

# Railhead

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## DEPOT ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

The Woodland Train Depot is over 100 years old but is still serving the local community. People still gather on the Depot's platform, sit in the waiting rooms, and watch for trains. Although you can no longer catch a train there, visitors come for new activities such as cultural events, school tours, historic presentations, and family adventures. Here is what has been happening at the Woodland Train Depot.

### Depot Yard Sale Fundraiser

This annual event took place on Saturday, April 20 and had the largest attendance to date. It also raised the most funds of any of the Depot Yard Sales, bringing in over \$4,500. Funds from the sale will be used to help refurbish SP caboose 1156. This event is gaining in popularity each year.

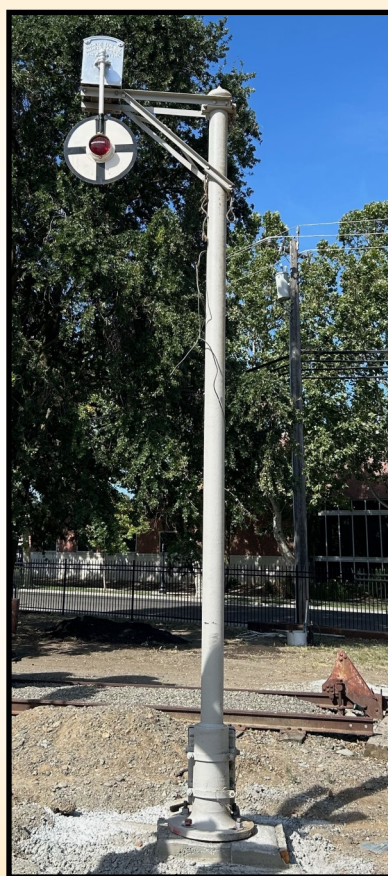
### Volunteer reception

It has been a busy year for SVHR volunteers working at the Woodland Train Depot. In addition to the routine maintenance and landscaping, volunteers worked on various restoration projects, staffed important events and fundraisers, and provided many hours of labor for the Vintage Railroad Signal and Site Lighting Project. To say "thanks" to all of these dedicated volunteers, the SVHR Board of Directors held a volunteer reception at the depot on May 29. This was an opportunity for volunteers to relax and

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## New Exhibits "Signal" Progress on the Depot Site Project

With the warmer weather, SVHR volunteers have been busy installing new exhibits and lighting



Wig wag signal installed on its new post

as part of the Vintage Railroad Signal and Site Lighting Project. The newest exhibit to be installed is the wig wag signal and signal pole that have been in storage for some time. The wig wag signal was donated by a Woodland resi-

dent in 1994, and the signal pole was donated by the Niles Canyon Railway in 2011. This style of signal was commonly used by the Southern Pacific Railroad.

Also known as a "Magnetic Flagman", this grade crossing signal was manufactured by the Magnetic Signal Company of Los Angeles sometime between 1914 and 1949. It utilizes alternating electromagnets pulling on an iron armature which swings a white and black steel target disc and sounds a mechanical bell with each swing. There is a red light in the center of the target which is illuminated when the signal is in operation. The signal box is mounted on a cantilever attached to the top of the signal pole allowing it to extend over a roadway.

Before the pole could be installed, volunteers had to construct and pour a concrete foundation that was designed by an engineer and approved by the City of Woodland. The signal is located along the north walkway near the Griswold grade crossing signal and SP locomotive 1233. Once this interactive exhibit is fully wired, visitors will be able to operate it by pushing a button.

Additional outdoor exhibits, two display tracks for SVHR's speeders, have also been installed.

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## From the Right Side of the Cab

June 5 marked the 42<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Sacramento Valley Historical Railways. On that day in 1982, a small group of volunteers gathered at the Yolo County Fairgrounds to work on Southern Pacific steam locomotive 1233. Ten days later this group of volunteers established the Friends of the 1233 as a nonprofit organization and later incorporated as the Sacramento Valley Historical Railways. Since then, SVHR has completed many projects both large and small with the goal of preserving the railroad history of the Sacramento Valley. SVHR volunteers remain as active as ever. Check out what they have been doing in this issue of the *Railhead* and on our Facebook page.

Once again SVHR participated in the Big Day of Giving on May 2. During this annual event, nonprofit organizations in the Sacramento area have an opportunity to work together to promote and fundraise for their organizations. This event is growing every year and has become an easy way to support SVHR and the Woodland Train Depot. This year we received over \$1,400 in donations which will greatly helping us to achieve our restoration goals. We thank all of our donors for their much-needed support. Donations can still be made online by going to [www.bigdayofgiving.org](http://www.bigdayofgiving.org), and looking for “Historic Woodland Train Depot” under “Find Nonprofits”.

One of the most popular exhibits at the Woodland Train Depot is Southern Pacific caboose 1156. Constructed at the SP General Shops in LA and completed in August 1942, this Class C-40-3 caboose helped alleviate the acute shortage of cabooses during World War II. It served the last of its career as the local between Elverta and Woodland before being donated to SVHR in December 1983. Although it has



received loving care throughout its time with SVHR, it now needs some additional work to maintain and preserve it. With this in mind, SVHR applied for and received a grant from the National Railway Historical Society for \$2,000 to paint and refurbish this caboose. Many thanks to Board of Directors member Brandon Leathers for researching and applying for this grant. This grant and funds from the recent Depot Yard Sale will fund this project.

This year has been a very busy time at the Woodland Train Depot as volunteers have been working long hours on many projects. On May 29 SVHR hosted a reception at the depot to thank these volunteers for their dedication and to allow volunteers from different projects and activities to get together and socialize with each other. SVHR is an all-volunteer organization that has accomplished so much in its 42-year history. New members and volunteers are always welcome. We invite you to join us at the Woodland Train Depot for a hands-on experience with our local railroad history. If you are interested in becoming a member, email us at [WoodlandTrainDepot@gmail.com](mailto:WoodlandTrainDepot@gmail.com). We would love to give you a personal tour and introduce you to our hard-working members.

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## Restoration of SP Baggage Wagons Continues

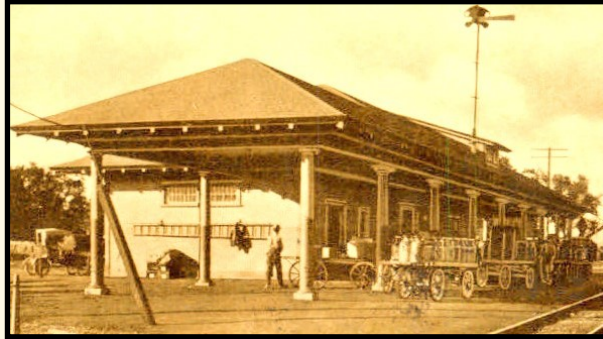
A passenger depot needed to transport passengers' luggage, freight such as crates and boxes, and postal mail between the depot Baggage Room and the train's baggage car. The most common way to do this was with a baggage wagon. These wagons were used throughout the last century and some are still in use at passenger depots today. Like all railroad equipment, they were designed for heavy use and durability, and the design didn't change much over the decades. Pulled by hand and later by motorized tug, the baggage wagon had a metal frame, spoked wheels with hard rubber treads, and a wooden deck that was generally at the level of the baggage car floor, thereby making it easier to move items on and off the train. Early on passengers used large trunks to transport their belongings, but later trunks were replaced by suitcases.

Baggage wagons were also used to move smaller items of freight and bags of mail. For instance, there are several photos of baggage wagons at the Woodland Train Depot loaded with milk cans from the local farms headed for processing plants in the larger cities like Sacramento. The mail in Woodland was transported to and from the depot in a different type of two wheeled cart which is also on display at the depot.

Over the years, the Woodland Train Depot has accumulated a number of baggage wagons for its museum collection. Three wagons were donated by Amtrak, two from the Sacramento depot in 1998 and one from the Davis depot in 2004. All three were

originally used by Southern Pacific and later passed on to Amtrak. When SVHR received

cate that it received an overhaul in 1961.



Baggage wagons at the Woodland Train Depot

the Sacramento wagons they were painted Amtrak blue and in need of substantial repair. Repairs were made to make them operational but they still needed additional restoration. The Davis wagon was painted SP orange and was still in use by Amtrak when it was donated.

Another baggage wagon once used by SP was donated in 2013 by a private collector who lived in Galt. He had obtained it from a real estate company in Elk Grove 15 years earlier. Its history before that is unknown, but it was probably used in the Sacramento area. It had high side and front plywood panels with SP markings, but was in very rough condition. Markings on it indi-

In 2012, SVHR became aware of two baggage wagons stored outdoors in rural Yolo County. The owner of the wagons said that they had been used in downtown Woodland many years ago but not at the SP depot. This led us to believe that they may have been used at the Sacramento Northern Railroad depot at Second and Main Streets. With this thought in mind, SVHR purchased the one in the best condition with the hope that further investigation could confirm our suspicions. This wagon was in extremely poor condition with all of the wood rotted but most of the metal parts intact but very rusty. The metal wheels had traces of various colors of paint which will hopefully help in identifying where it was used. It is hoped that it is either a Sacramento Northern or Railway Express Agency wagon since both were used at the Woodland SN depot.

As part of the work being done to clean up and develop the depot grounds, it was decided to finish the restoration of the baggage wagons to make them more presentable for display. SVHR volunteer Marv Schurke decided to take on this project and began work on the 3 Amtrak wagons last year. Since then, repairs were completed, missing wood work replaced, and the wagons painted SP orange. Marv was assisted by Raylene Ewing.

More recently, Marv and SVHR President Richard Wheeler



Restored baggage wagon and tug

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## New Depot Site Project Exhibits Installed

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One of these tracks is located behind the restroom building and the other is located along the south walkway. The rails for the first track were obtained from property adjacent to Main Street in Woodland and were probably used by the Sacramento Northern Railway which had a track running down the middle of Main Street. These tracks will allow for a better presentation of the speeders as they are restored.



Sheffield Speeder on new display track

Finally, the installation of lighting for the picnic area is progressing. Volunteers recently poured the concrete foundations for four light poles along west side of the depot property and electricians have been called to complete the installation. Each pole will have two lights, and two flood lights will also be installed. These lights will allow this area of the grounds to be

used at night and will provide better nighttime security.



Picnic area light post foundations installed

## Recent Acquisitions

*The Sacramento Valley Historical Railways museum collection is growing with generous gifts and other acquisitions like these:*

Southern Pacific Train Order and Clearance forms dated November 14-22, 1944, by gift of Mike Chandler of Woodland, CA.

Southern Pacific tools including an ice pick used for breaking up ice in refrigerated box cars, by gift of Maurice Rasmussen of Woodland, CA.

**If you would like to donate an item to the SVHR museum collection, contact us at: Sacramento Valley Historical Railways, Woodland Train Depot, 1120 Lincoln Avenue, Woodland, CA 95695 or email WoodlandTrainDepot@gmail.com.**

## Restoration of SP Baggage Wagons Continues

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began the restoration of the baggage wagon from Galt. Since this wagon needed much more extensive work than the Amtrak wagons, SVHR applied for and received a grant of \$1,000 from the Woodland Stroll Through History in March of this year. This wagon has since been disassembled, and work begun to replace the wooden front axle



Galt baggage wagon

mount. This project will require some time to complete.

Finally, in order to make it easier to pull the baggage wagons around, the gasoline powered baggage tug that Amtrak donated to SVHR in 2001 received some attention from SVHR volunteers Dave Barklow and Brandon Leathers. This tug was built by the Kalamazoo Manufacturing Company and delivered to the Davis depot in 1980. With a new battery and some TLC, they got

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## Depot Activities and Events

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enjoy some light refreshments.



Volunteer reception on the platform

## School Tour

The Woodland Train Depot had some young visitors on May 31 when Mr. Delgado's 4th grade class from Woodland Prairie Elementary School stopped by for tours led by our docents. Thirty students and 5 adults enjoyed seeing the various exhibits and having the opportunity to have a snack while sitting in the historic waiting room. School tours at the Woodland Train Depot offer a great way for students to learn about our local railroad history and are always welcome.

## Native Daughters of the Golden West Meeting

The Native Daughters of the Golden West, Woodland Parlor No. 90, hold their meetings on

the second Saturday of every month at various locations in Woodland including the Woodland Train Depot. For more information about the Native Daughters of the Golden West, contact them at [www.facebook.com/NDGWWoodland90/](http://www.facebook.com/NDGWWoodland90/).

## Restoration of SP Baggage Wagons Continues

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the tug running again, and applied a coat of SP orange paint. With the completion of these projects, the Woodland Train Depot will have an excellent display of the type of SP baggage wagons that were used at the depot during the last century.



SP logo on the Galt baggage wagon

# SCHEDULE BOARD

### Stroll Through History

Saturday, October 12

### NDGW Meeting

Saturday, November 2

### SVHR Work Day

Saturday, November 2

### SVHR Board Meeting

Wednesday Nov. 5

### Santa At the Depot

Saturday, December 7

**The Woodland Train Depot is a unique venue for events, meetings, and gatherings. To book space at the Woodland Train Depot, contact us at:**

**WoodlandTrainDepot@gmail.com  
or phone (530) 848-2243.**



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