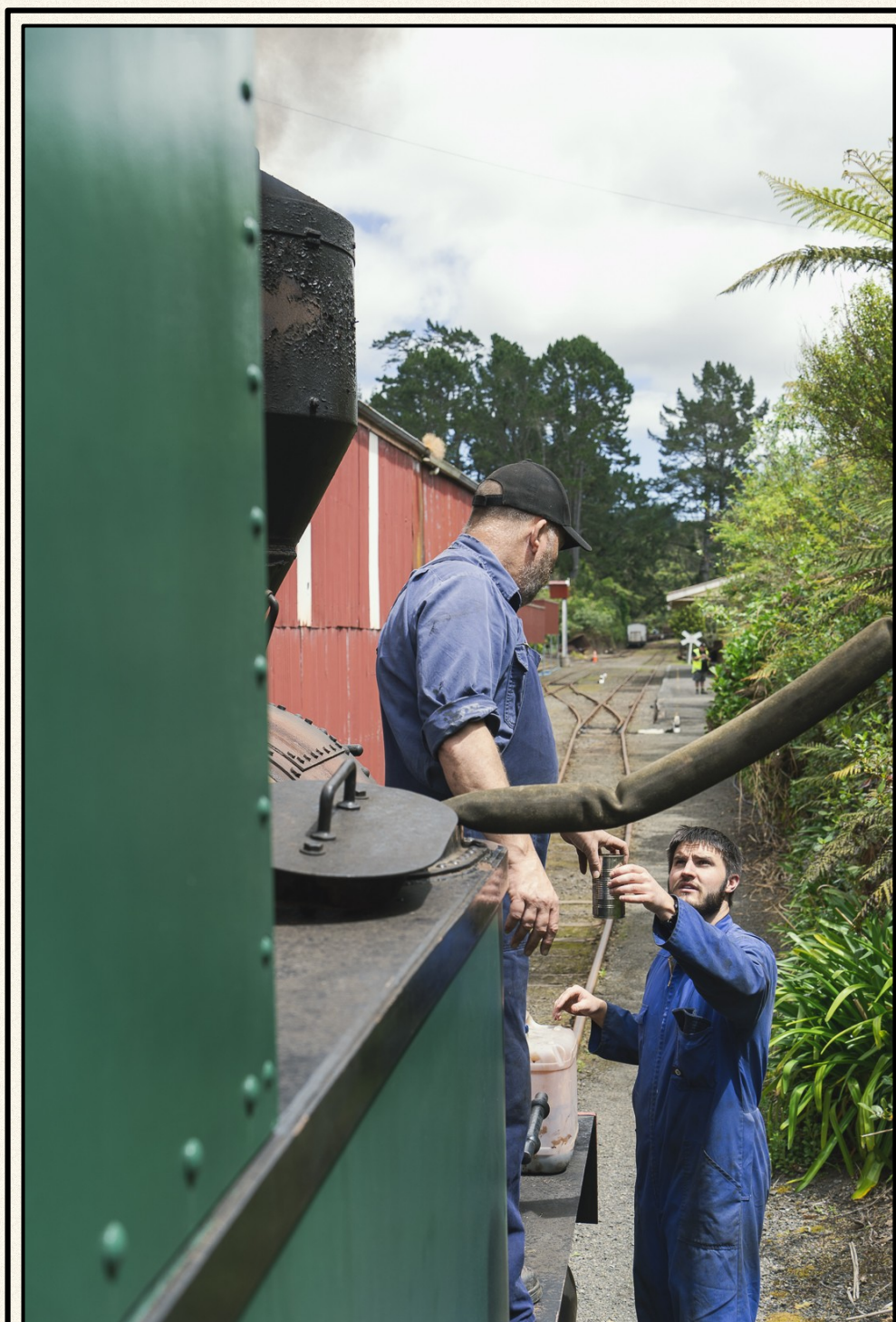


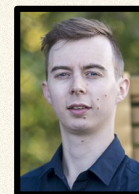
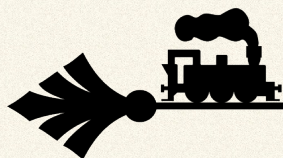


PUKEMIRO JUNCTION

VOLUME 19 ISSUE 1 — THE GLEN AFTON LINE — JANUARY 2025



BUSH TRAMWAY CLUB — ESTABLISHED 1965



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EDITORIAL

If you asked me a year ago if I thought I'd be editing the BTC newsletter I would have thought you were crazy, I was still a month away from signing up as a member. Yet here I am, ready to take this endeavour on as a contribution to the railway that I've come to enjoy my every minute at.

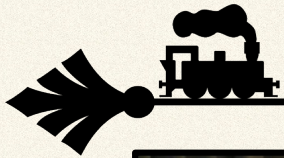
I'd like to extend a word of gratitude to Richard Ellis for the many years of overseeing the newsletter prior to this issue, and for asking if I'd like to take on the role. Also to the committee for accepting me as the editor.

My background is too much to go over in a short editorial but I currently work behind the scenes at events, handling tech, sound, photography, etc. Regardless of what the event is about, or how little or much I am involved, it's always about providing the opportunity for people to connect. In a way I see this newsletter the same, a space where members with a shared interest in the railway can share and find information, and connect. So with that idea in mind you will see some changes to the newsletter, not a reinvention of the wheel, but some changes to hopefully support it.

To the many issues the future holds, and happy new year!

THIS NEWSLETTER WAS EDITED BY KAYNE KNIGHT FOR THE BUSH TRAMWAY CLUB. IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING RELEVANT TO THE BTC, WHETHER IMAGES, ARTICLES OR PROJECTS PLEASE SEND TO:
EDITOR@BUSHTRAMWAYCLUB.COM

COVER PHOTO: FRAZER ROSE AND PETE CAIRNCROSS TAKING ON
WATER (KAYNE.K)



BUSH TRAMWAY CLUB INC

REPORT

By COLIN JENNER



Peckett and Meremere Diesel hauling train on November open day (Kayne.K)



Above: Families checking out the locomotives in the shed (Kayne.K)

Right: Meremere 401 Taking the train on the December open day (Nampu.K)

WELCOME TO ANOTHER BTC NEWSLETTER.

OPEN DAYS

November: This was a fairly fine day. We carried 141 adults, 59 children & 55 preschoolers. As usual the Peckett spent a lot of the day hauling the train with a Meremere diesel loco mostly leading the train downhill.

December: The previous day was a very wet day & heavy showers were predicted for the Sunday however, it turned out to be a reasonably fine day with the occasion heavy showers. We carried 133 adults, 43 children & 43 preschoolers. The Peckett wasn't in steam at all as we didn't have a driver for it. Instead we used Tr 459 & Meremere loco 401.

Many thanks to all who turn up & help make these days a success. We will be running as usual in January & February.





As usual, we had our end of year “feast” for all members that helped with our open days. This was a smaller gathering than usual with 12 hungry members taking part. They all enjoyed themselves.

ALONG THE LINE:

- John S & Richard S dumped another 2 Yb wagons of ballast at the top end of the sandfill area. John S has since been back to try & sort out a couple of rails to complete the gap where the rails were very twisted by the earthquake in February 2023.
- We have another 2 visits from our Community workers. The first time they replaced 6 sleepers in the carriage siding & on the other visit, they replaced 4 sleepers at the lower end of the track we have been working on down from the pine trees at the bottom of Pukemiro yard. We have so far replaced 30 sleepers on this section of line, have only 2 together to be replaced & I can lift the speed restriction on this section of our line. There will be still a few single sleepers to replace though.
- Dave M had been down with our small digger & removed 90% of the ballast from around these sleepers. This makes the job of replacing sleepers much quicker.



Burnt out car at railway entrance (Richard.E)



Members enjoying the end of year BBQ (Richard.E)



- Dave M & CJ have spent a couple of days trimming back the lineside growth on the lower section of our line.
- Evan & Vinnie have been removing some wilding pines at the top end of Pukemiro yard



Trevor Townsend water blasting his hut roof in preparation for painting (Richard.E)

AROUND THE JUNCTION:

- On 7/11 a truck load of “stuff“ arrived from Ian J’s warehouse in Auckland. The load consisted of Trevor & Leslie W’s hut, 2 x spare 6 cylinder Gardiner engines for our Trs, & another couple of pallets of bits & pieces. There is still a lot of stuff to come down yet.!!
- Dave M continues to keep our lawns cut helped by Richard S keeping the lawns around the shanty cut.



Hut flying off the truck (Trevor.W)



Trevor.w and Leslie.w’s Hut in Place (Kayne.K)

LOCOMOTIVES & ROLLING STOCK:

- **402:** Fraser R has continued fixing air leaks on this loco but there is a few more to do yet.
- **# 3 car:** Richard E was over for 3 weeks & has concentrated on getting the inside of this car completed. He has been helped by Russell W, Rob B, Kayne K, Dave M Richard S & CJ. This has been a very big job. Some finishing pieces of timber were made & fitted around the windows. Pieces of Wood that one side of the seats screw onto were made & fitted. All interior painting was completed. Finally the seat frames were cleaned & painted & screwed into place & the backs of them fitted. They found that some of the pegs that the backs fit over were too narrow so Richard S welded another piece of steel onto the frame a bit wider & then cut the old pegs off.



- **Car 1319:** We have found some of the screws that hold the window catches in place kept working loose. Ian B found that fitting a plastic insert that is fitted into concrete walls & then the screw is put in, works wonders in stopping the screws in the window catches working loose.
- **Price E:** Richard S has put a coat of black paint on this locos boiler.
- **Yb 636:** Our 2 Yb ballast wagons have sat full of ballast on & off for 12 months. When this wagon was emptied, it was found that the trap door at the bottom was rusted badly. Richard S spent a couple of days getting the old door off, making up the new one & then fitting it.

COMMITTEE CHANGES:

- After 12 years, Richard E has resigned as Secretary. Geoff B has also resigned because of bad health.
- Fraser R & Trevor W have joined the committee. Richard E's job has been split up amongst the following: Pete C, John S, Fraser R & Kayne K. At the AGM next year, we will need a few more members to get elected to the committee to carry out these jobs.
- We wish to thank Richard & Geoff for their excellent work over the years. The Secretary's is not an easy one as he has to answer a lot of emails or forward them to the committee member who looks after that side of the Club.

SUBS:

- A new year also marks the start of a new year for BTC. I know our membership committee member will soon be sending out the necessary renewal forms. Please pay your subs &, if you can afford to, include a donation.
- We would like a few more members to become trained in all aspects of running & maintaining our railway.

HUNTLY RAILWAY STATION:

- This was built in 1930s as an island station & was a very busy one until the use of coal started dropping off. It was closed & purchased by the Huntly mining museum & shifted to beside a lake on the west side of Huntly. It was overhauled there but never opened. During 2023 /4 it was shifted back to close to its original site right behind the new bus type looking station. It was shifted in halves & as the truck transporting the second section was coming over an overhead bridge over the railway, it was noticed that the first section had been set of fire. It was very badly damaged but was considered repairable. It sat like that for many months until the museum got some money together to repair the damage & completely overhaul the station as one piece. It looks very good now & was officially opened a couple of months ago.



1650 TURNS AGAIN

BY CHRIS MANN



Alan Ure turned up a pair of oil entry fittings for the oil entry into the main steam lines. These were fitted just before Xmas.

Some of the “minor” items that have taken a lot of Murray’s time to complete include the cylinder cocks, brake valve stand, spark arrestor, brake pump and pyle national generator mounting brackets, sand dome, steam dome, and ashpan.

The engine was given a trial run on air in early November. This was the first run of the engine for around 64 years, and we were all pretty excited to see it run so well. The air test of the boiler was completed just before Xmas. It is intended to steam the loco in mid January. The driveshafts are not fitted, so the engine can be run on steam without the loco moving.

We are looking forward to having the loco completed and see how it operates at Pukemiro.

John, Murray, and Paul of Pitcorn Engineering continue to make good progress towards completing Climax 1650. With the cab and water tank now fitted, and all the major steam piping completed, the loco is starting to look like an operating loco.

The Te Kuiti tradesmen are being kept busy with King Country Kitchens providing the cab lining and windows, and the local sign writer preparing the Climax logo and loco numbers for the side of the water tank.





RESTORING CARRIAGE #3

BY RICHARD ELLIS

A1477 is an NZR "A" class carriage built in 1917 at Petone. Due to World War 1 the railway workshops had lost a lot of the workforce who had left to join the armed services. This caused A1477 to be built to a simpler, more labour efficient design than pre-war "A" cars such as A1319 "Mary" which was made in 1913.

Whilst the basic design was the same, the interior panelling was simpler and the number of tie rods/turnbuckles on the chassis was reduced from four to two. The 24 labour intensive skylights found on older cars were not fitted: instead the main windows were made bigger.



Most surviving "A" class cars remain in existence because they were converted to "Way & Works" vehicles in the 1950's/1960's. Our vehicle was written off on 31/3/1958 but instead of being scrapped it had a pair of doors fitted on one side so it could carry tools, and sleeping quarters were created at each end inside complete with stoves.

It was withdrawn from service in the 1970's and found its way to the Bush Tramway Club, being donated to the BTC in 1979 by two members. The club stripped out the interior and fitted longitudinal seats (like the Mines car). A tinplate roof skin was fitted to stop the water leaks. It was used on Open days for the next 20 years.

- Above: Fraser Rose treating the carriage ceiling (Richard.E)
- Above Right: Rob Beaumont, Richard Ellis and Russell Webb in the woodwork shop. (Richard.S)
- Right: Rob Beaumont cleaning the seat squabs prior to fitting (Richard.E)



The most recent activity on A1477 has occurred since 2018 when A1319 "Mary" was finished. The core members of this new "carriage group" had previously worked on "Mary", and it has been strengthened recently with a welcome influx of new volunteers since the end of Covid.

A partial reframe of the second side has occurred, along with a partial recladding, and issues with the first side have been largely sorted out. The interior has been revamped. We started with the ceiling, which was covered in several layers of bitumen paint. We found that this had to be burnt off with a blowtorch, a very time consuming job on a 50 foot long ceiling. This revealed the original pressed metal NZR ceiling. Now painted "Villa White" the ceiling has quite a "wow" factor.

The floor has been reclad with plywood. This now has a vinyl (lino) surface covering. The interior walls have been reclad in plywood with basic timber cover strips screwed over the joints. The windows have been revamped with repaired frames holding safety (tempered) glass and installed with the original pattern window catches to enable them to open upwards (as they should). A decision was made to have an open area at one end of the carriage under the main roof so the number of windows in the main cabin has been reduced from 12 windows per side to 10 windows. This necessitated the construction of a new bulkhead after window 10.

Eventually it needed further overhauling and has spent most of the 21st century undergoing various restoration efforts. This was done by a number of different members at different times. There have also been considerable periods of inactivity, however the chassis ends had been repaired, one side had been reframed & reclad and one balcony deck and ceiling beam had been replaced by 2018.



Three of our seat frames for A1477 had to be modified to suit the seat backs. Richard Ellis here with a successful result. Richard Stratford did the welding and grinding.



Above: Russell Webb Shortening a seat squab (Richard.E)

Left: Russell Webb and Dave Mann pictured with several seat frames being painted (Richard.E)





On my latest 3 week stay at the BTC the "carriage group" managed to install 18 double seats so as to accommodate 36 passengers. The availability of "A" class carriage seats is nil, however the Goldfields railway at Waihi had some surplus "AA" seats at a very good price, so we obtained these in spite of the fact that the "AA" carriage is wider and therefore those seats in our carriage could seriously reduce the gangway width. However, on fitting the seats we found that the resultant gangway is similar to an aircraft gangway width and perfectly acceptable.



Above: First seats installed, Russell Webb modelling (Richard.E)

In 2025 the aim is to sort out exactly what we are doing with the open area at one end of the carriage, to fit the second balcony floor, to examine and work on the steps, the railings, the chassis, the brakes and the tinsplate roof (which leaks), more external wall repairs and so on. Plenty to do.

As many members know I live in Australia so I only spend about 6 weeks a year at Pukemiro Junction, which is when most of the work (but not all of the work!) on A1477 occurs. However, if any member is interested in being part of the team, if you contact me I can always suggest work that needs doing whether I am on site or not. My email address is richard.ellis.thirlmere@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

Finally I thank all the people who have worked on A1477 over the years, in particular the current group.

RICHARD ELLIS

P.S. You can also get more information about A1477 including photos from our website: www.bustramwayclub.com

Below: All seats installed in A1477 (Richard.E)





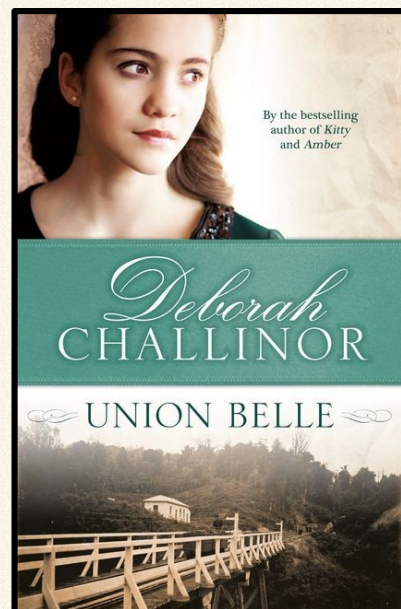
BOOK REVIEW: UNION BELLE

BY TREVOR WILLMOT

AUTHOR: DEBORAH CHALLINOR

A book review that may interest some of our members who don't know the history of the area, & reawaken memories in some of our oldest members.

I may say that this is a book I would not normally have looked at, except the edition I saw had a loco outside an engine shed, on the dust jacket, that looked much like ours & I espied the word "Pukemiro" on it as well so I picked it up, & was glad I did, as I thoroughly enjoyed the story, in its historical setting, based around the mines & what became our railway.



It is an historical novel rather than a documentary, but I found it very much worth the read.

It is called "Union Belle" written by Deborah Challinor, published in 2005 around the 1951 miners strike in the area.

Hopefully you can find it in your local library, or you can probably purchase either a physical or an e copy from various places on line.

Here is a summation from Google books/ Harper Collins Australia:

"A full-blooded romance set in times of conflict.

In 1951 some 1000 Waikato Miners went on strike to support their brothers in the Seaman's Union engaged in the 1951 Waterfront Lockout. times were tough and when the Government implemented harsh and heavy-handed emergency regulations, families were divided along political lines, and bitter accusations of sabotage and treachery began to tear small mining communities apart. Against this emotive backdrop, in the tiny mining village of Pukemiro, a story of love and treachery is also being played out in the personal lives of some of those intimately connected with the strike. Ellen McCabe, wife of the local union secretary and hero, Thomas McCabe, and a life-long Union woman, finds herself caught up the passion of the fight - and a new-found passion of her own - when a charismatic war veteran, Jack Vaughan comes to Pukemiro and befriends her husband. In a powerful tale of love and conflict, Ellen is forced to examine her loyalties and make heart-shattering choices, as the country and community around her is pulled apart."

Guys, don't be put off by the word "romance" it's still a great read, must be 5years since I read it & I still remember it!



UPCOMING DATES AND PROJECTS

JANUARY 5TH: OPEN DAY — FEBRUARY 2ND: OPEN DAY

TRACK WORKING BEE:

I am only available for the 2nd or 4th weekend of January. (Advise availability if interested)

The job that really needs doing is **the joint on the main line in the middle of the level crossing** just uphill from the station platform. I think that we also probably need to **replace at least 3 sleepers each side of the track joint.**

We should use plastic ones for this job. We noticed that when a train went over the joint that the rails on BOTH sides of the track were moving outwards. Using plastic sleepers is very much different to using wooden ones.

Contact if available: Colin Jenner - hooksandjan@actrix.co.nz

PECKETT WORKING BEE:

Sunday January 5th – The January Open Day
Saturday and Sunday 1st and 2nd February – The February Open Day weekend

1) Drain and flush the boiler

2) Clean firebox

3) Firebox work: Replace ferrules as required and Remove and remetal fusible plugs

4) Clean Smokebox

Contact if available: Chris Mann - chrism@horopito.nz

A1477 CARRIAGE RESTORATION:

The aim is to sort out exactly what we are doing with the open area at one end of the carriage, to fit the second balcony floor, to examine and work on the steps, the railings, the chassis, the brakes and the tinplate roof (which leaks), more external wall repairs and so on.

Contact if Interested: Richard Ellis - richard.ellis.thirlmere@gmail.com

UPCOMING PROJECTS REQUIRING INTEREST:

- CB Inspection Prep
- Sand-fill Track Restoration

Contact
editor@bushtramwayclub.com if interested and I will pass it on to the right person.



NOVEMBER OPEN DAY — KAYNE KNIGHT

GALLERY





THIS NEWSLETTER WAS EDITED BY KAYNE KNIGHT FOR
THE BUSH TRAMWAY CLUB.

IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING RELEVANT TO THE BTC,
WHETHER IMAGES, ARTICLES OR PROJECTS PLEASE
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