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## August 2008 Newsletter

### **STOP PRESS!**

#### **Change of September Meeting date**

September's monthly meeting has been transferred to **Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> September** at 7.30 pm in the Function Room of the Oberon RSL Club. OTHR has invited the 16 Oberon Council election candidates to address our meeting and discuss their policies, especially as they relate to tourism development, heritage preservation and our railway issues.

It is important for OTHR's future development that as many members as possible attend this meeting to meet the candidates and ask questions that relate to OTHR's operations.

### **A Snowy August Working Bee**



*OTHR's hardy fettlers working on a snowy Oberon day.*

Even the snow did not stop our fettlers during the August working bee. The team worked through 2 snowy days to construct the level crossings for Rutters Ridge Road and Clover Lane by pinning sleepers to rails and then transporting the sections of rail to each road crossing. Oberon Council supplied machinery, materials and an expert crew who prepared the level crossings by excavating the sealed roads and levelling the rail beds. OTHR volunteers then, with the assistance of the Council workers, installed the rails and sleepers. Great welding jobs were done by Matt McMahon and Shane Moorhead.

It was a well-organised co-operative effort to install these 2 major level crossings. We have now put in 4 major level crossings. What an achievement! Rolling stock can now travel almost all the way from Hazelgrove siding to Gate 6 on Lowes Mount Road. During the working bee other tasks undertaken included clearing the line, grading sleepers and removing and installing dog spikes.

### **OTHR's Wood Raffles**

During the past month OTHR has conducted wood raffles in the main street of Oberon. Many thanks to Keith Jones who organised the raffles and did most of

the selling by himself. Keith also mounted a display of photographs illustrating OTHR's restoration work on the line. The raffles raised approximately \$600 for our work. The winner of the last raffle was L. Hill of Oberon. Many thanks Keith for your dedicated support of OTHR.

### **September Working Bee**

The September working bee takes place from Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> September inclusive. It will be **SPRING WEATHER** in Oberon so come along and help with line clearing, painting, sleeper grading and sleeper laying. All OTHR members are invited to the working bee. If you can make this your first working bee you will thoroughly enjoy the fun with the OTHR team of volunteer fettlers. The excavator with the newly constructed sleeper grab will be in operation so we look forward to laying and dog spiking at least 500 sleepers during the week.

All volunteers should meet at the shipping container just north of the garbage tip road each morning from 8.00 a.m. For more details about the week phone Peter Culley (Track Manager) on 0407 042 448.

The OTHR catering committee will again be catering every day for our volunteers. Our co-ordinator, Lynette Ireland would like more assistance from our members. If you can donate food or help serve for a couple of hours for a day, it would be much appreciated so that the work doesn't fall on the same shoulders every working bee. If you can help, please phone Lynette on 6336 0565.



*Oberon Council and OTHR working together at the Rutters Ridge Road level crossing.*

### **OTHR's Spring Raffle**

Our major Spring Raffle commences in the next two weeks with 3 wonderful prizes. Our grateful thanks go to the Mudgee Miniature Railway Society which donated the **first prize**, a weekend extravaganza on 22nd/23<sup>rd</sup> November. It consists of a night's accommodation for two at the Wanderlight Motel in

Mudgee, two tickets on the connecting bus from Mudgee to Gulgong on Saturday to connect with the train, two tickets on the CPH rail motor from Gulgong to Dunedoo, bus transfer to Dunedoo Bowling Club for a 3-course meal and a Murder Mystery Show performed by professional actors. The night ends with return transport back to Mudgee. The prize value is \$295.

The **second prize** has been generously donated by OTHR stalwart, Arthur Robinson and consists of 2 matching pink emerald cut zircon gemstones that were mined in the Oberon district. These beautiful stones are valued at \$180. Many thanks Arthur for your wonderful donation and support which is much appreciated.

The **third prize** was donated by long standing supporters, Barbara and David Coleman of Café Savanna in Oberon. They have donated a \$50 voucher for a meal at their café. Again, a big thank-you to Barbara and David for your continued support of OTHR.

How can you help? Within the next 2 weeks all OTHR members will be sent 5 tickets to sell at \$2 per ticket. If you would like more tickets please contact Margaret Connors on 6336 1211. The raffle will be drawn on Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> October.

### **Country Week Publicity**

Our thanks go to Lynette Ireland and Lorraine and Clive Fielding who generously gave up their time to set up our OTHR information stand in the Oberon exhibition section at the Country Week Expo which was held earlier in the month at Rosehill Gardens Event Centre. They reported that there was a lot of interest shown in our heritage railway restoration project by visitors and they got a pleasant surprise when some of our Sydney members came up to them to say hello.

### **New Members**

Welcome to new members Bruce & Heather Johnson (Lindfield), Dorothy Kurtz (Oberon) and Brian & Margaret Kilby (Oberon). We appreciate your support and look forward to seeing you at OTHR's activities.

### **Member's Profile – Harry Cole**

Known as Harry 2, Harry Cole grew up in Portsmouth, England and undertook his education in that city. After leaving school Harry worked for 5 years at the Portsmouth dockyards for the Royal Navy as an apprentice carpenter. For the next 3 years Harry worked in a munitions depot as a maintenance officer. Then in 1968 he decided he'd had enough of the English winters and headed to sunny Australia.

Harry settled in Sydney and began work with the Dept. of Technical Education as a maintenance

carpenter. He met Jennifer (another hard working OTHR member) and they married in 1971.



*Harry demonstrates how to use a spiking hammer*

Harry progressed through the ranks to foreman carpenter and then maintenance supervisor. He had a long and enjoyable association of 33 years with Sydney Technical College.

Harry and Jennifer were looking for a tree change to “escape” from Sydney and after exploring many areas of the state, they visited Oberon and fell in love with the area. They both have made significant contributions to OTHR's work on the line – Harry with his construction work on the track and Jennifer with her catering skills. Both love the social interaction provided by OTHR and the great sense of community involvement in building an exciting tourist attraction for Oberon.

### **Annual Safety Report**

OTHR recently submitted its Annual Safety Report to the Independent Transport Safety & Reliability Regulator (ITSRR) and satisfactorily met all of the Regulator's requirements.

The development of Safety Management Systems and allied documentation is an ongoing process. Matt, Bob, Margaret and Harry Shannon are busy writing as over 200 pages of documentation have to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008. The documents and implementation strategies have to be approved by ITSRR before we can run any rolling stock on the line which must be certified as track worthy.

### **Rolling Stock Acquisition**

Progress is slow, but we are still working on several sources of rolling stock and have come closer to finalising arrangements for several different types of carriages and other rolling stock. We will keep you posted on these negotiations.

#### **Future Working Bee Dates**

**4<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> October inclusive**

**1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> November inclusive**

**13<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> December inclusive**