



SPCRR's Hotbox

Monthly

activities and work events

The Railroad Museum
at
Ardenwood

July 2014 Edition. *Hotbox* is a monthly bulletin of The Railroad Museum at Ardenwood, designed to update members and the general public about **activities, work events, and volunteer opportunities** at the museum. Questions or comments can be directed to Bruce MacGregor, editor, at bruce.macgregor@comcast.net

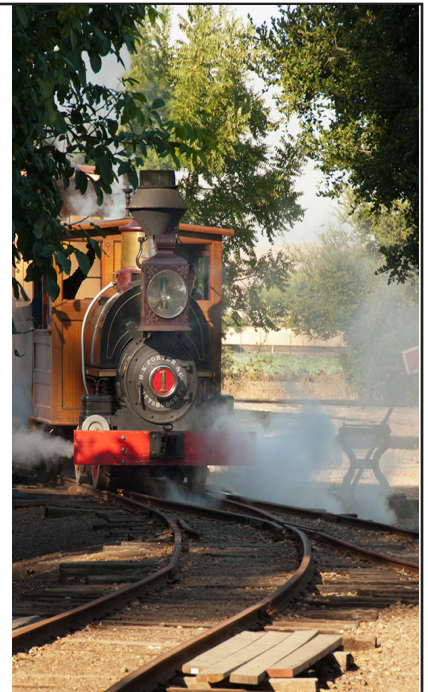
The Museum's mission is the preservation, restoration and interpretation of regional narrow gauge railroad history, including Carter Brothers, a pioneer railroad car builder of California. The Museum is operated by SPCRR, a non-profit, 501 (c)(3) corporation of the State of California.

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

Run-Up to Rail Fair!

Well here we are again, another month has past and we keep getting closer to Rail Fair! For everyone's information the Rail Fair flyer is on the members web site so please copy it and pass them out!!

We will again have two steam locomotives, Ann Marie and Antelope & Western #1. Also coming: Early day Gas and Tractor Assoc., Central Coast On30 Modelers, Diablo Shortline Garden RR, the Roving Garden Railroad, BAGRR Live Steam and this year Golden Gate Music Box Society. For musical entertainment, The Apple Butter Brothers, The Diasporta Swamp Boys and The East Bay Stompers. Food by Dino's at the Cafe and of course Handcar rides and Rail car restoration demonstrations. All our exhibitors are looking forward to returning for another weekend of fun.



So let us show our support and check out the new sign up sheets ONLINE ...how cool, thanks to Andy Cary!! See page 2 to learn how. If you would like to sign up for volunteer time and do not do online please send your requests by mail to SPCRR, PO Box 783, Newark, Ca. 94560, Attn Barbara or leave a message on the 800 hundred number (866 417-7277) with a call back number and name so we can sign you up. We are looking forward to a large turn out-of public and volunteers so we can make this a great event, so please help us meet this goal...Thank You in advance!! / Barbara Culp, GM general-manager@spr.org



How to Volunteer for Rail Fair

Ever wonder what it's like to be a brakeman on an operating, narrow gauge steam train? Ever want to operate a pump car like track crews of the 1880's? Sign up and get the chance!

We need, and welcome your help to staff Rail Fair, 2014 . We have jobs for a wide range of ages, 14 and up. Dozens of positions are open, over the three day period of Labor Day weekend (Saturday thru Monday). All these positions appear on a convenient, centralized web-based sign-up. All you have to do is pick the days you want to volunteer, and let the sign-up menu guide you. Here's the link to the site:

http://www.spcrr.org/Signup_for_Railfair2014.html

We should explain that some positions are "Certified" (and are labeled as such in the registration form). This means that some museum-provided training is required to do the job. Brakeman-and Handcar Operator training is available both at an upcoming workshop on Saturday August 9) and also from the Trainmaster, Andrew Cary, during time available during Rail Fair week end. Please see the article on "Certification", page 3, in this month's Hot Box , for details.

Here are the perks of volunteering for Rail Fair:

- *Free admission to Rail Fair (at the entrance, tell the park ticket-taker that you are filling a volunteer position on the railroad).
- *Hands-on experience helping to run a real operating railroad.
- *Lunch every day you volunteer.
- *Train ride, Car Barn reception, and plaque dedication if you volunteer on Friday (tickets must be reserved by Aug 15, see [page 4 for information](#)).
- *Dinner if you volunteer on Sunday.
- *The utterly fascinating, romantic presence of two operating, historic steam engines, all three days of the event.

Picture yourself volunteering at Rail Fair. Sign up. Sign up for two shifts. Get your buddy to sign up with you (optional). Put on sun block. Come to Ardenwood for the day. Have lunch. Enjoy the event as our guest. And come back the next day, and do it all over again! We'd love to have your help.

Certification

A number of crew positions at the Railroad Museum at Ardenwood are *Certified* positions. These positions are certified to make certain that they are executed in a manner to ensure the safety of people, horses, and equipment. They require knowledge of the SPCRR Operating Rules, EBRPD rules, and a demonstrated ability to operate the equipment safely and effectively. Certifications must be renewed annually ([see Certification Workshop details, below](#)). As we mentioned on pg 2, some Rail Fair volunteer positions require certification.

Certified Positions are:

Handcar Operator Must be 14 yrs of age or older--certified by Safety Manager or Operations Supervisor

Brakeman Must be 16 yrs of age or older--certified by Safety Manager or Operations Supervisor

Conductor Must be 16 yrs of age or older and be a certified brakeman--certified by Safety Manager

Engineer Must have a valid California drivers license and be a certified brakeman--certified by Safety Manager

Horse Driver Must be 16 years of age or older and be both a certified horse handler and Horse endorsed brakeman--certified by Operations Supervisor

Horse handler Must be 14 years of age or older--certified by Operations Supervisor

Brakeman-Horse endorsement Must be 16 years of age or older and be a certified brakeman --certified by Operations Supervisor

Certification and Re-certification workshop: Saturday, August 9, 10:30 am at Ardenwood Park in Fremont (meet at the train depot).

With special arrangement, provisional certification can be arranged during available hours during Rail Fair (August 29-Sept 1) with Train Master Andrew Cary. Please contact Andrew directly at:
train-master@spcrr.org.



An Invitation to
The Wissel Car Barn
Plaque Dedication & Reception
for SPCRR Members and
Sponsors:
Friday evening, August 29

What: special steam train takes you to an *Unveiling of the Car Barn Plaque*. The event includes wine and light refreshments.

When: Friday, August 29, train leaves Ardenwood Station promptly at 6:15 pm; train returns to Ardenwood Station at 8:00 pm.

Who: all SPCRR sponsors and members welcome to attend free of charge, with one guest. However, space is limited. **RSVP, please, by August 15, to reserve your tickets for this event.** Only 100 tickets are available. **RSVP to:** bruce.macgregor@comcast.net.



Membership Update; John Goldie

“We miss you!” postcards have just gone out.

Reminder post cards have been mailed to 2012 & 2013 annual members that have yet to renew. Please send in your annual dues to remain current and to support our cause. Would you like a Info Packet sent to a friend? If, so simply email the name and address to membership@spcrr.org

President's Report. John Stutz.

On the horse situation:

Early in June the BoD voted to authorize Alex and Emily to proceed with the purchase of the excellent draft horse Bella, that they had found in Washington, contingent on passing the Coggins health test. We currently anticipate Bella's arrival during the first week of July, and hope to have her pulling a single car within a week or so.

On the track work:

June 7 was a fairly slack day, due to the distraction of the Niles Canyon RR's opening SteamFest week, with 5 steam engines in operation.

June 14 was our regular workday, with the track crew concentrating on stretching switch bridles to correct gauge under Gene Arillaga's lead. These are the bars that slip onto the swing rails of our stub switches and hold them in gauge. It turns out that the bridle jaws were forged for smaller rail than we are now using, and need to be opened out. This configuration requires that most of the metal must be taken from the inner jaws. This narrows the gauge, so the bars need to be stretched, by heating the center in a forge, and then hammering it out.

We had done this quite successfully for our previous switches, but using bridles from a different supplier. This time, shortly after Bruce Sorel started hammering, a crack developed and the bridle broke at the center. We found that the maker had forged the jaws on half lengths, then trimmed the halves to get the correct gauge, and only tack welded the halves together, with about 1/16" weld penetration. So Bruce, who has suitable welding equipment, got volunteered to take them home and make them right.

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Track. John Stutz.

what: work continues on the Car Barn spur tracks

when: most Saturdays, 9:30-4:30 pm

NOTE: due to holiday, **July 5 track work is cancelled; work resumes on Saturday, July 12, and continues**

who: John Stutz, Track Manager

Contact: john.stutz@spcrr.org

Restoration Planning Workshop

Our entertainment for the July 12th barbeque will be a little unusual... instead of a presentation on railroad history, we will instead have a workshop on the groups restoration program

We will review our collection, what each car is, what work is needed, both short term and long term... talk a bit about cost of the work in both money and time... We will be trying to establish which projects most interest our members.. which cars should we work on next, and how we might pay for those projects. The workshop will end with a straw vote to recommend priorities!

Come advocate for your favorite car or project... again, the date is: July 12, after the BBQ.

RSVP to Randy at randyhees@gmail.com .

Car Restoration. Randy Hees, Curator.

What: Caboose 5591

The caboose continues to make progress. We have started to fit the finished floor... the mortises for the door cage are marked, and ready to be cut. I have a planer on hand to make the vertical posts for the door cage (it, and a router will also allow us to make molding to replace those damaged when the cupola was removed some years ago). Inside we continue to sand and paint. The deck boards for one platform are done. We will do the second set next work day if we have volunteers on hand. We will also start to paint the end platforms.

When: The monthly restoration work day is Saturday July 12... this is also the group's summer barbeque, and our [restoration planning workshop](#). I will be working on the caboose on some Thursday afternoons... July 3, July 10 and July 31st.

Our August work day will be Saturday August 9th. This will be our last chance to do significant work before railfair.

Who: Randy Hees, Coordinator. Contact: randyhees@gmail.com

Breaking News on Grants!!!

There has been late-breaking news on grant applications: Fremont Candlelighters has finished their ranking, placing us 5th among 10 finalists for the 2014 award. The actual amount of the grant won't be known until December, but the outcome looks positive- this funding would go to caboose 5591. We also have late-breaking news of a 5591 award from the Fremont Rotary Club of Niles, announced just last night, June 28. Stay tuned for details in August!

Through the efforts of John Goldie, the Museum has already earned matching funds benefiting the horse program. These matches are from:

TI Foundation \$150 - Horse Operations

TI Foundation \$1,000 - Horse Operations

TI VIP (Volunteer Incentive Program) \$1,000 - Horse Operations

Microsoft Foundation \$50 - General Fund

And this match is still in process:

Altera Foundations / Silicon Valley Foundation \$1,000 - Horse Operations



A New, Proposed Rail Fair adventure: speeder rides

A POSSIBLE NEW RAIL FAIR ACTIVITY

Member John Erdkamp has a narrow gauge speeder which the Board has agreed can be kept in the new Car Barn. A few weeks ago, John made a proposal to the Board to run his speeder between Deer Park and the Car Barn during Rail Fair to give public tours of the Car Barn for a donation (to be used toward restoration activities) of \$10 per person. John's thought was to keep the visitors on the speeder so that they could see the equipment stored in the barn, and then run them back to Deer Park. However, based on previous conversations, the Park District is concerned about allowing any public access to the Car Barn.

It was suggested that, instead of a \$10 donation, that the \$10 charge actually be a membership in SPCRR from the Rail Fair to the end of the year. That eliminates liability issues and access issues for us and the Park District since, instead of the public visiting the Car Barn, this visitor is a member of SPCRR.

Having these Rail Fair visitors become members lets us contact them after the event and invite them to get more involved. They would also receive the [Hotbox](#) and even attend the December meeting and program. When December rolls around, this member would get a solicitation for a one-year membership.

Attracting new members is extremely important to the continued ability of our group to restore and maintain our historic collection of early railroad equipment and this new Rail Fair activity gives us a very good opportunity to solicit new members. However, it will require several volunteers during the event. We need volunteers who would encourage visitors to take a speeder ride to the Car Barn, volunteers who would work with John to get visitors/new members safely to and from the Car Barn, and volunteers who would provide interpretation at the Car Barn. Those volunteers would be in addition to those required by activities that we have traditionally provided at past Rail Fair events. Bottom line...this new activity, which we really need to try, can't happen without more volunteers.

Please see *How to Volunteer for Rail Fair*, on page 2 of this issue of [Hotbox](#).

This idea has precipitated other ideas for new activities, for example, a gallery of interpretive panels that would appear in the Car Barn for Rail Fair, but remain in the Car Barn as a interim museum exhibit and interpretive display of the museum's railroad preservation goals.

For comments or questions, please contact Jack Burgess: jack@yosemitevalleyrr.com

President's Report, Continued

June 21 was our Rail Adventure day, with three people needed on the train, so the car barn area was pretty quiet. We had Gene Arillaga running Katie, with Ken Underhill and John Goldie directing passengers for most of the day. Total one way trips came to 471 passengers, while making a few extended trips out to the Car Barn.

At the Car Barn we got ties laid through most of the outdoor sidings' approach curves, and three more rail lengths bolted in place. These may still need to be bent for the tight curves leading into the sidings, but we are almost past that necessity and into easy straight track laying again. Andy Cary was out with his plane table attempting to survey our track arrangement, but tells me it did not go quite right and will require another attempt.

Talking with Ken Underhill on the 26th, I learned that he helped Bruce Sorel lay guard rails on the sidings switch, which leaves it complete except for installation of bridles, throw rod and a switch machine. I contemplate using one of the low lying ground throws salvaged from the Leslie Salt Works, and invite comment on this option.

Bruce and Ken have been out working at the Car Barn most Thursdays, Bruce mostly on track and Ken setting up our tool and material storage, and I expect they will welcome anyone who wants to lend a hand.

June 28 will see us working on the switch, and extending the siding tracks.

A heads up: We are almost at the end of our 8' ties, with about 150 9' ties in reserve. Jeff Schwab of the Richmond Pacific RR tells us he will be doing some extensive tie replacement in the near future, and will soon have a large stock of old ties that we can pick through. So Bruce and I will be doing a few tie runs in a month or so, and are looking for help, both sorting and hauling. Sorting involves going through a long stack of parallel ties, pulling the 'good' ones, and passing the rejects back. This definitely requires a good back and some endurance. Hauling requires a heavy pickup, capable of managing a 1 or 2 ton capacity flat bed trailer. Volunteers for either aspect will be most welcome, but we are still quite uncertain about the dates.