

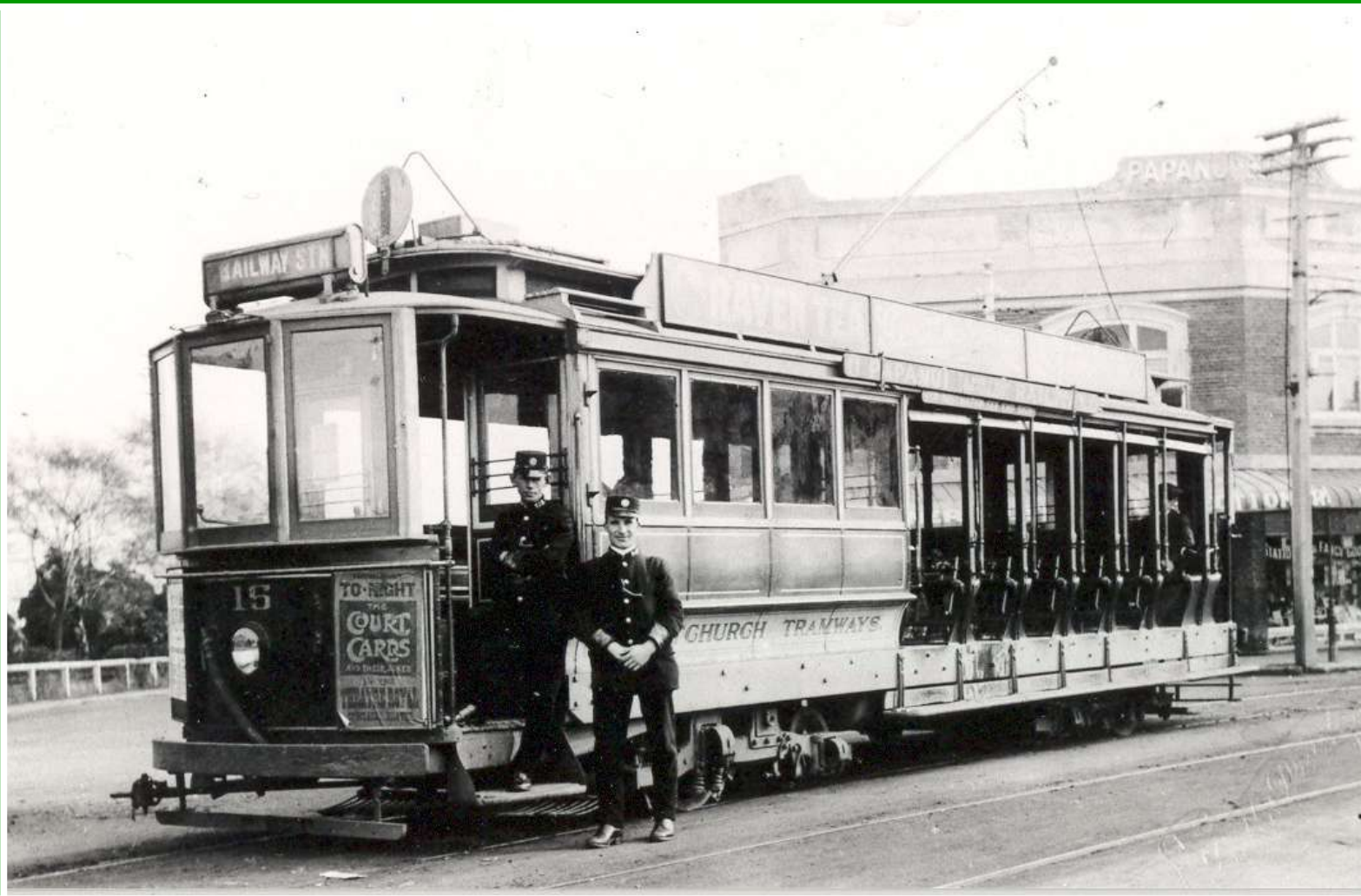
FERRYMEAD

Tram Tracts



The Journal of the Tramway Historical Society

Issue 15—June 2017



Dave Hinman Presents... Tram Relics in Riccarton Road

A surprising discovery of a little-known feature, 63 years after closure

From the Collection of Bruce Dale

More memories from Blackball and the Great Track Lift of '66

To Varnish—Or Not to Varnish?

A decision is finally made on the final decoration of Hills Car 24

President's Piece—Graeme Belworthy



Hi All,

The General Meeting for May was a little bit different in that it covered several topics. About 20 members enjoyed it to the extent that it ran rather later than usual. The meeting started with an address from the new Park Manager Shaun Horan, first outlining his work history (17 years at Willowbank Wildlife Reserve), then what he saw as some of the improvements needed around the

Park. Shaun emphasised his door is always open to listen to any queries or ideas groups may have.

A slide show then followed discussing some mystery items found during sewer replacement works in Riccarton Road, with some audience involvement in working out what the items actually were and their significance. More on this elsewhere in this issue of *Tracts*. The pictures then continued, covering progress on the work on the Yank Car for Sydney. This has been a joint effort of HTT staff and THS volunteers with all items once removed being stored in a shipping container provided for that purpose.

At the March General Meeting one of the issues raised was the option of retaining some of the original varnished interior on Hills Car 24 and the pros and cons

of this have been discussed in the last two editions of *Tracts*. Very robust discussion ensued including contributions submitted in writing by members unable to be present at the meeting. There is a more detailed report on this issue elsewhere in this month's *Tracts*.

The Diesel Bus Barn is progressing with the Resource Consent being submitted, and applications for funding are now being written up. The first stage will involve moving some services before we can start the main earth works. The work on moving the services should start soon. We will be reporting on bus barn progress to the June General Meeting.

The normal repairs and maintenance goes on as usual keeping the vehicles and infrastructure operating. This is what allows the Society to present the public image we are known for, the trams and buses. One of the jobs underway at the moment is refitting the windows in bus 538 with new window rubbers. This has turned out to be a little more difficult than anticipated but we are making progress albeit slowly.

Last month I raised the issue of the trouble John Harris was having filling the roster. I have just read John's latest email and after only one request the roster is full! Well done to those that stepped up and helped, so now it has been done once let's keep this up.

That's all for the moment.

Cheers,

Graeme

Alastair's Angle—Alastair Cross



Welcome to another issue of *Tracts*. We're now halfway through 2017—what, already? Where did the last few months go so quickly? As is often the case, I probably wasn't paying attention (again). How unusual...

For those who aren't yet aware—and I am sure that includes many of us—I am pleased to announce that Dave Hinman was recently awarded the Paul Heighton Award

for Excellence at the FRONZ Conference in Dunedin over Queen's Birthday. This is a well-deserved award, and we will no doubt hear more about this next month.

Back over at Ferrymead, progress is being made on the Diesel Bus Shed, Hills car 24 is edging on towards final reassembly of the roof and body, and Yank 12 is now a 'twelve inch to the foot' scale kitset! When it was being taken apart, the dismantling team found evidence of a in-service modification we previously were not aware of.

It is believed this modification was made circa 1908. Back on the bus front, 538 should soon be finished and ready for service, and I am hoping—and am sure Alan Roi will correct me if I am not—that this will mean that Dunedin trolleybus 79 is finally due its turn in the paint booth. This bus has been waiting for several years pending a repaint, but has had to take a back seat to other priorities. Once it is done, we will have operational examples of trolleybuses from three of New Zealand's trolleybus networks in service. Most notably, we will also have working representatives from the South Island's two trolleybus networks of Christchurch and Dunedin (note: Dunedin 79 is operational but it isn't in regular service yet.)

Well, that's about all from me this time. Until next month!

Cheers,

Alastair

Notices

June 2017 GENERAL MEETING

When: Wednesday 21 June 2017

Where: Lions Building (Entry from Gate A, Ferrymead Park Drive)

Time: 7:30pm

What: More presentations and discussions again this month, including:

- A report back by THS attendees at the FRONZ conference, held in Dunedin over Queens Birthday Weekend. Don McAra was a speaker at the conference and he will update us on the Dunedin Cable Car project, being part of the presentation made by the Dunedin Heritage Light Rail Trust. There will also be an update on Invercargill Birney 16, being restored at the Bill Richardson Transport World, Invercargill.

- A progress report on our new Bus Barn - with plans to show you what it's going to look like

Please do come if you can to what promises to be another interesting and informative evening.

Cost: \$2.00 per person for supper

NEW MEMBERS

This month, there have been no new memberships to announce. However, David Jones has informed us that four new tramway motormen are currently in training, with Neville Armstrong about to be licensed. The others are Caleb Ward, Clarrie Pearce and Rata Ingram. The attached photo shows Neville Armstrong watching as Clarrie Pearce practices “kissing the cone” with 26. (*Photo: David Jones*)



Tram Driving Tip from 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.

The Mystery of Riccarton Road

Earlier this year, contractors excavating for a new sewer line in Riccarton Road unearthed some surprising relics left over from the days of the electric trams. **Dave Hinman** reports on this discovery, which was first revealed at last month's General Meeting.

Contractors Downer together with March construction are currently installing a new main sewer in Riccarton Road and in order to cross under the railway line they had to build "thrust pits" either side. A few weeks ago Dave Hinman had an interesting series of emails from CCC staff and consultants involved saying: *"I have been on site this afternoon and they showed me an unidentified object that runs down the centre of the road. They have exposed it near the railway line where they will be excavating their thrust pit. They had approximately 20m marked out by GPR on both sides of the railway line. The thoughts are it may be something to do with the old tram line,"* with a later response: *"...yes, it does look a bit cable car related.."*

Dave was invited to go on site and investigate, and following consultation with several people, including Graham Stewart and Rachel Tucker from the Ferrymead Railway and after some of the relics were extracted, we were able to positively identify what they were. The unidentified items in question turned out to be part of the old point operating equipment for the tram catch points on Riccarton Road where the tram line crossed over the Main North Railway Line.

The photo at bottom right also helped solve part of the mystery – some thought the trench might also have contained the cabling to the semaphore signals but the white post adjacent to the then recently installed flashing lights gives the answer – the cabling was overhead - see the large pulley wheel on the post, sending the wire down to the signal (out of picture.) It would have been undergrounded from the signal box on the opposite side of the road - see the finials above the tram. The Graham Stewart photo at top right also shows this post.

The tram line in Riccarton Road was installed around 1906 and closed in 1953. The tracks were removed after the line closed, and until this discovery it had been thought that no other tramway remnants still existed. However it seems that when the crossing keeper's box was removed, all equipment generally outside the rail boundary was just abandoned and the CTB knowingly or otherwise had just removed the rails and sleepers.

There were five tram/train crossings in Christchurch, the others being Fendalton Rd, Lincoln Rd, Antigua Street and Colombo Street and while similar catch points and signalling had been installed there too, no remnants have ever been found. The rodding and rollers were standard railway equipment for the time, and examples still in use can be seen at the Ferrymead Railway which also displays the former Sockburn crossing keepers hut and signal box, of very similar design to that formerly at Riccarton Road. A section of the rodding and rollers and the surrounding wooden edging retrieved from Riccarton Road has been donated to the THS and it is anticipated that these relics will form part of a future display at Ferrymead featuring elements of the old Christchurch tramways infrastructure.

Footnote:

1. We haven't so far been able to show you a photo of a Christchurch tramway catch point. Graham Stewart has advised that he has some, but he has only just recently moved back into his recently repaired earthquake damaged apartment and it may take some time to find them. Brent Efford is assisting in the search.

2. One small mystery remains – we wonder how they were able to service the rods and rollers when they were buried underground? Were there inspection plates of some sort? If anyone knows Tracts would be pleased to hear from you!



LEFT: Part of the catch point rodding in situ, Riccarton Road. The suggestion of these remnants being related to cable cars comes from the wooden trench that the rodding ran through, which is still clearly visible in this photo and had been unearthed for some distance when Dave visited the site.

Photo: Dave Hinman.

The Mystery of Riccarton Road



ABOVE: A 'Brill' tram crosses the Main North Line at Riccarton Road heading westbound. In the foreground is a standard McKenzie & Holland railway semaphore signal, controlled from the crossing keeper's cabin to the right of the 'Brill', and used to indicate whether train or tram had right of way. The signal was interlocked with the tramway catch points which were meant to derail trams if they attempted to cross against the signal.

Photo: Graham Stewart.

The Riccarton Road Level Crossing

BELOW: A Cathedral Square-bound 'Brill' hurries across the Main North Line. The white mast behind the recently installed crossing lights carried the wires for the tramway signal on the western side of the crossing, as shown in Graham's photo above. The two finials above the tram roof are those on the roof of the crossing keeper's cabin.

Photo: Alan Bellamy.



To Varnish—Or Not to Varnish: The Question Answered!

A decision has finally been made on the final appearance of Hills car 24:

After a discussion initiated by Bruce Maffei at the March Goals meeting, and follow-up articles in April Tracts by Bruce and a response by Stephen Taylor in May, the matter of whether we should include original interior varnish in the restoration of Hills Car 24 was again discussed at the May general meeting. In the meantime several written responses had been received, mostly in favour of the proposition that some varnish be reinstated in the interior of the car.

At the well-attended May meeting there was a spirited and informative discussion, which included reference to both the approved conservation plan for 24 (and trailer 118) and the Society's Collection Policy. The arguments that we should be illustrating all of the tram era, and not just its beginning, and that this would likely be the only opportunity now to complete the restoration of a tram in its final form during the lifetime of those who remembered the trams operating was noted in both those documents and proved to be compelling. The great majority of those present (and these included some too young to remember the trams in service) agreed with this view, noting that we had other options, including Hills car 163, for restoration to earlier eras and that we should adhere to our previously agreed policy. *"It is the Society's policy to restore the tram fleet to illustrate the various stages of the tramway era, rather than for all vehicles to be put back into original condition. Important social or economic change can be demonstrated by showing how the tram system adjusted to this with changes in style and livery."* (THS Collection Policy) A justification for acquiring 163 had been to allow both an early and late era Hills car restoration to be undertaken.

It was noted that this would not be the first example of one of our trams restored to "close to end of life" appearance – we had done this with Brill 178 long ago in 1970. However the Brill has since been altered to include some earlier varnish work, and different paint colours to suit the needs of town operation, and indeed its history as a tram operating in the city continues to evolve! It was also clarified that the work done so far on parts of the interior of 24 was not in fact final varnishing – what has been done has been a seal coat to protect some earlier features of the wood finish and much more work would be required if a full return to varnishing was agreed. Some new wood has already been painted and could not easily be altered to a varnished condition.

Following the strong lead given at the general meeting in favour of continuing the present restoration policy for 24, the matter was reported back to the Management Committee. Noting that this has been an informative debate and a timely consultation with the membership, resulting in a renewed mandate to continue with the previously agreed restoration plan, the Committee resolved accordingly. It is now time to move on and work towards completing 24 as it would have been *"just prior to 1950 with all over green and yellow strip...and painted interior"* (24 & 118 Conservation Plan p.49).

—Dave Hinman



With a decision now made on the final appearance of Hills car 24, work is now well underway on completing the roof. One of the top plates has been temporarily fitted in this photo; the other will be so treated once the roof bows have been repaired when needed. Then the roof interior and top plates need to be painted, the roof bow reinforcing strips need to be sanded, primed and painted for refitting. Then everything can be finally assembled and the finished roof installed on 24 to complete the body.

Photo: Stephen Taylor.

Coming Soon....



*The Dunedin Light Rail Trust's proposal for a cable car museum in the Mornington Domain is now advanced. **Don McAra** provided the following blurb to accompany his painting (above) of Mornington trailer 111 and grip tram 103 in the proposed display building:*

The approval of this proposed mini Cable Car Museum (Stage 1.) is being sought from the Dunedin City Council. There have been some objections from certain departments that the building will be an eyesore on the Mornington Park (opposite the former cable car depot and powerhouse building which is tenanted by several organisations and businesses and therefore sadly unavailable).

The aim of this small building is to be as a money raising display for a larger Stage 2 Museum. On show will be three of our vehicles; two restored Mornington cars—grip tram 103 and trailer 111—and the body of Roslyn 97, which will not be mobile and be displayed in 'as received' condition behind the right hand window. Roslyn 95 will be sent before Mornington 103 in its stead until restoration of that car has been completed, and be viewed as a typical Dunedin Grip Car.

The Stage 1 museum building is here shown sitting on the foot print of a rather ugly former toilet block and redundant changing rooms. If the DCC would remove that it would be a great help for the Dunedin Light Rail and Cable Car trust's plans. No slot or conduit is needed at this stage.

ABOVE: *The vision for Stage One of the Dunedin Light Rail Trust's Dunedin cable car project. The display building will initially house three cable cars—two grip trams and a trailer—with two short lengths of track which will allow the Trust to display the cars outside. No cable conduit will be needed at this stage; the dotted line demarks where additional track will be installed as part of later stages. Original Painting: Don McAra.*

In the Works—"Yank" 12



Work has continued steadily on 'Yank' 12, owned by the Sydney Tramway Museum. **Dave Hinman** kindly provided some notes to Tracts explaining the latest work on this tram, which form the basis of this article.

The body of 'Yank' 12 has now been completely disassembled down to floor level, including removing the original floorboards which had been damaged, with parts affected by borer. The removal of the roof section took place on 12 May and since then the bulkheads and sides have also been removed and put in storage with the other salvaged components in the container provided by the Sydney Tramway Museum. The double thickness steel side plates of the chassis were also removed and this caused the chassis to immediately become more flexible and to sag at the ends. It was then discovered that the outer plate on each side was a later addition shown by some redundant bolt holes in the inner plates. Following some photographic research, it was concluded that the outer plates had been added by the CTB, probably in 1908. Photographs taken before 1908 show that the 'Yank' trams had begun to sag at both ends of the chassis. Photos taken after that time show the the outer, wider plates attached, and a straight chassis, therefore curing the problem.

THIS PAGE: Off with the roof! Parked on the extended traverser, (top) 'Yank' 12 has just had its roof lifted off by a hired crane truck. The job of 'flying' the roof to the storage container fell to Graeme Richardson and Brian Fairbrass (right), in conjunction with the crane



truck's driver. The roof is now stored high up in the container on a set of rollers set in beams attached to the container wall. Photos: Gary Webber

In the Works—“Yank” 12



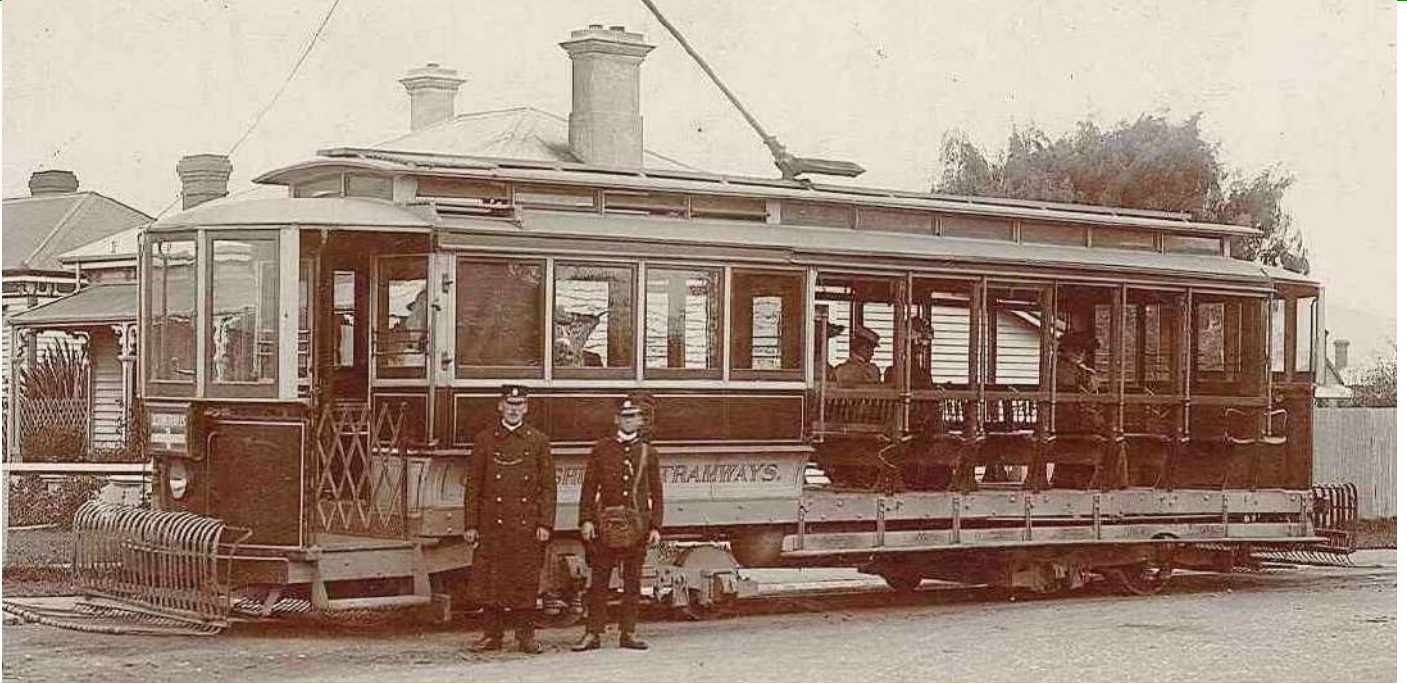
ABOVE: A different perspective on the ‘Yank’ with the roof off. The last time any tram of this type would have looked like this would have been back in 1904-05 when they were being reassembled in Christchurch after being made at the Stephenson factory in New York.
Photo: Dave Hinman.



ABOVE: Looking very full, this is the majority of ‘Yank’ 12—now disassembled down to a ‘twelve inch to the foot’ kitset and tucked away in the STM’s container. The roof hangs above the assorted components below—the main parts still missing are the twin steel side chassis plates (photos of which will appear next issue), the low end platform (separated from the chassis) and the chassis itself, at this stage still being worked on.

Photo: Dave Hinman.

In The Works—"Yank" 12



ABOVE: A sepia view of a 'Yank' in service pre-1908 with its crew—unfortunately for the photographer, the wire fenders on the tram's front dash obscure the numbers. This shows the original narrow steel chassis plate and a perceptible bend in the chassis which led to the installation of the wider outer plates c.1908. When finished, 'Yank' 12 will look very similar, but will have the wider plates but no end windscreens. Photo: THS Archives.

On the Buses



The Bus Team have recently completed installation of new window rubbers on ex-CTB bus 538. John Atkinson (on ladder) and Brian Fairbrass work to install yet another rubber during this important finishing task. Photo: Graeme Belworthy.

(below) A very different passenger! Last month Alan Roi sent in a photo of Jasmine the dog on holiday aboard CTB bus 612 earlier this year (February). We are assured that Jasmine did pay her fare. Photo: Alan Roi.



TRAMWAY TOPICS

- 40 -

DECEMBER 1966

the trolley bus finished externally and include her also.

Blackball Tracklift: A full article will appear in February issue, but suffice it to say that over the course of five weekends (approx 14 days) members have lifted 290 - 30 ft. lengths of 55 lb. track, some 1700 sleepers and all the associated track hardware, loaded them on to the rail and had them transported to Ferrymead. It is interesting to note that one of the wagons used to transport sleepers was U 233, built in 1890, one of two 'U' wagons that used to be on the Nelson line.

The Committee would like to record their thanks to all members who helped in the tracklift, in particular to our new members who have been very constant in coming over to the Coast and also those members who came from outside Christchurch for the Show weekend lift (Wellington and Dunedin).

Ferrymead Site : At the Ferrymead Park end of the project, it now appears that something is happening. About 860 sleepers are all stacked in piles of 70, and one Ub load of rail (about 100 lengths) are also there but still require to be stacked.

Ferrymead Booklet : The joint booklet 'RETURN TO FERRYMEAD' put out by the T.H.S. and the Canterbury Branch of the NZR&LS is now available from the Booklet Officer, P.O. Box 1126. Christchurch. In this are summarised our plans for Ferrymead plus a catalogue and photos of both Tramway and Railway rolling stock. Cost only 3/-, including postage.

Hurry While Stocks Last.

LATE NOTES - Q.E.P.

Saturday November 19 - Holes dug for jobs on extension towards Beach.

Sunday November 20 - First run of V.W. Kombi Van to Q.E.P.

Poles erected - 13 of them.

Put in by Shorty Collins and his crane - our thanks for the help.

Bruce Dale kindly provided a few photocopied pages from old back issues of Tramway Topics detailing the Blackball Track Lift of 1966, as well as four photos—two of locations associated with the Society during its work party visits, and two showing the work underway. Unfortunately an Editorial blunder during scanning meant they aren't quite good enough for publication. Once they've been properly scanned, they will be printed at a later date. Original page from Dec. 1966 Topics—courtesy Bruce Dale.



ABOVE: Coming Soon! With planning on the Diesel Bus Shed now well underway, Don McARA has painted this vision of what the real building will look like once finished. The Totalspan shed will be capable of housing our full diesel—and petrol—bus fleet including our ex-London Transport RT-class double-decker. With our buses and their spare parts under cover, out of the weather and away from the vandals (!).

Original Painting: Don McARA for Tramway Historical Society.

FRONT COVER: ‘Yank’ 15, during the World War 1 period (1914-19) waiting to depart from the Papanui terminus for a return trip to the Christchurch Railway Station. By then changes from its original condition had included the early installation of windshields, the later removal of the original wire fenders and the seating and bulkhead changes required by the 1913 centre aisle regulations, as well as the additional chassis steel strengthening plates which had been added c. 1908. Compare this straight chassis with that shown on p. 10. Today the remains of 15 are at Ruapuna near Mayfield in central Canterbury, and have been offered to the THS to recover any remaining useful spare parts.

Photo: THS Archive.

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.

