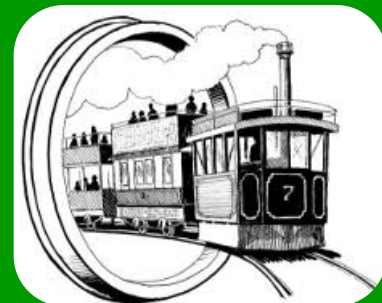


FERRYMEAD

Tram Tracts



The Journal of the Tramway Historical Society

Issue 22—March 2018



Dunedin Developments

Construction begins on the new Cable Car Museum

Upgrading our Trolleybuses

Keeping New Zealand's last trolleybus line running

An Aussie Adventure

Melbourne in a day—by tram around the City Centre

President's Piece—Graeme Belworthy



Hi All,

The Park has started a new idea by hosting Night Markets in the village. The first one was on Saturday 3rd February with various stalls lining Bowman St. Entrance to the Park was by gold coin donation, the Railway Society ran their Vulcan railcar and we gave rides on No26 the Double Decker tram around the birthday loop; both rides were also by gold coin donation. A very good crowd turned out and everyone was happy with the evening. It is intended to repeat these on a regular basis which will be a great way to advertise the Park. I spoke to several people on the night who had either never been, or had not visited in some time but intended to come again on an operating day.

The usual workshop activities continue, including the restoration of Hills Car 24 and Grip Car 103. The work on the Double Decker bus was completed in time to be used for a charter after the recent Nostalgia Music evening,

Dunedin trolley bus 79 is still being worked on before going into the paint booth. Work is underway to repair the second boiler for the Kitson steam tram and once this done it will replace the existing one.

The Resource Consent for the Diesel Bus Shed is still with the Council.

I have just returned home after the Society's February General Meeting, another John Shanks-organised mystery bus trip enjoyed by about a dozen members. This year using the Double Decker we travelled to the top of Halswell Quarry where those interested then walked down the track to the domain and met the bus. Then back to the Tram Barn for one of Phyllis's suppers.

After a lot of consideration and discussions with Phyllis I have decided to stand down as President at this year's AGM scheduled for August. I have enjoyed my time, but after what will be 12 years, a new person will bring new ideas. I hope to leave the Society in a good and healthy situation.

Cheers,

Graeme

Alastair's Angle—Alastair Cross



Welcome to another issue of *Tracts*. It's great to be back again after a short and very interesting week-long trip around Melbourne and Sydney early last month—and of course, trams featured prominently! As part of this, I was very lucky to have a behind the scenes tour of the Sydney Tramway Museum from one of their volunteers and see first-hand some of the

unique vehicles from both Sydney, and further afield, in their collection. It was an incredible privilege, so thank you very much STM!

It's heartening to hear that our recent involvement with the Ferrymead Night Markets have been received so enthusiastically by members of the local community. They're not only a great fundraiser for the Society but an even better way to get to meet people—and maybe a few potential volunteers as well? This does mean we need tram crews though and if you are able to spare some time to help out, please consider doing so.

Recently Don McAra passed on some excellent news that Stage One of the Dunedin Cable Car Museum is now finally underway. The latest update from Don is that the

building footprint is now roughed in and the rails—donated by the THS to the Dunedin Light Rail Trust—are now being positioned. This is fantastic news and we wish the DLRT all the best as they progress their plans for the future—namely, construction of the permanent museum and reconstruction of the former Mornington line.

Much closer to home, our trolleybus demonstration line is due for a much-needed dose of TLC to keep it running as New Zealand's last operational trolleybus line. With Wellington now trolleybus-free and Foxton in hiatus, Ferrymead is the last place in New Zealand to see these vehicles working again. Unfortunately, due to a random act of chance, and a more thorough knowledge of just how tired the infrastructure has become, it could grind to a halt if something isn't done—and quickly too. In fact, operations have already ceased due until something can be done to fix it. Thankfully, a plan has now been drawn up to revive our trolleybus line and hopefully work will soon be in hand to make the necessary repairs to bring it up to standard.

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

Cheers,

Alastair

Notices

GENERAL MEETING

The Society's next General Meeting will be held on Wed 21 March 2018, in the Lions Building at Ferrymead Heritage Park, starting at 7:30pm. The main topic will be trolley buses both in New Zealand and further afield, as well as a discussion on the proposed upgrade works to our own trolley bus line as described elsewhere in *Tracts*.

The meeting cost is \$2.00 per person, which covers the cost of supper afterwards.

UPCOMING BUS TRIP

Some of you will have noticed a Dunedin bus being repaired at Ferrymead. The bus in question is the prototype Hess bodied Leyland Leopard, Dunedin No. 180. This bus belongs to the Otago Heritage Bus Society, and has been overhauled by Anthony Holliday. It is now ready to return to Dunedin and will be leaving this month.

However we have been given the opportunity to use 180 for a trip before it heads south and we intend to travel over the former Christchurch trolleybus routes and allow you folk to reminisce. With the changes in the central city we will have to detour in places but we intend to cover as much of the routes as possible.

When: Sunday March 18th

Time: 1.30 pm

Departure point: The Tram Barn

Cost: \$5.00

NEW MEMBERS

The Society is pleased to welcome two new members this month: Alan Hinman and Dave Sanders.

VALE—JOHN KING

As this issue went to press, we were saddened to learn of the passing of Society member, John King. A full obituary for John will be published next issue.

BELOW: Sydney P-class tram 1497 at the Sydney Tramway Museum's Sutherland terminus showing the 'Canterbury' destination thanks to an obliging motorman, 4/2/18.

Photo: Alastair Cross.



Tram Driving Tips with David Jones

When unlocking the tram barn, either during daylight hours or in the evenings, please ensure that the security alarm system is disarmed before you walk past the alarm panel into the barn. If the red light on the alarm panel is on, then you must enter the code to disarm the alarm before proceeding. Failure to do so will result in operation of the alarm system and an expensive visit from a security guard.

Upgrading our Trolleybuses

As stated elsewhere this issue, the Ferrymead trolleybus line has been closed temporarily due to a combination of deferred maintenance and a chance accident. So what happened, and why is it important to rectify the damage and get the system going again? Alan Roi and Jonathan Day explain:

Our collection of trolleybuses is a very important one. We have an opportunity to display something that will be unique in New Zealand. Trolleybus operation in the country started in 1924 with a single AEC trolleybus that provided a feeder service to the Thorndon trams in Wellington. It ran from the Thorndon Depot/Terminus to Kaiwarra (sic) for eight years, until 1932. Following this in 1931, with the start of some tram route closures our own line to North Beach opened with seven buses and was followed by the Richmond line in 1934. A further four buses were purchased for this. Although no further tram routes were converted to trolleybuses, Christchurch could be considered to have the first system in New Zealand and it ran until 1956.

In Auckland the Farmers Department store took the unusual step of purchasing four Leyland trolleys to provide transport to their department store in Hobson St.

Then in 1949 Auckland and Wellington opened the start of what would be large systems, replacing the trams in both cities. The Auckland system finally closed its last routes in 1980 while Wellington continued with several fleet renewals and most of the system still intact until total closure on October 31st 2017. 1950 saw New Plymouth open a single route (tram replacement), operating four buses. It was followed two months later by Dunedin which developed a network, replacing and extending some electric tram and cable car routes, although it never reached its planned full extent. New Plymouth only lasted until 1967 but Dunedin survived until March 1982, although it had been closed twice before only to be reopened due to global fuel crises.

We are unique as we have one or more trolleybuses from every town in the country, although not every variant. Our collection includes:

- Christchurch No. 210, which is the oldest operable trolleybus in the country and which we also believe to currently be one of the three oldest operable trolleybuses in the world.
- Auckland Farmers No. 4, which ran all its life on a dedicated circuit and which has never carried a fare paying passenger.
- New Plymouth No. 3, built at the same time and of the same design as some of the first Wellington trolleybuses, none of which have survived.

- Dunedin No. 5, which is currently in storage but was, as far as we know, the last trolleybus to run in Dunedin.
- Wellington No. 258, an example of the second generation of trolleybuses to run in the capital.

These are just some examples of the special nature of our fleet, which also includes further buses both complete vehicles in operating condition and bodies awaiting restoration. The “final” New Zealand design of trolley bus having now ceased running is an obvious gap in the collection and a bus is available to us. Covered storage is an issue to be worked through.

It had always been an objective of the Society to be able to run our trolleybuses. In the mid-1980s and based on a design provided for us by the Dunedin City Council, poles were planted and wires strung to enable this. Since then the route has been modified twice, firstly to allow better manoeuvrability around the shed areas and secondly to follow the deviation of the roads outside the Park entrance.

Since the closure and ongoing rapid dismantling of the Wellington network there are only two places left in the country with potentially operable trolleybuses. Firstly there is Foxton, a small Horowhenua town, with a circuit built and originally operated by the late Ian Little. It is currently jointly administered by Malcolm Little (one of Ian’s sons) and the Omnibus Society. The overhead currently requires a large amount of work, partly due to its age and partly due to major streetworks undertaken by the local council.

The second system is, of course, our line at Ferrymead. This has now been in use for almost 30 years and as described in the report by Jonathan Day below is now in need of some serious repair and maintenance work. We are currently working on a programme to achieve this. Work is also progressing on getting our buses into a very good standard, and, as examples Dunedin 79 is at the tram barns being prepared for a full exterior repaint, and fundraising is in progress for work on Wellington 258. Thus we have the potential to become a world class trolleybus collection. This will of course need your help as members, both moral and on the ground, to make it happen. – **Alan Roi**

Current Condition

Further to Alan’s report, and as will be discussed at this month’s general meeting (see meeting notice on p. 3), our trolley bus system infrastructure is not currently in good condition and while the need for repairs and maintenance has been apparent for some time, some recent events have accelerated the need for urgent action.

Upgrading our Trolleybuses

On the 24th of February a car lost control rounding the bend onto Ferrymead Park Drive near the southern end of our trolley bus line and collided with one of the traction poles, completely writing the pole off.

Remarkably the car driver walked away unhurt, with the pole probably saving the car from ending up in Truscott's drain with potential serious consequences. The cost to replace the pole is being met by insurance, charged to the car driver. Following that incident a pole near the trolley bus turnaround at the northern end of our circuit was found to be unsafe.

These incidents have led us to make the decision to temporarily cease trolley bus operation until urgent work can be undertaken to make the system safe. We have now undertaken a survey of the full system and found a number of other poles need urgent attention.

The condition of the system leaves us with a dilemma – do we abandon and completely remove the trolley bus system or undertake a major works program to bring the system up to standard? Given the significance of our collection as outlined in Alan's report, there really is only one answer and we will be seeking confirmation of this at the general meeting.

The Plan

We have established a working group with the aim of undertaking the upgrade project; our first focus was breaking the project into easily manageable stages;

Stage 1 – Undertake a full system inspection to get a

clear picture of the condition.

Stage 2 – Replace poles found to be unsafe and requiring urgent replacement.

Stage 3 – Consult with overhead design expert.

Stage 4 – Work through short/medium/long term pole replacements.

Stage 5 – Anchor Block and/or Back Stay remaining poles.

Stage 6 – Create/Install Bracket arms where possible. (Reducing the number of poles required)

Stage 7 – Pole Cleaning and Painting (including other overhead components)

Stage 8 – Re-tensioning the Running Wire

While we have a good team, with expertise and experience included in the working group, all are busy people, with other Ferrymead interests and other responsibilities. What we are going to need is some commitment from additional people to assist in the repair and upgrading works, and identifying sources for funding the necessary materials.

Jonathan Day

BELOW: *The damaged pole referred to in Johnathan's report, post-accident.* *Photo: Dave Hansen.*



Cable Car News

The Mornington cable car barn is now being constructed by Naylor Love as a community project. This is marvellous as the Trust has at this stage very little money, having had a long battle dealing with minor objections to a Consent which has finally been granted by the Dunedin City Council. Most problems revolved around the building needing to go on the Eglinton Road-side of the Mornington Park. The custodians of the Park, along with all of Dunedin's reserves and parks and the famous Town Belt, are the Dunedin Amenities Society. Neville Jemmett and I joined other Trust members in finally persuading the Society to back down from their total opposition by saying that cable cars, even a small cable car museum as our building initially will be, are actually an amenity to the history of Dunedin. The Society withdrew to the sidelines and then began our journey towards Consent.

To begin with the cable car barn has been oriented so as to direct rails out on to, or to run alongside, Eglinton Road towards the top of High Street. This was the course of the original track which ceased operation in 1957, after which all rails and conduits were removed. I'm frequently asked if the rails and cable conduits are not still under High St. This is not the case, and it is just as well as in the event of the Trust finally getting to the stage of relaying the lines right down to Princes St, the old concrete conduits and bent rail "yokes" that supported the running and conduit rails, will not have to be removed before rebuilding in newer methods could

begin.

Rebuilding the lines is a long way off of course. The small initial barn with its short lengths of track on to which our leased cable cars can be pushed out for money raising purposes will however be a trigger to see what the response will be to the next stage. This is to be a two storey proper cable car Museum along the lines of the Kelburn cable car Museum in Wellington. From the top storey a view will be possible over the Park towards the city, and the Museum will be a worthy addition to other Dunedin attractions like Olveston. —Don McAra

BELOW: *Work in progress at Mornington, 11/02/18.*

"Since then Naylor Love have excavated where the rails are to angle to the foreground where they will ultimately turn slightly and lead off behind the viewer down Eglinton Rd. The small toilet at far left is across the road from the original Cable Car House, only the cellar of which can be used by the Light Rail Trust for storage. The front of the metal fill will be as far as the rails will come at first. On to these 111 and 95 will be pushed out for publicity purposes. It is hoped that the unused building behind can be demolished and the space used for the second stage and much larger Cable Car Museum. No conduits will be provided at first as no gripper will be attached to Roslyn 95. When Mornington 103 is completed it also will be leased to the Light Rail Trust. (DJMcA)



Back Page—Swanston Street



Recent late afternoon scenes from Swanston Street, Melbourne, 2/2/18. This part of central Melbourne is one of the last haunts of the Z3-class trams, yet to be displaced by the new Bombardier-built E-class trams:

ABOVE: Z3-class 126 and D-class 3509 heading north with approaching B-class 2043 in the distance;

BELOW: B-class trams 2128 (southbound) and 2082 with another Z3-class.

Both photos: Alastair Cross





ABOVE: *Old meets new during the morning peak hour. Not yet in service for the day, 1955-built W8-class tram 1010 — one of six W-series trams rebuilt in Bendigo since 2013 for use on Route 35 City Circle duties—passes its modern-day equivalent, 2016-built E-class tram 6047 outside Southern Cross Station. 02/02/2018. Photo: Alastair Cross.*

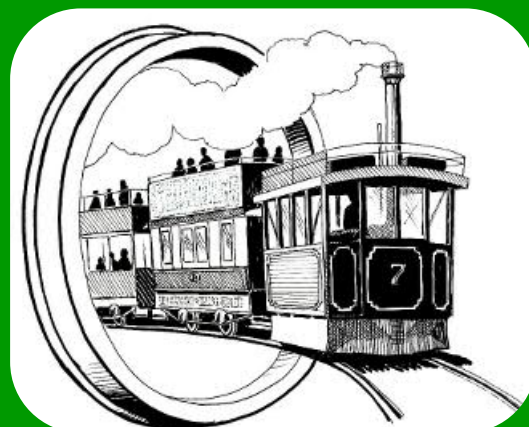
FRONT COVER: *With the backdrop of Southern Cross Station and its famous wavy roofline behind, E-class tram 6004 pauses for custom in Spencer Street on a Route 96 working to St Kilda. To date sixty-two of these trams are now in service, fifty E1-class (6001-50) and at least twelve E2-class (6051-62), with another eighteen E2s yet to be delivered or enter service. These trams are used exclusively on Routes 11, 86 and 96, running from New Preston and Southbank depots. 02/02/2018. Photo: Alastair Cross. (With thanks to Mal Rowe for information.)*

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.



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