

Heritage Happenings for October 2007

Tony's Tales

Hi again everyone. Yet another year is nearly cut and progress with the collection seems slow. My life has been largely consumed with work on 'Connecting the Country' the book that Transpower has commissioned on the history of the transmission system. Now that work is nearly done we can get back to working on the collection at Bunnythorpe.

The Damaged ECNZ Collection

We still have the damaged collection awaiting a conservator's assessment. After recent sorting and tidying up I fear that much of the equipment will have to be dumped. This is a shame and we will recondition what we can but some of it is beyond repair. The good news is that Jim McRoberts, who was the original conservator of the collection, had a few treasures that he had kept aside, including a box of early ECNZ slides.



Grocer's store at Arapuni

Another gem from Jim was this photo of the Dispatch Office at Claudelands, Hamilton.



Frank Wright at Claudelands

If anyone knows anything further about these photos please let us know and we can add the information to our database.

Bunnythorpe Collection

Work continues on identifying and photographing the ever-growing collection. We had a very worthwhile working-bee and added many new items to the collection.

Palmerston North Visit

During the same trip to Bunnythorpe we also took time-out to see what other collectors are up to. We were made very welcome at the Palmerston North Power Station. They kindly started up one of their wonderful old engines for us.



Stuart Nicholson flexes his muscles

The Power Station is maintained in beautiful condition and is a treasure-trove for those interested in the history of our industry. Hidden away upstairs they have what may be the best collection of historic domestic electrical equipment.



Unusual heaters

This heater took my eye as it was in perfect condition, still in its box.

Tokamaru Steam Museum

On the return to Wellington we visited the steam museum at Tokomaru and they had steam supplied to their magnificent machines.

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Steam Locomotive at Tokomaru

The steam museum is open to the public on most days but their big effort goes into their 3 monthly "steam" day. we have a challenge with our collection but it is nothing compared to the dedication that is required to keep the Power Station and the Steam Museum running.

Changes to our team

Sadly Stuart Nicholson has had to stand back from his close involvement in GridHeritage due to pressures of work. Stuart's contribution has been significant. He has been our technical expert and our expert on the PastPerfect database software. Stuart will remain a member of our Society. We are deeply indebted to him for his massive contribution in getting GridHeritage to the stage it is.

Les Davys has recently joined us; Les is a 'retired' engineer with a passion for history. Les has already contributed to our work at Bunnythorpe and on our database.

We are also pleased to now have Jim McRoberts on our team. Jim has had a lifetime of involvement in the industry and a strong interest in collecting.

GridHeritage AGM

We will be holding our 2007 AGM on Friday 30th November commencing at 12.00. Apart from the formal part we hope to put on an interesting show to keep you entertained and up with our activities.

Christchurch Film Show

In conjunction with NZ Film Archives we recently put on a historic film show in Transpower's Christchurch office.

Feedback from the show was very positive and we will look to provide similar events as new films are located.

Thanks to Judy Donald for her organising that made the event such a success.

Connecting the Country

As mentioned earlier Helen Reilly has nearly completed her book on the history of the NZ electricity transmission system. The book was commissioned by Transpower and will take its place as an authoritative work along with People Politics and Power Stations, by John Martin. The book has now gone to the publisher and is due for release around March next year. One benefit of the research that was done for the book has been the collection of important historic photographs. This 1933 one of Ashburton substation shows a Tudor style building that houses the equipment at the left and an operator's residence at the near end. We would welcome any further information about the building.



Ashburton substation 1933

Website

Our website is up and running but still in test mode. There are a number of errors in the text and a heap of updating to do from our collection software. This will be completed shortly

We want your feedback

We need to know what members want from us and welcome your feedback. Please telephone or email us with any ideas that you have, or photos and memorabilia that you can give us.