



## ***From the Trust's Funding Manager .....***

If ever asked to list the most frustrating thing I have ever been associated with, our attempts to get funding for the extension of the railway to Opuā, Gabriel's boiler and associated projects would have to be top of the list!

As many know, we formed a company, Northland Adventure Experience (NAX) Ltd to obtain and administer the funding from the Provincial Growth Fund (PGF), with the Directors being Hon John Carter, John Law, Murray McCully, Rowena Tana, Pita Tipene and myself as Chairman. Wayne Hutchinson from Whangarei is our Development Manager, and Sue Hamnett, Minutes Secretary. The 3 Shareholders in the Company are BOIVR holding 51%, FNDC holding 25% and the Cycleway Trust 24%.

An application was sent off in July last year. The project included restoration of the railway to Opuā, Gabriel's replacement boiler, repositioning a permanent cycleway within the railway corridor, significant building and rolling stock developments at Kawakawa, completing the restoration of the historic steam ship "Minerva," a new railway station/transport hub with a wide range of components at the area known as the Colenso Triangle in Opuā, a job training programme particularly for the Railway and "Minerva", and an art trail along the railway / cycleway. Once the project is completed we would have been in a position to offer up to 25 jobs to local people, and be a major local employer.

It was an excellent and highly detailed application and we had great hopes for it as it met a wide number of significant needs for the region. It was accompanied by 12 very strong Letters of Support from community organisations and groups. But after over 4 months of waiting with not a single query from the PGF it was turned down in December without a cent! It seems it was a political decision with the application turned down by some MP's deciding Northland had had enough funding support! It was a devastating blow.

However, NAX decided the project is far too important to give up on, so we have retained all the components, but broken the project down into "chunks" with the Kawakawa buildings, Gabriel's boiler and rolling stock, railway line restoration, and "Minerva" components being the subject of the revised application to the PGF, FNDC funding the design, construction and administration costs for the cycleway, FNHL and/or others funding the Opuā station development, and Ngati Hine/KiwiRail taking responsibility for the job training component. The total cost for all components is nearly \$16 million, a little more than the first application but retaining all the significant elements. This revised application was sent off at the end of March after BOIVR had a meeting with a PGF representative, and received strong signals that by breaking the project up in this way showing the levels of community support from our partners that we had a good chance of success this time, and we could possibly hear a result by the end of April.

But now we have the corona virus pandemic! What effects that will have on the meetings to determine PGF funding, and the level of funding that will be available, is impossible to predict, but it may not be good! We have done all we can, and now we just have to endure another anxious wait.

Keep those fingers crossed! Hopefully, the wait will be worth it!!

Frank Leadley



Gabriel appears – taken out of the big green shed to make room for our Concert at the Station – 1<sup>st</sup> March





## Goings on around BOIVR: Concert at the Station 1<sup>st</sup> March



**Left:** Carleen Still

**Right:** Martin family

**Below Left:**  
Jack Tane

**Middle:** Kerikeri  
Ukulele Group

**Below Right:**  
\* Ukulele Group play  
to the audience



## Railway Concert at the Station - another vintage success.

The 11<sup>th</sup> annual "Concert At The Station" held in the big green shed was filled to the back doors with a crowd who revelled in the wide range of top quality performances, with MC Mayor John Carter even joining in a duet with Country and Western singer Carleen Still.

However, there was a sombre start with the news that the opening performance by the Bay Of Islands kapa haka group would not be performing, due to the death of one of its members the night before.

So it was left to the loyal Railway Concert supporters, the **Bella A Capella** barbershop ladies, to lead off the afternoon's performance, and this they did with a delightful medley of songs that amply demonstrated why the group had won a New Zealand competition and had performed on the stage in an international competition in the USA, and were now in train-ing for the New Zealand National Singing Contest in 2021. Not to be outdone in the award-winning stakes came **Te Whanau** – the Robson family comprising Jessie Robson, wife Jane and mother-in law Millie had won the New Zealand Country Music Entertainer of the Year Award in 2015 and demonstrated their great talent to an enthusiastic audience, which was captivated by 9-year-old Ngakau – an extremely enthusiastic train buff who dreams of one day being a driver on a steam locomotive. Ngakau's bracket of songs gave ample demonstration of his ability to stay on track to achieve his ambition.

Keeping to the train theme came the **Kerikeri Ukulele Group** with a bracket of railway-themed songs which had the audience showing their huge appreciation of the talents in this group by singing along, foot tapping and huge applause. The melodies were powerfully and enthusiastically presented, and the various sounds of bells, train toots, cries of "All aboard" and thundering wheels added great realism to this excellent series of popular songs.

**Carleen Still** has been a regular performer at the Railway's Concert At The Station with her powerful belt-it-out, knock 'em down style of Country music which again had the audience joining in and foot-tapping to her wonderfully presented songs. The duet with MC Mayor John Carter was a reminder that John should stick with politics, but was nevertheless a great personal touch which the audience fully appreciated. **2**





## Railway Concert at the Station ... continued ...

Then came the group, which was the Concert highlight as 2 young members of the **Martin Family** - Atawhai aged 15 and Puroto aged 14 - together with their mother Xena with violin and two 'cellos presented a series of jaunty, well-known tunes. The incredible talent, relaxed style, and magnificent presentation earned them a richly-deserved standing ovation. This family has a wonderful future ahead of them, and the Railway Concert organisers will be wanting them back next year!

But it was left to the relaxed, cheerful, colourful and highly entertaining **Jack Tane** to bring the Concert to a close as he led the audience in a sing-along to popular songs. The full participation of the large audience was ample demonstration of the enjoyment they had received from the 2020 Concert At The Station.

The support of so many from across the Far North community was very heartening to BOIVR as it works towards the full restoration of this unique heritage railway.

Thanks go to the Trust Concert Committee and the support of Bay of Islands College in providing the stage.



\* Bella a Capella



\* Te Whanau



\*John Carter & Carleen

## Goings on around BOIVR:



### "Curry Train"

This was held on the evening of 19<sup>th</sup> March.

Three choices of meat or a vegetable curry – all were super delicious!

Food provided by North Indian Food. This is 1<sup>st</sup> of many events planned by the Gabriel Club to delight visitors and to support local business.

**LEFT:** Esmae with Kingfisher the dining car out, prepped for an evening run; at the station in Taumarere. Some ate inside!



**ABOVE:** Just some of our visitors enjoying a convivial repast. Including the driver, Frits Schouten 3<sup>rd</sup> from right, guard Denis 2<sup>nd</sup> from left back, & Grainger Brown, by box, who, with wife Hazel provided the picnic tables at Taumarere



### **RIGHT:**

This editions' mystery object: Could it be used to cook the naan?





**LEFT:** Denis Hewitt was pleased to meet up with ex school friend Betty Stuart; with Jim Dolan & David Lloyd when they came to call. \*\*  
**RIGHT:** BOIVR ran trains till Sunday 22nd March when the Trust decided to close to protect all our volunteers against COVID19. A busy weekend.



## From the workshop:



**LEFT:** Some of the jobs lined up for the workshop staff - refurbishment for Fantail (red AL carriage); the completion of engine repair for DSA225; & revamp for AL (green) carriage Pukeko.  
**LEFT:** rare view - shed cleared ... for the Concert



Pukeko's handbrake needed to be re-positioned, and new floor plates made. Gavin Davidson tightens the bolts



**LEFT:** Morris McLeary de-rusts the tanker - but is he lying down on the job?! It's proving to be a long and tedious task. Thanks for tackling it, Morris.



Carriage "Blue Heron" had a facelift before summer Christmas holiday runs in the workshop, whilst DSA 225 receives mechanical attention.

## Peter Matthews 1927-2019

A well respected medic in the Islands, retired to Okaihau, and was a prominent founder of BOIVR's Operations Committee and member of the Gabriel (Supporters) Club for many years. In addition, he regularly manned the train shop in the years before the platform Signal Box Shop was established. Pic 2013



**BOIVR Trust sincerely thanks all our volunteers for their magnificent work to keep our trains running.**





It is with great sadness that the Bay of Islands Vintage Railway Trust records the death on 26 March of Keith, husband of our hard-working, diligent and highly dedicated Trust Chair, Sue Hamnett. Keith's passing came very suddenly and their only daughter Lucy has returned from the UK to support Sue. The circumstances have been made all the more tragic due to the restraints imposed by the Corona Virus lockdown which has meant it is impossible to have a funeral.

Keith's passing comes after the death of Stuart Leitch, who also died from cancer, on 6<sup>th</sup> January, husband of Anne our Trust Secretary and an incredibly industrious and conscientious supporter of the Railway.

Our sincere gratitude, great sympathy, and very best wishes are extended to both these fine ladies.

*Frank Leadley (on behalf of the BOIVRT)*



Station yard – Moa, Esmae, loader & Gabriel - minus boiler



**\*\*Esmae's rolling stock at Taumarere, February 2020**



**ABOVE:** Gabriel's wheelbase (cattle wagon behind); Esmae; Ruby & Timmy. **BELOW:** David Mowat – Boo!



**Mystery object revealed:** this is the middle of the turntable. It was originally at Opuia Railway Station, but was moved to Kawakawa as it is a necessary piece of equipment for any railway