



THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 683

Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

www.ncry.org

July 2020

Early History of the forming of the Pacific Locomotive Assn.



McCloud #25 at Bartle, Calif. in 1964, that person in the cab door is Henry Luna. Henry and I had just completed alternating in the engineer's seat on the #25 on the run from McCloud with engineer Ray Piltz sitting over our shoulders giving us instructions.

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This is a summary of how the six original members of the Association met and the events that led up to establishing the association – with a little early year history.

The first members of the Association who met one another were Karl Koenig, Henry Luna and Tom Eikerenkotter. Tom and Karl were longtime friends having grown up in Burlingame, Calif and they attended grammar school together. In the seventh & eighth grades, they both attended the brand

new Burlingame Intermediate School. Henry, also from Burlingame, attended the same Intermediate school, but it was not until high school that Karl met Henry and introduced him to Tom. C. G. Heimerdinger Jr. (Charlie in those days) and Robert Field knew one another from the 1960 time period and the Northern California Railroad Club where Robert was President and Charlie was Excursion Director. Bart Gregg was a friend of Robert's.

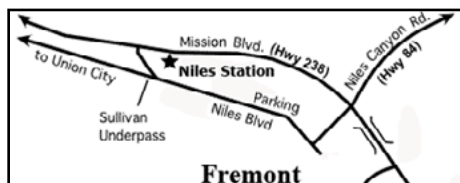
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OUR MISSION: To be an operating railroad museum for standard gauge railroading, past, present and future, with emphasis on the Western United States and special emphasis on Northern California

BOARDING LOCATIONS

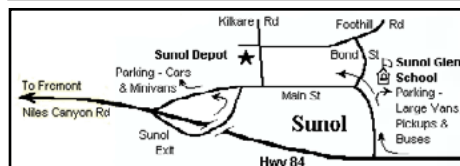
NILES STATION

37029 Mission Blvd.
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SUNOL STATION

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Sunol, CA 94586



===== BOARD OF DIRECTORS =====

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Train Master	Mark Miller	(510) 502-8521	mmiller510@aol.com
Volunteer Coordinator	Ed Best	(925) 998-8743	volunteers@ncry.org
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

July 11

3:15 pm

teleconferencing service

Membership Meeting

Saturday

July 18

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

===== July Activities =====

July 11	2nd Saturday	Board of Directors Meeting, 3:15 pm (Teleconference)
July 18	3rd Saturday	General Meeting, 3:15 pm (Teleconference)
July 25	4th Saturday	Brush Cutting, 8 am (Brightside) Steve Jones

PACIFIC LOCOMOTIVE ASSOCIATION'S 2020 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD HONOREES

Thank you to all the Voting Members who participated in the selection process. The response was fantastic! The following were chosen by their peers based on their decades of selfless dedication to the PLA, Castro Point Railway of Richmond, CA. and then later the Niles Canyon Railway. Their names will appear on the 'Spike' Award plaque in the Sunol Depot- forever to be remembered for their incalculable contributions to the PLA. Without further ado, please read on - the honorees for 2020 are:

HOWARD WISE
GEORGE CHILDS, JR.
STEVE SLABACH
ALAN SIEGWARTH
CURT HOPPINS
CONNIE LUNA
JIM EVANS
WARREN BENNER
DAVE BURLA
DENNIS MANN
PAUL VELTMAN
KEN ASMUS
PHIL ORTH
RAY MACALLISTER
JON VLASAK
RALEIGH 'BONES' ANDREWS

DEXTER DAY
MIKE STRIDER
JOE PETERSON
PETER SCHULZE
RICH ANDERSON
TIM FLIPPO
LOU BRADAS
JOHN FENSTERMACHER
LEN LEAVITT
CAROL SULLIVAN
ERROL OHMAN
AL HARVEY
AL FOWLER
CHARLIE HEIMERDINGER
DOUG CAMPBELL
BUD BARLOW



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

As the June General Membership meeting was held on the same day as the deadline for Club Car submissions for July, I sat on my article so I could announce the results of the election for Board of Directors, which was held by secret mail-in balloting of the Voting members. I want to thank the Recording Secretary Jim Evans for seeing that the ballots and candidate statements were mailed out in a timely manner, and for helping ensure the ballots were properly received, even though, as a nod to minimal interaction, the ballots were delivered directly to Dave Burla, who headed the Nominating Committee, and then the ballots were tabulated prior to the meeting by Dave and Mark Miller with results then delivered at the teleconference meeting. This went very smoothly and seemed to work well. I want to thank again the whole nominating committee Dave Burla, Mark Miller and Ed Best for all of their efforts.

The balloting results were reported that for President, Henry Baum was re-elected; for Recording Secretary, Jim Evans was reelected, and for Treasurer, Pat Stratton was reelected. These results were expected, as all of these positions had the incumbent running unopposed. The only contested position was for the open Director-At-Large position, and that also went to the incumbent, Kent Hedburg. Congratulations to all the winners, and a special commendation to Warren Haack for stepping up to run for the At-Large position.

Things continue to happen around the railroad, even though we are shut down. Our volunteers are working from home attending meetings and discussing items via video and teleconferencing. We are even holding our general membership and Board of Director meetings via teleconferencing, with great success. These are some of the best attended meetings we have had in a long time, and I find that extremely

encouraging. Some of our attendees have been members who live out of state and would find it difficult to attend in-person meetings.

We use teleconferencing as opposed to video conferencing only because the video conferencing tends to chew up bandwidth and at times disrupts the audio. Also, our membership tends to be older and includes those who still find the modern computer era daunting. Everyone knows how to work a telephone. Every mobile phone or cordless phone that I am aware of does have a mute button (and speaker phone capability), but members who still use an old-fashioned land line may find it is challenging to mute that type of equipment. Also, it must be tiring to hold a handset up to your ear for a long-duration meeting. I wonder how many of our members are still using rotary-dial landline phones. Contact me if you do, or if you want me to help you bring your communications equipment into the 21st century.

When I was working, we held lots of ONLINE meetings without video. These tended to be globally attended, so video of people in pajamas was not conducive to productivity. The constantly changing camera images can also be very distracting. But the online meetings did allow for sharing of computer screens which allowed everyone to see images and things like slide and charts that were being discussed. This was extremely productive, and I would like to see us become an organization that does things productively. I have even been asked to put together a tutorial class to help members learn how to be productive at teleconferences and online meetings. I will be working on that.

The current Alameda County Covid-19 guidelines are still making it difficult for us to hold in-person meetings, let alone get the railroad running again. Alameda County is running at least 2 weeks behind the state guidelines, and in some cases even longer. It is highly unlikely we will be able to have the July BOD

meetings and General Membership meetings in person, so we will schedule them as online meetings again. The BOD meeting will be on July 11th at 3:15PM and the membership meeting will be on July 18th. We normally do not have a General meeting in August, but if the restrictions allow it, we may go ahead and have one. If not August, then hopefully September.

The Operations Planning Committee which was convened to plan for the future was co-opted to help us plan for resuming our train operations. The Committee is doing an excellent job, and hopes to make recommendations to the Board in the next few weeks for implementation as soon as the restrictions allow us to resume. Hopefully, we can run some charters that would allow us to practice our implementations before dealing with the general public. We do know that moving forward, all ticket sales will be done online through Fare Harbor. Also, in the beginning, train operations will be run as Special trains, and not regular Sunday Operations. We need to ensure that we maximize our income for these trains, so members will not be allowed to ride for free. There will be plenty of opportunities for members to volunteer as on-board 'hosts' to help the train crew with managing the public, so that is a great way to also get a free train ride!

We are hoping to get some train operations in soon so that we will know how to deal with the 2020 Train of Lights. While I am confident we will be allowed to run some sort of TOL, it will certainly generate less income than we normally get. We will have to see how we can deal with that.

It is still vitally important 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. Some volunteers are not doing

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NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Membership Report

Linda Stanley - Membership Secretary

Following the June Board of Directors (BOD) meeting there are two topics on which I will focus – First: safeguarding the trust held by our valued members - and hard-working volunteers – that the PLA is a welcoming, inclusive and forward-thinking organization. Second: it is key that the PLA operates with full transparency and that those on the BOD and/or its membership are fully aware of all substantive issues facing it. For the most part, the PLA does a good job at both but there is always room for evaluation and improvement. One of the ways to assure both is the Bylaw review set to proceed this month. The need to examine how the PLA is allowed -going forward- to conduct membership business during exceptional times as these became clear after comments at the BOD meeting that there lacked an urgent need to accept new members into voting member status at this time. These comments came following a proposal made to address the issue of how to welcome members/volunteers into voting membership during the Covid pandemic. The By-laws language -strictly read- precludes this due to the PLA currently meeting via teleconference which prevents a secret ballot vote at a (face-to-face) membership meeting. If July's meetings are also held via teleconference, this pushes the next opportunity to vote to accept new voting members out to October, when the next membership

meeting is generally scheduled.

The coming Bylaw modifications and changes – which occur infrequently - may soon be voted on by the voting members of the PLA following the review process. So, there is an urgency, if not by some, then by those members who have expressed intent to become more involved in helping to frame the PLA's future course. One prospective voting member has already been prevented from participation in the recent BOD election. Since the June BOD meeting, three more members either wish to be reinstated or convert to voting member status. Due to the pandemic forcing meetings to be held via teleconference, how many more votes will these valued members be denied this important participation? Time will tell....

Moving on, I would like to highlight a quote from Matthew Petach, a PLA volunteer who was announced by the Membership Secretary at the June BOD meeting that he seeks voting member status. "I think for any volunteer organization, being as welcoming as possible of new blood with new energy and excitement is vital to ensuring a long and healthy life for the organization."

There is sometimes a tension between the 'old guard' and young 'whipper-snappers' who arrive full of ideas which challenge the status quo. Such was the case when one current mem-

ber of the BOD sought to frame the PLA more like a business, less like a club. Controversy and resistance ensued by those wishing to stay the course but over time this change has benefitted the PLA. Change is hard and it takes members who care enough for the PLA to bring their life's experience to share and contribute toward its growth. Ideally, those in leadership are willing to listen to these new voices who wish only the continued well-being of the PLA and have demonstrated their willingness to work hard toward its success.

Some of those who may join these ranks when given the opportunity are new members: Thomas Libbey, Celeste Hales who was added to the Robert Hales family membership, Robert Stipek and Diane Endom. Welcome to all and thank you for joining the PLA!

Staying Safe – and Looking Ahead
Linda Stanley

Hi Curt,

Can't thank you enough for your wonderful account of the signal poles retrieval escape. It is, by far, the funniest article ever to appear in The Club Car.

Sincerely,
Glee Willis
Reno, Nevada

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

Spring has given way to summer. The bright orange poppies, yellow mustard and other wild flowers up and down the ROW have displayed their glory. The green canyon hills have taken on a golden hue and the temperature has already approached triple digits. At least those things are going on as usual.

At Brightside, everything is still full of questions. When can we get back to working at the yard? When can we start to run trains? Will the people want to ride? What will the county require us to do to open for the public? Will we be able to run the TOL? Although I don't have all the answers, the BOD is eagerly watching what others in our situation are doing and have formed a committee that is making great progress toward a plan to run again. Social distancing, face coverings and extra cleaning of facilities are going to be the new normal for the near future, so we had best accept it. One thing is for sure. Niles Canyon Railway will run trains again.

In the meantime, work at Brightside has picked back up as members get into the swing of being "safe". MOW on Wednesdays have been cutting brush, repairing tow path, fixing our equipment and doing housekeeping work around the yard. Cars are being restored by members picking up projects to do in the comfort of home until we can work as groups again. We have built the special track section that will let us drop the center axle on the East Diner truck. This will take place on Yard track one just outside the Car shop. Stay tuned for more on that.

Work continues on the storm water run-off project. One last detail is to install a sump to collect the water behind the fuel shed and pump it over to Blake's pond. The potty dump station is ready for trains and we continue to develop the expansion to dump multiple cars at the same time.

Mechanical and Steam departments have been keeping our motive power



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

713 going on test run.

ready to run. You can't just let an engine sit. Gerald DeWitt and Chuck Kent have been keeping corrosion at bay. Howard Wise has completed water testing the KM9010's other engine and all went well. One more step toward restoration. On that subject, the WP713 made its first moves under its own power back and forth on the shop lead. I, for one, was overjoyed to see that. A couple of days later Gerry Feehey and Ron Thomas took her out on the main with the SP5623 and SP1195 in tow. Although the test run was less than phenomenal, (had some trouble making power from one of the control stands) it is believed the glitches are the result of sitting for almost a year in the shop. We will figure it out, and Gerry should be very proud that this monumental job could be done in-house. Great job guys!

So how about the Railroad? Well, out to the East, we have been working hard to get the utilities moved for the

Happy Valley Bridge repair. The fiber optic folks have a plan to bore the line under the bridge and it should be done this summer. AT&T has been alerted about its wire encroachment, as well as PG&E, and we will stay on them. Mike Strider has been making station signs for the Valley Subdivision. You may have seen the one at Verona, but look out for a new one at Bonita (just to the East of Johnston curve or MP37.25). He has been making them at home and bringing them out after he digs the hole. They look great. Next, he plans to replace the mileposts at MP37 and MP38. Keep it up Mike. A crew had to come out and re-splice the fiber optic cable on Arroyo Bridge again and the folks doing the Mission Clay clean-up came out to sample their monitor wells. One of our neighbors in Niles has become concerned about a utility pole on the south leg of the wye. It is abandoned (doesn't have any wires attached) and she is afraid it will come

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Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager

down on her house. It does not look like a signal pole and PG&E does not claim it. So, we will take it down in the spirit of harmony. At the Sunol station, you will notice new parking lot wheel stops (actually they are re-purposed signal cabinet bases with a fresh coat of paint) installed to protect the ramp that leads to the freight room museum display. We have purchased this structure and it needed to be protected. My thanks go out to CALTRANS for weed-eating the West end of our platform area. Last year the county told us we had to keep that area weed free for fire danger. I did not tell CALTRANS about their mistake.

We have donated the old WP side dump to Nevada State Railroad Museum, Boulder City, Nevada and it will be loaded out again. Some may remember we loaded it out once, but the truck grounded out from the weight and had to be unloaded. This time, they have hired the folks who brought us the Skookum, Taylor Heavy haul. They can handle it.

We are putting together a plan to hold an annual RWP training class. Either an online class or an outdoor session



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

New tire stops installed at Sunol Station.

is possible at this time. Soon we may be able to do classroom testing, but we are not getting in a twist about it because our training is good until the end

of 2020. Look for more news on that next time.

Stephen Barkkarie

Treasurer's Report

Pat Stratton - Treasurer

Our cash position looks good for now. However, we may have to make it last until next year. Let us hope not. But we must have more income in the second half of this calendar year than we had in the first half – we are too close to none right now.

We have Charter Deposits of almost \$5,000, which represent almost \$10,000 in revenue, but are subject to refund upon cancellation. We will stay in touch with the coming charters in the hopes of influencing their final go/no go decision. On the side of good news, our Forklift Loan (#2700.6) will be paid off by the middle of July.

We have paid the \$5,000 due on the purchase of the track Gradall. It is expected to work nicely with the rig Doug Vanderlee is about finished with – I call it the Heavy Hauler. Insurance is a major expense this time of year. By the end of this month we will have paid annual premiums of about \$40,000 for next year.

The Board appointed Regalia & Associates of Danville to perform an audit for the fiscal year ending June 30. We have this audit done each year so that our community partners and current and potential donors will have faith in our handling of our financial affairs.

Thank you to all of you who made the following donations in May:

General Fund	\$5,996
SP #1744	3,916
Steam Department	525
SP #9010	15
Bucket Truck Repair	1,210
New Loco Shop	100
SP #5623	309
Total	\$ 12,070

Thank you,

Pat Stratton

treasurer@ncry.org

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Early History of the forming of the Pacific Locomotive Assn.

Continued from Page 1

How these two groups of individuals met is quite interesting. The Western Railroader (a small railfan newsletter of the time edited by Francis Guido) published an article in August, 1959 on what steam was left running on Vancouver Island, which really peaked Charlie's interest. A month or so later he started to correspond with a young railfan in British Columbia by the name of Doug Cummings. In late 1959, Charlie traveled to Vancouver Island, and at that time he met Doug. Over the next two years they continued to correspond, and then in May 1961 Doug came to California. Doug stated that he had a friend in Burlingame and that he was going to show him around West Side Lumber Co. and the Pickering Lumber Company operations. That friend was Karl, and the driver to the Mother Lode was Henry. Charlie was invited to go along, and that is how Charlie met Karl and Henry.

Here is a little side item about that trip to Westside and Pickering. It was the Climaxes on Vancouver Island that really raised an interest to California railroad photographers, and it was the West Side Heisler that those from the Northwest wanted to see. Thus, the first stop was in Tuolumne to see Heisler #3 switching the mill. They then went to Standard where they found Pickering 3-truck Shay #11 switching that mill. Karl knew that Pickering 3-truck Shay #33 was running at Soap Creek Pass Camp, and asked directions on how to get there. They were advised to use the road off the road that goes through Angels Camp and the Calaveras Big Trees, and come in from the North. Well they tried it and got lost. While trying to find the correct direction on a logging road, a loaded log truck passed them going in the opposite direction. They all yelled at Henry to turn around and to follow that log truck. They went miles and finally came to Soap Creek Pass. On their way they went through Skull Creek, and much of the railroad still existed between that location and Soap



Yreka Western #18 & #19 charge up Butcher Hill in 1964 on a PLA excursion. #18 has just blown it's left cylinder head as evidenced by the steam in front of it's right cylinder. That changed the itinerary, and the second run of the day was with a single coach and #19.

Creek, but was in the process of being ripped up. Anyway, after spending time with the #33 they headed out, but this time it was to the South. They crossed the river above Beardsley Reservoir, and started up grade, but were stopped by a jack-knifed log truck. Henry did not want to try to get around it, so the driver of the log truck drove Henry's car around the truck. Charlie was in the right rear seat, and said there must have been at least two inches of clearance between his window and one of the logs.

Anyway, the four of them had a great time, and it was as they descended down Highway 108 that Charlie mentioned to Karl and Henry the Northern California Railroad Club and his involvement in a recent field trip that involved Howard Terminal. This was just the type of small trip that Karl was always interested in and of course he showed interest initially in the venture. It was on that trip that Charlie, Karl, and Henry also learned that all three were

students at the College of San Mateo, as was Tom. After that May 1961 Mother Lode trip Karl, Henry and Tom talked at least once about the idea of forming a club themselves but initially did nothing.

The formation of the PLA actually concerns a failure at the Northern California Railroad Club, where in 1961 Robert Field was President and Charlie was their Excursion Chairman. Bob and Charlie were interested in seeing if they could get some of the hard to see standby steam featured on excursions or field trips. They also wanted a newsletter that would report current news (the news in the Western Railroader was often months old at the time of publishing). However, when the Northern California Railroad Club attempted its first such trip in early 1961, which featured the Howard Terminal 2-6-2T #6, the Northern California membership would not support it. By that time, Bob Field and Charlie had come to the realization that maybe a new organization

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Early History of the forming of the Pacific Locomotive Assn.

was needed. When there was a second field activity a few weeks later on June 16, 1961 at the Blake Brothers operation at Richmond, it was supported by the same few of those who attended the first (Howard Terminal) outing. Karl and Henry attended this outing and it really spurred their interest in forming a new club. Robert Field went along with the concept but did not really put his heart into it. It was Karl and Charlie who really put the Association together in meetings in the College of San Mateo cafeteria and at Karl's home in Burlingame. The PLA was founded as the Associated Steam Society (ASS) by Charlie and Karl and renamed very soon for obvious reasons. The two of them as originators each added two friends because for some reason lost to fading memory they wanted six members. Probably this was related to the forming documents Charlie "borrowed" from another of the already established groups having spaces for six signatures. Charlie brought Bart Gregg and Bob Field to the table and Karl brought Henry Luna and Tom Eikerenkotter. At the time the formation documents were signed, Charlie and Karl had to track Henry down at work at Pacific Air Lines and "forced" him to join on the back of the Cargo King between flights as the sixth and final holdout. The first organizational meeting of the club in July 1961 was held in the backyard of Henry's family home in Burlingame with Henry, Charlie, Karl, and Tom in attendance. Most of the meetings in those initial years were held in living rooms of various board members. One early meeting was actually held in the ex-Southern Pacific business car "Western" when it was in Harrison Park in Oakland.

Henry Luna was the first president of the association serving until 1963. Bob Field was only a member of the PLA for six months and to the best of anyone's knowledge, did not attend a single meeting. Actually, Bart Gregg was also a short time member, although he was the first Secretary of the Association.



Photo by Tom Eikerenkotter

PLA #6 Work Party, Howard Terminal in 1963.

Bart resigned after being a member for little more than a year. He did rejoin for a year in 1969, but was never real active. George Childs joined the association in October 1961 and Don Hansen joined a couple months later and took over as Secretary after Bart left. Tom Eikerenkotter served as the second President, but only served one term until 1964 as he knew he had a date to join the Air Force in January 1965 and ended up staying in the Air Force as an officer, retiring in 1986 – and despite being out of the area has remained a member since the onset and currently lives in Ohio – the only founding member still a member. Henry Luna also was in the Air Force for one enlistment and for a while Charlie and Karl were the only founding members in the Bay Area with the association until Henry returned. Tom never returned to the Bay Area but has remained a member. How many members know that the first newsletter of the Association was 'Pacific News' that was edited by Karl Koenig and started as the club's newsletter. It was not too many months and Karl took the publication private in order to expand it into a true railroad news magazine, at which time the club established the 'Club Car' as the association's member's newsletter, though

initially the idea was to call it the 'Bull Sheet', but fortunately discarded.

Two of the reasons the association was established were first and foremost to run small excursions with normally not readily available steam locomotives plus the hope that someday the association could establish an operating museum. The first such venture occurred on Sept 1, 1961 at Kaiser Sand & Gravel in Oroville, Calif. This was more of a field trip as members had earlier cleaned up and partially painted their three 0-4-0T locomotives and on this day they lit fake fires in two of them for photos. The club actually called the operation Oroville Western. The first true excursion was on January 13, 1962 on the Howard Terminal Ry in Oakland. Their 2-6-2T was run all over the terminal in typical switching operations. A WP caboose was borrowed to carry participants from area to area. This, unbeknownst at the time was the last operation of the locomotive at Howard Terminal.

**Compiled by Tom Eikerenkotter
From memory and information
received over time from C. G.
Heimerdinger Jr. & Karl Koenig.**

**The conclusion of this story will be
in the August Club Car.**

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

This month's tale:

"WHAT ONCE WAS, ISN'T NOW"

The Castro Point Railway is gone. The equipment found new homes for storage until we could get the NCRy built to a point where we could run trains again.

I guess this tale starts with the closing days of the CPRy, and hope, fear, and vision for what would be the new Niles Canyon Railway. It was the Spring of 1985 when Peter Schulze and I first ventured onto the Southern Pacific's abandoned mainline through Niles Canyon. The right-of-way would be turned over to Alameda County for future transportation use.

The PLA had signed a lease agreement with Alameda County Land Management Department to maintain the right-of-way. For now, Peter and I could not believe that we would be running trains through this beautiful canyon. There was a lot of history in this canyon. This was part of the last link to complete the dream of going from the East Coast to the West Coast by rail. You could say this was the last link of the Transcontinental Railroad.

As we continued our walk up the canyon, we started to see what we would be up against; mud slides. There were scars on the hillsides where mud slides had taken place. We also saw that it was going to take a lot of upkeep to maintain this railroad in operational shape. The railroad had lots of vegetation that had not been controlled for a long while. The big thing we had to do was to see if we could get this railroad as it sat. That would be great.

In late May 1986, our dreams would come to the end of the line when the Southern Pacific started pulling rail throughout the canyon and Eastward. When they were done, we were left with the ties that the County bought to hold the right-of-way, and dirt. Some spots that had been a railroad looked like the Oregon Trail for covered wagons. For



Photo by Dexter Day

SP rail removal from right-of-way MP 34.5.

now, this was what we could say would be our new home. You have heard the term, "Rise up from the ashes"? Well, this was what we were looking at. We needed to get material to build this railroad. It was nice that our members were able to take a walk through the canyon and see the railroad intact.

At the time, Alameda County was in a land grab fight for the right-of-way with the adjacent land owners. If the county failed to win this case, we would be out in the cold with no place to go. This case would take a long time to get settled.

Back at Castro Point, it was July 1985 and we were getting ready for the 4th of July operation. We were going to run everything that was operational. It was the "Last Dance". The 4th of July came and the weather was perfect. The crowds were great and the operation was a great closing act for the Castro Point Railway. Toward the end of the operation, we double-headed Shay No. 12 and Heisler No.5 with a great look-

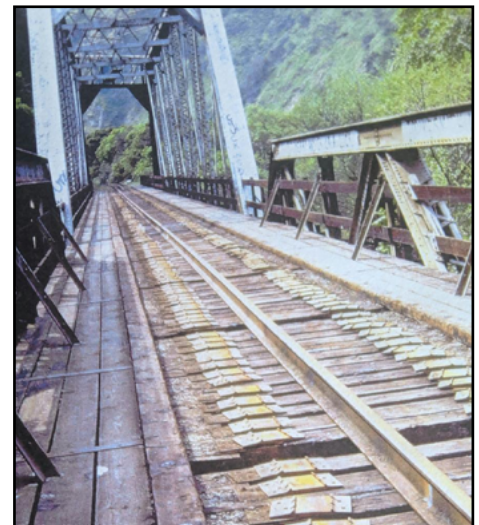


Photo by Dexter Day

Track removal by SP at Farwell..

ing train. Yes, fun was had by all who were there.

At the end of the operation, we took all engines and M200 that were involved in the day's operation out to the interchange tracks and staged them for a sendoff photo shoot. On queue, all

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

whistles and horn were blown. That brought to an end the regular operations on the CPRy.

It was then time to get the equipment that was going by rail readied for shipment. Two engines, Shay No. 12 and Quincy Tank Engine No. 2 were readied to be loaded onto flat cars to go to Vancouver, Canada, for Rail Fair.



Photo by Dexter Day

Track rip at Castro Point. This would be all we had in material.



Photo by Dexter Day

Farewell send off to CPRy operations.

In Vancouver, the two engines were unloaded and steamed up. The No. 12 was out on a test run when the word came down to our group that we did not have the proper boiler paperwork and we would have to shut down. Both engines were placed on static display and we staffed them to answer questions on their history and use. Although we



Photo by Dexter Day

Boarding train at Molate Beach.



Photo by Dexter Day

Double header at end of day on last day.



Photo by Dexter Day

The walk to look over our new home. SP had not removed rail yet.

were not able to be in the Grand Parade, we did benefit from being there. We were well received and did a lot of PR for our organization. Another good thing that came out of this adventure: the cost for transporting the two engines was paid by Canada. We had the engines delivered to Shinn St. in Fremont, at the Alameda Country Corporation Yard. The rest of the equipment was being readied for movement by the AT&SF and the SP. The equipment that was going by truck went to the interchange tracks.

In the Spring of 1986, we started to dismantle all the track from the interchange to the bridge. This was not an easy task since we were dealing with rail that had not been disturbed for forty some years. As we continued to take the track apart, we began to see what we had been running on. Yes, we must have had a four-leaf clover in our back pocket. When we were done, we pulled all rail from the bridge to the Navy gate. Now when the time came, we could get trucks onto the interchange tracks to load equipment.

For those who would like to see where the Castro Point Railway was, you can still see most of it by the road. Head West on Highway 580 toward the San Rafael bridge and take last exit to right (Stenmark Drive) before reaching bridge. You can then take the road down along the water, the old right-of-way and the old ferry pier. Go over the hill and past Point Molate Beach and past the PAD and through the Navy base which is an open base. You then will see Wine Haven. Continue East and you will come upon the causeway. At that point, you will have a great view of East Brother Light Station. Now the CPRy is just a memory of the past, but the NCRy story is just beginning and that means more tales, but this tale ends along with the Castro Point Railway.

Dexter Day

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Charles G. Heimerdinger, Jr.

By the time a friend of mine and I began hanging out around the NCRY in the late 1980's, Charles Heimerdinger had already begun to cut back his active involvement at the railroad. An involvement that had begun a couple of decades earlier in the 1960's as one of the 'original 6' founders of the PLA and credited with being one of the 'active 3' that were the driving force first with an idea, then a purchase of a steam locomotive and then tackling the ever-present challenges of finding a space and then building their own railroad.

What follows are remembrances of Charles Heimerdinger, who passed away recently, from those who knew him best and are among those who worked alongside Charles in the early days of the Castro Point Railway and as he worked to locate a new home for their railroad collection which culminated in the herculean move to Niles Canyon in the mid-1980's. Charlie, here are the (edited) tributes from your fellow volunteers.

To a man, they all send a wish for you to 'rest in peace' – amen! - Anonymous
Prior to his passing, these words of well wishes:

•I certainly wish Charlie all the best. He was responsible for much growth in myself and the PLA and I have many fond memories of him and his stories – Chris Campi

•I too wish Charlie the best. I have fond memories of his education and guidance imparted to me when I was a gandy dancer of CPRY. – Patrick Cassell
Then;

•C.G.Heimerdinger passed May 27th, 2020. He was the last of the three active founders of the PLA after the passing of Karl Koenig and Henry Luna. Charlie was one of the main factors that got me interested in the PLA in 1968. He served on the BOD in various capacities for many years and had extensive knowledge of all aspects of railroads, having worked for the Southern Pacific first in operations before retiring



1971 at Castro Point. Top L-R, Mike Strider, Greg Brahms, Bottom L-R, Tom Mongovan, Charlie Heimerdinger, Randy Cailish, Dave Sell, and Chris Holombo.

as a senior claims agent. Charlie was a skilled HO model railroader, active in the San Leandro club then later in Spokane, Washington area. Sad news – Jim Evans

•I'm saddened to hear of Charlie's passing. For a 16-year-old student brakeman at Castro Point, he was a gruff mentor but I learned a lot from him. – Brian Wise

•I got a call from long time member Warren Smith about Charlie's passing. My knowledge of him goes back to when I first joined the Castro Point Railway in Richmond in 1969. Chuck held several board positions including president and general manager and was instrumental in the move from Castro Point to Niles Canyon. The PLA was like a second job for Charlie and he cared for its operations, members and railroad equipment collection. At times very opinionated and hard-headed, he did get things done. When in a bind you could count on Charlie to help you out. Rest in peace Charlie – Mike Strider



1978 helping build the ramp in Richmond for moving of SP 0-6-0 1269 to Castro Point.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Charles G. Heimerdinger, Jr.



Photo by Mike Strider

The photo was taken with my camera on a tripod circa 1978 or 1979 at Castro Point Railway and we were all working on the track after a derailment. From left to right: Chris Collins (and his dog), C.G. Heimerdinger, Jon Kirchanski, JT Harden, Mike Strider, Phil Orth, and Lou Bradas.



Photo by Leonard Sell

Standing in front of the CV#4 at the CPRY circa 1978. From L/R – Frank Fontes, Greg Gregory and Charles Heimerdinger.

• I had written a story last year about the formation of the PLA from memory and notes I had from Karl Koenig and Charlie. Had to make a change in the article now that Charlie is no longer with us. What hits me hard is since nobody knows the status of Robert Field and Bart Gregg, I am sort of the last of the original 6 – Tom Eikerenkotter

• A nickname for Charlie was 'Mr. Humdinger' and he was a real one. He was usually right about 'club' affairs and probably its most devoted member. He was also a good friend to have. – Steve Slabach

• I first met Charles Heimerdinger in April 1970. Charles, George Adams and I went to Quincy, Ca. August 1970 to load and tie down on top of a flatcar the Quincy 2. As an electrician work was slow and Charley encouraged me

to apply for a job on the railroad and in 1971 I went to work for the Santa Fe and eventually became a locomotive engineer. With the help of Charlie and Pete Rogers they made me a steam engineer. Whether it was locating and moving 100 relay ties, getting the SP to give us a 32' tall train order board or arranging for the CP 233 to move by Santa Fe barge to SF to stand alongside the SP 4449 for the 1776 freedom train celebration. Charley was good about kicking around crazy ideas. Our biggest project was moving the CLV #4 that was in a field and we had to move it 1000' down a road. We solved all obstacles and got the engine out of Nevada. Charley's confidence in me was always the big push to solve the next problem. I will always have a kind thought, for Charley's encouragement made the impossible, possible. – Frank R. Fontes

• Charles brought me into this group and taught me a lot about railroading. Charlie was the sparkplug of the CPRY- and NCRY in the early days. He would find out what people were good at and herd them in that direction to help get things done. It is likely that without Charlie's insight the NCRY would not exist today. He was instrumental in dealing with the County for PLA to lease the SP abandoned right-of-way.

To Charlie, excursion field trips of an unusual or unique nature were just as important as establishing an operating railroad. This was the original purpose of the PLA – to organize and promote fan trips to interesting operations or last runs of rail lines particularly in the Western US.

On the Southern Pacific Charles was known as 'Checkbook Charlie' because as a SP claims agent his job was to settle claims. BTW, he hated to be called Charlie. He preferred Chuck, Chas or Charles but everyone called himCharlie!

R.I.P. Charles Heimerdinger, Jr.

Dave Burla

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

2020 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR - John Zielinski

The majority of the volunteers of the Pacific Locomotive Association/Niles Canyon Railway have voted fellow volunteer, John Zielinski, 2020 Volunteer of the Year. Congratulations to John! Traditionally, this award is announced and bestowed during the annual 4th of July Picnic, but unfortunately, that event has been cancelled this year due to the Pandemic. In lieu of the public recognition John would have received at the picnic, we feel that an article about why his fellow volunteers hold him in such high regard would be a good way to show John our appreciation.

John has been a member since 2000, and often does his best work - like the majority of our valued volunteers - toiling in the background where few see his efforts. He is a frequent contributor to Wednesday MOW Track Maintenance gangs, 1st Saturday Track Construction, and 2nd Wednesday & 4th Saturday Brush Cutting gangs. In addition:

If you have ever driven through Brightside Yard without puncturing your tire on a nail, screw or miscellaneous piece of shrapnel, you can thank John. He regularly rolls his magnetic nail catcher (of his design and manufacture) along the yard roads and collects pounds of sharp objects otherwise destined for your treads.

If you ever start up any power equipment in the yard, your success is because John regularly campaigns the rolling stock to ensure the batteries are filled to the proper level and are holding a charge.

If the tires on the equipment you are operating are inflated to proper pressure, you can thank John's equipment spreadsheet and his periodic tire inspection program. He monitors over 150 pneumatic tires on our railroad.

If you turn on a light switch and the fluorescent tubes light up, you can thank John for his regularly scheduled fluorescent tube inspection campaign.

If you plug in an extension cord at one of the many electrical gang boxes out in the yard and it becomes energized, you

can thank John for his regular inspection of GFI circuits inside the shops and out in the yard.

Last but not least, John frequently marks up to serve as a Brakeman during operating days on the NCRY. His dependability and good nature make him a pleasure to volunteer alongside and no doubt contributed to this recog-

nition among his peers.

The PLA salutes John Zielinski for the numerous contributions he provides to help make his fellow volunteers experience more enjoyable and hassle-free. Many thanks to John, and thanks go as well to John's wife Martha Zielinski for sharing John with us.

Steve Jones

President's Message

Henry Baum - President

Continued from Page 4

that, and that is a problem for the organization if we are called to show our records.

The newly formed By-Laws Review Committee has only 5 members interested in participating. While that is enough, I would like to see a few more people get involved. As I stated last month, I would like the Board members as well as all 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. If you are interested, a copy of the latest by-laws can be found in the documents

section of the Member's website. I hope to convene the committee and get them reviewing by the middle of July. While I don't know what the committee might decide, I am expecting to see a list of simple changes that clarify gray areas and loosen needless complications, and possibly a list of items that will need further review and discussions.

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

2020 Whistle Award - Dexter Day

Every year, the PLA Board of Directors presents the Whistle Award to a volunteer whom the Board feels exemplifies the efforts of all our volunteers, and who has contributed immensely to the Organization.

The Whistle Award is a traveling trophy, sort of like the Stanley Cup, which remains with the recipient for the year until the next recipient is announced. Each year the winner's name is added



to the trophy. Eventually another tier will be added to the trophy to make room for more names. Normally the award is presented at our July 4th festivities, but alas, this year we are not allowed to have them.

This year the Board unanimously approved that this year's recipient should be our recently retired General Manager, Dexter Day. Dexter's contributions and exploits in his 30+ years as General Manager and over 50 years of being a member are well documented in prior month's Club Cars, and there is probably enough to fill a book that is yet untold. We want to congratulate Dex on his many accomplishments, and to thank him again for his many years of dedicated service to the organization.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Volunteer Report

Ed Best - Volunteer Coordinator

The following is a list of the people who volunteered supporting your railroad in May. All volunteer hours on projects related to the railroad during these restricted periods are eligible to be registered. You can send your hours to me by e-mail at volunteers@ncry.org. Please note preferred email address has changed. One member of a working group can send me the data for all members of the group.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Henry Baum
Mike Strider
Jim Evans
Linda Stanley
Pat Stratton
Steve Barkkarie
Jim Stewart
Kent Hedberg
Gail Hedberg
Ed Best
Joe Scardino
Mark Miller
Rich Alexander
Steve Jones

CAR DEPARTMENT

Dennis Mann
Henry Baum
Mike Pechner

ELECTRICAL & SIGNALS

Curt Hoppins
Jim Stewart

FACILITIES

Bob Bradley
Rich Alexander
Ron Thomas
Wesley Van Osdol
Gift Shop
Donna Alexander

MECHANICAL

Alan Siegwarth
Chuck Kent
Dee Murphy

MECHANICAL

Dennis Mann
Doug Vanderlee
Gerald DeWitt
Gerry Feeney
Henry Baum
Henry Chandler
Howard Wise
Karl Swartz
Linda Stanley
Mark Whitman
Steve Jones
Steve Slabach
Wesley Van Osdol

MEETINGS

Andy Deane
Bev Patterson
Bill Strahle
Bob Pratt
Charlene Murrell
Charles Gullo
Charlotte Ferree
Chris Hauf
Curt Hoppins
Dave Burla
Dave Ernest
Dee Murphy
Derek Schipper
Dexter Day
Donald Kirker
Donna Alexander
Doug Debs
Doug Vanderlee
Ed Best
Faith Farberman
Fred Elenbaas

MEETINGS

Gail Hedberg
George Childs
Henry Baum
Hiroka Green
Jackie Vlasak
James Stewart
Jim Baber
Jim Evans
Jim Green
Jim Stewart
John Abatecola
John Burnside
John Houghton
John Zielinski
Karen Kadaja
Kathleen Olander
Kent Hedberg
Laura Bajuk
Linda Best
Linda Stanley
Lou Bradas
Mark Miller
Mary Asturias
Mike Strider
Nancy Pratt
Pat Buder
Pat Stratton
Paul Veltman
Peter Midnight
Rich Alexander
Ricky Soldavini
Rosanne Strahle
Shirley Ernest
Stephen Ferree
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Jones

MEETINGS

Steve Miller
Thomas Libbey
Tim Flippo
Tom Eikerenkotter
Trudie Burnside
Warren Benner
Warren Haack
Zona Fowler

MOW & TRACK

Bob Pratt
Dee Murphy
Ken Southwick
Linda Stanley
Mark Whitman
Matthew Petach
Mike Strider
Pat Hafey
Pat Stratton
Ron Thomas
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Jones

OTHER

Barry Lependorf
Ed Best
Howard Wise
Jim Stewart
Linda Stanley
Patrice Warren
Paul Veltman
Steve Jones
Zonker Harris

TRAIN OF LIGHTS

Tom Crawford

Looking for train related Gift Items?

Are you looking to purchase a train related item for yourself or someone else? We are still closed for riding the train, but the gift shop can be opened to purchase something by contacting me. I can meet you at the Sunol Depot for your personal shopping time, or if you live far away I can send photos of what we have and I can send the items to you for a small mailing fee.

And we have gift certificate coupons to purchase for giving a special and unique gift. The ticket prices, to cover both steam and diesel engine regular Sunday operations, are \$20.00 for adults (13-61), \$15.00 for seniors (62+), and \$10.00 for children (3-12). Two and under ride for free so no purchased ticket is necessary. These can be sent to you to give as gifts, or we can meet at the Sunol Depot for you to purchase.

We also donate 4 coupons to schools and other non-profit organizations for raffles and auctions. If your child's school is planning a function to raise money, or you belong to another non-profit organization and they are having an event to raise money, have a representative contact me with the name of the school or organization, the tax ID number, the date of the event, and their address to send the coupons. These can come by email or to our post office: Niles Canyon Railway, P. O. Box 515, Sunol, CA 94586.

Donna Alexander

station-agent@ncry.org
510-996-8420



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Time Sensitive Material



Photo by Kent Brezee

We didn't have our Fourth of July train this year, so Warren Haack thought we could celebrate with 2013's Fourth of July line-up. Left to right, CJ Carlson, Warren Haack, Alan Siegwarth, Henry Chandler, Jeff Schwab, Charles Franz, CJ Vargas, Jonathan Kruger, Dave Loyola, Gerald DeWitt, Dan Loyola and Phillip Preeo.