



JOURNAL

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FRONZ UPDATE

- FRONZ President, Grant Craig, had a meeting with Todd Moyle, Deputy CEO and Chief Operating Officer of Kiwirail, where issues affecting mainline heritage train running were discussed. We hope to have more regular meetings directly with Kiwirail.
- Several Executive members met with our Ministry of Transport liaison team late March in which the main topic was the briefing preparation for our upcoming meeting with the Minister of Transport on 24 May.
- The FRONZ Executive is keen to improve our engagement with member groups. Groups are invited to put a subject forward to FRONZ to consider and offer the opportunity to give a short presentation to the FRONZ Executive via Zoom. Any groups interested are invited to submit their issue and spokesperson to the Secretary at secretary@fronz.org.nz.
- FRONZ is also looking to get member feedback on Environmental issues in particular the ongoing supply and issues relating to the burning of coal.
- Training support for NZTA and Internal audits. Following the guidance published in the last "Journal" which was mainly of benefit to groups using IT based systems, David Maciulaitis will put together information for groups who use manual systems.

FRONZ CONFERENCE 2021

The 2021 FRONZ Conference is being held Gisborne from 4-7 June 2021. Our host group is Gisborne City Vintage Rail.

We will be gathering on Friday evening 4 June 2020. Saturday 5 June will consist of Conference Presentations all day including local speakers and a session with Waka Kotahi (NZTA) plus the regular contributions from Kiwirail, Rail Heritage Trust, Tramway update, and others. On Sunday 6 June the AGM will be held followed by a discussion on how FRONZ can improve engagement and provide a better service for our member groups. We will be taking a trip on the Gisborne City Vintage Rail on Sunday afternoon, and a visit to the East Coast Museum of Technology on Monday morning 7 June. Our annual FRONZ Awards dinner will be held Sunday evening.

The FRONZ web site at <https://www.fronz.org.nz/conferences> has full details including the program. Registration is now available [here](#). Book by 30 April. Late registrations after this date will incur additional charges.

FRONZ TRAINING

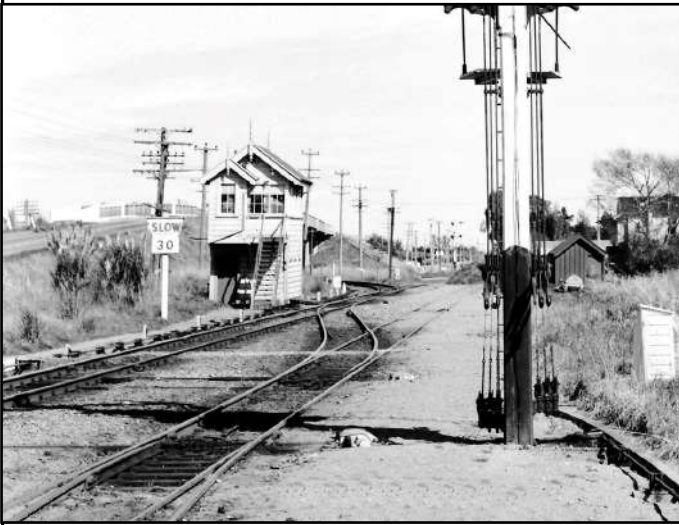
Following a successful training session at Pleasant Point, another South Island operator has asked for a similar training day. It appears there is interest in FRONZ-led training around several subjects, such as shunting and hand signals, internal audits and managing Safety Systems, Communications, Air Brakes, dealing with threats to people and property.

We will be asking for further interest in these sessions which are a mix of practical as well as theoretical in nature. If there is interest shown from other parts of the country, we will certainly look at holding sessions in other areas. There will be reasonable costs only for travel and accommodation.

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

Longburn Signal Box

Feilding and District Steam Rail Society Incorporated have recently acquired the ex-Longburn Signal Box. The following article and images are supplied by Gary Nichols.



Above: Original Longburn Signal Box probably in the 1950's. State Highway 56 is behind the box with what must have been a new road overbridge. The Longburn Freezing Works is behind the box (well out of site) around the curve under the road. The Foxton Branch is straight ahead.

Many readers will be aware of the well documented history of the Wellington Manawatu Railway Company (WMRC), the most successful private railway in New Zealand. The southern terminus was at Thorndon (Wellington), with the northern terminus at Longburn – some 6.7 km's south-west of central Palmerston North.

The company was formed in 1881, and was compulsorily acquired by the Crown in 1908 as part of the completion of the North Island Main Trunk. If I understand correctly, there were agreements in place prior to the compulsory acquisition date, to run Government locomotives and rolling stock over the WMRC trackage – presumably this was what we might today call a Memorandum of Understanding, or possibly a Joint Operating Agreement – that resulted in shared operating rights along the WMRC route north out of Wellington. At that time, the alternative route in and out of the Capital was the Rimutaka Incline. This was a heavily loaded route and at times unable to keep up with the ever increasing volumes of freight in and out of Wellington.

The Government had constructed a line from Palmerston North to Foxton. In those times the port of Foxton was a busy provincial trading port for coastal shipping, located at the mouth of the Manawatu River. Longburn was effectively the junction between the then Government road (Foxton and connection south. The WMRC had a much more direct route to Wellington than through the Manawatu Gorge, south through the Wairarapa and over the Rimutaka range.

In anticipation of the Wellington – Auckland Main Trunk being a single Government railway, several items of infrastructure were built and commissioned to full operability prior to the 1908 acquisition date. One of these was a permanent signal box located at Longburn. This would have controlled rail movements from Palmerston North south through Longburn and on to Linton, as well as access into and out of the Longburn yard onto the 'main line', and access to / from the Foxton Branch. In John Fitzgerald's excellent book *'New Zealand Railways Stand Alone Mechanical Signal Boxes of the HJ Wynne Era 1900 – 1929 (Note 1)*, the Longburn Signal Box was commissioned on 19 March 1906, and de-commissioned in August 1967. On page 80, a brief description of the installation is provided. It records the signal box as having a 30-lever frame with an additional 10-lever ground-frame at the Palmerston North end of the Longburn yard. Page 81 shows the 'Signalling and Interlocking Arrangement' diagram (Note 2), signed by H J Wynne 'Signal and Electrical Engineer' 5 March 1906. The final note in terms of the Longburn signal box is; '... no details are known of what happened to the box after closure ...'.

Note 1: Fitzgerald J; New Zealand Railways Stand Alone Mechanical Signal Boxes of the HJ Wynne Era 1900 – 1929; New Zealand Railway and Locomotive Society Incorporated: 2013; p.80.

Note 2: Fitzgerald J; New Zealand Railways Stand Alone Mechanical Signal Boxes of the HJ Wynne Era 1900 – 1929; New Zealand Railway and Locomotive Society Incorporated: 2013; p.81.



Above: Found in a paddock! The first-floor northern end that would have been facing Palmerston North.

I was attending a family function with my daughter, son-in-law and his family on their farm at Glen Oroua. My daughter's Mother-in-law (knowing that I was involved with Feilding and District Steam Rail Society Incorporated {FDSRS}) mentioned that they had an old signal box in one of their paddocks. I was somewhat doubtful, but eventually went with son-in-law to take a look. What a surprise – there was the old Longburn Signal Box! It is in poor condition – but the building is intact and ready (code for 'long-overdue') for restoration.

After research, it is a 'Type J' McKenzie and Holland 'box, and while these standard configurations were generally referred to as a 'McKenzie and Holland' 'box, the frame was usually designed and built in New Zealand by NZR – possibly along the lines of the British McKenzie and Holland configuration. Sadly the lever frame is missing. In the intervening period, the ground floor has been sepa-

rated from the first floor, with the separated buildings being used as temporary accommodation for farm workers. Apparently, the signal box was offered for sale by Government tender by the NZR once de-commissioned, with a local farmer being the successful (possibly the only) tenderer!

FDSRS is extremely grateful to Graeme and Denise Saunders for donating this heritage building to them for restoration at the FDSRS depot.

We are also extremely grateful for the contribution that McIntosh Cranes Limited have made on many occasions to FDSRS in terms of heavy lifting and transport.

While significant works are required, the building will be re-assembled as a single two-storey building as originally configured. The work will include a new roof structure (to correct the current shallow roof pitch), with extensive replacement of glazing, construction of a new external access stair to the first floor, replacing selected weather-boards etc. It has been named *'The John Cannon Memorial Signal Box'* in honour of one of FDSRS foundation members who contributed significantly over many years. This is an extremely exciting project – especially when the whereabouts of this piece of local rail heritage has been unknown for so many years – presumed lost for all time.

FDSRS would be grateful to anyone who has memorabilia (or knows the whereabouts of relevant memorabilia) to make contact so we may be able to assemble the typical tools and items of period infrastructure that may be able to be incorporated into the building as restoration progresses. Donations would of course be very welcome!

Gary Nichols

for and on behalf of Feilding and District Steam Rail Society Incorporated.

Acknowledgements:

Fitzgerald J; New Zealand Railways Stand Alone Mechanical Signal Boxes of the HJ Wynne Era 1900 – 1929; *New Zealand Railway and Locomotive Society Incorporated: 2013.*

Denise and Graeme Saunders – generously donated the ex Longburn Signal Box to FDSRS.

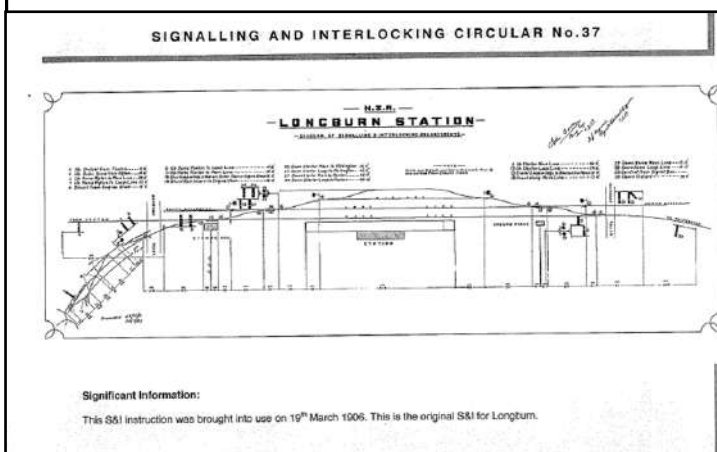
McIntosh Cranes Limited – donation of lifting and transport from Glen Oroua to FDSRS.



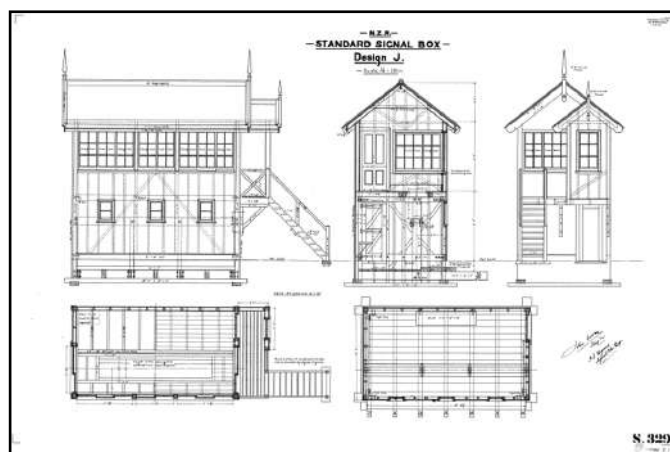
Above: The first-floor southern end facing Foxton and the main line to Linton.



Left: The ground floor northern end facing Palmerston North. Right: The ground floor (note the incorrect windows) facing south to Linton / Foxton.



Left: Longburn Signalling and Interlocking Diagram. Right: NZR drawing S329 showing a 'NZR Standard Signal Box Design J' – also signed by H J Wynne, Signal and Electrical Engineer. Note the draughtsman's signature, - W R Davidson, 11 April 1902. The Longburn 'box has the porch and stairs at the opposite end from that shown in this drawing – see note on the drawing 'Porch and stairs to be located at either end as directed by Signal Engineer'.



SPRINGFIELD RAILWAY STATION

It seems every month we feature the fate of another railway station on the national rail network. The following story appeared in the "Star News" from rural Canterbury on 3 March.

Springfield station is a picturesque stop on one of the world's great train journeys - the Transalpine.

But the station has been looking a little tired lately, and in need of a spruce-up.

Springfield resident Simon Williams has come to the rescue, getting in touch with the station's owner, KiwiRail, to see what could be done.

He has long been a fan of the large 1966 pink Summerhill stone gable building, as well as the railway history it represents.

The area's first station harks back to 1880 and in later years became an important locomotive depot.

"I believe we need to honour the 140 years or so of railway people who worked in Springfield," Williams said.

The refurbishment is well under way, with builders on site. Replacement of rotten windowsills, guttering and clear plastic veranda roofing has been undertaken, while gutter leaks on the roof have been repaired.

Painters will be on site soon, to attend to wooden window frames and doors.

One of the more unusual jobs of the refurbishment will be relocating a colony of bees, believed to have taken up residence in the wall cavity of a locked switching room.

Bees have been noticed flying to and fro from holes in the exterior of the room's windows, Williams said.

Kirwee Bees was to relocate the bees to another site, he said.

The large station was once bustling with activity, and has a refreshment room, station master's office, ticket office, waiting room and luggage and parcels' room.

Williams said it was great to see the station being preserved, and it made it all the more valuable to the community if it wanted to use it in the future.

He would ultimately like to see a display of memorabilia and artefacts there, relating to the region's railway history.

Various groups have utilised the station's rooms over the years, including a play group, craft group and gym, as well as businesses such as a cafe and plant shop.

The Transalpine stops at the station to pick up and drop off passengers, which has not been happening as much since the Covid-19 pandemic.

Williams was looking forward to the station becoming busier again, once New Zealand's borders opened.

"It will look great, and I'm so pleased Kiwirail have done this work," he said.



MYSTERY OBJECT

Journal has been sent this photo of a carafe engraved "NZR" Can any reader suggest if this was in fact an NZR item and what/where it was used for. *Anyone with an accurate answer gets a free drink on The Editor at this year's FRONZ Conference.*



NEW ZEALAND RAIL PARTY

I am Cory Aitken, the founder of the NZ Rail Party. I'm afraid I'm not an eccentric billionaire, I wish I was, but a Museum Curator from Reefton on the West Coast.

I am building the NZRP as a movement for all those who believe our railways are a vital asset in building the future of our Nation. It's still in the building phase, being just over a month old, but with enough support we can make waves in 2023.

And we absolutely support the reopening of the Wairoa - Gisborne Line 100%!

Thank you very much for your time. I'm very glad to see our name is getting out there!

Web site: <https://railparty.nz/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/nzrailparty>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nzrailparty>

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

BAY OF ISLANDS VINTAGE RAILWAY

From April Newsletter

Kawakawa Station; promotion for the new film "James & Isey" by NZ Film Commission. Isey Cook celebrates her 102nd birthday this week. She has lived in Kawakawa all her life but never travelled on a train. *Photo: Isey welcomed on arrival by Florian Habicht. This was featured on TV1 "Sunday" 11 April.*

Below: Provincial Growth Fund projects. Old KP storage; removed; and our spanking new Machinery Workshop.



*Left: What a beautiful evening was enjoyed at Taumarere for the new look concert: **Rock 'n Rail**. Concert go-ers gathered at Kawakawa station to ride the special train through to the venue at Taumarere, accompanied by an array of musical instruments and equipment in the open car.*

LUMSDEN HERITAGE TRUST

From Facebook

A199 has her last undercoat on ready for the topcoats. First and Second Class compartments are nearly ready for varnishing. Ballast laid thanks to fantastic contribution from several community minded organizations.



CANTERBURY RAILWAY SOCIETY

From "Branchlines".

During March, Persons tried to gain entry to RM57, but they appear to have gotten so far, and then given up. The other incident was a rock thrown through one of the windows at Ferrymead Station.

The roof on Ec7 has been repaired and painted, and there are several components which need to be lifted back onto its roof. The overhaul of one of the pantographs is nearly completed, and a start has been made on rubbing down the bodywork to remove the rust before it is repainted. Components for D140 are coming into the workshop to be cleaned up and then placed back on the locomotive.

A major milestone was reached over Easter when the last track set was screwed down for the Hall of Wheels track replacement. This has seen two 70lb turnouts (ex Islington), and close to 100m of plain track (ex Lyttelton) re-laid. Our next task will be the ballasting, then lifting, lining and tamping of the track.



Above Left: Progress of the repairs to the roof of Ec7. 21st March 2021. Photo: Peter Jenkinson.

Above Right: The body sides of Ec7 have been rubbed down. The more challenging cab fronts still to do. Photo: Facebook.

Left: Track replacement for access to the Hall of Wheels.

DIESEL TRACTION GROUP

From Facebook

A railfans night on 2 April went very successfully, thanks to the smooth operation organised by the Canterbury Railway Society. Thank you to everyone who turned up to see our locos in action, it was great to see a lot of familiar faces and smiles and we hope you enjoyed the evening despite the cold weather.

Photos by Tony Cameron.



PLEASANT POINT RAILWAY

As we can't run Thomas the Tank anymore, due to their new demands – we have our own – Kiwi the Engine & Friends, we have been running at Easter for a number of years now – proves very popular – the young visitors get an Easter egg from Kiwi.

On 4 April, NZ Holden cars that visited as part of their NZ get together in Timaru this Easter. Around 170 Holden's of different models & years were there plus round 330 people with it.

Timaru had its hottest day on record ever for April, 31 degrees C.

Photos Below: Tony Cameron. Right: Bryan Blanchard.



PLAINS RAILWAY

From Facebook



Above Left: RM 50. Right: A photo opportunity with K88 was amongst the many Easter Activities on offer.



Left: The Easter train running does not happen by accident. It was perfect weather for boiler washouts to take place for K88 and Ja1260, along with Easter preparations. Lots of hard work by the Plains volunteer team make it happen.

STEAM INCORPORATED

From Facebook

Our annual excursion through the Wairarapa to Masterton on Sunday 14 March. Hauled this year by Da 1410 and 1431, we dropped passengers at Pukaha Mt Bruce Wildlife Sanctuary and Wingate Lane Restruant at Opaki to enjoy a delicious meal. This excursion also played host to a training run for 4 new guards who had just been a 3-day course prior to the excursion.



Left: Our guard Graeme Clover along with our new trainees. L-R: Andy Maciver, Tommy Secker, Marty Melville, Al Buckingham, Graeme Clover. Photo: Jack Dolman. Above: Levin. Photo: Ray Mathewson



Right: Dc4375 has been sold by Kiwirail to Steam Incorporated with long-term plans to add it to the heritage EMD fleet. Here it is arriving at Paekakariki towed up by DFB 7322. 1 April 2021. Photo: John Bovis.



Left: Steam Incorporated is supply rolling stock for Pounamu Tourism Group for a South Island Rail Tour in April and May. Here Matthew Morison finds the train northbound approaching Parikawa undertaking a training run on the Main North Line from Picton to Kaikoura return on 19 April.

OCEAN BEACH RAILWAY

From Facebook

We are forever thankful from obtaining funding from The Southern Trust for assisting us in the project of our carriage restoration of A1254 built in 1913. This past week saw some huge milestones and edging further to being finished.



GLENBROOK VINTAGE RAILWAY



GVR ran their North Island tour from Auckland to Napier and New Plymouth return in April. Various day trips from several overnight stops are also included for local people. These trips have received good local publicity.

Here DBR 1254 and GVR train is between Taumarunui and Ongarue on 10 April. Photo: Finn O'Regan

FEILDING & DISTRICT STEAM RAIL SOCIETY

From: "Letting off Steam".

The finishing touches are being done on DSA 227 and this locomotive should return to service shortly. Welding work on the WAB boiler is not far from being completed and then re-assembly can commence.



WAB794. Ongoing work includes: Boiler repair for the bottom of the barrel paperwork has been approved and work has started, the area has been cut out and new steel in place. Cow catchers both front and rear have been extensively refurbished due to corrosion and general wear and tear. Side air reservoirs awaiting weld repair on one tank, found a pinhole, when repairing it have found incomplete penetration on some areas and have ground out more areas. Air pump has been painted and ready to go back on. Sand domes have been inspected and painted, ready to go back on. Balance pipes for the tanks have been sandblasted and now using Molasses to remove the rust on the inside. – Side tanks have been thickness tested and cleaning the rust out has been started. Couplers have been removed for Non-Destructive Testing.



MAINLINE STEAM HERITAGE TRUST

From Facebook

Christchurch:

Over the past 15 months since we were given notice to exit the property of CWF Hamilton's in Christchurch we have looked at many sites in and around Christchurch for a new depot location. As previously mentioned, our request to relocate to Ferrymead was not accepted and have we have since spoken with property developers, NZTA, Councils and KiwiRail about sites close to a railway line we could develop a new depot on. Everyone has been supportive of our quest to find suitable land but to date no suitable land has been found in or around Christchurch. During this search for land, we were in talks with the Midland Rail Heritage Trust based in Springfield with a large area of land with considerable rail track on site already including a triangle and a connection to the KiwiRail network. The setting is fantastic, and the site has good potential for development and expansion, so we have entered into an agreement with the private landowner and Midland Rail Heritage Trust to occupy and use the site.



GISBORNE CITY VINTAGE RAIL

With the arrival of DSC2759, our diesel consumption has increased, so we were very grateful to accept the long-term loan of a trailer tank from Cranswick Enterprises. The trailer was serviced in our workshops and is now in use.

Most of the remote-control air operated equipment has been removed from DSC2759. Electrical wiring diagrams for the remote-control installation have been located, which will make the removal of the (now) obsolete wiring and electrical equipment easier.



The 15th National Model A Ford Rally resulted in 125 Model A Ford cars from all over the country arriving in Gisborne for the Easter Weekend. One of them was driven up from Invercargill. The rally organisers fully booked the steam train for the Easter Saturday Muriwai excursion and despite the departure of the train from Gisborne Railway Station being delayed one hour while a problem with Wa165 was sorted out, they thoroughly enjoyed their trip. *Story and photos: Graeme Scott.*

Right: Wa 165 looks a lot happier now than she did in her last days before withdrawal from active service in this photo!



Photo: JM Creber



Come along and join us at the 2021 FRONZ Convention in Gisborne this Queens Birthday weekend 4-7 June. Details at www.fronz.org.nz/conferences

TRAMWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

One of the many tasks being undertaken in the trambarns at the moment is the overhaul of Dunedin Tram No.11. This tram which entered service in Dunedin in 1903 was built by J.G.Brill and Co in the USA. It was restored at Ferrymead and ran there before becoming part of the fleet for the opening of the city Tramway in 1995, remaining a city tram ever since. The tram is back at Ferrymead and our team are giving 11 a major overhaul. Pictured here is 11's body sitting in the spray booth with one cab removed for structural repairs and a picture of the running gear being reassembled. After the work is completed, 11 will return to the city.



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 scottos-mond54@gmail.com.

Glenbrook Vintage Railway

GVR are running several three-day package tours from Pukekohe to the Ruapehu area with various options for two-night stays and tours.

Departures are scheduled for 30 April, 11 June, 9 July, 13 August, 10 September.

More details at <https://www.gvr.org.nz/trips-events/ruapehu>.

Steam Incorporated

9 May 2021	Heartland Flyer. Paekakariki to Woodville return.
30 May 2021	Kapiti Family Express. Paraparaumu to Paekakariki shuttles. Steam.
12 June 2021	Crafty Feilding. Paekakariki to Feilding return. Steam.
12 September 2021	Daffodil Express.
17 October 2021	Heartland Flyer.
Early December 2021	Grand Circle Rail Cruise.

Gisborne City Vintage Railway

Gisborne to Muriwai
 9 May 2021
 30 May 2021
 5 June 2021
 24 October 2021

Feilding & Districts Steam Rail Society Inc

20 June 2021	Mid Winter Christmas Dinner Express to Masterton.
17 July 2021	Round The Block to Wellington.

All trips Kiwirail "Capital Connection" carriages and locomotives.

Pahiatua Railcar Society

24 December 2021	Tangiwai Memorial Excursion. Palmerston North to Tangiwai return.
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All trips on RM31.

PICTURE OF THE MONTH



It has been a while since we featured trams in our Picture of the Month. Here a sea of people board double-saloon 199 at Athletic Park. Others, to left of picture, appear resigned to walking. The sight is not only a spectacle for tram enthusiasts – local residents are viewing from the comfort of their front rooms and paths. Two Police Officers are trying to control the crowd. The only thing that hasn't changed from then till now is "Tip Top" ice cream. *Photo: Graeme Bennett from WTM Tramlines.*

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

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