



January 2017, Houston Area Live Steamers, Volume 2017 Issue 01, Rick White, Editor

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## The Presidential Siding

January 2017

Hello all,

Well, the New Year is upon us. I hope you have all had a good start to the year.

We had a suggestion near the end of last year to add some "Fun Run Days" to our calendar. As a result of that suggestion we have scheduled "Fun Run Days" for the following dates:

08 April

10 June

14 October

So what is a Fun Run Day? We believe it is a day to come out to Zube Park with friends, family, relatives, whomever, and enjoy the camaraderie that HALS has to offer. It is not a Workday, not a Meet, not a Meeting, just a day to come out run trains, give rides to friends, etc. Initially we are thinking that those who come out may want to bring a picnic lunch. After we have a couple of these, maybe we can start doing burgers, hotdogs, etc. At the moment there are no rules.

On the County front, Dennis Cranston and I had a meeting with Steve Dorman. We have a new Park Superintendent, David Tambeorella. David is replacing Will Davis who has moved to the Katy area. You may also notice that the "Shed" at the front of the HALS area has been torn down. They are in progress of replacing it with a larger building. Steve said that he expects it will be the end of this year before the building is complete and occupied. They are continuing to expand the Park area on Becker Road and plans are still in place for the

retention pond on the east side of the Park. Steve said that the Parks people are extremely busy with changes in parks, new parks being built, etc. He continues to be very supportive of HALS.

The work to produce the required engineering documentation, gain County approval, obtain permits, etc. is ongoing. My meeting with Steve was to better understand what is required and how we will continue to work with the Harris County Engineering Department, with an independent engineering firm, etc. so we can finish the work around the New Car Barn. The New Car Barn is very near completion. There is still work to do there, and if you see a notice come out from Bob Barnett asking for assistance, we would appreciate it if you can help.

While I continue to be frustrated with the County requirements that have been placed on us (and everybody else) I am optimistic that we are continuing to move forward, albeit slower than I would like. Thank You for your support and I really hope that more and more of you can come out and enjoy what HALS has to offer.

Hope to see you on the rails!

**Bill Smith**

President, Houston Area Live Steamers, Inc.  
Home of the Cypress Creek & Southern Railroad

## The County Tractor Shed

January 21, 2017



**Doug Blodgett photo of what is left of the county tractor shed, just the posts and the corner with the electric power. Power still in place. 1/21/2017**



**Rick White photo, an overview. The posts were pulled out with the concrete on them and left. The corner with the power still stands. 1/23/2017**

## HALS Events 2017

All events at Zube Park

January 7: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM  
January 21: Work Day  
January 23: Board Meeting 7PM  
January 28: OPS Day

February 4: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM  
February 18: HALS at Greater Houston Train Show  
February 20: Board Meeting at 7 PM  
February 23-25: Chugga Chugga Chili Fest (Bob Barnett)

March 4: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM  
March 11: Work Day, prepare for public run day.  
March 18: Public Run Day 9 AM to 2 PM  
March 25: OPS Day  
March 27: Board Meeting at 7 PM

April 1: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM  
April 8: Fun Run Day  
April 15: Public Run Day 9 AM to 2 PM  
April 24: Board Meeting at 7 PM

May 6: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM  
May 20: Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM  
May 22: Board Meeting at 7 PM  
May 24-28: Memorial Day Weekend Meet (Gary Brothers)

June 3: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM  
June 10: Fun Run Day  
June 17: Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM

June 26: Board Meeting at 7 PM

July 8: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM  
July 15: Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM  
July 24: Board Meeting at 7 PM

August 5: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM  
August 19: Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM  
August 28: Board Meeting at 7 PM

September 9: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM  
September 16: Public Run Day 9 to 1  
September 25: Board Meeting at 7 PM  
September 30: OPS Day

October 7: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM  
October 14: Fun Run Day  
October 21: Public Run Day 9 to 2  
October 23: Board Meeting at 7 PM  
October 28: OPS Day

November 4: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM  
November 9 – 12: SWLS Meet and HALS Anniversary Meet  
November 18: Public Run Day 9 to 2 with Toys for Tots.  
November 27: Board Meeting at 7 PM at Zube Park

December 2: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM  
December 11: Board Meeting at 7 PM at Zube Park

## **2017 Priorities**

### **Bill Smith**

One of the things we have discussed in the Board Meetings is the Roles of the board members. Those roles are documented in the By-Laws, but I felt the need to have more input from the Members as to what their interests are. So, while we are following the By-Laws, we are taking advantage of the flexibility we have to fine tune those Roles.

To facilitate these discussions I created the document on the next page. This is the 2nd year that we are using this methodology. The Board Members were asked to document the top two or three things that they feel are their priorities for 2017. In this way, I believe we have a better understanding of:

- Who is responsible for what
- Who wants to do what
- How their Roles fit in with the other Board Members.
- Agreement from each Board Member of their priorities

I presented this in the General Membership Meeting on January 7th. We had an excellent discussion with the

Members in attendance, and as a result I made a couple of very minor changes.

How does this affect you? Well, whether you are a Board Member or not, you now have the ability to see what they have agreed are their main priorities.

Now that you know that, if you have if you have an interest in a specific area, you should be able to know who is working in that area. If you have an interest in an area that is not listed, let me know what it is and we can figure it out where it goes.

We hope that with this information, that you can find an area that piques your interest and we can get more people out helping to make HALS a better and more fun place to be.

As always, if you have any comments, questions, etc. please let me one the Board Members know and we will do our best to answer them.

See you at the Park!

Bill Smith

President, Houston Area Live Steamers, Inc.

**HALS Board of Directors Priorities - 2017**  
**08 January 2016**

**President - Bill Smith**

- Coordinate with County on Requirements and Interfacing
- Actively assume other activities
- General Management

**V.P. Operations - Bob Barnett**

- Coordinate Public Run Day activities including Concession activities
- Coordinate Operations Day activities
- Facilitate Meet Coordination
- Facilitate Work Day activities as required to Support Operations Needs

**V.P. Facilities - Spence Gaskin**

- Car Storage Project - Work with Dennis Cranston to facilitate completion
- Facilitate Work Day activities as required to support Facility needs
- Maintain Inventory List of equipment available for use by members (welder, tamper, tools, etc.)
- Facilitate Restoration and Maintenance small buildings alongside track

**V.P. Track & Right of Way - Peder Serkland**

- Phase IV Bridge
- Continuation of Old Car Barn / Engine Barn Yard Track Repair
- Facilitate Work Day activities as related to Track needs

**V.P. Motive Power & Equipment- Gary Brothers**

- Have all Club Engines in proper operating condition before March Public Run Day
- Actively Maintain Lawn Mowers, String Trimmers, Blowers, etc. in Good Operating Condition
- Facilitate Work Day Activities as related to needs of Motive Power & Equipment

**Secretary - Rick White**

- Secretary activities
- Publish Stack Talk Newsletter

**V.P. Manpower - Rich Businger**

- Update Training Material and Certification Tests
- Have all Engineers and Conductors certified before March Public Run Day
- Update / Create New Member Packet and Mentoring Plan

**Treasurer - Dennis Cranston**

- Treasurer activities
- Backup President in Communications with County
- Design Coordinator for Projects Requiring Permitting from County
- Facilitate Project Activities As Required

**Sr. Director - Connor Witkowski**

- Assist V.P. Operations in Run Day activities

**Jr Director - JB Cason**

- Assist V.P. Motive Power in maintenance of HALS Owned Locomotives
- Assist V.P. Operations in Run Day activities

## **Status Update Line**

### **Bill Smith**

As I think all of you are aware, we use the HALS Status Update Line to provide close to real time updates of weather, traffic issues, track issues, closures, etc. centered around our Public Run Days. I normally start those updates on the Thursday afternoon before a Public Run Day and the frequency of updates depends on weather and other factors.

This worked well until the last Run Day of 2016 when the company we were using to provide that Service apparently died. They have not been reachable and the phone number I was using is no longer being answered. Oh well...

So...

I have found another Service that in my testing seems to work perfectly and very importantly is part of the Go Daddy.com

companies which should indicate they are likely to be around a while.

**The Status Update Line phone number is now [\(888\) 767-7660](tel:8887677660)**

I put together a quick series of screenshots from the HALS public website front page. This will show you what the public sees. Check it out and see what you think. The line is active. It says that we are closed and when we reopen for Public Run Day.

A big Thanks to Jim Thompson for updating the website.

Any questions or issues with the Status Line please let me know.

See you at the Park!

Bill Smith

President, Houston Area Live Steamers, Inc.

Click here for Run Day Information

Here is information about the Status Update Line

### Public Run Day Information

On the third Saturday of each month, March through November, the members of Houston Area Live Steamers offer FREE rides to the public on our track (map). The dates and hours can be found here.

**Track & Weather Updates now available for Run Days!**  
HALS has established a call-in number so that on those rainy days, you can check to see if the trains are running. It will also provide updates on early closings, late openings and any other condition that would affect the track. The Line is updated continuously beginning Thursday afternoon. **The number for the HALS Status Line is (888) 767-7660** You can not leave a message, as this line is dedicated to providing train status for Public Run Days.

**Signup for our Public Run Day Reminder E-Mail**  
We will send you an e-mail prior to each scheduled Run Day along with News and updates about activities at the track.  
• [Click Here to Signup for the Run Day Reminders](#)  
We will not share your email with anyone.  
• [Click Here to UnSubscribe from the Run Day Reminders](#)

This is the information about the email Notification

Houston Area Live Steamers, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

**WHO WE ARE:**

- [What is HALS?](#)
- [Public Run Day Information](#)

The HALS Status Update Line call in number has changed. It is now (888) 767-7660. For details click the Runday Information link above.

- [Signup for Email Reminder of Run Day Activities](#)
- [TxDot will be closing US 290 periodically. Click here for Detour info](#)
- [2016 Run Schedule](#)
- [Map to the track with directions](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

- [Public Run Day Photos](#)

**Something NEW!**

- The Clubs monthly Newsletter is now available to the public. The Stack Talk link on the right of this page will take you to a list of Public Stack Talk newsletters Just click the month and year and enjoy the activities.



## Work Day

### January 14, 2017

#### Bill Smith

Saturday dawned a little warmer and more humid than expected. However, people began arriving ready to work on a variety of things. Here is an overview of the day.

- Doug Blodgett returned his steam engine from being worked on to the Engine Barn
- Gary Brothers installed the new carburetor onto Engine 5321. He adjusted the carburetor and finally got it going. Steve Dennis and JB Cason assisted. Later, Gary took the engine out light and gave it a good test with no issues. Later he put a string of riding cars on it and tested it again. The engine is really running well now and sounds even better with the new larger muffler.
- JB Cason made some adjustments to his two engines. He was assisted by Rich Businger and later by Randy Neville.
- Peder Serkland and Steve Dennis cleaned up the berms at Sand Springs and Black's Crossing.
- Bob Barnett and Pete Greene installed the new bracing at the bottom of the 4 x 4 beams all around the building. This should

significantly increase the strength of those beams.

- Bill Howe replaced the points on one of the switches in the Yard. The point was pretty old and appears to have simply just worn out. Thanks to Bill for doing that.
- Rich Businger discovered another area right by one of the switches where the gauge had tightened up significantly and was working to fix that.
- Dennis Cranston did some HALS business while at the Park.
- Bill Smith had his engine out for a run and made the rounds of all of the work going on.
- We had some freeze damage to the Water Fountain at the Station Building. It was called in last Saturday as soon as noticed, but has not been repaired. Will contact the County again this week.
- Steve Dennis noticed some unusual noises in the Gator and investigated. Turns out that the chains were pretty dry so he oiled them which seemed to cure the issue.

The weather turned out to be really nice and we had a very productive day. Most showed up with no specific plans and ended up doing what piqued their interest...

A very good day and Big Thanks to those who came out! Is appreciated.

Bill Smith  
HALS President

## **Gary Brothers**

After installing the new carburetor in 5321, adjusting it, and oiling the main drive chain, I took it around phase one. No issues, so then I ran it through phase two and crossing over at Sumrall, continued over Anderson Loop and poured the gasoline to it on the straight away.

Third time around I pulled four straddle cars around the public route. All this was at Gary speed, again with no issues.

Nobody else was interested in taking it out so I put the train away.

The body is back on. Rich Businger is interested in doing the lights.

**Sinclair Tank Car**  
**Gary Brothers**  
**January 27, 2017**

I am detailing out the tank car that I purchased from Mary Rains. I made major changes to the frame cutting out the center portion and replacing it with a flat bar 3/8 X 2" and two 5/16" rods. Everything is welded together. Spacing was maintained between the two ends by first bolting the flat bar in place before cutting out the original middle part of the frame. I felt the flat bar was necessary due to the tank body being pvc or plastic. The flat bar helps transmit the push/pull forces thru the frame without distorting the mounting holes in the pipe. There are three holes in the flat bar along its length that bolts pass thru into the belly of the tank, these are in addition to the bolts holding it in place in the cradles.

I also fabricated some angle braces on each end using 1/2" angle iron then put down some grating on both ends.

The tank body, as I got it, had a 6" dome. I wanted to do something different so I filled in the hole with a piece of pvc pipe I had on hand screwing and gluing it in. I filled in the crack and screw holes with a body filler, sanded it till I was happy with the finish, then drilled a new smaller hole for the new dome caps, one being 3" and the other 1". The only downside to the smaller dome is that a hand will not pass thru so I will not be able to store stuff in the body.

Both the frame and body were cleaned, primed, and then painted. The frame received a gloss black finish and the tank body a green finish. I did not paint the trucks and couplers. It needs a bit of touch up paint here and there, and then on to applying the decals, which I will order from Connie Miracle.

GTB Shops



Flat bar 3/8 by 2 inches held in place by screws before cutting main frame.



After old main frame cut, just the flat bar under the tank car for strength. Small domes in place. End platforms installed.



Can see line where old 6 inch hole has been filled and now have a small dome.



Side view.



Side view.



B end with brake wheel.



**Left:** B end with brake wheel and end platform.

**Right:** two domes, a 3 inch and a 1 inch. Platform for workers around the domes.



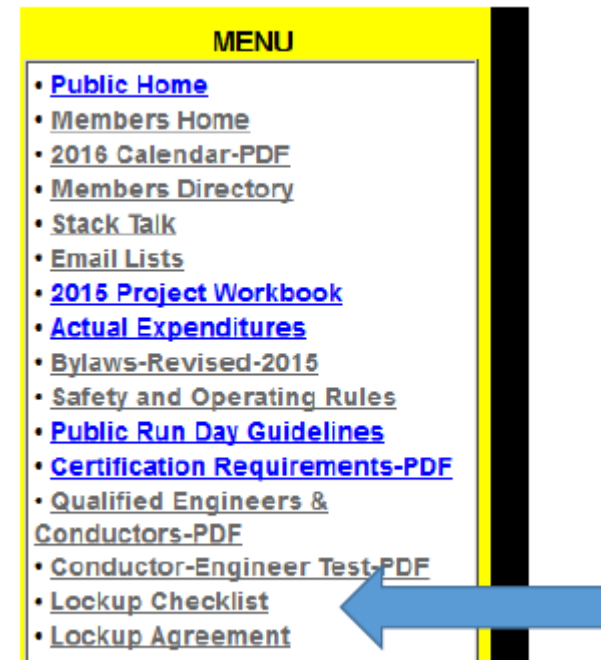
## Lock Up Bill Smith

Hello all,  
Sometime ago, we put together a document to assist all of us in knowing where in HALS there are locks that need to be locked to secure the area. This helped us resolve issues where nobody really knew where they all are. This document has been reviewed and updated and is now called the Lockup Checklist. The Lockup Checklist is now available on the HALS Members Only website. More on that shortly.

In the last few months we have had a rash of locks being left unlocked. A couple of times the Shop / Engine Barn was left unlocked. There is some valuable stuff in there! The original Car Barn, 13 stitches, and some other minor areas have also been left unlocked. Fortunately there has been no theft. As the Board discussed the issue after receiving several complaints from members about the issue it was decided that we need to remind **All Members that have keys** of their responsibility to make sure that HALS is properly locked.

So, IF you have a HALS Key.....

Go to the first page of the HALS Members Only Website. You should see the Menu in the upper left that looks like this:



The Blue arrow shows the links to the Lockup Checklist and the Lockup Agreement. To begin, Click on the Lockup Checklist Link, review that Checklist and then return to the Menu.

Next, Click on the Lockup Agreement. You will be taken to the Agreement which looks like this:

## Locking Up At HALS

Revision 0  
22 December 2016

All HALS members who currently have keys are required to sign and date the following pledge in order to maintain the privilege of having a HALS's Key:

1. Any member entering the HALS lease of Zube Park and opening any gate, door, turntable, or ballast tipple is required to relock same before departing the HALS property, UNLESS the following (in Item 2) is obtained.
2. If other members are working in the IMMEDIATE area, a verbal agreement may be obtained that the other member will relock the gate or door upon departure. The member agreeing to relock is then fully responsible for securing that lock.
3. The last person to exit the Park must check all gates and locks to assure that the facilities are secure (see attached). Members will assume they are the last member under the following condition:

The member will survey the Parking lot for cars or members working. If no one is visible the member will secure the facility. Note: Members working far to the east in Phase 3 or Phase 4 areas do not have visual contact with the Shops and barns and the facilities should be locked for security anyway. Those at the Gauge 1 track do not always have keys, the members at other than the Gauge 1 track must lock up before leaving.

4. A listing of the areas that need to be checked is included here. "Locking Up Checklist 22dec2016".  
[Locking Up Checklist](#)

When entering your response, date and your name, DO NOT USE THE ENTER Key. Use the TAB Key or Mouse to move between fields!

I have read and understand

Yes  No

Date

Name

We are asking **ALL MEMBERS who have HALS Keys** to review the Checklist, Read the Agreement and assuming that you agree, under the verbiage, "I have read and understand", click on the circle to the left of the word Yes. Enter the date on the next line. Enter your name on the next line and then click on the Submit Form button. The website will then send your response to me, and I will review, collate and then have the responses added to the Membership List.

In a case where a member may not have access to email, I will have blank forms available.

*In closing, the intent here is not to make a big drama out of this , but to remind **ALL MEMBERS who have HALS Keys** of their responsibility of having that key.*

If for any reason you decide that you no longer want your key, please feel free to return it to me.

Hope to see you at the Park!

Bill Smith

President, Houston Area Live Steamers, Inc.

## Maintenance for HALS owned Tom Bee trucks

### Rick White

The Tom Bee trucks that HALS owns have swing motion bolsters and grease fittings. This makes their maintenance different from the Mountain Car Company trucks we have used at HALS since the late 1990s.

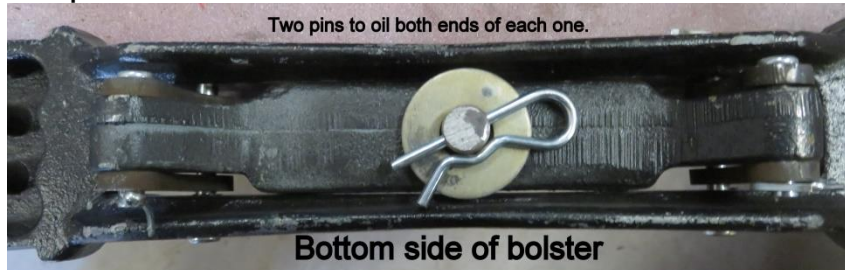
There are grease fittings for the bearings. A grease gun is needed.



The swing motion bolsters ride on pins that need oil. You need an oil that will last since we only oil these once a year! I use 25% bar oil in gear oil. Mix in the oil can and apply at each of the pin rotation points. For this, it is best to remove the truck and do half from the top and the other half from the bottom.



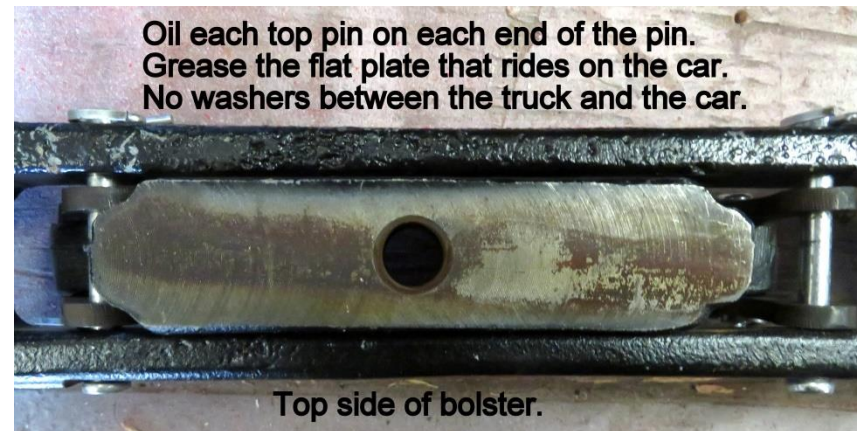
The bottom side of the bolster with the two bottom pins. The two pins shown need oil on each end of the pins.



Note the bottom end of the 1/2 inch grade 8 bolt with a 1/8 inch hole for the keeper pin. This is not the Tom Bee set up, but is easy for maintenance.

There are one or two HALS passenger cars with Tom Bee trucks that still have the Tom Bee shoulder bolts that bolt in from the bottom. These bolts must have lock tight on them. They are an accident waiting to happen if they do not have lock tight on them. Note that you are installing a clean bolt with lock tight and there is grease around the bolsters! Very difficult to do right. Requires one person to hold the truck in alignment and the other to insert the shoulder bolt without getting any grease on the bolt.

The other cars with Tom Bee trucks have the bolster on the car drilled out to 1/2 inch and have a bolt with a keeper pin installed like photo 3. This is much safer and also easier to use when you are doing maintenance. These 1/2 inch bolts



The top side of the bolster. Again, two pins to oil at each end. Also, the flat side of the bolster goes against the car bolster and needs grease so the two rotate smoothly. Clean off the old grease from the truck bolster and the car bolster. If there is any grit (sand or mud kicked up from the track) that will hurt truck rotation.

are grade 8 long bolts with the threads cut off and an 1/8 inch hole drilled for the keeper shown in photo 3. There should be only 1/16 to 1/8 inch slop between the washer under the keeper and the truck. Too much and a derailment is hard to put the truck on. Way too much slop and the truck can turn 90 degrees in a derailment and be very hard to re-rail. It has happened at HALS during a public run day. Too little slop and the truck cannot rotate freely in turns.

The two sets of three cars have the Mountain Car trucks. The other HALS cars all have the Tom Bee trucks. One car in the MoPac Eagle four car set is a private car with Mountain Car trucks.



## Throttle Valve Exchange – Mikado 7113 – Doug Blodgett

Sometimes a forced change is a good thing, but not always apparent at the time. That's what happened to me when the gate type throttle valve started acting up in my Mikado,

I wasn't too pleased at the thought of replacing that valve, given that a smokebox, where the throttle resides, quickly develops a heavy coating of lamp black, the same material that is used to make black paint, black ink, and a number of other very black things. It also absorbs about 97% of light striking it so just seeing where things are in a smokebox is a challenge.

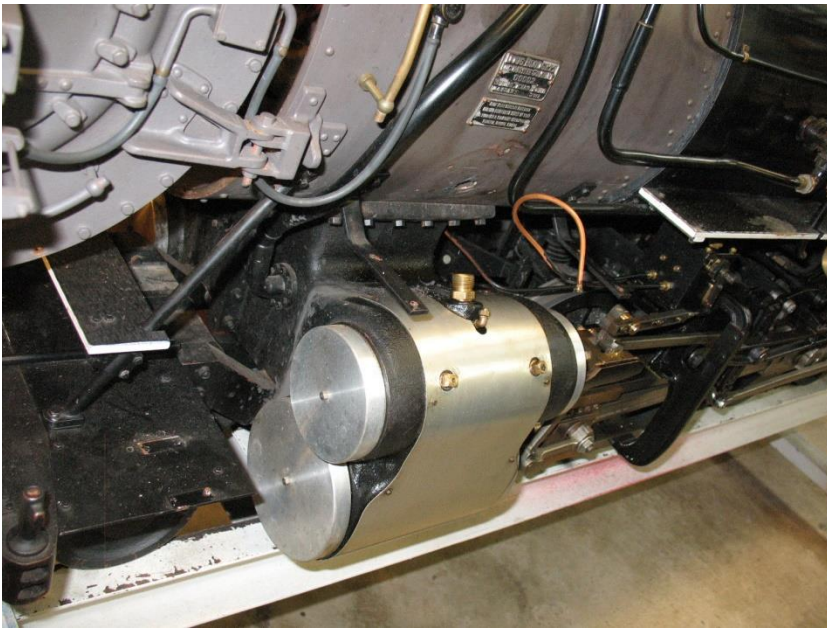
Since this repair was going to involve plumbing changes in the smokebox, I decided to bring the locomotive back to my shop where it would be much easier to do the work. Since 7113 was going to be in the shop, I would also be able to fix a nagging steam leak in the engine brake valve fitting and change the whistle valve. Earlier testing by Kenny Rhodes during the Anniversary Meet had determined that the pretty little scale whistle valve on the engine was not delivering enough steam to the Coles 2" whistle in spite of having specifications to match the 5/16" steam tubing called for by Coles. I didn't know it at the time, but changing out the whistle valve would also require rerouting the tubing to the boiler pressure gauge to another fitting, and that turned out to be a good thing, giving me a better view of the sight glass.

The first thing I did after opening the smokebox door was to vacuum it out and scrape off the buildup of carbon. If you ever undertake this task, be

sure to use a shop vacuum and put a supplementary cover over the paper filter in the vacuum. Otherwise, the regular filter will clog up very quickly and you will have to change it often. With the supplementary cover, you just change out the cover when the vacuum stops working. I also put on my protective Tyvek painters coveralls when digging around in the deep parts of the smokebox. They got pretty dirty, but at least my wife appreciated not having to wash carbon out of my clothing later.

I had planned to reuse some of the plumbing from the existing installation, but quickly discovered that it was much easier to just put everything back in new. That meant I would also have to remove the running boards and the steam tube casings on the outside of the smokebox so I could disconnect the steam tubes from the cylinder valve casting. The new valve is a ball valve, commonly used in live steam engines, but of a right angle design which is a bit unconventional. I had seen one of these in Brent Courtney's new Mikado and decided I liked how neatly it fit into the smokebox. Naturally, the linkage to operate the valve required a bit of modification and I discovered during the shakedown run that it might be too long. I will change that, but can do that at the track.

Since many of our club members are not familiar with the workings of a steam engine, I have tried to explain what the pieces do that you are looking at in the photos.



Front running board and stairs removed for access to plumbing in top of cylinder. Done on both sides of course.



Old gate valve throttle before removal.



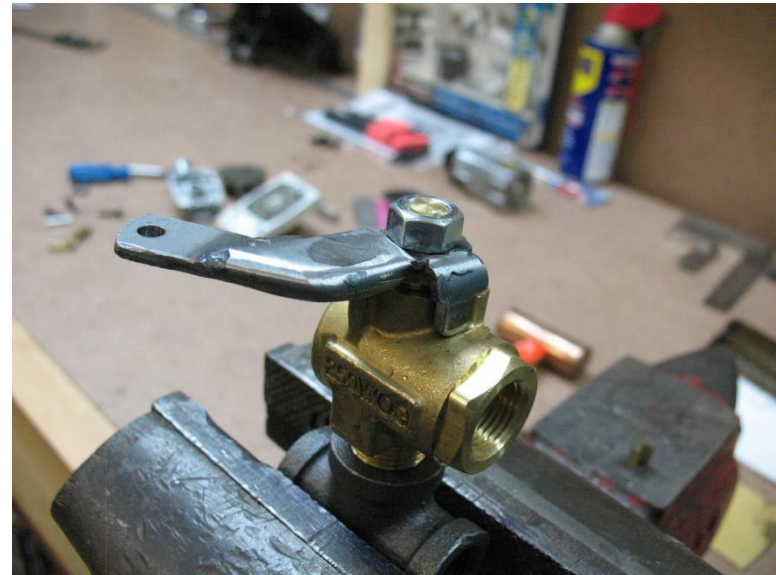
This is the lever arm inside the gate valve. You can see the fracture in the arm where the rectangular hole is. A rectangular rod engages this to swing the gate into place and it was becoming very loose with a lot of slack



Old valve removed but the plumbing remains. The large vertical pipe, called a petticoat, leads to the smokestack and will also be removed, as will the copper steam tubes. Pipe from bottom is exhaust which creates draft for the fire. Tubes go to cylinders.



Welding jig for a new lever on the new ball valve. The brass plug and spacer are to keep things in alignment without having to worry about welding to the jig. Steel weld won't adhere to brass.



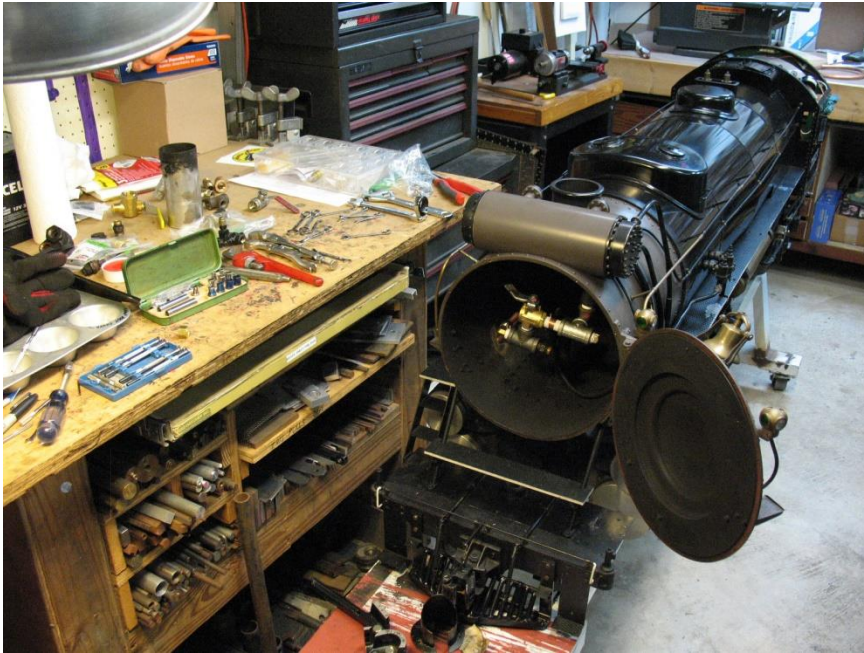
The new right angle ball valve with its new lever. Welding is MIG. Added material is  $\frac{1}{2}$  by  $\frac{1}{8}$  mild steel. Steam comes in on the side and goes out the bottom.



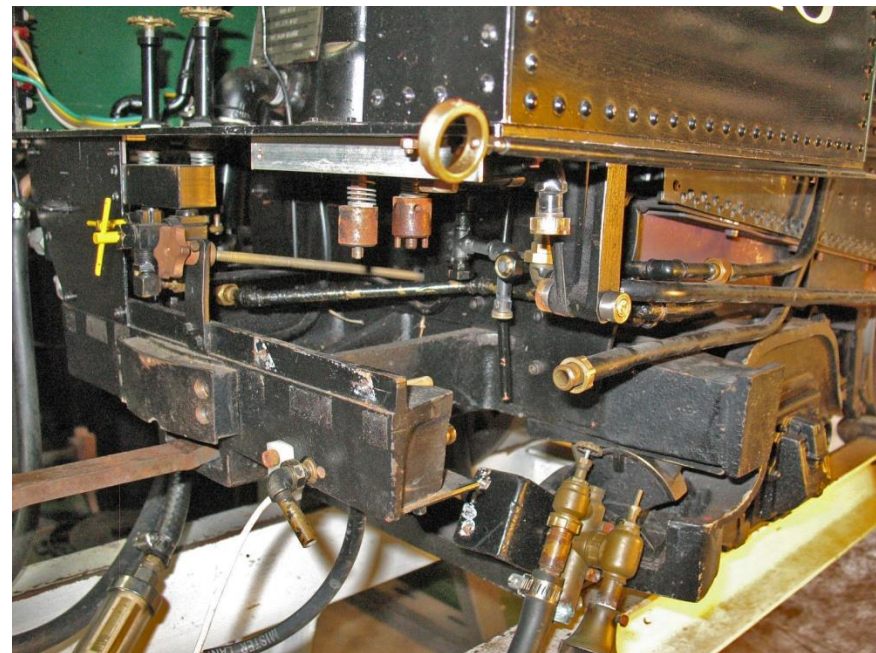
Shown on the left is the new valve partially installed in the smokebox. The light gray circles on the bottom right and left of the smokebox are where I cleaned off the openings in the smokebox for the steam pipes so I could re-caulk them with high temp RTV. The smokebox must be leak tight so a proper draft can be pulled through the tubes for the fire. In this photo, the right hand steam tube has not been installed yet. The question might come up about why I used a tee on the upper pipe instead of an ell. When I tightened the ell, it ended up facing the wrong way. I didn't want the connection too loose because I didn't want movement of the valve assembly, therefore I used a tee which gave me an opening every 180 degrees. There is a cap in the unused opening. The whole assembly is angled in order to raise the valve lever to the same height as the throttle rod.

Once I had the new valve installed, I turned to the cab area and repaired a leaking brake valve. That fitting is located under the cab in a very crowded spot, but I purposely built the cab and its supports so that any panel can be

removed independently for easy access to anything in the cab or under it. That extra bit of construction work has paid off handsomely several times since I put 7113 into service.



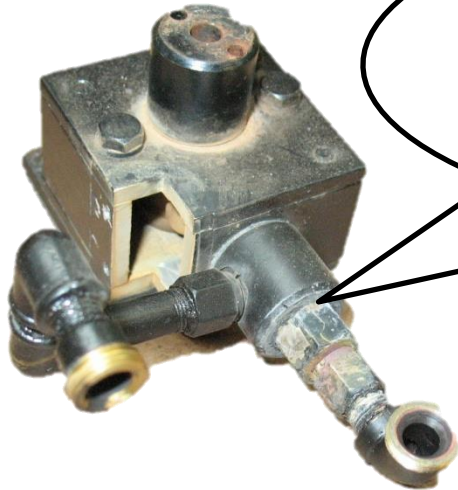
An overall shot of the work area and the crowded work bench with tools needed to change the valve. What a mess.



Rear R/H support panel under cab is removed for access to the steam brake valve. Most parts under here are made so components can be removed as assemblies.

Another thing I wanted to do was change the whistle valve in the cab. I have had trouble with it not sounding loud and deep, like a 2" whistle should. In fact, it would sometimes squeak – how embarrassing! During the Anniversary Meet, Ken Rhodes did some tests with it and we discovered

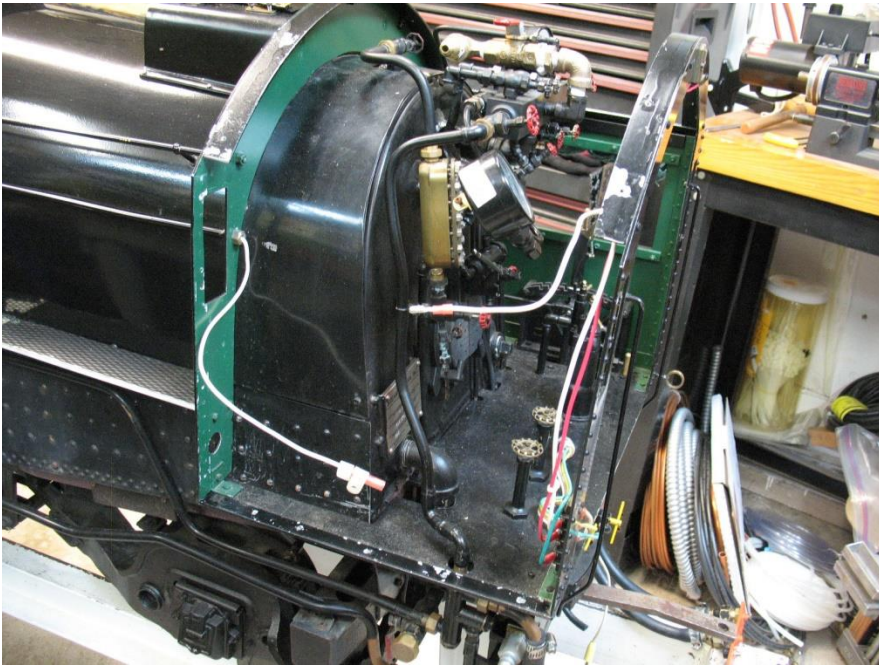
that the pretty little whistle valve only had a 1/8" hole in it passing steam even though the valve ends were threaded for 1/8" pipe feeding 5/16" tubing to the whistle. I decided to install a 1/4" ball valve instead – not as pretty as the original whistle valve, but a whole lot more effective.



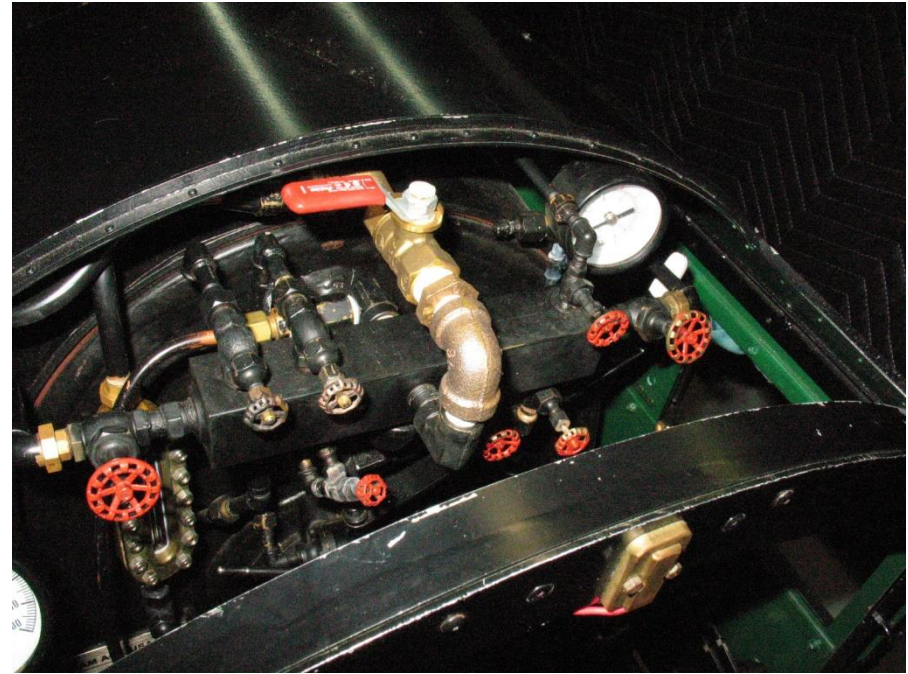
This is where the steam inlet was leaking when the engine was under steam. This is actually a Clippard valve inside the box which serves as a mount. I didn't know that a little "O" ring was required on the Clippard 10-32 straight thread fittings so it leaked badly until I put one on during this repair. The other pipe is the outlet leading to the brake cylinder.

While changing the steam valve for the whistle, I discovered that it would be easier to plumb if I used the fitting where the pressure gauge for the boiler was attached. That meant re-plumbing the pressure gauge to use the former whistle valve fitting. This actually turned out to be a good thing

because I not only simplified the plumbing, but allowed me to put the water glass siphon tube behind the water glass instead of in front of it. During this repair, I found that it was helpful to remove the fireman's side panel.



Cab roof and fireman's side panel removed for better access to whistle and pressure gauge plumbing.



The new whistle valve is in place using the former take-off point for the pressure gauge. The new pressure gauge take-off point is opposite where the brass fitting shows under the pair of little valves to the left of center.

I was able to fire up last weekend for a test run between rain storms we had in mid-January to test the repairs and am happy to report that the new throttle works much better than the old one as far as control of the steam. During the last year I had learned to compensate for the jerky starts due to slack so will have to retrain myself to stop compensating for that when I start out. There is some kind of binding going on in the linkage when it heats up but I think I have located the trouble and I am currently working

to adjust that. The new whistle valve works very well and the sound can only be described as "TOTALLY AWSOME". The leak in the supply line to the steam brake valve has finally been stopped so I am happy with that.

**Operations Day  
Rick White  
January 28, 2017**



Getting ready for operations. Model Railroader, Bob Barnett, and David James.



Spence Gaskin with his critter.



Steve Tacconnelly loading his riding car in his trailer because the county has the power off to the transfer table.



Steve Dennis with HALS 5321



JB Cason and Gordon Bliss backing into Sand Springs from Lakeside Jct. with the tank train.



Steve Dennis and Robert Briggs with passenger train 4 at Lakeside.



**Gary Brothers is fixing a fuel leak on the new carburetor on HALS 5321 while Steve Dennis helps.**



**Virginia and Gil Freitag.**



**Tom Bailey (Conductor) on the radio, Gilbert Freitag, and Spence Gaskin.**



**Randy Neville talking with Gerald Lee and Steve Dennis.**



**Steve Dennis and Gerald Lee**



**David James loco.**



**Gordon Bliss is coupling up cars.**



**JB Cason, our engineer.**





David James arriving while we are working the same area. Hannah Jct.



Tom Bailey (conductor), Virginia Freitag (engineer), Gilbert Freitag, and Gordon Bliss (our conductor). We are passing through Lakeside where Tom, Virginia, and Gilbert are switching.



Virginia and Gil Freitag Switching at Lakeside



Gilbert Freitag

OPS Day on January 28<sup>th</sup> had great weather for January. The sun kept us warm and the wind kept us cool. Freight train engineers were David James, JB Cason, and Virginia Freitag. Passenger train engineers were Gerald Lee (UP engine), Gary Brothers, Robert Briggs, and Steve Dennis. With bi-directional passenger trains and three freight trains, we were kept on our toes. In addition, the Tacconnellys ran their critter around the Phase I

loop. They just acquired the critter from Art Morris. They took home their passenger car because it fails to stay on the track well and Steve plans to fix it. Doug Blodgett could not run his steamer because the county had the power off to the steaming bays and Thirteen Stitches, where the air compressor is located. The transfer table was without power, causing considerable consternation.

## HALS 5321 Drive System Upgrade

### Gary Brothers, VP Motive Power

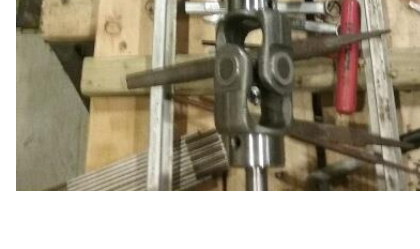
The photos show 5321's new drive lines.

- I replaced the complete assemblies including the lower pillow block and sprocket. All with 5/8" shafts, except for the slip joints.
- The keyed shafts go through both axle gear boxes on both trucks. Special keys had to be made as the shafts had a 3/16" key and the gearboxes were keyed for 1/8".
- The slip joints are 3/4" square tubing and 1" square tubing with a heavy wall. As the larger tubing had the weld close to the corner, I had to remove a small part of the smaller tubing so it would slide without binding. I got a pretty good fit between the two tubings.
- On the smaller rectangle tubing, I drilled into the opening with a 5/8" drill bit so the round shaft would fit tightly several inches.
- I would then tack weld insuring everything was straight. This was done on both drive line assemblies.
- The universals are all 5/8" keyed with set screws. Where they slip onto the shafts, I drilled a dimple so the set screws would hold onto the round shafts.
- Both sets of universals had to be lined up to prevent binding as they rotate.

- Both sets of drive lines have a number of grease zerks and so does the new pillow block.
- The new sprocket has the same number of teeth, 22, for number 40 chain.
- I was able to tighten all the chains, took a link out of one, and shimmed the other two.
- As the rest of the truck assemblies was in good shape, I left well enough alone.
- All filters were replaced, oil changed, filled the hydraulic fluid to the proper level.
- The muffler was changed out to the proper size, 1" pipe and muffler.
- During all this time, the carburetor was acting up to a point of where the engine would not start. A new carburetor was ordered and installed.
- The carburetor, shafts, square tubing, universals, pillow block and sprocket were all ordered online from several different vendors. All the keys and set screws were obtained locally.
- The universals are normally for ATVs.

Here's hoping we get many more years of service out of 5321.

Gary T Brothers  
V.P. Motive Power



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<https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow> and select Houston Area Live Steamers (oops, they wrote down streamers). **You have to renew this every year for Kroger.** This does not take anything away from you – it just gives money to HALS! These programs bring in 30 dollars a month with only three members in each right now. This does not cost you more, but does contribute to HALS

**Coming in the January Stack Talk**

Work Days for January

Your Project

Track Work reports from Peder Serkland and others.

More on 5321 upgrades from Gary Brothers.

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*(NOTE: Pete Greene is continuing as the “Former President” since Bob Barnett is still on the Board.)*

### Editor’s Comments

Bill Smith’s comment in the December Stack Talk “It has been quite a year, we lost Ed Rains and Dan Douglas who passed on” has gotten to me today (1/29/2017) when my live steam friend David Gehrke lost his wife JoAnne. Just a month earlier (1/27/2016) my live steam friend Allan Ratliff lost his wife Lynn. At his birthday yesterday Allan’s family and friends talked him in to traveling to Texas for the C&IG and WB&S meets. I look forward to seeing Allan again! And we lost the founder of the Annetta Valley & Western, Terry McGrath (1/18/2017). 15 years ago one of my old time live steam buddies said “we are dropping like flies”, I did not

understand him then. Now that I am that old timer, I do. We are dropping like flies.

Pete Greene: I wish you a speedy recovery from your triple bypass. I am so glad you caught this problem early.

Rick White, Stack Talk Editor

I can be reached and submissions may be made at the following e-mail address:

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