

“When I want to read a novel, I’ll write one” – Benjamin Disraeli

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# Pukemiro Junction

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



Member Robert. H. works on the Battery electric loco at a recent working bee – (T. Townsend)

GREETINGS & WELCOME TO ANOTHER BTC NEWSLETTER

We welcome all our new members – we hope you will get involved!

## OPEN DAYS, CHARTER TRIPS & GROUP VISITS

In January we ran on the 8<sup>th</sup> instead of the first Sunday which was New Year's Day. The day was very busy & we just ran our trains – as soon as one lot of passengers got off, the next were loaded on & we were away again. Even the 3pm train was full.

The crowd on these days really stretches our crews as we often don't get time for a break of any sort.

The café sold out of most of its stock.

February: This was just about as busy as the January Open Day. We ran trains every ¾ hour.

Thanks to all who turn up & help make these days a success.



Scene at a recent Open Day (Photo:C.Mann)

Charter trips: By the time you receive this newsletter we will have run a charter for a group of seniors from Hamilton.

We have enquiries for another four charters, so the interest in these is picking up. Thanks to all who turn up to run these trips.

Note that the next Open Days are: March 5<sup>th</sup>, April 2<sup>nd</sup> & May 7<sup>th</sup>

### PROMOTION

There was a ½ page spread in the Waikato Times on 13/2 about our railway. It contained 5 colour photos of our February open day.

### TRACK DAMAGE

On the Friday evening before the February Open Day, I (Colin J) received a phone call that there were a couple of places on the sand fill (which is halfway from Pukemiro Junction to Glen Afton) where the track had moved. We went up & had a look on the Saturday morning & Pete C decided to close the track from the start of the sand fill. During the week we had seen quite a lot of rain & a 4.8 Richter sized earthquake that was centred near to Te Aroha. We found some cracks in the ground just on the downhill side of the track. There is a known fault line running through the construction & demolition dump who are our neighbours & this dump adjoins our railway in this area. At this stage we aren't too sure exactly what caused the track to buckle but suspect it could have been caused by the earthquake. It has been a long time since we had trouble in this area when the track dropped into an old underground mine in 1993. We have had a contractor look at how to fix the problem track & he is going to send us a quote to do the job. This contractor has done a lot of work on our railway in the past.

We have had a lot of reasonably heavy rain in the last six weeks & as I write this newsletter another cyclone is starting to affect NZ. We have suffered four slips plus a tree down on the top part of our railway. We can't get access to clear these until the twisted track has been repaired.

There was a very wide spread damage to our area, mostly trees down but also some power lines down. The power to our area was out from 11pm on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> until 6am on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup>.

We hope that none of our members were affected by all this very rough weather.





Track issues after the recent events (P. Cairncross)



## ALONG THE LINE

Dave M & CJ have been spraying gorse & other problem trees with a new type of spray that seems to work on a lot of our other lineside growth. We also spent a couple of days trimming back lineside growth.

We have been busy marking & starting to lay out sleepers that need replacing.

A month or so ago, we found the gate that blocks off access from Hangapipi Rd to the bottom part of our line, had been virtually destroyed. A vehicle had hooked a rope or similar around the gate & driven back up the line. The result is that the gate is very badly bent, the post that the gate locked onto has snapped off at ground level & the post that the gate hinges from is almost out of the ground. It would appear that someone wants access to hoon around our area at the bottom of our line & drive through the pine trees that are growing beside our line.

This is the second time the gate has been damaged in the last few months.



This view from one of our Meremere diesels shows the locality of the vandalism which has recently occurred to our security gate (C.Mann)

## AROUND THE JUNCTION

Russell W has been out of action for a month or so, so Dave M has been cutting the lawns.

We have taken delivery of 15 lengths of 150 mm pipe so we can sort out some of our weather problems. Ian J has just about completed digging a drain that will connect up with the drain from beside our oil store.

Maarten R & Dave M have been clearing the pampas off a bank behind the loco shed.

## LOCOMOTIVES

**Steam locos:** Peckett: A working bee on 11/2 got the loco almost ready for the boiler inspector. Chris M, Pete C, Matthew C & Fraser R did the work.

Heisler: Some work has been done on cleaning the bogie that was removed during the December open day.



Pete C and Ian W in the loco shed are working on the Heisler bogie (C.Mann)



**Diesel locos:** Tr 459: This loco was glass blasted during the week of 6/2 & then a coat of under coat was sprayed on. Since then, the top coat has been started. Tr 436 is the next to be done.



Tr459 gets blasted prior to painting (I. Jenner)



Tr459 seen here in primer after blasting (I. Jenner)





The Price "E" watches on whilst the Tr's get painted in primer at the top of the yard (I. Jenner)

Tr 105 was noticed during the February open day being driven up & down the yard.

Planet loco D3: During December, the battery wouldn't stay charged. Richard S took the alternator off, cleaned it & took it away for testing. It was found that the regulator was burnt out. A new one was fitted & the alternator put back on the loco.

**Battery electric loco:** (news from Rob B) - Last Saturday I helped Trevor T & Robert H carry out maintenance of the Goodman's batteries; something that hasn't been done for over 10 years.

This involved disconnecting and removing about 30 batteries, cleaning and greasing terminals and checking the health of each battery. After we'd reinstalled the batteries we took the Goodman for a test run.



## NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to our new members. We have had quite a few join us in the last 2 months. A few are already helping with jobs around the Junction or are training in some aspect of running our railway.

## GALLERY



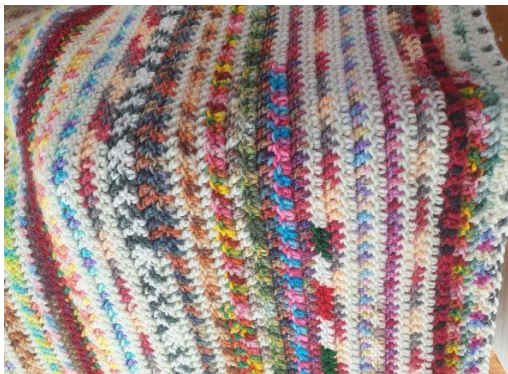
A clear view of our line, with the challenges of keeping the vegetation under control! (C.Mann)





The box van outside the woodwork shop (C. Mann)

## A BLANKET FOR SALE



A member has donated a “Hand-crocheted wool blanket, Queen-size” for sale with all proceeds to club funds.. The blanket will be in the souvenir area next Open Day for viewing.

Perfect for the coming winter season!

Too good to miss!

## BLACK CAPS FOR SALE



The BTC is ordering more of its very serviceable black caps (see the photo of one that has been worn for years!). Members can order these at a special price in advance of \$20 each plus postage. Once in stock, the price will go up! Contact the General Manager or Treasurer if you want to order one.

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](mailto:secretary@bushtramwayclub.com).