



# SPCRR's Hotbox

Monthly

activities and work events

The Railroad Museum  
at  
Ardenwood

*April 2014 Edition.*

**Hotbox** is a monthly publication of The Railroad Museum at Ardenwood, designed to update members and the general public about **activities, work events, and volunteer opportunities** at the museum. Editorial comments or input can be directed to Bruce MacGregor, editor, at [bruce.macgregor@comcast.net](mailto:bruce.macgregor@comcast.net).

The Museum's mission is the preservation, restoration and interpretation of regional narrow gauge railroad history, including Carter Brothers, a pioneer railroad car builder of California. The Museum is operated by SPCRR, a non-profit, 501 (c)(3) corporation of the State of California.

The Railroad Museum at Ardenwood is located at Ardenwood Historic Farm, in Fremont, California.

We are sad to report the passing of Red, a much-loved Railroad Museum draft horse and mainstay of its passenger operations at Ardenwood Historic Farm. For almost thirty years, draft horses like Red have made it possible for the Museum to interpret a period in California history when horses maintained common carrier schedules (for both freight and passengers) on the narrow gauge Centerville Branch, which operated between Newark and the Centerville District in Fremont during the years 1882-1909. Red will be missed by our train crew, and Ardenwood visitors alike. (see President's Report, page 2)



## ***President's Report.*** John Stutz.

The major event for March was Red's death from colic on the March 23, despite strenuous efforts on the part of Alex Oberg and Emily Nikzat to walk Red in order to reverse the condition. When attempts to walk the horse failed, Alex, Emily and Randy Hees made a heroic effort to move Red to professional medical help. Since Red was our one trained horse, we face some difficult decisions on how to proceed through the immanent opening.

March work at the Car Barn has been a mix of car and track work, on weekends and Thursday afternoons. Randy will have more to say on progress with Caboose restoration. Track work has been slowed by the need to catch up on deferred maintenance around the horse corral and paddock, but we have started laying out the switch for the outside storage sidings.

John Erdkamp is offering to store his 3' gauge speeder at the car barn, and allow trained SPCRR volunteers to use it as needed. I expect it will be very useful for track work as shift attention from the barn's immediate area to the full line. In addition, we are only just beginning to deal with the transition from having a single base of all activities at Ardenwood station, to the new double base configuration (front station and car barn areas). We will need a reasonably quick way to move tools, and possibly people, between the two sites during park open hours, and the pump car gets old after the third or fourth round trip. John's speeder is currently in the car barn on a trial basis, and John is looking for volunteers willing to be trained in its safe operation.

The horse corral and paddock have required extra attention, and will require more. Last summer's Rotary Club work day made an excellent start on repairs, but follow up was largely limited to minimal ongoing necessary repairs. Alex may have more to say on what needs doing, but I make it a half dozen more fenceposts, several more gates and the usual fence boards. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> Ken Underhill led a gate building project, for the gate that goes between the corral and tack room driveway. That was completed and will be hung on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

The St. Patrick's day dinner was held March 15<sup>th</sup>, with about 20 attending. Beth Cary provided the traditional potatoes, cabbage and corned beef, while the rest of us went a little overboard on the desserts. Andrew finished us off with his 'Railroad Jeopardy' contest, composed of devilishly obscure references, but no one could be persuaded to keep score. Our thanks to Barbara for organizing a pleasant evening together.



## ***Car Restoration.*** Randy Hees, Curator.

**what:** caboose 5591; work continues on car floor and interior car walls

**when:** Saturdays, (9:30 to 5:00) **April 12th**, May 17th (with Bruce MacGregor!) and June 14th, and Thursdays (2:00 to 5:00) **April 10th and 24th** May 1st, 15th, & 29th

**where:** Car Barn (eastern end of Ardenwood Historic Farm, Fremont)

**who:** Randy Hees, coordinator: [randyhees@gmail.com](mailto:randyhees@gmail.com) 650.347.5055

**details:** The caboose sub-floor is installed, and we can now start to install the T&G finish floor. Initially this will go slowly as we lay out the new floor, and mortise for door cages for the side doors. We have a bit of the T&G for the floor on hand, enough to get started, but will need to purchase more. We have been trying to purchase salvaged material (at a significantly lower cost) but this does mean we can only buy what is available, when it is available. If this slows the project we will purchase new material.

Bruce Sorrell is rebuilding the side door thresholds. We removed these while installing the sub-floor. We were surprised at what we found. The thresholds are not cast iron as expected, instead they are fabricated from iron bar stock, riveted together. They have quite a bit of rust erosion.

Meanwhile, we are sanding out the old interior paint, and starting to repaint the interior in white (with a maroon floor). We will be working from the baggage end, as we need to paint the walls before installing the door cages (you can see the “shadow” of the old door cages on the walls where they painted between the slats, resulting in heavier paint between slats).

We have gone through our supply of brake rods and levers salvaged from West Side Lumber Co. Tuolumne shops, and have identified a set of rods to use. Of course most are not quite the right length, requiring that we cut and weld to lengthen or shorten. Of course Bruce (as our welder) will be involved.

Meanwhile the other Bruce (MacGregor) is working on grants to support the project. We should start to hear about the status of these grants over the next two months.

We have a workday the 2nd Saturday of each month, plus many Thursday afternoons. We now have the building so rain isn't an issue... We have work for all skill levels. Sanding, painting, carpentry (floor and door cages) metal work (cutting the old brake rods and preparing them for welding).

## ***Volunteers.*** John Goldie, Volunteer Coordinator

### Membership Update:

Welcome to our newest member - David Fisher of Pleasanton CA.

Our Annual Membership Renewal campaign will occur in April with a mailer to 2013 and past members, please renewal your membership, as with your support we are able to further our California Narrow Gauge & Carter Brothers mission.

Questions about membership? Contact John at [membership@spcrr.org](mailto:membership@spcrr.org)

Or see [www.spcrr.org/joining.htm](http://www.spcrr.org/joining.htm) for membership information.

## **General Manager.** Barbara Culp

email: [general-manager@spcrr.org](mailto:general-manager@spcrr.org)    phone: 510.785.1343

We have had a busy month of March with all the track and corral work days and the St Patrick Day dinner that we all enjoyed with all the great food- thanks to Beth Cary. Then of course we are gearing up for Opening Day which is April 3 and Tartan Day, April 5. Sadly we lost Red, our working draft horse, on March 23, so we are regrouping to use the Locomotive for a while until we can get the horse operation in good shape.

April will be busy and any of you able to help with train rides on April 5, Tartan Day, April 19, Rail Adventure (train rides) and April 27, Sheep Shearing Day will be greatly appreciated as we have back-to-back train rides. If you can help crew please let Alex Oberg know at [operations-supervisor@spcrr.org](mailto:operations-supervisor@spcrr.org)

Hope to see you at Ardenwood!! / Barbara

UP COMING Dates:      May 10- Work Day; May 17- Rail Adventure; May 26- Free Day at the Farm



Red, and friends