



Heritage Happenings for July 2006

Tony's Tales

Hi again to all of the GridHeritage members and friends. This is our second newsletter that will keep you all informed on our happenings. We hope to produce a regular Newsletter that will cover the work that we are doing.

We received some very positive feedback from the first Newsletter in May and have tried to incorporate the changes in this edition.

You asked for pictures

We now have thousands of pictures in our collection and we will try and put a few into each of our Newsletters.

If you thought that our collection consisted of just only old electro-mechanical items then see if this one changes your mind. It is an ASEA Relay Tester and is now safely stored at Bunnythorpe.



ASEA relay tester

Bunnythorpe Collection

We haven't had a trip to Bunnythorpe for a while but we intend to do so when we get the opportunity. There is much work to do there such as continuing with the cataloguing and photographing of the collection. This is a time consuming and largely boring task but it has to be done. Winter is not the best time for such work. We continue to be indebted to Transpower for the use of their storage space, and we are especially grateful to Wal Samson and Janet Black for providing us access and security and a great deal of support.

Website

At last the GridHeritage website is nearing completion and now is expected to be online before the end of July. The work on our site has been delayed by the new

System Operation site which has been developed by the same people.

Roxburgh 50th Anniversary

Roxburgh Dam and Power Station, turns 50 years old this year and Contact Energy is planning a commemorative open day to mark the occasion on 21 October for all locals and those people who have worked on the construction or the operation of the dam over the years.



Roxburgh control room 1968

Anyone with any photos, memorabilia or stories to tell relating to the dam, or people wishing to register their interest in the commemorative function, should contact Cathy at the Roxburgh Dam on 0800 4ROX50 (0800476950). The 1968 photo above of a very young Tony Silke was dug out from under the bed for this occasion.

The photo below, again from Roxburgh, shows a 220kv disconnector breaking charging current.

The things operators did in their free time!



Roxburgh disconnector operation

Connecting the Country

Helen Reilly is beaver away with her book on the history of the NZ electricity transmission system. Much research has been now been done and Helen can often



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be found in the Energy Library or the National Library hidden underneath a pile of books.

Oral History recording Award

GridHeritage has received a \$10,000 award from the Ministry for Culture and Heritage to manage a special oral history recording project.

For some years we have been recording the lives of significant people in the electricity and currently have around 25 such recordings. While doing this recording and researching the building of the New Zealand transmission system it became clear that there were families that had a number of generations who had worked in the industry.

Of special note is the unique contribution of the linemen who built and maintained the high voltage transmission system. The Maori contribution was especially significant in that there were many families with a number of generations who worked on building or maintaining the transmission system.

The Ministry for Culture and Heritage grant is for a one year project on "Maori linemen who worked on the nation grid". The recording will be done by David Young a noted writer and historian.

While it was not just Maori who contributed so much to the transmission system they did naturally fit into the demanding line construction and maintenance work. The work of these people who did the work needs to be recorded and this award will be a start of this.

What is new in our collection?

With the move of Christchurch Field Services to their new office at Addington we have been given the ex-Halfway Bush master clock. There are now very few of these clocks around. This photo shows this type of clock but our one has the 2 dials for time error indication.

We would like to get this clock back into operation as it is a beautiful piece of work and deserves to be on show. There is interest from Otahuhu to display it in the Regional Operating Centre there.



An early 'Gents' master clock

Early 50kV v 66kV Transmission voltages

The North Island used 50kV and the South Island chose 66kV. Does anyone know why this difference occurred?

The original HVDC high voltage tester

It looks as if Transpower has no further use for the old BICC 900kV tester. We would of course love to add it to our collection but it will take up half a warehouse. We are still in discussion with Transpower on the matter but the least we will do is to look at assembling it and photographing it for posterity. Does anyone have a spare space for this monster?

We want your feedback

We need to know what members want from us and welcome your feedback. Please phone or email us with any ideas.