

The Oamaru Steam and Rail Digest



December 2017

Train Running

- Congratulations to *Driver* Graham Bull! Graham has become the latest member to be certified as a diesel driver on our railway.
- Ridership continues to increase as the tourist season ramps up. In addition, an intensive weekend of train running supported Oamaru's Victorian Heritage Celebrations over 18-19 Nov. A big thanks to the crews who make our train such an integral part of Oamaru's Victorian harbourside appeal.
- Several charters ran this month, including a wedding party that was transported to Portside Restaurant for their reception. Last Tuesday, two carriages and the open wagon were filled to capacity with 150 preschool children and accompanying adults. Charters are a great fundraiser for us.
- Dunedin's Silver Fern railcar made several more visits to the new 'Whisky Siding' platform, which also proved its worth during the recent charters.



Working on the Railway

- The Husky diesel loco was certified after its overhaul. The return to service of this rugged and powerful little engine enables TR35 to take a well-earned rest and receive some upgrades in the upcoming year.
- Work continues on the new 'Track Maintenance' wagon, with the air compressor, internal workbench, roof ends and replacement doors fitted.
- The replacement tubes for steam loco B10 have arrived.

About our Husky

Huskies are a class 15 of diesel mechanical locomotives built in the late 1950s to early 1960s by Robert Stephenson & Hawthorns Ltd. Most served industrial lines in the UK, although one went to Egypt and a 5 foot 6in gauge loco went to India.



English Huskies – note the buffers and ‘stepped’ cab mount. Pictures courtesy Gordon Edgar

Ours was the only one exported in New Zealand, being RS&H # 7908, built in Darlington (Northeast England) for the Wellington Meat Export Co. in 1962. The September 2017 NZ Railfan magazine pictures the loco breaking down on her ‘maiden voyage’ out to the Ngauranga Works before being rescued by an electric locomotive. In 1975 the loco was sold to Alliance, Pukeuri.

In 2009 the loco moved to Oamaru Steam and Rail. She has since had a gearbox and running gear overhaul, received air brakes and many other improvements.

In addition to ours, two locos have been saved in the UK: # 7901 built in 1958 is preserved and used occasionally on work trains at the Tanfield Railway near Newcastle, and prototype #7900 from 1958 was saved and plinthed by its last owner, AV Dawson transportation in Middlesbrough.



Items of Note

Our next regular monthly social coffee chat will be held on the 8th of December at 10:15 at the Brydone Hotel. RSVP to Anthea (anthea.oamaru@gmail.com)

Oops! Wayne accidentally fell off the committee list in the last newsletter:
President: Phillip Screen; VP: John Paul; Treasurer: John Dustin; Secretary: Graham Bull; GM: Harry Andrew; Committee: Wayne Brunton, Geoff Ellis, Alister Paton, Mike McErlane, Allan Killick, Dave Clark, Darryl Bond, John Lister