



March 2014 Newsletter

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Official Shed Opening

Saturday, 1st March heralded steady rain which continued nearly all day. Preparations for the official shed opening were underway early and the cake and ribbon were in place by the time the official guests arrived just after 11 am.

President Tim Arnison made some opening remarks to the crowd of well-wishers and the official guests. He spoke of the shed origins at a local mine site and of the many long hours put in by OTHR volunteers to get them dismantled, transported and re-erected at Oberon station. He thanked the Oberon Council and the NSW State Government for their support.

Our Patron, Paul Toole (Member for Bathurst) then gave a speech in which he congratulated OTHR on their achievements and in particular the shed completion. Paul then cut the official ribbon, assisted by John McMahon, Mayor of Oberon and Ken Lingabala, from John Holland Rail. The crowd gave a large supporting cheer as the ribbon was cut.

John McMahon then gave his address detailing the support given to OTHR by the Oberon Council and emphasising the great tourist potential of the heritage railway. Finally, the official cake cutting ceremony was performed by John McMahon flanked by Ken Lingabala and Paul Toole.

As the cake was handed around to the assembled guests the rain continued to pour down but this did not dampen the celebratory mood of the gathering. Indeed, local farmers were celebrating even more as the minutes passed.



A story of the event appears on the front page of the Thurs, March 6th issue of the Oberon Review and an article will appear in the local Community Newsletter. We also had a spot on the Monday night Prime/WIN News. More photos are in the attached supplement.

Working Bee News

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, we were dismayed to learn at the February meeting of the resignation of long-serving Track Manager Peter Culley. An overview of Peter's time as Track Manager appears over the page.



At the March meeting President Tim Arnison gave a vote of thanks to Peter for his long-serving efforts as Track Manager and presented Peter with a wooden plaque with OTHR metal medallion mounted. In the interim the committee will be considering how to manage working bees in the future, with the view to making them more task oriented.

Keep watching this space for updates on future working bees and their aims and focus. One task which is slated for attention in the very near future is the final bit of concreting along the eastern side of the rolling stock shed. Come along and lend a hand – even if you can spare only a few hours – it all makes a difference!

Next Meeting
Ordinary General Meeting
7:30pm 2nd April, 2014

ARHS to visit Oberon

On the afternoon of March 18, a group from the Australian Railway Historical Society will be visiting Oberon station. This visit will take place approx. between 1:30 and 2:30 pm. Put this date on your calendars as we need a few volunteers to meet and greet the visitors and show them around the station precinct. Our museum display will be open on the day.

Track Manager Retires

Peter Culley has indicated that he needs a break from the rigours of Track Manager and is taking 'time out' for 12 months. Peter will still be available for specific working bee jobs – particularly those requiring the excavator.

Peter has been out hard-working Track Manager for about 8 years now and we owe him a huge vote of thanks for all the "blood, sweat and tears" he has put into the job over that time. Early in the project, Peter took over from Matt McMahon, who was our first energetic Track Manager.

Peter brought his own unique personality to the job and encouraged many of the OTHR volunteers over the years. He also introduced the social excursions as a reward for those volunteers who had spent many hours during the monthly working bees slaving on the line.

On Peter's watch there were over 10 000 sleepers renewed between Hazelgrove and Oberon station, plus the Oberon yard was largely re-sleepered and drainage installed. During the conservation of the S Truck Peter was there supervising the team and leading the way. At many volunteer and Xmas BBQs Peter could be seen at work, beer in hand, handling steaks, sausages and onions with finesse.

Peter was also a leading hand in the dismantling, transport and re-erection of the sheds to form our large rolling stock shed – now a major feature of the Oberon station yard. One recent major project which would not have been so successful without Peter driving the council excavator was the expedition to Coolah to retrieve the rail and points – urgently needed for our extra lines in the rolling stock shed



and the Hazelgrove site restoration.

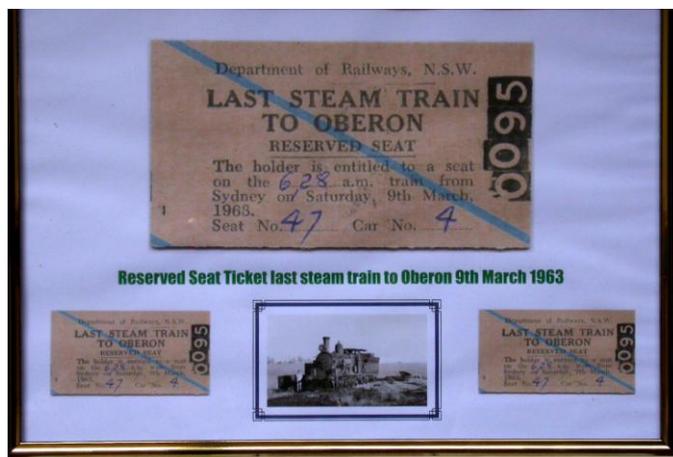
All-in-all we have a lot to thank Peter for and we wish him well in his "sabbatical". We look forward to seeing him return with renewed vigour in 12 months time – meanwhile Peter has "gone fishin".

Reminder...

OTHR news now appears from time to time in the Oberon and Villages Community Newsletter. If you have access to this publication check it out to see the latest happenings on the Heritage Railway. See the Council website..... <http://www.oberon.nsw.gov.au/>

Historic Find

Enthusiastic OTHR member Paul McDonald has once again managed to find an historic item connected with the Oberon Branch Line. This time it is one of the last tickets issued for the last steam train to Oberon. This has been enlarged and mounted in a nice frame and will be part of our historic museum displays in future. Thanks Paul.



Fund Raiser

There will be a major fund raising event later this year entitled "History in Motion" which will feature stories, songs and ballads relating to railways and transport in years gone by. This event will be held in the Oberon High School Auditorium on Saturday 27th September. Put this in your diaries now so as not to miss out – it will be a huge fun night. Watch this space for further details as time goes by.

The Bush Telegraph

The updated self-drive road tour of the Oberon Branch Line is now on the website - thanks Kylie. Check it out and take a drive sometime to see the historic features of the line. These are also available at the Oberon Visitors Centre.

Our friends at the Zig Zag Railway are hoping to be up and running in about 12 months time – following the disastrous fires in October which destroyed a large part of their workshop facilities and many items of rolling stock. We wish them well in their efforts to recover from this calamity. If you want to assist, donations are tax deductible.

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Our Ordinary General meeting minutes are now available on our website. You can also easily find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/OTHR.Inc Check out the events calendar on our website, plus new photos of current events.