



March 2016
Newsletter
PO Box 299 Oberon 2787
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With the new postal charges coming into effect at the beginning of this year, it is now becoming quite expensive to send out Newsletters and other mail items to members. Fortunately, most members receive their Newsletters by email, but the cost of sending out the hard copy to some members is not now covered by the current membership fees.

Thus, OTHR will be forced to consider raising fees in the coming financial year. This increase will be kept to the minimum if at all possible. We would like your feedback on this issue in the next few months as the increase – if approved - will most likely take effect at the end of June.

Business Plan

As mentioned in the December Newsletter, Committee Member David McMurray has been spending a great deal of time putting together the OTHR Business Plan, which is now in its final form - although it is amenable to change as circumstances change.

OTHR are about to enter negotiations with the Federal Government via Regional Development Australia Central West and with the State Government and other benefactors via Bathurst Enterprise Centre. The aim is to explore funding possibilities for the completion of Stage 1 of the Plan - i.e. Oberon to Hazelgrove and associated startup costs.

There is no guarantee of getting any funding as a result of negotiations at this point but we have to have a viable business plan to apply for any major funding grants.

Search for New Publicity Officer:

Your long-serving publicity Officer and Newsletter Editor is feeling in need of a break. Col has produced the Newsletter (with a few exceptions) since March 2010, nearly 65 issues. He will be stepping down from these positions as of June this year. Consequently, an appeal has now gone out to find a new Publicity Officer and Newsletter Editor by that time.

An enthusiastic person with some familiarity with Word (you don't have to be an expert!) and a nodding acquaintance with Photoshop (or similar program) would fill the bill. Col can hand over all files and templates for the Newsletter and give some hints as to how to go about it.

Please give this serious consideration as we need someone to step up to the plate and fill this essential position – particularly as there are exciting times ahead for OTHR in the near future.

Working Bee News

As you receive this Newsletter, the March working bee will have concluded.

Work has already started on the task of joining up the Lowes Mount Rd crossing to the track from the Oberon yard. Sufficient rail has been laid out on site to do the job and much has already been joined by appropriate fishplates and new bolts. Plans are in place to accomplish the levelling and compacting of the track bed. Several future working bees will be concentrating on this area of the line.

It is believed that council has started drainage works in preparation for the re-building of the perway near the Borg factory complex.

Next Working Bee

**Saturday, April 2nd to
Wed, April 6th**

If you can join our dedicated band of hard-working volunteers and assist with the work during the April working bee – please contact our Track Manager, Graham Williams, on 0422 596 438. Even a few hours assisting the team can make a big difference – step up and have a go!

Next Meeting

**General Meeting
7:30pm, 6th April, 2016**

Historic Photo!

Courtesy of Arthur Robinson – see story over the page.



Heritage Display Roster 2016

As you know, the OTHR Heritage display is open to the public on the first Saturday of each month. For this year, 2016, we now have all vacancies filled – thanks everyone! – see table below –

The times are from 10am till 2pm on a Saturday and can be very interesting talking to people who are keen to learn of our plans for the heritage rail operation.

Jan 1st	Tim Arnison
Feb 6th	Ian Davis
Mar 5th	Elaine Boxer
April 2nd	Col & Glenda Bembrick
May 7th	Arthur Robinson
Jun 4th	John Brotchie
Jul 2nd	David McMurray
Aug 6th	Elaine Boxer
Sept 3rd	Col & Glenda Bembrick
Oct 1st	Tim Arnison
Nov 5th	Arthur Robinson
Dec 3rd	Ian Davis

Historic Photo

This photo supplied by long-time OTHR member Arthur Robinson is believed to be the very first working bee held by OTHR - on the eastern side of Lowes Mount Rd not far from the Borg factory. We can identify most of the workers in the photo, but if anyone can put an exact date to this event please let us know. The team is uncovering the buried section of the long-disused line.

In the Journals

OTHR has scored some firsts in the publicity department recently. A small spot in the iMag tourist magazine for the Blue Mtns, publicising our Heritage Display at the station.

Also a good coverage with photos of our level crossing installation work appears in the March issue of Railway Digest – check it out.

Station Roof

Things are progressing – albeit very slowly – in the station roof repair department. John Holland Rail is planning to renew the whole roof for us using corrugated iron rather than the old asbestos tiling that is presently in place. Heritage approval for this to happen is currently under discussion.

NEXT Tarana Excursion Train

On March 27th next our good friends and colleagues from the Lithgow State Mine Railway group www.stateminerailway.com.au/ will run a train to the Tarana Farmers Market - departing Lithgow at 11:30am. This will feature their beautifully restored rail motor set mentioned in the last issue of the Newsletter. The cost is \$47 for the return trip, with meal and drinks being available at the Tarana Pub at your own expense. Book online. The return train leaves Tarana at 4:30pm that afternoon.

Loco Maintenance

Graham Williams has been active in co-opting OTHR member Steve Gaut to do some much needed maintenance on our diesel locos. After many hours of work on loco 7321 we can now report it is back on line and can be started without hassles. We thank Steve for his expertise and the hours he put in for OTHR.

Further work to sort out some minor problems with 7307 is now in hand.



Valley Heights swap

In a win-win situation, we have recently managed to swap some of our unwanted old machine tool items for a set of large display cabinets. The latter will eventually be adapted to be set up in the station building as we expand our Heritage Display following the completion of repairs to the station roof etc. Thanks to our colleagues at Valley Heights for this arrangement.

<http://www.infoblue-mountains.net.au/locodepot/>

Insights Tours to visit Tarana Station

On Wednesday 11th May a group from Insights Tours <http://www.insightstours.com.au/> will be visiting Tarana Station and lunching at the Pub. They will be travelling on a vintage railmotor set 621/721. OTHR has previously hosted an Insights Tour group in October, 2014, when we gave them a bus tour of the Tarana Valley and afternoon tea in the rolling stock shed (see Newsletter Nov 2014).

This time around OTHR will have a brief opportunity to publicise our project and some preliminary discussions have already taken place to this end.

Keep this date in mind as we may need some extra volunteers to help at Tarana station and/or Tarana Pub at the luncheon.

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Our Ordinary General meeting minutes are now available on our website www.othr.com.au

You can also easily find us on Facebook at... www.facebook.com/OTHR.Inc