



October 2009 Newsletter

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****November monthly meeting - Wednesday,
4th at 7.30pm at the Oberon RSL Club.
** November working bee: 16th - 20th Nov.**

OTHR acquires rolling stock

OTHR's first large item of rolling stock arrived at the Oberon Station recently. It is a rare Arnott's Biscuit Van (ABV). According to an expert in heritage rolling stock, the van was built in the early 1900's and operated as a cattle truck before being converted to a biscuit van in the early 1960's.

The van was fitted with masonite interior panelling and was used to transport biscuit products from Arnott's factory siding at North Strathfield to many different locations in NSW. The van continued to be used until the 1980's.

The van is an exciting acquisition and we plan to restore it to working condition and it will form part of a static heritage display of rare railway vehicles to be housed at Oberon Railway Station. We are looking for members with carpentry skills to assist with this project. OTHR members under the leadership of Ross Allen have already restored a 1956 Wickham Section Car that is in wonderful operating order.



The "OTHR Biscuit Express" has arrived at Oberon Station

Oberon Council Donates a Computer

Oberon Council continues to be a wonderful supporter of OTHR in many different ways. We thank the Council for the recent donation of a superseded computer that can be used by our Document Controller, Laurie Evans. Laurie has set up an office in Oberon Station and is doing a great job in establishing filing systems to maintain the large volume of documents we have generated since 2005.

Laurie is working closely with our Systems Manager, Rick Fletcher who has produced an outstanding set of Safety Management System documentation. Rick's work is essential for OTHR's continued accreditation with the Independent Transport Safety & Reliability Regulator and to meet requirements for OTHR to run rolling stock on the line.

Annual Central Tablelands Combined Clearance Sale

This is our 2nd annual clearance sale and will be held on **Sunday, 15th November 2009, commencing at 10.00 a.m. at Oberon Showground.**

The clearance sale is our largest fundraiser for 2009 so how about making the day a social event, visit Oberon, check out our work on the railway line and station, have a barbecue lunch with food supplied by Oberon Rotary Club, meet other OTHR members and of course, pick up a bargain at the sale.

The sale is shaping up as a gigantic event with over 400 lots registered so far. There are items both large and small. For example, a Ford truck 79DS series + cattle crate, an aluminium boat, 4 new ATV/quads, log splitter, trailer, 2 tractors, electric jack hammer, work bench and vice, bench saw and garden mulcher.

The household goods include piano/pianola, 500 L refrigerator, Bosch washing machine, coffee maker, new air conditioner, double beds, 6 hot water services, Westinghouse wall oven, trampoline, fitness equipment, retractable clothes line, cubby house, slippery dip, statues, antique wooden boxes, a Black & Decker griller and much, much more.

We are still looking for more entries, both large and small. For further information contact Tim Arnison on 0428 250 402 or Bill Muldoon on 0427 361 438. Download a registration form from www.OTHR.org or request one by email at: info@OTHR.org

Don't forget to put the 15th November in your diary – already 4 of our Sydney members have telephoned to say they are making a day visit to Oberon for the sale.

ITSRR Workshop at Oberon Station

Three officers from the Independent Transport Safety & Reliability Regulator conducted a very interesting hazard analysis workshop for members on 7th October at the Oberon Station. The presentations proved to be very useful for our participants and reinforced the risk assessment work that our members had already undertaken when moving into the station precincts. The workshop provided a better understanding of hazard identification and control mechanisms and OTHR's members were complimented on their understanding of safety issues as well as their positive attitude to our responsibilities to comply with the *Rail Safety Act 2008*.

October working bee report

The October working bee started off slowly with Track Manager Peter Culley working by himself on Saturday and Sunday. Much to Peter's relief, numbers increased during the week and the lines were cleaned between the Station boundary fence and Albion Avenue and 50 sleepers were laid. Peter and Arthur Robinson did a great job mowing the grass in the station area.

November Working Bee: Change of starting date

Because of our involvement in the Annual Clearance Sale on the 14th/15th November, the **November working bee will now commence on Monday, 16th November**. It will conclude on Friday, 20th November. For planning purposes it is important to inform Track Manager Peter Culley what day/s you will be attending. His number is 0427 042 448.

Peter must have a minimum of 4 volunteers to start the working bee on Monday, 16th November or we will have difficulty in meeting our challenge (see below).

The Big End of Year Challenge

This is all we have to do to complete the sleeper replacement from Oberon Station to Hazelgrove.

- 50 metres of line from the station boundary to Albion Avenue
- 100 metres behind the trucking yards
- 150 metres of line near Gate 6
- 100 metres of line at Hazelgrove Siding

Total length of line to be restored = 400 metres

Let's enjoy the satisfaction of having the line from Oberon to Hazelgrove restored before the end of 2009.

OTHR Christmas Party

Our Christmas Party will be held at Oberon Railway Station on Sunday, 13th December starting at 6.00 p.m. A highlight of the party will be a slide show prepared by our "official" photographer, Doug Booker presenting a montage of our work and achievements during the past 3 years. Put the 13th December in your social diaries. More details of the evening's plans will appear in the November newsletter.

Good wishes to an OTHR Stalwart

Pauline and John McMahon have been members and great supporters of OTHR for many years. Our members send their best wishes to Pauline for a full recovery from her illness and our support also goes to John and their family during this difficult time.

Membership News

Welcome to new member Bob Henderson (Oberon).

Cancellation of Trivia Night

With so much going on in Oberon, the Trivia Night set down for 16th October had to be cancelled. We thank Jenny and Harry Cole and Lynette Ireland for all the preparatory planning they had carried out for the event.

Don't throw all those questions away Harry, we will need them next year!

Rail Heritage Australia (NSW) Forum

Systems Manager Rick Fletcher represented OTHR at this important forum and AGM on Saturday, 31st October. Operators from around NSW gathered at the Australian Technology Park at Eveleigh to hear a variety of interesting presenters speak on different aspects of rail heritage. Dr John Glastonbury was re-elected as President of the RHA (NSW). Topics that were relevant for OTHR included:

- Training and assessment for heritage operators was discussed by Warren Doubleday (ATHRA),
- Simon Foster from ITSRR spoke about ITSRR's views on heritage sector accreditation,
- Don Marshall from Puffing Billy in Victoria gave an interesting session on the practicalities of using volunteers to manage the accreditation process,
- Our insurance broker, Grant Sigvart informed the forum about insurance issues for the heritage sector,
- Rebecca Pinchin gave a valuable presentation on the facilities available to groups through the Powerhouse Museum. There is much to be gained from attending their training courses on conservation of rolling stock and other infrastructure, and last but not least,
- Rick provided an informative insight on how to get started as a heritage railway which was well received by his audience.

Many thanks Rick for representing OTHR and speaking at the forum.



The late Jim Powe's ticket for the last steam train trip to Oberon arranged by the ARHS on 9th March 1963. Jim was a respected railway photographer and author of *Trains and Railways of Australia* and was a great supporter of OTHR. His ticket has been generously donated to OTHR.

Visit by Phil Buckley of MRS

OTHR's Secretary and Publicity Officer were visited by Phil Buckley, recently elected the President of the Merriwa Railway Society which plans to restore the disused Merriwa railway station and infrastructure. Discussions took place about how to get started as a heritage railway and the various compliance issues imposed on rail heritage groups. We wish the Merriwa Railway Society much success in their endeavours to save this important item of State's rail heritage.

2009 Working Bee Dates

November: Monday 16th – Friday 20th

December: Thurs. 10th – Sunday 13th

Note: Our Christmas Party will be held on the evening of the 13th December commencing at 6.00 p.m.