



**AMADOR SAWMILL AND MINING ASSOCIATION**  
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 A 501 (c) (3) tax exempt non-profit Ca. corporation  
**NEWSLETTER NUMBER 8**  
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**Mission Statement**

*“The primary objectives and purposes of this corporation shall be for public purposes: acquiring, restoring, and preserving authentic historic working sawmill and hard rock mining equipment for public education through display and demonstration, together with related activities.”*



Bill Braun's 1910 Case Steam Traction Engine was ably tended by Kevin Jarrett and Cliff Carpenter at the 2004 Amador County Fair.

We did it! The purchase of S. F. Piledriver #2 & #3 was finalized April 6, 2004. After towing them to Antioch April 15-16, the removal of the steam equipment took a month. The last equipment arrived in Plymouth May 17. It was a big effort by a dedicated bunch of volunteers. There will be pictures and a talk given at the potluck dinner Nov. 7, don't miss it!

The public live steam demonstration was a real show stopper this year at the Amador County Fair. It took many man hours to set up and to tear down. Set up days are the day before and the day after fair. Those days are full of fun hauling cable, setting the snatch blocks, running the Cats, lifting with the fork lifts and figuring how to set up tons of old industrial equipment for demonstration in front of thousands of people.

The boiler for #2 steam donkey has passed the Ca. State inspection and has been issued an annual operating permit for 125psi. At the fair the safety valve popped off sharply from time to time as Tom Iness got the hang of firing a boiler on fuel oil instead of burning wood as is done on the 1910 Case. Tom ran the engine for many hours, tending to the feed water, lubrication and the many questions from the public. His comment was, "It runs like a watch!" This winter the volunteers will complete the painting and build a metal canopy to protect the fireman and donkey puncher. Also a detachable air lift axle and detachable goose neck hitch will be installed so the donkey can be towed behind a fifth wheel truck, much like a Murray or Cozad low bed heavy equipment trailer is towed. This arrangement will allow the donkey to move safely over the highway to other events.



In the picture above left is Ed Akin using his fully restored 1946 CAT D-8 to skid the donkey engine off the low boy trailer at the Fair grounds. The picture at the right is Alan Langmuir on his 1929 Cat 15 helping align the donkey on low boy trailer during loading operations the day after the Fair closed. No tinker toys for these boys.

Below is a picture of the loading of the 1910 CASE the day after the Fair. Also included is a picture of the unloading of the Donkey at Bill's shop after moving from the Fairgrounds.

Thanks to Ed Akin for providing trucking and loading/unloading for moving the Steam Donkey, we couldn't have done it without his generous help.



The big whistle for this year's steam up was on the Donkey Engine, a 5in X 32in. We got complaints from the graveyard, it was that loud. The reconditioned whistle was a real crowd pleaser. The whistle doctor, Mike Oswalt will be making minor adjustments this winter to improve the tone. Whistle tuning is real industrial art in action!



I wonder if one hundred years ago the "pilebutts" in San Francisco Bay used the same steam whistle signals as the "donkey punchers" of the Sierra Nevada Mountains? 1 toot, 2 toots, 3 toots...What were they saying?



Floyd Percival's buzz saw cut slab wood fuel for the CASE boiler again this year.



The sawmill ran very well this year with few hang-ups.

The logs this year consisted of Ponderosa Pine and Douglas Fir donated by Sierra Pacific Industries. The lumber cut will be used to rebuild the blacksmith and wagon shop located near the arena among other projects on the fairgrounds.

One log that had a twist grain pulled the 48" blade out of alignment and the teeth struck the carriage frame and needed sharpening. All the bolts on the husk were tightened and trued up with a square. Alan Hyatt cut off 16" x 16" x 24" blocks from the twisted log with his 1947 Ottawa drag saw to mount blacksmith anvils on.



On the previous page the left picture shows Bill in the fire box on #2 donkey boiler. With the help of Alan, Tom, and Ken mixing refractory material by hand, the boiler fire box installation was completed the afternoon before the Fair opened.

Cathy Braun put together a professional storyboard and poster display for the educational kiosk showing the history of the acquisition of the two Port of San Francisco steam pile drivers and the conversion back to logging steam donkeys. These photo displays will be used to help obtain additional restoration grants like we applied for and were granted last year.

***The Second Annual Pot Luck Dinner and running of the Amador Saw Mill is on November 7, 2004. The saw blade bits the first log a 10am. We have 9 donated logs to saw. The lumber will be used to expand the mill building in the spring of 2005. The Dinner starts at 4pm followed by presentations.***

The power this year will be a jet engine! Well not really, we have been granted the use of the Chrysler V8 engine industrial engine which was originally belted to the mill before 1993. This engine is owned by Chris Andreason and is being refurbished by Rolland Matson. Last year we used



John Tower's 1925, 40HP, Harris gasoline engine.

Work continues on the Corliss engine. Currently a new piston & piston rod are being machined by Jerry Virtue. The flywheel and crankshaft is set up in the shop and are being cleaned prior to painting. The 12" steel H beam foundation is being welded and drilled to mount the engine frame.

***Workdays are the same as last year:***

***The third Saturday of each month except December 2004 and July 2005. Call (209) 245-3448 for time and place.***

***Bring your lunch, gloves, start time is 8am***



### **2004 Sawmill Crew**

The bank account is now at \$6200. The restoration of the Piledriver #2 steam equipment to become #2 donkey engine cost \$5500. We have the steam equipment off of Piledriver #3 waiting to go through the same restoration procedure. Donations collected during the Fair totaled \$494. We are applying for new grants this and next year. Our assets now are valued over \$54,000. We are solidly in the black. The volunteers did the work to make all of this happen, THANKS! We are a growing concern!

Newsletter number 8 compiled by Alan Langmuir, your cub reporter. Please contact me at [alangmuir@jps.net](mailto:alangmuir@jps.net) or (916) 524-7055 with your photos and ideas.



**The beautiful sound of steam.....**