



THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 686

Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

www.ncry.org

October 2020

Southern Pacific #1744 Running Gear Arrives at Brightside



Photo by Alan Siegwarth

Trailer gooseneck disconnected and ready for ramp installation.

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The running gear from the recently purchased Southern Pacific #1744 steam locomotive has been moved from Colorado to the Niles Canyon Railway. The running gear was loaded on a heavy haul truck in Alamosa, Colorado on Monday 8/31 and unloaded the afternoon of September 2nd at Brightside yard. While the move of the SP 1744 frame originally seemed to be a simple process, moving railroad equipment is never simple and things got more complicated as we delved

into the details. The frame and running gear are over 10' wide and would be a wide load on a truck which was obvious, but what type of truck would be required? While we knew the weight of the locomotive, what would just the running gear weigh?

Using our resources, we talked with anyone we could think of who had moved a locomotive in pieces to see if they had weights on both the boiler and frame and got the best information

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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

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Volunteer Report

Ed Best - Volunteer Coordinator

The following is a list of the people who volunteered supporting your railroad in August. 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. Meeting attendance by teleconference is reported to me by the Membership Secretary.

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
Steve Jones

ARCHIVES & LIBRARY

Brian Hitchcock

CAR DEPARTMENT

Dee Murphy
Dennis Mann

DOCENTS

Donna Alexander
Henry Baum
Jim Evans
Linda Stanley
Rich Alexander
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Jones

ELECTRICAL & SIGNALS

Curt Hoppins
Jim Stewart

FACILITIES

Bob Bradley
Chuck Kent

FACILITIES

Gerald DeWitt
Glenn Fountain
Jack Harrington
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Jones
Wesley Van Osdol

GIFT SHOP

Gail Hedberg

MECHANICAL

Alan Siegwarth
Bill Ross
Dee Murphy
Gerald DeWitt
Gerry Feeney
Henry Chandler
Howard Wise
Jeff Haslam
Jeff Schwab
Justin Legg
Karl Swartz
Kurt Olsen
Matthew Petach
Rich Anderson
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Jones
Whitney Haist

MEETINGS

Bev Patterson
Bill Strahle
Bob Bradley
Bob Pratt
Charles Gullo
Charles Navarra
Charles Smith

MEETINGS

Chris Campi
Chris Hauf
Curt Hoppins
Dave Burla
Dee Murphy
Dexter Day
Donald Kirker
Donna Alexander
Ed Best
Gail Hedberg
George Childs
Henry Baum
Jeff Haslam
Jim Evans
Jim Gilmore
Jim Stewart
Joe Romani
John Zielinski
Karen Kadaja
Kathleen Olander
Kent Hedberg
Kurt Olsen
Leslie Smith
Linda Stanley
Lou Bradas
Mark Miller
Marshall Williams
Matthew Petach
Mike Pechner
Mike Strider
Pat Stratton
Patrice McDonald
Rich Alexander
Roger McCluney
Ron Thomas
Rosanne Strahle
Steve Barkkarie

MEETINGS

Steve Jones
Steve Slabach
Thomas Libbey
Tim Flippo
Tom Eikerenkotter
Warren Haack
Zona Fowler

MOW & TRACK

Bob Pratt
Dee Murphy
Doug Vanderlee
John Pelmulder
John Zielinski
Ken Southwick
Kurt Olsen
Linda Stanley
Mark Whitman
Matthew Petach

MOW & TRACK

Mike Strider
Pat Hafey
Pat Stratton
Ron Thomas
Steve Jones
Steve Miller
Wesley Van Osdol

OTHER

Alan Siegwarth
Barry Lependorf
Brian Hitchcock
Dave Ernest
Dennis Mann
Donna Alexander
Ed Best
Gail Hedberg
Karl Swartz
Pat Stratton

OTHER

Patrice Warren
Paul Veltman
Steve Jones
Steve Slabach
Zonker Harris

SWITCHING CREW

Ed Best
Gerry Feeney
Mark Miller
Rich Anderson

TRAIN CREW

Alan Siegwarth
Bob Pratt
Chuck Kent
Jeff Schwab
John Sutkus
Kurt Olsen
Mark Miller



Photo by Dan Sarka

Sunol, 9/12/20 - First special steam train rides in September since the COVID-19 pandemic and the shelter-in-place orders went into effect back in March.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

===== October Activities =====

October 10	2nd Saturday	Special Train, 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm, Sunol
October 11	2nd Sunday	Special Train, 10:30 am and 1:30 pm, Sunol
October 17	3rd Saturday	Board of Directors Meeting, 2:15 pm (Teleconference)
October 17	3rd Saturday	Special Train, 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm, Sunol
October 18	3rd Sunday	Special Train, 10:30 am and 1:30 pm, Sunol
October 24	4th Saturday	Brush Cutting, 7:30 am (Brightside) Steve Jones
October 24	4th Saturday	Special Train, 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm, Sunol
October 25	4th Sunday	Special Train, 10:30 am and 1:30 pm, Sunol

ALL ACTIVITIES SUBJECT TO CHANGE OR CANCELLATION!

Treasurer's Report

Pat Stratton - Treasurer

The PLA's Balance Sheet at the end of August shows our cash position is very strong. However, our Profit/Loss for August shows gross revenue of \$25,727, which is barely enough to cover our \$20k+/month base expenses. When our income is only adequate to cover monthly expenses, our cash position is what we are using on our other expenses - maintenance, repairs and restorations. We must use it wisely, and only if budgeted (we will have that budget soon).



Our August income is consistent with our July income of \$25,132. Our revenue from donations has been very strong at nearly \$18k - both the SP1744 restoration and In-kind Contributions by members were major sources this month. We were able to complete a scheduled Charter in August, but that was the only revenue-producing train we had run for 6 months. As I write this, later in September, we have enjoyed two sold-out weekends of steam operations in mid-September, and have scheduled two more, and one weekend of diesel ops, in October. We are hoping these weekend runs continue to be successful so we can not only run trains, as we all enjoy doing, but earn some revenue as well.

Donations of \$17,951 during August were received as follows: General Fund, \$3,955; New Loco Shop, \$100; In-kind Contributions, \$2,400; SP1744 Restoration, \$8,697; Steam Opera-

tions, \$500; WP713 Repair, \$2,000; and GN1242 Ranch Car Restoration, \$300.

Thank you all for your work on everything PLA; for your contributions of time and money; and for the cooperation needed to develop the new path forward and keep having fun running this railroad.

Pat Stratton

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

The first two weekends of special runs that we did in September are behind us, and they were a huge success. All but one train sold out, and that could be chalked up to lousy air quality, high temperatures, and insufficient media exposure. Those problems appear to be behind us, and the future looks better. The revenue from those runs is revenue that will cover our non-operating expenses. It will not recover the lost TOL revenue for this year, but it keeps us from dipping into our cash reserves.

The September runs were so successful we are doing it again in October, and adding a third weekend operation, Diesel. We charge a \$5 premium per ticket when running steam to offset the cost of steam locomotive fuel, which is a much higher quality fuel than the bunker crude the locomotives are capable of burning. Fewer pollutants and dependable firing makes it worth the cost. We always buy it in bulk to get the best price. It appears there is a bit of a glut of this grade of fuel, probably because so few railroads are operating steam. That's also good for us.

We will also be running the first two weekends in November, no decision on steam or diesel yet for those two weekends. We will not be running these special trains in December, to avoid any possible TOL confusion, but we may be running charter trains during that time period. That's still in the planning stages.

Again, I want to reiterate this fact. We are running these trains to bring in revenue. Doing so will also allow us to fulfill our mission statement, keep our crews and equipment in top notch working order, and fulfill our commitments to the community at large, but, just like TOL, we are doing it to generate revenue with as little risk to our precious volunteers.

The By-Laws Committee continues to work on the next revision. While we have identified the substantive changes we need to make, primarily in the

Membership section, we have identified a number of factors that also need to be addressed. The committee was already planning to make changes to the general document format to improve readability and not duplicate information. We have since decided to redo the By-Laws into a more common format (such as the templates provided by the California Bar Association or the University of California) that will be more readily understood by those with an interest in our by-laws. These will be predominantly of interest to folks offering grants, be they private or government sourced. The current by-laws format was fine in 1968, but it really needs to follow the current conventions in the industry. This will also ensure our documents fit in with the requirements for maintaining our non-profit status.

Prior to presenting the revised By-Laws to the Voting Members, we intend to have an informational meeting to explain the changes we are making, and why we feel the need to make them. The date for this meeting will be announced well in advance, and it will not be this month, I can assure you that. The format changes are not trivial, and a sub-committee of Committee members has been established to grind through the templates and make the necessary conversions. I mentioned our non-profit status. While we are in great shape with regard to that, the BOD has identified a few areas where we need to improve our documentation to ensure we can show we are following the guidelines to retain that status.

After our extensive yard cleanup we have a really good handle on the things PLA owns in the yard. We have also identified a number of things that PLA does not own that are in the yard. While we have agreements on the rolling stock that are privately owned, there are a number of other items that will need to have written agreements between the owner and the PLA. The handshake agreements that have ex-

isted in the past are no longer adequate for an organization of our size and stature. We don't want to be a target and put our non-profit status at risk. These agreements will substantiate the benefit PLA derives from having these items on property, and identify any items that do not benefit the PLA, which will then need to be removed. Privately owned items that are on property will be readily identifiable as such and their ability to be used as needed by PLA volunteers. Items remaining on property and not so identified by the end of this calendar year will be regarded as a donation and become PLA property. So if you have property on PLA property, please ensure that you contact me so we can work out a written agreement for that material. Your other choice is to remove it.

Similarly, I will be working with the owners of the privately-owned rolling stock to bring the agreements we have for that equipment into the 21st Century. Those owners who get the Club Car should contact me to get a copy of the current 'boilerplate' agreement we will be using as a Point-Of-Departure for developing the individual agreements. We used that template to draw up the agreement currently in place for the GGRM equipment remaining on the property, and it works very well in covering the PLA interests.

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

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Membership Report

Linda Stanley - Membership Secretary

Excitement for NCRY's re-opening by the community is evidenced by myriad new memberships that were purchased shortly after NCRY SPECIAL train excursions were announced. Welcome Aboard! - to our 31 new members beginning with Jill Ingraham, Tom Stone, Wayne Morris, Sage Wike-Brown, plus Carlos Rico, Josie Gibson, Sharon and Richard Novotny, The Kessler Family including Joshua, Jaime, Matthew and Samuel, Kelly Huston, Paul and Juliette Phipps, Diane Turner, Janet Quilici, Victoria Springer and Andrew Revak, Deborah and Jeremy Weinstein, Woody and Peg Mosgers, Liem Cao joins the Owen DeLong membership, David and Dawn Mease, Charlotte and Francesca Harvey along with Kaden Koopmann, Rick Layden and photographer - and newest volunteer - Adam Weidenbach.

The processing of new member "Interest Forms" has resumed to assist members in identifying volunteer opportunities open to them. For those affected, demonstrating to a prospective, future employer on a resume that you remained active by volunteering during a layoff, is considered a positive. Come on out and help your railroad by taking an active role in supporting the NCRY. Look under the "Volunteer" tab on the members website at www.members.ncry.org to see the many opportunities the NCRY has to offer. Remember, no experience is necessary, we all learned by doing and the volunteers of the NCRY look forward to meeting you!

At September's BOD meeting, four new voting members were announced as being approved by secret ballot vote by those identified as the qualified voting members to participate. Please welcome Dee Murphy, Matt Petach, Jorg Linke, and Pat Hafey who now bring the total of all voting members to 68. Qualified members in good standing, Justin Legg and Steve Coon, join Kurt Olsen as the next members to seek Voting Member status. Normally these

members would have been voted on at the October membership meeting. Now, voting members who access the October membership teleconference will qualify as the voting members who will have the opportunity to participate in a mailed secret ballot vote on these prospective new voting members.

The members reviewing the PLA Bylaws may submit a change to be considered by voting members to modify the process of how members who qualify become a new voting member. Some who attended September's BOD have asked the Membership Secretary "What is considered when voting to approve a new voting member?" Glad you asked! This important vote is not a popularity contest but a vote cast after due consideration of a member's contribution to the PLA through their demonstrated volunteer time or meeting attendance.

The Membership Secretary reminds members that the announcing of elec-

tion results as traditionally done by the PLA is: Announce the name of member who won a specific BOD position, or if approval was granted to a prospective voting member or not, but specific numbers -although unintentionally revealed on occasion- are not traditionally publicly announced. Ballots are retained by either the BOD Secretary or the Membership Secretary for one year and those wishing to learn the specific results of an election are free to request this information.

A Friendly Reminder: to report your volunteer hours, please E-mail this important information to: volunteers@ncry.org instead of using sign in sheets. Train crew logs to be continued as required. Regular sign in sheets may be discontinued in the near future; your cooperation is appreciated!

Safety First!
and Support Your Fellow Volunteer
Linda Stanley



Photo by Dan Sarka

Sunol, 9/12/20 - First special steam train rides in September since the COVID-19 pandemic and the shelter-in-place orders went into effect back in March.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager

As I sit down to write this installment, the sun is shining, the skies are blue, and the #7 just steamed past with a train loaded with passengers. What a welcome change from the past several weeks. There has been fire and smoke, a sun that looked like a dull orange ball, an evacuation warning for Sunol and power outages up and down the canyon. We also suffered several days of record setting triple digit heat and Amtrak put a few cars in the dirt near Shinn street in early September. Just yesterday a motorist took out a major power pole across from Brightside and a motorcyclist bought the farm in mid canyon. I don't even want to ask "What's next", I may find out. Let's just hope the worst of 2020 will pass with the end of summer.

Well, enough about the outside world. There are plenty of good things happening in the small world that is the Niles Canyon Railway. The big one is that we are operating trains again. With the county's approval we have put together a short, mostly open car train with restrooms and a coach for boarding. With the addition of open car boarding, with the new rolling stair, we can give folks lots of space to keep their distance and our volunteer ambassadors help everyone keep to the guidelines. First weekend went well and the second weekend even better. Gosh it is great to hear a steam whistle echo through the canyon again! I had to text to Steam Engineer extraordinaire Jeff Schwab as he was putting the Skookum to bed, that his whistle work that evening brought a tear to my eye. Also on the steam front, many of you know that we have received the frame and wheels for the newly purchased SP1744 steamer. The truck arrived and was unloaded with a very organized ease. Our crews have really got this procedure down to a science. The final piece of the puzzle, the boiler, is to be rebuilt elsewhere and when complete the real fun will begin. I encourage everyone who can to donate to this project, which is slated to take a few years, and of course, being a steam engine, requires major funding.

Other projects are moving along nicely, such as the "Ranch Car" which is in the car shop being cleaned and corrosion removed. Howard Wise has removed the car generator for repair. The engine runs great and the generator section is being reconditioned. Howard has also made great strides in replacing rusty holes with fresh steel on the end of the car. He is a real artist with this type of repair. The Gothic Peak car is in need of similar work and our own Jeff Haslam has assembled the parts needed, and I look forward to assisting him with the welding. He has also been helping me identify brake repairs needed to be done before putting the car in service.

On other car related news, the "Great 2020 Hose off" project is nearly complete with approximately 70 pieces of rolling stock getting upgraded brake hoses. Some of the



Frog Before



Frog After

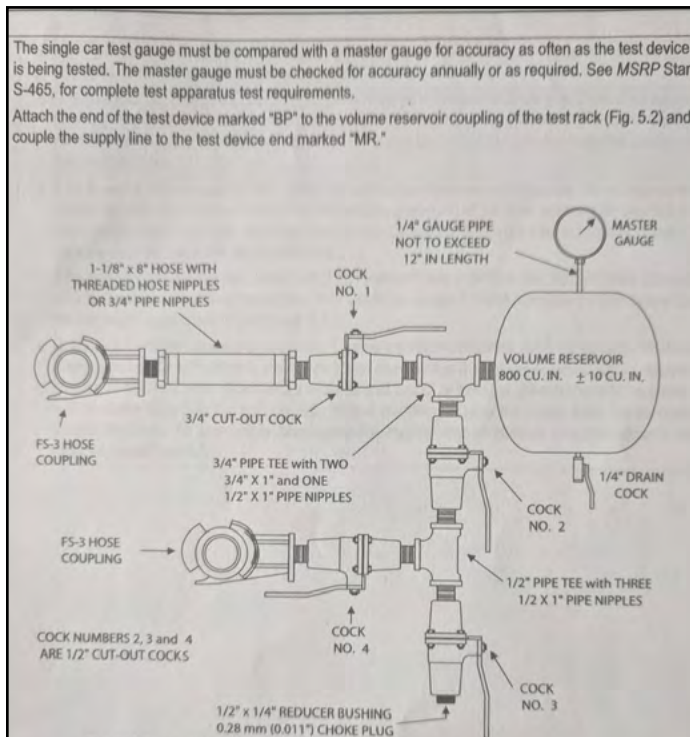
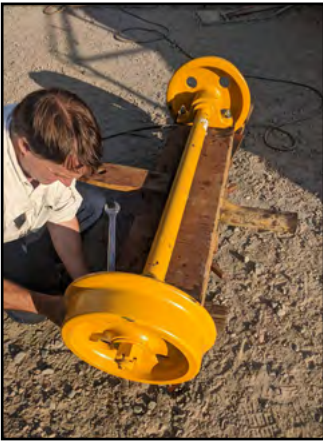
hoses removed were as old as 1985, a little out of date. Our next step will be to turn the old hoses into brushes for the Ballast regulator.

As you saw last month, a small band of volunteers are taking up the brake work on our rolling stock, and we will continue to go through the tasks necessary to be "qualified" to perform Single Car Testing. Namely, daily testing and calibration of our test equipment. I will be using the Diner as our Guinea Pig since we have it secured to Yard lead #1. All of this work is expected, by the FRA, to be performed by the railroad in-house and we actually own most of the equipment for 92 day calibration of our tester and a dead weight gauge tester to verify air gauges. We are lucky to have accumulated so many important tools. I need to build one piece of equipment to make us self-suf-

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager



ficient. Fortunately, the American Association of Railroads provides instructions and diagrams to construct and use this device.

Out on the track things are looking good for operation according to our long time track inspector Peter Schulze. We have a new homeless camp down by the Mission Clay brick plant. They have been bold enough to tie a rope to the track to assist in their trespassing. I removed said rope, warned the occupants that tampering with railroad tracks is a federal offense, and reported the encroachment to the ACWD. We will monitor the situation.

To the East, our efforts to move the Fiber-optic cable from Happy Valley Bridge have been modified. According to agreements in place with the county, we are going to have to foot the bill for the relocation and so are working with Century link to develop a cost efficient method and have come up with a good alternative.

In Brightside Yard while performing a welding repair on the MOW fleet, I decided it was time to fix the frog point on the MOW/ ladder track turnout. The point was worn so bad that wheels pounded the frog treads badly and may have contributed to last year's de-railed baggage car. Bob Pratt had donated a bunch of welding rods last year and among the lot was 50lbs of structural steel rods (110,000 lb. tensile strength) just right for track. I was told we should replace that frog because it was condemnable, but that is a major undertaking, and a new frog will cost you thousands. I feel the repair went well and I have watched engines and cars pass smoothly over it now.

The walkway project is progressing well and using up a great deal of old useless, and expensive to dispose of, ties from around the yard. The stake bed truck is being worked on by Steve Coon. He discovered the hard starting is due to a faulty ignition switch and will pursue the other repairs as well. The Case forklift has been performing well after its steering repair and Doug Vanderlee is making plans to upgrade the car mover that powers his heavy hauler. The water well is performing better, giving us more water than before (still only a few gallons a minute, but running clean). We received a donation of short sections of rail for use in constructing a retaining wall for the MOW second container. (Another good place to get rid of landscaper ties.)

A dark day that I have been dreading has come. The hi-rail axle for the rear of the CAT backhoe lost a bearing! Woe is me. Once you have a backhoe you can hi-rail, you cannot go back. This tool has been responsible for so much work from one end of the track to the other that learning to do without it is unthinkable. Changing a bearing even on a small axle is a big deal. So, I sourced a replacement axle from the NOLAN Co. and ordered one. Time was of the essence and the cost would be a burden on our cash resources, so I paid for the axle myself and will donate the cost in-kind. Doug V. and I put it on and it works like riding on a cloud.

I have gone on long enough, even though I did not cover everything, and would like to assure anyone worried about health conditions at Brightside that it is smoke free, we are masked, and the place is being sprayed after each use. Come on out and see for yourself!

Stephen Barkkarie

Southern Pacific #1744 Running Gear Arrives at Brightside

Continued from Page 1

from Steve Lee of Wasatch Railroad Contractors who supervised the recent move of the SP&S #539 2-8-2 from the Grand Canyon Railroad back to Washington. His weights on the boiler and running gear gave us a rough approximation of the running gear percentage of the total locomotive weight. As we knew the weight of all the parts shipped in March, their weight was subtracted from the locomotive weight to get an estimated weight of 113,400 pounds for the boiler and running gear. However, we did not know the weight of the boiler shell as it sat in Alamosa. Not knowing the boiler weight, we could only estimate the running gear weight which we guessed was close to 80,000 pound weight limit of shorter 8 axle trucks. Working with Renn Transportation, we ended up using a nine-axle truck and trailer which is rated for over 100,000 pounds of payload weight. The disadvantage of the longer trailer was added cost for the move as certain State Highway Department rules require oversize trucks to have one or two pilot cars. Interestingly, every State has different rules so by selective routing, Brad Renn was able to obtain permits for a route only requiring a pilot car in Colorado. Once the running gear was on the road, all the time spent calculating the weight to determine we needed a bigger trailer paid off as the running gear ended up weighing around 90,000 pounds based on truck scale weights.

In Alamosa, Stathi Pappas removed the grease cellars and prepared the frame to roll by cleaning the axles and applying new grease. The axles were blocked so they would stay in position when the frame was lifted. Stathi supervised on August 31st, 2020 as two Monte Vista Crane Company cranes lifted the running gear off the rails and onto the rails of the waiting Renn Transportation truck.

Peter, our driver with Renn Transportation, skillfully drove the loaded truck over the Continental Divide across Wolf



Photo by Stathi Pappas

Two cranes lifting the frame.



Photo by Stathi Pappas

Setting the frame on the truck.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Southern Pacific #1744 Running Gear Arrives at Brightside



Photo by Alan Siegwarth

Backing the trailer up on Brightside crossing to align with the track in preparation for unloading.

Creek Pass, through Colorado, across Arizona, Las Vegas, across the California border, to the Central Valley and into the Bay Area. PLA volunteers built an unloading ramp at Brightside Yard on September 2nd and the locomotive running gear was rolled off the trailer and onto the rails of the Niles Canyon Railway. The long journey back home to California, where she began her career working for the Southern Pacific Railroad nearly 120 years ago, is over.

The boiler is the final piece of the locomotive still in Colorado and it will be moved to a contract shop for repairs later this month which will finish the acquisition and moving part of the project. The PLA owes thanks to the many donors who have helped finance the move from Colorado. We want to extend a special thanks to the Niles Rotary Foundation for their recent \$5,000 grant toward the 1744 moving costs. Our thanks to Stathi for his help preparing and loading the frame in Alamosa. Finally, PLA is extremely grateful to the employees at the San Luis & Rio Grande Railroad who have been instrumental in helping with the move.

Continued on next page



Alan Siegwarth and Charles Franz happy the running gear of the 1744 has finally arrived after over a year of working on the purchase and move.



Photo by Alan Siegwarth

Unloading the car under the watchful eye of Henry Chandler.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Southern Pacific #1744 Running Gear Arrives at Brightside

Continued from previous page

With the running gear now onsite at Brightside, NCRy volunteers will begin the inspection, repair and reassembly of the running gear in preparation for the eventual operation of the locomotive on the Niles Canyon Railway. The repairs and boiler work can only

proceed as quickly as we can spend the planned budget for the project. COVID-19 and the associated shut-down of railroad operations (and now cancellation of the TOL) has severely impacted funding and as such your donations are essential to allow the SP #1744 project to continue moving for-

ward. PLEASE DONATE to keep the project on schedule! Donations can be mailed, made online at www.ncry.org or on our Steam Website page at <http://plasteam.ncry.org> which you can also visit to keep up with the progress of the restoration as the rebuild begins.

Alan Siegwarth



Photo by Justin Legg

Steam department volunteers take a water break to look over our new arrival – Henry Chandler, Gerald DeWitt, Charles Franz, Chuck Kent, Doug Vanderlee and Alan Siegwarth.



Photo by Alan Siegwarth

The running gear parked on the shop track.



Photo by Alan Siegwarth

1744 back on home rails!



Photo by Alan Siegwarth

Idle car coupled up to the frame ready for unloading.

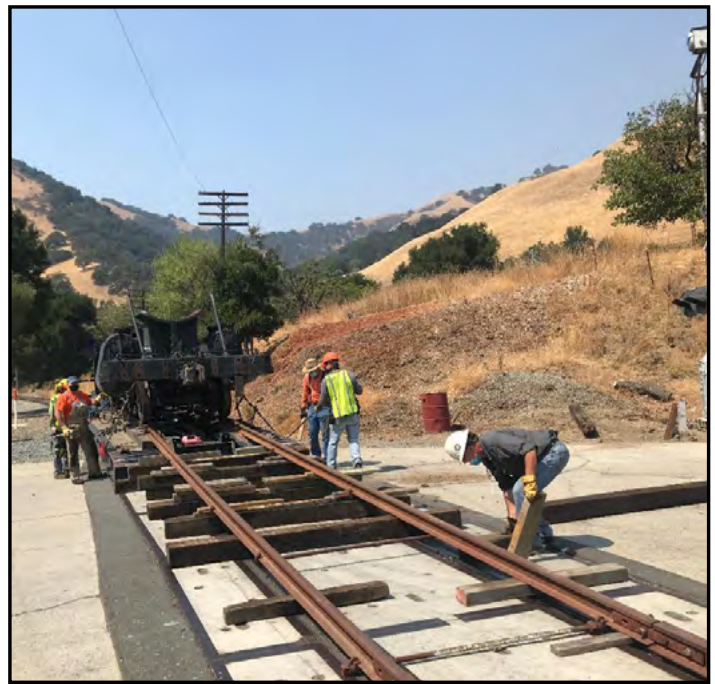


Photo by Alan Siegwarth

Building the unloading ramp.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Brush Cutting Report

Steve Jones - Sawdust Manager

The regular 4th Saturday Brush Cutting Day in August was canceled due to unhealthy air quality in the area. Fortunately, there was a 5th Saturday in August. We spent it, and the Second Wednesday in August, thinning out small trees and brush on the embankment between our tracks at the Sunol Depot, and Foothill Road. Linda Stanley and I also did some clean up on Tuesday the 1st of September. Between the three workdays, we cleaned up from Kilcare Road to about 200 feet West of the West Sunol Switch.

The objective of the campaign was to remove non-native invasive species, dead brush, small trees growing up too close in the shadow of big trees that will never thrive, those with structural flaws and to generally raise and open the vegetation for fire protection and for sightline visibility around curves.

I am grateful for the help of volunteers John Pelmulder, Matt Petach, Linda Stanley, Ron Thomas, Bob Pratt, Mark Whitman, Dee Murphy, Doug Vanderlee, Steve Miller and John Zielinski for their help. We were able to clean up vegetation that I have wanted to correct for many years. In this age of fire danger, I feel that the area is a lot safer.

On Saturday, September 12th, Doug Vanderlee called for a special Brush Cutting Day at Happy Valley Bridge. Over time, acorns have given rise to Oak trees growing up at all four corners of the concrete bridge abutments. That's their job! These wild saplings will be in the way of two repair and construction projects. First, the Happy Valley Bridge has many significantly deteriorated wooden timbers. The most efficient way to repair this little bridge is to hire a crane to lift the whole structure out of its saddles and place it on level ground for rebuilding, then rig it back a few weeks later. This project won't happen right away. Lifting the bridge out will minimize traffic problems on Happy Valley Road below the bridge, and will keep workers safe.



Photo by Dee Murphy

Mark Whitman on backhoe removes stumps, while John Zielinski, Steve Jones, Steve Miller, Ron Thomas, Matt Petach, and John Pelmulder feed the chipper.

The second project involves relocating the steel conduit that carries fiberoptic cables across the top of the bridge. Obviously, that has to be moved off the bridge before the bridge can be lifted off for repairs. The fiberoptic operator may be doing that work in the next few months, so it was imperative that the area in the way of the construction work be cleaned up. This project was facilitated by Doug Vanderlee, Stephen Barkkarie, Mike Strider, Mark Whitman, John Zielinski, Matt Petach, and brand-new members Peter Savoy and Adam Weidenbach. The addition of new blood to the gang is always a great event. We are doubly pleased to welcome these two enthusiastic new participants.

I will be out of action for a few months, recovering from hip replacement surgery. I am hopeful that others will step in to fill the void to assist John Pelmulder in the battle to keep the right-of-way clear. Remember the old

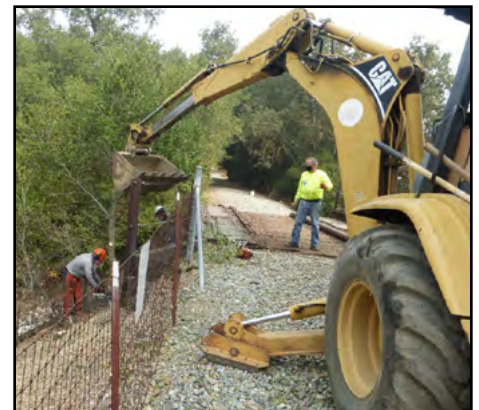


Photo by Matt Petach

Steve Jones, Doug Vanderlee, Mark Whitman and Stephen Barkkarie (on Cat Backhoe) hoist slash over the fence at Happy Valley Bridge.

PLA motto: "When many people do a little, a lot gets done". I will continue to send out E-mail messages about Brush Cutting plans and support the effort as best as I can from home. Stay safe.

Arborerros!! Aaawwwaaaaaayyyy!!
Steve Jones

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

This month's tale: **HERE COMES THE CALVERY! UNCLE PETE?**

It was the Spring of 1987. The Ford Plant track removal project was coming to a close. The material was stored over in the corner of the plant's yard. At that time, we did not have the money to transport the material to the canyon. It was safe where it was. At the same time that we were doing the Ford Plant, the Union Pacific Railroad was taking out the old Western Pacific Yard in Sacramento. Their main objective was to remove the yard as fast as they could, and get the material out of there. This was accomplished by using their machines designed for the job. When you have the right equipment, the job gets done.

They placed all the rail material into about 10 gondolas. They also spent time in disassembling the yard office. If it was going to scrap, they would have just crushed it.

Maybe an angel was on the shoulder of the Foreman saying, "Don't destroy the building". If he only knew what would happen to the building in the years to come. This is where this month's Tale begins:

At that time, Peter Schulze was a track inspector for the Union Pacific Railroad and he was the General Manager of the PLA. Mike McQuaid was the President. It was early in the week when I received a call from Peter Schulze notifying me about all this rail material planned to go to scrap. At that time, I was the Vice President.

The President was notified of the situation at hand. We really needed this material. All we had to do at this time is ask for it.

Although Peter Schulze was the GM, he also worked for the Union Pacific and that could look like conflict of interest. Mike Snyder, a PLA member with a legal background, did the front work for the PLA in asking for this rail



Sorting rail by size.

Photo by Brian Wise



Photo by Mike Duffy

Tie plates are now on top of berm. (Taken from old Club Car)

material which we really needed to rebuild the NILES CANYON RAILWAY. Mike talked to the U.P. Road Master, L.B. Chapman, in Stockton, to see if he could put a hold on sending those cars to Scrap.

A few more phone calls were made and a letter was sent requesting that



Photo by Mike Duffy

Crew just have tossed tie plates from car to ground at Shinn St. (From old Club Car)

the material be donated to a non-profit all-volunteer railroad. The UP went along with our request.

Now the pressure was on. The UP would move as many cars as we could handle.

The unloading would take place in Fremont, at Shinn St., which was the

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

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old Western Pacific yard. There was a spur track on the other side of the Yard up against a bank of dirt. It could hold several cars, but our work area would revolve around unloading three cars at any one time. When we received the cars, we would unload them as fast as we could, then call the UP when the cars were completely empty and cleaned out.

We agreed to the stipulations that were placed on us. I was going to be the contact person who would make arrangements for the car moves.

I was notified that the first three cars would arrive Friday. Game on! Now, time to see how we were going to handle this job. This was like the Marines hitting a beach-head in the Pacific. You don't know what you are up against until you hit the beach.

Just like the Marines, that's where we were. Until the cars arrived, we would not know what we would be up against.

The cars arrived. Wow! One gondola came in with nothing but tie plates. Two gondolas had 85 and 100 pound rail and some joint bars. The gondola with the tie plates was first. Once again, with lack of proper equipment, we reverted back to the old PLA way of doing things: the "HEAVE, GRUNT AND TOSS Method". That meant we climbed into the gondola and started throwing tie plates out of the gondola onto the ground. A large gap existed from the car to the edge of the berm.

When we got enough tie plates thrown out of the car onto the ground, we went onto the ground and tossed them up to the top of berm where they were stacked on pallets.

This continued all day long until the car was empty. The car was then swept and ready to be released back to the U.P. The following day, we had the use of a crane donated to us for unloading the rail. We were able to get both cars unloaded and I was able to release them back to the U.P. and schedule delivery of three more cars.



Photo by Brian Wise

Rail being loaded at Shinn Street for Brightside. Dexter Day driving, Mike Snyder stacking.

The first weekend went very well. We had a great turnout to help.

All outings didn't do as well because of heat or we were short of workers. Sometimes I was told a car was unloaded but contents not stacked due to time. When we had a big crew, we would split crews and load up a few trucks with rail for Brightside while the other crew worked the cars. Work continued in this fashion until all cars were unloaded. The building arrived. We unloaded it and stacked it out of the way.

The UP also delivered a gondola with brand new ties in it. We knew it wasn't for us. I called the UP and reported that a car showed up at Fremont for us to unload. It wasn't ours. I gave them the car number. Their comment was that was where it went.

I guess they lose a car now and then. The rail piles continued to be loaded onto trucks at Shinn St., and rail was dropped along the right-of-way by driving the truck down the right-of-way then dropping a rail off the truck every 39 feet. This saved time when construction started. We were lucky that

Peter Schulze was in the right place at the right time, and it was a good thing that Mike Snyder followed through in getting this critical material for the PLA.

With the San Jose siding project, the Ford Plant, and now the U.P. donation, we had enough material to get the rail started between Brightside and Sunol even though it was one rail only for protection of ties. Mr. Chapman and the Union Pacific came through for the PLA when we really needed a big break in our favor. The PLA thanked the UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD for their generous donation of rail material. The future of this group was near. Building this railroad was like planning the D-Day invasion. We had the material, the manpower, the will, and equipment to do the job. All we needed then was the green light. The days of kicking dirt and drawing pictures on napkins were almost over. We had some rough projects to get the rail material we needed. Now it was time to put it to use and build a railroad. With that said, ANOTHER TALE ENDS.

Dexter Day

Fred "The Voice" Krock, Remembered

NCRY Docent Extraordinaire, Fred Krock, passed away on August 26th 2020. My paths at the railroad did not intersect Fred's very often, but he left a distinct impression when they did. He cut a tall, erect, figure with a purposeful walk. His most recognized quality, of course, was his broadcast-quality baritone voice.

I had an opportunity to visit with Fred one afternoon during some special event at Sunol. I was surprised to learn that he was born in Arkansas, and had to go to some special diction classes to scrape off his natural accent before pursuing a career in radio broadcasting. For those of us who grew up in the SF Bay Area, Fred was General Manager of KQED FM Radio, near and dear to many of our hearts.

There is not enough space here to share all of the great memories of Fred. Please look at Jim Evans' article on

Page 6 of the December 2018 Club Car on the occasion of Fred's induction into the Bay Area Radio Broadcaster's Hall of Fame. There are also great stories about Fred I found on BING. He wrote articles for "Radio Survivor" about the "Golden Age" of radio. Some of his observations were very wry, and others were outright hilarious.

Rest in peace, Fred. "All the way across the Bay on the Big K!"

Steve Jones



 **Niles Canyon Railway's** 
2020 Train of Lights



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MEETINGS

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

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

Board of Directors Meeting

**Saturday
October 17
2:15 pm**

**=== NEW TIME ===
teleconferencing service**

Membership Meeting

**NO MEETING
SCHEDULED**

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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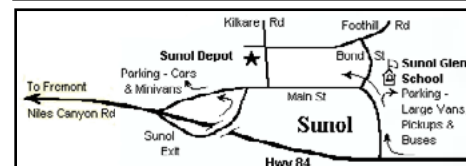
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Photo by Chris Hauf

One day on the SP... Nope! One day in August 2020, as #1423 was switching in Brightside yard to let the Skookum out of the shop lead.