



The Squeaky Wheel



The MOTAT Society Newsletter
ISSN 2350-2940 (Print)
ISSN 2350-2959 (Online)

Issue 28 - January 2017



MOTAT founder and tram historian Graham Stewart cuts a symbolic ribbon to start a parade of Auckland trams to mark the 60th anniversary of the official ending of tram services in Auckland, which occurred on December 29 1956. Crewing the leading tram are, from left, David Cawood, Paul Gourley and Leyton Chan. Graham assisted with the organisation of the final parade of trams from Lower Queen Street back to the Epsom depot. The last tram service, to Onehunga, had run the previous evening. See story on pages 4 and 5.

Evan James photo

ICONIC LOCOMOTIVE SHIFTED INTO STORAGE

Iconic locomotive K.900 has been removed from its long term resting place at MOTAT 1 and placed in storage at MOTAT 2 where work can begin on removing asbestos insulation.

The first of its class, it has joined class leader Da.1400 in storage at MOTAT 2, where it is planned they will be centre stage in a rail museum that is in the planning stages for MOTAT.

The locomotive was shifted under wraps on October 22 last year, because it contained asbestos, the reason it was moved from MOTAT 1 where it had been a feature near the entrance since December 20 1975.

The move meant re-organising the storage shed at MOTAT 2 to accommodate the 23 metre long locomotive, and the combined power of the section's two diesel shunters, Dsa.223 and Tr.730 was needed to shift it from the loading ramp to the shed.

Writing in The Driving Wheel magazine, Mr Croker said he hoped that the Waitakere station building and the Mt Albert signal box would also be relocated to MOTAT 2, and form part of an extensive rail exhibition along with the operational Western Springs Railway.



ABOVE; Dsa.223, about to hook onto K.900 to push it into the storage shed. The locomotive is in a special protective cover to stop any asbestos being disturbed by the wind during its road transit to MOTAT 2.

BELOW; K.900 at rest in its new home with most of its protective cover removed.



Dean McQuoid signals K.900's tender off the trailer at MOTAT 2 after being shifted by road from MOTAT 1

Richard Croker photos

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WHAT'S COMING UP AT MOTAT

February 19

Fire and Rescue Day

March 4

Prohibition Party

March 5

Military Day

SPECIAL TYPECASE FOR PRINTING MĀORI

by Makyla Curtis

A current project by the MOTAT Print Section is producing special Māori typecases to carry on the work of early missionary/printer William Colenso.

Widely regarded as New Zealand's first printer, Colenso's printing efforts were almost exclusively in the Māori language, until he was commissioned to print the Treaty of Waitangi in English.

When Colenso was sent to NZ in 1834 by the Church Missionary society to print the Māori Bible, the equipment he was given to set up a printery was severely lacking with typecases being one of the missing items.

And so Colenso designed new cases specifically for the Māori language which were then built by a carpenter in Kororāreka (Russell).

The cases were still in existence in the 1890s after Colenso's death. They were then bequeathed to R. Coupland Harding who planned to donate them to a museum but we are yet to find where they have gone to.

I have been analysing and experimenting with Colenso's case layout to modernise the design for MOTAT.

Colenso's design was specific to the Northern dialect, as he was based in Paihia.

The w, for example was given a smaller compartment because the Northern dialect tends to exclude the w in wh words (ie, hakapapa vs whakapapa).

In addition, at that time the single w was used to stand in for the aspirated wh as well, which you can see in the treaty with words like whenua written as wenua.

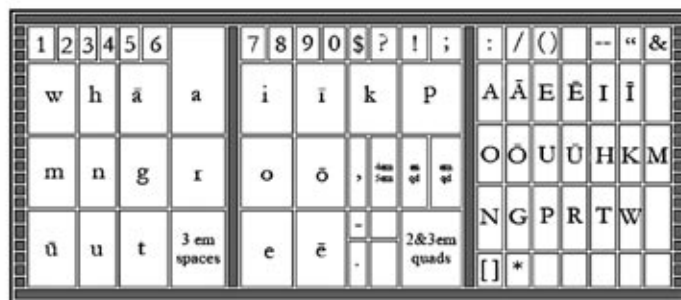
As was typical at the time, Colenso created cases for both upper and lower case letters, and each included both regular type and italic since he would be using both fonts in the Bible. With the reduced Māori alphabet there was plenty of room.

I have designed Colenso's layout for contemporary letterpress in the Māori language (TOP RIGHT). This new layout brings the Māori alphabet into the job case format (one tray instead of upper and lower case). It also includes space for macrons.

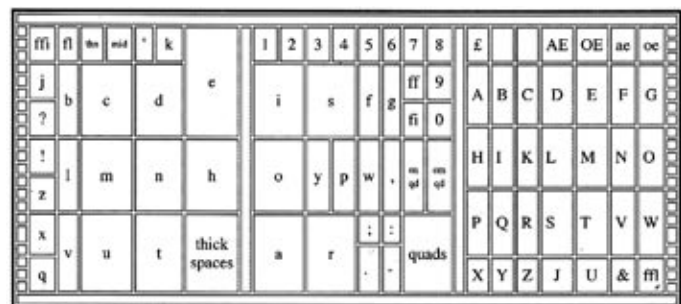
MOTAT has commissioned new vowels with macrons from The Printing Museum (Upper Hutt) especially for this project.

Colenso did not like the use of macrons and at the time he was printing, the double vowel was preferred method of

PRINTING



The new typecase specifically designed for Māori language printing (ABOVE) with the more commonly used N.Z. California typecase (BELOW).



marking the long vowel sound.

Colenso did not want to have to cast new 'sorts' (letters) and could use the type already available to him.

But today, the macron is preferred and so when updating the typecase it's important to have these available.

Other key differences are that the w, p, and k are all given more space to accommodate all dialects. The g is placed together with the n because it only ever appears with the n.

The a is in the larger space as the most commonly used letter in the alphabet, the equivalent of the English e. In keeping with Colenso's design the capital vowels come before the consonants in the upper case section.

The first ever printing in NZ (including that by amateur printer William Yate) was printed exclusively in the Māori language.

This project aims to bring NZ letterpress back to its origins. The longer term part of this project for MOTAT is to produce some Māori-language exclusive texts.



The capital A macron type, the macron being the line above the type.

Makyla Curtis photos



New macron type ready for distributing into the new typecases.



The three operable Auckland trams in the MOTAT collection on parade to mark the 60th anniversary of the closure of the tramway system on December 29 1956. They are, from front No. 44, built in 1906 to a 1902 design, No. 11, one of Auckland's first trams, and No. 248, one of the trams used in the final parade in 1956.

Albert Chan photograph

MARKING 60 YEARS SINCE THE TRAMS STOPPED

Representatives of the first and last trams to run on the Auckland tramway system ran in a parade to mark 60

years since the closing of the Auckland tramway system. The special parade was part of a special day to mark the anniversary of the closing of the Auckland tramway system on December 29 1956.

The closing parade in 1956 comprised trams 247, 248, 250 and 254, with 242 being the official last tram. No. 248 is now preserved and running at MOTAT.

For the 60th anniversary celebration it was joined by 11, one of the first trams to run in Auckland when service started in 1902, and 44, built in 1906 to a 1902 design.

Special guests included tram book author Graham Stewart, a founder of MOTAT, who was an avid photographer of Auckland trams in the 1950s, Auckland Councillor and public transport advocate, Mike Lee, and Cliff Tate, one of the few surviving motormen from 1956.

Mr Stewart recalled the speech by the Mayor of Auckland, Sir John Logan Campbell, at the official opening of the tramway on November 24 1902, "May their cars never cease to run in the City of Auckland".

Mr Lee said that Auckland, in a way, inflicted a tragedy upon itself when it ripped out the tramway in 1956, and hasn't recovered since.

He said that he envisaged trams, now called light rail, would be in the future for Auckland's transport network.

"It would be physically do-able, and should be financially possible," he said.

He congratulated MOTAT for keeping the tramway alive, and allowing for a dream of light rail in Auckland.



Cliff Tait (right) talking to John Wolf with Dave Ronson looking on. Mr Tait is one of the last surviving tram motormen from 1956, while Mr Wolf, was a workshop manager during the trolleybus era. Both are long serving MOTAT volunteers, Mr Tait in the Aviation Section.

Evan James photograph



Graham Stewart flanked by a "body guard" of Western Springs Tramway uniformed platform staff. From left they are Joan Wolf, John Wolf, Colin Zeff, Kinnon Pang, Albert Chan, Paul Gourley, Dave Ronson, Tony Messenger, Janna Herle, Leyton Chan, Ian Mison, Graham Stewart, Chris Cameron, Vincent Chan, David Cawood, Alan Curtis, Bruce Pullar, Don Larsen, Kerry Turner, Fred Hadwin and David Pitt.

Evan James photos

RECORDING THE FINAL TRAMS YEARS ON FILM

by Graham Stewart

I started taking my first tramway photographs in 1947 at the age of 15 years (70 years ago this year) while attending Mount Albert Grammar School, using a 116 format Box Brownie.

Then I graduated to a 116 format Graflex film camera, eight exposures only on each roll of film - see page 40, top left photo of 213 in my book "Always A Tram In Sight".

This interest in photography became a career path in January 1950 when I joined the staff of the New Zealand Herald and became familiar with some very good photographic equipment.

I put this to good use to record the final years of trams, especially in Auckland, and became a familiar face to those involved in the system which later gave me unprecedented access to all aspects of the operations.

I witnessed and recoded the running of all the last trams to the suburbs, from the closure of the first suburban service to Herne Bay in September 1949.

The service to Mt Roskill was terminated on September 11 1953, incidentally, the same year that our current Mayor and former Member of Parliament for Mt Roskill, Phil Goff, was born

That was part of the gradual conversion of the Auckland tram system to trolley buses which started in 1949 on the Herne Bay route, one of the first tram routes to open in Auckland.

The move from the steel-railed tramcar to trackless trams happened in pockets around the world following the Second World War - they became known by their American name "trolleybus", as the word "tram" had become a dirty word. No-one had a good word for the tramcars in the post war years, they had taken a thrashing during the war years, they had carried enormous loads, and New Zealanders' love affair with the motorcar was in full swing.

Flicking the clock forward to 1956, New Zealand's population had reached 2.2 million, New Zealand had won its first international cricket test in March, against the West Indies at Eden Park, and for the first time New Zealand

won a rugby test series against the Springboks from South Africa.

In October 1956 Tom Ashby had been elected Mayor of Auckland after serving as Town Clerk for Jack Allum from 1944 to 1955.

Tom Ashby therefore had the honour of driving the last tram up Queen Street to the town hall. Sadly, Mr Ashby died in office the following year at the age of 62.

Unbelievably, and it does not seem 60 years ago today, one of the those last trams was MOTAT's 248, which is part of the convoy of three trams today.

The Auckland Transport Board of the day allowed me to select the trams that were used that Saturday morning, and I had been instrumental in selecting the tram that was decorated and made the official last journey up Queen Street back to the Epsom tram barn.

So in the words of Sir John Logan Campbell, (with a slight edit), "May the MOTAT electric trams never cease to run".



Graham Stewart (left) in conversation with recently published author Dave Annan about his new book, "The Women Tram Conductors of Auckland June 1942 to December 1956". Mr Annan's book was released late last year, and is an extensive investigation into the subject. Mr Stewart has published several books on tramway topics.



ALL IS CHANGED OUTSIDE MOTAT

With major road works outside MOTAT now completed, we look back on how much has changed in the area in the last 70 years. Focusing on the stone bus shelter outside the museum, which started life as a tram shelter in the 1930s, we look at the area in the early 1950s, through the lens of MOTAT founding member, Graham Stewart, and through the digital camera lens of Squeaky Wheel editor Evan James.

LOOKING EAST:

1930 class tram 237 heading east to "Owairaka via Hobson Street" has set off five passengers dressed in coats. A blow up of the photograph shows a family sheltering inside the building. That's an International pickup truck in front of the shelter, following a Triumph "bathtub" motorcycle and a 1939 Ford V8 sedan. Coming down the hill from Grey Lynn shops are another tram and a 1932 Ford V8 sedan, with a Morris 8 sedan parked on the right. In the foreground is the intersection of Great North Road and Western Springs Road. Today, the shelter overlooks the rump of the intersection, giving access to the Caltex service station and a car park.





LOOKING WEST:

The shelter is still in the same place on the right, and the curvature of Great North Road is still there, but that's about it. The houses have gone, replaced by trees screening the North Western Motorway. That's M class tram 152 on its way to "Walker Road Pt Chevalier via Hobson Street". The MOTAT Pioneer Village has replaced the trees behind the shelter.



MOTAT LIGHTS UP FOR CHRISTMAS

MOTAT's annual Christmas Lights festival, is now rated as one of the top Christmas lights displays in Auckland.

Held over 10 nights, in December last year, the \$2 admission fees was to raise money to buy gifts for children, with the Auckland City Mission and the Auckland Women's Refuge being the charities to benefit.

An added attraction last year was the showing of movies in an outdoor cinema set up especially for the event. This featured two movies, being shown on alternative nights, "Polar Express" and "The Grinch".

Among the additional attractions were tram rides to the zoo and back on especially decorated trams, the patrons taking part in printing Christmas themed cards in the print shop, and coral singing in the Pioneer Village.



WORKING WITH WOOD FOR SEATS AND FLOOR



Wood preparation for steam tram trailer 21 continues with the nailing down of the floor slats on the ends of the trailer (ABOVE LEFT) and preparation of the wood for the seat slats (ABOVE RIGHT) The floor slats are being produced in the Tram Section's woodwork shops from native rewarewa wood, as per the original specifications, and will be painted floor grey. The seats slats are being produced in American ash and red cedar, and will assembled in an alternative pattern. Pictured is Stephen Curham (left), Leyton Chan and Paul Gourley inspecting ash slats prior to their final sanding and sealing, and varnishing.

Evan James photo

DISTINCTIVE WATER TANKS TAKING SHAPE



The distinctive saddle water tanks of F.180 Meg Merillees are taking shape in the Rail Section workshops. One side is nearing completion while the sheet metal for the other side has been rolled to shape and is ready to be hoisted and hot rivetted into place. The cylindrical shape on the top of the tanks is for the steam dome.

Evan James photo