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## June 2008 Newsletter

Winter is here at last! What an invigorating time it is to work on the railway line in our weeklong working bee which started on Saturday, 28 June and concludes on Saturday, 5 July.

During the week we will be pulling out the remaining old sleepers north of the shipping container and replacing them with our "new" second hand sleepers.

If time permits, we will put together the rail and sleeper structures for another level crossing. There are many other cleaning, painting and building tasks to be undertaken so, even if you can spend only an hour on the line it will be much appreciated.

### We now own a caravan

Many thanks to Tom O'Connell from Goulburn who has donated a caravan that will be used as a catering van. Already remodelling work has commenced on the interior of the caravan – many thanks to Tim and Peter for their building skills and to Lynette for putting the interior in order.

### The Excavator has arrived

Oberon Council has purchased a 4 tonne Kubota mini-excavator that has come with a cabin and many accessory buckets. Moorhead Engineering staff is already busy making a grab that will be used to pull sleepers out of the line and replace them with "new" ones. The excavator will be loaned to OTHR when not being used by Oberon Council. Track Manager Peter Culley's hands are twitching at the thought of using the excavator which will make its first appearance during the June/July working bee.

### Wood Raffle – 14<sup>th</sup> June

The winner of this raffle was John Hackfath of Oberon who turned out to be a real train enthusiast. The raffle raised \$360 on a quiet Saturday morning. OTHR thanks John and members of the Oberon community for their wonderful support for our exciting heritage railway tourist project. A big thank you is due to Chris, Lyndle, Margaret and Bob for their ticket selling efforts.

### Sleeper Club donations

The Sleeper Club continues to provide a steady source of income for our group. Now 30 June is a key date when considering taxation returns. We appreciate the generous support of all our members but if you are considering donations before the end of the financial year, remember that all donations \$2 and over to OTHR are tax deductible. Each sleeper bought costs \$20 and donors receive certificates and have their names placed for perpetuity in a leather-bound book.

For further details contact the Secretary or check the website.

### Visit a CPH Rail Motor

OTHR has the opportunity to lease or gain on loan a 42 feet CPH rail motor that is owned by the Australian Railway Historical Society (ACT Division). If we successfully obtain the rail motor it will be used as our first operating vehicle on the line between Oberon and Hazelgrove. The vintage style of the rail motor is truly in keeping with our heritage line.

The CPH is a self-propelled passenger carrying vehicle and the 37 rail motors of this series served for over 60 years in NSW, lasting well into the '80s and providing the backbone of country branch line passenger and mail services.

These vehicles were nicknamed "Tin Hares" as their introduction occurred at a time when tin hare dog coursing was becoming popular.



OTHR members are travelling to Canberra on Sunday, 6 July with the inspection of the CPH starting at 10.00 a.m. If you would like to view this exciting piece of rolling stock contact OTHR President Bill Muldoon on 6336 1438 (w).

### New Vice President

Congratulations to Ross Allen who was elected as OTHR's Vice-President at the last Management Committee meeting. Ross has been an enthusiastic member of OTHR ever since he and Alison moved to the district 2 years ago and he brings a wealth of business experience and expertise to our Board.

### Track Safe Training

Glen Pinkney, an accredited Track Safe Trainer will be conducting a 2-day Track Safe Certificate course. *The first day's instruction will be on Saturday, 19 July (all day)* and the second Saturday will be advised by Glen. The holder of this Certificate can enter an

operational rail corridor to carry out tasks such as removing sleepers. It is important for OTHR's operations that as many members as possible attend the course and gain the Certificate. Contact our Secretary, Margaret Connors if you wish to attend the course.

### **Great Progress at the Working Bee on 7/8 June**

The working bee on the long weekend was a great success as our fettlers worked north of the Tip Road and removed 400 old sleepers and laid and pinned approximately 200 replacement sleepers. We are currently laying sleepers at the ratio of 1:4 and will replace all missing sleepers when we have more replacement sleepers on site and also have access to an excavator. OTHR welcomed Mark Hicks from Hallidays Point and Bruce Webb from Sydney to their first working bee. They both enjoyed the experience and will be back at the first opportunity.

### **New Members**

Welcome to new members Jonathan Bennett (Orange), Andrew Buckland (Junee), Roland Clark (Galston), A. & B. Colvin (Blackheath), Andrew Clinton (Junee), Lisa Gosson (Oberon), Allan Bennett (Mudgee), Bruce Marich (our 5th Mosman member), Dennis O'Brien (Ryde) and Celia Ravesi for Oberon Arts Council.

We appreciate your support and look forward to seeing you at some of OTHR's activities.

### **Next Working Bee Dates**

**9<sup>th</sup> August – 16<sup>th</sup> August**

### **Office of Rail Heritage Brochure**

The NSW Office of Rail Heritage (ORH) has recently completed a 2 page colour brochure that provides a brief history, describes key features of the Oberon to Tarana line and outlines OTHR's goals and achievements. The brochure contains 11 photographs of trains and associated infrastructure and importantly describes the experiences in the Oberon district that future tourists could experience in addition to the train ride between Oberon and Hazelgrove.

OTHR appreciates the work of Carolyn Coulton, consultant to ORH who designed the brochure together with the assistance of members Rick, Margaret and Bob.

### **Final Reminder-**

**2008 Memberships now due!**

If you have forgotten to renew your membership of OTHR for 2008 please hurry and send in your application form and fees to our Treasurer. Your fees help with the costs of OTHR's administration.

### **More historical photos of our line**

Thank you to Paul Ballard (Cootamundra) for sending us his superb photos taken of the last steam-hauled passenger train to Oberon on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1963. The Australian Railway Historical Society organised the trip from Central Station and what a day it must have been from what Paul has told us!



*Locos 1919 and 1957 stop at Hazelgrove Station for photos*

### **OTHR's Website at**

**[www.ozsite.com.au/oberonrailway](http://www.ozsite.com.au/oberonrailway)**

This outstanding and comprehensive site has been organised and regularly updated by our web manager, Rick Fletcher. The site has become very popular with train enthusiasts throughout the world and receives approximately 900 hits each month.

The website contains many sections that are of interest for members and train buffs. For example –

- How to join OTHR, the executive officers and contact details.
- It provides updates of OTHR's history and objectives and describes the tasks we have achieved.
- A brief history of the railway line is documented.
- A great range of photographs, including historical and current restoration shots are there to peruse.
- A news section lists our meeting times and place, an aerial photo of the line, a restoration progress map, coming events and a copy of the latest newsletter.
- The Roll of Honour thanks those businesses and organisations which have helped our project over the years.

Download the **Self-Guided Car Tour** that guides visitors from Oberon, along the line and down into the beautiful Tarana Valley to Tarana Railway Station. The Guide is comprehensively documented with additional sights to see around Oberon and the Lithgow districts.

There is much much more to read so please take some time to explore our website and introduce it to your friends. Congratulations Rick on a superb effort.