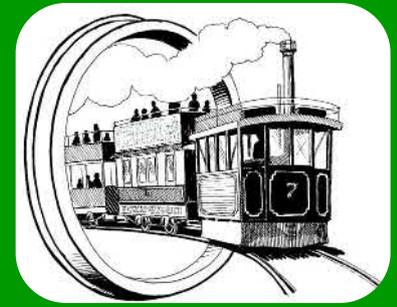


FERRYMEAD

Tram Tracts



The Journal of the Tramway Historical Society

Issue 33—March 2018



Sunset Bus Tour

Postponed to this month—details inside

Remembering John Shanks

Memories of the Society's 'Founding Father'

On the Move—Brill 194

Trackwork and tram movements at Ferrymead

President's Piece—Stephen Taylor



Another month has gone by and it is time for another contribution from your President. The past month has been quietly busy with a number of activities occurring, including a number behind the scenes, and it is some of these I would like to briefly mention – and hopefully a number of these will be expanded on elsewhere.

Firstly, the Society has had to setup a new Facebook Page. Unfortunately, the Society did

not have administrative access and control of the old page following the untimely death of Allen Harbrow in 2016, and after a number of unsuccessful attempts with Facebook to gain control of the old page, we have made the decision to start again. (There is also a lesson to be learnt there).

Next, the Society has set up a Givealittle page – the URL is <https://givealittle.co.nz/org/httpswwwyoutubebecomwatchv-dr2fgcwc4k>. This initial page is for donations towards the ongoing restoration of Christchurch Hills Car #24, and if this proves successful, we hope to use this mechanism as a fundraising source for other future activities. Givealittle is being trialled as another avenue for fundraising, and, if it proves successful, it should make it easier for the general public to find out about and donate to various Society projects. And all donations via Givealittle will still also be tax deductible as they “piggyback” on to the Society’s charitable status.

Unfortunately, the Society’s 27th February “Sunset” Tour had to get cancelled on the day. The decision was made that due to the weather forecast of strong gusty southerlies and rain in the evening, that a trip to the top of the Port Hills was not a good idea. And as it turned out, this was a good decision as the forecast was accurate – with strong gusty southerlies from about 6pm

and light horizontal rain from about 8pm (plus it was getting quite dark by 8pm).

I am pleased to report that the Society has a new member this month: - Shane Robinson. Welcome to the Society and our hobby.

Next, a more unpleasant piece of news. Unfortunately, in the last few months, there have been a number of burglaries and break-ins to the Society’s buildings. Firstly, the Trolley Bus Shed was broken into late last year and then more recently the main Tram Barn. In the latter event, the intruders were apparently “scared off” when they activated the building alarm. But in both events, the intruders found and took some property. To this end, we would ask members that they do not leave personal tools and possessions in Society buildings when they are not present unless they are locked securely away. While the Society does have insurance, there is a large excess on our insurance policy. (However, we understand that members’ personal insurance policies would generally provide cover). And we would also ask that when people are leaving at the end of the day, they put away any tools they have been using and, particularly in Tram Barn 1, they ensure all the workshop tool cupboards are locked. The Society is also going to further beef up security to make our buildings and vehicles more intruder proof. And one specific activity and to that end - we are intending to remove the external roller door switch on the outside of Tram Barn 1 as smashing the padlock off the box containing this switch was how admission was achieved the last time.

Finally, congratulations to Matthew White who has recently passed his Tram Driving licence and now joins the Society’s Tram Driving Roster. We also have a small number of additional “learner” drivers progressing through the training process and I look forward to reporting on their successfully passing their licences in future issues of *Tracts*. And to any non-tram driving members - if you have a yearn to drive the Society’s trams, we would be happy to hear from you.

Cheers,

Stephen

Tram Driving Tips with David Jones

A reminder that the gong is to be used when approaching pedestrian crossings - Square Shelter to Ferrymead Station and Tamaki crossing across the passing loop, Truscotts Road crossing, the children’s park next to the Sumner Lodge, the Lodge at all times when the door is open, when passing another tram and on other occasions at the motorman’s discretion.

Notices



FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

We're a little short on space this month, so no editorial from me!

New Facebook Page:

As Stephen has already noted in his Editorial, we now have a new Facebook page to replace the original one set up by the late Allen Harbrow. You can find it online at:

www.facebook.com/christchurchtramwaysociety/. We'll be doing our best to keep this regularly updated, and my thanks go to Mike Anderson from the Diesel Traction Group in pointing us in the right direction. If you have a Facebook account, please do log in and click that 'Like' button to be kept up to date with our activities!

With our new page up and running, we are now looking for regular submissions of stories, photos, and other

news from Ferrymead and maybe further afield to keep our Facebook page up to date. If you have anything you'd like to share, whether in *Tracts* or on Facebook, please, forward it on to me at the Editor's address.

Sunset Tour Rescheduled:

As also noted by Stephen, the decision was made to postpone the Sunset Tour last month following adverse weather conditions. It will take place on Wednesday 20 March, departing at 6:45PM so as to catch the earlier sunset. Please bring \$5 along to cover the cost of bus fuel and supper.

Society Work Day:

The next Society Work Day will be held on Saturday 16 March, this time focusing on cleaning up the area around the Trolleybus Shed and carrying out necessary repairs and maintenance after the break-in last year. Society members are encouraged to come along, even if only for part of the day. —*Alastair*

News

TRAMS—OUT AND ABOUT

There have been some good city tram shots on TV lately including the celebrity Cricket match at Hagley Oval on Friday 25 January. (Black Caps v. All Blacks – surprising won by the rugby team!) At various stages during the game there was quite a lot of discussion about the Christchurch rebuild, with much focus on the nearby central city and TVNZ's cameras capturing a variety of trams trundling the streets with some very positive remarks by the commentators about enjoying riding the trams.

Unfortunately, Dave Hinman, who spotted this, didn't take any photos of this while watching the match and all of the off-site footage has been edited out of the TVNZ On Demand version.

Then there's the new back drop for TV One's *Seven Sharp* which had commenced at the beginning of that same week, featuring in particular the Cardrona Hotel and our Brill 178 - albeit more pink than red! Graham Stewart has supplied this photo and advises that he has also sent some of his 1950s Brill 178 images to presenter Hillary Barry, whose family he knows - Perhaps another tram story may follow?

And finally, in late January a new mural has appeared in what was once the fully built up "Westpac Lane" linking Hereford Street with Cathedral Square and only recently reopened across currently (almost) bare land due to earthquake demolitions. The adjacent Distinction Hotel service area, previously covered in graffiti and tagging has been freshly painted, including elements of New Regent Street and featuring a good likeness of ex-Melbourne W2 No. 244 - in its current colours. (*This photo can be found on the back cover of this issue—Ed.*)

— *Dave Hinman*



TRAM 194 MOVES AGAIN

Since the BBQ picnic and “opening” of 194 on January 26, the advantage of having it fitted with both wheels and a tow bar fitted has been clearly demonstrated. The track work team needed to get the Beast (works tram 5W) and later the ballast wagon along behind the Cranmer building to their work site and with 194 at the picnic spot it was blocking the track. So, early the following Saturday morning 5W was coupled up and 194 was towed on to the triangle curve behind Tram Barn 3. This not only allowed access past Cranmer but also proved to be a good location for visitors to view our new tram/bach when exiting their tram at the Square Shelter. Indeed, this happened for the first time the next day (February 3) and has continued on running dates since.

By late afternoon on Saturday 23 February, the track repairs were complete other than some of the ballasting, now delayed because of loader repairs. It was decided to temporarily (at this stage) move 194 along the line to the Cranmer tram stop area to join sister bach trailer 126. It will need to move again when ballasting and final levelling work is undertaken. It was a slow and careful push along the line past Cranmer and the tram stop. We had refitted one of its bach features, the front door canopy, when 194 was at the picnic site, and with some of the tramway traction poles quite close to the track, careful measurement had indicated that we would get past – just! And so, it proved to be - a couple were very close (as shown in the photo on p. 5) but the tram passed by with millimetres to spare!

Meanwhile on our February work day, Richard Holland, new member and a donor of 194, put his builder’s skills to work and installed a more robust lock on the front doors of both 194 and 126. Both trailers now have standard door keys so can be really opened by duty drivers as part of their tram barn tour.

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND—JOHN SHANKS

Last month we advised of the passing of former THS founding member, John Shanks at the age of 79. A week after John’s passing, a memorial service was held on 7 February at the Cashmere Presbyterian Church. While John himself had left the Cashmere congregation and become a member of St. Martins Presbyterian Church in later years, their buildings were undergoing repair work at the time and so Cashmere Presbyterian kindly offered to host the service, led by the Rev. Dugald Wilson from St. Martins.

There was a strong THS contingent present among those who attended; with so many present on the day, it proved impossible to seat everyone in the main church hall itself and many others who attended had to sit downstairs in the catering lounge where they watched proceedings via webcam. John’s friend and fellow THS

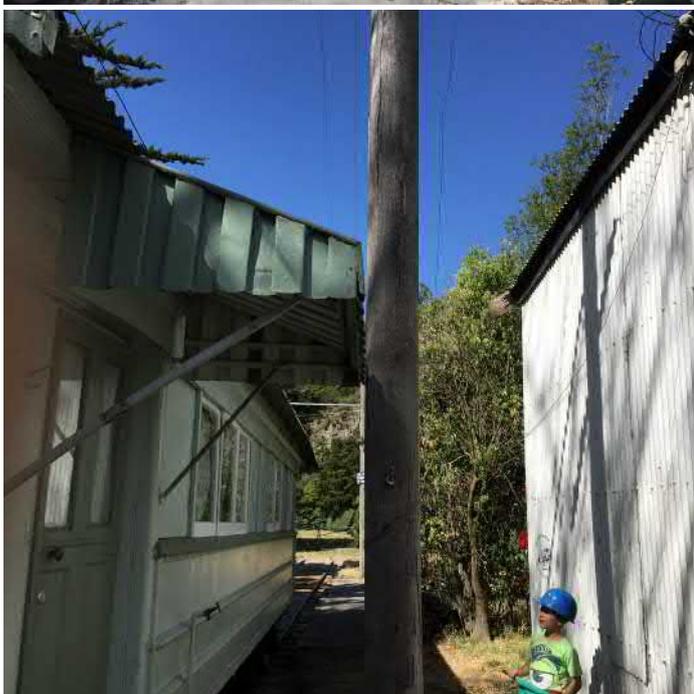
member Russell Kent was the organist for the service, during which it was joked that John might give Russell a dig in the ribs during the hymn *The King of Love My Shepherd Is* when the word ‘transport’ was mentioned, as he had done in previous years! Russell, of course, stayed on his stool throughout the hymn without any unexpected jolting.

With so many stories to potentially be told, the decision was made to limit the number of speakers to just four—John’s son and grandson on behalf of the family, Graeme Richardson as one of John’s tramping friends, and Joe Pickering as a fellow transport enthusiast with, of course, an emphasis on the Tramway Historical Society and John’s passion for industrial and transport heritage. At the request of John’s family, those in attendance were asked to bring photos of John doing things he enjoyed, and the Society obliged with a number of photos from John’s time at Ferrymead from as early as the 1960s to more recently. More can be found on this in the tributes to John elsewhere this issue.

AN OFFICIAL THS HISTORY—COMING SOON?

Following John’s untimely passing, it was not long before several members began discussing the need for an ‘official’ history of the Tramway Historical Society, and more so given that fewer original or early members of the Society were still present to give their account of ‘what actually happened’. The decision has now been made to proceed with this, and Alastair Cross has offered to lead this project. To this end, we are looking for stories of the Society and its work, from before it was founded right up until the present day—and potentially beyond. We welcome all contributions to this project, which is currently being slowly started up. They can be sent either to Alastair by email, or to the Society by post at which point they will be passed on to Alastair. Contact details can be found on the back cover of this issue.





ABOVE: Photos of recent work from around Ferrymead: 194 beside the Square Shelter (top left); the first lot of new ballast (9 Feb, top right); more ballast going in and bond wires being attached (23 Feb, middle left and right); 194 just fits! (23 Feb, bottom left); in place for now! (23 Feb, bottom right). Six photos: Dave Hinman.

FACING PAGE LEFT: Kitson steam-tram 7 as it was in January 1960—stored out in the open in W. A. Clapham’s yard, starting to look a little sorry for itself. Within seven years, it would be overhauled and running again on the brand-new Ferrymead Tramway thanks to John Shanks and his fellow tramway enthusiasts. Photo: John Radcliffe.



ABOVE: *Where it all began. Stephenson horse-tram 50 in store in W. A. Clapham's yard, circa January 1960. Photo: John Radcliffe.*

After John Shank's passing, **Dave Hinman** received a number of tributes to John, both locally and from further afield:

The notice of John's memorial service, published in the Press on 5 February, requested that "*in lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate a copy of photo of John doing something he enjoyed, if you have one.*" We emailed the notice out to THS members and friends and the wider tramway community that day and advised that the Society would be bringing copies of photos featuring John enjoying tramway related activities to the service and that we would be pleased to include some from Society members unable to attend. Many of you responded, so that in addition to photos gleaned from the Society archives we were able to compile a 77 page album covering most of John's tramway related activities which we took and gave to the family. This together with other photos individually supplied were on display at the post-service afternoon tea. Photos have continued to arrive and we are sending these to the family so they can be added to the album. We intend to show these at a future Society general meeting.

Many messages also came in to us from the tramway community, worldwide, and these have also been passed on to Margaret and the family. Some contained tributes and memories of John and we are including extracts in the tribute to John which follows. Elsewhere in this issue we discuss the need to develop a history of the Society

and what has been received about John since his passing will be a valuable resource for this.

JOHN STEUART SHANKS – SOME TRIBUTES AND MEMORIES – compiled by Dave Hinman

Firstly a piece from Brent Efford, looking back to when (and before) he first met John and joined the then "Tramway Preservation Association".

"...I can't be present for John's funeral, but I hope that this brief personal recollection ...will be of some use. I started off to write a complete account of my recollections up to the present day but once I reached the equivalent of a full page decided to stop there. Had I the time and you the patience, and without today's deadline, I could have gone on for 10!

I had been interested in trams since I was a toddler riding the Papanui line, and was taken by my father to see off the last tram from Papanui on that most notorious of dates, September 11 1954. Years later in 1961 my father, knowing of my developing interest, bought to my attention a newspaper article about two young guys who wanted to preserve some trams and maybe run them in a museum. The same year my father went to some trouble to obtain a book on tramways from publishers in London for my Christmas present. With my juvenile interest thus whetted, and encouragement from Gordon Troup, a family friend and well-known rail enthusiast and author, I became a regular passenger on rail excursions. It was on one of



ABOVE: *Ferrymead in 1967—John’s Hillman 8 and ex-CTB ‘Q’ 228 parked alongside Bridle Path Road on what is now the Ferrymead Reserve, in front of the Society’s stocks of rails and sleepers ex-Blackball and the bodies of Dunedin 11 and Christchurch 178. John and the team had been heating rails to assist bending, with John’s ‘hot thing’ — a repurposed weed burner (see inset)! Main photo: John Shanks Inset: Dave Hinman.*

these excursions, stopped at Otira, that I happened to mention my tramway interest and was ushered into the presence of one of those young guys in the Press article – John, of course. Before the excursion was over, I was recruited into the Tramway Preservation Association, as it was then briefly known, and my life would never be the same.

Meetings of the group were held at John’s family home, 15 Whareora Terrace, Cashmere. On Saturday mornings we met for a couple of hours in the backyard of a business premises in Southwark St where the Kitson steam tram motor 7 and the Stephenson horse tram 50 (now 43) had been temporarily stored. We did some chipping at the rust and desultory painting but mainly we discussed John’s vision of a working tramway museum where not only these vehicles but also old electric trams, then just decaying bodies dotted around the South Island, would run again. The realisation of that dream beyond our wildest adolescent fantasies springs from those John Shanks-initiated and guided beginnings.

Our first big break was Papanui tram week, when we ran the horsecar on the only tram track left exposed in Christchurch, in the Papanui shopping centre in August 1964. The full story was told by John himself in the

journal *Tramway Topics* that I used to produce, and will no doubt be referred to by many others. Suffice to say that it was John who was not only the hardest worker on the physical task of preparing the horse-drawn tram for the event but also the key organiser. He was the link with the Papanui Business Association, the Christchurch Transport Board (into whose workshops the two trams had been returned, with the support of the same General Manager, John Fardell, who had overseen the demise of the trams 10 years earlier, the City Council who controlled the road, the local media, and the many business houses whose support in kind made it all possible. John’s ‘bludge letters’ soliciting goods and services were a legendary part of this process. As a part of the Tram Week celebration we produced a little booklet *By Tram to Papanui*, which was probably the first tram enthusiast-produced publication about trams in New Zealand. One page, written by John, was about the future of modern trams elsewhere in the world, even though they were assumed to be ‘just history’ in New Zealand. I can date my own involvement with light rail advocacy from that realisation that trams were not ‘just history’, thanks to John.”

Brent Efford—NZ Agent, Light Rail Transit Assn

And now some reminiscences from near and far, by some of those who got to know and respect John during his lifetime of dedication to tramway heritage:

"I have some fond memories of John over the years, particularly my first trip to Christchurch with David Keenan and Ted Macdonald in early 1967. I well recall the trip he organised in the Q bus with no seats for a hair raising trip overlooking the harbour at Lyttelton and return to Ferrymead. He was also so supportive of Sydney Tramway Museum involvement with Christchurch Tramway and to my surprise he fully supported STM obtaining Yank 12 from Akarora, rather than 11 (as this was one of his favourites he travelled to school upon), so I shall miss him very much! My impression was of a man possessed with a desire to preserve local tramway Heritage, from wrecks 'from nowhere' as baches. I was so impressed with his capacity to source equipment from Melbourne, Edinburgh, Japan, and elsewhere overseas and his passion for a substation, plus his nervous concern for acquiring a Peckham truck ex Parramatta, cleverly and sincerely acquired before my time and for which he deserved full marks for his initiatives, as otherwise it may have been lost. He is fondly remembered for his sincere passion, his honesty and care for others and those in the tramway fraternity, particularly in the early days for encouraging younger participants, and for his continued passion for instilling in us a sense of involvement with history and our passion for preserving tramway heritage. John is a 'one of a kind' with a great sense of history, great oratory and a passion hard to be found with many others. From myself and his many friends on 'this side of the ditch', he is a one off and will remain greatly revered and a big loss for us all to remember. Vale, dear John, a true gentleman!"

Howard Clark—Chairman Sydney Tramway Museum

"I never met John Shanks until the THS became into reality... he would have been much younger...and after we formed the Old Time Transport Preservation League... my visit to John Fardell who I had met before... Fardell declining my humble offer to take Kitty and horse tram No. 50 off his hands for preservation at Matakoho in the far north! But he did take me in his large impressive car around to Clapham's yard to view the two exhibits I had come to acquire! When you look back... Fardell must always be given full marks in the history books as it could have been an officer of the CTB who could have said... take them!" **Graham Stewart**

"I first met John many, many moons ago. I was attending an early meeting of the COTMA organisation being held in Christchurch and flew to Christchurch where I was picked up by John. He said he would do this in his Hillman 8. In all my ignorance I assumed that a

Hillman 8 was something like a Morris 8, Singer 9 or perhaps even a Standard 10... Boy! was I surprised when lo and behold John shows up at the airport in this magnificent Hillman straight 8....At that stage I had no idea that Hillman even made cars that size but I believe that it was in contest with the large American cars that were appearing on the English market and this was one of the English carmaker's answer to them." **Ian Mison—MOTAT**

"I met John Shanks at Ferrymead when I visited for the first time in the mid-seventies. John was driving Kitty and I was fascinated by the variety and energy of the THS activity. My visit was blessed with the open friendship extended to me by the members and I have greatly enjoyed my membership of the THS since that time. John and I shared an innocent and crazy sense of humour. He usually asked me about the welfare of our Adelaide "Dingwarps" and of course was referring to the warning devices - gong and hooter - on our beloved H-type trams. On my most recent visit to Christchurch, John and I enjoyed a rail trip to Arthur's Pass. Riding on the open tourist wagon through a tunnel, I complained that there was no chocolate that I could lick off the walls as we passed through. John quietly explained that there were health concerns. Through my tears, I say, "Goodbye, dear friend." - **Ron White, Adelaide**

"On behalf of all members of the Wellington Tramway Museum, I would like to pass on to you and members of the Tramway Historical Society, our sincere condolences on the death of John Shanks. Many of our members had dealings and interactions with John over a long period of time, especially in the early days of both Societies when we were feeling our way forward in establishing what are now two very successful Tramway organisations. John had that special aptitude in relating well to everybody he came into contact and this with his ability to spin a good story, his passing will leave a big gap in your membership. Sadly with our aging membership, our ranks are being depleted of those members who had the knowledge and expertise of the street tramways systems that were once part of our everyday lives. He will be sadly missed." **Henry Brittain—Secretary Wellington Tramway Museum**

"I was deeply saddened to learn of the death of John Shanks. On the occasions I had the privilege of meeting him, either in New Zealand or England, and sometimes with his wife Margaret, he was always outgoing and enthusiastic, a truly wonderful person to know. On one never-to-be-forgotten occasion at Ferrymead, he put that superb tramcar, the Kitson engine - "Kitty" as he called her - in steam for me and allowed me to drive it.

As I did so, John whispered "Remember you are the only person on Earth able to do this!", referring to the fact that there were only two other Kitsons in the world and they were both in the UK and inoperable. What an honour and what a profound thought! We had exchanged Christmas cards over many years, including in 2018, and it is distressing to think that this will no longer be possible. Farewell John."

Geoffrey Claydon— Vice-President, The National Tramway Museum, Crich, UK

"John's loyalty and commitment to the THS and tramway preservation over his lifetime is one which will not only be sadly missed, but will be treasured for many generations to come."

Graham Jordan—Secretary, Tramway Museum Society of Victoria

"John is fondly remembered from his visit to Perth for the '92 COTMA conference, and also for his welcome that he extended to us wherever we saw him at other conferences, particularly those held in Christchurch. Our sincere and deepest sympathy is extended to John's family, and also to the members at Ferrymead THS."

Bob Pearce—Secretary, Perth Electric Tramway Society

"Sad news about John Shanks. I know how important he was to the founding and development of THS. I'm sure that it would have been a huge service last Thursday. I had the privilege of sharing a room with John at the 2006 COTMA Conference in Melbourne. We had many wonderful chats. He will be sorely missed."

Colin Seymour— Australian Electric Tramway Museum, Adelaide

"I am deeply saddened to hear of John's passing. On behalf of the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association members, please pass on our condolences to all concerned." **Anthony Smith—Haddon**

"Very sad news about John. As Maori say so well, another great Totara has fallen. He will be missed by us all. A true gentleman and a caring person. And we have also lost his expertise and a great deal of "institutional memory" with his passing." **David Turner**

"Sorry to hear of John's passing. My memory of him from a few discussions was his great passion for Ferrymead and trams. My condolences to his family and many Ferrymead friends. I found a couple of photos from my dad's (Guy Evans) slide collection that I think John is in." **Mike Evans**

"One of life's gentlemen and a pioneer who dared to dream the impossible and to create a legacy and a gift to the City of Christchurch. Nor should we forget the team that was forged as a result of that dream." **Bruce Whiteside—Miami, Qld.**

"I am saddened about the loss of John Shanks, a.k.a Uncle Shanksie, also the Father/Papa of the THS. My condolences to the family. R.I.P our dear friend; as we say in the Māori world Te atua koe - God be with you! Your tram awaits to take you for your final journey to the heavens. Travel in peace, our friend." **Jason Tutauha**

"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 will appear in next issue - Ed.)

A very good friend and mentor who taught me much about trams and life in general. I shall miss his company at tramway gatherings. To my eternal regret John and I never quite made the day when were to "have a play" with double decker 26 - he was to do the driving while I was to sit up top and enjoy the scenery! " **David Jones**

"I remember John fondly and well from the days when I was Chair of the Hagley Ferrymead Community Board. He was the Secretary and I used to watch in awe as he made notes of the meetings in his large signature scrawl – at least one sentence per page I think! He certainly went through the Minute Books. It is good that we acknowledge such wonderful stalwarts and champions and volunteers that contribute to our city's heritage. RIP John". **Anna Crighton—former Christchurch City Councillor and heritage advocate**

"I'm sorry to hear about John. What a lovely man he was. One of life's gentlemen. He always struck me as the "glue" of the tramways society." **Garry Moore—former Mayor of Christchurch**

"I am sorry to hear this. John has made a huge contribution." **Hon Nicky Wagner MP**

And for this issue, the last word from the furthest away!
"What sad news you are bringing to the tram world. I am really saddened – a noble gentleman has left us. I of course did not know John very well as we have only met on few occasions, but right from my first meeting with him in March 1973 I realized how unique a person he was. He takes so much knowledge with him to his grave – and will for sure be sadly missed. He was truly Mr. Tram of Christchurch. I had a good long chat with him at the COTMA conference in Christchurch/Ferrymead in October 2016 – this I will now treasure even more. Please pass my deepest condolences to John's family." **Mikael Lund Chairman, Danish Tramway Museum**

Next month we will hear from Russell Kent, a good friend of John for sixty-three years and one of John's original co-founders of what would become the Tramway Historical Society.

We will also publish a few more photos of John at work next issue—Ed.



ABOVE: Christchurch's love affair with trams continues! What was once a plain wall in Westpac Lane behind the Distinction Hotel has been decorated with a new mural including Melbourne 244 in its current colour scheme. It is hoped this mural will now discourage vandals from repeatedly graffitiing this wall as they have done in the past. Photo: Dave Hinman.

FRONT COVER: With track work underway, 'Brill' 194 stands beside the Square Shelter on 3 February 2019, looking quite at home. As reported in this issue, 194 has now been temporarily moved up to the 'Tramway Campsite' beside 'Standard' trailer 126, pending additional ballasting and final levelling of the track it stands on.

Photo: Dave Hinman.

Ferrymead Tram Tracts

The newsletter of the Tramway Historical Society

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We welcome contributions for both Tracts or our Facebook page—if you have anything tram, bus or trolleybus-related you would like to share with us, please email it to the Editor at tracts@ferrymeadtramway.org.nz. Slide photographs are welcome by arrangement.

