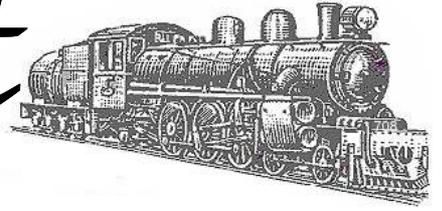


The Tablet



The newsletter of the Waitara Railway Preservation Society Inc.

No.16 April 2013



Dear members and friends,

As usual, I'll begin with an apology! Due to technical difficulties, Denyse's report in this newsletter has been included as a scan and not the usual format; it's still legible, just slightly askew.

I trust you have all been well and enjoying the good weather, unless of course you are connected with farming, in which case you will no doubt be glad to see some rain (remember rain?)

We recently travelled to Gisborne, and although it's no consolation, it looked just as dry over there. On the way back home, travelling down the coast road towards Napier, we were stuck behind logging trucks amongst others, struggling to negotiate the steep hills, while often we could see the relatively level (but closed !) railway line. You have to wonder at the "short sightedness" of our leaders not to spend the money on repairing the rail link between those two centres. Unless you are in the heavy road haulage industry, surely we'd all like to see more freight going by rail, not less! But what do we know?

Anyway, rant over, take care, and I hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Adam

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Chairman's Report.

March 2013.

It has been a busy, full on period since the last newsletter.

A big thank you to our staff, TET, Michielsen's & Magnolia Grove nursery's & other valuable assistance, especially the use of a ride on mower from a local person to be able to keep the grass under control. (terrible at remembering names).

In amongst this mix Eileen & I have been taking part in the initiatives of Waitara Alive in bringing Waitara Businesses to the fore & the New Plymouth Business Association also came out.

The format is very good & I would like to see other members of the WRPS Inc take part as we can truly say we are a business in our community, although volunteers, we do have a lot to offer.

Well done Waitara Alive.

A possible positive outcome from one local business was discussed into looking at how we can assist one another, along with other positive emerging possibilities for the future.

We at the WRPS have a unique opportunity to engage in different levels for Waitara's well being, which in the long term will benefit us all. Help & assistance is always a 2 lane street.

General

This news letter & my monthly reports go around New Zealand & other parts of the world, mostly Australia & the UK.

The feed back from the KDR (Keith Dufftown Railway) in Scotland is particularly pleasing, & we share the same type of outlook, values & work methods being a rural based operation—but without the snow! If you are in the UK—SORRY—Scotland look them up & check out their web page.

South Island.

Eileen & I had a long overdue holiday & went south to the South Island, have not been down there since the last trip in 1961—52 years ago!

As usual to gauge how we at the WRPS are going in our progress, it is always a good idea to look outwards at others

there is always something to learn & that sure happened. Thanks to you all there were some brilliant alternative ways of tackling things.

Outside Railway Toilets! Well there is a wide & varied theme on the usage & erection of these edifices still in use in one form or another which I have documented for our possible use at a later date.

My pick in no particular order are Moorehouse Station at Ferrymead, clean & functional & very representative of the general thing that were around, Waikari on the Weka Pass Railway, very innovative sheltering a Porta Loo, does the job well, but the iron walls cut of the outstanding view of the countryside!

There were other examples of varying interest & were worth recording.

Bridge accouttriments.—Photographed the undersides of both the Awatere River bridge & the one over the Taylor River at Blenheim both from Public space. Kiwi Rail securing of sleepers is slightly different from the way our bridge inspector's requirement is onto the underside of the top chord of the I beam. Also noticed is that Kiwi Rail also only use 200 X150 sleepers whereas we are required to 200 X 200 section. Otherwise is very much the same in bolt sizes etc.

Station Verandas, varying designs here & all have their own merits so the best way to go is to use the best one that would suit our station at Waitara Road.

Heritage Railways—Although all of the heritage sites were closed while we were around a lot of interest was seen at the various sites. We were taken with the Riverside two foot gauge Railway at Blenheim was extremely scenic wandering along the banks of the bone dry Taylor River—A must ride in my opinion.

We were impressed with what we saw of the Weka Pass Railway, no doubt about the fact that it has the real feel of the once common Rural Branch line. All elements are spaced out & fits with the small village of Waipara much as I remember it 1960 & 61. Another must do. Page 2



The "Top end" of the Riverside 2'-00" gauge Railway in Blenheim.
Photo- D.Bettridge



Kb at Mainline Steam in Christchurch took me back 50 years ago working on K class locomotives in the Wanganui depot & at New Plymouth.
Photo--D.Bettridge.

McCleans Island was brilliant in its execution of displaying the logging scene on it's site, covers a lot of the elements well. Love to return there as well.

The tramway at Ferrymead fits into that environment well, & the tram trip evoked a lot of memories of the New Plymouth tramway & also Wanganui to a point—Brilliant. The workshop staff were very friendly & a pleasure to deal with as was the tram driver.

I must thank Paul Malkholm for getting me out & about while our car was getting the automatic transmission re built after failing at Amberley.

The other sites that we looked at were all interesting & valuable & got a lot from them also.

North Island sites.

On our way to the Wairarapa we called into Silverstream to have a chat with them & it was a pity that we had to get to Featherstone to see the Fell group which we just managed to do as they were closing up.

I wish that I had more time to chat with Bryan Bishop & can possibly do that when things quieten down here a bit later. Thanks for the hospitality guys.

The Home Front

- The Track audit was excellent due to the large amount of track & ancilliary work that has been done.
- We now have purchased a rail drilling Rotobroach & Tamper, thanks to the TET trust for these & has sped up & completed a chunk of the Waitara yard development.
- The General Audit was in the auditors words "near perfect", will have to try harder!
- Every working day on a Saturday has between 14 to 18 staff beavering away plus a corrections crew & the results are showing in a positive way. Well done team, you deserve the rewards, pity about the pay!
- Burglar proofing our buildings is taking high priority at the moment & the purchase of a replacement mower is imminent.

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A real track saver, one set of points fits all!

Do not call these stub points for no reason. Photo at McCleans Island Railway, Christchurch. Photo--D Bettridge.



Inside the workshop of the Silverstream Railway.
Photo D.Bettridge.

- F726 is moving slowly along & Keith needs some help please. Due to increasing passenger numbers this vehicle is on the "wanted" list to cope with the present trend.
- Mike Zeier is working on getting a digger in to excavate for the sidings at Waitara & Waitara Road.
- The WRPS are purchasing a building off Dave Oxley so that a workshop at Waitara Road is at last going to happen once the new 200 metre siding has the earth works & siding laid. This will finally clean up the running sore of the Fennel which dogs the site.
- The big lathe has been uplifted from the Transport museum at Kent Road & placed in a farmers barn & will come out when the digger comes.
- Noel & Dave have finished one of the signals & is ready to plant at Waitara Road when the digger arrives.
- The opening of Magnolia Glade will happen with the sponsors just after Easter.
- This is only a brief follow up from my Monthly reports & adds the photos to some of the happenings.

To one & all,
 Cheers from the members
 Of the WRPS Inc.
 Denyse.



Hi folks,

Summer has been a productive time on the Waitara railway, even though it's been dry the weeds just keep on growing, so it's getting time for another spray along the line. The new track tools are proving their worth, around 25 rotting sleepers have been changed out around the 5km peg, along with a few in the Waitara yard. These are all being put to good use with the ongoing retaining wall along the Strange St. embankment.

A retaining wall made up of old parks and reserve signs on the incline has been attracting plenty of interest, including a suggestion from Denyse it could be sold to the Govett-Brewster art gallery for thousands!..we are working on that one!



The PD boys have been making steady progress in Waitara, excavating the sleepers, a lot of which require changing due to their declining condition. So there's plenty on the cards for our "willing" volunteers.



The butterfly garden at Waitara is really coming into its own now..what a difference from the weed infested eyesore it once was, thanks again to Heather Crowskey for her great input here.

Denyse and I have measured up the site for the new sidings at Brixton and Waitara, we have also had a stock take of fishplates, it looks like we will have just enough to complete these projects. A lot of bolts will need to be purchased.

One of my workmates, Gary Loveridge has his own digger and he is kindly going to use this to construct the sidings using mainly the tracks stacked on the lawn at Brixton. Eileen has plans for this site which is looking at becoming a small orchard..another sideline to our operations! Once we have finished building the points we are ready to go, so

hopefully this will be happening sometime in May. Then the stage will be set for Dave Oxley's shed which will become our new covered workshop. The society will really be heading in a good direction, being finally able to work on rail vehicles under cover, especially with winter approaching.

Paul Heighton, the track inspector from Auckland visited back in February, and has been very impressed with the progress since his last visit a year ago. Great to get feedback like this, he gave us plenty of advice which has been very helpful.



On April 6th we held the official opening of the Magnolia Glade station. This was opened by Vance Hooper from Magnolia Grove Nursery and John Michielsen from Michielsen's Tree Nursery. These guys have donated well over 200 trees which have been planted along the rail corridor, many of which are flowering magnolias. It's going to a beautiful site in years to come from what was once a weed infested area, and by doing so our way has been paved for the society to become a part of the fringe garden festival which will be wonderful for all parties concerned.



The day of the opening was a lovely day spent with our guests which included a train ride to view the plantings, along with liquid refreshments of the amber nectar variety, and an afternoon tea back at the station, after the speeches down at Magnolia glade station. Thanks again for all those involved with putting on this day and making our guests very welcome. It's great to see how the community gets behind the society. A great example was how a member of the public has been lending his ride-on mower since our one was stolen just before Christmas. The TET is coming to the rescue and is funding a replacement mower for the society, they have been fantastic to the society with all their funding getting us into a very good place.

The new mower shed has been constructed next to the station with it's temporary paint job, and Noel and Jim have done a great job making it a very secure shed, hopefully this foils any potential thief, well it will be no easy job getting in now.

Denyse and Mike Lehrke have been busy with contractors who are replacing the surface of the Browne and Cracroft St. crossings. At the time of writing, the Browne St. crossing's sleepers are in excellent order and do not require replacing which is great. Fingers crossed for Cracroft St.

Hopefully by the time of my next report we will have the sidings in place and the workshop well on its way, slowly but surely we are heading in the right direction with improvements happening on all fronts.

Till next time,

Cheers, *Mike Zeier*

Report from Jim Blyde on various happenings at the yard.

- January 19th Jim made repairs to MT01, one of the wheels started to rust out which required cleaning and welding. This operation did not take too long and was completed. When the unit was turned over we found that the flange of the wheels were rubbing against the chassis. Keith worked on this with his hammer and chisel after removing the sets.



- February 16th Both Adam and Dave worked on the northern points at the Waitara Road yard, as these were very hard to operate. As it transpired one of the linkage post was slightly out of whack, which made the linkage unable to work. While working to remedy the problem they managed to break one of the pivot posts. (*sorry Jim....Adam*) This was duly replaced and the lads got the lever to work again. Well done lads.





- February 02nd onwards. Noel, Jim Mike and Neville worked on the new mower shed, after Mike and Michael had built it. Noel and Mike worked on the doors. Neville started to paint. Jim worked on securing the shed. He did what he had done on the trolley sheds, shortly after their arrival at the beginning of our operating. A single bar across the front, so that the doors (hopefully) would be secured. The tin shed next door was also made secure with the same method, but with two bars across. We as a team would like to think that these two sheds will be more secure for the future.





- March 02nd Was a good day with a good number of members on site. Neville had Zoë? (spelling) with him, as she had heard so much about our Society from another Asian lass, who had spent some time with the members on site in the past. Nancy was a very helpful lass when she was on site. Not afraid to give a hand where she could. With a paint brush, or a jig saw, under supervision.



The camaraderie within the membership is terrific, with different members trying to 'upset' some in the tea room.



Of course, Carl just had to try it, didn't he?





- March 09th
Denyse playing on the platform, trying to build a trolley for a static display at the Magnolia Glade. Denyse had already built one which is now on display



- January 24th.
The Society had Chris Beath with his rail bicycle, which was to be filmed for TV.
We were allowed to take some photos but not for display. But the following were when we went to the site and assisted where possible to the crew.





?

Have you always read this newsletter and thought you'd like to have a go at producing it yourself?

Well, now's your chance. After editing the WRPS newsletter for over 5 years, I wonder if anyone else would like to have a go. You would need to be a member of the society and obtain the approval of the leadership team (a frightening ordeal....only joking Denyse) I would of course be on hand to offer any help if you needed it.

If you're keen, contact me. My email address is at the front

Adam

East Coast Museum of Technology

www.ECMOT.org.nz

On our recent trip to Gisborne, Becky and I called in at the East Coast Museum of Technology (ECMOT). This is located in Makaraka, on the outskirts of Gisborne. For an entry fee of only \$5, you can spend an eternity looking round dozens of buildings crammed with everything under the sun!



An Aladdin's cave...

There are fire engines, military vehicles, a whole display on domestic utensils (cooker, fridges etc), lawnmowers, agricultural machinery, the list is endless. There's also the buildings themselves, the site being a former Dairy Factory.



The former Matawhero Railway station



Any ideas?

What's more, it's on what remains of the old Gisborne – Motuhora railway line (1900 – 1959), so they also have a large collection of railway items and rolling stock. One of their members was telling me that they are applying to restore what is left of the line, and run some of their stock on it.



Rail tractor that used to run on Tolaga Bay wharf

If you find yourself in the area, I can highly recommend a visit, but be prepared to take longer than you'd planned!

Adam

Subscriptions

I apologise for sending out the sub invoices so late. This is entirely my fault. Thank you to those who paid prior to receiving the account.

Accounts have not been sent out over the years and a large number of members have not paid, therefore have not been entitled to vote at the AGM. Subscriptions help towards the costs of this newsletter and postage. This is a good way for you to know all the happenings, and these have been many and exciting for our future. The team sure does some great work and would be pleased to see you at our AGM. Please remember that you need to pay subs before you can vote.

Cheers,

Helen Johnson
Treasurer



The opening of the line