

NARROW GAUGE JOURNAL

FALL 2024



This issue's feature article:
- *Narrow Gauge Railroads
in Guatemala*



Where Volunteers and History Come Together

THE RAILROAD MUSEUM AT ARDENWOOD

is operated by the Society for the Preservation of Carter
Railroad Resources (SPCRR), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.
All donations and memberships and donations are tax deductible

The *Narrow Gauge Journal* provides historic information on Carter Bros. Builders of Newark, California; the South Pacific Coast Railroad, and other regional narrow gauge railroads; as well as updates for our members, volunteers, and the general public about our special events, activities, and volunteer opportunities. If you have any questions or comments, you can reach a staff member by email at info@spcrr.org or call 510-508-8826. Our Museum's mission is the preservation, restoration and interpretation of regional narrow gauge railroad history—including Carter Bros., a pioneer railroad car builder in California. We are located at Ardenwood Historic Farm, 34600 Ardenwood Blvd, Fremont, CA. Donations are greatly appreciated through our website, or by mail to SPCRR, PO Box 783, Newark, CA 94560. Trains operate on Thursday, Friday, Sunday; Monday holidays and special events from April to mid-November each year See our Calendar on the last page for upcoming events. To make a donation, become a member, employment opportunities, or for more information please click on the links below.

SPCRR Contact Information:

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Cover Photo: *The Carter Bros. Works, Newark California, 1913* - Bruce MacGregor Collection.
From here the Carter Bros. sent out railroad rolling stock both north and south along the Pacific Coast.

Narrow Gauge Railroads of Guatemala before the IRCA

by John F. Hall, SPCRR Historian

I am going to talk about somewhere a little bit different this issue. Traveling far south to the hot steaming coastal jungles of the Pacific side of 1878 Guatemala with aromatic coffee growing in the warm and wet foothills. Imagine a string of mules traveling on muddy paths slowly bringing sacks of coffee beans down out of the hills to ships waiting to take it all over the world. Capitalists from San Francisco, smelling a profitable business deal, decided it was time to build a few railroads...

Guatemala in the 1870s was different than it is today. The land form is still the same, but the Pacific Coast jungles now only exist in small spots with the rest of the lowlands cleared for agriculture. The land is terraced by numerous lava flows with flat lowlands stepping up to the foothills and beginning of the coffee country. Another step brings one to the highlands where the majority of the population lives away from the lowland heat and humidity. It's that first step that created the need for an improved transportation method. Coffee grew best at an elevation of 3500 feet. The only way to

get the coffee beans to a world that couldn't get enough of them was to put sacks of beans on the backs of mules, or people, and walk them down the hills and through the lowland jungle to ships.

The Pacific Ocean off Guatemala is very shallow. Ocean going ships had to moor one mile off the coast. Lighters were used to transfer cargo back and forth to the shore. On the Caribbean side there was a deep water port, but it was 200 miles of lowlands and then steep mountains before reaching the Pacific Coast coffee country. It was faster and cheaper to put the freight on a ship and sail 1,000 miles to Panama, crossing on the Panama Railroad, then back up the coast on a new ship another 1,000 miles to Guatemala, or farther to New Orleans, New York, and Europe. In the mid-1870s San Francisco was a bustling city. Not as large as New York but just as important for the west coast. San Francisco was the financial center for all of the far western states; brought about by the discovery of gold in California and the later discovery of silver in Nevada. San Francisco was teeming with money.

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The Guatemala Central Railroad, circa 1910.

Library of Congress

Capitalists were continually looking for opportunities to invest their money. One example was Alfred E. Davis taking over the failing Santa Clara Valley Railroad in 1876 and beginning to build the South Pacific Coast Railroad.

Coffee was in high demand in the West as well as all over the world. Guatemala was 2,700 miles down the coast by scheduled steamship. The California capitalists and others who had bought coffee ranches in Central America needed an efficient mode of transportation to get their products to market. Mules and men could only do so much.

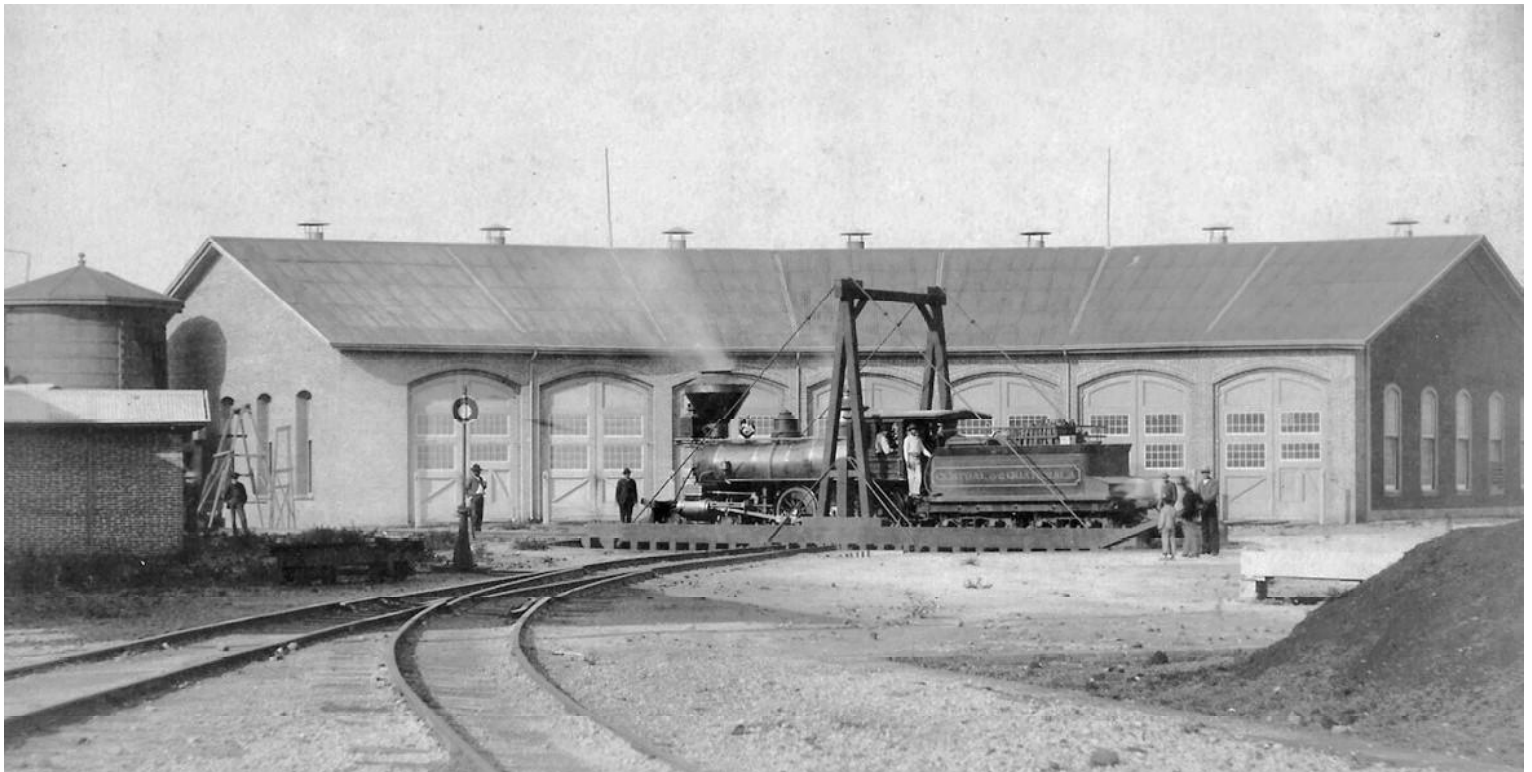
Guatemala Central Railroad

Guillermo Nanne, a citizen of Costa Rica and Superintendent of a Costa Rican railroad, came to California in 1878 looking for investors for a new railroad in Guatemala. The Government of Guatemala had just given him a concession to build a railroad from San José, on the Pacific Coast, to Escuintla, 28 miles inland into coffee country. In October 1878 the Guatemala Central Railroad was incorporated as a California corporation to build and operate a railroad in Guatemala. His backers included George C. Perkins of Goodall, Perkins & Co., owners of the Pacific Coast Steamship Co.; and Collis P. Huntington of the Southern Pacific Railroad.

Surveying and grading a railroad through a tropical rain forest is no small task. What took the U.S. transcontinental railroad builders one day in April 1869 (10 miles of track), took months in the rain forests of 1878 Guatemala.

A ship-load of railroad supplies and 20,000 redwood ties from California left San Francisco in February 1879 for Guatemala. The meter gauge Guatemala Central was opened to Escuintla in June 1880, a month after the South Pacific Coast Railroad opened to Santa Cruz. At the time of opening, the GC had two Baldwin locomotives, both meter gauge: a 2-6-0, No. 1, *J. Rufino Barrios*; and a 4-4-0, No. 2, *San José de Guatemala*, both were shipped from Philadelphia by vessel.

The gauge of the Guatemala Central Railroad was changed to three feet with the railroad's extension to Guatemala City. In May 1882, the 3-foot gauge Central American Pacific Railway and Transportation Company was incorporated in New York for the purpose of extending the Guatemala Central Railroad from Escuintla to Guatemala City. C. P. Huntington and other Directors of the Southern Pacific were the controlling stock holders. A 0-6-0T 3-foot gauge locomotive, built by Prescott-Scott's Union Iron Works in San Francisco,



Guatemala Central Roundhouse with Locomotive No. 2, Escuintla, Guatemala, circa 1884.

*Greg Maxwell Collection
continued next page*



Guatemala Central turn-backs near Escuintla. This section was originally a 4.5% grade rebuilt to 3.5% in 1889.



Guatemala Central turn-backs approaching Guatemala City.

was delivered to the CAPR&T after being declined by another railroad. This locomotive was instrumental in constructing a railroad with two abrupt elevation changes requiring two sets of turn-backs to climb the grade to Guatemala City from Escuintla. Both sets of turn-backs defined the odd shape of residential subdivisions built 120 years later. The original grade had a 5 mile section just east of Escuintla with a 4.5% grade. In 1889 this grade was reduced to 3.5% by adding more turn-backs and a longer path.

The extension of the Guatemala Central to Guatemala City was opened on July 19, 1884. The original section of the Guatemala Central Railroad was converted to 3-foot gauge and merged with the CAPR&T. A third GC locomotive came from California... the 3-foot gauge Santa Cruz Railroad's *Jupiter* was sent south after November 1883 when the Santa Cruz Railroad was converted to standard gauge by its new owners, the Southern Pacific Railroad. Now Guatemala City had quick access to the markets of the world via the railway to the Pacific coast.



Guatemala Central Railroad.

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The parts for a complete set of brick buildings were shipped from San Francisco to the Guatemala Central Railroad in June 1884. While the *Oakland Tribune* newspaper did not provide any additional details, the two brick buildings shown in the photographs in this article probably were part of the shipment.

The Guatemala Central built a branch from the original route about halfway between Puerto San Jose and Escuintla. The branch proceeded northwest hugging the foothills near the bottom of coffee country. It reached Santa Lucia in June 1895, and then Mazatenango in 1904. Here it connected to the Champerico & Northern Transportation Company which by that time, under new ownership, had been renamed the Ferrocarril de Occidental del Guatemala (Guatemala Western).

Champerico & Northern Transportation Company

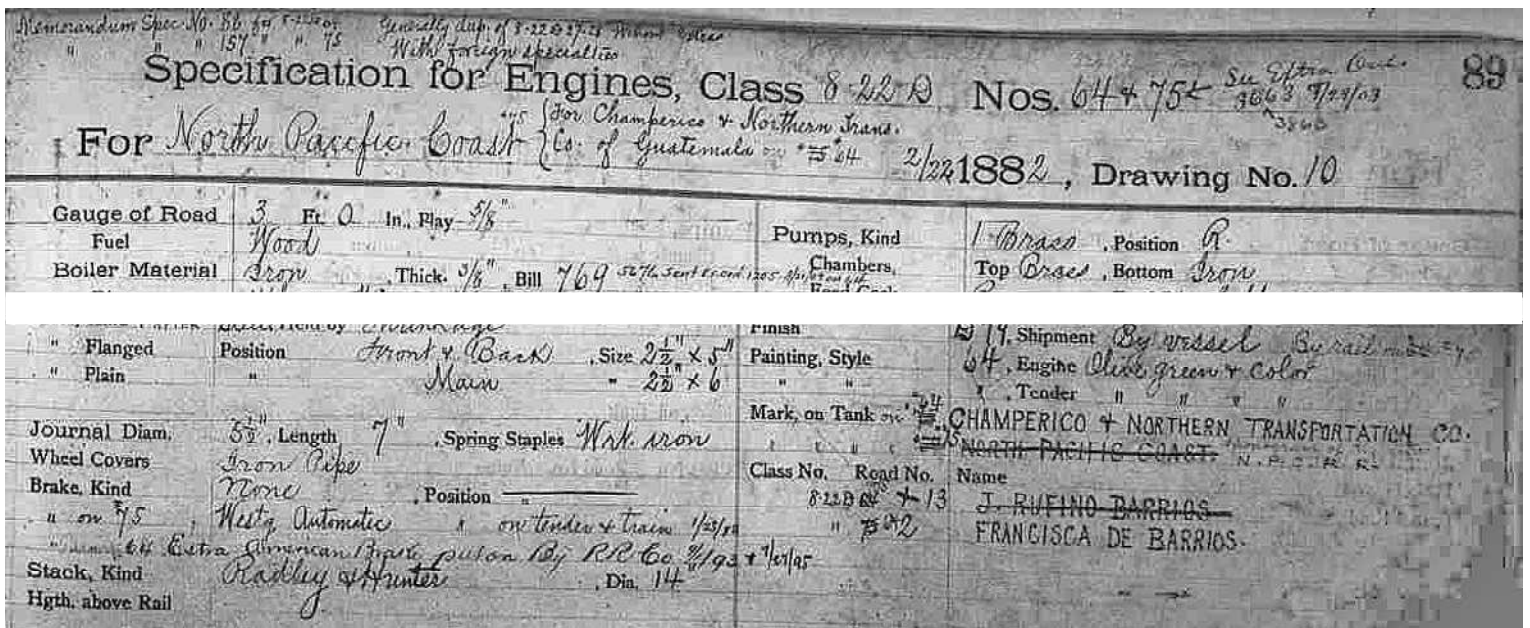
In June 1882, Commission merchants Thomas Bell & Company, San Francisco coffee brokers, along with banker Alfred Borel, incorporated the Champerico & Northern Transportation Company to build and operate a 3-foot gauge railroad from Champerico on the Pacific coast to points inland in Guatemalan coffee country. This railroad did not compete with the GC because at that time there was 75 miles of thick tropical jungle between them. They each accessed their own separate coffee growing areas.

The Champerico & Northern Transportation partially built with redwood ties from California was opened to Retalhuleu, 28 miles inland, in July 1883. Large quantities of coffee began to flow to the iron wharf at Champerico.

The C&NT opened with two locomotives. The first locomotive, if my recent research is correct, was the North Pacific Coast Railroad's #10 *Bloomfield*. I have found the smoking gun but not the fingerprints to confirm that the following is correct. In February 1882 the Baldwin Locomotive Works received an order from the North Pacific Coast Railroad for three locomotives—one for the NPC, and two for the C&NT. The specification sheet for these locomotives has numerous cross-outs and additions identifying the locomotives. The end result of these order modifications was that the final order was for two 2-6-0 3-foot gauge locomotives—one for the NPC and one for the C&NT. The 1882 *Poor's Manual of Railroads* shows that the NPC lost a locomotive, and then in 1883 gained a locomotive.

Placing these two facts together with the knowledge that the NPC No. 10 *Bloomfield* did end up in Guatemala, it can be concluded that the NPC traded the *Bloomfield* for a new 2-6-0 which became NPC No. 13. Previous historians have reported that *Bloomfield* arrived in Guatemala in 1895. However there is a Baldwin Extra Order placed by a Guatemalan company dated 1891 showing that the *Bloomfield* was in Guatemala earlier than 1895. My conclusion is that the *Bloomfield* was delivered immediately in 1882, before the other locomotives were completed, in order for the C&NT to begin construction as soon as possible. Remember that third locomotive in the original order sheet? The 2-6-0 *J. Rufino Barrios* No. 3 was ordered in 1884 by the C&NT. J. Rufino Barrios was the President of Guatemala at the time of the opening of the railroads. His wife was Francisca De Barrios nee Aparicio. The Barrios and Aparicio families were part owners of the C&NT.

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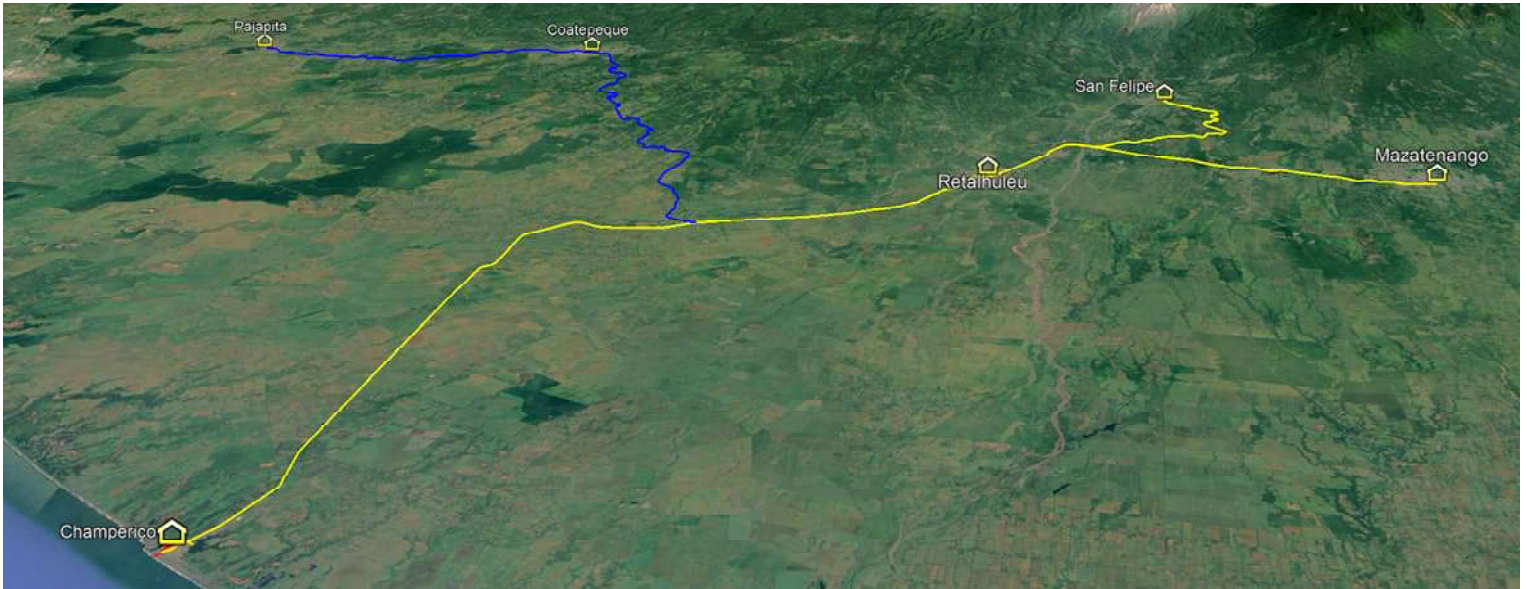


Top and bottom of the Baldwin Locomotive Specification, Vol. 11, Page 89, for NPC No. 13 and C&NT No. 1 and No. 2, 1882. DeGolyer Library, Southern Methodist University

Narrow Gauge Railroads of Guatemala - continued

In 1889 the C&NT was purchased by E. L. G. Steele & Company, San Francisco commission merchants. The original owners were financed by a French bank, while the second owners were financed with German funds. The railroad was renamed the Ferrocarril de Occidental del Guatemala (Guatemala Western). The railroad was

extended from Retalhuleu to San Felipe by 1895. A branch extension to Mazatenango was completed by 1902. The Guatemala Central purchased the Guatemala Western in February 1910. The Guatemala Central then built the Pan American Railway connection to the Ferrocarril Ocós which completed in November 1910.

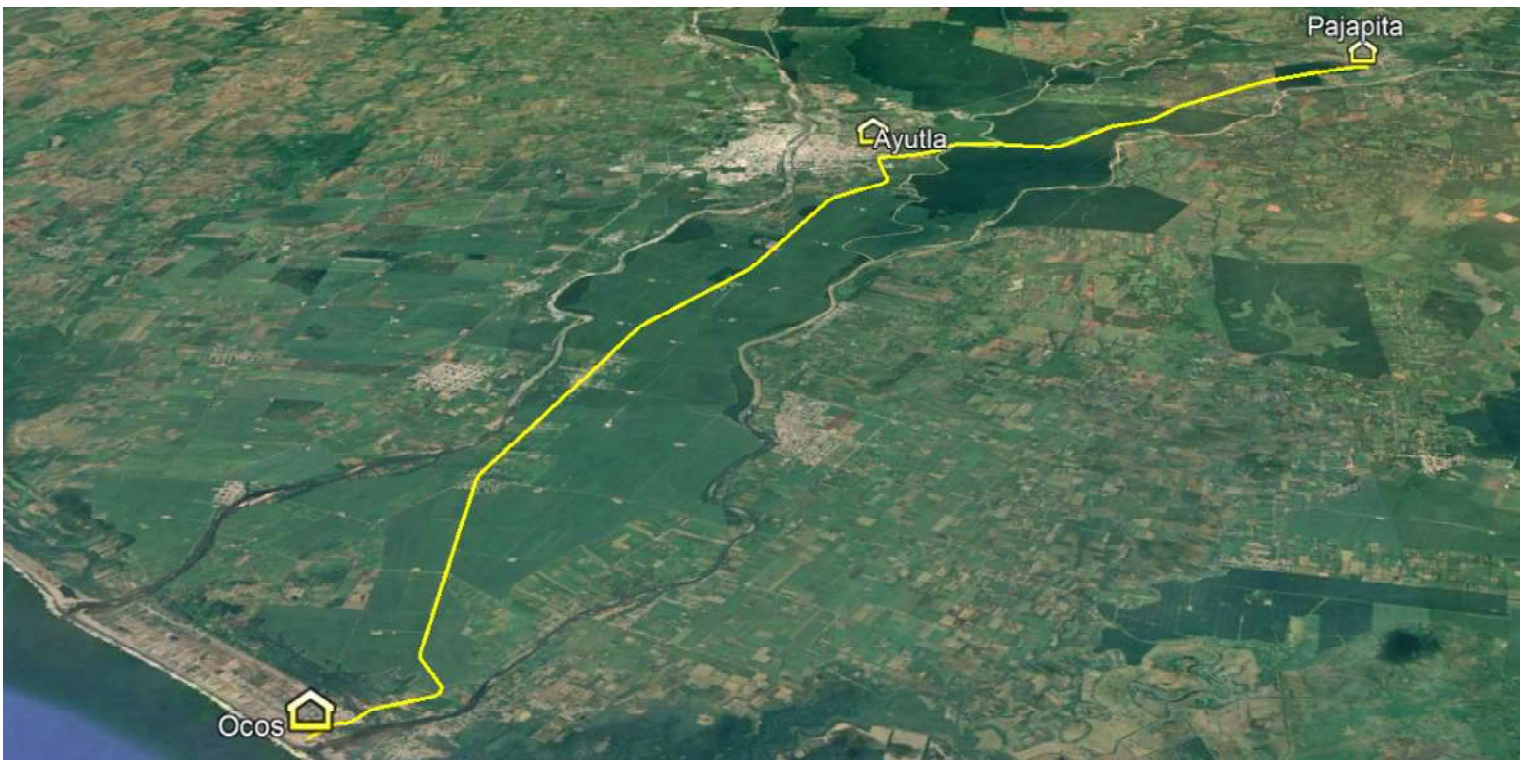


Champerico & Northern Transportation Company Railroad and Ferrocarril de Occidental del Guatemala. Blue line is the Pan American Railway connection built by the Guatemala Central to the Ferrocarril Ocós.

Ferrocarril Ocós

Californians were not the only people interested in Guatemalan coffee. Near the border with Mexico the port of Ocós became the Pacific end of the Ocós railroad. It began when the Pacific Bridge Company of San Francisco constructed the pier at Ocós. To assist with the construction, Pacific Bridge purchased a 3-foot gauge 0-4-0T from the Baldwin

Locomotive Works. The locomotive was delivered in early 1888. In 1893 the Guatemalan government granted a railroad concession from Ocós to Santa Catalina funded by German investors. Two Rogers 4-4-0 locomotives were delivered in 1896 and 1897. However, by 1902 only 21 miles to Pajapita were constructed. *continued next page*



Ferrocarril Ocós

Ferrocarril Del Norte De Guatemala

On the Pacific coast side of Guatemala, ships had to anchor a mile off shore with lighters transferring passengers and freight to shore and the railroads. This was a cumbersome and expensive method of moving people and material. President Barrios was well aware of this problem. In 1881 he gave a concession to the Larrondo Bros. to build a railroad from Santo Thomas (Puerto Barrios) on the Caribbean coast to Guatemala City. This was a 200 mile route with even rougher terrain up to Guatemala City than from the Pacific side.

The Larrondo Bros. attempt failed due to the inability to obtain financing, but that did not stop President Barrios from trying. In August 1883 President Barrios, a dictator, proclaimed that the people of Guatemala would finance the Ferrocarril del Norte de Guatemala (Guatemala Northern Railroad). All inhabitants making over \$8 per month would pay the government \$4 per year to finance the railroad. There was lots of language about stock certificates and land share ownership, but the \$4 per year tax was the basis of it. In January 1884 Salvans Miller began surveying the railroad from Santo Thomas to El Rico, 65 miles.

In March 1884 the 3-foot gauge 2-8-0 Baldwin locomotive No. 1, *La Democracia* was delivered to the port at Santo Thomas along with a train of cars. Four miles of track was laid before the money again ran out. In 1889 the government signed a contract with a French firm to continue building the railroad. A tax on liquor was to finance the project. A condition of the contract was that the French firm would purchase the Guatemala Central from C. P. Huntington and associates. That purchase of the GC did not occur. Then in 1896 a loan from German interests helped to complete the railroad to El Rancho, approximately two thirds of the way to Guatemala City. By 1897 the Ferrocarril Del Norte De Guatemala had nine Baldwin locomotives.

In 1900 after the government of Guatemala had failed to operate the railroad at a profit, even with an immense amount of potential freight, the government agreed to sell the railroad to an American-owned company, the Central American Improvement Company, with the condition that the company would build the extension from El Rancho to Guatemala City at no cost to the government. An additional condition was that the government had the right to buy back the railroad at a future unnamed date. This last condition was the reason the American offer was accepted rather than offers from England, France, Germany and Austria. However, even this scheme fell through. It wasn't until 1904, when the railroad was in such bad shape that it was almost impassable, that the government granted a railroad concession to Minor C. Keith and Sir William Van Horne for a railroad between Puerto Barrios and Guatemala City with the right of the government to reacquire the railroad in 99 years. The company would rebuild the old railroad and build the extension to Guatemala City. The government would guarantee \$4,500,000 in bonds at 5 percent for 15 years. Sir Van Horne was the President of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, and Minor C. Keith was the President of the United Fruit Company. These two men, along with Thomas Hubbard, President of the Pacific Improvement Company, a Southern Pacific subsidiary, formed the Guatemala Railway Company.

Guatemala Railway Company

The Guatemala Railway Company completed the railroad to Guatemala City in 1908, connecting with the Guatemala Central Railroad owned, after C. P. Huntington's death, by the Pacific Improvement Company. The United Fruit Company built numerous spurs into the banana fields which connected to both the Guatemala Railway and the Guatemala Central. These three railroads loosely formed what would become part of the International Railways of Central America (IRCA) in 1912.

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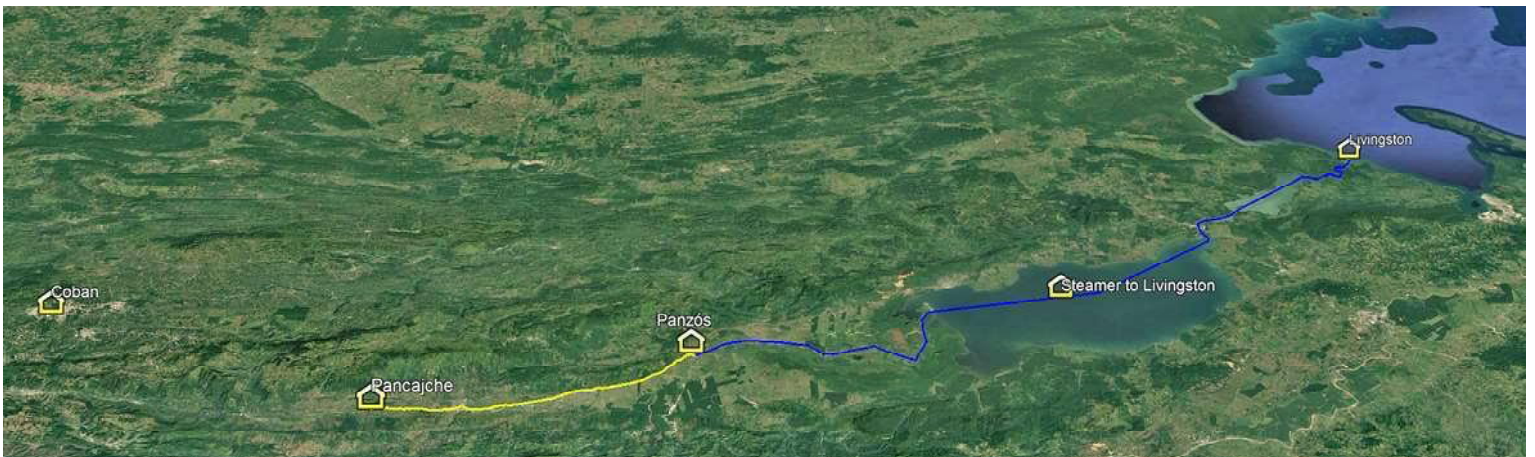


Ferrocarril del Norte de Guatemala (Guatemala Northern) and Guatemala Railway Company.

Ferrocarril Verapaz

The short Verapaz Railroad was isolated from the other railroads in Guatemala. It ran between Panzós on the Rio Polochic upstream 28 miles to Pancajche. Men, mules, and carts brought down coffee beans from the Coban area to the railhead at Pancajche. A steamer carried the freight down the river from Panzós to

Livingstone on the Caribbean coast. Guatemalan coffee growers using German capital established the railroad in 1895. Two Baldwin 4-4-0 locomotives were delivered in 1896. One fell in the river and was replaced with a Baldwin 2-6-0 in 1929. This railroad remained independent of the other Guatemalan railroads. It was not part of the IRCA. *continued next page*



Ferrocarril Verapaz.

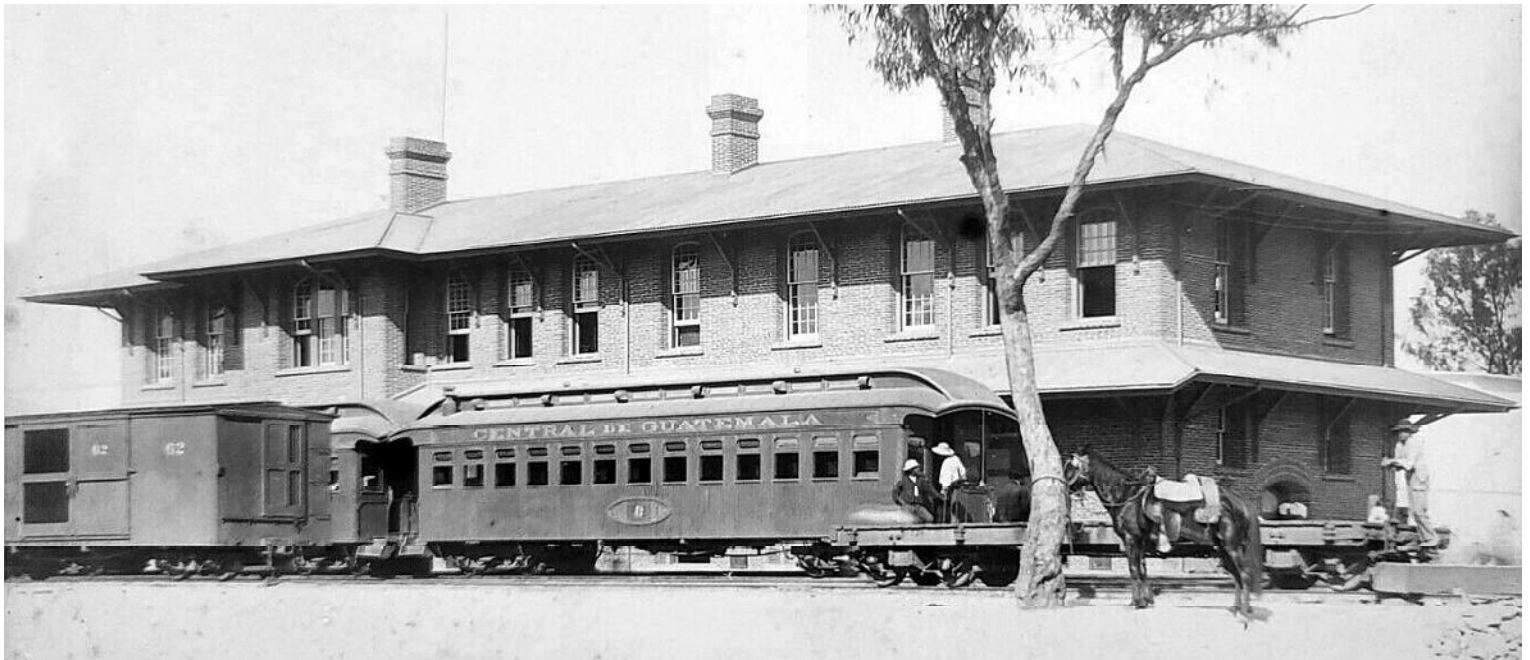
Rolling Stock

Lest you think that the only California connection to the Guatemalan railroads was money, redwood ties, and used locomotives, it is time we talked about rolling stock. In January 1883 the *Oakland Tribune* reported that the Carter Brothers of Newark, California were building box cars, a passenger car, and a caboose for the Champerico & Northern Transportation Company. The rolling stock was completely built by Carter, then disassembled and boxed up for shipment to Champerico. Remember the transfers to lighters from the ship to the shore mentioned earlier? The freight had to be put into crates light enough for the ship's hoists to lift them.

A July 1888 report by the US Consul-General to Guatemala stated that most of the rolling stock of the C&NT was built by Carter Brothers: 30 8-ton box cars; 5 9-ton flat cars; and 1 first class, 1 second class, and 1 third class passenger car. (Five additional flat cars were built by railroad personal in the shops at Retalhuleu.) Also on the roster were 6 hand cars; 3 push cars; and 2 velocipede cars. These were not stated as built by

Carter but certainly could have been. Carter built these cars for other railroads. A photograph of Carter equipment in Guatemala wearing Guatemala Central livery is shown below. I have not been able to determine the location of the photograph, but it could be on either the C&NT or the GC after the GC absorbed the C&NT in 1910.

The rolling stock of the Guatemala Central was reported in the March 1888 report from the U.S. Consul-General to Guatemala. Unfortunately he did not report the builder of the rolling stock. It included: 5 first-class coaches; 6 second-class coaches; 4 combination baggage cars; 21 8-ton 24-foot-long box cars; 30 10-ton 28-foot-long box cars; 28 flat cars both 24 and 28 feet long; and 6 stock cars. Gerald Best, in his 1961 book *Railroads of Guatemala and El Salvador*, said that the rolling stock came from either Kimball & Co. or the Central Pacific Shops in Sacramento. The photo below shows Carter equipment with GC livery. It may be that Carter made the rolling stock for the GC as well, or this is ex-C&NT rolling stock.



Carter Brothers rolling stock in Guatemala. The flat car may be one of those built in the Retalhuleu shops. Photo credit - Greg Maxwell Collection

That is not all of the Carter rolling stock. The *Oakland Tribune* on March 19, 1889 had a brief report that the Carter Brothers built 25 dump cars for the Guatemala Central Railroad. The *Tribune* reported on January 7, 1892 that, "Martin Carter is constructing a handsome palace car for some railroad magnate in Guatemala."

Most likely this is the *Nahualate* pictured below in about 1910. Nahualate is a river and a city in Suchitepéquez Department of Guatemala. The extension of the Guatemala Central to Mazatenango crossed the Nahualate River.



The Private Car Nahualate on the Guatemalan Stretch of the Pan American Railroad, circa 1910.



Library of Congress

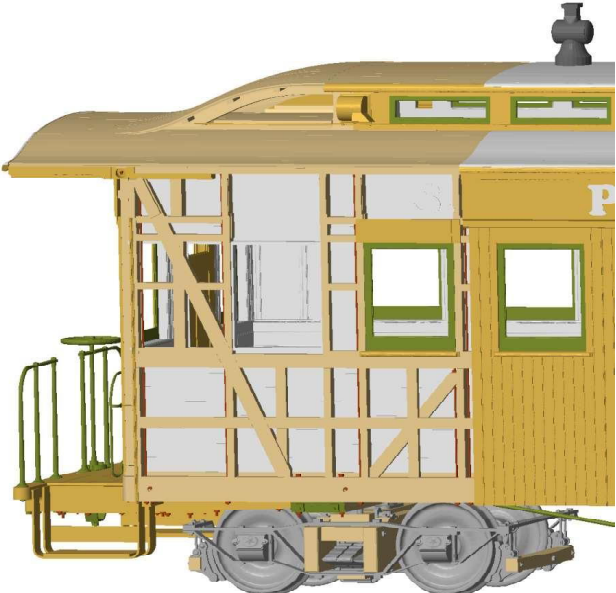
Bananas and the Unification of Railroads

It was coffee that brought the railroads to Guatemala, but it was bananas that brought the railroads together. In May of 1912 the Ferrocarril Central, Ferrocarril Occidental, and the Ferrocarril Ocós were purchased by the International Railways of Central America, the owner of the Ferrocarril Norte and Guatemala Railway.

Since 1908 when the Guatemala Railway connected with the Guatemala Central, the role of the Pacific coast ports was severely diminished. Freight traffic moved

toward the deep water port at Puerto Barrios where it could be easily shipped to New Orleans, New York, Europe and elsewhere without the use of lighters.

With the IRCA's purchase of the Central, Occidental and Ocós railroads, the California connection and influence no longer existed. The IRCA would continue on until 1968, moving people and freight throughout Guatemala and El Salvador. 🚂



Coming Soon!

After one year in production, the Restoration Report for the first car in SPCRR's collection, South Pacific Coast Caboose 47, is finally completed! The report will be available later this year after the final layout is finished.

President's Telegraph

by John Goldie, President

Photo by the Author

With Rail Fair moved up to Memorial Day, it was nice not to have all the event prep being done out in the August sun. Trains continue to run full on Sundays and only the open car thins out by the late afternoon runs as the day gets warm. The typical consist is four cars. A number of passengers enjoy the caboose experience on every run and the train crew also get to enjoy having their rolling office with them as well. Thanks to the operating crew for the fine efforts interacting with the visitors.

Looking ahead, into the Fall, we have our normal operations, the Special Harvest Festival operations, some public interpretation events and of our Haunted Train weekends. The Haunted Train can always use more hands, if nights are difficult, come out to help us set up each night, or come after to help us put everything away every night. There are lots of extra help needed at the front station to help line up passengers, or help in the haunted woods to entertain the riders (no scary costumes)..

If you have not been out to the park lately, come on down to see the progress. Join a restoration or support a project, or even better bring a friend along that has an interest in tools, woodworking, metal work, locomotives, track, trains, or just general area history!



The Gator Shed will be complete after it gets the correct color when they add the final coat of paint.

All departments can always use more hands, if your looking for a project to support, contact the managers to see what you can help out on - David for mechanical operations, Andy for Restoration, John for track work, and Jacque for events and special projects. Their contact info is shown on the inside cover of every issue.

We are putting plans in place for a December membership meeting that will feature a few Railroad presentations. Stay tuned for event updates as it gets closer. Hope to see you there on in the Park soon.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2024 at 6 PM

Annual holiday dinner for members/ volunteers/train crewmembers; General Meeting and Election of Officers; and fun special program (spouses and significant others are welcome)

For the first time since 2019 we are going to hold our Annual Holiday event again at Ardenwood. We'll meet in the Granary building and for safety we will open up the doors so fresh air circulates (wear warm clothes!). For those of you that are new to our museum, this is an annual event that everyone looks forward to. Our good friends at Dino's Grill will cater the dinner (a vegetarian option will be provided), after which there will be a very short general meeting and election of officers. The evening will be topped off with a very entertaining program made up of short shows by three different photographers. If you are a member, volunteer, or train crewmembers and you would like to attend the dinner **YOU MUST RSVP!** **The deadline to RSVP is November 15** - email Jacque at info@spcrr.org (or call/text me at 510-508-8826).

Membership News

by Julie Boyer, Membership Manager

Welcome New Members!

LIFE Members

Leonard Raley, Auburn CA
John Roth, Livermore CA
Hanson Loey, Danville CA

Contributing Members

Michael Nelson, Newark
Melissa Everitt, Napa

NMRA Pacific Coast Region Tour new members:

Rick Anderson	Steven Lane
James Atkins	Bruce Morden
Bob Bartlett	Dee Murphy
Cliff Baumer	Jerry Murri
Mark Beasley	Matthew Petach
Larry Champlin	Edward Powell
John Cockle	Malcolm
Lawrence Domansky	Robinson
Greg Duncan	Robert
Jaclyn Duncan	Rosenbauer
Mearl Eismeier	Bill Scott
David Fryman	

To become a member or renew your dues...

Join today so you don't miss future editions of the *Narrow Gauge Journal*, as well as access to special events and news about our museum. Our annual membership is **just \$20** and you will receive a year's subscription to the *NGJ*.

Support a great cause and help us preserve and restore our museum's amazing 19th century narrow gauge railroad collection. Your dues and donations support our museum's restoration and track projects.

To become a new member, or to renew your membership (or give someone else the gift of membership) click here: www.spcrr.org/joining.htm, or mail a check to SPCRR, PO Box 783, Newark, CA 94560.

Annual dues for Contributing Members are **just \$20**, or you can become a LIFE Member for a one-time donation of \$250 and you never pay dues again.

All dues and donations are tax deductible. SPCRR will send a letter for tax purposes for all Life Member payments, and for any donations over \$100. For Contributing memberships (and for donations under \$100), you can use your PayPal receipt or cancelled check for tax purposes. SPCRR is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

If you need any information about your membership or how to become a new member, feel free to contact me at membership@spcrr.org, or call/text 510-508-8826.

Donations Received July-September 2024

by Jacque Burgess, Treasurer

Our thanks to everyone who donated!

\$5-\$999	\$1,000-\$2,000
Michael Flaherty	Anonymous
Eve Little (<i>Cub Scouts</i>)	
Mark Pizarek	

Material Donations

Spencer Ferrington - Leaf Blower, four gallons of blackberry root killer from the *Track Crew's Amazon Wish List*.

Fran Foley - Case of N95 masks.

John Goldie - Two antique oil cans & one cylinder oiler for Kiso No. 9.

Become a Supporter!

SPCRR is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. You can donate on our website at:

<http://www.spcrr.org/donations.htm>

You can use any major credit card (you do not need a PayPal account). If you prefer to mail a check, please make it payable to SPCRR and send it to: SPCRR, PO Box 783, Newark, CA 94560.

All donations of \$100 or more will receive a letter from SPCRR confirming your donation for tax purposes (this includes the Track Crew's Amazon Wish List purchases of \$100 or more). For donations under \$100, you can use your PayPal receipt, Amazon receipt, or your cancelled check.

If you would like to donate in someone's honor or memory, please email us and let us know. If you have any questions, please send an email to info@spcrr.org or call/text 510-508-8826.

Restoration Update

by AJL Cary, Curator

Photos by the Author

Welcome new volunteer Hanson Loey!

Flat Car North Shore 1725

Restoration continues focusing on repairing North Shore flat car 1725 to return it to service. This 1887 Carter-built flat car was rebuilt in 1989, and converted into a covered picnic car in 2004. The car has been in use ever since as the ADA-accessible passenger car on our passenger train. After 20 years of service, the picnic car canopy was failing and the car deck was showing signs of dry rot and termite damage.

In early 2024 the canopy, benches and deck were removed to examine the car. This disclosed that the frame of the car was in surprisingly good condition, but the deck was a total loss. We decided to repair the sills, end beams and deck of the car to try and get it into service in time for the October Haunted Train. The repairs have proven to be more time consuming than expected, so the car will not be ready for this year's Haunted Train, but it will be able to resume service for the 2025 operating season.

Nearly all of the significant damage was limited to one sill. Rotted wood was removed and then termite tunnels opened using chisels and routers. The termite tunnels were spot-treated with a long acting termiticide and filled with anti-fungal penetrating resin. When needed, fir plank fillers were glued into the larger voids using a void filling waterproof glue. Structural epoxy filler was used to fill any remaining voids, and the resulting area planed and sanded flat. All deck nail holes were filled with penetrating resin. All of the resin takes time to cure and there are multiple layers per repair.

In addition, two 1/2" steel plates were bolted above the needle beams to stiffen the sill at these critical points.

These repairs should keep the car operating for a decade or so, after which the car will need a full rebuild. The next steps are to thoroughly clean the car's frame and paint it NS red (this is more of a brown). The air brake lines will be moved slightly to keep them from chafing on the trucks on tight curves. The stake pockets, steps and brake wheel will be added and the car decked. The car will probably be decked with modern dimensional 4x6 wood instead of the prototypical ship-lap 3x8s to keep water and dirt from being trapped in the deck and causing dry rot.

The car will probably have picnic car sides and benches installed to return it to service.

Caboose NWP 6101

An EDPM membrane roof is being installed on caboose 6101 to provide a long-lasting, waterproof

Restoration Focus Priority

Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
NS 1725	WSLCo 205 SPC 472 OR 2 D&C 64	NWP 6101 SP 1010
WSLCo 205	NWP 6101 SPC 472	SP 1010 OR 2 D&C 64 AMR 2
SP 1010	SPC 472 OR 2 AMR 2 SPC 47	D&C 64

Key:

Primary is major focus

Secondary is available time

Tertiary means of interest

roof. Originally a prototypical painted canvas roof was going to be installed, but after research with other museums we abandoned this approach and the membrane roof was selected.

Combine Southern Pacific 1010

SP combine 1010 has had exploratory work on the badly decayed windows on the weathered side of the car. The bad news is that most of the windows, slides and sill will need replacing. The good news is that the damage seems to be confined to these areas. A restoration proposal is in progress.

South Pacific Coast Caboose 47

John Hall has prepared a restoration report for SPC 47. It has identified some significant issues that need to be addressed prior to starting work on this car. The finalized report is expected soon.

Flat Car Westside Lumber Co. 205

WSLCo 205 was completely dismantled in 2023. Lumber is on hand to restore this sister flat to WSLCo 222 and 305. Car 2-5 will be completely rebuilt as time allows. All work stopped on this car to repair NS 1725.



From left to right: John Stutz, Hanson Loey, and Tony Peters hard at work on picnic car 1725. Notice all of the dark spots on top of the sills... the crew is working on cleaning and treating termite damage in every location.



Left:
BEFORE - The side of a sill when the crew opened it up. Note termite damage and termite tunnels.



Right:
BEFORE - The top of the sill was cleaned out and termite tunnels; and then was filled with special epoxy.



Left:
AFTER - The sill now has a wood splice after the crew removed all of the termite damage and termite tunnels.



Right:
AFTER - The top of the sill after the splice and epoxy. The last step was to sand it smooth.

SPCRR Track Report - 3rd Quarter

by John Goldie, Track Manager

Photos by the author

Summer was warm this year, so we focused on some needed smaller projects and also made a large push on vegetation control. We hosted 15 workdays, and the crew put in 426 hours. My thanks to Bruce Sorel, Steve Rusconi, David Waterman, and also Jay Martinez for their hard work out on the right-of-way.

Vegetation Management and those Dreaded Blackberries

On the vegetation, we keep the field-of-view open for the operating crew to see the tracks ahead. We also



The blackberry roots and cuttings were taller than the Gator!

tackled some tree work for car clearance and general pruning and cleanup of the oak tree grove near the Car Barn. This not only makes the area look better, it is also a security measure giving better visibility from the road to the Car Barn complex. The crew also cut back the trees along the access roads so that we have service



Now there is an unobstructed view as the train passes the farmyard in front of the park.

and fire track clearance. Likely that was the easier vegetation work, as we also put in multiple sessions on the invasive blackberries at the front. We have been removing them from the inside of SeaBee Curve so they don't take hold there or within the track bed. Steve brought extra batteries and a metal brush chopping weed whacker, so we were able to make a big dent in the blackberry growth the last work session. Bruce followed up and dug-out some very large root balls which will slow down their return. David and I removed the cuttings and trimmed the branches back to the fence line which is now visible for the first time in years.

Tie Replacement

Other projects included some needed tie replacement in the #1 stub switch, replacing ties under the frog (really difficult) and also under the swing rails. Tie work was done along the mainline also and will continue to be the focus for now. A major project we did was a blitz workday session of 5 days straight! We constructed the new planked crossing at Deer Park for passenger access—David did an outstanding job on precision cutting the curved boards and the ramp from the ground to the rail-head. Next step is for the Park staff to install the pad which will allow us to put Deer Park station back into service. The gator shed also got a full coat of paint to protect it from any early rains.

Looking Back

We made great accomplishments by the small track crew this summer. Our goals ahead are to continue with tie work, relaxing the tight curve in the loop (it was tight because we had to miss a large tree, which has since fallen over), along with a large tie project at Ardenwood station in the off season.

We can always use more hands—please contact me if you are interested. We work most Sundays, and usually do a blitz project over the Thanksgiving break. Another way you can support us to check out the Track Crew Wish List on Amazon for supplies we need to continue the job. Thank you to everyone who has supported us in the past. You make our work possible and we really appreciate having the right tools to get it done efficiently.

(Editor Note - A link to the Track Crew Amazon Wish List is on the last page of this newsletter.)

Donation of 40 lb Rail

by John Goldie, Track Manager

Photos by John Erdkamp

Our thanks to Cargill for donating some used 40 lb. rail to SPCRR, and having a trucker deliver it to Ardenwood. The rail was in a remote location between ponds, partially buried and adjacent to high concentration salt water. We did not know what condition it was in, and it was an all or nothing offer.

Approximately sixty 30-foot sections of used 40 lb. rail was delivered, along joint bars and a few switch parts. There are indeed some gems, but the base on some of the rail had disintegrated over the years due to salt exposure. We will use the good 40 lb. rail, use some of

the shorter pieces as crossing guard rails, and we always need joint bars. What we cannot use, we may find alternate uses or salvage it to fund other projects.

This would not have been possible without John Erdkamp's assistance. Not only did we get the rail and joint bars, Cargill also donated the cost for removal and transportation. Thank you to John, the contractor's crew, and Cargill for the great support and for making this possible! Also thank you to the unloading crew - John Erdkamp, Steve Rusconi, David Waterman and John Goldie.



Cargill's contractor getting ready to unload the rail and rail parts.



Steve Rusconi and David Waterman (in tractor) stacking the rail.

2024 SPECIAL EVENT CALENDAR

For updates on activities and workdays join the **SPCRR_Members group** at www.groups.io. Also check our website and Facebook page for special event info:

www.spcrr.org www.facebook.com/spcrrMuseum

OCTOBER

18, 19, 20; 25, 26, 27 - HAUNTED TRAIN

NOVEMBER

24 - Last train operating Day for the season

DECEMBER

6 - Annual Meeting, Election of Officers, Dinner, and Program. **Must RSVP by November 15 at info@spcrr.org**

JOB OPENINGS ON THE 2025 TRAIN CREW!

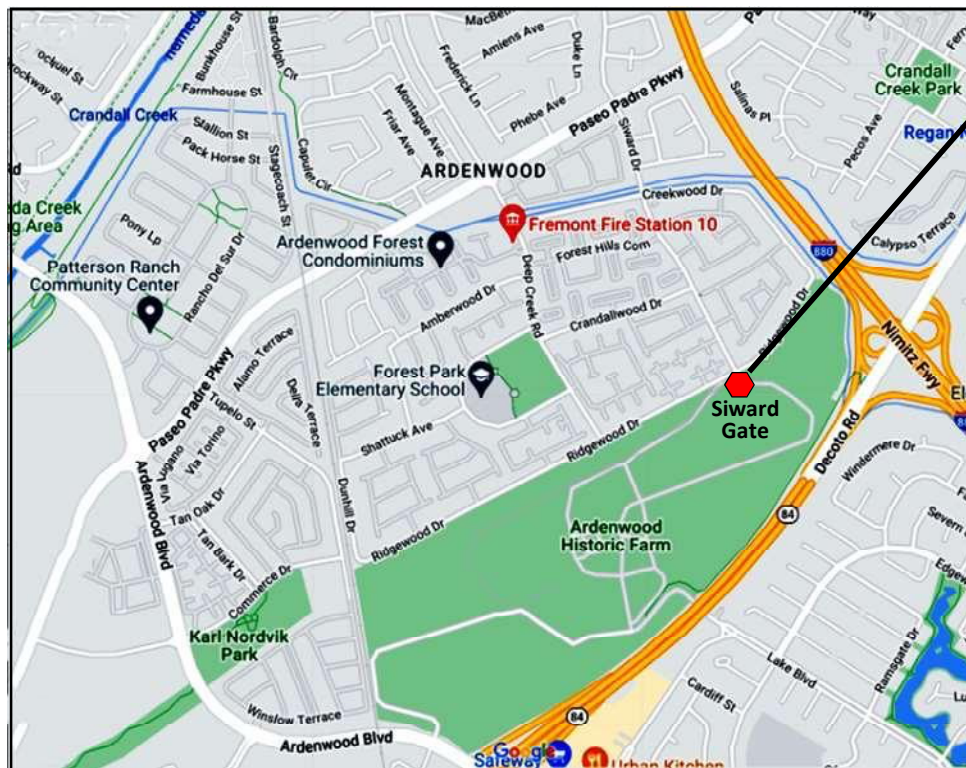
Employees work part-time between April-November. **VERY** flexible days. The train operates on Thursdays, Fridays, Sundays and some holidays/special events. For more information about becoming a train crew employee for 2025, contact Jacque Burgess at info@spcrr.org

TRACK CREW'S WISH LIST

To order from the Track Crew's Amazon Wish List, click on the following link. **IMPORTANT:** choose the shipping address called "**SPCRR's Gift Registry Address**": https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3UEP6ICIB5BUK?ref=wl_share

DIRECTIONS FOR WORKDAYS

If you are a new volunteer, the gate is locked so you must call/text the project manager before the workday to get instructions on how to enter. Always use the Seward Dr. gate entrance (*never drive through the park*). Click on the map below for directions on Google Maps.



GATE at the corner of Seward Dr and Ridgewood Dr