



## Heritage Happenings for November 2009

### Tony's Tales

Hi again everyone. The last couple of months have again been hectic with lots of additions to our collection plus a need to sort out and rationalise our Bunnythorpe storage, more of this later.

### Engineering Heritage Conference

The 3rd Australasian Engineering Heritage Conference was recently held in Dunedin and was attended by about 150 enthusiastic folk all with an interest in engineering history. Richard Donaldson and I presented a paper on the work of GridHeritage which was well received. It was a great opportunity to share our ideas with others who are doing similar work. We were reminded of the importance of the HVDC mercury-arc valves to the history of NZ and as these will be de-commissioned in the near future the need to ensure that some of the equipment is preserved. A real lesson from the Conference was the need for collections to be put to good use. Some of the better ideas have been, for example, using old railway stations as cafes. GridHeritage needs to invent some meaningful ways to use parts of the collection. We should certainly get back to running regular historic film shows once again.

### Akaroa Hydro scheme

John Dodgshun and a small team are restoring the old Akaroa Pelton wheel turbine and generator.



Akaroa protection and control panels

The turbine was designed by Boving in 1908 and first used in a display in London.

It was installed in Akaroa in 1911 and converted from DC to AC in 1923 when the Coleridge supply was interconnected.

In 1955 the plant was sold to the Maruia Springs Hotel and used until it was de-commissioned in 1995. In 1997 the plant was purchased by the Akaroa Hydro Generating-Set Trust and returned to Akaroa in 2003.

It is expected to have the plant running in the near future. The plant is especially interesting in that it would be the only one in New Zealand that would be easily accessible by the general public.



Akaroa generator and exciter

It is hoped to have the plant running as a synchronous condenser and generating an income.

### Bunnythorpe storage

We have been a bit naughty by allowing our collection at Bunnythorpe to spread out beyond our original space. Storage space is at a premium because of the amount of new equipment that Transpower holds for new projects. Our GridHeritage team moved the remains from the damaged ECNZ collection into our main storage shed and also set up a new paper storage space for our larger sized drawings and photographs. The aches and pains from moving shelving and equipment demonstrate just how unfit we were.

### Temporary appointment of a Museum Studies Graduate

We are employing a Massey Museum Studies graduate to help us sort out our cataloguing and to plan for properly storing our paper and photographic collection. To date our efforts have mainly been cataloguing objects and just storing the documents and photos for future sorting. This means that we have no system in place for searching and retrieving items.

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

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Hopefully by the end of our Graduate's 3 month term our systems will be improved.

### Updated Website

The GridHeritage website has been updated and it is now possible to view over 400 items in the collection from this site. While adding the new items to the collection we also took the opportunity to enlarge the text and photos to make the site more usable (especially for us oldies).

<http://www.gridheritage.org.nz/index.html>

### GridHeritage Annual General Meeting

We held our AGM on 11 November which was attended by 10 members and one guest.

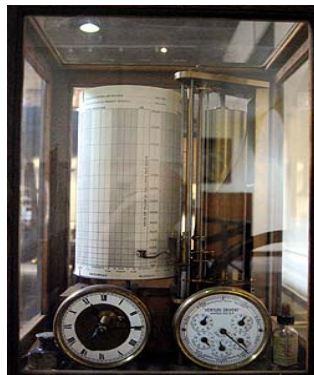
The following committee appointments were made:

Chairman:	Tony Silke
Deputy Chairman	Richard Donaldson
Treasurer	Brian Howard
Secretary	Les Davys

It was noted at the meeting that funds from the book 'Connecting the Country' were being donated by Transpower for the reconstruction and erection of towers from the original 50kV HoraHora – Waihi transmission line. GridHeritage also has an interest in this line as it was the first 'real' transmission line in New Zealand.

### Waitaki Venturi Flowmeter

You may recall that we restored a venturi flowmeter that was from the damaged ECNZ collection. We now find to our embarrassment that it is not ex-Waitaki as the original Waitaki one is still in place. So now we have a restored flowmeter and no idea of its history.



Venturi water flowmeter

If anyone can help us find the history of our flowmeter it would be much appreciated.

### Parsons Turbine Centenary Plate

This unusual plate was a part of the water-damaged ECNZ collection. The plate was merely water damaged but the box was completely ruined. Triptych Conservation Services built us a new box and glued the old Parsons logos onto it. The plate and box will now go in display in Transpower House in the System Operations area.



Restored Parsons Plate and box

### Oral Recording activities

We plan to do two more Oral Recording Interviews of people from the industry. If you know of anyone who would have a suitable life story to contribute then please let us know.

### Recent additions to our collection.

We continue to receive new objects and documents for our collection. Alasdair Turner sent us a complete draughting kit including set squares, tee squares, curves, lettering sets etc., these brought back some happy memories. Mike Bridger sent us a mint set of ECNZ publicity brochures, transmission line maps and papers. Martyn Jones of Transfield in Nelson continues to search out Technical Instructions and memorabilia from the old Nelson District.

2009 has been an exciting year for GridHeritage.

Merry Christmas to you all.

Tony Silke...