

Train



Orders

July, 2007

WWW.SCRVRHS.COM

A publication of the Santa Clara River Valley Railroad Historical Society; News, Notes of interest and upcoming events.

PIRU EAST... Article & Photos by: Jim Mendrala, Director

I noticed driving to the SCRVRHS RR Visitor Center that grading was occurring along side of CA-126 just before Center St. east of Piru. To find out what was happening in Piru east of the old railroad bridge that crosses Piru Creek, I called Monica Noland, Management Analyst Redevelopment Agency, County Executive Office, County of Ventura. She told me that the construction east of the old 1902 Southern Pacific railroad bridge is part of a three phase project to enhance and improve the community of Piru.

Phase One is the installation of a pedestrian/bicycle walkway along the north side of the Center St. highway bridge. This walkway is made of wood and it allows pedestrians and bicyclists to travel over Piru creek without danger.

Phase Two is the grading of the railroad right-of-way and walkway from the Center St. highway bridge out to the Motocross area just before you get to highway CA-126. The railroad right-of-way owned by VCTC in this area is 100 feet wide, and over the past 13 years property owners have encroached upon the property. Grading of the property will reclaim the land that had been encroached upon. The installation of the pedestrian/bicycle walkway will be completed in a few months before starting on the next phase.

Phase Three is the installation of a new railroad bed, ballast and rails to take the tracks out to Rancho Camulos along side of CA-126. At this time no one could give me a definite answer as to the completion, but most thought it would take a few years.

The old railroad bridge (see photo right) was built and installed in 1902, by US Steel, formerly the Pittsburg Carnegie Steel Company, and is in great shape, according to Monica Noland, even though it is over 105 years old. Ventura County did a search for drawings of the bridge but, according to Monica, US Steel destroyed the drawings about a half century ago. According to an engineering study done by Ventura County, structurally the steel bridge is in very good shape even though the wooden beams and railroad ties are in bad shape or missing. The abutments however need repair from the earthquake damage in 1994. These abutments are made from hand hewn stone not reinforced concrete as is the method under current construction methods. The bridge is Ventura County Historical Landmark # 101.

After Southern Pacific (SP) was taken over by the Union Pacific (UP) in 1996, UP didn't want or need the Santa Paula branch. VCTC bought the railroad right-of-way up to the Los Angeles/Ventura County line. Ventura County is one of five counties that make up Metrolink.

In the winter of 1978, at Saugus, another railroad bridge over the south fork of the Santa Clara River was washed out by heavy rains. SP did not restore the bridge so service from Newhall/Saugus to Piru ceased and on November 15, 1978 the Saugus Depot was closed by the last agent, James Guthrie. The Saugus depot was subsequently moved on June 24, 1980 to its present Newhall location by the Santa Clara Valley Historical Society.

I drove out to Piru a few times to find the foreman in charge of the project but with the July 4th holiday, fireworks booth and RR Visitor Center duties I have not yet established contact with him to obtain more details and/or a time frame. My best estimate is guess is that rail service to Rancho Camulos is still several years in the future.

CAR ATTENDANT TRAINING TO BEGIN IN AUGUST

An informal class on car attendant training will take place on Fillmore & Western's excursion to Piru on August 15th. This will be the same train ride for members of SCRVRHS, and the instruction will begin at 6:00 p.m. To sign up, please call Fred Ervast, (805) 389-0787, or e-mail him at fastfinn@aol.com. Remember, if you are not certified in CPR yet, you must obtain that training to become a qualified car attendant.

SCRVRHS TO BE REPRESENTED AT THE VENTURA COUNTY FAIR

During the Ventura County Fair, SCRVRHS will staff the Fillmore & Western RR booth at the Ventura County Fair on Thursday, August 9th. The Society is looking for volunteers to help out that day. Please call Fred Ervast, (805) 389-0787, for more info or if you would like to volunteer. Also, SCRVRHS may be at the fair on another day, if there is enough response. By the way, the fair runs from August 1st through August 12th.

RAILROAD ART WORK ON SALE AT THE VISITOR CENTER

Thanks to numerous donations by members and non-members, the Society has for sale numerous prints and lithographs of railroad scenes in the Railroad Visitor Center Gift Shop. All are framed and are reasonably priced. They are great for decorating a child's bedroom or as an excellent gift for that railroad buff that you know. Speaking of donations, the Society is always willing to accept donations of books about railroading, technical or historical, and videos about railroads and trains for its library.

Articles by Fred Ervast, Director



DISPATCH BOARD

JULY & AUGUST

Join us for breakfast Saturday mornings at 8:00 a.m.
Mama Sue's Café ~ Santa Clara & Central — Fillmore

July 11	Board Meeting (<u>Postponed from July 4th</u>) 7:00 p.m. Visitor Center
July 18	General Meeting (<u>Postponed from July 11th</u>) 7:00 p.m. Visitor Center
August 1	Board Meeting 7:00 p.m. Visitor Center
August 4th, 5th 11th, 12th	Metrolink Trains to Ventura Co. Fair ~Car Attendants will be needed!
August 15th	<u>New Member Piru Train</u> <u>6:00 P.M.</u> Bring a prospective member for a free train trip to Piru courtesy of the F&W and SCRVRHS. <u>Note: this train trip is in lieu of the August 8th, General Meeting.</u>
September 5th	Board Meeting 7:00 Visitor Center
September 12th	General Meeting 7:00 Visitor Center

Editor: Ron Lewis, President

Contributing Members: Jim Mendrala; Fred Ervast; Gary Phillips

AROUND THE ROUNDHOUSE . . .

2007 FIREWORKS SALES...

We had a very successful campaign this year in our Fireworks Sales Project. Final sales numbers are not in yet, however, I want to thank the many, many member volunteers who came out to make the set up, sales operation and tear down go smoothly. Our member participation was excellent and I wish to extend my "thanks" to you for helping SCRVRHS add to their restoration funds. Treasurer Fred Ervast Chaired the event for us and worked very hard to make the project a big success. Thank You Fred, for a job well done!!!

Ron Lewis, President

Nevada Northern Railway's Ghost Train



So what's so ghostly about the "Ghost Train"? There are a couple of variations to this theme. Originally it was in reference to Locomotive No. 40. From 1910 until 1941, Locomotive No. 40 was in daily passenger service between Ely and Cobro, Nevada. The story that's told around the rail yard is that during WW II, metal was needed for the war effort, and Locomotive No.40 avoided being

sold for scrap because the railroad workers hid it anytime the Government scrap metal "bean counters" were in the area.

Today, the name alludes to the fact that they are keeping the past alive at the Nevada Northern Railway Museum. At one time, the sight of a steam engine pulling a train was as common and expected as having a piece of grandma's home baked apple pie. However, that's yesteryear and today sights such as these are "ghostly" views of a grand old era. The history of the Nevada Northern Railway extends back to the early days of copper mining. For nearly 100 years, the NNR has hauled both passenger service and copper ore. Today, locomotive 93 (1909 Alco 2-8-0 Consolidation) and locomotive 40 (1910 Baldwin 4-8-0) are keeping the past alive as they make their runs up Robinson Canyon to Copper Flat, the site of the Kennecott mine. The NNR Museum comprises a forty-acre facility that includes a Depot and full service shops; today it is the largest and most complete steam era maintenance facility left in the United States.

Article & Photos by Gary Phillips, Treasurer



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