

“History is not what you thought – it is what you can remember”- W.C. Sellar

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Established 1965

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Pukemiro Junction

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



Pukemiro Junction at dusk – Photo – C.Mann)

GREETINGS & WELCOME TO ANOTHER BTC NEWSLETTER

Don't forget that our January 2023 Open Day is on 8th January not 1st January

OPEN DAYS, CHARTER TRIPS & GROUP VISITS

November: We were very short of members to help run this day. The Peckett wasn't lit up as we had no crew. The day was reasonably busy.

December: Despite a lot of rain in the early part of the week, the end of the week was very hot with strong winds so it was decided not to run the Peckett outside Pukemiro yard.

We had a good crowd of people wanting to ride on our railway so the day was pretty busy with all trains up until 2pm full. The Mamaku jigger was giving rides, the first for quite a long time.

After the last train & all the gear was put away, we had our usual end of year "nosh up". Most of the members who had worked that day stayed on enjoyed the feast.



Teresa and friends/relations at the Christmas time "nosh up" after the December Open Day (Photo:C.Mann)

A very pleasant surprise was that one of the original members, Len Boyd, had come out from UK to visit his brother. Len was brought up in Papatoetoe, South Auckland, but went on his OE to UK many years ago & never returned.



Members enjoy the December "nosh up" (Photo:C.Mann)

Charter trips: We had a visit from an elderly group from Hamilton West & they really enjoyed their ride. We have another two enquiries but haven't heard from them for a while now.



A view of the lower yard (Photo:C.Mann)

TRACK WORKING BEES

Two CW crews have been out since last newsletter. They have cleared all the muck off the top of the sleepers on the carriage siding each side of the driveway up to Karleen's house. Eleven tractor bucket loads was removed on one visit alone. This has shown up a few more sleepers that need replacing.

AROUND THE JUNCTION

Russell continues to keep our lawns mowed & our gardens weeded. As a result of very heavy rain we have had at times recently, our driveway has been badly scoured out. He has spent many hours cutting run offs between the driveway & the side drain that runs down the bank side of the drive. He then metals the driveway again. He gets very annoyed when some of the locals do wheelies on the lawn right at the bottom & tear the lawn up badly.



Pete attends to the removal of excess growth from up the line (Photo: J. Soffe)



Clearing up the driveway (Photo: J.Soffe)

ALONG THE LINE

The warm & wet winter & spring have really made the lineside growth grow. Sometimes it was well out into the loading gauge of our rail vehicles. At one stage, the whole of the valley & our railway looked as if there had been a very heavy snowfall!! Alas it was just privet bushes flowering. Dave M & CJ have spent many hours trimming this growth back. Pete C & John S spent most of a day cutting down large privet trees.

Dave M & CJ have also spent time weed spraying sections of our line but more needs doing.

The gate across the track just below Hangapi Rd level crossing was damaged by someone wanting to get past. They had tied a strop around the gate & pulled with a vehicle. The chain & padlock couldn't be found. The gate was straightened by Pete C & John S.

LOCOMOTIVES

Steam locos: Both our working steam locos are out of service for their annual boiler inspections. Richard S has already got the Cb loco just about ready.

Price E: Richard S has trial fitted the new smokebox to the loco & has drilled the bolt holes in it so the front can be bolted on. He has got the chimney ready to bolt in place as well.

Heisler: Chris M, Fraser R & Richard S spent most of the December open day removing & pulling apart the front bogie. It has shown that a couple of the bearings need remetalling.



A wheelset from the Heisler shows the bevel gear arrangement (Photo: C. Mann)



New volunteer Fraser R has been working on the Heisler – here we see a temporary wheelset keeping the bogie “on the rails” (C. Mann)



Richard S in action with the Heisler bogie strip down (C. Mann)



The Heisler bogie frame is hoisted at one end to remove a wheelset (C.Mann)

Diesel locos: Tr105 (367) loco: Richard S has been working on the “banging” noise coming from the gearbox. It appears to be that the original multi-speed gearbox had been deliberately locked into a single gear by NZR when the torque converter was fitted by NZR many years ago.

LIFTING GANTRY

Richard S has completed the painting of this item.

DRAINS

These are a very important part of keeping our railway in good order. Richard S has improved a drain that runs across the yard & now ends up beside the oil store. The old drain was chocked up so didn't work. We need to continue this drain under a lawn & then over the bank but we know that the 2 telephone cables for the whole area run very close to where we need to dig this drain. I don't know if you've ever tried to get hold of Chorus to come & locate cables but it can take quite some time & effort.

These cables contain the phone circuits for the whole of the area from Hangapi Rd to out past Pukemiro village. Many years ago, we gave Telecom permission to plough in these cables beside our railway. They run from close to Glen Afton to the bottom end of our railway, a distance of 3 kilometres. We know where they are beside the line & we know roughly where they go as they bypass the railway itself to get around the yard at the Junction. Here, they run well buried under the roadway.

Ian J has dug a short drain that takes the rain water that runs around the base of the hill that our water tanks sit on. The alteration now means that this drain runs under the yard just in front of the lower end of our loco shed/ workshop & then into a big culvert that runs back under the yard very close to the shanty.

Dylan P has partly dug a new drain to take the over flow from the tank that catches the rain from half of the woodwork shop roof & the new shed behind that shed.

Being in the hills, we get a lot of very heavy rain hence the need to keep our drains in good order.

2023 – AN IMPORTANT YEAR

2023 is a very important year for BTC. Our Peckett will be 100 years old & the line from Pukemiro Junction to Glen Afton was opened in 1923. The committee are presently thinking of how to celebrate this occasion. Climax 1650 & our Price E locos will also be 100 years old, whilst carriage A1319 "Mary" will be 110 years old. We would welcome ideas from our members.

NEW MEMBERS

In the last six weeks we have gained five new members. Welcome to BTC. We hope that you will become part of the active side of our Club, maintaining our vehicles & track & helping on our open days.

SID LE QUESNEY – A MEMORY FROM DAVID FIELD

Sid served a fitting and turning apprenticeship in Auckland and then worked at Taupo Totara Timber Company's Maroa mill. While there a workmate suggested applying for a position as a marine engineer.

Sid joined a London company called Trinder Anderson & Co Ltd who managed the ships of the Avenue and the Australind shipping companies. Around the mid-1950s Sid was serving on a vessel which brought the first two Da locomotives to NZ, loaded at Montreal.

Sid served five years with Trinder's, returning finally to NZ as Second Engineer on MV Tyrone in November, 1958.

He then was at NZ Co-op Dairy Co (now Fonterra) Te Awamutu factory for twenty five years.

GALLERY



Most of our Open Day operating locos here seen at a recent Open Day in the lower yard (J. Soffe)



Rusting hulks in our “rotten row” triangle (J. Soffe)

FROM THE COMMITTEE

Please don't put aerosol cans or milk containers with their lids on in the rubbish bins as they explode when heated & can blow flaming pieces out of the incinerator

***NOTE THAT OUR JANUARY 2023 OPEN DAY WILL BE
ON 8th JANUARY 2023 & NOT ON 1st JANUARY 2023***

This newsletter was produced by Richard Ellis, with much of the text from Colin Jenner – and others - send your contributions for future editions to secretary@bushtramwayclub.com.