



Coast Mail

News from the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum



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www.slorm.com

Museum Open House



On Saturday, **October 6, 2012**, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., in conjunction with the **Central Coast Railroad Festival**, the **San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum** will open the doors of the **1894 Southern Pacific Freighthouse** so that the public can see the progress of the future museum. Museum members will be on hand to answer questions and sell T-shirts and other Museum memorabilia. Two modular model railroad layouts will also be on display. *Photo by Andrew Merriam*

History is made . . .



On Tuesday evening, August 14, 2012, after 21 years of looking for a place to call home, SLORRM held its first meeting in the 1894 Southern Pacific Freighthouse. A recent donation of conference room chairs and temporary lighting fixtures made the meeting comfortable. It was amazing to be sitting in that historic building, and be able to look around at all the recent restoration work.

Reported by Brad LaRose. Photo by Gary See

Bitter Creek Festival

The next SLORRM fundraiser will be held on Sunday, November 4, 2012, from 10 am until 4 pm, at the Bitter Creek Western Live Steam Railroad in rural Arroyo Grande. Unlimited train rides will be available for an admission donation of \$12 for adults and \$8 for children 3 to 12 years old. Hot dogs, chips and soda or water will be available for an additional \$5. Museum members will be on hand selling T-shirts and other memorabilia. Admission is limited to 225 guests. Log on to www.slorm.com to purchase advance tickets.

Construction moves into high gear as volunteers move mountains



Tom Mitchell, Glen Matteson, Ted Van Klaveren, Chris Hurd and Duane Powell make a clean sweep of the Museum interior.

Volunteers moved a small mountain of dirt from inside the Freighthouse and from along the west side of the building to level the base for the track to support boxcar #706. A mountain of old asphalt from the platform was removed so that new concrete could be poured. Mountains of other junk and debris were removed from inside the Freighthouse.

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Glen Matteson, Tom Cooper, Tom Mitchell, and Brad LaRose breakup and remove old asphalt deck on the platform.



The mountain of dirt removed from inside the building was offered free to the public. Photos by Gary See



Mission Statement

The San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum is a non-profit educational institution founded to preserve and present the railroad history of California and specifically the Central Coast. Collecting, restoring, and displaying relevant railroad artifacts, photographs and documents is its goal. This effort is supplemented by creating models, displays and graphics as well as operating historic railroad equipment to facilitate a better understanding of how railroads have affected our area's social, cultural and economic history.

SAN LUIS OBISPO RAILROAD MUSEUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Brad LaRose *President*
- Karl Hovanitz *Vice President*
- Aron Kahn *Secretary*
- David Rohr *Treasurer*
- Arnold Jonas, John Marchetti,
Andrew Merriam, Duane Powell, Gary See

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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 Freighthouse, 1940 Santa Barbara Street, San Luis Obispo. Meetings begin at 6:00 p.m. All meetings are open to the public.

October 4-8 Central Coast Railroad Festival

October 6 . Museum Open House

October 9 *Business Meeting*

November 4 Bitter Creek Western Fundraiser

November 13 ... *Business Meeting*

December 11 ... *Business Meeting*

BY-LAWS AVAILABLE

Every member in good standing is entitled to a copy of the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum By-laws. In the interest of economy, we have not distributed them to all members automatically.

2 To get a copy, send a #10, self addressed, stamped, envelope to SLORRM, Post Office Box 13260, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.

Renew your membership

The last line of your mailing address on the envelope is 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 amount to renew your membership will be appreciated. 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.

Become a Member

Membership in SLORRM provides an outlet for anyone 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 an interest in the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum.

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 2 enameled pins, 2 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.

New Members The newest member of the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum is William Reiersgaard.

Renewals John Benson, Vincent Cipolla, Mark Evans, John Falkenstein and Paul Marcote have all renewed their membership in the Museum.

Luther and Betsy Bertrando, Robert and Kathleen Copeland, Suzette Girouard, Edward and Donna McCauley, and Craig and Cheryl McCollum have renewed their **Family Memberships**.

James Keene and William Ryan have renewed as **Sustaining Members**.

Life Members Michael Burrell has joined the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum as a Life Member.

End of the Line

Steve Mott

SLORRM Archivist Steve Mott, 76, passed away peacefully at his home Wednesday, August 22, 2012, after a battle with cancer. He was born in Unton, Indiana November, 1935. He grew up in Tucson, Arizona, graduating from Tucson High School in 1954. Steve earned his BS degree in 1959 and an MS degree in 1972 from Cal Poly. He was a Professor in the Graphic Communication Department at Cal Poly. He had studied printing technology in Germany and Italy and retired as Professor Emeritus in 2000. In addition to teaching undergraduates, he served as a consultant for the printing industry in the US, Thailand and Canada. His many interests included; marksmanship, photography, as well as collecting cameras, collecting and repairing antique railroad lanterns and pocket watches. He served as president of the local chapter of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors. He also held the position of Archivist for the Central Coast Veterans Memorial Museum. Steve is survived by Josephine, his wife of 50 years; daughter, Victory Phelps of Sacramento, sons Michael of Paso Robles and Mark of San Luis Obispo; seven grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Donations may be made in his memory to either the Vets Museum or the Railroad Museum.

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, engineer hats and videos are all available by going to the Museum website, www.slorrm.com and click on **Company Store**.



On June 6, 2012, concrete was pumped into the Museum's Freighthouse building to finish the interior flooring. Since then the plumber has finished the rough plumbing, the electrician has finished the rough conduit and most of the walls have been framed. The model railroad platform has been built and Alpha Fire has installed the platform sprinklers. RK Builders has assured us that the restrooms will be ready for the October 6th open house. Photo by Ted Van Klaveren



Howard Amborn uses his trusty tractor to lift the Wig-Wag while Ted VanKlaveren wrestles it into place. This antique crossing signal will be used to indicate when the Museum is open to the public. Photo by Gary See

Surveillance Cameras

Gary See has installed four surveillance cameras and more are planned for Museum security.

Wheelchair Lift Museum Board Member **Andrew Merriam** donated \$8,000 to pay for the ADA wheelchair lift.

Boxcar 706 Ted VanKlaveren has reported that Boxcar 706 is ready to be moved to the Freighthouse.

Board Actions

Board membership to increase

Those who have followed the progress of the construction at the Southern Pacific Freighthouse will recognize that the addition of a permanent facility open to the public will require additional administrative efforts and functions. To address this issue in part, the Museum Board of Directors is instituting a program of establishing seven standing committees and potentially increasing the number of people on the Board from nine to twenty-one. For the moment we expect to just add four new members to address the increased Board work load, provide improved member services and extend our outreach to potential donors.

However, to facilitate this change, the Board proposes an increase of up to 21 members as may be warranted by any changing circumstances, especially in raising additional funds to maintain Museum operations. This bylaw amendment requires a vote of approval by the membership to allow up to 21 people on the Museum Board of Directors.

A ballot postcard is included in this mailing. Please return it prior to November 12, 2012, so we can institute the larger board in 2013.

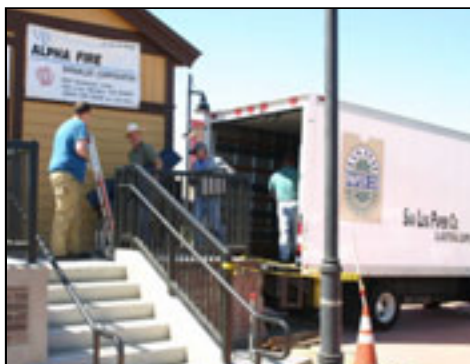
Reported by Andrew Merriam



LaCondesa Painted

On Friday, June 1, 2012, Museum members **Rob Himoto** and **Nathan Paul** painted the Museum's 1926 Pullman open platform passenger car LaCondesa. The paint was donated by Nathan.

Office Furniture Donated

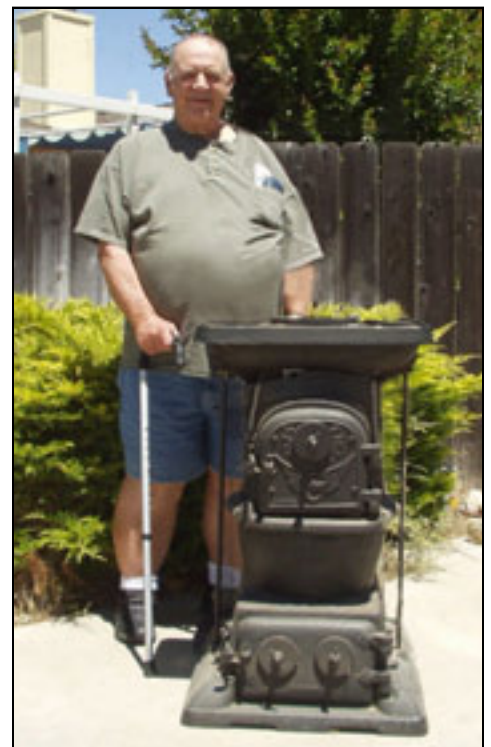


Thanks to the assistance and generosity of *Noble Construction Company* and *San Luis Paper Company*, the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum received a large number of bookcases, desks, tables, and chairs for the Museum's Freighthouse building.

It is well made *industrial strength* furniture that is no longer needed by its owners. It is perfect for the Museum's needs. It was picked up by volunteer Museum members on Saturday, June 23, 2012 and will be stored until the Freighthouse renovation is complete.

Report by Gary See
Photo by Andrew Merriam

Caboose Stove Donated



Iran Spradley is a long time SLORRM member, and recently became a Life Member. The caboose stove next to him is an Estate brand Smoke Consumer model, SPRR coal stove. Iran donated this artifact to the Museum on Friday, June 15, 2012. Museum President Brad LaRose and member Ted VanKlaveren met with Iran at his home in Paso Robles, California, and accepted the donation. They transported the stove to a Museum storage facility. Eventually, this stove could be displayed inside the Museum Freighthouse, or else in a Southern Pacific Railroad caboose.

Report and Photo by Brad LaRose

Blasts from the past . . . Whistles and More

Steam locomotive whistles have always played a strong part in people's romance with and fascination of the railroads in America. The photo at right shows two fine examples of Southern Pacific Railroad (SPRR) whistles. These are the essential elements and the beginning of a possible future exhibit in the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum.

The late Southern Pacific Railroad engineer, *George McCarron*, was known for running trains up and down the Coast Line of California, traveling through San Luis Obispo. At some time in his career, he obtained the whistle that was attached to the roof of the SPRR Power House, just south of the Round House in the San Luis Obispo yard. The Round House and Power House were located approximately ¼ mile south of the Museum's SPRR Freighthouse.

The power house whistle was not a thing of beauty. In fact, it was probably made in the SLO Round House. The cylinder part of the whistle was made out of heavy gauge sheet metal, 5 ¾" diameter and 14" long. It was mounted to a standard SPRR bronze whistle valve. This single note *Plain* type whistle must have had an awful sound, although it certainly worked and you could identify it by that sound.

At some time in his life, McCarron met a Northern California man by the name of Severn Edmonds. Edmonds had been a Southern Pacific Railroad Fireman working out of San Luis Obispo in 1963. McCarron gave Edmonds the Power House whistle.

On May 12, 2006, Edmonds came San Luis Obispo and met Museum President Brad LaRose at the Freighthouse. Edmonds wanted to return the Power House whistle to it's original home, San Luis Obispo. He donated the whistle to the museum, and related the story of how he obtained it. Edmonds also donated a bronze SPRR 6-chime *Step-Top* whistle. This *Step-Top* chime whistle, commonly called a *Road Whistle*, was missing a steam valve.

During Edmonds' railfan travels through Northern California, he found himself watching *Hal Wilmunder's* steam locomotive in Roseville, California. As he was admiring the locomotive, another man was standing next to him. Both men were pleased by the sound of the locomotive's whistle, an SPRR, 6-chime, *Step-Top*. This was the same type of whistle as those in the above photograph. He engaged Edmonds in conversation, and eventually said "I designed that whistle." He proceeded to introduce himself as *David L. Joselyn*, a railroad



6-chime Step-Top Whistles. Left donated by Severn Edmonds. Right donated by Archie Hamon



Power House Whistle, donated by Severn Edmonds.

historian and retired draftsman for the Southern Pacific Railroad. Joselyn had good reason to be proud of that whistle; those six notes call out a very beautiful sound to all who hear it. A sound that identifies with past eras, the development of the west and travel by people to places far away. This is a connection to the *Romance of the Rails*.

Brad LaRose restored the Step-Top whistle, attaching it to the valve from the Power House whistle. The whistle has been cleaned and polished to its *as new* or *as delivered* look. Brad also built the display base for the whistle on the left in the photograph.

In September of 2011, Museum Board Members Gary See and Brad LaRose traveled to Baltimore, Maryland and met with *Archie Hamon*. Archie is a collector of many things, including railroad artifacts. As a young man, Archie lived in Pittsburgh, California, within driving distance of his young railfan friend and now SLORRM board member, Arnold Jonas. Arnold suggested that Gary and Brad contact Archie, as he had artifacts he wanted to donate to the Museum.

Archie Hamon donated several items to the museum, including an SPRR GS-1 steam locomotive #4472 bell and headlight, a caboos whistle, lanterns and an SPRR 6-chime *Step-Top* whistle. This whistle came from SPRR steam locomotive #2568, a 2-8-0 wheel arrangement, class C9. It was built in September 1906. Archie was very proud of his collected items. After acquiring them in the late 1950's, he kept them all of these years, even after moving all the way across the country. His collection and

eventual donation, just as that of Severn Edmonds, truly makes these men preservationists. If it was not for their interest and collecting, we would not have these artifacts today.

Archie Hamon's SP whistle was eventually restored by Brad LaRose, and given an identical display base as that now under the Edmond's whistle. During the cleaning process, Brad found small traces of the original silver/aluminum paint, that had been applied to the whistle. On top of the silver/aluminum paint, were traces of black paint. These paint traces seem to indicate that the whistle was once appreciated and cared for, eventually being painted black to hide dirt and oil that was too much trouble to clean off. A typical story of how railroads eventually cut labor costs and the luster that once was part of early Southern Pacific Railroad steam locomotives. The now restored appearance of that whistle, shown on the right in the photo, is that of the proud and appreciated *silver/aluminum era*.

These whistles are fine examples of the Southern Pacific Railroad and craftsmanship. They functioned as warning devices, and things of beauty to look at and hear. Someday, maybe a third Step-Top whistle will be donated to the Museum and it can be included in this future exhibit, representing the final black paint era. Thank you Severn Edmonds, Archie Hamon, David Joselyn and Southern Pacific. Your whistles will live on for many future generations of people to see and appreciate.

Report and photos by Brad LaRose