

FRONZ: JOURNAL

Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand Incorporated

FRONZ UPDATE

To all readers of the Journal, the FRONZ Executive wishes you a Merry Christmas! Grant, David, Scott, Jeff, Bruce, Guy, Margaret and I hope all busy member groups and their many hard workers have a fantastic Christmas and New Years, and a successful season in any rail activities you are involved in.

FACEBOOK PAGES

Social media is a large part of the online world now, and when used can be an amazing tool for advertising. Lots of groups have great pages, and keep us up to date on there- if you aren't, it may be a good thing to consider! It is a free tool where you can post updates on your progress, advertise upcoming events, and grow interest in your societies. A lot of the information I use for the Journal also comes from there- thank you to the groups who use theirs regularly. If you need help setting one up, reach out!

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PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Neville Simpson cleaning out the ashpan before the days operation. 18/12/21
Photo: Natasha King



CONFERENCE 2022



Planning is continuing for our 2022 conference in Invercargill from Friday 3rd to Monday 6th June.

This is the first time the FRONZ conference has been held in Invercargill and we will be offering a great experience including rail heritage information which all members should share, as well as several field trips and tours of the Southland area including rail heritage sites and the great unspoilt Southland country.

Our host group, Waimea Plains Railway are looking forward to welcoming us to conference. We will be highlighting the theme of climate change and how it will affect rail heritage operations.

We cannot visit Invercargill without visiting the world renowned Bill Richardson's Transport World and Motorcycle Mecca, and the Burt Munro motorcycle display at Hayes Hardware department store. We are planning to see some of these attractions with a local tour on Friday June 3rd where numbers will be limited- you will need to arrive on Thursday June 2nd to join this as it will be a full day.

Well known Bluff resident, local councillor, and presenter of the "Off the Rails" TV documentary series Marcus Lush will be our keynote speaker on Saturday morning. This will be followed by an introduction to Southland Railway History by a local member of the Southern Steam Train Trust, Lindsay Buckingham.

Our Rail Safety Regulator Waka Kotahi will present in the main morning session. On Saturday afternoon we have presentations from KiwiRail, and speakers on alternative fuels as well as how organisations can best adapt to the requirements of impending climate change legislation and actual effects. Saturday sessions will conclude with breakout groups meeting to discuss the various issues of Tramway, Rail Heritage, Mainline rail groups.

Sunday morning will start with the FRONZ Annual General Meeting then several presentations from RailSafe, NZ Rail Heritage Trust, a Tramways update, and a video view of Southland railway history with a presentation from Lindsay Benbrook from Majik Video Systems.

On Monday June 6th we have planned a day trip to visit and ride the Kingston Flyer and Lumsden Railway Station. We will be back in Invercargill in time for Air NZ flights to Christchurch and other cities currently timetabled to depart at 1625 and 1815.

The conference venue is the Ascot Park Hotel which offers various accommodation options. Conference bookings will open from 1st April 2022.

CONFERENCE 2022

continued

At this time the proposed cost of the full conference package including all events on Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th of June will be \$280. This will include conference sessions all day Saturday and Sunday morning with morning, afternoon teas, and lunches provided, plus the trip to Waimea Plains Railway and Croydon Aviation Centre on Sunday afternoon and the FRONZ Awards Dinner Sunday night.

For those that also want to join our tours of the Invercargill area on Friday June 3rd and the Kingston Flyer on Monday June 6th, there will be a separate cost for these two tours of \$70 each.

So, start saving the pennies now for this unique event.



Waimea Plains Railway Trust. Photo: Got It In One Photography



The Kingston Flyer. Photo: NZ Herald



Croydon Aviation Heritage Centre. Photo: Stuff

NEWS FROM AROUND THE RAILWAYS

WAITARA RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Facebook

Built in 1968 by A&G Price, TR1026 (Price222) got delivered to its new home in Waitara today.

After a road trip from Auckland, it was craned onto the loop in the Waitara Town Yard. While we had the cranes there, Dsa loco Portland 11 was rotated 180deg to improve cooling while climbing the Waitara incline. We now need to get the Price and the Portland inspected and certified, and we will have three locos in operation.



Photos: John Churchouse & Waitara Railway Preservation Society



BUSH TRAMWAY CLUB

"We haven't been able to hold any Open Days since August because of Covid 19 restrictions. So no trains running and disappointed members and customers as a result, many who have also been "locked down" over the period.

NZ has just moved into the new traffic light system for Covid response. The Waikato is "orange" which gives us a lot more freedom, provided people are fully vaccinated. The committee are presently working out what we will require of all our members who form our crew for future open days, charter trips, working bees & what we will require of all our passengers and other visitors. It is likely, at least for the next few months that everyone who comes on site will have to be checked in & show proof of being fully vaccinated." -Pukemiro Junction January 2022

There have been a few work days held recently, with a lot ticked off the list it seems- trees removed that had been blocking the line, station clean ups, safety refreshers, track repairs, and more trees removed. Lawns have been mowed, the garden kept tidy, gates cleaned and painted.



Photos left to right: R. Webb & T. Bettison

KINGSTON FLYERS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Grant Craig

On Saturday 18th December 2021 it was a time of celebration at Kingston, as on this date 50 years earlier in 1971 the Kingston Flyer commenced running between Lumsden and Kingston.

The last 50 years has seen the Flyer move from Government ownership to private ownership, transferred for a short period to Invercargill to run to Bluff and on weekends to Wairio which wasn't a great success and finally back to Kingston into private ownership.

The Flyer has a special place in the New Zealand rail history- both in the preservation of 2 Ab locomotives and a fine representation of rolling stock, but not forgetting the face of the Flyer Russell Glendinning who made the Flyer a mecca for rail enthusiasts and really helped Cadbury sell Crunchie bars!

The day of the 50th anniversary was a lovely central day and a group of about 100 enjoyed the one return trip to Fairlight, comprising mostly of people that have contributed to the long history of the train. Included were Gavin Mortimer and Gary Kupe- now retired KiwiRail locomotive engineers who were both original firemen when the train commenced running in 1971. Also Neville Meek who started not long afterwards and a number of ex onboard train staff.

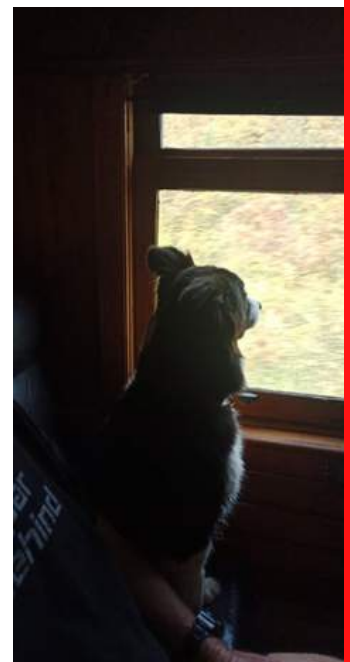
At Fairlight drinks and an afternoon tea was held for passengers and we were entertained by the Driver on the drum and 2 bag pipers.

Plenty of photos were taken and also lots of reminiscing took place, very much embellished over a few beers at the bar afterwards by a few of us.

Thanks to Neville and Myles for a great day, you can't beat Kingston and the Flyer on a nice day!



Left: Neville Simpson on the drums, Neville Meek & Clifford on the pipes at Fairlight.
Right: A special guest enjoying the view from his seat in the Car van.
Photos: Grant Craig



KINGSTON FLYERS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

continued



Above photos: Judy Trevathan



Above photos: Lindsay Withington



Photos: Left: Lindsay Withington, right: Chris Dore

GISBORNE CITY VINTAGE RAILWAY

There have been different enticements offered around NZ to get people to have the Covid vaccination. Here in Gisborne, the Te Tairāwhiti Arts Festival (<https://tetairawhitiartsfestival.nz/>) team decided to charter our train on 3 Saturdays in late November and early December. Everybody who got their second Covid vaccination during that period was offered a free excursion to Muriwai. These excursions were hauled by DSC2759 and many of the passengers had not been on a train before (not surprising seeing that Gisborne is rail-isolated from the rest of the country). Like many other places of business in NZ, we are now requiring sight of a passengers "My Vaccine Pass" (for those aged 12 years and 3 months or older) before allowing that person to board our excursion train.

DSC2759 is now scheduled to run some of the excursions during December and January. See our website (www.gcvr.org.nz) for more details.

The spring/summer growth period has meant that our track inspectors have also been busy cutting back vegetation to keep it clear of the train. This needs to be cut back further than previously required as the DSC2759 is wider and taller than the Wa165.

We are also working on adding the details of all of our "fleet" to our website. Hopefully that will be completed in the next few months – it will be a "when time allows" job between the excursions that we have scheduled.



B10 IN STEAM

Oamaru Steam and Rail - Facebook

B10 operated on December 27th, and will be all week until December 31st at Oamaru Steam and Rail.



Photos: David Oakley

STEAM INCORPORATED/NORTH POLE EXPRESS

Facebook

An incredible weekend with our train being used again by Ontrack Events to run their North Pole Express. Six round trips to the North Pole during the weekend. A truly magical experience created by the special guests and North Pole Express team members.



Photos: Steam Incorporated Facebook (Top left: John Bovis, top right: Sean Singleton, bottom left: Sean Singleton, bottom right: Ontrack Events)



KA 942 AND JA 1240 ON THE MOVE

Mainline Steam

Ka 942 and Ja 1240 have been relocated from Middleton to Plimmerton. Move was due to the Middleton loco depot closing, with some rolling stock moved to Springfield. Mainline Steam wanted these two locos back in Plimmerton, so thanks to KiwiRail for allowing this to happen!



Being turned in Middleton. Photos: Jayden Robinson Toohey



Heading towards the Kaikoura Coast.
Photo: Glen Anthony



DCP4559 leading the set out of the Ethelton Gorge.
Photo: Matthew Bell-Hills



Going through the Hurunui Gorge.
Photo: Jayden Robinson Toohey



Secured on the ferry.
Photo: Mainline Steam Heritage Trust Facebook

WMR NO. 48 PROGRESS

From the Turntable Newsletter- NZRLS

A milestone was reached on 6 October when our restoration team offered up the first main window into its reveal on WMR No. 48 and fixed it in place. This first window is shown below, slightly opened.

Early October has proven to be a good month for visitors who are interested in our restoration project.

On Sunday, 3rd, Wellington members of the Veteran Car Club visited our North End workshop to follow up a presentation to them on our WMR carriages restoration project. Here, some car club members listen to me explaining a point about our work on WMR 48.

Our photo on the left shows Rob Merrifield indicating the first window to be placed; the second shows Hawkes Bay members in discussion around No. 48. They called in on 10 October, to view progress. Our then Hawkes Bay Branch had bought No. 48 in 1960 for use as a meeting room in Clive station yard. The late Arthur Vosper and other Hawkes Bay members some of whom came on this visit, did much good work to look after the carriage until it was transferred to Wellington.



Photos: Glen Summers

WELCOMING THE NEW TENANTS

Weka Pass Railways new facility- Matthew Morison

The Weka Pass Railway's brand new 'Car Shop' has welcomed its first tenants - five historic vehicles are now stored under cover and out of the elements, ready to be cared for by a fraternity of eager volunteers.

The facility has been purpose-built for storing and maintaining these historic artefacts, allowing the railway to achieve its fundamental aim to preserve and operate historic New Zealand Railways vehicles for the enjoyment and education of all.

Erected in August, the shed is 52 metres long and 12 metres wide. It was largely funded by a couple of very generous benefactors, as well as from Givealittle donations.

Peter Gibson, a passionate volunteer from the railway's carriage maintenance team, is "well chuffed" with the new facility.

"There is a lot of room to move around. There is plenty of light, and we will be able to work on a couple of projects at the same time."

Gibson, who lives in Redwood, travels to the railway to lend a hand every Tuesday - joining others who travel from across Canterbury to do the same.

A very keen enthusiast and professional electrician, Alan Blee, even travels from Alexandra to help out! Blee has gifted many hours to the railway, assisting with the electrical fit-out of the new facility. He has even bought his apprentice along to help! It is hoped that sometime in the future, the restoration teams' current projects will join the railways fleet of 1930's carriages that operate weekend excursion trains through the Weka Pass.

Most of the vehicles were built in the early 1930's in the Addington Workshops, where the present-day Tower Junction shopping centre is located. They are wooden-clad, with the classic reversible leather seats that many New Zealanders will fondly remember.

A keen younger volunteer on the railway, Matthew Morison, is optimistic about the future of the railway and the region.

"By restoring these historic vehicles, we will be able to operate longer trains. In time, more and more people will be able to enjoy a ride on our beautiful line. That's good for us, and everyone."

The Weka Pass Railway has operated scenic train trips on selected weekends and public holidays since 1983.

Heritage societies like the Weka Pass Railway depend totally on the efforts of volunteers, who take up their vital roles because they love and believe in what they do, and because they believe it is important to preserve and display a long-gone part of this country's heritage.

Enjoy a ride on the Weka Pass Railway this summer by booking online at wekapassrailway.co.nz

WELCOMING THE NEW TENANTS

continued



Peter Gibson moving everything into its new home



WPR volunteer Tony Haines regularly travels from Hanmer Springs to volunteer at the railway



Volunteers Mike Ball, Warren Jenkins, Peter Gibson and Neville Tobin are excited about the Weka Pass Railway's new facility

THE POWER OF THE DOG

Available on Netflix

If you're looking for an afternoon gap filler and have Netflix available to use, The Power Of The Dog is a good "spot the railway" film to pop on.

Featuring Benedict Cumberbatch and Kirsten Dunst, this drama was filmed mostly around rural Otago.

"Charismatic rancher Phil Burbank inspires fear and awe in those around him. When his brother brings home a new wife and her son, Phil torments them until he finds himself exposed to the possibility of love."

If you are paying attention you may notice the Dunedin Railway Station platform, along with the signature yellow carriages (which have been changed to green for the film), and a rural track that was constructed for the film.



Photos: imdb.com, Los Angeles Times

UPCOMING MAINLINE EXCURSIONS

Excursions are subject to Covid Restrictions- check directly with operators prior to travel

Glenbrook Vintage Railway

GVR have multiple First Class Experience & Steam Train Experience dates available, along with Discover Ruapehu Rail Tours.

There are also newly advertised trips- the Vine & Dine Express (three journeys, with differing destinations) operating on the 29th of January 2022.

For more details visit - www.gvr.org.nz/events/whats-on

Steam Incorporated

Steam Incorporated have the Summer Spiral Limited operating on the 30th of January. There are also the Anzac Day Special to Waiouru Diesel, Rotary Charity Fundraiser to Taihape, and Heartland Flyer to Woodville coming soon.

More information is available at- www.steaminc.org.nz/book-train-trip

Dunedin Railways

Another Summer of "Trains not Planes" is underway, with the Seaside and Inlander both operating regularly over the summer. There are also special trips including the Twilight Train Quiz Night, and the Victorian.

More information is available at- www.dunedinrailways.co.nz/journeys

Gisborne City Vintage Railway

Running days for the summer from Gisborne to Muriwai are now being advertised.

More information is available at- www.gcvr.org.nz/bookings/

SHANTYTOWN HERITAGE PARK OPERATIONAL PLAN

Any contributions to be sent to site@shantytown.co.nz

We are currently working on our operational plan that we are planning to implement in the New Year.

As part of this process we would like to ask some questions of other groups to gauge if we are on the correct path.

- What standards do groups use to establish track repairs and therefor repair and maintenance time frames?
- What risk assessment framework do groups use to then prioritise the track work identified? eg if multiple high risk repairs are noted how are these then given a rank of importance?
- Do groups do internal track inspections and if so what competency training do their members under take?
- Do groups use external track inspectors, if so who and what qualifications do they hold?

I am aware that this is a busy time for groups but I would appreciate any time any group can give us.

Please also reply if you don't do any of the above.

I understand that groups don't wish to give out any private information so we are just asking to gauge if we are up with the latest or best standards and will not share any information with others.

