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GARRATT LOCOMOTIVE ARRIVES: It was a historic moment for the Taumarunui loco staff to have their photo taken with the revolutionary but controversial Garratt locomotive. The first Garratt arrived in Taumarunui on 3 April 1929 with a 450 ton test load for the purpose of testing its haulage power particularly up the Raurimu Spiral. Despite a promising start, the three Garratt locomotives were not successful and in 1937 were dismantled. BACK ROW (from left): Bill Cross, Arthur Lawson, Bill Eden, Eric Hinds, Gordon Jennings, Monty Glynn, Jack Bragg, Bob Skelton, Paul Mitchell (coalman), Wally Mann, unidentified, Bert Bailey, Bert Derbridge, unidentified, unidentified, Ike Armstrong, unidentified, Len Crumpton. SEATED: Joe McIntyre, Jim O’Brien, unidentified, Joe Johansen, Charlie Green, unidentified, unidentified, unidentified, Bill Hodges, Arty Hailwood (with son), Len Irving, Tommy Lee, Jimmy Pope, Bill Holder (with son Wes), unidentified, Walter Smith, Don Robertson.

- photo courtesy Lawson collection, Taumarunui (ref: 11400).
MODERN SERVICE STATION: The firm of P W Reardon Motor Engineer, who had opened a new garage in Miriama St in April 1925, had the confidence three or four years later, to take on the risky business of running a recently built “petrol station” on the corner of Hakiaha and Turaki streets. Paddy Reardon’s son Roy is pictured with his foot on the running board of a new 1930-31 Dodge (being the local dealers, it has “D” plates) which accurately dates this photo. In those days petrol stations offered most brands available from what were called “bowsers” which “gravity feed” petrol into the vehicle after being pumped from an underground tank into the graduated glass bowls clearly shown in this photo. The height of the glass bowl was important as it allowed the petrol to naturally flow down the hose and into the car. Paddy Reardon replaced this little petrol station in 1936 with a modern new service station and motor garage that later traded as Steven Motors then Turaki Motors.
TOURISM PROMISE: It has been a constant battle ever since 1903 when Hatrick’s riverboats opened up the Whanganui River to tourist traffic to achieve the potential that tourism had promised for the welfare and growth of the district. Even with the help of local bodies and politicians, private enterprise has struggled to reach their expectations without the funding to achieve it. In August 1989, John Banks, then National’s opposition spokesman on tourism, said the Government should be responsible for funding regional tourism in areas like Taumarunui and Ohakune. “What we need is a well organised, well run regional promotion centre funded from central, regional and local government and within the industry.” Despite these words and the commitment of local operators, the pieces are still coming together after more than a century of effort. John Banks (centre rear) is pictured with Barry Crocker (Pioneer Jet Boat Tours), Aroha Rudkin and Jack Black (both representing TDPDA).
KURURAU KRUSHER: It's a 108 km one-day multi-sport event that truly tests the stamina and determination of more than 250 participants over a challenging four-part course that includes cycling, running, paddling and mountain biking. The 2006 event was unusual being started in Miriama St opposite the Municipal Car Park due to road works on the Main Street that year. The “Krusher” began in 1999 and with a special research project being carried out in 2006 confirmed that the Kururau Krusher was worth hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Taumarunui community and this is only one of the reasons why everyone gets behind this annual event. The voluntary organisers say the event is staged for the participants by the local people who unselfishly give their time with passion and energy. Local businesses and residents also donate numerous prizes an example being where every entrant received a spot prize ranging in value from $20 to over $100—each year there is something new to whet the appetite.

- photo by Ron Cooke, Taumarunui (ref: 12852).
ROADING CONTRACTORS: Although policies have changed over the years, local authorities have always tried to spend locally raised money with local contractors. Roading takes up the biggest portion, around 40%, of Ruapehu District Council’s budget and while it is essential to get the best value for ratepayer’s money their contracts are subject to a competitive process which doesn’t always mean that the lowest price gets the job. Contracts can go to single local operators to large companies that operate nationally who then sub-contract to locals. Martien and Tony Jilesen of Jilesen Contractors Ltd have experienced both sides of the coin and having started out in 1989 with two excavators have grown to 10 Kenworth & Mitsubishi trucks, off-road dumpers, 11 excavators ranging from 7 tonne to the 30 tonne Cat 325D pictured above loading their Cat 725 ADT (articulated dump truck) at Marshall’s Quarry in June 2007. The firm has 32 staff in 2010 and with optimism, there is still room for growth.
ENTRANCE WAY OPENING: A carved waharoa (entrance way) was officially opened by Kaumatua, Arthur Tukiri Anderson BEM, at Morero Marae on Sunday 9 November 2008 to mark the historic beginning of the Waitangi Tribunal Hearings locally for Ngati Haua Iwi. Arthur, also the last surviving member of the 28th Maori Battalion in the district, is pictured at centre in the wheelchair with some of his people who had arrived at dawn to witness this historic occasion. The carvings for the entrance way, named Ngati Haua, were completed by members of the Hinengakau Carving School who had also done the carvings for the Whare Tupuna (meetinghouse) in the background. The house, named Hauaroa, was officially opened on 10 April 1999 by Attorney General, Sir Douglas Graham, who gave a moving speech mentioning that this project had set the standard for future negotiations which could bring the cultures of Maori and European closer together. A plaque bearing this promise was also unveiled on the Marae.

- photo courtesy Ngati Haua Iwi (ref: 13025).