What is this vegetation growing by the Shattock Barn track?
Is it Poison Oak? Check out the Poison Oak article by Bruce Anderson & Ben Lerman inside this issue.

The CallBoy

May 2025

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95014

The CallBoy Newsletter

Official Publication of the Golden Gate Live Steamers, Inc.
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Tilden Park 2491 Grizzly Peak Blvd, Orinda, California USA 94563	Pat Young, Editor phty95014@yahoo.com **May 2025**	A 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Corporation www.ggls.org or www.goldengatels.org

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President:	Jon Sargent	510-233-6481
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Director at Large:	Sammy Tamez	510-706-5614
Past President:	Rick Reaves	510-479-3386

Ombudsperson

Lisa Kimberlin 510-214-2595

GGLS Trust Fund Members

John Lisherness
Jerry Kimberlin (elected March 2015)
Sammy Tamez (elected August 2022)

GGLS Committee Chair People

Bits & Pieces:	Jeremy Coombes
Boiler Testing:	Jerry Kimberlin
Building:	Rick Reaves
CallBoy Editor:	Pat Young
Dues:	Lisa Kimberlin
Grounds:	Andy Weber
High Track:	Stephen Fares
Landscape:	Jo Ann Miller, Bruce Anderson
Librarian:	Pat Young
Locomotive:	Paul Hirsh
Membership:	Sammy Tamez
Public Train:	Walt Oellerich
Refreshments:	Walt Oellerich
Rolling Stock:	Rich Croll
Security:	Jon Sargent
Shop Foreman:	Rich Croll
Signals:	John Davis
Technical Talks:	Charlie Reiter
Track:	Jim McKibbin
Train Storage Rental:	Jon Sargent
Web Site:	Pat Young

Club Correspondence

All correspondence to the Golden Gate Live Steamers should be sent to the secretary, Sarah Buhre at this email: secretary@ggls.org

Membership

To qualify for membership, attend 2 monthly meetings. At the first meeting, please introduce yourself and obtain a membership application from the Membership chairman or Secretary. At the second meeting, return your completed application, a signed release form, the yearly prorated club dues, together with the $25 initiation fee and you are officially a member.

CallBoy

Articles, pictures, photographs, items for sale or any other information that would be of interest to the club should be sent to Pat Young, the CallBoy editor at phty95014@yahoo.com

Deadline for submittals to next month's issue is the 19th!

2025 Calendar of Club Sponsored Events

(Dates may change without notice)

05/04 General Meeting/Board Meeting
05/31 GGLS Spring Meet

06/01 GGLS Spring Meet/Open House
06/08 General Meeting/Board Meeting
06/14 Club reserved for Shanna O'Hare

07/13 General Meeting/Board/Meeting/Swap Meet/
Membership Appreciation day

08/02 Club reserved for John Smith
08/10 General Meeting/Board Meeting

09/14 General Meeting/Board Meeting
09/20 GGLS Fall Meet
09/21 GGLS Fall Meet/Open House

09/27 PV&A, GGLS, SVLS Joint Meet
09/28 PV&A, GGLS, SVLS Joint Meet

10/12 General Meeting/Board Meeting

11/09 General Meeting/Board Meeting

12/14 General Meeting/Board Meeting
End of Year Business Meeting

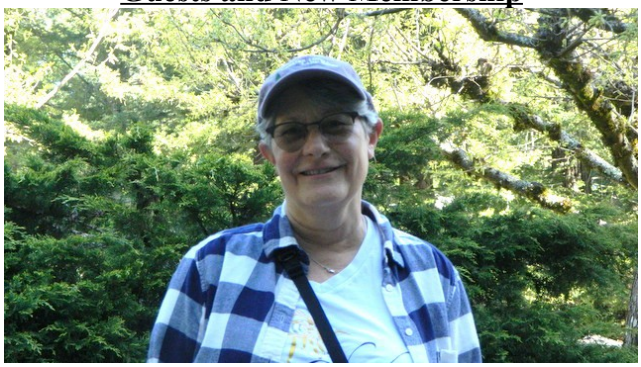
Announcements

Our Spring Meet & Open House is coming up on May 31st/June 1st, 2025. We're looking for some volunteers to help; and we need to figure out food for our people on Saturday.

Don't drink the water here at Tilden! Until we get the all clear, and the pipes have been flushed out, don't drink any water from any sink, water fountain, or hose up at the track!

Look out for rattlesnakes under logs & woodpiles; we saw another one during the work day!

Guests and New Membership



Jill Lambie was here as a guest & potential new member where her father was Byron Lambie. She was here with her brother Dana.

Railroading Activities

Rahim Pereira & his grandpa went to visit the South Bay Historical Railroad museum in the Santa Clara depot where they have an N scale layout & an HO scale layout.

He got to see the new Caltrain electric locomotives going in & out of the station and the engineer waved back at him!

Chris Smith stopped in Cheyenne, Wyoming after his Colorado trip and got a personal tour of the Union Pacific steam shop from Ed Dickens who showed him everything in the shop! If you're in Cheyenne, reach out to Ed about getting a tour (he's really approachable).

John Erdkamp visited the HO scale Carquinez Model Railroad Society club and they have a layout in a room with 25-foot vaulted ceilings that spans three levels. It models the run from Oakland to Reno and during their open house they have up to 20 trains running simultaneously.

GGLS Terry Strom is also a Redwood Empire Live Steamers member and reported they have a new battery operated locomotive built up in Oregon with an amazing sound system in it! Unfortunately, they have no 110 volt power at their site, so they're trying to figure out the best way to keep the batteries charged. They are getting ready to start their May-to-October public season next month.

Stephen Fares did his first run of the season as brakeman on the Niles Canyon Railway and did his first round of yard switching putting the train away at the end of the day. It gave him a clearer understanding about how switching moves happen in real life.

Minutes of the General Meeting

Meeting convened at 1005 hours Pacific time on April 13, 2025.

Officer Reports:

President: Nothing to report.
Vice President: Nothing to report other than see Stephen if you have ideas for the club's 90th anniversary celebration next year.
Secretary: Nothing to report.
Treasurer: John Lisherness paraphrased "We still have money" in his typical report.
Safety: Nothing to report.
Director at Large: Nothing to report.
Ombudsperson: Nothing to report.

Committee Report:

Public Train: Walt Oellerich's grandson Anthony sprayed 12 gallons of weed spray but still needs to spray from the tunnel to the Tilden depot. Walt is having trouble with his leg and could use help at the station with the Public Train.
Buildings: Nothing to report.
Grounds: Huge thanks to Bruce Anderson, Andy Weber, Bob Walker, Rich Croll, Jim McKibbin, Paul Hirsh, Jo Ann Miller, John Lytle, Walt Oellerich, Anthony and many others for all the hard work

clearing brush during the work days!

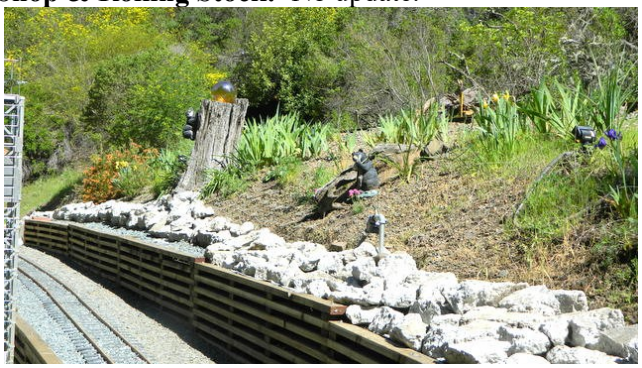
Track: Jim McKibben re-ballasted a stretch by the shop track switch and straightened a kink out of the track by the Shattock barn where Rich Croll's engine had derailed several times. Stephen Fares is looking for expertise & help in getting the High Track back into tiptop shape.

Signals: John Davis thanked Jim McKibbin for filling in and still looking at ways to improve the ground signals.

Locomotives: RGS 20 & 22 will both steam up next week to test their steam chests and may double-head them for a bit.

The Heinz Atlantic is now running on air. Once its smoke box cover is back on, he will steam it up and see how it runs.

Shop & Rolling Stock: No update.



Landscape: Paul Hirsh brought some concrete chunks which are now topping the new retaining wall. The irises should be coming in soon and some Gaimandia was planted to stabilize the hill. There is a LOT of poison oak up on that hill where some members got it pretty bad after the work days, so be CAREFUL around the underbrush!

Roundhouse & Storage: There are no issues and the Eagle Scouts finished with the steaming bay painting.

Security: Nothing to report but there were some early morning coyotes out by the Heinz loop.

Membership: Chairman Sammy Tamez wanted the new potential members to meet with him after the meeting.

Web/Library: The CallBoy newsletter is sent out the Sunday before the General meeting. If you don't get a copy, let Pat Young (phty95014@yahoo.com) know so he make sure the online newsletter gets to you.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

Happy 70th birthday to Bruce Anderson! □□

The April General Meeting was adjourned at 1036 hours Pacific time.

Minutes of the Board Meeting

Jon Sargent called the meeting to order at 1112 hours Pacific time on April 13, 2025

Present Board Officers: Jon Sargent, Stephen Fares, John Lisherness, Jerry Kimberlin, Sammy Tamez, (Matt Petach substituting for Sarah) and Lisa Kimberlin as Ombudsperson.

Board Meeting Minutes Approval: Sammy Tamez made a motion to accept the minutes of the February 2025 meeting and Stephen Fares seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Celebration of Life: Mel McDonough's daughter has inquired about having a memorial celebration of life for Mel at the track. Jon will call and talk to her about dates & times and we'll see if we can have a member sponsor the activity, or whether it can happen on a day when people will already be around.

New Business:

Food for Spring Meet: Let's do the same thing as last time but maybe have an additional table to hold the buns, fixings and condiments for the meats. John Lisherness would love some regular hot dogs instead of polish dogs. We're hoping Sarah can do a sign up genius for who is bringing what items again.

Open House Sign: Sammy Tamez will check with John Smith to see when he might finish repainting the open house sign so we can get it ready to put up.

Tree Removal: We have 2 or 3 trees that need to be removed and Jon has the contact information for a tree company that the park district uses. The one by the green shed will be cut & left there. The other two will be cut into sections & stacked by the woodshed.

High Track Swing Bridge: The High Track swing bridge will have to be position further to the left than

we'd planned. PG&E marked their electrical service conduits and they run just to the right of our step-over where we had originally thought of putting the swing bridge.

Membership Roster: Jon will go through Lisa's spreadsheet of who hasn't paid yet to verify which members will be dropped from the roster.

Insurance Renewal: The club insurance renewal process is underway.

Andy Clerici Trench Engine: Andy Clerici's trench engine has arrived and is on Jon's track in the three-track barn, but will eventually have to be moved to the middle track of the Bulger barn.

Jon Sargent adjourned the meeting at 1142 hours Pacific time on April 13, 2025.

Bits and Pieces

Additional photographs
by Pat Young & Bruce Anderson

Rahim Pereira was daydreaming a little when he set about to build the "Not sure what it is" (his words, not mine!). However, Rahim did point out that there was very little room inside and the operator can only fit into the space sideways, which might have been due to a design oversight. The reason for this shall be left to each of your imaginations to ponder . . . . but not while driving!

Sammy Tamez & his daughter are still going through his collection & memorabilia and wanted to share some more items before he donates them to the San Leandro Historical Museum. This month, Sammy brought in an AM radio in the shape of the CP Huntington, a copy of the rules & regulations of the Union Pacific RR (obviously the pocket version), a commemorative desk clock (which Sammy is keeping for sentimental reasons), a badge from an SP uniform and a checklist required before a trenching operation could begin.

Sammy also brought in some give-away items: bandannas and railroad crossing reflective tape. I wonder what else he might find in the future.

Charlie Reiter needed some multiple gaskets of the same size for the Stuart Double V10 compound engine he is building and brought along the tool he made to

manufacture them. The gasket blank first has the inner diameter punched out. The blanks are then assembled onto the shaft of the tool and compressed with the mating part of the tool. The tool is then held against the lathe face plate with pressure exerted from a live center held in the tail stock. The outside diameter is then machined to the desired dimension. This is one version of a method called pressure turning. Of course, care must be exercised when employing these methods of machining as depth and speed of cut should be approached cautiously!

Charlie needed more tool holders for his Aloris quick change lathe tool post system as it is very handy to have cutting tools in dedicated holders already set to the lathe center height. Charlie made his holders from aluminum as the amount & type of use will not impart any ware or damage.

The Adjustment nuts were found in a scrap bin many years ago and actually look like they originally came from Aloris tool holders (the circle of life for materials in Charlie's shop).

The third item from Charlie was in the steaming bays. Yup. Charlie has finished a complete rebuild of another project, a 1½" scale Climax geared locomotive, what else!

As is true for all geared locomotives, the Climax was designed for a specific type of work & environment, which lead to the development of the Bevel Skew gear system that transfers power from the two inclined cylinders to the driving wheels on each truck.

In true Charlie Reiter fashion, the engine was stripped and inspected before a repair plan & sketches were made. In the end Charlie made several needed upgrades as well as renewal of bearings, bushings and pins. The boiler, a transplant from a Heisler locomotive (is that legal Charlie?), required development & fabrication of a new throttle system. After passing a boiler inspection Charlie made a successful first run, with only minor teething issues to straighten out.

John Lisherness decided he needed a tote to transport stuff (oil, tools, etc.) when running one of his locomotives. But John wanted a tote that would work well and look in-place around a railroad. The results of John's effort are shown in the accompanying photographs. The first thought that came to mind was sturdy and industrially beautiful. Trust me, it may look relatively simple, but a lot of careful work went into this item, which is why it is so pleasing to look at!

Stephen Fares has been researching the 3½" gauge clubhouse engine and has been reading the construction series for this engine that appeared in the Model Craftsman magazine. However, although Stephen was disappointed to find no construction article in the March 1940 edition there was one about the GGLS holding a display & meeting and was accompanied by photographs of founding & early members. A nice find!

Steam Trains & Poison Oak

By Dr. Benjamin Lerman, M.D., & Bruce Anderson

As members should be aware, especially following the Los Angeles fires, the club has been at work cleaning up green waste around the track. Many members have come out to help fill two 15-cubic yard debris boxes, each the equivalent of about 30 household green waste bins.

Following one of the workdays, I (Bruce) felt a tingling on my skin while driving home. Oh oh…, poison oak? As soon as the garage door was closed I took off my clothing, put them into the washing machine, and headed towards the shower. What I did was what I had learned decades ago as a Boy Scout,

cool water to keep my pores closed and lots of soap! In following days I had a bit of a rash but not too bad. Unfortunately a couple of others had a bit more to deal with.
Knowing one of our members and builder of a Conner Beam locomotive was also medical doctor, I sent Ben an email and asked him some questions. Ben graciously responded:

Bruce: Could you please help me with a possible CallBoy story on Poison Oak?
Ben: Having suffered many an awful case of poison oak, I've sadly learned a lot about not just professionally but personally! See my comments below, which are just my own opinions on the topic. I'm also including a patient hand-out that was prepared by a reputable online medical textbook publisher (UpToDate).

First off, identify and avoid if at all possible.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure… Wear long sleeves, long pants, & gloves. Don't touch your face (or any other sensitive part of your anatomy!). Treat everything as contaminated — put it all straight into the laundry and then give yourself a full body washing. Don't wait for a rash to appear — assume you have been exposed and wash immediately. Tecnu is one detergent that is marketed specifically for this purpose, but at least one study found that Dawn dish soap worked just as well. The less time that elapses between exposure and washing, the less chance of rash.

Shoes are the trickiest. If yours can go in the laundry machine, that's probably best, otherwise remove the laces and run them through the laundry and wipe the shoes down with Tecnu or Dawn. Be sure to wear disposable gloves when doing this.

Bruce: How the heck does it move around?
Ben: Two factors: first, if you haven't removed all the oil, you may be transferring oil from one part of your body to the next. Second, even if you have removed all the oil, different parts of your body may have absorbed different amounts during the initial exposure, or be more sensitive. So places that got a big dose and/or are more sensitive will break out first, places that got a smaller exposure or are less sensitive break out later.

Bruce: Is Poison Oak contagious?
Ben: In a sense, yes. The rash is caused by the rhus oil in the plant (also found in poison ivy and other plants). If you have failed to fully remove the oil from your skin and you then touch someone else, you can transfer the oil to them (my wife has had some choice words for me about this!).

Bruce: Using over-the-counter medications versus calling the doctor?
Ben: If you have broken out in a rash it is unlikely to respond to available over-the-counter medications; certainly over-the-counter hydrocortisone cream is way too weak for this purpose. There is an over-the-counter product called Zanfel which claims fantastic ability not only to remove rhus oils before a rash starts, but to reverse an existing rash. I can't vouch for it, but maybe worth a try (it's not cheap however!).

But the bottom line is that if you have a bad poison oak rash, you probably will need prescription medication if you want relief (**Bruce:** Zanfel did help!).

Bruce: If you feel tingling, how about a cool shower versus a warm bath?
Ben: The makers of Tecnu recommend using cool water when washing the oils off; this is presumably to avoid increasing absorption of the oils that you would get with warm water. However UpToDate (the medical textbook I mentioned above) says to use warm/hot water! I think the advantage of warm/hot water is that it may help dissolve the oils more effectively. More importantly, most people would probably cut a cold shower as short as possible — but you really want to be thorough and not rush this step. Washing as well is so important that I'm copying and pasting the entire paragraph about this from the UpToDate article at the bottom of this email, as it has some additional details.

After you have done your best to remove the oils, subsequent bath or shower temperature is just personal preference. Some people find hot showers heighten the sensation of itching but others feel that it sort of overwhelms the itch receptors and they get a short period of itch relief afterward.

Bruce: Fels-Naptha bar soap?
Ben: It is reputed to work for removing rhus oils but I haven't come across any studies about it.

Bruce: Rubbing Alcohol?
Ben: No, bad idea. It will be ineffective at removing the oils (you need a detergent for this) and it's drying

and irritating. If you already have a rash it would probably be excruciating!

Bruce: Witch Hazel?
Ben: I don't have personal experience with it... Some sources say Witch Hazel can be helpful, especially for helping to soothe and dry up oozing, blistering rashes. But others say it should only be applied to intact skin! If you are going to try it, be aware that in rare instances it can cause allergic reactions so stop it, of course, if your rash seems to be getting worse.

Bruce: For a rash, how about Calamine Lotion?
Ben: Many people get relief with Calamine. Aveeno baths can also be soothing and helpful. Old-fashioned oral antihistamines like Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) may be helpful but mostly just because they are sedating (so they can help you sleep through the itching).
Newer, non-sedating antihistamines are probably of no use at all.

The most effective treatment for a rash is steroids either in topical or oral form (or both). Topical steroids need to be high potency (e.g. hydrocortisone won't cut it). In my experience many doctors don't prescribe very well for this; they often prescribe a low or mid-range potency steroid and they very often only prescribe it for a week or so. A poison oak rash can be expected to last a good three weeks (or more) and if you stop steroids sooner than that the rash that had been improving or resolved will suddenly get bad again. If I were a patient, I would ask the doctor to prescribe enough to last three weeks at the outset.

Bruce: How about Aspercreme (Lidocaine) versus Benzocaine?
Ben: Topical anesthetics and topical antihistamines are not recommended — they don't work very well (if at all) and they can cause allergic reactions.

Bruce: How about swelling?
Ben: Some swelling is to be expected if the rash is moderately severe. However poison oak rashes can also get infected. If your swelling suddenly gets worse, or your rash becomes painful or tender, or starts oozing pus, or you develop a fever, these are all signs of infection that should get immediate medical attention.

Bruce: Any other thoughts?
Ben: Inhaling fumes or aerosolized particles of poison oak can cause severe lung reactions so it should never be burnt or put through a shredder.

Also from the UpToDate article:
Washing – After a known exposure, patients should remove any contaminated clothing and wash the whole body with mild soap or dish soap on a damp washcloth under very warm or hot running water as soon as possible. One study found that after approximately 10 minutes on the skin, 50 percent of the urushiol can be removed. This number falls to 10 percent after 30 minutes and 0 percent after 1 hour [10].

Despite this, washing even two hours after exposure significantly reduces the likelihood and severity of dermatitis [15,16]. Some clinicians suggest washing the entire body three times while always wiping in one direction, not back and forth; this seems to reduce irritation and help remove the oils [16]. If there is no rapid access to dish washing liquid, plain water can be used to wipe the skin in the same fashion.
This will at least remove some of the resin.
Comparison of dish washing liquid with more expensive products made for removing poison ivy oils did not show a difference in effectiveness [15]. Clothing, tools, or other items that may be contaminated with the oleoresin should also be washed with warm, soapy water prior to reuse.

Bruce: Thank you Ben! Hope to see you steaming at the track again soon.
Ben: All the best!

p.s., From the Zanfel Product information sheet
Arg..., "Roots and vines may be 10 to 100 times more potent than the leaves of the plant."

The oil "can get on your pets, tools, gloves, clothing, shoes, and bedding -- and contaminate upon contact". Any soap and water will wash the oil away from non-human surfaces. Sounds like we should use a cleanser on car window sills and seats too.