



THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 681

Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

www.ncry.org

May 2020

The Castro Point Railway the early years



Photo by David Sell

Molate Beach, 1972 - On ground: Scott Zuniga, Al Thamm, Henry Luna, George Childs, Eddie Chase, and Karl Koenig. On the Engine: Pete Rogers, Ken Thamm, Randy Calish, Mike Strider, Warren Smith, Chris Collins, Bud Shaver, and Joe Ward.

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In the early 1970s I spent some time as a volunteer working on the Castro Point Railway. My favorite work was with Pete Rogers on the locomotives. Pete was a crusty old boilermaker who had started out on the Great Northern Railroad in Everett, Washington. He was full of stories and songs that are mostly unprintable here, his favorite seemed to be a rather bawdy version of the song "The Cremation of Sam McGee." Pete was a talented boilermaker and despite the basic nature of the fa-

cilities, the engines ran safely, and he always managed to stay on the good side of the state boiler inspector. I recall one time while performing a hydrostatic test on engine 6 we had a hand operated hydro pump. Warren Smith and I just about knocked ourselves out trying to maintain pressure with that thing. Finally Pete hollered out "This boiler is condemned!" There was a long crack in the bottom knuckle of the front tube sheet and water was spraying out of

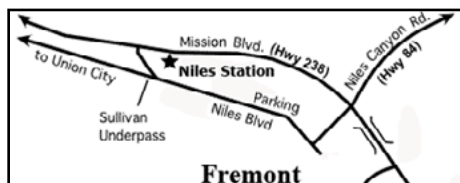
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OUR MISSION: To be an operating railroad museum for standard gauge railroading, past, present and future, with emphasis on the Western United States and special emphasis on Northern California

BOARDING LOCATIONS

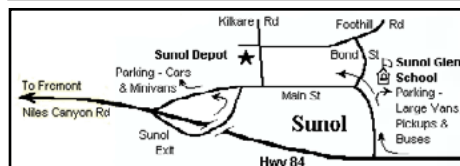
NILES STATION

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Fremont, CA 94536



SUNOL STATION

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Yardmaster	Gerry Feeney	(408) 739-9347	spb-gerry@comcast.net

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

Saturday, May 9
via

Teleconferencing Service

Membership Meetings

MAY & JUNE
CANCELLED

watch your email for
notice of future
Teleconferences

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.

The Club Car is distributed monthly to members, sponsors and friends of the Pacific Locomotive Association.

The Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc. is an IRS Code 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

The PLA's Federal Tax ID is 94-6130878, the State of California Tax ID is 0501445.

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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Views expressed herein are those of the author unless specifically noted by the editor as official policy.

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

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

May Activities

May 2	1st Saturday	East Track Building, 8 am, (Brightside) Steve Jones
May 3	1st Sunday	Regular Train Operations
May 8	2nd Friday	Niles School Room, 10 am
May 9	2nd Saturday	Board of Directors Meeting, 5 pm (Brightside)
May 10	2nd Sunday	Regular Train Operations
May 15	3rd Friday	Sunol School Room, 10 am
May 17	3rd Sunday	Regular Train Operations
May 23	4th Saturday	Brush Cutting, 8 am (Brightside) Steve Jones
May 24	4th Sunday	Regular Operations - Memorial Day
May 31	5th Sunday	Regular Operations

CANCELLED
UNLESS NOTIFIED OTHERWISE

Membership Report

Linda Stanley
Membership Secretary

At a time when the Operations startup date of the PLA/NCRY in 2020 is uncertain as of this writing, the Board of Directors (BOD) of your organization is engaged in robust conversation in how best to preserve membership resources while continuing to bring its members the best experience possible. Rest assured, by your continuing support shown through renewing your memberships, your financial commitment to the PLA is well founded, spent wisely -and deeply appreciated. We also wish to thank those who have seen the economic advantage for themselves -as well as greatly supporting the PLA- in converting a Regular to LIFE membership. We salute our members as we work together to allow the PLA/NCRY to continue its mission "to be a (unique) operating railroad museum....".

Along with renewing members, 9 new members have been welcomed into

the PLA. These members are: Nancy and William Keep, Nicole Cherry with family members John and Bryce, Ricky Soldavini, Kyle Wyatt with Deborah King and Steve Miller added wife Faith Farberman to become a Family member. Thanks for joining. Some of you are already volunteering for the PLA/NCRY and we look forward to offering this unique opportunity to all in the near future!

On April 5th, 2020 member/volunteer Doug Vanderlee requested the Membership Secretary place his name for BOD consideration toward reinstatement into Voting Membership. Research confirmed that Doug has remained a member in good standing. The BOD, by unanimous email vote on April 13th, 2020 reinstated Doug Vanderlee to Voting Member status. This action was taken in accordance with PLA Bylaws that authorize that the

BOD reinstates a former voting member to Voting Member status by a simple majority vote.

Voting Members like Doug will have busy months in May and June as they participate in votes to: Elect the Voting Members nominated to serve as representatives on the BOD, Vote to confirm member/volunteer Dee Murphy's request to attain Voting Member status and to select the first group of inductees for the Lifetime Achievement – or 'Spike' – Award. To review voting criteria for the 'Spike' Award please see February 2020 Membership Secretary article in the Club Car.

Votes to select the Volunteer of the Year Award will be submitted by the volunteers of the NCry to recognize who among them has gone beyond the call. Two of the aforementioned votes will be done in separate mailings, and

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E-COUPLING INFORMATION

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

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

Twitter: [@toots4ncry](https://twitter.com/toots4ncry)

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

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



NILES CANYON RAILWAY

President's Message

Henry Baum
President

"No man is an Island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankind; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee."

-John Donne 1572 - 1631

That is one of my favorite quotes of all time, even though it is usually taken out of context. But it always makes me think of being the best person I can be, even if I know I am far from it. We are all in this together, and even though we are isolated, we are working for the common good.

The entire San Francisco Bay Area remains in 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, although we are seeing some ability to begin to work outside of our cocoons.

A few of our dedicated volunteers have received permission to visit Brightside yard to perform 'essential' services as defined by Alameda County, and to gather materials so they can work on projects at their home. I feel this is the beginning of the end of restrictions. If for some reason you did not see my emails about the Brightside allowances, let me know.

I am hoping that by the end of May we can allow our volunteers to work on projects of all kinds, but with new 'social distancing' protocols and sanitation procedures in place. These will basically be the kind of projects where tasks can be performed by a single person, working independently. Those will be the first projects, and a lot can be accomplished that way.

Bigger projects that require a team may need to wait a while longer, such as track work, Eastward expansion, and some work on passenger cars and

locomotives. The department heads will need to ensure that the guidelines are being followed whenever anyone is working on a project in their department. As soon as it is safe to do so, we will allow those projects to resume.

The other requirement for working on projects will be derived from their costs. With no revenue coming in, we cannot afford to be spending money for materials that will not be able to generate an effective Return On Investment. In other words, until we know we can run the 2020 Train of Lights, we cannot spend money on decorations. Pretty simple concept.

As of now, we do not know when we will be allowed to resume our normal schedule of Operations. We may be allowed to do some smaller revenue runs, but the main objective would be to ensure we are being financially prudent about those operations. Running trains at a loss may just not be practical.

As this looked like it would be some time before we would be able to allow normal activities, my concern was about ensuring the public knows we are still here, and still taking care of our assets. I instructed General Manager Steve Barkkarie to do a number of things to ensure that the railroad appeared active even though we were not running revenue operations. We want Steve to be very visible, and make sure it looks like the property is not abandoned. Abandoned looking properties have been broken into and vandalism has occurred, and we wanted to avoid that.

We have not been 100% successful, but I think we are doing pretty good. The Sunol Post Office had several mailboxes broken into late on a Sunday evening, and ours was one of them. The feds are investigating, but the likelihood of apprehension is small. Similarly, the fiber optic cable that runs underground along our ROW also suffered a costly outage when vandals or copper thieves cut into the plastic expansion joints

on the conduits on the Arroyo bridge. They cut some of the fibers and that created an outage affecting numerous businesses around the bay area. Finding the damage, devising a repair plan, and repairing the cables took 26 hours to accomplish. The loss to the optical carriers was probably in the hundreds of dollars per minute, so it was not a victimless crime by any means. Again, perpetrator apprehension is unlikely, but the silver lining is that the optical services provider have a real understanding as to the costs of leaving the fibers exposed on the bridges, and they will probably be far more likely to determine that the need to relocate them is justifiable.

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. Right now, we feel that Brightside is virus free since nobody has been bringing it into the yard. With the sanitation protocols we have put in place, we should be able to keep it virus free. But the best idea is to JUST STAY HOME. If everyone does their part, the bans will be lifted, and our passengers will be looking for safe ways to visit and enjoy our services. Ensuring that TOL is as normal as possible will allow us to recover as quickly as possible from this pandemic.

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 which we pay for in order to save money. Simple things like reducing the number of port-potties on property and minimizing the service schedule will go a long way.

As this is not going away, we need to continue conducting business. To that end, the May Board of Directors meeting will be held by teleconference. You

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NILES CANYON RAILWAY

President's Message

Henry Baum
President

Continued from previous page

will probably get several invites to this over the coming few days. Look for a separate article on how to participate in the teleconference elsewhere in this issue.

The best way to stay on top of what is happening is to be signed up for the PLA members email list. Non-members can also follow us on Facebook and Instagram, and of course, check the PLA Website.

I also want to reach out to all of our members who have identified on their membership applications willingness to work on our web activities. We are

currently looking for a member to take over responsibility for our Member's webpage. This is the webpage dedicated to members, and it has access to a lot of great features. A lot of members don't use it, though, and we feel with a little expert assistance, it could be very functional.

We would like it, at least for now, to continue to reside on ClubExpress, because it theoretically is a site geared for members of organizations. Previous webmasters complained bitterly about the difficulties working with ClubExpress's format and support. We feel that some small improvements would

make it work better, and it would be possible to set it up the way we want. It also needs better instructions on how to use it, as some of it is not as intuitive as people would like. If you are interested in serving in this important but less than vital role (so minimum pressure), please contact me directly.

As always, if you would like to discuss any topic in further detail, please contact me by phone at 925.447.7358 or by email at president@ncry.org.

Respectfully submitted
Henry Baum

Treasurer's Report

Pat Stratton
Treasurer

March was a good month for me and my family, and I hope for you and yours, as we learn to protect our health and sanity and find ways to endure financially. March was, however, anything but normal for anyone. It was also bizarre for most organizations, including the Niles Canyon Railway, where we earned zero operating income – we were unable to run our historic trains through the beautiful Springtime canyon because of state and county prohibitions on various social and business activities. All of us who enjoy running those trains and bringing joy to our riders are actively looking for the ways we

might continue to offer our train rides and special events to the newly minted Bay Area citizens who will be so different after months of social distancing. This is our challenge now, how do we maintain distance between riders on our very long but very narrow train? We can use ideas from everyone to figure this one out.

In the meantime, your Board has been actively reducing the remaining monthly expenses as much as possible. All except critical maintenance and restoration activities have ended at Brightside. Utilities have chipped in with credits, Suppliers of regular ser-

vices have made concessions in their service patterns (our restroom supplier is charging the low monthly rent but not the much higher service charges while the units are not in use); and our Club Car newsletter printer has temporarily discounted his printing services.

We gratefully received donations from individuals in the amount of \$1,620 during March. They went primarily to the General Fund and the Steam Department with its new project, the restoration of SP 1744.

Stay safe and healthy until we can meet again.

Pat Stratton

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

Stephen Barkkarie
General Manager

Well, what a strange month it has been. Before I enlighten you with all the exciting things that have not gone on, I would like to send out a great big round of applause to all of our volunteers for their support of public health by staying home. I know it is a very hard thing to do for such a go-getting group. I am sure many are chomping at the bit to get back to the fun of railroading and I know that when we are able to get out to the canyon again, things will get back to "normal" quickly. Whatever normal looks like after this unprecedented situation.

I would also like to assure everyone that the railroad is just as you left it. I have been making the rounds most every day, flashing my orange lights, rattling door knobs, checking gates and generally being visible. Of course I am also finding time to catch up on all the little projects around the house that have taken a backseat to the NCRY. My wife could not be happier.

In the past month, essential maintenance is taking place on our fleet by starting engines to charge batteries, closing windows and locking doors and securing valuables that were overlooked by the sudden shut-down. We have had some very windy weather and some days of heavy rain so, culverts and track needed to be checked. I am happy to say that our track structure has come through another season without any catastrophes. A few minor rocks around "The Spot" are the worst I found. Several people, usually in pairs, have been encountered walking the mainline and that presented a perfect opportunity to deliver an "Operation Lifesaver" lecture about the dangers of walking on tracks and to relay to them that "IF YOU ARE WALKING ON A RAILROAD TRACK, YOU ARE TRESSPASSING". Fremont PD were able to apprehend a graffiti artist in the act near the entrance to Niles Station and graciously provided them a place

to "shelter" courtesy of the city, or perhaps just a financial incentive to find a more productive hobby.

On Easter Sunday or in the wee hours of Monday, an industrious individual was looking to line his pockets with copper and found what he/she/they thought was a "gold mine" running on top of the Arroyo de Laguna Bridge. The clever thief/thieves had found two rubber expansion joints in the steel conduit and opened one with a knife to see the six big black wires inside. Then a saws-all was employed at the other joint severing the fiber optic cable inside. Needless to say, they got no copper. The fiber optic people spent the next twenty-six hours straight repairing the damage. It involved digging up the cable at both ends of the bridge and splicing in a section of new cable. They finished late Monday night and got the internet restored to those served by that line. Thank goodness it didn't affect my house, I could not survive house arrest without the World Wide Web.

Since we are on the subject of the Fiber Optic cable, as many of you know, the line runs atop of the Happy Valley bridge and is keeping us from going forward with repairs to the bridge deck. This is a crucial step in our Eastward build. After dealing with the break in the line, we were also able to conduct a field meeting with the concerned parties. Representatives from Kinder Morgan (petroleum line owner), CenturyLink (service provider for fiber line), Golden State Utility (contractor who does work for CenturyLink) and yours truly (representing Pacific Locomotive Assoc.) met to inspect the situation and discuss alternative remedies. The meeting went well. A plan to bore under Happy Valley road is in the works and could be completed by mid-summer. Keep your fingers crossed that all goes according to plan. That at least will be one piece of the puzzle in place and we

can proceed with contracting out the bridge replacement once our revenue stream returns.

Now, because our operations have been red flagged by the shelter order, we are not generating any ticket donations and in turn it means we have to "big hole" our spending. No one can tell us when we can highball again, but in the meantime we can all make the best of things. While you are side tracked arrange your railroad photos, work on your model trains, spiff up your uniform, or, like me, re-organize your tools. Point is keeping your boiler hot. There is a light at the end of the tunnel and when we get the green flag we can all get back on the mainline doing what we love.

Stephen Barkkarie

Membership Report

Linda Stanley
Membership Secretary

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the rest are still being determined as to the method of voting. Please make sure if you are a Voting Member that the Membership Secretary has all of your current contact information – including email. It is recommended members should subscribe to the PLA Email List to stay connected to PLA leadership and learn of developing news now and when the PLA is authorized to begin the reopening process toward Operations start-up. Send an email to: membership@ncry.org to request inclusion to the PLA Email List. Thanks for your interest!

Staying Safe by Staying at Home,
Linda Stanley

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Teleconferencing instructions for May BOD meeting

The May Board of Director's meeting will be held on May 9th at 3:15PM, via teleconferencing service.

This will be an audio only call, and it will be recorded. Video cameras will be blocked if they appear.

This is the official access information provided by the service:

Dial-in number (US): (425) 436-6398

Access code: 282820#

International dial-in numbers:

<https://fccdl.in/i/president819>

Online meeting ID: president819

Join the online meeting:

<https://join.freeconferencecall.com/president819>

For additional assistance connecting to the meeting text "Help" to the Dial-In number above. Message and data rates may apply.

If you regularly participate in teleconferences, this will be easily understood. You dial the number, enter the access code when prompted, and join the conference.

If you rarely or have never participated in a teleconference meeting, I will give you more instructions below. It is fairly straightforward, but like all things digital, they can go wrong quickly.

Again, this will be an audio only teleconference, so you can call in using your house phone, your cell phone, or even your computer if it is set up for voice and audio. As we don't know how long the call will last, the best choice is your landline phone. No worries about batteries dying. If you can keep your cell phone charging while you are on the call, that works also. But it can suck your battery down pretty quickly if not.

Notice 2 things in the announcement. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 3:15 pm on May 9th. You should plan on calling in before 3:15, like at 3:08 pm.

The other thing to notice is that the area code is 425. That is in the state of Washington. If you have a phone service that does not include toll-free calling, you might want to skip the call. But you probably have toll-free calling, as it is very rare these days not to have that.

Pick up your phone and dial:

(425) 436-6398

You will be greeted and asked to enter the Access Code: 282820#

Punch in those numbers carefully, and do not forget the hash at the end. It is important.

If you screw it up (easy to do, trust me) the best thing to do is hang up and start over.

I will be the host on the call. If I have not logged on yet, you will be told the host has not yet arrived, and if you are the host to enter the host ID. You don't have it, so do nothing. You will be added to the call and you can

announce yourself. I will strive to be one of the first on the call, so you shouldn't have to worry about that.

And that's it. I will call for open comment at the beginning, let us try to avoid a free-for-all. Only one person can speak at once, say your name and I will try to give you the floor.

Once the open comment period of the agenda is over I will be muting everyone's phone who is not on the Board, so you will not be heard. You can listen to the Board discussions, but you cannot participate.

You can use your computer to join the call, you should be computer-savvy enough to do that with the information given above.

Just enter: <https://join.freeconferencecall.com/president819> in your browser and follow the prompts. You might want to test that out before the time of the call, it will allow you to set up your computer properly beforehand.

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

The Castro Point Railway the early years

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the smokebox door.

Aside from the occasional balky injector or air compressor the locomotives were fairly reliable. The one incident that I recall that took an engine out of service during an operating day occurred when one of the pins in a line shaft universal joint on Heisler 5 worked loose. The universal was under the cab on the second truck, the pin was about 2 inches in diameter and when it had worked out far enough it struck the locomotive frame with every revolution of the shaft. The noise it made was impressive. A little work with a cutting torch removed the bent portion of the pin and the 5 was returned to the enginehouse. This incident started everyone to thinking that the "ash pan barrel" which is slung under the firebox and supported with heavy chains was really intended to catch loose parts rather than ash.

On operating weekends usually no compressed air was available so cold engines were fired up on wood. An ingenious little electric fan was rigged up with a funnel that fit over the stack to



Photo by David Sell

The 102 and the 5 sit outside the enginehouse at Tollbridge Yard.



Photo by David Sell



Photo by David Sell

Number 6 at Molate Beach: Pete Rogers, engineer, George Childs, fireman.

1970

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

The Castro Point Railway the early years



Number 3: Dan Ranger, engineer, Pete Rogers, fireman.

Photo by David Sell

create a draft for the fire. When there was enough boiler pressure to heat the oil and run the atomizer and blower the engine was fired in a more conventional manner. It all worked well but did leave a mess of ash and embers that had to be raked out of the firebox. When Pete was able to snag an air compressor from Standard Oil, where he worked, things were a little easier. The locomotives were first fired on diesel fuel and then switched over to the heavier residual fuel oil once it had been heated enough to flow.

While being a bit informal train operations at Castro Point did seem to go quite safely. The only incident that I can remember was the derailment of one truck of the All Day Lunch car at what was called Quarry Station. This was at slow speed and only required a little track repair afterwards. Most operating days however went well with both the public and club membership enjoying the railroad.

David Sell



Number 6 at the Interchange Yard, Karl Koenig, engineer.

Photo by David Sell



Photo by David Sell

On the ground at Quarry Station. Mike Riggs, Pete Rogers and an unidentified friend of his, and Jim Evans are shown.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day
Operations Manager

This month's tale:

"WE ARE STORING OUR EQUIPMENT WHERE?"

All the activity in the Spring of 1986 was directed toward getting the rolling equipment ready to move out of Richmond. Some were going to be set up to go out by rail. Others were going to go by truck or other means. This is where this tale starts.

The M200, the little Porter engine, and the CPRY-built little passenger car called the "CHRYSOCOLLA" which was built to run with the No. 3 steam engine were designated to move first. What was surprising to me at that time was where the three pieces of equipment were going for storage. Vallecitos Nuclear Center? That is the home of DPR-1, the first Boiling Water Nuclear Reactor. I was told we would not be next to the reactor, but near a storage tank. Yea, right! Every time we would enter and leave the facility, we drove by the reactor.

Vallecitos is located in Alameda County close to Pleasanton. The reservation is up against the hills and had no human traffic walking around it from the outside. That made it perfect for the animals to have the run of the place. There was an area for the cows, and the Jack Rabbits (big ones). They were all over the place, and the biggest rattle snakes you ever saw in California, so, when doing any work out there, you had to look first.

The DPR-1 Nuclear Reactor was shut down in 1963, but it was still considered hot in 1986. Before we could do anything, the whole crew supporting this move had to go through nuclear fallout training. The training was interesting. At graduation, we were issued a radiation monitor to wear 24-7. It recorded all radiation levels to which we were exposed during our everyday lives, plus the time we spent on the Vallecitos Nuclear reservation.

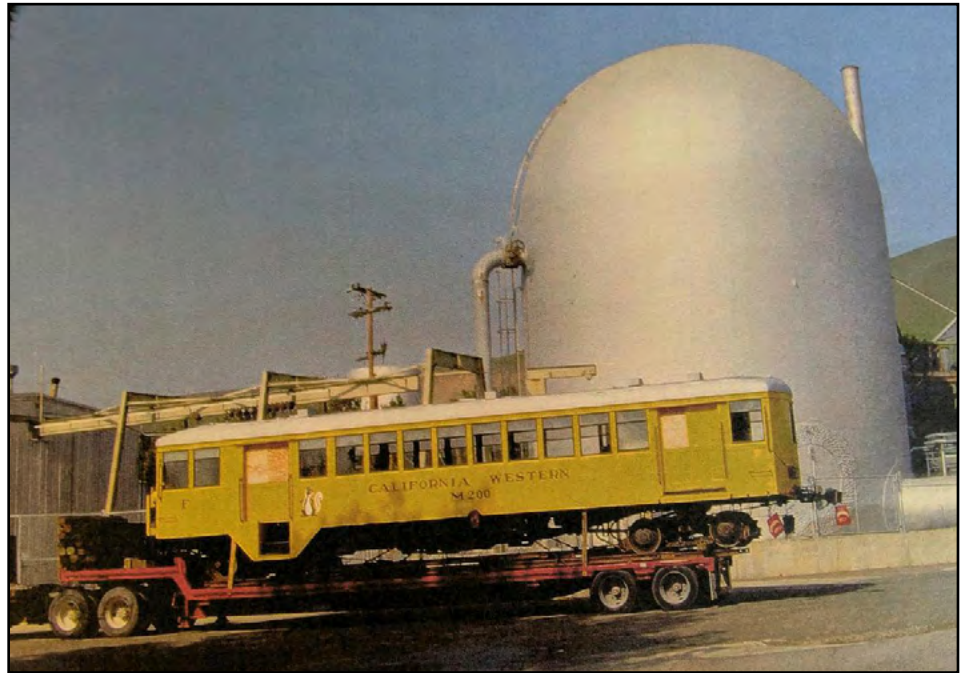


Photo by Dexter D. Day

M200 leaving Vallecitos for the NCRY at Brightside.



Photo by Dexter Day

The skunk under tow into compound Brightside.

After class, we had a guided tour of the areas where we would be working and where we were to build the storage track. The areas were apart from each other, but one site looked like it was next to what looked like the reactor. We were just learning the area. We were issued a temporary pass to enter the reservation through the main gate. You just don't walk up and take a

picture of the reactor.

Back at Castro Point, we were loading up a truck with the equipment that would be needed to build the panel track and the ramps. Wow, that was a lot of track material for the small storage tracks! When the track was ready, we loaded up the Chrysocola, M200, and the little Porter. We trucked out the M200 first. The Chrysocola was

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

TALES OF THE PAST

Dexter D. Day
Operations Manager

delivered by Peter Schulze using his truck and a trailer. The little Porter engine was the last to be loaded on a "low-boy" semi-trailer.

We got all three items unloaded at Vallecitos. They would be there for over a year. That gave us time to build the track from Sunol to Brightside, and the compound at Brightside for storage of equipment.

When time was right, we returned to Vallecitos and loaded the M200 first. That was delivered to Brightside by S&R trucking on their "low-boy". After we built the ramp to the East on the West side of the Brightside driveway crossing, our plan was to fire up the M200 and air it up, then set the hand brake. After M200 was aired up, we put a "set" on the car air brake, and released the hand brake. Well, all you heard was a lot of noise coming from the engineer seat as the M200 drifted down the ramp and off the end of track putting the rear truck into the dirt. We had to worry about what went wrong later. We had to take down the ramp and get a truck and trailer out of there.

When all was done, we returned to the M200 sitting there at end of track in the dirt. We rigged some blocking and had the boom truck pull it up onto the rails and into the compound. Welcome to the NCRY! The next day, the Chrysocola was delivered by Peter Schulze using his pickup truck and trailer. Now that the items had arrived from Vallecitos, the job at hand was getting the little passenger car ready for the No. 3 to pull in the canyon.

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

Dexter D. Day



Photo by Dexter Day

Brian Wise running M200 while unloading at Brightside.

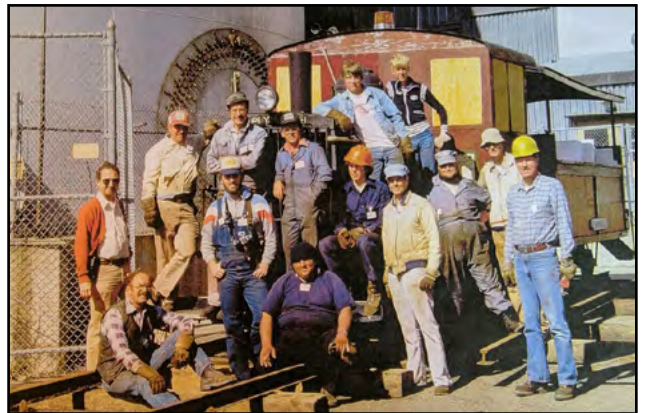


Photo by Dexter Day

Just finished unloading the Porter and Chrysocola at Vallecitos.



Photo by Dexter Day

M200 off rails on unloading. Welcome to the NCRY.



Photo by Dexter Day

Crew unloading the Porter. The Chrysocola was unloaded first.

Brush Cutting Report

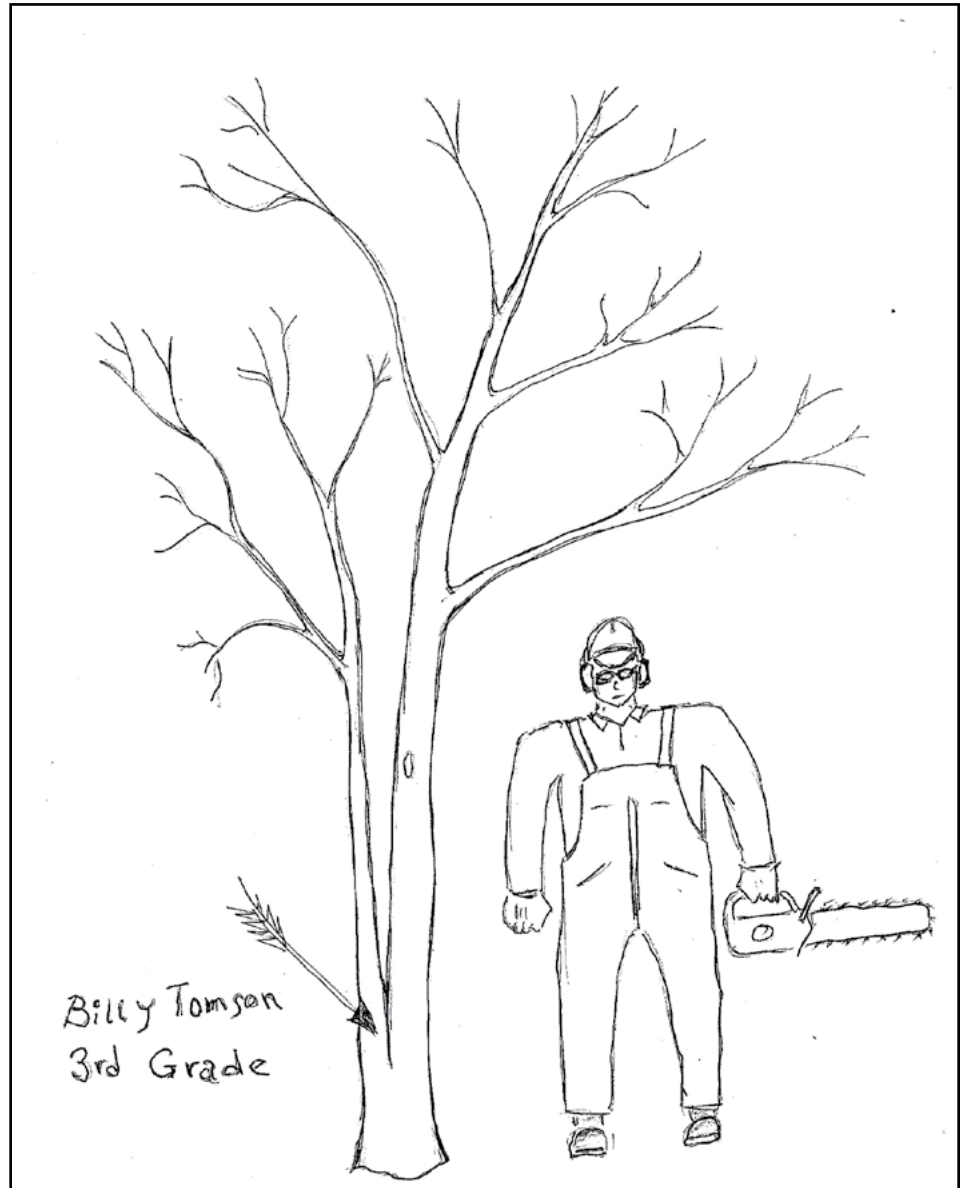
Steve Jones
Sawdust Manager

Due to the public health and safety Shelter-At Home Order, the Mighty Arboreros did not venture out in April to trim trees along the right-of-way. This provides an opportunity for me to answer a few questions about the rationale and practices we follow when trimming vegetation back from the tracks. Here are the conditions we look for when deciding what to cut and how:

- 1) Tree branches that are so close to the tracks they will strike the train and/or passengers or crew aboard the train.
- 2) Trees and brush on the inside of a curve obscuring clear sightlines around the curve must be pushed back.
- 3) Dead or damaged limbs.
- 4) Compliance with the State Fire Marshal's recommendations to raise the bottom limbs of trees 3 to 5 feet (more on slopes) to eliminate "fire ladders". When limbs lay on or close to the ground, they add fuel to what would have otherwise been a minor grass fire and can cause the flames to shoot up into the canopy.

5) Structural flaws. Limbs can grow in odd shapes and directions. Over time, some shapes can cause catastrophic failure of the limb, or the whole tree. The most common flaw we see is called "Bark Included, Acute Angle V-Crotches". When a limb grows from a tree trunk at a very acute angle, bark grows between the trunk and the limb. Over time, the increasingly thick bark creates a cleaving pressure which often causes the limb to split off. To illustrate this condition, I wanted to go out to the canyon to photograph an example, but the shelter in place order prevented me from doing so. Instead, I have inserted a copy of artwork sent to me by Education Train passenger, 3rd Grader Billy Tomson, to illustrate this condition. The arrow in the sketch shows a typical bark included V-Crotch.

6) Trees too close or under bridges, signal equipment and other structures violate FRA clearance limits.



When contemplating the above situations, we have to consider Alameda County Public Works rules. The County values trees as important contributors to the environment. We are bound to comply with various ethical and workmanship standards. The County Chief Arborist has visited our Right-of-Way, met with us, inspected the trees we have trimmed, and has approved of our workmanship standards, and thinning criteria. We continue to work hard

to maintain the County's confidence and approval.

On behalf of all the volunteers in the MOW Vegetation Control Gang, we wish you continued good health. We look forward to returning to our right-of way and working to manicure one of the most beautiful natural spots in California.

**Your Brother in Sawdust,
Arboreros! Aaaaawwwaaaaayyyy!!
Steve Jones**

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Cancelled Events - Donation Envelopes

~~Mar. 21 Beer on the Rails* 1:00-3:00 p.m. cancelled~~
~~Mar. 27 Sunol School Train 10:00 a.m. cancelled~~
~~April 3 Niles School Train 10:00 a.m.* cancelled~~
~~April 5 (s), 12 (s), 19 (s), 26 (d) cancelled~~
~~April 18 Ride the Rails Relay for Life* cancelled~~
~~April 24 Sunol School Train 10:00 a.m.* cancelled~~
~~May 3 (s), 10 (s), 17(s), 24 (d), 31 (d) questionable~~
~~May 8, 22 Niles School Train 10:00 a.m.* cancelled~~
~~May 15 Sunol School Train 10:00 a.m.* cancelled~~

By the time this newsletter comes out, we will have been closed for at least 8 weeks. As you can see from our 2020 schedule above, we had to cancel many events and Sunday operation days. As I'm writing this, we don't know about our May schedule yet, but more than likely we won't be operating in May. We took in a large amount of money from our 2019 Train of Lights, but have had many expenses, both normal and unexpected since then. We have daily and monthly expenses no one really thinks about (I know I didn't), like insurance, county fees, electricity, water, porta-potty rentals, garbage, phones, and probably a few more that I can't remember. Plus we had a well drilled at Brightside, and purchased new containers for our water waste dumping as new expenses before we had to shelter

and close our operations. And we purchased a "new to us" steam engine that will need money to be assembled. We were relying on the cancelled events, plus the rest of our Sunday and summer events, to see us through until our Train of Lights ticketing starts again. Now we are unsure of everything moving forward.

If possible, please send in a donation for whatever amount you can give to help pay for our regular monthly bills, and try to keep us in the black. You might not think it will make a difference, but if we all could donate something, all of these donations could really help to get us through this hard time until we can start operating again. Please send donations to:

Niles Canyon Railway
Attention: Treasurer Pat Stratton
P. O. Box 515
Sunol, CA 94586

Hopefully we can get back to whatever normal will be soon, and be able to volunteer together once again. While away from our trains, Rich has been scanning our slides and putting them in our computer, (about 3500 and still scanning) and when he's finished with the slides he'll tackle our photos, and I have been cleaning and getting rid of items in various closets, drawers, and rooms at home. We've also been working on many jigsaw puzzles. And boy, am I tired of cooking; I can hardly wait until I can eat at a restaurant again one day! Get all of your "honey-dos" completed now, and when we are operating again, we can all give our all to the railroad and volunteer again!

Stay safe and healthy, and thank you for sending your donation envelopes to Pat.

donna alexander

"NOTICE TO ALL VOTING MEMBERS"

Board positions up for election this year are:

President
Recording Secretary
Treasurer
Director-at-Large

Members desiring to stand for election and inclusion on the ballot of the four Board of Directors positions should send notice to the nominating committee. Only Voting Members are eligible to serve on the board. Notice to stand for election may be sent to the nominating committee by U. S. mail or e-mail up until May 15th. The nominating committee consists of the following: chair, David Burla, e-mail: burlafam@earthlink.net, mail address, 140 Dutton Ave., San Leandro, CA 94577, Mark Miller e-mail: mmiller510@aol.com, and Ed Best e-mail: ed-best@comcast.net

Thank you!
Dave Burla



Brakeman Training Class.

Photo by Jamie West

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Steam Department

Alan Siegwarth

Steam Department Roadmap after "Staying at Home"

The following are some ideas of projects we will be working on when allowed to in the future. We are also looking at working on projects that have minimal costs as we expect the organization to minimize costs for many months until revenue returns closer to budgeted.

The last issue of the Club Car pretty much summed up our department's future plans with the announcement of the Southern Pacific #1744 acquisition. The rebuild of the locomotive is a long-term project and will require spending for contract work on the boiler and re-assembly/restoration work at Brightside. The PLA still needs to move the frame and boiler from Colorado which is currently on hold due to the State "Stay at Home Order" as well as PLA finances. Once the frame is moved to Brightside, the Steam Department will have a lot of inspection and cleaning work that will keep us busy for many months requiring very little money. Planned work includes but isn't limited to dropping all axles, inspecting bearings/axle surfaces and inspecting running gear. Valves and piston bores can be inspected and lubricated. Rods and drive pins checked and readied for assembly. Frame can be cleaned, inspected and painted. Brake rigging can be re-assembled. All these items are labor intensive but require little in



Photo by Chris Hauf

SP Boxcar #100752.

expenses other than paint and cleaning supplies. This process, additionally, will allow us to determine if any future work requiring outside help is required and that can be categorized and budgeted for future repairs.

Other Projects:

Freight car restorations – Work was started on several freight cars in preparation for the Lerro Photo Charter in February. Our boxcar SP #100752 was completely repainted and lettered for the charter by Chris Hauf. He has the SP herald ready and will be applying it in the future to complete the car's repaint. The UP gondola #61078 was cleaned up and readied for paint before

the charter and ended up being used in as is condition. Paint has already been purchased and the plan is to complete this project by painting and lettering the car. The other car planned for painting is PFE reefer #10591. Work was started on sanding the car down in January but not finished in the rush to get all the equipment ready for the charter. PLA has received an offer from a member to help generate all the lettering stencils and help offset paint costs on this project so our department wants to get this car completed as well in the near future.

Operations:

The department had planned to run another photo freight with the Skookum later this year and we are hoping to be able to still hold the charter. With two steam locomotives ready for service again we may even propose doing a welcome back doubleheader for our first steam operations if conditions warrant it. The past month of beautiful weather would have been a beautiful time for the 2020 wildflower trains but hopefully we can operate again later in the year.

Alan Siegwarth



Photo by Chris Hauf

UP Gondola Car #61078

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Volunteer Report

Ed Best
Volunteer Coordinator

The following is a list of the people who helped run your railroad while we were open in March. 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
Donna Alexander
Ed Best
Joe Scardino
Mary Asturias
Paul Veltman

CAR DEPARTMENT

Bob Moore
Dee Murphy
Dennis Mann
Dennis Murchison
Henry Baum
Howard Wise
Jim McDaniel
Joan Weber
Joe Scardino
Marshall Williams
Norm Fraga
Pete Goodier
Phil Stone
Tom Crawford
Tony Peters

COMMISSARY

Jacques Verdier

DEPOT CREW & OPERATIONS

Bob Bailey
Dan Mills
Donna Alexander
Glenn Fountain
Jim Gilmore
Kent Hedberg
Linda Stanley
Rhonda Dijeu
Rich Alexander
Sally Mills
Sharron Morrison
Steve Jones
Wayne Stoddard

ELECTRICAL & SIGNALS

Curt Hoppins
Jim Stewart

FACILITIES

Bob Bailey
Bob Bradley
Doug Debs
Jack Harrington
Michael Noff
Rich Alexander
Steve Coon
Steve Jones

GIFT SHOP

Charlene Murrell
Gail Hedberg
Patrice McDonald

MECHANICAL

Alan Siegwarth
Bill Ross
Dee Murphy
Doug Vanderlee
Gerald DeWitt
Gerry Feeney
Henry Chandler
Howard Wise
Jeff Haslam
John Zielinski
Linda Stanley
Mark Whitman
Nick Alexander
Rich Alexander
Rich Anderson
Rich Gove
Steve Jones

MEETINGS

Bob Bradley
Bob Pratt
Dee Murphy
Donna Alexander
Doug Debs
Doug Vanderlee
Ed Best
Gail Hedberg
Henry Baum
Jim Evans
Jim Stewart
Kent Hedberg
Linda Stanley
Mike Strider
Pat Stratton
Rich Alexander
Roger McCluney

MEETINGS

Ron Vane
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Coon
Steve Jones
Steve Slabach
Warren Haack

MOW & TRACK

Bob Pratt
Brooke Murphy
Chris Campi
Dan Mills
Dee Murphy
Doug Vanderlee
Garrett Farwell
Jim Allen
Jim Stewart
Joe Romani
John Zielinski
Ken Southwick
Linda Stanley
Mark Whitman
Matthew Petach
Mike Strider
Norm Kyte
Pat Stratton
Ron Thomas
Sierra Murphy
Steve Hill
Steve Jones
Wesley Van Osdol

OTHER

Barry Lependorf
Bob Bailey
Carlo Borlandelli

OTHER

Derek Schipper
Dexter Day
Donna Alexander
Ed Best
Gail Hedberg
Henry Baum
Linda Stanley
Mike Bozzini
Patrice Warren
Steve Jones
Zonker Harris

SWITCHING CREW

Kent Hedberg

TRAIN CREW

Alan Siegwarth
Bob Pratt
Charles Franz
Chris Hamilton

TRAIN CREW

Dave Hipple
Donald Kirker
Gerald DeWitt
Henry Chandler
Jackie Vlasak
Jamie West
Jim Evans
Jim Stewart
John Zielinski
Jon Williamson
Jordan Hamilton
Jorg Linke
Justin Legg
Linda Stanley
Mark Miller
Nick Alexander
Norm Kyte
Rich Anderson
Ron Thomas
Ted Unruh
Warren Haack



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Time Sensitive Material



Photos by Jim Evans

Just one example of PLA's restoration efforts over the years. WP F7 918, donated to PLA in the early 1980s and now looking quite different and operating on The Niles Canyon Railway.