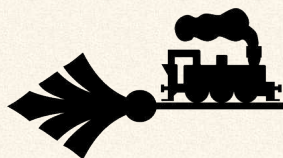


# PUKEMIRO JUNCTION

VOLUME 19 ISSUE 3 — THE GLEN AFTON LINE — MAY 2025



BUSH TRAMWAY CLUB — ESTABLISHED 1965



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# EDITORIAL



Hello all again for the third newsletter of 2025!

Apologies, I'm a bit late on this one, a career in events can certainly rip your time away from you if you let it!

What a last few months it has been! Coming into the steam season with not one but two operating steam locomotives (although with one in trial phase) after the successful restoration and return of Climax 1650!

I have a ton of great material sent in from members, covering the quite substantial goings on of the last couple months. So I thank everyone that contributed!

Outside of the newsletter and social media I had my own little win coaxing one of the NZR Jiggers to life again so hopefully with a little more work it'll be fit to run on the line again.

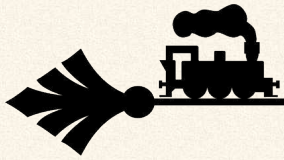
Overall with the hard work that has been going in lately from long time and new members, I hope this newsletter can give a small glimpse at what we can achieve.

Keep sending in material, whether its about the goings on, the history of the railway and its locomotives, or something members may find relevant.

To a prosperous second half of the year everyone!

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





# THE GREAT BUSH TRAMWAY CLUB

IT WAS SOMEWHERE IN THE WAIKATO  
IN THE LAND OF BUSH AND SCRUB;  
THEY HOUSED AN INSTITUTION  
CALLED THE GREAT BUSH TRAMWAY CLUB.

THEY WERE KEEN AND EAGER PEOPLE  
ON THAT RUGGED MOUNTAIN SIDE,  
AND AN ENGINE NEVER STEAMED  
THAT THE TICKETED COULDN'T DRIVE.

BUT THEIR STYLE OF PLAYING TRAINS  
WAS IRREGULAR NOT FLASH.  
THEY HAD MIGHTY LITTLE SCIENCE  
BUT A MIGHTY LOT OF DASH.

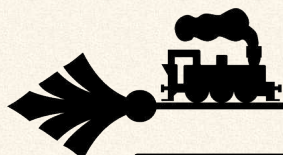
THEY PLAYED ON MOUNTAIN RAIL TRACKS  
SOME QUESTIONABLE, SOME STRONG.  
WITH THEIR OVERALLS ALL GRIMY  
AND THEIR FACES NEVER LONG.

WITH ENGINES THAT HAVE BEEN RESTORED,  
AND SOME THAT EVEN GO,  
AND CARRIAGES THAT HAVE BEEN DONE UP,  
THEY PUT ON QUITE A SHOW.

THEY GET EXCITED OVER SCRUB FIRES  
AND BUILDINGS AND PITS.  
BUT WHEN MONEY STARTS GETTING SHORT  
THEY HAVE TO USE THEIR WITS.

SO SOMEWHERE IN THE WAIKATO  
IN THE LAND OF BUSH AND SCRUB,  
YOU'LL SEE THE GREY SMOKE RISING  
FROM THE GREAT BUSH TRAMWAY CLUB





# BUSH TRAMWAY CLUB INC

## REPORT

BY COLIN JENNER



© Kayne Knight

*402 heading down the line to the Sandfill during the March open day (Kayne K.)*

*Lesley, Pete, Trevor, and John having an intense discussion on the viability of a rail line to the moon (Kayne K.)*



© Kayne Knight

**WELCOME TO ANOTHER BTC NEWSLETTER.**

### OPEN DAYS

**March:** This was a fine day but it was a pretty quiet day passenger wise. We carried 56 adults, 30 children & 13 preschoolers.

The train consist was a Meremere diesel loco at each end of the 2 carriage train.

**April:** This was a fine day but was again a pretty quiet day but we carried a few more passengers than March. We carried 79 adults, 12 children & 16 preschoolers.

It only takes other attractions to draw our passengers away. I know there was an open day with the rescue helicopter at Waikato Hospital. Also there was a fire engine & an ambulance. Reports told that there were a lot of families there.

Many thanks to all who turn up & help make these days a success.

### CHARTERS

We have had 2 since last news letter:

- A touring group from the Ffestiniog railway in Wales.
- A group of BSA motor bike Club members came & made us their lunch stop.

Teresa helped by Ian B, Kelly-Ann, Isla & Finn McC. They really worked as a team putting the filled rolls together. It looked like a chain gang operation!!

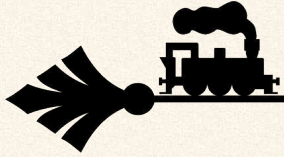
A very good lunch was provided. There was a lot of BSA bikes, most had been ridden there but a few came on trailers. Jan & I were away for the first trip but back for the second.

We have no more planned at present.

Thanks to all who turn up & help make these days a success.

**(TERESA'S REPORT ON PAGE 15)**





## LOCOMOTIVES:

**Diesel loco 401:** The motor starter packed up just after the last train during the April open day. Ian B tried several ways of getting it going again but no go!! He worked on it during the next Wednesday & found that it looked as if the motor always stopped in one place. The teeth on the starter motor Bendix drive & the ring gear on the fly wheel had a lot of burring on the teeth so a short time with a small disc grinder corrected this problem & the motor started ok.

The tachometer on this loco packed up as well. He first off thought that the problem was the very short piece of hose that joined 2 drives together had broken, which it had. He couldn't get a new piece of hose to go over the 2 different sized shafts but wondered if the tacho itself was the problem. It turned out that that was the case so him & a friend fitted a digital one to replace the original one.

**402:** At the end of the February open day, we noticed a bad air leak from just under the driving panel in the cab.

Fraser R & Ian B found that the air leak was from the gear selector which was just under the driving panel on the left hand side. This wasn't an easy place to work & we have never had a problem with this before. They eventually managed to get the selector apart & fitted new gaskets

This work now means that when selecting another gear, before you had to go just up past the mark on the panel & then back down to the mark. Now you don't need to go past the mark. We also can't get 4<sup>th</sup> gear but we never use that

Anyway.

**Peckett:** This loco has now passed its boiler inspections & is all go again.

## Climax 1650:

This loco arrived on 28<sup>th</sup> March after a major overhaul that took 14 years. To house the loco in the shed, we had to have a major shunt around & now the pink Tr has to remain outside. The loco has been in steam about 4 times since its arrival but still needs a lot of work to get it so it can haul trains.

**(SEE THE TRIP ON PAGE 11)**



*Ian and Fraser become contortionists in 401 (Teresa B.)*







### WAGONS:

**Xp 474:** Bruce McL has been working on the roof of this wagon. He has found that the timber has so much rot in it that he must replace the whole of the timber. He has just finished removing all the timber.

**Xc track wagon:** The roof on this wagon is in much the same condition as Xp 474 so Bruce has put 2 x tarpulines on the roof to keep the weather out. As soon as the Xp wagon is completed, this wagon will go into the shed for the same treatment.

### CARRIAGES:

**#3 car:** Richard E has spent the last 3 weeks at the Junction working on this car. The work this time entailed sorting out the platform at the lower end of the car. There was a tremendous amount of work done & those who came & helped were Russell W, Fraser R, Rob & Sue B. There is still plenty to do on this end of the car.

(SEE RICHARD'S REPORT ON PAGE 17)

### IAN J'S TREASURES:

We have recently received a truck & trailer load of Ian's projects. The only place we could unload them onto was the edge of the carpark. The truck arrived at 5.30pm & left just as darkness was coming down.



*Above - Ian J's Treasures unloaded, including a bush jigger. This jigger was unusual in having a 6 wheeled chain driven bogie at the rear, and a 4 wheeled bogie at the front. (Richard E.)*

*Left - Richard S. with Tony H. during the March open day (Richard S.)*





### **ALONG THE LINE:**

Richard S has made an attachment that now means a porter power can now be used in the gym crow to bend the rails. It makes life a lot easier than having to manually crow the rails.

Richard S has painted the yellow line on the station platform. This is there to stop our passengers getting too close to the edge of the platform so forms part of the safety side of our railway.

New member Graeme C has overhauled our petrol drill which is used for drilling the holes in sleepers to hold the rails to the sleepers.

The company that made the drill are long out of business & we haven't really found a company that could overhaul it. It is a Japanese brand that was fairly common in power tools some years ago.

**(SEE THE RECENT PROGRESS OF THE TRACK TEAM ON PAGE 9)**



*Hunter using the overhauled petrol drill (Michael A.)*

**WE HAVE HAD SEVERAL NEW MEMBERS JOIN IN THE LAST LITTLE WHILE. WE HOPE YOU WILL BECOME PART OF OUR OPERATING MEMBERS. WE WELCOME YOU TO OUR CLUB.**





## AGM

This was held on 23/3/25 & was attended by 20 Odd members. The new committee consists mostly of the old committee.

Pete C is Treasurer, John S is Secretary. There was no one wanting to stand for Chairman or Vice Chairman so the committee will have to sort a couple out at next meeting.

Apart from the Treasurer & Secretary, the committee consists of Guy C, Fraser R, Ashley T, Trevor W & Kayne K.

Richard S stood down this year. We thank him for all his ideas & work on the committee over many years.

The new constitution was approved so it can now be sent away for registration.

A shunting refresher course was held which consisted of the use of the correct signals to use.

*Images courtesy of Guy C.*







## (RE)MAKING TRACKS

OUR TRACK TEAM HAS  
BEEN HARD AT WORK,  
HERE'S A LOOK INTO  
THEIR RECENT  
PROGRESS



### **(Continued from Colin's report)**

A working bee was held for the weekend of 12 & 13<sup>th</sup> April & attended by Mike & Hunter A, Scotty W & his son, Dave M & CJ & new member Graeme C.

The job this time was to remove & dig out the track-sets down to the foundations of the track at the level crossing on the main line just up past the station platform.

We then had to put some ballast down to form the bed, replace all the sleepers, screw the rails to the sleepers & then put new ballast for the 2 track-sets, the digging out took longer than we had expected. The new ballast was put in up to the top of the rails for part of the area so it forms the level crossing.

A community work crew had spent the day before digging out the ballast from around one track-set.





Dave M, Mike & Hunter A & CJ have replaced 4 sleepers at the top end of coal cutting. Dave has dug the ballast away from around another 3 sleepers in this area.

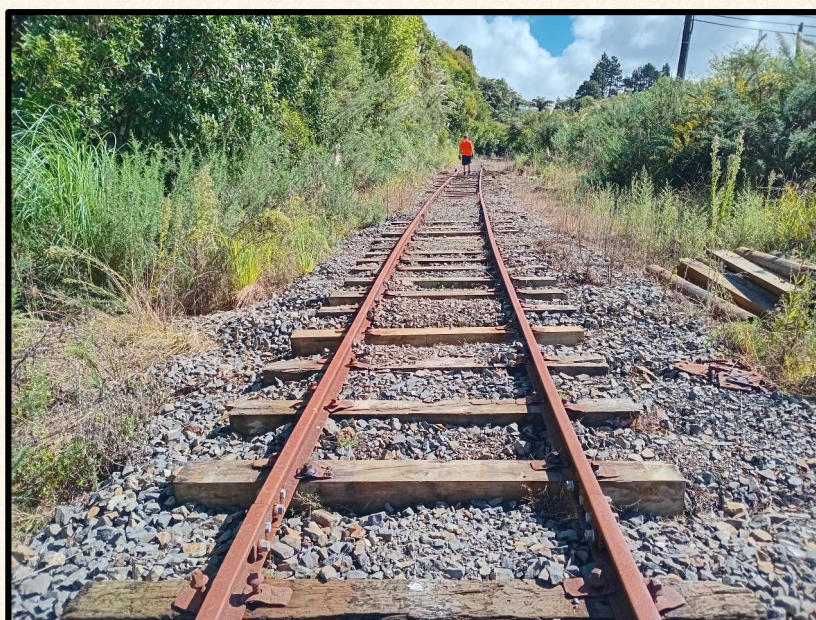
Richard S & Evan W crowed a replacement rail for the cracked one that was damaged during the February 2023 earthquake.

Mike & Hunter A have been out most Saturdays working at the sandfill. They have gauged the track from the top of the sandfill to the first slip, approx. 100 m & it is ok. They have replaced some sleepers at the top end of this area.

*Above and Below – A team of 8 members replaced both rails and 8 sleepers at the Glen Afton end of the yard (Michael A)*



*Replacement sleepers beyond sandfill looking towards Pukemiro (above) and Glen Afton (below) (Michael A.)*







# CLIMAX 1650 RETURNS!

A PHOTO GALLERY  
THANKS TO GUY C,  
CHRIS M AND  
RICHARD E.



*Images courtesy of Guy C.*





*Images Top Left, Bottom Left, Bottom Right courtesy of Guy C.*

*Images Left Middle, Top Right courtesy of Richard E.*

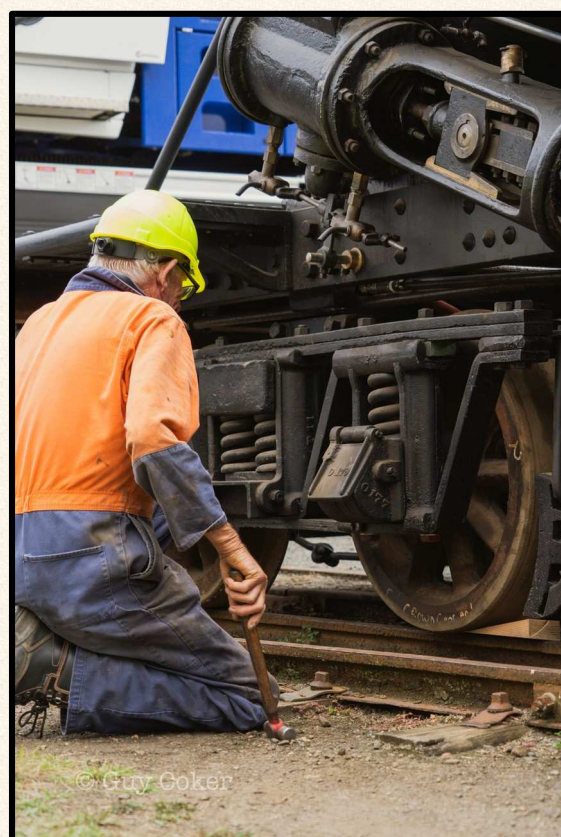






*Images Top Left, Bottom Left, Top Right, Bottom Right courtesy of Guy C.*

*Image Left Middle courtesy of Richard E.*







*Guy C.*



*Chris M.*



*Richard E.*



# CHARTERS



**BY  
TERESA  
BETTISON**

On Tuesday 11th March, the much anticipated Ffestinog Travel Group (Welsh train enthusiasts) charter was set to take place in brilliant weather conditions.

The charter crew waited, and waited and waited. Oops, 2pm became 3.15pm but our wait was worth it. (The bus had been held up with road works and .... getting a little lost finding The Junction from Rotorua).

Richard Stratford at least got a ride back up in their bus - he suspected they may have got a little lost, and met them down by entrance sign.!

Probably this group will spend much longer on a future tour, as with thanks to Richard for helping with the guided tours, they could not spend a lot of quality time - their schedule didn't allow extra time with us. Fascinated with the restoration work in progress.

A couple of donations were gratefully received - and once again a special thanks to Guy coming to our aid to drive the TR when it was realised 401 could not be repaired in time. (Fraser was more than a willing worker for us with the repairs).

A special thanks to Gail, Derek, and Ashley. Ian was the other driver on 402. I try and make morning teas and lunches a little interesting for our crews. It is appreciated those that make themselves available for these charters.







On Saturday 15th March - BSAOC (BSA Motorbike enthusiasts) The Club hosted this group. They arrived in time to grab a cold drink and straight onto the waiting train at 12.30pm.

Do I mention both Finn and I "lost" where the train had got to, we thought it spent a VERY LONG TIME away at The Glen Afton end (where-as, it was actually down the Rotowaro end of trip.... eer, Finn and I didn't notice it travelling through). Thank you Finn for walking up to check out why the long-wait!

While this was happening, a car of interested passer-bys called in and wanted to have a ride! It was explained this was a private charter, and they couldn't be allowed to wander around The Junction as we had to consider the security of the numerous bikes and gear left around for our safe-keeping!! Never a dull moment!

A great Bike Group, they enjoyed their lunches and then the guided walk-tour. A couple had a flat tyre to repair, and another bike was being taken back on a trailer.

The Meremere Locos performed as should, with extreme thanks to Fraser for going over and above "normal" call-up duties to get 401's problems sorted in time for this charter.

First time in kitchen for Kelly-Anne, Isla and Finn to help at a charter, so well done them. Much appreciated.



*Images courtesy of Teresa B.*





# NUMBER 3 PROGRESS

**BY RICHARD ELLIS**



As members may know I spent 3 weeks in March/April 2025 at the Pukemiro Junction site assisted by the "No.3 Carriage Group" with the aim of further restoring the BTC owned "A" class carriage "A1477" (built in 1917) to working order. The Club used this carriage in the early life of the BTC to carry passengers up and down from Rotowaro to Pukemiro Junction, but it has now been out of use for many years. This restoration project has taken the BTC some 20 years to achieve so far with various people leading the restoration of the carriage over the years.

*Newly rebuilt end balcony  
with Rob, Sue and Russell  
(Richard E.)*

However, since finishing "Mary" some years ago the remnants of the "Mary" group have taken on the restoration of the A1477 car with some solid progress.

The current group, consisting of Russell W, Rob & Sue B, Trevor T, Fraser R, Richard S & Richard E plus others have, in recent weeks, been working on completing the balcony area at the Rotowaro end of the carriage. This will feature an open area for visitors to stand and admire the local landscape in the future beyond that normally seen on an "A" class carriage balcony (about 5 times the usual balcony size).

Progress recently has been rapid, but the group still needs to sort out various other areas like the timber work above the windows, tackle any issues with the roof, and sort out the chassis brakes, steelwork supporting the steps, steelwork and railings for the end balconies etc.

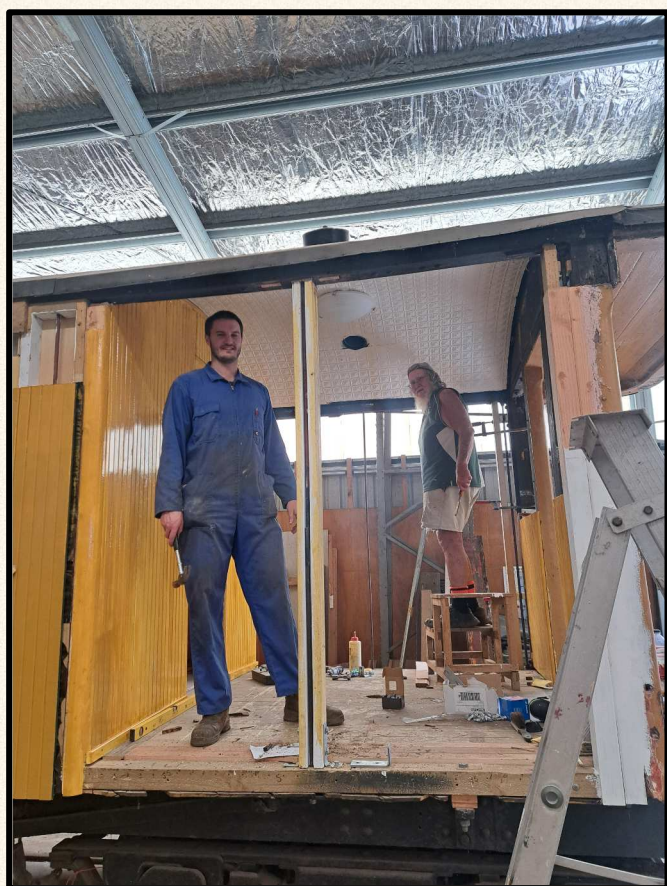
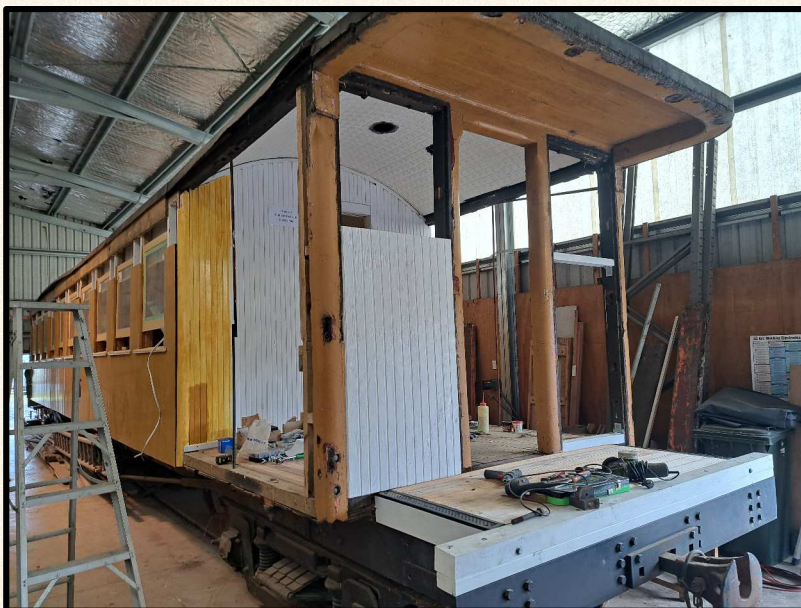
It is likely that the next burst of activity will be towards the end of the year, but if anyone is interested in "doing a bit" between now and then please contact me, Richard Ellis, at [richard.ellis.thirlmere@gmail.com](mailto:richard.ellis.thirlmere@gmail.com)



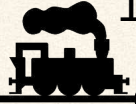




*Rob, Sue, Richard, Fraser and Russell working on the open end of #3, painting and installing floors, fingerboard and doors (Richard E.)*







# UPCOMING DATES AND PROJECTS

**JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup>: OPEN DAY — JULY 6<sup>TH</sup>: OPEN DAY**

## **THE RAILWAY REQUIRES ALUMINIUM CANS**

Please can members bring along any cans they would  
otherwise recycle.

### **MAJOR TRACK WORK**

With work to stabilise the coal cutting corner ongoing, help is always needed. Alongside urgent maintenance work, the major goal is to finish the sandfill curve which will open up a significant extension to passenger travel. Keep an eye on emails from [editor@bushtramwayclub.com](mailto:editor@bushtramwayclub.com) for future dates.

Contact [editor@bushtramwayclub.com](mailto:editor@bushtramwayclub.com) if you'd like to get involved with other maintenance around the station and yards (there's plenty to do).





*Above – Glenbrook's River Steam Rover trip with WW644 stopped at Huntly (Teresa B.)*

*Right – Mary before restoration and currently with lights on at night, Murder mystery event anyone? (Richard E.)*



*Below – View from Climax 1650's Cab (Chris M.)*



## GALLERY



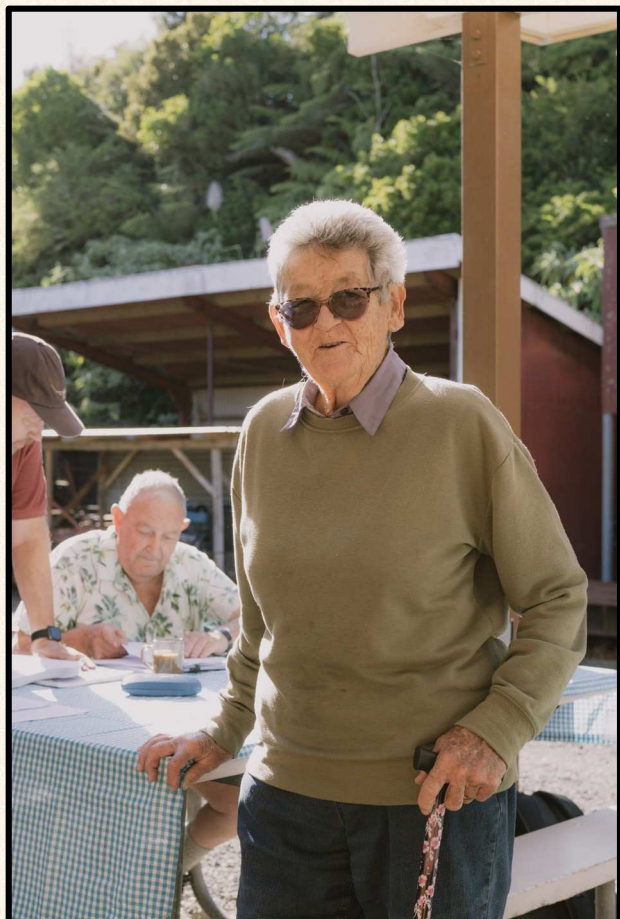




*Above – Climax 1650 working with E111, and prior to restoration at the BTC*

*Left – Ian and Jan at the AGM (Guy C.)*

*Below – Bb 636 with the morning passenger train at Glen Afton (Trevor Terry 1965, Provided by Richard S.)*







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