

# Mini Railways in New Zealand

**Second Edition, Mar, April 2002**

## **24" Gauge and under.**

### **Blenheim Riverside Railway Society.**

24" g (610mm) gauge. Between Brayshaw Park and Nelson Street, a railway of 4.5kms. Running is a Price 4wD hauls four 24 seat carriages, following Taylor River. Awaiting restoration, a 1902 0 - 4 - 0 steam loco, used at Puponga Coal Mine, Collingwood. Open on first and third Sundays of the month.

Ph (03) 572 8968. Postal Address, C/- Brandcott Road, RD2 Blenheim 7321

### **Kaikohe Pioneer Village**

Recreation Street, Kaikohe, 24" (610mm) gauge. A Planet Diesel, used in Kaimai Tunnel construction, with carriages, ply a short loop, around Pioneer Village with historic Buildings. Refreshments, Parking and toilets are available. Prior to Kaimai tunnel, "Kaimai," as loco is named, was used at Grassmere Salt evaporation ponds, until salt harvesting was equipped with rubber tyred machines. ph, (09) 401 0816.

### **Stratford Pioneer Village**

State Highway 3, about 2 kilometres south of Stratford, Pioneer Village Features a 24" (610mm) gauge railway. Diesel outline loco (Hillman motor) hauls two carriages. Train operates on demand, through a village representing early 1900s. Open daily, parking and cafe on site. postal address, P O Box 401, Stratford, 4700. ph, (06) 765 5399. email pgwebb@roses.co.nz Peter Webb.

### **Waitakere Tramway Society**

Phone Keith Wright, (09) 832 3300, for information on train running. 24" (610mm) gauge, Kubota diesel and carriages, a one day membership subscription, \$6.00 adults, \$4.00 child. From Auckland City, take North Western Motorway, exit at Lincoln Road, travel towards Henderson, turn right at Universal drive, through to Swanson Road, towards Swanson, to O'Niels Road, through to Christian Road, to car park at entrance to Filter Station. Park outside of gates, otherwise car could be locked inside. A short walk past filter station, on well formed gravel path, will bring you to two sheds, some rails and pointwork and tunnel mouth. The Train journey starts here, to Waitakere Dam, Auckland's first water supply dam built in early 1920s. Take a picnic as facilities are available, if weather is good. Keith will explain the reason for subscriptions. Don't forget, phone (09) 832 3300.

## **The Rainforest Express**

Although this railway is a new enterprise, the Author walked this track in the late 1940s, and rail were in place from Filters, on Scenic Drive, Exhibition Drive, to vicinity of Upper Nihotupu Dam. The Lower Nihotupu Dam, New Zealand's first Earth Dam was at that time, about to be constructed, so a lot of railway on valley floor was removed and loco tipped into tidal mud.

Rainforest Express Railway is operated by Watercare Services, the Contractors for supplying potable water to Greater Auckland. The equipment is owned by Watercare. A call to ph 0800 788 788, a free call in New Zealand, contact HARVEY STEWART.

## **Ngongotaha Old Railway Yard**

Ngongotaha Railway Park, a 12 acre site, formerly station and yard operated by N Z RAIL, and successors. A 24" (610) gauge diesel hydraulic loco with carriages is under construction, also, a 16" gauge steam loco and carriages is operating. On site, a 3' 6" gauge railway and equipment is awaiting restoration. About 10 minutes from Rotorua City, on Auckland Highway. See below in 7¼" listing also. Open Saturday and Sunday, ph at depot, (07) 357 5484. Secretary, Don Burton, 406 Pukehangi Rd, Rotorua, ph (07) 8486. Jim Ross at jim.betty@paradise.net.nz

## **Aotea Lagoon Railway, Porirua.**

A quarter size, 18" gauge, replica of an NZR Dc class diesel, and three carriages, seating twelve passengers each, colour scheme is blue with a white stripe simulates "the Bay Express." Length of track 833 metres, operating Saturday and Sunday afternoons, public and school holidays, weather permitting. Located at Papakowhai Park, take Papakowhai Road turn-off, just north of Porirua, on State Highway 1. Porirua City, ph (04) 237 5089, Recreation or Information Centres, or (04) 237 4375.

## **Narrow Gauge Railway,**

At Whangaparaoa, a 15" gauge railway, operated by Ted Pointon, 400 Whangaparaoa Road. Steam Loco with carriages and a rail car, bridges, tunnel and station with engine shed and turntable. Tea Rooms and Animal Farm, continuing improvements. ph Ted or family at (09) 424 5018

## **Driving Creek Railway.**

Coromandel, on Kennedy Bay Road, 3km from town, a 15" gauge railway, with Diesel Railcars. A very scenic railway, double deck bridge, tunnels, viaducts and a great lookout. On clear days the view is spectacular, even looking to north west, Auckland can be seen. Barry Brickell also has a native tree nursery, and The Driving Creek Potteries. ph Barry (07) 866 8073

## **Tot Town Railway**

At Kowhai Park, Wanganui, a 15" gauge railway, a Lions Club project. A replica NZR diesel loco and carriages, built by Apprentices from N Z R Eastown Railway Workshops. Kowhai Park is on State Highway 4, cnr of Dublin and Jones Streets, on main road north from town, a very popular spot for travelers with children. An unusual playground. contact, ph Bob Horsley, (06) 345 2955.

## **Masterton Miniature Train Society.**

Largest 15" gauge steam locomotive in Southern Hemisphere, located in Queen Elizabeth Park A replica diesel N Z R Dg class loco also resident. Steam loco has Stephenson's valve gear, super heated at 100psi, three open carriages, Station, tunnel and four bridges and working crossing lights and bells. Masterton Miniature Train Society Inc; P O Box 173, Masterton.5915 ph (06) 378 9081

## **Great Avalon Railway.**

Avalon Park, Lower Hutt. NZR Dx class diesel loco. A Lions Club project. No information available.

Editor would welcome address details and ph number !

## **Esplanade Scenic Railway**

As you travel south from City, just before bridge over Manawatu River turn into Manawaroa road, a 10¼" gauge railway, 2.2kms, with ¼ scale NZR locos, classes, Da, Dx, and Dxr. Open Saturday and Sunday, school and public holidays, 1pm to 4pm, extended hours during January. Murray Robinson, ph (06) 358 5265

## **Big Little Railway.**

Ian Sandford at "Windsong," on Railway Road, Sandy Knolls has South Island's only 10¼" gauge steam Railway. With help from the "Ians Club," relocated along -side the MIDLAND railway line, between Rolleston and Aylesbury, about 30 minutes from Christchurch. Ian Sandford, Big Little Railway, Railway Road, Sandy Knolls, RD5, Christchurch. ph (03) 347 7136, Fax (03) 347 7135, email [ians.blr@snap.net.nz](mailto:ians.blr@snap.net.nz) [www.geocities.com/ians\\_club](http://www.geocities.com/ians_club)

## **Toot & Whistle Railway.**

In Kuirau Park, Rotorua, a 9½" gauge steam railway, operated by Peter Fantham, bridges across thermal pools, very interesting. ph Peter at (07) 349 4642.

**2½” 3½” 5” 7¼” gauges.**

***Ground level and elevated tracks, Model Engineering and Live Steamers Clubs.***

**Whangarei Model Engineering Club Inc;**

Heritage Park, Maunu, on State Highway 14 (Whangarei - Dargaville road) Heritage Park Miniature Railway is a comprehensive 5” and 7¼” dual gauge ground level track, hills, grades, tunnel and viaduct. Station and clubrooms with basement workshop is about to be constructed. All with Whangarei Museum and Clark Historical Homestead, with Kiwi House. 4km from traffic lights cnr State Highways 1 & 14, Otaika and Maunu Roads. Roger Reynolds, ph (09) 438 7911, email, roger-wendy@xtra.co.nz

**Manukau Live Steamers.**

The closest small railway to Auckland International Airport, at Mangere Centre Park, Robertson Road. 3½”, 5” and 7¼” ground level track, over 2kms with steaming bays, two turntables, tunnel, viaducts and bridges. Great Club rooms, toilet facilities. ph Dave Giles, (09) 576 7162, or Richard Morgan (publicity officer) at (09) 275 9190. Operating every Sunday, 10.00am to 4.00pm weather permitting. club address, P O Box 43 095 Mangere Town Centre, Auckland, 1730.

**Auckland Model Engineering Society.**

In the Peterson Road reserve, the Society has elevated track, 3½” and 5” dual gauge track. A boat pond is included on site, and a club room, with model engineering items on display. ph (09) 570 5286. postal address, P O Box 14 570, Panmure, Auckland, 1134. Peterson Road reserve is located adjacent to Waipuna Lodge Hotel & Restaurant. Mt Wellington.

**Thames Small Gauge Railway**

Located just north of Goldfields Shopping Centre, in Victoria Park, Thames, an authentic N Z R miniature railway station, “Grahamstown,” with 5” and 7¼” ground level track. A number of N Z R diesel outline locos. The tunnel featured is as goldmines were timbered in the area, a “School of Mines,” across road. contact Phil McDiarmid, 43 Kauarenga Valley Road, RD2, Thames, 2821. ph (07) 868 6893.

**Tauranga Model & Marine Engineering Club.**

Palmerville Station is in Memorial Park, at corner of Devonport Rd, and 11th Avenue, Tauranga. Ground level and elevated tracks, 2½”, 3½” 5” and 7¼” gauges. Boat pond adjacent. ph (07) 576 6669.

### **Rotorua Society of Model Engineers.**

At Te Amorangi Museum grounds, in Robinson Avenue, Holdens Bay, operating ground level track, 5" and 7¼" gauge, station, other facilities are included with museum. A boating pond, ask first, may be out of use. ph Byron Somervell, (07) 362 8150.

### **Ngongotaha 7¼" gauge Railway.**

Old Ngongotaha Railway Yard, listed up further, is 7¼" gauge ground level track. These people are into railways in a big way, 3' 6", 24", 16" and 7¼" all in 12 acres, about 4.2 hectares. and room to put caravans with permission. ph depot at (07) 357 5484 or Don Burton at (07) 347 8486. Don Burton, 406 Pukehangi Rd, Rotorua, or Jim Ross = jim.betty@paradise.net.nz

### **Eastern Bay of Plenty Model Engineers.**

A 5" and 7¼" gauge railway, C/- 1a McAlister Street, Whakatane, ph (07) 308 8884. Running, and further construction underway.

### **Hamilton Model Engineers.**

Forest Lake, Hamilton is the home of Hamilton Model Engineers, at 24 Tui Avenue. A ground level 3½", 5" and 7¼" gauge track, with tunnels, viaduct and bridges, great Station - clubrooms, and boating pond. Contact Valerie Clark, vclark@waikato.ac.nz or ph (07) 855 1927.

**Note on your calendar, "Steam & Steel," Convention.**  
**8 - 12 Jan 2004 AT HAMILTON**

### **New Plymouth Society of Model Engineers.**

Clubrooms and track at 11 Gilbert Street, elevated track, 2½", 3½" and 5" gauges. Club has conducted Labour Weekend meets for 5" g and under, for many years. ph (06) 758 2412 or (07) 753 4528

### **Palmerston North Model Engineering Club**

At Marriner Reserve, Marriner St, a ground level track, 3½", 5" and 7¼" gauges. Murray Bold, 12a Hereford St. Palmerston North. 5301 ph (06) 323 8001, bolds@clear.net.nz  
www.homepages.ihug.co.nz/sweetpea/pnmec.htm

### **Hawkes Bay Model Engineering Society.**

At Anderson Park, Napier, members have relocated to this site, ongoing construction, a tunnel, club facilities. Graham Lebourne, ph (06) 843 7277.

### **Keirunga Park Railway.**

Just up in Pufflet Road, is a rather great hilly location with ground level track, 3½", 5" and 7¼" gauges. tunnels, viaducts, bridges, and covered steaming bays. Labour Weekend location for 7¼" gauge locos. (other smaller locos welcome too.) Secretary, 18 Moorhouse Street, Taradale, Hawkes Bay 4001.

### **Kapiti Miniature Railway & Associates.**

Off Raumati Road, into Garden Road, is Marine Gardens. 5" and 7¼" ground level track, facilities. C. Burleigh, P O Box 296 Paraparaumu, 6450, ph (04)902 8557.

### **Hutt Valley Model Engineering Society.**

Along Petone Esplanade, at eastern end, Club has elevated and ground level tracks, 2½", 3½" & 5" el, 5" and 7¼" ground level. ph (04) 567 4487. P O Box 6008 Petone. 6304.

### **Maidstone Model Engineering Society.**

In Park Street, off Ferguson Drive Upper Hutt, is 2½", 3½" and 5" elevated track, and new ground level 7¼" gauge track. Facilities and steaming bays. Bob Begbie, 95 Holdsworth Avenue, Trentham, 6007 Wellington. ph (04) 528 9114.

### **Nelson Society of Model Engineers.**

Waikare Street, off Beach Road, Tahunanui Beach, Nelson, is elevated 2½", 3½" and 5" gauges. Ground level 6¼" and 7¼" gauges. Norm Milne, P O Box 810 Nelson, 7015. ph (03) 544 7024.

### **Picton Model Engineers.**

In centre of car park, adjacent to InterIsland Ferry Terminal, elevated track, 2½", 3½" and 5" gauges, boat pond. Secretary, 42 Wairau Road, Picton, 7372. ph&fx, (03) 573 7660.

### **Marlborough Associated Modellers Society.**

In Brayshaw Park, Blenheim, for Model Aircraft, boating pond. Elevated 3½" and 5" gauges, ground level 5" and 7¼" gauge track. Don Crooks, 8 Arthur Baker Place, Blenheim, 7301. ph (03) 578 4925.

### **Mandeville Steam Railway.**

Ian Frost is developing 4 hectares, north of Christchurch, at 306 Mandeville Road, Mandeville North, Ohoka, 8252, Christchurch. A 7¼" g ground level track and facilities. Was late of Burkes Pass Rly. ph Ian on (03) 312 6358 fx (03) 312 6359.

### **Canterbury Society of Model Engineers.**

Canterbury Model Engineers are at 26 Andrews Crescent, and postal address, P O Box 33294 Christchurch. 8015. ph (03) 388 7240. 3½" and 5" gauge elevated track.

## **Christchurch Live Steamers.**

Operating in conjunction with Canterbury Steam Preservation Society, at McLeans Island. 7¼" gauge ground level track, still building further facilities. Angus Davis, email victoriaangus@xtra.co.nz

## **Ashburton Steam Model & Engineering Club.**

Along Maronan Road, at Tinwald Domain, Club has elevated 3½" and 5" gauge track. R. Brasell, 77 Middle Road, Ashburton, 8300

## **South Canterbury Modellers.**

Corner of Babington and Rose Streets, Timaru, Modellers have an elevated 3½" and 5" gauge track. Harold Gibbs.  
ph (03) 688 8526

## **Otago Model Engineering Society.**

In Kettle Park, John Wilson Drive, St Kilda in Dunedin, Club has elevated 2½", 3½" and 5" gauge track, and 7¼" gauge ground level track. J. Clover, ph (03) 471 0681. P O Box 2163 South Dunedin. 9001

## **Gore Model Engineering Club.**

World famous as New Zealand's' only elevated 7¼" gauge track with 3½", and 5" as well. All neatly laid out in Hamilton Park, in Gore. T. Shanks, 49 Hamilton Street, Gore, Southland, 9700. ph Graham Head, (03) 208 1580.

## **Southland Society of Model Engineers.**

Initiators of "The Great little Train Show," Permanent track at Surrey Park, in Invercargill. Portable track for hire. 3½" 5" and 7¼" gauges. P O box 216 Invercargill, 9515.

*Although all Mini Railways have been listed, as is known to Author, a couple may be on "The Coast," as these fellows are not organized into a club yet. A couple of 5" and 7¼" gauge geared steamers are in construction, "Over on The Coast."*

**Manu Ariki, 7¼" gauge railway,** is private, by Invitation Only. Located in "The King Country," adjacent to the North Island Main Trunk Railway, 10km north of Taumarunui.

Contact Dave Giles, ph (09 576 7162, Dave invites through your club news letter.

This track has been built as a Works - Skills project, for local youth. A large and interesting project, accommodation and facilities to cater for 1000 plus guests. A great Convention Centre.

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