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541-582-3912

Vice President: Tony Johnson
541-944-9176

Secretary: Pat Butler
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Treasurer: Paul Sheedy
541-471-3016

Const. Superintendent: Lee Parrish
541-659-2555

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541-855-5485

Rules of the Month
Rule 1-13: The engineer is the final authority as to who may or may not ride on the train, including the train crew.

Rule: 1-14: All engineers shall have a functioning radio and head-set when pulling the public.

Rule 1-15: All conductors shall have a functioning radio and head-set when pulling the public.

Rule 1-16: The Board of Directors may restrict or suspend from duty any operating personnel who consistently violate safety rules.

Rule 1-17: Public passengers shall be carried only on equipment approved by the Board of Directors.

NEXT SOLS MEETING

Monday, Oct. 28th at 7:15 P.M. inside the model railroad clubhouse. There will be an opportunity for you to sign up for assigned jobs for the upcoming railroad show. We hope you will be in attendance.

Minutes from the Sept 23, 2013 SOLS Membership Meeting

Meeting called to order at 7:15 pm. Twenty-two members and two guests present. The minutes from the August meeting were read and approved.

Dale presented the sign up sheet for the upcoming Railroad Show volunteer jobs. The Telegraph Club needs help. If anyone does a job for them, the time can be donated to the Telegraphers, or the job can be credited to the Live Steamers. If a volunteer signs up for Security that volunteer must be able bodied; that is, able to walk up and down the stairs etc.

If you volunteer for parking lot duty, be sure you bring rain gear if the forecast is for rain. If anyone volunteers to take an additional job the Live Steamers will get credit for that job.

TREASURER REPORT: In the absence of Paul Sheedy, Dale gave the Treasurer's Report. That report is attached to these minutes. Passenger count for last run day was: Thomas 306, Mainline 1716. The passenger count was down somewhat because of cool rainy weather. Total passenger count so far this year: 31,026.

TRACK SUPERINDENENT: Track maintenance was centered on several yard tracks in the station area. Many of the original cedar ties no longer held rail screws. This was corrected by turning the ties over and securing the rail. About 10% of these Port Orford ties needed to be replaced. Two yard switches and one mainline switch were adjusted. Rain gutters were cleaned out and Elvin and Tony have begun the annual task of picking up leaves and pods. If anyone would like to donate some time to helping out with this task, just come on out to the park. A great thank you goes to Rick Aubin for trimming the trees.

ELECTRICAL REPORT: Rocky said the signal system finally dried out at the end of the last run day and started working correctly. He pointed out that Wednesdays were his work day at the park.

ROUNDHOUSE REPORT: Art said everything is running smoothly... for now at least.

BEANERY REPORT: Terri said that bags of popcorn were the big seller last run day. At times the line at the Beanery was as long as the line waiting for a train ride.

The names of Steve Bruff and Herb Warren were added to the Memorial monument.

Dale reminded the conductors the importance of protecting the rear of the train. Anytime a train stops for an emergency on the mainline, conductors need to remember to "red flag" the rear of

[Minutes continued] the train. If a train derails and the engineer needs to assist in putting it back on the track, he should call for help, therefore, freeing him to either “red flag” or assist the engineer. Safety is always first and foremost.

A locomotive, similar to “Tinkerbelle”, has become available along with about 150 feet of track. Glen Pfister, who just recently joined the HO club, has purchased the entire package. He is donating the use of the locomotive, cars, rails and assorted other items to the Live Steamers. As requested by Glen, Art Turner will paint the engine similar to his own Western Pacific Railroad locomotive. Tony will inventory and disassemble the track. Art will “go over the engine”.

Former SOLS member John Powell has passed away. His widow would like to have a memorial at the park. It was moved and seconded that we adjourn at 8:00 P.M.

2013 RAILROAD SHOW The 36th annual Rogue Valley Railroad Show will be held this year on November 30-December 1 inside the Medford Armory. This is the one big fundraising event held each year for the Railroad Park.

This special event focuses on the five clubs which make up the Railroad Park, and it also focuses the public to the fun of the railroad hobby with operating model railroad layouts from other clubs, historic railroad artifacts, model railroad manufacturers, vendors, and much more.

Each year all five Park clubs are each assigned a specific number of hours to help staff various “show jobs” to make the show a success. In addition to the jobs assigned to the Live Steamers, four of the clubs are asked to help fill the “show job” assignments to the Morse Telegraph Club. The members of this small group usually have their extended family members fill the assigned jobs, however this year many family members will be out of town visiting other relatives during the Thanksgiving weekend. Anyone filling one of the Morse Telegraph assignments can donate their hours to that club or to the Live Steamers for more credit towards our share of the show’s proceeds.

At the September meeting some SOLS members signed up early for some of our job assignments, but there are many more assignments remaining to be filled. Dale will bring the sign up sheet to the last two Run Days (Oct. 13 & Oct. 27). You can also find out which assignments are still available by contacting Dale at 541-582-3912 or via e-mail at dpbutler@budget.net. You can also have your name place on a list to fill assignments for the Morse Telegraph Club.

RAILROAD PARK NEWS Our two Run Days in September surprised us by being slower than usual. The weather for the Sept 8th Run Day was 93 degrees (compared to 83 degrees for the same run day last year) The total passengers carried that day was 2,773 (down 110 passengers from last year). The surprise was the Sept. 22 Run Day with only 2,022 passengers carried on a cloudy 68 degree day. Last year it was 2,735 on a warm 81 degree day. It appears this will be our second busiest year on record.

Our trackage is in very good condition on account of near daily maintenance and help to me from Bruce Kelly. We’ve only had to “tweak” the mainline for train operations during the last two months, so we’ve concentrated on tie work in the main yard in front of the station. As reported in our minutes a large number of the original Port Orford cedar ties could no longer hold the rails down tight, so we simply pulled them out and turned them upside down and secured the rails down tight. This is great wood to work with. These ties are least 25 years old and will last another 15 or so years in the yard after being flipped over.

If there is a downside to our layout it is the signal system. Rocky, Dean, Phil, and Skip had it in good working order until excessive heat made the rails expand enough to bridge some of

insulated joints; followed by rain that short circuited much of the system. The 12-volt system is dependable most of the time, but bad weather conditions bring challenges to the signal department. It's nothing new, and they will get it back to perfect working order.

The City of Medford reassessed their budget for the pavilion area outside our gates. Instead of the planned total rebuilding of the structure they chose only to replace the large support beams and some small rotted areas. The pavilion still has the very faded and incorrectly lettered "National Historic Railroad Park" sign on top. We were promised a new sign lettered "Medford Railroad Park". Maybe we'll get it someday.

Rick Aubin used his previous experience working for the U.S. Forest Service to carefully trim many of the trees around our layout. He did a lot more than trim the lower branches of a few trees; he also trimmed some very large branches from the Black Walnut tree that extended over the station beanery building. Not only does our area of the park look great, it also translates into far fewer leaves, walnut pods, and small branches to clean up during the off season. Elvin has all the trimmings in large piles ready for disposal by John Polacek and his trailer. We can always use extra help in cleaning up debris during the winter.

Operating trains for special parties is a important source of income, and a great chance to inform the public on who we are, and show off the Railroad Park. I believe last year we operated trains for 129 special parties. Even though we changed our philosophy by no longer hosting parties during "non-run day Sundays" and no more than two parties on a single day, we will end up hosting 118 parties this year, plus the income from sales and donations during these parties will likely match last year's record.

We have at least eight more parties to run in October, and one in November. This is a great opportunity for you to operate trains in a relaxed atmosphere and educate the public. If you haven't done this before, or it's been a long time since you have, contact me [Tony Johnson] at 541-944-9176 and I'll let you choose from the available dates.

A SURPRISE ACQUISITION Last month I was approached by Mary Beaton of Grants Pass, OR. Her late father was Julius Blenkle. Julius was a SOLS member for many years until poor health sidelined him a few years ago. After his recent passing Mary and her sister offered to us their dad's remaining 7.5" gauge tracks, locomotive, small self-propelled hand cars, and extra parts. They also offered Julius' HO gauge equipment to the Rogue Valley Model Railroad Club, which they accepted. It was their wish that the equipment would join their dad's other equipment at our park because he loved this place so much.

As background Julius Blenkle had built three small, Model SW-8 switcher-type diesel locomotives years ago. One of these is our "Tinkerbelle" work train locomotive. Another was acquired years ago by Rocky & Billie, which he uses for his signal work train. This left the last remaining switcher stored in Grants Pass.

I made an appointment to see and photograph the equipment and found the switcher looking pretty good after last operated about three years ago. The tracks consisted of a tight circle, with short straight sections, two switches, and a ramp for loading/unloading the train onto a truck for movement to Live Steamer operations. I estimated the total trackage at around 150 feet. The rails showed no wear and the ties in good shape. There were two small passenger cars not compatible to our equipment, but can be converted to other uses.

A week later Mary gave me a quote on how much they wanted for all the track, locomotive, cars, and so on. It was a reasonable price, but the question was did our club want any or all of the collection. I told Mary I would show photos to the SOLS Board for consideration.

Now new SOLS member Bruce Kelly enters into the picture. Bruce is also the president of the Rogue Valley Model Railroad Club. After picking up Julius' HO gauge model railroad equipment he mentioned the live steam equipment being offered for sale to us. It was then

that new model railroad club member Glen Pfister said he thought it would ideal if Julius' equipment came to our club, so he offered to purchase it from the Blenkle family. Wow!

After discussions with both parties the deal was made. For now Glen will retain ownership of the equipment, but will donate it to our club at a later time. Now everyone wins!

On Sept. 24th Bruce and I went to Grants Pass and unbolted all the track except for what the locomotive and cars were parked on, and also the loading ramp. We took all the smaller items to the park at the end of the day.

The following day, Bruce, Rick Aubin, Art Turner, David Turner and myself came back to load all the track panels, the locomotive, and the two cars. In less than one hour we loaded the locomotive and cars in Art's pickup truck, and removed all the track for movement in Rick's trailer. We also dismantled the wood loading ramp for disposal by Elvin on his next run to Bio Mass. The whole process couldn't have been any smoother. Thank you very much Glen for making the acquisition for our club. And I want to add a big thank you to the Blenkle family for wanting their dad's equipment to come to a place where it will be used and appreciated.

As this issue goes to press all the tracks and the two cars are stored on the ground and on two of the club's steaming bays. Art took the locomotive to his house for inspection and evaluation. He said the carburetor was gummed up from not running in three years. He has since cleaned it. Overall he believes the locomotive can be made operable for \$100-\$200. He estimates another \$100 or so to paint the locomotive into the Western Pacific livery Glen has requested.

In addition to all of the above, Glen donated two railroad items to our club. The first is a 44" x 41" square metal Western Pacific Railroad "Feather Rive Route" sign. It is now mounted on the track side of the No. 4 Car barn where passengers riding our trains can see it. The second item is a complete full-size "Railroad Crossing" sign made of aluminum.

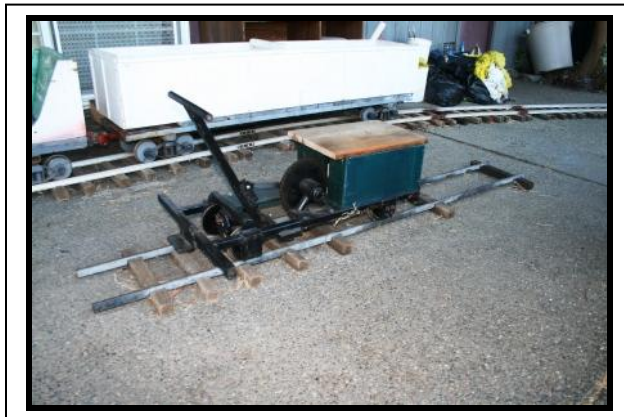
Except for the switches and a few 10-foot long straight track panels, most of the curved panels are short 4-to 5-foot sections, and too sharp a curvature for our use. So during the off season I will remove the ties from the rails and run the rails through our rail bender and reduce the curvature or make them straight again, depending on our projected needs. The ties will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Bruce couldn't help himself and tried operating the one assembled tiny "hand-operated" speeder car. After replacing the broken chain he found out, on account of the design, that it works easier running backward than forward. We'll have some fun puttering around the layout with these cars.

FORMER MEMBER PASSES Many of you knew John Powell of White City. John's membership with SOLS went way back to the beginning years of our Railroad Park. He was also a member of the Southern Oregon Chapter-NRHS [SOC-NRHS], and a member of the Rogue Valley Model Railroad Club. John hadn't been a SOLS member for many years, but still was active with the other clubs and could always be found volunteering during Run Days.

During the night of Friday, April 20th John died in his sleep of an apparent heart attack while attending a Christian conference in Yreka. That evening John gave a stirring testimony during a meeting and all seemed well as a neighbor of this editor said goodnight as John walked to his room. When John didn't show up for breakfast my neighbor found someone to open John's room, where she found he has expired during the night.

This was shocking news to those who knew John. Just last month he was made the president of the SOC-NRHS and was looking forward to his new duties, but are now left unfulfilled. John was only 52 years old and leaves his wife Sue and family behind to carry on.



GRANTS PASS, OR – SEPT. 24, 2013 – PACKING UP LOCOMOTIVE, CARS AND TRACKS

[TOP, LEFT] Julius Blenkle's switcher locomotive. [TOP, RIGHT] The two passenger cars. [MIDDLE, LEFT] A completed hand-powered track speeder. [MIDDLE, RIGHT] Part of the curved track layout before removal. [BOTTOM, LEFT] A next door neighbor watches as Bruce Kelly, Tony Johnson, and Art Turner push the locomotive into Art's truck. [BOTTOM RIGHT] Dave Turner watches his dad, Art secure one of the passenger cars and the locomotive to his pickup truck.