

The OETT Telegraph

August
2016



website: oett.nz

e-mail: oett@vodafone.co.nz

Editor

Trevor Buchanan

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE OTAGO EXCURSION TRAIN TRUST
WILL BE HELD IN THE MACMILLAN LOUNGE COMMUNITY HOUSE
CNR MORAY PLACE AND GREAT KING STREET DUNEDIN
ON WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2016

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 Minutes of the 2015 Annual General Meeting 23rd September 2015.**
- 3 To Receive the Annual Report for the Year Ended 30th June 2016.**
- 4 To receive the Financial Report 2015/2016 together with the Financial Accounts for the Year Ended 30th June 2016.**
- 5 To elect three (3) members to the Executive.**
This year standing members of the Executive Brian Crabbe and David Wood have been nominated & co-opted member Diane Nader has also been nominated. Nominations closed on 25th August 2016, no further nominations were received.
- 7 To fix the annual subscription rates.**
- 8 General Business**

David Wood

Secretary to the Trust

Brian Crabbe

Hi my name is Brian Crabbe. I am a Foreman Carpenter for Naylor Love Construction and have been with them 43 years in January. This will be my sixth year as a Volunteer host with Taieri Gorge Railway. In February 2014 I was asked would I like to be co-opted into the Executive of the Otago Excursion Train Trust. I thought this was a privilege to be asked. For the last two years I have been OETT Health & Safety Rep where we are making some headway with the new Health & Safety at Work Act 2015.

David Wood

I have lived in Dunedin since 1977 and began my association with the OETT back in January 2006 when I became a volunteer for cruise ship trains and have retained this involvement since that date. Since October 2009 have been a member of the OETT Executive and was part of the duo who went to the Bay of Islands to take part in the TrustPower Awards. Following the death of Alan Fraser I was appointed acting Secretary and in May 2015 was appointed Secretary. In 2013 I was elected to the Taieri Gorge Railway Board as one of the OETT Directors and still retain this important position.

Diane Nader

I have lived in Dunedin all my life, I'm married with 2 daughters and 4 grandchildren. Last year I took early retirement from my government employment which leaves me time to get involved in some voluntary work. I enjoyed my first season with the Otago Excursion Train Trust and looking forward to this years tourists. Having being co-opted onto the executive committee earlier this year has given me the opportunity to see 'how things are run'. I am now available to stand for the executive in the next election.



Chairman's Message

The 2016-2017 year was one of change, in that, as published in the Telegraph in April, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Otago Excursion Train Trust and the Taieri Gorge Railway on 22 February 2016.

This was as the result of many years of endeavour by the Otago Excursion Train Trust to have an agreement with the Taieri Gorge Railway rather than an arrangement based upon the constitution of the Otago Excursion Train Trust (which can be viewed on the oett.nz website for financial members).

As at preparation of this report, with little more than a couple of months where the Memorandum of Cooperation was in place at the end of the 2016-2017 Cruise Ship Season, the Taieri Gorge Railway indicated it wished to change the Memorandum of Cooperation.

Our Deputy Chairman Murray Schofield and Secretary David Wood are having meetings with the Management of the Taieri Gorge Railway to talk through the proposed changes by the Taieri Gorge Railway.

The finances of the Otago Excursion Train Trust are in good figures, and when the Taieri Gorge Railway accepts one of our projects, we will have the finance to fund the project. However, as at writing there has been no confirmations from the Taieri Gorge Railway of any of our proposals.

Training of Volunteer Hosts was organised by Training Director Brian Crabbe and carried out by members of the Otago Excursion Train Trust on 20th & 27th August 2016 to ensure the Otago Excursion Train Trust Volunteer Hosts are fully trained and signed off on Host Responsibility under the Sale of Liquor Act, and all matters relation to working on the train under the Health & Safety at Work Act and under the A Grade Health Licence. Thank you to all who participated, and thanks for the chocolate supplied by the Taieri Gorge Railway.

I wish to thank the members of the Otago Excursion Train Trust Executive for their support and hard work during the year. These are Pat Beman, Daphne Buchanan, John Chapman, Brian Crabbe, Murray Schofield, Des Scott, David Wood and co-opted member Diane Nader. Members do not realise how much work is done by these people behind the scenes. Des Scott is not standing this year, and Diane Nader has been nominated for a position on the Executive.

I would also acknowledge the hard work carried out by Daphne Buchanan and Des Scott as Volunteer Host Coordinators throughout the Cruise Ship Season. There are many volunteer hours carried out in order to staff the Cruise Ship Trains with sufficient Volunteer Hosts as required by the Taieri Gorge Railway, sometimes at very short notice due to late advice by the cruise ships. Their positions have been advertised, without any applicants. Des has indicated that he will no longer be carrying out that position, so that will now leave Daphne to carry on as the sole Volunteer Host Coordinator.

For those who give up your time as Volunteer Hosts on the Cruise Ship Trains, thank you on behalf of the Otago Excursion Train Trust. Without your dedication, the Taieri Gorge Railway would not be able to run the Cruise Ship Trains with the fantastic service and care you provide the travellers.

For those financial members who are able to attend the Annual General Meeting this year, I thank you for your attendance and continuing interest in the Trust. If you are unable to attend the Annual General Meeting, your continued membership and support is appreciated.

Trevor Buchanan Chairman, Otago Excursion Train Trust



Early Days with the Otago Excursion Train Trust

Contributed by Bill Cowan, April 2016

I became involved with the Trust in 1980 so cannot count myself as one of the original few but my memories of those early days may be of some interest to present-day members. Though we were all on a steep learning curve in the formative years it was also an exciting period as our train ventured to destinations new, capturing the interests and enthusiasms of both travellers and the community at large.

I returned to Dunedin in May 1980 after spending the previous 22 years working in various Otago and Southland country schools. In Dunedin I looked forward to forging closer ties with the OETT which had run its first excursion train in the previous spring to Katiki. (Warning: these notes are being written strictly from memory and we all know how fallible that can be)! George Emerson was an early contact and he suggested I might like to take on the role of Secretary to the Trust. With some reluctance I agreed but after a year relinquished the position to Philip Kidd.

In 1980 the Trust Committee consisted of about eight members and we met before tea in Jolyon Manning's Otago Development Council's Office in Princes Street about once a fortnight. Members included George (Chairman), Arthur Rockliff (Treasurer), self (Secretary), Robin Archer, John Chapman, Roger Stanton and Nan Ball. George ran a 'tight ship'. All the Trust business was handled by this committee with George and Arthur the 'action men.' Arthur and George had skills which complemented each other so neatly: Arthur was the practical man who spoke and thought NZR lingo and procedure; George had the vision and leadership qualities. Both men loved trains. Only later was a sub-committee structure established with the first having responsibility for 'operations'.

Arthur was able to cut through NZR 'bull' with relish. Early on the Trust received permission to lease a guard's van for a specified period, of about a year. Permission was also granted for the van to be painted in Trust colours. Towards the end of 1980 a letter was received from the NZR requesting the return of the van and its re-painting in NZR colours. With an, 'I'll deal with that,' Arthur grabbed the letter and we heard no more about the van's return. For all I know this vehicle is still in Trust colours and service.

But these meetings and the subsequent writing up and distribution of minutes and attending to correspondence, etc. weren't my only Trust involvement. There were Tuesday evenings at the old Reid and Gray plant at Burnside. For a couple of hours a group of us beavered away rehabilitating seating for the wooden cars under restoration. During this time Jim Blakie was busy converting the buffet car which, in time, became not only a real money-spinner but was also a key feature of all subsequent excursions.

Those early excursions! What adventures! In those early years, and once an effective fleet of restored cars was established, the Trust's motto could well have been: 'Have Train, Will Travel'. In spite of a steadily shrinking rail network the OETT covered a lot of ground: Central Otago, the West Coast, Northland, Napier/Hastings, Kurow, Ohai, Makareao, even Cormacks on the abandoned Ngapara line.

Naturally, visits of the OETT attracted much favourable publicity especially in those places which hadn't hosted a passenger train for yonks. Ohai would come to a standstill Businesses would throw open their doors. And imagine the pride felt by the Otagoites as they took 'their' train into those parts of the country foreign to many of us. (Somewhere there is a diary written-up by the late Ruby Bambery about that remarkable Young Farmers' Trip from Invercargill to the Far North).



Names of those early train volunteers who helped to make things happen flood back: The Rockliff Family, Ian Gamble and Ruth, Andy and Tina Arendonk, Stan Wooding, Bill Lloyd, Dave Aitken, my own family, Des and June Scott, John Chapman, Jim Harris, Harry Watt, Ben and Agnes Beatson, Bert and Betty Wolff, etc. etc. For a period I had the job of organizing volunteers for these various excursions and very rarely was I let down. Folk were invariably keen to help and they took their duties seriously but there was never a dull moment.



The Memories retain their Lustre:

*Another motto for the Trust in those formative years could read: 'Just in Time'. There were occasions when 'things' came together at the last minute. In the final, few hours before the operation of the very first *Taieri Gorge Ltd* Jack Watson and helper were still fitting a bogie king-pin cover in the newly-built observation car. In the final hour or so before passengers boarded the Great Scout Expedition to the North Island Arthur was brazing-up some pipe work under the Buffet Car.

*The train is returning from an excursion to Clyde and climbing Tiger Hill with the setting-sun slanting through into a 'service' car. The troops have to be fed and the volunteers are using the swing-over seat backs as tables on which to butter bread.

*The unflappable Ian Gamble. With Ian aboard you were guaranteed of a trouble-free trip. Ian was a master at dealing with misbehaving toilets and any other mechanical or electrical problem which might arise. Otherwise he would be found in the buffet car dispensing scones, soup and wisdom in equal quantities.

*The School train and weedspray. Every couple of years I would organize an outing up the Gorge for Fairfield School and any other schools interested. We would stop over for a couple of hours or so at Hindon and use the picnic area to kick and hit balls around WITH NO SWIMMING ALLOWED! Usually it was a pleasant and stress-free outing. Not on one outing however: with absolutely lousy timing our train arrived at Hindon about half an hour after a weed spraying outfit had begun spraying weed-killer over our picnic area!

* Dick Skinner's stories particularly the one about the circus elephant at Riversdale.

*Overall, the good humour of passengers, volunteers and NZR crew. It was a great case of train management and OETT staff working together harmoniously towards a common goal: promoting the pleasures of train travel. Stevenson was right: the journey itself is as important as the destination.

*Hosting school parties on the train and watching the reaction as we crossed the viaducts and negotiated the tunnels. Even thirty years ago, few children had travelled by train and a trip up the Gorge was a real novelty.

*The Ohai Railway Board's little yellow diesels having a real struggle lifting the OETT train out of Ohai in Spring 1986.

*Les Box's gang of clowns enlivening proceedings and leading the carol singing on the annual Santa train accompanied by Ruby Bambery on her accordion.

*The trip to Pukerangi to view Halley's Comet courtesy of the local Astronomers' Group who had set up telescopes. Alas the night was overcast and Halley remained shrouded. But who can forget that train passage through the Gorge where the locomotive's headlights picked - out all those fantastic shapes; talk about a trip with a difference.

*Jim Harris, on a Friday evening and prior to a Saturday excursion, pulling up on the main platform beside our train in his blue Mk 3 Zephyr loaded to the gunwales with stocks for the buffet car. The old Zephyr was chock-a-block full of supplies such as chocolate bars, lollies, gum, Twinky Bars, drinks, ice creams, you name it, Jim had it. He and Harry Watts would then set-to and stow all the stuff aboard the car which, at that time, also housed the diesel engine and generator which supplied electricity to the train for lighting, heating and refrigeration purposes.

These memories have only scratched the surface. There is a book waiting to be written on the history and operations of the OETT, TGR and Dunedin Railways and it will not be a slim volume. Do we really appreciate what a remarkable venture was established all those years ago? But there is an urgency for this to be started before too many of us take that journey to the place where the trains are always on time, where the engines burn coal and where the Buffet Cars never run short of Twinky Bars.

P.S. I would dearly like some of the 'old timers' to contribute their memories even if it is just to amplify or correct what I have written.

Bill Cowan



Having possession of the photographs of members who have passed on, I have found quite a number of historical photographs of people who have moved on in this world, and some that are still around. This page is a retreat to the past where some youthful faces shine out. My apologies if I cannot recall some names, can you help fill the gaps? *Trevor Buchanan*



At rear, Brian Roulston, From Left: Allan Boyer, ?, Allan Fraser, ?, Ruby Bambery, Arthur Rockliff, and Brian Wolff. Front: Ngaire Trevathan



Arthur Rockliff contemplating (possibly snoozing) at the door of the Buffet Car. Note the oven, pie warmer & toasted sandwich maker behind him.



Somewhere in the Gorge, taken sometime in the past, can anyone recognise those in the photo?



David Shea, Joanne Shea, Des Scott, Ruby Bambery, Brian Roulston.



DG/DH? hauled passenger train stopped at Hindon. A Blossom Festival Train? Loco correct?



This Ab is, I am reliably informed, is accelerating out from Invercargill in the 1950's. The JG Ward building between the towers was on the Crescent





New OETT Website

The new OETT website is at oett.nz.

John Chapman has been working hard at getting this up and running and it is looking great.

Have a look and see what you think.

If you wish to view the members section, you need to log in as follows:

1. Click members login
2. On the page that opens click "I've lost my password"
3. On the next page that opens enter your email address. You will be informed that an email has been sent to you.
4. Check your incoming emails for the link that that has been sent to you.
5. Set your password.
6. You can now login to the members pages on the site.

Note: you will not be able to login to the site unless you use the email address that the OETT already has for you.

Therefore, those on the e mail list will be the only ones who will be able to log on to membership pages. No e mail address, no access until you advise us of your e mail address or if you want to use a different email address you will have to let the OETT know at admin@oett.nz.

Volunteer Host Availability Sheet

Those Volunteer Hosts who have attended the training or have indicated they were unable to attend on either of the dates available, will be sent two Availability Sheets and a return envelope. **Please complete both Availability Sheets, retain one and return the other in the enclosed envelope. Please note:** Just because you have put your availability on a date, it does not mean you are actually working on that date.

OETT Contribution to

Taieri Gorge Railway Ltd. 2015 - 2016

Otago Excursion Train Trust Volunteer Hosts completed 6988 hours for Cruise Ship Trains during the 2016 – 2017 Cruise Ship season.

They also served on other trains, such as the Trust Power Community Awards, Steam Shuttles with Ab 608 and the Sea Food Festival – a further 210 hours.

Total hours: **7198 hours.**

At the minimum wage of \$15.25/hr, that came to **\$109769.50.**

Well done to everyone who participated and who gave your time freely.

Editors Notes

There is now a list of 107 members who now receive their Telegraph by e mail in blazing colour in order to keep costs down, around \$200 savings (estimated) per edition.

As I receive confirmation of your e mail, I place it on the list. I wish to apologise for all your e mail addresses being in the header of the e mails rather than as a B(lind)CC.

After 8 hours working on setting up the e mails & handwriting envelopes, I was so pleased to finish & hit 'SEND'. In future they will be sent by BCC, however, it is the difference of a button press to change, and mistakes can & will no doubt be made.

Trevor Buchanan

Contributions

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

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

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

