



Coast Mail

News from the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum



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www.slorm.com

Museum to be featured during 2011 Central Coast Railroad Festival

The Third Annual Central Coast Railroad Festival is set to take place October 6-10, 2010 in the heart of the California Central Coast. A variety of events and activities will take place at various venues and railroad locations throughout San Luis Obispo and northern Santa Barbara Counties. The Festival is a family friendly event designed to please casual train buffs, avid railfans and tourists alike. The 2011 Festival will focus on regional railroad history, model railroad layouts, concerts, family events and Amtrak excursions. New this year will be the inclusion of host hotels which will offer discounts to Festival attendees as well as displays and programs.

Complete information and a schedule of events for the Central Coast Railroad Festival can be found at



www.ccrf.com or by calling the festival office at 805-773-4173.

The SLORRM will be featured at several events during the Festival. Members will represent the Museum at the CCRRF Big Booth during the SLO Farmers Market on Thursday

night. On Saturday the SLORRM takes center stage with a big event at its future home, the restored SP Freight House in the SLO Historic Railroad District. During the Saturday event attendees will enjoy RR displays, history walks and talks, speeder rides and live RR music.

Of special note that day will be the launch of the new Podcast of a walking tour of the Historical Railroad District. Additionally, attendees will have the opportunity to step inside and view the almost completed interior of the Freight House for the first time in decades!

Museum Promoted at Arroyo Grande Centennial



On July 10, 2011, SLORRM participated in the City of Arroyo Grande's Centennial Celebration. The museum was the featured non-profit of the Summer Concert series held that Sunday. A drawing was held and many donated prizes including local restaurant dinners and a Hearst Castle tour were given away. The Museum donated free tickets to the next Bittercreek Train Festival and a museum family membership. An HO train set was the most sought after item by the children. Over \$260 Was raised to benefit the Museum. Thanks go to the Summer Concert Series organizers for inviting us to the event. Museum members Aron Kahn, Brad LaRose, Duane Powell, Dave and Judy Rohr, and Ted and Mark VanKlaveren all worked at the Museum tent. It turned out to be a great family event on a beautiful Central Coast Sunday!

Photo and report by Aron Kahn

Bitter Creek Western

Rounding out the weekend will be another SLORRM fundraiser open house and live steam run at Bitter Creek Western Railroad just south of Arroyo Grande. Tickets for this fundraiser will be available only online through a link at www.slorm.com.

Attendance is limited to 225 people and will probably sell out in advance, so order your tickets now.

Contributed by Curtis Reinhardt

Freighthouse Progress

The Freighthouse rehabilitation is coming along. The handicap ramp and stairs have been installed; brick veneer has been added to all the foundation areas that were bare concrete; The fire sprinkler system is in, but the underground supply and riser are still needed. The roof is to be coated with elastomer to seal some leaks.

Reported by Ted VanKlaveren



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.

October 9th, Sunday Bitter Creek Western Festival

October 11 *Business Meeting*
 November 8 *Business Meeting*
 December 13 *Business Meeting*
 January 10, 2012 ... *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 all members. To get a copy,

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

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 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

Richard Quick has joined the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum since the last Coast Mail was published.

Sustaining Members

John Falkenstein has joined the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum as a Sustaining Member.

Individual Renewals

Marian Gregory and Chris Hurd have renewed their SLORRM memberships since the last Coast Mail was printed.

Life Members

David and Judy Rohr have become Family Life Members. Bill Wissel has become a Life Member of the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum.

Rick Framme

John Richard "Rick" Framme, 59, passed away July 21, 2011. Rick became a Museum member on May 6, 2006, at the Pacific Coast Railroad Roundup. An Air Force veteran, once stationed at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Rick was a Certified Project Management Professional and had worked for several aerospace companies. A funeral mass was held at Mission San Luis Obispo and interment was at Old Mission Cemetery. Arrangements were handled by Reis Family Mortuary. Donations in Rick's memory may be made to Hospice Partners of the Central Coast, 277 South Street, Suite R, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 or Central Coast Funds for Children, P.O. Box 1046, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.

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. Please include any changes to your contact information. This will help to 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.

What is it? A RR Mystery



On May 14, 2011, the Museum had a work day at the museum building, the former Southern Pacific Railroad Freight house. The building was built in 1894, just before the arrival of the first Southern Pacific train from San Francisco. The structure is basically a rectangular box sitting on bituminous asphalt, which is paved over a dirt rock and brick foundation.

At the north end of the building the freight agent had his office and kept account of freight that was delivered from the trains, wagons and trucks. During the last 100 plus years, the few interior walls have been modified and added to slightly. Attached to the walls was a raised wood floor approximately 10 feet x 10 feet x 8 inches high.

During the work day, the floor was demolished to make way for restoration work on the adjacent wall and to facilitate new restrooms that were called for in the City approved plans. A crew of 7 or 8 Museum members were hard at work inside the building and nearing the end of the work day by cleaning up the debris. Ted VanKlaveren reached into the pile of trash wood and dirt and picked out a very strange item.

None of the those present were able to identify it. However, it clearly was a railroad related item as it was hand stamped with "SP 5209." Brad LaRose, Museum president, has since cleaned it up, revealing that it is almost entirely made of bronze. It appears to be a lock or seal mechanism. It is operated by breaking a glass plate on the front and then depressing a metal button behind the glass. The button



releases the housing surrounding the main lock frame and the housing drops down which also opens the staple on the top rear of the device, thus opening it from the item it is locking.

Museum members thought it may be a keyless lock for mail bags or possibly the car door of a baggage car, as the number on the lock could be a baggage car number. None of these speculations really answered the question as to what it is or used for. One speculation is that it is not an item off of a railroad car. It could be a seal for a building or track side fire piping valve. The item is made of quality materials and made to last in the outside elements. As it requires the expenditure of a piece of glass to open, it likely was not opened on a frequent basis. If so, it would have cost money each time to replace the glass which would make this lock not practical.

So, we are left to speculate about a lock or seal, that is of quality bronze construction, that requires the breakage of glass to open and cost money to replace, which also has a hand stamped railroad initials and number on the front, found hidden under a 70 to 100 year plus old wood floor, in a freight house that never had a fire pipe system. If anyone has an idea, has seen one somewhere or actually has used an item like this, please call (805) 550-1836, or e-mail the Museum at info@slorm.com or write to PO Box 13260 San Luis Obsipo, CA 93406. Please solve the mystery and answer our question: What is it?

*Reported by Brad LaRose
Photos by Andrew Merriam*



Merriam Wins NMRA Awards

SLORRM Board Member Andrew Merriam has won not one, but three prestigious model making awards at the National Model Railroad Association Annual Convention held this year in Sacramento, California.

First Place Model Freight Cars was awarded to Andrew for his HO scale Pacific Coast Railway wooden gondola #1169, pictured above.



Andrew was awarded Second Place Model Structure for his model of the Pacific Coast Railway Avila Beach Railroad bridge. The bridge also won a Special Award for best use of scale lumber from the Mount Albert Scale Lumber Company. This bridge model will be installed as an integral part of the layout in the SLORRM.

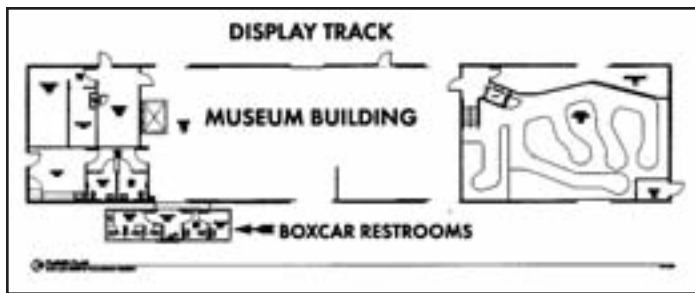
Movin' the Movies

In 1958-59, while I was a student at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, we had Friday night movies in the "Air Conditioning Auditorium" (it was in the Air Conditioning building, which was not air conditioned). The movies were 16 mm copies of Hollywood films from a few years earlier. I knew the "film committee" and was delegated to take the film carton to the railroad station and place it in a special mailbox on the platform at around 11 pm. This box was unusual in that it had two locks on either end of a steel link. One was for the local postal workers, the other was for the Railway Post Office crew. This was to insure that the movie went on to the next customer (sometimes a mental institution in Nevada) on the overnight train, which by then was probably the Lark.

*Contributed by Bob Davis
San Gabriel, California*

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Boxcar to Bathrooms: A Necessary Project



Long after the original plans for the rehabilitation of the 1894 Southern Pacific Freight House were approved, it was discovered that, based on square footage, additional toilets are required in the restrooms.

The City of San Luis Obispo has approved the Museum's proposal to place Pacific Coast Railway boxcar

#706 next to the Museum and outfit it as a restroom facility. To accomplish this, the car must be remodeled.

Ted VanKlaveren has agreed to take on the task of organizing and supervising this project. He has acquired two 20-foot steel containers for the storage of artifacts and other material presently in #706.

Ted is looking for members that would be interested in helping. Carpentry skills would be nice, but are not required. Anybody interested in painting the boxcar after the new siding is installed would be welcome. Contact Ted at 805-461-1460, 805-904-2495 or e-mail, Orangerail@aol.com.

A Birthday Party Tour of the Historic Railroad District



On Friday, June 24, 2011, SLORRM President, Brad LaRose conducted a tour of the Railroad Historic District in San Luis Obispo. This was a special tour arranged by Laura Skiff for her son's 6th birthday party. Dressed in his 1940's vintage Southern Pacific Railroad passenger conductor uniform, Brad met with the party group.

At 3:00 p.m., a group of children, ages 5 to 40+ (some of the "kids" were parents of the younger ones) gathered at the Museum freight house for a special *private* tour of the historic district. The first stop was Southern Pacific Railroad caboose #409 for a lesson on what a railroad is, what a train is, and what are freight and passenger trains.

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Included was a description and demonstration of how to

build track. Brad removed a spike and hammered it back into the museum display track. He observed that small kids like lots of noise and action.

The next stop was the Emily Street Yard where the kids marveled at the Baldwin #7 steam locomotive. After an explanation of how water and steam make the wheels turn, each kid enjoyed ringing the locomotive's bell. They were thrilled to learn that #7 is related to Thomas the Tank Engine, as they are both "Tank Engine Brothers."

At 3:30 p.m., the group arrived at the highest point on the Jennifer Street pedestrian bridge for aerial viewing of the railroad yard, station, Railway Express Agency building and the tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad. On the way to the passenger station, a stop was made on the platform to look at the massive Union Pacific Railroad diesel *helper locomotives*. Explaining how these locomotives *help* freight trains over the steep Cuesta Grade, gave the children an understanding of the difficulty of running a railroad in San Luis Obispo County.

The last stop on the tour was the former Southern Pacific Railroad station, now the Amtrak passenger depot.

Although the kids were appreciative of seeing the station and having had the exciting tour, they were even more eager to walk to a local park and have the actual party where the birthday cake was served. Laura Skiff made a generous donation to the museum for having provided the tour. She said her family are big supporters of Museum fund raising events such as the Bitter Creek Live Steam Railroad Train Festival. All of the museum event information can be found on the museum web site at: www.slorm.com.

Similar fund raising events may be held in the future, such as Birthday Caboose parties, tours, etc. When the freight house building is finally opened for museum use, likely other similar events will be used to earn much needed funds to restore and operate historic railroad artifacts. This recent event proves that education and fun do go together, as long as there is cake and ice cream somewhere in the mix.

Reported by Brad LaRose

Increased Fundraising Needed

As we get closer to opening the Museum to the public, the need for funds becomes greater. To date, most Museum income has come from the Bitter Creek Western Train Festivals, Pacific Coast Railroad Roundups and individual donations. The cost of rehabilitating the Freight House/Museum building has come from grants by the City of San Luis Obispo, SLOGOG, and the Hind Foundation.

There is an immediate need for \$7,000 to pay for an underground fire backflow preventer and an ADA Accessible wheelchair lift for the model railroad area at about \$7,000. Any donations to help pay for these items will be gladly accepted.

If anyone has any suggestions for fundraising or knows of any available grants, please pass that information on to the Board of Directors.