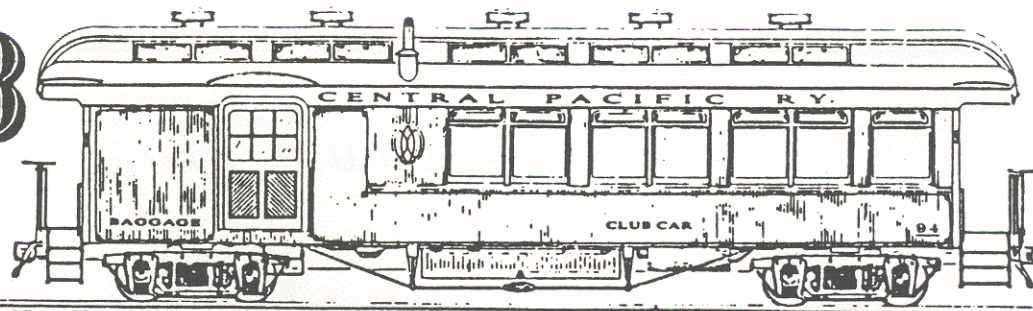


THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 282

Pacific Locomotive Association

December, 1986

Backhoe Delivered To Canyon; "Back-A-Hoe" Fund Created

By Alan Teruya

The work crews in Niles Canyon have something else to be thankful for this year. On the day after Thanksgiving, while the guys were still working off the turkey, a CASE 580B backhoe was delivered at Brightside.

The backhoe is diesel powered and has a bucket on front for doing light grading (a real help since the Hough is still down.). The backhoe also has a telescoping Extend-a-hoe feature which will allow us to dig ditches deeper and farther from the road bed.

The funds to authorize the purchase was made at the November meeting (more about that later). As one of the conditions of the purchase, the seller also had repairs done.

After it was delivered FRANK PRESLEY sat down with the instruction manuals and by Saturday, November 29, had it up and running. It's first mission was to clean up around the tipple. On Saturday, December 6, it was used to help move the trailer from underneath the new tool car. During the remainder of December it will be used to work on the dirt road and to clear drainage ditches and culverts between MP 34 and 34.9.

That's the good news. Now I need to tell you about something else. We're sort of broke. You're probably thinking isn't that like being a "little bit pregnant"? Well kind of. We've got about \$6,000 in the bank, but most of that is already allocated to other projects so we can't use it for our day to day operations.

The Case backhoe was purchased for



Frank Presley does roadwork with the PLA's Case 580B backhoe. The PLA will need the help of its members to finance this important acquisition. (See accompanying story.)

\$13,000 to be paid in three equal installments. The first was due before delivery, the next will be due a year from now, and the third in two years. The first installment is what got us in trouble.

So why did we buy this thing? Because we need it. Building a railroad by hand is hard work and the guys working in the canyon are busting their butts. (Why do you think they're called laborers?) Our right-of-way in Niles Canyon is susceptible to mud and rain coming down from the hills. In the spring we'll be clearing out the results of this winter's storms. It took us a few weekends to dig out one culvert and the drainage ditches around it. If you multiply this by all the places mud can backup along the right-of-way we'll be digging until the next rains. If we were going to hire a backhoe it could cost us as much as \$500 per day. Doing this twice a month (24 days) would cost us \$12,000 per year. Our first payment was \$4333.33. There's a big

difference there and we'll have the backhoe 365 days per year.

So here's the pitch: The First Mile Fund was retired last month and the Buy-A-Tie program won't be started until after all the agreements with the county are signed. Therefore for right now we're asking PLA members to Back-A-Hoe.

Donations will be used for two purposes. The first will be to replace the first payment. It took up most of our unallocated funds and we'll need to replace this money for day to day club operations. The second will be to provide regular maintenance on the Case. Needed maintenance coming up are changes of the hydraulic fluid and filters with a cost of \$70.

So we're asking that you give a Christmas or Hanukkah present to the PLA and help with the cost of the Case. This machine will be helping us out for many years to come, especially when we're digging out our railroad every spring.

General Manager's Report

Tool Car Arrives

By Peter Schulze

One of the biggest successes of the past month is the arrival of our "tool storage facility". (At one time this was a 40 foot Santa Fe box car and tool car at Richmond.) Special thanks from all PLA members go to:

* Mr. JOE CATALDO and LEVIN METALS CORP. for their donation of the car and JOHN and OTHERS at Levin for their help in loading the car.

* Mr. RAY BRATCHER is the truck owner-operator who invested three days of his working time to haul the boxcar down 20 city streets to arrive at Brightside. Thank you Ray and Mary!

* Mr. JOHN KNOBLOCK and Mr. DENNIS BRODERICK and BIGGE CRANE AND RIGGING CO. who again has come to PLA's rescue. Without their special equipment and willingness to help our many hauling projects could not be accomplished.

* Member JOHN DILLMAN hauled the tool car's trucks to Brightside on a trailer loaned by Mr. FRANK PIO.

* Within PLA, special thanks must go to RANDY LEBER who more than any other member brought this about.

* Other PLA workers who deserve thanks: BONES ANDREWS, FRANK PRESLEY, HOWARD WISE, and JOEL COX.

As well as getting the tool car we have also received our "new" backhoe and have put it to work at Brightside. A lifting frame was built at the Alameda Creek storage area to load rail onto trailers. The first rail has been laid on Rosewerner Bridge and over half of a mile of ties were cleaned and plugged between the two bridges.

Looking ahead, we intend to lay additional rail and start a switch at MP 31, begin cleaning and plugging from the farm

Museum Progress: An Editorial

By Joel Cox

During the year and a half I have been involved with the PLA the focus of the club has shifted dramatically. Since September 1985 when I joined, we have completely ended our operations at Castro Point and moved most of the collection away from there. Now the emphasis is on building and improving our new home in Niles Canyon.

Last year when I first visited the Castro Point operation, I was told that we would have to move all of our equipment by the end of that year. That idea overwhelmed me, as a lot of the "stuff" was strewn around hardly ready to be loaded out.

Even more distressing to me was the lack of urgency on the part of the workers I talked to: "Oh yeah, we'll have to get started moving these things pretty soon." And then they would go back to whatever they were doing: Tinkering with an air compressor, fitting pipes to a steam locomotive, or cleaning up the 918. Not that I want to knock these activities, but it seemed to me that the end of the year was closer than that. Needless to say, it took

crossing at MP 33.6 (west of Brightside) going westward, and haul 100 lb. rail to secure the ties at West Brightside. Work will be started on refurbishing and securing our new "tool storage facility" at Brightside and opening up the culvert at MP 34.9. We will also have to devote two full days to loading the rest of the 75 lb. rail in San Jose that we are trading to Levin.

During the first quarter of next year we intend to emphasize cleaning and plugging of ties between SP's end of track and Ki-Lite and additional grading and site preparation around Brightside.

an extra three months to clear the area, though that is probably not so bad for a bunch of weekend volunteers.

Now that we are well into the construction phase of our relocation project, I feel a much greater sense of urgency from the members who come out and do the work. It is IMPERATIVE to protect ties in the canyon ASAP! We MUST blow and plug as much as possible before the rains start in earnest. We HAVE to start operations AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to get the ball rolling again. All of these ideas are shared by the members I have talked to in the canyon.

To me, this is where the real strength of this organization lies. If more people can be made to feel the need to get these and other projects completed quickly, then we can really make progress. Sure, we all have the desire to make an operating railway museum a reality; that is why we all pay our dues and read the Club Car. It is the first duty of an organization like this one to get the word out and make itself known. But when more members see the potential for growth and the need to act fast, that is when such an organization becomes POWERFUL, FAST GROWING and DYNAMIC!

Speaking of dynamism and urgency, we need your help! The guys out in the canyon are consistently short-handed. The more hands on the job, the faster it will get done.

The first step is to come out and see what is going on. The progress of the last few months has been phenomenol! Also, we love it when people come out and see what is happening; the more of an audience we have, the faster we work. If you haven't personally inspected the NCSRy in the last two months, set aside a day in the next month to do so. Your museum is making tracks so fast that we hardly know what to say!

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The Club Car

The Club Car is the monthly newsletter of the Pacific Locomotive Association and its members. All submissions will be considered for publication and will only be edited for space and clarity.

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V-P and Operations Manager's Report

Work Continues At Dresser, Brightside

By Dexter Day

The work continues and the projects keep expanding. In November the work projects were divided between the Ki-Lite and Dresser areas. At Ki-Lite the work at MP 34 means the culvert may last through the winter. Some rail from the Ki-Lite stockpile was strung along the right of way West of the Ki-Lite crossing. Rail has also been laid in place half way through the Ki-Lite area. Now that the work car has been delivered and set in place, rail can now continue to be set and laid toward the crossing.

Around the Dresser area, blowing and plugging ties was the main theme. Ties have been unplugged from the end of Espee rail on the west side of Dresser Bridge to about 2,000 ft. from the Farwell Bridge. By the time you read this, ties should be plugged across the bridge. Rail has also been laid across the Dresser Bridge and is ready to be spiked down.

You know, it is hard to believe what has been accomplished in the nine months since we started cleaning ties at Ki-Lite in April. Each month new projects keep popping up as old ones are completed. This is satisfying in itself when you stop and think of what we had to work on with what we had to work with. I guess all I have to say is it has been a heck of a year with a good job done by all.

The best news is that we have a new machine. Yes, we finally got a backhole. Now we will be able to attack some major problems in style. FRANK PRESLEY has been put in charge of the backhole and will be training operators on how to use it. In time, the machine will really pay off.

The work projects coming up are important ones. Before the end of this month, we are going to load to 100 ton gondolas down in San Jose with scrap rail from Levin. The rail removal project at the Ford Plant in Milpitas will start at the end of this month by CRAIG WILSON and his volunteers. We will have some supervisory people down there to instruct on this project.

On the home front, we will continue blowing and plugging ties West of Ki-Lite if weather permits. Laying and spiking rail will take place around the Dresser and Ki-Lite areas. Culvert work has to be done at MP 34.9 (near the farm crossing) and at



Herb Norleen and Madeline Iverson put a new coat of paint on the NCSRy's new tool car.

Photo by Alan Teruya

Nov. Roll Call

The following people worked on the NCSRy during the month of November. Number of days worked was not available: B. Andrews, C. Barnes, B. Berger, C. Blake, M. Bozzini, D. Burla, E. Chase, J. Cox, D. Day, J. Dilman, D. Eatmon, T. Flippo, R. Gill, D. Gross, M. Gross, H. Holumbo, P. Lewis, M. Maksel, M. McQuaid, P. Orth, E. Powell, F. Presley, A. Ramsay, J. Schrufer, P. Schulze, M. Snyder, A. Teruya, C. Walters, D. Watson, S. Wiley-Robertson, J. Williams, M. Wilson.

the Ki-Lite crossing. The road must be finished and rocked or gravelled to make it passable when the rains come. Also, with some luck, the steam engines will be moved from Castro Point to Niles. They are ready, we are waiting for permission to move them.

And if that isn't enough, we got to move some switch rails from the bullpen to Ki-Lite before the ground gets too muddy to drive on. If you have the time, let's jump on these projects and get them done and out of the way. In closing, I hope that you all have a good Christmas and may we all approach the New Year with hope and enthusiasm. Just think, if all goes well at this time next year we'll be running trains.

More Bang For Your Buck in '86

By Steve Slabach
PLA General Counsel

Under the federal Tax Reform Act of 1986 it is advantageous to make your gift to the PLA before the end of the year. Beginning in 1987 those who do not itemize all deductions may not count charitable deductions as they can if the gift is made during 1986. Also, with the general lowering of income tax rates beginning in 1987, a gift made in 1986 means greater tax savings to you.

Please send all Associate and Active renewals and address changes to Membership Secretary Jim Evans, P.O. Box 451, Burlingame, CA 94011-0451. Please do not send renewals to our Niles Station mailing address or delays may result.

Applications for Associate Membership may be requested from the Membership Secretary. All applications must be endorsed by two members and be returned with \$17.50 dues for the first year.

To be eligible for Active Membership one must have been an Associate Member for at least six months and have regularly attended meetings in that time. The number of Active Members is limited to insure a quorum at club meetings.

December Meeting

To be considered for Associate Membership: Hyland Morrow of San Ramon .

Mike Wilson will be considered for Active Membership. Mike has been out often to help us in Niles Canyon.

At the next meeting we'll be having a Christmas Pot-luck dinner starting at 7:00 PM. RSVP to Membership Secretary Madeline Iverson (408-727-7230). We will also be having a raffle. Prizes will include books, mugs, glasses, and model railroading supplies donated by The Train Shop in San Jose.

At the last meeting Ed and Marie Echols, Paul Veltman, Gordon Richardson, John Blunden, and Leonard Coffin were voted in as Associate Members. Frank Presley was voted in as an Active Member.

Regular meetings are held on the third Friday of every month at St. Christopher's Church at the corner of Via Toledo and Hacienda in San Lorenzo.

PLA Calendar

Dec. 19 Regular Meeting
Dec. 20 & 21Work Parties, Niles Canyon and Castro Point
Dec. 25Merry Christmas
Dec. 27 & 28. .Work Parties, NCSRy or CP
Jan. 2. . . Deadline, September Club Car
Jan. 6. Club Car Goes to Printer
Jan. 3 & 4. . .Work Parties, NCSRy or CP
Jan. 10 & 11. .Work Parties, NCSRy or CP
Jan. 16Regular Meeting
Jan. 17,18,&19 Work Parties, NCSRy or CP
Feb. 20Regular Meeting

For work projects in Niles Canyon please contact Vice-President Dexter Day (415-345-1790) or General Manager Peter Schulze (415-797-8613) for details. For projects at Castro Point contact Master Mechanic Ray McAllister (415-479-5249).

The Hot Box

Your association continues to need tools (and people) to do our building projects for the Niles Canyon Scenic Railway.

1) Two 25-ton Railroad Journal or Screw Jacks (we recently had our only two jacks stolen and these must be replaced). This is important. Please help!

2) Two 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 Hp 4-Cycle Horizontal Shaft Engines for rail drills - Any condition. Call Jeff Williams, (415)-455-5575.