

"I know that's a secret, it's whispered everywhere" – William Congreve (1695)

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Pukemiro Junction

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



The Cb is lit up- circa 2016 – (G. Coker)



GREETINGS & WELCOME TO ANOTHER BTC NEWSLETTER

OPEN DAYS, CHARTER TRIPS & GROUP VISITS

July Open Day: This was a pretty busy one with 382 passengers carried. The Peckett was again at the head of the train with a diesel loco at the other end. About mid-day, the Peckett needed servicing so the train was hauled by 2 diesels. Servicing the Peckett entails cleaning the fire to get any clinker out as the firebox is only about 2 feet square so any clinker really clogs up the fire. The ashpan is also emptied & the loco topped up with coal & water.

The kitchen sold out of most things so we had to make a hurried trip to Huntly to restock.

August Open Day: This can only be described as probably our busiest day ever in the Club's history. We carried 1053 passengers!! For the first time since the long ago days when we had the Heisler & F185 running, we had to use 3 carriages on our trains. This meant that a diesel loco had to stay on the train & help push the train up the hills. The diesel loco in use was Tr 459. It was built by A & G Price in the 1960s so would never have been used on passenger trains before coming to our railway.



Tr459 at the August Open Day (Nampu)

As soon as one train load of passengers got off, the next was loaded on & the train was away again. We often had another train load of passengers waiting to

get on as the train left.

Richard S & Guy C had the Cb loco in steam & running up & down the yard with a rake of wagons.

One of the reasons for our very large patronage was that the Waikato Times reposted our face book page & included us in their list of things to do in the Waikato that weekend.

There was also an article in the local paper about us.

All members were extremely busy & most did not get a break for the whole day. The souvenir side also did good business. We sold out of train whistles!! I'm sure a lot of parents now wished they hadn't bought them!! The kitchen sold 270 sausages, Ian J cooked 60kg of chips & all the pies & sausage rolls sold out. We even sold a lot of trumpet ice creams. In fact, I don't think there was very much left in the kitchen at all.

We even had 2 members acting as "traffic wardens" - not all cars could come up to the station. It is the first time I have seen all the available parking area at the bottom of the driveway filled up & about 8 – 10 cars were parked on both sides of the main road.

Many thanks to all who turn up & help make these days a success. You are certainly needed.



Tr105 at the July Open Day. Built by A&G Price of Thames in 1956 (Nampu)



Two diesels and 3 carriages – an uncommon sight – seen at the August Open day – (C.Mann)

Charter trips: By the time you receive this newsletter, we will have run 3 charter trips & had a vintage car group stop at our railway just for morning tea. This was ably catered for by Teresa B & her family.

Surprisingly all 3 charters were for some Clubs from Tauranga.

We have had a few charters put off until next year or we can run the full length of our line.

Our member Teresa B has provided a detailed report about a recent vintage car visit:

We had a really good / busy day. Everything went very well. CJ had come on out after we had arrived - and finding the gate padlocked (probably by the neighbours) he opened it up again.

Ian and Jacqui from the car club were very easy to deal with - and their rally-goers seemed pretty pleased. The catering went well (with some car club members coming back for seconds of their "favourite" - being either the cream scone or the hot-cheese rolls).

The two gluten free duo sang our praises on the items on offer and thoroughly enjoyed them. (home-made potato-case savouries and peppermint squares)...

Cameron was in-charge of anything to do with the hot-water items (packets of soup to be opened, cappuccino packets, or tea/coffee). He went down well with the car club members.

Carla organised the hot-food - with Melanie and Stephanie keeping up with the initial prep work (topping the scones) and gathering dishes, or refilling..... so my-Ian and I after the initial prep of setting up tables and table cloths, rubbish bins, hot water urns, pie-warmer etc. were able to mingle somewhat.

I am sure we will have many of the vintage car club visit us again on an operating day due to this safari stop-over....

Teresa



Members of the Tauranga Model Marine & Engineering Club were at a recent BTC charter (W.Karlsson)

NEW MEMBERS

We have had quite a few join us recently & they are mostly in the younger age group. We welcome their future participation in our club activities.

ALONG THE LINE

In the last newsletter, I (CJ) mentioned that a car had been driven down the line a short distance from Hangapi Rd & then set on fire. We had 5 sleepers burnt out by this fire. They have been replaced & packed. Those involved were Dave M, CJ, Pete C, Ian J & Ian W.

Dave M has been doing some more trimming of the lineside growth below the Junction & heaps of weed spraying above the sand fill area.

John S has spent another day cleaning out some lineside drains just above Hangapi Rd.

Waikato District Council have cleaned out the road side drains above Hangapi Rd level crossing. Above the crossing, the road is just a metal one & with the road side drains blocked, the rain water was running down the road, collecting up gravel then running down our level crossing & eventually vanishing through the ballast of a small embankment about 20 metres down from the crossing. This meant that before we could run trains, we previously had to go down & clean the crossing out.

AROUND THE JUNCTION

Security: It is important that the gate at the bottom of the driveway is kept locked shut unless you are going to be at the Junction all day or are expecting someone or a delivery has been arranged. The last person to leave the Junction is to shut & lock the gate.

The gate just up the line from Hangapi Rd is to be kept locked shut unless we are running trains & then the last train up the line must stop & lock the gate.

Just inside the gate at the bottom of our driveway, is a box on 2 posts with a solar panel on top. This is nothing to do with us so it is not to be touched. It is a continuous water sampler to check the water coming from the construction & demolition dump up behind our railway. Previously the water was sampled manually once or twice a week.

We have a small lathe that is surplus to our needs now. It is an IXL make & can be viewed in our woodwork shop. If interested, please contact us.

Dave M continues to keep our lawns mowed, when the weather is fine enough to permit this.

LOCOMOTIVES & ROLLING STOCK

Rolling Stock:

XP wagon: Some time ago, Bruce McL started overhauling the wood work side of this wagon. He has returned to work on the wagon & the day before the August open day, he spent some time tying down the temporary plastic roof & completing the new wooden floor. He was helped by 2 of our new younger members.

Steam locos:

Heisler: Dave M has completed taking the crown wheel sections off the front bogie wheel. The journals on this axle aren't in the best shape, so we are presently getting prices to get the areas metal sprayed & then ground to size.

Diesel locos:

401: The fusible plug in the torque converter was replaced again, the torque converter oil refilled & the loco test run. Pete C & Ian W did the job.

Tr459: Tr's weren't fitted with controls that could operate the train air brakes. Chris M has designed a system so the guard can operate the train brakes in an emergency. However, we have found out that the loco driver can operate the train brakes when you know how. This has proved to be very successful.

The operating lever is a 3 way toggle valve. He intends fitting this system to the Meremere locos as well.

Thanks Chris for this idea, it is another way of improving safety on our railway.

Petrol locos:

Union foundry tractor; A member has purchased a Union Foundry tractor from Ngongotaha & is hoping to make a good working one out of this one & the one we have had for many years at the BTC but is now incomplete. It had been used at a Fonterra factory at some stage in its past life. This type of rail tractor replaced steam locos in the bush.

Our own Union Foundry tractor was very useful in the early days of the Club as it was used to take the coal wagon down to Rotowaro & then collect it a few days later. It was used on Open days to take the guards van down to Rotowaro that served as our ticket office & then bring it back to the Junction at the end of the day (it was also used extensively in the 1980's by the then track gang to relay the missing track between Pukemiro Junction and CJ's place – Editor).

The motor was very thirsty so you always made sure the petrol tank was full before you left & that you also took a 4 gallon tin full as well.

SHUNTING & FIREFIGHTING

Shunting & safety course: This was held on 23/7 & attended by 15 members. Our newer members were given a demonstration of the various types of hand brakes & had a go at applying & releasing them. They then were shown how to couple & uncouple the air brake hoses & had a try at doing this.

Our shunting leaflet was given to our new members.

The safety side of the course was going through various sections of our safety system. They were often given examples of why the various bits were included.

After lunch, Bruce McL conducted a fire fighting display by lighting a fire in a purposely built drum & then putting it out with fire extinguishers. All present had a go at this. We then moved on to our fire wagon & all had a go at using the hoses. This time there was no fire to put out but it demonstrated how far the hoses will reach.

He then demonstrated the 2 back pack sprayers we have.

INTERNAL AUDIT

We are required to have an internal audit carried out every year & our auditor is Chris M. He chose this year to look at the ways we check our air brakes, what our safety system says we will do & if our annual inspection sheets agree with all that. He looked at our records & our safety system. We haven't got his report yet but we will have to do a few changes to our paperwork.

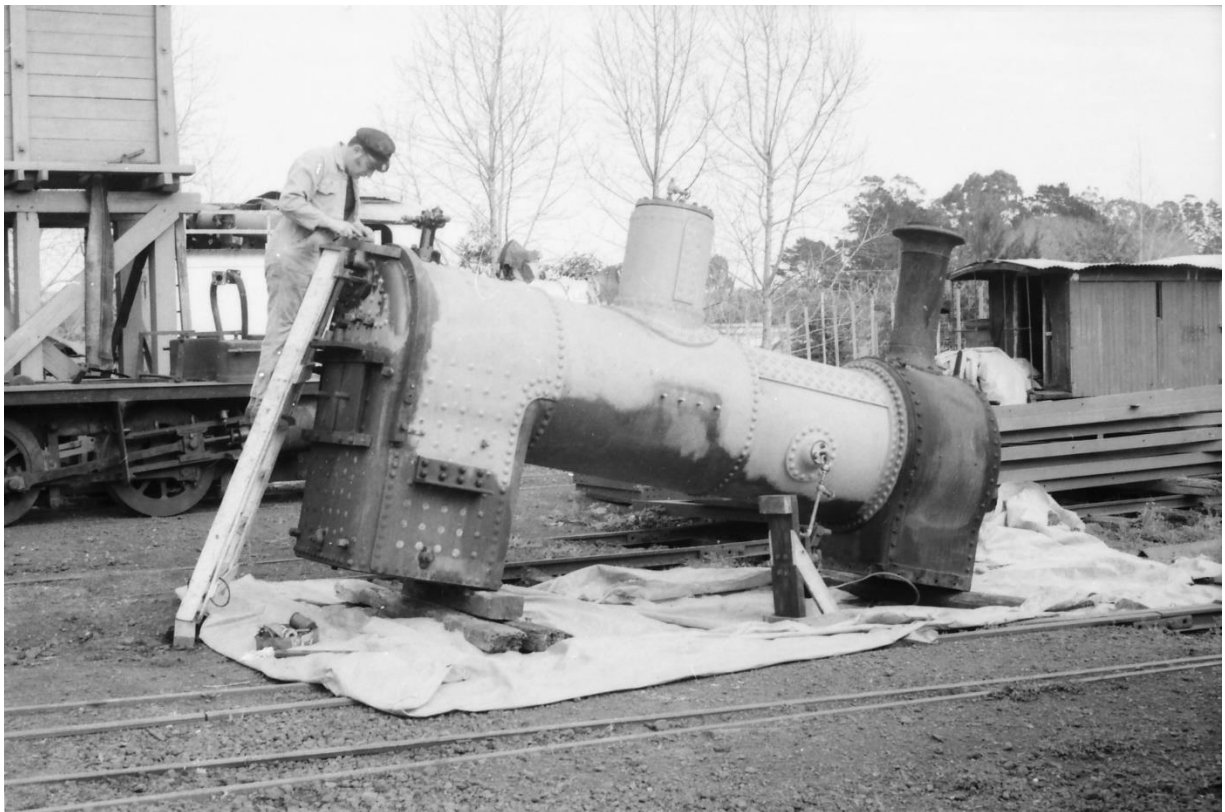
DEATHS

- 1) Bernard Jones who was involved with the Bush Tramway Club some 30 plus years ago (before moving to Opotiki) died at the end of July.
- 2) One of our members who used to come to the Junction & take a lot of photos has passed away. He was Robin Russell & was aged 90. We hadn't seen him for quite a few years (I recall seeing Robin taking photos of our train on several occasions perched on top of a step ladder poking out above a sea of gorse near Rotowaro township as we chugged past in the mid 1980's. – Editor)

GALLERY



BTC members visit Pukemiro Junction for the first time in the early 1970's....(R J Mann)



CJ working on the Peckett boiler circa 1970 (R.J. Mann)



The Stephenson's valve gear showing fresh paint on the Peckett chassis circa 1970 (R.J.Mann)



Above: Members at the shunting course learn about wagon handbrakes (Nampu).



Bruce and CJ put out a fire during fire extinguisher practice (Nampu)



New brake application valve on Tr459 & Marlene on Tr459 (I.Jenner) & Solar powered train at Byron Bay, Australia (courtesy of FRONZ)



Peckett on the pit at the August Open Day (C.Mann)

BYRON BAY TRAIN

Members might be interested that in Australia a 96-seater standard gauge [600 class railmotor](#) has been converted to run off solar power as the [Byron Bay Train](#). (Ctrl + left click on your mouse to view).

Byron Bay Train

Working on a 3km section of track in New South Wales, BBT uses solar panels on the locomotive, station and an external power company to run 9 return trips a day, 364 days a year. Not only is it innovative, but it's also popular and the railway carried 10,000 people within its first 19 days of operation. <https://youtu.be/3ZU6Uh8fV7Q>

Food for thought?

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.