



Heritage Happenings for March 2011

Tony's Tales

Hi again, we had hoped that 2011 would be a bit quieter for GridHeritage but so far we have been really busy with lots of new additions to the collection and lots of enquiries. Keep them coming.

An unusual request to Transpower

Fergus (Mac) Doig was the Palmerston North District Electrical Engineer from 1955 to 1963 and was instrumental in the construction of the 110kV lines to the Wairarapa. Doig was one of the early engineers who laid the very substantial foundations for what is now the National Grid.

In his Will he asked to have his ashes sprinkled near Tower 151, at 2340 ft, the highest pylon on the Upper Hutt – Greytown, now Masterton - Upper Hutt Line A.



Tower 151 Masterton Upper Hutt line A

Nigel Christian, the nephew of F.M. Doig and Executor of his Will, first contacted Transpower in 2008 and duly arranged to go to the tower and spread the ashes, but on the allotted day the howling Nor-wester gusting up to 125 km/hr prevented their access and Mac's family were unable to undertake Mac's last wishes. Despite this his transmission line gave faultless service through the atrocious conditions.

On a more peaceful day in February 2011, with the help of Transpower, and Gary McGillicuddy of United Group, Nigel was able to spread the ashes beneath the tower. He reports that the

weather was glorious and the views outstanding.

F.M. Doig can at last rest in peace.

Model 220kV flat top tower

GridHeritage has a beautiful model 220kV Tower and we recently took it to Bunnythorpe where it may be displayed for training purposes.



Top of our model tower with a 'real one' in the background
The tower is in two parts and we had to break it down to move it.



The model tower partly assembled.

A highlight of our regular Bunnythorpe visits is morning tea at Shorty Spearpoint's home for a cuppa and the best scones in New Zealand. We are always spoiled (and we love it).



GridHeritage team with the Spearpoints

Another highlight of our visits is stopping at Shannon on the way home

GridHeritage. Registered as: "The Electricity Transmission Heritage of New Zealand Incorporated"

Te Mana Hiko Tuku Iho

www.gridheritage.org.nz

Phone: 04 494 7474

Email: gridheritage@transpower.co.nz

for a welcome ice-cream. Richard was heard to ask for a second paper towel to clean the dribbles from his bearded chin. Like a flash the shopkeeper offered to give him a shave. He was out the door in no time at all.

Regular Oldies Meeting at Feathers

In the last Newsletter we mentioned a regular meeting of some of the Industry Seniors. Here is a follow up article from Brian Thomas.

The lunch group that you referred to in your last newsletter originated in the late 1980s. It was about that time that NZED was morphing into ECNZ and several members of the Head Office Transmission Line Section were approaching retirement, early or otherwise.

To maintain contact, we decided to meet for lunch, on a monthly basis, at a suitable local watering hole. We met at the Thorndon Tavern for several years. When that closed, we tried the Backbenchers and, for the last several years, we have met at the Featherston Bar and Grill in Featherston St.

For many years, our numbers have included Brian Thomas, Bogdan Manastyski, Toby Wilkinson, Sandy Anderson, Ranjith De Silva and Maria Argus. Sivagurunatha Kamalanathan (Kamal) was with us until he moved to West Australia a few years ago and also Chris Perinpanayagam (Perin) who died at the end of 2009.

For several years, we were joined by Andy Gibb, until he moved elsewhere and, more recently, we have welcomed Lindsay Duff and also, members of the GridHeritage Group, Tony Silke, Richard Donaldson and Les Davys. Others have joined us when they happen to be in Wellington on the day. The group meets at 12 noon, on the last Tuesday of each month, except December.

Real work at Bunnythorpe

Our Bunnythorpe visits are not all scones and ice creams. We continue to receive many new acquisitions and these all require photographing and describing in our database. It is a long and laborious job but Richard, Les and Brian have a good system of adding to the database.

Of late we have been receiving a lot of historic documents and apart from keeping them safe we have done little to catalogue them. We now have another Massey Museum Studies Graduate, Megan Wallis, to lead us through this work. We have to ensure that anyone doing research in our system can find what they are looking for and this is a tall ask.

Historic photos from the old Napier District



Unloading Napier transformer 1928

The photo shows how things were done prior to the introduction of cranes and indeed even the most basic safety equipment.

Could this transformer bank be the Woodville T1 Bank that is currently being decommissioned and one unit going to GridHeritage.

Oral recording progress

David Young is back into our oral recording and is currently recording Hec Sutherland and Peter Simpson. Both Peter and Hec have had a long involvement in the industry.

Tony...