



# Goldfields Railway Newsletter December 2022

Welcome back to our last newsletter of 2022. We will soon have a new year upon us and hopefully an exciting year for Goldfields Railway. We take this opportunity to wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

This month we are introducing Dave Cole. As well as being a part of the furniture, he is also largely responsible for the introduction of a miniature railway to Goldfields.

## Dave Cole



Born in Christchurch in the middle of the last century, I am one of 4 family baby boomers. My Father worked in Sawmills around the South Island so we lived in a few small towns. The last being Gladstone, just south of Greymouth. When the native timber milling came to an end we moved to Christchurch where I was educated at Riccarton High School till I was fifteen. I couldn't wait to leave school and get a job as I was only there to eat my lunch!

I worked for CWF Hamilton, Jet Boats and Engineering Co before deciding to make a career in the Royal New Zealand Navy. I was a Weapon Mechanic/Fitter for 11 years and made the decision to move on with life to civvy street, after reaching the dizzy heights of "Petty

Officer” The Navy was a good era in my young life and I saw and did things that young people of today would never understand. Enough said about that!

I went to Australia in 1985 where I did mainly Horticulture and Studied Viticulture through Dookie University in Victoria. I think I pruned more grape vines than most people have had hot peas. I also spent a couple of years driving trucks around the southern states of Australia and managed to clock up a few kilometres and bowl the odd “Roo” or two in the process.

We built our own home on 20 acres there and raised our kids in the Australian way. They turned out alright so we must have done something right. I was also a member of the “Victorian Goldfields Railway” in Maldon, Victoria for quite a few years and spent many a hot dry day repairing and laying track for our 5’ 3” gauge Steam Locos to traverse with ease.

I was also into “G” scale Garden Railways that consumed a bit of my spare time, and money. Guess that’s why I am a pauper but have lots of Model Railway equipment.

Alas, after 22 years of life in Oz we sold up and returned to NZ. Coincidentally we ended up in Waikino where there was another Railway. I wonder how that happened....?

I joined the “Goldfields Railway” where I was employed as an Operation Assistant (Otherwise known as a Dogs Body). It involved Driving, Guarding, Maintenance and all manner of things too numerous to mention. Due to circumstances beyond my control, the employment came to an end and I remained on as a volunteer and here I am today. A bit older and maybe wiser, but that’s a matter of debate.

Myself and Dennis Blake instigated the building of a 7’25” in 2011 and it eventually got started 2 years later. It’s still not finished but with a bit of luck and some help it will be completed in a year or so. Dennis became unwell and left us about 4 years ago so it’s been a one man slog since then, but it has progressed, and that’s the main thing.

Luckily, I have my own machine shop here in Waikino so I have been able to fabricate everything that is required to build Locomotives and Rolling stock. I presently have a Steam Loco under way and once the boiler is sorted out it should be a good drawcard for the Miniature Railway. Here’s hoping!

What lies in the future for me? Family first and Trains a close second!

## **THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY**

It has been a couple of years since Goldfields Railway had run a Great Train Robbery, due to Covid, so now that there aren’t any lockdowns and people are free to mingle, a decision was made to run The Great Train Robbery on Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2022. Unfortunately, what we didn’t take into account, was the weather. It was a horrendous day, with constant rain, however, after consulting with ‘The Cowboy’ and his group prior to Saturday, and they knowing what the weather was like, gave the ‘green light’. So, The Great Train Robbery/ies was/were on. It was decided that this year, we would run two robberies, as in past years, Goldfields Railway had to turn people away, so they missed out. The first ‘robbery’ would

take place on the first trip down to Waikino, with the second 'robbery' taking place on the last trip down to Waikino.

The passengers were made aware of what was likely to take place as some didn't know about the event, and others had spent some time dressing themselves and their families up, and off the train went, from a wet Waihi Station. By the time the train was approaching the area where the 'robbery' was to take place, it had stopped raining and then the robbers appeared on horseback, stopping the train at Schuler's Crossing. Whilst one robber (The Cowboy) climbed on the front carriages of the train, another (Chief Sitting Bear) climbed on the back and proceeded to hand out large Crunchie Bars to the eager awaiting children. Many thanks for the team at Waihi New World for providing a large box of Crunchie Bars free of charge. Very much appreciated.



So, while The Cowboy and Chief Sitting Bear made their way through the carriages, other 'robbers' waited on horseback to ensure that no-one 'escaped' - all brandishing guns (fake of course) and once the 'robbery' was over, the train was allowed to continue on its trip to Waikino.

I do not know who got the most pleasure out of the robbery - the children, Mum and Dad, or the grandparents. There were some parents worried about

the 'sugar rush' with the amount of chocolate etc. being consumed by their children.

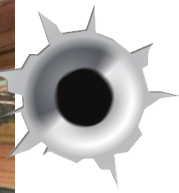
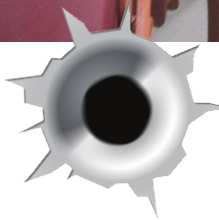
The second 'robbery' took place as planned. However, the rain did not stop for this one and the 'robbers' and their mounts were very wet.

A **HUGE** thank you to The Cowboy and Chief Sitting Bear and their band of outlaws, together with their steeds who endured dismal weather to make the event happen, also to the Team at New World, Waihi for their generous support and the volunteers at Goldfields Railway who helped put the event together and make it the success that it was on a very trying day.



Whilst The Great Train Robbery is an annual event, it was felt that another should be held early in the new year, when hopefully the weather will be fine to allow more people to participate.





**NEW WORLD**



## Leonbergers on the Train

A group of passengers from the Leonberger Kennel Club recently travelled with their prized dogs on the train. Leonbergers are a large dog breed, originating from the town of Leonberg in Germany. They were initially bred so that they looked like lions, and are a cross between a Saint Bernard and a Newfoundland – so they are quite large. Males average between 60- 80 kgs each, with the females around 10kgs lighter. As most people know, Saint Bernards are notorious for their drooling and slobber. With the Leonberger, you get the Saint Bernard size, without the drooling and slobber.



According to one of the owners, the breed nearly became extinct after World War II, with only 5 Leonbergers left that were suitable for breeding. The dogs were used by the Nazis to haul ammunition around the front lines, and hence most of them perished. A breeding program was started after the war and a decision was made to also breed it with the



Pyrenean Mountain Dog to provide a lighter colouring. The black faces/heads denotes the age of the dog - the darker the face/head, the older the dog. Being a large dog, their life expectancy is around 8-10 years, and due to the rigorous control on their breeding, they do not suffer from hip displacement that other dogs of a similar size do.

They are a very placid, laid-back dog, very loyal to their owners and also quite intelligent. Of the 11 Leonbergers that rode the train, only one played up, and a swift clip behind the ears, saw him behave himself. He was a one-year-old "puppy" weighing in at 50kgs and just wanted to assert his presence with the older males.

If you are interested in purchasing a Leonberger, a registered puppy will set

you back between \$4000-\$5000. An average Leonberger devours about 2kg of meat a day - apparently, they are very partial to chicken drumsticks. At Waikino, one ate a mince pie in basically one bite. They are not a cheap dog to feed. There was no tugging on leads, most just followed their handler.

All the dogs were malting, so there was a fair amount of fur left behind after the dogs disembarked back at Waihi, but thankfully, no slobber to wipe up.

The picture to the right is of Samson – nearly 6 years old, weighing in at just 80 kg and a true gentleman of a dog. If the owner stopped, so did Samson, never walked ahead, always at his side.



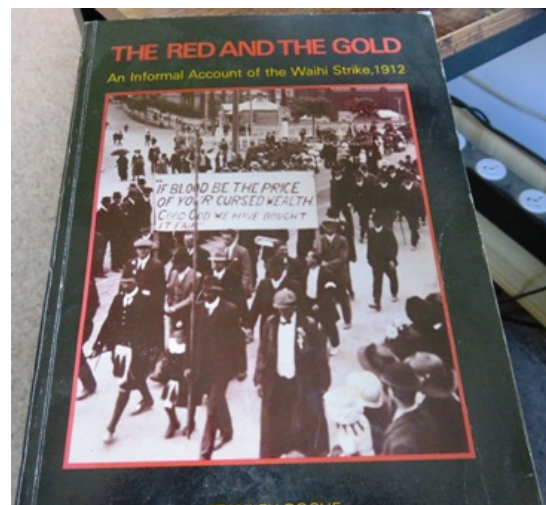
This is the third group of dogs that Goldfields Railway have entertained this year. The first group were Saint Bernards, complete with slobber and fur and then there were the Burmese Mountain dogs - similar to the Saint Bernards with different colourings.

## Library Book Review

Roche, Stanley (1982)

***The Red and the Gold***

Oxford University Press, Auckland



“Remember Waihi, Remember Waihi”. In the closing weeks of 1912, this was the slogan flung at audiences around New Zealand. Those who had taken part in the Waihi struggle; no matter which side they were on, the plea must have seemed quite unnecessary. Who could forget those dramatic, traumatic months and their terrible culmination? On Tuesday 12 November 1912, a man fired at a constable wounding him in the stomach. The constable struck down the man who he believed was responsible. Then a mob attacked the fallen man, beating and kicking him. He died from his injuries. His name was Evans and our Memorial Hall was built in memory of him.

Mobs armed with batons and sometimes guns, went around the town giving notice to various households - they and their families had 48 hours to get out of town. Some used our station for their departure, or Waikino as they were fearful of their reception at the

Waihi Station. Gold, and silver, danger and death, socialism, patriotism and violence were elements of this explosion at Waihi. This book attempts to trace the history of that explosion.

Our railway was actually a sort of safe Zone, as deportees gathered and strike breakers also gathered to ensure that the miners and their families actually left. They often had to run the gauntlet of hostile men. Some families caught the train at Waikino to avoid this situation.

For those interested in learning about the local history so as to be better informed when talking to or passengers, this book has been donated to our growing library of Video cassettes, DVD and books.

Graeme Martin

## **From the Pages of Our History**

### The Waihi-Paeroa Railway Line

Taken from the publication Gold Country – ‘A journey through the country of Ohinemuri and beyond’ by Henry Rawle, Waihi, December 1985. Printed by Goldfields Print Ltd, Paeroa.

The historic line was phased out with the opening of the Kaimai tunnel in 1978, but the energy and foresight of tourist-orientated groups has ensured the public will continue to have access to one of the most picturesque stretches of railway line in the country.

Today vintage trains cover the Waihi end of the track, while a walkway follows the course of the old line through rugged Karangahake Gorge and the 1090 metre railway tunnel out to the Crown battery.

The railway reached Paeroa in 1893 but faced with the rocky obstacle of the gorge bluffs, the decision to extend the line to Waihi was deferred for many years.

It was pressure from Waihi mining companies, backed by threats to build the line themselves, that finally forced the Government to drive a tunnel through the hills and complete the 21 kilometre track from Paeroa to Waihi.

Tunnelling started in 1900 and a combined road and rail bridge was erected at the Karangahake entrance. The line from Paeroa to the tunnel mouth was opened for goods traffic in 1904 and the Karangahake railway station was built across the river, later providing a passenger platform and two sidings capable of holding 65 wagons.

The tunnel was through by 1905 and the line was officially opened in November 9 of that year.

The completion of the Kaimai tunnel 73 years later marked the end of an era for the historic line yet only a farewell whistle blast signalled the departure of the last train from Waihi.

The absence of ceremony was marked in contrast to the jubilation which greeted the opening of the Paeroa-Waihi line.

Two 'specials' ran from Thames to the new Waihi railway station where hundreds of excited onlookers waved flags and cheered as the first train rolled up to the platform drawn by two glistening locomotives.

The novelty and sense of pride engendered by the first steam trains lasted for many years. Excursions were popular, whistles blowing, wheel-tappers bustling to and fro and the great engines hissing steam and smoke from their balloon funnels.

The first locomotives were small "F" and "Fa" tank engines made at Price's foundry at Thames. A railway timetable dated 1912 reveals there were six passenger and freight trains running every day, the journey taking 55 minutes with several stops along the way.

In later years the faster and more powerful "J" class engines took over and it was not unusual to see these locomotives hauling up to a hundred wagons.

Diesel replaced steam, road haulage challenged the railway for goods transport and the Waihi-Paeroa line became one of the many to be declared redundant.

Weeds grew waist-high along the track; the rusting rails were sold for scrap. The iron road which once reached out into a bright new future looked back on a nostalgic past.

It was due to the efforts of a handful of local train enthusiasts that at least part of the historic line was saved for future generations to enjoy.

## **ARRIVAL OF NEW LOCOMOTIVES TO GOLDFIELDS RAILWAY**

Goldfields Railway now has two 'new' locomotives in its yard. The two main line DBR model locomotives arrived via road after being railed from Wellington by KiwiRail. The two locomotives, nos. 1199 and 1282 saw service with KiwiRail, and both have different paint schemes - 1282 the generic KiwiRail yellow and red paint scheme, whilst 1199 has the dark blue and yellow colour paint scheme of the Auckland Regional Transport Authority MAXX branding, which was the forerunner to Auckland Transport. Whilst the MAXX logos have been removed, the outline can still be clearly seen on the locomotive. This loco saw service on Auckland's rail network between 2003 to 2014.

DBR 1199 (ex DB1076) does have some prominence with Waihi, as it was the last train to pull into Waihi Station at the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Paeroa to Waihi rail line, plus also it was the locomotive that also brought a variety of rolling stock and was present at the official handover ceremony of the railway line between Waikino and Waihi to the Waihi Steam Train Society in 1980. Unfortunately, 42 years of hard work has taken its toll on the loco, as shown with the train pulling into Waihi Station in 1980 and now parked one line 3 at Waihi Station.





DBR 1199 arriving at Waihi Station in 1980 for the official handover ceremony.



DBR1199 (front) with DBR 1282 parked on line 3 at Waihi Rail Station in 2022.

Goldfields Railway do plan to have both of these locos operating throughout the year on special track days with one at each end of the train that travels between Waihi and Waikino. Both locomotives are fully mobile, and with a V8 powertrain, and sound awesome when started up.

**Fact Sheet:**

**DBR 1199** was originally built as **DB 1076** in 1965 - 1966 by General Motors Diesel, Canada, model EMD G8.

The locomotive was rebuilt in 1980 - 1982 by Clyde Engineering, Australia (hence DBR - R stands for rebuild).

Both locomotives are each 14 metres in length and weigh 68 tons.

They are both Diesel Electric locomotives, with both powered by a GM 8 - 645C V8 diesel of 84.56 litres (5,160 cubic inch).



DBR 1282 arriving via truck, ready to be railed off.



DBR 1199 on its way through the Karangahake Gorge to Waihi for the handover ceremony.

(Photo courtesy of Facebook)



## REPORT ON 2022 GOLDFIELDS RAILWAY INC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General meeting of Goldfields Railway Inc was held at the Waihi Arts Centre and Museum on Thursday, 27 October, 2022.

A small gathering of members attended to hear what had happened over the past 12 months and what was planned over the next twelve months.

Secretary Greg Stilwell, in the absence of a Chairperson gave a review of what had happened in the last year. Highlights from Greg's report are as follows:

- COVID-19 still had an adverse effect on how Goldfields Railway operated over the year, however with a relaxation of COVID-19 guidelines, has seen people returning to support the railway.
- Paid staff have reduced from 6 to 2. All 4 had left on their own accord, pursuing other endeavours. Goldfields Railway at present has only two part time staff - Station Master Sue Brandt who works Monday to Friday and Lynette Hardy, who works Saturdays and Sundays. Volunteers have taken up the slack with the departure of paid staff.
- **Rolling Stock and Locomotives**- Goldfields Railway at present only has one operational locomotive, the DSA. However, Loco 6 is expected to be back to operational standard before the end of the year. Loco 7, which has sat idle for the past couple of years, finally had its engine repaired, and is having a number of jobs done to make it compliant for operational duties. The Glenbrook Carriage, Tauranga Dining Car, Open wagon and bike wagon still continue to serve Goldfields Railway well. The Newmarket Carriage is used as required.
- **Update of Goldfields Railway Safety Case and System**- The Management Committee undertook a review of their Safety Case and System to better reflect how the Railway operates. Most of the changes were to reporting lines and job descriptions. All changes were approved by the Rail Regulatory Body of NZTA.
- **Waihi Station Railway Buildings**- There is a lot of work in tidying up the various railway buildings at Waihi. Roofs need cleaning, paintwork needs refreshing and the jigger sheds alongside Line 1 need to be rebuilt. A project to re-roof the Train Shed was started, funding sourced, however to date has not progressed. Needs to be done, so the incoming Management Committee will need to progress this. Once the Train Shed re-roofing has been completed, the Management Committee need to start the restoration of the Goods Shed. With the assistance of Department of Conservation Heritage, early in the new year, a start will be made with preserving the wood on the Derrick Crane. A wood preservation expert from Hokitika has had a preliminary look to what is required and will supervise the preservation of the wood structure.
- **Information plaques**- This has been a long time coming; however, plaques will be placed on a number of buildings at the Waihi Station Rail Heritage site advising their origins, and after a suggestion from a member, Don Henwood, plaques will also be placed on all items of operational rolling stock and locomotives, advising of their origins and working life.
- **Replacement of Rail sleepers**- Goldfields Railway was able to source a significant number of ex-KiwiRail concrete sleepers free of charge and these will replace worn wooden sleepers at various points along the Waihi to Waikino rail corridor. Wooden



sleepers will continue to be used in both the Waihi and Waikino rail yards. This will be an ongoing process as time permits. The concrete sleepers will allow for reduced maintenance issues as well as lasting longer than the wooden sleepers.

#### **Highlights from Treasurer's Report:**

- Chris Hale, Treasurer gave a report of the financial state of Goldfields Railway for the year ending 30 June, 2022. Ticket sales were down due to COVID-19 lockdowns; however, Goldfields Railway was successful in obtaining Government Wage Subsidies relating to COVID-19, which helped.
- The TRAXX Shunters Cottage (Air B n B) operated by Goldfields Railway, together with the camping ground produced good returns over the past year.
- Department of Conservation, Goldfields Railway's landlord, also assisted financially by waiving approx. \$10,000 from our annual lease.
- The Financial Accounts for the year ending 30 June 2022 were presented in Draft form, as they are presently with the Society's Auditor, being audited.
- Dianne Dawson at Waikino Station Café has worked well with Goldfields Railway over the financial year, providing excellent service to train patrons, as well as feeding them with her treats from the café.

#### **Highlights from Health & Safety Officer's Report:**

- Graeme Martin took over the role in February 2022 and undertook a review of the Health and Safety processes operated by the Railway. The Railway complied with the Safety Case and System and Government legislation in general and Graeme has been working through those issues that had been neglected.
- As stated in the Secretary's Report, a review was undertaken of Goldfields Railway's Safety Case and System, to bring it more in line with how the Management Committee saw the Railway operating. As part of this process, a full review was also undertaken of the Hazard Register.
- First Aid kits were updated, with the guards now picking up a first aid kit for the train each day. That way, the guards now know that the first aid supplies are current and not expired. Goldfields Railway are also seeking funding for a Defibrillator that will be available on the train in case of need.
- Goldfields Railway are also changing and updating the gangway covers to look more professional and making them more compliant and safer for passengers.
- Mini Rail - Graeme has undertaken a review of the operating licence for the Mini Rail, which expired last year and is working to having the operating licence renewed.
- Upgrades are being undertaken to the lighting in the Train Shed and ultimately, the Goods Shed, together with an upgrade to the intruder and fire detection systems for all buildings and an improved PA system for the Station Platform, so that passengers are able to hear what is being said.

## **Highlights from Housing Manager's Report, Restoration and Maintenance Report and Waihi Mini Rail Report.**

- **Housing Report**- Chris Hale advised that rental income is up to date, with some repair work carried out by a licenced professional over the past year. All rental housing complies with the Tenancy Act and are inspected regularly by Wrightsons Real Estate. It is planned to have House 1's (by Maddock St) exterior repainted before Christmas, and the other houses' exteriors washed prior to Christmas. It is also planned to have the TRAXX Shunters Cottage interior refreshed during the next 12 months.
- **Restoration and Maintenance**- Dave Rowe advised that due to a lack of manpower, the R & M Team hasn't been as productive as they would have liked this year. Work on the restoration of the Guards Van is progressing slowly, however it is on the final straight to be finished. The Team is currently working on getting both Locos 6 & 7 operational. There are a number of other tasks that need to be done, however with a lack of manpower, tasks need to be prioritised.
- **Waihi Mini Railway**- Dave Cole advised that the last year has been quiet, with the safety audit and operating licence expiring. Work is underway to get both renewed. Extending the mini rail track has also taken a back seat due to other work and poor weather. Dave hopes that he can finish the proposed track extension, although somewhat lesser length than what was originally proposed.

### **Election of Officers for 2022 – 2023 year:**

**Chairperson** no nominations were received for the position and there were none forthcoming from the floor.

**Secretary** only one nomination was received for Greg Stilwell.

**Treasurer** only one nomination was received for Chris Hale.

**Committee members** nominations were received for the following:

Ashton Baird

Susan Brandt

Dave Cole

Stan Foster

Dean McQuoid

All were elected to the Management Committee.

**Appointment of Honorary Solicitor** Gemma Barden

**Appointment of Auditor** Michael Burt

### **Annual Member Subscriptions**

\$20.00 – for a normal member subscription fee.

\$10.00 – for a working member subscription fee.

\$10.00 – for junior member subscription fee.

### **Items of General Business:**

A request that the rail corridor between Waihi and Waikino be tidied up. This is planned for early December.

A general discussion was had about where to source more volunteers from. Some good ideas were forthcoming and the Management Committee will follow up on.

With the lack of attendees at this meeting, it was thought that a change of day and time may assist in getting more members to the AGM. Secretary undertook to look at the options.

For any member wanting to view the reports presented at the meeting, they can contact the office between 8:00am to 3:00pm, Monday to Friday - phone (07)863 9020 or email [railwaygoldfields@xtra.co.nz](mailto:railwaygoldfields@xtra.co.nz)

Greg Stilwell  
**Secretary.**

### **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OFFICE HOLDERS – 2022/2023**

<b>CHAIRPERSON-</b>	Graeme Martin – email: <a href="mailto:graeme.martin2@gmail.com">graeme.martin2@gmail.com</a>
<b>SECRETARY -</b>	Greg Stilwell – email: <a href="mailto:gergandrob@gmail.com">gergandrob@gmail.com</a>
<b>TREASURER -</b>	Chris Hale – email: <a href="mailto:chrishale@outlook.co.nz">chrishale@outlook.co.nz</a>
<b>COMMITTEE MEMBERS -</b>	Ashton Baird – email: <a href="mailto:railboy_nz@hotmail.com">railboy_nz@hotmail.com</a>
	Susan Brandt – email: <a href="mailto:susanbrandt8@gmail.com">susanbrandt8@gmail.com</a>
	Dave Cole – email: <a href="mailto:dhrl@slingshot.co.nz">dhrl@slingshot.co.nz</a>
	Stan Foster – email: <a href="mailto:swfoster49@gmail.com">swfoster49@gmail.com</a>
	Dean McQuoid – email: <a href="mailto:dean.dbm@gmail.com">dean.dbm@gmail.com</a>
	Andre Coppell – email: <a href="mailto:andrea6@xtra.co.nz">andrea6@xtra.co.nz</a>

**H & S OFFICER** - Graeme Martin - email: [graeme.martin2@gmail.com](mailto:graeme.martin2@gmail.com)

The Management Committee meets every third Monday at 5:00pm at the Waihi Station lunchroom.

Any current financial member of Goldfields Railway Inc is entitled to be present at Management Committee meetings and may exercise visitor's speaking rights, but do not have any voting rights.

Next meeting dates are:

December - Monday – 19 December, 2022

January - Monday – 23 January, 2023

February - Monday – 20 February, 2023

