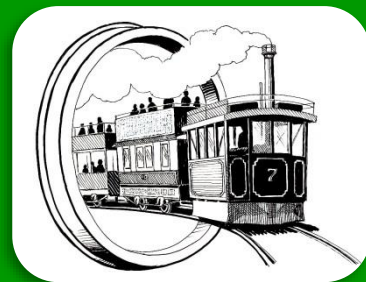


Ferrymead

Tram Tracts

The Journal of the Tramway Historical Society



Issue 34 – April 2019



Remembering... John Shanks

A personal tribute from Russell Kent

Trolleybus 79 Rides Again!

A fresh coat of paint for Dunedin's last trolleybus

An Offer from Graham Stewart

Grantham House's last book – with proceeds to tramway preservation

The Tramway Historical Society
P. O. Box 1126, Christchurch 8140 - www.ferrymeadtramway.org.nz

First Notch

President's Piece – Stephen Taylor



Another month – time for another President's Report. There have been a lot of things going on, and I want to mention a few of them.

First to mention – the Sunset tour delayed from last month and rescheduled to this month occurred.

We decided to reschedule the start to 6pm due to the sunset being approx. 40 minutes (!) earlier than it would have been the previous month. So, 12 members boarded 612, with Anthony Holiday as our driver, for a trip up to the Summit Road above Mt Pleasant via Sumner and Evans Pass. On the way we noted a few remnants of the Sumner tramway days, including the Stone Shelter at Moncks Bay, currently fenced off and awaiting earthquake repairs. This was followed by a walk up a 4WD track to the top of the Port Hills and the "heavy" 3.7 Anti-Aircraft Gun site. This walk was conducted in low cloud. Once there, we had a good look around at the concrete gun emplacements and associated command bunker – all relics from WWII, including some good views down into Lyttelton Harbour through breaks in the cloud. We then headed back to our bus which then transported us back to the Tram Barn for discussions over supper supplied by Phyllis. It was agreed that we should continue the tradition of "Sunset" tours – in part to honour the memory of John Shanks – but it was agreed that they were better to occur earlier in the year. The evening concluded with a night viewing of Brill 194 in its "final" (for now) position, with lighting by car battery as per its back life at Oxford.

The monthly workday was focused around the Trolley Bus Shed – where various activities were conducted, including tidying up the site, removing a damaged trolley bus overhead pole, dragging out some surplus scrap metal for sale, and replacement of the second story "front window". Thanks in particular to Dave Hinman who filled in as cook. However, the track gang (Ken and his team) spent the day back at the Tram Barn where they finished re-ballasting the re-sleepered track behind Cranmer and the Cranmer tram stop has now reopened.

posts now being permanently fitted. And Dunedin Trolley Bus 79 has now emerged from the Spray Tent ready to have its external fittings re-attached and to head back to the Trolley Bus shed.

And finally, I cannot finish without mentioning that Society Secretary Dave Hinman has officially retired from the Christchurch City Council as at the end of March. He has been there for 50 years (starting in 1969). Well done Dave – and enjoy your retirement. And the end of an era for the Council. (I believe he worked with/under eight different mayors over the years). I understand Dave already has some tasks planned to occupy his time, and I am sure that some of these will be Ferrymead Tramway related.

Regards, **Stephen**

Editor's Corner – Alastair Cross



Welcome to another issue of *Tracts*. Please pardon the roughness of this issue; since my old Office 365 subscription expired late last month, I've backdated to an earlier version of Microsoft Office which doesn't have Publisher... but has

Word, so I'll be using that instead! To be fair, I had a good run with Publisher – I've used it since I started as Editor nearly five years ago, with the help of a free Office subscription from university. So it's time for another round of fine tuning, and as always suggestions are welcome for improvement.

The only thing of note from me this month is that there will be **NO** Work Day this month as it coincides with Easter Weekend and the Operations Committee felt this wasn't a good time to hold one. We'll instead hold one on **19 May**; all members are welcome to attend, even if only for part of the day. Catering will also be provided either by Chef Alan or one of the team.

Regards, **Alastair**

Notices and News

APRIL GENERAL MEETING

The next General Meeting will be held on **Wednesday 24 April at 7:30PM** in the Lions Building at Ferrymead Heritage Park. The meeting will be in two parts.

Firstly, we will be presenting by slide show the memorial "book" of photos of John Shanks that was put together and presented to the family, with more turning up in recent weeks. Many of these are from the earlier years of the Society. We will also be attempting to put some names to faces in these photos.

The second part of the evening will be the Society's annual Goals and Projects discussion, chaired by President Stephen Taylor. This will also assist the Society with planning and priorities for the coming year.

As is usual, supper will be provided at a cost of \$2.00 per head.

SAFETY CORNER WITH DAVE SANDERS

People going into Tram Barn 1 may wonder at what is happening with the floor painting and marking that is to be seen. We have started to paint walkways (yellow Lines) and "No Laydown" zones (in red) in the workshop area and Tram Barn in general. This is a work in motion and will be completed over the next few months. We will include a photo next issue.

The yellow painted walkways are principally to guide guests and visitors through the Tram Barn safely. Can we please ask that all working personnel keep these lanes clear of tools and equipment, or identify them as closed as and where absolutely necessary.

The red patches on the floor are areas in front of electrical boards, emergency exits and firefighting equipment. These are "No Laydown" areas and must be kept clear by all so that quick access is available as required.

A general plea when working in all Tram Barns is for all members to please ensure that the housekeeping is maintained at the highest standard possible. This will help people to move through all areas safely and help ensure the safety of guests and visitors. This means cleaning up after yourselves (including in the kitchen and lunchroom) and putting tools and equipment away in their correct location to be found by others, used again when required or discarded as rubbish or scrap.

HILLS CAR 24 UPDATE

Now that the 'B' end motorman's platform is fully framed up, the focus has now moved on

to framing up the 'A' end. All the various pieces and components have to be fabricated or restored and trial fitted with every other part of the same jigsaw. The photo on p. 8 shows some of the progress to date in framing this up but there are still quite a few pieces to go. Once all are fitted, they will then be taken apart again so all the joints can be primed and painted and then permanently fitted.

At the same time, a set of replacement roof steps have been fabricated and are awaiting the roof canvassing to be fitted.

BUS NEWS

On 23 March, Dunedin trolleybus 79 was brought out of the spray booth. There are still some minor jobs to finish on the bus including chroming and fitting the bumper bars and light fittings among others, but basically 79 is complete. With help from Mark Hibbs, and for the manoeuvring Dave Hinman and Graeme Richardson, 79 has been put over the pit, where Mark and Alan Roi serviced it (see front cover). Unfortunately a fault, hopefully minor, seems to have developed because when it was attempted to move 79 under power nothing would happen. Until the overhead can be livened, 79 will remain at the Tram Barn area. Members though are encouraged to come and inspect the bus now looking superb thanks to the HTT folk.

Around the same time, diesel bus 612 went home to Redbus, albeit temporarily. On Friday the 29th March Redbus were using spare buses to block off intersections during the road closures for the memorial service for the atrocities a fortnight earlier at the two Christchurch mosques. As it was a Friday and they were stretched for buses, we were asked if we could help. We offered 612 which was gratefully accepted and delivered to its old home on the Thursday. 612 has now since returned to Ferrymead.

WORK DAY REPORT

A successful workday was had on the 16th of March where a team undertook a number of tasks around the Trolleybus Shed. We have had, for a number of years, a very sad window looking out from the upstairs room. Also some of the side windows of the shed were on their last legs. A team including Stephen Taylor, Michael Ball, and Jonathan Day managed to obtain a window for the front of the shed and installed this. The side windows are gradually being replaced by "Novalite" panels and Jonathan framed up a couple of these and temporary plywood covers were fitted. Meanwhile another crew were making an

attack on the scrap metal from the aborted boiler house project. A quantity of this was extracted ready for the scrap man to collect. One of the areas to benefit from this scrap drive will be the engineering area in the Tram Barn. The guys have their eyes on some machinery including a milling machine. A third crew were involved in dealing to a lot of the out of control vegetation around the area. We were burgled at Christmastime and one of the major purposes of the working bee was to improve the appearance of the area and make it less likely to be a target for burglars and other undesirables. Any offers of help in trying to maintain the area in a pleasant looking state will be appreciated. Whilst all this was going on Ken Henderson and his crew were able to get the track renewal behind the Cranmer Building advanced. Our catering for the day was provided by Dave Hinman who sweated over a hot stove barbecuing sausages, etc. Thank you to everyone that helped.

IN TRIBUTE TO JOHN SHANKS

*Due to shortness of space last issue, we weren't able to publish all of the promised tributes to John Shanks. One that was received recently was this one from **Russell Kent**:*

All of the wonderful tributes to John Shanks that have appeared recently in *Tram Tracts* have mostly covered areas of association with John from the early 1960s to the current time. These are some early memories I have of John and I discovering each other's passion and fascination for trams and trains as schoolboys prior to the 1960s. This huge fascination of John's formed the basis of his absolute commitment to the preservation and restoration of trams and tramways throughout the remainder of his life.

My journey with John which has lasted for over 63 years started in the 1950s when we were both at High School together. John & I attended St Andrew's College, but before I really knew him personally in 1953 and 1954, I was always aware of this senior boy in one class ahead of me who must have had the same interest in trams as me. We would both board the same tram/trailer at Valley Road, Cashmere at the time when the Hackthorne Road section of the Cashmere line was closed and only two trams a day used the section from Barrington Street to Valley Road. It was the 8.10 am tram to Papanui that started at Valley Road. We would catch it there so that, in spite of an extra walk for both of us, we could savour the extra ride on a section of line little used as all other trams terminated at Barrington Street.



Valley Rd departure 1953-54

Photo: THS Collection

It was only when the buses started following the closing of the tramway in 1954 that we caught the same bus, sat together, and discovered our common interest in trams and, from then on, our long lasting friendship developed. We went to school together, attended Cashmere Hills Presbyterian Church together and had the same interests in music, railways and, of course, tramways.

The 1950s were great for John & me. We were both members of the local branch of the New Zealand Railway & Locomotive Society and participated in many of the amazing steam train trips that the Society ran on main lines and several Canterbury branch lines that were still in use such as trips to Little River and the country fair specials to Southbridge. Once, on this line, John & I offered to clean the A^B's windows in exchange for a ride back to Hornby in the loco. That was a marvellous trip! We both thoroughly enjoyed trips to Mt Somers, Methven, Waiau, Fairlie and Whitecliffs – branches now all closed for many years. We also went on Vulcan and Fiat railcar excursions, visiting bush tramways at Ross, Moana and Burke's Creek near Reefton. Riding in the cab of a Vulcan railcar from Arthur's Pass to Christchurch, attaining speeds of over 75mph on certain sections of the track as we crossed the Canterbury Plains. I can imagine what OSH would say today!

John, Brian Jacobsen and I worked on F13 *Peveril* – cleaning and polishing this little engine for the historic 1958 return trip to Lyttelton. There were no modern cleaning devices and the whole loco was cleaned by hand. I remember coming home every weekend covered from head to foot in soot much to the astonishment of my parents.

Probably the most memorable occasions we had, along with Brian Jacobsen who had joined us at this time, were the trips we took every year during the school holidays from 1958 to 1961 to explore the Wellington

tramway system which was still reasonably complete at this stage. So many amazing things happened on these trips with John that they are etched into my mind for ever. To list a few – lifting the floor on a Fiducia tram while in public service on the Lyall Bay line to watch the bogies dancing along the track much to the amazement of the passengers. The shock and horror of the conductor, who came racing down the car to tell us in no uncertain terms to put the floor down at once. Another was of talking the motorman of Fiducia 260 into applying the magnetic brakes while the tram was travelling at high speed in the HAITAITAI Tunnel resulting in a spectacular fireworks display against the dark walls of the tunnel.

Another memorable tour I did with John was the one recently mentioned in Tram Tracts. 151 & 159 double saloons were used & several of the Wellington city lines that had been officially closed were traversed. John revelled in talking the crew into taking the trams down abandoned lines to the amazement of the general public walking in these streets that hadn't seen trams working on these inner city lines for several years.

A never to be repeated experience John & I had together was the great 1959 - 60 Otago – Southland Rail Tour run by the Railway Enthusiasts Society. We used NZR's signal train which consisted of 2 day cars, 2 guards vans (which we used for sleeping in), 1 clerestory roof dining car plus 2 vans used for luggage and supplies with A 178 at the head. We lived on that train for a fortnight and explored all the Southland and Otago branch lines, the majority of which were still in operating condition. John took an amazing number of photos, most of which may still be in his collection.



1964 – Inangahua-Westport Photo: Alister McKenzie

The beginnings of the Tramway Preservation Society has been well documented but I would like to add that our group which was instrumental in starting it was made up of 4 schoolboys led by John and consisting also of Brian Jacobsen, Gary Riggs and myself. Our primary focus was on the preservation of the horse and steam trams in Chapman's yard. These were later moved to the Christchurch Transport Board Workshops culminating in the Tram Week at Papanui in 1964. John and a team of us spent several days of the school holidays cleaning out 10 years of dirt and stones in the tram tracks and points on Papanui Road. No road cones, high visibility vests, or obvious safety regulations were required in those days and we were constantly in danger from traffic passing by extremely close to us!

Although I didn't know John at the time, we both had attended the closures of several Christchurch lines in the early 50s – Brighton & Sumner in 1952 & 1953 respectively where Yank 11 did the honours, and of course the closure of the last line Papanui – Cashmere (Barrington Street) on 11 September, 1954.



Sumner's Last Tram Photo: Roy Gay – THS Collection

Every year since then John and I marked the anniversary of this day in some way. Finally, when the trams returned to the city in 1995, we were able to mark that day in a more fitting way by, every September, riding the trams together once more. Sadly, last September, 2018, was to be the last time I was able to do this with John.

When the Wellington system closed in May 1964, two comments that John made stand out in my mind. The first comment John made to me as the last trams drove into the Newtown Depot and the doors were symbolically closed behind them was, 'NZ has today made a very large mistake in getting rid of its trams'. How right he was! The second was made as we were taken back to the Lyttelton Ferry in the early evening, and saw throughout the city, miles of shining steel

rails, knowing that trams would never run on them again, John's poignant comment to me, 'What a waste!'

As I said at the beginning, the formation of the TPS into the THS has been well documented. I felt, however, that the readers may be interested in the earlier experiences John & I had in the 1950s – experiences etched into my mind forever and shared for so many years with my dear friend and colleague, John Shanks.



Russell & John – Feb 2011

Photo: Brent Efford

Rest in peace, John. I count it a great honour to have known you, not just in sharing our enthusiasm and love of trains and trams, but as a kind and caring person for 63 years of my life.

AND ANOTHER TRIBUTE FROM DENMARK!

"Hello

My tram friend Mikael Lund was so kind to send me copies of 2 issues of Tracts with articles about the late John Shanks, and I have noted that you ask for memories of John Shanks. On one of our numerous visits to Ferrymead since 2004 we were in 2013 on our way towards the trolley bus shed to take a ride on a trolley bus. On our way I spotted an old Morris Minor and took a photo. On board the trolley bus a gentleman contacted us as he noticed our badges with the Danish flag on. He presented himself as John Shanks and asked whether we were involved in the Danish Tram Museum and whether we knew the chairman. I could reply that I knew Mikael Lund since many years but that we were not actively involved in the museum but obviously I was a member of the society. Thereafter we had a very interesting conversation, and he offered to take us back to our motel in Central Christchurch at the end of the day. It was a very nice gesture and during the car ride he pointed out various sites of interest. We really enjoyed the company of this gentleman.



Kind regards

Hans & Irene Fentz"

Graham Stewart's

1950s & 1960s images of

Trams on the Streets of New Zealand

Large Format: 240 (depth) x 280 (width – landscape. Hardback bound.

Extent: 296 pages printed on quality art paper

– Majority of the pages will only have one plate to a page.

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ABOVE: Celebrating 40 years at Ferrymead – 6 January 2008. John doing what John did very well - speaking to the assembled throng, and always managing to keep their attention.

PHOTO: David Jones



ABOVE: New Zealand Railway and Locomotive Society (Canterbury Branch) work party at Garth Beardsley's property on the 1924 ex-Ruru Barclay sawmill locomotive. John Shanks stands at far right with his hand on the regulator quadrant.

PHOTO: Alister McKenzie



ABOVE: Latest progress on Christchurch 'Hills' car 24 with the 'A' end motorman's cab framing now starting to go up. By the time you read this, work should be underway to dismantle the cab framing again for priming and permanent reassembly. PHOTO: Stephen Taylor.



ABOVE: Clearing scrap metal from around the Trolleybus Shed with the help of the Case front-end loader during the March Work Day. Much of this as noted was originally from the Power House Project, now sadly aborted.
PHOTO: Dave Hinman.



Trolley bus shed repairs – “new” window being inserted by Stephen, Jonathan and Michael.
PHOTOS: Dave Hinman



ABOVE The March Social Meeting was a special 'Sunset Tour' to the World War II anti-aircraft battery site at the top of the Port Hills using diesel bus 612. Access to the site is by foot from the nearby Summit Road; Dave Hinman snapped this quick group photo including President, Stephen Taylor as the group negotiates the stile in the roadside fence. PHOTO: Dave Hinman.

BELOW - The battery site -then and now - Five concrete structures on the hilltop east of Tauhinukorokio/Mt Pleasant in Christchurch represent a command post and four gun positions. They are the remains of a World War II (1939-1945) Heavy Anti-aircraft Artillery (HAA) battery.

Photo left: a screen shot of one of the guns from the following background 'DOC' document:
<https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/canterbury/places/banks-peninsula-area/mt-pleasant-heavy-anti-aircraft-artillery-battery/>

Photo right: our intrepid adventurers reach the site 77 years later. PHOTO: Dave Hinman

