

The Santa Clara **B L O C K**

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SBHRS SPRING OPEN HOUSE APRIL 2 and 3, 2016



Visitors are entering the Waiting Room on Sunday morning, April 3rd.

The Spring Open house was held on Saturday and Sunday April 2nd and 3rd. 618 paid visitors were present over the two days. There were 365 kids who attended. The museum made \$8,000 in net profit from entrance fees and the Company Store. The weather cooperated well enough that many visitors came to visit the Edward Peterman Museum, the Tower, and the Train Room. Following page shows some of the scenes that occurred during the event.

Open House Photos





Book Review: The Electric Pullman

By Lawrence A. Brough

A History of the Niles Car & Manufacturing Company

It lasted a mere fifteen years, from 1902 to 1917, but left its mark on the electric interurban market. Alongside other big name companies such as Jewett, Niles Car built for many well known railroads in North America.

This 115 page book covers Niles' activities and includes a ten page listing of car orders and deliveries by year. There is also a list of known survivors, including Salt Lake & Utah Railroad #751, preserved in Rio Vista, CA by the Western Railway Museum.

Niles Car even produced some streetcars, including one single truck version. Baggage cars, parlor cars, and other versions also came out of their shops. Many photographs are sprinkled liberally throughout the book, including builders photos, and others showing cars in service.

Niles' production peaked in 1906 with 147 deliveries, after which it never reached that high again, declining sharply beginning in 1912 until the end of 1917. In total, Niles produced 1,100 cars, of which 60 percent were interurbans, 14 percent were city cars and 6 percent work and express cars.

One interesting story involves an order for 25 cars for the Cleveland Electric Railway. This order was delivered eight days after receipt. In actual fact, Niles had been building cars for Detroit, when the Cleveland facility suffered a catastrophic fire. The Detroit facility accommodated them by allowing the cars to be diverted from Detroit to Cleveland.

The book also includes several car diagrams with dimensions, which may be of help to any modeler seeking details on Niles interurbans.

This book was published by the Indiana University Press.

Reviewed by Norman E. Spaulding.

HO LAYOUT CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

The long term HO Construction Project has shown a lot of progress so far this year. Mission San Miguel is virtually finished (see photos below), plus a housing project, as well as a beautiful Sunkist shipping factory right below the housing project, with its own lighting. The trackwork has been installed, and is operational. As the project continues, several SBHRS members are working on various aspects of site construction. This includes: Michael Laine, Ed Del Prete, Michael Stockwell, and many others. Currently the site needs both housing and industrial buildings, as well as some supporting scenery objects.

More information on the real Mission San Miguel can be seen online at: <http://www.missionsanmiguel.org/>

If you would like to contribute, please contact Woody Allen or Michael Laine for what is needed. The photo below shows Mission San Miguel. More construction photos are on the next page.



HO Construction Project Photos, Continued



HONORARY MEMBER JIM HOLMES



Jim Holmes passed away January 5th, at age 91. The following is his obituary:

Jim was born at home, 91 N 25th St., San Jose on March 18, 1925. He attended San Jose High School but dropped out in 1942 to enlist in the US Navy at age 17.

Jim was trained as a machinist in Navy school and was deployed to Pear Harbor where he was assigned as 'water tender' on the heavy cruiser New Orleans (CA-32). Jim stepped on board just after the cruiser returned from the battle of Midway Island. Jim, deep-down in the boiler room at battle station, participated in five major battles till the end of hostilities.

As he was 'regular Navy' as opposed to 'reserve', he accompanied the New Orleans through the Panama Canal to the East coast where he and the cruiser were decommissioned in 1946. The New Orleans made a brief layover in New Orleans, LA., where the crew were allowed a rip-roaring liberty...but Jim was assigned MP duty...so much for having fun.

Upon Jim's return to San Jose in late 1946, jobs were

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FROM THE MUSEUM CURATOR*(Continued from page 4)*

hard to find so he figured he ought to finish high school and what better person to first visit than his HS principal. Jim sat outside the principal's office for three days being told various excuses for the wait. On the third day of Jim's bench polishing, one of his former teachers was amazed to see Jim sitting there and, finding the reason, they both burst into the principal's office; the principal with feet on desk having a smoke. The teacher, Walter L. Bachrodt, demanded Jim should be granted a HS diploma considering his Navy training etc... and so it was recorded.

Jim spent a couple years employed as a house painter. In 1949 he applied to the Southern Pacific Railroad and spent the next thirty nine years in the signal department. Jim was very active in 15 inch gauge steam locomotive building with a railroad in the Felton, CA area. He was a founding member and past president of the Central Coast RR Club. Jim is pictured with his 15" scale narrow gauge mogul locomotive #5. Jim also was a member of the "black gang", helping with restoration of the engine room and boiler of the Steam Tug Hercules, located at the Maritime National Historical Park, Hyde St. Pier, SF. His knowledge and interests spanned a large number of the "heavy" hobbies: Streetcars, railroads and steam boats (both model and prototype).

Jim was an early CTCRC volunteer at Kelley Park, San Jose working with Fred Bennett. Jim donated and installed the wig-wag signal next to the trolley barn in 1985. He had a hand in restoring the Port Huron Traction engine. He built several O-gauge model trolley cars in 17/64 scale, one of which he donated to CTCRC and operates on the O-gauge model track in the Trolley Barn. In the late 1940's there were not many hobby shops around and Jim carved the model trolley parts from WWII military medical splint wood found locally in war surplus stores. Jim was an honorary member of the South Bay Railroad Historical Society installing and sharing his knowledge of railroad signals with the late Ed Peterman.

Jim passed away at his home he built in 1949 at age 91.

The SBHRS has received two display cases. Here is the description, in the words of Museum Curator Joe Hoffmann:

“ The two display cabinets were donated about 3 years ago by an unknown person, nameless, who was involved with the ice skating rink on Lawrence Expressway and Monroe Ave. in Sunnyvale. They have been renovated with new paint for the base and the interior; the addition of a velveteen material on the bottom shelf; and the purchase of new beveled-edge glass for the tops of the cabinets. The shelving brackets, we learned during the renovation, were not those compatible with the cabinet, so they had to be filed down. The last things, still to be accomplished at this writing, is to build doors for the backside of the cabinets.

The cabinets have been placed under the two counter windows in the Waiting Room, and will be filled with a variety of artifacts relative to passenger railroad travel and services in support of the traveler. “

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The SBHRS Welcomes our newest members:

Janet Cooper

Charles Johnson

James Von Rittmann

David Morman

Our members have many specialized topics among the categories of both railroad past and present, as well as railroad modeling.



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THE SANTA CLARA BLOCK



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