



Bay of Islands Vintage Railway

March 2011

102 Gillies Street, Kawakawa. NZ

(Risking Nothing But Success)

Website: www.bayofislandsvintagerailway.org.nz

Email : mikethsteam@hotmail.com

Postal: P.O. Box 142, Kawakawa

Ph: (09) 404-0684

Mobile: 021-171-2697

(Editor Johnson Davis Ph (09) 404-0636; email kruza@xtra.co.nz)

Devastation in the form of Cyclone Wilma hit us on the 29th January (below left). Next day, 30th January we celebrated , in the sun. our 3rd Annual Concert at the Station (below right). We though we were hard done by, but then.....



... a National Disaster hit New Zealand; 12.51pm February 22nd Christchurch was hit with their second earthquake.

Kawakawa was deploring their second 100 year flood in 4 years. Poor Christchurch had, unbelievably, a greater quake only 4 months after their last one in September. Our sincerest sympathy goes out to all those who lost loved ones. Our best wishes go to our fellow Cantabrians as they face the huge challenges over the next days, weeks months and years as they seek to rebuild their beloved City.



Kia Kaha Christchurch.. Our thought are with you

Operations Mangers (Mike Bradshaw) Report February 2011.

What a marvelous time to fly away to Wales, just 3 days after the most devastating flood and track damage we have ever known. I was very glad and impressed to see that it was all put back together on my return and I was able to drive the steam engine Gabriel on Saturday and Sunday. Speaking to people in town, both business and private; everyone was pleased to have the train running again. There is no doubt about it , we are an important link in the tourism chain for Kawakawa, Bay of Islands and even Northland.

Johnson has mentioned the people and organisations who have assisted, both physically and financially in getting the track back together, but we are very also grateful for the normal on-going work , mostly behind the scenes in carriage rebuilding and other non-operational but vital bits of work. Thank you Harding and Garth.

Now we can get back to where we were before the wheels fell off; the children's playground equipment and BBQ at Taumarere are high on the agenda. Planning for the next Puff N Pull Day on the 22nd May and the very important Rugby Steam Sevens coming up in September is also high on our agenda. The plan of attack here is that to avoid huge traffic congestion and parking chaos at the United-Kawakawa Rugby clubrooms, supporters and visitors will be encouraged to park in Kawakawa. We will run a quick shuttle out to the Club so that a 20 minute service will be possible. This will create a new experience for our area. Traveling by train to watch a Rugby Tournament. However our passengers will have to be able to get off and on at Taumarere so a new Station will have to be built as close as possible to the venue. We have found that platforms consisting of half round posts, backed with old sleepers and capped with a timber rail can easily and quickly be built So, the materials have already been purchased and our Community Max team will make a start next week Truck load of river metal, compliments of Cyclone Wilma, will form the majority of the back fill required and a topping of fines well compacted will make for a platform that will do the job.

Having a temporary terminus at Taumarere, which does not have road access, is not ideal and we lose many potential passengers, especially coach parties who only want a one-way trip on their way North or South. But with a Station at the Rugby Club with adequate parking and coach turning facilities perhaps we can capture some of these potential extra passengers. When the facilities at the Club are complete we will approach the coach Companies and let them know that one way trips are now possible.

During the track repairs both of our over-worked earthmoving machines suffered the odd failure but these were fixed fairly quickly. Our ongoing trouble with our rubber track digger finally came to a head when one of the track idlers really gave up the ghost On examination we found the bearings had failed and continuing to use the machine has seriously damaged the axle and wheel centers. Both have been built up with weld by gun-welder Harding and are currently being machined on our newly acquired lathe. Buying a new idler would have been about half the cost of the lathe so we are on the winning side

I have always maintained that people returning from overseas trips should not base the rest of the world by banging on about what they saw and did. Suffice to say that the main reason for my visit to UK was to ride on the first train from the Ffestiniog Railway onto the Welsh Highland. Having spent 5 years working on these two railways it was particularly satisfying to see a lot of hard work by a great gang of people actually came to fruition on a amazing 40m railway. (*Shirl says I also went to see our Grandkids for the first time*)

We have now obtained , at last, several drums of track screws and spikes. This means that we can fasten down the 300 plus sleepers, which have been put in but not fastened fully and also, change more sleepers. Four years ago we had nearly 100% good sleepers but some of those "good" ones were 30 years old and so gradually have packed up especially when helped along by floods and washouts so sleeper changing will be an ongoing job.

Volunteers Wanted

Yes the old adage, "many hands makes light work," still applies and we need more hands/volunteers. Can you help. NOW's a good time to start a new career Would you like to be a steam engine driver? ,or a diesel engine driver?, Do you enjoy meeting people from all around the world . If so become a Guard or a shop attendant on the train. Skilled trades people especially carpenters also most welcome. Do you enjoy painting or gardening. Yes your help would be most appreciated..

If you can help please contact Mike Bradshaw at the station or any of the Trustees. Please help us keep this iconic experience "on track" and help us get to to Opua



The Kerikeri Chapter does it again. Raising funds outside the Warehouse Kerikeri 12 March .(L-R) Howard Lunn, Grainger Brown, Jack Beggs Hazel Brown and Stephanie Beggs . Big thanks to the Warehouse for their support.



Puha Banditos



Carleen Still



O-Roadies



Budapest Swing



Annette and Kim



Mirage



Shirley May



3rd Annual Concert at the Station

A great big thanks to all our artists who braved the elements and gave their time to help us raise funds for the Railway. Like true artists the *Show Must Go On* and undeterred by the wiles of Cyclone Wilma they braved the floods and elements and gave their all. There was only one cancellation and that was from our staunch supporters Bella Arcapella who had some members flood bound. Yes the numbers were down as the road north and SH11 to Paihia were still closed, at times, right up to and even during the Concert. To those who attended thank you one and all for your much needed support.

This year we even went international with the Dixie Hits all the way from North Wales. Nice to welcome first-timers The O-Roaders, who are normally a threesome but were down to two, due to the floods... and wasn't it great to see our Chief organiser Shirley May give us a song or three. Good one Shirley and thanks for a job well done.



The Dixie Hits (John & Sue)

(Above) Julian Scarisbric came all the way from Wales for a ride on Gabriel but Cyclone Wilma ruined that. Here he enjoys a sausage at the Gabriel Club tent. (Below) Manning the Gabriel Club tent Grainer Brown, Howard Lunn & Jenny Andrew serve the Lady in Red; former Guard, Naomi Waterhouse. (Bottom left and right) Just enjoying the music.



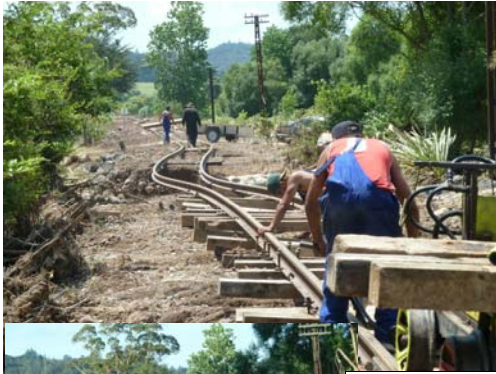


Cyclone Wilma

Cyclone Wilma started with steady rain about noon on the 28th and flooding was to peak with extra high tides at 4am Saturday morning of the 29th January. Therefore there were no photos taken when the flood was at its peak and when all the damage was done. The spectacular photos of the 1934 floods (Top left and above left) have been provided courtesy John Frew. What is amazing in these photos is the flood levels seen on both sides of the track . Equally amazing is that in the photo (above left) the train running is fully operational in spite of the flood levels. (Top right) This photo taken from the town side shows the damage in much the same area as that of the 1934 photo. The other photo (above right) was taken about 100 metres further along, between bridges 2 and 3 , and shows the embankment totally gone. Most of the damage had been caused by logs which had been felled upstream in the Waiomio Valley and not removed from the flood plain



(Left) Taken on the 29th this photo shows that the railway has almost totally disappeared under the flood waters.(Right) Freddie does the business on day one as the first passenger train commenced running again on Friday 4th March
(Photos courtesy John Frew)



Above- Removing the sleepers.



Left- The sleepers gone.



Below Work starts on restoring the embankment



(Above) Mike and Malcolm tidying up the embankment (Below) The relaying and spiking of the sleepers begin.



Bugger... Lets clean this bloody mess up... ..and so they did.

What a magnificent effort from Dave Mowat (General Manager) Graeme Winterbourn (Track Inspector) Dennis Hewitt (Volunteer extraordinaire) Mike Ngakoti (Track Supervisor) Malcolm Barnfather (Driver and Jack- of- all- trades) . Also thank goodness for the Community Max guys; Tawhero Mangu, James Hine, Jarvis Mangu, Macky Gray, Zac Renton, and Terence Rakei. The CM guys started on the 7 Feb and their first jobs were going to be to install the playground and BBQ at Taumarere Station .

And what about the great support from the Community. Brilliant Our grateful thanks goes to;

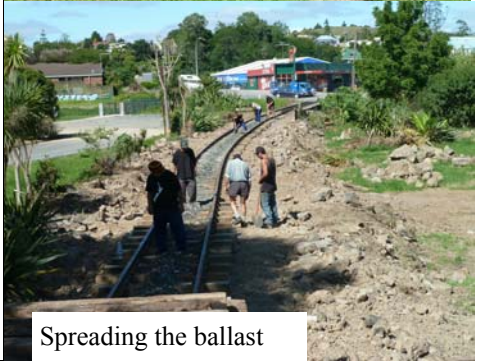
Owen Construction (Dave Owen) Transport of ballast and donation of brown rock. **Steve Taylor**, loan of large digger; **Ken Shepherd** , Transport of digger, **Stan Morley** , offer of loader and driver, **Mrs D.E.(Mac) Butcher Whangarei**, donation, **Mrs May Patton Kerikeri**, donation ; and also offers of help from **Peter (Doc) Halliday** **BOI Rotary** grant \$2000 and **Bay of Islands Whangaroa Community Board**, grant \$3000

Thank You One and All

It was only due to your wonderful support and effort we saw the first passenger train commence services on the 4th March.



(Above) All the sleepers and spikes are back in place and await ballasting. (Below) Graham Winterbourn lays the ballast as the ballast wagons come into service for the first time



Spreading the ballast



More screwing (of the spikes that is) from the guys



Choo, Choo; Day two and Gabriel is back in business. What a great sight it was to see her as she steamed onto the newly laid section immediately after Bridge one.



...another washout



Community Max 2011 with Denis Hewitt
(L-R) Jarvis Mangu, Macky Gray, Tawhero Mangu, James Hine, Denis Hewitt, Zac Renton (Absent) Terence Rakei



“ Now when we get to the Cook Islands”... Our local MP, Trustee and MC for the concert ,John Carter enjoys time out with his lovely wife Leoni



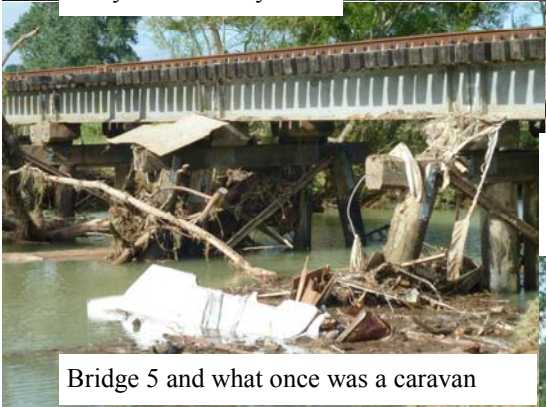
2 days after the Cyclone



A new Puff and Pull Event??
..being “trialled” by James Hine and Tawhero Mangu Who knows?



Vanessa and Frank Leadley enjoy the concert with Labour and local MP Kelvin Davis



Bridge 5 and what once was a caravan



**The beginning of the Cycleway
Kawakawa to Opua ??**

No way . This is the restored section over Bridge 1 waiting for the rails to be replaced. However the Railway are fully supportive and ready and willing to play their part of *Pou Herenga Tai* ; the first Cycleway in NZ which will run (cycle that is) Coast to Coast. (Right) Our poor neighbors the Kawakawa Bowling Club cop it again. Badly hit in 2007 this is the last thing they needed on the eve of the 100th celebration in 2012. Our workers offered to help with their clean -up if required , See also 1934 flood photo (page 4) and yes, they also got badly whacked then.



Julie Davis with sons Reuben (right) and Ezra (left) enjoys the Concert with Grandma Lorraine (a potential performer at next years concert?)



Taumarere



Longbridge (Photo Barney Houston)