

May 2009

Carterton Mail Express

Wairarapa Railway Restoration Society

Carterton's Historic Railway Station

PO Box 202

Carterton



Hi-Rail Toyota Twin Cab Hilux 4 Wheel Drive

Toyota Twin Cab Hilux Reg. No: PH 8026 was the only twin cab ever converted for Hi Rail operation by NZ Rail.

I was lucky enough to be given the task of evaluating it for the Signals Branch. I met the Proquip (branch of NZ Rail) staff at Upper Hutt in May 1991 where the vehicle was given to me in pristine condition fresh from the workshops.

The Hilux weighed 2 tonnes with its entire road & track gear and stuck to the rails like glue – that's if you obeyed the speed limit of 40 kph.

Because of the ratio of the gear boxes fitted to rail wheels at the rear (some 3000 rpm @ 40 kph) there was a formula used to convert the rail speed to be able to use the vehicles on board speedometer.

The calculations were prepared by Proquip staff and given to me when I received the vehicle.

It became an interesting trip on track from Upper Hutt through the Rimutaka tunnel to Masterton as it appeared the vehicle was exceeding its rail speed by a significant amount, even though I was driving it to the recommended speed as indicated on the speedo.

Later calculations would reveal my speed



Dalefield 3km south west of Carterton

Photo Ken O'Reilly, 14 May 1991

between Upper Hutt & Featherston was as fast as a goods train.

The day after I had picked the vehicle up I received a call from the manager of Proquip asking how it had driven from Upper Hutt to Masterton.

My reply was it rode extremely well on track but I believed the speedo calculations weren't correct as the vehicle seemed to be travelling much faster than the recommended 40 kph, his reply was that there had been a mistake made with the calculations & the speed I would have been doing was more like 70 kph.

After that new calculations were put in place and we rode the track at a more sedate speed for the rest of the evaluation program.

Extreme care needed to be exercised at both public & private crossings where there was a build up of ballast etc between the tracks. Caution through points was just as important.

Once I had the feel for the vehicle it proved to be very versatile even with the extra weight.

As the images show the vehicle had an extended front frame to house the front guide rail wheels, this required an exemption certificate from MOT for it to receive a W.O.F.

When switching from road to track use all that was required was to straddle the track with all 4 wheels pull the safety pin holding the front rail wheels secure, jump back into the cab and operate the hydraulic system to lower the front wheels first then the rear.

The system was much easier and faster than that used by the Suzuki's inspection vehicles as they also required being in 4 wheel drive.

When on track the front guide wheels were fitted with disc brakes which worked in conjunction with the normal foot brake of the Hilux. The vehicle did require a lot more distance to stop (on track) but that generally wasn't too much of a problem, more care if wet.

The versatility of the 4 wheel drive system made it great for getting on & off track almost any where and much easier where you didn't have road crossings or special pull off areas.

This was an excellent feature for signals staff that looked after many hundreds of kilometres of overhead lines and track circuits. This machine was of course to replace our motor trolleys.

I found with some modifications it was going to be well suited to signals staff particularly those like myself who were on a single staffed section which at the time there were several locations around the country being considered for that status.

My evaluation time was shortened from a month to 1 week in which time I completed 700 km on track between Masterton - Featherston & Pahiatua including night runs.

It appeared everyone else wanted to evaluate it as well.

I know the vehicle did go to Whangarei and also spent sometime in the South Island.

One problem of concern was the gear boxes between the road & track wheels because of the high revolutions the boxes would get quite hot. This was something I was asked to monitor quite closely.

After my evaluation I wrote a comprehensive report including recommendations for mostly minor improvements for our requirements.

In July 1992 I received my new Hilux 4 wheel drive twin cab. It had not been converted to High Rail operation at that time, but was to happen later that year.

In mid 1993 the program to Hi Rail 4 wheel drive twin cabs was canned sighting costs as the main reason, but as we know NZ Rail was being primed for sale, by the end of 1994 the idea of single manned Signals Sections was abolished and I was made redundant in November 1994 after 33 years with railways and my Masterton Section was incorporated into the Upper Hutt Signals Section.

Evaluated by Ken O'Reilly, Sole charge Signal Maintainer based in Masterton May 1991



...completed 700
km on track
during one week...

...proved to be
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All Photos;
Dalefield 3km south west of Carterton
Photo Ken O'Reilly, 14 May 1991



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Richard Clark

"Trains make a noise, lots of noise. Trains come in all shapes and all sizes. Trains, real trains, coal powered, steam driven, make smoke, lots of smoke. It's what makes kids love them. There is a romance to them. And, of course, trains are always going somewhere.

As a child I love the K Class Locomotives and I loved the small black shunters that shunted backward and forward from Port Napier to Port Ahuriri. Short, blunt. Purposeful. They crossed the road at the bottom of Bluff Hill where we lived. They hooted, I smiled. There is a mystery to a train, there is magic, and, as I said, a romance.

In my teens, as a harrier, I travelled from Napier to Gisborne by railcar, not a real train and yet it was still a train. We tossed rolls of toilet paper over the Mohaka Viaduct. We ate railway pies and drank railway tea and we played Crown & Anchor as we travelled and ran badly as a result. I remember living in suspended silence as our eldest brother caught the Wellington to Auckland Express and heard it become the Tangiwai Rail Disaster in 1953, but that he had missed the train at the last moment. From Sydney to Adelaide 3rd class, now that was a trip. Cold, Hard, Slow. Sydney to Brisbane was more enjoyable. I travelled from Perth to Manjimup in West Australia. I watched the giant ore trains that emptied the Pilbara to fill ships for Japan. I commuted daily by train in Sydney and New York, I have travelled from Hong Kong Central into China's New Territories, travelled underground in London and Paris but my favorite spot on the face of the planet is, and always will be, Grand Central Terminal in New York. Center of the Universe I call it. Standing in the main concourse, up on the mezzanine, looking out over what appears to me as a huge ants nest of intertwined travellers. Literally thousands upon thousands going about their daily business. Travellers waiting to be met, seen off, connecting with other travellers, a huge melting pot of humanity.

The destination board fascinated me. The Hudson Line and all the other lines that went all the way to Niagara Falls. For nourishment as I watched I ate at the Oyster Bar, so often that I became a regular.

A dozen mixed oysters and a glass of Cloudy Bay.

I walked through the main concourse every morning and every evening, to and from work on Madison Avenue. The deep down rumble of multiple trains on multiple tracks on multiple levels. The sound is what got me, the acoustics. Down below the main concourse I can stand in one corner and whisper into the vaulted wall and another person across the passageway can hear my voice as clear as a bell. Amazing. I loved the Hudson Line, visiting friends at Croton, Sleepy Hollow and Ossining, aka Sing Sing. I love the New York subway, the smell, the noise, the rattle of trains on the 6 Line, the A Line, the E and all the others that took me down town, up town, the cross town shuttle. Finally, and unfortunately it was the overwhelming smell of urine and the grime and crime of the subway that had me leave New York for the Coast. I love New York.

And then to Penn Station to catch the train, 1st Class, to Washington DC. That was something, to pass an America in decay. An America that used to produce. Sad to see shuttered buildings, mile after mile.

I spent 21 years in New Zealand, 20 years in Australia, 20 in America and now I am back in New Zealand and am in despair at the state of our State Rail. Grubby, boring, unimaginative, slow and expensive.

However, on certain days, I get to drive at 160k chasing the classic trains that sometimes ply the Manawatu Gorge and sometimes appear in the Wairarapa. What magic there is in trains.

I have stood 3 feet from an East West Main Line near Route 66 in Arizona, as a mile long train roared by, loaded two stories high with shipping containers and to be told that 42 trains pass this spot daily.

I edited Television Commercials for BNSF in America. I filmed BNSF Rolling Stock as I travelled the American West for two years. I spent time chatting to the crew of the Durango to Silverton steam trains. Glorious engines from a glorious age. I have devoured Zane Grey and read Union Pacific so many times I almost live it. I drove from Venice Beach, California to Ogden Utah, where the Golden Spike was driven way back in '65, towing an Airstream Trailer. All those memories and I am not at all what I would call a Train Nut or Fan. But, for whatever reason, trains play a large part in my imagination. I love to film and photograph them and have a growing collection. And the thing that really, really gets me is the sad lonesome sound of distant trains, be they in New Zealand or the American West. Someone, somewhere is travelling by train right now.

Long Live the Tracks. Long Live the Trains that Ply them and the Engineers who keep them running."

- Richard Clark's kiwicafe.com, copyright 2009



DC Twins lead 10 Carriage Wairarapa Connection Service 1610 into Masterton, Friday 7th April 2009
Photo Iain Alisdair Palmer

President's Ponder—Ramble

The annual conference of FRONZ is about to take place in Christchurch on Queens Birthday weekend.

It's good to see they have a 'full house' even with the economic downturn. Of course it's important that even though times are tough we at the local coal face maintain our presence at a National level through our National Association. Doing so will mean we will be up with the play when good times return. This applies as much to small museums like ours as to the larger operators like the Feilding & Districts Steam Rail or Steam Inc. Volunteer groups always suffer when there's a downturn, but battle to survive and mostly they do.

The future development of our group is in the hands of you the members for without your participation the last nineteen years would have been in vain. This is not a doom & gloom story but as the group grows we do rely more on you our members & volunteers to undertake tasks so the work load is spread evenly, not left to just one or two. Plus with more member participation many more new & exciting ideas are born and eventually achieved.

In 1990 the main focus of our newly formed group was to save Carterton's Railway Station -Built in 1880- from demolition as the then railways wanted it removed & replaced with a block shelter similar to those in the Hutt Valley.

Today we now have an Award Winning Historic Railway Station being the oldest of its type in NZ still selling rail tickets, a museum of railway memorabilia with a small community section and a developing Archive & Research centre which has totally out grown its small room within the building.

Our precinct also includes the rail yard with Carterton having some quite unique track & signalling features within its yard boundaries. One thing our group has always maintained is the ability to adapt to changes, keeping that ability of going forward is very important. An example was purchasing a shunting locomotive (TR 724 - never considered in our earlier years) which although not stored at the precinct at this time, we are working towards that goal which will eventually allow the group to obtain an operating licence for the loco within our precinct.

We are moving forward ever so slowly with the relocation of the former Woodside Goodshed to the precinct as our new Archive & Research Headquarters. There are many other projects - wagon restoration - being undertaken by members plus there are the on going 'Housekeeping' duties for groups such as ours such as weed control, painting & the large list goes on.

Looking ahead sees the 30th of June as the groups end of year & the AGM to be held within 3 months so it's not too early to think about whether you as a member might like to stand for one of our groups governing executive or committee. Remember next year the station building is 130 years old & the group will celebrate 20 years. All the help we receive will be appreciated.

Ken O'Reilly

DVD / Video Library

The Group has been fortunate in having had a fairly large quantity of DVD's and video tapes donated to it. While most are on New Zealand Rail, i.e. 'NZ Rail Scene' & 'NZ Rail Documentary Series,' there are also many miscellaneous New Zealand Rail titles, as well as some excellent titles from overseas.

PLEASE NOTE: if any Group Member would like to 'rent' a title, please see either Bill Ingley or Kath O'Reilly - Sunday's only! As most of these DVD's/videos have been donated, it is very important that we look after them; hence please follow the following protocol:

All titles must be signed out by either Bill Ingley or Kath O'Reilly. Returns must be returned to Bill or Kath - on Sunday's only so the titles can be signed back in.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN AND SIGN THEM BACK IN YOURSELF!

The DVD's/videos can be hired for - \$2 per title, or, \$5 for three titles. Length of hire - 2 weeks.

Since the library was set up we have received quite a few donated video titles. As space is at a premium in the office, please see Bill for the new titles. They will be available for hire within the next couple of weeks.



In Station and on the Platform

- GRWC and TranzMetro have installed a new four way hot-point for the CCTV camera system bringing an end to a long running issue
- At the same time the platform and yard lights were checked resulting in some bulbs being replaced
- On the society's side of the power board we have completed the new power supply for tablet and display lighting including using a relay and control circuit. This means that the full load of the transformers and lights doesn't pass through the switch making it a lot safer
- Tidy up of the bookstall has allowed us to create more space in the Lamp room come office

Workshop and Yard

- ONTRACK had done a bit of work at the mainline connection (old southern end main to loop crossover) to enable their Palmerston North based Tamper group in to say the night during the weekend 2nd/3rd of May
- With a grant from the Lions we have purchased a spray unit and pump
- Some new concrete steps have been created at the Carpenters Shop entrance to the workshop, this will enable easier access into this important part of the workshop
- Work on our motor trolley is progressing with framing timber now being the area of attention

Required

- ⇒ Tablet Terminal Switch-out box
- ⇒ Photos of Wairarapa Stations
- ⇒ Information on the Greytown Branch Line

Monthly Members Meetings

As daylight saving has finished we are back to winter time of 2.30pm (1430hrs) on the 3rd Sunday of the month

Station Open Hours

Museum

Every Sunday between 11am and 4pm

Other times by appointment



Contact Details

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Upcoming Events

- ⇒ FRONZ Conference 2009
 - ⇒ Queens Birthday Weekend
 - ⇒ Christchurch
- ⇒ Group Day Trip
- ⇒ Mid-Christmas Dinner (members only)
- ⇒ AGM
- ⇒ Model Train Show
 - ⇒ August
 - ⇒ Masterton Town Hall
- ⇒ Daffodil Day 2009

Ticket Office

Open for selected south bound trains only

Ticket service provided by Travel Smart Wairarapa

Weekdays

5.45 am to 7.10 am

10.25 am until 10.40 am

3.40 pm until 4 pm

Sunday

5 pm until 5.16 pm



Tamper departs Carterton for Dalefield passes remains of #3 Up Home Semaphore Signal , Sunday 3rd May 2009
Photo Iain Alisdair Palmer



Northbound DC4185 with 3 carriage Wairarapa Connection Service 1602 with passes DC's 4634 & 4467 with Combined 13 carriage Southbound Wairarapa Connection Services 1603 & 1605 at Petone Railway Station, Tuesday 26th April 2009
Photo: Iain Alisdair Palmer



L509 rounds a curve during the Silver Steam Railway Railfan's day, Saturday 4th April 2009
Photo Iain Alisdair Palmer

The Views expressed in 'Carterton Mail Express' newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Wairarapa Railway Restoration Society Inc

Members: Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand (FRONZ), Wairarapa Heritage Association

Acknowledges the support of:



Carterton District Council



Rail Heritage Trust
of New Zealand

