



July/August 2009 Newsletter

PO Box 299, Oberon 2787

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** Sept. monthly meeting - Wednesday,
2nd at 7.30pm in the Oberon RSL Club.

** September working bee: 5th - 12th

We move into the Railway Station

Well it has happened at last. There was great excitement among our workers on 15th July as we moved into Oberon Railway Station. OTHR has been granted control of the station and platform, the rail corridor and part of the grounds by the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC). The Oberon Museum group has been given control of the rest of the grounds, including the historic pioneer buildings. A fence has already been constructed to separate the respective allocated areas.



Members Graham Williams, Kylie, Ellie, Laura & Shane Moorhead, Arthur Robinson and Laurie Evans enjoy the warmth of the fireplace in the Station Master's office.

Photo – Rick Fletcher

To celebrate this historic day and also Track Manager's Peter Culley's birthday, 30 members gathered in the station building and toasted this milestone in our progress towards establishing a tourist railway for our region. Peter will always remember this birthday.

OTHR members congratulate the Museum members for the good condition in which the station and surrounding areas have been maintained. We look forward to both groups working together to make the tourist railway and museum complex an exciting tourist attraction for Oberon.

The move into the station is extremely significant for OTHR. The station will become the "nerve centre" of our organisation and provide a base for all of our activities. It has already become the operational centre where an administrative office has been established and a meeting centre is operating. The fireplace in the Station Master's office has been in use to warm volunteers as they come in from working on the track.

When members are visiting Oberon please note that we have already moved our shipping container, all tools and equipment and our catering van from their previous location near the tip road. If you are visiting

Oberon to view our progress on the line, make the station your first port of call. Members will be there during the working bees.

Restoration work at the station has commenced in earnest. The old turntable foundations have been located as well as the old de-ashing pit. The mechanisms at Frame B with their operating levers that control signals and points have been repaired and restored to working order. Many thanks to Graham Williams for sourcing the needed spare parts. Plans are under way to paint the station in its original 1923 colours and heritage rail restoration experts are working on reproducing the signs that were on the station building in 1923.

Very soon Oberon community and OTHR members will see the first stages of a working railway station. Within the next six weeks a rail motor, three S trucks and a Baldwin water tanker (used on the line) will be on display outside the station. When OTHR members are working around the station precincts we will set up an observation site so visitors can view the rolling stock and our restoration work.

July Working Bee

This working bee saw the move into the station and it was facilitated by Systems Manager Rick Fletcher who led the team in carrying out a risk analysis of the move. Rick has produced a full report for ARTC, ITSRR and the Oberon Council. Thank you Rick for further increasing our members' knowledge of risk analysis procedures and processes. Work on the track saw relaying of the line and the replacement of sleepers behind the trucking yards.

August Working Bee

The current working bee is now in full swing with the team working on the line behind Highland Pine Mill, cleaning up the station precinct and planning for the redevelopment of the Hazelgrove siding area. Our volunteers continue to come from all over the state for our working bees and show extreme dedication to the project. Tony McCoy (Bass Hill) and Dale Adamski (Avoca Beach) have each taken a week's holiday from work to help on the line. We again thank the Big Trout Motel for their free accommodation for our out of town workers.

2009 Working Bee Dates

September: Sat. 5th – Sat. 12th

October: Sat. 17th – Sat. 24th

November: Sat. 14th – Sat. 21st

December: Thurs. 10th – Sunday 13th

Note: Our Christmas Party will be held on the evening of the 13th December.

Social Activities – Excursion to Burraga

On the last Saturday of each monthly working bee OTHR's volunteers and friends explore some part of our district. On Saturday, 18th July Track Manager Peter Culley led 16 members on a trip to the old Burraga mine and district. Inspections were made of the smelter site and mine area with its many old shafts and adits. Peter provided information about the area's history, for example, there were 6,000 people in the town at the height of the mine activities and 2 Shay locomotives were used on some 30 km of local track to haul wood for the smelter furnaces. Colin Bembrick gave an overview of the geology of the area and pointed out that the mine during its life produced 23,000 tonnes of copper with some small amounts of gold and silver.

A picnic was held by the Burraga Dam and a big thank you goes to Colin Maloney for providing his gas barbecue and to the ladies who provided salads. A very enjoyable and informative day was had by all.



OTHR members inspect the slag from the old copper smelter at the Burraga mine site. Photo- Tim Arnison

A visit to Yerranderie

On Saturday 15th August, members and friends are invited to visit the historic mining and heritage listed village of Yerranderie. With its restored buildings and museum, this site is one of the most interesting and best-kept "secrets" in the Oberon district. Assemble outside the Oberon Station at 8.00 a.m. and bring your own picnic lunch. We will supply tea and coffee for morning tea. Also, bring a camera, as you will travel through some spectacular scenery. Note that this is a full-day excursion and fuel cannot be purchased after Oberon. Contact Peter Culley on 0427 042 448 to let him know if you are coming.

Welcome to our new members

Our membership grows almost every week. We welcome Martin and Ross Gilmore (Black Springs), Ben Gray (Westmead), Allan Leaver (Unanderra), Alex and Leanne Mackenzie (Granville), Maree Arrow (Oberon), Lyn Prowse (Oberon) and Anne Russell (Isabella). We hope you can join in some of OTHR's activities and enjoy the good fellowship and fun for which our group is noted.

OTHR's Spring Raffle

There are three wonderful prizes being offered in this year's spring raffle. The first prize valued at \$390 has been donated by the Mudgee Miniature Railway group. It includes 2 return bus tickets from Mudgee to Gulgong, travel on the CPH rail motor between Gulgong and Dunedoo, a 3-course meal at the Dunedoo Bowling club with a Murder Mystery Show and then return to Mudgee with 2 nights accommodation for two at the Cudgegong Valley Motel, Mudgee on the long weekend of 3rd/4th October.

Second prize is a basket of Oberon local produce while the third prize is a \$50 voucher kindly donated by members Elizabeth and Allan Ross of Ross Conifers. We thank all prize donors for their generosity and support of OTHR.

SOME IMPORTANT DETAILS

Tickets are \$2.00 each and the raffle will be drawn on Saturday, 19th September at noon. A book of 5 tickets will be posted to all members. Could you please make certain all tickets and payments are returned to:

The Treasurer, OTHR, PO Box 299, Oberon NSW 2787 by **THURSDAY, 17TH SEPTEMBER 2009.**

If you do not want to receive a book of tickets or would like more than one book, please contact our Secretary, Margaret Connors on 6336 1211.

Thank you to our members, Kathy and Chris Segært of Permanent Press Printers once again for generously printing our raffle tickets.

Member's Profile – Dale Adamski

Dale who has been a member of OTHR since 2007, lives at Avoca Beach where he grew up and attended nearby Kincumber High School. He works as a trade assistant in building switchboards and has taken holidays over the past few years to come and work on the line. At 22, Dale is our youngest active "fettler". He has always been fascinated by trains and railways and years ago the Oberon Tarana line became his favourite with its unique features of steep grades, sharp curves and spectacular scenery. He has always been a fan of the 19 Class engines. Dale likes the friendly group of volunteers he works with and is impressed with the great community spirit in Oberon.



Dale working with OTHR's Assistant Track Manager, Tim Arnison sorting out sleepers to insert in the track. Photo- Rick Fletcher

One of Dale's ambitions is to become a train driver. We hope he achieves this so that we can see him driving one of our trains in the next few years.