



JOURNAL

MAR 2017
ISSUE # 164

PUBLISHED BY FEDERATION OF RAIL ORGANISATIONS NZ INC :

PLEASE SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDITOR, SCOTT OSMOND, BY E-MAIL : scottosmond54@gmail.com

IN THIS ISSUE

FRONZ Conference 2017	1	News From Our Members	5
FRONZ Notices	1	International News	8
John Peterson	2	Future Mainline Excursions	9
Denniston Experience Closure	3	Picture of the Month	10

FRONZ CONFERENCE 2017

Bookings are now open for the 2017 FRONZ Conference in Dunedin from Friday 2 to Monday 5 June. To make your conference bookings online go to our web site link at <https://www.fronz.org.nz/conference.php?display=confRegis>

Scenic Hotel Southern Cross is our venue for the conference and accommodation. The hotel has offered a very good room rate which includes breakfast for FRONZ delegates. The hotel is about 600metres walk from the Dunedin Railway Station. The Dunedin Casino is also located at the hotel. To make a booking for accommodation at the Southern Cross Hotel go to our web site link at <https://www.fronz.org.nz/conference.php?display=accomBooking..>

Conference Program

Friday 2 June. Taieri Gorge Limited train to Pukerangi and return. Registration and get-together in the evening.

Saturday 3 June is our main business day.

Sunday 4 June. FRONZ AGM in morning. In the afternoon visits to the Dunedin Gasworks Museum, Ocean Beach Railway, and Toitu Otago Settler's Museum.

The FRONZ Annual Awards Dinner will be held on Sunday evening at the Scenic Hotel Southern Cross.

Monday 5 June. Dunedin Railways Silver Fern railcar from Dunedin to Oamaru and return. We will visit and ride on the Oamaru Steam and Rail train during our two hour stopover there.

FRONZ AGM NOTICE

The Annual General Meeting of the Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand will be held on Sunday 4 June, 2017, at the Scenic Southern Cross Hotel, 118 High Street, Dunedin, commencing at 0900 hours.

FRONZ CONVENORS REPORTS

Convenor's Annual reports are required for circulation prior to the FRONZ Annual Conference by 30 April. Please send by e-mail to secretary@fronz.org.nz.

**JOURNAL IS FOR ALL OF YOUR MEMBERS. PLEASE
FORWARD IT TO ALL ON YOUR E-MAIL LISTS**

JOHN PETERSON

Another sad loss to report this month. Our FRONZ Secretary, John Peterson, died suddenly on March 13, 2017, at his home in Christchurch, aged 66 years. Our condolences to his daughter and son-in-law, Julie Peterson and Jamie Hales (from Greymouth), and his extended family including six brothers and sisters. A Memorial Service for John was held in Christchurch on March 22.

Patsy and I got to know John well as a fellow member of the FRONZ Executive and always enjoyed his conversation, especially when reminiscing about people and places we knew in America. When I last met John in Wellington just three weeks ago I recall a fond farewell when he wished us both blessings. Little did we know what was just around the corner. John's energy and enthusiasm for all his work at FRONZ and the National Rail Museum will be sorely missed but it is time now for others to take on those challenges. We will miss John's presence and thoughtful contributions to the FRONZ Executive.

John's passing will be widely felt as aside from the roles readers probably know about including FRONZ Secretary, on the Canterbury Railway Society committee, and as Chairman of the National Railway Museum, he was also a director of Ferrymead Park Limited and had a role in the local American Society. He came from a background in radio and still did some work in that field.



Below: John Sellwood interviewing John Peterson for Campbell Live about forthcoming events for Ferrymead 150 at Ferrymead and (left) relaxing at a FRONZ Conference, Photos D.L.A. Turner.



DENNISTON EXPERIENCE CLOSURE

New health and safety regulations close coal mine tours for tourists at Denniston

A key West Coast tourist attraction has closed down amid claims it has not met new health and safety regulations.

The Denniston Experience operates a train ride 200 metres into Banbury mine, one of the historic mines at Denniston near Westport.

The area is administered by the Department of Conservation (DOC), but the interactive tours are run by private operators Jacqueline and Nigel Slonker.

DOC Buller area manager Bob Dickson said the tourist mine had become an "unintentional casualty" of new regulations brought in following the Pike River disaster which killed 29 miners in 2010.

The Banbury mine tours had been operating safely for six years, and aimed to take tourists back to the 1880s by recreating the life and work of a miner on the mountain plateau.

Dickson said the new regulations did not differentiate between a producing coal mine and a tourist mine.

"DOC, Development West Coast, Buller District Council and corporate sponsors all invested around \$3.5 million to bring it up to a high safety standard. A considerable amount has been spent on safety equipment, full roof support and a second egress. It is considered gas-free," he said.

WorkSafe's high hazard unit told the operators an adequately qualified and experienced mine manager had to be on site at all times," Dickson said.

He said Nigel Slonker was a qualified mine manager who previously worked for WorkSafe but was not always able to be on site. It would be cost-prohibitive to employ another manager, he said.

The mine was a "fantastic" asset for the West Coast, attracting about 3000 visitors a year, and its closure was a "bitter blow" to the region's tourism industry.

"We can't afford to lose it. It's absolutely crucial we get that mine open again."

Slonker said they did not have the finances to meet WorkSafe's demands so he had given up his DOC concession to run the tourist mine.

"There are not too many mine managers left in New Zealand but these guys can demand \$1000 a day. We simply can't do it.

"We have no option but to close unless WorkSafe changes the regulations for tourist mines."

Four staff would lose their jobs, unless DOC could find a new operator who could meet the requirements, he said.

"We have always put safety for our staff, our visitors and ourselves first. We have met all the requirements as clearly stated in the current mining regulations. However, our understanding of the regulations appears to be different to those of WorkSafe."

WorkSafe chief inspector Mark Pizey said there must be a qualified and experienced manager on-site to manage the mine.

"It is absolutely [Slonker's] choice as to who that person is and if he has decided that his proposed solution does not meet the terms of the mining regulations, the decision to close the attraction is his alone and he cannot suggest there has been any change to mining compliance issued by this agency," he said.

- Stuff



NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

These items are obtained from numerous e-newsletters that our member groups publish. Members are welcome to submit these or any other information they would like to share with the wider rail and tramway heritage community by e-mailing to scottosmond@xtra.co.nz

NELSON RAILWAY SOCIETY

Recent updates on Facebook advise WF403 was coming along well. Almost finished, when they hit a snag. The compensating beam is not up to scratch. Needs building up at one end. So, more delays.



GLENBROOK VINTAGE RAILWAY AND BUSH TRAMWAY CLUB

FRONZ members working together again. Bush Tramway Club Mamaku Bush Jigger #1 took part in the 2017 Glenbrook Vintage Railway Steam & Vintage Country Festival in February.



Prior to turning around passengers alighted on the loop track with the old Kingsland station shelter in the background.

Thanks to its special design it was able to change directions at each end of the line without a turntable. It takes a lot of muscle from Derek and sharp eyechrometer usage from Ian, but it's a great feature. Good thing it was such a stunning summer day.



ART DECO EXCURSIONS

Two FRONZ members, Steam Incorporated and Pahiatua Railcar Society, ran mainline trains to the Art Deco weekend at Napier in February. The trains all ran well despite some pretty miserable weather which put a damper on the activities in Napier. Below we see the two heritage trains crossing at Whakatu and the railcar in less salubrious company crossing Kiwirail freight 620 at Otane Photos Doug Johnston.



Doug Johnston



Doug Johnston

STEAM SCENE



STEAM EXTRAVAGANZA
8 & 9 APRIL 2017

Entry \$15 adult Children (15 & under) free No effpos
DEMONSTRATION 10.00 AM UNTIL 2.00PM
GATES OPEN 9.00AM

STEAM TRAIN RIDES
FOOD STALLS
TRACTION ENGINE DEMONSTRATIONS
MINIATURE TRAIN RIDES
STEAM POWERED SHEARING & SAWMILLING
WET OR FINE NO DOGS

At 621 McLeans Island Road

Logos: Rātā Foundation, www.steamscene.co.nz, isaac, Allied Petroleum, WAIMAR, PGG Wrightson Wool, Sue & Gemma Roberts, SMTL, Kelford Engineering Services Limited, TRAFFICRUS

SOUTHERN STEAM TRAIN CHARITABLE TRUST/ WAIMEA PLAINS RAILWAY

In celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Invercargill – Bluff line, Southern Steam Trust held a public open day on 26 March at the Southern Steam Yard, 50 Crinan Street Invercargill.

K92 ran under her own steam along the short track within the Southern Steam yard accompanied by some NZR themed exhibits both static and moving.

More than 1000 people have checked out an old steam locomotive that ran on Southland railway lines about a century ago.

The K92 locomotive was on display at Invercargill's Crinan St on Sunday, and though not running on the line, it was "fully steamed up and live", Southern Steam Train Charitable Trust president Lindsay Buckingham said.

The steam locomotive gave the public a glimpse of railway travel in the old days, with its appeal in its uniqueness, Buckingham suggested.

"It's not often people get to see a steam locomotive fully steamed up and live."

The train, now owned by the Waimea Plains Railway Trust, was on display in Invercargill to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Invercargill-Bluff Railway line.

The 139-year-old American-built Rogers locomotive arrived in New Zealand in 1878 to work on the Christchurch to Dunedin line before being put to use in Southland for many years.

Deemed obsolete in 1926, it was toppled into the Oreti River near Lumsden to help with erosion control but in 1985 was dug out of the bank and eventually restored back to working condition.

Rides were also available on a 1/6 scale AB locomotive, located beside the impressive K92 on Sunday.

- *The Southland Times*



NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM

Remembering our friend John Peterson who made such a huge contribution to progress on the building of the National Railway Museum, we have two recent pictures from David Maciulaitis on progress at the museum site.

© 2017 - D. J. Maciulaitis



Above: The NRM Roundhouse site from 28-metres above Moorhouse Square. - 5 March 2017

Below: Ballast dropped between turntable roads - 5 March 2017

© 2017 - D. J. Maciulaitis



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

FUTURE OF SYDNEY'S VINTAGE TRAINS UNCLEAR AS 3801 TOUR COMPANY EVICTED

In a capacious brick warehouse in the historic Eveleigh railway precinct, hundreds of tonnes of heritage railway carriages and equipment is sitting idle after the NSW government terminated a tour company's access to the site and changed the locks.

For 30 years, 3801 Limited, a heritage rail company run by volunteers, has had almost exclusive use of the warehouse - called the Large Erecting Shop - to run its historic railway tours through the Southern Highlands and along the Hawkesbury River.

The heritage rail group's access to the site, so close to Redfern Station, has been periodically threatened. When in 2006 the former Labor government indicated it might sell the site for development, then opposition transport spokeswoman Gladys Berejiklian insisted it should continue to be used for heritage rail, and said 3801 had been doing a great job.

But in January, after years of failed negotiations and time extensions, Ms Berejiklian's government acted on its plans to convert the warehouse into a facility that could also be used by other rail heritage companies.

Through its not-for-profit entity, Transport Heritage NSW, the government served 3801 Limited with a termination notice and locked the company out of the workshop, granting it restricted access only to remove its property.

As a result, 3801 has been forced to cancel its upcoming tours runs, and with lost income now mounting well into five figures, one of the state's key heritage rail operators is now in a precarious financial state.

Sharyn Gregory, chairman of 3801 Limited, said the company's eviction had left it with nowhere to go and, with no revenue coming in, no means of funding a move.

"We don't have the slush fund available to move, and we don't have anywhere to move to," Ms Gregory said.

"At this stage there is no alternative site in NSW for any heritage operator to undertake carriage restoration work."

The situation is now at a standstill, and there is no resolution in sight.

This diesel locomotive is among 3801 Limited's vintage fleet, which is now locked inside the Large Erecting Shed in

Eveleigh. Photo: Thomas Durber For more than a century, tradesmen have toiled and tinkered on train carriages inside large erecting shop, making it among the oldest railway workshops still in use in the country.



The Large Erecting Shop at Eveleigh Railway Precinct, which has been in continual use since the 1890s Photo: Kate Geraghty

Since 1986, 3801 Limited has paid peppercorn rent for use of the site, located within Redfern's Technology Park, where it maintains its fleet of vintage diesel locomotives and operates its Cockatoo Run tour.

The decision to terminate 3801's access to the site was not a snap one, Transport for NSW said.

It first issued the company with 12 months' notice to leave the site in 2014, following a government review of the heritage rail network, which found the company's near exclusive use of the warehouse had "been a source of conflict in the sector".

The work required to make it a shared user facility, including bringing it into line with modern safety standards, "cannot happen until 3801 Ltd's assets are removed", a spokesperson from Transport for NSW said.

The department said it had "offered support" to assist with the relocation, but insisted "the overall responsibility for finding and relocating to another site lies with 3801 Limited".

Ms Gregory said 3801 Limited was prepared to downsize to allow other operators access to the facility, but they couldn't afford to gamble leaving the site without a guarantee they would be able to recommence their tour operations.

She said countless meetings with Transport for NSW and Transport Heritage NSW had failed to produce any written agreements about the company's access and future licensing costs.

"It appears that discussion can't occur until after we leave the shed."

As the intransigence continues, Ms Gregory said the company's ability to stay afloat was "not good", leaving a question mark hovering over the future of the company's beautifully restored carriages.

This article first appeared on www.smh.com.au

FUTURE MAINLINE EXCURSIONS

This feature in Journal is a list of forthcoming mainline excursions by our members. Hopefully all are covered from newsletters and web sites but if any members have excursion plans please send them to Journal at scottosmond54@gmail.com.

Steam Incorporated

- 1 April 2017. Mangaweka Express - Paekakariki—Taihape return.
- 1 April 2017. Portland Express - Whangarei—Portland shuttles.
- 14 May 2017. Mothers Day Special—Paekakariki-Woodville return.
- 11 June 2017. Kapiiti Steam Shuttles.

ALSO COMING IN 2017

- Taranaki Winter Express (diesel) 22 July
- Daffodil Express (steam) 10 September
- Christmas Grand Circle (diesel) 3 December

Dunedin Railways

Regular Taieri Gorge and North Line services

4 to 10 May 2017 Silver Fern Railcar Christchurch to Invercargill and return (sold out)

23 to 29 October 2017 Silver Fern Railcar Christchurch to Invercargill and return

Gisborne City Vintage Railway

Gisborne to Muriwai -

Saturday 15 April 2017

Sunday 14 May 2017

Sunday 4 June 2017

Feilding & Districts Steam Rail Society Inc

9 April 2017 - Chateau Tongariro Rail Excursion.

14 May—A Day In The Bay KiwiRail Diesel

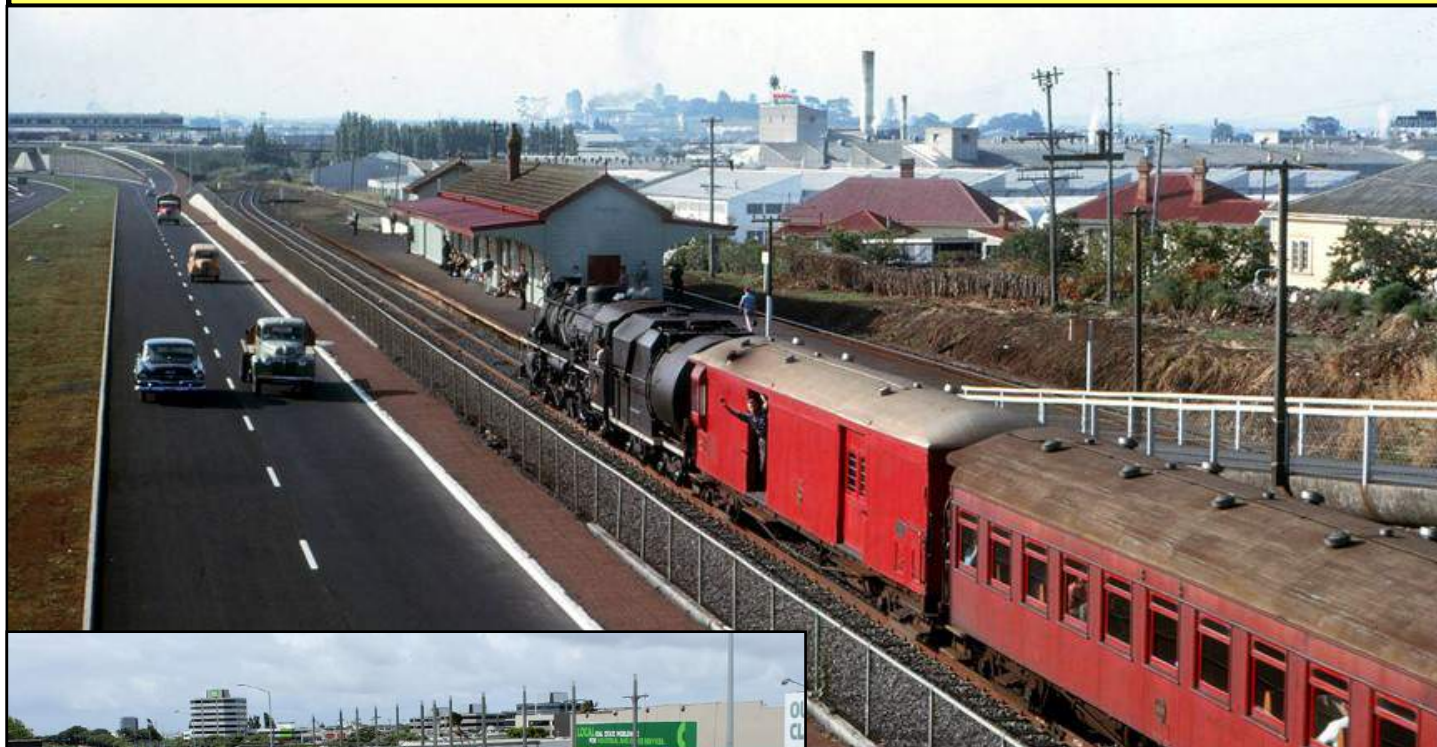
No Mainline Excursions presently advertised for:

Mainline Steam

Railway Enthusiasts Society

Pahiatua Railcar Society

PICTURE OF THE MONTH



Ellerslie 53 Years ago. On Tuesday 17 December 1963, Ja1284 arrives at Ellerslie with 103 Auckland-Otahuhu passenger. This would be shortly after 7.30am, and there's not much traffic on this recently opened portion of Southern Motorway! Photo by J M Creber from Trevor Cheer.

Inset: For a comparison, here's the same location during the midday 'slack' period late in 2016. Photo: Trevor Cheer

**FRONZ CONFERENCE DUNEDIN
2—5 JUNE 2017**

**FRONZ JOURNAL # 164
WAS PUBLISHED ON 28 MARCH 2017
CONTENTS MAY BE REPUBLISHED WITH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**