

TRAM LINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM INC.

No. 2021/2

MARCH - APRIL 2021

In this Issue:

The Backyard Water Leak

'This time', it's our Trams in Fiction

Historic Corner – Trams' Passenger Loadings

.....and much more.





ABOVE: Two fine photographs of Fiducia 260 during its short (11 years, 5 months) service life in Wellington. Tram 260 is now the 'pride of the fleet' at Queen Elizabeth Park, Paekakariki.

The top photo by Graham Stewart shows 260 decorated for the Festival of Wellington in March 1959. As well as being fitted with decorations and coloured electric lights the single row of seats inside was removed to add to the tram's passenger capacity during the popular festival time.

The lower photo by Dave Turner shows 260 in Roy Street, Newtown, commencing its turn into the Zoo terminus loop, during the final months prior to the closure of Wellington trams on 2nd May 1964. Shell Oil Ltd achieved a considerable advertising coup by having three trams (244, 257 & 260) repainted and emblazoned with Shell Oil advertisements over the last three months of street tramway operation in Wellington – fortuitously Shell colours were almost the same as Wellington's tram livery. The back (south) end of Newtown tram sheds is in the background. *See article about these two photos commencing page 7.*

COVER: 27th January 2021; early days in a significant but unwanted project to find the source of an elusive water leak in the Museum's backyard. Colin Dash is on the digger, then clockwise John Tier, Barry Ollerenshaw, Grant Johnson, Steve Porter and Trevor Weaver. See article page 11. *Photo: Mike Flinn*

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WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSUM INCORPORATED – N.Z. Registered Charity No.CC38985

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Keith McGavin
Allan Neilson
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Ray Shand*

MUSEUM PEOPLE

NEW MEMBER

A very warm welcome is extended to new Society member:

Stefany Knight, of Paraparaumu

(Stefany is member Terry Knight's wife.)

Welcome to the Wellington Tramway Museum Stefany, and thank you for your support. We trust that you will gain good satisfaction from your membership.

GET WELL

Get well wishes are extended to Keith McGavin and Robert Hatten who have both had stays in Hospital. It is good to hear that they are now both recuperating at home. John Tier is looking after his mum who also had a spell in Hospital.

From the MUSEUM'S BOARD

Henry Brittain, Secretary

The Board had its standard quarterly meeting in January and apart from normal business Board Members addressed the following subjects:

- Agreed to allocate an amount of \$6,000 for the purchase of sleepers and any associated track fittings that may be needed.
- Confirmed expenditure towards the restoration of 207- see separate article.
- Noted that 151 reaches 100 years of service on 21 Dec 2023 and agreed that we arrange a suitable acknowledgement of this event at the time.
- Noted that the Museum finances continued to be in a very good state taking into account the effects of COVID.
- That a "Priority list" be drawn up in an order of priority for planning purposes.
- Tram 86: noted that Alan Smith with the assistance of other members had commenced with research on this tram with the object of preparing a Conservation Plan.

- Replacement Palace, agreed that we progress the construction of this building.

OTHER SOCIETIES' NEWSLETTERS

The Museum regularly receives newsletters from Kindred organisations, either hard copy or electronic.

Attached with emailed copies of this issue of "Tramlines" is the March issue of the Wanganui Tramways Trust newsletter. For those wishing to peruse a wider range of rail activities in New Zealand, they can access the FRONZ (Federation of Rail Organisations of NZ) newsletters at:

www.fronz.org.nz/journals

FRONZ Conference

The annual conference of the Federation of Rail Organisations of NZ will be held at the Emerald Hotel, Gisborne, this year from the 4th to 6th June (Queens Birthday weekend). It will include a rail excursion on the Gisborne City Vintage Rail to Murawai and return, and a visit to the East Coast Museum of Technology. For more details please go to www.fronz.org.nz/conferences.

Wellington Trams 207 and 244 Big move coming up!

As reported previously Fiducia 244, which has been part of MOTAT's stored fleet in Auckland since 1964, is to be moved to Queen Elizabeth Park and become part of WTM's fleet.

It has made sense to combine 244's move to Wellington with Double-Saloon 207's impending move to Auckland. 207 is heading for bodywork repairs and roof replacement by Clinton Pearce's company, Tramworks Limited, based in Otahuhu.

Tram 244, unlike WTM's two out-of-service Fiducia trams 235 and 238, has been stored under cover for almost all of the 57 years since it left Wellington so apart from one end, which has been dismantled, the body is in sound condition.

Wellington Trams 207 and 244, cont.

As well as the trams the opportunity is being taken for three GE247 motors ex Melbourne (similar to those installed in Tram 17), to be transported to Wellington. These were imported by WTM into Auckland some years ago in conjunction with motors, trucks and other equipment for MOTAT, and are held at MOTAT.

Machinery Movers, based in Auckland, will carry out the moving project with suitable dates being worked out but possibly as early as the end of March. Tram 244, plus the motors, will be brought down from MOTAT. The tram will be unloaded by local firm Collins Lifting and moved into the rear of Road 3 of the WTM tram barn. The motors will also be unloaded. Then tram 207 will be loaded for transport to Tramworks Ltd. at Otahuhu. It will be unloaded and moved into the Tramworks' workshop using two large forklifts.

THE TRAM 207 PROJECT

At present the contracted arrangement with Tramworks Ltd. covers repairs to the main timber body structure (pillars etc.), new roof bows, roof timbers and canvas and a few other specific but smaller items. This is estimated to cost \$150,000, which is money we have on hand (including a Lottery grant and a Lion Foundation grant – plus previous generous donations from members).

If affordable the opportunity is there for the contract to be extended; for example to include repair – and replacement where

needed – of the timber floor and installation of interior bulkheads. Contract extensions like this would accelerate the whole restoration project considerably.

The currently planned contract period in Auckland is only three months so funds need to be found quickly if the contract is to be extended.

If you would like to donate towards extending the tram 207 contract please either pay in at the Tramway Museum kiosk – ensuring that the shop operator records the receipt as a Donation for 207 - or credit the Wellington Tramway Museum's ANZ Bank account No.

06 0501 0075414 00

and reference the funds as "Donation" and "Tram 207".

To ensure a receipt for tax purposes, posted to you, please also email WTM's Treasurer, Michael Boyton, at

treasurer@wellingtontrams.org.nz

with the details of the banking and your name and address.

With 31st March, the end of the tax year, coming up today is a good day to make that donation - as your tax refund can be received promptly.



Kapiti Aeromodellers' Annual Rally

Queen Elizabeth Park
MacKay's Crossing
Paekakariki

PRIZES, BBQ.
FREE ENTRY SPECTATORS

Check our website:
www.Kapitiaeromodellersclub.org.nz

Or ring: Steve Hutchison: 021644595
Paul Buckrell: 021422633

Landing fees
\$10.00

MFNZ wings badge required

**Sat 13th & Sun 14th
March 2021**

Conference Notice– Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia (COTMA)

Proposed COTMA Conference -
September 2021

Programme as of Feb. 2021 -for
updates see
www.cotma.org.au/conference.html or
contact Henry Brittain, WTM Secretary

*All subject to there being no COVID-19
restrictions*

Hosted by:



Accommodation

At least three options available and near the Railway Station. Delegates will book their own accommodation based on advice to be provided in the next update.

Transport to Ballarat

Train services to Ballarat are now every 40 mins on weekdays and hourly Saturday and Sunday. There is also a direct airport bus.

Wednesday 15th September

- Delegates arrive
- Social evening at Seymour's on Lydiard - Meet & greet

Thursday 16th

- COTMA - Conference Opening and formal sessions
- Lunch at Wallace hotel and then visit the Museum's Bungaree offsite store
- Social night/ evening meal at VRI Hall

Friday 17th

- Morning Speaker, Conference CGM with spare parts discussion - VRI Hall
- Lunch at VRI Hall
- After lunch visit to Museum's tram depot

- Conference Dinner at Quest Receptions, Lydiard St

Saturday 18th

- Visit Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association at Haddon
- Lunch at Haddon
- Self-guided visit CBD Ballarat
- BTM 50th anniversary Dinner at the Mercure

Sunday 19th

- BTM day of celebrations - Vintage Transport Day

Monday 20th

- Social Day - Train trip Ballarat to Beaufort
- Visit Lake Goldsmith machinery display Beaufort railway goods shed
- Bus to Waterloo, terminus of 5'3" gauge tramway branch line, closed 1912 formerly used to carry mining rubble for ballast on main line railways
- Lunch at Maryborough Highland Society (Bowls Club)
- View magnificent Maryborough Railway Station. Train to Ballarat

Partners Programme

Thursday 16th

- Walking tour of city area. Will include Art Gallery and Mechanics Institute. Lunch included.

Friday 17th

- Bus tour to Creswick Woollen Mill, Lambley Plant Nursery (between Creswick and Clunes)
- Sandwich lunch at Clunes
- Visit historic Talbot, with afternoon tea locally.

It is anticipated that some pre-conference activities in Melbourne will be arranged by Melbourne based people, and it is expected that some delegates may wish to follow up the conference with visits to new tram systems up the east coast of Australia.

Compare the “red” colours of the two tram 260 photographs on page 2. Note how the red of the “Shell” painted tram in the lower photo is lighter and brighter than that of the red used on the Festival of Wellington tram in 1959. Some of the difference may be due to differences in photographic emulsion and reproduction but I can offer another reason. When I visited Newtown tram barns one day in February 1964 the three trams to be prepared for Shell Oil Ltd., Nos. 244, 257 and 260, had been moved over to tracks on the west side of the sheds, trestles erected, and they were being hand painted by staff from Kilbirnie Workshops. And there for all to see were several open and partially used one gallon paint cans of Dulux Hi-Gloss enamel, the colour: Carnation Red. This was a sensation amongst the small group of tram enthusiasts at the time. No trams had been repainted for several years and for a short while it was a mystery what was going on. Why repaint trams within weeks of the final closure?

I particularly noted the colour thinking that knowledge would be useful for Museum purposes in time to come – and indeed it was. For many years our Museum trams, when it came to repainting, were always repainted in Dulux Carnation Red.

It was only in recent years that we have discovered that the traditional Wellington Tramways Red was “Dulux Hi-Gloss Enamel Bandarillo Red” - a slightly darker red. In recent years we were able to confirm this through Union Hardware Ltd. at Newtown who through all the years had retained and updated the formulae for each of these “reds” and were able to supply samples and spraying enamel for each. They still had Bandarillo Red referenced as the “tram colour”. Carnation Red was used by N Z Railways for railway carriages. Carnation Red may also have been used by WCCT for buses in more recent years (e.g. the AEC Reliances that replaced the trams – though I am not sure about that).



Above: A blurry photograph I took of the three “Shell” trams being prepared in Newtown tram sheds in February 1964 for Shell advertising – Nos. 244, 257 and 260. Unfortunately I used “Agfacolor” slide film at the time and the colour rendition, especially for “reds” was woefully inaccurate. The actual colour was a much lighter and brighter red, as per Dave Turner’s Kodachrome (I assume) photo at the bottom of page two. By this stage the painting trestles had been removed.

Photo: Keith McGavin

The three Shell trams may have been the only examples of Wellington trams ever being painted in Carnation Red. So why was Carnation Red used in this instance? Probably that question will remain unanswered but in February 1964, when they were painted, it had been several years since the Council had repainted

The page 2 photographs of Tram 260 – further comment, cont.

any trams other than minor touch ups - and the historic specifications may have been overlooked. Another possibility is that Shell Oil, who was paying, specified Carnation Red as being closer to its own advertising colour.

Mr Tony Froude, who in 1964 was Sales Manager for Shell Oil NZ Ltd. in Wellington, was the mastermind behind the “Shell” trams and they created quite a lot of public interest over the last three months of operation – it was a long time since the public had seen a clean tram!

Tony (A.S.) Froude still lives in the Kāpiti area. Shell Oil, through Tony, was a vital financial supporter of the fledgling Tramway Museum and of MOTAT’s Wellington trams in the Museums’ early days. “Shell” trams 244 and 257 went to MOTAT - I understand the costs were covered by Shell, while 260 remained in Wellington with Shell supplying paint etc. and general advertising funds, including paying for the setting up of ex Wellington City Transport Leyland bus as the Museum’s mobile generating unit in 1964. Both bus 247 and Fiducia 260 provided good advertising for Shell in the early years of the Museum.

Present Practice at Wellington Tramway Museum:



Above: Fiducia 239 repainted in a Resene matching to Bandarillo Red, April 2019.

Photo: Keith McGavin

As Union Hardware has now closed we have had Resene colour match the Bandarillo Red supplied by Union Hardware about 2014. This was most recently used on Fiducia 239 repainting of which was completed in April 2019.

Compare the red in the photo of 239 (below, left) with that in Graham Stewart’s photo of Festival of Wellington tram 260 in 1959, on page 2. We think it is pretty close!

“Shell” tram 260 in Roy Street, Newtown (the lower photo on page 2):

One of WTM’s early members, Dick Barker, recently passed away in Melbourne, Australia, and has kindly left the Museum a generous bequest. Dave Turner, a well known ex Wellingtonian and photographer now living in Christchurch who took this photo describes it as follows:

“Dick Barker’s family Prefect on the right. Our family dark green Humber is parked on the left. Dick chasing the tram by bike, just behind the Prefect.”

“Now even the brand “Shell” has gone! But 260 is preserved at the Wellington Tramway Museum in the Queen Elizabeth Park near Paekakariki”.

“The tram is turning into the balloon loop (partly around an island of trees) that used to be at the entrance to Newtown Park Zoo. The motorman has already changed the destination blind back to Thorndon. The brick complex at the end of the road was the far end (as in away from the entrance to) of the Newtown Tram Barn.”

Postscript: I have photographs of the late Dick Barker in 1963 / 1964 with a small group of us inspecting an old railway shed at Paremata to see whether it could be suitable for at least storing trams and also, in 1965, working on the first stretch of WTM track prior to the opening on 19th December 1965. Dick went teaching and left Wellington shortly thereafter and we lost touch but later in life he went to Australia and for a time drove trams in Melbourne.

Obituary - Richard Wiseman

UK obituary by his son Ian Wiseman, edited and with some added notes by Alan Smith

Richard Joseph Stewart Wiseman, one of the pioneers of tram preservation in the UK, died peacefully aged 95 on 19 December 2020 in Yorkshire.

Richard was born in Stoke on Trent and educated at Dartington Hall boarding school in Devon. He received his call-up papers in September 1943 and joined the Royal Navy. During the war, like many of his generation, he recalled some “narrow squeaks”, such as the occasion he momentarily failed an officer-selection course after leaving the drain plug out of a lifeboat; whilst many of his fellow course members who graduated subsequently lost their lives on ships escorting the Arctic convoys. On another occasion his interest in trams may have saved his life. He was enjoying a day touring the London system, during which he leapt off Feltham car 2109 to try and catch the unique prototype tram LCC 1, known as Bluebird, which was coming towards him. Having failed to board Bluebird, a little later he noted a V1 flying bomb overhead and soon an explosion not too far off. Imagine his shock on discovering the remains of 2109 at Kennington Gate the following day.

Richard studied at Nottingham University, graduating in Geography in 1951, having spent at least one vacation working as a tram conductor in Glasgow. During the 1940s and 50s Richard pursued his tramway interest with vigour, riding and photographing the remaining systems and building up a nationally important collection of images as well as a truly encyclopaedic knowledge. He was a strong cyclist and made many epic rides through the night to reach systems on their last legs and capture

historic photographs of fast disappearing routes and vehicles.

Richard was present at the inaugural meeting of the Tramway Museum Society (TMS) in 1955 and made a member of the Committee. The TMS had for some time been fruitlessly searching for a museum site and with the future of cars in their custody in doubt unless a site could be found, Richard established a TMS working party to co-ordinate the search. In November 1958, he joined a Tallylyn Railway Preservation Society (the first case of volunteers saving a near-closure operating railway, in this case a narrow-gauge line in Wales) track-lifting working party at Crich quarry and agreeing, in view of the urgency of the situation, that this was the best option they had. This led to the visit to the site in January 1959 by the TMS Committee and its subsequent leasing and purchase. (Comparable key NZ dates are 1954 - the saving of a steam and a horse car in Christchurch; 1956 - founding of the Old Time Transport Preservation League at Matakoho; and 1960 - the start of thinking about a tramway museum for Wellington.)

On 9 May 1959 Richard and his family were at the site to see the first car delivered there, Cardiff 131, and spent many subsequent weekends and holidays at Crich in its formative years actively contributing to its development. He was proud to be installed as President of the TMS in 1998 and continued to support the Museum (he was always uncomfortable with the name “Tramway Village”!). Much of his illustrious photographic collection is now housed in the Library at Crich.

During the 1960s Richard authored the first of his four books, the *British Tramways in*

Obituary, Richard Wiseman, cont.

Pictures series, featuring predominantly his own photos of the systems in Sheffield, Glasgow, Birmingham and Leeds. He was also the editor of the TMS magazine, *Trams*, throughout its existence from 1961 to 1969.

Richard and Anne were compulsive travellers and as Anne was a primary school teacher, they were able to make good use of holidays, heading off as soon as duties allowed on family camping trips to places near and far. These included such epic journeys, given the vehicles and roads of the time, as driving to Geneva in a Morris Minor and to Vienna in an Austin A30 in the early '60s, and later in the decade to communist Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, Scandinavia and Franco's Spain. There was inevitably a rail aspect to many of the locations visited.



Above: Richard Wiseman at the controls of an ex-Lisbon tram in Sóller, Mallorca. For details of this system see www.trendesoller.com and select English as the language. Photo supplied.

Retirement from teaching in 1978 allowed Richard the time to work on articles for *Tramway Review*, the historical journal of the LRTA, and he was its editor from 1982 to 2004. He also enjoyed the opportunity to author further books, *Classic Tramcars*, *Sheffield Trams in Colour since 1950* and *Edinburgh Trams - The Later Years* (four paperback volumes), primarily featuring images from his own superb portfolio. In addition Richard edited, singly or in conjunction with John Gillham, seven of the LRTA's *Regional Handbooks* published between 1994 and 2007. He was proud to enjoy the honour of being President of the TMS for the customary one year period.

Into his 70s and early 80s Richard continued to travel in Europe with Anne, enjoying the resurgence of the tram as a mode of transport and visiting many of the new generation of networks, photographing their construction and introductory services. He also visited tramway systems during two more trips outside Europe at the age of 70 plus, including Philadelphia, San Francisco, San Diego, Asuncion and Melbourne, as well as the tramway museums in Sydney and MoTaT in Auckland.

Crich and the TMS were very much seen as the "gold standard" in the early days of WTM. This possibly reflected NZ's general Anglophile attitudes of those times, but Crich remains the recognised "best practice" for our sector worldwide. We build on the work of the late Richard Wiseman and his colleagues, who in turn inspired our own pioneers like Graham Stewart, John Shanks, and Bill Horne amongst all the others with whom we share this heritage interest.

In this issue, in place of the familiar “From the President’s Workbench” Steve Porter has contributed the following article describing the recent water leak in the Museum’s “backyard” and the efforts to fix it.

THE BACKYARD WATER LEAK **by Steve Porter**

Well here we go again. It does not seem like two months since I paused to put “pen to paper” ie fingers to the keyboard.

Sadly for me and quite a few of the Maintenance and Engineering staff we have had to concentrate on the repair of a water leak.

With the advantage of hindsight, we can now say that the water leak which evidenced itself in early January as a growing puddle under the two buses in front of the Rear Storage Building had probably been leaking for some time but was getting more severe.

The water appearing at the surface was most likely from the supply pipe between the toby at the fence and the Palace with a tee off to the Workshop/Barn and other southern usage points being the most likely suspect. The location, line and depth of the suspect tee/pipe were unknown, and it was

decided to trace the pipe from the toby to the Palace by digging it up. We started at the toby and after reaching the grassed area found the pipe to be now at least 1200 mm deep and continuing to get deeper and to be taking a path under the buses. (See cover photo taken on 27th January!) Randomly our connection to the supply main failed and we had to ask the Regional Council (GWRC) to effect a repair of the supply to the toby. The plumbers who attended for GWRC asked if we, WTM, could assist by lifting out the valve sump as it was above the broken fitting. Acting on



Above: Part of the site on 1st February. Leaking water has filled the supply pipe trench from the toby at the western fence of our “backyard”.

Photo: Steve Porter

The Backyard Water Leak, cont.

their instructions we did so and another connection threaded through the sump failed. GWRC, WTM and the plumbers did not know the second connection was there!

Now there were two 20mm diameter holes in the supply main, no supply to WTM and a loss of supply to some of the horse troughs next door, AND the original leak was still to be located, identified, and fixed. It was agreed that while the supply pipes and tobys were being attended to that the height of these should be raised so that they were not under water most of the year.

While the drama at the toby (supply) end was being attended to it was decided to trace the supply pipe from the Palace end.

This initially went well with the pipe proceeding south at a reasonable depth. As the trench came roughly opposite a line at right angles past the front of trolleybus 91 the pipe turned 90 degrees towards the toby. This continued for several metres but the pipe got deeper and deeper and then inexplicably turned slightly north and lined up to go under trolleybus 91 and definitely not on the line one would have expected. A meeting of the available minds ensued, and it was agreed that we would replace the supply pipe and lay the new one straight and at sensible depths. (500 to 600mm). So as to get the road from the car park to the Storage Compound open again a large bore galvanised pipe, to carry the water supply pipe, was laid in the trench and the trench backfilled over it. Efforts to locate other services before we damaged them with the digger were mostly successful, but the unmarked seven pair communication cable and an associated three wire cable were broken. AND the original leak was still to be located, identified, and fixed.



Above: The trench from the “Palace” in the foreground with the covered over portion to provide access to the rear compound, as described in the article. 6th February 2021. Photo: Mike Flinn



Above: At the other end formwork was prepared to allow the fire hydrant and two toby’s to be raised. 6th February 2021. Photo: Mike Flinn

The Backyard Water Leak, cont.

A temporary cable was laid over the ground to provide EFTPOS service. A six pair temporary repair to provide phone and security service was completed a few days later.

Some years ago, water started coming to the surface near where the front of trolleybus 91 is and we excavated the pipe, found a leaking gate valve stem and sealed it with concrete. We checked this repair and found that the pipe was dry but only a few days later this pipe started leaking again. No real pressure but a significant flow. A drain coil connection to a drain pipe we found near the valve sump from adjacent to this new water leak was installed to manage the leaking water. Later at GWRC request we dug up this earlier repair and a GWRC contracted plumber plugged the end of the pipe and we backfilled that trench.

The trench was completed to the toby and the new pipe installed. We now had water service to the Palace. Efforts then turned to locating the pipes from any tees off the existing but leaking pipe.

The pipe to the Workshop, Tram Barn and beyond was identified as it passed the centre of yard surface drain and was at a sensible height. As it proceeded north from there it continued to dive. It was cut as it crossed the new pipe and brought up to a tee on the new pipe. It had been decided to reuse the toby sump as a valve sump at the tee so that two valves, one for each downstream leg, could be installed (and accessible).

The location of any other tees could not be found and as it transpired there are probably none as everything seems to be working correctly.

As I write this the rear yard which had been dug up and looked like a bomb site is virtually back together with only the permanent cable repair and associated earthworks to complete.



Above: Two photos showing nearly completed work as at 3rd March. Top, two toby's and the fire hydrant raised to proper levels. Lower: In the foreground - access to the tee for the pipe that heads south to the barn and workshop.

Photos: Mike Flinn

The Backyard Water Leak, cont.

It was only a leak but just about everything in the back yard had to be dug up or moved and we still do not know where the leak was, or what we needed to do to fix it.

For many of us that is where January and February went. Despite that tram operations and for most, work on 17 continued. What we learned, and it should not have been too much of a surprise, is that our infrastructure is getting old.

AROUND THE SITE AND DOWN THE LINE

Mike Flinn

Much of member's time in the last few weeks has been spent on resolving water leaks in the Depot (as covered to Steve Porter's article above).

Tram 17

Installation of traction wiring work has continued together with further work on installing the Ackley Brake Fittings at each end of the tram. In addition, both Route Number Boxes have now been fitted onto the roof. Currently each is fixed and displays Route No 4 (Vivian Street).



Above: Trevor Weaver connecting Tram 17's "B" end controller, 20th January 2021.

Photo: Keith McGavin

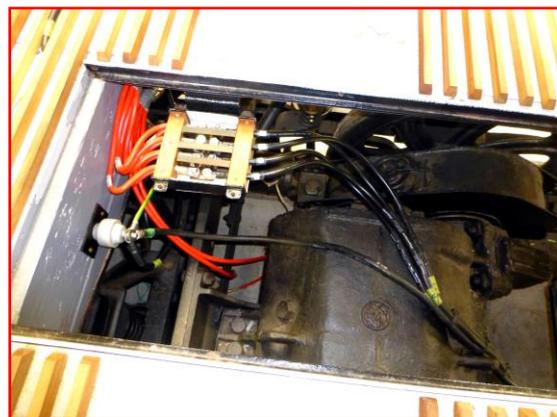
Track and Depot area

New tie bars have been painted and are ready for fitting onto the track. Several sections of the track have been greased regularly due to the higher number of trips run during the holiday season.



Above: Tram 17's "A" end controller with its cover removed. Note also the newly applied "17A" inside cab label (17B at the other end) – designating the tram No. and which end.

Photo: Keith McGavin



Above: Looking down through the removable floorboards in Tram 17 discloses one of the two motor terminal boxes. This is the connection point between the black flexible leads from the motor and the fixed (red) wiring in the body of the tram.

Photo: Keith McGavin

Around the Site and Down the Line – Track and Depot area, cont.

Track weed spraying by a contractor was delayed by poor weather before Christmas but was finished by early February. Grass on the track edges was cut by the trimmer up to the airfield crossing with the rest of the track edges left to be trimmed after the spray takes effect. The point stacks near the loop required grass trimming and cutting. Trimming of some bushes near the track was needed between the loop and top of the hill. Grass cutting was done up to Pole 10 and within the Depot and Compound as needed.

Tram 207

The tram has been prepared for the move to Auckland, probably at the end of March, with some tidying of the roof vents done before they go north in the tram. *See Pp 4-5*

Overhead

An inspection of the overhead line has been carried out except for the lines and fittings in the depot area. Parts have been sorted to go to Ferrymead and MOTAT.

Track fittings

As mentioned in the last “Tramlines” time has been spent on better storing the track screw spikes in the area behind the sub-station. Plastic storage cubes have each been loaded with 100 spikes and placed three high with each group covered by an inverted drum to give weather protection. Although six drums were anticipated to be needed at the start in fact twelve drums have been required. See the photo in the Tramlines for November – December 2020 for a photo of the volume of spikes now stored for future track



Above: Screw spikes have been sorted into different lengths (short and long) and stored in the rear compound in plastic storage cubes holding 100 each, each three of which are covered by an inverted drum. Those carrying out this job don't wish to see another screw spike for quite a while!

Photo: Mike Flinn, 13th February 2021.

Around the Site and Down the Line – Track Fittings, cont.

upgrades. In addition, a further drum of “A” plates (which are the favoured way of fixing rails to sleepers with screw spikes)



Above: Seven fish-bins, each filled with “A” plates, now in storage in the store behind the transformer.

Photo Mike Flinn, 3rd March 2021

was located and these plates were added to the plates already stored inside during last year to double our stocks for upgrades. Other fixings, including small coil springs and other clips, have been collected together so a decision as to future needs and options for sale or disposal can be made.

Miscellaneous

Ongoing activities such as tram maintenance checks and tram cleaning have continued.

With higher visitor numbers during summer restocking of shop stocks has been needed more frequently including replenishing ice cream stocks.

Borer bombs were let off in Container Numbers 1 and 2 as well as trams 235 and 238.

The Case Loader has been sold to Rod Clifton at Te Horo and was collected by him on 27th January. See photo below.

There was a break-in at the Fiducia Centre in late February. Some equipment and stocks were taken but fortunately only one window needed replacing.



Above: The Case loader being winched onto Rod Clifton’s truck – not without difficulty –and about to depart the Museum, 27th January 2021.

Photo: Mike Flinn

Well, the late summer weather has been good, and this has resulted in good takings most weekends; in fact, VERY GOOD takings on some days.

As we head into autumn things may quieten down, but here is hoping that the weather stays good for the Easter Holidays at the beginning of April, and we have good numbers of visitors.

Weekday Tram Charters

We have had two weekday charters since our daily operations ceased in January.

The first was from SKIDS, an organisation that offers Holiday programmes for students.

The large group travelled to and from the beach, where they took part in several activities.

complimentary comments about what we had to offer groups like theirs.

Twilight Trams

Twilight Tram running on Waitangi Day (6 February) was not as well attended as the one held in December, but those members of the public who came enjoyed themselves.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to assist with the event.

Xterra Multisport Event.

Saturday 13 February saw the second running of Xterra, a multi-sport event featuring Triathlons, Biathlons, Trail Running and Mountain Biking.

Unlike the 2020 event, most of the activities were centred around the Ramaroa Centre. The start of the Triathlon, however, was the



Left:

The “SKIDS” special charter at the Beach on 26th January 2021.

Photo: Rob Webb

On 10 February we hosted around 30 visitors from Levin. They were on their way to Wellington for the day and called in for a tram ride and look around the Museum. Like a lot of groups in the “older age bracket”, the visit brought back a lot of memories from the past. There were many

swim leg at the beach and the Tramway ran a 15-minute service to and from the beach between 7am and 10am, with special “Early Bird” fares. A good number of spectators made use of the service to go and see the start of the event.

Marketing & Operations Department, cont.

Queen Elizabeth Park Festival

Unfortunately, because of the change in Covid Alert Levels, the Regional Council cancelled the event.

The decision was made to operate the Tramway at the new 'level 2' and income on both Saturday and Sunday was particularly good.

On the Sunday, things were busy in the morning but became quieter in the early afternoon. Just as the crew and I were debating about the possibility of closing early, we had a big influx of passengers. The final trip of the day back from the beach at 4.15 was well filled.

This demonstrates that some visitors do call in late in the day, and we must be prepared to cater for them.

Tram Driver Training

Tram Driver Training has recommenced but Covid and other commitments have restricted time spent training

If you are interested in undertaking Tram Driver Training, please get in touch with me by email at rjenkins@xtra.co.nz. I already have a few people who have shown an interest in becoming a Tram Driver, and I hope that over the next few months we can expand the programme.

Remember to keep up to date with the Tramway on either our webpage www.wellingtontrams.org.nz Or the



Tramway Facebook page

TRAM STATISTICS

We now have tram passenger statistics for the whole of the Christmas / New Year period through to 31st January as well of course the earlier period from 1st July – the start of our financial year – through to Christmas.

Christmas-January period:

The Museum was open and trams operated daily throughout the period from 26th December 2020 until and including Wellington Anniversary Day January 25th 2021. Thereafter there was the "SKIDS" special charter on January 26th and then the final weekend operations on 30th and 31st January. So trams operated on 34 days of the 37 days over this period.

Due to an error on my part I have omitted the figures for 30th and 31st January – I will correct this at the first opportunity. However the figures we have at present, which exclude those two days, show a modest but very pleasing 4% increase over last year. Pleasing especially because last year's figures included significant numbers from Grand Pacific Tour (GPT) visits – which

Keith McGavin

of course have been cancelled this year due to Covid-19.

Total passenger journeys over the period were 3,508 (figure still to be adjusted for the final weekend) compared with 3,382 last year.

Year to Date Situation:

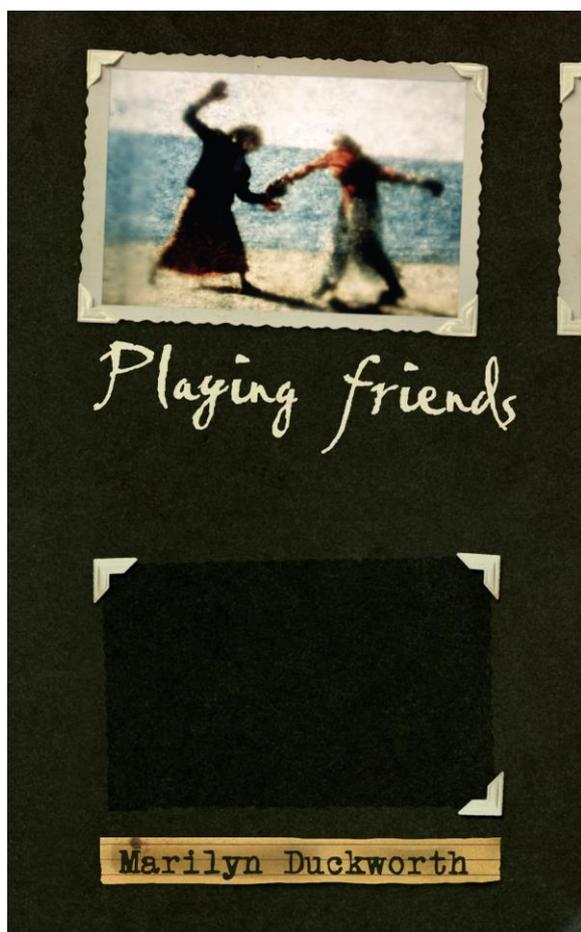
Year to date to the end of January (once again excluding the last two days) the position is also encouraging. Overall 6,942 passenger journeys have been recorded from 1st July 2020 to 31st January 2021. This compares with 7,596 for the same period last year, a reduction this year to date of 654 (9%). However last year's figure includes all the GPT passengers. Weekday special charters (mostly GPT) are down this year by 1,039 – more than accounting for the reduction.

Tram Usage:

Year 1st July 2020 to 31st January 2021 tram km statistics, with last years in parenthesis, are as follows: Tram 151 27(28), 159 1,263(1,111), 239 751(534) and 260 530(839).

Tramlines 2021/1 (Jan-Feb 2021) had an evocative description, in the novel *Women in the Fields, One and Two* by Thomasin Sleigh, of trams in the crowded evening streets of 1950's Wellington.

Forward just a few decades, and our WTM trams at Queen Elizabeth Park too have acquired a familiarity which has found them in the realm of creative writing. That novel is *Playing Friends*, by Marilyn Duckworth - published as a book by Vintage (Random House) in 2007 and three years later as an e-book.



Marilyn Duckworth OBE, born 1935, is part of New Zealand's literary pantheon, with a Katherine Mansfield Fellowship in Menton in 1980, the Sargeson Literary

Fellowship in 1995, and a Prime Minister's Award for Literary Achievement in 2016 under her belt. The lead character in *Playing Friends* is Clarice - "59 and widowed, with not much money coming in and not many friends, Clarice decides to buy a flat [near the Basin Reserve] with Una, an acquaintance from her school days. Una comes complete with 16-year old Sheree, who is very loud, very pregnant." The story is firmly set in the Wellington of around the turn of this century. Beryl, another distant friend, lives close to Newtown Zoo.

Read on from p.75:.....

At the tram museum we had just missed the Fiducia ride. We walked in the vast, dusty shed among the exhibits: trams in varying states of repair, two-deckers and palace trams, red with dashers [sic] in yellow and gold, three angled windows in the front and back. I heard myself and Una blurting small nostalgic utterances, to please Beryl as much as anything, although I did now vividly remember mornings crossing the city in a tram just like that one, as far as Bowen Street, where we'd had to transfer to a bus, sharing around my homework answers with the gigglers who occupied the back seats. It was for Beryl I'd suggested this outing up the coast. In Riddiford Street last week, contemplating a row of red buses, she had remembered the trams out loud - mournfully, I thought in retrospect - and mentioned that she'd known a conductor in those old days. "Romantically?" I'd asked, inviting her to smile. "Yes, I suppose so. That's about all." Sheree now walked ahead of us, not quite as if she had bus to catch, but

This Time, It's our Trams in Fiction, cont.

faster than we were strolling; obviously she didn't see the point of lingering as Beryl was doing. Staring.

Beryl is on one of these trams while the driver in his big black coat operates the gears and makes the tram rattle along its tracks, seeming about to leave them at corners but never quite doing so. Clang, and around they go. And the conductor is selling the tickets, clipping Beryl's. The sliding door into the front compartment bangs and bangs and there is a picture on it of the ivy-covered university with sappy lines printed underneath.

"Some poem or other" Beryl muttered. "Where?"

"On the glass door. Not here. It might be on one of the others."

Sheree had come back, removing the plug from her ear and letting it dangle on her spandex collar. "Come on. We going to be here all day? What about that ice cream place?"

"I met my husband on a tram", Beryl told me.

"How was that? Oh, you mean...?"

"He was going to change my life."

"I bet he did that."

Beryl put her head down on her sleeve and began to shake....."

Alan Smith comments:

Now let's get real, it's just fiction; but there are many interesting points for WTM members. Do other visitors see our Barn display as a "vast, dusty shed"? Double-Deckers? - well, "everybody" in Wellington has heard of them and we do display their photos.

The "Palace trams" intrigued me - as a child visiting my Grandmother in Onepu Road, just down from the Kilbirnie Tram Barns, I vaguely recall her and other adults talking about there being just two kinds of trams - "Fiducias" - and "Palaces" for all the rest. "Everybody" in Wellington knew what a Fiducia was and chose one if there was a choice at the tram-stop - Nana certainly called anything else a "rattletrap" which was even more dismissive than "Palace" which a least had a nice degree of irony.

Schoolgirls from Newtown around 1960 would indeed have taken the tram to Bowen St to change for the bus up to Marsden Collegiate in Karori. The "sappy lines" of the Victoria University poem by Hubert Church can still be read on the replica of that sliding door window at the B end of 159 - *Tramway Topics* No.225 (Spring 2005) had a whole article about it.

The main interesting point for us is, I believe, to not underestimate the power of our trams to conjure up nostalgic memories and stories - and to always bear that in mind when talking to visitors or when planning our displays. In 2021, only people in their 60s and over can recall trams in Wellington streets; it's always gives me a bit of a jolt when grandparents getting off the tram after a happy ride say that they haven't been up here for ages, not since they were a kid.....

There's more to our trams than interesting machinery!

Historic Corner – Trams' Passenger Loadings,
cont.

Although trams were always crowded at peak hours, one of the best known routes for heavy loads were those cars returning from Athletic Park after a big event. Large numbers of trams would assemble in Luxford street and even further away as far as Wakefield Park on extremely busy days. Trams would be dispatched from these locations and pick up their passengers at the main Rintoul street entrance of the park and then proceed to the Railway Station terminus.

Although the Tramway Traffic staff attempted to control loading numbers on

these occasions, this was mostly an almost impossible task and many trams departed from Athletic Park with passengers festooned around the side of the tram and packed inside.

Annual passenger numbers were always in the millions with the busiest year being 1944 when petrol rationing meant that trams were the main source of transport for Wellingtonians. To cope with this heavy demand, the authorities removed the three single seats in the middle saloon of double saloons and three single seats in the middle of Fiducia cars. This allowed the tram to carry more standing passengers during times of heavy demand.

ATHLETIC PARK TRAM PHOTOS - by Graeme Bennett



Above: Double-saloon and Fiducia type trams lined up alongside Wakefield Park on the main inward line to the city from Island Bay. They will move forward about a kilometre to Athletic Park, Rintoul Street entrance, to load passengers following what must have been a major Athletic Park event.

Historic Corner – Trams' Passenger Loadings: Athletic Park tram photos (Graeme Bennett) cont.



Above: A sea of people board double-saloon 199 at Athletic Park. Others, to left of picture, appear resigned to walking. The sight is not only a spectacle for tram enthusiasts – local residents are viewing from the comfort of their front rooms and paths.



Above: a “fully-loaded!” double-saloon tram bearing the unlikely destination “Brooklyn” trundles along Kent Terrace after the match heading towards the Railway Station. – the riders appear to be beating the walkers. The tram body does look very low on its trucks!

WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM PICTURES FROM THE PAST

(1) 50 YEARS AGO - 1971



Above: 1971-72 : The start of building the platform loop. Ian Carter is driving the loader and Charlie Gibson is standing on tram 250's chassis and holding the handbrake. A load of rails is being brought from the depot area to be unloaded for use in the new track. Note no barn as yet, and the two grey Brisbane trams (236 in front, and 133) in the background. *Photo: Mike Flinn*

(2) 10 YEARS AGO - 2011



Above: A good portion of the tram 260 restoration team "testing" the then newly renovated and installed seats in tram 260. From left, clockwise: Robert Hatten, Jim Bentall, Alan Smith, Keith McGavin, Trevor Burling and Colin Dash. 30th November 2011. *Photo: Mike Flinn*

"Tramlines" is the bi-monthly newsletter for members of the Wellington Tramway Museum Inc. Its aim is to keep members in touch with practical notices and the details of current developments and it also includes articles on matters of historic tramway interest, especially Wellington. Please also see our website and Facebook page which are our instantly-updated Museum fact resource and notice to the wider world. Contributions and notes welcomed. Contact details are on Page. 3.