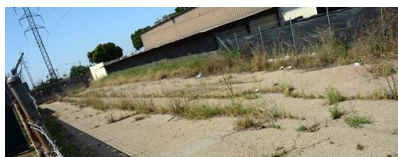


Rerun of the PC Ry Tour

On November 9, 2013 we reran the popular field trip covering the Pacific Coast Railway's right-of-way from where it crossed the Santa Maria River, south through Santa Maria and Orcutt, and continuing along today's Highway 135 to Los Alamos.



Near the corner of Depot and Main in Santa Maria can be seen this no-man's-land (above) which includes parallel rows of weeds spaced exactly three feet apart - the gauge of the Pacific Coast Railway. See Google Maps, too!

Pictured at left is a plaque mounted on the north side of Main Street at the southwest corner of Depot Square. The PC Ry went due north from here to the river and due south along Railroad Ave.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

Thank you for all of your support of the Friends of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad! With your support we were able to provide outstanding programs and tours about the history of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad as well as educate the public about the current railroad industry. We encourage you to purchase gift memberships for your friends and family! Also, for those of you whose memberships are up for renewal, please renew so we can continue these outstanding programs and tours. Merry Christmas and have a Happy New Year!

Passing of Bill Giles

Former long-time Train Master for the Southern Pacific Railroad Bill Giles passed away on November 9, 2013. Bill started working for the SP in 1951 and became the Train Master in San Luis Obispo. His territory covered Guadalupe which included dealing with the Santa Maria Valley Railroad. Bill served as an outside arbitrator for the SMVRR for various personnel cases and he worked with Captain Hancock, Marion Hancock, Sue Sword and Ernie Estes.



Last year Bill donated an SMVRR tie clip to the Friends of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad. The tie clip was presented to Bill from Captain Hancock. It is a beautiful piece (above) with a very detailed engraving of Engine 21. We have been very fortunate to hear some of the stories Bill had about the Santa Maria Valley Railroad the past couple of years.



Friends of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad



Coming Up in 2014

We've got several activities planned...

January 22, 2014

Signals. Gary See will present how crossing signals work and Rob Himoto will talk about crossing signals on the Santa Maria Valley Railroad. This program will be held at the Santa Maria Library's Shepard's Hall. Doors open at 5pm. Admission is \$5, or free if you grab dinner from the Cafe right next to the Hall. The program will start at 6pm.

February 22, 2014

Betteravia Branch Tour. Join us to take a tour and learn about the history of the Betteravia Branch, the SMVRR line from Guadalupe to Betteravia. At 9am we will meet at the Santa Maria Valley Railroad offices at the old sugar mill for coffee and donuts and a presentation of the history of the line, originally built by Southern Pacific Railroad to serve the Union Sugar Mill. In keeping with seeing things that aren't there any more, we'll track down remnants from historical station locations: Iremel, Bragur, and Barsug. After, we'll head to the Dunes Center and Arts Center in Guadalupe and then have lunch. You must be a Friends member to be on the Betteravia Branch portion of this trip. RSVP: Jamie.Foster@JF2.com or (805) 614-7093.

April, 2014

We're trying to pull together a program about the rail expansion at the Phillips 66 plant on the Nipomo Mesa.

May 3, 2014

Santa Maria Valley's Electric Railroad. We'll explore the electrified branches of the Pacific Coast Railway and, ideally, gain some insight to the sometimes conflicting published material about them. Details to follow. RSVP: Jamie.Foster@JF2.com or (805) 614-7093.

Sponsors

The Santa Maria Valley Railroad is a sponsor of our newsletter and our quarterly programs. The Mortgage House is a sponsor of our meeting room for Friends Board Meetings. We are always looking for sponsors to expand our programs and tours and fund educational activities.

Thanks to our Facilities Sponsors



of San Luis Obispo

Betteravia Tour, September 14, 2013

WITH PERMISSION OF THE PROPERTY OWNER, a small group of Friends enjoyed a very rare opportunity to freely explore Betteravia, once a thriving town of several hundred people, including the abandoned sugar mill that was the heart of the community.

Kevin lead the group through the townsite portion, and Rob handled the sugar mill exploration.



The Betteravia brochure pictured above is available as a download from Friends-SMVRR.org.



Above are the flumes which carried the beets in a river of water from the highline to the mill. Each highline track accommodated about ten sugar beet railcars.



At the base of the lime kiln.



Considerably more pictures and links to additional information are available on the Friends webpage documenting this trip: <http://friends-smvrr.org/130914.html>

Industry Presentations at the CRRF

On Sunday of the Central Coast Railroad Festival Weekend, October 13, 2013, the Santa Maria Valley Railroad and the Union Pacific Railroad teamed up to present up-to-date information about both railroads to those in attendance at the SLO freight house. The presentations were part of the Opening Celebration weekend for the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum, hosted by the Friends.



Jamie Foster, COO of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad, led off the presentation with current information about the local railroad. He briefed the attendees on the layout of the railroad, its customers, where they are and what types of products come and go, hurdles overcome in recent years, success stories from business development to infrastructure improvements, louder horns, efficiencies and environmental advantages of transportation by rail, 24/7 service availability, cross-trained employees, and prospects for the future.



Liisa Lawson Stark, Director of Public Affairs and Corporate Relations for Union Pacific Railroad, presented a brief history of the Union Pacific Railroad and the current operations of today, now the largest railroad in North America. Liisa covered operations on a national level, in California and operations on the Central Coast. Liisa talked about what an integral part of the economy UP is in regards to hauling freight and the many different commodities and customers it serves, service levels, challenges and successes, current projects, and future prospects for Union Pacific Railroad.

**Union Pacific Railroad:
Building America for 150 Years**