



THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 684

Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

www.ncry.org

August 2020

Steam Department Volunteers hard at work!



Photo by Alan Siegarth

All three of the steam locomotives that department volunteers worked on in one day shown in one photograph!

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Brightside has been relatively quiet over the last few months with social distancing in practice and the railroad not operating, but limited work continues on many fronts in the steam department. The gasoline powered water pump seal failed on the NATX #8502 Tank Car that is used to haul water from Sunol for use in the yard and the motor crankcase was found full of water. The pump has been troublesome over the last several years and this prompted us to finally replace it with a new one. Hen-

ry Chandler, Gerald DeWitt and Chuck Kent spent several days tearing the old pump off the car and replacing it. With the pump replaced, we will once again be able to fill steam locomotive boilers for operation when the time comes to operate again.

The crew has spent time cleaning the running gear on the Skookum and Clover Valley. Bill Ross has done a fantastic job cleaning the rods on the #4 and although the public will not notice

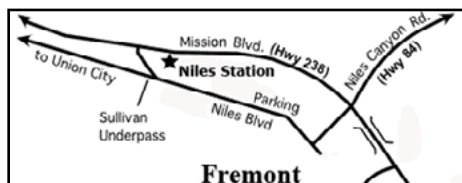
Stack Talk continued on Page 13

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

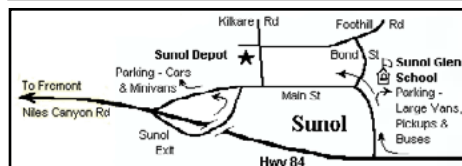
NILES STATION

37029 Mission Blvd.
Fremont, CA 94536



SUNOL STATION

6 Kilcare Road
Sunol, CA 94586



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

President	Henry Baum	(925) 447-7358	president@ncry.org
Vice President	Mike Strider	(707) 318-2633	vice-president@ncry.org
Recording Secretary	Jim Evans	(650) 697-9033	secretary@ncry.org
Membership Secretary	Linda Stanley	(510) 579-6300	membership@ncry.org
Treasurer	Pat Stratton	(650) 888-8619	treasurer@ncry.org
General Manager	Stephen Barkkarie	510-368-1733	sbarkkarie@comcast.net
Director-At-Large	Jim Stewart	(510) 796-2810	james.stewart4@comcast.net
Director-At-Large	Kent Hedberg	(415) 608-3811	hedbergs@sbcglobal.net
Director-At-Large	Gail Hedberg	(510) 207-5524	marketing@ncry.org

===== DEPARTMENTS =====

Brush Cutting	Steve Jones	(510) 289-3559	fcocompost@aol.com
Car Department	Dennis Mann	(650) 726-0167	dmann@coastside.net
Charter Agent/Docents	Jim Evans	(650) 697-9033	charter-agent@ncry.org
Chief Engineer	Mike Strider	(707) 318-2633	mstrider67@gmail.com
Club Car Editor	Barry Lependorf	(510) 431-3401	clubcar@ncry.org
Commissary	Bob Bradley	(510) 910-7024	ncry.commissary@gmail.com
Crew Caller	Jackie Vlasak	(510) 582-2648	traincrews@gmail.com
Gift Shop	Gail Hedberg	(510) 207-5524	giftshop@ncry.org
Hazmat Manager	Doug Debs	(650) 704-1487	dougdebs2472@yahoo.com
Member Communications	Linda Stanley	(510) 579-6300	membercom@ncry.org
Museum Curator	Dennis Mann	(650) 726-0167	dmann@coastside.net
New Member Orientation	Glenn Fountain	(510) 673-1084	grfoun10@aol.com
Operations Manager	Dexter Day	(408) 234-4956	plancrygm@sbcglobal.net
Public Relations	Henry Baum	(925) 447-7358	pr@ncry.org
Road Foreman of Engines	Kent Hedberg	(415) 608-3811	hedbergs@sbcglobal.net
Security Department	Jim Evans	(650) 697-9033	fivechime@aol.com
Signal Department	Curt Hoppins	(408) 723-1154	curt@ncrysignal.com
Station Agent - Niles	John Fenstermacher	(510) 522-7949	johnnsherif@aol.com
Station Agent - Sunol	Donna Alexander	(510) 996-8420	station-agent@ncry.org
Steam Department Head	Alan Siegwath	(408) 515-4602	siegy667@hotmail.com
Steam Hosteler Training	Jeff Schwab	(510) 734-6890	jeffs@levinterminal.com
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
August 8
3:15 pm

teleconferencing service

Membership Meeting

NO MEETING
SCHEDULED
THIS MONTH

CLUB CAR DEADLINE

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

Send e-mail to:

clubcar@ncry.org

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

===== August Activities =====

August 8	2nd Saturday	Board of Directors Meeting, 3:15 pm (Teleconference)
August 15	3rd Saturday	Wedding Charter, 5:30 pm (Sunol) Jim Evans
August 22	4th Saturday	Brush Cutting, 8 am (Brightside) Steve Jones
August 22	4th Saturday	Wedding Charter, 5:30 pm (Sunol) Jim Evans

ALL ACTIVITIES SUBJECT TO CHANGE OR CANCELLATION!

Treasurer's Report

Pat Stratton - Treasurer

Welcome to mid-July. Under Alameda County rules, Brightside is open again for controlled activities, but actual train operations are still not allowed. The PLA has a strong cash position right now, and we are zealously guarding it because we still don't know if revenue operations will be allowed at any time during the rest of this year and into 2021 - we may need it to "keep the lights on" for a currently unknown period of time. So check with me before spending any money on projects outside the bare minimum required at this time.

As Treasurer I am responsible to oversee our organizations' fundraising activities. There are a variety of ways to raise funds, more today than ever in

this electronic world, and it is important that these strategies be coordinated so they work together, not clashing with or drowning each other out. Gail Hedberg is our Fundraising Director, tasked with planning and coordinating PLA fundraising activities. These might include grants, direct mail, social media, capital campaigns, and any other fundraiser. If you have ideas, or think your project might make a good candidate, contact Gail, myself, or another Board member. All activities will be vetted, planned, and presented to the Board via Gail.

One ongoing fundraiser you may not know about is Amazon Smile. If you designate PLA, which is a qualified non-profit within Amazon Smile, each time you make a purchase from Amazon, some amount will come to PLA. It won't make your purchase more expensive, but everyone's participation will result in a quarterly check in support of PLA. Try it out if you haven't already, and Thank You!

Cash donations in June from 40 individuals covered almost \$16,400 in expenses for the PLA. The General Fund received \$4,200, SP1744 re-

ceived \$5,785 and the Steam Dept. \$200, the KM9010 \$260, MOW equipment \$200, a new Loco Shop \$100, the Bucket Truck Repair another \$1,700. Also helping out immensely, with over \$3,900, were in-kind contributions. This is where an individual purchases materials, supplies or repairs required for a project, paying for it themselves but not requesting reimbursement. This is also a very effective way to help our railroad get projects done. Thank you to all who have contributed. At a time when we are precluded from any revenue operations, your donations are keeping us going.

Thank you,
Pat Stratton
treasurer@ncry.org



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

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 sitting at home in my normally air-conditioned office with the windows open enjoying a cool breeze from the East. What in Hell is going on? This is pretty much unheard of, and is really unusual for mid-summer.

We all know that weather can be variable, and the only thing you can say about it for sure is it will change. Still, if I were a cave-dweller I would probably be alarmed by the 'new' normal.

The 'new' normal. That is a great phrase. It says everything in 3 simple words. It also says nothing about anything. We all feel we understand it, though, and can frame it into our lives. My 'new' normal is not your 'new' normal. But we all have a definition. For some, the 'new' normal may actually be indistinguishable from the 'old' normal. For others, after 5 months of this pandemic, they may have forgotten the 'old' normal.

Some cannot wait for the 'new' normal to become what the 'old' normal used to be, back to the way things were. Others hope the 'new' normal never reverts to the 'old' normal, seeing this as a golden opportunity to go in new directions. Regardless of your position, I am sure you all understand that the situation requires creativity and flexibility and that doesn't just mean personally, but for organizations like the Pacific Locomotive Association as well.

How's this for a 'new' normal. The PLA was not able to hold our annual July 4th picnic due to the County restrictions, yet, following the 'old' normal, the PLA Board of Directors did decide that this year's winner of the coveted 'Whistle Award' would be our recently 'retired' General Manager, Dexter Day. The whistle award is unique among PLA honors, as it is accompanied by a travelling trophy that the recipient gets to proudly display in their home for the entire year. Sitting in a plastic bag for a year would not be appropriate. So I met with Dexter Day and current General Manager Steve Barkkarie for a so-



PLA President Henry Baum presents the 2020 Whistle Award to Dexter Day at the Sunol Depot on July 15th, 2020.

cially distanced, outdoor dining lunch at Casa Bella. The outdoor dining restriction had been waived in Alameda county just a couple of hours before, so this was fortuitous (otherwise we would probably end up lunching at McDonalds). After a leisurely lunch I made the presentation of the Whistle Award standing outside the Sunol Depot. See the photo. Notice the gloves and mask, and the award still blossoming out of its hygienic plastic traveling bag. Steve Barkkarie took the photo. So, this is the 'new' normal, or maybe the 'current' normal is a better term. Naw, 'new' is shorter.

Similarly, the winners' names of the Volunteer of the Year awards and the second round of Lifetime Achievement awards were added to their respective plaques in the Sunol Depot. While no formal presentation was made, the winners were announced in last month's Club Car. We will be presenting all of these award winners with Certificates

(suitable for framing) so they have a permanent memento of their achievements. This will have to wait until we can have an in-person gathering of some sort (in the 'new' normal).

The current Alameda County Covid-19 guidelines are still making it difficult for us to hold in-person meetings (due to a 10 person limit) yet alone get the railroad running again. It is probably best to schedule it as an online meeting again, so the August BOD meeting will be on August 8th at 3:15PM. We normally do not have a General meeting in August, but we may go ahead and have one as an online meeting again. If not August, then hopefully September.

I want to thank the Operations Planning Committee which was convened to plan for the future and was co-opted to help us plan for resuming our train operations. The Committee provided a number of recommendations to the Board for implementation as soon as the restrictions allow us to resume. We

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

President's Message

Henry Baum - President

are going to try and run some charters in conjunction with Casa Bella events. We are hoping to get some weekend train operations in soon so that we will know how to deal with the 2020 Train of Lights if we are allowed to run it (although the likelihood is shrinking by the day), and the need to make a decision will be upon us shortly.

The inaugural meeting of the By-Law Review Committee was recently held. The By-Laws make up the principle governing rules for the organization. These By-Laws have been reviewed and updated numerous times over the years to adapt to new situations. That is what we will be endeavoring to do this go-around also. So the scope of this review will be identifying clarifying language for areas that are subject to interpretation.

Fundamental and philosophical review of the By-Laws and the organization is beyond the scope of this committee, but these issues may be deserving of some discussion nonetheless. The structure of the Organization is not being reviewed. The common practice of electing a Board of Directors and then letting the Board select who is assigned each of the tasks has been determined numerous times to not be in the best interests of our all-volunteer organization. Similar organizations such as ours have gone to this model, and usually are far less successful.

The Membership classes defined in the By-Laws also appear to be serving us well. The By-Laws allow the Board to determine membership levels and dues. If we were to adopt a tiered membership structure like many other organizations, it would be done more as a marketing model with rewards based on level donated. CSRM and others use this model successfully, but we have avoided it as the work involved is extremely difficult for an organization without a paid staff to manage it.

The main reason to do this By-Law review at this time is that we have

identified a number of 'gray' areas in the By-Laws that could benefit from some clarification. The key point will be discussing these issues amongst the committee members. For some of these issues, it may be helpful to learn the background on the clauses from the older members.

Obviously, Article II needs updating. Our PO Box is now in Sunol. Clarification of a number of areas is required – in general, any area not specifically forbidden in the By-Laws can be 'interpreted'. The By-Laws do not forbid us to hold meetings by teleconference, videoconference or online, although there may be a need to reevaluate the situations where the various meetings are called, how notifications are made, and how voting by the voting members can be accomplished. Should we allow voting managed by a third-party to en-

sure fairness and propriety are never questioned? There are services available that do this, for a fee. The only real way to do this is to go through the By-Laws section by section, and discuss if there is a need for clarification.

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

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



Photo by Curt Hoppins

Jim Stewart performing signal inspections in Pandemic approved attire.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager

Well, another month has come and gone under the cloud of COVID. We had an opening of Brightside with members returning to work masked and gloved but eager to get back to the business of railroading. Then a volunteer got a positive test result and here we go back into full shut down. Everyone who visited the yard got tested and came back negative. For me that would indicate our efforts to keep one another safe are, at least, adequate. (Our positive member subsequently tested negative after a two week wait.)

Although no trains are able to run, Niles Canyon Railway is still a busy place. As General Manager I am responsible for dealing with all outside companies and agencies that have business on our property. There are quite a few. The ones I dealt with just this month were Kinder-Morgan doing anomaly excavation at Thompson's Crossing, Century Link/Golden State Utilities doing preparations to move the fiber-optic cable from Happy Valley Bridge, Alameda County spraying difficult weeds, the clean-up company at Crist Oil needing to drill a score of new wells at our Niles Station, California PUC reporting missing signs at Hearst Crossing and Sunol Station, and finally our good friends at ACME Fire Suppression informed me it is time to check and recharge extinguishers. (Wed MOW and our Yard Master assisted in collecting over one hundred of these crucial safety items and delivered them to the Car Shop).

Out on the track, Steve Jones and Chris Boza directed a brush cutting Blitz (a week of non-stop tree trimming) once again battling back the ever encroaching vegetation. I applaud all the members who came out in full safety attire even with the hot summer temperatures. I do not mention you by name, but you have my respect for your hard work. I also want to thank Mark Whitman for taking the backhoe out and removing small stumps to try



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

Gang replacing the Diner pin, left to right, Bob Bradley, Doug Vanderlee, Wes van Osdal and Ron Thomas with Pat Stratton under the car.



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

Axle lowered.

and limit the regrowth of trees. (Mark has also spearheaded repairs on this valuable piece of equipment. Thanks) I have been keeping an eye on the right-of-way for trespassers, track condition and to let people know we are still here. I have found a few broken bolts (which were replaced) and have again had several conversations with folks walking the track to get out of the house. (I have become quite good at giving the "Operation Lifesaver" spiel.) Mike Strider has been working to correct signage deficiencies and place station markers he has been constructing at home.

Evidently we are visited by the CPUC even when we don't run trains, because Curt Hoppins received a friendly phone call to inform him of a missing sign at Hearst Crossing (which he has ordered). We have resolved another issue at the Sunol Station. Since we gated the parking lot at the station our members have figured out it is easier to drive on the platform from Foothill road rather than open the gate. The problem is that other people (the public) have taken to following that example. As we have seen from the many who have driven onto the track at the East end of the crossing, it is not a matter of "if", but "when" we get a call for a car stuck in front of the station. Dee Murphy painted up a couple of concrete pylons we had at B'side and I bought "NO Vehicles past this point" signs to mount on them. One is placed at the end of the platform and the other is across the road to stop people from driving around the crossing arms or parking too close to the tracks. Safety before convenience.

In Brightside yard several projects are continuing. Doug Vanderlee has just finished the Diner Pin Replacement Project by constructing and installing a new retainer for the bolster pin. As you may

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Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager

recall, this car has been missing that pin since we moved it to the canyon. Doug and I came up with a plan to replace it and with the help of the Wednesday Warriors we pulled it off. Great job by all involved. The Wed MOW has also been working on the tow path improvement project on the Southside Mainline removing ties that were placed along the perimeter fence to hold up ballast. We will replace them but in a retaining wall made from salvaged pipe and the old ties that will take the pressure off of the fence. It also looks way better from the highway. Curb Appeal is often the basis for first impressions and an orderly appearance is good for the PLA. (This work is a part of a larger push to improve conditions for train crew safety and overall look of the ROW. I call this effort the "Brightside Initiative To Enhance Mainline Environment". So, if you hear me use the acronym, you will know what I mean.)

About a year ago we hired a consultant to help us deal with storm water run-off issues and the regulations that go along with it. Long story short, we are required to sample, test and pay a permit fee for releasing storm run-off from an industrial site. Our consultant developed a plan to prove that we contain our water in the pond by Blake's Palace. Since then we have been im-

plementing the changes suggested with one important step left to complete. We are required to collect the water from around the fuel shed, electrical container and signal container and get it over to the main yard drainage system. Doug Debs got a message that the filing time was due at the end of June and if we did not have the sump and pump installed it may cause our request to be denied. With luck, during our yard clean-up efforts I came across all the stuff I needed to put it together. John Zielinski got a bunch of 2" steel pipe given to us, perfect for running under the track. We had the old "potty pump" Jack Starr bought for us that could be repurposed as the sump pump. An old propane tank that was the first wash station in the yard, which could be truncated for a perfect cistern, and a highway grade inlet grate we've had laying around for years rounded out the materials. With a couple of days efforts the plan was completed on time and we have filed for our status as a "No Output, Not Applicable" facility.

The Brightside Water project has begun. We now have a water source in the yard since Canape & Sons Well Drilling has installed the pump in our new well. For several weeks we have been running the pump to clean the newly drilled hole out. On the 14th of July the water was looking very clear and Dennis Mann stepped up to be the taste tester. His comment was "not bad". When I saw him several days later, I concluded the water had no adverse effects. We can now proceed with plans for permanent power and piping for the water system and go forward with major improvements in Brightside. Could you imagine flush toilets in the Yard? In the meantime, Wed MOW is restoring water from the tank on the hill to the back of Blake's Palace to provide a wash station more convenient than going to the shop. There will be a sink and an emergency shower. (Hopefully to avoid members going home covered in

Poison Oak, you know who you are... Matt.)

The BOD put together a group to explore options and preparations for re-opening. We met several times over ZOOM and discussed many options to develop an opening strategy. We have no date for sure, but we are making ready the track and equipment so, when we get word, we can hit the rails running. Based on recommendations, open cars, Snack Bar Car (for the restrooms only) and coaches that have windows that open (2101 & 315) have been inspected for brake compliance and safety. Jim Green left me with a great place to start with his excellent record keeping and an organized shop for brake equipment. The biggest deficit is with end of car hoses. They have a legal life of 8 years in service from date of manufacture. I used the few we had on the shelf to ready as many cars as possible and began researching suppliers for the rest. Got a reasonable quote from a manufacturer in New York, but the shipping almost doubled the cost to us, so I continued to source hoses and found a shipment in Kansas that could be had. (He could not give me an exact number of hoses, but it should be enough to replace all the hose on our entire collection.) I negotiated with the owner on price and purchased the lot (which my company WRMS would like to donate to the PLA). By the time you read this, we will have received them and begun the "PLA 2020 Great Hose-off", to replace all the decades old hoses on our fleet. I am willing to share all the fun and excitement of changing these out and the added bonus is we get to use the old hoses to rebuild the broom on the Ballast Regulator. Now that is entertainment.

One of the bigger responsibilities I have is the required testing of car brake systems and the compliance with Federal regulations. I have enrolled in a class with Pittsburgh Air Brake for advanced training, but the COVID pan-



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

First water from the Brightside well.

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Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager

demic has postponed that indefinitely. Meanwhile, I have been studying the regulations and have been able to download the single car test procedures (a Step by Step manual from the AAR). I have been using the Diner as a classroom conducting the tests over and over. I also have read the regulations regarding "certification" to perform Single Car Testing. Turns out CFR 49 sec 232 requires a person to be "qualified" to perform the test. The only place the word "certified" is used is in the section that states "The railroad owner or contractor that provides the service may certify that a person has past experience" which makes them qualified. Turns out the FRA expects each railroad to provide training to its employees and to test and record their knowledge, both written and oral plus "hands on".

To this end, I have ordered a curriculum package from Westinghouse Air Brake Company to begin an in-house brake test training program, just like we do for crews and RWP. Interestingly when looking for a class to take, I found out even WABCO can only give you the classroom portion training and you need to find a railcar to demonstrate the Hands-On portion for qualification. Now they will come to your railroad and train your people if you can afford it and have enough people to train. I tried that first, but got little response to my request as they are experiencing a shortage of instructors. These discov-

eries led me to go ahead and practice the test on a car, we have plenty of those. When I get the training package I hope to answer some of the questions I have about triple valves and the requirements for changing them. Several members have expressed interest in this program; let me know if you want

to join.

There is also a program for locomotive brake systems and some day that may be something we want to explore, well maybe next month. Until then "signals are working and the crossing is clear".

Stephen Barkkarie

Brush Cutting Report

Steve Jones - Sawdust Manager

June 22 through 26, 2020 saw another successful week-long Brush Cutting Blitz in Niles Canyon. Once again, Chris Boza traveled down from his home in the woods of Chattaroy, Washington, to lead the charge. Included in the gang were: Chris Boza, John Pelmulder, Chris Campi, Mark Whitman, Matt Petach, Jackie Vlasak, Steve Miller, Dee Murphy, Sierra Murphy, Brooke Murphy, Ken Southwick, Ron Thomas, John Zielinski, Bob Pratt, Linda Stanley and yours truly.

This time out, we took up where we left off last year at MP-30-ish, and continued on to MP-30.5. One half mile of progress doesn't sound great, but we were cutting back 15 to 20 feet from centerline of track, so we should not have to expend any energy on cleaning up the area for many years. Progress through this area was slowed a bit owing to the fact that we were working down an embankment much of the time. Of course, that is to be expected in a canyon railway; hillside up one side, with creek or road downhill on the other side. This topographical condition was made less exhausting this year by Mark Whitman who Hi-Railed the Case 580 Super-E backhoe out to the site and lifted slash up to the grade for chipping instead of us having to climb down the hillside and convey the slash up by hand. To the extent possible, Mark also dug out the stumps of any small trees we removed. This will lessen the possibility of trees re-grow-

ing where they were cut down.

My thanks to all hands who supported this project. Through your efforts, we will not have to do any major work in the area worked for a long time. Depending upon the Pandemic situation at the time, Chris Boza is hoping to return in October to lead another week long Blitz.

After completion of the work described above, we took our 1969 Ford F600 Chassis/Cab – Aerial Bucket Truck out of service for some needed inspections and repairs. In addition to brush cutting, the truck is used by the Signal Department, Electrical Facilities Maintenance, MOW for clearing crow's nests from the bridges, and hanging Christmas lights on the shop buildings, and other miscellaneous rat-projects. It is important to keep this critical asset working safely, properly and dependably.

A fundraiser was developed to accomplish the required mechanical service and inspection work to the Bucket Truck with the goal of easing any burden to the NCRY's stagnant resources during pandemic-forced operations shutdown. 20 donations were received from 19 donors, totaling \$5,297.00 in donations as of 7/19/20. Our sincere thanks for the financial support of so many toward this important performance and safety inspection, service and repair.

Arboreros!! Aaaaawwwaaaaaayyyyyy!!

Steve Jones



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

Storm water Sump and Pump.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Membership Report

Linda Stanley - Membership Secretary

The PLA has five members who are either seeking to obtain voting member status or to be reinstated as such. Volunteers Dee Murphy and Matt Petach have been previously announced regarding their intentions to become voting members at earlier Board of Directors (BOD) meetings and then announced in the respective edition of the Club Car to notify the broader membership as required in the Bylaws. At the close of the June BOD, Jorg Linke and Pat Hafey notified the membership secretary that they would like to be considered as well and after confirming their eligibility, that formal announcement was made at the July BOD and the membership secretary is including here as the second step in the election process. Jim Gilmore has been re-instated to voting member status after recent BOD unanimous consent. Current Bylaws allow this reinstatement to occur by a simple majority vote of the BOD after due consideration.

The last couple of months have been busy arranging to have the name plates engraved for 2020's Whistle Award honoree Dexter Day, Volunteer of the Year John Zielinski, the names of the latest regular members who have converted to LIFE member status and will now appear on the LIFE membership plaque, and the inaugural 32 honorees of the PLA's LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD. Taking part in the opportunity to acknowledge these volunteers and members for their invaluable contributions in support of the mission of the PLA/NCRY has been a most satisfying aspect of membership duties. It goes without saying that we all look forward to the day the Sunol Depot will be allowed to open to the public once again so all can get by to see the names of the Pioneers and more current members who have had their names added to the enduring history of the PLA.

That long history culminates in the 60th anniversary of the PLA next year in 2021 – fingers crossed that the pan-



The PLA's Lifetime Achievement Award, displayed at the Sunol Depot, is now complete with the names of the 32 honorees selected by the voting members for 2020.

demical will be behind us at that point and the PLA will be able to enjoy celebrating this milestone event by hosting passenger excursions and special operations once again.

The 2019-2020 fiscal year ended on June 30th and with it -despite the NCry shuttering operations in March in accordance with safety mandates -renewing memberships came in within \$60.00 of what was budgeted last year. Thanks to all the members who have renewed their yearly memberships and those who have memberships coming due over the months ahead are encouraged to please renew as well. The PLA is relying on its members -through membership renewals and generous donations- at this moment in time to get the organization through this difficult Covid-19 operations shutdown. Whether it is converting an annual member-

ship to a LIFE membership or other kind donation, any amount you are able to contribute is judiciously spent on the projects and day to day expenses that assure the PLA/NCry will continue to thrive into its 60th year and beyond.

The Membership Secretary introduces these new members who joined in the last month – thank you for this show of support in these uncertain times. The volunteers of the NCry are working hard with Operations to determine the safest way to offer NCry passenger trains as soon as allowed and we hope to see the Linga Sneed family of four, Helen Kwong along with Liz and Amelie McKinney, Thomas Brown and Gary Thimsen on these excursions through beautiful Niles Canyon in the near future – Welcome to All !

Staying Safe – and Looking Ahead
Linda Stanley

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

This month's tale:

"LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL AGAIN"

The time was 1988. The railroad had been completed to a point where we could start to operate trains for the public again, but it had been a long drawn out fight to get the railroad to the point of operation.

When we first got to Niles Canyon, a lawsuit was under way, pitting the land owners along the right-of-way against the County of Alameda. The adjacent property owners wanted the right-of-way for their property line. Alameda County wanted it preserved for a future rail service corridor. This is where we came into the picture; to build a railroad to preserve the right-of-way for that use. This was the chance we took to have a railroad again since we had no other place to go with all of our equipment.

The railroad was built by laying down one continuous length of jointed rail to protect the ties. At that time, existing ties were being stolen. The first stretch of single laid rail was between Brightside and Sunol. The supply of rail was stacked along what had been the main-line. When the PLA took possession, it was old ties and dirt. The task of getting rail from Brightside to rail head was accomplished by dragging three rails at a time up the right-of-way with the Hough* front-end loader (*pronounced Huff, and nicknamed "the Huff").

The front crews would then disconnect from the Huff, unfasten the joint bars and butt rail together, apply joint bars, align the rail, put tie plates under the rail and nail it down. When the lawsuit was won in favor of Alameda County, the second rail was put in to complete the railroad between Brightside and Sunol.

An area inside Brightside was built to create a compound for our storage area. Remember, we were in the open at that time, and had no protection. With the equipment on property



Photo by Warren Benner

No.3 with its passenger car Chrysocola that just finished rehabilitation.



Photo by Warren Benner

Welcome to Brightside 1988, the whole fleet is in the compound.

protected, we were ready to start an operation. It wouldn't be much, but we would be rolling revenue trains again; something that we really needed to do.

I can say that the track and roadbed back then didn't look anything close to

how it looks today. There were gaps of one, two, and three ties in a row missing, but it was solid enough to run the M200, and the little No. 3 steam engine. With the No. 3 running, we were going to have a smoke chaser. That

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager



Photo by Dexter Day

Passengers boarding M200 in Sunol on early platform.



Photo by Dexter Day

Gypsy Camp Sunol, this was the Station for waiting, information and snacks.

was a specially built speeder which carried about 200 gallons of water with a gasoline powered water pump and hose. Also, the smoke chaser had a fire extinguisher. Yes sir, our own fire truck on rails.

The big day came and the ribbon was broken by the M200. After a few speeches, we boarded the M200 for its first revenue run. There would be many more to follow. The No. 3 ran by itself since the "Chrysocolla" which was the little passenger car for the little steam engine was being readied for operations on an up and down hill railroad. For the time being, the No. 3 ran by itself for the show with the Smoke Chaser not too far behind. The Gift shop was at Brightside in an old Maintenance of Way bunk house car. The car had been refurbished and remodeled on the inside with shelves, counter and racks for postcards. It really was a nice gift shop. We made steps so people could get in the car without too much strain on their bodies.

To board the M200 in Sunol, we made a loading platform to put the M200 step stool on. The fun job for the engineer on the M200 was spotting the door on the eight-foot platform since the door was behind the Engineer. The first



Photo by Dexter Day

After picking up passengers from gift shop, M200 Hi Balls early Brightside.

spot of the day was the fun one. After that, it was like landing on an aircraft carrier. Sometimes you make it on your first try, other times you didn't. Another thing we had in Sunol was a tent city better known as "Gypsy Camp". It was a series of tents that served as a waiting area, information center, and snack stand.

Yes, we were moving up in the world. We were not selling tickets at that time. We were using the same Medieval methods that we used at Castro Point. We would walk up and down the isle of the M200 carrying a fare box for people to donate to the cause, building the



Photo by Dexter Day

Passengers checking out the gift shop while No. 3 standing down.

NCRY. When the M200 got back to Sunol, the fare box was swapped out for an empty one. This method was used for several years. A lot of hard work was being put into this railroad. We were still doing salvaging parties to obtain track materials. We were lucky to get enough rail to do the first two and a half miles, but sometimes you luck out and things fall your way.

With that said, ANOTHER TALE ENDS.

Dexter Day

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Early History of the forming of the Pacific Locomotive Assn.

Continued from July 2020 Club Car

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.

In mid 1962 Don Hansen came to Karl's house to meet with him and Henry with the news we could not run a second Howard Terminal trip because the ICC (Interstate Commerce Commission) time had expired on #6, with the added comment we could buy the locomotive if we wanted for six hundred dollars. Discussions took a while and resulted in them agreeing and the three of them each put up one-third of the asking price, originally with the hopes the PLA would vote to repay them; which they did, over a rather long time period. The Association bought her in October 1962. The club held several work sessions on the locomotive at Howard Terminal but were eventually asked to vacate and the locomotive was moved to Crow Canyon Park in Castro Valley where it was eventually steamed for members on May 7, 1967, and moved to Castro Point shortly thereafter.

Some may wonder how the association came to own their next two locomotives, Pickering #5 and #12. Well, Pickering had sold four geared locomotives (3-truck Heislors #1, #5, #10 and 3-truck Shay #12) to Connell Brothers Trucking of Stockton in 1958 with their intent to resale the locomotives to Cuba. That of course never happened and the locomotives languished in their yard in Stockton rusting away. A couple of members would stop by the yard periodically and photograph the locomotives with no luck approaching the company. The breakthrough came in early 1966 when the #10 was donated to the Pacific Southwest Railroad Museum who soon discovered they did not have the funds to move it. That opened the door for members to

contact Connell in hopes of obtaining one of the locomotives. Thus started a chain reaction that resulted in the Association obtaining two locomotives, with saving Shay #12 being almost a "fluke". The PLA, led by Charlie and Virgil Staff (then President), opted only to acquire Heisler #5. The club had little money and Shay #12 was deemed too large to work on if the three-cylinder engine itself needed work in the future. To combat the too big concept Karl involved railroad historian and Shay expert Dan Ranger of Portland, OR who confirmed the cylinders were separate. To combat the money Karl arranged to purchase the #10 from Pacific Southwest Railroad Museum and resold the #10 to Gus Peterson (Gus was building his Klamath and Hoppaw Valley Railroad behind his mill in Klamath, CA) to fund moving Shay #12. It was a done deal before most of the PLA could react and the world's oldest three-truck Shay was saved. The locomotive move to Castro Point was in October, 1967. Heisler #5 came first, then the #12 and finally the tenders wandered in a while later as they got stuck on a single truck at the scales and had to wait for Sheedy Drayage to go up with another trailer to separate the tenders and "lighten the load".

The club knew that with the locomotives they would want to pull something behind the locomotive and learned that A D Schaefer Co. was getting ready to scrap their Office Car formerly of the Virginia and Truckee and the Yosemite Valley which was at the closed A D Schaefer yard in Oakland. Karl proposed buying the YV #107 and George Childs funded it at the telephone company credit union (Sept. 1968) for another whopping \$600.00. That, plus an opportunity to haul people for a Fourth of July celebration in Point Richmond on the Castro Point track put the association into the preservation world passenger business - and the rest, as they say, is history.

As for excursions in the early years

through 1964 they were small but numerous – with 16 trips. Between January 1962 and October of 1964 the club ran six trips on the California Western eventually with all four "Skunk" motor cars; a visit to the Howard Terminal with #6 that eventually lead to the club purchasing the locomotive, first revenue train on Roaring Camp & Big Trees on March 31, 1963; two trips with Westside Lumber Heisler #3 at the mill in Tuolumne; three trips on McCloud with #25 (two co-sponsored with Bay Area Electric and one with Northern California RR Club): Nevada Northern #40 at East Ely, NV, and a visit to Granite Rock Co., at Logan Calif where their 0-6-0T #10 was pulled out for photos (this locomotive is now in Sacramento on the Sacramento Southern). Not all trips went smoothly as attested on October 31, 1964 with double-headed mixed trains on the Yreka Western with 2-8-2's #18 and #19, when on the first round-trip return to Yreka #18 blew a cylinder head and #19 finished the day alone with a quite different consist.

The early years were tough. The club had no money and had to rely on members' loans to support many early activities. Tom says he remembers the great sigh of relief when they had sold enough tickets on the first California Western trip to break even, but that trip was so successful the club chartered the M-200 two weeks later to handle the overflow crowd. It was also an uphill battle to gain respect from the well-established railroad clubs in the Bay Area – after all, the PLA was the upstart organization run by a bunch of college students that had no idea what they were doing and the other clubs hoped those crazy kids would just go away – yet the organization has thrived and still exists where others have folded. Long live the PLA.

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

Stack Talk

Alan Siegwarth

Continued from Page 1

the difference, the frames underneath the locomotives are cleaner than they have been for years. Bolts have been tightened and running gear adjusted in preparation for the day the locomotives can operate again.

Work also continues while at home with plans being made to move the Southern Pacific #1744 frame and boiler from Colorado. This has been a long process and is currently awaiting a PLA board approved contract with the boiler repair company so the move can be scheduled. Once the contract is in

place, we need 3-4 weeks to schedule the move which is concerning as time continues to march on and the move needs to be completed in the next several months before winter sets in again – we can't be moving an oversize load in the snow!

The steam department wants to extend our sincere gratitude for the donations that have been sent to support the SP #1744 project. Please continue to DONATE! The lack of revenue resulting from COVID-19 causing no train operations this year really means that progress on the boiler repairs for the SP

#1744 will depend on your donations. Please donate if you are able to help keep this project on schedule – every dollar donated brings us a step closer to being able to pay for completing the boiler work and returning the locomotive to service in Niles Canyon.

Please visit our Steam Website at <http://plasteam.ncry.org> to donate toward the restoration or send in a donation by mail. We will continue to update the website with more information and progress updates as the rebuild begins.

Alan Siegwarth

New SP Common Standard non-agency station sign at Bonita

Bonita is located near mile post 37.2, just 0.3 miles railroad east of the Arroyo de la Laguna bridge. In 1901, per Henry Luna's book on Niles Canyon, a small station shelter was installed at

Bonita as a passenger and milk stop (however, Bonita is first shown as a station in the 1912 edition of the SP Western Division employee timetable on the Tracy Line). The shelter was retired in 1939 and the 1940 SP timetable does not show Bonita. On Monday, June 1, 2020, Steve Jones assisted Mike Strider with the installation of a new SP Common Standard non-agency station sign at Bonita (similar to the style of the one installed at Verona last year). Bonita, as well as Verona, have also been published in recent NCRY operating timetables.

Mike Strider



Photo by Linda Stanley

Steve Jones (L) and Mike Strider putting finishing touches on new BONITA station sign. Note the watering of the post so it can grow.



Photo by Linda Stanley

Steve Jones (L) and Mike Strider installing new BONITA station sign near MP 37.2.



Side Dump returning home

On June 18, an NCRy crew of Steve Barkkarie, Doug Vanderlee, Rich Alexander, Chuck Kent, Gerald DeWitt, Bob Pratt, Bob Bradley and Gerry Feeney loaded side dump #11034 onto a flatbed truck for movement to the Nevada State Railroad Museum at Boulder City, NV. The car was built in June 1927 and initially saw service in the construction of Hoover Dam south of Las Vegas in the early 1930s. The car came to PLA from Western Pacific where it had been used in maintenance of way service. Because of its use in the dam project, NSRM was interested in acquiring it for their collection. Hoover Dam is only a few miles from NSRM.

Getting the car loaded and on its way was not a simple process. After NSRM contracted with a trucking company more than a year ago, the car was brought to Brightside from The Spot siding and loaded on a flatbed truck. However, the car was too heavy for the trailer. When the truck attempted to depart Brightside the trailer bottomed out on SR 84. Fortunately the driver was able to maneuver back onto the Brightside crossing where the car was unloaded and returned to The Spot. Move forward to 2020. Taylor Heavy Haul Trucking was hired for the June 18th move. When the car was loaded onto Taylor's trailer, it was discovered the car did not fit because its steps on each corner struck the trailer frame. This car really did not want to leave. So the side dump was pulled off the trailer and bolts cut off so the steps could be removed. Additionally, at each corner the car sides had to be cinched with chains to snug them in so they cleared the trailer frame. As usual, the NCRy volunteers were up to the task. After the adjustments, the car was successfully loaded, tied down and ready to depart for southern Nevada. Just one more obstacle. An Alameda County motorcycle cop pulled a speeder over in the driveway blocking the truck's exit. After the speeding driver was re-



Photo by Gerry Feeney

Former WP side dump #11034 at Brightside Yard prior to loading for its trip to the NSRM.

warded with some paperwork, the officer mounted his bike. As he was about to depart, over his speaker system he announced to the speeder "you're good to go" and so was the side dump. It departed NCRy for a two-day journey to its new home at Boulder City.

An item of interest discovered early in

the car's MOW service on NCRy. When its load was dumped, the car had a tendency because of the dumping weight shift to topple over with the load. After a few such incidents, the MOW guys would chain the non-dumping side to the rail which kept it on the rails.

Gerry Feeney



Photo by Gerry Feeney

GM Steve Barkkarie examining the side dump after it was loaded on Taylor Trucking's trailer at Brightside Crossing.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Volunteer Report

Ed Best - Volunteer Coordinator

The following is a list of the people who volunteered supporting your railroad in June. All volunteer hours on projects related to the railroad during these restricted periods are eligible to be registered. Please send your hours to me by e-mail at volunteers@ncry.org. 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
Brian Hitchcock
Dennis Mann
Don Gholson
Ed Best
Joe Scardino
Mark Miller
Peter Midnight
Rich Alexander
Roger McCluney
Steve Jones

ARCHIVES & LIBRARY

Brian Hitchcock

CAR DEPARTMENT

Dee Murphy
Dennis Mann
Henry Baum
Howard Wise
Jeff Haslam
Karl Swartz
Mike Pechner

COMMISSARY

Bob Bradley
Bonnie Harrington
Jack Harrington

COMMISSARY

Jacqui Szymanski
Janet Crowley
Ron Thomas
Sally Mills
Sue Thomas

ELECTRICAL & SIGNALS

Curt Hoppins
Jim Stewart

FACILITIES

Doug Debs
Linda Stanley
Rich Alexander
Steve Coon
Steve Jones

MECHANICAL

Bill Ross
Chuck Kent
Dee Murphy
Doug Vanderlee
Gerald DeWitt
Gerry Feeney
Howard Wise
Jeff Haslam
Karl Swartz
Linda Stanley
Ron Thomas
Steve Jones
Steve Slabach
Wesley Van Osdol

MEETINGS

Alan Siegwarth
Andy Deane

MEETINGS

Bev Patterson
Bill Strahle
Bob Bradley
Bob Pratt
Brooke Murphy
Charlene Murrell
Charles Franz
Charles Gullo
Charles Smith
Charlotte Ferree
Chris Hauf
Curt Hoppins
Dan Mills
Dan Sarka
Dave Burla
Dave Ernest
Dee Murphy
Derek Schipper
Dexter Day
Donald Kirker
Donna Alexander
Doug Debs
Doug Vanderlee
Ed Best
Fred Elenbaas
Gail Hedberg
George Childs
Henry Baum
Jason Kazarian
Jim Baber
Jim Evans
Jim Gilmore
Jim Stewart
Jim Evans
Joe Scardino
John Zielinski
Jorg Linke

MEETINGS

Karen Kadaja
Kathleen Olander
Kelly Linke
Kent Hedberg
Laura Bajuk
Leslie Smith
Linda Best
Linda Stanley
Louis Bradas
Mark Miller
Mary Asturias
Matt Petach
Mike Pechner
Mike Strider
Nancy Pratt
Pat Buder
Pat Cassell
Pat Hafey
Pat Stratton
Patrice McDonald
Paul Veltman
Peter Midnight
Rich Alexander
Roger McCluney
Rosanne Strahle
Sally Mills
Sierra Murphy
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Ferree
Steve Jones
Steve Van Meter
Thomas Libbey
Tim Flippo
Tom Eikerenkottter
Warren Haack
Zona Fowler

MOW & TRACK

Bob Pratt
Brooke Murphy
Chris Boza
Chris Campi
Dan Mills
Dee Murphy
Jackie Vlasak
John Pelmulder
John Zielinski
Ken Southwick
Linda Stanley
Mark Whitman
Matthew Petach
Mike Strider
Pat Hafey
Pat Stratton
Ron Thomas
Sierra Murphy
Steve Jones

MOW & TRACK

Steve Miller
Wesley Van Osdol

OTHER

Barry Lependorf
Bob Pratt
Doug Debs
Ed Best
Jim Stewart
Patrice Warren
Steve Jones
Zonker Harris

SWITCHING CREW

Bob Pratt
Ed Best
Gerry Feeney
Howard Wise



Photo by Matt Petach
Heavily damaged Oak tree before removal.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Time Sensitive Material

Help Complete the SP #1744 Move!



John West photograph May 4, 1958 Knights Landing Branch, CA



I will be proud to send a:

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

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

Please send your tax-deductible donation to:

Pacific Locomotive Association

SP#1744 Restoration

PO Box 515, Sunol, CA 94586