The Sydney Tramway Museum (operated by the South Pacific Electric Railway) is Australia's oldest tramway museum and the largest in the southern hemisphere. It is located at Loftus in the southern suburbs of Sydney.

Contents

History[edit]

Construction of the museum at its original site on the edge of the Royal National Park commenced in August 1956.[1] It was officially opened in March 1965 by NSW Deputy Premier Pat Hills. The facilities were basic, initially a four-track shed built with second hand materials and approximately 800 metres of running track.[2][3]

In 1975, the Government of New South Wales approved the museum moving to a new site across the Princes Highway adjacent to Loftus railway station.[4] Construction commenced in April 1980, with the first trams transferred from the old site in November 1982.[5][6] It officially opened on 19 March 1988.[7][8] The former Railway Square tramway shelter that had been disassembled in 1973 was reassembled.[9][10] The last tram left the Royal National Park in May 1989.[11]

In 1989, a traverser from Comeng's, Granville factory was purchased.[12] Following CityRail closing the two kilometre Royal National Park line in 1991, the museum was able to commence operating services on the line on 1 May 1993.[13][14]

In 2001, the museum was the recipient of the YMCA facade, that was previously located at the corner of Pitt and Bathurst Street in the Sydney central business district. The facade was relocated by Meriton to make way for a new building being constructed at the same location. This huge impressive sandstone structure dating from the 1880s makes a spectacular backdrop when entering the museum complex from the front gates. The building is not finished yet, and is still being worked on as funding permits.[15] The gates from the original Gladesville Bridge were installed as the depot gates in 2010.[16]

On 23 October 2015, the museum storage shed was broken into by graffiti artists and caught fire. Located off the main museum site, at the Museums original location in the Royal National Park near Loftus Oval, the shed housed the museum's reserve collection of six trams, four buses and a double-decker bus chassis dating to 1937. The shed and contents were destroyed in the blaze.[17]

The 2018 film Ladies in Black had both live action scenes and film stock for CGI segments filmed around the Railway Square Waiting Shed that is located in the southern end of the museum site.[18]

Operations[edit]

The museum has an extensive collection of trams from Sydney and other cities in Australia, as well as from other places around the world. The museum operates 4 kilometres (2.5 mi)

of track. One line runs 1.5 kilometres (0.93 mi) north towards Sutherland, paralleling Rawson Avenue in the way that parts of Sydney's tram system operated. The second runs 2.5 kilometres (1.6 mi) to the south and utilises the Royal National Park branch railway line that was constructed in 1886 and closed by CityRail in June 1991.[19]

In 1993, the museum converted the line to tramway standards and connected it to the then existing Sutherland line to establish what is now a popular means of access to the world's second oldest national park.[14][20] The line terminates at Royal National Park railway station.

The museum opens and operates trams on Wednesdays, Sundays, public holidays (except Christmas Day) and on selected weekdays during school holidays.

The Sydney Tramway Museum is run entirely by volunteers and self funds its day-to-day activities, restorations, maintenance and construction programs from gate takings and donations from the generous public.

Preservation[edit]

Rolling Stock[21]

No	Description	Manufacturer	Type	Year Built	Length m	Weight t	Date Acquired	Status	Comments
12	C-Class Tram	Hudson Bros	Single truck	1899	7.62	8.60	1997	Scrapped	Converted to breakdown car 56s in 1909. Converted back to passenger in 1959 By NSWDOT. Originally donated to NSW Tramway Historical Society. Body in poor condition. Stored at the old RNP depot site. Burnt and scrapped after the fire.
29	C-Class Tram	Hudson Bros	Single truck	1898	7.62	8.60	1961	IO	Converted to breakdown car 60s in 1910. Converted back to passenger in 1995 at STM. Operational in 2001.
33	C-Class Tram	Hudson Bros	Single truck	1898	7.62	8.60	1995	URF	Converted to experimental double deck car in 1907 and lasted until 1908. Converted to breakdown car 33s in 1924 at Randwick Workshop. Body only recovered in 1995 from Newcastle Tramway Museum, Rutherford. Being restored in Bendigo to double deck tram.
37	C-Class Tram	Hudson Bros	Single truck	1899	7.62	8.60	2010	URN	Sold in 1924. Donated by the Tradesmens Union Club, Canberra in 2010. Moved to Sydney 20 April 2010 for restoration and to be sent to Christchurch, NZ on completion.
290	C-Class Tram	Morrison	Single truck	1896	7.93	8.60	1957	IOS	Converted to breakdown car 115s in 1927 by NSWDOT. Restored to Passenger tram by SPER.
23	Cable trailer	Ritchie Brothers	Single truck	1894	5.64	2.50	1976	DCO	Under restoration
117	D-Class Tram	Clyde	Single truck	1899	9.40	9.66	1994	URN	Converted to breakdown car 112s in 1913 by NSWDOT. Major restoration back to passenger car
529	E-Class Tram	Clyde	Single truck	1903	8.37	10.20	1957	URN	Under restoration
530	E-Class Tram	Clyde	Single truck	1903	8.37	10.20	1957	URN	Under restoration
393	F-Class Tram	Clyde	Bogie	1902	11.75	13.00	1957	IOS	Converted to Eye Sight car 127s in 1927. Restored to original condition at STM.
24s	Freight car	NSWGT	Bogie	1903	9.60	12.70	1957	IOS	Car preserved without motors.

Body restored for display.

675 J-Class Tram Meadowbank Single truck 1904 8.89 11.70 1996 IO Restored to operating condition. In service 2009. Out of service after accident with Nagasaki 1054

1295 K-Class Tram Meadowbank Single truck 1913 8.89 10.90 1997 Scrapped Originally donated to NSW Tramway Historical Society. Body in poor condition. Stored at old RNP site depot. Burnt in a fire in 2015. Scrapped

1296 K-Class Tram Meadowbank Single truck 1913 8.89 10.90 1957 DCO

154 L/P-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1900 12.45 15.20 1957 IO Built as an F-Class Tram and converted to L class in 1910. Converted to L/P in 1926

257 L/P-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1901 12.45 15.20 1995 SFI Body stored at HPOTS, Cessnock poor condition.

298 L/P-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1901 12.45 15.20 1995 SFI Body stored at HPOTS, Cessnock poor condition

341 L/P-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1901 12.45 15.20 1995 SFI Body stored at HPOTS, Cessnock poor condition

710 N-Class Tram Meadowbank Bogie 1906 11.99 15.10 2007 Scrapped Stored at Old site, RNP* poor condition of body. Burnt in fire in 2015. Scrapped

718 N-Class Tram Meadowbank Bogie 1906 11.99 15.10 1995 SFI Stored at HPOTS, Cessnock poor condition of body

728 N-Class Tram Meadowbank Bogie 1906 11.99 15.10 1957 IOS

824 O-Class Tram Meadowbank Bogie 1909 13.58 17.80 1995 SFI Stored at HPOTS, Cessnock poor condition of body

957 O-Class Tram Meadowbank Bogie 1910 13.58 17.80 1978 URN Under restoration

1111 O-Class Tram Meadowbank Bogie 1912 13.58 17.80 1959 IO Oldest tram in regular operation

1089 O/P-Class Tram Meadowbank Bogie 1912 13.58 17.90 1974 URN Originally an O-Class Tram; rebuilt by NSWDOT to O/P on 15 June 1920. Under restoration

99u Overhead Line car Meadowbank Bogie 1913 12.65 18.90 1959 IOW Operational

1497 P-Class Tram NSWGT Bogie 1922 13.85 16.90 1961 IO

1501 P-Class Tram NSWGT Bogie 1922 13.85 16.90 1999 SFI Stored at Bendigo pending review for restoration

1729 P-Class Tram Morts Dock Bogie 1929 13.85 16.90 2010 URN Donated by the Tradesmens Union Club, Canberra in 2010. Moved to Sydney 24 January 2010. Under restoration. New P type bogies fitted 10/11/18. Currently awaiting further restoration due to workshop queue

1573 P/R1-Class Tram Meadowbank Bogie 1923 13.85 18.60 1965 SNO P car rebuilt as PR1 in 1949 by NSWDOT. To be restored

948 Prison Tram NSWGT Bogie 1909 12.04 15.60 1957 DCO Car preserved without motors.

1740 R-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1933 14.35 18.00 1961 IO

1741 R-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1933 14.35 18.00 2003 SNO Burnt in fire in 2015

1753 R-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1933 14.35 17.90 1999 SFI Body stored at Rozelle Depot-ex Citytram Assoc.

1798 R-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1934 14.35 18.00 1999 SNO Body stored at HPOTS,

Cessnock poor condition.

1808 R-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1934 14.35 18.00 1999 OOS Restored at Bendigo in 2000 to operational condition. Stored at Melbourne in Preston Workshops. Leased to MOTAT in New Zealand December 2009 and used in Auckland until June 2017. Transported to Christchurch for Welcome Aboard Limited's Christchurch City Tramway August 2017.

1819 R-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1934 14.35 18.00 2006 Scrapped Moved From Canberra Tradesmens Union Club. Stored at old RNP site*. Burnt in fire in 2015. Scrapped

1917 R-Class Tram Bogie 1935 14.35 18.00 2003 Scrapped Burnt in fire in 2015. Scrapped

1923 R-Class Tram Bogie 1935 14.35 17.90 1997 SFI Body stored at Rozelle Depot-ex Citytram Assoc.

1933 R/R1 class tram Clyde Bogie 1935 14.35 17.90 1990 SNO Car preserved without motors. Currently used as Book Shop

1943 R1-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1935 14.35 17.90 1997 SFI Body stored at Rozelle Depot-ex Citytram Assoc. Future to be decided-July 2012.

1951 R1-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1935 14.35 17.90 1994 SFI Stored at Newstead, Victoria Partly restored

1971 R1-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1936 14.35 17.90 1979 OOS On loan, operating at Tramway Museum, St Kilda in South Australia in 2005

1979 R1-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1936 14.35 17.90 1974 IO

1980 R1-Class Tram Clyde Bogie 1936 14.35 17.90 1999 SFI Body stored at HPOTS, Cessnock poor condition.

1995 R1-Class Tram Comeng Bogie 1951 14.35 17.90 1997 SFI Cosmetically restored for display in the redeveloped Rozelle Tram Depot

2001 R1-Class Tram Comeng Bogie 1951 14.35 17.90 2001 IO Acquired by STM as a body in 2001. Restored at Bendigo in 2001 for the proposed Federation Tramways. Overhaul Complete December 2019, In Temporary Service. Will be Withdrawn for repainting to green and cream livery in January 2020. Repainting complete October 2020.

2044 R1-Class Tram Comeng Bogie 1952 14.35 17.90 1983 SNO Car preserved without motors. Currently used as Traffic Office

2050 R1-Class Tram Comeng Bogie 1952 14.35 17.90 2011 SFI Tram stored at Rozelle Depot- originally owned by Sydney City Council now ownership passed to STM-

2107 Variotram Adtranz, Dandenong 5 Module Low floor 1997 29.5 36.5 2018 DCO Ex Sydney Light Rail, acquired by Transport Heritage NSW and placed on permanent loan with STM in October 2018, operational awaiting certification[22]

3 Reciprocating Rail Grinder S&E Co, Bath Single truck 1920 4.27 6.10 1971 OOS Operable, converted to current design by MMTB in 1958. Loaned to MOTAT despatched from STM May 2011, overhauled and shipped back to Sydney, September 2017

11W Scrubber Meadowbank Single truck 1908 8.89 10.90 2003 SFO Originally K-Class Tram 797, converted to scrubber in 1953 by NSWDOT and coded 139s. Sold to MMTB in 1961. Stored in Melbourne at Preston Workshops until 2015, retutned to service in 2019

134s Scrubber tram Ritchie Brothers Single truck 1899 9.40 12.50 1961 IOW Originally D class tram 102, converted to scrubber in 1930 and coded 134s, operational.

147s Track Tamper Single truck IOW Originally TDX45 on NSWGR register. Currently at

Lithgow for conversion and to make operational.

19 Trolleybus Ritchie Brothers AEC 664T 1937 9.30 8.80 1978 URN Under restoration

1275 Bus Waddingtons Leyland Tiger 1937 Operational

2619 Bus Clyde AEC Regent III 1952 Operational

144s Weed Burner NSWGT Single truck 1956 3.00 3.60 1961 IOS

93u Ballast Motor Meadowbank Bogie 1913 12.65 18.90 1967 URN Restored for display only in 1991.

42s Ballast Motor-U2 NSWGT Bogie 1907 11.43 15.70 1981 IOW Numbered L707 in NSWGR service from 1926 to 1980.

Balmain Counterweight Clyde Single truck 1903 3.28 2.00 1955 IOS Restored at Hunter Valley Training Company in 1990. On display in Display Hall

141s Breakdown car Meadowbank Bogie 1911 13.85 18.03 1964 IOW Originally O-Class Tram 1030, converted to breakdown car in 1955 by NSWDOT and coded 141s.

111 Z2-Class Tram Comeng Bogie 1979 16.52 19.20 2003 IO 111 mostly operates during Autumn, Winter and Spring

249 W2-Class Tram Moore Bogie 1924 14.63 16.52 1996 URN In Federal Capital Commission Tramways Livery. Repainting in progress

611 Y1-Class Tram MMTB Bogie 1930 13.72 20.09 2014 IO

180 Brisbane Dreadnought Tram Gardiner Bogie 1924 11.58 12.20 1964 IO

295 Brisbane Dropcentre Tram Brisbane City Council Bogie 1930 13.87 15.30 1968 IO

548 Brisbane FM Class Brisbane City Council Bogie 1963 14.94 16.10 1969 IO

1692 Peter Witt streetcar Breda Bogie 1929 13.89 15.00 2001 URN Will enter service once modifications are made to overhead and air compressor issues are resolved. Former Milan ATM Class 1500 tram. Based at Brunswick tram depot before transfer to Sydney

1014 PCC Tram St Louis Car Company Bogie 1948 15.37 18.20 1987 URN Donated as bicentenary gift in 1988. Awaiting parts. Former San Francisco Municipal Railway tram

1054 Nagasaki Electric Tramway Class 1050 Nigata Iron Works Bogie 1952 11.40 14.30 1992 IO In Sendai, Japan the number was 121. Regauged and sent to Nagasaki Tramway system.[23] Donated as bicentenary gift. Involved in accident with J675 May 2016. Repairs completed and re-entered service in early 2018

2656 Trams in Munich Waggonfabri Joseph Rathgeber Bogie 1965 1999 Donated 1999[24]

2666 Trams in Munich Waggonfabri Joseph Rathgeber Bogie 1965 1999 Donated 1999[24]

Publications[edit]

The Sydney Tramway Museum publishes Trolley Wire on behalf of most tramway museums around the country. Published quarterly, it carries articles on tramways around the world and news from the various Australasian heritage tramways.

Engineering heritage award[edit]

The museum received a Historic Engineering Marker from Engineers Australia as part of its Engineering Heritage Recognition Program.[25]