

Left: Yet another terminus – this time Island Bay with the driver of 71 completing the turnaround to point the bus back in the direction of the city. Today, buses terminating at Island Bay turn left here into Reef Street and stop just around the corner.

Right: B.U.T. heaven; a nice portrait of 72 resting in the sunshine at Wakefield Street depot. The clock tower of the Central Fire Station appears above the roof of the bus and Mt Victoria towers in the distance.



Left: Te Anau Road in Hataitai was a quiet backwater and once part of the one-way loop for trolleybuses enabling them to face back in the direction of the city. 74 picks up a lone schoolboy before turning right into Grafton Road in the direction of Roseneath. The route number 10 (later used for services to/from Newtown Park) is correct for this service.

Right: Yet another terminus to close this feature – Hector Street in Seatoun, with 76 taking a short rest between services. It looks like the driver is having “a bob each way” with the destination rolls. An examination of the right hand pole reveals it has had an altercation with something judging by the kink in it.

Thanks to **Allan Steel** for scanning the photographs and **Henry Brittain** for help in identifying a couple of the locations and providing extra information.

None of the buses in this feature survived into preservation.

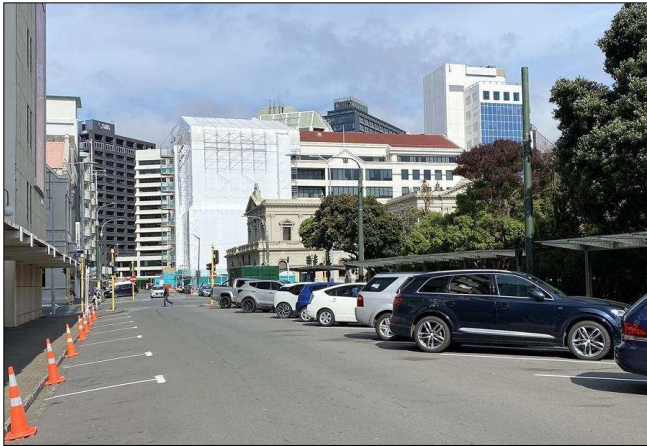
Next month, the third batch of B.U.T.s.



TRAMS AROUND STOUT STREET

On page 11 B.U.T. trolleybus 53 was pictured travelling along Stout Street towards the Railway Station. Winding the clock back a little further we return to the days of trams and trolleybuses at the same location and vicinity, courtesy of Graeme Bennett.

Right: This view along Stout Street towards Lambton Quay in the distance gives us another look at the New Zealand Railways Road Services (N.Z.R.) terminus with a Bedford coach waiting to depart for Khandallah (in the northern suburbs of Wellington) on school bus duties. About to pass it is Fiducia tram 255 travelling to the Railway Station on Route 8. In the background are two B.U.T. trolleybuses also heading to the station terminus. A number of buildings in this street have survived, though not the NZR terminus as illustrated below.



wait patiently for the problem to be sorted out. While several staff gaze skywards at the errant pole uniformed help comes striding on to the scene. Once again, the photograph is full of other vehicle interest including, in the foreground, a Morris/Austin LD van with the sliding driver's door.

Right: From the “*You Wouldn't Dare do that Today*” files! What was probably a very exciting and interesting activity for the watching schoolboys as an attempt was made to sort out a problem or as we would say today “deal with a challenge”. You can almost hear several boys calling out advice to the staff member on the roof of 228. What would Health and Safety people say had they been around in those days? They weren't, so people just got on and got things done.

Left: Graeme has now moved to Featherston Street with his camera pointing in the direction of the CBD. On the right is Stout Street where Fiducia 228, on its way to Newtown on a Route 11 service, has unfortunately has come to grief – it has derailed with its pole snagged right in the middle of the intersection! A couple of B.U.T.s moving in the direction of the Railway Station





*Left: Double Saloon 143 turns from Featherston Street into Stout Street en route to Kilbirnie on a Route 2 service. The conductor can be seen taking a break at the back of the vehicle. The building on the corner was originally a Telephone Exchange. In the picture of the same intersection on the previous page there was a sign above the door – *Technician's Branch, N.Z. Post Office. Seeking Juniors for a career in automatic exchange telephony.* When **Graeme Bennett** took this photograph there was a different sign on the building – *Security starts with Saving. Join a Thrift Club.**

Below: Finally, an overview (literally) of the whole area taken from high up on the Railway Station. In the foreground is Bunny Street and the Defence Headquarters. To the left is Featherston Street with a B.U.T. trolleybus approaching in the direction of the station terminus. A Double-Saloon tram is starting its turn into Stout Street and will soon pass the N.Z.R. building, while another B.U.T. has just turned out of Stout Street and may be about to turn left into Bunny Street. As can be imagined, a lot of changes have taken place over the last sixty odd years since this marvellous record was taken.



A LOOK BACK AT KARORI DEPOT

Opened in 1954 for the launch of the trolleybus operated services into the western suburbs of Wellington, Karori depot has continued to be a stabling point for buses and staff. The depot enjoyed sixty-three years of electric powered traction until the closure of the trolleybus network in 2017. Accommodation for staff was originally incorporated into the depot design. There was also an undercover area for a handful of buses plus a workshop area for trolleybus maintenance. As the years passed the depot became no more than a stabling point.. The flats above the workshop and undercover parking were sold and the overhead to the workshop was removed. Many years ago part of the depot land was also sold and pensioner flats were built in its place.



Above: Two of the "roads" at Karori with second and third generation Wellington B.U.T.s resting between duties. The land on which they are standing was later sold and pensioner housing built in its place. In the background is Darwin Street. The depot entrance remains just behind the nearest row of buses near the large house in the right background.



Left: A particularly tidy looking 74, part of the second batch of thirty-three B.U.T.s introduced in 1958 stands at the depot entrance in Darwin Street.



Above right: Trolleybuses entered Karori depot in Darwin Street and exited left into Ranelagh Street. The overhead leading off to the right of the picture went to the workshop area.



Left: 69, showing Karori P.O. on its destination roll is driven towards the workshop. As mentioned on page 22, this trolleybus was one of the first withdrawals of the second batch and ended service in 1981.

Photos: Graeme Bennett.



Left: Very few photographs have come to light of workshop trolleybuses inside the single workshop space at Karori. Here is 76 over the inspection pit undergoing some maintenance.

Right: The driver carefully reverses 76 back out into the yard. This view gives a good impression of the overhead troughing and inspection pit. Other than a new roller door, boards covering the pit and the wires removed, not much else has changed since this photograph was taken.

Photos: Graeme Bennett.



Below: Over the years the trolleybus wiring was reduced to just one set running through the depot from Darwin Street out into Ranelagh Street. In the middle of 2014 the overhead in Karori was completely renewed even though it was known trolleybuses would be withdrawn completely in 2017 – the condition of the wiring had deteriorated and was in need of replacement if services were to continue. This view taken on 10 August 2017 shows prototype 301 (thankfully saved by the Omnibus Society for preservation) framed in the depot exit with the undercover parking and storage shown behind and the accommodation that was originally built for depot staff but now private dwellings. The occasion for 301's visit was the *Farewell to Trolleybuses* tour organised by the Omnibus Society. This was the last time that 301 visited Karori depot and the last time it ran in service. Photo: Graeme Inwood.



Interesting fact: Karori depot maintained its connection with trolleybuses beyond the closure of the system on 31 October 2017. Four Designlines, 347, 354, 364 and 366 were stored undercover long term at Karori depot until their final removal to Kilbirnie depot on 25 August 2020.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE MEDIA



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

Tree falls on Lambton Quay, blocking two lanes

A large tree has fallen in Midland Park in central Wellington, blocking part of Lambton Quay.

No one was hurt and no one was underneath at the time, but a council staff member saw the tree fall around midday. Firefighters and council staff were called to the Midland Park site making it safe, and preparing to remove the tree. Wellington City Council tree manager Josh Symes said there had been "extreme wind" in the city in the past few days – and recent rain could have softened the ground – but it appeared a sudden gust today caused the fall. (Abridged).

Source: **Wellington Scoop**. 3 October 2020. <http://wellington.scoop.co.nz/?p=131429>

Photo: R.N.Z.

The tree fell on a power box that operates nearby traffic lights. Southbound buses were diverted around the scene along nearby roads..



Bus Network Review - October 2020 improvements

Improvements to bus services are coming into effect Sunday 25 October 2020. These changes are a direct result of customer feedback and the 2019 Bus Network Review (BNR) and aim to better match the bus network with the needs of local communities. Improved bus services in Wellington's eastern, western and southern Suburbs - areas include: Miramar, Seatoun, Strathmore Park and (along the east-west corridor) to the city and Karori, Lyall Bay, Houghton Bay, Island Bay, Owhiro Bay, Kingston, Vogelstown and Brooklyn. The changes are the implementation of Bus Network Review Medium Term recommendations. These changes will be advertised to customers in these areas and along routes - Metlink staff will also be at key bus stops to help when the changes come into effect. Timetables and maps will be available to view online closer to the change date.

What's changing?

Miramar

Route 2 services will split at Miramar Shops with one branch continuing to Miramar (Darlington Rd) and the other branch continuing to Seatoun (7 days a week).

This will provide:

Direct services from Karori / Wellington city to Miramar (Darlington Rd): No longer transfers required at Miramar Shops

Earlier weekday services: Seatoun, Strathmore and South Miramar

Higher frequency and capacity into the city: Kilbirnie, Hataitai and Karori

The route 2 'split' at Miramar Shops means that services will alternate between Miramar (Darlington Rd) and Seatoun. Miramar (Darlington Rd) route 2 services will travel via Park Rd, Rotherham Terrace and Darlington Rd to bus turnaround. Seatoun route 2 services continue to use the existing route via Hobart St and Broadway.

Bus fronts will say 'Route 2 - Miramar' and 'Route 2 - Seatoun'.

All Miramar (Darlington Rd) and Seatoun services will operate through to Karori with a weekday daytime frequency of every 15 minutes on both the Miramar (Darlington Rd), and Seatoun sectors, combining to provide a 7-8 minute frequency between Miramar Shops and Karori.

Route 18 - This service is being replaced by the route 2 branch to Miramar (Darlington Rd).

Route 18e - Three extra services added to meet school and university student demand.

Route 31x - Will no longer stop at Hataitai.

Seatoun & Strathmore

Route 2 services will split at Miramar Shops with one branch going to Miramar (Darlington Rd) and the other branch continuing onto Seatoun (7 days a week).

Seatoun, Strathmore and South Miramar: Earlier weekday services

Kilbirnie, Hataitai, Mt Victoria and Karori: Higher frequency and capacity into the city

Direct services to Miramar (Darlington Rd): No transfer required at Miramar Shops

The Route 2 'split' at Miramar Shops means that services from the city will alternate between Miramar (Darlington Rd) and Seatoun. Miramar (Darlington Rd) route 2 services will travel via Park Rd, Rotherham Terrace and Darlington Rd to bus turnaround. Seatoun route 2 services continue to use the existing route via Hobart St and Broadway.

Bus fronts will say 'Route 2 - Miramar' and 'Route 2 - Seatoun'.

All Miramar (Darlington Rd) and Seatoun services will operate through to Karori with a weekday daytime frequency of every 15 minutes on both the Miramar (Darlington Rd) and Seatoun sectors, combining to provide a 7-8 minute frequency between Miramar Shops and Karori.

General daytime frequency reduces from 10 minutes to 15 minutes from Seatoun to Miramar Shops allowing for the increase in capacity and other improvements from Miramar Shops to the city.

Route 30x - No longer stops at Hataitai.

Route 12 - Improved access between Strathmore Park and the city (9am-3pm).

The route 12 inter-peak weekday services that currently run between Strathmore Park and Hutchison Terminus (Newtown) will now run between Strathmore Park and Wellington Station via Newtown / Courtenay Place.

This gives Strathmore Park a direct route to Newtown, the hospital, Accident & Urgent Medical Centre, Golden Mile, and Wellington Station.

Route 12e is unchanged.

Kilbirnie, Lyall Bay, Hataitai, Mt Victoria, Thorndon & Karori

Route 2: Miramar and Seatoun

Higher frequency and capacity to the city

No transfer required at Miramar Shops for Miramar (Darlington Rd), and Seatoun

Route 37: Karori (Wrights Hill) - Kelburn - Brandon Street

An extra trip at 5.40pm from Brandon Street

Route 36: Lyall Bay - Kilbirnie - Hataitai - Wellington
Three extra services in both the AM and PM peaks on weekdays

Southern suburbs

Kowhai Park, Brooklyn, Houghton Bay, Newtown, Kingston, Vogeltown, Owhiro Bay, Island Bay, Southgate, Mt Cook
Kowhai Park, Brooklyn, Houghton Bay, Newtown, Kingston, Vogeltown, Owhiro Bay, Island Bay, Southgate, Mt Cook

These changes are being made in response to feedback received as part of the BNR. Most respondents in these areas preferred a direct service to the city every hour over a connecting service every half hour. Making this possible will result in lower off peak (hourly) frequency for these services.

Route 17: Kowhai Park - Brooklyn

Will extend all the way to Wellington Station

Will no longer use the Brooklyn Hub (except for the 8.20 from Kowhai Park and 2.53pm from Wellington Station)

First bus in the morning will be at 6.50am

Hourly off-peak frequency

Route 23 / 23e / 23z: Houghton Bay

Will extend route 23 through Courtenay Place to Wellington Station

Route 23e will be incorporated into the route 23, retaining the same peak frequency

23z will be incorporated into the 23 (there is no change to service for Zoo customers)

Hourly off-peak frequency

Route 23: Kingston, Vogeltown

Will be replaced by the route 27 (Kingston, Vogeltown to Wellington Station)

Route 27 will be a 7 day service

For hospital and Newtown access - walk from the Hutchison Rd stop, or transfer to the route 3 heading to Newtown

Hourly off-peak frequency

(Route 23 will run from Houghton Bay, through Riddiford Street, then extend to Wellington Station via Adelaide Road, and Courtenay Place and will no longer service Vogeltown and Kingston.)

Route 29: Newtown - Southgate - Owhiro Bay - Brooklyn

The branch that previously ended at Hutchison Rd now will extend through Courtenay Place to Wellington Station

Route 29e

Route 29e services for Southgate and Newtown will be replaced by route 29 to Wellington central

Route 29e services for Owhiro Bay/Happy Valley will be replaced by the new peak only route 39 Island Bay - Owhiro Bay - Brooklyn - Wellington (peak only)

Source: **Metlink**. https://www.metlink.org.nz/our-metlink-journey/our-metlink-bus-journey/bus-network-review/bus-network-review-october-2020-improvements/?fbclid=IwAR2_6Ltk_eI5JPmpmFnT4Y9OMp6gtGwCfVmxzyY_M9Ua_eL-3QCi_g_uPLU



3400 working Route 17 on 28 October. The service is now reinstated to Wellington Station from Kowhai Park.

'Bustastrophe' to bonanza: New express and direct routes promise end to Wellington's bus chaos

After a long-term driver shortage and chaotic changes to the bus network, Metlink is promising that a new review of routes will set things straight. Several extra services will be added to meet rush-hour demand, and several routes extended to run directly from outer suburbs to the centre city, starting from October 25. The changes will remove some of the most unpopular aspects of the 2018 'Bustastrophe' network changes, particularly the need to make multiple transfers across different services. They follow several months of community consultation and feedback. Commuters from Miramar and the Eastern Suburbs are among the big winners. Hataitai has long been a problem area for the Metlink network. On busy days, stops are often crowded with passengers who can be completely skipped by already-full buses. Three new services morning and afternoon-peak services will run on Route 26 from Lyall Bay through Hataitai to the central city, in the hope of easing stress at major pinch points. Routes 30x and 31x from Miramar will no longer stop at Hataitai during the morning peak, and instead will travel express to the central city. Regular passengers on the route were not convinced the changes would make much of a difference. Strathmore resident James Donaldson said the stop in Hataitai by 30x and No 2 services did not make much of a difference. Delays were caused by the buses travelling through Kilbirnie. Evan Dumbleton, of Seatoun, thought skipping Hataitai might make for a quicker journey but was sceptical that it would be any faster than the No 2. People travelling from the southern suburbs, including Island Bay and Owhiro Bay, will have to deal with fewer transfers. Greater Wellington Regional councillor Roger Blakely said there was a clear signal that most commuters would rather have more direct services into the city than more frequent services that required transfers. "We took a community by community approach, listening to what was important for each suburb before designing, testing, and not rolling out improvements," he said. Route 17 from Kowhai Park to Brooklyn will change from every 30 minutes to an hourly service but, as a trade-off, will run directly through to Wellington Station. Several other key routes will see similar changes, including Routes 23e and 23z for Houghton Bay and Wellington Zoo which will be combined into a one hourly all-day route. Route 29 from Newtown to Brooklyn now will extend all the way through to Wellington station and Courtenay Place. The changes effectively end the controversial "hub and spoke" model which caused disruption and confusion for commuters since its adoption in 2018. That system was based on models used successfully in London and Singapore, but caused unnecessary drama for many Wellingtonians who use the buses simply to get to and from the centre city. According to a report, as many as 35 runs a day gave commuters less than two minutes to transfer to a different service. That meant even minor delays for one bus could cause backlogs through the system. Bus companies in Wellington have been plagued by employee shortages for several years, which was blamed as a major cause of the 2018 shambles. However, Metlink general manager Scott Gallacher said there were now "more than enough" drivers available, partly due to a major driver recruitment campaign, as well as a number of people who were made unemployed due to Covid-19 taking up bus driving. Many coach drivers who previously catered to international tour groups had switched to public transport. Metlink was also planning to launch a new website and app before Christmas, and roll out TV screens with live information on buses. Other commuters were pleased with more frequent services on routes like the 18e. Talia Crockett said the services were infrequent. She said during the period of public transport restrictions because of Covid-19 buses often did not stop, which left her and other passenger waiting for long periods on the side of the road.

Source: **Stuff**. 14 October 2020. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/wellington/123067565/bustastrophe-to-bonanza-new-express-and-direct-routes-promise-end-to-wellingtons-bus-chaos>

Bus-friendly streets

Cities all over the world operate bus networks where passengers routinely transfer at hubs. It is normal and uncontroversial.

Why can't Wellington make hubs work?

Performance of a bus network starts with the streets the buses run on. Streets that are unfriendly to buses create wide variability in bus journey times.

Schedule designers could design the timetable with slack to cover the slowest trips, but this makes many journeys unnecessarily slow and increases operating costs, as you need more buses.

Greater Wellington has belatedly discovered it cannot schedule buses on Wellington's streets in a way that delivers reliable hub connections at an affordable cost. Its example of scheduled two-minute transfer times being impractical is standard operating practice in many cities.

Instead of fining bus operators for running late, it would be better to step up the work with Wellington City Council to make the streets more bus-friendly.

Instead of dumbing down the timetable to fit the constraints of the streets, rework the streets to support a reliable and efficient timetable.

The proposed changes to the Golden Mile are a good first step.

John Rankin, Wellington

Left: Letter to *The Dominion Post* 17 October 2020.

Bus drivers ask for council help after six months without lockdown backpay

Six months after the Covid-19 Level 4 lockdown began, hundreds of Wellington bus drivers are still fighting for money they say they are owed by their employer Tranzurban. After unsuccessfully seeking an Auditor-General investigation, the drivers' union has now asked the regional council to step in and force a resolution. *Stuff* understands the issue was raised at a high-level meeting between councillors, bus companies, Waka Kotahi NZTA, and the Council of Trade Unions. During the first lockdown, Waka Kotahi NZTA paid a \$110m subsidy to regional councils to provide free public transport. It was followed up by another \$100 million rescue package in July. That money was given to bus companies to continue to pay wages. In a memo, NZTA told operators they had an obligation to ensure employees were "not financially disadvantaged by Covid-19". Tranzurban and the union have been locked in a bitter dispute over how that subsidy money should have been distributed to employees. The company decided to pay drivers based on their rostered hours, but the union believes drivers should have been paid based on their average weekly income, as many drivers normally work far more hours than they are rostered for, through overtime and extra shifts. "It's just disgusting really," Tramways union secretary Kevin O'Sullivan said. "When they were given the money there was a clear instruction. They just need to get on and pay it." A Tranzurban spokesperson said the company was waiting on the results of an audit before it would decide on whether to back pay employees. "Tranzurban is nearing completion of our payroll audit and we will be updating our team once complete. We have also met with Greater Wellington Regional Council and they are comfortable with how we are tracking," they said. A similar dispute with another Wellington bus company, NZ Bus, was resolved in June, with drivers being back paid to reflect average earning. One driver, who did not wish to be named, told *Stuff* they worked between 60 and 70 hours a week on average but were only rostered for 40 hours. "I'm out of pocket about \$1600 at least, if not two grand. There's probably at least 200 other drivers at Tranzurban who are in the same boat," they said. An internal memo sent to Tranzurban, which has been seen by *Stuff*, appeared to suggest drivers had flip-flopped on their pay demands. "During the Level 4 lockdown, Tranzurban continued to pay all employees 100 per cent of the hours they are contracted to work. This was well-received during a time of uncertainty for many," the memo read. Roger Blakeley, who holds Greater Wellington Regional Council

transport portfolio, was optimistic a deal could be reached. "We would like to see the drivers fairly treated, so we are hopeful for a good outcome," he said.

Source: **Stuff**. 16 October 2020 <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/wellington/123107304/bus-drivers-ask-for-council-help-after-six-months-without-lockdown-backpay>.

What does a Labour majority mean for Wellington's transport system?

Labour won a barnstorming victory on the back of their slogan "Let's Keep Moving." But for Wellington, the question is whether the city will get moving at all. Jacinda Ardern's new government will have a huge mandate to pursue projects around public transport, cycleways, and mass rapid transit, but will also be tempted to distance itself from the Greens on road projects. National has faced an electoral drubbing. Despite an energetic campaign and promises to build \$4-billion's worth of new highways and tunnels, National lost the party vote in every electorate in the Lower North Island. The Greens won an unprecedented 31 per cent and 24 per cent in Wellington Central and Rongotai respectively, pushing National into third place in the party vote in both electorates. "National said they wanted to double the tunnel, but the Greens got double the votes," Green party regional councillor Thomas Nash said, referring to their plan for a second Mount Victoria tunnel. The new political reality has immediately changed the calculus on the capital's most controversial transport project. The current timeline of the Let's Get Wellington Moving programme would see construction begin around 2028. National pushed hard for that to be brought forward to 2024, but former Labour staffer and political analyst Phil Quin said any chance of that is dead in the water. Labour will be in no rush to take on a complex and risky construction project any earlier than needed, Quin said. The PR risks of delays and cost blowouts far outweigh the benefit of opening the tunnel four years earlier. The Greens were not-so-privately hoping the business case for the second tunnel would prove flimsy, with costs far outweighing the benefits in terms of time saved per trip. If the business case had come back as they expected, the Greens wanted to instead push for two different tunnels: one in Mount Victoria exclusively for walkers and cyclists, and another in Newtown for an airport train. It's hard to imagine Labour going along with that now. The party knows the tunnel is popular among swing voters and won't want to be seen backtracking. The election results mean the tunnel is more likely to go ahead as planned, but less likely to be accelerated. Bigger questions hang over the future of the entire Let's Get Wellington Moving programme, which has struggled from its inception. Even the supposed "easy wins" like taking private vehicles off the Golden Mile have turned into bitter battles. The \$6.4 billion project is now under review, with independent consultants brought in to assess the organisation's culture and ask whether its plans are actually achievable. Quin thinks the programme needs to be put in the hands of an independent Wellington Transport agency, rather than the current three-headed joint arrangement between Wellington City Council, NZTA and Greater Wellington Regional Council. Creating a Wellington Transport agency would have a lot of upsides. It would put the job of making unpopular decisions in the hands of civil servants rather than politicians. It was also an official National Party policy, and the opposition would not hold back in lauding that over the government. Labour wasn't necessarily opposed to a transport agency, but it would be an embarrassing admission of failure in the current programme. Despite that, Quin said the party had more than enough political capital right now to weather the minor storm of reforming the programme. Nash was optimistic about the Green party's chances in the transport space. He was the top polling candidate by a huge majority in the 2019 regional council election and said the general election result was further evidence of voters demanding 21st-century transport policies. The question now is how much those votes are worth. The Green Party proved it has backing in the capital, but it has lost its leverage in a coalition. It's not yet clear how much influence the Green Party will wield in the next government. Green MP Julie Anne Genter has served three years as Associate Transport Minister, but could soon find herself on the outside looking in. Labour has not yet announced yet whether Phil Twyford will continue as Transport Minister. For walking and cycling, the new makeup of government shouldn't change too much. Labour and the Greens both spent their campaign frantically rolling out new funding for cycleways in the Hutt and Eastbourne, and announced a fast-tracking of the Ngāūranga-to-Petone cycleway. Both the Greens and Labour are largely in agreement on the need for more cycling and walking infrastructure, and that

progress is expected to continue. Progress should continue as normal for public transport too. The government released a draft plan before the election which would increase public transport from spending from \$600 million to \$900 million per year. National's transport plan for Wellington was centred around a handful of highly expensive road projects, including the Petone-to-Grenada link road, a second Terrace Tunnel, and a \$1.1 billion underground tunnel for SH1 through Te Aro. Those projects are all off the table for at least the next three years. Labour has already considered and rejected all of them. The projects won't be reconsidered for funding by Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency until 2028. It's not outside the realm of possibility that National could fight for small wins from their plans, such as \$50 million for the Kennedy Good interchange or \$100 million to expand the River Road section of SH2 in Silverstream to four lanes. Both stretches of road are notorious choke points and safety risks, and Hutt-based National MP Chris Bishop has already had success pressuring the government into funding the nearby Melling Interchange. By the 2023 election, Wellington should be ready to break ground on a new mass rapid transit system, will have a firmer idea about the Mount Victoria tunnel, and several newly built cycleways moving people around the harbour. Labour will find itself with a huge mandate and the ability to pursue major reform should it choose to. It will have an enthusiastic, if mostly powerless, partner egging it on, and drastically weakened opposition. The question is how far Ardern's party is willing to go.

Source: **Stuff**. 20 October 2020. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/wellington/123131458/what-does-a-labour-majority-mean-for-wellingtons-transport-system>

Ten battery-powered trolleybuses for Fribourg

One of the ten battery-powered articulated trolleybuses ordered in 2019 was recently presented at the TPF's maintenance and operations centre in Givisiez (FR). The vehicle has a 66 kWh battery mounted on the roof, which will give it the autonomy to run on line 1 in Fribourg, capital of the Swiss canton of Fribourg in the West of Switzerland. What is very interesting is that the trolleybus will be in contact with a power supply line only on 28% of the route. The balance of the 7.5 kilometres will be done using the battery, which will change a lot inside and out, since the vehicle will have the silence of electricity. The ten vehicles are expected to debut on the road at the beginning of 2021. They are produced by Hess and will replace the dual-mode electric and diesel trolleybuses that have been in operation for 16 years. This will save between 300,000 and 400,000 litres of diesel per year, according to the public transport company calculations. The new trolleybuses cost around 1.3 million francs each (1.2 million euros*), but "they are more environmentally friendly and cause less noise", said State Councillor Jean-François Steiert, in charge of public transport. The arrival of the new trolleybuses, which could eventually run on other lines, requires an additional investment of 3 million francs (2.8 million euros). In terms of infrastructure, the existing contact lines are maintained, without extension. *NZ\$2.153m per bus.



Source: **Sustainable Bus**. 20 October 2020. <https://www.sustainable-bus.com/news/battery-powered-trolleybuses-in-switzerland-ten-vehicles-towards-fribourg/>

More buses all day: better travel to Karori and Miramar

by Mike Mellor

Metlink describes several of its bus routes as "high frequency", commonly defined as a bus every 15 minutes or better from first bus to last bus, every day of the week. With frequency like that, people don't need a timetable: it's turn up and go. Until now these Metlink routes have met this criterion during the day, but in the evenings buses are only every half hour, meaning a long wait if you don't happen to be at the stop at the right time. This weekend that will be changing for route 2, the second-busiest bus route. As Metlink **has announced** and as **reported on Wellington Scoop**, that route is being split at the Miramar shops into two branches, one to northern Miramar (still described confusingly as just Miramar, rather than Miramar Terminus, Darlington Rd, or Miramar North) and one to Seatoun, with increased off-peak weekday daytime frequency on the core Karori-Miramar shops section – but there's been no mention of what happens in the evenings and weekends. That is surprising, because clearly the new route structure means that they have to change. Some digging in **a different part of the Metlink website**, and looking at the hyperlinked route 2 timetable, shows that frequency on the core section will increase dramatically at all off-peak times, with alternate buses going to/from each branch:

* *weekday daytime by 33%, from every 10 minutes to every 7/8*

* *weekends by 50%, from every 15 minutes to every 10*

* *evenings by 100%, from every 30 minutes to every 15.*

Overall this is a major step forward for public transport in the eastern and western suburbs, and should be celebrated! (Except in the evenings, when there's a reduction in the Seatoun service from every 10 or 15 minutes to every 15 or 20 minutes). Also to be celebrated is the near-disappearance of forced changes at hubs. Nearly all suburbs that lost their through off-peak service in 2018 have had it reinstated, albeit with the unfortunate consequence of frequency being halved to hourly. The sole exception is Strathmore Park, where changing at Kilbirnie is still required except for alternate daytime weekday off-peak services, which run to/from the city. So congratulations to Metlink for listening to feedback and making progress – and it would help if it was made clearer what is actually happening. *The author, a member of GWRC's Public Transport Advisory Group, has written this article in a personal capacity and he accepts full responsibility for any errors.*

Source: **Wellington Scoop**. 22 October 2020. <http://wellington.scoop.co.nz/?p=131895#more-131895>

Tranzurban wins gold award for commitment to electric buses

Press Release – Tranzurban

In recognition of its long-term commitment to electrifying public transport, Wellington bus operator Tranzurban won the Green Gold Award at the annual Wellington Gold Awards. At a special awards ceremony held at TSB Arena in Wellington last night (22 October), Tranzurban was announced as the winner of the Green Gold category for its commitment to building a modern and reliable electric bus fleet and for reducing carbon emissions. Accepting the award were Paul Snelgrove, Managing Director of Tranzit, the parent company of Tranzurban and Keven Snelgrove, Tranzit's Transport and Operations Director. The two brothers were delighted their fourth generation, family-owned company was acknowledged for its commitment to growing electric vehicle (EV) public transport in New Zealand and thanked all those who have helped them along the way. This included EECA (Energy Efficiency & Conservation Authority's Low Emission Vehicles Contestable Fund), the Auckland University of Technology; Tauranga based Kiwi Bus Builders where all the company's EV buses are built and Greater Wellington Regional Council, who introduced modern electric buses into Wellington in 2018. He also referenced how Tranzurban was bringing adding 31 more double-deck electric buses into Wellington over the next two years and its upcoming conversion of two double-deck diesel buses to electric. "We have 31 double deck electric buses on build now and we are very proud that our EV buses have been built in New Zealand. It cost us more, but we are proud to protect New Zealand business. "We do have a number of diesel double deck buses on the road in Wellington ... and the first of these has arrived in Masterton and this will be repowered 100% electric. That will be repowered in our workshop by trained apprentices through our own training so it's a big proud moment for the team." "Lastly, I would like to thank, through lockdown, that our Tranzurban drivers kept the Wellington public transport system going. I am proud of those guys and everybody else," said Paul. Keven gave a huge shout out to his team, which includes specialist EV mechanics, engineers, and drivers. "It's been a four-year journey this electrification of vehicles in Wellington. It's been a hell of a ride. But the most important people to us is our team who made this happen. We have around 20 workshop team members who have gone from working on our Euro 6 diesel bus technology into EVs and these guys have done an amazing job to make this happen. But the most important ones to thank are our team who goes and drive them." Tranzit's EV journey began in 2014 after it partnered with Auckland University of Technology in a joint application to the Energy Efficiency & Conservation Authority's Low Emission Vehicles Contestable Fund. After developing EV1, New Zealand's first commercially operated 100% battery powered electric bus now based in Auckland, the company's subsidiary Tranzurban was launched and then collaborated with GWRC to introduce 10 EVDDs and supporting charging infrastructure into Wellington in 2018. All these EVDDs were built in Tauranga at Kiwi Bus Builders, as will the new 31 EVDDs be. Without AUT and EECA's support and foresight, coupled with Tranzit and Tranzurban's commitment to a sustainable future, Wellington would not be where it is today. Keven has previously explained the environmental benefits of Tranzurban's Wellington EV fleet. He says the 10 EV double decks buses regularly travel over 2000km in a single day, meaning approximately over 1300 litres of diesel is saved and around 3.54 tonnes of CO₂ is prevented from entering Wellington's atmosphere every single day. When the company begins operating its full fleet of 41 EV double decks in Wellington, these environmental benefits will be even more significant. Tranzurban's other buses include 225 Euro 6 diesel buses, which meet the highest global emission standards. "Since our EV journey began in 2014, we have been constantly learning and innovating, paving the way for others to follow," said Keven. The Wellington Gold Awards were established in 1999 and celebrate excellence and enterprise of businesses in Wellington Region.

Source: **Wellington Scoop**. 23 October 2020. <http://wellington.scoop.co.nz/?p=131945>

DINING UNDER THE WIRES - UPDATE



Christchurch Tramway's Restaurant Tram 411 (formerly a Melbourne W2 class tram) has undergone a major overhaul in the Tramway Historical Society's workshops in the Ferrymead Heritage Park. On 22 October 2020, 411 travelled around the Ferrymead tramway circuit before being positioned in the Heritage Village ready to be lifted on to a truck and trailer unit next morning at 5.30am. Resplendent in its fresh coat of paint, Tram 411 is seen here in the Heritage Village beside the colonial Curragh Cottage. The overhaul was carried out by four members of the Christchurch Heritage Tramway Trust and two employees of the Christchurch Tramway Company between April and October 2020.

Words and picture: D.L.A. Turner.

DAMAGED CARDIFF TROLLEYBUSES MOVE TO A NEW HOME



John Webb reports:

Almost a year ago Cardiff trolleybuses 243 and 262 barely survived a fire while stored in a hay barn on the outskirts of Cardiff.

With the vehicles exposed to all that the weather could throw at them and with all restoration on hold, an offer for relocating was received from our friends the Cardiff Transport and Preservation Group based in the former Western Welsh Garage at Barry* in the Vale of Glamorgan.



During September the vehicles were transferred successfully to their new home by low loader (left) and suspended tow (right).



243 (single decker) and 262 now in their new home.

The task now remains to transport our remaining equipment which is temporary suspended due to local COVID 19 lockdown restrictions. Fortunately the vehicles are now protected from the elements. So we are now raring to get stuck into preservation to make up for the lost time. We are also very grateful to the generous gifts and support we have received in these very difficult times.

* The town of Barry is well-known in railway circles for its 1960s activity as a scrapyard (hence its colloquial name of Barry Scrapyard), where 297 withdrawn British Railways steam locomotives were sent, from which 213 were rescued for the developing railway preservation movement.

UNREPEATABLE KILBIRNIE DEPOT SCENES



Left: 86, one of the nineteen trolleybuses that made up the third batch of B.U.T.s for Wellington, stands in the yard at Kilbirnie depot. Alongside is another “export”, a former London Transport RT, registration LYF317. The fleet number isn’t visible but it is RT 2592. For fans of this classic DD class, it went into service in July 1951 at Peckham garage and ended its career as a training bus in 1970. It was bought by the Lions Club of Wellington in March 1971.

Right: B.U.T. 90 basks in the sunshine inside Kilbirnie yard. On withdrawal from service in 1986 this bus was saved for preservation by the Omnibus Society. It is currently stored at the Foxton Trolleybus Museum.



Photos: Graeme Bennett



Above: Inside what is believed to be the former No.1 barn at Kilbirnie (now demolished) is the RT in the company of B.U.T.s 111 and 119. The latter trolleybus, the highest numbered B.U.T., was also saved for preservation by the O.S.



Left: Another view of 90 but from another position at the depot not able to be repeated due to the buildings having been demolished. Onepu Road is in the background.

Right: B.U.T. 51 with its beaming driver emerges from the gloom into the sunlight at the rear of the depot that leads into Ross Street. The warnings above the doorway have been given – 550V DC LIVE WIRES.



Left: 95 waits in the sunshine outside the depot. Most of these nineteen B.U.T.s saw an average of twenty-two years service. We must be grateful to Graeme Bennett for recording these scenes which were later swept away when part of the depot land was sold and a retirement village built in its place.

Below: 113 and 105, part of the last batch of nineteen B.U.T.s to arrive in New Zealand receive some attention. Note the overhead trolleying extending through the now demolished barn.



Photos: Graeme Bennett

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE DESIGNLINE PROTOTYPES?

Back in 2003, the first of the Designline prototypes appeared. Numbered 301 it was radically different from anything seen before in Wellington with its smooth lines and bulbous cover on the roof ahead of the poles. Then in 2005 two more prototype models appeared, 302 and 303. All three were tested and evaluated with a view to replacing the ageing Volvo trolleybus fleet. As is well known, the buses that eventuated, 331-387 were different again, longer and of the three axle variety. 301-3 put in regular service through the following years although none of them survived in service to the last day. In fact 301 was the last of the three to be seen on the roads of Wellington; on 10 August 2017 it worked the "Farewell to Trolleybuses" tour around parts of the city before finally being withdrawn. 302 was noted off the road from April of that year while 303 wasn't seen in action after June 2017. In February 2018, NZ Bus kindly donated the trio to the Omnibus Society for preservation especially as they were non standard. This was the same month that a start was made on 362 becoming a Wrightspeed powered bus. There were high hopes that this novel power train would revitalise not only the redundant remainder of trolleybus fleet but also find its way into some of NZ Bus's diesel fleet. Unfortunately for all concerned the project was abandoned. Being "different" became the "saviour" for the prototypes for hopefully a life one day doing what they were designed for and not becoming a coffee shop or pie cart or some other enterprising project. But what became of 301-3 when they left Kilbirnie depot over 2½ years ago? Although part of the Omnibus Society's collection they are currently being stored by Malcolm Little,

who has been responsible for towing all but one of the Designline fleet from Kilbirnie. Malcolm, the son of the legendary Ian, is the owner of NCS (New Zealand Coach Services) whose company currently provides charter and school bus services. Like his father, Malcolm also has buses "flowing through his veins" and is keen to see a future for some of the saved trolleybuses, hence his generosity in storing some of the buses, including 301-3.

Left: 302 and 301 inside one of the NCS workshops at the Taita depot.

Below left: The first two prototypes share the company of former Dunedin City Transport B.U.T. 43, one of several that Malcolm's father saved from scrapping.

Below: 301 with its signature "bulbous" component cover.



Right: As we remember 301 on the road. On 10 August 2017, 301 ran its last. It worked the Omnibus Society's charter as a *Farewell to Trolleybuses*, together with 332. **Graeme Inwood** staked out the bus at the western end of the tunnel as 301 emerged into Chaytor Street on its way to Karori Park terminus. The author can just be glimpsed crouched at the front photographing Graeme.

Incidentally, 303 is stored together with many other Designlines on a property owned by Malcolm north west of Masterton.



A VISIT TO NCS DEPOT

NCS (New Zealand Coach Services) depot in Taita is currently home to the largest collection of trolleybuses in Wellington. As well as 301, 302 and 384 being stored under cover, the following Designlines were also at the premises during a visit on 8 October 2020 kindly permitted by owner, Malcolm Little; 339, 347, 363, 364, 366, 369, 374 and 384. As mentioned on the previous page, Dunedin 43 is also stored there, together with former W.C.T. 88 and Volvo 233, making thirteen trolleybuses in all. What a treasure trove! Bear in mind that not all of these buses are owned by Malcolm and some are in a state of transit.



Above: 339 and 347. The latter is one of the "Karori Four" now owned by Malcolm Little.



Above: 363 and 364. Once again, the latter is one of those that was stored at Karori long-term.

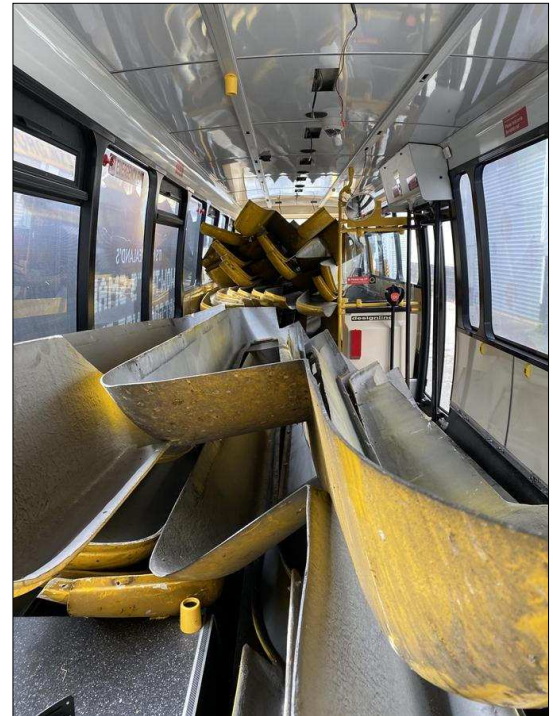


Left: 366 is the third of the those stored at Karori from October 2017 until August 2020. The fourth bus, 354, is currently stored at premises in Seaview. These four buses, together with 384, are likely to be the most complete three-axle examples to survive. This is the only line-up of three Designlines that can be viewed in Wellington; 366, 363 and 364.



Left: There are three Designlines in one grouping in this view, but only just; 374, 369 and 347. However, this view is only available in the yard itself, the one on the previous page is visible from the road outside the premises. 369 is infamous for being the very last trolleybus conventionally towed away from Kilbirnie depot. 337 was actually the last to be removed but it had to be hitched up and towed as its forward rear axle was missing.

Right: During its last few days at Kilbirnie, 369 ended up being a place to store roof battery covers. They are fibreglass so are unlikely to have any resale value. It's a pity that they weren't returned to their respective buses after they were removed to access the redundant batteries. I can't think of a use for most of them now.



Left: 369's driving position, or what's left of it.

Right: Apart from 301, 302 and Dunedin 43, 384 is the only other trolleybus at NCS that is stored undercover. That is because it is also somewhat of a celebrity, being the bus that worked the very last trolleybus service in Wellington on the night of 31 October 2017. The bus was also displayed at the 2017 Kilbirnie Christmas Parade and suitably adorned inside with photographs of trolleybuses through the years. The bus was eventually donated to the Omnibus Society for preservation by Wayne Henry.

B.U.T. 88 and Volvo 233 have already been displayed in a recent issue. These two trolleybuses are stored outside in the yard.

Malcolm Little told me that there are currently 33 trolleybuses in storage on his property north west of Masterton. Now that would be a sight to behold – watch this space!



210 – NEW ZEALAND’S OLDEST WORKING TROLLEYBUS

While Christchurch 210 can't claim to be N.Z.'s oldest surviving trolleybus it can wear the longevity crown for being the country's oldest active trolleybus. Wellington's surviving "trackless tram" #1 has the honour of being the oldest, being in service from 1924 to 1932. However, despite being preserved it is far from complete unlike Christchurch 210. Trolleybus operation began in Christchurch in 1931, with six English Electric buses, numbered 207-212, and one Ransomes Sims & Jeffries vehicle numbered 213. A further four Ransomes vehicles followed in 1934, however the system never developed further and it closed in 1956. Three examples of the Christchurch fleet survive; 209, 210 and 216, although only 210 is complete, the other two being bodies only. All were saved by the Tramway Historical Society, based at Ferrymead Heritage Park. Reader Michael Jarka was in Christchurch on 3 October to lend a hand with the trolleybus overhead at Ferrymead and while there used the opportunity to take some photographs of 210. He takes up the story:

Above: New Zealand's first trolleybus, built by AEC in 1924. It worked Wellington's first trolleybus route from Thorndon to Kaiwharawhara until 1932. Photo: Gunter Mackineer - taken on 10 March 2016.



Recently I was up in Christchurch to help the team at Ferrymead to repair and change the layout of their trolleybus overhead as the group of trolleybus enthusiasts are keen to get the system up and running again as soon as is practicable. This is the third trip I have made there this year. A lot of work has been done on the overhead but there is still plenty to do before the dream is realised and trolleybuses return to the streets. I had done some years of work on maintaining the overhead on the tramway at MOTAT so was keen to lend my experience to a well organised team led by Larry and Jonathan Day.

A part of getting the system operational again is repairs and maintenance of the near-operable vehicles, of which there are three: Christchurch 210, Dunedin 79 and Wellington 103. All are generally to be found tucked away in the large trolleybus shed.

One vehicle which needs very little work doing is the jewel in their crown: Christchurch 210. As we had a good sized team on hand it was decided to begin the day on Saturday by taking 210 from the trolleybus depot to the main tramway workshop part of Ferrymead in order to have the left front spring removed to replace two broken leaves. In order to get the vehicle moved, it was decided to tow it using Dave Hinman's vehicle which had been used for this type of operation before.

A crew of two, Larry Day and Philip Murphy was needed to brake and steer the bus as there is no power assisted steering; only the 'Armstrong' type. I was asked if I wanted to pilot it but I declined as I had not driven it before.

The bus was carefully removed from the barn and towed over to the Tramway workshop area without incident. Anthony Holliday, a mechanic who works wonders on the Otago Heritage Bus Society fleet, removed the damaged spring and it has been duly taken to a repairer. It should shortly be finished and reinstated under 210.

I could not resist the opportunity to get photographs as it is not every day that an 89 year-old trolleybus moves on the roads these days. The photos tell the story of this move.



Oh to look this good at nearly 90!



210 is looking in superb external condition so hopefully with repairs made to the spring it will soon be able to work *under the wires* at Ferrymead once the overhead work has been completed. Meanwhile, a look back to the *100 Years of Electric Public Transport* event held in June 2004 when 210 was last seen operating in Wellington.



Left: A line-up such as will never be seen again; 210, Wellington 119, Stagecoach 301, Dunedin 43 and Wellington 66 at the Railway Station terminus on 13 June 2004. Photo: Graeme Inwood.



Right: 210 leaving Karori Park terminus on 14 June 2004. Photo: Graeme Inwood.

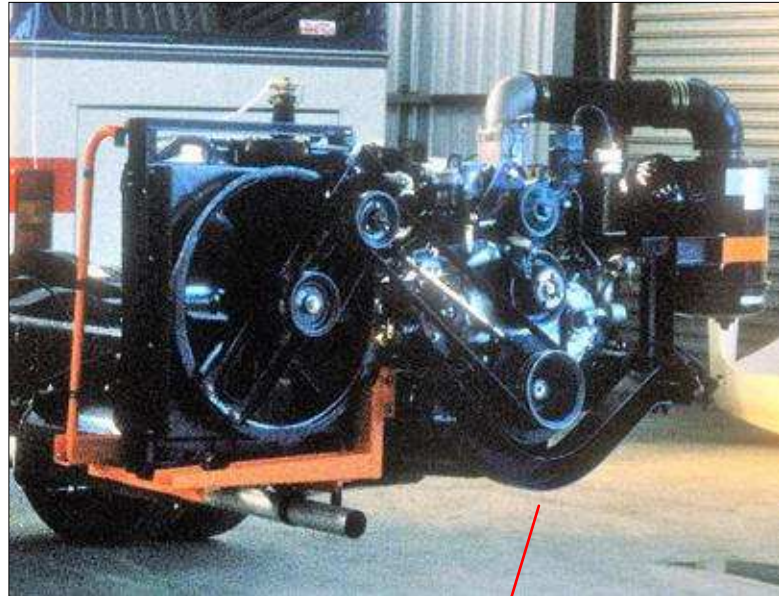
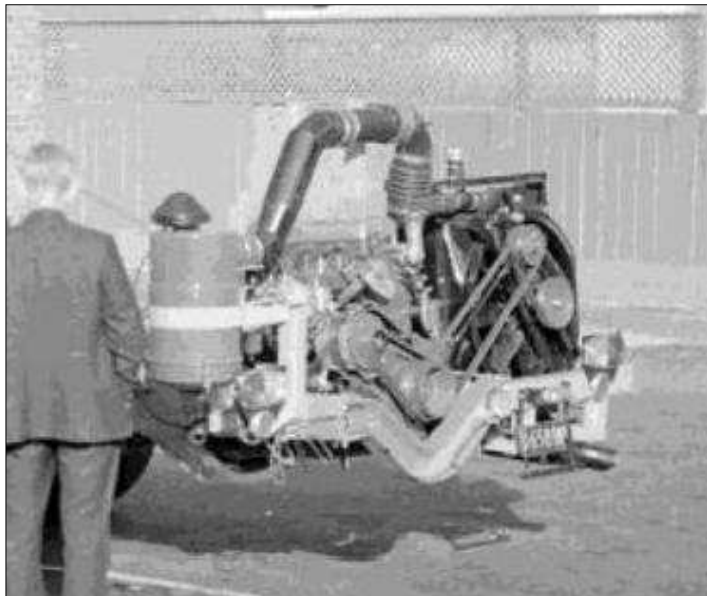
Below and right: Internal views of 210 taken in 2004 during the occasion of the Trolleybus Festival. Photos: Alan Wickens.



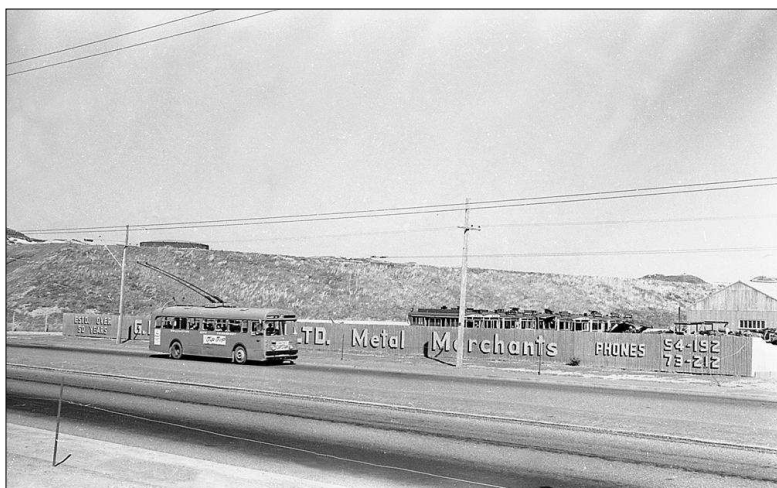
MORE ON 'THAT' CHASSIS

Basil Hancock has come up with more on the mystery chassis featured on page 44 of last month's issue...

I have found a photo of an Australian UD-Nissan RB30R chassis, which has an almost identical rear end to the one in your photo, including the cranked rear drop crossmember. However, the RB30R has a higher chassis frame than the one in your photo, with an upswept area over the rear axle, and more importantly the radiator and air cleaner are on opposite sides of the chassis. I have definitely scanned my version the correct way around, so why the example in your photo had them the other way I do not know. So I think it is safe to assume that it is some form of UD-Nissan, but which model I do not know. Could it have been some kind of NDNZ Scorpion chassis, which were built with UD-Nissan parts?



Above: UD-Nissan RB30R chassis at Custom Coaches. Photo: Basil Hancock.



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Left: One of the third batch of nineteen B.U.T.s, with English Electric equipment, powers past the G.R. Stevens Ltd scrap yard in Cobham Drive at the north end of Wellington Airport. This circa 1961 photograph shows a group of withdrawn Double Saloon trams awaiting their fate.
Photo: Graeme Bennett.

ROUTE 2 TO SEATOUN AND NOW MIRAMAR

As mentioned in OVERHEA(r)D on page 3, Route 2 now has two branches at its eastern end, to Seatoun **and** Miramar. When the new route began in July 2018 the route ran from Karori (Park) through the city and out to Seatoun via Miramar shops. However, those living on the Miramar peninsula had to change at Miramar shops onto another bus to complete their journey (or vice versa if travelling toward the city). On the other hand Seatoun residents were very happy to have a much larger service frequency. You may recall that prior to these route changes Route 2 ran from the Railway Station to Miramar (Darlington Road) and Route 11 from the Railway Station to Seatoun. The hub concept introduced by Metlink, the transport arm of the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), did not prove particularly popular and since the new route and timetable changes introduced on 25 October these hub concepts have been all but abandoned. The hubs are still there (the major one being at Kilbirnie) but they are now being referred to by Metlink as “interchanges”. To differentiate between the two branches, services to Miramar now show **2m** on the rear of buses and **2s** is displayed on the rear of Seatoun services. All inbound services just show **2** as all go to Karori. Incidentally, buses on outbound Route 3 to Lyall Bay and Rongotai are yet to have a similar display of **3L** and **3R**. Lower case suffixes are used on Route 2 so that **2S** doesn't get confused with a Route **2S** bus. Similar action needs to be taken with Route **30xS** (to Scorching Bay) and **30xM** (Moa Point).



Left: 2004 M.A.N. 1480 is in Manners Street and displaying the latest destination information. It retains number 2 at the front of the bus...



Right: ...but at the rear services to Miramar show 2m. Useful for passengers approaching the bus from this position and realising it is going to the peninsula rather than mistakenly getting on a 2 to Seatoun or having to query the destination with the driver.



Left: 2010 Scania 2166, one of the NZ Bus “fill-in” buses sent to Wellington from Auckland for service when the trolleybus network closed in 2017 is working the Seatoun branch of Route 2. The bus is pictured in Manners Street on 28 October 2020. Eight services depart each hour from Karori off peak and alternate to Miramar or Seatoun on reaching Miramar shops; each suburb having a fifteen minute frequency. The rear of Seatoun services show **2s**.

Right: This is how Route 2 services had their eastern suburbs information displayed prior to the 25 October change; *Miramar-Seatoun via Courtenay Place, Hataitai*. 2219 emerging from the Seatoun tunnel on 9 May 2019.





RAILWAY STATION TERMINUS CHANGES

Left: B.U.T. 57 enjoys a brief layover at the Railway Station terminus before heading off to Miramar. Perhaps for the driver it was “time for a Captstan” as he doesn’t appear to be around. Trolleybuses entered the terminus from Featherston Street (seen behind). The photograph, believed to have been taken about sixty years ago shows tram tracks still in place. Photo: Graeme Bennett.

Right: The new bus terminus connected to the Railway Station via a subway below Featherston Street. It opened on 2 April 2003. This photograph was taken a week later. The new facilities were a considerable improvement on the old. Other than some changes to signage and departure stops and of course the absence of trolleybus wires the scene remains much the same.



Tranzurban’s 3425 needed the service of the tyre specialist on 24 October. While on a Route 7 roster it suffered a puncture. The very slick operator arrived at the Railway Station layover area and had the errant tyre replaced in no time with the bus soon on its way.

TAILPIECE



There were only days left to enjoy a ride on a trolleybus in Wellington, as I was doing when I took this photograph on a gloomy 9 October 2017. 360 performs a bit dead running as it returns to Kilbirnie depot from the Railway Station, *Not in Service*. It is turning left from Kent Terrace into Elizabeth Street to travel to the eastern suburbs via Hataitai. The outer wires continuing ahead go towards the southern suburbs; Island Bay and the Zoo and to Kilbirnie, Miramar and Seatoun via Newtown.