

OBERON TARANA HERITAGE RAILWAY INC.

NEWSLETTER

May 2018



.....bringing your rail heritage back to life.

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Website: www.othr.com.au

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/OTHR.Inc

GoFundMe: <https://gofund.me/2mhftk44>

Patrons:

**Daul Toole State Member for Bathurst, Minister for Lands and Forestry,
Minister for Racing**

Andrew Gee, Federal Member for Calare

Committee:

President/ Systems Manager: Gregory Bourne

Vice President/Asset Manager: Martyn Salmon

Secretary: Elaine Boxer

Treasurer: John Brochie

Track Manager: Graham Williams

Public Officer: Elaine Boxer

General Committee:

David McMurray: Fundraiser, Newsletter Editor/Dublicity

Tim Arnison: Operations Manager

Peter Culley

Ken Lingabala

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Mother's Day 13th May 2018

....from the President's desk....

The Bi-monthly General Meeting was well attended. We had two visitors from Zig Zag Railway who gave an excellent presentation that brought us up to date on their operations. You may remember that much of their rolling stock was very badly damaged in a bushfire in 2013. Fundamentally they have not recovered from the devastation and their insurance has not been finalised.

We had ten visitors to the monthly open day on Saturday 7th April. It was encouraging that 5 of them were from "out of town" – travellers who have an interest in Heritage Rail. The rest were local people who used the train to get from Sydney to Oberon.

The committee is working well and for the first few days of the month David McMurray was hard at work writing an application for a grant from Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 2 provided through the Oberon Council. If successful, the money will be used to restore the timbers that support the station platform that are in total disrepair.

The "shunting in the yard using a tractor" project has been changed. We are now concentrating on getting the SMS documents ready for shunting using a locomotive.

The review of all SMS documents continues an onerous task but an essential one.

If you would like to become more involved in the activities of the group, we will run another Induction Course for Rail Safety Worker and another course for the Operation of Track Maintenance Vehicles. Please email or phone me or the Secretary to put your name on the appropriate list.

Greg Bourne
President OTHR
Email: gpbourne@gmail.com
Mobile: 0437 389 684 (not often in range during the day)



President Greg Bourne

Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. Mission Statement

To operate tourist trains between Oberon, Hazelgrove and ultimately Tarana, with volunteers from OTHR.

To have the Oberon Station precinct operate as a vibrant heritage railway display run by the volunteers of OTHR as a professional tourist centre.

Editor's thoughts

Community – a social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and often have a common and cultural and historical heritage.

A broad description indeed – but think about this – Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. really is a community, a social group sharing government (our constitution and all it encompasses) and we have a common and cultural interest and share an interest in heritage.

We owe it to ourselves to get on and work together to achieve our vision to operate trains to Tarana

and to operate the Oberon Station and precinct as a vibrant tourist centre.

However OTHR should never be insular or self-centred. Our association is part of the Oberon community and our responsibility to that community is to work with them and make our project worthwhile for everyone in the town. In other words we need to contribute to the liveability of the town.

Never think of OTHR as us and them, we are all in this together, our government (committee) works with Oberon's local government (council) and our responsibility is to make our project work for the benefit of the wider community.

"We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community..... our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.

Cesar Chavez"

Have a say!

I've been writing this newsletter since about October 2016. During that time I have tried to write it in a way that it captures your interest and leaves you hanging for the next newsletter.

The newsletter has tried to provide a clear and transparent view on the workings of the committee, OTHR activities, a little humour and a sense of our history.

I have endeavoured to include you the reader and give you the feeling that you are actually part of Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. and that you share our grand vision.

Many bouquets have flowed during this time, and some brickbats have been thrown as well.

Here's your chance to let me know what you think and what you might want to read in the newsletter. One comment is that it is too long to read; others say it should go back to a format of a page or two of

basic information. Others tell me to remove our history and yet others want me to have an emphasis on the OTHR rules and regulations. Maybe you want to add something.

So have a say if you want, start a conversation on your ideas. Address all suggestions to Secretary Elaine.

It's your newsletter, so let me tell the sort of stories you want to know.

NEXT MEETING

GENERAL MEETING

5TH JUNE 2018

7.30PM

Immediate Goals.

1. **OTHR applies for and gains ONRSR accreditation to shunt in the Oberon station yard using at locomotive before 30th June 2018**
2. **OTHR applies for and gains ONRSR accreditation to operate wok trains to Hazelgrove before December 2018**
3. **OTHR applies for and gains ONRSR accreditation to operate trains to Hazelgrove before 31st December 2019, which is 40 years since the last passenger train rode the track.**



*Photo taken by Ron Preston when he & friends visited Oberon on 3rd August 1957. A down 36 class leads a pass service out of Tarana past an HS carriage (adjacent to the carriage shed) waiting its turn for a run up to Oberon on the branch line.
Photo Ron Preston*

General meeting

Reserve the date, 5th June 2018 for the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. general meeting.

Secretary Elaine will enlist the assistance of an interesting guest speaker for the meeting.

Be there!

A valuable lesson for us all...

How important is it for OTHR to maintain an asset register and to accurately value those assets?

This question was part of a conversation at the April meeting when Michael Forbes and Mark Langdon from the Zig Zag Railway addressed us on the current position of that group. As you all know the Zig Zag railway was devastated by a bush fire about two years ago. Huge amounts of rolling stock, spares and memorabilia were lost. That group didn't have an adequate asset register and the task of working out what was lost in the fire was enormous, and of course little things that were totally destroyed may never be financially recovered. The need to maintain up to date valuations was immediately noted.

A couple of examples of what can happen occurred when the Government assessors started to value lost items. They tried to value rare and irreplaceable carriages at scrap metal value less removal costs, in other words nothing. Worldwide research revealed they were really worth upwards of \$600K each. A steam train valued at scrap metal value less costs, again in fact valued at around \$1.5M. A common theme was that the machinery was old and therefore not worth anything.

OTHR has maintained an asset register and we were slowly updating it. The need to get that register up to date and properly value our assets suddenly became apparent. One of our newer members has volunteered to help the process.

OTHR can never afford to sit on its hands. Your committee can't do it all either and volunteers are always needed to help out. Members with basic computer and administrative skills and are prepared to do a little work are valuable to the association in this instance.

Important Information.

Help us bring our heritage railway to life by becoming a financial member of the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc.

Membership of Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. is a valuable way you can contribute to our vision. Individual annual membership costs \$20.00 per year and new members are welcomed at any time during the year.

Membership is required to cover insurance for any volunteer work you are able to contribute.

Membership is due at the end of June annually. Your subscription will help us financially as well as insure you for any volunteer work you may carry out on our project.

Refer to OTHR website to download an application.

About Oberon.....

Four distinct seasons are what awaits you and makes a visit to Oberon a magnificent experience.

Spring is the signal of the town's awakening from the cold months of winter. Bulbs push their heads above the soil. Suddenly daffodils are everywhere from the main street to the beautiful parks and gardens seemingly around every corner.

Summer is a delight with lovely warm but mild and humid free days that are just perfect; cooling at night allowing a restful sleep in one of Oberon's many accommodation beds.

Autumn is perhaps the most beautiful season of the year. Days still have the last of the mild summer days, and trees start to make the annual change to winter hibernation. The autumn colour hue gives Oberon the feeling of being awash with colour and makes an artist's palate dull by comparison.

Winter, of course, brings cold crisp days, often creating frost that makes the landscape a fairyland. Often as not there is the wonder of falling flakes of snow that extends a white calming effect to the entire countryside.

Oberon truly is God's country.

Simply Spectacular!!.



*Temporarily, all is quiet in Tarana yard.
Photo Ron Preston*

Next Working Bee.

**Keep an eye on the
"News/What's On"
Section of the
Website.**

News from the April working bee

Another successful working bee was carried out on the 4th & 5th April with jobs worked on: painting of "S" Truck 14201, some more prep work for paint on Car Set 21. Asset stocktake, catalogue of some donated items and working on some grant funding. Special thanks for our "out of towners" who came up for the bi-monthly General Meeting and participated in the working bee either side of the meeting night.

Further painting of "S" Truck 14201 and Car Set 21 will be carried out on random days going forward, vegetation control in the Oberon Yard, relocation of sleepers and sleeper plates from the tip to Oberon Yard (is scheduled for Sunday 15th April) and the fitting of axles/wheels to the Sleeper Inserter (Tim and Peter are doing this week).

As always keep your eye on our website for working bee days.

Important Dates

Open days are held on the 1st Saturday of each month to coincide with the Oberon Farmers Market. Please note the roster below and ensure you attend as necessary.

- May 5th Col & Glenda Bembrick
- June 2nd Elaine Boxer
- July 7th Arthur Robinson
- August 4th
- September 1st
- October 6th Col and Glenda Bembrick
- November 3rd
- December 1st

The rest of 2018 will be allocated at a later date. If you wish to volunteer at the open days please contact Secretary Elaine. All that's required is a broad knowledge of OTHR history and an ability to talk with people. The work is rewarding.



Sleeper Audit

A review of our sleeper stockpile was conducted recently to determine exactly what we had in storage. The stockpile was divided into three sections – suitable for track maintenance, landscape and firewood.

All sleepers need to be moved to the yard shortly for safe storage and plans for that task are underway.

New Systems Manager appointment

Following the resignation of Ian Davis from his position on the committee along with the relinquishment of assistant's duties by Tim Arnison, nominations were called for at the committee meeting to appoint a replacement.

Greg Bourne was nominated and was appointed unopposed.

An SMS working party has been established consisting of Greg, Martyn Salmon, Phil O'Regan, Michael Merritt, Graham Williams, Steve Gault and Ian Theyers.

This is a larger group than we have had before and there is a good balance of people with railway experience.

Review of our documents is pushing ahead and is continuing the very good work of Ian and Tim.

The OTHR committee wishes to acknowledge the excellent work Ian did in reviewing and rewriting our SMS documents, an arduous task indeed. Ian remains a member of OTHR.

Thanks also to Tim Arnison for his great work in assisting Ian. Tim remains a committee member.

Skoda and Tatra Register News

Our friends over at the Register are holding a meet and greet with OTHR and a couple of other guests on 26th May. Amongst items to be discussed will be their position with funding.

That all important grip on grants seems to fall from the hands of so many organisations and our friends at the Register are no exception.

The only solution is to keep trying at every opportunity and we all hope they will come up trumps with their current application.



Long term member Wayne Dempsey in a carriage that he has assisted in restoring.

Transport Heritage Rally outcome.

Was the Rally a success? Both from an attendance and financial point of view it certainly was. The public made a variety of positive comments and our VIP guests were suitably impressed. The only adverse comment was about the platform edge and as mentioned elsewhere we are seeking funding to rebuild the whole platform. Your committee made

the important decision to extend the Rally to a bi-annual event alternating with the OH&CC's Highlands Steam & Vintage Fair. The two half day model will be tried again in 2020.

Part of the Rally's success was due in no small part to Col and Glenda Bembrick who put together an excellent and quite professional display in the station. Working with a shortage of time and virtually no budget they absolutely pulled it together.

A job well done Col and Glenda.

We also should give a big vote of thanks to all our volunteers who worked tirelessly both before during and after the event.

Nothing happens without our volunteers, so a big thank you to you all.

Monthly Open Days.

Your committee has been chewing the fat in recent months on the subject of our Open Days. They occur on the first Saturday of every month, with reasonably wide but low key advertising. Two things are occurring – we always have difficulty finding willing volunteers amongst our members and often very few visitors come through the gate. One of the ideas is to specifically target groups and, to this end, a group will be touring the Oberon heritage yard shortly. For us this will be a try out; there will be enough members on hand to give the visitors a very personal tour, they will get a Devonshire tea, and accordingly there will be a commensurate fee charged.

The committee will be seeking feedback from the visitors and our members who were involved. We can then gauge whether group visits to the station yard will be viable.

Another idea is to give certain open days a focus and advertise widely. There will be more certainty about this idea in the June issue of this newsletter.

What is the committee working on...

at present? A HOL on the remainder of the track to Tarana is being discussed with John Holland Rail and a meeting with them shortly will hopefully progress this issue.

ONSRS accreditation for shunting in the yard with a tractor and loco is underway.

As mentioned in other parts of the newsletter, many grants are being applied for to help us on our way.



*The down mixed for Oberon waits in the station at Tarana for passengers for the branch line
Photo Ron Preston*

Track Maintenance Vehicles

As a result of the training day, OTHR was able to run the Wickham up and down the track on the Rally days as a demonstration.

More training days are coming up soon, so let Secretary Elaine know if you would like to participate and we'll put you on the list.

Station Project

The majority of painting has been completed; Mike O'Kane was the foreman and was helped by volunteers over the painting period with sanding, cutting in etc. Overall an excellent team effort; thanks to all who helped out. There was enough funding left to make a substantial improvement to the floor in the Ladies Waiting Room.

The funds were made available via a Federal Government Grant and our local Federal Member, Andrew Gee, gave the project the "thumbs up." Andrew inspected the handiwork during the Transport Heritage Rally.

Catering considered

Member, Victoria Theyers who has a most unusual skill for a train buff, is keen to start catering for visitors as a fund raiser.

She has discussed many options and has decided to "start small" with pop-up cafes on the platform during open days and visit events.

We will be testing the water shortly with a car club group visiting on 21st April. This is a great opportunity to see how this event goes and fine tune accordingly.

Asset Register

As a follow up to Michael Forbes and Mark Langdon's visit on behalf of Zig Zag Railway, Jenny O'Regan asked for clarification of our asset register. Martyn Salmon advised that we have an asset register but it is mostly out of date. Much of our equipment and assets are irreplaceable and need to be carefully documented, even the smallest item. This also brings into question of whether we really have adequate insurance and in some cases who owns some of the assets on loan and who needs to insure them.

This matter has priority and Jenny has agreed to provide data entry skills as all assets are taken into consideration and valued.

The road to funding

Steadily rolls on. Your committee recently lodged a small grant application and a request for a donation with benefactors for a number of minor bits and pieces.

A major grant has been lodged to rebuild the station platform.

Your committee is looking at another grant to provide us with a number of heritage items related to the station museum. That one is due to be lodged shortly.

No results have been released to date.

Welcome New Members

Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. is always looking for new members.

Timothy Judd has joined OTHR this month.

Welcome Timothy, we are sure you will find your membership rewarding.

Interested in railways or the Oberon to Tarana line in particular, why not give your support by becoming a member?

Not so well....

If anyone hears about any member on the sick list, please let the editor know via Secretary Elaine so we can send get well wishes on behalf of the association.

Remembering....

If anyone hears of the passing of one of our members please let the editor know via Secretary Elaine so we can make a special mention.



Mystery Photo

Our very own rail gunzel Col Bembrick has provided the following brain twister of a picture. The idea is that you are to guess where the photo was taken.

Some clues are that it is an Australian country town where the rail line runs down the centre of the main street. The gauge isn't standard. Don't ask me 'cause I don't know!

All guesses care of Secretary Elaine; be part of the fun and give it a go. Look for the answer in the June Newsletter.



Say Whaaat???

- I noticed two people wandering around a cemetery carrying a casket; they've lost the plot!"
- Saw an NRMA serviceman sitting on the side of the road sobbing his heart out. I thought "looks like he's heading for a breakdown!"

The Quest for funding continues....

Your donations remain as important as ever and every dollar gets us one step closer to our mutual goal of running a train on the line.

To donate go to OTHR GoFundMe site and donate there, or alternatively send those donations to PO Box 299 Oberon. Please make it clear that you are donating to the rebuilding of the Oberon Branch line.

Sponsors

Seeking funding continues to be one of your committee's priorities

Sponsorships are a very important part of the funding of our activities. There has been no activity in seeking sponsors for many years and this avenue of funding is to be pursued shortly. It matters not whether a person or company contributes cash or kind, each will be considered as a sponsorship. The reason is that any person or company that contributes in kind is helping us in as much as we don't have to pay for those services and the sponsor is foregoing income. The committee needs to seek cash sponsors and this is being worked out at this date.

As a side issue, discussion on the supporter's board located at the public station entrance was discussed. These individuals and companies supported us as long ago as 2006. If it weren't for those original supporters we most probably would never have been able to institute our vision. As a matter of our history that board acknowledging the original stakeholders will remain in recognition of their efforts.

Currently we have two sponsors on board, both sponsors offer in kind support for which we are extremely grateful.

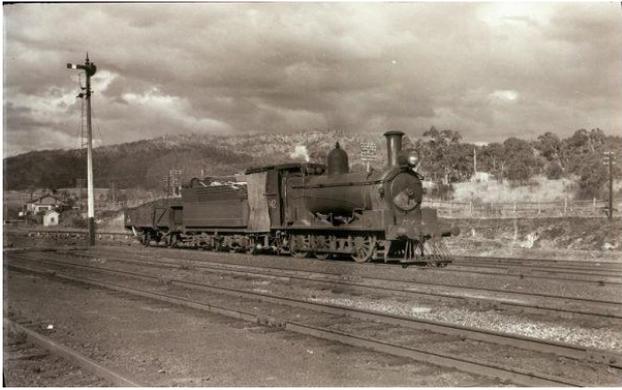
Rail Museum and Rolling Stock Shed

Coming to Oberon? Why not visit OTHR's Rail Museum and Rolling Stock shed.

In the heritage listed PC3 station building you'll see a photo display of the Oberon- Tarana branch line history. OTHR's restoration of the Oberon yard precinct and railway memorabilia is always a work in progress. When in the Rolling Stock shed, walk through and sit down in 1897 American End Platform carriages. View a variety of trikes and track inspection cars (TMVs) in the yard. Also in the Rolling Stock shed you will find our 73CL Diesel Locomotives and inspection cars.

Open on the 1st Saturday of the month coinciding with the Oberon Farmers Markets between 10.00AM and 2.00PM or by appointment for groups (see contact us page on OTHR.com)

Admission charge \$5.00 (18 years and over).



*A shunting trip to pick up an S truck full of coal for the Oberon loco.
Photo Ron Preston*

A blast from the past!

August 2006

The board of OTHR has approved the exciting new logo showing a 19 Class engine crossing the wooden trestle bridge over Snakes Valley Creek between Hazelgrove and Carlwood. Thanks go to members Harry Shannon and Chris and Kathy Segært for their hard work on developing the logo which will be used in the future to become an immediate identifier of our organisation.



For those of us who wondered how the logo came about, this is your answer.

Facts and figures

“Lithgow Mercury, Friday 17th September 1926.

BIG RAILWAY FIGURES

The following figures show the quantity of produce, etc., which was forwarded from Oberon railway station for the year ended 31st July: Potatoes 945 tons, chaff 1264, props 511, timber 107, bismuth 4, grass 27, oats 49, wool 194, peas 247, wheat 14, general 31 tons. These quantities, considering the very dry season experienced, give some idea what might be expected in ordinary seasons. This would more particularly apply in regard to the potato crops, which were very badly affected with the drought. When eventually rain did fall, it was too late to be of any benefit, and under the continuance many tons were destroyed. As regards the “props” this is a comparatively new industry, and is expected to be much more extensive in the future. Bismuth, as big developments are now taking place in this line, must increase heavily. As far as the wheat (14 tons) is concerned, this too, is something of a tryout, and previously commented upon on these columns, are grown Mr. A.E.Wilcox, with excellent results. The quantity was classed as prime. Passengers from Oberon for the same period totalled 2177. It might be pointed out that these figures do not include Hazelgrove, where additional large quantities of produce, props, etc., were dispatched.”

Here is a snapshot of agriculture and industry in the 1920’s. Isn’t it amazing to see, in hindsight, which pursuits of agriculture and industry prospered and which ones failed in the past 70 odd years.

As a matter of interest the following was mentioned in the same news article:

“Mr. C. Sheppard, proprietor of the Austral pictures, announces the screening of Charlie Chaplin in “The Gold Rush”, supported with a two reel comedy, for Wednesday next, 22nd September.

Attention is also drawn to the advertisement of the Oberon District Cricket Association’s meeting on Saturday afternoon next.”

Fascinating stuff!



*In true Aussie style, the driver of 1942 wanders across to have a yarn with the driver of the 54 class standard goods loco on an up goods.
Photo-Ron Preston*

History and Significance of Set 21 Carriages housed at Oberon NSW.

Courtesy of New South Wales Transport Museum

Principal Dimensions as Built.

| | | |
|------------------------|---|--------|
| Length over headstocks | 15.11m | 49' 7" |
| Length over body | 13.41m | 44' 0" |
| Width over body | 2.69m | 8' 10" |
| Height – rail to roof | 3.76m | 12' 4" |
| Bogie Centres | 10.36m | 34' 0" |
| Bogie Wheelbase | 1.828m | 6' 0" |
| Wheel Diameter | 838mm | 33" |
| Average Tare | 19.5t (Electric wired) 22t (generator equipped) | |

Set 21 was built by Ritchie Brothers under Contract 6/96 and delivered as a six car set but was placed into service as a five car set 21 which entered service on May 1897. The set was built up to a six car set in 1930.

The current Set 21 cars were originally coded FA 850 and FA 854 (terminal car) and entered service with gas lighting and varnished exteriors that were converted to electric lighting during

August 1930. It is most likely that Set 21 was painted either during the 1920's or when the set received electric lighting. Both cars remained in this configuration until March 1940 when FA 850 was converted to LLB 850 (first class with centre lavatory). FA 854 (second class with guard's accommodation and centre lavatory) in October 1940. At this time, both of the cars would have been painted in Tuscan red and Russet.

Set 21 remained as a six car set until it was broken up into three two car sets (19,20 & 21) in October 1969 for use at the country depots of Narrandera, Cootamundra and Dubbo to provide relief service for any two car diesel that may have failed. It was at this time that the carriages were modernised to their present form. They would have been painted into the Indian red colour at some time during the late 1950's or early 1960's. At the time of their modernisation in 1969, LLB 850 was altered to provide composite accommodation for both first and second class seating and was given the code CBA 850. At this time CBA 850 was also made into a terminal car and allocated to Dubbo.

Set 21 moved from Dubbo in 1975 to the Illawarra and worked until early 1977. The set was officially condemned in December 1974 so it was very unusual for the carriages to remain in service after official condemnation. Following the final withdrawal of all end platform carriages from the Illawarra early in 1977, Set 21 was purchased by the RTM and transferred to Thirlmere. It was transferred to BHP Port Kembla on loan during the mid-1990's for use on BHP internal excursion services until this service ceased under BlueScope Steel in 2005. They have been in undercover storage at BlueScope Steel ever since then until their transfer on extended loan to the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway. During its time at Port Kembla, the set was fitted with retention tanks on the toilets. HLF 854 was transferred by road on 22nd April 2010 and CBA 850 was moved on 23rd April 2010.



*Two standard goods locos make a three way cross
with 1942 on the branch line.
Photo Ron Preston*

Proud Sponsors

Primary Sponsor



Oberon Council is a proudly independent council which has supported OTHR from its very beginning. The council administers the Oberon Shire and is second to none when looking after the community.

Bronze sponsor

Jenolan Holiday Park

Jenolan Holiday Park offers a range of accommodation in Oberon to suit everyone.

Would you like to book your accommodation now?

Would you like to become a sponsor? Contact Fundraiser Dave via our Secretary to find out how you can participate in OTHR's exciting sponsorship deals. There are a number of sponsorship levels available. By sponsoring OTHR and its vision you will become a partner of the programme.

Members Remember your Mums on Mother's Day

*Mothers
hold their
children's hands
for a while,
but their hearts
forever.*

Contacts
For all enquires

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