

# Coast Mail

News from the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum



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## Freighthouse Rehabilitation Resumes

Pre-construction activity is underway and construction is expected to start on or before Monday, March 5, 2007. A contract for the next phase of rehabilitation of the Freighthouse has been awarded to **Effect Contractors** of Nipomo. The work to be done by this contract will include interior shear walls, freight doors, man doors, painting galvanized trim around roof to give it a rusted appearance that will match the roof, and installation of temporary electric power. Because the bid was below the engineer's estimate, it is hoped that enough money will be left to repair the shingles on the west wall of the building.

*Reported by Arnold Jonas.*



*Shingles on the west (or south) end of the Freighthouse might get replaced using extra money from current rehab contract.*

## Get Out of Jail Free



*Track ran from just north of the Stenner Creek Trestle, through the California Mens Colony, to Camp San Luis Obispo. A freight train traversing the horseshoe curve on the Cuesta Grade mainline is just visible at the top of this picture*

In early 1941 the United States was anticipating the involvement in war. The strategic location of the California coast and its ports required the construction of military installations. At these camps, soldiers and supplies could be quickly moved to the ports for shipment overseas.

Los Angeles and San Francisco were ports of embarkation for troops and supplies. The primary means of transportation between these ports was the Southern Pacific Railroad's Coast Line. The halfway point on this line was the crew change stop in San Luis Obispo.

In 1942, the U. S. Army needed to move large quantities of materials in and out of Camp San Luis Obispo. In order to accomplish this a short

branch line was built from the Southern Pacific Railroad mainline on the Cuesta Grade to the camp. The line began at the Goldtree Wye, which is between the Horseshoe Curve and the Stenner Creek Trestle, ran through what is now the California Mens Colony, across Highway One, and split off into many spurs throughout Camp San Luis.

The tracks served the Army and the California National Guard for all of WWII, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. In 1975 it was determined that the track was no longer needed, and the wye was removed, breaking the connection to Camp San Luis. For more than thirty years the track has laid unused, rusting on the original ties.

*Continued on page 4*

## Graffiti Busters



*Saturday, February 3, 2007, Using paint supplied by The City, Arnold Jonas (above) and Aron Kahn covered all the current graffiti on the Freighthouse.*

## Help Wanted

On May 5 and 6, 2007 (Yes, more than 2-months from now) the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum will host the Third Annual *Pacific Coast Railroad Roundup* at the Santa Margarita Ranch Pacific Coast Railroad.

Last year we entertained over 2,000 guests. As you can imagine, that takes a lot of manpower. The 9 members of the Board of Directors, plus a dozen or so regular volunteers, all worked 12 and more hours each of these days to make the event a success.

More volunteers are needed to be sure that this event remains a success. You can help by taking tickets, being a crossing guard, parking attendant for just 4 hours on either Saturday or Sunday, or help with set-up and clean-up. For insurance reasons, you must be a Museum member. To offer your help, e-mail to [info@slorm.com](mailto:info@slorm.com) or mail a card to PO Box 13260, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.



## 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*  
Bill Pyper ..... *Newsletter Editor*  
Arnold Jonas, John Marchetti,  
Duane Powell, Frank Rheinisch

Telephone 805-461-3456  
e-mail: info@slorm.com  
web site: www.slorm.com  
Mail to: P.O. Box 13260  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

## 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.

March 13 ..... *Business Meeting*  
April 11 ..... *Business Meeting*  
**May 5 & 6 — Railroad Roundup**  
May 8 ..... *Business Meeting*  
June 13 ..... *Business Meeting*  
July 11 ..... *Business Meeting*  
**July 22 — BitterCreek Fundraiser**

## 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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## Rail Passenger Car Alliance (RPCA) Annual Conference

Three SLORRM members, David Rohr, our treasurer, along with Ron and Louise Milot attended the RPCA Conference in San Jose the weekend of January 12, 2007. RPCA started in the Midwest 25 years ago when they would get together in January to work together and lease their cars to the Norfolk Southern and other Railroads for their steam excursions. From that beginning, membership grew nationally. Meeting once a year to conduct seminars on rebuilding and the operation of historic rail passenger cars, individuals, museums and NRHS chapters are members. With the donation of the private car La Condessa, a 1926 built Pullman lounge café car, our museum joined the organization.

The seminars Dave, Ron and Louise attended included Air Conditioning systems, Diesel Generator sets for passenger cars, C,O, T & S, Head End Power (for operating on Amtrak), passenger truck overhauls, Insurance, six wheel truck overhauls, water raising systems and safety rules and procedures. There was also a vendor room where parts and even brochures on complete passenger cars for sale.

Representatives from our insurance carrier and various railroads, including Amtrak, were there. Pictured at the right with Dave Rohr is Harold Weisinger, Amtrak's Private Car Mechanical Officer. When the museum starts rebuilding the La Condessa later this year, it will be Harold who gives the final approval after his inspectors view the work.

The car is familiar to Dave, Ron and Louise. Ron and Louise worked on the car in the 1970's and 1980's. Dave used the car when he ran trips in the 1980's with his car, the Native Son. While at the conference, they ran into inspectors and mechanics who knew and have worked on the car. Brian Reese, an Amtrak inspector, worked on the car before working for Amtrak. It was very encouraging to listen to Brian as he remembered the trucks being rebuilt in the early 1980s. The museum will have to do it again, but all were pleased that the car is in very good condition. Pat Egan, another inspector at the conference, is a retired Santa Fe mechanical carman who worked in the car when it was owned by the Santa Fe and has inspected the car since the 1950s.

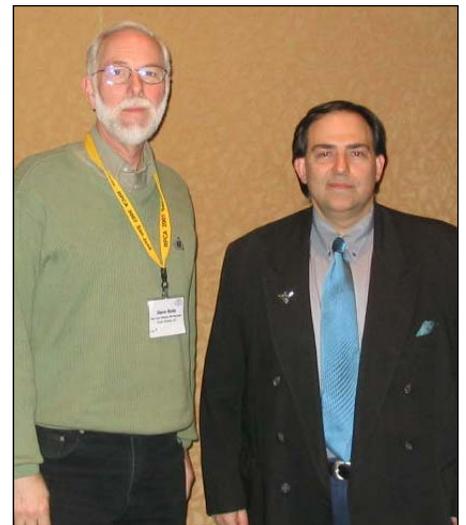
## ARM Convention

The Association of Railroad Museums (ARM) and Tourist Railroad Association, Inc. (TRAIN) held its pentennial convention on November 7 through 12, 2006 at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Sacramento, California.

Museum President Brad LaRose attended as both a representative of the Museum and the Pacific Coast Railroad. He attended several seminars including; casting parts, marketing, museum operations, themed events, acquisition of funds and strategies for obtaining matching funds. He also sat in on a board meeting.

Brad also went on several tours including the Western Pacific Museum in Portola, a Southern Pacific Shops tour, a rail trip on the Sacramento Southern, and a visit to the California State Railroad Museum collections storage.

He also visited the Vendor Room at the State Museum and obtained lots of information about sources of parts, museum supplies, restoration, etc. Brad also took the opportunity to meet with managers and presidents of other museums and tourist railroad operations. He was able to participate in networking sessions that will pay great dividends in the future.



The weekend was helpful to plans on the rebuilding of the La Condessa to Amtrak standards so we can all enjoy a ride on the car. It will take a lot of money and energy to complete the rebuild. Any donations to the museum will be greatly appreciated along with anyone who would like to help on the rebuild.

## New Members

Bill Rust, Horace Fabing, Dwight Hudson, George Wilson, Jenny Curzan and Jim Gray have joined SLORRM since the last issue of Coast Mail was published.

## Renewals . . .

Bonnie Adams, James Taylor, Laura Abeloe, Michael Orcutt-Clenard and family, Robert Del Pesco, Jesse Hawley, Henry Myers, Guenther Mayer-Harnisch, Frank and Diana Rheinisch, Walter Rice, Gordon and Manetta Bennett, Ken Schwartz, Pierre Rademaker and Pat Sullivan have renewed their membership since the last Coast Mail was published.

## Life Members

Robert and Irene Brown, Fred Paap, Richard Fox, Dan Manion, and Art and Barbara Reiter have become Life Members.

**If you're not a member,** please join. Your financial support is needed. A single membership costs \$36 per year. A family membership costs \$60 annually, a sustaining member pays \$100 per year.

Mail your check to San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum, Post Office Box 13260, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.

See below for information about Life Memberships.

# Become a Life 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 especially 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.

**Life Memberships:** receive a special laminated membership card, 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

# Company Store

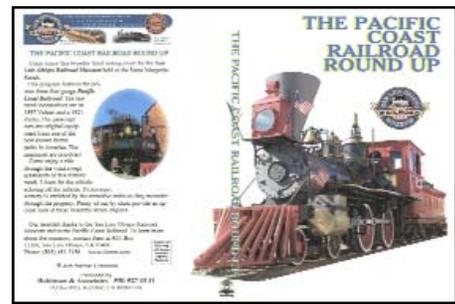
SLORRM has a variety of items for sale to raise money for the Museum. All the goods shown below are available for purchase at any time.

To order, send a check to SLORRM, P. O. Box 13260, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. Local orders will be delivered. Outside of SLO County please include \$5.00 for shipping and handling.



## Roundup Video Available: \$20<sup>00</sup>

**Robinson & Associates** of Red Bluff, California has produced a DVD from video taken by them at the *Pacific Coast Railroad Roundup* in 2005. The hour-long video presents a great view of the two-day event.



## Videos and DVD's \$20<sup>00</sup>

**Southern Pacific Scrapbook.** Final look at SP in California and Arizona.  
**SP Vintage West** features many scenes from Bernice Jackson films. Shows SP from 1950 to 1978.  
**SP When the empire was intact.** 1965-1975. A Look at a Great Era.  
**Electric Rails of Utah,** featuring more of Bernice Jackson's film.  
 All the above were donated to the Museum by **Charles Smiley Presents.**



**12 oz. Coffee Mugs \$10**



## T-Shirts \$17<sup>00</sup>

Gray Haynes Beefy-T with SLORRM logo printed on front and the Historic Railroad District logo on back. Available in adult sizes; S, M, L, XL, XXL. Children's S, M, L.

**Family Life Memberships:** receive special laminated membership cards for all family members, the Coast Mail newsletter, two enameled pins, two embroidered patches, 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.



**Hats \$8<sup>00</sup>**  
 Adult or Child's



**Belt Buckle \$25<sup>00</sup>**



**Blue and Tan Baseball Hat \$20**  
 one size fits all  
**2" dia. Embroidered Patch \$5**  
**1" dia. Enameled Pin \$5**



# and be put to good use . . . continued from page 1

The rail used to construct the Camp San Luis track had been removed from other locations, as was typical during the war. It appears that the wooden ties were newly laid at the location.

The California Mens Colony donated the portion of track located on their property (now separate from Camp San Luis Obispo) to the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum. The rusted rails and the 65 year old ties were found to be in very good condition. Beside the rails, ties, and track hardware, the granite rock ballast was part of the donation.

The Museum greatly appreciates the hard work done by inmates dismantling the track and preparing it for removal by museum members. This massive donation is a major step towards the completion of a display track at the museum site.

On November 30, 2006, a Museum work crew made up of Karl Hovanitz, Arnold Jonas, Brad LaRose, John Marchetti, Duane Powell and Frank Rheinisch and two of Frank's employees from **Alpha Fire Sprinklers** moved approximately 47,500 pounds of 90 pound rail from CMC to the Museum. Superior Crane and Transport of Atascadero was contracted to do the heavy lifting.



*Arnold Jonas, in the foreground, guides a rail being lifted by Superior Crane to the truck in the background for transport to the Museum site.*



On a chilly Saturday morning, January 6, 2007, a crew of SLORRM volunteers turned out at the Museum site to lay track. Karl Hovanitz, Brad LaRose, John Marchetti, Duane Powell, Dave Rohr, Bill Rust and Kevin O'Rourke donated their time and effort to spike and bolt the track from CMC at the Museum site.

*Left: Duane Powell, Dave Rohr, Karl Hovanitz, Brad LaRose spike down track while Kevin O'Rourke talks to Rob Himoto, President of Santa Maria Valley Railroad Company. Right: John Marchetti did the messy job of cleaning and freeing-up rusted track bolts.*



On Saturday, February 3, 2007, the track crew was out there again. This time Dennis Thurman, Bill Rust, Karl Hovanitz, John Marchetti and Brad LaRose took up hammer and tongs to place ties and lay more track.

A Union Pacific hi-railer that was in the area stopped by to say hello and offer encouragement.

Track has now been laid almost to the southwest end of the Freighthouse platform. From this point on, laying of the track will be critical, so that cars will clear the platform without being too far away.

The next workday is planned for Saturday, March 3, 2007.

