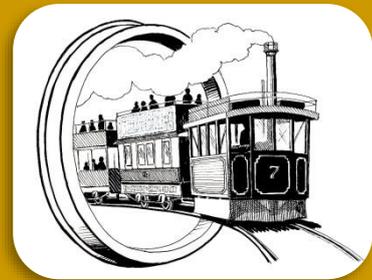


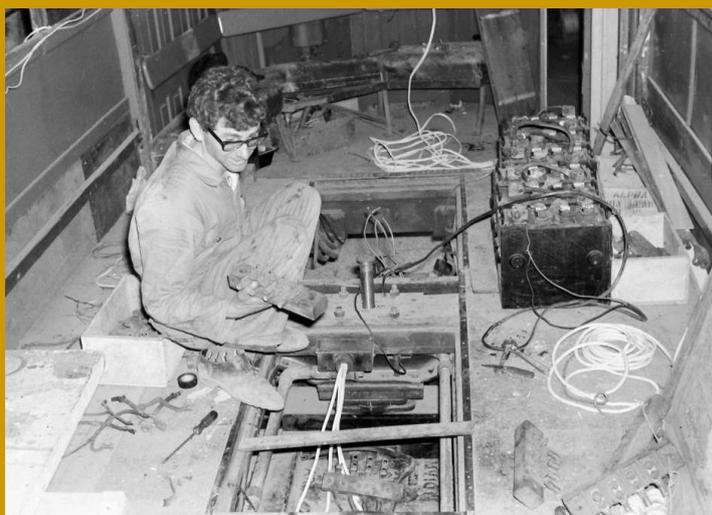
Ferrymead

Tram Tracts



The Journal of the Tramway Historical Society

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Fifty Years of Electric Trams at Ferrymead 1970-2020

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President's Piece – Stephen Taylor

Well, as you should all be aware, the Ferrymead Tramway site at Ferrymead Heritage Park has been closed due to the current COVID-19 situation. And while the Government has recently lowered the COVID-19 alert level from Level 4 to Level 3, at present this has essentially meant no major

change for us.

However, now being at COVID-19 Level 3 means we have been able to open the workshops to HTT staff (only), but this still precludes the tramway operating and the tram barn workshops are currently closed to members. Hopefully, with further lowering of the Governments COVID-19 alert levels, we will soon be in a situation where we can advise a managed start to re-open the site to members. And the HTT have taken delivery of Tram 411– the Restaurant Tram – from the Christchurch Tramway which arrived at the Tram Barns on 1st May for some extensive body

Alastair's Angle – Alastair Cross

Welcome to your Fiftieth Anniversary Edition of *Tracts*. While we can't celebrate in person at Ferrymead with tram running, festivities and speeches from representatives of those who helped to get the electric trams running, I hope this will provide a suitable substitute in the meanwhile. And, once

things are back to 'relatively normal', perhaps we might even host a proper event to commemorate Fifty Years of Electric Trams. I certainly hope so!

This month's focus is of course on the Fiftieth Anniversary, and so we have had to hold over a few unpublished items intended for our April Lockdown issue. They will be printed next month, so please look forward to it! Once the lockdown is behind us, and as circumstances continue to improve here in New Zealand, I'm sure we are all looking forward to getting back 'out and about' and doing the things we enjoy. Hopefully we will know more early next week

repairs. I am sure there will be some photos of this in this issue of *Tracts*.

But, the major focus of this issue of *Tracts* is the 50th Anniversary of the official start of electric Tram operations on the Ferrymead Tramway at Ferrymead Park – which also celebrates fifty years of the completion of our first electric tram car restoration. While this is not quite how we expected to be commemorating this anniversary, there are a number of articles and remembrances' in this issue from some of the Tramway members involved fifty years ago.

This event occurred in the early days of both the Society (less than ten years since it was formed) and also the early days of the Ferrymead Heritage Park site itself – and a long time before I was involved with the Society. I hope you all enjoy this issue of *Tracts* as you read further and look back on how far we have come since electric tramway operations first commented on the Ferrymead Tramway fifty years ago this month.

That's all from me this month!

Stephen

about if and when we drop to Alert Level 2, and what that may look like.

As Stephen notes, the only major event of recent note has been the arrival of the Restaurant Tram, Melbourne 411 at Ferrymead for the first time since it was restored at the Sydney Tramway Museum and shipped to New Zealand in 1999. Having been present in a Management Committee role to observe, it was certainly an experience to watch a seventeen-ton tram being hoisted up by only two forklifts and carefully lined up with the rails! And yes, there are a few photos in this issue too. It was a splendid morning for photography too I might add, and I wasn't the only person around with a camera either – there were at least two others from THS and CTL present taking pictures of the occasion as well.

But enough about Melbourne trams and my ramblings! This month we celebrate New Zealand trams and a Christchurch one at that too! Fifty not out and still going strong. Here's to another fifty then!

That's enough from me!

Alastair

COVID- 19 UPDATE

Further to Stephen's comments in his President's piece, those of you in the Christchurch area received a special email on Monday 27 April, the day the move was made from Level 4 to Level 3. For the record, and for those readers outside of Christchurch, the message given is summarised here. We noted that since our previous communication (April Chat, 1 week earlier), much work had been going on to progress the partial opening of our Ferrymead site and the Tram barns. There was no change to the message that Ferrymead remains closed to members. The email went to say that "we are delighted to report that preparations have now been completed to permit restricted opening of the Tram Barn workshops, in accordance with the Level 3 rules allowing for "safe" in addition to "essential" businesses. A small team comprising representatives of the HTT Board and staff and THS Committee spent many hours on this last week, led by Dave Sanders, THS representative (and H&S specialist) on the combined HTT/THS Health and Safety Committee. The required "Covid-19 Level 3 Return to Work Policy" and related documents have been approved, and the tram workshop has been prepared so that HTT staff can commence work on site tomorrow [Tuesday 28th]. Restaurant tram No. 411 from the city is scheduled to arrive on Friday [1 May] for its planned heavy body maintenance/overhaul. The approved return to work plan only permits HTT staff and NOT VOLUNTEERS to work in the tram barns, and numbers need to be limited and great care taken to ensure social distancing and the other health requirements essential to protect all involved. HTT Board and THS Management Committee members will also be allowed limited access, but for management purposes and not as volunteer workers."

And so it happened. It was on the Wednesday that the full staff complement returned, including new recruit, engineer Bob Williams, as mentioned in the report from HTT Chairman Murray Hobbs in the April Chat. Meanwhile in the city tram shed, working under their own Return to work plan, CTL staff Alex Hunter and David Maciulaitis were also at work preparing Restaurant tram N^o. 411 for the move, This included removal of much of the internal fit out, but the tram remained mobile and able to be driven to Cathedral Square for the 9:00 am Friday morning departure. The story of the move appears below, plus an update on the first week of work back in the tram barns.

And now, it appears that a move from Level 3 to Level 2 may be imminent, but this decision won't be announced by the Prime Minister until this coming Monday (11 May). The HTT Board and the THS Committee are actively considering how and when a managed start to reopen the Ferrymead site to members may be possible, but for now the situation and our messaging remains the same as before: THE FERRYMEAD SITE INCLUDING THE TRAM BARNS AND WORKSHOP WILL REMAIN CLOSED TO MEMBERS, UNTIL THE COMMITTEE ADVISES OTHERWISE. We will provide a further update when the government further lowers the COVID-19 alert level or if the situation changes. As we are keen for this issue of *Tracts* to appear on the actual 50th Anniversary date, (9 May) we will again send a further email and postal update when there is a change relating to member access

MELBOURNE 411 COMES TO FERRYMEAD

In the March 2020 issue of *Tracts*, it was reported that Restaurant Tram 411 from the Christchurch Tramway was due to come to Ferrymead for a body overhaul in June of this year. Following the recent coronavirus pandemic, and as published in the April issue, the decision was taken to move 411 to Ferrymead in May, and potentially for 'two-stage, two-years' overhaul to be condensed into a five-month intensive overhaul to be completed in time for the tram to be returned to the Christchurch Tramway on 31 September.

On 1 May, 411 was driven the short distance from the Tram Shed to Cathedral Square, where it was forklifted onto BTR's transporter for the short journey to Ferrymead. Arriving just after 10:00AM, it was positioned in front of the Masonic Lodge and then forklifted back onto the rails – the first time it had been at Ferrymead since it arrived in Christchurch from Loftus in 1999. With the overhead already livened, and the Truscotts Road tram lights specially turned back on, Alex Hunter and Graeme Richardson drove 411 down to the Tram Barns, with a brief stop on the former Ferrymead lift bridge to check around the tram. It has since been placed on 4 Road in Tram Barn 1, where it will remain for the majority of the bodywork overhaul. Since its arrival on-site, 411 has undergone a radical change with several sections of timber body framing and one cab completely removed due to water damage.

At time of writing, 411 is the only regularly operating Restaurant Tram in Australasia following the termination of Melbourne's Colonial Tramcar Restaurant service in October 2018. Two other restaurant trams are preserved in Australia – ex-Adelaide H1-class 378 on display at the St. Kilda Tramway Museum, and ex-Melbourne W6-class 939 and latterly Melbourne's 3rd Restaurant Tram, now in service as a 'Function Tram' at the Ballarat Tramway Museum. The BTM does not provide catering for groups hiring 939, but instead offers to co-ordinate with external caterers organised by the intending users.

CHRISTCHURCH 'HILLS' CAR 24

Since our report last month, significant progress has been made on completion of N^o. 24's roof. On return to work last week, and with the final coats of paint now applied, HTT staff have now mounted the end and side destination boxes, pole bases and hooks, and the first of the step boards to the roof. The goal was to have 24's roof as finished as possible before Restaurant Tram 411 arrived on site, as some of the scaffolding surrounding 24 will be needed shortly to assist with 411's overhaul. With the HTT now focused on overhauling 411, there will be a slow-down in progress on 24 until volunteers are allowed to return to the Tram Barns, hopefully in the next few weeks. A more detailed report on the work done to date will be in the next issue. Just as this issue was being finalised, Dave Hinman sent through a photo of 24 being moved on the traverser; with the paint booth needed to work on components from 411, 24 has now moved back into Tram Barn 1 where it has joined 411 on Road 4.

SYDNEY BOGIE 62 – A CORRECTION

Last month we published a Graeme Stewart photo of Dunedin 'Sydney Bogie' 62 at the Princes Street – Anderson Bay Road intersection, noting that the shops behind the tram had '*since been demolished and replaced with vehicle parking.*' Allan Steel promptly emailed Dave Hinman to set the record straight; the shops in question had been demolished in 1952 to make way for additional motor and trolley bus parking at the nearby tram sheds, and Allan also provided a scan of the original newspaper article detailing this. Prior to the demolition of the shops and construction of the new bus park, Dunedin City Corporation buses were parked along Andersons Bay Road and Princes Street outside the depot. We'd like to thank Alan for bringing this fact to our attention.



THREE PHOTOS: On 1 May, Dave Hinman and Alastair Cross were both on-site at Ferrymead to witness the arrival of Restaurant Tram 411, and took the time to note the current progress on 'Hills' car 24 with the roof now fitted with destination boxes, pole bases and hooks, and the first of the step boards and catwalks. Michael Hobbs is working on one of the pole bases (Top left, top right.) A few days later, on 7 May, 24 was on the move into Tram Barn 1, having been made to vacate the paint booth in Tram Barn 3 for parts ex-411 to be repainted.

Photos: Alastair Cross (top left, right); Graeme Richardson (bottom left).



SIX PHOTOS: The arrival of Restaurant Tram 411 at Ferrymead, 01/05/20. From top left:

- Being loaded onto BTR's transporter in a nearly-deserted Cathedral Square; (Dave Hinman)
- Arrival at Ferrymead and entering through Gate 'A' by the Trolleybus Shed; (Alastair Cross)
- Unloading by the Sumner Lodge with the help of the forklifts from Cathedral Square; the truck has driven out and the forklifts are now manoeuvring 411 to line it up with the rails; (Alastair Cross)
- Paused on the Ferrymead Bridge for a check-around and impromptu photography session (under strict observation of current social distancing requirements); (Alastair Cross)
- Jacking down the rear truck after traversing 411 across to Road 4 and into Tram Barn 1; (Dave Hinman)
- Mission accomplished! 411 joins fellow Australian drop-centre Brisbane 236 and Dunedin 'Combo' 22 (just visible at rear) in the Tram Barn. (Alastair Cross)

During the move it was suggested by Alastair – in jest – that if Sydney 1808 had been on-site as well, the Society would have been able to present a line-up of Australian East Coast drop-centre trams. Dave Hinman's suggestion to that was to add Christchurch 152 to the line-up, and thus represent the genesis of the drop-centre design. While we won't be creating such a line-up ourselves, perhaps the Sydney Tramway Museum – which possesses drop-centre trams from Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane – have likely already done this.. Can anyone produce a photo of such a gathering?

Fifty Years of Electric Trams at Ferrymead



On 9 May 1970, ex-Christchurch 'Brill' 178 became the first electric tram to run in service at Ferrymead, and the first electric tram to run in the South Island since the closure of Dunedin's remaining tram routes fourteen years earlier in March 1956. Several members have kindly provided their reminiscences of the events leading up to, and including, Opening Day 50 years ago.

It's the Tram Hunting Season – Dave Hinman

For those (mostly young) early members of the Tramway Historical Society, it began as a seemingly impossible dream in the early 1960s - to have an *electric* tram running on a yet to be built museum line together with Kitson steam tram N^o. 7 and a couple of trailers. Unlike in Auckland or Wellington, no South Island electric trams were retained complete. By the end of the decade, not only was the steam tram in passenger service on the first stage of an ever-expanding tram line at what is now Ferrymead Heritage Park, but we also had a brand new, 150ft x 50ft tram barn. And that building was chock full! In there were four operating trams (7, 10, 43 and 115), our first electric tram ('Brill' 178) in the final stages of restoration, six unrestored Christchurch and Dunedin tram bodies plus four trolley buses, a diesel bus and even an ex NZR steam locomotive thrown in for good measure! Add to that a corner of the building occupied by our "power house", containing our soon to be commissioned ex-Timaru Harbour Board Mercury Arc rectifier, and the many trailer loads of tram parts, some on hastily erected shelving and the rest stored in the tram

bodies in waiting. Some of the bodies even formed part of our early workshop space, containing workbenches and the like... And more was to come in the years ahead! This is the story of one important part of our endeavours during those early years - what came to be known as "tram hunting".

The steady closure of tram routes and replacement by buses, which had begun in the 1930s but accelerated from 1950, saw most of the written off tram fleet being stripped of easily removable, valuable parts and fittings and then the bodies sold, often by auction. By the mid-1950s the former trams of Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill were scattered all over the South Island, and in use for a variety of purposes. These included holiday cottages - baches (or cribs if south of the Waitaki River), sleep outs, playrooms, farm or garden sheds, workshops, and some even ending up as hay barns and pig pens. Sale prices at the time ranged from £10 – £80 (\$20-\$160) each, depending on condition – some being sold following write off after accident damage!

More than ten years later the hunt was on to find, for preservation, examples of one or two of the different styles of trams and trailers that had once



THREE PHOTOS: *Armed with Alan Bellamy's list, THS members subsequently tracked down all but one of the former 'Brill' trams. Clockwise from top left: the body of No. 172 at Hamner; the four 'Brills' used as holiday cabins by the Tramway Social Club at Waikuku Beach (numbers 182, 187, 190 and 192); a THS Tram Hunting party raids the battered body of 'Brill' 183 at Dromore. This tram body was reputed to have been 'very rotten but a gold mine for parts.'* (*Tramway Topics, Winter 2008 pp. 9-10*)
Three photos: Courtesy Dave Hinman.

trundled along our city streets, with the initial number continuing to multiply as time went on and more of our tramway heritage was rediscovered. It was also about obtaining parts and fittings to assist in the restoration of those trams and others yet to be found. Fortunately for us the presale stripping of the tram bodies was a little bit random, with some trams having more parts retained than others. In some case this was because the new owner/trucking contractor arrived to pick up their new possession before it was quite ready and they took it "as is". And of course, when found by us, some of the trams had been altered for post tram use, with some of their fittings removed (or souvenired) in their post tram life.

Finding the trams, particularly when not located close to or readily visible from busy roads was a combination of some pre-hunt research, (studying Lands and Survey topography maps and occasionally some aerial photos), perfecting the art of recognising tram windows on an otherwise common shed or bach, word of mouth, advice from owners and neighbours, and sometimes an element of good luck. For the Christchurch fleet we were very fortunate in that local tram enthusiast Alan Bellamy (also one of the few tram photographers of the time) managed to put together an informal disposals list. Well known to CTB workshop staff at the time, Alan

would call in to the yard in Moorhouse Ave where the trams were being stripped for sale. He would find out and take a note of who the buyer was, including where from, the price paid, and the date of departure. While not a complete list, and with some trams having disappeared in the intervening ten or more years, Alan's list was nevertheless a very valuable tool in assisting our search.

Tram hunting trips usually involved one or two car loads of members, often with a trailer in tow setting off for a day (or a weekend) in the country, searching a particular locality for trams thought to be residing there. Usually several a day would be found; most owners were happy to see us, to learn about their particular tram, and often letting us take parts and fittings. After more than 10 years outside, the wooden bodies and their canvas roofs were often showing their age, particularly if they had not been protected by enclosure or at least having a more weather resistant roof added. Some trams were no longer in use and some had already been destroyed and sometimes the parts we found were from just the remains of the tram which had been bulldozed not long before. In some instances they were such a gold mine that we came back more than once to remove and retrieve the parts. We learnt a lot about the differences in detail of the various tram types during these expeditions and were soon able for example to recognise the differences between

Stephenson, Boon and Brill made bodies and fittings. We would take pretty much everything removable that we were allowed to, whether or not we had a tram body of that particular type. More than 50 years later we are still using (or replicating) some of the parts obtained all those years ago.

The tram hunting exercises also expanded our interest in and desires for more trams, given the great variety of types that were part of the fleets. Hence the shed full referred to above (plus the many more which have been collected in the years that followed. The hunters would come back home full of enthusiasm for yet one more and it wasn't too difficult to persuade the committee of the day that it should be added to the collection. This was much assisted by the generosity of local transport companies who were persuaded to provide free or very cheap transport. Early on it was T.P. Gilroy Ltd,

owner Tom Gilroy, also a being a great supporter of the Ferrymead railway. Local carrier A.R. Guthrey Ltd. (Ron Guthrey was mayor of Christchurch in the late 1960s) were also supportive, but it was Brightlings Transport Ltd. who really came to our party. John Brightling had been involved in local tramway construction in the pre- electric era, including operating the City and Suburban line to North Beach which he had taken over from 1893, and this connection was revived in the THS's time of need. With one of his drivers, Brian Harris, a Society member, John Brightling Ltd. manager Ralph Higgott was happy for us to borrow his trucks as needed, and with Brian and later Trevor Craib at the wheel, most of the fleet came back to Christchurch on a Brightlings truck. In later years the New Zealand Express Co. took over Brightlings, and manager Richard Riley was also very accommodating.

BELOW: *Three of the larger items collected during a Tram Hunt and taken back to Ferrymead were a pair of bolsters and an internal monitor roof from 'Brills' 191 and 185 respectively, located on the Ward and Lovett family farms at Newlands in central Canterbury. The difficulties in installation of the bolsters noted by Murray Sanders in his comments may have been due to distortion caused by the head-on tram smash in fog in Ferry Road in 1949. Brill 191 was one of the trams involved!* Photo: Dave Hinman.





FIVE PHOTOS: *The recovery of 'Brill' 178 from its old home at the Milford Huts: what started out as a tidy holiday cabin soon came down to reveal a somewhat complete tram body, still painted in its final CTB livery. Fitted neatly onto Gilroy's transporter, and lifted with the help of a mobile crane from the Timaru Harbour Board, 178 began its journey back to Christchurch in January 1967.*
 Photos: John Shanks Collection; Brent Efford.

Turning now to our first electric tram to be restored, it should be noted that while having a Brill was an early desire, it wasn't 178 that was our initial target. Class leader N^o. 172, located at the Mountain View Lodge, Hanmer Springs, had earlier been found, in good original condition, and visited on several occasions. However, our persuasive skills had yet to be perfected and we had not been able to convince the owner to part with this tram. We were also aware of the CTB tram baches at Waikuku Beach – see recent photo that has come to light - but they had been much modified as well as still being in use by the Tramway Social Club. The year was 1964 and just as we were due for another trip to Hanmer, came an approach to THS President John Bettle from Frank Gilmour who had recently purchased a bach at

Milford Huts, near Temuka. To his surprise he found a tram inside the cottage, and not wanting to retain it, contacted John to see if it would be of any use to the THS! A visit by members in 1964 confirmed that not only was the almost totally enclosed tram a Brill, but, being under cover it appeared to be in great condition, and little altered from its tram days. Bruce Maffei picks up the story. "I had not long joined the Society after moving from North Beach to Bryndwr, and my parents wanted me to get involved in some sort of hobby activity. With my dad (a railway enthusiast) we attended a Society film evening, I think in Merivale, and we heard from Bruce Dale seeking members to join a work party going to Temuka the following weekend to continue preparing 178 for its return to Christchurch. I had never been on a work party before and I was a bit nervous about going, not knowing anything much

about trams and their restoration, but my mother persuaded me to go. So I called Bruce Dale and then on the Friday night, after he had finished work, he picked me up from home (I didn't own a car) and together with Ian Spicer, off we went to Temuka. By this time there had already been one weekend spent there and the tram was now partly exposed to the elements. We stayed in the Gilmour House and began the task of jacking and traversing the tram out long ways to clear the building. We used four ex NZR A^B class loco bottle jacks which I think had been obtained for us by engine driver Don Spicer. I then attended every work party over the following months to complete the task, and we also managed to find some spare time to do some local tram hunting while there. Other people I can remember attending those work parties included John Shanks, Bruce Fleming, Neil Andrews and Brent Efford."

Some quotes from *Tramway Topics*:

June 1965, p.4. "Latest information is that the Brill car will be shifted to Christchurch from South Canterbury sometime in August. We still have to find some way of moving the body off its foundations and out of the building. Any bright ideas on how to do this?"

By the next report the problem had been solved: - **October 1965, p.5.** "During the past few weekends, a number of members of the Society have been making trips to Temuka to work on the Brill tramcar N^o. 178. The tramcar had been literally embalmed in building additions and its removal necessitated wrecking a good part of this building and jacking it on four transverse jacks outwards. This process has been coming along quite smoothly, except in the later stages when the jacks started to slip and the car started to come out sideways. However, one more work-party should have the tramcar out and ready for transporting to Christchurch. "

And in **December 1965, p.3** "Another work party at Temuka on this tram has brought her within three feet of being clear of the building that surrounds her. Another work party will be held early this month to complete the task. Members also spent profitable hours removing spare parts from other cars, with the result that 178 is 'chocka' with three trailer loads of spares stacked away inside her." This work party was reported in the **February 1966 issue on p.6:** "The final Temuka work party last year encountered the difficult problem of swinging one end of the car round in an arc away from the side of the building so that the carrier could pick up the tram. A difficult problem: resolved quite neatly and rather dramatically by a variation of the jack and

traverse process – it was jacked and pushed sideways off the jacks several times!

Good things take time and a further year was to pass before the move to Christchurch was completed. In the meantime, "a Society Member" (not named at the time but it was Bruce Dale) had offered to pay for a crane to lift the tram when it was moved.

Again from *Tramway Topics*, **February 1967, p.35:**

BRILL 178 RETURNS TO CHRISTCHURCH by DeSpike
"Brill 178 has been jacked out of the bach where it was entombed... ready for transport to Christchurch for well over a year now, and when it was decided that a work party would be in Temuka over the weekend of January 7/8th, a decision was made to try and transport 178 that weekend." Mr. T.P. Gilroy offered his truck for the move, subject to a crane being at Temuka. "More frantic telephoning to the Timaru Harbour Board asking, checking and confirming all permits had been obtained for the crane to travel to Temuka and the final confirmation with the transporter driver, Curly Buchanan. Friday afternoon saw John Shanks at Timaru to pilot the crane up to Temuka. Once on site the crane moved the tram to a right angle to the building so that all was needed on Saturday morning was a lift while the transporter backed under. Saturday morning – 5am – saw Bruce Dale with Curly Buchanan on the transporter leaving Christchurch.....three hours later it arrived at Temuka and after a preliminary look, the tram was lifted and the truck backed under. 10A.M. – saw crane and the truck on the road posing for photos, and shortly afterwards the truck was on its way to Christchurch. Only unusual incident (apart from many unbelieving stares) was a comment of the storekeeper at Rakaia – "I said that buses wouldn't last in Christchurch!!"

After a weekend at Gilroy's yard, Ferrymead was startled at 9A.M. Monday by the arrival, within 5 mins of each other, THS members, crane, transporter and tram. Sleepers were stacked at the correct distance, hawsers rigged, crane legs put out and at 9:30, 178 was sitting on the sleepers at Ferrymead."

Its temporary home was outside the Ferrymead House property in what was to later become the Ferrymead Reserve, where together with Dunedin "Spiff" Boxcar no.11, it would sit outside for a further few months, until the new tram barn was complete and ready to receive it in November 1967.



TWO PHOTOS: *It wouldn't be long before 178 had company at Ferrymead! Within a few months of its arrival, another tram body, that of Dunedin N^o. 11, would arrive from its 'short-term' home at the DCCT McBride Street trolleybus depot, precariously perched aboard one of Brightling's trucks. The late John Shanks provided an article on the recovery of this tram in **Tramway Topics** issue 245. Photos: John Shanks Collection.*

Dave notes "While the only time I went to Temuka was for the transport of 178 back to Christchurch, I did become a regular tram hunter and enjoyed many trips around Canterbury and beyond. I also had prior knowledge of the Waikuku Brills as they were located not far from our family bach in Reserve Road, Waikuku beach which we owned in the 1950s. Seeing those trams as an 11 year old helped me remember them through to when I discovered the THS during the Papanui Tramway week nearly a decade later. Some of the most memorable tram hunting trips were those with Murray Sanders, John Shanks and Bruce Maffei riding in Murray's 1928 Chrysler tourer with the top open, trailer full of tram parts behind and often so absorbed in the hunt, or having the occasional breakdown or puncture, that normal meal times were ignored. Some later trips were with his ex-butchers Chevrolet van which was probably more practical (for carrying parts and being able to spot trams more easily by standing on the roof!). Others who became regulars included among others, Trevor Craib, Larry Day, John Palmer, Robin Willan and Steve Lea.

By November 1967, the Melbourne no. 1A trucks had arrived and 178 was able to be temporarily mounted on these and moved into the new tram barn, with restoration to commence the following year.

Ongoing tram hunting expeditions had seen the collection of further parts for 178 as well as for other trams. In addition to those noted by Murray in his piece, a complete set of rear end seats and backs, were obtained from 179 (the "real" red Brill), sand box seats and boxes and also the interior monitor

roof lining from 185 (now at Ferrymead as well and of course missing those parts), other Brill tram seats from various Brill trams, and, still attached on its base at the rear of the tram, the trolley retriever from 175.

Obtaining and restoring 178 was part of our story, but to run it of course we needed overhead wires and more track to be completed. Dave Hansen picks up the story:

Commissioning the Overhead – Dave Hansen

I joined the THS in August 1964 when the horse tram was running in Papanui Road.

My first Saturday work parties were at Garvins Road in Hornby. This was where 'Duckhouse' 115 was located.

A short time later the Saturday work parties were held at the old CTB workshop at Moorhouse Avenue.

In 1967 I joined the New Zealand Post Office as a telephone lineman. It was about this time the first tram barn was constructed at Bridle Path Road. This was also the start of finding ex-CTB tram bodies and having them moved to our new tram barn. 'Brill' 178 was moved from the park outside Gumboot's house to the barn.

When a decision was made to restore 178, overhead wires were going to be needed. The next thing I knew I was told 'you can climb poles' so I was seconded to the committee as the first overhead officer. The first overhead wire was erected from the rear of the tram barn to near the end of tram barns 2 & 3. What a great night it was, when 178 was first powered up and driven in and out of the tram barn several times.

My memories are bit vague here. I think the next



THREE PHOTOS: *The Kitson steam tram reprised its former maintenance role with the CTB, helping assemble the new overhead with the help of two special wagons, the homemade tower wagon referred to by Dave Hansen below and the 'Circus' ballast wagon mounted on a Brill Radiax trailer truck, still in use in a modified form 50 years later! Also in use at the time, the trolley-mounted compressor, predecessor to the Society's current work tram 5W, both of which were constructed by Steve Lea, seen here with a very young Greg Harris. Photos: Dave Hinman.*

overhead wire erected was from the present Square Shelter to the end of the line in the park. Bruce Fleming, Steve Lea and Ray Silcock were the main helpers. Sorry if I have missed any other names here. Ex-CTB steel poles were dropped off at Ferrymead by the MED and my work mates in the Post Office. Once on site these poles were prepared and painted. Paul Shelly the MED General Manager was contacted to see if the MED could install the poles. The answer was yes. Soon the poles were installed; the MED also supplied the concrete at no cost to THS.

The first work done was to make up all the span wires, etc. and install to the poles. We were very lucky that the CTB loaned their V8 tower wagon to us on Saturdays whenever needed. The engine was very well worn and driving it from the city to Ferrymead was a mission. So much blue smoke was emitted I had to drive with all the windows open. A rail mounted tower wagon was made up from pipe by Andy Law. It was mounted on an old ballast wagon chassis from the Monks Bay Yacht Club. This was mounted on a pair of old mine wheels by Alan Webster.

I seem to recall the contact wire was run out in one day to the end of the line. This was a 5AM start with Ray Silcock lighting up and driving the steam tram. We worked until approximately 10PM. I think the steam tram and our rail mounted tower wagon were used on several occasions. The contact wire was tensioned up with a lever hoist from the Post Office. In the following days the contact wire was attached to the ears and to the hangers with caps and cones. From memory two ladders were borrowed from the Post Office Lines Branch.

We were sometimes short of the steel brackets off the steel poles. So, when I spotted them on the poles still in the street, I would make a point of recovering them. On one occasion I was removing one off a large steel pole in Oxford Terrace. The bolts would not undo, so I cut one with a hacksaw, but when it was nearly cut through it sprung and the head of the bolt took off and landed on the rear window of a parked car. Fortunately, the window did not break but there was a mark like a stone chip where it hit. How would I explain this to my boss? There were no Post office wires to be seen. Why was I there?



TWO PHOTOS: *To help with installation of the poles for the overhead, the MED loaned a Hiab-fitted Austin truck, seen here placing a pole near what is now the Square Shelter Tram Stop. The contact wire was obtained second-hand from the former New Plymouth trolleybus system, and was wound onto a trolley-mounted drum as shown above. By the time this photo was taken on 13 December 1969, the Tram Barn doors had already been modified – see p.17 for the reason!*

Photos:

Dave Hinman.

I was also involved with installing the overhead from the Square shelter to the church. Many members may not know how or where we obtained many of the overhead fittings from. Two trips were made to Ngakawau about 1971/72. Bruce Fleming arranged an old house for us to stay in. This was located above the Ngakawau bins set amongst the native bush. The people on these two missions were myself, Bruce Fleming, Ray Silcock, Malcom Giles, Graham Tayler and Alan Webster.

We had been informed that where the Stockton Tramway ran, that many of the overhead parts were laying on the embankment from when the overhead had been removed. So, it was on a very wet Saturday morning we walked this old tramway formation and to our amazement where every pole had been, the metal fittings for the bracket arms, plus double and single pull offs and straight-line hangers were on the ground. These fittings were same that the Christchurch Tramway Board had used.

On our second trip we were having a beer at the Granity Pub on Saturday night when one of the locals asked what we doing over there. We explained we were looking for old overhead fittings from the Stockton Tramway formation for the Ferrymead Tramway Museum in Christchurch. He said, “*You don't want that old stuff, there are heaps of brand-*

new ones in the Mines Department stores.”

We arranged to meet him the following morning. There were all these brand-new double and single pull offs and straight-line hangers. These were taken to the Granity Railway Station. The Station Master consigned them to Woolston Station. We were charged 25 cents for transport. I picked them up in my Post Office Bedford truck. We were so lucky to get this stuff. A large portion of the overhead fittings on the Ferrymead tramway came from Stockton. The cast fittings on all the straight bracket arms also came from the Stockton formation.

Restoring ‘Brill’ 178 – Murray Sanders

I was away overseas in 1970, but I believe I was the first to operate the tram, under traction power in 1969, down the length of the running road of Tram Barn N^o. 1. I am sure this only occurred successfully, following a quick rewire, getting the four motors rotating in the same direction!

These reminiscences are concerned with the activity leading up to the operation of 178.

The tram body, when obtained from Temuka, was minus the bolsters (where the trucks are attached), and all electrical and mechanical equipment. Bolsters were removed from another Brill body, was it the Hanmer one? The bolster bolt holes cannot have aligned with those under the tram, because



FOUR PHOTOS: *One of the background jobs: Steve Lea restoring decorative pole ‘skirts’ for the new overhead poles being installed by the MED (top left); the CTB’s Ford V8 tower wagon – now stored in the Trolleybus Shed – at work helping assemble a pole arm for what is now the Paddock loop (top right); collecting a mercury-arc rectifier from the Timaru Harbour Board’s powerhouse (bottom left); opening day for the new Power House in Tram Barn 1 with President Joe Pickering officiating (bottom right).*
Four photos: *Dave Hinman.*

Steve Lea and I spent weeks underneath with our employer’s electric drill, drilling fresh holes in the chassis. Following this we installed the pipework through the bolsters, much of it obtained from other bodies.

As the work progressed, parts emerged, souvenired by trammies or visiting Aussies, including motorman’s controllers, headlights, brake valves and deadman’s valves. Prior to this, John Shanks and Bruce Dale had negotiated for and obtained trucks and mechanical parts, off a scrapped Melbourne tram. The resistance grids travelled from Adelaide to Melbourne in Dave Hinman’s rental car. The PC5 controller, (ex-Adelaide) and the mercury arc rectifier (ex Timaru) were renovated by quiet genius Alan Webster.

Dave Hansen oversaw the overhead line installation. The trolley wire came from the New Plymouth trolleybus system, (another story). Paul Shelley, the MED General Manager organised his staff to install the support poles around into the reserve. Wooden

troughing for the wire in the barn had been obtained from the Cathedral Square car shed.

I did hear in my remote location, that a dispute arose about the cream stripe which ended up being painted along the sides of 178. It was a rather brief period livery, current in the late 1940’s.

Editor’s Note: The bolsters now under ‘Brill’ 178 were removed from sister 191, one of the three ‘Brills’ that ended up at Newlands in Central Canterbury. The Society’s other ‘Brills’, 185 also ex-Newlands and 194 ex-Coopers Creek, both had their bolsters intact when they were donated to the Society.

Recommissioning ‘Brill’ 178 – Joe Pickering

So it's fifty years since the inauguration of Brill 178! That means she's been in service as a restored tram for longer than she was in CTB service in the streets: 1922 to 1952 - 30 years; 1970 to 2020 - 50 years! It seems extraordinary now that a society of youthful people should choose as their very first electric tram restoration project a car which, with its pneumatic doors and control gear, was probably the most sophisticated tram they could contemplate



SIX PHOTOS: One corner of Tram Barn 1 was used for a time a storage area; tram 24 was used as the workshop, where volunteers Lindsay -- and Robin -- were caught on film working on more ex-New Plymouth overhead fittings. Elsewhere in the Tram Barn, work continued underneath 178 to fit up the complex air-brake system, including a main reservoir from a scrapped English Electric E⁰ class electric locomotive, withdrawn the year before (1968). The interior wasn't neglected either with new timber, new paint, and new seats -- the latter scrounged from other 'Brills' and subsequently refurbished. The controllers came from Australia by courtesy of Hugh Ballment and Arthur Perry; a set of K1 brake valves came from the Wellington Tramway Museum. By December 1969, 178 was starting to look more like a tram again.

Photos:

Dave Hinman.

restoring. When I came on the scene, much of the donkey work had been done. The countryside had been combed for tram bodies and those that were found had been stripped for parts. Despite this, the crucial bits - bogies and other electrical gear - had long since been scrapped and the only likely source of such items was Melbourne.

But what we now think of as vintage trams were still running in Melbourne and spare parts were not readily available for sale. We were fortunate in having the support of Mr. John Fardell, General Manager of the CTB who was a friend of Major General Risson, general manager of the Melbourne

and Metropolitan Tramways Board, and it was through this connection that we were able to obtain a pair of 9A bogies for £80.00 (\$160.00). The full story of the restoration has been told by people more closely involved than I was, but, as well as the restoration of the tram, there was the installation of the power supply, the planting of poles and the stringing of the overhead wire.

There was also the question of motorman training and licensing. In those days, the responsibility for licensing fell upon the shoulders of the Marine Department. Needless to say the Marine Department knew nothing about trams since they had been gone from the streets for almost 20 years. However, one of their engineers, Don McKelvey, found himself charged with the task of licensing a bunch of youthful aspiring tram drivers. He was an astute man, and although he had had no experience of trams, quickly learned that by careful observation and asking the right questions he could accurately gauge the competence or otherwise of the candidates.

The first batch to go through were Trevor Craib, Bruce Dale, Larry Day, Bruce Fleming, Steve Lea, Joe Pickering, Alan Robb, Don Spicer, John Shanks, and Max Taylor. Don Spicer had schooled us well and nobody failed, but Steve Lea had an anxious moment when he dewired on the corner leading into the reserve and, having reset the pole, found he had locked himself out of the tram and to regain entry was obliged to scramble up through a (fortunately open) window.

Opening day arrived and the tram, resplendent in its new larch green paint with cream window frames and a cream stripe down the middle, was parked in the reserve. The official party arrived by steam tram. Speeches were delivered by Mr. H. Scott, chairman of the Heathcote County Council, Mr. Bert Walker, Minister of Tourism and Mr. Fardell. Following these, Mrs. Fardell cut the ribbon and it was all aboard for the official first run - driven, appropriately by Mr. Fardell under the tutelage of Bruce Fleming. The

tram then ran a service between the reserve and the tram barn with many people enjoying the nostalgia of being on a Brill once again. In the evening a celebratory dinner was held and Mr. Fardell spoke about his work with the trams.

Interestingly he mentioned that his resolve to abolish the tramway system was not due to a dislike of trams. On the contrary, his whole career had been with trams which he held in great affection. It was simply that in the existing situation, he believed they were no longer a suitable mode of transport for Christchurch.

Now that the 'Brill' was operational, we were all keen to drive. Things didn't always go well. My worst moment was when I started off from the reserve and suddenly heard a dreadful crashing noise above my head. I recall turning to the passengers and yelling, "What on earth is that?" Precisely why I expected them to be able to answer the question I can't explain. I stopped the tram, got out and found that I had lost the pole. Not figuratively in the usual sense of dewiring, but literally. The front pole was quite literally nowhere to be seen. I remember vaguely searching in the long grass but when that proved futile I climbed up and looked on the roof. Sure enough, there, behind the right-hand ad board was the missing pole. It was suddenly all too clear what had happened. I had omitted to pull it down before starting off. It had left the wire, got caught in a span wire which forced it back causing it to break the rope and, more seriously, the casting at the base in which it was mounted. At least it didn't bring the overhead down. The rear pole had also dewired but had been caught by the retriever. One of life's more embarrassing moments!

Never mind. It was the start of what has turned out to be a brilliant career for the 'Brill'. Who then would have dreamed of the future that lay before it, eventually finding itself back in the city streets running in almost daily service? Not bad for a lady who will be a century old in a couple of years! Life is indeed full of surprises.

OVERLEAF: *It's Alive! Murray Sanders was able to get 178 moving on 16 October 1969 using a set of former E⁰ locomotive standby batteries (top left). On 5 January 1970 the first 'night run' took place (top right); passengers included a very youthful Alan Roi, Phillip Burns (front row), Joe Pickering and Trevor Craib (back row) (middle left); the tram barn doors were later modified to make room for the contact wire (middle right).*

It wasn't just the contact wire that needed extra height though! When Steve Lea first towed 178 out of the Tram Barn with 'Mollie' the Minneapolis Moline tractor – the front trolley pole punched through the front of the Barn! No one had realised that a tram with trolley poles on is higher than an ex-NZR steam locomotive. The doors were modified promptly after that!

Photos:

Dave Hinman.



WHOOOPS! *– Nice one Steve!*





THIS PAGE: *Opening Day – 9 May 1970, with guests of honour Mr. John Fardell (Christchurch Transport Board), Mr. H. Scott (Heathcote County Council), and the Rt. Hon. H. Walker. Mrs Fardell had the honour of cutting the ceremonial ribbon in front of ‘Brill’ 178 (above); a sizeable crowd gathered for the event despite the cold Sou-West wind. A CTB Mk IV and ‘New’ Reliance, a Mt. Cook touring coach and a Midland Coachlines ‘Starliner’ were also there on display. After two days of rain, it had been questioned whether the buses could get on site – luckily, the ground had dried out nicely in time for the afternoon’s event.*

Both photos:

Dave Hinman.



From Behind Closed Doors...



The major body repairs to Restaurant Tram 411 are well under way, as can be seen by these images supplied by Graeme Richardson. Decayed timber due to water damage has meant major surgery is now needed.



ABOVE: Brian Fairbrass (left) and new staff member, engineer Bob Williams (right) at work dismantling 411.
BELOW: The leading motorman's cab dismantled (left); the larger 24-seat saloon as seen from the kitchen area, with the end apron and windows with its 1970s-era head- and tail-light clusters on the floor in front of Graeme. All Photos: Graeme Richardson.





ABOVE: For some of our members, the words ‘tram bodies’ conjure up memories of trams used as holiday cabins around the South Island. While Auckland has its famous ‘Tram Bay’ at Waikawau Bay and smaller clusters at Tapu and across the Coromandel Peninsular, Christchurch had a more modest version – four ‘Brills’ at Waikuku Beach, used by the Tramway Social Club, and a ‘Hills’ car as an ablutions building. This photo appears on p. 7 but has been reproduced here to show the trams in greater detail.

FRONT COVER: Four photos from the early days of Ferrymead’s electric trams. A fully restored ‘Brill’ 178 stands outside the Tram Barn (top left; THS postcard); opening day after the ribbon has been cut – Mr & Mrs Fardell and President Joe Pickering, 9 May 1970 (top right; Dave Hinman); recovering 178 with the help of Gilroy’s transporter and a Timaru Harbour Board crane (bottom left; Dave Hinman); Murray Sanders ‘driving’ 178 using the ex-E⁰ locomotive standby batteries, 16 October 1969 (bottom right; Dave Hinman).

FERRYMEAD TRAM TRACTS

The Newsletter of the Tramway Historical Society

Editor: Alastair Cross

Contributions can be sent to the Editor at tracts@ferrymeadtramway.org.nz

We welcome contributions of information for both Tracts and our Society Facebook page. Slide photographs and text are welcome by prior arrangement.

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