

TRAM LINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM INC.

No. 2019 /1

JANUARY– FEBRUARY 2019



Wellington Tramway Museum's two operating ex-Wellington double-saloon trams Nos. 151 and 159 await their next turns of duty on a grey and windy Waitangi Day morning, 2019. Photo: Keith McGavin

PICTURES FROM THE PAST



On 10th June 1961 trams 151 and 159 were chartered by tram enthusiasts for a tour of remaining Wellington tram routes.

Top: The two trams, having been cleaned for the occasion, pose on the approach tracks to Newtown tram sheds – a not too different aspect from our present day cover photo. This was immediately prior to the tour. Note the double crossover partially under tram 151. This was retrieved for the Tramway Museum subsequent to the city tramway's closure.

Lower, during the tour: A posed photo of 151 (right) in Hunter Street about to pass 159 in Customhouse Quay at the right-angled crossover. To achieve this position 159 had waited while 151 proceeded on down Customhouse Quay, turned left into Johnston Street, left into Lambton Quay and then left again into Hunter Street.

Photos by Keith McGavin, with his "Agfa Clack" camera

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Assembled by the WTM production team:

Henry Brittain & Keith McGavin

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Contributions welcome

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From Steve Porter's Workbench

In recent times we have seen our usually very busy December and January Operations period and, in the workshop, much activity.

On the operations side Russell J and his team have managed a very good result. The hotter season has seen many more ice creams sold and Denys Peck has responded to the demand well. As is probably reported elsewhere 159, 260 and 151 have served well. I, and I am sure the Board, appreciate the work put in by operations staff. Without our operations volunteers no trams would be seen plying their passengers within the Park. Thank you.

On the Engineering side of our project we have seen the repair of 239 and the repainting of the red panels and doors nearly completed. Neville and Keith continue to chase this job to completion. Your efforts are noted and appreciated. Allan has drafted a projects list which will be reviewed by the Maintenance and Engineering (M&E) Committee. It is intended that the Committee will set priorities for each project taking into account what funding or other resources are to hand or needed and what the need is for each project in regard to other works. The completed prioritised list will be approved, or otherwise, by the Board and will then become the ongoing plan of works for M & E Committee to achieve.

We are very fortunate that both our power supply and overhead infrastructure have been upgraded during 2017 and 2018 as this allows us to focus on track work. There is a lot of track needing attention. We are hoping that we will be able to have a contractor rather than our members upgrade the track. In addition, we hope to

have the works conducted without significant loss of track use. To achieve this, we will need to identify what needs doing, and then seek tenders for the required work. A resident Site Supervisor or Supervisors will be required for this predominately week day work. Such work is better than the back-breaking track work if we had to do the work ourselves. Obviously planning and funding of such works is vital, but the end result would be quicker and safer for our aging work force.

When 239 returns to the roster we expect that 17 will be relocated from the Barn to the Workshop for the fitting of wiring (under the floor), resistor banks, controllers and, when received, the trucks. The Destination blinds, pole base, roof bridge and pole will also need to be fitted as will the life guards. The overhaul of controllers for 17 continues under the care of Trevor Weaver.

After so long and with so much work already done the completion of 17 is within reach. Please offer to help Trevor Burling and his team with the work.

The stalled construction of the Dummy Motorman's Cabin (Tram 214 B end) has resumed with the cabin now all but ready for an onslaught of children (it is basically a toy) - only a repaint of the Apron is required.

Thank you once again to all members. The work done both in operations and engineering are vital both for the present and future of our Tramway.

**STEVE PORTER, President
6th February 2019**

COMING EVENT

“Jewels in the Crown” Park Open Days, 9th & 10th March

Please see the Marketing and Operations Report on page 8 for details of this event.

OBITUARY – John Shanks

By Alan Smith



John Shanks (above) died in Christchurch on 1 February this year, just 3 days short of his 79th birthday. John was the “founding father figure” of tram preservation in Christchurch - where the last “classic system” trams ran in September 1954. John may have been only a teenager at the time, but he knew (it seemed to me later) every rail-joint, curve, stop, traction pole,

sub-station and car that had ever existed there since the 19th century days of horse and steam trams. What’s more, he cared about those things; he recorded them, he told people about them, and he did practical things and took initiatives to ensure that a public memory of them became established.

A firm Calvinist, John was an unlikely associate of the rather hedonistic Bill Horne in Wellington - “Bodgie Bill” - who separately and at around the same time was collecting bits and pieces of Wellington tramway history and thinking in hazy ways about how some public memory could become established by the time the “classic” tram system here had finally groaned its last.

By 1960 John had gathered about him a small group of (mostly young) Christchurch men who did the hard graft of helping protect the few relics which had survived from 1954. I suspect that he would have first met Bill (those were pre e-mail and web days, remember) on one of those numerous trips up to Wellington by the overnight ferry to experience what was left of the Wellington tram system. The “Tramway Preservation Association” (TPA) was formed, comprising two “centres”, one



Above: 3rd July 1965 – Early days at the Wellington Tramway Museum. John, in typical hands-on mode, helping Keith McGavin load sleepers on to the flat wagon (ex Newtown Depot tower wagon). *Alan Smith photo*

John Shanks obituary, cont.

in Christchurch led by John Shanks and one in Wellington led by Bill Horne; the famous “151 and 159” charter tour of the Wellington system in June 1961 (see page 2 – Ed.) was a landmark consolidating point for the TPA.

Tramway Museum Inc (WTM) and the Christchurch centre had evolved into today’s Tramway Historical Society Inc (THS). The rest, as they say, is history; but a consistent positive theme of both is the guiding mana and wise counsel of John

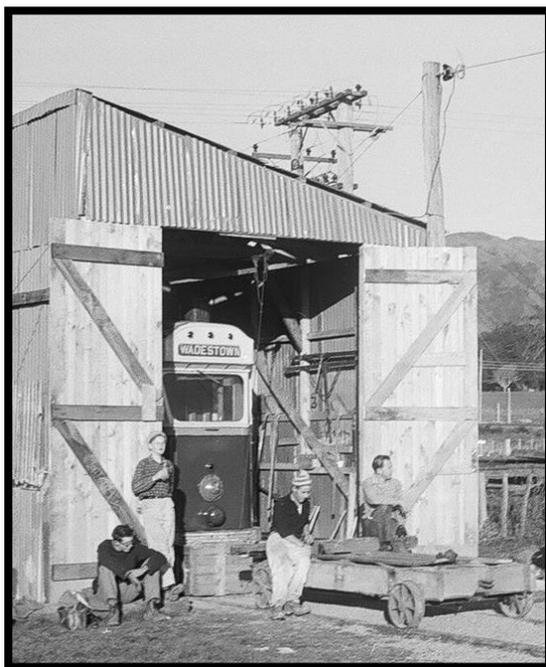


John, hand on the brake handle, posing with Tram No.1’s night crew at a special evening event at Ferrymead.
Photo D.L.A Turner

In February 1962 I first met John, on the TPA’s “257 tour” and this I’m happy to say was the start of a firm and valued friendship between us. Later that year John gave firm instructions to fellow Christchurch Centre TPA member Gary Riggs who was transferring up to Wellington: gee up Bill and get some life into TPA Wellington. Well, he did; things happened, with many a bump along the way, but the TPA evolved so that by the 2 May 1964 run of the last Wellington trams the old “Wellington Centre” had morphed into an incorporated Society which became today’s Wellington

Shanks.

But John continued to take a supportive interest in our doings and, even before one of his daughters moved here, he always liked visiting Wellington, riding the trolleybuses and the EMUs (there is a story about him pulling up the floor hatches of an English Electric DM motor coach better to hear the music of its traction motors as it whined up the continuous grade of the Johnsonville railway) and coming out to WTM at “the Park”.



Above: 3rd July 1965 John, on the left, in a rare moment of relaxation - but no doubt talking those mellifluous sentences all the while - outside the old temporary barn (which is roughly where the present-day kiosk is, but parallel to the road) with Russell Bidgood, John Horn and Keith McGavin. *Alan Smith photo*

There was of course much more to John Shanks than the tram person. He was a true gentleman, a fine fellow, a devoted family man, a great friend, a Christchurch civic patriot, a loyal parishioner, an explorer (round the world more than once by container ships, and to the sub-antarctic islands), a tramper, a singer, a raconteur, a grandfather. These notes just record the death of a dear friend of mine, and of someone seminal to our Wellington Tramway Museum; there will I am sure be fuller obituaries of him in the THS and COTMA bulletins.

Our sincere condolences go out to John's wife Margaret and to his family, and to our THS colleagues. Meanwhile, our best tribute to John will be to press on ahead and build on what he inspired to become even better.

FROM THE MARKETING AND OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

Russell Jenkins, Vice-President

Well I have now turned over my Tramway Memories Calendar to February, looked at the photo of Mk2 Double Saloon 193 turning into Adelaide Road and started dreaming of the day that 207 will turn Marines Corner again.

But that is in the future and there are a lot of more immediate tasks ahead in the foreseeable future. (P.S. All stocks of the 2019 Calendar have been sold and so if you missed out on getting one, buy the 2020 one as soon as it is available!)

January Operations:

A big "THANK YOU" goes to those members who offered their services during January that enabled the tramway to be open and operational between Boxing Day and Wellington Anniversary Day. While the weather was a bit of a mixed bag with good and not so good days, we had reasonable patronage most days and initial calculations show that revenue was up on the previous year.

Since the opening of the cycleway through the park, the number of cyclists has certainly increased and now that we have a sign at the cycle crossing at the top of the hill advertising the Tramway Kiosk it would appear that some cyclists are coming to the Kiosk. A number are having a look around the Museum and even taking a ride, all of which is good for the tramway.

From the Marketing and Operations Department, cont.

Tram Crew Vests

During the holiday running during January, we introduced the new “Tram Crew” vests. The purpose of the new vests is to make members of the “Tram Crew” more visible to the public.

In addition to having a nice new logo on the front, along with a clear pocket for a name tag, the back of the vest has the words TRAM CREW,

The vests are on hangers in a locker beside the “Tram Handle Box” in the Barn Office and cardboard name tags are on the top shelf inside the locker.

I encourage all operations staff to wear the new vests when part of the operating crew especially on special event days when we can have large numbers of people around.



Above: Robert Hatten (left) and Alan Smith being “visible” to visitors.

Photo: Keith McGavin

Jewels in the Crown Day – coming up

The Regional Council are having a “**Jewels in the Crown**” Park Open Day on 9 and 10 March. This will involve all the Queen Elizabeth Park stakeholders and will provide an opportunity for everyone to promote the activities they undertake. The Regional Council will be running a shuttle to and from Paekakariki Railway station to promote public transport for the day and the Tramway will be offering special fares. Additional operating staff will be required to cater for what we hope to be more than the normal number of visitors and so please advise Henry Brittain or Robert Vale if you can be called on to help on either or both days of the event.

Waitangi Day 2019



This Waitangi Day saw the Te Whakaminenga o Kāpiti and Kāpiti Coast District Council hold celebrations at Queen Elizabeth Park in the area behind the Ramaroa Centre.

While the Tramway Museum was not involved directly in the celebrations, trams operated from 10 am to offer the public rides to the beach. In anticipation of a large crowd at the event, 3 operating trams were prepared but the weather played its part and the hoped for large numbers did not materialize.

Initially 260 and 159 provided a half hourly service and later in the day 260 was parked up as 159 coped with the number of visitors.



Tram 214

The latest addition to the fleet “Tram 214” is nearing completion and will be “entering service” in the not too distant future.

The plan is to have it in the public area in the barn for children and others who want to drive a tram to try their hand.



The Year Ahead

Well, looking ahead we will be having a busy time in 2019. In addition to our usual running we can look forward to the preparation and hopefully the entering into service of Tram 17 (The original Wellington tram in our collection).

But the “fun” will really start on Wednesday 11 September when the first of a projected **71** tour groups visit the Tramway Museum for afternoon tea and a tram ride. Yes, we are talking of up to 50 visitors on some days and in some weeks up to 4 or 5 groups during the week.

An Australian company, Grand Pacific Tours, have asked us to host tours coming from Rotorua to Wellington for their 2019 – 2020 Season. For each visit it is estimated that 3 or 4 members will be required to assist with proceedings between around 2.30pm, and 4pm. A number of the scheduled visits are on days when we will open for normal running or on Wednesdays when members are on site.

Yes it is a big commitment, but think of the benefits to the museum and to you its members.

Up to 3000 additional visitors at \$15 pp + GST = A very good source of income to help us do all that is required to maintain and improve our museum.

If we give these people an enjoyable visit they will pass the message on and that can only be good for us.

If we do the job well, there is a good chance that Grand Pacific Tours, and possibly others, will include the Tramway Museum in their itineraries in the future.

Please give serious thought to offering to help with what has the potential to be a significant source of funds in the future.

Looking Ahead to 2020

We have received a request for 2 Special Charters in November 2020!

Grand Pacific Tours want to bring 2 groups to the museum for morning tea on their way to a garden show in Taranaki. **Talk about forward planning.**

Remember to keep up to date with the Tramway on either our webpage

www.wellingtontrams.org.nz

Or

The Tramway Facebook page



MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE AND PAYABLE

Thank you to all who have already paid their annual membership subscription.

All annual subscriptions are now due and payable and must be paid by 31st March to retain continued membership.

Any enquiries to Secretary Henry Brittain please

Email:

secretary@wellingtontrams.org.nz

Phone: 04 293 8929

Mobile: 0274 303 536

Personal:

We are sorry to hear that Peter Hawke has been unwell recently, including a spell in hospital. We wish him a speedy recovery.

AROUND THE SITE AND DOWN THE LINE

Allan Neilson

Despite the holiday period and the need to support daily operations from Boxing Day to late January quite a lot has been achieved over the period since my last report in the November-December issue.

Trackwork:

The programme, referred to in the September-October issue, of making up and installing new tie bars to better hold gauge where sleepers are in poor condition, has continued. In addition loose fishplates on open track have been identified and are being worked on. A speed restriction is in place between poles 47 and 48 due to a bad track joint with a rail crack that is waiting repair.



Above: New tie-rods in place near the Park Rangers crossing. 8th December 2018.

Photo: Allan Neilson

Switchblade cleanout work plus routine track greasing and maintenance have continued.



Above: Barry Ollerenshaw re-fitting the spring mechanism in the Y-point leading to Barn roads 1 and 2, having already replaced the switchblade after cleaning out and oiling. 30th January 2019

Photo: Keith McGavin

At this time of the year we keep an eye out for extreme rail expansion that can cause buckling, so have earmarked some joints for lubrication and a few places where we need to ground out some rail at joints to help relieve rail longitudinal tension.

Site Work:

This is a good time of the year to tidy up our site and both visitors and regulars will notice that it has rarely looked neater than it does now.

Remaining loose poles have all now been moved to the pole stack and the Daimler tower wagon has been shifted to a position next to the buses in front of the Rear Storage Building. This has enabled the area outside the north-east end of the

Around the site and down the line cont.

workshop to be cleared and tidied, along with the area north west of the barn.



**Above: The pole stack, 5th January 2019
Photo: Allan Neilson**



**Above: Another pole is added to the stack during the tidy-up. Colin Dash on the Tug, Mike Flinn with the crowbar. 16th January 2019.
Photo: Keith McGavin**

The rear storage compound has been largely tidied up - an on-going task – while the north east corner, behind the “Palace” has also been cleaned up.

Photos right: Four views that show different parts of the rear storage compound taken on 30th January 2019, during the tidying process.

Photos Keith McGavin



A start has been made on cleaning our building gutters – there is more to do.

Around the site and down the line cont.



Above: On-going building maintenance - Barry Ollerenshaw and Allan Neilson cleaning workshop building guttering, 9th February 2019.

Photo: Mike Flinn



Above: Phil Austin assisting with rear compound clearing – between the fire sprinkler container and the rear storage building, 13th February 2019

Photo: Mike Flinn

Around the site and down the line cont.



Above: Keith McGavin assisting with the repainting of 239, 13th February 2019.

Photo: Mike Flinn



Above: 13th February 2019 – Trams 260 (foreground) and 159 (middle) shunting during a special charter, and 239 in the background undergoing repainting.

Photo: Keith McGavin



Above: Alan Smith getting down to it, repainting tram 239's bumper. 13th February 2019
Photo: Keith McGavin



Above: Photograph of a brass plate "McCarty & McElroy & Coy Ltd.", who were the suppliers of Wellington's first electric tram fleet. This plate came from tram No.31, dismantled for parts when located on a farm in the Wairarapa by members in the 1970's. No.17 would have sported an identical plate and it is proposed to mount this one appropriately in No.17.

Photo by Keith McGavin, 6th February 2019



Above: Mike Vash has been working on a new storage facility in the south-west corner of the workshop, for track tools.

Photo: Keith McGavin, 30th January 2019



Above: A bell, activated by a push down lever on the top, donated to the Museum recently by a member of the public and said to be off a tram. Is it possible that this was a bell activated by a conductor on the top deck of a double decker as a signal to a motorman? Does anyone have any idea?

Photo: Keith McGavin, 23rd January 2019

Around the site and down the line cont.



Above: Colin Dash using the digger fitted with a new “ripper hook” to pull out a tree stump behind the Palace, 13th February 2019

Photo: Henry Brittain



Above – a short while later. The same tree stump satisfactorily uprooted and in many pieces.

Photo: Mike Flinn, 13th February 2019

Around the site and down the line cont.

Mock-up Driver's Cab

Now sporting the number "214" this project is nearly complete. See photos in the Marketing and Operations section.

Tram 239

The body repairs are now complete and repainting of the red is well underway. The tram will look smart with new numbering and coat of arms when completed.



Above: Tram 239 in the "paint-shop", 6th February 2019

Photo: Keith McGavin



Above: 22E truck casting being machined, 20th January 2019

Photo courtesy A&G Price Ltd.

Tram 17 (notes from Trevor Burling)

Trucks:

Work is progressing at A&G Price Ltd., Thames, with machining of castings and other work.

Destination and Route No. boxes:

These are being restored to be ready to fit to the roof, when the positioning is confirmed by inserting the colour light rods through the roof from the inside brackets.

(Note: The completion of the "B" end of tram 239 has taken precedence so it can be returned to service as soon as practicable. Our staff resources have had to be reorganised to achieve this thus depleting our efforts on tram 17. Volunteers are sought to bolster our efforts.)

Trolley tower and pole

- A pole base has been selected and is being refurbished in readiness for fitting to the roof of 17
- The trolley pole tower will be prepared for the fitting to the trolley bridge.

Controllers:

The restoration of the first controller is nearly complete and the second one has been selected for restoration. Tram 17 originally had GE B35 controllers. The replacements are BTH B510 with more modern components and are consequently deeper than the originals – they will have to be positioned with care.

Around the site and down the line, Tram 17
cont.



Above: Inside the “B” end cab of tram 17. The black bracket and the grey (undercoated) arm being test fitted. These brackets will support the controls for the coloured light signals and the destination signs. *Photo: Keith McGavin*



Above: Trevor Weaver working on the refurbishment of a controller case for tram 17. *Photo: Keith McGavin*

Wiring, Resistor Banks etc.

The wooden casing for internal driver’s cabin wiring and lighting has been prepared and will be fitted at the same time as the steel brackets for the colour light and destination changing mechanisms.

At present we are determining the most practical positioning of the resistor banks underneath the tram so they do not foul other components once the trucks are in place.

We are also currently determining the best fit for the wiring loom and tee off connections for the resistors, magnetic brakes, motor connections, and controller terminations.

Our goal is to have the body sufficiently complete to receive the trucks without compromising the running of wiring, brake chains, rods etc.

Hand-brake:

Henry Brittain advises as follows:

We have started to assemble the parts we already have for the handbrake assembly for 17 and list out those components we already have and identify those that have to be acquired or made.

Luckily, MOTAT recently had a similar pair made for their restored Wanganui trailer, by the Heritage Tramways Trust in Christchurch and photos and drawings from this source will be invaluable. Aside from this Wellington cars 47 and 301 which are domiciled at MOTAT and having mostly identical handbrakes as 17, are another source for comparison.

Parts already sourced from WTM stock include a handbrake wheel found at Kilbirnie workshops many years ago and the mounting bracket that sits inside the front apron, removed years ago from a derelict

Around the site and down the line, Tram 17 cont.

Palace car plus some assorted patterns. Two underfloor components were acquired from Bendigo when we took delivery of 22E Brill truck components, and these will also be used on 17.

The handbrake on 17 is different from the other Wellington trams that we have, as 17's is a stopping brake rather than a holding brake, hence the name "handbrake cars" used by Tramway staff to generally describe all trams up to number 91.

TRAM STATISTICS
from Keith McGavin
Daily figures collated by Mike Vash

This issue we cover two very different periods, first the period in December up until Christmas Eve – operating weekends only and traditionally with light traffic – the hectic time up until Christmas leaving little time for pleasurable pursuits such as riding trams! – and second the period from Boxing Day through to the end of January – a period which is busy with holiday makers and a time when we expect to be busy.

December 1st to 24th:

Total passenger journeys:

this year: 588

last year: 517

increase: 71 (14%)

The increase was due to a charter special which contributed 134 journeys – but for this there would have been a decrease of 63 journeys (12%).

December 26th to January 31st

Total passenger journeys

this year: 3,165

last year: 3,143

increase: 22(1%)

It is very pleasing in the circumstances that we "held our own" given the road disruption for the Transmission Gully motorway construction at our doorstep and the removal of the brown tourist road signs. Often the volume of traffic is weather dependent – having said this the detailed figures over the period show that weekend traffic was up by 23 (2%), Statutory Holiday traffic up by 136 (36%), weekday traffic was down by 78 (6%) and weekday special charters during the final week of January when we were not otherwise operating was down by 59 journeys - (73%).

Tram Kilometres Run

For the period 1st to 24th December tram kilometres run were just 259 – 38 or 13% less than the previous year.

For the Boxing day to end of January period the results, amazingly enough, show only a 2 km difference – last year 1,047 kms; this year 1,049 kms.

Year to Date figures:

From 1st July to 31st January (7 months) passenger journeys this year were 6,667. This is a minute variation with last year when the total to the same date was 6,694 – a variation of just 27 passenger journeys.

While the variation in passenger journey numbers is very small the trams have run 2,611 kms this year compared with 2,743 last year, a reduction of 5%.

A reduction in tram kms whilst maintaining virtually the same number of passengers means that average passenger numbers per trip have increased, which is a good thing.

Over the 7 months tram 151 has run 562 kms, tram 159 1,175 kms and tram 260 874 kms. Tram 239 has been in the workshop over this period.

**HISTORICAL CORNER –
Henry Brittain**

Earlier this year, a visitor to the Museum provided a photo (shown below) of a Motorman and his Conductor, standing in front of a tram at the Oriental Bay terminus.

after initial training was posted to the Hospital Ships, departing on the first voyage of the Maheno to Gallipoli on 10 July 1915. He continued as a Hospital Ship medic serving on both NZ Hospital ships, Maheno and Marama.



The motorman was Henry Alfred Bade who was the donor's Grandfather and the tram was converted Combination number 19, one of the same batch as our tram, 17.

Bade, who was born in September 1876 joined the Wellington City Corporation Tramways as a conductor in 1909, graduating as a motorman in 1911 and retiring in the 1940's.

Like many Tramway staff, he took leave of absence and joined the Defence Force during World War One. He enlisted in the NZ Army Medical Corps in May 1915 and

At the end of hostilities, he returned to the Tramways and resumed duties in 1919, now as a Senior Motorman.

Family records indicate that the photo of 19 was taken circa mid 1912 which would be not long after its 1911 conversion to a bogie car. It is most likely in its original rebuilt style as the centre isles in the open compartments were not installed until 1913. This photo has been of assistance to the Museum in providing detail to those working on the installation of destination boxes on 17.

"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 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.