as indicated in my last report in the November/December 2017 *Tracts* as being the next steps – but I still expect and hope this work will re-commence “real soon now”.

In the meantime, work has progressed on cleaning up and refitting some of the wooden components removed from the open section of the body when it was being de-constructed at least six years ago.

And special mention needs to be made of Lyn Cannell who has been working diligently and with very good effect using both the hot air gun and paint stripper to remove the old paint and varnish from a number of these wooden components.

I expect to report further – with photos – in coming months the outcome of this work as it visibly progresses.
—Stephen Taylor

BELOW: David and Joanne Hanchett (right) together with Jonathan Day, Alan Roi and Wellington trolleybus 103, 19.03.18.

Photo: Alan Roi



Recent Events



Last month the Society ran another ‘mystery bus tour’ led by John Shanks and using the ex-London double decker bus. Unfortunately due to time constraints it wasn’t possible to publish more than a short paragraph on the trip, so to make up for this, we have included a couple of photos from the camera of Dave Hinman taken on this trip.

The destination of the trip was the Halswell Quarry Domain, first opened in the 1860s and finally closed in 1990 after a 130-year working life. Now converted into a public park containing several historic buildings from the quarry’s working days, it is a popular spot for recreational walkers. On John’s trip, the bus dropped its passengers off at the top of the former quarry (above); those more adventurous were then able to walk around the rim and down the tracks to the quarry floor where they met the bus again (below).

Both photos: Dave Hinman.



Vale — John King

Last month we were saddened to hear of the passing of long serving HTT staff member, John King. Having not had time to write a proper obituary last month, Stephen Taylor has kindly provided one this month.

As mentioned in the March 2018 Tracts, we were saddened to hear that John King had passed away in late February following a long illness.

John had been hired by the Heritage Tramways Trust for two days a week in the late 2000s as a part time fitter and turner following his retirement from Lyttelton Engineering. John's first major activity was the final assembly and commissioning of the pair of replica Peckham 14D5 trucks that were required for Christchurch Double Decker 26, and he also got involved in a number of the other engineering related activities required for the commissioning of this tram.

Following the completion of that work, John got involved in a number of other engineering tasks – major projects that I can recall his involvement in included work on Invercargill Birney 15's replica Brill 79E truck, the initial assembly of the two new replica Peckham 14D5 trucks for Christchurch Hills Car 24, and then working on the assembly of the Sydney P-class trucks when the HTT took over that work (which in my mind unfortunately meant the side lining of the work on #24's trucks – though this wasn't John's doing)!

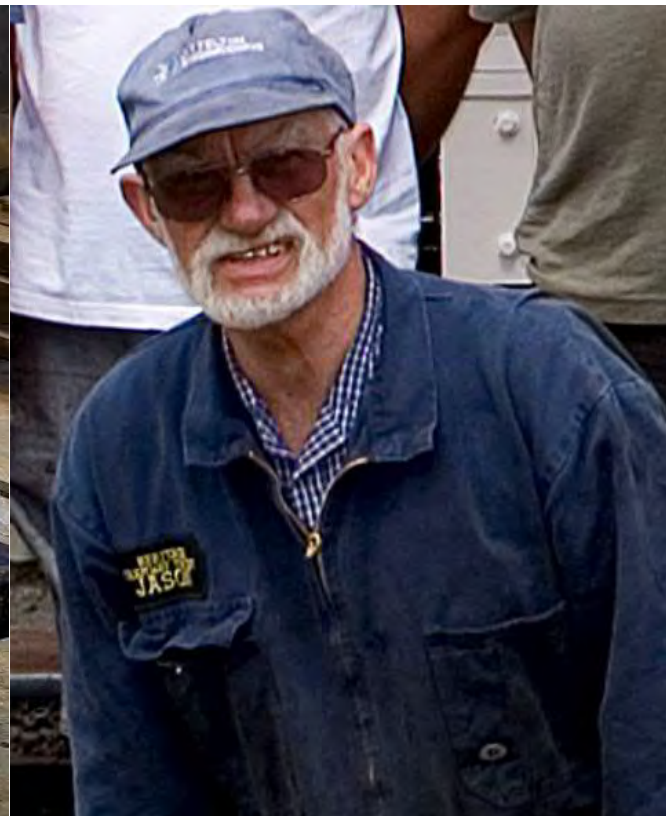
John also got involved in a number of other engineering related activities around the Tram Barn, including involvement in the refurbishment of the Trams leased to the City Tramway following the earthquakes before their

return to service when the City Tramway reopened. Unfortunately, John had to give up the HTT work due to ill health over a year ago.

Outside of his work for HTT, John had plenty of other interests to keep him busy – some of which include Christchurch Model Engineers and the Holy Trinity Church Lyttelton parish. John was heavily involved in the re-erection, restoration and "fitting out" of the relocated St Saviour's church on the Holy Trinity site following the demolition of the previous church following the 2011 earthquakes - including the restoration of a massive brass "chandelier" from the old church which is now proudly installed in the centre of the replacement Church. And with his wife, John was also involved in a worldwide friendship hosting organisation.

One story told at the funeral was that John also had a massive workshop in his Lyttelton property which was apparently "chock full of useful bits and pieces" that John had collected over the years and which he intended to work on to restore or put to good use. The story was told that John had great difficulty with the down-sizing of this collection when he and his wife had to move out of this property to a much smaller villa at Alpine View Retirement Village, but that good homes were found for all the important stuff that couldn't move to his new home.

BELOW: John at work: assembling a Peckham 14D5 truck for Double Decker 26 (left, 2009); and together with the finished tram and its restoration team (right, 2010). Both photos: D. L. A. Turner.



Christchurch Tramway — Possible Progress?

Seven years after the Canterbury earthquakes suddenly halted plans to extend the Christchurch Tramway down High Street, the City Council is now contemplating the possibility of bringing this work forward as part of its draft Long Term Plan and to tie in with other major developments in the area:

It is Annual Plan time again at the CCC and this year it is the draft 10 year “Long Term Plan 2018-2028” that is now open for public comment.

We understand that that there has been some discussion around the Council table about completing some of the proposed tramway extension works, including street refurbishment and upgrading (along High Street to St Asaph) to be co-ordinated with the completion of the restoration of the heritage listed “Duncans” buildings, at the behest of local property owners, developers and tenants. Funding for this work has been included in the draft plan, but is currently not planned to commence until July 2019. The Council at its meeting on 22 February resolved: “That the Council:

...2. Notes that before the Long Term Plan is approved staff will engage on the following:

...c. The proposed changes to High Street, including the tram track extension with the objective of aligning the streetscape, construction methodology and physical works with the needs of the key stakeholders.”

The public engagement and debate through the annual plan will be about whether to bring that forward to commence during the 2018-19 financial year and also to

confirm the actual route (and terminus) of this stage of the extension. One of the key stakeholders identified is tram operator Christchurch Tramway Limited, and CTL have expressed a preference for the next stage of the extension to incorporate a turning loop, as had been proposed in the pre-earthquake approved Stage 1 plan.

There is again an opportunity to have a say on this matter, with submissions closing at **5pm on Friday 13 April**. There is an online submission form at www.ccc.govt.nz/ltp, feedback can be emailed to ccc-plan@ccc.govt.nz or a letter may be delivered to the Civic Offices, 53 Hereford Street, or posted to Freepost 178, Long Term Plan Submissions, Christchurch City Council, P.O. Box 73017 Christchurch 8154. Following the consideration of submissions, the Long Term Plan will be approved by the Council in late June.

OTHER NEWS FROM THE CHRISTCHURCH TRAMWAY

On March 28, Christchurch ‘Brill’ 178 was returned to Ferrymead for roof repairs to be carried out. As its Brill trucks were deemed unsuitable to be loaded by forklift as Sydney 1808 was, it was instead loaded and unloaded by using a ramp and temporary rails. On arrival at Ferrymead, 178 was unloaded in the township and towed to the Tram Barns by Dunedin 22 (*below*), as its trolley poles and other roof equipment had already been removed prior to transport. Consequently, Dunedin trolleybus 79 has been moved into the paint booth for completion of its repaint and overhaul to make space for 178 in Tram Barn 1.

Photo: David Maciulaitis.



On the Level

Last year, Tracts featured a series of articles on the discovery of remains from the former tram-train level crossing in Riccarton Road. Abandoned under the road when the Riccarton tram line closed on 14 June 1953, part of the long-forgotten control rodding and cranks for the tramway trap points have been saved for posterity by the Tramway Historical Society.

However, the story did not end there! Reading through back issues of the New Zealand Railway Observer, Alister McKenzie discovered an article in the August-September 1952 Observer, giving more detail on Christchurch's then four remaining tram-train crossings and their operation from a railway perspective. Recalling the discovery of the Riccarton Road remnants, he sent us a copy of the article, the text of which has been reprinted here verbatim with its accompanying diagrams (overleaf):

ON THE LEVEL

Tramway/Railway Crossings in Christchurch

By D.K.G. Greenhill

The Christchurch Tramways makes four level crossings with the New Zealand Railways, three on the Main South Line between Christchurch and Addington (Colombo Street, Antigua Street and Lincoln Road), and one on the Main North Line between Addington and Papanui (Riccarton Road). The Fendalton Road crossing signal box (between Riccarton and Papanui) was closed when the Fendalton trams ceased running in February 1950.

Semaphore signals, in conjunction with derailing switches, are provided to control tramway and other road traffic. These are normally "off", being placed at "stop" when required for the passage of trains.

Colombo Street Crossing.—The Colombo Street crossing is under the control of the signalman at the Christchurch South Box, who controls all railway traffic to and from the Main South Line at Christchurch Station. There are five railway and two tramway tracks at the crossing.

Lincoln Road Crossing.—The Lincoln Road crossing is under the control of the signalman at the Addington East

Box, who controls all railway traffic at Addington Station. There are four railway and two tramway tracks at this crossing.

Antigua Street Crossing.—Referring to the diagram of the Antigua Street crossing (see p.76) it will be noted that signals 2 and 9 are colour light signals with the automatic indicator "A" staggered to the right-hand side of them. These signals are normally at red and show yellow or green only when the tramway signals are at danger and levers 2 and 9 pulled "off".

No. 1 lever is labelled "Control Lever". This lever is "off" when the signal box is attended. On Sundays or other holiday occasions when the box is closed and no railway traffic is operating between Christchurch and Addington, this lever is returned to "normal", and levers 5 and 6 pulled "off". It can be noted that there are one tramway and four railway tracks at this crossing.

Riccarton Road Crossing.—Referring to the diagram on the next page of the Riccarton Road crossing it will be noted that No. 5 lever, besides pulling off the Down Home, also controls the distant signal for Riccarton station. Both boxes have therefore to pull off (No. 1 at the station and No. 5 at the road) before the distant operates to "clear". This is known as "slot control". The distant is the normal fishtail-ended arm painted yellow with black stripe, the night indications being: arm horizontal—yellow light; arm inclined—green light.

It can also be noted that at this crossing there are one railway and two tramway tracks.

At all the tramway crossings the tram safety trap points are on both sides of the railway lines, thus preventing any attempt to reverse a tramcar back on to an oncoming train.

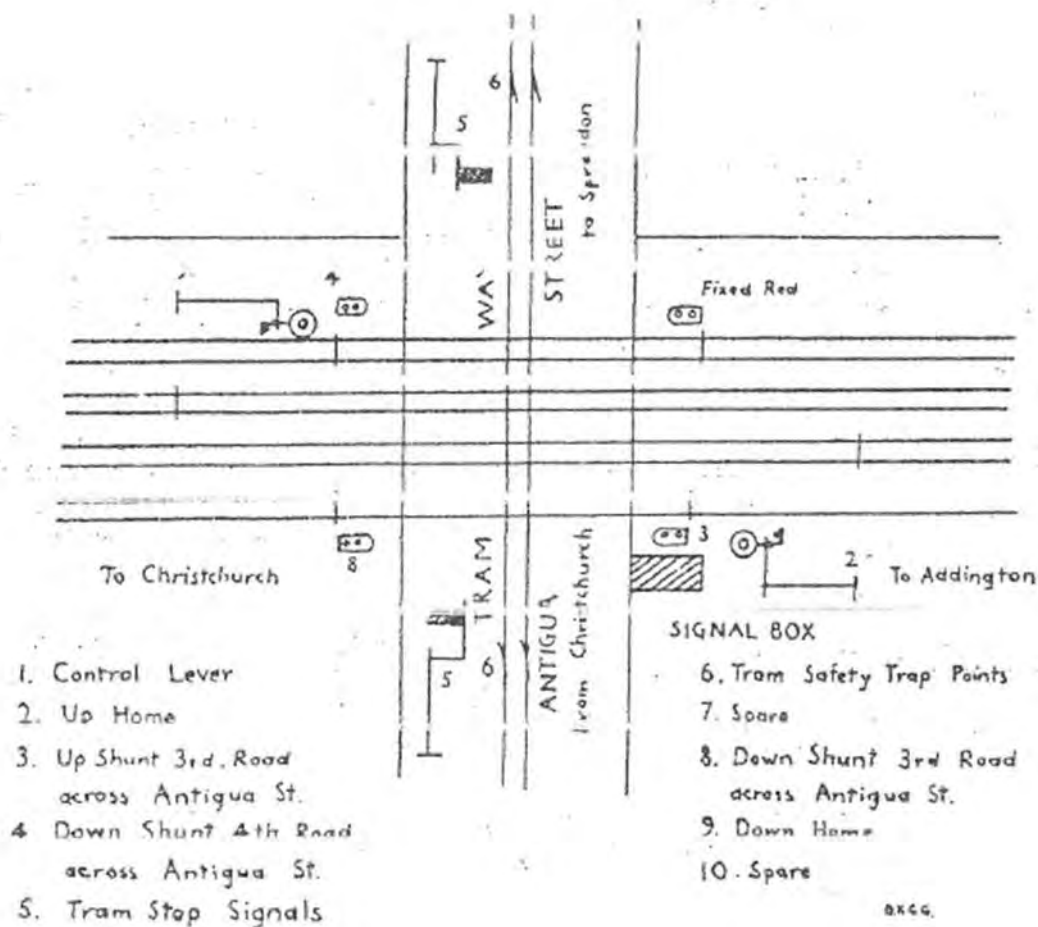
The lever numbers and descriptions on the diagrams are the official numbers as they appear in the signal boxes.

—With thanks to Alister McKenzie and Dave Hinman.

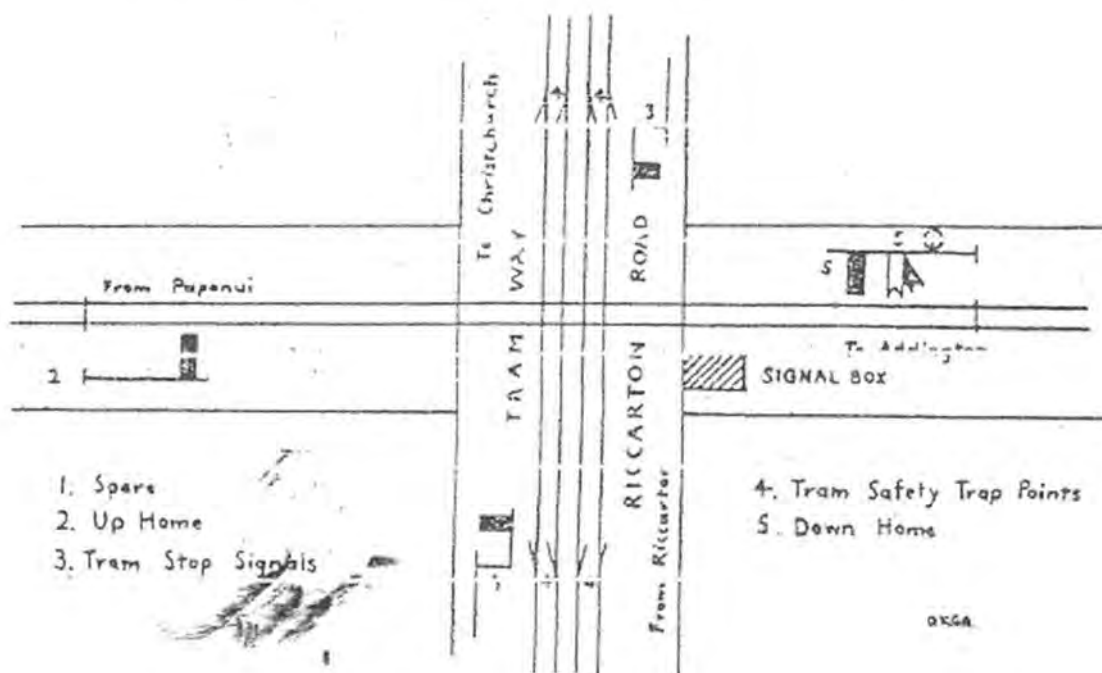
OVERLEAF: *The two diagrams from D. K. G. Greenhill's article, showing copies of the official Signals & Interlocking diagrams for the Antigua Street and Riccarton Road crossings. The Antigua Street drawing is shown with South (to Spreydon) at the top of the diagram; that for Riccarton Road is shown with East (to Cathedral Square and City) in the same position.*

Editor's note: The only other relic I know of to survive from the era of manually controlled rail crossings in Christchurch is the former Sockburn crossing-keeper's hut, now preserved at Moorhouse Station at Ferrymead Park and which in days gone by was there for the crossing keeper at the Main South Road level crossing. All other relics and buildings, so far as I know, have been swept away by the passage of time. Can anyone shed more light on the fate of the other tram-train signal boxes and crossing keeper's huts? More to the point, do any still survive?

ANTIGUA STREET TRAMWAY CROSSING



RICCARTON ROAD TRAMWAY CROSSING





ABOVE: Last month we reported that the Dunedin Light Rail Trust had begun construction of their new Stage One cable car display building at Mornington . As at 21 March, this was the scene at the building site—the rails were in place, the concrete floor slab had been poured, and everything was almost ready for the new building to go on top. Once the new Totalspan shed is completed sometime in the next few months, three ex-Dunedin cable cars will head south from Ferrymead (Roslyn 95, Roslyn 97 and Mornington trailer 111) to take up residence on site and hopefully generate support for the next stage—a working recreation of the Mornington line with a proper museum and car barn to be built directly behind, and in replacement of, the display shed. Photo: Neville Jemmett, courtesy Don McAra.

FRONT COVER: The oldest electric tram in Australia, Sydney C-class tram 290 stands on display in the display hall at the Sydney Tramway Museum, 04/02/2018. Built in 1896 and later converted to breakdown tram 115s, it is one of three such trams in the STM collection, two of which—including No. 290—are maintained in running condition. Photo: Alastair Cross.

Ferrymead Tram Tracts

The newsletter of the Tramway Historical Society

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We welcome contributions of material for publication in Tram Tracts—if you have anything tram, bus or trolleybus related you want to share with us, please email it to the Editor at tracts@ferrymeadtramway.org.nz. Slide photographs are welcome by arrangement.

