

# The Oamaru Steam and Rail Digest



February 2018

## Train Running

- Another busy month was recorded with the January passenger count being 770 over 7 running days.
- The Husky ran most of the month's services, but TR 35 returned at the end of the month to cover as the Husky had its starter motor refreshed. If any reader knows of spare Gardiner 6LW engine parts, we're always on the lookout! These were not an uncommon motor in New Zealand, being fairly common in boats and other diesel-powered machines.

## Working on the Railway

- Electrical equipment in the Guards Van continues to be upgraded. This includes the self-contained battery system, which runs interior lighting, the new PA/sound system, headlights and flashers for safety, and incorporates a new battery charging apparatus.
- Work on the CW maintenance wagon continues with air intakes and filters for the diesel-powered air compressor being fitted, as well as exhaust piping. With the progression of interior painting, tools and consumables that will be used on trackside missions have started to find homes in the wagon – hammers, spanners, picks, shovels, track jacks, fishplates, bolts and the like. More on the CW wagon's history over the page.
- Despite the hot weather and holiday lull, a number of items on the trackwork 'to-do' list have been attended to - with the odd sleeper, rail and bolt being replaced or tightened up. Gardeners continue their war on weeds.

## Come along for a Cuppa: 9<sup>th</sup> February 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 February 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](mailto:anthea.oamaru@gmail.com))



**CW57**, our new track maintenance wagon, was originally built in the 1960s by West Australian Government Railways as hopper wagon XBC 21005. These wagons were built to haul Bauxite ore - the world's main source of aluminium.

In the 1990s, NZ's West Coast coal production was booming, and Tranz Rail faced a shortage of coal wagons despite Dunedin's Hillside Workshops rolling out new high-capacity hoppers. As an interim measure, it was decided to import 20 of the second hand XBC wagons in 1996, and convert them to carry coal.

Modified for NZ use as the CW class, they ran briefly as a solid train, before being broken into smaller sets and mingled with other coal wagons until the downturn in coal exports led to their withdrawal and scrapping in recent years.

CW57 was more recently based at Pukeuri to store and carry coal into the works. Sold to Sims Pacific for scrap last year, Oamaru Steam and Rail entered into an agreement that would see our labour used to remove the valuable aluminium top and in return, we would get to keep the low-value steel underframe.

CW57 is being transformed into a track maintenance wagon, with three sections.

- An FM (actually latterly an FH) guards van module (donated by Jimmy Tayles) housing an air compressor, generator, tool store and workshop.
- A flat, wooden planked section for carrying sleepers and other items.
- An excavator, for ditch digging and sleeper placement.



Mobile workshop

Work in progress

Tool Racks