
THE DESERT WIND

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A Publication of the Joshua Tree and Southern Railroad Museum

Fall 2004

So Long Tim.

We will miss you...

Tim Poppell, our caretaker of less than a year, passed away on September 18th due to medical complications. Tim was a great asset to the Museum, and will be sorely missed. The following obituary was published in the local newspaper on Sept. 23rd:

Timothy John Poppell

Bartender, Chef, 34

Timothy John Poppell of Joshua Tree died Sept 18th, 2004. He was 34 years old.

Born Nov. 16th, 1969, in Jacksonville, Florida, his parents were Jon and Dayle Perry Pountain. He was a 25-year resident of California and a 20-year resident of Joshua Tree.

Mr. Poppell was a caterer with Funtastics and a bartender at several restaurants in the Coachella Valley. He taught CPR for the American Red Cross. An active member of the Hi-Desert Playhouse, he acted in many productions there.

He served four years in the U.S. Navy during Desert Storm as a hospital corpsman.

He is survived by mother Dayle Will, stepfathers Gordon Poppell of Twentynine Palms and Ed Will of Joshua Tree, sister Bekki Jones of Twentynine Palms, step-brother Adam Will, serving in the U.S. Air Force in Afghanistan, a niece and a nephew.

The family requests that donations be made to the Hi-Desert Playhouse in lieu of flowers: PO Box 128, Joshua Tree, CA 92252. ☀

Fall Meet 2004 Coming Up.

Make plans now!

November 11th through the 14th, 2004 will be the Joshua Tree and Southern Railroad Museum's Fall Meet. Plan on coming up for some fun, fellowship, and fresh air in our high desert. Campers can reserve a space by calling the Museum phone (760) 366-8503 and leave a message.

The sumptuous **Dinner in the Diner** will once again be hosted in the dining car *Castle Peak* on Saturday evening, beginning with social hour in the Pullman car *Red Oak* at 5:30 pm. For info or reservations email Rita Allan at wslco@earthlink.net or phone (562) 809-7455. Cost is \$40.00 for members and \$50.00 for non-members. Seating is limited to 36 persons. *See you at the meet!* -ed. ☀



*Come join in on the fun!
November 11th-14th.*

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Member Gerry Marsh builds and donates switches!

-from Rudy van Wingen

Our quiet member from Leona Valley recently sent two switches that he built for our highline to the Museum. Bill Shepherd delivered them since they were (1) bigger than Gerry could haul in his vehicle if (2) it were running which it is not! That explains why we have not seen nor hair of Gerry and his big black "BO" at the last two meets...sure hope he gets wheels under him again soon; things always seem to get done when Gerry shows up and I know he would like to see the Three Companies progress on the highline.

The larger switch is a real "puzzle" switch (a double slip switch in RR terms) which is designed to be the lead in switch to the turntable, switchback and passing siding to be built at the end of the lower high line. The other switch is for the other end of the siding.

At the rate that progress is being made on the highline, perhaps we will see these switches in place before the year is out! Meanwhile, if you want to see them "up close and personal", they are resting alongside the roadbed on the north side of the south loop across from the "G" gauge layout.

Thanks, Gerry, for a big boost and a job well done. We hope to see you out for the fall meet! ☀



A real "puzzle" switch!

Visit our online gift shop at:

www.cafepress.com/jtsdiningcar

Proceeds go to worthy Museum projects!

President's Message - Fall 2004



This edition's message comes with a mix of sadness and great anticipation. The sadness is because our caretaker Tim Poppel passed away last month after a brief illness. Tim was only 34 so naturally this comes at a great shock. Our hearts go out to his family and friends. Tim had become a welcome part of our family as well and we will miss him very much. A memorial was held on Sunday, Oct. 3rd at the High Desert Playhouse where Tim was an active participant. Cherie Palmer attended and is coordinating the contributions to the playhouse in Tim's name. If you would like to contribute, you may send a check to Cherie at **P. O. Box 475, Joshua Tree, CA 92252. Please make checks payable to High Desert Playhouse with a note: In memory of Tim Poppel.**

The great anticipation is because of the exciting season we have ahead. Bill & Mary Shepard will be arriving the last week in October so Bill can start working on the car barn. Hopefully it can be ready for the November meet.

Once the car barn is complete we can start work on the round house at the steaming bay. Thanks to the Ratliff family, the tracks are all ready for that project.

Greg Ratliff tells me the highline will make major progress this year. With one trestle complete and the other in the works, it's likely we'll have trains on the upper line before long.

Chris Allan and the Grand Scale group plan to have the bridge over the wash completed this year so some of the big stuff could be running on the other side by next summer.

If you would like to participate in any of these projects, please contact Bill, Greg or Chris to coordinate schedules. If you don't know how to contact them, you can call me at (949) 642-9994 and I will put you in touch with them.

It goes without saying that life has its ups and downs. Frequently they occur at the same time. We'll miss you Tim. ☀

Tom Arnold, President

Congratulations to Tom on his retirement from the Newport Beach Fire Department! His career lasted 30+ years and he is now ready for some quality time with his wife Kathy and spending lots of time on projects at the Museum! All the Best and Good Luck Tom! - ed.

Grand Scale Division Report

The 2004 season begins!

The first workday of the new season, September 11th, was a warm but beautiful day with lots of puffy clouds, some menacing, some not. The property was found intact after a long summer absence, and only the occasional pack rat mess was in evidence to suggest that we had been away for any amount of time.

First order was to continue cutting apart the track panels donated by the Santa Ana Zoo that were brought onto the property late in the Spring. These panels were originally installed at Santa's Village in the San Bernardino Mountains, and migrated down to Orange County when the 14" gauge Hurlbut-built train was purchased for reinstallation at the Zoo. We are of course building 15" gauge so the steel tie bars (15 per panel) need to be removed.

Dick Pantoja came up from Yucca Valley and spent the better part of the afternoon torching, while I dug out the panels and positioned them for cutting. At the time of this writing the rail still needs to be moved up the hill as it is now at campground level. Thanks go to Dick for his tireless efforts!

Ken Kukuk continues to make progress on Shay #6. Cleanup continues on the frame and components. The air compressor has been rebuilt and runs like a champ. Hillcrest Shops of Reedley, California has donated around \$300.00 worth of new valves and fittings. Thanks to Sean and Melissa Bautista for their continued generosity!

Please drop by the 15" gauge if you make it up for the Fall Meet, and don't forget that Grand Scale Division workdays are always the 2nd Saturday of each month. Call me at (562) 809-7455 or email me at wsflco@earthlink.net for more info.

-Chris Allan, GSD Coordinator

Back Shop News

-from out back.

One of the two Westside Lumber Company side dump cars built for Francis Moseley by Bob Gantz in 1983 has been rebuilt and is ready to return to service as soon as the lettering is completed, which should be in September in time for the Fall Meet.

Francis had the cars built for him by cabinetmaker Bob initially to go with the Gordon Corwin "Fruit Growers Express" Shay but later decided to donate them to the Museum. As built, these cars were referred to as "coffee table models" as they were beautifully finished with varnished wood. Once pressed into service they began to deteriorate, the varnish worn away by sun and sand, the small 1-1/2" scale die cast wheels lost chunks out of their flanges, and poorly designed journal boxes cause binding in the axles.

In 2002 the cars were withdrawn from almost all service and "Three Companies" member Greg Ratliff dismantled the running gear on one car for inspection and possible repair. The car

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Calendar of Events

•*Work Weekend Schedule:*

October 9-10, 2004

December 11-12, 2004

January 8-9, 2005

•*Fall Meet Spectacular*

Nov. 11th - 14th, 2004

Dinner in the Diner Saturday night only.

Members \$40 - Non members \$50

Contact **Rita Allan** for more dinner info:

wsflco@earthlink.net

•*Narrow Gauge Meet*

March 18-20, 2005

Contact **Rudy van Wingen** for more info:

dmmcomo@sprintmail.com

Logon at www.jtsrr.org for all the latest!



Back Shop...*from page 3*

was then transported to the Como Roundhouse shop in San Marino where Rudy van Wingen undertook the repair and rebuilding of the running gear. New 2-1/2" scale cast iron wheels were ordered from the foundry and subsequently machined with the JT&S standard flange. The original die cast wheels were pressed off the axles, which turned out to be in good enough condition to reuse, and the journal boxes were cleaned and degreased and inspected. The original "iolite" bearings were found to be worn oval due to the boxes being held rigidly in the journal guides and not allowed to tilt to follow irregularities in the track.

The ruined bearings were pressed out and new Garlock™ type DU sleeve bearings were pressed in; these bearings have proven themselves in service on our railroad over many years, having the rolling qualities of needle bearings without the need for hardened axles and heavy press fits.

The journal boxes were re-machined to allow them the tilt with the axle when encountering rough track, which should eliminate the excessive wear problem and solve an annoying derailment previously encountered with these cars. The wheel/axle/journal box assemblies were then reassembled to the undercarriage of the cars.

Since the original wood finish was so badly deteriorated, it was decided by the Como Roundhouse shop foreman to repaint the entire car including the original black undercarriage. The choice was between the "usual" maintenance of way grey and Tuscan red, with the Tuscan red winning out. Once back at the Museum the JT&S "D&RGW" style logo will be applied along with appropriate lettering and the car will be returned to service



Newly restored side dump car.

for use by the Three Companies personnel in the continue construction of the high line and regular right of way maintenance.

The second car, in similar condition, will be moved to the JT&S Shop from the Museum and restoration will be begun on it in September or October. It is hoped that based on what was learned on the first car that restoration will be completed in time for the fall meet so that both cars may be seen in operation once again. ☀



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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