

“Because a man is born in a stable, that does not make him a horse” – Duke of Wellington (1769 - 1852)

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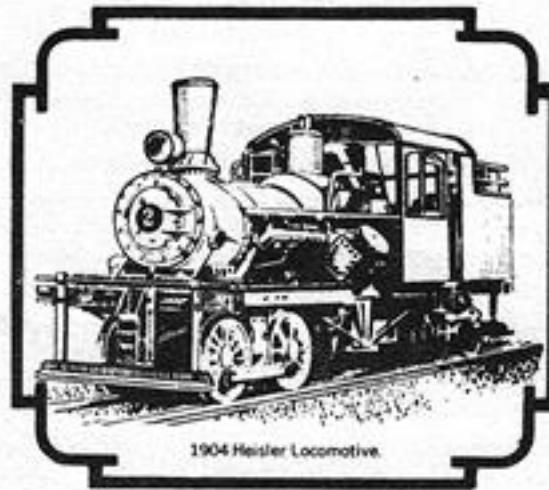
Established 1965

January 2024

Pukemiro Junction

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

The Bush Tramway Club Inc.



1904 Heislter Locomotive.

“The Pukemiro Line”

A working steam railway and museum is being established on the former Rotowaro to Glen Afton railway, 6 miles West of Huntly. Steam locomotives used in the timber and coal industries are being featured, as well as vintage engines and machinery.

There is no regular running of trains while the line is being established, but special steaming up of engines may be arranged for groups by prior agreement.

For further information, write to:-

THE BUSH TRAMWAY CLUB INC.
P.O. Box 18,
ROTOWARO.

Or Telephone, Rotowaro 623 or Auckland 605-552.



Front page of a 50 year old leaflet (R.Cook)

GREETINGS & WELCOME TO ANOTHER BTC NEWSLETTER

OPEN DAYS, CHARTER TRIPS / GROUP VISITS

November Open Day: This was a reasonably quiet day. The Peckett, as usual, was at the head of the train with one of the Meremere diesel locos at the other end. The Peckett had to leave the train around midday to get the ashpan & fire cleaned so the other Meremere diesel did the honours on the train during this period.

December Open Day: This was a very quiet day, perhaps because of the wet to wetter weather but also the Santa parade was on in Hamilton and people were doing Christmas shopping. We had 120 passengers. Isla has started selling lollies & chocolate at the counter in the carriage Mary boosting the café takings financially and providing a novelty feature on the train.

The Peckett wasn't available to run the trains as it had been prepared for its annual boiler survey on the Friday & Saturday before.

We had a visit from eight Morris 8's in December. They were all in very good condition but looked so small against a few modern cars.

After the open day, we had our usual end of year BBQ & very good it was too!!

Jill C has taken over the kitchen side of things while Marlene hasn't been around. She has spent a few days tidying up, rearranging things & cleaning. She also does the stock taking & ordering the necessary supplies, some of which she brings back on her little motor scooter.

Our souvenirs continue to sell pretty well.

Many thanks to all who turn up & help make these days a success. We were pretty short of members to help on both of these days.

Charter trips: We have had one since the last newsletter. It was 150 kids aged between 5 & 6 years of age & 50 parents & teachers from Te Rapa Primary school. This would be the best behaved kids we have ever had at our railway. The teacher blew her whistle, the kids clapped twice & then there was silence!! Ashley T is the caretaker at the school.

Again many thanks to those who come & help with these trips. Jill C sold quite a lot of crisps, cups of tea or coffee and lollies.



A large group from Te Rapa at the recent charter (A. Turner)



Visitors enjoy a birthday at our railway picnic area in November (R. Cook)

ALONG THE LINE

We found that the point that connects the loop road to the back shunt & the cross over to the mainline just beside the pit had some areas where the track gauge was very wide.

Dave M used our digger with the narrow bucket to clean out around the sleepers. We measured up the long sleepers that were required & Dave cut them out of some long lengths of 6"x 6' pine that we had stacked under the pine trees just down from the Junction. We got several crews of Community workers out & they pulled out the old sleepers & put in the new ones. They then packed new ballast under the sleepers. We then drilled the screw holes on one rail & they fitted the screw spikes. John S came down, gauged, drilled & put in the screw spikes on the other rail.

Dave M used our loader & put new ballast in place around the sleepers. There are still two 2 metre sleepers to replace at the blades end of the point. The point will have all new sleepers & ballast from the blades down to the frog.

AROUND THE JUNCTION

Dave M & CJ sprayed the whole of our working railway with a long term weed spray.

We also "pruned" some overhanging growth down from the Junction. The recent very wet weather & full load of flowers on the privet bushes has meant that we need to go back & do more "pruning". This is a never ending job.

Dave M has also sprayed some of the top end of the line.

Dave M continues to keep the lawns mowed. Jill C & Dave have been trimming back some of the shrubs around the Junction.

We have very recently purchased a NEW ice cream freezer so we are now selling ice creams & you can look in the window on the top & choose which one you want. Thanks to a few members that donated towards this purchase.

LOCOMOTIVES & ROLLING STOCK

Rolling Stock:

Xp wagon: Bruce McL has fitted some of the flashings mentioned in the last newsletter.

Large flat top wagon: Ian B has been working on a steel cover for the motor & hydraulic pump that forms the tipping side of this wagon. We have also purchased new cables the will control the tips.

Mary {A1319}: Richard E, Dave M & CJ recently carried out the 5 yearly checks of the air brakes on this carriage. Part of these checks now involves swapping the triple valve for an overhauled one. This valve controls the air to & from the brake piston. This job took most of a morning.

Mines Car: We have been very fortunate in obtaining from Silver Stream railway a very old type of triple valve of the type that is fitted to the carriage brakes on the mines car. This type of valve is so old now that these two valves could well be the only ones still in existence.

Diesel Locomotives:

Planet loco: Richard S has spent a lot of hours fitting the new engine mounting bolts. The old mounting brackets needed altering.

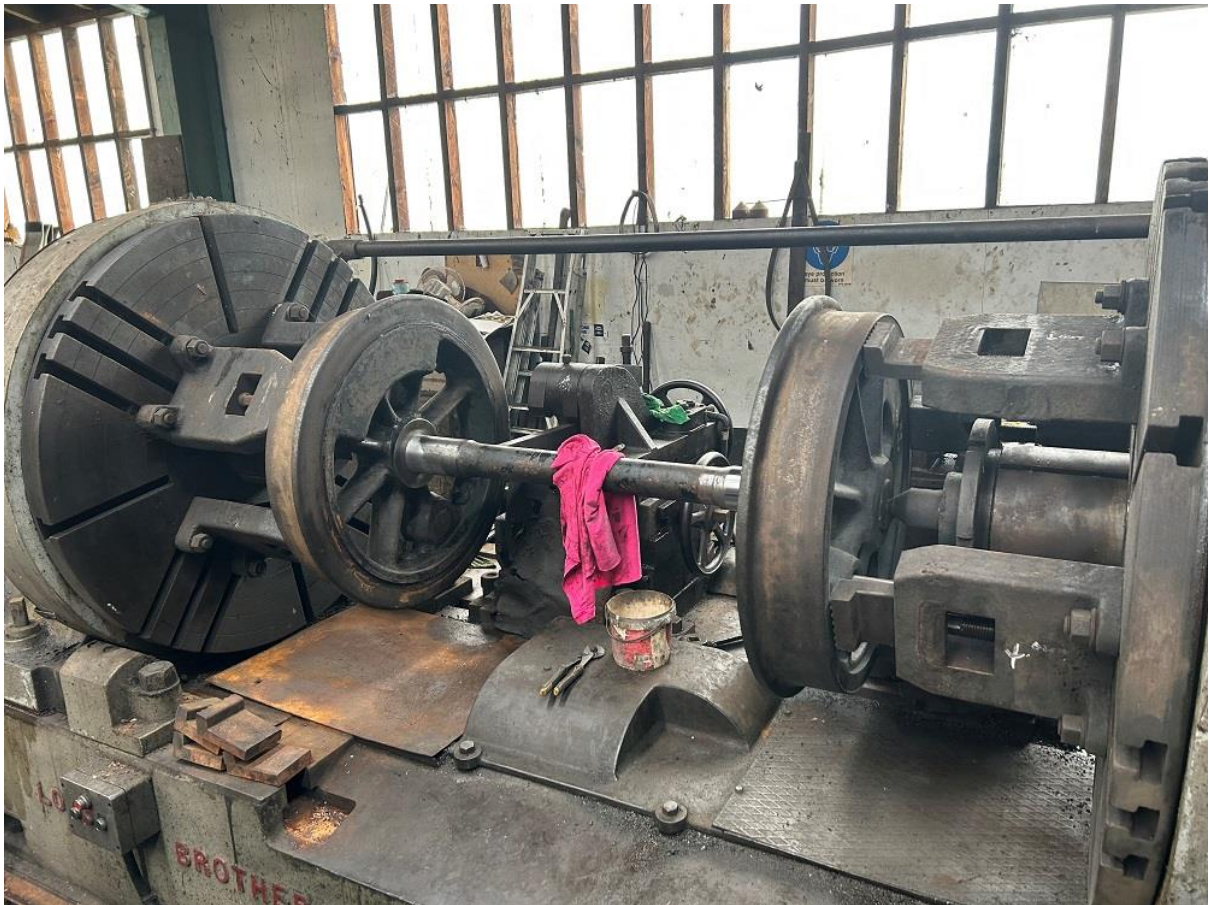
He has also replaced the flexible drive & mating flanges between the main gearbox & the forward/ reverse box.

Tr 105: The air compressor that supplies the air for the brakes & gear changes couldn't keep up with the requirements when the loco was drifting down hill. Richard E found that 2 of the 4 cylinders of the compressor weren't working so the heads are currently in Hamilton being overhauled.

Meremere 401: Chris M & Dave M spent quite a few hours recently fitting a new air brake system on this loco. It is the same as already fitted to Tr459. Drivers of this locomotive have to pay special attention to the train advice as to the operation of the brakes on this locomotive.

Steam locos:

Heisler: The axle journals on the wheelsets that are at Glenbrook Railway have been machined. They also have some of the axle bearings as well & are machining them to fit. During the December Open Day, Fraser R, Clive D & Richard S spent the day working on the valves & pistons of the loco. They found one of the valve rods had been broken at some stage & the adjusting nut had been welded in place to join the two halves!!



The Heisler wheelsets have been machined recently at Glenbrook Vintage Railway (C.Mann)

Climax:



The Climax (off-site) has recently had new boiler cladding installed (C.Mann)

Peckett: This loco was dismantled ready for its annual boiler inspection on the Friday & Saturday before the December open day. Chris M, John S, Dave M, Fraser R, and Alan U did the majority of the work.



The Peckett being stripped for inspection, J. Soffe cleans the smokebox (C. Mann)

OBITUARIES

Since the last newsletter, we have had 3 members pass away, 2 of them foundation members of BTC.

Ian Jenner: He passed away in Dunedin Hospital on 5/12. He went into hospital to have a triple heart bypass operation & never really came out of the operation.

He was the Club's Treasurer for a number of years & also extremely generous with donations of money & equipment. He had built a "gangers hut" which he & Marlene stayed in while they were at the Junction.

He owned a warehousing & freight forwarding company in Mangere near Auckland Airport & has a lot of BTC gear stored there.

We have just found out that Ian was interviewed by Bill Hohepa a couple of days after the October open day. This was Ian's third interview by Bill & was about the creamy coloured Mamaku jigger. This can be viewed by entering episode 25 of the Billy Ho show in Google.

He was one of the founding members of BTC.



Ian Jenner with two of his bush jiggers at the BTC (T. Hinton)

His funeral was attended by a very large crowd of his friends & work colleagues. Approx. 12 members of BTC were there & we have received about eight emails of condolences. He will be really missed around the Junction. Pete C spoke on behalf of the BTC at the service.

Peter Jones: He passed away on November 17th, in Tauranga hospital. He served his apprenticeship at Otahuhu railway workshops starting in 1963. He ended up as a maintenance fitter at the locomotive depot in Tauranga. When he retired, he drove a school bus, did repairs to buses & ran charter trips when required. He had brought a bus load from his model engineers in Tauranga over to BTC about 6 weeks before his death.

He was a Vauxhall car enthusiast & had a lot of them in various stages of repair or otherwise at his home, plus several that he kept in working order.

He was BTC'S auditor for NZTA for a number of years.

He was also a founding member of BTC.

Maxine Walker: She came to the Junction in the late 1970s when her marriage broke up & lived in the "shanty" with her father, Bo (Les Bodle) who was the first resident at the Junction when we moved our equipment to Pukemiro Junction from MOTAT. She also had her 2 children with her.

Bo soon purchased a transportable house which is just above the Junction & they lived there for at least 13 years. She met & married Trevor Walker who was a volunteer with BTC

In the earlier days of BTC, all the ladies used to go up to Maxine's place & make sandwiches for all the members who were present on the open days.

They sold the house in 2013 & moved to Te Awamutu & then to Hamilton. She passed away while on a cruise around the Pacific islands.

To the families of these 3 members, the BTC extends our deepest sympathy.

THE NEW YEAR

Subs: The start of a new year also means the start of a new financial year for the BTC. You will receive you renewal notice soon. We hope that you will all renew your subs.

Open days: We will be having our usual open days in January & February on the first Sunday of each month. We hope that you will turn up & help.

GALLERY



The battery electric loco and the Peckett which was being prepared for its annual inspection at the time (C.Mann)



Members at the November Open Day in action...or simply relaxing.(R.Cook)



Family fun on an Open Day – a well patronised A1319 “Mary” loaded up with happy passengers in November (R.Cook)



Richard S in November 2023 was exploring Knight's Sawmill tramway, Raurimu....seen here with a large Rimu tree "Two giants of the forest" (K. Crosado)



Ian Jenner in happier times restoring a bush jigger in his Auckland warehouse (T.Hinton)



A box has been bought to store our expensive walkie-talkie radios securely and Karleen recently met an old member in Hanmer Springs (R.Ellis/K.Kopa)



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.