

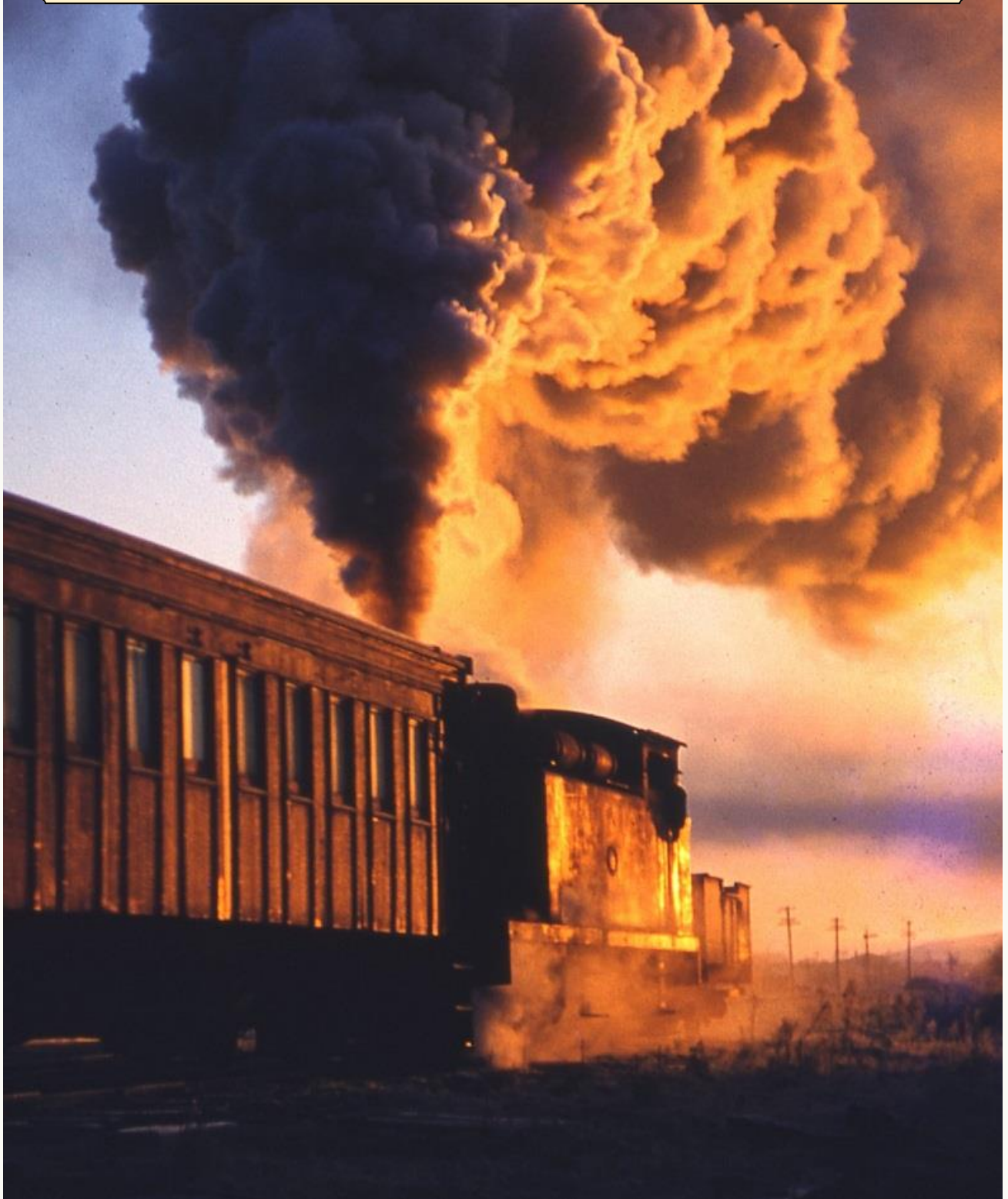
Volume 14 - Issue 3

Established 1965

May 2020

# Pukemiro Junction

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



The Miners train at Rotowaro in the 1960's (Image courtesy of R. Stratford)

**DUE TO THE CORONA VIRUS ALL OPEN DAYS ARE CANCELLED****GREETINGS**

Welcome to another BTC newsletter. Because of the NZ lockdown, not a lot has happened at the Junction lately.

**2020 OPEN DAYS**

March Open Day: This was moderately well attended. Because of recent track work, we were able to run our passenger trains to Glen Afton whilst the Mamaku jigger ran on the bottom half of the line.

Thanks to all who turned up & helped make this day a success.

April Open Day: We decided to cancel this day as we considered that passengers in our carriages did not have sufficient space between them to stop the spread of Covid-19. It was just as well that we had cancelled as the NZ Government brought in a nationwide lockdown shortly afterwards.

At this stage, we are uncertain as to when our next Open Day will be, we'll let you know.

Currently our site is closed to all visitors.

**CHARTER GROUPS**

We had three charters booked for April which were all cancelled because of the lockdown. Two were Probus Clubs based in Auckland & the other was the Huntly Lions Club.

One was run in mid March for Ian J's Rotary Club & was very successful:

*"On Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March the club ran a special day for members of the Rotary Club of Ellerslie Sunrise with 40 members & friends attending. The weather was perfect for a day out.*

*Visitors were welcomed with tea & coffee plus scones & muffins.*

*BTC members had worked hard to ensure the Peckett was re-assembled & certified after the annual survey & it was used in the yard to give visitors the*

*chance to drive & fire it, although some people seemed to enjoy blowing the whistle.*

*One Meremere diesel was used to propel the car-van to the top of the line for several runs while No 2 Mamaku jigger ran 5 trips to the bottom of the line.*

*Marlene had spent many hours planning & organising lunch for all, bread rolls to be filled with your choice of ham, chicken, coleslaw, lettuce, beetroot, tomato & grated cheese, sausage rolls & savouries followed by Marlene's special fruitcake & chocolate chip biscuits.*

*The RCES members gradually drifted away after lunch & we were able to pack up around 2.30. The Rotary Club made a donation of \$1000 to the BTC.*

*Special thanks to the BTC members who worked to make the day a success. Pete Cairncross, John Soffe, Neil Purdie & Ian, Dave Mann, Bill Redman-White, Russell Webb, Ashley Turner, plus the organisers Marlene Marsden & Ian Jenner”.*

We presently have an enquiry for 2 x car clubs for September, virus permitting.

#### **ALONG THE LINE**

Our contractor & his worker came to our railway for the last week in February. They worked on the top half of our line which had been closed to heavier trains since May 2019 following several derailments. During the week, they replaced 163 sleepers, re-gauged 196 sleepers where the gauge was too wide & replaced 1x 30ft rail.

They lifted & packed the top half of the sandfill area & dumped 1 x Yb wagon of ballast in this area.

Two of our Club members also assisted with this work, John S & Dave M. Without their help, we would not have got so much work done.

Pete C & John S spent approx. 2 full days marking the sleepers that needed to be replaced, gauging the line every metre & recording all of this.

Dave M picked up some of the replaced sleepers.

Our CW crew unloaded 450 new sleepers then went up the line & picked up the

rest of the replaced sleepers & the 30ft rail.

There are approx. 40 sleepers that still need the rails screwing down to them. Watch out for a notice about a working bee to do this work!!

Dave M has spent a lot of time during the lockdown spraying the weeds on our line using a knapsack sprayer- as he says he's got plenty of time to do it!!

### **AROUND THE JUNCTION**

CJ assisted by Dave M have been carrying out the annual inspections of our carriages & regularly used wagons.

We have also sorted out a lot of track fittings that came out of the line when the sleepers were replaced. A lot of them went into our scrap bin.

Dave M has been spending some of the exceptionally hot afternoons sorting out the gear in the hall. We are trying to empty the hall so that it can be demolished.

We have recently had the yellow safety line on the station platform resprayed.

### **LOCOMOTIVES**

Peckett: This was checked in steam in mid-March ready for the charter trip later that week. It passed OK. The very dry weather mean that it was only able to run up & down in the Junction yard.

Thanks to all who helped put it back together after its open boiler inspection.

Cb 117: This loco had its open boiler inspection in mid January, at the same time as the Peckett.

Richard S is replacing all the pipework between the steam dome & the engine unit with heavy wall pipe. The existing pipe has been in place for 25 years & is getting thin in places.

Heisler: Some more work has been done on this loco. Neil Purdie & his son have been removing the bolts that hold the smoke box to the saddle & struts that support the front of the smokebox. These are bolted through the headstock.



The Climax boiler is just about completed. Note the new steam take-off on the dome (image: Chris Mann)



Dave Mann working on re-assembling the Peckett after its recent boiler survey (Image: C. Mann)

**ROLLING STOCK**

A 1477: MTL (Chris M) and his team have created a design for the balcony steelwork needed to give this carriage a larger than normal “balcony area” which should be a visitor-pleasing feature of the vehicle once restored.

**SECURITY**

Due to the current Covid-19 situation the bottom gate to the site is being kept locked.

**A . G . M .**

This has been postponed. We will let you know a revised date in due course.

**NZTA VISIT**

A final report has been received from the NZTA with findings from their recent visit. The BTC is preparing a response by the end of June; the focus being on the upgrading of our risk assessments.

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

*I have just been reading the History of loco's 401 & 402 and wish to point out that these loco's ceased use at Meremere Power Station when it was decommissioned in 1991. At this time I took the role of Station Superintendent until April 1992 and it was during this time that arrangements with Colin Jenner (a former Meremere Power Station employee) from Bush Tramways and myself representing ECNZ were made. The Drewry Catalogue is the original 401 Catalogue from back in the day when all items of plant had a SHD (State Hydro Department) number hence the two Loco's were originally SHD1 & SHD2.*

*Regards  
Allen Morrison*

Thanks Allen, we will revise our website information which has the wrong dates! – Ed..

**SCRAP METAL APPEAL**

In normal times the BTC collects steel & aluminium to recycle and earn the club some extra cash. We would ask you if you can to save your old “tin” cans (steel) or drinks cans (aluminium) and the like and donate them to the BTC once the restrictions on travel are lifted. Start saving steel and aluminium now, and we will be very grateful. Every little helps!



Bb222 approaches Glen Afton in 1957 with train No.266 (Image courtesy of R. Stratford)



Bb222 with a Saturday only train No. 276 under the old road bridge at Glen Afton (image courtesy of R. Stratford)

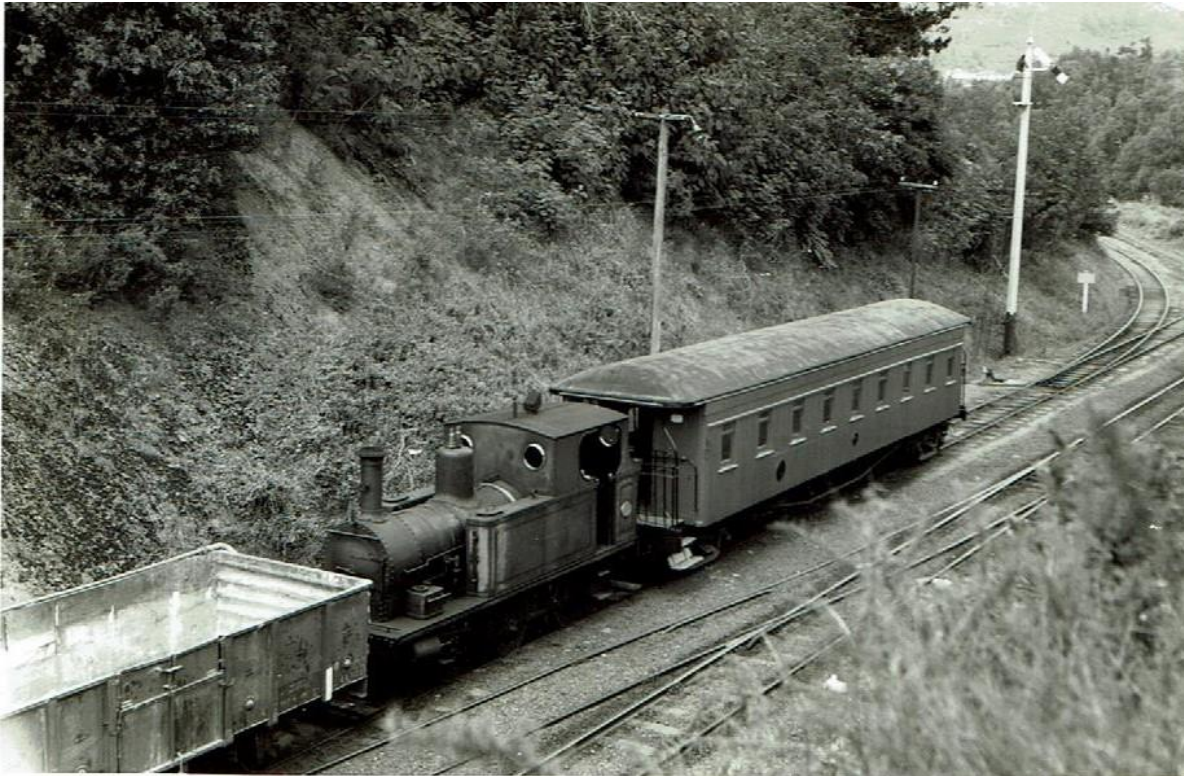


The Price "E" is seen out-of-use at Ongarue in the 1960's (image: I. Jenner)



Members of the BTC camped in a shearing shed at Ongarue in the 1960's. The mill was in the centre distance and the Price "E" is visible off to the right (image: I. Jenner)





The Peckett with miners carriage & a wagon at Pukemiro Junction in the 1960's (image: I. Jenner)

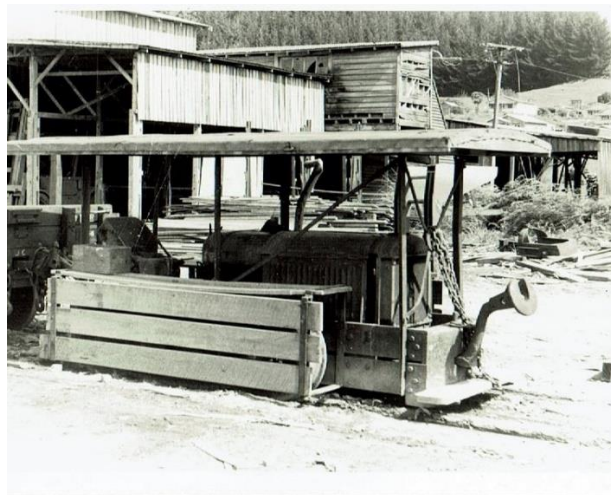


Pukemiro Junction Station with a passenger train approaching from Glen Afton – 1960's (image: Wilson Lythgoe)



A painting of Pukemiro Junction in the mid 1900's by C. Patterson (reproduced courtesy of Wayne Palmer). Note the church, but no hall.

(Below): A Union Foundry tractor, probably at National Park (image: I. Jenner)



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