



MILLHANDS 2002

AMADOR SAWMILL & MINING ASSOCIATION
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December 1, 2002

Hello to the Crew and Supporters,

The mad rush of summer is done and fall has passed.

2002 AMADOR FAIR

As you all must have surmised, the sawmill operation went very well this year. The power was there this year and the blade sang a sweet tune of clean cuts. Nineteen logs yielded about five thousand board feet of lumber. A new set of teeth was installed in the blade before the fair, which helped for a smooth operation. The single belt arrangement coupled with the new line shaft and rebuilt husk (framework supporting the saw arbor) did the trick. The Case was running at its best speed (250rpm).

The new educational kiosk attracted a lot of attention between shows. Those people who missed the show could see photos and the video of the sawmill process if not the real thing. The archive photos brought out many stories from old timers who remembered the old sawmills or had relatives who worked at them.

The sketch of the proposed sawmill additions, drawn and donated by Rand Huggett helped to impress the fair goers that we have plans to expand the exhibit, and will be helpful when raising funds.

2002 UPGRADES TO SAWMILL

New line shaft – This arrangement will allow belting direct to the Corliss stationary steam engine and also belting up other equipment (edger, re-saw, etc.).

Rebuilt husk – This stabilized and strengthened the mill for better accuracy of the lumber dimensions. Rebuilding the carriage in the coming months will further improve the sawing dimensions.

FINANCIAL REPORT

We netted \$808 in donations during the fair after reimbursing the expense of printing the calendars we gave out as donation incentives.

We currently have \$1,216 in the bank. These funds are set aside for restoration projects. The organization continues to run with the help of volunteers paying the various costs during the year: maintenance and upgrades to the sawmill, insurance rider for the fair, kiosk poster display, phone, newsletter costs, etc, etc. Thank you to all the volunteers who have dug into their pockets.

NON-PROFIT EXEMPT STATUS

We received our provisional exempt status from California Franchise Tax Board, and expect to receive the same from the IRS shortly. The law allows donors a tax deduction for donations to exempt organizations. The exempt status in our case is effective retroactively back to our incorporation date of February 16, 2000. Keep your receipts for materials used for the sawmill and advise your tax preparer!

STATUS OF BOILER & ENGINE RESTORATION

Boiler: Costs for repairs (firebox cracked and significant corrosion) are beyond our present funding capability. A new ASME code boiler large enough to run the Corliss is in excess of twenty thousand dollars. The Directors are currently looking at another boiler which has real potential.

Engine: I am looking for persons to help in the rebuild / reassembly of the Corliss engine. I have most of the machine tools in my shop for the rebuild and have more coming on line as I can find the time. Your willingness to help will fill a need no matter what your skills or experience. I will be setting up the main engine frame on assembly stands in the near future and will need assistance, give me a call if you can help.

STATUS OF LEASE

We are negotiating with the Amador Fair Board to get a long-term lease to operate the sawmill (which belongs to the fair) and in return lease to them the improvements

we have made to the line shaft, and our future planned additions such as the boiler and steam engine, a shingle mill, an edger saw, a trim saw, and a 4-side planer. Such a lease will protect all our work and sweat in improving the sawmill exhibit. Currently, there is only a year by year operating agreement in effect.

WORK PROJECTS FOR 2003

BOILER & ENGINE RESTORATION: Again anyone that can provide the time and skills to help, please contact me by phone or e-mail.

SAWMILL MAINTENANCE: The carriage is in need of major work this coming year. The set works are very worn and need refit. The timber framework is becoming very loose and needs significant work. The sawmill roof is again in need of some work (re-nailing) and several of the supporting columns are scheduled to be replaced.

PORTABLE KIOSK: While the kiosk worked well to display the posters during the fair, it was a pain to take the posters down each night and haul them and the TV & VCR home to prevent theft. It would be a helpful if we could build a portable 8' x10' kiosk that we could trailer to the site and forklift off. It could have large fold-down window shutters that we could prop in the horizontal position to provide table surfaces for the TV & VCR, the donation jar, and our donation incentives. The wood construction would be from our lumber cut from the sawmill. Posters could be hung on the inside and outside of the structure. The important feature would be the ability to secure everything inside at night and lock it up.

Do I have any volunteers to take on the project to design and build it?

FUNDRAISING: We need ideas for both the donation incentives we use at the fair (calendars and caps this past year), and for major money for the restoration project.

Donation incentives: Did the calendar idea work well enough to try it again? Other ideas tossed around: T-shirts, Polaroid photos of fairgoers at the sawmill or steam engine, 12-page calendar, a piece of rough cut board branded with our name. Any ideas? Keep in mind the organization has no money to finance the up front cost, so volunteers must dig into their pockets to advance or donate the cost. Any ideas on how to use the photos from the 20 leftover laminated 2002 calendars?

Major fundraising: I have been working on a PowerPoint presentation to use before groups, but could use help from someone knowledgeable with PowerPoint and someone with access to the projector equipment. Also need help in putting together handouts and a presentation plan to use before a group. And volunteers to help with the presentation before groups. And most important, I need help in identifying, then contacting, the local groups we want to approach for funds.

If anyone has experience with applying for grants, please step forward! My wife has taken a workshop in finding grant sources and may be able to help out with the initial search, but if anyone knows of specific foundations that would be interested in our projects please call or e-mail me.

WEBSITE: While this is not a high priority item, it would be nice if we had someone with expertise to set up a website. Perhaps either Central House or Volcano could donate the site. We could link with other Amador County visitor sites, and become a “destination” for visitors during the fair! We could also put a plea out for donations for our restoration project, and post photos.

WELCOME NEW VOLUNTEERS

At the 2002 fair, we had sixteen people step forward and say they could donate materials, time, or expertise. I will be contacting them to see how they can help after they have had a chance to read this newsletter.

E-MAIL LIST

It would be handy to have e-mail addresses for all those volunteers who are connected. It would save time and money having to play telephone tag whenever I need to contact people. If you have e-mail, please contact me at bill@centralhouse.net. I already have the e-mail for the new volunteers who provided it on our volunteer sign-up at the fair.

CAPS AND CALENDARS MAKE GREAT HOLIDAY GIFTS

We still have 9 caps, 3 videos, and 15 “2003” calendars left. If you can make a donation, I’ll see that you get what you need.

2003 WORK SCHEDULES

I would propose that the third Saturday of each month be designated as Workday for the Association. Any thoughts on that? The first workday would be in January. We need to get the fundraising and computer work started right away. Let me know which projects you can work on and if you are available for work other than the monthly workday.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Bill Braun
President, ASMA