

JOURNAL

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

Issue CCXXXII

150 YEARS OF PEVERIL

CHANGE IS
COMING
IncSoc overhaul



*Exec Officer
calls time*

CONFERENCE '24:
A return to Palmerston
North



Image: Tim Frank



K^A 942 thunders past the iconic shed at Winslow on the Canterbury Plains in a stunning shot by Roger Harper.

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FRONZ EXECUTIVE

President's ramble

- Grant Craig, FRONZ President

How are we nearly in November?

As is the case when life throws spanners in the works, this is the first Journal in a few months. It's always nice to know something is missed, unless it's typos. We're back in action now, but don't think that the work in the background has stopped.

Our focus on rail retention continues, as does the focus on retention of key infrastructure (think turntables and platforms). One of the latest efforts on this front is the efforts to retain the line through to Middlemarch. More on this comes later in Journal.

With a new Government in the wings, we're waiting in anticipation to see what that means for our sector. In the meantime, and with such a change of representation in the electorates, I'd advise you all to remember Peter Dunne's advice from the 2018 conference and get to know your local MP. Take the time to build up the rapport, so they know what you do and how your function, so they can help you if and when the time comes.

On the Executive front, the FRONZ board is continuing to meet once a month over Zoom, with a physical meeting in Wellington twice a year. Our focus is now turning to the changes to the Incorporated Societies Act. For us, it involves a bit of soul-searching. After all, you don't pay subscriptions just to have us to tick boxes. FRONZ needs to be an organisation that meets YOUR needs, and is ready for whatever the future throws at it. As part of this, we're encouraging all of you to let us know what we can do better and what we need to focus on.

Scott Osmond has drafted changes to the FRONZ constitution and these alterations were discussed at our September meeting in Wellington. The role of FRONZ and its strategy were also discussed. Work on all these fronts continues and we'll involve you as this work progresses. The draft Constitution, which should be a living, breathing document, will be circulated to you by the end of the year.

I'd like to thank Scott for his hours of work on this. The purpose of it all revolves around you, our members. If you have ideas of what FRONZ needs to do better, write them down and send them to the secretary, or talk to me.

Next year is 49 years since FRONZ was established,

and while we have adapted to a number of challenges, we know we need to do more to make sure we're serving our entire organisation.

Reflection is also an opportunity to see how far we've come - and one of the greatest examples of this is the honest relationships we've formed with Waka Kotahi/NZTA and KiwiRail. Thanks to efforts from all sides and regular catch ups, we've been able to build a relationship that hasn't just made my life easier, it's benefited the whole organisation. We're now able to have hard conversations and at the same time, work together to resolve problems

One issue that every one of us is rightfully exhausted by is insurance.

We've been incredibly lucky to have Executive Officer Margaret Gordon go into fight for all insurance-carrying members on this front. She has spent hours of her time in meetings with our broker, comparing quotes with other insurers, and doing her utmost to get you the best deal possible.

She has also been a driving force on the Executive and making sure that, like insurance, you are getting the best deal from us.

Under Margaret's watch, we have been able to reduce spending significantly in a number of key areas, and have a sharper focus on the issues that matter to you.

Sadly for FRONZ, however, Margaret is unable to continue in the role due to other commitments. She has done an incredible amount of work for FRONZ, and brought an outside perspective that has benefited every group.

Margaret and John are going on a well-deserved three-month holiday and we are gutted to lose her. On behalf of all of the Executive, and our members, I wish her the best for the future and send the thanks of every one of us to her for the insurmountable volume of work she has done.

Thanks to Margaret's work, the Executive is able to take some time to review the Executive Officer's position, and Secretary Jeff Tollan will fill step into the role in an interim capacity. We'll keep you posted on developments.

Finally, congratulations to the Canterbury Railway Society for their successful weekend celebrating Pevreril's 150th anniversary. A terrific achievement!

Send us your feedback
Email secretary@fronz.org.nz



Image courtesy of DLA Turner

Peveril turns 150



Image courtesy of Tim Frank

- FRONZ

New Zealand's oldest operating steam locomotive celebrated its 150th year of service with a great number of people watching on.

The celebrations at Ferrymead Railway took place over Labour Weekend and involved an endless list of attractions for rail fans of all ages.

Peveril, aka F 13, was built in Scotland in 1872 and entered service in December 1873. Since steam engines have no retirement age (we don't know what Winston Peters thinks of that), the engine has spent most of its life working.

F 13, was transferred to Christchurch from Otago in the 1890's and remained in the Canterbury District until withdrawn from service in the late 1960s. It then headed to the Canterbury Railway Society, where it's been a loved part of the fleet ever since.

After several years on display, a concentrated effort was made to return F 13 to steam, and in 1984, Peveril lived again.

The weekend's festivities opened on the Saturday, with speeches and the traditional birthday cake. The rest of the day was dedicated to the rail fans, with trains of the 1880s through to the 1920s. The festivities opened to the public on Sunday and Monday.

Helping with the celebrations were CRS's D 140, built in Christchurch in 1887, and Pleasant Point's D 16, built in Scotland in 1878.

For those of you who are wondering what's in a name: 'Peveril' was given to the locomotive in the late 1950s, after a character in one of Sir Walter Scott's novels, which were popular at the time the locomotive was placed into service.

More recent research has found the original name for F 13 was 'Edie Ochiltree', but to Cantabrians and rail fans, F 13 will always be Peveril - to whom we say happy birthday!



Image courtesy of David Oakley

Peveril departs with another train load of passengers.



Image courtesy of David Oakley

D 16, visiting from Pleasant Point, storms towards the station.



Image courtesy of David Oakley

A triple header for the rail fans on the Saturday.



Image courtesy of David Oakley



Centre photos: DLA Turner



Image courtesy of David Oakley



Pictured above: The Great Train Robbery during a conference at Pleasant Point, featuring the Pauls Heighton and Dillicar. **Below:** Delegates pose in the garden at the Novotel during the 2016 Conference. Photos: DLA Turner

Conference update

- FRONZ

Twenty-twenty-five marks 50 years of FRONZ, and we're heading back to Canterbury, where it all began in 1975.

Expect a reduced Conference format, with special events across the King's Birthday weekend. The celebrations are likely to continue in other centres, but more on that at a later date...

The entire focus is on celebrating how far we've

come. FRONZ's original goal was to get groups back on the mainline, but the cause grew to be far bigger than anyone anticipated.

The 50th will be a massive weekend, and we're setting lofty goals for it. We'll provide updates as this work progresses.

But first we have Conference 2024.

The Spanish football team may have (allegedly) not gelled with Palmerston North, but we're



thrilled to be heading back to the city for the first Palmy-based conference since 2010.

It's early days yet in planning, but we can confirm it won't involve the once-popular game of possum – where uni students climb a tree with a box of alcohol and drink until someone falls out. This is mainly because our insurers will throw a hissy fit.

There will be an excursion, and the Distinction Hotel will be the base for Conference, with the awards night being held in its ballroom. The venue was picked after a fact-finding trip by Margaret, who has worked hard to ensure we all get bang for our buck. With cost being at front of mind, we're looking to firm up all the details as soon as possible so you can get booking.

As we hurtle towards King's Birthday, remember that Conference is a great chance for your younger members to interact with other groups and experience things that, ordinarily, might be out of reach for them.

If you've got young, keen members, consider whether they could benefit by coming along too.

Following Conference 23, we sent you a survey and asked for feedback. This is helping us prepare for future conferences, and I'd like to thank all of you who filled this in. Here's what's happening in

three of the areas you identified as needing work:

- Tech (oh God, the tech!): To make sure we are ready for any eventuality, FRONZ has purchased two HD projectors and a speaker, which will immediately save us money in Palmerston North. There's nothing worse than squinting at a low-resolution projector, and we think these will serve us well into the future, and stop the secretary grinding his teeth.
- The programme: You're paying to come to conference, and we want to make sure the content is relevant to you. Your voice matters – let us know what's important to you! If there are topics you want us to be covering - NOW is your time to let us know. Get in touch with me at secretary@fronz.org.nz, so we can cover the things you need and want to know.
- Awards evening: We've taken steps already to build on the success of last year's awards evening and are working with the hotel sure it's a seamless night (with no gridlock at the bar!). We also plan to open entries for the awards earlier, giving you a bit more breathing room to get your entries in.

The Executive is working on a breakdown of costs and we will get this to you as soon as possible to allow you to budget and set money aside.

And now a throwback to Conference 2010, in Palmerston North.

Photos: Jeff Tollan





A flashback to the 2016 Conference, held in Blenheim.

Photo: DLA Turner



The 1975 FRONZ conference, held at Pleasant Point, saw a field trip to Ashburton.

Photo: DLA Turner

Life on the tramways



Baldwin 100 passes Auckland Streamliner 248 at the Zoo loop. The lack of smoke being emitted by 100 is obvious, a testament to the biofuel pellets it is currently trialling. Photo: Allan Neilson

- By **Henry Brittain**, *Tramways Convenor*

The biggest event for the tramway sector recently has been the COTMA (Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia) Conference, held in Auckland and hosted by MOTAT, from October 5-9.

Representatives from all major Tramway Museums in New Zealand and Australia attended, and 13 separate heritage tramway groups were present. The conference venue was at the Maritime Museum complex, located in the Viaduct Basin precinct in downtown Auckland.

A wide variety of topics were presented by various speakers and field trips were made to MOTAT, where their entire fleet of restored trams were available, along with the Aviation Hall and Railway section. On a separate day, the Dockline Tramway adjacent to the Viaduct Basin area was also available for attendees to enjoy.

Of special interest to steam enthusiasts was the 1891 Baldwin

steam tram (No. 100), which originally operated in Sydney and Wanganui before its acquisition by MOTAT.

At the present time, in place of coal, it is trialling Bio Fuel pellets made of compressed wood sourced from slash and made into a brickette form. Initial indications are that this is a viable option to fire a steam boiler and this is certainly evident in the observed reduction of up to 90% in smoke emissions.

Conference awards were made to the Ballarat Tramway Museum for its new display hall, the Tramway Historical Society in Christchurch for its restoration of their Kitson steam tram number 7 of 1881 and Graham Stewart for his lifetime involvement in both Tramway Preservation and the recording of tramway history in New Zealand.

After the conference, a group of attendees travelled to Wellington and Christchurch to visit the Wellington Tramway Museum and both Christchurch Tramway groups.

At the Conference, Henry Brittain from the Wellington Tramway Museum was re-elected to the position of President.

[Editor's note: Congratulations, Henry!]



Wellington Double Decker 47 waits in the workshop before entering service. Photo: Henry Brittain



Auckland Dockline tram 258 on its City Circle run. Photo: Lorraine Rule

Plan could keep Taieri Gorge trains running



- Otago Daily Times

An Auckland heritage rail operator could help keep trains on the Taieri Gorge tracks, an Otago trust says.

A proposal is being developed that might result in the Otago Excursion Train Trust and Auckland's Glenbrook Vintage Railway running the Dunedin Railways operation.

"Taieri Gorge railway is an Otago treasure, and a new community-based model is being proposed so it can operate successfully in a post-pandemic world," Otago Excursion Train Trust chairman Murray Schofield said.

Glenbrook would bring business expertise to a joint venture, he said.

"Like Dunedin Railways, it has its own branch line, maintains a large vehicle fleet, and operates regular long-distance excursions.

"We are incredibly excited to have Glenbrook involved in this effort to preserve the operation."

Under the proposal, the Otago train trust and the Dunedin City Council would own Dunedin Railways' assets and would contract above-rail operations to an entity

formed by the Otago and Glenbrook groups.

The Otago Excursion Train Trust has commissioned a consultancy to prepare a business case, and the joint bid to operate Dunedin Railways is to be put to the council in the next couple of months.

The Dunedin Railways company, owned by the city council, went into hibernation in 2020 when Covid-19 had a drastic impact on tourism.

Limited services have been run under a temporary structure since and the council has yet to determine which model might work best in the years ahead.

The council has signalled it intends to facilitate a train service between Dunedin and Middlemarch, but a multimillion-dollar deferred maintenance bill for the Taieri Gorge tracks would need to be faced.

Dunedin train services are popular with passengers from cruise ships, but they have not in recent years broken even while keeping up with track maintenance. An alternative idea would involve converting at least part of the line

into a cycle trail.

Possibilities for extending the Otago Central Rail Trail past Middlemarch towards Dunedin are being looked into.

A feasibility study commissioned by the Otago Central Rail Trail Trust is set to be completed before the council runs consultation on its draft 2024-34 long-term plan.

Taieri MP Ingrid Leary described Dunedin rail as a precious heritage tourism product.

"Decisions on whether to continue the rail connection to Middlemarch are not just about an iconic rail journey for both New Zealanders and our overseas visitors, they speak to the very heart of our Otago heritage — a history full of pioneers and high achievers," she said.

"This provides another opportunity for central and local government to jointly support Dunedin Railways with a 10-year plan on investment."

Ms Leary said ideas about extending the rail trail should not be ignored, and she wanted to see a win-win.

• See OETT's update on page 19.



Murray Schofield

FRONZ convenor flags in

- **Guy Wellwood, Non-Mainline Groups and Museums Convenor**

Early this year, David Maciulaitis signalled his intention to step down from the FRONZ Executive, where he had served for 15 years, and to relinquish his convenorship of the large group of FRONZ members that have traditionally been labelled as Non-Mainline Groups and Museums.

David will, thankfully, continue to drive the Canterbury Railway Society and the continued development of Ferrymead as one of the powerhouses of the heritage rail movement and will always be willing, I am sure, to share his enormous, probably unsurpassed knowledge of technical matters concerning steam, trams, tracks and many other things. I do want to pay tribute to David and to thank him for all his work on the national stage of FRONZ.

FRONZ has currently 66 member groups. Eight are those operating or proposing to operate on the KiwiRail-controlled NZ rail network.

Seven groups clearly focus on trams and tramways and have their own convenor, Henry Brittain.

That leaves 51 groups or 77 per cent of the total - all under my convenorship.

Thirteen are museums and static displays, 18 actually run their own trains on their own tracks, while others, perhaps six, have long-term ambitions to run their own trains. Several groups are as big and prestigious as FRONZ - perhaps more so to the public, including Railway Enthusiasts Society and the NZ Rail and Locomotive Society. Meanwhile, there are other members who solely operate as service providers.

Every one of the above groups are important to FRONZ.

A number of our sector journeyed at Kings Birthday Weekend to Waitangi, Bay of Islands, for FRONZ's annual King's Birthday Conference and I thought that our sector meeting on the

Saturday afternoon was very useful. I cannot say we sorted out many problems and issues, but we made a good list that we can work on.

The big issues as I see them.

1. The new Incorporated Societies Legislation requires all existing Incorporated Societies to re-register but is also an opportunity for groups to look at their existing structures and their objectives.
2. Most of the groups in our sector are in the tourism industry. While the members and supporters of our groups may in the main be passionate volunteers, our groups still need to be business-like and marketing is important.
3. Too many of our groups are dominated by ageing men so we have to look for ways to attract women and younger members into the ranks.
4. Some groups need technical assistance or training or inspections and FRONZ can help with that.
5. Money and fundraising are always issues.
6. Groups need to establish good relationships with the local authorities in their regions

I want our sector members to feel that FRONZ is listening and can help. I am planning to visit as many groups as I can over the next couple of years. I would like to turn up, when invited, and when a good chunk of the active membership can be on hand -perhaps at smoko time in a weekend.

I want to make sure you're getting the best out of us, and that we're looking after you. If you and your members wish to have a face-to-face chat, or talk on the phone, please get in touch.

You can contact me on 027 378 5114, or by email at guywellwood48@gmail.com.



Ashburton Rail & Preservation Society's **50th** **Anniversary** Sat 18th & Sun 19th Nov 2023 11am till 4pm

- 3 steam trains
- visiting traction engines
- threshing/chaff cutting displays
- vintage tractors



62 Maronan Road
Tinwald
Ashburton

Digging deep

Mainline Steam's new depot progresses



- **By Grant Bradley,**
General Manager

The very wet year has delayed progress at Mercer with the ground conditions to wet for the machinery to effectively spread and compact the fill.

The fill was stock piled over winter and with some dryer spring weather our contractor is now able to start the spreading of the fill as it dries out.

This summer our contractor will concentrate filling to the north east of where the fill is currently stock piled. This will give us a clear area for the proposed building's at the site while filling of the site will continue to the north during 2024.

The main image show the volume of fill that has been brought to site and the height of over burden that has been built up to assist with the compacting of the existing soil.



On the rolling stock front, the team at Plimmerton continue to work through the A° carriages as part of the recertification process.

The work has primarily involved checking each carriage for signs of any water leaks and repairing the subsequent damage the water leaks may have caused, undertaking crack testing, brake servicing, bogie checks and in some cases the carriage as been repainted.



Three of the A° carriages and the F^M van have just had their independent inspection completed in preparation for sign off by the Certifying Engineer after which the vehicles will be presented to the HTC for the first step towards registration to run on the National Rail Network.



Pictured, from top, are F^M 3010 - winner of this year's Guards Van award at Conference, and A° 215 and A° 48.

IncSoc changes and the Constitution

- FRONZ

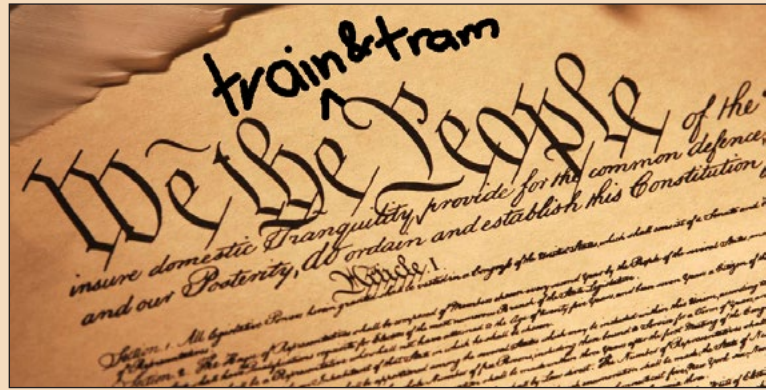
The “boring-but-significant” thing that will affect all of us is the change to the way Incorporated Societies regulations work.

Over the last couple of months, the Executive has looked at FRONZ’s Constitution. A draft version has been discussed and additions and clarifications have been made. It’s currently in the process of being cleaned up before we seek legal consultation. Once all of that’s sorted, we’re going to circulate it to FRONZ members for further discussion and comment.

It will be tabled at the 2024 AGM for your approval, and then we will apply for registration.

There are two key elements to the work FRONZ is doing on this front:

1. Establishing what changes are required to our own constitution and implementing them.
2. Assisting our members with advice on how to make the appropriate changes to their own Constitutions.



From now, all incorporated societies have 2½ years to reregister. The deadline expires in April 2026.

The changes to FRONZ’s Constitution will be communicated to you all well in advance of the 2024 AGM.

We are also planning to provide further information to you all through Journal updates and Zoom meetings in the future, so watch out for these.

In the meantime, we recommend all groups prepare a project plan to manage the review and updating of your constitution, otherwise time will quickly slip away.

Rail Heritage Trust update



- By Barry O'Donnell, Executive Officer

There’s never a shortage of work around railways, but this year there have been two large projects crossed off the RHT’s to-do list:

• Wingatui signal box:

In a project initiated following the discovery of rotted foundation timbers in the basement in 2019, the Wingatui signal box was lifted on

5th May and placed on temporary staging. While there, the Rail Heritage Trust took the opportunity to repair, refurbish, and repaint the signal box.

Following the lift the contractors, Stevenson & Williams, determined the building had subsided and was up to 140mm lower at the Mosgiel end than the Dunedin end. In mid-September the signal box was lifted again, returned to its original site, and placed on a new concrete slab foundation.

• Ongarue Memorial:

A memorial commemorating the centenary of the railway accident at Ongarue was unveiled on 8th July 2023, but work remained to be done in and around the site.



Following the unveiling the Ongarue Memorial Organising Committee also approved the addition for two additional interpretative display stands, one showing the location of the Memorial relative to the accident scene and the other featuring information about the 1923 NZ Maori Rugby team, which was travelling on the derailed train and played a prominent role in the rescue efforts.

The two new Corten steel stands were erected in

early October together with the boxing around the site; this will be backfilled with crushed limestone.

The only remaining uncompleted large works are the installation of the permanent interpretative panels (a tight timeline saw temporary ones in place for the unveiling), and following KiwiRail approval of a Beautification Licence, the removal of trees from the adjacent swamp so visitors can clearly see the North Island Main Trunk Line.





HTC and HOC update



HOC chair Tim Kerwin, Mainline Steam owner Ian Welch, FRONZ chair Grant Craig, Mainline Steam general manager Grant Bradley, and HTC chair Michael Hobbs caught up during a joint meeting of the HTC and HOC in July.

Heritage Technical Committee

- By Michael Hobbs, HTC Chair

In the past six months we have welcomed four new(ish) members to the HTC.

Matt Hermann joined the committee in the position left vacant by the passing of Mike Anderson, and Mike Wilcox returned to the committee in the place of Mike Bradshaw. We also welcomed back Andrew Hunt who has been appointed to the vacant CPEng position. Andrews' previous position as KiwiRail liaison is currently being filled by Chris Wakeling.

One of HTC's main functions is the certification of heritage vehicles for use on the national network.

So far this year we have certified six heritage vehicles for main line use, W^W 644, U^C 686 and A^G 49 for GVR and A 1962, A 1975 and A^G 239 for Steam Inc. All of these vehicles went through a vigorous review by the committee to ensure they

meet the exacting standards for network operations. In the coming months we hope to see the first of Mainline Steam's rail vehicles come through HTC as part of their re-registration process to return to the national network. The HTC chair recently visited MLS's Plimmerton Depot along with Grant Craig (FRONZ president) and Tim Kerwin (HOC chair) to view the ongoing restoration works and meet with the MLS team.

In conjunction with FRONZ and the Heritage Operating Committee, the HTC partakes in tri-annual meetings with KiwiRail. These meetings cover a wide array of topics mostly associated with main line operations, but also general requests from the heritage sector. Our last meeting was held at the new KiwiRail train control centre in Wallaceville and the attendees were fortunate to be able to tour the facility and view the operations of the centre.

Outside the main line operations sphere, HTC have also been reviewing a number of the FRONZ mechanical codes. A number of

these codes are based on the old NZR codes from the 1960s and 70s and the current focus of these reviews is to ensure that they meet best practice requirements for current day. HTC are also working to develop training documentation for inspectors undertaking checks on heritage rail vehicles. Whilst initially geared at main line operations we hope to be able to make this training available to non-network operators to strengthen their inspection processes.

Heritage Operating Committee

- By Tim Kerwin, HOC Chair

The purpose of the HOC, is to provide direction and professional technical guidance for matters relating the management of train operations on the NRS.

Your FRONZ representatives on the committee are: Grant Bradley (MLS), Graeme Clover (Steam

Inc), Donald Ross (FRONZ trainer through RAIL), Margaret Gordon (Secretary) and myself as HOC chair. A new feature of the Operating Committee is the addition of succession seats which are currently held by Jack Dolman and Tommy Secker (Steam Inc), and Finn O'Regan (GVR). The Access Provider (KiwiRail) and Industry representative (Rail and Maritime Transport Union) are represented on the committee also. The committee meets at least four times per year, preferably over video meet as being both efficient and economical.

The committee works collaboratively with the Access Provider on a number of projects, these include oversight and review of changes to the Heritage Operating Manual, monitor operating rules and procedures and manage their

suitability and implementation to heritage operators and to provide a conduit of communication between heritage operators, the access provider and industry representatives.

Some recent examples of HOC work include:

- Qualification of FRONZ Trainer to undertake Tunnel Operations training for heritage operators.
- Planning and joint provision of Steam Fireman and Driver training - 1x driver & 1x fireman school completed.
- Document competency process for heritage LEs.
- Develop guidelines for - and implement - operational peer reviews for network operators.

Following the HTC reset, the HOC

has also been reinvigorated and both committees enjoy a much closer working relationship and proactive communications, including both committees aiming to meet once every 24 months. The HOC chair is required to provide a report to the FRONZ Executive after each meeting.

Whilst the HOC is a committee focussed for Mainline Operators, we are aligned with the HTC's vision of passing on knowledge and key learnings from the committee to non-mainline operators.

We need to develop the right conduit for this information and knowledge sharing to begin. This is what I believe is part of the FRONZ vision of inclusion and collaboration within rail heritage organisations.



The effort to save rails to Taieri

- Murray Schofield, Chairman

The Otago Excursion Train Trust is moving, along with Chris Le Marshall and Linqage International, to collect information with key stakeholders in order to retain the rail line to Middelmarsh.

Chris has visited from Australia and met several of these people already. The process from here is that Chris will continue to build the business case on our behalf. The council's position is that they have agreed in principle with the proposal to retain the track to Middelmarsh as a rail line.

Despite this, the Trust is planning to put another submission to the Dunedin City Councillors (DCC) at an open council meeting on October 30.

This is important work, as there is an active Dunedin Cycle Track Group who wish to turn the line into a cycleway.

The operating model OETT put forward originally is that the DCC owns the infrastructure, and that the operator runs the service. By joining with Glenbrook Vintage Railway, which would provide its expertise and skills to assist in this part of the operation, we have the best chance of success in retaining the Taieri Gorge Line.

The OETT is committed to presenting to the DCC a comprehensive business plan at the right time. The Council as part of their process will be asking the ratepayers of Dunedin through public consultation what they want to happen.

National Railway Museum update



A photo from the collection of Ronald Linfoot, a former NZR deputy CME. Likely taken in the '60s, it shows Ja 1244 heading west on the Midland Line, towing a newly overhauled English Electric E^o class to Otira for operation through the Tunnel.

- By Alan Spooner, President

A feature of early 20th Century, life was often the railway yard that divided a township between the nice residential areas and the industrial and poorer housing areas.

Ferrymead, being true to the theme, does the same, however parts of the National Railway Museum - on the "wrong side of the tracks" from historical perspectives, at least - is having somewhat of a glow up.

Three years ago, the museum leased Albert Hall from the Ferrymead Trust. It was a tired building that needed a lot of love; the intense work to bring it up to standard and a habitable state has happened out of sight of most other societies.

During its years out of use, a major leak from the internal guttering virtually destroyed the area that was the kitchen. Thankfully, one of our skilled members, Peter Ross, has rebuilt this literally from foundation to roof and this "grandad's axe" of rooms is now to become the museum's archive space.

Project leads Alan and David Spooner have undertaken myriad repairs to the external structure, the most recent being the removal of the rear wall framing and corrugated iron to allow the museum's 1883 plough van to be moved inside the building.

Once this was done, a new wall frame was constructed as the old Don Muir work scheme creation hadn't passed the test of time.



A scan from an unknown English visitor to New Zealand in the late 1940s. This photo is taken at Lyttelton (possibly 1948) and shows an F-class propelling the steamer express consist onto the steamer wharf. Passengers would transfer to the overnight Wellington ferry. Note the extremely well-turned-out guard walking adjacent to the carriages.

New corrugated iron has also been attached as part of this rebuild.

The most noticeable part of this large undertaking is a lick of paint in period colour scheme. Initially started by Gordon Bartram and then passed to Joe and Tina Bray, it's given the building a much needed lift.

If you do venture to the "wrong side of the tracks", on a Saturday, the team will be pleased to show you around.

Gone with the wind, almost

- **By Maurice Fenton, Secretary**

Weka Pass volunteers have been manning chain-saws and hammers following severe winds on Saturday, October 14. Across Canterbury, emergency crews dealt with lifted roofs, fallen trees and power lines down, thanks to 200kmh gales.

The strong winds of last Saturday have caused a bit of havoc around the railway.

The large shed doors on our recently completed Car Shop building were completely torn off. This is now in the hands of shed builders Totalspan, who are assessing the damage and – hopefully – will help with the repair work once their report is finished.

Our staffroom building wasn't exempt from damage, with windows and doors also blown in. All in all, there's a bit of repair work to do!

The winds were so strong on the day that we had to cancel a charter train, which was due to leave at 2pm. The situation had become so unsafe, people were having difficulty standing up in the station carpark and yards. Nobody wanted to risk going up the line and getting stranded.

This was a fortuitous call, 4.1km up the track, six large pine trees had fallen over the track and blocked it completely. Clearing these pines was such a big job it affected our Sunday running day, and as a result, we've had to refund bookings. Thankfully, a good portion of affected passengers have opted to take a voucher for a future date. A charter booked for the 19th was also affected.

Along the line there have been plenty of branches to clear from the track. Work on clearing all the debris is under way, but there is plenty more work to go and many chainsaws are being sharpened.

Thanks to those involved, we'll be all ready to go for running on the 5th of November.





Railway Enthusiasts' Society update

- By Alan Verry, Past President

Greetings to all readers. The RES Society held its Annual General Meeting on October 14, at the Rosepark Lounge in Parnell.

Fifty-eight members attended, along with apologies received from a number of other members. After Constitutional changes approved at last year's AGM, the incoming committee elected was reduced in size by two committee members.

Nominations received matched the number of vacancies needing filling so no elections were necessary. The new committee for the 2023 /2024 year is:

- President - Rob Utting
- Secretary - Tim Major
- Treasurer - Rob Dunn
- Committee Members - Steve Woodward, Sean Heenan, Niall Robertson
- RES Members Trustee to the GVR Trust Board - David Black

The major topic for discussion was the future of the clubrooms, where various proposals were placed before the members for their thoughts. The members gave the Committee approval to continue discussions along particular lines.

On the housekeeping front, there is the sorting of the RES clubrooms and archives.

Over the years the Society has become the repository of many and varied, books, photos, documents, magazines and other railway memorabilia. We are now concentrating on sorting, recording, and documenting the items.

There are many interesting items coming to light including the first original copies 1 – 7 of YARN, and early documentation of the formation of the Glenbrook Vintage Railway. Many books are now being sold, these include New Zealand rail books as well as books from all other major rail countries – UK, America, Australia, Europe, etc. All proceeds will go to the Society's coffers.

The next book sale is to be held on Saturday 25th November at the Clubrooms 10.00am to 3.00pm. This will also double as a members barbeque and Christmas event. For any reader wishing to acquire books, a new catalogue of stock is about to be posted on the RES Facebook page.

Speaking of the RES Facebook page, in recent times there has been increased posting activity of older RES Excursions and other activities as various doyens of the railway fraternity open up their own collections and start sharing them.

Our next Club-night in Auckland will be held at 7.30pm on Thursday November 9, at the Pearce St Hall Onehunga. Other rail society members are most welcome.

Work ramps up at GVR

The ever-popular Christmas lights event. Photo: GVR



- By Alan Verry

Greetings to all readers. There is always plenty of activity happening within the organisation, lately that's included activity here and abroad.

Sean Heenan recently organised and escorted a group on a tour to Tasmania and Melbourne. The trip was well supported and by all accounts everyone had a great time.

The tourist market has returned in full force and the GVR has been hosting a good number of tour coach groups over recent months, with many more booked for summer.

I've hosted some of the charters and the majority of tourists are from Australia, with the odd British and American traveller also included.

They enjoy the experience; the visitors travel on the parlour car and lounge



car with morning or afternoon tea either catered on the train or at the station.

The new operating season commenced at Labour Weekend and continues on specific dates through to Christmas and January. The most popular option is the First-Class experience, with catered teas on the parlour car.

Our highly popular Christmas Lights event returns this Christmas and will run over a number of nights in December. Please refer to the GVR website for specific details.



The Christmas Lights are sponsored and supported by Counties Power and they have been open in acknowledging it is their best sponsored event.

Steam on the mainline returns on Saturday, November 4, when the GVR runs three roundtrips between Papakura and Glenbrook, hauled by W^m 644.

Bookings are already well supported. As with any railway, but particularly one the size of GVR, one of the major tasks is ongoing maintenance.

For years a bank between the neighbouring farm and our car shed has been eroding away and on a recent visit, it was a surprise to see the General Manager at the controls of the digger and all hands to the pump positioning in place large Interlock

concrete blocks to act as a retainer wall.

The wall looks very professional and I suggested we could a new branch of the railway – GVR Civil Engineering.

Whilst visiting the retaining wall I spotted Safety & Compliance Manager Aaron Wong taking one of the Auckland Transport D^{MU} units on a bit of a run along the line.

As part of the contract we have AT for storing these units, we need to keep them serviceable and run them on a regular basis.

Other-wise work continues on refurbishing and repainting the GVR red set of carriages, ongoing refurbishment of D^C 4818 and track ballast work.



One of the groups from Australian Pacific Tours during a visit to Glenbrook. Photo: Alan Verry

Waitara update: Planning, painting and more

- John Churchouse, General Manager

Waitara Railway has had a very busy months with charters and excursions keeping the crews busy.

Our extended Brixton Station platform, which now includes the Waitotara Station, has worked well with the longer operating consist, which now includes our new open wagon, E^A3298. This has been very popular since it replaced the smaller N^{AK}, with twice the space and better viewing spaces for the passengers.

Our blue locomotive, Portland 11, is having the side rods rebushed and some servicing work done. While Portland 11 is out of service, the Price 222 has stepped up and is hauling the excursion trains between Waitara and Lepperton Junction.

Once Portland 11 is back in service, our A^L 50182 carvan will be unwrapped for overhauling, with new scaffolding installed around it for our members to work on safely. One of its bogies has been removed for overhauling in the meantime.

D^{SC} 2884 is also in final planning stages for overhauling, and this loco will give us more capacity on the branch line and let us haul more carriages and passengers.

From October 27, we're going to have a busy 10 days for the Fringe Garden Festival, which



we run every day during the 10-day festival.

FRONZ isn't the only organisation with a big anniversary in 2025. October 2025 also marks the 150-year anniversary of the Waitara branch line. This means we're starting our long-term planning for a weekend of train running to celebrate the anniversary.

As always, if you're ever in the Waitara area, call by and say hello!

FRONZ trivia:

1. What is the southern-most member of FRONZ?
2. Which locomotive recently celebrates its 150th anniversary this Labour Weekend?
3. In what year did LTSA become NZTA?
4. When uncoupling, which piece of equipment is removed last?
5. How many ABs survive in New Zealand?
6. Name this acronym: SFAIRP
7. FRONZ has how many mainline operators?
8. The first railway operated where in NZ?
9. In millimetres, what is 3'6"?
10. How many tramways operate in NZ?



The winterless North lived up to its name when Conference delegates turned out for a ride over King's birthday weekend.
Photos: Aerial Vision

The beautiful Bay of Islands

- FRONZ

On behalf of the nearly 80 attendees who took part in Conference 2023, we would like to say a huge thank you to the Northland groups who took us in.

The Bay of Islands Vintage Railway were our hosts for the weekend and delivered a conference to remember.

Saturday included a visit to the Whangarei Steam and Model Railway Club to see the impressive work they have been doing, followed by a trip to the old Whangarei Railway Station to see the amazing restoration

that has recently been completed thanks to the hard work of the local Menzshed, supported by funding from the Rail Heritage Trust.

The weekend concluded with a visit on Monday to the Bay of Islands Vintage Railway at Kawakawa.

We'd like to sincerely thank all the local groups for their manākitanga and their caring members who gave up their time to make the weekend so enjoyable. We strongly recommend everybody takes a trip to the winterless north and experiences the amazing work these groups and their members are doing.



Preparing for the worst: Steam Inc, agencies stage emergency drill

- FRONZ

Under the fading light of an October evening, FENZ, police and ambulance crews were put to the test, with a staged emergency on a Steam Incorporated train.

The aim of the exercise was to ensure the area has the capability to respond to a mass-casualty incident of scale, and that emergency services can effectively work together to ensure a streamlined response and reduce loss of life at a disaster scene.

The exercise brought together Police, FENZ, St John and Civil Defence, along with Steam Incorporated and KiwiRail.

At 6.30pm, the exercise began. In the scenario, the 1915 A^B Passchendaele, had collided with a vehicle at the Alabama Rd level crossing, near Blenheim, causing more than 50 casualties. Two of the four people trapped in the car were deceased.

The train's loco and first three cars had derailed, with more than 50 passengers trapped inside, with injuries ranging from the deceased to critical and more minor injuries. Small fires had broken out around the accident scene, creating a very

realistic smoky haze over the derailment location as the sun went down.

More than 16 fire engines, several ambulances and about two dozen police vehicles, including quad bikes and drones, were at the scene - 100 emergency responders in total.



They began a methodical exercise to extract people from carriages sitting on the main line between Seddon and Blenheim.

The exercise put every team, including train crew, to the test, Steam Incorporated operations manager Jack Dolman says.

The exercise didn't come cheap, but the learnings are invaluable.

"The cost of the exercise doesn't compare with the benefit of what we've learned. At Steam Inc, we're looking at running something like 65 services for the Marlborough Flyer, and the reality is the more you're running, the greater the risk of something happening.

"It's the unexpected things that will catch you out. This exercise taught us some valuable lessons and we're going to be sharing those with other operators.



“It means if they’re ever faced with the worst-case scenario, everyone is better prepared, and that can only be a good thing.”

All the agencies involved in the mammoth undertaking will be preparing reports, which will be combined into a final version.

While no critical issues were uncovered, Dolman says a key learning was around communication, with key emergency service personnel taking around 30 minutes

to talk to the train manager.

The learnings are ways to make the industry safer: “What benefits one of us can benefit us all.”

[Editor’s note: On behalf of FRONZ, we want to thank Steam Inc for being so proactive on this initiative that will give all members critical safety advice. The outcomes of the exercise will be shared in the coming months, once the reports are compiled and reviewed by those who took part.]

Your FRONZ Executive:

Committee:

- President - Grant Craig
- Treasurer - Bruce Shalders
- Secretary - Jeff Tollan
- Interim Exec Officer - Jeff Tollan
- Guy Wellwood
- Alan Verry
- Courtney Kilner

Convenors:

- Sustainability - Dan Armstrong
- Track - Robert Storm
- Health and Safety - Donald Ross
- Tramways - Henry Brittain
- Mainline - TBC
- Non-Mainline Groups and Museums Convenor - Guy Wellwood

RAIL:

- Director - Clark Simmonds

Contact:

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- journaleditor@fronz.org.nz

The final word, from the secretary

Kia ora koutou, FRONZ members, we hope you’ve found this Journal as informative and as interesting as I am...

Thank you to everybody who enquired about, and contributed to this edition of Journal. To those who’ve sent me contributions or listened to me talk your ears off, I appreciate it. Your efforts mean I’ll have my sanity intact for several more weeks or months - until I do my last-minute Christmas shopping or try to find a carpark in the centre of Wellington. They’re both “me problems”, according to my colleagues, but I will rant to anyone who listens.

This edition of Journal has covered updates from a selection of FRONZ members around New Zealand. We want to profile the great work all our members doing, so do send us your photos and submissions to journaleditor@fronz.org.nz, or to myself at secretary@fronz.org.nz. We will also be getting in touch with a selection of FRONZ members proactively each month.

Finally, a reminder: If you have feedback or suggestions of what we could be doing better, or issues we need to tackle, get in touch with me so we can take action.

As always, we remain your ever-faithful servants,

Jeff