



Picton Rail & Sail¹ on the Picton Foreshore



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NEWSLETTER June 2021

Brian Morris, Editor 021 192 2936



Winter is well-established, with the weather to prove it – sadly, a few of our regular Sunday sessions have been rained off. This is not only disappointing for our customers, but also for our train crews, and of course, no runs mean no income to help keep the wheels turning. Here's hoping we have



a fine Queen's Birthday Weekend, when we plan to run every day. Hope to see you there!

Nonetheless, we're a resilient bunch and when we can't get together at the station, we have a few different ways to socialise and share our many and varied interests.

*Thanks to **Paul and Helen's** excellent suggestion, we've had our first social get-together at the Picton RSA on Wellington Street, on Thursday 13 May, between 5 and 7, where about ten of us gathered for a drink or two and some snacks. And a lot of chat, all of us*



learning something new about each other – most especially, what an amazingly diverse and talented bunch we are



The Crow Tavern (on the Green) has quoted Editor **Brian** for hosting us for a 12.30pm lunch, Tuesday 13 July 2021. Three meal options: (1) Steak, salad & chips \$15; (2) Fish, chips & salad \$18; (3) Roast beef, vegetables \$18; with six desserts @ \$12 each. **Got an interest?**

Contact Brian 021 192 2936 or nzibs1@gmail.com by 30 June!

¹ Picton Society of Model Engineers Incorporated

*And just to reassure everyone that we **are** a Society of Model Engineers, not just a Society of Socialisers, a few of us have been talking about having a casual session, perhaps once a month, at the station, a “show and tell” workshop where we could bring **any** projects (not necessarily rail-related) that we are working on, and get help, advice and of course admiration for what we are doing. At one stage, President **Bob** was feeling a bit lonely as seemingly the only engineer, but with **Paul, Graham, Patrick and Arthur** all with different practical projects on the go, there’s a lot of share and learn. Plus cuppas, biscuits and companionship! Again, please email railandsailpicton@gmail.com to indicate an interest, preferred times/dates, etc. If we get this established as a regular event, there’s no reason why we couldn’t invite the local college engineering and woodwork students to join us for a session or two – we can always learn from each other, and **college students are potential new members***

Huge thanks are due (again) to **Paul** who drained and cleaned the pool in the last week or so in the month. He noted that the paint is starting to “bubble” in certain areas. He’ll tell us how it goes over the winter and what action we’ll need to take by the summer



Editor’s pick

Much of our focus lately has been on mighty locos (who’s seen Passchendaele steaming along the viaduct and up the Elevation over the last few weekends?) and historical sailing vessels – this month, we’ll look at the world’s most iconic urban rail network – the London Underground or “the Tube”. It’s a fascinating and ever-evolving entity, with many books having been written on all aspects of its creation, development and operations. But, for our small space here, just a few interesting facts:

The service began in 1863 with steam trains running mostly at ground level. When tunnels were needed, air venting chimneys were built

To reach its current extent of 400 kms, more and deeper excavations have been required, until lines have had to go multi-level: intersecting, crossing over and under, looping the loop — but

somehow the system works. More than a billion people ride the London Underground each year, with an average train speed of 35 kph but in places, trains can exceed 80kph

During WWII, portions of the Central Line were commandeered for the war effort, with bomb shelters for people, and even fighter planes being assembled underground

Getting around London by Tube requires a map, but one based on London's actual topography - almost impossible! In 1931 an out-of-work draughtsman, Harry Beck, designed the famous London Tube Map which disregards physical distances and contours, sticking mostly to straight lines and schematics. He was never commissioned to do this, merely gifted a paltry ten guineas (recalling the similar fate of John and William Harrison, featured in May's newsletter. Although they saved the Royal Navy with their invention of an onboard timepiece that enabled ships to navigate accurately and safely, they too were never properly recompensed)



If you are viewing this online, do enlarge the map to make sense of the following story ...

Some wily old railway men (aka WORMs) have been known to place bets with unsuspecting tourists in *The Monument Pub* (which commemorates the Great Fire of London 1666), next to Bank Station. “I bet ya 100 quid I can beat ya to *Hatchets’ Pub* at Mansion House!” “You’re on, old man!” So the tourists race into Bank Station, take the Central Line to Liverpool Street, change to Circle Line, and travel five stops to Mansion House. And there’s the WORM sipping his pint. He’d gone topside and walked the 70 metres between the two pubs. I do hope we’re kinder than that to our Picton tourists!

President’s call

*Our Secretary has recently had a total hip replacement and this got me thinking about the difference between mechanical and human bodies. When Charlotte had her battery transplant a couple of months ago, it was a matter of diagnosing the “bad” bit, inserting a new part, connecting everything up, taking her for a test run and thank goodness, she’s not missed a beat since. Human bodies are a lot more complicated. Replacing a part and reconnecting all the bits and pieces is not only much more complex and time-consuming, it also involves a lot of pain, recuperation and quiet running for a bit – not something we engineers have to worry about very much with our machinery. Of course we wish her the speediest recovery, with as little pain as possible – and **it is a great reminder to us all, in this winter cold and ‘flu season, to look after ourselves and each other, and to take care of our not-so-robust componentry***



Society contacts

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