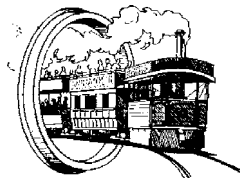


# Ferrymead Tram Tracts

Newsletter of the  
Tramway Historical Society Inc  
P. O. Box 1126  
Christchurch.  
Website  
[www.ferrymeadtramway.org.nz](http://www.ferrymeadtramway.org.nz)



December 2014

## Earthquake repairs to substation.

from MURRAY SANDERS

*Orion's building maintenance contractors have done an outstanding repair job to the Truscotts substation building. During the repairs, electric trains and trolleybuses were unable to operate. Damage was mainly cracks in concrete block joints and gib lining panels. The timber dividing wall had separated to some extent. Floor slab cracks have been epoxied. The whole interior has been repainted. The Canterbury Railway Society, who share the premises are repairing a door to the viewing gallery. The exterior paint work now requires attention.*



Murray Sanders

## Hydrovac process used to drill holes



*These photos from DAVE HINMAN show the process used to drill holes for the poles on the City Tramway extension (for more pictures see pages 6 - 8). The process involves using a water blaster to excavate the holes and a suction device to extract the spoil. It is clean and efficient, the spoil being contained for later re-use. It is also safe in that it avoids the obnoxious propensity of more traditional digging methods to penetrate pipes, cables and other underground services. The concrete blocks are holding the existing light poles (being replaced) and will support the new poles until the concrete sets.*

### Next work party

The next work party is scheduled for **Saturday 20 December 2014**. Formal work parties are held every **third Saturday of the month** and Alan Roi provides a cooked midday meal. There are also activities **every Saturday** and on **Monday evenings**.

**Editorial address: Joe Pickering, P. O. Box 17, Woodend, North Canterbury 7641. Phone 03 312 2578. Email [jpickering@clear.net.nz](mailto:jpickering@clear.net.nz).**

## Message from the president



ANOTHER YEAR is all but over, I'm sure the years are getting shorter and shorter.

Work around tram barns continues and includes the replacement of the concrete apron and part of the traverser wall. The next part of that work will be to continue the concrete across in front of Tram Barn 3 and that will be locked into the traverser wall.

In time we also intend concreting the apron in front of Tram Barn 1 and also locking that into the wall of the traverser which we hope will prevent any more damage in the future.

The permanent power supply to Tram Barn 3 has now been completed. Some power points have been installed and plans to install lights are under way. The Paint Booth is still getting used and is a great asset to the Society.

The Management Committee was asked for permission to reinstate doors to the rear off side of Tram 178 to enable it to operate on the new extension through Cashel Mall and High St. This alteration will return it to what it was when it originally entered service in 1922. The Tramway Board closed the doors off on the trams for one man operation in the early 1930's. As with all alterations to trams it will be documented and done in such a manner that it can be return to the way it is now when no longer required. With the original circuit now open and part of the new extension scheduled to open early February. It is something positive happening in the central city.

The Society is inviting "Captains of Industry" to visit the tram barn and see for themselves what we do. Leading up to this visit we will need to do a lot of cleaning up in and around the site and any help members can offer would be very much appreciated.

The final note on the long awaited "Land Deal" is that I signed the cheque today ( Saturday 6th December) for the final payment which will be lodged with our solicitor on Monday.

As mentioned in my last article the 2016 COTMA Conference will be hosted in Christchurch and we are now calling for expressions of interest from anyone interested being a member of the group arranging this conference. It is anticipated that most of the arrangement will be in place by late 2015 and only minor on going things to be completed right up to the time of the conference. Anyone interested can contact me by email at [president@ferrymeadtramway.org.nz](mailto:president@ferrymeadtramway.org.nz) ph 033524872 or 02102325989.

As I said earlier the year seems to have flown by so I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone and Merry Christmas and a Happy and Safe New Year from both myself and Phyllis.

## Season's greetings

from the editor's chair

The calendar has rolled around and it is time once again to extend to our members our good wishes for the Festive Season as we plunge yet again into the Christmas period. It's been an interesting year, highlighted perhaps by the return of the City Tramway to full operation and the prospect of an early opening of the extension to Cashel Mall and High Street. We also celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the closing of the Christchurch tramway system and the fiftieth anniversary of Horse Tram Week at Papanui. The year has closed on a sad note with the death of one of our former presidents Les Dew.

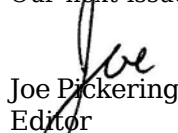
Progress has, of course, been made on many fronts including Hills car No 24, Christchurch No 1 and Dunedin cable car trailer No 111. An overhaul of Boon tram No 152 was also completed and this tram returned to the City Tramway. The Truscotts Road bridge has received major attention and a full refurbishment of the traverser was undertaken. The essential if less romantic tasks of maintaining track, overhead and rolling stock have also been carried out and a full programme of meetings held. In short, another great year.

Looking over the year's issues, I see we had no fewer than twenty-one contributors to whom I offer my grateful thanks. They are (in alphabetical order): Graeme Belworthy, Jenny Burchell, David Critchley, Les Dew, Brent Efford, Dave Hansen, Allen Harbrow, Dave Hinman, Ken Henderson, Peter Jenkinson, David Jones, Douglas Johns, Don McAra, Alan Robb, Alan Roi, Murray Sanders, John Shanks, Roy Sinclair, Graham Stewart, Stephen Taylor and David Turner. And we're not forgetting those behind-the-scenes toilers: Barry Marchant, Colin and Win Loach and granddaughter Evelyn who get our efforts into the mail. I've always maintained that *Tracts* is essentially a team effort and the wealth of contributions from members eloquently proves the point.

Every year when I write this letter, I recall an AGM where, in a rash moment, I lamented the lack of a Society newsletter. In an even rasher moment I offered to supply the need. Research reveals that, come August, that will be fifteen years ago! Ever since my age began to exceed its traditionally allotted span, I have had the recurring thought that maybe it's time to consider finding a successor. At this point I'm just sowing the seeds of an idea but be aware that in the coming year, my tenure of the editorship will need to end and that this will probably be the last Christmas letter I will write.

So are there any budding editors out there? If so, I'd be delighted to hear from you.

Meanwhile, have a great Christmas and holiday season. Our next issue will be in February.

  
Joe Pickering  
Editor

### Tramway Topics for sale

Hi to all members. I have some *Tramway Topics* for sale: Numbers 211, 212, 213, 214,x2 .215, 217.218 \$2 per copy 220, 221 &222 combine, 23, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229,230, 31,232,233,234,235,237,238&239combine, 240, 241, 246, 247,248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254,2 55, \$5 per copy.

Contact Linda Watson [lmwatson1@live.com](mailto:lmwatson1@live.com) Ph (03) 3106555.

## More on Jerry Matthews

IT'S A SAD IRONY that, just a month ago, Les Dew, whose obituary appears below, was paying tribute in these pages to another recently deceased helper in the *On the Move* series, Jerry Matthews.

STEPHEN TAYLOR has something to add to this tribute.

"Further to the note on Jerry Matthews in the November *Tracts* there is another story about Jerry for which the Society also very grateful. Jerry had stored the remaining unsold sets of *On the Move* in boxes in his garage. About a year or two ago when Jerry was moving house, he contacted the Society to donate these to be sold for fund-raising purposes.

If any members are interested in a full set (eight volumes plus introduction), and what could be better gift if you are in need of ideas for a Christmas present for a "difficult to buy for" friend or relative, this is also a reminder that sets are still available at \$25 per set, payable to the society, see me (the Treasurer) or email to

[treasurer@ferrymeadtramway.org.nz](mailto:treasurer@ferrymeadtramway.org.nz)."

## Height restriction.

If you're not up to it don't apply!

JENNY BURCHELL found this in the 9 March 1926 edition of the *Evening Star* (Dunedin).

**N**o person who is under 5ft 7in in height may gain employment as a tram conductor in Christchurch. In calling attention to this fact in its report to the Tramway Board, the Works and Traffic Committee stated:— "The committee desires that publicity be given to applicants for conductors' positions that the minimum height is 5ft 7in. There are a few men in the traffic department under this height, but they were engaged years ago, before the present rule was made a strict one.

The rule is not made because it is desired that conductors be big men. Small men in some respects are more efficient as conductors, but the position is that Parliament has decreed that no motorman be employed who has not already had one year's experience as a conductor; and as a short motorman would be at a disadvantage when required to operate overhead switches the board must see that conductors, from whose ranks the motormen are drawn must also be of suitable height."

## Tram driving tip

from Motorman Training Officer DAVID JONES

When operating a tram with a conductor, the correct procedure as covered by the Rules Governing the Operation of the Ferrymead Tramway, is as follows:

The Motorman gives 1 ring on the foot gong to indicate to the Conductor that he is ready to proceed. When ready the Conductor answers with 2 rings of the bell and if clear to proceed the Motorman answers with 2 rings on the foot gong and moves off.

## Obituary

## Leslie William Dew



MEMBERS will be saddened to hear of the death of one of THS's older members.

Les Dew was a genial, outgoing fellow with a love of all things to do with rail. He joined the Society in the 1970s and became secretary in 1977. He loved rail trips and organised many for the Society.

In 1980, he succeeded Dave Hinman as president and held the post till 1982.

One of his great contributions to THS was his involvement with the *On the Move* series of booklets depicting the history of the various modes of public transport (not just trams) in Christchurch. He was part of the editorial committee for many of them but was the principal author of Vol 5: *The Country Commuter*, Vol 6: *The*

*Tidal Travellers* Vol 7: *Tram to the Terminus* and Vol 8: *Buses—Beetle to Bristols*. He also authored some of the Society's booklets, e.g. *Papanui, the No. 1 Line*. Les's researches were always meticulous.

Les was a qualified draftsman and is believed to have worked for some years for the old Christchurch Regional Planning Authority. He later came back to the Planning Dept at Christchurch City Council where he worked until his retirement 24 years ago at the age of 60.

In later years, Les devoted much of his time to the Weka Pass Railway where he made an enormous contribution. He will be remembered for his book *The Great Northern* which tells the story of the Waiau branch, of which the Weka Pass Railway is a preserved section. This is a scholarly, yet eminently readable book which demonstrates Les's passion for detail and accuracy.

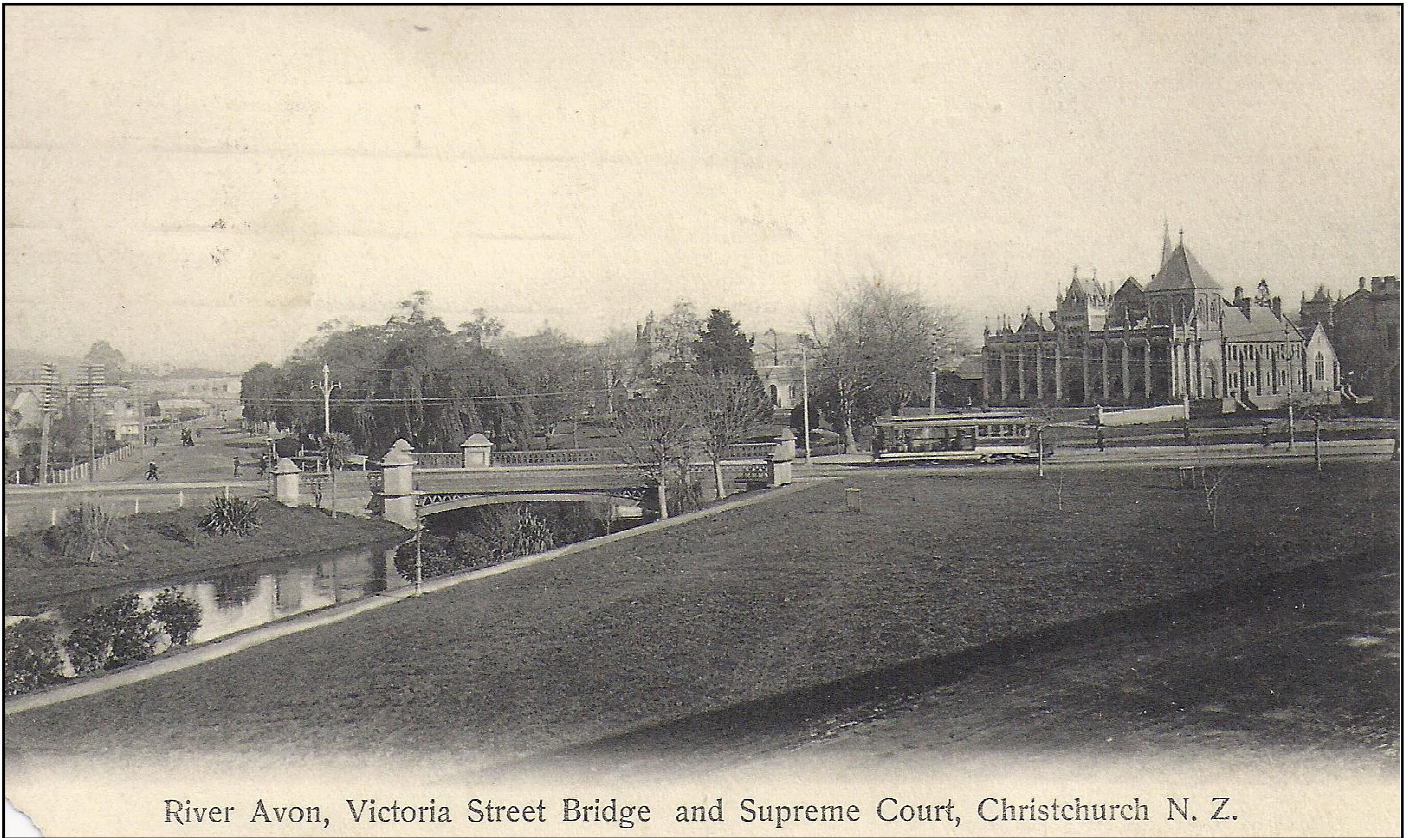
Les had been in indifferent health for some time and although less active in the affairs of his favourite organisations, he continued to take a vital interest.

To Dot and his family we extend our deepest condolences.

Joe Pickering, Dave Hinman, Graeme Belworthy

## A tale of two squares 1. — Victoria Square

DAVID CRITCHLEY has generously supplied copies of these postcards along with captions.

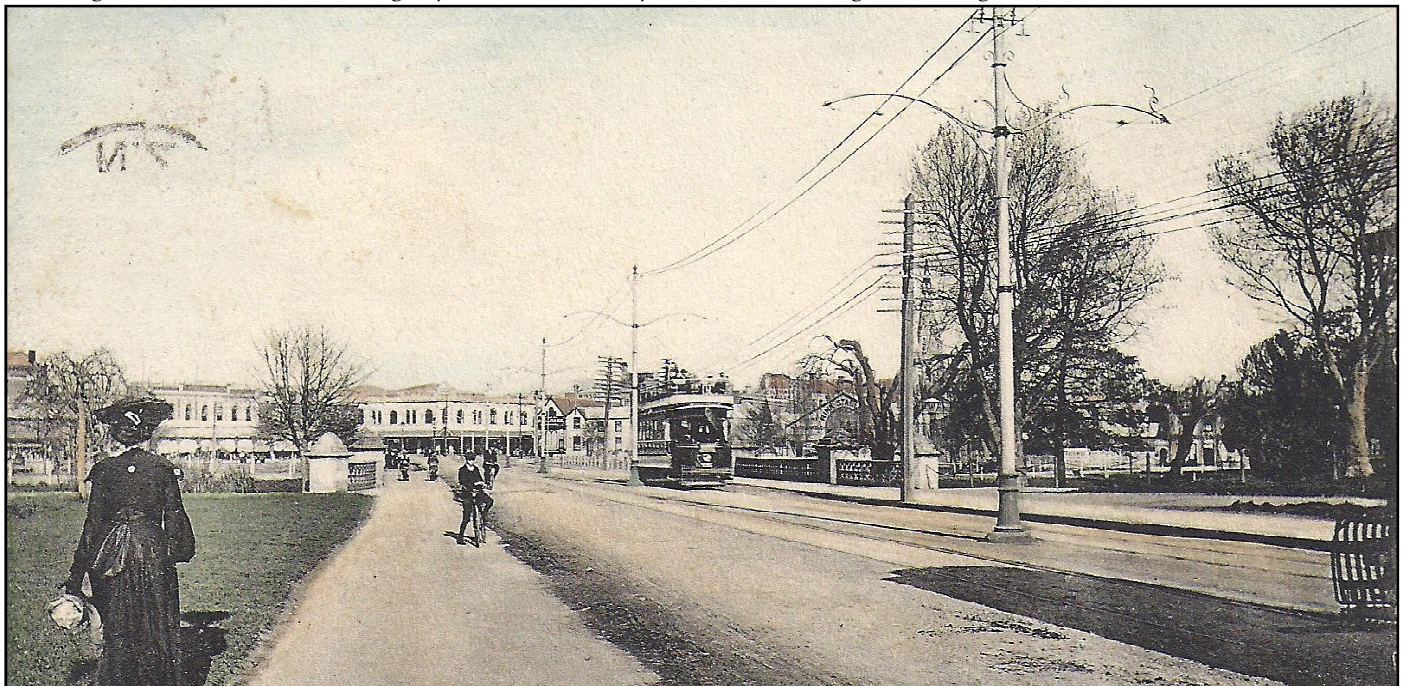


River Avon, Victoria Street Bridge and Supreme Court, Christchurch N. Z.

### *Christchurch, Victoria St Bridge c1905.*

*A Gold Medal Series litho postcard. Postmarked 1 March 1907. Looking more like a genteel English countryside, perhaps only the single deck American type tram and growths of flax along the river bank give away this scene as being from the South Island of New Zealand.*

*The 'Yank' tram is inbound on the Papanui line which left Colombo Street (at hard left) at an angle to run through Victoria Square along Victoria Street and out along Papanui Road. The Supreme Court building in the background was demolished in the 1980s.*



### *Christchurch, Victoria Square c1905.*

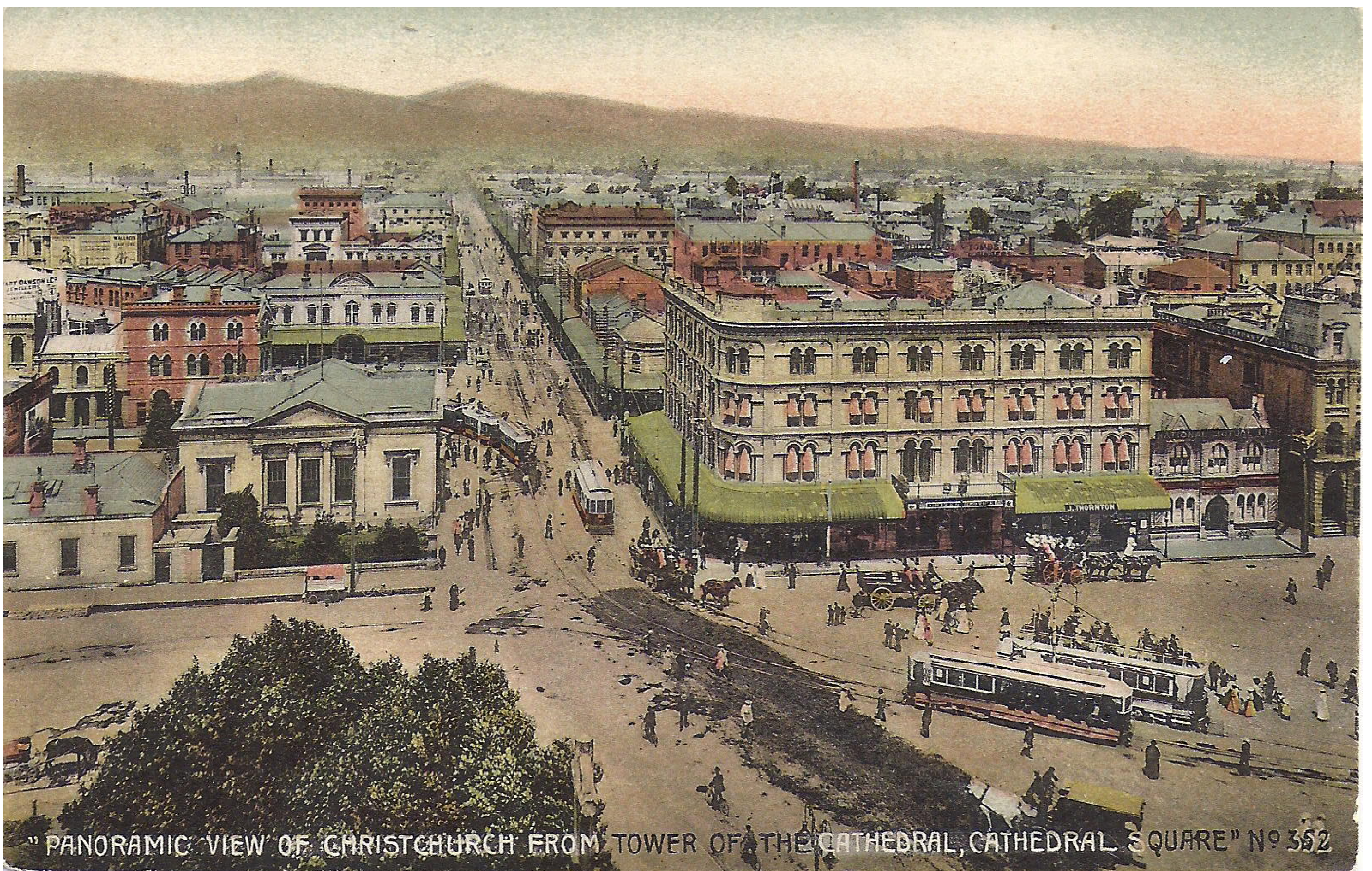
*A Muir & Moodie litho postcard. 5 June 1906. Another angle on the lovely tramway through Victoria Square with a double decker crossing the Bridge over the Avon River. The tram is outbound on the Papanui line and surprisingly considering it is a winter scene (note that the deciduous trees are all leafless) there are passengers on the top deck. Note also lifeguard and the shadow of a clerestory roofed single deck tram at the extreme right of the image.*

## A tale of two squares 2. — Cathedral Square

DAVID CRITCHLEY has also generously supplied copies of these postcards along with captions.

### *Christchurch, Cathedral Square c1913.*

*An unattributed photo postcard. Mint. An amazing image of Cathedral Square hosting three Boon electric trams, another single pole electric tram [Yank] and all types of trailers. In the foreground, a conductor collects fares on the top deck of trailer, while other passengers chat and enjoy the view across the Square.*



### *Christchurch, Cathedral Square c1906.*

*A W. Beattie & Co 'Moa' series litho postcard. Mint. From high up on the Cathedral comes this view across Christchurch in Edwardian times looking south towards the Port Hills. It highlights the flat terrain of the city, which gives the town a distinctive character compared to the big and hilly cities of Dunedin, Wellington and Auckland. In this view, a variety of trams can be seen in and around the Square. In the foreground a 'Yank' combination tram passes a big bogie double decker. The decker has a good crowd on the top deck, indicating that the image was probably taken during the short summer period. Meanwhile, in Colombo Street at least three trams can be glimpsed travelling along this wide boulevard and just for good measure a Kitson steam tram and two double deck trailers are turning into High St, possibly heading for the distant suburb of Sumner on the Pacific coast.*

## City loop extension forges ahead

THIS LAST MONTH in town has seen the return to service of Boon 152, after a period of driver (and conductor) training—conductors have returned to the city tramway for the first time since the earthquakes. The full loop is operating well and has been appreciated by visitors and locals alike.

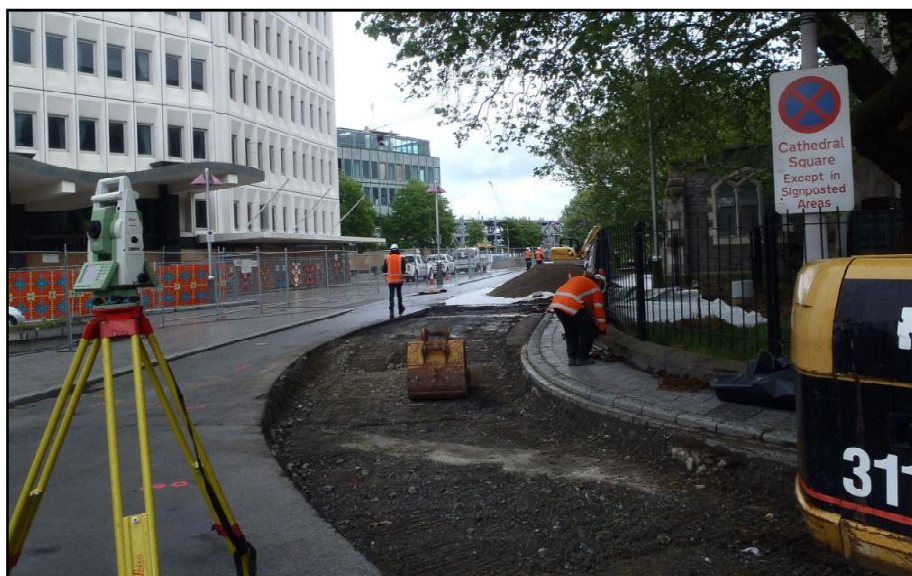
One really positive response appeared as a letter to the editor in *The Press* on 12 November, and again two days later as “Letter of the Week” for which the writer was presented with an Akaroa salmon.

### Lovely Moment

I had ‘a moment’ today—a lovely one actually. I looked out of my office window near Victoria Square and to my delight I saw the tram trundling past. I had to terminate my phone conversation and go outside and watch it roll towards New Regent Street. On occasion, I weigh up what I feel our community has lost and what it has gained because of the earthquakes. In sombre moments, I wonder whether, in my lifetime, I will ever see us regaining even a fraction of what we have lost. It takes a lovely moment like seeing our trams returning to old territory to restore the faith that, while we have lost so much, we haven’t lost everything. I gave the tram driver the most enthusiastic thumbs-up I could muster and he gave me the biggest smile.

Christchurch I still love you.  
KYLIE EHRICH, Middleton.

Progress with the tram extension is going well, and on target for opening in time for the Cricket World Cup in February. The “Cathedral Curve” track (and Cathedral Proof fence) has now been completed and a good start has been made on excavations at the interim High-Manchester terminus for the new cross over. Temporary wooden poles have been erected in High Street to replace building attachments (buildings gone!) and at Manchester Street to temporarily terminate the overhead, and deep holes have been appearing in parts of Oxford Terrace with steel poles to follow. In Oxford Terrace the track straightening has been completed and the contractors have started work on preparing to lay new pavers on the Cashel-Hereford Street section. How much of this area will still be a work site when the tram starts up is an



*The photos above and at the top of the next page show in sequence the completion of Cathedral Curve*

**All photos: Dave Hinman**



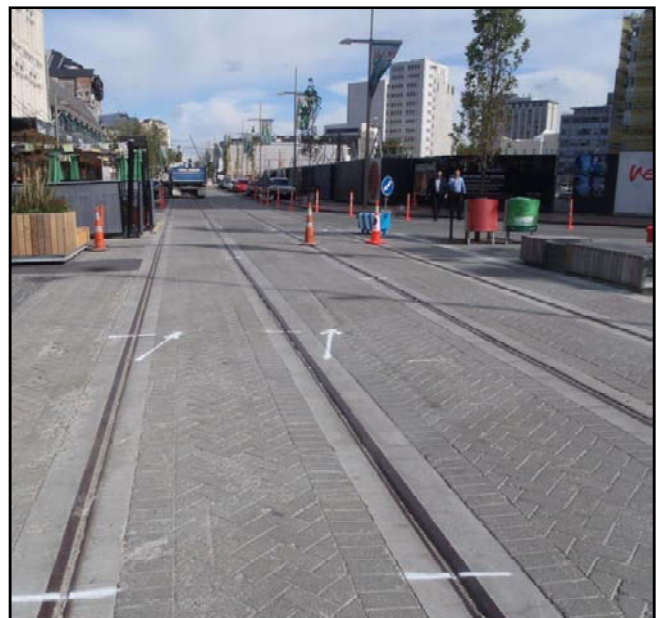
interesting question.

Tram 411 (tramway restaurant) has been repaired and refurbished and re-entered service on Wednesday 10 December. And, in anticipation of the extension opening where the initial running to Manchester Street and return will result in all trams needing to be able to be operated from both ends and with loading/unloading from both sides, Brill 178 is having a temporary change made to provide a manually operated folding door on the “off side” at the “back” end. THS have agreed to this, on the basis that when no longer required, the off side door can again be sealed up to as it has been since the early 1930s.



***...and at the other end, in High Street, work on the crossover is under way.***

The photos below and at the top of the next page show the site, the initial marking out and the work getting started. Note the stout temporary wooden termination poles.





### *...and in Oxford Terrace*

Part of the tram line was relaid to remove the kink. The track is now straight all the way along Oxford Terrace.



## Tramway inventiveness in Dunedin

Another finding in Dunedin's *Evening Star*, unearthed by JENNY BURCHELL.

Mr F. Ansdell, foreman of the overhead and permanent way branch of the Corporation Tramway Department, is the latest Dunedin man to come forward with an invention. The present attachment of the trolley-wire to the pole bracket, on the Dunedin and many other electric tramway systems, is by means of two brasses, each about 11 in long, and clamped together by four screws, placed just above the wire, which lies in the groove formed by the concave inside face of each brass. This attachment lasts from four to six months, and, being then worn out, the whole thing has to be "scrapped."

As on every line of track there is one of these every 120ft, exclusive of

what are known as "pull offs" (at rail points and other places), this frequent renewal of the attachments means considerable expense.

Mr Ansdell's attachment consists of a brass casting 5½in long, to the under face of which the trolley wire is held by an "envelope" of sheet brass, passing beneath the wire and clamped to the casting by two set screws. This envelope is the only part of the attachment subjected to wear (by the running wheel at the end of the trolley pole on the car). Consequently it is the only part of the attachment that requires renewal. The total cost of Mr Ansdell's attachment is about the same as the old attachment—viz., 3s 3d each; but as the envelope costs only 8d, it can

at once be seen what a saving there is in renewal – 8d against 3s 3d.

That is not all. About 38 of Mr Ansdell's attachments have been in use along George Street, and the life of each envelope has proved to be from 12 to 15 months – as against four to six months. Furthermore, the new envelope is much more expeditiously made by the overhead linemen than the old.

Mr Ansdell estimates that his attachment would save the corporation £99 1s 5d annually. He has had favourable opinions on it from Mr C.F. Alexander and several engineers, and has patented it throughout New Zealand. He leaves for England on the 26<sup>th</sup> inst., and will probably take out patent rights there and elsewhere.