



September 2009 Newsletter

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****Next monthly meeting - Wednesday, 7th October at 7.30pm at the Oberon RSL Club.**

**** October working bee: 17th - 23rd October**

Spring Raffle Results



A big thank you to all OTHR supporters who so generously supported our spring raffle. Such great support not only helps us financially, but also gives encouragement to the Committee of Management and the fitters who spend so much of their time restoring the line. The raffle raised over \$1,900. The lucky winners were:

1st prize: Kevin and Lillian Cocks of Bathurst. On the long weekend they will drive to Mudgee to travel on the CPH railmotor from Gulgong to Dunedoo and enjoy all of the pleasures incorporated in the prize which was generously donated by the Mudgee Miniature Railway group.

2nd prize: Phillip De Baun of Mosman won the basket of Oberon local produce.

3rd prize: Mary and Barry Ferguson of Tarana won the \$50 voucher donated by Ross Conifers.

Congratulations to the winners and thank you again to the prize donors for their generous support.

Sleepers stolen!

Thirty sleepers, pre-drilled and ready to place under the line and stored just north of the trucking yard near the timber factory have recently been stolen. The thieves made two raids on the sleeper pile, taking 18 in the first on Friday morning, 28th August and then 12 in a later raid. Luckily for us some of the first lot fell off the thieves' vehicle on Lowes Mount Road on the way to Tarana and an OTHR member rescued seven of them. As well as the holes drilled in the sleepers, they were painted with a green stripe at one end for easy identification.

OTHR members are disgusted and upset that someone in the district would stoop so low as to steal from a volunteer group that has worked so hard to raise funds to restore the railway line for the benefit of the Oberon and Tarana communities.

The theft has been reported to the Oberon police who are investigating the robbery.

Trivia Night - Friday, 16th October



Put Friday evening, 16th October in your social diaries for our next Trivia Night starting at 7.00 p.m. at the Oberon Golf Club.

This will be another fun night so come along or get a group of eight together and book a table with **Jenny Cole on 6336 5338**. There will be some great prizes.

Annual Central Tablelands

Combined Clearance Sale

**Sunday, 15th November
Oberon Showground**

The Clearance Sale in 2008 was a great success with visitors coming from many districts to bid for a wide variety of goods. How can you help this year?

You can help in several ways - firstly by registering your goods for sale. We will sell anything including cars, trucks, boats, household goods, building materials, farm machinery, books and antiques. Sellers will be limited to 20 lots each. Secondly, you can attend the sale to bid for goods or enjoy the exciting atmosphere watching the auction.

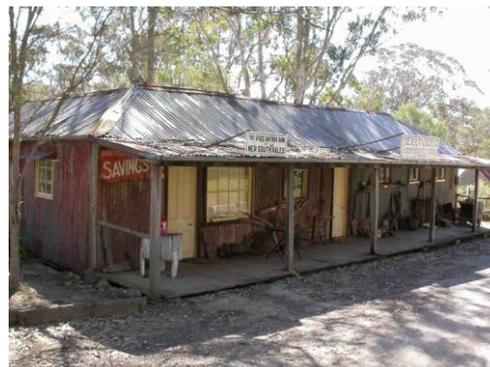
Registration forms are available from Oberon, Bathurst, Lithgow Visitors Information Centres and Thrifty Link, Oberon and Ray White, Oberon. Download a form at www.OTHR.org or request by email at: info@OTHR.org

Contact **Tim Arnison** on 0428 250 402 or **Bill Muldoon** on 0427 361 438 for more information.

Post working bee excursions

After the August working bee, members visited Yerranderie heritage village and mine sites. According to member Col Bembrick, the convoy of vehicles travelled from Oberon in bright sunshine and drove 110 kms to the old silver mining town. During the morning tea break the travellers examined the rock pavement for Aboriginal axe and spear sharpening grooves of which several examples were discovered.

At Yerranderie the group inspected the village and restored buildings, including the museum. In the town cemetery the gravestones recorded the many young lives that were lost when the silver mines were at their peak of production between 1900 and 1930. Col gave a talk about the mining history and the local geology.



Yerranderie
Museum

Photo courtesy
of Col
Bembrick

Following the September working bee a small contingent of members inspected the Glow Worm Tunnel at Newnes. After stopping for morning tea en route the party walked to the 400m long tunnel which was built as part of the Wolgan Valley railway (closed in 1937) which ran 51 kms from Newnes Junction to the Newnes Oil Shale works on the floor of the Wolgan Valley. Torches were doused in the middle of the tunnel to admire the great display of glow worms on the walls. The far end of the tunnel opens out into a stunning world of tall tree ferns, towering sandstone cliffs and small streams.

Many thanks to the excursion leader, Track Manager Peter Culley for organising these interesting trips.

September working bee

There was a good turn up of members from many different places including Bathurst, Napoleon Reef, Tarana, Katoomba, Bargo, the Central Coast and of course from around the Oberon district. Most of the week's activities took place around the station where lines were cleared of rubbish and sleepers replaced in readiness for the storage of our CPH railmotor.



OTHR's volunteers enjoy lunch in the Oberon Station on a cold September day. Note their new rail safety vests which OTHR has supplied to its fitters as well as orange safety helmets. Photo courtesy of Rick Fletcher

We have been informed that ARTC funding will be allocated to enable the station to be repainted in its original heritage colour scheme and to have some work done on the restoration of the toilets. Work will soon begin preparing the building for the paintwork.

Recent visitors to the station

On Friday, 11th September we received a visit from Kevin Kitchen and Stuart Hudd, two senior safety compliance officers from the Independent Transport Safety and Reliability Regulator in Sydney. This was an informal "get to know you" visit. However, the ITSRR officers took time to discuss safety management issues and future planning directions that OTHR should be considering in the station precincts.

We also enjoyed hosting a brief visit from Stephen Preston and David Matthews who have been strong supporters of OTHR. Ron Preston, Stephen's late father, was a well-known rail historian and author of a

number of books on heritage railways. Stephen himself is an authority on many rail matters and has generously given OTHR rail items, as well as his time and advice about rolling stock and their restoration.



Photo courtesy of Rick Fletcher

Arthur Robinson, Graham Williams & Clive Payne replacing sleepers at the Oberon Station.

Graham brings great experience from his work at RTM and is undergoing training to become a ganger.

Stop Press !!

The NSW Transport Minister has introduced a legislative amendment into Parliament this week relating to disused rail lines in NSW that may have a significant impact on the future of our line and our restoration work. Currently legislation restricts the disposal of rail corridors or track removal without an Act of Parliament formally closing a line.

The proposed new law will enable the Minister to authorise the closure of a disused line on a case-by-case basis after public consultation. A line could then be transferred to the Lands Administration Ministerial Corporation within the Land and Property Management Authority for its management as Crown Land and for rail trail development or other community purposes.

Whilst at this stage we do not have the full details of the Bill, we urge all members to contact their local members of the NSW Parliament to obtain further information so that we can assess the potential impact for the Oberon –Tarana branch line and OTHR's future directions. The use of disused lines for future rail transport needs appears to be in serious jeopardy.

Membership News

Membership numbers continue to grow steadily. In the past month we have welcomed Graham and Meg Sillis (Werrington Downs), John Watkins-Wilkins (Lapstone), John & Robyn Martin (Oberon), Bruce Allen (Wodonga), Laurie and Jill Evans (Oberon), Andrew Gray (O'Connell), Mary and Bill Long (Oberon) and Melissa and Ian Burgess (Manly). We value your support and look forward to meeting you at OTHR's activities.

Reminder

Please contact us if your mail or email address change. We want to keep in touch with you.

2009 Working Bee Dates

October: Sat. 17th – Fri. 23rd

November: Sat. 14th – Fri. 20th

December: Thurs. 10th – Sunday 13th

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