



March 2010 Newsletter

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May monthly meeting - Wednesday, 5th at 7.30pm at the Oberon RSL Club.
April working bee: 17th - 24th incl.

Welcome to the March newsletter which has been delayed by the handover to the new Publicity Officer, Col Bembrick (see profile) as well as the intervention of Easter. Col is coming to grips with the mechanics of producing the newsletter and looks forward to receiving contributions from members over the coming year. Every endeavour will be made to continue in the high standard set by Bob (and Margaret) Connors over the previous years. President Shane Moorhead has taken on the task of conducting the radio interviews, previously managed with some finesse by Bob Connors.

It is going to be a very busy year in many respects – not least of all on the line, but by the end of 2010 it is confidently expected that OTHR will have achieved a number of significant milestones – including such items as the CPH rail motor acquisition and further progress on the Oberon station upgrade.

Reminder - Annual Memberships Fees

Membership fees for 2010 are now due. Fees had not risen since OTHR was first established in 2005 and the Committee of Management reluctantly decided that it was appropriate to raise them to \$15 per member. Family memberships have now been abolished because of confusion about voting rights.

A membership form can be downloaded from our website. Please send it with your payment to our Treasurer at the address above. Alternatively, you can arrange to pay your fees by direct bank transfer (see details on form). **Remember to forward the completed membership form** so that we can keep our database up to date as we find that many people change their address details during the year.

Membership News

The Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway is currently the largest volunteer community group in Oberon. We are always ready to welcome new members and it is pleasing to see the wide range of experiences and skills you bring to OTHR. As always, you are invited to join our working bees and social activities or just come to Oberon Station and admire our progress. This month we extend our warm welcome to Noel Rigney-Johnson, of Chester Hill and Ronald Pearce from Burruga.

Oberon Clearance Sale 2010 – Advance Notice

Mark this date on your calendar – this year's clearance sale will take place on Sunday, 14th November. An event not to be missed! All enquiries can be directed to Bill Muldoon on mobile 042 736 1438.

April Working Bee: 17th to 24th

At the April working bee we will be working back on the track as we still have quite a few metres of track outside the station precinct to be restored. Our fettlers are keen to complete this work so the 3 major level crossings can be installed.

If you can help at the working bee, even for an hour or two, please contact Track Manager Peter Culley on 6336 0228 or 0427 042 448 by Thursday, 15th April. Peter will now be looking after all accommodation needs for our workers. Free accommodation for out-of-town members is still being generously donated by the Big Trout Motel and the Titania Motel. Please let Peter know as soon as possible if you require accommodation.

Working Bee Dates for 2010

April:	17 th - 24 th
May:	15 th - 22 nd
June:	12 th - 19 th
July:	10 th - 17 th
August:	7 th - 14 th
September:	18 th - 25 th
October:	16 th - 23 rd
November:	13 th - 20 th
December:	TBA

Social Outings

By popular demand, these outings will continue this year and will take place on the last Saturday of working bees. Our second outing for the year will be held on Saturday, 24th April when we will travel to Newnes in the Wolgan Valley. A very scenic location, with lots of industrial, mining and railway history – and a “pub with no beer”!

All members and friends are invited to join us.

Please note the following details

- Let Peter Culley know if you are coming (Phone: 6336 0228 or 0427 042 448).
- Meet at Oberon Station at 9.00 a.m.
- Bring your own barbecue food and drinks.
- We expect to return to Oberon around 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Further excursions are being planned, including a trip to Cadia (probably in May) and the Chifley Dam cabins for an evening BBQ, fishing and other activities – probably at the end of the October Workbee. Please let Peter have some feedback on your preferences and thoughts on these excursions – all suggestions are most welcome.

Successful March Excursion

On a beautifully sunny autumn day a select and discerning group of OTHR members sallied forth to Kanangra Walls to appreciate the stunning scenery at this location. Animated discussions were had about the early exploration history of the area as well as local members' recollections re the Dance Floor and other features. Even some Geology was noted in passing. A relaxed and leisurely lunch stop was made at the Boyd River campsites where the local reptilian fauna was observed. Thanks go to Peter Culley for in his enthusiasm organising this event.



Oberon Line History

An article has just been published in the new journal of the Bathurst & District Historical Society – authored by Rick Fletcher and Col Bembrick – dealing with the historical aspects of building the Tarana-Oberon Branch Line. Copies of the journal “The New Country” are available for purchase at the Bathurst Historical Society Museum next to the Courthouse in Russell St Bathurst. The article details the trials and tribulations of getting the railway up and running, together with mention of the main protagonists involved. A number of interesting and historical black and white photos are included.

Team Safety on the Line

OTHR has a duty of care to the volunteers who work on the line. We also have policies regarding drug and alcohol issues and numerous other policies to protect our workers. These are reinforced at toolbox meetings and all policies are available for viewing at Oberon Station.

It is also important that our volunteers assist by reporting to the team leaders matters which may affect their performance and safety on the job. If you are taking medication or have some physical disability, even a temporary one, please advise your team leader so that you can be allocated appropriate tasks. If your ability to work safely is impaired it may have unfortunate consequences on other members of your team. If you have concerns regarding the health of your co-workers, please advise your team leader.

Member Profile – Col Bembrick



Col Bembrick joined OTHR in February, 2006 and lives with his wife, Glenda on a small property in Napoleon Reef, near Bathurst. Col was a geologist for most of his career, but before retiring in 2000 spent some years as a technical officer with the Uni of NSW – looking after an optical telescope at Siding Spring, NSW. His life-

long background in amateur astronomy stood him in good stead there. He now runs a small private research observatory – Mt Tarana Observatory. When not working for OTHR, this keeps him out of mischief!! Col's hobbies and activities have included Speleology and rock climbing (while at Uni), mountaineering (in NZ), bushwalking and cross-country skiing.

Workbee Progress

Thanks to the hard work of the many OTHR volunteers at the March working bee about 100m of track was gauged and pinned – stretching from Gate 6 level crossing back towards Oberon. The tractor and trailer did sterling service carting sleepers until both front wheel bearings failed. These were ably replaced by Peter during a late night session and work continued next day. The newly purchased rattle gun was pressed into service and proved very effective on the large fishplate bolts.

Noted in the Journals

The December issue of “Australian Railway History” has a 9 page article on maintaining railmotors in NSW. It has many B&W photos, including one of “our” CPH13 while at the loco shed at Cootamundra in 1970. Check it out – it makes interesting reading.

OTHR's website – don't forget to keep checking our website (see masthead) run by our tireless web manager, Rick Fletcher. This is regularly updated with news and photos – both recent and historical. Rick has put an enormous amount of work into this aspect of OTHR and has received many positive comments and feedback. Historical photos relating to the Oberon Tarana line are always gratefully received and acknowledged on the website.

NB: Please send suggestions and material to incorporate in the Newsletter to Col at... bembrick@ix.net.au