



THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 680

Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

www.ncry.org

April 2020

A New Face on its way to Brightside



Photo by Jim Wrinn

1744 in service in 2007 on the San Luis & Rio Grande Railroad.

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2019 was an exciting year for the Niles Canyon Railway Steam Department, with many projects and events that challenged us and our abilities, and I'm so impressed with our volunteers rising to the occasion to make it all happen. 2020 is turning out to be no different with probably the most ambitious project we've undertaken since rebuilding Robert Dollar #3. I'm happy to announce (or maybe you've already heard or seen the parts arriving) that the PLA has closed on the purchase

of the Southern Pacific 2-6-0 steam locomotive #1744 with the intention of restoring it to regular operating service here in Niles Canyon.

The 1744 has had a colorful service history all the way back to the SP days. The M-6 class Mogul was built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works in November of 1901. With 63" drivers, and a weight of 174,000lbs, she produced 33,320lbs of tractive effort. She spent most of her life in freight service for

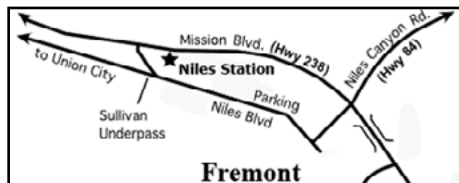
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OUR MISSION: To be an operating railroad museum for standard gauge railroading, past, present and future, with emphasis on the Western United States and special emphasis on Northern California

BOARDING LOCATIONS

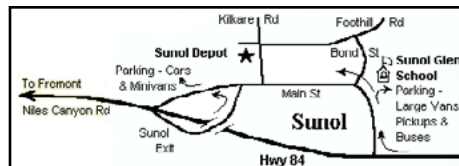
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MEETINGS

Most General Meetings take place at Sunol Glen School in Sunol.

Meetings are held in January, March, May, June, July, and October, but can be subject to cancellation.

Board of Directors Meeting

**CANCELLED
FOR
APRIL**

**ALL MEETINGS
AND EVENTS
ARE CANCELLED
UNTIL NOTIFIED
OTHERWISE**

CLUB CAR DEADLINE

The deadline for submitting articles and photos for next month's issue of The Club Car is the **20th of this month**. Submitting articles is easy by e-mail in Word text format.

Send e-mail to:

clubcar@ncry.org

Digital photos may also be submitted by e-mail. Electronic images should be saved as PC format .jpg files with minimal compression (i.e., average to excellent quality). A text file with the photo number, description of photo and identifying the people in them is required.

The editor reserves the right to hold or edit material as necessary.

The Club Car is an official publication of the Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc., P.O. Box 515, Sunol, CA 94586-0515.

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General Meetings are held on the 3rd Friday of January, May & July at 7:30 p.m. and the 3rd Saturday of March, June & October at 3:30 pm at the Sunol Glen School, two blocks east of the Depot on Main Street in Sunol, CA. Members, Sponsors & Guests are welcome.

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The Pacific Locomotive Association is a member of the Association of Tourist Railroads and Railway Museums. (ATRRM)

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

April Activities		
April 3	1st Friday	Niles School Train 10:00AM
April 4	1st Saturday	East Track Relays, 8 and 10 miles, Brighton, Mike Strider
April 5	1st Sunday	Regular Train Operations
April 11	2nd Saturday	Board of Directors Meeting (2:30pm, 3rd. Inside)
April 12	2nd Sunday	Regular Train Operations
April 13	3rd Saturday	7 mile Rails Relay for Life Bob Bradley
April 19	3rd Sunday	Regular Train Operations
April 24	4th Friday	Sunol School Train 10:00AM

----- Membership Report -----

On February 15th, 2020 – PLA member Dee Murphy requested the Membership Secretary place her name into consideration to be accepted into voting membership status. Upon inspection, it was found that Dee meets the requirements to be a voting member so the Membership Secretary began the process by announcing her intention at the March 14th Board of Directors (BOD) meeting and now announcing in the April Club Car. There is normally no membership meeting in April. It is hoped that the meeting schedule will be back on track by the May 16th membership meeting where the voting members of the PLA will have the opportunity to vote on Dee's voting membership status at that point in time.

Before introducing the 'bumper crop' of new members to the PLA/NCRY I would like to take this opportunity to encourage those of you who may not have considered it before to perhaps now consider becoming a LIFE member of this organization. In these unprecedented times when the revenue from normally scheduled passenger opera-

tions has been curtailed, members can provide a good deal for themselves as well as support the NCRY and its many ongoing projects and goals in a meaningful way right now when the need is great. The cost of a LIFE membership is \$1000.00. That means you are paying for 21 years up front but if you are nearing retirement age this investment could ultimately end up being a very good deal for you as well. Whether it is through a LIFE membership or a monetary donation to your favorite NCRY project, your financial support is gratefully appreciated as it helps support the work of the dedicated volunteers who tackle the challenges that make this railroad unique.

Please welcome to the PLA/NCRY family the following 30 new members that have joined since the February BOD. These new members are: Matthew Corey and Nathan Viela, John Vilalovos and Fritzie Lavina, former WWII Rosie the Riveter- Mary Fierros, Nguyen, Morgan and William Doan, new brakeman Ron Quilici, Patrick, Nathan and Thomas Norris, the Begic Family

which includes Jennifer, Jerko, Luka and Nikolas along with Evelyn Hough, John Yeoman, Jack Thorne and Dominic Yeoman, Nicholas Battelo, Eric and Ryden Maschiwitz along with Jennifer Chiou, the Cabrito family including Cherylenne, Ronald and Risaiah, Jarrod, Allison and Weston DellaChiesa. Thank you for joining the PLA/NCRY, hope to meet you soon!

Due to the unavoidable canceling of the March membership meeting, members will need to wait just a bit longer to enjoy the Transcontinental Railroads path through the East Bay presentation by PLA archivist Brian Hitchcock. The next program is scheduled for the Saturday, May 16th membership meeting. The business meeting begins at 3:30 PM, preceded by a Social with doors open at 2:30 PM as the PLA returns to the facilities at the Sunol Glen School, if conditions allow – Stay Tuned, Stay Safe!

Linda Stanley
Membership Secretary



E-COUPLING INFORMATION

Website: <http://www.ncry.org>

Email: To Join Members Email List, send an Email to: info@ncry.org

Twitter: @toots4ncry

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/NilesCanyonRailway>

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/NilesCanyonRailRoad>



President's Message

Spring is in the air. Wildflowers are in bloom. A rainy March after a dry February is making the hills green all over. Spring is usually a very busy time around the Niles Canyon Railway, but this year is different. Death is also in the air. The Global pandemic caused by the Covid-19 virus has the entire world in its grip. The entire San Francisco Bay Area is under a 'shelter-at-home' order, meaning we must remain at home except for essential activities. In support of this order, the entire NCRy is shut down, and will probably remain shut down for the entire month of April.

Like every other business in the Bay Area, we are working diligently to keep our passengers and volunteers safe. All train operations are cancelled until further notice. All yard activities are cancelled as well. There is nothing going on out at the railroad, and there is no reason for any of our volunteers to venture out, with a very few exceptions.

Our General Manager, Steve Barkarie, is not only allowed to visit any site along the railroad, he is expected to maintain a good handle on the place. He will also be checking on Bob Bradley, who is our Security person at Brightside and Bob Bailey, our Security person at Niles to ensure they remain safe and that there are no apparent issues. If you feel there is something that needs to be taken care of at the railroad, get that information to Steve and he will take care of it. He has already done that for several volunteers, allowing them to remain at home. This will also allow Steve to follow the 'social distancing' protocol, as he really shouldn't be running into anyone except the 2 Bobs.

Treasurer, Pat Stratton has a procedure in place to handle the mail. Even with everything going on, we still need to pay our bills. He will be looking at the mail and handling anything urgent for the rest of us. The remainder will end up in the Brightside mailboxes for the recipients return. We will be curtailing all spending until this situation

resolves, having already put several projects on hold. The global pandemic is impacting everyone, and the Pacific Locomotive Association is not immune to that. The endowment investments have taken a serious hit, but hopefully this will be a temporary downturn.

I cannot emphasize enough how important it is for everyone to stay home. While the Shelter at Home Order is scheduled to be lifted as of April 7th, the ban on activities involving groups of more than 10 will probably remain through April, if not longer. Only by exhibiting a sharp downturn in the spread of the virus will these bans be lifted, so you need to do your part to ensure you do not find yourself where you are likely to be exposed to the virus, or to expose someone else to the virus. JUST STAY HOME.

We have made some significant investments in the last two months, and now we have to pay for them. We have had a well drilled at Brightside. This project was not inexpensive, but it will allow us to save volunteers from spending many hours each month just hauling water from Sunol. We will have to develop a storage system, and ultimately a black water disposal facility (a septic system). This project is a prerequisite to our plans for building a new locomotive shop, but it will not be developing as quickly now due to funding issues.

As you will also see elsewhere in this issue, the PLA has bought a new steam locomotive for our collection. This was done quietly as we were concerned with the state of the locomotive and the risk to it before we could get it secured. But the deal was made, the money spent and the locomotive is now (mostly) under PLA control. This will be a 5-year project, with a bottom line of around \$500K by the time it is completed. It is the perfect size locomotive for our operation, and it is a locomotive with a history in the Bay Area. Procuring a steam locomotive of this size has been on the PLA's wish list for a long time,

and this should turn out to be quite a jewel for us when it is completed. The folks in the Steam Department will be sharing the project's progress on the web site, as was done for the SP9010.

Work on the ranch car will continue, but in order to use the car, the wheels need to be sent out for turning. That is on hold until the financial picture resolves. The next big hurdle in our Eastward expansion will be the refurbishing of the Happy Valley Bridge in Pleasanton. This also will be put on hold until the financial position is resolved.

Without operating trains, money will not be coming in, but we will continue to spend. It costs us just to exist and keep the lights on. We will be curtailing services we pay for in order to save money. Simple things like reducing the number of Port-O-Potties on property and minimizing the service schedule will go a long way.

Before the lockdown, we did attempt to run trains on Sunday March 15th. This was done to assist in crew training, and to gauge the demand and reaction of our passenger community. Based on the results of that day, which was also cold and rainy, we probably would have decided to cease operations until the health situation improved. We do take all the prescribed precautions, adding portable hand sanitizer stations at the depots and on the train. Gloves were provided to our volunteers who were dealing with the public. Disinfectant kits were put aboard the train to allow the crew to disinfect the surfaces our passengers touch. I did this duty myself on the first train, wiping down grab irons, door handles, bathroom fixtures and railings in the open cars and seat backs. The snack bar was closed as was the gift shop, but with the low passenger turnout, and the passenger requests, Rich and Donna Alexander were able to allow passengers (and crew members) to make purchases. Social distancing was never an issue, as the low turnout meant the passen-

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NILES CANYON RAILWAY

President's Message

Continued from previous page

ger groups could easily spread out over the train maintaining far more than the prescribed six-foot distance. I made an executive decision to cancel the last departure out of Sunol, making the 1:20 train from Niles the last train of the day. We had one family group who raced down to Niles to make that departure, and one member drove to Sunol to pick the rest up, riding just one way. I also put another family group on the train at Sunol who were working on a school project, and who agreed to Uber back to Sunol after the ride. Flexibility makes the NCRy work so well.

A new agreement was signed with the Golden Gate Railroad Museum which helped them get their 3 functioning locomotives out of Brightside, off the property and on their way to Schellville. This agreement also drastically reduced their monthly storage fees, so it was a win for all. The two derelict F-Units and the 3 derelict sub-urbans are all that remain on property, and they are stored out at East Sunol where they are no longer in our way. They have two years to get those items off the property, but it is yet to be seen if that can be done economically. As of now UP refuses to move them, but UP said they wouldn't move the 3 locomotives, and now they have. We continue to hope for the best for GGRM.

The best way to stay on top of what is happening is to be signed up for the PLA members email list. Non-mem-

bers can also follow us on Facebook and Instagram, and of course, check the PLA Website.

As always, if you would like to discuss any topic in further detail, please con-

tact me by phone at 925.447.7358 or by email at president@ncry.org.

Respectfully submitted
Henry Baum
President

Treasurer's Report

February was a good month, but it seems already lost in history. It has been overtaken the past 3 weeks by first "social distancing" and then "sheltering-in-place", neither terms we would have expected to apply to us, the general population. But here we are. With no operations scheduled in the near future, and no idea when the schedule will be taken up again, our earned revenue stream has temporarily stopped. I expect we will continue to receive donations, but it's not likely they will cover all our monthly expenses.

The mid-year budget revisions that were to be considered at the March Board meeting are already being reconsidered. With severely reduced revenue it is imperative that we reduce our expenditures. Some overhead items must continue "to keep the lights on", but every department is cutting back where possible. We need your help with this. At this time all projects are on hold. Except in case of emergency repairs, do not spend any of the PLA's money for anything. If something comes up, get approval from the

appropriate department head and the Treasurer before spending anything.

I do have good news – the "Chili Pepper Challenge" has paid off. We received a check from the Niles Rotary for \$11,790.00. Thanks to the Rotary and everyone who participated! Otherwise, we received donations from individuals in the amount of \$2,171 during February.

Stay safe and healthy until we can meet again.

Pat Stratton
Treasurer
treasurer@ncry.org

TAX DEDUCTIBLE: The Pacific Locomotive Association is qualified under Internal Revenue Service code section 501 (c)(3) as a tax exempt organization. Thus, donations to the PLA are tax deductible as **CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS** to the extent allowed by law. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 515, Sunol, CA 94586-0515. The PLA's Federal ID is: 94-6130878, CA ID is: 0501445.

Want to Volunteer? Department Contacts are listed below:

BRUSH CUTTING - Clearing the RoW of bushes and trees - Steve Jones - fcocompost@aol.com

CAR MAINTENANCE - Maintenance and repair - Tom Crawford - tom@thecrawfordfamily.net

COMMISSARY - Food service on the trains - Bob Bradley - ncry.commissary@gmail.com

GIFT SHOP - Work in the Sunol Gift Shop - Gail Hedberg - giftshop@ncry.org

MOW CREW - (WEDNESDAY) - Work on track repair, etc. - Ron Thomas - rsthomas@sbcglobal.net

MOW CREW - (SATURDAY) - Work on building track East. Michael Strider - mstrider67@gmail.com

SIGNALS - Install/Maintain signal systems - Curt Hoppins - curt@ncrysignal.com

STATION - (NILES) - Work parking, ticket sales, set-up, etc. - John Fenstermacher - johnnsherif@aol.com

STATION - (SUNOL) - Work parking, ticket sales, set-up, etc. - Donna Alexander - station-agent@ncry.org

STEAM DEPARTMENT - Work in all aspects of steam engines - Alan Siegwarth - siegggy667@hotmail.com

STEAM HOSTLER TRAINING - Prepare a steam locomotive for service - Jeff Schwab - jeffs@levinterminal.com

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

----- Along the Right of Way -----

It has been said; "If March comes in like a lamb, it will go out like a lion". Well, at the Niles Canyon Railway, the old saying has come true as far as weather is concerned. We had a beautiful start to the month. Dry weather and warm days seemed to signal an early spring. And now, we have had rain and cold more like what February should have brought.

The saying is also used in reverse to say "if March comes in like a lion, it will go out as a lamb". Now that is how I would describe our operating season. We saw March began with GGRM's three remaining engines moved out to Hearst and picked up by UP. That freed up space on our Yard Track #4 which in turn spurred a flurry of much needed tree trimming activity to clear the overhanging limbs and ladder branches; noticeable improvement to the environment in Brightside. A lot of energy and effort has been put toward the "new to us" Great Northern "Ranch Car". Cleaning, removing damaged



Photo by Max Camden

GGRM equipment move.

wood, work on the electrical system, prepping the window for resealing and preparation for turning the wheels. The

Wednesday car crew never lets moss grow under their feet. They are hard at work refinishing windows in the All Day Lunch. More newly reupholstered seats have been replaced in the 1949.

The rebuild work is wrapping up on the 713 with most of the systems reconnected and a test scheduled for the last week of March. What a great job done by all who put in time on this incredible in-house project. It goes to show what can be accomplished by volunteers.

PLA received its first shipment of parts of the newly purchased steam engine. There is much excitement in the train community to see this engine come back to life with donations already being pledged for the project. This is the perfect place for an engine of that type. The 2-6-0 "Mogul" also known as a "Valley Malley" has terrific tractive effort and should haul anything we can put behind her.

The tender for the SP-1744 arrived on one truck. The tender trucks, smokebox door, air tanks and cab came on

Continued on next page



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

Canape & Sons Well Drilling.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

----- Along the Right of Way -----

Continued from previous page

another. Two more trucks carried shipping containers full of the small parts and jewelry. We hired Peninsula Crane to do the heavy lifting and once again everything went off smoothly. Thanks again go out to all those who showed up on a Monday morning to help out.

MOW has geared up for the season. Six more panels have been laid out East. Next stop milepost 39! We took the newly repaired Fairmont tamper out and profiled the Verona spur switch and the Westward approach to the Arroyo de Laguna Bridge. Plans are to return to tie replacement after a successful change-out of two head block ties at the East end of Brightside. We are also focusing on in-house repair of our hydraulic equipment starting with the leaking cylinders and worn cutting edge on the Case backhoe. This is a great budget saver because we can re-



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

Left to right Wes Van Osdal, Stephen Barkkarie, Ken Southwick, Ron Thomas and Pat Stratton working on profiling the Verona spur switch.



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

L-R John Zelinski, Chris Campi, Steve Hill, Mark Whitman, Steve Jones' best side, Dave Fontes (Running crane), Frank Fontes, Norm Kyte and Mike Strider.

build a cylinder for about one-fifth the cost of sending it out to a shop.

PLA has taken another giant step forward with the long anticipated drilling of a water well at Brightside. This will change everything in the yard for the better. Can you imagine? Real bathrooms with flush toilets at Brightside, a new engine house, and no more running a tank car to Sunol to fill the water tank in the yard. What a wet and wonderful world that will be. I may be getting ahead of myself because as of this writing we have a hole in the ground with a lining and there is water, but we do not know how much it will produce. Testing is scheduled for later this month.

Stay tuned for more info.

Stephen Barkkarie
General Manager

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

A New Face on its way to Brightside

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Southern Pacific on the Western and San Joaquin Divisions and was officially retired in 1956. She continued to be tapped for several railfan excursions up until her last run for SP on a Knights Landing excursion trip in May of 1958, taking over the run at Davis from GS-6 #4460. Following her SP career, she was donated and displayed in Utah until 1980 when she was sold to and restored to operate on the Heber Creeper in Heber, UT. In 1990, she was purchased by the Tarantula Railroad and moved to Fort Worth, TX where she was stored until the 1999 sale to Rio Grande Pacific Corp. At that time, she was moved to New Orleans, LA and restored to operation in 2000. It ran on the New Orleans & Gulf Coast Railway until she was sold to Iowa Pacific Holdings in 2007 and moved to the San Luis & Rio Grande Railroad in Alamosa, CO. In Alamosa, she ran for one season before going down for a major overhaul.

After so many years of service, much work was required, including replacement of the entire firebox, tubes, superheater flues, and some running gear repairs. To facilitate this, the entire locomotive was disassembled, some pieces being shipped all over the country for repairs before finding their way back to Alamosa for re-assembly. And like many past PLA restoration projects...that's where we find her now. At least six owners, five states, and nearly 120 years later, she'll be coming home to a warm welcome in the Bay Area.

The restoration work for the 1744 may seem daunting from the images, but truth be told, much of the hard work has already been done (and with great care and quality, I might add). Of course, much remains as well, but considering the poor shape that most SP locomotive boilers were in at their retirement, the fact that we are purchasing one with all the problems diagnosed and repairs partially completed is a big advantage. When the restoration is complete, the SP 1744 will outlive all of us, and will



Photo by Charles Franz

The locomotive frame.



Photo by Charles Franz

Locomotive boiler.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY



Photo by Charles Franz

Gerald DeWitt loading miscellaneous parts and tender trucks on a flatbed.



Photo by Charles Franz

Henry Chandler, Alan Siegwarth, and Gerald DeWitt loading a rod into a container.

continue to serve the PLA and/or the general public as a pristine example of Western steam railroading for generations. This sort of engine is exactly why the PLA was formed. Not to mention, its size will make it a perfect “daily driver” for Sunday operations, big enough to pull the train lengths we need, but

small enough to keep fuel consumption, fireup time, and maintenance activities within reasonable limits. And it’s a tender engine! How exotic!

So far, the purchase and move has gone extremely well, despite a lot of litigation, and some very daunting last-minute surprises. I’d like to thank

Henry Baum, John Suscheck of OMR, and our fearless lawyer Steve Wood for their help with the purchase. This first phase after purchase was to identify and transfer the literal debris fields of (very heavy) parts into containers for shipment to Brightside, along with the cab, tender, and a few other things. I’d like to sincerely thank PLA volunteers Alan Siegwarth, Derek Schipper, Gerald DeWitt, Henry Chandler, and Justin Legg for taking an entire week away from their jobs, families, and other commitments to participate in the first phase of this truly backbreaking move. Special thanks also goes to Dave Hackbarth and his crew at IPH / SL&RG, whose help and resources made the move possible. The next phase will be moving the frame to Brightside for further disassembly and repairs to the running gear, and the boiler to a contract shop.

It remains to be seen exactly how much work the contract shop will do before it’s shipped back to Brightside, but the total scope of work that must be done is very significant. Remember that we (the Steam Department volunteers) work on the weekends, and still have three other locomotives to maintain and run. The contract shop works five days a week, and they do this for a living. The amount of time this restoration will take is directly proportionate to the amount of donations we receive. The more work we can pay the contract shop to do, the faster the whole restoration will go, by a lot. So, if you want to see an SP Mogul run in the Canyon again, please consider a financial donation and/or help in spreading the word. Donations can be made through the leaflet in this newsletter, or at: plasteam.ncry.org.

Thank you from all of us!

Reference:

Utahrails.net. “Heber Valley Railroad Equipment.” Oct 30, 2019.

**Charles Franz
Steam Department**

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

TALES OF THE PAST

This month's tale:

"LET THEM FALL"

The railroad was built between Brightside and Sunol. That was a feat in itself knowing what we had to work with. Dragging the rail over the ties that were in the road bed with the Hough front end loader (pronounced "Huff") was a bottom bounce exercise, but that story will be another tale.

This month, I want to focus on the Engine House at Brightside and how it became the structure it is today. When we took over the right of way that the County bought for our use, the right of way included ties left after SP removed the rail, and the structures and bridges on and alongside the right-of-way. Assets included the large structure known as the Tipple. The Tipple was used for loading "Kilite" aggregate used in making light weight concrete.

We needed a structure to put a steam engine under for protection. Since the bays under the tipple structure were large in size, track was built into the structure. That solved one problem. It got the engine under cover, but we soon realized that we had to do a lot more to protect the engine. The structure had big cylindrical steel silos on top; eight of them. It seems that those silos leaked moisture, and it was not pure water either. Those tanks were



Photo by Dexter Day

The Tipple as we found it. It is the engine house today.

condos for pigeons. Not just a few, but a bomber group. This was corrected with a shelter being built above the engine. That solved one problem; the droppings, but the smell! This wasn't healthy to say the least. You did not want to walk or be around that area before or after lunch.

Something had to be done to solve that mess. Mark Whitman took on the task to take down the tanks and upper structure. Rich Gill assisted. I hope Mark had all his shots and a strong stomach. He wasn't called "MAD DOG" for nothing. He got things done once he got going. Mark's plan was to take the silos down just like you would remove a tree. The plan was to cut his way into the tank and cut out a notch in the side of each silo from the inside.



Photo by Dexter Day

Rich Gill and Mark Whitman looking over fallen tank.



Photo by Dexter Day

Mark Whitman cutting a slice to pull down the tank.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

TALES OF THE PAST

He would then attach a cable from the "Boom Truck" which was an old AT&T telephone truck with a winch. I have to say, he did not make the pigeons very happy with the smoke from the cutting torch. The notch was cut and cable attached. The Boom truck stretched out the cable and hit the gas. Just like watching a tree fall, the silos came down.

With the dropping of the silos, the area became livable. We had a structure that could be used without your eyes watering. A new engine house was planned and later completed which included applying side panels and a roof on the structure. Today this structure is our engine house.

With that said, this concludes another "TALES FROM THE PAST".

By Dexter D. Day
Operations Manager

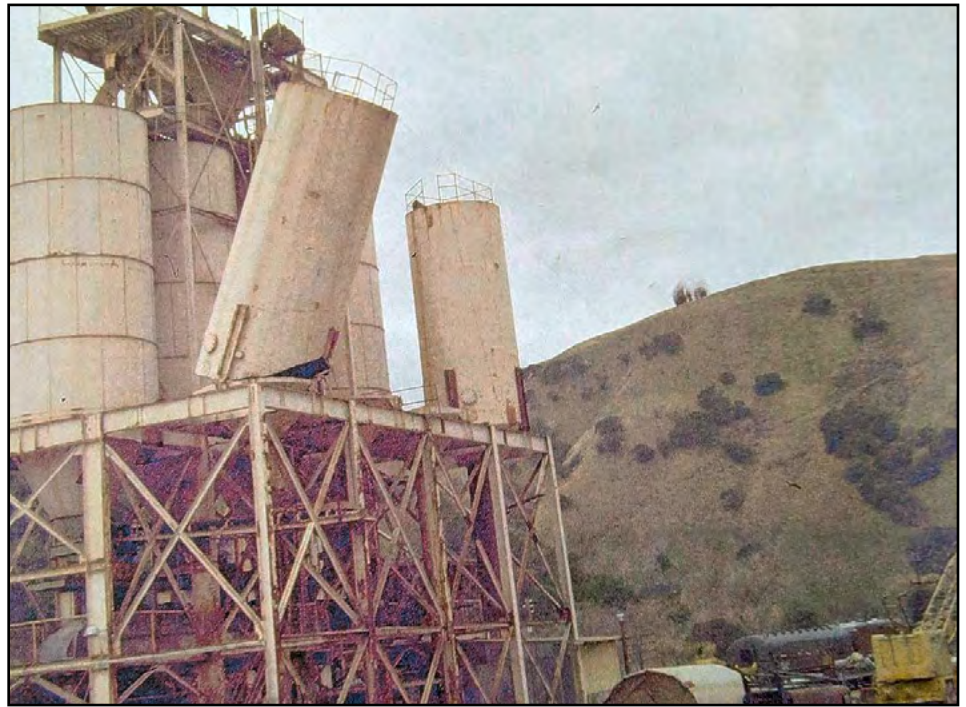


Photo by Dexter Day

Here is tank 3 on its way down.

Brush Cutting Report

Keeping tree limbs and scrub brush along the right-of-way from hitting equipment and impairing sight lines around corners by periodic (twice monthly) trimming campaigns is not inherently complicated . . . or interesting. Cut, drop, drag, feed into the chipper, repeat. It is hard to write a scintillating article about that activity.

Last month, we did experience a few new wrinkles in the old routine which made the work days a little different and maybe even a little borderline exciting. February had 5 Saturdays, so we used that bonus Saturday to trim up trees at the far East end of the railroad, ahead of new track construction. This meant that we could not reach our target vegetation from the rails. We had to drive our Bucket Truck to the end of track over the road, then access the work area via the Happy Valley Gate. That is an uncommon event.

Once the offending limbs were cut, the resultant slash was dragged a short distance to the chipper, parked at the extreme East end of track by our team of draggers including John Pelmulder, Bob Pratt, Pat Stratton, John Zielinski and Mike Strider. As the work grew farther away from the end of track, Stephen Barkkarie used the Cat backhoe to haul the slash to the chipper. As a result of this work, there are no limbs interfering with transport of panels to the end of track using the Burro Crane. The next task in this area will be to clean up scrub right at the bridge abutments on both ends of Happy Valley Bridge in preparation for impending bridge repair.

The other brush cutting project accomplished on Wednesday March 4th was one I have wanted to get done for 4 or 5 years. Several assets were moved off of Brightside North Yard

Track #4, enabling access to the trees lining the North side of that track up to the White House. Those trees have now been "lifted" to eliminate "fire ladders" and opened up for visibility and air flow.

Lastly, we had scheduled a week long "Blitz" of the canyon where PLA Chief Arborist Emeritus Chris Boza would travel down from his home near Spokane during the last week of March. That campaign was cancelled. We will reschedule another Blitz project some weeks or months later.

Your Brother in Sawdust,
Steve Jones



NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Happenings around the Railway



Photo by Jim Evans

On March 14th there was an NCRy wedding charter and there was also a lot of heavy rain. Conductor Jorg Linke and train crew members, Ted Unruh and John Williamson with Engineers Mark Miller and Ron Thomas did a great job keeping our train guests happy in the unpleasant weather.



Photo by Donna Alexander

Steve, Bev, Rich, and Donna represented the Niles Canyon Railway and served snacks at intermission to the patrons of the Sunol Repertory Theatre on March 7th. The Theatre decided to close the following week because of the corona virus, so our group was the only non-profit to provide snacks for the season. Because everything was handmade except the fruit, the patrons were very generous with their donations.



Photo by Dee Murphy

Howard Wise uses a special fixture, one that he and SP 9010 lead volunteer machinist Bill Stimmerman created, to drive home a fresh cylinder liner sleeve for the KM's V-16. The tool, which was fabricated in the Car Shop and duplicates the function of a very expensive factory tool, allows Howard or Bill to cinch the sleeve down to the last few millimeters until it seats perfectly at the top of the bore.



Photo by Donna Alexander

Henry Baum accepted a check for \$11,790.00 at the Rotary Club's luncheon on January 14th for their Hot Hot Chili Pepper contest last fall. The Mission San Jose Rotary Club sponsored the Niles Canyon Railway, and out of 9 top non-profit organizations, we came in second place. Thank you to all who donated money for this easy fundraiser.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Cal Fire NCRy Coordination

Last month Henry Baum, Steve Barkkarie, and I meet with, new Sunol Station, Cal Fire Battalion Chief (BC) Brandon Leitzk. PLA had great rapport with Sunol BC Mike Martin who just retired after many years of service at the Sunol Station and we wanted to make sure that Mike's replacement, Brandon was familiar with our railroad.

Our meeting went very well and we agreed that future meetings would be beneficial to enable the local fire staff to learn about access to our trains and the NCRy in case of an emergency.

We learned today that Cal Fire is contracted by Alameda County to provide medical aid and structural fire protection with what are called Schedule A crews and equipment while the Sunol Station also houses Schedule B crews which handle wildland fires.

On Saturday March 14th, Henry Baum, Steve Barkkarie, Rich Alexander and I met with Cal Fire Engineer Brandon Larson, Engineer Medic Sheldon Montgomery and Patric Donlin. They arrived in Schedule A Alameda County Engine 14 which is assigned to Sunol.

First we assembled at the Sunol Station so they could become familiar with details of our historic building. We then went to Brightside where the firemen evaluated ways and methods

that might be used to access our historic railroad cars and locomotives in the event of an emergency.

We also discussed the potential for use of our water tank cars as a water source in the event of a wildland fire.

The plan is to have future meetings

with Cal Fire personnel later in the Spring when more of the Schedule B wildland firefighters are assigned to Sunol Station.

Jim Evans
Emergency Coordinator

Help Complete the SP #1744 Move!



Doug Richter photo May 4, 1958 Davis, CA

The Pacific Locomotive Association (PLA) is proud to announce that we have purchased and are returning a native Bay Area steam locomotive, the Southern Pacific #1744, to be rebuilt for operation on the Niles Canyon Railway. The 2-6-0 Mogul built by Baldwin in 1901 operated for many years out of Oakland on the SP Western Division and in California's Central Valley.

In early March, PLA moved the many parts of the disassembled locomotive including the tender and they are now safely stored at Brightside. However, the locomotive frame and boiler still need to be moved. Due to the unfortunate events surrounding the Coronavirus in the Bay Area, the operating revenue budgeted to finance the move will not be sufficient. The PLA therefore requests donations to help offset the \$30,000 cost of moving the two final pieces of the locomotive in preparation for restoration. This fundraiser will likely not be the last request for donations as the restoration proceeds to return this historic locomotive to service, but please support move of the SP #1744.

I will be proud to send a:

- ☐ \$25 donation
- ☐ \$50 donation
- ☐ \$100 donation
- ☐ \$500 donation
- ☐ \$ _____ donation

Please send your tax-deductible donation to:

Pacific Locomotive Association

SP#1744 Restoration

PO Box 515

Sunol, CA 94586



NILES CANYON RAILWAY

- - - - - Saturday Eastward Track Building MoW Report - - - - -

The Saturday Ballasteros were in good form the first Saturday in March as we installed six 39-ft track panels so we are 234-ft closer to Pleasanton. The track panels in this curved section are the panels we purchased from Caltrain some years ago consisting of 132-lb head free rail, a rail section that is for the most part proprietary to Southern Pacific dating from the 1940's and 1950's. Mile Post 39 and the Happy Valley Road Bridge are now in direct sight from the end of track. It was a cool and at times wet day as the crew laid the panels on the newly prepared trackbed. The Burro Crane was operated by Dave Fontes and the ground crew consisted of Frank Fontes, Chris Campi, Jim Allen, John Zielinski, Steve Hill, Steve Jones, Matt Petach, Steve Barkkarie, Mark Whitman and Mike Strider. Dee Murphy joined the crew later in the afternoon. Steve Barkkarie assisted with the CAT backhoe with the alignment of the track panels as the Burro Crane set the track panels in place. Previously placed offset pins set every 25-ft are used for the final horizontal track center-line alignment as we progress the track panels eastward (elevation accuracy within 1/8"). On the previous Saturday, a small crew of bush whackers (arboreros) under the supervision of Steve Jones cleared the tree branches at the east end of track that were in the way of the Burro crane's overhead operating space for placing the track panels. After the Shelter-In-Place order is lifted, we will install more panels. Come join in on the fun.

Mike Strider
Chief Engineer



Selfie by Dee Murphy with full crew (l-r) John Zielinski, Matt Petach, Frank Fontes, Mark Whitman, Dave Fontes, Chris Campi, Jim Allen, Steve Jones, Mike Strider and Steve Hill.



Photo by Matt Petach

Connecting first panel of the day.



Photo by Matt Petach

Delivering last (6th) track panel.



Photo by Dee Murphy

Mark Whitman (blue hard hat) and Steve Hill tightening bolts on the rail joints.



Photo by Matt Petach

Installing 3rd panel of 6. Steve Barkkarie lining track with backhoe.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

----- Volunteer Report -----

By Ed Best

The following is a list of the people who helped run your railroad in February. Please print your name clearly on all sign in sheets so it can be read. If you find that your name is misspelled, please inform me of the correct spelling. You can also send hours by e-mail to ncryvolunteerhours@gmail.com.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Henry Baum
Mike Strider
Jim Evans
Linda Stanley
Pat Stratton
Steve Barkkarie
Jim Stewart
Kent Hedberg
Gail Hedberg
Brian Hitchcock
Curt Hoppins
Dexter Day
Ed Best
Joe Scardino
Mark Miller
Steve Jones
Steve Slabach

ARCHIVES & LIBRARY

Brian Hitchcock
Linda Stanley

CAR DEPARTMENT

Bob Bradley
Bob Moore
Dennis Mann
Dennis Murchison
Doug Vanderlee
Henry Baum
Henry Chandler
Jack Harrington
Jim McDaniel
Joan Weber
Marshall Williams
Norm Fraga
Norm Kyte
Pete Goodier
Phil Stone

CAR DEPARTMENT

Steve Van Meter
Tom Crawford
Tony Peters

COMMISSARY

Bonnie Harrington
Dave Hipple
Doug Debs
Jack Harrington
Jacqui Szymanski
Roger McCluney
Sally Mills
Steve Coon
Sue Thomas

DEPOT CREW & OPERATIONS

Bob Bailey
Dan Mills
Donna Alexander
Glenn Fountain
Jack Harrington
Jim Gilmore
Linda Stanley
Norm Fraga
Pete Goodier
Rhonda Dijeau
Steve Jones
Wayne Stoddard

ELECTRICAL & SIGNALS

Bill Kenney
Don Martinez
George Turner
Jacques Verdier
Jim Stewart
Logan Rubasky
Rich Gove

FACILITIES

Doug Debs
John Zielinski
Rich Alexander
Steve Coon

GIFT SHOP

Charlene Murrell
Gail Hedberg
Patrice McDonald
Rich Alexander

MECHANICAL

Alan Siegwarth
Bill Ross
Brian Wise
Chris Hauf
Dave Tadlock
Dee Murphy
Don Stuff
Doug Vanderlee
Frank Fontes
Gerald DeWitt
Gerry Feeney
Henry Chandler
Howard Wise
Jeff Haslam
Jeff Schwab
John Zielinski
Justin Legg
Norm Kyte
Pete Goodier
Rich Alexander
Rich Anderson
Stephanie Tadlock
Steve Jones

MEETINGS

Bill Ross
Bob Bradley
Bob Pratt

MEETINGS

Dave Burla
Dave Hipple
Dee Murphy
Dexter Day
Donna Alexander
Doug Debs
Doug Vanderlee
Ed Best
Gail Hedberg
Henry Baum
Jim Evans
Jim Stewart
Kent Hedberg
Linda Stanley
Mark Miller
Mark Whitman
Michael Laccabue
Mike Strider
Pat Stratton
Phil Gosney
Rich Alexander
Ron Vane
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Jones
Steve Slabach
Warren Haack

MOW & TRACK

Bob Pratt
Chris Campi
Dee Murphy
Doug Vanderlee
Frank Fontes
Jim Stewart
John Pelmulder
John Zielinski
Ken Southwick
Linda Stanley
Mark Whitman
Matt Petach

MOW & TRACK

Mike Pechner
Mike Strider
Norm Kyte
Pat Hafey
Pat Stratton
Paul Smith
Ron Thomas
Steve Hill
Steve Jones
Steve Miller
Tom Crawford
Wesley Van Osdol

OTHER

Barry Lependorf
Bob Bradley
Carlo Borlandelli
Dan Sarka
Dee Murphy
Ed Best
Linda Stanley
Mike Bozzini
Patrice Warren
Sharron Morrison
Steve Jones
Wayne Stoddard
Zonker Harris

SWITCHING CREW

Doug Vanderlee
Gerry Feeney
Henry Chandler
Kent Hedberg
Rich Anderson

TRAIN CREW

Alan Siegwarth
Bob Pratt
Brian Wise
Charles Franz

TRAIN CREW

Curt Hoppins
Dave Tadlock
Derek Schipper
Doug Vanderlee
Gerald DeWitt
Gerry Feeney
Henry Chandler
Jeff Schwab
Jim Stewart
Justin Legg
Kent Hedberg
Mark Miller
Pat Stratton
Ray Crist
Rich Alexander
Rich Anderson
Stephanie Tadlock
Steve Barkkarie
Steven Butler
Ted Unruh
Tim Flippo
Warren Haack

TRAIN OF LIGHTS

Bob Moore
Dennis Murchison
Jackie Kearney
Jim Kearney
Joan Weber
Lou Bradas
Norm Fraga
Norm Kyte
Pete Goodier
Peter Bradas
Phil Stone
Steve Van Meter
Terry Stokes
Tom Crawford
Tony Peters

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1744 in service on the San Luis & Rio Grande Railroad in 2007.

Photo by Jim Wrinn