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June/July 2007 Newsletter

The Sleeper Club – join up today

President Shane Moorhead launched our Sleeper Club in June to give our many supporters an opportunity to contribute to the preservation of the Oberon Tarana heritage railway.

Many enthusiasts are actively involved in the track restoration work. Others can't attend the working bees but want to assist us in a meaningful way. The Board looked at the issue and concluded that since thousands of old sleepers have to be replaced for safety reasons, the best solution would be to invite contributions to the Sleeper Club.

By giving \$20 to purchase a sleeper, you will become a member of OTHR's Sleeper Club. A membership form can be found on our website and a form is enclosed with this newsletter for members who don't have access to the Internet.

Donations are tax deductible and contributors will receive an attractive numbered certificate to keep for posterity. Perhaps donors would like to purchase a sleeper as a gift for someone in their family. Contributors' names will also be recorded in a special journal to show future generations how they helped to restore a heritage railway. Sleeper Club members' names will be highlighted also on the OTHR website.

Please forward your donation with the membership form to our Treasurer, Marjorie Webb, at "Wonga", Tarana NSW 2787.

Track Restoration Report

Progress on sleeper replacement has been slowed down lately. The rain has been very welcome for the Oberon district - good for farmers but not so good for our track work. The photo of Shane below illustrates how vehicles and machinery have been seriously bogged along the access track beside the line, making our task virtually impossible.



The OTHR Board is hoping that a long-term solution can soon be found by working in co-operation with the Oberon Council to overcome this problem.

In the meantime, volunteers should drive carefully down the walking track from the Black Bullock Road end of the line at Hazelgrove to the shipping container to commence work.

Remember that the safety of all track users is paramount.

Working Bee Dates

Put the following dates on your calendar.

✂ Every Friday starting at 4.00 p.m.

✂ Every FIRST and THIRD SATURDAY of the month starting at 7.30 a.m.

✂ Next weeklong working bee:
4th to 11th August

Contact the Secretary if you would like us to organise accommodation for you

Contact our Track Manager, Peter Culley on 0427 042 448 if you need a local weather report before setting out for a work session.

Next working bee will be held on Saturday, 21st July (weather permitting)

OTHR's Raffle will be drawn on Saturday, 11th August at the working bee (Please return money and tickets to our Treasurer before that date)

Rail Heritage Australia Meeting

A number of OTHR's Board members recently attended the AGM and Forum held in Sydney by Rail Heritage Australia (NSW) for heritage railway operators. The great progress achieved by OTHR was recognised by the meeting and our reputation was further enhanced by a superb PowerPoint presentation given by Rick Fletcher.

Congratulations to Rick and the team.

Office of Rail Heritage

Two representatives from the NSW Office of Rail Heritage travelled to Oberon on 2nd July to review with our Board the heritage equipment and rolling stock that could be loaned to OTHR when the track is completed from Hazelgrove next year. Key issues are now being followed up by several members.

Office of Rail Heritage - Volunteer Awards

Some exciting news! We have been advised that OTHR has reached the final list of nominees for the 2007 Volunteer Awards presented by the Office of Rail Heritage. President Shane and Track Manager Peter Culley will attend the special presentation ceremony in Sydney on 31st July. Keep your fingers crossed for OTHR's success!

Member's Profile – Arthur Robinson

This month we pay tribute to a local gem, Arthur Robinson who is one of our quiet achievers.

Arthur was 13 years old when his family moved to Oberon. His father had worked on the NSW Railways so it is not surprising that heritage railways are in Arthur's "blood". He recalls many delightful weekends in his youth when he and his friends caught the steam train to Tarana from Oberon for the day. After pottering around Tarana they would catch the afternoon train back home to Oberon. Ah, the simple joys of those days!!!



Arthur prepares the line for replacement sleepers

Long before OTHR came into existence to preserve and restore the Oberon to Tarana line, Arthur spent innumerable hours of his retirement keeping the line clear of rubbish and weeds. He said,

"I couldn't bear to see that piece of Oberon's heritage fall into total disrepair. I dreamed that one day it would again become an important part of Oberon's connection to the outside world."

Oberon residents have often observed Arthur's lone figure working out on the line on any day of the week. He is a tireless volunteer at working bees and on other projects. Thanks for your tremendous contribution to OTHR and to Oberon Arthur!

Wood Raffle

Many thanks to Keith, Arthur and Margaret for selling tickets in our first wood raffle in Oberon on the 14th July. They are still thawing out! The winner of the load of wood was Mrs S. Hevesi of Oberon.

We intend to run more wood raffles in the main street before winter is over.

Farewell Herb

OTHR members were saddened to learn of the passing recently of one of Oberon Station's railway identities, Herb Cunynghame. Herb was one of a diminishing band of former railway employees who had worked on our branch line before operations ceased in 1979. Our deepest sympathy goes to Herb's family from everyone in OTHR.

Our sincere condolences also go to our member Hugh Tregarthen and his family from Duckmaloi and Sydney on the passing of his delightful wife, Frances.

Looking for OTHR on Google

We need members to search for OTHR on Google to bring it up to the top of the page and increase its profile.



Harry's Diary or How to Survive a Week Laying Sleepers in Oberon Chapter 2

Wednesday- The only way I can brush my teeth today is by laying the toothbrush on the sink and moving my mouth back and forth over it. I think I have a hernia in both pectorals from lifting sleepers! The Track Manager said he was annoyed with my screams of pain because they bothered the other volunteers. My chest hurts even when I push the empty sleeper trolley. I've been told it will all help to get me into shape.

Thursday:

I couldn't help being half an hour late for the toolbox meeting this morning, but it took me that long to tie my laces. As punishment, Matt allocated me to the jackhammer for the day. Can my body survive this boot camp? Will it be worth it?

Final next month