

## NARROW GAUGE PRESERVATION FOUNDATION'S "\$10,000" GRANT FOR SP#18



In this issue of the Newsletter, we would like to update you on our most recent grant, this time involving a non-Colorado narrow gauge treasure, 4-6-0 #18 of the Southern Pacific Narrow Gauge. A story on the SPNG can be found inside. SPNG #18 was built by Baldwin in 1911 operating initially on the Nevada-California-Oregon narrow gauge railroad, the N-C-O. In 1928, the engine was sold to the SP, operating on the Laws- Keeler narrow gauge line until 1955. Our grant enables the engine to be operated for the first time since 1955.

Actually, the NGPF grant was for \$5,000.00 but as with all of our grants, it is a matching grant. That means the impact will be \$10,000 hence the headline. What makes this grant unusual is that with prior NGPF assistance and that of many others, the SPNG engine has already been fully restored. So why make a further grant? Because the engine is "trapped" on a short section of track, near where it was rebuilt in Independence California. This grant will enable the Carson & Colorado Railway group (C&C) who restored the engine to move it and operate it for the first time since approximately 1955. As we have noted in previous newsletters, the NGPF prides itself on assisting in somewhat unconventional but effective ways. For example, we do not accept applications per se but rather, seek out worthy projects, including those recommended by our members or Board members.

The SP #18 project first came to our attention from Board member Fred Hill, owner of the Original Whistle Stop train shop in Pasadena California. Fred is also a leader in rail preservation issues, including a major project to restore a Santa Fe steam engine. Fred is therefore no stranger to worthy preservation efforts and felt the C&C group in Owens Valley was worthy of support. Over the years, we have encouraged and supported that work. To their credit, the C&C group has accomplished a lot with local support in the unlikely location of the Owens Valley, a sparsely occupied high desert area of California. In 2010, restoration efforts began under the supervision of C&C president Dave Mull and VP, Randy Babcock. With only \$174,000 spent on restoration, an

### INSIDE

- 2 The Southern Pacific Narrow Gauge
- 3 From the Executive Director
- 4 Who We Are; What We Do

amazingly modest amount, but with 7500 volunteer hours, the first steam-up test occurred in October 2016.



Activities then focused on building an enginehouse to protect the restored engine from the elements. Given the limited resources and visitors at Independence, operation there was never contemplated. However, up the road at Laws, a former SPNG engine facility and yard, track and equipment could support operation. The problem was raising the dollars needed to safely move the engine and tender to Laws, eventually returning it to Independence. Excursions on the C&TS or D&S have also been proposed but at this point, the group feels keeping it local is the best course. The NGPF offered to fund the estimated cost for this operation with this matching grant.

As a result, the C&C group will be able to celebrate the #18's return to steam with a proper celebration this coming September 22nd-24th at Laws. This will be a rare opportunity to see a Baldwin narrow gauge 4-6-0 run where it historically operated almost one hundred years ago. The NGPF is proud to have played a role in helping accomplish this goal.

Our thanks to the C&C group, Jimmy Booth and Bob Brown for the photos used in this newsletter.

### **The Southern Pacific Narrow Gauge**

In 1880, the Carson & Colorado Railroad was incorporated with the intent to link the Carson River in Northern Nevada to the Colorado River on its Southern boundary, hence the name. The C&C was intended to do more than join two major rivers; it was intended to tap into the anticipated mineral wealth that lay between, over the 600 mile projected route. Starting at Mound House, Nevada, and a connection with the fabled Virginia & Truckee Railroad, the narrow gauge C&C was extended 300 miles southwest to stop abruptly at the sleepy agricultural town of Keeler California. Having not encountered fabled wealth on the route chosen, one contemporary wag opined that the railroad was either "built 300 miles too long or 300 years too soon". The narrow gauge line nonetheless experienced mild traffic with a smattering of mines and agricultural traffic along the line, selling 20 years later to the Southern Pacific, and becoming the SPNG.



Timing is everything as just a few years after the sale; Tonopah Nevada experienced a major strike and boom, with the C&C being the nearest railhead. Traffic was brisk, re-paying the railroad's purchase in just one year. The Tonopah and Tidewater standard gauge railroad was later built and in response in 1908, part of the C&C was standard gauged as far south from Mound House as Mina.

Until the Depression caused abandonment of the Northern half of the line in 1938, the SPNG operated the old C&C line from Mina to Keeler. Thereafter, only the Owens Valley section, the Keeler Branch, was operated from Laws to Keeler, some 70 miles, interchanging at Owenyo with the SP's Jawbone Branch, built as part of the Los Angeles Aqueduct project. The Keeler branch generated enough agricultural and mineral traffic to operate well into the 1950's, finally being abandoned in 1960, but remaining narrow gauge.

The equipment operated on the line bears special mention. Steam lasted until 1954 when the SP #1 was introduced. Called the "Little Giant", SP #1 was a GE Caterpillar diesel, the only model built for American narrow gauge but a model exported to other countries. Steam was kept in reserve for those occasions when the diesel was loaded onto a flatcar and serviced in Bakersfield. 4-6-0 #9, now on display at Laws, was called back into service on such occasions. 4-6-0 #18 was retired in 1955 and placed on display in Independence, soon after its last shopping. Thus it was in excellent condition for a restoration.

All but one of the SPNG steam fleet were Baldwin engines, with the exception being #22, another 4-6-0 but with a storied past. Built by Schenectady in 1900, this engine was operated by the Florence & Cripple Creek as the "Vindicator" until the railroad's abandonment in 1915. Three sister engines, were sold to the RGS





#### Mission

The Narrow Gauge Preservation Foundation will preserve, exhibit and interpret significant prototype and model Narrow Gauge artifacts, as well as educate the public on the importance of Narrow Gauge railroading

#### THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

##### BOB BROWN

is editor and publisher of the Narrow Gauge and Shortline Gazette, the premier magazine devoted to Narrow Gauge. Since 1975, the Gazette has documented the history of narrow gauge in articles, plans, photos and has acted as a focus for the Narrow Gauge community. Bob Brown, a Master Model Railroader as recognized by the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA), has been building narrow gauge models for over sixty five years and has a massed a collection of pioneer narrow gauge models reflecting his own interest in the history of Narrow Gauge. Bob also serves on the Museum Committee of the NMRA. Bob is the chairman of the Board.

##### SAM FURUKAWA

is a recognized photographer of Narrow Gauge, author and modeler. Retired from a long career at Microsoft Corporation, Sam is now a professor at Keio University in Tokyo, Japan. He is an author of three books on Colorado's preserved narrow gauge railroads. He has extensively photographed the operations of the surviving narrow gauge lines of Colorado and New Mexico and some of his videos have recently been released to the public by the NGPF.

##### FRED HAMILTON

was a long time employee for Kalmbach Publishing serving on the sales staff of both Trains and Model Railroader Magazines. Fred is also an avid On3 modeler and remains close to the model railroad industry. In the past, he has served as President and Executive Director of the industry's trade association and currently serves as the Treasurer of the NGPF.

##### BOB HAYDEN

is the author of numerous articles and books on narrow gauge topics and also was a long time employee at Kalmbach Publishing working on Model Railroader, Trains, Classic Toy Trains, Garden Railways and Fine Scale Modeler Magazines. Bob has also built narrow gauge models for over fifty years and currently works in the publication field. Bob serves as Secretary of the NGPF.

##### FRED HILL

is the owner of the original Whistle Stop in Pasadena, a major hobby shop in Southern California. He has long been active in railroad preservation for both narrow and standard gauges and is involved with two model companies, The Coach Yard and Thin Film Decals. He has served with distinction for many years as an officer and board member on several hobby trade associations.

##### JIMMY BOOTH

comes from a distinguished career as a principal at P-B-L (Peter Built Locomotives), a major supplier and importer of Sn3 locomotives and equipment. He also has dedicated much of his life researching the history of D&RGW narrow gauge equipment and has served as a historical advisor to both the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic and Durango and Silverton Railroads. Jimmy volunteers at a local museum as a steam locomotive engineer.

Cont'd from page 2

becoming #'s 20, 22 and 25. The Vindicator became NCO #22 and later SP #22. It ended its days in stationary steam service in the SF Bay area at SP's Bayshore shops.

Many of the SPNG steam engines were equipped with distinctive whaleback tenders, semi-circular in design, to carry water and oil. #18 was the only engine featuring Walschaert's valve gear, referred to by trainmen as "monkey-motion" gear due to its complexity and numerous moving parts. With their distinctive large SP headlights, whaleback tenders and weather-beaten freight cars, SPNG trains were photogenic against the stark desert background of the Keeler Branch. Three steam engines were saved, #8 on display in Carson City, as well as numbers 9 and 18, in Laws and Independence respectively.



For further information, we recommend two excellent books on the SPNG, Slim Rails in the Sand, by George Turner, 1964, Trans-Anglo books; and Southern Pacific Narrow Gauge, by Mallory Hope Ferrell, 1982, by PFM books. For a remote and rather obscure line, the steam engines of the SP's Keeler branch have been well represented in model form with numbers 8, 9 and 18

imported in Brass by Westside and PFM in HOn3, PBL in Sn3 and Sunset in On3. Even Diesel #1 was produced in Brass in HOn3 by NWSL. If you hate making trees and love quaint equipment, the Keeler Branch and the SPNG might just be perfect for you.

#### From The Executive Director

This issue highlights another example of the NGPF making a difference in narrow gauge preservation. With your continued help, we will preserve and assist in the operation of historic narrow gauge equipment. As a result, we all will be richer for the experience.

I hope to see many of you in Denver this August/September at the National Narrow Gauge Convention. We will be holding a clinic and roundtable discussion on the NGPF so bring your questions and meet fellow and new members along with our Board members. There may also be a benefit auction. So I hope to see you there. Thanks for being a member and thanks for your help.

*Charlie Getz*

Since 1975, Charlie has written a column for the Narrow Gauge and Shortline Gazette and has been active in the NMRA, currently serving as its President. He has been Executive Director of the NGPF since its inception.

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#### UPCOMING ISSUES

- The Models of Len Madsen
- T-12 #168; on the road to Restoration
- Como and the C&S NG; steam again?
- Displays at the Colorado Railroad Museum



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### WHO WE ARE - WHAT WE DO AND HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Narrow Gauge Preservation Foundation (NGPF) was first established as the Narrow Gauge Trust in 2000. It was the dream of one of our board members to help preserve Narrow Gauge in both its prototype and model form. In 2002, the Narrow Gauge Trust Fund was incorporated as the Narrow Gauge Preservation Foundation, and acquired non-profit status both within the State of California and as recognized by the Federal government. As a non-profit public benefit corporation, our mission is to establish interactive exhibits where the public can learn of the significant history of Narrow Gauge railroading as well as to support preservation activities and projects wherever possible.

The foundation is administered by a board of directors, which does not receive compensation. The NGPF is proud that less than five percent of its funds are spent on administrative costs. Thus, ninety five percent of the funds raised go toward preservation efforts.

Our primary function is the creation of interactive exhibits where the public can be told the story of Narrow Gauge, such as the one at Chama. As with the Chama exhibit, each exhibit will include interactive video presentations and models as well as dioramas, photographs and other graphics to explain the significance of the Narrow Gauge railroading experience. As a secondary function, the NGPF assists Narrow Gauge preservation efforts across North America. These efforts to date have exceeded over one million dollars and in some cases have made the difference between preservation and loss of significant artifacts.

The foundation is also unique in supporting the efforts of Narrow Gauge Preservation projects throughout the United States rather than concentrating on one area or one particular project. To date, the organization has supported projects on the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, Ardenwood Park in California, Friends of Denver and Rio Grande Engine #169, the Southern Pacific Narrow Gauge Railroad Foundation, The Colorado Railroad Museum, the Southeast Narrow Gauge and Shortline Museum in North Carolina and the Durango Railroad Historical Society, among others. In addition, we have preserved the collections of prominent narrow gauge modelers, extensive libraries of books as well as important art pieces depicting narrow gauge scenes.

One of the unique aspects of the NGPF is the use of matching grants to encourage the receiving parties to reach out to the public for support. Many of our grants require that the receiving agency establish within a set time frame, an equal number of individual new donations from members of the public, which not only shows support for the particular project, but also provides new sources of funding for the organization. As a result of this policy, organizations receiving our grants have reported increased donations. Donations to the Foundation are tax-deductible, acknowledged and appreciated. By donating, you support a variety of worthwhile projects and thereby enhance preservation of Narrow Gauge.