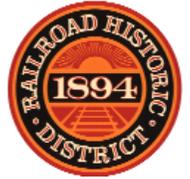




# Coast Mail

News from the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum



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San Luis Obispo, California, Spring 2010

www.slorm.com



John Marchetti supervises while Ted VanKlaveren, Chris Hurd and Gary See distribute base material behind the retaining wall, delivered by Howard Amborn on his tractor.

## Retaining Wall for Emily Street Yard

Saturdays April 10 and May 1, 2010, work crews manned by Howard Amborn (and his tractor), Chris Hurd, Arnold Jonas, John Marchetti, Glen Matteson, Brad LaRose, Curtis Rheinhart, Gary See and Ted Van Klaveren built two retaining walls at the Emily Street Storage Yard.

The main wall was built at the south end of the yard, just behind the fence. This barrier is necessary to prevent the erosion of the fill that supports the storage tracks.

This wall and a short wall along the western fence were built using some ties from the Museum stock pile. The ties were stacked four-high and drilled and had 1/2" rebar pounded into them to hold them together. A third short retaining wall will be constructed in the future along the eastern side of the driveway. This wall will connect to the wall at the south end of the yard at the gates. Completion of this work clears more space for the storage of ties, rail and other hardware.

## Train Day in SLO



Museum President Brad LaRose explains the history and importance of the railroads to a tour group.

**National Train Day**, was Saturday, May 8, 2010. Sponsored by **Amtrak**, its purpose is to promote the awareness of railroading to the general public.

Museum President Brad LaRose lead two walking tours of the *Historic Railroad District*, talking about the importance of the railroads in Central Coast history and future. SLORRM brochures were handed out at the Amtrak Depot.

The *San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association* had hands-on working model trains and *Amtrak* had refreshments and gifts for the kids. Train rides from Guadalupe to San Luis Obispo and back were available.

## Rotary Rides the Rails (to their complete surprise) starring LaCondessa

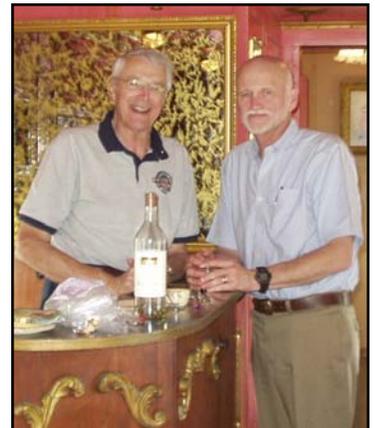


Rotarians enjoy scenery from the LaCondessa on their trip through the Santa Maria Valley.

Members of the San Luis Obispo Rotary Club, along with family and friends, recently participated in the first museum sponsored excursion aboard our parlor lounge car LaCondessa. The Rotary Club has been a long-time supporter and benefactor of the museum. They were instrumental in funding the transport of the car to the Central Coast, and the beginning of its restoration. The trip aboard La Condessa was an expression of appreciation by the museum for the relationship which has developed between our organizations, and the significant contribution Rotary has made during the early stages of our development.

The trip was a complete surprise to the Rotary Club members as it was part of an annual "mystery trip" social event wherein they are transported to an unknown destination for an undisclosed activity after

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Museum Director Arnold Jonas and Rotarian Doug Hoffman converse at the LaCondessa bar.



### 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

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

Telephone 805-544-6531  
 e-mail: info@slorrm.com  
 web site: www.slorrm.com

Mail to: P.O. Box 13260  
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

Bill Pyper, *Newsletter Editor*  
 rrbill10@comcast.net

## 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.

June 8 ..... *Business Meeting*  
 July 13 ..... *Business Meeting*  
 August 10 ..... *Business Meeting*  
 September 14 ..... *Business Meeting*

**October 7-11, 2010**  
**Central Coast Railroad Festival**

### 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 [slorrm.com](http://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](http://www.slorrm.com) and click on **Company Store**.

## Collection Management Upgraded

The museum has installed professional software to accession, organize, and catalog our extensive artifact holdings, rolling stock, books, etc.

"PastPerfect" is the leader in museum collection management, claim its developers, conforming to the latest standards for cataloging archives, libraries, historic objects and photograph collections, among others. The program is also capable of managing membership lists, loans in and out, exhibits, condition reporting, and recording photos of artifacts. Many of the repetitive steps in cataloging will be automated.

A presence on the web will be available so that we may trade, loan, and research with other museums.

*Reported by Steve Mott*

## Individual Renewals

David B. Bruns, Tom Cooper, Ray P. Craig, Roy Gammill, Douglas Gerard, Shirley Clark Herbel, Karl Hovanitz, Charles Jordan, Jane Maxwell, Guenther Mayer-Harnisch, Renee Morton, Nathan Paul, Roland Pautz, Nicholas Price, William Rust, Iran Spradley and James R. Taylor have all renewed their membership since the last Coast Mail was published.

## Family Renewals

Paul and Dorothy Deis, Robert and Olga Harway, Duane and Carlene Powell, Frank and Diana Rheinisch and Bob and Dodie Williams have all renewed their Family Memberships.

## Sustaining Members

Malcom and Peggy Carlaw and Bill Wissel have have joined SLORRM as Sustaining Members.

## 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.

# Mary Rossi, Museum Founding Board Member



Mary Rossi passed away at her home in Avila Beach, California, on Tuesday, February 9, 2010. She spent many years of her life in

Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, becoming involved in many local organizations. Among the activities that kept her very busy and involved were: Board member of the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, first woman foreman of the Ohio Grand Jury and a write-in candidate for Mayor of Cuyahoga Falls.

Mary was a true community activist. She involved herself in projects that needed doing for the good of the community.

When Mary and her husband Roger moved to Avila Beach in 1983, she again picked up the torch of community activism and became involved. In 1991, she joined the Avila Valley Railway Museum. This was the first year of the organizations existence. She immediately began organizing fund raising events, including the museum's first fund raising event at the Golf course in Avila Beach, owned by her son and museum member Rob Rossi. Mary donated numerous items to the museum and attended all of the meetings.

Mary was a driving force in 1994 when the Avila Valley Railway Museum

partnered with the San Luis Obispo County Historical Society, to bring a steam locomotive and train to San Luis Obispo to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first Southern Pacific Railroad train entering San Luis Obispo. Not only did Mary assist the museum in raising funds to bring steam locomotive #2472 to SLO, she organized numerous other related events all over town. She was instrumental in organizing the Centennial Ball, having wine glasses etched with the Centennial logo, and gathered dignitaries at the SPRR train station on May 4, 1994 for the train's arrival. If you met Mary at these events, she was usually dressed in period attire. She helped put on the show, and she was a part of the show.

When the museum moved into San Luis Obispo and changed it's name to the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum, Mary and her son Rob became Life members of the museum. Mary would be proud of the accomplishments the museum has made, based on her early involvement and hard work. She was always an inspiration, fun to work with, and kept our spirits up. We are proud and are lucky to have had such a wonderful person as a museum board member. She will be missed greatly. Thank you Mary, you accomplished many things during your time on earth, all for the betterment of your friends, neighbors and community .

*Reported by Brad LaRose*

## Central Coast Railroad Festival, October 7-11, 2010

The SLORRM Board of Directors and Special Events - Fundraising Committee have started discussions concerning the Museum's involvement with the 2010 *Central Coast Railroad Festival* to be held October 7-11 in San Luis Obispo and northern Santa Barbara Counties.

SLORRM and the CCRRF teamed up for the first annual Festival in October 2009 and are planning to enhance the cooperative effort this year. Here are some of the probable activities and items of interest:

- A Railroad Festival Booth at the San Luis Obispo Farmers' Market on Thursday, October 7th.
- A Santa Margarita Ranch event on Friday, October 8th which could

include a BBQ, film, historical presentations and various running trains.

- A Freighthouse Celebration on Saturday, October 9th, similar to the event last year with displays, history walks and talks, music and various rolling stock. With a little luck we will be able to show of the interior of the Freight House! Tentative plans are to have the #7 engine moved down (from the Santa Margarita Ranch) to the Emily Street Yard prior to the Festival so that it can be featured at the Saturday Celebration.
- We are hoping to be able to run the Museum's 7 1/2" gauge steam locomotive and cars sometime, somewhere during the Festival.

*more on page 4*

## Museum Elects 2 New Directors

On March 3, 2010, the Museum membership elected Andrew Merriam and Gary See to the Board of Directors. Andrew and Gary replace Bill Pyper, who has moved to Oregon, and Frank Rheinisch, who retired.

### Andrew Merriam:

Mr. Merriam has a lifelong interest in both full size railroads (Pacific Coast Railway and Southern Pacific) and model railroads. He contributed over a dozen articles for SLO Trains entitled "Notes Along the Pacific Coast Right Of Way" and made drawings and contributed photographs for the book *The Pacific Coast Railway*. Andrew models the Southern Pacific Coast Line in HO scale and is well on his way to becoming a Master Model Railroader.

He is an architect and urban planner who has assisted the museum in getting the permits to construct the museum display track adjacent to the freight warehouse. Andrew has served on the San Luis Obispo Planning Commission and Cultural Heritage Committee. He currently participates with the design team in bringing the railroad museum to reality including developing display and operating concepts for the model railroad area and assisting in the design and permitting process.

### Gary See:

Gary See is an electrical/computer engineer who has been involved with railroads his entire life.

Gary became a member of the Orange Empire Railway Museum in 1976 and eventually became a volunteer signal maintainer in their Signals Department. For years he has worked on the installation, display, and maintenance of all types of signals at the museum as well as the webmaster for the OERM Signals Department website. Gary is also an active member of Pacific Railroad Society and Friends of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad.

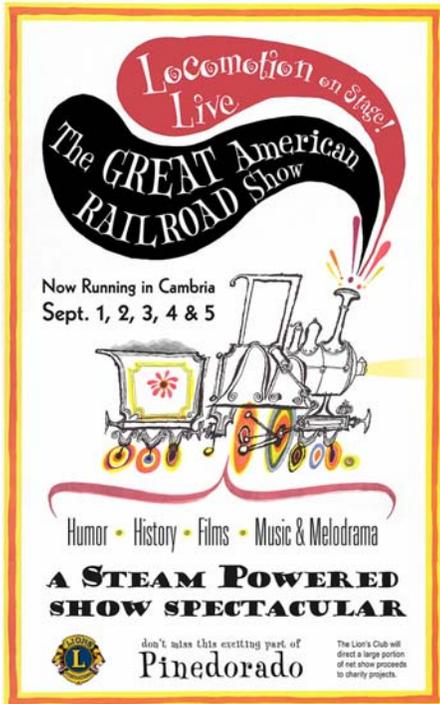
Gary is looking forward to helping the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum as it moves to its next phase of having a permanent home in the historic SP freighthouse.

*Reported by Aron Kahn*



*Continued*

- We are also looking at the possibility of utilizing LaCondesa during the Festival.
- *The Great American Railroad Show* will be presented as part of the Central Coast Railroad Festival during the *Pinedorado* Celebration in Cambria September 1-5, over the Labor Day weekend. This live, rail-themed stage show will feature humor, music, films, history, and melodrama. It is being produced by Festival Director and SLORRM member, Curtis Reinhardt, and Disney alumnus, Joe Burns. Joe is a SLORRM member and has produced extraordinary programs for Museum meetings in the past.



SLORRM and the CRRF obtained a promotional funding Grant from the San Luis Obispo Promotional Coordinating Committee in 2009 to market the Freighthouse event, Historic Railroad District and the Railroad Festival. A grant application is pending for the 2010 events.

CRRF Director, Curtis Reinhardt, welcomes your Festival suggestions and input. Curtis' contact information

**4** as well as up to date Festival and Great American Railroad Show information is available at: [www.crrf.com](http://www.crrf.com)

# Lids for Boxcar Trucks

Many years ago, the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum acquired a 1200 series Pacific Coast Railway boxcar, built by the American Car and Foundry Company in 1924.

About 4 years ago, the Pacific Coast Railway boxcar that was located at the Dallide Adobe in San Luis Obispo was moved by the museum. The trucks that were under that car are the same type used for the 1200 boxcar. When the 1200 series boxcar was moved to the Museum's Emily Street yard, it was placed on these trucks.

When the museum acquired the trucks, the journal bearing boxes were missing their lids. This allowed dust, rainwater and dirt into the boxes, which is not conducive to good long term preservation. How the trucks came to be missing their covers is a mystery. The lids could have been stolen while they were at the Dallide Adobe. More than likely, they were lost in the Pacific Ocean.

Museum member Tom Cooper took on the project of fabricating replacement journal box covers. Tom is a



*Tom Cooper shows off his handiwork.*

metal worker by trade, and during the museum work day in the Emily Street yard November 7, 2009, he placed eight new lids onto the trucks. They are a perfect fit.

The museum sincerely thanks Tom for taking on this worthy project and encourages others to take on projects for the museum and further our preservation of historic railroad artifacts on the Central Coast of California.

*Reported by Brad LaRose*

# Rotary Rides the Rails continued

which they have dinner and are returned home. Participants gathered in the early afternoon at the Madonna Inn in San Luis Obispo, and were bussed south 34 miles along an ambiguous route through Pismo Beach, Grover Beach, Oceano, Nipomo and Guadalupe to their ultimate destination: Betteravia.

Betteravia? Betteravia, unfamiliar to most of those on the bus, is the mostly barren former site of a large sugar beet refinery west of Santa Maria. Bustling with activity during the early part of the 20th century, its present claim to fame is as the headquarters for the Santa Maria Valley Railroad, and storage site of La Condesa and Southern Pacific caboose #1886, also owned by SLORRM. Many other out-of-service rail cars are also stored in the vicinity.

Remarking on the abundance of rail equipment to be seen, trip participants commented that Rotarian Arnold Jonas (who is also a member of the SLORRM Board of Directors and life-long train enthusiast) was not on-board to enjoy the sights. Surprise! Arnold suddenly appeared at the side of the highway and directed the bus to turn into the Betteravia complex. As La Condesa came into sight, trip participants began to get an inkling of what lay ahead. After disembarking

from the bus guests were treated to a presentation on the history and importance of the SMVRR to the local area by railroad owner Rob Himoto and Board member Jamie Foster.

Following the educational experience, attendees embarked upon the afternoons major event, rolling through the verdant countryside of the Santa Maria Valley in a vintage railcar. The observation platform was an especially popular vantage point for many on-board. Once underway with museum members Gary See helping on the locomotive and Brad LaRose, John Marchetti and Arnold Jonas attending to travelers aboard the car, snacks and soft drinks were served by Rotarian event organizers Diane and Joe Brocato. A variety of red and white wines donated by Ancient Peaks Winery of Santa Margarita were also quaffed during the the trip.

The train returned to Betteravia, and the group re-boarded the bus and motored to the Santa Maria Inn for a multi-course meal in a private dining room. Sated, and pleasantly tired the group returned to San Luis Obispo in early evening. After the trip numerous expressions of approval for the museums efforts were received, and several new memberships recorded.

*Reported by Arnold Jonas*