

Volume 15 - Issue 5

Established 1965

September 2021

Pukemiro Junction

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



BB621 at Glen Afton 1956 (T. Terry – C Howell Coll.)

GREETINGS & WELCOME TO ANOTHER BTC NEWSLETTER

2021 OPEN DAYS

July: This was a fairly quiet open day. Once again, the Peckett & mines car ran the bottom half of the line with the two Meremere diesels & 2 carriages on the top half.

August: This was a slightly better day as we were visited by the Hamilton branches of the Austin & Morris car clubs. There were some very well presented cars on show.

The way we ran the trains was the same as July open day.

Thanks to all who turn up & help run these days. We have been doing a lot of training lately & have 3 new guards & one new large diesel engine driver under training.

2021 SAFETY REFRESHER / TRACK WORKING BEE

A Safety Refresher course will be held on Sunday 22 August starting at 10am. It is important that as many of our operating members as possible turn up. It is a requirement of our safety system that operating members receive frequent refresher training. After this course, we intend to do some trackwork for the rest of the day. All welcome! Morning tea will be provided, but bring your own lunch....

HEISLER 1082 FUND

This fund has had quite some success with several members making substantial contributions in cash including one member contributing hundreds of dollars from his pension (for which many thanks) as well as the BTC receiving a couple of very welcome grants. Funds raised so far (including promises) total roughly \$22,000 whilst expenditure is around \$25,000. Just a reminder: this is a Club locomotive so there are no “fairy godmothers” waiting in the wings who are flush with cash.... Your contributions are most welcome.

See our website for details as to how to make a donation....

The Peckett at the July Open Day – early morning (J. Soffe)



ALONG THE LINE

Dave M & CJ have continued trimming back the lineside growth. We have also cut down a few small trees that were too close to the line. These have been cut up for firewood.

John S has continued inspecting our culverts. He is now nearly at the top of the line.

The Community Work crew spent a day with us replacing sleepers just up past the sand fill area. Some of these were found while Dave M & CJ were pruning the lineside growth in the area. John S came down a week later & screwed the rails to the sleepers, assisted by Dave M & CJ.

Dave M & CJ spent a couple of hours cutting out loose fishplate bolts & putting in new ones. This work was largely around the sand fill area & some were found while trimming back lineside growth in the area.

AROUND THE JUNCTION

The area where the hall was has undergone further work. The area was completely cleared & the ground tidied up. Holes for a retaining wall were drilled by Bruce Mc L. All posts have now been concreted in & the retaining wall was completed the day before the August open day.

Ian J comments:

This last weekend we managed to complete the retaining wall required before the hall area is filled. This has been a communal project, Bruce M brought his excavator & auger in last month to bore the post holes, IJ & DM then spent a day setting up & concreting the first of the posts before the July Open Day, & then Saturday 30th July we completed the remaining posts, & with the hard work of IJ, DM, Russell Webb, & Trevor Wilmott all the retaining timber was put in place. A source of clay fill has been found along with transport so the filling will happen as soon as the weather improves. Good progress when you consider it is only about 1 year since we started demolishing the hall, & only 3 months since we lifted the floor.



The new retaining wall next to the pit & where the hall used to be (I. Jenner)

Lawns: Russell W has continued to cut the lawns. He has, again, tidied up the drive up to the Junction. This presently scours badly with the heavy rain we have been having lately. He has also been tidying up some of our gardens. He has obtained some large tractor tyres & is intending to make them into gardens.

Woodwork shop lean to: Bruce Mc L drilled the holes for the timber that the end doors will swing from. These posts were concreted in by Ian J & Dave M.

N. Z. T. A.

NZTA have finally closed all the amendments to our safety case & safety system that were required after the assessment carried out by them during our December open day. We still have to send them all the rewritten pages of our safety case & safety system. Doing all the required amendments has been a very long job. Thanks to Richard E, John S, Peter C & CJ for doing all the work.

One of NZTA's requirements was that we upgrade our medical requirements. They have agreed that all our engine drivers & firemen are to sign a declaration stating that they will provide the GM with a copy of their NZ drivers licence & will inform the GM of any changes to their health or medication. These forms will be sent out soon. We have also added a notice on the running day sign-on roster that you are fit for your duties today.

All this information will be kept in a separate folder by the GM.

LOCOMOTIVES

Peckett: This loco continues to run very well. It handles the run between the Junction & the Rotowaro end of the line very well.

Tr 105: Maarten has been working on the new airbrake system so this loco can control the carriage brakes.

Tr 112: The Club now has 3 Price built Tr locos. This latest one was donated by a Club member & it was last used by Kiwirail in 2019. It is still on Kiwirail property at Westfield loco depot.

Heisler: : Work on this loco continues. Work on the boiler is progressing. The holes in the boiler where the crown stays were screwed into were recently checked ultrasonically for cracks, none were found.

Dave M has been cleaning & painting a lot of the smaller pieces & pipework for the loco.

We are very fortunate that several of our members contribute regularly to the fund for the overhaul of this loco. Thank you very much. Look at our website to see how you can help.



The Heisler smokebox door & safety valves are a focus of attention – the photos show the cracks in the smokebox door surround (C. Mann)

Climax 1650: Work continues on this loco at John Pitcorns' Te Kuiti workshop.



The Climax approaches completion in Te Kuiti (C. Mann)

Meremere 401: Some months ago, we couldn't get its radio to work. We checked & found someone had cut the aerial cable & taken the whole aerial!! A new one was purchased by Ashley T & was fitted by Geoff B.

ROLLING STOCK

Xp wagon: Work on this wagon has started again with Bruce Mc L covering the wagon in black plastic to keep the weather out of it. He has recently purchased the thick plywood for the new floor.

Flat Wagon: Ian B has completed cutting approx. ½ metre off each side of this wagon. He has finished grinding all the gas cuts.

We have purchased a three way tipping body from a truck. This will be mounted on one end of the wagon so all the spoil can be put in in for dumping somewhere out of the way. We have also purchased a 12 volt hydraulic pumping unit to work the hydraulics on the tipping gear of the truck body.



Tip truck body bought for mounting on the large flat wagon (I. Jenner)

La 17313: Dave M has been chipping rust that had bubbled through the paintwork & then applying new paint.

#3 car : Dave H continues to work on the plywood interior of this car, including prime painting the plywood and fixing some of it. He is now working out the seat mountings, the seats having come from the Goldfields railway at a good price. Co-operation between heritage railways is good to see!

He has also fitted stops to the windows so they can't be opened enough for kids to lean out.

FRONZ CONFERENCE

Most heritage type railways belong to this organisation. Each year they hold a conference at Queen's birthday weekend – usually one year in the North Island & the next year in the South Island.

This year it was held in Gisborne & attended by myself & Jan J & 80 other

delegates or observers. Speakers were from a group trying to get the railway between Wairoa & Gisborne re opened.

Four participants from NZTA gave a talk about their future ideas for the assessments they carry out on all railways. Looks like a lot more paperwork!!

Kiwirail gave a talk on future rolling stock for them following significant & welcome financial contributions from the NZ Government.

All groups such as ours had a session where our main concerns were discussed- future coal supplies & even being permitted to operate coal burning locos. In the UK some railways now can only get coal imported from Russia!!

On Sunday afternoon, we had a trip behind Wa165 to Muriwai. The annual prizes were won by the following: Steam loco restoration award - GVR for the restoration of Ww480. Non steam powered loco - Mainline steam heritage trust for Dj1229. Carriage restoration - Steam Incorporated for their restoration of steel car Aa1783.

All in all a good conference but it was a long way to drive!!

TRAINING

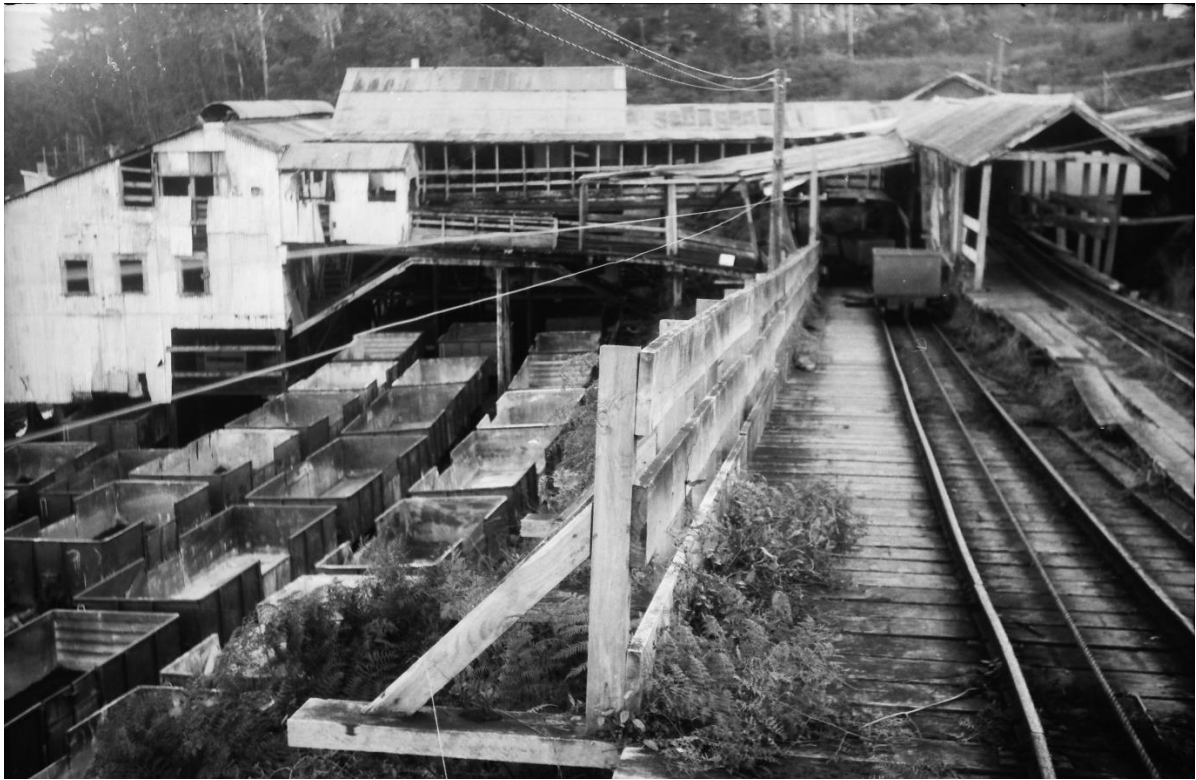
We could do with more members to train in all aspects of running our railway. We are very short of guards. Contact Colin Jenner if you want to help.

PUKEMIRO SCHOOL CLOSED

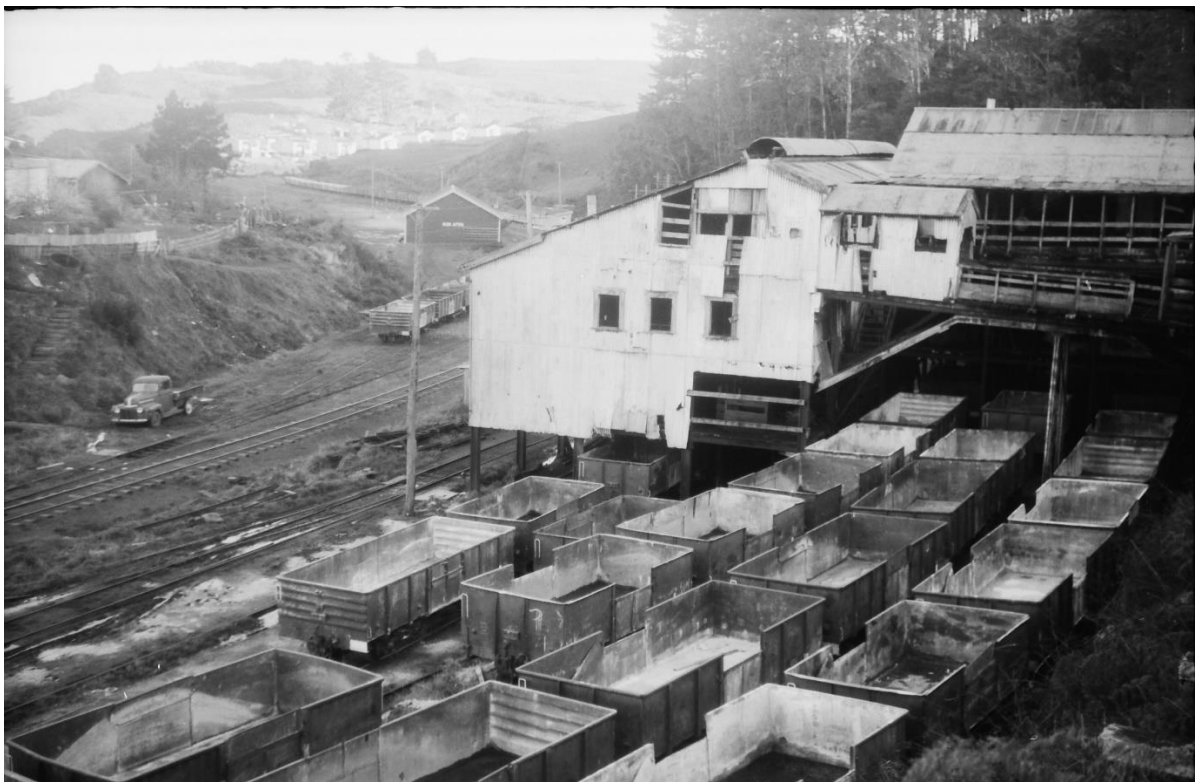
This school was opened on 2/2/1914 & closed on 25/7/21. It was the primary school for the Pukemiro & Glen Afton area & was well attended for most of its life. Over the last couple of years, the numbers of kids attending dropped off for several reasons. Last year there were 4 kids attending & this year just 1.

At this stage no one knows what will happen to the buildings or the grounds. They must be offered back to the original land owners. Pukemiro Collieries donated the land but they are long gone & became part of Neil Croppers' who had their offices in Anzac Ave in Auckland. They have also long gone.

GALLERY



Glen Afton Colliery 1969 (J. Agnew Collection).



Glen Afton Colliery (2) 1969 (J Agnew Collection)



Peckett loco 1645 at Glen Afton colliery 1957 (J. Agnew collection)



Peckett at Pukemiro 1957 (J.A. Terry)



Steam crane in action & Heisler loco in action in 1979 at Pukemiro Jcn. (J.A. Terry)



Hangapipi road bridge 1979 (J.A.Terry)

This newsletter was produced by Richard Ellis, with much of the text from Colin Jenner, and contributions from several other members. Photos & text to add variety are needed and much appreciated. Send your contributions to secretary@bushtramwayclub.com.