



# The TURNTABLE



June 2014

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

## Upcoming Events

### June 3

Railtown Ladies Luncheon  
11:30am @ Covers Apple  
Ranch, Call Marge 533-4595

### June 7

5th Annual Singing Rails  
Festival, featuring the music  
of Woody Guthrie by the  
Wailin' Woody's (an extra  
train is added at 4pm)

### June 14

Father's Day @ Railtown  
Keith Keenom will be enter-  
taining 'Under the Tulip Tree'  
From 11am-3pm

### June 14-15

48th Annual Father's Day  
Fly-In @ Columbia Airport

### June 25

Volunteer picnic and BBQ  
starts @ 3pm, but location is  
still to be determined  
Call Dottie @ 533-8483

### June 28

Dave Connery will give his  
presentation, "The Angels  
Branch of The Sierra Rail-  
way" 8-9:30am(Carriage  
Room)

### July 1

Ladies Luncheon 11:30am  
Black Oak Casino Café  
Call Marge @ 533-4595

### July 2

\*Wednesday trains begin  
every Wednesday in July  
and August. Starts with  
"Story Time in The Little Red  
Caboose" at 11am and  
trains at 12 & 2pm.

### July 4

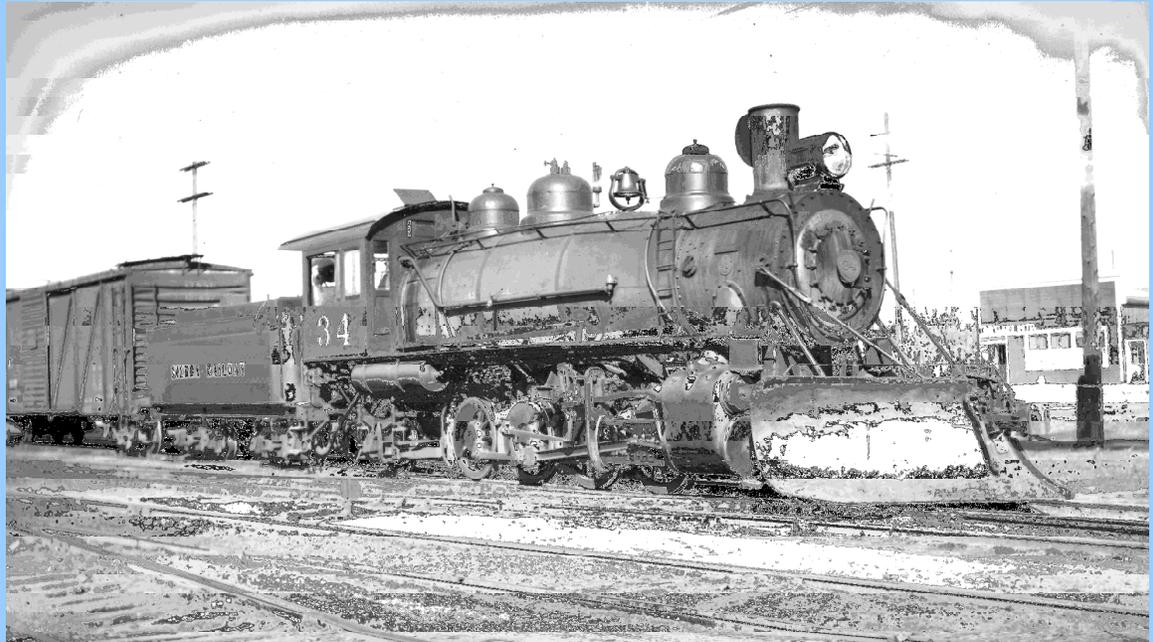
Special trains on Friday at  
11, 12, 1, 2 and 3  
The Strong Brothers will join  
us again to entertain from  
11am to 3pm

### July 9, 16, 23 & 30

Mid week excursion trains  
Noon & 2pm

### July 26

Rods to Rails event



## THE SIERRA RAILWAY AND THE HETCH HETCHY DAM

Dave Connery

Beginning about 1900, the City and County of San Francisco had been seeking municipal control over its water source and to expand the available water supply. Although initially thwarted in this effort, the 1906 earthquake and fire proved something had to be done to improve the water supply system of the city. After years of considerable opposition from many fronts, Congress passed the Raker Act in December of 1913, authorizing San Francisco to proceed with its plans to dam the Tuolumne River, creating a reservoir in the Hetch Hetchy Valley (located within Yosemite National Park) and build a system of aqueducts to transport the water and power facilities to utilize the hydro-electric potential inherent in the project. Work began in earnest in 1914, under the direction of City Engineer Michael O'Shaughnessy.

Much improved transportation to the dam site was needed and a railroad was determined to be the best alternative. Beginning at Mile Post 26 near the Rosasco ranch on the Sierra Railway, the line passed near the town site of Jacksonville, followed Moccasin Creek to the base of the Priest Hill and after climbing the hill passed by Groveland and thence along ridges to Hog Ranch (Mather) and on to the dam site. This alignment allowed the railroad to serve the site of the future Moccasin Power Plant, several of the planned construction camps for the aqueduct excavation as well as the dam itself. The railroad was constructed by contractor Frederick Rolandi, who finished the 68 mile line in October 1917. Railroad and initial construction headquarters were established in Groveland and the railroad was operated by the city itself as a common carrier railroad. Sierra Rwy. Shays #10 and #11 were leased by Rolandi during construction and Sierra Shays #10 and #12 were leased at times (next page)

(continued) by the City & County of San Francisco during their operation of the railroad.

Of great importance to the Sierra was the hauling of an estimated 300,000 tons of construction materials and goods from Oakdale to Hetch Hetchy Junction. While the aqueduct tunneling produced all the gravel needed for the dam, huge quantities of cement (over 5,000 boxcar loads) were hauled from off line to the dam site, along with all the equipment and provisions for the men working on the dam, at Groveland and



at numerous construction camps along the route that were used to create the bore to carry the water from the dam to the San Joaquin Valley. Initially it was difficult to obtain workers and material due to World War I, but once the war was over work moved at a faster pace. The dam was completed in April 1923 but a great deal of work remained on the aqueduct and Moccasin power house. The railroad continued to operate to serve these needs, although after the dam was completed nearly all movement on the railroad was by a fleet of motor cars and rail trucks, including HHRy #19, now at Railtown. During this time, the focus of construction activity switched to a new headquarters, first at Moccasin and then Livermore, as the pipeline and aqueduct crossed the San Joaquin Valley, tunneled under the Livermore Range and eventually reached the shores of the San Francisco Bay, through the longest tunnel in the world.

In the original design, O'Shaughnessy Dam was engineered to be eventually raised by 85 feet which would increase its storage capacity by more than 75%. While the need for this was still years in the future, the Great Depression provided an opportunity to complete this increase at very favorable terms for the citizens of San Francisco. Under the State Emergency Relief Act (SERA) and later the Works Progress Administration (WPA) it became possible to provide work for the unemployed masses with state and federal government financial assistance. To effect this new construction effort it was necessary to rehabilitate the Hetch Hetchy Railroad, which had seriously deteriorated, and which the city undertook. To operate the railroad this time (the steam locomotives operated originally by the city had been sold once the heavy construction work on the original dam had been completed) a contract was put out to bid and the Sierra Railway won over the bid by the city employees. This was critical work for the Sierra, having gone into receivership in May 1932, after the closing of the Pickering and West Side Lumber Companies. With the addition of the Hetch Hetchy mileage the Sierra reached its greatest extent, a total of over 140 miles. With this operation the Sierra had to learn to deal with some new problems. The highest point on the Sierra was 2,900 feet while the Hetch Hetchy's Poopenaut Pass was over 5,000 feet, imposing some very severe weather conditions during winter months. One of the stalwart locomotives regularly used on the Hetch Hetchy line was Sierra #34, now stored out of service in the Railtown roundhouse. Sierra locomotive #36, as well as smaller locomotives #18, #20 and #32, were also used to operate the Hetch Hetchy. The contract provided considerable work for the Sierra for over 3 years and was a critical factor in bridging the railroad through these very difficult economic times. Today the Hetch Hetchy remains a controversial project while at Railtown we can be thankful the Sierra's operation there in the late 1930's helped preserve the historic remnants of the railroad we so proudly operate and display.

**Greeters Wanted!**

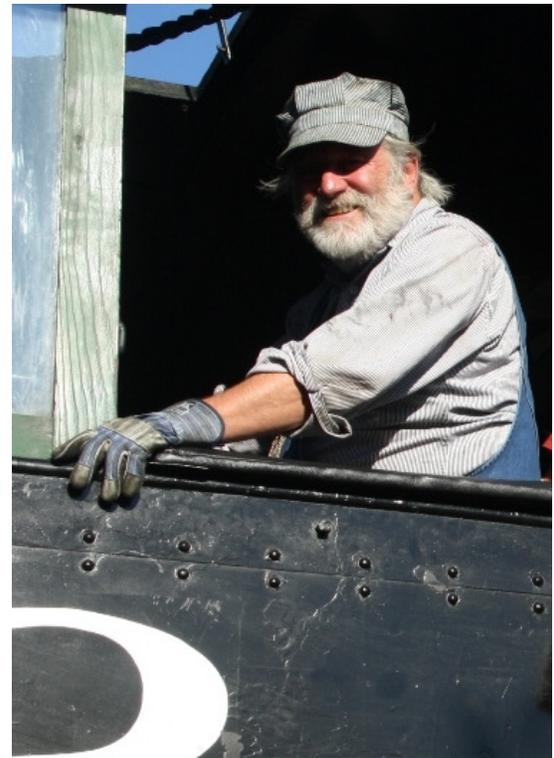
We are often short of volunteer greeters. Don't want to be a Tour Guide or Car Host? Consider greeting. Greeters are most often the first persons to meet our visitors as they arrive at Railtown. They help orient visitors when they first arrive at our park, directing them to the ticket window or the bathrooms. But it's far more than that. Greeters may wear railroad worker denims or 1897 era costuming. They may stage in the Waiting Room, Carriage Room, Depot Store, loading platform or around the park. A very important part of the job is knowing and sharing our history (usually one on one). Nancy Bull (pictured) has led the way as a greeter 'pioneering' the membership table. On days which she is in, she'll set up the table not only with membership benefit information, but also with interpretive items (photographs and railroad related items), which become talking points with visitors as they walk by. Greeters are asked to be courteous and friendly at all times, making visitors feel welcomed and appreciated. You may also wave to train passengers as they depart or arrive back at the depot. You might also answer questions like 'where is the best restaurant?' or 'what else is there to see around here?'



So consider being a Greeter!

**Volunteer Profiles: Warren Smith**

"I think my generation is the last one to see main line steam." Warren has been a volunteer at Railtown since 1995. I was asking him about his past. He grew up in San Leandro only 150 yards from the Western Pacific Railroad tracks. He remembers steam. After 30 years as a boiler operator and supervisor at Chevron, Warren retired. After moving to Tuolumne County, his love of the railroad led him to come to Railtown. "It was Marge Lovingfoss who signed me up and put me to work the same day! I worked with Bill Gillaspie working on the cars (I think it was the 2901). Although I was a qualified steam locomotive engineer, I was told I had to work first as a Car Host, and I enjoyed doing it." Warren had volunteered at Niles Canyon since 1970 for the Pacific Locomotive Association. Their system is much the same as ours. You work your way up from brakeman to conductor to fireman, then engineer. "The first time I worked in the cab here, I found out I had a lot more to learn. The tracks are flat at Niles, but here you have curves and hills. If you can operate a steam locomotive here, you could pretty much go anywhere." Warren's other hobbies include his HO scale model railroad and train photography. "What do I like most about volunteering at Railtown? I like the people, the way it's currently being run, but most of all I like running and working the equipment for future generations." In 2009, Warren was given the special peer award "Legends of the Roundhouse". We all want to say thanks Warren for being here!





**PO Box 1250**  
**Jamestown, CA 95327**  
**Return Service Requested**

**TO:**



**Depot Store-** (209) 984-3953  
**Volunteer Desk-** (209) 984-4408  
**Volunteer Website-** <http://railtown.team.parks.ca.gov/volunteers>  
**Railtown Blog-** [www.railtown1897.wordpress.com](http://www.railtown1897.wordpress.com)  
**Newsletter Editor—** [Dave.Rainwater@parks.ca.gov](mailto:Dave.Rainwater@parks.ca.gov)  
**Crew Caboose-** (209) 984-0352



**Railtown Paid and Volunteer Staff Contact Information**

*(all area codes are 209)*

<b>Kim Baker</b> , Park Superintendent	984-4622	<a href="mailto:Kim.Baker@parks.ca.gov">Kim.Baker@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>George Sapp</b> , Railroad Restoration Lead Worker (DSLE)	774-6368	<a href="mailto:George.Sapp@parks.ca.gov">George.Sapp@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Lisa DeLacy</b> , State Park Curator I (DER)	984-3119	<a href="mailto:Lisa.DeLacy@parks.ca.gov">Lisa.DeLacy@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Diana Fisher</b> , Park Aide & Social Media Specialist	984-0352	<a href="mailto:Diana.Fisher@parks.ca.gov">Diana.Fisher@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Karen Kling</b> , Park Interpretive Specialist	984-8703	<a href="mailto:Karen.Kling@parks.ca.gov">Karen.Kling@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Ryan Richelson</b> , Maintenance Supervisor	984-3115	<a href="mailto:Ryan.Richelson@parks.ca.gov">Ryan.Richelson@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Rob Buchanan</b> , Park Maintenance Worker I	984-8702	<a href="mailto:Rob.Buchanan@parks.ca.gov">Rob.Buchanan@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Danny Taylor</b> , Park Maintenance Assistant	984-8702	<a href="mailto:Danny.Taylor@parks.ca.gov">Danny.Taylor@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Dave Rainwater</b> , Senior Park Aide & Volunteer Coordinator	984-4408	<a href="mailto:Dave.Rainwater@parks.ca.gov">Dave.Rainwater@parks.ca.gov</a>
<b>Carl Rudolph</b> , Fire Patrol Coordinator	586-9905	<a href="mailto:cakr@sonnet.com">cakr@sonnet.com</a>
<b>Karen Ethier</b> , Ticket Agent Coordinator	471-7525	<a href="mailto:kmethier@gmail.com">kmethier@gmail.com</a>
<b>Ron White</b> , Stationmaster Coordinator	551-7087	<a href="mailto:rbarryw@att.net">rbarryw@att.net</a>