

“A triumph of the embalmers art” (Gore Vidal about Ronald Reagan 1981)

Volume 18 - Issue 4

Established 1965

July 2024

Pukemiro Junction

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



Loco shed view - track work underway (Chris M)

GREETINGS & WELCOME TO ANOTHER BTC NEWSLETTER

OPEN DAYS, CHARTER TRIPS / GROUP VISITS

We are now into winter so we can expect our open days to have some wet periods or whole days.

May: This was a fine day & we were very busy for about ½ the day. We carried 339 adults, 68 children & 89 pre-schoolers.

We had to use Tr 459 for 3 trips as we had to use our 3 carriages. The Peckett was at the head of the train & needed the Tr to help haul the train up the hill. When we only needed 2 cars, the Peckett hauled them up by itself & the Meremere diesel loco that was leading the train going downhill, then followed the train up hill.

June: The morning was wet & our passenger count was down slightly. Again, we ran in the same order as the May open day. We carried 293 adults, 69 children & 128 pre-schoolers.

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

Charters: The one we had an enquiry for in early June was put off until the weather improves. We have just received a booking for October.

ALONG THE LINE

The problem area at the sandfill hasn't been worked on since April. As we lease the land for this section of our line off the Waikato District Council, I (CJ) wrote to them asking if they could help with our problems. A couple of months ago, we had a visit from 3 of the Council's staff who told us that they would get in touch with a civil engineering company that carries out work for WDC, to come & have a look at the problem areas. About 3 weeks ago, one of the company's engineers came & had a good look at our problems areas. He measured the areas up & took heaps of photos. He rang me up on the Thursday before King's Birthday weekend & asked if it was possible to get a small boring machine up to the sandfill. It is a reasonably small machine so we told him it should be possible. For the second area, any soil samples will need to be drilled by hand as it is impossible to get a machine up the slope of the land.

He told me they would get back to me in a couple of weeks.

Dave M has continued weed spraying on the top section of our line that we can't get access to apart from walking. He uses a knap sack sprayer. This part of our line is well overgrown.

John S has spent a couple of days with a slasher & chain saw clearing growth that overhangs our line in this area.

AROUND THE JUNCTION

Around the Junction: We have had another visit from the CW crews. This time they replaced 3 sleepers under the point in front of the shanty. The old sleepers were a locally grown red gum & one of its uses was for railway sleepers. We got quite a few of them at least 15 – 20 years ago & they have reached the end of their time as sleepers. The CW crew is due out again shortly when their job will be to replace a rail in this point at the shanty.

Richard S spent a couple of days replacing the ceiling in the shower & toilet at the shanty.

Dave M has continued to keep our lawns cut.

During the day before the June open day, the shanty was alive with the sound of a sewing machine & ladies yakking!! They were making & fitting a new set of curtains in the shanty.

A few weeks before the May open day, Dave M & myself were putting the locos back in the shed after coaling the Peckett when Dave came to me & said that we had a broken rail we had just run over. The cracked section was about ¼ metre long & the total length of the rail was about 1 ¾ metres long. Many, many years ago, we ran an axle bearing in the Peckett & we dug a pit to drop the wheel set down so we could get at the bearing. This was the reason for the very short section of rail. We found a suitable piece of rail & cut it to length. The day before the May open day, we pulled all the locos out & cleaned all the sand & muck out so we could get at the track fittings. We also noticed that the end of the adjacent rail had a “dip” in it at the fish plates. We also found that 3 sleepers needed replacing. Clive D, Chris M, Dave M, Evan & myself removed the fittings & fish plate bolts & found that the area under the fish plate of the adjoining rail was broken behind the fish plates. We found a longer piece of rail, replaced the 3 sleepers & then fastened the new rail in place. We packed under the sleepers & filled the area with sand up to the top of the rail.



Trackwork in the loco shed (C.Mann)

LOCOMOTIVES & ROLLING STOCK

Locos & rolling stock: Peckett: During the day before the May open day, Vinnie & Evan cleaned the Peckett. They also replaced the gland packing on the steam side of the Westinghouse air compressor.

Heisler: A lot of work has been done on the bogie that is in pieces. It has been steam cleaned, further dismantled & accumulations of very hard grease & muck scrapped off. Chris M, Dave M, Vinnie, & Evan have worked on this. Dave M has under coated the wheel sets with an orange under coat. Believe or not, the whole bogie still has a good coating of “seachrome” undercoat that was put on during the overhaul of the bogies in the early 1970’s at MOTAT.

Tr 105: The problem with the air compressor on this loco continues. It seems as if the 2 pistons on one end are not compressing air. The two Richards are trying to find out ways to check & see exactly what the problem is.

The “newest” Union Foundry loco: Work has been done on this specimen with assistance from the handcrane.



Union Foundry loco being worked on outside “Trevor’s shed” by the handcrane (Jill C)

VALE

Beryl Whittington: She was a member of the BTC for a number of years & was in our souvenir shop selling items for quite a few years. She lived at Glen Afton for a number of years until she moved into Kimihia rest home where she passed away on 22/5/24 just 2 weeks short of her 82nd birthday. She was a very chirpy lady who was always ready to help in what ever needed doing.

GALLERY



Heisler components being assessed for repair (C.Mann)



Peckett in the sunshine (C.Mann)



Dave M leans out of a Meremere diesel (Kayne K)



John S converses with the Peckett driver Chris (Kayne K)



Carriages at the station at a recent open day (Nampu)



Chris M, Ian B & Dave M on the station platform at a recent Open Day (Kayne K)



Peckett takes on water at a recent Open Day (Kayne K)

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