

January 2016 Edition

The *Hotbox* is a monthly bulletin of The Railroad Museum at Ardenwood, designed to update members, volunteers, 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 in California. The Railroad Museum at Ardenwood is located at Ardenwood Historic Farm in Fremont, California.

First Workday of the Year... Saturday, January 2, 2016

Come out to the Car Barn at 10 a.m. on Saturday, January 2nd to help repair our locomotive, SPCRR 1 (the "Katie"). We especially need people with experience in tractor/truck body work who can help us pull the cab and fix the rust problem. We will also need volunteers to clean, sand, and paint the cab and frame. Someone with experience with tractor instrument panels would be very helpful.

There is a comprehensive list of what needs to be accomplished in Andrew Cary's article on page 2 in this edition of the *Hotbox*.

Throughout this edition of the Hotbox are photos taken by Bruce MacGregor in 2015. What wonderful memories. Thank you Bruce!

SPCRR 1 Being Repaired And Painted

*Andrew J. L. Cary,
Safety Manager*

All Photos: AJL Cary

Background:

SPCRR 1 is a 5 ton Plymouth HSGB -DH gasoline locomotive nicknamed 'Katie'. This gasoline locomotive was manufactured in Plymouth, Ohio by Plymouth Locomotive Works in 1968. It was ordered by the US Army for use in the Badger Ammunition Plant in Baraboo, WI. At that time it was numbered US ARMY 581 and CO268. Shortly afterward the plant operator, Olin Corporation, renumbered it OB-588. The locomotive was sold to a private individual and was acquired by the SPCRR after a multi-year lease in 2004. SPCRR painted it and renumbered the locomotive SPCRR 1.

SPCRR 1 has an International Harvester truck engine driving a hydraulic torque converter and pump that drives the wheels. It is not part of the historic collection of the Railroad Museum at Ardenwood—it was purchased for MOW operations and switching, occasional operational use during special events, and use during the annual Haunted Railroad fundraiser.

During the past 5 years SPCRR 1 has become the primary operational engine, pulling trains 3 days a week in addition to the MOW and special event work. This additional use has accelerated wear and tear on the locomotive, necessitating an engine rebuild in 2013, and turning the locomotive in 2014 to equalize wheel wear.



Why are we working on Katie now?

During contract negotiations with EBRPD in 2015, EBRPD requested that the engine be painted before starting operations in April 2016. The locomotive's current 'primer' paint job has weathered since it was applied in 2005 and is no longer attractive. I took on the role of managing the repainting and some other minor repairs. The engine is to be painted in Plymouth's stock forest green with black roof and hood tops. Lettering will be in white using simple lettering. Grab irons and fixtures will be black.

What has been done?

After the end of the 2015 operating season, an evaluation was made to determine what needed to be done to paint the engine and get the engine ready for operation prior to April 2016. The good news is that other than a sticky governor and a slow valve cover leak, the mechanical and hydraulic systems appear to be in good shape. The valve cover gasket is messy but noncritical, and the governor needs to have a new contact rod end fabricated. Parts have been ordered to fix the fuel gauge, and sources for other missing parts have been identified.

The bad news is that while the bulk of the body is in good shape, the base of the cab is badly rusted. The back of the cab is rusted through in multiple places, and both sides under the doors are badly rusted as well. The rust has swelled the cab base badly enough on the sides to cause issues with the doors sliding. Fortunately the heavy steel engine frame does not appear to have much damage beyond surface pitting. The floor of the cab has now been removed. It was plywood covered with oak tongue-and-groove planking that was partially covered with a waterproof coating. This floor fit tightly against the bottom of the cab which caused water to be trapped against the base. This caused acceleration of the rusting.

In addition to the body issues, there are several less serious issues: the instrument panel has several nonworking instruments; the emergency fuel cutoff pull on the right side is not working due to a pinched cover; there are missing windshield wipers; and the front and rear headlights are not working.



What needs to be done?

Based on meeting our contractual obligation to operate by April 2016, a decision to defer repairs and do a quick patch and paint job, or to do a full repair has to be made quickly. A major part of this decision is dependent on what resources and what skills are available before April. The patch and paint job will involve stabilizing the rust, cleaning the surfaces, filling rust holes with body putty, and sanding the repairs smooth. The full repair is far more work and requires that the cab be removed and the bottom 6" of the rear and side panels replaced. After either solution, the body will have all existing exterior paint removed chemically and/or by sand blasting; have the surface rust removed; and then it will be sanded, primed, and topcoated. After painting, the engine will be relettered as SPCRR 1. A new floor will be installed without the top sealer and with clearance from the cab base to prevent trapping moisture.

Several of the gauges are nonfunctional. Some like the fuel gauge are easy to repair (by replacing the sender float), but other gauges will require replacing if they cannot be repaired. In addition, several knobs and a dashlight need replacing.

Other minor repairs needed include: fixing the front and rear headlights, replacing the missing windshield wipers, adding safety handrails to the hood top, and touching up the paint inside the cab. Plus the engine governor needs a minor part fabricated (or found) and the motor's valve cover gasket tightened.

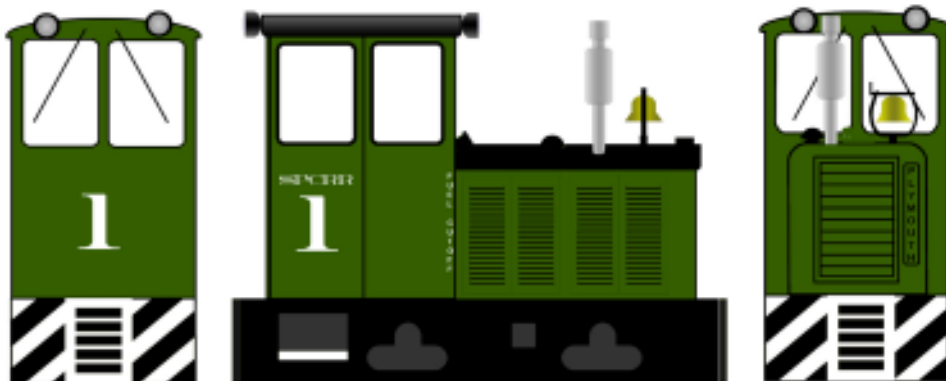
Who can help?

We critically need people with experience in tractor/truck body work who can help us pull the cab and fix the rust problem. We will also need volunteers to clean, sand, and paint the cab and frame. Someone with experience with tractor instrument panels would be useful to help repair the non-working gauges.

If you can help with the project, keep an eye out for the workday announcements in *Hotbox*. The first workday will be Saturday, January 2, 2016. There will also be Thursday workdays some weeks, and on regular Saturday workdays. If you can help or have questions please contact me, Andrew Cary, by email at safety-manager@spcrr.org or by phone at (510)794-8536. 📞

PROPOSED COLOR AND LETTERING FOR SPCRR 1

VER V



Not a scaled drawing

We need volunteers to repair Katie...
keep an eye out for work day announcements

The North Shore Railroad: Change in a BIG Way

Kevin Bunker, Curator

Your curator has a lot on his plate these days, and chief among those duties is to unearth as much historical, contextual data as can be found relative to our Northwestern Pacific caboose and other artifacts in our collection, with or without wheels underneath.

We are amazingly blessed by the Internet, and if that blanket statement seems trite, then consider the wealth of knowledge that can lately be gained by one website alone. UC Riverside—through its Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research—is hosting and providing an absolutely vital site known as the California Digital Newspaper Collection (CDNC) (http://cdnc.ucr.edu/site/about_us.html).

What can now be relatively easily done on one's own laptop or desktop computer by use of the CDNC site would have taken weeks or years to accomplish just a few years ago.

About the only large all-in one repository of California newspapers is the California State Library at Sacramento where many filing cabinets full of microfilmed and microfiched newspapers exist, waiting to be tapped by researchers. While these microfilms can be ordered by distant California patrons through their local library's reference desk, the receiving library has to have at least one microfilm reader or reader-printer on hand. Not all do, anymore. Thus venturing to Sacramento has been more and more necessary. And as anyone knows, it's laborious, eye-straining work to spend one or more days poring through microfilmed newspapers in search of specific articles.

CDNC newspaper holdings are large and the holdings range dates from 1849 to 1922. Its site is not complete but quite comprehensive, and searching is remarkably easy.

Advanced search functions allow a researcher to narrow a date window or perform a sweeping topical search throughout the CDNC holdings range—those being pretty much statewide. Sometimes real surprises crop up: Los Angeles newspapers commenting on activities in Marin County, or local Northern California papers commenting on major or minor news a thousand of miles away or more. Such leads to another storyline printed in a separate paper can be useful, even if that paper has not been preserved, digitally or otherwise. So what have I recently learned on CDNC about just one of the railroads with lineage ties to two artifact cars in our collection? Using just three search terms (“North Shore Railroad” and setting a restrictive search field to the dates “1 January 1902 to 31 December 1906”), rather a lot. Consider this savory tidbit that surfaced:



Photo: Bruce MacGregor

Improvement of North Shore Road

“SAN FRANCISCO Jan. 28—The North Shore Railway company, successor to the North Pacific Coast Railroad company, is preparing to expend \$1,000,000 in the improvement of the Sausalito-Cazadero line and the ferry service between this city and Sausalito. The work will be begun immediately and will be under the supervision of General Manager J. A. Fillmore. A new fast ferry boat is to be built, cars of modern style will be used, a tunnel 4000 feet long will run through White's Hill and heavy rails will be laid.” [Los Angeles Herald (29 January 1902), 4.]

Just basics, true, but nevertheless telling in ways more recently published history books haven't so well distilled. The “cars of modern style” were the then so-far radical AC-electric propelled suburban trains that North Shore employed in its pioneer standard gauge commuter operations. But the story hinted at other goings on. Now let's examine another example from the Sausalito News (6 January 1903).

Railroad Company Doing Things.

“Our railroad people, the new management, are showing a broad minded, enterprising spirit, giving us new steamboats, new cars and new rails; accommodations for the increasing passenger and freight traffic; everything being on a substantial, permanent basis. These facts are being noised abroad and scores of new people are coming in seeking homes in Sausalito, Mill Valley, Alto, Corte Madera, Larkspur, Kent, Ross, San Anselmo, San Rafael and elsewhere in beautiful Marin county. We are now enjoying a far better service than we pay for—think of it. Communication with San Francisco every forty minutes! This is deemed too liberal by many of the best friends and patrons, who take the liberty to suggest to the North Shore people that a round trip by boat and cars every 75 minutes, between the hours of 5 a. m. and midnight, would be a liberal service and all the most exacting customer could ask. - OLD MOSS BACK.”

Old Moss Back—think “Hidebound”—was the historic columnist’s signature or nome d’plume. I suspect he/she was trying to say they didn’t need more frequent, faster service, but that a predictable and steady 75 minutes circuit would have sufficed.

That tantalizing opinion piece pales in comparison to this next little “just the facts” story...

Sound of Hammer and Saw Never Ceases.

“With great piles of lumber lining either side of the railroad tracks and carpenters and mechanics busy plying their trades, the scene at the carshops of the North Shore Railroad is one of intense activity. There is that feeling pervading the establishment that the work on hand must be rushed through with the greatest possible dispatch to carry out the plans of the railroad Officials and the sound of the hammer and saw never ceases.

“Flat cars are being constructed into box cars, an article the former management of the road sadly lacked, and old cars are being overhauled and put into condition to handle the enormous crowds expected this summer, and which have already put in an appearance as exemplified by the travel on the ferries the last few Sundays.

“Expert painters are engaged in coating the cars with the brilliant red adopted by the North Shore, and mechanics in the machine shops have all they can attend to making necessary articles for the reconstruction of the road. With it all the system at this busy section of the road is perfect and the work is being turned out in a manner that speaks well for the management and the skill of the workmen.” [Sausalito News (25 April 1903), 1.]

So, what have we just learned? In short, what had been a somewhat sleepy local narrow gauge pike was being turned into a beehive of activity by the latest corporate owners as traffic projections demanded action. Moreover, in the final news story, specific types of freight cars are mentioned, and—yes!—the columnist has picked up on painters making key visual changes to the rolling stock, events rarely reported by newspapers after the 1880s.

This sort of very specific data helps our own mission and goals leap-frog right along. Our restored Carter Brothers flat car, North Shore Railroad No. 1725 could well have been one of those freight cars getting new “brilliant red” paint in 1903. When we rebuilt and repainted this car over a decade ago, we guessed at the body color for there was no historical record to guide us. Now I think we got it wrong. However, we now have a Northwestern Pacific narrow gauge caboose in the collection, which had earlier been North Shore’s No. 2002. It still has two original end fascia panels, both of which bear remnant North Shore lettering and numbers and the railroad’s signature red color way down underneath all subsequent NWP paint layers. Thus, we now have not just a “paper trail” but also a tangible, provable sample of exactly what color the railroad was applying to its rolling stock and when that hue began adorning the cars.

There is still much similar CDNC research to be done—as well as some deep-diving into NSRR’s financial journals and cash books preserved at California State Railroad Museum Archives in Sacramento, a mission about to resume thanks to a willing SPCRR volunteer Rich Neelson.

But I’ll close for now with one more North Shore story—from the Marin Journal (10 May 1906), 3, covering the widespread problems caused by a certain major earthquake that occurred only 22 days before, on April 18—and let you mull over the significance.

Local Notes

“. . . —At Duncan’s Mills the El Bonito Hotel crashed down killing two of the occupants; the company store was split and shaken everyway, and a caboose and oil tank cars were over-turned. . . .”

See why I’m excited? Stay tuned. 

NEW CONTRACT AND FUNDING REQUEST APPROVED BY EBRPD

Jack Burgess

At their December 15, 2015 Board meeting, the East Bay Regional Park District approved a new contract and funding request for our group. But before getting into the details, let me first provide some background information.

EBRPD reimburses us monthly to operate trains for Ardenwood visitors during the operating season (April 1 to the last Sunday before Thanksgiving) based on anticipated operating expenses. These expenses include our employee costs plus other operating expenses such as fuel, oil, engine maintenance, Worker's Compensation insurance, and liability insurance. Our contracts with EBRPD run for five years, which requires us to predict our costs five years into the future. We can anticipate some of these costs, but most cannot be accurately estimated, such as unanticipated Worker's Compensation insurance and liability insurance increases, as well as fuel costs. During the last five-year contract, our costs exceeded our payments from EBRPD during the last couple of years of that contract, especially during the 2015 season when our costs were about \$5,000 more than we received from EBRPD.

Negotiations on a new contract with EBRPD began at a meeting last May when representatives from EBRPD notified us that we needed to move to a purely mechanical operation as reported in the August issue of the *Hotbox*. In response to that decision on the part of EBRPD, a funding request for the next five years was developed based on historical information and our best "guesses." What will be the cost of a gallon of gasoline five years from now? Will Katie require an overhaul?

District staff also wanted us to paint Katie during the off-season and agreed without question to cover the estimated cost of that work. Due to some unexpected shut-downs with Katie during the 2015 season, they also asked that we obtain a second locomotive as a backup.

After that meeting, a very detailed funding request was prepared for EBRPD for the 2016-2020 contract period. It included funding to cover all of our operating expenses such as employee costs, fuel, oil, Worker's Compensation insurance, and liability insurance; as well as just over \$2,000 per year to cover engine maintenance, parts, and supplies. It also included \$1,500 during the 2016 operating session for repainting our locomotive, and \$2,000 per year over the next five years toward the cost of a second locomotive.


Most importantly, our funding request includes a significant increase in the wages for our seasonal employees. Our employees are not supervised and are expected to run trains on time and in a safe manner. During the May meeting with District staff members, they expressed concern regarding the need for our employees to dress in period costumes. They also stated concern with the lack of an interpretation program for visitors while riding our train. For years we have paid our employees the minimum hourly wage. Being able to recruit individuals who will follow these goals will be easier with the ability to pay more than minimum wage.

The intent of our funding request provided to EBRPD staff was to cover all of our operating costs during the next five years. The funding levels for regular operations (not including special events and Rail Fair) which were approved by the EBRPD Board are shown in the chart to the right.

Our new contract will run from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2020. The contract was changed to reflect the new term. (The current contract began in June 16, 2010, but from now on it will be on a calendar year basis.) The new contract deletes the requirement to operate trains during the three-day Christmas Special Event. We were being compensated for operating those three days, but I'm

assuming that attendance figures didn't justify the cost to EBRPD. The new contract also deletes the requirement that we operate a horse-drawn railroad, which was specifically written into the current contract by EBRPD. The contract continues to include provisions for paying the group for special events including Rail Adventure Days and Rail Fair, and for running extra trains when requested by Park staff.

There are other costs to our group which are not compensated by EBRPD since they are not related to operations. These include water, telephone, and power bills; Porta-Potty rental, fire alarm monitoring, and Board liability insurance. These bills currently total approximately \$7,000 per year. There are also expenses for track and equipment maintenance, weed spraying, infrastructure improvements, etc.

The approved funding request which covers the next five years is an obvious indication that the Park District recognizes our value to visitors at Ardenwood Historic Farm. 

SPCRR Funding 2016-2010

2016 -	\$47,363
2017 -	\$47,363
2018 -	\$50,710
2019 -	\$52,799
2020 -	\$56,943

December 2015 General Meeting Report

If you didn't attend the December General Meeting, you missed a fun and informative event! Total attendance was about 30 members and friends. Dinner was catered by our "adopted" restaurant, Dino's, located in the Safeway Shopping Center in Newark. (Dino's is the favorite lunch spot for SPCRR volunteers on work days.) Once dinner was over, there was a very short business meeting for the election of officers as required by our Bylaws. Board Member Kevin Bunker had decided not to run this time since he is now the official Curator for our group. The Election Committee recruited Brook Rother to submit his name for the vacated Board seat. All other officers agreed to run again and the slate of candidates was unanimously approved.

Longtime member Dave Eggleston then made a very interesting and informative presentation about his planned Study Phase of the oldest car in our collection, the Monterey & Salinas Valley/Nevada Central box car which was built in 1874 by Thomas Carter. (This is the car in the back of the Car Barn with the casino advertising painted on the side of it.) Dave talked about how Thomas Carter came to be the contractor to build this and seven other box cars for the Monterey & Salinas Valley Railroad. He illustrated his talk with photos of the car at different stages of its life and explained why he is willing to come down from Seattle on a regular basis to do the field research needed to complete the Study Phase for this car.

We had planned to discuss restoration priorities after Dave's talk but everyone decided to put that discussion off to a date after the start of the new year.



Photo: Bruce MacGregor

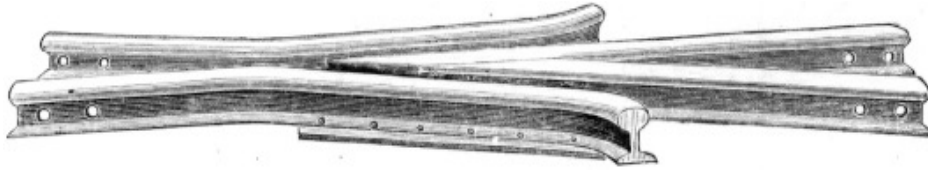


All Photos: Bruce MacGregor

Weekly Workdays

Track, Restoration & General Maintenance

Ken Underhill



Date(s): Most Thursdays and some Saturdays

Time: Email or Call (see below)

Meet At: Car Barn - See “Directions”

Special Abilities or Work Equipment: N/A

What to Bring: Long pants, work gloves, and steel-toe boots if you have them. Water is provided. If we are working on an outdoor project, bring a hat, long-sleeve shirt, and sunscreen, We generally go off-site for lunch, but you are welcome to bring your own lunch if you prefer.

Progress Last Month:

- Wednesday 12/9 - Andrew Cary, John Erdkamp, and Ken Underhill moved SP10, NS 1725, and the Katie locomotive from the front to the Car Barn for winter storage.

- Saturday 12/12 - Many volunteers were out today. Andrew Cary worked on cleaning and repairing the Katie, we re-shuffled some of the cars in Car Barn for a better fit/access, and John Erdkamp and Gene Arrillaga tarped D&C 64 up front. The other flat left up front (WSLCo 222) had previously been tarped.

Contact: Ken Underhill

Email: kcunderhill@yahoo.com

Phone: 925-373-6884

Notes:

- Everyone over the age of 14 are welcome.
- Thursdays often include restoration work. I post workday updates on the SPCRR Members list on Yahoo Groups (free to join—you just need a Yahoo account, then click on “Groups” at the top of the page, and next search for “SPCRR Members” and follow the instructions to join the group.)
- Please contact me in advance so I know how many to expect (prefer email). That way I can have jobs ready for you when you arrive, Please include your name, cell number, and email so I can contact you if I have to cancel the date or change the time.



Calendar Look Ahead

January

**Jan 2 – Saturday Workday: Repair SPCRR 1 locomotive (the “Katie”).
Meet at 10 a.m. at the Car Barn**



Photo: Bruce MacGregor

Directions For All Workdays

Volunteers cannot drive beyond the regular entrance parking lot when the Park is open to the public (between the hours of 10 am-5 pm, every day except Monday). When the Park is open, we must use the gate at the end of Siward Dr. at Ridgewood Dr. (near the Car Barn).

From I-880:

Take I-880 to the Dumbarton Freeway/Route 84 West toward the Dumbarton Bridge. Exit at Newark Blvd/Ardenwood Blvd and turn right onto Ardenwood Blvd. Continue 1 mile (past the Ardenwood entrance) and turn right onto Paseo Padre Pkwy at the traffic signal. Continue 1 mile on Paseo Padre Pkwy and turn right at the traffic signal onto Siward Dr (just before the I-880 overpass). The gate into the Park is at the end of Siward Dr at Ridgewood Dr. Once you enter the gate, proceed on the gravel road toward the left and park your vehicle at the Car Barn.

From Highway 101 on the Peninsula:

Take Highway 101 to Route 84 East over the Dumbarton Bridge. Exit at Newark Boulevard/Ardenwood Blvd and turn left onto Ardenwood Blvd. Continue 1 mile (past the Ardenwood entrance) and turn right onto Paseo Padre Pkwy at the traffic signal. Continue 1 mile on Paseo Padre Pkwy and turn right at the traffic signal onto Siward Dr (just before the I-880 overpass). The gate into the Park is at the end of Siward Dr at Ridgewood Dr. Once you enter the gate, proceed on the gravel road toward the left and park your vehicle at the Car Barn.