
THE DESERT WIND

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A Publication of the Joshua Tree and Southern Railroad Museum

Summer 2003

Train Mountain Ramble comes to JT&S!

Participants from around the world.

-- from **Rudy van Wingen**

Thursday June 12, 2003 - we entertained 21 guests including two from Germany, one from Denmark, 3 from Great Britain and two from Australia. We had 20 members on hand to lend support and 11 locomotives: 4 steam, 4 battery, and 3 gasoline.

Thanks to **Allan Ratliff** who played host and helped everyone feel welcome!



Hubert Wetekamp's Goose is a gas/electric hybrid.

Photos continued on page 2

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President's Message for June 2003 -- from Tom Arnold

After hearing from our members about the inconvenience of having to write two separate checks for dues, the Board of Directors researched the possibility of consolidating the Club and Museum into one entity. We contacted people with experience in non-profit organizations and got some great news. Since all of our activities supplement the museum, there is no longer a need to keep the club as a separate corporation. Therefore, this spring the Board of Directors elected to consolidate all operations into the Museum. This means not only will you no longer have to write two checks for dues but also the entire amount of your dues will be tax deductible, as will any contributions you make. A special thanks goes to Nancy Donnelly for her research on this issue.

As you may have seen in the last newsletter, we have several new regular members. **Chris & Rita Allan, Don & Susie Gage, Paul & Celeste Lavacot, and Greg & Rebecca Ratliff** were recognized by the Board for their outstanding contributions to the Museum. Regular members have voting privileges and can serve on the Board of Directors. We will be considering other annual members for recognition in the future and look forward to expanding our regular membership.

It's been very exciting at JT&S lately. The campground has been utilized more than ever before with folks coming for fun, relaxation and projects. The place is looking great thanks to the entire Ratliff family, Kevin & Liza Kane, Gary Conley, Terry Watson, Rudy van Wingen, Don Gage, Paul Lavacot and others. Chris Allan with Jack Sessums and his crew have made significant progress on the grand scale bridge across the wash. Brian, Gregg and Allan Ratliff doubled the size of the steaming bay in time for the Train Mountain Ramble crowd. Rudy installed a 17-foot diameter swimming pool that everyone is enjoying. And the list goes on.

Of course the Fall Meet is the veterans day weekend so put that in your calendar now and plan some of your own get away weekends as well. Look for our fall schedule on the web site soon. We'll keep you posted on project activities and other events as they get organized. You can look for

See you at the railroad. ☺

A Tractor Story.

--from Rudy van Wingen

JJ&S Members, Friends, and associates....

Many of you are probably not aware of it, but our "Old Faithful" (aka "Ol Betsy") tractor has been getting an ongoing face lift for several months.

As part of this "face lift" we had to purchase and have installed two new rear tires to the tune on \$681.45. Paul Lavacot and Don Gage both have already thrown \$100.00/each into the pot; so we only need another \$481.65 to achieve parity. Please donate what you can...the saga of "Old Betsy" follows for those of you with the time to read it...

Starting back last year, new member Kevin Kane, with the behind the scenes encouragement of helpmeet Liza, took on the poor old thing as a "project". Kevin has the reputation of being able to "fix anything, and fix it right". He started with the E-Z-GO golf cart and it now goes up hills like a billy goat.

Over a several month period Kevin got the tractor running better and better. It took a lot of tries, and each try made it run better but the increased activity showed up new problems. Kevin kept plugging away on "Ol Betsy", determined to make her a real functional part of our on site stable of operating equipment once again.

Finally he got her to the point that she was about as reliable as the old family mare; willing to put in a good day's work as long as she got some TLC along the way.

Then came Memorial Day Weekend 2003. Kevin and helpmeet Liza took some time off to go to Yosemite, so poor "Ol Betsy" was left to the tender mercies of the younger crowd.

Don Gage and Paul Lavacot began to put her through her paces, but she was still looking for a lot of TLC. Since Don and Paul had a greater agenda than she was able to deal with, they decided to give her another boost up the ladder. Paul removed the gas tank and cleaned it thoroughly, then fixed some hidden gas line problems. Brian Ratliff gave her a few tweaks in the ignition area. Don, Paul and Terry Watson did another rework on her front end alignment.

Lo and behold, the "Ol Betsy" thought she was a new Colt! She ran like a "Swiss Watch", and the dirt started really flying! She worked all day Saturday and Sunday, even knocking down that old institution the "Green Room".

Then, late on Sunday May 25th, while moving dirt from the side of the road to the south station approach for the yard tracks, "Betsy" threw a shoe. One of her big rear tires, more than 40 years old, split a seam! Those poor old tires had not seen so much activity in YEARS! So once again, "Betsy" was put out to pasture by the shop car and a call was put in to

Gary's Tires in Yucca Valley.

Gary's gave us a real bargain! Two brand new tires for \$441.45 and an in place delivery and installation fee of \$240.00; \$681.45 total. The Gary's installers (2) spent over 6 hours on Sunday, June 1st delivering the new tires, installing them professionally, and hauling off the old hulks.

Now "Betsy" is a Colt again, and ready and raring to go. Her next job is to clear the brush and debris in the "Green Room" basin and prepare it for our new 3,100 gallon above ground swimming pool, which should be up and running by the time you read this. ☺

Ramble report... from page 1



Hank Robert's and his RGS Goose on the Hiline.



Kevin Doe and a handsome DRGW steam freight.

Please see page 4 for a complete list of Ramble attendees! ☺



DUES ARE DUE-

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!

PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT YOUR MUSEUM BY SENDING YOUR ANNUAL TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DUES PAYMENT, IN THE AMOUNT OF **\$60.00**. MAKE CHECK OUT TO "**JTSRR MUSEUM**" AND MAIL TO:

**JT&S RAILROAD MUSEUM
PO BOX 425
JOSHUA TREE, CA 92252**

WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED A GREAT DEAL IN THE PAST YEAR, AND THE COMING YEAR WILL BRING EVEN MORE EXCITING PROGRESS!

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

? **FALL MEET SPECTACULAR**

NOVEMBER 6TH – 11TH, 2003

SATURDAY NIGHT- **DINNER IN THE DINER**

Dinner reservations accepted online starting Oct.1st, 2003.

? **NARROW GAUGE MEET**

MARCH 26TH - 28TH, 2004

RESERVATIONS AVAILABLE IN THE FALL

Logon to **WWW.JTSRR.ORG**

and click on the **Calendar of Events** page for updates.

ATTENTION:

RITA ALLAN IS LOOKING FOR THE DONATION OF A HEAVY ALUMINUM PRESSURE COOKER POT FOR THE DINING CAR. PLEASE CONTACT HER AT (562) 809-7455 IF YOU CAN HELP.

Grand Scale Bridge Construction Under Way!

--From Chris Allan

Thanks to a huge effort on the part of Jack Sessums, Rick Mugele, and the Pimlotts, the West Pier is ready for it's trestle bents. Rick and I poured the pier on top of the foundation recently, finishing this rather sizable chunk of concrete. The East Pier foundation has been poured, thanks to Jack, Paul Lavacot, and Lars Tenpas. This will allow us to tilt up bents 4 - 10 and give us a good start on being able to get the 40' girder span up in the Fall. Bent designs are finalized now, and their construction should begin in earnest. Thanks to our caretaker, Joe who has donated 20 bags of cement which still need to be picked up at Barr Lumber in Yucca Valley.

Sean Bautista at **Hillcrest Shops** has graciously donated 10 sets of switch points, which should keep us supplied for quite a while. Tom Gaszi has offered to make up our frog points. I anticipate the laying of at least two turnouts for the Fall Meet in November as well as enough track to allow us a small bit of run for my 0-4-0 and cars, as well as (hopefully) Jack's RGS work Goose #6. Progress has been encouraging to say the least.

The Coffey Shay is progressing forward. Gary Smith of Danville, CA has donated the remainder of the gears needed for the truck renewal, and Ken Kukuk is pressing forward. As soon as the trucks are done the remainder of the engine will travel to his shop to be mated to the trucks, and a few other tasks will be addressed.

The turntable will hopefully be back on the build soon, as time allows. Jack has supplied us with the side plates, via his CNC plasma cutter. We would like to place it by the Fall, which will include more (you guessed it!) concrete work. ☺



The exhausted crew Sunday evening of the GSD Meet, April 24th, 2003: Rick, Chris, Jack, Skipper, Ken, Andrew, and Nick. The build has begun!

Another photo on page 4.

Ramble attendees, June 12th, 2003.

- ❑ HANK & FAYE ROBERTS – STONE MOUNTAIN, GA
- ❑ LUTZ BRAUN – FRANKLIN, TN
- ❑ DAN RANKIN – MARIETTA, GA
- ❑ KEVIN DOE – ROSWELL, GA
- ❑ DON & CAROLINE ORR – SUFFOLK, VA
- ❑ RON WILKERSON – HEMET, CA
- ❑ STEVE WATERFALL – PETALUMA, CA
- ❑ TOM WATERFALL – REDWOOD CITY, CA
- ❑ HUBERT & CHRISTEN WETEKAMP – WERL, GERMANY
- ❑ IAIN McDONALD – MARKHAM, ON, CANADA
- ❑ KEITH McDONALD – SOUTHPORT, ENGLAND
- ❑ BO DYIA – DENMARK
- ❑ DEREK PAYNE – STAFFORD, ENGLAND
- ❑ NOEL EBERHARDT – BRISBAINNE, AUSTRALIA

VISIT OUR ONLINE GIFT SHOP AT:

www.cafepress.com/jtsdiningcar

Proceeds go to restoration of the standard gauge cars!



The completed West Pier on the GSD Bridge.



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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