

“There is no doubt that the first requirement for a composer is to be dead” - Arthur Honegger

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Pukemiro Junction

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



A full set of new stays have been installed in the Heisler boiler – Jan 2022 (A. McIver)

GREETINGS & WELCOME TO ANOTHER BTC NEWSLETTER

Here we are again, with a newsletter a bit short on content, but I'm most appreciative of the positive comments I received about the last edition.

It is very hard to judge whether the newsletter is appreciated, or lacking, when the usual deathly hush follows the release of a new edition.

I don't mind positive criticism, suggesting how the newsletter might be improved. All suggestions welcome!

R.E. - EDITOR.

2022 OPEN DAYS

As I (CJ) write this newsletter, we are hoping to have our first 2022 open day on the first Sunday of March. The committee are presently working out how to manage our members & passengers but still stick to the rules for Covid 19. This will be our first open day since August 2021.

COVID DEVELOPMENTS

The lockdown in Auckland ended in mid-December after being shut off from the rest of NZ since the middle of August. The whole country has gone back to the new red light system because of the new Omicron variant in the community.

However, now that our Auckland members are allowed out, a lot of them have been reasonably frequent visitors to the Junction.

We have also just received our first charter trip enquiry.

ACTIVITIES / DEVELOPMENTS

A tremendous amount of work has gone on at the Junction since the last newsletter.

Trev T4 & Rob B have been out & repaired the radio in 402. The step down transformer that converts 24 volts into 12 volts to work the radio wasn't working. It was taken away to get a new one.

There was an issue with positive/negative earth to solve. After that, Trev & Rob came down to help with the track work.

The pine trees up the line that had either fallen down or been dropped by us & that were easily accessible have been cut up into rings & transported to the Junction. We now have a very large heap waiting to be split into firewood.

The CW crews have been out twice since we went to an orange light – one visit they raked up the pine needles on the track at both ends of Pukemiro yard & the other time, with just 2 bods in the crew, replaced 6 sleepers to support a rail that was due to be replaced. The old rail had already been removed by Dave M. Unfortunately the CW crews are not permitted to work while we are in the current red light setting.

Bruce McL repaired a section of the wooden edging of the station platform that had become loose.

He then went on to help Ian J, Richard S & Pete C who were constructing the side wall of the extension to the shed behind the wood work shop.



Dave Mann working on the woodwork shop side lean-to extension (T. Townsend)

Russell W has continued with keeping the lawns mowed & the gardens in reasonable order. Maarten & Lesley R have also been doing some gardening.

Dave M & CJ have weed sprayed the whole line on one day & spent another spraying the whole line for gorse. We have also continued the job of replacing fish plate bolts that are loose or have broken spring washers.

5TH - 7TH FEBRUARY STATION CLEAN-UP WORKING BEE

Working bee 5 – 7th February: On the 6th, there were 13 members present but it poured with rain!! The first serious rain since mid-December.

Richard S scrubbed the outside of the carriages while Teresa B & Maarten R cleaned the insides.

Pete C, John S & Guy C replaced the rail that had been removed, re-gauged the rail & then screwed the sleepers to the rail- all in the rain!!

Ian J & Richard S were making the new doors for the new extension shed behind the wood work shop.

Marleen M & Lesley R spent a large part of the day cleaning the toilets & rec room, helped for a while by Teresa B.

Track wagon: After sitting unused for a number of years, a need has been found for the compressor in it.

Richard S finally got the compressor to start but the battery was flat next time he went to start it & it wouldn't take a charge., so a new battery was purchased & Ian B started it on 6/2 & gave Pete C & John S a run down on the checks etc that are necessary for this.

Our new neighbours that have purchased the construction & demolition dump just up past the top end of Pukemiro yard want to extend the concrete level crossing where the entrance to their property crosses our railway. BTC will be required to remove the present rails & then replace them after the foundations have been completed. The rest of the job, including providing the replacement sleepers, will be carried out by the dump's contractors. Approx. 60 sleepers are needed. Once the rails are back in place, the contractors will construct the boxing & do the concrete work. They are a very good crowd to deal with.

Large flat wagon: Ian B has been working on this wagon. He has made up a coupling for each end so they can couple up to our rolling stock. One end coupling couldn't couple up so he is working on plan B, or is it C!!. He is also working on the grease lines to the bogies.



Trevor T4 has ingeniously isolated the radio on a Meremere diesel loco using a block of wood...thus "positive earth" or "negative earth" no longer matters....

TRACTOR

Many years ago, Russell W fitted a new alternator to this tractor, a job he reckons was extremely awkward. Unfortunately, it got wired up wrong by another person & burnt out. Richard S has dismantled the front of the tractor enough to get the old alternator out. He is presently looking for a more modern & smaller one.

AGM

This will be held on 27/3/22 at the Junction at 1.30pm. It is important that as many members as possible attend to hear what has gone on in the last year & have a say in what they would like to happen in the future. A refresher shunting school will be held before the AGM starting at 10.30am.

It is very important that both new and existing members attend the refresher course, particularly as Covid has caused some members to lapse & thus they can no longer be regarded as being operational staff.

HEISLER 1082 FUND

Work on the Heisler boiler progresses at Paekakariki with the new stays now installed. Following a generous donation the boiler tubes and stay tubes are being installed over coming months. It may seem like magic that the boiler is being fast-tracked, but make no mistake that every dollar is welcome to complete the job.

Editor's Note: We appreciate the continuing donations by our member Kerry B. I'm advised that Kerry is unwell, and I'm sure we all wish him well.

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

LOCOMOTIVES

D3 - our Planet loco. In mid-January, we found the wiring from the alternator to the battery had been cut. This is not the first time someone has cut wiring on our vehicles as some months ago we found the radio aerial cabling on 401 cut & the aerial missing!!

Richard S sorted out the wiring & it is all working again. There is a light on the panel that glows if you HAVEN'T turned the key off when you have stopped the motor. If left on, it gradually flattens the battery. Whoever put the loco away on 6/2 didn't turn the key off.

The aerial on 401 was sorted out by Ashley T & Trev T4.

SINGLE MEN'S HUTS

Members may not be aware but every smaller NZR depot once had a collection of single men's huts close to the loco depot for single employees. They also once supplied houses for their married employees as well.

There is a growing collection of these huts at the Junction, all owned & used by members. We presently have 3 on site with another one being constructed. The latest one is built & owned by Peter C & arrived at the Junction in mid-January.

The newly made huts are somewhat higher than the originals but otherwise are reasonably faithful to the original NZR huts.



The two new recently built huts now on site (T.Townsend)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions: Many thanks to all who have renewed their subs. Special thanks to those who have included a donation, some of them are quite large.

MEDICAL FORMS

I (CJ) still have a lot of these to get returned. I MUST have the medical form & a copy of your driver's licence. Unless they are returned, you may find you can't drive on our railway. This now a requirement of our safety system.

“LOGGING THE PUNGA”

This is a new book about Ellis & Bernand's sawmill & tramways at Manunui, just down from Taumarunui. It was published by Taumarunui & Districts Historical Society & written by the late Ken Anderson & Audrey Walker & Ron Cooke. It is available from the Society at PO Box 329, Taumarunui 3946.

It is probably the last book that deals with the history of the large sawmills in that area.

Recommended!

PHOTO GALLERY



The woodwork shop lean-to a work in progress above (T. Townsend) and below (I.Jenner)





(Above & below) - Removal of unwanted material was a feature of the recent working bee (I.Jenner)





A585 at Pukemiro Junction - T278 22 Sep 1952 LJH5448a_cr Les Hostick (R. Stratford)

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.