



THE CLUB CAR



BULLETIN 691

PACIFIC LOCOMOTIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.

MARCH 2021

Work is continuing on the SP #1744



Photo by Stathi Pappas

Inside SP#1744 boiler looking forward down the barrel. Notice the grey Apexior coating on the barrel which is a special protective paint for use in boilers.

IN THIS ISSUE

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

February has been a busy month preparing for steam operations to begin again. The annual inspection on the Robert Dollar #3 will be complete by the time you read this article and the locomotive will be back in service for operations for the first time in several years. Chris Hauf has completed the lettering on the #3 as well, so her new shiny paint job is now complete and we can't wait to see his work outside the shop in the sunlight! The steam

crew is also looking forward to hearing her sharp exhaust chuffs again as she works up the grades in the Canyon and remember, the locomotive's original Alco whistle is now back on the #3 as well. The whistle, now known as the Henry Luna Memorial Whistle, was purchased and rebuilt thanks to member donations in memory of Henry. If you have a chance, come out take a ride behind the #3 and enjoy the Can-

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

Once again, we did not gather in a large group last month to do Brush Cutting out on the ROW, but some progress in the battle against encroaching vegetation was accomplished. Since last report, Linda Stanley and I made a trip out to beat back scrub too near the rails around MP-30.3. This time, we did not discover any lost cows. We also made a return trip to the split Oak tree near the Mission Bridges. At this writing, the fallen limb is 95% cut up and chipped. Only the largest section remains to be dispatched.

On Wednesday, 17 February, the Wednesday MOW Crew performed a long-planned tree removal project on the embankment adjacent to the front Truck Gate at Brightside. There were two Sycamores and two Oak trees growing up under, or very close to PG&E power lines and other telecommunication cables. Contractors working for the utilities had repeatedly pruned the trees back, resulting in grotesque shapes and structural flaws likely to cause limb failures in the future. The tree removal and slash chipping effort was supported by Wes Van Osdol, Ken Southwick, Ron Thomas, Matt Petach, Dee Murphy, Bob Bradley, and Bob Pratt. My thanks to all hands for their labor.

Close examination of the remaining trees up on the embankment revealed a couple more trees growing too close together, and too close to the power lines, and an additional tree that was headed back (topped) by the utility contractors that I didn't know about. I will make a return trip up there in the near future to clean up all of these problems



Photo by Linda Stanley

Failed Oak tree limb at Vallejo Mills.

before they get any worse.

I love trees. I would much prefer to be planting trees than taking them out. It is my goal to work with the General Manager and the Facilities Manager to determine the long-term use for the real estate up next to the West perimeter fence. If it is not going to be developed, I'd like to plant some flowering trees up there. They would have to be a low maintenance species that doesn't grow taller than 15 to 20 feet, so they won't interfere with utility wires. The Crepe Myrtle growing in front of Blake's Palace is an example. We'll see.

Our next big project will be cleaning up the "Tunnel of Trees" East of the Happy Valley Bridge. This work is needed to enable the Burro Crane to travel past the bridge, moving track panels into place as we build toward Pleasanton, and will take several days of work. The



Photo by Linda Stanley

Cleanup in progress.

project will be initiated as soon as the grade is dry enough to allow for us to take the Bucket Truck and Chipper out there without fear of getting stuck in the mud.

Until next time,
Arboreros!! Aaaaawwwaayyyyyyyy!
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

===== March Activities =====

March 3,10,17,24,31	Wednesdays	Maintenance of Way, 7:30 am (Brightside) - Ron Thomas
March 13	2nd Saturday	Regular Operation, Sunol, 10:30 am, 1:00 pm
March 13	2nd Saturday	Board of Directors Meeting, 2:15 pm (Teleconference)
March 13	2nd Saturday	General Meeting, 3:30 pm (Teleconference)
March 14	2nd Sunday	Regular Operation, Sunol, 10:30 am, 1:00 pm
March 20	3rd Saturday	Regular Operation, Sunol, 10:30 am, 1:00 pm
March 21	3rd Sunday	Regular Operation, Sunol, 10:30 am, 1:00 pm
March 27	4th Saturday	Brush Cutting, 8:00 am (Brightside) - Steve Jones

== ALL ACTIVITIES SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION ==

Volunteer Report

Ed Best - Volunteer Coordinator

The following is a list of the people who reported a total of 2,134 volunteer hours supporting your railroad in January. 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
Chris Hauf
Donna Alexander
Ed Best
Jackie Vlasak
Mark Miller
Mary Asturias
Rich Alexander
Steve Jones

ARCHIVES & LIBRARY

Brian Hitchcock

CAR DEPARTMENT

Dennis Mann
Howard Wise

ELECTRICAL & SIGNALS

Curt Hoppins
Jim Stewart

FACILITIES

Bob Bailey
Bob Bradley
Dee Murphy
Doug Debs
Gerry Feeney
Glenn Fountain
Jim Evans
John Zielinski
Kurt Olsen
Matthew Petach
Rich Alexander
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Coon
Steve Jones
Tom Crawford
Wesley Van Osdol

GIFT SHOP

Donna Alexander
Gail Hedberg
Rich Alexander

MECHANICAL

Alan Siegwarth
Bill Stimmerman
Charles Franz
Chris Campi
Chris Hauf
Chuck Kent
Dee Murphy
Doug Vanderlee
Gerald DeWitt
Gerry Feeney
Henry Chandler
Howard Wise
Jeff Haslam
Jeff Schwab
John Zielinski
Justin Legg
Karl Swartz
Linda Stanley
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Jones

MEETINGS

Bob Pratt
Charles Gullo
Charles Navarra

MEETINGS

Charles Smith
Chris Hauf
Curt Hoppins
Dan Mills
Dave Burla
Dee Murphy
Don Gholson
Doug Debs
Doug Vanderlee
Ed Best
Gail Hedberg
George Childs
Henry Baum
Jim Baber
Jim Evans
Jim Stewart
Joe Romani
John Zielinski
Justin Legg
Karen Kadaja
Kent Hedberg
Kurt Olsen
Leslie Smith
Linda Stanley
Mark Miller
Matthew Petach

MEETINGS

Mike Strider
Pat Buder
Pat Stratton
Patrice McDonald
Peter Midnight
Rob Giles
Sally Mills
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Jones
Thomas Libbey
Tim Flippo
Tom Crawford
Tom Eikerenkotter
Warren Haack
Zona Fowler

MOW & TRACK

Bob Pratt
Chris Campi
Dee Murphy
Doug Vanderlee
Ken Southwick
Linda Stanley
Matthew Petach
Mike Strider

MOW & TRACK

Ron Thomas
Steve Jones
Wesley Van Osdol

OTHER

Barry Lependorf
Carlo Borlandelli
Dave Burla
Dennis Mann
Doug Vanderlee
Ed Best
Linda Stanley
Mike Strider
Patrice Warren
Steve Barkkarie
Steve Jones
Wesley Van Osdol
Zonker Harris

SWITCHING CREW

Gerry Feeney
Karl Swartz

President's Message

Henry Baum - President

Covid-19 continues to affect all of our lives, and it is continuing to have an impact on the Pacific Locomotive Association. Taking a gamble on the trends, we are planning to begin operations similar to those we ran last Fall starting the middle of March. We are expecting Alameda County to be in the red tier by then, and well on its way toward orange. We are taking this risk because we are classified as an outdoor museum within the State's guidelines, and we are allowed to be open with modifications today. We choose not to run, primarily due to our concern for our volunteers. We want to minimize the risk to which the crews are exposed, and that is more important than making some revenue. As we all know, without our volunteers we cannot run trains, for revenue or any other reason. We need to protect our volunteers.

We hope the red tier will grant us this extra margin of safety, and the orange tier will make it really safer. We also do not want to have to start selling tickets and then have to shut down again. That frustrates our volunteers as well as our patrons. We are planning to run this modified schedule at least through May. By then we will know if we can risk expanding operations or even go back to our 'normal' schedule.

There is an increasing desire amongst our members to begin running trains to the East, on our newly constructed and underutilized Valley Division. With the crossing at Verona Road in service we can now run trains from Sunol to Happy Valley Bridge and back. Our Operations Planning Committee will be developing some plans to begin doing that as soon as we can run more normal trains. The M200 was going to be used in the beginning to introduce these rides, but the Pandemic means we can't put enough socially distanced passengers on board to make it worthwhile. (We will probably still use the M200 when we begin these trips, but the option of running the same consist

we run to Niles but run it to the East may also be feasible, especially when running diesel powered trains). There are a number of details that will need to be worked out, but luckily, we have the experts to work out the logistics of doing so.

I am also hoping that the restrictions on large gatherings will be lifted when we are approaching the yellow tier. This will be important so we can hopefully have our 4th of July picnic this year. We may have to push it later in the year so it may be a Labor Day picnic, but we will work out something. This will also be critical in our planning for the resumption of TOL for the 2021 season. 2021 is also the 60th anniversary of the founding of the PLA. We are hoping to be able to celebrate this milestone with some form of in-person gathering and train rides, but Covid-19 may have other ideas. If we can pull off a picnic, it may be a volunteer appreciation / 60th Anniversary celebration and member's picnic.

By September we will also have to make a call on the 2021 Train of Lights. As it takes months to decorate the train, it needs to be decided by this time frame. We chose not to run it for the 2020 season as it would have been a truncated and highly restricted version of itself. If socially distant requirements remain in effect, the TOL may also suffer from those restrictions. Will we scrap it again? Will we design a different version? Mask requirements will not have an impact but running at half capacity to achieve social distancing will make the TOL a disappointment

for all involved. We would still have to decorate a huge number of cars to run a decent train at half capacity, and decorating the cars is the bulk of the prep work. It is also difficult to do if the decorating teams need to be socially distanced in order to do their work.

I have heard some experts already say that the mask and social distancing restrictions may not be lifted until 2022. That spells disaster for our TOL. I hope everyone begins working as hard as possible to get this virus under control through any efforts that you can put forward. While for some this means getting vaccinated ASAP, and for others it means ensuring their immune system is as robust as it can be. We need to stop the spread for TOL to occur.

Last November Governor Newsom and the California Small Business Office (SBO) announced a new California Relief Grant Program for Small Business, and another grant for Small Non-Profit Businesses. The non-profit grant would consist of two rounds, with \$2.3 million available for each round. Non-profits such as ours, with revenues of over \$1 million, would be eligible for a grant of \$25,000 to cover expenses such as rent and utilities, as compensation for lost revenues. While we had all the necessary documentation readily available, the application process was untried as the typical questions for businesses did not apply for non-profits. The State chose a company called Lendistry to manage the grant program, but they also had little experience with non-profits. The CalSBO also had little experience with non-profits. The California Association of Non-Profits stepped in to facilitate the exchange of information between the non-profits and Lendistry. While we were able to begin the registration process as soon as the on-line application window opened, we were locked out when the Lendistry website crashed. We were finally able to get the application process completed, and then were



President's Message

Henry Baum - President

able to upload the necessary financial documents before the closing date. We were eventually notified that we would need to grant them access to our on-line banking access so they could verify our accounts prior to being granted an award. Both Treasurer Pat Stratton and I balked at this, and challenged Lendistry to justify their request. After considerable internal review, Lendistry settled for a voided check to establish account parameters.

Shortly thereafter we received notice that the PLA had been selected to re-

ceive a \$25,000 grant, and the money was successfully deposited into our account! As required, we will probably use it to pay our various utility bills over the coming year. This also means that we will not have to dip into our savings to pay these bills, and hopefully with running special trains soon, we can probably survive another year in a close to normal manner.

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. The new restrictions make this vitally important again.

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

To our Members:

Our cash position is good, bolstered by your continuing contributions and the receipt of a COVID-19 Relief Grant of \$25,000 from the state of CA. It can be used to pay for utilities, our rent to the County, and the payment on our one equipment loan. That grant will help us through the months when Alameda County rules will not allow us to operate our revenue-producing passenger trains. We are cautiously optimistic that we will be able to resume those operations soon, possibly in mid-March or early April.

On the expense side, we are doing a good job controlling our costs and getting work done while staying within our budgets.

Our annual financial audit is nearly complete. We voluntarily have our books audited each year so that our donors and other partners understand how much we as an organization value transparency and good recordkeeping.

January contributions to PLA and its various projects were just under \$23,686. This is the detail by restoration project or fund:

General Fund - \$14,256
Steam SP1744 - \$6,507
Diesel SP1218 - \$150

Pleasanton Extension - \$335
MOW Second Shed - \$104
New Loco Shop - \$100
In-kind Contributions - \$2,203

I would like to let you all know who our contributors are – you are vitally important to the financial health of the PLA. Your donations not only help fund these efforts; they also are a vote toward that projects' importance and value to the organization. However, in January we received contributions from over 90 people! – so you can understand why I cannot name you all each month. Thank you to all of you who gave generously to the PLA.

Thank you,

Pat Stratton

650-888-8619

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.



Photo by Chris Hauf

We were busy for a moment staring into our crystal ball in hopes of finding some good things.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager

As usual this time of year, time seems to march along, and as the rest of the country is enduring a last blast of Winter before the promised early Spring, things around the Canyon are getting steamy. Annuals are being done on the engines in anticipation of opening for some special runs soon and the Steam Dept. has even teamed up with MoW to ferry track panels East from Verona to get ready to cross the Happy Valley Bridge. Where else can you go and find track being laid by a Burro Crane and a steam engine? Only at the NCRy.

Operations Department is hard at work planning the strategy for offering the public rides again, probably just like the runs from last Fall. We have the track in shape and the stable of diesels is primed for the task. The Burro Crane engine has been road tested and it works like new. The Pettibone Crane has been moved to Brightside and everyone is excited about what we can do with it. Howard is already planning how to finish the SP 9010 engine re-install. Now we can remove the hood and lift the engine without scheduling a rental. The Steam Dept crew is looking forward to how a crane will make work on the engines so much easier, as well as how useful for the assembly of the 1744. We even have the ability to transport it on the mainline with the Heavy Hauler. How nice to have a choice of cranes.

In Brightside, the South side walkway should finally be finished this month. Even though this project has had some setbacks, we have pushed forward, and the end is in sight. We now will have safe conditions for our crews to do their jobs. Thanks to all involved. Once this project is completed, we can move on to the next major improvement at Brightside.

Also, in Brightside, the front gate has been completely rebuilt and is working perfectly. Hats off to Bob Bradley for pushing the effort to start from scratch. It is the right way to fix it. Thanks also



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

MOW workers Ron Thomas, Dee Murphy and Wes Van Osdol tamp-up ties in East Sunol.

to Kurt Olsen and Matt Petach for their tech expertise in the reinstall and to Rich Alexander for overseeing the whole thing. Kurt and Matt moved on to installing the wireless connection from the Radio room in the Tipple to the front gate. This will give us a camera for security and has, for the first time, given

us Wi-Fi in the yard from the Car Shop to the front gate. Even though the provider is a limited land line, they have great plans to enhance the digital capabilities at the railroad and hopefully get us a better deal on communications and credit card processing at the stations. Keep your fingers crossed.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager



Photo by Stephen Barkkarie

Doug Vanderlee setting up the MoW combo of the week, The Burro-Vator, OTM transport supreme.

Until we reach a better level in the COVID-19 rainbow, crews are mostly confined to the yard, and that has led to good things happening in Blake's Palace. Wes Van Osdol has been busy in the new GM office with a fresh paint job on the walls, as well as the floor. New bookcases have been constructed by our Wednesday Warriors leader Tom Crawford in his home shop. They look great and are sturdy as heck. This should give us lots of room to shelve training material, equipment manuals, and reference materials. Plus, with Wi-Fi available, we should be able to provide Internet and printing for crew use and training. Best part is, Wes used paint found gathering dust on a shelf in the Wood Shop Car, and Tom used wood donated years ago and has been taking space in the Car Shop.

You may recall, a few issues ago I showed a photo of the plans for the device for calibrating our Single Car Tester. I recently received the final

component, a very precisely drilled orifice plug, and have completed the build. I performed the required 92-day dis-assembly, cleaning, inspection and calibration of the Single Car Tester required by CFR Title 49, so it is ready to do the SCT's due this year on our rolling stock. I also have taken a field trip to the Placerville Sacramento Valley railroad to do Single Car Tests on their caboose and flatcar conversion. They needed it done to run this Spring. Our own Jim Green did the last tests for them five years ago. Helping a fellow museum in these trying times only seems right.

Out on the track, despite the restrictions, we must still take care of our property. Steve Jones is still continually active battling the ever-growing vegetation, Wednesday MoW conducts inspections for falling rocks (and livestock) and our Mechanical Department test runs equipment. For example, late in January, a significant rain event was

forecast, and prudence dictated we have a side dump in Brightside in case of landslide. To that end, Gerry Feeney, Doug Vanderlee and I took SP1423 to East Sunol to switch one out and, during that task, several issues were noted with both the mainline switch and the crossover. On the main, loose wedges, missing cotter pins and low ties with displaced saddle braces were evident, and are considered a safety defect. The crossover turnout was noted to have the left point jumping when equipment passed over. Gerry noted that this condition has existed for some time, well, that simply won't do when we have fixed that condition several times in Brightside. As a result, MoW sprang into action the very next workday. A small band was dispatched with jacks, bars, and cotter pins to correct those conditions. With a little instruction in technique, gained in my time working with professional track repair companies, our forces were able to fix the situation in short order and with only hand tools. It goes to show that a little knowledge can go a long way and should be shared at every opportunity.

A little side note about knowledge shared, for those of you who need Railway Worker Protection recertification, Peter Shulze will conduct training when COVID-19 restrictions loosen. He has assured us that, if it is completed this calendar year, we will not have a problem with the PUC/FRA because of the Pandemic.

When Spring has sprung, and the sap is running (along with our trains) the days will be getting longer and the PLA will be getting stronger as our dedicated volunteers emerge from their forced hibernation. I encourage all who read this to lend their support by volunteering (anyway you can) or donating to their favorite project, because, we will get back to doing what we always do (and maybe some new things, too).

Stephen Barkkarie

Stack Talk

Alan Siegwarth

Continued from Page 1

yon's Spring beauty.

Work continues on the SP #1744 as well with lots of needle gunning to clean, inspect and then paint the frame ongoing. The running gear inspections continue as well with the Fireman's side crosshead, piston rod and packing being cleaned and inspected. Every journey starts with a first step and a firebox replacement begins with the first sheet installation. Stockton Locomotive Works has the door sheet up and lined up ready for holes to be drilled and bolted to the mudring – this is a huge first step! The side sheets, crown sheet and rear tube sheet all will need to be installed and lined up properly in preparation for them to be welded to complete the new firebox. In addition, the UT inspection on the boiler is continuing and Stathi has completed painting the Apexior protective coating inside the boiler barrel – it looks beautiful!

The steam crew wants to thank ev-



Photo by Alan Siegwarth

Chuck Kent moving the crosshead during running gear inspections with Gerald DeWitt needle gunning the frame in the background.



Photo by Stathi Pappas

The doorsheet of the firebox up in place ready for further work so it can be permanently mounted. A huge first step on the boiler work.

everyone who has donated toward the SP #1744 project as donations are essential to allow the SP #1744 project to continue moving forward. PLA members have been extremely generous in donating to this project throughout 2020. If you can, PLEASE DONATE to keep

the project on schedule in 2021. Donations can be mailed, made online at www.ncry.org/donate 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.

Alan Siegwarth

Alan Siegarth



Photos by Alan Siegarth

Top, left and right: Spring and piston rod packing removed, inspected and cleaned from the back of the cylinder.



Photo by Alan Siegarth

Chris Hauf working on setting stencils in preparation for painting "The Robert Dollar Co" lettering on the tank.



Photo by Alan Siegarth

Moving the SP#1744 frame over to the other shop track in preparation for operation of the #3.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

DRESSER'S DONE! NILES, HERE WE COME?

The time was December of 1992. The Farwell Bridge was close by, but it was behind us. We were at E.O.T. (End of Track) which was at the beginning of the turn at Joyland Park heading West. Joyland Park was popular in the 1920's and 30's. Folks from the East Bay cities rode the train out to Niles Canyon for a day outing or to spend the weekend. The Southern Pacific Railroad ran several trains a day through Niles Canyon. Joyland Park had a stop for those who were going to have a picnic or go swimming in the swimming pond upstream from the dam. Today, the park is grown over. If you walk through the park, you will find the fire pits, of which only two remain. Along with Farwell Bridge for the trains, Joyland Park had its own automobile bridge and a ticket booth for those who drove to the park. That bridge was destroyed over the years from high water in the creek. You can see a bridge abutment laying over in the location where the bridge was.

Yes! Niles Canyon was a recreation area throughout. It even had a dance hall which was located about 1200 feet West of Brightside Crossing in the field to the North. Please, don't go looking for the foundation. It is not there. I know. We met our neighbors looking for it. At one time, PLA thought about opening up Joyland Park again, but the park property is not part of our lease.

It was time to once again head West to our next two goals: Dresser Bridge and Niles. This is where this month's tale begins.

The proper rails had been placed for this portion of railroad. The ties did not look all that great through the turn but they would hold rail and a train at the time. There was an erosion problem just West of Joyland Park. All ties must be in ballast on solid ground. Ends of ties can't be airborne. After finishing the turn at Joyland Park, the track crew continued laying rail down the grade toward Dresser Bridge. There were several bad ties on that tangent track, but enough good ties to hold rail and a train. The Track Crew began replacing the really bad ties where needed just to make it legal to run on. More ties would be replaced when time permitted. The crew was almost to MP 31.0 and a completed switch that was built several years back. The section they were working on was already gone over several years earlier by another track crew when they were only allowed to lay down one rail to protect ties on the right-of-way. This crew was bolting rail together, gaging, spiking it down, then ballasting and tamping to finish track. That one rail saved the Track Crew a lot of time.

At MP 31.0, the crew built a small spur track to set out or rearrange MOW equipment. Another crew set up at the



Photo by Alan Frank

Mark Whitman inspects the damage on the West end of Dresser Bridge.



Photo from Old Club Car

Track crew blowing spike holes and plugging them West of Dresser.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager



Photo by: Mike Strider

Track Crew fight fire on our side of the Canyon in July 1993 across from where the big one was.



Photo by Alan Frank

DRESSER DONE! Happy Track Crew on August 29, 1993.



Photo by Alan Frank

Banner break as first train crosses Dresser bridge at 2 PM August 29, 1993.

Dresser Bridge ready to lay down rail. They were on the West side of the Dresser Bridge, blowing out spike holes on the existing ties, and plugging the holes on the usable ties they were going to keep. If you were blowing tie holes, (with compressed air) it didn't take long before you looked like the stuff you were blowing out of the spike holes. You might say this was a dirty job. The Southern Pacific Railroad didn't put much money into this line in the latter years before the County bought it for future rail activity. The Track Laying Crew proceeded to lay rail across the Dresser Bridge and headed West.

The top view of the bridge looked great with the new rail across the bridge, but that was only on the surface. Yes! If you went under the bridge and took a good look on the West end bridge abutment support, you would see a damaged area where the foot of the bridge goes supported by a large beam. That timber had seen better days. We needed to get it out of there and have new concrete poured for the footing. Easy? No room. HWY 84 is right on top of you at that point. The West head wall of the bridge was damaged in a big slide at that point, years in the past. This portion of the railroad through Niles Canyon was known for producing lots of slides throughout the years. Mark Whitman took a close look under the span to see how the exercise of removing the bad timber could take place. Joe McNeil was our resident bridge inspector who provided his expertise in getting this job done. We figured the project would take several months to complete.

Then came the big Canyon fire in July 1993 which was on the North side of Hwy. 84. The whole hillside between Farewell and Dresser was on fire. The highway was closed. The CDF was attacking the fire at the top of the ridge. Jeff Otto and his crew took advantage of this situation. Using a spur-of-the-moment plan, they took action to get the backhoe down onto the highway and were able to remove the bad timber from the West end of Dresser Bridge and took it down the highway to a location to place timber to block access to right-of-way. They were also able to remove all the old rotten catwalks that were under the bridge. Now it was ready for concrete pour for the footing which took place by the end of July. The best thing to note about this repair; it was done by our own Track Crew with people who knew how to get it done right. The only problem was that they didn't have much room to work and having concrete delivered caused a slight problem on the highway. The job got done and Dresser Bridge was ready to be opened. Of course, the PLA heard about it.

Now that the footing problem was corrected, it was time to get the bridge opened. There was another fire on our side of the canyon in the same area in July a week later. Our Track Crew helped out on our track by using the Smoke

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

Chaser to wet down the grass fire. So much for the fires.

Wait a minute! Where was the picnic for the Dresser Bridge? It was time to plan for the picnic and grand opening of the crossing of Dresser Bridge. The next question; where to hold the picnic? No open space around there. There was a flat area off the road that came up to our right-of-way, but it was overgrown. Mark Whitman solved that problem. He took the backhoe down to that area and made a picnic area out of the over grown field. He also made a path down to the creek where there was a small beach under the bridge. The picnic area was completed and ready for the big day. On August 29, 1993, Dresser Bridge was opened for operation and we had a great picnic with honors going out to the Track Crew for their accomplishments in building the right-of-way to this point.

The Track Crew was then beyond MP 30.5 after they had to build new drainage and clean culverts from mud and rock slides. It is amazing what that crew could do with the mess that was handed to them. After completing MP 30.5, the Track Crew moved West to MP 30.1. When they reached that point and the right-of-way and track was completed, the track was opened to operations.

Meanwhile, the Niles Canyon Railway participated in the 1993 Fall Newark Parade. That year's theme was, "The Best in The West". The Steptoe Valley Engine No. 3 was loaded onto a Statewide Transport lowboy trailer, was tied down, and off it went to the parade. In the parade, it was under steam and I have to say you knew it was there. The bell was rung and the whistle was blown. It was great PR for NCRy since 50,000 people attend the parade. Although the NO. 3 only took 2nd place in the Antique Car Division, it was the overall opinion, "although unofficial", that the No. 3 was the best entry in the parade and overall Best of Show. The officials thought it was great and thanked us for going through all the trouble to bring the engine to their parade.

At MP 29.9, the Track Crew found a major problem: A large eroded area on the right of way. This was going to take a little time to correct. The two eroded areas were deep and they extended from our right-of-way to the highway. This would slow the Track Crew down. Ed Alley and Mark Whitman got the eroded area under control slowly. A contractor was hired to put in a new culvert and drainage down to the highway culvert. Other Track Crew members were cleaning off the right-of-way which was covered in mud. The Track Crew completed track to MP 30.1 and opened the track for operations. By March 1994, Ed Alley and Mark Whitman had the erosion problem corrected and the Track Crew was laying track across that area and beyond. The right-of-way had to be reestablished and center-line of right-of-way defined. The Side Dump was

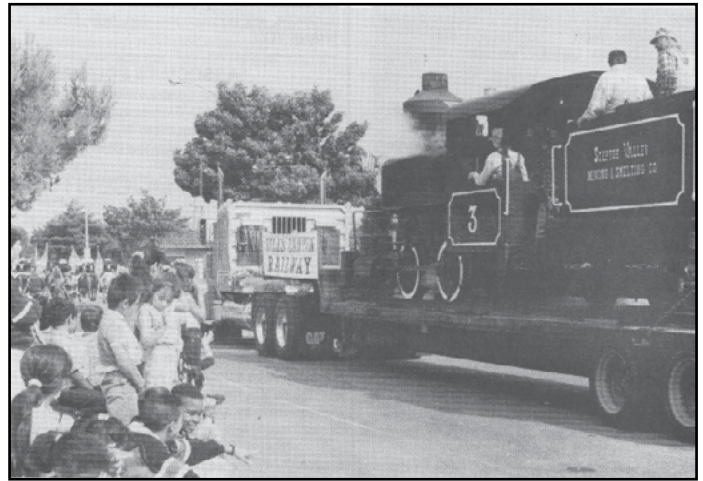


Photo by Alan Frank

Look what showed up for the Newark Parade which is attended by 50,000.

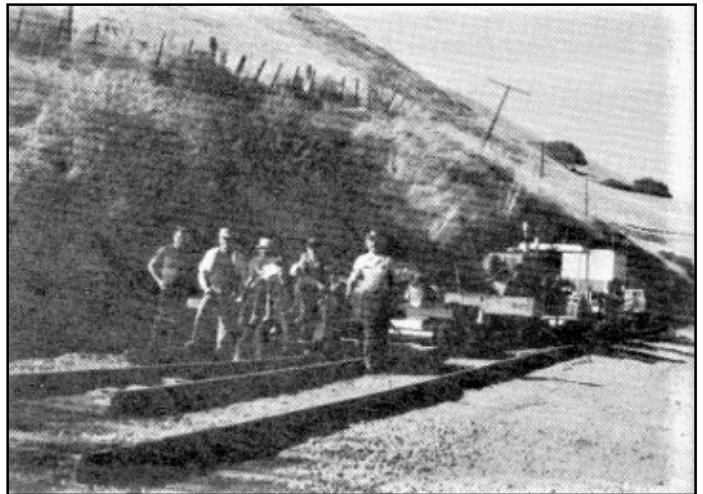


Photo by John Pelmulder

Track Crew at East switch of wye at Niles. They made their goal in July 1994.

loaded with ballast and was delivered to the MP 29.9. The track work was finished at MP 29.9. The whole area really looked good compared to how we found it.

Now the building of the railroad was back heading West to the next goal which was the East Switch of the Niles Wye. That goal was met in July 1994. From the switch, the rail was built up to the Mission Bridges, both North and South legs of the wye. We heard rumors that our bridges over Mission Boulevard, built in 1937, were going to be removed so widening of Mission Blvd. could be accomplished. The PLA had to make sure they would be replaced with new bridges.

It was August, 1994. We had come a long way in a short

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

period of time, but it looked like the E.O.T. would be at the Mission Bridges for the time being. The Mission Bridges were not part of our lease at that time. The County was working with the Union Pacific to make a deal to acquire the 10.2 acres of land that comprises the wye, extending from Sullivan Underpass to the Niles Blvd. underpass. There is a 25' separation between the UP and the NCRY tracks. Also, the good news was, the two bridges over Mission Blvd. would be included in this purchase when the deal was completed.

At the time, let's say the East end of the bridge was like the 48TH parallel in Korea. We were on one side looking at Niles, and they were on the other side looking at us. With that said, this portion of our push to Niles was put on hold waiting for the County to give us the green light to enter what would become our Niles Boarding area. While waiting to build across the bridges, the Track Crew had time to go back and do tie replacement on the right-of-way that they had just built over the last couple of years. Track work continued at Brightside and on the run-around in Sunol.

The PLA was running a little thin on supplies. We had to take rail that we had stored at the East end of the railroad to complete the rail build at Niles to where we sit now. That situation was about to change. It was April 1995 and the PLA had received permission to take up the Port of Oakland Naval rail yard. This was a big boost for replenishing our rail supply. This yard had (12) yard tracks with switches. Jeff Otto was put in charge of dismantling the yard and getting it trucked to Brightside. Ed Alley would be in charge of getting the material unloaded and stored. When you take into account the number of rails, ties and OTM that this project would produce, the thought was staggering. Due to the size of this project, we estimated it would take a least two months, maybe three, to complete, depending upon how smoothly the job progressed. At least when the green light was received from Alameda County to build into Niles, we would have the material needed to get the job done. This part of the tale ends, for now. To be continued.

Dexter D. Day



Photo by Chris Hauf

With its new motor installed, our Burro Model 40 crane was out for a test run with our 100-ton Army flat car seen here along Highway 84 just west of Sunol.

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 - siegggy667@hotmail.com
STEAM HOSTLER TRAINING - Prepare a steam locomotive for service - Jeff Schwab - jeffs@levinterminal.com

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Membership Report

Linda Stanley - Membership Secretary

Observing current Bylaw guidance, it is the Membership Secretary's duty to announce a qualified member's decision to be considered for voting membership status at the BOD meeting immediately following the member's request. The member's intention is then published in the next edition of the Club Car to alert current Voting Members ahead of the actual vote (currently mailed due to Covid restrictions on in-person meetings) taking place. All of this occurs after the Membership Secretary has determined that the requesting member meets or exceeds all requirements spelled out in the current Bylaws to become a Voting Member. For members' information, these same requirements need to be met yearly to retain Voting Member status as well.

Volunteer Karl Swartz has requested consideration for Voting Member status and has met or exceeded all requirements spelled out in the current Bylaws to be so considered. For Voting Members information, Karl initially became a member of the PLA/NCRY as a result of his employer's program for its employees to volunteer in their community. Any member who volunteers at Brightside and knows Karl, is aware of his valued involvement on both the SP 9010 and SP 1218 locomotive restorations.

During the February BOD meeting it was determined that an in-person Membership Meeting in March would not be allowed under current Alameda County mandates (restricting the numbers of unrelated households at public gatherings) to hold Karl's Voting Member vote. With this in mind, a brief teleconference Membership Meeting will follow the March BOD teleconference meeting to document the attendance of those Voting Members who will then be eligible to participate in the mailed ballot that will occur following the March 2021 Membership Meeting teleconference.

So, to recap: If you are a Voting Mem-

ber and wish to receive a ballot in the mail in March to vote in the current Voting Member vote, please attend the brief Membership Meeting teleconference immediately following the March BOD meeting. To be safe, assure you have accessed the BOD teleconference no later than 3:30 PM PST to guarantee you will be present at the beginning of the Membership Meeting when attendance will be documented.

The Membership Secretary has received all Volunteer Hours reported for the first half of the fiscal year from Volunteer Coordinator Ed Best. All member's reported volunteer hours and meeting attendance records have been updated in the official membership database and the process to verify that all Voting Member's meet the minimum requirements to retain voting status completed. The few Voting Members who do not currently meet the volunteer hours or meeting attendance minimums will be notified well before the

end of March 2021 to allow time to bring their volunteer hours (96 hours minimum) or meeting attendance (4 minimum) in line with what the current Bylaws require to participate in coming Voting Member approvals and June 2021 BOD elections.

Starting last month, the rate of membership renewals coming in decreased dramatically from the multitudes that come due (and most all of you renewed – Thank You!) at the end of 2020. The PLA is gratified to acknowledge volunteer Derek Lyon-McKeil's increased support for the PLA/NCRY by becoming a LIFE Member. The good news continues with the addition of Thomas Charron and Nancy Shemick, Michael and Linda Gardner and - all the way from Italy, Lorenzo Pantani - as New Members – Welcome/ Accogliere !

Respectfully submitted

Linda Stanley



Photo by Chris Hauf

Caboose hop? Nope...Just U.S. Army #7348 repositioning some equipment around Brightside yard for the Steam Department.

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
MARCH 13
2:15 PM

Teleconferencing service

General Meeting

Saturday
MARCH 13
3:30 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

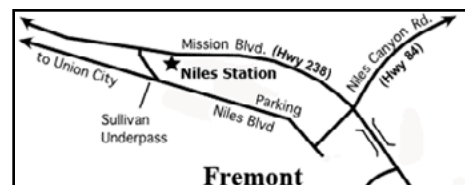
Digital photos may also be submitted by e-mail. Electronic images should be saved as PC format .jpg files with minimal compression (i.e., average to excellent quality). A **WORD** file with the photo number, description of photo and identifying the people in them **IS REQUIRED**.

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

BOARDING LOCATIONS

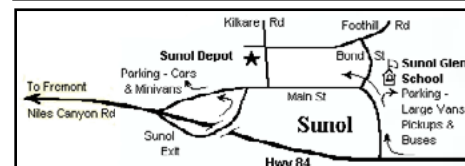
NILES STATION

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Fremont, CA 94536



SUNOL DEPOT

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Sunol, CA 94586



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Train Master	Mark Miller	(510) 502-8521	mmiller510@aol.com
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Yardmaster	Stephen Barkkarie	(510) 368-1733	sbarkkarie@comcast.net

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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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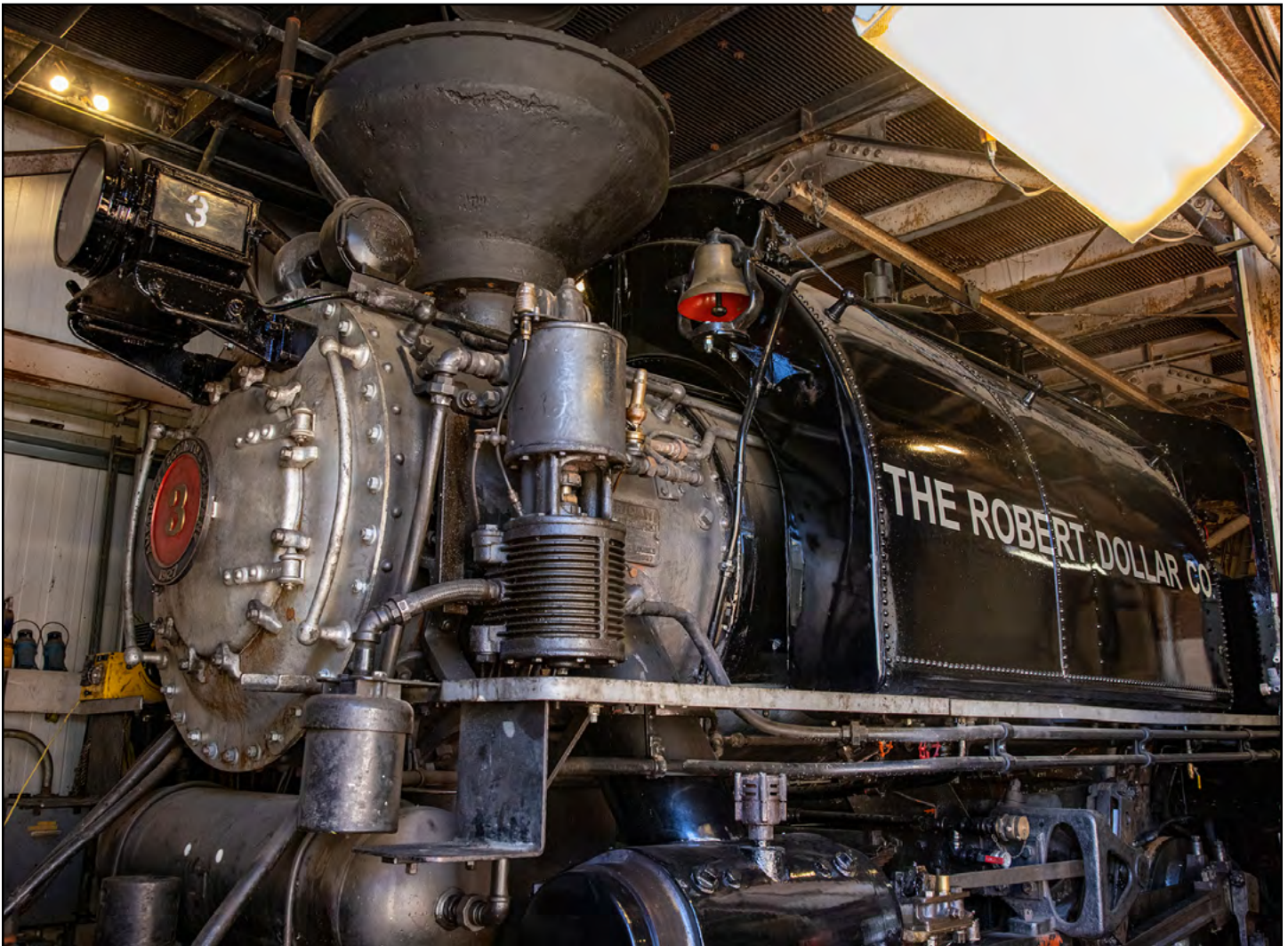


Photo by Chris Hauf

Chris Hauf has completed the tank lettering on both sides of Robert Dollar Co. #3. The fireman's side is shown here. Since this photo was taken, additional painting details have been completed including the silver on the running board sides and all new paint on the smokebox door thanks to a joint effort with Chuck Kent.