

The OETT Telegraph

December
2016



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Editor

Trevor Buchanan

The annual general meeting of the Otago Excursion Train Trust was held on 28 September 2016. Brian Crabbe, David Wood and Diane Nader were the only nominations for the three positions on the Executive, and as no further nominations were received, they were elected unopposed.

Trevor Buchanan

New Executive

Following the AGM, the new Executive met, where the positions of Chairman and Deputy Chairman were called for.

Trevor Buchanan was nominated as Chairman, but declined the nomination.

David Wood was nominated as Chairman, and Murray Schofield was nominated as Deputy Chairman.

There have been no applications for Secretary and Treasurer, and as Helen Buchanan has stepped down as Treasurer, David Wood has taken over that position. Murray Schofield has taken over the Secretary's position.

Treasurer & Secretary

The positions of Treasurer and Secretary have been advertised in the Telegraph with no one willing to stand. Are you willing to stand for either of these positions to assist the Trust?

Des Scott

At the AGM, Des Scott, who has worked consistently and more times as a Volunteer Host than anyone else was presented with a small token of his long and enduring commitment to the Otago Excursion Train Trust. Des will no longer be working as a Volunteer Host or as a Volunteer Host Coordinator or Supervisor.



Sorry Des, I had to use this one!

We wish Des well for the future, and we thank him for his contribution over many, many years.

Trevor Buchanan

A Christmas Message from the Chairman

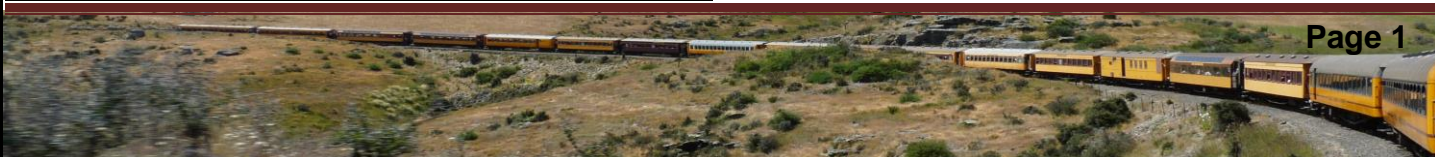
Christmas 2016 is upon us once again....."the silly season of the year as some will say" Some of you will be well organised with present buying and sorting out what are we going to have for Christmas dinner and who do we invite. Some will be trying to find that suitable present for whoever.

Many of you no doubt will remember when shops would be open until 10.00 p.m. on Christmas Eve, one family member would still be buying presents right up until closing time and the presents would still not be wrapped until Christmas morning to the angst of some of us.

The cruise ship season is under way and thank you to you all for the contribution that you have made so far into the season, but one of the biggest days will be on the 22nd with 2 very large cruise ships in port. The retailers will be happy with the "tills" ringing right on Christmas.

To you all a very happy Christmas and may 2017 be a good year for you all.

David Wood



Volunteer Host Availability Sheet

There was an error in the Volunteer Host Availability Sheet of the days of the week for the dates 14th, 15th & 17th March 2017.

The days are now corrected now as to the right:

Tuesday	14 March 2017	
Wednesday	15 March 2017	
Friday	17 March 2017	

Volunteer Host Handbook

The last Volunteer Host Handbook was issued in 2014. The reason for non-issue in 2015 was that the TGR were constantly changing things, and there was no ability to issue the Handbook when, without consultation, TGR staff would change a procedure on the Cruise Ship Trains. At a Training Day in August 2016, I was assured by the Operations Manager there were no changes to procedures from the 2015-2016 Cruise Ship. The Memorandum of Co-operation has been signed between the TGR and OETT, but there continues to be quite a number of constantly changing procedures on the trains, and until they are totally settled, again, the Volunteer Host Handbook cannot be updated.

Brian Crabbe has prepared an updated handout that has covered most matters, and this handout will be given out at the commencement of each Cruise Ship Trip. This handout has a reporting sheet on the last page, for you to report anything immediately that needs reporting and if completed for a matter, is to be handed to Daphne at the end of the day.

Trevor Buchanan

Volunteer Host Training

The last of the three Volunteer Host Training days was carried out on Sunday 30 October 2016. Thank you to all who attended the training and have been signed off to work on TGR trains.

On all three training days, DCC Liquor Licensing Inspector Martine Cashell-Smith brought home to the Volunteer Hosts their personal responsibility in the oversupply of alcohol to their passengers, emphasising Host Responsibility, and the consequences of allowing passengers to become intoxicated.

Yet we hear, that at least one Volunteer Host considers the training in relation to the supply of alcohol as "Over the top". This gives the indication that that Host does not intend to comply with the law.

Again, we remind all Volunteer Hosts of your Host Responsibility in the supply of alcohol, and there are criminal consequences if you oversupply alcohol to a passenger(s) especially on a moving train.

We thank Pat Tutty for her time, as well as Brian Crabbe, Pat Beman, Daphne Buchanan and Murray and Pam Schofield for their efforts in this training.

Volunteer Host Policy

The following policy was passed by the OETT Executive on 16 November 2016 and shall apply from that date to all Volunteer Hosts:

Any volunteer who fails to comply with the Training received shall have the following procedures carried out:

1. The Training Director, an OETT supervisor or appointed Trust representative shall discuss with you your actions, and if necessary, issue a verbal warning which is to warn you about your actions and will allow you to improve your behaviour.
2. If your behaviour does not improve, the Training Director, an OETT supervisor or appointed Trust representative shall discuss with you your actions and issue you with a written warning which is to warn you about your actions and allow you to improve your behaviour.
3. If your behaviour does not improve, the Training Director, an OETT supervisor or appointed Trust representative shall discuss with you your actions and shall consider excluding you from volunteering on the TGR trains.
4. If your behaviour is sufficiently serious it may lead to you no longer volunteering on TGR trains.



My Canadian Impressions:

By David Wood

In July of this year some members of the Wood Family spent just on 14 Days in Canada visiting firstly Vancouver and then Toronto. Time did not allow us to travel by train between Vancouver and Toronto.

Just to give you an idea of time—we left Vancouver at 0900 local time and arrived in Toronto at 1625 local time—a flight of just 4 hours and a gain of 3 hours as a result of local time zones.

Another interesting fact was GST—GST is not included in the price tag and in Vancouver, it was 5% plus 7% and Toronto was 5% plus 8%.

In Vancouver saw very little of rail but you can travel by train from Vancouver Airport to downtown Vancouver. In Toronto our bedroom was on the 12th floor of the hotel and just below us were railway lines—and what were we to see—just freight trains with 2 diesels at the front and sometimes another half way down the train—the length of those trains were probably 2kms..

With a little bit of research I found a heritage line operating between Stouffville and Uxbridge. The line from Stouffville to Lincolnville is part of the greater Toronto suburban train system and from there to Uxbridge is owned by the York Durham Restoration Society. The Group maintain all track from Lincolnville to Uxbridge together with the rolling stock.



York Durham Heritage Railway Station

The area is rapidly developing and from 1 service a day there are now 6 services a day into Toronto by modern 2 deck units seating 125 and up to 75 standing.

The group operate trains at the weekend as there are no suburban trains operating—you have to rely on a fairly fast bus service into Toronto at the weekends. The train consisted of 3 carriages, luggage van which doubled for souvenirs, refreshments and viewing, hauled by a diesel on a push/pull basis.



The Toronto modern design carriages

The train trundled quietly through rolling country at about 20mph—the maximum height was around 300 feet above sea level. Plenty of corn and soya beans. The commentary was given by a Train Manager, not Canadian but a Welshman, only a limited number of volunteers and no uniform of any degree.





The carriages



The diesel push - pull locomotive

The train trundled quietly through rolling country at about 20mph—the maximum height was around 300 feet above sea level. Plenty of corn and soya beans. The commentary was given by a Train Manager, not Canadian but a Welshman, only a limited number of volunteers and no uniform of any degree. The trip out to Uxbridge took around an hour, then a chance to explore Uxbridge (Not big) a walk round the rail yard and back onto the train to Stouffville which was reached around 3.35 p.m. Finally a bus back to Toronto and out to Vaughan. The end of an interesting day. *David Wood*

Cruise Ship Memory

By John Heaven

On the 31 December 2011 I crewed a Celebrity Century cruise ship charter train. It was a big train with over 250 passengers.

Early in the full day excursion, one lady called me aside. She was cruising with a friend who had recently lost her husband.

She asked, (being on a train) “Could I please get her a chunk of coal”, and explained as it was Hogmanay, her friend and the late husband had regularly celebrated new year by “first footing” and offering a gift of coal.

“It would mean so much to her, as this would be the first new-year without her husband”.

I explained that here in New Zealand we no longer use coal fired locomotives, but never-the-less I would see what I could do.

Checking with the rest of the crew, Driver, Pat, Alan etc. it was soon obvious there was no line-side coal left anywhere on the Taieri Gorge Railway.

After much thought we came up with a plan. There was a coal retailer alongside the KiwiRail South Island main trunk line a few hundred meters north of Dunedin Station.

On the return journey to the Celebrity Century cruise ship, over the Government owned KiwiRail main trunk line, and a few minutes after leaving Dunedin station, the train was halted due to an “operational matter” and all passengers were advised to stay in their seats.

Pat briefly left the train, and on his return, signalled the all-clear and we resumed the journey.

Train control in Wellington didn’t appear to notice we were a few minutes longer than usual clearing that block section of the main trunk.

Pat handed me the package, and I moved through the 10 or so carriages to the two ladies.

The look on their faces was worth a million dollars when I handed her a small brown paper parcel of coal.

With a cheeky grin, the first lady replied to me: “I did wonder about that non-scheduled Operational matter!”

John Heaven

Do you have a particular memory of a trip you would like to share via the OETT Telegraph?

Please put it in a legible format – preferably electronic – and send it to oett@vodafone.co.nz

or P.O. Box 2269, South Dunedin.

Trevor Buchanan



Memorandum of Cooperation

The Memorandum of Cooperation between the Otago Excursion Train Trust and Taieri Gorge Railway Limited was finally signed off on 30 September 2016.

The Memorandum is also available to members on the OETT website at OETT.nz

John Garraway

By John Chapman

John Garraway passed away early November 2016.

The Garraway family were good friends of the OETT in the early days of the Taieri Gorge Railway when it was operated by the OETT. They were a great help to the trust with their knowledge of the gorge and its conditions.

I remember a Saturday night special to Middlemarch in midsummer from North Taieri operated by a volunteer crew for our volunteer workers and their families, who worked on the track and building stopping places, such as the Reefs Hotel.

We stopped at the Garraway's for a late afternoon tea and a tour of their house.

John Garraway and his wife were the hosts for about 2 hours before we carried on ambling through the gorge, with many stops, before arriving at Middlemarch.

One of the best train trips I've ever been involved with. Something that could not be repeated now.

John attended John Garraway's funeral.

From The Last Telegraph - Somewhere in the Gorge

As identified by *Bob Sammes*:

From left were Eunice Sammes, third from left Maisie Pagel and Bob Sammes second from right

Outgoing Chairman's Message

After 15 years in the position of Chairman of the Otago Excursion Train Trust, I decided that it was time to stand down as Chairman.

I wish to thank those who have supported me throughout – being those of the Executive – past and present, the members of the OETT, and those supporters in the Taieri Gorge Railway Ltd. Throughout my tenure I have been outspoken when standing up for OETT members, especially those members who work as Volunteer Hosts.

As a result, this has put me offside with a number of people, and I have had to put up with personal attacks – and yes - attempts at bullying by some.

I shall not leave the OETT but will remain as a member of the Executive to continue working for the good of the Trust and its members.

You have a great new Chairman and Executive working for the good of the OETT.

Thank you for your support over the years.

Trevor Buchanan

Santa Train

The OETT ran their annual Santa Train to Hindon on 4 December 2016. The weather was fine, there were Christmas decorations, face painting, balloons, bubbles, a clown, lollies, and the opportunity for the children to meet Santa in his new Holiday Home which was a new black gazebo that was quicker to put up by the great advance crew who decorated it fit for Santa who arrived puffing from his morning jog and grateful for a seat. The train arrived with countless excited children (and excited adults), and a long line formed with children wanting to meet Santa, and receive a small present. Special thanks to Daphne Buchanan for the presents (buying & wrapping), decorations and organisation, Bob Sims as Santa, Brian Crabbe for the gazebo and advance crew & Dian Nader for organisation and bringing 10 face painting young volunteers who helped to make this day memorable for the passengers, and to those OETT members who staffed the train. We thank you all for your enthusiastic help. There has been no negative feedback and we could not have done it any better.



From Trip Advisor

Out of all the destinations we visited on our New Zealand/Australia cruise, we opted to buy this excursion. It was listed as one of the most popular. We were not disappointed.

For the ship excursion, the train is actually not far from the boat as the rail comes onto the shipyard. You will be directed to go to the left as far down as you can go to arrive at the last car. It appears they can accommodate up to 20 per car. As a tip, I suggest being in the first 20 to go to the caboose because it has retained its old-time interior. As an added bonus, you can take pictures from the end of the caboose.

If you're not on a ship cruise, you can take the tour at the Dunedin Railway Station. The car attendants are all volunteers from the Otago Excursion Train Trust. They are wonderful and very generous with their time and knowledge of the area as well as the Dunedin Railways.

For the cruise ship guests, this excursion package has meals included so be prepared to eat well. If you are not part of a cruise ship excursion, they do have snacks and drinks available for sale. You will be given a "journey guide" of the train route which will include the menu and the prices.

Don't worry about souvenirs, there is a gentleman who will come through the cars selling them: postcards, train whistles, key chains, caps - the usual souvenir fare. Prices can also be found in the journey guide.

You don't have to worry about which side has the best views, but if you want to see a deep ravine and a fault line, sit on the right side of the train or the side which you climbed onto the train. The ravine is after Hindon either Deep Stream or Flat Stream.

Our particular excursion ended at Pukerangi. We had a 20 minute stop where we can get out and look around, stretch our legs, and look at the local vendors who have set up tables to sell their wares (New Zealand wool, scarves, tea towels, jewellery, etc.)

This is also the time to use the restrooms. There are two outhouses located behind a couple of trees away from the small train station. You can also use the restroom in the train cars as the outhouses tend to have a lineup.

On the way back, we were served lunch and plenty of wine to drink (sauvignon Blanc and Riesling). They also have other drinks of course. This was a very enjoyable trip. We happened to sit next to a group of Québécois (French-Canadians) so we talked and got a long with them as my partner is also Québécois and I speak French.

So enjoy this excursion and share your joy with your fellow travellers as well as the volunteers. A special shout out to George and Gaylene who served our car for our excursion.

As an added suggestion for fellow cruise ship travelers, on the way back you will be given another 20 minutes at the Dunedin Railway Station before heading back to the ship. Take more photos at the railway station and don't bother with the free wifi. There will be free wifi when you get back to the shipyard. Instead of going back to the ship, take a left as if you were going to leave the port. You will enter this building where they have set up an iSite center. There they will have free wifi. You will need to enter a password which they publicly post. This is the time to catch up on social media or upload your photos. There are public restrooms in the building.

Visited November 2016

Volunteer Host Availability Sheet

Most Volunteer Host Availability Sheets have been returned.

A number of people not put their name on their Availability List, so we didn't know who you were. Daphne has found most, but there is still one she doesn't know.

If you have sent your list back and have not been contacted for a trip, yours may be the one that has no name on it. Please contact Daphne Buchanan as soon as possible



A Great Shot at Waihola

By Don Weston

I found Bill Cowan's article in the August issue most interesting, bringing back memories of past railway adventures particularly the trips the excursion train did to the North Island, as I recall one was a trip by farmers and another was the Boy Scouts. The trains I think, originated in Invercargill and picked up passengers on the journey north and returning about a week or so later.

In those days I often was in the company of George Emerson following the trains locally leap-frogging by car to photograph these trains. We did a lot of other such photographic trips also before the days of steam bowed out in about 1971. For those 'steamies' I've attached a photo I captured at Waihola of Ab 795 in full cry at speed, heading on the last leg of its North Island



journey to Invercargill. I think this was a boy Scouts trip. (Sometime mid 1980's?).

It was a lucky shot in that George and myself just made it to Waihola with seconds to spare, and only time to rough park the car and tumble out, capturing the pic on the run and got it with its 'rods down' the classic way steam loco pics should be presented, and a reflection in the lake water as an added bonus. This type of shot one could rarely repeat in the days of film cameras, so a large framed print has always been in my hobby room as a shot to remember from steam days and chasing trains.

Oh how much easier it is to capture great train shots these days with digital technology!

I recall George being very worried about the speed these trains were hauled in the Nth Island considering at that time the carriages were riding on original bogies and therefore always the threat of a 'hot-box' episode which could have caused major problems to these excursions.

Both these excursions north were a great success and showed that we could in fact run a railway and in those years there were quite a few such extended excursion trips beyond our normal sphere of operation many memories now lost in the mists of time.

Don Weston

Cruise Ship Trains

The first Cruise Ship trains have run, the first after being postponed by the ship for a few days. By all accounts, the trips have run well.

Prior to the first trip, a Volunteer Host became ill, and their illness was advised to the Train Manager, who never passed that unavailability on to the OETT.

It is timely to remind Volunteer Hosts that advice of sickness or unavailability is to be directed as soon as possible to Daphne Buchanan, who is the Volunteer Host Coordinator, not the Train Manager or any staff member of the Taieri Gorge Railway.

The Volunteer Host Coordinator, not anyone in the Taieri Gorge Railway is responsible to arrange a Volunteer Host to fill that gap created by the unavailability.

Trevor Buchanan



FRONZ AGM

The Otago Excursion Train Trust has been required to be the host of the FRONZ Annual General Meeting to be held at Queen's Birthday Weekend in Dunedin.

The Trust was given the following clear idea of expectations:

You as host group are asked to supply a conference pack to all delegates (100 should be allowed for). This is usually in the form of a handout folder of some sort and some brochures for local attractions, possibly some writing paper and pens if they can be obtained easily. No doubt the Dunedin Tourist Centre will be able to assist with these items. I will be bringing completed name tags for all delegates which will also be handed out with the other information. On Friday 2 June your group is asked to supply a couple of people to staff this registration table.

On Saturday 3 June we will be at the conference venue all day. At 0815 you are asked to again be at the registration table at the venue to hand out the information and name tags to late arrivals that were not present on the Friday night. Also after the housekeeping by our President Grant Craig and official opening, then your Chairperson is also asked to make a short welcome speech. This will all happen between 0845 and 0920 roughly.

Sunday 4 June and Monday 5 there are no tasks for the host group.

If anyone was interested in the sourcing of material, and 'stuffing' of these handout folders, please let me know.
Trevor Buchanan



For Sale

A new blue round neck OETT sweatshirt, size L has been located and is available to any OETT Volunteer Host who wishes to purchase it at \$30. Enquiries to Trevor Buchanan by any means. If there is a number of people wishing to purchase the sweatshirt, a draw will be held to ascertain the winner.

Santa Train Photos



Barbara Reid Photograph



Membership Invoices

If you have been sent an invoice for your 2016-2017 membership, and this has been sent in error if you are a Life Member, could you please advise as soon as possible to enable our records to be corrected. There are a number of members who are in arrears whose continued membership will be looked at if their membership is not paid.

Contributions

Every member of the OETT has the right to contribute to your Telegraph.

Send your contribution for consideration for the next Telegraph to the e mail address of oett@vodafone.co.nz

I wish to thank those authors who have contributed to this large edition.

Trevor Buchanan

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The statements contained therein are not necessarily those of the Trust.

