



JOURNAL

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**IN THIS
ISSUE**

FRONZ Update	1	UK Heritage Support	6
Heritage Technical Committee	1	News From Our Members	7
NZTA Safety Performance Stats	2	Picture of the Month	17
Rail Safety Week	5		

FRONZ UPDATE

This month the FRONZ team have been working on several issues:

- The FRONZ Executive have had two Zoom meetings this month.
- Trans-Tasman bubble. Working with Australian rail heritage to develop common publicity.
- Executive Member Rob Martin, along with Executive Officer Margaret Gordon have been submitting on the changes to the restructuring of rail since the introduction of the Land Transport (Rail) Act On 19 December 2019. It was the opportunity to get recognition of our status as long-standing users of the rail network with definite interest on what was being proposed.
- We have met with Erin Wynne, the Ministry of Transport director rail transformation to discuss how we can participate in the proposed changes. We presented the set of problems facing the heritage movement and proposing ways to meet our concerns. These included: Recognition – for heritage operators as active participants in the rail network in NZ. Our preference for the Ontrack model. Resourcing – Existing issues and our expectations of where we needed support from the Ministry to overcome them.
- We met with James Llewellyn NZTA Portfolio Manager (Transitional Rail). James has a transport background and is also responsible not only for the management of the portfolio team but also has responsibility for program management, business case advice, and strategy and plan development. We found James empathetic to our situation, especially to the concerns about the managed decline in the state of the rail network. Under the new regime when NZTA reviews the KiwiRail three-year investment plans they will also have to take into consideration those inputs from the wider users which will include the heritage operators.
- Sheena McGuire, the new Kiwirail access manager, is trying to make the running of heritage trips less of a nightmare. It's thrown up a few bumps in the road, but she's working through them.
- FRONZ has been asked to be involved with a project that plans to celebrate the anniversary of the handing over of the land for the NI main trunk line.
- Scott Osmond met with a group working on restoring the Remuera Railway Station.

HERITAGE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE



Readers will be aware of, but maybe not sure of the important role, played by the Heritage Technical Committee in mainline heritage rail activities. To provide transparency and wider public understanding of how NZ's Heritage Vehicles are certified for use on the National Network - HTC has recently launched a website for public access. Go to www.htc.kiwi for a full understanding of the HTC.

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

WAKA KOTAHI NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY SAFETY PERFORMANCE REPORT

Tourist & heritage sector – by the numbers

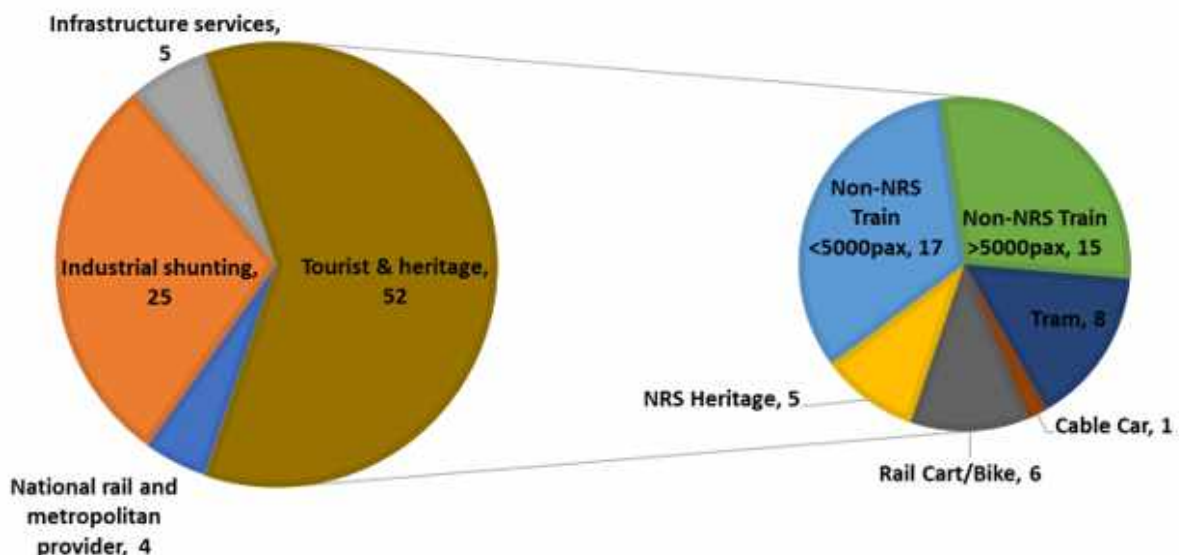
By now, rail licence holders will all have received details from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency about the Safety Performance Report you need to submit by 16 August to capture the 2019-20 year's information.

Your organisation is required to submit a Safety Performance Report as part of your licence and the report allows us to accurately and fairly calculate your organisation's Annual Licence Charge. But the Safety Performance Report is also one of the few surveys in New Zealand of the entire rail industry and, in the future, Waka Kotahi is planning to make better use of the data we collect and make it more widely available.

Already it has been invaluable in helping us communicate the nature and importance of the Tourist and Heritage rail industry to the rest of Government. We've also had inquiries from within the sector that we have been able to help with using this information.

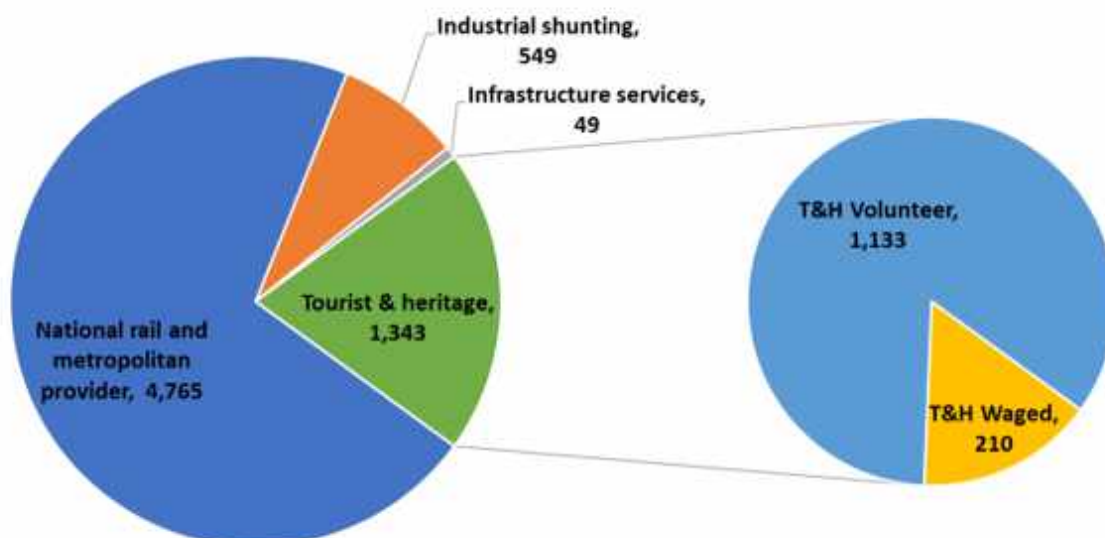
We thought FRONZ's members would be interested to see some of the statistics covering rail activity from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 that we gleaned from last year's survey.

RAIL LICENCE HOLDERS

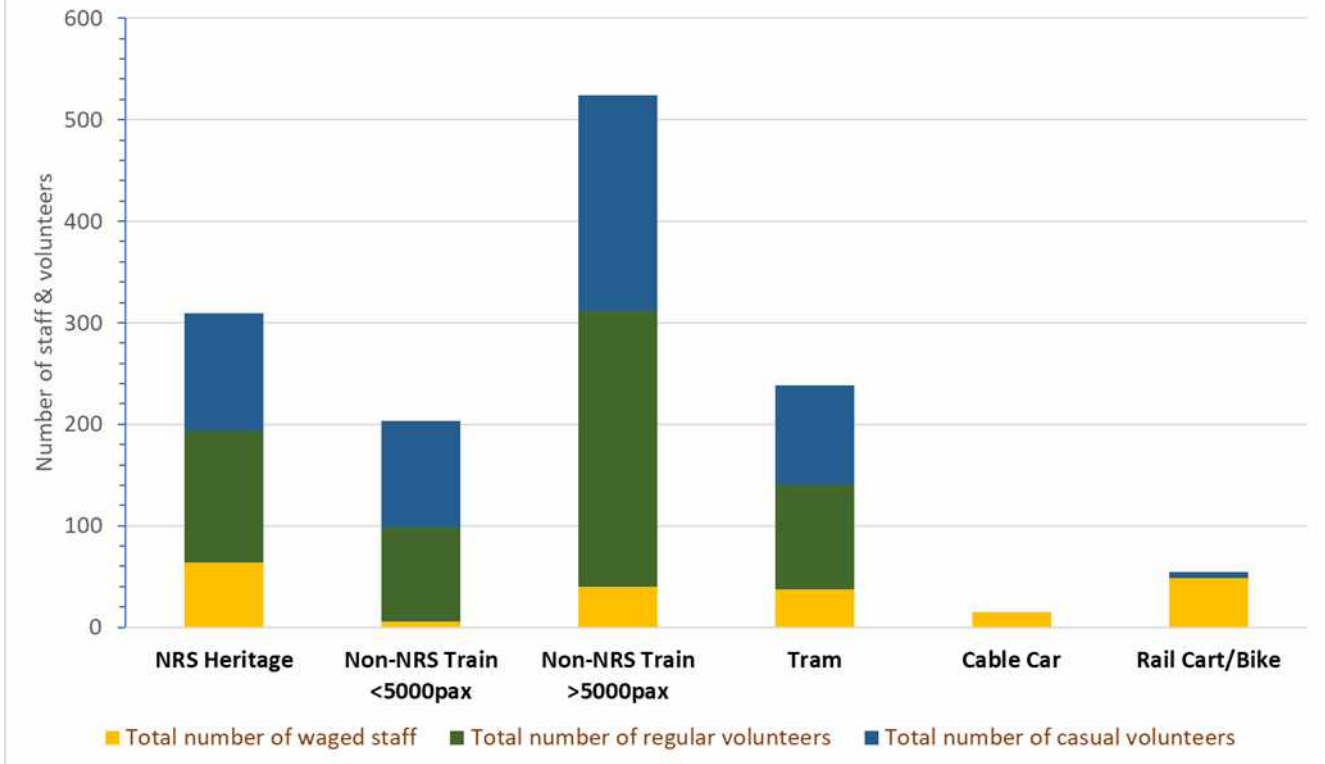


RAIL WORKFORCE

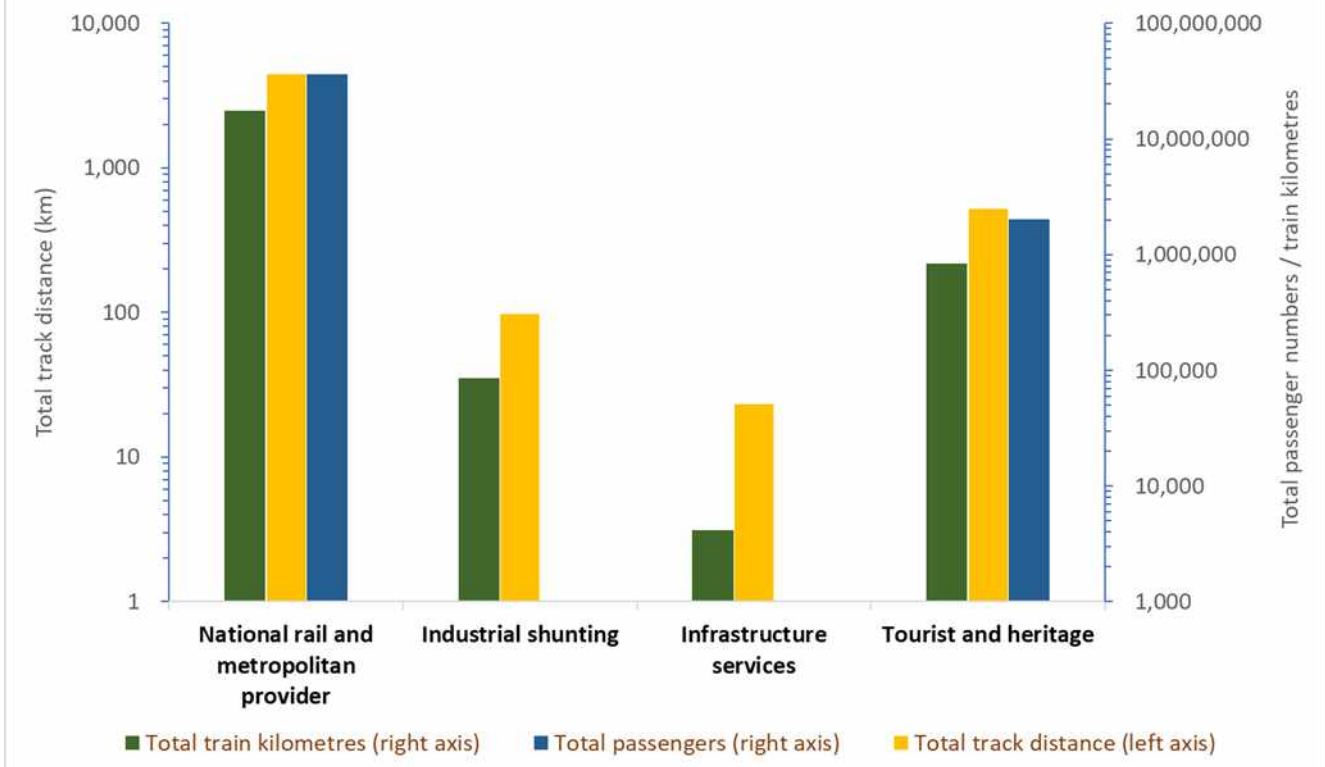
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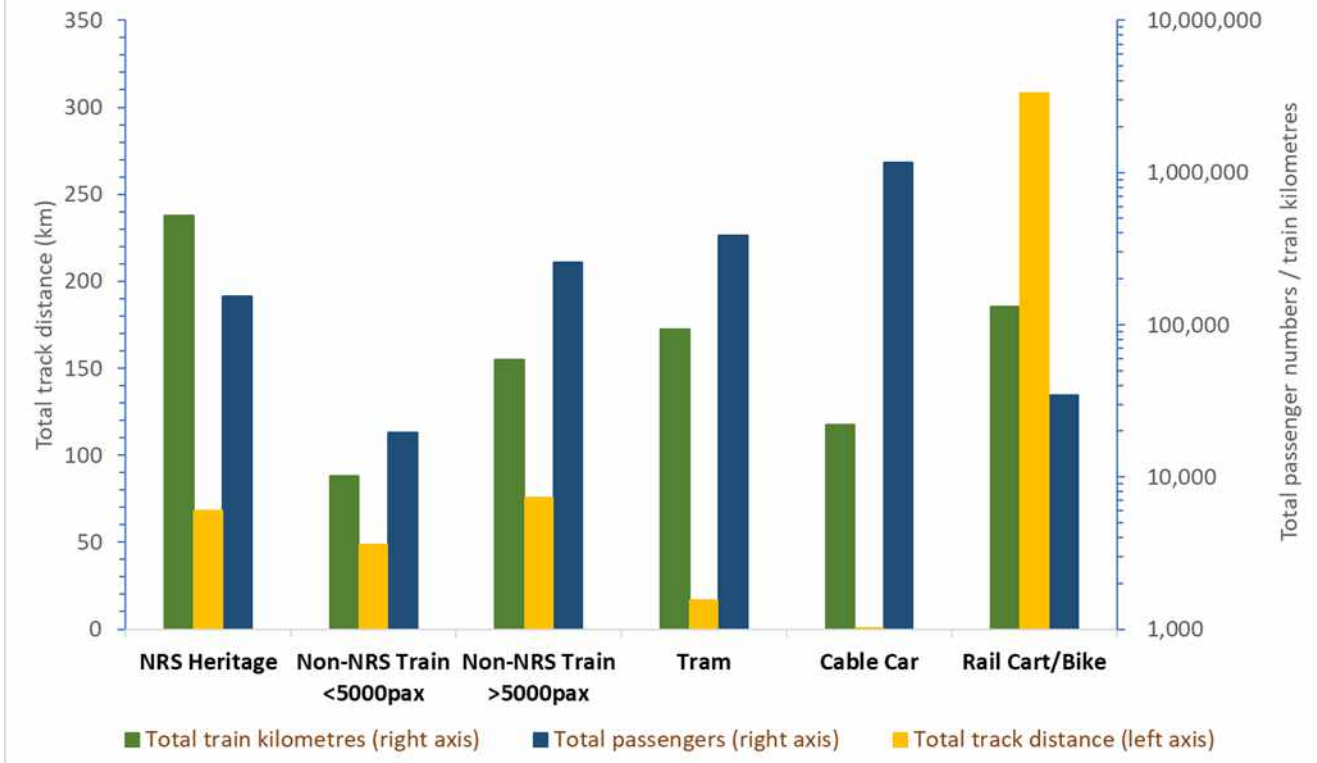
TOURIST AND HERITAGE WORKFORCE



RAIL ACTIVITY



TOURIST AND HERITAGE ACTIVITY



Group	Description
National rail and metropolitan provider	KiwiRail, Transdev Wellington, Transdev Auckland, CAF
Industrial shunting	Organisations that carry out shunting activities on industrial sites connected to the National Rail System to load and unload goods
Infrastructure service	Organisation that use private railways to service other infrastructure (eg electricity networks)
NRS heritage	Tourist and heritage licence holders who operate on the National Rail System
Non-NRS train < 5000pax	Tourist and heritage licence holders who operate trains off the National Rail System and carried fewer than 5000 passengers last year
Non-NRS train ≥ 5000pax	Tourist and heritage licence holders who operate trains off the National Rail System and carried 5000 or more passengers last year
Tram	Organisations operating tram services
Cable car	Wellington Cable Car
Rail cart/bike	Organisations operating self-drive rail carts and rail bikes

Please contact us at railregulator@nzta.govt.nz if you are interested in other data or have ideas for what we should collect in the future. We can only require information from the sector relevant to rail safety, but we are always interested in how we can use our role to support the rail industry.

Thanks to those who have already submitted this year's Safety Performance Report, and for everyone else please do so by 16 August.

RAIL SAFETY WEEK 10 AUGUST 2020



Rail Safety Week is just around the corner once again and we welcome involvement from FRONZ members. The week will be launched by the Minister of Transport at the Wellington Railway Station on Monday 10 August.

The theme this year continues to raise awareness of near misses. While each year on average three people die and six people suffer a serious injury at railway level crossings across New Zealand, there were 149 near misses reported with vehicles and 46 with pedestrians in the last year.

Rail Safety Week draws attention to the safety issues so that hopefully we can change behaviour and reduce complacency and risk-taking. We also want people to consider the impact that near misses have on locomotive engineers.

The symbol of a half cross, signifying an event that was almost a fatality, are referred to as 'near miss memorials'. These will be displayed on posters and billboards around the country, and an event on Wednesday 12 August at Takutai Square in Auckland. Some 'near miss memorials' have a QR code which members of the public can scan with their phones and be taken to a video clip of near misses and the campaign website (www.nearmisses.co.nz) which also hosts safety tips.

There will also be a nationwide radio campaign as well as an online/social media campaign.

KiwiRail and TrackSAFE NZ are also working with Waka Kotahi on a virtual field trip for schools which will be filmed during Rail Safety Week. Students will be able to engage in a variety of stimulating and meaningful activities about safety on and around the rail corridor, without having to leave their classroom. During 'live days', students can put questions to rail experts through web conferences.

Keep an eye on the KiwiRail and/or TrackSAFE Facebook pages for social media videos that FRONZ members can share during the week and posters will be available to download as well if you have anywhere you'd like to display them.

Stay safe!

Megan (TrackSAFE NZ)



HERITAGE RAILWAYS SAVED FROM 'SERIOUS JEOPARDY' – UK HERITAGE SUPPORT

There is a light at the end of the tunnel for heritage railways stopped in their tracks by the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.

When lockdown began, heritage railways were just getting ready to open for their busiest season. Instead they were forced into survival mode.

"Heritage railways have been put in serious jeopardy," says Kim Shaw, Acting General Manager at Nene Valley Railway. "The lockdown started at exactly the wrong time, just before the beginning of a new operating season."

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"Heritage railways have been put in serious jeopardy," says Kim Shaw, Acting General Manager at Nene Valley Railway. "The lockdown started at exactly the wrong time, just before the beginning of a new operating season."

Usually, UK heritage railways welcome **thousands of passengers, support around 4,000 jobs and contribute some £400million** of economic impact to the visitor economy. They also play a key role for apprentices and trainees to learn vital heritage skills.

Now, turnstiles remain still, carriages empty and workshops silent.

As well as a large number of staff being put on furlough, the closure of heritage railways has had a huge impact on its volunteer workforce – many of whom see it as "not just a hobby but a way of life" according to Lisa Adair, General Manager of the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland.

"This crisis has put a big part of our volunteers' lives on hold. Many of them are in the 'at risk' age group and are very concerned about when they will be able to return safely."

Paul Blount, Project Engineer at Strathspey Railway

"I cannot stress enough the benefits volunteering has for wellbeing," adds Paul Blount, Project Engineer at Strathspey Railway. "This crisis has put a big part of our volunteers' lives on hold. Many of them are in the 'at risk' age group and are very concerned about when they will be able to return safely."

The difference between survival and oblivion

Nene Valley Railway, the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland and Strathspey Railway are among a number of heritage railways that have received vital funding from [The National Lottery Heritage Fund's Heritage Emergency Fund](#).

Made possible by National Lottery players, the funding is enabling bills and salaries to be paid and essential repairs and maintenance of tracks, engines and trains to continue. It is also helping organisations look towards reopening for business and getting their volunteers, apprentices and staff back on board.

"This National Lottery funding means the difference between oblivion and survival," says David Pearson, Fundraising Co-ordinator at Keighley & Worth Valley Railway – a principal attraction for West Yorkshire and the setting of the 1970 film *The Railway Children*.

Many heritage railways say the emergency funding will help them to bring back apprentices and trainees earlier than they would otherwise have been able – either through online courses or in the workshops. They say they will play a key role in getting heritage railways moving again.

Light at the end of the tunnel

As lockdown measures begin to ease, heritage railways are now looking towards how they might reopen safely.

"There are so many things we need to consider – how will we safely accommodate passengers on narrow platforms and usually busy coaches?" asks Paul Blount. "With all the safety measures in place, will we be able to generate an income still?"

National Lottery funding is helping heritage railway organisations to:

- establish online booking and access management systems which could help visitors plan their trips safely and the railways to carefully manage people on site

- explore options for diversifying income in the future

provide consultants, advisors and the opportunities to develop recovery plans and new business models

Kim Shaw adds: "Thanks to The National Lottery and its players we now have a fighting chance of being able to welcome visitors back to the railway when we are allowed to reopen."

Supporting heritage during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Have you applied for support yet?

The National Lottery Heritage Fund is committed to helping the heritage sector through this crisis.

Our £50m Heritage Emergency Fund is open for grants from £3,000–£250,000 until 12noon on 31 July.

We want to support as many organisations as we can. Submit an application before the deadline so we can help your organisation too.

Additional support includes:

- Digital Skills for Heritage: increasing sector skills and confidence to bring heritage to more people

- maintaining our financial commitment to all of our 2,500 existing projects

- help and advice from our UK-wide teams

Right: Nene Valley Railway



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 scottosmond54@gmail.com

GISBORNE CITY VINTAGE RAILWAY

As mentioned previously, Gisborne City Vintage Railway was to host the 2020 FRONZ Conference and we were disappointed that it had to be cancelled. However, we are going to host the 2021 Conference instead, so everybody will have a chance then to see the improvements that have been made here.

Not all work is directly related to our rail vehicles though! The crew room was getting rather crowded, especially on Saturday mornings, so part of our storage area has been transformed into a new office and the crew room extended into the old office area.

The cancellation of the cruise ship visits by the government, followed almost immediately by the Level 4 lockdown brought our 2019/2020 summer season to a rather abrupt halt – a situation faced by every other group as well! By the time we reached level 2, it had been decided to cancel the rest of the scheduled excursions and start the winter maintenance program early.

Wa165 has had some paintwork tidied up around the smoke-box. The boiler plugs have all been removed and new sacrificial anodes manufactured ready for the next operating season. The cab flooring was lifted (for the first time in 20 years) and some rust removal and inhibiting work is being carried out.

Carriage brake testing is scheduled to be carried out in the next couple of months.

A provisional list of excursions is still being worked on at the moment, but it is intended that the first runs of the 2020/2021 season will be on Labour Weekend – the 20th anniversary of the first passenger run made following the restoration of Wa165, which was started in 1985.

Hopefully next month we will be able to bring you news of our new arrival!

Meanwhile, the workshop is open on Thursday and Saturday mornings from 9am to noon – visitors are very welcome!



Far Left: GCVR train at Muriwai on 28 Dec 2019. Centre: John working on the cab floor rust removal. Above: Wa165 in the workshops on 16 July 2020 with TR23 in the background.

PLEASANT POINT RAILWAY

A really GREAT EFFORT by, Daniel Smith, Josh Granger & Dowall McLeod to get our Ab699 going - a lot of work went in getting the tender bogie wheel units that had been repaired, assembled and fitted back on its tender chassis ready for the 12 July member's 80th birthday party steaming. Pictures Bryan Blanchard.



KINGSTON FLYER

From The Otago Daily Times 25 May

Plans to reopen the steam engine the Kingston Flyer as a commercial operation are on track, despite Covid-19 related delays.

Kingston Flyer Ltd director Neville Simpson was one of a small team who took the engine for a 14-kilometre run from Kingston to Fairlight and back at the weekend.

The group were giving the engine a test run before it was shut down for a boiler survey over winter.

"Everything went really well. It was a good feeling to have a successful run with nothing going wrong," he said.

Prior to closure under the previous owners in 2016, the operation had been beset by fires alongside the tracks that were ignited by sparks from the engine.

A lot of work with fire brigade members and mechanical engineers had been under way to resolve that issue, Simpson said.

Despite the hit that tourism industry was taking after Covid-19 he was confident there was enough interest from New Zealanders to justify reopening the steam train as a commercial operation.

"It's quite an exciting time... we are continuing work towards getting back in operation just the same as we were doing prior to Covid-19."

He hoped that would be before the end of 2020.

There was still red tape to work through, including getting a licence from the NZ Transport Agency to run with passengers.

Sleepers needed to be replaced and two carriages were to be restored. One carriage was complete except for painting.

The exact business model had not been decided. The train might operate for corporate events, weddings and private charters with the possibility of public outings in summer months.

Pounamu Tourism Group managing director Paul Jackson said his company, which operates the Marlborough Flyer, would lease the Kingston Flyer and was working towards the reopening.

"We think it's so important to keep probably New Zealand's most iconic piece of railway heritage going."

New ownership of Kingston Flyer Ltd was confirmed in mid-2019, but the new owners have remained a mystery. They are registered as trustee company Wylie McDonald (Kingston) Ltd on the NZ Companies website.

"We don't get in to that. Nobody really has to know who the investors are," Simpson said.

Previously it was said the buyers were "local to the district".



Locomotive fireman Myles Manihera, engine driver Neville Simpson and track inspector Neville Martin after a successful run of the Kingston Flyer on Saturday.

FELL LOCOMOTIVE MUSEUM

Due to New Zealand now being at Level 1 the Fell Locomotive Museum is reopening on Saturday the 4th July 10 am - 4 pm.

The Museum is open Saturday, Sundays and Public Holidays 10 am – 4 pm. Open 7 days/week for tour bookings.



TRAMWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

From July "Tracts"



One good thing to come out of New Zealand returning to Alert Level 1 – no more social distancing, so the break room can be used as – a break room! This was the view at afternoon tea time on 20 June during the Work Day, with thirteen people (not including the photographer) present. Photo: Dave Hinman.

From our Workshops – Restaurant Tram 411



Right: "Just Hangin' Around". David M using our new safety harness.



Above: With one end close to being finished, it's time to start on the other end.

Left: The sides are going back together. Photos: Dave Hinman

FEILDING AND DISTRICT STEAM RAIL SOCIETY

Mainline trips utilising Kiwirail locomotives.

Join us on Saturday 8th August 2020 on a diesel-hauled excursion 'around the block', from Feilding via the Wairarapa to Wellington, returning to Feilding via the Main Trunk.

12 September 2020. Taumarunui On The Main Trunk line 2020.

WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM

From July-Aug "Tramlines"

The effort to upgrade the road crossing adjacent to the Chief Ranger's Office has been an immense one. I have kept a running record of the members who attended on the various days, of the work done and of the progress at each stage. By assuming each person's daily involvement was five hours (average) I have come up with a conservative member involvement in this project of at least 790 hours "coal face" activity. Well done everyone. I am sure that in time your muscles and joints will settle down. The Kango hammer that we have used to tamp ballast died with six sleepers still to be tamped but we will manage somehow.



*Above Left: The crossing prior to the upgrade for heavy farm traffic. Photo by Mike Flinn.
Right: First tram on the upgraded crossing, also showing some of the re-laid track. Mike Flinn (left) and Steve Porter observing. Photo by Allan Neilson.*

Left: Members hard at work on the road crossing track relay on an overcast and showery 17th June. This view is looking west, towards the Beach. PCL Contractors had just arranged the ballast delivery and placement. Photo: Mike Flinn

SILVER STREAM RAILWAY

Thanks to everyone who visited us today (5 July) on our first operating day since March the 15th. It was great to restart things so busily. We are having an extra July operating day on the 19th with Barclay 1749 and the open wagon.

Photo: De508 taking the first train out post Covid-19 lockdown. Great to be back doing what we love.



OAMARU STEAM AND RAIL

From July Digest



After the long Coronavirus-related break, our vintage train will be running again from Sunday. To celebrate and to give something back to Oamaru, we will be offering train rides for a donation for the first few Sundays of July. No tickets needed, passengers can drop a donation in the box and hop aboard. There will only be four return services in the depths of winter so crews can get home earlier. Departures from Harbourside : 11am, 11:45am, 1pm and 2pm.

As we are now in Covid Level 1, things have largely returned to normal on the railway. However please stay safe at all times by using the hand sanitiser provided at strategic locations (including at the ends of carriages), and the single use cups and paper towels in the breakroom.



McKeowns Crossing. We now have about 175 metres of what is probably the finest section of track on a heritage railway in the country. Perhaps on *any* railway! With 91 pound rail professionally installed on completely new concrete sleepers, with new fittings and ballast, it is smooth enough to play marbles on. The road crossing itself will eventually have a rubber-decked surface and be equipped with bells and lights. This will require 350m of cabling to be threaded through conduits that have been embedded under both road and track.



GOLDFIELDS RAILWAY

Back on track: Historic railway open for business in Waihi

Bay of Plenty Times. 13 June

Waihi's heritage railway has returned to daily operation of its historic trains.

"The Covid-19 pandemic proved to be a real challenge for us," said executive officer Peter Cooper. "We shut down all operations on the day the PM announced the alert level system and notified NZTA of our decision first thing the following Monday."

Although the lockdown was difficult for the railway, it was able to financially weather the storm.

"We had quite a lot of groups scheduled to ride our trains before the country shut down and thankfully many just postponed their visits. Hopefully, they'll be back enjoying our rail journeys soon."

Cooper says he's proud of how his team of volunteers and paid staff focused on keeping everyone safe as the pandemic took hold.

"Even before the lockdown there were procedures put into place for enhanced carriage hygiene and changes made to ticket handling. All of the changes came from those working on the frontline at the railway.

At alert level 2, Goldfields Railway met Central Government and NZTA guidelines to restart limited services.

"We decided to operate only at weekends during level 2 to minimise the number of our team who would be engaging with the public.

"I'm really proud of how our team stepped up and supported the railway throughout the lockdown and eventual reopening of the railway. I'd also like to thank NZTA for its guidance and support during these trying times, and suggested to the agency that anything that Goldfields Railway has learned during the pandemic should be openly shared with other heritage railway organisations," Cooper says.

Goldfields Railway is looking forward to the future with initiatives in the pipeline that may finally be brought to reality.

Waihi Gold Discovery Centre Manager Eddie Morrow set up an informal network of tourism-focused businesses during the lockdown and they have come up with "some pretty exciting stuff" to raise Waihi's profile and attract locals and visitors to make use of the areas many attractions.

He said Hauraki Mayor Toby Adam's comments about completing connections from the Waihi Railway and end of the Hauraki Rail Trail into town would bring plenty of opportunity.

"The trail is a great platform for all of the town's tourism businesses. What it does is create a really solid piece of infrastructure other things can connect to. The railway is a classic example."

In the meantime, Cooper is happy to see the railway's team settling back into their respective roles and hopes to attract more volunteers to assist with operating the popular tourist attraction.



POUNAMU TOURISM GROUP

From Radio NZ, 4 July.

Heritage steam train turns in direction of domestic tourism

A tourism company facing a downturn in cruise ship passengers has shifted its focus to heritage rail journeys for New Zealanders.

Blenheim based Pounamu Tourism Group will operate a 1915 steam train throughout the South Island next year, including one journey that runs the length of the island.

The company said it was facing the loss of up to 10,000 cruise ship passengers who would normally arrive in Picton and take a steam train journey to Blenheim and sometimes beyond.

Director Paul Jackson said like many tourism businesses recovering from Covid-19 restrictions, they needed to change their focus in order to move forward.

He said the idea for the Great Southern Steam Train Tour emerged to expand heritage rail tours on the Marlborough Flyer, to help Kiwis explore their own backyard by steam train.

"Over the lockdown, we were scratching our heads, like the entire tourism industry, and looking for ways to not only survive the period but also come out and try and flourish to keep the business going.

"The obvious, and only direction was domestic tourism."

Jackson said cruise ship passengers made up 95 percent of their market, and the loss of that forced them to look inward.

"We've got this wonderful asset; this fantastic 1915 coal-fired steam locomotive which is a living piece of railway heritage - why don't we take it further south."

The 1915 locomotive named Passchendaele was restored by Paekakariki-based Steam Incorporated.

Passchendaele, or Ab608 was the first of Ab class locos built in 1915, in Christchurch's Addington workshops, and was named in honour of railway workers killed in World War I.

Jackson said it was quite a process organising the South Island tour, in conjunction with Steam Incorporated, which overhauled the locomotive on its return each year to Paekakariki.

"There are quite a lot of logistics involved as the train comes over [to Marlborough] at the start of each season on the Cook Strait ferry - that's over 100 metres of train coming over on the ferry, and that's the first hurdle."

Jackson said the company worked under a heritage access agreement and worked with Steam Incorporated and Kiwirail to get line access.

"We basically schedule the train, and along the way, we have coal and water stops."

The Great Southern Steam Train Tour is scheduled for next April and offers a range of options departing from Wellington, Christchurch, Invercargill or Blenheim.

Jackson said the longest itinerary, which covered the length of the South Island from Marlborough through Kaikōura, Christchurch, Ōamaru, Dunedin and Invercargill, would cost just under \$6000. That covered accommodation and extra tours inland to Te Anau, Milford Sound, Queenstown and Franz Josef, and a return trip to Christchurch on the TranzAlpine via Arthur's Pass.

"We realise it's a significant amount of money for the domestic market, but if you break it down it covers four-star accommodation over 13 days, all breakfasts and dinners, and many excursions and activities at each stop."

Jackson said even in the current economic climate it was necessary to take risks.

"We're cautiously optimistic but there's a lot of pent-up demand in the market. A lot of people realise they can't go overseas but they still have the money to travel and so far we've had a very good response."

WEKA PASS RAILWAY

Weka pass railway re-started operations on 5 July with a train headed by Diesel Traction Group's De 1429. *Photos by David Maciulaitis.*



THE PLAINS RAILWAY & HISTORICAL MUSEUM

From Facebook

For the first time in many many weeks, the sound of a Diesel Engine or two was heard onsite! The final Carriage seat backs were fitted, followed by Shunting with the Ruston after which RM50 had a trip to the top of the line in the last of the evening sun.

Photos below: Standing room only! Thomas, Rick, Mike, Dave and Gary working inside, with Bryce and Cyril outside tackling the last 2 Seat backs installation.

RM50 idles at the end of the line, in the late afternoon,

Mid Canterbury sun.

Bryce at the controls of the Ruston.



CANTERBURY RAILWAY SOCIETY

From July "Branchlines"

Interesting comment from President, Wayne McClintock, which no doubt all "Journal" readers can empathise with. Editor.

National Volunteer Week which was held from 16th to 22nd June is an annual event which recognises the collective contribution of the 1.2 million volunteers who contribute to the social well-being of our citizens. Volunteers not only provide significant assistance in the form of labour to the health and community sectors, but also to the arts, recreation, and heritage sectors. Sometimes volunteers provide support to paid staff employed by not-for-profit organisations such as the ambulance and fire services, but in the case of many smaller organisations such as the Canterbury Railway Society they are the only source of labour. The unfortunate fact is the skills and experiences provided by volunteers are undervalued by both the Government and many citizens who rely on their services. Being unpaid the services of volunteers are not recognised as contributing to Gross Domestic Product, and their hours of work are not recorded as comprehensively as they are for paid employees.

Therefore it's not surprising when a pandemic strikes the country that most of the funds distributed by government as financial assistance to not-for-profit organisations ends up in the bank accounts of those with the largest number of employees or those with the highest profile (e.g. the sports and arts sectors). Railway heritage organisations are well down the pecking order as only a few of them have paid employees. Yet all of us who belong to this group, like the business sector, have experienced a serious loss of revenue. The unfortunate fact is we have a low profile in the community. Private sponsorship and grants for arts and heritage organisations are mainly directed to prestigious institutions such as museums and art galleries. With the wealth of this country having been created by technological innovation and the labour of its workforce, it is difficult to understand why both industrial and transport heritage organisations receive so little financial support from funding agencies.



The new siding to the ballast pit: a double slip has been connected to the turnout on the back leg of the triangle and is being rebuilt. 27th June 2020. Photo: Peter Jenkinson

DIESEL TRACTION GROUP

Sunday, July 12th 2020, was the first full day of public running on the railway at Ferrymead since LOCKDOWN.

Both the Diesel Traction Group and the Canterbury Railway Society ran well-patronised trains. The latter ran F 13, *Peveril*, with a vintage train set, while the DTG returned De 511 to public running for the first time in 25 years.

The return of the De was the result of over two-and-a-half-years of



enterprise by one of the DTG's younger members, Pete Weir, who was happy to at last see his hard work perform faultlessly at the head of a train load of enthusiastic passengers.

Crossing Truscott's Drain en route from Moorhouse to Ferrymead (left) and then returning from Ferrymead (above); the absence of wind providing many opportunities for reflections in the mirror-glass-like full tide. Photos: D.L.A. Turner.

BAY OF ISLANDS VINTAGE RAILWAY

Northern Advocate, 4 July.

It's finally full steam ahead for a plan to link the Bay of Islands' top attractions by vintage steam train and ferry thanks to a multimillion-dollar Provincial Growth Fund grant.

The \$5.59 million cash injection was announced at Kawakawa railway station yesterday by Regional Economic Development Minister Shane Jones, accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister Winston Peters, Tourism Minister Kelvin Davis and a who's who of Northland's tourist industry.

Also unveiled was a \$1.96m training scheme to help Northland tourism and hospitality businesses retain and upskill staff during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The grants come just days after the Government announced \$20m from its \$3 billion post-Covid infrastructure fund for Whangārei projects including CBD rejuvenation and a 850-seat theatre and conference venue at Hihiaua Cultural Centre, and a week after Jones pledged \$7.5m for ecological and Māori tourism projects in the Kerikeri area.

Yesterday's \$5.59m grant will go to Northland Adventure Experience (NAX), a consortium bringing together the Bay of Islands Vintage Railway, the 110-year-old steam ferry Minerva, the Twin Coast Cycle Trail, Far North Holdings and local iwi Ngāti Hine.

NAX chairman Frank Leadley said the cash would be used to extend the railway shed at Kawakawa so all carriages could be stored indoors, build a new engineering workshop and job training centre, and order a new boiler for the steam locomotive Gabriel.

It would also complete the Minerva's restoration and allow the railway track to Ōpua to be reinstated.

Leadley said the idea was to link the coast-to-coast cycle trail and the vintage railway with the Minerva, which would then ferry passengers to Russell and Waitangi.

The combined excursion would be unique not just in New Zealand but in the world, Leadley said.



Tourism Minister Kelvin Davis addresses the roughly 300 people who turned out to hear the funding announcement. Photo / Peter de Graaf

More than 300 people turned out to hear the announcements and speeches which included a convoluted story from Jones about a one-legged gymnast sparking a riot in Kawakawa, Davis recounting family connections to the railway, and Peters berating national media for ignoring the provinces and lauding the Government for pumping \$500m-plus into "one of the most neglected provinces in the country".

Meanwhile, the \$1.96m training programme will be run by Queenstown Resort College's Paihia campus.

The scheme was spearheaded by Duke of Marlborough Hotel co-owner Riki Kinnaird and will see 250 tourism and hospitality staff from 22 businesses gain level 4 tourism operation qualifications while the borders remain closed.

Duke co-owner Anton Haagh said it was an "absolute game-changer" because it would allow businesses to retain staff during winter instead of relying on overseas labour each time summer rolled around.

Next summer the hotel would have a freshly upskilled and fully Kiwi staff for the first time, he said.

Right: Mike "The Train" Bradshaw shows how it's done as the Bay of Islands Vintage Railway Trust veteran of 34 years hammers in a symbolic rail spike. Photo / Peter de Graaf

The project is expected to create 68 jobs during construction and 25 long-term.

It was a case of second time lucky for NAX, which was turned down after applying for just under \$19m in PGF funding last year.

After that setback the consortium was advised to break the project up into parts, get other funders on board, and try again.

Yesterday's grant does not cover the vintage railway's plans for a new station at Colenso's Triangle near Ōpua, nor does it pay for re-routing of 6.5km of cycle trail from Taumarere to Opua. That leg of the bike trail currently sits on top of the rail track.

The Far North District Council will pay for a new cycle trail, still within the rail corridor, while council-owned company Far North Holdings will build the station on a commercial basis.



Update from BOIVR 18 July (Facebook).

No trains today at Bay of Islands Vintage Railway.

This area of Taumarere (UK Rugby grounds) was flooded leaving debris on the tracks. We have not viewed the remaining parts. Roads here are similarly covered in debris, slips have occurred and rivers flooding roads. Before re-starting train operations the track will need to be cleared and checked for stability after flood waters recede. Thinking of all the local folk, and their homes and livestock at this time.

Metservice is calling this a one in 500 year flood. The media loved that number!! The local Civil Defence says it's more like one in 5 years as there was a similar one in 2014. BOIVR had similar damage then and recovered well. Editor.



Photos from left: Evidence that the water covered our railway tracks leaving the tree debris. Bridge over Tirohanga Stream. Railway track had obviously been underwater. Clear up can only happen when waters recede, and track stability has been checked. Another section of track in Taumarere area

**STEAM INCORPORATED**

Steam Incorporated opened their public post lockdown activities with an open weekend on 11, 12 July. Their Facebook report includes: We thank you so very much for your support. We had around 2,500 people through our depot this past Open Weekend and we cannot believe the generosity and great feedback people have given us. As a largely voluntary organisation with a small group of full-time staff, a lot of people have put in countless hours over the last couple of months in preparation for this weekend. We were so pleased to see so many smiles around from those that came.

Fancy traveling on an illuminated heritage train to a fabulous winter night market? All aboard! It's time to kick back and enjoy this amazing community that we live in! Join us on 1 August 2020 for this fun, unique event.



Photo: Tony Hurst

Light the Night is a unique combination of vintage train journey and winter night market.

To make your journey a little more magical the beautiful train from local heritage operator Steam Incorporated will have exterior illuminations!

Carriages of guests will travel on return journeys from Paraparaumu to Ōtaki where a night market will be hosted by local market Ōtaki Yard as well as local businesses which you will also find open on the night.

When you arrive at Otaki, spend 1.5 hours discovering amazing artisans and businesses from the Kapiti Coast. Otaki Yard have also amassed food vendors to delight your taste buds and then you have time to visit local stores and market stalls.

Bookings are now open for several mainline trips.

Daffodil Express 13 September 2020

Kapiti Family Express 27 September 2020

Heartland Flyer 25 October.

Refer <https://www.steaminc.org.nz/book-a-tour/> for details.

LIGHT THE NIGHT
STEAM TRAIN & NIGHT MARKET

PICTURE OF THE MONTH



Another gem from the camera of D.L.A. Turner this month. Appropriate at this time of year.

The great Canterbury snowfall of 2006.

It was a really heavy snowfall on already frozen ground, and being mid-June the sun's angle was very low. Good for photography all day (even at mid-day) the low angle not endowing the sun with any melting warmth. Then overnight the snow froze solid, lasting for over a week near the coast and inland for nearly two months.

For once, I was living close by, and could choose to completely reschedule my activities for several days. You had to have 4WD and chains, and be up before dawn and out until after sunset. But the sunny days made for unusual and unrepeatable results well worth the effort.

Here the frozen silence south of Hinds was broken by a sustained blast of the loco's whistle as it swept through the unprotected railway crossing.

The farmer's son had to cover his ears while the dog (enjoying the warmth from the engine of the farm quad bike) howled like a wolf. The loco crew were surprised, I guess, to find such a gathering (including the photographer and his car) at the largely inaccessible road crossing in the snow-bound landscape!

***** FRONZ CONFERENCE GISBORNE *****
***** 4—7 JUNE 2021 *****

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