



## Boy Scouts Clean and Polish Locomotive #7

On Saturday, February 22, 2003, members of Boy Scout Troop 164 from Paso Robles, led by Scoutmaster Doug Major, washed and polished the Museum's locomotives. Both the Baldwin #7 *Dagny* and the #594 Plymouth Switcher were beneficiaries of the boys' labor. Even the windows of the 594 were cleaned, and the floor was vacuumed! Before the work started, Museum President Brad LaRose gave the Scouts a presentation on the history and importance of railroading.

## MAY IS A BUSY MONTH FOR MUSEUM WORKERS

Spring Train Fest, Lost Drive-in Car Show, Mixer Showcase keep volunteers hopping

**Spring Train Fest** will find all the usual suspects at *BitterCreek Western Railroad* raking leaves, oiling switches and generally fixing the place up for our visitors. More help would be appreciated. Anyone able to help with cleanup on Saturday or with the BBQ or other chores on Sunday, please call the Museum at 461-3456 and leave your name and number.

**Karl Hovanitz**, owner of the *BitterCreek*, tells us that he has built a new loading area for passengers near the entrance.

It has rained some since the Fall Train Fest, so it should be safe to run live steam without fear of starting a fire. A good time is sure to be had by all.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Train Fests held at *BitterCreek Western Railroad* have become victims of their own success. Last fall we entertained 500 visitors at the **Fall Train Fest**. Luckily there were no problems and everyone had a good time. The Museum's coffers added about \$3000. Sadly having that many people visit the *Bitter Creek* in one day severely strains the system, particularly the parking. Karl's neighbors have been very patient with the congestion that we cause.

Because of the over-crowding at the Fall Train Fest, the Board of Directors has decided to limit ticket sales for the Spring Train Fest to 175. Flyers were mailed

to all the people on our mailing list on April 12. Tickets are sent out the day after the check is received. If you have not received your tickets within a week of having sent money, call the Museum at 461-3456. If your check is received after all tickets have been sold, it will be returned promptly. **Please don't show up without a ticket. We can't let you in.**

For those of you who are able to attend, there will be the usual unlimited train rides. Hot dogs, chips and soda will be for sale at the Cook Shack. We will also be selling T-shirts, hats, buttons and DVD's (See story inside).

**Ed Marcom**, owner of *Fast Eddie's Car* (continued inside)



## 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  
Arnold Jonas ..... Secretary  
David Rohr ..... Treasurer  
Bill Pyper ..... Newsletter Editor  
Jim Horton, Aron Kahn  
John Marchetti, Duane Powell

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

# Smiley Donates Videos

Charles Smiley, of *Charles Smiley Presents*, a railroad video production company in Northridge, California, has donated 10 copies of his latest DVD video to SLORRM.

The video, titled *Southern Pacific Scrapbook, Arizona and California*, is all color; 138 minutes long, featuring sharp, original video, with a few minutes of old movie film.

Some scenes show SD7's and SD9's hauling old wooden sided sugar beet cars. Many branch lines are shown, such as the Vasona Branch out of San Jose and street running in Santa Cruz. The Lompoc Local is shown servicing the White Hills Gypsum Plant.

Quite a lot of footage is devoted to the Coast Line. There are shots of the Horseshoe Curve, Stenner Creek Trestle and the San Luis Obispo Depot. A cab ride through Gaviota and a view of the trestle from the Gaviota Pier make for good viewing.

No video about the SP would be complete if it didn't include Donner Pass and the Tehachapi Loop. Shots at Colfax and Emigrant Gap illustrate the steepness of Donner Pass and there are views of the Loop area near Caliente and Beaville.

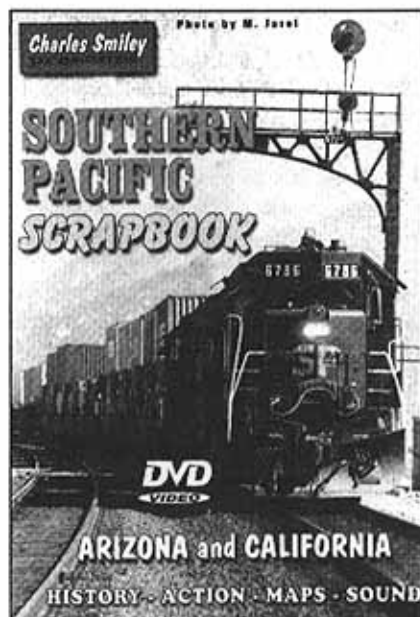
There's a segment on the *Oil Can* train that was used to haul oil from the Central Valley to LA. Probably some of the same cars now haul oil from Bradley to the south.

Arizona is represented with views of the Lordsburg District, between Tuscon and Lordsburg, New Mexico, and the Maricopa District, west of Tuscon to Yuma.

## Recent Donations . . .

**Mr. Evan Mason** of rural Paso Robles, has donated a *Yale* brand, model SS, 5-ton, spur-gear *Chain Hoist*. The hoist is fully operable and will make a fine addition to the *Pacific Coast Railway Jib Crane* that was donated several years ago by **Arnold and Peggy Teague**. Although the hoist mechanism is fully operational, it lacks a chain. If you have any 1/2" chain that would be suitable for use with this hoist, and would like to donate it, call the museum at 461-3456.

**Central Coast Printing**, 845-B Capitolio Way, San Luis Obispo, donated the printing of the flyers and tickets for the Spring Train Fest and the printing of this newsletter.



One copy will be kept for the Museum library. The other nine copies are for sale at \$26.50 + tax (\$28.42) each. They will be available at the Spring Train Fest or can be ordered by sending a check to the Museum at Post Office Box 13260, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. We can deliver to locals. If you live out of the area please include \$5 for shipping.

## Bernice Jackson Films to Video

Along with the videos the Museum received the following message:

*I'm wrapping up a combined SP, IER and Sacramento Northern Railway video that used some of Bernice Jackson's film scenes. Copies should be out in a couple of weeks if all goes according to plan.*



## MAY IS BUSY *Continued . . .*

*Wash* at 393 Marsh Street, San Luis Obispo, is again sponsoring a booth for SLORRM at the **Lost Drive-in Car Show** to be held on Saturday, May 10th, at the **Sunset Drive-n Theater** on Elks Lane in San Luis Obispo. The **Velocipede** is unavailable for display, so **Karl Hovanitz** has offered to bring a **Fairmont MT19A, 2-man Speeder** from his collection. The San Luis Obispo Rotary Club puts on the show to raise money for it's various projects and charities.

Wednesday, May 14th, SLORRM will have a booth at the San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce' **Mixer Showcase** at the **Embassy Suites Hotel**. This annual event, which features displays by more than 100 local businesses and organizations, usually attracts over 2,000 visitors. This will be a good opportunity to expose the museum and its potential to local business leaders.

# TIME TABLE

The following is a list of coming meetings of the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum. Business meetings begin at 6:00 p.m. and program meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.

Meetings are held at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 333 Madonna Road, San Luis Obispo, unless otherwise noted.

May 4, Sunday,.....**Spring Train Fest**  
at BitterCreek Western Railroad

May 10, Saturday,.....**Lost Drive-in Car Show** at Sunset Drive-in

May 8 ..... *Business Meeting*

May 14 ..... **Showcase Mixer**

June 11 ..... *Business Meeting*

July 9 ..... **Program Meeting**

August 13 ..... *Business Meeting*

September 10 ..... *Business Meeting*

October 8 ..... **Program Meeting**

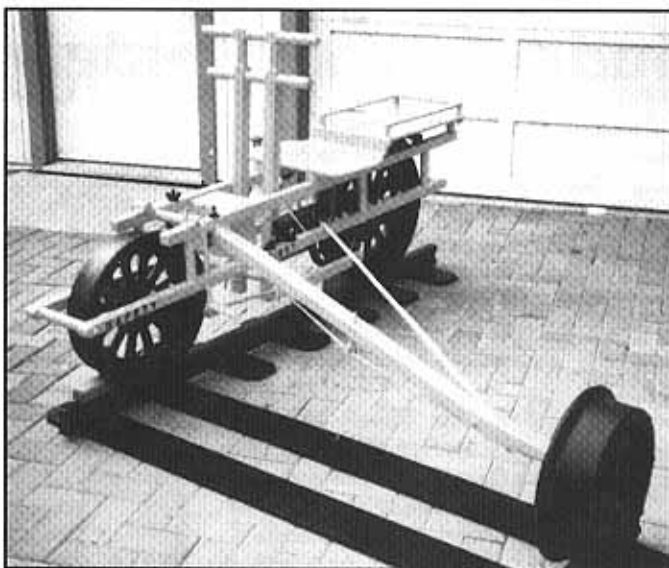
October 19 ..... **Fall Train Fest**  
at BitterCreek Western Railroad

November 12 ..... *Business Meeting*

December 10 ..... *Business Meeting*

## 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 everyone. To get a copy of the By-Laws, send a self-addressed, stamped, #10 envelope to SLORRM, Attention: Bill Pyper, Post Office Box 13260, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.



## Velocipede On Display

San Luis Obispo Railroad Museums' beautifully restored Sheffield Velocipede is currently on display at the Santa Maria Town Center Mall. The Santa Maria Valley Railroad Museum requested the loan of the old vehicle for display in their temporary museum. The Town Center management is donating space to the SMVRM on the third level at the north end of the mall.

## Membership Renewal Notices

The new membership chairman (anonymous) has gotten way behind in the task of sending out membership renewal letters. If you want to save the museum some money (postage) look at you membership card. If your membership has expired, please send in your renewal dues.

Those whose membership has expired will be getting renewal notices next month.



## Badges, We got badges!

... and T-shirts, and coffee mugs, and hats, and posters, and DVDs all will be for sale at the Spring Train Fest. If you can't wait until then, call the Museum number, 461-3456, and we'll arrange to get them to you. Visit our on-line store at [www.slorm.com](http://www.slorm.com) and see what's available there.

## San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum Membership Application

**Membership Levels:** \_\_\_ \$36, Individual \_\_\_ \$60, Family \_\_\_ \$100, Sustaining

I would like to further help the museum by donating \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Complete form and mail with your check to:

**San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum (SLORRM)**

Post Office Box 13260, San Luis Obispo CA 93406

### PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY:

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to help the museum by: \_\_\_\_\_

# City Budget Woes Sidetrack Museum

On Wednesday, February 4, 1998, a group of people met at the *City-County Library* in San Luis Obispo and formed the *San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum*. Many of the people at that first meeting were members of the *Avila Valley Railway Museum*, a group that had been struggling for several years to establish a museum using the old *Pacific Coast Railway* right-of-way in the Avila Valley. That project was getting overshadowed by the *Bob Jones Bicycle Trail*, and members were losing interest and momentum.

At the time, the City of San Luis Obispo had just received a grant from the federal government, through the *San Luis Obispo County Council of Governments (SLOCOG)* for the purpose of refurbishing the railroad station area. Those funds were used to build the new parking lot that runs from the Osos Street entrance to the station area, south to where High Street terminates behind Pacific Home Do-it Center.

A second grant of approximately \$500,000, received from the same source, was to be used for the preservation and restoration of transportation related, historic buildings or sites. *The City of San Luis Obispo* chose for restoration the Freighthouse, built in 1894 as part of the depot complex, by the *Southern Pacific Railroad*. The vision was that it could be used as a museum. The City had already refurbished the passenger depot and was working on preserving the water tower.

When the grant was received, unnamed engineers, architects, and others who claimed to know, all agreed that \$500,000 was more than enough money for the job.

The City decided that the best course of action was to build the parking lot first. Once that was done, the restoration of the Freighthouse could begin. That seemed like a logical way to do things, and nobody disputed it. After countless meetings, hearings, permits; all the usual

government rigamarole, the parking lot was built. Most will agree that it is a great improvement to the area.

On August 30, 2000, Mayor Allen Settle, representing the *City of San Luis Obispo*, and Brad LaRose, president of the *San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum* signed a lease granting use of the building as a museum for 40 years. **The lease doesn't take effect until after the restoration is done!**

Now it's the year 2001, and time to restore the Freighthouse. A local architecture company does an assessment of the building's condition and estimates that it will cost about \$1 million to do the rehabilitation as one project. Restore it in two phases, and it will cost \$1,500,000.

A majority of the San Luis Obispo City Council want the Freighthouse restored and the Museum open to the public. They realize what an asset it will be to the city as an historical treasure and as a tourist attraction. If this were 1997, there is no doubt that the City Council would find a way to finance the project.

Thanks to the price gouging of the energy companies and the less than astute handling of the situation by Governor Gray Davis and others in Sacramento, the San Luis Obispo City Council now faces the prospect of having its treasury raided by the State to balance its own budget. Faced with a possible \$7,000,000 shortfall, The City can't pay for the restoration at this time.

There has been some talk (unofficial so far) in government circles about the possibility of issuing bonds to pay for the restoration of the Freighthouse, the Adobes and several other City projects.

It is a certainty that once the Museum is open, the added tourist revenue in the form of increased Sales Tax and Transient Occupancy Tax receipts and additional business for stores, motels and restaurants, will more than pay for the restoration.

## ARC Approves SP Freighthouse Stabilization

The April 21, 2003 meeting of the *City Architectural Review Commission (ARC)* included final review of the plans to rehabilitate the SP Freighthouse. In attendance representing the museum were President **Brad LaRose**, Directors **John Marchetti**, **Arnold Jonas** and **Duane Powell**. City staff recommended approval of the plans as submitted by the City Public Works Department.

This ARC action was limited to building rehabilitation, and will permit stabilization to proceed to the extent allowed by available funds.

Discussion centered on the new iron railing proposed for public safety along the perimeter of the trackside loading platform; several doors intended for access to the museum and the transit drivers' lounge; stairs and ramp for public access to the loading platform which provides access to the building; style, number and location of windows and roofing material. Significant discussion was directed to the conceptual landscape plan, which will be reviewed later. The Commission was very

supportive of the museum proposal to locate a Pacific Coast Railway boxcar adjacent to one of the loading doors on the parking lot side of the building. They directed that the landscape should be relative to the building's character. Specifically, much of the landscape should resemble ballast and shrubs should be of historic context, and not obscure the building facade.

Conceptual plans for the project had previously been reviewed by the *City Cultural Heritage Committee (CHC)*. The CHC determined that the project was consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. This finding allowed the project continue without the need for an EIR.

Much remains to be done before the building is ready for occupancy by The Museum. In addition to preparation of final construction drawings by The City, approval of a Museum Master Plan must be obtained. The first phase of building stabilization is now clear to begin in late summer of this year. — Reported by Arnold Jonas