

OBERON TARANA HERITAGE RAILWAY INC.

NEWSLETTER

August 2019



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

PO Box 299 Oberon NSW 2787

Website: www.othr.com.au

Email: admin@othr.com.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/OTHR.Inc

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

Patrons:

Daul Toole,

State Member for Bathurst, Deputy Leader of the New South Wales National Party, Minister for Regional Transport and Roads

Andrew Gee,

Federal Member for Calare, Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister

Committee:

President/ Systems Manager/ Public Officer: Gregory Bourne

Vice President/Asset Manager: Martyn Salmon

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: John Brotchie

Track Manager: Graham Williams

Public Officer: Gregory Bourne

General Committee:

David McMurray: Fundraiser, Newsletter Editor/Publicity

Ken Lingabala

Managers

Operations Manager: Timo Kanko

Rolling Stock Manager: Time Kanko

In this issue

	<i>Page</i>		
President's Message	5	Sponsors	16
Oberon Tarana Mission Statement	5/6	Skoda & Tatra Museum Update	16
Editor's thoughts	6/7	Visit OTHR every time you are in Oberon	16/17
Membership Renewals due 30 th June	7	Geoff Thompson	17/18
August Guest Speaker	7	Winter Special	19
Immediate Goals	8	Contact	19
Position Vacant	7/8	Proud Sponsors	19
So... You think you want to volunteer	9	Membership Application	20
Important Information	9	Official OTHR Merchandise	21
Movement at the Station	9/10	Merchandise Order Form	22
A Note from our President	10		
Work on Oberon Railway Station is underway	11		
New merchandise delivered	11		
Sleepers	12		
About Oberon	12/13		
Working Bee Wrap	13/14		
Important dates for Volunteers	14		
Monthly Open Days	14/15		
Welcome New Members	15		
Not So Well	15		
Remembering	15		
Say Whaaat!!	15/16		
Quest for Funding Continues	16		

STOP PRESS!!!

OTHR has been granted accreditation!!!

See report later in Newsletter.

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

Well the talk of the month has been that our application for a variation to our accreditation was successful. We can use the locomotives or a tractor to shunt in the Oberon yard. This is, of course, a major advancement for OTHR. We are now entering a period when we will be developing new skills and expertise to have controlled train movements. Accountability has moved up a notch and it will be necessary to make sure that every detail in our SMS documents are followed through.

We are moving forward with the station platform project. The timber has been delivered. The section 60 application is being processed. We were asked for an addition to the documents provided last Thursday. We are working on that!!.

Negotiations with John Holland Rail and Transport for New South Wales regarding an extension of the Heritage Operators Licence north of Albion Street is proceeding.

We have a Bi – Monthly Committee meeting in August and then the Annual General Meeting in October. Please consider joining the committee at the October meeting.

Information on the next major working bee, Wednesday 7th and Thursday 8th August will be on the website. There are a few tasks to complete in the yard before the track can be certified:

- Replacing 9 lengths of rail which have a badly corroded foot.
- Replacing timbers under some of the compensators in the yard.
- Tidying up the container which holds tools and equipment.

Greg Bourne
President/ SMS Manager
Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc.
Email: gpbourne@gmail.com
Mobile: 0437 389 684



President Greg Bourne

Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. Mission Statement

To be an accredited rail operator to run a tourist train from Oberon station to Tarana station on the main western line. This would allow for

tourists to ride a heritage train along the Oberon Tarana branch line which was also known as the pioneer line.

Further, the running of this train would generate tourist related jobs in the Oberon area and give residents in the Oberon/Bathurst area an opportunity by volunteering at OTHR to enhance rail heritage in the local area.

Network with other rail heritage groups and museums at Valley Heights, Lithgow, Zig Zag, Bathurst and Cowra to form a Heritage Railway partnership to prioritise and promote the area as a Railway Tourist Precinct.



Friday 23 August 2019 is Daffodil Day.

With one in two Australians diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85, this is a cause that affects us all.

OTHR encourages all readers to go to the Cancer Council website and donate a couple of dollars. Research is saving lives. Help fund Australia's brightest researchers as they work to uncover breakthrough cancer treatments to protect the ones you love.

Editor's thoughts

From little things big things grow; from little things big things grow.

You all remember this song written by Paul Kelly and Kevin Carmody. It's about aboriginals fighting for land rights and equality.

The same song title could easily be used to describe Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc.

Way back when, somebody had a germ of an idea to resurrect the suspended Oberon to Tarana branch line as a tourist enterprise for the benefit of the good folk who live in Oberon, NSW. They spoke to other likeminded towns folk and the little thing started to grow.

Actually the origins of the idea started back in 1975 when the Oberon Tarana Steam Train Company Ltd. was established to purchase steam locomotive 1904 for use on the branch line but it came to nothing.

So from those beginnings and the subsequent establishment of the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. in 2005 from little things big things have grown.

Plenty of committee members, volunteers and other workers have come and gone over the years, each contributing to a very sound, yet visionary association and OTHR has reached an era where all that hard work is starting to pay off

Administratively, work is steaming ahead with accreditation now at hand to shunt Locomotives in the Oberon yard; we can move TMV's in the Oberon yard, work to repair and refurbish the Oberon station platform moving forward, received very large funding to reopen the Oberon to Tarana branch line as far as Hazelgrove and an application has been submitted to vary our HOL to enable work to commence on that section of track.

Additionally your committee has lodged an EOI for further funding to meet the Oberon to Hazelgrove budget and grants to refurbish rolling stock and improve the interpretive display as well as investigating the recommissioning of the 1923

men's toilet and providing women's and disabled facilities. Further your committee is also investigating the establishment of a kitchen to properly cater to our visitors.

Speaking of which, your branch line precinct is now regularly attracting larger groups of visitors.

Of course this activity is creating the need for specific and general volunteers and they are now being advertised.

The Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. will grow and thrive with more volunteers coming forward, so how about putting your hand up. I know someone who is a new member indicating he would like to learn to become a guard.

This project, firstly, is for the benefit of the Oberon community and secondly for all folk with an interest in railways. Nothing is achieved by sitting on the fence – contact President Greg or Vice – President Martyn via the OTHR contacts now!

Membership Renewals Due 30th June.

Here's a timely reminder that renewal of annual membership is due on 30th June.

You have until 30th September to renew or your membership will lapse.

A Renewal form can be found at the end of this Newsletter

NEXT MEETING

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

7TH AUGUST 2019

OBERON RSL

7.30 PM.

August Guest Speaker

Ben O'Regan, Project Co-Ordinator, Bathurst Railway Museum, will be our speaker for this evening.

Come and hear about the exciting details of that museum and how close it is to opening its doors. Hear also how the Bathurst Railway Museum will work with the Oberon To Tarana Railway Inc. project.



Ben O'Regan, Project Co-Ordinator, Bathurst Railway Museum (left) with Bathurst City Council Mayor, Graham Hanger, inside the new museum building.

Immediate Goals

Existing goals 1 and 2 have now been achieved as a result of our accreditation recently granted. Your committee has now set a new range of goals to be achieved in the near future as follows:

- 1. Obtain track certification for most of the Oberon Yard area.**
- 2. Gain approval (having applied) for the HOL North of Albion Street to just south of the Snakes Valley Creek Bridge “stop block” at 208.409Km.**
- 3. Apply for variation to existing accreditation for RIM & RSO (for use of TMV’s) to just south of the Snakes Valley Creek Bridge “stop block” at 208.409Km. Time frame 3 – 6 months. after the Federally funded restoration of Stage 1 being the line North to Hazelgrove.**
- 4. Apply for variation to existing accreditation to operate work trains to Hazelgrove. Time frame 3 – 6 months.**
- 5. Apply for variation to existing accreditation to operate tourist trains to Hazelgrove. Time frame 3 – 6 months.**

Positions Vacant

As you have read earlier, your committee is looking for members to step up and have a part in the responsibility of running a large scale volunteer enterprise, namely the Oberon to Tarana Heritage Branch Line as a tourism attraction.

Within the next few months and into the future OTHR will be commencing the building of a wonderful community project involving the operations of trains as a tourism attraction that will be the envy of the Central Tablelands and the Central West, if not New South Wales.

Specifically the following positions have been identified and will need to be filled in due course:

- Secretary – the position needs to be filled ASAP.
- Asset Manager – needs to be filled ASAP
- Catering Manager – the position needs to be filled ASAP
- Finance Manager – needs to be filled soon.
- Infrastructure Manager – needs to be filled soon
- Safety Manager – needs to be filled ASAP

All positions will be filled by members or the railway community or the general public with appropriate skills suited to the job.

Please contact President Greg Bourne on gpbourne@gmail.com or admin@othr.com.au or mobile 0437 389 684 with a CV of experience.

OTHR also needs skilled tradespersons of all types. For example, Carpenters, Plumbers, Electricians, Boilermakers, Painters plus more. Please also contact Greg Bourne as above with your experience.

As a result of our recently granted accreditation to shunt locomotives in the Oberon yard we are seeking volunteers who would like to train as drivers or ancillary staff.

Please contact Vice President Martyn Salmon by email at admin@OTHR.com.au

OTHR is a volunteer group so you will be volunteering with a fun group but with serious intent.

So... you think you want to volunteer?

WOW, look at all the volunteer positions now becoming available!!

I want to drive a loco or the tractor for shunting or a track maintenance vehicle to haul materials around the yard.

But what do I do?

Step one: contact President Greg or Vice President Martyn via our email address and indicate interest.

Step 2: when advised, organise a medical at the appropriate level (there are three levels of rail medical).

Step 3: when advised, our trainer will instruct you in controlling trains, tractors or TMV's to the appropriate certificate level.

For all other volunteers there is a site induction and further training depending on the type of volunteer assistance you wish to undertake.

All this is a requirement because as an accredited rail operator we need to comply with the national health standards and qualifications as set out by the National Transport Commission.

Shunting in the yard will not be frequent but regular as movements are required. Typically shunting would occur in bringing rolling stock to the station for display at open days, special events and rallies.

Still interested in volunteering? Then let's hear from you.

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 cost \$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.

Refer to OTHR website to download an application, or complete the form at the end of this newsletter.

Movement at Station.

Oberon Review Thursday 11th July 2019

"Things are going to start moving at the station precinct, according to Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway.

OTHR has received confirmation from the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator that its' application for a variation to accreditation to shunt using a locomotive or tractor has been approved.

OTHR President, Greg Bourne said OTHR can now shunt rolling stock in the Oberon yard – subject to local crewing.

"We will, in time, be able to move locomotives to the platform for open days and other special events such as heritage transport rallies" he said.

“This has been holding us up for some time and things will start moving at the station precinct on Lowes Mount Road”

Mr Bourne said the news puts OTHR in a new league.

“The moving locos will attract train enthusiasts from all over the State” he said.

“It’s very different to a static display. It will boost our open days. Members hope it will attract new members and visitors.

“The certifiable tracks have to cater for locos weighing 50 tons plus.

“In recent times, we have made a further application to John Holland Rail and Transport for New South Wales to vary our heritage operator licence north of Albion Street.

“This particular application includes some extra distance past Hazelgrove to just south of Snake Valley Bridge.”

Mr Bourne said in the meantime, work is progressing on the platform project and the timber has been delivered.

“Tenders will be called when the Department of Environment and Heritage completes its assessment of the project”, he said.

OTHR’s mission is to be an accredited rail operator to run a tourist train from Oberon station to Tarana station on the main western line.

This would allow for tourists to ride in a diesel locomotive hauled heritage train along the Oberon – Tarana branch line, which was also known as the pioneer line.

“The running of this train would generate tourist-related jobs and give residents an opportunity by volunteering at Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway to enhance rail heritage in the local area”, Mr Bourne said.



73Cl diesels owned by OTHR being moved to the rolling stock shed in 2017.

A note from our President.

“Good evening members of Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway.

It has been a great day for Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. We have received confirmation from the Office of the National Safety Regulator (ONRSR) that our application for a variation to accreditation to shunt using a locomotive or tractor has been approved. OTHR can shunt (subject to Loco crewing) rolling stock in the Oberon yard. We will in time be able to move Car Set 21 to the platform for Open Days and other special events such as Heritage Transport Rallies.

In recent times we have made a further application to John Holland Rail and Transport for New South Wales to vary our heritage operator’s licence north of Albion Street. This particular application includes some extra distance past Hazelgrove to just south of the Snakes Valley Bridge.

The station platform project is progressing. The timber has been delivered. Tenders will be called when the Department of Environment and Heritage completes its assessment of the project.

We look forward to busy and exciting times.”

Greg Bourne
President.



Artist's impression of the tourist train leaving Oberon station for Hazelgrove, NSW

Work on Oberon Railway Station is underway.

Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. is still awaiting the assessment of The Department of Environment and Heritage before we can start actual refurbishment of the Oberon station platform.

In the meantime delivery of materials has been completed and tenders prepared.



Load of station material has arrives at Oberon.



Timber posts unloaded from truck



Sleepers unloaded and on the ground



Coping timbers offloaded and on the ground

All photos Greg Bourne

New merchandise delivered

The first of the new range of merchandise has been delivered.

OTHR caps are now available for purchase now and are of very good quality.
Prices: \$15.00 members, \$20.00 non-members.
Get in for yours now.

An online store is being set up to allow distant members to purchase our merchandise. Look for it soon as part of the OTHR website.

Further additions to the merchandise range will be added slowly throughout 2019.

Sleepers

You are reminded that we have a supply of sleepers for sale. Some are suitable for landscaping and some suitable for firewood. See the advertisement later in the newsletter about firewood. If you want to purchase landscaping sleepers, contact President Greg Bourne. These sales are a good source of income for your organisation.

About Oberon.....

Oberon in Spring?

Now that's got to be fun!

And so it's welcome to the 2019 Downunder Jampot Rally!

No, this is not a jam making conference!!



1925 AJS 350 E5 motorcycle

The AJS and Matchless Owners Club of Australia are holding their annual "Downunder Jampot Rally" in the Central West of NSW town of Oberon. The rally has been planned to attract Classic & Enthusiasts motorcycle members from the nearby towns of Lithgow and Bathurst as well as being suitably located for riders to attend from Sydney, Illawarra and Goulburn regions. Families are encouraged to attend and we will be supplying a 20 seat bus to follow the rally route.

Interstate visitors will find many local attractions to ensure their extended stay is made most enjoyable. From 2 – 10th November the town will be celebrating "Outdoor Week", promoting Wineries, Jenolan Caves, Mayfield Gardens, Museums, Trout Fishing and Forest activities. In addition, we will be holding a small "Scavenger Hunt" over the rally weekend.

A variety of district runs will test the classic motorcycles. On Sunday 10th November there will be a run through "Luscious woodbine" pine forests, heading south to Abercrombie via Shooter's Hill and returning to Oberon via Black Springs. The run will terminate at the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. Interpretive Centre where a BBQ lunch is planned and a prize for the winner of the scavenger hunt will be presented. The Railway Heritage Interpretive Centre/Skoda museum and Barry Hughes' Tractor Orphanage will all be available for inspection during the afternoon.

If that's not enough to whet an enthusiast's whistle OTHR will also be hosting a visit from the 7th Horseless Carriage Club, International Tour also visiting the Bathurst Region in August/September. Their visit to the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. Interpretive Centre will be 2nd September. There will be a large number of vehicles all manufactured prior to 1920 will be on display for a short time from 11.00AM.



1909 Packard Model 18

All this is enough to render any car and bike enthusiast senseless.

One thing's for sure, you will be more than welcome in Oberon

Contact us any time to discuss.

Oberon, Simply Spectacular!

Email admin@othr.com.au

Or phone 0437 389 684 Greg, or 0408 606 889 Dave.



A recent scene at the heritage Oberon Station.



*Happy volunteers at the June working bee.
Left to right Geoff Smith, Martyn Salmon, Council Ken, Graham Williams and Greg Bourne.*

Working Bee

wrap....

... for June/July 2019.

OTHR volunteers have carried out a number of jobs in the Oberon yard which included:

- Vegetation control undertaken by Barry.
- Removal of material from either side of the sleepers for better drainage; this work was carried out on Road 3 (in part).
- De-clutter of the awning area.
- Double pinning a number of sleepers through the Crossing and Check/Stockrail unit.
- Sorted out some rail by weight sizes, stacked some scrap rail on a trailer for disposal.
- Worked on the control rodding/compensator for the Catchpoint.
- Unloaded 26 tonnes of hardwood timber for the station platform wall and coping edge.

We are always on the lookout for volunteers for working bees.

Generally volunteers are required to participate in allocated tasks.

If you can help, contact President Greg.

Next Working Bee.

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

Not all work is onerous and can be as little or as much as you can put in.

We would like to see anyone with railway trade experience but that's not a requirement.

There is a job for everyone.

You don't have to attend every working bee, just the ones that fit in your timeframe.

You will take away experiences from your time at Oberon.

Some of the benefits of volunteering are:

- Developing new skills
- Meeting new people
- Assisting with a meaningful and important cause
- Contributing to the community
- A sense of belonging.



Volunteers at the June Working Bee. Left to right Jenny O'Regan, Michael Merritt, Graham Williams, Phil O'Regan, Greg Bourne, Martyn Salmon and Geoff Smith.

Important Dates for Volunteers

Open days are held on the 1st Saturday of each month to coincide with the Oberon Farmers Market.

Volunteers will be required to meet and greet visitors, show them through the displays and try to answer any questions.

If you wish to volunteer at the open days please contact President Greg. All that's required is a broad knowledge of OTHR history and an ability to talk with people. The work is rewarding.

Monthly Open Days.

The Oberon Station precinct holds open days on the 1st Saturday of the month, the same day as the Oberon Farmers Markets.

Some changes have been made, with the establishment of a professional though small railway interpretive display; an entry fee of \$5.00 pp (children under 18 free), and a pop up café serving a Devonshire tea for an additional \$10.00.

The result has seen a large increase in visitors comprising locals and tourists.

Your committee is also actively advertising for group visits and we are providing a railway experience bar none.

Groups are starting to line up and results so far have been encouraging.

If you are a member of another group, say a car club or Rotary or Probus or a gardening club, etc. and that group is looking for an excursion, please suggest they book a group visit to Oberon station.



Hosting a recent group tour



v

28th April 2018

To: David McMurray

Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway inc

Dear David,

I am writing on behalf of the TR Register Australia Club to thank you and your Heritage Rail Group for the fantastic hospitality you showed us during our recent Autumn Run to Oberon.

The high tea on the station platform was very well received by our group, especially the ladies who enjoyed Victoria's scones and jam afternoon tea.

The viewing of the Oberon rail station, the rail memorabilia and the rolling stock including the old carriages bought back many fond memories to all of us.

Please extend our thanks also to Wayne, Greg and of course Victoria for the great time shown to us

We wish you the best in your continuing endeavours to get the trains moving to Tarana and rest assured we will be back to enjoy another high tea soon.

Thanks again

Gavin Rea



Welcome New Members

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

This month we welcome:

Mark Handel.

Mark is from Ingleside NSW and his skills are in Automotive: Mechanic/Fabricator/Welder/Spray Painter

Welcome Mark.

Tom Thompson

Welcome Tom.

Tony Clift.

Tony is from Tandarra Vic. He is an ex carriage trimmer NSWGR Eveleigh and Chullora Workshops. Currently works part time at Bendigo Tramway Workshop.

Welcome Tony.

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 President Greg so we can send get well wishes on behalf of the association.

Remembering....

Geoff Thompson
1921 – 2019

Geoff lived a very full life. See a little of that life later in this newsletter.

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

Say Whaant???

- I changed my ipod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.
- Haunted French pancakes give me the crepes.
- I got some batteries that were given out free of charge.

- A will is a dead giveaway.
- A man walked into a bank with a suitcase of marijuana.

He wanted to open a joint account.

The Quest for funding continues....

Donations are particularly important now as we have the certainty of running a train to Hazelgrove soon.

With your help, your committee can start to introduce all the refinements that will make a journey to Hazelgrove an experience to remember.

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.



Another view of the June working bee. Martyn Salmon in the background, Greg Bourne in the foreground and Council Ken in the excavator.

Sponsors

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

Sponsorships are a very important part of the funding of our activities. 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 task is ongoing.

Currently we now have five sponsors on board, all sponsors offer in kind support for which we are extremely grateful.

Skoda & Tatra Museum update...

Skoda and Tatra Museum held its annual "Christmas in July" function and AGM at Oberon 13th July.

Oberon's Mayor, Kathy Sajowitz launched a new booklet entitled "A Dream Come True" written by John Hebblewhite.

The newly elected committee advises that 60% of the committee is now aged under 40.

OTHR President Greg Bourne was a prominent guest at the function.

Visit OTHR every time you come to Oberon

Make sure you keep up to date with work in progress at the Oberon Station Precinct and the Oberon branch line.

The heritage listed PC3 station building contains a small interpretive centre consisting of

memorabilia and a photo display of the history of the Oberon to Tarana branch line.

You'll see a variety of trikes and TMV's (track maintenance vehicles) in the Oberon Station yard. Take time to inspect the Rolling Stock shed and inspect our 73CI Diesel Locomotives and walk through - even sit down in - the two 1897 American End Platform carriages.

OTHR is open between 10 AM and 2 PM on the first Saturday of each month, coinciding with the Oberon Farmers Market.

Admission \$5 (18 and over), Devonshire Tea \$10.

For group visits: see <http://othr.com.au> (contact us) or contact President Greg.

Geoff Thompson

1921 - 2019



Geoff's Son, Tom, has provided an account of a life well lived.

"Broken Hill in 1963 was a union town, with no railway to the South Australian border and no bitumen link to the south or east. The drought was on. We had a new TV but had no reception for three years. Miner's huts still had earthen floors and ice and vegetables were hand delivered. The Council's Press Officer was blind. The high school had 2000 children, with first year going from 1A to 1P. It was an exciting town.

Dad revelled in its can-do approach and had an especially good relationship with Mayor George Dial who also went to the Church of Christ. Dad

surveyed the rail link into town for Council, and George Dial promptly demanded the exact line to SA railways, and it was reluctantly delivered.

Dad completed the road from Broken Hill south to Mildura by creating bitumen that could move over the shifting Kudgi Sandhills. He befriended E.V. Whyte, the President of the Wentworth Shire, only to find out that he was a companion and cook with the great crime writer Arthur Upfield. Dad's domain was from the dingo fence on the Queensland border south to the Victorian border and east from the South Australian border for two hundred miles. Bridges were designed for future flooding, and his keen eye spotted the old Cobb & Co coach line on high ground east of Wilcannia. His design to complete the bitumen road to Sydney was almost complete when the family moved again to the sea, where Dad would take the position of Divisional Engineer in Wollongong, for the area that included the Southern Highlands.

The imperatives for Dad were designing the new highway down Mt Ousley Road. Solving the drama of runaway trucks on the Bulli Pass, keeping the road from Clifton in a fit state and resolving the hair-pin bends on Macquarie Pass. He took genuine responsibility for his work, and the only time I saw him shaken was following the inevitable fatal speeding accident, upon which he was requested by Police to attend with them. He developed strong friendships with several politicians including Rex Jackson and Laurie Kelly, and introduced me to Gough Whitlam and Jack Lang, NSW Premier in the 20's and 30's.

Some of Dad's signs became classics: Who can forget sighting:

"GO BACK - YOU'RE GOING THE WRONG WAY"

"LEFT LANE MERGING"

"RUNAWAY TRUCKS STOP HERE"

In 1976, with children leaving home, Dad and Mum took their only overseas tour of England and Europe, with several northern points. The resulting thousand photographs and notebooks showed how seriously he thrived on sightings of

both the ancient bridging and the new rail hubs and hovercraft.

On his return he developed the engineering coursework at Wollongong University, and they then moved to Castlecrag.

In 1982 – for the 50th anniversary of the SHB, Dad gifted the Mallard film to the Film & Sound Archive.

Around 1993, Dad began a memoir of his own father, which resulted in publication last year as “The Man from Minmi”

On 2010 Dad was visited by Lieut Foxall, his troop’s old commanding officer in Darwin in 1943. Foxall was in Dad’s class at North Sydney Boys, and his father was a prominent surveyor. Foxall was commissioned. While Dad never went on about his army life, I was privy to a remarkable exchange about the chances of a Japanese invasion:

Foxall: “There was not much we could do if they came in by sea”.

Dad: “Well, we always had the final plan”.

Foxall: “What final plan”?

Dad: “The one for our troop, if they invaded by Darwin Harbour”...

Foxall: “There was no such plan!”

Dad: “Oh yes, you remember. I was to arrange that the unit spill the oil refineries and set the harbour alight”.

Foxall was dumfounded. The military had given their reliable Sgt the final defence of Darwin, not him. Dad’s modesty precluded him from saying much more, but it was another example of his coming of age during WW11. In his 90’s Dad became even more interested in finding out whether his great interests: surveying, map-making, road building and railways also played a part in his ancestor’s lives. He knew that his own grand-father had fashioned the transoms for the original Hawkesbury River Bridge, and a relative, George Thompson surveyed, mapped and built roads in the Cape of Good Hope in the 1820s.

The original Thomas Thompson, in Dad’s direct line, was close friends with George Stephenson, the father of the British Railways. Indeed, Thomas surveyed the third railway built in England, with

George Stephenson walking the line. James suggested to Stephenson that the standard gauge should be 4 foot 8 ½ inches, and Stephenson agreed and that is history.

James Thompson then bought the Stephenson’s Rocket to run on his own standard gauge line, and with brother Mark Thompson driving, created a new land speed record for steam in the Rocket in 1841.

James built several locomotives that Robert Stephenson designed for him.

In 1861, when James Thompson died, his wife Maria gifted the Rocket to the British Government in memory of the relationship between the Thompsons and the Stephensons.

This gave Dad great joy to think that so much of his life was in many ways, a throw back to his immediate ancestors and certainly helped us all better understand his zeal for both road and rail.”

Tom said that Geoff was a party to rail and particularly what OTHR have done and achieved.

He said that Geoff’s great pleasure was to know of our firm resilience in getting the job done for our community”.

If you have a story to tell, let us know so we can publish it as we did for Tom and his late father Geoff.

Winter Special

Firewood grade sleepers for sale

6 x 4 Box trailer load

\$50.00

Contacts For all enquires

President: Greg Bourne, 0437 389 684

Email admin@othr.com.au

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 offers a range of accommodation in Oberon to suit everyone. Would you like to book your accommodation now?

Contact: Phone/Fax 6335-6239

Mob: 0418 619 709

7 Cunyngame Street, Oberon NSW 2787

Bronze Sponsor

Highlands Motor Inn, quality accommodation at an affordable price.

We don't work to a budget; we work to exceed our expectations.

Contact (02)6336 – 1866

77 – 79 Dart Street, Oberon NSW 2787

Bronze Sponsor

Along with the Australian specialised construction brands Orminoid and Lanko, Davco is part of the international ParexGroup. ParexGroup is a truly global company and a leading producer of speciality dry-mix solutions with 3,905 employees. The group has a strong local focus.

Bronze Sponsor

Haymes Paints are a family owned Australian business. The business started in Ballarat in 1935 is now in the hands of fourth generation of the Haymes family. Over the years, each member has taken care to hand on the commitment and passion for crafting quality products. As they say their name and reputation is on every can.

Would you like to become a sponsor? Contact our President 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.



Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc
 PO Box 299, Oberon NSW 2787
 email: admin@othr.com.au
 website: - othr.com.au
 Phone President 0437 389 684
 ABN 98 107 506 208

Renewal or Application for Membership

I/We wish to renew or apply to become a member of the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc and agree to be bound by the Articles of Association of the organization and its Rules and Regulations

Name	
Mailing address	_____
	Suburb/Town _____
	State _____ Postcode _____
Phone	Mobile _____
	Home phone _____
Email	

Tick appropriate box

Membership is \$20.00 per person \$ _____

Donation \$ _____

Total amount payable \$ _____

Payment can be made in the following ways

- **Cheques** - made payable to Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc and mailed to PO Box 299 Oberon NSW 2787
- **Cash** - can be paid direct to our Treasurer at any of our bi-monthly general meetings
- **Direct Bank Transfer** – our bank details are **BSB: 062 632 Account number: 1004 9851**. Please include your name as the reference statement

Expertise (Please complete if you are joining OTHR for the first time) Indicate any skills, expertise or areas of interest you may be able to share with us as the railway is being restored ready for operation. We need members with a wide range of skills from laboring, catering to professional management.

Membership represents a significant financial contribution to our organization. Members receive regular newsletters and invitations to special events. Membership is required to cover insurance for any voluntary work you are able to contribute.

Signed: _____ Date: _____



Official OTHR Merchandise

Buy Now.

OTHR Cap.

New Product, Bottle Green with white OTHR logo, fits all sizes.

Purchase today and be a part of the OTHR team. Proceeds go towards the reopening of the Oberon to Tarana line.

Priced at \$29.00 non - members, \$24.00 members. Price includes GST and Postage and Handling anywhere in Australia. Overseas will incur extra postage.

Payment:

Direct Bank Transfer - BSB 062632. Account Number: 1004 9851. Please include your name as a reference.

Cheques – made payable to Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. and mailed to PO Box 299 Oberon NSW 2787.

Merchandise Order Form.

Official OTHR Cap **\$29.00 non - members** **\$24.00 members.** (Please indicate choice)

Quantity:

Name:

Address:

No

Street

PO Box

Suburb or town

State and Postcode.

Cheque or Direct Transfer (please indicate)

Merchandise will be posted on receipt of funds.

Please email this order form to: othr.com.au,

Or post to BOX 299, Oberon NSW 2787.