



THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 688

Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

www.ncry.org

December 2020

New Record: 9 Track Panels Laid In One Day



Saturday MOW crew laying a panel at MP 39.

Photo by Mike Pechner

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2** Brush Cutting Report
- 3** Activities Page
- 4** Presidents Message
- 6** General Manager Report
- 12** Tales of the Past
- 15** Information Page

Saturday, November 7th, 2020 was the Track Department's most productive day for the greatest number of track panels laid in one day, 9 panels building East! Our last record was 7 panels on September 7th, 2019. It was a cool and partly cloudy morning as we left Brightside to head East and with the help of the Wednesday Maintenance-of-Way (MOW) crew who set up the MOW train earlier in the week. Their preliminary work saved precious switching time for the Saturday crew.

We needed to be out of Brightside before 9 am due to the day's planned train activities. After some minor loading of equipment in the yard, the MOW train left Brightside about 8:45 AM and got to the East end of the track by 9:30 AM. The day's Ballasteros and Volunteers included Chris Campi, Doug Vanderlee, John Zielinski, John Pelmulder, Chris O'Gara, Steve Hill, Matt Petach, Dan Colley, Steve Barkkarie (operating the Burro), Mark Whitman (on the Cat

Continued on Page 8

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

Brush Cutting Report

Steve Jones - Sawdust Manager

Keeping the Right-of-Way clear of overhanging tree limbs and encroaching brush has been a mixed bag in late October and November. On our regularly scheduled 4th Saturday-of-the-Month Brush Cutting Day, 24 October, John Pelmulder was joined by Dan Mills, Matt Petach, Mike Strider, Mark Whitman, John Zielinski, and new member Jack Gillespie with the intention of cleaning up the curve East of the "Sandbag Curve", approaching Farmer's Crossing. Unfortunately, our Bandit Chipper experienced a failure which prevented it from running at any speed above fast idle. The decision was made to go out and cut offending vegetation anyway, in the hopes that the mechanical problem could be identified and fixed in time to chip up the resultant slash within a few days of dropping it.

We were unsuccessful in our attempts to correct the problem with the Chipper, in house, so we had our local Caterpillar service shop tow it to San Leandro for troubleshooting and repair. The problem was identified as a defective liquid level sensor in the DEF (Diesel Exhaust Fluid) tank. DEF is a clear liquid Urea, which is injected in very small amounts into the exhaust stream to chemically neutralize the carbon and carbon-dioxide emitted from the engine. This technology, designed to clean up Diesel exhaust, is still pretty new, and the bugs are still being worked out. The sensor was backordered and not expected to arrive until early December. Fortunately, a replacement arrived early, and the chipper was returned to Brightside on Monday the 16th.



Photo by Linda Stanley

ROW Clearance-Master-2000, Dimensional Envelope Template.

The chipper failure necessitated canceling the one-week long brush cutting blitz of the ROW, long planned for the third week in November. We are thinking about trying to reschedule for February of 2021. Stay tuned.

Since we have begun to do limited reopening and running some lightly populated trains, our Operations crewmembers have been reporting areas along the ROW where vegetation is extending out into the ROW envelope and touching the equipment and/or personnel. Linda Stanley and I tip-toed out on a couple of occasions with the Bucket Truck to clean up those ticklers. In the hopes of speeding our targeting, and only cutting those branches that were touching the equipment, we brought out the PLA's "ROW Clear-

ance-Master 2000, Dimensional Envelope Template", and pushed it ahead of the Bucket Truck on a small MOW pushcar. Note: The Bucket Truck is operating well since its recent reconditioning. Thanks to all who contributed funds toward this effort.

I am grateful for the participation of the volunteers who regularly come out on the 4th Saturday and the second Wednesday of the month to support Brush Cutting. Thanks, too, to those who respond to my requests for volunteers to come out for the seemingly more frequent special brush cutting campaigns.

Your Brother in Sawdust.

Arboreros! Aaawwwaaaaaayyyyyy!
Steve Jones



E-COUPLING INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

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



NILES CANYON RAILWAY

===== December Activities =====

December 2,9,16,23	Wednesdays	Maintenance of Way, 7:30 am to 4:00 pm	Ron Thomas
December 5	1st Saturday	Ride the 7 for the 1744, 9:00 am, Sunol -The Alexanders	
December 6	1st Sunday	Ride the 7 for the 1744, 9:00 am, Sunol -The Alexanders	
December 11	2nd Friday	Charter, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, Sunol to Niles - Jim Evans	
December 12	2nd Saturday	MOW building East, 8:00 am (Brightside) - Mike Strider	
December 12	2nd Saturday	Board of Directors Meeting, 2:15 pm (Teleconference)	
December 12	2nd Saturday	General Meeting, 3:15 pm (Teleconference)	See Membership Report
December 19	3rd Saturday	Brush Cutting, 8:00 am (Brightside) - Steve Jones	

Volunteer Report

Ed Best - Volunteer Coordinator

The following is a list of the people who volunteered supporting your railroad in October. 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
Mary Asturias
Rich Alexander

ARCHIVES & LIBRARY

Brian Hitchcock

CAR DEPARTMENT

Bob Moore
Bob Pratt
Denis Murchison
Dennis Mann
Howard Wise
Jim McDaniel
Karl Swartz
Marshall Williams
Pete Goodier
Phil Stone
Rob Giles
Steve Van Meter
Tom Crawford

DEPOT CREW & OPERATIONS

Bob Bailey
Donna Alexander
Rich Alexander

DOCENTS

Ed Best
Henry Baum
Jim Evans
Rob Giles

ELECTRICAL & SIGNALS

Curt Hoppins
Jim Stewart
Rich Alexander

FACILITIES

Bob Pratt
Jack Harrington
John Zielinski
Rich Alexander
Steve Barkkarie
Wesley Van Osdol

GIFT SHOP

Donna Alexander
Gail Hedberg

MECHANICAL

Bill Ross
Charles Franz

MECHANICAL

Chris Hauf
Chuck Kent
Dee Murphy
Ed Best
Gerald DeWitt
Gerry Feeney
Howard Wise
Jeff Haslam
Karl Swartz
Kurt Olsen
Linda Stanley
Lou Bradas
Matthew Petach
Peter Bradas
Rich Anderson
Rich Gove
Steve Jones

MEETINGS

Bev Patterson
Bob Bradley
Bob Pratt
Charles Gullo
Charles Smith
Curt Hoppins
Dan Sarka
Dave Burla
Dee Murphy
Dexter Day
Donna Alexander
Doug Vanderlee
Ed Best

MEETINGS

Gail Hedberg
George Childs
Henry Baum
Jim Evans
Jim Gilmore
Jim Stewart
John Zielinski
Karen Kadaja
Kent Hedberg
Leslie Smith
Linda Stanley
Lou Bradas
Marshall Williams
Matthew Petach
Mike Strider
Pat Buder
Pat Stratton
Peter Midnight
Rich Alexander
Roger McCluney
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Jones
Thomas Libbey
Tim Flippo
Tom Eikerenkotter
Zona Fowler

MOW & TRACK

Bob Pratt
Dan Mills
Dee Murphy
Jack Gillespie

MOW & TRACK

John Pelmulder
John Zielinski
Ken Southwick
Mark Whitman
Matthew Petach
Mike Strider
Pat Hafey
Pat Stratton
Ron Thomas
Steve Jones
Wesley Van Osdol

OTHER

Barry Lependorf
Chris Hauf
Dan Sarka
Dennis Mann
Ed Best
Gerald DeWitt
Henry Chandler
Mark Miller
Mike Strider
Patrice Warren
Paul Veltman
Zonker Harris

SWITCHING CREW

Charles Franz
Ed Best
Mark Miller

TRAIN CREW

Alan Siegwarth
Bill Ross
Bob Pratt
Brad Jones
Charles Franz
Chris Chisom
Chuck Kent
Ed Best
Gerald DeWitt
Gerry Feeney
Jackie Vlasak
Jamie West
Jeff Schwab
Jim Stewart
John Sutkus
Jon Williamson
Jordan Hamilton
Jorg Linke
Justin Legg
Kurt Olsen
Linda Stanley
Mark Miller
Nick Alexander
Rich Anderson
Ron Quilici
Scott Crislip
Ted Unruh
Travis Zupo
Warren Haack
Zonker Harris

President's Message

Henry Baum - President

First, I want to wish you and your family the best holiday you can have and I hope you will continue to stay safe throughout the season and for all of next year. We are looking forward to this whole fiasco being over as quickly as possible. Pandemics, politics and prejudice need to be put behind us, and the world needs to embrace a new normal with all the wonderful new things we have learned put to the best uses possible.

When the PLA visited Cuba on our first approved junket to that troubled island back in 2003, we learned that the people as a whole had taken to refer to a dark period in their history as the 'Especial Period'. They knew they needed to put the dark days behind them, and to only look forward to the better days ahead. The use of the term 'Especial Period' allowed people to get on the same page without having to drag up all the emotional baggage, fears, and anger that those times had created. (The Special Period covered the decade from 1991 until 2001 after the collapse of the Soviet Union, which, on top of the US embargo on trade with the nation, left the country abandoned, isolated and starving. This hardship was made even more difficult by the 1996 ban on foreign companies doing business in Cuba.)

We were exposed to a lot of these hardships while visiting the various sugar plantations and marveled at the Cuban people's resilience to overcoming these hardships. Everywhere we went the people did their best to hide their deprivations from us. It was extremely obvious where their recovery was when we travelled down the unfinished 8 lane Soviet-built superhighway where our monster tour bus had to share the road with pedestrians, bicycles, equestrians and oxcarts, passing under overpasses that did not connect to anything on either end. We thought they were kidding us when they told us the most serious vehicle accident one

could have involved hitting a cow, but it was critically important that the loss of a dairy cow was minimized by having it converted to meat that could be sold to tourist hotels. Alan Siegwarth and I both learned this lesson when, against all recommendations and warnings, we both opted to order the beefsteak on the 3 Star Hotel Santa Clara's menu. While correctly cooked and of decent flavor, it is highly likely we were eating a steak from a traffic accident cow, as the meat could not be cut with a table knife, nor easily bitten off. I needed to collect my pocketknife from my baggage to reduce this 'steak' to chewable hunks.

Hopefully our own resilience will shine when this is over, and we can take all the good things we learned to utilize and make them part of our 'New Normal' and leave the bitterness behind. I know I see that when I look at how fantastically the PLA and NCRy has weathered this crisis. We remain fiscally solvent, and we continue to move forward on our restoration and maintenance efforts. To date, no volunteers have been lost to this virus, and we are unaware of any members directly impacted by this deadly disease, although it is highly likely that by now, we all know someone impacted directly by this disease. We have learned the benefits of on-line ticket sales and have improved our on-line Gift Shop tremendously. We have the new Steve Barkkarie built stairway that allows us to board passengers directly into the open cars, and it has worked out tremendously.

We have learned how to do smaller charters that fit within the guidelines and have adapted our Operating Procedures to handle the special trains we have been running on Saturdays and Sundays.

So wear your mask, stay socially distant, and avoid large gatherings. It appears PLA Board meetings and General meetings will be remaining fully virtual for the foreseeable future.

Attendance at the Board meetings has been exceptional, and it looks like we may just have them roll into General Meetings with an open forum at the end of the Board-specific business. With 12 Board meetings a year, that would allow everyone who desires to attend and learn about what is happening and meet their meeting attendance requirements to be a Voting Member. As the information presented at the Board meetings is typically recapped at the General meetings, combining the two is expedient and will be easier to satisfy the member's needs.

We all agree that in-person meetings are friendlier and less robotic, but the pandemic guidelines currently forbids them in the old way we used to have these meetings. We do want to move to having hybrid in-person/virtual meetings in the future, but there are significant technical difficulties that need to be worked out to make those meetings happen in a way that benefits all in attendance. When the pandemic restrictions are lifted we will have to decide if we want to revert to in-person meetings or stay with virtual meetings. The by-law revisions being developed will allow us to have meetings any way we choose, so that is a good thing.

Policies are still being reviewed; the Board hopes to finalize them in the upcoming months (just in time for review again in July). I am actively rewriting the policy concerning privately owned property on the premises.

The handshake agreements that have existed in the past are no longer adequate for an organization of our size and stature. We will need to have written agreements that 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

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

President's Message

Henry Baum - President

property and not so identified by the end of this calendar year will be regarded as a donation and become PLA property. 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, we are beginning the long and tedious process of cataloguing all the PLA-owned property, be it books, bells or baggage cars. Over the years we have requested that if you have PLA owned property in your possession, to

notify us. Now, we would like to amend that so that any PLA owned property in your possession be returned to us so we can catalogue and store it appropriately. We have places to do that now, so it is in the organization's best interests to get it under control. You can contact Jim Evans, Linda Stanley, Bob Pratt, Dennis Mann or myself to make arrangements to return the property.

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 work-

ing. 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

Treasurer's Report

Pat Stratton - Treasurer

Good news, fellow Volunteers, we are running trains again! Our first two weekends in September (4 trains each weekend, all with steam) grossed \$22,180. Along with gift shop sales and donated money and supplies, we had total income of \$45,941 for September. We are looking ahead for charters, possibly in support of Casa Bella in Sunol. And we should be thinking about Special Trains, like Beer Trains and other events, planning for early next year. The kind of events that are exciting and memorable for our riders.

Expenses for train operations, maintenance and repairs, facilities upkeep, MOW, and Admin expenses totaled \$29,404. We also had restoration costs of \$25,343 to bring the SP1744 frame home to Brightside, and \$1,463 for

work on the Ranch Car.

Less the restoration costs, that means we had a net positive income, with revenue of \$45,941 less \$29,404 expenses equal to \$16,357 in excess of our operating expenses. A great job everyone, finding a successful way to make our riders comfortable in these virus times. Thanks to all those who are making donations of cash and materials, in the amount of \$18,437 in September, and of course their time. It all comes together to allow us to continue to put up an operating schedule of trains, and to continue our maintenance and restoration works. Our Volunteers are hard at work on every Wednesday, and many other days, keeping our track up, making ROW improvements, repairing cars (ADL 1975 and Coach 2101)

and locomotives (WP713 and WP918), and working various restoration projects including the KM diesel Hydraulic SP9010, the Ranch Car GN1242, and now the SP1744 steam locomotive. Be sure to contact someone if you want to get involved in any of these projects. We will make sure you talk to the right people.

At the last Board meeting we approved the Budget for the rest of this fiscal year. If we can continue to operate like we did this month, with good earnings and controlled expenses, we will make it through this very lean fiscal year and into next year where we can work toward a successful TOL to get us back to normal.

Pat Stratton
650-888-8619

Looking for a place to Volunteer? Department Contacts are listed below:

BRUSH CUTTING - Clearing the RoW of bushes and trees - Steve Jones - fcocompost@aol.com
CAR MAINTENANCE - Maintenance and repair - Tom Crawford - tom@thecrawfordfamily.net
COMMISSARY - Food service on the trains - Bob Bradley - ncry.commissary@gmail.com
GIFT SHOP - Work in the Sunol Gift Shop - Gail Hedberg - giftshop@ncry.org
MOW CREW - (WEDNESDAY) - Work on track repair, etc. - Ron Thomas - rsthomas@sbcglobal.net
MOW CREW - (SATURDAY) - Work on building track East. Michael Strider - mstrider67@gmail.com
SIGNALS - Install/Maintain signal systems - Curt Hoppins - curt@ncrysignal.com
NILES STATION - Work parking, ticket sales, set-up, etc. - John Fenstermacher - johnnsherif@aol.com
SUNOL STATION - Work parking, ticket sales, set-up, etc. - Donna Alexander - station-agent@ncry.org
STEAM DEPARTMENT - Work in all aspects of steam engines - Alan Siegwarth - siegyy667@hotmail.com
STEAM HOSTLER TRAINING - Prepare a steam locomotive for service - Jeff Schwab - jeffs@levinterminal.com

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager

Happy Valley here we come. On Saturday Nov.7th a dozen members of MOW placed a record number of nine track panels in one day, over 350 feet of new track toward our goal of Happy Valley bridge. The weather was perfect, a light rain had fallen the day before and the temps were in the 70's. We had stacked eight panels out near the end of the line earlier in the season to save time ferrying panels long distances one at a time. We saved so much time that it was necessary to go a half mile west to bring up the last panel. The track is now about a hundred feet from the bridge.

The plan has been to remove the bridge and rebuild it from the beam seats up to the hand rails. But as with many plans we hit a snag, when the cable company sent us a cost estimate of \$100,000 to move their cable off the bridge before we could put the repairs out to bid. This would put off the repair for years. After consulting with our bridge inspection engineering firm, we are devising a plan to replace the failed wooden parts of the bridge without moving the cable. Most important are the walkways and the head timbers. We exposed the timbers and found they indeed can be replaced without moving the cable conduit. With a little more research, a cost and procedure will be prepared for the BOD.

Before the last test trains of October, during the regular track inspection, our inspector came across a vehicle down near Vallejo Mills Park on the right of way across the tracks at the homeless encampment known as "the hole". He stopped took photos and reported the trespass to the Fremont PD and of course the perps high-tailed it. When I went to look for how they got on the right of way, I discovered the tracks of a vehicle climbing the East end of the park and up onto the railway. This would not do, so the following Wednesday MOW set out to fix the problem. I thought a well-placed line of boulders should do the job. Fortunately for us Mother Nature provides us a constant supply of rocks, many that fall at the Spot Siding and foul the toe path. With the hi-rail backhoe and Mongo pulling flat cars, our crew loaded up a dozen large rocks to stop the trespassers and cleaned up the spur track at the same time. Two for one bonus. We placed those stones, and a second load from around the corner from MP30, before lunch and proceeded to lunch in the shade near Joyland Park.

While enjoying a brief meal I noticed a number of attractive stones (moss covered and nicely shaped) and it put me in mind of a discussion about a rock garden for the Sunol depot. Since we were all set up to load and haul large rocks, it made sense to pick out a few. Some of you may have seen the stones placed in the gravel patch between the platform and parking lot. Now that is known (in hockey parlance) as a Hat Trick, making three goals in a row; cleaned up the



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

A view of the Track Crew from the Burro operator's seat.



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

The stones placed to prevent vehicles onto the right of way.

"Spot" of violations, stopped unwanted egress and prettied up the place. Well done guys.

Union Pacific has a maintenance yard down on Shinn Street where they have accumulated a large number of surplus concrete crossing panels. I reached out to their head of track maintenance to ask if they would donate them to us and was pleasantly surprised when he agreed. Almost all are in great shape and there are nearly one hundred of

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager

them. These are very useful for retaining walls and walkways, as well as a part of a plan I am developing to construct an inspection pit. We managed to retrieve one load, and then a fence and gate showed up, so I will have to hunt down access to get the remainder of them. To save cost we are using our own forklift (the Hyster 15) and the trucker has promised a sweet rate. I plan to do fundraising to make this as close to no-cost as possible.

Speaking of fund raising, we are running a photo freight special the first week of December. This will help with the restoration of the #1744 and it looks to be another successful outing for our intrepid Steam Department. To aid this ef-

fort several of our volunteers have been busily sprucing up freight cars like the Union Pacific Gondola and the newly acquired D & R G Stock Car. The gondola will get some fresh paint after its mechanical repairs and our Stock Car needs some repairs to the West truck.

This month brings to a close my first year as General Manager. It has been a very surreal year to say the least and I would like to thank everyone for their support, guidance and mostly their patience. I am very blessed to be a part of this stellar group and am excited to see what the New Year brings.

Stephen Barkkarie



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

This is the crew laying panels toward the east.



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

Crossing panels donated by UP from Shinn St.



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

The stock car being lifted to remove the west truck.



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

This shows Happy Valley Bridge timber exposed.

New Record: 9 Track Panels Laid In One Day

Continued from Page 1

Backhoe) and yours truly. Charles Navarra and Mike Pechner arrived later that day on site.

Previously, Doug Vanderlee, Steve Barkkarie and I stockpiled 8 panels near the end of track to save travel time in gathering the panels with the Burro Crane. Also, the Burro Crane was spotted at the end of track on the day before (Friday) while Doug and I distributed the joint bars at the approximate panel ends and painted center-line of track to save additional time.

Work started immediately at 9:30 AM in laying out the tools for the day's work as well as starting and warming up the Burro. The laying of the panels proceeded like clockwork and everyone there had specific tasks including rigging the panels with lifting chains, directing the Burro, lining the rails to connect the joint bars, loosening spikes to slide and stagger one rail, and tightening the joint bolts just to list a few. As the day went on, 5 panels were in place by noon. Mark Whitman ran the CAT backhoe and supplied replacement crossties where rotten ones were removed from the panels. The temps continued to be cool, in the 60's which made work a lot more manageable as compared to those hot summer 90°+ days. After our lunch break, we placed 3 more panels and exhausted our stockpile of 8 panels close by. It was only 2 PM. We decided to go for a 9th panel given the extra time, daylight, and the coolness of the day, and the fact that leaving that early would conflict with train operations west of Sunol if we quit early. In less than an hour the 9th panel was in place. We could have gone for 10 panels with the remaining daylight but the day was long, the crew worked hard and we needed to call it a day.

The total track distance with the 9 panels is 351 feet closer to Pleasanton. We passed MP 39 and are now approximately 100 feet from the West edge of the Happy Valley Road bridge.



Photo by Doug Vanderlee

This photo was taken with the 9th track panel installed and with the Happy Valley bridge in background. From L-R: Chris O'Gara, Mark Whitman, John Pelmulder, Mike Strider, Chris Campi, Steve Hill, Matt Petach, Dan Colley, Steve Barkkarie, John Zielinski and Charles Navarra.



Photo by Matt Petach

Transporting 9th panel.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Depending on the situation of the fiber optic cable relocation on the bridge, the next steps to tackle building track on the bridge may change if the bridge repair plan is delayed. Stay tuned! The next main task will be to harden up all of the panels that have not been attended. This includes replacing rotten crossties with good ones, spacing crossties, nipping (raising) crossties and re-spiking before applying ballast. Once all of the panelized (skeletonized) track is hardened, the entire track from Verona to Happy Valley will be profiled and aligned (called surfaced and lined). Once this is all done, trains can safely operate all the way to Happy Valley with no restrictions.

Kudos goes to all the volunteers that helped with the 9 panels as it was a great accomplishment. Volunteers are always welcome and there is a task or job for everyone.

Mike Strider



Photo by Matt Petach

9th panel showing Happy Valley bridge.



Photo by Charles Navarra

Burro Crane on 9th panel looking east toward Happy Valley bridge.



Photo by Mike Pechner

Connecting panels near MP 39.



Photo by Matt Petach

(L-R) John Pelmulder, Doug Vanderlee, Chris Campi and Mike Strider. Pulling rail in place for joint stagger.



Photo by Mike Pechner

Steve Hill (L) and Mike Strider overlooking panel laying near MP 39. Steve Barkarie on Burro.



Photo by Matt Petach

(L-R) Chris Campi, Mike Strider, Steve Hill and Dan Colley preparing track before first panel.



Photo by Mike Pechner

Mark Whitman on CAT backhoe lining new panels.



Photo by Mike Pechner

Connecting panels near MP 39.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Membership Report

Linda Stanley - Membership Secretary

As year 2020 - that all are relieved to see -draws to a close, the Pacific Locomotive Association (PLA) moves forward with restorations, programs and projects underway. Your Membership Secretary remains busy processing the many memberships that come due at this time and would like to again thank the members who renewed their support throughout 2020 that helped to fuel PLA's ambitious plans for this year, 2021 and beyond.

The PLA is pleased to introduce the following 12 new members, some who have already come out to volunteer their valuable time. 'Welcome Aboard' to Fran Vader, Jay and Rojon Hasker, Rory Miller, the Wilson Family including Amy, Brian, Addison and Reagan, Jack Gillespie, Thomas Hayden, Sarah and Andrew Vanier, and John April Jr. reinstated.

EXTRA! The Board of Director's (BOD) announced at their November BOD meeting that there will be a Membership Meeting following the BOD meeting on December 12th, 2020. All Voting Members are especially encouraged to log into the teleconference by phone or computer. By your attendance at this Membership Meeting, you

will establish your eligibility to receive a mailed secret ballot to participate in the coming new voting member approval. Members in good standing/volunteers Kurt Olsen, Justin Legg, and Steve Coon intentions to join the ranks of Voting Members were previously announced at the September BOD meeting. Likewise, the Membership Meeting used to determine Voting Member participation is repeated here from November BOD meeting announcement. December's meeting access information was E-mailed to the membership around the first of December and again just prior to the Membership Meeting. For all members convenience, the access information will also appear at the bottom of this article. If you need further information or assistance, please call the Membership Secretary at 510.579.6300 or email membership@ncry.org.

The BOD teleconference meeting prior to the Membership Meeting begins at 2:15 PM PST. Voting members should access the BOD meeting no later than 3:15 PM PST to assure they do not miss the beginning of the Membership Meeting so their attendance can be noted.

Note: Be sure to adjust the meeting time according to your time zone!

To call into BOD/Membership Meeting using your phone:

- Use a telephone that has a 'Mute' button- all background noise is heard by all on the call and distracts from the business under way.
- Dial in number is: (425) 436-6398.
- When prompted, enter Access Code: 282820# - the # sign is required, do not forget to include!
- Mute your phone after announcing yourself when accessing meeting.
- Unmute your phone when you wish to speak.

To access using your computer, carefully type the following in Search box:

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

- Be sure to Mute your computer after announcing yourself and Unmute if you wish to address attendees – then Mute again when done speaking.

E-mail the Membership Secretary if you think that for any reason your attendance may not have been credited.

Finally – the secret ballots will be mailed before the end of the year via United States Postal Service to all Voting Members who attend the December Membership Meeting. It will be announced at the time of the mailing when ballots should be returned.

Enjoy a Safe and Healthy Holiday!

Linda Stanley

GIFT SHOP

It's Official - Announcing
the arrival of the

NCRy #1744 Hat

Information for how to order
is available at the
online gift store

<https://tinyurl.com/NCRyGiftShop>

Questions: Contact
giftshop@ncry.org



NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Denver & Rio Grande Western Stock Car #39210

PLA's latest acquisition, Denver and Rio Grande Western #39210 stock car arrived November 4th to Brightside yard. D&RGW shops built the car in 1944 using Murphy ends and other parts from an older 63500 series boxcar. The car was in service on the railroad until retired in 1977. Sonoma Valley Historical Society acquired the car in 1978 and put it on display in front of the Depot Museum in Sonoma along with a PFE ice reefer and a Southern Pacific C-40-3 caboose.

The Historical Society voted to surplus the stock car early in 2020 and offered it to NCRy in July. Doug Vanderlee and Dennis Mann drove to Sonoma to inspect the car and found it to be in good shape. After receiving approval by the BOD arrangements were started to move the car from Sonoma to Brightside.

There were several complications

Honoring Our Vets

On Veterans Day the Wednesday Warriors (The Niles Canyon Railway Car Department Wednesday crew) went to lunch at Jim's in Pleasanton (where we go every Wednesday) and some of us wore veterans stuff for Veteran's Day. (I had on my Vietnam Veteran's hat.) Of the 9 guys there, 6 of us were veterans. When the bill came, there was no bill. A woman at a table near us had paid for our lunch, and had left before we got to know it, letting our waitress know it was to support the veterans and she didn't want us to know who she was.

Now usually we give our waitress about a 50% tip, and figured out this gal probably didn't tip that much, so we decided to each give our waitress a \$10 tip, which came to \$90, which probably way exceeded 50%, but we didn't care. Ireland (the waitress's first name) is a college student, so we figured it was good for her.

Tom Crawford

Wednesday Warriors Team Lead



Photo by Chris Hauf

PLA's latest acquisition is now at Brightside. This Stock Car was built by D&RGW in 1944. Donated to PLA by Sonoma Valley Historical Society.



Photo by Dennis Mann

DRGW Stock Car being loaded at the Sonoma Depot Museum.

with the move; the car was on city property, the location was landscaped and a bike path blocked easy access to the equipment. We needed a crane sufficient to reach about 60' to pick up the car and load it onto a lowboy trailer. Doug Vanderlee oversaw the multiple arrangements needed to get the permits from the city, scheduling the crane contractor and the trucking company. Bragg Crane of Richmond provided the 140 ton crane, S&R Trucking from Fremont the lowboy truck.

On October 5th a group of PLA volunteers including Dennis Mann, Doug Vanderlee, Bob Pratt, Steve Barkkarie and Mike Strider prepared the car for the move by removing the brake rods, cleaning many years worth of rocks out of the journals, removing the dirty



Photo by Dennis Mann

The 140 ton crane lifted the stockcar over the bike path and landscaping to load it onto the lowboy trailer.

journal pads, cleaning the boxes and greasing the bearing surfaces.

November 4th the contractors arrived at the Depot Museum along with PLA members Henry Baum, Doug Vanderlee, Mike Strider and Dennis Mann. The operation went smoothly and everything was loaded by 10 AM. The lowboy, crane and a second truck with the wheel sets arrived around noon for unloading at Brightside.

Adding a Stock Car to the freight car collection has been a long time goal of the PLA as representative the livestock industry of the early 20th century. It will be restored for use in our photo freights and historic equipment displays.

Dennis Mann

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

This month's tale:

"JACK POT"

It was April of 2001. Overall, things were going well for the NCRY. The railroad was expanding and the train operations were well received by our passengers. Planning for the 40th 4th of July Festival was under way. This was going to be a special 4th of July with a special train ride and picnic. At the same time in the Bay area, the Union Pacific Railroad was swapping property with the County of Alameda. The property in play for this tale was the San Ramon Branch at Radium in East Pleasanton. This is where this Tale begins.

The County told our organization that they would like the PLA to remove all rail material from the Radium rail yard. Clearing the right of way was being contracted out. The ROW would become what it is today, the Iron Horse Trail, for hiking, jogging, and biking. The whole trail is now paved in black top. The Radium Branch went from Pleasanton through Contra Costa County to cut back into the old S.P. just outside of Concord. You can still see the right of way as it was. It is now a path. The book, "San Ramon Branch", shows buildings that are still at railroad crossing areas which have been removed.

At this time, we were planning on the removal of the rail at Radium. The cost to the PLA to dispose of junk ties was planned to be offset by the value of the scrap we would receive from taking up the Radium Yard. We took the opportunity to pull up the West leg of the wye; heavy rail, 136 pound, and some good ties. We planned on removing most of the Radium Yard for scrap. That did not take place.

It seems that the U.P. had assigned a contractor to remove the railroad for the construction of the Iron Horse Trail. That included the Yard at Radium. The County was not aware of this. I drove by there one day and found that remov-



Photo by Pat Warren

Ballasteros Steve Jones, Steve Rusconi and Mark Voelker rip up lead to Dumbarton Main.



Photo by Pat Warren, from old Club Car

Steve Rusconi, Mike Strider and Steve Jones lay down overhead crossing protection.

al was under way. I called the County, and they called U.P. Let's say that the U.P. was not happy with the situation. We were told that what was left at Radium was ours.

Two days later, the contractor had crossed the road and was ripping up the other half of the yard. I called the County again. U.P. was contacted again by the County. The outcome? The U.P.

local area had an outdated map of areas in their control. U.P. Omaha, sent a new map to them. The property in question was transferred to the County by the U.P. It looked as though they might need to make good for material improperly removed by their contractor.

One day I was driving across the Dumbarton Bridge when my cell phone got a call. "This is the U.P. at Fremont.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager



Photo by Pat Warren

Steve Rusconi, John Pelmulder and Gerry Dewees take out one of several switches.



Photo by Pat Warren. From old Club Car

Steve Jones lands another load of ties from the lead track.

Can you copy down an address at this time?" . . . "I will call you back after clearing bridge." I gave them a call. They gave me an address to check out for rail material salvage in Menlo Park. I said, "OK, thanks. On my way". I had to pay for another Bridge crossing, then arrived at the address given. I was looking at a warehouse area served by rail. This included rail, ties, switches, switch stands and more. It looked as if it hadn't been used much. In fact, it looked like new material.

I called the U.P. back. I asked, "Would you like to give me the address again?" . . . "Yes, that is the address!" U.P. wanted to know if we liked it. "Yes! It will do us well" . . . It's ours? . . . Yes! You need to get it out by end of next month". This will give us enough time. Game on! There was one stipulation: We needed to leave 200 Ft. of track off of the Dumbarton main track for U.P. use.

We now had everything we needed to build a railroad and all yards and sidings. The material was ours, but then we had to perform to get the material out of the industrial park area on time. We called for members to pitch in and help out to get this task done. Rich at S&R Trucking provided the flatbed rail-

ers on site to be loaded. Fork lifts were rented for a month. Along with having weekend crews, the midweek crews prepped by pulling spikes and unbolting joint bars. With the little stuff out of the way, the stage was set for the weekend crew to set up a production line for loading and shipping material to Brightside.

The Mighty Ballesteros (including Mike Strider, Chris Campi, Steve Rusconi, Doug Vanderlee, Doug Shannon, Steve Jones, Gerry Dewees, Mark Llewellyn, and probably others) headed up a production line that dug up and salvaged the ties. The tie gang cleaned, sorted, stacked and banded the ties. The bundles of ties were then loaded onto the flatbed trailers. The rail was loaded the same way by size of rail. OTM (other track material, i.e., spikes, joint bars, nuts & bolts) was placed in 55 Gal. drums and loaded onto the trailers. This project continued



Photo by Pat Warren

Doug Vanderlee, Glenn Fountain and Steve Rusconi sort and stack ties.

for about four weeks.

The area was cleared and the warehouse owner could construct their parking area. Since there wasn't a railroad crossing anymore, we unbolted the overhead crossing protection and got it loaded onto a trailer to go to the shoofly at East Sunol for storage. The Menlo Park Salvage Project was finished. Once again, the Union Pacific Railroad was a big help in building the Niles Canyon Railway.

With that said, ANOTHER TALE ENDS.

Dexter Day

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

When the PLA ran Mainline Excursions

I joined The Pacific Locomotive Association in 1968 at a time when Excursion Director Henry Luna was very successful in working with the Bay Area mainline railroads, the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe to arrange and operate very unique excursions. Henry working with the railroads was able to arrange for some great trips.

These excursions were run prior to the coming of Amtrak at a time the mainline railroads had eliminated a lot of their passenger trains but still retained a lot of nice streamlined cars.

Veteran PLA member, and early long term Secretary of the organization, Don Hansen, was on hand to photograph many of these special trains and here are a few of his photos:



April 30th, 1967. SP KM 9120 (same as our 9010) from Oakland to Sacramento via Martinez and Davis with return via Stockton, the Altamont Pass and Niles Canyon. The train consisted of coaches, a snack car and a few lounge cars. Picture at Oakland 16th Street Station prior to departure. Many of the crowd pictured were PLA members!



March 3rd, 1968, the Santa Fe Riverbank Rambler. Running with the last Alco PA's in Santa Fe passenger service. Ran from Richmond to Riverbank and return. Pictures at Richmond prior to departure and running through Franklin Canyon.



April 26th, 1970. The Truckee Limited. PLA ran a Truckee Limited train with unique SP locomotives starting in 1968 until 1971. In 1970 as I recall, Henry requested a more unique locomotive, but SP provided us with a brand new General Electric U33C unit, the only time one was used in passenger service.

SP allowed PLA volunteers to provide service on these trains and keep tips!

I worked as a lounge car attendant serving drinks in one of the three lounge cars on the train. Great fun for a 19 year old railfan!

Photo below is train stopped on eastbound trip at Colfax awaiting a mainline photo runby.

The PLA Truckee Limited Trains ran from Oakland, over Donner Pass to Truckee and back. Long, but fun days!

Jim Evans



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
December 12
2:15 PM**

Teleconferencing service

Membership Meeting

**Saturday
December 12
3:15 PM**

Teleconferencing service

CLUB CAR DEADLINE

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

Send e-mail to:

clubcar@ncry.org

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

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

BOARDING LOCATIONS

NILES STATION

**37029 Mission Blvd.
Fremont, CA 94536**



SUNOL DEPOT

**6 Kilkare 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	johnnsheer@aol.com
Station Agent - Sunol	Donna Alexander	(510) 996-8420	station-agent@ncry.org
Steam Department Head	Alan Siegwath	(408) 515-4602	siegggy667@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

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.

Items in this publication are Copyright © 2020, Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc. and may be reproduced only by permission with credit to the source.

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

The Pacific Locomotive Association is a member of the HeritageRail Alliance (HRA).

PACIFIC LOCOMOTIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.

Post Office Box 515
Sunol, CA 94586-0515

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage

PAID

Hayward, CA
Permit No. 188

Time Sensitive Material



Photo by Chris Hauf

Our Steam Department painter, Chris Hauf, has completed putting our Union Pacific drop bottom gondola #60178 back into its as built paint scheme. Lettering is next, but this is the first time in a long time this car has worn this paint scheme.