

Oberon TARANA HERITAGE RAILWAY INC.

NEWSLETTER

November 2017



.....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:

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

Andrew Gee, Federal Member for Calare

Committee:

President: 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/Publicity

Ian Davis: Systems Manager, Tim Arnison: Operations Manager

Peter Culley, Ken Lingabala



A very happy festive season to all our readers.

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

At the last committee meeting, I emphasised that OTHR must do all it can to ensure that its overall mission – **to develop a tourist railway** – is at the forefront of its day to day operations. At the committee level we need to work towards securing a Heritage Operators Licence for the line north of Albion Street.

We have met with council, Mayor Kathy Sajowitz and General Manager Gary Wallace, to start the process. Further discussions with John Holland Rail will have to take place before the matter is finalised. Other meetings have taken place to identify extra grants that may be available to OTHR to develop track and station buildings.

Two major movements have taken place so far this month. A group from THNSW shifted the two 73 series locomotives from in front of the station to the rolling stock shed. The Wickham Track Maintenance Vehicle was taken to Aaron Faulds in O'Connell to have some repair work done on it.

There are a number of challenges the new committee has to work through. While we have the HOL to operate TMV's in the station yard, appropriate documentation has to be developed that satisfies the safety regulators requirements – very time consuming! A yearly budget must be

considered. Grants make it possible to get major projects underway, but there are recurring annual expense, day to day operations and costs for insurance etcetera that must be recognised.

Greg Bourne
President



President Greg Bourne

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.

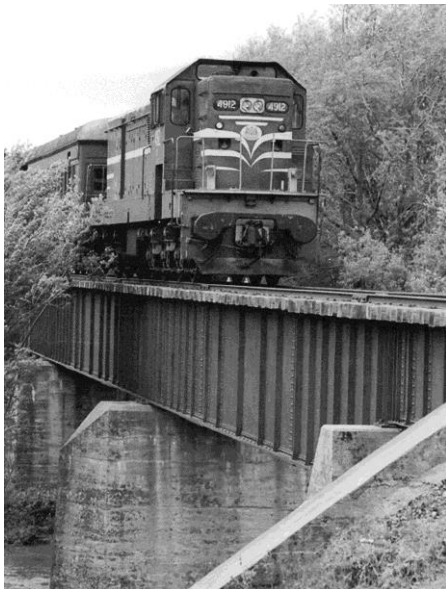
Know Martyn Salmon...

Last month Greg Bourne, our new President introduced himself with great aplomb. But how many members know our new Vice President, Martyn?

Martyn was a lifelong railman working at both the Chullora and Bathurst yards in senior positions, now retired. His knowledge of railways and how they work is extensive.

Within the community Martyn is involved with the RFS and SES. In the latter he was 10 years as the Communications Officer and Deputy Divisional Controller and Division Controller.

Martyn is a very active member of the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. and was elected to his position at the last Annual General Meeting. You'll often find him volunteering at our working bees and at other times as needed. He is currently working with the committee to get a train on the tracks once again.



Crossing the Fish River Bridge 1975

Photo Howard Smith.

Editor's thoughts

This morning I saw a report on television of a very tragic accident. The report spoke at length on the accident and what effect it had on the community. I saw how that community rallied around to offer their support to the victims and others affected.

It got me wondering just what a community was, after all aren't we all part of a much larger society.

A dictionary definition of community is "a social, religious, occupational or other group sharing common characteristics of interests and perceived or perceiving itself as distinct in some respect from the larger society within which it exists."

So does the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. fit the definition of a community? I think it does by definition. Our organisation is a social group sharing common characteristics of interests and we are distinct from other groups within the larger community who also share their common interests within their groups.

Who is part of the OTHR community and where do we fit. Every member, friend and person who is interested in railways and rail heritage is part of our community; so too are the many hundreds of other groups sharing that common cause.

Communities help each other and that can take many forms – support, care, donating either cash or memorabilia, volunteering or swapping information with other groups, are some of the functions that can advance the heritage rail cause.

The OTHR community is also a participant in the Oberon community which in turn is part of the Central Tablelands community, which supports the New South Wales Community which supports the Australian community. That is the sense of community.

All communities, in turn, support each other.

OTHR looks towards the leaders of the Oberon community be it council or business or tourism to provide their support by lobbying the leaders of the greater community for their financial support and seeking to value add to the assets of the Oberon

community. We in turn seek to support of the Oberon community by providing an additional tourism interest and in the longer term permanent jobs to help secure Oberon's continuing prosperity and success.

The question we all have to ask ourselves is: are we part of our community or merely observers?

"Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community.

Anthony D'Angelo"



Oberon Station 1975

Photo Howard Smith

Non-Executive Management Positions Filled.

Elections for non-executive management positions were filled at the last committee meeting. The committee nominated and elected the following members to management positions:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| • Track Manager | Graham Williams |
| • Asset Manager | Martyn Salmon |
| • Systems Manager | Ian Davis |
| • Operations Manager | Tim Arnison |

NEXT MEETING

General Meeting

6th December 2017

7.30PM

General meeting

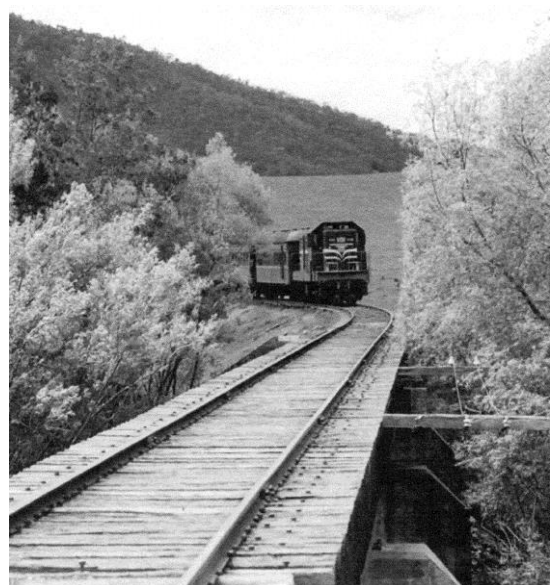
Reserve the date, 6th December 2017 for the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. general meeting.

Secretary Elaine has enlisted the services of **Michael Forbes of the Zig Zag Railway.**

His talk is entitled "ZZ, four years after the fire"

Naturally Michael will fill us in on what's happened at Zig Zag since their catastrophic fire.

Don't miss this meeting!



About to cross the Fish River Bridge 1975
Photo Howard Smith

Photo Acknowledgement.

This month we are publishing a series of photos submitted by Howard Smith a train enthusiast and regular reader from Sydney. The photos were taken on a special train trip for enthusiasts from Sydney to Oberon in 1975.

Thanks Howard.

If you have any photos or items of interest, stories about the Oberon line etc. that you think would be of interest, please submit them to Secretary Elaine.

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 1st September but a joining fee in addition to annual membership fee will apply.



Approaching the Fish River Bridge 1975

Photo Howard Smith

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 10th & 11th March 2018 at the Oberon Railway Station Precinct. Display times are:
Saturday 10th March, 12 – 4 PM
Sunday 11th 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.....

Who knew that Oberon is at the centre of a new breed of sheep?

The Australian White was developed by the Gilmore family on their property just outside of Oberon, NSW.

The Australian White is a self-replacing haired sheep (as opposed to wool) that was developed solely for the meat trade. The meat has the same traits as Wagyu beef and is considered superior lamb meat, now being served in leading restaurants.

The breed is quickly becoming a favoured breed among sheep growers and is now spreading widely throughout Australia.



It's Christmas time, mistletoe and wine...

And it's time for the OTHR Christmas Knees-up!!

Yes it's the annual Christmas Function for Members and Friends.

Don't miss this gathering, a chance to catch up, reminisce and renew old friendships.

Saturday 16th December at the Royal Hotel Oberon at 6.30PM.

RSVP Secretary Elaine by 8th December.

This is a participant's pay event. See poster in this issue of the Newsletter.

Next Working Bee
Saturday 2nd December 2017
To
Wednesday 6th December 2017

Working Bee News

General working bees may include maintenance on the track, maintenance/restoration on rolling stock and Locos and maintenance on other infrastructure items.

Project working bees are specific jobs that may require all resources and need to be completed on a short term frame.

One such project is the painting of the interior walls of the station as part of a refurbishment project to enhance the station building as a museum.

As part of the refreshed new committee's commitment to advancing OTHR towards its final goal, please consider volunteering your time for even an hour or two at the next working bee.

Contact Secretary Elaine to indicate your intention to attend the working bee commencing 4th November.

A team leader will be in place to manage future proposed projects.

News from the November working bee

Vice President Martyn advised that many tasks were undertaken or are being undertaken at the OTHR November working bee.

Graham has been working on Car 21.

Col has finished restoring the two frames from Coolah ready to go to Hazelgrove.

Arthur, Col, Ian and Martyn cleaned up the middle road and manhandled some of the TMV's onto 3 road.

Ian checked out the security light issue at the Station and will come back with some options to fix.



Graham hard at work on car 21



Refurbishment continues

Important Dates

Volunteers rostered for station duty on open days are:

- December 2nd Tim Arnison
- January 7th Elaine Boxer
- February 4th Glenda Bembrick
- March 4th Arthur Robinson and David McMurray
- April 1st Marjorie Webb
- May 6th Arthur Robinson
- June 3rd Col and Glenda Bembrick
- July 1st Tim Arnison
- August 5th Elaine Boxer
- September 2nd Arthur Robinson
- October 7th Col and Glenda Bembrick
- November 4th Elaine Boxer
- December 2nd Tim Arnison

News about our Website

Exciting news is at hand about the Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. website.

After many years of faithful service our website is about to be modernised and made easier to navigate.

The design draft is almost ready and your committee will be discussing its virtues shortly. More news as it comes to hand.

Welcome New Members

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

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



Why it's the silly season!

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???

Since its Christmas, here's my present to you:

1. I once had a job in a calendar factory but I got the sack after taking a few days off.
2. Q. So how come there aren't any circuses around now?

A. Because all the clowns went into politics!
3. I went for a job as a garbage collector. The interviewer asked what experience I had. I said I hadn't any but I'll pick it up as I go along.
4. I went to the Red Cross shop thinking I might buy a stretcher. The shop assistant asked whether I'd like to try it out. I said no, I didn't want to get carried away.

What's Col been up to now?

Col's been restoring a ground frame! The two frames rescued from Leadville NSW (located in the back of beyond) in mid-2013 have finally arrived at the Oberon yard. Col Bembrick has been restoring them in his "Section man's Workshop", with the help of several OTHR members.

After much grit blasting, zinc spraying, welding, finishing, wire brushing, sanding and painting they are now looking better than new. Eventually they will be deployed at Hazelgrove for the run around loop as part of the Hazelgrove rebuild.

They are currently in the yard next to the recently acquired three lever frame which is to be made into an interactive display.



In situ at Leadville NSW



Three frames now in the Oberon yard



Col, the happy restorer

Meeting with Council

President Greg, Vice President Martyn and Secretary Elaine met with the Mayor and General Manager of Oberon Council last Tuesday 7th November. It was a productive meeting and Council expressed the view that they are still fully supportive of OTHR. Council and OTHR will send letters to JHR to action the land swap (boundary adjustment); therefore this will then re-define the rail corridor along Lowes Mount Road and will bring the relocated level crossing into the rail corridor.

On another note....

Ken Lingabala (committee member) has arranged for the track in the yard to be certified by a company from Newcastle, next time they are in the area, free of charge which is great news!!



'Tis the season to be jolly!

Scope of Works

Graham Priddle and Vice President Martyn recently worked on a Bill of Materials (BOM) and a scope of works to replace the timber retaining wall and coping on the Oberon platform. Martyn has forwarded some photos to Col Bembrick so he might write a report on why the Heritage listed platform needs a makeover. All the costings should be done by the week ending 10th November and along with Col's report, the package can be submitted to the Office of Environment and Heritage for possible grant funding.



Train arrives at Oberon Station 1975

Photo Howard Smith

OTHR has had a movement!!

THNSW, Rail & Safety Operations has provided assistance to Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. in moving our two 73 Class locomotives safely to the rolling stock shed. For some years it has been

your committee's ambition to move the locomotives to the shed, out of the weather so that they can be properly maintained.

The move came on the afternoon of November 14th. The locomotives moved under their own power and the process was without incident. What a great sight to see our locos moving under their own power in the historic Oberon yard.

Our thanks go to the members of THNSW who came to Oberon from Thirlmere for the move. It's part of their commitment to the NSW Government to assist other heritage railway groups in need.



*Start of the brief journey to the rolling stock shed
Photo Col Bembrick*



*Nearly there
Photo Col Bembrick*



*Cosy in their new home
Photo Col Bembrick*

The Quest for funding continues....

Recent times have seen your Committee calling for members, family, friends and enthusiasts to make a donation that will help advance our project to fruition. Thanks to those who answered the call.

Your committee is not sitting back wringing its hands hoping that all the funding will come from you.

As a result of a referral by our Co-Patron Paul Toole the committee has entered into talks with the Business Development Manager, Office of Regional Development, NSW Government Premier and Cabinet.

At this early stage the committee needs to provide a deal of information to prove that Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. has the potential to become a viable concern.

Your committee has turned its sights back to the whole project – Oberon to Tarana rather than concentrate on Stage One to Hazelgrove.

We have started on a very complex road with every turn being minutely examined by Government experts and we certainly believe that that road will lead to success.

But there are no guarantees.

However, your donations remain as important as ever and every dollar gets us one step closer to our mutual goal. 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.



All aboard! Tarana here we come!!

Photo Howard Smith 1975

Existing Pc I Station Buildings in NSW.

Col Bembrick and John Tuckerman have prepared a very comprehensive study on existing Pc! Buildings remaining in NSW. It was presented at the November committee meeting.

For those puzzled by this description of a railway building, they are the buildings used formally at the Hazelgrove and Carlwood stops.

It would appear that there are only eight such buildings in existence and only a couple are in private hands.

Col and John have implored the committee to authorise an approach to the owners of the privately owned PC1's to explore the potential of acquiring two for use on our line.

The committee believe that opportunities to acquire original Pc1's are limited and gave authority to Col and John to approach the owners of the privately owned buildings to explore the potential for acquiring, costs, etc. and report back in due course.



It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...

Sleeper Inserter

Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway Inc. has purchased a sleeper inserter from a disbursement sale recently.

There needs to be some refurbishment to get it mobile and on completion will make the task of changing sleepers so much less arduous.



Ready for the undercarriage

The Oberon-Tarana Railway



*Carl Wood Johnston
Considered to be the father of the Oberon to
Tarana branch line.
On his death his ashes were scattered at the
Oberon station.*

“The Prodigal Returns” Carl Wood Johnston (the Prodigal): Here I am, home again after three years absence, but I don’t see the fatted calf.

This sarcastic cartoon which appeared in The Bathurst Times on March 9, 1922 shows Carl Wood Johnston MLA returning home to his old O’Connell Plains home.

This cartoon appeared a few weeks after he lost his seat as Member for Bathurst.

Bathurst historian Denis Chamberlain concludes his look at the Oberon – Tarana rail link.

“The official opening took place at 4.00 PM at the Oberon station where there was scarcely standing room on the platform.

Minister for Local Government, Mr. Fitzpatrick addressed the gathering, explaining that the line cost the Government \$324,000 to construct and that everyone at Oberon must give their patronage and support.

Sir Charles Rosenthal, MLA. Also offered congratulations and pointed out that for a few years the line may show a deficit, however, it

would be of immense service to the State for conveying livestock in times of drought.

Mr. J. Tyan, MLC. referred to early efforts of residents dating back 40 years to have the line constructed.

The great moment had come, a ribbon was stretched across the new line, and was cut by Mrs Burcher, wife of Mr. A.E. Burcher, president of the Oberon Railway League.

The train then moved forward to the station where Mr. Burcher welcomed the visitors.

Following the ceremony, the train was loaded with young school children and travelled to Hazelgrove siding and back.

At the time of building the line, it was found necessary to place inner rails on a number of sharp curves to enable the engines and trucks flanged wheels to stay on the rails as they negotiated the downhill grades, and thus guide them safely on their journey which did not exceed 24.14 km per hour.

It is most probable that 25 Class goods engines were first used on the line until about 1940 when two 19 Class and five 26 Class engines were allocated to Bathurst Number Four locomotive depot.

Although it was possible to see the odd 26 Class engine working the line, the most frequent locomotives seen were the 19 Class.

An interesting feature of these engines for their work on the Oberon line was that they had their original tender removed and were fitted with a Baldwin built twin bogie wheel tender.

These tenders were ideal for sharp curves, and were survivors of old scrapped “J” Class engines (former 29 Class).

The last steam hauled train travelled from Tarana to Oberon on March 9, 1963. It was not the usual mixed passenger-goods train, but rather an enthusiast passenger train hauled by a double header.

The two engines No's 1942 and 1957 had been specially painted black by yours truly for their last historic trip.

The five carriage enthusiast train was hauled to Tarana from Lithgow by loco engines No's 1709 and 2605, where they were met by the two Z19 Class engines that had travelled to Tarana as light engines from Bathurst.

The two Bathurst engines then proceeded with the last steam train to Oberon, whilst the Lithgow crews reconditioned their engines at Tarana for the return journey to Lithgow upon the return of the enthusiast train.

This was the last occasion that Bathurst crews worked the branch line. Prior to the last steam trip Lithgow crews had commenced working 49 Class diesel locomotives from their home depot as a day job.

The enginemen's positions that had for so long a time been stationed at Oberon were now gone. Incidentally this was the first place where diesel locomotives were placed into service on the Western line during the early 1960's.

Later in the 1970's the branch line was closed down altogether and allowed to deteriorate and become overgrown with flora.

However the Oberon railway station remained open for another few years as a booking office, the parcels and goods being received and dispatched by road transport to various centres. But this all came to an end when the Oberon railway station was finally closed down by State Rail Authority on March 28, 1980."



*Visitor's train at Oberon station 1975
Photo Howard Smith*



Deck the halls

Building Oberon Railway Station.

Stuart Sharp continues his history.....

"The Materials used for the Platform.

The concrete building sits at a level of six inches above the platform level, which was the traditional building height above platforms. While today, CityRail endeavours to match the height of buildings with the height of platforms and with the height of the floor of rail vehicles, this standard has only been embraced in the last decade. It was the traditional view of the NSW Railways to step up into a building and step up into a carriage.

The platform surface at Oberon was covered with crushed granite from the now closed quarry at Locksley. This was the traditional platform surface material up to 1955. There was no fence along the rear of the platform, which was consistent with most concrete unit buildings. The platform measured 250 feet long by 12 feet wide. These measurements were consistent with other branch line termini and large, intermediate stations in country areas. The width of 12 feet was the standard width from about 1880.

The platform itself is formed of compacted earth with a timber wall facing the line. The coping, sometimes called the kerb, of the platform sits on top of the wall and at Oberon it is timber. The

coping was a height of three feet two inches above the rail head, which was consistent with the then standard. Again, the distance from the platform coping to the track centre was the then standard five feet one and half inches. The platform has the traditional 15 feet long ramps at each end with a gradient of 1 in 5. The rear of the platform is battered to provide a gentle slope. The use of timber for the platform wall is of interest. Why were concrete units not used, as was done for the Nimmitabel-Bombala extension and at Brewongle in 1921? The answer is that there was no policy that dictated the use of materials for walls and copings. Mass concrete poured in situ was used for the Menindee-Broken Hill line in 1919 and at Mangoplah in 1923. Timber was also widely used where concrete buildings existed. It was just a case of build what you like.

At the rear of the station, there was a railway-owned, gravelled access road from Scotia Avenue that terminated at the platform building in a semi-circular forecourt 50 feet wide. This was the standard arrangement of road access to passenger platform from at least 1900."



Working Bee 11th August 2007; site Rutters Ridge.



It must be Christmas....

What's this thing called luv?



This item is a Hanks and Lloyd token marking the opening of the Sydney Railway - the only commemorative penny token of the 1850's gold rushes.

The Sydney Railway was Australia's first passenger railway and ran for 13 miles from Sydney to Parramatta NSW. The commemorative medal/token was issued in the name of Hanks and Lloyd, Sydney (Australian Tea Mart) The penny token is made of copper.

Today the medal/token sells for around \$40.00.

And finally...

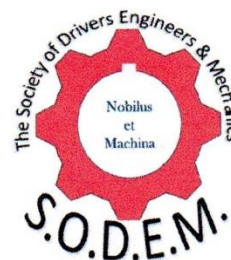


**From the committee at
OTHR. Have a happy and
wonderful Christmas with
your loved ones and friends.
Have a safe holiday period
and we'll see you all in
2018.**

**Contacts
For all enquiries**

Secretary: Elaine Ph. 02 6336-0441

Email admin@othr.com.au



Heritage Transport Rally

March 10th & 11th 2018

Where: Oberon Railway Station Precinct

When: 12-4pm Saturday 10th March

8-12md Sunday 11th March

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





Christmas Function for Members and Friends

Saturday 16th December 2017

Royal Hotel Oberon

6.30pm

A la carte menu

RSVP to Elaine by 8th December 2017

Ph 6336 0441 or admin@othr.com.au

Participants pay for their own drinks and meals.