History on the Move

Newsletter of Oberon Tarana Heritage Railway

October 2026



Our new Visitor's Centre under construction

Patrons

Paul Toole
State Member for Bathurst

Andrew Gee
Independent Member for Calare

Committee

Michael Clark
President

Jessie Clark
Treasurer

Elaine Boxer
Vice President

Michael O'Kane
Events Manager

Timothy Barnes
Committee Member

Elaine Boxer
Secretary, Catering Manager, Public Officer

Trent Elliott
Committee Member

Line Managers

Mark Langdon
Asset Manager

Alex Boromisa
Facebook Moderator

Volunteer Today. Call Elaine Boxer on 0409 777 580 for details

SPRING LUNCH

Our Spring Lunch will be held very shortly. Don't miss out on the opportunity to enjoy exquisite fare onboard our 1897 dining car while also supporting OTHR to help meets its end goals.

Please use the link below or the QR code on the flyer.

https://www.ticketebo.com.au/oberon-tarana-heritage-railway/the-spring-lunch-2026



*Its time to book your Spring lunch on board our vintage dining car. Celebrate Spring with a sumptuous multi course meal with all beer, wine, and non alcoholic drinks included. Seating is **strictly limited** to 20 people so get in early to avoid missing out. All tables seat 2 people and can only be booked as tables for 2.*

BOOKINGS

https://www.ticketebo.com.au/oberon-tarana-heritage-railway/the-spring-lunch-2026

Volunteer Today. Call Elaine Boxer on 0409 777 580 for details

Welcome to our October 2026 Newsletter

As usual there is no rest for the wicked at OTHR, from meetings with ONRSR through to building platforms, visitor's centre and organising menus for the Spring lunch, our volunteers have been hard at it to continually move our small group forward to achieve our end goal of running tourist heritage trains. Hoping you all enjoy reading about it in this October Newsletter.

Michael Clark. President

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Just a reminder for those that haven't yet renewed their membership for the 2027 year, to please consider doing so. Your continued support helps us achieve our end goals and we would like you all to be on board. OTHR deeply appreciates your ongoing support through membership and donations. Our Renewal/New Member form is located on the last page of this newsletter or on our website at **https://othr.com.au/membership/**

WORKING BEES - It is your railway, be a part of its development

Regular working bees are now occurring every Saturday with opportunities during the week if you are available.

Personal Protective Equipment, boots and orange Hi-Viz must at a minimum be worn.

All volunteers will need to be financial members of OTHR and need to pass a General Induction Program. On track volunteers will need to progress to Rail Safety Worker (RSW) status.

Please Contact: Elaine Boxer Secretary

Email: admin@othr.com.au Mobile: 0409 777 580

You do not have to attend every working bee, just the ones that fit in your timeframe.

There are many benefits to volunteering, with just some being:

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

CONTINUING THROUGH 2026

How quickly has 2026 scooted along? We are almost at the end of the year, and with that thankfully comes warmer weather. Unfortunately, with the warmer weather comes the vegetation growth of grass and weeds constantly requiring mowing, spraying or whipper snipping. An often-unappreciated task but extremely important, vegetation control is always at the top of our list of things to do. If you would like to help, please contact our Secretary at admin@othr.com.au.

Onboarding volunteers can be difficult for smaller volunteer organisations. Volunteering can be a very rewarding and beneficial activity for those willing to take the leap. OTHR is constantly seeking volunteers to help us achieve our mission of being a tourist heritage railway. Currently we require involvement in track and grounds work with a need to train shunters, second persons and drivers. This will be followed in due course with training in becoming carriage attendants, guards, and station attendants as well as many other important admin roles.

We are currently in the process of developing a more engaging flyer for distribution in hope of attracting valuable volunteers to our cause.

If you feel you can support OTHR by volunteering, then please lodge your interest with the Secretary at admin@othr.com.au

MEDICALS

OTHR needs to comply with the guidelines of ONRSR – the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator and other Laws either Federal or State and as such certain functions within OTHR and any other railways require certain levels of medicals to be achieved. For OTHR the following apply.

- Driver. Cat 2 medical certificate
- TMV Operator. Cat 2 medical certificate
- Ground Shunter. Cat 2 medical certificate
- RSW (Rail Safety Worker) Cat 2 medical certificate
- For all volunteers there is a site induction and further training depending on the type of volunteer assistance you wish to undertake.

CURRENT WORK IN PROGRESS

ONRSR SEMINAR

Saturday 19th September saw OTHR attend the latest ONRSR Engaugement Forum in Sydney.

It is good to see ONRSR placing more emphasis on communications with heritage groups. A lot was covered in this forum including the following.

- Critical Risks 20off covering the top 20 risks as perceived by the Regulator.
- ONRSR interaction levels. (How often to expect ONRSR interaction)
- Safety themes.
    a. T&H – significant rolling stock failure
    b. Passenger – fire on train
    c. Freight – uncontrolled movements
    d. RIMs – significant track infrastructure failures
    e. Light rail – contractual oversight
    f. Yard & sidings – shunting and runaways
    g. Maintenance and constructors – RRV collisions

- Significant Rolling Stock Failures leading to catastrophic outcomes
    - Boilers
    - Brakes
    - Draw gear
    - Running gear
    - Wheels, wheelsets and bogies

- ONRSR looking at
    - Does your risk register include all the credible risks of rolling stock failure?
    - What controls do you have listed?
    - Are they effective?
    - Are you controlling the risks SFAIRP?

- Train Visibility – In regard to THNSW ditch light work.
- Variation of accreditation and notification of change (when, why and what you need to do)
- SMS reviews and Auditing. Reviewing high risks.

As you can see there was a lot covered and it is indicative of just how much is involved in running a railway safely and in line with the Regulator's requirements.

ATHRA ONLINE SEMINAR

The Association of Tourist and Heritage Rail Australia held a seminar for members on October 12th to discuss the *National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers*.

ATHRA is launching a national advocacy campaign to raise concerns about the impact of the National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers 2024 on Australia's tourist and heritage railway sector. ATHRA fully supports high standards of rail safety, however, believes the current medical requirements should better reflect the risk-based principles that underpin Australia's rail safety framework encompassing all operators from heavy mainline to small, disconnected branch line heritage operators (such as OTHR). ATHRA are asking State and Territory Transport and Tourism Ministers to support a review of the standard to ensure it remains evidence-based, proportionate to risk and sustainable for volunteer heritage railways.

There is an obvious difference in health risk profile when comparing a main line multiple locomotive unit running at high speed with one driver for many hours compared to small branch line operations at 30kph with driver and second person in the cab running for no more than 30 minutes between stops. ATHRA believes the level of medicals should reflect this difference in risk profile.

HAZELGROVE STATION PRECINCT

This major project of establishing a new platform and picnic area at Hazelgrove is progressing very well.

Since our last newsletter we have installed all the timber copings. Some work had to be redone on the east side timbers to make them sit as level as possible to allow the fencing on this side to be installed with minimal drama. As this very time, volunteers have been on site levelling the platform and applying the top deco layer of decomposed granite. All in all, this platform is looking very smart.

When the levelling is complete, we will install the formwork and piers for the slab that the replica PC1 will sit on. A stand for the rainwater tank off the picnic shelter has been made and is ready for installation. The final touch will be the re-installation of the Hazelgrove destination board.

As always, thanks go to the small handful of volunteers pushing this project to completion.



Coping timbers with first paint top coat



First three track side timbers in place



Further timbers installed track side



Method used to counter bore timbers



Timbers burnt through after boring and drilling



North end complete



A view along track side



All timbers in place



Plastic coping used behind timbers



Full view from Trackside

TRAINING and ACCREDITATION

Training continues with General Inductions and Safely Access Rail Corridor programs being completed. Further training documentation is currently under review and in progress as part of our SMS documentations.

OTHR is endeavouring to apply for a change in accreditation to allow section cars/ track maintenance vehicles to run on the line between Oberon yard and Hazelgrove yard. This is the first stage of a three-stage change, culminating in full consist to Hazelgrove. There is still a lot to focus on as we bring our SMS and training documentation up to speed. We are always asked, “when will trains be running”, and this is a very valid question, one which we wish we could give a definitive answer. Unfortunately, the answer to that question is not an easy one, but rest assured, the Committee is doing all it can to make at least this first stage a viable one in the not-too-distant future.

HS36 PROGRESS

Work continues on HS36 with all old nails and screws removed from the non-Guard’s end wall (there were hundreds).

The main timber frame section that sits just above the second-class lavatory drop light was found to have rot right up inside its end grain. This piece of profiled frame has been removed and awaiting replacement. New window bumpers have been added to framework below the drop light. We should be able to commence further painting now that the warmer weather is now well on its way.



Nail hole filling continues



New drop light window bumpers 2nd class lav

VISITOR’S CENTRE

The last few months has finally seen work commence on our Visitor’s Centre. This building will serve as our ticketing office, café and merchandising shop while also supporting a function and dining area. It has been designed to replicate an old regional goods shed, which were often found in yards or sidings. A main gable shed area and a skillion section on one end with amenity and kitchen facilities will support us nicely into the future.

To date the frame has been erected, roof, soffit and main guttering installed, doors and windows fitted with wall sarking in place. Hardiplank external cladding has now begun, moving us quickly to lockup stage. All in all our new building is starting to look pretty good.



First day of frame works



First day of frame works



Second day, trusses on



Skillion end



Internal view



Roofing and guttering on



Internal view



Wrapping and Hardiplank being installed

OPEN DAY

The Sunday of the October long weekend saw our most recent Open Day.

Our consist of locomotive 7307 and our two 1897 end platform cars were moved to the station for morning teas and light lunches.

Visitation was very good with some large family groups and many young ones attending. Hopefully some heritage appreciation was rubbed off onto the younger generation.

7307

For quite some time, locomotive 7307 has been missing one short end buffer, making it look like a smile without a tooth.

We are pleased to say that one of the buffers picked up from Goulburn last year has now been installed and primed, making the old girl look a lot better indeed.





Missing our famous on board lunches?

Melting Moments with Passionfruit Cream

Ingredients

Biscuits

- 80g icing sugar
- 250g salted butter cut into pieces
- 220g plain flour plus extra to dust
- 80g cornflour
- 1pinch sea salt
- 1tsp natural vanilla extract

Passionfruit Icing

- 90g unsalted butter softened
- 120g icing sugar plus extra to dust (optional)
- 1Tbsp fresh passionfruit pulp and seeds

Preparation

Biscuits

1. Preheat oven to 150°C. Line 2 large baking trays with baking paper and set aside.
2. Beat sugar and butter until pale and fluffy.
3. Add flour, cornflour, salt and vanilla and mix until combined.
4. With lightly floured hands, roll heaped teaspoons of mixture into balls (approx. 50 balls), and place onto baking trays about 2.5 cm apart. Flatten slightly with a floured fork to make 3 cm rounds.
5. Bake for 12–14 minutes (150°C), swapping and rotating trays on shelves halfway through cooking time, or until cooked and very lightly golden. Cool on trays for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Clean and dry mixing bowl

Passionfruit icing

1. Beat butter and icing sugar until pale and fluffy. Add passionfruit and mix with spatula until combined.
2. Pipe or spread a generous layer of cream onto the flat-side of half of the biscuits, then sandwich with remaining biscuits. Dust with icing sugar (optional) to finish.



Volunteer Today. Call Elaine Boxer on 0409 777 580 for details

EVENTS

Our last major event for 2026 will be our **Spring Lunch** being held on Saturday 7th November There are still seats available, so support OTHR and don't miss out **.**

Guided tours of the station building and rolling stock shed can also be arranged by appointment. Entry and tour are $5. Contact our Secretary for further details

Book a visit to the OTHR Precinct

Get a group together or suggest it to a group that you are a member of.

Group Bookings are Always Welcome

Morning or Afternoon Tea

Special Lunches

All Linked to a Tour of the Precinct



OTHR would like to acknowledge the ongoing support from the local business community. The following entitites are instrumental in helping us achieve our Mission. Please support us by supporting them.

Titania Motel

Highlands Motor Inn

Jenolan Cabins

Oberon Council.

PO Box 299, Oberon NSW 2787
email: admin@othr.com.au
website: othr.com.au
Phone Secretary: 0409 777 580
ABN: 98 107 506 208

Renewal or Application for Membership
Annual Membership runs from July 1st to June 30th

I/We wish to renew membership or to 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	
Address	Street Number _____ Street _____ or Post Office Box Number _____ Suburb/Town_____ State_____Postcode_____
Phone	Mobile_____ Home phone_____
Email	

Tick appropriate box

Membership is $40.00 per person ☐ $_____

Donation ☐ $_____

Total amount payable $_____

All donations are tax deductible. The treasurer sends a receipt for membership which will

Payment can be made in the following ways however EFT is preferred.

- **Direct Bank Transfer** – bank details are **BSB: 062 632 Account number: 1004 9851.**
- **PayPal via our website at https://othr.com.au/membership/**
- **Cash** - can be paid direct on Open Days

****** Please include your name as reference on your EFT transfer ******

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.

_____
_____
_____

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 can contribute.

Signed: _____**Date:** _____