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# Pukemiro Junction

T H E G L E N A F T O N L I N E



The front page shows the Peckett operating on the August Open Day (image: C.Mann)

**BUMPER EDITION!**

**THE NEXT OPEN DAY IS ON SUNDAY, 1<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019****GREETINGS / NEW MEMBERS**

Hope you are all keeping warm & dry with this very wet & cold weather we have been having lately. Spring is just around the corner, so they tell us.

Welcome to our new members – during our August open day, we had 3 new members join. We encourage you to be active members & help with our open days or the maintenance of our railway.

**2019 OPEN DAYS**

July open day was pretty well attended but August was largely a washout – literally!!

For July, we carried 350 passengers, well down on June but never the less was quite a good day. August started wet, had a few sunny spells, & then continued wet. We had a lot of Essex vintage cars visit us. They were first built in 1919, according to a vintage car enthusiast in Huntly.

Both days the Mamaku jigger was in use. Again, we used the 2 diesel locos and 2 carriages & the Peckett with one car. We could only run a distance up the line – not right up to the top – so the 2 trains crossed at the Junction with the down train running through the loop. This meant we were pretty well operating a train every ½ hour, so no passenger was waiting too long for a ride. This system worked very well.

The café was very busy both days & a good amount of money was taken. We had a new helper in the café, Karleen, who lives just above the Junction.

Even the souvenir shop did well.

Many thanks to all who turn up & help run these days – in any capacity. You are certainly needed but we could do with more help as some members didn't get a break all day.



Marlene has been doing a roaring trade with pots of tea & homemade cakes on the train (Image: R. Ellis)

### **CHARTERS / GROUPS**

The next ones are planned for October & we have another couple of enquiries.

### **ALONG THE LINE**

We have a few problems with our track at present which are restricting our operations.

After June open day, Pete & John S did a comprehensive survey of our line from the trap points at the bottom of Pukemiro yard to the bottom end of our line & the outcome wasn't good.

To enable us to run over this section of our line, we employed our contractor, Dean, for a week to rectify the problems.

A Club working bee in mid-July had laid out all the sleepers that needed replacing. Dean came, with his helper, for the week before our July open day. He replaced the sleepers that were laid out, re-gauged our track in numerous

places & replaced 6 x 30ft rails that had corroded through in the web. During this week, he was helped by John S & Dave M. Since this work, we have re-gauged another 4 areas & have laid out more sleepers to replace. As a lot of our replacement sleepers are on curves, we are fitting bed plates. All our bed plates are left over from our railways' original hardwood sleepers so the screw holes in them must be drilled out to take the larger screw spikes needed for the pine sleepers. This work has been done by Dave M & CJ.



David Mann hard at work using Dean's equipment to refurbish the track (Image: J. Soffe)

A contractor has sprayed the gorse, toi toi & tobacco weed on most of our line.

Our CW crews have been busy screwing down some of the replaced sleepers & regauging in a couple of areas. They have picked up most of the replaced sleepers & rails. Dave M has also picked up a lot of the replaced sleepers.

Dave continues to keep the lineside growth trimmed back, a never ending job.

We need as many members as possible to help with our working bees to keep our track in good order. No track, no trains, no income!!

## **AROUND THE JUNCTION**

Russell continues to keep the drive sorted out & mow the lawns.

We need a member who is prepared to sort out our gardens around the Junction. Sue has had to give the job up because of health problems.

We have just received (& Russell has spread) a truck load of metal. This has been spread where the new container will be placed at the end of the car park behind the shanty. The idea is to store all the useful stuff from the old hall in it when shelves have been built.



Some of our hard working mid-week members seen with the smart new installation by our artist in residence....a golden jug....in the Shanty (Image: R.Ellis)

## **LOCOMOTIVES**

Meremere 401: The torque converter has been repaired, Richard S found some fusible metal of the correct melting temperature, put it in the fusible plug & the torque converter has been filled with the correct oil.

We had to purchase new batteries for this loco as well. The old ones were

marked 3/10, so were over 9 years old.

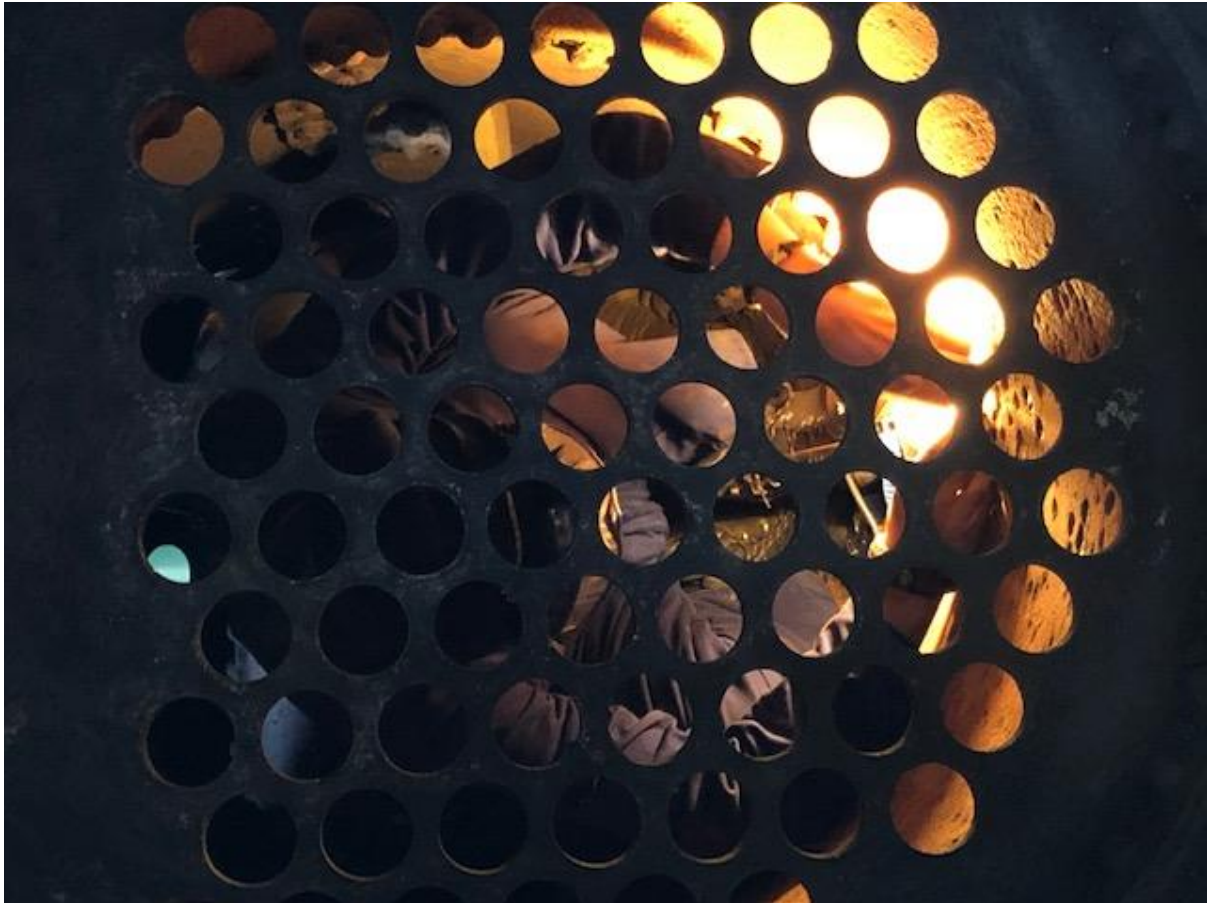
Geoff has fitted the new injectors. There are still a few jobs to do on this loco.



Geoff Boyle fits new injectors to 401's 8 cylinder Gardner engine (Image: R.Ellis)

Peckett: This has run reliably during the open days.

Climax: Richard S has been working on the boiler for this loco again. He has made & fitted the studs that secure the rear boiler mounts to the boiler & fitted everything in place. He is presently reaming out the washout plug holes in the boiler & rethreading them.



New member Connor working inside the Heisler boiler on the August Open Day weekend (Image C. Mann)

### **ROLLING STOCK**

A1477 (#3 Car): Richard E has been over for another three weeks working on this car, along with Dave H, Rob & Sue B. Work has mainly been concentrating on getting all the windows right & they are now in place. He has been burning the old paint off the ceiling & Sue has been painting it.

Russell has been painting some of the new internal framing.

Dave H has made & fitted the tongue & groove timber to the new bulkhead at the end of the carriage.

Chris M has produced some drawings of the modifications necessary for the enlarged balcony.

La 17313: Bruce has taken all the air brake pipework off that needs replacing.

**SECURITY**

This is a must for our railway. For years we have talked about putting security cameras around the site . We recently had 2 break-ins to the rec room & a quantity of food & soft drinks were taken.

Richard E, Trevor T, Rob & Sue B spent a week installing the cameras on the station eaves. They are good quality ones & during the day, we can read vehicle number plates & clearly make out people's faces. A floodlight has also been installed to deter potential thieves from coming up the drive at night. This can be seen from the road.

New member Karleen has offered to keep an eye on the system & monitor activity using her computer at home.

It's up to all members to help keep our place secure.

During the week, Geoff- our neighbour - locks the gate at the bottom of the drive on his way home from work. It is up to all members....whoever is the last to leave the Junction at weekends or on public holidays..... to lock the bottom gate. No exceptions or excuses can or will be accepted!!

**FILM EVENING**

Richard S is organising a slide evening for 31/8/19. This will be held in the wood work shop & starts at 7.30pm.

*COME ALONG & ENJOY AN EVENING OF OLD RAILWAY SLIDES.*

**OPEN DAYS**

The next ones are: 1<sup>st</sup> September, 6<sup>th</sup> October, 3<sup>rd</sup> November. We hope as many members will come & help with these days. At present we have plenty of trainee diesel drivers but need a couple to train as guards or steam firemen.

**SLEEPERS**

We have for sale a quantity of old hardwood sleepers. Price is \$10 each. Please order from the Secretary. [secretary@bushtramwayclub.com](mailto:secretary@bushtramwayclub.com)



**LETTER TO THE EDITOR -**

We have the best opportunity of any rail society to achieve 100% zero carbon by 2030 never mind 2050. We can run all of our bush locomotives on plantation forest wood which is zero carbon if trees are replanted.

We need to plant eucalypts to harvest in 25 years. The calorific value of gum is excellent compared to pine. If we burn a gum tree every Open Day we only need to plant one tree a month and we have a solar powered steam railway. I would be keen to plant eucalypts for a cropping forest and we should sell trees (for the public) to plant on Open Days.

The Heisler and the Climax and the Cb are our flagship zero carbon locomotives. The Peckett will run on gum but I would not like our chances on pine.

We have the Cb and the Goodman to shunt in the yard: the (electricity) grid is substantially renewable but we can charge the Goodman from PV. We can run diesels on bio diesel as a backup. The amount of diesel we use would not make this a logistical problem, maybe expensive?

I suggest we aim for accreditation as the world's first carboNZero railway. I work with enviro mark and EECA and I am sure we would be supported by these organisations to achieve that goal.

**Neil Purdie**

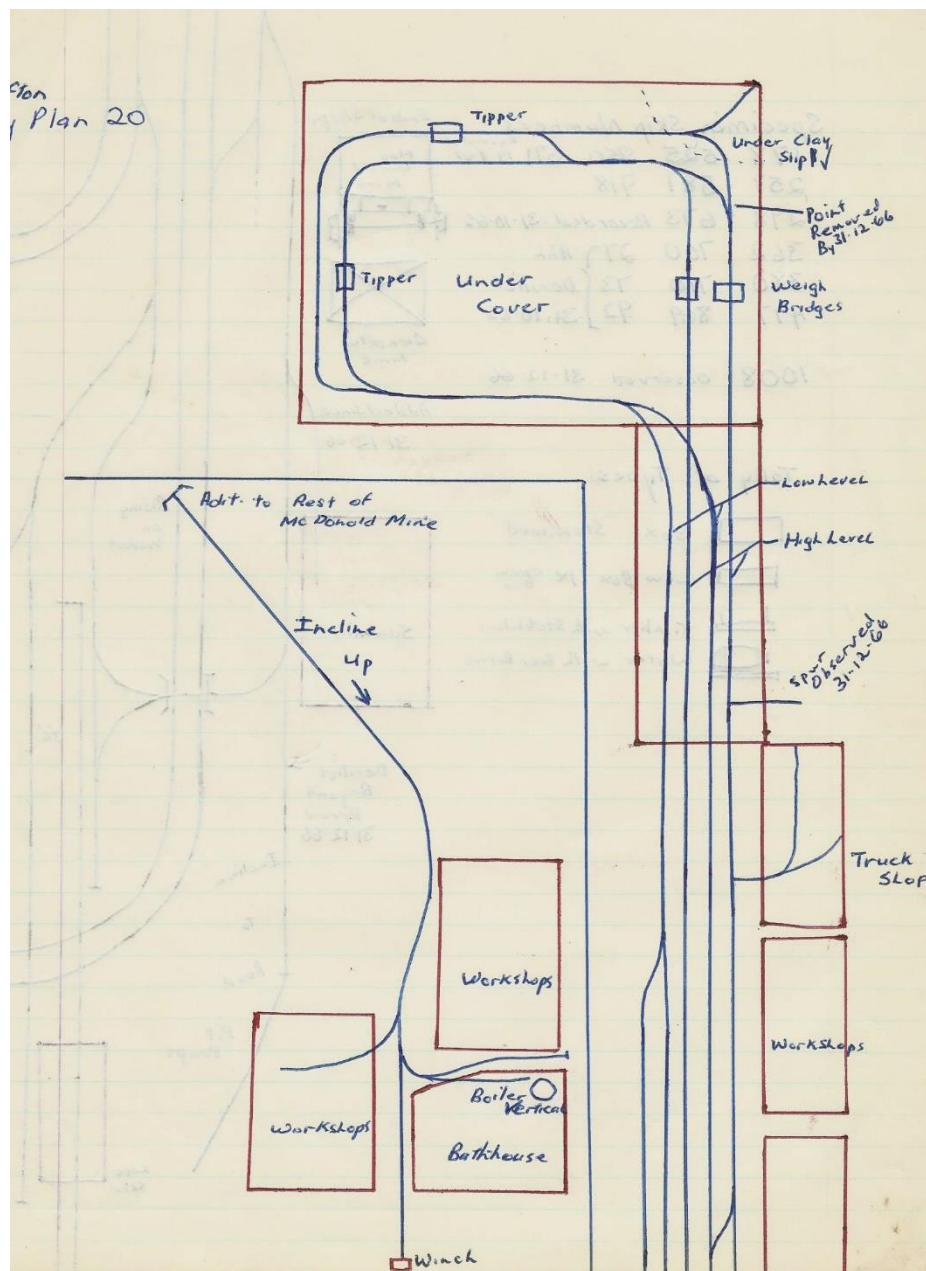
(Editors note: I've edited this letter to reduce its length...if anyone wants to see the original version let me know).

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**GLEN AFTON MINE - REMINISCENCES FROM THE 1960'S**

Words by member Russell Webb; Drawing by member Kerry Bennett.

Skips coming in to the screens from Glen Afton mine were on a flat run-in. They were first unclipped from the main rope by Keith Ridley who was the clipper. They were then sent to the weigh bridge and weighed. The weigh man on the Glen Afton screens was Arthur Sefton. From there the skips went around through the tumbler, where they were emptied into the crushing and screening plant. The empty boxes came back around and were clipped onto the rope and sent back down into the mine. The person who clipped them back on, to go back into the mine, was Bobby Bates. The skips coming down from the McDonald mine entered the screens on quite a steep slope. My first job when I started there was as spragger. The clipper I was working with was Jim Brown. As the skips came in you could not see the clip because the skips had overrun it. You had to put a steel sprag through a spoke in the wheels. This acted as a brake, so that the rope would pull the clip out from under the box. The clipper could undo the bolt on top, take it off, throw it down the chute to the level below. My job was then to take the chain off the boxes and drop it down the chute to the lower level.



The miners were paid by tonnage. Every pair of miners had a number. The number was pressed onto a flat piece of metal, with a string through it. Every time they filled a box they would fasten their number to that particular skip. I would undo the tallies and put them on top of the coal in the skip, then send the box down to the weighbridge where George Bell would stop it and throw the tally through the window to the weigh man. The weigh man was Bob Porteous, who would record the details on the daily sheet, so that the miners got paid according to how many boxes they filled that day. There was also a third weigh man, who went between both weighbridges. He was employed by the miners to make sure that the weights and tallies were right. When the box left the weighbridge, it went around through the tumbler, and then back around empty to the lower level, where it was chained into pairs by Ross Sharp. It was then clipped back onto the main rope by Bob Tait and then sent back to the McDonald mine. They were spaced out at about a chain's length, in order to keep the rope road in balance. ....Russell Webb.

## **ROARING CAMP RAILROAD**

Words & images by member Bruce Alabaster, who recently visited the USA.

Roaring Camp is one of three private narrow gauge (3 ft) railways that we were able to visit during a recent trip to the US. Roaring Camp is located about 90 minutes driving south of San Francisco close to the seaside town of Santa Cruz. The railway is family owned and consists of two distinct lines, one running down to the town of Santa Cruz, and along the beach, taking 90 minutes each way and pulled by a diesel. This is partially advertised as a solution to the car parking issues in Santa Cruz over weekends, relating to the popularity of the beach.

The other line is a recreation of a logging railway, and runs 5.2 km one-way to the top of the 2,500 ft. high Bear Mountain, taking 80 minutes for the round trip . This was built in 1963 and runs through original Californian Redwoods and Douglas Firs, many of these topping 200 feet. Two steam locomotives are currently in use, the primary being a 1912 2-truck Shay (Dixiana) on weekdays, with an 1899 Heisler (Number 1041, or Tuolumne) running on weekends. There are two additional Shays under restoration, an 1890 0-4-2 tank engine which is operational and a 1928 Climax (Number 1692) which they have just started to restore. The Shay uses recycled car engine oil, being burnt at a temperature of 1100 degrees.



The Shay locomotive

The track was specifically built to replicate the features of many of the US logging railways: steep with tight curves, and hence able to demonstrate the abilities of the geared steam locomotives being used- slow but steady. Much of the line is at an 8% grade, and until 1976 featured a 360 degree spiral climb across a trestle bridge, climbing back over this on a second trestle bridge which crossed over the first, but 94 feet above it. In 1976 both bridges were destroyed by a fire and replaced with a switch back, which features a climb of 10.5% (or 1 in 9) and is apparently the steepest passenger grade still in use. The line also still has a trestle bridge with the sharpest curve in the US. The railway operates year around, and during the 3 months summer peak they operate 4 trips per day on weekdays, and six per day on the weekends, pulling an average train weight of 102 tonnes (one of the benefits of drawing from an immediate catchment area of 10 million people, all within 120 minutes driving), with LA also (just) within driving distance. The train itself is predominantly open carriages, but with each equipped with a PA system and there is a regular commentary on points of interest (including the history of the railway and the locomotives). They also offer an “Engineer for the day” gift concept which provides for a day on the footplate (as an observer) for NZ\$ 275

Bruce Alabaster



The Heisler locomotive (Images B. Alabaster)

This newsletter is produced by Colin Jenner & Richard Ellis. Send your contributions for future editions (including images/photos to [secretary@bushtramwayclub.com](mailto:secretary@bushtramwayclub.com). We especially want old photos & reminiscences of days of old..... let's get these newsletters enhanced with more member views & reviews!