

March 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.

Deer Park Tie Replacement Project – tentatively scheduled for March 11-12 (depending on weather)

SPCRR Board members learned last month that all of the ties on the main line between the West and East Deer Park switches need to be replaced before the start of our operating season on April 1. This task is currently scheduled for the weekend of March 11-12.

But we need to stay flexible due to the weather. However, if rain is predicted for this time period we need to reschedule for the following weekend (March 18-19). It is important that this work be completed prior to the start of the 2017 operating season. Any change in plans will be sent out to the Yahoo SPCRR_Members group. If you plan to volunteer, but are not a member of that Yahoo list, send an email to jack_burgess@spcrr.org and he will let you know the status of the project.

In order to make this tie replacement work, we need to plan this event to make the effort as productive of manpower as possible. Here's the current plan:

Earlier in the week - Replacement ballast needed for this project will be delivered and dumped near the Car Barn. The spikes on this section of track should be removed prior the work weekend and the existing rails moved out of the way toward the passing track.

Thursday, March 9 - Brook Rother will bring down a ballast car which will allow us to dump ballast between the rails or at the ends of the ties.

Friday, March 10 - Brook will take his trailer to the Niles Canyon Railway to be loaded with about 200 replacement ties.

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Other Details

Lunch will be provided to all workers on both days. On Saturday, we are planning to prepare a huge pot of chili along with water and regular/diet CocaCola (or bring your own non-alcoholic beverage). Sunday we are planning to purchase some large sandwiches to cut into pieces for everyone. The same drinks will be available as on Saturday.

What to Bring

Bring gloves, rain gear if sprinkles are predicted, and a "get it done" attitude!

Hope to see you there on both days!

The Art of Car Restoration: Sometimes It's All About the Wood

Bruce MacGregor, Collections Manager

One reason Thomas and Martin Carter succeeded as car builders in the 1870s was because they had easy access to what seemed to be inexhaustible supplies of redwood and Douglas fir. California coastal forests, having an abundance of both, gave the Carter Brothers stockpiles of the two types of lumber they needed the most: redwood for car siding and roofing; and Douglas fir for car sills, wall posts and other structural members. Small quantities of specialty woods, like oak for draft timbers and mahogany for passenger car interiors, had to be imported.

The forests that produced the lumber the Carters used were different than the forests that produce lumber today. The Carters tapped supplies from old growth forests which produced trees with tight growth rings and dense wood grain. Lumber cut from those trees, once dried, was inherently denser and stronger than trees grown in the managed forests of today. In the case of old growth redwood, the slow growth process that created density in the wood grain also infused more tannin into the heartwood of the tree. Tannin gives redwood its characteristic color and also makes it more resistant to rot, termites and beetles.

The Carter Brothers purchased Douglas fir for the sills of their cars because of its tensile strength and dimensional stability. Sills made with Douglas fir were strong enough to resist the pull of an entire train, and flexible enough to torsion with the car's motion over uneven track. Once it was dried, this wood was dimensionally stable when cut and assembled into structural parts.

Redwood was used for siding and roofing because of its durability and its absorbency—it was easy to prime, paint and letter. The core of the redwood tree—the so-called heartwood—was also resistant to bugs, rot and checking, providing protection for the entire car.

Museum quality restorations require us to use modern materials as close to the original materials as possible. Finding a supply of Douglas fir and redwood comparable in quality to the Douglas fir and redwood that the Carter Brothers used has become one of the biggest challenges the Museum faces. You simply can't buy this material at Home Depot.

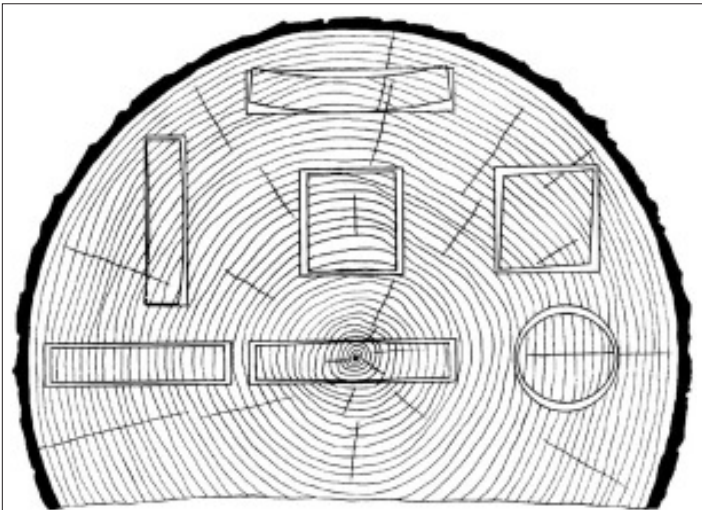
So we have to get clever. In the case of Douglas fir, the extreme lengths required for car sills—25 to 35 feet in dimensions like 8"x8" and 8"x10"—make it hard to find any old growth material long enough to qualify at any price. Here's the clever part... we can substitute new growth Douglas fir logs if we cut them and dry them in ways that minimize checking and dimensional distortion.

Here's how. Lumber cut from a tree shrinks as it dries. It takes about a year (in normal California temperatures and humidity) to complete the drying process. But the orientation of the grain within the lumber determines how shrinkage is likely to affect the cross-section of the lumber when it is completely dry.



Main saw carriage at the Hull Oaks Mill near Corvallis, Oregon. Photo: Bruce MacGregor

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Characteristic shrinkage and distortion of flats, squares, and rounds as affected by the direction of the annual rings. The dimensional changes shown are somewhat exaggerated.

The accompanying illustration shows various profiles of timbers useful in car construction, cut from different areas and orientations inside a full log. The in-set drawing shows likely distortions due to drying for each of the timber cross-sections. By asking a mill to choose their saw cuts to minimize distortion, the resulting sills, when finally dry, show minimum checking, offer more structural integrity and last longer. So our strategy is to work closely with a mill that does custom cutting. This is not an inexpensive process, but its essential to get quality finished lumber.

We mentioned earlier that modern commercial redwood often has less tannin as well as less grain density than its counterpart of 130 years ago. In fact, commercial redwood sold today is often a mixture of heartwood (which contains tannin and is red in color) and sapwood, which comes from the layer of the tree near the bark. This sapwood contains little tannin and is white in color. Our group learned from experience that using new growth redwood in a car restoration invites rot and decay. We discovered when re-roofing box car 472 during the 1990s, that it was only the white sapwood—purchased in a batch of new growth redwood—that showed significant rot.

When Brook Rother located a unique source of old growth redwood logs, now almost impossible to find, the game changed. A coastal California salvage firm has had unusual luck in finding old growth logs. In many cases these logs or log sections have been buried for well over a hundred years. Because of the rich infusion of tannin in this material, the wood has remained intact and undeteriorated, even when buried in the ground.

With your help, we hope to secure a generous supply of this rare and beautiful old growth material. For Carter Brothers, and for us, it's all about the wood. 🪵

Fundraising for: “REDWOOD FOR RESTORATION”

Brook Rother, our Restoration Manager, is always on the lookout for quality wood at reasonable prices. He recently located a very limited supply of old growth redwood at a saw mill in Northern California.

These “ghost redwoods” are scarce and their future availability uncertain. We would like to purchase enough redwood now to create the siding for at least three cars in our collection: South Pacific Coast caboose 47, Monterey and Salinas Valley box car 253, and South Pacific Coast box car 444. The total cost is estimated at \$12,000.

We are requesting donations for only one fund in 2017: “Redwood for Restoration.” If you would like to help the Museum purchase the redwood for these projects, please send your tax-deductible donation to SPCRR, P.O. Box 783, Newark, CA 94560. On your check please write “Redwood for Restoration.” A donation acknowledgment letter will be mailed to you.

Note: We previously solicited donations for two restoration projects: 472-Museum Car Roof fund, and 6101-Phase I Caboose Fund. These projects are now fully funded thanks to your donations as well as revenue from our special fund raising events in 2016.

Curator's Corner: "50 Years"

Kevin Bunker, Curator

In wrapping up the preliminary restoration report on our Northwestern Pacific caboose No. 6101 earlier this year, a notion suddenly swept through my head, leaving me somewhat stunned. This notion had never occurred so clearly to me before—the bulk of the narrow gauges, indeed many of the short lines of the Far West and the nation, had very short lives. Most were launched in the early 1870s when the country was excited over the newly realized “first transcontinental railroad.” Everyone was ready to reach for the stars, until a deep recession clobbered the national economy in 1874. Short lines of various gauges still got built, but some built during the 1870s withered and died practically aborning—the Monterey & Salinas Valley Railroad being a perfect example.

Briefly put, many of these lines just faded away as scrap metal within a span of 50 years. That's roughly the lifetime of an average man of the same generation. That the famous Colorado narrow gauge lines fostered by the Denver & Rio Grande Western survived as late as today, albeit as heritage railways dependent on tourism, is both an anomaly and nearly miraculous.

Of the best known California narrow gauges and short lines, look at what started up and what disappeared inside those same 50-odd years: South Pacific Coast; North Pacific Coast – Northwestern Pacific, Pacific Coast; Nevada County Narrow Gauge; Pajaro Valley Railroad; Diamond & Caldor; Hetch Hetchy & Yosemite Valley – West Side Lumber Co.; Michigan-California Lumber Co.; L. E. White Lumber Co.; and the Hobart Estate Railroad. Now, add in the best known Nevada slim gauge pikes: Nevada-California-Oregon; Carson & Colorado – Southern Pacific; Carson and Tahoe Flume & Lumber Co.; Lake Tahoe Railway & Transportation Co. – Southern Pacific; Eureka & Palisade – Eureka-Nevada; Nevada Central; and Nevada Short Line. Most of these had reached the zenith of their careers by World War I, and from there it was a fast downward slide to doom.

In stark contrast, the larger standard gauge railroads of North America enjoyed their best years in the late 1920s and again, traffic-wise, in the mid-1940s when the wars in Europe and the Pacific were raging. But the narrow gauges that had made it into the 1920s were not doing so well—few of them were able to weather the turmoil of the Great Depression of the 1930s. If they were common carriers, the triad of automobiles, trucks and “good roads” almost uniformly sealed their fate. If they were industrial (mining or lumber) carriers, they hung on as long as their commodity-freight held strength in the national or global marketplace. Had it not been for the enormous power and wealth of the Southern Pacific Company, some of our favorite 3-foot lines wouldn't have survived at all, or not much longer than 30-odd years. As it was, the SP gobbled up some of these and then spent the next two decades spreading the rolling stock around its “Pacific Lines.”


Had it not been for the Southern Pacific, most of the rolling stock and a few 3-foot gauge steam locomotives allied with the “Slim Princess” in the rain shadow of the Sierra Nevada would not have survived at all. “The Octopus” was resourceful indeed, and in devouring narrow gauge competitors it did its level best to adapt some into standard gauge branch lines: the South Pacific Coast, parts of the former North Pacific Coast and the Lake Tahoe Railway & Transportation Company spring to mind. Again, these outfits valiantly hung on until the “Automotive Age” sapped their lifeblood.

The Southern Pacific system from New Orleans to San Francisco, Portland, and Ogden was ultimately doomed, too. As a child or man, I never expected to witness this. Yet now that I have reached my 60s, I look back in astonishment to see no more the once-familiar SP places and trains of my youth and of two prior generations, in a sense, vanished. The railroad itself survives, but as an “alien” Union Pacific, a.k.a. “Big Yellow” or “Uncle Pete.” Its yellow sameness bores me, or leaves me almost painfully nostalgic for what will never return in full. Now I believe I'm feeling what some of the now-dead “Old Guard” earlier railfans witnessed and felt as their beloved railroads and rolling stock fell out of favor, out of profitability and into scrap yards; or as frozen pieces stuffed and mounted in community parks or nascent museums.

Rather than end on a morose note, I'll shift to the brighter side of the story. The Railroad Museum at Ardenwood is but one of the “new generation” of preservation-minded Western railway heritage venues. Orange Empire Railway Museum and a small, newish group in Independence, California are doing their parts, too. Orange Empire is continuing to foster and restore equipment preserved by the late Ward Kimball on his now-gone very short line. The Independence group has just successfully revived (after a lengthy overhaul) one of four surviving Southern Pacific narrow gauge steam locomotives—in this case 4-6-0 No. 18—and they are now seeking to take it “on tour.” However improbable, it's not impossible to expect to see SP No. 18 trotting along over famed Durango & Silverton and the Cumbres & Toltec (former D&RGW) narrow gauge lines, something that would never have happened before. This expectation emulates earlier tours by Dan Markoff's gorgeous ex-Eureka & Palisade 4-4-0 No. 4, “Eureka.”

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Then there is the Nevada State Railroad Museum which has finally restored the "Glenbrook," a classic Baldwin narrow gauge 2-6-0 that ran on the D. L. Bliss-controlled logging lines around Lake Tahoe, and had even ventured to the Nevada County Narrow Gauge as a parts source. Having been a stone-cold monument in Carson City for over 50 years, it has come back to life, and it is every bit as beautiful as Markoff's "Eureka," both engines being of the same generation and builder. Will we see Glenbrook on-tour in Colorado, too? I wouldn't be surprised.

We have much to be proud of, right here at Ardenwood. We should give ourselves a pat on the back for accomplishing some remarkable equipment preservation. We have more of that to do. What lies ahead for us organizationally comes with real challenges. We must continue to grow and mature and, more importantly, we must continue to inspire, attract and foster a new generation of member-volunteers who never saw any of this rolling stock in its native settings. It is the current and next generations who will either carry on our labors of love, or not. We must face that fact and decide where we are headed, or will our museum fade away within 50 years. It's a sobering thought, isn't it? 

Museum Historic Parts Collection: Parts Inventory Workday held on February 11, 2017


Jay Shellen, Collections Project Manager

We got another weather break with no rain. Brook Rother and I spent the morning looking and measuring ogee washer patterns to prepare a quote to have castings made of them as requested by the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum. Jack Burgess and I spent the afternoon transferring parts from the reefer to the new container.

Jack did all the heavy lifting alone, but we were still able to make some headway. In all there were 66 parts moved, inventoried and stored. There were approximately another 50 or 60 brake hangers and miscellaneous brake parts moved and will be inventoried later.

On Monday, I spent a few hours sorting and corralling a lot of washers into like piles which I then tie-wrapped together so the next time it will be easier for folks to identify like washers rather than have them thrown in a box and all mixed up again.

NOTE: Our next Parts Inventory Workday will depend upon the completion of the Deer Park track work. The track work must be finished before opening day on April 1. A notice will be posted on the Yahoo SPCRR_Members group list in a few days once we can schedule a date.

We *desperately* need more folks to give us a hand at the next couple of Parts Inventory Workdays since there are large beams and large wood parts that need to make the trip across the yard to the new container. If you have any questions, contact me or by email at hoosierdadee@gmail.com or call 510-754-5311 (cell). Hope to see you out there! 

Workday to move artifacts from old reefer to new container

If you would like to help move our historic artifact collection to the new storage container, the next workday will be announced on the Yahoo SPCRR_Members group. To receive updates on workdays, send an email to "spcrr_members-subscribe@yahoo.com" and include your name and your Yahoo email address. If you have a problem or have questions, call Ken Underhill at 925-373-6884 or email Ken at kcunderhill@yahoo.com.

General Announcements

NEW LIFE MEMBER

At the February 11 meeting, the Board approved honoring Andrew Cary with a Life Membership in recognition of his long and extraordinarily active service for SPCRR.

Andy's accomplishments during his time with SPCRR are many and varied. It seems there is nothing that he can't do! He started out in our horse program and found himself increasingly involved with railroad restoration and operation. Andy has served as our President, Board member, contract negotiator, Safety Manager who also trained brakeman and engineers, helped coordinate and get the Park ready for Rail Fair, served as Train Master, managed our Haunted Railroad for more years than we can count, created and still maintains SPCRR's large website, and he was project manager to restore and repaint our locomotive "Katie" during the 2015-16 off-season.

We can always count on Andy to do a fantastic job and get it done on time. Thank you Andy for all your service!

NEW POLICY: "Emergency Locomotive Parts Purchases"

There are times when maintenance of our locomotive needs to be addressed quickly. A provision of our Bylaws addresses larger purchases but does not address smaller "emergency" purchases.


At the February 2017 meeting, the Board approved a policy that reads: "Members may purchase up to \$50.00 for emergency locomotive parts without approval but must submit their request for reimbursement with an explanation of what was purchased and why it was needed."

REQUEST FOR SHADE TENTS

Does anyone have a 10'x10' or larger pop-up shade tent that you aren't using? We can really put it to use!

We are still on the lookout for the missing frame for our existing pop-up tent. If you borrowed it, please return it to the Car Barn. Thanks!

NO GENERAL MEETING IN MARCH

Unfortunately, Beth Cary won't be able to fix the annual St. Patrick's Day dinner this year. Therefore, the General Meeting has been postponed until summer. The summer General Meeting will consist of a program for everyone's enjoyment. The date will be announced in a future *Hotbox*. 

Report on February 2017 Board Meeting *Gene Arrillaga, Secretary*

The Board of Directors took the following actions at their February 11, 2017 meeting:

John Stutz reported that he was able to repair the latest tree damage to the Car Barn for well under the \$500 deductible of our causality insurance.

After much research and consultation with the persons considered to be most involved with the restricted funds mentioned last month, the Board decided to allot the "signage" money to Caboose 6101; and the "Horse/harness" money to the 1010 roof project.

Because Beth Cary will not be able to provide the St Patrick's dinner this year the Board has decided not include a dinner with the spring general meeting. We are currently investigating alternatives, more details to follow.

The Board approved \$600 for building the new more manageable tables for Katie Railroad Adventure Day and Rail Fair.

Other items approved for purchase are included in the article on page 7.

The Board has approved \$6,000 for fumigating the entire Car Barn and contents in order to kill termites and powder post beetles in the cars. The Car Barn will be inaccessible for 2-4 days during the process.

The concept and location of a second shipping container in the corporation yard was approved. The Board did more than just spend money. In response to a request to purchase some parts from the SPCRR "Catalog of Iron Castings and Forgings," we have established the following pricing policy: Retail cost to a non-profit should cover all our costs (shipping, foundry costs, taxes, etc.), plus 50%. Costs to for-profit organizations and individuals should cover all our costs, plus 100%.

Approved Projects for 2017

Jack Burgess, Vice President

A number of major projects were approved for funding in 2017 at the February Board meeting. These projects were approved based on current and expected funds available for maintenance and restoration projects this year; the amount of expected funds was based on special event net revenues in 2016. Although not a factor in the approval of these projects for funding, the Park District has approved increasing the price of tickets for Katie Railroad Adventure Day (June 17) from \$3.00 to \$5.00 per ticket and a ticket price increase for our Labor Day/Rail Fair event by \$2.00 per ticket. These price increases will provide a significant funding increase in our restoration budget going forward.

Major projects approved include:

Deer Park Tie replacement

All of the ties on the mainline between the West and East Deer Park switches need to be replaced before Opening Day on April 1. More information on this project is included in the front page article in this issue of the *Hotbox*.

Car Barn Fumigation

We have been finding evidence of termites in our historic wood cars stored in the Car Barn for some time. A recent inspection by a fumigation company also found evidence of powder post beetles. This project will fumigate the entire Car Barn to resolve this problem for the time being. This fumigation is expected to be scheduled within the next few months.

Second Cargo Container


The cargo container purchased and set in place in November was intended to be the first of two containers. A second cargo container was planned to be used for storage of our non-railroad items such as the large number of props used for our Haunted Railroad (our largest special event in terms of revenue), Rail Fair, our Railroad Adventure Days, and other non-historic items. The project also includes fumigation of the artifact cargo container since it stores many of our historic wood parts and patterns.

Sorenson Flat Cars

Our collection includes two West Side Lumber Company flat cars donated to us by Henry Sorenson. If restored to operating condition, these cars could increase our operating capacity for special events such as Rail Fair. While the Board approved purchasing the wood now for these cars, further inspection revealed that all of the wood needs to be replaced and not just the side and end sills as originally expected. The Board will revisit this project at the March meeting. We need to purchase the wood now since it needs to be dried for another year before reconstruction of the cars can begin.

Other projects approved include:

Complete the project to upgrade flat car 222, purchase replacement tires for our trailer, purchase 2-way radios for the train, and replace the door locks on the Car Barn.

NOTE: While all but the Sorenson flat car project are “maintenance” projects, the approval of these projects was not done at the expense of our ongoing restoration activities. There is currently over \$6,000 in donations available to complete the structural restoration of caboose 6101. If more funds are needed, funds can be allocated to this major restoration project. 

President's Report

John Stutz, President

February has traditionally been a very quiet month, and this year's heavy rains have inhibited outside work, but we have been unusually busy under cover. Thursday restoration work had slacked somewhat while Gene Arillaga was out of service. But now that Gene has recovered and work has resumed. Gene and crew are making up for lost time with more than half a dozen Thursday workdays—primarily working on Northwestern Pacific caboose 6101. David Waterman is making visible progress on the repair of West Side flat car 222 (see photo below) which was beginning to show the wear of frequent use. Brook Rother and Rich Nealson were down from the Sierras on February 11 to lead the monthly Saturday restoration day (second Saturday of every month).

In the Corp Yard, Jay Shellen has been diligently cataloging items being moved from the old reefer to our new container (see his report on page 5 for details on the latest progress). **NOTE:** Jay and Jack Burgess will be needing additional help for future moves of larger, heavier items at the next workday. The date will depend on the weather and completion of the track work project at Deer Park. Subscribe to the Yahoo SPCRR_Members group to receive updates—Yahoo will automatically send you an email when a new message is posted on the group (*instructions for how to join on page 10*).

Old growth heart redwood for car siding is not something we can just go out and buy. What you find at lumber stores is modern redwood lumber, cut from second or third growth stands. These trees grow like weeds in the Coast Range climate, but grow without generating the heart wood that gives redwood its reputation for resisting decay. Brook has found a specialist sawyer who cuts long-downed old growth redwood trunks—mining what the early loggers could not haul out and which are still remarkably free of decay after a century or more on the ground. We hope that you can help us purchase the redwood we need while this supply lasts. Find out more about how you can help in the side bar on page 3.

We have two immediate projects which need to be finished by opening day on April 1: (1) clear the large tree that fell across our right-of-way blocking access to and from the Car Barn. The tree we will be removing is just beyond and much smaller than the tree in this picture (the larger tree will be removed by the Park). This will be a one-day operation on Saturday, **March 4** (see calendar on page 12 for more info); and (2) replacing the mainline ties between the Deer Park switches tentatively scheduled for the **March 11-12** weekend, contingent on predicted weather (see article on page 1). The plan is to have all of the spikes removed and straightened during the week preceeding the work weekend. The rails will be left bolted together in as long a length as we can handle with bars. Then we will roll out the ties, level the existing “ballast”, spread new ties, and finally shift the rail back in place. We will have Brook's air compressor, a light jack hammer for spiking, and a Bobcat which should speed things up immensely. Once spiked and aligned, we will use Brook's ballast car to place new ballast. I think most of us will be surprised at how quickly this can be done if everyone turns out to help, so keep an eye out for further schedule information on the Yahoo SPCRR_Members group, or email: vice-president@spcrr.org.



Most recent fatality of the storm.
Photo: Jack Burgess

Be aware that we expect to fumigate the Car Barn and every piece of wooden rolling stock to rid everything of termites and beetles some time late in March. This action will close the Car Barn for several days, during which time it will be fatal to enter. We will post the dates when the Car Barn will be closed and when it will be safe to enter on the Yahoo SPCRR_Members group. Danger signs to Keep Out will also be posted on the building.

Be very careful being anywhere near the trees. We were warned to look out for raised dirt around the base of any tree... that means it might fall. The Park tells us that it's best to stay clear of the tree fall until the ground dries out. 🚫

Membership Update - March 2017

John Goldie, Membership Administrator

Our Annual membership renewal campaign is traditionally run in April of each year. 2016 and 2015 Annual members will receive a reminder postcard in the US Mail. Annual members are welcome to send in their dues now, which remain at \$20/year. These funds help our group meet its goals and cover our operating expenses.

Annual members may also upgrade their membership status to LIFE membership for a one time donation of \$250. Annual membership dues and LIFE membership payments are tax deductible.


Thank you for your continued support! Please send checks to:

SPCRR
P.O. Box 783
Newark, CA 94560

NEW MEMBERS:

New LIFE Member: Andrew Cary - Newark CA

CHANGES THIS YEAR:

- If you wish to receive a printed version of the *Hotbox* sent via US Mail, there is a \$24/year additional charge to cover the cost of printing and mailing (total of \$44/year).
- Beginning this year you will be able to join or renew memberships online using PayPal. Watch for details in a future edition of the *Hotbox*. 

Track Workday - continued from page 1


Those ties will be unloaded along the work site later that day. We will also have a rental Bobcat tractor and an air compressor delivered late that day.

Saturday and Sunday, March 11 and 12 - The first order of business on Saturday will be pulling the existing ties off of the roadbed. The Bobcat will then be used to grade the existing mainline roadbed slightly lower than the grade, then replacement ties will be set in place and aligned. The existing rails will then be moved into place on the replacement ties. They will then be set in gauge and held in gauge with spikes every 5-10 ties.

We will then predrill holes for the rest of the spikes, set those spikes, and drive those spikes in place using an air compressor and jack hammer with a chisel which fits the spike heads. Meanwhile ballast will be loaded into the ballast car with the Bobcat and pushed by Katie (our locomotive) to the work site and dumped. This ballast will then be spread between the ties.

The final step will be to set the grade of the new track by jacking up the rails as necessary and compacting the ballast. The old ties will then be moved and stacked near the Car Barn.

If we must change the date due to rain, subscribe to the Yahoo SPCRR Members group to receive updates—Yahoo will automatically send you an email when a new message is posted on the group (*instructions for how to join on page 10*).

Hope to see you there on both days! 

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 the last page

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: Project Manager - Gene Arrillaga

2/2/17 - Volunteers: Gene Arrillaga, Andrew Cary, Tony Peters.

Nailed girth rail for supporting vertical siding. Finished tightening carriage bolts connecting side sills to end beam via 1/2" steel plate installed by shipyard during previous rebuild. Tried to tighten bolts holding draw timbers to center sills, discovered that bolt heads were free to rotate under 2 layers of sub-floor. Started exposing offending hex bolt heads installed by shipyard.

2/9/17 - Volunteers: Gene Arrillaga, Gene Bobik, Andy Cary, Tony Peters. The two Gene's, Tony and Andrew worked on caboose 6101.

2/16/17 - Volunteers: Gene Arrillaga, Gene Bobik, Tony Peters. Continued working on caboose 6101, fitting tenons into the mortices previously cut into the outboard surface of end beam. Counter bored holes in platform filler blocks to allow heads to sit flush with surface. Drilled 1" holes in west end of end beam A and matching holes in side sill. Installed dowels, hopefully locking the end beam and side sill together—something the aforementioned 1/2" steel plate has failed to satisfactorily accomplish.

2/23/17 - Volunteers: Gene Arrillaga, Gene Bobik, Andrew Cary, Tony Peters. Continued working on caboose 6101, cutting slots in counter-bored holes in platform filler blocks for 1/2"x 2" square steel pieces to keep square bolt heads from rotating. This is a useful technique the shipyard sometimes employed. Liberally coated all surfaces, including holes, of both needle beams with Thompson's water seal. Installed dowels in the east end of end beam and east side sill. Exposed the heads of additional draw timber bolts as needed.

Historic Parts Collection and Inventory Project: Project Manager - Jay Shellen

2/11/17 - Volunteers: Jack Burgess, Brook Rother, Jay Shellen. In the a.m. Jay and Brook looked for missing patterns. In the p.m. Jay and Jack continued inventorying historic parts and moving them to the new container. See article on page 5.

Flat Car 222: Project Manager - David Waterman

Volunteer: David Waterman. The changes on the car have been minimal due to my focus on the track this month. Major changes to the car this month include:

- The conversion from link/pin to knuckle couplers. Big thanks to Scott Kennedy for welding a number of components that needed adjustment to accept the new couplers.
- Painted the wheel sets.

Workdays continued on page 11

How to sign up for the YAHOO SPCRR_Members group to receive announcements and updates on workdays

We post workday updates on the SPCRR_Members group on Yahoo Groups. It is free to join. You just need a free Yahoo email account. To receive emails, send an email to "spcrr_members-subscribe@yahoogroups.com" and include your name and your Yahoo email address. If you have any problem, call Ken Underhill at 925-373-6884 or email Ken at kcunderhill@yahoo.com.

Weekly Workdays - continued from page 10

Flat Car 222 - Continued...

- The deck boards have been placed back on the car with smaller gaps between each board. They are now ready for final adjustments and nailing.
- Once the deck is secured, we can begin the work of constructing the seating and “walls” around the outside of the car. The plan right now is to build a slightly sturdier version of the siding on D&CRy 64. The car will feature passenger loading doors on both sides and will also have a clearly marked area for handicapped individuals.

Locomotives - Volunteers: David Waterman

Work on the locomotives is progressing. We are slowly pinpointing the best possible set up for the Whitcomb’s automatic air system, and addressing the power transmission issues it has been having. Additionally we are on the hunt for a small four-cylinder diesel engine for Katie and will report back when we find something.

Miscellaneous Projects

2/9/17 - Volunteers: Dave Fisher, Ken Underhill.

Dave and Ken worked on installing a white board to post current information about projects in the Car Barn.

2/10/17 - Volunteers: Ken Underhill.

Ken cleaned and re-arranged the office area in the front of the Car Barn—Ken is making plans to finish an interior wall in that area so items can be mounted with cabinets beneath for storage and a flat workspace.

2/25/17 - Volunteers: John Stutz, David Waterman. John and David went out to inspect the trees that fell after the last storm. There was a tree blocking the track and the road between the Deer Park and the Corp Yard. John and David trimmed the tree so cars can drive around and get to the Car Barn. You can still use the Siward gate to get to the Car Barn also.

WORK PLANNED FOR NEXT MONTH:

- **Thursdays and some Saturdays** - Work will continue on miscellaneous projects.
- **Thursdays and some Saturdays** - Work will continue on caboos 6101.
- Work will continue on flat car 222 and locomotives.
- **SPECIAL TRACK WORK WEEKEND tentatively scheduled March 11-12.** Watch for a special email confirming the date when we can verify the weather.
- **NEW CONTAINER PROJECT. - NEED ABLE BODIES** to move heavy wood beams and parts from the old reefer to the new container.

All dates will be announced once we can verify the weather on the Yahoo SPCRR_Members group. Instructions how to join below.


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.
- 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.

NOTICE: David Waterman is willing to lead general track maintenance projects on Thursdays and Saturdays if he has some help. Is anyone interested in joining him? Please email him at steamfreak22@gmail.com, or call or text him at 415-602-7377, and let David know if you are willing to help, and what day(s) of the week you are available. 

CALENDAR: March-May 2017

CALENDAR OVERVIEW: Restoration Workdays are held on Thursdays and some Saturdays. Call or email Project Manager Gene Arrillaga to check dates that he will be at the Car Barn. His email is arrillaga@sbcglobal.net or phone: 510-657-8733. **NOTE:** If you are a new volunteer, call or email your project manager **BEFORE** the workday to get instructions for entering the Siward gate (emails and phone numbers are shown below as well as in the *Hotbox* articles). Any changes in dates or times are posted on the Yahoo SPCRR_Members group. See instructions for how to join the group on the previous page.

Sat, March 4 (10-4) Clear Fallen Tree On Track East of the Corp Yard led by John Stutz (email president@spcrr.org; cell 650-604-3363). May also continue pulling ties at Deer Park to get ready for the Tie Replacement Project on Mar 11-12.

Sat&Sun, March 11-12 (9-5) DEER PARK TIE REPLACEMENT PROJECT led by David Waterman (email: steamfreak22@gmail.com; cell: 415-602-7277). There will be a track work weekend if the weather cooperates. **JOBS FOR EVERYONE, NO MATTER YOUR ABILITY!** See article on page 1. A message confirming the dates will be sent to members on the Yahoo SPCRR_Members group. **See instructions on page 10 on how to join the list.**

Sat, March __? (10-4) - Parts Inventory Workday led by Jay Shellen, Collections Project Manager (email jay@shellen.com; cell: 510-754-5311). **Need extra help to move heavy beams and parts.** Work date depends upon weather and Deer Park Tie Replacement Project. An email confirming the date will be sent to members on the Yahoo SPCRR_Members group list (*instructions on page 10*). Enter at Siward gate (*directions below*).

IMPORTANT TRAIN CREW NOTICE: Employees will now operate the train for all "Park" special events. Volunteers will continue to operate the train at all "SPCRR" special events. Station Agents will continue to be covered by volunteers at all special events when needed.

Sat, April 1 FIRST DAY OF OPERATION and PARK SPECIAL EVENT: Tartan Day Scottish Fair (Train Rides). Employee Train Crew. **Need one volunteer Station Agent.** Meet at 9:30 a.m. at Ardenwood station. If you can volunteer, email vice-president@spcrr.org, or call 510-797-9557.

Sat. April 8 (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 Siward gate (*directions below*).

Sat, May 13 - 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 Siward gate (*directions below*).

Sat, May 20 - SPCRR Railroad Adventure Day (Train Rides). **Need volunteer train crew.** Meet at 9 a.m. at Ardenwood station. If you can volunteer, email vice-president@spcrr.org, or call 510-797-9557.

Monday, May 29 - PARK SPECIAL EVENT: Memorial Day & FREE Park Open House (Train Rides). Employee Train Crew. **Need one volunteer Station Agent.** Meet at 9:30 a.m. at Ardenwood station. If you can volunteer, please email vice-president@spcrr.org, or call 510-797-9557.

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). **IMPORTANT: the gate is kept locked, so you must contact the project manager BEFORE the workday so he can arrange to let you in. 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 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.