

Monthly Report March 2013.

Friday 1st.

- Catching up with the month of February's Paper work due to a month long holiday in the South Island.
- Ian Hancock painting the platform edge at Waitara Road.
- Dave Oxley repairing seized point's parts.
- Jim Hook mowing the lawns at Waitara Road. The new ride on mower to replace the stolen one is now being organised.

Saturday 2nd.

- 18 staff on duty for working bee.
- Corrections on site digging out ballast at Waitara.
- New Mower shed now burglar proofed. Like Fort Knox, but not as pretty.
- I am informed that the track audit was excellent while Eileen & I were away. Good stuff.
- Noel & Jim cleaning up carpentry jobs.
- Keith Hancock re-cladding his guards van—the internal framing is in good shape.
- 2584 had the oil change & check finished today. Good job team.
- Mike Zeier has changed out 24 sleepers on the hill with more to complete.
- After catching up with every body over what happened over February I finally got to set up the new tamper for Mike Z as the Tyne was delivered to our place & was sitting at my neighbours for two weeks.
- Mike & I did a inspection run to Lepperton late in the afternoon.
- Money arrived from the last load of rubbish scrap, helps to turn the place tidy.
- Good to see our women folk getting more involved in many operations along with the recent members taking on jobs. On Saturdays bar from Eileen on a regular basis that trend is changing & we are all for that.
- Another load of recyclable timber was delivered just recently & 2 trolley loads were prepared for stacking.

Sunday 3rd.

- 2 trips.
- Annual Audit.
- Good loadings on both trips.
- Audit went well with only minor issues.
- Internal auditor will be Mike Lerhrke—Appointed.
- Mike Zeier Shifted the last of the timber stack after the last train had finished.

Monday 4th.

- Bought Eileen a lap top computer so that she can independently do her own reports & catering accounts.
- Paper work all day.

Tuesday 5th.

- Mimi School Charter at 10am.
- 5 staff on duty.
- Took the children around our site as requested by the head teacher to talk about our operation & equipment. Went down well.
- Mike Lehrke had some driving training & train examining training.

Wednesday 6th.

- Spent most of the day assembling the bridge costings into a document for sending off to the Mayor for appraisal & possible help from the oil company's. Fingers crossed! This bridge has consumed a tremendous amount of my time along with headaches getting ahead in slow progress, but positive progress, but we will win eventually.
- Received the preliminary report from our Auditor & his comment was it was nearly perfect which is good news as a lot of hard work has gone into our systems & recording of documentation to get to this point. Auditors are hard to please! WELL DONE to our members who really put the effort in.

Thursday 7th.

- Paper work – Bridge costings to council for possible help from the oil company's.

Friday 8th.

- Paper work—letters to council seeking help with road crossing problems. We are trying to get judder bars fitted at Waitara Road plus signage to hammer home the message on the non compliance of road users on this dangerous crossing. See what happens!
- Letter to be sent to the transport operator next door to explore what can be done with his hedge to make the sight lines better. This crossing has been a bone of discontent even back to the NZR days & still the lesson has not been learnt—makes you wonder what the hell does it take for someone to listen.

Saturday 9th.

- 9 staff on duty today.
- Very hot 28 degrees. Every body got slower as the day wore on & packed in at 3.00pm.
- Jim Hook cutting the hedge & trimming the shelter belt on our side of the fence—thanks Jim.
- Bill Batten inspected the floor of the open car for thickness OK & ground off some very minor flats on one wheel set.
- Noel Arthur & Jim Blyde working on shed security.
- Adam Jenkins fitted a vent in the paint shed.
- Dave Oxley & Adam Jenkins finished the points repair at Waitara Road.
- Mike Lehrke setting up exhibits in the museum.
- Bill & Nick were stacking the lighter parts off the Ex Fert works rail tractor out of the weather.
- Mike L gave me a hand to get the 2nd 700 mm gauge wagon started.
- Eileen as usual kept the troops fed & watered!
- Volunteer hours at week 22—5,914.

Sunday 10th.

- Mike Zeier & I today.
- Spot spraying of Ginger & other unwanted weeds in the Wetland area at Kohatu.
- The new Atlas Copco tamper got it's first use today & does a good job, no more hand tamping! Thanks to the TET.
- The last of the donated timber stripped down & stacked. All this material & associated coach bolts & coach screws are a god send in getting work done that otherwise would have to go the back-burner.
- We measured up both the Waitara Road & Waitara yard sites for a quantity survey on track materials, vehicle access at Waitara Road to the proposed work shop area, earth works, & water main requirements.
- Waitara yard sidings just east of the proposed station is marked out for the digger.
- We have sufficient track sets to lay both areas & get the redundant points taken up to Waitara Road to be stacked in a tidy manner for either use later or spare parts,
- The storage / workshop siding that will be built at Waitara Road will be 200 metres long, fixing the storage & workshop into a tidy entity. Best use of a narrow site & will also deal with the long running Fennel problem once & for all.
- All the old ballast that will be needed to be dug out at Waitara will be suitable to ballast this siding
- Along with this work there will be a job for the old sleepers to recycled into retaining walls & the recycled posts as usual will be a huge help here.

Monday 11th

- Retaining wall to contain a slip just past the 5 km peg.
- Do drawings for manufacturing 70lb rail fish-plates.

Tuesday 12th March.

- Mike L & I today.
- Mike L did some work in the museum.
- Mike & I finished the new 700mm gauge under frame & mounted on it's wheel sets. These wheel sets came from the Kurihau tram that was used to rail down logs from the Ranges near the Pukeiti Rhododendron trust's gardens, to a saw mill just out of Oakura.

Wednesday 13th.

- Paperwork.
- Management meeting at 7.00pm.
- Purchased a packaged metric tool set & 1 KG fire extinguisher for the mobile work shop.

Thursday 14th.

- Brian Biggar & Trevor O Keefe mowed the lawns at Waitara Road. Thanks guys.
- I got ½ the decking cut & fitted onto the new NG wagon.
- Went out to Kent Road & picked up the lathe & is now stored in a farm shed & will come out to Waitara road on the transporter with the digger next month. Saves money this way.
- A really old Hornby clockwork train track & accessories were donated for the museum.

Friday 15th.

- Truck load of mulch delivered.

Saturday 16th.

- Corrections on site.
- Shifted the Mulch & distributed where needed in several sites at Waitara Road.
- 2 Nak wagons of used ballast from Waitara spread ready for the new siding at Waitara Road
- Jim & Pat Hook on gardening & shelter belt pruning.
- Keith Hancock & Neville S.J. on F726.
- Jim B & Noel A strengthening doors & fitting burglar deterrent equipment to sheds
- The new 700mm gauge wagon was installed today down at the glade.
- The new loco fuelling equipment was used today, really excellent.
- Fire extinguisher fitted to mobile workshop.
- Lawn mowed at the glade. Mike Zeier.
- Photographed the new retaining wall at the 5.5 KM peg.
- It is "different" using the redundant park signs on the outside face. **WARNING!** Do not follow the signs as arrows & instructions there on, point in many directions.

Sunday 17th.

- One Charter & one excursion.
- Good loadings on both.
- The rain has finally arrived .
- 9 staff on duty.

Monday 18th.

- Paperwork.

Tuesday 19th.

- Meeting at Waitara Road with Mike Lehrke re the training exercise the local volunteer fire brigade wish to carry out with us.
- Mike & I met up with the manager at Stepping Stones Nursery over a tree fouling the transformer that feeds both sites.
- The siding in their property was discussed along with our gear stored on there. OK for at least 12 months.
- Had a ring from Fulton Hogan re the councils programme to upgrade all the rail crossings with hot mix on our Railway @ 2 crossings in April. I have set up a system where they & us can keep in contact over this work & train movements. Browne Street & Cracroft Street are the first ones to be done & re-sleeping of these crossings has been discussed by Fulton Hogan as part of the crossing upgrades. The Urban crossings are being completed before the rural ones.

Wednesday 19th.

- Paper work on road crossing repairs.
- Waitara Alive & New Plymouth Business association combined tour of 3 local businesses was worthwhile with one projected follow up with help on both sides. This is worth following up. Every thing is worth considering.

Thursday 20th.

- Setting up vehicles for repairs on Saturday.
- Continuing flood of paperwork & documentation with the roading contractors. There is a definite lack of understanding on rail corridor requirements by some authorities & wish they would check first , not have to be sorted at the last moment, very frustrating.
- Another load of recyclable timber has been delivered.
- Waitara Road lawns mowed by Trevor O'Keefe.

Friday 21st.

- Another busy day on paperwork.
- A battery condition register has been drawn up so that the batteries in our fleet can have their condition charted so that renewals can be planned on the condition of them.
- Completed the Chairman's report for the next "Tablet" due out shortly.

Saturday 22nd.

- 10 Staff on duty.
- Mainly train maintenance today.
- Bill, Carl, Brian & I were the maintenance team with me mostly training.
- Bill was sorting out the BP emergency dump valve problem caused by thread tape jammed under the valve.
- Carl replaced the BP cock on the Hand brake end of the open car with a 1 ¼" ball valve & fittings which fixed that.
- Brian did all the inspections & recorded data on the batteries of 2584 into a file to track trends every 6 months.
- Prognosis to trickle charge the trays up in 24 volt blocks, this has worked in the past after oil changes due to sometimes winding the engines over after fuel filter changes, even though the filters are filled prior to fitting.
- Mike & Adam were down the hill finishing the retaining wall at the 5.5km peg.
- Ballast retaining wall fitted across the illegal access track used by the locals at Strange Street to stop the degradation of ballast.
- Jim & Noel working on key security & building security issues.
- Neville scraping the door of the mower shed in preparation for painting.
- All the delivered recycled timber was stacked away.
- Mike preparing track bolts for use.
- 2013 track audit delivered today, very good outcome, the hard effort is now showing in the audit results.
- Volunteer hours at week 24---6,347

Sunday 24th.

- Photographed & had a good study of the Road surfaces & possible underlying problems at Browne & Cracroft streets before meeting with the road contractor & council.
- Shifted the battery charger onto another 24 Volt set of trays on 2584.
- Eileen vacuumed out the Station at Waitara Road.

Monday 25th.

- Checked on the battery charging, nearly there.
- Met up & discussed the crossing site lines with J D Hickmans Transport this morning about getting the hedge trimmed.
- As a follow up from Wednesday nights Waitara Alive! BA5 meetings with 3 local businesses, I decided to do some follow up with 6 local businesses to send them our reports & News letters to show them what we are up to & how we go about our business. Yes we are indeed a business run by Volunteers & we take what we do very seriously & I guess there is always advice from others to help guide us if necessary. We are spreading our sphere of being involved in our community & other local organisations where practical.
- Thanks for the talk & feed back from all I approached today it was welcome.
- Received from Jim Blyde a Monthly Report for February while Eileen & I were away. Thanks Jim. This will be E Mailed out as well. (this has pictures & few words!)

Tuesday 26th.

- Got onto the roading contractor this morning by E Mail & got a response this time. Had to get a little more forceful.
- Meeting them at Browne St at 10.30am Thursday the 31st.
- Crossing accident training with the local fire brigade at 7.00pm. Grey St.
- Present from the WRPS were Brian Jury Safety officer; Denyse Bettridge General Manager & Eileen Bettridge as observer.
- This was a very worthwhile exercise for both parties.
- Much was learnt from this & Brian & I both agree that some our procedures at a crossing collision, over & above the safety case procedures should be adopted as being first on the scene until help arrives. This woke us up a little into matters that one would not normally consider.
- Photos were taken to add into a safety procedure & internal audit on safety again to keep a hard look at these important matters.
- There was another tangible upside from this as well, net working with another volunteer group in our community.
- Brian & I were asked to come back to the fire station after we put the loco away & have a drink with them which we did.
- On arriving at the fire station we took note on the de brief that was still going on & rail crossing safety issues on which we had an input into later.
- A lot of useful talk on safety & other issues by "motorists" behaviour over a drink was enlightening as well.
- It was pleasing to see that the brigade keep volunteer hours like us as there are others who do not understand the importance of this & or how much effort is put into whatever group they belong to do.
- A humorous aside to the proceedings (although serious) was the poor unfortunate fireman that was delegated to be the victim of the accident (Passenger) got out of the car & wandered away from the scene, collapsed & died

right next to the track. This was fine although uncomfortable lying on the ballast was bad enough, BUT unfortunately laid down on an Argentine Ant nest which the Ants thought AHA a meal! I have never seen a "corpse" wriggle so much! When to make the scene more realistic & to the indignity of said deceased person his ham acting was not true to the script wriggling & writhing under the green tarpaulin that was thrown over him. The offer of some fly spray to deal with the critters was rejected!

- Even when Brian & I went to the after briefing he was covered in bites, did he get any sympathy No!
- The moral of the storey is, Pick your spot!

Wednesday 27th.

- Had a ring from Graeme Hudson from Transport NZ.
- Charter for the New Plymouth over 60's today.
- 6 staff on duty.
- Afternoon of paper work!

Thursday 24th.

- Met with Maria Swan from Fulton Hogan & Stephen Bowden from the Council at Browne Street to go through the procedures of the work to be undertaken at both the Browne & Cracroft streets, which will be far more extensive than they envisaged.
- It was pleasant to be able to go through the issues in a co-operative manner & come to a good outcome for all. Thanks that was appreciated.
- Browne St will be getting upgraded storm water drains, foot pathing for mobility scooters which will benefit the elderly who use Browne St & have to manoeuvre at an angle to cross the track, fix the drainage for once & for all. A win-win solution .

Friday 29th.

- Got rid of the old refrigerator.
- Watered the Waitara Road station gardens.
- Had a check around & uplifted the plans for the Waitara road crossings for the start on Browne Street on Wednesday.

Saturday 30th.

- No corrections crew on site as they have Easter off.
- 9 staff on duty.
- At long last we have got some useful rain fall.
- Mike Zeier & I took all the plants down to "Magnolia Glade", planted some lily's around the station (AKA the donated bus shelter), Cordelines to frame the building out a suitable distance & grasses around the two wee wagons. This will add a visual dimension to the area when they all get established. Waiting for long awaited rain seemed like an eternity.
- Noel Arthur has finished the new document shelving & erected same in my office for finally having somewhere to store all our documents. Thanks Noel.
- Keith Hancock was working on F726 replacing tie rods & fitting new brackets.
- The rolling stock crew were at their industrious best with Carl & Jim repairing the corroded floor section on Nak 6078.
- Carl is receiving welding tuition & is going well.

- Mike Lehrke was assisting Noel with the shelving & getting things sorted for the curtaining in the museum, which Eileen will make.
- Gosh thank goodness Easter only comes around once a year!! Bill brought in some beautiful cake his mum made, Carl brought in 2 dozen Hot Cross Buns, & along with Eileen's home made hot cross buns & savouries we had to work B****y hard to work it all off! Mike Z supplied the pudding—Feijoa's—WHEW!
- I am already dreading the Christmas morning tea & lunch.
- Volunteer hours at week 25—6,503
- Mike Z & I did a stock take on fish plates in readiness for the impending laying of sidings at Waitara & Waitara Road.

Sunday 31st.

- Received both Jim & Bills monthly reports.
- Two trips running today as Easter specials.
- Complete & mail out Monthly Report.
- Received Mike Zeier's Monthly Report.
- 9 staff on duty, passenger #s were quite good considering it was raining & a fair smattering of out of town Easter Break visitors.
- Eileen, Jan & Lyn on catering.
- Mike Z started on the retaining wall for ballast retention at the pond.

Well it has been another busy month & on Wednesday the 3rd of April upgrades of the Browne & Cracroft streets crossings will be carried out over 2 weeks.

Cheers to you all from the WRPS Inc.

Denyse Bettridge,

General Manager.