

The Oamaru Steam and Rail Digest



March 2018

Train Running

- We had a quieter month in February, with just under 500 passengers. The Husky ran February's services after having her starter motor refurbished.
- We lost one running day because of... clay (see below).
- The Silver Fern railcar from Dunedin Railways visited our platform on the 18th February.
- A wedding charter was run in conjunction with Portside restaurant. And didn't the Husky and the open wagon behind her look pretty?!



Clay

The remains of Cyclone Gita emptied themselves over Oamaru last week, and Oamaru Steam and Rail was not immune from her deluge, with a large volume of water and clay washing down from the roads and cliffs above the eastern end of our line. The build up of clay was such that we were forced to cancel our regular train running on Sunday the 25th of February.

Thanks to Brett Ambler, the bulk of the clay was removed with an excavator, and some moderately-hard labour was applied on the 28th to shift most of what remains wedged in between the rails and ballast out by the Penguin Colony. However we need a few more hours of work to clear the line before next Sunday's train can run.

Special Clay Work Day – This Friday, March 2nd!

Bring appropriate clothes (“Sunday Best” would be inappropriate) to the workshop by 9:00am and ride out on the work train, or drive out and meet us down the line. We will work for an hour, break for coffee, then another hour’s work should finish the job if we get a good turnout of volunteers who can operate a shovel in a more productive manner than the layabouts below:



In ‘The Shed’

Our workshop has finally achieved national recognition as one of the great sheds of New Zealand, appearing in the latest edition of ‘The Shed’ magazine. Last weekend the workshop crew were checking out the interviews and looking at themselves in print. As always, new volunteers are always welcome.



Wanted!

Oamaru Steam and Rail relies on volunteer labour and equipment that is often second hand to run our tourist railway. If you happen to know of anyone disposing of the following items, we would love to hear from you. They don't have to be in pristine condition as long as we can repair them for our use.

- A medium sized excavator. This will be mounted on the end of our CW track maintenance wagon and be used for lifting things, shoveling ballast, and clearing drainage ditches of clay. As such, it doesn't have to be mobile (we don't need tracks or wheels) as long as the digger arm works and can swivel on its base.
- A small front-end loader. We have an old tractor that we use as a mobile forklift and digger, but its days are numbered as the power steering is getting to a state where it is becoming uneconomic to maintain it.

Come along for a Cuppa: 9th March at The Brydone

Everyone is most welcome at our informal monthly coffee mornings. Come along for chat over a cuppa at The Brydone Hotel on the 9th of March at 10:15am. As always, please RSVP to Anthea by the evening of Wednesday the 7th so that we can give them an idea of our numbers (anthea.oamaru@gmail.com)