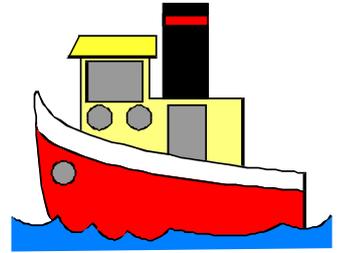


Wheels and Floats



Newsletter March 2017

TAURANGA MODEL MARINE AND ENGINEERING CLUB INC.

The Secretary
PO Box 15589
Tauranga 3112

Palmerville Station Phone 578 7293

Miniature Railway Memorial Park
Open to Public, weather permitting
Sundays in Summer: 10am to 4pm approximately
Winter: 10am to 3pm approximately
Website: www.tmmecc.org.nz

MEETINGS

General Members Meeting every first Tuesday 7pm.
Committee Meeting every second Thursday at 7pm.
Maintenance Tuesday mornings from 9am.
Engineering discussions Tuesday evenings 7.30pm.

COMMITTEE

President: Peter Jones 543 2528
Vice President: Bruce Harvey 548 0804
Club Captain: Bruce McKerras 5770134
Secretary: Murray de Lues 027 3020930
Treasurer: Owen Bennett 544 9807
Committee: Warren Belk, Shane Marshall,
John Stent, Russell Prout, Clive Goodley.
Boiler Committee: Peter Jones, Bruce McKerras,
John Heald, Paul Newton.
Safety Committee: Warren Karlsson, Bruce Harvey,
Peter Jones, Malcolm George,
Marty Rickard.

EDITOR: Roy Robinson 07 5491182
royrobkk@gmail.com
NOTE new email address

CONVENERS

Workshop: John Nicol
Track : Bruce Harvey, John Stent,
Russell Prout
Marine: Warren Belk
Librarian: John Nicol
Rolling Stock: Clive Goodley
Website: Murray de Lues
Driver Training: Clive Goodley
Club Captain: Bruce McKerras

OPERATORS 2017

19 March R Salisbury
26 March G Barnes
2 April N Bush
9 April M Duncan
16 April B Fitzpatrick
23 April B Harvey
30 April P Jones
7 May W Karlsson
14 May B McKerras
21 May R Salisbury
28 May G Barnes

Greetings Members.

Our Club get together went ahead as planned at Bruce Harvey's residence on Saturday the 11th Feb, better late than never. The weather was perfect and a good turn out of members. Life Member Trevor Chapman came north just for the occasion so the opportunity to get four club foundation members together, Peter Jones, Trevor Chapman, Don Hamilton and Warren Belk was something to record. Further details about the event will I am sure be recorded in this issue of Wheels and floats, thank you again Bruce for your hospitality.

The club sponsored a first aid course run by St John for members who were interested also went ahead as planned. Congratulations to Bruce McKerras, Bruce Harvey, Ron Salisbury and Roy Robinson. They reported that the course was very informative, and yes, they all passed. Further

courses are being organized for Neil Bush and Geoff Barnes in Whakatane and Rotorua. Thank you Guys for giving up your free time to attend.

Clubroom cleaning contractor Caroline Jones has moved north of Auckland so has advised that she can no longer provide the service. A letter of thanks has been sent to Caroline thanking her for the great job she has done over the past two years. That means of course we are looking for a new cleaner. The job involves 2 hours per month, if you know anyone who would be interested let me know and I will send them a job description.

Murray DeLues expressed an interest in becoming a Track Operator and has been trained under the watchful eye of our Club Captain Bruce McKerras, who has given him a tick. Thank you for taking on this responsibility Murray, you will be added to the roster.

The Rob Roy project has started, jobs were dished out at our last club night, if you missed out and want to help talk to project coordinator Mark Duncan or Club Captain Bruce McKerras. It is hoped that the project will be finished by the open weekend in November.(yes this year, it's only a small loco)

The Trust Power Volunteers award are set to take place in Rotorua from Friday the 24th to Sunday the 26th of March. Our presentation will be made on Saturday the 25th, at the time of writing I am still not sure of the venue. City Mayor Grieg Brownless, junior member Oliver Duncan and Peter Jones will have 8 minutes to tell the story supported by the excellent video arranged by Lara Marshall. If you want to have a look at the video go to https://www.dropbox.com/s/9iwhqhstnzwo/visual_4MIN_FINAL1.mp4?dl=0.

At our last committee meeting the AGM date was set for the 20th of May, so now's the time to start thinking about the future direction of our club. The club hand book is being reviewed and the recommendations will be presented to the meeting, any rule changes must be approved at the AGM, then presented to the Registrar of Incorporated Societies for approval and then we can reprint the new handbook.

Finally, I have been struggling with my computer over the last couple of month's, advice from all quarters has been to upgrade my XP desk top system to Window's 10. I purchased a lap top last September which died last week. In the meantime my DT was getting slower and slower, with no MS support, taking 30 minutes to carry out the simplest task. Rather than do irreparable damage to my 8 year old faithful computer I bit the bullet and purchased a shiny new system while the sales were on. After installing the new plant, a message came up on my XP screen, "don't shut down your computer installing 6 updates". 5 hours later the machine shut down and when I operated it again it went like a rocket, faster than the new machine, only because I am familiar with the system. I don't think I will send the new one back, looks nice with a shiny big screen, wireless this and that. Computers, I'm sure somewhere up in the cloud there is someone with a plug in his hand and a smile on his face, just waiting for the right moment.

Cheers

Peter Jones.

LIFE AND TIMES OF MODEL ENGINEERING IN THE BAY OF PLENTY

(Part 3)

By John Heald (part 3)

The late 1970's to 1990's began to see big changes in our hobby with the Tauranga members getting involved in the setting up of a local model engineering society. Brett Lilly and Don McNeil eventually moving to take up work in Whakatane and a Model Engineering Club was formed there with input from Dave Fitton and other interested parties. The International Convention in 1984 saw Stan Compton a Palmerston North Model Engineering club member, bring his 4-4-0 7.25" gauge engine and run it on 80 metres of portable track on the Te Amorangi grounds. This was an eye catcher as 7.25" gauge engines were quite rare to see. This was probably the catalyst here at the Rotorua club to build in a 7.25" gauge track to the existing 3.5" and 5" gauges. It was completed in 1991 and at this time was classed and registered as a Light Railway. This was before the setting up of Meanz in the late 1990's. Arther Sheward, owner of the Te Amorangi museum had formulated a Trust that was to be set up on his death, which happened in about 1987, from memory (I stand to be corrected if wrong!). With the setting up of the Trust it was thought the club was enshrined and guaranteed tenure for the coming years on a fixed yearly rental which started on about \$250 (as the club Committee of the day thought) with increases based on the Government CPI index. However the Trust eventually knowing that the clubs income was higher than from their public income set a change of events that lead to the track being lifted. The Trust was offered the chance to lease the railway on the 3 Sundays per month that the club didn't run on. An Operating Manual including Health and Safety was drawn up based on the Government requirements of the day. A lease agreement seemed to gain momentum at one stage as the costs to the Museum would enable them to make a reasonable income from a 3 Sunday, or Saturday running plan. In the end the final result was that the Trust wanted to charge us \$2500 per year together with other requirements which the club felt was not in its interests. The track was marked, lifted and cut into sections and removed from the site early in 2011 within 48 hours!

LIFE AND TIMES OF MODEL ENGINEERING IN THE BAY OF PLENTY

(Part 4)

By John Heald



THE STATION DECEMBER 2016



SECURITY BUILDING DECEMBER 2016



SOUTH TUNNEL ENTRANCE DECEMBER 2016

At the Clubs somewhat belated Xmas function at Bruce Harvey's we were fortunate to have our four current members who are foundation members of the Tauranga Model Marine and Engineering Club.

L—R Donald Hamilton, Trevor Chapman, Peter Jones and Warren Belk.



Photo Bruce Harvey



What is it?

This machine is in the workshops at the Waiouru Army Museum and despite many people looking at it no one has provided a conclusive idea of what it is used for.

Has only 2 rollers so is not a plate roller. The gears either side of the hand wheel lift and lower the top roller. Both rollers are driven.

Please advise the Editor of your ideas.



From the Editor.

"Steam Cinders 18" gets ever closer and the Registration Form is now out. Should you want one please give me a call as to my knowledge it is not on the website as yet. There are 2 informative Newsletters on the website so if you are planning to attend please go and have a look.

www.nelsonmodellers.org.nz

I'm short of articles for the newsletter so PLEASE put pen to paper or hit the keys and get something to me urgently. I know you ALL have stories to tell which would enthral other members. Remember I'm happy to sanitise your efforts and promise no criticism or comment.

The following article has nothing to do with model engineering whatsoever. I was given a large heap of mags from a friend dating back to 1972 and this article held me in disbelief being something of "believe it or not"!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Look at the "what is it" on page 4 and let me know your answer.

Regards Roy

The Zulu Boys

by JOHN HILL ZL2AYQ

JUNE 1969 is firmly recorded in the history books as the time when man first walked on the moon. But I remember the month for another reason since it was then when I learned of the life of "Cricket" Chalmers. I was working for a weekly newspaper in the Northern Territory and Cricket was a local identity who occasionally walked or rode his rusty bike around the dusty little town and, more often than not, could be seen wobbling his way about with his string bag and his precious Darwin stubby. He lived along with a number of other old men at "the barracks" which was a cluster of ramshackle huts on the edge of the rail yards. He was always good for a yarn about nothing in particular and had been a useful source of background information over the years, especially for what we called the "early days". However, Cricket was also always right up to date with world events and had a reputation for knowing the news before we printed it.

I didn't get to learn much of Cricket's life until one evening when the whole town gathered in the faded ballroom of Jackson's Hotel for a special showing of newsreel films of the moon landing. Somehow it fell to me to set things up and run the film although I had never seen a projector up close and had only a hazy notion of their operation. Cricket wasn't there but a number of other old men from the barracks were: some of them could remember when it took eight weeks for the mail to arrive from Adelaide, and now they were watching men walk on the moon. At the end, one old fellow who looked ninety if a day but still sported wisps of shocking red hair and beard to match, thanked me and remarked, "Cricket would have like to have seen this."

"Oh," I said. "Did he not come?"

"No," said the old timer, "he's been and shuffled off this earth last night."

After the end of the showing I saw Bluey sitting alone in the bar and on an impulse I got drinks and went over to his table. We must have drunk a gallon or so each before he began to speak. He opened by saying, "I suppose you think he got his name because he once opened for Australia?", and then went on to tell me of his brother's life.

The two men were born at the old Barkley Ponds telegraph station. Barkley Ponds was not a full staffed mini-town like the Alice Springs Station, just a couple of small buildings with a staff (officially) of two single men, a telegraphist and a linesman whose skills and duties overlapped. The function of the station was to monitor north and south

traffic and to attend to any maintenance and line breaks in their area about 25 miles north and south of the station. There were the usual problems of the era, white ants ate the poles, the livestock died for no apparent reason and there was the enduring loneliness in a forever hot dry climate.

Donald Chalmers had come north as a 16-year-old apprentice telegraphist and after five years was given a few weeks leave in Adelaide, just long enough to meet and marry a mute girl named Margot who had recently arrived from Scotland. He dressed her in moleskins and one of his shirts to smuggle her back up the line to the station where the happy couple squeezed into the available accommodation. One thing and another was too much for the linesman who got thoroughly drunk and walked out into the desert never to be seen again. Donald and Margot were shocked at the loss of their only human contact but too afraid of censure to report his disappearance. Donald tried to do both their duties and soon Margot was learning the code and taking a turn at the key. Head Office in Adelaide eventually realized something was amiss and sent an inspector who arrived at the stations three days after their first child was born. He was shocked at what he learned and also amazed at Margot's skill.

Cricket was the first-born and he was truly born to the code since both day and night the sounders tapped out the commercial traffic, the coded diplomatic despatches and the thousands of sundry messages between Australia and the rest of the world. His father was away for weeks at a time up and down the line and with a mute mother the sounders were all he heard in that desolate place. He didn't learn to speak until he was nearly six but for years he had been communicating with his mother in high-pitched clicks and chirps; he may have sounded like an insect to some, but a skilled ear could recognize order and intelligence in the sounds for he was "speaking" in the only tongue he knew, the voice of the telegraph.

The second boy was born two years later and he too learned the family language. It was another five years before the family was finally relieved and transferred down the line to Alice Springs.

One day a telegram arrived from a firm of solicitors in Adelaide seeking instructions regarding the education fund that had been invested as promised some 15 years earlier. The parents were astonished at the sum that had accumulated and by adding their meagre savings they were able to enrol both boys in a prestigious boys' boarding school in Melbourne.

Here the boys were like fish out of water and became victims of merciless taunting and teasing so they took refuge where no others could follow in their unique ability to communicate in their strange clicking manner. Their remarkable abilities did not go unnoticed and language experts from the university came to study them. The boys played it out as long as they could. The experts took notes, make wax sound recordings and put their best efforts into the task. The investigation was getting farcical when the learned dons were settling on the conclusion that the boys were reincarnations of Kalahari Desert pygmy bushmen who spoke in a supposedly similar language. Eventually a college servant astonished the learned folk by showing that he too could understand what the boys were saying, thus earning himself instant respect and attention. He rode the wave until he tired of the game but one evening, while serving high tea, announced he had once been a telegram boy and was returning to it.

The upshoot of the "Zulu Boys" incident, as the newspapers called it, was that the boys finally found acceptance among their fellow students and from

then on made rapid progress with their studies. The other students had given Cricket his nickname, which stuck to the older boy, and was reinforced when he went on to play against the touring All India Eleven. Their name for the red-headed brother was inevitable and it too stuck for a lifetime.

Bluey said he married and returned to The Territory to open a small store near the telegraph station where he was born and spent the rest of his life in that tiny town until his wife died in 1966.

Cricket had joined up in 1914 and soon found himself in what is now Iraq. He was held captive for a time by the Turks and, whilst under interrogation, he heard the click of a telegraph in the next room. Of course everything was in code but Cricket was able to memorize a few hundred characters. He used techniques he had learned from his childhood aborigine friends to feign a heart attack and death and so then his captors threw him out into the street. Friendly Arabs took him in and put him in contact with British Intelligence and when he wrote down what he heard from the Turkish telegraph sounder the British were able to decode enough to get the details of a troop train movement. What then followed has gone down in history as "Lawrence of Arabia" leading a successful attack which destroyed the train.

Injuries prevented Cricket from returning to "the inland" for some years by which time the overland telegraph was being surpassed by radio and coastal cable routes so Cricket took a traffic clerk's job at the railway station.

He was too old for WW II but he managed to get a civilian job at a new wartime air base. He started in the base meteorological office, sweeping and as general assistant to the forecaster on duty, and it was here that he learned to draw a complete weather map from the analysis of messages that arrived as 400 or 500 five-figure groups from the offices at Darwin and Melbourne. The airbase had all the latest equipment, including radio-teletypes, and by watching the machines print and listening to the clicking of the magnet relays he very soon learned to read the five-unit code. Eventually Cricket could listen to the incoming data and draw the weather map in all its detail before the forecaster could even begin to decode and plot the message. You see, Cricket never wrote anything down and to him the clicks were a word picture just like the chatter of sounders in his formative years.

Cricket took a series of jobs after the

war with the new air services, and even for a while at our newspaper, but most of his time was spent with the railways.

Bluey told me that, over the years, Cricket and his friends had "arranged" for various workmen's huts to be reported as attacked by white ants and consigned to the dump at the edge of the yard so when Cricket retired in about 1960 he just moved into one of these to be joined by his brother a few years later.

We spoke for a while of how things had been in the town over the years, what the railway had done to the town, the changes that came with motor cars and, of course, Father Flynn and his Inland Mission. Bluey mentioned the new memorial for Father Flynn up the road at Three Ways and I wondered aloud what memorial there would ever be to Cricket Chalmers.

"Only this," he sighed and reached into a bag and drew out a hard-covered exercise book, one of those with about 200 pages. "This is all he left," he said, "he did one last night." He passed the book to me.

I opened it to find pages of drawings of news events, the first few pages were barely recognizable but as I looked further they became more detailed and almost perfect copies of news photographs we had published during the last few years: the Queen's coronation, atom bomb tests and scenes from the Hungarian uprising. "Very good," I said. "Your brother had quite a talent," not yet grasping the significance of what I was holding.

"Turn to the last one," said Bluey. I did and there was Neil Armstrong and the flag on the moon. I was astounded since we had only just received that photo on the plane that day when the newsreels arrived. This was a real shock and I doubted that I could ever have believed what I saw. Then Bluey explained how for many years Cricket spent his evenings hunched over his old "short-wave" radio listening, first to Morse, later radio-teletypes, and finally the news services' radio picture transmissions from Manila and Sydney. Eventually he could listen to an entire 12 minute radio facsimile transmission and then draw a perfect rendition of what he had heard.



At our March meeting Oliver Duncan brought along his Lego efforts for “Show and Tell”.

The detail which is available and has been converted into life like models by Oliver is just amazing. I remember my amateurish efforts with my limited range of Meccano when I was of similar age. Keep it up Oliver, we await the next instalment with bated breath.

