

Under the Wires

**Remembering Wellington's
trolleybus heritage**

...plus other bus news



**Compiled by
Alan Wickens**

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Left: Ten years ago on 23 December 2010, Designline prototype 301 travels south on Willis Street on a Lyall Bay service. 349 follows with a short run to Aro Street.

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE



Thanks to this month's contributors;
 Graeme Bennett, Michael McKeon, D.L.A. Turner, Phil Waters, Garth Stewart, Graeme Inwood, Grant Fletcher,
 and David Jones

Thanks also to Mike Mellor for checking the text.



Merry
Christmas

OVERHEA(r)D - Issue 85

With Christmas just around the corner you will perhaps be either hinting or being asked for hints for that special present. Well the ultimate gift is available at \$10,000, or near offer – a Designline trolleybus. After originally being offered “from” \$10,000 back in January they are now available for sale again. As mentioned in last month’s issue, over half of them are in still in storage so there are plenty to choose from – maybe your favourite bus is even still on the market. An opportunity like this is unlikely to come again. Have a look at the Trade Me listing <https://www.trademe.co.nz/a/motors/buses/house-buses/listing/2838384016?bof=JhKGzrD4> or just go to [trademe.co.nz](https://www.trademe.co.nz) and enter 2838384016 into the search field. In terms of the remaining trolleybuses, 371 made the long road trip north from Wellington to Riverhead north of Auckland on 7 November being transferred to the yard of its owner. Having been stored in a yard in Seaview the bus had been used to store various components removed from other trolleybuses. Reports suggest there has been little interest in sales of the remaining trolleybuses.

Right: 371 at Kilbirnie depot on 26 August 2020 prior to its shift to storage at Seaview.



Closed overnight on 24/25 August, Moscow could once boast the world’s largest trolleybus system. Phil Waters points out that when withdrawn some Moscow trolleybuses were built as late as 2017. This was a fate worse than that suffered in Wellington. However, a “museum line” operating trolleybuses remains, due to pressure from the public and enthusiasts alike. It seems trolleybuses are part of local folk lore and songs, an integral part of Russian life – a pity it wasn’t the case in Wellington. Read more on this at:

<https://www.urban-transport-magazine.com/en/moscow-the-end-of-what-was-once-the-worlds-largest-trolleybus-operation>

For the record the very last Moscow trolleybus to run was 8341 BKM-321 at 03.14hrs on 25 August 2020. More on page 32.

On 9 November, NZ Bus announced it would cease operations of its *Airport Flyer* service on 27 November following the end of its licence agreement. Transit will be taking over the reins launching “a new and improved service next year”. It appears that until the new *Flyer* (or whatever it is named) starts in the first quarter of 2021 airport passengers will have to find an alternative means of travel. It does beg the question as to why a replacement service wasn’t organised for when the old one ended allowing a seamless continuation for customers. Snapper card payment will be reintroduced on the new buses, services will once again appear on the Real Time Information screens at bus stops and a seven-day service will be implemented. However, the service will continue to run only between the Railway Station and Airport. Unless the Covid-19 situation improves and aircraft travel increases it is unclear how Transit’s venture will be a success considering how few people used the service offered by NZ Bus, who by their own admission have incurred “significant losses” of late. Another consideration for those with a bus interest is what will happen now to former trolleybus 361? Having been used solely on *Airport Flyer* work for just over two years, will it have a future? More on this story on pages 14/15 and 42/43. Right: On 5 November, 2503 concludes its morning’s work at the Railway Station.



NZ Bus has a new landlord. In its results for the 6 months ended 30 September 2020 and released on 12 November 2020, Infratil, announced the sale of the Kilbirnie bus depot for NZ\$35 million. See: <https://infratil.com/assets/Uploads/Infratil-Interim-Report-2020-334931.pdf> In its annual report the former owners of NZ Bus reported: *During the year, Infratil sold NZ Bus to funds controlled by Next Capital. \$93 million was received with final consideration to reflect adjustments for working capital, capital expenditure, and an earnout mechanism. The balance will be paid in cash or as a vendor loan once post completion activities are finalised. When the company was acquired in 2005 it was hoped that regional transport agencies in Wellington and Auckland would recognise that by far the quickest and lowest cost way to improve mobility in those regions would involve a significant expansion in bus public transport. Unfortunately, public transport*

turned out to be subject to a complex and conflict driven regulatory and funding regime. Ultimately the new contracting model transferred absolute control and most of the risk to the regional councils while prioritising cost minimisation above all else. How much longer NZ Bus will remain at the Onepu Road site is unknown.

From 19 November the wearing of masks on public transport in Auckland became compulsory in response to the Covid-19 virus outbreak. The new Government requirement would not be enforced by bus drivers and non compliance would initially be dealt with by an educational approach with police only brought in as a last resort. However, a maximum fine of \$4000 or up to 6 months imprisonment can be imposed on passengers and drivers. The move was enacted as a further line of defence against the spread of the virus in the community. Meanwhile, New Zealand continued to operate on the lowest level of restrictions (Level 1) though there were calls for the use of face coverings to be worn on all public transport throughout the country.



It just remains for me to wish you a safe and happy Christmas and a New Year where we can all return to some normality in life.

Alan

As always, the photographs are mine except where stated.

Front Cover: 361 achieved notoriety by becoming the first (and only) battery-powered and propelled ‘trolleybus’ in Wellington. It was taken out of service in August 2016 and then readied for its conversion – the electronics in the rear compartment and the roof-top equipment and poles being removed. More of the story will be told in this month’s issue, but meantime we see 361 on 15 November 2013 approaching the switch just outside the Interchange at the end of a service from Island Bay. 361 continued to be seen regularly at work, although only on selected *Airport Flyer* duties. Its last day at work was 27 November.

A FOCUS ON 361 - LOOKING BACK AT ITS LIFE, YEAR BY YEAR



The on-going series about the Designline fleet - this month we remember 361.

Right: 361 arrived from Designline in Ashburton late in 2008 and here it is in "out of the box" condition inside Kilbirnie depot on 22 December still having the finishing touches applied. Have you noticed that two of the very important parts are still to be attached – the poles!



Left: Seatoun was definitely Route 11 so it is puzzling to see just a 1 showing in the Hanover display. 361 is about to leave Rongotai Road in Kilbirnie to continue the short distance along Troy Street. The driver will then be able to "put his foot down" for the 70kph section along Cobham Drive and Calabar Road when the route becomes part of SH1. This photograph was taken on 21 August 2009.

Right: This autumnal scene was taken on 25 May 2010 with our featured bus on an outbound service in Wakefield Street. Trolleybuses left the CBD via Lambton Quay, Willis Street and Mercer street where they branched and either went along Victoria Street (to Aro Street or Kingston) or via Wakefield Street, Cuba Street and Manners Street (if their destination was Island Bay, Miramar, Lyall Bay, Newtown Park or Seatoun). This would all change later in the year when Manners Street reopened throughout for buses.





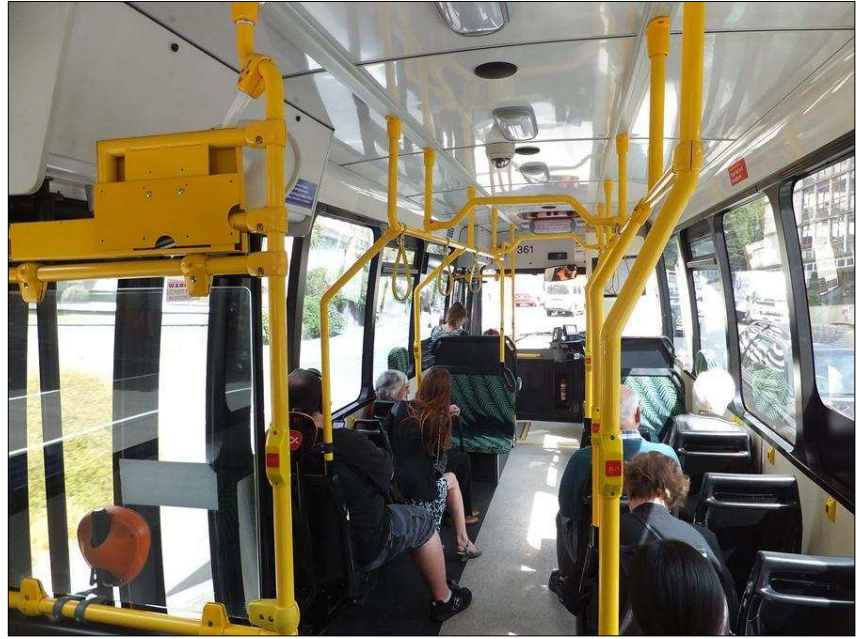
Left: Near the end of its run from Newtown Park, 361 travels along Lambton Quay towards the Railway Station on 29 September 2011. Airport Flyer 2505 follows behind on its way to Queensgate shopping centre in Lower Hutt.

Below: The intersection of Caledonia and Hobart Streets on 1 November 2012. This view shows the special work to good effect. 361 turns left into Hobart Street en route to Miramar while the route to Seatoun can be seen peeling off to the right.



Left: Shades of yellow. The era of advertising had well and truly arrived for trolleybuses (and diesel powered buses too) by 2013. Departing the Railway Station terminus on 8 October the yellow Go Wellington bus is advertising Yellow Pages and its mobile phone app. The journey to Island Bay would take 36 minutes.

Right: 361 amongst the traffic on 7 February 2014.



Left: ...and leaving Kilbirnie depot on 13 June to begin another shift.

Right: Another interesting location for special work was the intersection of Waitoa Road with Hataitai Road and Moxham Avenue in Hataitai. Whilst most of the trolleybus traffic turned into or out of Moxham Avenue on Route 2 (as seen here on 18 November 2015), during the peak hours Route 5 to Hataitai would turn left into Hataitai Road (using switch 473) and travel up the hill to the school and then return to this point on a one-way loop along Waipapa Road rejoining Waitoa Road half way up the hill in the distance. Buses would travel across the intersection on their return to the city. There was also provision for buses to travel straight across the intersection from right to left at the start of the day and to turn left out of Waitoa Road into Moxham Avenue at the end of a shift on Route 5.



Left: 2016 was the last year that 361 would operate as a trolleybus. Like a number of the fleet it wore large off-side advertisements and here it is with the last it displayed, an ad for the ANZ bank passing the main branch in Lambton Quay (closed since the Covid-19 pandemic) on 6 July 2016. (What was I doing photographing trolleybuses on my wedding anniversary?)



Left: On 8 September 2016, 361 was photographed over one of the former tram inspection pits at Kilbirnie depot. It had run its last as a trolleybus. It had been chosen as the pilot vehicle for a battery-conversion project. It was well known that the trolleybus fleet were on borrowed time and the network would be closed in 2017. The question was what to do with the vehicles. Although their bodies were modern looking and fairly new some of the working parts had been re-used and reconditioned from the previous Volvo fleet. Around the same time, 362 had been chosen for another project – to equip it with a Wrightspeed engine. Presumably NZ Bus hoped that one or both of these projects would be successful and lead to further use of the Designlines rather than them ending up as scrap, or being sold off to private buyers as eventuated.

Below: Meanwhile, the closure of the trolleybus network came on 31 October 2017, the south end of Kilbirnie depot filled up with redundant vehicles but 361 waited for its salvation. It is seen in the right hand corner of this photograph taken on 20 December 2020.



Left: After its long wait at the depot, 361 finally got the call. It was towed from Kilbirnie on 14 February 2018 to the nondescript workshop in Newlands to have its transformation. The shift truck was used for the movement and was followed by a depot pilot vehicle. The entourage are pictured in Newlands Road. Meanwhile the Wrightspeed development with 362 had been commenced in August 2016 and by the time of 361's transfer had been undergoing numerous tests which were eventually abandoned. Could 361 prove to be an easier and more successful project?

Right: Within a couple of months, the job had been done. On 23 April 2018, the bus was seen being transferred to Kaiwharawhara depot. New electronics were concealed behind the rear engine bay but the roof was transformed with six rows of batteries. The bus was only to remain in the Go Wellington colours for a matter of days.
Photo: Michael McKeon.





Above: Imagine my surprise seeing this sight in Kent Terrace on 8 May. What a transformation! 361 was on a test run around the city and turning around to join Cambridge Terrace and return towards the city centre.

Right: 361 was evaluated around various parts of the city for a couple of weeks following its launch and then went into regular use on Route 11 between the city and Seatoun. On 26 June 2018 the battery bus was photographed in Dundas Street, Seatoun on a city-bound service. The trolleybus wires were still in place at the time though only had weeks before they were removed.



Left: With the start of the new bus contracts in July 2018 361 was no longer used. It was by no means an “ugly duckling” but like the poor aquatic bird it just didn’t fit in. On 26 July it was found sunning itself outside Kilbirnie depot along with redundant MAN 740.

Right: So what new adventure awaited 361? After a wash and brush up at the depot on 19 September it was ready for its next assignment...





Left: This came as a transfer to the *Airport Flyer* dedicated fleet, though only on services between the city and airport (other *Flyers* continuing on to Lower Hutt). On 25 September the bus departs the airport with an afternoon service to the Railway Station. This pattern of work has continued to the present day, except all *Flyers* now only operate between the Airport and Railway Station. 361 drivers spoken with all seem to have a good word to say about the bus. Despite it being a good performer there was never going to be any other similar battery-powered ex-trolleybuses as the remaining fleet was disposed of or sold.



Above: On 7 May 2019, 361 joined its other NZ Bus diesel colleagues in the sunny yard at Kaiwharawhara depot. At the time the rest of the *Airport Flyer* fleet were based elsewhere.



Above: Which brings us up to the present - 361 can usually be found at work, Mondays to Fridays, on the *Airport Flyer* schedule. This drastically pruned timetable doesn't give the bus a lot of work but at least it can still be seen and enjoyed. It remains the only working link with the Designline fleet that ran too short a time. On 5 November 2020, 361 waits to leave Manners Street while working the 11.00 Airport to Wellington Station service. With the *Airport Flyer* contract concluding on 27 November what could be 361's future?

- Next month: **362**, the bus intended to be Wrightspeed powered, but finished as a shell -

MORE KILBIRNIE DEPOT GEMS FROM YESTERYEAR



Left: Looking toward the eastern end wall of Kilbirnie depot plus all the associated paraphernalia necessary for bus maintenance. On view over a former tram inspection pit is B.U.T. 24. Into service in 1954, 24 lasted until withdrawal came in 1982. Standing alongside in a similar situation is 1949 Leyland Tiger half-cab 251.*

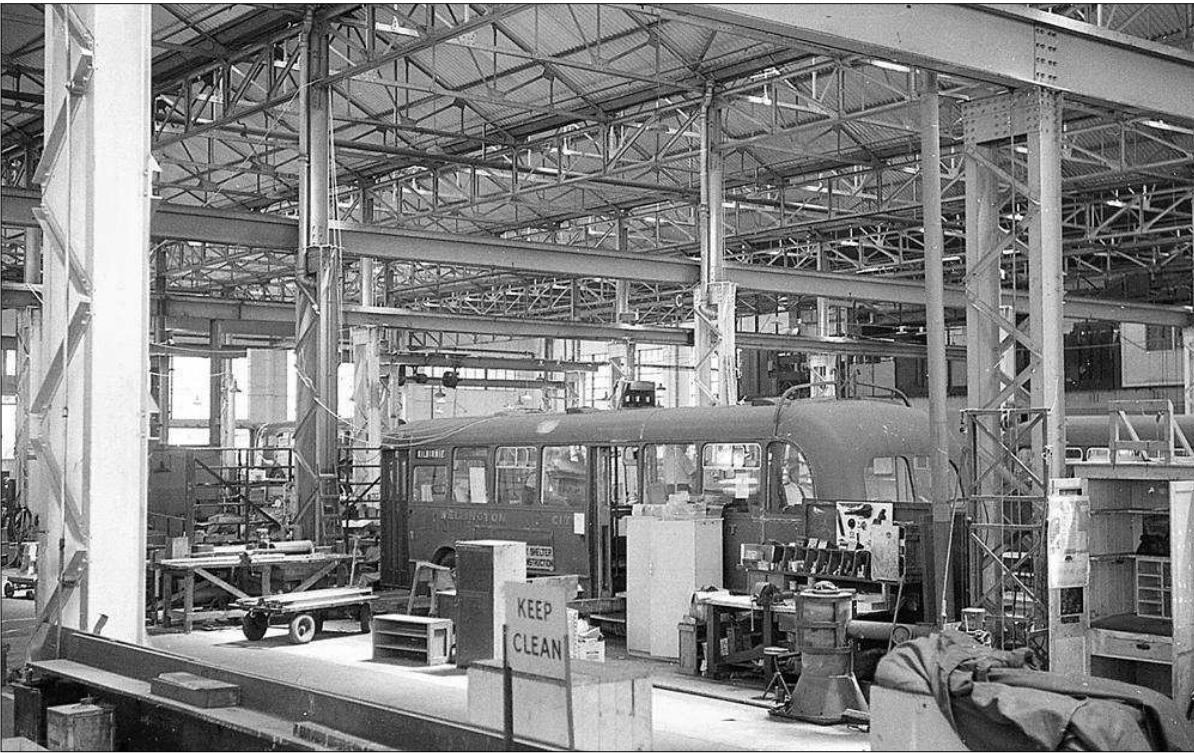
Photos:
Graeme Bennett.

*251 was later bought by a Kilbirnie depot electrician who converted it into a motorhome. After sitting in the back yard of his Tawa home for many years it went into the Little ownership and it was driven to Foxton where it remains. There are plans to one day restore it.

Right: We move out to the yard to find the ex London Transport RT 2592 double-decker showing N95 on its display, one of the London night services. At the time the bus was owned by The Wellington Lions Club. It was subsequently sold but its fate remains unknown. Keeping the stranger company are two first generation Wellington B.U.T.s, 31 and 28. These trolleybuses were both introduced in 1954 and lasted until 1983. A later model B.U.T. is up on the ramp undergoing maintenance.



Left: Back inside the depot we find our old friend Crossley 7. Its appearance suggests it has been withdrawn. The “clutter” surrounding it adds to the interest that so many enthusiasts have not had the pleasure of experiencing, depots generally being out of bounds. Look at all the trip hazards that would need to be made known to today’s visitors; that’s presupposing they would even be given permission to visit.



Above: Crossley 7 surrounded by an array of depot “stuff” giving an impression of a very busy workplace. In those days there was a much larger skilled depot workforce than today. “Keep Clean” implores the notice in the foreground; probably not an easy task with so much equipment everywhere.



Above: Half cab 250 stands over the inspection pit with B.U.T. 51 for company alongside. 51 was part of the second batch of B.U.T.s to arrive in Wellington in 1958. It was one of the last of these thirty-three trolleybuses to survive – in 1986. The two Leyland Tiger half-cabs shown in this feature were disposed of in the early 1970s.



Left: At least 50 years later, Volvo 207 and Designline 374 keep company over the inspection pits on 12 May 2009. The former tram traverser rails features in the foreground of this picture and the one above. The tram rails indicate a bygone heritage. Soon the trolleybus overhead will be taken down leaving one less link with the past. Photo: Alan Wickens.

JOHANNESBURG DOUBLE-DECKERS

After nearly a decade without significant main-line steam in New Zealand, D.L.A. Turner and a group of like-minded Kiwis travelled to South Africa in 1978 to once again experience a railway still mostly powered by large steam locomotives and to photograph all the associated infrastructure of a steam-operated railway.

Dave recalls: *While in Johannesburg, double-decker trolleybuses caught my eye, never having seen a double-decker version before. The Johannesburg trolley bus system was part of the public transport network in Johannesburg, South Africa, for nearly 50 years in the mid-twentieth century. Opened on 26 August 1936, the system gradually supplemented the Johannesburg tramway network, a network that was to last for many more years. The trolley buses in time partially replaced parts of the tramway network until what remained of that was closed on 2 August 1961. In preparation for the closure of the tramway system many brand-new trolleybuses were purchased in 1959, impressing both commuters and the travelling public alike. The Johannesburg trolleybus system was closed in 1982. However, in an attempt to achieve energy independence in the face of sanctions against the Apartheid regime, a demonstration system involving seven prototypes was used from 1982 until the system was abandoned on 10 January 1986. (Thanks to David Jones for his supplementary notes.)*



These three images were recorded in August 1978. The buses in the third image were clearly signed *Slegs Nie-Blanks (Non-Whites Only)*, a reminder that this was South Africa still under the Apartheid regime.

Note too, the sign to the right of trolleybus 1631 in this first image - FATTIS Health Foods



The trolleybuses in these views are three-axle B.U.T. 9641Ts with English Electric electrical equipment. They were bodied by Bus Bodies with separate front and rear entrances, 8'6" wide, 30 feet long and with seating for 73 passengers. They were renumbered late in their careers by adding 1000 in front of the fleet number. They did not carry registration plates and were the last examples of trolleybuses to run in South Africa.



600 and 1649 are preserved in the James Hall Museum in Johannesburg, the largest transport museum in Africa. However, 589 is being restored at Sandtoft (U.K.) to represent the SA class trolleybus operated by London Transport, diverted by the Second World War and run in the East End because they were 8ft wide. Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria had trolleybus systems but closed down much earlier.

Thanks to Phil Waters for additional information.
Photos: D.L.A. Turner.



Where you can catch up with what's been in the news and who has been saying what...

Metlink aligns advertising with community values and diversity

Metlink is moving forward with amendments to its advertising policy to better reflect the community it serves. Metlink general manager, Scott Gallacher says the changes, as part of Metlink's normal review processes, were a chance to do the right thing for the region. "Like any public transport provider Metlink needs to make use of advertising opportunities to help fund and strengthen services, but we've put considerable effort into ensuring what we promote aligns with the values and expectations of our diverse communities across the region," says Scott Gallacher. Metlink has long ruled out advertising fast foods on its fleet of buses, trains and ferries and recent changes now means it will also rule out advertising material in relation to alcohol, gambling and firearms. "We have a social responsibility and we take our role as connectors of the region very seriously, we want to support the health and wellbeing of our children, young people and wider community members. Roger Blakeley, Chair of Greater Wellington's Transport Committee says the changes to the advertising policy have public safety at the forefront. "It's vital that public transport remains a safe and inclusive space for the travelling public. We need buses, trains and ferries that reflect our region's diversity and we cannot diminish the beliefs of our passengers so Council has also agreed that religious or political material will not be promoted," says Cr Blakeley. Under its new policy, Metlink will accept advertising for social and community events where the main organiser or promoter is a faith-based organisation. "Council did recognise the value and importance of community events so we will continue to accept advertising for charitable causes, promotions, activities and events where the intent is to fulfil a charitable purpose rather than the promotion of faith," says Cr Blakeley. Alongside advertising across its fleet, Metlink will continue to display the latest COVID-19 messaging from the Government which includes QR contact tracing posters to help passengers record their journeys.

Source: **Metlink**. 22 October 2020. <https://www.metlink.org.nz/news/metlink-aligns-advertising-with-community-values-and-diversity/>

Public backs most radical plan to remove cars from Wellington's Golden Mile

Wellingtonians have overwhelmingly backed a radical plan to remove cars from the city's Golden Mile, to significantly widen footpaths and to turn several side streets in Wellington's inner city into pedestrian-only zones. Almost 2000 people gave feedback on three options for proposed changes to Wellington's Golden Mile, which runs 1.5 miles from the Beehive to the end of Courtenay Place. The vast majority supported the "transform" option, the most radical of the three options to reform Wellington's main shopping and entertainment area. The plan would cost up to \$80 million and remove up to 200 car parks between Wellington Railway Station and Kent/Cambridge Terrace. It is part of the \$6.4 billion Let's Get Wellington Moving programme designed to overhaul the capital's transport infrastructure. The "transform" option would remove all public traffic from the Golden Mile, create bus-only lanes along the entire stretch, and widen footpaths by as much as 75 per cent. The plan proposes pedestrianising the end of almost every side street which connects on to the Golden Mile, including Tory St, Lower Cuba St, and areas surrounding Midland Park on Lambton Quay. Service vehicles would still be able to access the streets when required. Some bus stops along the route would be closed or moved to reduce bus congestion in the streets. New, larger bus stops would be built, separated from the main footpath area. The changes would take an average of 3 minutes and 40 seconds off the time it takes a bus to travel the full length of the Golden Mile, according to estimates from Let's Get Wellington Moving, which is a partnership between Wellington City Council, the Greater Wellington Regional Council and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency. "This ensures the buses transiting the Golden Mile are able to keep to time. It will give the public more certainty, it means they can expect their bus within one to two minutes of the schedules rather than five to 10 minutes," regional council chair Daran Ponter said. Almost 95 per cent of buses in Wellington's centre city pass through the Golden Mile. In terms of tackling the problems of Wellington's bus delays, the Golden Mile is "a damn good place to start", Ponter said. The Golden Mile runs from Courtenay Place, through Manners and Willis streets, to the end of Lambton Quay. Despite its moniker, the stretch of road is actually closer to 2.5 kilometres or 1.5 miles. (Abridged).

Source: **Stuff**. 28 October 2020. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/wellington/123223131/public-backs-most-radical-plan-to-remove-cars-from-wellingtons-golden-mile>

Council agrees a 1.5% fare increase to maintain Metlink services following one year funding freeze

Fares on Metlink services across the region will be increasing in line with inflation from February 2021 following a decision at council today. In its annual fares review, Greater Wellington looks at the expectations of revenue and costs and determines what fare adjustments might be required for the following year to maintain good quality public transport services across the region. Greater Wellington had signalled in its current Long Term Plan (LTP 2018-28) that fares would increase in line with inflation from 2019/20 onwards but decided to freeze any increase last year. Roger Blakeley Chair of Greater Wellington's Transport Committee says that 2020/21 is a different story. "Against the backdrop of COVID-19 we've seen reduced patronage and fare collection. While we've seen a remarkable rebound in people using public transport across the Wellington region it still leaves ratepayers, the government and public transport users on the hook for any potential shortfall. "Many people don't know that public transport services are actually funded by three sources: Waka Kotahi as the government, fare paying passengers and rate payers across the region. "We have the ongoing commitment of Waka Kotahi and along with this minor increase we believe we will be able to guarantee continued provision of good public transport without pricing it out of the hands of those that rely on it the most," says Cr Blakeley. Under the changes most bus and rail non-cash fares including Snapper, 10-trip fares, rail monthly and MonthlyPlus passes and Wellington and Eastbourne 30 Day passes will see an average increase of 1.5 percent. There will also be a 50 cent increase in adult cash fares for zones 5, 10, 12 and 13, and child cash fares for zones 10 and 12. All other cash fares will remain unchanged. Cash fares are set at a 25 percent premium to the Snapper/ten-trip fares and then rounded up to the nearest

50 cent. Therefore increases to cash fares would only be made once the increase rounds up to the nearest 50 cent. Ferry fares are traditionally set at a higher price than standard bus and rail fares and as a result, the non-cash ferry fares will increase by on average 2 percent. All other fares will remain unchanged. Promotion of the changes and what they mean for passengers will roll out as part of a public information campaign prior to 1 February 2021 when they come into effect.

Source: **Metlink**. 29 October 2020. <https://www.metlink.org.nz/news/council-agrees-a-1-5-fare-increase-to-maintain-metlink-services-following-one-year-funding-freeze/>

Christmas and holiday travellers to miss out on Wellington Airport Flyer bus after new service announced

Travellers in and out of the capital over the Christmas and holiday period will not have access to the Airport Flyer bus. The current service operated by NZ Bus will end on November 27, making way for a new service operated by Tranzit early in 2021. A Wellington Airport spokeswoman was unable to provide an exact date of when the new service would operate or how much it would cost but did say the service would be operational in the first quarter of 2021 at a "good price point". In the meantime, Wellington Airport is encouraging the use of Metlink's number 2 bus, which can be caught near the airport, and other travel options such as taxis and ride sharing apps. The new service will be accessible to Snapper card users and Metlink's Real Time Information screens. It will run seven days a week, with more frequent and reliable scheduling, an airport spokesperson said. The Airport Flyer had not accepted Snapper cards since February 2019, when it was removed from Metlink services by NZ Bus, an unpopular move among many Wellington locals, in part due to the reduced reliability of the service. Monday's announcement brought disappointment for some as the new service will no longer run to the Hutt Valley, only between the airport and the central city. Previously, Hutt South-based MP Chris Bishop ran a vocal online campaign, Fix the Flyer, to get the service taken over by the Greater Wellington Regional Council. Bishop said Monday's announcement was disappointing; given there was a strong demand for the service in the Hutt Valley. He hoped to sit down with Wellington Airport and Tranzit in the next month in order to discuss whether extending the service to the Hutt Valley was possible. "I have had a brief chat with the airport already and my understanding is that they are open to that," he said. Lower Hutt mayor Campbell Barry said he was also disappointed by the decision, which he called "short-sighted". "I will be writing to Wellington Airport and their new operator to challenge this decision, and ask them to reconsider their commitment to Lower Hutt," he said. Wellington Airport's Leanne Gibson said the impact of Covid-19 had made it difficult to operate airport bus services but she believed the market would turn around. "We acknowledge the importance of a reliable bus service, and we are working hard to get a replacement up and running as soon as possible," she said. "Domestic passenger numbers are climbing, reaching around 60 per cent of normal in recent months and future growth looks positive. The airport bus has been run successfully as a commercial service in the past and it will be again."

Source: **Stuff**. 9 November 2020. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/wellington/123341255/christmas-and-holiday-travellers-to-miss-out-on-wellington-airport-flyer-bus-after-new-service-announced>

Airport Flyer Ceasing Operations

NZ Bus announced on 9 November 2020 that its Airport Flyer service operating from the CBD to Wellington Airport will cease operations at the end of November, in line with the expiry of its licence agreement with the Airport. NZ Bus has operated the Airport Flyer as a commercial service for over 15 years, providing a premium service for customers travelling to the Airport. More recently, the impacts of COVID-19 saw the service suspended earlier in the year but resume service in July despite limited air travel and significantly reduced passenger numbers. NZ Bus CEO Barry Hinkley said that the Airport Flyer had been an important part of NZ Bus over many years and that he was proud of the premium service that airport customers have enjoyed. "It has been a terrific service for our Wellington Airport customers. I'm proud of the high customer service levels provided by our staff and the support we have been able to provide to our passengers and the Airport" he said. "With our Airport licence expiring at the end of November and passenger numbers still severely impacted by the pandemic, the market for a premium airport service has been really tough this year. We have continued to operate the service, to support the Airport and our customers, despite the significant losses we have incurred". With the NZ Bus licence to access the Airport coming to an end on 30 November, Wellington Airport is working towards a new licence to operate an airport bus service in the New Year. "We have worked closely with the Airport for over 15 years, and know they are working to finalise alternate arrangements for new service. We wish the new service every success" Mr Hinkley said. NZ Bus Chief Operating Officer, Jay Zmijewski said that all staff associated with the Airport Flyer will have ongoing roles with NZ Bus. "Our drivers from the Airport Flyer service have great customer skills and an intimate knowledge of Wellington. They are terrific ambassadors for NZ Bus and will have ongoing positions across the NZ Bus business" he said. "I want to thank all our Airport Flyer staff for their role in providing a premium service to customers and we look forward to them continuing with us on our Metlink network". The last day of the Airport Flyer service will be Friday 27th November. Customers wanting to travel to the airport can continue to catch the high frequency Route 2 service which travels between Karori, through the CBD and Kilbirnie to the Airport.



Source: **NZ Bus**. 9 November 2020. <https://www.nzbus.co.nz/news-from-nzbus/airport-flyer-ceasing-operations>

Wellington has had a long association with the *Flyer*. Here is one of the original buses, as operated by Stagecoach, in Wakefield Street in September 2002. The service received the name *Airport Flyer* in 2008. The fleet of 10 dedicated Scania began in 2009.

New Airport Flyer bus service next year – but only to the CBD

News from Wellington Airport

Wellington Airport will launch a new and improved bus service for Airport travellers next year. The replacement service will deliver more frequent and reliable scheduling, a seven-day service, and access to Snapper and Metlink's Real Time Information screens. It will also transition to electric buses in future. The service will run from the Airport to the CBD, providing connections to further destinations on the public transport network. Wellington Airport is working with established bus operator Tranzit for the replacement service after NZ Bus confirmed it does not intend to operate the Airport Flyer beyond its licence expiry at the end of November. The last date for the service will be 27 November. "We acknowledge the importance of a reliable bus service and we are working hard to get a replacement up and running as soon as possible," said Leanne Gibson, GM of Facilities, Transport, and Technology. "The impact of Covid-19 has made it extremely challenging for operators to run the service, with passenger numbers dropping to just 1% of normal during the level 4 lockdown in April. "Domestic passenger numbers are climbing, reaching around 60% of normal in recent months and future growth looks positive. The Airport bus has been run successfully as a commercial service in the past and it will be again. "We are confident Tranzit will provide a great service for our passengers and we are now focusing our time on agreeing the details of the new service with Tranzit, including a restart date. We would like to acknowledge the more than 10 years of service NZ Bus has provided to Wellingtonians on the Airport route. "In the meantime, there are other options available for Airport travellers, including the public bus and shuttles, taxis and app-based pick up which all have comparable costs. There are also a wide range of parking options, free pick-up and drop-off zones and two car share operators available to and from the airport."

Background

Tranzit has been selected as the preferred operator following a recent tender process. The tender process was interrupted due to Covid-19, meaning a new service could not be established prior to 30 November. The incumbent supplier NZ Bus is unable to extend their current service.

Media release from Chris Bishop MP

National List MP based in Hutt South Chris Bishop has welcomed today's announcement from Wellington International Airport that the Airport Flyer bus service will return, with local provider Tranzit Coachlines contracted to provide the new service. "While I was MP for Hutt South I fought hard to save the Airport Flyer in 2018 and have since spent the last two years advocating for the service to be improved, with bus times back on the real time information boards, and with Snapper accepted on the bus. "There's good and bad news for the Hutt from today's announcement. The good news is that the service will be a regular 7 days a week service, with Snapper accepted and the bus times back on the Metlink real time boards. This is welcome progress. It's also exciting that the buses will be electric in the future. "However Hutt residents will be disappointed that there is no immediate resumption of the service to and from the Hutt, with the new service just running from the Wellington train station to the airport. "It's encouraging that the airport and Tranzit have an open mind about future extensions of the service and I will be talking to them in coming weeks about how we can make this happen. On behalf of the Hutt I will keep fighting hard for a direct Hutt to Airport bus service."

Source: **Wellington Scoop**. 9 November 2020. <http://wellington.scoop.co.nz/?p=132361&cpage=1#comment-1766317>

Who's in charge here?

Could Greater Wellington Regional Council please tell contractors that the public wants a regular bus to Wellington Airport, and that that is what they will be contracted to provide (*Christmas won't get off to a Flyer*, Nov 10)?

For some reason the bus contractors seem to think they'll provide what they decide to provide, and when they'll have buses running.

Does GWRC want all those extra cars on the road to the airport? Not having the Flyer on the electronic arrival boards was bad enough. Not having a bus over Christmas is ridiculous. Not having a bus going to the Hutt Valley is ridiculous.

Who is in charge here?

Jenny Clark, Paekākāriki

Letter to *The Dominion Post* 11 November 2020.

Hutt politicians teaming up to extend Airport Flyer route

The Hutt's three top elected politicians are joining forces in an attempt to bring the Airport Flyer bus service back to the area. Hutt mayor Campbell Barry, Hutt South MP Ginny Andersen, and Hutt-based List MP Chris Bishop will pen a joint letter to Wellington Airport owner Infratil, as well as newly appointed bus operator Tranzit. "Quite clearly all of us are really disappointed at the decision not to include the Hutt in the new run," Barry said. Wellington Airport announced on Monday the Airport Flyer would return under a new operator in early 2021, and would feature Snapper card payments and Metlink's Real Time Information screens, both of which were removed from the service in 2019. It will run seven days a week between the airport and CBD, with more frequent and reliable scheduling, an airport spokesperson said. But it would not return to service between the CBD and the Hutt. The Airport Flyer has been a source of controversy and frustration for many. The bus earned a reputation for poor reliability, and the lack of Real Time information meant travellers could find out if their bus was running on time. Andersen said she was concerned about how losing the service would impact the elderly, disabled, and people travelling with young children. Transferring from the train to a bus was not easy for people with mobility issues, she said. "Especially if you're carrying a baby, a toddler and a suitcase, it's impossible," she said. Barry said the fact that all three of the major political players in the area were collaborating would lend more weight to the argument. "It's really important on an issue like this to have all the local representatives singing from the same song sheet. This is the way we should be doing things as much as possible," Barry said. "We all know that when a service gets taken away, it's hard to get it back. We're pushing hard to ensure that when it does open, it will include Lower Hutt." He said rapid growth in the Hutt made the decision not to run the service "short-sighted", with the new Sebel Hotel set to open next year and more professionals basing themselves in the area. Bishop was part of the 2018 'Save the Flyer' campaign, in which he heard from thousands of Hutt residents who wanted the service to stay. "It was pretty clear that there is a strong demand in the Hutt for this, it's a critical connector to the Airport and the Eastern Suburbs," he said. He said he had already spoken to the Airport which indicated it would be open to extending the service, but would still need to convince Tranzit. "There's a strong, united Hutt voice, Labour and National, and hopefully we can make it clear that the Hutt wants and needs a direct Airport Flyer service," he said.

Source: **Stuff**. 11 November 2020. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/hutt-valley/123349545/hutt-politicians-teaming-up-to-extend-airport-flyer-route>

Right: So what will become of 361 at the end of the NZ Bus Airport Flyer contract? The unique bus turns out of Willis Street into Lambton Quay on 11 November 2020 with the 11.00 Airport to Wellington service, its future uncertain.



Bus drivers forced to go toilet in bushes threaten to walk off the job

Hundreds of Wellington bus drivers are threatening to abandon their routes in protest over a lack of toilet facilities. Tranzurban drivers claim they have been forced to go to the toilet in bushes and behind their buses since changes in July 2018, which scheduled rest breaks at random bus stops and terminals without adequate facilities. Tramways Union secretary Kevin O'Sullivan said the lack of toilet facilities was not something you would expect in a first-world country. "It's not rocket science, it's a basic amenity. If you work somewhere, you should have access to a bathroom. It's not that hard," he said. "It's pretty awful really ... They keep saying they'll fix it, but it's been pretty slow." The structure of shifts meant drivers were usually away from the depot for four to five hours without access to a toilet. Some drivers had complained of dehydration, leading to kidney damage, headaches, and concentration issues. The issue was made worse because of the age of the workforce, O'Sullivan said. Bus drivers are the oldest workers of any key industry, according to Stats NZ. The average age of bus drivers in New Zealand is 54, eight years older than the age for the next highest industry. In a letter to the mayors of Wellington, Porirua and Lower Hutt, drivers said they would abandon their routes if toilet facilities were not provided by January 1, 2021. "Drivers will have no further options but to drive to the nearest public convenience some distance away, incurring late running and disruption to timetabled services," the letter read. At a minimum, drivers want good quality portaloos with combination locks and sensor lights at each location. The letter was initiated by individual drivers, but has been endorsed by Tramways Union. Metlink general manager Scott Gallacher said a number of new sites were in the process of being developed. "A drivers' facility will be part of a new Metlink layover at 248 Thorndon Quay, which will be in addition to existing facilities at the Lambton Interchange. The layover facility is currently in the design phase and construction will start in 2021. A driver toilet will be added as part of Metlink upgrades at Porirua station which is also planned for construction next year." Metlink is developing a business case to lease and modernise six Wellington City Council-owned sites at Wilton, Northland, Highbury, Houghton Bay, Karori and Lyall Bay, he said. "Metlink has been working with unions, territorial authorities across the region and our operators to fully understand this issue and ensure that that drivers are well-supported and have access to a good standard of facilities," he said. "Bus drivers are the backbone of public transport and are entitled to hard-earned rest and meal breaks."

Source: **Stuff**. 13 November 2020. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/wellington/123373048/bus-drivers-forced-to-go-toilet-in-bushes-threaten-to-walk-off-the-job>

Cheaper bus fares would have overwhelmed Wellington bus network - regional council

Wellington's public transport network risked being overwhelmed by an influx of passengers if a Government scheme designed to subsidise fares for people on low incomes had gone through, according to newly released documents. The Government looked last term at creating a green transport card to subsidise public transport fares for as many as 900,000 community service cardholders, including beneficiaries, refugees, low-income families, and student allowance recipients. But NZ First blocked the scheme, proposed by the Green Party, at Cabinet. The policy wasn't ready for implementation under the last government, said Labour's new transport minister, Michael Wood. He declined to say whether Labour would press ahead with the scheme this term. If the scheme had gone ahead, the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) would have had "the most challenges" of all the large regional councils in the country in getting ready for the greater public transport patronage that would come with cheaper fares, according to policy work released under the Official Information Act. The GWRC feared the region's public transport wasn't ready for additional demand on the network at peak times, and even asked for the rollout to be delayed by two years. The Ministry of Transport last year went out to regional councils to ask them how cheaper fares for community services cardholders would work on their public transport networks. Councils in Christchurch and Auckland had enough capacity on their public transport to get the scheme running earlier, although Auckland said it could take 18 months to adapt its ticketing system. But transport officials said the Greater Wellington Regional Council was "very concerned about the impact on its bus network if on-peak services are included [in the scheme]". "GWRC is concerned about the difficulties it is currently facing in increasing public transport capacities at peak times," they said, according to the newly released papers. The problem ran deep, with the council saying that "it would take two years to resolve its capacity issues". Buses weren't the only problem for Wellington. The council also said that the card could be "difficult to implement" ahead of integrated ticketing being rolled out on the city's trains in 2021. This is because the transport card would work as another layer on top of existing travel cards, like the snapper card, (right) but this is a problem in Wellington, where trains use paper tickets, rather than electronic cards. "Unfortunately, this approach would not currently work with train services in Wellington, as train passengers currently use paper tickets instead of smart cards," the documents said. The paper brouhaha over paper tickets meant GWRC was the only council that didn't favour the 50 per cent subsidy – preferring another scheme that wouldn't require electronic cards. Ministers initially wanted the card to be up and running by this year. Transport officials pushed back saying that mid-2021 was the earliest feasible date the scheme could be difficult for Wellington. "Among councils, GWRC would face the most challenges in implementing the scheme by mid-2021," officials said. "This is due to the difficulties that GWRC is facing to increase the capacity of Wellington's public transport network". Greater Wellington Regional Council Chair Daran Ponter said the Council was still keen for a subsidy. "Greater Wellington Regional Council would welcome a nationwide public transport discount for community services cardholders," Ponter said. "We are committed to providing transport options that give more people more ways to get around the city and the region." But he said that if Labour is to resurrect the scheme, the Council would be looking for the Government to pay not just the subsidy, but the cost of increasing capacity on the network. "We know that with the right support from central government we can open up public transport to residents on lower incomes," Ponter said. "This means central government funding to cover the lower fare revenues and also funding for the new trains and electric buses we will need to meet the increased number of passengers we would expect from this initiative".



Snapper card

Source: **Stuff**. 20 November 2020. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/300162942/cheaper-bus-fares-would-have-overwhelmed-wellington-bus-network--regional-council>

ALCOHOL, FAST FOOD ADS BANNED ON BUSES

Alcohol and fast food promotions were regularly seen on buses over the years, but the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) has now decided that it will no longer accept such advertising. In addition, advertising for gambling, firearms, political or religious messages will also not be permitted on the trains, buses or ferries it operates.

In years past it was possible to advertise most socially acceptable things of the day, even cigarettes. Many of Wellington's B.U.T. trolleybuses contended it was "Time for a Capstan" (cigarette). Lion beer was another popular promoted product. Even all-over ads sponsored by local politicians occasionally appeared on buses. This is now all at an end as announced by the GWRC on 22 October (see page 13). Since the advent of Metlink livery most ads on the outside of buses have been much reduced in size to small side and rear panels. Gone are the heady days when Go Wellington (NZ Bus) plastered up to the complete sides of some of its trolleybuses and diesel buses for wine, beer and fast food products. However, the adverts certainly added some colour and interest to buses and I took a particular interest in recording them. As a result of that we can now look back at what was once a commonplace sight.



Left: 342 with a medium sized ad for Woodstock bourbon as the bus stands at the Railway Station terminus in September 2017.

Right: Advertising on Designline trolleybuses became common from 2012. The days of tidy buses were over as there was a dollar to be earned. With Christmas just around the corner, here is 343 in Lambton Quay in November of that year with a promotion for Stella Artois.



Left: A promotion for the Monopoly game played at McDonald's seen spread across the side of 346 in September 2015. These ads were a good source of revenue for NZ Bus. Nowadays, money raised from advertising helps support Metlink's coffers.



Left: Whereas the ad on the previous page promotes a game at McDonalds, this ad on 348 is clearly for its food. The bus is pictured on an inbound service in Manners Street outside the Maccas outlet in May 2014.

Right: Monteith's beer ad on 354 tells people that there are 20 brews to choose from. The bus is departing from the Railway Station terminus in March 2015.



Left: Presumably Subway will fall into the same league as other fast food providers and will be prohibited from display on public transport services operated by Metlink. 354 had a promotion to attract potential customers in December 2016 with the company using a trolleybus to spread the message around Wellington. Climbing Brooklyn Road, 354 is pictured on its way to Kingston.

Right: It wasn't only wine and beer messages that found their way onto buses. Isaac's cider was another alcoholic drink that could be found on the side of trolleybuses as seen here with 355 in Lambton Quay in December 2014 nearing the end of a run from Newtown Park.





Left: It wasn't always the preserve of trolleybuses to carry what would now be deemed questionable advertising. ADL 4182 had most of its off-side covered with a *Corona* beer ad. It is seen in July 2016 stopped outside Wellington Hospital, a place that would have seen its fair share of alcohol-related medical matters.



Right: In more recent times (July 2018) alcohol ads were still appearing on the city's buses as witnessed here with ADL 4134, one of the NZ Bus fleet sent from Auckland to "fill the gap" left behind with the withdrawal of the trolleybuses in October 2017. However, this form of advertising did tend to become less apparent.



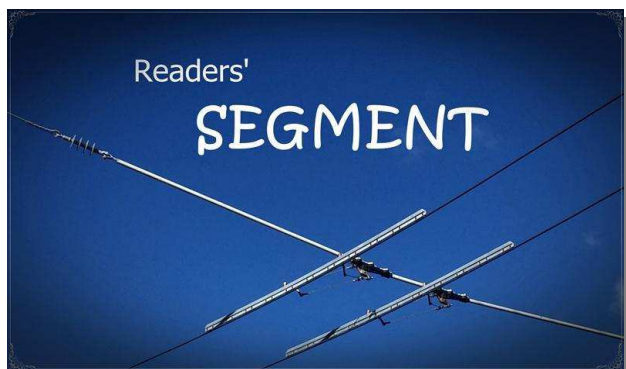
Left: DB Export beer's *More Lageriness More Hoppiness* is the message on the side of ADL 4181 seen here in Lambton Quay in January 2016.

Below: It is alcohol advertising (rather than firearm or gambling promotion) that has been the mainstay on buses when these vinyl ads have been attached. 4185 waits at Lyall Bay terminus in February 2018 showing off its message for *Smirnoff* vodka.

Below: This feature is not intended to be exhaustive of advertising that has appeared, rather a selection in recent years. An interesting question is how Metlink would treat an enquiry for soft drink for one of its vehicles? It wasn't seen as a problem back in December 2015 when trolleybus 356 was carrying an advertisement for *Pepsi*, and seen here in Lambton Quay.



It was certainly interesting while it lasted.



Your Comments and Feedback

“Congratulations from Northern Ireland on yet another interesting UTW! We had

several AEC Monarch tower wagons in Belfast, doubling as tow trucks for disabled trolleys and carrying a couple of spare wheels and jacks for on-road changes. I think yours (page 2, October 2020) is a 1932 Bedford, which owed much to parent company GM's Chevrolet LQ 2-tonner stateside. I remember these vehicles still in use in Lincolnshire during the late 1950s. Vehicles for export had a BRITISH BEDFORD plaque on each side of the bonnet. Sadly, such adornment might not go down too well these days ...”
Michael McRitchie, Northern Ireland. [Ian Robertson thinks it may be a Thornycroft or a White – see next page – Ed]

“What a splendid issue. I loved the detailed article on trolleybus model 208. Ian Robertson was quite the perfectionist and that model of 208 was amazing. I had the pleasure of serving on the Wellington Omnibus Society committee with Ian for many years. He had many strings to his bow apart from model maker, WCT bus driver and a Presbyterian minister.”
David Donald, N.Z.

“A bit more on route 10 (page 23, November 2020): in 1982 it was the inbound version of the 15, but from Wakefield Street going via Willeston-Customhouse-Whitmore instead of the 15's Ballance-Featherston-Hunter-Victoria routeing, but by December 1984 it meant buses leaving the city (to whatever destination) via Customhouse-Victoria-Wakefield. (The outbound 15 hadn't changed).”
Mike Mellor, N.Z.

“Wow! That model (Volvo 208) is really something. Regarding the trolleybus burnt out on 7 February 1967 bushfires in Hobart (page 12, November 2020), I'm not sure how many were burnt, I think only one, but the one I had a cutting on that looks like it could be the one that was on the south-western Cascades Route in Hobart - trolleybus 234, and was outside the historic Cascades Brewery which was also destroyed. To put those fires into perspective, they reached to within 1km of the Hobart GPO. 234 had around 1.6km to go to reach the terminus when it was caught by the fire and destroyed. It was 3km from the City terminal. The entire overhead on Strickland Ave was destroyed in the fire.”
Garry Ford, Australia. [Both Garry Ford and Terence Revell point to Ian G. Cooper's book "Trolleybuses of Tasmania", published by the Australian Electric Traction Association, that contains an interesting account of the bush fires and this particular incident. Fifty-nine people tragically lost their lives in the blaze, thousands were made homeless and over 15,000 buildings in Hobart were destroyed. In just a few hours 265,000 hectares of this corner of south-east Tasmania were lost to the fire. The driver of trolleybus 234 and his one passenger abandoned the bus just before it was engulfed in fire. The bus was left a shell and was removed to the South Hobart rubbish tip the following day. Apparently 234 was not the only Hobart trolleybus lost to fire; Canton 84 mysteriously caught fire at the depot on 1 October 1964. 82 and 89 alongside it were also damaged although they were repaired. Anyone interested in further information is asked to get in touch – Ed]

“It seems so long ago that I was in Wellington in March 2016. Thanks for continuing to publish UTW. I always loved Wellington and always will. I learned last week that Moscow abandoned its very large trolleybus network in March. What a shame. Do these people think that removing electrically powered vehicles has no effect upon their environments? In many ways I believe that our world is going crazy. COVID-19 has ended almost all international travel, not that I have any desire to go anywhere. In the meantime, keep sending me your magazines. They remind me of my several trips to NZ and the joyous times that I had in your beautiful country. Memories keep us going.”
Jeff Wein, U.S.

“Thank you for the November 2020 edition of Under the Wires. It came after we were told of a second lockdown from the 5th October to last at least 4 weeks. So when the next issue appears hopefully we will be back to normality; time will tell. As always, a perfect mix of items old and new all of great interest. Like the model Volvo trolleybus 208, almost like having the real thing in size. The second part of David Jones's photographs was brilliant together with the many tram and trolleybus views that complement each other. Good to see the modern scene as well. Pleased to have an update on the Christchurch restaurant tram at Ferrymead and of course the heritage gem of trolleybus 210; it must have been a fine sight during the trolleybus festival of 2004. That was a nice piece on New Zealand Coach Services with the collection of preserved trolleybuses. Really hope there will be a happy ending to those vehicles stored there. Also three years on from the trolleybus withdrawal in Wellington and they are still "tweaking" bus services as though things will never be right. With changes in travel patterns they probably never will. As always keep it going, we all appreciate the work that goes into each magazine.”
Phil Waters, U.K.



(158) preserved in Dunedin. At present it is a motor home but the intention is to restore it as a bus in due course. We got it as it still has the Nissan 4D (four cylinder two-stroke) engine and Leyland SCG gearbox as per the original. It is most likely the only one with the original drive line in it today so we were keen to get it for the Otago Heritage Bus Society collection. Here are a couple of photos of what they looked like in DCT service.”
Michael Jarka, N.Z.

“Regarding the mystery chassis parked at Kilbirnie, as featured in the last two issues of UTW. I am 100% certain that it is a Nissan Scorpion RX102 for Dunedin City Transport. Why I say this is because the chassis were assembled in Auckland (by whom?) and driven south to Dunedin, including a ferry trip, in lots of three. A former inspector, the late Ray Hurring was one of the drivers involved. They were provided with two pairs of overalls, a woollen coat and a motorcycle helmet as protection for the trip. The buses were bodied by Emslie in Dunedin and became DCT 153-167. They have a trolleybus connection as they were intended to replace the trolleybuses on the Halfway Bush service. Due to them being under-powered, their tenure on such a demanding route was short-lived. We have one



"Thanks for the excellent article you have done on the model of Volvo trolley 208. The quality of the photos is impressive. There is just one correction that I think should be made in the next issue. The trolleybus model was not presented to Kevin Crompton, it was made for Wellington City Transport and in their possession until passed on to subsequent owners of WCT. It was the model of the new Cable Car that was presented to Kevin Crompton and is now on display at the Cable Car Museum. Regarding the photo of the tower wagon in New Plymouth, I have no recollection of the make of the truck. Although I saw it often during tram days, during the construction of the trolley bus overhead and subsequent servicing, I did not find the truck of sufficient interest to take notice of the make. It is possible it was converted from one of the early New Plymouth buses. From the list in O.B. Monograph No.10, "Northern City Transport" there are two likely contenders: a Thornycroft or a White. As to the location of the photo; I did know the entire trolleybus route reasonably well. The high ground behind the street level houses limits likely locations. My guess is that is in Tukapa Street in Westown, near where I lived. The other possibility is in lower Morley Street, just up from Devon Street where there is a hill on the right hand side of the road going out. The feeder wire for the overhead wires should define the location more precisely, but again I was then not interested in that aspect to take particular notice. Keep up the good work." **Ian Robertson, N.Z.**



Above: The model Ian Robertson made in 1981.

"Congratulations on another excellent issue of UTW. The highlights for me were; The cover photo. P2 - The photo of the New Plymouth tower wagon. P4/5/6 - A Focus on 360, Looking back at its Life, Year by Year. P7 - More Hobart Trolleybus Memories. P8/9/10 - WOW! is the appropriate terminology to describe the superb Volvo model. I could easily believe that the interior photos are of the actual vehicle. P11 - All three photos. P13 - Readers' Segment re Michael Ball's letter; I have viewed the video's mentioned. P20/21/22/23 - The David Jones Collection; all of the photos. Re the comments about dewirements at the switch in Stout Street; in the latter days of the system in my home town of Derby (U.K.), this aspect of trolleybus operation was commonplace at many frogs and crossings, also often caused by excessive speed. P24/25 - Trams around Stout Street; am I correct in stating that the trolley pole of 143 is on the wrong wire? Is the facing switch here faulty? P26/27 - A Look Back At Karori Depot. P31 - The picture of an impressive looking Hess double articulated trolleybus. Am I correct in stating that the view was taken in Lausanne? P34/35 - Unrepeatable Kilbirnie depot Scenes, particularly those featuring RT 2592 beneath trolleybus overhead. P37/38 - A Visit to NCS Depot. P39/40 - 210- New Zealand's Oldest Working Trolleybus; what a gem this vehicle is! And again, am I correct in stating that it is the world's second oldest operable trolleybus after Copenhagen 5, which is five years older? I was lucky enough to ride on it back in February, 2017. P41 - The bottom photo. P43 - The top photo." **Tom Douce, U.K.**

"Well, yet another quite superb edition of UTW. I loved "The David Jones Collection Part 2" and I do hope that there will be further "Parts" to come. That, followed by "Trams around Stout Street" and then "A look back at Karori Depot" with Graeme Bennett's excellent photos, plus Graeme Inwood's super photo of 301. I know that you will be aware that the photo with the piece on Fribourg's new trolleybuses is one of Lausanne's new 701 double articulated when Fribourg's will be single articulated. Again I liked some of Graeme Bennett's super photos at Kilbirnie depot, and good to see the photos of the vehicles at the NCS depot. Finally good to see the piece on 210, New Zealand's oldest working trolleybus with excellent colour photos. I was also very pleased with the piece on Cardiff's trolleybuses by John Webb regarding their move to a new home. I thought both buses were both looking good considering what happened. I am actually a "non active" member of "The Cardiff and South Wales Trolleybus Project" so was pleased to see the photos of them in their new home. Another unbelievable issue, from cover to cover." **Peter Blears, U.K.**

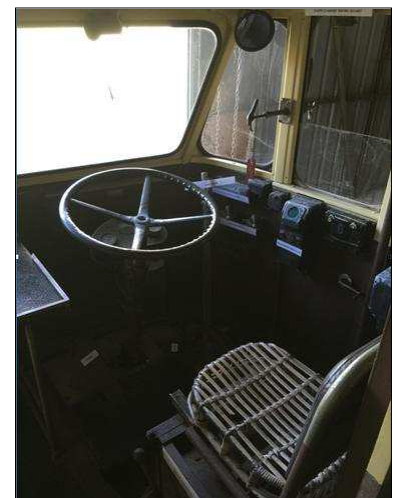


"Belatedly following on from the Australian trolleybus feature in August's Under the Wires, here are some trolleybus photos from a visit I paid to the Brisbane Tramway Museum at Ferny Grove in August 2016. I didn't have a great camera at that time so the photos are rather basic and I don't have information about the trolley bus/s I photographed. There are also some YouTube videos of the system such as <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4ntVDIVpM0> I do enjoy reading the magazine." **Kingsley Sampson, N.Z.**

Photos: Brisbane 1, a 1951 Sunbeam on static display at the Brisbane Tramway Museum. Photo: Kingsley Sampson.

"That was another excellent issue and plenty to read about. I look forward to the end of the month as I know when I wake up on the first day of the month the next copy of UTW will have arrived overnight! As regards the article on pages 24-25 re "Trams around Stout Street", I noted that Fiducia 228 had lost its pole when turning into Stout Street and the unorthodox way it was fixed. However, if you turn to the picture of Double Saloon 143 also turning into Stout Street and the conductor taking a break at the rear you will see that he is in for a rude awakening any second as the tram may be turning into Stout Street but the pole is definitely NOT. He is in for a shock when the pole comes off the wire and bangs against the roof line! This incident must have happened many times before as the wire leading into Stout Street comes off the switch at about 45 degrees so any tram negotiating this turn must do so at about 5mph. This switch is of the old original type whereas the more modern ones (as used on the trolleybus overhead) had a long curved sweep arm to allow the pole to stay on the wire. Your note about the sign above the door of the Telephone Exchange shows that this picture and the one of Fiducia 228 were not taken on the same day but shows this switch was causing frequent dewirements." **John Houghton, U.K.**

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REMEMBER WHEN?



Above: This wonderful cameo of Double Saloon trams and a first generation B.U.T. trolleybus, when both ran side by side, was taken at the intersection of Cuba Street with Manners Street.

Right: The transformation of this area over ensuing years has been dramatic. Parts of Cuba Street have been pedestrianised, most of the heritage buildings have been replaced, the tram rails (and since this photograph was taken, the trolleybus wires) have all been removed, buses no longer ply Cuba Street and life is very different! On 1 August 2011, Designline 333 travels along Manners Street with a service from Island Bay to the Railway Station. Oh for a time machine to be transported back fifty years or so to once again enjoy those black and white days.



Left: First generation B.U.T. 23, introduced in 1954, stands unattended at the intersection of Lyall Parade and Queens Drive. Perhaps the photographer was also the bus driver. This was once the turning point for Lyall Bay trolleybuses before returning towards the city. Lion Brown beer, Griffins biscuits and Choysa tea are promoted on the exterior of the bus. Also note the *Not in Service* board on the front and side. 23 was withdrawn in 1983.



Right: On 26 June 2017, 355 is travelling along Queens Drive beside Wellington Harbour on route 3 trip to Karori Park from the Lyall Bay terminus at Hungerford Road. From a slightly different angle it is approaching the position where 23 (above) is standing where it will then join with the original route. Note that this inbound section is one way, from the intersection with Sutherland Road, along Queens Drive until it reaches Rua Street. Outbound buses travel via Rua Street and Sutherland Road to join up with Queens Drive (at a point in the distance).

