



MAGAZINE OF THE

**CHRISTCHURCH
GARDEN RAILWAY SOCIETY**
(New Zealand)

December 2006



This is what summer is all about: - trains in the garden. Phillip Cooke's small LGB 'field locos' cross a trestle bridge on Karl Arnesen's *Mt Catt and Jessie Falls Railway* during the November 2006 meeting.

Denniston To Become A Heritage Park

Reprinted from The Press

10 November 2006

By SANDRA COX in GREYMOUTH

A historic rail line that for decades was the only link to an isolated West Coast coalmining town will be partly recreated, and with it some romance of the past.

The ghost town of Denniston, 20km north-east of Westport, will become a \$1.5 million heritage park.

The steep Denniston incline rail line was an engineering feat when it was built in the 1870s by pick and shovel. Until the late 1960s, it carted Denniston's coal.

Buller Department of Conservation (DOC) community relations programme manager, John Green, said that for decades the incline was the only transport for people before a bridle track was built.

The project will restore the upper section of line and brakehead, and renew viewing facilities.

Green said the project recognised the potential of the township, which sits on a plateau 700m above sea, as a tourist destination.

The northern West Coast's two most popular tourist attractions, the blowholes at Punakaiki and the seal colony near Westport, attracted visitors only briefly.

The district needed bigger attractions to extend the visitor stay, he said.

Three kilometres away, 50m of the old Coalbrookdale mine will be opened to tourists – the only restored underground coalmine in New Zealand.

Buller Mayor Martin Sawyers said the area was one of New Zealand's premier industrial heritage sites and would deteriorate without the

cash injection.

"What's planned for the site is preservation rather than recreation. It will retain its status as a historic ruin," he said.

The park status would not affect mining operations or applications for future works.

Several mine firms have operations on the plateau and others have exploration rights.

Museum consultant Ken Gorbey said Denniston was unique in New Zealand.

"Denniston is not just the place but the wealth of stories that goes with it – the people who ended up there on the top of a hill mining coal where the weather was either brilliant or in cloud," he said.

It was a maturing ruin and should never be fully recreated.

"We are taking people into an evocative landscape, full of memory. That's where Denniston is brilliant."

The project is shared by several organisations with land tenure – Solid Energy, the Buller District Council and DOC – and the West Coast Development Trust and community group Friends of the Hill.

For the past 13 years, Friends of the Hill has run a museum in Denniston.

Chairman Gary James said it was good that other organisations saw Denniston's value.

"They can experience the harshness and feel the wind on the face. People use their imagination and tell me they can put things back," he said.

More notes and photos on Denniston

By Jim Staton



For the past three years I have had the Outdoor Recreation students from the Tai Poutini Polytechnic (Greymouth) working on the clearance of Middle Brake on the Denniston Incline for two one week sessions per year. I can have between eight and twelve in each group each week, so plenty of work gets done.

The work to date has seen all the gorse removed and approx five tons of slip material removed, the rocks in the first pic are to be blown by DOC staff and next July we will get into removing the fragments.

The idea is to clear as much line as possible with the end result to relay as much line as we can recover from over the edge of the banks. We have already recovered about 12 lengths.

We have put back the hydraulic brake cylinders in place and set back up some of the valve controls. We have also cleared around the brakehouse and assembled quite a collection of metal to consider what to do with. Next year will be more clearing of slips and start re-laying tracks.



Ray's latest Bus

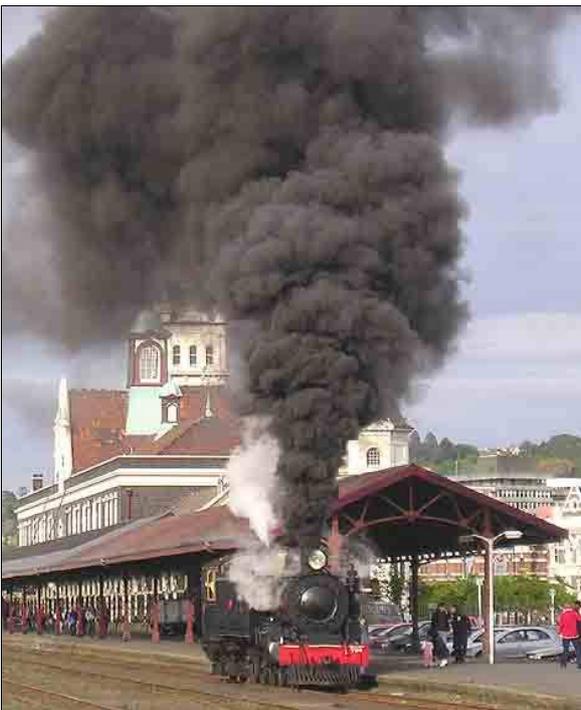


Ray's latest bus (although I am told this is a coach, not a bus), is this 1:24 scale Bedford OB Duple Vista Coach. It is a die-cast model built by Sun Star, the same company who made the red double-decker bus he had at the show last year. It is just new on the market, and Ray received it in the mail the week before the Big Model Train Show, where the photo above was taken. The original was built in 1947 and carried 26 people.

The model is in Yellowway Motor Services livery. The moving parts include the sun roof, and drivers and passengers doors. The passengers doors actually slides, the same as the prototype.

Ray says another company will soon be releasing an identical model, but with working head lights. It is understood that the club's other Bedford enthusiast is lined up to get one.

Dunedin Station turns 100



A few of the club members headed off down to Dunedin at Labour weekend for the Dunedin Station Centenary celebrations.

The George Troup designed building is said to be one of the 100 most photographed buildings in the world.

People came from around NZ and the world to be there. Four different railway tour groups arrived on the two double-headed steam excursions trains which rolled into town on the preceding days. One train had come from Auckland, the other from Wellington, taking several days to get there.

On Saturday morning there was a cavalcade of Locomotives through the station. Steam shuttle trips ran to Sawyers Bay, Hillside Workshops, and the Early Settlers Museum throughout the weekend. Longer day excursions also went to Middlemarch and Invercargill. *continued>*

Left: Wab 794 (from Fielding) steams though the Dunedin station to collect some carriages.

The highlight for me was the trip to Hillside Workshops, which included a 1 hour guided tour. At Hillside, one of the new YJ ballast hopper wagons was on display. A guide was holding a remote control not much bigger than an Aristocraft Train Engineer, operating the discharge doors on the wagon. On-board solar panels keep the batteries charged to work the control gear. So who is going to be the first to build a model one of those? And although Robin Jager is no longer with us, that is no excuse for the bottom doors not working either!



At the Otago Early Settlers Museum there was a display of some large hand crafted models of different steam engines from around the world. A lot of time had been put in to building those.

We also found a G scale model railway in the front window of a Bank (pictured). But as the bank was closed, the railway wasn't running.

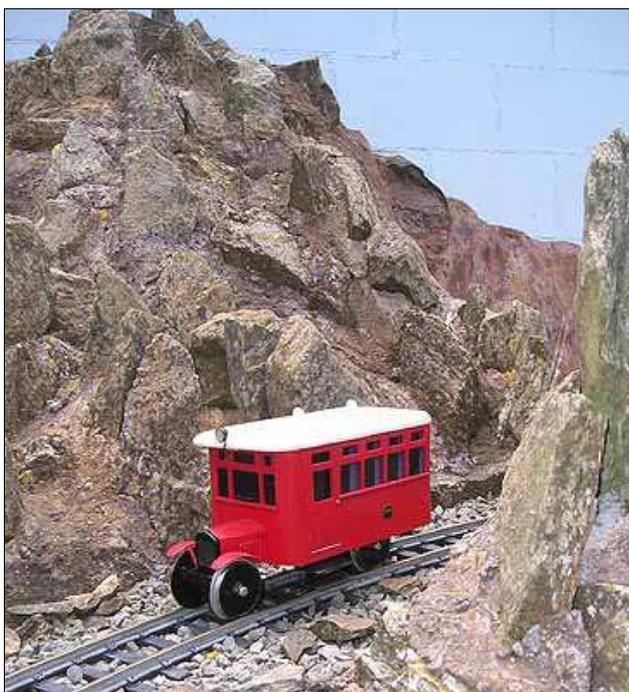


Photos: Top; I saw this unusual tractor at the Dunedin boat yards while waiting for the train.

Middle and Bottom: The G scale layout in the bank window, based on the Taieri Gorge line.



Club November Meeting



There was a good turnout at the November meeting, hosted by Karl Arnesen. The Mt Catt and Jessie Falls railway certainly has plenty of spectacular photo locations, and it is always easy finding photos to go in the newsletter.

We were lucky with the weather. Morning rain cleared to a mostly sunny afternoon, but rain then returned early evening.

CGRS PORTABLE LAYOUT UPGRADE 2007/2008

Notes From our discussions held at the November meeting at Karls

Things to do....

Sand, paint and tidy up existing base boards.

Make more specific flow thru scenery.

Increase yard lengths to meet 6m standard.

Make specific buildings to fit new scenery.

Add longer mainline running for point to point running.

Install signalling system.

Complete club turntable.

Add engine facility behind turntables.

Link section to other layouts.

Add passing loops to centre of mainlines.

Drop down bridge section for centre access.

Gauntlet bridge sections.

Continuation of mainline for continuous circle.

Purchase more club track and points.

Design easy made/transportable single line extended run sections for continuous running.

Photos:

Top: Dean's railcar in a rocky cutting.

Below: Graeme's train on the big trestle.

Next Page: Tank train winds through the pass.





Garden Railways Tour of Oz and NZ

Garden Railways magazine has announced it is running a tour of Australia and New Zealand in October 2007. The tour guide will be editor Mark Horovitz.

The main tour will visit garden railways and other attractions in Sydney, and Melbourne, before flying to Auckland and then back to USA.

There will be an optional South Island extension which will fly from Auckland to Queenstown, travel up to Christchurch, and back home to USA.

Saturday 13th October has been set aside as a full day layout tour around Christchurch. I have already made contact with some members to see if they would like to be part of the tour. If you wish to participate and have not been approached, let me know, and I can forward you details on to the organiser for consideration.

Full details of the tour can be found at:
www.TravelingTogether.net

LGB to be sold

A news report translated from a German Newspaper suggests that LGB will be sold by the end of this year.

LGB ran into financial difficulties in September, and filed for bankruptcy.

In the preceding two weeks, working hours at the German factory were cut to the point where staff had not come in at all for the last week.

It is now running under the control of provisional insolvency manager Steffen Goede, and product is being dispatched again.

There are said to be 12 parties interested in acquiring LGB. These range from private individuals to financial investors and include the owners of model train company Marklin.

Lehmann will bid as well through a third party. The selling price is estimated to be around 7-8M Euros.

The former American division, LGBoA, which was sold shortly before the announced bankruptcy, has recently announced that it is to start selling PIKO HO scale trains in North America.

"When we announced the transfer of LGBoA, we promised the change would allow us to offer other interesting products," said Tony Castellano, LGBoA's Chief Operating Officer. "Now, you're seeing the first step in making that promise into a reality."

The PIKO HO line will join the brands already offered by LGBoA, including LGB, PIKO G-scale line and the NOCH line of G-scale accessories.

News taken from various reports on mylargescale.com

Important Dates:

December

17th - Trevor Stewart, 25 Warner Place, Heathcote

25th - Santa Brings more trains (only if you have been good!)

Club Meetings 2007:

January 21st - Glen & Brenda Anthony, 59 Colombo Street

February 18th - Ian Barker

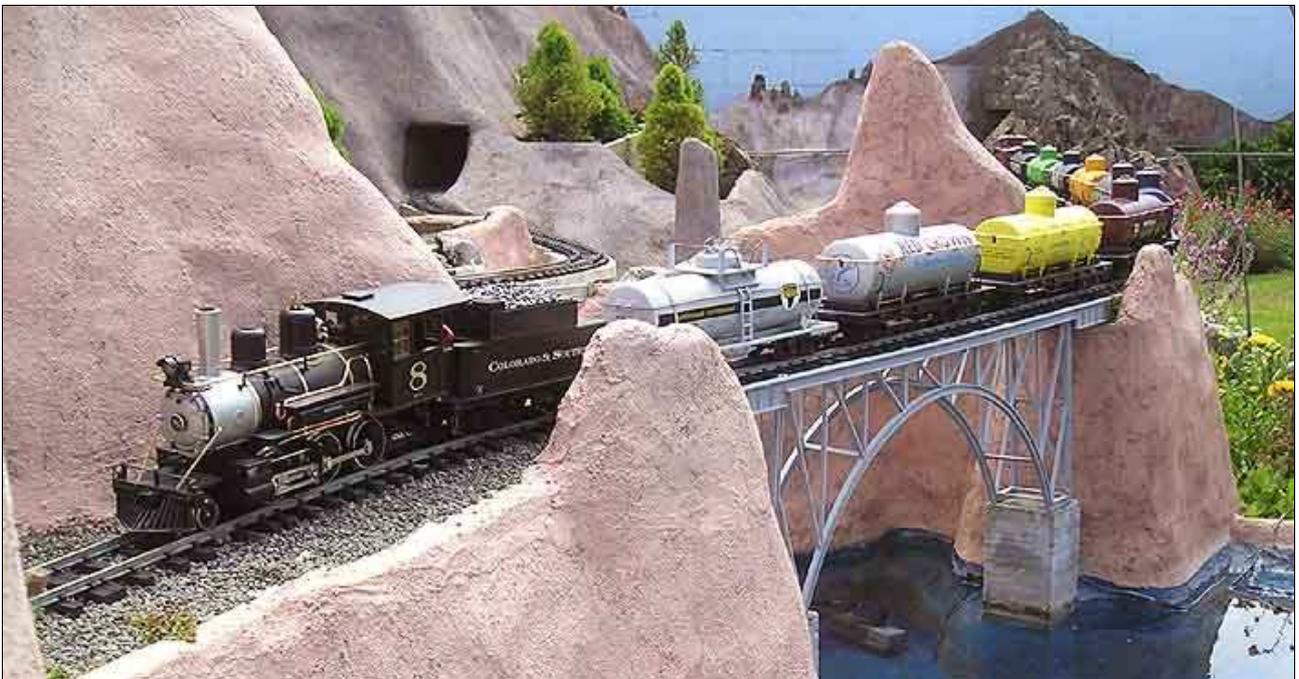
March 18th - Still available, offers??

April 22nd - Ross Fraser

May 27th - Bob McCully Memorial Show, Addington School. (Set up day Sat 26th.)

Model Train Shows 2007:

Cromwell - March 24 & 25. Timaru - July 6 & 7. Christchurch - October 6 & 7



Tank train at the November meeting on Karl's *Jessie Falls Viaduct*.

Club Information:

Our aim is to have fun by building and/or running model trains outdoors. The society caters for all scales outdoors, but specialises in "G" scale (Gauge 1, 45mm) outdoors and indoors. The club meeting is held on the second to last Sunday of most months and consists of a mixture of visits to established garden railways, indoor meetings and exhibitions for display to the public. Membership is \$20 per year. New members are welcome. For membership or other inquiries please contact:

Chairman: Don Ellis: ph/fax 365-2267 wk Email: don@computercables.co.nz

Treasurer: Phillip Cooke: ph 389-6192 hm Email: philrail@xtra.co.nz

or

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Christchurch 8032

Newsletter Contributions:

Photos and/or articles for the newsletter are welcome: Please send to Glen Anthony: glen.bren@paradise.net.nz