



January 2015

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PAID & VOLUNTEER STAFF OF RAILTOWN 1897 STATE HISTORIC PARK

Upcoming Events

January 6

Railtown ladies luncheon held the first Tuesday of each month at 11:30am. Apple-
bee's on Sanguinetti Road.
call Marge at 209-533-4595

January 24

Annual Volunteer Recognition
Dinner at Black Oak Casino
Resort 5-8:30pm

This year's theme: Hollywood
Glamour! Come if you can in
your finest vintage or modern
dress for the ladies and tux or
suit coats from the gentlemen.

January 31

New Volunteer Open House
10am-1pm

February 3

Railtown Ladies luncheon
at the Wok & Sushi near the
Orchard Supply store
call Marge at 209-533-4595

February 14

Roundhouse Day
10am-2:30pm

February 14

New Volunteer Orientation
9am-3pm?

February 21

Volunteer Training workshops
9am-3pm

February 28

Volunteer Training workshops

February 28 (day 1)

GCOR Training/ 8am-4pm

March 1 (day 2)

GCOR Training/ 8am-4pm

March 14

Volunteer Training workshops
9am-3pm

March 28

Car Host Training & practice
trains 9am-2pm

April 4 & 5

Excursion season begins!

*NOTE: We have new train
departure times this year:
10:30am, Noon, 1:30pm and
3:00pm

*NOTE: the Brakeman's
Academy dates still TBA

What Visitors Want from a Visit to a Historic Park

I hope you all have been reading this ongoing series about interpretation. It's all food for thought and I think it's helpful to keep reminding us about what the true purpose of interpretation is. In the last issue we read that interpretation is not just a mere show and tell or 'bragging' session. Also, a truly great teacher inspires the visitor and doesn't just states mere facts. I thought it would be helpful to pass along some information from Sam Ham's newest book 'Interpretation: Making A Difference.' He mentions two individuals, Cameron and Gatewood (on page 83) who in 2003 visited many historic sites and parks to question visitors about what they really wanted to get from their heritage experience. It's interesting to hear their comments: **1.** "To develop a feel of the experience of the people of that time, what they were thinking, what their reality was", **2.** "To develop a feeling of the times they are showing you. The mind set of the people at that time", **3.** "To develop a feeling of the place, a way to connect with what was", **4.** "Just to get a feel for that time, something that is memorable. I like to reflect and remember it, to be part of it", **5.** "To be able to make a connection with the events that took place", **6.** "I want to feel the aura of the period, gain a sense of connectedness with the way people lived. I want to use my mind to really experience it, not just the externals." These same people that were interviewed would say the very same thing, should they ever visit our Railtown 1897 historic site. They would want to connect to the steam locomotive era and connect to what once was.

Sam goes on to say: "most of these visitors also wanted to be entertained and to learn, but notice the emphasis in their comments on 'connecting', 'feeling', and 'reflecting' as opposed to having fun and gaining knowledge."



Congratulations to all our volunteers (and staff) who made our first annual Polar Express event a smashing success! Not even Hollywood could have done it better! If we missed you in this impromptu photo..... you know who are!

Scenes from 2014



Railtown Volunteers represented our park in the Murphy's Irish Days Parade



Speeder Rides were offered on Thanksgiving weekend



Alex Sharp became a certified locomotive engineer!



Nancy Johnson piloted the successful 'Story time in the Little Red Caboose'



John & Natalie kept up the popcorn service to visitors



Our annual volunteer field trip led us to Roaring Camp and the Wilder Ranch State Park



The 'Wailing Woodies' entertained at our annual Singing Rails Festival



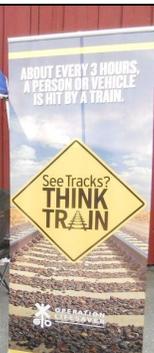
Railtown volunteers and a certain fiddler hosted on the annual Meals on Wheels train



David & Karen Eithr performed with their ukuleles at the volunteer dinner



Anthony LaNotte shared Operation Lifesaver at the Railroad Worker Re-Union event in September



Hal Montano was awarded 'Volunteer of The Year' for service in 2013



The roundhouse door refurbishing project continued



We said goodbye to a great friend and fantastic volunteer Cliff Hughes who passed away



The restoration of the #28 project began and continues



Our first annual Railtown Workers Re-Union was a great success in September

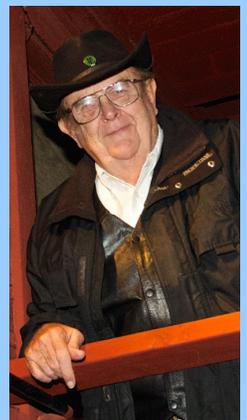


We said farewell to long time volunteer Laverne Coon who moved back to her home state of Wisconsin





The Polar Express 2014



Railtown News

2015 Training Dates/ Mark Your Calendars

January 31: New Volunteer Open House/ 10am-1pm

*Note: Brakeman's Academy date still to be announced

February 14: New Volunteer Orientation/ 10am-3pm
(it's also Roundhouse Day 10am-2:30pm)

February 21: Volunteer Training/ 9am-3pm

February 28: Volunteer Training/ 9am-3pm

February 28: GCOR Training/8am-4pm

March 1: Day 2 for GCOR Training/8am-4pm

March 7: No training

March 14: Volunteer Training/ 9am-3pm

March 21: No training

March 28: Car Host Training & Practice Trains

Interpretive Master Plan Meetings

Railtown staff will be meeting from 10am-12 on January 13, 20, and 27 to work on thematic development for the Interpretive Plan. All are also welcome to attend, but please RSVP if you plan on attending, in the event we change the meeting location.

Railtown Interpretive Improvement Team Forming!

Would you like to delve a little deeper into the mechanics of the Interpretive and Educational programming at Railtown 1897 State Historic Park? Would you like to learn more about field of interpretation? Are you interested in what goes into designing and developing museum exhibits? Do you consider yourself to be an 'early adopter'? Are you interested in providing leadership for other volunteers? We want YOU on the Railtown Interpretive Improvement Team.

This group will be meeting monthly to learn more about interpretive programming, by reading and following the State Parks Basic Interpretive Learning System. We will apply our understanding by taking field trips to other industrial heritage sites (Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park, Folsom Powerhouse State Park). We will review their interpretive planning and critique how it is applied through tours, exhibits and online presence, and see how these lessons can be applied to Railtown. We will also host some interesting guest speakers.

If you are interested in being a part of this group, please attend the first meeting on January 10th, from 9-11:30. An RSVP to Dave would be appreciated.



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Sonora Photo Club members have been busy this year! Here are two pics by Dan Ryan and Dan Childres



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Return Service Requested

TO:



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Railtown Blog- www.railtown1897.wordpress.com
Newsletter Editor— Dave.Rainwater@parks.ca.gov
Crew Caboose- (209) 984-0352



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