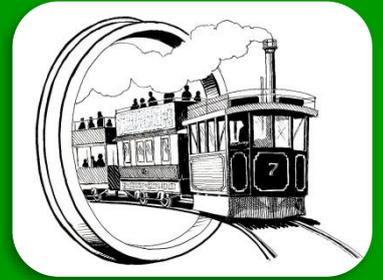


# *Ferrymead*

## *Tram Tracts*



*The Journal of the Tramway Historical Society*

*Issue 51 – October 2020*



***Vale – Guy Evans***  
***Put Another Bob in the Gas Meter...***  
***The Challenge of Cranmer***

The Tramway Historical Society  
P. O. Box 1126, Christchurch 8140 - [www.ferrymeadtramway.org.nz](http://www.ferrymeadtramway.org.nz)

**President's Piece – Stephen Taylor**

As I write this, it's the 1<sup>st</sup> October. Spring is well and truly upon us, and so is daylight savings. And even better news - we are back to COVID level 1 which means we can dispense with the social distancing thing on the trams, and hence can carry bigger loads. October traditionally contains one of the biggest events on the Ferrymead calendar - over Labour weekend – and 2020 (as long as we remain in COVID level 1) should be no exception. From the Park's weekly updates, I can see that they are planning to run an event called "Extravaganza" on the Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> and Monday 26<sup>th</sup>. While details – and planning – are yet to be completed, I would expect that the Society will be running a three tram service – something we haven't done for a while. This of course means additional crew, plus conductors, etc. The Park is also planning to restart their Night Markets again from October 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Steam Sundays from 11<sup>th</sup> October. It is always worth visiting the Park's Facebook page to see that events the Park are planning. **(Ed. Note. Since this was written the Extravaganza has been reduced to one day – Sunday 25th October. – see p. 12 for more details)**

Also in October, the work on refurbishing the Restaurant Tram is planned to be completed and be sent back to town. The Restaurant Tram is now in the spray booth getting its final touches. There should now be sufficient space in Tram Barn 1 for work on the Body of tram #24 to re-commence. It is pleasing to see some work on the trucks for #24 has been continuing, but it will be good to be able to be hands on with the body again – something I haven't really been able to do since February this year.

It was disappointing to see only 16 members and partners at the Annual Society dinner in September. I would like to think that maybe we can blame COVID for the small turnout – but maybe members would like to try a different venue next year. If you feel strongly about this – and in particular, if you were not there – some feedback would be helpful.

And finally for this month, the General Meeting for October is a planning meeting on how the Society can best use the Cranmer building, and how best to make it happen. Conceptually, there is an expectation that the building will consist of a mixture of display space, library and archive space, and storage space. This meeting is to help determine which bits of the building should be used for what, how they should be fitted out, over what timescales, and whatever else is necessary – such as fixing the floor in the west end of the building, and making it properly weather tight. This is your chance to get involved in the planning so the Society can incorporate your ideas, and then to socialise informally over a cup of tea or coffee and one of Phyllis Belworthy's suppers. I am expecting that Dave Hinman will be leading this discussion, and that he will be providing further information elsewhere in in this edition of Tracts. See you all there.

Regards,  
**Stephen**

## HEALTH & SAFETY SPOT WITH DAVE SANDERS

Tools and equipment are again being left loose in the Workshop. We would like to politely remind everyone to please put equipment away after use or at the end of your work session.

Also – could the person/people sharpening our drill bits please stop! Incorrect sharpening techniques usually results in the drill bit being damaged beyond repair. Graeme Richardson has noted that this happened to a 25mm bit recently – these are not cheap to replace. Get the right person to do the job.

We would also like to note that Murray Sanders is retiring from the H&S Committee with the December meeting being his last. This is after many years of sterling service. I for one will miss his input greatly.

With Murray leaving the committee we desperately need some additional people as the committee is difficult with three active members and cannot operate if this falls to two for any reason. Help from any quarter would be appreciated. The work requires attendance at one meeting each month and some additional phone calls / research / inspections or other work on occasion.

## Notices

### WORK DAY

Our next work day is Saturday 17 October, which also happens to be NZ Election Day, though many of you may have already voted by then. As usual we will be focussing on tasks both around the Tram Barn and in the trolley bus area, but are not yet resuming catered lunches. Because election results will be announced on Saturday evening, we will delay the post workday Zoom session by one week to ensure a good NZ turnout (at the Zoom session!) It may well be a topic of conversation the following week for our Aussie participants as well! The Zoom details are included in the email and will be re-sent as a reminder to previous participants the day before the meeting.

### OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING: CRANMER BUILDING DISCUSSION

This will be held in the Lions building on Wednesday 21<sup>ST</sup> commencing at 7:30pm. As noted in the President's Piece, this month's meeting will be a planning meeting to brainstorm on how we progress the repairs and modifications to the Cranmer building to meet our future needs, including uses proposed, space requirements, where located, and timing and funding issues. Go to p.9 for more details, including a site plan and some bullet points. Please consider these prior to the meeting to help develop your ideas.

## News

### DAVE CARR MEMORIAL TRUCK RUN

*Ed. Note. The following advert has been copied from the Dave Carr Memorial Truck Run Facebook page. The Society is grateful to Cam Lill and the other organisers for their very generous gift:*

"So what a year it's been one way or another!

What about the Dave Carr Memorial Run we hear you asking? Well, it's all go for Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>

November departing the Highway Inn Truck Stop at 9:00am.

\$20 donation / truck, and once again Gerard Daldry has made a Mt Cook-Denning bus available - Thank you Gerard. Seats available on the bus donation \$20 / person. You'll notice this year's theme and poster is in fact an MCD bus - thank you to Catherine Jopson for the artwork.

The run is now all sorted with two stops (possibly a third back in Christchurch if there's time) departing the Highway Inn Truck Stop at 9:00am (meet at the truck stop from any time after 8:00am) and we'll return back there for the evening "Bull" Session. The Highway Inn will be open on Saturday morning for coffee's etc.

Given the challenging year it's been, we are going ease off on the Charity Auction this year and won't be chasing items to auction. That said, if people do feel like they would like to donate please get in touch and we'll look to run perhaps a raffle for any gear/ items that are donated.

We have T Shirts featuring a Mt Cook-Denning sorted for the run for those of you who would like to purchase them - details on how to order these are in

the posts section on this Event Page or on the main Dave Carr Truck Photo Collection page.

This year we have chosen the Tramway Historical Society (based at Ferrymead Heritage Park) as our benefactor. This was one of Dave's big interests / favourite places that he devoted a lot of time to, so it seems only fitting we give them a helping hand to carry on the fantastic work they do there to save part of New Zealand's transport history in the form of trams, trolleybuses and diesel buses from the Christchurch Transport Board Days.

We'll keep you posted with more info closer to the date so be sure to check back in."

### OCTOBER NIGHT MARKET

The monthly Saturday Night Market (actually 4pm-8pm) recommenced (again) on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October and what a night it was. A nice balmy night, little wind (though strong winds had been predicted), and lots of people. But it could have been a disaster – early on Saturday morning the main Ferrymead site power failed – completely, after a few stops and starts! The fault turned out to be the high (11kV) feed to the substation, which meant no mains power or any DC power for the Canterbury Railway Society. THS operations were not majorly impacted thanks to the feed from our small rectifier at Bridle Path Road, but the tram traffic lights malfunctioned as did the nearby railway crossing lights. Mains supplier Orion got their contractors Connetics Ltd. on the job and this involved a temporary 11KV portable generator to the rescue, tapped into our substation, plus a team trying to find the fault, which was later located in

quite recently undergrounded cabling in Ferrymead Park Drive, and finally fixed on Sunday afternoon. (see photos on p.10). It did mean that the Ferrymead Railway's Wellington Electric Unit could not run, so it was a Vulcan railcar instead, later upgraded to two in multiple because of the large numbers of patrons. We were very busy with Double Decker 26 and fortunately had a relief crew available. All those Ferrymead groups who opened their doors did very well, as did the growing number of market stalls. Next month could be even better, if the weather is good, as we hear that there is going to be a steam punk theme which should help attract patrons.

### **CHRISTCHURCH TRAMWAY – 25 YEARS YOUNG**

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> year of operation of the Christchurch Tramway (the actual opening date was 4 February). CTL will be publicly celebrating this on Labour Day (Monday 26 October) as part of the Christchurch City Council's Christchurch Heritage Festival 2020, running from October 24 to November 8. There will be a 25% discount off tram tickets for the public as well as giveaways, discounts and special promotions in conjunction with local businesses. A photographic display featuring 25 years of the tramway will also be showing in the currently vacant shop adjacent to the Christchurch Attractions office in Cathedral Junction. There will also be a private function for invited guests on Thursday 29th October. For the full Heritage Festival Programme, go to: <https://www.ccc.govt.nz/news-and-events/whats-on/programme/42>.

### **RESTAURANT TRAM 411 UPDATE**

The Restaurant Tram is now in its final stages of renovation prior to its return to the city - scheduled for 23 October. The HTT team together with Alex Hunter and David Maciulaitis from CTL are now mainly working in Tram Barn 3 with final painting (outside) and fit-out (inside) moving at pace. No 411 is due to commence trial runs and promotions from 28 October and return to commercial operation on November 1. (see photos on p. 11 below).

### **TROLLEYBUS OVERHEAD RESTORATION**

Our overhead crew has been working at the rear of the Trolleybus Shed. When the overhead was first constructed, it was intended to put wires around the outside of the shed to provide an outside parking area and a set of points was erected at the rear of the shed. It is now felt that these points were in the wrong place and they have been removed. The overhead at the rear of the shed has been raised

using the poles that we recently back stayed. As the geometry of the line is somewhat altered, we have removed a sweep from the depot line and a solid segment is being added in a different position. The line crew are re-adjusting the depot wires and reconnecting them to the main line. It is hoped that before too long we will be able to energise the overhead and run a bus to test the overhead. We envisage there will be quite a lot of adjusting and final tensioning required before the overhead is usable. We have had the pleasure of working with Michael Jarka from Dunedin. Michael is a long term bus enthusiast and at one stage lived in Auckland. There he was involved in tram overhead maintenance at MOTAT. His help on the overhead was really appreciated. Thank you, Michael.

-Alan Roi



### **VALE – GUY EVANS**

From the Ferrymead Park Weekly Update, 25 September:

"....Very sad news of Guy Evans passing away [on 22 September] , just shy of his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was in hospital for routine reasons, however there turned out to be underlying issues causing more serious illness until his passing. Many of you will know Guy from the very early days of Ferrymead Park, being one of the founders back in the 1960's. He has long standing friendships and connections with the park, one of them as the patron of Friends of Ferrymead to this day, and he is the very backbone and fabric of Ferrymead Park. His kindness and generosity over the years is unsurpassed and it is a very sad time for all of those who have been lucky enough to have had Guy part of their lives and part of Ferrymead Park. He published Ferrymead Park's 'Recycled Township'

with David Gee in 2004, which is in our gift shop and very much the source of regular reference and information gathering.

As much as Guy was such a generous and giving man in his lifetime, he remains so in his passing, offering his body to Otago University for medical studies. As such his family have asked all at Ferrymead be patient and wait one year, whereupon his body will be returned to the family for cremation. At this point, his family have expressed Guy's wishes to have his ashes scattered at Ferrymead."

*Ed. Note. Tracts will publish a more detailed outline of Guy's achievements, including his involvement with the Tramway Historical Society (of which he was an honorary member) next year around the time when it anticipated there will be a memorial function for him at Ferrymead. The above photo was taken on the occasion of Guy's last public appearance at Ferrymead in November 2017 when a park bench named in his honour was unveiled in Coronation Park followed by an afternoon tea at Curragh.*

### **ANDY ROWE – LIFE CELEBRATION**

With the welcome return to Covid Alert Level 1, Andy's family have reconfirmed the function date and venue - Sunday 18 October, Steam Scene at McLean's Island commencing at 2pm.

### **END OF THE ROAD – FAREWELL TRAILER 201**

We're sad to report than one of the victims of the disastrous Lake Ohau village and area wildfire on Sunday 4 October was former Christchurch Standard Trailer No. 201. Its evolving story has featured in several past issues of Tracts, starting as long ago as November 2009. Following the acquisition by THS of Standard trailer class leader No. 126, a series of articles about Standard trailers followed in 2016-18, including the rediscovery of 201 and locating its owners, though a slight doubt remained about its identity. A postscript in March this year reported on the visit to Christchurch of owner Michael Barker to view the standard trailers at Ferrymead to assist in his planning of the refurbishment of his family's tram into a modern holiday cottage. He had also

found early photos of it taken after its purchase by his father in 1957-8, finally confirming it was indeed Christchurch's last tram trailer no. 201.

As recently as last week Michael had emailed us saying that they were finally making a start on their renovation and that they were going to mount some of the old tram photos we had given them with an appropriate story/caption. They hoped to be largely finished this summer. Michael also asked if we could edit his draft and perhaps add to it. On Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October our response went back to him, including some additional photos. Michael replied "We hope to be largely finished this summer so please let us know if you are heading up that way and would like to have a look".

And then at the weekend – the disastrous wildfires! On the evening of Sunday 4 October, we viewed the horrific reports of the early morning destruction of much of the Lake Ohau Village and nearby countryside. Fearing the worst but hoping for the best, an email of support was sent to Michael. His response came back a couple of hours later, saying "It has been a sad day, 201 is no more. The last tram is now deceased. This photo [see p.11] shows the remains of both it (foreground) and another bach (background) which burnt to the ground in the early hours. We are in the North Island and still coming to grips with the news. I'm not sure what we will do, now that we don't have an historic tram to do up! We were so enjoying the project, and had already had a bathroom built to drop in behind it on Monday week. If you have any old trams that are surplus to requirements do let us know! Sorry to be the bearer of such sad news."

Michael has since advised that they hope to visit in the coming week to see what if anything is salvageable, including any tram parts. We will give a further update next month, and in the meantime we share in the grief of Michael and his family for the loss of Christchurch's last tram trailer 201 and part of their family for more than 60 years - more than double its original tram life at the CTB.

## **TRAM DRIVING TIPS WITH DAVID JONES**

When crossing Truscotts Road, it is essential that a red tail light is not showing at the front of your tram when crossing this public road. Always make sure that you reverse your lights when reversing the tram either at the Square Shelter or if you are short working from the Church.

## Put Another Bob in the Gas Meter...

Many years ago, some of our readers may recall there was an article in *Tramway Topics*, issue 212, which revealed how Dunedin once considered purchasing British-built compressed-gas-powered tramcars (to a German patent, no less!) However, had events transpired differently, Dunedin may well have turned to a manufacturer a little closer to home...

On 14 July 2020, THS Secretary Dave Hinman received an email from Professor John Hannavy in the United Kingdom, requesting further information about “a patent issued in 1882 to two engineers from Oamaru, Messrs Harper and Rock” for a gas-powered tramcar. At that time writing a book on gas-powered trams worldwide, Professor Hannavy believed the Society might be better positioned to find out more about this previously-unknown patent than someone living eight thousand miles and several time zones away.

While initial discussions bore little fruit – Graham Stewart even admitting that he’d never heard of such a patent before – a few hours searching online by THS Editor, Alastair Cross soon had a possible lead with Archives New Zealand holding patent information from that time. A quick email to the Christchurch office, and two days later Archives had responded: they had the original patent and engineering drawings! Dave quickly coordinated with Wellington-based Society member Brent Efford to see the patent.

Brent duly took photos of the patent, but noted that several pages of drawings were missing, a sentiment shared by Professor Hannavy who by now had found out Archives held the patent and ordered a digital copy of it. One of those missing drawings was that of the proposed tramcar to have been built for use with Harper and Rock’s gas engine. Brent decided to keep digging, and on a later visit - finally success! The Archives team had found the missing drawings in another file! Brent duly took photos, and passed them on to Dave and Professor Hannavy.

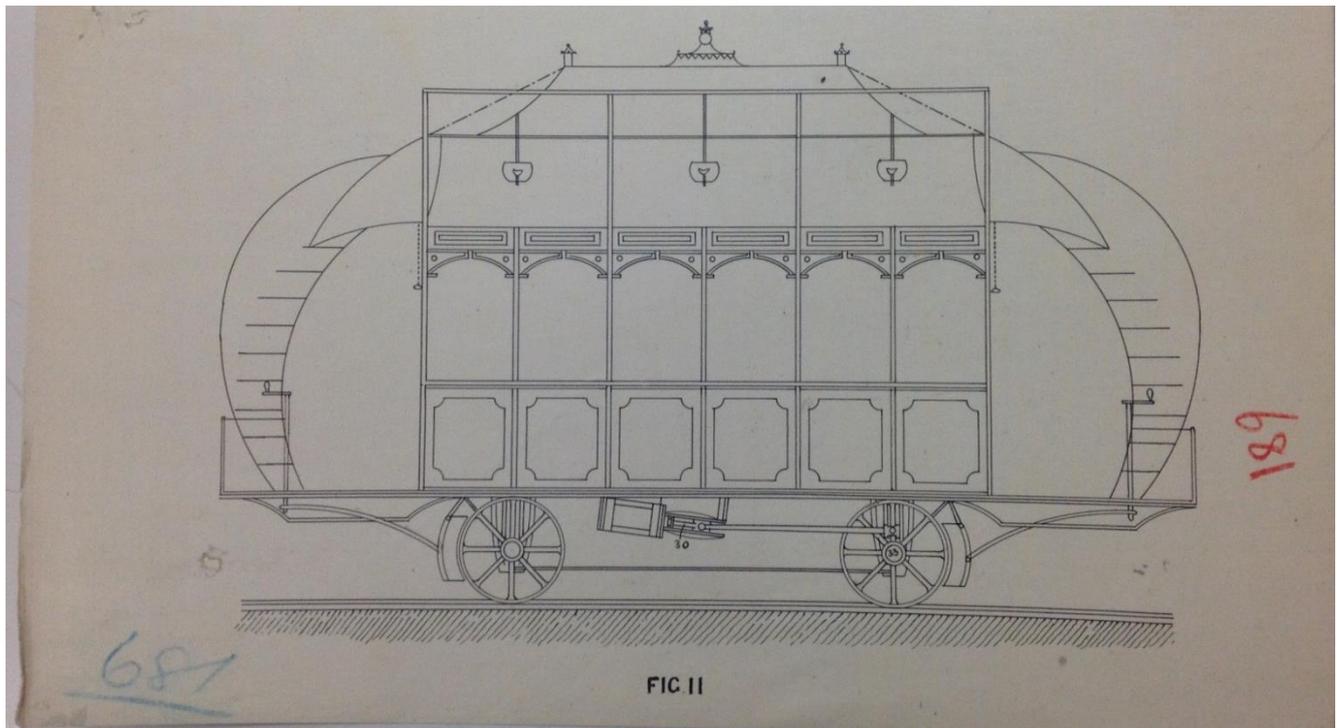
So who were Harper and Rock? So far the only information we have on the two comes from the opening paragraph of the patent. Walter Andrew Harper was a surveyor, presumably with the Otago Provincial Government, while John William Rock was a mechanical engineer. It’s likely that their design was produced in response to plans for a municipal tramway in Oamaru linking the town with the Ngapara branch line. While the tramway plan never came to anything, Harper and Rock certainly filed their patent; furthermore, the patent was even given consideration by the town of Hawera, which was then also considering trams. Nothing ever came of that either, and there is no evidence to suggest that Harper and Rock ever built a prototype. However, Professor Hannavy believes that the Harper-Rock patent may be the oldest gas tram patent anywhere in the world, predating similar efforts in Australia and Europe by several years.

While on the subject of Tramways, thanks to an error by NZ Archives on Brent’s first visit when they initially misread the patent number (651 instead of 681) he also found a second but unrelated tramway patent, also from 1882. This had been granted to Mr. Alexander Cairns for a type of shared tramway rail. The proposed rails would have been usable by both ordinary tramway vehicles and horse-drawn drays, and come in two different forms for urban and rural use, but as with the Harper-Rock patent, Cairns’ idea appears not to have ever left the drawing board.

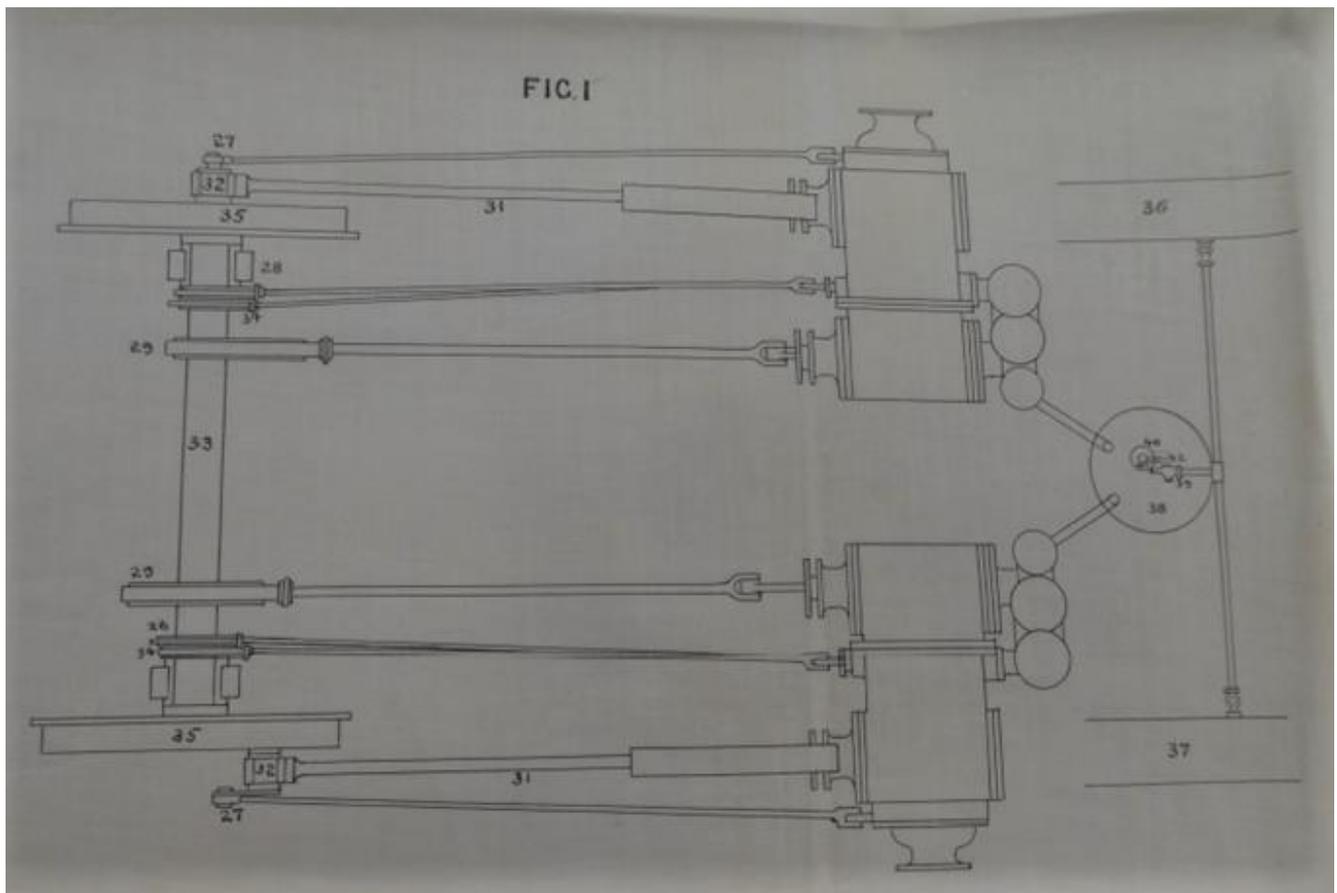
So now New Zealand has a unique claim to fame! And what of those Dunedin gas trams, you might ask? While the Dunedin City Corporation was prepared to purchase fifteen gas trams in 1898 and run them with a select number of refurbished horse- or steam-tram cars, ultimately that plan was ‘scotched’ too when the neighbouring Dunedin & Roslyn Tramway Company decided to purchase American-built electric trams for its pioneering line. Once Roslyn had their jazzy new electrics, everyone else wanted electric trams too and so any remaining interest in gas-powered tramcars finally evaporated.

For those wondering, only one gas-powered tram exists anywhere in the world: the restored body of Neath Corporation N<sup>o</sup> 1, stripped of its gas engine when it was retired in 1920, is displayed at the Cefn Coed Colliery Museum in Wales. Professor Hannavy’s book on gas trams, *The Gas Tram: An idea ahead of its time* is yet to be released.

*With thanks to Dave Hinman, Brent Efford, and Alastair Cross for research and documentation.*



**ABOVE:** Victorian tramway opulence, but not as we knew it. Harper and Rock's proposed double-deck tramcar bore little resemblance to anything else running on New Zealand's street tramways at that time. The ornate detailing is more suggestive perhaps of an early British railway carriage.



**ABOVE:** 'Overhead' view of the Harper-Rock patent gas engine illustrating the cylinders, eccentrics and main driving wheelset. Much of this appears to be of typical steam locomotive orthodoxy of the period; unlike a steam locomotive however, the gas engine itself was attached not at the front of the chassis but between the two axles. Both photos: Brent Efford.

## On the Move – Trolleybus 210



With no currently live overhead, towing with Dave Hinman's Land Rover was the way to go. The power cut mentioned elsewhere meant some tyres were unable to be pumped to full pressure. Larry Day helped by Phil Murphy to put the power into the steering!  
*(Photos: Michael Jarka)*



Outside workshop. By the end of the day Anthony Holliday had jacked up the bus and removed the left front spring for repairs (two leaves had been identified as broken). Meanwhile, work continues on the reinstallation of Short Reliance 410's overhauled motor, more photos of which will appear next issue.  
*(Photos: Dave Hinman)*

## The Question of Cranmer

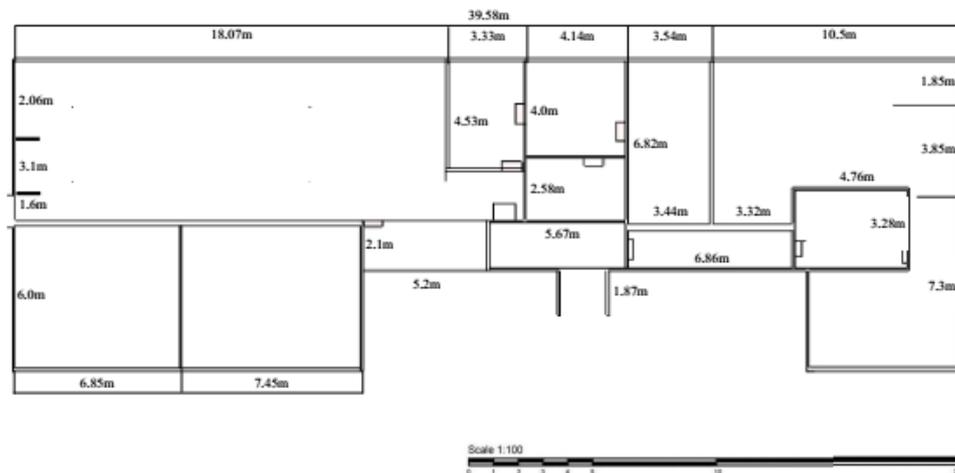


### Cramner Building Floorplan

A3 Size

1:100

As at 22/06/20

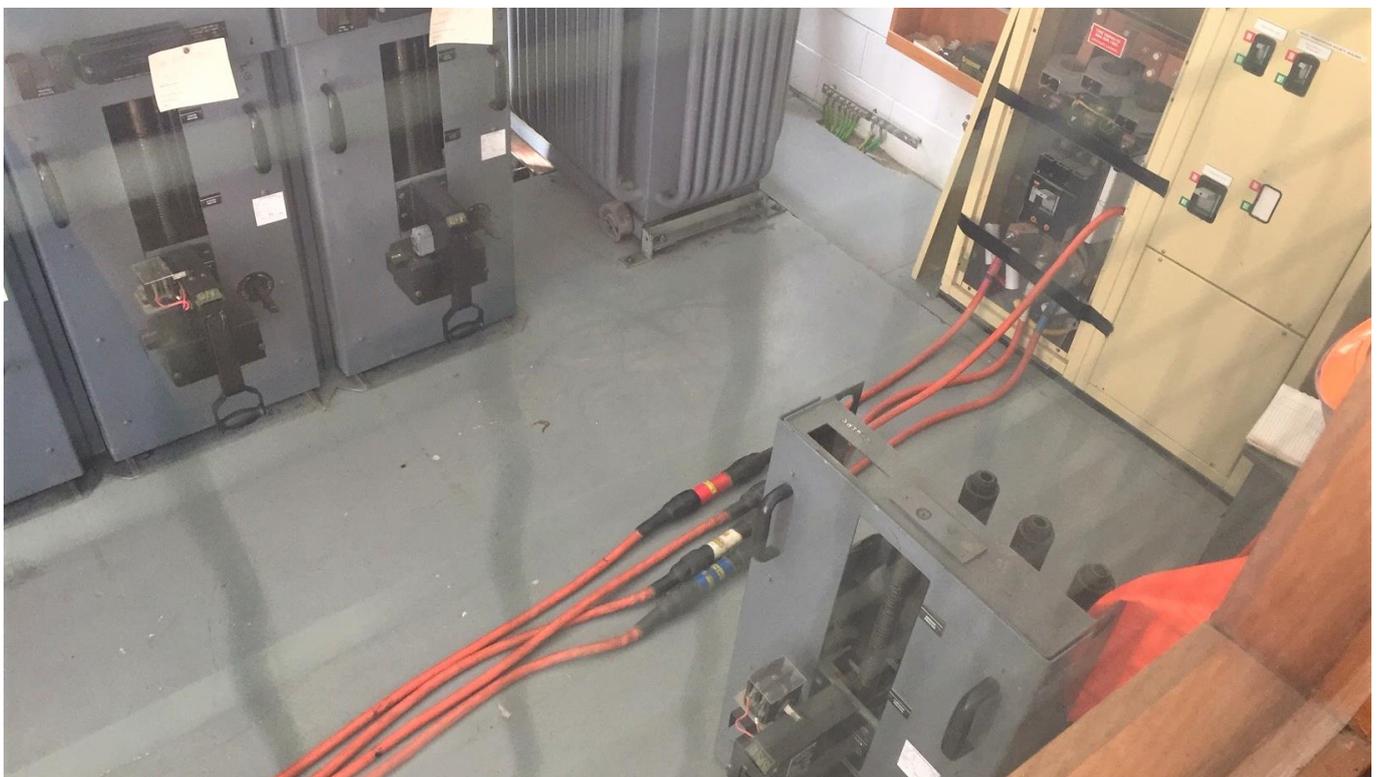


**Progress to date** – The Dini Collection has been moved into new storage; building ownership and land lease sorted including power, insurance etc.; the carpet has been lifted to check floor condition; East end being used for storage and as workshop area for bus motor assembly, some temporary archive, etc. storage (the old Ferry Rd unit has now been closed); maintenance of outside areas; flagpoles removed.

#### Next possible steps

1. Make the building watertight – it is currently suffering from deferred maintenance
2. Develop ideas for short, medium and longer term use- e.g.:
  - Display hall and annexes
  - Theatre/ meeting room
  - Library and Archive storage and work space
  - Storage of heritage items not on display
  - General parts, etc. storage
  - Workshop
3. Establish subcommittee and/or steering group to lead the project
4. Develop Funding plan
5. First stage alterations
6. Exhibits inventory
7. Prepare first exhibits for display

## From our Members' Cameras



**ABOVE:** Two views of the temporary generator set up by Orion and Connetics to get the Night Market on 3 October up and running. At top, the truck carrying the 11kV generator stands outside the combined THS/CRS/Park substation; above, the wandering leads linking the generator into the Ferrymead system. While it wasn't enough to get the Railway Society's 1950s-era EMU set running, it reactivated the mains power to the Ferrymead site including the traffic lights (for the trams) and signals (for Vulcan railcars RM 51 and RM 56).

Connetics weren't the only ones doing electrical work that day; down behind the Trolleybus Shed, the team were busy installing a new sweep to carry the relocated overhead with the help of the Bedford tower wagon. It is hoped that with the completion of this work it may be possible to energize the overhead and test the trolleybus circuit with one of our operational buses – mostly likely Christchurch 210 or Wellington 103. Photos of the trolley bus area work will appear in next month's issue.

Both photos: Dave Hinman.



**ABOVE:** Two views of Restaurant Tram 411 during repainting and fit-out in the paint booth in Tram Barn 3. At left, the body has received its base black coat; at right, Alex Hunter works in one of the driving cabs doing finishing touches. Both photos: Dave Hinman.

**BELOW LEFT:** End of the road. This was the aftermath of the Lake Ohau fires: the remains of what once was 'Standard' trailer 201 (foreground) and another private bach (to the rear). **BELOW RIGHT:** More than 60 years of post-tramway service. Last trailer 201 purchased by the Barker family of Geraldine and moved to Lake Ohau to be turned into a comfortable and much loved holiday bach. Three photos: Michael Barker; Barker family collection.



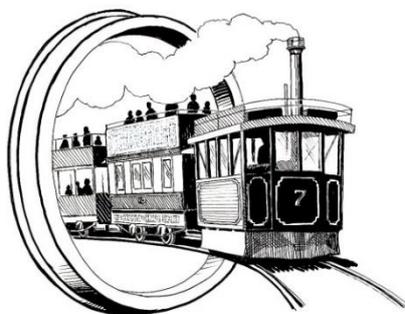


**ABOVE:** Flashback to October 2013, and the Rail 150 weekend at Ferrymead over Labour Weekend. As part of its contribution to the festivities, the Society fielded its full fleet of working trams on site on the Sunday afternoon: five Park stalwarts (Christchurch 1 and 26, Kitson 7 and two trailers, Dunedin 22 and Brisbane 236) plus two returnees from the earthquake-damaged Christchurch Tramway (Christchurch 178 and Dunedin 11) plus recently-completed Invercargill Birney 15. Photo: Alastair Cross

**FRONT COVER:** Heading home empty. Brisbane 236 pauses on Truscotts Bridge for another impromptu photo stop, 11/07/20. Photo: Alastair Cross

**LABOUR WEEKEND EXTRAVAGANZA UPDATE - (from p.2 Ed. Note)**

The Ferrymead Heritage Park Extravaganza has now been confirmed as one day only - Sunday 25 October. We will aim to have a three-tram service and have an "open day" with buildings and displays open to view. Come and assist if you can and enjoy a great day at Ferrymead with a BBQ (BYO) and social get-together at the end of the day. Contact Jonathan Day for details, Email [jonathan@dayj.co.nz](mailto:jonathan@dayj.co.nz) home 03 926 0092 cell. 027 8400 340



**Ferrymead Tram Tracts is the newsletter of the Tramway Historical Society Inc.**  
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