

# **Oberon TARANA HERITAGE RAILWAY INC.**

## **NEWSLETTER**

**September 2017**



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

**PO Box 299 Oberon NSW 2787**

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**Facebook: [www.facebook.com/OTHR.Inc](https://www.facebook.com/OTHR.Inc)**

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

### **Patrons:**

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

**Andrew Gee, Federal Member for Calare**

### **Committee:**

**President: Tim Arnison**

**Vice President: Peter Culley**

**Secretary: Elaine Boxer**

**Treasurer: John Brochie**

**Track Manager: Graham Williams**

**Public Officer: Elaine Boxer**

### **General Committee:**

**David McMurray: Fundraiser, Newsletter Editor/Publicity**

**Ian Davis: Document Writer**

**Martyn Salmon**

# **SUCCESS!!**

**In what is the biggest news of the year for Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. your committee has been successful in obtaining both a Heritage Operators licence and accreditation to operate section cars and work in the general area of the Oberon Station precinct.**

In simple terms the Heritage Operators Licence is rather like a lease on the ground but it allows us to use the land for heritage rail operations. This licence covers the Oberon Station precinct and is issued by TfNSW, an arm of the NSW State Government.

The accreditation to operate section cars and work on the line in the area covered by the HOL was granted by the Office of National Rail Safety Regulator (ONSR). This is the national auditing organisation that makes sure we are doing everything in the manner we have said in our SMS documentation and that we are operating safely.

This is an important step in getting a train running on the tracks again. It means we will be able to use our fleet of section cars within the Oberon Station precinct. Provided we prove to the authorities that we can operate these machines safely, then we will be able to apply for accreditation to shunt the locos within the yard in due course.

President Tim, Secretary Elaine and Document Writer Ian who is updating our SMS documentation have played a very important part in this success.

Thanks Guys!!!

## **Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. Mission Statement**

To operate voluntary run tourist trains between Oberon, Hazelgrove and ultimately Tarana.

To have the Oberon Station precinct as a vibrant Heritage Railway Display run by volunteers as a professional tourist centre.

### **Editor's thoughts**

Dedication..... The act of binding yourself (intellectually or emotionally) to a course of action.

Who knew back in 2006 when it was first mooted by a group of passionate railway enthusiasts that the Oberon to Tarana Branch line should be reopened that it was going to cause that group to become dedicated to a long course of action now entering its eleventh year.

Dedication and passion are what makes any enthusiast push ahead with projects that almost consumes their lives.

That's what drives volunteers to roll up month after month to involve themselves in some small project that ultimately joins with other small projects that eventually becomes a big finished project.

That's what drives your committee to work tirelessly behind the scenes to solve the unsolvable problems that moves the project a few more grinding metres towards the OTHR goal. As you read through this month's edition you will come across results that have taken your volunteers and committee a long time, sometimes years, to resolve but are now a reality.

Dedicated and Passionate (that word again) people can't help but to talk about their projects. They know that you probably don't want to hear about them because you hear about them all the time, but they don't really want to talk about anything else. And even if they do, their conversations almost always steer back to their passions. They can't help it because they don't see their passions as separate from themselves; they are their passions.

Do you know this person? I know plenty of them but then I live in that world!

"Seems to me that there is a fine line between insanity and dedication.... I call that line commitment

**Jeremy Aldana"**



*A rare photo of the aligning peg that was located on the northern side of Oberon Rubbish Tip. Unfortunately the peg no longer exists. Aligning pegs were used to mark the alignment of the railway line before they were laid. The photo shows the old Tip camp in the background.*

## NEXT MEETING

Annual General Meeting

4th October 2017

7.30PM

### General meeting

Reserve the date, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017 for the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. general meeting.

Secretary Elaine has enlisted Buzz Sanderson, President of the Kandos Rylstone Railway Museum as guest speaker for this meeting. Buzz is heading up a new and exciting museum; he will talk about its formation amongst other interesting facts.

This meeting is also our Annual General Meeting and all financial members are requested to attend.

### Important Information.

If you haven't renewed your membership for 2016/17 you are now unfinancial.

You can apply to re-join any time after 1<sup>st</sup> September but a joining fee in addition to annual membership fee will apply.

## Big News for OTHR.

Our colleagues over at The Oberon Heritage & Collectors Club Inc. have announced that the annual Highlands Steam & Vintage Fair will be rested in 2018 to refresh and regroup.

Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. will stage a display to cover the gap year.

Our event is called the **Heritage Transport Rally** to be held on 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at the Oberon Railway Station Precinct. Display times are:  
Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March, 12 – 4 PM  
Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> March, 8 – 12 noon.

Come and see:

- Heritage Rail Carriages
- Trikes
- Steam Road Traction Engines
- Cars
- Trucks
- Station Memorabilia display
- More

This is our first rally and is proudly presented by:

- Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc.
- Oberon Heritage & Collectors Club Inc.
- Skoda and Tatra Museum
- The Society of Drivers, Engineers and Mechanics

Don't miss this one and spread the word!

See flyer attached.



## About Oberon.....

October in Oberon.....nothing happening?

Wrong!

Book a room at one of Oberon's fantastic motels, caravan park, B & B's or farm stays during 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> and visit the 2017 Supercheap Auto Bathurst 1000 at Mt Panorama. Bathurst is a short ½ hour drive away yet you can still experience the pleasures of small town hospitality.

Perhaps you are a garden hound, then visit the Mayfield Garden Spring Festival 2017 during 14<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>.

Discover the expansive Private Garden spanning over 160 acres spread across a hillside in beautiful rolling countryside. Mayfield Garden is probably the best cool climate garden in the world bar none.

What about Gairloch Garden Spring Opening 2017, an elegant country garden located within Oberon township. This cool climate garden has been lovingly created by Meg and Peter Low over many years. The garden has been featured on Better Homes and Gardens TV show and should not be missed.

And while you are visiting the gardens, don't miss the Forever Diamond 2017 tour at the RSL on 20<sup>th</sup> October. Arguably the best Neil Diamond impressionist, Peter Byrne has toured the world with this show and he's at Oberon RSL.

The National Cool Climate Wine Show has teamed up with Mayfield Garden to present The National Cool Climate Wine & Food festival. Come and celebrate world class cool climate wines from over 20 local vineyards and sample local gourmet cuisine with all food sourced from the Central Tablelands area.

And lastly don't forget to visit the Oberon Community Markets on 7<sup>th</sup> October where you will find all sorts of delights, crafts and treasures sourced from the Oberon area. Visit the OTHR memorabilia stall located at the Oberon Men's Shed all located in the Oberon Showgrounds.

If that's not enough, call over to the Oberon Station precinct and have a look at our progress to date. There's always something new to see.



*A part of Gairloch Garden  
Open during October.*

## Spare a thought.....

For our friends at Richmond Vale Railway Museum who lost almost all of their collection due to a bushfire on 13<sup>th</sup> September last.

## Our fund raising isn't dead!

The donations you make to get the track up and running are quarantined from the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc.'s general funds

Donations are still required to help achieve our aim of putting a train back on the track. The immediate aim is raise \$20K to fund a couple of essential studies to allow us to apply for big funding that will help us achieve our ultimate target.

Nothing can happen unless you rail gunzels donate.

Wouldn't it be a shame if the project didn't reach its goal and languished as a static museum – or worse?

We have a saying here at OTHR:  
"You don't know what you've got 'til it's gone."

Don't look back in years to come and wish you should have made the donation of the dollar that would have allowed the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. to bring your rail heritage back to life.

We are keeping all donations so far especially to move the project forward. All donations are tax deductible.

Make that donation and do it now!

There are two ways to make a donation:

- Go to our GoFundMe page and make your donation there.
- Or send a cheque to our Post Office Box 299, Oberon NSW 2787 marking your envelope "fund raiser".

If you are a business person large or small and would like to sponsor OTHR, please contact our Secretary for information on how you can help.

**Next Working Bee**  
**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017**  
**To**  
**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

## Working Bee News

Tasks to be tackled include:

- Prepare Oberon station interior to ready it for painting.
- Commence work on the Plough Van
- Reposition the Signal ladder.

This is still an ambitious task list so it would be appreciated that anybody up to it comes along and helps out.

Remember too, the old saying: "many hands make light work."



Remember also the conditions of offering up your labour for a day or two:

- Morning and Afternoon tea.
- A great lunch
- Accommodation for out of towners at Oberon Men's Shed
- Cabin style accommodation at Jenolan Caravan Park for very reasonable tariff.
- Hot showers at the caravan park.

Come on, be a part of it; you won't regret it.

We always need volunteers to help out even for an hour or two and that extra pair of hands really makes a difference.

## And the Diggings continue...

Col Bembrick, OTHR's dinky di gunzel and his long suffering better half Glenda have been doing some "industrial archaeology" at Carlwood station site in an effort to establish the original exact location of the station sign – which is currently stored (and about to be restored) in the Oberon yard.

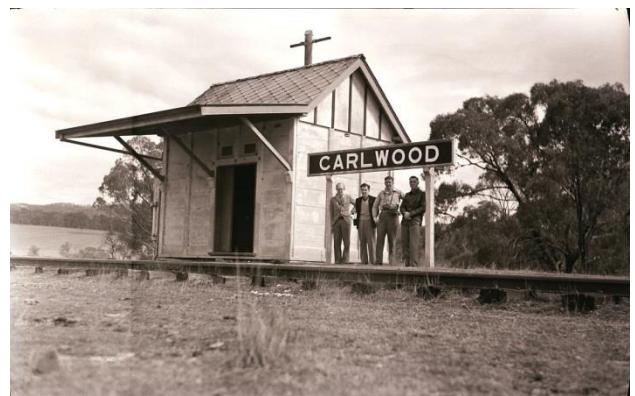
Their previous work at this site – where they did their "Time-Team" impersonations, has located the remains and foundations of the PC1 Shelter shed. The original shed (see photo below) is featured in an excellent archival photo by Ron Preston. Scaled measurements from this photo gave us the dig location.

Just like Mole in "Wind in the Willows", they scraped and scratched and scrabbled and scrooged, then scrooged again and scrabbled and scratched until finally, 25 cm below the grass roots they struck lucky. The remains of a concrete post were uncovered – approx. 10cm by 10cm in size – just right for a support for the station sign (see photo below). The second support location can now be accurately measured off and will hopefully soon be unearthed.

Why all this effort to locate a broken concrete post? When the station sign is restored, it is planned to re-erect it on the site and possibly add some interpretive signage with a photo to explain the historical significance of the site, similar to the historical sign at Oberon station.

Well done to Col and Glenda who contribute so much in the way of rediscovering our history that is so important to the eventual reconstruction of the rail line all the way to Tarana.

Oberon's railway history mustn't be allowed to die away and with the help of Col and Glenda the richness of the history of the Oberon – Tarana rail line will gradually re-emerge for future generations.



*Carlwood Station with sign in place.*



*Remains of concrete post unearthed at Carlwood station site.*

## Welcome New Members

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

Recent new members are Ken Lingabala, Phil O'Regan and Jenny O'Regan. All have considerable experience in heritage railways and will be valuable additions to our membership.

Welcome Ken, Phil and Jenny!

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.

## In Memorium.

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.

## Say Whaaat???

- I bought a pair of Nike Hi-tops that were once owned by a drug dealer. Don't know what they were laced with, but I've been tripping all day.
- I came upon a very pregnant lady at a bus stop:  
"How long before its due?" I asked  
"About three days" the lady replied.  
"Oh?" I said, "I'll think I'll walk."

## Another fabulous rail event for you on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Capertee & District Progress Association Inc. has organised yet another Tin Hare rail trip from Lithgow to Capertee. Rave reviews have been received for the previous two trips.

An OTHR member has travelled on both previous trips and recommends them for all OTHR enthusiasts.

The Tin Hare run will start from Lithgow, co-ordinating with an interurban from Sydney, leaving Lithgow at around 9.00AM.

This trip will see a bus run from Capertee down to the Glen Davis Shale Mine for a tour of the ruins, returning to the Capertee Hall in time for lunch. A bus will also take passengers from the Capertee Station to the Capertee Hall in the morning, where the Capertee Market will be on all day. Travellers will also have an opportunity to take a bus trip down into the spectacular Capertee Valley for afternoon High Tea with a view. Lunch will be available for purchase at the market or you may wish to book a table at the historic Capertee Royal Hotel.

Two options are available:

Rail Motor from Lithgow to Capertee, bus trip and tour of the Glen Davis Shale Oil Mine. Adults priced at \$125.00 pp., pensioner and child rates apply.

Rail Motor from Lithgow to Capertee, bus trip and High Tea. Adults priced at \$105pp, pensioner, child and group bookings apply.

For full details of these exciting tours contact Dott Pike, Secretary, Capertee & District Progress Association Inc. on 0414 395 614 or email:

[caperteeprogress@gmail.com](mailto:caperteeprogress@gmail.com)



*Tin Hare at Capertee Station  
From tour 1*



*Tin Hare at Capertee Station  
From tour 2*

## The Oberon-Tarana Railway

There has been so much written about the opening of the Oberon to Tarana Railway line, most of it objective yet many other correspondents have been very opinionated, some even scathing. It seems that it all depended on which group the correspondent was aligned.

Here's yet another reporting of the opening of the line and a bit about the subsequent celebrations etc.

**Lithgow Mercury Wednesday 10 October 1923.**

"The very successful demonstration in connection with the railway opening at Oberon is now an incident of history. It is safe to say, however, that it was a day which will be long remembered by all who witnessed it both old and young.

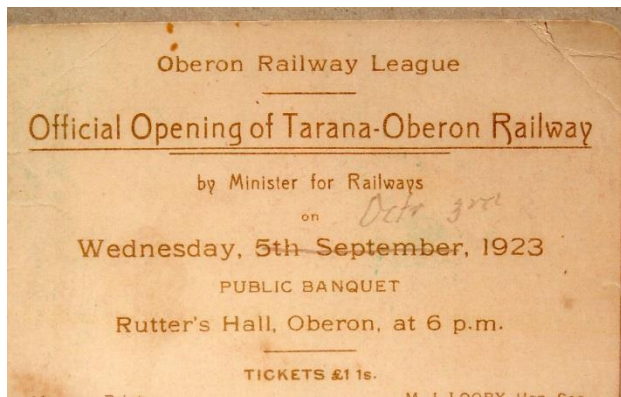
Mr. W.R. Cotter is Oberon's first station master. Driver Murray and Fireman Robinson brought the first official train through from Tarana, while Guard

Arthur Griffiths, a native of the district, was practically in charge. Among those who engaged in final testing and inspections in the various sections were Inspector Alt, traffic branch, Building Inspector Leggo and Riding Ganger Hunter, who played an important part in carrying the line through. Mr. A.D. Thorp was resident engineer during the construction of the branch. Members of the Railway League are very grateful to this officer who is said to have gone out of his way on many occasions to assist the league. Driver J Crompton was in charge of the engine hauling the construction train. Mr. A. McKinnon represented Perway Inspector Webster. There were also present: Loco Inspectors G. Tweedie and Mr. McGuinness, in addition to District Inspector Nicholas.

Mr. J.A. Green was the first local resident to consign goods from Oberon to the main line, and Mr. Stephens was the first passenger to take out a season ticket for the branch.

The President of the local railway league, Mr. A.E. Burcher, one of Oberon's most popular citizens, has communicated with this office, expressing regret that in the general excitement of the night, a specific toast of the visitors was overlooked.. He says they all felt honoured by the presence of several representative gentlemen, both at the opening ceremony and the festive board. Among these were: Mr. L. Gilmore, Mayor of Picton, Cr. J. Commens, President of Blaxland Shire Council, Cr. Prior, President of Turon Shire Council, Messrs A. & J. Stephenson, who during long and useful lives have played important parts in placing Oberon district on the map. Many others would have been individualised, had such a toast not been overlooked."





*A rare copy of an invitation to the opening of the Tarana-Oberon Railway, a public banquet at Rutter's Hall Oberon on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1923.*

*It was hosted by the Oberon Railway League, authorised by M.J. Looby and the cost was One Guinea, a considerable cost in 1923. Rutter's Hall was located where Oberon Video and Discs is now located in Oberon Street.*

## Building Oberon Railway Station.

Stuart Sharp continues his history of the Oberon Tarana line....

### **The class of building – reinforced concrete construction.**

William Hutchinson, the Chief Engineer and Head of the Railway and Tramway Construction Branch of the NSW Railways, approved the construction of a concrete building of the PC3 type at Oberon on 25th June 1922. As standard plans existed, no architectural plan for Oberon was prepared. The approval of the building was part of Hutchinson's signature on the Station Arrangement plan, which included all buildings and structures at Oberon. The platform building and all other infrastructure at the station were constructed by department labour, as opposed to construction by contract. This was consistent with the period.

The NSW Railways had been using an alpha-numerical coding system for buildings from 1897 and introduced the "P" type in 1917, the "P" standing for portable.

The concept of portable platform buildings had been introduced in 1915 without the alpha-numerical coding. They were used only on "the cheapest class of lines". Lower case "c" denoted a concrete unit "P" type building. So far the alpha system is intelligible. Now comes the funny part. Why call the Oberon type of building "Pc3" when all examples of the "Pc3" had four rooms? Obviously, the numerical referred to a bureaucrat's typology and not any worldly reality.

Pat Horder has worked out that there were 147 platform buildings made of pre-cast concrete in NSW. A total of 86 or 58% were one room Pc1 Shelter sheds. There were 25 examples (17%) of the Pc2 and 17 examples (12%) of the Pc3 type. There were a further 19 structures built to variant designs. Paul has calculated that the Oberon building is one of seven extant Pc3 type and is the oldest of the group and the only one surviving using the larger 15 inch wide units. The year in which the Oberon structure was opened 1923, was the year in which the most (38) concrete unit buildings were erected.

A major feature of pre-cast concrete buildings is their relative small size. Neville Pollard well illustrates this aspect in his article on border railways. He included a photograph of a relatively large, attractive, brick platform that Victorian Railways erected at Moulamein in 1923, the same year that the Oberon building was erected.

The only near-consistent measurement of the concrete units, or slabs as they were also called, was the width. The Oberon building has the units with a width of 15 inches. In the second half of the 1920's, the width was reduced to ten inches to make the panels easier to carry by a single person. There were three "standard" lengths of three feet three inches, three feet nine inches and four feet, according to the generic plan of 1920. However, Paul Horder points out that use of the word, "standard" does not mean too much when

the words New South Wales Railways are applied to the same sentence. For example, Paul states that the concrete ordering lists for ten-inch wide concrete units for Pc buildings show not three standard lengths but seven different sizes of slabs.

The Oberon building is 14 units long. Of those, the dominant length is three feet three inches, with ten being of that length. The flush-mounted slabs as at Oberon were not rain proof and emitted rain between the joints. They also allowed wind into the buildings. Either the penetration of rain or wind or both was a problem at Oberon as the rear wall of the structure was completely sheeted with Fibro at an unknown time.

When first introduced, one benefit of using concrete was the lack of necessity to paint the concrete and Fibrolite surfaces. While this was done to signal boxes and other non-passenger examples, the evidence is that concrete unit buildings were painted in a range of the traditional stone colours.”

As Stuart Sharp’s essay on the building of Oberon station unfolds it is becoming clear that the station itself is a very rare example of railway buildings from the early 1920’s. I conclude that’s one more reason why the Oberon community should take financial steps to preserve it and the railway line to Tarana.

During coming newsletters more compelling evidence will emerge to back my opinion.



*Oberon Station in recent times.*

## What’s this thing called luv?



Here’s a fine example of a 1930’s-1940’s NSW Railway glass water decanter. Cork stopper is not original.

If you want one for your collection, expect to pay around \$80.00

**“Passionate** people can’t help but talk about their projects. They know that you probably don’t want to hear about it because you hear about it all the time, but they don’t really want to talk about much else. And even if they do, their conversations almost always steer back to their passions. They can’t help it because they don’t see their passions as separate from themselves; they are their passions”

*Paul Hudson*

Is this you?

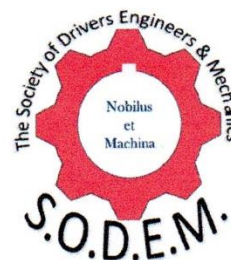
Welcome to the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. where passion is our pride.

## **Contacts**

### **For all enquiries**

Secretary: Elaine Ph. 02 6336-0441

Email [admin@othr.com.au](mailto:admin@othr.com.au)



## Heritage Transport Rally

March 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> 2018

Where: Oberon Railway Station Precinct

When: 12-4pm Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March

8-12md Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> March

Heritage rail carriages, trikes, steam road  
traction engines, cars, trucks, station  
memorabilia display and more!

