



THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 682

Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

www.ncry.org

June 2020

Tales of the Past - Castro Point Railway

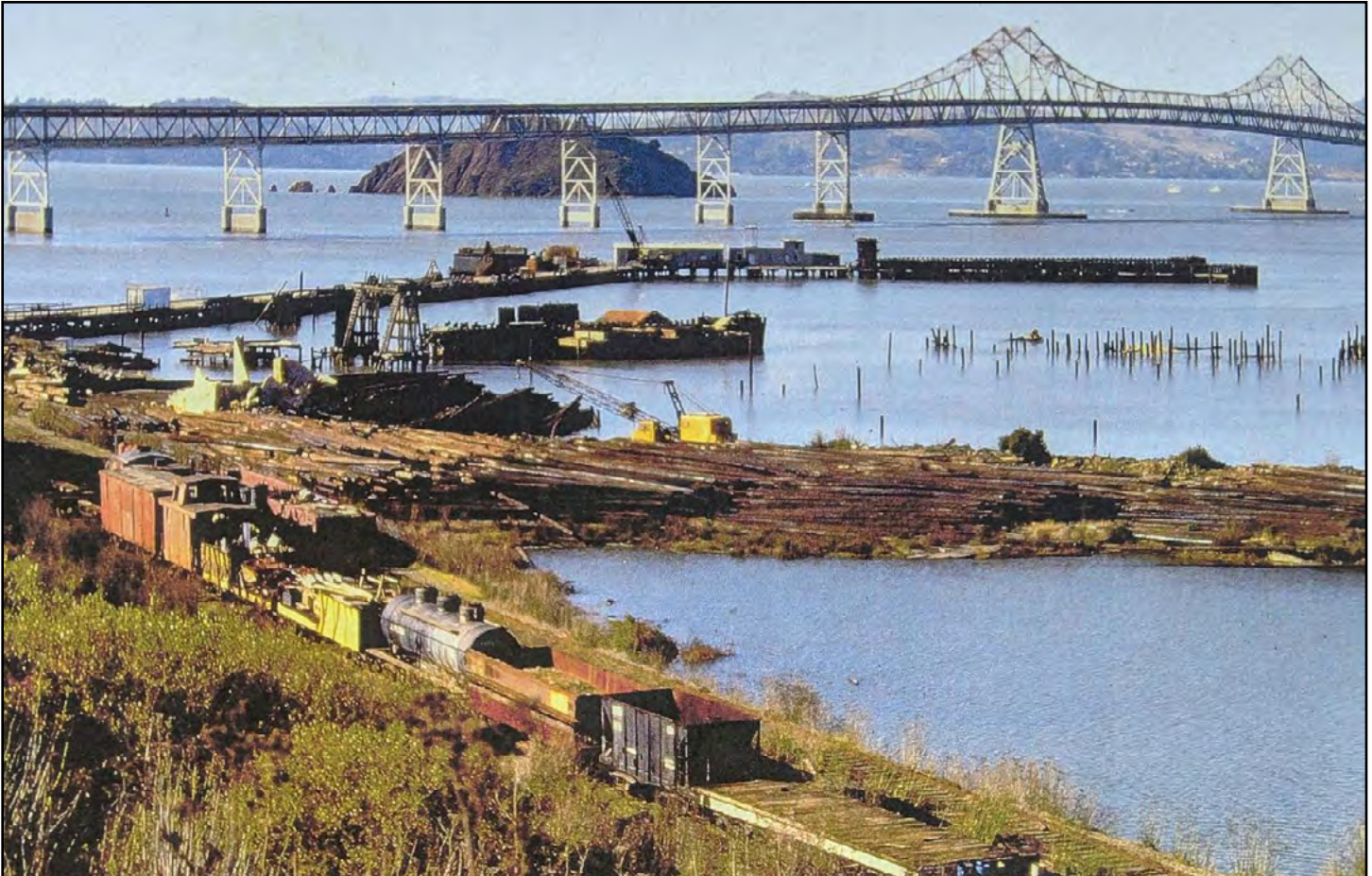


Photo by Dexter Day

The equipment left behind for truck move.

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This month's tale: **"IT IS TIME TO GO"**

We have been watching the GGRM get ready for their move off of the NCRY. That move has finally been accomplished. This made me think that it wasn't too long ago that the PLA was faced with the same situation on the Castro Point Railway.

It was 1985. There were rumors going around about the Navy who owned the property we operated from known as "The Pad". This was at one time a

Naval loading facility which was part of the Navy supply depot. The rumor was that they were going to bring the U.S.S. MISSOURI to the Naval Facility and that our lease would not be renewed and we would have to vacate the property. That was not what we wanted to hear. There was nothing that we could do to change their minds.

So, for the time being, life went on as normal, however, dark clouds were on the horizon. It was not just the fear that

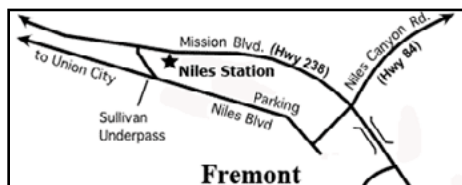
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OUR MISSION: To be an operating railroad museum for standard gauge railroading, past, present and future, with emphasis on the Western United States and special emphasis on Northern California

BOARDING LOCATIONS

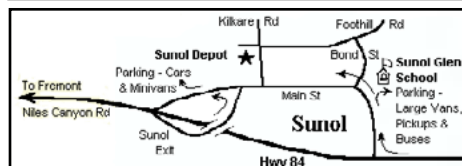
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MEETINGS

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

Saturday

June 13

3:15 pm

teleconferencing service

Membership Meetings

Saturday

JUNE 20

3:15 pm

teleconferencing service

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.

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

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

===== June Activities =====

June 6	1st Saturday	East Track Building, 8 am (Brightside) Mike Strider
June 7	1st Sunday	Regular Train Operations
June 14	2nd Sunday	Regular Train Operations
June 20	3rd Saturday	Beer on the Rails, 1 pm - 3 pm Bob Bradley
June 21	3rd Sunday	Regular Train Operations
June 26	4th Friday	Niles Summer Train, 10am (Niles)
June 27	4th Saturday	Brush Cutting, 8 am (Brightside) Steve Jones
June 28	4th Sunday	Regular Operations

Brush Cutting Report

Steve Jones - Sawdust Manager

No brush cutting last month. In May, we took our ROW clearance gauge out on the rails to check how far the tree branches have fuzzed out toward the tracks. The results of that inspection showed a couple of spots where branches will strike our equipment. We found 3 or 4 dozen locations from Niles to Sunol where the brush is getting very close to the width limits. These areas were marked with surveyor's paint and will be addressed as soon as we can have controlled access to the track.

Being so heavily involved in vegetation control along our Right-of-Way has a way of pervading one's thoughts. If I am stuck in slow commute traffic on a landscaped highway, my attention drifts to the trees and bushes in the median and along the sides. I find myself thinking, "That limb needs to be removed. That tree is too close to that other one and needs to be removed. That limb is broken and needs to come off. That limb is deformed and needs a 5-year corrective pruning plan. Hey! Cal-Trans! Are you listening? . . . Calm down, calm

down. Hands on the wheel, eyes on the road. You'll be home soon."

We have had the opportunity to ride other tourist and museum railroads in California and in the UK, and seen tree limbs within what looks like 2 inches from the train windows. I wonder how these railroads manage their track side vegetation. In some cases, I know how they deal with it; they just cut, drop and abandon the slash where it falls. This creates a fire hazard next to the tracks and makes access to the train difficult if not impossible if emergency workers ever needed to access the train from the outside in a derailment or other emergency. Unacceptable!

The PLA is fortunate to have volunteers who keep after the trackside vegetation twice a month, and the highly specialized pieces of equipment needed to remove and dispatch offending limbs. The custom-built Bandit Chipper we obtained in July of 2017 made a significant improvement in our capability. Our brush clearing capability rivals many commercial railroads.

The backbone of our tree trimming campaigns has, for decades, been our 1969 Ford 8000 Series Bucket Truck. That truck was originally built for Lockheed in Sunnyvale. When Lockheed was ready to retire it, our own Ken Asmus, who worked for Lockheed at the time, convinced them to send it to the PLA. Ken undertook the project to install the hi-rail gear to enable the truck to travel on the rails. I think about Ken every time we take the truck out. It has been a while since the bucket and turret assembly has been professionally serviced. We are trying to take it out of service during this quiet time on the railroad to have the mechanical components inspected and reconditioned as needed. We are currently running a fund-raising campaign to pay for the bucket truck service.

We look forward to the day when the Covid-19 pandemic is in the rear-view mirror and our return to our brush cutting efforts. Meanwhile, stay safe.

Arboreros!! Aaawwaaaaayyyy!

Steve Jones



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>



President's Message

Henry Baum - President

I am happy to report that as of May 18th, 2020, the PLA was able to put procedures in place that allow us to open Brightside yard, as well as Sunol and Niles Stations, for Minimum Business Operations. For us, that means maintenance and renovation projects can be worked on.

The new safety protocols require signage to be installed at the entrance to the facility (although no signs have been posted yet at the depot buildings, I have them ready to go). The Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) also requires us to distribute the county approved procedure be to all employees. We will substitute 'Volunteer' for 'Employee' to meet this requirement. This procedure was emailed to everyone on the PLA members email list, and to all members who have a valid email listed on the Member's Website through Club Express. If you didn't get it, check your Spam folder. If you didn't get it because we don't have your current email address, please contact me or Membership Secretary Linda Stanley so we can update our records. If you don't have email, contact me and I will snail mail you a copy.

The basic protocols are simply: don't come out if you are sick or show any Covid-19 symptoms. Wear a face covering. Stay six feet from others unless absolutely necessary to be closer to perform a task (like moving something large and unwieldy, or having someone hold something in position while you fasten it in place). Common sense should prevail in these situations. We require you to disinfect behind you as you work. This means if you touched it, disinfect it. Materials have been provided, but it will be best if you bring your own. Even if you are wearing gloves, you still need to disinfect, because the virus can be on the gloves. Simple fact – the less you touch the less you have to disinfect. This includes the porta-potties. As I have stated before, right now the facilities are virus free, and if

you come out, it is your responsibility to see they remain that way.

The last thing we require is that you notify Ed Best at volunteers@ncry.org to record your hours worked, what you worked on, and where you were working. This will allow us to do any necessary contact tracing should the need arise. Just say something simple like 'worked on ranch car'; no need for details like 'cleaned 72 grease encrusted screws'. This contactless recording will keep you and Ed safe.

We hope to expand these procedures to allow more group intensive projects like MOW and tree trimming activities soon.

The other requirement for working on projects must still be derived from their costs. 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 still be curtailing services which we pay for in order to save money. Think porta-potties, each one serviced costs us weekly.

I have changed the 'charter' of the Operations Planning Committee to focus on developing our plans to allow us to begin offering train rides. We want to be ready when the restrictions are lifted so we can do that. We also must figure out what we can do for TOL this year. Not easy.

We are still conducting business. The May Board of Director's meeting was held by teleconference, and the May Membership meeting will also be held that way on May 23rd. The June Board of Directors and the June General Membership meetings will be held by teleconference. You will get several invites to these over the coming few days, if we have your email address. Look for a separate article on how to participate in the teleconferences elsewhere in this issue. All of this is allowed within the framework of the current by-laws, as long as the Voting Members are notified in advance.

It is most effective to communicate

through email, as it is virtually no cost to the organization, and it is fast. It is pretty obvious now that when situations like this occur, email will allow us to communicate with all of our members in a timely manner. While the Cub Car is a historic means of communicating to the membership, it does have a significant time lag.

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.

In studying the by-laws to confirm what is and is not allowed, it is apparent the time is right for reviewing them to see if they need to be updated. To that end I would like to hear from ANYONE interested in serving on a By-Laws Review Committee. I feel it is best NOT to have members of the PLA Board on that committee, but I would like the Board members to provide input on things they would like to see changed. I expect the Committee will also solicit input from the members for opinions on desirable changes.

Some changes should be made to clarify things that are somewhat gray, and some changes may have a more significant impact on the future of the organization. Allowing meetings via electronic means is a simple change (by-laws don't forbid them, but also don't establish guidelines for them). Changing voting member requirements is a much more complicated change that needs addressing. It may also be time to consider electronic voting as required.

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

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Membership Report

Linda Stanley - Membership Secretary

An educational task just completed! Thanks, must first go to PLA Archivist Brian Hitchcock who last year accepted the challenge to download fifty-seven years of Club Cars (1962-2019) and make them searchable. Using this invaluable tool, research by the Membership Secretary and Committee -including Steve Jones and Dave Burla, with input from George Childs – led to the May published nominee list of those storied volunteers to be considered for the PLA's first ever LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT -or- "SPIKE AWARD". As is the case with most organizations, there are those volunteers who are in the limelight, being featured time and time again (and deservedly so!)- and then there are those who contribute their unique talents in the background, assisting an organization like the PLA/NCRY over the decades to grow to its full potential. This SPIKE AWARD provides the opportunity to honor these valued volunteers onto this historical record for all to see. It is hoped that these Honorees will be announced in July's Club Car -and thanks to all the Voting Members who voted on these esteemed nominees. The beautiful "SPIKE AWARD", created by master wood craftsmen Carlo Borlandelli and Steve Jones, is on display at the historic 1884 Sunol Depot. It will be announced when PLA members can get by to view once the Depot is open to our Honorees, members and riding public following the current Covid-19 shutdown.

During research it became obvious the need for a special award to celebrate those who could not volunteer over the years but their shorter-term impact fundamentally changed the PLA. More on this concept later.

It was insightful seeing how, through the decades, the PLA had to keep coming to its members time and time again to seek funds for a special project or simply day-to-day operating expenses. In the years between the move from Castro Point to the NCry's first revenue day of operation in May 1988, the PLA depended solely on the generosity of its membership to keep the organization afloat when no funds were being earned during this transition to Niles Canyon.

So, the volunteers of the PLA/NCRY have been in this position before. We have faith that through the kindness and support of its membership, it will pull through once again. Meanwhile, the Operations Department is making plans for that happy day when the door is opened to allow passenger excursions again, in whatever form they may need to take to assure passenger enjoyment while maintaining rider and train crew safety.

On the membership side, although renewals have slowed a wee bit, the PLA is gratified that our members continue to demonstrate their support overall for the volunteers and in the projects- like the restoration of SP 1744 – that separate this 501(c) (3) from other non-profits. We are worthy of your support and in doing so, you help to ensure unique excursions with your family and friends will continue through historic Niles Canyon in happier days to come.

Staying Safe – and Looking Ahead

Linda Stanley



Photo by Dan Sarka

Skookum #7 at Farwell bridge in route to Sunol during a steam operations day.

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 - sieggy667@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

To begin this month's submission, I would like to applaud the patience and commitment to following county guidelines that all of our members have shown over these past weeks. It takes a singular individual to set aside one's passion and desire for the greater good. I take my hat off to you all.

Now that I am off the soap box, let's see what has been going on for all those who are hungry for news of the railroad. The county has given us the green light for work in Brightside, with proper sanitation process, to preserve the collection and prevent damage from neglect. As a result several people have been allowed to return to the Canyon to perform necessary jobs like starting engines to charge batteries, protect projects from rust forming, or secure expensive materials from walking away. In the recent days the restrictions are lightening up some so that projects may begin to some degree if they can be performed by members working alone. In this light, we have been working on improvements to our sanitary holding facility area. We bought new tanks for this purpose before the shutdown, so when they arrived they were installed. We have hopes of expanding the availability of restrooms on the train by using the other cars that have working restrooms (i.e. the Articulated Coach or the Dome) To do this we need extra dumping sites along the mainline and that is part of the reason for the improved holding facility. This work is tied into our on-going storm water runoff containment project that will collect the water from the area around the fuel shed and pump it into our holding pond near Blake's Palace. The whole area has undergone a clean-up and regrade for this purpose. When you get back to the yard, check it out.

The Fiber optic people have been busy also since they were attacked on Easter. They had to re-visit the Arroyo Bridge to replace the rubber joints with steel, which they did. A week later they

had to return to re-splice the fibers as the signal was found to be less than acceptable. Then after we (our tree trimming crew performing an essential survey of the foliage growth) noticed evidence of further vandalism to the new joints, they once more had to request track time to secure the joints by welding them. By now, they are well trained in contacting us before accessing the right-of-way. Now, the fiber operators have decided that they need to replace the joints with something more robust. We will accommodate them of course, one more time. Mike Strider has put together a bill for the repairs to the bridge timbers damaged during the emergency repair and they will also receive a bill for flagman services, as is the industry standard.

We have received another request for encroachment. This time it is Niles around the Crist oil site on our access to Niles station. The ACWD wants to drill monitor wells and some kind of venting chimneys to determine where the contamination is traveling underground. We have requested a field meet to hopefully avoid the kind of situation we have at Mission Clay Tile and Pipe where people sampling the wells are on the track, and the track must be closed during their samplings. Fool me once.....

To help out our sister museums, we have donated our Jackson Tamper (old tamper replaced by the Fairmont) to El Dorado Western and the CSRM in Sacramento has expressed interest in preserving an old car Brake Test stand taking up space in the yard.

During this period of no revenue, we are looking at costs and our treasurer has tasked me to look into electrical use at Brightside. The bill there seems higher than everywhere else. We have shut down automatic air compressors and looked for lights or heaters left on. I did find that we have a welding rod oven in the shop that has been plugged in since I joined in 2000 and has been

using 1000w, 24 hours a day 365 days a year. The purpose of this oven is to keep your welding rods warm and dry. With no one welding this was a no brainer, so I unplugged it. Personally, I use room temperature rods and always have. When we start up again it can be re-started if someone feels they need it. I also found that the security lights on the containers by the fuel shed, once motion activated, are on 24/7. When I looked closer, I found those lights were incandescent and 100w apiece. Another meter spinner. I went down to the local hardware and bought two LED floods that give out more light and use only 10w for twelve bucks. I think they will save us that much the first week.

Brightside water concerns are flowing along as well. The BOD has approved the final expense of buying the pump that will provide water from the well. The drilling company is assembling the materials to complete this work and I hope it will be in place by the time this is published. Before the "Day the Earth Stood Still" we had met with the boys from CALFIRE to introduce the new Battalion Chief and tour our facility. At that time, we promised them we keep a tank car full of water for fire support in case of emergency and showed them how to access it. Unfortunately, the well drilling and our last steam operation had depleted the supply on hand. When the yard water ran dry, I noticed the oversight. Fortunately, on that day, Ron Thomas was in starting MOW equipment and I commandeered him to run the tank to Sunol for a fill-up. Coincidentally, while we were filling the tank, CALFIRE got a call about a grassfire at Palomares road. Thank goodness it was small and they didn't need water. That could have been awkward.

Until we are running again and can project revenue, we will be concentrating on projects that are either no cost or low-cost, or are near completion. Our new mantra should be; "Reduce Waste, Re-use What You Can, Re-cy-

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager

cle what we need to dispose. For instance, when we needed a hand rail for the new potty tank farm, we found an old handrail from the Bones car up on the back forty. Presto.. junk disposed and need filled. Win/win. We need to get rid of old ties. That costs a lot for dump fees. We have lots of old steel fence poles. We need retaining walls along mainline to support tow path. Put the two together, with a little labor, and you get two dead birds using a stone you had to throw away anyway. I think you get the picture. Along these lines, another procedure I have been developing over several years involves saving lost ballast. You may notice along the track that many areas have ballast running down the embankment from years of use and the effects of gravity. In some areas it is quite thick. I found that it is possible to gather it up with the backhoe bucket if you do it just right. Also, when fouled ballast has been replaced with new during tie chang-

ing and is spread alongside the track, we can recover the ballast by picking it up and running it over a screen. You may have seen some of the screens used for this around Brightside. I have called these methods "Saving Lost Old Ballast By Energized Recovery" or S.L.O.B.B.E.R.. So, in the interest of

saving money and resources, you can be sure that I will be out slobbering all over the track whenever I can.

Take care until I get to see your (masked) smiling faces again.

Stephen Barkkarie

Treasurer's Report

Pat Stratton - Treasurer

With \$590,000.00 in cash in the bank the PLA is in relatively good financial shape for the short term. Our financial wellbeing in the medium term is related to how well we can outfit our regular, special and Train of Lights trains in this time of the Corona virus. In a year or so, perhaps the virus will have left us alone and people will have gotten over the enormity of the hit everyone has taken in their own way. Between now and then, our financial status is dependent upon finding ways to run our trains that will be acceptable to all those people just like you and I who enjoy trains

and the Canyon.

Included in our cash, the PLA received a distribution of \$189,000.00 of the earnings (not principle) from the Endowment Fund, designated as follows: \$89,000 for the SP1744 Steam Locomotive Restoration; \$85,000 for drilling a water well and installing a pump at Brightside; and \$15,000 for engineering the work needed for restoration of Happy Valley Bridge, on the Pleasanton Extension.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask all of you: if you are in possession of PLA or NCRy documents, particularly original documents such as contracts, bills of sale or vehicle titles, please notify me, Henry Baum, or Steve Barkkarie. Many members have helped us out by maintaining custody of important papers and other historical items over the years. However, we now have a secure and temperature controlled facility in which to keep these items, so we would like to gather them all in one place.

We gratefully received donations from individuals in the amount of \$4,441.00 for the General Fund and \$8,140 for the restoration of SP 1744. Linda Stanley paid for equipment repair services on behalf of the PLA in the amount of \$323.54. Thank you all very much. Stay safe and healthy.

Pat Stratton
treasurer@ncry.org

We all need some silliness right now; I hope you smile. :)

Half of us are going to come out of this quarantine as amazing cooks. The other half will come out with a drinking problem.

PSA: every few days try your jeans on just to make sure they fit. Pajamas will have you believe all is well in the kingdom.

I don't think anyone expected that when we changed the clocks we'd go from Standard Time to Twilight Zone.

The world has turned upside down. Old folks are sneaking out of the house and their kids are yelling at them to stay indoors.

donna

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.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

Continued from Page 1

we did not know where we were going along with our full collection of cars and engines. It was also how are we going to move it. That really worried me since I was the Operations Manager.

In October of that year, those worries intensified when we got hit with a major storm coming in from the West. The storm hit with hurricane velocity winds and it hit at high tide. This storm we did not need. It did severe damage to the causeway across the lagoon on the East end of the railroad. The storm undermined a large section of track which was about 16 feet long and 8 feet deep to fill. The track had no support. It also exposed the old pilings for the trestle that crossed the lagoon. The bridge in the middle of the causeway survived, but some fill work on one end was needed. We were trapped!

The repair on the causeway would not be easy. All we had to work with was a very old Western Pacific railroad side dump and a Hough (pronounced "huff") front end loader. We had a small Great Northern Ore car. Not much to work with for a major repair of this scale. Peter Schulze wanted me to go beachcombing and hunt for a 16 in X 16 in X 16 ft. long beam that would sit on the old pilings to support the track. Right! You will find one on any friendly beach. Well, the hunt was on.

I looked under piers and along the waterfront areas. No beam. One Saturday before going to the yard, I swung down the road under the San Rafael Bridge to check this long beach out. I scanned the beach with binoculars. Contact! There was a big chunk of lumber laying in the sand. It had to have washed up onto the sand during the big storm. Excitedly, I hurried back to get Peter Schulze and took him back to the beach to look at it. His comment, "That's it! Just what we need. How are we going to get it out of here?" Well, I had thought about that and planned to surf it under the San Rafael Bridge onto



Photo by Dexter Day

Engines arriving Richmond Santa Fe. Will be picked up by S. P. with Lou Bradas engineer.



Photo by Dexter Day

After dropping 462 in Oakland, Lou Bradas takes engines to Shinn Street.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

the small sandy area next to the road where the Boom Truck could pick it up. Peter's comment, "Really?"

The following Saturday, we rolled the beam into the water. It floated; good sign. With frogman gear on, I left the beach heading for the bridge. Members were watching from the beach. It reminded you of the TITANIC leaving Ireland never to be seen again. The swim under the bridge took a little longer than I planned. I had to reach that sandy strip on the other side of the bridge before the tide started to go out. The Boom truck picked up the beam then we swung it into place the following week. Mission accomplished. Now we were able start the fill work.

In January of 1986, we received the official notice, in writing, from the Navy that our lease would not be renewed and were to be off property by the end of year. Great, another nail in the coffin. The work on the causeway continued but it was not accomplishing enough for the time we were putting into it, then the Hough broke a steering rod. We would need some help if we were going to have a chance to move anything by rail. With luck, one of our members knew someone with trucks and a big loader. He volunteered to help us out. With his trucks and loader and our side dump, we got the job done. It was tamped and compacted by running on it. It was safe to use. Now we just had to make our crews believe it.

Meanwhile, other opportunities were opening up for the PLA. The County of Alameda and the PLA were in discussions for leasing the abandoned Southern Pacific Railroad right of way through Niles Canyon. It was looking very promising for the PLA at that time. We still needed a place to store our equipment. Even if we got Niles Canyon, we still had a move date looking at us. Well, that was solved when Oakland Terminal Railway offered us yard tracks for storage. That was just what the doctor ordered. Alameda County

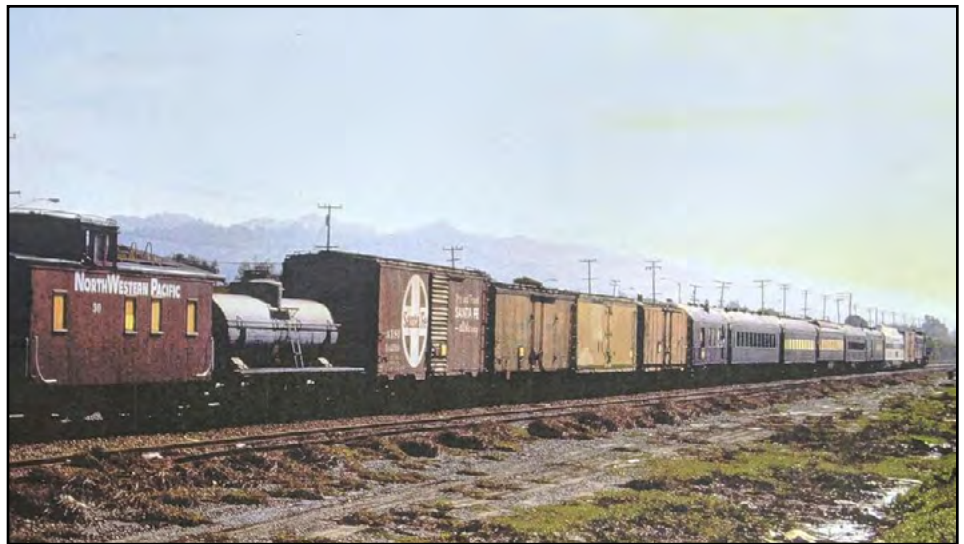


Photo by Dexter Day

Lou Bradas taking equipment to Oakland Terminal Railroad for storage.



Photo by Dexter Day

Hough slowly fills side dump for trip out to causeway to dump fill.

was also going to lease us the spur track at the Corporation Yard at Shinn street. The clock was ticking and we had a lot of stuff to get accomplished before we could leave. We also planned the final operation at Castro Point. That will be another tale.

In Vancouver, Canada, they were holding a steam-fest. The No. 2 and No.12 were invited to attend. The engines were loaded onto flat cars and shipped to Canada. They would not be coming back to Castro Point Railway, but to the spur track at Shinn St.

The time had come. It was time to go. Being Operations Manager, I worked up the switch lists for two moves. One

train would be the passenger equipment and Freight equipment that passed inspection. The engines and cars that were not considered to go by rail were spotted at the interchange tracks which the Navy did not own.

The second move would handle three steam engines and 1 diesel 44-Tonner. Those were the No. 4/Docs, Shay/ No. 5 and 462. The passenger and freight equipment were going to Oakland Terminal along with the WP 918. The steam engines were going to Spur track Shinn St. and the ATSF 462 was dropped at Oakland Terminal. I have to say, the switch out move came off without a hitch. The crews had the switch lists and they executed moves without a hitch. Two trains, two different days, and The Castro Point Railway operations came to a close. It was sad. It was a fun place to run trains.

We were now going to a better place and we would be better off. The problem was, we had to rebuild the right of way and develop a facility to call home. The second problem, we didn't have the material to accomplish it.

THAT WILL BE ANOTHER TALE AS THIS TALE ENDS.

Dexter Day

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Traveling aboard Via Rail Canada from Winnipeg to Churchill, Manitoba

Mike Strider and I took a rail trip in August 2019 for 19 days aboard Amtrak and Via Rail Canada. The main focus of our trip was to retrace the PLA Excursion many years ago that we had missed from Winnipeg to Churchill, Manitoba. We started in Boston, MA on August 6 at 12:05PM aboard Amtrak #2165 (Acela) in First Class traveling at speeds of up to 150 mph to New York, NY arriving at Penn Station about 3:52PM. On August 7, we rode the New York subway (clean and nice) to lower Manhattan for a Crown Tour of the Statue of Liberty and over to Ellis Island. We also visited the Twin Tower Memorial and 9/11 Museum. The next day on August 8 at 8:15AM, we caught Amtrak #69 (The Adirondack) to Montreal, Quebec arriving at 7:11PM. On August 9, we ventured over to Quebec City and back by Via Rail Canada for the day to see the Chateau Frontenac (built by Canadian Pacific in 1893, now a Fairmont Hotel) and the Citadel of Quebec. Via Rail Canada #63 on August 10 at 8:55AM transported us from Montreal to Toronto, Ontario by 2:07PM that day. We visited the CN Toronto Tower grounds that still have the old turntable and a rail museum. On August 11 at 9:30AM, we boarded Via Rail Canada's (The Canadian) #1 from Toronto to Winnipeg, Manitoba by August 12 at about 7:30PM. Traveling through Quebec and Ontario you are on ground known as the Canadian Shield (surrounds Hudson Bay to North and as far South as North Dakota). Many small lakes and dense pine forests. The Winnipeg Station had a great railroad museum.

Our true adventure began as we climbed aboard Via Rail Canada #693 at 12:05PM August 13 and headed to Churchill 899 miles away. The train was two engines and nine cars. We had sleeping car accommodations (Roomettes for one) and access to the Bar/Dome Car at the end of the train. The route starts out traveling at 79 mph on the main line out of Winnipeg.



Photo by Doug Vanderlee

Churchill Station.



Photo by Mike Strider

Hudson Bay Railway Box Car near Dauphin, Manitoba.



Photo by Doug Vanderlee

Mainline 45 miles South of Churchill. Tundra small trees.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY



Dining Car. Exceptionally clean!

Photo by Doug Vanderlee



MOW Gang Camp train about 50 miles South of Churchill.

Photo by Doug Vanderlee

Once over to Portage La Prairie, the track speed lowers to around 45 MPH. As one heads more North, the track speed lowers even further to between 25-35 MPH up to The Pas and Thompson Junction. The Pas is a junction for

the Keewatin Railway (passenger) up to Pukatawagan (about 120 miles). The line used to operate to Lynn Lake (about another 80 miles). Apparently, the track from Winnipeg to The Pas is owned and maintained by Canadian

National. North of The Pas to Churchill, the track is reportedly owned by Hudson Bay Railway (1997). Washouts caused the rail line to be shut down for about 2 years and just opened again a few years ago after a change in ownership and political issues on rehab costs were resolved. The town of Thompson is served by all trains enroute to Churchill with a 30 mile spur off the mainline. Track speed was slow. Major washouts along that stretch of track reduced the travel in some spots to 10 MPH and in one case the track profile was so bad the tops of the dome cars disappeared from sight momentarily. Once back to Thompson Junction at the mainline, the train headed Northeast toward Gillam along the Nelson River. At Gillam, the track takes a sharp turn North to Churchill. Back when the track was being constructed (opened for service 9/10/1929), rumor says the surveyors noticed the Nelson River dumped too much silt into Hudson Bay at the mouth to put in a port, so the route changed to head up to Churchill. As the trees get smaller and smaller, so does the track speed (10-15 MPH). We did see two separate track crews installing many, many ties between Gillam and Churchill. We were told the crews spend two weeks at a time on some converted flat cars with trailers to sleep and eat. Upon arrival into Churchill Station (about Noon August 15), Mike and I took a taxi over to Cape Merry where the Churchill River dumps into Hudson Bay. We saw lots of Beluga Whales near the mouth of the Churchill River, but NO Polar Bears. Season starts about October 1. The return trip back to Winnipeg was pretty much the mirror of the Northbound trip with the exception Mike and I were the "only" revenue passengers with access to the rear dome car. We had the whole car to ourselves. Once back in Winnipeg, we had a very long wait for the westbound Canadian which was approximately 7 hours late. It did in fact make up most of the time by the time we arrived in Vancouver, BC.

Doug Vanderlee

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Teleconferencing instructions for June BOD and General Membership meetings

**The June Board of Director's meeting will be held on
June 13 at 3:15PM
via teleconferencing service**

**The June General Membership meeting will be held on
June 20th at 3:15PM
via teleconferencing service**

The access information for these meetings will be the same as for the May meetings, and it is repeated below. This will be an audio only call, and it will be recorded. Video cameras will be blocked if they appear. Future meetings will also have the same access info. 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. It is important that whatever phone you use, it has a MUTE button, especially for the General meetings, as group meetings over telephone are difficult for the host to mute. People eating, going to the bathroom, driving can ruin a meeting if they have not muted their phone.

If you get muted by the host (me) you may have to hang up and dial in again to get unmuted.

Notice two things in the announcement. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 3:15PM on June 13. 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 Seattle WA area. 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. 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.

For the Board meeting only, 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.

If we see more and more people attending over the internet, we may opt to use the many enhanced features available to us for computer-based meetings.

We all need some silliness right now; I hope you smile. :)

This virus has done what no woman had been able to do...cancel all sports, shut down all bars, and keep men home!

My body has absorbed so much soap and disinfectant lately that when I pee it cleans the toilet.

Does anyone know if we can take showers yet or should we just keep washing our hands?

Since we can't eat out, now is the perfect time to eat better, get fit, and stay healthy. We're quarantined? Who are we trying to impress? We have snacks, we have sweat-pants....I say we use them!

donna

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Signaleros Report

Curt Hoppins

You've probably passed them numerous times without ever taking much notice, those two tall masts just west of Brightside yard limits near Estates crossing. They are actually a couple of GRS model 2A upper quadrant semaphore signals that were donated to us back in 1989 by the Washington Central Railroad (WCRR). There's a very short article titled "Semaphore Signal Acquisition" in the May 1989 Club Car that describes what was acquired, but it doesn't tell the story of the adventure four of us took to Yakima, Washington that year to bring back these signals from the past. That was supposed to happen in a follow up article that was never written. So here it is, almost 31 years later.

In 1989, I had been a member of the PLA for almost a year and was spending part of my time in the newly formed Electrical and Signal Department headed by Pat Lewis. Pat approached me earlier in the year and asked if I'd be interested in taking a trip up to WA to pick up four semaphore signals. I really didn't know what that entailed, but it sounded like fun so I immediately said yes. The plan was for Pat and me to drive up in his 1960's vintage Jeep Wagoneer, stay the night somewhere along the way, then meet up with the WCRR signal foreman the next morning. Gerry Dewees and Ed Floth, riding in Gerry's motorhome pulling a flatbed trailer, would meet up with us that afternoon.

A few days before our departure Pat instructed me to pick up a small Oxy-Acetylene welding setup from his friend in case we had some stuck bolts that needed to be heated. I did that, and on the day of our departure we loaded it into Pat's Jeep along with a bunch of other tools, then headed out in the early morning on our adventure.

Sometime during its lifetime Pat had installed a somewhat souped up Chevy V8 into the Jeep. He also installed some other interesting features, like a

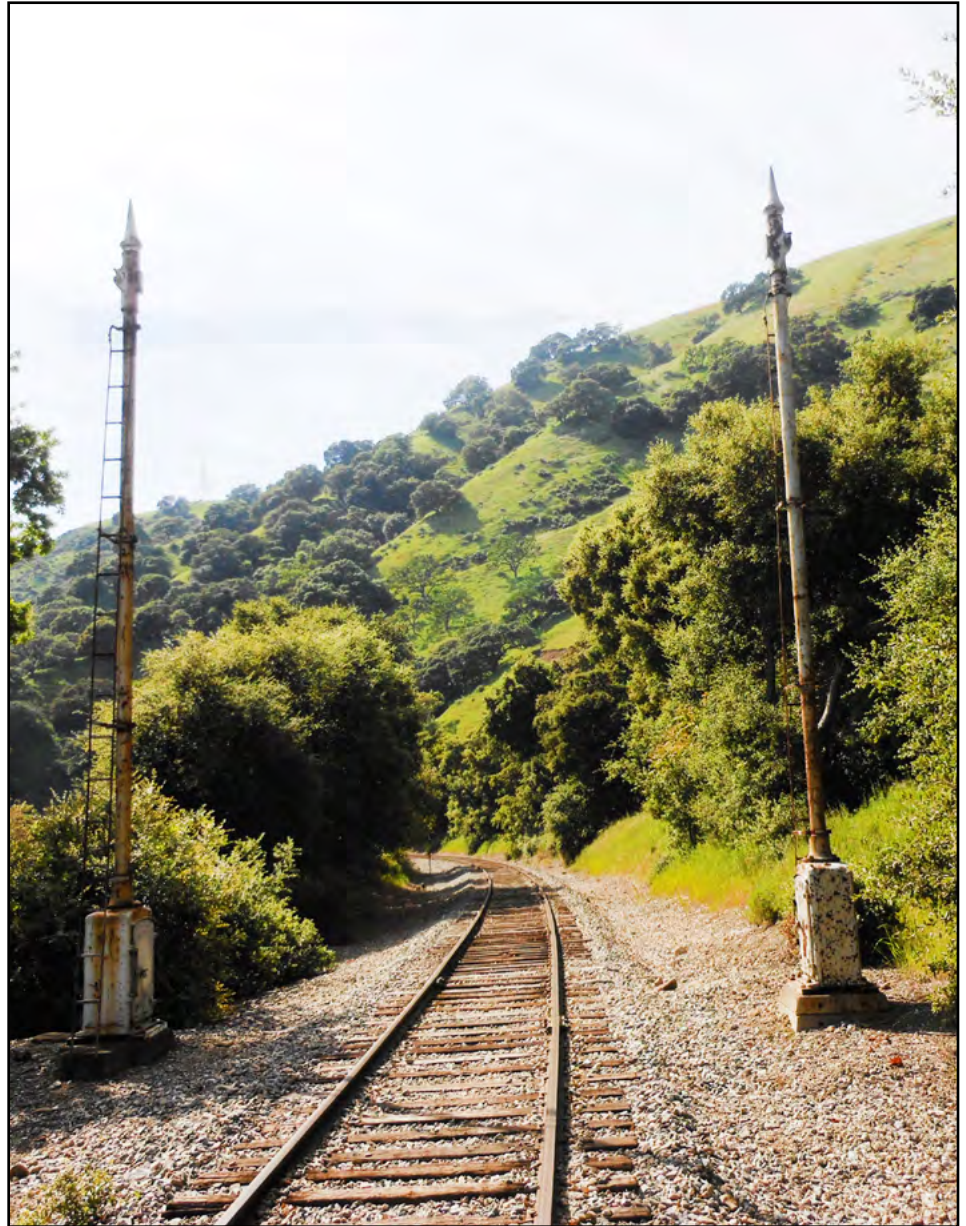


Photo by Curt Hoppins

Estates semaphores.

set of aircraft instruments including an altimeter, in the passenger compartment. I guess that was needed in case the Jeep got airborne.

After being on the road for a while Pat asked if I could take over the driving. We were somewhere around Redding when I happened to glance in the rear-view mirror and could only see a thick

fog behind us. I checked the side mirrors and realized we were creating a James Bond smoke screen. We quickly pulled over, popped the hood, and found the engine compartment dripping with oil. The culprit was a melted rubber hose running to a remote oil filter and had fallen against the hot exhaust manifold.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Signaleros Report

Curt Hoppins

I recalled seeing a gas station a few miles back, so I walked the distance and picked up a bunch of oil along with a new stock oil filter. We disconnected the remote filter, installed the stock filter, filled the engine with oil, then got back on the road.

The day soon began to warm up and so did the Jeep as we started to climb some grades. It wasn't long after that when it started to sputter and backfire through the carburetor. We'd slow down to around 45MPH, then it would run just fine. It appeared the engine was suffering from vapor lock and we'd have to keep our speed down until the evening when the air was cooler. This was going to be a very long drive. We finally arrived at our motel sometime after midnight, unloaded all our gear into the motel room, then hit the hay.

The next morning we headed out and were soon paralleling the WCRR right-of-way. There they were, every couple of miles, another pair of semaphore signals, some with their original wooden blades. We soon arrived at the WCRR office and met up with the signal foreman. He instructed us to pick out whichever four signals we wanted. He would close the right-of-way the next day so we didn't have to worry about protecting ourselves from any rail traffic. Off we went to scope out a couple of pairs that would be easy to access using the boom truck we had reserved at a local rental center for the next day. Sometime in the afternoon Gerry and Ed arrived in the motor home where we would stay the night.

When dawn arrived we had some breakfast then headed off to the rental center to pickup the boom truck and an additional flatbed trailer. Apparently, someone had calculated the height of the signals as being 12-Ft tall based on estimates they had made by looking at photos and counting the ladder rungs. Turned out the signals were actually 22ft tall so there wasn't enough room on the trailer Gerry had towed. We



arrived at the rental center as it was opening and were quickly informed that the boom truck we had rented had been "rolled" the previous day and was in the process of being repaired. That didn't sound good but they assured us they would get it fixed. After a few hours the truck was finally ready.

We drove it to the first pair of signals, got into position, then raised the boom to lift the first signal mast. It was all going well until the boom reached the top of the mast. Suddenly hydraulic fluid began flowing down the boom and onto the operator, which happened to be Gerry. With time ticking away we decided to keep working and have someone run back to the rental center for help. No cell phones in those days. Help did eventually arrive, but he wasn't able to fix the problem. Instead he left us a 5 gallon can of hydraulic fluid that we could use to keep things going while Gerry was getting bathed in fluid.

By the time we got the fourth signal removed it was getting late and we still had to cut the masts in half in order to get them to fit on the trailers. Fortunately, we had the Oxy-Acetylene welding setup that would make the cutting really easy. But we soon found out there was something wrong with the cutting torch and we could only use it to "melt" our way through the masts. It was a slow process but we eventually got them all cut and loaded onto the

trailers.

The next morning we parked the boom truck in front of the rental center before they opened, then started our trek back home. Gerry and Ed were in the lead with Pat and me right behind. All was going well until we got to some downward grades. Apparently the Jeep didn't like going downhill with the trailer at highway speeds, and its stagecoach style suspension would cause it to sway back and forth making it difficult to steer. Pat flashed his headlights and got Gerry to pull over. We stopped on the shoulder but were not completely off the roadway. Pat tried to back up to a better location but ended up jackknifing the Jeep and trailer, blocking the outer lane of traffic. He went to pull forward but the Jeep's engine died and wouldn't restart. Ed and I ran back to wave off traffic while Pat and Gerry tried to get the Jeep to restart. Fortunately, a motorist in a truck came by and offered to pull the Jeep to safety. Pat eventually got the Jeep to restart.

I really don't remember much after that. We were all tired and our nerves were frazzled. Two of the masts were eventually welded back together and the signals erected near Estates crossing where they have stood ever since.

You may be wondering why there are not any photos of our adventure. We did take lots of photos, but when we got to photo 37 we realized the camera had no film.

To learn more about the Signal Department check out our website at: www.ncrysignal.com.

Curt Hoppins



NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Volunteer Report

Ed Best - Volunteer Coordinator

The following is a list of the people who volunteered supporting your railroad even while we were closed in April. Remember, any volunteer hours doing projects directly related to the railroad during these restricted periods are eligible to be registered. If you register your hours on a sign in sheet, please print your name clearly so it can be read. You can also send your hours to me by e-mail at:

volunteers@ncry.org or ncryvolunteerhours@gmail.com.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Henry Baum
Mike Strider
Jim Evans
Linda Stanley
Pat Stratton
Steve Barkkarie
Jim Stewart
Kent Hedberg
Gail Hedberg

ADMINISTRATIVE

Donna Alexander
Ed Best
Howard Wise
Joe Scardino
Mark Miller
Mary Asturias
Paul Veltman
Peter Midnight

CAR DEPARTMENT

Howard Wise

DEPOT CREW & OPERATIONS

Donna Alexander

FACILITIES

Linda Stanley
Rich Alexander
Ron Thomas
Steve Jones

MECHANICAL

Gerry Feeney
Howard Wise
Linda Stanley
Steve Jones

MOW & TRACK

Mike Strider
Steve Jones

OTHER

Barry Lependorf
Charlotte Ferree
Ed Best
Linda Stanley
Patrice Warren
Steve Ferree
Zonker Harris

STEAM / SP 1744

PLANNING

Alan Siegwarth
Charles Franz
Henry Baum
Jeff Schwab

TRAIN OF LIGHTS

Tom Crawford



Project Manager Bob Pratt does his final inspection of newly built car sides for an MOW flatcar.

Photo by Pat Stratton

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Photo by Stan Kestler

SP Mogul No. 1744 heads for Mexican territory as it approaches the border fence between Calexico and Mexicali in 1955.