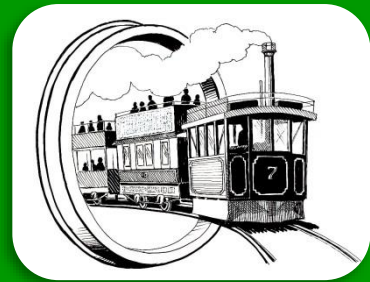


Ferrymead

Tram Tracts



The Journal of the Tramway Historical Society

Issue 47 – June 2020



The Lockdown Special

Returning to Running at Level 2
Overseas Focus – Lynton Cliff Railway
More 50th Anniversary Memories

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

From the Editor's Chair – Alastair Cross



Welcome to another issue of *Tracts*. As I write this – admittedly belatedly! – we are now well and truly over the worst of the coronavirus; not a single active case in New Zealand, no more ‘social distancing’, and life is now returning to something close to what it was!

There is of course some way to go, and still plenty of stress to deal with in the return to normal (something which I personally have had to deal with), but so far things are looking much better than they were seven or eight weeks ago!

While our President Stephen usually opens each issue with a short word about recent events at Ferrymead, we were sorry to hear a few weeks ago that he had been hospitalized. At the time of writing, the cause was not yet known. Thankfully Stephen is now at home and recovering well and we wish him all the best for a speedy recovery to full health. Since it wouldn't be kind to press him for an editorial at this time, I'll fill in for this issue and hopefully Stephen will be back again next issue with more news from Ferrymead and beyond.

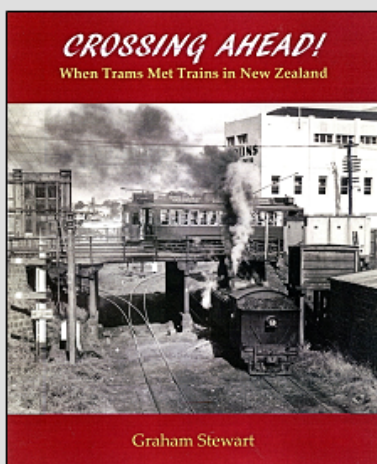
And speaking of Ferrymead, work continues on Restaurant Tram 411, which we have now had confirmed as staying until October for a full overhaul, rather than being done in two stages as originally planned. Another recent development comes from Don McCara and Richard Holland, who have begun reassembling the clerestory roof from Mornington 103, and have been offered possible funding to remake 103's wheelsets and pawl brakes. While there hasn't been much to report on our other restoration project, Christchurch 24, in recent months we are assured that work continues – in true project leader style, Stephen still has a list of things to be worked on in his absence and I understand has been delegating them too!

Over the last two months and through the lockdown, I received a number of contributions for *Tracts* from Society members and like-minded enthusiasts, and I'm incredibly grateful for this. With tightening deadlines and an Anniversary issue to publish, however, some of those items fell by the wayside, “we'll publish them next issue.” So this issue features one of those items which came in, and had to be left out while I fumbled and fudged my way through two issues of *Tracts*. There will be more ‘left items’ in next month's issue; in the meantime, I hope you enjoy this issue!

Alastair

JUST RELEASED

Crossing Ahead When Trams Met Trains in New Zealand



At a time when city tramways and railways in New Zealand fed each other's networks and often crossed the respective rights-of-way, noted author Graham Stewart shares the previously undocumented story and images of these interesting interfaces

The crossing of a heavy-rail railway train with a light-railed street vehicle over a street level crossing has always required extreme caution. From the early crossing keeper holding their red and green flags to high-tech signals of today; there has never been any room for a margin of error. For over 90 years when trams met trains, not one life has been recorded as having been lost in an accident – a truly remarkable record of safety. Some tram lines to the suburbs stopped just before a railway level crossing, as to proceed further would have required the additional maintenance cost of the crossing's manganese steel track diamonds, the crossing keeper's wages and signalmen of those years. This is the story of those crossings whether they were level or the vehicles crossed on a viaduct or bridge. The story is lavishly illustrated with photographs and diagrams researched from archives throughout New Zealand.

250 x 210mm portrait format, 198 photographs, 84 pages, card covers.

Contact Dave Hinman for your copy: \$30.00 collected or \$35.00 posted to within NZ. Overseas \$30 + p&p. For payment details see separate sheet following p.12.

On Holiday with Douglas Johns – ‘A Cable Car with a Difference’

Last year, at about the same time as the Hinman/Lea adventures, Douglas & Fiona Johns went on their own ‘overseas experience’ to the United Kingdom. While travelling through rural North Devon, they encountered a rather interesting cable car in the twin villages of Lynton and Lynmouth. From their trip record, 2 October 2019: “Lynmouth and Lynton are twin towns. Lynmouth is the older of the two and sits at the mouth of the Lyn River, which has its source high in the hills of Exmoor. The town nestles on a very limited amount of land crowded in between the cliffs and the sea at the confluence of the East and West branches of the Lyn River. When all the available land had been settled Lynton at the top of the cliffs was established to cater for the overflow.



Lynmouth, sandwiched in between the cliffs and the confluence of the East and West Lyn Rivers (left); the East Lyn River tumbles over rocks in its gorge (right).

The Valley of the Rocks



Back on the night of 15th August 1952 Lynmouth was devastated by a flash flood. It had been raining for some days up on Exmoor, and the river was carrying a large volume of water. On this night over 9 inches of rain fell on the moors and the resultant flash flood swept through the town. Most of the buildings were either severely damaged or totally destroyed. 28 of the 31 bridges in the area were washed away, 34 people died and over 800 were rendered homeless. Lynmouth has since been faithfully rebuilt and today is a thriving tourist hub.

It was a much more peaceful river today, although recent rains meant that the river was carrying more water than normal. We walked along paths beside the East Lyn River and up through the gorge where the water

was tumbling noisily over the huge rocks and rapids in the river bed.

Rather than drive down into Lynmouth, where parking is extremely limited, we were advised to drive to an area known as the Valley of Rocks, and walk along cliff paths and through woodlands to the town.



Some of the feral goats that live in the Valley of the Rocks (left); the cliff edge path from the Valley of the Rocks back to Lynmouth (right).

The Valley of Rocks is a very scenic area, and on a day when the sun shone brightly the rather rugged rock formations on the crests of the hills stood out clearly against the sky.

There is a large picnic area alongside the large carpark. Feral goats frequent the valley, and seemed quite oblivious to both cars and people. The path into town wends its way on the edge of the cliff face high above the sea before descending through woodland down to the town, which was almost over run with tourists.

Lynton is at the top of the 500ft cliffs overlooking Lynmouth. The two are connected by a tortuous, in places one way, road some 4 miles (6km) long. There are also steep walking paths up the cliffs.



For those without cars there is a much more unique way of getting between the two – The Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway.

The railway – in practice a type of funicular – is powered by water. It is the only one of its type left in Britain, and the longest and steepest one in the world. Construction commenced in 1887 and it was opened on Easter Monday 1890.

It has operated continuously ever since. Initially it was built as a freight carrier, but the passenger carrying and tourist potential has long since become its prime reason for operation.

The little harbour at Lynmouth.

Between 1896 and 1944, Lynmouth was the home of a Royal National Lifeboat Institution station, RNLI Lynmouth, protecting shipping through the then-busy Bristol Channel. Closed after neighbouring stations at Minehead and Ilfracombe received motor lifeboats in the late 1930s, RNLI Lynmouth's greatest moment was the rescue of the *Forrest Hall* on 12 January 1899, requiring the station's lifeboat to be hauled by road to Porlock Weir, 15 miles (24 km) away, to be launched.

The original lifeboat station was subsequently used as a club until it was destroyed by the Lynmouth Floods in 1952. A replica of the building, the Lynmouth Flood Memorial Hall, was later built on the same site. – Ed.



A car descends on the Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway (left); Fiona and all the other passengers on board the Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway (right).

Two “cars”, each on its own track, are connected by a continuous wire rope. Each car seats about 15 people. Under each car is a water tank. The tank under the car at the top of the incline is filled with water, and the weight of this, plus the passengers, makes the car heavier than the one at the bottom. Once the brake is released – for safety reasons there are four forms of braking – the top car descends and pulls the bottom car up, whereupon the water in the car now at the bottom is released, and the car now at the top has its tank filled. And the process then repeats itself. It is an environmentalist’s dream – no electricity (save for the lights), no motors, no diesel, no oil, all sustainable, biodegradable materials, and no pollution !!



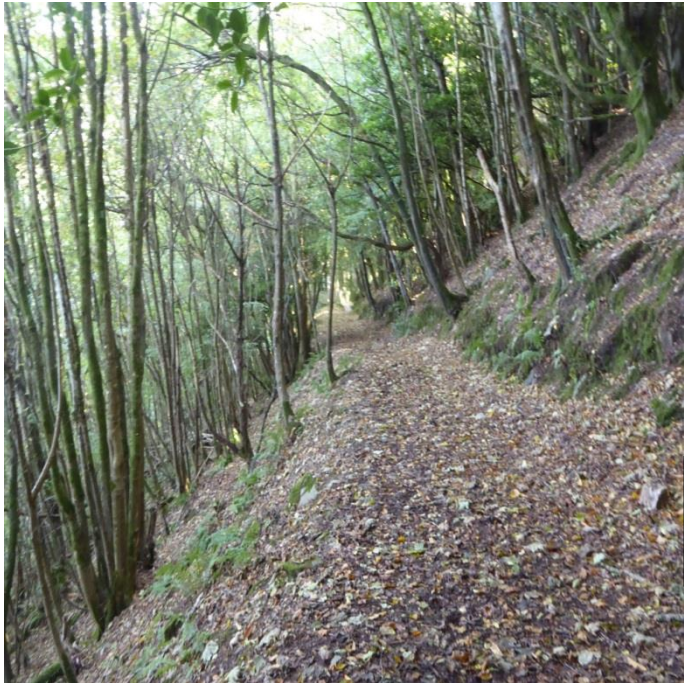
View of the big water tank under the car which when full pulls the car down the slope (above left); The Valley of Rocks from the top of the high level path (right).



We rode the railway to the top of the cliff, where we had lunch in a tiny café with just four tables, and a very chatty couple of elderly proprietors who rejoiced in telling us that all their food was homemade.

After lunch we took an even higher walking track that was quite steep in places back to our car in the Valley Of Rocks. The day was so clear that we were able to see the South Wales Coast across the Bristol Channel - we understand that to see the coast is rather unusual.

The Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway operates over just 862 feet (262.7m) of 3ft 8in track between its lower and upper termini, on a gradient of 1:1.724 (58%), making it the highest and steepest water-powered cliff railway in existence. Each car is fitted with a 700-imperial gallon (3,182L) water tank, using water piped from the West Lyn River to a storage reservoir at the top station via a 1 mile-long (1.6km) pipeline. The Railway is recognised by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers as a unique and outstanding piece of British engineering history, as well as being the first water-powered, total-loss funicular railway in the UK.



The walking track back to the Valley of the Rocks (left); the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway affords peaceful country views (above).

Lynton and Barnstaple, 19 miles (31km) apart, were connected by a narrow gauge railway which opened in 1896. It was not a commercial success and closed in

1935. Since the mid-2000s efforts have been made to reconstruct the line as a tourist attraction and today just over a kilometre has been reopened between Woody Bay and Killington Lane. Five of the original carriages have been restored, and a replica of one of the original steam locomotives has been made. The standard of workmanship and presentation is exemplary.

We took a trip on the railway – in a very plush first class compartment carriage. The restored piece of line passes through very pleasant rural countryside.”



LEFT: *On the day of Douglas’ visit to the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway, the day’s services were being worked by replica Southern Railway Baldwin 2-4-2T No. E762 Lyn. Named after a North Devon river as per L&B tradition, the original Lyn was built in 1898 to supplement the railway’s original three Manning Wardle 2-6-2T tank locomotives. It was scrapped in 1935 when the line was closed; plans for a replica Lyn were announced in 2009 and the finished locomotive first steamed in 2017 at Alan Keef’s workshop in Herefordshire.*

Coupled behind Lyn are three of the railway’s five operational coaches, all

reconstructed from partial body remains of original L&BR coaches. The remains of a further five coaches are held pending reconstruction, along with the restored body of a brake van and two goods wagons. A further two coaches are held by other groups: one as a static display in ‘as received’ condition by the National Railway Museum, York; the other, rebuilt as a buffet car, is in regular use on the Ffestiniog Railway in North Wales.

At the time of writing, the L&BR were progressing with the reconstruction of the railway formation southward towards the next former station at Parracombe. The Railway is also fundraising for the construction of two replica Manning Wardle 2-6-2T engines, Yeo and Exe, to work the fully reconstructed railway alongside Lyn. – Ed.

Story and photos: Douglas Johns

Additional research: Alastair Cross

IN MEMORIAM

It is with much sadness that we report the passing of the following members/supporters over the past few weeks - Ken Finnemore, Nelson Kennedy and Ross Clapp. Our sincere condolences to their families. Tributes will follow in the July Issue of *Tracts*.

WORK DAY

The Society's next monthly Work Day will be held on **Saturday 20 June**. With the recent relaxation in social distancing requirements, morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea will once more be provided. Even if you can only make it down for part of the day, members are warmly encouraged to come along and lend a hand, or just catch up over coffee or tea.

GENERAL MEETING

The next Society General Meeting will be held on **Wednesday 24 June, starting at 7:30PM** in the Lions Building at Ferrymead Heritage Park. This month, the meeting will include a slideshow of photos taken by Allan Bellamy and other 1940s-50s tramway photographers, with discussion afterwards. Our usual \$2.00 supper will be provided.

RETURN TO SERVICE – FERRYMEAD TRAMWAY AND CHRISTCHURCH TRAMWAY

Since the publication of our 50th Anniversary *Tracts* on May 9th, NZ's progress through the COVID Alert levels has seen the move from almost total lockdown to nearly back to normal, in terms of access and operations. Back then we were at Level 3, with the tram barns and Ferrymead site restricted to HTT staff plus members of the HTT and THS Management Committees, and no public access. As of 14 June, however, most of those restrictions are gone. Now it's more about coping with the economic impacts of COVID.

With the move to Level 2 taking effect from 13 May, but limited to groups of 10, we were able to have a limited number of members on site and our first Saturday work party was held on Sat 16 May. Site entry required signing in, hand washing and sanitising, limiting the numbers in the buildings and observing social distancing. Ferrymead Heritage Park moved quite quickly, reopening to the public from Monday May 18, and THS decided to commence limited tram operations from the following Saturday (23rd). This would be in preparation for the coming holiday weekend (Queen's Birthday) 30 May to 1 June. We decided that Brisbane 236 would be the most practicable tram to operate given the need to follow PT guidelines, separating people by limiting and marking seating. Our system allow for about 24 people to be carried. The normal capacity is 64 seated! Our back up tram was Dunedin 22, with less seating available and the need to mark out distances on the bench seats. It was also decided to run to a half hourly timetable and only pick up and drop off from the Church Corner stop, with a tour through the Ferrymead township and then to Bridle Path Road and back, and no alighting for tram barn or tram bach tours. Cleaning of shared surfaces on the tram followed after each trip. The tram operated successfully on both Sat 23, (69 pax.) and Sun 24 (51 pax.). Photos of Level 2 operation can be seen on p.11 below. We believe that we were the first heritage rail organisation in either NZ or Australia to reopen since COVID lockdown.

The following week there was a change of the Level 2 rules to increase maximum numbers to 100, taking effect for the start of Queens Birthday weekend. Park (and tram) numbers over the weekend (not an events weekend) were quite good until the rain arrived on Monday afternoon. And then with Level 1 coming into effect from midnight on Monday 8 June it was another step towards normal and by Saturday 13th, both 236 and 22 had been stripped of their signage. Running to a timetable is being recommended to continue.

More volunteers have been coming to Ferrymead on Saturdays, week day volunteer attendance has resumed, as have the Corrections Department Community Service workers. Local members have been given advance notice of Saturday work planned at the tram barns and trolley bus shed as well as advice of the current status of restrictions. In the next issue we will report further on what has been done, including how we have progressed towards getting access to the adjacent Cranmer building for which we hope to take over the lease when it is vacated by the Ferrymead Trust.

Meanwhile in the city an announcement of a temporary Queen's Birthday weekend "pop up" tram opening had evolved into a permanent restart, with all tram stops in use. Contact tracing either by sign in or using a COVID app. The trams back in service during level 2 were Brill 178, Birney 15 and Sydney 1888 as a "rover". The city tram opening made the 6pm TV1 news on the Saturday. The Port Hills Gondola is now due to re-open in time for the July school holidays. It is great to see the city coming back to life with the trams being part of the push for local and domestic tourist to support local business.

CITY TRAM EXTENSION UPDATE

We reported in April *Tracts* that although the funding for completing the tram extension to Tuam Street was in the Draft Annual Plan, with calls being made for a nil rates rise there was a risk that this could result in the extension being delayed. Accordingly CTL, THS and HTT had all put in submissions arguing for its continuation. The Council has since reviewed its draft annual plan and it is proposing to reduce the rates increase (though not to zero!). The new draft was published on June 12, with a call for further submissions, closing Monday 29 June at 5pm.

Notwithstanding the iconic status of the tram as illustrated below with an image of 178 on the cover of the updated Annual Plan document, it appears that the tram funding for the 2020/21 year may have been reduced and that its completion will be delayed. THS/HTT and CTL are studying this and will consider making further submissions as well as encouraging others to do likewise. There is also at least one lobby group (The NZ Taxpayers Union) which has publicly vowed to "mobilise ratepayers into calling for a rates freeze" (*Christchurch Star*, June 11 2020 p.7). If you would like to support the tram extension being completed as planned and previously funded, go to:

<https://ccc.govt.nz/the-council/plans-strategies-policies-and-bylaws/plans/long-term-plan-and-annual-plans/2020-2021-annual-plan/>; see Proposed Capital Programme p.60, and <https://www.ccc.govt.nz/the-council/consultations-and-submissions/haveyoursay/show/308>



TRAM DRIVING TIPS WITH DAVID JONES

Tram lights – headlights, marker lights and saloon lights – are to be left on during daylight running as a warning to oncoming traffic. Saloon lighting is the traditional way of telling whether the power is on and the pole is on the overhead.

More 50th Anniversary Memories

SOME FURTHER RECOLLECTIONS AND RESPONSES TO OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ELECTRIC TRAMS ISSUE

(Because of space limitations, some of these are abridged - Ed)

Russell Kent

"I wasn't able to help much with the shifting of 178 but I was there for the opening ceremony which was amazing. Seeing the photos reminded me of how young we were then, all working hard to get a tramway up and running at Ferrymead. How many people would be bothered doing that today? We were passionate about the tramway and just did it. John Shanks, Brian Jacobsen and I had this vision in the late 1950s and early 60s (inspired by John of course) that this would happen one day and I remember investigating with John various sites around Christchurch that might be suitable for a tramway museum. John always felt that Ferrymead would be the best option. How right he was.

I do remember quite a bit of correspondence from the public in 1952 and 1953 questioning why the Tramway Board did not build a turning loop at Valley Road and use the Brill trams on the Cashmere - Papanui line as by mid-1953 upon the closure of the Cranford St - Lincoln Rd line they were all in storage pending a possible sale. With brand new concrete track being laid in Papanui Rd. in 1951 (on which we ran the horse tram in 1964) there was hope that the Papanui - Cashmere line would be saved and operated by the Brill cars. Sadly, with the change to a conservative Tramway/Transport Board this was not to be."

Howard Clark (Sydney)

"Congratulations on a wonderful issue! My first visit to Ferrymead was early in 1967 with David Keenan and Ted McDonald. John Shanks was our main host and we were all impressed with the resourcefulness where John and others had scrounged parts and equipment from, not only Melbourne and elsewhere in Australia, including the Steam Tram people in Parramatta Park, but also from the UK, Europe and Japan. Overall, I left Ferrymead with huge admiration for what was being achieved and still marvel at the great quality of restoration work achieved by your team there. The next 50 years will see more great achievements, I feel sure."

John Radcliffe (Adelaide)

"I enjoyed the story of 178, especially as I recall Dave Hinman arriving at St Kilda in a hired car with a PC5 and resistance boxes in the boot and the back end of the car just about dragging on the ground. Well done! But the pictures show how youthful everyone was when we started our various museum efforts, and how many of those youths are still with us and contributing. The problem remains as to whether the enthusiasm will be found in a following generation to keep them going, though the City Tramway will certainly help with continued impetus in Christchurch."

(Mr. Hinman – perhaps it's time you shared some more memories of those early days with us! – Ed.)

Graham Stewart

"A brilliant issue with great memories from THS members - and an insight for the many who were not around in those years to see how the pioneer THS members saved so many exhibits from their graves... and in the nick of time! Not like other museums who were bequeathed trams as they left the streets. All richly deserved tributes - sadly John Shanks was not around to witness this milestone of Ferrymead."

Brent Efford

"I wish I could join you for your on-line celebration – and it is not for want of Zoom literacy that I cannot, because I use the app a lot these days. However, tomorrow happens to be my birthday, and I am already booked for a Zoom with family members at precisely the same time! 50 years ago I wasn't there either – because it was my 21st birthday and for some reason lost in the fog of time I was actually in Dunedin. But I was well aware then, as we all are now, about how important the ambitious project of getting 178 going as Ferrymead's first electric tram was. Now it is the mainstay of the Christchurch Tramway (Covid excepted, of course) which I use constantly as an example of how a city centre tramway can best be built in New Zealand."

Bruce Whiteside (Queensland)

"Yesterday May 9th is a day I always remember... I was 38 at the time. When I read the covering e-mail and read where Brill 178 was celebrating its 'new birth', the miracle of that restoration from the dead has never failed to leave me in awe. Fifty years...and you ask yourself, where have the years gone... It was a long time ago, and I was involved with working on and off at Ferrymead about the time that Charlie Thomas, architect designed the tram barn. One of the jobs I recall was painting Brill 178. I noticed that in the text about the tram that the original

colour was 'larch green', and I seem to recall that all the Boon trams were. (I was a painting contractor). At the time I had a new camera and I took a couple of shots of Brill 178. I recognised Mr Fardell and the man who the THS owes a lot, Murray Sanders. All of you have shown a remarkable penchant for work, consistency and the sheer innovative ability to overcome the seemingly impossible. Forty-one years ago when I left Alfred Brown and Company, I gave all of my contracting painting gear to Ferrymead for the boys and over the years I have spotted the odd trestle etc. Had I stayed on in Christchurch I'd have been there in person, not just wished that I was, as I have done many times.



As it once was. Brill 178 turns the corner from the Ferrymead Reserve and onto the long straight behind the newly erected Cranmer Building. Note the then almost bare hillside behind. (Photo: Bruce Whiteside)

Operating at Alert Level 2



Crowd control at Church Corner - Ken opens the gate for passengers waiting to board No. 236. 30/5/20



Hand sanitising available before boarding



All trips were round trips with no stops.



Paused at Cranmer stop while poles changed for return



22 signed and marked for Level 2 but not used



In the City Brill 178 had QR Codes at the entrances and keep off signs on alternate seats

(Photos: Dave Hinman)

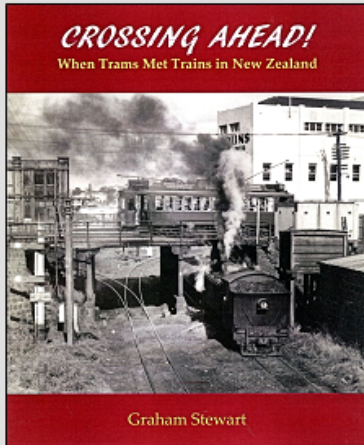


THIS PAGE: Two recent developments from Ferrymead: reassembly has begun on Mornington 103's clerestory roof (photo: Richard Holland), while ex-Melbourne W2 411 has received the first section of its replacement body framing (photo: Dave Hinman). There will be more to follow on these projects next issue.

FRONT COVER: Inbound from Anderson's Bay, Dunedin 'Takapuna' 66 trundles along Andersons Bay Road past the rear of the Dunedin Locomotive Depot en route to the Octagon. An A^B-hailed suburban train to Mosgiel is about to cross the rail overbridge and tackle the climb up to Caversham behind the tram. Original artwork: Don McAra.

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"Crossing Ahead" is a great read and it's more than just crossings – stories and images of the tram and train sidings at Riccarton Racecourse, the Papanui siding which went all the way to the Papanui Railway Station, a rail crane which was also used on the Sumner tram line and lots more! - The book is selling like hot cakes with our first order of 20 now sold and a second box of 20 arrived and ready to go!

Time to order your copy!

THS Members (no delivery) **\$30.00** per copy Members Price posted to within NZ - **\$35.00**

Members Price Overseas **\$30.00 + p&p**

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