

October 2018 a year in review for AGM

Through a number of initiatives OTHR has lifted its profile both online (Website & Facebook page) and visitors through the gate. Further there is constant growth in subscribers to OTHR's Newsletter which is emailed out each month, with another 7 added to the list in September alone.

OTHR has also been fostering relationships with other Heritage Operators including Lachlan Valley Railway (LVR) who had floated the idea of resource sharing which would include Loco crews etc, also OTHR has loaned a power Dog spike hammer and spreader bar to Crookwell Heritage Railway.

The outgoing Committee believes that OTHR is closer today to running a Heritage Tourist Train than 12 months ago. Below is a look back over the past 12 months on what's happened at OTHR.

Donations / Sponsors

Oberon Council \$5k (in kind) Jenolan Holiday Park (discount for out of town members)

Verolia Mulwaree Trust \$1k, Chris Dwyer \$600 (in kind) and Mark Langdon \$250 (in kind), a number of supports have donated \$100 or more.

Grants Applied for:

Station Platform \$130k, through to second stage

Station painting (inside) \$6.8k, successful and has been completed.

Cattle Wagon CW17192 rebuild \$16k, unsuccessful will reapply next year.

Re-roofing of second carriage in Car Set 21 \$9k, successful will be done October 2018

CCTV/ Alarm for Station / Rollingstock shed \$18k, submitted in September 2018.

Line between Oberon and Tarana \$10M, there has been a rule change for infrastructure spending resulting in either OTHR finds \$1M or gets a commercial user to operate on the line as well.

Future Grant Funding ideas:

Cattle Wagon CW17192 \$16k.

Car Set 21 Running gear / bogies and make operational.

Extractor system for Rollingstock shed to extract Loco exhaust smoke \$2-3k

Extend the Rollingstock Shed by 3 bays \$60k.

Heritage Operators Licence (HOL) north to Hazelgrove

Back in December 2017 a small sub-committee started discussion with John Holland Rail (JHR) in Bathurst to resolve the land swap issue at the Lowes Mount Road level crossing, which is holding up OTHR's application for the HOL north to Hazelgrove. In February 2018 JHR started an internal

restructuring, resulting in the property function being transferred to Newcastle. Finally, in September 2018 an onsite meeting was held at the Lowes Mount Road level crossing with representatives of JHR, Transport NSW (TfNSW) and Oberon Council all agreeing to resolve the land swap issue.

Once the land swap issue is completed OTHR can apply for a Heritage Operators Licence (HOL) for the line north 6kms to Hazelgrove, as a step towards Tarana.

Heritage Transport Rally

The Heritage Transport Rally was held in March over two days in the Oberon Yard, with over 500 visitors coming through the gates to see OTHR's operation and items belonging to our partner on the day being the Oberon Heritage and Collectors Club. Visitors come from around the Central West and from Sydney, with notables in the crowd being Andrew Gee Federal member of Calare and co-patron of OTHR and Rob Mason Chairman of Board Transport Heritage NSW.

Miniature Railway onsite meeting

In June saw an onsite meeting with Mini Train Systems, Oberon Council and OTHR looking at a possible location for a Miniature Railway track in the Oberon Yard Precinct. There was some discussion about locating the layout on the raised loading area and on Council land between North Street and the Station precinct. After some discussion at a committee meeting it was decided to put this project on hold until more suitable land is identified.

Open Days / Group Bookings

The traditional 1st Saturday of the month open days (10.00am to 2.00pm) sees visitors' numbers from 5 – 25 depending upon the weather with a mixture of locals and out of town visitors. There is a real growth in the Group Booking area, a number of car clubs and other groups stopping in. As part of the enhanced experience offered by OTHR the option for the 'Devonshire Tea' is a big hit with the visitors. Group booking numbers for October and November total around 400.

ONRSR Accreditation

Applied for Rail Infrastructure Manager (RIM) for the line north to Hazelgrove.

Outcome: OTHR was asked to withdraw this application until the land swap issue is resolved, then reapply but also include Track maintenance standard documentation and also Level crossing Interface Agreements for the 9-level crossing from Oberon to Hazelgrove.

Applied for Shunting in the Oberon Yard with a Tractor.

Outcome: OTHR was asked to withdraw this application until OTHR could supply an Engineering sign off on the Tractor and Drawbar. This revised document package is about 95% complete and just about ready for resubmitting.

Applied for Shunting in the Oberon yard with a Locomotive.

Outcome: OTHR was asked to withdraw this application until OTHR could supply information on Loco crews' qualifications and Maintenance inspection / schedules for the Locos. This documentation package is about 90% complete for resubmitting.

Grant Windsham (ONRSR) has been very helpful in guiding OTHR down the right path regarding documentation, Grant paid OTHR a visit in July as part of that support.

Operations

November 2017: THNSW crew was engaged to drive 7307 & 21 from the station into the Rollingstock shed. The video on Facebook attracted a lot of interest.

July 2018: THNSW crew was engaged to drive the 73's for a major shunt in the Oberon yard, with the movement of Car Set 21, Plough Van and Freezer Van. The video on Facebook attracted of 500 likes and over 100 comments.

TMV's play a regular part of open days and group booking days.

SMS Documentation

Documents submitted and approved by the Committee totalled 21.

Existing documents Reformatted / or modified (12) Tool box / work brief, Induction training, Operational form, SOP's, Incident Management and Purchasing policy.

New documents (9) Operational forms, TMV training, Prior Learning Policy, Risk assessment for shunting.

Training

5 members gained their TMV's operators' qualification and when there are sufficient numbers available another TMV training course will be held.

A training package for 'OTHR Yard Shunting' is being finalised and when completed, there will be an opportunity for members to gain their shunting qualification.

Track Inspection / Certification

A track inspection of the Oberon Yard was carried out by High Tech Rail Services in late July and a number of defects were recorded, OTHR is working to clear those defects and once done a Certification of yard will be issued.

Working Bees

During the past 12 months there has been a variety of activities carried out of which some are listed here: relocation of some 700 sleepers from the tip storage area to the Oberon yard, Internal painting of the station, ongoing painting of Car Set 21, visitor walkway in front of the Rollingstock shed, repainting of S14201 and re-fitting the buffers to make S14201 another match wagon, TMV and air compressor maintenance, clean up of the Lowes Mount Road old level crossing, yard maintenance and clean up of the Rollingstock shed. A big thank you to all the volunteers from Oberon, Southern Highland and Sydney who turned up for the planned working bees, also the “locals” who are there most days doing those one-person jobs and keeping things moving ahead as well as carrying maintenance in the yard.

Vision / Future

With two significant dates coming up in regarding the Oberon Branch line;

11th November 2019 will be 40 years since the last train ran on the branch line.

May 2021 marks 100 years since construction started on the Oberon Branch line.

OTHR's committee is committed to operating a Heritage Tourist Train on the Oberon Branch line and over the next 6 months, its planning to get the 73CI Locos inspected / serviced / fit to run as part of that commitment.

