



Coast Mail

News from the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum



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www.slormm.com

Public Gets First Inside View of Freighthouse Central Coast Railroad Festival Presents Opportunity to Display Progress



SLO City Councilmember and SLO History Center representative Dan Carpenter addresses the Podcast Ceremony crowd. In back, L-R: Museum President Brad LaRose, SLO City Councilmember John Ashbaugh, Dan Carpenter and Arnold Jonas (hidden).



The Museum's latest acquisition, a circa 1910 Southern Pacific handcar, is taken for its initial run on the Museum display track by L-R: Councilmember John Ashbaugh, Kirsten Hind, Museum President Brad LaRose and Museum benefactor Greg Hind.

The 3rd Annual Central Coast Railroad Festival is now safely in the roundhouse having had an exciting and successful run in early October. The high points of the Festival again this year included model displays, family events, concerts, excursions and two big San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum events. SLORRM members rallied to present the Saturday Rail Celebration at the Freighthouse as well as a highly successful Bitter Creek Western Railroad fundraiser open house on Sunday.

The Rail Celebration drew a respectable audience of railfans and history buffs throughout the day. Most attendees stopped by for an hour or so to view the exterior static displays, buy SLORRM merchandise, enjoy speeder rides and take guided tours of the area and the Emily Street Yard.

A ceremony officially welcomed the new podcast which features a Walking Tour of the Historic Railroad District. The City of San Luis Obispo Promotional Coordinating Committee and the SLO County History Center joined forces to create this interesting new audio and video production, which can be downloaded free from iTunes. The podcast features information

about numerous Railroad District structures including the Freighthouse. Several SLO City Council members took part in this ceremony. Major donor Greg Hind and his daughter Kirsten attended the ceremony and were among the first to take a stroll through the Freighthouse.

We were FINALLY able to welcome visitors INTO the Freighthouse! People entered from the track-side platform, viewed temporary displays and were able to see the improvements being made to the interior in preparation for occupancy of the structure.

Greg Hind and his daughter Kirsten also took a speeder ride with Brad.

At the Bitter Creek open house the Museum experienced record attendance, perfect weather, many new fans and strong merchandise and food sales. The Museum successfully utilized online ticketing for the first time and sold out all 225 tickets in advance through this system! (This was much to the joy of event ticket manager Arnold Jonas and Treasurer Dave Rohr!) Additional tickets were sold on-site in the mid-afternoon after the initial crowd thinned out.

Photos and report by Curtis Reinhardt

Who Built the Freighthouse?

Who really built the "1894 Southern Pacific Freighthouse," as we have been calling it these many years?

Are we actually in a Pacific Coast Railway freighthouse, located at the Southern Pacific Depot? Possibly.

Reading Gerald Best's book *The Pacific Coast Company: Ships and Narrow Gauge Rails*, he states "SP did a 'small gesture' and donated LAND at the SP terminal for a freighthouse and transfer platform for the Pacific Coast Railway."

For the sake of historical accuracy we need to find out.

Reported by Aron Kahn

April 14-15, 2012 tentative dates for Railroad Roundup

Save the date(s)! The Pacific Coast Railroad at Santa Margarita Ranch will once again host SLORRM supporters with a Railroad Roundup. More info at www.slormm.com in the future.



Mission Statement

The San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum, founded as a non-profit, public benefit educational museum, will preserve the railroad history of California and the Central Coast by collecting, restoring, displaying and operating historic railroad equipment.

SAN LUIS OBISPO RAILROAD MUSEUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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TIMETABLE

The following is a list of future meetings of the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum. Business meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at the Quality Suites Hotel, 1631 Monterey Street, San Luis Obispo. They begin at 6:00 p.m.

The Program Meeting locations and times will be announced in advance. All meetings are open to the public.

January 10, 2012 . *Business Meeting*
February 14 *Business Meeting*
March 13 *Business Meeting*
April 10 *Business Meeting*
April 1 *Bitter Creek Festival*
April 14-15 *Pacific Coast Railroad Roundup*

BY-LAWS AVAILABLE

Every member in good standing is entitled to have a copy of the By-laws. In the interest of economy, we have not automatically distributed them to all members. To get a copy, send a #10, self addressed, stamped, envelope to SLORRM, Post Office Box 13260, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.

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Become a Member

Membership in SLORRM provides an outlet for any person interested in railroad history, train travel, railroad oriented entertainment and the value of railroading to the community.

Membership is designed for those who love trains and wish to educate others, young and old, and who share the dream of building the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum in the 1894 SP Freighthouse, at the San Luis Obispo railroad station.

Single members pay \$36 per year. A family can join for \$60 annually, and a sustaining member pays \$100 per year. Mail to SLORRM, P.O. Box 13260, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406-3260. Go to <http://www.slorrm.com> to download an application form.

Life Members receive an embroidered patch, enameled pin, the Coast Mail newsletter, and have voting rights for one person for life. *Use current age to calculate amount due.*

0-17 years \$1200 or 5 payments of \$280
18-39 \$900 or 5 payments of \$220
40-61 \$600 or 5 payments of \$160
62 and older \$300 or 5 payments of \$100

Family Life Members receive two enameled pins, two embroidered patches, the Coast Mail newsletter, and voting rights for life for two people residing at the same address. *Use the age of youngest family member to calculate amount due.*

0-17 years of age \$1800 or 5 payments of \$420
18-39 \$1350 or 5 payments of \$330
40-61 \$900 or 5 payments of \$240
62 and older \$450 or 5 payments of \$150

If making payments the life membership card will be sent upon receipt of final payment. Until such time as the life membership is paid in full, the member will receive a yearly membership card. All payments made toward a life membership are non-refundable and failure to make a scheduled payment by the due date will result in forfeiture of all funds paid toward the life membership. Payment plans include yearly member dues.

Company Store

The San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum has a variety of items for sale for your enjoyment and to raise money for the Museum. T-shirts in both adult and children sizes, baseball hats, belt buckles, coffee mugs, enamel pins, embroidered patches and engineer hats are all available by going to the Museum website, www.slorrm.com and click on **Company Store**.

New Members

Stuart Young has joined SLORRM. James Keene is a new Sustaining Member. Ralph and Gail Jacobson and Jon and Beth Wordsworthy have joined as Family Members.

Renewals Bonnie Adams, Jack Chedister, Robert Del Pesco, Phil Keys, Lynne Maddy, Timothy Mansker, Michael McGinley, Nathan Paul and Michael Reneau have all renewed their memberships. Paul and Dorothy Deis, Ed and Donna McCauley and William and Kim Ryan renewed their Family Memberships to SLORRM.

Life Members

Don Maddy and Tom Mitchell have become Life Members of the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum.

Renew your membership

The last line of your mailing address on the envelope states the current expiration date of your membership. Please check this date each time you receive a mailing from SLORRM. If the date is within a month or so of your receipt of the mailing, your remittance of the appropriate amount to renew your membership will be greatly appreciated. Any changes to your contact information should also be included. This will help assure that your membership is always current. Should your mailing address or e-mail address change, prompt submittal of updated information will help achieve this same goal. Thank you for your diligence and cooperation.

End of the Line

George "Smokey" Bass

Longtime Museum member and benefactor George "Smokey" Bass, 80, passed away August 13, 2011. Smokey was a career Firefighter from 1953 to 1988 and was Chief of the Vernon, California Fire Department from 1978 to 1988. Besides SLORRM, Smokey had been a member and President of the LA Live Steamers.

Donald E. Fauset

Retired Southern Pacific and Union Pacific Conductor Donald E. Fauset passed away September 30, 2011. Don was born in San Luis Obispo in 1951 and worked for the railroad for 40 years before retiring in February, 2011.

Charles Dockstader

Longtime Museum member and Bitter Creek engineer Charlie Dockstader passed away Tuesday, October 11, 2011.

Road Trip Brings Home the Bell



Museum President Brad LaRose thanks Archie Hammond for his great donation.

In August Museum President Brad LaRose and Director Gary See went on a cross-country excursion through the midwest and eastern United States as a railroad museum evaluation trip. They visited all of the major and many of the smaller museums, picking up lots of ideas for future use in SLORRM.

The trip was originally planned to go only as far east as Indianapolis, Indiana. Brad and Gary extended the journey, at their own expense, to Maryland to pick up a generous donation from Archie Hammond, a boyhood friend of Arnold Jonas.



The bell from a Southern Pacific GS-1 steam locomotive.

Included in the donation are a bell and headlight from a GS-1 steam locomotive, a 6-chime SP whistle, 2 SP lanterns and a caboose whistle.

The GS-1 was a 4-8-4 Northern type steam locomotive that served the Southern Pacific from 1930 to 1956. They were built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works. GS stands for Golden State or General Service.

They were assigned to passenger trains throughout the SP system, and ended their careers on the San Jose-San Francisco commutes. No GS-1 locomotives survive.



Gary See loads lanterns into the back of the van for the trip back to California.

Workday, Saturday, November 5th



This fall two prefabricated steel storage units were acquired and placed at the Emily Street yard. Moving items of the Museum's collection that have been stored at the Duncan Road site will save \$175 per month. It will also make the items more conveniently available for public functions and eventual display.

This development is the result of the efforts of several members. Ted Van Klaveren arranged the purchase of the units, helped place the units, and installed plywood shelving. Howard Amborn and Mark VanKlaveren helped level the site and install railroad-tie supports. Howard, Mark, and Tom

Cooper installed and anchored racks within the units. Tom Cooper, Chris Hurd, Brad LaRose, John Marchetti, and Glen Matteson moved shelves and the contents of the Museum's rented storage space on Duncan Road into the Emily Street containers.

On Saturday, November 5, 2011, a crew of SLORRM members spent a the day moving parts of the Museum collection for use of the space and to allow work on Boxcar #706.

The display cases were moved from Container A to the Freighthouse. This was risky but necessary.

Photo and report by Glen Matteson

Artifact Mystery Solved

Occasionally we have artifact mysteries to be solved. Usually in the form of "What is it."

Recently Jesse Hawley and his daughter, Renee Vinson, of Paso Robles, donated an SP Railroad mail bag. It is white canvas with leather and metal buckles.



On the outside is painted the following: S. P. RR. M. & D. B.-S. F.

A great artifact, but what do the marking's mean? Thanks to the internet, Museum member Tom Mitchell found a reference in a 1919 SP Bulletin (the Museum's library of SP Bulletins only goes back to 1929) indicating "Mail and Department of Baggage."

With this information we are able to decipher the code: Southern Pacific Railroad Mail & Department of Baggage, San Francisco. This bag likely traveled to many stations in its work life. We now have a better understanding of how it was used, what it carried (railroad, not public, business mail) and where it was sent from and delivered to.

This mail bag, along with other railroad mail envelopes donated by Jesse Hawley and Renee Vinson will add realism to our exhibit of a freight house business office.

Reported by Brad LaRose
Thanks Tom, Jesse and Renee



Wine-Rail Excursions

The Central Coast Railroad Festival saw substantial interest in the Wine-Rail Excursions that it hosted during the Festival. These Excursions couple a trip up or down the Cuesta Grade on the Amtrak Coast Starlight with wine tasting at railroad themed wineries. To satisfy demand the Festival has started to offer these Excursions on the second Sunday of every month. Discussions are underway to include occasional SLORRM fundraising with some of these trips. Plans are also being made for one or more of the Excursions to incorporate visits to the upcoming Railroad Roundup.

Jackson Scrapbook Pictures Available



The picture above, taken in 1952, is the only color picture and the only photo taken on the Central Coast in a collection of photos donated to the Museum by Tom Mitchell in 2000. It was taken at the south leg of the Camp San Luis Obispo Wye at Goldtree.

In the foreground are Southern Pacific detector cars 4901 and 4902. The approaching train is presumably the Coast Daylight.

The cap style railroad telephone booth in the background is the same as one that was on the north leg of the Wye and was given to the Museum by Larry Smith. It is now in the Emily Street storage yard, waiting to be restored and put on display.

Part of the donation was a scrapbook of black and white snapshots taken by Bernice Jackson, an employee at Southern Pacific headquarters in San Francisco. She took the photos on various railfan excursions in Northern California in 1950 and 1951. Included are places like Keddie, Jamestown and San Francisco.

A Norman Rockwell Memory

By Bill Cattaneo

I worked for the Southern Pacific Railroad civil engineering crew in San Luis Obispo from 1955 to 1961. Our office was in the rear of the Roadmaster's office.

The engineering crew, when I began, included Sam Taylor (the boss), Ernie Holmes, Hope (Dar) Kiger, and Jim Henderson. Ernie was married to Jim's sister, Dolly.

Our area of responsibility ran from Santa Barbara to King City.

One of the most enduring memories of my days with the engineering crew took place on a rainy day in 1955. The crew traveled in a General Motors vehicle, which had ample room for our surveying equipment and an assortment of tools and materials.

On this one particular morning, Sam Taylor announced that we had a small job to do in one of the railroad tunnels on the Cuesta. I had never been to the tunnels, so this promised to be an adventure for me.

After driving north on the old Stagecoach Road, with the Highway 101 La Cuesta high above us, we pulled off the road, and unloaded our gear.

We then proceeded up the steep embankment on a well-used path, through the brush to a point where we could see the mainline tracks. On somewhat level ground now, we walked toward the entrance to one of the tunnels.

Off to the right, perhaps fifty feet from the tunnel entrance, was a wooden shack. It has been 56 years since that day, but I estimate the shack to have been 10 feet by 20 feet.

Inside was a sight that I will never forget. The tunnel construction and maintenance gang kept in close constant contact with the dispatcher's office to be able to remove the workers and equipment if a train was scheduled to pass through the tunnel.

On this particular day, all of the tunnel gang workers were in the shack. Some were standing around a pot-bellied stove drinking hot coffee and some were seated at a table playing some sort of card game. Jim Henderson explained to me that they were playing cribbage.

Hunched over the grimy table with a grimy cribbage board were three or four equally grimy tunnel gang workers completely engrossed in the game.

Looking back, it was a Norman Rockwell scene straight out of the Saturday Evening Post.

Clifford Brooks joined our crew perhaps around 1956 or 1957 He turned out to be an excellent worker, and later joined Sam Taylor, when Sam left SP to start his own engineering company in Arroyo Grande.

Editor's note: Bill Cattaneo is the son of Bill Cattaneo, Sr., founder of Cattaneo Bros. Beef Jerky Company and is a fount of knowledge of San Luis Obispo railroad history.

I have scanned the 141 pictures in this scrapbook at 300 dpi and put them on CDs. Anyone wishing to have a copy of this CD can get one by making a \$25 donation to the Museum. Send a check, made out to San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum, to Bill Pyper, PO Box 885, Salem, OR 97308, and I will send the CD by Priority Mail.

Parker Street Find



City workers recently unearthed a small piece of original Pacific Coast Railway narrow gauge track while doing some pavement repairs on Parker Street in San Luis Obispo. The 18 inch long piece of 75 lb. (weight per lineal yard) rail, typically used by the PCRY, was part of the spur north of the original PCRY station and yard area. This spur originally went northward to the ice company used for refrigerator car icing. The site still exists today as Dana Ice Co. The Pacific Coast Coal Company lumber yard also existed along the spur in the Parker Street area which dates back to the late 1800's and the beginnings of the PCRY.

Picture and report by Aron Kahn