



The TURNTABLE

October 2009

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

Important Dates

October 3rd-

Speeder Car Club visiting park and using turntable. 10:30-2:00 PM. Greeters and roving interpreters needed!

October 10th

Autumn Fest- Member day and kick-off for October events. Greeters and Roving Interpreters Needed!

October 12th

RR Operations Management Group Meeting 3pm

October 14th 10AM

Breakfast Picnic, Pinecrest Lake

October 20th

Field Trip to CSRM and Sacramento Shops

Mark the Date!

January 16th

Annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner

October Birthdays

George Sapp
Jim Stark
Jay McAusland
Bob West
Janet Hart
Dewey Barron

Ghosts in the Roundhouse

By Dave Rainwater

Of all the spooky ghost stories floating around Jamestown, none is more elusive than those of the Roundhouse at Railtown 1897 State Historic Park. If you ask any of our current workers, they grow very silent. It's like pulling teeth, trying to get them to share any of their experiences. And many experiences they have had! As one of our more recent workers put it, 'it is out of great respect to these 'ghosts', 'spirits' or whatever you wish to call it, that we won't talk about it. Respect? Respect for ghosts or apparitions? 'You can feel their presence when you first go in there in the mornings', one worker has said. 'Sometimes it makes the hair stand up on the back of your neck'. There is a lot of history, blood, sweat and tears associated with the many men who spent their days laboring for the Sierra Railway over the years. The very second you walk in there you can smell it. Ancient dirt and oil. Ancient iron horses parked there silently waiting for the next call to service. Maybe a railroad man can never stray far from the locomotive they loved and worked on for so much of their life. Go ahead, ask any long time railroad worker you know. It get's in your blood, your soul and your spirit. Once it does it's there forever. When the doors are open on either end there's a nice gentle breeze. You can almost hear them from the old days, hammering away on the blacksmith's anvil, or cursing as a worker tries to loosen a frozen bolt on the #28 for to make a repair. Or you can hear the grunts and groans as the men drop an axel off a locomotive, in order to change the tires. If you listen close, you might hear the whispering of the many whose lives, hopes and dreams passed through.

So what did happen to make our workers so quiet about these things? Maybe some are just embarrassed to go on record. Yes, it's true. Some folks just think you're crazy or hallucinating. I've left out anyone's names out of respect.

But actual sightings of individuals? Yes! Tools being moved and misplaced? Yes! Valves being turned off, with no explanation? Air hoses coming apart, jugs falling off tables? Yes to all! You could try to rationalize and explain away some of these things. But folks, these are things that have happened to normal, regular people like you and me. Most of our workers are professionals from all walks of life. Some have been with the railroad for years, others from different occupations. No, drunks, druggies or crazies here. You couldn't come near the Park if you were. So, there is a silent respect for the 'ghosts' of Jamestown's train roundhouse, and strange occurrences can and do happen here after all. Hmmm....

News and Notes

A Special Thank You this Month to-

- Larry Miller for repairing the broken chair in the 2901.
- Mike Warzee for showing up at just the right time to paint the driving wheels of the Sierra #3
- Jerry Tannhauser for researching, purchasing and installing a portable PA for car host use
- Laverne Coon for attending to all of the little details of the Wine and Cheese Benefit event
- Al Lehr for coming in and operating the historic Machine Shop for the John Muir Filming (and coordinating piano moving! And bathrooms for Wine and cheese. . .
- Dave Tadlock and Kevin Zimmerman for trekking to Sacramento to meet with the Sacramento Railroad Operations crew.
- Ron Sloan for making that locomotive shine
- Anthony LaNotte for agreeing to be the new crew caller for the Fire Chase!

Pinecrest Breakfast Picnic– 10AM October 14th

Join your fellow volunteers for a Pinecrest breakfast picnic. Look for us close to the amphitheatre. Bring something to add to breakfast. Pancakes and bacon already provided, contact Natalie Stier for questions 586-6367.

Jamestown Heritage Days Welcomes the Sonora Pass Wagon Train, Oct 18th

12am – 5pm starting 12am the Firing of the Anvil, BBQ music, ail opening
12:30 Authors reception, clogging, music, gold panning exhibition,
1:00 arrival Sonora Pass Wagon Train
1:30 Rocca Park – cloggers, music, BBQ

Help Wanted ! Join The Parade!

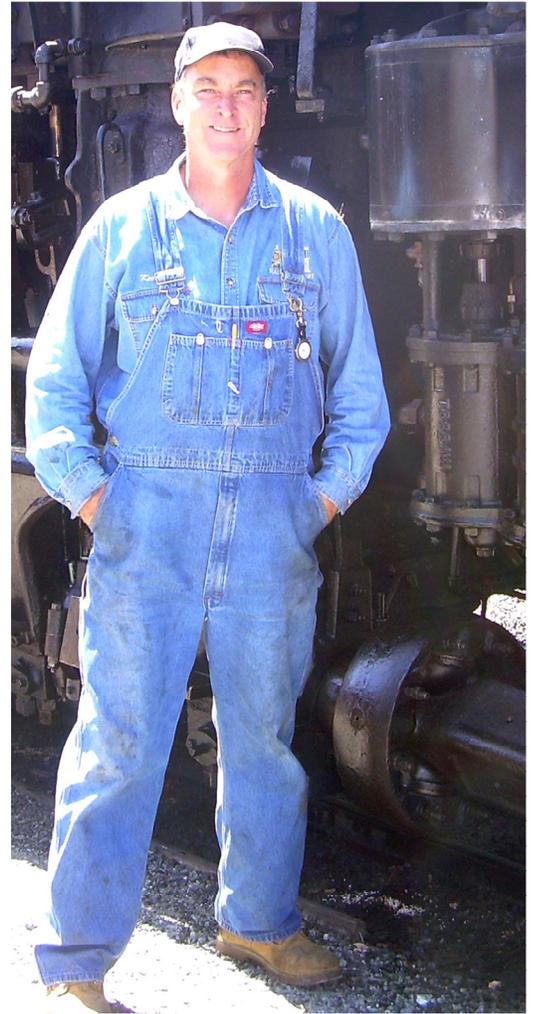
After eight years coordinating Railtown’s parade entries, Gary and Linda Hosman will be retiring from that honorable duty. Each year Railtown is entered in a number of parades, including Murphy’s Irish Days, the Sonora Round-up, 4th of July, the Logging Jamboree and Christmas Parades in Sonora, Twain Harte and Tuolumne City. We need a new *Grand Parade Master* coordinator. If you think you’d like to help please call Gary and Linda at 209-532-5313 or leave a message on our volunteer line 984-4408. You could join them in this year’s Christmas parades, just to see what is involved.

Ticket Agents Needed! Just a few weeks to go this season, but we need your help!

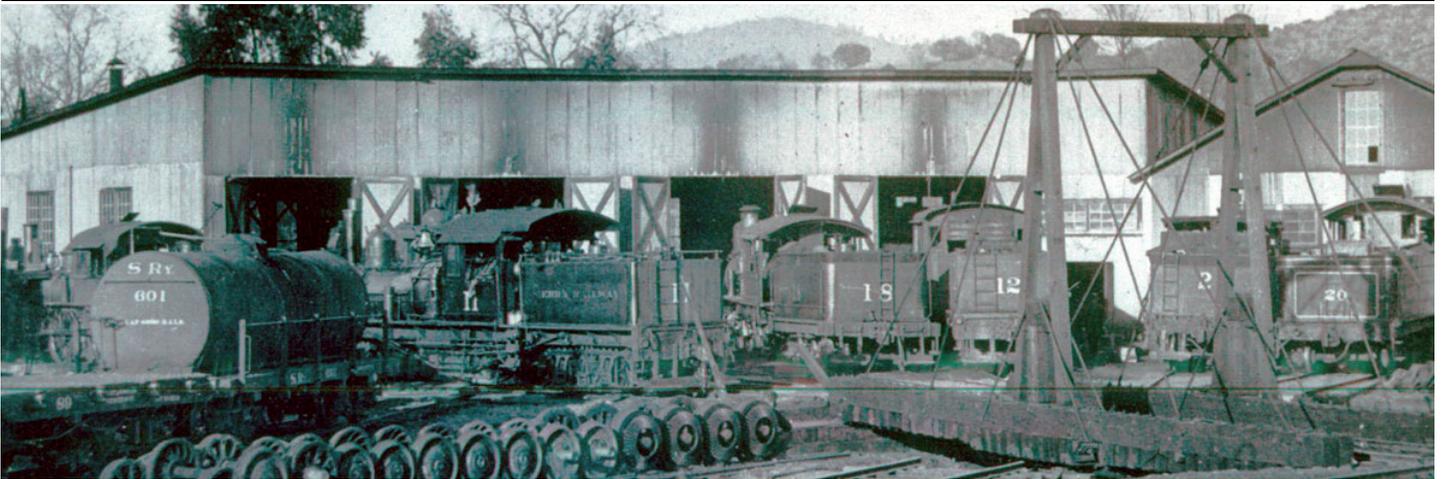
Congratulations to Jim and Pat Philips on their recent marriage!

Volunteer of the Month-Kevin Zimmerman

Our Volunteer of The Month is engineer Kevin Zimmerman. Kevin is a California native from Modesto. He and his lovely wife Jackie have lived in Sonora now for 12 years and have 3 kids. Kevin has been in the grocery business for 30 plus years. So how does one go from the grocery business to being an engineer on a steam locomotive? Kevin responded to an ad in the Union Democrat, in 1999, announcing "Volunteer Training Sessions" at Railtown. "I started out on Fire Chase and progressed thru the ranks from student brakeman to conductor and had a lot of good teachers along the way. Folks like Mike Reynolds, John Scott, Dave Barbosa, Ron Core as well as more familiar folks like Warren Smith, Joe Siemons, Jason Smith, Tom Bispo, John Nichols and Joe Bispo. I'm a grocery clerk by trade with no railroad background at all. As I progressed from Conductor to Fireman to Engineer, I'm proud to say that I am responsible for a large amount of Joe Bispo's grey hair! I finally qualified as an engineer in June of 2004. Spilt a switch on my qualifying run, could be the only one in Railtown history to do that and still get a card. I'm never allowed to forget this either! I work with a great group of folks at Railtown. We get the job done, safely and properly, and have a good time doing it. I have 3 kids, Matt, Anne and Mike, and 3 grandkids, Dylan, Kaitlyn and Ty. They love to come to Railtown and see 'Poppys Big Train' and the 'Boose with No Wheels' (Back To The Future Caboose). "



From all the volunteers and staff at Railtown, thank you Kevin!





RAILTOWN 1897
State Historic Park

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Jamestown, CA 95327

Return Service Requested

TO:



Docent Hotline- (209)-984-4408

Docent Site- <http://Railtown.team.parks.ca.gov/volunteers/default.aspx>

Railtown Blog- www.railtown1897.wordpress.com



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