

A Day in Awakeri on the Rails

By Corrie Jamison

By the time we left Welcome Bay for Awakeri, the weather became quite “inclement”, but not enough to abandon the Rail Ride.

With a two- and half-hour journey ahead of us, we were ready to depart at 10.30am, that is after the prep talk, H&S Rules and driving instructions. All the 8 carts were lined up - some 2-seater but mostly 4. Each cart had weather protection (zip up/down heavy-duty plastic). With the weather still persisting, we left the station into the unknown.



First stop was to coincide with feeding time on the farm. We saw them running as soon as they heard the carts. Hens, roosters, geese, and some “unkept looking special bred geese” (Sebastopol geese). Apparently, that is their look, I thought it was because they were wet???? Not sure of the head count, but there was a lot!!



Feeding over, back on the cart and onward. Spotted a sign that said “whistle” so we did?? Dead Man’s Curve.....it sure was, we saw the skeleton hanging about. We proceeded over a “flyover type bridge” no sides, railings or bush – just a sheer drop on to the road below or into the river (don’t look down). Lots of country, bush, sheep, steers and even a deer, until we came to a stop to do the bushwalk.



It was probably a 20 min, mostly level, walk. We viewed the 600 yr old Kahikatea tree (it didn’t look that old to me compared with a kauri, which is tall and rotund, this one was young).

We walked to a kind of look out point and noted the farmers fences were covered in gumboots. Good day for it.

Our final stop was at Peketahi which is where we disembarked and waited while they turned the carts around (on a cute wee cart size turn-table), and that’s when the sun decided to come out. Once all back in the carts for the home journey, with all the plastic’s rolled up our “mid-morning cuppa stop”. This is where we met Vladimir Putin would you believe.



Mid-morning cuppa stop

Glennys with Putin



He's a sad sight believe me, and if he thinks our NZ bush is going to protect him, he's sadly mistaken. He was hiding in the lady's toilet no less!! After tea, coffee, milo and cake we were back in our carts for the journey home.

Following our very enjoyable rail cart ride, we then proceeded in convoy to the Red Barn for lunch and then on to our various destinations.

Thank you to all those involved in the organisation of this trip.

Corrie

