

The Hotbox

January 2017 Edition

A monthly newsletter from SPCRR
and The Railroad Museum at Ardenwood

The Hotbox is 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 the Assistant Editor at: publicity@spcrr.org.


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.

Your Volunteer Hours are Important to our Museum and the Park!

Each year, East Bay Regional Park collects a record of the hours that volunteers serve at their 65 parks. This data is valuable to EBRPD when used to apply for grants and other purposes. Ardenwood Historic Farm is unique in that SPCRR members volunteer an enormous number of hours compared to other parks, especially compared to parks dedicated primarily to hiking and similar activities. Providing EBRPD with everyone's hours also makes Ardenwood look good since it increases the total number of hours that the combined volunteer groups give to the park. And your hours are very valuable to our Museum when we apply for grants.

But you say that you didn't keep track? We already keep track of everyone's hours that are shown in the *Hotbox* articles about special projects (such as repainting "Katie", the new container project, etc.), as well as each month's "Weekly Workdays." So you don't need to turn those hours in. What we do need are the hours you worked at the park that were not listed in the *Hotbox* such as volunteering to work as a train crew member, work on track or equipment maintenance, weeding, projects you worked on to get ready for the big fund raisers (Rail Adventure Days, Rail Fair, the Haunted Railroad), hours spent on projects at home, phone calls, emails, etc. Make an "educated guess" of the days and hours per day and submit the total.

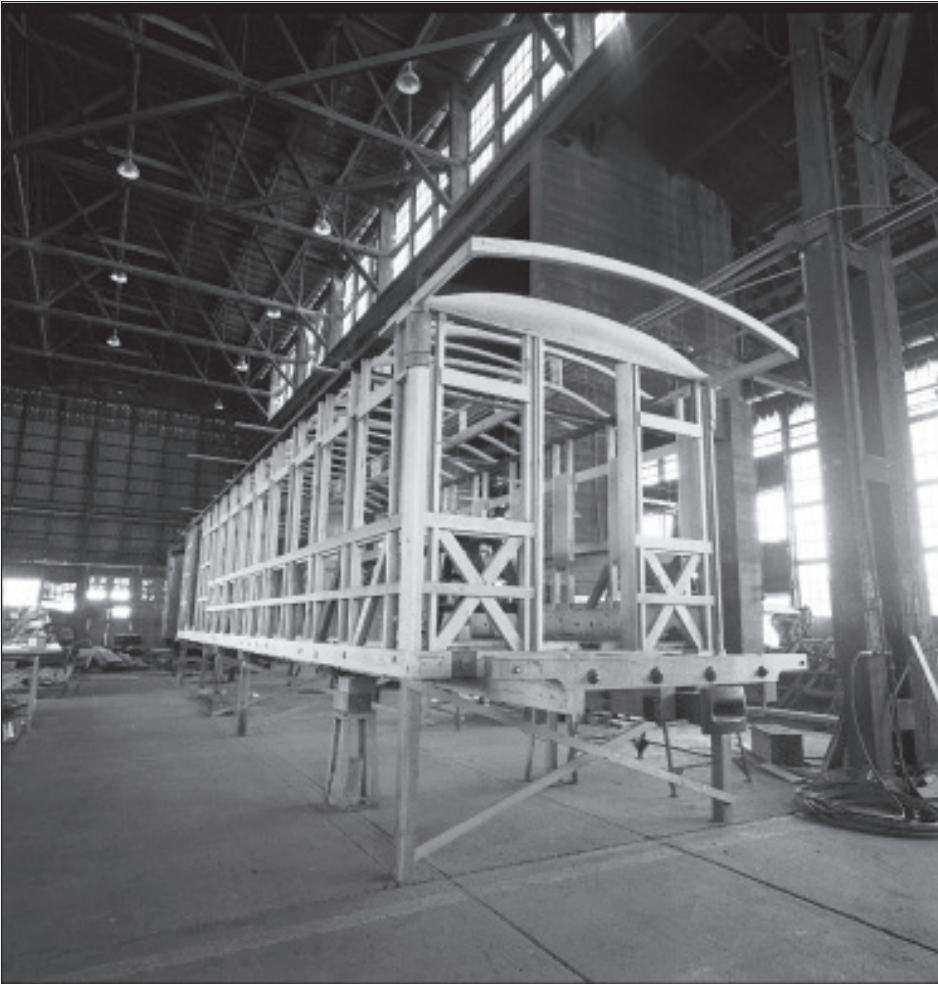
The easiest way is to submit your hours via an email to publicity@spcrr.org. We will summarize everyone's hours and submit them to the Park District. Everyone who volunteered 25 hours or more in 2016 will be invited to the annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner hosted by EBRPD. Not only will you receive a nice dinner, there will also be prizes based on your hours.

The deadline for submitting hours is January 5. (After we get your hours, we will add them to the others and turn them in to EBRPD by January 8.) If you have any questions, please email publicity@spcrr.org or call 510-797-9557. 



I'll start this column out with my belated best Christmas and New Year's wishes to each and all of you. In trying to decide what to write for this month's column, I mused about my professional past and found myself bouncing back to my first hands-on experience with narrow gauge railway equipment. That was in 1977 when I was hired, still "wet behind the ears," as a seasonal researcher for the brand-new California State Railroad Museum, then just being planned.

Of the research team, there were seven of us at first, working under one supervisor—the late William "Bill" Oden—then most recently a lead partner with a small business called "Short Line Enterprises" out of



The cavernous expanse of California State Railroad Museum's restoration shop dwarf the fully rebuilt body framework of the first passenger car ever built by the Carter Brothers. Having found most of the original structure fully worn out and unsound, new lumber matching the 1874 specs has been made and hand-fitted atop the lower frame. The combine came retrofitted with link couplers, those applied in 1938 by Nevada Central at the time the car was sold to the Pacific Coast Chapter, Railway & Locomotive Historical Society before the railroad company fully abandoned and tore down its Battle Mountain, NV shop and dismantled its yard tracks.

Photo: Bruce MacGregor

Southern California. Our workplace was in the far northwestern corner of Southern Pacific's Sacramento General Shops complex, within a cavernous building called the "Unit Shop." That was a timber framed structure about 300 feet long and approximately 90 feet wide, clad in corrugated sheet iron and roofed with tar paper. The Unit Shop had been built in the 1920s as a small steel foundry where locomotive and car components were cast for use in the Sacramento Shops and other shops across SP's far-flung "Pacific Lines." That purpose was relatively short-lived, and the structure was gutted and converted into an air conditioning "unit" shop, tasked with servicing the devices mounted in or underneath the railroad's passenger cars. By the 1960s it was empty again and used as a storage building.

Around 1975, California State Parks accepted SP's generous offer to use the building as an interim restoration shop. The state rented the Unit Shop for a mere \$1 per year, and was granted access to the shops grounds and use of an access spur for the equipment that would arrive via the railroad. In 1975-76 some very basic restorations were done in the shop, including the first freight cars to be displayed in or next to the Central

Pacific Railroad Passenger Station. The depot is a replica structure built on the Sacramento River waterfront as Phase One of CSRM's multi-phase construction, and opened to the public in 1977. A badly rutted driveway, largely made of sand and ballast, paralleled the spur track, both approaching the west end of the Unit Shop. Trucks hauling in narrow gauge and fragile rolling stock had a devil of a time coming in.

I started along with four or five others around March 1977, taking a seat in an office placed inside one of two aluminum trailers parked on the shop's left flank. The Unit Shop was hot as Hades in summer, and in winter it was chilly. It was solely heated by two enormous gas-flame hot air blower units that kicked up every particle of dust when lit off. Naturally, a lot of the heat they made went straight up into the open rafters,

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about 70 feet high at the crown, and perhaps 35 feet along the perimeter walls. On the coldest days we burned scrap wood in a 55-gallon steel drum set in the middle of the shop floor with a bucket of water and fire extinguisher set close-by. A traveling bridge crane was also there, and we eventually got it running and used it to lift and move equipment as restorations evolved from one stage to another.

So, my first assignment—I don't recall how I got it—was none other than the Monterey & Salinas Valley Railroad combination coach built by Carter Brothers at Monterey in 1874. It arrived by truck along with a “sister” coach, the former “Silver State” (with Carter Brothers passenger trucks) that was built in 1881 by Nevada Central Railway. Only 20 years old, I was terrifically naive, and had never researched nor aided in the restoration of anything. I was a model railroader, an armchair historian, a bookish sort. Now I was in the “catbird seat” along with one dear pal and a group of others I'd never met. The day the combine rolled off the truck trailer and down onto temporary 3-foot gauged rails set on the shop's concrete floor, I was excited and nervous. Diving right in, I walked up, scraped some old paint on its side—then clad in worn tongue and groove boards—and saw some turquoise paint underneath the mineral red. “It was turquoise!” I shouted. Little did I know!

My partner was a young, charmingly brassy woman named Sharon, a recently college graduate with a master's degree in archeology and a bachelor's in cultural anthropology. She knew little or nothing about railroads, but had a passion for history. I didn't even have an AA degree. We got along famously, and I learned a lot from her, and she from me, for I (at least) knew about the Carter Brothers, or thought I did. Frankly, hardly anyone then knew much about the Carter Brothers, as our Collections Manager and resident Carter expert, Bruce MacGregor can attest.

That next week we took a crash course in architectural research techniques as espoused by the National Park Service and various important national house museums—think Monticello or Colonial Williamsburg. We had to learn how to “see” as well as to place in context the myriad documentary and photographic resources that we would also have to dig up, organize and analyze. In the case of the M&SV combine, that meant we had to first figure out what we had age-wise, and then go after every scrap of source material.

In addition to learning how wooden railroad cars were built, we crammed a stream of knowledge about California's 19th century railroad history, and much of Nevada's as well, for a significant number of cars and engines we were all to be working with spent a lot of their active lives in Nevada. Others started out there, like the Nevada Central coach “Silver State” and Virginia & Truckee locomotives 12 and 13, respectively named “Genoa” and “Empire.” We also were going to be restoring two former Southern Pacific narrow gauge freight cars with roots on the Nevada & California Railroad. Since most of Nevada's gold and silver flowed



The tired-out accumulations of Nevada Central Railroad alterations and finishes have given way to a 1970s reversal staged inside CSRM's first restoration shop at Sacramento. A young Haig MacGregor (son of our Collections Manager) gives the nearly complete “Monterey Car” a visual inspection. With primer already done and sanded smooth, painters will next apply the first layers of a pale yellow body color, while across the way, other craftsmen are rebuilding the combine's trucks to like-new condition.

Photo: Bruce MacGregor

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through the Bank of California and Nevada-National Bank, and thence to the U.S. Mint in San Francisco, we had to document not just the cars and engines, but how they fit into the broader history of the Pacific Slope between the 1860s and up through the early 20th century.

The Monterey & Salinas Valley combine turned out to be a major puzzle. Only its interior had original components, much altered. The exterior was a mere shadow of the car when new, for the combine had



A glance into the upper right corner of the clerestory inside Monterey & Salinas Valley's first combination car yields the first signs of finish painting and carpentry that will soon be hidden by elaborately painted canvas "headlining" cloths. The panel atop the car's dividing bulkhead has already been given exacting replica ornamentation in a "polychromed"—multi-hued stenciling (on a pale blue-gray base) that exactly matches the original 1874 finish found beneath about a dozen accumulated paint layers applied since circa 1885. Photo: Bruce MacGregor

endured an 1880s stove fire, one wind-tossed rollover, plus two rebuildings. The trucks were an amalgam of parts that baffled us for months. After assessing every stick, panel, seat, window blind, and a host of other components, we began to write a first draft report. We took hundreds of photos in black and white and in color, plus color slides. Our professional draftsmen recorded the car(s) as received and slowly developed reversed-engineered restoration drawing packages, by hand, on paper and vellum, long before AutoCAD or personal computers were available. At the same time we began traveling on the state's nickel to Monterey, Salinas, Watsonville, San Francisco and all the way (against the rules) to Reno, Battle Mountain and Austin, Nevada. We managed to mask the illicit travel by renting cars using a state motor pool credit card. State employees were allowed only to work in California, so we pretended to drive as far as South Shore, Lake Tahoe and pay for "parking" there. I believe this was eventually figured out by the higher supervisors in State Parks, the State Treasurer's office and elsewhere, but ultimately it got passed off with a wink-wink, nudge-nudge since this was a fast-paced, multi-million dollar museum development project, the likes of which the State of California had not yet undertaken. Again, with cars and engines that worked in Nevada, we had to go there!

Fortunately, Sharon had a real down-to-earth manner with suspicious rural Nevadans and managed to gain their confidence. I, on the other hand, found I had a shirt-tail cousin. In being told the whereabouts of the Nevada Central Railroad's last engineer, we made a phone call. His wife Lena answered. I gave my name. She paused, and said, "Bunker? That was my maiden name!" Anyway, that gave us more than a foot in the door. Herb Merrill, her husband, had not only run our former North Pacific Coast 3-foot gauge 4-4-0 "Sonoma"—when it was Nevada Central No. 5—but also the little Baldwin Mogul 2-6-0 that had served NCRR a short time as their No. 6. We invited them to Sacramento and found a way for the museum's non-profit partner to pay for their travel, meals and hotel room. That introductory visit turned magical. Herb, in turn, introduced us to the widow of the Nevada Central's last general manager, who worked for that company a good 30+ years and continued after the rails were torn up in 1928 by developing and running the Nevada Central Trailways bus lines. Mrs. Hiskey, then in her 90s, came to Sacramento with her niece to see our restorations effort, and wound up giving CSRM a significant stack of her late husband's personal papers, photographs and an impressive batch of Nevada Central shop service records! Those personal papers revealed an embarrassment—that Mr. Hiskey actually then still held title to the NCRR 4-4-0 No. 5, a.k.a. NPCRR "Sonoma" plus ex-NCRR coach No. 3, "Silver State." Talk about surprise and, frankly, horror!

Here we were, with that engine and coach torn apart on the Unit Shop floor. This legal crisis only came to light a week after Mrs. Hiskey returned home. Much discussion ensued, and a few meetings with state lawyers in Sacramento and Carson City. The original contract had lent the locomotive and coach to the Pacific Coast Chapter, Railway & Locomotive Historical Society, for use at the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition held on Treasure Island. PCC/R&LHS had bought at 1938 scrap price the ex-NCRR 2-6-0 No. 6 and the onetime M&SV combine that had initially served Monterey & Salinas Valley Railroad, and so had clear title to those up to the point where these had been given to California State Parks for inclusion in CSRM. However

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since the exposition ran a second season in 1940, a loan extension was negotiated by letter. Yet, somehow nothing further was done after the fair ended. Incidentally, that world's fair marked the last time all of this rolling stock ever ran, with the two engines steaming under reduced operating pressure, all of them duded up as stand-ins for the standard gauge Central Pacific and Union Pacific equipment that had been at Promontory Summit, Utah on May 10, 1869. This explained the yellow and red paint we found on the combine, underneath a layer of turquoise, that color layer having turned out to be only a primer or weather-coat. Why? I'm going to leave you hanging until next issue! Call me mean. {wink} 🚂



Standing on 3-foot gauge rails inside CSRM's Museum of Railroad History, the fully restored "M&SV car" No. 1 has amazed and delighted millions of visitors since the museum opened in May 1981. It there serves to illustrate the incredible contribution by the Carter Brothers to Golden State railroading, and at the same time portrays a powerful optimism held by Salinas Valley grangers seeking a cheap and efficient way of moving themselves and their grain crops to Monterey and waiting sailing vessels or steamers calling there.

Photo: Courtesy California State Railroad Museum

There's still time to give a tax-deductible donation and get a write-off for your 2016 taxes

Be sure to **date your check "December 31, 2016"** and send your donation to: SPCRR, PO Box 783, Newark, CA 94560. If you would like your donation to go to a specific project, please mark it on your check or include a letter. SPCRR is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and we will provide each donor with a letter that has all of the information you need for the IRS.

A Photographer's Journey

Bruce MacGregor

In 1977, as Kevin Bunker was researching the Monterey & Salinas Valley combine for the California State Railroad Museum's restoration team, I had the privilege of photographing the restoration of this remarkable car. The visits I made were a preamble to the opening of CSRM's world-class Sacramento museum facility, in which the "Monterey car," as it was known to its restorers, would play a starring role. In many ways, it was the most complex, involved restoration of any rolling stock that would appear in the new museum. In other ways, personal ways, it was the ONLY car in the museum. Or at least it seemed that way to me at the time. It was the single piece of rolling stock that totally absorbed my attention. I thought of it this way: as the first time in over seventy years that a Carter car would be completely deconstructed, then reconstructed, much as it had been when it was built in Monterey in 1874.

I probably was witnessing what someone would have witnessed at Carter's shop in Monterey, in the late summer and early autumn of 1874. Over the course of several visits, I watched the original car body being carefully disassembled, board by board. I was amazed at how much of this original material was carefully measured, exactly

copied, and then set aside. In its place, over 90% of the car's restoration was done with new material, giving the assembly the appearance of a new car under construction.

The work was done with an amazing sense of authenticity and detail, often the result of Kevin and Sharon's detective work and forensic analysis. A few examples stood out dramatically. For example, all visible trace of the "Monterey & Salinas Valley" lettering appeared to the naked eye to have vanished from the car's letter boards. The researchers skipped the "naked eye" part and took a letter board to the Davis, California Police Department, where it was subjected to an X-ray diffraction scan. A few letters from the original name appeared faintly in the scan, providing researchers with evidence of the original font style.

As I took photographs of the restoration (at the same time Kevin was digging into the car's earliest historic records) I began to learn the names of the car's wooden parts: wall plates and sills; carlines, clearstory soffit boards, clearstory posts, belt rails, truss planks, platform sills and letter boards—and literally hundreds more. I learned that these parts were nearly universal components of 19th century American passenger car design. But I also learned that Carter put their own unique touches on many of the parts, or in the way the parts were assembled, giving the car a unique Carter "signature." This signature, and the car as a whole, was lovingly, painstakingly reconstructed in front of my camera by the CSRM staff, over a period of a year. By 1981, that professionalism would be on display for the world to see when CSRM opened its doors to the public in



A much younger Bruce MacGregor stands amazed at witnessing how the Carter Brothers framed their first-ever (of two identical) coaches. More specifically, he is examining how neatly CSRM restoration shop craftsmen have exactly "aped" Carter practice while integrating new materials with original century-old millwork. The rescue-worthy lumber included the two upper wall plates, the two heavy truss planks at the base of the walls, and a small number of diagonal wall braces, plus the car's subframe. The museum, however, left in place four extra sills (added in the 1880s) hidden beneath the floorboards, after having found—like the NCCR did—the chassis structure to be too under-sized and weak without them. In 1874 the Carter Brothers were still learning and honing their newly independent craft.

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Sacramento, California. The Monterey car, lettered for the "Monterey & Salinas Valley," appeared in public as part of a two-car narrow gauge train.

The photographs that emerged from these visits, now nearly forty years ago, were a starting point for not only a better understanding of Carter as a designer and a manufacturer, but a starting point for my involvement with the Railroad Museum at Ardenwood. It was clear, watching the work progress, that the standards were high for museum quality restoration of historic railroad equipment. At that point, our museum was just four years away from opening its own doors. Its first restoration—a humble flat car—benefited tremendously from a number of our own members witnessing (and in Kevin Bunker's case, participating in) the ground breaking work that took place at CSR on the "Monterey car." 📷

Museum Historic Parts Collection: A Quick Guide

Bruce MacGregor, Collections Manager

Over its 30 year life, the Museum has acquired, or been given, thousands of historic parts related to the history of West Coast narrow gauge railroads. With the Museum's focus on car restoration, it makes sense that most (not all) of these parts are from historic cars and rolling stock. Taken together, the sum total of these parts, and a digital inventory kept to record them and keep track of information about them, has become known simply as the "parts collection."

In last month's Hotbox, you read about the effort to create new, secure storage for this collection and, at the same time, to refresh the collection inventory. Now, with new attention being focused on better storage for this collection, a new inventory and better long-term security, it's time to talk about what the collection is, how it's intended to be used, and who is managing it.

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Jay Shellen and Stuart Guedon hold a rare 1879 door plate from a Carter duck bill roof coach, believed to be South Pacific Coast number 23. The part was donated by collector Henry Welzel, of Tacoma, Washington, and is one of hundreds of original car parts our group has collected over a period of thirty years.
Photo: Bruce MacGregor

Workday to move artifacts from old reefer to new container

If you really like organizing old parts, and would like to help with the collection itself, Jay Shellen would REALLY like to hear from you. Work days are scheduled regularly. The next one is: **SATURDAY, JANUARY 28 from 10 am-4 pm**. The park will be open to the public that day, so enter at the Siward gate and meet at the Car Barn (directions on page 13). At 10 am we will caravan or carpool to the Corp Yard. If you can help, please RSVP to Jay Shellen at jay@shellen.com or call 510-754-5311 (cell).

What's in the parts collection?

There are thousands of artifacts in the collection, ranging from metal castings to patterns, forgings, doors, windows, car seats, mechanical drawings, intact portions of car walls, paint samples, plus miscellaneous railroad hardware like telegraph apparatus, signs, gauges, track hardware, weigh scales, machine tools and depot furnishings.

How did these artifacts get into the collection?

The heart of the collection are car parts. Most of the parts got into the collection in one of two ways:

1. Through a Museum restoration project, where replica parts were often needed to replace missing parts on a car like North Shore flat car 1725. Consider this example from 1725: when we got the car in the late 1980s, its truss rod washers were not originals. These washers are a minor detail, but an important one. Replica washers, matching those that appeared on the car when it was built in 1888, were cast from new patterns, and installed on 1725 in order to make the car both operational and as historically accurate as possible. As all of our restoration projects move forward, at least some parts on the car will be identified as important and unique, and will be registered in the parts collection to serve as examples for future projects.

2. Through the gift of a car fragment that could never be restored to operate, but whose identity was known and whose gift to the Museum gave us many original parts as examples of how the car was constructed. An example is North Pacific Coast coach 34, whose wooden body was flooded several times by the Russian River. In an advanced state of decay at Duncans Mills, California, the car was given to the museum but could only be recovered as fragments and parts. Those fragments are now in the parts collection.

And of course, many parts in the collection are not from cars or rolling stock, but are still included in the collection for their historic value and relevance to our mission.

Our parts collection is unique. In this collection, we've created a digital map of our work, a detailed way to break down cars into component parts, and de-construct their history by understanding the background of nearly every part on a car. Few museums have committed to capture this kind of detail. While we have chosen to focus the collection on parts related to rolling stock, in the future the concept can be extended to any group of historical artifacts falling into our mission statement.



A good example of the parts collection in action is this circa 1985 image of how a replica Carter Brothers coupler was created by our Museum from historic parts. At the far back of the photo is a damaged West Side original Carter link and pin coupler (also called a draw bar), installed as new equipment by Carter on a set of 24-foot-long flat cars delivered to West Side in 1898. Next in line (coming towards the camera) is an original West Side pattern that captured many (not all) features of the original Carter coupler, allowing West Side to reproduce the couplers as they became worn out or broken. Next in line is our modern pattern, created from the first two historic originals. And finally (closest to the camera) is a casting made from our modern pattern. A pair of these replica draw bars now operate on D&C flat car 64. Photo: Bruce MacGregor

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How are parts belonging to the collection identified?

Parts already entered into the collection registry should carry a nine digit number, written on the part, that looks like this:

mm-dd-yy-xyz

In this format, the first six numbers identify the date the part was registered, and the last three numbers (xyz) identify the order the part was registered on that date. An example would be “112796008,” which is an original window latch from a Carter duck bill coach, the eighth part entered into the registry on November 27, 1996.

Registration of parts began in 1986 and was ongoing until 1996 (a ten year period). An inactive period followed, when relatively few parts were registered. After 1996, some of the parts in the collection were moved in order to display them, or study them. We're in the process now of trying to locate parts that have strayed, to re-inventory them, and to bring them back into a new collections storage facility for safekeeping.

If you see a part with a nine digit number, we'd appreciate your getting in touch with either the Collections Project Manager, Jay Shellen, or the Collections Manager, Bruce MacGregor. Their contact information is provided at the end of this article.

What are the parts in the collection used for?

The collection is like a research library. Original parts are used to study hardware from manufacturers like Carter Brothers, to make duplicates for active restoration projects, and to interpret the story our Museum is telling to the public. The digital inventory records not only the registration number and name of the part, but a wealth of supporting information about the railroad it came from, the number of the car (if it came from rolling stock), the donor, as well as whether it's original or a replica. And much more.

One very unique, popular use of the collection came with our Museum's publication of “A Car Builder's Dictionary; A Catalog of Iron Castings and Forgings; Useful Information and Parts for Railroad Mechanics and Car Builders.” Created by then-curator Randy Hees, the catalog offered a detailed guide to the range of parts that went into West Coast narrow gauge cars of the 19th century. We'd like to continue the publication of this catalog as the collection continues to grow.

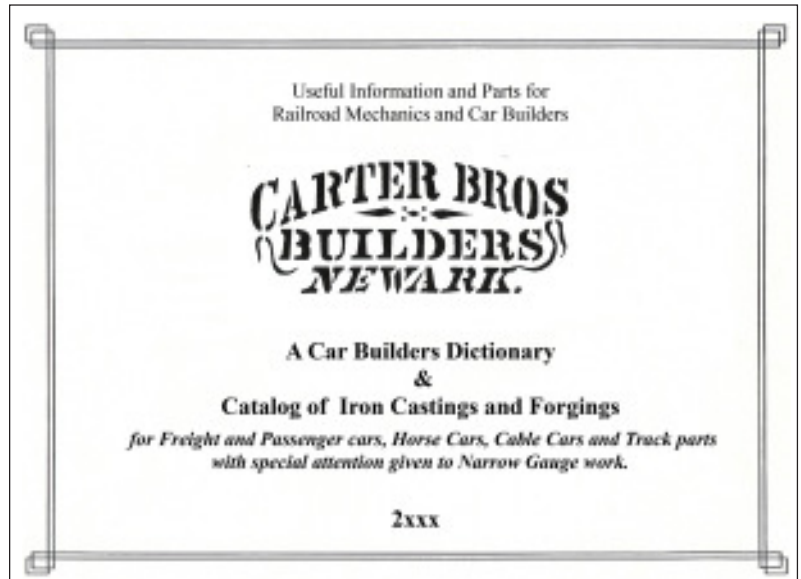
How can the parts collection inventory be seen and used?

Right now, the digital inventory is in the form of a spreadsheet, slowly being updated and revised as a new inventory process takes place, as old parts are identified, and new parts added. It may take another six months to complete, but in the near future, this spreadsheet will be available on line, in a searchable form, for anyone to access and view. When that happens, we'll provide an update and a link in the *Hotbox*.

In the online version, it will be possible to search the digital inventory in many different ways. For example, you could ask for all examples of window latches in the collection. You could ask for a list of all patterns. You could ask for the names of any parts belonging to a specific car, like North Shore Rwy 1725. And in some cases, you could ask for a list of all parts belonging to a specific car, like Diamond & Caldor flat car 64 (all of which are listed in the inventory). Historical details for each part (like markings or visible lettering) will be provided.

Can parts be borrowed from the collection?

For most parts, the answer is yes, as soon as the current inventory is finished (estimated to happen by June, 2017). Any of our members, a museum, a historical group or an individual researcher may check out an artifact from the inventory, just like a book from a library. If the loan is approved, a loan agreement needs to



Cover of the SPCRR car parts catalog.

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be signed (with approval from our board). The loan period will be three months in length, with two renewal periods possible (again, with board approval from our Museum). The goal is to make these parts available for railroad preservationists to use, and learn from. In rare cases, parts in the collection may be too fragile to loan, or are in current use on a project in our own museum.

How does one go about checking out a part?

The process begins by contacting Bruce MacGregor or Jay Shellen, to formally ask for a loan. Their contact information is provided below. Right now, in the early stages of the inventory, access is likely to be limited to on-site viewing, until our inventory and collections management resources are in place.

Who is managing the collection?

Bruce MacGregor is Collections Manager, and Jay Shellen is Collections Project Manager.

Bruce can be reached at bruce.alan.macgregor@gmail.com

Jay can be reached at jay@shellen.com

And in the meantime, while the inventory is going on, how can you help?

We're actively looking for any parts that may have drifted outside of the collection's storage area during the last twenty years, possibly into nooks and crannies located anywhere in Ardenwood's 200+ acres, or possibly- with the best of intentions- into someone's garage. We would love to get them back... **No questions asked.** If you think you've found one, check for the nine digit registry number, or take a photo with an iPhone and send it to Bruce or Jay (emails shown above). You can also leave a pattern or part on the table inside the door of the Car Barn. 🗝

Report on the December 2017 General Meeting & Election

Gene Arrillaga, Secretary

After our annual holiday dinner, the Board met and approved authorizing Bruce MacGregor to approach a representative of the Henry Sorenson family to inquire about the availability of additional West Side car parts. Then John Stutz called the general meeting to order. The main order of business was the annual election of the officers. Janne Wissel moved and it was seconded to allow John Stutz to run for president for two more years. The motion passed unanimously. This was followed by the election of officers. The nominated slate of Board Members was presented to the membership. Nominations from the floor were solicited but none were offered. The presented slate of officers was unanimously elected.

The SPCRR Board Members for 2017 are:

President	John Stutz
Vice President	Jack Burgess
Secretary	Gene Arrillaga
Treasurer	Alice Evarts
Director-at-Large	Gary Smith
Director-at-Large	Brook Rother
General Manager	currently vacant (appointed by the Board)

President's Report

John Stutz, President

As we wrap up the year I find much to congratulate you for...

On the operation side, Jack Burgess and Bob Pratt organized a very successful operating season. This was not an easy thing to do, especially with the fluctuating availability of some of the regular crew members. The largely volunteer operation for the Park's special events and our own Saturday Rail Adventure Days went very well. I encourage anyone who is interested in actually operating our trains to watch the *Hotbox* for volunteer opportunities. There will also be a class for new brakemen and engineers before the park opens in April.

Breaking records this year were our Museum's largest fund raising events, Rail Fair and the Haunted Railroad, as well as our two new "Rail Adventure Days featuring Katie" which doubled its attendance. Such success is dependent on getting enough volunteers to cover the events, which has been a strain in past years. Big thanks this year to Kathy MacGregor who led a successful effort to pre-schedule volunteers for all special events. This worked very well and resulted in a better experience for our volunteers and decreased the anxiety levels for event organizers.

Restoration activity took on a new life this year with Curator Kevin Bunker in charge of research, Restoration Manager Brook Rother overseeing restoration, Project Manager Gene Arrillaga leading weekly workdays, and Collections Manager Bruce MacGregor coordinating work with our blacksmith and other project details. Kevin Bunker finished the restoration report on cabooses 6101, while project draftsman Darly DiBitonto is generating detailed engineering drawings. The weekly workday volunteers have focused on cabooses 6101's restoration, while David Waterman took on the maintenance and re-decking of flat car 222.

Large special projects this year included the re-painting of locomotive No. 1 "Katie" led by Andrew Cary; as well as the purchase of a new cargo container to properly store our patterns and historic information and artifacts led by Jay Shellen, Brook Rother and Jack Burgess.

A year-long project in 2016 was the development of the Draft of the Interpretive Master Plan by Bruce MacGregor. The draft report was accepted by the Board—and the next step will be the review of the document by various members over the next six months.

Track work was largely covered by David Waterman and Scott Kennedy this year. David and Scott fixed many track problems prior to Rail Fair; and David Waterman, with help from Scott Kennedy, has almost completed the new spur track next to the Car Barn.

The Christmas Dinner was very well received, 35 people attended! Several people commented to me about the number present. Our thanks to the committee and the folks at Dino's Grill for setting this up, and to Don Marenzi (including photos from Andrew Cary and Ken Underhill) for putting together a most evocative photo history presentation of our group, showing much of where we have been and what we have done over the last 30 years. There was a good deal in Don's presentation that I had missed over those years.

Without a doubt our biggest successes this year were our outstanding relationship with the Park District, and that we have attracted over a half-dozen new volunteers! Also, there was not one complaint about our railroad in 2016... plus all of our employees appeared in costume and provided interpretation to riders, thanks to the guidance of experienced interpreter Fran Foley.

Congratulations Everyone!!! I am looking forward to another very productive year in 2017.

John

Weekly Workdays

Track, Restoration & General Maintenance

Ken Underhill

Date(s): Thursdays and Saturdays

Time: Email or Call (see below)

Meet At: Car Barn - See "Directions" on page 13

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:

Caboose 6101 Project (Gene Arrillaga):

Between the holidays, illness, and other commitments filling our calendars, we only held one workday this month. Saturday, Dec 10 proved to be a productive day:

1. Flats were cut in the ends of both needle beams to receive the washers and bolt heads.
2. The queen posts were located on the needle beams and holes drilled to receive the locating studs for the queen posts.
3. The material for the new platform framing was located and is on site.

New Container/Collections Project (Jay Shellen):

Dec 10 and 11: Inventory continued with Brook Rother, Jack Burgess, and Jay Shellen helping to move and identify 35 patterns and parts that were located at BCH Manufacturing Co. and in the Car Barn.

New Track Track Work (David Waterman):

Completed the spur track on the side of the Car Barn except for ballast.

Flat Car 222 (David Waterman):

Removed the wood decking; removed the air brake rigging and piping to paint it; pulled the trucks so they can be cleaned and painted.



New spur track.

Photo: David Waterman

WORK PLANNED FOR NEXT MONTH:

- Work will continue on miscellaneous projects on Thursdays and some Saturdays.
- Work will continue on caboose 6101 on Thursdays and some Saturdays.
- Work will continue on flat car 222 and spur track ballasting
- Restoration Day led by Brook Rother will be held on **Saturday, January 14 (10-5)** (see calendar on page 13).
- Special Workday for the New Container/Collections Project will be held on **January 28 (10-4)**. Work continues moving parts from the old reefer storage to the new container. (details, see calendar on page 13).

Contact: Ken Underhill

Email: kcunderhill@yahoo.com

Phone: 925-373-6884

Notes:

- Everyone over the age of 14 is welcome.
- Thursdays usually include restoration work. We post workday updates on the SPCRR_Members group on Yahoo! Groups (free to join—you just need a Yahoo! account, and send an email to: spcrr_members-subscribe@yahoo.com.)
- 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: **January/February**

OVERVIEW: Restoration Workdays are held on most Thursdays and some Saturdays. Call or email Gene Arrillaga to check dates that he will be at the Car Barn. His email is arrillaga@sbcglobal.net or phone: 510-657-8733 (h) or 510-690-4687 (c). **NOTE:** If you are a new volunteer, call or email Gene to get instructions for entering the Seward gate.

Sat, January 14 (10-5) - Monthly Restoration Day led by Brook Rother, Restoration Manager (email: brookrother1@gmail.com; cell: 530-559-4249). Meet at 10 am at Car Barn. Enter at Seward gate (*directions below*).

Sat, January 28 (10-4) - Monthly Reefer Cleanout led by Jay Shellen, Collections Project Manager (email jay@shellen.com; cell: 510-754-5311). Enter at Seward gate (*directions below*).

Sat, February 11 (10-5) - Monthly Restoration Day led by Brook Rother, Restoration Manager (email: brookrother1@gmail.com; cell: 530-559-4249). Meet at 10 am at Car Barn. Enter at Seward gate (*directions below*).

(February Date to be Announced) - Monthly Reefer Cleanout led by Jay Shellen, Collections Project Manager (email jay@shellen.com; cell: 510-754-5311). Enter at Seward gate (*directions below*).

Sat, April 1 - Opening Day (*employees operate train*).

NOTE: Special Event dates are still be planned, however they will be listed in the February Hotbox.

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 Seward Dr. at Ridgewood Dr. (near the Car Barn). **IMPORTANT: the gate is kept locked, so you must contact the project manager so he can let you inside. See the contact information shown in each workday notice.**

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 Seward Dr (just before the I-880 overpass). The gate into the Park is at the end of Seward 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 Seward Dr (just before the I-880 overpass). The gate into the Park is at the end of Seward 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.

