



# SPCRR's Hotbox

Monthly

activities and work events

The Railroad Museum  
at  
Ardenwood

**August 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](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.

## *Rail Fair: It's Show time!*

With Rail Fair just four weeks away, it's show time. Right now, volunteer crews are repairing track, positioning rolling stock, oiling the bearings on hand cars, making posters, polishing boiler jackets on steam engines, and putting the finishing touches on the Museum's signature event. It's a lot of work, but it's also a lot of fun- a chance to see, ride on, and operate a real steam railroad.

That's Karen Blamor in the photograph at the right, performing the ritual of "bending the iron", or throwing a switch, during 2010 Rail Fair event. Ask Karen and she'll tell you: it's a hands-on experience in 19th century railroading.

Please sign up! Turn the page for guidance, suggestions, and links to volunteer registration web site. And please come. We'd love to share the fun. And oh yes, the work! We think the two are connected.



# *How to Volunteer for Rail Fair*

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). Set-up jobs are available the preceding Thursday and Friday. 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](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.

## **What: Certification and Re-certification workshop:**

We will cover the 2014 Operating rules, how to load and unload passengers, inspecting a car, braking a car, signalling, switching and coupling and uncoupling a car.

**When:** Saturday, August 9, 10:00-4 pm

**Where:** Ardenwood Park (meet at the train depot).

**Who:** Andrew Cary, Trainmaster. email: [train-master@spcrr.org](mailto:train-master@spcrr.org).

## **Track. John Stutz.**

**what:** mainline track maintenance with focus on preparation for Rail Fair, for example replacement of front crossover switch tie.

**when:** all Saturdays in August (except Rail Fair!), 9:30-4:30 pm

**who:** John Stutz, Track Manager

Contact: [john.stutz@spcrr.org](mailto:john.stutz@spcrr.org)



# 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.

## 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

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](mailto:train-master@spcrr.org).



# President's Report. John Stutz

The July 12 general meeting included a planning session on future restoration work, aimed at publicizing options and clarifying where we want to go over the next few years. See Randy's report for details.

The July 19 Rail Adventure Day was well patronized, with two full carloads on about half of the runs, and a couple extra runs to accommodate waiting passengers. For those not familiar with this, we run a monthly Saturday train for ticketed passengers, with ticket sales at the park gate, as a fund raiser. Passengers get to ride all day on their ticket. The trains are run by volunteers, with Katie and two or three flat cars. I want to thank Gene Arillaga, Ken Underwood, Andy Cary, and John Goldie for their help with this year's program.

The July 12th work day had an exceptional turnout, with progress on several fronts: the Caboose, outside track extension, and Car barn occupation.

Ken Underhill has been leading the effort to clean 30 years accumulation of tools, paint and supplies out of our boxcars, and into organized storage in the barn. This has progressed to the point of getting boxcar 10 largely cleaned out, and restocked with a minimal tool set, so we were able to move it back to Ardenwood Station on the 25th. This is more important than it might seem, as park visitors have been asking when the trains were going to return.

We had a major cleanup around the tack room and corral area on the 13th, and removed a couple trailer loads of junk. This has largely eliminated a sore point with the park supervisors.

Outside track extension is temporally stalled for lack of suitable ties. We do have about 125 of very hard wood and well preserved 9' ties, but would prefer to save those for mainline track replacements. However we have been promised a supply from Richmond Pacific, who are currently engaged in a replacement program, so expect to resume work on the sidings after RailFair.

August track work will need to concentrate on our mainline. Some of this will be the usual pre-Rail Fair checks to ensure safe and efficient operation. The switch head block tie on the mainline crossover at Ardenwood station must be replaced, which will be an all day job in itself. There are also some questionable stretches in Jack's curve where the rails were originally bent into the curve by springing them, and have been squirming around ever since. Some ties there are getting thoroughly spike killed and are past due for replacement.

John Erdkamp, our speeder man, has been working hard to provide a speeder shuttle between Deerpark and the Car Barn for RailFair. He has successfully modified his speeder, which had been geared for inspection, to reduce speed by about 1/3. This makes it much more suitable for both track work and the anticipated shuttle. Last month he got an old military adjustable gauge platform car, which has been narrowed to 3' gauge, and is being modified to serve as a center bench passenger car. This is progressing well, and should be completed shortly.



*An Invitation to*

***The Wissel Car Barn***

***Plaque Dedication & Reception***

*for SPCRR Members and  
Sponsors:*

*Friday evening, August 29*

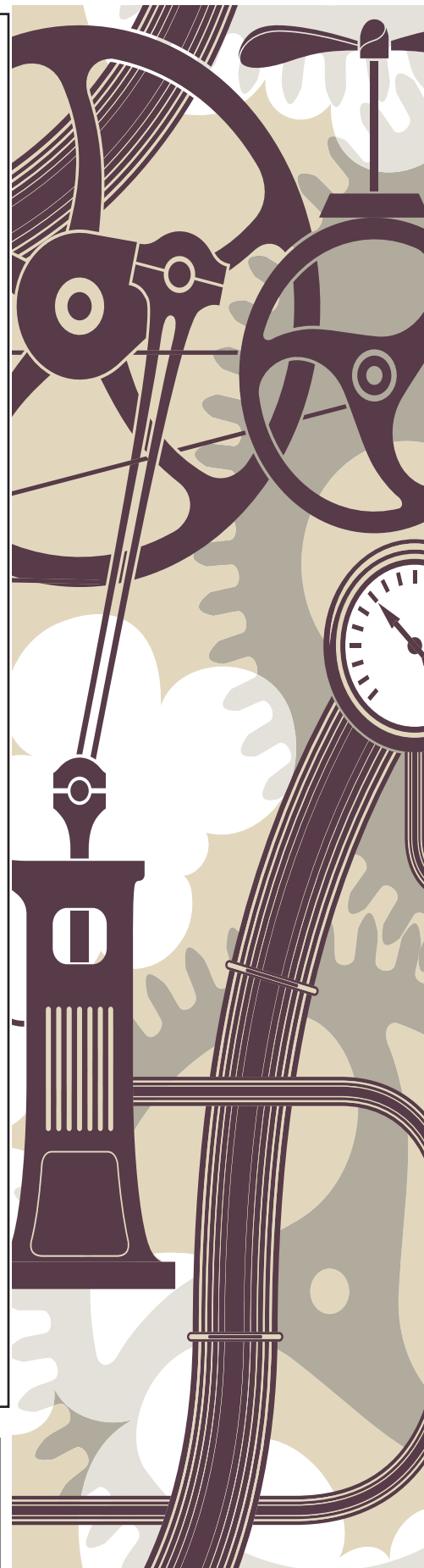
**What:** special steam train takes you to an *Unveiling of the Car Barn Plaque*. The event includes wine and light refreshments.

**When:** Friday, August 29, please be at the depot by 6 pm; 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](mailto:bruce.macgregor@comcast.net).

**A Note about September *Hotbox*:** due to participation in Rail Fair, your editor apologizes that the September issue of *Hotbox* will be delayed by at least one week. You should expect to see it by September 10./ Bruce



# Historic First Car in the Collection Goes Under Cover



**South Pacific Coast Railroad caboose 47**, built in 1882 in Newark by Carter Brothers, was the first car acquired by SPCRR. It was moved to Ardenwood in 1978, before Ardenwood was a public park, and provided the seed for both our collection, and our operating railroad. For most of its life at Ardenwood, 47 has been stored outdoors. Finally, on Monday, July 28, a team moved the historic car into the museum's car barn. Thanks go to Jack Burgess, Brook Rother, Ken Underhill, Rich Nealson, Gene Arillaga, Bruce Sorel and Don Marenzi for accomplishing this important preservation step. *(photo courtesy Don Marenzi)*

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

**What: Caboose 5591**

### **When:**

Our August work day will be Saturday August 9th. This will be our last chance to do significant work before Rail Fair. We will be working Thursday August 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th in the late afternoon, generally from 2:00 to 5:00.

**Who:** Randy Hees, Coordinator. Contact: [randyhees@gmail.com](mailto:randyhees@gmail.com)

Our July work days were very productive. The first of the finished floor is down, and the mortises for the door cages are cut. The brake rods have been cut and ground preparing them for welding. We continue to make slow progress on the interior paint.

August will be busy as we prepare for Rail Fair. As usual we will be working at the back of the park near the car house. We are continuing to sand and paint the interior, and install the T&G finished floor. I would like to repaint both platforms.

We will also be preparing to move the car to the Arden end of the railroad, where it will be our railfair public restoration project. We will have several tables set up with tools, parts, and photos. We would also like to clean and wash Oakland Railroad 8, our horse car, and set up a table with the patterns we have created as a display at the car barn for Rail Fair.

# ***Restoration Planning Workshop***

Our program at the July general meeting and Bar-B-Que was a little different. Instead of a presentation of some aspect of railroad history, we held a group workshop, reviewing the groups collection of railroad cars, and their needs. It was done “storyboard” style, with comments collected about each car, what work was needed, and how it might be restored and eventually used.

Included were two rounds of voting, one before the discussion, the second after the discussion, using stickers (each person present got 6 stickers each time... they could be all used to vote for a single car, or could be spread around...)

## **Generally, there was consensus that (not in order):**

- 1) the caboose (NWP 5591) was our current project
- 2) that we need to address SPC 472 (our museum box car) paint and lettering, which are badly deteriorated.
- 3) That 1010’s current, deteriorated appearance is embarrassing, and needs significant work before being used or considered finished. Candidate work could include: a new roof, refinishing or replacement of siding, and historically accurate trucks.
- 4) Box car 444, a SPC ventilator car, lettered for SPC, received the highest number of votes, and becomes a candidate for a near-term large scale restoration project.
- 5) There is lots of interest in having a horse car for rail operations, possibly a replica rather than operating ORR 8

## **In addition:**

- 1) that the two West Side Lumber Co flat cars stored off site should be unstacked on arrival, One to be used (eventually) as an additional passenger car, the other to remain a flat car for maintenance work and to interpret as a flat car.
- 2) That we need to continue to address the cars used for regular operations (1725, 64 and 222), in terms of basic maintenance and historic integrity.

The next step is a discussion with the board, and agreement about how to implement the recommendations.